

The TOOL SHED

Number 29

November 1983

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CRIMPING FORMS

by Raymond R. Townsend

The common form for crimping leather (Figure 1) consists of two pieces: the crimping board (shown with the screw in place) and the crimping screw. Quite often one of these without the other will appear on a "whatsit" table. The form is used as a tool or machine for giving the shape to the front of the foot of a one-piece vamp and leg of a high-style boot or riding boot. Formerly, when formed over an ordinary board, the leather made a series of folds or crimps over the in-step, and this may be the origin of the name.



Figure 1: Left, the crimping board, with screw in place; right, the crimping screw.

The leather is first soaked in a tub of clear water, then allowed to partially dry in natural air until it is soft and pliable, referred to as mellow. The leather is then strained by pincers over

the crimping board, and the screw is attached at the edges and drawn tight. The edges may be tacked along the edge of the board. The latter results in the many small holes often seen in the forms. The leather is then allowed to dry before removing.

There are a number of patented crimpers, sometimes called boot crimps or boot clamps. All of them have the same principle.

[Continued on page 8]

NOVEMBER 20th MEETING TO BE HELD AT EAST JERSEY OLDE TOWNE

CRAFTS of New Jersey will hold its second meeting of the 1983-84 year on Sunday, November 20, at East Jersey Olde Towne in Piscataway.

The meeting will begin with the "Swap & Sell" at 1:00 p.m. The formal program will begin promptly at 2:00.

The program for the afternoon will feature CRAFTSman Kenneth C. Vliet of Oldwick, who will speak on "Toys and Other Craft Work." Look forward to a most interesting meeting. Any member who owns any handmade toys or similar craft work is invited to bring them for display.

Following a break for refreshments, the program will conclude with the "Whatsit?" session. Members are asked to bring no more than one "whatsit?" for identification.

For new members who have not yet been to East Jersey Olde Towne, here are the directions:

Take I-287 to River Road (Rte. 18) in Piscataway. Go south on River Road for two miles to the second light, at

[Continued on page 7]



**Collectors of Rare and Familiar Tools Society
of New Jersey**

President _____ STEPHEN ZLUKY, Whitehouse
Vice President _____ HARRY J. O'NEILL, Annandale
Secretary _____ BARBARA FARNHAM, Stockton
Treasurer _____ JOHN M. WHELAN, Murray Hill

Membership in CRAFTS is open to anyone interested in early trades and industries, and the identification, study and preservation of tools and implements used and made in New Jersey. Annual dues are seven dollars for the membership year of July 1 to June 30. Membership fees may be sent to the Treasurer: John M. Whelan, 38 Colony Court, Murray Hill, NJ 07974.

The Tool Shed

Published five times per year for members of CRAFTS of New Jersey. Editor: Robert Fridlington, 8 Keith Jeffries Ave., Cranford, NJ 07016. Contributions, especially about New Jersey tools and trades, are welcomed.

**SPEAKER PROFILE:
KENNETH C. VLIET**

CRAFTSman Kenneth C. Vliet, who will be the featured speaker at the November 20 meeting, grew up on a farm outside of Oldwick, N.J., where he still lives.

Married and the father of two boys, Ken has taught at Watchung Hills Regional High School in Warren for 14 years. In his leisure hours he keeps busy with his hobbies of woodworking and carpentry. He has also been known to pick up an old tool or two.

In addition Ken is an avid toy collector and toy maker. His work has been exhibited at the Lamington Art Show, at Waterloo Village, and at the Warren Township Historical Society. His truck models, which most of our members have seen exhibited at the fall picnic, were selected for publication in Fine Woodworking Design Book II and Design Book III.

PROGRAMS FOR 1983-1984

Frederick A. Shippey, Chairman of CRAFTS Program Committee, has announced the program topics for the 1983-1984 year. As in the past, the meetings will feature a series of distinguished speakers on a variety of tool-related subjects.

At our next meeting, on November 20, Kenneth C. Vliet will speak on "Toys and Other Craft Work." For more about Ken Vliet, see the speaker's profile in the column to the right.

On February 25, Dorothea Connolly, Curator of the Township of Lebanon Museum and our regular columnist for "The Distaff Side," will present a program on "Kitchen Tools: Colonial and Victorian." Dorothea is a well-known lecturer on colonial living.

Because of some scheduling difficulties, the speaker for the April 8 meeting cannot yet be announced. But we will let you know who it will be as soon as possible.

On June 3, the last meeting of the year, Kenneth D. Roberts, whom we all know for his works on planes, will speak on "Collecting Measuring Instruments."



THOSE CURIOUS INITIALS ON WHITE PLANES:
A REQUEST FOR HELP

by Carl E. Bopp

For over a year now, fellow CRAFTS-
man Peter T. Corrigan and I have been
researching the White family of plane-
makers in Philadelphia. We hope to
publish the fruits of our labor in the
not too distant future.

We have discovered that at one time
bench-hands working for the Whites
stamped their own initials near the
White makers-mark on the front of the
plane.

These initials are about the size
of a standard capital letter on a type-
writer. Periods separate each initial,
but there is none following the last
letter. They do not stand out as promi-
nently as the crowned initials that
appear on some Grant, Eastburn, and
other planes, and we believe that they
have a different meaning.

The "White initials" are found on
some, but not all, planes marked "ISRAEL
WHITE—PHILAD^A." The list at the bottom
of this page shows all of the initials
that we have found thus far. It also
gives the names of the men we believe
these initials represent and the type
of plane each of these men made. I have
listed a plane type only when three or
more planes bearing the initials have
been reported.

This list should not suggest that
each workman was limited to a single
type of plane. We know, for example, of

five screw-arm plows and two screw-arm
sash fillisters marked "D.H". Of course,
both of these types require similar
techniques to manufacture.

We are asking all CRAFTSMen who have
any White planes with these or other
initials on them to report them to us, so
we can expand the list.



Israel White Imprint
Bearing Initials "S.L"

Please give the initials, the type
of plane and, if possible, a rubbing of
the imprint. Do not confuse these
initials with owner initials that might
also appear on the plane.

We would also like to hear from
anyone who has unusual White planes,
other White tools, or information that
might be of interest.

Write to:

Peter T. Corrigan
P.O. Box 323
Tuckerton, NJ 08087
or
Carl E. Bopp
101 Nicholson Rd.
Audubon, NJ 08106

INITIALS ON WHITE PLANES

<u>Initials</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>
A.M	Adam Miller	Bench
D.H	David Hanley	Two-Arm Plows
W.M.D	William McDaniel	Panel Raisers
S.L	?	Moulding
J.S	James Silcock	Pat. Three-Arm Plows
T.D	Thomas Donoho	Moulding
N.N	Nathan Norton	?
F.M	Frederrick Miller	?

SOME RECENT ADVANCES IN THE
STATE-OF-THE-ART OF SHARPENING EDGED TOOLS:
PART II

by Lew Cooper

[In Part I of this article the author discussed several sharpening devices, ranging from motor-driven silicon-carbide discs to the Japanese "Kanaban," which is simply a flat, steel plate. Lew Cooper now continues his quest for the perfect sharpening device.]

We now come to the most exalted stage of recent improvements in sharpening techniques—Japanese water stones.¹ A few strains of oriental music, followed by a loud gong and a little Buddhist theology, may be in order here; but space is limited, and you will have to imagine the sound effects.

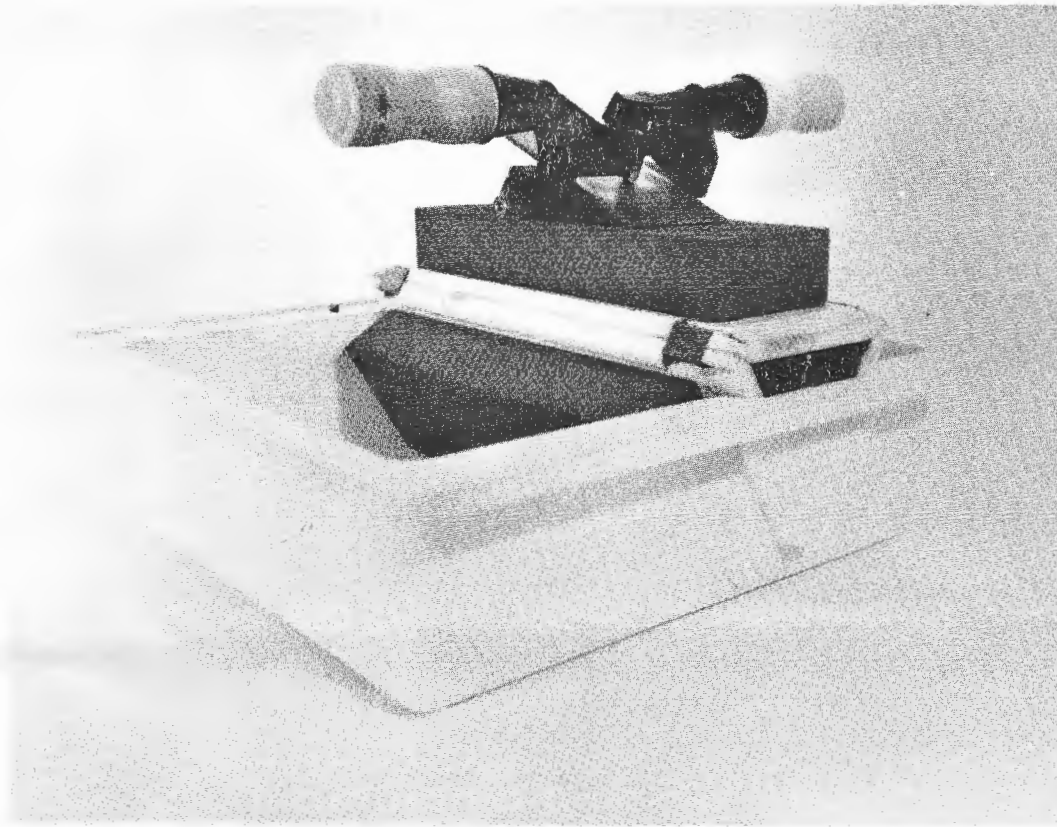
According to Fred Damsen, proprietor of Woodline The Japan Woodworker, the Japanese have been mining natural sharpening stones in the mountainous Norutaki District, north of Kyoto, for 1,200 years.² Of course, the current supply is nowhere near equal to the demand, so about 80 years ago the Japanese began to develop a series of artificial stones that may actually be better than the natural ones, because particle size and chemical composition can be rigidly controlled.

The water stone works on the same principle as the Kanaban—that is, water and abrasive particles form a slurry that cuts rapidly or slowly, depending on particle size. If you stop to think about it, an oilstone is a contradiction: the particles do the work, but oil provides too much lubrication, which partially defeats one's efforts. That is why oilstones require so much time and energy and why only a very light oil should be used. Furthermore, I think Westerners start at the wrong end of the series by first buying a very fine water stone to put on the ultimate edge. But the quality of that edge depends very much on the care taken during the intermediate steps. Therefore, I recommend starting with a very coarse water stone. You will be amazed by how fast it cuts. Each slow stroke removes an appreciable amount of metal. Working slowly enables one to utilize the entire surface of the stone, thereby slowing the development

of concavity. When that finally does happen, it can be corrected easily by rubbing with the Kanaban, another water stone, or (best of all) a diamond stone.³ The water stones stay clean and are much easier to keep flat than oilstones.

The most cost-effective set of water stones I've found is offered by the Fine Tool Shops, Inc., at \$49.95. That may seem expensive, but what you get is three good-size stones (800, 1200 and 6000 grits) mounted on a triangular form which fits into V-slots in a sturdy plastic water basin. Two of the stones remain partially immersed in water while you are using the uppermost stone. A small plastic squeeze bottle filled with water is very convenient to keep the surface quite wet. Eventually, I plan to construct a wooden box to hold the rectangular basin and which will be screwed to a table top in my shop. Once they have been placed into use, it is a good idea to store these stones in a pail of water; otherwise, they will accumulate undesirable calcium and iron deposits (unless you have very soft water). A drop or two of Clorox from time-to-time will control the growth of algae. My only criticism of this set is that the jump from 800 grit to 1200 seems very large, so you may want to add a 1000 grit stone to the series.⁴ The 1200 grit is quite fine, while the 6000 grit is finer than most Westerners have ever encountered.

The entire range of grits I've seen offered by the various mail-order houses runs from 700 to 8000. I particularly like the very large 700 grit stone offered by Woodline at \$25.10. It is so big (8 3/4 x 3 1/4 x 2 3/4) that it actually provides four surfaces for various sharpening operations. I should mention that the grit ratings do not seem to be entirely standardized by the various manufacturers, so some experimentation may be necessary. However, since you can buy three or four water stones for the price of one hard arkansas, the strain on the pocketbook is moderate.



Three-piece set of water stones; Japanese blade holder.

In the final analysis, the edge that can be obtained is only as good as the steel in the tool. The Rockwell scale is logarithmic, so there is considerable difference between a Japanese tool that tests at Rockwell 65 or better and an English or American tool around Rockwell 54. But even if you don't own a single Japanese tool, I think you will be pleasantly surprised by the performance of water stones—starting, as I said, with the coarser stones. If you can find a clean, unsoiled carborundum stone,⁵ using it with water will give you an idea of how the Japanese stones perform. Near the end of the process, when you can tell whether the smiling face reflected in the bevel of the tool is Oriental or Caucasian, then you've gone far enough.

The exact composition of the Japanese artificial water stones has been the subject of considerable speculation among Western tool dealers and users. With a small assist from Ma Bell, we can now disclose some preliminary results.⁶ Samples of dried slurry from each of the stones in the three-piece set described above were subjected to X-ray diffraction and fluorescence analysis. The primary

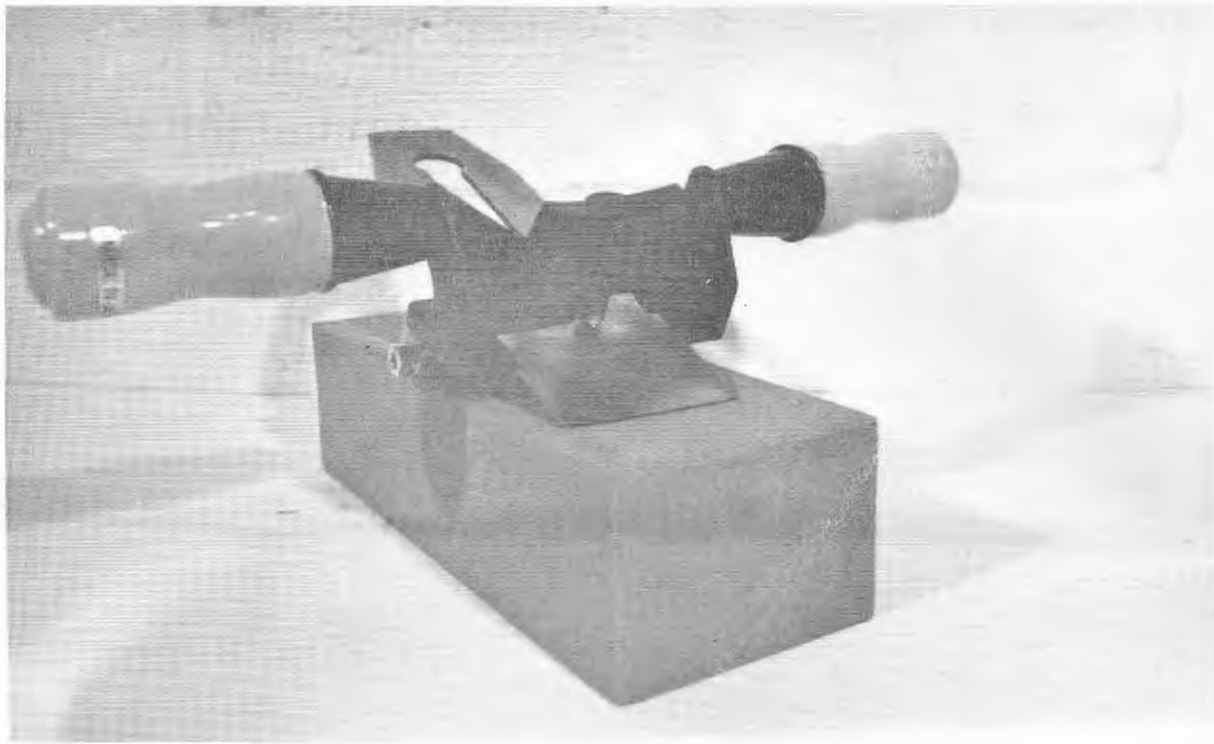
constituents of the green 800 grit stone are silicon carbide (SiC) and silicon dioxide (SiO_2 in the form of alpha quartz). There are also traces of copper and zinc (= brass?), calcium, titanium, iron, and nickel. We feel that this stone's green color is probably the result of the nickel content.

The reddish-brown 1200 grit stone contains silicon dioxide (SiO_2 as alpha quartz) and aluminum oxide (Al_2O_3 in the form of corundum). There are also traces of copper, zinc, and calcium, with more titanium and iron and less nickel than in the 800 grit stone.

The white 6000 grit stone contains zirconium, magnesium, and iron; some silicon, calcium, titanium, aluminum, potassium, and chlorine (!); plus traces of copper and nickel.

Some very fine stones are rumored to contain cerium oxide, but we have not been able to confirm that as yet. Also, we cannot say whether the minor constituents disclosed by these analyses affect the performance of the stones or are merely impurities. In fact, some of them may be contaminants from my very hard

[Continued on following page]



Japanese Blade Holder
and Large Coarse (700) Grit Stone

well water.⁷

In any event, since the principal constituents are not very exotic, it would appear that the secret is in the manufacturing (bonding) process which has remained hidden from prying Western eyes. I imagine that this process could be reconstructed if any American company had a motive for doing so. At the moment, they remain devoted to their oilstones.

Two final comments with respect to the use of water as the lubricant in sharpening tool steel: tools should be degreased prior to sharpening them in order to avoid contaminating the water stones. After sharpening, they must be dried carefully and then coated with a rust preventive. The Japanese prefer camellia oil, which I recommend. A small bottle will last for years.⁸ Other possible materials include fine mineral oil, silicone spray or PAM, a vegetable oil in a spray can which can readily be purchased from your local supermarket. I thought silicone was pretty effective until I discovered that

it can cause a dread disease known as "fish eyes" in the finish of your wood-working projects. So now I use PAM whenever I'm not using camellia oil (I don't waste the latter on my hand-saws, circular saws, pruning tools, etc.).

Woodline also sells a "Mon Chiku" or Japanese oiler made from a knuckle of bamboo. It is stuffed with rolled-up fabric that is impregnated with camellia oil. Unless one has a mystical affinity for things Japanese, any small oil-proof cylinder should do as well.

Notes

¹Woodsmith, No. 24, November/December 1982, pp. 4-6.

²Woodline 1983 Catalog, p. 27.

³Available from The Fine Tool Shops, Inc., and other mail order houses. Coarse grit 8" x 2" x 1½" at \$59.95. Woodsmith, No. 24, November/December 1982, p. 7.

[Continued on page 9]

A WHIMSICAL TALE ✓

by Herb Kean

I recently took a trip to England and came back with a great tool story. It was told to me by a renowned Englishman one sunny afternoon as we sat in his shop sipping tea. For the most part, there was an impish twinkle in his eye, but at times he maintained a serious, prideful bearing. It goes like this.

When Victoria became Queen of England in the mid-1800s, she was young and not completely experienced in matters of domestic policy. She had many advisors and court politicians, but she wanted to do something special for the people, all on her own. It wasn't long before she got her chance.

The Carpenter's Guild sent its Chief Steward to see her about reducing the seventy-hour work week. She was surprised to hear that anyone had to work such long hours. But her advisors convinced her that if she made any changes with the carpenters, then the bakers, silversmiths, etc., would all be camped on her throne-step for similar easements and the entire economy of the kingdom would collapse.

What a dilemma! Here was Victoria, wanting to do something to show her appreciation for her crafts people, but not wishing to anger her lordly advisors. What to do? It all came to her in the proverbial flash. She recalled her favorite fairy tale, about a King who offered his daughter's hand to the craftsman who could mold the most perfect golden frog.

As the tale goes, craftsmen came from far and wide to try their luck at sculpting a golden frog. But to no avail. The King turned them all down as imperfect. Finally a brilliant technician-type figured out that if he used a real frog as an actual model and cast around it, he could make a perfect likeness. And by utilizing what is known today as the lost-wax process, he created a flawless golden frog. The King was delighted and gave the young suitor his daughter's hand in marriage and half his kingdom. Of course, the King kept the thousands of rejected golden frogs and was understandably elated with his new found fortune.

Victoria found the fairy tale a

solution to her dilemma. She announced to her kingdom that the craftsman who made the most perfect brass-framed ebony brace would become Master of the Queen's Carpenters and would be granted the prestigious Queen's Letters. She described the brace as the ultimate in tools and called it an "Ultimatum" for short.

There were many applicants, just like the fairy tale. All submitted their samples—men like Pasley, Howarth, Marsden, Marples, Flather, Sorby, Ridge, Kent, and so on. After much deliberation, she picked the brace made by William Marples, and he became an overnight celebrity. The Queen awarded him a large patent citation with her letters embossed in gold, and he was allowed to advertise this honor on his subsequent braces with the inscription: "By Her Majesty's Royal Letters Patent."

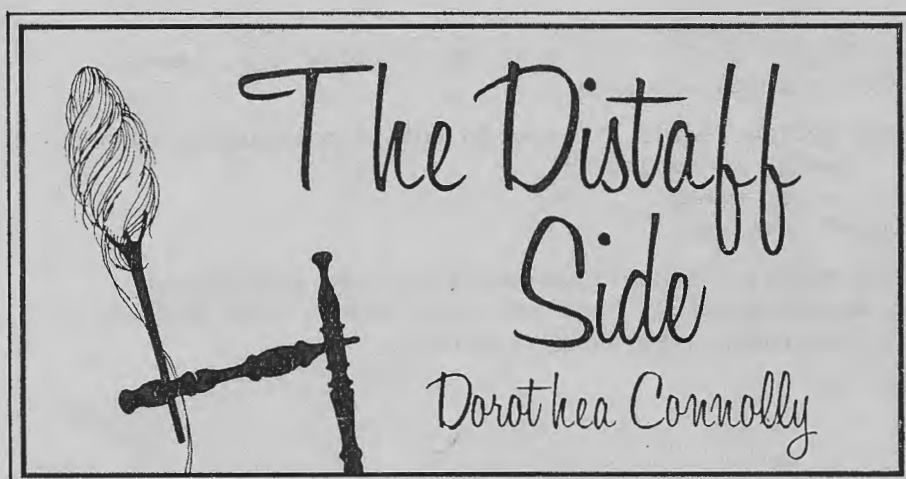
Strange as it may seem, the original complaint by the Carpenter's Guild was quickly resolved. Queen Victoria reached an agreement with the Chief Steward that each of the royal carpenters would receive one of the left-over contest braces in lieu of a reduction of work hours. All was well again in the kingdom and most certainly for William Marples who lived happily ever after, making his "Ultimatums."

And that is why today, of all the brass-framed ebony braces that have made their way to the "colonies," only one type carries the Queen's seal of approval—the Ultimatum by William Marples.

Note: Please, no letters on any anachronisms or literary liberties taken in this story. Just enjoy it for what it is—a tall-tool-tale.

[Meeting, continued from page 1]
at Hoes Lane.

Turn right at this light into Johnson Park and East Jersey Olde Towne. There are signs at Hoes Lane for EJOT and the Middlesex County Parks Administration Building, so you cannot miss it. The parking lot is on the left-hand side of the road, a short distance ahead.



With the Holidays coming, I thought you might get some pleasure from a few recipes that our forefathers enjoyed.

SOUCED OYSTERS (circa 1617)

1 cup white wine	1 tsp. ground ginger
1 cup cider vinegar	4 whole cloves
6 whole peppercorns	2½ cups oysters

Simmer wine, vinegar with the spices for ten minutes. Add oysters and cook until the oysters curl. Remove the oysters and cool the liquid before returning the oysters to the liquid. Early settlers claimed the oysters would last all year. They never do at my house!

PUMPKIN SOUP

Peel half of a medium pumkin, remove seeds and cut into wedges. Chop and cook in boiling salted water until tender. Drain and put through a sieve. Today's woman opens a can of pumpkin puree!

Combine: 2 cups pumpkin puree
 3 tbs. butter
 ¼ tsp. pepper
 1 tsp. sugar and salt

Cover and simmer over low heat for 10 minutes. Then stir in 3 cups hot milk a little at a time, and simmer for a few minutes. When I serve, I sprinkle a little nutmeg on top.

GREEN BEANS WITH MACE

Cook until slightly crisp 4 cups green beans with tips cut off.
 Add: 4 tbs. sweet butter
 1½ tsp. mace
 Salt and pepper to taste.

Blend. Put in oven for a few minutes to blend the flavors.

CREAMED RADISHES

Slice 4 cups of radishes thin. Do not peel. Put in water to cover and simmer. Drain when tender but not mushy. Strain stock and save.

Sauce: 2 tbs. butter 1 cup radish liquid (If you do not have enough strained
 2 tbs. flour stock, add milk)
 ½ tsp. salt ½ cup heavy cream
 ¼ tsp. pepper chopped parsley

Melt butter, add flour, salt and pepper. Cook two minutes and add all liquid except heavy cream. Simmer to make a smooth sauce, heat well and remove from fire. Add cream. Place in serving dish and sprinkle with chopped parsley.

CRANBERRY CHUTNEY

1 lb. cranberries
1 tart apple, pared, cored, and diced
2 cups brown sugar
¾ cups vinegar
½ cup chopped mixed candied fruit and peels
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. each dried mustard, ground ginger, cloves, allspice

Combine all ingredients in a 3 quart pan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and let simmer uncovered for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Cool and refrigerate in air-tight containers. This make 4½ cups.

MINCEMEAT FOR PYES

If you have never made your own mincemeat for pyes, try it. You will never use the store-bought kind again.

5 lbs. apples
2½ lbs. lean cooked beef
1 lb. suet
2 boxes raisins (15 oz.)
1 box currants (11 oz.)
2 tsp. cinnamon and nutmeg
1 tsp. allspice
2 lbs. brown sugar
2 cups brandy

Peel and core apples and put through meat grinder with suet and meat. Mix remaining ingredients and let stand overnight in earthenware crock. Place in quart jars. This makes 4 quarts.

This recipe keeps for at least six weeks in jars at room temperature. Placed in the refrigerator it will keep indefinitely. Mincemeat is excellent for stuffing baked apples. Simply place 2 tbs. mincemeat in the cavity of each apple before baking. Mincemeat is also delicious for stuffed pork chops and over ice cream.

ENJOY!

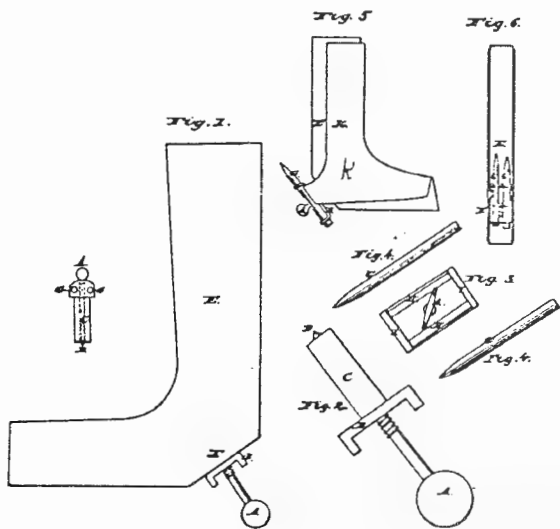


Figure 2: Drawings of Ebenezer G. Pomeroy's Horizontal Boot Cramp, patented October 4, 1836.

Figure 2 shows the "Horizontal Boot Cramp" patented by Ebenezer G. Pomeroy of Newark, Ohio, on October 4, 1836. Pomeroy claimed this to be an improvement over an earlier patent of his, dated July 27, 1824. This reveals how early this particular type of shoemaker's tool for forming the uppers to boots was developed. "Fig. 5 K" in the Pomeroy drawings shows the upper stretched around the board and held by the crimping screw or pin.

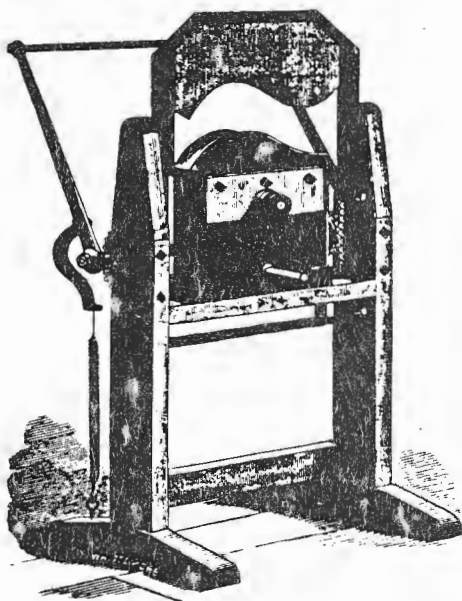


Figure 3: Crimping Machine

Some of the crimping machines are of unusual form. They remind one more of a guillotine and are frequently found in collections unidentified.

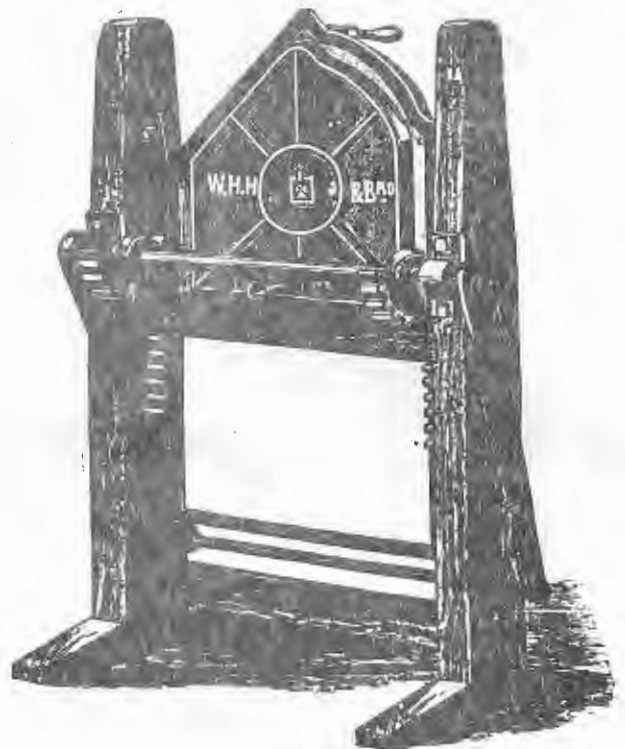


Figure 4: Crimping Machine, W.H. Horn & Bro., "Boston Patent."

Figures 3 and 4 are taken from the Ross, Moyer Mfg. Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, catalog (1884), where they were advertised as "Improved" shoe crimping machines. Figure 4, called the "Boston Patent," has brass-lined iron jaws and a brass follower. The "W.H.H. & Bro.," which can be seen on this machine, refers to William H. Horn & Bro., a well-known manufacturer of shoemaker's tools.

Figure 5 shows two examples of crimping machines from the collection of the late W.P. Blodgett. The machine on the left has a brass "knife" and is lowered by the lever shown raised, working on the same principle as the machine in Figure 3. The one on the right is constructed entirely of wood, pegged, except for the crank and the bolt that squeezes the blacksmith-made jaws. Unlike the lever-operated machine, this one is raised and lowered by a well-turned wood-screw shaft that can be seen in the picture.

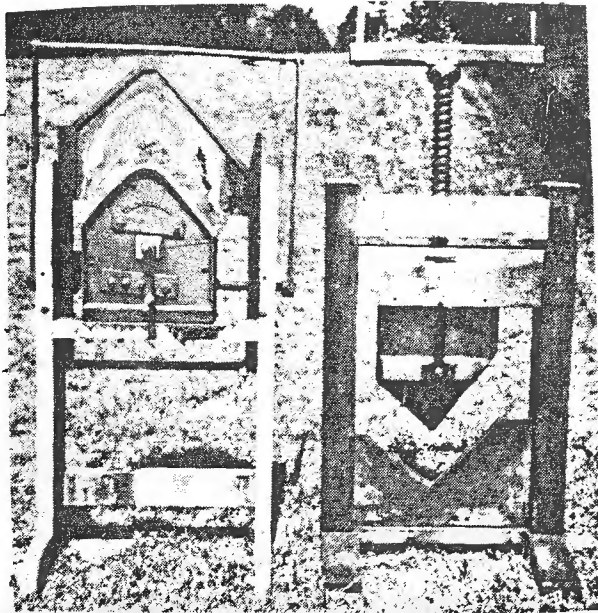


Figure 5: Crimping machines from the collection of the late W.P. Blodgett.

There were also small board-type crimping forms for gaiters and blucher shoes.

[Sharpening, continued from page 6]

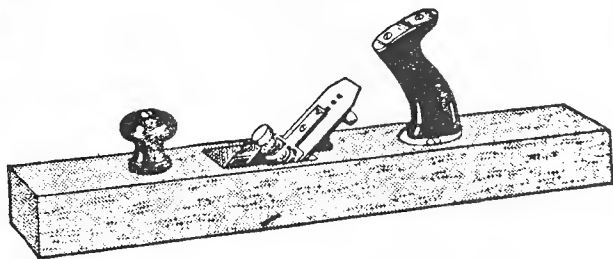
⁴Such as the ochre-colored "Koo-seki" Sparkle Stone" #500-1245, which is available from The Fine Tool Shops, Inc., at \$6.95.

⁵I obtained mine from The Tool Works, 111 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

⁶A. S. Cooper, Bell Laboratories, Murray Hill, NJ 07974, Private communication.

⁷Future tests will be made on new stones using distilled water.

⁸Available from Woodline and other mail order houses.



FRIDLINGTON RECEIVES 1983 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

by Stephen Zlucky, President

On December 4, 1977, about thirty men and women met at the invitation of Ed Bragg at the Field Homestead in Piscataway, N.J., and formed a state-wide organization of tool collectors. At the second meeting of the group, fifty-five persons attended, and Jim Aber gave the organization its name—Collectors of Rare and Familiar Tools Society of New Jersey.

Since that time the Society has continued to grow, and it has received considerable recognition in the tool collecting community. All of our members have made a contribution to the organization's success; but there has been from the beginning a special few whose hard work and dedication have been especially notable.

To recognize those members who have given so freely of their time and talent, the Society has established the "President's Award," which will be presented at the first meeting of each year to a member who has made a significant contribution to CRAFTS.

The first President's Award went to Robert Fridlington. At the September picnic, Fridlington was presented with a beautiful brass and rosewood scribe in recognition of his service as Editor of The Tool Shed.

Bob's talents lie not only in his knowledge and appreciation of fine tools but also in his skills as writer and editor. It is his task to elicit articles from our members and then to put the paper together. Although constantly working under the pressure of a deadline, he somehow finds time to proofread meticulously all of his copy.

Bob's outstanding work deserves this recognition. I hope that he will now be inundated with articles and will long continue his fine work for CRAFTS of New Jersey.

[Editor's Note: We were deeply honored to receive the first President's Award; and the kind words above are very much appreciated. Nevertheless, we do wish that President Zlucky had not tossed in that remark concerning the meticulous proofreading.]

NEW JERSEY TOOLS SOLD AT BITTNER AUCTION

by Alexander Farnham

When former CRAFTS member Paul Gelber of Doylestown, Pa., decided to dispose of his entire collection, he chose J.P. Bittner over three-hundred miles away as his auctioneer. Since the author of this article lives less than fifteen miles from where the collection originated, nearly seven hours of driving were necessary for him to reach the auction, which took place at the Ramada Inn, Keene, N.H., on September 24. A catalog of tools to be sold, which was mailed well in advance, listed many ordinary tools plus several spectacular ones.

One lot which was of particular interest to me was listed as:

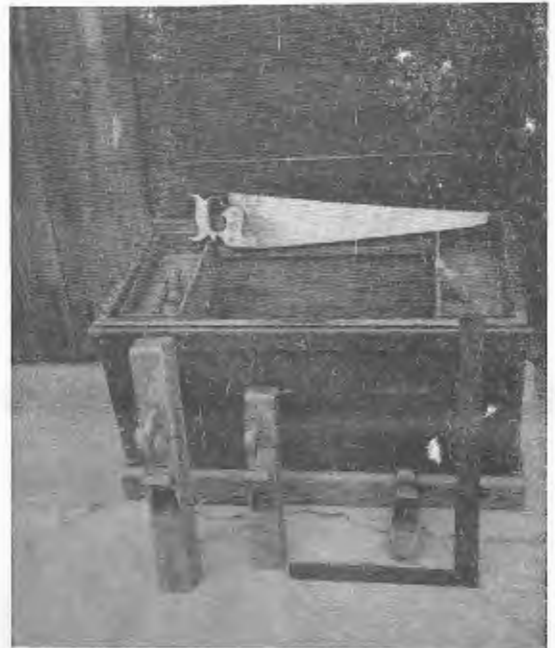
"Early dovetailed Pine J. Smith, of Smith's Mill in Stockton Tool Box with his branding iron & a dozen or so of his tools. Interior drawers & compartments. Nice."



14½"-long branding iron from Joseph Smith's toolbox.

Though New Jersey was not mentioned, I knew that in 1883 Joseph Smith had purchased what is now known as Prallsville Mill in Stockton, N.J., near my home. The mill was operated by Smith and later his heirs until shortly after World War II. The original mill, erected in 1702, burned to the ground in 1874, and a short while later the present mill was built on the old foundation. Since the toolbox was being sold in New Hampshire and not New Jersey, I expected little or no competition for it. As it turned out, however, others were also after it, so it took a bid of \$550 to carry the box back

to Stockton.



Joseph Smith's toolbox and tools, which made a round-trip of more than 600 miles from the Delaware Valley to Keene, N.H., and back again, cost the author \$550.

Providing me with another reason for attending the auction were three New Brunswick, N.J., wooden planes, listed in the catalog as being sold as a lot. One of the planes bore the mark of Samuel C. Cook, who was born in 1800 and was one of New Jersey's most prolific early planemakers. Another and rarer plane was made by Ellsworth Danberry who sometime around 1850 took over Cook's plane manufacturing business. Danberry ran this business until he became an express agent during the mid-1850s. The third plane was listed as having been stamped with both the mark of S.C. Cook and that of E. Danberry. Such a double mark would make this plane extremely rare and very desirable. Though I studied these planes before the start of the auction, I was unable to discover the double mark. However, I was assured by Mr. Bittner that he had

seen it. The planes sold for \$62.50 each, or \$187.50 for the lot.

Holding no personal interest for me was one lot which I was curious to see sold. It was a metal plane patented by Charles G. Miller on June 28, 1870, and thought to be the only example of his plane in existence that follows his original patent specifications. This was possibly Miller's own example before he sold his patent to Stanley Rule & Level Co. All six of the plane's adjusting nuts had ivory tips, and its rosewood handle had an ivory insert riveted to each side. The entire body, including the fillister bed, was cast in gunmetal.

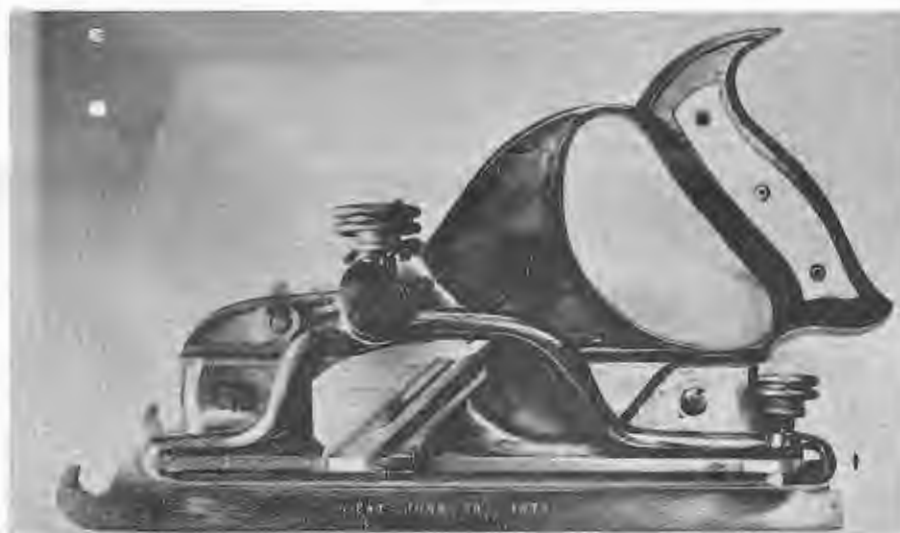
The plane had been exhibited at a previous Bittner auction and had created a great deal of excitement. Tool dealer and CRAFTS member Bill Gustafson told me before the auction that the Miller plane would bring more than \$4,000. Before selling it, J.P. Bittner gave a short sales pitch extolling the virtues of the plane. Once the bidding started it climbed fast until reaching \$4,000 where it slowed a little. After \$6,000 the bidding just about stopped. However, another \$600 was extracted before the plane was finally sold to tool dealer and CRAFTS member Bud Steere of North Kingstown, R.I. To my knowledge, the \$6,600 paid for Miller's plane beats considerably any previous amount paid for a plane or, for that matter, any other hand tool.

Vera Steere, Bud's wife, sat next to me during the auction, and I noticed that she did not bat an eye while Bud was bidding on the plane. How many wives could act as calm while their husbands spent \$6,600 on a tool? There is no doubt, however, that Bud now has one of the world's great tools, which will probably continue to increase in value.



Auctioneer J.P. Bittner, left, and successful bidder Bud Steere hold \$6,600 plane.

During the auction there were several New Jersey tools sold. Two
[Continued on page 12]



Tool auction records were shattered when this Miller patent plane sold for \$6,600.

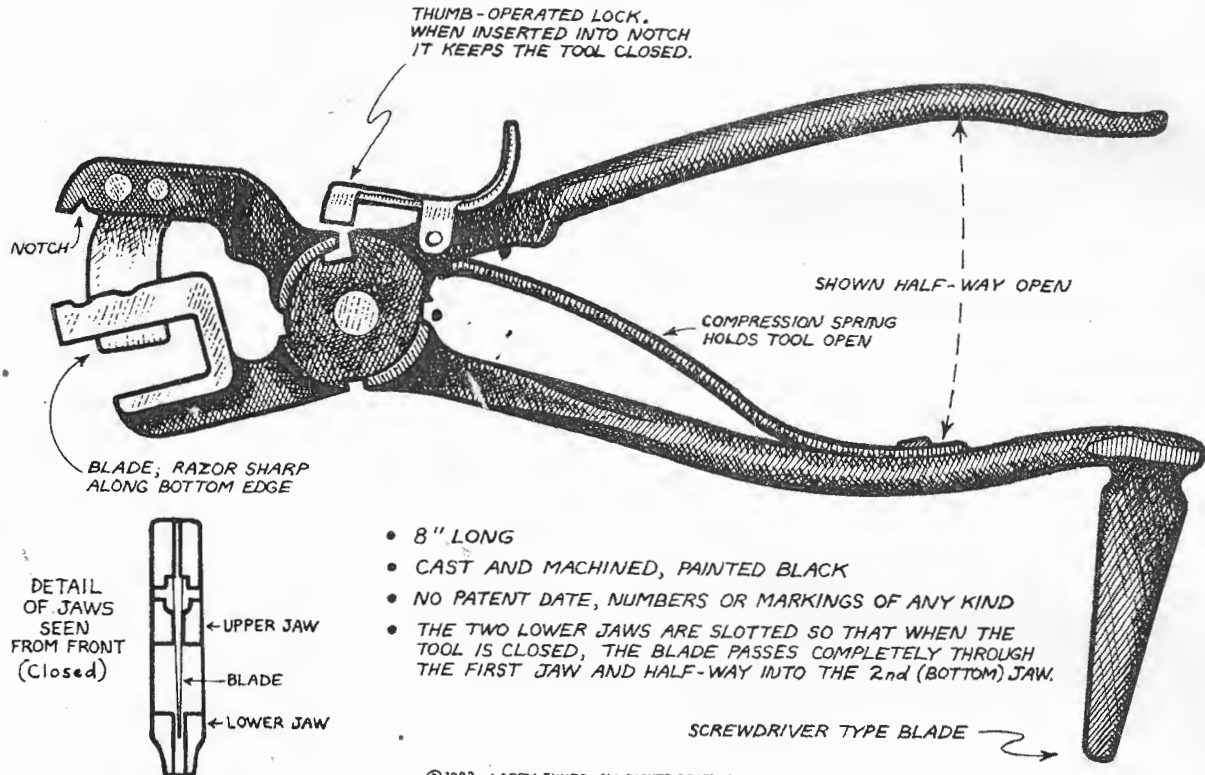
Pop Rivet's What's It? No.11



by LARRY FUHRO

A COMBINATION TOOL,
BUT FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

Thanks to
Carl Peterson, Cranford, N.J.



- 8" LONG
- CAST AND MACHINED, PAINTED BLACK
- NO PATENT DATE, NUMBERS OR MARKINGS OF ANY KIND
- THE TWO LOWER JAWS ARE SLOTTED SO THAT WHEN THE TOOL IS CLOSED, THE BLADE PASSES COMPLETELY THROUGH THE FIRST JAW AND HALF-WAY INTO THE 2nd (BOTTOM) JAW.

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GADGETS · DOOHICKEYS · THINGAMAJIGS · AND WHATCHAMACALLITS

[Auction, continued from page 7]
were tools manufactured in Newark: a pair of tailor's shears patented in 1859 by inventor and manufacturer Rochus Heinisch and a pair of twenty-four inch wing dividers made by William Johnson. The shears sold for \$25 and the dividers for \$35.

Also sold was a boat bevel with double brass blades, made by Belcher Brothers. An item such as this raises a question as to what constitutes a "New Jersey tool." Although it was marked NEW YORK, the bevel was made in either Camptown or Newark, where the Belcher Brothers had their factories. The boat bevel brought \$20.

As so frequently happens at auctions, a tool that I wanted got away. But this time I was lucky.

At the end of the sale, when it was time to pack up and head for home, CRAFTSman Paul Weidenschilling showed me an upholsterer's hammer that he had bought along with a shoemaker's hammer and two blacksmith's hammers for \$7.50. I don't know how I missed it.

First we talked, and then we negotiated. Weidenschilling deliberated. But when I finally left for home, I was the new owner of an upholsterer's hammer, marked WM DODD & CO/ NEWARK, N.J.