The TOOL SHED
NUMBER 80 FEBRUARY 1994
A Journal of Tool Collecting published by CRAFTS of New Jersey

Modified Molding Planes

by Joe Hauck

The purpose of this article is to provide information to assist collectors in determining if a molding plane has been modified. While wedges, blades, and boxing were occasionally repaired or replaced, the thrust of this article will be on the sole or profile of the plane. However, to determine if the sole has been modified, one must look for clues on virtually all parts of the plane.

Planes were modified basically in order to restore them to a functional condition (although not necessarily the original profile), or to improvise in a pinch, or for a special profile that was not readily available. Certainly it is easier to modify a hollow, round or rabbet, then it is to make a plane from scratch. It is difficult to establish value guidelines on modified planes, and many collectors immediately dismiss them; however, some modifications are well done, functionally sound, and provide a unique profile. Collectors tend to be more forgiving with older planes. After all, a plane used for over 100 years (as many 18th century planes were) has a high probability of significant wear or damage. Would we rather that those planes were discarded, or -- modified to extend their useful life?

Now for a tour of the plane, and the clues to look for in order to demonstrate some of the points. I will use illustrations from Jack Whelan's new book The Wooden Plane.

Heel of the Plane

Let us start with the heel of the plane. While not all planes are marked on the heel, it is important to remember some basic conventions. Hollows and rounds typically have a number (from 1 to 32) on the heel; they also tend to have a bevel on one side -- see figure 1A. Rabbets, as well as moldings, usually have a size that is in fractions of inches, while complex molders have two dimensions, e.g. ½" and 1¼". The latter cuts a molding which is ½" high and 1¼" wide. Finally, some of the planes I have seen from N.Y., N.J., and Philadelphia have the actual name of the profile written in ink on the heel. I believe these names were applied by the manufacturer. The key question for us is whether or not the heel marks are consistent with the profile of the plane. Figure 1B shows the hollow converted to a rabbet, and the round converted to a side round. The remaining bevel on what was once a hollow gives it away, while the converted round requires more detective work. *(continued on page 4)*

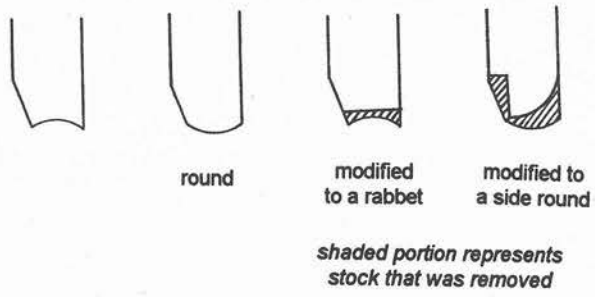


Figure 1A Original Profiles

Figure 1B Modified Profiles

February 6 - CRAFTS Meeting
High Bridge, NJ Masonic Lodge

Jack Whelan will talk about his new book,
The Wooden Plane
Its History, Form, and Function.
(*see page 2*)

CRAFTS of New Jersey

Collectors of Rare and Familiar Tools Society
of New Jersey

President . . . . . JOHN M. WHELAN, Murray Hill
Vice President . . . . JOSEPH G. HAUCK, Lebanon
Secretary . . . . . BARBARA FARNHAM, Stockton
Treasurer . . . . . HELEN WHELAN, Murray Hill

The purpose of CRAFTS of New Jersey is to encourage interest in early trades and industries, and in the identification, study, preservation and exhibition of tools and implements used and made in New Jersey as an integral part of our heritage.

Membership in CRAFTS is open to anyone who shares the above interests. Annual dues per person or couple are ten dollars for the membership year of July 1 through June 30. Membership fees may be sent to the Treasurer: Helen Whelan, 38 Colony Court, Murray Hill, NJ 07974.

CRAFTS of NJ meets at the HOST Masonic Lodge, High Bridge. Take I-78 to Route 31 exit at Clinton. Go north on Rte. 31 two miles to second traffic light at the High Bridge exit. Turn right and go about half a mile to Dennis Ave. Turn left, then straight to the Masonic Lodge (on the left). Tailgate sales in the parking lot begin at 1 P.M.; meeting starts at 2 P.M.

THE TOOL SHED

Published five times a year for members of CRAFTS of New Jersey. Editor: Stuart Shippey, 251 Hillside Ave., Chatham, NJ 07928-1732. Assistant Editor: Herb Kean. Articles, especially about New Jersey tools and trades, are encouraged and may be sent to the editors. Send hand written or typed text, or ascii or *Word Perfect*® PC disk, or FAX to 201 635-7939.

CRAFTS Calendar of Events

Feb. 6 - CRAFTS meeting, High Bridge, N.J.

Feb. 20 - TOOLSHED and free ad deadline

Apr. 9 - CRAFTS Auction, Clinton, N.J.

Apr. 10 - CRAFTS meeting, High Bridge, N.J.

Speaker's Profile
John M. Whelan

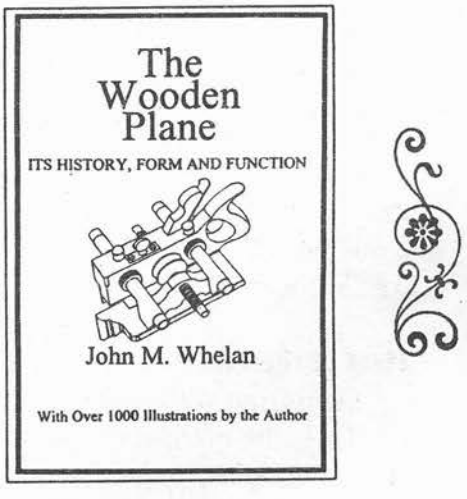
Our speaker for the Feb. 6th meeting needs no profile, as not only is he our president, but he has spoken during our Nov. meeting a few years back. At that time a very thorough personal chronology was provided in the Tool Shed (No. 69). It covered his collecting history, his woodworking ability, his book The Wooden Plane, and his educational and work background.

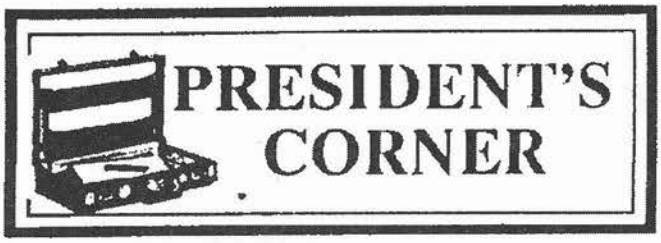
His talk in 1991 was on the opening chapters of his book, and mostly covered the history and development of the wooden plane. His presentation now will cover highlights from the remaining chapters.

This book was four years of Jack's life that brings many memories, some bittersweet. Yes, over 1000 sketches, with almost flawless accuracy, not only takes an enormous amount of time, but is a definite wear and tear on the nerves. Jack had to seclude himself to the quiet section of his house to maintain proper concentration. As his wife Helen would say, "It was as if he went off to Walden Pond for four years." (When I was writing, my wife only wished I would go off to Walden Pond.) But one of Jack's great attributes is his ability to maintain his composure, and everything he does reflects that.

There have been many glowing reviews of the book, and anyone even remotely interested in wooden planes should have a copy. But to hear the author himself on such a heralded piece of work, is an opportunity that you should not miss.

Herb Kean





An important news item slipped between the cracks in the last issue. The O'Neill award was presented at the September picnic to Stuart Shippey and Herb Kean, who have done such a great job on the TOOLSHED.

Antique Tool Discovery day at Mercer Museum, Doylestown, on November 13 was brightened by CRAFTS participation: all but three of the demonstrators and exhibitors were CRAFTS members. Herb Kean did a crowd pleasing demonstration of coopering tools. He really didn't need the attention gained by the periodic noisy collapse of the cooper's jointer! Walter and Suzanne Jacob got a lot of play with their demonstration of Stanley combination planes (he can make beautiful music with a 55!). George Lott brought along his oak woodworking bench and showed how a rough board was brought into usable form with hand planes. Of my molding planes, the spill plane got the most attention and provided mementos for the visitors. The racket made by Dominic Micalizzi's passer bit was a good attention getter, and its work proved the attention warranted. Steve Zluky's rakemaking bench added to the collection of shavings that we covered the floor of the exhibition hall with: Wilma Sagurton was neater with her fulling model. Other CRAFTS exhibitors were Alex Farnham, Bill and Roxy Frey, Al Hodge, Frank Kingsbury, Bill Phillips, Steve Orbine, Ken Vliet, and Greg Welsh. The attendance was gratifying, and I think we added to the number of people who recognize the attraction of old tools.

Welcome to new members Todd Barany (Washington), David & Laura Bolson (Morris Township), Eric Clingen (Tarrytown Woodworks, Tarrytown, NY), Gerald & Joyce Coleman (Chestertown, MD), Lynn Drickamer (Ann Arbor, MI), Rick & Georginia Ellenberger (North Wales, PA), Craig Evans (Bethlehem, PA), David MacArthur (Sebastopol, CA), Frederick & Doris Pfeiffer (Rahway), David Pollak (Dover), Valerie & Bill Schwarz-Zars (Hoboken), and Pete Vaughan (Braggs, OK)

Meet Your Dealers

The purpose of this column is NOT to evaluate dealers, but simply to present useful and interesting information about sources of tools.

When you think about the decreasing number of tool dealers with open shops, you get to thinking that maybe they are more rare than the tools they sell. Frank Kerr is one of these gems.

He started selling out of his barn in Minnisink Hills, Pa., in the 60's. Even though they closed the little bridge to his shop years ago, people still beat a path to his door, roundabout the back roads. And it's worth it! The shop holds not just an excellent cross-section of tools, but some fine Americana, e.g. hand-forged early colonial implements.

His tools range from typical Pennsylvanian "iron" (including some dramatic edge tools), to wooden planes, with an assortment of plows, panel planes, and a crown or two. In his glass cases are glitzy measuring tools, English ebony pieces and a few ivory rules. He is never without the quizzical *whatsit*. Many starting collectors learned via browsing at Kerr's.

But a trip to Frank's place is incomplete if you don't spend some time with the man. Tools are important to him, but there are a lot of other things that rank high up also. Just get him started on his younger days. He was a singer, an actor in the local playhouse and quite an extrovert.

Today Frank's health keeps him from auctions and flea markets. But people come to him, and he is able to keep the shop stocked from walk-in sellers. Years ago, when I was an active dealer, I was at Frank's often; although mostly to sell, we did trade a lot. Even today, when I visit, I always manage to trade a piece or two. With it goes the back-and-forth kidding as to who's getting the best of it. I usually get more belly laughs there than at one of today's "comedy" movies. He still maintains the humor and wit that he obviously had in his youth.

He always underplays his knowledge of tools by portraying himself as "just a country dealer." But don't get trapped into this ploy. He hasn't survived all these years without knowing his product. If you want to get the flavor of "tooling" as it was years ago, give Frank a visit. Call first for directions: 717 424-0838.

Herb Kean

Modified Molding Planes continued

by Joe Hauck

Tales of the Toe

There are two basic things to check for up front: the spring lines, and evidence of the plane being cut down or *shot*. Planes were shot for two basic reasons: the first was to clean-up or freshen the profile at the front part of the plane where it typically becomes misshapen due to wear. The second reason is that many 19th century tool chests were build with sections (wells) to accommodate the then standard 9½" planes. A joiner who owned such a chest would have to cut down any 10" long 18th century plane he had, or subsequently acquired. Close examination of the uniformity of the chamfers of the top, toe and heel will reveal this modification. In addition, a cut-down plane typically has obvious saw marks on the toe (or the heel if the back was cut), compared to the smooth end grain found on the front of professionally made planes. The second thing to check on the toe of the plane is the spring lines. They should be consistent with the profile. The solid lines that form the right angle in figure 2A are correct. As this plane wears, the owner might restrike the spring lines. The new lines would be like the dotted lines in figure 2A; note that they are parallel to the original lines. Figure 2B is the same plane -- but modified; note how the new spring line (dotted) varies from the original one. Not only has the profile been modified, but the spring angle was also changed.

Bed and Blade

Now for the business portion of the plane: the bed and the blade. The bed should be of uniform color, and it should show some signs of burnishing due to normal operation and use. Check closely for gouge marks or *chattering* as a result of an area of the bed being reshaped. If a portion of the bed looks suspicious, remove the blade and check the corresponding area. Has the blade been reground and roughly honed in this one area? Is the width of the mouth fairly uniform along the whole profile? Beds that have been totally reshaped are often left with mouths that are too wide for the plane to work. I've seen planes with blade clearance of ¼" or larger; I doubt that such a tool would work. Finally, the boxing on a plane may provide some clues. Look for what I would call *lazy boxing*, that is, boxing that doesn't do anything. I remember a 10 minute debate over a profile that I thought was original. I was forced to yield when asked what the boxing was doing, since it was flush with the bed. Boxing should be either part of the integral fence (where it can limit wear) or protruding from the bed (as in a bead or astragal). Profiles with a thin piece of boxing in the middle are often damaged in this area, and reshaping the bed is the only way to make the plane usable. Figure 3A shows the original profile, while figure 3B shows the lazy boxing; it is just there, it doesn't do anything.

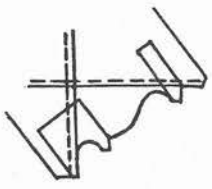


Figure 2A

Figure 2B

Figure 3A

Figure 3B

While the above discussion is not all encompassing, I hope it provides some useful information. As a final suggestion, one should make a point of closely examining planes in excellent condition in order to become familiar with how a plane looks when everything is right. That knowledge and a thorough understanding of what a plane is doing mechanically will serve you in good stead when you examine questionable profiles.

Speed Indicators, Revolution Counters, & Tachometers

by Stephen A. Orbine

Speed Indicators, Revolution Counters, Tachometers and various other marketing names are all devices for measuring the speed of rotating shafts in machinery. This is of great importance in determining pulley sizes, blade speeds, machine operating speeds and horsepower calculations, which require accurate rotational speed.

A great deal of ingenuity and creativity was invested in designing and improving these devices over time. Kenneth L. Cope, in his new publication American Machinist's Tools, lists 45 Speed Indicator patents from the earliest found in 1873 to 1916.

In it's simplest form (as pictured below left), the Speed Indicator does nothing more than count revolutions, and register the count on a scale that goes to 100. It is required that the machinist apply the indicator to the moving shaft while watching a clock, and to hold the indicator to the shaft for an accurate and specific time period. During this time he must also keep track of the number of times the pointer moves full scale (100 revolutions). No easy task when you consider a shaft turning at 1750 RPM will complete 100 revolutions every 3.4 seconds. Once the count is obtained, in a known time period, the speed of the shaft is easily calculated.

Improvements included scales for clockwise and counter-clockwise rotation, devices for alerting the user when each 100 was reached (including one with a bell), additional scales and pointers to register 100's and 1,000's, built-in timing devices and provisions for resetting to zero. Also developed were a variety of methods for allowing the machinist to hold the indicator to the shaft and while watching the clock, initiate the count.

Tachometers are devices which when applied to the shaft give a direct, continuous reading without any need for a timing device or any calculation. These were made, and continue to be made today, in a wide variety of styles and speed ranges including many multiple range devices.

CHAS. A. STRELINGER & CO., DETROIT, MICH., U. S. A. 27

FIG. 94. $7.00. Postage, 15 cts.

Taylor's Speed Indicator (Fig. 94) is of the same class as the Ulster. It differs in that it has not the stop motion, and is also different in design, but quality of workmanship and accuracy of registration are identical. Works right or left.

FIG. 95. $55.00.

The Portable Tachometer (Fig. 95) is similar in construction to the Tachometer for permanent attachment. By applying this instrument by hand to the centre of rotating shafts, it will instantly and correctly indicate the number of revolutions of the shaft per minute.

This instrument is arranged with a dial for one thousand revolutions; but with it are also furnished two sets of geared wheels, in proportion of one to two, by which the speed can be reduced to five hundred or increased to two thousand revolutions.

Diameter of dial, 2½ inches; depth of case, 3 inches; entire length, including handle and detachable point, 11 inches. Total weight, including Morocco case, 5 lbs.

This instrument is of excellent workmanship, plated and finished. It is contained in an elegant case. We confidently recommend it for its adaptability in obtaining accurate indications of the variations in speed of fast-running machinery. Can furnish several styles of Tachometers.

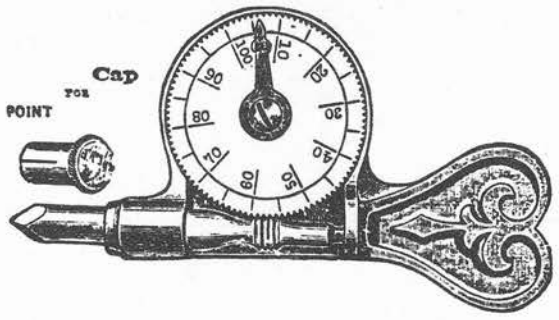
Chas. A. Strelinger & Co. Catalog of 1895

One Tachometer in my collection, marketed by the Schaeffer & Budenberg Co. of New York, came complete with two additional external gear sets to halve or double the scale range. This was pictured in the 1895 Strelinger catalog (shown above) and was listed as selling for $55.00, a small fortune in it's time.

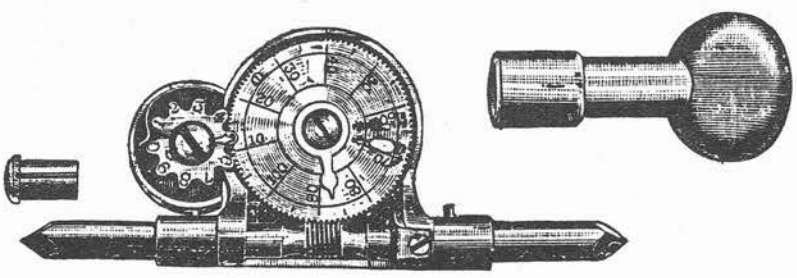
Speed Indicators and Tachometers are a wonderful collectible. They are small, ornate, ingenious, range from extremely simple to elaborate and complex, come in a wide variety, and except for the most elaborate and complex models, are usually priced reasonably.

Anyone possessing or obtaining some of these marvelous trinkets is encouraged to begin a collection. Should you not be so inclined you are invited to participate in expanding the author's collection.

SPEED INDICATOR OLD STYLE.



IMPROVED SPEED INDICATOR.



Cuts from Wm. P. Walter's Sons Catalog of 1883

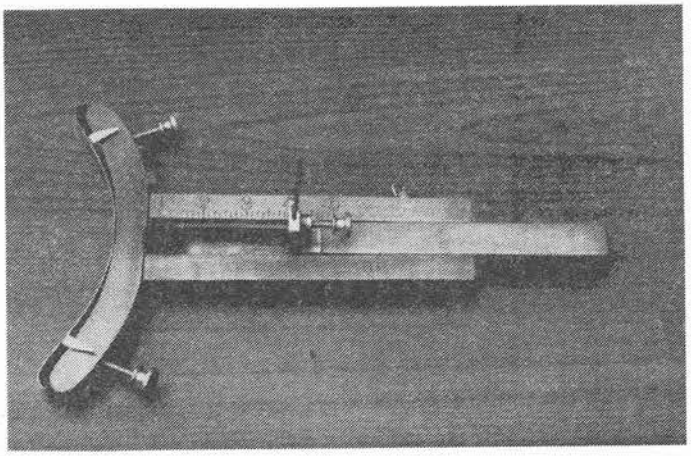
Early New Jersey Toolmakers - A Continuing Search

by Alex Farnham

Mystery of the Brim Trimmer Mark

Some months ago I received a phone call concerning a hatter's brim trimmer (also called a brim trammel) which was stamped ALBERT C. COURTER / NEWARK, N.J. After spending most of one morning and afternoon at Rutgers University's Alexander Library searching for information about the maker of the hatter's tool, I left somewhat mystified. What I found was that Albert C. Courter was first listed in the Holbrook Newark City Directory in 1869. His listing from that year until 1878 showed no occupation for him. Courter's name was missing from the 1879 directory , but in 1880 his occupation was listed as a salesman. From 1885 to 1890 Courter was in partnership with George A. Thomas in the firm of Thomas & Courter located at 209 Market Street, Newark. They were listed as manufacturers of cylinder, signal, and machinery oils, as well as paints. In 1891 Courter took over control of the company and ran it at the same location well into the 1900s. At no time was he listed as a toolmaker, so he can be added to those whose names are found stamped into tools but were never listed as toolmakers.

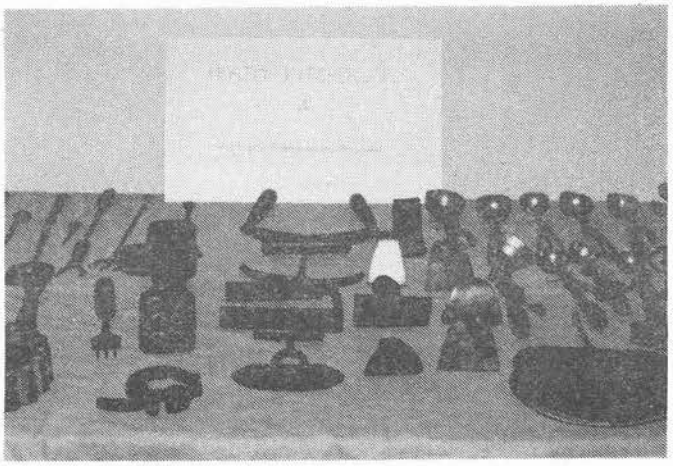
The tool stamped with Courter's name has an adjustable arm to which a blade is attached. It can be



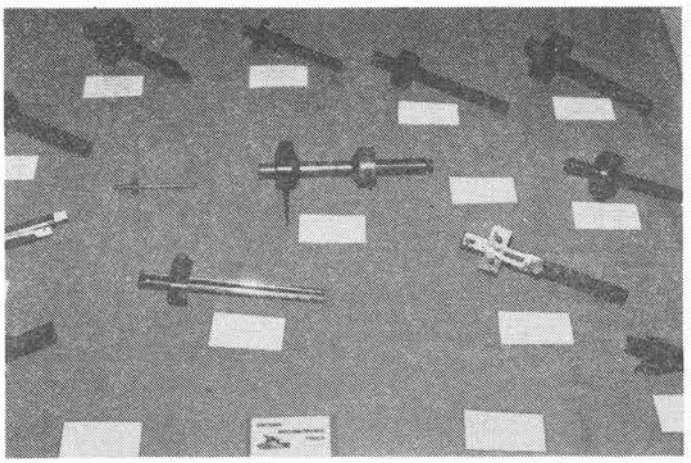
set at any desired width up to five inches. When rotated around the crown it will cut away excess material from the brim of the hat.

Newark was a major center of the hat industry, so it was important for the city to have a number of toolmakers producing hatters' tools. The earliest of these was possibly a Mr. Pierson who started in the trade in 1816. In 1858 he was in partnership with a Mr. Ryerson and in 1863 with a Mr. Herman. John Charlton advertised in 1850 that he made hatters' tools along with a number of other kinds.

It is hoped that one of the readers of this column will be able to solve the question as to whether Albert C. Courter manufactured or simply sold brim trimmers.



Joan Fridlington's *Mostly Kitchenware* display at the November CRAFTS Meeting



Chuck Morgan's Marking Guage display at the November CRAFTS Meeting

Slim Pickin's
by Bob Nelson

Let's be frank. Our supposedly rational and logical explanations of why we collect tools are mostly bunk. The plain truth is that most of us are collecting addicts, and tools just happen to be what we've chosen to feed our addiction. Just as a drug addict will use something else if his primary drug of choice isn't available, we would be collecting beer cans or such if tools weren't available. Don't many tool collectors also collect something else?

I'll cite myself as an example. I started collecting both tools and pewter at the same time, and with relatively equal enthusiasm. Since only a limited number of types of pewter items were made, about 12-15 years of collecting those brought me to a point where what was available was already owned, was not of interest, or was not affordable. Accordingly, I abandoned the pursuit of pewter and doubled my focus on tools, I never imagined that the much greater variety of tools would ever allow me to reach the point I had with the pewter. However, I've found the pickin's to be awfully slim this past year and for essentially the same reasons.

There are so many tools available that new collectors, user-collectors, and totally indiscriminate collectors might think I'm out of my mind. I'm speaking from a perspective of a collector who already has all of the more common items, and is now primarily seeking only rarer additions or better quality upgrades of those core items.

My tool collecting goals are somewhat unique and limited, so I initially thought my finding the pickin's slim might be just a personal, hopefully temporary, lull. However, I've been hearing enough similar comments from others with different interests to make it seem there might be an overall decline in the variety and attractiveness of what is available. If so, why?

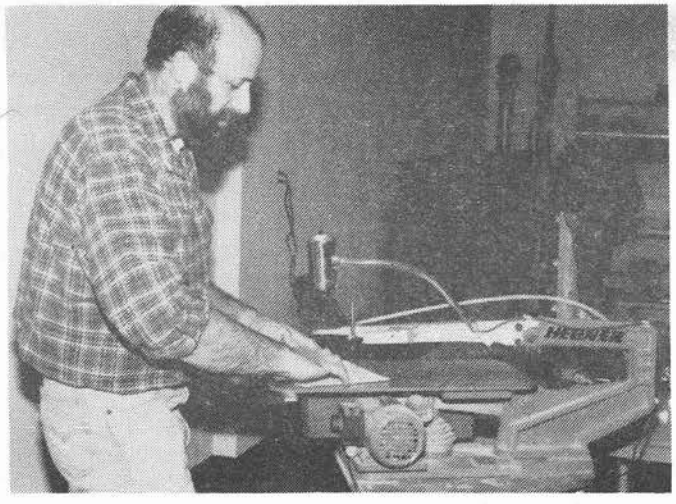
Since *good* tools have always been somewhat harder to find, their current non-availability must be viewed in relative terms. Earlier in my collecting career, so many cheaper tools were desirable and acceptable that I tended to amass quantities of those and view the higher priced things I would see as *someday* items. Now that *someday* has arrived and I would be satisfied with smaller numbers of such items, I don't seem to be seeing them at all. I know I used to see them sometimes, so I'm confident that more than a general relative scarcity is involved. In a six month period, I've driven around 150 miles to each of seven different auctions, looked the offerings over, and gone home. I can't feed an addiction with pickin's like that.

One possible explanation is that while I was passing up those *someday* tools, their more finite quantities were being removed from the marketplace by already advanced collectors. Another is that tools have become so recognized as collectible that the old barns, basements, etc., that used to provide a fairly steady infusion of new goods are now depleted. If those explanations are true, there is little hope of such items reappearing in the quantities needed to satisfy the habits of a growing number of advanced collectors. The inevitable result of this is even higher prices for such items until their shortage drives advanced tool collectors into other fields. That effect can be seen more clearly in fields like my former pewter collecting where a combination of scarcity and high prices (of even the more common items) attracts few new collectors and leaves pewter to only a small cadre of possibly non-addicted collectors and those who only buy a piece as a decorator item.

Dealers were among those I've heard bemoaning the scarcity of *good* tools. One such dealer attributed this to a substantially greater number of tools now being sold in auctions. But auctions have been my primary source of tools for the past several years and it's at them that I've found slim pickin's.

My primary suspicion and hope is that the shortage is a result of recent general economic conditions which have leveled the earlier steady increase in tool prices. It is natural for those having tools that they intend to dispose of to decide to sit on them until prices start rising again. That logic is actually fallacious as far as *good* tools are concerned. Their prices have continued to rise at the same rate as earlier; only the prices of the more common tools have flattened out. I guess only time and a continuing economic recovery will tell if this suspicion is correct.

Is it time for me, and others like me, to find something else to start collecting -- or to sell all our tools and start over again? Maybe so, maybe not. Perhaps I could write some sort of an article that would lead others to stop sitting on *good* tools that they intend to sell, and I could continue to feed my habit with those.



Dave Pollak cutting a marquetry butterfly at the November 7 CRAFTS meeting.

European Hinge Chisels

by Chuck Granick

After having attended college during the "hippie" years of the late 60's, I took a few years off to "find myself" in a cabinet/restoration shop in N.Y.C., which specialized in fine French furniture. At any given time there were always a half dozen French armoires from the 18th and 19th century requiring the talents of one of the master European cabinetmakers to make them "right" again.

Almost all the armoires utilized a standard quarter round and rabbet detail on all four edges of their doors. While this was not unusual in itself, the standard hinge detail was most unusual. Upon first glance, the hinge itself looked like a normal single knuckle lift-off butt hinge which would allow for door removal by simply lifting up on the door. On doors where the hinges had broken out of the mortises, one could see that the leaves were very thin, and tapered further to a knife edge. The leaves were fully blind mortised into the door rail and cabinet frame, and once the door was positioned correctly, iron nails would be driven through the wood and the hinge leaves, thus fixing the whole assembly. I presume that a hole would have been drilled for the nails, as they could not have penetrated the hinge leaf. The procedure works very well as it allows for considerable adjustment to the doors before the nails are driven home (see figure 1).

Cutting the hinge mortises, which are approximately 2 ½" wide, 1 ¾" deep and 1/16" thick has always intrigued me. How could one cut a 1/16" thick blind mortise, and extract the shavings from same, on a consistent basis.

One clue came in Salaman's Dictionary of Tools, which illustrates four styles of European hinge chisels. Salaman's descriptions of these chisels were quite vague, and, until last year, left many questions unanswered.

At that time I had the good fortune to come across a set of hinge mortise chisels by HIRSCH of Germany. The chisels were almost unused and were in various widths and thicknesses. All were shaped like very thin and wide woodcarver's macaroni chisels which have 90° corners the full length of their face. In addition, all had unusual barbs with chisel-like edges on their top faces which pointed towards the user's hand (see figure 2). These barbs appeared to be capable of catching and extracting any wood shavings dislodged by the three cutting edges of the chisel.

Sharpening the chisels, and experimenting with a piece of poplar, produced the hoped for results - a deep, wide very thin blind mortise. At last the solution to my quandary - and it only took 20 years.

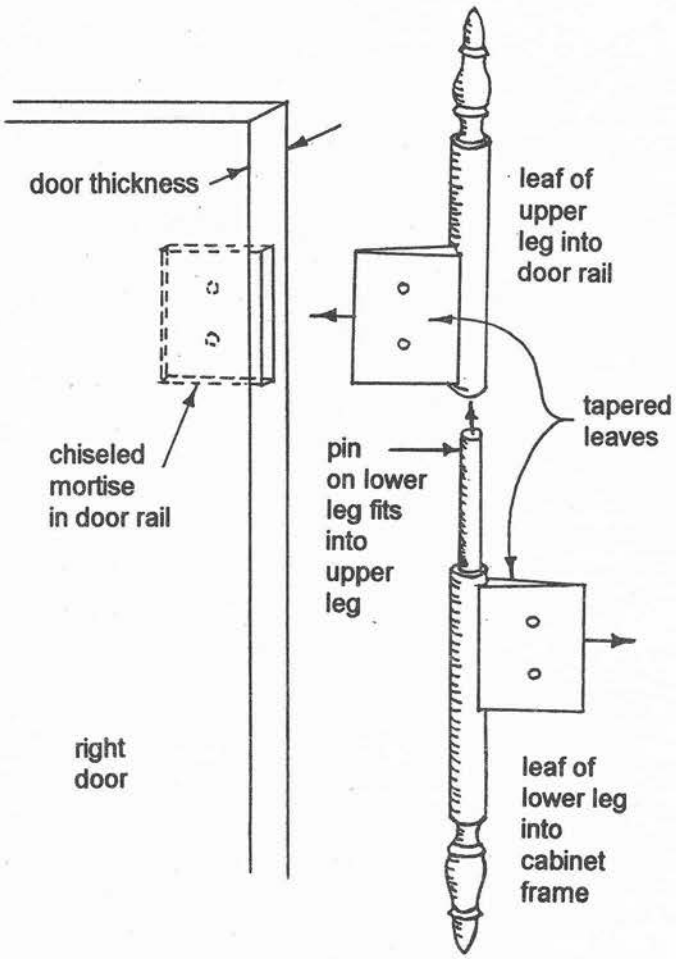


Figure 1. Upper Hinge Assembly

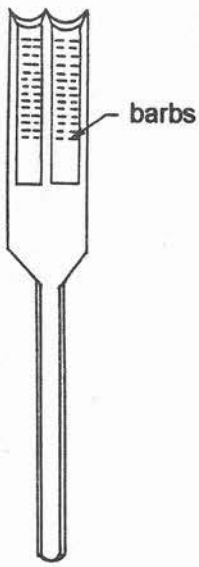


Figure 2. Mortise Chisel

Museum of Early Trades and Crafts

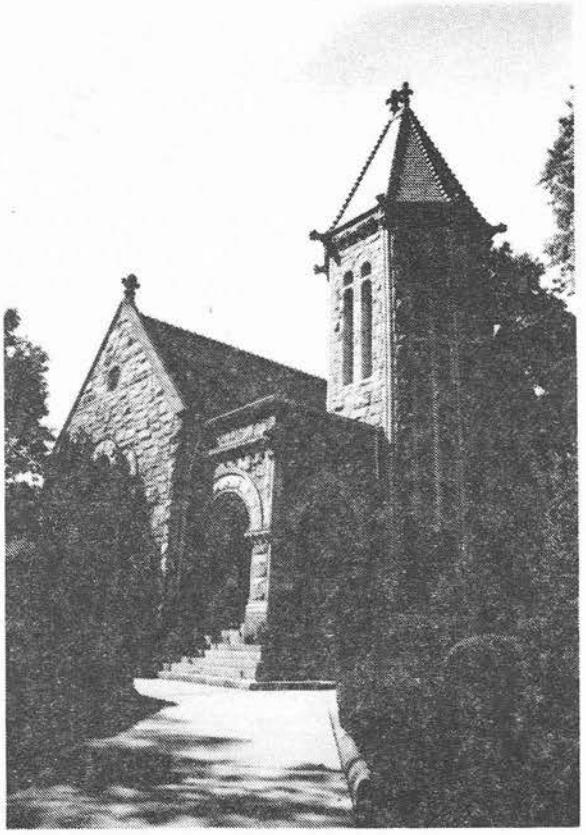
Madison, N.J.
by Herb Kean

Back in the 60's Bud Land had a dream. If the town of Madison would allow him to use the old vacant library, he could make a museum for his collection of tools, implements and artifacts. And this museum would be structured to attract the school children of the area. He felt that knowledge of our heritage is more effectively passed along at the grade school level.

The town cooperated more than he hoped, and Bud and his wife Agnes had their museum. It wasn't long before people began donating their pieces of history to the museum, and it grew to the point where the only way they could display everything was in *shifts*. The rotating displays stood for three or four months back then, but these days a major exhibit will stay up for around nine months.

When Bud fell ill, Agnes took over and the museum grew to the 13,000 visitor-volume of today. Aside from the basic volunteer staff, there is now a professional director, Elaine Zopes. She is presently working on a major fund-raising effort to refurbish the entire building and the exhibits, which would give the museum more effectiveness and comfort.

The museum likes to keep their displays in the pre-industrial period (prior to the mid-1800's) and whenever possible to use N.J. pieces. Permanent exhibits include a recreated school room, colonial kitchen, and shoemaker's shop. Changing exhibits feature everyday implements such as toys, medical equipment, etc., as well as tools of the various trades: cabinetmaker, tinsmith, wheelwright, blacksmith, textile worker, cooper, and farmer. Many of these exhibits include hands-on activities.



The 8500 piece collection is composed mostly of tools and implements of the wood and metalworking trades. There are many early tools for closeup review, labeled and mostly with explanations. Should any *CRAFTS* member wish to do some in-depth research, the museum will assign a staffer to work with him (by appointment).

The **Museum of Early Trades and Crafts** is located at the corner of Main St, and Green Village Rd. in Madison, N.J. Hours are: Tuesday through Saturday - 10 am to 4 pm, and Sunday - 2 to 5 pm. Admission: $2 adults, $1 children. It would pay to call first to be assured that the current displays fall into your interest categories: 201 377-2982.

April 9 Auction News

Activities for our April 9 auction are well underway. By now your list should have been returned to me, and if you have not delivered your tools, you need to do so quickly. As always, we have great items coming in. I saw a Stanley No. 1, a nice 55 in the box, a Helb railroad level, and many other goodies. This year there are a few CHANGES:

- Barry Hurchalla will be our auctioneer. I'm sure many of you have enjoyed his tool auctions in Pennsylvania.
- The auction **START TIME will be 9:30 am with the doors opening at 7:30 am for inspection.**

I always received tremendous assistance from the members in running the auction, and I'm sure you will come through again. If you have never helped us before and would like to, please call me at 908-236-2072. I always need runners for the day of the sale, and I would like to start breaking in a tallykeeper. As for the auction regulars who help out each year, "we know who you are" and are counting on you. We will plan on setting up on Friday evening and will call the team if that changes.

Joe Hauck

Kean Kuttin's

A Take-Apart Treasure

On occasion, some of my stories about finding tool treasures have been greeted with doubtful looks. I suppose someone who writes tongue-in-cheek articles has to be prepared for this treatment. However, just recently I ran into a typical story telling piece, - but this time it was in the presence of an impeccable witness. I can let it all out on this one, without fear of being accused of coloring-up.

It was the day of the Fall Waterloo show, and it looked like rain. This meant to me that fast walking was required before the downpour. I hadn't been inside the show gate more than a few minutes when I met Steve Orbine (a fellow Craftsman). It was a slightly tentative moment for me because Steve is not the hyper "run-through-quick-at-first" type that I am, and I didn't want to be impolite and just buzz off. So I decided to hack along with him for a bit and play it by ear.

The pickings were bad, and I preferred to socialize with Steve rather than rush through. So we just bumped along, complaining about the lack of buyable tools. In desperation, Steve mentioned that he did see a plow plane at a reasonable price, but it was in terrible shape. Any port in a storm was my philosophy at that point, and off we went to see the plow plane.

Terrible shape was a fair appraisal: one main nut split in two, the other cracked wide open; both flat nuts frozen; half the dirt and grime taken off (worse looking than if none of it was removed); rust on all the iron; oxidation on all the brass; and to rub salt in the wound - the entire plane was coated with polyurethane without disassembly. As cheap as it was, and as bad as I wanted to buy something, I passed.

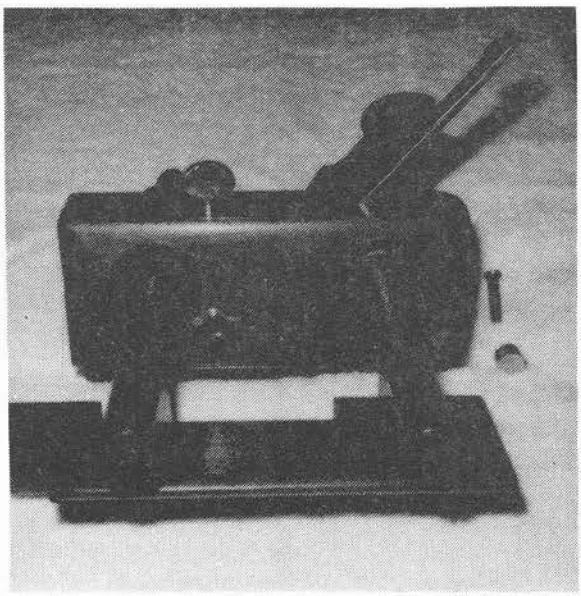
After an hour or so, it started to rain and Steve and I took refuge in one of the tents near where the plow plane was. I just had to take another look, for so far I had bought zilch. The rain and the lack of success in selling anything panicked the dealer into giving me a price that I couldn't refuse. I rationalized that I could make restoration wages on it, so it wouldn't be a loser.

The restoration proceeded better than planned. The poly came right off with steelwool. The nuts glued back together with almost no visible seams. The rust and oxidation polished out without pitting, and the frozen flat nuts popped loose easily. The round brass plugs on the left side of the body fell out when I removed the skate screws. I originally thought they were decoration inserts and would clean up to give the plane that *special look*. But why would anyone go to the trouble of insetting five round nuts with two anti-rotational wings on each? (see photo) Wood screws hold just as well or better. (In many restorations the wood screws are so locked in place that they have to be flamed out!) No, it couldn't be for better holding power, nor for decoration. I gave up trying to solve it, but decided not to sell it until I learned more.

A day or two later, in a random conversation with Chuck Granick (another Craftsman), I mentioned the plane. It struck a chord with Chuck and he searched through piles of Catalogs trying to find it. And find it he did! In Catalog #12 of *The Mechanick's Workbench* (1981), there is an English plane with the same configuration. It was believed that the nuts were to allow the skate to be replaced with a compassed one so as to do coach work. It was handsomely priced because of this rare feature.

We also found confirming information of the above in addition to a full page of another English plane of this type in Ken Roberts' book Some 19th Century English Woodworking Tools (1980). The plane was listed as a "Combination Plough for Straight and Circular Work by Joseph Marples, York Works, Sheffield." In both the Roberts' book and the Catalog, the illustrated planes were without the circular or compassed skates, probably lost through lack of use.

The aficionados that I have talked to can't remember seeing many planes like this, and any that they remember were English. Here now is an American convertible-skate plane by *A & E Baldwin / Warranted* (in itself a rare mark not yet in Pollak's book). Not a bad find on a rainy day with almost nothing to pick from. Sure, go ahead, call it dumb luck.



Left side, showing rearmost skate screw and nut removed.

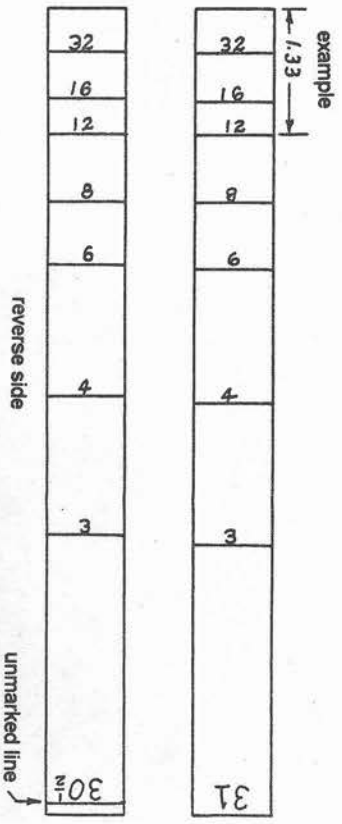
Right side, (fence removed) showing straight and compassed skates. Compassed skate not original to the plane.

Some Intriguing Rules
by Max Richardson

This set of 21 wooden rules is truly intriguing -- it puzzles, perplexes, and baffles everyone but its unknown maker. Although evidently made by a skilled workman, it appears to be one-of-a-kind. The rules themselves are neat but not precise.

The individual rules vary in length from 8 to 13 inches, are of unvarnished beech, 1/16" thick, and 13/16" wide. Both sides have seven transverse lines marked 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 16, and 32. A typical one is shown in the figure. Across the end of each rule, both front and back, is an identifying number. These numbers run from 30 to 50 on one side and from 29½ to 49½ on the other. Finally, on the "½-numbered" sides there is an unmarked transverse line close to the identifying number end.

The center of this intrigue is the following fact: if one measures (in inches) from the high-marked end of ANY of the rules to ANY one of the transverse markings, then multiplies this by the mark of the transverse line, and finally divides by the identifying number of the rule, the answer comes out very nearly one-half (average 0.52). For example, take the rule illustrated in the figure. The distance to the line marked 12 is 1.33". 1.33 x 12 = 15.96. 15.96 divided by 31 = 0.515. This relationship also holds if one treats the ends of the "whole-number" sides as though they were marked 2 and on the "½-numbered" sides as though the unmarked transverse lines were also marked 2.



Puzzle:
What's with 0.52 (or one-half)?

Perplexion:
Why no intermediate marks between the transverse lines?

Baffle:
Who would have used them and what for?

The maker hasn't been found or isn't talking.

Buy, Swap, & Sell

CRAFTS members only may have a free 5 line (40 word) ad that is primarily related to the exchange of tools or information. Each additional line (over 5) is $1. Send to: Stuart Shippey, 251 Hillside Ave., Chatham, NJ 07928-1732 (FAX 201 635-7939). All ads accepted on a space permitting basis. Please print or type.

WANTED

CHISELS and EDGE TOOLS marked H.C. SEELY, Cornwall Bridge, CT or A.ALFRED, Harwinton, CT. ✂ SCISSORS marked MALINSON and MINIATURE LATHES marked ManSon, Master, DuoLathe, MonoLathe or Small Machines, Inc. Daniel Semel, ✍ 245 East 80th St., New York, NY 10021-0515. ☎ 212 628-5613.

STANLEY PLANES Nº 4½H, 42, 44, 10¼C, 11½, 12¾, 87, 64, 018, 019, 63, 80 S/C, 90A, 101½, 239½, 72½, 190W, 602C, 195. Bill Hermanek, ✍ 31 Wildwood La., Smithtown, NY 11787. ☎ 516 360-1216.

SARGENT AUTOSET PLANES with nickel-plated lever caps, VG or better. Any fine or better Sargent tools except wooden planes. Sargent catalogs & paper. Also tools marked B-M-CO. (Braunsdorf-Mueller) ✍ Paul Weidenschilling, PO Box 298, Boonton, NJ 07005-0298.

HARNESS / LEATHER WORKING Draw Gauges, Round Knives, etc. by BURSCH, SEYMOUR, BALDWIN, CHARLTON, GOODSELL - NJ Cutlers. ✍ Ken Hopfel, 25 Lilac Drive, Flemington, NJ 08822. ☎ 908 788-2053.

OHIO TOOL CO. WOOD PLANES all types, sizes. Hollows and rounds OK. Condition must be Good or better. No missing parts or repairs. ✍ Bob Howard, 5 Glenrich Dr., St. James, NY 11780-1610. ☎516 724-6514.

Mint condition or unusual SAWS. Brass backed or otherwise nice American back saws particularly desired. Signed American squares, mitre squares, and bevel squares. Lee Richmond. ☎703 391-0074.

FOR SALE

BOXED SET of 2 RARE PLANE-AXE TOOLS - $100 + 5 shipping. Money back if not enchanted. Tool list - $5 for 3 issues. Philip Whitby, ✍ 2722 W. Union Ave., Englewood, CO 80110. ☎ 303 795-5650.

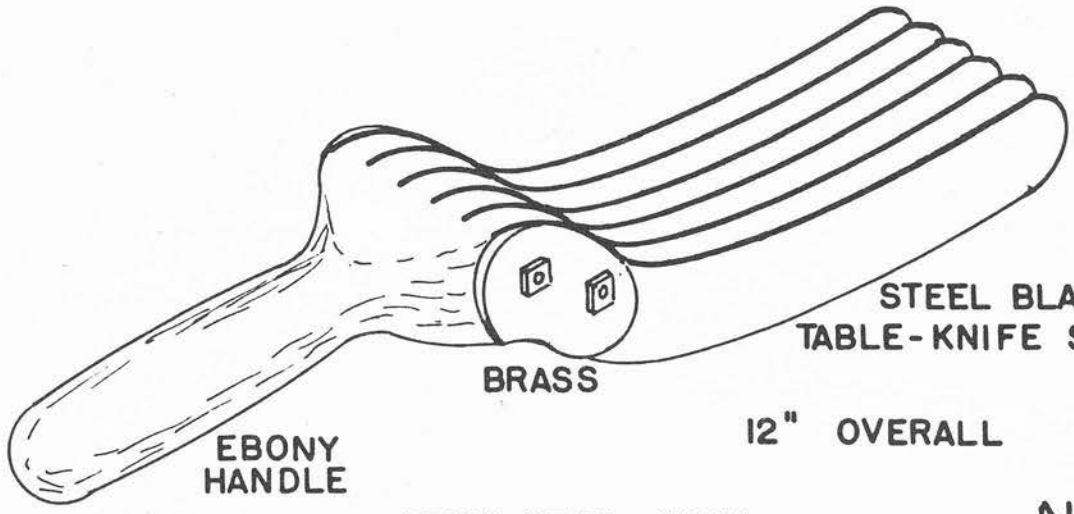
HOLTZAPFFEL, CHARLES, TURNING AND MECHANICAL MANIPULATION, Volumes I to V, 1852 to 1884. Rebound on dark blue covers with gold impressions. Original spines saved. Excellent condition, $950. John Cammarata, ✍ 45 Murray Hill Terrace, Marlboro, NJ 07746. ☎ 908 972-7863.

⊙ CLOCK & WATCHMAKERS TOOLS "DERBYSHIRE" Complete. Lathe - motor - foot pedal, etc. with accessories too numerous to list. $4,000. Arthur F. Gatti, ☎ 201 374-6421.

ALLIGATOR WRENCH, 5½ " stamped "ROEBLING TRENTON, N.J. ALLIGATOR PAT." Pictured in April 1988 *ToolShed*. Ethelle Fountain, ✍ P.O. Box 650, Westhampton Beach, NY 11978. ☎ 516 288-2279.

WOOD IDENTIFICATION SAMPLES; 22 small blocks of the woods most commonly used in tools, with a numbered key for ease of use. $22 per set. Herb Kean. ☎ 201 993-8374.

WILLY TELLUS WHATSIT



-FROM HERB KEAN

No. 16

Just Following Orders

A journeyman carpenter told his apprentice: "I'm putting this nail in exactly the correct position. When I nod my head, you hit it hard with your hammer." The journeyman woke up in the hospital with one heck of a headache.

THE COLLECTOR

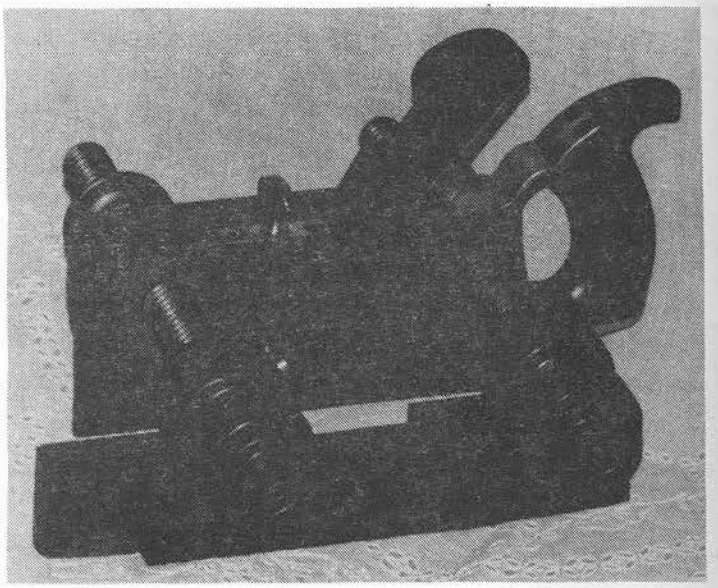
His love is inspired by visions of beauty.
He dreams of possible treasures to find.
He searches the ads; he asks for directions,
Pursuing each lead with unflagging drive.

He must survey all items of interest,
Inspecting well and weighing their worth.
Is the price firm? Can he afford it?
Will it display well with others he owns?

Now he selects; he makes his decision
Choosing the rarest, the finest, the best.
But here is something that stirs his emotion;
Without it, once seen, he will always regret--
And so for that prize, he bargains and barters,
Wheeling and dealing--anything goes!

Returning with pride, relishing triumph;
This is the day to brag and to boast!
Yet short is his joy and deep is his longing
For glorious trophies--he must have the most!

10-'93 Mary Alice Kingsbury



Tool of the Month

This is the famous E. W. Carpenter patent plow plane. Boxwood and rosewood, with brass hardware, this tool makes quite an impression. There are other variations of this model, but this is the most artistic looking. Most of these planes are found in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania; the above originally from Art Kushlan (Joy's Antiques).