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GRAVITY INCLINOMETERS
By Jim Gehring

In its most general sense, the term "inclinometer" refers to any device for measuring with precision the angle between a surface and a line that is perpendicular to a line through the earth's center of gravity – or, in other words, level. The difference between a level and an inclinometer is that while a level tells the user whether or not a surface is level (or plumb), an inclinometer tells the user exactly how far out of level (or plumb) it is.

In addition to ones used by carpenters or machinists, various forms of inclinometers are widely used in other fields – by plumbers, surveyors, miners, skiers, artillery gunners, sailors (to tell how far over a vessel is listing), and even chiropractors, who use a device called an inclinometer to measure the angles of the spine. Today we tend to think of "inclinometers" as carpenters tools and "clinometers" in the context of surveying or scientific instruments. However, the nineteenth century meaning of the terms was exactly the opposite. Knight's comprehensive *American Mechanical Dictionary*, published in 1877, defined an inclinometer primarily as an instrument to detect the inclination in the earth's magnetic field, and gave as the best known example the "dipping needle", a form of vertical compass widely used in mining. A secondary definition given was that of an instrument for measuring the slope of an embankment, incline, using a level attached to a "base piece which lies on the slope."

The same work defined clinometer primarily as an instrument used in determining the slope of cuttings and embankments, illustrating the definition with an instrument very similar to many of the gravity inclinometers illustrated in this article. The now obsolete "batter-level" was given as a synonym. A secondary definition for "clinometer" was a "carpenter's tool for leveling up sills and other horizontal framing timbers." In fact, the terms "inclinometer" and "clinometer" have become more or less synonymous, and this article will use the term "inclinometer" exclusively.

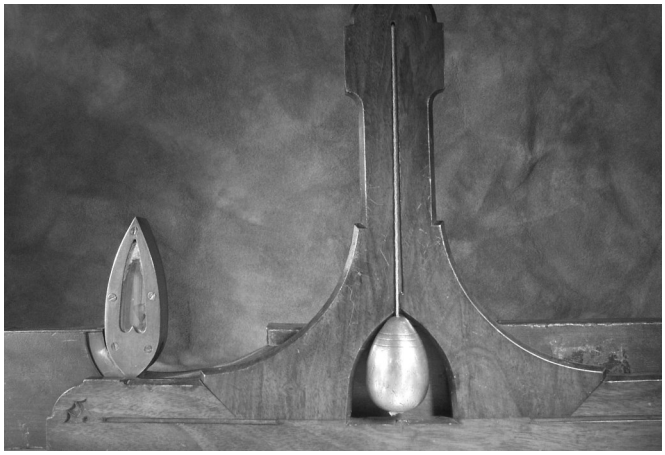

Figure 1 Plumb bob inclinometer.

Inclinometers fall roughly into two categories: those that use a gravity-actuated pendulum or other indicator, and those that use a spirit vial. (The use of the term "gravity" to describe only the former class of tools is somewhat inaccurate, since all inclinometers are based on gravitational force, but it is a well established and convenient convention.) This article will concentrate on gravity

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February 3 - CRAFTS Meeting
Highbridge, New Jersey, Masonic Lodge
Speaker - Tom Elliott

Collectors of Rare and Familiar Tools Society of New Jersey

President ..... JOE HAUCK, Lebanon
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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 fifteen dollars for the membership year of July 1 through June 30. Membership fees may be sent to the Treasurer: John Whelan, 38 Colony Court, Murray Hill, NJ 07974 (write check payable to Crafts of New Jersey).

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 10 A.M., meeting starts at 1 P.M.

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EMAIL - takeadip@optonline.net
Articles, especially about early tools and trades, are encouraged and may be sent to the Editor.

CRAFTS Calendar of Events

Feb. 3 CRAFTS meeting, High Bridge, N.J.
Apr. 13 CRAFTS auction, Flemington, N.J.
Apr. 14 CRAFTS meeting, High Bridge, N.J.

CRAFTS Website
http://craftsofnj.org

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Many readers have mentioned their interest in last issue's goosewing axe article. After talking with John Caroline, the author of the booklet, *Goose Wing Axes-The Myths or the Realities*, he said I could give our readers his contact information. Interested collectors can drop him a line at, John Caroline, 12 Deer Path, Carbondale, Colorado 81623 (970) 963-2020. Also, interested collectors can get more goosewing axe information from the recent article Frank Kosmerl wrote for the December, EAIA *Chronicle*.

This month's lead article is written by Jim Gehring, a tool collector from Chicago. I have been acquainted with Jim through eBay sales and have developed a cyberspace friendship. I have observed the many fine tools he has purchased and the recognition he receives for the outstanding displays he presents at Mid-West Tool Meets. He agreed to furnish the *Toolshed* with an article which turned into a two-part series on inclinometers. I am sure you will enjoy his presentation on this topic, as his collection and knowledge are outstanding.

Alex Farnham is always on the hunt for new information on New Jersey tool makers. He has collected some of his recent finds in an article showing us that we should never give up the chase. His search has inspired me to research information on my own home town tool makers from Trenton N.J.

Lastly I am looking forward to a busy spring auction schedule coming up. The CRAFTS auction is always a hot spot for great tool deals. To counter balance my purchases I am cleaning off some old tools I can spare to make a little cash for purchases. You too can earn some extra tool cash by putting something into the CRAFTS auction.

FEBRUARY MEETING SPEAKER

Tom Elliott is an architect from Connecticut. He has been a tool collector and dealer since the 1960's and is a member of EAIA and a founding member of ATTIC (Antique Tools and Trades in Connecticut). His collection is focused on undocumented l8th century wooden planes and he takes great pleasure in the research of their early makers.

He has had several articles published in Mike Humphery's *The Catalog of American Wooden Planes,* including a four part article on the Denisons and other plane makers of Saybrook/ Winthrop, Connecticut, located just 2 miles from his home; and *The Plane Makers of New London County, Connecticut.* Another article *Three Generations of Hovey Craftsman* was published in the September 2000 issue of *The Chronicle.*

In 1999 he undertook a two year project of editing the 4th Edition of *A Guide to the Makers of American Wooden Planes,* a project that he feels was a once in a lifetime opportunity .

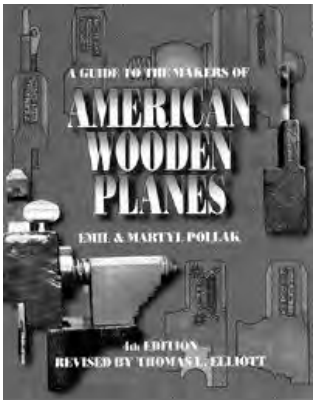
PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I hope those of you who came to the November meeting enjoyed our speaker from Cape May, decoy carver, Jamie Hand. After watching him work I'm not sure carver is appropriate since he did something far more difficult that is, shaping the entire head and neck with a hatchet! I was so impressed I bought one of his beautiful decoys. Incidentally, this was sort of a foreign exchange program since the Tuckerton museum where Jamie sometimes gives programs, wants CRAFTS to put on a tool program at their site next summer. Something like the Doylestown event would be well received. Those who are interested should contact Carl Bopp.

Jamie Hand at work on decoy head.

The board members and officers held their December meeting, at which time we regretfully accepted the resignation of Stuart Shippey. There has been a Shippey on our board since the founding of the organization. I want to thank Stuart for all his hard work over many years to produce and mail the Tool Shed publication. Thanks to Stuart and Bob Garay, much has been computerized, and although it is still a large undertaking, Bob can now do it on his own. Bob will become the editor and take that officer position. I trust you will continue to support Bob with contributions for articles. I have asked Dave Nowicki to join the board and complete Bob's term and he has agreed. If you were a buyer at last year's auction you probably dealt with Dave at the desk. Speaking of which we always need good items for the sale, so please contact Steve Zluky or Greg Welsh if you have some interesting or exceptional items to discuss. We believe that the prices that we get, combined with the very reasonable commission that we charge, presents an unequaled opportunity for members interested in selling quality items. There will be updates to our website as auction material is consigned so check it out occasionally and spread the word.

The CRAFTS board is still looking for some projects to get involved in, and one of those is reprinting any noteworthy catalogs from New Jersey. We have one in mind but would be open to considering others.



Finally, the speaker for our next meeting in February will be Tom Elliott who recently revised the book, *A Guide To The Makers of American Wooden Planes*. If you haven't purchased this essential book yet, this will be your chance to buy one and get it autographed. Tom would also like to see any planes members have that are not listed in this or the previous edition. I intend to give him a real workout, and I hope to see many of you there.

Welcome new members: David Beckhusen, Princeton, NJ; Joseph Brennan, Peterborough, NH; Alan & Jenny Hunt, Basking Ridge, NJ; Jim Leamy, East Earl, PA; Michael Schlesinger, Caribou, ME; and Gerald J.Schroeder, Kansas City, MO.

CRAFTS member Maurice L. Maltby, 72, passed away recently on October 10, 2001. Born in Casper, Wyoming, Maurice was an avid "flea marketer" always looking for a special wrench. Known as "Mr. Fix It" he could repair, fix, or remake almost anything. He retired in 1991 as a Senior Associate Engineer with Mobil Oil Corporation. He enjoyed his work with Mobil for 34 years. He was a member of CRAFTS of NJ, Mid-West Tool Club, Missouri Valley Wrench Club, and the Early American Industries Association.

Continued from page 1

Figure 2 Inclosed pendulum mechanism advertisement.

inclinometers. Gravity inclinometers are direct descendants of the oldest form of leveling device, the plumb bob. A plumb bob can be converted to a level by attaching it to a horizontal bar to form a plumb square, and from that it only requires the addition of a scale along the horizontal bar to measure the exact grade of the slope on which the horizontal bar rests. Although a plumb square is accurate, it is not particularly convenient or portable, and one of the principle themes of the development of gravity inclinometers has been the attempts of inventors to adapt the mechanism of the plumb square into an instrument that can be safely carried and easily used.

One possible approach is to enclose a small plumb bob in a case mounted on the level stock. Figure 1 shows a traditional plumb square, along with a user-made device that includes a small plumb bob in the teardrop shaped case that folds flat against the stock for carrying and can be rotated to determine the slope of the surface. It lacks only a scale to make it a true inclinometer. As far as I know, the only commercially produced inclinometer to use this enclosed pendulum mechanism was patented in 1887 by Oscar B. Fuller of Burlington, Kansas, and manufactured by the Pittsburg Novelty Works in Pittsburg, Kansas. The term "novelty" is particularly appropriate in this case as the level is quite rare; a contemporary advertisement for it is shown in figure 2, and a photo of the level itself (from Don Rosebrook's collection), is in Sandor Nagyzalanczy's *The Art of Fine Tools.* (My thanks to Roger Smith for sending me this ad, and the one for the Melick Clinometer in figure 12).

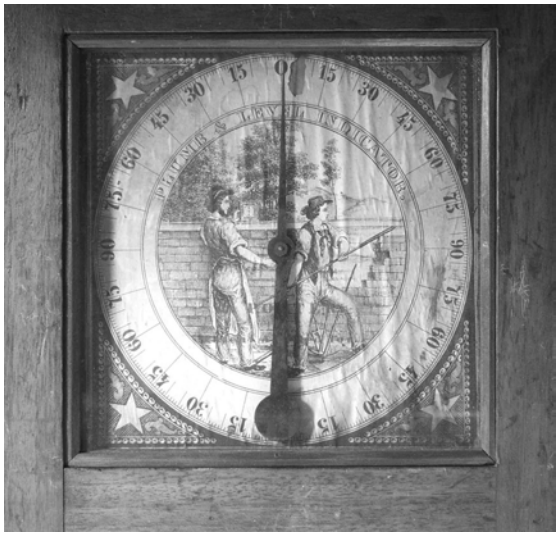


Figure 3 Rufus Porter's inclinometer

Most gravity inclinometers utilized some form of rotating pointer or weighted wheel in lieu of the inherently fragile enclosed plumb bob. Some of the earliest examples of the rotating pointer are found in inclinometers manufactured by Rufus Porter, the inventor, artist and *Scientific American* founder, who is sometimes referred to as the American da Vinci. Porter inclinometers (see figure 3) have a distinctive square shape and were decorated with an engraving by Porter showing the device in use. They are highly prized by collectors. Although marked "Patent Applied For," it does not appear that Porter actually received a patent for this device.

The weighted pointer rotating around a central pivot point in the middle of a scale was used in several other gravity inclinometers. Some of the patented variations of Porter's basic design are illustrated in figures 4, 5 and 6. William Gibson of Enid, Oklahoma Territory, patented a "Combined Level and Plumb" in 1907 (figure 4). It used a matched pair of pointers supported by a central bearing to overcome the problem of friction between the point and the face of the scale and to produce an inclinometer that could be read from either side. Henry Loeschner of Fredericktown, Missouri, patented a "Protractor Level" in 1921 (figure 5), in which the needle was suspended from the top against a semi-circular scale, and which also included four separate level vials (three of which are missing in this example) located with the inclinometer in a separate compartment that could be removed from the level stock for independent use.

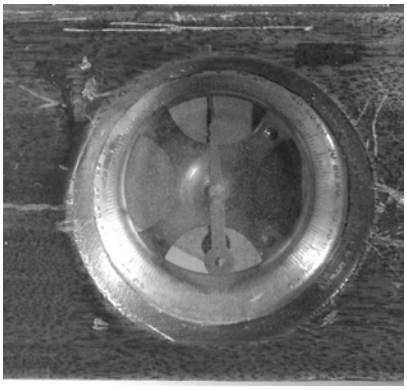


Figure 4 Gibson's inclinometer.

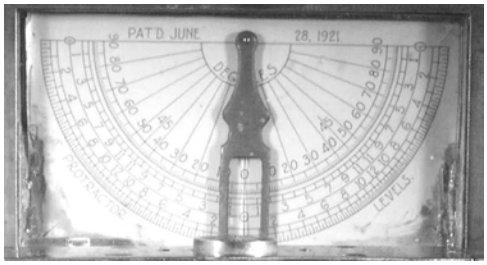


Figure 5 Loeschner's "protractor level"

James T. Reed of Akron, Iowa, patented a level in 1923 that was subsequently manufactured by the Union Gravity Level Co. of Sioux City (figure 6). The patent papers describe a rotating needle suspended by bearings in the glass cover plates, and a worm gear adjustment mechanism. However, the actual production model suspended the rotating pointers through a central brass disc on which the scales are engraved. The level also features a stock made of aluminum rather than wood or cast iron.

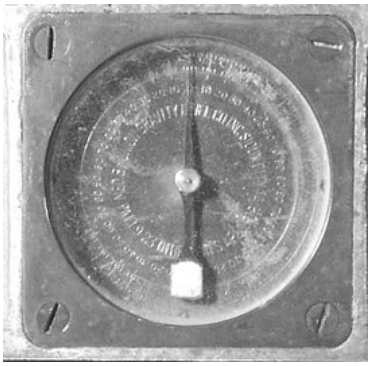
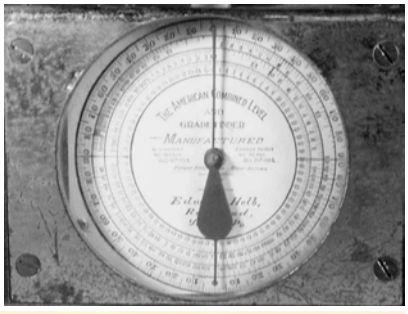


Fig. 6 Reed's patent inclinometer.

It will be noted that all of these levels were patented and manufactured by small entrepreneurs located outside of the toolmaking hubs of New England. Neither Stanley nor Starrett ever manufactured a gravity inclinometer of this type. Perhaps the most successful of the rotating-needle type inclinometers – at least in terms of surviving examples – was Edward Helb's "Combined Level and Grade Finder" patented in 1904. Helb's device, (figure 7) which was manufactured in Railroad, Pennsylvania, and is often mistakenly identified as a tool used primarily in laying railroad tracks, used a simple rotating needle against a cardboard scale functionally identical to Porter's. However, it had a much more elaborate scale that purportedly allowed the user to perform various elaborate calculations, as shown in the excerpt from the instruction book included in figure 7, and also featured a sighting-tube and compass for surveying purposes.



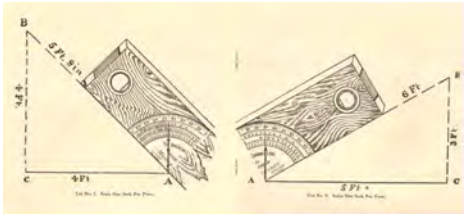


Figure 7 Helb's "Combined Level and Grade Finder" & excerpt from instruction booklet.

The weak point of all these inclinometers was friction at the point at which the needle rotated (and in some cases between the needle and the face of the scale), which caused inaccuracy that would only increase as the instrument was used. The needle was also susceptible to damage when the tool was transported. Various methods of overcoming one or both of these shortcomings were also tried. Alvan B. Ewing of Lewisburg, Tennessee, patented a "Plumb-Level" in 1889 (figure 8) that used a heavier pendulum enclosed within the stock of the level with a pointer that could be read through a slot in the top (or a window in the side for plumb applications).

Figure 8 Ewing's patented "Plumb Level"

Instruments that used a heavier pendulum suspended from bearing points in the glass covers, such as the apparently unpatented example shown in figure 9, which was manufactured in Decatur, Illinois, were more accurate but even more susceptible to damage during transport. Perhaps the most extreme example of accuracy at the expense of delicacy is the "Hight Micrometer Level" manufactured by the Automatic Level Co. of Cleveland, Ohio (figure 10), which used a suspended plate inside a large enclosed semicircular scale. The Hight level, which was apparently never patented, also included sights and was probably intended more for surveying than carpentry.

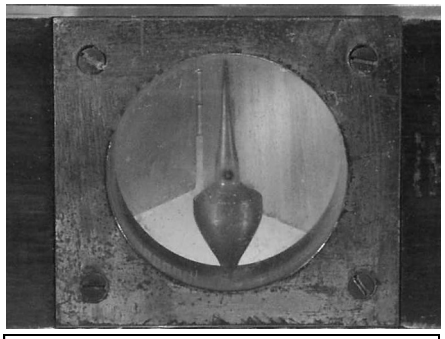


Figure 9 Suspended pendulum design.

The device that used the most elaborate mechanism for insuring smooth and accurate operation of the rotating pointer was the "Gravity Level" invented by Thomas F. Deck of Toledo, Ohio, which was covered by two separate patents issued in 1896 and 1905.

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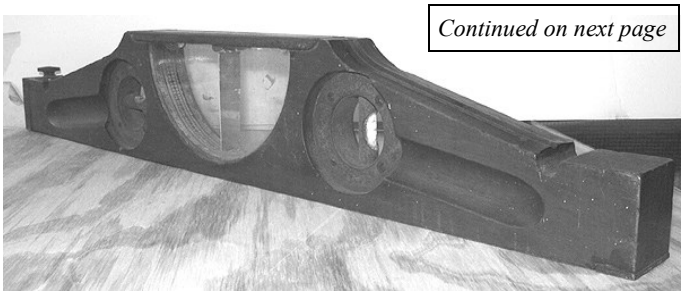


Figure 10 "Hight Micrometer Level"

The Deck inclinometer (figure 11) used an elaborate set of internal roller bearings, and also featured a locking button that could be used to lock the needle in place to prevent damage during transport. The second Deck patent provided for an internal pendulum suspended below the center of the scale, with the motion of the pendulum conveyed to the rotating needle through a gear train.

The best and most practical of the gravity inclinometers – as well as the only one to be so described by its inventor - was the "clinometer" invented in 1889 by William B. Melick of St. Louis (figure

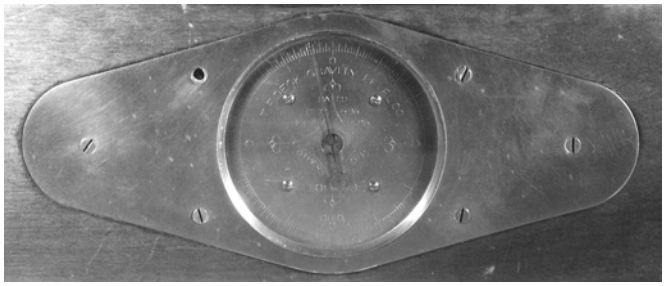


Figure 11 Deck inclinometer

12). In lieu of a needle rotating against a fixed scale, Melick's instrument contains a rotating scale and fixed pointers. The scale is powered by an internal pendulum weight fastened to the back, and is suspended from a bearing supported in the front by the diagonal cross-piece. There were also two buttons (only one shown in the patent drawings) that could be depressed to lock the scale in place for easier reading, although they did not allow it to be locked during transport (unlike the Deck design). This was an altogether sturdier and more practical design, and was marketed both in a traditional wooden stock (see the advertisement at the bottom of figure 8) and in an elaborate cast-iron mantle clock design.

Finally, mention should be made of what I believe to be the only gravity inclinometer that was specifically designed to be mounted on another level – the "Attachment for Levels" patented in 1908 by David Southward and manufactured by the Superior Level Co. of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania (figure 13, right). The Pittsburg (Kansas) Novelty Works manufactured a variation of the Fuller patent that was designed to be mounted on a rule, but it lacked an inclinometer scale. Although spirit-levels designed to be mounted on a rule are common, the Southward attachment, with its thicker bracket, was specifically intend-

Figure 12 The "clinometer" invented by William B. Melick.

ed to be mounted on a common wood-stock spirit level. The design of its pendulum and pointer are actually superior to most of the full-size inclinometers shown above. Next to the Southward patent in figure 13 is the most modern gravity inclinometer in my collection, a mantle clock design which appears to date from the 1940s or 1950s. It is marked "Jos. Behr & Sons, Inc." of Rockford, Illinois, but I don't know whether that is the manufacturer or whether it is an advertising level.

Although gravity inclinometers are fascinating in their variety and the ingenuity of their inventors, they were destined to be supplanted by devices that used the increasingly accurate spirit vials that

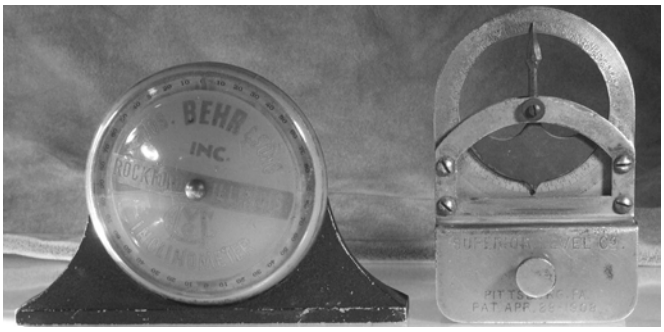


Figure 13 On left is Jos. Behr & Sons, Inc. inclinometer and right is David Southward's "Attachment for Levels"

became available near the end of the nineteenth century, just as the spirit level supplanted the plumb square. In the next article I will describe inclinometers that used different types of spirit vials.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN 18TH CENTURY CROWN MOLDING PLANE

By Peter Hathaway

One of my favorite planes is an 18th century crown molder by Nathaniel Potter. The birch plane is in very fine condition and measures 13 ½ inches long and 3 5/8 inches wide. The cutting iron is 2 9/16 inches wide. The pattern of the plane is a bevel, ovolo, back bevel, bevel plus ogee, back bevel and bevel. There are many different characteristics of early eighteenth century planes that this plane exhibits. It has wide flat chamfers which were predominant in the early 18th century and lessened by the end of the century to become rounded edges. The handle is offset to the right with vertical grain attached to the plane's body with a wooden peg going through the side. The top of the handle is also chamfered and the iron sits on the handle for stability. The grain in the plane's body is upside down with the bark side up, different from later planes that have the bark side down. The wedge has a round top matching the iron with no chamfers. A feature that suggests that it is of early creation is the wedge design. It is a full wedge shape without a parallel flat top common on later planes. The extra thin iron is put in and taken out from the bottom and has a forged-on steel edge. The plane has a 7/16 inch pull hole going through the front of the plane for pulling the plane through a tough cut. There is an iron strike button centered on the top front of the body. The very clear stamp N. POTTER is upside down on the front of the body.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NEW JERSEY TOOLMAKERS
By Alexander Farnham

I have been interested in early tools and how they were used for more than fifty years, and have been writing and illustrating articles about them since 1959 when I started contributing articles to the *CHRONICLE* of the Early American Industries Association. After many years of attending auctions I started work on the first of my three *TOOL COLLECTORS HANDBOOKS* in the late 1960s. It was published in 1970 and was followed by the other two in 1972 and 1975. These resulted in my writing articles for various antique publications including *MAINE ANTIQUE DIGEST* where they have appeared since 1976. The first writing I did for M.A.D. were reports of antique tools sold at auctions in the Delaware Valley and New England. After CRAFTS of New Jersey was founded, these articles were also published in *THE TOOL SHED* starting with the fifth issue, November 1978. For a number of years thereafter I continued writing about tool sales for both publications, but when I started covering other forms of antiques for M.A.D. I contributed fewer articles to *THE TOOL SHED.*

In 1994 when Herb Kean became Assistant

Auger & insert stamped "DAVID WILLET MENDHAM"

Editor of *THE TOOL SHED* he suggested that I do a series on recently discovered New Jersey toolmakers not included in my two books published in 1984 and 1992. Having spent at least sixteen years collecting and researching tools manufactured in this state, I agreed with Herb's idea. With information supplied to me by fellow CRAFTS' members along with many hours of research on my part, I was able to come up with articles for several issues of *THE TOOL SHED*. After awhile however, I had to discontinue the series for lack of newly discovered toolmakers and too little time to do the needed research. The New Jersey tools illustrated and discussed here have only been brought to my attention within the last few years. Though two of their manufacturers are included in my books I consider the examples of their products shown here to be extremely rare.

While appraising tools at the Clinton Historical Museum I was shown a 39" auger, which was stamped DAVID WILLET MENDHAM. Though I have in my collection a number of Willet tools this was the only one of his that I know of which was marked with his location. Wilma Sagurton, who has done considerable research on both David Willet and the town of Mendham, has told me that he rarely included Mendham when signing his tools. As far as I can determine the majority of the tools he made were simply stamped D. WILLET. One reason that he marked his full name and place of business on the 39" auger may have been the availability of a greater amount of space for that purpose. The dealer who sold me the auger later phoned me to say that he found a large hoe marked ROCKAWAY, N.J. I thought that it was probably a product of William McKinnon, whose father began making axes in Rockaway in 1845. When I saw the hoe at the dealer's shop, however, I discovered that it was marked J. J. PEER instead of Wm. McKINNON like the one illustrated in my book *EARLY TOOLS OF NEW JERSEY*. These two hoes were somewhat similar in appearance except that the one made by Peer had a longer shank, which was slightly twisted towards the left side. Its manufacture was much finer and it appeared to predate the McKinnon hoe considerably. Since the marks stamped into McKinnon products changed periodically, it is difficult to determine exactly in which year they were made, but the design of the lettering would indicate that their hoe was forged around 1900. The lettering stamped into the Peer hoe is like that used in the mid-1800s. Although I have attempted to gain information about J. J. Peer, so far he remains a complete mystery. Another toolmaker about whom nothing is known, other than that he worked in New Milford, N. J., is an axe maker who stamped his products R. A. BERRY / CAST STEEL. The example of his work shown here, a chisel edged hewing broad axe, appears to date from early to mid-1800s. Though I've contacted the New Milford

Hewing axe stamped “R.A. BERRY / CAST STEEL”

Historical Society, they haven't sent me any information about Berry.

There is somewhat more known about the manufacturers of the two New Jersey saws included in this article. They were made by Christopher and William C. Richardson, who established their saw works at 15 Railroad Avenue, Newark, in 1859. The trademark by which they are best known is a Maltese cross with an "R" in the center. On each of the arms is one of the four letters, which spell the word BEST. They started using this trademark in April 1878. Two trademarks they used prior to that date are shown here, the most unusual being the one on a ripsaw found by Ken Vliet hidden in a barn on his family's farm. It shows a beaver encircled by C & W. C. RICHARDSON / NEWARK, N. J. The other trademark is on a crosscut saw and pictures an eagle in the center with PAT DEC 31 1867 above it and RxB just below. Circling around the top is RICHARDSON BROTHERS and at the bottom NEWARK, N. J. These trademarks are possibly among the earliest to be found on any New Jersey saws.

Top picture is beaver logo found on Richardson saw. Middle is eagle logo found on saw shown.

Due to access to several books in Trip

Kahn's fine library I was able to do considerable research on a family who made some of the most beautiful tools ever produced in New Jersey. Lebbeus Dod (1739-1816) and his three sons Stephen (1770- 1855), Abner (1772-1847), and Danie1 (1778-1823) were all mathematical instrument makers besides possessing a number of other skills such as clock-making, gun smithing, and iron turning. At various times they all worked in Mendham and signed the instruments they made there to that effect. The brass protracting parallel rule illustrated here is the product of Lebbeus's second son, Abner, and is part of Trip Kahn's collection of eighteenth and early nineteenth century objects. This multi-purpose drafting instrument has scales divided every inch and ha1f-inch, with transversal interpolation grids. S-shaped hinges provide parallel rule motion to a second rule, which carries the semi-circular protractor, divided every degree and mounted with index arm. This is a typically American form of this instrument usually associated with Lebbeus and his sons.

Although in my book *SEARCH FOR EARLY NEW JERSEY TOOLMAKERS* a 12"divider made by L. A. Sayre & Co. is pictured, the only information I have been able to learn is that they were in business in Newark during the latter part of the 1800s. Since the publication of my book I have obtained the lathing hatchet pictured here, which was produced by this company. No doubt there are in existence other tools manufactured by them, but I have yet to discover them.

It is my hope that through this article I will get readers to come forward with further information about the six toolmakers covered here.

MERCER MUSEUM TOOL DAY
By Bob Garay

Many CRAFTS members participated in the Mercer Museum Tool Day event held this past November.

Many hands-on activities were put together by members as the Mercer Museum played host to different scouting groups. Don Wallace demonstrated how to use the shaving horse using hand rived wood the kids split. Anna Rokita provided a hands-on display, as visitors used her many different antique apple peelers to enjoy a tasty snack. Youngsters were busy sawing, drilling and hammering as they built pegboards by hand. Sue Jacobs had visitors try their hand at corn husking using the many different antique huskers she had on exhibit. Her husband Walter, displayed a treasured collection of pre-Stanley, Bailey planes. I sent some youngsters over to ask him if they could try their hand at using these hand planes. For some reason Walter did not want these kids using his planes'. Inside, Ken Hopfel had an impressive display of Philadelphia planemaker, John Veit's tools. Displayed was an extraordinary shaving horse with Veit's mark. Also, Alex Farnham had some of his most recent finds of New Jersey antique tools. Herb Kean gave a presentation on coopering and drew a crowd, as kids used his six foot cooper's plane to shape barrel staves. I had my hands full as many wanted to try wood turning using the foot powered treadle lathe. Below, scouts team up to turn a small baseball bat on the treadle lathe. The kids and their parents kept us busy all day until it was time to go. It was another beautiful day outside and the time at the Mercer Museum flew by. It was fun and I am sure many youngsters had their first experience with the tools we collect and study. It is from activities like these that budding collectors of tomorrow will originate.

Don Wallace demonstrates using the shaving horse while keeping one eye on the youngster with the mallet.

Even the youngest had a busy tool day.

Following in the footsteps of Don Wallace this youngster works on mastering the use of the shaving horse and the drawknife.

Herb Kean discusses the finer points of woodworking with two visitors.

Team work paid off as scouts used the treadle lathe.

Kean Kuttin's

MIXED EMOTIONS

Back in the 70s (almost sounds like ancient history), there was a very quaint antique shop near the village of Hubbardton, Vermont that was run by one of the original antique toolers. The shop was called Iron Horse Antiques, and the dealer was Vernon Ward. He put out a Catalog that was one of the few places where you could see hundreds of antique tools at the same time. To a relative beginner, the Iron Horse was spectacular.

As part of our New England "wanderings," Doris and I decided to stay on Lake Bomoseen (just next to Hubbardton) for a nice quiet vacation. Fishing, antiquing, eating-out and just plain relaxing; it had it all. I neglected to mention to her that it was only a brisk walk from the Iron Horse.

It's not hard to figure out that the eating-out and the relaxing parts were overshadowed by the fishing and the antiquing. Yep- most days I was up early and out on the lake until the shop opened later in the day. Then browsing amongst what I considered the best collection of tools anywhere. It was high living.

The last day of the vacation, I promised Doris that I would be home early, so she could go shopping for gifts before we left. I really had every intention of doing just that. However, fate stepped in. Vern was going to Rutland that morning and had no time for me, except to tell me that a small dealer had called with a great piece, but needed the money quickly. Vern benevolently turned it over to me, as the dealer lived nearby. Wow! A chance to get a good piece at a wholesale price.

It was a beautiful house right on the lake with a garage full of antiques. The daughter was getting married that weekend and some of the costs were getting out of line. Some extra bucks would help. OK, I had some extra bucks, and couldn't wait to see the piece.

It was the gunmetal Millers Patent. It took my breath away. It's the same one that still hangs on my wall, and has been on the cover of the *AMERICAN WOODWORKER Tool Calendar*, and the Crafts *TOOL SHED TREASURY* book. I never even knew that they made tools like that. The downside was that the dealer had a fair idea of its value and asked a price that also took my breath away. (I bought my first car for less.) After much agonizing, I turned him down, and went back to our cottage feeling very low.

"Where have you been for so long, and what's with the long face?" was what greeted me. I just said that I had an opportunity to buy a great tool, but if I did I would have no money left for her to buy gifts. I don't think she believed that was the real reason, but it was fine with her and off to town we went. (She didn't spend much, as she has always been a rather frugal person.)

We packed, said our goodbyes and headed south for home. I was unusually quiet for the first 50 miles. Finally, she asked me to "spill it". I let it all out: the beauty of the plane, the fact that I never bought anything expensive, all the trips that I took her on, all the restaurants that I took her to, and on and on. She finally cut it off and asked the price. I lied a little.

"Do you have enough money?" she asked.

"Just."

A smile and a hug and I pulled into the nearest phone booth. Yes, the plane was still for sale, and yes he would drop the price a little. But- he needed the money that day, and if I came there within the next hour or so, it could be mine.

Going the extra 100 miles was a little much, and I thought that would be the "straw". But no, Doris was all for turning back. I was super delighted, and if I knew how to do one of those TV

Continued on next page

Kean Kuttin's continued

spin-turns I would have done one.

The transaction was quick and pleasant, and we wished them a happy wedding. I couldn't get out of there fast enough. After a few miles I pulled over and just stared at the piece. Doris took it away from me as she was afraid I would keep looking at it rather than the road. It was a grand day.

After about 15 minutes, a strange feeling started to creep over me. I wasn't feeling very well either. I stopped the car, got out and breathed deeply to get my color back. Was it something I ate? Not likely. I really knew what it was, but was too ashamed to admit it. However, it didn't take Doris very long to figure it out.

"Mr. Conservative has finally jumped into the deep water," was her analysis. With a few rational and consoling remarks, she had me back to normal, and we were on our way.

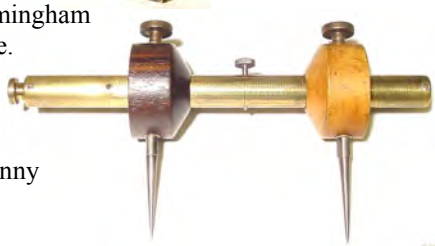
Needless to say, the particular piece was well worth the money. It was one of the best investments that I made in my early collecting days. But I will never forget the wildly mixed emotions of that day.

CRAFTS AUCTION SPARKLERS

Left is a L.Bailey No.4 plane.

Above is a Stanley 602C type 3 plane.

Above is a Birmingham No. 2 size plane.



Right is a Kenny patent gauge.

2002 COMING TOOL EVENTS

Feb.8 & March 23-Spicer-Steere Tool Auction, North Kingston, R.I. (401)884-5049

March-8&9- Live Free or Die dealer sale & auctions, Holiday Inn Airport Select, Indianapolis, Indiana

March-10, June 2, Fine Tool Journal Absentee Auction, contact FTJ at (800)248-8114 or www.FineToolJ.com

March-16&17- PATINA dealer sale & auction. Damascus, Maryland contact Bob Rothen (301)972-1672

April-5&6- 20th International Antique Tool Auction and Dealer Sale. Brown Auction Services. Radisson Inn, Camp Hill, PA. Clarence Blanchard, (800) 248-8114

April 13- Crafts Tool Auction, Elks Club, Rt. 31 Flemington, N.J. Contact Greg Welsh (908) 439-3266

April 14- CRAFTS meeting Masonic Lodge, High Bridge, N.J.

April 26&27- Live Free or Die dealer sale & auctions, Holiday Inn, Everett Turnpike, Nashua, N.H.

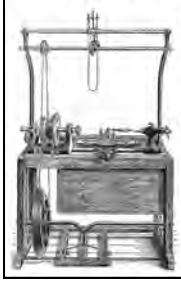
BUY, SWAP & SELL

WANTED: Research information on set of 21 rules described in Feb. 1994 Tool Shed and in the Crafts Treasury. Originally sold some years ago by Max Richardson. Send reply to Steven Walton, 1308 E. Bywater Lane, Fox Point, WI. 53217

WANTED: Antique dental and medical instruments. Prompt payment in American dollars. Bill McDougal, 4020 Grande Dr. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107. Phone 505-344-9272

WANTED: 1 3/4" wide Moulsen Bros. bench plane iron. Ray Wisneski, 631-499-7115

Union Hill Antique Tools



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