The TOOL SHED

No. 33 September 1984

A Journal of Tool Collecting published by CRAFTS of New Jersey

A TOOL ANYBODY CAN UNDERSTAND

by Frederick A. Shippey

An uncommon tool today is the wooden hand screw. In vain the collector searches for this fine antique in flea markets and elsewhere. However, this strange artifact which is completely wooden eludes him. It is a joiner's implement, comprising but four essential parts—two jaws and two screws. Between its adjustable jaws, it grasps pieces of wood, either to be worked on or to be compressed while glue sets.

Amazingly, in Ancient Carpenters' Tools Henry C. Mercer regards this unusual tool as one which "...anybody can understand." Subsequently, however, Mercer encounters difficulty in explaining how this simple tool really works. Here is what he wrote:

"The other screw only engages the arm next its handle, and loosely meets a shallow socket in the opposite arm: hence it pushes the arms apart, at their rear end where it works, but since the centre screw acts as a fulcrum, this end screw, by leverage, forces them still tighter together at their other or jaw end."

Sometimes a technical explanation hinders understanding.

Historically speaking, the wooden hand screw can not be dated along with the emergence of what Salaman describes as "primary tools" (i.e., adze, axe, hammer, chisel, saw) or what Goodman refers to as "main tools" utilized for chopping, sawing, planing, and boring timber.

Rather, according to Hummel and Mercer, the wooden hand screw awaited the advent of of the glue pot, the screw box and the tap. Hence, its appearance in Western Civilization probably occurred near the end of the eighteenth century. During the period 1770-1800, the Dominy workshop acquired the relevant tools by which to improvise wooden screws for hand clamps, lathe puppets, bench vises, and so on. Possibly Hermon Chapin, an early wooden hand screw manufacturer

[continued on page 8]

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

An extremely rare document owned by Harry O. Ludwig has "mysteriously disappeared."

The document is a "memorandum of agreement" between the Lancaster, Pa., plane maker Emanuel W. Carpenter and Joseph L. Hurst to teach the "Art and Mysterys of Plane Making." It is signed by both Carpenter and Hurst and is witnessed by Henry Carpenter. The agreement is dated 1828 and bears the seal of Lancaster County, Pa.

The agreement is mounted in a specially designed walnut frame, between two sheets of ultra-violet-light repulsive glass, so that it is visible from both sides.

Although its actual value is difficult to determine, this is obviously a museum piece.

If anyone has any information concerning this document or its present location, please write or call:

Harry O. Ludwig
309 Harvard Blvd.
Lincoln Park
Reading, PA 19609
(215) 777-3938

CRAFTS PICNIC ON SEPTEMBER 16!
SEE PAGE 2 FOR MEETING NOTICE.

CRAFTS of New Jersey

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.

PICNIC MEETING SEPTEMBER 16th WILL BEGIN 1984-1985 YEAR

CRAFTS of New Jersey will begin its 1984-85 year with a picnic meeting at the farm and studios of Alex and Barbara Farnham on Sunday, September 16.

If it should rain, the meeting will be canceled, and the next meeting will be held on November 18 at a location that will be announced. If there is any doubt as to whether the picnic will be held, you may call either Steve Zluky at (201) 534-2710 or Joe Hauck at (201) 236-2072 after 9:00 am on the morning of the 16th.

The picnic will begin at 11:00 am with the "Swap & Sell." Lunch will be served at noon, with the fun and games to follow. Each family is asked to bring a casserole, a salad, or a dessert. And you must provide your own chairs! CRAFTS will supply the hot-dogs, hamburgers, soda, and beer.

As in previous years, members are asked to bring some favorite tools or crafts for display.

The remaining programs for the year are scheduled as follows:

November 18: Herb Kean, Chuck Granick, and Dominic Micalizzi will combine their talents in a program entitled "Cleaning and Restoring Tools."

February 3: Roger K. Smith will speak on "Transitional Planes."

April 1[illegible]: Harold Fountain will speak on and demonstrate "Stair Building."

June 9: Program will be announced at a later date.

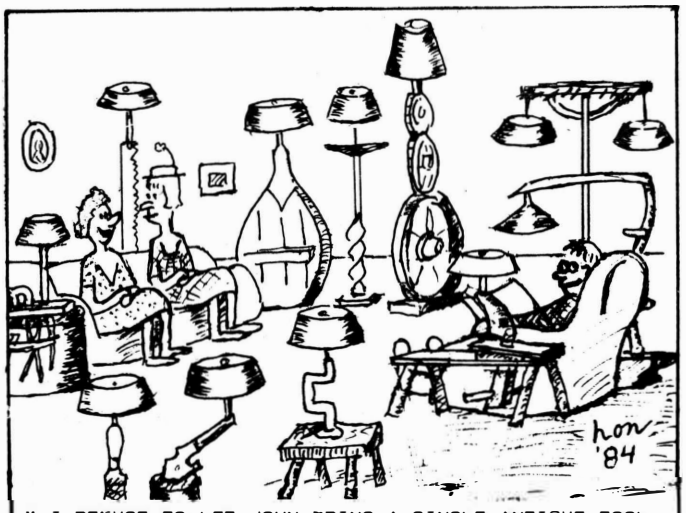
At the present time, the meeting places for these programs have not been decided. They will be announced in subsequent issues.

CLINTON MUSEUM HARVEST JUBILEE

Clinton Historical Museum Village will hold its eighth Harvest Jubilee on Saturday and Sunday, October 6 and 7, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, and it is looking for persons who can demonstrate crafts.

Participants should dress in "old-fashioned" or farm costumes. Items for sale must be related to early American, Victorian, or harvest crafts and products. Any profit made is yours. But the Museum emphasizes its desire for participants to demonstrate their crafts.

Space must be reserved. Any member interested in demonstrating a craft or, more especially, the use of antique tools should get in touch with Steve Zluky or Alex Farnham.



" I REFUSE TO LET JOHN BRING A SINGLE ANTIQUE TOOL INTO THIS HOUSE. HIS LAMP MAKING HOBBY IS SO MUCH MORE SENSIBLE".

CHANCERY SALES

by Herb Kean

Several years ago I had some fairly active tool sales in a little shop in Chatham, N.J. They were always on a Saturday, opened promptly at 9:00 a.m., and had a strict no early-bird rule. But there were complaints that the first half-hour was wild, with frenzied grabbing and in some cases hoarding. It was hard to correct this. I tried to pattern it after Win Carter's sales, as I thought Win was one of the finest gentlemen in the business. But even Win had trouble in his area. So for a number of reasons, including the one above, I stopped my sales and went to auctioning.

This article is not meant to evaluate the difference. Its purpose is to describe an alternative method for a tag sale that provides less need for aggressiveness. It is called a chancery sale (derived from the Court of Equity). It works well and is a great social day to boot. You must, however, set your thinking to accept another culture, almost in another time. The events of this story are basically true; only the names and places have been changed to protect the unbelievable source of supply, which I have dubbed the "Mother Lode."

In an obscure portion of England there is a small area of approximately 100 square miles that is poor in soil, poor in industry, and just plain poor. The people, rather than accept the meager welfare available, have taken up crafts (very similar to our Appalachia area). Everyone makes something—some do it well, some not so well. Many have branched out to scavenging up antiques from neighboring areas because they have developed a great marketing technique!

Once a month or so, everyone brings their stuff to a huge barn, and they tag everything. About 25 enterprising, but discreet, dealers are invited. Secrecy is everything, as these dealers do not want other people finding out where the Mother Lode is located. And the sellers do not want people from neighboring towns to find their market, or they might start their own sales.

Sales day started with a couple dozen dealers sitting around outside the barn, waiting for opening time. Everyone was socializing, with little regard for jockeying to be the first through the barn doors. Ale and sandwiches were being shared by everyone. Then a hat was passed—not for money, but to pick each dealers position number. The explanation went like this: In order of pick each man goes in and buys one major and two minor items. When everybody has had a turn, they go around again.

Each round was punctuated with hearty gulps of ale. There was absolutely no bargaining inside. Outside, the dealers fiercely traded all their early picks. Sometimes an item changed hands three times.

After about two hours of this, everyone was seemingly "bought out," and turns were being "passed." The barn doors were then closed, and a group of townspeople made their way into the barn via the back door. They were the owners, and their job was to lower prices on things that did not sell. In a few minutes the excitement of purchasing started all over again with the ritual of the sequence-pick being strictly adhered to.

In an hour or so, the doors were closed again and the prices marked down once more (Now I know where the Sims commercial got the idea of price cutting). The basic game plan was that no one—buyer or seller—was to leave before every stick of everything was out of the barn. If you left early, you would not be invited back. Improperly high prices were pressured downward by the seller's peers in an effort to go home. And many magnanimous buyers bought the low-end merchandise just to help out (and also to get home).

But when the day was over, buyers were happy, sellers were happy, and everyone was tipsy. I'm not sure about the tipsy part, but there is an awful lot to be said about the rest.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 1984-1985 DUES? IF NOT, SEND $7.00 TO JOHN M. WHELAN, 38 COLONY COURT, MURRAY HILL, NJ 07974.

WANTED! TOWER & LYON BOOKLET

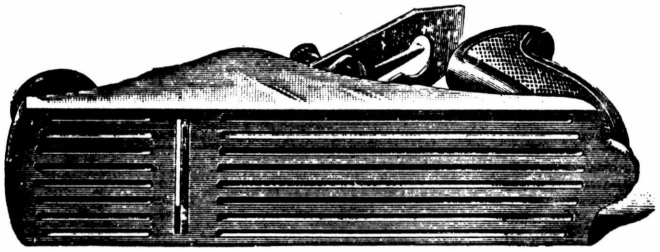
Advertisement of Chaplin's Improved Plane, *Carpentry & Building*, c. 1905.
The Dec. 24, 1902 date was in error and should be Dec. 23, 1902.
(From Roger K. Smith, PTAMPIA)

FAR AHEAD for Smooth, easy work and holding edge will be YOUR VERDICT ON TRYING

CHAPLIN'S IMPROVED PLANES

Patented Feb. 14, 1899; Oct. 30 1900; Dec. 24 1902

We invite the Severest Comparative Tests



We want you to have a copy of our booklet

"A 'Plane' Talk About a Good Plane!"

We want you to have a copy, for it is a booklet you really need in your business.
We'll gladly send you this booklet with our compliments, promptly upon receipt of your request.

Tower & Lyon Company, 95 Chambers Street, New York

CRAFTSman Roger K. Smith has discovered a copy of the Tower & Lyon booklet "A 'Plane' Talk About a Good Plane," which was described in the T & L advertisement (c. 1905) that is illustrated above.

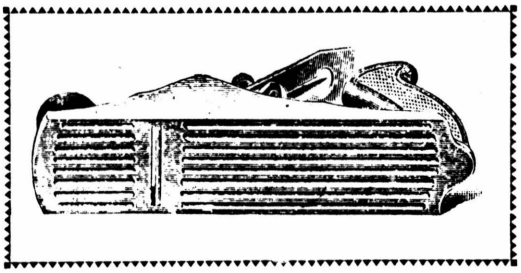
The original of this work is quite small, 3" x 5", and contains sixteen pages, including covers. Unfortunately, Roger's copy is missing the center signature, which includes pages 7, 8, 9, and 10.

We have reproduced the cover (below) and two pages (opposing page) in the hope that one of our members has a complete copy. If we can locate one that has all the pages, Roger will reprint it and distribute it free to all members of CRAFTS.

Although Tower & Lyon was a New York firm, it had a New Jersey connection. According to Roger Smith's Patented Transitional and Metallic Planes in America, 1827-1927 (1981), Tower & Lyon maintained a factory in Glen Ridge, N.J., right on the Bloomfield border, c. 1903-1914. The Chaplin Improved planes were probably manufactured in this factory.

John J. Tower, the President of the company, lived in nearby Montclair from 1901 until his death in 1911. His son Warren M. Tower, an officer in the company, also lived in Montclair.

A "Plane" Talk about a good Plane



Tower & Lyon Company

95 CHAMBERS STREET,

New York

A "Plane" Talk About a Good Plane

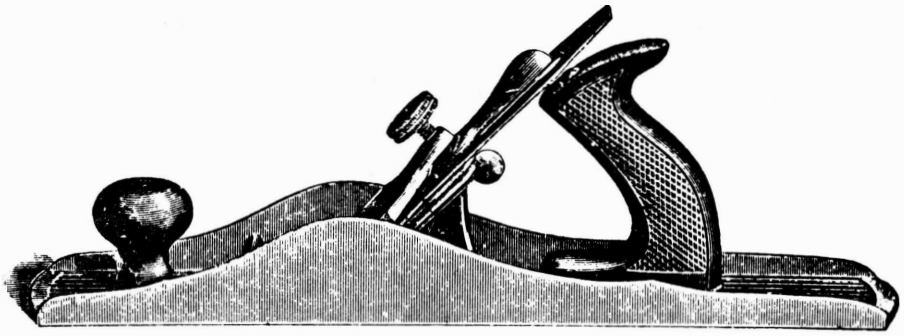
They say a man is judged by the company he keeps.

The carpenter is certainly judged by his tools.

The expert carpenter,—the man of long experience, invariably appreciates the value of good tools; tools that not only save labor when in actual use, but which require the least attention when *not* in use,—which require the least adjustment, the least sharpening, and the least repairs.

For years the perfect plane has been eagerly sought.

—2—



NOTICE the angle or bevel to which our Cutting Bits are ground and sharpened. Do not change this angle in re-sharpening! It is the best for uniformly smooth work and for holding thelcutting edge!

In re-sharpening, be careful to keep the bevel on a straight, line, not an oval or rocking bevel.

—13—

WHATSIT? IDENTIFIED

The "Whatsit?" pictured at the right stumped all the experts at last February's CRAFTS meeting. There was not even a good guess. The gadget is patented, but the patent date is not legible.

Irwin Turner, the owner, then tried another approach. He took it to the Lambertville Flea Market, out it on a table, and asked if anyone knew what it was. Several people did.

It is a device for aligning bicycle wheels. At least one person who identified it called it a "spoker." A search of local bicycle shops found one that is still using an identical device for straightening wheels.

Collecting quilts and coverlets has become as much a part of the antiques world as collecting other artifacts. I have only ten of them in my small collection, but I have not stopped seeking.

Dating a quilt or coverlet is a challenge unless, like many of the Jacquard coverlets, it has the date woven into the corner, or in the case of a quilt, the maker has taken the time to put her name and the date on it.

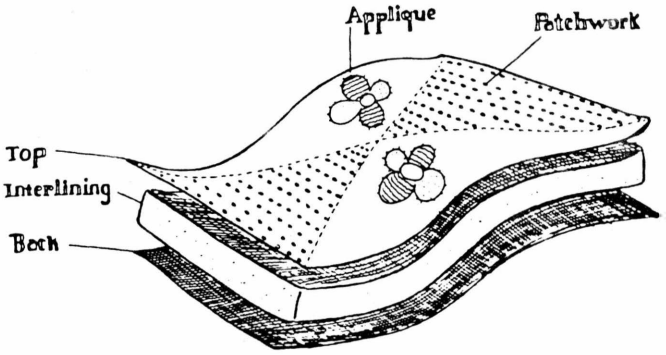
Signing a quilt with cross-stitch goes back to the 1700's. Before 1830 homemade ink was also used to sign quilts. Often this ink contained rusted iron, which was used "to make it last"; but instead it corroded the fabric and faded it. After 1830 indelible inks were used, and from 1840 to 1870 stencils and stamps were used quite often.

In the nineteenth century makers would sometimes embroider their names and dates with strands of human hair, like the hair wreaths and jewelry. This was done mostly during the Civil War. Morbid if you ask me.

Quilts can be approximately dated by the material, the thread, the way the quilting was done, the shapes and sizes. All of these are hints as to age. Components of the design can be particularly helpful—the number of stars in a flag, political slogans, dress styles, and forms of transportation. If it belonged to your great-grandmother, you can just add twenty years for each generation (three generations, sixty years).

There are two types of quilts—best and common. The best spent most of its life in a blanket chest, the common on a bed. I have more common than best. There are quilted, tied (layers of fabric tied together with knots), patchwork, applique, and whole-cloth quilts, which were used throughout the colonies. The fabrics used in the older quilts were homespun, linsey-woolsey, and linen.

The dyes used to color fabric can also tell you something. Prior to 1820 only natural dyes were used, made from plants, flowers, insects, minerals, and barks of trees. In 1820 harsher mineral dyes were used. In 1856 Perkins discovered synthetic coaltar dyes, and we now have brighter, more permanent colors.



Quilt Anatomy

In America we used the running stitch for quilting, and in Europe they backstitched. I do both. I run for 12 stitches and then backstitch. I have made three quilts and one coverlet so far. Some of the stitches in old quilts are so fine you need a manifying glass to see them. On everyday quilts, the stitches would follow the outlines of the applique or the patchwork or move across the quilt top in plain parallel rows. The "best" quilts would be quilted with a complex pattern design, such as plumes, hearts, swags, stars, or wreaths.

Some of the patch patterns are: Log Cabin, Crazy, Rob Peter-Pay Paul, Royal Cross, Drunkard's Path, Friendship, Hawaiian, Broken Star, Turkey Track, Pineapple, Star of Bethlehem, and Blazing Star, to name just a few.

On the following page is a list showing the trends in quilt design.

I am having a Quilt and Coverlet Show at the Township of Lebanon Museum on September 8, with a wine and cheese party at 7:00 pm. The quilts are coming out of private homes and will be at the Museum until October 22. If you have a quilt and would like to show it off, get in touch with me during the evening at (201) 537-4623.

If you would like to do more

reading about quilts, I recommend: "The Romance of Patchwork Quilts in America" by Carrie Hall and Rose Kretsinger; "Old Patchwork Quilts and the Women Who Made Them" by Ruth Finley; and "One Hundred and One Patchwork Patterns" by Ruby Short McKim.

TRENDS IN DESIGN

1776-1830	**Liberty Quilts:** These have a central eagle, often encircled by a wreath of stars. Sometimes the stars represent the number of states in the Union, and thus give a clue to the date of the quilt's manufacture.
1824-1835	**Stenciled Quilts:** Popular for a short period, the designs were dye-painted onto the quilt top, using stencil patterns. On the older of these quilts, each component of the overall design—each leaf or petal, for example—was individually painted onto the fabric with its own stencil. Later, an entire flower or plant might be applied using a single stencil pattern, giving a more mass-produced appearance. Stenciled quilts were again popular in 1850-60.
1830's to the present	**Alphabet Quilts:** Quilts with names, verses, or the alphabet itself worked out in patches, these first appear in the 1830's.
1840-1860	**Album Quilts:** These counterpanes, quilted in a variety of stitching and piecework patterns, are made up of blocks donated by many different people. At this period they were very popular in the area of Baltimore, Maryland, and are later found in all parts of the country. Frequently they were presented as gifts to teachers, ministers, and other respected public figures.
1850 to the present	**Autograph Quilts:** Patches for these quilts might be sent to various celebrities for their signatures, or requests might be made for patches from their clothing, which were then incorporated into a quilt.
1850-1880	**Log Cabin Quilts:** Found throughout the United States, these quilts may owe their popularity to the widespread interest in Abe Lincoln's origins. Early log cabin quilts were pieced from mohair and worsted cloth; later, they were commonly made from cotton prints and challis; and finally, the Victorian quilters produced them in silks, satins, and brocades.
1860's	**Union Quilts:** Prompted by the Civil War, these quilts sport diagonal arrangements of appliqued eagles.
1860-1880	**Silhouette Quilts:** Here, repetitive designs were used, featuring rows of celebrity profiles, flags, fans, butterflies, horseshoes, schoolhouses, and the like.
1860-1880	**Botanical Quilts:** Part of a trend toward more realistic design components on quilt tops, these quilts portray naturalistic plants or tree leaves, often native species, as design elements.
1870-1890	**Victorian Quilts:** Done in elegant fabrics and covered with elaborate embroidery, Victorian quilts often made use of Roman Square, Crazy Quilt, Quilt, and a variety of oriental quilt designs.
1875-1900	**Kate Greenaway:** Kate Greenaway-type figures make their appearance, especially on nursery quilts.
1876-1900	**Centennial Quilts:** These quilts are often prominently dated, and exhibit a variety of patriotic design motifs.

In the next issue: Salt Glaze Pottery.

LETTERS

In view of escalating costs, comparable dues established by other organizations, and the growing interest of CRAFTS programs, I hereby propose that...CRAFTS dues be increased from the present $7.00 per annum to $10.00 per annum...which I consider a modest increase, all things considered.

—Robert S. Gargiuli
Plainfield, NJ

THE BIG WRENCH

When Dr. Frank Kingsbury attended the Missouri Valley Wrench Club meeting in Nebraska last May, he met Miss Helen Hanson of Sioux Center, Iowa. Helen has more than 1,500 wrenches in her collection, including one 5½ feet long.

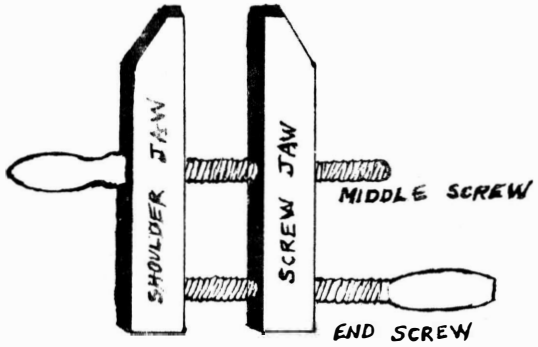
It was love at first sight. Not Frank and Helen, but Frank and the WRENCH! The three of them are pictured above.

[A Tool, continued from page 1]
in America, produced the tool in the 1820's.

An exhaustive list of manufacturers in this field remains unavailable. However, reference to several names drawn from nineteenth-century tool catalogs suffices here. Yet a caveat is needed. Some large retail stores stamped the firms logo on the adjuvant tool. For example, Sandusky Tool Company (Ohio) and the Chapin-Stephens Company (Conn.) each advertised wooden hand screws for sale under the firms name. This practice became embarassing when one discovered that these retailers sold clamps bearing identical manufacturer's stock numbers (800 through 816); identical jaw lengths (4 through 24 inches); identical screw lengths (5 through 28 inches); identical diameters of respective screws; plus additional similarities.

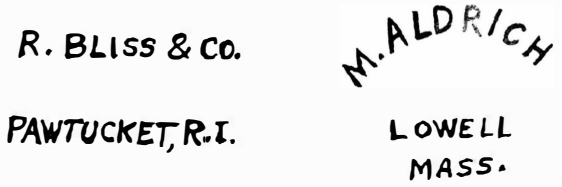
The two firms (situated in different regions) were separated geographically by approximately 600 miles. A single maker could have furnished the identical but unsigned tools in quantity to both retailers. Without additional research, it would be difficult to identify reliably the actual manufacturer. By way of contrast, Hammacher, Schlemmer & Company practised a different merchandising policy. The firm sold wooden hand screws made by Rufus Bliss & Company, Pawtucket, R.I., and M. Aldrich, Lowell, Mass. Nevertheless, each manufacturer's product was identified separately in the retailer's catalog. Hence the consumer was enabled to purchase hand screws made either by Bliss or by Aldrich.

The structure of a wooden hand screw can be delineated briefly. As illustrated, the four parts are identified as follows: a shoulder jaw; a screw jaw; an end screw (spindle); and a middle screw (spindle. The jaws were made of beech, maple, or birch. The screws were usually turned out of hickory. The shoulder jaw (contains no threads) provides a loose hole for the middle screw, plus a shallow socket for the end screw. On the other hand, the screw jaw provides two properly threaded holes within which the screws rotate in order to move the jaws outward and inward. To move these parallel jaws, the joiner grasps the handles of each screw and "cranks" the clamp in a circular motion, holding the screws tightly.



To clutch a work-piece, the tool is placed in position to grasp the object. The middle screw is tightened first, tipping slightly the outer ends of the jaws away from the surface of the work piece. Next, the end screw is tightened enough to grasp the stock firmly and/or to squeeze glue from the joints of the work-piece. A word of caution: the craftsman avoids overtightening.

Attention can be directed to the logos utilized by several American manufacturers, such as those shown below. Usually the tool is "signed" on the outer end of the shoulder jaw.



A few additional details can facilitate an understanding of this adjuvant tool:

First, wooden hand screws are available in at least seventeen sizes, based on length of jaw (arm or shoulder) in inches: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8½, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, and 24.

Second, American manufacturers who utilized stock numbers usually identified the sizes in reverse order—the shorter the jaw, the higher the indentification number. For example, Chapin-Stephens (Union Factory) started with No. 800 (24" jaw) and terminated with No. 816 (4" jaw).

Third, the screws (spindles) always were cut longer than the jaws with which they were paired. Surpri-

singly, 87.9 percent are 2" or longer than the jaw paired with it. The average difference in length between jaw and screw is approximately 3 inches.

Fourth, the diameter of the threaded screw varies according to the jaw's length. Among the seventeen sizes of jaws noted above, there are nine different diameters of the screw: ¼, 3/8, ½, 5/8, 3/4, 7/8, 1, 1 1/8, and 1¼ inches. The four smallest diameters are utilized only for wooden hand screws under 10 inches in jaw length. The three largest diameters of threaded spindles are generally utilized for clamps having a jaw length of 16 inches or longer.

Fifth, sometimes a decorative feature was added: selected outer edges of the jaws were beaded or heavily chamfered. This "extra quality" feature was offered on hand screws for an additional charge of twenty-five cents per dozen clamps!

Sixth, no oil of any kind was ever put on the wooden threads. Purchasers of clamps manufactured by Rufus Bliss applied to the threads of new hand screws a paste comprising graphite (black lead) mixed with tallow, which made the tools work easier and lengthened their service life.

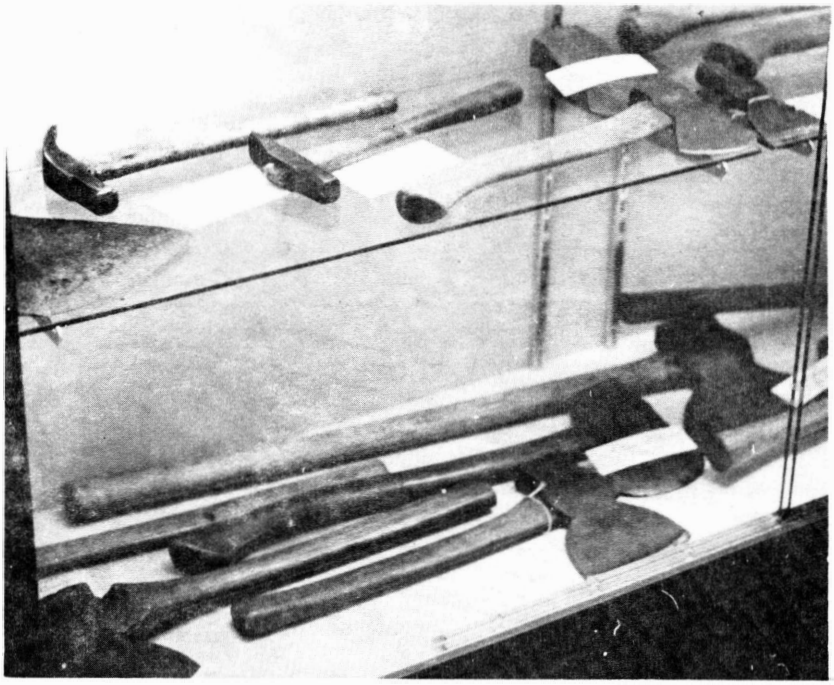
In our modern world today, wooden hand screws have at least half a hundred uses. For our purpose one can mention twelve situations wherein the joiner finds the adjuvant tool of practical value: (1) coping saw V block clamped firmly to workbench or table; (2) Windsor chair seat block held for shaping with scorp and spoke shave; (3) wood pieces held down on workbench for planing off "mill marks"; (4) dry-run tests of cabinet joints and other fits; (5) safe holding of small objects for machine sanding; (6) small metal objects gripped for grinding and/or sharpening; (7) picture frame hand screw jig (for gluing), which provides diagonal pressure evenly to the four corners; (8) wooden clamps to hold related stock pieces together temporarily for layout work; (9) bench holddown for special hand work—drilling, mortising, carving, etc.; (10) curved jigs for bending wood into desired shapes for stair risers and stringers, furniture, etc.; (11) holding in proper position the dovetail guide and the notched-joint jig; and (12) the hand screw as a third hand in assembling cabinet work.

This preliminary list leaves unmentioned the indispensable help provided by wooden hand screws for doing kerf cuts, pocket holes, door veneers, outside mitres, finger joints, tenoning tasks, sawhorse projects, and innumerable jigs for safety and convenience on power tools and woodworking machinery. A distinguished cabinet maker cites a major problem in this sphere: the craftsman never has enough wooden hand screws to carry on his work!

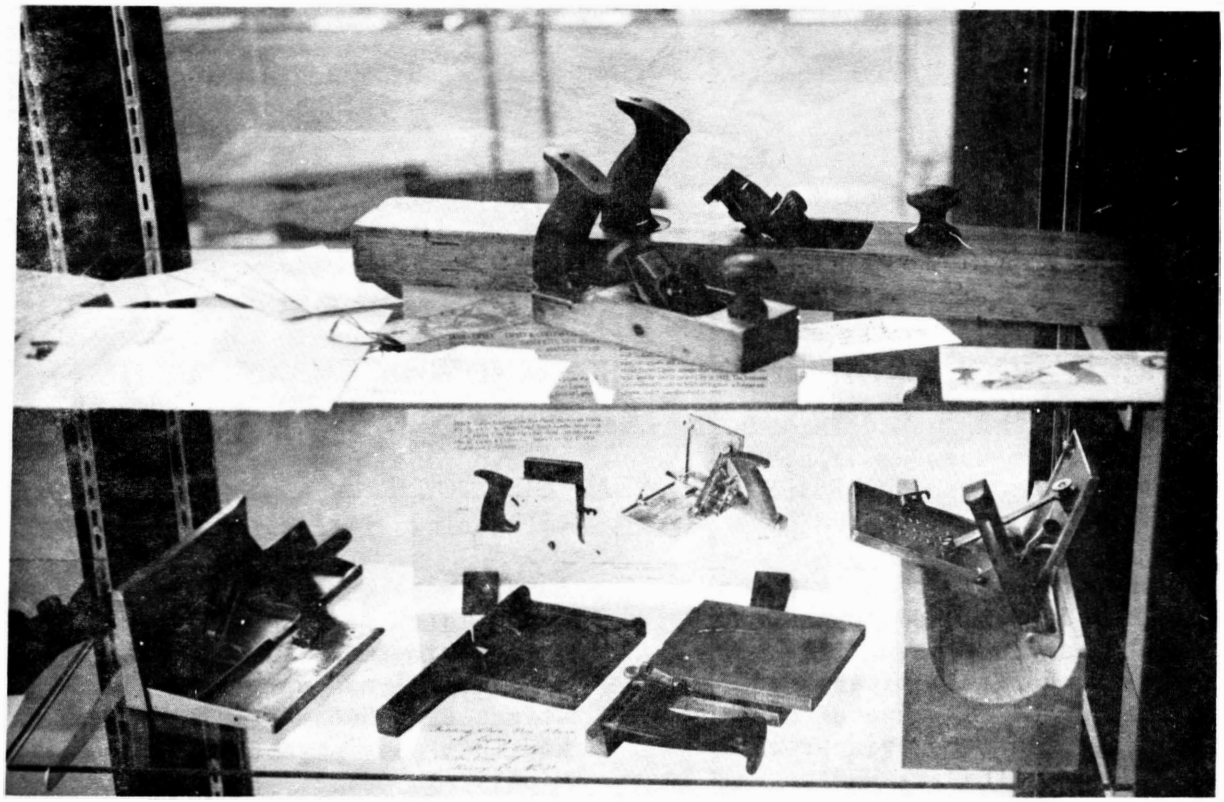
NEW JERSEY TOOL DISPLAY AT E.A.I.A. JUNE MEETING

There were six cases packed with tools made in New Jersey. . .

and New Jersey tool catalogs. . . and even a CRAFTS of New Jersey truck. . .



There were hammers and axes. . .



and planes and more planes. . .

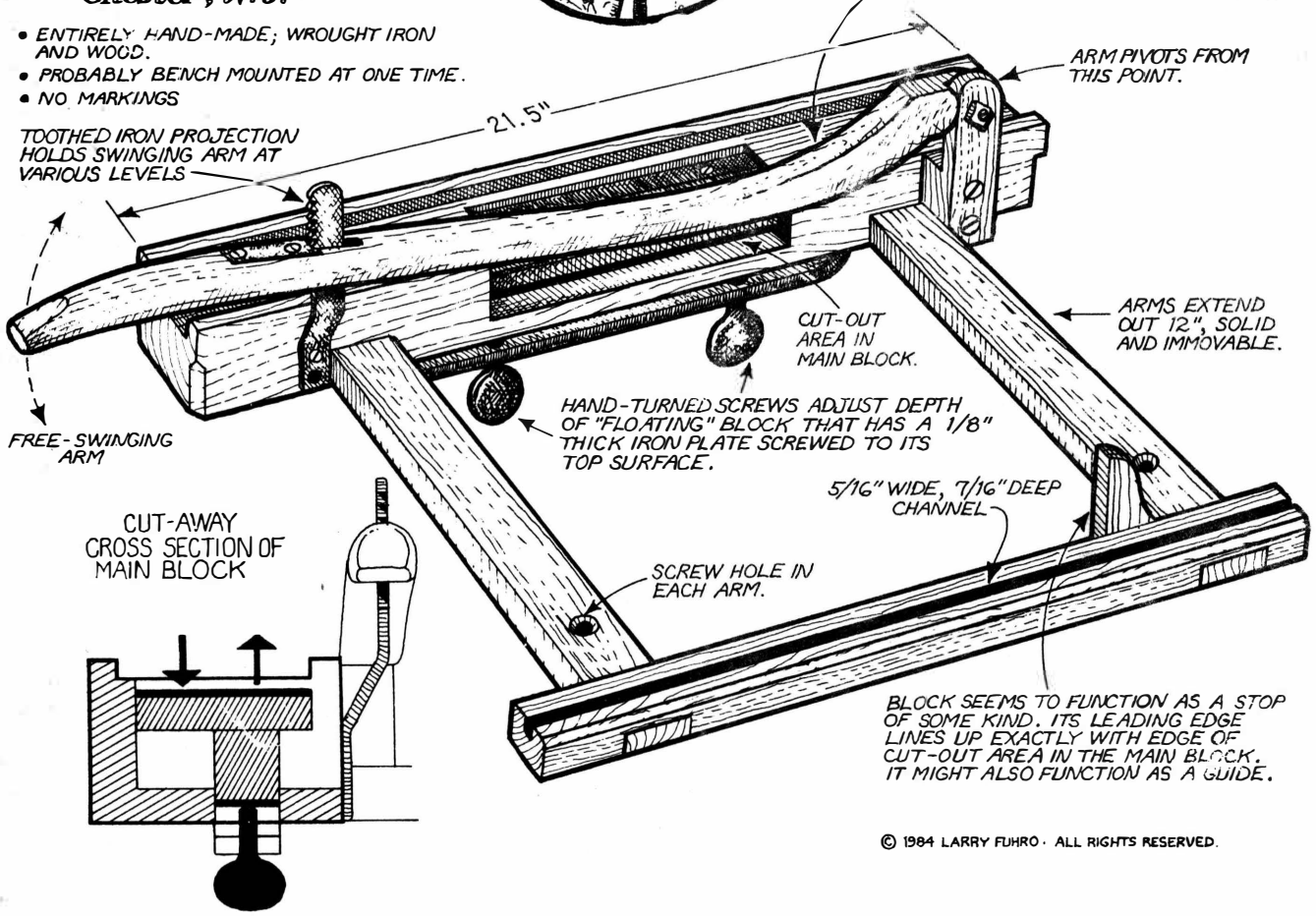
(Photos by Don Kahn)

Pop Rivet's What's It? No.15

by LARRY FUHRO

Thanks to Lew Cooper
Chester, N.J.

- ENTIRELY HAND-MADE; WROUGHT IRON AND WOOD.
- PROBABLY BENCH MOUNTED AT ONE TIME.
- NO MARKINGS



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GADGETS · DOOHICKEYS · THINGAMAJIGS · AND WHATCHAMACALLITS

* *

FOURTH OF JULY AT OLD TOWNE

by Harry O'Neill

CRAFTS annual Fourth of July demonstration at East Jersey Olde Towne went off with a "big bang."

Don ("the Snake Man") Lipsey did his usual fine job of jigging out curly wooden reptiles for hordes of appreciative kids. Coppersmith Jack Whelan showed examples of his excellent copper work and produced a number of items before admiring groups.

Dave Pollak held the attention of onlookers with his fine lathe work. Dave's wife Tracy was the star of the show. She cranked the five-foot lathe wheel most of the time and was always there to take over when one of the macho males tired.

Cabinetmaker Les Beyer showed how a beautiful mahogany table was constructed with hand tools. Spectators kept him busy with questions. Dom Micalizzi, our only foreign member (Brooklyn!), demonstrated the mysteries of rake making with the help of yours truly. Two were actually completed.

The show was the hit of the Olde Towne Fourth of July festivities. CRAFTS thanks all of the CRAFTSmen and CRAFTSladies who participated.