

JD's 151 – A Fresh Look At An Old Plane

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At times when collecting, it's not unusual to bring a tool home, put it on a shelf and forget why one brought it home in the first place as it becomes just a part of a display and loses its *Identity*.

Well, this did happen with the subject of this story, a Shoulder plane made by John HOLLAND, London. I was showing a friend a few old tools recently and the plane, just mentioned, when handed to the friend, caused me to take 'a fresh look' at this 'old plane' which had just regained its 'identity'.

The maker of this unique plane, John HOLLAND, was working in London at 68 Oakley Street Lambeth, then later at 93 York Road Lambeth from 1861 to 1892. John HOLLAND was a neighbour of the well documented plane maker Thomas NORRIS in York Road. NORRIS was the only manufacturer of traditional English planes to develop an adjusting mechanism and his fame was based on this improvement.¹



The enlarged top photo shows the HOLLAND stamp. The second photo above illustrates the added width to the sole of the plane exaggerated by the filing of the vertical front corners of the body and identifies the maker in spite of what looks like a deliberate attempt to remove the HOLLAND mark, or perhaps remove the previous owner's name, one can only speculate.

HOLLAND, John

68 Oakley St., Lambeth

93 York Rd., Lambeth

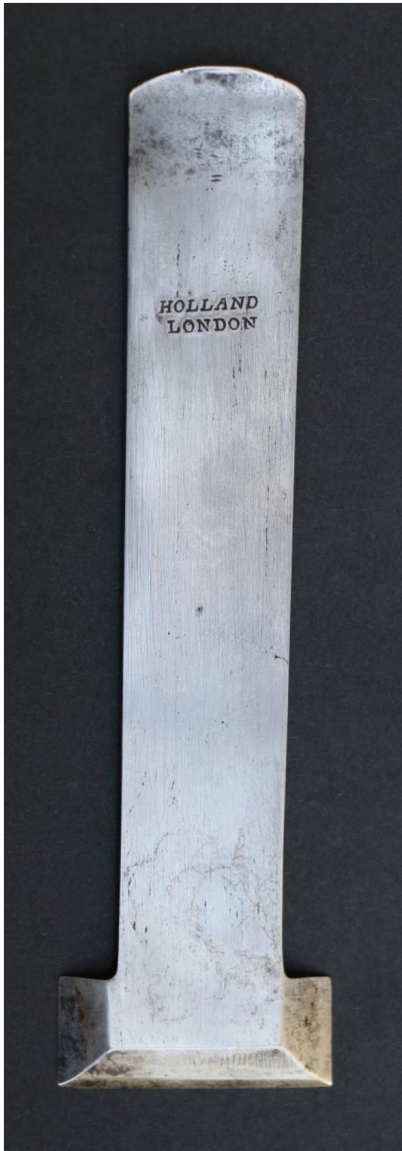
Toolmaker and dealer. Maker of good quality metal shoulder (and other) planes, some marked only "HOLLAND", others including "OAKLEY ST". A neighbour of T. Norris in York Rd.

LONDON

1861 - 1878

1878 - 1892





The body of the plane is 1 3/4" wide flared out at the sole an additional 1/32", with the front vertical edges of the body filed to exaggerate the taper, now if this isn't unique, it does set this plane apart.

I hadn't given the maker John HOLLAND much thought, actually my plane is the only one that I'd come across, so after seeing this plane with fresh eyes, I thought I'd better do a little research.

I found information on this maker is a little scant. I was familiar with HOLLOND & HOLLAND of London, who were, and still are makers of top quality guns and rifles. Maybe the late nineteenth century Plane maker, H. C. HOLLAND with a factory at 25 Falcon Road Clapham Junction London was a relation. However more research needed; must get back the plane in hand.

References:

1. British Planemakers from 1700
W. L. Goodman 3rd Edition
pages 284 and 363





Why unique?

You may ask, at first glance it just looks like any other Shoulder plane of the period, it is infilled with quality Rosewood, not uncommon, the wood at the toe and front of the plane has been badly scored making it difficult to read the maker's name and the wedge has a bit of hammer damage; well take a close look. The plane is close to standard length of 8", this one 7 ¾" long. The accompanying photos give an overall impression of the quality of the plane, also the high standard set by the factory; competition with the factory next door may well have been a factor in achieving this high level of quality control.

How many planes did this factory turn out?

Who knows, though they seem to turn up in the United Kingdom reasonably frequently judging by overseas antique tool outlets which indicate that John HOLLAND had a wide range of stock, not just Shoulder planes, also Rebate planes, Smoothing planes, Chariot planes and others.

Hackney Tools Photos

The photos used for the following discussion were downloaded from HACKNEY TOOLS and Antique Metal Planes & Infills at "The Best Things" (in the UK), many thanks to Garry Cook for allowing me to use these in this article.

Chariot planes

In reference to chariot planes Garry, on his site Hackney Tools, <http://hackneytools.com/2013/02/john-holland-planemaker/> has one there very similar to one made by NORRIS sitting on a felt pouch similar to one supplied by NORRIS, which begs the question; *Did HOLLAND have a close tie with his neighbour?*



Gunmetal Shoulder Plane

Notice the variation of the punch used to strike the name on the blade of my plane and the gunmetal Shoulder plane on Garry's site, maybe indicating that they were made at different addresses and in different time slots.



John HOLLAND obviously was a maker of a wide variety of infill planes, and a lot is known about him, perhaps he may have only supplied a London market, however as time passes, no doubt, more information about the man and his enterprise will surface.



Do you have a HOLLAND and HOLLAND Plane?

Send your photos or additional information to JD
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