

JD's

GREGSTEEL Dovetail Saw

John Daniel



Last week I was given an old tool box half full of cabinet making tools, maybe it was just the usual assortment of a few late nineteenth century wooden moulding planes, a couple of spirit levels, wooden jack and a coffin shaped smoother, a chamfer plane, a few chisels, and so on. Additions such as a Hunt (Sydney) spirit level, steel tape measure, tin snips, saw sets etc., almost forgot, a small dovetail saw, the inspiration for this article.

The dovetail saw had been over stamped and roughly engraved, then over-cleaned in the past (no doubt to remove the damage), however with a careful re-clean a partial name became evident, "GR.....EL" and "Aust." stamped underneath, the remnant of the stamp of GREGSTEEL, the maker of WOODSTOCK planes and spokeshaves.



Gregsteel Saws

I hadn't come across GREGSTEEL saws before and had only associated the name with planes and other "WOODSTOCK" marked tools that I had come across such as a spokeshave in my possession.

It is little wonder that Mr. Jim Gregory, a Saw Doctor, the founder of Gregory Steel Products Pty Ltd. at No. 25 Johnson Street, Collingwood, Victoria would manufacture saws as well as planes blades, spanners and other steel goods in his obviously well-equipped factory.

Trevor D, Semmens, Author of Australian Woodworking Planemakers, states that, "Steel used was silchrome steel purchased from B.H.P. and was rolled to Gregory's specification".

Now back to the saw: -The 7-inch blade has 12 points to the inch, is heavily backed and is fitted with a Coachwood handle. The heavy back gives a controlled feel when in use and after sympathetic attention the saw cuts smoothly and will be ideal for fine dovetailing and joint cutting.

This Gregsteel saw was indeed a nice inclusion in the old tool box.

Acknowledgement

For many years I'd been looking for information on Australian tools, and when in Melbourne back in the mid 1990's, I happened to come across Trevor D. Semmens' publication, Australian Planemakers, then acquired his second edition several years later, and as luck would have it, was given his latest publication, Australian Woodworking Planemakers, in which I used to assist in writing this article.

Thank you Trevor for your constant search for knowledge and putting it in a form that's accessible to all collectors and historians.

Editor' Comment

The NEWS editor has seen one of these 7" Greg Steel back-saws. Gregsteel knives are also known. *The question is:*

Did Gregsteel make other saws?