

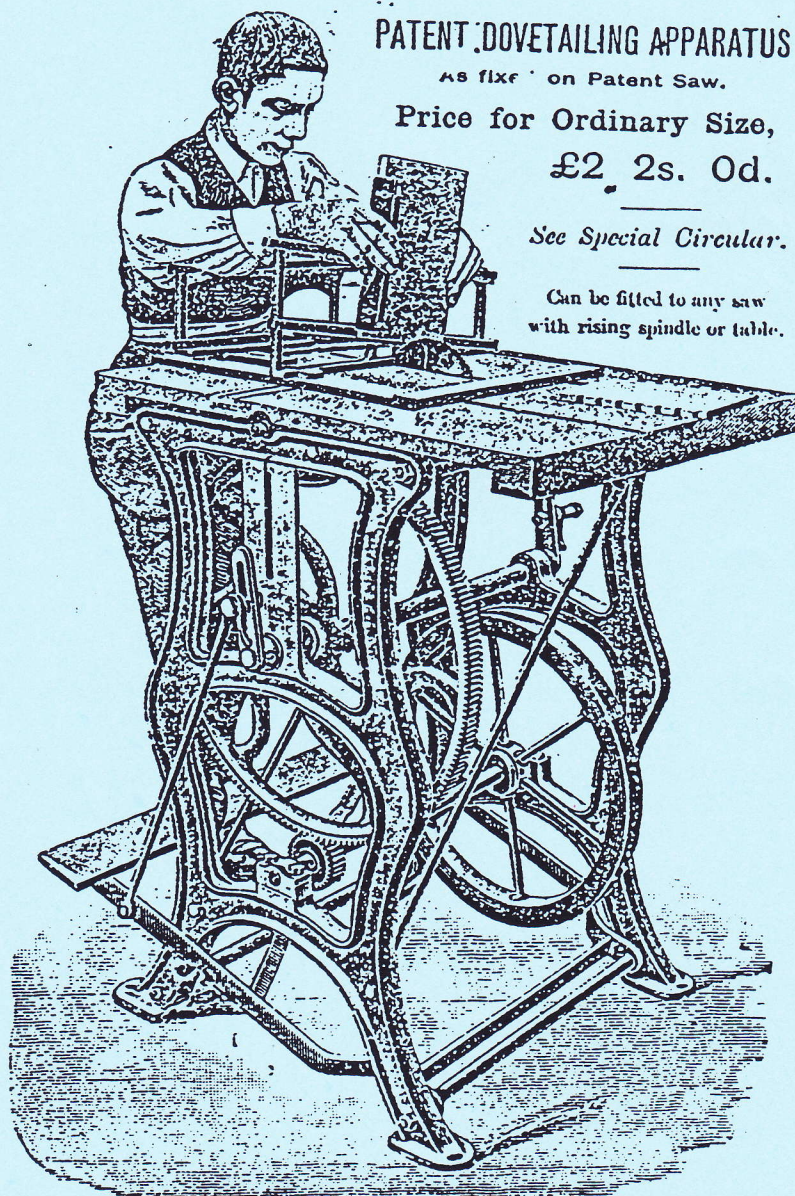


TTG

THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS GROUP INC.

THE TIMBER AND WORKING WITH WOOD SHOW
SPECIAL TTTG NEWSLETTER

JULY /AUGUST 1998



PATENT DOVETAILING APPARATUS

As fitted on Patent Saw.

Price for Ordinary Size,
£2, 2s. 0d.

See Special Circular.

Can be fitted to any saw
with rising spindle or table.

TTTG Inc.

THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS GROUP

WHAT IS TTTG.

TTTG promotes the preservation of traditional skills and tools.
TTTG members are diverse and share an interest in old tools.
Members include trades persons and tool collectors.
TTTG is concerned with all aspects of traditional technology.
All trades, tools and machines are seen as worthy of study.
Membership of TTTG is open to all.

WHAT DOES TTTG DO.

TTTG holds regular meetings in Sydney. (Every second month).
At each meeting a guest speaker makes a presentation.
At each meeting old tools are offered for sale to members.
TTTG publishes a regular newsletter.
The newsletter is sent to all members.
TTTG offers special events for members.

HOW DO I JOIN TTTG.

The annual membership subscription is \$30.
To join send a cheque for \$30 to;

**The Treasurer TTTG Inc.
P.O. Box 240
Grosvenor Place
Sydney N.S.W. 1220**

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Phone: _____

MORTICE CHISELS

There are several types of woodworking chisels made expressly for cutting (chopping) mortises.

The Common or Joiner's Mortice Chisel This is a heavy chisel intended for general morticing in soft or hard woods. The handle is oval and without ferrule. As with all true mortice chisels the blade is wider than it is thick and tapers in width from tang to bevel. The best quality were ground truly parallel in thickness, common quality were slightly tapered. The bulk of the blade is wrought iron with a back layer of fire welded steel. Sizes are to match standard plough irons, but the same size plough iron is always nominally thicker. As mostly these chisels were used to mortice framing or doors this was to allow panels to enter grooves freely. Common sizes used for joinery $\frac{3}{8}$ ", $\frac{1}{2}$ ", $\frac{9}{16}$ ". The $\frac{1}{2}$ " was the most commonly used, $\frac{1}{4}$ " doors.

Some manufacturers listed, at greater price Cabinet Mortice Chisels, these were same pattern but perhaps slightly smaller. Common cabinet size $\frac{5}{16}$ ". Sizes of both Joiner's and Cabinet from $\frac{1}{8}$ " to $\frac{7}{16}$ ", larger sizes were listed by some makers.

Sash Mortice Chisel A lighter chisel with turned ferrelled handle and leather tang washer. Intended to mortice sash stiles but also suitable for cabinet work. For deep mortises the Joiner's Mortice Chisel should be used. Sash mortice chisels are suitable for shallow mortises, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ ", and soft woods. Common sizes: Joinery $\frac{3}{8}$ ", Cabinet $\frac{5}{16}$ ". Made from wrought iron laid with steel.

Special Mortice Chisels

Drawer Mortice, or bolting iron

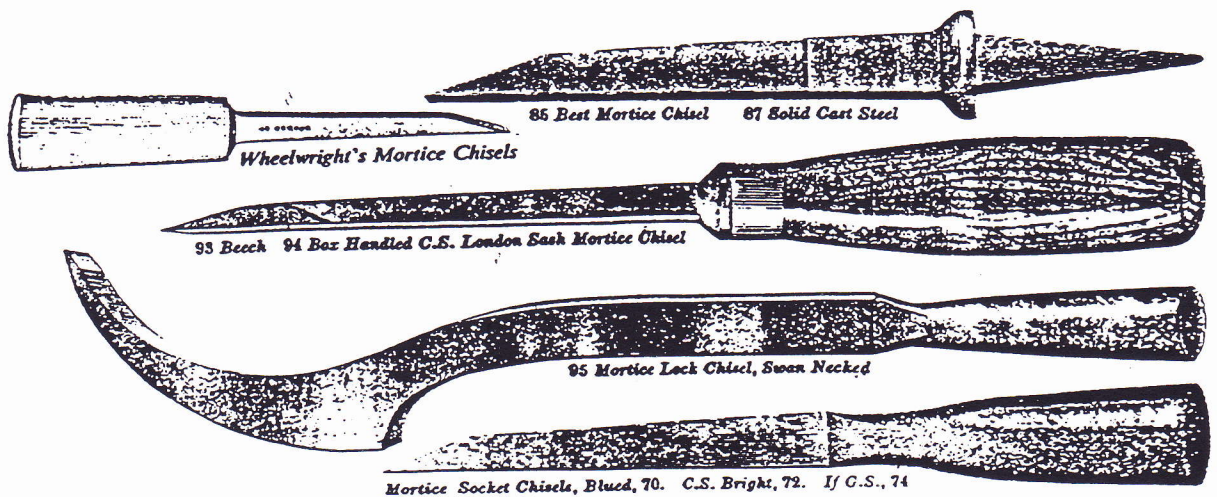
Small unhandled chisel used in fitting cabinet locks to drawers.

Lock Mortice Chisel (Swan-neck chisel)

Large handled chisel with curved blade. Used to clean out lock mortises when hanging panelled house doors. Cutting edge curved to

- a) cut end grain of tenons;
- b) lever out waste and flatten mortice bottom.

Both Sash and Lock Mortice can have beech, ash or box handles; Joiner's mortice beech or ash handles.



Handy Stop-Chamfer Plane.

Thinking it would be interesting to many of your readers, I have sent the drawings of a stop-chamfer plane, which has a great advantage over all others, in as much that it will cut the stop without the use of a chisel. It will chamfer, finish the stop, and angle perfectly clean, straight and smooth, better and much quicker than it is possible to do in the usual way. I have sent the drawings half size, of the plane I use myself, and I find it answers very well indeed for all class of work. It will work, stop and chamfer from three eighths inch to one and one eighths inch. Now, one word concerning the pitch of the iron. The pitch here given will bring the length of stop A, equal to width of chamfer B, the same with any width chamfer that the plane may be set at.

To set the stop for a given chamfer, remove the point of B, the required distance from C, screw it fast; it will then be ready for work.

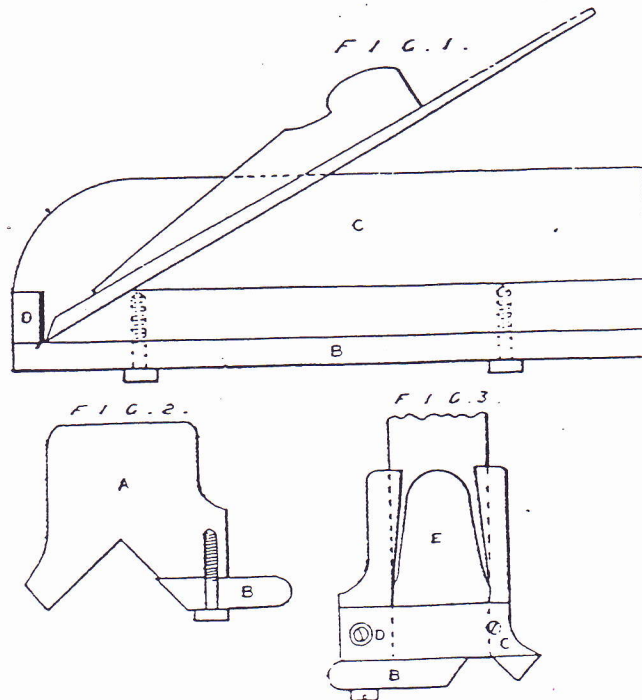
I have made frames with 96 stops in less than three hours with this plane- about one fourth of the time it would take in the usual way.

Figure 1 shows the longitudinal section through centre. D is a piece of iron to form the bed of the plane and also the mouth. Figure 2 is section of back-end, B showing the moveable stop. Figure 3 shows section of front end with iron and wedge. From: English Mechanic and World of Science Sept. 4 1880.

Editors' comment.

Sizes; A, C.	Stock	196mm	x	60mm	x	60mm.
B.	Fence	196mm	x	42mm	x	10mm
D.	Sole	60mm	x	16mm	x	10mm
E.	Blade	200mm	x	30mm	x	5mm
	Wedge	115mm	x	30mm	x	16mm

Extras: 2 csk. wood screws, 2 Cheese head wood screws



CENTRE BITS

"Here's your crow-bar and your centre bit,"

W.S.Gilbert

Pirates of Penzance 1879

When these words were first sung in 1879, the centre bit was quite familiar to the audience of the day. In fact when the Victorian carpenter or gentleman handyman wanted to drill a reasonable size hole in a piece of timber, he invariably reached for his brace and set of centre bits.

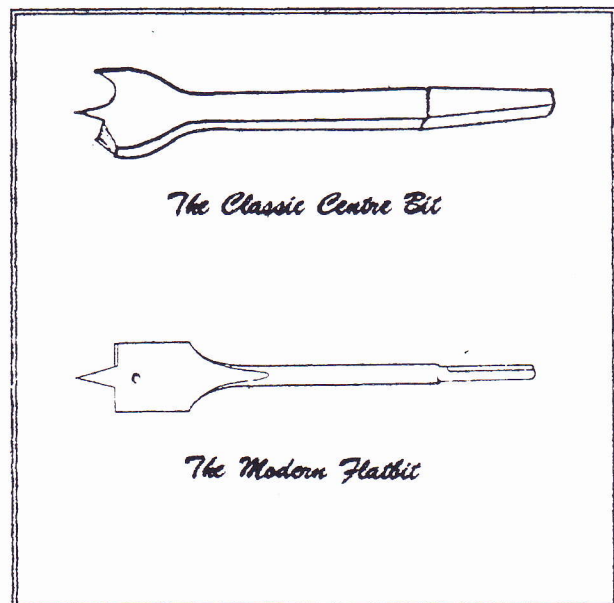
The centre bit had been widely used since the eighteenth century both in England and on the Continent. Bergeron's "Manuel du Tourneur" of 1816 shows a centre bit amongst a range of shell augers, nose bits and spoons, although in a position of no particular prominence. Salaman notes that in France the centre bit is sometimes called the English three-point bit which probably indicates its origin and accounts for its slower acceptance in France; national rivalry being what it is.

Why was the centre bit so popular? Why has it now disappeared from the tool catalogues? Although spiral or twist augers had been known for a long time, (Smith's "Key to the Various Manufactories of Sheffield", 1816, illustrates one) they were not in common use. They were expensive to make and generally made a fairly rough-edged hole as they were "Scotch" pattern without nicking spurs.

On the other hand the centre bit was extremely easy to make by small tool manufacturers. Even the local village blacksmith could turn out a centre bit which worked well. The scribing arm of the centre bit ensured that holes had cleanly cut edges even in splintery timber, the router-like single cutter produced a nearly flat-bottomed hole and the plain centre spike meant that the operator controlled the speed of cut by the amount of pressure he applied to the brace. (Later it was possible to buy centre bits with screw noses but these were more expensive and lacked the advantage of pressure control hence they proved less popular.)

True, the centre bit did not clear the hole of shavings like the spiral augers but for shallow holes the price to performance ratio of the centre bit was unmatched.

Centre bits were available in a large range of sizes from 1/4-inch to 3 1/2-inches in diameter, much larger than commonly available sizes of spiral augers. Salaman claims that for sizes over 2-inches centre bits were provided with a second intermediate nicking spur but I personally have never seen one.



Around 1650, the newly developed process for rolling strip steel using water power allowed the toolmakers in England and Holland to make wide bladed handsaws and to be able to dispense with the tensioning frame which had characterised the necessarily narrow bladed saws up to this time.

Small handsaws with narrower blades had previously been able to be made without frames and almost without exception they had straight in-line handles like a knife or else a simple pistol-grip handle. The early Dutch wide bladed handsaws continued this tradition and presumably because the saw looked unbalanced with a thin handle and wide blade, they added a decorative element to the saw nose to visually lighten the blade and improve its aesthetic appeal. Presumably these new wide bladed saws were considerably more expensive than their narrow bladed framesaw equivalents, so the elaborate toe decoration was entirely in keeping with the "top of the range" position which the new saws occupied.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the toe decoration was often characterised by stops, curls and elaborate piercing as shown in the sketch in fig 1.

The English sawmakers of this period had abandoned the knife handle or pistol-grip approach when they moved to the wider blades and had adopted the wide flat saw handle with which we are familiar today. This offered better control, was more comfortable to use, allowed greater pressure to be brought to bear on the workpiece

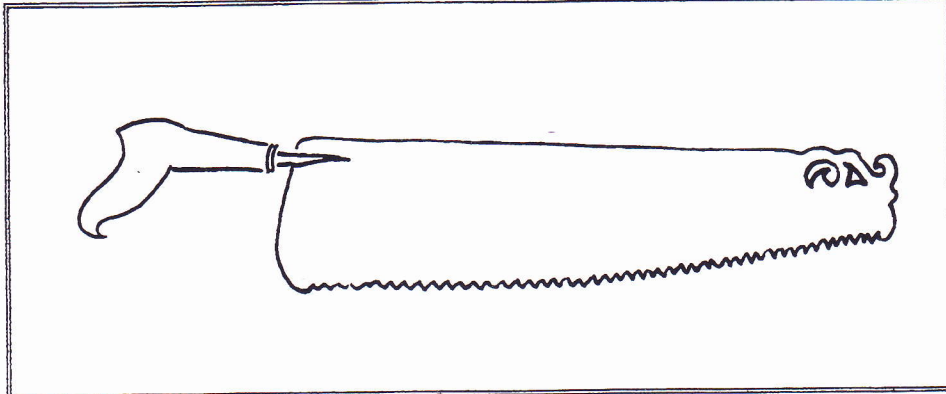


Fig.1 Dutch handsaw c.1698

and provided a better visual balance between blade and handle, obviating the necessity for toe decoration.

In 1689 William of Orange and his wife Mary ascended the throne of England bringing with them an infusion of Dutch craftsmen and styles.

Old traditions die hard and although the newcomers adopted the obviously superior English-style saw handles, the new Dutch craftsmen could not resist some minimal toe decoration.

Over the next century, the so-called "golden age of furniture" encouraged the parallel growth and standardisation of the woodworking tool industry. Smith's "Key" of 1816 shows a panel saw of now very familiar form where toe decoration has shrunk to a restrained vestigial nib. (fig 2) Perhaps this decorative feature would have finally

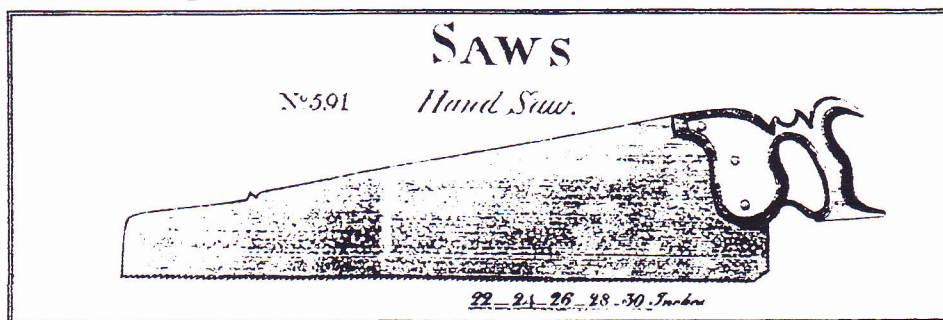


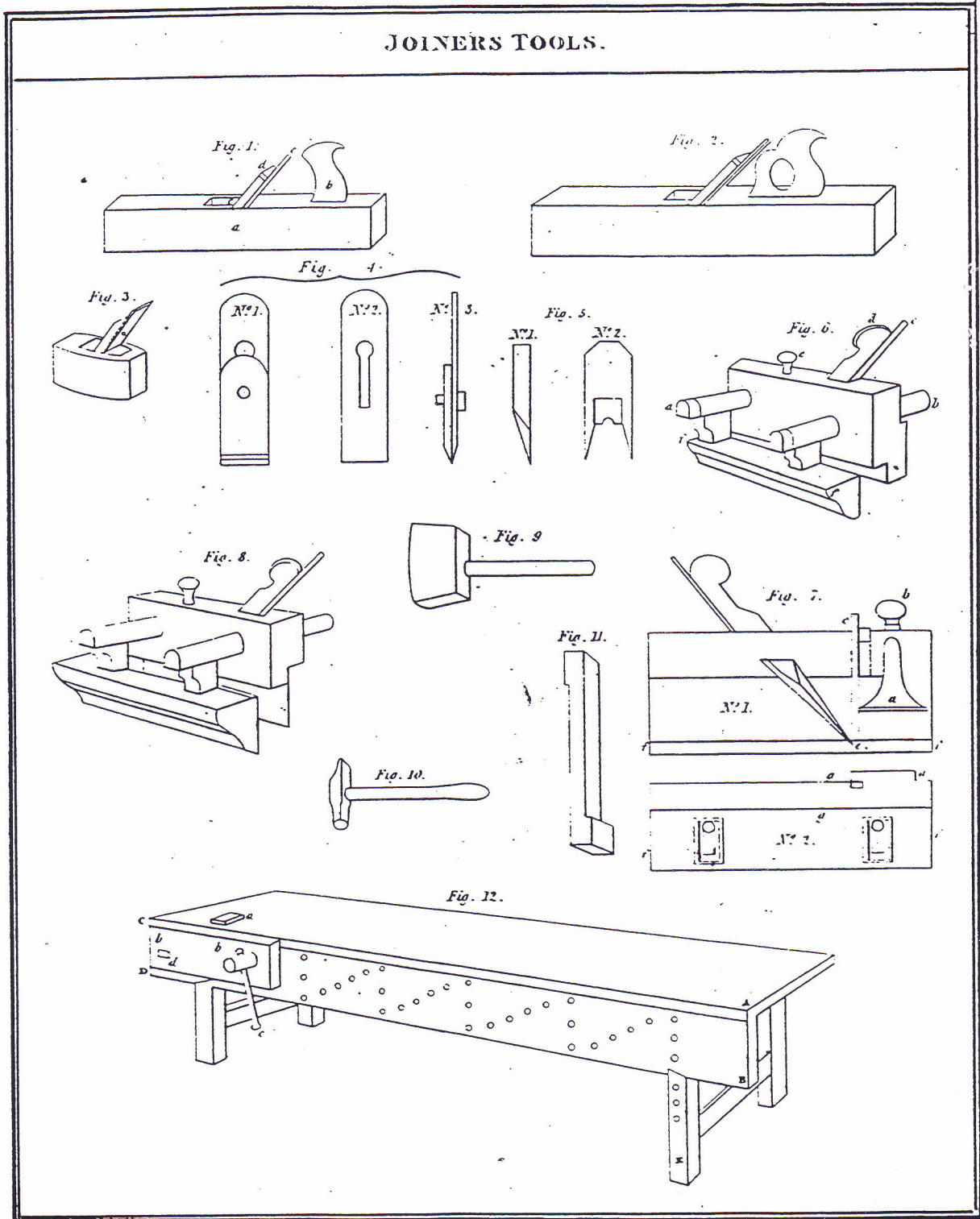
Fig.2 From Smith's "Key" 1816.

shrunk to nothing last century had it not been for Henry Disston and the influence he exerted on the global saw industry in the latter half of last century.

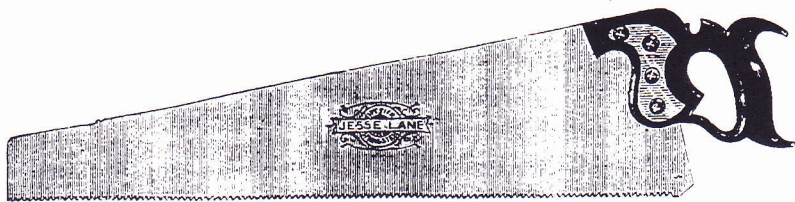
Disston was born in the U.K. in 1819 and learnt the saw trade with Spear and Jackson of Sheffield where he must have been very familiar with the decorative nib on hand saw blades. Emigrating to the U.S.A., he started to manufacture his own saws in 1840 and by 1855 he was producing his own strip steel.

So efficient were his manufacturing methods that he rapidly captured the world market and his saws became the product against which all others were judged. His famous streamlined "skew-back" saw was introduced in 1874 but the company continued to produce the classical straight-backed design complete with its historical nib up to the early 1920s and this was slavishly copied by many of its competitors.

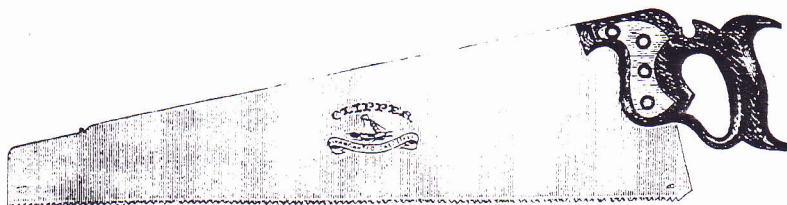
JOINERS TOOLS.



Disston's Special Hand Saws.



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