

News 103

October 2008



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THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS GROUP (Inc.)

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TTTG Newsletter Number 103 October 2008

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Subscription \$30

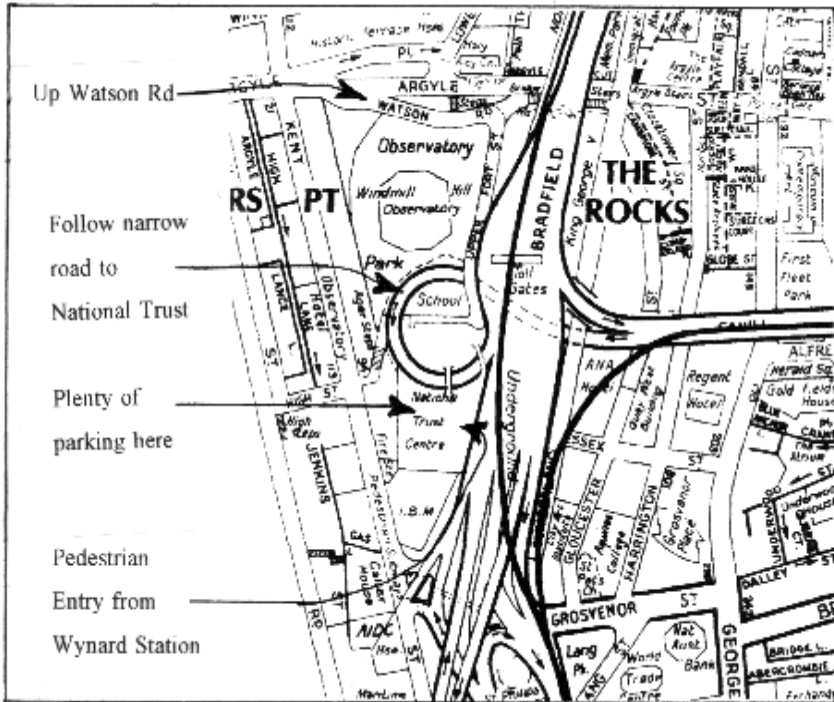
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Next Meeting

Tuesday 14th October

National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill

Annie Wyatt Room
"Doors Open" at 7pm



Programme

1) Presentation

Early Power Tools

2) TTTG Auction

Catering by Mario Dato

Next Meeting

EARLY POWER TOOLS

Modern power tools are both a blessing and a curse.

Portable power tools have been around for a long time.

Two world wars slowed down the development of cheap electricity supply and the universal use of portable power tools.

This meeting is **a show and tell** session.

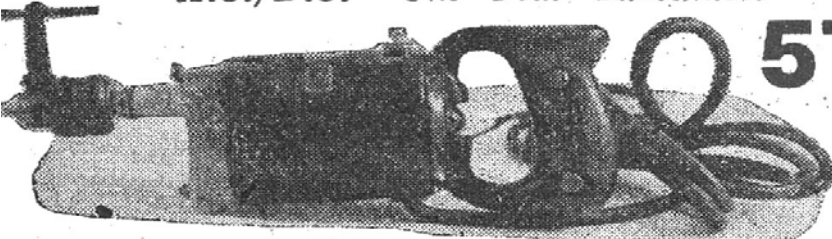
Every time I see a power tool from forty or so years ago on a junk pile I think "this is so well made someone must want it".

Some of us even use these old power tools.

The invitation is to bring in your ancient power tools and we will start a discussion, maybe even form a power tools sub-committee!

ELECTRIC HAND DRILL.

*Capacity $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Voltage 220/250. Universal Motor
A.C./D.C. One Year Guarantee.*

57/6

*Carr.
Paid.*

**HOLMES ENGINEERS,
LEEDS RD., BRADFORD.**

English Mechanics

June 1,

1934

The Auction

The **Presentation** will be followed by **The Auction**.

The TTTG Auction continues to offer a great variety of tools and related ironmongery at unbeatable prices. No absentee bids and no reserves.

The changes in the structure of the auction have resulted in better quality lots and greater satisfaction to both the buyers and the vendors.

Remember to try and have the exact money ready. TTTG only gets the commission on sales so every cent counts.

Last Meeting

Another lively TTTG meeting was followed by a well attended auction.

Several speakers guided the audience through the mysteries of wood identification. The word '*mysteries*' is a poor choice of descriptor as successful timber identification is dependent on scientific methodology. The numerous wood specimens provided ready and enjoyable examples.

A highlight of the meeting was the impromptu explanation of the machine illustrated on the cover of the previous issue of NEWS.

Annual General Meeting Election Results

There were no new nominations received either beforehand or from the floor and all the previous Committee Members agreed to stand again in their previous positions so they were elected unopposed.

Your 2008 /2009 Committee is therefore:

Bob Crosbie	President and Newsletter Editor
Clynt Sheehy	Treasurer
Mike Williams	Secretary, Public Officer and Newsletter Sub-editor
Darcy Hourd	Web Master
Peter Evans	Events Co-ordinator
Mario Dato	Catering
Ray Gurney	Newsletter Photographer
Ric Mitchell	Librarian
John Bates	Committee Member
Henry Black	Committee Member
Fred Murrell	Committee Member

News 103 Cover Pages

The front page is from an article in *English Mechanics* July 21, 1933,

Modern Steels and Their Uses

The photograph shows the manufacture of circular saws.

This process was called **Saw Smithing**.

The snap shot was taken in 1934 but the workshop and methods could have been recorded in 1880.

The back page is from ***Giant Home Workshop Manual***, New York 1946

This Grossett & Dunlap publication was first printed in 1941. I mention this because most of the articles have a 30s Great Depression feel.

The caption is ***Junked Rear Axle Housings Support Machine Bench***.

Seems like a good idea but getting the parts might be tricky.

News 102 Cover

One Man Guides Giant ‘Jumping Frog’ Tamper on Road

The picture was simply too good to resist. The editor was approached at the beginning of the last meeting by Bob Peak, asking if he could talk! Had the editor gone too far? It turned out that Bob knows a bit about

these machines. Bob’s impromptu talk was brief, road compaction might seem a little dull but the stories about road building in post war London captured the audience’s attention.

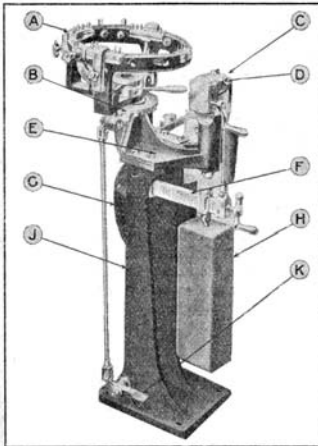
Bob travels a long way to the meetings but this will not stop the TTTG Committee putting him on the rostrum at future meetings.

I’m still trying to work out Bob’s comment “*I was thinner but taller then*”.

The drawing shows the construction of a Petrol Power Rammer. Is this *Pegson*

Rammer the rammer that had Bob up in the air?

English Mechanics March 30, 1934.



TTTG Publications

Two TTTG CDs are now available.

The CDs are available at the Meetings or Workshops from Clynt.

-TTTG CD Number 1

Anthony Horden's Sydney

"Tools for Tradesmen" Catalogue, 1913

W S Friend, Sydney Catalogue Undated, circa 1920

Ironmongeries Ltd. Brisbane Catalogue June 1930

-TTTG CD Number 2

Alexander Young & Co. 1901 Machine Tool Catalogue

McPherson's Home Workshop Guide (1940s)

Hardware and tools pages from Sears, Roebuck and Co. 1947

T. S. Kaye & Sons Tool List (1930s) (70? pages)

plus explanatory notes and notes on the different companies

CDs are \$10 each

TTTG also publishes reprint tool catalogues.

Some early copies of News are available. Ask for details.

TTTG at Linnwood

Linnwood is a historic property in Guildford.

TTTG attends the Linnwood Open Days.

The next open day is Sunday November 9.

The address is 25 Byron Road, Guildford. Entry costs only \$2.

The November 9 Linnwood Open Day starts at 11am and closes at 4pm.

To contact Friends of Linnwood email linnwood@optusnet.com.au

Another great outing for TTTG members and family.

2008/9 TTTG Workshops Programme

Workshops Sundays. Starting at 9.30am. Bring your lunch.

Saw Sharpening

26 October 2008

Good saw sharpeners are rare. The answer is to learn how to sharpen your own saws. All basic tools are provided but you need sharp files

Files and some old saw-sets will be on sale. European style saws only

Bring a blunt saw; it will be sharp when you leave!

Tool Swap

23 November 2008 & 26 April 2009

Finishes at 12.30pm. TTTG members only

Parts for planes and other tools. Members can sell and swap

A great social outing for TTTG members

Sharpening Edge Tools

15 February 2009

Find out what sharp means.

Chisels, plane blades and all woodworking edge tools

Plane Tuning

29 March 2009

Learn how to get the best performance from planes

Materials, parts and fettled planes for sale

Experience what a correctly fettled plane can do

We are only limited by our imagination

It was early one Sunday morning when we entered Kerang, a rural Victorian town on the Murray River. On rounding a corner we spotted this humungus (sorry, the grand-kids are expanding our vocabulary) table and chairs. I know Australians like all things big, after all we do have the “Big Pineapple” and the “Big Banana” up North, the “Big Potato” at Robertson, and the “Big Ram” in Goulburn, the “Big Trout” etc, etc. Do I need to go on? – However, I didn't expect to see such an impressive display of scaled-up Traditional furniture.



What's this got to do with Traditional Tools? You may rightly ask.

After all, is a Newsletter focused on tools and the Traditional way of “doing things”.

Well, to answer, for a moment I felt a little like Gulliver in his “travels”, with my mind flooded with images of a workforce of giants, and more relevant, the dimensions of the workshop and Traditional Tools. Being a Sunday, of course, I didn't get a chance to check the place out.

I was quite impressed with the ingenuity of the craftsmen to show their skill and to convey the message that “no job is too big”. I just wanted to share it.

I may have strayed a little from our usual focus as a group, however, I think it is good for the soul to take the blinkers off for awhile and let a little more light in.

German Steel

These are Simon Barley slightly condensed observations.

“English saws were very frequently made of *German Steel*, but there is little or no documentation to say what that was. A catalogue page from Marsh Brothers (Sheffield) dated 1849, has a long list of the various steels they supplied.

German steel is listed, and is called "German, or Tilted Steel". This may mean steel that was taken from the cementation furnace, at which stage it was called blister, or cementation, steel. It was not used in this condition, and always was given further treatment, for example it may have been melted ("Converted" or "Refined") and when cast was called Cast Steel. Or it may have been reheated and hammered one or more times and was known as Shear, or Double Shear steel.

If it was hammered under a fast-running tilt hammer, it may have been called German Steel. That is, it was the most basic, lowest quality steel used for saws.

German Steel was very common, and I've seen scores of saws marked thus, and have used some which seem just as good as cast steel ones (but there was a big price difference); these are probably the earliest I know - maybe 1810-20? Saws continued to be used, with this mark, up to - again, tentative date - about 1914, after which the word German became extremely unpopular in Britain. But I suspect that its use was probably dying out by then, and would have been replaced by more modern tool steels.

In the eighteenth century (and before) the words German Steel were used, but not on saws. The Sheffield saw-maker Joseph Wilson (1768-1775) made saws in three qualities - Common, Best and Cast. No one knows what exactly the first two were, but we can surmise they were grades of cementation steel given two increasing amounts of heating and forging treatment to increase the homogeneity, and hence quality, of the steel. One of them was probably much the same as the later “German steel”.

Thermite Soldering Irons

Mike Williams

Following on from John's Page last issue, Barry Perdriau (Member No 12) actually owns one of these devices in its original steel box with original instructions. The interesting thing is that Barry's Soldering Iron, although almost identical to the Solex featured in last issue is a different brand, a "Merx".



Ray Gurney has kindly photographed Barry's Merx iron together with its original briquettes and fuses (called "fusees by Merx). We have also reproduced the instructions here and the reader can see that the heating element is a lot hotter than John Daniel guessed in the last issue. We suspect that the heavy groove between the thermite heating element ("the briquette") and the soldering tip is a means to limit the temperature for soldering as the briquette is claimed to reach temperatures of 5000°F.



For those unfamiliar with Thermite, it is a mixture of Aluminium powder and Ferric oxide which, when ignited (usually with burning Magnesium) produces sufficient heat to weld steel. It is used to weld railway lines and also in incendiary munitions.

Left: The fuses and ignition point

Below: The boxed Merx iron complete with briquettes, fuses, instructions and asbestos resting pad.



MERX ALUMINO-THERMIC BRIQUETTES

Obtainable only from:—
MERX, L.T.D., SEVENOAKS
Euckhurst Lane,

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Place the briquette in one of the special MERX IRONS.

PRIME the briquette by pushing a fusee match through paper disc as far as possible into the loose ignition powder, then break off the stalk near the head of fusee.

(3) Close and fasten the perforated cover of the Merx Iron, and through its central hole ignite the first fusee with a second one. A fierce reaction takes place immediately, and during the short time while this continues the briquette becomes a mass of molten metal and sparks are emitted through the perforated cover (THESE HOLES MUST ALWAYS BE KEPT FREE). Priming and ignition, therefore, should be carried out with the iron in a horizontal position, cover uppermost; A FEW SECONDS LATER the iron will be heated READY FOR USE IN ANY POSITION.

See Note (a).

Note (a) Upon ignition the briquette attains a temperature of about 5,000 deg. F., and BEFORE PRIMING it is ESSENTIAL that it is placed in one of the Merx Irons which have been specially designed to contain and distribute the heat generated.

Note (b) Fusees and briquettes must always be KEPT ABSOLUTELY DRY. Fusees which are even slightly damp may not be effective; this also applies to the ignition powder, which is contained in a small cavity under the paper disc in the centre of the briquette. Both should regain their efficiency if thoroughly dried, though in the case of the briquettes the ignition powder may have become caked, and it will then be necessary to joggle the priming fusee which will break up any such caking.

Note (c) The briquette will stand up to any reasonable handling, is non-inflammable, and CANNOT be ignited by percussion. Severe shocks, however, may upset the composition sufficiently to prevent correct ignition; nevertheless, failures due to this or (b) may often be successfully remedied by priming and igniting again after removing the first burnt priming fusee, leaving as much powder as possible in the cavity.

FUSEES AND BRIQUETTES MUST BE KEPT ABSOLUTELY DRY.

The advertisement below is from English Mechanics 23 Sept. 1938.

The Solex, the Merx and the Soldo were not the only thermite soldering irons manufactured. Hans Brunner had a similar soldering iron in his latest tender sale. Han's one appears to be made in the USA.

Thermite soldering irons were probably manufactured in the 1930s. Perhaps for a limited period!

**The SOLDO Self-Heating
SOLDERING IRON**

- No External Heat Required.
- Ready for Use in 30 seconds.
- Remains Hot for 5 mins.
- Ideal for Use Out of Doors.

PRICE
15/-
COMPLETE
Extra Tablets
3/- for 10



Intense heat (5,400 degrees F.) is generated by a tablet which is inserted in the bowl of the iron and ignited by a fusee. The outfit is packed in a metal box and is complete with 10 tablets, a box of fusees, a sample of "Soldo" tinning compound, and instructional leaflet. Write for further particulars.

TRADE ENQUIRIES INVITED.
SOLDO CO. LTD.,
Sicilian House, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1

Were the briquettes and fuses interchangeable?

Perhaps one day a reader may chance upon a newspaper report of an accident caused by one of these thermite soldering irons.

Memories of Eveleigh

George Richardson

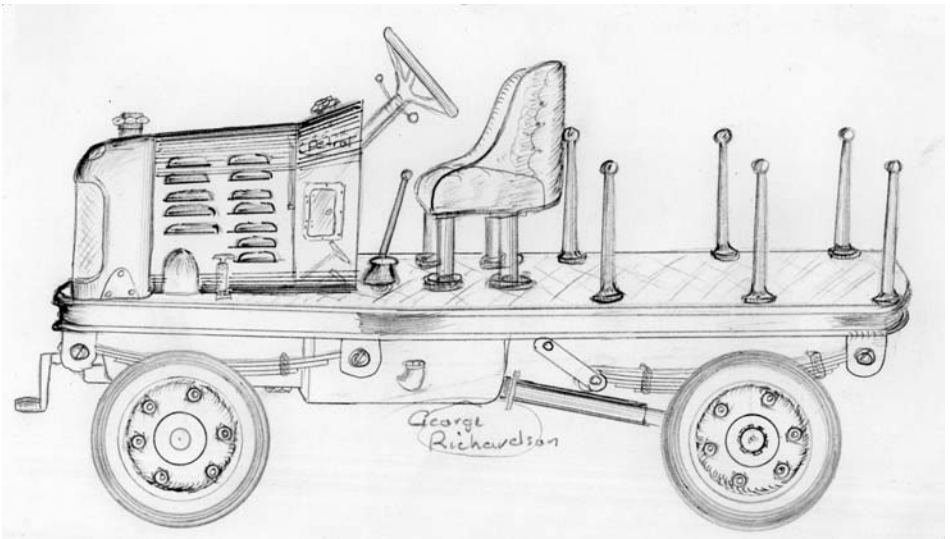
The old Bull-nosed (1926) Morris Cowley, was one of about 25 old "Industrial Trucks" that I once helped to maintain at Eveleigh Workshops, Redfern. It had a 4-cylinder water cooled engine, "Thermosyphon" cooling (i.e. no water pump) and a strange carburetor made by "Alldays and Onions". This latter device had a heavy bronze piston which was lifted up and down in a small cast iron dome by engine suction, thus uncovering various jobs at different heights of its travel. It must have been a forerunner of the SU carburetor.

It had an oil-bath clutch, gravity fed fuel tank behind the dash board and was crank started.

The car models were fitted with a 12V Lucas Starter motor and Dynamo in one unit weighing about 50lbs but the Industrial truck pictured did not have the space for the large battery required.

The roads at Eveleigh Workshops were fairly uneven and it must have been pretty bumpy operating that vehicle all over the area with its solid rubber tyres. It was used to pick up scrap to take to the foundry for reclaiming, collecting finished products from the many machine shops and even for carrying the two paymasters on paydays. They sat on a wooden bench and seat which was bolted in place on the day.

This was the only one of its kind in Eveleigh and is probably no longer in existence.



THE LEDGER

New Members

On behalf of the TTTG Executive and Members, a welcome is extended to five new Members :-

Andrew Bellingham	M488	Ken Hawley	M491
Wayne Pilling	M489	Chris Priday	M492
Phil Bray	M490	Len Woolan	M493

Why We'd Like Your E-Mail Address

Following the posting of each TTTG newsletter, we invariably receive several back marked "RETURN TO SENDER". Last issue I looked up our database and we had the E-mail address of one of the "returns" who I was able to contact and redirect his TTTG News. The others, who knows? You can advise us of your E-mail address by going to TTTG's website www.tttg.org.au clicking on "Contact Us" and tell the webmaster or me of your E-mail address.

Workshops

On Sunday 26th October, 2008 at Asquith Boys' High School, starting at 9:30 am, TTTG will be again holding our ever-popular **Saw Sharpening Workshop** (\$20 members; \$40 non-members). Australia is awash with blunt handsaws; you've probably got a couple yourself. You know you won't get around to sharpening them at home; but at the workshop, Bob will teach you how to sharpening them properly and you'll go home with a sharp saw after a day of camaraderie with other attendees.

On Sunday 23rd November, 2008 at Asquith Boys' High School, from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm TTTG will be holding its **Tool Swap, Rare Parts & Bits** day. This is a **members only event**; cost **\$5** but non-members may join on the day for \$30 membership plus

the \$5. Please tell potential members of the incredible benefits of TTTG membership.

Benefactors Wanted for the Old Dart

I was recently on holiday in UK and Ireland and spent some time with new member Ken Hawley in the Hawley tool and cutlery museum at the University of Sheffield. Ken drew my attention to the fact that the doorway arch from the former Robert Sorby & Sons steel and edge tool factory had been dismantled and the stone blocks are held in storage by the Hawley Museum. The Robert Sorby trade mark was a kangaroo as Sorbys had a large export market in Australia and the arch bore a kangaroo carved in stone. (A picture of the Sorby doorway may be seen at <http://public-art.shu.ac.uk/sheffield/unk297im.html>)

When the Robert Sorby factory was torn down, it was agreed that the doorway arch would be incorporated in the new "development". As is often the case, this agreement was ignored by the "developer".

The Ken Hawley Trust would like to re-erect the Sorby archway at an appropriate site in Sheffield and Ken thought that, because of the Australian connection, there may be benefactors in Australia who could contribute towards the re-erection of the kangaroo archway.

Should you wish to contribute, Ken may be connected by clicking on "Contact Us" at the Ken Hawley Collection Trust website www.sheffield.ac.uk/hawley

Clynt Sheehy
Hon. Treasurer

The Davenport Saw Makers of Sheffield

Ray Gardiner and Peter Evans

The asking of a seemingly simple question on the WoodNet forum a while back, led to a long and interesting discussion, as the complex intertwined history of the various Davenport saw makers was slowly unravelled. The Davenports have always been a bit problematic to document, there are criss-crossing trade directory entries, multiple makers with the same names, three John Davenports and three Charles Davenports and two Henrys, to begin with, and not to mention two separate firms called Davenport Brothers.

In unravelling the makers we also tackled the thorny matter of dating saws. There is currently no dating reference for British saws; and producing one is not a simple matter¹. The conclusions reached in this article are therefore a “work in progress”.

Matt W asked this question about the saw illustrated *“Has anyone ever come across a saw maker named Davenport and if not can this saw be reasonably dated based on the style?”*



The blade is marked Davenport (faint stamp that I assumed is the maker) and German Steel in a deeper stamp right next to that on the steel spine. I couldn't find any other markings.”

A number of people contributed to the discussion that followed. In addition we have the benefit of Simon Barley's (who has two Davenport saws) major contribution; from his article², personal communication on a number of saw dating issues in particular (and also on using relevant terminology³), and from his reviews of drafts of this article.

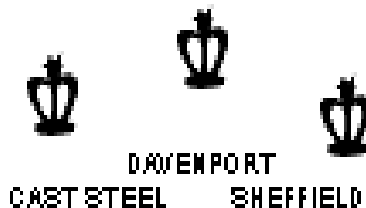


A close examination of this steel backed saw clearly shows these marks

A Crown, GERMAN STEEL, DAVENPORT

The saw's interesting handle is secured to the blade with saw screw. These aspects of saw making are helpful in determining the maker and age of the saw.

Firstly, the struck Crown. Crowns were extensively used in the early years of the nineteenth century. Some makers continued to use the crown symbol as part of their trademark; however it is likely that the use of crowns separate to the trademark largely petered out by the middle of the nineteenth century⁴.



Another contributor to the discussion provided some pictures of a Davenport handsaw. A partial picture of the stamped mark and a drawing of the mark are reproduced on the previous page. Struck marks were the norm until around 1850 when etching became the common means of marking saw blades⁵. The three crowns around the name was common to many makers and is really not part of a trademark.



This saw has domed rivets fastener, and also handle picture on the rather than split nuts, indicative of an early date. However rivets and split nuts overlapped in use from around 1760 to beyond 1840⁶. It also has the Dolphin⁷ shaped handle that was introduced after around 1830, and the unintegrated three crowns.



This saw is probably later than the backsaw. Simon Barley has a handsaw with a similar mark – with the important difference that the name is curved. Also his saw has split nuts rather than the rivet like fasteners illustrated; Simon dates his saw to 1840-1850; the saw above may tentatively be dated to 1830-1840, but may also be a different Davenport – there may be one straight, one curved⁸. See later in this article for discussion about another saw with a curved name.

Secondly, German Steel. Saws were made from four grades of steel in the nineteenth century. The top quality was Cast Steel; the second quality was German Steel (not from Germany, but in the German style). “For one reason or another "German Steel" ceased to be a quality mark probably sometime after the 1860s”⁹. So the stamp German Steel leans towards a pre-1860 date, however the Preston 1909 catalogue lists 2nd quality saws as German Steel, so there was a lingering death¹⁰.

Note the dot in the mark GERMAN•STEEL. The • is an indication of a saw made before 1830.

Simon Barley has an open handled Davenport backsaw with an almost identical mark. The differences - the back is brass and so the mark is clearer, and it is marked CAST•STEEL. Note the •, the Barley saw is probably of similar vintage to the saw subject of this article. The saw with the cast steel mark, may be later.

Thirdly, the saw screws. The number of screws is generally not a strong indicator of age. Small screws are an indication of an early saw, and early backsaws were more likely to have two rather than three screws. Medallions appeared around 1830 and became common over time, although many backsaws were not equipped with medallions well into the twentieth century. So the saw screws are a faint indication of a date earlier than 1840.



Fourthly, the handle. There are three points of interest in the handle. The shape of the base is London pattern; this pattern was generally replaced by the Dolphin pattern by 1840. The shape of the boss is still quite rounded, again indicating an early date. Finally the grace and style of the handle. There was a progressive coarsening of handle design over the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century (have a look at handles from 1930 onwards); this example is reasonably elegant, but not refined. The horns of early saws are long and elegant; hard to tell how much wear these horns have taken, however they do not appear long and well shaped, suggesting a date closer to 1840, rather than 1820.

Fifthly, and most importantly, **DAVENPORT**, the name.



Marks started off as very simple stamps, see the illustration to left, and became progressively longer, more complex, more decorative.

The illustration following is positively restrained compared to some. A simple stamp suggests an early saw¹¹. The earliest saws had a single word, so the saw we are investigating is not a very early saw. However the use of a single surname is indicative of an early saw.



In the process of searching the Davenports, we managed to untangle the various branches of the Davenport family and consider the information uncovered should be published so that others may, in future have a starting point for future investigations. This article is also an example of how the authors search.

The key to untangling the Davenport saw-makers of Sheffield was to identify the separate family groupings and then track each group separately. If we start with the 1841 census and work backwards and forwards, then the various branches can be untangled. There are three main strands to our investigation, the Rockingham Street Davenports, the Jessop Street Davenports, and finally Charles Davenport. In Part 2 the full details are set out; below are the key players¹².

If we look at the 1841 Sheffield census returns, then we see the family members who are/become saw makers.

Rockingham Street in 1841

John (58), Thomas (19), Henry (26), James (25)

Jessop Street in 1841

John Alfred (34), John (13), Charles (11), Alfred (2m)

There are two more born after the 1841 census:-

Joseph (born 1844) Henry (born 1846), included here because they later form part of the Jessop Street Davenport Brothers.

Gloucester Street in 1841

Charles (25), Edward (3), born after the 1841 Census, Lawrence

Gloucester St. Charles, it also seems is the son of Rockingham St. John, It is possible the John Alfred is also, but for our purposes, it makes no difference, the three follow different paths.

Having identified the three branches, we can now group the Trade Directory listings accordingly. When grouped this way, the apparent casualness towards directory listings goes away.

Summarizing the Trade Directory Listings (keeping the groups together)
Note: - HSMOB == "Handsaw Makers of Britain"

The Jessop Street Davenports
1834 -- no listing --

Sometime between 1834 and 1837 John Alfred Davenport starts his
saw making business at 56 Jessop Street.

1837 DAVENPORT John Alfred Saw manufacturer 56 Jessop Street

In 1841, he identifies himself as John Junior, so perhaps he is John's
son after all.

1841 DAVENPORT John Jun. Saw manufacturer 56 Jessop Street

1849 DAVENPORT John Alfred 56 Jessop Street, St. John's Works

1863 DAVENPORT John Alfred 56 Jessop Street, St. John's Works

There is a gap in directory listings here, but by 1879 the business in
Jessop Street is being run by the three brothers Joseph (now 35), Henry
[now 33] and Alfred [now 38], it is not known whether Charles [now 49]
was involved or not. John Alfred senior is no longer involved in the
business.

We do know that Charles was working at Taylor Brothers at the time of
the 1864 flood, because he made a claim for lost wages as a result of
the Adelaide works being closed. He claimed 1 pound, but only got 13
shillings.

1879 DAVENPORT BROTHERS 56 Jessop Street St Johns Works

Charles passed away in 1885 aged 56, and is buried in the City Road
Cemetery. Henry passed away in 1889 aged 42, and James in 1899
aged 82, the various grandsons continued the family business at the St
Johns works. They were still going in 1911.

1911 DAVENPORT BROTHERS 39 (back of) Fitzwilliam Street (HSMOB)

What happened after 1911 is left as an exercise for the reader.

The Gloucester Street Davenports

This Charles Davenport turned out to be far more interesting than we could have first imagined. He first appears in 1837 in Rockingham Street.

1837 DAVENPORT, CHARLES 67 Rockingham Street

Charles evidently ran into financial problems and is listed as being in debtors gaol Sheffield in 1848 (The Jurist), There was at the same time a John Davenport saw maker to appear before the insolvency judge, we suspect that it may have been John Alfred's (Jessop Street) son John, who would have been 20 in 1848.

Charles and Mary don't appear in the 1851 Census. So what happened to them? We found the following on a Davenport Genealogy site:-

Charles Davenport, born 1812 in Sheffield, England, married Mary Wilson born 1813. The couple came to Philadelphia in the early 1850's The ages tally with our Gloucester Street Charles and Mary.

Charles, evidently got out of debtors gaol, and sailed for Philadelphia with his wife Mary, plus children, Edward, Charles and Hannah, in the early 1850's; at least leaving Sheffield before the 1851 census.

So, let's look at "Handsaw Makers of North America" Erwin L Schaffer Aha! here he is in Henry Disston territory. A long way from home for our Sheffield saw-maker.

1860 DAVENPORT Charles, Philadelphia PA

1868 HILL & DAVENPORT, Philadelphia PA, acquired by Henry Disston

1872 DAVENPORT E & L, Philadelphia "Philadelphia Saw Works"

We don't know if HILL & DAVENPORT is our Charles, perhaps more research can uncover the details. It is also possible that the "E & L" is Edward and Lawrence.



Lawrence also served in the Union Army in the Civil War and was in Company C of the 81st Philadelphia Regiment.

In the EAIA Directory, there is also:

[No date] DAVENPORT, John, [no location], mark Jno DAVENPORT (line curved). No illustration. There is no maker information at all. This saw probably British made.

Ken Roberts¹³ mentions Jno. Davenport as being in the 1821 Sheffield Directory. Now an open handled backsaw with split nuts has appeared in the US – all saws illustrated in this article are in the US.

The saw has a number of the characteristics of an early saw. The saw is (poor pictures regrettably) marked on the steel back with a curved DAVENPORT, but no Jno, so not the saw listed by EAIA, and no other words¹⁴. The style of this saw is early to mid nineteenth century for the following reasons – the boss¹⁵ is more elongated along the blade than square on the blade, indicating early nineteenth century; small screws; only one word in the mark (as opposed to the mid-late nineteenth century practice of spraying advertising along the back); saw blade is canted, that is tapers in width from heel to toe; the bottom edge of the back is heavily chamfered along the lower edge where it joins the blade (as is the backsaw the subject of this article). The open handle design was pretty much in its final form by 1830, so is not a good indicator of age. Who made this saw and where? This saw was probably made in the UK, and is perhaps the earliest saw in this group. Simon Barley has a handsaw with the curved name, but with additional text – suggesting Simon's saw is later.

Thanks to:

Matthew Wojtaszek, Rhode Island who started the discussion and then was inspired by the contributions to carry out researches himself;

“khampton” who contributed pictures of another Davenport saw.

Don McConnell, who co-wrote the guide to British saws, and contributed to the WoodNet discussion.

References

1. There is a great reference for dating Disston US saws - <http://www.disstonianinstitute.com/>, Disston are undoubtedly the most documented saw-makers.
2. *Dating Saws*, TATHS Newsletter #102, September 2008
3. Do we use terms currently in circulation or only use terms used in the period – and region - in which the saws were made? In this article we mix usage, acknowledging the different uses, trying to be as clear as possible. An in-depth discussion is beyond the scope of this article (and the knowledge of the authors), hopefully, Simon Barley who has investigated this topic in detail, will write an article on the often colourful language of Sheffield saw-makers.
4. Simon Barley comments – the latest datable saw with the 3 crowns he has observed is mid-1860
5. *Acid Etching on Saws*, Simon Barley, TATHS Newsletter 89-Summer 2005. Note that struck marks continued on handsaws well into the second half of the 19th century.
6. The illustrated fasteners were not called rivets in Sheffield [SB]; however as we do not have a term for this early fastener, and it does not appear to be a screw, we will use rivet to differentiate this fastener.
7. The term *Dolphin* pattern was coined by Goodman for curved horn handles, and never used in the saw trade; we use the term in this article as it is now in common use.
8. Many makers used a variety of marks over the years, and different styles do not necessarily mean different makers of the same name. Also a well regarded mark could continue for many years through successor firms, or by being sold to another firm.
9. *Steel and Saws*, Simon Barley, TATHS Newsletter 91, & Appendix B.
10. See Simon Barley's observations on German Steel page 10.
11. The trend of longer marks over time is true of Sheffield, but not necessarily of other places; this particular mark is from a Birmingham maker around 1850.
12. Detailed genealogy of the Davenport Saw-makers is in Part 2
13. P 34, as a maker of circular saws.
14. A number of saws found in the US have been incorrectly identified as American when they are in fact British.
15. The boss is the wooden part of the handle the screws go through that grips the blade.

Part 2 will be published in NEWS 104.



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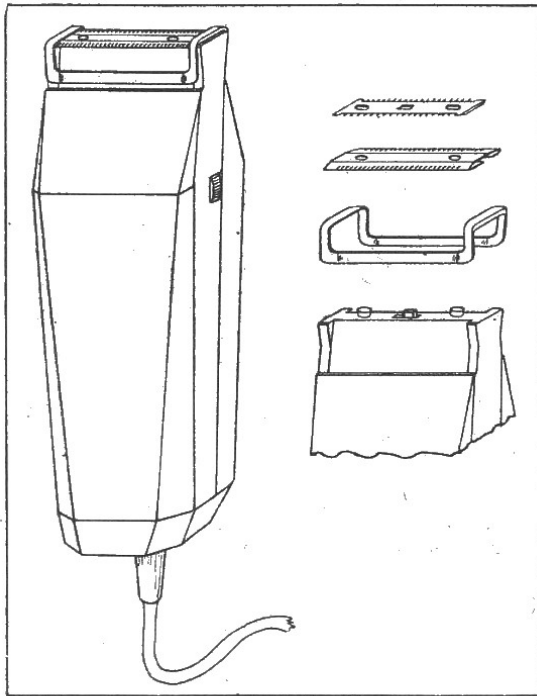
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JDAVEY@bigpond.com

Electric Razor

When I was growing up my father had two razors. One was the safety razor issued to him by the army during the war. The other was an electric razor. Both gave him lots of nicks. My grandfather had an open, cut-throat, razor. When I came to shaving I tried the three razors. The electric razor was pretty rough. I gave the cut-throat a fair trial and used the safety razor for a few years. Shaving was something I never liked. For thirty years or so I've cultivated a beard. Blame the three razors!

Is this the first electric razor?



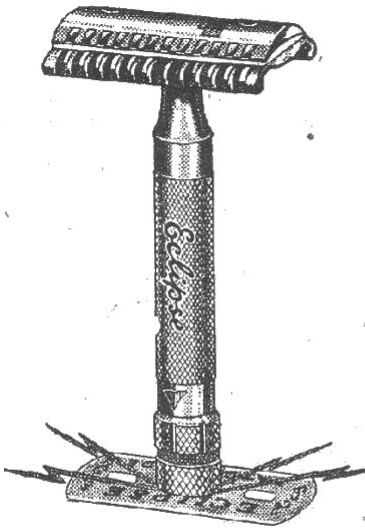
The Clipshave Electric Razor.

English Mechanics Feb. 18, 1938

Eclipse Magnetic Safety Razor

James Neill & Co. Ltd., Composite Steel Works Sheffield manufactured a wide range of tools under the trade mark **Eclipse**. Eclipse tools have a reputation for high quality. Both the design and manufacturing standards of all Eclipse tools is exceptionally high. Even so it came as a surprise to the editor when he chanced on this advertisement for the Eclipse Magnetic Safety Razor. I don't have much knowledge of razors but it is probably a safe guess that safety razors were starting to displace open razors by the thirties. The open razor remained popular with barbers and razor gangs but the throw away safe blade must have had great appeal to young shavers.

The Eclipse Magnetic Safety Razor is similar to other safety razors of the time but it has that something extra.



The Eclipse Magnetic Safety Razor.

AN IMPROVED SAFETY RAZOR.

A new type of safety razor taking the Gillette pattern blades has recently been placed on the market by James Neill & Co., Ltd., Composite Steel Works, Sheffield. It has many novel features, and is a definite advance upon ordinary makes. In the first place, it has a self-centring device for the blades, consisting of two tapered pins which, by registering with the holes in the blades, locate them accurately so that both edges of the blade project by exactly the same amount. Next, there is a micrometer adjustment device, operated by a knurled head, to enable the projection of the blades to be finely regulated to suit light or stiff beards. The knurled portion is graduated, and there is a fixed arrow on the stem, so that a definite setting can be given by the micrometer. Perhaps the most novel feature of the razor is the powerful magnet on the handle, which enables a blade to be picked up from any surface without injuring the fingers or the keen edges of the blade. The latter can be picked up and placed in position without touching it by hand. Finally, there is an indicating design upon the cap which serves to show which edge has been used first. The razor is supplied in nickel-plated finish, and is inexpensive.

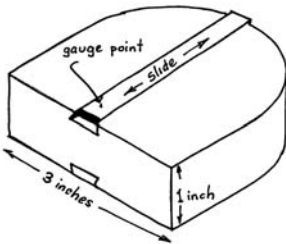
English Mechanics
March 16, 1934

Side gauge or Butt Gauge?

Mike Williams

In a recent donation of tools to TTTG, there was an interesting craftsman-made wooden gauge, identified by Bob Crosbie as a side gauge. Bob recalled that this type of gauge was mentioned by Sheraton and indeed, on page 434 of Sheraton's "The Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book" in his section on the "gaging and working cornices", he says:

"The cornice being thus properly sprung, faften it down on the fide ap, and proceed to rabbet out the feveral squares. Begin at c and rabbet down to f; at h run on a fide gage and, entering in by a fnipe's bill, work down to i, the fluting being laid on afterwards; at q run on a fide gage each way for the square of the oval."



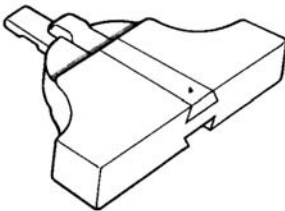
The TTTG Side Gauge

It is clear from reading the entire section that the "fide gage" that Sheraton is referring to is a gauge that runs from a rebated face rather than on the timber edge that a conventional gauge uses, and indeed the wooden gauge in question does this. It is also interesting to note (beside the rather confusing use of f for s) Sheraton's spelling of gauge, still in use in USA. Salaman's Dictionary of Woodworking Tools also lists a Side Gauge from a catalogue of James Cam of Sheffield from about 1800 and notes that this tool was available in a single and double slide version.

Salaman also notes the reference in Sheraton's work and states. "We do not know its purpose nor what it looked like."

However, Salaman also lists what he calls a "butt gauge" and his sketch of this device seems remarkably similar to the gauge which we found. The TTTG gauge only has wear on one side, so why a double-slide version provided an advantage is something of a mystery.

The TTTG gauge is marked twice with the owner's embossed stamp, G.Duncan. The stamp has a zig-zag edge which probably dates it to around 1800 and the zig-zag edge is larger around the capital letters rather than being a simple rectangle. This practice is thought to be unique to Birmingham



The Salaman butt gauge

Nowadays, a butt gauge is mostly used to mark out the grave for butt hinges and in fact, a more common manifestation of the tool is a metal one made by Stanley and others for this purpose. My theory is that Sheraton's "fide gage" and Salaman's "butt gauge" are effectively one and the same tool separated by a 200 year name change.

DURO Belt Sander

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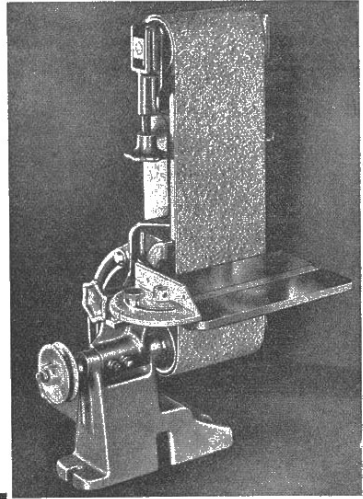
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English Mechanics Jan. 7, 1938

The Duro Belt Sander is one of the ancestors of the cheap modern sanding units which invariably are found inadequate.

A close inspection of the photograph will reveal the quality engineering incorporated in this machine.

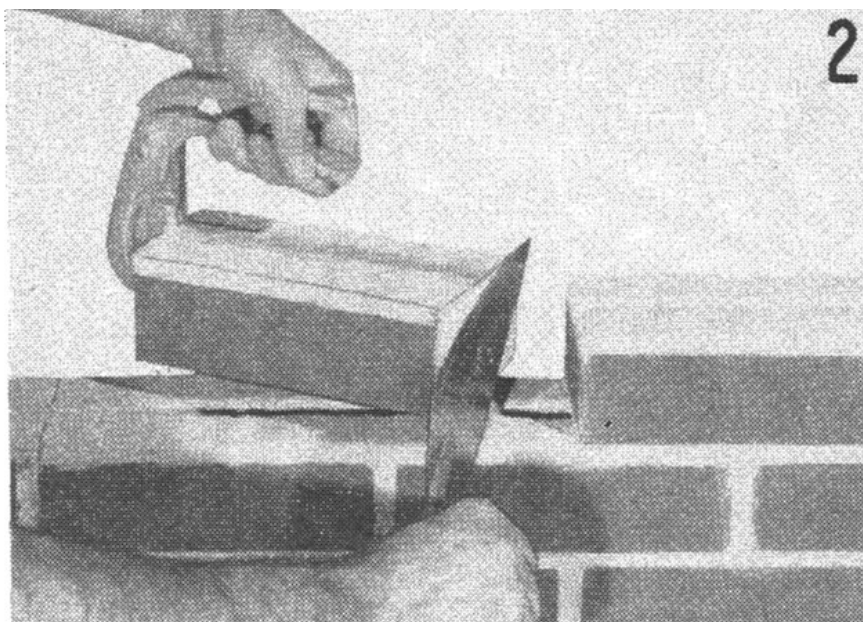
When did a manufacturer rotate the belt to the horizontal?

At what time was a direct drive motor fitted?

Where did Linisher start to be used to describe this machine?

The editor remembers Terry Butcher, TTTG's Southern Correspondent and founding President, having strong opinions regarding the term linisher. Perhaps Terry has some answers.

Bricklayer's Tool

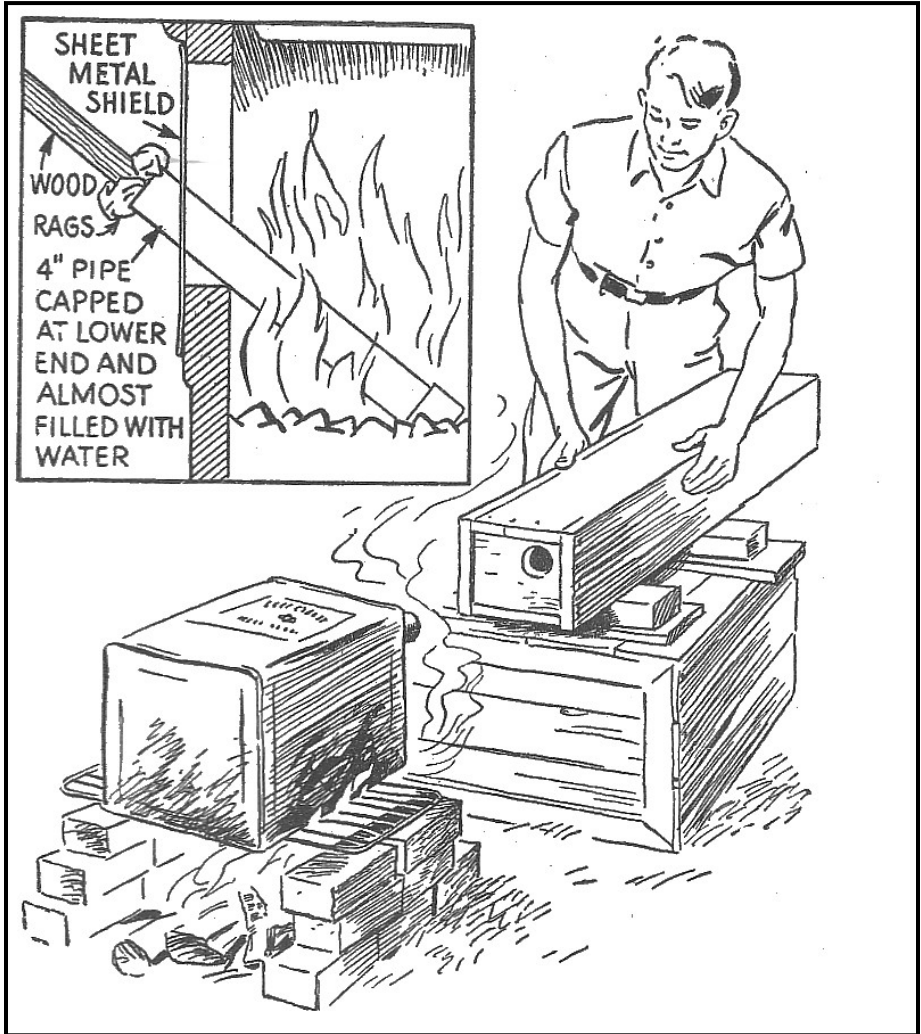


Popular Mechanics April 1962

2. BRICKLAYER'S TOOL allows you to lay bricks without touching them, and makes perfectly spaced, even joints. Called "Automason," the tool makes it possible to butter bricks uniformly without mortar waste. Tool designed for regular bricks costs \$4.80; for special Roman size, price is \$5.20 ppd. Made by Port Austin Level & Tool Mfg. Co., Port Austin, Mich.

Steam Bending

This set up for steam bending could do with a few refinements and some safety features but it would do the job!

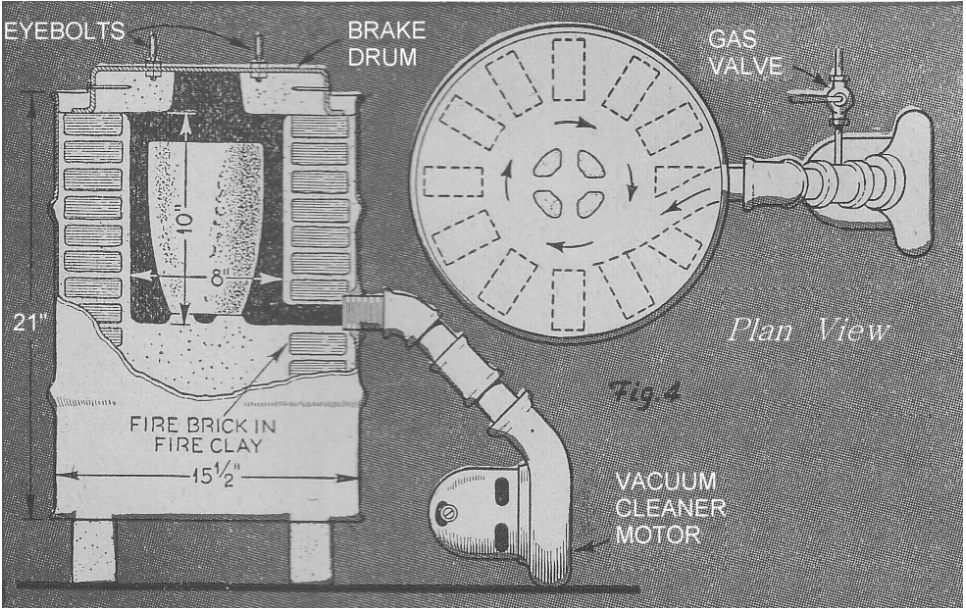


Giant Home Workshop Manual, New York 1946

Foundry Furnace

Why not build your own foundry furnace?

Giant Home Workshop Manual, New York 1946



WARNING

This drawing should be seen as the basis of a good idea. The first problem will be finding a substitute for the brake drum. The brake drum specified would have been asbestos lined.

Do not source, and then use, old asbestos lined brake drums.

In 1941 the heavy drum was probably painted with lead based paint.

Use an unpainted heavy gauge drum. Avoid toxic contents.

Using fire bricks and fire clay should be risk free.

The vacuum cleaner might be a problem, **ask the wife first.**

The drawing implies that the furnace is plumbed into the gas supply.

One of the TTG Plumbers might suggest the fittings required.

These comments aside, it should work!

Power Planes

The Stanley 1962 Power Tools Catalogue includes a range of power planes.

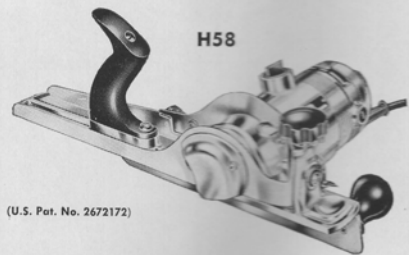
- There are two types of plane,
 - a) Attachments for Routers &
 - b) Independent planes.

These power planes are heavy units compared with present day power planes. However the Stanley power planes are lightweights compared to the power planes manufactured in the 1950s.

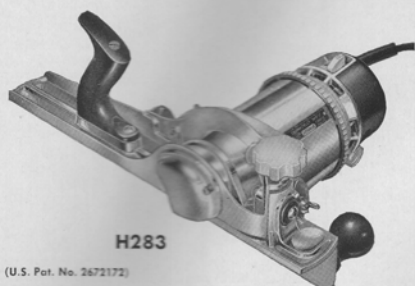
Large heavy wide blade power planes have never been as popular as light weight narrow blade planes.

Few of the heavy versions have remained in production. The exception is the Makita 300mm power plane. But this is about as popular as the Makita 16 inch portable circular saw!

At the next meeting I will bring a heavy veteran power plane for comparison with a modern power plane. This is a UK made plane circa 1950. It is in fact a combined power plane and portable spindle moulder! Never used.



(U.S. Pat. No. 2672172)

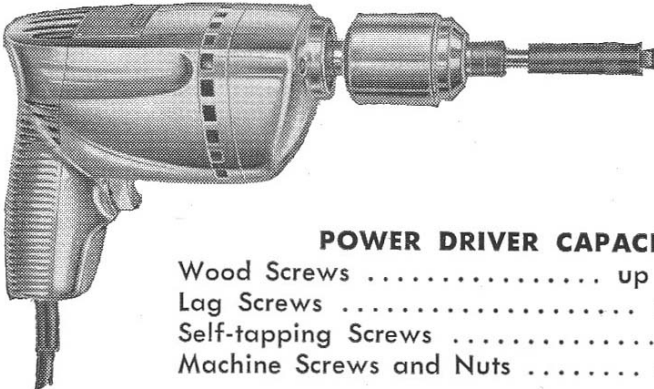


(U.S. Pat. No. 2672172)

Power Drivers

The Stanley 1962 Power Tools Catalogue also includes a power driver. When slotted screws were still manufactured to a high standard I was happy to use a brace or a Yankee Screwdriver to drive screws. Nowadays modern screws need a power driver of which there are many brands.

Why only one model in 1962? Did Stanley realise that power drivers would be ubiquitous in a few decades? No doubt Stanley was testing the market as they had done previously with hand tools.



POWER DRIVER CAPACITIES

Wood Screws	up to No. 14 x 2"
Lag Screws	up to 3/16" x 2"
Self-tapping Screws	up to 1/4"
Machine Screws and Nuts	up to 1/4" diam.

This Stanley Power Driver approved and powered for industrial use.

These early power drivers had two limitations, they were heavy and they had to be plugged in. Later light weight model power drivers were less fatiguing to use but still reliant on mains power.

The development of the cordless driver was the great breakthrough. Of course without the introduction of a vast range of Phillips, Pozi-drive, Scan and Square Drive screws as well as Hex head roofing and sheet metal screws the power driver would have had little advantage off the automobile production line.

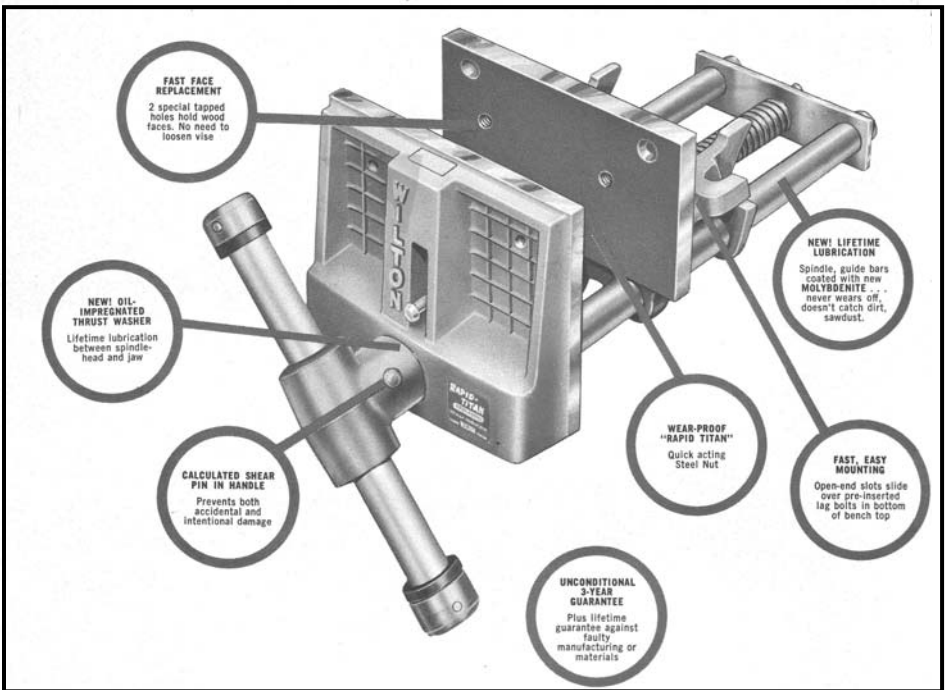
There is an argument that for quality woodwork the older slotted screws are a superior fixing. But to discuss this would be to digress.

Wilton Vices

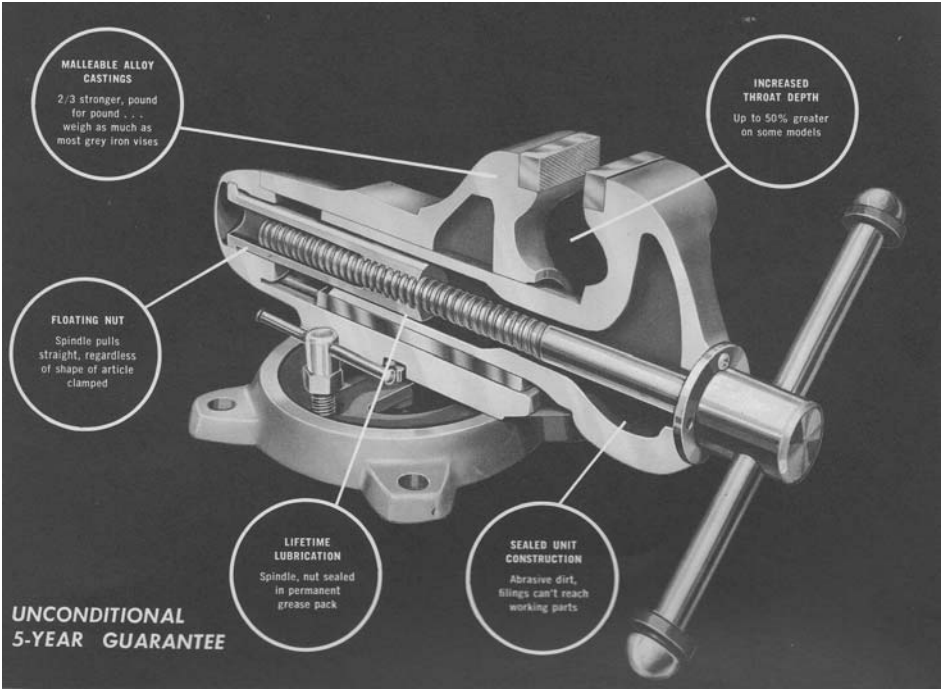
The Wilton Tool Manufacturing Co. Inc. Schiller Park, Illinois manufactured a wide range of vices. The company was probably active in the 50s and 60s. This statement is a guess based on the one Wilton Catalogue I have seen.

The Wilton School Catalog is in a folder of catalogues issued by the Vonnegut Hardware Co. Indianapolis. The folder includes some Stanley 1962 power tool leaflets dated 1962 so I assume the other publications in the folder are around this date.

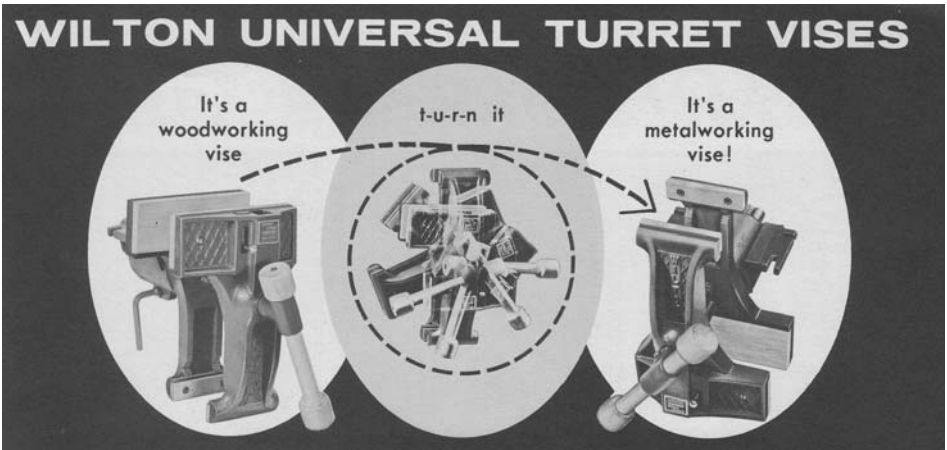
Wilton supplied vices for schools as well as sets of castings for school projects. The aesthetics of the vices are very sixties as is the excellent engineering features. This illustration should whet your appetite.



Wilton manufactured woodworking and metal working vices. This illustration shows the quality of the metal working vices

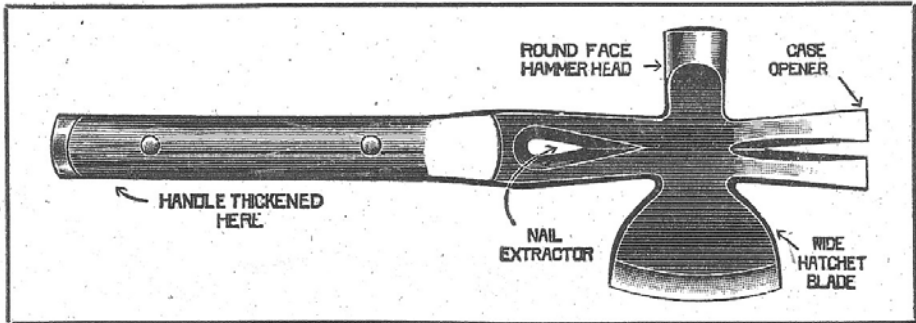


Wilton offered a vice designed for teaching any technical subject at the one bench. Maybe the designer started out as engineering machinist and this explains the name, **Wilton Universal Turret Vises**



Good Idea?

Universal or combination tools start out as a revelation but often end up being a forgotten novelty. This one is a classic example.



A Useful Four-in-One Combination Tool.

English Mechanics
April 6, 1934

A COMBINATION TOOL.

The accompanying sketch shows a useful four-in-one tool, combining a hatchet, hammer, case opener, and nail extractor, in very convenient form. The tool is of solid construction and is British made. The head and haft are in one solid piece machined from heat treated steel. Its total weight is $1\frac{3}{4}$ lb., although the $12\frac{3}{4}$ in. polished handle enables it to be quite usefully employed for fairly heavy hammering. Since the price is little in excess of any one of the tools it contains, it should prove popular. It is manufactured by Smith's O'Saltley, and marketed at 3s. 9d. in black finish, and 6s. 6d. bright.

