

Common 1800's Carpentry Tools

Axes



This picture of two axes and two adzes was taken in New Guinea.

The carpenter's adze was used for shaping and finishing crafts. With a curved inward blade, it was used most commonly for squaring freshly hewn beams.

Bow Saws

The bow saw opposite is of English origin and is located in the United Kingdom.



The bow saw was known as a multipurpose handsaw. Carpenters, for many different projects used the bow saw very often.

Framing Square



This framing square is on display in the W. J. Grace Cooperage.

A carpenter's framing square was used mainly for laying out perpendicular lines along the edge of a piece of wood and to frame a structure. It was used as a measuring tool but also to lay out lines.

Panel Gauge



This panel gauge is on display in the W. J. Grace Cooperage.

The panel gauge was primarily used for scoring a line through a piece of wood parallel to the edge. A panel gauge is larger than a marking gauge.

Plummet Level

This plummet level is an antique Davis and Cook 28" level from the United States.



A plummet level was used for checking a wooden frame's structure. It was most commonly used while framing buildings to check for true verticals and horizontals. It was also used to accurately hang windows and doors in a home.

Hammer



This hammer is on display in the W. J. Grace Cooperage.

The commander was a hammer used to drive new mortise and tenon joints into their final positions in wooden framework.



Village Carpentry

CARPENTRY 101



The above picture was taken inside the W.J. Grace Cooperage of the carpentry display.

FULTZ HOUSE MUSEUM



Village Carpenter Work Tasks

The tasks of a village carpenter may have seemed simple and small but were in fact tasks that took time and patience. Some tasks called for very intricate skills. Most items made by a village carpenter would have been for agricultural items. Since most of these items needed iron fittings, the village carpenter worked in close contact with the village blacksmith.

Some of the main items that a carpenter would have frequently made are a wooden harrow, field gates, and wheelbarrows. The wooden harrow was used to cultivate the soil to get maximum work out of it. The blacksmith would have had to place an iron tine, a sharp prong, projecting from the base of the harrow, to comb through the ground. Field gates were very common because farming was such a popular career. It was said that the hardest part to crafting a wheelbarrow was making the wheel to fit, as each wheelbarrow was a different size.

Some other tasks faced by a carpenter were the construction of coffins. A carpenter would need all measurements of the deceased to make the coffin to fit. The carpenter would need to select wood that was elegant, yet respectful to both the family and deceased. The ladies in the carpenter's household normally assisted by lining the coffin after it had been built.



A Brief History of Carpentry

It is said that wood is one of mankind's oldest building materials. The earliest record of carpentry is in the 15th century, but carpentry was around long before then. Each carpenter taught his or her skills to the next aspiring carpenter with each instruction given orally and through hands-on learning.

Before the mid-nineteenth century, many carpenters worked under a system called the artisan system. They would have to work under a 4-7 year apprenticeship before becoming what was called a journeyman in the 1800's. A journeyman carpenter was someone equipped to work both indoors and outdoors, turning things by hand indoors and building frames for houses with their tools outdoors. A carpenter's job was never rushed because all employers knew that each and every carpenter put all his pride into his work, working his best to complete the job to the best of their ability.

Eventually, the indoor work once done by a journeymen was taken over by planning mills, sash, and blind factories in the 1840's-1860's. Items that were once crafted by hand were then crafted by a machine. Soon, even the jobs done outside by a carpenter were taken over by machines, therefore carpenters living standards reduced to not much higher than that of a labourer.

For a while, Sackville was home to a well-known carpenter. Robert Fenerty, son of Augustus Fenerty, who became a carpenter upon his return from Boston to Sackville, and married Mary Oland.



The photograph opposite is of a tool box on display in the W.J. Grace Cooperage.



The History of Woodworking

Woodworking can be anything made from the types of wood used or selected for carving, painting, and sawing, or anything else desired. It is said that around 2000 B.C. the Egyptians used woodworking as a skill to supply them with furniture.

Once, the wood used in a country for woodworking came from that country's natural resources. Now, different types of wood are imported from around the globe to many different countries.

Unfortunately, over time wood splits and cracks due to deterioration. To try to avoid the cracks and splits in the wood, wooden creations started to be painted. It is still unknown as to when this began, but it has continued to this day.



The above photograph is circa 1920's. Harry and Kit Little operating a cross cut saw in the mill on their property.