

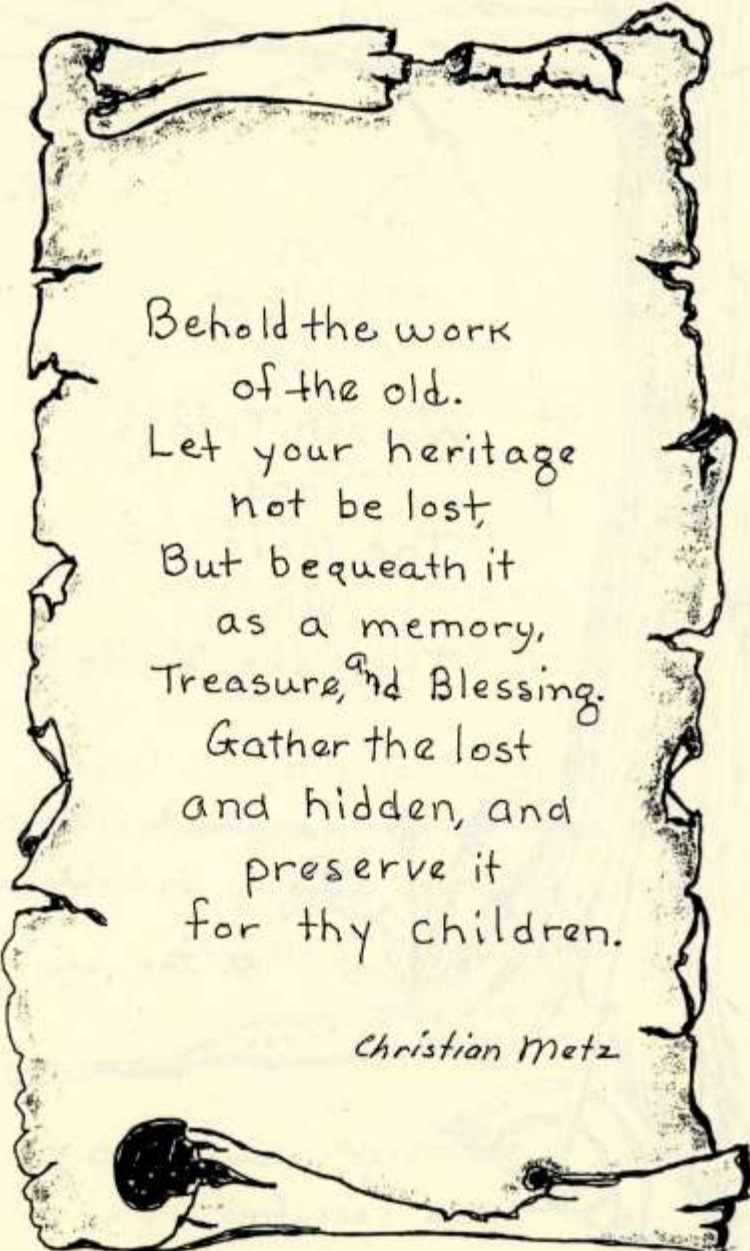
A
Lexicon
of
Wooden Things
and
The tools with
which
They are made

compiled and illustrated
by Sue Hulsey

Handle white oak

Teeth and braces hickory

Head, sassafras



Behold the work
of the old.
Let your heritage
not be lost,
But bequeath it
as a memory,
Treasure,^{and} Blessing.
Gather the lost
and hidden, and
preserve it
for thy children.

Christian Metz

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© January, 1995

Handle - white oak

Teeth and bows, hickory

Head - sassafras

Rake design unchanged from middle ages

Inscribed

To Dale F. Hulsey
master treenware carver
and my husband for almost
half a century, who, in all
the days that I have known
him has lived thusly:

Count that day lost whose low
descending sun views from thy
hand no worthy action done.

from Staniford's Art of Reading
Boston, 1803



reenware, from the old English *treow* or Tree, plus *en*; *treowen* of, or belonging to, obtained or made from a tree or trees.

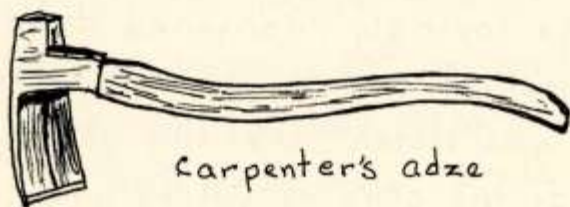
Once a common term, used to describe those small items made of wood, so important to the every day tasks of early settlers, now rarely used except by historians and collectors.



If you pick up a piece of treen, close your eyes and touch it gently, perhaps it will begin to tell you a story, one of the tree in the forest, of the woodsman who felled it long ago when the land was young, of the craftsman who lovingly fashioned it into an object of beauty as well as function. If you listen carefully you might hear the echo of voices long stilled, of generations it has served well. With every task and every hand that touched it, with each dent and scratch, it only became more beautiful. That alone seems reason enough to save it. — now try this with a styrofoam cup or plastic spoon.



A dze, adz - (old English)
a tool like an ax, with
the blade set at right
angles to the handle, and
curving inwards toward it,
used for chipping or slicing
away the surface of wood.

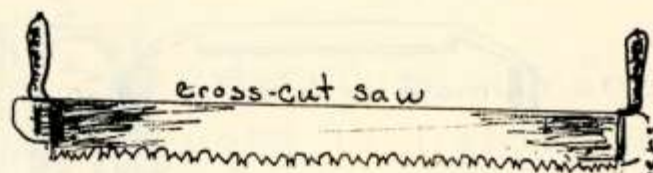


Carpenter's adze

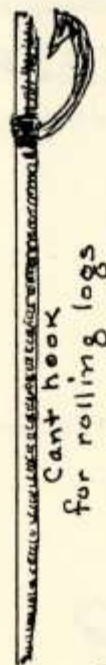


Hand adze
or Bowl adze

American Indians used a similar
tool of wood and flint to fashion their
dugout canoes.

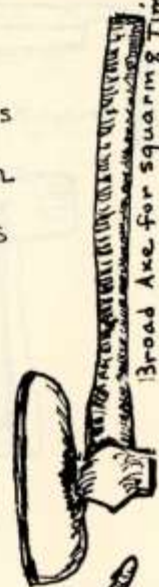


cross-cut saw



Cant hook
for rolling logs

Wood carvers
relied on the skills
of the blacksmith
to forge the tools
for treenware
from tree to
trencher,
from woods to
workshop.

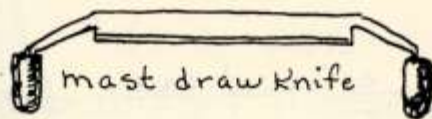


Broad Axe for squaring timbers



Beak or nail

wedge



mast draw knife



Draw Knife



Spoke shave



-mallet

strikes the top
of the blade, not
the handle of



the Froe



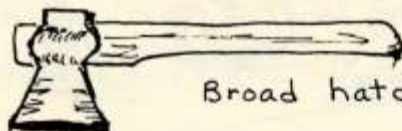
scorp



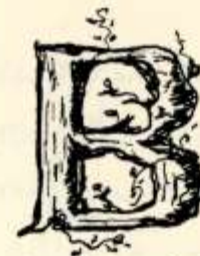
chisel



Gouge

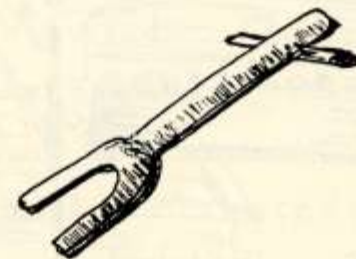


Broad hatchet



ed key or wrench,
used to tighten the
ropes on a rope
bed; necessary for a good
night's sleep, hence -

Sleep Tight !

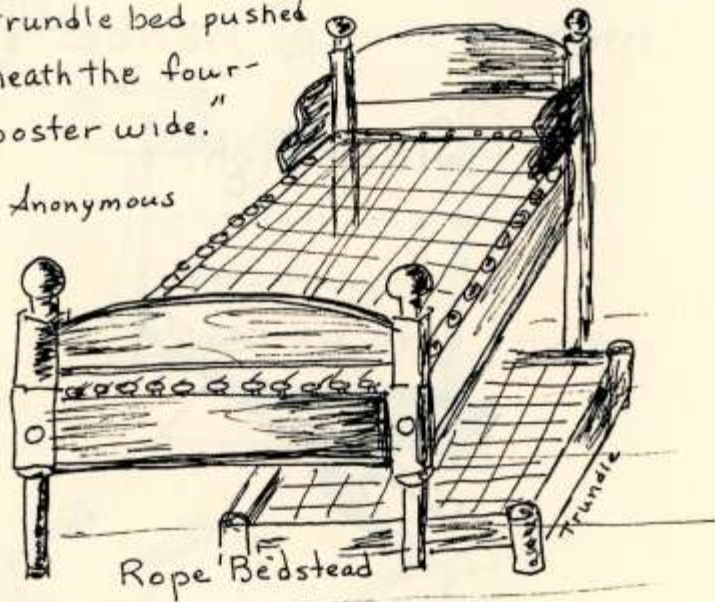


Bodkin - 1714 an instrument
with a knobbed end or point
having a large eye for drawing
tape or cord through a hem.



"The loom rested here and the wheel was nearby, and beside it the tub with the butternut dye; The settle was there by the warm chimney side, and the trundle bed pushed neath the four-poster wide."

Anonymous



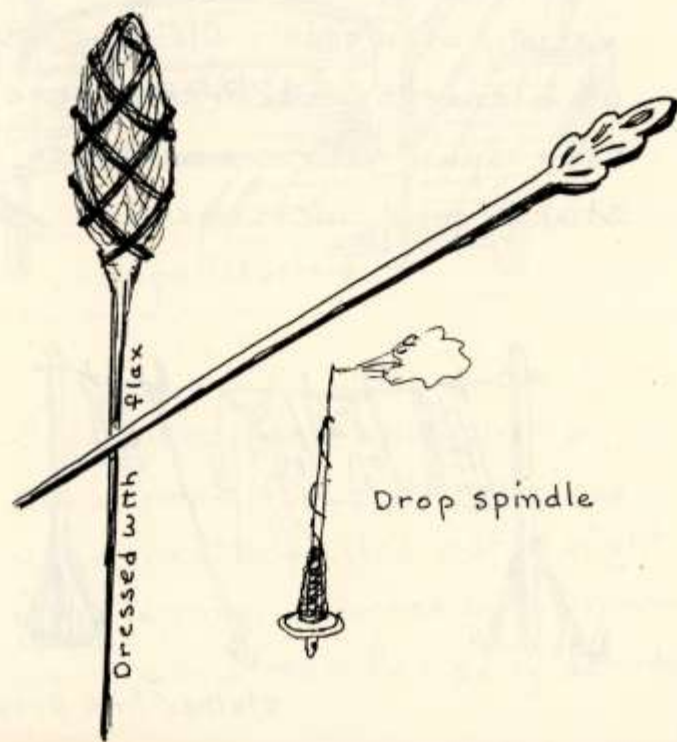
Beds were high enough to allow room for a trundle bed under neath, pulled out at night for sleeping - returned in the morning to allow room for daily activities.

Clothes pin —
Before the clothespin, laundry was spread on the ground, over fences and on bushes to dry. Machine made pins were generally unknown until the late nineteenth century. Early clothes pins were six to eight inches long, carved from a variety of woods. Clothing as well as blankets and linens were of home spun fabric and heavy, so sturdy pins were needed.

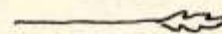


clothes line prop

Distaff, a cleft staff, about three feet long, on which in the ancient mode of spinning, wool or flax was wound. Used as the type of women's work (M.E.) hence, the female branch of the family, 'The distaff side'.



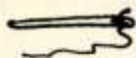
St. Distaff's day, January 7 on which day women resumed their spinning after the holidays. This was a tongue in cheek phrase, as St. Distaff did not exist.



The newel post that supports the handrail of a staircase, either at the foot or head of the stair was often used as a support for a distaff. A hole drilled at an angle in the side of the post held the distaff rigid and freed the spinner's hands.



Egg darning, used to mend by filling in a hole or tear with yarn or thread interwoven, especially stockings, using a darning needle with a blunt tip.



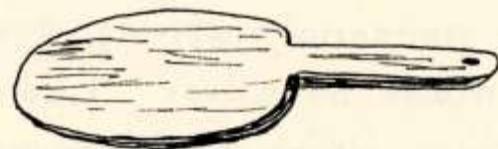
Etui, (pronounced et-wee) a small case for needles, pins, etc.



Pins were carefully stored as they were each handmade and a scarce commodity.

"He that will not stoop for a pin will never be

Feather bed smoother. The feather bed, or feather tick, is fluffed to rearrange the feathers then smoothed by gently patting with a short thick paddle.



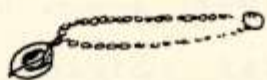
Tick (1440) from latin 'teca or case, strong material used for a covering for feathers, corn husks, etc. Only the softer inner husks were used. These were sometimes shredded with a flax hatchel.



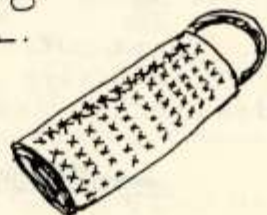
Grater, combines wood and pierced tin to make a rough surface for grating spices, vegetables, etc.



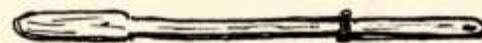
Eighteenth century gentlemen carried personal nutmeg graters, some made of silver. Ladies sometimes wore nutmeg in a wire "cage" on a chain around their necks.



Large coarse graters were used for corn.



Hasty pudding stick, to stir the Indian corn meal pudding, or mush, eaten daily by the early colonists. This dish took a long time to cook, and was definitely not *hasty*.

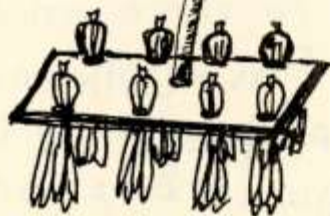


Husking Peg or Pin - with leather thong or strap that fits over the thumb for husking corn.





several husks
tied together
and shredded
for a pot
scrubber, or
hearth brush.



log cabin broom
or mop - used wet
as well as dry.

made from a board with holes
drilled, through which corn husks
were fastened. When the husks
wore out, they were easily replaced.



'Bent low by
autumn's wind and rain
through husks that dry
and sere, unfolded from
their ripened charge
Shone out the yellow ear.
From: "The Huskers"
John Greenleaf Whittier



Indian cup, with
leather thong and
toggle to fasten on
the loin cloth



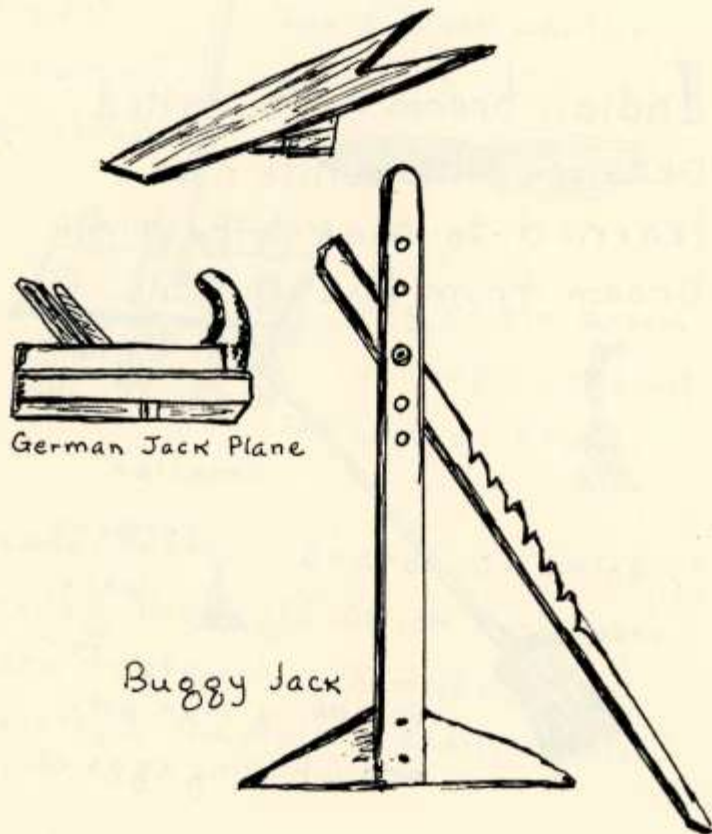
Indian broom - so called
because the white man
learned to make the birch
broom from the Indians.



Smaller
versions
were
for

scrubbing iron pots,
and whisking eggs, etc.

Jack, applied to things that take the place of a lad or man, to save human labor. — A contrivance for pulling off boots, a boot-Jack.

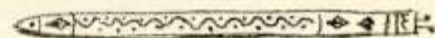


German Jack Plane

Buggy Jack

Knitting needles, cases, sheaths.

Knitting case, to store needles when not in use, often carved and given as a gift.



Knitting sheath - serves as third hand holding one needle rigid

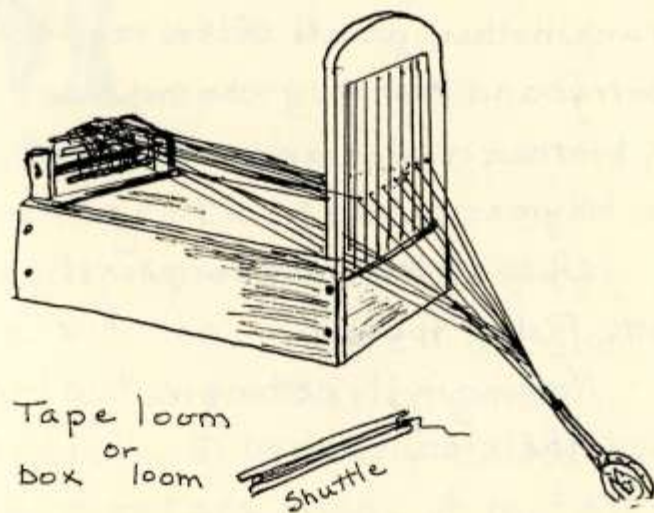


Knitter, one who or that which ties, knots or closely joins together.



love spoon, or courting spoon, a token of the carver's affection.

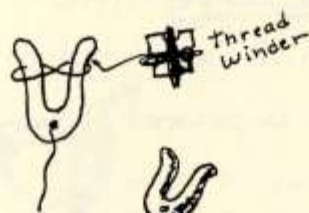
This tradition observed by the Vikings, and continues to this day in other areas, especially in Wales. Symbols carved into the spoon convey special meanings. For example, a chain; binding love, heart; love also, bell; marriage, wheel; industry, promise to provide, vine, two lives entwined, locks, keys, shields, a promise to keep safe from harm.



Tape loom
box or loom



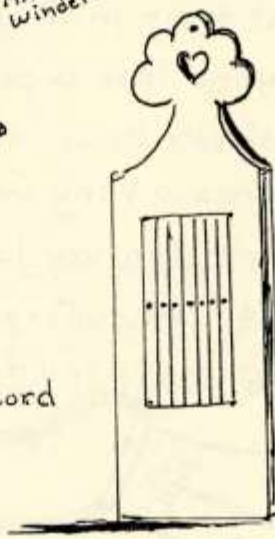
Shuttle



Thread winder



Lucets
for making cord



Lap loom

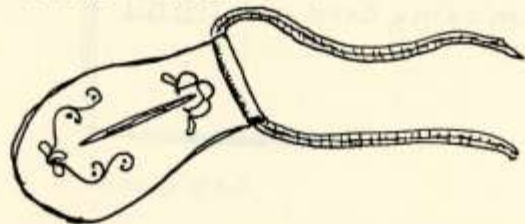
When I was a little girl, my grandmother would often recite poetry and nursery rhymes for my brother, sister and me. One of the rhymes was

Lucy Locket lost her pocket
Betty Fisher found it.

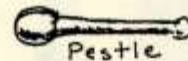
Nothing in it, nothing in it
Save the ribbon round it.

I could believe the three little Kittens lost their mittens, but how could anyone lose a pocket?

A pocket was a very important part of seventeenth century lady's dress. Tape or braid from a box or lap loom was sometimes used for ties.



Mortar and pestle, used to grind the coarse material into that which was more manageable, such as salt, sugar, spices and herbs for the kitchen, as well as corn, barley and other grains. Medicines usually called for mortars made of metal.



Pestle



mortar with pestle

Was the pellet with the poison
in the chalice from the palace
or did the vessel with the pestle
hold the brew that was true?



American Indian Mortar^{and} Pestle
using the spring action of a tree
limb. Early settlers also used this
method.

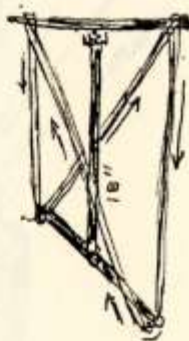


Though thou shouldest bray a
fool in a mortar among wheat
with a pestle, yet will not his
foolishness depart from him.

proverbs xxvii

Niddy noddy, an improvement on the stick reel, used to wind yarn from the spindle of the spinning wheel, and measure into eighty yards. A skein consisted of seven of these hanks, or 560 yards.

This verse was recited to keep count of each complete turn.



Niddy Noddy

Niddy Noddy, Two heads, one body

Here's one, Taint' one

Will be one, Bye and bye.

Oak, Several varieties of native hard wood, strong, durable, coarse grained. many objects of green were made of oak. A favorite wood for furniture, cooperage, construction, etc.



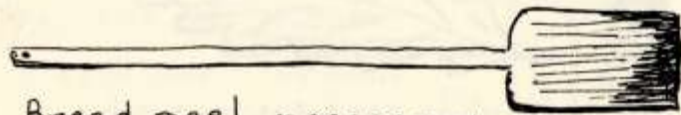
White oak - quercus alba



Oval boxes, made and used by the Shakers for kitchen dry materials, and sewing items etc.



Peel, late Middle English, from the French *pelle*, shovel. A shovel shaped instrument specifically a bakers shovel for thrusting loaves, pies, etc. into the oven and withdrawing them from it.



Bread peel, necessary for use in the deep brick ovens

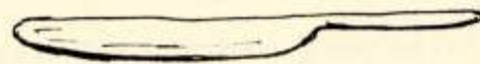


Pie peel

Ash peels were made of iron to remove ashes from the oven.

Bread baked in outdoor ovens is often blackened on the bottom. In earlier times when bread was baked by servants of the manor, the bottom crust was removed before serving to the gentry, and eaten by the workers. This gave rise to the term "upper crust" referring to the rich.

An Apple pie order undoubtedly originated with the uniformly sliced apples arranged carefully in a beautifully crimped crust presenting a tidy appearance.



Wooden dough knife, to separate dough into loaf size before baking.

uassia (1765) the name of a Surinam black man who discovered the medicinal properties of the South American tree which bears his name. Quassia cups made from the wood supposedly transferred these properties to water contained in them. Mortars and pestles were also made from Quassia.

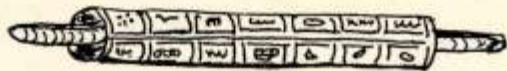


a small amount of the wood combined with boiling water makes a bitter tonic.

uapaws, the first of the four tribes of the Akansea or Arkansas nation visited by LaSalle in March of 1682. They were called "Aux Arcs" (the bows) by the French. The area where they lived is still called the Ozarks. The Quapaws used the wood of the Osage Orange (*maclura pomifera*) known for its strength, and called bois d'arc (wood of the bow). It is still sometimes called bodarc or bodock. This tree was native to n. Texas, se. Oklahoma, and Arkansas, home of the Osage Indians. It was spread into other areas, used as a thorny living fence before barbed wire. The "hedge apples" were soaked in barrels of water to loosen seeds, then poured into a trench. This wood made life time fence posts, and yields a yellow dye.



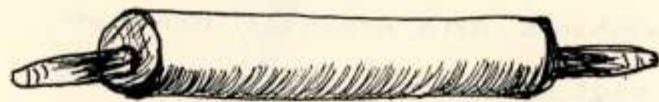
Rolling pin, for
pie crust, cookie
dough-etc.



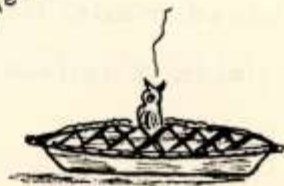
Springerle pin- for cookies
Designs carved in squares.



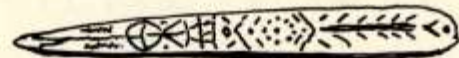
Deep cut grooves
for noodles.



Plain Rolling pin



Stay busk (1592)
a strip of wood,
whalebone, steel, etc.,
passed down the front of a
corset, to stiffen and support
it.

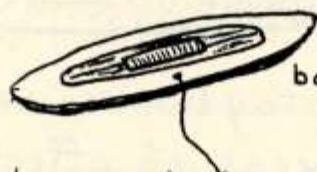


Finely carved stay busks were
given as tokens of affection.
Those of whale bone were
sometimes decorated by sailors
with scrimshaw. Busks were worn
into the eighteenth century.



From Old Norse, to prepare oneself,
to dress, to set in order.

Shuttle - middle English, an instrument used in weaving for passing the thread of the weft to and fro from one edge of the cloth to the other between the thread of the warp.



boat shuttle

Elderberry stems were often used for the bobbin that held the thread, because they were easily hollowed. School boys found Elderberry to be perfect for pop-guns.



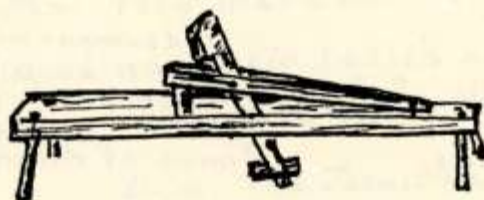
- shuttle for tape loom



Tatting shuttles

my days are swifter than the weaver's shuttle; Job. vii 6

Having had in the past, my carefully drawn cows in a pasture identified by more than one as 'handsome rocks', I now follow the practice of Cervantes' painter Orbaneja of Ubeda - 'if he chanced to draw a cock, he wrote under it, this is cock, lest the people should take it for a fox.' (From Don Quixote)



Schnitzelbank or foot vise
or
shaving horse. 

Trencher, a flat piece of wood, square or circular, on which meat was served and cut up, a plate or platter.
(middle English - 1340-1450)



salt
Top side

a "square meal" from one plate.



Reverse side

He is a very valiant trencher-man
midsummer nights dream

You fools of fortune, trencher friends'
time's flies. Timon of Athens

I found you as a morsel, cold upon
Dead Caesar's Trencher.

Anthonynd Cleopatra

Trencher-cap, the mortar board of
a scholar.

In a letter of Father Francois du Peron to his brother Joseph from the land of the Hurons, 27th of April, 1639. :

"Our plates, although of wood, cost us more than yours; for they are valued at one beaver robe, which is a hundred francs."

In the journal of Father Marquette June, 1673, describing the habits and customs of the Illinois Indians writes "they make all their utensils of wood and their ladles out of the heads of cattle" (buffalo)

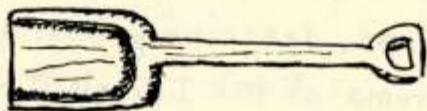
from The Jesuit Relations
And Allied Documents



Toll board
from Grist
mill.

Toll, a proportion of the grain or flour taken by the miller in payment for grinding.

Grist, the action of grinding, or grain to be ground.



Wooden Shovel used in place of metal to avoid sparks which might ignite floating dust and cause an explosion of gases formed by grain decomposition.

'Though the mills of God grind slowly,
yet they grind exceedingly small'

Frederick Von Logau 1605-1655



tensil, any article useful or necessary in a household.



Strainer



funnel



Butter scoop



Butter print



Dipper



Timer



Bellows



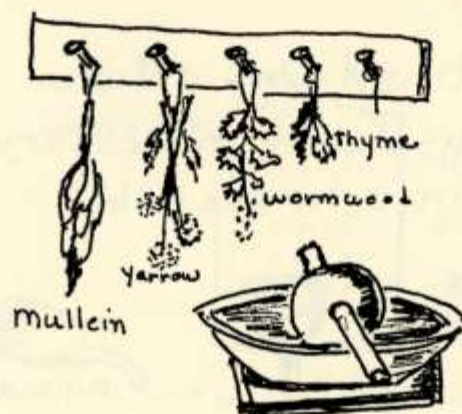
candle stick



Spoons



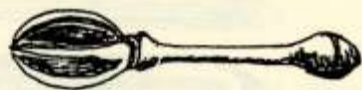
netting needles



Herb Crusher



lemon or citrus
reamer; carried aboard
Spanish galleons. Scurvy was
a problem on long voyages
due to poor nutrition. Fresh
fruit was carried to prevent
it.



Both
Culinary and
medicinal herbs
were needed
in every
household.

Vessel, a receptacle
for a liquid or other
substance.

Liquor was
dispensed



Pint
measure



quart
measure

In early taverns in pints and
quarts. Guests who showed signs
of having imbibed too much,
were often advised to

'mind your p's and q's'



spill vase

Spills were small rolled strips
of paper or wood used for
lighting a fire

"In old time we had treen chalices
and golden priests, but now we have
treen priests and golden chalices."
certain sermons Preached before the
Queen's Majesty 1609 - Bishop John Jewel

Washing or scrubbing stick, forerunner of the washboard.



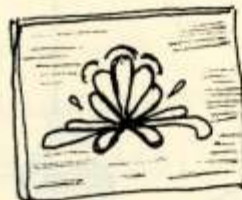
lye soap scoop



Laundry tub

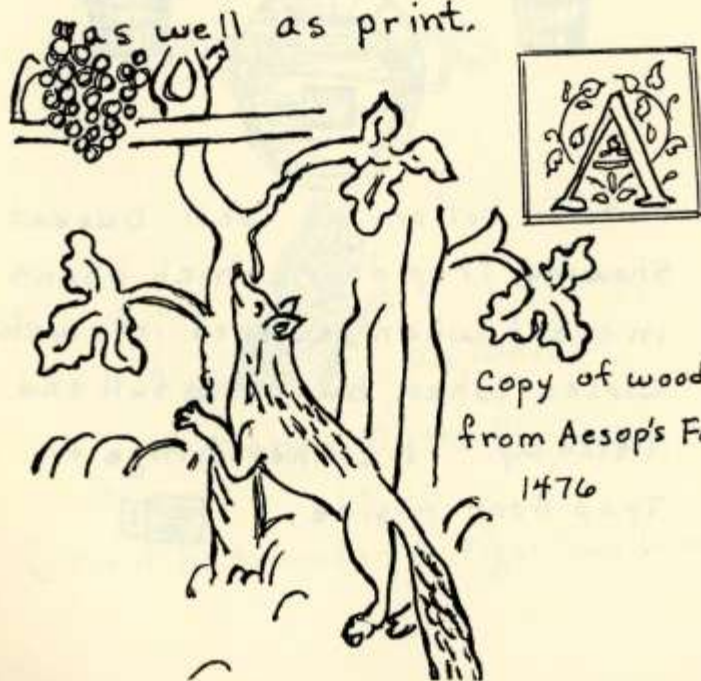
lye for soft soap was obtained by leaching wood ashes, then stirred into grease saved from cooking. Soap was made usually once a year, dipped from a barrel to use.

Xylography, wood engraving of the early period, or of a primitive kind, printing from wood blocks as distinct from type.



used for textiles

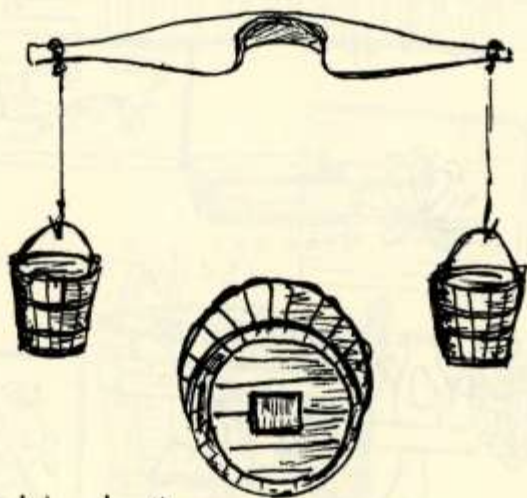
as well as print.



Copy of woodcut from Aesop's Fables

1476

Yoke, distributed weight, making milk or water buckets, etc, easier to carry.



outside bottom of well bucket showing trap door, which opens in ward when lowered into water, closes when bucket is full and lifted up. Leather hinge on Trap door inside. 

Zooks! an exclamation, or minced oath, expressing vexation, surprise, or other emotion; describes feelings of the author after reading the entire Z section of the Oxford Universal Dictionary and coming up with ZIP for treenware spelled with a Z. - Unless ——— Zeugma (1586), a yoking- or Zeuglodon, strap or loop of a yoke



ah, well,

Zebra Butterfly

(Lest it be taken for a Tiger Swallowtail)

AFTERWIT

Many of the treenware items as well as the old tools are from my own forty year collection, others were reproduced by my husband.

My thanks to the friends who over the years have generously allowed family pieces to be copied, and to the living history museums throughout the country where I have had the good fortune to see many items of treen explained.

The scions of genius were gleaned from the orchards of others,

The encouragement from my children, Tara and Kelley and my friend,

Polly.