



## THE SLOYD KNIFE

Lief Erickson



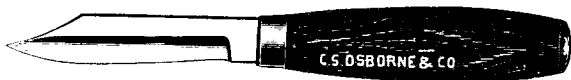
Sloyd Knives, No. 2.....



Sloyd Knives, No. 3.....



Sloyd Knives, No. 6.....



Sloyd Knives, No. 7.....

Unlike the famous Barlow and Bowie knives, The sloyd knife is named for a system, not a man's name.

The word sloyd (also slejd and sloid) derives from an early Swedish word meaning skill, or dexterity. The root word is related to the English word sleight, meaning a skillful trick or knack, as sleight-of-hand, as in legerdemain, or card tricks.

In Sweden the word came to be applied to a system of manual training in the practical use of tools and materials, primarily in the trade of wood-carving. Gradually, it expanded to include wood-working and related trades, and the making of plans, specifications, and blueprints. It also came to be identified with

the system of training apprentices under the guild system. In early English usage, the word sloyd means skilled craftsmanship; trained mechanical work: again, especially in wood-carving and cabinetry. (Most possibly, the surname Sloyd is like the surnames Turner, Cartwright, Farrier and the like - a name that identifies a man with a particular craft.)

After adoption by England and America, the term expanded to include all the fields of what was called "manual training" in the early 1900's, and is now called "vocational education". Since young students and trainees are usually not capable of fine work, sloyd has come to mean a system of elementary training based on the making of small wooden articles with simple tools, a far cry from its original connotation of highly skilled workmanship.

The knife itself deserves comment. It is much the same size and shape as an ordinary paring knife - but with significant differences. It usually has a stag blade of heavy cross-section, much like its larger brother, the hunting or sheath knife. It is forged from cast steel (or its present substitute) - not stamped out of thin stainless steel like modern paring knives; so it can take and hold a really keen edge. Because of its weight, balance, and design, it is truly a craftsman's tool, excellent for whittling, carving, trimming, marking (better than a scratch awl for precise layout work), and many other needs of the good wood-worker.

The basic design qualities led to its use in other areas, with variations in in size and configuration, such as the hunting and skinning sheath knife mentioned above. It was used not only by Scandinavian artisans, but also by farmers and sailors as an omnipresent jack-knife. This was a special type, suitable for carrying in the pocket or on a lanyard. It has the typical sloyd blade, completely contained in a slot in a wooden handle, which can be withdrawn, reversed, locked in place, and then used as a standard sloyd knife. This writer has one that was brought to America by his grandfather in 1872 (stamped SEGERSTROM ESLILSTUNA SWEDEN), which the family always referred to as "Grandpa's sailor knife". But Grandpa was not a sailor; he was a farmer and jack-of-all-trades, making everything from wooden spoons and huckleberry pickers to water-wheels and wagons; and one can only assume that his

sloyd knife was used in all of these projects. In fact, it was also used for less complicated but still very important operations. This writer remembers it being used to make a bow and arrow set, "figure-four traps", and a lot of willow whistles.

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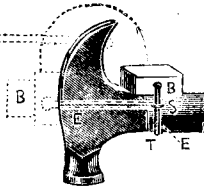
## THE ADJUSTABLE FULCRUM BLOCK. FOR DRAWING NAILS.

PAT. APL'D FOR.

SOMETHING NEW.

DON'T WASTE TIME

Comprises Block B held to Hammer by Elastic attachment E.  
To draw nails pass block over in front as in cut.



Hunting for a block.  
Use this. It's always at hand.  
Never in the way.  
Pays for itself the first day.

Instantly adjustable. Automatic: Holds itself in any of the three positions as desired. You can't break your hammer handle if you use this fulcrum. You can draw nails with this when you positively can not with a hammer alone.

- |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Saves hunting for a block. | 4. Saves hammer handle.          |
| 2. Saves scarring the wall.   | 5. Saves enlarging the nail hole |
| 3. Saves your nail straight.  | 6. Saves your temper.            |

### DIRECTIONS.

TO DRAW A NAIL:—1. Start nail in old way till hammer is down to heel. 2. Pass block over in front, and use it flat-wise for a purchase. 3. If nail is long, turn block end-wise, to finish. See dotted line.

If particular to keep nail straight, slip block back gradually, as you pry. As soon as you have drawn, always replace block back on handle. The pin and socket will hold it there in spite of all pounding.

TO ATTACH TO HAMMER ONCE FOR ALL IN ONE MINUTE:—1. Drive tack T part way in, under handle. 2. Slip elastic E over handle and into place; wind once over tack; taking up all slack, by winding more, or retieing the knot that is drawn through the hole in the block. 3. Insert Staples, starting holes for same with brad supplied. Drive each staple part way in on each side near the top, as shown, to guide the elastic, which should pass freely through the same without binding. One leg should be against the hammer-shank. 4. Insert brad in top of handle, to project 3-8 inch and engage socket in block.

It is well to round edges of hammer-claws with a file, to save chafing the elastic.

RETAIL PRICE ONE DIME—everything complete with directions.

Above contributed by Henry Sawin, Worcester, Mass.

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### Letter to the Editor

(Relative to November Attic Tool Chest) I don't remember the Connecticut entries in NEMUD (New England Mercantile Union Directory) well enough to tell if it's their typo or yours (under joiners tools) but the firm name is definitely not "Sewage and Carter". The man's name was Savage, probably Seth Savage of Middletown, who at a different time made rules, bevels and so forth. (Joe Link can take credit for this error which is quite appropriate to him as an ex-plumbing contractor (editor's note)).

Simeon DeForest may have been Linson De Forest, corrupted in the NEMUD. It is the only instance of a Simeon of that name I could find, although Linson appears in several records. Chapin's name was Hermon. This was NEMUD's error.

John Mix Manufacturing Co. was operating in (West) Cheshire as late as 1856.

A Lyman Killam also worked in Glastonbury, but since Ken Roberts also reports a J Killam, there were apparently two of the surname. One of these operated in 1856, but no front name or initial is in the reference.

James M. Sheffield worked in New York City from 1849 to 1854. I have an adze made by him with a NY address. By 1851 Sanford, Parmelee & Co. had become N.C. Sanford & Co., and there were also operating in Connecticut the following:

R.N. Bassett, augers, Birmingham  
W. Churchill, augers, Hamden (Mill River Works)  
~~Wm.~~ T. Wilcox, augers, Guilford  
Westville Mfg. Co., Wales French, Westville

Upson, Jennings and Canfield, and probably others from the NEMUD list were still at work. R.N. Bassett was Robert. N.W. Churchill was Willis I think.

In 1856 Connecticut auger makers included:

R.N. Bassett, Birmingham  
Plainville Bit and Auger Co., Farmington  
W. Churchill, Hamden  
N.C. Sanford & Co., Meridan  
Wales French, Westville  
Charles A. Converse & Co., Norwich  
Upson Mfg. Co., Seymour  
French, Swift & Co., Seymour  
Winstead Auger Co., (West) Winstead  
J.L. Clark, Chester  
C.G. Griswold & Co., Chester  
L'Hommedieu & Co., Chester  
S.C. Silliman & Co., Chester  
Jennings & Co., Saybrook  
Smith & Baxter, Sharon

The 1851 - 1856 material is from the Connecticut Business Directory of those years.

What is known about the Winstead Edge Tool Works, West Winstead?

Joel Fenn, incidentally, was connected with the Sawheag Works in Wallingford.

Elliot Sayward  
Levittown, New York

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"Communications from intelligent Mechanics will be very acceptable, in whatever style they may be written. Original patents, inventions, etc. will be inserted on the shortest notice."

An excerpt from THE GLASGOW MECHANIC'S MAGAZINE of Saturday  
11th September, 1824 Price 3d

I shall be glad to forward any contributions any of you readers wish to make.

William A. Downes, 987 River Road, Mystic, Ct. 06355