

Inventory of Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Workshops

W. Michael McCracken*

August 3, 2006

1 Introduction

As I promised, I have put together some information on Gustav Stickley's furniture manufacturing equipment in Syracuse (actually Eastwood, now a neighborhood of Syracuse), NY. The major part of this thing will be long, so I'm breaking it up into pieces. The first piece will be about the adventure of uncovering this information.

2 On the trail of Gus's Iron

My wife and I have collected and studied the American arts and crafts movement for more than 35 years. Our studies have led us to all kinds of exciting and odd places. There have been two pieces of information that have not surfaced in the studies others have done on Gustav Stickley. The first, is what the heck did he finish the furniture with? I've been working on that one for more than 3 years now, and I'm getting close, but I don't have all the answers yet. I think that information will become a book on the finishing methods of the arts and crafts manufacturers. The second is, how much of that stuff did he make? His business that made arts and crafts furniture lasted about 15 or 16 years (depending on how you count). Prior to that he made chairs of many different forms. The bottom line is he made a lot of furniture. We will be giving a short talk on the production figures at the Annual Grove Park Inn Arts and Crafts Conference in Feb in Asheville. Those two questions led us to spend a month at the Winterthur Museum and Library in Wilmington, DE. They have the business records of Gustav Stickley's businesses. Though incomplete, they offered us much information. As a sidebar, I went through all of the inventories of the company. Those inventories included, materials on hand, partially completed and completed furniture, and machines. I thought it would be fun to put together a little list of the machines for my OWWM friends. The following listing

*Copyright ©2006 by W. Michael McCracken. All rights reserved

contains the major tools. Sometimes they did not list a manufacturer so I can't. Also, this list is from a later inventory that was undated. My best guess, from comparing its contents with other dated inventories is that it is likely from 1910-1915. So here goes. Note everything, or at least most everything was driven off a line shaft system. I won't include the inventory of shafts and pulleys, but they are there. I'm also only including the wood working machines. There were also sewing machines, and stuff for fabric and leather, and there were metal working machines for the metal shop.

3 The Iron

Note, spelling is theirs.

1. Pattern Maker's Lathe, 12" swing, 8' bed
2. Swing Cut-Off Saw, quantity 2
3. Slitting Saw Bench, including saw, 3'6" x 4'6", Frank H. Clement Co., quantity 4
4. Buss Planar and Jointer, 16", 7' table, Frank H. Clement Co.
5. Band Saw, 42", 40" x 42" iron table, Frank H. Clement Co.
6. Pedestal Emery Grinder, Diamond Machine Co.
7. Wood Turning Lathe, 16" swing, 8' bed
8. Circular Saw Grinder
9. Two Spindle Heavy Shaper, 43" x 58" table, Buss Machine Works
10. Two spindle shaper, # 2 1/2, Frank H. Clement Co., quantity 2
11. Power feed reed and Dowel Machine
12. Four-Sided Moulder, #209, J. A. Fay and Egan Co.
13. Automatic Glue Jointer, J.A. Fay and Egan Co.
14. Single Surfacer, 24" x 6", Connell and Dengler Machine Co.
15. Single Surfacer, 30" x 6 1/2", Baxter D. Whitney
16. Buzz Planer and Jointer, 30", Frank H. Clement Co., quantity 2
17. Swing Cut-Off Saw, left hand, Connell and Dengler Machine Co.
18. Hydraulic Chair Back Bending Press
19. Chair Press, three screws, L.G. McKnight and Son, quantity 2

20. Combination saw and dado machine, 3'8" x 4'7" table, Buss Machine Works
21. Framing Saw and bench, Connell and Dengler Machine Co.
22. Variety Saw and bench, Frank H. Clement Co., quantity 2
23. Chain Saw Mortiser, The New Britain Machine Co.
24. Double Spindle Sander, 24" x 46" iron table, Frank H. Clement Co.
25. Chuck Stand, including chuck (Is this the chuck to chuck woodchucks?), quantity 2
26. Bed Rail Saw with 3 spindle boring attachment, Bradford Joint Co.
27. Drum Sander
28. Hollow Chisel Mortising Machine, Hitchcock Manuf. Co.
29. Variety Saw Bench, #1, 36" x 44" table, Frank H. Clement co.
30. Automatic Knife Grinder, 30", Baxter D. Whitney
31. Royal Invincible Snding Machine, 36", 3 drum, Berlin Machine Works
32. Band Saw, 34", Frank H. Clement Co., quantity 2
33. Post Boring Machine, #2, Frank H. Clement Co.
34. Scroll Saw Machine, Eureka
35. Dovetailing Machine, A. Dodd
36. Scraping Machine, 30", Baxter D. Whitney
37. Bit Mortising Machine, 12" Stroke, L. G. McKnight and Son, quantity 2
38. Single End Tenoning Machine, #12, Witherby, Hugg and Richardson, Co.
39. Post Boring Machine, #2, Frank H. Clement Co.
40. Double Horizontal Borer, #2, Frank H. Clement Co., quantity 2
41. Back Tenoning Machine, L. G. McKnight and Son, quantity 2
42. Single Belt Sanding Machine, 24" x 6"
43. Double Drum Sanding Machine, 20" x 24"
44. Belt Sanding Machine, #66, Wysong and Miles and Co.
45. Belt Sander, #294, 8', 8" belt, Clemons Machine Co.
46. Post Belt Sanding Machine, 8"

47. Buzz Planer and Jointer, 8", Frank H. Clement Co.
48. Power Grindstone, 18"
49. Combination Saw and Dado Machine, 40" x45" iron table, American Wood Working Machinery Co.
50. Horizontal Boring Machine, #1, Frank H. Clement Co.
51. Vertical Boring Machine, #3, Frank H. Clement Co.
52. Presses, L. G. McKnight and son, quantity 2

4 Summary

That's what he had. That was valued at \$29,308.50, which is replacement value. Plus he had \$2852.85 of belts, pulleys, and shafting, \$984.83 of blower pipe and fittings, \$2096.50 of hand tools, \$1000 of patterns, and \$1679.47 of tables, racks, and benches. That adds up to, \$37,922.15 in 1910 or 1915 dollars. In today's dollars that adds up to: \$771,071.42 for 1910 and \$732,116.88 for 1915. I used a simple CPI calculator for that, which may have no relevance to actual machinery cost.