

THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS

— BULLETIN —

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THE MARBLE SPINDLE

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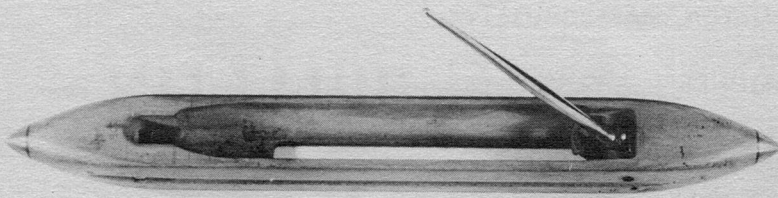
ED. NOTE- After the June 1984 issue of the BULLETIN, stories for the publication became quite infrequent and regular quarterly issues were suspended. However, the Society is resuming its publication on quarterly basis and we hope to continue that schedule. This story should have appeared in 1984 because of the subject's anniversary of its patent, 1884. We regret delay chronologically speaking, but prevailing logistics assumed a motivating factor in that recourse.

One hundred years ago in 1884 when the textile industry was at its peak in New England, Ezra Washington Marble, Sr., invented the Famous Marble spindle. He was the great grandfather of our 1981-1984 Selectman, Ralph W. Gurney, Jr. Several types of spindles had been used up to that time, but the Marble spindle seemed the best for securely holding the bobbin onto the spindle in the shuttle.

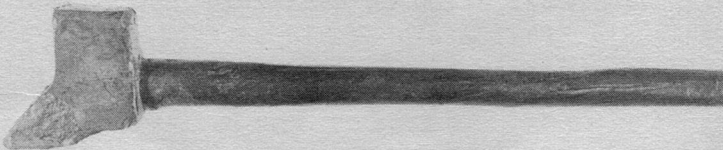
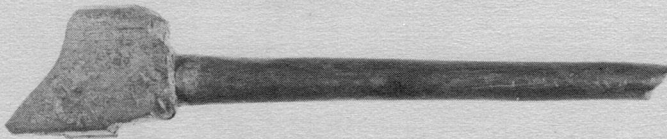
In loom weaving the shuttle is driven back and forth across the lay beam by a forceful stroke of a picker stick at a rapid rate (picks per minute) and is abruptly stopped before being reversed in direction back across the lay beam in its alternate travel path, thus inserting the filling threads into the warp threads to produce cloth. This sudden change of direction created centrifical force which could loosen the bobbin on the spindle, but the Marble spindle virtually eliminated this trouble.

The invention took place in an eastern section of Sutton known as Marble Village in recognition of its inventor. In the late 1800's cotton and woolen textile mills were predominately located in New England, such as; Manchester (Amoskeag Mills the largest in the world) and Nashua, N.H., Bath, Saco-Kennebunk, Me, Lowell, Lawrence, Fall River, New Bedford, Chicopee, the Blackstone Valley in Mass., Pawtucket, Cranston, R.I. and numerous towns and cities in New England. Locally, Wilkinsonville, Manchaug (both Sutton), Saundersville, Fisherville, Rockdale, Uxbridge, Whitinsville, Millville, Millbury, and many others both woolen and cotton were productive in cloth and manufacture.

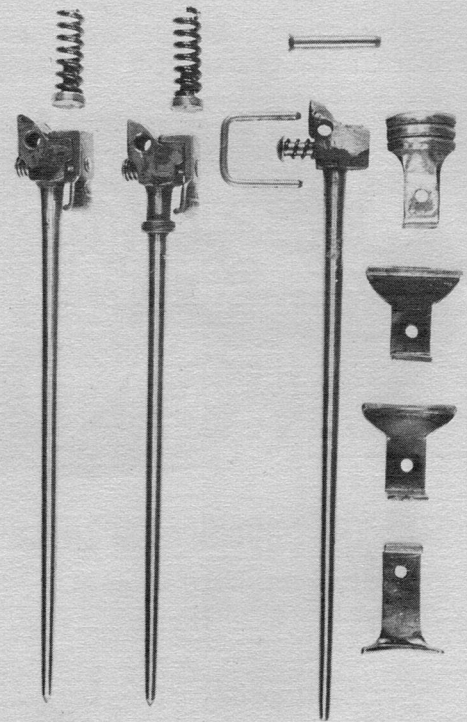
The shop Ezra W. Marble operated is where the present Sutton Machine Tool Company is located. Henry Wheelock's manufacturing reign is now superseded by Lawrence Tebo who produces tools and dies. The expansion of the business became so extensive that steel forgings for the Marble spindle were made by the D.T. Dudley and Son Company of Wilkinsonville (Sutton). This shop is now the Dudley Spindle and Dudley Pine Shop.



SHUTTLE WITH SPINDLE EXTENDED
AND BOBBIN



SPINDLE FORGINGS



SPINDLE PARTS

The Marble Spindle is made up of several components; the main body or spindle, a catch that holds the bobbin on to the spindle, a rivet or pin and a coil spring. The pin with a coil spring in place goes through a hole in the base of the spindle and these parts are riveted to a catch on the shuttle. To load a wound bobbin or unload an empty one, the tip of the bobbin is pulled outward from its operating position and the coil spring under compression holds a tension for the bobbin reloading cycle. When the new bobbin on the spindle is snapped back into the shuttle cavity, a spring lifts the catch tightly on to the bobbin. With the spindle in place, a coil spring in the back of the spindle forces the spindle down into a lowered position which in turn raises the spindle up by opening the catch against a staple that is fitted above the spindle in the shuttle. This design of spindle was used extensively in a cotton, woolen and duck weaving.

Until the 1930's the textile business finding labor costs too expensive in the north moved to the southern states. Approximately, thirty-five firms manufactured shuttles and spindles at that time. There are now about four remaining, one in the north and three in the south.

The Rosemont Tool Company in 1953 took over the spindle and steel shuttle parts from the D.T. Dudley and Son Company. Production of these parts continues to the present day, and it is the only operating firm in New England to manufacture them.

The Marble Spindle, a century old design, is still being made for the Appleton Woolen Company of Appleton, Wisconsin, by the Rosemont Tool Company. They may be the only textile firm still using the Marble Spindle. Shutterless automatic looms and the trend to knitted goods has almost obliterated the spindle industry.

MONTHLY MEETINGS-

1984

JULY - A picnic meeting was held July 10 at the Manchaug church site at 6Pm. Slide programs were presented by Daniel Griffith and Charles Pentland on quilts and Heritage Day 1970, respectfully.

AUGUST - A potluck supper was enjoyed by the Society members at the Eight Lots School site. A Director's meeting was called to discuss an invitation by the Millbury Historical Society, to jointly promote an event at the Millbury High School, September 14, which is to feature a 19th century magician by Robert Olson. A program was presented by Patti Smith on the 19th century activities in the Douglas State Forest area.

SEPTEMBER - No regular Society monthly meeting was scheduled because of the September 3, Labor Day, flea market sale at the Blacksmith Shop which netted \$192.00 and the September 14 entertainment program at the Millbury High School held jointly with the Millbury Historical Society.

OCTOBER - This meeting being the annual election of officies, the following nominees were voted into office: Charles Pentland, President, Carilyn Philbrook, V.P., William Holst, Treasurer, Betty Pentland, recording secretary, Donald King, corresponding secretary, Mary King, Historian, and Rae Johnson, Curator. Wilfred Stockwell spoke on "Early American Automobiles" from 1890 to 1920 which he illustrated with color slides.

NOVEMBER - The Society met at the Manchaug Baptist Church. After a short business meeting Malcolm Pearson showed 100 yr. old lantern slides of Biblical scenes on an early 1900 projector. These slides were hand colored in France.

DECEMBER - The meeting was held at the West Sutton Baptist Community Hall. Annual dues were received for 1985. Sponsorship of a scholarship grant will be discussed at a Director's meeting. A copy of the Upton History published in commemeration of their 250th Anniversary has been purchased for the Society. The Christmas auction raised \$177.75 and refreshments were served during the social hour.

1985

JANUARY - Rae Johnson presided during the absence of President, Charles Pentland, Shirley Nelson took secretarial notes for Recording Secretary, Betty Pentland. The meeting was held at the West Sutton Baptist Community Hall. Robert Bristol, Sutton, New Hampshire Selectman, was the guest speaker. Sutton, Massachusetts had participated in their Bicentennial Celebration. Mr. Bristol purchased the Harvey Farm, known as the Muster Field Farm, an 18th century federal homestead, and restored it to that period. He, also, has rejuvenated the farm into a working entity and is collecting old farm equipment as a museum enterprise. He discussed the history of Sutton, N.H. (a lawyer, Baruch Chase from Sutton, Massachusetts drew up the incorporation charter for Sutton, N.H.), showed some slides and made available some brochures on that town.

FEBRUARY - The Society met at the West Sutton Baptist Community Hall. The Upton history book, "Upton's Heritage" by Donald Blake Johnson, was presented to President Charles Pentland for the Societie's records. The Treasurer's showed a balance of \$9,684.74. The scheduled guest speaker was not available and Malcolm Pearson presented a slide show of he and his wife Myra's trip across the country and back in 1959.

MARCH - The Society met at the West Sutton Baptist Community Hall. Fred Baldwin's campaign to revive the old weathervane from the Town Hall to be duplicated in style for the new Municipal Building was reviewed from the secretarial record. James Moran, the guest speaker discussed many historical events in the growth of Worcester to a county shire town/city its related association with surrounding communities. A slide tape entitled "The Mechanic Story" was shown to explain events which were critical to Worcester's leading role in industrial development.

APRIL - The Society met at the West Sutton Community Hall. William Holst announced that Gordon Spence had presented to the Society a book on gravestone markings. A cabinet maker's work bench (circa 1850) was donated by Carl Sunquist and it is now in the Blacksmith Shop. Miss Elizabeth Balmer presented a slide show and discussion on her trip to Oberammergau, Germany, to see the Passion Play which the villagers have held semiannually since 1634.

MAY - The Sutton Historical Society met jointly at the Douglas Historical Society headquarters in the Jenekes Store in Douglas. Marita Howard whose father worked in the century old store, had an intimate knowledge of its history. A tour of the store followed where many of the original commodities are on display.

JUNE - Preparation for the annual flea market day at the Blacksmith Shop was in progress early in the morning. Although the weather did not cooperate, sale returns for the day were \$465.76.

JULY - A potluck picnic was held at the Eight Lots School. Rae Johnson presided over the business meeting at which time the "Bulletin" publication and the building of carriage sheds at the Blacksmith Shop were discussed.

MONTHLY MEETING REPORT CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

1984 JULY 1985 DECEMBER- Welcome New Members

Gordon and Susan Curtis
John R. Crossman
James A. Gilbert
Francis C. Mateer

Rev. Thomas V. Walsh
Rita E. Woodward
John and Mary Connor
Delores L. Kender

IN MEMORIAM-

*Mary S. Benjamin *Simone M. Bousquet *Norman L. Slocum
*Vietta S. Batcheller *Elsie M. Conner *Waldo Horne
*Hazel D. King *Phebe Rosebrooks *Freeman Rosebrooks
*Edwin D. Riley *Sigred Johnson

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