

**Pages showing billhooks from the 1899 Catalogue of Isaac Nash,
Wollaston Mills, nr Stourbridge.**

Edge tool making had been established in the village of Belbroughton in the 15th century when John Waldern established a scythe manufacturers there. Isaac Nash started an edge tool business in 1842, with two helpers and in 1873 bought out the Waldron works. Nash died in 1877 (or 1888??) and the business continued to flourish with the acquisition of Fussells of Mells in 1894 and a lease on the forges at Wollaston Mills in Stourbridge 1896. The Fussell's works were closed about 1895 and manufacture, and some staff from Somerset, transferred to the Stourbridge site. Nash continued to manufacture tools bearing both the NASH and FUSSELL IMPRROVED trademarks, inventing a new JF stamp to match the existing N one. Billhooks were usually marked NASH in an incised stamp with a serrated (zigzag) border. The N stamp, or ISAAC NASH was rarely used on billhooks, but common on reap-hooks, sickles and hay knives. Separate catalogues were still being issued for Nash and Fussell tools (although only the 1895 catalogue of Fussell is known to exist), but post WW1 Nash catalogues show both ranges.



The original catalogues are from the collection of Jane Rees, Vice President of TATHS, and are reproduced here her with her kind permission



Isaac Nash & Sons,

Wollaston Mills,

Stourbridge.



Cancels all Previous Lists.

1899.

THE MANUFACTURES OF
Isaac Nash & Sons,
WOLLASTON MILLS,
STOURBRIDGE,
ENGLAND.

Subject to alteration without notice.

SECTION V.

EDGE TOOLS.

SUB-SECTION B.

BILL-HOOKS, SLASHERS, AXES, HATCHETS, ADZES,
DRAWING KNIVES, CLEAVERS, CHOPPERS, &c.



370



367



396



408

BILL HOOKS, BROOM HOOKS, SOCKET BILL HOOKS and SLASHERS are measured from top of ferrule or socket to extreme end as shown by dotted lines in above engravings.

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BILL HOOKS, BROOM HOOKS, and SOCKET BILL HOOKS.

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BILL HOOKS.

No.	PATTERN.	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12 in.
253	Epsom ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/- per doz
254	Kent ...	—	—	21/-	21/3	21/6	22/-	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/-
256	Chart's or Gravesend	—	—	24/9	26/-	27/-	28/6	29/6	31/-	32/-	33/-	34/-
257	" Canterbury	—	—	24/9	26/-	27/-	28/6	29/6	31/-	32/-	33/-	34/-
258	" Folkestone	—	—	24/9	26/-	27/-	28/6	29/6	31/-	32/-	33/-	34/-
259	Hampshire or Isle of Wight	23/6	24/-	24/6	25/-	26/-	27/-	28/-	29/-	30/-	31/-	32/-
260	Hampshire or Isle of Wight Cutting Down	—	—	24/6	25/-	26/-	27/-	28/-	29/-	30/-	31/-	32/-
261	Hampshire Faggoting	—	—	24/6	25/-	26/-	27/-	28/-	—	—	—	—
262	" Hurdling	—	—	24/6	25/-	26/-	27/-	28/-	—	—	—	—
263	Chichester or Moss's No. 2	—	—	20/6	20/6	20/6	20/6	21/-	22/-	24/-	25/-	27/-
264	Sussex ...	23/6	24/-	24/6	25/-	26/-	27/-	28/-	—	—	—	—
268	Berkshire or Moss's No. 1	23/-	23/6	24/-	24/6	25/-	25/6	26/-	26/6	27/-	28/-	29/-
269	Oxford ...	—	—	—	—	23/-	23/6	24/-	24/6	25/-	25/6	26/6
270	Surrey ...	—	—	21/-	21/6	22/3	23/-	23/6	—	—	—	—
368	Duckett's Oxford ...	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	27/6

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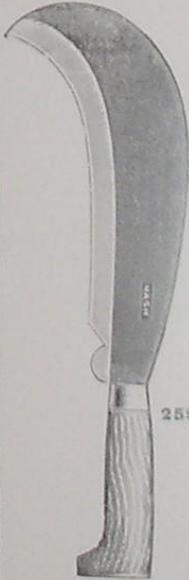
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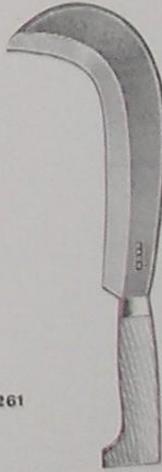
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260



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262



263



264



268



269



270



358



BILL HOOKS.

No.	PATTERN	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12 inch.
277C	Knighton	21/-	21/6	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/- per doz.
278	Shropshire	21/6	22/-	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/- "
279	Woodman's	23/6	24/-	24/9	27/-	29/6	32/-	34/- "
280	Kington	21/6	22/-	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/- "
281	Hedging ...	21/6	22/-	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/- "
282	Hay	21/6	22/-	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/- "
283	Pontypool	23/6	24/-	24/9	27/-	29/6	32/-	34/- "
283A	Monmouth, Solid Steeled	—	—	30/-	32/-	—	—	— "
284	Newtown	21/-	21/-	21/6	22/3	24/9	26/-	27/- "
286	Hereford	21/6	22/-	22/9	24/-	26/9	29/6	31/- "
287	Ledbury ...	21/6	22/-	22/9	24/-	26/9	29/6	31/- "
288	Llanelly ...	21/6	22/-	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/- "
362	Caergwrie	20/6	20/6	20/6	22/-	23/6	25/-	27/- "
363	Leek	21/6	22/-	23/-	24/-	24/6	25/6	26/6 "
364	Newport ...	21/6	22/-	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/- "

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277 C



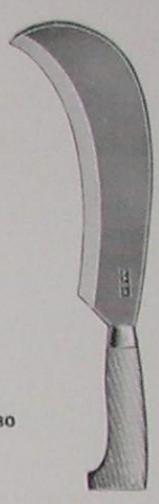
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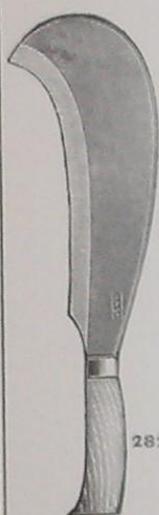
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283 A



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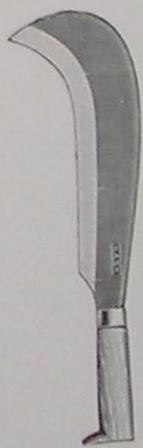
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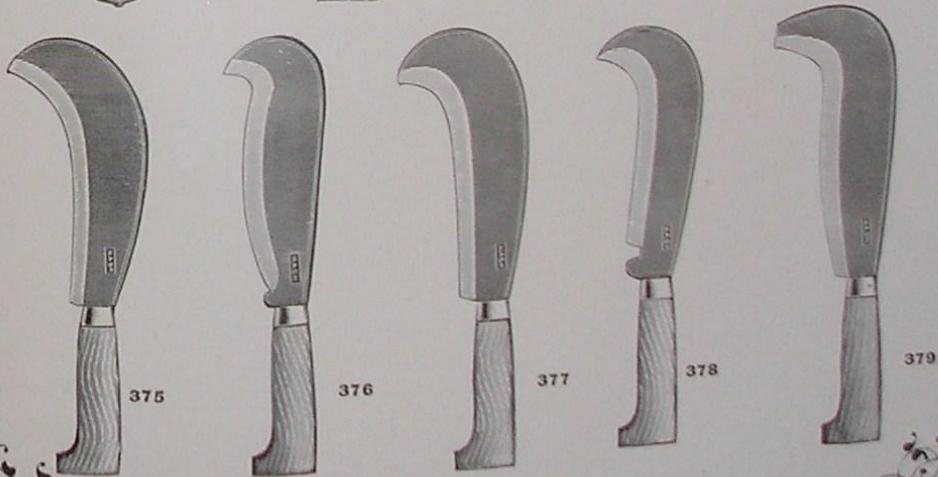
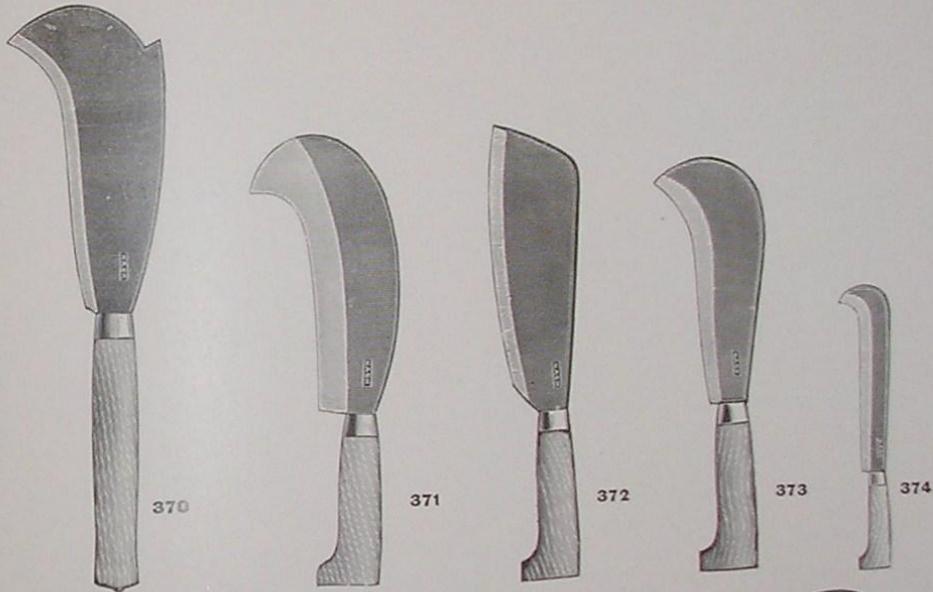
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BILL HOOKS.

No.	PATTERN.	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12 inch.
285	Stafford ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	21/-	21/-	21/-	23/6	25/9	28/3	30/- per doz.
365	Abingdon ...	—	—	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/-	"
366	Bath ...	—	—	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/-	"
367	Bristol ...	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	27/6
369	Imber ...	—	—	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	27/6
370	Llandilo ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22/6	23/-	24/-	26/-	28/-	31/-
371	Roach Back ...	—	—	—	—	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	—
372	Rutland ...	—	—	—	—	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	—
373	Salisbury ...	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	27/6
374	Spar ...	16/-	16/-	16/6	16/6	17/-	17/-	18/-	18/-	18/6	—	—	—	—
375	Swindon ...	—	—	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/-	—
376	Tetbury ...	—	—	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	27/6
377	Warminster ...	—	—	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	27/6
378	Wells ...	—	—	—	—	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	27/6
379	Wiveliscombe ...	—	—	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/-	—

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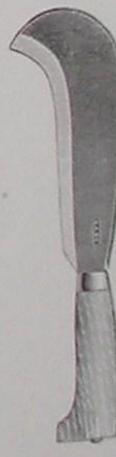
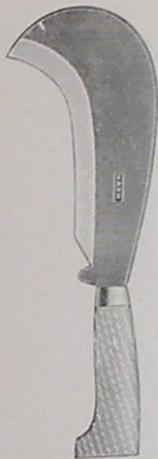




BILL HOOKS.

No.	PATTERN.	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12 inch.
255	Block	22/6	23/-	23/6	25/-	26/-	27/-	28/6	—	— per doz.
265	Norfolk	...	...	...	23/-	23/6	24/-	24/9	26/-	27/-	28/-	30/- "
380	Trowbridge Projection	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3	27/6 "
381	Trowbridge...	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/- "
382	Chippenham	...	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/- "
383	Dorset	...	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3 27/6 "
384	Downton	...	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3 27/6 "
385	Farringdon	...	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/- "
386	Fordingbridge	...	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3 27/6 "
387	Half Turn	...	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/- "
388	Maidstone	...	21/-	21/-	21/6	22/6	23/-	24/-	24/6	25/-	26/-	27/- 28/- "
389	Martock	...	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3 27/6 "
390	Sevenoaks	...	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/- "
391	Woodrow	...	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/-	20/6	21/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/- "
392	Knapman	...	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/9	25/-	26/3 27/6 "

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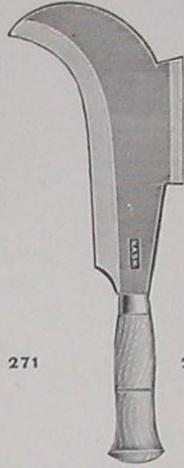
BROOM HOOKS.

No.	PATTERN.	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12 inch.
271	Shropshire ...	—	—	—	21/6	22/6	23/6	24/6	26/-	29/-	32/-	34/- per doz.
272	Stafford ...	—	—	—	21/-	21/-	21/6	22/3	24/9	27/-	29/6	31/6 "
273	Nottingham ...	—	—	—	—	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/-	27/-	28/6	29/6 "
274	Lincoln ...	—	—	—	—	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/-	27/-	28/6	29/6 "
275	Banbury ...	—	—	—	—	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/-	27/-	28/6	29/6 "
276	Kent ...	—	—	—	21/6	22/-	22/6	23/-	23/6	26/-	28/6	30/6 32/6 "
289	Gentlemen's Bright Cast-steel, Polished Handles ...	22/-	22/-	22/3	23/-	24/-	—	—	—	—	—	— "
393	Bright Kent Rips ...	—	—	—	—	23/-	23/6	24/9	27/-	—	—	— "
394	Hereford ...	—	—	—	22/6	23/-	24/-	24/6	25/6	27/-	29/6	31/6 "
395	Hedging ...	—	—	—	22/6	23/-	24/-	24/6	25/6	27/-	29/6	31/6 "
396	Natal ...	—	—	—	—	23/6	24/-	25/-	26/-	—	—	— "
397	Leicestershire ...	—	—	—	22/-	22/3	23/6	24/9	26/-	27/-	28/6	29/6 "
398	Irish ...	—	—	—	21/-	21/-	22/-	22/6	23/6	24/-	25/6	27/- "
399	Uttoxeter ...	—	—	—	22/-	22/6	23/-	24/-	24/6	25/-	26/-	28/- 30/- "
400	Best Warranted Cast-steel Bright Stratford, 41/- per doz.											

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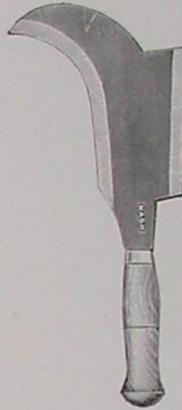
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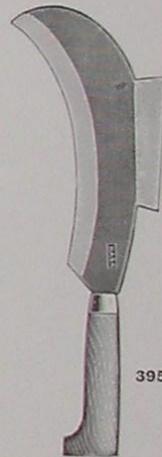
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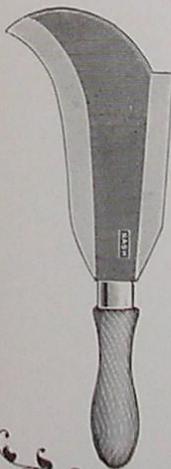
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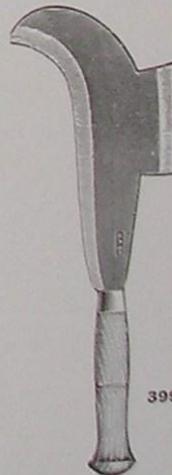
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398



399



400



SOCKET BILL HOOKS.

No.	PATTERN.	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12 inch.
266	Suffolk, light, handled ...	-	-	23/-	23/6	24/-	24/6	26/-	27/-	28/-	30/- per doz.
267	Suffolk, strong, handled ...	-	-	25/-	26/-	27/-	28/-	29/6	31/-	32/-	34/- "
290	Kent ...	-	-	22/-	23/6	24/-	24/9	27/-	29/9	32/-	34/- "
291	Chart's ...	-	27/3	28/6	29/6	31/-	32/-	-	-	-	- "
292	Block ...	-	24/-	25/-	26/-	27/6	28/6	29/6	31/-	33/-	35/- "
293	Offley, small bill	-	-	-	23/6	24/-	25/-	27/-	-	-	- "
294	" large bill	-	-	-	23/6	24/-	25/-	27/-	-	-	- "
401	Cheltenham ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- "
402	Uxbridge ...	-	21/6	22/-	23/6	24/-	24/9	27/-	29/9	32/-	34/- "
403	Watford ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- "
404	Bedford, Solid Steeled (handled extra) ...	23/-	24/-	25/-	26/-	27/6	28/6	29/6	31/-	33/-	35/- "
405	Woodstock ...	-	-	-	-	27/6	28/6	29/6	31/-	33/-	35/- "
406	Hertfordshire, full edge	23/-	24/-	25/-	26/-	27/6	28/6	29/6	31/-	33/-	35/- "
407	Hertfordshire, straight edge	23/-	24/-	25/-	26/-	27/6	28/6	29/6	31/-	33/-	35/- "
408	Tetbury ...	21/-	21/6	22/-	23/6	24/-	24/9	27/-	29/9	32/-	34/- "

Handled, 5/- dozen extra.

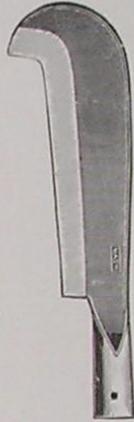
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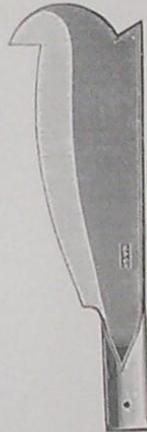
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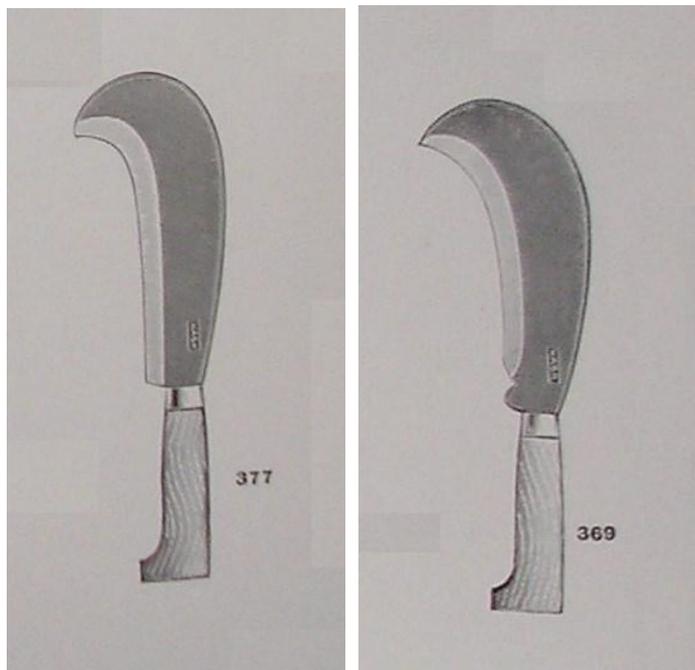


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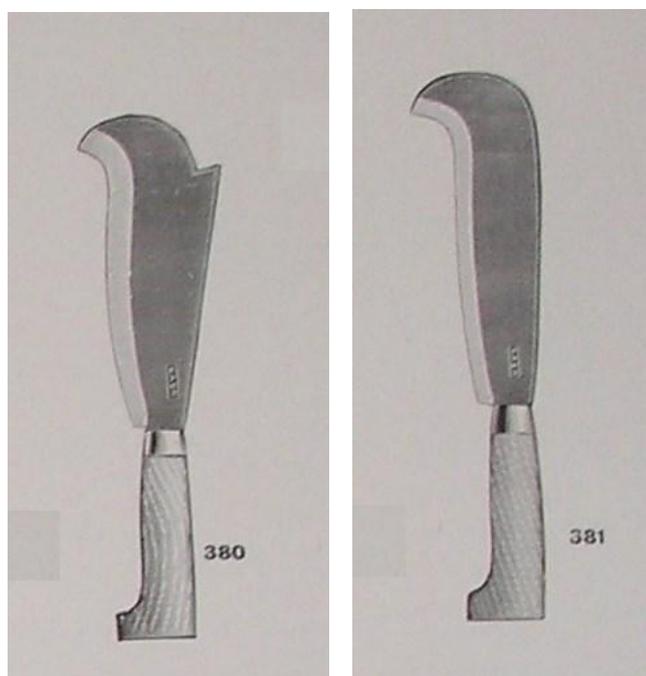
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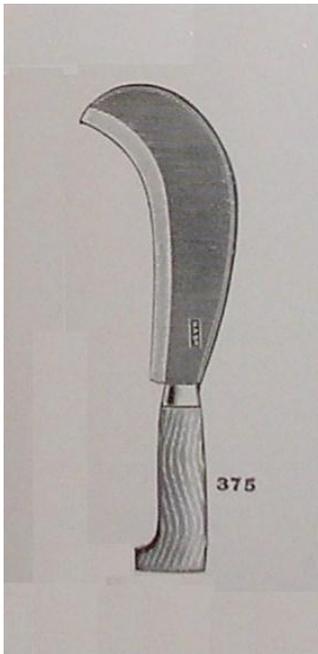
One of the interesting things about this catalogue is the range of regional patterns being made. Being a Wiltshire lad, my home county patterns are of special interest, notably the Warminster (377) and Imber (369) patterns:



Imber village is situated about 5 miles from Warminster, in the middle of Salisbury Plain, and had a peak population of 440 in 1851, dwindling to only 150 when it was evacuated during WW2. How a village with a working male population of less than 150 persons warranted its own billhook remains a mystery. Warminster with a population of 5000 plus is understandable.

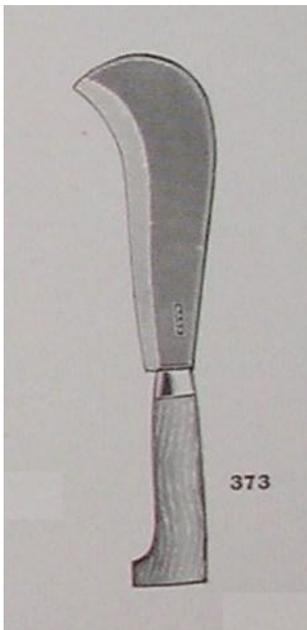
Trowbridge also had its own billhooks (2 versions (380) with a peak, and (381) without):





Swindon (375) and Chippenham (382) also had their own patterns. Curiously the Trowbridge (381) pattern is closer in shape to the 20th century Chippenham pattern, than the one Nash shows.

To the south of the county one finds the Salisbury (373) and the Downton (384) patterns.



Salisbury was a centre of cutlery making in the 16th century, and edge tool making continued at nearby Netheravon and Downton into the 19th century. Both shapes have similar blades with a gently curved beak and a slightly bellied blade. The Trowbridge (381) and Imber (377) patterns also have some similarities with the Woodrow (391) pattern.



Nothing is known of the origins of the Woodrow pattern, but Woodrows were an ironmongers in Salisbury in the 19th century, closing in the 20th, but surviving as a builders' merchants into the 21st. In the 20th century Woodrows had tools stamped with their name, as did Pinders of Salisbury (another rival ironmongers) who sold the above Downton pattern by W Gilpin.

Equally interesting are the Knapman (392) and Half Turn (387)



The Knapman is identical with the later Devon Half Turn, still being made and sold in the late 20th century. More curious because Knapman and Son of Hill Mill at Harberton near Totnes were at this time also making billhooks for the Devon market, and continued to do so well into the 20th century. The Half Turn is closer in pattern to the Dorset pattern (383) but without the vee notch. The name half turn is given billhooks

with a pronounced beak, common in the south west of England. Both Dorset and Devon hooks are curious in having a notch in the blade near the handle, although this is also a feature found further east in Hampshire/Isle of Wight (259); in Somerset, Wells (378) and Martock (389) and in Wiltshire, Imber (369). Its purpose is unknown, possibly for a strap, but more likely a vestige of the days when the wrought iron back was steeled by forge welding a high carbon cutting edge to it, that survived as a way of identifying the regional shape.

It would appear that Nash were making hooks to gain a share of the smaller, local market, and aggressively marketing their mass produced billhooks through their salesmen who called on the local ironmongers.

Elsewhere in the catalogue we see the Berkshire or Moss's No 2 (268) Chichester or Moss' No 2 (263); Duckett's Oxford (368) and Chart's (291) which I believe were also made to compete with existing makers.