

My Lucky Chance to Show What I Know

By Bob Garay

In the September 2010 issue of the Tool Shed I wrote an article on The American Saw Company. In that article I reported that the founder James E. Emerson had left California in the early 1860's to come to New Jersey. Here he formed the company Emerson & Silver which made swords for the civil war. It was afterwards that he formed the American Saw Company. Well recently I was presenting antique tools at the Warren County Antiques Festival and one of the attractions was an antiques road show by Harry Rinker, a well known authority on antiques. While I was watching his presentation a man brought a civil war sword for his inspection. He could make out the name Silver and judged it to indeed be an authentic civil war sword worth about \$500. I asked to see the sword and to my surprise I could also make out the name Emerson and remnants of Trenton, NJ. I was elated. Here was an artifact from Trenton, my home town as a youngster. And not only that but I was able to show off my knowledge about the maker to this well known antiques expert. Later after a friendly chat with Harry he invited me to be a guest speaker on his Sunday syndicated radio antiques show. Wow! I jumped at the offer and the next morning he called me



at exactly 8:30AM and we discussed antique tools for about five minutes on his radio show. Just goes to show that a little knowledge stored up in the noggin will be useful someday. And the owner of the sword was delighted to learn what I knew of Silver & Emerson. It was a rewarding experience for all involved.

UPDATE:

Recently I was at an antique tools flea market for CRAFTS and one of the dealers had a sword that looked old for sale. Just being curious I picked it up to look who made it and sure enough it was an Emerson & Silver, Trenton, NJ sword. I was able to purchase it at a very affordable price as the seller had no idea who Emerson was. A very good item to add to my collection of saws and other tools made by Emerson when he ran the American Saw Company.