

FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM

LOG CALIPER EXHIBIT

Since the first sawmills were built in the United States, log rules were developed to help determine the product value of a log. The log rule was a specially calibrated stick, resembling a yard stick, by which the number of board feet that could be sawed from a log could be calculated by measuring first the length of a log and then the diameter of the log. The log rule took into account the taper that exists in the log, the saw kerf and the removing of wood on the outside of the logs for slabs.

To assist with accuracy, the log scale was later fitted with a caliper to make it easier for the “scaler” to measure the diameter of the log.

NOTE: The term used to refer to the measurement of a log is known as “scaling” and the person doing this scaling was known as the “scaler”.

Heritage Museum Exhibit 581



This log caliper has the name of the maker stamped on the stick – L.B. Sargent, Lincoln, NH.

A caliper such as this one had to conform to set standards, namely the International $\frac{1}{4}$ " Log Rule and certain criteria in the construction of the rule. An example of this is the brass ends (←) on the caliper arms which were required. This log caliper was inspected by the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture and bears the metal “Tested Number 53” (↑) tag.

Different types of log rules and log calipers were developed but all had to meet the same standards. The most noted manufacturers were located in Maine and New Hampshire. Some of these devices cost as little as \$1.25 in the 1920's. A later addition to these devices was a spoked wheel that increased the accuracy and ease of measuring the length of a log.

On loan from Francestown Improvement and Historical Society – donated by Herb Vadney, Jr.