

known edge toolmaker and merchant of Mount Joy.⁸ The 1858 Mount Joy map (Figure 2) shows the location of Stamm's property with the notation "planes and guages [sic]," and John Stamm's name is indicated on the map, where the two-story brick dwelling still stands at 214 Donegal Street. Some time after moving to Mount Joy, his son, John Spera Stamm, married Elizabeth Brady, niece of William Brady, the edge toolmaker. His other son, Joseph, was a schoolteacher in the community school of Mount Joy.⁹

The tax records of Mount Joy for 1854 to 1857 list his occupation as plane maker, owning two lots with a house, valued at \$600. He had one pleasure carriage (valued 50¢), paid state tax of \$1.95 and county tax of \$1.49, and had a yearly income from trades at \$430.¹⁰

Being a talented man of many resources, John Stamm is well known for the manufacture of patent medicine or bitters. The first advertising we find recorded is in *The Church Advocate* for 15 February 1855, titled "Dyspepsia Bitters—No Humbug." Another advertisement of 1856 includes six letters of testimony for his medicine, plus a list of forty-two agents throughout Pennsylvania and as far away as Mississippi, who sold the bitters.¹¹ Even with such a prolific production of bitters evident, there are no known remnants of these bitters found, such as bottles or labels. Possibly, they were dispensed in unmarked bottles.

John Stamm used various marks (Figure 3). The first five examples have been found on his tools, always using J. STAMM and never his full name, John Stamm (Figure 3a to e). In addition to those five different stamps, several examples have been found with a J*STAM mark (Figure 3f).

Another of John Stamm's ventures was the making of wooden kitchenware. He made cabbage slaw cutters in several styles and sizes, as well as a small onion slicer, bearing his stamp (Figures 4 and 5). Another item, which to my knowledge has not yet been found, is his Keystone washboard such as he advertised in *The Church Advocate* of July 1873 (Figure 6).

The bulk of his production of tools was between 1853 and 1870, while he was living in Mount Joy. Relatively few molding planes have

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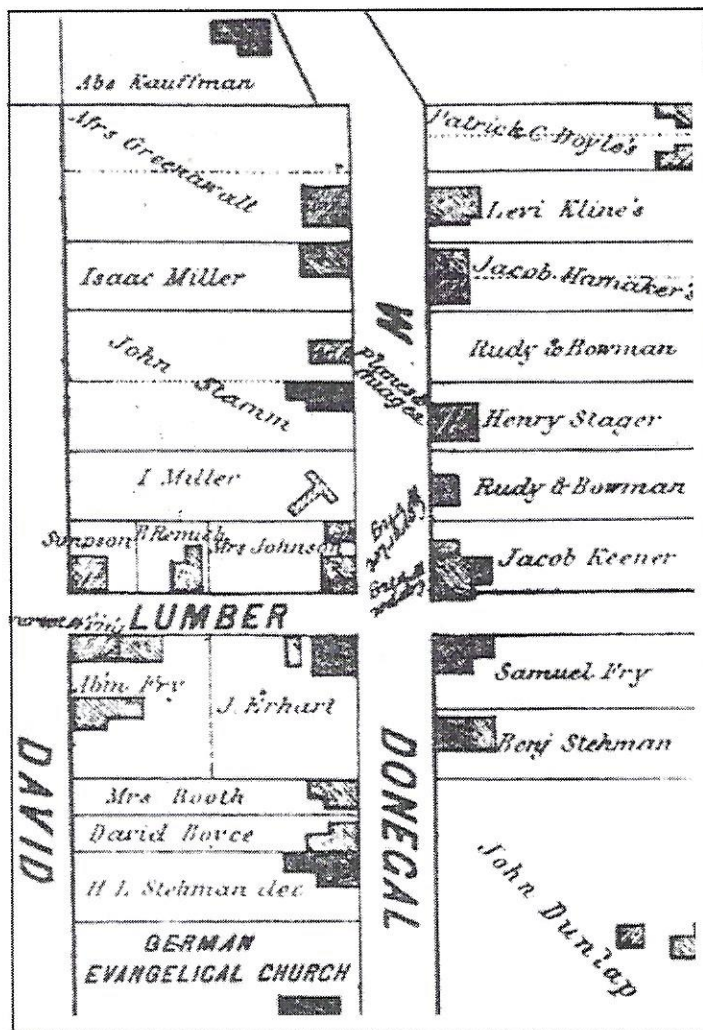


Figure 2. The 1858 borough map of Mount Joy, Pennsylvania. John Stamm's dwelling is on the upper left. "Planes & Guages" is noted in the map next to his property.

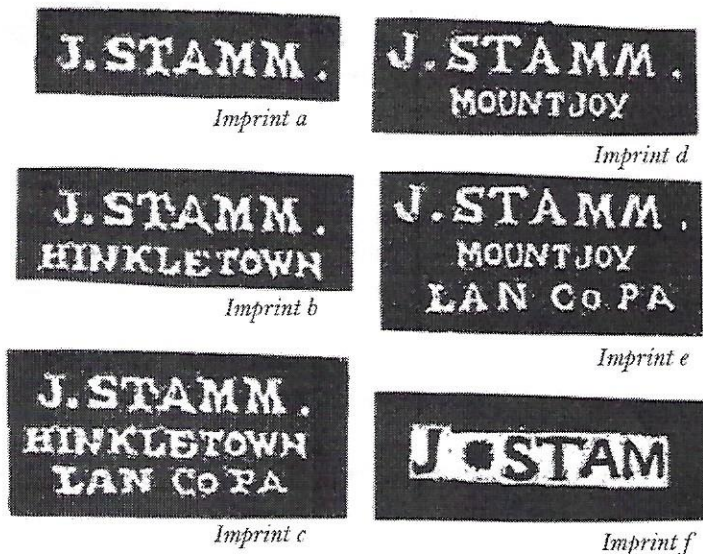


Figure 3. The various Stamm imprints.