

JOHN J. VICIC, SR.

1886-1964

My friend Bob Vicic has always felt a strong interest in 'who made the banks' and in the bank making process. Imagine his surprise when he learned that his grandfather had been a foundryman, and that in the early to mid 1920's he had worked at the Ohio Foundry Company—one of the very companies that Bob and his wife Dee were researching. Here is part of what Bob related:

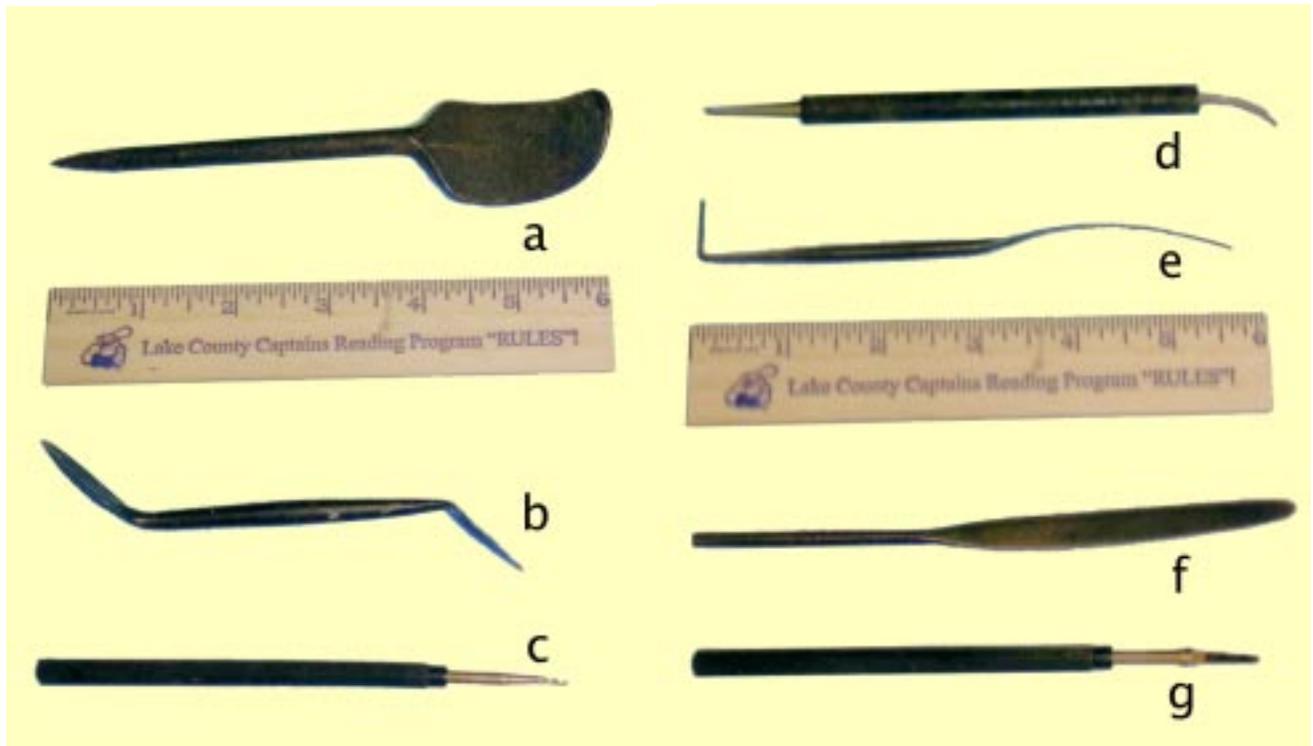
"In his retirement my dad, John J. Vicic, Jr., loved to read. He read everything, but really enjoyed tales of the Old West. He also enjoyed the articles Dee and I put together for the *Penny Bank Post*, a publication of the Still Bank Collector's Club. After reading one of our articles on the Ohio Foundry Company, he looked up and said, 'You know, your grandfather worked for the Ohio Foundry Company.' I'm sure my jaw dropped on hearing that! I pressed him for more information and learned that while my grandfather was not a member of the management team, he was their 'go-to' man in the foundry, especially when things had to turn out letter perfect, such as it was for salesmen's samples. It was said that he was a wizard with his brushes and tools—that he could make the foundry sand do whatever it was he wanted it to do. These are some of his tools (see below). I remember finding them in an old cabinet in the basement of my grandfather's home some time after his passing. I never knew what they were for until my dad helped me put two and two together!"

Robert A. Vicic

March 2004

Two of the tools that Bob mentions can be readily recognized: Tool (b) is a mold maker's "slick" used to repair and smooth a sand mold when, for example, a portion breaks loose when a pattern is removed. Tool (e) is a "bench lifter." The end with the sharp bend is used to lift loose sand from recesses of a mold; the other end can be used to smooth the sand. Both of these tools are relatively small; suggesting they were used for fine work. Tools (a) and (f) also seem to be slicking tools. The pointed end on the first tool may have been used to poke vent hole in sand molds.

Bob doesn't know the purposes of tools (c), (d), and (g), and we have not yet found tools like them in our old foundry texts or catalogs, or talked to anyone who recognizes them. Clearly, they were intended for fine work. It is tempting to imagine that they are pattern makers' tools; but they seem too delicate for shaping even wood.



Tools that belonged to John J. Vicic, Sr. Photographs by Robert A. Vicic.

By the way: you can find Bob's and Dee's research on the Ohio Foundry Company in the December 1999 and April 2000 issues of the *Penny Bank Post*.

Fritz Kokesh, September 2004
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