

## Sash Templates or (Templets; *archaic*)

By Neil Searle

I am just touching on a few of the many specialist tools for sash window making, namely my sash templates and a sash gouge. A more comprehensive study can be found at several online sites listed, at the end of this article.

Making the sash bars in the earliest windows, up to the 1740s, the bars had sizeable ovolo profiles and were typically 1½" or even 2" wide. Making bars of this size presented less of a problem than the later thinner bars and there is no evidence of specialist tools prior to this date. The rebate would have been cut with a moving or standing fillister and the ovolo cut with a moulding plane that might well have also been used in other more general purpose joinery. However, the difficulties of making the bars became more acute as fashion dictated thinner and thinner bars, which ultimately reached as little as ¾" by the end of the 18th century and even as slender as 5/8" by the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The shaping and jointing of pieces of wood which were in general much thinner than those normally worked for such items as doors and panelling required specialist tools that enabled a speedy and accurate result for the joiner. With the advent of the astragal & hollow profile in the 1760s, sash planes start to appear.

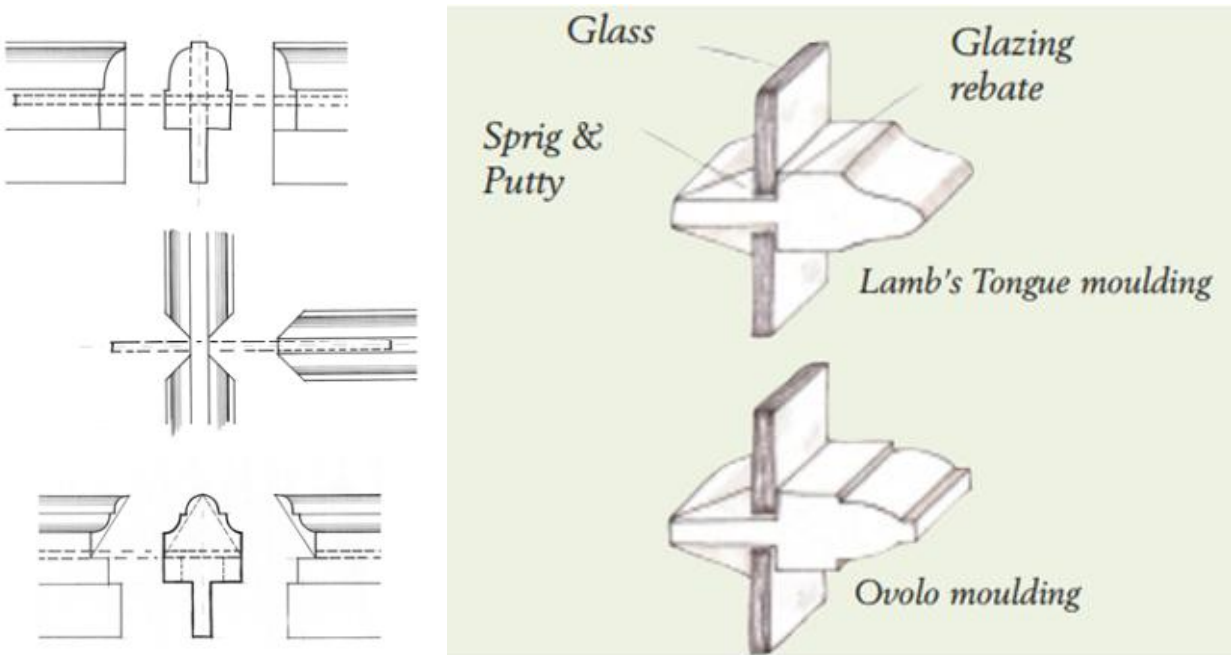


**Fig. 1.** One style of sash template, (showing brass faced ends) Also known as saddle template.

One is marked, John Moseley & Son. 54-55 Broad St. Bloomsbury, London 5/8" 1 ½". These measurements denote the overall size of the sash bar.

Alex Mathieson made similar templets as in Fig.1. The common brass faced templets they produced were Ovolo, Gothic and Lambs tongue profiles.

To use this guide, the template was placed on the sash bar and scribed with a pencil.



**Fig. 2.** Diagram of a mitred joint showing top, elevation of a square mitre, center, plan of a square mitre and bottom, a canted mitre. The left image shows the two common moulding profiles used.

Larger sash bars were necessary as glass back then was heavier and thicker. The sashes were generally made of Baltic pine. No glue was used in the construction of window sashes as exterior adhesive had not yet been invented.



**Fig. 3. Sash gouge.** William Marples, ½" with a tapered hexagonal handle and built in depth stop.

In-cannel Gouge: A curved chisel, sharpened on the inside, for precisely cutting an inside curve. Some sash makers used the scribing gouge as a gouge to score the glazing bar with which to make a clean cut. And technically, we can of course cut the matching coping profile using chisel and gouge. Jim Bode Tools refers to these as a sash Coping Gouge.

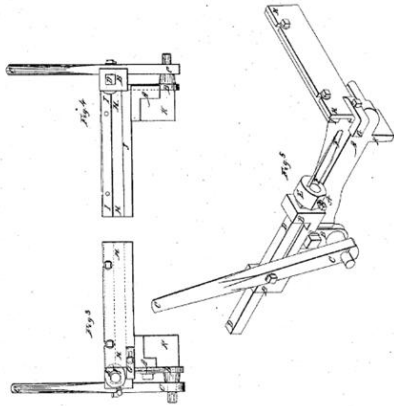


**Fig. 4.** My sash gauge just happens to match one of the sash templates I have.



**Fig. 5.** Very obviously the wrong sash bar for the template. However, to use this guide, the sash bar was placed in the template and marked with a pencil. Just out of interest, the sash bar shown is 1 ½ "wide and therefore has a reasonable vintage, as mentioned above, the sash bars became much narrower and thinner into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

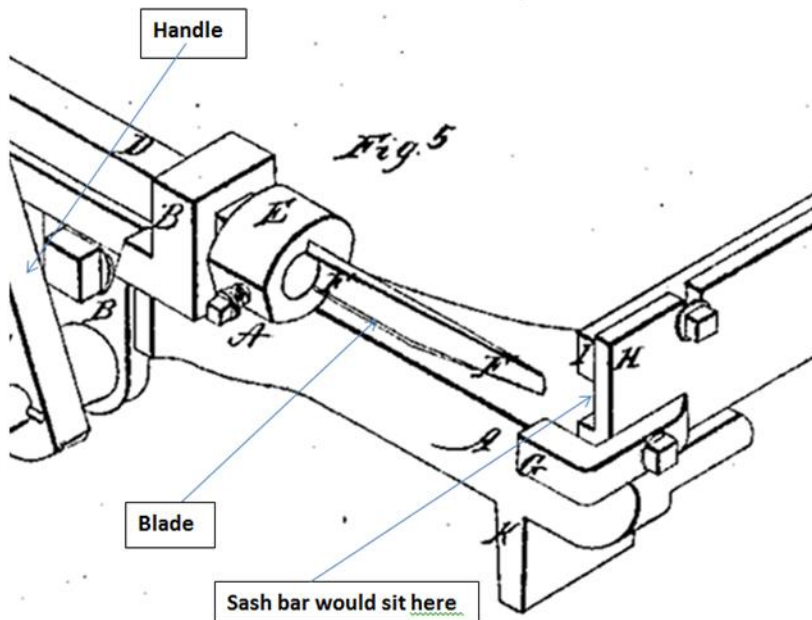
T.B. Jones  
*Making Sash.*  
 No. 41,700. Patented Feb. 23, 1864.



**Fig. 6.** T.B. Jones Patent. 1864

*"The nature of my invention consists in the form of a gouge or cutter worked by means of a slide and lever, which has the cutting-edge or point so formed as to strike the bar in an oblique or angular direction to the center of the gouge or cutter, as shown by F,*

*. Fig. 2, thereby obviating the difficulty of splintering the bar when cutting directly through and across the bar of the wood at one cut, which would be the natural consequence of a cut made directly through the bar by a common gouge as used by hand, the bar in that case having to be turned over and cut from both sides, which is still liable to splinter from a slip of the hand or gouge".*



**Fig. 7.** An exploded view of T.B. Jones patent showing how his invention would work. The in-cannel tapered blade would cut according to his endorsement above.

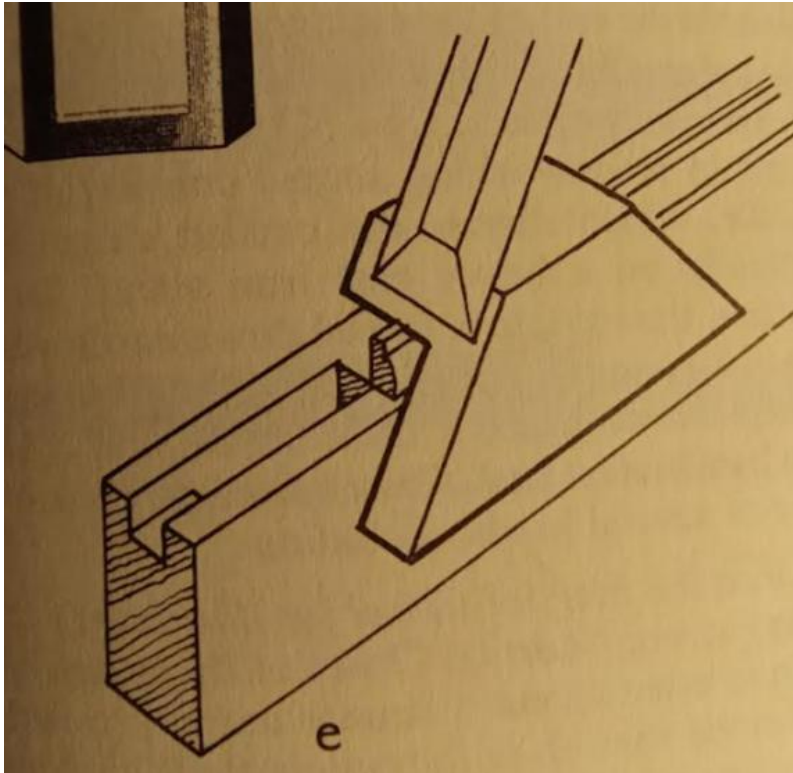


**Fig. 8.** From an unknown catalogue showing “*Saddle Templets, Sash Gouges and Side Templet.*” Note the two sash gouges in Fig.8. have hexagonal handles and the lower of the two has a stop. This does suggest that these sash gouges were sold with wooden handles. My example has a tapered hexagonal handle with stop and this shape seems to be the most common shape whether tradesman made or purchased complete with handle.



**Fig. 9.** Another style of sash template cut on the 45 degree angle. Showing a single (Ovolo) template and a double (Gothic) template. The double is marked, John Moseley & Son. The single is marked “No. 178 5/8 “





**Fig.10.** Miter Template. My example is made from mahogany. Used for guiding a chisel when cutting mitres where a plane could not be used.

Note about orthography: According to Wikipedia, Miter and mitre are both English terms. In the United States, there is a preference for "miter" over "mitre" (78 to 22). In the United Kingdom, there is a 91 to 9 preference for "mitre" over "miter". In Australia and New Zealand there is a 96 to 4 preference for "mitre" over "miter".

Ref: Jane Rees, Goodman, W.G. *British Plane makers from 1700*. "Modern Practical Joinery" by George Ellis, London 1904. Dictionary of Woodworking Tools by R.A. Salaman.

Also <http://thevalleywoodworker.blogspot.com/2017/03/sash-planes-and-window-making.html>  
[www.hackneytools.com](http://www.hackneytools.com)