Above is an example of the colonial cabinet maker's art. Surprisingly beautiful furniture was created by tools that would be considered primitive by today's standards.
FROM TREE... TO TIMBER

The tools for "rough" woodworking were most important in early America. Some of them are pictured here.
For many years, America was a "rural" country and the farmer was one of the most important persons in our economic structure. Pictured here are some of the tools he used to feed a nation.
The Cooper

There were three distinct kinds of cooper, or barrel maker. The “wet” cooper made containers for liquid — the “dry” cooper made containers for things like sugar and flour and the “white” cooper made articles like bowls, baskets and boxes.

After the wood for staves was selected it was split out of the block by a splitting froe, a steel blade that was struck with a heavy wooden maul.

“Side” axe was used in roughly hewing or shaping the stock for the stave before joining the edge on a cooper’s joiner.

Hand adze has a handle “centered” so that there is equal weight on either side. The adze end was for shaping and the hammer end for “driving” hoops.

The joiner is the largest of all joiner planes. It was mounted at an angle and the wood was pushed over the plane instead of the plane being pushed over the wood.

Draw knife used to shape staves and finish them up. Note the curved blade.

Howel or compass plane equipped with a semi-circular blade used to chamfer the inner barrel head.

Scraper to smooth down the outside butt-edges.