

## Foreword

Whenever I have met David Russell our conversation has turned almost inevitably to early tools. As we talked, it soon became clear that we shared a love not just of what tools in good hands can make but of the craftsmanship of the tools themselves.

As a cabinet-maker myself, I have often wondered how tools have evolved and what milestones down the ages there have been to better their design and performance. I have long felt there was room for a book that tells something of this story. Yet in modern times it was only with the publication of *A History of Woodworking Tools* in 1964 and of *British Planemakers* (first edition 1968), both compiled by William Goodman (1913–1993), that a real attempt was made to chart the history of tool-making in the West. Salaman's *Dictionary of Woodworking Tools*, when first published in 1975, provided a perfect complement to these landmark works.

Whilst the history of furniture and other arts and crafts has been studied thoroughly and extensively published, there still seems to be sparse understanding of the history of the tools behind the trades involved. Things are looking more positive, however. The new furniture galleries planned to open at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London in 2012 will feature displays of tools to help show how items of furniture are made. This is a most welcome and exciting step in creating awareness of what lies behind the craftsmanship invested in making furniture.

In timely fashion Russell's book serves as herald to this new approach and sets standards for others to follow. He is to be congratulated on amassing with unerring eye such a fascinating array of tools, many of which are of the highest quality or deepest historical significance, and on using them to tell this story to the widest audience. His is a scholarly account of a collection that through its breadth and depth gives remarkable insights into the tools that were used to make furniture, sash-windows, roofs, wheels, coaches and barrels and more; in short, that have helped shape man's material culture over many hundreds of years.

I would like to commend David Russell on this fascinating history of woodworking tools. The book shows clearly the kinds of tools that enabled craftsmen to make the most beautiful pieces of furniture and other items. I feel sure that his work will encourage the next generation of makers and collectors.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Linley." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a period at the end.

David Linley