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Sharpening a Crosscut Saw Every camp in the lumber woods had a man called the saw filer and filing crosscut saws was all the work he was expected to do. Each man would carry his own axe to the grindstone but for filing the saw the work was left to this generally older and more experienced man. We were unable to find a man who had filed in the North River woods but Sandy Kenny Morrison of Wreck Cove has had plenty of experience with the crosscut and happens to own a saw that did service in those lumber camps and we asked him to show us how that work was done. He gathered together the tools: a clamp which wedges the blade solid, a gauge for jointing the teeth and setting the rakers, a file and tools for setting teeth and checking the proper set. Jointing means getting all the teeth to the same height. The gauge for the rakers also holds a file and gives a good grip for running the file along the top of the teeth. Sandy Kenny chose to do this with a file held in his fingers. When the teeth are the same length you sharpen them and sharpening every other tooth along one side of the blade, then turning it around and sharpening every other tooth from that side. The object is a sharp tooth with the point centered on the tooth, you file away from yourself. With all the teeth sharp, you then set the rakers (or cleaners) to the proper length: if too short the saw would bounce, grabbing too much; too long and you wouldn't cut very much. The gauge goes over the raker sitting flush on the teeth each side of the raker. File away as much of the raker as comes up through the gauge and then a wide V is filed in the raker and filed flat, not at an angle that would sharpen the raker. The raker is thus lower than the teeth about the thickness of a modern dime.

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