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(54) **ROOFING TOOL BLADE**

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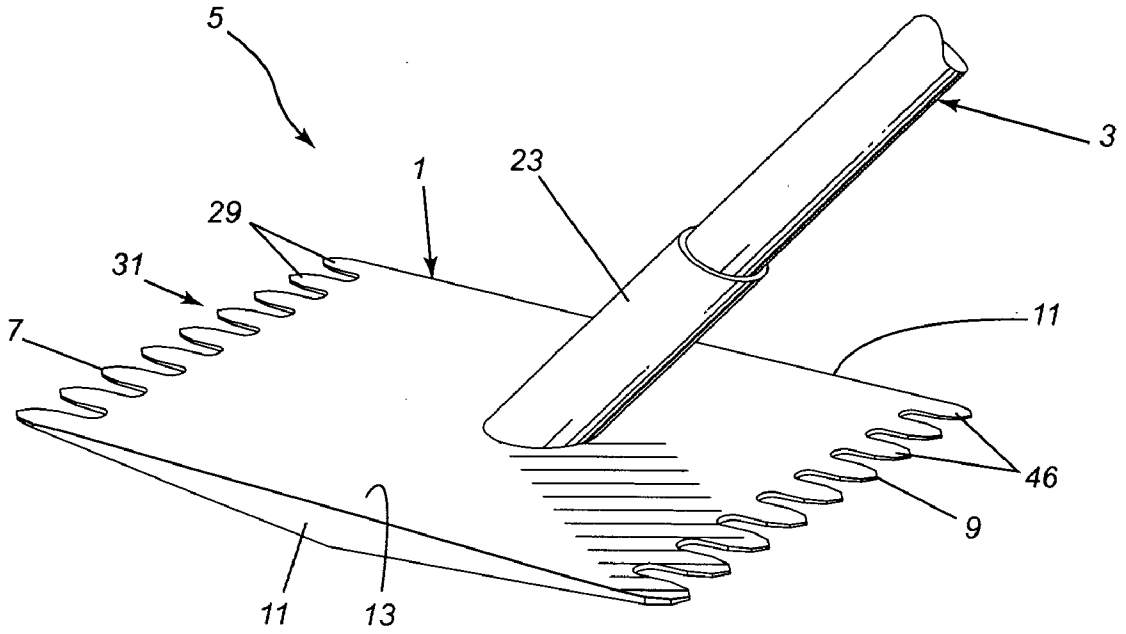
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A blade for a roofing tool, the tool used to remove material off a roof. The blade has a generally quadratic shape with front and rear edges joined by sides, a top surface, and a bottom surface. The bottom surface has a front section and a rear section, the front section extending rearwardly from the front edge of the blade while angling slightly away from the top surface, and the rear section extending forwardly from the back edge of the blade while angling slightly away from the top surface. The front and rear sections join to define a ridge located generally midway between the front and back edges of the blade, the ridge extending across the blade and parallel to the front edge. The blade can be rocked about the ridge to rest on either the back or front bottom section. When rocked back to rest on its back section, it can lever a roofing fastener up with its front edge.



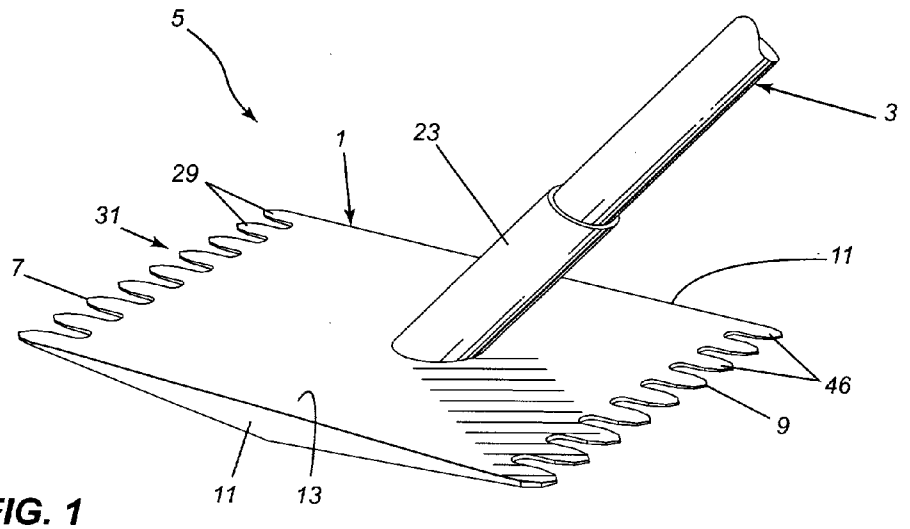


FIG. 1

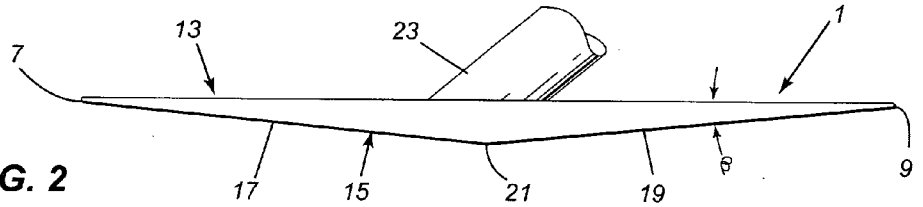


FIG. 2

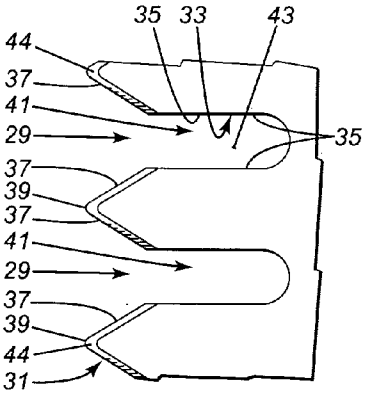


FIG. 3

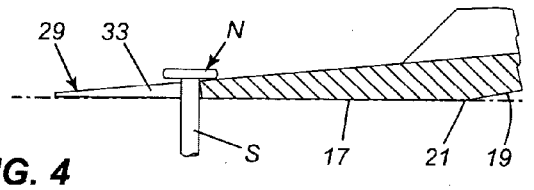


FIG. 4

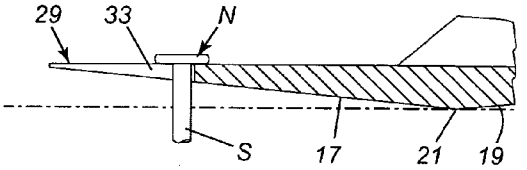


FIG. 5

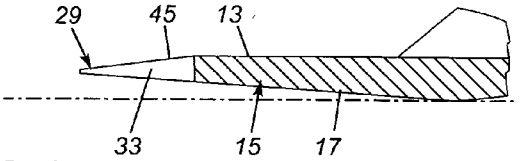


FIG. 6

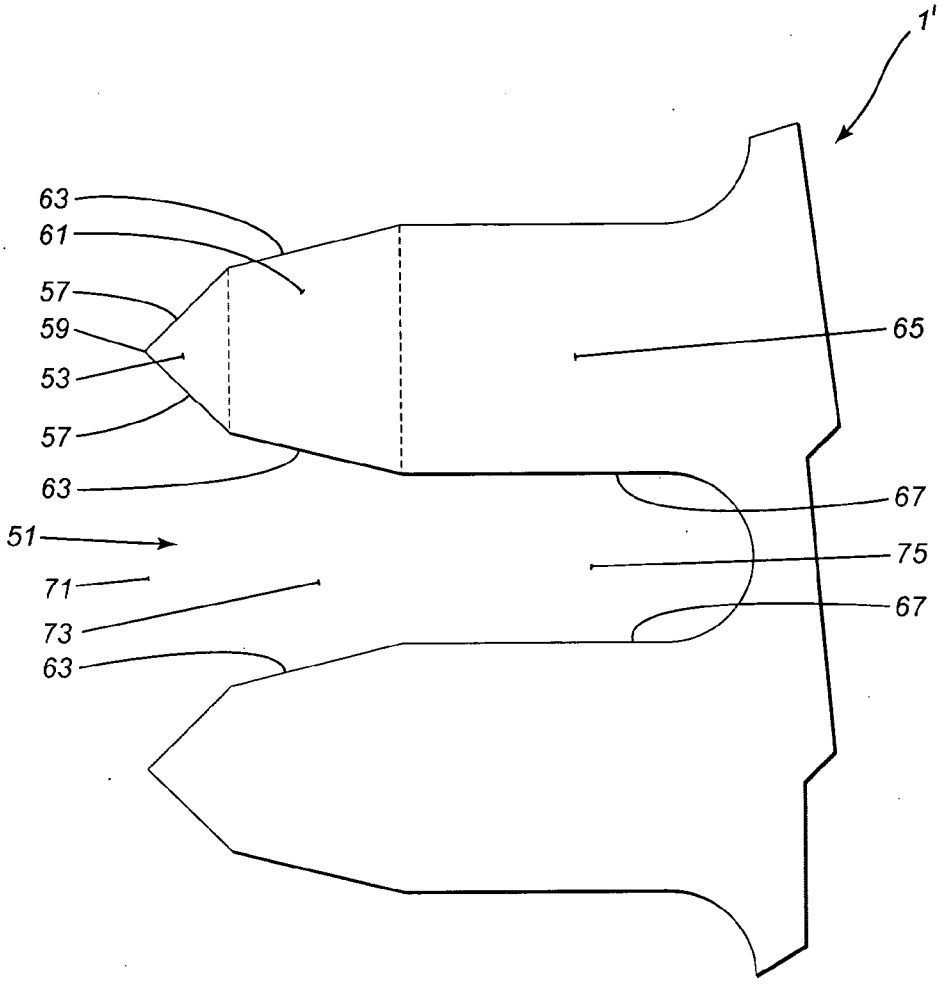

1'
63
61
57
59
53
57
63
51
71
73
63
65
67
75
67

FIG. 7

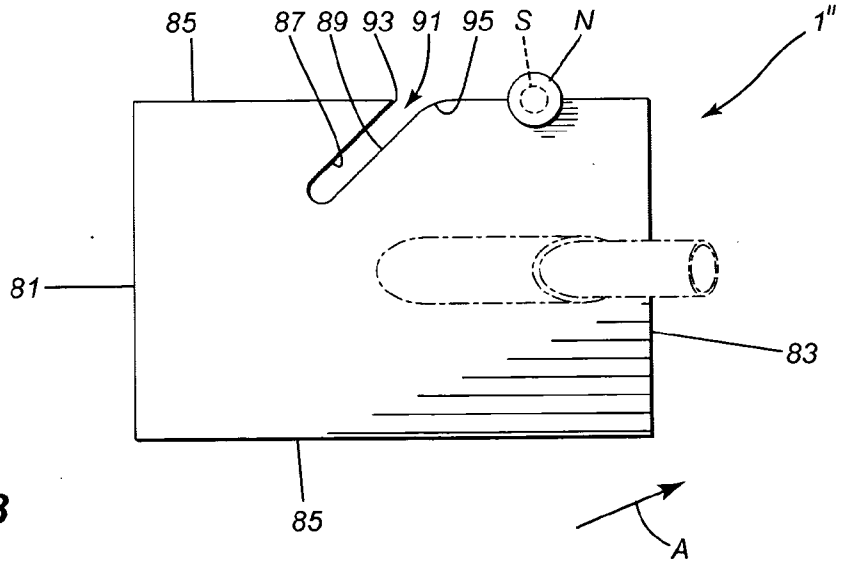

85
87
89
93
91
95
S
N
1"
81
83
85
A

FIG. 8

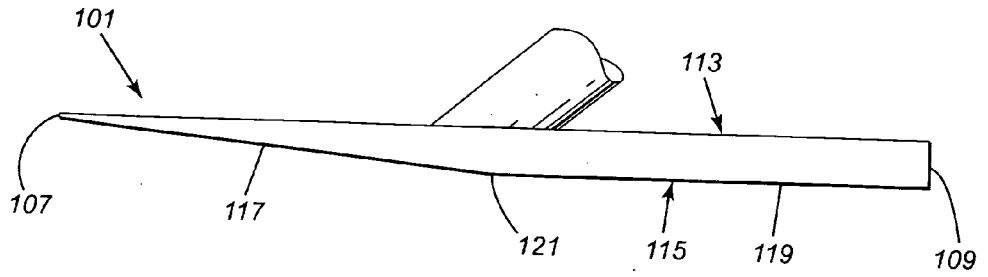


FIG. 9

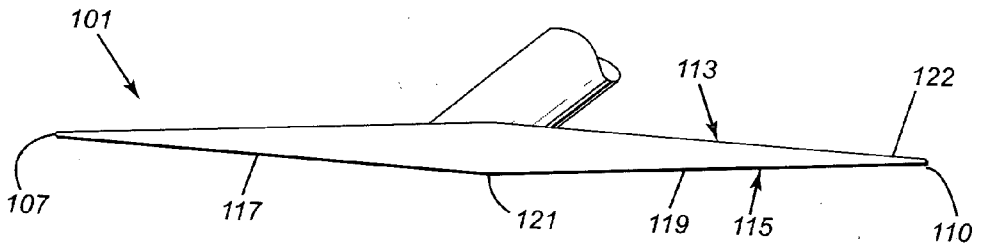


FIG. 10

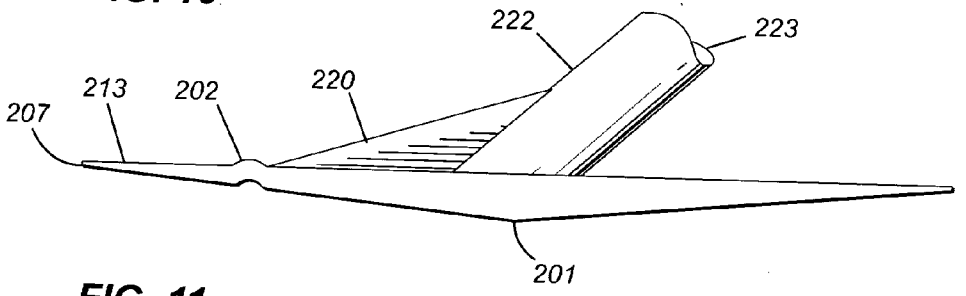


FIG. 11

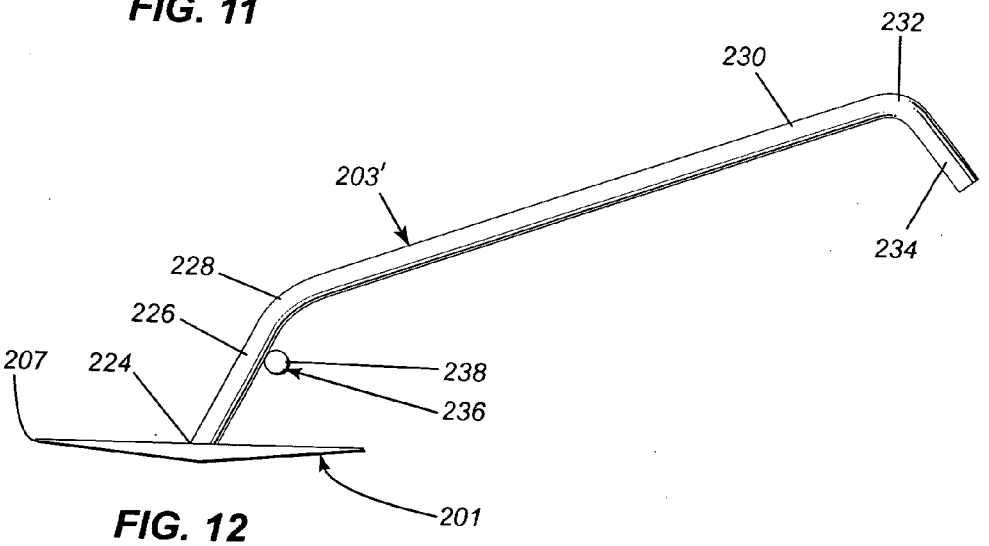


FIG. 12

ROOFING TOOL BLADE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] This invention is directed toward a blade used in a roofing tool. The invention is more particularly directed toward a roofing tool blade particularly useful in removing roofing material, such as asphalt shingles, and roofing material fasteners, such as shingle nails. The invention is also directed toward a roofing tool employing the blade.

[0003] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0004] Roofing tools are known having a straight, flat, blade at the end of a handle with the blade having a tapered front edge. The blade can be slid under the edge of roofing material on a roof surface with the tapered front edge leading. The blade can extend at an angle to the handle of the tool so that the tool can be levered by the handle about the front or back edge of the blade to try to lift the roofing material off the roof surface with a main portion of the blade inserted under the material.

[0005] Other roofing tools are known where the blade itself is bent to form front and rear blade portions, the blade levered by the tool handle about the bend joining the front and rear portions to lift the front edge of the front portion of the blade. More leverage can be applied to the front portion of the blade by the handle since the front portion provides a shorter lever arm between the front edge and the bend relative to the long lever arm provided by the handle. However, a bent or angled blade is limited as to how far it can be inserted under the roofing material and thus it can take longer to remove a given amount of material than when using a straight or flat blade.

[0006] The known tools also have slots in the blade extending rearwardly from the front edge of the blade. The slots separate forwardly extending teeth on the blade. The slots serve to receive the shanks of roofing fasteners such as roofing nails with the heads of the fasteners resting on adjacent teeth. The tool is operated to lever the fasteners, caught in the slots, out of the roof.

[0007] However, the known roofing tools with straight, flat, blades have trouble lifting 'frozen' fasteners, fasteners that have rusted slightly in place and/or are tightly held by dried wood. The lifting leverage provided by a tool with a straight blade is not always sufficient to lift tightly held nails. Some known roofing tools with straight blades can be bent when lifting 'frozen' fasteners thereby limiting their use.

[0008] Also, the slots in the blades in all known roofing tools are usually designed to take one size only of roofing nail. Further the slots are usually designed to merely capture the fasteners and not help 'crack' the fasteners from the roof while guiding the fasteners into holding slots. in addition, the known roofing tools do not have handles designed to more easily and safely lift the fasteners with the blade of the tool.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] It is purpose of the present invention to provide a roofing tool blade that can provide a strong lifting force to provide initial movement to even the most tightly held roofing fasteners, so that the fasteners can be easily removed when removing roofing material from roofs. It is another purpose to provide a straight roofing tool blade that can be easily inserted far under roofing material. It is another purpose of the present invention to provide a roofing tool blade with slots that can receive different sizes of roofing fasteners while initially lifting them. It is another purpose of the present invention to provide a roofing tool blade with different teeth on the front and back edges of the blade so the blade can be used for pulling one type and size of roofing fastener with the teeth on the front edge and for pulling another type and size of roofing fastener with the teeth on the back edge. It is another purpose of the present invention to provide a stronger roofing tool that has a straight blade that is not easily bent during use. It is a further purpose of the present invention to provide a roofing tool with a handle that can more easily and safely manipulate the blade of the tool.

[0010] In accordance with the present invention, a roofing tool blade is provided with parallel front edge and rear edges, the edges joined by sides. Slots extend rearwardly from the front edge of the blade to define forwardly extending teeth. The blade has a flat top surface extending rearwardly from the front edge and a slightly angled, front, bottom, surface section extending rearwardly from the front edge and diverging away from the top surface. The front, bottom surface section is joined to a rear, bottom surface section, the joint forming a ridge at about the center of the blade midway between the front and rear edges. The rear, bottom surface section extends from the ridge to the rear edge of the blade. The blade is thickest at the ridge and thinnest at the front edge. The ridge provides a fulcrum point about where the blade can be slightly pivoted.

[0011] The tapered front edge of the blade when on a roofing tool can be inserted under roofing material while sliding along the front, bottom surface section. The blade can be pivoted about the ridge to rest on the rear bottom surface section to slightly lift the material to release it from the roof. the blade can then be pivoted about its front or back edges to further lift the material to loosen it. The tapered front edge can also be used to position a fastener in a slot in the front edge of the blade. the fastener can be cracked out of the roof while traveling up the tapered front edge into the slot. If the fastener does not move, the blade can be pivoted about the ridge while the fastener is in the slot to raise the fastener initially a short distance. The lever arm for the front, bottom surface section is relatively short, so greater leverage is obtained to lift the fastener initially than obtained from a straight blade of uniform thickness which has to be pivoted about the rear edge of the blade to provide leverage. Once the fastener has moved initially the fastener is removed by pivoting the blade about its front or rear edges while the fastener is in the slot.

[0012] The slots between the teeth in the front or back edge of the blade can be shaped to have an outer slot section which is quite wide initially and tapers down to the mouth of an intermediate slot section which in turn tapers down to the mouth of an inner slot section. The trailing slot section extends to the end of the slot. The tapered outer slot section is large so as to be able to easily catch and direct fasteners into the slots. In addition, the outer slot section, with a wide taper very gradually engages and raises a fastener. The portion of the teeth adjacent the intermediate slot section will pick up the heads of the most commonly used roofing

fasteners. The portion of the teeth defining the narrow inner slot section will pick up half or broken heads of common roofing fasteners.

[0013] The blade can be strengthened, if desired, by bending the blade at a point just behind the front teeth to form a slight upstanding ridge extending across the width of the blade, the ridge parallel with the front edge. The blades of the present invention can be employed on roofing tools with a handle attached directly to the approximate center of the blade and extending upwardly and rearwardly or with a handle attached to a socket on the blade, the socket extending upwardly and rearwardly.

[0014] The roofing tool can be strengthened by including a gusset between the top front portion of the blade and the top front of a handle on the top of the blade. The gusset strengthens the blade against bending and is shaped to direct the roofing material upwardly as the blade is forced under the material. The tool can also have a handle bent to make the tool more efficient and safe in use.

[0015] The invention is particularly directed toward a blade for a roofing tool having front and rear edges joined by sides and with a flat top surface and a bottom surface with a front section and a rear section. The front bottom surface section extends rearwardly from the front edge of the blade while angling slightly away from the top surface, and the rear bottom surface section extends forwardly from the rear edge. The front and rear sections join to define a ridge generally midway between the front and rear edges of the blade. The ridge is at the thickest portion of the blade and extends across the blade and is parallel to the front edge of the blade.

[0016] The invention is further particularly directed toward a blade for a roofing tool having front and rear edges, the blade having slots extending inwardly from at least one of the front and rear edges to form outwardly extending teeth. Each slot is defined by adjacent teeth and has an outer section that tapers inwardly from an outer mouth to collect and direct a nail into the slot. The slot has an intermediate section following the outer section that tapers inwardly at a greater angle than the outer section tapers inwardly to have the adjacent teeth defining the section support fastener heads of varying size. An inner section follows the intermediate section and is of generally uniform width to receive the shanks of fasteners.

[0017] The invention is further directed toward a blade for a roofing tool having front and rear edges and sides joining the front and rear edges. A handle extends up from about the center of the top surface of the blade. Teeth are formed in the blade extending rearwardly from the front edge. The blade is bent just behind the teeth to form a slight ridge in the top of the blade extending across the width of the blade.

[0018] The invention is further directed toward a blade for a roofing tool having front and rear edges and sides joining the front and rear edges. A handle extends up from about the center of the top surface of the blade. Teeth are formed in the blade extending rearwardly from the front edge. A gusset is provided on the top of the blade joined both to the top surface of the blade in front of the socket and to the top of the socket, the top surface of the gusset curved upwardly to smoothly merge with both the top of the blade and with the top of the socket.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0019] FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a roofing tool with the blade of the present invention;

[0020] FIG. **2** is a side view of the blade;

[0021] FIG. **3** is a detail plan view showing the slots and teeth on the front of the blade;

[0022] FIG. **4** is a side view of the blade, in partial cross-section, catching a roofing nail;

[0023] FIG. **5** is a side view similar to FIG. **4** but with the blade in a position after pivoting it about the bottom ridge;

[0024] FIG. **6** is a detail cross-section view showing a tapered tooth on the blade;

[0025] FIG. **7** is a detail plan view of shaped teeth on the blade;

[0026] FIG. **8** is a plan view of a blade with a trapping slot;

[0027] FIG. **9** is a side view of another variation of the blade;

[0028] FIG. **10** is a side view of a further variation of the blade;

[0029] FIG. **11** is a partial side view of the tool with reinforcing features thereon; and

[0030] FIG. **12** is a side view of the tool showing the handle.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0031] The blade **1** of the present invention, as shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**, is to be used with a handle **3** to provide a roofing tool **5**. The blade **1** has front and rear edges **7**, **9** and sides **11** joining the edges. The blade is preferably of quadratic shape and so the edges **7**, **9** are parallel and the sides **11** are parallel and transverse to the edges. The blade has a top surface **13** that is preferably flat and a bottom surface **15** that has a front, bottom, surface section **17** and a rear, bottom, surface section **19**. The front and back bottom surface sections are flat. The front, bottom, surface section **17** angles slightly away from the top surface **13** as it extends rearwardly from the front edge **7**. The rear bottom surface section **19** angles slightly away from the top surface **13** as it extends forwardly from the rear edge **9**. The front and rear bottom surface sections **17**, **19** connect at about the center of the blade to form a ridge **21** which is parallel to the front and rear edges **7**, **9** and extends across the blade between the sides **11**. The blade tapers in thickness moving from the ridge **21** toward both the front and back edges **7**, **9**.

[0032] The drawings slightly exaggerate the angulation of the bottom surface sections **17**, **19** with respect to the top surface **13**. Generally, the blade might be about six inches in length between the front and rear edges **7**, **9** with the ridge **21** being about three inches from each edge. The blade at the edges **7**, **9** might be about one sixteenth of an inch thick and anywhere from three sixteenths to five sixteenths of an inch thick at the ridge **21**. The blade is thickest at the ridge **21**. The angle β between the top surface and the front and rear bottom surfaces can range between 3° and 5°. While the ridge **21** has been described as being midway between the front and rear edges, it can also be slightly off-center,

ranging, on a six inch long blade for example, anywhere from between two and one half inches and three and one half inches from the front edge. The ridge **21** is best located at the center of the blade however to have teeth on both the front and rear edges **7**, **9**, to be described, located equidistant from the ridge.

[**0033**] The handle **3** can be a wooden handle fixedly mounted in a socket **23**, the socket welded to the top center of the blade and angled rearwardly and upwardly about forty five degrees as shown. Alternatively, the handle **3** can be a metal rod or tube and welded at one end to the top surface **13** of the blade **1**, the handle located generally in the center of the blade and angled rearwardly and upwardly about forty five degrees.

[**0034**] At least the front of the blade **1** has fastener receiving slots **29** extending rearwardly from the front edge **7** of the blade. The slots **29** define a set **31** of spaced-apart forwardly extending teeth **33** as shown in detail in FIG. **3**. The sides **35** of the teeth **33** are parallel and the fronts **37** of the teeth **33** are angled from the sides **35** to a rounded point **39**. The angled fronts **37** of the teeth **33** define a tapered, outer, slot portion **41** for each slot **29**. The tapered, outer, slot portion **41**.provides an entrance and leads to an inner, uniform-width, slot portion **43** defined by the sides **35** of the teeth **33**. The inner slot portions **43** are wide enough to receive the shank of a standard roofing fastener but not wide enough to pass the head of the fastener and are substantially longer than the outer slot portions **41**. The teeth **33** are of course tapered to increase in thickness moving away from the front of the teeth. The angled fronts **37** of the teeth can be beveled laterally, if desired, as shown at **44**, to make it easier for the head of the fastener to move up onto the teeth.

[**0035**] The structure of the blade **1** is well suited for use in lifting roofing material, and particularly in lifting roofing fasteners that are tightly held by the roof. The thin, front edge **7** of the blade **1** can be easily slid under the edge of roofing material resting on its front bottom surface section **17**. Since the front bottom surface section is only about half the length of the blade, friction is much less as the blade slides on the roof as compared to a flat, substantially uniform-thickness, blade riding on its entire length. The blade **1** can be pivoted about its ridge **21** to help loosen the material being removed and the blade can also be pivoted about its front or back edges **7**, **9** to further loosen and remove material.

[**0036**] If the blade encounters a tightly held roofing nail 'N' as shown in FIG. **4**, the shank 'S' of the nail slides into a nail receiving slot **29** as the blade moves forward and the head 'H' of the nail rides up on the sides of the teeth **33** adjacent the slot. The nail riding up on the sides of the tapered teeth **33** may 'crack' it loose from the wood. However, if it does not, the blade is levered about its ridge **21** by the tool handle **3** to slightly lift the teeth **33** until the blade rests on the roof surface on its rear bottom surface section **19** as shown in FIG. **5**. The relatively short arm from the ridge **21** to the slots **29** on the front of the blade, compared to the length of the handle, provides good leverage to 'crack' the tight nail from the grip of the dry wood and slightly lift it. The nail does not move far but it is not meant to initially. Once the nail is 'cracked' and initially moved, it can be more easily pulled out by pivoting the blade about either its front or back edges.

[**0037**] If desired, the teeth can be made more tapered in thickness front to back by angling them from front to back at a slightly greater angle than the angle at which the front bottom surface is angled to the top surface. The angling can be on the top of the teeth **33** as shown by surface **45** in FIG. **6** but it can also be on the bottom of the teeth if desired. The angling extends for a length no greater than the length of the teeth. The more tapered teeth may be shorter and are thinner at their leading edge making it easier to insert the teeth under material. The more tapered teeth may also make it easier to 'crack' some fasteners.

[**0038**] A set **46** of teeth can be provided on the rear edge **9** of the blade which are the same as the set **31** of teeth **33** on the front edge. This allows the tool to be used in either direction to pull fasteners. Preferably, however, one set **31** of teeth are sized to provide slots that receive one size of roofing fasteners, such as asphalt shingle nails, and the other set **46** of teeth can be sized to provide slots that receive smaller size of roofing fasteners, such as the nails used for cedar shakes.

[**0039**] The blade can be provided with shaped slots between the teeth. The shaped slots have several advantages. They make it easier for the fasteners to enter the slots and to move to the end of the slots. They make it easier to try to 'crack' the fastener. They also make it easier to sharpen the teeth to maintain their utility, particularly the leading portion of the teeth at the mouth of the slot where most wear occurs. The shaped slots **51**, as shown in FIG. **7**, define shaped teeth **53** between the slots. The shaped teeth **53** each have an outer, angled section **55** defined by front sides **57** leading rearwardly from a rounded front point **59** on the tooth and diverging rearwardly from each other by an angle ranging from between 80° and 100°. The tapered front sides **57** of the outer section **55** normally diverge from each other more than the front sides of a normal pointed tooth of the type shown in FIG. **3**.

[**0040**] The outer, angled section **55** is followed by an intermediate, angled section **61** defined by intermediate sides **63** extending rearwardly from the front sides **57**. The intermediate sides **63** are slightly longer than the front sides **57** and diverge from front to back do but not as much front sides. The intermediate sides **63** would diverge from each other by an angle ranging from between 30° and 60°. The tooth has a inner, straight section **65**, behind the intermediate section **61**, defined by straight, parallel, sides **67** leading rearwardly from the intermediate sides **63**. The straight sides **67** are longer than the intermediate sides **63**.

[**0041**] The slot **51** between adjacent teeth **53** has a wide, tapered, outer, slot section **71** between the front sides **53** of the teeth, and a tapered intermediate slot section **73**, following the outer slot section **71**, between the intermediate sides **63** of the teeth. The outer slot section **71** provides entry to the intermediate slot section **73**. The intermediate slot section **73** converges toward a narrow inner slot section **75** of uniform width between the straight sides **67** of the teeth.

[**0042**] A front side **57** of the outer angled section **55** of a tooth initially picks up the fastener head entering a slot and moves both sideways and forwardly relative to the fastener, gently and easily raising the head a slight distance due to the taper in thickness of the outer section of the tooth, and initially 'cracking' the fastener out of the wood. The fastener head in this stage moves relatively to the tooth on only one

side of the tooth and moves about as fast sideways as forwardly thus gently easing the fastener head up. The fastener then moves onto the intermediate angled section, the tooth now moving relatively faster forwardly than sideways since the intermediate sides of the teeth are not angled as much as the outer sides. Since the tooth has been initially cracked it is now easier to raise the fastener in the intermediate angled section and in this section the fastener head becomes supported between two adjacent teeth. Continued relative movement of the fastener occurs in moving into, and along the length of, the inner slot section, the taper in thickness of the blade continually raising the fastener.

[0043] The inner slot in both embodiments has been described as having parallel sides. However, the inner slot can also have the sides converging toward the closed end of the inner slot so as to be able to pick up finishing nails by their head as well as other types of fasteners with smaller heads. In this case fasteners with larger shanks will not travel to the closed end of the slot.

[0044] While the shaped slots have been described as being in a blade that tapers in thickness from its middle to each edge, the slots can also be used in a blade that is flat and of even thickness except for being tapered in the area of the teeth, the teeth tapering to a thin front edge as is known.

[0045] A blade **1"** can also be provided having at least one fastener trapping slot in a side of the blade. The blade **1"** can be a blade as shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**, the blade tapering from a relatively thick middle to thin front and back edges-.(The teeth in the front and rear edges are not shown). The trapping slot **87** is a slot that extends inwardly from the side **85** of the blade, angled toward the front edge **81** of the blade. Because the blade tapers in thickness, the trapping slot should be located as close to the front edge as possible. The sides **89**, **89'** of the slot **87** are parallel. The slot **87** operates to trap or catch the shank 'S' of a nail 'N' as the side **85** of the blade is drawn rearwardly against and past the shank 'S' as shown by the arrow 'A'. As the mouth **91** of the slot **87** passes by the shank 'S' as the blade is drawn rearwardly, the blade moves slightly toward the shank, the shank partly entering the mouth **91** of the slot **87**. The pointed nose **93** of the blade at the mouth **91** of the slot **87** helps catch the shank 'S' and move it further into the slot **81** as the blade continues its rearward movement. The blade **1"** can then be rotated while flat on its bottom surface to move the shank to the bottom of the slot and to then lever the nail out of the wood. Preferably, the side **89'** of the slot nearest the rear edge **83** can be rounded at the mouth **91** of the slot as shown at **95** to make it easier for the shank of a nail to enter the slot. A trapping slot **87** can be provided on both sides of the blade.

[0046] The blade described in FIGS. **1** and **2** has a bottom surface with both the front and rear sections of the surface angled with respect to the top surface, the front and rear bottom sections joining to form a ridge. The blade **101** can be effective however with a rear bottom section **119** of the bottom surface **115** that is not angled but rather parallel to the top surface **113** as shown in FIG. **9**. In this embodiment, the front edge **107** of the blade will not be moved as much about the ridge **121**, when the blade is pivoted about the ridge, before the rear bottom section **119** abuts against the roof surface as it would be moved if the rear bottom section were also angled. However, the movement will sufficient to 'crack' many nails. In this embodiment, the rear edge **109** remains thick, as thick as the blade is at the ridge **121**, and this blade would have no rear teeth for use in withdrawing fasteners.

[0047] In another embodiment, the blade, as shown in FIG. **9**, may be modified to have the rear section **122** of the top surface **113** of the blade angled down to the bottom rear section **119** of the bottom surface **115**, as shown in FIG. **10**, to provide a thin rear edge **110** that can have teeth (not shown) therein.

[0048] Any of the blades, including flat blades of uniform thickness with a tapered front edge portion, can be strengthened by bending the blade **201** just behind the front teeth to form a small ridge **202** in the blade extending across the width of the blade as shown in FIG. **11**. The ridge **202** is parallel to the front edge **207** of the blade. The ridge **202** also serves to direct the roofing material upwardly away from the blade.

[0049] Any of the blades can be further strengthened by welding a curved gusset **220** between the top surface **213** of the blade in front of the handle and the front portion **222** of the socket **223** as shown in FIG. **11**. The gusset **220** merges smoothly between the top surface **213** of the blade and the front of the socket **223**. The curved gusset **220** strengthens the blade **201** and also directs roofing material away from the blade up the handle.

[0050] The tool has been shown in FIGS. **1** and **2** with a socket and a wooden handle extending from the socket. The tool **205** can also have a metal handle **203'**, the handle welded at its front end **224** to the top surface **213** of the blade **201** and having a relatively short front portion **226** extending upwardly and rearwardly from the blade as shown in FIG. **12** at an angle of about forty five degrees. The handle can be tubular or solid. The handle **203'** can have a slight downward bend **228** near the blade **201** to position the grip portion **230** of the handle **203'** of the tool in a better position for the user of the tool. The grip portion **230** is relatively long compared to the front portion **226**, the grip portion being gripped during use near its far end spaced from the front portion **226**. The grip portion **230** extends at an angle to the blade which is substantially less than the angle at which the front portion of the handle extends to the blade. The grip portion **230**, being lowered during use due to bend **228**, allows the user to more easily insert the tool blade under material, while the front portion **226** of the handle, extending at about a forty five degree angle to the blade, still allows the user to lever the blade upwardly. The handle **203'** can have a second bend **232** just behind the grip portion **230** to angle the rear portion **234** of the handle, just behind the grip portion **230**, downwardly. This allows the rear portion **234** of the handle to hit the roof surface first and protect the hand of the user on the grip portion **230**, just above the rear portion **234**, from hitting the roof surface when maneuvering the tool to lift material and fasteners. The tool **205** with the handle **203'** is shown with a blade as shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**. However, the tool can have any kind of blade with any type of teeth and any type of blade reinforcing means.

[0051] The tool can also include an impact receiving member **236** on the handle **203'** just above the blade **201** as shown in FIG. **12**. The member **236** can comprise a cylindrical bar **238**, the bar **238** welded onto the front portion **226** of the handle **203'** and extending transverse to it, the bar **238** parallel with the front edge **207** of the blade **201**. The bar

238 can be hit by the user with a hammer to force the tool forward when needed, such as when cutting roofing material. The impact receiving member **236** could be a square bar instead of cylindrical, or it could have other shapes. The member **236** could also be attached to the top of the blade if desired instead of on the handle as shown. The impact receiving member is also wide enough to allow the user to step on it to help force the blade downwardly into the roofing material. The impact receiving member could also be attached to the socket of a tool employing a wooden handle.

I claim:

1. A blade for a roofing tool having front and rear edges joined by sides, a top surface, and a bottom surface; the bottom surface having a front, bottom surface section and a rear, bottom surface section, the front, bottom surface section extending rearwardly from the front edge of the blade while angling slightly away from the top surface, and the rear, bottom surface section extending forwardly from the rear edge; the front and rear bottom surface sections joining to define a ridge located generally midway between the front and rear edges of the blade, the ridge at the thickest portion of the blade and extending across the blade and parallel to the front edge, the blade tapering in thickness from the ridge to the front edge to provide a thin front edge.

2. A blade as claimed in claim 1 wherein the rear bottom surface section angles upwardly from the ridge toward the top surface, the blade tapering in thickness from the ridge to the rear edge to provide a thin rear edge on the blade.

3. A blade as claimed in claim 1 wherein the top surface has a front top surface section and a rear top surface section, the rear top surface section angling downwardly toward the bottom rear surface section of the bottom surface, the blade tapering in thickness from the ridge to the rear edge to provide a thin rear edge.

4. A blade as claimed in claim 2 wherein the top surface is flat, and the front and rear bottom surface sections diverge from the top surface, from the front and rear edges respectively, by an angle ranging between 3° and 5°.

5. A blade as claimed in claim 4 wherein the blade has a thickness of about one sixteenth of an inch at the front and rear edges, and the blade has a thickness at the ridge of between three sixteenths and five sixteenths of an inch.

6. A blade as claimed in claim 2 including a set of fastener receiving slots extending rearwardly from the front edge of the blade to define teeth between the slots, each tooth having a relatively short front portion that tapers to the front of the tooth to a rounded point and a relatively long body portion with parallel sides, each tooth tapering in thickness toward the front edge.

7. A blade as claimed in claim 2 including a set of fastener receiving slots extending rearwardly from the front edge of the blade to define teeth between the slots; each tooth having a relatively short front portion that tapers to the front of the tooth to a rounded point; an intermediate tapered portion extending rearwardly from the front portion, the intermediate portion slightly longer than the front portion and not tapered from back to front as much as the front portion; and a body portion with parallel sides, the body portion longer than the intermediate portion; each tooth tapering in thickness toward the front edge.

8. A blade as claimed in claim 7 wherein the sides of the front portion of the tooth diverge from each other from the point of the tooth at an angle ranging between eighty and one hundred degrees.

9. A blade as claimed in claim 2 including a trapping slot in at least one side of the blade, the slot extending inwardly and forwardly toward the front edge of the blade and sized to receive the shank of a fastener.

10. A blade as claimed in claim 6 including a trapping slot in at least one side of the blade, the slot extending inwardly and forwardly toward the front edge of the blade and sized to receive the shank of a fastener.

11. A blade as claimed in claim 6 including a second set of fastener receiving slots extending forwardly from the back edge of the blade, the second set of slots sized to receive fasteners with shanks of a different size than the shanks of fasteners received by the set of slots in the front edge.

12. A blade as claimed in claim 6 including a strengthening ridge formed in the blade just behind the front teeth, the ridge extending across the width of the blade, the ridge above the top surface of the blade.

13. A blade for a roofing tool having front and back edges and sides joining the front and back edges; the blade having slots extending inwardly from at least one of the front and back edges to form outwardly extending teeth; each slot defined by adjacent teeth and having an outer section that tapers inwardly from an outer mouth to collect and direct a fastener into the slot; the slot having an intermediate section following the outer section that tapers inwardly to a lesser degree than the outer section and the slot having an inner section following the intermediate section and of generally uniform width to receive the shanks of fasteners.

14. A blade as claimed in claim 13 wherein the sides of the outer section of the slot converge toward each other from the mouth of the slot at an angle ranging between eighty and one hundred degrees.

15. A blade as claimed in claim 13 including a trapping slot in at least one side of the blade, the slot extending inwardly and forwardly toward the front edge of the blade and sized to receive the shank of a fastener, the side of the trapping slot nearest the rear edge of the blade rounded at the mouth of the slot to make entry of the fastener shank into the slot easier.

16. a blade as claimed in claim 13 including a strengthening ridge formed in the blade just behind the front teeth, the ridge extending across the width of the blade, the ridge above the top surface of the blade.

17. A blade for a roofing tool having front and back edges and sides joining the front and back edges; the blade having slots extending inwardly from the front edge to form forwardly extending teeth; and a strengthening ridge formed in the blade just behind the front teeth, the ridge extending across the width of the blade, the ridge above the top surface of the blade.

18. A blade for a roofing tool having front and rear edges joined by sides, the blade having a first set of slots extending rearwardly into the front edge to form a first set of front teeth which extend forwardly, the first set of slots sized to receive the shanks of one size of fastener, a second set of slots extending forwardly into the rear edge to form a second set of rear teeth which extend rearwardly, the second set of slots sized to receive the shanks of a second size of fastener.

19. A blade as claimed in claim 18 including a strengthening ridge formed in the blade just behind the front teeth, the ridge extending across the width of the blade, the ridge above the top surface of the blade.

20. A roofing tool having a blade, the blade having front and back edges and sides joining the front and back edges; the blade having slots extending inwardly from the front edge to form forwardly extending teeth; a handle extending upwardly and rearwardly away from the front edge from about the center of the blade, a gusset on the top of the blade, the gusset extending from the top surface of the blade, in front of the handle to the lower front portion of the handle near the blade and fastened to both the blade and the handle, the top of the gusset curved upwardly to have the gusset merge smoothly with the top surface of the blade and with the lower front of the handle.

21. A tool as claimed in claim 20 including a strengthening ridge formed in the blade just behind the teeth, the ridge extending across the width of the blade, the ridge above the top surface of the blade.

22. A roofing tool having a blade, the blade having front and back edges and sides joining the front and back edges; the blade having slots extending inwardly from the front edge to form forwardly extending teeth; a handle, the handle divided by a bend near the front of the handle into a relatively short front portion and a relatively long grip portion; the front portion of the handle attached to about the center of the blade and extending upwardly and rearwardly from the blade at a first angle; the grip portion of the handle extending at a second angle to the blade which is substantially less than the first angle.

23. A tool as claimed in claim 22 wherein the handle has a short rear portion bent down from the end of the grip portion to extend toward the roof when the tool is in use.

24. A tool as claimed in claim 22 including a strengthening ridge formed in the blade just behind the front teeth, the ridge extending across the width of the blade, the ridge above the top surface of the blade.

25. A tool as claimed in claim 22 including a gusset on the top of the blade, the gusset extending from the top surface of the blade, in front of the handle to the lower front portion of the handle near the blade and fastened to both the blade and the socket, the top of the gusset curved upwardly to have the gusset merge smoothly with the top surface of the blade and with the lower front of the handle.

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