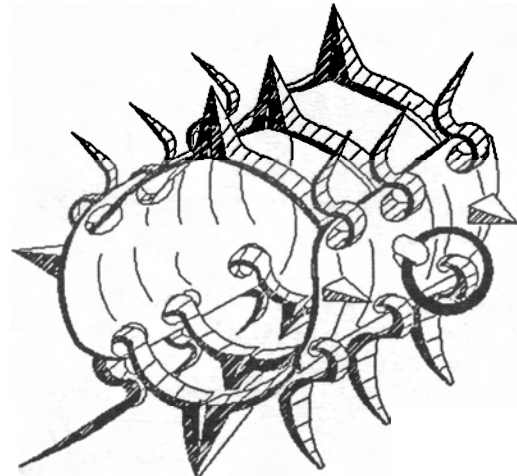


16th Century Spanish "Mastiff" Dog Collar Steve Bloom

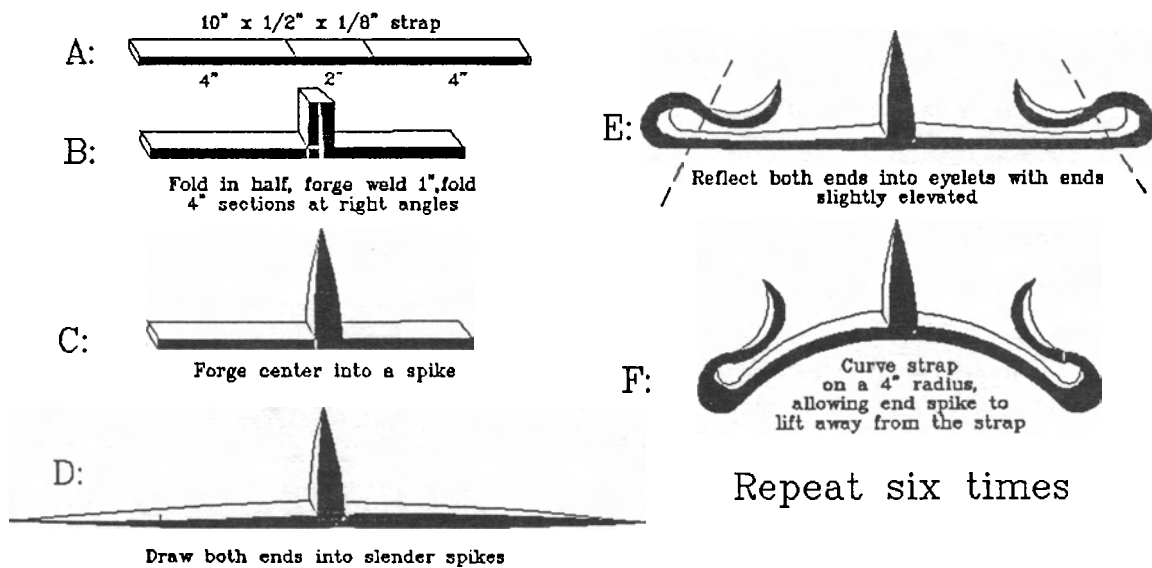
This project may be of interest to smiths who are interested in the recreation of historical ironwork (my excuse), who are looking for a 'conversation piece' project, who generate clothing accessories for punk-rockers, or who want to give their Cocker Spaniel an edge when contesting boundaries with the local Rottweiler. The original object is a 19th century reproduction of a 16th century item and is now in the collection of the Florida State Museum in Gainesville, Florida (Fig.1). The measurements given here are fairly close to the actual object (the overall neck size is approximately 16 inches in circumference and the breed of dog was most likely a hound and not what we now call a mastiff - otherwise it wore the collar on its leg. The object consists of 4 basic components, the straps, the plates, rings and eyes, and surface spikes. It requires a number of processes such as forge-welding, drawing, punching, filing, swaging, ring fabrication, mortise and tenon riveting, and surface decorating - so it does represent a good excuse to try a number of standard processes.



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Figure 1: The assembled collar

The first component are six straps. Each strap (see Fig.2) eventually contributes 3



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Figure 2: Construction of straps

spikes to overall total off 22. The only change I recommend from the original is to form the eyes over a piece of 1/4" round stock. I found that folding the strap over the bar, then clamping the assembly in the vise and centering the eye while rounding it worked well. The rounded eye allows for a freer articulation of the straps with the side plates than was found in the original. The only other 'trick' which I found helpful was during the curving of the straps (Step F). Heat the entire strap to a light cherry, quench the ends, then gently bend the strap over the horn or other convenient

cylindrical object. The end spikes will tend to lift from the strap by themselves and can then be easily bent to the correct position with pliers after the next heat.

The second major component are the side plates (Fig.3). These were cut from 14 gauge mild steel. You will need two such plates, 4 single spikes, and 2 eye-and-ring combinations. The technique used in forming the eye is identical to that needed in creating mounting brackets for furniture pulls or handles, just smaller. I annealed the filed shanks of the spikes and the eyes. The spikes were attached first (clamp the spike upright in your vise, position the plate over the tenon, and treat the tenon like a rivet - it worked as well cold as hot, so do it the easy way - cold), then attach the eye in the same fashion.

The collar is assembled by prying open the eyelets on the straps, slipping the plates over and into the eyelets, then gently hammering the eyelet shut. That's okay for three of the four articulation planes. The last one was probably closed using pliers (or the equivalent) after the dog was 'deactivated'. If you really wanted to use this collar on a dog today, I suggest that you alter the design to allow a more convenient method of installing and removing the collar (perhaps an auxiliary plate with leather straps & buckles). If you do use this on your dog, you may also want instructions on how to fabricate plate amour - especially for your legs.

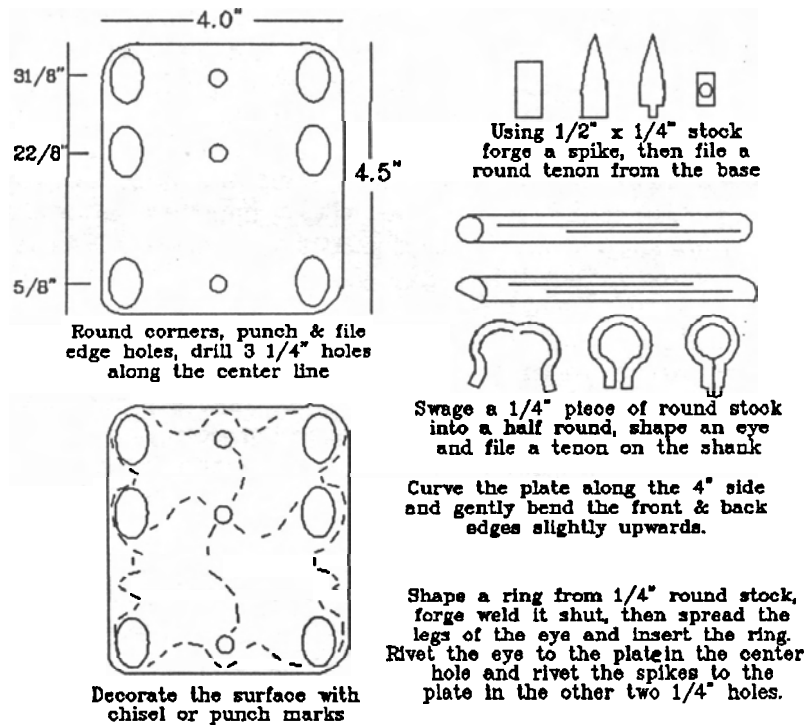


Figure 3: Construction of plates