FURNITURE

The conservatism of the early English colonists in North America, their strong **attachment to** the English way of doing things, would play a major part in the furniture that was made in New England. The very tools that the first New England furniture makers used were, after all, not much different from those used for centuries- even millennia: basic hammers, saws, chisels, planes, augers, compasses, and measures. These were the tools used more or less by all people who worked with wood: carpenters, barrel makers, and shipwrights. At most the furniture makers might have had planes with special edges or more delicate chisels, but there could not have been much specialization in the early years of the colonies.

The furniture makers in those early decades of the 1600's were known as "joiners," for the primary method of constructing furniture, at least among the English of this time, was that of mortise- and-tenon joinery. The mortise is the hole chiseled and cut into one piece of wood, while the tenon is the tongue or **protruding** element shaped from another piece of wood so that it fits into the mortise; and another small hole is then drilled (with the auger) through the mortised end and the tenon so that a whittled peg can secure the joint- thus the term "joiner." Panels were fitted into slots on the basic frames. This kind of construction was used for making everything from houses to chests.

Relatively little hardware was used during this period. Some nails- forged by hand- were used, but no screws or glue. Hinges were often made of leather, but metal hinges were also used. The cruder varieties were made by blacksmiths in the colonies, but the finer metal elements were imported. Locks and escutcheon plates - the latter to **shield** the wood from the metal key – would often be imported. Above all, what the early English colonists imported was their knowledge of, familiarity with, and dedication to the traditional types and designs of furniture **they** knew in England.

Question 11 The phrase "**attachment to**" in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to _____.

A. control of

B. distance from

C. curiosity about

D. preference for

Question 12 The relationship of a mortise and a tenon is most similar to that of …

A. a lock and a key

B. a book and its cover

C. a cup and a saucer

D. a hammer and a nail

Question 13 For what purpose did woodworkers use an auger?

A. To whittle a peg

B. To make a tenon

C. To drill a hole

D. To measure a panel

Question 14 The word "**protruding**" in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to

A. parallel

B. simple

C. projecting

D. important

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Question 15 The author implies that colonial metalworkers were _____.
A. unable to make elaborate parts
B. more skilled than woodworkers
C. more conservative than other colonists
D. frequently employed by joiners

Question 16 The word "**shield**" in the last paragraph is closest in meaning to _____.
A. decorate
B. copy
C. shape
D. protect

Question 17 The word "**they**" in the last paragraph refers to _____.
A. designs
B. types
C. colonists
D. all

Question 18 Which of the following were NOT used in the construction of colonial furniture?
A. Mortises
B. Nails
C. Hinges
D. Screws

Question 19 Which of the following terms does the author explain in the passage?
A. "millennia"
B. "joiners"
C. "whittled"
D. "blacksmiths"

Question 20 The author implies that the colonial joiners_____.
A. were highly paid
B. based their furniture on English models
C. used many specialized tools
D. had to adjust to using new kinds of wood in New England

LIVEWORKSHEETS