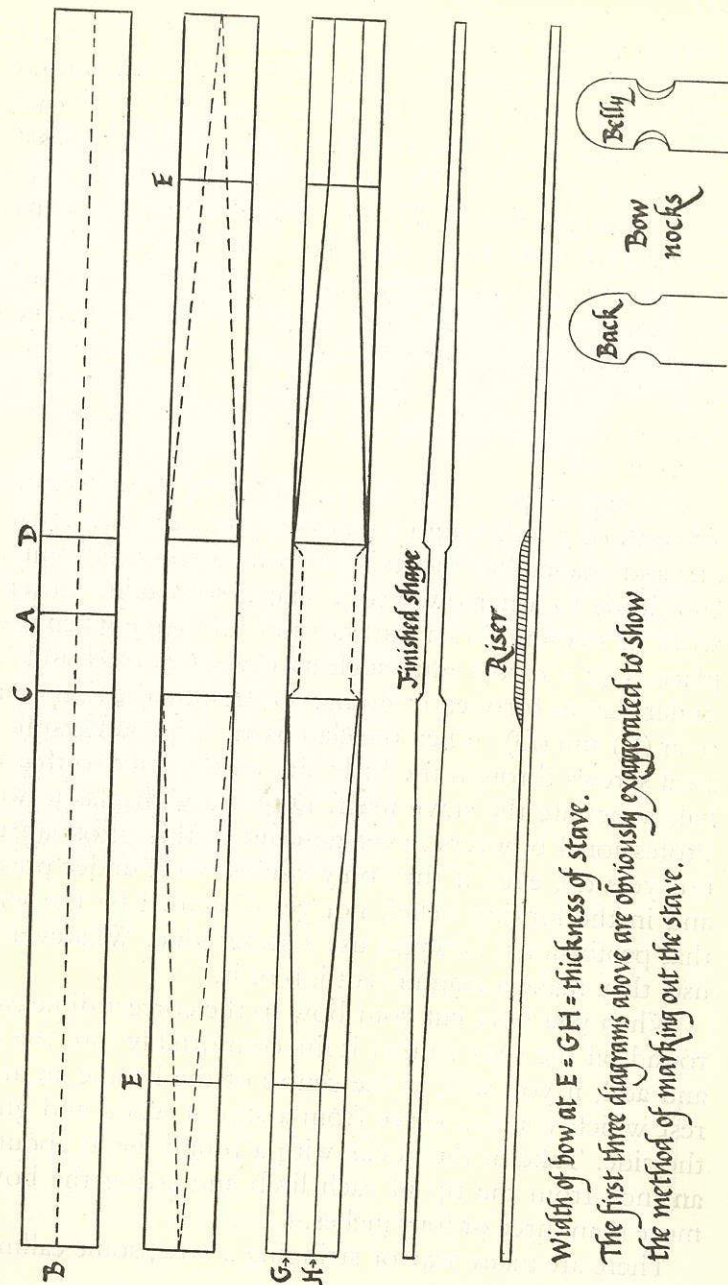inch. This, for an archer drawing a 27–28 in. arrow will produce a weapon of an approximate initial draw weight of 50–52 lb. I underline the fact that this is an approximation, dependent on the individual stave and the final dimensions. If this sounds heavy remember that a self bow may drop some eight pounds or more in draw weight after a round or two has been shot with it. It may indeed lose more than this, since a bow of this design has a fairly pronounced string-follow. If laymen friends ask you in bright innocence 'how you get that lovely bend in it', don't grind your teeth too much, for once a self bow has taken a certain set it will not increase.

Lay the stave back down and mark the exact centre of the bow (A) after having cut the stave to length. The *exact* centre, working on both dimensions. Mark the centre of width at the tip of each limb (B) and draw a straight line down through the entire stave. You can do this with a long rule in stages or by means of thin twine, dusted with chalk, stretched down the centre of the stave and caught at each tip with a drawing pin. The twine is then plucked, producing a chalk line on the wood. The former is the better method. You now have the longitudinal centre of the bow and the two-dimensional centre mark at the handle position. Draw a line across the stave at this latter point (A) and take it all round the stave. All lines that you draw on the belly should be duplicated on the back; all lines across the bow must be taken all round.

Measure down three inches from the handle centre and draw all round (C). Now take a mark five inches above dead centre and continue the lines similarly to sides and back (D). The five-inch line represents the top of the handle; the three-inch line represents the bottom. Note that this bow is shot from the *centre* of this eight-inch cutaway handle. The limb above the five-inch mark is the top and each limb at its widest point is one and a half inches.

Take a line from each side of the stave at (C) to the end of

Self bow of rectangular limb section: not to scale

Finished shape

Riser

Back   Bow   Belly
        nocks

Width of bow at E = GH = thickness of stave.

The first three diagrams above are obviously exaggerated to show the method of marking out the stave.