STANLEY "LIBERTY BELL" PLANES
TYPE STUDY
September 6, 2008

By Robert E. Ziegler

The starting point for this type study is the information in John Walter's book, *Antique & Collectible STANLEY TOOLS*. I have cast it in the more usual type study format used by Roger K. Smith and added my observations and illustrations. The Liberty Bell type points closely parallel those of the Bailey-Stanley wood bottom planes and that type study should be reviewed by the reader. I have retained the letter designations of illustrations which are in common with Bailey-Stanley planes.

The Liberty Bell design commemorates *the Centennial Celebration of American Independence* and was introduced at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876. Stanley made the Liberty Bell plane in five wood bottom with metal frame models, numbers 122, 127, 129, 132 and 135 and two metallic models, numbers 104 and 105. The production of these planes was deeply resented by Leonard Bailey who sued Stanley, claiming the lower priced Liberty Bells were competing against the Bailey line licensed to Stanley. Bailey lost the suit and Stanley sold these planes for approximately 42 years, discontinuing them in 1918.

The most unique feature of these planes is the screw-down lever cap with a cast Liberty Bell enclosing the numerals 76. These castings vary considerably in quality and definition. The lever cap engages a cross bar on the frame with either one pair of notches, two pair, or a ramp. Another unique feature is the special two-piece cutter screw with a spur that engages the adjusting levers. This feature is the Traut & Richards 4/18/1876 patent. These planes have neither adjustable frogs nor lateral adjusters as found in Bailey- Stanley models. Cutters and cap irons are not interchangeable between Liberty Bell and Bailey-Stanley planes.

This study serves only to date the various planes and may be accurate to within two years. No truly functional changes occurred in the Liberty Bell line, with the possible exception of the 1892 cutter/cap iron patent.

WOOD BOTTOM TYPES

The wood bottom Liberty Bell planes all have bottoms, totes and knobs of beech. They approximately follow the Bailey-Stanley wood bottom planes in terms of the features that differentiate the types.

TYPE 1. 1876 to 1886

A. Trademark stamped on cutter
B. Lever cap has plain, ribbed back
* Decorative, cast cap screw
C. Spur is attached to **cutter** with a round, screwdriver-slotted nut and has shoulders milled on flat to prevent rotation in cutter slot
* Cap iron has 9/16"wide slot to clear cutter nut
I. Eagle trademark and model number stamped on toe and the "1" in the model number mismatches other numerals

TYPE 2. 1886 to 1891

All features of TYPE 1 except:
* Eagle is removed
N. New trademark stamped on toe and the "1" in the model number still mismatches other numerals

TYPE 3. 1892 to 1899

All features of TYPE 2 except:

M. 1892 patent cutter

Q. New trademark on cutter, the lettering 1/32 inch taller than on Bailey-Stanley's

* The "1" in the model number on the toe now matches other numerals

* Cutter spur now attached to **cap iron** with hex nut,
the threaded spur stud being milled with flats to prevent rotation in the slot

D. Lever cap now has hex pattern ribs and "S" cast on back
It has been suggested that the hex pattern is a nut wrench, but too shallow

* Some models have "S" cast on bottom of frame

TYPE 3A. 1900 to 1904

All features of TYPE 3 except:

* May have "B" cast on back of lever cap

* May have "B" cast on top of frame behind cutter

TYPE 4. 1905 to 1909

All features of TYPE 3A except:

T. New trademark on cutter

TYPE 4A. 1909

Model 122 only ?

All features of TYPE 3A except:

* No marking on toe

* One-inch plated, cast lever cap screw

O. Trademark on cutter

* Pre-1892 patent, extra-wide slotted cutter

* Frame sides extended fore and aft in smooth curve

* "B" cast mark inside frame heel

TYPE 5. 1910 to 1918

All features of TYPE 4 except:

V. New trademark on cutter

* Machined, serrated edge on lever cap screw

METALLIC TYPES

The metallic Liberty Bell planes have a cast iron core, with integral frog and adjuster, riveted to a steel bottom. This is the Traut & Richards 10/5/1875 patent. Although the steel bottom is strong, it has a tendency to oxidize and many examples are found heavily rusted and pitted. These planes all have rosewood totes and knobs. The adjusting lever operates in the opposite direction of the wood bottom Liberty Bells. Lowering the lever advances the cutter. Lever caps are not interchangeable with the wood bottom types. The planes approximately follow the Bailey-Stanley planes in terms of the features that differentiate the types.

TYPE 1. 1876 to 1891

A. Trademark on cutter

C. Spur is attached to **cutter** with a round, screwdriver-slotted nut and
has shoulders milled on flat to prevent rotation in cutter slot

* Decorative, cast lever cap screw

E. Side of plane stamped with 10/5/1875 patent

TYPE 2. 1892 to 1899

All features of TYPE 1 except:

M 1892 patent cutter

* Cutter spur now attached to **cap iron** with hex nut,
the threaded spur stud being milled with flats to prevent rotation in the slot

D. Lever cap now has hex pattern ribs and "S" cast on back
It has been suggested that the hex pattern is a nut wrench, but too shallow

Q. Trademark on cutter

TYPE 2A. 1900 to 1904

All features of TYPE 2 except:

* May have "B" cast on back of lever cap

TYPE 3. 1905 to 1909

All features of TYPE 2A except:

* Patent mark removed from side of plane

T. Trademark on cutter

* Machined, serrated edge lever cap screw with rounded "Stanley"

F. Lever cap back now has shallow elongated hex shape between ribs

TYPE 4. 1910 to 1918

All features of TYPE 3 except:

V. Trademark on cutter

* Machined, serrated edge on lever cap screw added in 1911

FOOTNOTE: The "S" and "B" casting marks seen on a variety of Stanley planes are assumed to be associated with outsourced foundries which are not identified. The switch from "S" to "B" occurred about 1899. Stanley purchased the Bridgewater Iron Works in 1899. Could this be the source of "B" casting marks? Could Stanley Works be the source of "S" casting marks? I have no supporting data for this supposition. It is only an observation of patterns in the literature. REZ

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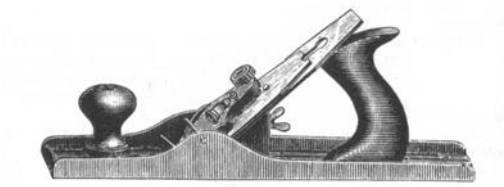

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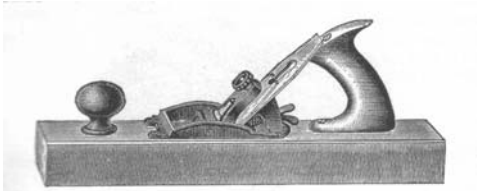

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A.

E.

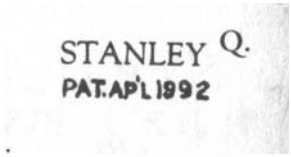
Image Not Available

I.

N.

O.

Q.



T.

V.

B.

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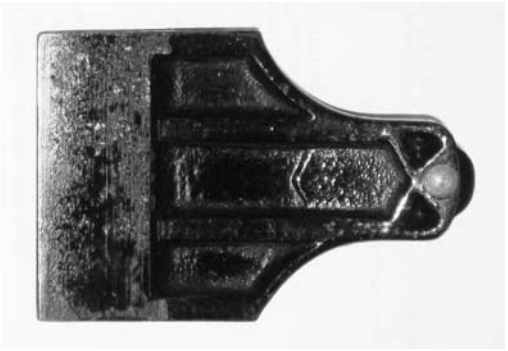
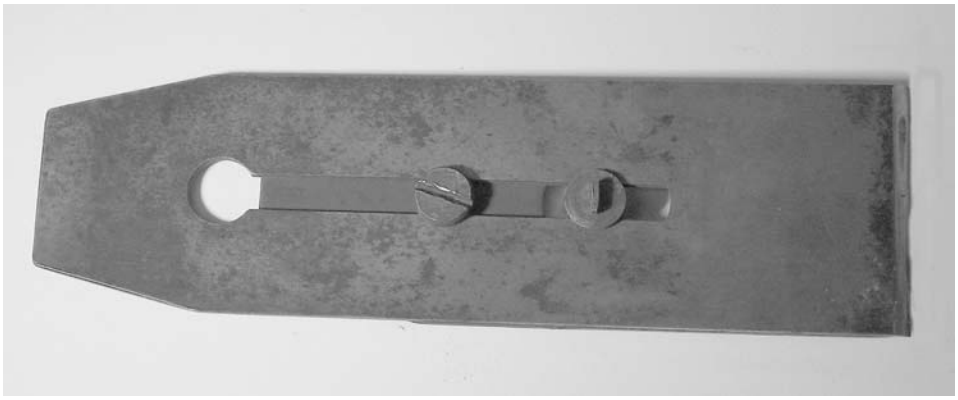


C.



M.