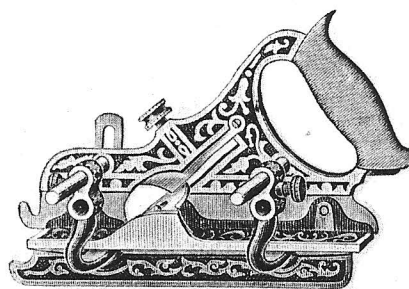
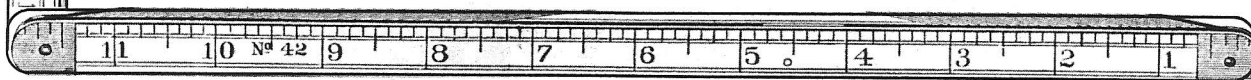




Stanley

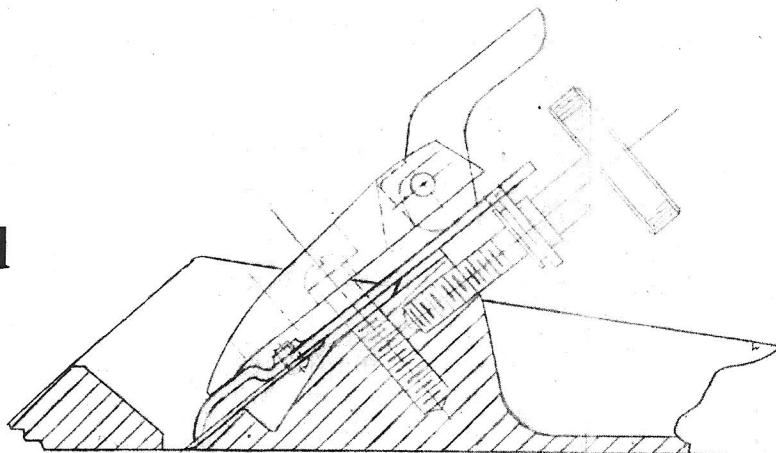


PLANE TRUTH & EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE



Stanley No. 140 Bench Plane

Clarence Blanchard



As Stanley collectors, we often find ourselves wondering how many items made up a production run or how did a tool get from the drafting board to the hardware store. Except for the catalogs issued during the last half of the 19th century, which show how many Bailey planes sold, little information has come to light. And as for how they did it, Stanley ain't telling. So when a production folder for the Stanley No. 140 throw-a-way cutter plane showed up, you can believe it got my attention.

Granted, the plane and information are late in the game as far as collectible Stanley tools are concerned. Certainly, the same level of information for the 1860s would be better than the 1960s, but we have to go with what comes to light. The one thing that we can assume with some degree of certainty is that Stanley developed the procedures for introducing a new tool over a long period of time. Like many large companies, Stanley no doubt made changes slowly and the steps taken in the 1960s were at least similar to those used for years.

The earliest information dates to the spring of 1960. Sometime before April, Stanley decided to produce a throw-a-way blade plane. The plane was known as the Low Price Plane with no number assigned. This plane was to compete with the four-way throw-a-way blade planes being offered by Sears and others. The size would be the same as a number 4, but the body design was to have a low side profile that saved materials and reduced casting costs.

W. Robinson did a series of concept sketches in April; see fig. 1 of the blade assembly. By the middle of July, blueprint drawings were well along with prints for the body, cutter assembly, and other parts. The cutter assembly is shown in fig. 2. At this early stage, the plane was intended to be an addition to the top-end Stanley tool line. The design includes a stylized Bailey lever cap and an arched cap iron.

Design and revisions continued through 1960; in the spring of 1961, the designers were nearing completion of their work. By March 1961, the design had undergone many

