Ed Fitzgerald

Millers Falls Planes

A Collection of Planes

Version
7/28/2021

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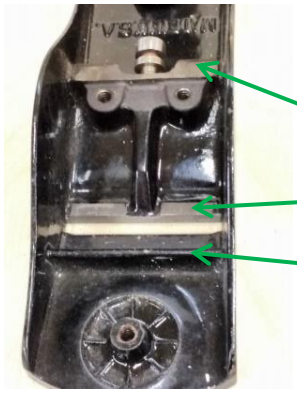
Plane Terms

Heel Tab – Found on planes up to ten inches. On type 1 premium plane, the heel tab is above the sole. On all other planes, the heel tab is part of the sole.



Upper Frog Seat

Frog Foot Receiver

Support Rib - This height changes over time on MF planes.

Raised Tote Receiver

Casting Gate

Yoke Pin Recess - Unique feature on Millers Falls.

Frog Seat

Frog Foot

Cap Iron Screw Recess

Frog Face Relief – Unique feature on Millers Falls

Cam Lever Spring

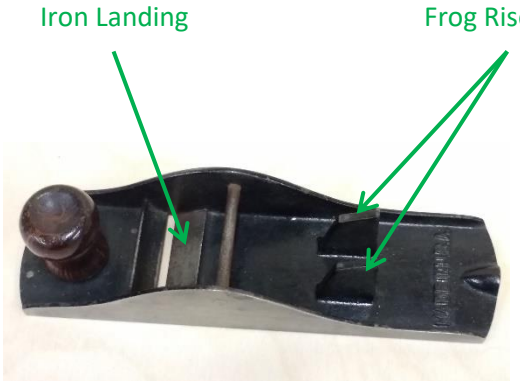
Upper section

Casting relief

Contact pads

Interlocking tabs - Type 1 MF only. Tabs eliminated after type 1.

Lower section



Screw type depth adjustment

Frog, Complete (from MF catalog #42)

Frog

Millers Falls Planes

Bench Plane

The following sections are going to be a different way of looking at the premium line and the changes that were incorporated into them. Each of the four major components (body, frog, iron, lever cap) that makeup a premium bench plane will be listed with the changes that occurred during the six types.

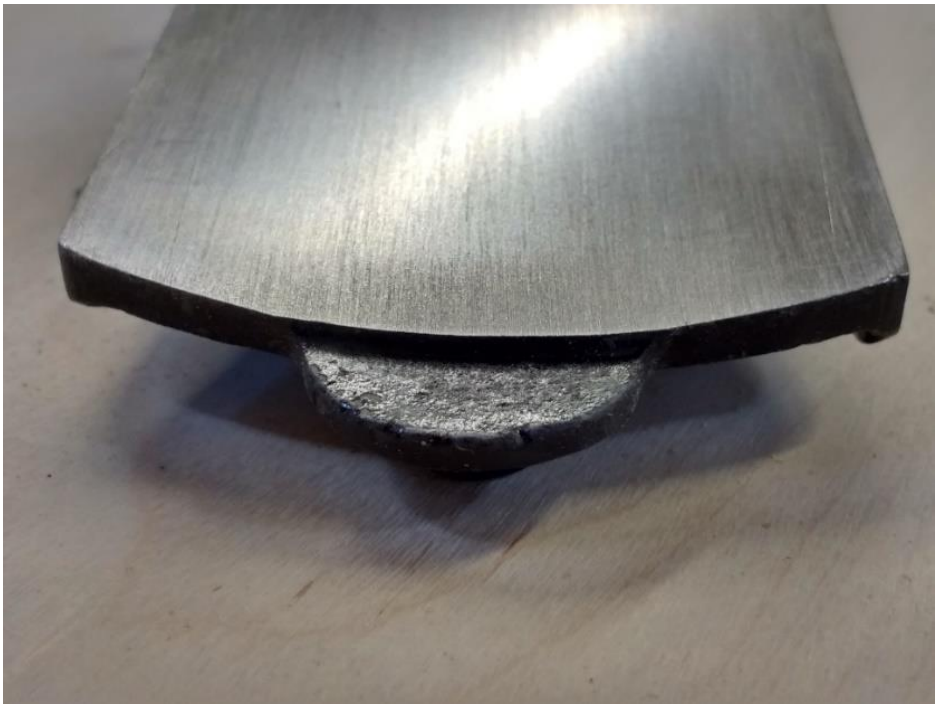
Premium Bench Plane Body

The premium line of planes had ten different models at the start of 1929. The bodies with casting numbers were No. 7(300), No 8(301), No. 9(302), No. 10(303), No. 11(304), No. 14(305), No. 15(306), No. 18(307), No. 22(308), and No. 24(309). I will point out any changes as we go through the different types.

Type 1 Body

This picture shows a No.8, No. 9, and a No. 14 as it appeared on the January 1929 release.

The unique features across all premium models of this type are the company name around the front knob, a smooth bed under the knob, a tall support rib and the model number cast on the bed. In the picture above, you will notice that the No. 9 does not have a raised tote receiver. On the type 1 bodies, only the No. 7 and No. 9 did not have this feature.



The No. 7, 8, 9 and 10 had a raised heel tab that was above the sole. This feature gave support to the tote at the heel. On the larger planes, the tote was mounted away from the heel which rendered the heel tab unnecessary.

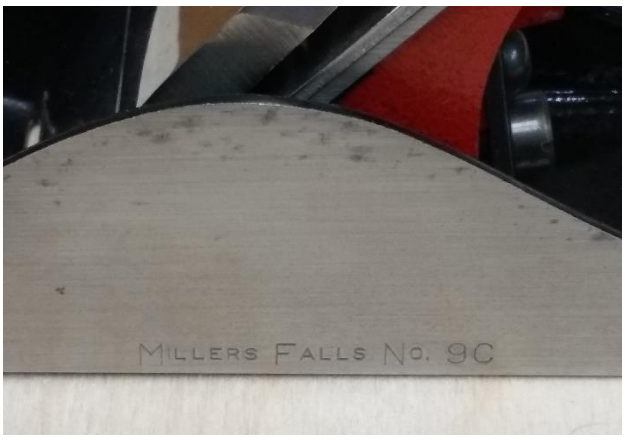
During the time Millers Falls made planes, they would stamp the casting number and casting template number on the parts. During the type 1 years, only the template number was applied to the body usually under the tote.

The type 1 ran from January 1929 until the end of 1935. During this time, no additional changes were done to the type 1 bodies.

Type 2 Body

There were several changes to the type 2 bodies. The company name and model number were removed from the bed and stamped on the left side of the cheek. The bed under the knob had ribs added to prevent the knob from turning in use. The raised heel tab was lowered and is now part of the sole and the high vertical support was about 3/16 inch lower.

The picture above shows a No.8, No. 9, and a No. 14 as it appeared on the type 2 release. Also note that the raised tote receiver on the No.8 has been eliminated.



The type 2 years ran from 1936 through 1941. Sometime around the 1939 timeframe, Millers Falls changed the process of making the bodies of the No 11 through No. 24 by adding or not eliminating a deposit of metal on the toe and heel called a casting gate.

This picture shows two No. 14 type 2 planes. The earlier version without the casting gate and the later version with it. This feature will be on all larger plane bodies moving forward and is an easy way to identify a Millers Falls plane

To date I have not seen a casting number on a type 2 base. Like the type 1, the only casting id on the base is the template number usually found under the tote.

Type 3 Body

Between 1942 and 1948 no changes were done to the type 3 bodies. During this time, on many of the No. 9 beds is a 'U' within a circle. This mark is not found on the 900 or rebrand bodies for this period.

The No. 7 was eliminated from the production line around 1944.

Type 2/2 Body

Between 1949 and 1952 no changes were done to the type 2/2 bodies. The casting number is now being applied to the bed behind the frog. The letter 'S' can be seen on the No. 14 bed. It is not clear if the other models had a similar or different letter stamp.

Type 4 Body

Between 1953 and 1965 no changes were done to the type 4 bodies. The number of stamps increased during this period on the No. 8, 9 and 14 bodies. The secondary lines of planes are showing similar letter stamps. Not clear if the other premium models had these stamps applied.

The No. 10, No. 15 and No.24 were eliminated from production by 1962.

Type 5 Body

Between 1966 and 1978 several changes were done to the type 5 body. The six remaining models would now have the same raised tote receiver that had a removable toe pin and a 7/32-24 philips head tote bolt. This meant that only one style tote would be needed across the six models. The premium line also eliminated the frog adjustment screw. These two changes would cut the cost of manufacturing because now the premium line, 900/814, 90/140 and the rebrands would all be made the same.

Looking at the No. 8 and No.14 below, you can see the same size raised tote receiver on both planes.

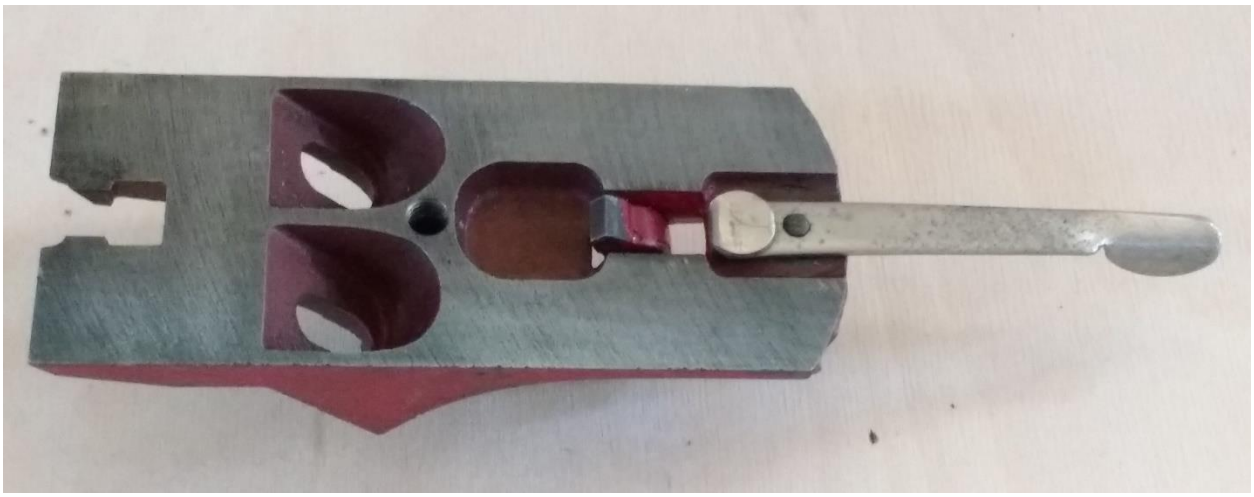
Millers Falls stopped casting tools when the Greenfield foundry was closed in 1969. The following picture shows a No. 9 with the bridge between the upper frog seat eliminated. Also, new casting numbers identify these bodies as being outsourced.

Premium Bench Plane Frog

The premium line of planes had ten different models in six different widths. The six different size frogs with casting numbers were 1-5/8”(315), 1-3/4”(316), 2”(317), 2-1/4”(318), 2-3/8”(319) and 2-5/8”(320). I will point out any changes as we go through the different types.

Type 1 Frog

The type 1 frog had a folded lateral adjustment, a painted cast iron yoke, no yoke pin recess, no frog face relief, and a brass recessed adjustment nut. The following two pictures are of a 2” frog as it would appear in the January 1929 release.



In 1931(based on the Craftsman study), Millers Falls changed the 1-3/4 and the 2” frog by adding extra metal around the lever cap screw. The thought was that this change would strengthen the metal around the screw to prevent stress cracks. What is strange is they did not do the same to the 1-5/8” frog which had less metal around the lever cap screw then the two that were changed.

Type 2 Frog

Around 1936, Millers Falls changed the design of all six frogs by replacing the folded lateral adjustor with a pinned disk to engage the iron. The cast iron yoke was replaced with a two-piece steel yoke. A yoke pin recess was added on either side of the yoke pin and on either side of the lever cap screw, a frog face relief was added to the front.

These changes were not new to Millers Falls on the type 2 release. These same changes had been used on the 900/814 series and the Sears planes for two or more years.

Type 3 Frog

The type 3 premium planes eliminated the use of brass and the import of cocobolo. The adjustment nut was now a nickel-plated steel.

Around 1944, Millers Falls changed the casting number on only the 2” frog from 317 to 496A. This change was on both the premium line and the secondary 900/814 series along with the rebranded planes. It is not clear if this change was on the 209 planes before the 209 ended in 1946.

There is no clear reason why this casting change was done because no features on the frog changed.

In 1944 the No. 7 plane was eliminated from production. The No. 7 was the only plane with the 1-5/8 frog, so the number of unique size frogs is now five.

Type 2/2 Frog

In 1949 when Millers Falls introduced the 2/2 type, the adjusting nut was changed back to brass from nickel steel on the previous type. On the 2” frog this type also has the 496A casting number which distinguished this type from the 2/1 which had a 317 casting number.

Type 4 Frog

The paint on the type 4 was changed from red to black and the recessed depth adjustment nut was replaced with a full brass nut. Sometime between 2/56 and 9/59, Millers Falls again changed the casting number on the 2” frog from 496A to 496. Like before, where is no clear reason why this was done. The other four frogs have their original casting numbers.

In 1961 millers Falls dropped the No. 10, No. 15, and the No. 24 planes from the production line. The No. 15 had a 2-1/4” frog and the No. 24 had a 2-5/8” frog. With these three planes out of production, the number of unique frogs is down to three.

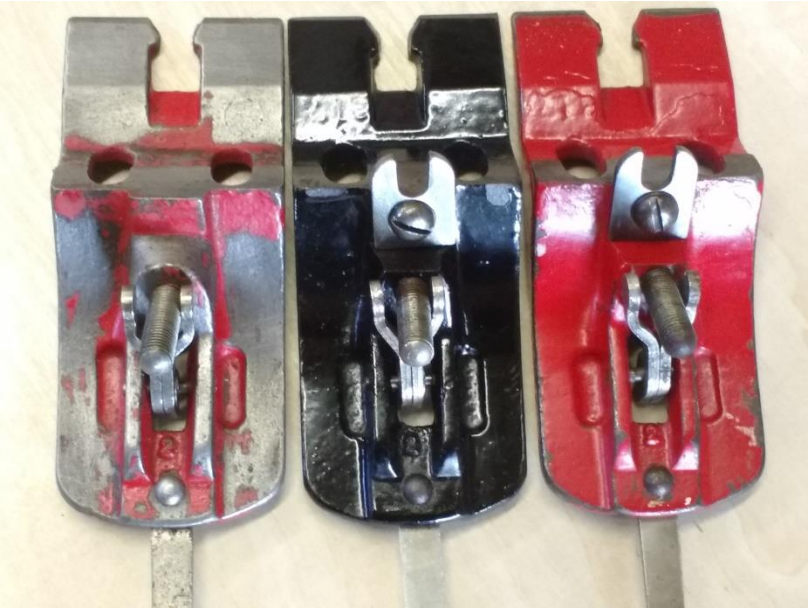
Type 5 Frog

The type 5 planes were an effort in 1966 to minimize costs by consolidating the existing planes into one form. The drilling and tapping for the frog adjustment screw was eliminated saving time and material. This move also eliminated labor and machinery. The depth adjustment nut was changed from brass to plated steel.

The picture on the left shows the back of a 1-3/4” and the front of a 2”. Both are early type 5 frogs made at the factory. The picture on the right are frogs that were outsourced after 1969. Both frogs are 2” with a casting number 32686. The outsourced frogs eliminated metal between the cap iron screw recess and the frog locking screw recess. Also note on the outsourced frogs that no attempt was made of covering the frog seat and frog foot before the paint was applied.

Cast Number "2" on Frog

I have three examples of a raised number "2" cast in the back of a frog behind the rivet for the lateral adjuster. All three frogs are 2inch with folded lateral adjusters. The first was from a Craftsman No. 5264 with a two-digit stamp "4C" was on the cheek without the "BB". The second is from a 209 and the third from a No. 9 type 2/1. Both the No. 209 and the No. 9 had a 317 casting number on the frog and had overlapping production dates. No casting number was on to the Craftsman and is believed to have been an earlier plane.



Premium Lever Cap

There were six different sizes on the premium line. At the start of production, the sizes with casting numbers were: 1-5/8”(332), 1-3/4”(333), 2”(334A), 2-1/4”(335), 2-3/8”(336), 2-5/8”(337). Only the 2” cap wound change casting numbers and have slight changes where the other caps remained the same.

Type 1 Lever Cap

The features on the initial 1929 release had no patent number on the front. The patent was granted on September 8, 1931. Based on the number of caps found with the patent number, it may have been one or two years before the machine was setup to apply the patent stamp to the front of the cap during the type 1 years.

The back of the type 1 lever cap had interlocking tabs on the main upper section to fit into the lower T-section. A steel cam spring was held on with a large flat rivet. The phrase “PAT APLD FOR” was cast into the lower section in a free hand style. It is clear when each of the templates were made, someone wrote this phrase by hand. This freestyle would continue until the end of the hinged leave cap. Also on the back of the lower section was the casting number.

Type 2 Lever Cap

In 1936, Millers falls changed the back of the lever cap by removing the interlocking tabs on the upper section. A smaller rivet head was also used to secure the cam lever spring. The 1-3/4” and 2” lever caps had a shorter cam spring on the type 1. Starting in 1936, all cam springs across the different sized lever cap were now consistent.

On the 2” lever cap only, the curved sides on the cavities in the upper section of the type 1 are now straight as shown in the picture above. Also note the missing interlocking tabs, longer cam spring and smaller rivet.

Type 3 Lever Cap

In 1942 at the start of WWII, we can see changes to the lever cap by eliminating the red paint on the front of the cap and seeing a distinct change in the appearance of the letters and numbers on the back.

On the two examples above, you can see some of the letters are not clear and the casting 334A is difficult to see. The surface on the back side appears to be grainier than the previous type 2 caps. This is an easy way to distinguish a cap made during the type 3 years from the type 2/1 caps.

The 1941 edition of the #42 catalog stated that because of a national emergency, many materials including metals would be difficult to obtain. Did this shortage have an effect on the iron used at Millers Falls?

Around 1944 in the middle of the type 3 years, Millers Falls updated only the 2” lever cap by changing the casting number from 334A to 334 and removing the phrase “PAT. APLD. FOR”. This change to the lower section of the lever cap will continue into most of the type 2 second release years. Another noted change on the 334 caps will have the return of the red background on the front of the cap.

Type 4 Lever Cap

In 1953 for the start of the type 4 years, Millers falls changed the back side of the upper section by removing metal between the cam spring and the two cavities and changing the shape of the cam spring with a sharper bend.

Before the 2” two piece hinged lever cap went extinct, the company used some old templates to close out the type 4 period. There are very few of the next example found indicating a limited production run. This change only applies to the 2” lever cap because all the other different sized caps always had the “PAT. APLD. FOR” phrase on them throughout production.

On this 2” cap the lower section with a 334A casting looks like the same template used during the beginning of the type 3 years. The upper section was cast from the current production run.

Type 5 Lever Cap

The new style is now a one-piece cap with the company name on the front like the previous versions, but no paint was applied. The back still has the cam lever spring.

Many of the early lever caps do not have a casting number like the one shown above. There are others with this exact style that have a cast number 4928.

After the Erving facility was officially closed in April 1970 and the foundry at Greenfield was closed, castings were made offsite by another company. The following picture shows a 2” cap made outside of Millers Falls.

The cam lever spring has been eliminated and a new casting number 32888 is visible.

Iron

Trademark on Bench Plane Irons

Millers Falls started making planes in 1929 with a premium iron in their debut plane. In 1931 they introduced a second line of planes with what is said to be a lower quality iron. I am going to list all the irons that I know of on all the MF lines.

The Premium Line

This is the iron you will find on the type 1 premium planes. The triangle with the “SINCE 1868” does not touch the isosceles trapezoid. The USA and size are centered under the triangle.

This iron has the triangle separate from the isosceles trapezoid, but the USA and the size are spread out more across the width of the iron. You will find this iron on early type 2 first release planes and the 209. We need to find out if the 209 only used this iron or if it was swapped out for the next version by the time the 209 ended in 1947.

On this version the triangle is touching the isosceles trapezoid. The same font is used on this version as the previous version. This iron will be found on later type 2 first release and type 3 premium planes.

On this version only the date “1868” is in the triangle. I found this version on a type 2 first release and two type 3 pre 1944 planes with 334A cap and a 317 frog.

In 1949 MF completely changed their Trademark with this version. It also marked the first time that every plane with the Millers Falls name had the same iron. The premium line, 709/714 and the 900/814 series all had the “SOLID TOOL STEEL” iron.

In 1966 MF stopped stamping their Trademark on their irons. Examples have been found showing the ink stamp was used in November 1965. This example was found on the premium plane shipped in November 1966. Sometime shortly after this iron left the factory, even the ink went dry.

The 900 series

Millers Falls started a second line of tools in 1931 with the Trademark “Mohawk Shelburne”. Why this name? In the northwestern part of Massachusetts next to the Millers Falls factory the main road (route 2/2A) that runs east to west is referred to as the “Mohawk Trail”. The Goodell Pratt company acquired in 1931 had started a “Shelburne” secondary tool line. Shelburne is a town next to Greenfield.

This is the iron that started the second line of planes by Millers Falls. The iron was stamped with the name, but it is not clear if a sticker was also applied to the lever cap to identify the manufacturer.

This iron became the standard on the Mohawk Shelburne line until the end of production around 1944. It would be interesting to run a Rockwell test on these irons to see just how good they were compared to the premium line.

This version has the same three lines but in a different order and font set.

In 1944 Millers Falls dropped six block planes and one bench plane from their production line. The Mohawk Shelburne line was switched to the Millers Falls line during the WWII years. Casting numbers on the 2” frog and cap were also changed during this time.

I am not aware of any official documentation what would indicate when the Mohawk line was switched to the Millers Falls line. So, based on casting numbers and the cutbacks, I am putting my vote on 1944.

A second Millers Falls Co. iron has the company location at Millers Falls Mass. The headquarters for the company was switched to Greenfield after the merge of Goodell Pratt in 1931. Does the location indicate where the iron was made? Both Greenfield and Millers Falls facility had a forge.

Letter Stamps on block and bench plane irons

There are letter stamps on both the block and bench plane irons. Not all the irons have these stamps which begs the question, why only some of them? I have found four different stamps. These stamps are consistent with the time in which the irons were produced. The irons labeled “Since 1868” that were on a type 1 plane had a “GD” stamp. Irons on a type 2 and type 3 with either a “Since 1868” or an “1868” label have a “DD” stamp. Irons labeled “Solid Tool Steel” have a “C” stamp.

There was one example of a type 1 plane with a “Since 1868” iron that had a “KW” stamp. More examples are needed to validate this stamp. I also found two examples of a “Solid Tool Steel” 2-inch bench plane iron with an “A” stamp.

Some guesses as to what the stamps represent are:

- In a lot, the first iron was stamped for the inspection process?
- The stamp identified the source of the steel?
- The stamp identified the process used on the tool steel?
- The stamp is a proprietary code for the Rockwell scale measurement?

Shorter “B” Iron

The “B” version planes shortened the irons from the initial 4-5/8 inch chip breaker screw slot to a 3-5/8 inch slot. This change covers all the different widths used on the No. 8, 9, 14, 18, 22, 90, 140, 900 and 814. The 8900/9814 has a 3-7/8 slot but this plane was started well into the “B” version and never had a longer length. The 9740 and 9140 also never had a longer length. I have an example of a P&C plane with the shorter iron.

Why Stop At One

How many of these do you think are out there? This is the same iron showing front and back.

I put a piece of tape on the iron to show it being turned over. They stamped the front like every other iron and then they stamped the back. I wonder if they were paid by a stamp count.

Waist Nut

Does the waist nut produced by MF look or fit any different than a waist nut produced by another company?

Maybe?

Let us use the same thread size/count along with the same diameter nut and remove the fit from this question. From what I noticed, MF had basically two looks on their nut profile. The first is a straight waist with little transition to the upper and lower lip. The second look has a more distinct curved transition. It is this second look that brings it close to at least one other manufacturer.

This picture shows waist nuts produced from three different manufactures. The left is unknown and is easy to see it is not a MF, middle is Stanley, and the right is Millers Falls. It is the middle one that puts us in the "Maybe"

These four nuts are from MF planes. The two waist nuts on the left have a small, curved transition from the waist to the lips. The two on the right have a more noticeable transition. Comparing these two with the Stanley nut in the picture above, the profile is close.

With the Stanley on the left and the Millers Falls on the right, you can see that the difference can be overlooked.

This comparison has nothing to do with functionality between the different waist nuts. More so than ever when buying tools on eBay, you can see every part on a plane being swapped out. This is about showing what Millers Falls used on their tools.

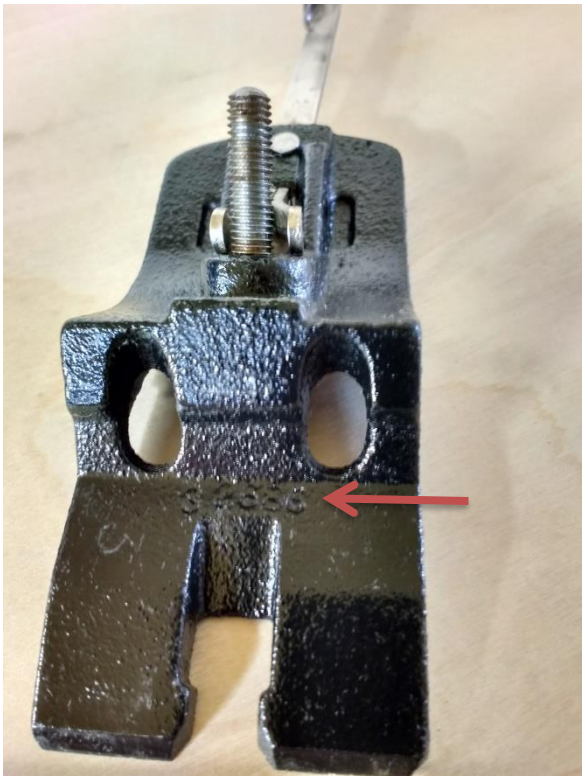
No. 14B Low Side

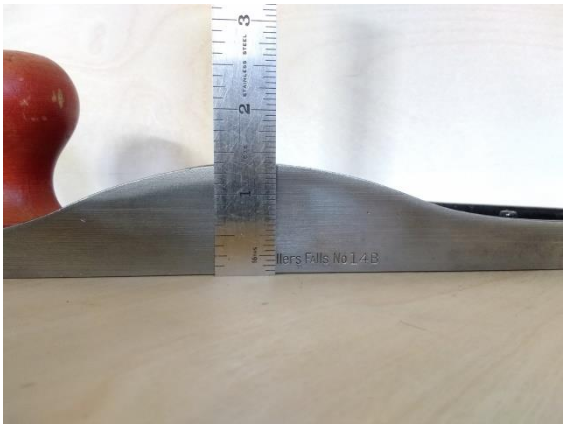
This 14B has changes in the body not found on the earlier 14B planes. The first is a lower cheek. The traditional cheek was 1-3/4 inches, and this plane has a 1-3/8 inch cheek. The second change is the tote toe pin is cast in the bed. The original 14B had a removable tote toe pin.

You can see in these next two pictures the parts of this plane and fixed toe pin.

The stamps on this plane clearly show it was made by an outside source. The body has a unique stamp behind the knob of “RF” next to a “2”. Behind the frog is the casting number is “5678” and the “MADE IN USA” is cast not stamped. The frog has the metal removed around the lever cap screw that is common on later frogs with a casting number of “32686” and a separate “3”. The lever cap has a number “10” stamp and a casting number “32888” There is also a “U” inside a parallelogram. I have seen this symbol on another “B” lever caps.

Another feature is the shorter iron. The chip breaker screw slot measures 3-5/8inches. Previous irons had a slot what measured 4-5/8inches.




Millers Falls No 14B


32888
MADE IN USA

No. 90/140

The No.90/140 had a short eleven-year run starting around 1958 and ended before 1969. Because this model ended when the Erving plant closed and the foundry at Greenfield closed, the casting number should be consistent and the stamp on the cheek should all be the original style font. I will point out any differences as I go thought the years.

I only have two examples of this version, but I think it was consistent up to the beginning of the "B" version. It has an STS iron, red casting 496 frog, nickel casting 494 lever cap with a cam spring and a black 302 casting body. The wood had nickel waist nut with straight slot locking screws holding the frog. The depth adjusting nut was solid with a nickel finish. This box had a March 1962 date.

This is an example of an early "B" version. It has the one-piece Philips screws for the wood and Philips locking screws for the frog. The body has the raised base under the tote and a stamped "MADE IN USA". This version has a black frog and a solid brass depth adjusting nut. It also has the regular length STS iron. The date on the box is Feb 1965.

This "B" version had a full-length iron with an ink stamp "Tool Steel MF Co." This stamp has been found on other planes with a date stamp from 11/1965 to 11/1966.

The frog on this version is back to the original red with a nickel depth adjusting nut. This plane still has all the original casting numbers.

This 90CBG was made in January 1966. The picture below has the old-style font on the cheek like all the other No.90 before this one. The wood on the 90CBG is now black and the iron is the shorter version with no stamp. The frog is the original style, and the cap still has a cam spring.

Not sure when the 90CBG started and ended.

A 90 Like No Other

I saw this No. 90 plane on eBay and thought it had to be a mix of pictures from two different planes.

It has the nickel cap, the stained wood, and the STS iron. It also has a frog adjuster screw! This is what I know about this plane.

The plane was in a box with a No. 90 label and a stamp “2 63 43?”. The frog is black with a brass depth adjusting nut. The premium line also used a black frog and had a brass depth adjusting nut. The casting number on the frog is 496 which would match the 1963 timeline. The body is also from the premium line. The stamps on the base match both the premium and the 90 timelines. Did MF “borrow” a frog and base from the premium line before the cheek stamp was applied? Are there more examples like this one out there or did MF need just one!

No. 900/814

The No. 900 production line ran from 1931 to 1974. During that time there may have been as many as twenty different styles of the 900/814. Most of these style changes involved a change in paint only. What was consistent on the 900/814 models was a lower quality in the fit and finish of the planes over the premium line. The upper frog seat and frog foot receiver would not be machines and were almost always painted over. This line had a one-piece cap and there was no frog adjustment screw.

Because there were so many changes during the production cycle, I am going to break this list into four types:

- Mohawk Shelburne are type 1 (1931 – 1944)
- Post MS with recessed depth adjusting nut and a cam lever spring are type 2 (1944 – 1953)
- Solid depth adjusting nut with no cam lever springs are type 3 (1953 – 1964?)
- The 'B' version will be type 4. (1964? – 1974)

There will be different styles or versions in each type, so I will add a letter designation to help keep track of the order that I think they were produced. The order in this document is my opinion and is not the proven order of production.

Type	Body-color	Frog/color	Cap/color	Iron	Name&Number	
1A	302/305-Black	317-Black	397-Black	MS–No USA	Name-Iron	
1B	302/305-Black	317-Black	397-Black	MS–No USA	Name-Iron	
1C	302/305 Black	317 Black	397-Red/Black	MS	Name-Iron	
1D	302/305-Black	317-Black	397-Red/Black	MS	Name-Iron	
1E	302/305-Black	317-Black	397-Red/Black	MS	Name-Iron	
1F	302/305-Black	317-Black	397-Black	MS	Name-Iron	
1G	302/305-Black	317-Black	397-Black	MS	Name-Iron	
1H	302/305-Black	317-Red	397-Black	MS	Name-Iron	
2A	302/305-Black	496A-Red	397-Black	MF	Name-Iron	
2B	302/305-Black	496A-Red	942-Black	STS	N&N Cheek	
2C	302/305-Black	496A-Black	? - Black	STS	N&N Cheek	
2D	302/305-Black	496A-Black	? - Black	STS	N&N Tote	
3A	302/305-Gray	496A-Black	494-Gray	STS	N&N Tote	
3B	302/305-Gray	496A-Red	494-Gray	STS	N&N Tote	
3C	302/305-Gray	496A-Red	494-Gray	STS	No N&N	
3D	302/305-Gray	496-Red	494-Gray	STS	Name-Tote	
3E	302/305-Gray	496 -Red	? - Gray	STS	N&N Cheek/Tote	
4A	302/305-Gray	496-Red	494-Gray	STS	N&N Cheek/Tote	
4B	302/305-Black	496-Red	494-Black	No Stamp	N&N Cheek	
4C	302/305-Gray	496-Red	494-Gray	No Stamp	N&N Cheek	

Type 1

The Mohawk Shelburne line started in 1931 when Millers Falls combined their Mohawk line with the newly acquired Goodell Pratt's Shelburne line producing a line of tools for the occasional user. During the Mohawk Shelburne years there were as many as seven different style and hardware changes to the plane. There is no clear date when the Mohawk line ended but in 1944 Millers Falls dropped six block planes and one bench plane from the production line. Millers Falls needed a secondary line so I believe the name was changed at this time.

The first release (Type 1A) used many of the features as the type 1 premium planes without the cast name and number and a frog adjustment. The iron was the only external means of identifying the plane.

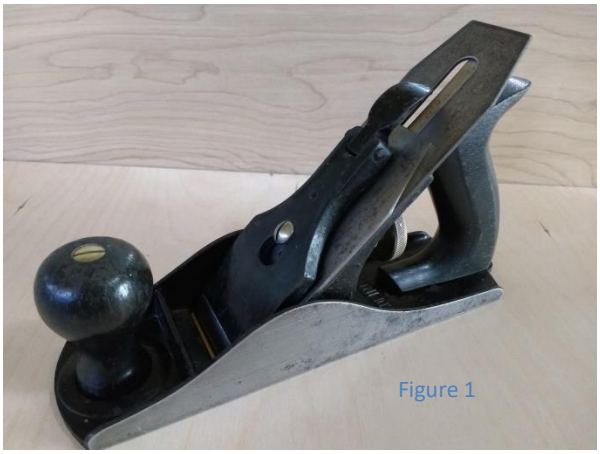


Figure 1

The first release of the Mohawk Shelburne line had an iron with the name Mohawk Shelburne only on two lines. On the bed under the knob, there were no ribs, and the heel tab is flush with the sole.

From the picture above, you can see the casting number on the upper frog seat location. You will see this location used on several models throughout the early production. You can also see from the very beginning the quality of mating the frog to the body was not built into this plane.

The first release had brass waist nuts and a recessed nickel depth adjusting nut. The bed will have "MADE IN U.S.A." cast which will continue until the end of this model. The knob and tote will be black hardwood throughout the series with only one exception during the V-Line years. The frog has a folded lateral adjustment lever, a cast yoke with no yoke pin recess. The frog face had the extra metal around the lever cap screw and no frog face relief.

I will outline the features found on these planes going through the different versions.

The 900/814 planes may have been used as the basis for the Sears Fulton and Dunlap line of planes. That may have something to do with the 900/814 having so many different looks over the years.

This next version (Type 1B) has the same features in the body, cap, hardware, and iron but the frog has a steel yoke with the yoke pin recess.

Figure 2

I do not believe the pitting on the back of the frog is from rust because the front is clean.

I found a second example of this version not in a Mohawk Shelburne but in a Fulton 5262. Everything between these two planes are the same except for the template number and the finish on the wood and lever cap. The templates used to cast the body and frog have slight differences like the position of the USA cast, but for the overall features, they are the same.

In each of the two pictures, the plane on the left is the Mohawk Shelburne and the Fulton on the right. The Fulton 5260 and 5262 were produced from the spring 1931 to the winter 1931/1932. This is an indicator when MF started transitioning from the cast yoke to the steel yoke with the frog yoke recess.

Figure 3

Next is a version (Type 1C) that is identical to the (Type 1B) version with all the same features but has a red and black cap. The cap is an early version because it has the large rivet head attaching the cam spring.

Made In USA is now on the iron under Shelburne.

On the bevel side of the Mohawk Shelburne irons is a dark almost black applied material. I am not sure what this is or why it was only used on the MS irons. Over the years I have seen irons with little of this black coating remaining on the back of the iron, but in most examples the material has been completely removed from the iron. The iron above is my best example of what the back of the iron should look like.

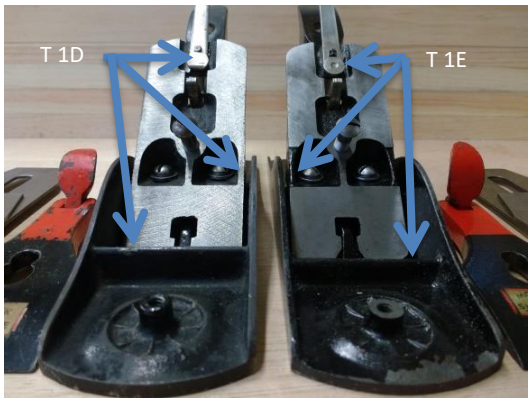
The next version of the Mohawk Shelburne line (Type 1D) has the red and black cap and for the first time the bed under the knob has the ribs. The premium line introduced the ribs around the 1936-time frame, but I think the Mohawk line was using the rib bed at least a year before the premium line used it. Behind the knob, the body still has the high support rib found on the first release and the frog is the same as the previous version. The iron has 'MADE IN USA' now between Mohawk and Shelburne.

Figure 3

Figure 4

This next version (Type 1E) changed the lateral adjuster with a riveted washer, the front support rib was much shorter and there is a relief on the frog face next to the frog locking screws. You will see these same changes done on the premium line around the 1936 timeline. The casting number for the body on this version is now located on the bed behind the frog.

From the outside the only feature that identifies this plane as a Type 1E is the lower support rib. On the 814, while this version was in production the casting gates were incorporated.



This next 814 Mohawk Shelburne plane (Type 1F) was probably the last MS plane to have brass waist nuts. The body has a 305 casting number on the upper frog seat, ribbed knob base, lower support rib and a 397 lever cap that is now all black which is like the cap on the type 1A plane. The previous version and this version have the casting gate feature. Based on the premium line, I think this feature was introduced around 1939/1940. If this is true, this Type 1E was in production for a short time before MF switched to the single bolt on the wood.

Figure 6

Figure 7 shows the Mohawk line moving into the World War II years (Type 1G).

To date, all the examples of a Mohawk- Shelburne plane with a single bolt for the wood have a 317 casting number on the frog. MF kept the paint on the cap to all black and changed the wood to except the singe bolt like those found on the premium line at the start of the 40's.

Between 1941 and 1948, Millers Falls changed the casting number on the 2 in. frog from 317 to 496A. More examples are needed to see if the Mohawk version went into the 496A years or did this casting change mark the end of the Mohawk Shelburne brand?

The next Mohawk Shelburne plane is identical to (Type 1G) figure 6 but this version has a red frog. I am putting this MS plane as (Type 1H) but there is no clear way to know the order of the WWII Mohawk planes.

Figure 8

The knob and tote bolts, lever cap screw, frog screws and the depth adjusting nut all seem to be blued. During WWII, Millers Falls and other manufacturers changed the surface prep on the hardware used on these planes. The biggest problem with collectors today is that bluing can be removed with improper cleaning. I am sure that the previous version that I have documented here was also blued in the beginning. More examples are needed to see if all version produced during the war had the hardware blued.

I found a type 1G plane with the same trademark on the iron as the type 1C. The font is a little different on this iron.

Type 2

This is the version (Type 2A) I believe was after the MS plane. Figure 9 has a single bolt and a Millers Falls Co. iron. There is no company name or model number on the cheek or tote just like the MS version.

Figure 9

One interesting fact about this plane is it has a 496A frog. On the premium planes, I have almost an even split of the 317 frog and a 496A frog on the No 9 and No. 14 made between 1941 and 1948. It is clear this plane was made during the premium type 3 years with single bolt for the knob.

On the last Mohawk Shelburne plane, we had a single bolt securing the wood with a 317 frog. Now with this Millers Falls Co. plane, the frog is a 496A. Are there examples of a Mohawk plane with a single bolt and a 496A frog, or are there any examples of the Millers Falls Co. plane with a 317 Frog?

On the same WWII crossover from Mohawk Shelburne to Millers Falls Co, I found an example of this type as described above but with a 317casting frog. That is not surprising because it could be that Millers Falls had extra 317 casting frogs and used their inventory before using the new 496A casting frog. What is surprising is seeing a Millers Falls Co iron with the company headquarter of Millers Falls Mass. If another plane like this can be found with the Millers Falls Mass. stamp, it will be considered the first crossover from the Mohawk Shelburne line.

The No. 700 block planes also had an iron with the Millers Falls Co. / Millers Falls Mass. stamp. The features on that plane matched the features on the Mohawk Shelburne plane with the same casting number on the bed and the thin weld at the base of the frog risers. When the Millers Falls Co. / Greenfield Mass. iron was put into circulation, we see a different casting number on the base of the block plane and a thicker weld at the base of the frog risers. The order of production is clear based on these features. The same would be true if a second 900 plane with the Millers Falls Mass. stamp can be found.

Next on the timeline is a version (Type 2B) that has the return of the waist nut to secure the wood. The waist nuts are no longer brass but nickel steel. The name and number are stamped on the side of the cheek.

Figure 10

The cap on this version has an applied stamp of 942 for a casting number. Why?

The cap is identical to the previous 397 casting. If you look at the pictures above, you can see that where the location of the original casting number has been filled in. The template that produced the cap would have been altered (Not a particularly good job). After the cap was made, it was stamped with the 942 number. It is hard to see this area in a picture, but if you have one of these caps, it is clear to see.

I am thinking the 900/814 type 2 had a span from about 1945 until 1952. How many rebrand planes were made during this time and did the rebrand have anything to do with this renumbering? Or did they have duplicate 397 casting numbers on different tools throughout the plant and one of them had to go?

This next plane (Type 2C) has the same features as Figure 10 but with a black frog.

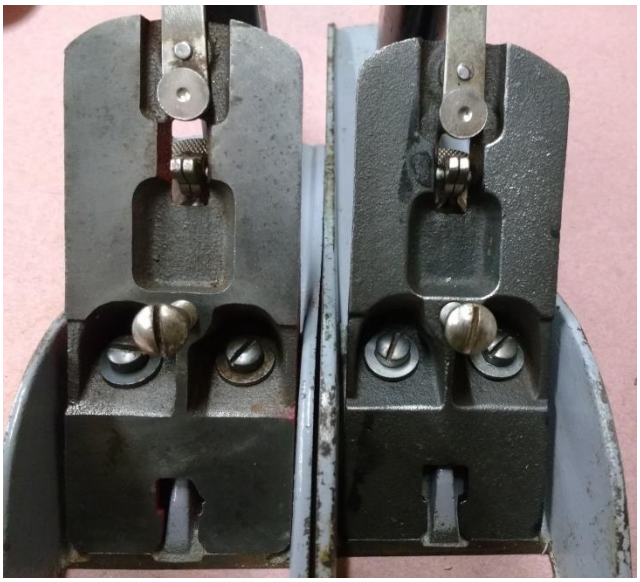
Figure 11

This is a hard plane to find which would suggest it had a short production life. More examples are needed. This version has a corrugated bottom on the No. 814.

There is a second version of the all black plane (Type 2D). Figure 12 shows this version with the name and number on the side of the tote. The stamp on the cheek has been eliminated. This plane was in a box with the stamp “1152 432”. This version was probably the last No. 900 to have a cam lever spring and a recessed depth adjusting nut.


Figure 12

This plane may be the first version to eliminate the machining of the frog face for a smooth flat surface. It would be interesting to know if another plane manufactures also eliminate this step.



For a short period of time, the 900/814 series produced frogs that appear to eliminate the frog face being machined flat. Looking at this comparison, the left frog has a smooth machined frog face with visible machine marks. The frog on the right has no machine marks on the frog face. This is an observation and I am not sure how the frog on the right was processed to ensure the bed was flat. What I can say is this process started in the early 50's and lasted until the start of the 496 casting number during the V-Line years.

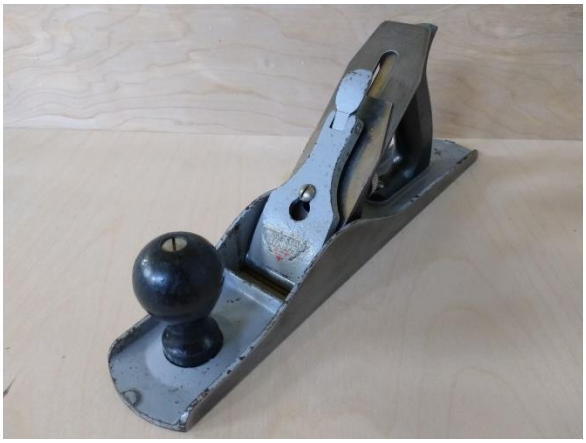
Type 3

Figure 13

Figure 13 shows the first plane in the 900/814 series to eliminate the clamping cam spring on the cap and switch the depth adjusting nut to a full body style. (Type 3A) Like the previous version, the frog face on the frog was not machined flat.

The box shows a date of 4/45, but this date is actually 4/54. Other examples of dates with this style are 12/52, 11/53, 12/54, 6/55 and 6/56. This style seems to be the most popular. From what I can see it was only on the market for less than five years.

This No. 814 (Type 3A) plane was sold with both a smooth sole and a corrugated sole. I have not found an example of a corrugated sole on a 900. A corrugated sole is a feature not a new type.



The corrugated version seems to always get a cheek stamp with the name and number. You can see from Figure 13 that the 900 version has the name and number on the side of the tote.

This next plane (Type 3B) had a shorter production run then the previous version. Figure 14 shows the same features as the plane in Figure 13 but with a red frog.

Figure 14

This plane was in a box with the stamp “1056 430”.

On eBay I saw an 814 in this configuration with a box marked ‘4 57432’. 1957 was into the V-Line years but this plane on eBay was not labeled as a V-Line.

Figure 15

The V-Line started in 1956 until 1962. During this time, two more styles were introduced.

Figure 15 shows a V-Line with an STS iron, a red frog with a solid depth adjusting nut, stained wood, gray body, and a gray cap. This version does not have a name or number visible on the plane (Type 3C). Like the type 3 planes before it, the frog face on the frog is not machined flat.

Figure 16

Figure 16 shows a V-Line plane with STS iron, a red frog with a solid depth adjusting nut, black wood and a gray body and a gray cap. The Millers Falls name is on the tote from bottom to top. This version does not have a name and number stamp on the cheek (Type 3D). This is the first No. 900 to have the 496 frog casting and the return of machining the frog face flat.

After the V-Line ended, Millers Falls continued with this version. The only change was to eliminate the V-Line sticker. One example found was in a box with the date 11 62 430. The box had the original logo.

Figure 17

(Type 3E) This plane, Figure 17 has the look of a V-Line like that in Figure 16 with the Millers Falls name on the tote from bottom to top, but it also has the name and number stamped on the cheek. There is no V-Line sticker on the plane or on the side of the box. The V-Line ended in 1962 so this plane may have a range from 1962 to 1964.

Type 4

The “B” version had both hardware and casting changes to the 900/814 planes. The knob and tote are secured with one-piece philips head bolts with a new thread count of 7/32-24. The base length of the tote on the 900 was increased to match the 814 and the bed under the 900 tote was raised to also match the 814. This means the same tote can be used between the model numbers. The toe screw was eliminated and replaced with a removable pin to align the tote. The screws securing the frog were also changed to philips head with a new thread count of 7/32-24.

How do you set a timeline for “B” planes? A box with a date would certainly work but short of that I will base it on the font style on the cheek, length of the iron and the old and new casting numbers.

Figure 18

This “B” plane has a red frog, gray body, and cap. The black wood has the classic V-Line tote with the reversed name (Type 4A). The stamp on the cheek is the original style font. It also has the longer STS iron used in previous versions.

A second plane of this type was in a box with a date 9/65.

Figure 19

This “B” version (Type 4B) has the original font on the cheek and the longer iron. The paint on this version has a black cap, body, and wood with a red frog.

This version (Type 4C) started out with the old-style font and during its production run, switched to the new style font on the cheek. This version has new style frog with the metal removed around the lever cap screw. I would say this plane was cast off site by another company, but all the parts have the old casting numbers. Body 302, frog 496 and cap 494. Sometime after the start of production, the frog locking screws were changed to a one-piece screw/washer setup.

More data is needed to determine when the font and screw changes occurred.

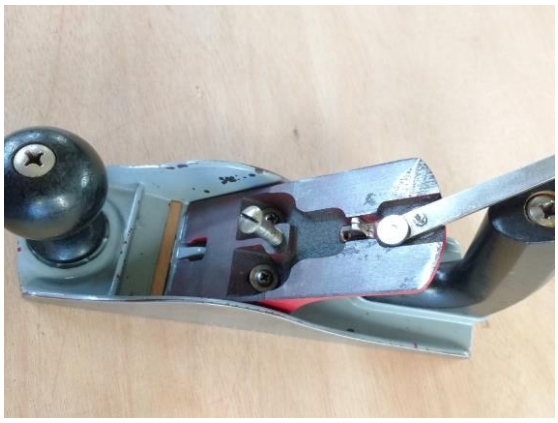


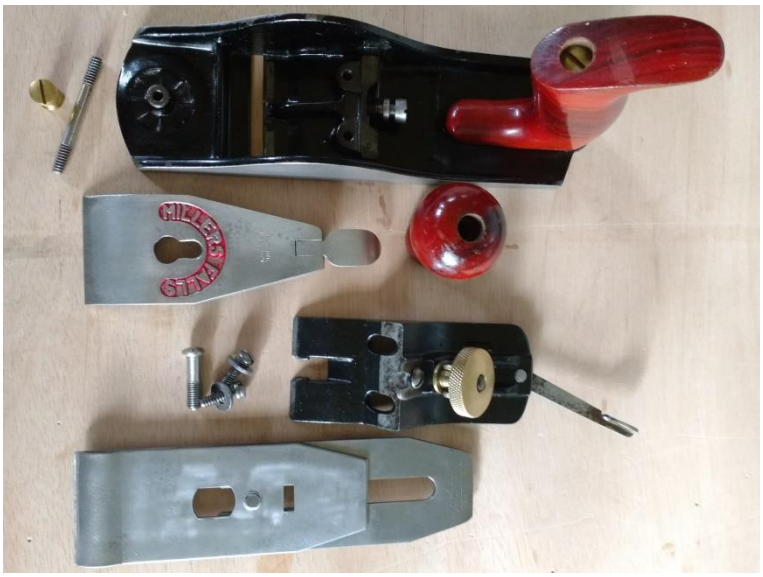
Figure 20

On many of the 'B' versions, Millers Falls changed the font on the cheek stamp which is covered under the No. 16 and No.75. On the 900B series, there were three different font styles: the original font, the upper and lower case letters with an upper case 'A' and the upper and lower case with the lower case 'a'.

A Mistake Uncovered

In 1966 Millers Falls switched their bench planes from a type 4 to a type 5. The type 5 went to a one-piece lever cap, no paint on the cap, no frog adjuster, no “Made in USA” casting, no brass depth adjusting nut, no stamp on the iron, no finished castings, and no straight slot screws. The plane in the picture has all the features of a type 4 except for the one-piece cap and the normal horn on the tote.

The key here that identifies this plane as one of the first type 5 planes is that the one-piece lever cap has a patent number on it. The patent number was for the hinged cap that was eliminated, not the new one piece. I could only guess that before the foreman could implement the new process, a few one-piece caps passed through paint and the patent stamp press. We all know that in Millers Falls land, nothing goes to waste.



Plane With No Name

A Number 8-ish

Sometimes it is easy to see when a part has been swapped out on a tool. This plane is the exception to that rule. The plane below is a 1-3/4 equivalent to a No. 8.

I asked the previous owner if any parts were swapped out and he told me the only work done on the plane was a general cleaning, new paint on the frog and the wood was refinished because it was in poor condition. Now let's look under the hood.

The bed does not have any ribs under the knob. Behind the knob is a tall support rib found on the type 1 body. The body casting number 301 is found on the upper frog seat surface. The body is tapped for a frog adjusting screw. There is a raised tote receiver found on the type 1 body, but the bottom of the heel extension is even with the sole found on all bodies after the type 1. Confusing, there's more! The frog is a type 1A which means there is less metal around the lever cap screw which signals an early type 1 plane. The cap is also a type 1, but it has a patent number on it. This would be seen on later type 1 planes. The iron has a separate non touching triangle which is found on all type 1 and some type 2 planes. The last inconsistent part is the front knob. The knob has the groves used for a ribbed bed.





If you have five people look at this, you will get five different answers. I'll narrow it down to four left. At the factory in 1930 they needed a body for the premium line and pulled one from the Fulton process line, drilled and tapped it for the frog adjusting hardware and called it a day. They did not stamp type 1 planes on the cheek. This accounts for all the changes except for the lever cap and knob. OK, the lever cap; the owner had two No. 8 planes before the 1936 change; one with a patent and the other without the number. Back then, these tools were used all the time and were not considered collectables like we think of them now. So, the owner took them apart to sharpen the irons and put the wrong cap on this plane which would not have mattered to the owner. The ONLY other reason for the later cap would be a Stanley owner "borrowed" the cap around 1935 and the owner ordered a new one from MF with a patent number on it. The knob must have been that same Stanley owner at it again between 36 and 40. I know, I know, you can drive a truck though that one. Give it a shot, four left!

A Number 9-ish

A couple of years ago I bought what I thought was a corrugated No. 9C type 2 bench plane on eBay. Turns out it was not a No. 9C or anything on the books. I will try and break down all the parts in a timeline and see if this came from MF or someone created their own unique masterpiece.

This plane has cocobolo tote and knob with brass waist nuts. The frog has a casting number 5A/496A with a recessed nickel depth adjusting nut but does not have the frog adjusting hardware. The iron has the top stamp "Millers Falls Co." with a "C" stamped on the back. The hinge cap is a type 3/4 with a casting number 1/334. The body has no name or number on the cheek and has a casting number P/302/P3/G.

OK, now for the fun part. The wood with the brass nuts eliminates the type 3 years. The casting number on the body was also found on a type 2 second release, so around 49 to 52. The 496A frog number started during the type 3 years and ended sometime between 55 and 59. The 334 cap started sometime in the type 3 years and went to the end of the hinged cap. OK, still in the 4-year window. The iron has a stamp used on the No. 900 after the transition from the Mohawk iron. This iron had a range from around 1944 to 1948. The "C" on the iron is also found on the STS irons starting in 1949.

So, what is it?

All the parts match a very narrow 48/49 transition window. The base, frog, brass waist nuts, and wood match a Craftsman 3742. The iron may be a transition to the STS iron. The "C" stamp is found on STS irons. On the No. 9 side, this one has the wood, brass waist nuts, and cap. The stamps on the base matches the only example of a premium No. 9 type 2/2 base I have, but it is not setup for a frog adjustment. The fact that it does not have a MF stamp on the cheek tells me it was not put together by a user. I do not know enough about government contract planes but if this was not built under contract then some employee at MF had a rip-roaring weekend and this was a Monday morning plane.

A Second No. 9-ish

This plane is the second 9-ish plane I found. I am going to break it down and describe each part as to what type it is and how they came together.



When it is together it looks like a type 2, but when you look under the hood this is one different plane. The wood is cocobolo, so we start off as a type 1 or 2. The frog has the features on type 1 with a casting number 317, a folded lateral adjustor, no yoke pin recess, no frog face relief, brass depth adjusting nut, fillister frog locking screws and a frog adjuster tab. The only problem is it has a steel yoke. This is an easy one. The original cast iron yoke broke and was replaced with a steel yoke. Sounds good to me. Moving onto the body, the bed under the knob has no ribs but the heel tab is level with the sole. Also, there is no name and number on the body either cast or stamped. The early Mohawk Shelburne (type 1A), Fulton and Craftsman bodies match this one perfectly. They just borrowed a body from one of these production lines and drilled and tapped it for the frog adjuster screw. The lever cap has a patent number on the front and locking tabs on the back which makes this a late type 1 cap.

The iron on this plane was stamped “Millers Falls Co. Greenfield Mass”. All the parts described above were produced before 1935 during the type 1 period. The iron was a user add on because this iron was produced between 1944 to 1948 when the Mohawk Shelburne line was cancelled. This plane also has nickel waist nuts. I always thought that every plane that left the MF factory had brass waist nuts.




Rebrand Bench Planes

This is a small set of planes I picked up over the years.

Fulton 5260

Millers Falls produced the 5260, 5262 and the 5272 between the spring 1931 through the winter 1931/32. In the spring 1932, Sargent produced these two planes until the end of production in winter 1935/36




The frog has a 317 casting number with a folded lateral lever and a steel yoke with a yoke pin recess. The wood is secured with brass waist nuts. The body has a 302 casting number with no ribs on the bed under the knob. The 397 cap used on this plane was also used on the Mohawk Shelburne line. This plane also uses the same frog locking screws found on a type 1 premium plane. See the section below on the Fulton research.

Fulton 5262

The same features that were on the 5260 above are also found on this plane except for a brass depth adjustment nut.

Fulton 5272

Millers Falls produced this plane for Sears between the spring 1931 to the winter 1932/33

Like the 5260 and 5262 listed above, this plane has no ribs on the bed under the knob. The frog has the extra metal around the lever cap screw, a folded lateral adjustment lever and a steel yoke. Because this is an early version, the bed is raised under the tote. The body has a 301 casting number, the frog has a casting 316 and the cap has a casting number 400.

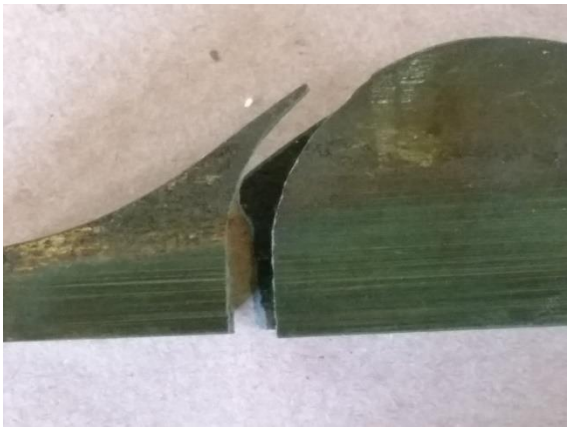
Fulton 3709

I purchased an early Fulton on eBay not knowing what the model number was, but I knew it was an early Fulton version from the high support rib behind the knob.

Opening the package, I saw eighty years of history in two pieces. I want to document some of the features on this plane.

The bed under the knob had ribs but this model had a raised tote receiver which was used in the type 1 years. There was no name and number stamped on the side cheek. That is interesting because I thought all Fulton had a stamp before they went out the door. The frog was a type 2 with a frog face relief, steel yoke and yoke pin recess. The frog also had a folded lateral adjustment lever with a 316 casting number. The iron was stamped Fulton with an OEM of BB.

This model has features that put it in the 1936 range with the high support rib and the raised tote receiver. Other features like the folded lateral adjustment lever, OEM, ribs, and brass waist nuts can support dates up to 1941. I need more examples to see the common features of this plane.



Fulton 3710

The Fulton 3710 first appeared in the spring 1935 catalog. Millers Falls and Sargent would produce Fulton bench planes until 1947 when Sears stopped carrying the entire Fulton line from their catalog.

The features on this plane starting with the frog are an open nickel depth adjusting nut, 317 casting number, steel yoke and no frog face relief. The body has a 302 casting number with brass waist nuts for the knob and tote. The cap has a casting number 397 which is the same cap used on the Mohawk Shelburne line. This version was before the Original Equipment Manufacturer stamp was applied to Fulton planes.

Millers Falls started incorporating the frog face relief on their premium line in 1936. Based on this plane has no relief, it must have been an early release in 1935.

This next version now has the frog face relief, a washer style lateral adjustment lever and a lower support rib. The OEM is also stamped on the iron.

Millers Falls stopped using brass at the start of WWII and as early as mid-1939 because of the European war. Based on the relief, lateral, rib, OEM, and brass, this could have been produced between 1937 and 1941.

Fulton 3711

The 3711 was produced by both Millers Falls and Sargent from the spring 1935 to the fall/winter 1941/42. The fourteen-inch plane has an additional feature to help identify when it was made. Around 1939, a casting gate was added to the toe and heel on all plane bodies over 10 inched. This plane does not have the casting gates which puts it before 1939. This plane has a tall support rib. MF started shorting the support around 1936/1937. My guess is this plane left the factory around the 1936 timeframe.

Dunlap 3726

The 3726 was produced by both Millers Falls and Sargent from the fall 1939 to the fall/winter 1956/57. Based on the features and casting numbers, I will try to give a production range.

This version has an open nickel depth adjusting nut and a one-piece bolt for the knob and tote. The body has a 301 casting number with a 3DBB stamp on the cheek. The frog has a 316 casting and the cap has a casting number 257. Unlike the 2" wide plane, the 1-3/4 like this one did not change casting numbers throughout production. Based on the one-piece bolt, this plane was produced between 1942 and 1948.

Dunlap 3738

The 3738 was produced by both Millers Falls and Sargent from the fall 1939 to the fall/winter 1953/54. This version has an open nickel depth adjusting nut and a brass waist nut for the knob and tote. The body has a 302 casting number with a 4DBB stamp on the cheek. The frog has a casting 317 and the cap has a casting number 358. Millers Falls switched to a one-piece tote/knob bolt and stopped using brass at the start of WWII. Around 1944, MF changed the frog casting from 317 to 496A. With the brass waist nuts and a 317 frog, this plane was produced before 1942.

Dunlap 4DBB (3738)

This version has an open nickel depth adjusting nut and a one-piece bolt for the knob and tote. The body has a 302 casting number, the frog has a casting 496A and the cap has a casting number 258. With the one-piece bolts and the 496A casting frog, this plane was produced between 1945 and 1948.

Craftsman 5264

This plane was sold at Sears for two years starting in the spring 1933 through the fall/winter of 34/35. This data was obtained from Greg Ricketts's Craftsman Plane Study. The body has no casing number and no ribs on the bed under the knob. The cap has an inner ring with a gold background and a casting number of 398. The frog has a 317 casting number, a solid cast yoke, no yoke pin recess, and a folded lateral adjuster. During the first year of production, we see a yoke pin recess added to the frog with a cast yoke. The iron has a unique stamp that can be traced for the first twelve months of production.

Craftsman 4C (5264)

At the end of the first year or the beginning of the second year (fall/winter of 33/34), we see some key features changing on this plane. The body now has the ribs on the bed under the knob. The frog has a steel yoke pin with the yoke pin recess. The frog face relief has also been added. With this plane, we can see that these changes may have been used in the winter 33/34 two years before the premium planes


This plane had a raised “2” next to the backside lateral adjustment lever rivet. This raised “2” was also found on an early Mohawk Shelburne and a No. 209. The raised “2” is documented under the premium bench plane frog section.


The OEM code for Millers Falls started in spring 1934.

Craftsman 4C BB (5264)

If the 5264 ended in the fall/winter of 1934/35, this would be an example of how it was configured. The cap has the inner ring with a blue background and a casting number 398. The frog will be the same as the previous version with all the features of a type 2 frog without the frog adjustment and a casting of 317. The knob and tote will be rosewood (cocobolo) with waist nuts.

Craftsman 3715

The 3715 was produced by Millers Falls from the fall 1935 to the summer 1939. The fall 1936 catalog offered a “Golden Jubilee” version with gold paint around the Craftsman name on the lever cap. It is harder to date a No. 3 plane because no casting numbers changed over time. There are other features what will help other than casting numbers. The frog has a folded lateral lever, a frog face relief, and a nickel recessed adjustment nut. The body has a raised tote receiver with a 3CBB stamped on the cheek and a slightly lower support rib than the Golden Jubilee model . The iron also has an OEM stamp of BB. What is strange about this plane is it has a “chased” pattern on the cheek which first appeared in the fall 1939 Sears catalog 3741 model number.

Millers Falls eliminated the raised tote receiver at the start of the type 2 premium line around 1936. The “chased” pattern on the cheek is found on a different model number starting in 1939. The lower support rib puts us in the start of the type 2 years. These three features are on the same part, so nothing was swapped out. This plane was made after the Golden Jubilee but how long did MF keep the raised tote receiver and did the premium line have a raised tote receiver at the beginning of the type 2 period?

The pictures below are a 3715 Golden Jubilee that was sold for only six months in the fall/winter 1936/1937 catalog. The features on this plane put it in the transition period with a raised tote receiver, no frog face relief, a large cam spring rivet, and round head frog screws. For this version brass adjustment nut and waist nut were used. No OEM code is on this plane.

Craftsman 3742

The 3742 was produced by both Millers Falls and Sargent from the fall 1939 to the summer 1960. On this plane, the frog has a 496A casting number, a washer lateral lever, a frog face relief, and a brass recessed adjustment nut. The cap has a 495 casting number and the body has a casting 302 with a 4CBB stamped on the cheek. The iron has an OEM stamp of an F in a circle (Millers Falls).

The 496A frog was introduced around 1944. After the war, MF started using brass waist nuts and brass recessed adjustment nuts again in 1948/49. In 1953 MF changed the adjustment nut from being recessed to a solid style. So based on these four features, I would date this plane around 1949 to 1953.

Craftsman 107-37034

This MF plane was sold at Sears from the fall 1964 to the summer 1969 based on the Craftsman type study. The base has a 302 casting number and the cap has a 4940 casting number. The frog has a casting number 496. The knob and tote are plastic.

Craftsman 3730

Millers Falls rebranded the No. 85 rabbet and fillister plane as the No. 3730. No stamp was applied to the body and only the iron had the Craftsman name. Millers Falls used an iron adjustment lever on their planes whereas Sargent did not have this feature.

It is hard to see, but the OEM “BB” is stamped under the “MADE IN USA”

Sears 107-37033

This plane was in a box with a stamp “10 64 907”. Based on the Craftsman study, MF sold this model plane at Sears starting in the fall 1964. This box is dated October 1964. Note the raised tote receiver and philips screws. The body has a 302 casting number, the frog has a casting 496 and the cap has a casting number 494.

The type 5 changes were started on the premium line in 1966. This plane has all the type 5 changes in 1964.

Worthington 400W

This plane was in a box with a stamp “9 55 432”. The body has a 302 casting number, the frog has a casting 496A and the cap has a casting number 494. Note the frog bed not being machined flat. This would match the No.900 type 3A that was made at the same time. The only difference is that this plane has brass waist nuts and a cam lever spring on the cap.

P & C 1940

P & C Tool Co. (Peterson & Carlborg), a subsidiary of Pendleton Tool Co. was owned by Ingersoll-Rand. When MF was acquired, MF planes were sold under the P & C line. The body and cap did not have casting number, the frog has a casting 496.

The iron on this plane did not have a stamp. Note that rebranded planes still have a cam lever spring on the lever cap.

Researching the First MF Fulton and Craftsman Planes

Greg Ricketts published a paper on the history of the Fulton 5260, 5262 and the 5272. In it he outlines that Millers Falls started producing the 5260, 5262 and 5272 for Sears in the spring 1931 and would only last 12 months until the spring 1932 when Sargent regained production and would finish out the line in 1936.

I have a direct comparison with the Fulton 5262 and a Mohawk Shelburne 814. I want to point out some of the features on these two planes and compare them with features found on the premium line. It is important to think of the timeline when evaluating how this all came about.

The picture below shows both the Mohawk 814 and the Fulton 5262.

The Mohawk is on the left and the Fulton on the right. These planes are identical so it should be safe to say they came off the assembly line close to the same time. The only differences between these two planes are the finish on the lever cap and wood and that the Fulton has a brass depth nut. Both have:

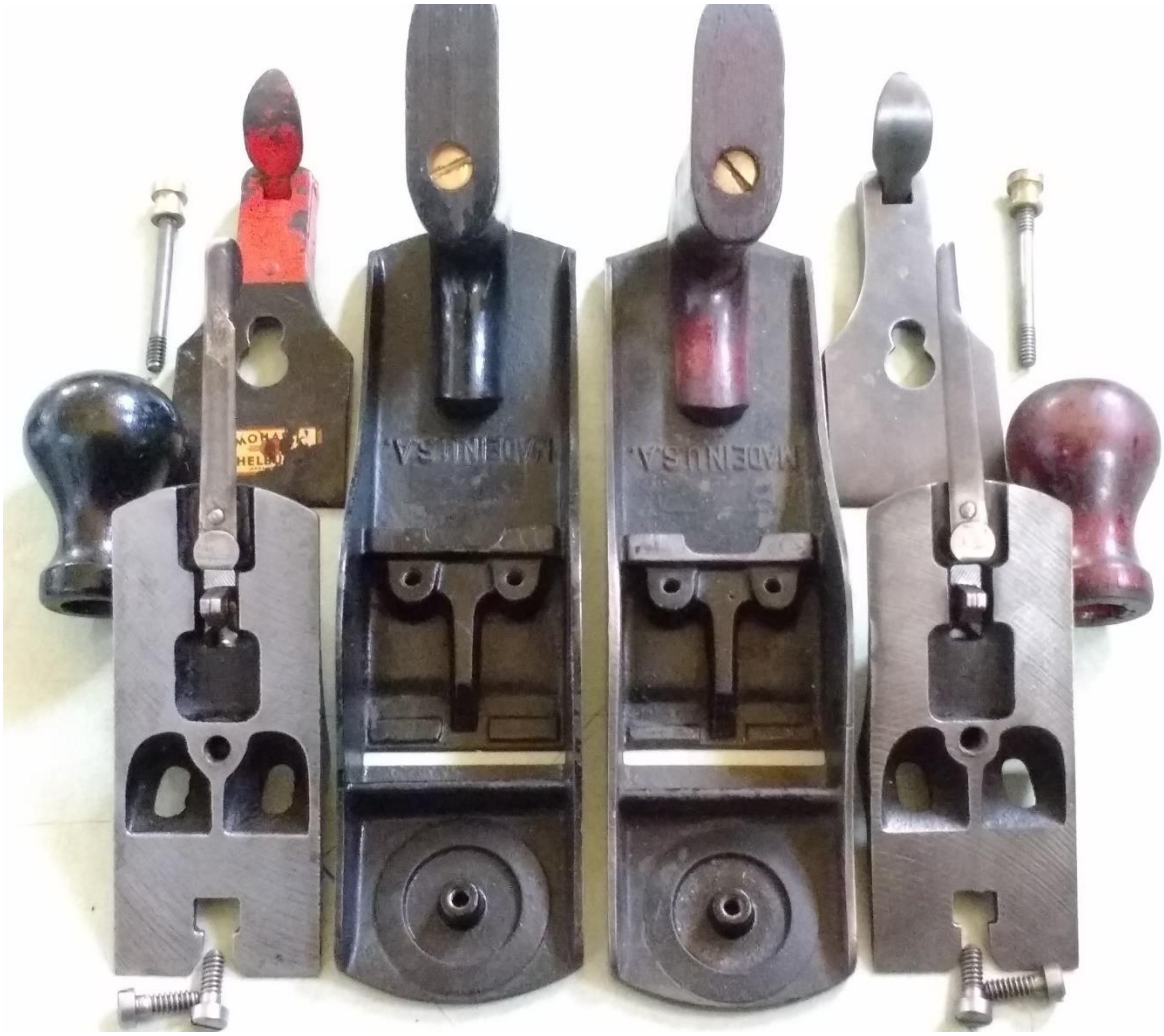
Body – No ribs on the bed under the knob and a high support rib. On both bodies the japanning was not removed from the upper frog seat or the frog foot receiver.

Cap – Both planes have identical lever cap with a 397 casting number.

Frog Locking Screws - Fillister style screws used in early production.

Frog – Folded lateral adjustment lever would have been a common feature at the time these planes were produced. The extra metal around the lever cap screw fits the timeline because I think it was done before MF started making these Fulton planes. What is outside the timeline is the steel yoke with the yoke pin recess on the back of the frog. These planes have MF using the steel yoke four years before they were used on the premium type 2 planes.

The same configuration found on the 5262 described above is also found on the Mohawk Shelburne 900 and the Fulton 5260. The picture below shows the two identical planes. On both the 5260 and the 5262, there is no OEM code which was started in 1934 on the Craftsman line.



Having more examples will help fine tune when these features were implements on the rebrand and 900/814 series.

Craftsman 5264

The Craftsman 5264 is a good example of documenting changes in features in the early years of Millers Falls. Greg Ricketts study of Craftsman planes will date this model starting in the spring 1933 thru the fall/winter 1933/1934 with a gold background on the cap and a unique stamp on the iron with two stars. The model changed the background color to blue and the stamp on the iron would simply say Craftsman starting in the spring 1934 thru fall/winter 1934/1935.

The four planes above have the gold background cap used in the first year of production. The first three having the “Guaranteed Craftsman Tools Highest Quality” two-star iron and the last plane with the craftsman iron stamp. They may look the same, but all have some differences.

The oldest of the four is the plane on the left. This version has a folded lateral lever, cast iron yoke, no frog face relief, no yoke pin recess, and the bed has no ribs under the knob.

This is what you would find on the first version sold at Sears.

The second from the left has all the same features as the one above, but it has a yoke pin recess. This is the first frog I have seen with a cast iron yoke and a yoke pin recess. This yoke pin recess is unique to Millers Falls and is seen with steel yokes. It would not be surprising to see a steel yoke with no yoke pin recess by replacing a broken cast yoke with a steel yoke

The third plane from the left has a frog with the steel yoke and the yoke pin recess.

These three planes show that in 1933 Millers Falls was using the steel yoke on the Craftsman planes while continuing to use the cast iron yokes on their premium line until 1935/36.

In the spring of 1934, the color on the cap background changed from gold to blue and the stamp on the iron read “Craftsman Made in USA BB” The BB was the new OEM code Sears would use to identify the original manufacturer.

The last plane from the four above has the gold background lever cap and the steel yoke with the yoke pin recess. What is different about this plane is it has the frog face relief and the ribs on the bed. These two features are unique to only Millers falls planes. Also note the frog locking screws are now round head instead of the fillister head screws used on the previous versions.

Because of the gold cap, these changes were done sooner rather than later in this spring 1934 to fall/winter 1934/1935 production year.

Block Plane

No. 16

The number 16 block plane with a bailey-type depth adjustment was introduced in 1929. The only change to the plane happened around 1936 when the solid iron landing was milled out to form a U-shaped landing. This same change was done to all the block planes with a 20-degree bedding angle. Around the beginning of 1968, MF standardized on a single style iron with three oval holes which eliminated the bailey-type adjustment what worked with slots on the back side of the iron. The new style for the No. 16 was a screw adjustment that would fit in one of the oval holes on the iron.

This picture shows the original style plane with the bailey-type depth adjustment on the right and the new screw type adjustment on the left. These two planes are completely different but Millers Falls decided that the new style would have the same 497 casting number as the original. On the two-inch bench plane frog, the company changed the casting numbers twice with no changes to the frog. Here there is a significant change, and the number stays the same. I give up trying to figure this one out.

The 16C and the 16CG also had different configurations depending on the template/casting. The following picture shows three 16CG planes with different features.

The plane to the left has “MADE IN USA” on one line. The center and right plane have it on two lines. The plane on the right has a raised bridge between the cap screw and the frog. The center and left planes have no raised bridge.

The plane on the left is a match to the Craftsman planes sold in the late 60’s. Millers Falls stopped casting their own tools around 1969, so the two planes on the right were cast outside of the Millers Falls foundry.

The top plane has the newer name logo that was introduced on the “B” version which would date it on or after 1968. The two bottom planes have the original name logo. On the top plane the model number is 16G-C, and the older planes have a model of 16CG.

No. 33

The No. 33 had frog risers that would have a bevel-down iron at 45 degrees. From its debut in 1929 until the end of 1969, it had only two minor changes. The first change was the series of stamp changes on the iron what all the premium planes went through over the years. The second change was a color change Millers Falls introduce at the start of the V-Line years.

Sometime after 1969, the body on this plane was stamped out of sheet steel. The angle of the frog changed to 20 degrees and the iron reversed to a bevel-up configuration.

No. 56

For the beginning of production until around 1968, this plane's configuration was relatively consistent. When MF switched to a standard iron with three oval holes, the frog on this plane was redesigned to accept the wider adjustment mechanism with the new model number 56B.

The above picture shows the original No 56 on the left with a "Since 1868" touching iron issued from 1939/40 to 1949. On the right is the B version that was cast offsite.

A 1974 catalog shows the No.56 with a metal knob. Sometime after 1974, the metal adjusting knob was replaced with a plastic version.

No. 56 Standard Angle

In 1976 Millers Falls replaced the No. 56 low angle plane with a standard 20-degree bed plane. Why didn't MF identify this plane as the No. 16? It has all the same features as the No. 16; adjustable throat, cam lever cap, bailey-type adjustment, recess on cheek for thumb/finger, 6 inches long and 1-5/8 inch iron.

These pictures show an example of the standard angle No. 56 that was sold from 1976 to 1989(MF 1989 catalog). The body is a blue-gray and the cap is black. This plane was also sold with a same color body and a red cap. There are no casting numbers or stamps on either the body or the cap. The iron has nine groves on the back with no stamp on the top.

This plane was produced by an outside foundry and was distributed to other companies like Montgomery Ward, Master Mechanics, and others. The only difference between these other retail companies and Millers Falls was the sticky label at the bottom of the cap. The same box can also be seen with the other retail companies, Again, just a label was applied to the end of the box to distinguish them.

No. 75

The No.75 had four different casting changes to the body during a production run from 1929 to after 1980. I will refer to the body as type1 though type4 and note any changes with the iron. From beginning to end the cap on these planes are the same. The only exception was the type 1 had a red cap; all the others have a black cap.

The top body is a type 1 with the name and number cast into the body and were produced between 1929 to 1936. The body on the bottom is a type 2 with the name and number stamped on the cheek and were produced from 1936 to around 1944. Both type 1 and type 2 had a threaded knob.

The type 1 had a solid iron landing and mouth opening of 7/64”. The cocobolo knob on the type 1 is shorter and narrower than the type 2 knob. The type 2 had a recess cut into the iron landing which resulted with less contact between the iron and the bed. The mouth on the type 2 increased from 7/64”to 13/64”. This wider mouth will carry thru to the end of production.

Millers Falls attach the knob with an external screw on this plane sometime in the forties based on my observation. The plane on the left is what I call a type 3. It has the same frog as the type 1 and 2.

The Sears catalog shows the No. 75 being sold as a Sears 37031 from the fall 1964 to the summer 1969. Every 37031 I have seen matches the No. 75B with MADE IN USA on one line. The middle body is a No 75B with the new adjuster using an iron with three oval holes. (See the section on block plane irons.) The plane on the right is a 75-01-B. I have a publication effective 9/3/68 that changes the catalog number 75 block plane to 75-01 because there was a pocket scriber that also had a catalog number 75. Later, they started stamping the new number on the cheek as 75-01-B.

You can see in the photo how the frog changed from the No. 75 on the left to the No. 75B in the center and right side. The 75-01-B body on the right has “MADE IN USA” is on two lines and the surface is very rough. The 75-01-B base is 1/8 inch longer than all other previous No. 75 planes.

This photo shows the profile of the two castings. The No. 75 with a shorter frog is in the background and the 75B with a taller frog in the foreground.

This photo shows two different formats Millers Falls used to stamp their name and the plane number. The top plane has the old format that was used from 1936 to the 196?. This format has all upper-case letters with the “M” and “F” larger than the other letters raised from the bottom. The new format has an upper case “M” and “F” and an upper case “A” with the rest of the letters lower case. All the letters are on the same level and the “A” is the size of a lower case. What is interesting about these two formats is they are both on the same plane number. This may help fine tune a timeline when this new format was started.

There is a different example of these two formats under the No. 16 and a third example of the name in the new format with a lower case ‘a’ under the No. 900 section.

No. 87-700-707

I am grouping these three planes together because they are basically the same configuration with a screw-operated cap clamp, a 20-degree bedded iron and no mechanical adjusters. If I had an 8707, I would put that in too, but I have not seen one yet. The 87 was in production from 1929 until 1964. The 700 started out as a Mohawk Shelburne in 1931, switched to a Millers Falls in 194? and ended production with the No. 87 in 1964. The 707 started in 1956 and ended in 1974. What is interesting is that for more than six years from 1956 to 1964 all three models were in production.

No. 87

This picture shows the three different types of the No. 87 block plane. The plane to the left is a type 1 which has a solid knob and the name and number around the knob with a red cap. The middle plane is a type 2 with a solid knob and the name and number on the side cheek. The right plane is a type 3 with an external screw securing the knob. The external knob screw may have been introduced sometime in the mid-forties.

The type 1 and type 2 are setup the same. Both have a solid iron landing, and the mouth has an opening of 15/128”. The frog risers join the body with a clean line. The type 3 has a recess in the iron landing removing some of the surface area. The mouth has opened to 27/128” and the frog risers now has a metal bead at the junction. I do not own one, but I’m sure there is a second type 2 with a threaded knob, recess iron landing and a wide mouth opening.

The body on this plane measures 7-1/16”. The No. 87 is a 1/8 longer than the No. 700. The side cheeks also have a different profile from the No. 700.

This picture shows the change in the mouth opening from 15/128” to 27/128”.

No. 700

If the No. 700 is anything like its big brother the No 900, then this section is going to have a lot of updates.

The picture on the left is showing six different versions that I am currently aware of today. I will describe each plane from left to right which is what I believe to be the order of production.

The first Mohawk Shelburne has a solid iron landing, hardwood threaded knob, a mouth opening of 17/128” and a Mohawk Shelburne iron. The cap was painted red/black but only the paint under the cap survived. There is no casting number on the body, but it is an exact match to the No. 87

The next plane is also a Mohawk Shelburne version with a red/black cap, a threaded knob and the Mohawk Shelburne iron, but this version has a recessed iron landing and a mouth opening of 15/64”. This version is 1/8” shorter and the profile of the cheeks are higher in the back from the previous version. This plane has a casting number of 84 on the base bed.

Around 1944 Millers Falls replaced the Mohawk Shelburne line with the Millers Falls line. This is an example of the crossover with a base casting number of 84 and a Mills Falls Co./Millers Falls Mass. Iron. You can see the MF version has an external screw securing the knob. Also note the lever cap tension wheel is painted gray. Another feature on this plane is the applied black finish on the bevel side of the iron. I have seen this same finish on the bevel side of MS bench plane irons but not a block plane iron.

The fourth plane has a Millers Falls Co. iron with the company location Greenfield MA. The base casting number is either 493 or 493A and the lever cap tension screw can be either gray or nickel. This version has a heavy weld at the base of the frog risers.

The next plane is the same as the previous one except the iron is now stamped ‘Solid Tool Steel’. The lever cap tension screw is nickel plated. The box this plane was in was dated January 1951.

The last plane was in a box with a date November 1955. The cheeks on this plane are much thicker than the previous version. The body and lever cap are gray.

No. 707

The 707 had an eighteen-year span starting in 1956 and ended 1974. When introduced in 1956 as a V-Line plane, it had a “Solid Tool Steel” iron that was also used on the No. 87 and No. 700. At the start of the “B” versions all solid irons were eliminated and replaced with a standardized iron that had three oval adjustment holes whether the plane had an iron adjuster or not. This picture shows a V-Line plane on the left and two “B” version planes in the center and right side. The only changes to the 707 were the elimination of the original iron and increasing the contact area of the screw operated cap clamp so it would not fall into one of the oval holes.

No. 97

I have in my collection, three different versions of a type 1 No. 97. The oldest one has a red cap, name and number around the knob and no headquarters stamped on the iron. The second one has a black cap, name and number around the knob and an iron with the Millers Falls Mass headquarters. The third plane has a black cap, name and number around the knob and stamped on the cheek. The headquarters is now stamped Greenfield Mass.

These two pictures show the oldest type 1 with all the red paint on the outside of the cap gone. Only the paint under the cap remains.

The first plane on the left is a type 1 with a red cap. The second plane is a type 1 with a black cap. There is no sign of any red on this cap, but the cap could have been swapped out. The third plane is a type 1 that has the name and number both cast and stamped on the cheek. The last plane is a type 3 with an external screw on the knob. I need a type 2 with a threaded knob and the name and number stamped on the cheek.

The side view shows no stamp on the first two from the left. The third has a stamp on the cheek and the casting name and number on the body. The plane on the right is the type 3 with the stamp on the cheek.

No. 1455

The No. 66 had a production life from 1929 to 1944. Twelve years after it was dropped from the production line, it reemerged as the No. 1455 with a new look and an external screw securing the knob. The first release of this plane had all the same basic characteristics as the No. 66, but sometime before the 'B' version was released, a different template configuration was used to cast the base.



On each of the three pictures above, the plane on the right is the original configuration as the No. 66. The plane on the left has the new configuration with a wider frog, MADE IN USA on two lines and the elimination of the center support. This new configuration is also found on an all-black version.

At the beginning of the V-Line years, MF stained the wood a burgundy color for a short time. I am thinking this would be an example of that beginning look. Under the hood is the original No. 66 configuration.


The picture above to the left is the 'B' configuration. The adjustment mechanism to the right was taken from two different No. 1455B planes. Was one in-house and the other outsourced?

Block Plane Wooden Knob

Different Sizes

The wooden knobs on Millers Falls block planes were not created the same. They may have used the same lathe, but the cutters or setup varied all the time. Below is a chart showing the height and upper diameter from threaded knobs with their model and type. The numbers under height and diameter are the fraction of 128th of an inch for consistency. Both the height and diameter are over 1 inch.

An example of the number 52 for the height would be 1-52/128 or 1-13/32 inch

Model	Type	Height	Diameter		Model	Type	Height	Diameter
45	T2	52	15		75	T2	52	16
66	T2	51	16		07	T2	45	22
68	T1	50	16		97	T1	49	19
87	T1	38	18		97	T1	39	9
87	T2	42	17		700 MS		52	19
87	T2	52	19		700 MS		53	15
75	T1	39	5		700 MS		42	16
75	T2	55	17					
75	T2	46	18					

The external screw knobs started down the same path so there was no need to continue with them.

Here are two pictures of the extremes in height and diameter.

External Knob Screw

There are eight block planes with wooden knobs and a twenty-degree bedding angle that were started on or just after 1929. These planes would have had a screw thread cast into the body and a wooden knob threaded to screw onto this cast thread. The planes in question are the #07, #45, #66, #68, #75, #87, #97 and the #700. Until now the common belief was that the castings were changed to except a threaded screw through the knob by 1956. I am suggesting we push that date back at least ten years to the mid-forties based on what I have observed.

As always, a box with a date stamp would be helpful, but I will start this with the stamps on the irons. One big assumption I have is that MF switched from the Greenfield iron to the Solid Tool Steel iron around 1949. One or two examples do not confirm or discount a timeline. You need several examples for this to be conclusive.

I am going to list all the block planes I have that have an external knob screw. The first column is the plane number. Second column is the plant location on the iron stamp, or solid tool steel. Third is an external screw knob (ext). Fourth is a comment. Fifth column would show an early conversion based in the Greenfield and Millers Falls irons. The STS iron was used before and after the 1956 date and does not offer any evidence of an early conversion.

Num	Stamp on Iron	Knob	Comment	Early Conversion to External Screw
45	STS	ext	after the mid-type 3 years	No Evidence
75	Greenfield	ext	type 3 plane	Early
75	Greenfield	ext	type 3 plane	Early
87	STS	ext	type 3 plane	No Evidence
87	Greenfield	ext	type 3 plane	Early
87	Greenfield	ext	type 3 plane	Early
97	Greenfield	ext	type 3 plane	Early
700	STS	ext	type 3 plane	No Evidence
700	STS	ext	type 3 plane	No Evidence
700	MF Co.	ext	type 3 plane	Early
700	MF Co.	ext	Type 3 plane	Early

What does this table prove? We know the Greenfield iron was used throughout the 1940's and so the examples above show the external knob screw was used in the 40's. The No. 700/900/814 was switched from the Mohawk Shelburne line to the Millers Falls line sometime in the mid 40's. I have not found a MF 700 plane with a solid threaded knob or a MS 700 plane with an external screw. So, my opinion the 700 was switched in the mid 40's. Millers Falls made planes for Sears. The fall 1945 catalog shows a Dunlap 3701(#75) made by Millers Falls with an external screw securing the knob.

Irons

Trademark on Block Plane Irons

To date, I have identified four different trademark stamps applied by a press and two different ink stamps

I believe the two pictures above are the first version of the iron stamp released in 1929. Both have the same format with “MILLERS FALLS TOOLS” in the recessed isosceles trapezoid and “SINCE 1868” in the triangle. The triangle is not touching the trapezoid. “MADE IN THE U.S.A.” is under the triangle with no company location. I found two different styles for this version.

The picture to the left shows a different stamp I found on type 1 and type 2 planes. Above the trapezoid is the company name “MILLERS FALLS CO.”. Below the triangle is the company location “MILLERS FALLS MASS” and “MADE IN U.S.A.”. Like the first version, the triangle does not touch the trapezoid.

A little trivia: Millers Falls Mass is a village in the towns of Montague and Erving Massachusetts. The plant is in the town of Erving.

The third iron stamp has the company headquarters moved to Greenfield. Yes, Greenfield is a city.

On the Greenfield stamp, the triangle is touching the trapezoid.

The Millers Falls Mass stamp was before the Greenfield stamp, but I am not sure when one ended and the other started. I have found Greenfield irons on early planes. The problem with irons is that they can easily be changed during the plane's life.

The fourth iron stamp contains the words "SOLID TOOL STEEL" above an isosceles trapezoid. Inside the trapezoid is "MILLERS FALLS". A blank triangle is slightly recessed into the bottom of the trapezoid. "MADE IN U.S.A." is on either side of the triangle. Below the picture on the left shows the format of the stamp. Figure 2 shows the stamp in two different styles from the same model number. This is the same as the first version where there were two different styles. I am calling both styles the same but that may change.

The "SOLID TOOL STEEL" stamp was also found on irons with three oval holes. Only a few of these irons have been found

The first ink stamp was found on a No. 707. The stamp is on three lines and is shown in the picture below. There is no box for this plane, so it is not clear when this stamp was in use.

The second ink stamp can be found on both bench and block planes. This iron was in a No. 75B box dated 11/1965.

Groves on block plane irons

Block planes with Bailey type depth adjustment and screw type depth adjustment use groves on the back of the iron for the adjustment. Early production or type 1 planes have 11 groves for the 1-5/8" width. The 1-3/8 width planes have 8 groves with the "Since 1868" label. Planes after the early production but with the "Since 1868" label have 7 groves for both sizes. "Both sized planes with "Solid Tool Steel" irons have 8 groves and replacement "Solid Tool Steel" irons have 6 groves.

Planes with the Bailey type depth adjustment and a lateral adjuster had a limited sharpening range which was the distance of about three groves. If the iron needed to be sharpened beyond that, either the iron would have to be replaced or the lateral adjuster would have to be removed

The "B" version of the block planes modified the iron adjuster and changed the groves to three ovals. In the beginning of the "B" version, the irons were labeled "Solid Tool Steel". Later in production no label was on the iron.

Fig 1 – 1-5/8" Irons

Fig2 – 1-3/8" irons

Fig3 – B Version Irons

Distinguishing a Cam-Lock Cap

Millers Falls used two different sizes of cam-lock caps, 1-3/8inch with a casting number of ??? and the 1-5/8 inch with a casting number of 344. Regardless of the final finish on the cap, the same cap was used on the correct size. Most of the caps I have seen have the number covered from the japanning including all the 1-3/8 caps in my collection. Visually you can tell the difference with Millers falls having a round center support in the cam lever and Stanley having a long curved top center support.

Functionally, a Millers Falls plane body works great with a Stanley cap or vise-versa. This is for anyone who wants to make sure they have the same manufacturer of both body and cap.

In this picture the cap on the left is the Millers Fall and the cap on the right is a Stanley. With both caps next to each other you can see the different shape of the center of the cam support.

Rebrand Block Planes

This is a small set of planes I picked up over the years.

Fulton 5252

The Fulton 5252 Is a match to one of the earliest versions of the Mohawk Shelburne No. 700 which started in 1931. The No. 5252 ended in the beginning of 1935.




In the bottom left picture, the plane on the left is the Fulton 5252. On the right is the Mohawk Shelburne 700. The picture on the bottom right shows the two planes with the identical mouth opening and the solid iron landing. The first No. 700 used the same casting as the No. 87. A short time after the initial release of the No. 700, MF changed the casting on the No. 700. This No. 5252 matches the configuration of the early No. 700 or the No. 87.

Fulton 3701

This Fulton was modeled after the MF No. 75. This version has a solid iron landing and a narrow mouth. The lever cap is all nickel with a threaded knob. There is no OEM on either the iron or cheek. The No. 3701 was first sold at Sears in 1935. MF widened the mouth and recessed the iron landing around 1936.

Craftsman 3704

The 3704 is a match to the MF No. 26 which is shown in the lower right picture. The Craftsman on the right is an older version with a solid iron landing. The MF on the left is newer with a recessed iron landing.

Craftsman 3732

The 3732 is a match to the MF No. 47 which is shown in the lower right picture. The Craftsman is in the foreground and the MF in the background. On the iron, this plane has a stamp ‘DD’ which was stamped on the MF irons between 1936 and 1948. When MF changed their irons in 1949 to ‘Solid Tool Steel’, the stamp changed to a ‘C’.

Millers Falls stopped producing the No.47 from their catalog in 1948. The Sears catalog continued to display this plane or one like it until the start of 1959. Did MF continue to produce this plane for only Sears, or did Sears turn to Stanley for their version after 1948. If I can find a No. 3732 with a ‘C’ stamp on the iron, when MF continued to made this plane for only Sears after 1948.

Craftsman 107-37032

Sears started selling the 37032 in the fall 1964. This version is based on the Millers Falls No. 16 except for the nickel-plated lever cap.

This picture shows the MF No. 16 in the background and the Craftsman No 37032 in the foreground. Both planes are identical in size with a Bailey type depth adjustment. At the time these planes were made, the MF No. 16 had the “Solid Tool Steel” stamp on the iron but, I have not found an example of the No. 37032 with the Craftsman stamp on the iron. Like all other planes made for Sears, the Craftsman name and model number are stamped on the cheek.

In the spring 1968, the configuration of the 37032 changed from a Bailey style adjuster to a screw adjustment mechanism. The model number did not change and remained as the 107-37032. This same change happened on the MF No 16 when the company standardized on one style of iron with three oval holes changing the model number from No. 16 to No. 16C.

The 107-37032 is in the front and the MF 16C in the back. Both planes have no stamp on the iron.

Based on the illustrations in the Sears catalog, this screw adjustment mechanism version was no longer sold by Sears after the of summer 1969.

Dunlap 3701

This Dunlap has the wide mouth and recessed iron landing. The stamp on the cheek is “DUNLAP MADE IN USA BB” Sears started selling this plane in 1937.

This plane is the equivalent to the MF No. 75. The picture above shows the Dunlap on the right and the MF No. 75 on the left. Both planes have a solid threaded knob, a wide mouth opening and a recessed iron bed. Up to the beginning of 1942 the cap was nickel. Later in 1942 the cap had a polished finish.

This is the iron from a second plane. The Dunlap name is enclosed in an oval like the side cheek stamp.

Sears 107-37031

This plane is a match to the MF 75B. The casting numbers and symbols were an identical match on the base.

The picture to the left shows a Millers Falls No. 75B in the background and No. 37031 in the foreground. There was no stamp on the Sears plane iron, but the MF had a Solid Tool Steel iron.

I found an all-black version of this 37031 plane. The black version has MADE IN USA on two lines, the red is on one line. The same casting differences were found on the MF No. 75B and 75-01-B.

Government Contracts

To date I have found eight contract numbers for Millers Falls. I am not sure what information is behind these contracts, but I will investigate it.

No. 16	Contract No. GS-OOS-35793	Federal Stock No. 5110-180-0831
No. 9C type 3	Contract No. GS-OOS-35793	Federal Stock No. 5110-242-3057
No. 9 type 4	Contract No. GS-OOS-35793	Federal Stock No. 5110-293-3372
No. 14C type 4	Contract No. GS-OOS-32768	Federal Stock No. 5110-293-3371
No. 16	Contract No. GS-OOS-38848	Federal Stock No. 5110-180-0831
No. 16CG	Contract No. GS-OOS-59998	Federal Stock No. 5110-180-0831
No. 16CG	Contract No. GS-OOS-77470	Federal Stock No. 5110-180-0831
No. 18BG	Contract No. GS-OOS-77470	Federal Stock No. 5110-640-6734
No. 140CBG	Contract No. GS-OOS-77470	Federal Stock No. 5110-224-7911
No. 140CBG	Contract No. GS-OOS-59998	Federal Stock No. 5110-224-7911
No. 22 CBG	Contract No. GS-OOS-59998	Federal Stock No. 5110-243-1525

I was able to peel back the top layer of these numbers. Here is what I have using one of the numbers as an example: Federal Stock Number was used from 1955 to 1974. Using 5110-180-0831, the 5110 is the Federal Supply Classification Group (FSCG). Breaking this number down further the 51 is the Federal Supply Group (FSG) and the 10 is the Federal Supply Classification (FSC). The 180-0831 unique items serial number (FIIN). After 1974 they changed the name from Federal Stock No. to National Stock No. and added a -00 after the FSCG so the new National Stock number for the old Federal Stock Number is 5110-00-180-0831.

The site I used was the ISO Group Defense and Aerospace supply chain partner.

Observations

Each time I purchase a MF plane, I pulled it apart and recorded on a spreadsheet, all stamps, and castings on the plane. Looking at the data across the different models you start to see patterns with the casting numbers and consistent changes across the planes. Anyone can certainly challenge any of my observation and I would welcome a discussion on it.

- The type 2 first release two-inch planes can be identified with a “Since 1868” iron, a 317 frog and a 334A lever cap. The type 2 second release two-inch planes can be identified with a “Solid Tool Steel” iron, a 496A frog and a 334 lever cap. All bets are off if the plane has been “Restored” with parts being swapped out.
- It is possible the 1868 iron started and ended during the type 3 years.
- The switch from the 317 to the 496A frog happened sometime halfway through the type 3 premium years. I have more 496A frogs, but production may have also increased after the war. Another model that made the switch was the 900/814 from the Mohawk Shelburne to the Millers Falls Co. All the MS planes have 317 frogs, and the MF planes have 496A frogs.
- The switch from the 496A to the 496 frog happened sometime between 1956 and 1959. There is a box with a 2/56 date for a 496A frog, and a box with a 9/59 date for the 496 frog. The No. 90/140 started around 1959. All the 90/140 planes in my collection have a 496 frog. Did the 90/140 ever have a 496A frog at the very beginning of production? That would narrow the gap.
- The switch from the 334A to the 334-lever cap happened sometime after the halfway mark during the type 3 years. I have more caps with a 334A casting number then a 334 number. After retiring the 334A lower section with the patent message, MF started using the 334A lower section with a different upper section during the type 4 years.
- There are four common two-inch hinged lever cap styles. These caps cross over plane types, but they do have a sequence in production. I have seen three examples that were a mix of the four common styles. The early hinged caps produced during the type 1 years (1929-1936) did not have a patent number on the front. Later in the type 1 years, the patent number was applied to the cap. Only the two-inch hinge cap removed the “PAT. APLD. FOR” casting sometime during the Type 3 years. All the other sizes of hinge caps kept the “PAT. APLD. FOR” until the end of their hinged cap production.
- I have seen one example of the square bent cam spring commonly found on the type 4 planes on a type 2 second release plane.
- A two-inch type 3 lever cap without paint will probably be a 334A. A two-inch type 3 cap with paint will probably be a 334.
- Is the casting number on a hinged cap for the bottom section only? Is there a different number for the top portion?
- From the mid-forties to the seventies, Millers Falls applied a stamp to the inside of many of their boxes. This stamp consists of a month/year and a three or four digit code. I think this date is when the plane left the factory.
- Millers Malls used a red box to package their products until 1959. From 1959 until 1962 the box was changed with the trapezoid/triangle trademark dotting the box with a red background. The

period from 1962 to 1968 had the same trapezoid/triangle trademark but with a white background. After 1968 the box was an off white to plain cardboard with just a label on the front. These dates are not fixed. I have seen examples of an overlap in box styles.

- MF applied a letter stamp to a sub-set of the irons they produced. The stamps “GD”,”DD”,”C”, “KW” and “A” have been found. What do these stamps mean?
- The number of adjusting groves on block plane irons changed over the years. 1-5/8 inch irons have 11 groves on the irons produced from 1929 to 1936 (Type 1 years). 7 groves on irons after 1936 while the “Since 1868” stamp was used. 8 groves on “Solid Tool Steel” irons. 1-3/8 irons have 8 groves on type 1, 7 on later “Since 1868” stamps, 8 on “Solid Tool Steel” irons and 6 groves on Solid Tool Steel replacement irons.
- The block plane irons stamps have four different styles not counting stamp size.
- A U inside a circle appears on both block and bench planes. This is a breakdown of where this stamp was found. Bench plan body: 1- #8B, 5 - #9, 1 - 90CBG, 1 - 900B. Bench plane frog: 1- #8B. Block plane body: 5 - #16, 1 - #16CG, 1 - #36, 2 - #75B, 1 - #707, 1 – #1455B. Block plane cap: 1 – #16CG, 1 - #85, 1 - #707, 1 - #1455B, 1 - #9775. Block plane throat plate: 1 - #16CG. This stamp starts with a #9 type2 first release though a #9775 around 1970.
- The casting numbers for the premium bench plane frogs are known. Based on width, the early frogs had a sequence from 315 to 320.
- Knowing 4 of the 6 casting numbers for the early hinged lever cap; #7-332, #9/#14-334, #15-335, #10/#18/#22-336, #24-320. Playing the “What If” by width, the sequence would be from 332 to 337.
- I know only four of the ten casting numbers on the premium bench plane bodies; #8-301, #9-302, #14-305 and #22-308.Those four fit into a sequence by length. Back to the “What If”, the sequence would be 300 to 309.
- The #900 may have had 20 different style changes to it over its 44-year life span. The changes are mostly paint, but there are changes to different features and screw types. The 814 should have the same changes but only in 42 years.
- Using only the 2-inch wide, 9-inch long bench plane, there were fifty different versions/styles/models MF produced. This is a ***guess*** and is based on types, model number, flat or corrugated sole, paint colors and rebranding: 11–#9, 5-#90, 19-#900, 1-#209, 2–#709, 3–#8900, 1–#9790, 8–rebranding. It should not take someone more than two minutes to shoot holes in this guess.
- Bench plane bolt: knob bolt, tote bolt, tote screw, frog locking screws = 7/32-20. Frog adj tab screw = 7/32-24. Frog adj screw = ¼-24. Lever cap screw = 9/32-24. Chip breaker screw = 5/16-18. Threaded adj rod (LHT) = 9/32-24. The “B” version replaced all the 7/32-20 with 7/32-24.
- When Millers Falls started stamping their name and model number on the cheek of the plane, they used all capital letter to spell their name. The “M” and the “F” were larger than the other letters in the name on two different levels. Around 1970 during the “B” version, Millers Falls changed their name format with lower case letters after both “M” and “F” except the “A” which was uppercase but the same size as the lower-case letters. All letters were on the same level. I found one example of the new style where the ‘A’ was stamped as a lower case.

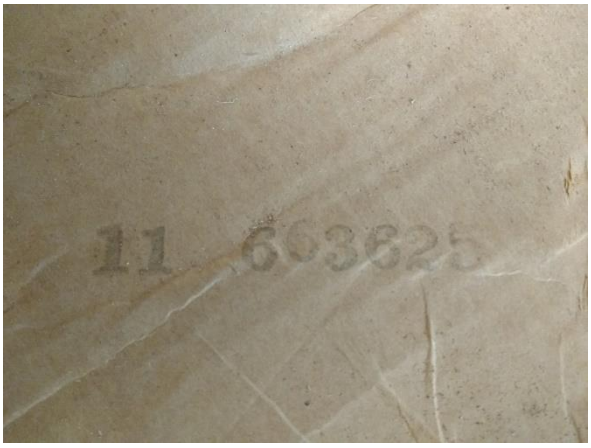
- In a MF publication numbered H-RL effective 9/3/1968, several planes were renumbered because of duplicate catalog numbers. The following catalog number planes were updated: #4 to #4-01, #75 to #75-01, #8C to #8-03, #9C to #9-02, #14C to #14-01. Sometime later, these new catalog numbers were stamped on the cheek with a “-B”.

Date Stamps Inside Millers Falls Boxes

Inside many of the Millers Falls packaging boxes is a hand applied stamp that identifies when the product was packaged in a month/year and a “packaged by” three to four digit numerical code. This date stamp tells when the plane left the factory at either Millers Falls or Greenfield. The following examples are in my possession and I have noted many more examples on eBay.

The first example is a Type 2 second release with a date stamp “Sep 22, 1950” from the hardware store where it was sold. Inside the box is a stamp “805 43?”. If you reverse the 05 to 50 when the store had the plane one month after it left the factory.

Next is a No. 14B with a date stamp “11 66” and code “3625”. The iron on this plane has an ink stamp. There are a few things I will note about this plane/box. The stamp has a 3625 code which is unique so far to the 1966-time frame. The box was a plain white cardboard box with a simple label. Why the ink stamp on the iron? The start of the type 5 was in 1966.



The date on this type 4 No. 14 is January 1955 “155 ?30”. Type 4 started in 1953.

The No.36 stopped production in 1961. This one was produced in July 1959.

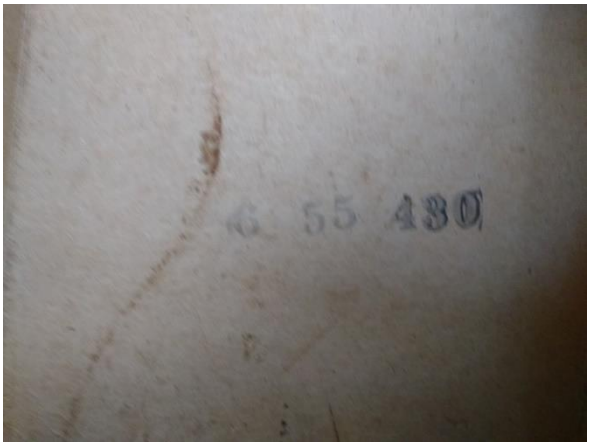
The No. 90 started production in 1958. This one left the factory in September 1959.

The No. 90 series ended production in 1969. This No. 90B has a date of February 1965. All the examples up to this one had a month, year, and code stamp. In this example, the year is first followed by the month and the three-digit code.

When I first saw this date, I thought it was the breakthrough of the Mohawk mystery. Then I looked at the plane and realized it was made in the 50's not the 40's.

This is the third example I have of MF reversing the numbers for the year.

This pre-V-Line No. 900 has a June 1955 and a code of 430. The V-Line did not start until 1956.



The ink on this next example is difficult to see. It is a No. 700 with a stamp of “1155 430”.

This is a No. 1455. In this example you can see yet another change in the order of the stamp. First is the three-digit code, next is the year with no space and the month is near the corner and difficult to see in this picture. “43258 12” The V-Line started in 1956. This box has a V-Line label when it was shipped in December 1958.

Who knows what the code “BOXXX” stood for when this Mohawk Shelburne No. 700 was produced? This is the second known example of this code on this type of plane.

After 1970 when the planes were made outside of Millers Falls, a different code was used inside the boxes. I do not know what it stands for, but a couple of No. 900B had the same code.

Packaged By

This is a list of stamps I have logged. The list starts with the code and date found in the box followed by the plane and type.

Code In Box	Date In Box	Plane Model	Plane Type
249	2/65	90B	
427	11/54	75	
429	5/57	707	VLine
430	1/55	14	T4
430	3/55	900	T3A
430	4/55	85	
430	6/55	900	T3A
430	9/55	16	
430	11/55	700	
430	2/56	9	T4
430	3/56	56	
430	6/56	900	T3D
430	9/56	85	
430	10/60	16	
430	10/60	707	
430	3/62	90	
430	11/62	900	T3E
430	2/63	14	T4
432	8/50	9C	T2/2
432	10/52	07	
432	11/52	900	T2D
432	12/52	900	T3A
432	7/53	814	T3A
432	11/53	900	T3A
432	4/54	900	T3A
432	3/55	75	
432	4/55	900	T3A
432	9/55	400W Worthington	
432	10/56	75	
432	8/57	55	
432	6/58	22	T4
432	10/58	90	
432	11/58	900	T3E
432	12/58	1455	
432	7/59	36	
432	9/59	90	
432	10/59	1455	

432	12/59	87	
432	12/59	16	
436	1/51	700	
446	12/61	900	
482	10/52	814	T2C
482	9/59	90	
625	5/63	700	
625	10/64	33	
625	2/65	4	
625	9/65	900B	T4A
907	10/64	37033 Sears	
3625	11/66	14B	T5
3625	1/66	90CBG	
3625	1/66	85	

Does the date range mean anything next to each code? I think these codes represent the employee badge number or employee number working in the shipping department. People come and go.

Where It Began

I have taken some pictures of the two factories in both Greenfield and Erving. The Greenfield building has been given a new beginning whereas the Erving facility may be on life support.

This is all that remains of the Greenfield facility. A single surviving building that is now an apartment complex.

The Erving location is still used as a commercial site but not much money is being put into it.






The canals that powered this facility have been filled in, but the locks that controlled the water can still be found if you want to fight your way through fifty plus years of growth.

Final Notes

This research started with one plane and wondering what all the stamps meant. I'm still trying to answer that question, but it is a challenge trying to get it right. Today with online antique tool purchasing, it is easy to buy parts for everything. How many times have you seen a Millers Falls block plane with a Stanley lever cap? On using just Millers Falls parts, you can take a type 5 body, put an early Mohawk Shelburne frog on it with an iron from a type 3, and it may slip through the Millers Falls look-a-like contest for some people. The planes in this research are ones I noticed changes what originated from the factory and wanted to document those features. As I find new or different features on a given model, I will update this research.

The Millers Falls catalogs are useful for setting timelines on their start and finish but almost useless for tracking features because once they sketch a plane, it lives on well past any physical changes. I do use the Sears catalogs for some detail changes. Sears did a better job at updating their drawings from catalog to catalog showing detail changes on a few of the Millers Falls planes. From the early 30's to the late 60's, Sargent and Millers Falls provided plane for the Craftsman, Fulton, and Dunlap lines to Sears. Sometimes one company would provide planes at a given time, but at other times, both companies were providing planes at the same time and only one was shown in the catalog.

I recently picked up a Miller Falls Tool Co. Cincinnati, Ohio catalog dated 1989. In the plane section there were nine planes listed with seven being displayed. Just like the Millers Falls of old, the same images were used from previous catalogs for all but one of the planes. So must for research.