

Proposal for Identifying Variations of Cast Iron Still Banks

Supplement No. 1, Modified Working Patterns: "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty)" Bank*

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Introduction

This is a supplement to the paper "Proposal for Identifying Variations of Cast Iron Still Banks" in which it was proposed that two banks that are similar but not identical are *Variations* if they were made using the same master pattern, or are distinct *Types* if different master patterns were used. The purpose of this and future Supplements is to expand on the proposal, present new examples, and also to correct errors.

In this first Supplement a brass working pattern for a "Prancing Horse on Oval Base" bank is described. The pattern was modified extensively; the type of fastener was changed and lettering was applied. As will be demonstrated, it is the pattern for Moore-514. The bank produced from the original pattern also is identified. The pattern was photographed during a visit with Frank Kidd at Kidd's Toy Museum in Portland, Oregon. Information about the corresponding cast iron banks was contributed by Kidd, Mike Henry, and Bill Robison.

Pattern for "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty)"



Photo 1. Brass working pattern for "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty)," Moore-514.



Photo 2.

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Photos 1 and 2 show a two-piece brass pattern for a "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty)" bank. The pattern is 4 3/4" tall. Photos 3 and 4 show exterior and interior close-ups of the left half of the pattern in the area of the fastener. The extent to which the pattern has been modified is quite surprising, and the quality of the craftsmanship remarkable! As the photos show, the pattern was created by modifying one for a bank that had a nut and bolt fastener and no lettering. The pattern originally had a depression for a square nut. A plug that on one end fit the depression and on the other end had a post was inserted and soldered in place. The post (or "boss") would be drilled and tapped in the iron banks. The plug was shaped to conform to the horse's body, creating a smooth surface on which lettering was applied. Inside each half of the pattern the number "989" is stamped.



Photo 3. Close-up of the left side of the pattern. Notice that the square area in the center of the photo where a plug fills what was a depression for a square nut. Solder can be seen around the letters, which were applied to the pattern.



Photo 4. Close-up of the inner surface of the left side of the pattern and the post or "boss." The area around the post is coated with solder. Beyond the left edge of the photo is a pattern number, "989." This number also is stamped in the right half.

Based on just these photos one conclusion is perfectly clear: the "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty)" is a *Tooling Variation* of a bank that was (or more exactly at this point, could have been) molded from the unmodified pattern. For convenience, the bank made from the unmodified pattern will be referred to as the "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (square nut)."

How to Recognize the Prancing Horse on Oval Base Banks

How will we recognize the "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty)" bank made from the modified pattern and the "Prancing Horse of Oval Base (square nut)" bank made from the unmodified pattern?

First off, no signs of the modifications to the patterns are expected to be visible on or in the cast iron "Beauty" banks. If the pattern was used to create molds for the "Beauty" bank, the pattern number "989" might be found in the banks¹ and the "Beauty" bank should be the same size as the "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (square nut)" bank and about 1.5% or about 1/16" to 3/32"

shorter² than the pattern. Or, if the pattern was used to create a new series of working patterns, then the pattern number might or might not be found³ in the banks and the "Beauty" bank should be about 3.5% smaller than the pattern and about 2.0% smaller than the "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (square nut)" bank.

The "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (square nut)" bank will be identical to the "Beauty" bank *except* it won't have the lettering for "Beauty" and it will have a square nut recessed in the left side. The pattern number might be found, and the bank is expected to be about 1.5% smaller than the pattern.

Known Prancing Horse on Oval Base Banks

Moore lists two "Prancing Horse on Oval Base" banks, M-513 and M-514. Mike Henry first told me of a third version that is unlisted and very scarce. Table 1 gives complete descriptions.

Table 1: Descriptions of Prancing Horse on Oval Base Banks

<p>M-513: "Prancing Horse on Oval Base," Hubley, A.C. Williams, 1920's; a "B" bank.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 1/8" tall.⁴ • Screw head at left. • Details unlike M-514. 	<p>M-514: "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty);" a "D" bank.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 3/4" tall.[†] • Screw head at right. 	<p>M-N/L: "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (square nut)."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 3/4" tall.[†] • Screw head at right. • Details identical to M-514.
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Descriptions and measurements for M-513 and M-514 are from Moore.⁵ Other information provided by Mike Henry and Bill Robison.

[†] Heights of M-514 and M-N/L confirmed by Mike Henry and Bill Robison.

Based on this information it is quite certain that the pattern shown in Photos 1 to 4 was used to produce the "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty)" bank, M-514. The pattern has not been compared side-to-side with a "Beauty" bank, but the design details seem to match. The sizes of the pattern and bank also are consistent; both the pattern and bank were measured as 4 3/4" tall. If the pattern were used to mold the "Beauty" bank, because of shrinkage during casting of the iron the bank would be expected to be 1.5% (about 1/16 to 3/32") shorter than the pattern. A difference this small might be difficult to detect until the pattern and the bank can be compared side-by-side. No pattern number was found in the "Beauty" bank examined by Bill Robison, but the surface was somewhat rough so the number would not be expected to be visible.



Photo 5. "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (square nut)." Photo by Bill Robison.

Were either of the other two banks made from the unmodified pattern? Earlier, key characteristics of the "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (square nut)" were listed. If the unlisted bank is compared to M-514 one finds:

- √ It is identical to M-514 except it doesn't have lettering for "Beauty."
- √ It has a square nut recessed in the left side.
- √ It is the same size as M-514.

Additional evidence that the original pattern was used to produce the unlisted bank was provided by Bill Robison. He examined the interior surface of two "square nut" banks and found the pattern number "989" in one of them. In one half of the second bank he could see part of a pattern number not inconsistent with "989", but he could not read it completely. In the second half of the bank a faint sign of a number was seen but it could not be read. He also assembled each half of the "Beauty" bank with the complementary half of one of the "square nut" banks. The fits were perfect. All of these data point to the same conclusion: *M-514 is a Tooling Variation of the unlisted "square nut" bank.*

On the other hand, M-513 does not fit the description for "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (square nut)." It doesn't have a square nut, the screw head is on the left side, and differences in molding details can be seen in side-by-side comparisons to the other two Prancing Horse banks. Most definitively, it is *larger* than the pattern for "Beauty." Therefore: *M-513 is a distinct Type from M-514 and the unlisted Prancing Horse banks.*

Additional Question

The available facts allow a pretty complete and convincing story, but do not say whether all "Beauty" banks were made from this one pattern, or if there were multiple working patterns. Normally, mold making was done using pattern trees constructed from multiple working patterns. Using a single pattern would make bank manufacture unusually tedious and expensive.

The easiest way to know that multiple patterns were used would be to find another pattern. The question might also be answered by examining banks. If pattern numbers cannot be found in other "Beauty" banks, then the next best hope is to compare the layouts of the lettering on several "Beauty" banks to each other and to the layout on the pattern. Finding differences would point to multiple patterns being used.

If you have any information that might help answer this question, please contact me.

Late Information

What appears to be a second brass working pattern for "Prancing Horse on Oval Base (Beauty)" has been reported by Bill Robison. Like the pattern described above, it was made by converting a pattern for a bank with square nut, and it appears that the word "Beauty" was applied to the pattern one letter at a time. However, the depression for the square nut was not completely filled. Quite surprisingly, this pattern is stamped with the same "989" number found in the pattern at the Kidd Museum.

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References

¹ The pattern number should be seen if the interior surface of the banks is smooth enough.

² Shrinkage when molding iron is 1 to 2%, which is equivalent to about 1/8" to 1/4" per foot. When molding brass shrinkage is about 0.5% greater.

³ It will not be found, for example, if each new working pattern was stamped with its own unique, number.

⁴ Bill Robison confirmed this measurement, but reports a second example that is only 5" tall. (That story will be saved for another day.)

⁵ Andy and Susan Moore, "The Penny Bank Book: Collecting Still Banks," Schiffer Publishing Ltd., Exton, Pennsylvania.