

Proposal for Identifying Variations of Cast Iron Still Banks

Supplement No. 3: The "Punch and Judy" Mechanical 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.

Although the original paper includes "Still Banks" in the title, this Supplement concerns the cast iron "Punch and Judy" mechanical bank. It is concluded that the three versions described in standard catalogs are separate *Types* because distinct master patterns were required for at least the front panels of the banks. The banks pictured were photographed during a visit with Frank Kidd at Kidd's Toy Museum in Portland, Oregon. Information about the construction of the cast iron "Punch and Judy" banks was contributed by Bill Robison.

The Punch and Judy Mechanical Bank



Photo 1. The "small letters" Punch and Judy bank, Norman-4740a

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There are three versions of the cast iron "Punch and Judy" bank listed in Norman:¹ 4740a, small letters; 4740b medium letters; and 4740c large letters. The "letters" are the Punch and Judy (or Punch & Judy) at the top front of the bank. See examples of each version in Photos 2 to 4.



Photo 2. Punch and Judy small letters, Norman-4740a.



Photo 3. Punch and Judy medium letters, Norman-4740b.



Photo 4. Punch and Judy large letters, Norman-4740c.

Variations or Types?

The "Punch and Judy" banks were assembled from a number of separate castings. However, the analysis here focuses on the most easily inspected of these castings, the front panels of the banks.

Examination of the three versions reveals differences that point to the bank with large letters being a separate *Type* from the other two versions:

1. The area for the lettering in the large letters version is larger than it is for the other two versions and has a smooth rather than pebbled surface.
2. The version with large letters has a different "ripple" pattern on each side of the sloped roof of the bank than versions with small and medium letters. In the first case there are 10 ripples and with the other two 9+ ripples.
3. The curtain rings have a different shape. Those on the version with large letters are shorter and thicker than those on the versions with small and medium letters.

It is very difficult to see how any of these changes would or could be made without replacing the master pattern for the front panel of the bank.

At first glance it seems plausible that the small and medium letter versions could have been produced by simply replacing the lettering on the master or working patterns. If only the master pattern was modified the two banks would be separate Types. For example, as described in the original paper, the plain "Art Deco Elephant" bank and the similar bank with "GOP" were produced by modifying the wood master pattern. On the other hand, if lettering was replaced on the working patterns, the two banks would be Variations. For example, the "Mulligan" banks with advertising were produced by replacing the messages on working patterns. (Notice that the raised bases for the "Punch and Judy" or "Punch & Judy" lettering are reminiscent of the bases seen with the messages on the "Mulligan" banks.)

However, careful inspection reveals other differences. There are steps from the outer frame down to the surface on which the lettering rests: three steps with the small letters bank, two with medium letters, and one with large letters. It is nearly impossible to see how these changes would or could be made to working patterns. They seem consistent only with distinct master patterns being used for the front panels of the banks, a different one for each version. *Therefore: the three versions are each a separate Type.*

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References

¹ Bill Norman, "The Bank Book; the Encyclopedia of Mechanical Bank Collecting," Accent Studios, San Diego, California, 1985.