Stanley Tools In Sets - Pocket Catalogs

by David E. Heckel

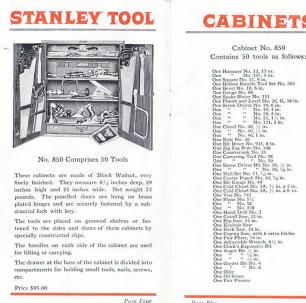
In 1870 Stanley Rule & Level Company brought out their first pocket sized catalog.

They had only just added Leonard Bailey's bench planes to their line of rules and levels and this was one of their first catalogs issued. They produced many other small pocket sized catalogs from 1870 to the 1960s. These small catalogs were usually about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " X 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " in size and were in the form of a booklet or a fold out brochure. They were easy to mail upon a request from a customer and they also were packed in the shipping box of many of Stanley's tools.

In 1922 Stanley issued three pocket catalogs relating to tool sets. The first was entitled STANLEY TOOLS in CABINETS BOXES and SETS. In this catalog were listed five Stanley cabinets and boxes that were made of Black Walnut. These were the first tool sets that were offered for sale by Stanley. The prices were also very high. The #850 set was priced at \$95.00 for the Black Walnut cabinet with 50 tools. This was at the time when the average wage for a skilled worker was \$30.61 per week and for an un-skilled worker, \$22.45 per week. Even the #801 tool box with 15 tools was priced at \$20.00. Stanley only manufactured the Black Walnut tool boxes in 1922 and then they were

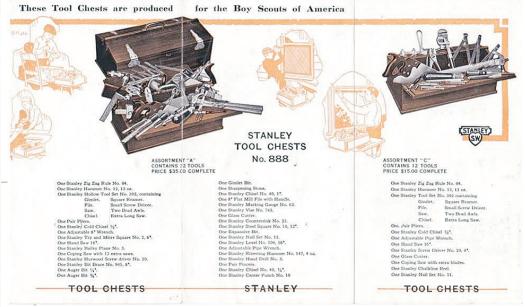
replaced in 1923 with boxes made of oak.

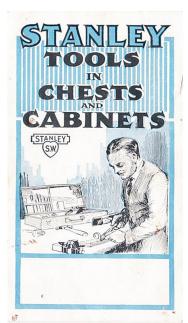




Also in 1922, Stanlev produced another pocket catalog that was aimed at the boy who was a member of the Boy Scouts of America. This second pocket catalog was entitled STAN-LEY TOOL CHESTS No. 888. The # 888 Stanley tool chests were available in four assortments, A. B. C. and D. They ranged in price from \$35.00 to \$15.00. Those prices kept the chests probably out of the reach of many boys.









The catalog showed boys making or repairing various projects. This is a very scarce catalog.

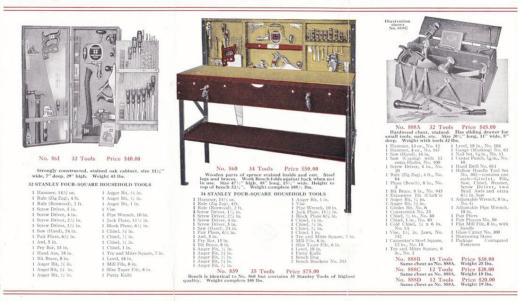
The third catalog issued in 1922 was entitled STANLEY TOOLS IN CHESTS AND CABINETS. It pictured five of the lower priced sets. The chests and cabinet were listed as being made of wood and the box was made of a fiber material, but they still had the better quality tools.

In 1923 a new line of tools was developed by Stanley. This line was called FOUR – SQUARE and was promoted to the homeowner or to the Do It Yourself market. The tools were first marketed to the user in 1924. This pocket catalog listed 16 different tool sets, of which five were FOUR

– SQUARE sets. This catalog was titled STANLEY TOOLS in sets and it unfolded into a 10 ½" X 12 ½" brochure, rather than being in a booklet format. It also showed some of the sets in full four-color and six of the sets were packed in cardboard boxes that had a plan included to show you how to make your own tool chest. This catalog was one of the brochures included in the M-WTCA Special Publication which was sent to members in 2002.

The next pocket catalog was issued in November 1923 and was titled STANLEY TOOL ASSORTMENTS and it was graced with reproduced paintings by noted artist G. W. Gage. These paintings showed the average homeowner usually dressed in suit jacket or in a vest and tie making





items for use in his home. These paintings were also available from Stanley as six different advertising posters reproduced on heavy poster board that were for display in a hardware store to promote the tool boxes, chests and sets.

The last small size pocket catalog was issued in 1935 and was titled STANLEY TOOLS IN SETS. It used the new THE TOOL BOX OF AMERICA logo on the cover which Stanley began using in 1934. This catalog folded out into a 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " X 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " brochure. It also offered the first tool boxes to be made out of metal. Also shown in the catalog were two sets that contained the new numbered FOUR – SQUARE tools, which were introduced in1935.

After this pocket catalog was issued in 1935, future references to tool sets were shown in the Stanley No. 34 catalogs that were issued periodically for the next 40 years.





Tool Chest Advertising Posters





eBay by John Walkowiak

Please consider placing an M-WTCA membership promotion in your listing or on your web site. This will be good for M-WTCA by providing the thousands of eBayer's and online collectors who are looking at old tools and do not know about us, an easy means to make contact with our organization. This will also improve your credibility as a seller by showing your affiliation with M-WTCA. It will be a Win-Win situation for everyone! Just go to http://mwtca.org and click on the Selling on eBay bar on the left side of the homepage. Then simply copy and paste the promotion and add it to your listing where it best fits. It is simple and easy and will be a great help in exposing our great organization to the world. Also, do not forget to include a membership brochure in all the tools you send out. Please contact me and I will send a supply of membership brochures to you.