

11/9/15

Young America 1853 – POB 1:96

Part 31 – Decking

Readers may note that I am going into some detail on methods in this log. As I mentioned earlier, I wanted these posts to be a supplement to the POB model work described in Volume I of the book. Once the POB model is framed, common methods are used on both versions, but space did not permit pictorial presentation of both versions. So this should be helpful for POB modelers who are using the book. There are also a few twists on this version that may be useful.

With all the hatchway and cabin coamings installed, the planking of the weather decks began - working from the central plank outwards with the strakes parallel to the centerline. Inside the waterways that abut the frames at the side, there are three strakes that follow the curve of the side on the main deck – two thicker structural “binding strakes” and one wide “margin plank”. The margin plank is similar to that shown below on the poop deck where there are no binding strakes or waterways.



In the picture the starboard margin plank is being glued to the tops of the frames and to the top outboard plank. These margin strakes were made wide enough to “cut in” the ends of the straight planks to avoid feathered-edge tapers that could not be caulked.

The picture also shows the pin clamps that I used to hold all of the deck planking in place on this model. On the larger, framed version, planks were held down with pins pushed through tight holes drilled in each plank – into the members below. I did not wish to drill holes in this version, so used “pin clamps” that could be hammered into the plywood bulkheads at the edge of the plank being glued. I made about a dozen of these by drilling holes through small segments of dowel that would allow a tight sliding fit for ½” long lil pins, allowing the pin point to project from the end by about

1/8". The pins were then glued into the dowels using medium viscosity CA. Pins can thus be driven by tapping the head of the pin with a hammer and removed by pulling on the dowel with pliers. There is little stress on the CA joint in either case. These were very useful to say the least. The next picture shows the completed poop deck.



As areas of planking were installed, the tops were leveled out using curved flat rifflers followed by sandpaper. The planks were initially cut about 1" thicker to allow for this. As described in Volume I of the book and in earlier posts, the planking material was painted on one side with dark brown acrylic paint before ripping the planks – to simulate caulked joints. Cutting planks into the margin plank is also described there and in other posts.

The next picture shows the first central plank on the main deck being installed between hatchway head ledges.



Accurate centering of these first planks is important. Although the hatchways were carefully centered on the bulkhead pattern centerlines, I marked a center on each head ledge by measuring in from the outsides of the hatchway with dividers. This helped ensure that the planking will be symmetric on each side of the hatch framing. If hatches are found to be slightly out of line as the planking progresses forward using this method, they may have to be moved slightly.

In the next picture a plank is being marked for notching to fit around one of the mizzen bitts.

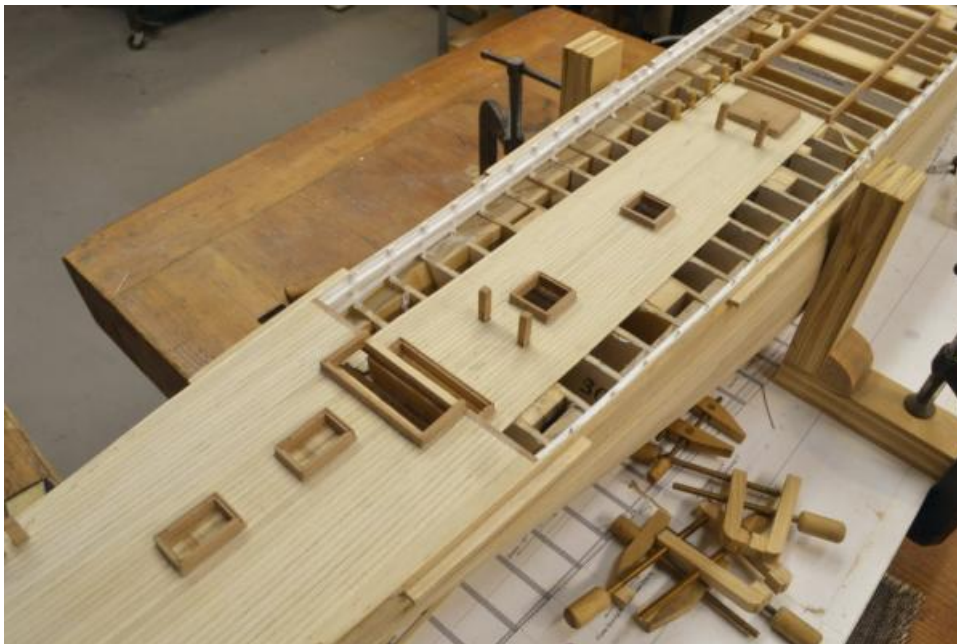


Planks will most likely need to be notched to fit around the sides of hatchways. Where very thin widths would result, wider sections in planks along the side of the hatch were used, cut back to

normal width to fit against angled cuts in planks at the ends. (I will look for a picture and post later.) Dark glue was used for all this planking. In the next picture a screw clamp is being used to close a joint at the corner of a hatch.



The next picture shows the main deck planking progressing forward.



To ensure adequate and symmetrical spacing between plank butts, I used a standard plank length that would span eight bulkheads, 7 spaces. Planks were thus about 35-40 feet long. This resulted in uniform and adequate spacing of butts both across and along the strakes. Planks on these ships were narrow – about 6". On this model I used a standard width of 7" including the caulk paint.

You will notice that the outer members – waterways, binding strakes and margin plank are not yet installed in the last picture. This work will be described in the next part.

Later: Here is a picture illustrating the planking configuration described above.

