



The Doorknob Collector

Number 29

May-June 1988

ADCA Membership Roster Enclosed

Flea Market Expands Hours

By Staff Writer



The Kane County Flea Market has expanded its schedule to Saturday. The flea market, which is the largest in the midwest, is open on the first Sunday of each month from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Beginning with the May session, it will be open from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday preceding the first Sunday.

Helen Robinson, founder and director of the flea market, hopes the additional afternoon will give more people an opportunity to take advantage of the and collectible's and antiques offered by the dealers.

The Kane County Flea Market has been a popular source for doorknobs for many ADCA members. Two club members set up regularly at the flea market to sell door hardware and other architectural items

The 1988 ADCA membership roster is enclosed with this issue to all paid members of the organization. The roster includes 139 members. One new member, bringing membership to 140, and an address change have been received since the roster was printed and are included in this issue. Please make corrections to your roster to keep it updated.

The 140 members are located in 32 states. Several inquiries have been received from foreign countries but there has been no one from outside the continental United States sign up as a member at this time.

The membership has grown from 112 on May 1, 1987 to 140 on May 1, 1988. This is the largest increase in membership since the ANTIQUE DOORKNOB COLLECTORS OF AMERICA was formed in 1981.

Increased national publicity has been a major contributor to our growth. Recent publicity in The Old-House Journal has brought about 40 inquiries concerning our club and membership.

CONVENTION THEME

The Russell & Erwin doorknob and escutcheon plate above are to remind us that the ADCA annual convention is September 22 to September 25, 1988, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Remember this year's convention theme is "Russell & Erwin".



The first R&E trademark. First used in 1853, registered in 1872.

A POTTER'S DELIGHT by Maude Eastwood

Collectors concerned with duplication should appreciate mineral knobs, for no two are identical. What are mineral knobs? According to terminology found in Josiah Jones' 1867 patent for "Improving the Manufacture of Mineral Knobs", the name specifically covered knobs composed of clays of different colors; were currently in use and known to the "trade" as mineral knobs.

This does not preclude other clay bodied knobs from also being classified in that category; any knob formed of clays firing to brown tones and fitted with a simple glaze designed to seal the knob's rough surface and enhance the appearance of the formative material is a mineral knob. The glaze ordinarily will show no color, unless as an exception. This knob type appeared second in order in the triplet of American white, brown and black pottery knobs.

As a matter of history, glass knobs were also included in mineral knobs in early U.S. tariff records and certain patent specifications dating back to the mid 1830's, and appropriately so, when interpreting mineral in the broad sense. Even the important reproduction firm of Ball & Ball, Exton, Pa. an impeccable source -- grouped all white, black



and brown knobs under a Mineral section in their 1978 catalogue.

For the purposes of this article, only knobs of colored clay body, whether veined, streaked, mottled, speckled or plain appearance, in light or dark brown, yellow-brown, red-brown, greenish of tint or any combination thereof, will be covered. These qualifications automatically eliminate Bennington knobs of buff clays and brown Rockingham glaze. However, the comparison chart will reveal the main differences, until they can be spelled out in a future article.

Providing dating and provenance for specimen indeed presents a "sticky wicket". As with jet and porcelain knobs, the few clues with answers may be in the mounting. Recognizing important, less obvious differences

requires a practiced eye. Pre-1850 shanks are distinctive, often having an inner metal piece imbedded in the body or secured after formation, finished with a sleeve or shell so closely worked as to appear all-in-one. After 1867, the trend turned to mottled from veined, the result of Branford's pioneering work to produce a knob of sounder construction and cheaper make.

The first patent issued for making knobs of clays used in pottery and porcelain - 1841, Hotchkiss, Davenport and Quincy - was later (1850) the focus of an infringement suit involving M. Greenwood, an important potter of the period. No less than a dozen instances of earlier appearance of such knobs were cited with an early date of 1834 quoted. The 1841 patent did not use the word 'mineral' yet clearly the knobs would have been mineral in classification. Enoch Robinson verified that 'stone' knobs had been produced before 1837. A large number of potteries made prodigious amounts of mineral knobs, from

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the 1840's through the 1870's when hardware manufacturers became involved in making pottery knobs. Potters had secured the services of former Staffordshire, England, pottery workers with experience in making Agate Ware (the English version of the three color clay knob mixed like a marble cake). Hardware manufacturers Branford, Mallory-Wheeler and Russell & Erwin are candidates for pioneering work in mineral knobs, providing them not only for their own but for other companies use, from circa 1850. Under headings of either Mineral or Pottery--first veined and then mottled--brown knobs were sold by mail order catalogues until the mid 1920's and hardware company catalogues through 1940, the year Adon Brownell of "Builder's Hardware" fame pronounced them losing favor.

The prediction that no two mineral knobs, at least the veined and streaked, will be identical will probably hold until some enterprising baker figures out a way to make exact duplicates in marble cake designs!



COMPARISON CHART

MINERAL vs BENNINGTON ROCKINGHAM

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mold lines circle the perimeter of the knob, whether octagon or round shape. 2. Pattern lines break at the mold lines, often reversing in direction. 3. A nearly transparent glaze envelopes the knob, usually showing color only in "run" build-ups. 4. An inserted cast iron shank is the predominate mounting. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mold lines not apparent. 2. The streaks or mottling tend to bleed and follow a general downward or outward movement. 3. A brown Rockingham glaze partially covers the buff body, having been dripped, sponged, etc. to the desired effect. 4. A "shell" shank or metal ferrule usually finished the extended pottery neck. |
|---|--|



SHOW & TELL

Len Blumin gave a talk and slide presentation to the Mill Valley (Calif.) Rotary International, and was well received. They didn't even laugh too much when he loudly introduced the talk by dropping the

entire display of loose doorknobs onto the floor. With now - reddened face, he struggled on to "enlighten" the Rotarians, many of whom stopped afterwards to admire the knobs.

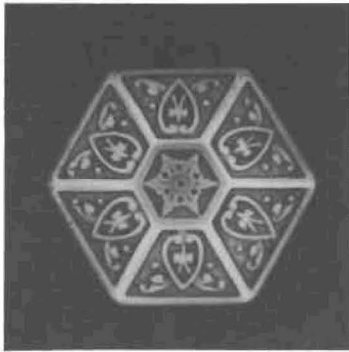
ORNAMENTAL DESIGN IN ANTIQUE DOORKNOBS

by Len Blumin

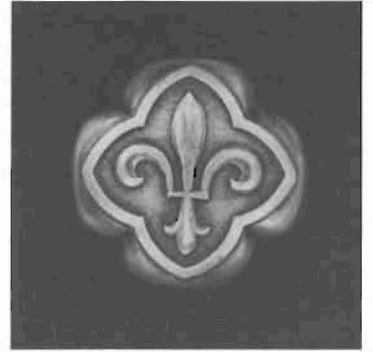
ODD SHAPED KNOBS

- C-113 Cast iron hex, circa 1875.
C-114 Classic. MCCC/R&E. Design patent #4107. Charles Kunze. Reproduction knob.
C-115 Snowflake hex, iron, circa 1920.
C-116 Louis Sullivan design for Isabella building. See TDK #17, 2/86.
C-117 "Nugget." This is really odd.
C-118 "Courtenay," French Renaiss., Russwin, 1909 catalogue.

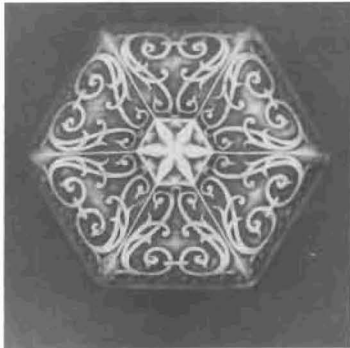
C-113



C-116



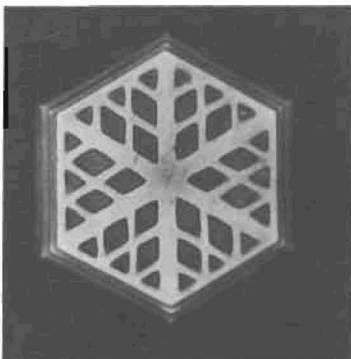
C-114



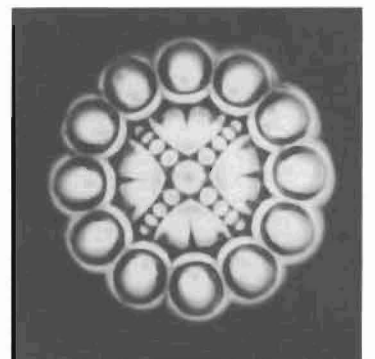
C-117



C-115



C-118



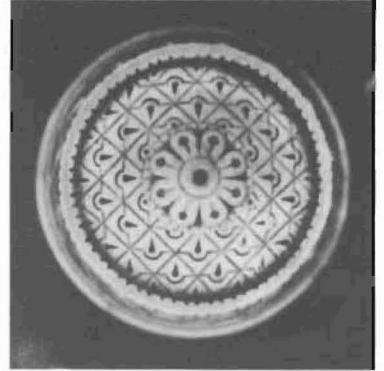
FIELD OR DIAPER PATTERNS

- D-102a An interesting variation of D-102.
D-131 Made in domed and flat versions, circa 1885.
D-132 Could be in concentric group, circa 1885.
D-133 Large knob with unusual shape, circa 1890.
D-134 "Ideal", Norwalk, circa 1885, steel.
D-135 Woven/fluted, wrought, possibly Corbin.

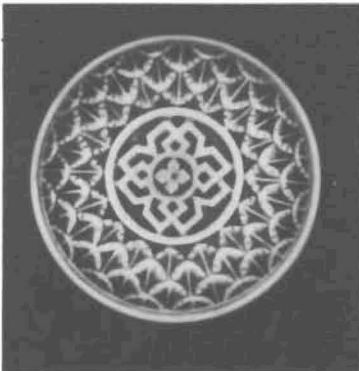
D-102a



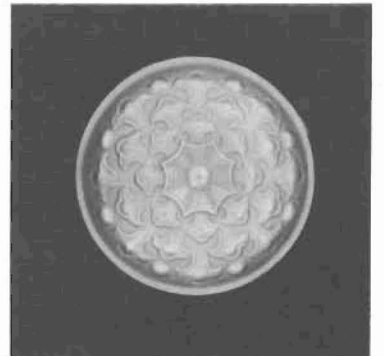
D-133



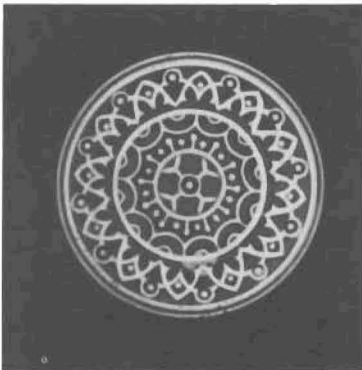
D-131



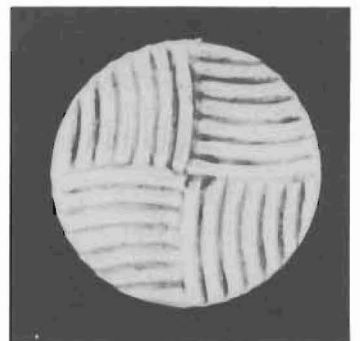
D-134



D-132



D-135



MEET THE BOLEN'S LAWRENCE & FRANCES that is!

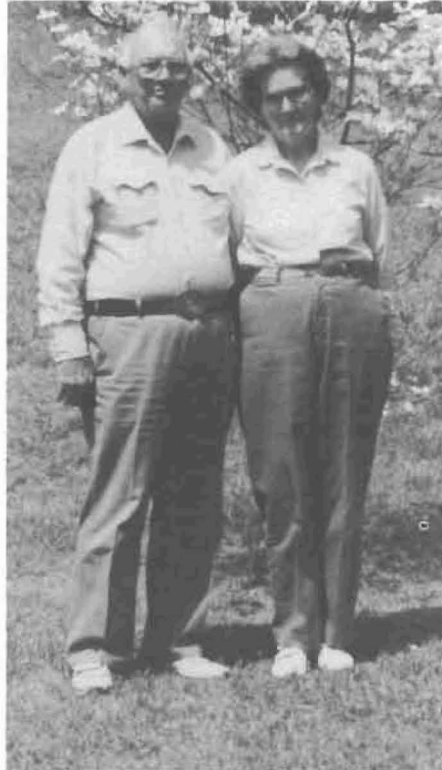
by Lawrence Bolen

Ln 1985, Frances and I joined the world of retirement. The question that we all ask is "What can we do with our lives?" That's when I first became aware of The Antique Doorknob Collectors of America through a good friend, Sam Miller owner of "The Brass Shop", in Atlanta, Georgia. He did quite a bit of polishing for me on various items through the years. On day when Sam heard me say, I was interested in antique doorknobs, he gave me an ADCA newsletter, issue #3, dated June 1982, along with an application. One of our members left it at his shop.

Sad to say, Mr. Miller passed away several years ago. We all lost one of the best known brass authorities in this area of the country.

After leaving the convention, we traveled on into Canada. A funny thing happened to us at the Canadian Border. We were inspected by the Canadian Customs Agent and were told we could not cross the border into Canada due to the doorknobs. He referred us back to the United States Customs Agent to declare our doorknobs. After the United States Customs Agent inspected and declared our doorknobs were okay, we were allowed to continue our trip into Canada.

We spent several days in Winnipeg then returned once again to the United States. The same agent, who originally inspected our doorknobs, greeted us by saying, "Oh, you're the doorknob man - go on through".



In 1986 we decided to make a trip to the West coast and back through the middle part of the United States. We packed some of our doorknob collection and planned to visit Maudie Eastwood, whose name appeared in the newsletter.

When Maudie saw our collection, she said we had made a good start and had some unusual knobs. She convinced us that we should join the ADCA. When we returned to Atlanta we decided to fill out the application. Since then we have collected over 200 doorknobs.

In early 1987, we joined ADCA and attended the convention in Des Moines, Iowa. The people at the convention were most helpful and friendly, just like family.

Continued on page 7



The Knob From Crow Wing County

Our Center Fold

The Crow doorknob is probably one of the rarer knobs of those found in ADCA members' collections. Only four are known to be in collector's hands. All were obtained by Charles Bednar.

Bednar advised us the knob comes from Crow Wing County, Minnesota. Brainerd is the county seat and is located about 120 miles north of Minneapolis.

"Years ago, north of Brainerd," Charles recalls, "there was a big salvage (or junk) place out in the woods. There were five doors, all with the 'Crow' doorknobs on them." The man on duty at the salvage yard wouldn't sell them but after Charles pleaded his case, the attendant made a phone call. After talking to someone on the phone, he gave Bednar the okay to take two pair.

"I kept going back," Charles related, "eventually they all disappeared. Finally everything was gone except one door with the escutcheon plates still on it. I am assuming somebody didn't know how to get them off. They had a cylinder lock. The lock case had a double face plate that you had to take the first plate off to get to the set screw. He sold me the pair."

Today, Charles Bednar has a complete set of two crow knobs and escutcheon plates handsomely mounted. The other two knobs were used in trades. One knob went to a west coast collector for a Statue of Liberty knob and the other to a Midwest collector in another trade.



A-111 From Crow Wing County, Minnesota

Bolens ————— from p6 —————

We also visited Kane County Flea Market in St. Charles, Illinois and met several of our fellow members there. Some we had seen at the convention and some we had not. While there, we purchased several doorknobs.

Many people we meet in the South collect doorknobs but have never heard of our club. We tell them about it and I wear my ADCA cap with pride. It draws quite a bit of attention and is certainly a conversation piece.

Since we had such a good time at the 1987 convention, we plan to attend the 1988 convention in Indianapolis.

See you at the convention.



One of the most popular features in **THE DOORKNOB COLLECTOR** is "our center fold." Titled "Ornamental Design in Antique Doorknobs," by Len Blumin, twelve doorknobs are presented in each issue as a supplement to Len's book, **VICTORIAN DECORATIVE ART**.

In 1983 Mr. Blumin published his book and ADCA members were introduced to it at the national convention held in Naperville, Illinois, in September of that year.

The book was an immediate hit with doorknob collectors. **VICTORIAN DECORATIVE ART** included pictures of over 500 doorknobs. But more important, Blumin had developed a classification system and gave each knob a number. Information, when available, included descriptive name, the school (or style of knob), manufacturer and date of design.

We will continue to publish this feature, adding new knobs and their classification number, with the hope it will lead to a universal use of the system to help collectors identify their doorknobs and to enable them to make trades with other collectors by mail.

If any member does not have a copy of **VICTORIAN DECORATIVE ART**, we strongly urge them to obtain a copy now. The supply is limited and when it is exhausted, we are sure the book will become a collectors' item and worth much more than the \$11.00 ADCA is selling it for. Remember all proceeds go to the club.



FROM THE ARCHIVES
by Alice Chadonich

CLASSIFIED AD SECTION

At our 1985 convention in St. Louis, members in attendance received a pamphlet in conjunction with our continuing education program. It contained 34 questions posed by John Holland to certain designated members of the Club and their answers. Included was information regarding some of the earliest door knobs manufactured, various methods of manufacture, clues identifying age of hardware, how to distinguish reproductions from originals, insuring collections and much more. A lot of time and research went into this very interesting and informative booklet.

It was felt that perhaps our new members as well as those who did not attend the St. Louis convention might like to have this information. Copies are available for anyone interested. Send your request along with a check for \$6.50 made payable to Alice Chadonich, Archivist ADCA, 4701 Harrison Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68157. Please try to have your orders to me by June 8, 1988.

ROSTER CHANGES

Addition: Frank Johnstone & Joan Hawley, 1236 Moore St., Brookings, OR 97415. Ph: 503-469-2296.
Address Change: Mike Maldonado, 2 St. John's Street, Old Orchard Beach, ME 04064.

Members are reminded that your dues entitles you to advertise items for sale, trade, or wanted at no charge.

FOR SALE. 11 complete Corbin lock sets, #B-215 in Victoria Decorative Art (c. 1895). Good Condition. Asking \$1,000 but will consider all reasonable offers. Walter Bright, 11 E. Papago Drive, Tempe, AZ 85281. Phone 602-946-4709.

WANTED. To trade for or buy, antique doorbells. Joe Mueller, 1227 Roxton Drive, St. Louis, MO 63137. Phone 314-867-7943.

WANTED. To buy, antique light fixtures, glass shades, etc. Stefan Lys, 4412 No. Ashland Ave., Chicago, IL 60640. Phone 312-728-8911.

WANTED. To buy, brown porcelain knobs (with swirls of yellow color), diam. 2-1/8" to 2-1/4"; thickness 7/8" to 1-1/16". H. S. Robinson, 119 Colonial Ave., Moorestown, NJ 08057.

WANTED. 20 sets of door-knobs for 1890 Victorian House. Walnut toned plastic celluloid knobs made in three parts. Central portion like hollow doughnut with brass center medallion. Will consider white or black plastic or celluloid. John Merrick, 117 South Broad Street, P.O. Box 67, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

WANTED. Any knob with the monogram "M", in any medium. Maudie Eastwood, 3900 Latimer Road, N., Tillamook, Oregon 97141.

WANTED. To trade for or buy. One or two of #K-311 Bronze knobs. Art Andrews, 214 South 4th Street, Smithfield, NC 27577.

FOR TRADE. The following doorknobs, one each B-106 (cast iron), D101, F-234 (cast iron), G-116, G-123, H-213, H-221, H-256, H-268, H-272, H-405, I-101, J-214, K-214 (flat), K-310, L-101, L-111, and a few others. Mike Maldonado, 2 St. John's Street, Old Orchard Beach, Maine 04064.

