



The Doorknob Collector

Number 35

May-June 1989

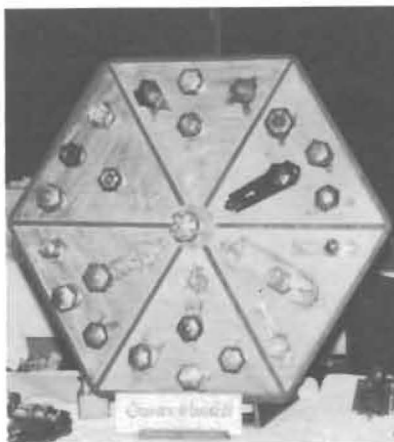
1989 ADCA Convention

No Display? -- Come Anyway!

by Dorothy Ann Miller

....."I'd like to go to Iowa City in September for the 1989 A.D.C.A. convention if only I could figure out what to take for a display. It would be fun to meet and get acquainted with the other members, and I would like to see their collections, but I don't feel like I could walk in empty handed, and I just can't decide what to take.".....

If these thoughts have been going through your mind, you have been worrying for nothing. It is not unusual for people to



Wardell's display

come to their first convention without a display. Sometimes even those who normally do bring a display, skip a year and just bring traders, or even nothing at all.

What I am trying to say is: don't feel that you would be conspicuous if you didn't arrive armed with a board full of hardware. The main thing is to come and get acquainted. Spend the time with us on the convention floor where you will find a lot of friendly people, some beautiful and interesting displays to look at, and plenty of doorknobs and other hardware available to purchase. Attend the dinners, programs, the pre-convention tour, the auction, the business meeting, and, of course, plan to relax with us in the hospitality room. If you have some duplicates that you might want to

trade, bring them along.

So, with or without a display, plan to attend this year. Get your calendar right now and set aside those convention dates. Do plan to get there a day early for the pre-convention tour. We look forward to getting acquainted with you and feel sure that when you have been to one of our get-togethers, you will be "hooked" and will be like the rest of us, looking forward to the next convention. ■



Fredrick's display

See Page 3 for article
on pricing



Len Blumin's display

THE PARKER AND WHIPPLE COMPANY
1859 - 1868
W. Meriden, Connecticut

by Maud Eastwood

The diversified company of Charles Parker of Meridan, Connecticut was the root company of Parker & Whipple builder's hardware company founded in 1859. Nine years into business, the owners incorporated as the Parker & Whipple Company. They enjoyed a degree of success for twelve years and then elected to specialize in clock manufacturing in 1880. Tom Hennessey covered this company very well in his *Early Locks and Lock Makers of America*, but some interesting sidelights might serve to show that there is mystery even in door hardware.


When Parker and his partner, Whipple, decided to specialize, what became of their considerable stock and patent rights? And why did they elect to put out a catalog that same year? Buhl Sons & Co. of Detroit, Michigan, carried at least part of the line in their 1884 catalog. Trademarks on the locks varied. "Whipple Mfg. Co." and "P&W" with the patent dates of 1-12-1864 and 9-20-1870 were illustrated, besides the quality trim also shown in the 1880 Parker & Whipple catalog. Included were plates, key escutcheons and bolts, of fine cast metal and ornamental butts.

Branford, another company more subtly involved, was closer at hand. Both Branford and Parker & Whipple claimed the same patent, illustrated by the

same identical patent drawing! Note pages 107, top and 176, **ANTIQUÉ BUILDER'S HARDWARE**. There is no mistaking the fact. Branford's is attributed to Kennedy (Thomas Kennedy who founded Branford in the same year the patent was given.) Whipple is credited with the invention in their sales brochure shown on page 176. And, unless a typographical error was made, the two patents date eight days apart. The sales brochure was not dated. Has anyone the answer to this mystery?

Several patents were attributed to Parker & Whipple, some related to spindles for the spring-action knob noted in the

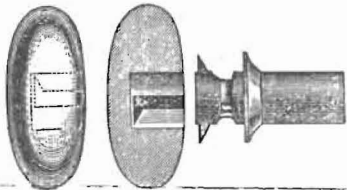
WHIPPLE'S
PATENT
DOOR KNOB,



Patented July 29, 1873,
MANUFACTURED BY
THE PARKER & WHIPPLE CO.,
West Meriden, Conn.
New York Office, - 97 Chambers St.

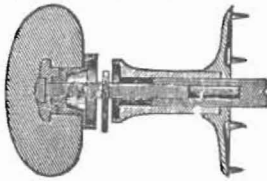
EASY TO PUT ON AND SURE TO STAY.

WHIPPLE'S
Patent Door Knob



Patented Jan. 18th, 1865.

Improved method of attaching Mineral and Porcelain Knobs to their Necks.



Sectional Cut showing the working parts of the Whipple Door Knob. The Spring is inoperative in working the Knob, its only function being to hold the Pawl against the neck.

brochure. See page 177, ABH, for a list of knobs with their mountings, that were in variation. Knobs of mineral body, porcelain, silvered glass and solid brass were available. If there is a collector who needs a challenge, this may provide the incentive for both research and collecting Parker & Whipple hardware. ■



The Doorknob Collector

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Collectors can benefit from pricing information

I recently became interested in a collectors group I did a story on. The man who writes the organization's newsletter is very nice, so I started writing him letters whenever I saw something at a shop, show or auction that I thought his members would

CIRCA

by Connie Swaim, Assistant Editor

be interested in. Usually I sent him a description of the item, the price and where I saw it.

He recently wrote again thanking me for all of the information. He said he was considering using the pricing information in an upcoming newsletter, but he anticipated that some members would be upset by the prices. "There seems to be two schools of thought by members; one group opposed to any reference to prices and others asking us to do more in that area," he wrote.

I wrote back and told him that his was not a unique situation. Whenever I have written a story, the collectors I have interviewed have been enthusiastic about having more publicity on their field. But when I get to that final question during my interview, "What kind of prices can people expect to pay?" I often encounter resistance. I ask the question, not because I am nosy, but because it is the most common question we get here at *AntiqueWeek*. Every day we get letters and phone calls from people wanting to know what something is worth. While price guides and auction reports offer some help in pricing, it seems that knowledgeable collectors of a specific item often have the best pricing information.

For example, for the last two years one of the major price guides has listed a Monarch sample cocoa tin at \$20. I have been tempted to write and see if they would tell me where they found this \$20 tin. I rarely see the good sample cocoa tins priced less than \$35, and I have seen those in excellent condition priced \$50 and \$60. These aren't regional prices either. During my travels I have kept track of Monarch prices, keeping them on file. I know other collectors do the same thing. That's what makes collectors such good sources for pricing.

But I do know why collectors are so reluctant to give me prices. They are afraid that if a publication like *AntiqueWeek* does a feature story complete with prices, then there won't be any bargains left. Collectors want people to know something is collectible so it won't be thrown away, but they still want to buy those items cheap. Face it, we all want a bargain, including me. But I also think we have a right to give people a fair price if they ask for that information.

Collectors have to realize that information about current prices can help them. Almost every collector I know will occasionally sell some pieces. It is hard to pass something up at a good price just because you already have one like it at home. Those collectors who are selling want to get the best price out of their merchandise. So here we have a dilemma. If we never print prices or tell other people how much that Monarch sample tin is worth, how are we going to convince a buyer to pay \$50 for it?

My friend, the newsletter editor, also pointed out another positive to printing prices — it could increase the circulation of the newsletter. Antique dealers often handle a wide assortment of items. They don't always know what to price something, so they might be willing to spend \$10 or \$15 a year to subscribe to a newsletter that contains pricing information.

I think prices are an important part of any newsletter and an important part of any story that we do. Uninformed buyers usually end up paying too much for something just because they haven't seen one like it before. If they knew that more examples were out there and what those items are really worth, they could make better purchases.

There is one major pitfall to pricing, however. People who don't read descriptions will sometimes use a blanket price for anything in a particular category. For instance, take the following example that occurred because of a story in *AntiqueWeek* last year.

A particular type of stoneware sold at an auction for more than \$300. Several months after the sale, some collectors of that type of stoneware went to an antique shop and found a piece of stoneware made by the same company. The crock was priced \$450. Unfortunately the piece that sold for more than \$300 was a very early example which

is hard to find; the piece priced \$450 was a common example from the 1920s. A similar 1920s crock by the same maker was priced \$45 in a nearby antique mall where it sat for several months before it finally went to a collector for \$40.

The dealer didn't read the article carefully enough. He or she assumed that because a marked, salt-glazed, circa-1860s ovoid jar was worth more than \$300, then an ordinary straight-sided brown-over-white crock with a common mark by the same company must also be as valuable.

This example also shows that auction prices are not necessarily an accurate indication of what something is worth. Many factors can affect the price of a piece at auction. A collector usually knows when the prices are being run up because uninformed bidders are present.

For example, the February issue of "The Ice Screamer" newsletter (P.O. Box 5387, Lancaster, PA 17601) contained some auction prices for ice cream and soda fountain memorabilia. The editor of the newsletter has noted that those prices were unrealistic. A number of factors combined to cause very high prices at that particular auction, meaning that those prices don't necessarily reflect the true market value of the items.

Editor Ed Marks mentions in particular a heart-shaped ice cream scoop which sold for more than \$4,000. Ralph and Terry Kovel mentioned that scoop in one of their columns, and since then Marks has been offered three of them. The last one he was offered was priced \$4,620. He wrote in the newsletter, "As usual, I sent regrets." Marks said he saw a heart-shaped scoop offered recently for just over \$2,000 which he thinks is a truer reflection of the piece's value.

But those examples won't deter me from putting prices in my stories, nor will it stop me from encouraging newsletter editors to give prices to their members. Most antiquers are intelligent. They know that age, condition and rarity play a big difference in prices. The better information we give people, the better buys they will make, which then makes them happy antiquers and willing to keep spending money on antiques and collectibles. People who get stung too often are going to leave the field and take their money with them.

Editors Note: Reprinted with permission of the author, Connie Swaim. The story appeared in the April 24th issue of *AntiqueWeek*. Connie Swaim wrote a feature, front page, story on antique doorknobs which appeared in the January 16th issue of *AntiqueWeek*. She interviewed several A.D.C.A. club members, and her story was one of the finest ever done on doorknob collecting. A.D.C.A. received a number of orders for books, new members and inquiries as a result of that story. *AntiqueWeek* is published in two editions, Mid-Atlantic and Mid-Central, and has a circulation of over 60,000. If you would like more information, a copy of the doorknob story or a free sample of *AntiqueWeek*, write to Connie Swaim, Assistant Editor, *AntiqueWeek*, P.O. Box 90, Knightstown, IN 46148.

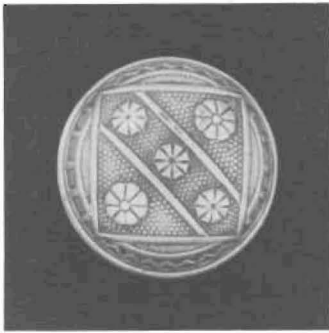
Ornamental design in antique doorknobs

by Len Blumin

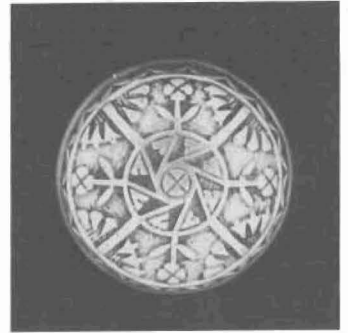
FOURFOLD SYMMETRY

- H-219a Vernacular design, circa 1885, domed version.
H-219a b¹. Domed, clean design now "spoiled" by elaboration.
H-249a Another Windsor type.
H-250a Another Magnolia type.
H-254a Wrought, popular.
H-411a Design has been simplified for this screen door knob.

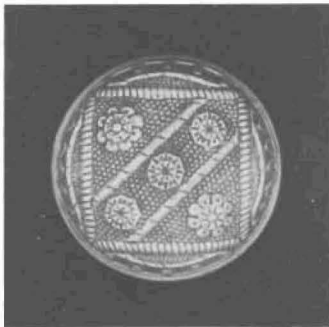
H-219a



H-250a



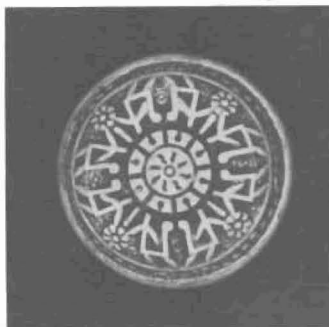
H-219b



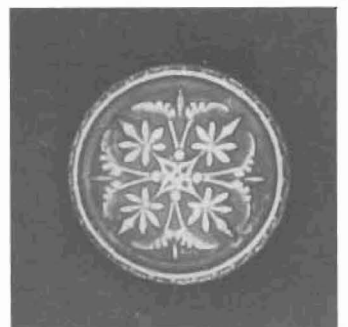
H-254a



H-249a



H-411a



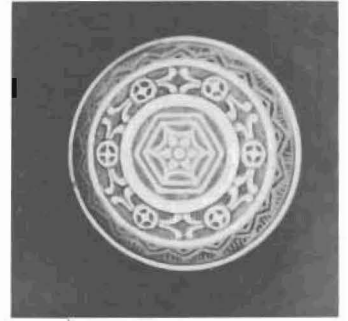
SIXFOLD SYMMETRY
(continued)

- J-106a Classic. Corbin, 1874 catalog.
J-107 Classic. Circa 1875. Center is fourfold.
J-108 Classic. Cast iron, crude.
J-219 Vernacular. Cast iron. Rare.
J-220 Vernacular. Norwalk, 1890 catalog, Nbr. 5660. Iron.
J-221 "Cairo," Corbin, 1905 catalog.

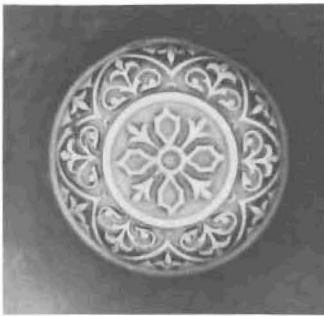
J-106a



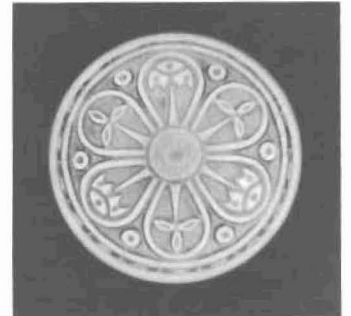
J-219



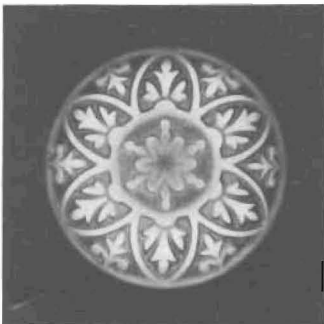
J-107



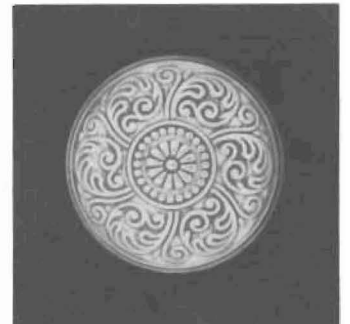
J-220



J-108



J-221



George Doyle Reminisces

Yes, I still have fond memories of my doorknob collecting days. My son got me started when he was going to the University of Connecticut. We lived in West Hartford then. My son liked old barn wood and old buildings and occasionally brought home hardware parts he found. I looked at a few old Bennington type and the thought struck me to start collecting knobs. I traveled all over the East from New England to Buffalo and down to Washington, D.C., and combed as many antique shops and flea markets I could. I got started about 1968. Like all early collectors I did not meet up with any other collectors and for a long time thought I was the only one doing this. Dealers could not seem to put me in touch with other collectors.

Somehow I heard of the Lock Museum in Terryville, Connecticut, and met Tom Hennessy, the curator. He mentioned Maud Eastwood's first book and I wrote her. I was entranced with the many designs on knobs and Maud said this was her "thing" too! Rich Kennedy came into the picture. He and his wife, Faye, started a newsletter about knobs and he and I traded a few knobs.

I kept Maud posted and things kept moving onward and upwards. I developed a business card and letterhead naming myself "The Doorknob Man."

Later my daughter moved to Olympia, Washington.



George Doyle's collection as it looked in 1979

When visited her from Connecticut, my son and I drove to Tillamook and stayed overnight with Maud and her husband. We talked about forming a collectors club, but other than bringing up the idea I cannot take credit. Others got the ball rolling. I always thought it was quite interesting that I, who lived in the heart of where all the brass knob manufacturers resided, would be put in touch with a 'gal' who lived thousands of miles away in a little town in Oregon and who wrote the first book on knob collecting. Through Maud I met many other knobbers as time went on, among them were the John Hollands' who came to Hartford and we identified each other by instinct at the airport. Needless to say we went bananas at the Brimfield flea market setup.

When I retired here in Washington I set up my knobs and as time went on decided to sell. Once again

Maud Eastwood came to my rescue. She put me in touch with the Claude Knoxes. They bought my entire collection except for about two dozen I could not bear to part with. The reason I stopped collecting -- is me. I have turned to new challenges as time went on. Besides I would have died from envy at the knobs I didn't have in my hands. Incidentally, the one regret I have is when I was active (in collecting) I passed up many a good knob because at that time I thought it was too high priced. Ha! Think of prices today.

I was 78 in March and as the old saying goes: "once a knobber always a knobber." I would love to have obtained a knob from every state house in the fifty states. As it was I did buy one from the Connecticut statehouse for \$40 which was the highest price I paid for a knob. ■



Maud Eastwood visits George Doyle in West Hartford, Connecticut

"WHAT A TREASURE"

by Lawrence Bolen

Last year after we left the convention in Indianapolis, Frances and I visited her cousin in Plymouth Indiana for several days. We all decided to visit the Amish Hartland and the Flea Market in Shipshewana for the day. We walked and walked but to my surprise did not see any doorknobs but we did have a lot of fun.

After leaving her cousins we went North into Michigan for the day and then headed South toward St. Louis. While in St. Louis we visited Debbie Fellenz's shop and afterward went sight seeing.

From there we continued South to Memphis. We visited several Antique places but again we did not see any doorknobs. We left Memphis and headed East to Birmingham. We arrived in a rain storm so decided to check into a Motel.

We found out we were not far from several Antique places so, again we went to see what we could find. As we were browsing around I spotted a set of doorknobs, hinges, lock and plates. Much to my surprise the tag read Masonic door knobs. I looked again at the knobs and said to myself, "this can't be true as they are U.S. Treasury seal knobs." Again to my surprise the manufacturer's name was on the front of the dead bolt (Hopkins & Dickenson Mfg. Co.).

I called Frances over to look at them. We decided we



should buy this set as we would not see another set of knobs like these for sale. After chewing the owner down from her price we came home happy.

When we arrived home I made several pictures and sent them to Maude Eastwood. She said and I quote: "Are you fortunate! What a treasure to find".

We continue to look for doorknobs for there are still treasurers to be found.■

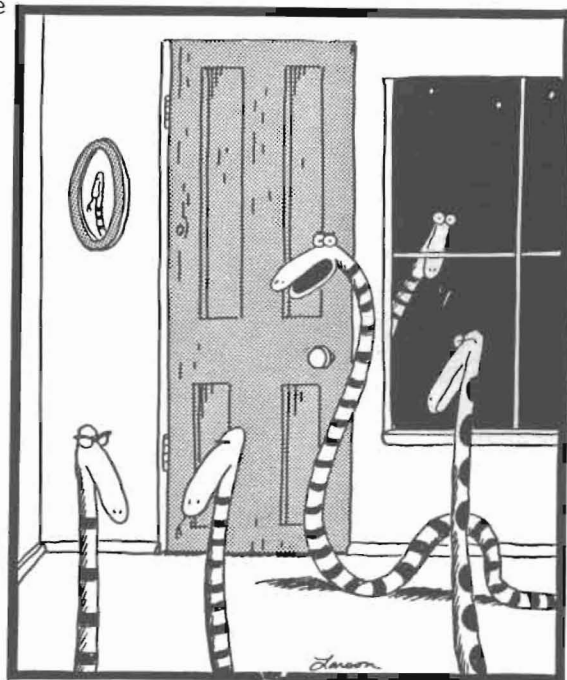


Historic Iowa City in 1989

Iowa City, Iowa, was the original site of Iowa's first state capitol. A.D.C.A. members will get a chance to see the historic National Landmark, the University of Iowa campus, the Amana Colonies and much more when they attend this year's A.D.C.A. annual convention, September 21 through the 24, 1989.

This is, of course, in addition to the fine program being lined up by the Byingtons. Usual favorites, such as the auction, buying and trading sessions, will be included. Don't forget A.D.C.A.'s annual meeting is held at that time and as always everyone is urged to attend and express their views.■

DISCOVER **IOWA**
TREASURES



"Hey, Bob wants in—does anyone know how to work this thing?"

CLASSIFIED AD SECTION



Membership Roster

The 1989 A.D.C.A. membership roster is enclosed with this issue to all paid members of the organization. The roster includes 164 members, an increase of 24 from last year at this time.

The 164 members are located in 33 states and one country (Canada). California leads with 25 members. Illinois is second with 15. However, the Midwest still holds the greatest concentration of members. The south, with no members in Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana has the fewest members. Several inquiries have been received from these states. New members have been added to the eastern coastal states due to some publicity we have been able to generate.

Following is the numbers of members at the time the roster has been printed:

1981 -	43
1982 -	71
1983 -	82
1984 -	90
1985 -	100
1986 -	105
1987 -	118
1988 -	140
1989 -	164

FOR SALE. Entire doorknob collection - 125 to 150 knobs (wood, ceramic, metals, glass) - 100 mounted with roses, some keyhole escutcheon, keyhole covers, plates, pairs. All in perfect condition. The cream of 20 year collecting. E.P. Dick (#13), 3701 Bryant Ave., So. #509, Minneapolis, MN 55409. Phone 612-827-8582.

FOR SALE OR TRADE. A-315, C-104. Best offer for one or both. Charles Wardell (#9), Box 195, Trinity, NC 27370.

FOR TRADE. Towne's Builders Hardware - Locks and Hardware, 1904. 1117 pages plus 16 page Index to Advertisements. (Book is listed on page 11 of Victorian Decorative Art.) Wanted catalog of equal value. Art Paholke (#51), 122 Hacienda Blvd., Hot Springs, AR 71909.

FOR TRADE. A-206, B-113, B-114, B-128, B-215, B-216, B-217, B-218, D-112, E-105, E-106, F-108, F-121, F-217, F-219, G-107, G-112, G-118, H-105, H-111, H-213, H-217, H-221, H-242, H-244, H-256, H-261, H-433, J-209, K-213, also knob number 3, page 189, of Antique Builders Hardware. Wanted B-101, B-106, B-107, B-207, B-213, C-104, D-122, E-101, E-117, H-109, K-101, K-302, L-107. Dale Sponaugle (#85), 247 Summit Ave., Buffalo, NY 14214-1933.

WANTED. Knobs, plates and locks, number H-244. Scott R. Bowles (#183), 870 Fell St., San Francisco, CA 94117.

FOR TRADE. Doggie A-101 plus a faceted cut crystal glass knob in exchange for any three of the following: A-104 Flying Bird, A-103 Irish Setter, A-301 Lady with bonnet, A-318 Man, C-111 Heart Knob. John Holland (#4), 3434 No. 47th Way, Phoenix, AZ 85018.

FOR TRADE. A-310 Greek Head (by Mallory Wheeler) plus a faceted cut crystal glass knob in exchange for either A-301 Lady with bonnet or A-318 Man. John Holland (#4), 3434 No. 47th Way, Phoenix, AZ 85018.

Show & Tell

Art Paholke's excellent collection of door hardware has been featured on television and in Keynotes publication this year.

Art's collection was featured on Chuck Dovish Action News, Channel 11, serving Central Arkansas. The program was seen on January 2, 1989.

The April 1989 issue of Keynotes, the official publication of Associated Locksmiths of America, Inc., presented a five page story and pictures by Paholke. There were 30 pictures, 18 of them in color. Readers got a glimpse of Art's collection, including some of his catalogs. There are a number of fine examples of hardware collectors are seeking.

There is even a picture of the knob bearing a likeness to Maud Eastwood. Paholke calls her the matriarch of doorknob collectors. ■