



The Doorknob Collector

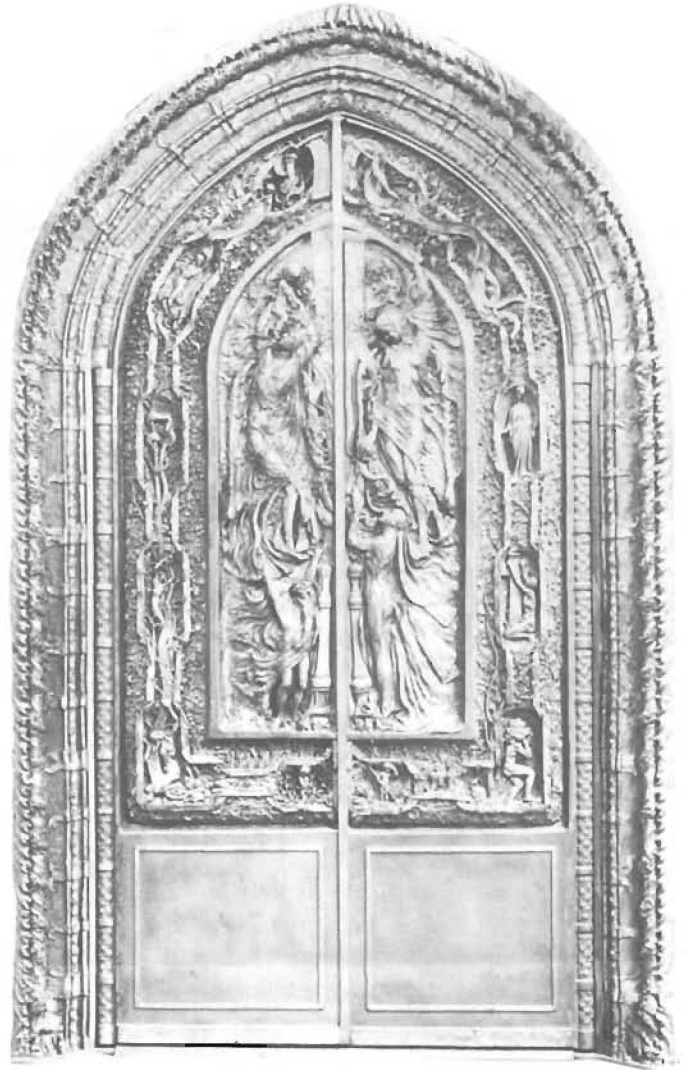
Number 72

July - August 1995

DOOR of LIFE

A highlight of the **ADCA** convention tour on Tuesday, August 15th will be a visit to the "**Door of Life**" at the Advance Aluminum and Brass, Inc.

The dream and work of an Italian immigrant, Felix Peano, the door was commissioned in 1914 and finally assembled in 1954. •



Have you sent in your registration?

It is time for the annual renewal of old acquaintances, the making of new ones, and a general immersion in doorknobs that happens once a year at the **ADCA** Annual Convention. If you have not made plans to attend the event, we hope you will consider being a part of this unique gathering of doorknob collectors and enjoy four days of none-stop hardware activities from August 15th through August 18th, 1995.

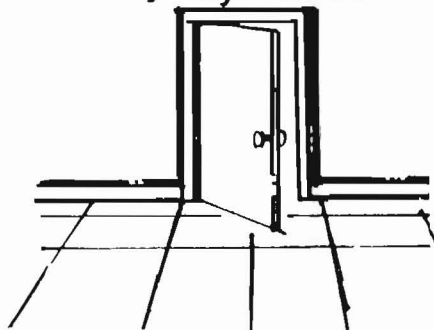
Registration forms were sent with the May-June issue of **The Doorknob Collector**. If you did not get a copy of the registration form or if you have any question, please call us at 708/357-2381.

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THE OPEN DOOR

by ray nemec



How many hardware museums and displays are there in the United States that are open to the public?

There are probably five that I could list. Some of the collections may be seen only by appointment. The most famous one is the **Lock Museum of America** located in Terryville, Connecticut. It is open to the public May through October, Tuesday and Sunday.

There are probably a lot more than the five I know about. Has any member done research on this subject?

The Doorknob Collector would like to publish a list of the antique hardware display locations. If you know of any, please send us the name, location, when they are opened to the public (or if a reservation is needed). A telephone number would be helpful. It is always a good idea to call to verify they will be opened.

I had an experience just recently to show why this is necessary. I knew the museum holding the Barrows Lock Company exhibit was open Tuesday through Sunday. When I got there on Wednesday it was closed. By calling ahead I could have arranged to be there on a day I could see the Barrows display. Next time I will call.

Please send us the information on hardware museums. I think all the members will find this very useful.

We will also find out just how many antique hardware displays are available to us. •



Just how many pieces of cut crystal doorknobs are there? You will have to come see for yourself at the Annual Doorknob Collectors Convention in Santa Monica, California. The above Waterford Crystal doorknob is from Betty Madison collection.

Identifying doorknobs

This is the eighth of a series which cross-references the number appearing in Lionel Moes 1984 catalog with those assigned by Leonard Blumin.

Moes <u>Enterprises</u> <u>Catalog</u>	Len Blumin's <u>Victorian Decorative</u> <u>Art</u>
A-115	F-208
A-116	N/A
A-117	K-210
A-118	H-413
A-119	N/A
A-120	H-254
A-121	H-226
A-122	N/A
A-123	H-403
A-124	F-230

(Compiled by Edward Sobczak)

The theme for the 1995 convention will be on Glass doorknobs, Pairpoint and Technical Glass Companies.



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Founded in September 1981, the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America** is a non-profit organization devoted to those interested in collecting and preservation of Antique Doorknobs and related hardware.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writer and not necessarily reflect those of the Board of Directors of ADCA or the editors of **The Doorknob Collector**.

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From Niles to Sager The Story of the Chicago Hardware Company

by Raymond J. Nemeč

(Continued from May/June 1995 issue 71 of *The Doorknob Collector*.)

IX

Charles W. Sager would become the key "player" of the North Chicago based hardware company for the next twenty-five years beginning in 1907.

The first decade of the Twentieth Century was a period of inventions and development. Henry Ford began production of automobiles in 1903 and his famous Model T began a twenty year production run in late 1908. Orville and Wilbur Wright had their first successful flight in 1903. During 1904 and 1905 the Wright Brothers made some of the most significant contributions to aeronautics.

Radio, also, was advancing during this period. Commercial companies were making their initial stand. Amateur radio began in late 1904 with interest picking up in 1905. The fascination of sending messages through space without wires began taking hold, not only to private experimenters but also to the younger generation.

It was during this period that Charles W. Sager would emerge as President of two companies. He was forty years old in January 1907 and President of the Barrows Lock Company and the Chicago Hardware Company.

Charles Warner Sager was born on June 14, 1866 at Birmingham, England, the third of five children born to Richard Gibson and Harriet Norton Sager. Shortly after Charles was born, the family moved to the United States. Involved in the business of importing and exporting cotton, Richard Sager eventually moved his family to Mobile, Alabama, considered in the 1860s as the hub of cotton exporting.

The fortunes of the Sager family took a tragic turn at Mobile when the father, Richard, died. The mother, Harriet, took her five children and moved to Lockport, Illinois, where she had relatives. Harriet Sager's maiden name was Norton. She was born in Ontario, Canada. Her family had been instrumental in the development of Lockport.

Lockport, located 33 miles southwest of Chicago, by the 1860s had become a leading commercial center on the Illinois-Michigan Canal, largely through the efforts of Hiram Norton and his family. Hiram Norton was thirty-eight years old when he journeyed from Ontario, Canada, to Lockport in 1837. By 1842, six years before the Illinois-Michigan Canal would open, he was engaged in running a general store and in a grain forwarding operation. He also acted as agent for farmers selling their grain.

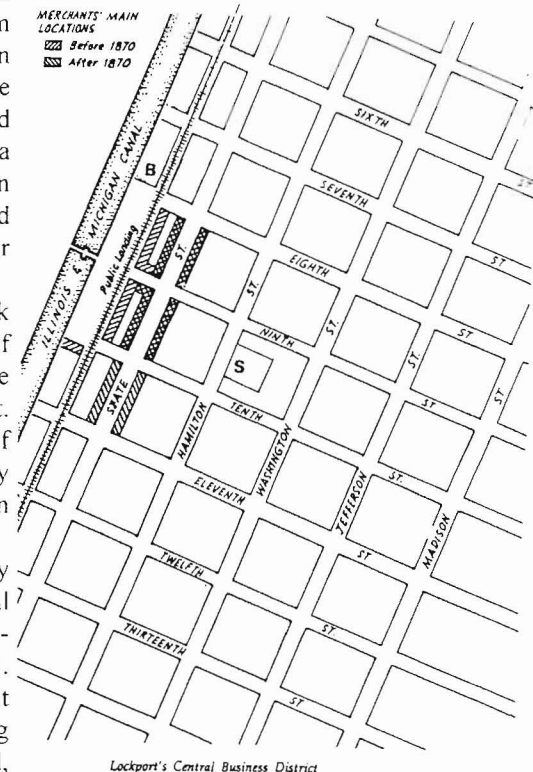
Lockport Legacy, a book published by the University of Chicago in 1990, detailed the Norton operations in Lockport. Primarily in the business of shipping grain, the Norton family had a great deal of activity in commercial and retail sales.

Lockport, originally platted by the Illinois and Michigan Canal commissioners in 1836, was incorporated as a village in 1853. Hiram Norton served as President from 1854 to 1856. It was during this period the Rock Island railroad, in competition with the Illinois and Michigan (I&M) canal elected to by-pass Lockport when it laid track from Chicago to Joliet. At the time, Joliet was competing with Lockport as the leading commerce center of the area.

Norton was instrumental in forming a railroad, the Joliet and Chicago railroad, to give Lockport a direct rail connection with Chicago. The railroad later became part of the Chicago and Alton and survives today as part of the ICG railroad.

Hiram Norton had married Rhoda Kingsley in 1826. While living in Canada they had two sons, Lemuel D. Norton in 1828 and John L. Norton in 1838 and while in Lockport, a daughter, Mary, was born in 1842. A year later Rhoda died.

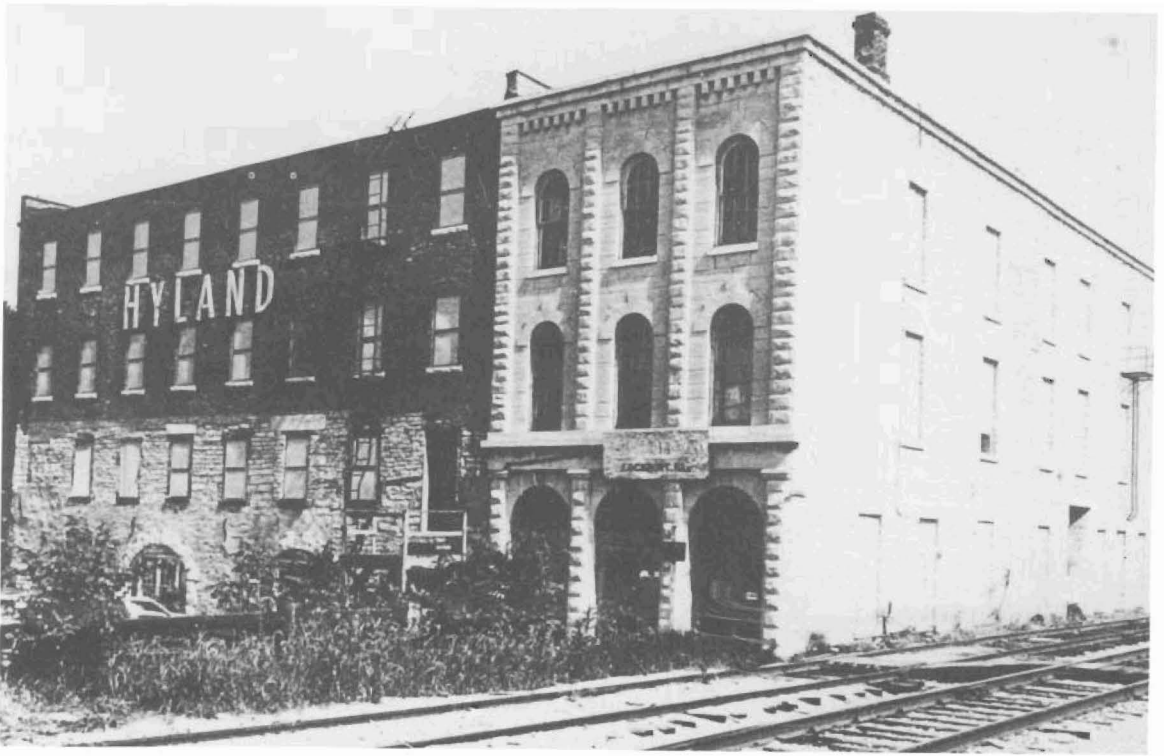
Hiram married again. Elizabeth Sager was eight years younger and



Lockport's Central Business District

Downtown Lockport Shows (B) Barrows Lock Co. Location and (S) Charles W. Sager's Home.

The above Merchants Location map from *Lockport Legacy*.



Above picture, taken in 1979, shows the former Barrows Lock Company. Lower Left (Limestone) Building was built in 1837, brick addition above it was added in 1902. Building to the right was built in early 1860s. Building has since been completely renovated. (1979 Photo by Jet Lowe for Historic American Engineering Records)

they would remain together until Hiram died on April 1, 1875. They had three sons, James born in 1845, Edward born in 1846 and George born in 1848.

This was the village young Charles Sager and his family came to after his father's death. He would spend forty years living in Lockport. Charles' formal education ended in sixth grade. He went to work, loading and unloading for the Norton company, on docks of the I&M canal. Later he would go to work for a man named Barrows.

X

Barrows established a brass foundry in 1890. It was located in the Gaylord Building owned by the Nortons. The first recorded listing of the Barrows Lock Company was in January 1892.

Hiram N. Sager, Morris M. Herriman and Adolphe Vieser, on January 16, 1892, filed a proposal with the Illinois Secretary

of State to form a corporation under Illinois laws. They stated:

1. The name of such corporation is Barrows Lock Company.
2. The object for which it is formed is to manufacture, buy, sell and deal in builders hardware, and to carry on a general manufacturing and commercial business.
3. The capital stock shall be Twenty-five Thousand Dollars.
4. The amount of each share shall is One Hundred Dollars.
5. The number of shares, Two Hundred and Fifty.
6. The location of the principal office is in Lockport, in the County of Will, State of Illinois.

On January 18, 1892, Isaac Pearson, Secretary of State for Illinois, granted Sager, Merriman and Vieser the right to open the books for subscription of Barrows Lock Company stock. The stock was fully subscribed. Owners were:

(Name)	(Shares)	(Amount)
John L. Norton	90	\$9000
Lemuel D. Norton	90	\$9000
J. C. McMullin	50	\$5000
William G. Norton	20	\$2000

On February 1, 1892, the three Nortons were elected directors.

Hiram Norton Sager never took an active roll in the operation of the hardware business. Hiram, the oldest child of Robert and Harriet Sager, was seven years older than his brother Charles. He was born in June 1859 in Birmingham, England. Hiram attended the University of Wisconsin and while in the state met Julia. who would become his wife. She was born in November 1866 in Wisconsin. They had three daughters, Harriet born in July 1889, Ruth born in January 1892 and Mildred who was born in 1901.

Hiram joined the grain operations of Norton and Company in their Chicago office. He became Treasurer of the company, a

position he held for many years. Sager became a member of the Chicago Board of Trade in 1886 and served the Board as President in 1907 and 1908. With the bankruptcy of Norton and Company in 1906, Hiram Sager joined J. H. Dole and Company and was the managing head of the grain receiving house at the time of his death on October 29, 1924. He was survived by his wife and three daughters.

A mystery that may never be resolved is why was he named Hiram Norton Sager? Was he named for the founder of Norton and Company or were his names the result of Hiram being a popular family name and the Norton simply his mother's maiden name? The fact that Hiram Norton married a Sager makes one wonder if this alliance brought Richard Sager and Harriet Norton together and prompted the Sagers to name their first born in honor of Hiram Norton.

XI

The rise to prominence of Charles Warner Sager at Barrows Lock Company was swift once his relatives, the Nortons, took control of the company. By 1895, he was firmly entrenched as the Secretary and Treasurer of the company.

His rise to a key position at Barrows was not without hardship and tragedy. He married Fanny Bigelow and on October 11, 1893, a daughter, Mabel, was born. Soon after, Fanny died.

Charles would marry Corinne Harpham. She was born in August 1868 in Havana, Illinois. They lived at 922 Hamilton Street in Lockport. A son, Charles H. Sager was born in 1902 and a daughter, Jean, was born in 1909.

Although his formal education was limited, this did not handi-

cap Charles Sager. He was considered a very articulate speaker and admired by his peers. This undoubtedly led to his election as President of the American Hardware Manufacturers Association (AHMA). Through the AHMA he cultivated many friendships with other members of the association, including some of the most influential people in the industry.

At the turn of the century, 1900, Barrows was doing well. John L. Norton was President and Charles W. Sager was Secretary-Treasurer. They would remain in these offices until 1906.

Lockport's population in 1900 was 2,659. The village's population had been 1,679 in 1880 and had increased to 2,449 in 1890. A new canal was being built. The Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, running parallel to the Illinois and Michigan canal, had faced years of litigation by the commissioners of the I&M. The new canal which had reached Lockport by 1903, was extended to Joliet by 1907. Lockport, deriving its name from the fact that the controlling locks were located there, changed from a village to a city charter in 1904.

In 1902 the Barrows Lock Company increased its capital stock from \$25,000 to \$110,000. It also built a brick two story addition above the original structure. However, there were dark clouds on the horizon. Norton and Company was having financial problems. The depression of 1893 had hurt the operation. By 1896, grain prices were at the lowest levels ever known. There was also a trend of companies to consolidate. Norton and Company remained independent. However in 1906 it was bankrupt.

The Barrows Lock Company, owned by the Nortons was a casualty of their financial problems. Arrangements were made in April 1906 where David B. Gann and Walter C. Haight, both of Chicago, bought the assets of the Barrows Lock Company. Charles W. Sager filed papers with the Illinois Secretary of State to change the name of the Norton owned Barrows Lock Company to that of the Barrows Hardware Company. This cleared the way for Gann and Haight to file for a new corporation using the Barrows Lock Company name. This occurred in May 1906.

Gann, Haight and Charles W. Sager were elected to the board of directors of the new company. Sager became President and Treasurer. Gann became Secretary.

The Barrows Hardware Company, now a company existing in name only failed to file an annual report with the State of Illinois in 1907. A certificate of cancellation was entered against the company on March 5, 1907. The State, thirteen years later, on May 25, 1920, issued a final decree dissolving the Barrows Hardware Company.

At the time Gann took over the ownership of Barrows it was estimated there were over 250 employees at the site.

Within six months of the Barrows purchase, Gann bought the Chicago Hardware Company of North Chicago, Illinois. With Sager already running Barrows as the President and Treasurer, he added those titles and responsibilities to Chicago Hardware. He and his family would remain living on Hamilton Street and Sager would run both companies from his Barrows office.

The site of the Barrows operation in Lockport is known as the Gaylord Building. The original section had been built of limestone in 1837 to store provisions and supplies for the construction of the I&M canal. After the canal was completed in 1848, it was largely unused until 1851. In that year, George Martin and Daniel Townsend bought the building from the canal commissioners and erected grain elevators and a two story frame structure. Martin bought Townsend out in 1853. His operations, including a lumber yard and a grocery business flourished for a number of years but by 1878 Martin was bankrupt.

In 1859 Martin hired Julius Scheibe, a master stone mason to construct a three-story Italiante stone structure on the east end of the original limestone building. It was completed in the early 1860s.

When Martin went bankrupt in 1878, George Gaylord bought the three-unit building from him. Gaylord came to Lockport in 1847 and by 1878 had become one of the village's most prosperous residents. Gaylord, who died five years later, in 1883, made no additions to the building. Upon his death the Norton family acquired the structures.

The Nortons apparently leased most of the building to others until they bought the Barrows Lock Company in 1892. Barrows placed the two-story brick addition above the original limestone structure in 1902. That was last major construction to be done.

When Gann bought the Barrows assets in 1906 they included the buildings. The buildings remained under Barrows ownership until 1925 when Yale & Towne bought the them. They held title to the buildings until 1945. A printing company oc-

cupied it for a short period. Hyland Plumbing Supply bought it in 1948 and was the last occupant until a group of Gaylord's descendants formed the Gaylord Lockport Company in 1983 to restore the historic structure.

Today, the former home of the Barrows Lock Company is known officially as the Gaylord Building. It houses a small Barrows display, a visitor center for the I&M canal, a restaurant/banquet facility and a gallery of the Illinois State Museum.

(From *Niles to Sager, The Story of the Chicago Hardware Company*, including more information on the Barrows Lock Co. and the Sager Lock Co., by Raymond J. Nemeec, will be continued in the next issue of *The Doorknob Collector*.)

Niles Knob

A supplement to *Ornamental Design in Antique Doorknobs* by Len Blumin.



G-152 No. 5. Shown in Chicago Hardware Manufacturing Co. catalog #6, 1895, page 115. Design, Acorn. Diameter, 2-3/8 inches. Weight, 9 oz.

Swap meet held in Joliet, Illinois

They came from five states. A total of 32 members, relatives and friends gathered at the mansion owned by John Audlee and Deanna Opsahl on Saturday, May 20th to swap hardware and enjoy a day of camaraderie.

The occasion was the first **ADCA** promoted regional swap meet held since the organization was formed in 1981. Members came to Joliet, Illinois, from California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Michigan to visit the famous Scutt mansion now owned by Audlee and Opsahl and enjoyed a full day of trading and visiting with fellow **ADCA** members.

Four new members were welcomed to their first **ADCA** function. They were John Audlee (and Deanna Opsahl), William Berry, Robert Johnson (and Beth Anna Orwitz) and Yvonne and Ralph Watts.

Others in attendance were Lillian and Dick Balasa, Gene and Miriam DeLange, Liz Gordon, Roy and Bonnie Hajek, Junella and Glenn Leach, Ardythe and Gerald Leaders, Barbara and Steve Menchhofer, Loretta and Ray Nemeec, Craig Phillips and his mother, Helen and Orval Ryan, Homer and Mary Snow, Ed Sobczak, Carol and Eugene Stone and Rich Wise.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the swap meet and all were in favor of doing it again. However it may be difficult to hold it at a location that will be comparable to John and Deanna's mansion overlooking the river and the city of Joliet. •

Vaseline Glass

Did you ever wonder what your Vaseline glass doorknob is worth? A pair of Vaseline glass doorknobs are pictured in the book, **Yellow-Green Vaseline!, A Guide to The Magic Glass**, by Jay L. Glickman. In a separate 1992-93 Value Guide the pair of mint condition knobs are priced at \$170.00.



Photo above. Silent ADCA guest deeply engrossed in *The Doorknob Collector*.



Center Photo. Bonnie & Roy Hajek are caught by the camera as they come down the staircase in the Audlee Mansion.

Upper Right. Robert Johnson in foreground watches presentation, while Yvonne Watt, Helen Ryan, Gene & Carol Stone and Steve Menchhofer look on.

Lower Photo. Deanna Opsahl & John Audlee express sincere happiness in receiving a copy of Len Blumin's book, *Victorian Decorative Art*, given as a gift from the ADCA members for their hosting the swap meet.

Niles Knobs

A supplement to *Ornamental Design in Antique Doorknobs* by Len Blumin.

H-280 **Niles No. 6.** Originally shown in issue No. 33 (Jan.-Feb. 1989). Vernacular, a small knob. Diameter, 2-1/8 inches. Weight, 7.5 ounces.

H-466 **Niles No. 7.** Originally shown in Len Blumin's book, page H-50 diameter, 2-7/32 inches. Weight, only 4 ounces.

H-280



H-466





From The Archives

by Steve & Barbara Menchhofer

P & F CORBIN - 1895

This catalog was made available to the membership for the first time in the January-February issue of **The Doorknob Collector**. It was offered in selected and knob design pages. We do not have the complete catalog.

For those who collect doorknobs only, the knob design pages are for you. But for those of you who also collect related hardware items the selected pages are great! There are 118 pages of drawings of bell levers, bell pulls, electric push buttons, store door handles, door pulls, push plates, shutter knobs, door knockers, plate escutcheons, doorknobs and escutcheons, plus one drawing of a double stroke doorbell with lever and one drawing of a rim knob lock.

Everything in this catalog is detailed very nicely. Designs include Brocade, Dresden, Florence, Madrid, Empire and Romanesque among many others. For you Corbin collectors, these catalog pages are an excellent choice.

We will see you in California in August at the **ADCA** convention. We'll be bringing some of the catalog copies for the members to browse through. So don't forget to stop at the Archives table. •

DEADLINE

All ads, material and articles for the September-October 1995 issue of **The Doorknob Collector** should be in the hands of the editors by August 25, 1995.

The Doorknob Exchange

Members are reminded that your dues entitle you to advertise items for sale, trade or wanted at no charge. **ADCA** is not responsible for any transaction or the condition of the items advertised.

For Sale: Pennsylvania Railroad knob (see picture, Chicago Hardware, Niles shank). \$125.00 or trade
Bob Rodder (#167)
1203 Bruce Road
Oreland, PA 19075
PH: 215-885-1488.

Service: Jewelry quality cleaning service for all hardware. Very reasonable prices, quick service, references.

John or Ken Spahr (#402)
Lilac Shed Antiques,
Route 17, P.O. Box 206
Washington, ME 04574
PH: 207-845-2263.

Wanted: Entry sets or double keyhole plates as shown in Moes catalogue, page B-1 item #B7, page B-4 item #B25, page C-17 items # C351, C352, C367, C374, C375 & C376, update B-3 item number B57, update B-5 item # C455, C456 and C458. I also want thumb latch plates similar to or exactly like those shown in Moes catalogue page I-3, item numbers I45, I47, I48.

Tim Risse (#408)
P.O. Box 317
Sheridan, CA 95681-0317.

Wanted:
Your ad should be here.



OBITUARY

Donald C. Hill, a member of the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America** since August 22, 1993, died recently.

Mr. Hill resided in Pasadena, California. He was an avid collector of antique hardware.

His son, Ronald C. Hill, has asked if any of the members attending the **ADCA** convention in August might be interested in purchasing his collection. They can contact him at (Phone) 812-441-6659 for further information.

Niles Knob

A supplement to *Ornamental Design in Antique Doorknobs* by Len Blumin.



O-179 Niles No. 8.

Pennsylvania Railroad. A variation of D-115. Diameter, 2-1/4 inches. Weight, 8.5 oz.

U.S. Patent

Invention number Chart

Last issue's table, the fifth in the series, omitted the first number in the last column. The Column is being repeated in this issue with the correct numbers..

YEAR PATENT NUMBERS

1920	1,326,899	through	1,364,062
1921	1,364,063	through	1,401,947
1922	1,401,948	through	1,440,361
1923	1,440,362	through	1,478,995
1924	1,478,996	through	1,521,589
1925	1,521,590	through	1,568,039
1926	1,568,040	through	1,612,699
1927	1,612,700	through	1,654,520
1928	1,654,521	through	1,696,896
1929	1,696,897	through	1,742,180

Club Founder Claimed by Cancer

ARNOLD A. FREDRICK



Arnold A. Fredrick, credited with being one of the founders of the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America**, died of cancer at the Waverly Municipal Hospital in Waverly, Iowa, on June 27, 1995. He was 67 years old.

Fredrick was born October 31, 1927 at Strawberry Point, Iowa. He served in the United States Army Air Force from 1946 to 1948, attaining the rank of Sergeant. He later attended Wartburg College in Waverly Iowa, and the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Commerce degree in 1953. He married Gloria Theo (Tedi) Nellor in 1952.

Arnie was employed by Lutheran Mutual Life Insurance Company, Waverly, Iowa from 1953 to 1984, and by the State Bank of Waverly from 1986 until he retired in 1995.

Fredrick began collecting doorknobs about 1976. Arnie started collecting door knobs more or less by accident. He said, "I had picked some doorknobs from

old houses that were being demolished, but I just threw them in a box, brought these home and sort of forgot about them.

Writing in the January 1985 issue of **The Doorknob Collector**, Arnie said, "in 1976, while visiting an antique store (owned by Bill Fellenz) in St. Louis, I bought three doorknobs for three dollars each and my life never has been the same."

"One of the first things I did upon my return from the trip to St. Louis was to look through the box I had set aside and forgotten. I discovered several fine doorknobs and, with the three from St. Louis, I now had the start of a collection."

In the January 1985 article Arnie wrote his favorite knobs were the ones on his house which was built by a member of the Curtis Family, owners of a hardware store, in 1909. The Fredricks were only the second owners of the house.

One of his most revered knobs was the one from the door of the bedroom he was born in at Strawberry Point.

Recalling how the club was formed, Arnie said that the late Emil Miller and he met in January 1981 and the idea of a doorknob convention was hatched. Arnie thought the Red Fox Inn in Waverly would be an ideal site. A September 1981 date was selected and at that gathering the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America** was formed.

Arnie served many roles in the club's 14 years. He was ADCA's first Vice President serving from September 1981 until September 1982. He was President of the club from September 1982 to September 1983. He served on the board of directors from September 1983 to September 1985 and again September 1988 until his death.

Although he did not initiate the popular ADCA auction, Arnie helped develop it. He had a professional auctioneer conduct the auction when the convention returned to Waverly in 1984. The ideas and procedures developed from that auction left Arnie as the chairman of the function for the next ten years.

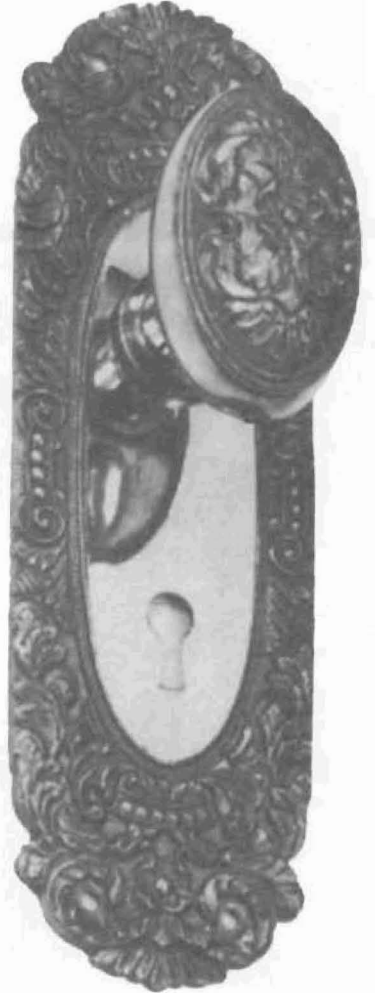
In addition to his wife, Gloria (Tedi), he is survived by his daughter Candice Brekhus and her husband, Mel, of Irving, Texas, his son Thomas Fredrick and his wife, Kathryn, of Kansas City, Missouri, and seven grandchildren. •

Fredrick told about favorite knobs

(Writing in the January 1985 issue of **The Doorknob Collector**, the late Arnold Fredrick told about the doorknobs on his home which he regarded as his favorites. The story of why these were his favorites is repeated here - editors.)

Because the Curtis family was in the hardware business, the door hardware and other finishings in the house are of the highest quality. The local newspaper has stated that "the doors featured elaborate doorknobs with intricately scrolled plates." The door hardware is the "Alexandria" design by the Lockwood Manufacturing Company and is pictured on page 120 of Maudie's second book. [Maud L. Eastwood, **Antique Builders' Hardware - Knobs & Accessories.**] These doorknobs sparked my interest in antique door hardware, although I did not start collecting until 1976. The design was apparently not popular since I have seen only one other knob of the same design.

Incidentally, the S.H. Curtis hardware store was established in Waverly in 1855. In addition to the Lockwood doorknobs, the store also sold door hardware manufactured by The Parker & Whipple Company, West Meridan, Connecticut. The hardware store founder's grandson operated the store until about 1975. After the store was sold, the purchaser found a letter written by the president of Parker & Whipple. The letter was handwritten on October 11, 1877 in response to a letter written by Mr. Curtis wherein he complained about the discount on his last doorknob order. That letter and a Parker & Whipple brochure are reproduced on pages 176-177 of Maudie's book. •



"Alexandria"