



The Doorknob Collector

Number 77

May- June 1996

ADCA Convention, Grand Rapids, Michigan - July 24-27, 1996

1996 Theme - Porcelain

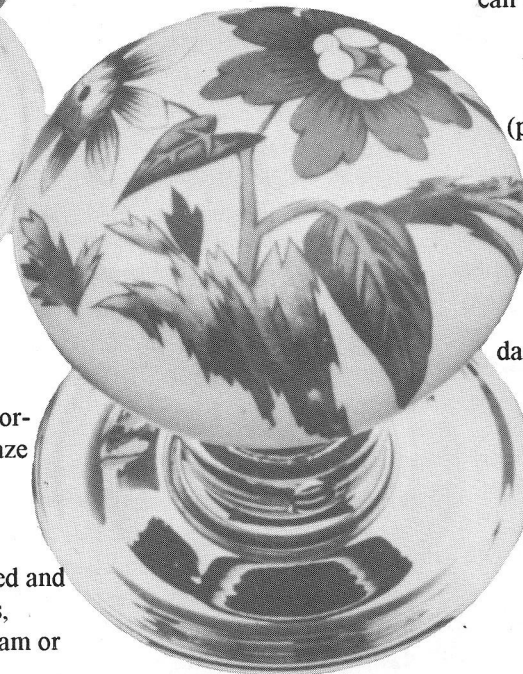
by Maud Eastwood

How confident do you who read the description of porcelain in the last issue feel that you are ready to discuss the term with ease? Few? Any? Read on, there are mitigating circumstances that apply. Do not be too critical on yourself.

An authority had this to say on the subject of defining porcelain, Quote, "The man who has never held a piece of porcelain in his hand and looked at it, could never understand what it is from a word description." (Warren E. Cox, pottery and porcelain historian) Where does this leave collectors who hold their ceramic doorknobs in their hands, unable to view the body that is usually hidden from view by glaze and decoration? How are they to determine a pottery, stoneware, or porcelain body?

The second sage remark by Mr. Cox prompts me to ask that if any among us has potting experience, that he show at convention. As this expert explained, "The man who has never made a piece of porcelain, can never **REALLY** understand

it either." For starters to understanding porcelain, pick up your ADCA mug (porcelain) and try to scratch the surface with a piece of steel. Because it is porcelain, neither the body that shows through on the bottom rim or the covering glaze will show damage. (Note the white body beneath the cream glaze.) knobs do show the body was wiped off (so they in the firing) a visit to an Here various ceramic and feel of the formative smooth) teapots, porcelain cups and whiteware table ware,



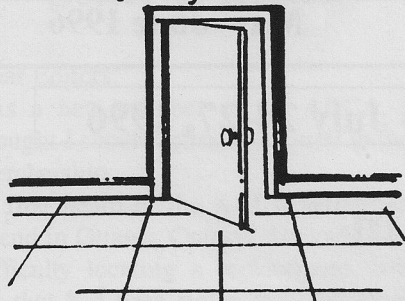
Because dishes, vessels, etc. unlike door- of the ware on the bottom where the glaze will not become bonded to the sagger antique mall is strongly recommended. wares may be examined for a look material. Look for terra-cotta bodied (red and stoneware jugs, trivets, saucers, platters, saucers, plates, figurines, vases and cream or etc. (continued on page 7))

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THE OPEN DOOR

by ray nemec



The date that appears on your mailing label is a reminder that your membership dues must be paid by that date to avoid interruption in your membership and mailings. Thus, if a 1/1/97 appears on your label, to insure no delays in receiving *The Doorknob Collector* and to have your name on the new roster, dues should be paid prior to the date on the envelope.

If you have hardware on display, appear on the radio or television or have an article written about you and or doorknob collecting we hope that you will share it with us. In April, a portion of Loretta's collection appeared on a new television program in Chicago, a Sunday morning show hosted by Channel 2 (WBBM-TV) weatherman, Steve Baskerville. ADCA member Danielle Arnet appeared on the program to enlighten Baskerville and the Channel 2 audience on antique ornamental hardware.

We enlisted Richard Wise and our son, Tom Nemeč, to help bring the hardware into the downtown Chicago TV studios.

As I write this column, I am not certain if the Convention Registration will be included with this issue or not. If it is not enclosed a separate mailing will be made in about one or two weeks. Let us make this the biggest and best convention yet. Gene and Miriam DeLange, Florence Jarvis, Betty Madison, Jackie Rode and all our Michigan members are looking forward to helping you have a great time in Grand Rapids, Michigan. •

Meet Your Board of Directors

Each issue *The Doorknob Collector* will feature the pictures of an ADCA member who is on the Board of Directors. In this issue we present:



MAUD EASTWOOD

Although some have been collecting doorknobs longer than Maudie Eastwood, none have contributed more to the history and the hobby of collecting than she has. A charter member of ADCA, Maudie has been on the Board of Directors since 1983 and has served a term as Vice President and President. •

Bits & Pieces

by President Win Applegate

Architectural salvage companies. Many metropolitan areas have at least one. In Chicago, it's SALVAGE ONE. Atlanta has at least two.

New York City, where I worked for many years, is no exception. I have had for some time in my files, a request from Al and Janet Still to purchase a knob of my choice for them from one of these New York City firms. Because of the prices there, I haven't had the nerve to do so.

I was again reminded of this firm several years ago as I received two calls from West Coast members who had received notice of Louis H. Sullivan hardware to be auctioned off in Manhattan.

Two days prior to the auction I visited the site and inspected the 'goods'. The knobs and plates, pardon me . . . 'escutcheons', were from the Chicago

Stock Exchange and were fine examples of both the large and small sets.

Without going into the details, once it was determined the "others", namely me, were interested in these pieces, an apparent quick shuffle took place and on auction day, these lots went off before I even got on the train to New York City. Yes, this was certainly odd and had caused me to ponder and ponder, but??

Now, shifting the time to the Fall of 1995, I was visiting the Metropolitan Museum of Art (in New York City) to see its Christmas displays. The Henry R. Luce Center in the American Wing is chuck-full of fine antiques and cases upon cases of 'smalls' from glass to metal that represent a broad range of early American artistry and design.

(continued on page 4)

Antique Doorknob Collectors of America Board of Directors 1995/1997

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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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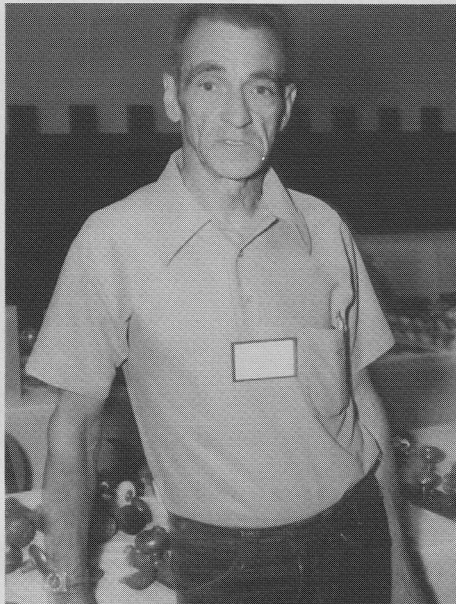
"Only Yesterday"

by Charles Wardell

Entering Waverly, Iowa after a three day drive from North Carolina, I discovered a police car following me. I had been speeding in a 20 mph zone and I expected to be stopped but the police turned off. I took this as a welcome to town and found a genuine welcome at the Red Fox Inn. There, Arnie Fredrick directed me to the lobby where several other collectors were gathered. Arnie, along with Emil Miller, had called a meeting of all known doorknob collectors here for a three-day session with the purpose of organizing a club in answer to many requests. This was to be the organizational convention of the new **ANTIQUÉ DOORKNOB COLLECTORS OF AMERICA**. There were 21 collectors from 11 states, all eager to meet the others and to begin friendships that would continue for years. Many had met before and many letters and packages had exchanged hands but here was the opportunity to meet and talk and trade in an atmosphere akin to paradise!

After years of activities in junk shops, demolition sites, abandoned buildings and landfills we were socializing like decent people. As of September 13, 1981, we were legitimate! Doorknob collecting is miserly and shocking to the uninformed and, even today, when everything is collected, we are an enigma. Why do we do it? Well, why not? The jewels of a building are on the doors and the hardware is, oftentimes, the only artistic expression in sight. Much information about the present and previous occupants, the age of the structure, past usage and pride of ownership can be gleaned by a close inspection of the hardware. Writers go to great detail in describing the floorboards, paneling, brickwork and wavy glass windows but nothing is said about the hardware (unless it being handmade) and the first greeting we get is at the

door and the last words are said there. In some surroundings, the doorknob is the only item we are allowed to touch. So, why the secret? I'm not satisfied with just a visual inspection in the majority of cases.



Charlie Wardell 1981

The hardware industry in America had its beginnings in 1833 in Terryville, Connecticut and, following the Civil War, grew immensely, supplying the hardware to a booming building industry after years of frugality. Manufactories in New England, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, Iowa, New Jersey and other states made ornamental hardware in many hundreds of patterns. In 1904, Yale & Towne alone had a selection of 250 designs to choose from.

The emergence of The United States as the most prosperous and powerful nation on earth amazed the old countries as well as our forefathers. We were free of foreign dictates and, largely, independent in thoughts thus new designs appeared in our decoration which some call ginger-bread and others by less endearing terms. Whatever you think of the

ornamentation, respect it as the personality of an era. A new form of design showed up on our hardware also and an apt name is vernacular-native style. This decoration appears on a large percentage of very attractive hardware made in America in the years from 1870-1920. These dates coincide with an era of intense pride in workmanship and the finest hardware in history was produced. A decline in selection (and quality) has persisted over the last two generations and we, the doorknob collectors, possess a national treasure that not even the Smithsonian Institution can boast of.

Philosophy class over, return to early days with me. When the A.D.C.A. was formed in 1981, I had nearly twenty years experience in the hobby. Prices at shops and wrecking yards were less than a dollar for a nice cast brass or bronze knob and I marvel, still, at the artistry and craftsmanship in them. Fred Magnus found his first knob in 1940. I think he was the first person with my malady I had heard of. Fred appeared on the network television show, "What's My Line?", and stumped the panel of experts. He had to tell them what it was he did. Unless Maud Eastwood gives us the date of her first knob she was interested in them as a child) Fred will win another prize. I learned that only recently Fred had died. His endearing personality will always be remembered and all who met him will miss him at the conventions. I'll also remember the prized red glass knob and his "genuine door knob" from China.

Most collectors began in the 1970s when there was an abundance of hardware to be found and a club was on several minds. After publication of "*The Antique Doorknob*" Maud Eastwood became the clearing-house for all interested parties and "the ball began rolling" (an example of the vernacular in speech) this time, "everyway at once". Len Blumin sent his check of \$25 for dues in a club that

(Continued on page 4)

Yesterday (continued from page 3)

was not yet in existence. Jim Kaiser offered financial aid if someone would start a club and a chorus of collectors voiced the same desire. Rich Kennedy published a newsletter in the late 1970's and into 1981. His tenth newsletter had Arnie's offer to host a convention in Waverly. The rest is history.

Many knob collectors, including me, had a desire to write a book on the subject but there was so little to base it on I gave up. My early years included, in addition to finding doorknobs, countless hours in libraries and book-stalls searching and finding nothing on the subject. However, Maud knew where to look and compiled her first book that was (and still) our first reference on doorknobs. She in 1982 published her "Antique Builders Hardware". Then, in 1983, Len published his "Victorian Decorative Art". Other than newspaper and magazine articles, I know of no other writings on ornamental hardware. Do we feel neglected? Well, yes but we may take comfort in knowing that the dearth of information on hardware has kept the prices down and we have practically had the field alone. The renovators and antique dealers have discovered hardware and, alas, in rare instances values have increased a hundred fold. So I say, "Get started in the hobby now", before it is too late.

What lies in the future? Only time will tell. Twenty years ago I was certain there were no more patterns I could add to my collection but every year I add others. Although the selection isn't as it was a few years ago, the joy is increased with each new find. I fantasize about the long closed warehouse, filled with hardware of the yesterdays, that lies just over the next hill. Dreaming is a balm for all those disappointments. Maybe you'll spot a sale sign on your next trip. Happy hunting!

(Another chapter of this early recollection of doorknob fever is forthcoming. Your own unique experiences would be appreciated for inclusion.)



Charlie Wardell 1994

THE ADCA BOOK PEDDLER	
Book	Prices
Antique Builders Hardware (soft cover style) by Maud Eastwood	\$19.50
Antique Builders Hardware (three ring binder w/hard cover) by Maud Eastwood	\$21.50
Supplement No. 1 Antique Builders Hardware by Maud Eastwood	\$ 6.00
150 Years of Builders' Hardware: Forms, Use & Lore (three ring binder w/hard cover) by Maud Eastwood	\$27.50
150 Years of Builders' Hardware: Forms, Use & Lore (soft cover-style)	\$22.50
Victorian Decorative Art by Len Blumin	\$12.00
Moes' Enterprise Catalog of Authentic Pre-1929 Hardware (1984) by Leonard Moes	\$12.50
*Canadian orders, add extra \$1.00 per book Prices include shipping and handling costs. Make check payable to ADCA Mail order to ADCA Book Peddler P.O. Box 126 Eola, IL 60519-0126	

Bits & Pieces (continued from p.2)

There, almost shouting out at me because of their readily identifiable shape, was on full set of Chicago Stock Exchange knobs with plates (small). Within the same case were other examples of closure hardware, from hinges to pistol latches (door locks) from the 1700s to the late 1800s.

The obvious question . . . could these be from the quick shuffle auction of a few years ago?

The Luce Wing is serviced by a computer system for visitors that allows tracking and identifying each piece in inventory. Sit down at a terminal and type in, shall we say, "Sullivan" and it will list for you any item by any Sullivan that it has.

Up on the computer screen will come about thirty items by Louis Sullivan: including doorknobs from the Guaranty Building in Buffalo and, of course, our Chicago Stock Exchange knobs. Check further and donors and dates are shown. The conclusion, . . . no, the donation date of 1979 was several years too early, but a good discovery and a fine exercise!

The computer search identified items from several Sullivan buildings and also their location. The code "STO" obviously indicated the some large items such as balusters were in storage.

One item in particular caught my eye . . . a door from Sullivan's Getty Tomb in Chicago (1890) had a code of "MIA" (missing -in-action?). Well, if you have ever spent much time in New York City you would realize that even this is possible.

See you in Michigan in July. •

Convention Facts	
Hotel:	Hilton Inn 4747 28th Street SE Grand Rapids, MI 49512
Airport:	Kent County International Grand Rapids, MI
Amtrak:	Limited Schedule
Bus:	Greyhound
The hotel is located 1-1/2 miles from the airport. Call the Hilton for free transportation service to and from the airport.	

Ornamental Design in Antique Doorknobs

by Len Blumin

(The following regular feature is a supplement to Len Blumin's excellent book, **Victorian Decorative Art**. Copies of the book are available from ADCA for \$12.00.)

Asymmetric Designs

- B-135** Japanesque butterfly design, in the style of Branford or Norwalk, c. 1880s. Charming and unusual.
- B-136** Unusual wrought steel, floral, c. 1890-1900.
- B-137** Cast bronze asymmetric.
- B-138** "Arabic" symmetric c. 1890. Compare to Mallory Wheeler's K-214 (VDA). Note: The background consisting of waved parallel lines to give the appearance of agitated water.

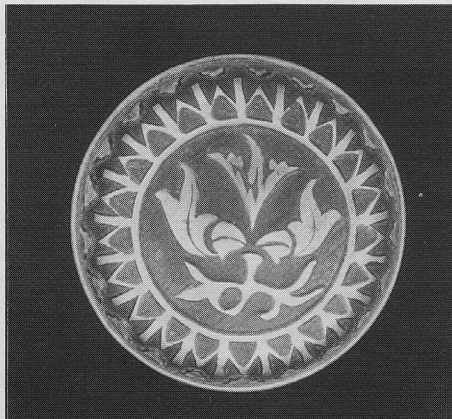
B-135



B-137



B-136



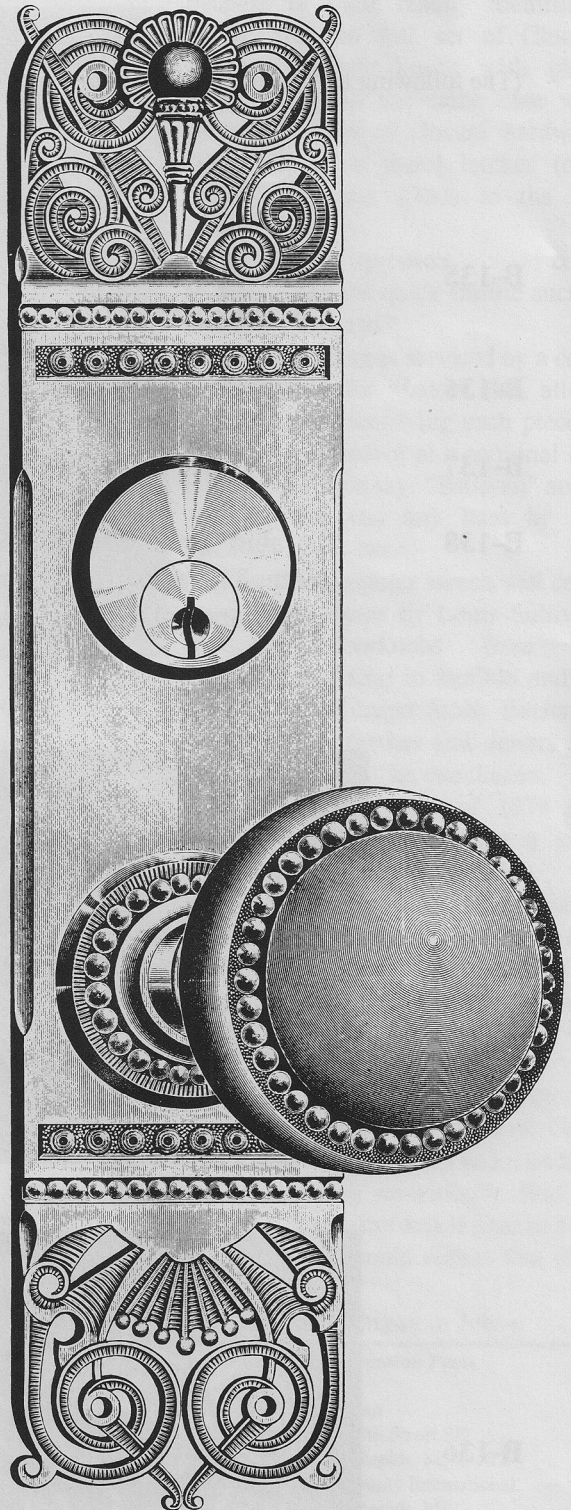
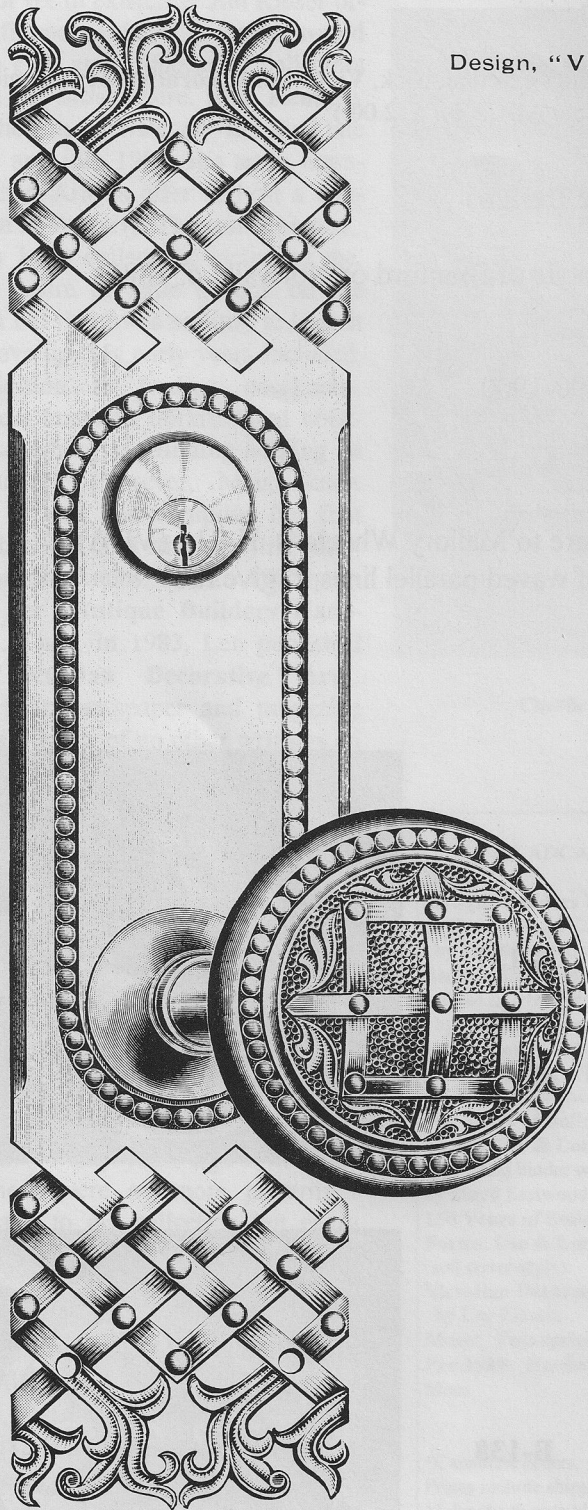
B-138



624

KNOBS AND ESCUTCHEONS

Design, "VENICE"



No. 9361 Knob. No. 9360 Rose and Escutcheon.

No. 01528 Knob. No. 9370 Rose and Escutcheon.

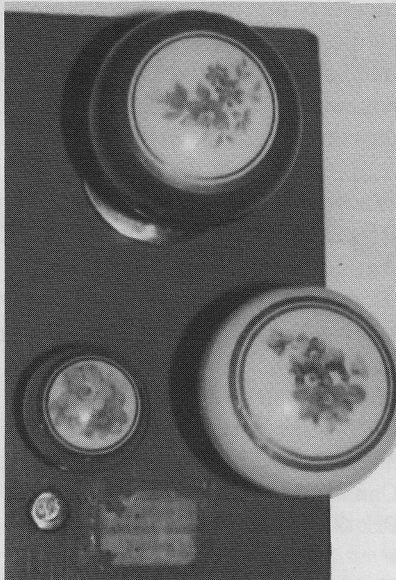
No.	Size, inch.	DESCRIPTION.	Per Pair.
01528	2½	BRONZE METAL KNOB, with Screws,	
9361	2½	" " " " " "	
9362	2¼	" " " " " " Style of No. 9361.	

Porcelain (continued from page 1)

Do not stop with observing, take notes of the type of ware that is often stamped or incised on the bottom, as well as the manufacturers seal or mark. You will probably find Iron Stone, Granite, Semi-Porcelain, Imperial Crown China, Delft, Hand Painted, etc. and other numbers or initials that my later prove useful.

So, there are different porcelain bodies from soft to hard. What has this to do with collecting door-knobs? Not a lot, but does lead into the third revealing remark by Mr. Cox. Quote: "Few so-called authorities agree even on their definition of such basic terms as 'soft paste' or 'porcelain'."

That lets us off the hook. We do not have to figure out what the experts disagree about. We do not have to go back over the last 3,000 years (useful clay vessels date from even earlier) and bone up on the steps and techniques used to arrive at the three, possibly four, categories of ceramic wares that are represented in our doorknobs that date, roughly, circa late 1700s through the 1950s. We just have to learn to recognize them. We will be more concerned with what we can see - - - the decoration, how applied, the types and the glazes. •



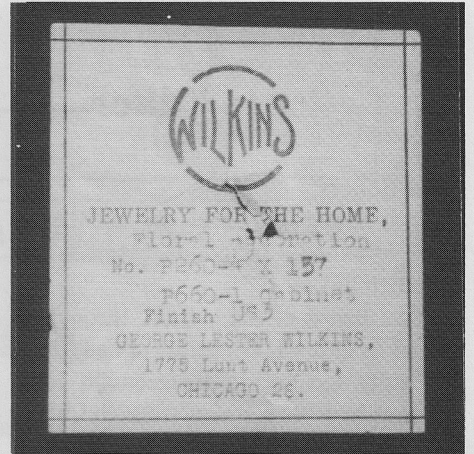
The above hardware was featured at Wilkins Jewelry for the home.

Convention Exhibit

Although our first love is door hardware, many of us have an interest in other antiques. At the July Convention, one of our members who spent a life time as a lock-smith, will be showing a portion of his very fine collection of padlocks and keys along with his doorknob display. Who is this member? Guess....(He is short in stature; has a fine mustache, but not much hair; is always joking; and was recently married to a wonderful lady named Mary.) •

Rare Postal Mailboxes to be Exhibited at Convention

We will also be fortunate to have Mr. Mike Schragg, postmaster from Marshall, Michigan, lend us his collection of rare postal mailboxes. Mike has the only Government sanctioned postal museum. Interested ADCA members may visit the museum which is located in the basement of the post office in Marshall, Michigan. •



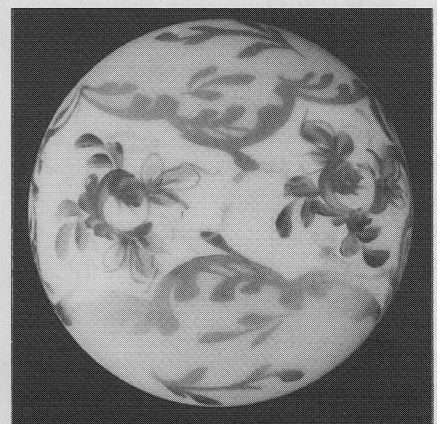
George Lester Wilkins
Chicago, Illinois

1996 ADCA Convention Display Contest Categories

1. **Best Single Knob**, Porcelain Hand Painted
2. **Best Display**, Porcelain Mixed Types (Bennington, Wedgwood, delft, etc.)
3. **Best Display**, Porcelain Various Designs (floral, scenic, figural, geometric, etc.)
4. **Best Metallic Display.**
5. **Most Creative Display.**
6. **Best of Show**, (Based upon total votes from categories 1 through 5 above.)



Painted Porcelain with Gold Border



Painted Porcelain with Yellow Border

From The Archives

by Steve & Barbara Menchhofer
(Will resume next issue)

Letter to Editor

Dear Editors:

As a new member of the ADCA, I thought I should introduce myself to the membership.

I first heard of the ADCA through a friend in Ottawa, Ontario. He had great difficulty locating a replacement lock set that had been stolen from the front door of his 1880s antique shop. As you guessed, he was referred to an ADCA member who came to the rescue with an exact match.

About the same time, I too, was looking for hardware for the heritage home that my wife and I were restoring. I sent for Maud Eastwood's first two books, but didn't join the club at that time.

Over the next few years I scouted out demo sales, garage sales and flea markets picking up everything I found that I could use or trade. I then realized I was hooked and no longer satisfied confining my search to one pattern or one maker, I needed more.

The ADCA seems like the next logical step. I hope my small collection will help others find that missing piece and locate a few of mine. I look forward to the next newsletter.

Mark Aitken #442
Victoria, BC, Canada

Identifying doorknobs

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

Moes Enterprises Catalog	Len blumin's Victorian Decorative Art
A-141	G-104
A-142	H-453
A-143	D-102a
A-144	J-304
A-145	J-302
A-146	F-217
A-147	J-222
A-148	H-250
A-149	F-221
A-150	K-110
A-151	H-110

(Compiled by Edward Sobczak)

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.

Wanted: B-126 Double Lock Front Door Set (top of page 183, "The Antique Doorknob").

Door knobs only for Chicago Hardware locks (page 159, "The Antique Doorknob").

Mark Aitken #442
657 Lampson St.
Victoria, B.C.
Canada, V9A6A5
PH: 604-386-6593

Trade: Several bronze faced Chicago Hardware locks and matching escutcheon plates, **no knobs.**

Mark Aitken #442
657 Lampson St.
Victoria, B.C.
Canada, V9A6A5
PH: 604-386-6593

For Sale: ADCA Membership roster, by state is available from ADCA Headquarters for \$1.00. Request should be sent to:

ADCA
P.O. Box 126
Eola, IL 60519-0126

Auction #2

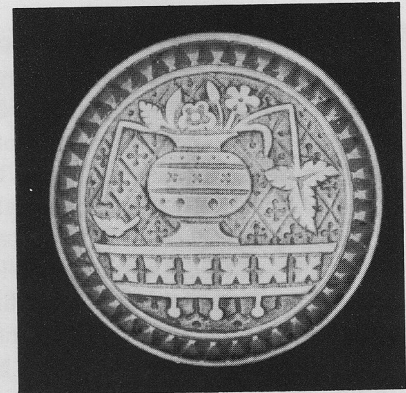
Web Wilson's Antique Hardware Auction #2 is scheduled for June of '96. More close-ups, color photos, dimensions of each lot, and other improvements. Bidding by subscription: \$12.50 per catalog. We will provide an 800 number and prices realized from Auction #1 to all subscribers.

Mail checks to:

Web Wilson (#266)
P.O. Box 506
Portsmouth, RI 02871
PH 800-508-0022 for more details.

DEADLINE

All ads, material and articles for the July-August 1996 issue of **The Doorknob Collector** should be in the hands of the editors by June 15, 1996.



B-126

For Sale Back Issues

The Doorknob Collector

Issues 14, 20	\$2.50 each
Issues 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31	\$2.00 each
Issues 32, 33	\$2.50 each
Issues 34, 35, 36, 37, 38	\$2.00 each
Issues 39	\$3.00
Issues 40, 41	\$2.00 each
Issues 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48	\$1.50 each
Issues 49, 50, 51, 52	\$2.00 each
Issues 53, 55	\$1.50 each
Issues 54, 56	\$2.50 each
Issues 57, 58, 59, 60	\$1.50 each
Issues 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68	\$2.00 each

Send your list of back issues wanted along with your check or money order, payable to ADCA. Mail to: ADCA, P.O. Box 126, Eola, IL 60519-0126.

Supplies are limited



Rare Porcelain knob with printed under glazed advertisement from National Fire Insurance Co. New York.