

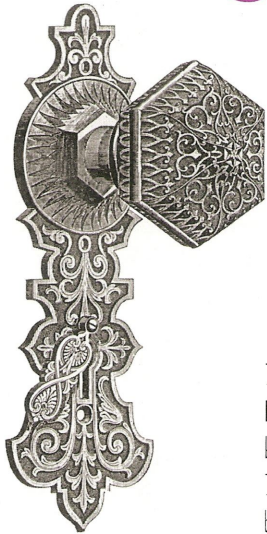
The Doorknob Collector

Number 156

July-August 2009

A Publication of The Antique Doorknob Collectors of America

A Nonprofit Organization Devoted to the Study and Preservation of Ornamental Hardware



The Three Feathered Indian Identified!

By John Roberts

The VDA2d contains three Indian knobs: the "Standing Indian" (A-203), the "Three Feathered Indian" (A-317), and the "Six Feathered Indian" (A-325). It also has some knobs whose design suggests Native American patterns (N-170 and N-161). As to the Three Feathered Indian, VDA2d remarks it is "finely made, possibly for a commercial building".

A recent purchase of old hardware catalog copies, not from the ADCA archives, included two pages from the 1923 Reading Hardware Co. catalog. One of these was the title page; the other was entitled "Special Designs", and showed, among eight other fraternal knobs, what we know as the "Three Feathered Indian" which was titled "Red Men". A comment from Win Applegate led a search that produced a reference to a fraternal organization named the Improved Order of Red Men (IORM). (Note from the Editor: a copy of the 1923 Reading Catalogue is in fact in the Archives, but given its late date, apparently nobody has paid much attention to it.)

We emailed Mr. David Lintz, director of the IORM Museum and Library in Waco, Texas, who responded that that he feels that the knob was probably an unofficial item purchased by and used in Red Men halls around the country, being unofficial because it lacked the initials or name of the organization. Mr. Lintz is interested in acquiring one or two of these knobs for his museum, and can be contacted at dlintz@redmen.org, phone (254)-756-1221, or at 7541 Speight Ave., Waco, Texas 76711. The Red Men have a museum in Waco, which houses an eclectic collection, ranging from a watercolor by Adolph Hitler to a bugle from Gettysburg.

Congress chartered the Improved Order of Red Men. It sounds like an American Indian organization, but in 1886 their membership requirements were: "No person shall be entitled to adoption into the order except a free white male of good moral character and standing, of the full age of twenty-one great suns, who believes in the existence of a Great Spirit, the Creator and Preserver of the Universe, and is possessed of some known reputable means of support". In the 1970s IROM opened its membership to Native Americans and other persons of color; whether any joined it not immediately ascertainable. It currently has chapters in 18 States.

The IORM says its primary goal is to promote patriotism and the American Way of Life and that it is the oldest fraternal organization in the U.S.A., tracing its history back to 1765, and is descended from the Sons of Liberty (who threw a famous tea party in Boston, disguised as Mohawk Indians). It sponsors charitable programs, particularly directed to research on Alzheimer's disease.



Red Men

Inside		
2009 Convention..... 4	First-Time Attendees 5	Restoration vs. Alteration 2
	Five Additional Catalogs 6	Winners -Display Contest..... 7

Their rituals and regalia are modeled after those used by Native Americans, and their various groups are organized into tribes, lodges, etc. Interestingly enough, its membership has slipped (from 500,000 in 1935 to less than 38,000) while the Native American population has grown – in 1920 there were more than two Red Men for every Native American, while according to one book, by the end of the 1990s, there were 70 Native Americans for every Redman. If you look at the New York Times archives, it was a very big thing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Theodore Roosevelt was an honorary member.

The current "Three Feathered Indian" knob will be renamed Red Men in the new edition of VDA, and Len Blumin has decided to leave it in the Representational Designs category, due to the fact that there are no identifying markings, therefore that category is where users would look for the knob. Len also thinks that there are several other examples of probable emblematic knobs "embedded" within the "A" category of VDA.

References:

www.redmen.org/museum

Lies America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong. By James W. Loewen. (New York: New Press, 1999) p. 133.

http://wikipedia/wiki/Improved_Order_of_Red_Men

RESTORATION VS. ALTERATION

By Steve Rowe

(A frequent question we are asked is how to clean, polish, restore, or whatever, antique decorative hardware. Some suggestions from Steve Rowe on this subject, which appeared in the TDC # 93, some 10 years ago, struck the Editor as deserving repetition.)



“Going once, going twice, sold”, yelled the auctioneer. For a final bid of \$5500 the 19th century Victorian bedroom suite appeared to be a steal. Pre-auction estimates based on rarity alone indicated that the suite would command closer to \$10,000. What went wrong? I quickly asked the auctioneer and the answer was loud and clear: if the pieces had carried the original finish there would have been much more spirited bidding. Many people had called to inquire, but only a handful came to bid. The lack of original finish or “patina” made this rare antique bedroom suite sell for approximately half of its pre-auction estimate.

Patina is defined in Webster’s New Twentieth Century Dictionary as: “a thin film, coloring or mellowed appearance on the surface of an object as a result of age or use.” To the advanced collector in virtually all areas, evidence of original patina signifies an increase in value. Simply put, condition equals money and original condition increases the likelihood of even greater value. Having attended each ADCA convention since 1994, and seeing the various members’ collections, it is apparent there are differing opinions regarding the cleaning and polishing of door hardware. Following is one considered opinion along with a detailed method for cleaning, which does not destroy patina.

One way of protecting the investment in your collection and insuring its future marketability is to preserve rather than alter the pieces in a collection. If the original patina equates money, then removing patina from a doorknob removes money from one’s pocket. As a firm believer of this concept I cannot promote the polishing of hardware.

Only in rare circumstances do I ever remove metal from a doorknob. Removing metal disfigures the original state and only should be done when a knob has clearly been abused. (See TDC # 69, "Sandpapering of Doorknobs???" by Len Blumin)

Restoration is defined in Webster's Dictionary as: "to bring back to a former or normal condition, to recover or renew." As a promoter of restoration, I believe that gentle cleaning of a doorknob to bring out its natural color and restore luster actually enhances the item. If done properly, a thorough cleaning will not destroy patina. A superior method of cleaning involves a common household detergent booster. Arm & Hammer's Super Washington Soda ® is all you need.

Soaking hardware for periods from 5 minutes to 24 hours not only cleans, but also enhances the appearance of the knob. I have found the best approach to be as follows: pour several cups of A&H into a 1.5-quart stainless steel pot. Using hot tap water, fill until full and mix thoroughly. Once completely mixed, drop in hardware and wait to cool. Take out each piece individually and gently scrub under the tap with a toothbrush sized bristle or brass brush (not steel). Never use a stronger brush or you risk scratching and damaging the item. Once the piece is clean, it is important to wash off all the remaining solution and dry thoroughly. Knobs need to be filled with water and allowed to drain 3-5 times to insure that all traces of the mixture are gone. Finally, stand the knob on end and allow any water inside to drain for 24 hours.



The finished product will amaze you! The item will be clean, the details crisp and clear, and most importantly the original patina will be undisturbed. Painted items sometimes need a longer soaking period and/or a second cleaning. Pieces with original black paint in their background require a much shorter period of soaking since you want to avoid disturbing the original coloring. You should wait to clean an item like this until more experience is gained with this cleaning process.

In summary, I urge all collectors to try this method of cleaning. Benefits include working with a solution that is safe to use without gloves; has relatively no odor; is extremely economical, and most importantly preserves original patina. By using this technique instead of a polishing wheel you will someday pay yourself dividends.

However, I do realize that it all comes down to personal preference. If you must use the wheel, stick to common pieces since polishing a figural doorknob destroys high relief and value quickly. As for me? I intend to follow the principles of restoration rather than alteration. Someday, if I am ever forced to sell my collection, my wife is counting on 100% of the members being at the ADCA auction!

(A further note – if the piece has heavy tarnish, your Editor will remove it with Twinkle ®, followed by polishing with Nev'r Dull ®. Unlike the polishing wheel and rouge, Nev'r Dull ® does not remove metal. We solicit suggestions from our readers as to the removal of green "crud" from bronze doorknobs, and restoring a Bower-Bariff finish)

THE 2009 CONVENTION

Tour Day: We gathered early in the morning to board a trolley-like bus to tour Hartford. Various buildings were pointed out to the members as we passed by. The city has a beautiful skyline with both modern and old buildings. The Capital Building's golden dome gleams in the sunlight and Hartford tries to keep the feeling of the early city by restoring old building and keeping the façade when updating the building for current use.

The first stop was the Mark Twain House and Museum. The house is a Victorian delight with Tiffany windows and other touches throughout



the home. Although you think you are looking at wallpaper, the walls are actually stenciled. They have left areas where you can see the original, but have restored the walls to their original glory. The whole place is a delight to the eye.

Items returned with Mark Twain from his many trips and are incorporated into the home. One outstanding item is the fireplace mantel from Scotland. Well, it was a bit too large for the

room so he had the cherubs removed from the top and installed them over the door for an added touch.

We were told that Mark Twain was constantly changing what was written in any book he read, including his own. His books have margin notes throughout as he improved on the author.

We were then able to watch a movie about his life. At one point he was the most recognizable person in America. He had financial problems (don't we all?) and had to do a world lecture tour to pay his debts. I consider that lucky for the world.

After a lunch on the patio at the museum we went over to the Lock Museum of America. If you have not been there, it is worth the trip. They have an extensive collection of doorknobs as well as locks and keys. The group wandered through the rooms and many also made purchases. One of the things that fascinated me was a large model of how a ball bearing lock works. Press the button and the oversized hand puts the key in the lock and turns it and you can see the inner workings of the lock. Each person had his or her favorite item in the museum. It was a great trip.

The Evening Meeting: After cocktails and a delightful buffet dinner, Warren Kingsbury, the President of the New Britain Industrial Museum spoke about the history of New Britain's various industries, of which there were and are a great variety. He pointed out that New Britain had no natural advantages, including no river, but from its earliest days it had one human advantage, talented entrepreneurs, who drew other entrepreneurs.

Election of the Board: President Steve Rowe opened the membership meeting. After reports from the Secretary and Treasurer, Steve reported that due to two resignations from the Board of Directors, the



Board was proposing to add Faye Kennedy and Steve Hannum as Directors, as well as re-nominating Rhett Butler, Allen Joslyn, Rich Kennedy, Steve Rowe, Nick Doto and Vicki Berol for additional two year terms. The Board also recommended retaining Steve Rowe as President, Rich Kennedy as Secretary and Allen Joslyn as Treasurer. Rhett Butler was nominated to serve as Vice-President. These nominees were unanimously elected by the membership.

The Awards: Norm and Cheryl Blam, and Allen Joslyn, were presented with plaques in appreciation for their co-hosting this year's convention. Steve Hannum received the award for the **Most Creative** exhibit, and Allen Joslyn won awards for **Best of Show**, and **Best Aesthetic Hardware**.

In the closely watched category of **Ugliest Hardware**, Norm Blam took the honors and was presented with a proper monstrosity as an award (see picture). Norm has indicated that he will donate award to the ADCA so that it can be awarded to the winner of that category next year, and in subsequent years, each winner having custody for only that year. And thus a great tradition, the award of "**The Ugly**", is born. Norm explained that the real purpose in making this generous gift to the club was to get it out of his house.



The Ugly

To be presented each year.

First-Time Attendees

This year we had ten first-time attendees at the Convention, all of whom we hope will become part of the crowd of "the usual suspects" in the upcoming years. We enjoyed meeting these new friends, some of whom are long-time members. Their enthusiasm was contagious. All seemed to enjoy not only the hardware, but also the camaraderie that is always present at the conventions. We are glad they made the effort to attend. Hope to see you there next year.

HIP! HIP! HURRAH FOR:



Ted (#228) & Nancy Bremble
Washington Crossing, PA



Braxton (#828) & Maryanna Dixon
Hendersonville, TN



Tom (#316) & Andree Dulac
Forestville, CT



Al (#55) & Audrey Jehning
Mountain View, CA



Nyla (#724) & Bill Novotny
Prior Lake, MN

FIVE ADDITIONAL ANTIQUE CATALOGUES OFFERED

Thanks to the generosity of Win Applegate, the Archives can offer five new (old) hardware catalogues. You can order them from our website and pay through Pay Pal if you wish. Otherwise checks are accepted. Prices include the cost of shipping. Copies are loose-leaf and unbound. There is an August 15th deadline for orders, which will be shipped by September 15th. Catalogs will be offered four times a year, so if you miss the deadline, another will be coming soon. Check the website (AntiqueDoorknobs.org) for dates.

There are three order categories:

Complete Catalog. In the case of a builders' hardware catalog, the book has been copied in its entirety. In the case of a general hardware catalog, only the builders' hardware section has been copied.

Selected Pages. Included are title page, index, finish or other general hardware information pages, pages showing doorknobs, escutcheons, flush pulls, store door locks, push plates, cremone bolts, some mortise locks with ornate face plates, and limited miscellaneous hardware items that are offered in the same designs as doorknobs and escutcheons. In some cases, a few padlocks and keys are included.

Knob Design Pages. These pages pertain strictly to knobs and possibly some levers and escutcheons. Title and finish pages, if available, are included.

Note: bibliographical information is provided when known, i.e., place of publication, title (in italics), date of publication, pagination, page size (h x w), and binding description. Catalogs are not always reproduced actual size.

<u>DESCRIPTION OF CATALOG</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
-------------------------------	--------------	-----------------

Belleville Hardware and Lock Manufacturing Co.

Belleville, Ontario

Catalogue No. 4: Locks and Builders' Hardware, March 1919

xxiv, 330 pp., frontispiece, 10 x 7, cloth.

Complete catalog – 357 pages	\$ 50.00	_____
90 selected pages	\$ 14.50	_____
30 knob design pages	\$ 6.00	_____

P. & F. Corbin

New Britain, Conn.

Illustrated and Descriptive Catalogue and Price List of Hardware; March 1, 1885

xvi, 631 pp., 13 x 10, cloth.

Complete catalog – 646 pages	\$ 65.00	_____
167 selected pages	\$ 30.00	_____
64 knob design pages	\$ 12.00	_____

<u>DESCRIPTION OF CATALOG</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
-------------------------------	--------------	-----------------

Brittan, Graham & Mathes (formerly Nimick & Brittan Manufacturing Co.)

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Catalogue of Door-Locks and Knobs, Builders' Hardware, Padlocks and Scales, 1890

217 pp., 10 ½ x 8, cloth. (Note: front cover is dated 1890, but Terms of Sale on p. [4] is dated January, 1888.)

Includes a separate price list:

No. 1, Brittan, Graham & Mathes' New Price List of Door Locks and Latches, Knobs and Builders'

Hardware, Padlocks and Scales, January 1890

[17] pp., 10 ½ x 7 ½, wraps.

Complete catalog – 234 pages	\$ 34.00	_____
110 selected pages	\$ 15.50	_____
44 knob design pages	\$ 9.45	_____

Lockwood Manufacturing Company

South Norwalk, Conn.

Builders' Hardware . . . Supplementary to our General Catalogue, 1897

[4] Pp., 140 leaves of plates, 11 x 8 1/2, lacking covers.

Some plates with text on reverse (stock nos., sizes, etc.)

Complete catalog – 208 pages.....	\$ 30.00	_____
120 selected pages	\$ 19.50	_____
45-knob design pages	\$ 9.55	_____

J. Jacob Shannon & Co.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Catalogue of Builders' Hardware, July 1888

292 pp., 11 1/2 x 8, cloth.

Complete catalog – 290 pages (two of the numbered Pages in the catalog are blank)	\$ 44.00	_____
47 selected pages	\$ 10.00	_____
20 knob design pages	\$ 5.00	_____

Winners of the Display Contest

Best of Show & Best Aesthetic

Allen Joslyn



Most Original

Steve Hannum



Ugliest

Norm Blam



Our Business Members

<p>Albion Doors & Windows Owner: Larry Sawyer PO Box 220 Albion, CA 95410 Phone: 707-937-0078 Fax: 707-937-0078 (call first) Website: www.knobsession.com Email: bysawyer@mcn.org</p>	<p>Antique Door Hardware Collector Owner: Tom Iannucci 2611 Silverdale Drive Silver Spring, MD 20906 Phone: 240-595-1115 Web Site: www.antiquedoorhardwarecollector.com/ email: rebecca.iannucci@comcast.net</p>	<p>Architectural Salvage, Inc. Owner: Elizabeth Werhane 5001 N. Colorado Blvd. Denver, CO 80216 Phone: (303) 321-0200 Website: salvagelady.com/</p>	<p>Aurora Mills Architectural Salvage Owner: Mike Byrnes 14971 First St NE Aurora, OR 97002 Phone: 503-678-6083 Fax: 503-678-3299 Email: auroramills@centurytel.net Website: http://www.auroramills.com/</p>
<p>Discovery Architectural Antiques Owner: Suzane Kittel 409 St. Francis Gonzales, TX 78629 Phone: 830-672-2428 or 888-686-2966 Fax: 830-672-3701 Web Site: www.DiscoveryS.net Email: swk@discoverys.net</p>	<p>House of Antique Hardware Owner: Roy Prange 3439 NE Sandy Blvd./PMB 106 Portland, OR 97214 Phone: 888-223-2545 Fax: 503-231-1312 Web Site: www.HouseofAntiqueHardware.com Email: Sales@HouseofAntiqueHardware.com</p>	<p>Liz's Antique Hardware Owner: Liz Gordon 453 South La Brea Los Angeles, CA 90036 Phone: 323-939-4403 Fax: 323-939-4387 Email: Shop@LAHardware.com Web Site: www.lahardware.com/</p>	<p>Webwilson.com Owner: H. Weber Wilson PO Box 506 Portsmouth, RI 02871 Phone: 800-508-0022 Web Site: www.webwilson.com Email: Hww@webwilson.com</p>
<p>The Brass Knob and Back Door Warehouse Owners: Donetta George and Ron Allen The Brass Knob 2311 18th St. N.W. Washington, DC Phone: 202-332-3370 Fax: 202-332-5594 Email: BK@theBrassKnob.com Web Site: www.theBrassKnob.com</p> <p>Back Door Warehouse 2329 Champlain St. Washington, DC 20009</p>		<p>These are paid advertisements. The ADCA assumes no responsibility. For further information about these businesses see the Resource section our website: www.antiquedoorknobs.org</p>	

Editor of The Doorknob Collector

Allen Joslyn,
Phone (973) 783-9411
Fax: (973) 783-8503

Web Site: www.antiquedoorknobs.org

Membership Office

ADCA
Box 31
Chatham, NJ 07928-0031
Knobnews@optonline.net
Phone: 973-635-6338

General Questions

Antiquedoorknobs@comcast.net

Officers

President: Steve Rowe
4narowe@sbcglobal.net
Vice President: Brad Kittel
bwk@puresalvage.com
Secretary: Rich Kennedy
knobnews@optonline.net
Treasurer: Allen Joslyn
ajoslyn@comcast.net

The Doorknob Collector®



Published six times a year by
Antique Doorknob Collectors of America, Inc.

P.O. Box 31,
Chatham, NJ
07928-0031

Annual Membership in US \$25.00
age 18 or younger US\$10.00
Foreign rates on request.

Founded Sept 1981, the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America** is a non-profit organization devoted to the study and preservation of ornamental hardware.

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

Any reproduction of material contained in **The Doorknob Collector** without permission of the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America** is prohibited. All material submitted for publication becomes the property of the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America**, unless otherwise agreed upon in advance in writing. Material quoted in **The Doorknob Collector** from other sources is subject to the requirements of the originator.