



# The Doorknob Collector

JULY 1978

## BIG RESPONSE

The March issue of "The Doorknob Collector" was well received according to the response. Many letters and notes came our way. Several readers expressed an interest in trading and this will be indicated on the address list.

This is only the third issue. However, the first went out to about 15 readers; the second to 80; and, this one will go to well over 150. The cost of printing and mailing has fallen on your editor. As you can see he needs help. In order to continue, we are asking that you fill in the coupon below and enclose \$1.00 for the next three issues (one year subscription). The next newsletter will be sent to those responding.

News needed; DEADLINE Oct. 15

## COLLECTORS CORNER

Art Paholke is a Sargeant with the Chicago Police Department and is the Chief Comparative Tool Mark Examiner of the Criminalistics Division. He is an internationally known lock expert and has taught classes at the FBI Academy.

Art not only collects doorknobs but also escutcheon plates, hinges, keys, locksmithing catalogues, window lifts and even ice box doors. He has a library of over 200 old locksmith books, one dating back to 1876.

Last year Art wrote an extensive article for KEYNOTES, a publication for locksmiths, in which he went into great depth on identi-

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(please print)

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

SEND TO:

THE DOORKNOB COLLECTOR  
7 Lafayette Place  
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- DO NOT publish name and address in newsletter
- I am interested in trading

*PLEASE DISREGARD - YOU'VE PAID - THANK YOU*

fying escutcheon plates by the period and design.

Art was featured in the February 1978 issue of CHICAGO POLICE STAR, where he stated that to his knowledge he was the only collector of ornamental hardware in the world. His collection is one of the largest I know. It includes some 523 escutcheon plates, ranging in size from 5 inches in length to 36 inches in length and so many doorknobs he has lost count. His earliest escutcheon plate is a Yale with a patent date of 1865.

## CLEANING KNOBS

I received two responses on cleaning doorknobs. One was from Jim and Lee Kiasser (Minneapolis, Minn.). They suggest that for moderate to heavy tarnish start with "Revere Copper Cleaner" and finish with "Never Dull". They then spray with flat black paint and immediately wipe it off leaving the recessed areas blackened for contrast. The knob is then sprayed with several coats of lacquer.

Attached to this newsletter is an article written by Maude Eastwood. Permission is required to copy this article.

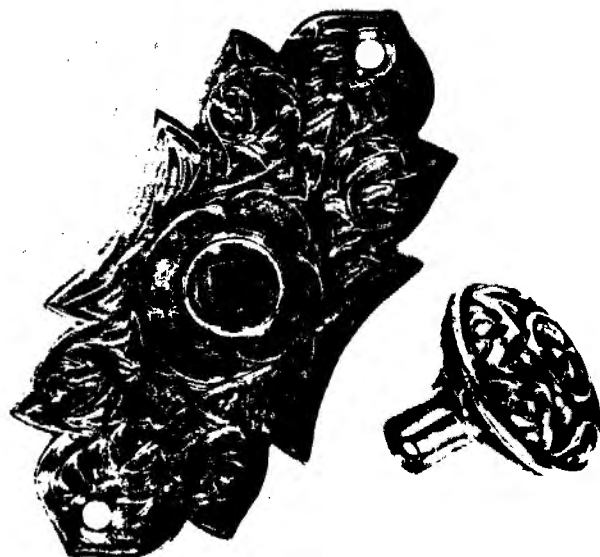
## RECENT INTERESTING FINDS

When is a doorknob NOT a doorknob? When it is a doorbell pull. Recently I discovered, while browsing in an antique shop, that a solid bronze knob and plate I have in my collection was indeed a doorbell pull. The shank, to which the knob is fastened, and the hole in the plate were square. Therefore, the knob does not turn but just pulls in and out. In turn it trips a bell mounted on the inside of the door.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In the last newsletter I asked if anyone had any information on the brass escutcheon plate that was pictured. I got a fine reply from Emil Miller (Omaha, Nebraska) together with copies of several pages of an old Corbin hardware catalog. The plate was of a COMO design and was available in both steel and bronze. Also Emil sent me a copy of part of a 1909 Russell & Erwin hardware catalog describing the metal in the knob set pictured at the bottom of page 2 in our last newsletter. The metal was called "Nickelene" and was a composite cast, consisting largely of nickel. The color was uniform throughout and would not change from wear. With a light hand polishing, a silvery luster could be obtained. The catalog also stated it was much superior to "nickel plate" especially in lavatories and bathrooms. According to the catalog it was 25¢ for the nickelene.

I've seen some glass knobs that resemble doorknobs but are in fact dresser drawer pulls. They are quite large but have a screw shank running thru the center of the knob. I think I'm safe in assuming they are NOT doorknobs. Has anyone seen this type of knob on a door?



## TO CLEAN, OR NOT TO CLEAN, THAT IS THE KNOBBY QUESTION

When restoring antique hardware, the question is how to clean and what to clean. We know that we should clean our hardware for aesthetic reasons. To what degree of restoration you aspire, or to what extent to remove the oxides, should be determined by the projected use for the article: functional, decorative, or historical.

My collection is a study collection so positive measures have been taken during cleaning to retain and protect existing evidence of the original formative material, surface texture, and finish. In a collection of this nature, the degree of restoration must never interfere with preservation of any knob as an artifact of historical significance.

In submitting the following suggestions for cleaning and restoring the finish of individual pieces, the coverage is only of those products and methods within my experience. The practices of other collectors or the quality of performance of other products, correctly used, is not discounted.

### CLEANING PRODUCTS AND PRACTICES

#### Suggested Products -

KEROSCENE - for removing grease and oil and softening rust (Carried at service stations).

INDUSTROCLEAN - solvent detergent for dissolving paints and other foreign accumulations. Use on any solid surface (an Amway product - see a distributor).

SIMICHROME - a bright polishing and preserving agent for any metal (Happich).

NEVER DULL - an impregnated wadding polish for all metals, leaves no white deposits (Base).

KING MIDAS - a fast action polishing cream - excellent for textured and relieved surfaces.

WESTERN WOOD DOCTOR - for wooden knobs to clean surface and restore finish. (Most of the above creams are nationally advertised and are available at antique outlets and hardware stores)

### GENERAL CLEANING - ALL TYPES OF MATERIAL

Dissolve paint and other accumulations on hardware in a solution of Amway's INDUSTROCLEAN. Use a 1 to 4 dilution for glass, porcelain, jet, and mineral knobs. Soak 5 to 15 minutes and rinse. For metal, use 1 to 1 and soak for 15 minutes to 2 hours depending on the type and number of layers of paint. Do not soak wood or resin upside down to a level with the neck only -- do not allow moisture to penetrate to the silvered core. Discoloration will result.

## GENERAL CLEANING (Con't)

### OXIDE REMOVAL - Metal Hardware

Tarnish - on silver or copper, use the very mildest of metal polishes - never abrasive.

on brass and bronze, start with hand polishing creams and fine steel wool and graduate to friction polishes and wire wheels when necessary.

Rust - on iron and steel, soften in kerosene then scrape with a dull knife, or use a medium wire wheel, then polish with a fine wheel (for heavy incrustations).

for rust spots on "finished" surfaces, soak as above and use fine steel wool.

Corrosion - on brass and bronze, fine steel wool is preferable, for there will be no further action of cleaning chemicals. Where this is not feasible, follow the directions for tarnish removal.

### WOOD, COMPOSITION, AND GLASS

WOOD - slightly marrer - restore finish. Damaged - remove finish with sand paper or varnish remover and refinish.

COMPOSITION - (man made materials) - sand or use 0000 steel wool where necessary. Apply protective silicone type finish.

GLASS - scratched, marred - seek professional help for wheel polishing.

### NO NO's - do not -

1. Destroy custom oxidized finishes, relieving, detail, or plating with caustic cleaners and coarse wire wheels.
2. Remove the black enamel base relief from iron hardware.
3. Pit the surface of fine Victorian brass and bronze hardware with commercial rust removers.
4. Etch iron knobs with commercial rust remover.
5. Clean copper with vinegar and salt (the chlorides may speed re-oxidation).
6. Use metal paste cleaners on lacquered surfaces.

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