



The Doorknob Collector

Number 58

March - April 1993

1993 ADCA Convention, October 8-11

The 1993 ADCA annual convention is scheduled for October 8 through October 11, 1993, at the Holiday Inn in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Convention chairman Dale Sponaugle has been working on a schedule that will include tours on Thursday, October 7, 1993, and Friday, October 8, 1993.

Tours under consideration include the White House, FBI and the National Building Museum. Also planned is a pre-convention get together at a members' house. Hopefully many of the members will be able to participate in the tours. Costs, which should be minimal, and a full itinerary will be announced prior to the convention.

The convention will officially start Friday evening. Saturday should allow plenty of time for the chance to buy, trade and sell hardware. A banquet and program are planned for that evening.

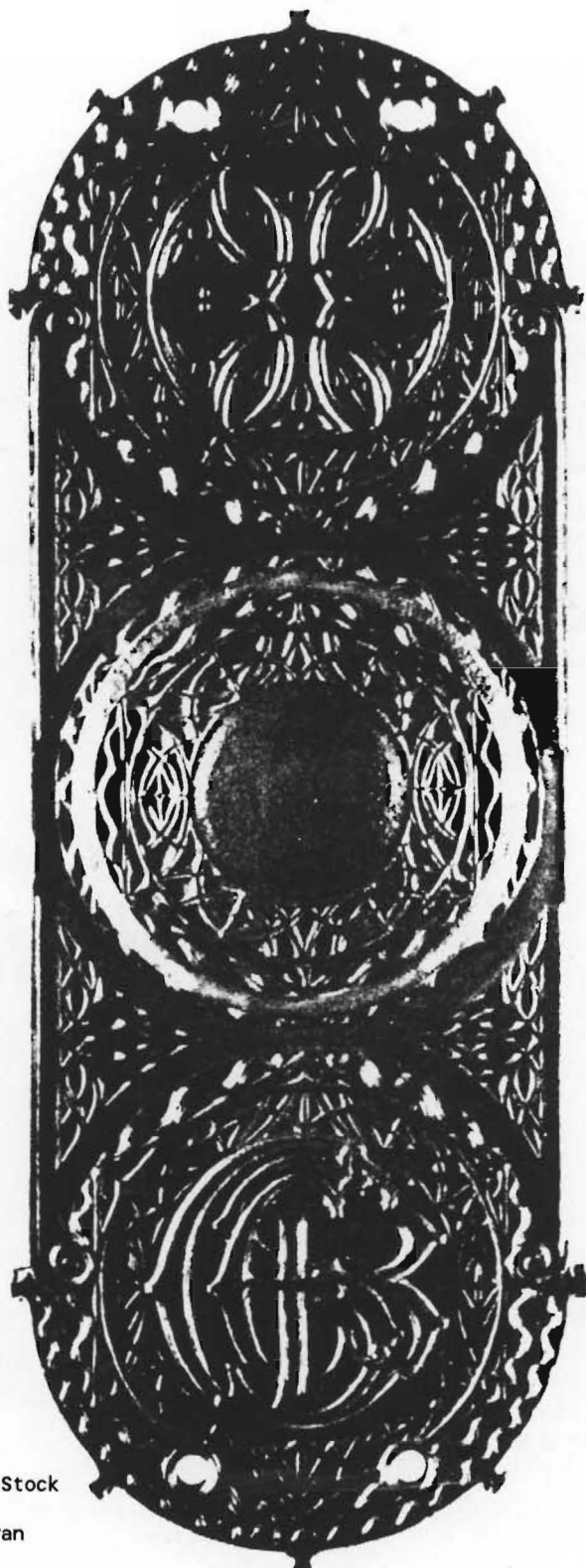
A chance for the local residents to see our doorknobs will be made available from 11:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday. Monday, after a buffet breakfast, the auction will be conducted.

If anyone would like to make a presentation at the convention they should contact Dale Sponaugle as soon as possible.

Remember to lock in those dates, October 8, through the 11, for the 1993, convention.■

Convention Theme

The 1993 convention theme is **Emblematic** and **Representational** designed doorknobs.



Door hardware - Chicago Stock
Exchange Building
Designed by Louis Sullivan

THE OPEN DOOR

by ray nemec



Jack Cooney of Villisca, Iowa, a long-time ADCA member, wrote that he has decided to sell his collection and will not be renewing his membership in the club.

Losing a member is always sad and in this case it is doubly so for me. Being a historian and with a great deal of interest in Southwest Iowa, I am well aware of Villisca, a small community nestled in the Southwest corner of Montgomery County. With it being on our mailing list I am continually reminded of Villisca's place in history.

Villisca's only claim to national prominence occurred 81 years ago, on June 10, 1912, and is still being discussed and written about today.

It was a tragedy that Cooney's family narrowly escaped being involved in. Jack's father was eleven years old at the time. His older sister was invited to spend the night with friends at the Joseph Moore's home. Cooney said, "when she called home to get permission, her parents wouldn't let her stay because the Moore's did

not have a barn for the pony she had ridden to town."

The next morning Villisca was to learn that the six members of the Moore family and two girls, who did stay to spend the night, had all become victims of an ax murder.

The Villisca ax murders, still to this day, remain as an unsolved mystery. A book published in 1977 reviewed the murders. In 1986 the murders were the subject in the book, 'Morning Ran Red,' and just a few weeks ago, another writer was in Villisca interviewing some of the older families with question about that day. There still may be more written about the crime.

Villisca, once with a population of over 2,000, now about 1,400, remains, as it was 81 years ago, a quiet agricultural community and, but for that one night in June 1912, almost unknown to the world...■



Books from Lock Museum

The Lock Museum of America has a number of books and other material available for sale. This is an ideal way to expand knowledge in the history and development of the builders' hardware industry. The following are available by ordering from: Lock Museum of America, Inc., P.O. Box 104, Terryville, CT 06786-0104.

BOOKS

PADLOCK COLLECTOR	
by Frank Arnall	\$15.00
EARLY LOCKS AND LOCKMAKERS OF AMERICA (First Edition)	
by Tom Hennessy	\$15.00
THE LURE OF THE LOCK (hardbound book on Safe & Bank Locks)	\$20.00
TWO HOUR COLOR VIDEO OF MUSEUM by Tom Hennessy	\$29.00
MUSEUM 20TH ANNIVERSARY KEY	\$3.00
80 DESIGNS OF DOORKNOBS & ESCUTCHEONS FROM 1905 P&F CORBIN CATALOG	\$3.00

ADD \$1.00 FOR POSTAGE AND HANDLING.

In addition to the above books the Lock Museum of America has available the "Historical Series by Tom Hennessy", a total of 36 features pertaining to the history of the companies, patents and people. The articles are available at \$.50 each. For the complete list send a SASE to the museum.■



The Doorknob Collector

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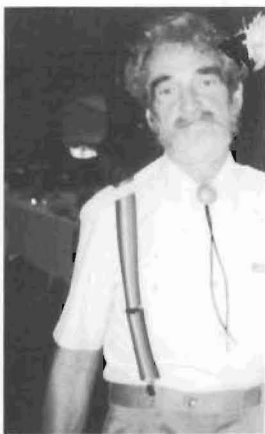
Prospecting at Salvage One

by Charlie Wardell

During the ADCA Convention in Elgin a free afternoon gave a group of collectors an opportunity to visit a part of Chicago and act like normal people. A tour of Sears Tower, strolling the streets and lunch at an Italian restaurant bolstered our confidence and we blended into the flow of humanity. Whatever signs of conformity we may have had would soon vanish as our destination was a shop on Sangamon Street. We became explorers on a mighty mission. Fanatics on a Safari were we!

It was a beautiful day as we entered a distressed section of town and the scenery turned gloomy. Past forlorn warehouses, factories and weedy railroad spurs we steered through steamy streets strewn with the makings of a stew. Over-ripe tomatoes, squash, onions and melons lay discarded in the gutters. Peddlers used the street earlier in the day as a market but it was deserted now except for the scavenging gulls and who knows what other secretive creatures. It wasn't too bad, though, for we had a clear path to the doors of our destination, Salvage One.

The ancient warehouse stood among countless other buildings of an earlier century and is typical of such salvage houses. Like a museum of divers arts, it exhibits the artistry and craftsmanship that was expended on buildings of our grandfathers. Objects in stone, metal, wood, glass and plaster are everywhere. Stacked against the walls; in piles on the floor and counters; hanging from the rafters are remnants of early Chicago homes, shops, offices, schools and even skyscrapers. Magnificent columns, moldings, paneling, ceiling, stained glass windows and doors



and decorations are for sale here to anyone with that peculiar love of things old or seeking a piece of history.

The disarray is awesome and can bring on vertigo, nostalgia and acute derangement of the mental functions. One is transported to a century previous and visions of horse-drawn wagons, gas lights, bowler hats and high-button shoes encroach on reality. This stuff witnessed the first automobile rolling up the street, the first telephone and light bulb. Be still a spell and you may hear Enrico or Jenny singing in the next room.

To those who have never been to an architectural salvage house, I recommend a visit. You will gain a greater appreciation of craftsmanship and affect a liberal education in Things Americana. Most cities have these salvage houses (or yards) and are listed in the yellow pages under Antiques - Architectural.

The hardware room, naturally, was the point of interest to us and two hours of anticipation was to be satisfied here by searching through numerous crates and cans of hardware. Treasures untold lay at our hands and who can know what secrets lie deep in the heart of a can? The collector knows. Locks and

latches, store door handles, door knobs and escutcheon plates, butts and roses that were one time, the proud jewels of a building have somehow survived the fickle fashions of passing generations. Like archeologists picking through Pompeii, we picked through this treasure trove.

Paint, varnish and dirt are no hindrance and soap and water always restores the pink. An hour into this "dig" uncovers lots of common patterns and also a few keepers. After all, this hardware was discarded when the interstate highways and freeways were being built and other hands had sorted through it making it a near-miracle for a rarity to remain. But there it was, covered with many coats of paint, and the only one of its kind, was my find on the day. The knob had a vernacular decoration that was familiar but I knew by its profile that I had something unique. Len Blumin and I pronounced it a rarity and I gladly paid the \$17.50 price at the check-out desk.

Back at the hotel, Len found the knob in his book, "**Victorian Decorative Art**," on page B-8. This knob, B-124, was fairly easy to acquire ten years ago and I had one at home like it. Again, the profile told me I had a new pattern and a successful hunt was completed.

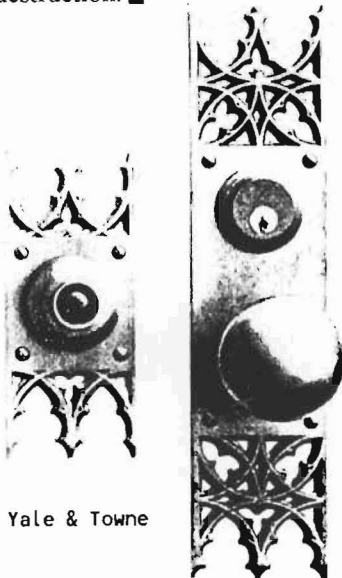
Profiles are of many shapes and sizes and, like in a person, reveal beauty and character at a glance. Yes, a doorknob has a personality and this feeling is unanimous among serious collectors. Be he an autograph or Barbie doll collector or a beer can or elephant figurine gatherer, each item has a significance all its own. As we progress in our hobby we can use the valuable tool of profile identification for

Recognition for Byingtons



Prospecting (continued from page 3)
greater enjoyment and understanding. When planning his book, Len Blumin wanted to use profiles in his descriptions but limitation of space made it impracticable. A future article in the newsletter will treat the subject fully.

My new knob from Salvage One was flat faced and much lovelier than the familiar high-domed variety. Paint had protected the metal and I had a Perkins Specialty Lock Company knob of 1885 in mint condition. This knob I now consider one of my best finds of 1992. My wishes are that each collector will look closely, get his hands dirty and save these works of art from destruction. ■



Yale & Towne

Helen and Bill Byington were recently featured in a newspaper article in their hometown of Iowa City, Iowa. Helen and Bill have been volunteering their time and efforts to the Johnson County Historical Society, which includes time at Heritage Museum in Coralville.

The Byingtons have featured exhibits of their antique doorknobs and miniature lamp collections. In addition Bill puts together the Johnson County Society Scrapbook and both Helen and Bill have acted as docents.

The Byington's have been active in many community projects in Johnson County. But this should be of no surprise to ADCA members. Bill has served on ADCA's Board of Directors and has been active in developing promotional items such as the "Doggie coffee mug" for members. And who will forget the great convention Helen and Bill hosted in 1989. ADCA is

proud to have the Byington, leaders in their community, as members of the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America.** ■



Yale & Towne Mfg. Co.

Ornamentation - Beauvais
School - Gothic

The patented finish of Messieurs Bower & Barff

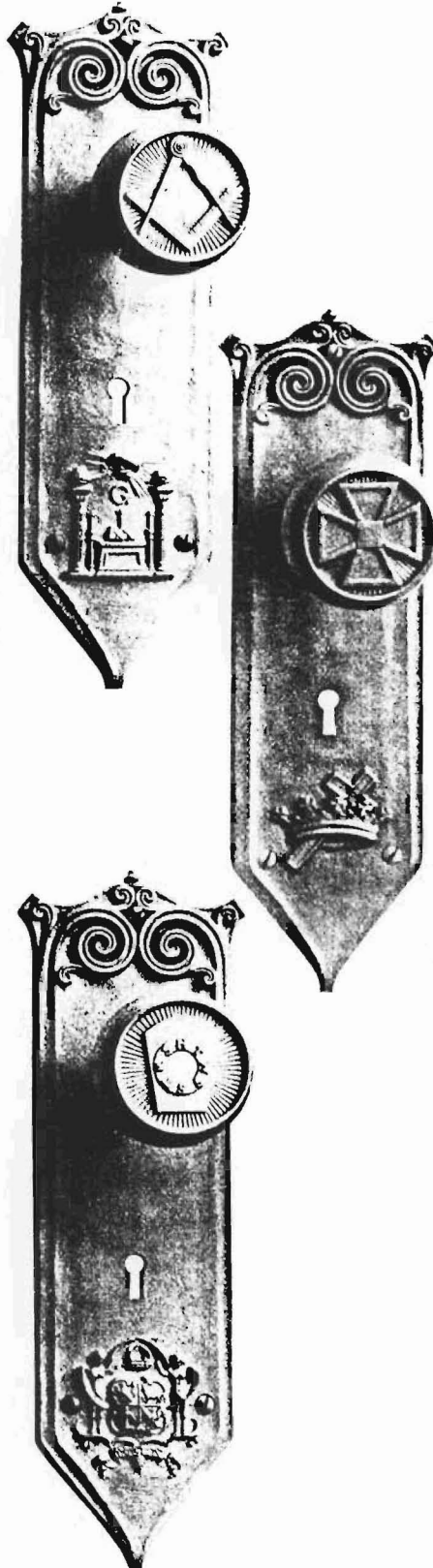
by Maude Eastwood

Is Spring not coming fast enough to rout your winter doldrums? Not to fret, there is a sure cure. Take those catalog copies you ordered through the Archives down from the shelf, pull out the pages on Metals and Finishes and lose yourself among the "Oxides" and "Fancy Finishes."

You may be amazed. For instance, have you a knob with a Yale & Towne "terra cotta" finish? Have you even seen one? I think I have -- and did. If terra cotta it was, I ruined the finish through improper cleaning. Not having heard of such a finish at that time and ignoring obvious clues of an original finish, I decided this knob would look better if the reddish-earth appearing accumulation was removed.

When all the "right" methods failed to budge the color, I resorted to a kitchen chore girl and elbow grease. I knew better, but how hard it is to give up, once started. When I finally got down to the body (right on top) I stopped. Now, the knob rests in the drawer marked "what to do with them next?"

Hint: When, after removing a knob soil and tarnish, the exposed finish appears to be even all over, and not characterized by handling marks, in



the original, made-to-last-a-lifetime, finish. That is not to say all finishes are equally long-lasting.

"Chocolate" or Statuary Bronze is a finish most of us have in those brown toned, wrought knobs of the late 1880s. Just try to remove that finish and you end up with a shiny steel knob.

On the finishes for iron in Yale & Towne, 1889. The first on the list is No. 80, Bower-Barffed. Not only is this the name of a finish (the name is patented), it refers to the Messieurs Bower and Barff. These two enterprising Englishmen discovered a way to protect iron from the elements, eliminating the rusting process.

At the time, Yale & Towne's star was really on the rise. They saw in the Bower-Barff process, the possibility of returning cast iron to its rightful place in the ornamental hardware field. If they could secure the patent rights in this country to a truly rust resistant finish, they would raise another rung.

Yale & Towne was successful in acquiring the rights (1887) and also in perfecting (at great expense) the original process. So, until the end of the century, when the patent expired, Yale & Towne was

Bower-Barffed...

exclusively producing this hardware of "beautiful blue-black and absolutely rustless finish." (The tone would later turn to black)

However, time would prove that if cell structure irregularities occurred, even Bower-Barffed hardware would rust when exposed to moisture over a period of time. The use of extra fine steel wool is suggested for cleaning the rust from cast iron knobs. Derusting agents are not recommended.

Without a doubt, the Bower-Barffed finish "gave character and dignity to the work on which it was used." See, **The Doorknob Collector** No. 17, February 1986 for illustration of this hardware as manufactured by Yale & Towne and Chicago Hardware for important buildings. This hardware was designed by leading architects.

Bower-Barffed hardware was particularly suited for public building use because of the wear resistant qualities of the iron. It was a god-send in areas where soft coal was the leading fuel. In this environment, metal tarnish was a constant problem and Bower-Barffed hardware, for use on iron and steel only, was not visibly affected.

When used for residential purposes, Bower - Barffed hardware was usually confined to entry, hall and library doors

in combination with dark woodwork such as antique oak. The appearance was considered too dark for other areas in the house. In later catalogs it was not recommended for outside use if exposed to the elements.

To prove, then, the nature of builders' hardware, that was even in a state of change, pick up a 1937 Sager catalog and note one in particular among their 97 finishes. And I quote: "Rustic Old Iron." What was once a bane was now being imitated or contrived.

Then, refer to Peabody, 1957. "Imitation Rusty Old Iron". This was a finish for their forged iron. The description? A slightly reddish-brown cast of old rusty iron. Undoubtedly Messieurs Bower and Barff turned over in their graves.

With that facetious remark you may either return to your doldrums, or look into the gold, silver, and crystallized finishes. ■



O-201

Bower-Barff Process

The Bower-Barff process consists of treating the iron or steel in a special furnace, by gases, at high temperature. The end result is that the surface is converted into a magnetic or black oxide of iron. The process provides a very effective protection against normal corrosion except if exposed directly to the weather or salt air, where minute pores in the "skin" allow moisture to penetrate and eventually produce rust and discoloration.



O-154

Price Increase

The prices of the hardware books currently being sold by ADCA will be increased effective April 1, 1993. The increase reflects the higher costs of obtaining copies, shipping and handling. Current prices have been in effect since July 1, 1990.

Book Prices effective 4/1/93

The Antique Doorknob by Maude Eastwood	\$12.00
Antique Builders Hardware by Maude Eastwood	\$19.50
Antique Builders Hardware (three ring binder w/hard cover) by Maude Eastwood	\$21.50
Supplement No. 1 Antique Builders Hardware by Maude Eastwood	\$ 6.00
Victorian Decorative Art by Len Blumin	\$12.00

The doorknob exchange

Members are reminded that your dues entitle you to advertise items for sale, trade or wanted at no charge.

WANTED. Any and all published material concerning decorative and builders' hardware. This means books, catalogs, brochures, trade publications, newspaper and magazine articles, advertising material, copies of research documents, notes from your own research. This material is desperately needed to add to any verify information for a guide to decorative hardware research material to be published in time for our convention. Please contact Rhett Butler (#292), P.O. Box 272, New York, NY 10012
PH: (212) 925-3565
FAX: (212) 925-3305.

WANTED. To buy or trade. Knob & escutcheon that appears on page 419, Sweet's 1906 catalog. (Chicago Hardware Co. ad).
Ray Nemec (#8), 1424 Heatherton Dr., Naperville, IL 60563
PH: (708) 357-2381
FAX: (708) 357-2391.

WANTED TO BUY. Architectural hardware for doors, windows, furniture, bath accessories, ceiling fixtures, wall scones, etc. (pre 1950). Send photo with prices to:
Liz's Antique Hardware (#111)
453 S. LaBrea,
Los Angeles, Ca 90036
PH: (213) 939-4403
FAX: (213) 939-4487.

WANTED. Six knobs F104 Niles, for home renovation.
Cynthia Jenner (#323)
55 E 76th Street,
New York, NY 10021
PH: (212) 988-9344.

WANTED. Single knobs B-104, D-124, J-218 and K-302. Mortise locks B-101, B-205, & D-101.
Any or all, brass only.
Stephen Rowe (#327)
85 Jasmine Ave., Clovis, CA 93611
PH: (209) 299-8863.

FOR TRADE. Hotel Lemington knobs (See, TDC #37, p6, O-124).
WANTED. Two (2) flat entry knobs, K-214. John Decker (#141),
517 Clayton Street,
San Francisco, CA 94117
PH: (415) 552-6625.

WANTED. Chicago Fire Department knob (See TDC, #57, p7). also interested in cabinet latches, binpulls, shutter hardware, window hardware and sliding door hardware. I have many traders available.
Dale Sponaugle (#85),
728 Guilford Court,
Silver Springs, MD 20901
PH: (301) 589-5008.

WANTED. Two (2) knobs each B-116, F-106, H-251, J-203. Two (2) knobs and escutcheons D-119 and K-204. Any or all, brass only.
Stephen Rowe (#287),
85 Jasmine Ave.,
Clovis, CA 93611
PH: (209) 299-8863

WANTED. Will someone PLEASE sell or trade me a Gilbert door lock. This lock is the type that fits inside a door and is probably marked "G. PAT. May 30, 76 G.L. Co." (see Eastwood's ABH pages 172-175). I already have the knobs and desperately need the lock so I can use them on an 1890's door in my house. I will buy the complete set if you do not want to separate. Call collect (512) 835-9510.
Russell Barnes (#288), 203 W. Caddo, Austin, TX 78753.

WANTED. To contact person who at Elgin convention indicated interest in Charlotte Hornets memorabilia.
Call or write to: Charlie Wardell (#9)
P.O. Box 195,
Trinity, N.C. 27370
Ph: (919) 434-1145

DEADLINE

All ads, material and articles for the May-June 1993 issue of *The Doorknob Collector* should be in the hands of the editors by April 25, 1993.

Kennedy Komments

by Rich Kennedy



The other night I sat by the fire and read my favorite newsletter, you know, the one that comes from the ADCA. Sometimes like many others, I tend to put it aside. The front is worth a thousand words alone, but read on, inside and you will be amazed at what you can learn. As I read through it, I thought of all the people that make it happen. All the contributing writers, those who maintain the archives and all the others, not to mention the editors, those fabulous editors, who put it all together. I would like to personally salute all those folks who keep the ADCA alive and well through the newsletter. It is a great resource tool. You can buy, sell or just keep in touch with a collector friend. Read your newsletter, it is a learning experience. ■



Mercy High School Knob
Chicago, Illinois



**FROM THE ARCHIVES
WITH ARCHIVISTS**
Steve/Barb Menchhofer

After researching all of the past issues of **The Doorknob Collector**, we gathered this information about the history of the Archives and the Emil Miller Memorial Library.

In the Number 1 issues of **The Doorknob Collector** in December, 1981 catalog lending was mentioned by the editors, Jim and Lee Kaiser, when member Charlie Wardell loaned them a catalog of his to copy.

Then in the Number 2 issue Charlie Wardell suggested maybe it would be better to trade copies of catalogs and thus eliminate the chance of loss or damage to the original. So an idea was formed.

A permanent archive for the ADCA was established by the board of directors in the fall of 1983 with the appointment of Emil Miller as Archivist. Mr. Miller served in this capacity until his death in 1984. Dorothy Ann Miller, Emil's wife, was appointed Archivist at the annual meeting of the ADCA in September, 1984.

The board of directors, at this same time announced the estab-

lishment of the Emil Miller Memorial Library. Its purpose is to serve as the official library for the ADCA and it will be administered by the archivist until such time as a permanent location can be established.

Dorothy Ann remained Archivist until 1987 and during that time she did a wonderful job of structuring and maintaining the Archives and the Library. Alice Chadonich was appointed to this position in 1987. She remained Archivist until 1989.

In September, 1989 we were appointed Co-Archivists and we remain so today. During this time the Archives and the Emil Miller Memorial Library have moved from Nebraska to Speedway, Indiana.

We are proud to say that with the dedication and care given by the late Emil Miller, his wife, Dorothy Ann, and Alice Chadonich the Archives and the Library are thriving today. ■

YALE & TOWNE MFG. CO.

Ornamentation - ALBI
School - Romanesque



No. 423 Escutcheon Plate,
T-Handle and No. 56 Knob

No. 258 Escutcheon Plate,
No. 55 Knob

Roster update No. 5

The following are additions to the 1992 ADCA roster which was enclosed with the May-June 1992 issue of **The Doorknob Collector**.

Rachael Weingarden #325
Materials Unlimited
2 West Michigan Ave.
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Dallas E. Moon #326
7608 Suwannee Ct.
Jonesboro, GA 30236

Robert N. Aiken #327
715 Hemlock St.
Lake Oswego, OR 97034

Lawrence H. Selman #328
761 Chestnut St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Jimi Kay #138
407 S.E. 5th Street
Enterprise, OR 97828

The following are changes to the 1992 Roster:

Cynthia Lee Jenner #323
55 E. 76th Street
New York, NY 10021

Edward J. Sobczak #154
4848 So. LaCrosse Ave.
Chicago, IL 60638

Frank Peters #44
150 Maple Ave.
Watsonville, CA 95076-4709

Donna J. Sumera #312
38134 Overbrook Rd.
Zephyrhills, FL 33541

Genevieve Szaradowski #298
P.O. Box 334
Traverse City, MI 49685-0334

Frederic D. Smith #208
1017 Mitscher Dr.
Key West, FL 33040