



The Doorknob Collector

Number 71

May - June 1995

A TOUCH OF GLASS

by Maud Eastwood

In anticipation of the event coming up in August, I am getting that tingly feeling usually reserved for family reunions, Christmas festivities, or a shopping spree at the Bon. Roll them all into one to know what I mean.

In my mind's eye, I see glass knobs wall to wall at the Santa Monica convention. I see blown, cut, and pressed. Ones I have been privileged to see before and ones I had no idea existed.

I want to see all those colored knobs accomplished by Technical, Reading and Brock in the 1930s. I want to see bubbly Sandwich types of the 1830s and flawless crystal, cut by a master in the 1880s.

I want to see just how spirited the bidding can become when a choice glass knob, sacrificed in the spirit of the occasion, hits the auction block. (How can anyone NOT decide to attend this yearly event?)

You, who are going, will do well to review back issues of the illustrious newsletter for articles relating to glass knobs and their manufacture. Colored Glass Knobs, covered in the September/October issued of 1989, was followed in January/February by Entries from a Paperweight File. Pairpoint and the Bubble Ball knob took space in the May/June 1994 issue.

Other references to glass in *Builders' Hardware* can be found on pages 4, 6, 7 and 33 to 35, of the 40-page *Question and Answer Bulletin* assembled by John Holland for the 1985 convention and available through the Archives.

Technical Glass Company is of particular interest, being an important West Coast source for artistic glass door hardware after the turn of the century. Technical served home and foreign markets and other hardware manufacturers.

Technical Glass Company was the assignee of several patents for the design and operation of their products. The earliest patent date in the 1930 Technical catalog is June 2nd, 1925. Technical was the originator of the glass handle, as opposed to a knob.

Information presented at the convention will cover this company in greater detail, and also the products. Health permitting Mr. Rosenthal, a former official with Technical, will be in attendance and available to answer questions. •

CUT GLASS PUSH PLATES

Crystal

All cut glass push plates have a mirror finished back.



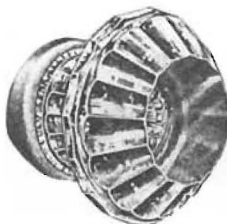
No. 1916



No. 1920



No. 1918



Patented June 2, 1925

THE COLONIAL



THE DIAMOND BEAUTY

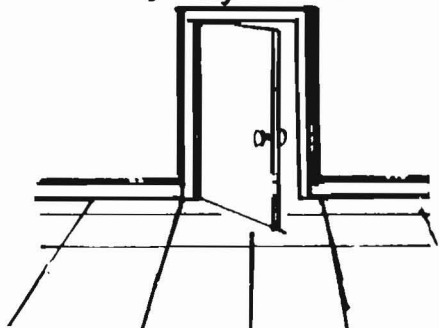
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ADCA Convention, Santa Monica, CA - August 15-18, 1995

THE OPEN DOOR

by ray nemec



ADCA elections are just around the corner; time to think what you would like to see added, changed and/or left the same.

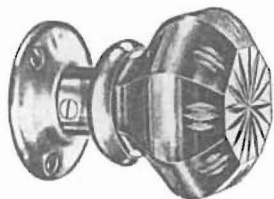
I would like to propose a change in memberships' dues as follows:

1. Regular Membership \$25 (no change)
2. Family Membership \$35 (This would include husband wife and children 18 or under.)
3. Contributing \$50
4. Sustaining \$100

The contributing and sustaining membership would be a way members can further support ADCA. It would be my recommendation that tokens of appreciation, possibly T-shirts, caps or books, for example, could be given to those who renew as a contributing or sustaining member.

The added income could be used, for example, to add more pages and pictures of doorknobs to **The Doorknob Collector**. We had a tremendous response to our 16 page issue for January/February and this would be one way to publish additional pages on a regular basis. •

BLOWN HAND-FINISHED
CUT GLASS DOOR KNOB
THE ARISTOCRATS—Size 2 1/4"



BITS AND PIECES

by Win Applegate

Upon returning home from the 1994 convention, there was a very official-looking piece of mail.

The letter informed my mother that she had successfully completed the first three levels of the READERS' DIGEST contest and was a finalist for the GRAND PRIZE worth several million dollars.

Later that same week, another first class mailing arrived from a vice-president of a travel agency offering to help her with travel arrangements, assuming she wished to personally pick up her winnings, if she won. The gentleman even included his business card.

This created quite a stir in our household as my mother had passed away six years prior!

Well, of course, there is a moral to this (unaccustomedly) brief story: "Don't believe everything that comes in the mail."

Your ADCA Newsletter is an exception. When you read about the up-coming convention, believe it! Always a change of scenery, people gathering with the same interests as you, educational, informative, etc.

One would wonder how, year after year, such an annual event could appear to be so similar, yet in reality be so different.

WHY NOT ATTEND?.

Back by popular demand.....

WINGATER #22

During a visit to a salvage company you will almost certainly find a door knob that you think you MUST have.

WINGATER #22 A

The knob will already be affixed to a door that appears irreparable.

WINGATER #22 B

The dealer will not remove and sell the knob separately.

WINGATER #22 C

The price tag on the door will be at least \$700. •

Magnus

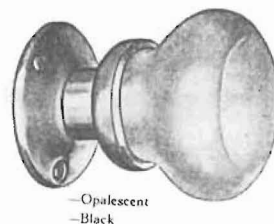
Continues to Show and Tell!

Fred Magnus recently gave a "show and tell" on approximately forty of his interesting antique doorknobs, telling of the incorporation of ADCA with a few collectors. The club now has over 220 members and an annual convention, Fred pointed out.

An audience of forty residents at Shell Point Village in Fort Myers, Florida, were very interested and appreciative of the "show and tell."

Previously Fred had a table at the annual Hall of Hobbies at the main activities building at Shell Point Village. As Fred says, "We keep going." •

BLOWN HAND-FINISHED GLASS DOOR KNOBS



The Doorknob Collector

©

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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. Nemec

(Continued from Mar/Apr. 1995 issue 70 of *The Doorknob Collector*)

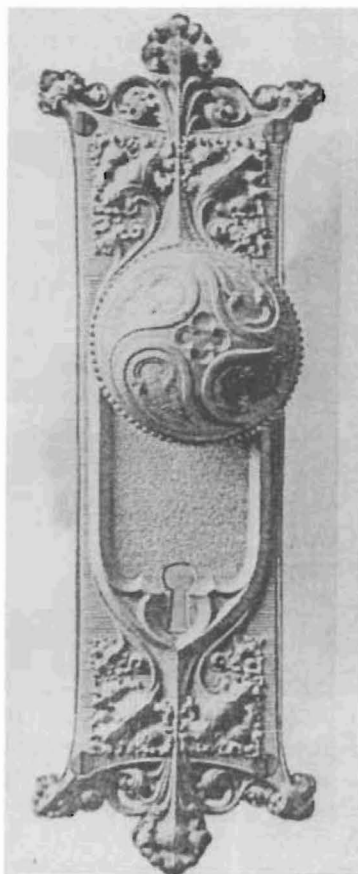
VII

Door Hardware Historian Art Paholke observed that "like the major hardware companies of the East, the Chicago Hardware Manufacturing Company maintained an impressive catalog of stock patterns." Their 1895 catalog featured a wide variety of styles and schools of design. In addition, Paholke reported, "These patterns were offered in an extensive choice of materials and finishes, including an authorized Bower-Barff finish for cast iron, licensed from the original British patent-holders."

The company did custom design orders. The Schiller Building and the Federal Building (constructed between 1898 and 1905) both in Chicago, the Pabst Building in Milwaukee, the Wisconsin Power Company and some of the Chicago public schools are a few examples of public and commercial buildings using Niles hardware. In many fine homes in large cities like Chicago and Milwaukee or smaller cities such as Kewanee, Illinois, the Niles hardware was used.

In 1900 James H. Shields became President and W. H. Gold was Secretary. A 1901 listing shows A. Weinberg was treasurer and their Chicago offices were at 308 Ashland Block. H. W. Pritchard was the plant superintendent at North Chicago. Pritchard succeeded E. P. Sedgwick in 1897.

On May 14, 1901, at a special meeting of the stockholders, Chicago Hardware Manufacturing Company changed the name of the corporation to that of Chicago Hardware Company. Shields and Gold signed the papers. The change occurred just over 19 years from the



H-499 A Niles knob, Gothic School, Westminster Design appeared in the Chicago Hardware Manufacturing Company's Catalog number 6 in 1895 and in Sweet's 1906 catalog. (It is the knob the author has been trying to find for several years, has still to add it to his collection.)

date the company had adopted the former name.

The officers of the company in 1905 were Hiram B. Prentice, President, W. H. Gold, Vice President/Secretary and A. V. Allen, Treasurer. Chicago offices were now shown as 40 Dearborn Street.

The company placed an impressive ad in a new publication, the 1906 issue of "Sweet's" Indexed Catalogue of Building Construction.

The "ad" on pages 418 and 419 described in some detail products and services the company offered. The text described the Niles lock, the Bower-Barff process and showed a full page of Gothic school, Westminster design, a design found in homes throughout Southern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois. The Westminster design originally appeared in the 1895 C.H.M.C. catalog.

This would be the last major advertisement seen for Niles locks. A change was about to take place at North Chicago. Just how successful the Niles lock had been is hard to determine. If we were to look at our collection of doorknobs, only 2-1/2% of them are Niles. It would probably be safe to estimate that the Niles hardware captured less than 5% of the market. Never being accepted by many builders, it had now been 27 years since it was first introduced. The original Niles family was out of the picture.

Milton's brother, Smith Niles, had died on April 3, 1895, in Oak Park. He was 72 and had lived in West Chicago and Joliet prior to moving to Oak Park. His wife, Mary Laurene, was born December 12, 1838, in Haydenville, Massachusetts. She died December 26, 1926, in Oak Park. They had two sons. Lewis N. Niles and Fred S. Niles.

Milton Niles' wife, Mary Caroline, died on June 3, 1908, in Oak Park. Cause of death was listed as senility. Mary was 78.

About eighteen months later, on December 21, 1909, Milton C. Niles died at his home in Oak Park. The pioneer lock inventor was 82. Gastritis was listed as the cause of death.



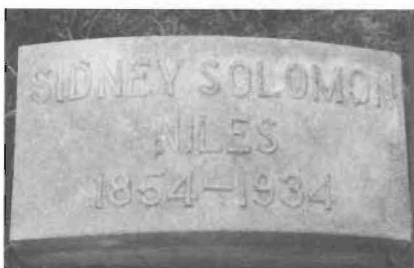
Ray Nemec and Maud Eastwood find Milton Niles' burial location at Forest Home Cemetery, Forest Park, Illinois.

Milton and Mary's daughter, Marian Augustus Niles, never married. She died on April 12, 1921, at Oak Park. She was 69. Marion had attended the Lowell school in Oak Park, Lake Forest Seminary and graduated from Monticello Seminary. She had been a member of the Unity Church and her obituary in the Oak Leaves (an Oak Park newspaper) described her as an "ardent worker in church and social affairs."

Sidney S. Niles died on December 25, 1934, in Pasadena, California. Death was a result of a cerebral hemorrhage. He was 80 year old. Sidney and his wife, Lulu G. Niles, had lived in Oak Park until 1928 when they moved to Pasadena. Sidney had resided in Oak Park for seventy years.

In his obituary in the Oak Leaves, it was mentioned that Sidney started his business career as secretary at the Chicago Hardware Manufacturing Company. It further stated that he engaged in the manufacture of hardware specialties. Little is known of this facet of his business life. What is known is that he was actively engaged in real estate sales and developing and as stated earlier, the Niles Block, built in 1891, stands to this day as a monument to his work.

At the time of his death, Sidney's wife and his son, Sidney C. Niles, survived. Dr. Sidney C. Niles resided in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1935. Also surviving was Sidney Solomon Niles' older brother, Marcellus, 85 at that time. He resided in Daytona Beach, Florida.



The headstones of Milton C. Niles and Sidney S. Niles, inventors of the Niles Lock, are located at the Forest Home Cemetery.

Milton C. Niles, his wife, his daughter, Marian, and his son, Sidney S., are all buried in the Forest Home Cemetery, at Forest Park, Illinois. Also buried there are his brother, his brother's wife and their two sons.

VIII

As the year 1906 was ushered in, Waukegan had more than a passing interest in the announced merger of many glucose companies into one corporation, the Corn Products Refining Company. Waukegan's Warner Sugar refinery and the idled United States Refinery were expected to prosper under the new ownership, helping to bring stability to the area.

North Chicago was also in the news. By June construction began

on a new Naval training station at Pettibone Creek, just east of the Chicago Hardware Company site. It would take two years to complete the Great Lakes Naval Training Station.

A front page story in the November 6th *Waukegan Sun* told about L. C. Delamothe, an electrochemist at Chicago Hardware, having made a discovery that suspends perishable plant and animal life in a secret solution. Delamothe said, "I take the plant, the flower, the twig, the fruit, the vegetable from nature. I put it into my solution. It stays there for twenty-four yours. Presto, it is metal now. It is perishable nature embalmed in everlasting metal." Delamothe worked daily at the hardware concern and at night he worked at the formation of a stock company.

About a month later, on December 19, 1906, the *Waukegan Sun's* front page carried the headline, "Chicago Hardware Plant sold for \$60,000." The reporter told the story and elaborated on his attempt to get information. It read: "The North Chicago plant of the Chicago Hardware Company has been sold in the entirety to David B. Gann for \$60,000, subject to bonds amounting to \$50,000 that have been issued. The transfer of the property was entered in the court house today.

"The plant at North Chicago was called up but no information could be secured. Superintendent Pritchard was in Chicago and it was stated that the office there was not allowed to give any information.

"The Chicago offices of the company were then called up by the *Sun*. Nothing could be learned from them. 'It is a matter we want to keep secret for awhile,' was said. 'What is the reason for that?' was asked. 'Because we do not wish it known,' was the answer.

'Who is David Gann?' 'We cannot tell you a thing about it,' was replied. 'It is to be kept entirely secret.'

"The Chicago Hardware Company is the plant across the street from the Chicago Hardware Foundry Company and is one of the oldest factories in North Chicago. It is engaged in general foundry business.

Later

"David B. Gann is a Chicago lawyer with offices in the Borland building. He was called up by the *Sun* and asked about the deal.

'Well, I guess I have purchased it,' he said. 'I was acting for myself. The plant will be run by a new company of which Charles W. Sager, of Lockport, will be the head. I will not be actively connected with the company as that is not my business.

'We are already running the plant and the change took place yesterday. We expect to make no changes, at least none we know of as yet.' As they expect to make no changes it was stated by Mr. Gann that Mr. Pritchard would remain as superintendent of the plant."

Gann was no stranger to owning a hardware company. Records show that in 1906 he owned 91.7% of the stock in the Barrows Lock Company, in Lockport, Illinois, where Charles W. Sager was one of the directors.

Some interesting corporate moves were made just weeks prior to Gann revealing his takeover of the North Chicago hardware plant. It seems rather intriguing that Gann, who held control of Barrows, was not mentioned in any of the following transactions yet his influence was there.

On November 21, 1906, the Western Hardware Company was formed and papers were filed for incorporation in the State of West Virginia. The principal place of business was given as 181 LaSalle

Street, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

The objects and purpose for which the corporation was formed stated, "To manufacture, buy, sell and deal in builders' hardware of all kinds." This statement was followed by a rather lengthy continuation of other expected functions, all related to hardware and metals, the company would be involved in.

The amount of total authorized capital stock was set as \$465,000, which was divided into 4,650 shares of \$100.00 par value. The name of the incorporators and the number of stock subscribed for by each are as follows:

Walter C. Haight (Chicago) 10 shares
J. Walter Stead (Chicago) 10 shares
Wm. Capron, Jr. (Chicago) 10 shares
G. E. Kerr (Chicago) 10 shares
Harold Beach (Chicago) 10 shares

The company was officially incorporated on November 28, 1906 at Charleston, West Virginia.

On that very day, November 28th, Western Hardware Company, with William C. Haight as President, held a meeting of stock holders and changed the name of the corporation to Chicago Hardware Company. The certificate of change was officially dated December 10, 1906.

The Chicago Hardware Company, operating under an Illinois charter since 1880, originally under the name of Gray Iron Company, held a stockholders meeting on December 7, 1906. They voted to change the name of the corporation from Chicago Hardware Company to North Chicago Iron Company. The certificate was signed by J. F. Stone, President, and W. J. Gold, Secretary, on December 8, 1906.

Then on December 18, 1906, David B. Gann's company, now legally using the name of Chicago Hardware Company, took over operation of the North Chicago plant from the North Chicago Iron Company.

The last annual report filed with the Illinois Secretary of State by North Chicago Iron Company was on February 19, 1909. J. F. Stone (Wilmette, Illinois) President, W. J. Gold (4101 Howard Avenue, Chicago), Secretary and William Jenkins, (4101 Howard Ave., Chicago), Treasurer, were the listed officers. The state issued a certificate of cancellation of the charter of North Chicago Iron Company on June 30, 1918.

The new Chicago Hardware company, at a meeting of stockholders on December 15, 1906, reduced the number of shares from 4,650 to 3,000 and the capital was reduced from \$465,000 to \$300,000. Walter C. Haight was listed as President, G. E. Kerr, Secretary and J. Walter Stead as a Director. William Capron, Jr. and Harold Beach were listed as stockholders in addition to the three officers/directors. All gave Chicago addresses. Gann's name did not appear. However in 1907, Charles W. Sager became President and David B. Gann would take a more active corporate role.

At the time Gann became financially involved in Barrows and Chicago Hardware he was a member of the law firm of Gann & Peaks. David B. Gann was born October 28, 1866, at Bellevue, Ohio. He attended Western Reserve Academy in Hudson, Ohio, and graduated from the University of Michigan. He became an attorney in Chicago in 1892 and would remain one for over 50 years. In 1906, the law firm of Gann & Peaks was formed with offices at 105 S. LaSalle in downtown Chicago. In 1922 the name was changed to Gann, Secord, Stead and McIntosh and offices, in the early 1940s, were at 135 LaSalle Street. Gann was the senior member of the firm.

Gann married Mary E. L. Mills in 1893. A second marriage, to Georgie E. Kerr, took place on

November 30, 1922. Kerr was on of the original subscribers for stock in 1906 when Gann and his associates took over the builders' hardware operation in North Chicago. Her exact relationship with the firm Gann & Peaks is not known.

Another of the original stockholders was J. Walter Stead, who began his practice of law in 1906 and remained with Gann until the 1940s. Stead became a full partner of Gann, Secord, Stead and McIntosh in 1922.

Frederick Secord, a member of the Gann, Secord, Stead and McIntosh law firm, was a native of Chicago, having been born there on May 1, 1884. After graduation from Northwestern in 1906, he was admitted to the Illinois Bar later that year. It was also the year he joined Gann & Peaks, remaining with them until he became a full partner in the firm in 1922. Like Stead, he would remain with Gann, both as a lawyer and as a stock holder in the builders' hardware operation. •

(The Story of The Chicago Hardware Company, by Raymond J. Nemec, will be continued in the next issue of **The Doorknob Collector**.)

Identifying doorknobs

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

Moes Enterprises	Len Blumin's Victorian Decorative
Catalog	Art
A-106	J-214
A-107	H-234
A-108	H-427
A-109	B-111
A-110	H-244
A-111	H-261
A-112	J-207
A-113	K-310
A-114	K-213

(Compiled by Edward Sobczak)



Knobs on Display Ryan's Have a Heart

Orval and Helen Ryan, of Stronghurst, Illinois in February participated in Collector's Night, sponsored by the Jr. High Classes at an area school.

Since this took place in February, Orval constructed a large red heart and with Helen's help they attached some of their unusual knobs to display a variety of shapes, as well as various materials used in making knobs.

A great deal of interest was shown, not only by the students, but their parents and other patrons of the school. Amid the more usual displays of dolls, baseball caps, model car kits, match-box cars etc., Helen said "Ours was perhaps the most unusual - - - and the most commonly heard comment was 'Well, I never knew anyone who collected doorknobs before.' And another was 'They don't take up much room.' We didn't tell them that eventually they can."

Helen added, "It was great fun - - - and we were treated to a free lunch before the show started." •

Doorknobs on TV

On April 12, Loretta and Ray Nemec, along with about 150 doorknobs, were guests on the TV program, Fox Valley Today. The program was broadcast live at 8:30 a.m. and rebroadcast at 6:30 and 10:30 p.m. later that day on WFXV, channel 30, Plano, Illinois. The station covers the Aurora and Naperville area.

Later in the month, the Nemecs were guests of the Lions club of Villa Park, Illinois, at a luncheon where they were featured with a doorknob presentation. •

New Member Policy for 1995

Membership in ADCA follows the current calendar year. Anyone joining during the period from January through September 30, is enrolled for the current year and is sent all back issues of **The Doorknob Collector** for the current year. The member then continues to receive the rest of the current year's issues of **The Doorknob Collector**.

Applicants for membership after September 30 are enrolled as members for the following year. They received notices of year end meetings as well as other current ADCA announcements and are told they will begin receiving **The Doorknob Collector** during the next year. •

U. S. Patent Invention number chart

This is the fifth table in a six part series to help you determine the approximate age of patented hardware.

YEAR PATENT NUMBERS

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

CHICAGO HARDWARE COMPANY

MAIN OFFICE
40 DEARBORN STREET
CHICAGO, ILL.

TELEPHONE, CENTRAL 623

FACTORY
NORTH CHICAGO
LAKE CO., ILL.

TELEPHONE, NORTH CHICAGO 88

PRODUCTS—Manufacturers of the NILES SCREWLESS SPINDLE SELF-ADJUSTING KNOBS AND LOCKS, and a complete line of BUILDERS' HARDWARE, embracing designs in all the various schools of Architecture.

FACILITIES—Our extensive line of hardware offers a selection to suit any purse or taste, ranging from the most simple hardware, suitable for the ordinary type of Dwelling House, to the higher grades required for Hotels, Office Buildings, etc. We are prepared to execute orders from Architects' Designs or from designs furnished by our own artists, special attention being given to the interpretation and execution of original work.

NILES LOCKS—The ingenious methods of construction employed in the manufacture of the Niles Locks and Knobs (Fig. 1) has eliminated the use of the side Knob Screws, Machine Screws, Spindles and Washers, with all their inefficiency and annoyance, and is the most perfect and practical method yet discovered in combining perfect adjustment and permanent utility.

Many devices have been offered to the public professing to have the above qualities, but in applying the most simple and mechanically correct principles in the construction of the Niles Locks and Knobs, a high degree of efficiency is secured, not hitherto attained.

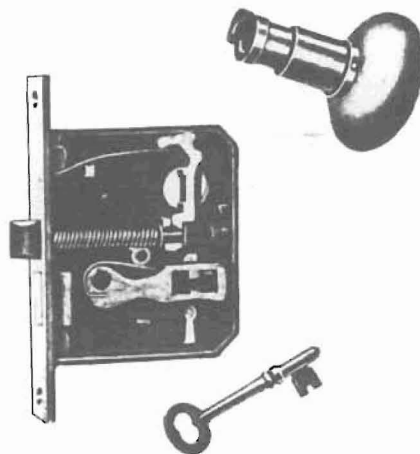


FIG. 1. NILES LOCK, SHOWING CONSTRUCTION.

BOWER-BARFF HARDWARE—We are one of the two manufacturers of Builders' Hardware who are making these goods by the scientific process patented under the name of Oxidized Iron or Bower-Barff Hardware. We have an extensive, modern furnace for this treatment, and we can give our customers the results of most approved methods. We guarantee that this product is the best that can be produced, and for use inside of buildings, to be rust-proof.

GOTHIC SCHOOL, WESTMINSTER DESIGN—The Gothic design, Westminster, illustrated on the next page, is one of our many stock designs, and is a good example of the high character of the Company's products. This design is suitable for Churches, Parish Houses, Lodge Rooms and any room treated in the Medieval School.

The most appropriate finishes in this style are, Genuine Bower-Barff on Iron or any Sand Finish on Copper or Brass.

Our complete catalogue of Builders' Hardware will be furnished on request.

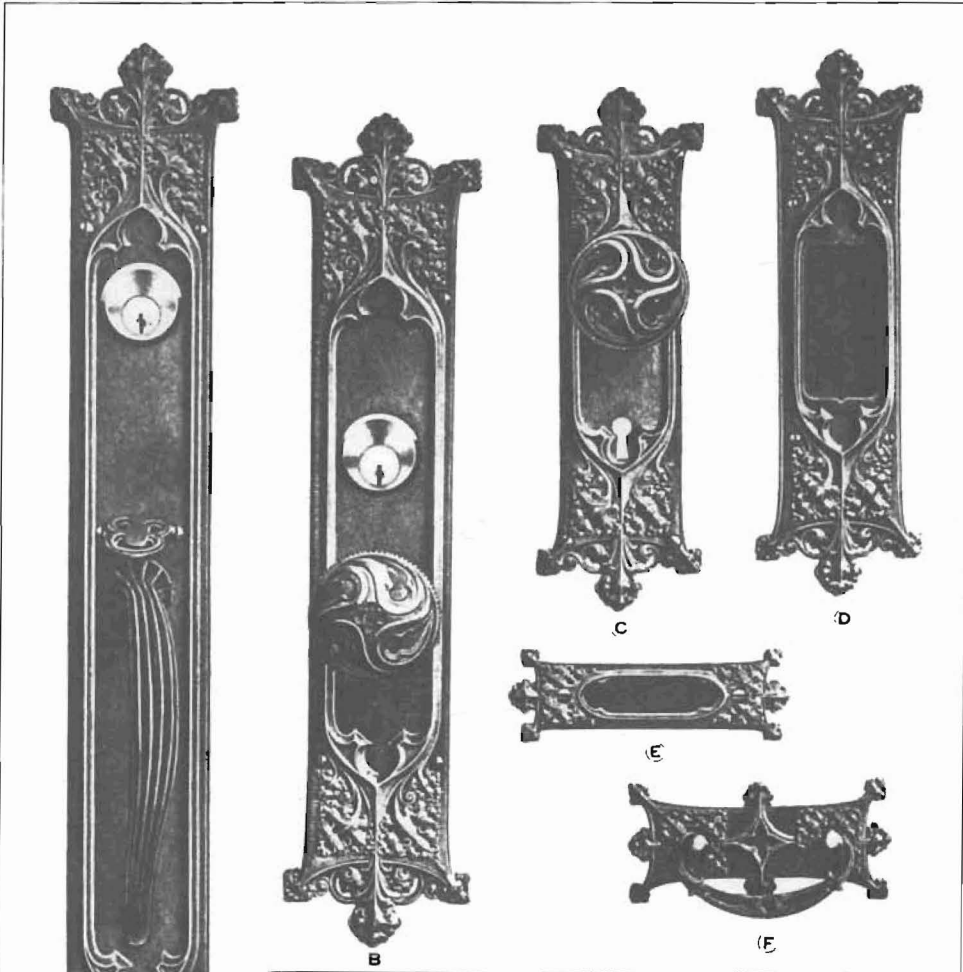


FIG. 2. GOTHIC SCHOOL, WESTMINSTER DESIGN

NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	SIZE		ANY SAND BRASS OR BRONZE FIN.	BOWER BARFF
974F	4 1/4 Inch Inside Lock Set.....	Esc 10 3/4 x 3 3/4	Per Set	\$ 5.00	\$ 4.00
9074A	Cylinder Front Door Set { Out Esc..	16 1/2 x 3 3/4	"	10.00	8.00
3117x3274	Single Sliding Door Set { In Esc..	12 x 3 1/4	"	4.50	3.50
3118x3274	Double Sliding Door Set } Escsns	11 x 3 3/4	"	10.00	8.00
4274	Flush Sash Lift.....	5 3/4 x 2	Per Doz.	8.00	6.50
4974A	Push Plate.....	22 1/4 x 3 3/4	Each	4.25	3.50
7030 1/2 x 7674	Store Door Set.....	22 1/4 x 3 3/4	Per Set	12.00	9.50
8074A-B-C	Set of Corner and Center Hinge Plates { Width on	Style 3 3/4"	"	50.00	40.00
8274D	Drop Drawer Pull.....	5 1/4 x 2 1/2	Per Doz.	12.00	9.50

The prices given are subject to a liberal discount to the trade.

Space will not permit our showing all the articles we make in this design; we have therefore selected such pieces as are commonly called for, and if other pieces, such as Push Buttons, Letter Plates, Bar Lifts and Cabinet Hardware, are desired, we will furnish complete information upon application.