



The Doorknob Collector

Number 189

January—February 2015

A Publication of The Antique Doorknob Collectors of America

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

The Motherhood Knob

Russell and Erwin 1902

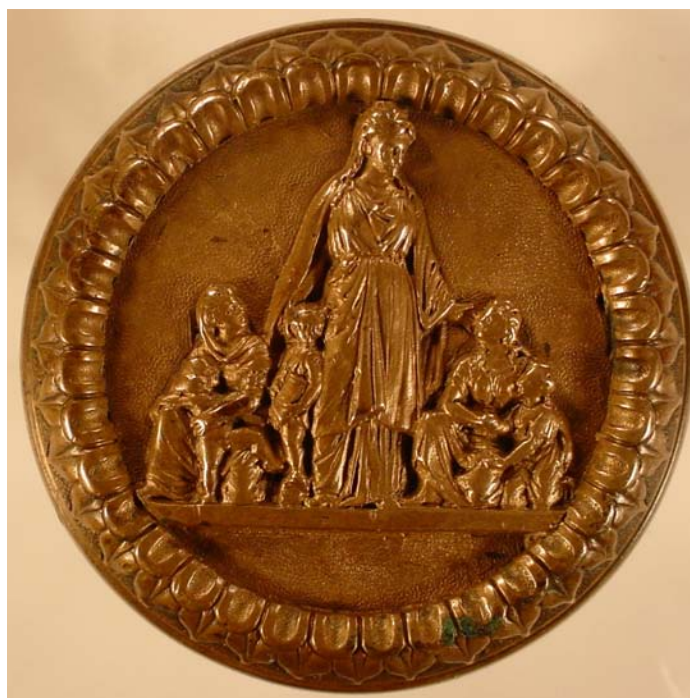
By Win Applegate

I had initially decided to title this ‘Motherhood Revisited’ but then thought better of it as so few members have seen this knob or are even aware of it. It is not an entry sized knob. At less than three inches in diameter, once the classic Russell and Erwin ring is in place, what is left is a field of about one and three quarters of an inch.

Except for those with exceptional vision, a magnifying glass is needed to study what is a portrait of a standing woman, the mother, and five children. The middle aged child is the only girl. Almost too small to measure is a naked infant, who is clearly a boy, draped across the lap of the figure on the far left. This feature alone speaks of its remarkable quality.

We have aptly named the knob in today’s world. It could certainly stand on its own as a motivational poster as ‘Motherhood’ along with others such as ‘Courage’, ‘Loyalty’, etc. But, in its time over a hundred years ago such an excellent specimen by a quality manufacturer, Russell and Erwin with its classic and identifying ‘frame’ would hardly stand as a “motivational” doorknob.

Could this be a family portrait? Well, I had to start the search. With a doubtful



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beginning, prominent family names like Kennedy and Roosevelt failed the test. Not only was a 'head count' important, but the correct sequence of gender was paramount. Eventually, the parameters were enlarged and there was the missing piece of the jigsaw. Not only was the family intact, but the gender issue was satisfied!

The 'Motherhood' knob is a portrait of the family of King George V of England! Born 1865, crowned 1910 and died 1936, George married Princess Victoria Mary of Teck, who was informally called 'May'. May bore George six children, two of whom were later crowned Kings of England.

Edward Born in 1894. He was crowned Edward VIII after George V died in 1936 and later abdicated the throne to marry Wallis Simpson an American divorcée. Edward and Wallis became a very prominent couple in international society as the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

Albert Born in 1895. Crowned George VI after his brother's abdication, Albert was the father of Queen Elizabeth II.

Mary Born in 1897. Countess of Harewood.

Henry Born in 1900. Duke of Gloucester.

George Born in 1902 and dates the knob portrait. Duke of Kent.

John Born in 1905. Prince John was stricken with epilepsy and died at age 13.

In 1917, given strong anti-German public sentiment, King George V renounced his many German and non-English titles and founded the Royal House of Windsor of England; taking the name from Windsor Castle.



The Doorknob Collector ©



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

P.O. Box 803,
Hackettstown, NJ
07840

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 501 (c)(3) organization devoted to the study and preservation of ornamental hardware.

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As I was assembling this article, I was using qualifying phrases such as ‘very strong possibility’. Near the end of my research, I came across the concluding photo [bottom of pg 2] that removes any doubt about ‘Motherhood’. The photo (circa 1909) is without May, who will later become Queen Consort, but with young John at about four years of age.

Perhaps one of our talented members could locate the building or edifice, undoubtedly Canadian, from which ‘Motherhood’ came.

Canadian Patent Research

BY JOHN ROBERTS

The Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) offers online patent databases that can be useful for researching antique hardware. Patents back to 1861 in their Industrial Design database, and from 1869 forward in the main (utility) database are available. There are simple patent number and keyword searches, and the advanced and Boolean search pages have a wide variety of search options.

There are some problems with searching Canadian patents, including the fact that many patents are nearly duplicates of American patents that many of us already know about. The website is often down (usually all weekend), a few patents are written or printed in French, and many pages are had written or poorly printed, making them hard to read. Also most older Canadian patents are assigned to people (called the Owner), rather than to companies, as many American patents are, making it difficult to determine who produced an item, or if it was ever manufactured. Lack of knowledge about Canadian companies, officers, inventors, and locations compounds this problem.

To do a Canadian patent search, Google on Canadian patents, click on “Patents—Canadian Intellectual Property Office”, and select “Search Patent Documents”; OR: enter www.cipo.gc.ca and choose “Search Patents”. Either method gives you the basic search page referred to below, where you can select from the search options in the left column.

For an often needed date search, starting from the basic search page, select Advanced or Boolean search in the left column, and scroll to the bottom of the page. In the date search section, after “Find patents With”, choose “issue date”. Then enter a date range and click the search box. Which brings up a list of patents. When a patent you want to view is found, click on the patent number to bring up the patent summary page. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select “Drawings:”, “Description”, or “Claims” to view the actual patent. If the page disappears after loading, try enlarging it which usually works. If the enlargement disappears after loading, go back to the summary page and choose the PDF version in the chart which is a slower download, but often higher quality. If you get a notice on a patent summary page that says, “Sorry, the requested images are unavailable ...”, the website is usually down, although patents from another page of the list will sometimes load.

To search design patents, starting from the basic search page, click on “Canadian Industrial Designs Database: in the left column, then click on “advanced search” within the text of the page, and fill in the search form. From the list that comes up, click on the title of the desired patent to bring up the summary page. As with utility patents, scroll to the bottom and select what to view.

To increase our knowledge of Canadian-made hardware, I encourage members (especially Canadian) to send information about Canadian patents, possible patent dates, manufacturers, company officers, inventors, etc., of antique ornate Canadian hardware to jcr621@earthlink.net. I’ve done a lot of research and patent searches on Canadian hardware, but much more information is needed.

FURTHER FUN AND GAMES WITH METALLIC COMPRESSION CASTING COMPANY

By Allen Joslyn

We all know about the builders hardware and plaques produced by Metallic Compression Casting Company, and that the company was trying to interest producers of other articles – such as type - to use it. (TDC 160). They did also produce an exceedingly fine wood-working plane, of a type subsequently listed in R&E's 1875 catalogue. Further investigation is underway.

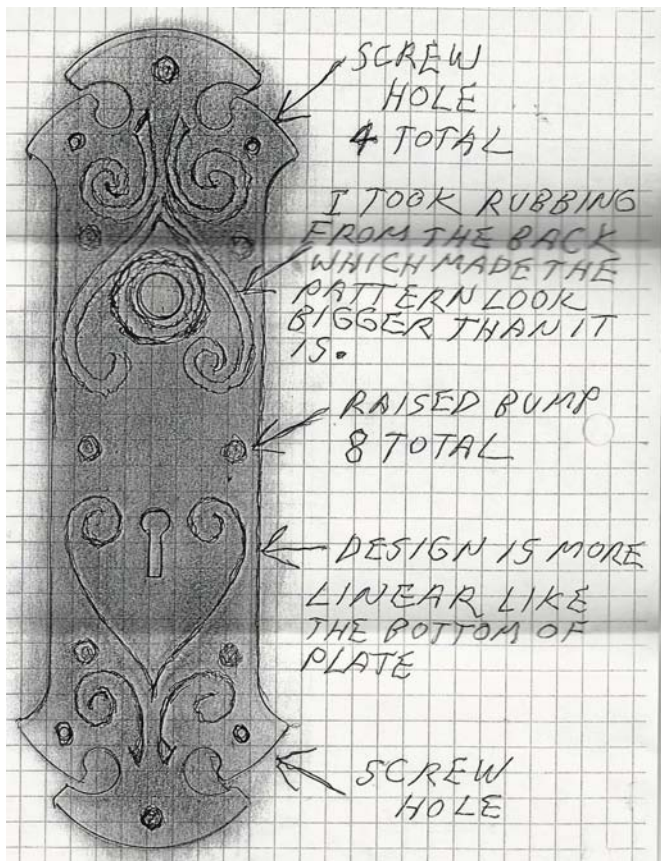


The Doorknob Exchange

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: Escutcheon plate pictured at left Vicky Berol (# 450) (415) 771-9899
sfgofer@yahoo.com

For Sale: At Auction: The complete door-knob collection of Glenn and Junella Leach, (ADCA #42)...the first auction will close New Year's Day, 2015, online at AntiquesYes.com...the second auction will follow a few weeks later...Glenn bought the very first Judgment knob which will be sold again, along with other rarities...for all the details visit www.AntiquesYes.com or call Web Wilson at 800-508-0022.



First National Bank Building Pueblo, Colorado



The First National Bank of Pueblo was founded in 1871 and grew progressively under the leadership of the Thatcher brothers. In 1912 the Bank commissioned the architectural firm of Schmidt, Garden, and Martin of Chicago (designers of the Montgomery Ward headquarters and Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago, as well as the Fort Shelby Hotel in Detroit) to design their new building. The building is a Prairie-style masterpiece of terra cotta, brick, and stone. The hardware, by Corbin, is Sullivanesque brilliance which is not surprising, given that architect Hugh Garden did work for both Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright before partnering with Richard Schmidt. The hardware can be seen on the President's Office door from a feature article on the Bank building from the August 1915 issue of the *Western Architect*.



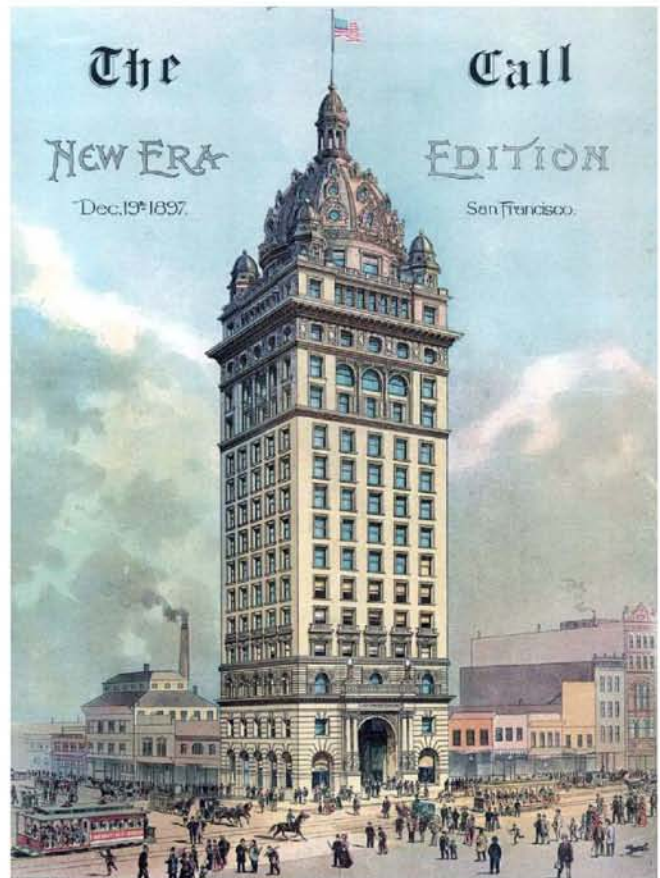
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE



Claus Spreckels/Call Building San Francisco, California



Claus Spreckels made his fortune in the sugar business in Hawaii and California, and with his sons invested in real estate, railroads, and newspapers. In 1897 the family built the Claus Spreckels Building on Market Street in San Francisco which provided a home for their *San Francisco Call* newspaper. The building as designed by the Reid Brothers, who often used emblematic hardware in their buildings (Morning Oregonian in Portland, Douglas Building in Los Angeles, David Hewes Building in San Francisco). The Call Building was one of many steel-framed structures that survived the 1906 San Francisco earthquake but was damaged in the ensuing fire. The building was restored after the fire and remained a sought-after business address until the mid-1930s, when it was remodeled in an Art Moderne style, with all of the exterior terra cotta embellishments removed including the dome. The Art Moderne version still stands today and has some of the original Corbin hardware in use on some office doors. This knob is included in the *VDA* as O-133 (although not identified), and the Call Building having CS-monogrammed hardware was mentioned in Maude Eastwood's book *150 Years of Builders Hardware*. An article from August 2013 on www.bizjournals.com about this building being for sale for the first time in 70 years includes a photo of the original hardware and provided much of this information.



Palace Hotel San Francisco, California

The Palace Hotel opened in 1875, built by Comstock Lode financier William Ralston. The hotel remained the grandest and finest hotel in town until April 1906, when the building survived the great San Francisco earthquake but was fully destroyed in the ensuing fire. Architects Trowbridge and Livingston of New York, who had designed both the St. Regis and Knickerbocker hotels in New York, created the "New" Palace Hotel for San Francisco which reopened in 1909. Many of the features from the original hotel were built into the new hotel, including the Garden Court which serves as a dining room. The doorknobs, which feature the PH monogram, are included in the VDA as O-136 and are still in use on some doors in the hotel.



Sources:

Wikipedia, [*Palace Hotel, San Francisco*](#)

Wikipedia, [*Trowbridge & Livingston*](#)

Our Business Members

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