The Hunt begins!

The story of American buttonhooks begins in Europe. In the formative years of the United States the settler's lives were shaped by the things they brought with them from home and the conditions they found when they arrived. Any buttonhooks they had, they brought with them.

There were two other things they left behind that perpetuated the buttonhook throughout the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe; hunting and the army. True that in time there would be a military presence in the new colonies, but it would be a long time before they rose above the level of militia, whose ranks would be drawn form the local population. As for hunting, this was no longer with dogs but with muskets. Then there were no foxes to chase, although foxes were later introduced. Hunting for the new colonists was for food, essential for their very survival.

It was not until 1650 that fox hunting came to America, and with it would have been all the accoutrements that accompanied it, including buttonhook usage of the gaiters that would have been brought over from England. The earliest record of the importation of hounds to this country was on June 30, 1650, when Robert Brooke arrived in Maryland with his family and hounds. By the early 1700's, fox hunting was increasing rapidly in Maryland, Virginia and other colonies. The earliest surviving record of American fox hunting by what is known as an organized hunt, was of the pack instituted by Thomas, Sixth Lord Fairfax in 1747 in northern Virginia. Much of what little is recorded about early hunting comes from letters written by Lord Fairfax and the diaries of George Washington. Washington was an ardent fox hunter who owned his own pack of hounds and was frequently joined in the hunt by Thomas Jefferson. Washington's diaries are laced with frequent references to foxhunts near the nation's capital.

On one occasion hounds ran near the capital while congress was in session. Many congressmen ran outside to watch them and some jumped on their horses and joined the chase. The earliest established foxhound club was the Montreal Hunt in Canada founded in 1826. In the United States, the Piedmont Foxhounds were established in Virginia in1840. Both packs continue very successfully to this day.

Through the years North American foxhunting has evolved its own distinct flavour which is noticeably different from British hunting. In Britain the objective is to kill the fox, however in North America the emphasis is on the chase rather than the kill. A successful hunt ends when the fox is accounted for by entering its earth. Once there, hounds are rewarded with praise from their huntsman. The fox gets away and is chased another day. When hounds do not account for a fox by chasing him to an earth, the vast majority of times hounds lose the scent of the fox and that ends the hunt. On many hunts scent isn't sufficient for hounds to run at all. They cannot run what they can't smell. Even these slow days are fun as the scenery is always beautiful, fellow foxhunters are enjoyable and watching the hounds as they attempt to find the quarry is pleasurable. That is not to say that foxhounds in America do not sometimes kill but it is generally the exception. Fox populations in hunt country are exceptionally healthy due to natural selection. In addition, hounds were used to hunt many different animals. In various parts of the United States, where foxes are more difficult to locate, hunts track coyotes, rabbits, bear, and, in some cases, bobcats.

So far only one American buttonhook associated with hunting has been identified and that is of stag horn.

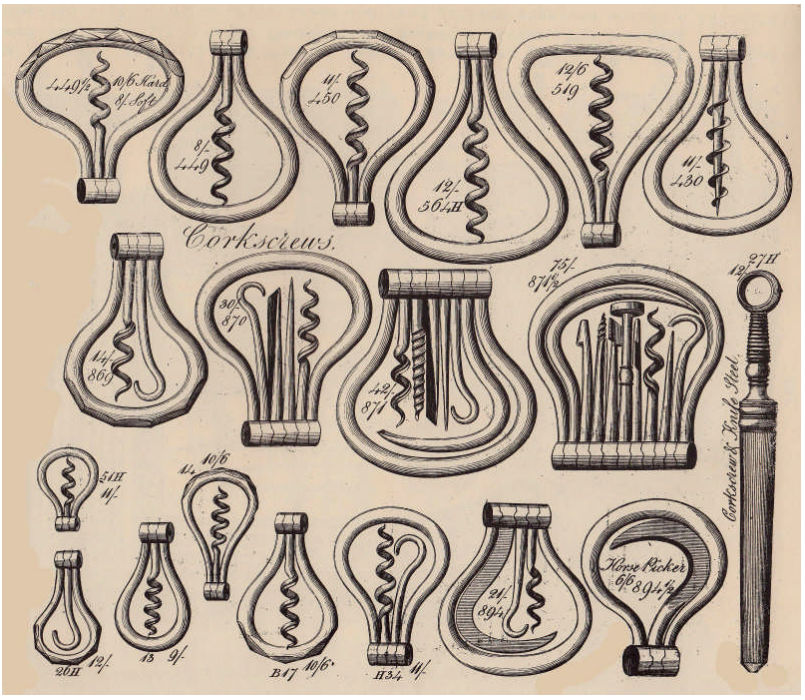
Deer hunting in America began at the outset, as the Native Americans hunted them as did the early colonists. Their quarry was the Whitetail deer, and it provided them with skins and

antlers which could be used in ensuring the settler's survival.

Stag horn & Sterling silver by Black, Starr & Frost.

The Industrial Revolution in England.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, England had been transformed from being a feudal economy to an industrialised one. Since the eleventh century the rural poor had been sustained by their tenancy of feudal strips of land and their rights to use common land. This allowed them to survive albeit at subsistence level. However with the increase in profitability in sheep farming, land owners began to enclose their fields and turn their tenant off the land. It was claimed that by so doing they were releasing a mobile work force who could work in the growing industrial companies. Nevertheless the loss of the common lands sent thousands of destitute rural labourers into London and other cities for work. By 1775 two-thirds of English arable land had been enclosed and by 1790 most of the remainder had been enclosed.



The Industrial Revolution was now well under way; canals were being dug, the spinning jenny had been invented, James Watt's steam engine had just been demonstrated. Against this background, the multum in parvo makes an appearance.

These tools would not have been called a multum in parvo then but more likely a combination tool. They were known to be around in 1775 if not before and by 1790 they were appearing in pattern books. Just as when Randle Cotgrave's entry of a description of a buttonhook appeared, the fact that these appear in a pattern book indicates that such tools had been around for a long time, developed from the hand forged tools that craftsmen had been making for many years.

It is very evocative handling these tools in the knowledge that some poor soul, having been turned off his land in 1775, could seek work and turn his hand to anything with this multiple tool in his pocket.

The makers of these tools sent travelling salesmen all over Britain carrying samples. However by making pattern books, the traveller now had no heavy goods to carry but

could simply take orders from the books. One of the most interesting things about these pattern books is that the prices are engraved in them. The fact is that we are used to inflation as if it was the normal state of things, but from 1800 to the First World War the normal state was to have no inflation, so the prices could be engraved on the plates.

At this time there was no impetus in America for making such tools. They would undoubtedly make their way to America but there was no reason to make their own. Industrial tool making did not begin in America until about 1830, and in any event they were preoccupied with weightier matters in 1775.

Unlike the harp tool shown on the left, the harp tool shown on the right was not from a pattern book but was hand made. Unlike in the pattern books, the mechanism does not work by a ratchet or by a spring system but by two knops at the back, that prevents the hook from turning beyond 180°. Circa 1770 -1780.

The harp tool on the left sold recently on eBay for $2370.

1790 US Patents

Modern patents originated in Europe where the sovereigns commonly awarded "letters patent" to favoured inventors. These letters had their royal seal on the outside, with the writing open, or patent, for all to see. So before independence, the King of England officially owned all the intellectual property created by the colonists. Prior to 1790, it was necessary for an inventor to make a special appeal to the governing body of the Colony or State to protect an invention. The first such patent on this continent was granted by the Massachusetts General Court to Samuel Winslow in 1641 for a novel method of making salt.

The first U.S. patent laws were enacted by Congress in 1790 as part of the Constitution. George Washington signed the First United States Patent Grant on July 31, 1790, and the patent examiner was Thomas Jefferson. It went to Samuel Hopkins of Pittsford, Vermont for a new method of making Potash, an industrial chemical used in making soap, glass, fertilizers and gunpowder. The fee was four dollars.

In order to ensure that the invention would be understood by all parties concerned, drawings of inventions have generally been required from applicants for patents since the first patent statute was enacted in 1790. A total of 55 patents were issued between 1790 and 1793 and there were nearly 10,000 United States patents granted between July 31, 1790 and July 2, 1836. These patents were not numbered but were referenced only by name and date. However after the Patent Act of July 4, 1836, patents were numbered, and patent No. 1 was issued on July 13, 1836 to inventor John Ruggles for traction wheels. The patent office went back and numbered the older patents, and an X suffix was used to distinguish them from the newer patents so that the first patent ever issued in the United States became patent number 1X.

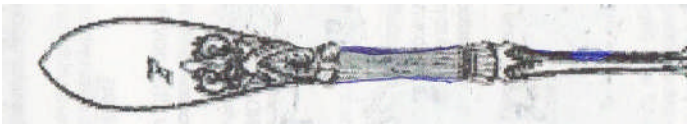
The Patent Office fire of December 15, 1836 destroyed all of the patent drawings to that date. About 2,845 patents were restored and reconstructed, but it is suspected that reconstruction artists may have reflected the drawing style of the 1840s rather than that of the originals.

The Patent Act of March 3, 1837, required applicants to submit two copies of drawings - one to be kept in the patent office and one to attach to the patent grant sent to the applicant. The requirement was dropped in 1870 when the Office began printing complete copies of patents as they were issued. The Patent Office set no standards for patent drawings before 1870. Sizes ranged from a half sheet to large folio size drawings, with some drawings elaborately done with water colours. By 1871, the patent office required all drawings to be black on white and of a specific size.

The first patents involving a buttonhook were in 1867. An interesting case was brought involving one of them by John Goldthwait for a buttoner, in which the assignee complains of an infringement of the patent. The case shows how difficult it is to prevent the copying of patents.

In 1842, Ornamental Designs were made patentable, later called design patents. George Bruce was awarded the first design patent, U.S. Patent D1. for a design of new font. A US design patent covers the ornamental design for an object having practical utility. An object with a design that is substantially similar to the design claimed in a design patent cannot be made, used, copied or imported into the United States. The copy does not have to be exact for the patent to be infringed. It only has to be substantially similar. Design patents with line drawings cover only the features shown as solid lines. Items shown as dotted lines are not covered.

The first Design patent involving a buttonhook was in 1875 when E.L. Brittin obtained patent D8846 for handles of table cutlery, which could equally be applied to buttonhooks



1791 Black, Starr & Frost

The history of this firm begins with Isaac Marquand. He advertised in the *State Gazette of North Carolina* 11 Nov 1791, announcing he had opened a shop on Broad Street, Edenton, adjoining Henry Niel's store and offering his services as a goldsmith and silversmith, clockmaker and watchmaker. He proposed to carry on the silversmith's business in all its branches and wanted "*a boy, between the age of 14 and 16, as an apprentice.*" In Feb 1796: he gave to Jonathan Maltbee a bill of sale for "*two buildings joined together making a shop where I formerly worked, ... all my silversmith and watch making tools, one negro boy by the name of Sam.*" Three years earlier, he had bought Sam at a sheriffs sale for £130. He also informed the people of Edenton that he intended to leave the state and requested all persons indebted to him to make payment to Jonathan Maltbee. By 1801 he was a partner with Cornelius Paulding with himself running the New York office. In 1825 he took on William Black and Henry Ball as an apprentices.

In 1839 the Marquand family withdrew from the business, leaving it to messrs Ball and Black who took in their cashier, Erastus Tompkins as a partner and changed the firm name to Ball, Tompkins & Black. Their shop was the first in New York to have plate glass windows.

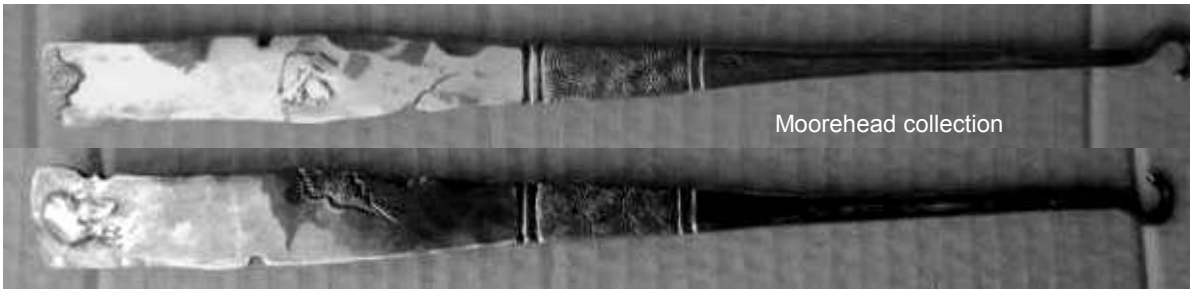
In 1876 William Black took in two new partners, Cortlandt Starr and Aaron Frost, and the company name changed to Black, Starr & Frost and moved to 251 Fifth Avenue. Its inventory became focused on jewellery and silver objects, some imported from Europe, some produced in-house. For many decades, *Black, Starr, and Frost* was considered one of the great American jewellers. In 1876, it was invited to exhibit at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia along with renowned firms like *Tiffany & Co. Whiting*, and *Gorham*.

Along with Tiffany, Black, Starr & Frost was one of the most venerable of the American jewellers. In the nineteenth century, it was reported that the Prince of Wales visited New York, danced, supped, and bought pearls at Black, Starr & Frost. The Vanderbilt's, Guggenheims, and Carnegies had all shopped there.

In 1929 they merged with *Gorham* to become *Black, Starr, Frost - Gorham*. This association continued until 1962 when they parted and Black, Starr & Frost continues to this day.

They were associated with all the leading silver manufacturers of the time, who produced many items for them. This one based upon ancient times and shown be Greco-roman. It is stamped BLACK, STARR & FROST 400 STIRLING with a Shiebler mark. Shiebler made many of such hooks under their own exclusive Mark.

In 1953, Marilyn Monroe as Lorelei Lee in “Gentlemen Prefer Blondes” sings “Diamonds are a Girl’s Best Friend” with the unforgettable verse “Tiffany, Cartier, Black, Starr, Frost, Gorham, talk to me Harry Winston, tell me all about it.”



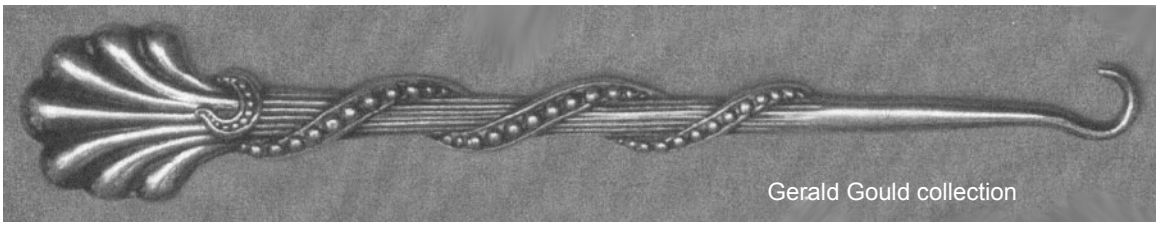
1796 Shreve, Crump & Low Co Inc.

It is not the intention of this book to take you through all the highways and byways which led to the company set up by John McFarlane in 1796 to the name we know it by today; Shreve, Crump & Low Co Inc. For those who like such details it is recommended that you look at the excellent book *The Encyclopaedia of American Manufacturers* by Dorothy T Rainwater and Judy Redfield. Here we will just touch on items about them of particular historical interest and where they are connected to buttonhooks.

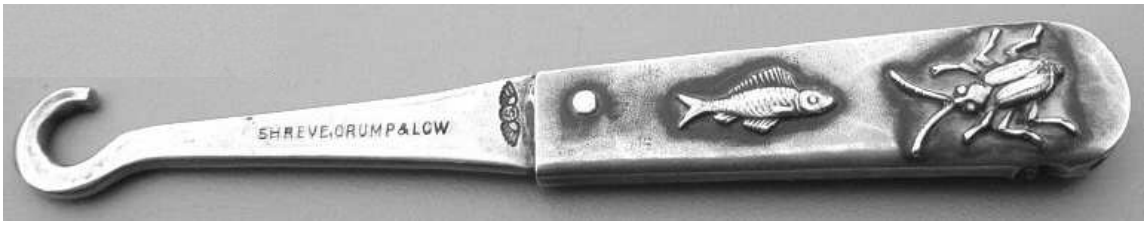
The firm began with John McFarlane opening a workshop in Boston across the street from Paul Revere, who was also a silversmith but more renowned for his historic ride to Lexington. In the 1800s, the firm changed its name to Shreve's. In 1869 the firm of Shreve, Crump & Low was formed by merger, with the makers mark shown above.

Among its many claims to fame is that it made the original Davis Cup. The tournament was conceived in 1899 by four members of the Harvard University tennis team who wished to challenge the British to a tennis competition. Once their respective lawn tennis associations agreed, one of the four Harvard players, Dwight F. Davis, designed a tournament format and ordered an appropriate sterling silver trophy from Shreve, Crump & Low, purchasing it

from his own funds for about $1000. They in turn commissioned a classically-styled design



from William B. Durgin's of Concord, New Hampshire, crafted by the Englishman Rowland Rhodes. This hook shown is by them, the one below was retailed by them for Shiebler. whose mark it bears with PATENT 83.



1800 Life on the frontier

It is difficult to imagine that in 1800 American independence was only 25 years old. American clothing during this period was still very much regional. In Pennsylvania and Tennessee, the Quakers brought about fashionable period styles coupled with simplicity of adornment. In New Orleans, French fashions were still very much *en vogue*. In New York, clothing amongst the immigrant population was both a sign of cultural heritage and religion. Immigrants held on to much of their traditional dress. It provided a sense of belonging and a sense of community. But clothing also denoted social status. And, only in America could the poor have the chance to achieve a better life. For these people, clothing was an outward expression of the American dream.

But in the untamed American wilderness, things were a bit different. Most people on the frontier settled into communities but the houses were usually miles apart. In Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania, the big frontier of the early 1800's, people wore what they brought with them from the better settled East: homemade calico, cotton or wool dresses, linen and cotton shits, and hand-cobbled shoes and boots usually made of cowhide. When those items began to wear out they supplemented their outer clothing with deer hide jackets and moccasins, wool dresses, shirts, skirts and trousers from the wool of their own sheep.

The whole family helped to produce the cloth used for their clothing if they were a rural or frontier family: sheep were fed and sheared by the men of the household. Wool cleaning and carding were done by young children. Spinning yarn on the high wheel, dyeing it over the cooking fire using natural dyes from butternut shells, berries or hops. The loom weaving of "homespun" fabric was done by the women who also sewed up trousers, coats and dresses; all the women and children would knit caps, mittens and stockings. Several sheep could provide enough wool for the needs of the average family each year.

When linen was used, the fibre came from the flax plant, which was grown as a field crop. A quarter acre of flax plants was enough to clothe the largest family. After harvest, the plants were rotted in water to break down the cellulose in the stalks. Then they were "broken" then scraped or "scutched" with a knife and "hackled" across several boards

covered with sharp metal teeth to separate and align the fibres for spinning. These processes were difficult work, and required strength and determination. When the fibres were all prepared, they were spun on a low wheel, and then loom woven into linen shirting or sheeting, or table linens. Since the only capital investment in linen fabric was for flax seeds, with all the labour being supplied by the family, it was cheap to produce, and was the cloth most used by poorer families, or those on the frontier. It was also the cheapest fabric to buy.

The early American colonies were forbidden to produce their own cotton fabrics, and were forced to purchase them from English merchants. Later, after the American Revolution, the growing of cotton and the manufacture of cotton cloth encouraged both the slave population of the southern states and the industrialization of the New England states. But, because cotton cloth production was not a family industry, it was expensive to buy. Cotton fabrics were a favourite gift for men to take home from their travels.

So what kinds of clothing did these families make with the fabrics available to them?

For men, everyday clothing consisted of a linen pullover shirt, made with full sleeves, deep buttoned cuffs, a generous collar, and very long tails to tuck into the trousers. Underwear was not worn, so the tails helped protect the wearer from the scratchy wool of the trousers. The pants had straight, fairly slim legs, and a flap which buttoned to the waistband in front covered pockets on either side of the opening. A cravat, covered the throat. A vest was always worn, either single or double breasted, with or without shawl collar, whether or not a coat went over it. It helped to hide the suspenders, or galluses, which held up the trousers, as belts were not used by men at that time.

Several styles of coats were worn, depending on age, occupation and social status. There were tail coats, which were waist length in front, but had thigh-length tails in back. A "frock" coat had a thigh-length narrow or moderately full skirt all around. A "round-about" was cropped off at the waist. Coats were both single and double breasted, and the collars were cut so that the vest showed beneath them. Coats were always fully lined. They were made of wool, linen, or cotton, depending on the owner's finances and the dictates of the weather. There were overcoats, some with shoulder capes and with an attached hood for cold weather. Many farmers wore heavy wool shirts called waumases, which were said to be warmer and easier to work in than coats. These were especially popular in New England.

Shoes were leather boots of various heights for day wear, and slipper-like dancing shoes were available for gentlemen who needed them. Portraits of the time period show some gentlemen wearing dainty shoes with pointy toes, high arches and elevated heels. Stockings were usually hand knit of wool or linen, but machine-knit fine stockings were also available from New England mills through local merchants. Several hat styles were available - round crowned, wide-brimmed fur felts, higher-crowned "toppers" of beaver fur, with slight flares to the taps, high-crowned, wide-brimmed woven or plaited straw for summer. Silk hats were increasingly popular after 1830, as beaver pelts became scarcer and more expensive.

Those who lived in the cities usually rented property or lived in rooms in tenements, but on the frontier the houses depended on where you settled. Most people started with log houses of two to three rooms. They might stay in these homes for 5 to 10 years before having the money to build clapboard houses. Log homes would normally have one door and one or two windows. They rarely had glass in the windows so in the summer when they were open flies and mosquitoes got inside. In the winter, the windows were covered and chinked with mud and stick to keep the warmth in the house. There would be a

fireplace on one wall, usually made of locally found stones with mud plaster. It was used for warmth and for cooking. If your husband wasn't a great fireplace builder you would have smoke in your rooms or the fireplace might fall in on one of your children and set the cabin on fire. People on the frontier worked at whatever they had to do to stay alive. Everyone in the family worked except the infants. The father was responsible for hunting, raising and caring for the livestock, ploughing a garden, and building whatever was needed. Fathers would often exchange work so that barns could be raised, hogs and sheep could be slaughtered, fields could be harvested and maple trees tapped for sap. Mothers cooked; an almost 24 hour a day job with no electricity or gas. They cleaned, washed clothes, sewed torn clothes, made the thread and wove cloth for the family's new clothes, bottled, dried, salted and smoked all the harvest products whether vegetable or animal, bore and cared for large numbers of children, and did the nursing and often the doctoring in these small communities. Sometimes they lived and worked for months on end without seeing anyone other than their husbands and children.

A barn raising or quilting bee was a great joy to them. Books were scarce and precious. The only music they heard was by singing. All the children helped their parents. They could milk cows, drive the animals to pasture and home again, muck out the barn, care for younger siblings, wash dishes, dust, sweep the log or dirt floor, feed the animals and help shock the hay when haymaking. They also collected food: berries, herbs, wild fruits, nuts and wild onions. They fetched and toted for their parents, to help make the work more efficient. They had little time to play and very few toys. It was physically hard, could be mentally wearing and sent many of them to an early grave.

In the cities the wealthier population still took their fashions for Europe, the ladies from France and the gentlemen form England.

In the aftermath of the French Revolution, no one wanted to emulate the French aristocracy. As a result, the shifts that occurred in fashion at the turn of the 19th century allowed people the opportunity of dressing to please them selves and expressing their individuality.

For women's dress, the day to day outfit of the skirt and jacket style were practical and similar to those worn by working class women. Women's fashions followed classical ideals, and tightly laced corsets were temporarily abandoned in favour of a high-waisted, natural figure. This natural figure was emphasized by being able to see the body beneath the clothing. American fashion trends emulated French dress of short-sleeved chemise dresses and jackets, but in a toned down manner with shawls and tunics to cope with the sheerness of the chemise.

One result of the empire line dresses of the turn of the century was the reticule which appeared in the late 1790s. Before then, women had carried their pockets about their waist when their gowns had been large enough to hide them. Pockets then of course were not sewn into the garment as today but tied separately underneath the skirt. The new slender fashions using sheer muslin meant that pocket purses could be seen beneath dresses hence the need for the reticule.

There was one item of fashion that remained sacrosanct for the fashionable lady; her gloves.

1800 Gloves

The wearing of gloves by women had been popular since the time of Catherine de Medici, but the Empress Josephine, by her fancy for long gloves, started a nationwide craze, which rapidly spread throughout all Europe and America, during the Napoleonic period.

Kidskin and cloth were favoured materials, and the gloves were often made so that they fitted loosely around the wearer's arm and could be "scrunched" down toward the wrist at the wearer's option.

Kidskin is an extremely soft, smooth, thin type of leather, made from the skins of milk-fed baby goats. These kids are carefully raised so that they do not eat herbage which will change the texture of the skin in undesirable ways, or get bruised or scratched, so that their skins remain perfect and smooth. Kid leather is used for fine-grained, glace-finished gloves. Kid gloves are often dyed so that the inside of the glove remains white. The traditional colour for the kid glove, the default colour in fact, is white or some other related shade like ivory or taupe, and this colour was and is especially favoured for formal wear, but other colours, such as black, red, blue and brown have also found favour for less formal occasions.

Starting from about 1810, sleeves began to grow longer, and the length of gloves in most cases shortened correspondingly. However, long gloves were still customarily worn with formal dress until around 1825. From approximately 1825 on, though, the opera glove fell out of fashion as the long sleeves of the early to mid Victorian period came to dominate women's fashions; even when sleeves were worn short, as in most evening gowns of the period, gloves were still short, usually wrist-length, no more than 12 to 14 inches at most.

The "opera glove", or the version we most commonly know them today; a glove of between 19 and 23 inches in length, made of kid leather and coloured white, ivory or black, with a wrist opening closing with three buttons, and often with three lines stitched across the back of the hand. This type was known as the *mousquetaire*. If that name sounds familiar it should be as it is the glove which is a feminine adaptation of a style that was originally developed for use by the Three Musketeers in the 17th century. In the original form, these gloves were made in singles for use in duelling, and were constructed so as to fit over a sleeve. These gloves often had wrist belts with buttons for everyday dress and jewelled clasps for court wear. When the *mousquetaire* was redesigned for ladies, it was refined so that the glove was much longer, usually over the elbow, sometimes as far up as the shoulder, and designed with its modern characteristic feature, the lengthwise opening, usually 2 to 3 inches long, closed with small buttons in clusters of three or four. These were commonly of pearl. The longest *mousquetaires* were designed so that the sleeves could wrinkle attractively as they wrapped their wearer's arms.

Before the 1870's, gloves tended to be wrist-length for daytime wear, since sleeves on daytime dresses were usually full-length in the Victorian period, and usually were elbow-length or shorter for evening wear.

The *mousquetaire* was introduced to America during the 1870's by perhaps the greatest actress of them all, Sarah Bernhardt. Mme. Bernhardt had rather thin arms even by the standards of those days, and the long *mousquetaires* she wore onstage flattered her arms and hands perfectly. Their expressive movements drew attention whenever she took the stage. Indeed, when she wore over the elbow gloves on one of her American tours, their beauty and elegance was so overwhelming to her audience that the *mousquetaire* almost immediately became universally accepted in America and Europe as a prerequisite for a lady's formal dress. The new style ousted the previously universal short glove styles.

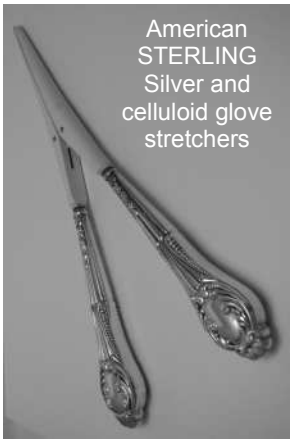
The popularity of the opera glove or *mousquetaire* grew through the remainder of the nineteenth century, hitting its peak in the Edwardian period. Lillian Russell, the famous New York actress and society beauty of the time, was known for her huge glove collection, especially her shoulder-length gloves, and was often photographed wearing them. Miss Russell was particularly known for pedalling up and down Fifth Avenue on a gold-and-silver bicycle while wearing a gorgeous pair of white, shoulder-length kid gloves, causing passing pedestrians to stop and stare in awe and admiration

In the Victorian and Edwardian periods, it was considered absolutely essential for a lady or gentleman to keep their gloves on at all times, even when sea bathing, and kid gloves were supposed to be skin tight to a degree that would impress a modern-day fetishist. In fact, gloves in the Victorian period were so skin tight that ladies were unable to button their *mousquetaires* without assistance, hence the importation of the buttonhook! It was, in fact, considered improperly alluring for women to put on or entirely remove opera-length gloves in public, and several etiquette writers of the time advised women to put on their long gloves at home before venturing outdoors. The button fastened wrist opening which is the characteristic feature of the *mousquetaire* was put to very good use in this respect by many ladies of the period, who would slip their hands out through the opening to eat or drink while keeping the glove itself on. Harrison Fisher's painting of a young woman at tea demonstrates this custom in action.

Harrison Fisher was born in Brooklyn, in 1877, spent most of his youth in San Francisco until he turned 21 years old when he moved back to New York where he began his highly successful career as a magazine illustrator.

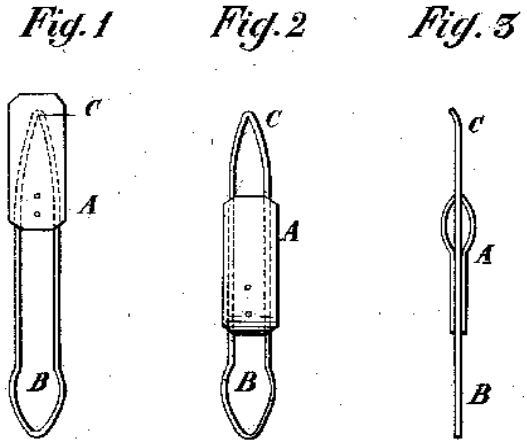
It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of the glove to feminine fashion in this period of history. Gloves were so much associated with elegance and high class that they were worn on all possible occasions, from weddings to funerals. Indeed, it was for centuries a common custom for distinguished personages, upon their deaths to be laid out and buried wearing gloves.

Gorham powderer Silver 1899 Sickle date stamp



American STERLING Silver and celluloid glove stretchers

One of the first patents for a glove hook was by Greenleaf Stackpole of the city of Elizabeth, in Union county and State of New Jersey on June 29th 1875.



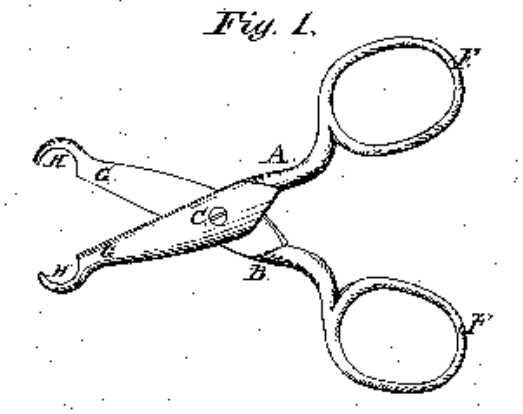
Stackpole Pat No 6523

His invention consists of a buttoner fitted with a sliding handle. To strengthen it the handle is to be arranged to move from the centre toward either end of the buttoner, which may have a large and a small hook or loop on its respective ends to serve in buttoning either gloves or shoes, and one end of the buttoner can be used as an ear-spoon, while at the same time the handle may be made in the form of tweezers, as shown in Fig. 3 of the drawing. The buttoner consists of two parts, the handle and the hook. The latter may be made of wire bent, pressed, or cut in the form shown by B C, the end B being for shoes or large buttons, and the end C for gloves or small buttons, as shown by the drawing. The handle may be made of two pieces of plain wood or metal, or other suitable material, riveted together, and arranged to slide on the hook to fulfill the function of a sliding handle or clasp, merely to strengthen the hook in addition to its office as a handle; or, if made of metal, one end may be in the form of tweezers, which still further adds to the utility of the implement. Fig. 3 shows the handle in the form of tweezers. Fig. 1 shows the handle shoved over the small end of the hook or loop, and Fig. 2 shows it shoved toward the large head or loop.

In on September 21st 1875 a patent appeared for a buttonhook that we would all recognize as primarily a glove hook. It was by Antonio Rasines and Thomas Power for an ornamental case for carrying the button hook, of which they say: -

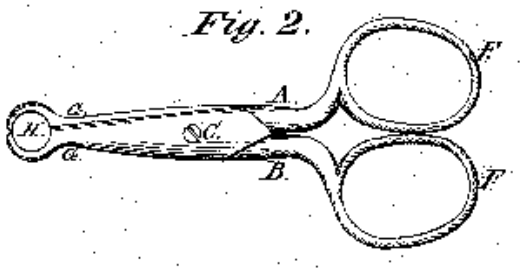
Rasines & Power Pat No 167937

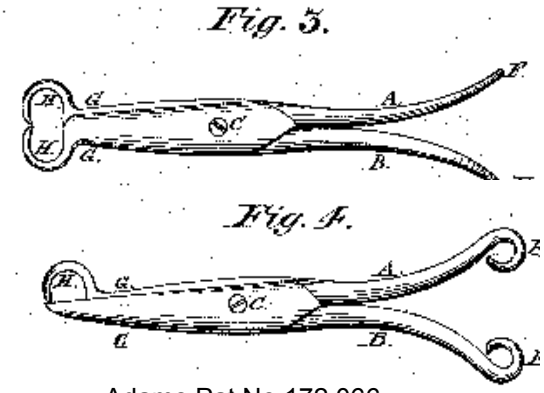
By this construction the button-hook is enclosed in an ornamental case, it is kept out of sight when the case is closed, and the hook itself can be made sufficiently large for ordinary purposes, and the case small; hence it can be worn upon a watch-chain as an ornament, or carried in the pocket and with ladies it is very convenient as a glove-buttoner.



The next patent is really weird and was not likely to have been put to use. It was patented on January 11th 1876 by John Adams who set out the following explanation.

In the accompanying drawing, forming a part of this specification, Figure 1 represents a plan view of an instrument embodying my invention, showing the same open. Fig. 2 is a plan view of the same, closed. Fig: 3 represents a modification of the contour of the hook, being varied from that in the previous figures. Fig. 4 shows a modification of my invention when one hook is employed.





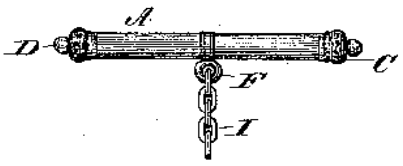
Adams Pat No 172,066

To button a glove or shoe, the points of the hooks H are brought together, as shown in Fig.2, and inserted through the button-hole. The hooks are then separated and placed around and closed over the shank of the button, which latter is then drawn through the buttonhole, or the latter over it. The levers are then opened and the hooks withdrawn.

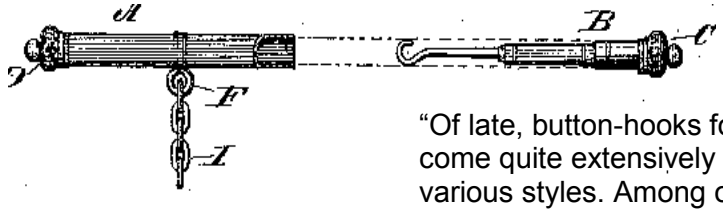
As the hooks embrace the button-shank on both sides there is no danger of the button slipping, especially if the glove or shoe is tight, and has to be stretched to be buttoned.

Odd isn't it? Not surprising that no-one has seen this made as an implement.

William Hicks of New York, in the county of New York and State of New York, invented a Combined Chain-Bar and Button-Hook, of which the following is the specification



"My invention consists of a combined watch-chain bar and button-hook, the bar being made hollow, and the hook being so constructed as to permit it to be inserted within the hollow bar, and be withdrawn there from when needed for use, all as hereinafter more fully described.

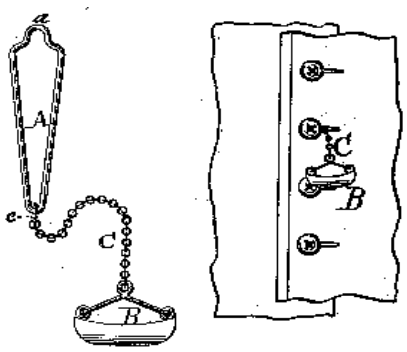


Hicks Pat No 190,488
May 8th 1877

"Of late, button-hooks for use in buttoning gloves have come quite extensively into use, and are now made in various styles. Among others is the plan of making them on the principle of a pencil-case, to be carried loosely in the pocket, and also by attaching them as a pendant to watch-chains. When carried loosely in the pocket, the hook is liable to be lost or misplaced by a change of clothing, by its being left in the pocket of the removed garment, and thus is not at hand when needed. When hung to the chain as a pendant or charm, it is possible to use it to advantage; and, moreover, when made with an extension-case like that of a pencil, its cost is much increased. By my present invention these objections are obviated.

The next buttoner is one of many hybrids invented for use for either gloves or shoes. The invention relates to buttoners for shoes and gloves; and consists in the combination, with a link-shaped buttoner, adapted at one end for buttoning shoes and at the other end for buttoning gloves, of a chain or cord having one end attached to said buttoner by a slipping ring, and the other end attached to a charm, as will be hereinafter more particularly described.

In order that the buttoner may be held snugly and securely on the inside of the vest when not in use for buttoning purposes, and also that it may be adapted for use with large shoe-

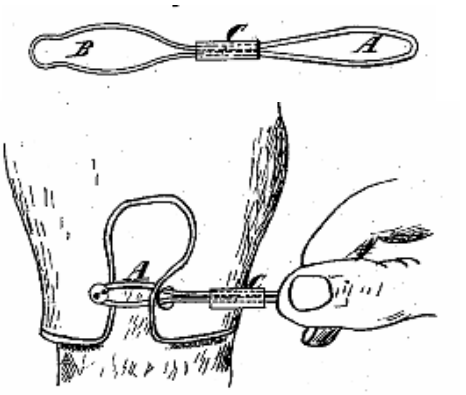


Stevens Pat No 208,435

buttons with small shanks, the large end of said buttoner is provided with a narrow extension, a, which, while the larger portion is adapted to pass over the button, is capable only of embracing the shank, the end, of course can slip upward to escape. In securing the buttoner to a lady's vest, the large portion is passed over a button, and the narrow extension drawn upon the shank, the buttoner following has been previously passed inwardly through the button-hole of the button next above that to which attached, with the charm hanging out by the chain. The invention was by George Stevens, of East Orange, in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey, patented on September 24th 1878.

This modest yet efficient littler buttoner was invented by Samuel Howland of New York, in the county and State of New York. The object of his invention was to make a simple, cheap, neat, and strong combined glove and shoe buttoner, without superfluous material, and small enough to be readily carried in the pocket-book.

"My improvement consists in a buttoner formed of wire, with a loop at each end, one of said loops being adapted for buttoning shoes and the other for buttoning gloves, and having a band permanently affixed at or near its central portion, so as to conceal the ends of the wire and brace the sides laterally."

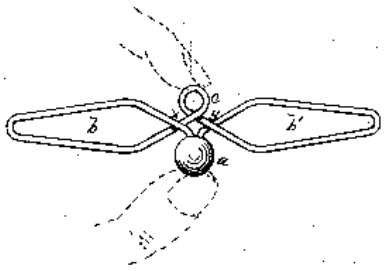


Howland Pat No 215,612 20th May 1879

This odd little buttoner is actually quite sophisticated. It was invented by John Partridge, of Boston, in the county of Suffolk and State of Massachusetts.

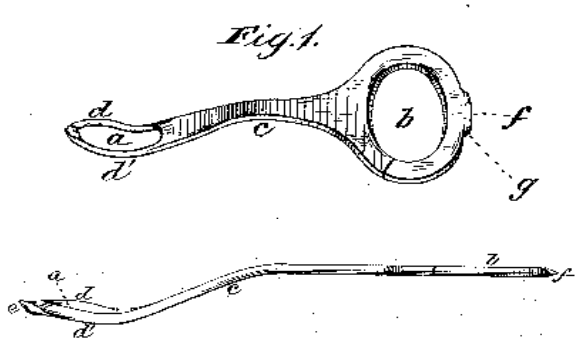
It was claimed to be an improvement relating to that class of glove-buttoners known as double glove-buttoners. those having two loops adapted for buttoning purposes.

The view of my improved glove-buttoner shows it with the buttoning loops spread by pressing the thumb and finger upon the ball and central loop thereby enlarging the aperture of the loops.



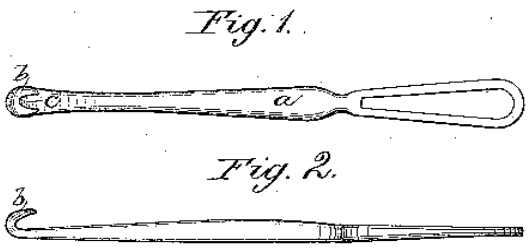
Partridge Pat No 230,196
July 20th 1880

The claims for this buttoner by Samuel Eugene Adamson, a citizen of the United States, residing at Stapleton, in the county of Richmond and State of New York are as follows. This invention is in the nature of a combination-tool, being a glove or shoe buttoner, a key-ring, a watch-case opener or knife-blade opener, an ear-spoon, and a nail-cleaner, relating principally, however, to glove or shoe buttoners. Note the little flange at the back of the ring which is the opener!

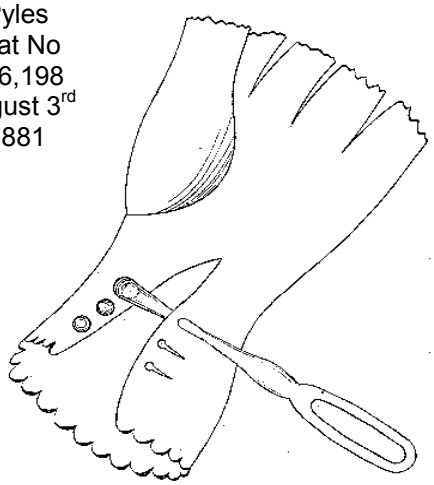


Adamson Pat No 240,362 26th Aril 1881

The originality and complexity of these inventions is exemplified in this patent issued to Nathaniel Pyles. So much so his explanation is set out here in full.



Pyles
Pat No
246,198
August 3rd
1881



Be it known that I, NATHANIEL PYLES, of Westport, in the county of Jackson and State of Missouri, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Glove-Buttoners, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description, reference being had to the drawings hereto annexed.

The object of my invention is to furnish a glove-buttoner whereby a glove may be buttoned without stretching or tearing the buttonhole or twisting off the button; and my invention consists in a certain peculiarity of construction, as hereinafter described.

In the accompanying drawings, Figure 1 is a bottom view of my improved buttoner; Fig. 2, a side view, and Fig. 3 is a view showing the manner of using the buttoner.

As ordinarily constructed glove-buttoners have been made in the form of simple hooks, by which the button is twisted through the button-hole by means of a horizontal movement of the handle. By thus using the sides of the button-hole as a fulcrum they are soon worn away and need to be repaired; besides, in wrenching the but-ton through the hole, the threads by which it is secured to the glove are twisted first one way and then another until the button is finally broken off.

To overcome the above-mentioned objections I construct a buttoner of the following description: The shank a is made tapering from the end to the center, and of sufficient width at the end to hold the button-hole open while drawing the button through. The said end terminates in a downward projection to form the broad hook b, which is designed to enclose the button on top and partially on the under side. The lower or under portion of the said hook is provided with a central slot, 0, made sufficiently large to admit the thread by which the button is secured to the glove, so that the button shall be securely clasped or seized by the hook on all sides except one. The shank a on the under side is bevelled or planed from the center to the horizontal angle of the hook in order to accommodate the passage of the button into the hook as the buttoner is drawn toward the operator. This angle is grooved out so as to fit the periphery of the button, thus forming a snug seat, whereby the button is held in a perfectly rigid manner, and all twisting or turning to one side prevented. The upper surface of the shank is rounded, as is also the exterior of the hook, and from the end of the shank to the lower portion of the hook the outer surface is slightly bevelled, in order to allow the hook to be easily passed back from the button and over the edge of the button hole after the button has been drawn through.

The buttoner is operated in the following manner: Pass the shank through the button hole

with the hook downward; place the under side of the shank on top of the button and draw the buttoner toward you until the button slides into its seat in the hook or claw; then with the thumb or forefinger of the hand in which the instrument is held push the buttonhole toward the end of the shank and draw the buttoner toward you at the same time.

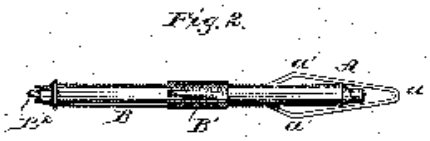
The button-hole will thus pass over the end of the shank, and by a backward movement of the buttoner the latter will slip from off the button and over the top of the button-hole, leaving the glove buttoned. In this manner the glove may be buttoned without strain upon either the button or button-hole.

I am aware of the existence of a buttoner having a bifurcated claw for lifting a button through a button-hole by oscillating the handle in a vertical plane; but the operation of this device in its intended manner requires that the edge of the button-hole shall be used as a fulcrum, which is one of the objections I desire to overcome, since it tends to wear and otherwise injure the stitching of the buttonhole.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is in a glove-buttoner, a broad slotted hook having its inner portion grooved out to fit the periphery of a button, whereby the button may be rigidly held in a horizontal position while the button-hole is being passed over the end of the buttoner, substantially as shown and described, and for the purpose specified.

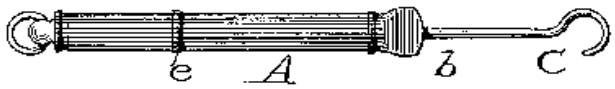
An interesting insight into life in 1883 is cast by the invention of Samual Estell, of the city of Chicago, county of Cook, and State of Illinois, who invented a new and useful Improvement in Glove and Shoe Buttoners.

Top open below both closed

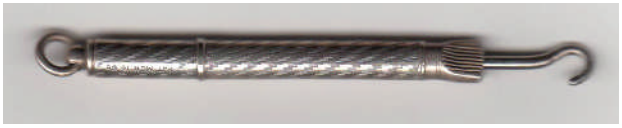


Estell Pat No 288,700 November 20th 1883

The invention relates to a buttoner in which the buttoning-hook is adjustably combined with a pencil without interfering with the adjustability of the latter, thus combining two important pocket instruments in one, of convenient size for carrying, and at the same time making the instrument an ornamental article for use at balls or parties where it is usually found desirable to use both buttoner and pencil.

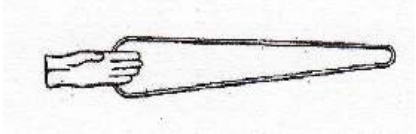


Hicks Pat No 337,833 March 16th 1886



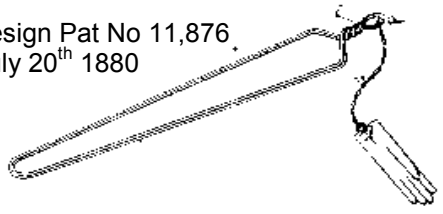
This patent by William Hicks actually made it to the construction stage. It is in fact very similar to the Rasines and Power patent we have already looked at. Both wind the buttonhook in and out of the casing. Both were meant to be hung on a watch chain or some such, or carried in the pocket. The example is gold plated from the Paul Moorehead collection.

Finally, before we leave gloves, two Design Patents shown by Charles T Jones.



Jones Pat No 14,158 August 7th 1883

Jones Design Pat No 11,876 July 20th 1880



1803 The Louisiana purchase

The revelation in 1801 of the secret agreement of 1800, whereby Spain ceded Louisiana back to France, aroused uneasiness in the United States, not just because France under Napoleon was becoming an aggressive power but also because the Western settlers depended on the Mississippi River which had become the chief trading channel for goods shipped among the states it bordered, the American government became greatly interested in purchasing New Orleans, an important port city at the mouth of the river.

Beginning in 1801, and with little luck at first, Thomas Jefferson sent envoys to France to negotiate the small purchase they had in mind.

France controlled the vast stretches of land west of the Mississippi, known as Louisiana, from 1699 until 1762, when it gave the land to its Spanish ally. Napoleon took back the land in 1800 and had every intention of asserting his presence in the region. Unfortunately for him, there were several reasons why selling the land became all but necessary:

They had just lost a fierce battle in Saint-Domingue which took up much needed resources and cut off the connection to the ports of North America's southern coast. French officials in the United States had reported to Napoleon on the country's quickly increasing population, thus highlighting the difficulty France might have in holding back the American pioneers on its western frontier. Also, France did not have a strong enough navy to maintain control of lands so far away from home, separated as it was by the Atlantic ocean; and Napoleon wanted to consolidate his resources so that he could focus on conquering England.

So believing he lacked the troops and materials to wage an effective war, Napoleon decided to raise funds by selling off French land.

On April 30, 1803 France sold 828,000 square miles of land west of the Mississippi River to the young United States of America in a treaty commonly known as the Louisiana Purchase. President Thomas Jefferson, in one of his greatest achievements, more than doubled the size of the United States at a time when the young nation's population growth, which then stood at about 4M, was beginning to quicken.

The Louisiana Purchase was an incredible deal for the United States, the final cost totaling less than five cents per acre at $15 million; about $283 million in today's dollars. France's land was mainly unexplored wilderness, and so the fertile soils and other valuable natural resources we know are present today might not have been factored in the relatively low cost at the time.

The Louisiana Purchase stretched from the Mississippi River to the beginning of the Rocky Mountains. Official boundaries were not determined, except that the eastern border ran from the source of the Mississippi River north to the 31 degrees north.

Present states that were included in part or whole of the Louisiana Purchase were:

Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming.

Led by U.S. Secretary of State, James Madison, American negotiators took advantage of the deal and signed on the President's behalf. Back in the United States the treaty was approved in Congress by a vote of twenty-four to seven.

1812 America declares war on Britain

This war ended in stalemate with both sides returning to their original boundaries. It began because America was trying to trade with both sides when Britain was busy fighting

Napoleon's domination of Europe, and both were trying to wreck trade on each side, plus the Americans were becoming increasingly irritated by the British habit of pressing their merchant seaman into service in the British Navy. They were also concerned about the British support of Native Americans in the Northwest Territory who hoped to found Native American states there. For the first time newly born America flexed its muscles and declared war upon another nation.

The war was a short one; unimportant in many ways but the effects reverberate today. After the British razed Washington, during which they burnt the White House down, the Americans retreated to Fort McHenrey which withstood continuous bombardment over 24 hours. At the end, the American flag still flew over the Fort and this inspired a lawyer by the name of Francis Scott Key to write a poem in tribute. Set to the tune of an old drinking song, his words became an anthem; The Star-Spangled Banner. America had come of age!

1815 S Kirk & Son

Judv Burr Collection

Baltimore's prominent silverware manufacturing company, Samuel Kirk & Son, began in 1815 when Philadelphia-trained Samuel Kirk finished his apprenticeship under James Howell and moved to Baltimore, Maryland.

Kirk was attracted by the prosperous port and opened his shop at 212 Market Street, later known as 106 Baltimore Street with fellow silversmith, John Smith. After their partnership was dissolved in 1821, Samuel Kirk carried on alone until his eldest son, Henry Child Kirk, became a partner in 1846.

During these early days Kirk introduced to America the repousse treatment for silverware. Repousse refers to a pattern which is beaten or pressed up from the reverse side. Kirk's technique was probably inspired by East India silversmiths, but his patterns were uniquely his own. Eventually he was to apply this technique to flatware as well as other pieces. As a result of these innovations the company grew and prospered greatly.

In 1820 Maria Hester Monroe, daughter of President James Monroe, was married in the White House. She chose Kirk 'Mayflower' as her silverware pattern.

In 1861 and 1863, respectively, two more sons, Charles Douglas and Edwin Clarence Kirk, were admitted as partners, changing the firm's name to Samuel Kirk & Sons. The Civil War and its aftermath created an economic slump in the silver business causing Charles and Edwin to become discouraged and resigned from the partnership, the firm reverting to the name Samuel Kirk & Son.

Samuel Kirk died in 1872 leaving the business to Henry Child Kirk. The firm's technology advanced as hand-wrought repousse methods were replaced until finally the repousse

patterns were cut in reverse in a steel die, and then stamped on the softer silver with a heavy drop hammer.

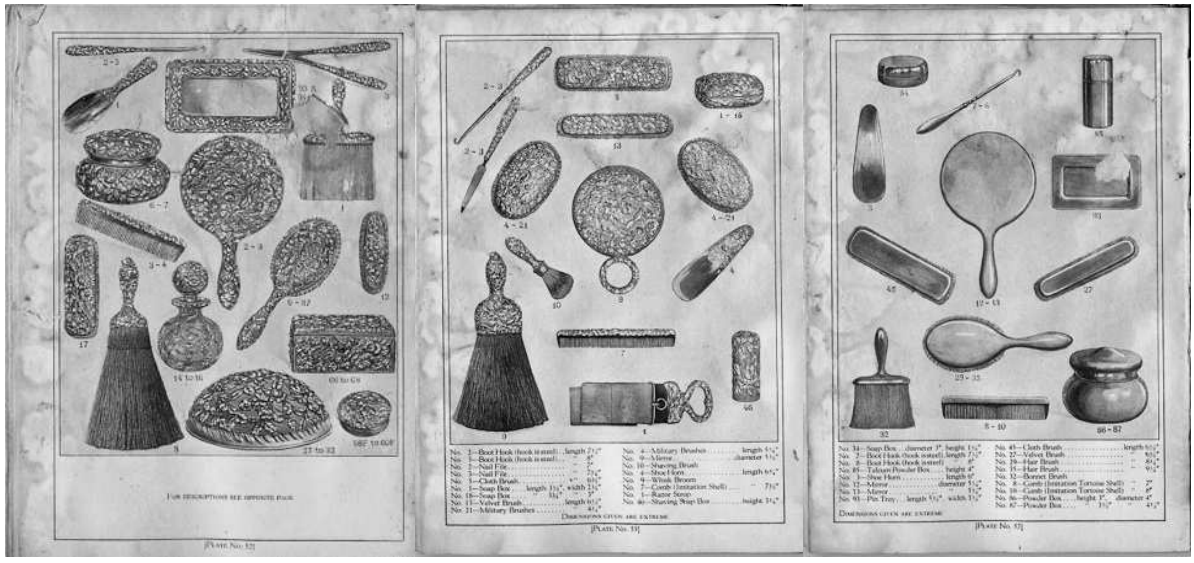
Business continued to prosper as the firm's clientele spread beyond Maryland. Prominent customers throughout the United States were now patronising Samuel Kirk & Son.

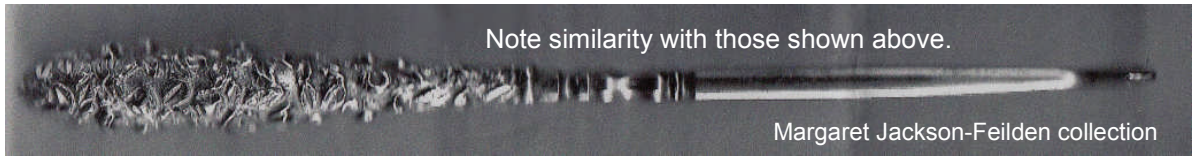
The company suffered severe blows in 1903 and 1904 from two separate fires, but vital records and patterns were saved by a quick arrangement between Henry Child Kirk, Jr. and the express company manager across the street who used express wagons and Kirk employees to save the records of both businesses.

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed several changes in the company. In the nineteenth century business had been generated primarily by word of mouth as the founder felt that advertising was associated with commercialism.

Bringing the company into more modern times at their November 1911 meeting, the Board of Directors authorized spending $1,000 for advertising in the Baltimore newspapers. An additional $1,000 was approved for advertising in September 1912. After Henry Child Kirk, Sr. died in 1914 Samuel Kirk & Son's first retail silverware catalogue was produced. They were in fact years behind their competitors who had already published their catalogues ten years before.

The pages below are from a water damaged copy discovered recently and restored.





The Great had its effect on all businesses including Samuel Kirk & Son, Inc. In spite of the poor economy, the number of agents selling Kirk silver continued to increase and several improvements were made to the factory. Kirk stock generally continued to pay quarterly dividends.

Samuel Kirk & Son survived the depression and the World War II and became involved in several other enterprises. In 1979 they sold their assets to the Stieff Corporation and a new company was born under the name of The Kirk Stieff Company.

1815 Gorham

Look at any history of Gorham and it will tell you that the Gorham silver company we know today started in 1831 when Jabez Gorham teamed up with Henry L Webster to form Gorham & Webster. In fact it all started much earlier when Jabez, who had formed a partnership with Christopher Burr, George Clark and Harvey Mumford after finishing his apprenticeship with Nehemiah Dodge in 1813. They were known as *The Firm*. In 1815 he opened his own small shop under his own name making what became known as *The Gorham Chain*.

In 1831 Henry Webster joined him ostensibly to make silver spoons out of coin silver. Rather than sourcing silver supplies, silversmiths of the day simply melted down silver coins which were readily available to produce their flatware. For the American silversmith to obtain raw materials he either had to purchase silver bars or melt silver coins. A silversmith with a rush order could, literally, reach into his pocket, and from that comes the generic term; Coin Silver. Silversmiths would also buy silver items from the public. Almost every silversmith's newspaper advertisement would also include an offer to buy.

This partially explains the rarity of very early American silver. Many a spoon from the 1720's was melted down to become an 1820's spoon. Another reason that pre-1800 silver is rare is the fact that there were far fewer people and, of those, fewer still who could afford silver. As both population and wealth grew so did the demand for silver.

Concurrent with US population growth came advances in technology. The 1780's brought a rolling machine for processing melt into sheets of silver. In 1801, Thomas Bruff of Chestertown, MD invented a spoon press. Hours previously spent on repetitious preparatory tasks could now be spent on ornamentation. Repoussed and Chased hollowware and patterned flatware began to replace the plain Federal styles.

By 1855 Tiffany and Gorham were making exquisite silver and having difficultly selling it because: "It's not as good as English Silver"... and it wasn't. It was 90% silver. The English had been on the Sterling standard since the early 1300's. Their silver was 92.5%. It wasn't long before both Tiffany and Gorham were making Sterling silver. This left and every other silversmith in America listening to: "Well, it's nice, but it's not as good as Tiffany or Gorham".

Partners in Gorham came and went and when Jabez' son John joined the firm in 1841 he immediately introduced factory methods to the production of silverware. The firm evolved through various twists and turns before finally becoming the Gorham Corporation in 1961. For a detailed history of Gorham one can do no better than to read Ian Wood's book *An Introduction to Gorham* which can be obtained from *The Buttonhook Society*.

The Gorham Mark which most buttonhook collectors are familiar with was in use from 1868 which was later registered in 1899. The new mark was to demonstrate to customers that Gorham were now producing silverware of sterling quality to match the English silver standard of 92.5% and henceforth all Gorham products were also stamped STERLING. They also initiated year marks from 1868 that ran up to 1933.

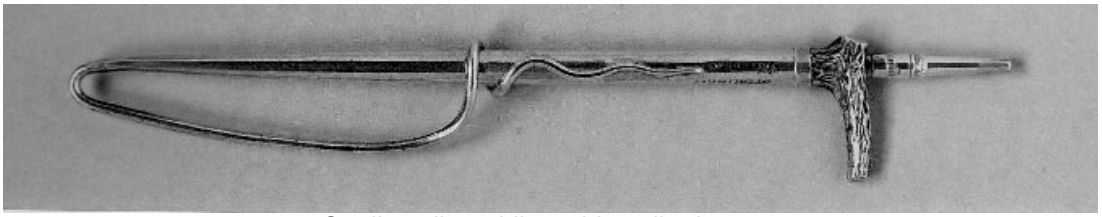
Towards the end of the nineteenth century a new and exciting metal was found; aluminium. This was bright and shiny and did not tarnish. Gorham decided to try this new material with a special line in goods. At the time aluminium was extremely expensive. It was reputed that at a banquet given by Napoleon III the most honoured guests were served on aluminium plates instead of gold. However in the 1880's the amount of bauxite was increased and the

price declined. Not many aluminium examples survive but among those that do, Ian found a buttonhook in a toilet set made between 1891 - 94 and a scabbard type buttonhook from 1891.

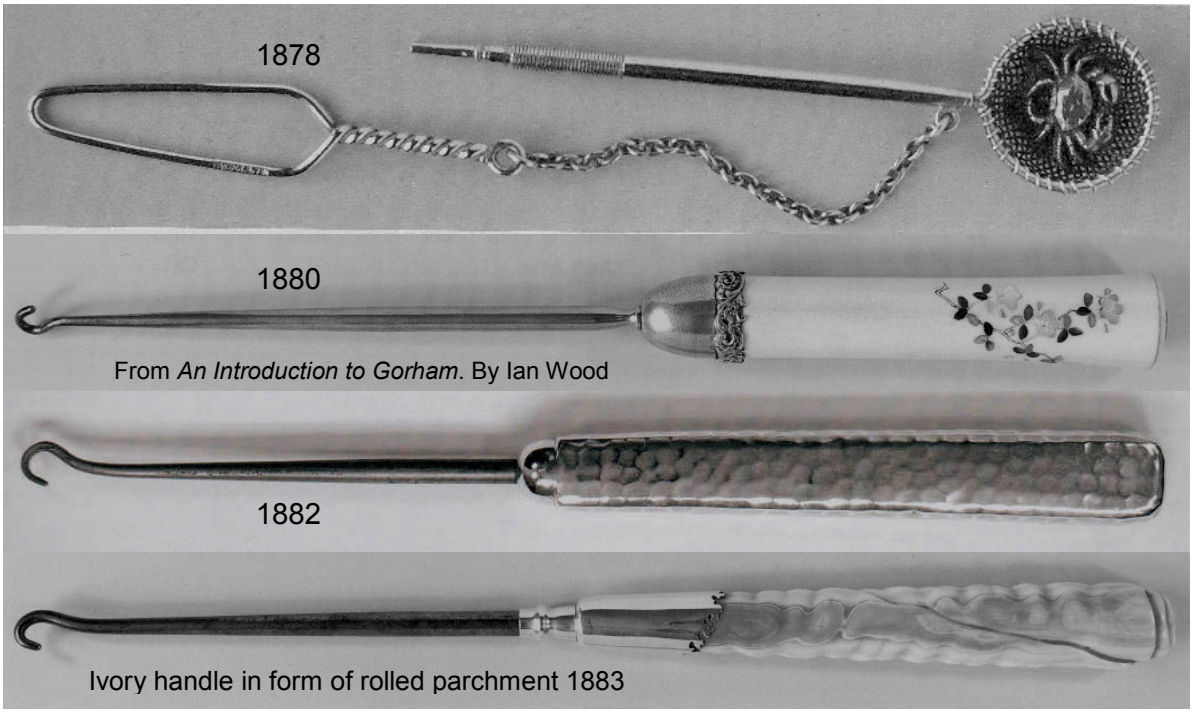
From *An Introduction to Gorham*. By Ian Wood

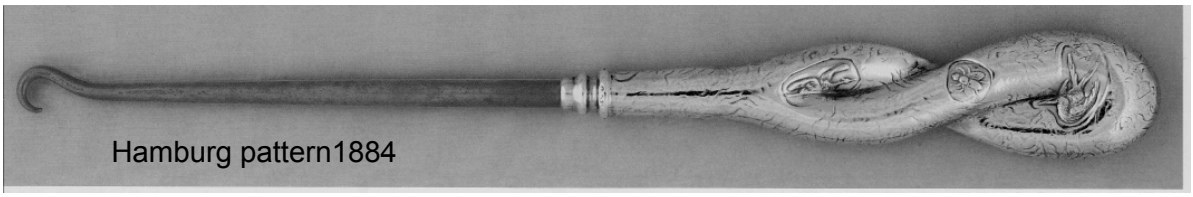
Gorham marked its aluminium ware with a capital L with a capital A leaning against it. On the cap of the hook above it has a lion date code for 1891 and 31 as the production number.

For the buttonhook collector, Gorham is a gold mine; few collectors do not have a Gorham buttonhook in their collection. Ian Wood has identified over 200 buttonhooks designs. Dating them is of course impossible but many were shown in their 1883 catalogue. However some have appeared that are a bit earlier.

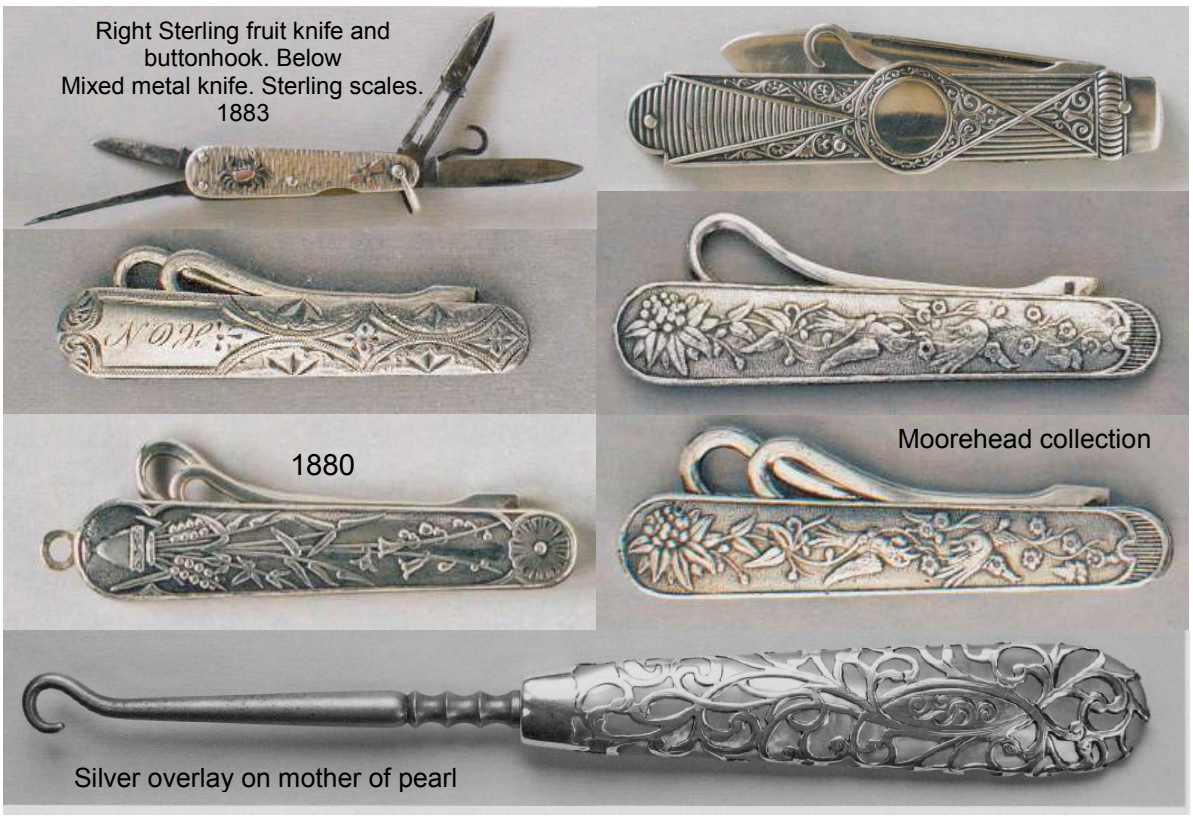


Sterling silver riding whip collar buttoner.
Below: See J A Smith Patent 208,858. 1878.





In addition to straight buttonhooks, Gorham also produced a range of knife type hooks, many of them double hooks.



1817: Scrimshaw

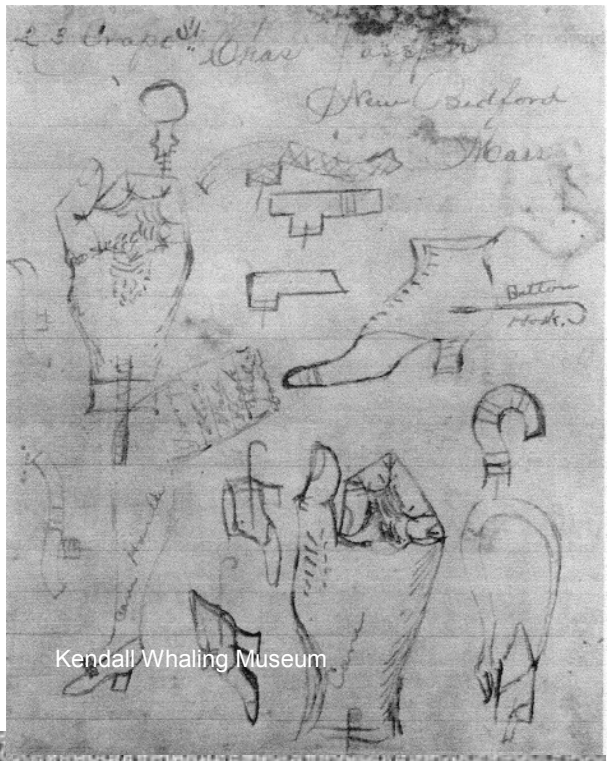
Scrimshaw is an art form that is considered by some to be the only art form that originated in America, since the art of Scrimshaw was first practiced by sailors working on whaling ships out of New England.

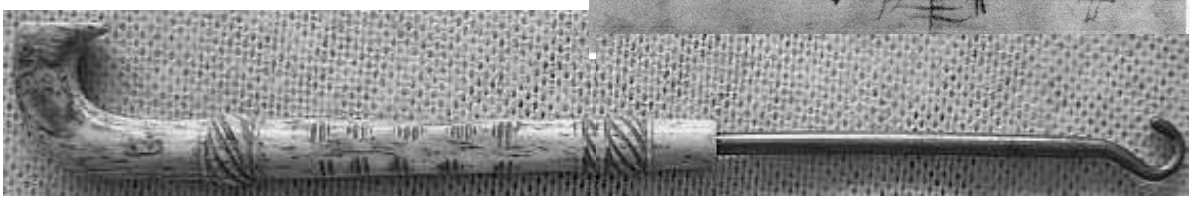
Scrimshaw is derived from the practice of sailors on whaling ships creating common tools, where the by products of whales were readily available. The term originally referred to the making of tools, only later referring to works of art created by whalers in their spare time. Whale bone was ideally suited for the task, as it is easy to work and was plentiful.

The development of scrimshaw took off after the market for whale teeth, which were sought by Chinese traders for use in the Pacific Islands. The market was flooded with teeth after a narrative by an American sailor, Captain David Porter, revealed both the market and the source of the teeth. Around this time is the earliest authenticated pictorial piece of scrimshaw (1817). The tooth was inscribed with the following *This is the tooth of a sperm whale that was caught near the Galapagos islands by the crew of the ship Adam [of London], and made 100 barrels of oil in the year 1817.*

Other sea animal ivories were also used as alternatives for rarer whale teeth. Walrus tusks, for example, may have been acquired in trade from indigenous walrus hunters.

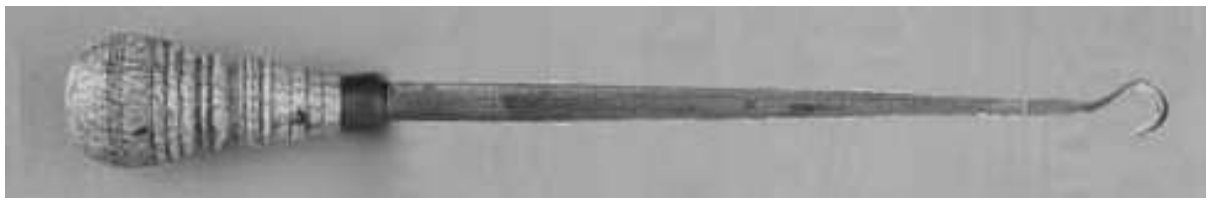
Scrimshaw essentially was a leisure activity for whalers. Because the work of whaling was very dangerous at the best of times, whalers were unable to work at night. This gave them a great deal more free time than other sailors. A lot of scrimshaw was never signed and a great many of the pieces are anonymous. Early scrimshaw was done with crude sailing needles, and the movement of the ship, as well as the skill of the artist, produced drawings of varying levels of detail and artistry. Originally, candle black, soot or tobacco juice would have been used to bring the etched design into view. Also ink was used that the sailors would bring on before the voyage. Today's artists use finer tools in various sizes, mostly borrowed from the dental industry. Some scrimshanders ink their work with more than one colour, and restrained polychromed examples of this art are now popular. Originating in an era when sperm whales were initially plentiful only to be hunted to near collapse, scrimshaw no longer is an art form utilising an easily renewable animal resource, but one that is susceptible to contraband. Now, the Endangered Species Act and international conventions restrict the harvest and sale of ivory to try to reverse





Left
Maureen Crawley
collection

Right & below
Audrey Longhurst
collection



the scarcity of ivory-bearing animals.

There are some who claim that there were no scrimshaw buttonhooks and that those that appear to exist are marriages of scrimshaw handle to hook. This is impossible to prove or disprove as we have so little information to go on. However we do have a drawing made by Charles Joseph which appeared in his journal aboard the schooner the Valkyria around 1917.

There is a page of pencil and ink drawings of plans for several types of scrimshaw. These include six of cane handles in traditional straight, curved, and arched forms evidently intended to be carved from whale ivory and some to be inlaid with baleen. Some were also in the form of a clenched fist, a very popular form of scrimshaw, another in the form of a woman's leg with a high heeled shoe. There is also a ball finial, a curvilinear snake and three buttonhooks in the form of women's shoes. Some are labelled 'cane handle,' 'button hook,' and 'ivory/black/whale/whalebone' to indicate the purpose of the object and the materials to be employed; a few also indicate the intended means of attachment by plain or screw-threaded pegs. The drawing is illustrated in other sources where it referred back to the drawings of Captain William Joseph, a kinsman, who entered similar drawings into his journal whilst Master of the Bark *California* of San Francisco in 1902.

Apart from the intrinsic value of these rare documents of the shipboard scrimshaw process, the drawings imply that the Joseph's made at least a few pieces of the generic sort that customarily remain unsigned and therefore unattributable. It also tends to support the idea that buttonhooks were articles made intrinsically as scrimshaw.

1827: Collar buttoners

Thanks to Beau Brummel the English dandy of the Regency period, men's clothing had changed to the type of dress we would recognize today. Walking shoes were in; trousers were worn and the fancy ruffs and falls were replaced by cravats which morphed into ties. Men now wore shirts with collars. Unfortunately in those days when most people did the 'weekly wash' for those who did manual work or worked in dirty conditions, the inside of the collar required washing before most would consider the rest of the shirt did. The 'ring around the collar' was a fact of life.

One day Mrs Hannah Montague Lord of Troy in New York, lost her patience and suggested to her husband that instead of keep washing the same shirt she should cut the collar of, wash it, and then sew it back on again. The experiment was a great success and news of it spread far and wide and soon everyone wanted shirts with a detachable collar.

Soon the news reached the ears of The Reverend Ebenezer Brown, a former Methodist minister, who was now the owner of a small shop at 285 River Street. After being asked about the new innovation several times he determined to fill the need. Soon his wife and daughter were cutting and stitching and laundering the first commercially made detachable collars, made of two ply material which had to be taped and tied round the neck. As a result they were called "string collars". They retailed for 25 cents apiece.

The popularity of his collars caused him to expand, setting up a separate workshop at the back of the shop. He now hired several women to do the work and outsourced much of it too. He paid his workers through trade off's in his shop so no money changed hands.

When Mr. Orlando Montague, the first man to wear a detached collar saw how popular they were, he too set up his own collar factory with Austen Granger in 1834. The Montague & Granger collar factory improved on the string collar, and they eventually developed the "Bishop" collar, an upright modification of the turn down collar. Aside from collars, they

manufactured “dickeys”, detachable shirt fronts, as well as detachable cuffs. Mrs. Montague’s desire to make shirt collars easier to wash soon inspired other innovations, such as button fastenings to eliminate the gap between the shirt and collar, in addition to a variety of new collar designs.

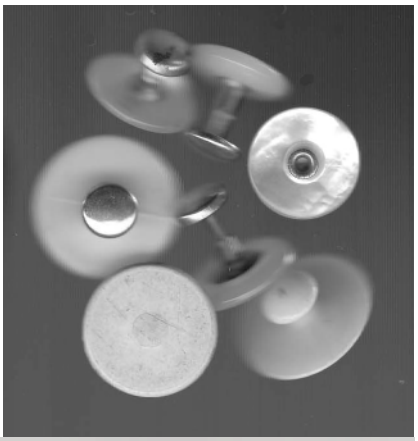
In 1835 Independence Sparks entered the collar making business and set up the first Troy laundry at 66 North Second Street where he washed the collars of everyone whether he made them or not.

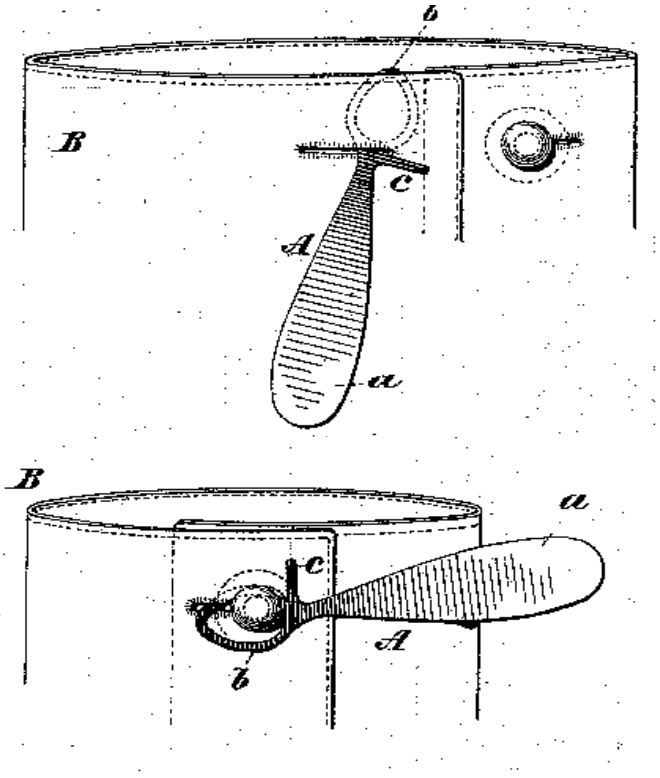
At the same time Lyman Bennett, a carpenter by trade, set up the first true factory with his ‘collar express’ assembly line. His wife did all the cutting of the material and he would deliver these to outworkers who would stitch, starch, turn, buttonhole and iron them. They would now be bundled and delivered in the ‘collar express’ wagons. Boys were paid $1.50 a week to take collars all over Troy and even further afield.

By the late 1880´s, everyone was wearing detachable collars and laundries were springing up to meet the need of the social class; the “white collar” worker, who now differentiated themselves from the “blue” collar factory worker.

By now collars were attached to the shirt by collar studs, the front stud taking four layers of cloth, the top tilting flat to assist in the buttoning. The back stud only had to go through two layers of cloth and was rigid.

No doubt buttoners from England and France made their way to America and certainly many types were patented there. The earliest American patent for a collar buttoner was by Robert Gans of New York City, Pat 615482 December 6th 1898.



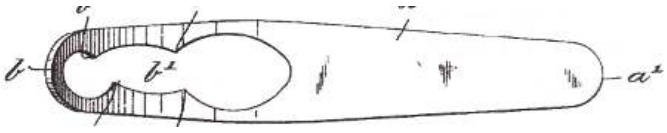


Top is marked COLLAR BUTTONER with GT&Co LONDON round the hole and 380918 by the buttoner section. This indicates its design was registered in England in1899.

Also English S HARMAN & CO LTD with 28 DUKE ST PICCADILLY on reverse.

Lastly we have a French chromium plated buttoner marked DEPOSE. Plating did not arrive in Europe until after 1914

On the 22nd August 1899 Richard Clarkson of Philadelphia took out a design patent of his version of a collar buttoner that looked very similar to the English ones shown earlier.

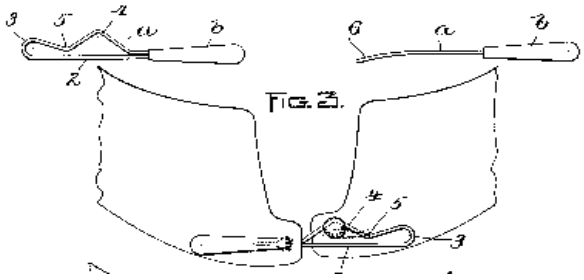


Clarkson Pat No 31433

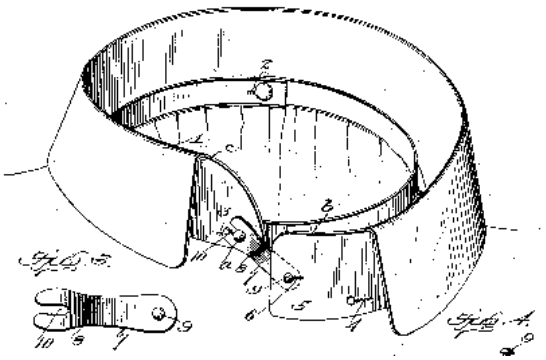
He titled it a 'Buttonhole opener and buttoner.'

On December 19th of the same year, George Salisbury of the County of Suffolk in the Sate of Massachusetts patented a different kind of collar buttoner

Henry Tomkin collection



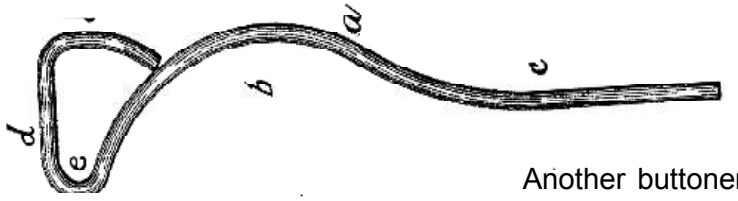
Salisbury Pat No 339642



Paterson Pat No 719035

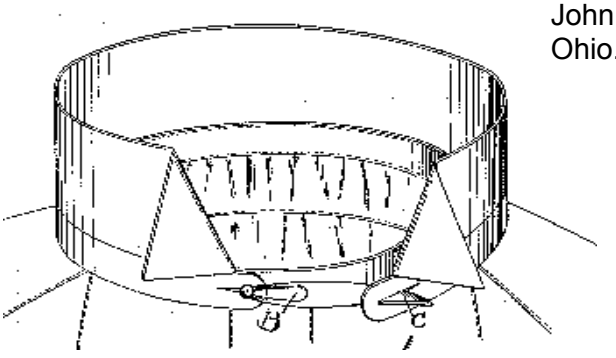
Although he depicted it as a collar buttoner he also claimed that it was just as useful to button cuffs, shoes, gloves, and other articles.

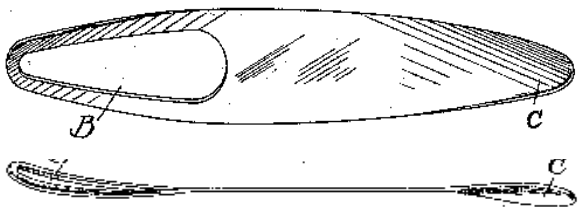
On April 17th 1900 George Spencer, residing at Watertown, in the county of Jefferson, State of New York patented a very peculiar design No 32524 shown below. Shown above is a buttoner patented In 1903 by William Paterson of Troy, in the State of New York, who invented a new and improved buttoner Patent No 719035 on the 27th January. Whether either of these caught on and were ever produced is debatable, but would anyone recognise either of them as buttoners if they saw them?



Spencer Design Pat No 32524

Another buttoner appeared in 1910 patented by John Robinson of Cleveland, in the State of Ohio. It looks quite modern and sophisticated

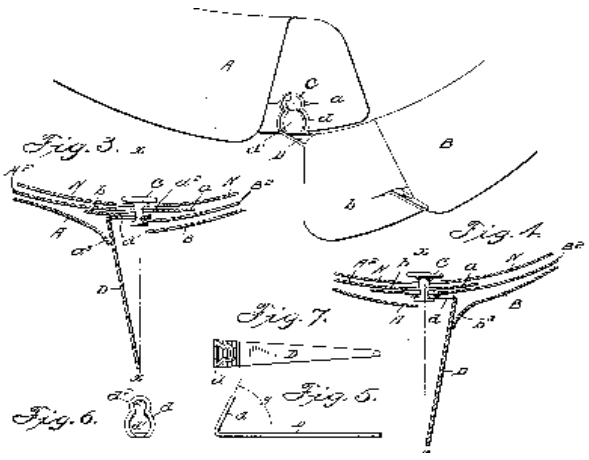




Robinson Pat No 976098

compared with Bill Paterson's effort.

A quite different buttoner was offered by John Newlon with his collar button buttoner. Patent 1,073,815 September 23rd 1913. He says of his invention: -



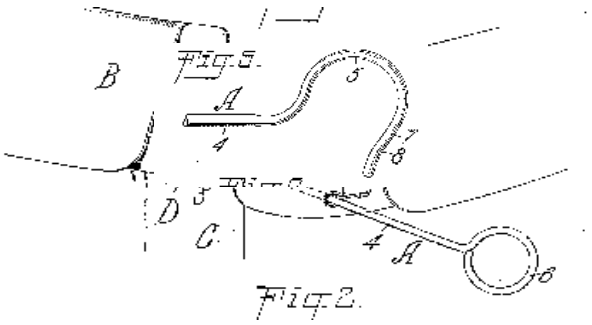
Newlon Pat No 1,073,815

My invention is in the nature of a buttoner for buttoning the tabs of a collar upon the collar button of the neck band of a shirt, and especially that form of turn-down collar the ends of whose wing portions come close together in front, which leaves but little space for the fingers. Great difficulty is experienced with this fashionable form of collar, because of the inadequate space left in front for the fingers, resulting in the crumpling and soiling of the collar and the trying of the patience of the wearer. My invention provides an extremely simple little toilet article, which accomplishes the object without soiling or cramping the collar, and in a very easy and expeditious manner, and which is so inexpensive in cost of production as to be negligible, enabling the dealer to give them away as advertisements of the collar or of his store.

It is surprising how different inventors have approached the same problem and come up with totally different solutions. Sadly, ardent collectors as we are, most of us would overlook some of these inventions as collar buttoners even if they poked us in the eye!

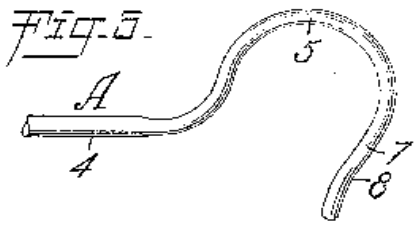
Patents for collar buttoners continued to appear up to the present day, although increasingly they were intended for people who had problems with their hands; amputees and arthritis etc. However the next patent has been included here because of its hook. If you look closely at it you will see it curves away at the end. Some collectors see this and believe that it has been bent out of true and straighten it, not realizing that this is how it was intended to be.

Joseph Eschenbrenner patented his invention on September 5th 1916.



Eschenbrenner Pat No 1,275,931

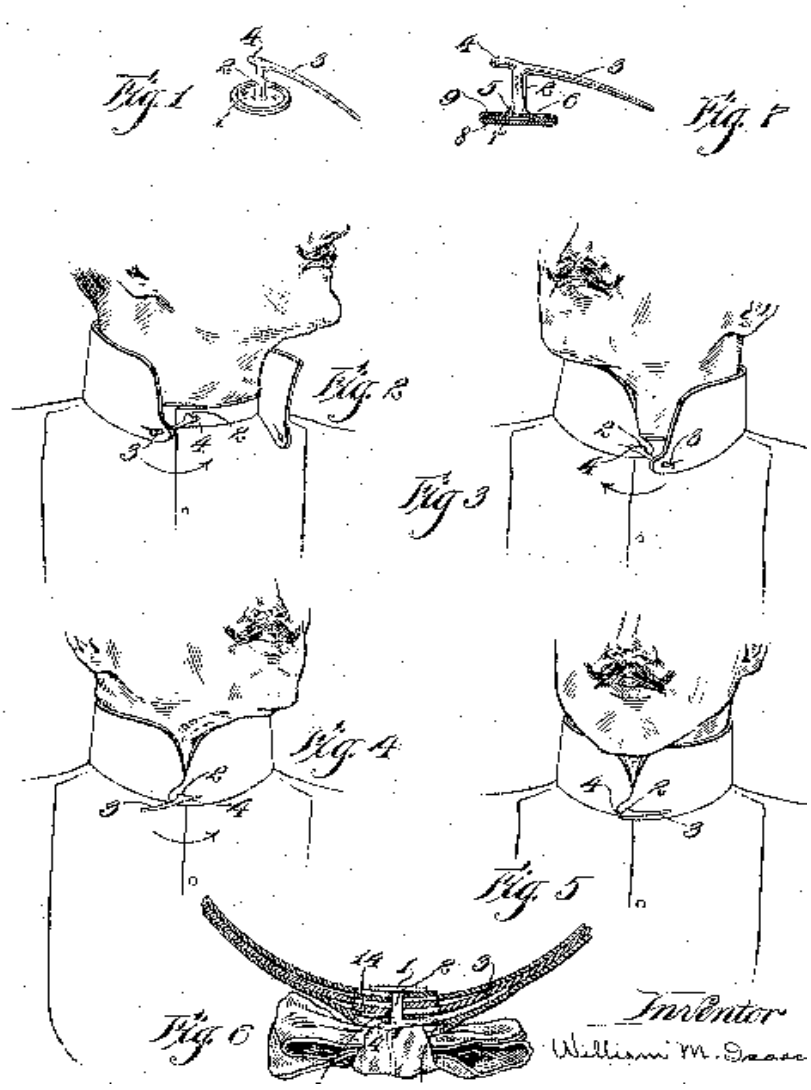
The invention has for its general objects to improve the construction of buttoning devices of this character so as to be reliable and efficient in use, comparatively simple and inexpensive to manufacture, and so designed that the collar can be easily and quickly buttoned without danger of injuring the collar fabric or the buttonhole, and without danger of soiling the collar.



A more specific object of the invention is the provision of a hook having a special form of bill which insures the easy buttoning of the collar.

Whether it did help or not it is certainly distinctive.

This is yet another one that could easily be overlooked. This invention was by William Isaacs of Cleveland in the State of Ohio. His invention is very clever and quite unique, consisting of a buttoner and collar stud combined. Although it is simplicity itself, it takes a lot of explaining as you can see below.



Isaac Pat No 1,275,931 August 3rd 1918

This invention relates to a novel device having the double purpose of a collar button and buttoner, it being the general object of the invention to provide a device of this nature, which, while constituting a particularly desirable collar button, which possesses neatness and efficiency, and assuring comfort to the wearer. It serves also as a collar buttoner taking the place of prevailing forms of collar buttoners, which are more or less inconvenient of use and injurious to the buttonholes the device being so constructed that the collar may be very easily disconnected there from.

As it is stated in more specific terms, the invention maybe said to have as its main object the production of a device comprising a neck which projects therefrom, and a combined head and buttoning member extending laterally from the neck, and which may be readily placed in the button holes of the collar band and, by inserting the entering end of the buttoning member into first the button hole at one end of the collar and turning it in an appropriate direction, will cause said end or the collar to travel there along to wearing position where the button hole automatically slips over and embraces the neck of the button, and then by inserting said member into the button hole at the other end of the collar and reversing the operation it will draw the second end of the collar to wearing position, after which the buttoning member may be turned to lie alongside the last mentioned end of; the collar and against the collar and hold it snugly so design and construct the device that its operation may be performed naturally and instinctively.

They do say that every picture tells a story, and it certainly does in this case.

Along the way there were other innovations which had an effect on the collar wearing

populace. By 1862 detachable collars were the height of fashion when collars, not just of cotton or linen but paper as well were being worn. Alternatives were constantly being sought as laundering linen collars was relatively expensive and the paper collars and cuffs, though cheap, were not strong enough or dirt-resistant enough to be ideal substitutes, even when varnished. In 1862 machines were invented to mass produce laminating linen on to thick cardboard creating a material known as linene.

In 1870 John Wesley Hyatt invented celluloid, an early plastic. He invented many other things but when he turned his attention to collars he sandwiched linen or paper between thin sheets of the transparent celluloid, then invented machines for cutting, heating, and bending this hybrid material into the form of collars, cuffs, and shirtfronts. The resulting long-lasting items never needed washing: they could just be rinsed clean, thus eliminating the elaborate starching and pressing process required for pure cotton and linen.

Though celluloid linens never completely replaced true linens they were moderately popular until shirt styles changed in the 1930s.

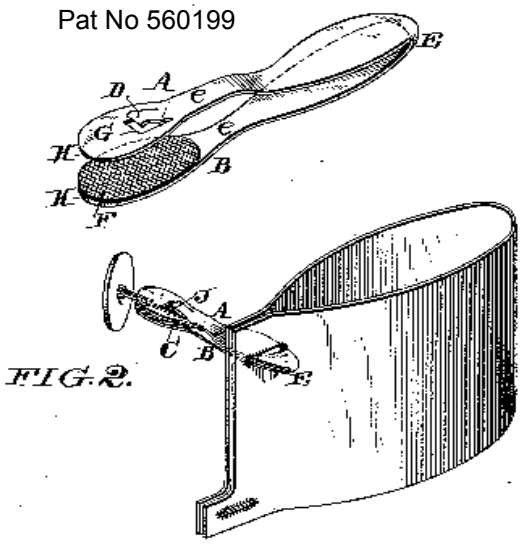
The benefit to the burgeoning clerical classes of wearing celluloid collars was immeasurable as they were expected to turn up to their offices looking bandbox. Shirts of course continued to be washed once a week, but the collars gave the spurious indication of cleanliness.

Celluloid collars were advertised extensively, even to the extent of claiming that the faint smell of camphor was a medical virtue. Such collars did have a downside as they did occasionally spontaneously combust, hence the saying ‘hot under the collar.’

When Paul Moorehead was in the Royal Air Force doing his National Service, all wore detached collars. However they were linen and were sent away each week to a Chinese laundry. They were so well starched that they could also be wiped and were far superior to celluloid. In America the Chinese laundries were in fierce competition with other laundries for the collar cleaning business and some were burnt down because of the threat they caused to the livelihoods of the worker from other laundries.

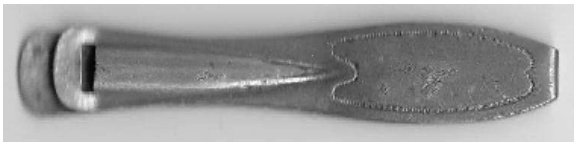
So far we have discussed collar fastening but of course often shirt cuffs were detachable as well, or they were fastened by cuff links rather than buttons, particularly among the well to do. One or two patents exist for alternative fastenings to buttons or links, but only Lewis Earl came up with a patent for ease of buttoning cuffs with cuff links. He invented the Link Cuff Buttoner, May 19th 1896.

Pat No 560199



Old fashioned cuff links were not rigid as today but were linked. This lack of rigidity made fastening cuffs, often four layers of linen, most difficult, and it was to address this problem that Lewis Earl came up with his invention. This he advertised extensively in the newspapers.

Generally he assigned his invention initially to Simons Brothers & Co of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he lived. However he later assigned it to Rand Brothers of Boston whose advert it is for.



Paul Moorehead collection

This buttoner above is marked Earl Link Cuff Buttoner, Boston, but there is no clue who the retailer is. It is quite remarkable to have survived.

Unlike the previous invention that took pages to explain Lewis Earl managed it in a sentence.

“The object of my invention is to provide a suitable construction of buttoner adapted for inserting link-buttons into the buttonholes of a cuff with rapidity and without crumpling or breaking down the cuff."

Just as a snapshot in time, this Sears, Roebucks & Co’s catalogue of 1897 demonstrates how entrenched by then was the habit of wearing detachable collars and cuffs for men and their sons. It seems that to be really on the ball in those days you had to wear things that were classed as ‘the nobbiest!’

1836 The Alamo

There are many accounts and flms about the Alamo, now synonymous with the independence of Texas. Most of these are more myth and legend than the truth.

San Antonio was captured by rebellious Texians in December, 1835. However General Sam Houston felt that holding San Antonio was impossible and unnecessary, as most of the settlements of the rebellious Texians were far to the east. Houston sent Jim Bowie to San Antonio: with orders to destroy the Alamo and return with all of the men and artillery. Bowie decided to ignore Houston's orders.

The official commander of the Alamo was James Neill. He left on family matters leaving Lt. Colonel William Travis in charge. The problem was that about half of the men there were not enlisted soldiers, but volunteers who technically could come, go and do as they pleased. These men only listened to Jim Bowie, who disliked Travis and often refused to follow his orders. This tense situation was solved by three events: the advance of the Mexican army, the arrival of the charismatic and famous Davy Crockett who proved very skilled at defusing the tension between Travis and Bowie, and Bowie's illness just before the battle.

Santa Anna's army arrived in San Antonio in late February, 1836. Seeing the massive Mexican army on their doorstep, the Texan defenders hastily retreated to the well-fortified Alamo. During the first couple of days, however, Santa Anna made no attempt to seal the exits from the Alamo and the town and the defenders could very easily have slipped away in the night if they wished.

Travis sent repeated requests for reinforcements, but they never came. According to legend, fort commander William Travis drew a line in the sand with his sword and asked all of the defenders who were willing to fight to the death to cross it: only one man refused. Legendary frontiersman Jim Bowie, suffering from a debilitating illness, asked to be carried over the line. This famous story shows the dedication of the Texians to fight for their freedom. The only problem? It probably didn't happen.

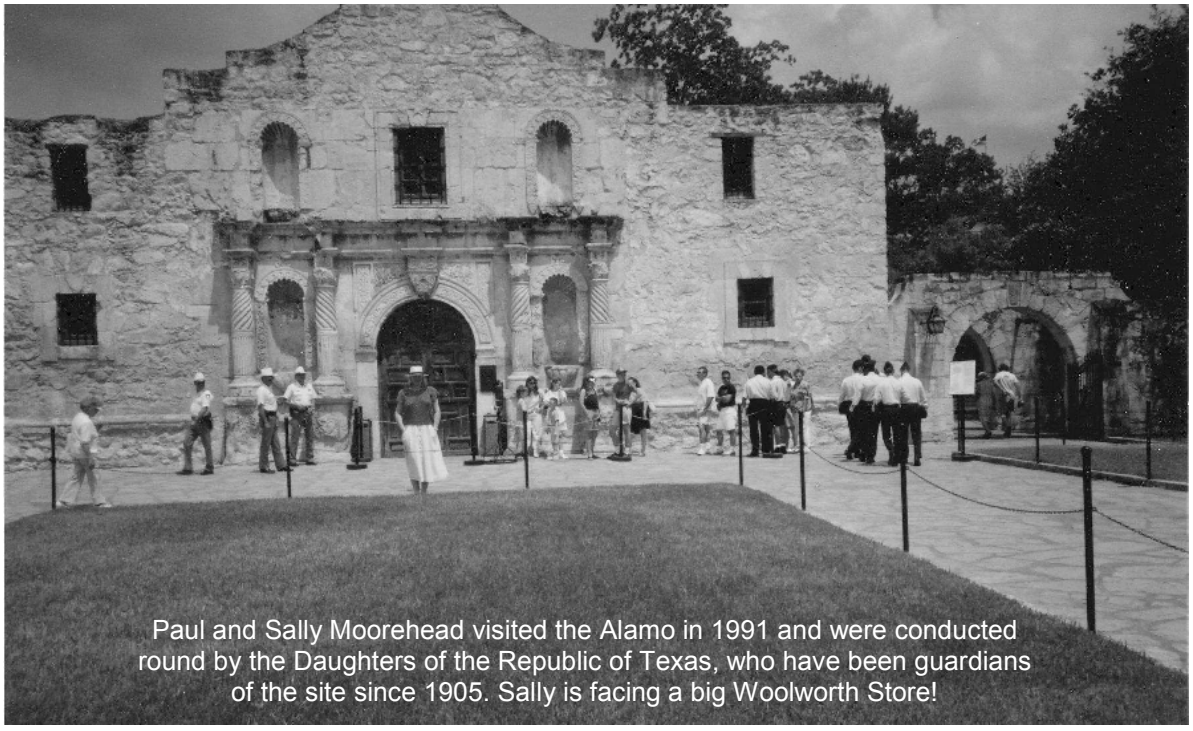
There was another misconception that the Texians who rose up against Mexico were all settlers who had spilled out from the United States who wanted independence. In fact there were many native Texians; Mexican nationals referred to as Tejanos, who joined the movement and fought every bit as bravely as their Anglo companions. It is estimated that of the nearly 200 defenders who died at the Alamo, about a dozen were Tejanos dedicated to the cause of independence, or at least restoration of the 1824 constitution.

Many of the defenders of the Alamo believed in independence for Texas, but their leaders did not declare independence from Mexico until March 2, 1836, when delegates meeting at Washington-on-the-Brazos, formally declared independence from Mexico. Meanwhile, the Alamo had been under siege for days, and it fell early on March 6, with the defenders never knowing that Independence had been formally declared a few days before.

Of those who died there were many Americans from several states, There were English, Scots and Irish settlers as well as Tejanos, but one thing is sure, no Texans died at the Alamo. The locals were previously known as Texians and only became Texans once independence was declared.

After the fall of the Alamo the church and buildings were largely abandoned. The government of the new Texas Republic returned the chapel to the Catholic Church, but after annexation, the U.S. Government claimed it again for military use. In the ensuing years, both U.S. and Confederate forces used the building to house quartermaster stores and munitions.

In 1882, Bishop John Claud Neraz offered to sell the Alamo to Frank W. Johnson, first president of the Texas Veterans' Association. He, in turn, passed the information on to the governor with a recommendation that the State purchase the building. On April 23, 1883, the Texas legislature passed an act authorizing the purchase of the Alamo**.**



Paul and Sally Moorehead visited the Alamo in 1991 and were conducted round by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, who have been guardians of the site since 1905. Sally is facing a big Woolworth Store!

1833 Wood & Hughes

In 1833 William Gale formed a partnership with Jacob Wood and Jasper Hughes, the latter two having been Gale's apprentices. In 1845 they left and formed their own company. The company was essentially a maker of silver table wear. With the Civil War, they lost a considerable amount of southern business but soon recovered with the northern economic boom. One of their most notable employees was Charles F Richer who patented many flatwear patterns on behalf of the company.

1834 R Wallace & Sons

Robert Wallace had been apprenticed to Captain William Mix of Prospect to learn the art of making Britannia spoons. In 1833 he set up on his own but in 1834 he saw a German silver spoon made by Dixon & Sons of Sheffield, England. Recognizing its superior strength and colour he began manufacturing German silver spoons, the first in America to do so.

In 1855 he joined up with Samuel Simpson and formed R Wallace and Co and this became Wallace, Simpson & Co in 1865, but in 1871 he bought Simpson's interest and so the R. Wallace & Sons Mfg Co was born. In the same year they introduced three sterling flatware patterns; Hawthorn, Crown and St Leon. The company continues to this day having changed ownership several times since1959.

Hawthorn design 1880

In 1897 the company began making nickel silver flatware when they issued the following statement.

'Since 1835 to date we have manufactured more than five million dozen nickel spoons, forks etc and not a single one bore our name or trademark, these having been made for other firms who have built on our skill and workmanship a world wide reputation for quality and durability of such wares. On January 1st 1897 we began to place our nickel silver flatware on the market bearing our name, which is a guarantee of both the quality and durability of our goods so stamped

The Crash of 1837 and the Birth of Tiffany's

When Andrew Jackson became President, in 1829, he very quickly demonstrated his enmity to the National Bank, which he declared to be corrupt, dangerous, and unconstitutional. His first measure was to remove all government deposits, which he distributed among the State banks. This measure produced a storm of opposition but Jackson was unyieldingly obstinate in his opinions. The State banks took advantage of this condition of affairs to expand their discounts, new banks came rapidly into existence, and the banking facilities were enormously increased.

A series of wild speculations attended this expansion: foreign goods were heavily imported, and enormous operations took place in government lands, in payment for which paper money poured profusely into the treasury. To check these operations Bonds was issued by the Secretary of the Treasury, which required payment for government lands to be made in gold and silver after August 15, 1836. The effect of this series of executive actions, and of the fever of speculation which existed, was disastrous. The moneys which were expected

to flow into the treasury in payment for public lands failed to appear. The banks refused discount and called in their loans. The value of property everywhere crashed. Then, like an avalanche suddenly falling upon the land, came the business crash and panic of 1837, which caused the financial ruin of thousands. During the first three weeks of April two hundred and fifty business houses failed in New York. Within two months the failures in that city alone aggregated nearly one hundred millions of dollars. Throughout the whole country every class of person was involved in the ruinous consequences of the disaster. Bankruptcy everywhere prevailed; sacrifice of valuable merchandise was the order of the day. Eight of the States partially or wholly failed, even the general government could not pay its debts, trade stopped and business confidence vanished. Everything was in ruin. It would take another eight years for the United States to recover.

In the light of the prevailing trading conditions it did not seem the most auspicious time for anyone to start a new business. However this is exactly what Charles Lewis Tiffany did when with John F.Young, he opened Tiffany & Young, with $1,000 in backing from Tiffanys' father. Located on Broadway opposite Manhattan's City Hall Park, this store sold stationery and a variety of "fancy goods," including costume jewellery. Unlike other stores of the time, Tiffany featured plainly marked prices that were strictly adhered to, sparing the customer the usual practice of haggling with the proprietor. Tiffany also departed from the norm by insisting on cash payment rather than extending credit or accepting barter.

On their way to the new emporium at 259 Broadway, fashionable ladies in silks, satins and beribboned bonnets faced a gauntlet of narrow streets teeming with horses and carriages. At Tiffany's they discovered a newly emerging "American style" that departed from the European design aesthetic, which was rooted in ceremonial patterns and the Victorian era's mannered opulence. The young entrepreneurs were inspired by the natural world, which they interpreted in patterns of simplicity, harmony and clarity.

In 1841 Tiffany and Young took on another partner, J. L. Ellis, and the store became Tiffany, Young & Ellis. By 1845 the store was successful enough to discontinue paste and begin selling real jewellery, as well as the city's most complete line of stationery. Also in 1845 Tiffany's mail order catalogue, known as the "Blue Book," was published, as it has been every year since. The blue colour was specially chosen and was the colour of robin's eggs. Nothing left the store unless it was in a Tiffany blue box!

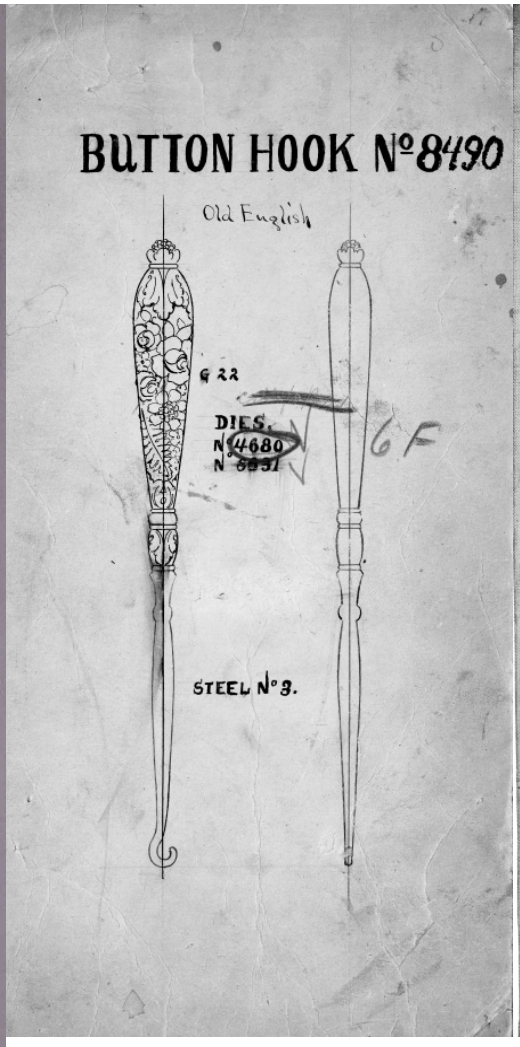
Silverware was added in 1847. In addition to these main items, Tiffany's also sold watches and clocks, a variety of ornaments and bronzes, perfumes, preparations for the skin and hair, dinner sets, cuspidors (spittoons,) moccasins, belts, and numerous other sundries, including Chinese bric-a-brac and horse and dog whips.

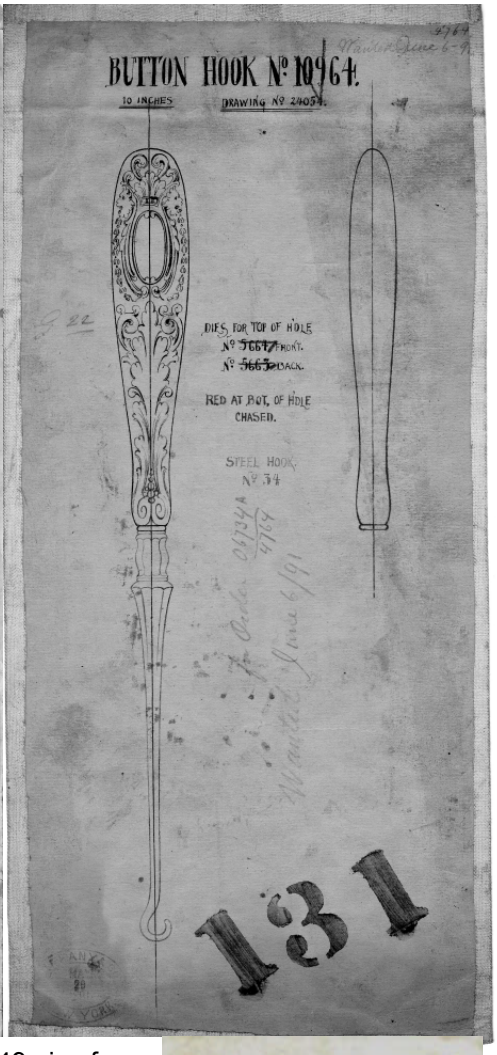
In 1851 Tiffany's decided to embrace the English Sterling standard for their silver of 92.5% silver; the first to do so and some seven years earlier than Gorham. Largely through the efforts of Charles Lewis Tiffany, this standard was adopted by the U.S. Government.

The name was shortened to Tiffany & Company in 1853 when Charles Tiffany took control and established the firm's emphasis on jewellery.

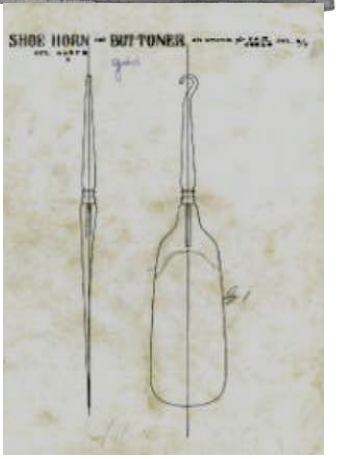
Tiffany first achieved international recognition at the *Exposition Universelle* in Paris in 1867. The company was awarded the grand prize for silver craftsmanship, the first time that an American design house had been so honoured by a foreign jury.

The Tiffany & Co. silver studio was the first American school of design. Apprentices were encouraged to observe and sketch nature, and to explore the vast collections of sketches and artwork assembled by Edward C. Moore, the celebrated silversmith and head of the studio. By 1870 Tiffany & Co. had become America's premier silversmith and purveyor of jewels and timepieces.





The picture of button hook B1993.49 is from Tiffany's permanent collection. The Hollowware blueprints of button hook No 8490 and button hook No 10964 are from their archive, as is the shoe horn buttoner S.O 7271.



An example of the high class work that Tiffany produced, is this bronze buttonhook designed by Louis Comfort Tiffany after 1902.

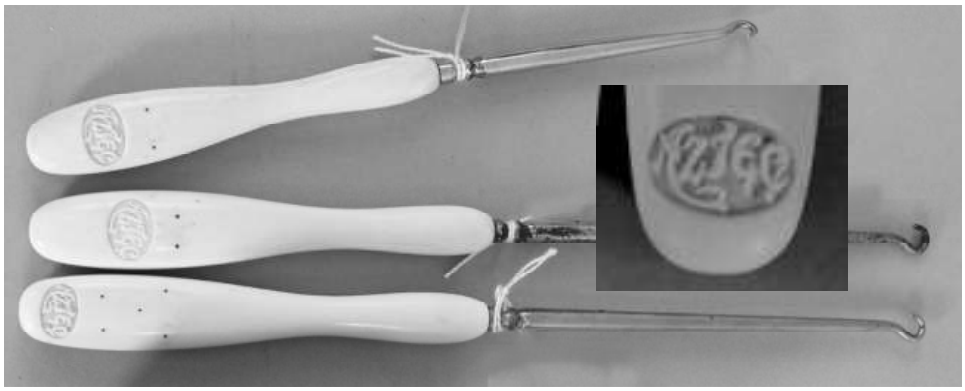
A report of the time said: -

"*For today's consumers, buttonhooks, match cases and inkstands are everyday items; unless they came from a high-end shop that transforms the mundane into an upscale status symbol. For the affluent, Tiffany & Co. offers sterling silver button hooks for fastening corsets, gloves and shoes; ornate diamond-studded cases for carrying cigarettes, matches or calling cards; hand-hammered inkstands in precious metals, and other personal accessories commonly referred to as "fancy goods*."

Tiffany scaled the heights when in 1861 President-elect Abraham Lincoln chose a seed pearl necklace and brooch for his wife Mary Todd Lincoln to wear to the Inaugural Ball of 1861. The original set is now housed in the Library of Congress. Later a young Franklin Roosevelt purchased a Tiffany engagement ring in 1904. The influence of Tiffany & Co. went beyond jewellery and even silver at the White House, with a notable commission in 1968 from Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson for a set of china, the design of which featured more than 40 varieties of American wildflowers, with a graceful eagle motif reminiscent of a china pattern brought from Paris by President James Monroe circa 1817.

In 1862, Tiffany & Company supplied the Union Army with swords (Model 1840 Cavalry Sabre), flags and surgical implements.

As suggested here, it was not just high quality silver for which Tiffany's became renowned but for the more commonplace too. This pair of ivory handled button hooks were made by Tiffany & Co for the steam yacht *Aztec* in 1902. The *Aztec* was owned by Albert Cameron Burrage, a Boston attorney and copper baron. The Gardner & Cox designed *Aztec* was a 263 foot steam yacht with an interior considered to be one of the most luxurious of the day. These ivory pieces each have the word "Aztec" scribed into the handle.



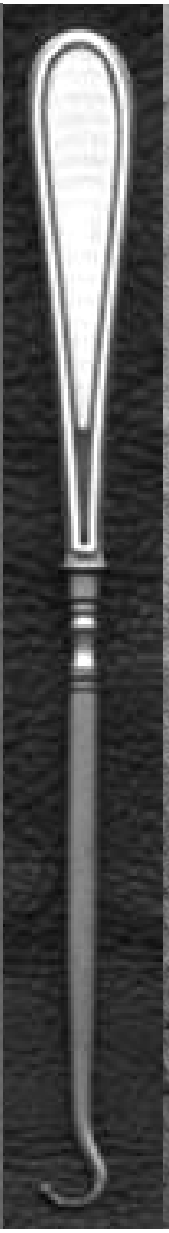
Immediately after World War I, as the US Navy decided to recognize with the Medal of Honour, two manners of heroism, one in combat and one in the line of a sailor's duty. The original upside-down star was designated as the non-combat version and a new pattern of the medal pendant, in cross form, was designed by the Tiffany Company in 1919. It was to be presented to a sailor or Marine who "in action involving actual conflict with the enemy, distinguished himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty" and without detriment to his mission. This pendant became the *Tiffany Cross*.

In the 1953 movie Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, Marilyn Monroe sings the song "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend", which mentions Tiffany's twice, and perhaps more famously, in the iconic film, 'Breakfast at Tiffany's' the main character, Holly Golightly played by Audrey Hepburn, constantly refers to Tiffany's as "*the best place in the world, where nothing bad can take place.*" Like Black, Starr & Frost, Tiffany's commissioned other silversmiths to make goods for them, such as the first one below made by Shiebler.

TIFFANY
STERLING
By Shiebler

TIFFANY
STERLING

TIFFANY
STERLING

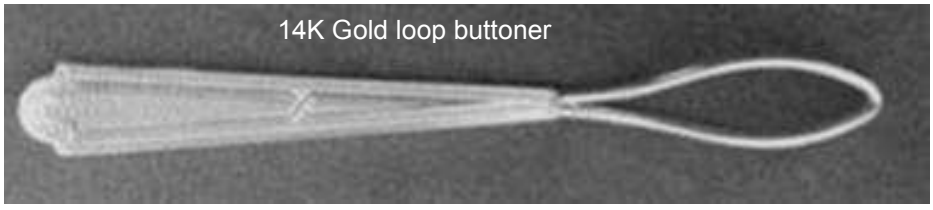


TIFFANY
STERLING
& yellow
enamel

TIFFANY & C^{o}
MAKERS
20512
STERLING
M

TIFFANY & C^{o}
MAKERS 3670
STERLING
M

TIFFANY
STERLING



Just to give a flavour of the extent to which Tiffany catered to the needs of high society, here are some details given about a recent Tiffany exhibition in New York of what they were selling at the latter part of the nineteenth century.

"*Among the women's items on exhibit are sterling buttonhooks, a circa 1880 sterling chatelaine with pencil and perfume vial attached and a circa 1885 chatelaine in silver and gold. Chatelaines, which were ornamental chains worn at the waist; served as a handy place for women to clip small personal and household necessities such as scissors, coin purses, thimble cases and tiny containers of smelling salts to ward off fainting spells known as 'the vapours.' Other female fancy goods on display include a pair of 18-karat gold and diamond opera glasses and a gold mesh and diamonds daytime purse from the 1890s with a built-in watch.*

"According to exhibit organizers, prominent Americans of the 19th Century were far more likely than their European counterparts to wear or favour diamonds; in Europe, the jewels were customarily worn only by the married and middle-aged.

"Men's items include a sterling silver match case from the 1880s, a sterling silver and gold flask from the 1870s and a sterling inkstand featuring a decorating technique called pearling, in which drops of silver of graduated size are applied. For the gentleman tippler, there is a whiskey flask executed in gold and sterling silver and decorated with a rye motif.

"For the home, there's a octagonal tray circa 1916 used to receive the calling cards of visitors who were making calls of condolence, congratulation, ceremony or friendship; a sterling bonbon box from the 1880s and an elaborate vanity box enameled in blue, purple and orange.

"Finally, for one's yacht, the vintage display includes a solitaire game created circa 1900 for a financier named Thomas W. Lawson, who wanted the puzzle to entertain guests aboard his boat. Called The Dreamer, it was done in silver, mother-of-pearl, enamel and glass, the game involves strategically moving discs and pyramids on a rope; according to an inscription on the bottom of the game, at least 484 moves are required to successfully complete the puzzle."

Those were the days

1837 Fairchild & Co

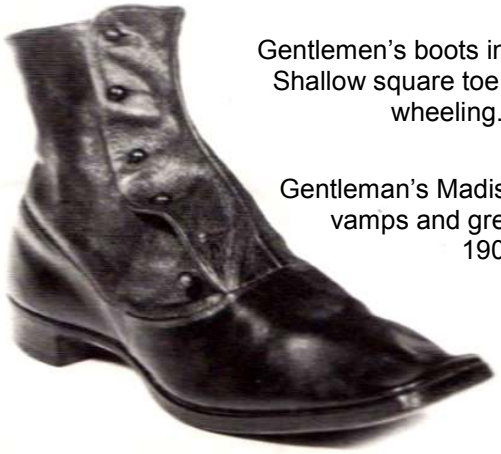
Sterling pencil & Loop Buttoner

Gold propelling pencil & Loop Buttoner

This firm started out as Randall & Fairchild in 1837 in New York. They reached their peak after several transformations when as Leroy W Fairchild & Co they were one of only five firms to compete in the International Exhibition in Paris and one of the four that won a prize. After that they sunk into obscurity. At the time they were producers of 'gold and silver novelty goods: pencil cases, pencils, penholders, cigarette cases, pocket knives and flasks,' including many retractables.

Large retractable 5½" long open

Undoubtedly the more sophisticated city men in America would have got caught up in the new fashion for men to wear button boots, although there are no records to say so. It is just that while the ladies tended to follow French fashion the men followed the English styles. However there is a thought that in America the elastic sided boot probably outweighed the button boot. Out on the expanding American borders, boots of various kinds were worn.



Left
Gentlemen's boots in black leather with 5 buttons. Shallow square toe, stacked heel with fine rand wheeling. Cloth lined 1840.

Right
Gentleman's Madison boots with black leather vamps and grey cloth upper quarters. 1900 American

Left
Black leather gentlemen's boots with black cloth upper quarters made by C Moykopf of Burlington Arcade, LONDON W. c1895

Right
Gentleman's boots with black leather vamps and grey cloth upper quarters by Treadwell Bros circa 1905.

Pair of Walkover boots in black patent leather vamps with black leather quarters. American. 1880.

Far right
Gentlemen's boots with 6 buttons matching fawn upper quarters and black leather vamps. American 1895.

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1839 Simons, Bro. & Co

Born in 1819, George Washington Simons started his business in 1839. The City Directory for Philadelphia in 1842 had him listed as a manufacturer of gold and silver thimbles, pencil cases etc. His brother, P. Boneil Simons later known as Peter B. was also listed in the directory and later joined his brother in the business. The company grew rapidly in the next 20 years, expanding into manufacturing many other gold and silver items.


Sue & John Brandon collection


Margaret Jackson-Feilden collection


Marion Hodges collection

In 1858, George W. Simons & Brother is described as employing 60 people and manufacturing "gold and silver pen and pencil cases ... gold, silver and steel topped thimbles, finger shields, tooth and ear picks, watch keys, gold pens, cane heads, bracelets, breast pins, earrings, finger rings, sleeve buttons, studs, guard slides, charms, seals, badges, etc".

George Simons had also become a business leader, establishing a reputation for technical innovation and was one of the first to use steam advantageously and to have first class machinery that embodied all the latest improvements of the time.

In the 1860's, as Japan was opening to the West, we find a newspaper report of Japanese ambassadors visiting the United States. This entourage was addressed by George Simons welcoming them to "the first manufacturing, and one of the greatest commercial cities in our country".

During the Civil War, Simons added officers and presentation Swords to their line. Many of the finest Presentation Swords were made by this firm. Swords with gold hilts set with gems and etched and engraved blades are prized holdings at the Pennsylvania Historical Society in Philadelphia and the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis.

At the International Exhibition in 1876, the Centennial Commission issued a medal and Certificate of Award to Simons, Opdyke & Co. for Gold and Silver work. About the time of the Exhibition, Peter B. moved to San Francisco and established another branch of the Company. About that time, the four sons of the founder were admitted to the firm, John, George Jr, Frederick and Edwin Simons. Frederick had always worked in the business and Edwin, the youngest son, was still a student at Princeton.

In 1893, Simons Bros. and Co. received a medal and award at the Columbian Exhibition. The award inscribed "*Gold and Silver Thimbles For a Variety of Designs, Beautiful Patterns Studded with Gems, Fine Chasing, Quality of Jewels and Fine workmanship and Finish*."

On September 13, 1905, Simons Brother and Company was incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania, and the company name was officially changed to Simons, Bro. & Co.

1840 The Whiting Manufacturing Company

William Dean Whiting was a silversmith who began his career as an apprentice to his uncle John Tifft at the Attleboro, Massachusetts, jewellery manufacturing firm Draper and Tifft. With his uncle's financial backing, he and his cousin Albert Crandall Tifft formed Tifft and Whiting in 1840, which produced such items as gold hearts, crosses, and rings. By the 1850s they employed 150 workers and had expanded production to include sterling silver goods such as cups, flatware, and combs. In need of a wholesale sales presence, Whiting established an office in New York, where he appears in the 1853-1854 city directories as a jeweller. The firm underwent several expansions but was liquidated in 1866 due to debts.

Whiting and several partners then founded the Whiting Manufacturing Company later that year. By the early 1870s the firm had a steam-powered, belt-driven factory in Attleboro employing highly specialized workers, such as die makers, turners, chasers, and engravers. This early adoption of a factory model allowed for increased production, with the result that by 1893 Whiting was the third largest silver-manufacturing firm in the United States.


0702 John & Sue Brandon collection
John & Sue Brandon collection
Double sided buttonhook John & Sue Brandon collection
Curved handled buttonhook 0307 Inscribed *Carrie, August 25th 1888.* John & Sue Brandon
Moorehead collection
1887
All STERLING
All STERLING Leaf glove hook pin brooch
STERLING
67
1885

1842 The Tariff Act a bonus for American silversmiths.

In 1841, New York City silversmiths signed a petition requesting increased tariffs on imported silver. Their problem was shared by many developing industries in the newly formed United States. How could small-scale, domestic producers compete in a market dominated by British and European companies with many years' experience and much more capital? Luckily for American silversmiths, their petition and cause were taken up by the national champion of "Home Protection," Senator Henry Clay. Senator Clay helped pass the Tariff of 1842, which placed a thirty percent *ad valorem* tax on imported silverware. This tax made foreign-made silver very expensive and much less appealing on the American market. In addition, the Tariff of 1842 required that the new tax, which was levied on a number of products, be paid in gold or silver. Consequently, Americans began receiving large amounts of silver coin, a "raw material" for silversmiths. With the competition removed and a supply of silver metal secured, the period from the 1840s to 1870s became a time of significant beginnings for American silver makers.

Many American silver producers were satisfied with the limited production of wares in small shops using centuries-old methods, but not John Gorham as we have heard. He brought a new vision to silver making in America. Trained in his father's jewellery and spoon making shop in Providence, Rhode Island, Gorham joined the business in 1841 and soon initiated dramatic changes. Wherever possible, he added new technology, such as steam-driven engines and metalworking machines, to save hours of hand labour. He streamlined production by developing a division of labour, and he trained a body of native workers by importing master craftsmen and professional designers from Europe. Under his guidance, the firm grew from fourteen workers in 1850 to three hundred and twelve in 1865, eventually becoming one of the largest and most successful silverware manufacturers in the world.

Charles L. Tiffany focused on developing another side of the silverware industry, merchandising. He began his career by running a Connecticut country store for his father, but the retail opportunities of New York drew him to the city in 1837. Tiffany and various partners prospered at selling fancy goods of high quality. Their success allowed them to open overseas branches in London and Paris and to purchase control of silver manufacturing firms. This move into silver making allowed Tiffany & Co. to control the

quality and exclusivity of the silverwares they sold. Unlike other businessmen, Tiffany emphasized the importance of a good location with elegant showrooms, innovative advertising, and attention-getting publicity. By continually developing marketing possibilities, Tiffany & Co. expanded to become the chief rival of Gorham silver.

The foundations for the American silver industry were laid during the period 1842-1872, and during this time, the price of silver metal remained stable. But in 1872, silver prices began a drop that continued until 1915, resulting in a 60 percent loss in value. In one sense, this drop was good in that the reduced cost allowed far more Americans to buy silverware. The U.S. silver industry responded to falling silver prices by expanding both its production and marketing of silverware.

In order to expand production, silver makers developed better organization with larger work staffs in newer facilities. Managers sought ways to increase efficiency and cut costs. Foremen pushed workers to increase output, and formal work rules replaced older, more lax codes of behaviour. Gorham Manufacturing Co. opened its Elmwood plant in 1890 and Tiffany & Co. opened its Forest Hill works in 1894, both examples of the latest in extensive and well-organized manufactories, semi-mechanized factories that also used skilled hand labour. Despite some labour unrest, production rose throughout the period 1875 to 1915.

By 1875, the marketing of silver in America was carried out through a national network of manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers who were connected by salesmen. In order to expand marketing, all these people honed their skills at promoting and selling their products. Many firms instituted training manuals and programmes for wholesale and retail sales staff. Trade journals such as the New York *Jeweler's Weekly* connected out-of-town buyers with silver manufacturers and wholesalers. Large and impressive showrooms built by the major silver makers like Gorham and Tiffany's were copied by jewellery stores throughout the country. Lavish catalogues like Tiffany's *Blue Book* were printed by silver manufacturers, and advertisements appeared regularly in national newspapers and magazines. It is difficult to measure the success of these efforts to expand marketing. Nevertheless, between the Civil War and World War I, American silverware production increased more than five-fold.

Participation in World's Fairs was another way major silver manufacturers publicized their products. Dozens of books commemorated the 1876 Centennial Exposition held in Philadelphia, and many of them highlighted American silverware. In addition, numerous stories and articles about these displays appeared in the nation's newspapers, popular magazines, and trade journals. International acclaim came to American silver makers as a result of the 1878 *Exposition Universelle* held in Paris where Tiffany & Co. won the grand prize for artwork in silver and shocked the great British and European silverware producers. In the next twenty-five years, American firms participated in at least nine major fairs, showcasing spectacular silver objects of the highest quality to an international audience.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the United States produced and consumed more silverware than any nation in the world. How had the ownership of silver become so important a part of American life? Silver had traditionally been a sign of wealth and high status, and newly rich Americans found it the perfect vehicle to announce their "arrival." Silver objects were given to mark rites of passage such as weddings, births, and anniversaries. Silver trophies were the very image of excellence and victory. Silver tea and coffee sets emphasized women's role in the home and in social interaction, as well as one's ability to afford the luxuries of tea, coffee, or chocolate. Perhaps most importantly for nineteenth-century Americans, matched sets of beautiful silver tableware symbolized the importance of both the home and the rituals of etiquette associated with dining. To an

extent almost unimaginable today, the social act of eating had become a gauge of a person's status and merit.

The use of silver in American homes changed significantly from 1900 to 1940. At the beginning of the twentieth century, wealthy and middle-class people kept large, abundantly decorated homes that served as the setting for etiquette-regulated social events. This way of life required an enormous amount of upkeep. Cleaning the house, cooking and serving the meals, waiting on guests, and polishing the silver required long hours from family members or paid servants. During the years that followed, events occurred that brought an end to this lifestyle. After World War I, the rising cost of labour and a growing distaste for service work made the habit of using a large household staff of servants difficult to continue. Reform movements stressed the desirability of clean, modern-looking homes stripped of unnecessary ornament. The Great Depression devastated middle-class incomes and made conspicuous consumption suspect. But perhaps most significantly, a new American lifestyle was developing that embraced new technologies, leisure time, and informality. As a result, ownership of silver became far less significant in American lives.

1851 How the sewing machine changed America

The notion of mass-produced clothing, cheap and well made and available to all, is peculiarly American. That plus the notion that all were equal and that, unlike their European counterparts, their class would not be defined by their dress. By the end of the nineteenth century a poor factory girl in America who worked six days a week in the same rough dress could, if she liked, wear store-bought silks or laces on Sundays. Or that an illiterate immigrant, if he had the cash, could go from Ellis Island to Broadway and after a few hours of shopping transform himself into an American.

By about 1850, even before there was an established garment trade, foreign visitors to the United States fretted about the upstart sartorial habits of the lower classes. A British merchant complained in the mid-1850s: "You meet men in railroad-cars, and on the decks of steamboats, rigged out in super-fine broadcloth and white waistcoats, as if they were on their way to a ballroom, and common workmen you find attired in glossy black clothes while performing work of the dirtiest description."

Clearly the common people were not dressing as commonly as they had been expected to do in other times and places. By the end of the century the trend had turned into a torrent. Shop girls and servants acquired fur-pieces and "Parisian" bonnets and, by means of newly published dress patterns, copied fashionable dresses and coats, so that it grew impossible to tell who was who. Wealthy women reacted to all this instant chic by adopting skin-tight bodices and elaborate styles that were extremely hard to tailor, let alone copy.

But as fashion moved down the social ladder, it also, curiously enough, began to move up. Thanks to Beau Brummell setting the trend in England, workingmen's trousers had already replaced fashionable men's breeches by about 1830. This was not the first time that the dress of working classes had been pre-empted by the upper classes, nor would it be the last.

This remarkable transition was achieved mainly because of the sewing machine. Isaac Merrit Singer designed his first marketable model in 1850. But there were other factors at work besides the sewing machine. The ready-made clothing industry had got underway in the United States much earlier, to supply not women's clothes but men's. It was not a matter of taste but of circumstance: few people really had the time or the purse for tailor made clothing. Tailors themselves, moreover, were eager to devise some system for

proportional sizing, so that they could cut and sew for the "average" man during the slack seasons when there were few individual orders.

The Gold Rush of 1849 provided another great impetus. One of the forty-niners was an enterprising young dry-goods merchant named Levi Strauss. Realizing that a roof might be hard to come by in the California wilderness, he had brought along a supply of cotton tenting. But once he arrived, he found that the miners were as desperate for clothes as for gold nuggets, so he hired a tailor and turned his roll of cloth into work trousers. He continued to use canvas for many years but he soon also began importing a sturdy French fabric known as "serge de Nimes," which has since been anglicized to "denimes" and then denim.

Nevertheless the sewing was still hand-done; the industry had begun to grow long before the sewing machine had arrived. The 1850 census showed over 4,000 men's clothing manufacturers in the United States, including some ready-made establishments competing with the more numerous traditional tailoring firms. The invention and marketing of the sewing machine has all the elements of a pulp fiction such was the bitter rivalry, unabashed chicanery, showmanship, guile, wealth, ruination, and sex.

The sewing machine was the invention of many hands. Patents had been granted in both England and France in 1790 and 1830, respectively. Some time around 1833, an American, Walter Hunt, made an enormous imaginative leap: he devised a sewing machine that used an eye-pointed needle and the principle of the lockstitch. This was the step that liberated sewing-machine inventors from the temptation to imitate the seamstress. Hunt was a practicing Quaker who feared his invention might cause seamstresses to lose their jobs, so he never marketed it. In 1846 Elias Howe, Jr., who is most often credited with inventing the machine, was granted a patent on a device that also had an eye-pointed needle and a lockstitch. But the needle was horizontal and mainly for this reason the machine did not work very well. Despite some imaginative publicity Howe was unsuccessful in marketing his machine.

Isaac Singer, the man who turned the sewing machine into a standard household and industrial appliance, had no such problems. Born to German immigrant parents in 1811 in upstate New York; the wild frontier in those days, Singer earned his living by any means that came to hand. His profession of choice was acting. Forced for a time to dig ditches, he had invented a rock-drilling machine. As a stranded actor in Fredericksburg, Ohio, he perfected a machine that cut wooden type blocks. When he arrived back in New York again, he persuaded a bookseller named George B. Zieber to stake him to $40 and give him a chance to perfect a sewing machine. His motive, he readily admitted later, was greed. He took the horizontal needle and made it vertical and added a foot treadle. It worked, and the basic design is much the same today.

Elias Howe was now completely down and out, and when Singer went into production, Howe brought a suit for patent infringement. The litigation went on for years, and Howe was eventually awarded a royalty on every Singer machine sold until 1867 when Howe's patent expired. During the long trial, Singer once rose to his feet and described, with true Shakespearean flair, how he had worked on his invention around the clock while his backer, George Zieber, held a flickering lamp. So zealous had Singer been to get the work done before the $40 ran out that he had hardly eaten or slept.

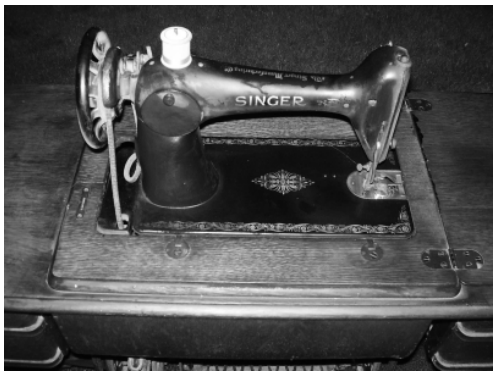
Even as he spoke, Singer was already making a fortune. The solicitous Zieber, who had so trustingly held the lamp, was bilked out of his share of the company when a new partner named Edward Clark came on the scene. Without any knowledge of merchandising he nevertheless proved to be one of the canniest businessmen in the country. With a

promotional programme that consisted prominently of pretty young women demonstrating sewing machines in elaborately decorated showrooms, Clark overcame the prevailing prejudice against allowing women to operate machinery. To allay fears that the sewing machine would be forever broken down, he sold service contracts along with each appliance: an innovation in that day. And he also broke down resistance to the high price of a Singer, which at first retailed for the monumental sum of $500, by initiating instalment buying.

In the marketplace, the first and most important effect of the sewing machine was to drive clothing prices down. A pair of summer pants that had taken two hours and 50 minutes to sew by hand in 1861 could now be stitched in less than 38 minutes. In New Haven, Connecticut, in 1860, a shirt manufacturer who installed machines drove his labour costs down from $6,000 a week to $1,600 a week and still produced 800 dozen shirts. The difference was that instead of employing 2,000 seamstresses, he now needed only 400. The 400 were now making $4 a week instead of $3.

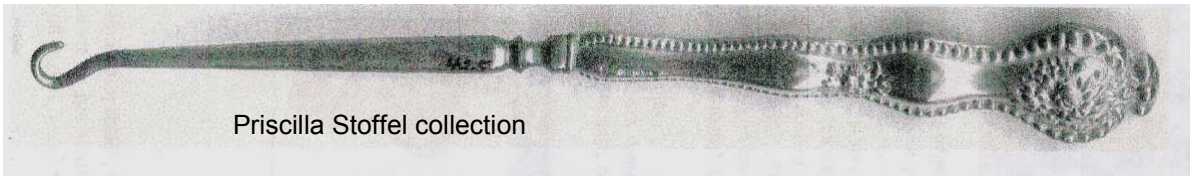
Another development was that sewing, which had always been farmed out as piece-work to be done at home, could now also be done in contractors' shops or on salary in factories. One form of sweated labour went in tandem with another. In the 1880s, the weekly wage in cities like Baltimore, Boston, and New York might run anywhere from $3.50 to $7. Working conditions were unsafe and inhuman, and hours were set at the employers' discretion. Not just women but men and thousands of children toiled over sewing machines. What it all led to, aside from a flood of cheap and excellently crafted clothing for the nation, was one of the most important events in the history of organized labour. In 1900, with 2,000 members and $30 in funds, the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union was formed.

In the final analysis, the clothing industry has also been a democratiser providing opportunities by which immigrants have traditionally been able to squeeze into the economic system of America.



1852 Curtis & Co

Stephan Curtis Jr started in business with Henry Yale in 1852. When Yale left in 1867 it became Curtis & Co. He traded under his own name for a while then becoming Curtis & Rowley in 1873 before disappearing without trace the following year.



Priscilla Stoffel collection

1853 Clark & Bros

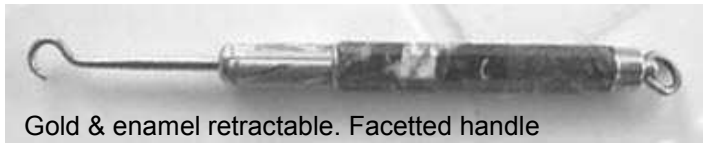
The firm began in 1853 with H.G. Clark joined with his brother Norman to form Clark & Bros. The following year another brother, A.W. Clark joined the firm. They sold fancy goods and guns as well as silverware. The selection of wares were an assortment of silver spoon, forks and pie, butter and fruit knives; Together with children's mugs, and salt cellars. They also offered watches, clocks, jewellery, plated ware, spectacles, cutlery, guns, revolvers, rifles, shotguns, cartridges, fishing rods and tackle. Their speciality was Rutland marble jewellery set in Vermont gold; Rutland marble being found in the Green Mountains.

The partnership slowly disintegrated until by 1873 all the Clark Brothers had retired and the firm ceased to exist.

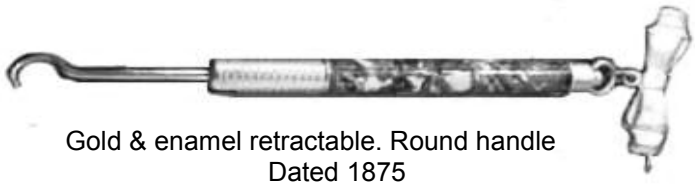
This knife is the only known example of their work.

1854 Mabie, Todd & Co

John Mabie began in New York before 1854 and was involved with Messrs Knapp, Smith and Johnson, before forming Mabie and Todd & Co in 1860. The company traded until 1926 when a Mr Bard joined the firm in 1974. They all enjoyed multiple partnerships throughout the period. They were generally known for producing fountain pens.



Gold & enamel retractable. Facetted handle



Gold & enamel retractable. Round handle
Dated 1875

1855 Wm B Kerr & Co

Established as Kerr & Thiery in Newark New Jersey in 1855, they were makers of flat and tableware plus gold dress ware and jewellery. They used the mark above until 1892 after which a fleur-de-lis was used. This axe mark which looks reminiscent of revolutionary France, is clearly seen here. Another interesting mark is *Cartier*, so they obviously made pieces on commission as others have done. The company was purchased by the Gorham Corporation in 1906 and moved to Rhode Island in 1927.

Maureen Crawley collection

We know nothing of the fine buttonhook shown on the next page, both sides showing the tail curling round. It looks terrific and was sold on eBay in 2004 for $102.

1855 Spaulding & Co

Another company with a tortuous pedigree, Spaulding & Co was founded as S Hoard & Co in Chicago. In 1888 it was incorporated as Spaulding & co when it took over the business of N Matson & Co. and with Levi Leiter of Chicago and Edward Holbrook of New York who represented Gorham they formed a Corporation to manufacture and retail watches, clocks, jewellery, diamonds, silverware and *objet d'art*. In the 1920's the Gorham Mfg Co acquired control and it became Spaulding-Gorham Inc. We only have one example of their wares. In 1943 the company was sold to Gordon Lang when the name reverted to Spaulding & co.

What is interesting is that they also had a London registered Hall Mark and were known for their English hand forged silver flatware by Fletcher of London and other eminent American silversmiths.

The Panic of 1857

The Panic of 1857 was caused by the declining international economy and over-expansion of the domestic economy. Because of the interconnectedness of the world economy by the time of the 1850s, the financial crisis that began in late 1857 was the world's first world-wide economic crisis.

In Britain, the Palmerston government circumvented the requirements of the Peel Banking Act of 1844, which required that the gold and silver reserves should back up the amount of money in circulation. This circumvention set off a panic in Britain, which spread throughout the world.

The sinking of the SS Central America greatly contributed to the panic as New York banks were awaiting the much needed shipment of gold it was carrying. After the failure of Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company, the financial panic quickly spread as business began to fail, the railroad industry experienced financial declines and hundreds of workers were laid off.

Although the financial downturn did not last long they did not recover financially until after the civil war.

Since the years immediately preceding the Panic of 1857 were extremely prosperous, many banks, merchants, and farmers had seized the opportunity to take risks with their investments but as soon as market prices began to fall, they quickly began to experience the effects of financial panic.

This seems a familiar story as such panics recur, and the bankers do not seem to have learned the lessons of history as the meltdown of 2009 showed.

1857 Towle & Jones

This company has a most interesting history, evolving as it did from one of the longest lines of silversmiths in America. In 1637, William, John and Thomas came from Norfolk, England, and settled in Hampton, New Hampshire. Wiliam's great-great-grandson William IV took on two apprentices Anthony Francis Towle and William P. Jones. William IV's son, Joseph inherited the business and sold it to his father's two apprentices in 1857 to form Towle & Jones, Co. In 1873, the son of Anthony Towle, Edward, was added to the business, and the name was changed to A.F. Towle & Son. It was in business until 1902, when their dies were purchased by Rogers, Lunt and Bowlen, who were later to become Lunt Silversmiths. In 1882, Anthony Francis Towle, while still owning A.F. Towle & Son, established the Towle Manufacturing Co.

In 1890, the company adopted the trademark of a large script "T" enclosed by a lion. Richard Dimes, an English silversmith who had emigrated to the U.S. in 1881, started the Towle's hollow ware line. Dimes, who also worked for the Frank W. Smith Silver Co., would eventually establish his own company, Richard Dimes Co., in Boston.

Eventually the company's name was changed to Towle Silversmiths. The only example of their work is this glove hook marked STERLING 15 with the above mark which was found on the Silverdale Buttonhook site.

1859 The Nevada silver strikes

Silver mining in Nevada, a state of the United States, began in 1858 with the discovery of the Comstock Lode, the first major silver-mining district in the United States.

The Comstock Lode had been a minor gold district since 1849 but in 1859, several prospectors discovered its rich lode silver ore, and a great rush of miners poured eastward from California, and established Gold Hill and Virginia City, the principal towns of the Comstock Lode.

The Comstock was the first important silver-mining district in the United States, and its discovery stimulated a great deal of prospecting for silver across the Great Basin area of the United States. The resulting silver rush led to many other silver discoveries in Nevada, including Austin in 1862, Eureka in 1864, and Pioche in 1869.

In the California gold rush, the Forty-Niners swarmed into the land and panned the easy nuggets from the stream placers. Then the geologists moved in to finish the job. The mining corporations and hydraulic syndicates thrived on the deep veins and low-pay ores that the panners couldn't touch. Mining camps had a chance to grow into mining towns, then into stable communities with farms and merchants and libraries.

Not in Nevada. Silver there formed strictly on the surface. Over millions of years of desert conditions, silver sulphide minerals weathered out of their volcanic host rocks and slowly turned, under the influence of rainwater, to silver chloride. The climate of Nevada concentrated this silver ore in *supergene enrichments*. These heavy grey crusts were often polished by dust and wind to the dull lustre of a cow horn; horn silver. You could shovel it

right off the ground, and you didn't need to be Einstein to find it. And once it was gone, there was little or nothing left beneath but hard-rock.

A big silver bed could be tens of metres wide and more than a kilometre long, and that crust on the ground was worth up to $27,000 a ton in 1860s dollars. The territory of Nevada, along with the states around it, was picked clean in a few decades. The miners would have done it faster, but there were dozens of other ranges to prospect on foot, and the climate was so harsh. Only the Comstock Lode supported silver mining by large combines, and it was depleted by the 1890s and the district has been mostly inactive since the 1920s.

We have many examples of Nevada Silver buttonhooks, although we know that many of them were made in Washington State Prison well to the north. However they may have originally been made at the Carson State Prison in Nevada using the local materials. As Nevada silver was relatively cheap it seems to have been used in prisons all over the United states to make particular goods, especially spurs. Nevada silver had also been used for many years by the Native Americans who combined it with abalone shells.

Carson City Dollar 1883

1861 The American Civil War

In 1860 Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the Untied States. Within a year the Civil War would begin.

In 2007 Paul and Sally Moorehead met up with their friends Ed and Betty Gardiner from New Jersey. They all went down to Charleston for the Spoleto Festival. Whilst there they did the compulsory tour of Charleston on a horse and cart. The earnest young man who was acting as guide asked why no one was asking any questions, so Paul asked. 'Why does everyone say that the Civil War…. The young man held his hand up and corrected Paul immediately saying that it was 'The War between the States.' Paul started again 'Why does everyone say that the War between the States was about slavery, when Abraham Lincoln had slaves of his own?' He thought a moment and replied; 'That is a two hour lunch question.' He was right! So we will not be going into why the war was fought or the ins and outs of the battles that took place. No; we will have a look at some of the consequences as they affect buttonhooks; or more exactly, footwear.

Boot and shoemakers arrived soon after the colonies were established to provide the settlers with much-needed footwear. Cobblers, who mainly worked at home, used hand tools and centuries-old techniques to cut out the various parts, to sew them together shaping each shoe over a wooden last. Lynn in Massachusetts became a leading centre after John Adam Dagyr and other immigrants introduced recent European hand processes, which allowed the colonists to make products that could compete successfully with European imports.

In order to supply the demands of a growing population after the Revolutionary War, merchants began reorganizing the trade. They purchased leather from wherever they could, cut the materials and hired craftsmen to make the shoes in their homes, before

selling the finished products. This, *putting-out*, system of manufacture meant that the cobbler worked for the merchant. Two kinds of specialization emerged; shoemakers in a region would specialize in a particular type of shoe, while craftsmen would specialize in only one step in the manufacturing process. Improving transportation networks and growing financial resources allowed the shoe manufacturers in Massachusetts and the Middle Atlantic states to exploit southern and western markets.

As a result of the Civil War, which saw many cobblers called up and great strains put upon those that were left to keep the troops of both sides shod, there was a great drive towards mechanization. Entrepreneurs gradually recognized the usefulness of consolidating the various processes at one location, where better supervision of the increasingly specialized steps could occur. Within these factories, machines were perfected that imitated specific hand processes. More than five thousand American patents were issued before 1900 for improvements in shoemaking. Of these, three proved most significant: the adaptation of the Howe sewing machine to stitching uppers; the invention by Lyman R. Blake, a black mechanic, of a device for sewing the upper to the sole, although the machine bears the name of Col. Gordon McKay, who improved and marketed it during the Civil War; and the perfection by 1875 of Auguste Deystouy's welt-stitching machine for joining the upper and sole, by Charles Goodyear, Jr. The advantages of machines, especially those that were power driven, encouraged the further subdivision of processes so that by the end of the century the process ran to more than 170 steps. This mechanization reduced the time required to make a shoe by more than 80 percent.

With the creation of large, integrated factories, employees turned toward trade unionism. In 1895, in the wake of several other more radical labour associations, workers formed the International Boot and Shoe Workers Union. In 1899 the principal producers of shoemaking machinery formed the United Shoe Machinery Company, which still controlled this industry in the mid-1970s. In 1905 the shoe manufacturers formed the National Boot and Shoe Manufacturers Association.

Although New England and the Atlantic seaboard dominated shoemaking, before World War I other centres of manufacture emerged using materials from throughout the world. Consolidation greatly reduced the number of firms, but they still had 211,000 employees and an output of 331 million pairs of shoes. Americans were exporting almost $75 million worth of leather footwear per year.

By the First World War, America was dominating Europe in shoe manufacture driving indigenous boot and shoe industries almost to destruction. Northampton in England was on the verge of collapse, only to be saved by the advent of war. Once war was declared, America, as a neutral withdrew and the local footwear industries set about restructuring themselves to provide the thousands of boots required by the troops. As a result they emerged from the war better equipped to withstand the pressures from American footwear companies.

After World War I the American shoemaking industry experienced difficulties and although Americans refined their techniques, foreign machinery manufacturers could now compete successfully.

With the Civil War over, the peace was marred by the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the greatest figure of the war. The ex-Confederate States were readmitted to the Union, which had been saved and in which slavery was now abolished. The Civil War brought death to more Americans than did any other war, including World War II. The war cost untold billions. It established many of the patterns, especially a strong central government, that are now taken for granted in American national life. Virtually every battlefield, with its

graves, is either a national or a state park. Monuments commemorating Civil War figures and events are conspicuous in almost all sizable Northern towns and are even more numerous in the upper South.

Paul Moorehead as a boy remembers seeing a huge statue of Abraham Lincoln standing in front of Platt Hall in Manchester, now a leading costume museum.

Arlington Cemetery

Lincoln's statue

You might not expect to see a statue of Abraham Lincoln in Manchester, but the statue had an inscription below that reflected a connection between Lincoln and Manchester which dates to the Civil War.

After the war broke, the Union blockade of Confederate ports hit Manchester and the surrounding area hard. A bit of smuggling aside, the Lancashire mills suddenly lost all access to their biggest supply of raw cotton. The 1861 cotton crop just about made it to the mills, but as the conflict continued into 1862, mills began to close with thousands of workers being made unemployed. There was poverty, hunger and even emigration, in what became known as the Lancashire Cotton Famine. Unsurprisingly, this meant there was some support in England for the Confederacy, and a hope among Confederate leaders that a British intervention on their side might decide the war in their favour. But Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, announced in September 1862, changed attitudes. Slavery had long since been abolished in Britain and its Empire, and sympathies switched to the Union side. On New Year's Eve 1862, the struggling cotton workers of Lancashire met at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, and agreed to send a formal letter to Lincoln demonstrating their strong support for him, despite the economic hardship they were facing. Lincoln replied warmly a few weeks later. Extracts from the letters are reproduced on the plinth.

The statue was actually intended for London, but it was deemed not statesmanlike enough, and so a different one was commissioned and still stands outside the Houses of Parliament. Manchester offered to take the rejected statue, and it was placed in Platt Fields Park in 1919. It was moved to its current location in a new public space called Lincoln Square, in 1986.

The American Civil War has been called by some the last of the old-fashioned wars; others have termed it the first of the modern wars in history. Actually it was a transitional war, and it had a profound impact, technologically, on the development of modern weapons and

techniques. There were many innovations. It was the first war in history in which ironclad warships clashed; the first in which the telegraph and railroad played significant roles; the first to use extensively, rifled ordnance and shell guns and to introduce the machine gun; the first to have widespread newspaper coverage, voting by servicemen in national elections, and photographic recordings; the first to organize medical care of troops systematically; and the first to use land and water mines and to employ a submarine that could sink a warship. It was also the first war in which armies widely employed aerial reconnaissance by means of balloons.

1862 The Homestead Act.

With the secession of Southern states from the Union, the Homestead Act was finally passed and signed into law by Abraham Lincoln on May 20th 1862. The new law established a three-fold homestead acquisition process: filing an application, improving the land, and filing for deed of title. Any U.S. citizen, or intended citizen, who had never borne arms against the U.S. Government could file an application and lay claim to 160 acres of surveyed Government land. For the next 5 years, the homesteader had to live on the land and improve it by building a 12-by-14 dwelling and growing crops. After 5 years, the homesteader could file for his patent or deed of title by submitting proof of residency and the required improvements to a local land office.

Local land offices forwarded the paperwork to the General Land Office in Washington, DC, along with a final certificate of eligibility. The case file was examined, and valid claims were granted patent to the land free and clear, except for a small registration fee. Title could also be acquired after a 6-month residency and trivial improvements, provided the claimant paid the government $1.25 per acre. After the Civil War, Union soldiers could deduct the time they served from the residency requirements.

Some land speculators took advantage of a legislative loophole caused when those drafting the law's language failed to specify whether the 12-by-14 dwelling was to be built in feet or inches. Others hired phoney claimants or bought abandoned land. The General Land Office was under funded and unable to hire a sufficient number of investigators for its widely scattered local offices. As a result, overworked and underpaid investigators were often susceptible to bribery.

Physical conditions on the frontier presented even greater challenges. Wind, blizzards, and plagues of insects threatened crops. Open plains meant few trees for building, forcing many to build homes out of sod. Limited fuel and water supplies could turn simple cooking and heating chores into difficult trials. Ironically, even the smaller size of sections took its own toll. While 160 acres may have been sufficient for an eastern farmer, it was simply not enough to sustain agriculture on the dry plains, and scarce natural vegetation made raising livestock on the prairie difficult. As a result, in many areas, the original homesteader did not stay on the land long enough to fulfil the claim.

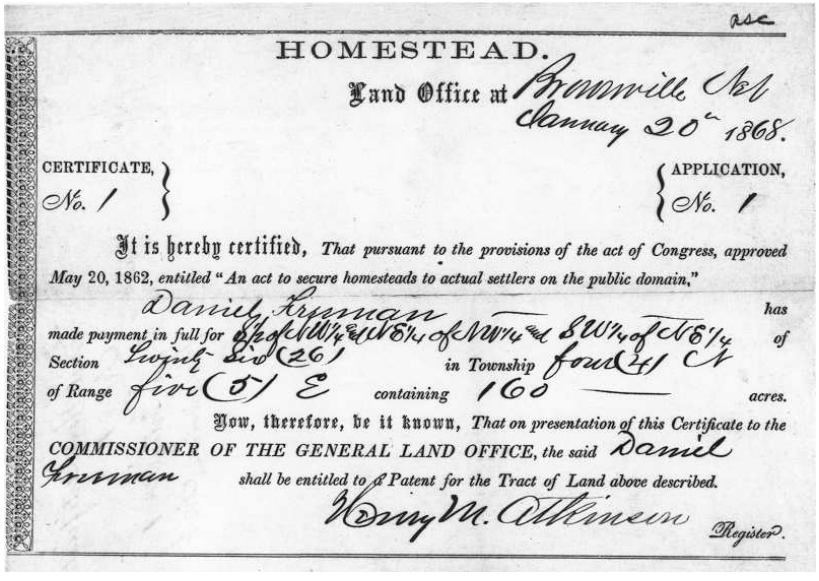
Homesteaders who persevered were rewarded with opportunities as rapid changes in transportation eased some of the hardships. Six months after the Homestead Act was passed, the Railroad Act was signed, and by May 1869, a transcontinental railroad stretched across the frontier. The new railroads provided easy transportation for homesteaders, and new immigrants were lured westward by railroad companies eager to sell off excess land at inflated prices. The new rail lines provided ready access to manufactured goods and catalogue houses like Montgomery Ward offered farm tools, barbed wire, linens, weapons, and even houses delivered via the rails.

On January 1, 1863, Daniel Freeman, a Union Army Scout, was scheduled to leave

Gage County, Nebraska, to report for duty in St. Louis. At a New Year's Eve party the night before, Freeman met some local Land Office officials and convinced a clerk to open the office shortly after midnight in order to file a land claim. In doing so, Freeman became one of the first to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Homestead Act.

As well as Daniel Freeman another 417 filed claims. Many more pioneers followed, populating the land, building towns and schools and creating new states from the territories. In many cases, the schools became the focal point for community life, serving as churches, polling places and social gathering locations. In 1936, the Department of the Interior recognized Freeman as the first claimant and established the Homestead National Monument, near a school built in 1872, on his homestead near Beatrice, Nebraska.

On the right is Daniel Freeman's Certificate handing over title to the land after he had worked it for the statutory five years. Many more Land acts followed but this was the pioneering Act that sent millions of immigrants west seeking their fortunes.



HOMESTEAD.

Land Office at Brownville Nebr
January 20th 1868.

CERTIFICATE, No. 1

APPLICATION, No. 1

It is hereby certified, That pursuant to the provisions of the act of Congress, approved May 20, 1862, entitled "An act to secure homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain,"

Daniel Freeman has made payment in full for Lots No 1 and 2 & SE¼ of NE¼ and SW¼ of NE¼ of Section Twenty Six (26) in Township Four (4) N of Range Five (5) E containing 160 acres.

Now, therefore, be it known, That on presentation of this Certificate to the COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE, the said Daniel Freeman shall be entitled to a Patent for the Tract of Land above described.

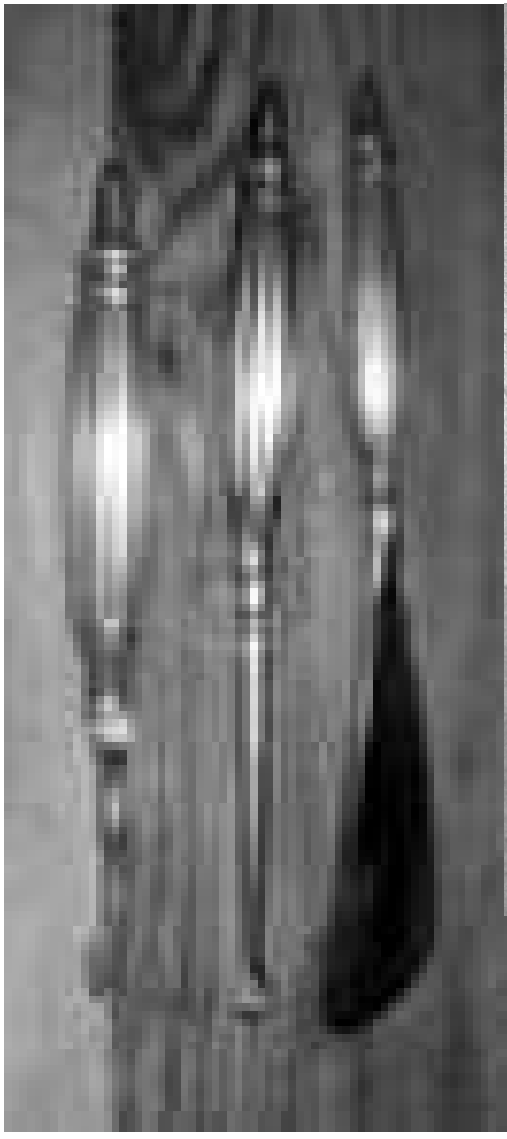
Henry M. Atkinson Register.

1862 R Blackinton & Co

Despite the war, business in the Northern States continued as before apart from being depleted of men. In some respect it stirred businessmen to be even more entrepreneurial and inventive. Against this background Roswell Blackinton set up his business in North Attleboro, Massachusetts with Walter Ballou.

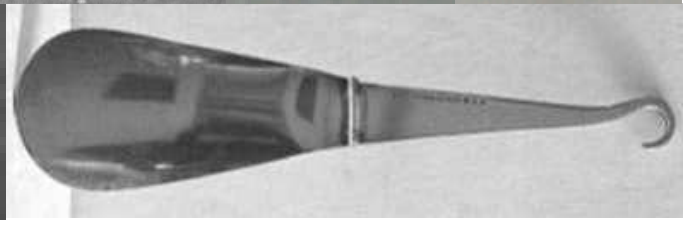
They were known mainly for sterling silver and 14 karat gold novelties, flatware, hollowware and dresser ware with some costume jewellery.

They kept their original mark until 1900. The business was bought by Well Inc in 1967



Margaret Jackson-Feilden collection

Black enamel striping .Ian Wood collection



1865 American cowboy boots

No one really knows who the original inventor of cowboy boots was. Depending upon where your loyalties lie the first pair of cowboy boots were made either in Kansas, or in Texas, either way, the story remains the same.

After the Civil War was over, the cowboys who were driving cattle across the country from Texas to Kansas. soon discovered that they needed a different style of boots. The ones worn during the war just didn't suit the long hours riding on the trails: blazing through the brush and brambles, splashing through creeks and rivers, and riding with their feet in stirrups for hours at a time. Around 1870 some ingenious cowboy took his boots to a shoemaker and asked for a pointy toe so he could get his foot into the stirrup more easily; a taller shaft to protect his legs;

Buffalo Bill Cody in high thigh boots with Sitting Bull

and a bigger, thicker, under slung heal so his foot wouldn't come out of the stirrup during the rough riding on the trails. The knee-high design protected his legs from the thorns of mesquite trees, barbed wire, snakes, and other dangers. The cowboy boots were pulled on with long mule-ear straps but were loose enough on the top so that they could be wiggled out of easily if the cowboy was hung up in the stirrup and needed to get out in a hurry. The tough leather that the cowboy boots were made from also protected the cowboy's ankles from being bruised by the wooden stirrups, and his legs from rubbing against the stirrup leathers. The cowboy boots were stitched on the outside to keep the leather from buckling and eventually rubbing against the cowboy's leg.

The high, under slung heel of the cowboy boot also served to protect the cowboy. He could dig that heel into the ground when pulling a stubborn mule or when leading his horse down a steep and rocky trail. The heel also kept the cowboy's foot from going all the way through the stirrup so that if he were thrown from his horse he wouldn't get stuck in the stirrup and dragged on the ground. And just like that, the first pair of cowboy boots was born.

The first pairs of cowboy boots had very little style and were for working purposes only. They were a tool that helped keep the cowboy safe and quickly became a part of any cowboy's everyday life.

At first, cowboy boots were only custom made. A cowboy would have to go to a cobbler who would measure his feet and make a pair of cowboy boots just for him. Later, the first mail-order boot companies came about. Getting a pair of cowboy boots in this way was much more humble, but a cowboy down on his luck had to do whatever he could to get his boots.

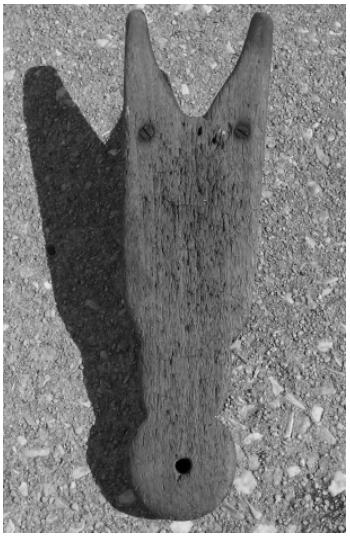
Cowboy boots began as a practical tool for the cowboy, but soon became a fashion

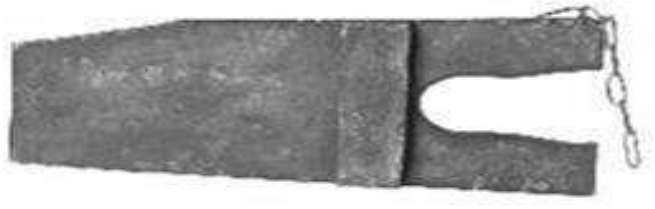
statement. The stitching on the outside usually done in a plain black or brown soon gave way to more colourful thread, and designs and pictures were sewn into the boots. From there, boot makers began to experiment with inlays and overlays, and suddenly boot designs became limitless. The more extraordinary the cowboy boot could be, the better.

Naturally as long as there have been boots there have been boot jacks. Whereas in England boot jacks followed established traditional lines, American boot jack makers felt free to make ones that better reflected their own life style and culture.





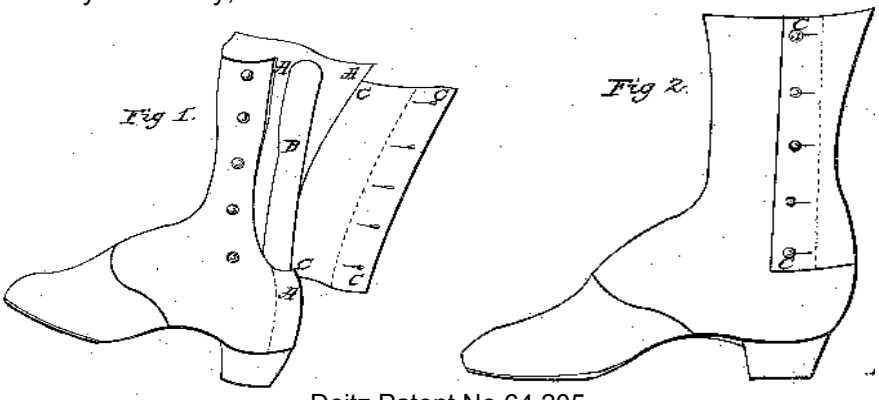
1867 First American Patent regarding button boots and buttonhooks

Just as we were alerted to gentlemen's button boots and buttonhook use by Captain Halliday's patent in England in 1826 with his improved boot jack that mentioned in the patent description that a buttonhook could be fitted on the end of the handle of the boot pull, so in searching for evidence of button boots and buttonhooks in America we also look to a patent.

Georgian folding boot jack holding a pair of boot pulls one with leather punch the other with buttonhook.

In Cynthia Compton's excellent book Buttonhooks; collecting and price guide, she claims the oldest patent as being in 1858. This is undoubtedly an error as the patent referred to was taken out on 8th October 1878.

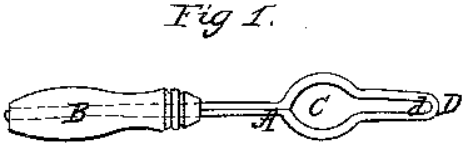
The first patent was in fact on April 30th 1867 and refers to an improved method of fastening ladies button boots by William Deitz, of the city of Albany, State of New York.



Deitz Patent No 64,205

The second patent is by John F. Goldthwait of Boston, in the County of Suffolk, in the State of Massachusetts. He claimed to have invented a new and improved Buttoner for buttoning shoes, gloves, and similar articles.

All these patents begin with an explanation of what is being proposed, whilst referring to the drawing submitted with them.



For the sake of brevity, future Patents will just show the patent number and the essential part of the drawings.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

J. P. GOLDTHWAIT OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETS

IMPROVEMENT IN BUTTONERS FOR SHOES.

Specification for Letters Patent No. 68,361. Dated Sept. 3 1867.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Be it known that I, JOHN F. GOLDTHWAIT, of. Boston, in the county of Suffolk, in the State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and improved Buttoner for buttoning shoes, gloves, and similar articles; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear and exact description there reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the letters of reference marked thereon.

The nature of my invention consists in so constructing the buttoner that there shall be .no broken surface on either side to catch in the button-hole, and yet have an opening of sufficient size to receive the button.

To enable others skilled in the art to make und use my invention, I will proceed to describe its construction and operation.

I construct my buttoner of wire, bent in form, as seen in the drawings and the same is provided with a suitable handle, and is firmly secured to it by being riveted at the extreme end of the handle.

Figure 1 `represents a top view of the buttoner, and Figure 2, an edge view of same.

A is the metallic portion of the buttoner, B the handle, C the opening for the button, d the opening suited to the eye of the button, e the button, the eye of same, and the cloth or other material to which it is secured.

The operation is as follows: The extreme end D is inserted into the button-hole of the article to be buttoned, and forced through up to the handle B, when the 'button is received through the opening C; the motion is then changed to the opposite direction, which carries the eye f of the button e to d, as seen in the drawings, Fig. 2.- the motion being continued, the button is drawn through the button-hole, which completes the buttoning, and the buttoner is disengaged through the-opening C. (Not shown here.)

This buttoner is particularly adapted to the buttoning of gloves, shoes, and similar articles, and supplies a long felt want in the community. It is simple, yet effective, not liable to get out of order, and can be made sufficiently small to carry in the vest-pocket.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is

A buttoner, substantially as described, consisting of an continuous loop, enlarged at C, for the purpose of receiving the button, and narrowed at A to suit the eye of the button.

Signed: John F Goldthwait

Witnessed: H H Washburn

Geo H Fairfield.

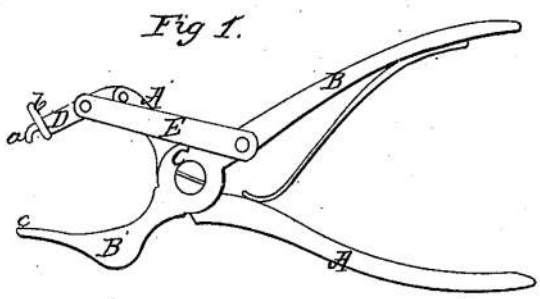
1868 An unusual buttonhook patent

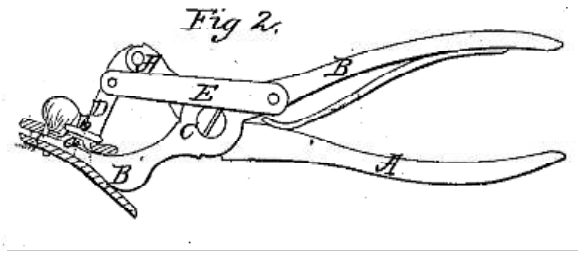
The next patent is a shoe buttoner that works on a totally different principle to a buttonhook. One can see why it did not catch on as it is extremely complicated, although the concept is simple enough. It is by EDWARD CARD, of North Providence, in the county of Providence and State of Rhode Island and the opening explanation is as follows.

“The nature of my invention consists in the construction of an improved instrument for buttoning ladies shoes by arranging a jointed arm, provided with a button-hole hook and presser, upon a pair of pinchers.”

The basic principle is to press the buttonhole down upon the button until it pops through. There are several more figures but figures 1 & 2 are clear enough!

Card Patent No 81,250 Patented Aug 18th 1868



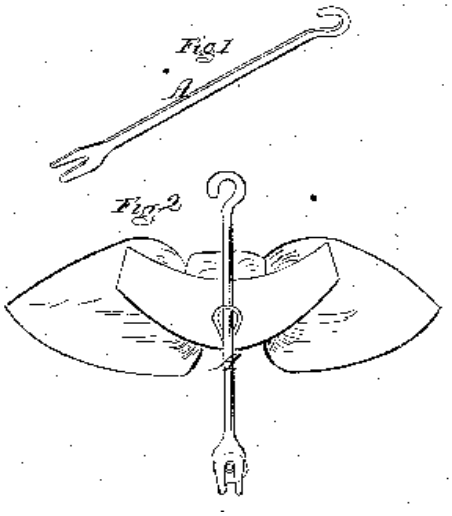


The following year Omar Wilson, of Sandusky City, in the county of Erie, and State of Ohio, claimed to have invented certain new and useful Improvements in necktie Fasteners and Buttoners. He goes on to say: - “The object of my invention is to provide a device by which neckties or butterflies (Bow ties,) can be easily and quickly attached to the button.

It will help the understanding of this device if one understands that Fig 2 is the view looking out from the shirt front. That is if one can understand it at all.

In Bertha Bentensly’s book she points out that at that time neckties and butterfly or bow ties did not go all the way round the neck, as they were preknotted and fastened by rubber band or some such. It is the problems with such ties that this implement is trying to address.

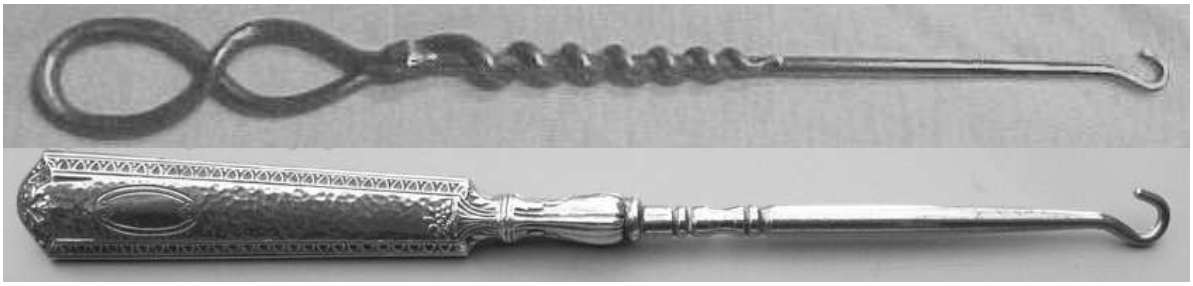
Wilson Pat No 93,656 Aug 10th 1869



1869 Webster Company

If one checks this company out in *The Encyclopaedia of American Silversmiths* one will be very confused. It shows that George K Webster of North Attleboro began a company in 1869 under the name G.K.Webster & Co, and this was ‘supervised’ by him until his death in 1894 when it became Webster & Co. Meanwhile he went to New Jersey in 1868 and worked for the Raritan and Delaware Railroad in the office of the repair shop. He then went to Lawrence, Massachusetts and worked in the drug business before moving to Boston

and then North Attleboro engaged in drugs on his own account. He sold up in 1879 and began manufacturing sterling work, jewellery and novelties. When he died on 2nd October 1894 that business too came under Webster & Co. See how confusing it is?



According to Cynthia Compton, Webster hooks are very common and usually of geometric design.

1869 The birth of Plastic

This *New York Times* dispatch is more than a hundred and fifty years old, and yet it sounds surprisingly modern: elephants, the paper warned in 1867, were in grave danger of being "numbered with extinct species" because of humans' insatiable demand for the ivory in their tusks. Ivory, at the time, was used for all manner of things, from buttonhooks to boxes, piano keys to combs. But one of the biggest uses was for billiard balls. Billiards had come to captivate upper-crust society in the United States as well as in Europe. Every estate, every mansion had a billiards table, and by the mid-1800s, there was growing concern that there would soon be no more elephants left to keep the game tables stocked with balls. The situation was most dire in Ceylon, source of the ivory that made the best billiard balls. There, in the northern part of the island, the *Times* reported, "upon the reward of a few shillings per head being offered by the authorities, 3,500 pachyderms were dispatched in less than three years by the natives." All told, at least one million pounds of ivory were consumed each year, sparking fears of an ivory shortage. "Long before the elephants are no more and the mammoths used up," the *Times* hoped, "an adequate substitute may [be] found."

Ivory wasn't the only item in nature's vast larder that was starting to run low. The hawksbill turtle, that unhappy supplier of the shell used to fashion combs, was becoming scarcer. Even cattle horn, another natural plastic that had been used by American comb makers since before the War of Independence, was becoming less available as ranchers stopped dehorning their cattle.

In 1863, so the story goes, a New York billiards supplier ran a newspaper ad offering "a handsome fortune," ten thousand dollars in gold, to anyone who could come up with a suitable alternative for ivory. John Wesley Hyatt, a young journeyman printer in Upstate New York, read the ad and decided he could do it. Hyatt had no formal training in chemistry, but he did have a knack for invention—at the age of twenty-three, he'd patented a knife sharpener. Setting up in a shack behind his home, he began experimenting with various combinations of solvents and a doughy mixture made of nitric acid and cotton, called guncotton, which was highly flammable, even explosive. For a while it was used as a substitute for gunpowder until producers of it got tired of having their factories blown up.

As he worked in his homemade lab, Hyatt was building on decades of invention and innovation that had been spurred not only by the limited quantities of natural materials but

also by their physical limitations. The Victorian era was fascinated with natural plastics such as rubber and shellac and had got excited by an English inventor Alexander Parkes who is credited with inventing Parkesine, which he exhibited at the Great International Exhibition in 1862. It was the first plastic as we would know it today, although the word had not been coined then.

Hyatt's breakthrough came in 1869. After years of trial and error, Hyatt ran an experiment that yielded a whitish material that had "the consistency of shoe leather" but the capacity to do much more than sole a pair of shoes. This was a malleable substance that could be made as hard as horn. It shrugged off water and oils. It could be moulded into a shape or pressed paper-thin and then cut or sawed into usable forms. It was created from a natural polymer; the cellulose in the cotton, but had a versatility none of the known natural plastics possessed. Hyatt's brother Isaiah, a born marketer, dubbed the new material *celluloid*, meaning "like cellulose."

While celluloid would prove a wonderful substitute for ivory, Hyatt apparently never collected the ten-thousand-dollar prize. Perhaps that's because celluloid didn't make very good billiard balls; at least not at first. It lacked the bounce and resilience of ivory, and it was highly volatile. The first balls Hyatt made produced a loud crack, like a shotgun blast, when they knocked into each other. One Colorado saloonkeeper wrote Hyatt that "he didn't mind, but every time the balls collided, every man in the room pulled a gun."

However, it was an ideal material for combs. As Hyatt noted in one of his early patents, celluloid transcended the deficiencies that plagued many traditional comb materials. When it got wet, it didn't get slimy, like wood, or corrode, like metal. It didn't turn brittle, like rubber, or become cracked and discoloured, like natural ivory.

Celluloid could be rendered with the rich creamy hues and striations of the finest tusks from Ceylon, a faux material marketed as French Ivory. It could be mottled in browns and ambers to emulate tortoiseshell; traced with veining to look like marble; infused with the bright colours of coral, lapis lazuli, or carnelian to resemble those and other semiprecious stones; or blackened to look like ebony or jet. Celluloid made it possible to produce counterfeits so exact that they deceived "even the eye of the expert," as Hyatt's company boasted in one pamphlet. "As petroleum came to the relief of the whale," the pamphlet stated, so "has celluloid given the elephant, the tortoise, and the coral insect a respite in their native haunts; and it will no longer be necessary to ransack the earth in pursuit of substances which are constantly growing scarcer."

Celluloid appeared at a time when the country was changing from an agrarian economy to an industrial one. Where once people had grown and prepared their own food and made their own clothes, increasingly they were eating, drinking, wearing, and using things that came from factories. America was fast becoming a country of consumers. Ample supplies of celluloid allowed manufacturers to keep up with rapidly rising demand while also keeping costs down. Like other plastics that would follow, celluloid offered a means for Americans to buy their way into new stations in life.

One of celluloid's greatest uses was as the base for photographic film. Film offered a new kind of entertainment, available to and shared by the masses. A dime bought anyone an afternoon of drama, romance, action, escape. Audiences from Seattle to New York roared at the antics of Buster Keaton and thrilled to hear Al Jolson speak the first words in a talkie: "Wait a minute, wait a minute, you ain't heard nothin' yet." The mass culture of film reeled across class, ethnic, racial, and regional lines, drawing one and all into shared stories and imbuing us with the sense that reality itself is as changeable and ephemeral as the names on the movie marquee. With film, an old elite was dethroned; the glamour once associated

with class and social standing was now possible for anyone with good cheekbones, some talent, and a bit of luck.

Ironically, the world opened by celluloid film nearly killed the celluloid- comb industry. In 1914, Irene Castle, a ballroom dancer turned movie star, decided to cut her long hair into a short bob, prompting female fans across the country to take scissors to their own hair. Nowhere did those shorn locks fall harder than in Leominster, Massachusetts, which had been the country's comb capital since before the War of Independence and which was now the cradle of the celluloid industry, much of it devoted to combs. Nearly overnight, half of the comb companies in town were forced to shut down, throwing thousands of comb makers out of work. Sam Foster, owner of Foster Grant, one of the town's leading celluloid-comb companies, told his workers not to worry. "We'll make something else," he assured them. He hit on the idea of making sunglasses, creating an entirely new mass market.

With the rise of mass-production plastics, the fanciful decorative combs and faux ivory dresser sets so popular in the celluloid era gradually disappeared.

Bakelite, the first truly synthetic plastic, a polymer forged entirely in the lab. the plastic Leo Baekeland invented was infinitely more versatile. It didn't have celluloid's knack for imitation. Instead, it had a powerful identity of its own, which helped encourage the development of a distinctively plastic look. Bakelite was a dark-colored, rugged material with a sleek, machinelike beauty. Unlike celluloid, Bakelite could be precisely molded and machined into nearly anything. Families gathered around Bakelite radios, drove Bakelite accessorized cars, kept in touch with Bakelite phones, washed clothes in machines with Bakelite blades, pressed out wrinkles with Bakelite-encased irons—and, of course, styled their hair with Bakelite combs.

The creation of Bakelite marked a shift in the development of new plastics. The 1920s and '30s saw an outpouring of new materials, which could be produced in many shapes and be of many bright colours, no wonder buttonhook makers seized upon this new material to make cutting edge designs for their handles.

Although, as we have seen, the plastic story begins in 1869, it will take a bit longer before we see its effect on buttonhooks. We will pick the tale up again when we take a look at how pin backs were revolutionized by plastic, and plastic art deco handles appeared.

You may have noticed that many of the jewellers we have covered have been from Attleboro. The next two are from there too.

The first jewellery maker in Attleboro was known as "the Frenchman". He was a soldier, who was said to have come to Boston from France in 1772 with General LaFayette. The Frenchman set up shop at an abandoned forge at the corner of Chestnut and South Washington Streets and made gold buttons for the American Continental Army during the American War.

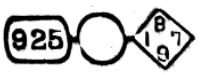
The jewellery industry took root in Attleboro with this first factory in 1807 and it flourished due to the ingenuity of the toolmakers and collaboration with jewellery makers throughout the city. By 1930 it had acquired the sobriquet of the Jewellery Capital of the World.

1870 Hamilton & Hamilton

Hamilton & Hamilton began life in 1870 in Attleboro as Hamilton & Hunt, when Ralph Spence Hamilton and his son went into partnership with George C Hunt. They began by making solid gold ladies jewellery sets , lace pins and gentlemen's chains.

In 1883 Hamilton & Hunt was dissolved by mutual consent and Hamilton & Hamilton was formed. In 1886 they registered a trade mark patent for their wares.

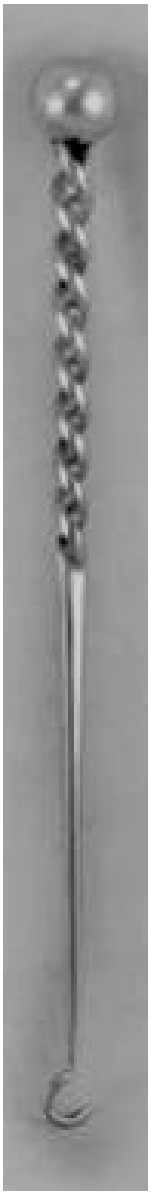
1870 Dominick & Haff

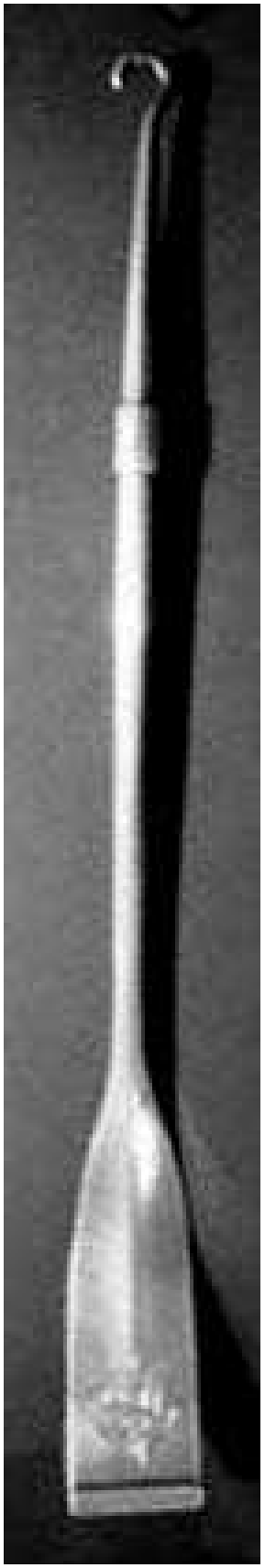


H Blanchard Dominick and Leroy B Haff appeared as partners in the New York Directory in 1870. They both had previous experience of silversmithing. Initially they confined them selves to manufacturing small items of silver; vinaigrettes, chatelaines and other fancy articles. However in 1877 after a fire they moved to bigger premises and expanded their business. In an advert of that year they describe themselves as "makers of wares in sterling silver, also fancy goods and novelties in silver, including bangles in endless varieties of styles and prices, dime holders, dress holders, worsted holders, scarf pins, lace pins, belt buckles, comb etc." Sadly no buttonhooks are mentioned but we know they made them.

In 1880 they purchased the flatware dies of Adams & Shaw, the rest of Adam & Shaw's materials went to the Whiting Manufacturing Company. Eventually Dominick & Haff was sold to Reed & Barton in 1928.

The hallmarking of Dominick & Haff Silver is a three linked monogram that consists of the number 925 and the year the piece was made. The number 925 indicates the percentage of pure silver that was used in making the piece. For instance the punched hallmark of 925 and the number 1897 as above on an item means the piece was made with 92.5 percent of pure silver and was manufactured in 1897.





The rise in silversmithing

In the 1870s, the United States experienced an unprecedented explosion of industrial growth. The Industrial Revolution, which had begun before the Civil War, re-emerged with unparalleled vigour. A rapidly increasing workforce and the abundance of raw materials such as timber, iron, coal, and oil fuelled the industrial boom.

Other factors helped the American

economy outpace the rest of the world. Immigrants from around the world streamed into the United States looking for work. In addition to providing labour, immigrants purchased many of the products manufactured in U.S. factories. The improvement of transportation and communication systems and better machines and labour saving devices all increased productivity. Talented business leaders invested in new processes and developed business organizations that resulted in the modern corporation. Industrial leaders enjoyed the support of a cooperative federal government that used tariffs to protect U.S. companies from foreign competition, while largely exempting the domestic companies from regulations and taxes on profits.

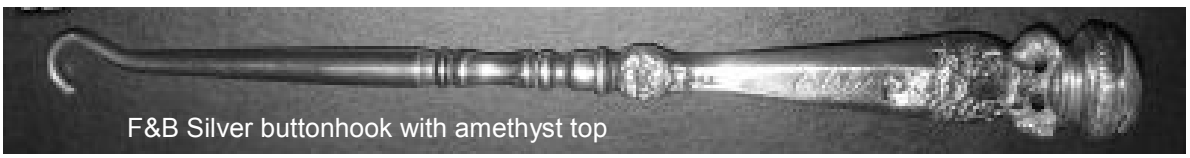
Rapid industrialization changed the way Americans lived. Before the Industrial Revolution, factories in the United States were rather small operations, where owners and employees knew one another and worked side by side. That quickly changed as industry and manufacturing began to dominate the economy. Where people used to perform manufacturing tasks by hand, they now ran machines that did the work. Production and manufacturing processes also became much more complex, requiring more people to fill more jobs.

While the poor suffered and struggled in slums, life for many middle-class Americans also changed as a result of the Industrial Revolution. The growth of the large corporations created the need for more managers and office workers, who are often referred to as white-collar workers. By contrast, factory workers and labourers became known as blue-collar workers. Industrialization also created the need for other types of employees such as engineers and sales representatives. Wages for middle-class workers also increased during the latter years of the 19th century, raising their standard of living.

The growing middle class had the luxury of income to spend on more than just the food, clothing, and shelter necessary for survival. While low-wage labourers worked long hours for six or seven days a week, increasing numbers of middle-class Americans enjoyed more free time. Many Americans pursued recreational activities during their free time. Baseball, football, boxing, and horse racing became more popular spectator sports that drew large crowds. Bicycle riding also became popular. Theatres in large cities drew patrons who enjoyed vaudeville shows featuring a variety of singing, dancing, comedy acts, plays, and operas. Travelling circuses were welcomed by large crowds in towns and cities across the nation. One and two-cent newspapers, in addition to dime novels, sold well. In 1880, Thomas Edison invented moving pictures, and eventually thousands of people were enjoying movies at local theatres.

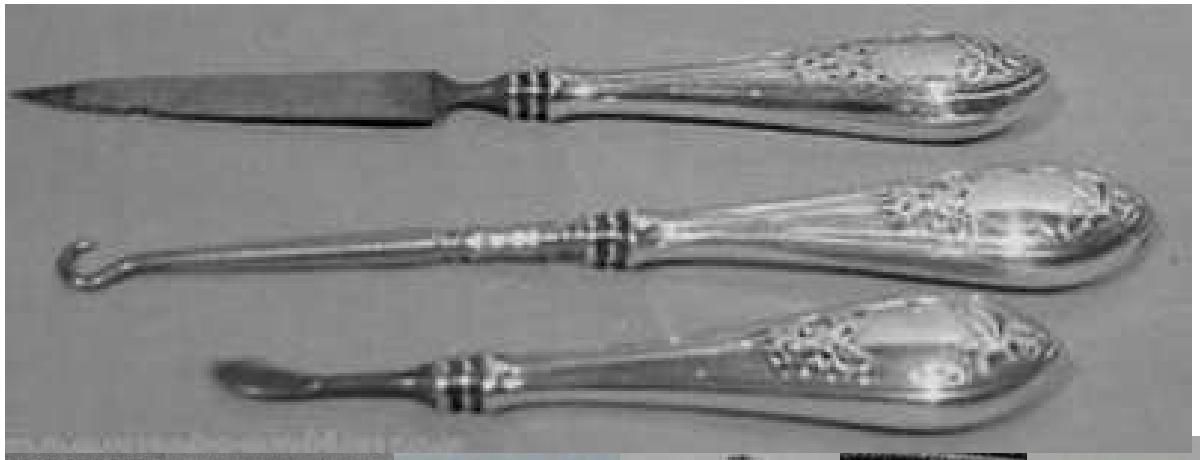
Industrialization changed the lives of millions of people in many ways. The changes benefited some people but made conditions worse for others. Industrialization drew immigrant and U.S. born workers to cities and helped spawn some of the worst slums imaginable, but it also turned the United States into the world's leading manufacturing power and created whole new industries dedicated to leisure time activities. Industrialization, immigration, and urbanization were all part of a historical process that drastically changed how Americans lived and worked over a very short period of time.

This surge in affluence was reflected in the need for the *nouveau riche* to show off. This they did by buying silver. As a result there was a proliferation of silversmiths as we will see. Also as the middle classes of the cities were now fashion conscious, they were buying high buttoned boots which would require the use of a buttonhook.



F&B Silver buttonhook with amethyst top

1873 Theodore W Foster & Bros Co



This six piece enamel set was made by Foster and Bailey**,** American silversmiths that operated between the years of 1878 and 1898. Prior to that the firm was known as White & Foster, from around 1873 up until 1878. Between 1898 and 1951 the company continued to operate under the name Theodore W. Foster and Bros, however it used the same "F&B Sterling" hallmark on its silver as Foster and Bailey, which can make it difficult to determine when a piece was made. The firm was based in Providence, Rhode Island and made small sterling silver, silver plate and gold items for the home and personal use, such as hair brushes, compacts, hat brushes, hand mirrors, dresser jars, shoe horns and button hooks.

Part of six piece enamel set: Hook Priscilla Stoffel collection

New Patented

F&B

TRADE MARK.

DRIPLESS

TEA STRAINER

F and B TRADE MARK.

Pour your tea and set the strainer on the cloth, no fear of drips.

No. 368.

Bracelets with Padlocks.
Lockets and Charms in Gold Plate.
Trilby Heart Lockets and Chains in Silver.

Ask your Jeweler to order one through any wholesale dealer. Made only by us. We also make a large line of **STERLING NOVELTIES** and beautiful **MANICURE AND TOILET ARTICLES.** Everything we sell is guaranteed, and has our well known trade-marks.

F & B or F and B

FOSTER & BAILEY,

Jewelers and Silversmiths,

Providence, R. I.

New York Office (samples only):

178 Broadway.

The Panic of 1873

Since the end of the Civil War, railroad construction had been booming. Between 1866 and 1873, 35,000 mles of track ahd been laid across the country. Railroads were the nation's largest non-agricultural employer. Banks and other industries were putting money into railroads. So when the banking firm Jay Cooke & Co, a firm who had invested heavily in railroads, closed its doors on September 18th 1873, a major economic panic swept the United States.

Jay Cooke's had been the Governments chief financier of the Union military effort during the Civil War, after which the firm became a federal agent in the government financing of railroad construction. This involved vast amounts of money; not to mention risk. Building racks where land had not yet been cleared or settled required land grants and loans which only the Government could provide.

The first transcontinental railroad had been completed in 1869 and entrepreneurs planned another one called the Northern Pacific. As before, Jay Cooke were the financial agents and poured money into it. However on Sepmber 18th the firm realiased it had overextended itself and declared itself bankrupt.

Mirroring Cooke's collapse many other banking firms and industrial companies did likewise. The collapse was disastrous for the nation's economy and 89 railroad companies out of 364 declared themselves bankrupt. A total of 18,000 businesses failed over the next two years and by 1876 unemployement had risen to 14 percent.

President Ulysses Grant was now in his second term and was faced with the problem of what to do about the financial crisis as everyone looked to him to find a solution. Everybody argued over what was to be done. Grant determined on a course in which he colluded with big business, adopting their ideas for easing the crisis. However it was no quick fix and Grant left office with the crisis unresolved.

Grant's approach however had alienated the workers and set off a series of strikes by the railway workers in response to wage cuts and poor working conditions. As a result trains all over the country sat on the tracks not going anywhere. The new President Rutherford Hayes was eventually forced to send in federal troops to many states to put an end to the strikes. Fighting between troops and strikers left over 100 dead and many more injured.
It was not until 1879 that the United States recovered its business nerve and began expanding trade again.

1874 Watson & Co 

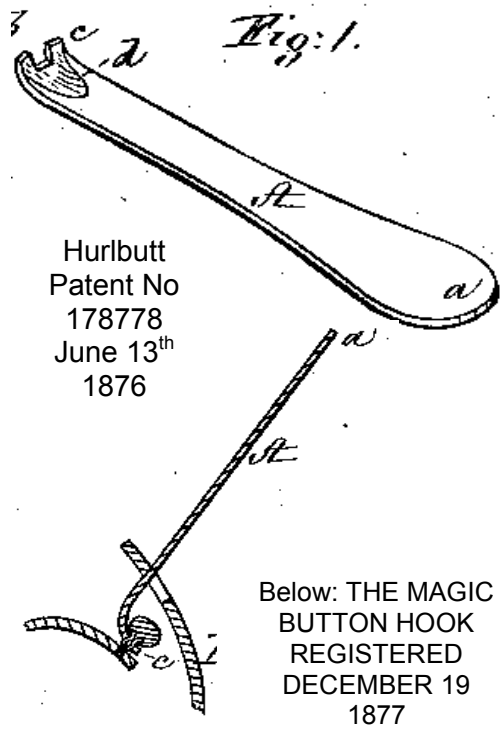
Priscilla Stoffel collection

This company's claim to fame was based upon making sleeve buttons. It started as Cobb, Gould & Co, when Clarence Watson, Fred Newell, Charles Cobb, Samuel Biley and William Battey got together. When Battey left, Cobb retired and Gould withdrew it only left Watson and Newell who carried on until 1920 when it became the Watson Company. The only exciting thing about this firm was that they were sued by Gorham for infringement of copyright when they tried to patent a flatware design. Eventually the company got so big it was split up with Watson & Co taking charge of all silver operations.

1876 Henry Hurlbutt's Buttonhook

Henry Hurlbutt, of Boston, in the county of Suffolk and State of Massachusetts, decided that the ordinary button hook then in general use was objectionable for the reason that the button was liable to be twisted by the thread or other fastening being subjected to an undue strain, besides which the shank near the hook was not of a width sufficient to keep the button-hole open to allow for the easy entrance of the button, the contact of the button with the edges of the hole rendering an increased strain on the button necessary, in order to allow the button to be drawn through.

His invention had for its purpose to overcome the above mentioned objections; and consisted of a device bifurcated at its extremity, and having the projections at a right angle, or nearly so, to the handle, and a depression in the rear of the bifurcation. and having its shank adapted to open the button-hole to allow of the button being drawn or pried through it with great facility, whereby the button is only subjected to a slight strain, which is not liable to break it, nor the thread. Clear now?



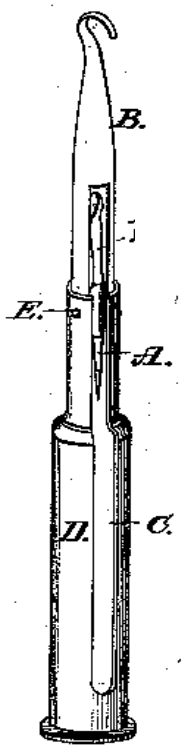
Hurlbutt
Patent No
178778
June 13th
1876

Below: THE MAGIC BUTTON HOOK REGISTERED DECEMBER 19 1877
Moorehead collection

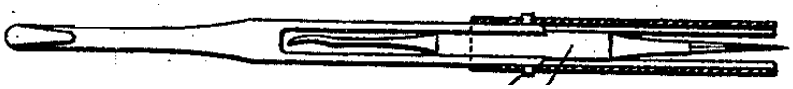
1876 Cowle's improvement in pocket implements

Irving Cowle's invention was to combine a buttonhook with a toothpick and an ear spoon, as he explains: -

The object of my invention is to form a convenient implement for the pocket, and is constructed in the following manner: A cylindrical case, D, is formed of convenient length for the vest-pocket, and is slotted about two thirds of its length. In this slotted case is pivoted a button-hook, having a bifurcated shank and an interlying ear-spoon or tooth-pick. The pivot that holds the parts in place, and on which they turn, is passed through near the slotted end of case, and near the slotted or bifurcated end of the button-hook; thence through the interlying ear-spoon or tooth-pick. The pivot is held in place by the spring of the slotted cylinder. The whole is so arranged that either the button-hook, ear-spoon, or toothpick can be turned in or out of case separately, as either is desired for use.



Pat No 171.997 January 11th 1876



1876 George W Shiebler & Co.

Although starting much later than Gorham and Tiffany, Shielber probably outshone them all! For sheer range and beauty of design it excelled in everything it produced. Its history shows that it expanded and developed through acquisition more than anything else ; many of its hooks show many a well known name as well as its own as we have s already.

George Shiebler and his older brothers, Andrew and William, all entered the jewellery and silverware trades, George beginning as a travelling salesman for the gold chain firm of Jahne, Smith & Co. After they both died he became a partner in Hodenpyl, Tunison & Shiebler to continue the gold chain business. The firm became a casualty of the panic of 1873 and folded.

In 1876 after a break of a year Shiebler bought Coles & Reynolds who made silver spoons and began trading under his own name. From then on he began a policy of acquistion, buying up tools and dies from many important firms.

His skill and the clevernes of his designs enhanced the company's position. They became noted for there medallion work, inspired by the excavations at Pompeii and Herculanaeum which was called Etruscan ware.

This is an interesting combination buttonhook and shoehorn. It is yet another collaboration by Sheilber with another maker. This time it is with Bailey, Banks & Biddle of whose work this is the only example. Note the 'key' hole in the centre of the shaft, see page 153 for full explanation.

Bailey, Banks & Biddle began in 1848 in Rutland, Vermont. After a series of partnerships by Bradbury M Bailey, the company stopped production in the 1870's and became a jewellery store. In 1875 Bailey symbolically made two more spoons and closed the business down.

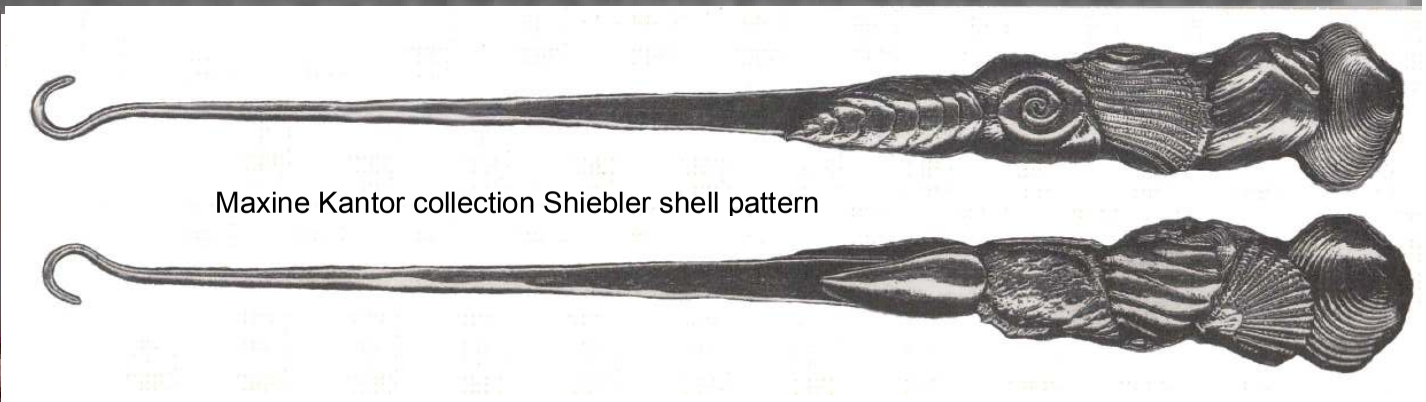
Judy Burr collection

The Etruscan disc is a pin cushion

Shiebler's Etruscan ware demonstrated the best of his designs combined with his methods of oxidization.

This had been tried before in the silver industry but had been spectacularly unsuccessful. It took the genius of Shiebler to turn it into a triumph.

Etruscan Shiebler ; Black, Starr & Frost Paul Moorehead



Maxine Kantor collection Shiebler shell pattern

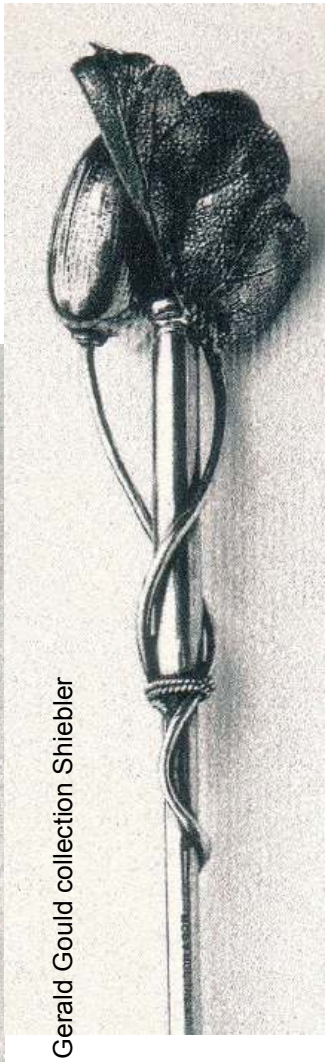
Ian Wood collection Shiebler Etruscan ware

Ian Wood collection

Another success arose from his oxidised silver which he appplied to all sorts of articles to great acclaim.

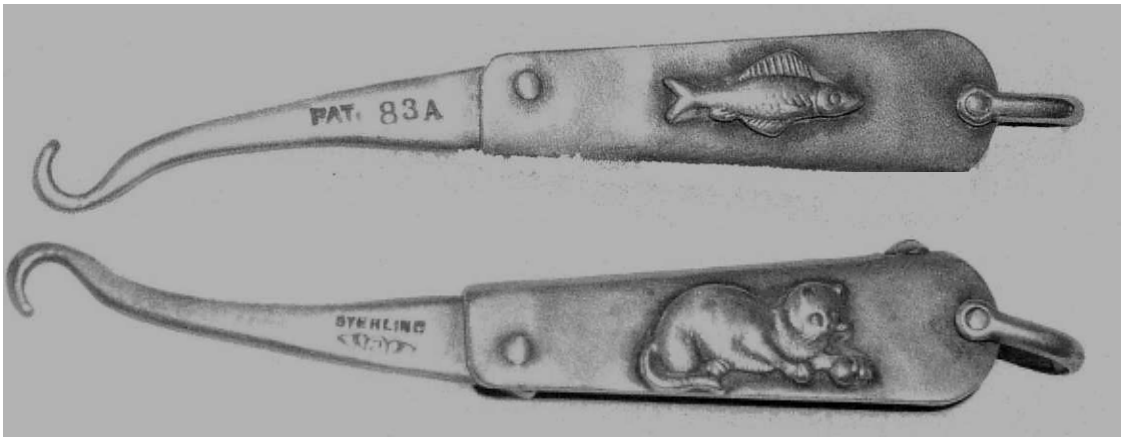
In the November 2009 Boutonneur, Marge Aldritch pointed out that one of Shielber's very succesful lines was his Flora range of handles. These were: Primrose, Buttercup, Passion flower, Narcissus, Geranium, Forget-me-not, Wild Prairie Rose, Lily of the Valley, Water Lily and Pansy.

Primrose | Lily of the Valley | Buttercup | Lotus bud



Lotus blossom

This Shiebler Cat & Fish folding glove hook, is a rare piece. It shows the S in reverse with STERLING on one side of the loop and Pat. 83 on the other. It measures $2^{5}/_{8}$" open and 1¾" closed, including the loop.



In 1892 the firm was incorporated as George W Shiebler & Co with George as President. In 1910 he dissolved the firm and went to work for Gorham until he died.

1876 Custer's last stand

So far we have tended to reflect upon the events in the eastern cities, but as remarked before, whilst they were thriving, the western and northern frontiers were still being rolled back. Whilst some folk in the cities were now rich and enjoying the good life, the frontiers were poor, hazardous and often dangerous places. There were still many conflicts with the Indians, who, even after they were driven off their lands and put on reservations, could still be moved further with the influx of settlers, and this was the root of the problem leading to Custer's last stand.

This battle aroused the public imagination and due to Hollywood everyone refers to it as Custer's last stand due to Colonel Custer's participation in it. Views about him differ as to whether he was a vainglorious buffoon or a brave commander fighting against overwhelming odds.

The battle is more properly known as the Battle of the Little Big Horn. It arose over a dispute about the rights of the Indians in the Black Hills versus the rights of gold miners. A treaty had given the Sioux exclusive rights to the Black Hills, but when gold was later discovered in the area, miners flocked to the territory. Despite the treaty, the U.S. Government ordered the Indians away from the invading settlers and back to their reservations. Some of the Indians refused to leave their sacred land so the Government sent in the army to force the Indians back to their reservations.

Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer was given command of the 7th Cavalry under Brigadier General George Crook. Custer's orders were to wait for reinforcements at the mouth of the Little Big Horn River before attacking the Indians, but Chief Sitting Bull had been spotted nearby, and Custer was impatient to attack.

On the morning of June 25, 1876, Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer and the 7th Cavalry charged into battle against Lakota Sioux and Northern Cheyenne Indians. Custer planned to attack the Indian camp from three sides, but Chief Sitting Bull was ready for them. The first two groups, led by Captain Benteen and Major Reno, were immediately forced to retreat to one side of the river, where they continued to fight as best they could. Custer was not as lucky. Custer's troops charged the Indians from the north and were quickly encircled by the Indians. In the battle Custer and 265 of his soldiers were killed in less than an hour, along with two of his brothers, a nephew, and a brother-in-law.. The Indians retreated two days later when the troops Custer had been ordered to wait for arrived.

The Battle of Little Big Horn was a short-lived victory for the Indians. Federal troops soon poured into the Black Hills. While many Indians surrendered, Sitting Bull escaped to Canada.

The Black Hills dispute was quickly settled by redrawing the boundary lines, placing the Black Hills outside the reservation and open to white settlement. Within a year, the Sioux nation was defeated and broken. "Custer's Last Stand" was their last stand as well.

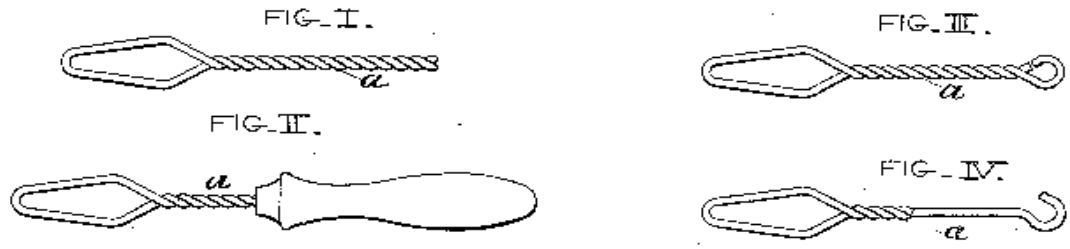
The Custer legend lives on and the debate continues whether he was a fool or hero!

1878 Joseph Smith's Buttoner

This innovation will be known to many of you as it has been used for several types of buttoner.

The invention relates to a button-hook or buttoner formed out of a single wire, the wire being bent to the proper shape of the loop or hook, and then duplicated and twisted to form the shank. The twist alone may constitute the handle, in which case it is found to be sufficiently strong for the purpose or the twisted shank may be inserted in a wooden, bone, or other handle. When so inserted, the shape of the twist, together with the cement, glue, or other fastening substance employed, makes a secure and permanent connection with the handle.

In the accompanying drawing, Figure 1 shows the buttoner formed out of a single wire and ready to be inserted in the handle. Fig. 2 shows the buttoner and additional handle complete. Fig. 3 represents a buttoner formed out of a single wire, the twisted part or shank, which terminates in a ring, constituting the handle. Fig. 4 represents a buttoner having two ends, one being in the form of a loop and the other in that of a hook, the whole formed from one wire and having a twisted shank.



Smith's patent No 208,858 October 8th 1878

1878 Patent infringement

Litigation about the infringement of patents is rare, mainly because they are difficult to prove or they are so blatant that the trespasser retreats immediately rather than face ruin.

This case demonstrates the difficulties faced by either side in such a dispute. The case involved was Case No 1956 Brooks v Moorhouse in the Circuit Court of Massachusetts. February1878.

The complainant Hiram W Brooks had previously brought an action at law against the defendant John Moorhouse for damages for the infringement of patent No. 68,361 for a shoe buttoner, granted to J. F. Goldthwait, in September 5, 1867. The defendant's default was entered, and an arrangement was made that the complainant should buy the stock of infringing articles which the defendant had on hand, and that the defendant should thereupon stop the further manufacture of them. The arrangement was carried out, but the defendant afterwards made and sold articles differing very slightly in form from those previously made by him, and clearly embodying the complainant's invention.

An action at law was commenced in this court by Brooks against the defendant Moorhouse,

alleging infringement of the same patent. The defendant was personally served with process in that suit, and allowed a default to be entered on the 10th day of November, 1874. After the commencement of the action, an arrangement was made between the plaintiff and the defendant, that if plaintiff would buy the stock of boot and shoe buttoners the defendant had on hand, defendant would stop the manufacture of the infringing articles. Accordingly defendant gave to the plaintiff a receipted bill for manufactured goods and for wires and handles for the manufacture, amounting to $157.90, which goods plaintiff received and paid for at the agreed price. Across the face of the receipted bill, Moorhouse, the defendant, wrote, “I agree not to make any more of the Goldthwait buttoner from this date of our Lord, October 6th, 1874,” and signed it with his name. He afterwards continued to manufacture and sell buttoners differing very slightly in form from those previously made by him, but clearly embodying the invention described in the Goldthwait patent, of which complainant is the assignee.

However in this case Moorhouse denied that Goldthwait was the first and original inventor, and alleges that prior to the date of the alleged invention great numbers of buttoners embodying the invention described and claimed by Goldthwait had been imported from England and France, and were in common use and on public sale in this country for more than two years. Moorhouse in reply to the allegations in the bill in relation to the action admits the commencement of the action, and the voluntary default, but avers that when the action was brought the defendant was ignorant of the facts he now sets up in relation to the prior manufacture, use and sale of the buttoners before Goldthwait's invention, and was ignorant of the law and not advised that those facts would constitute a defence.

The question of ignorance of the facts did not correspond with defendant's testimony in the case, from which it would appear that before the default he ascertained that the article had been imported for many years, and that the patentee had stolen the patent from a French patent by simply reversing it.

The defendant now relies for his defence upon the evidence tending to show an importation from France and Germany, and the public sale and common use in this country more than two years before the application for the patent, of articles embodying the invention. The complainant, while contending that the evidence is not sufficient to establish prior invention and use, contends that it is not open to the defendant, after the default in the action at law, to interpose that defence in this proceeding in equity, and also that the defendant cannot in a court of equity deny the binding obligation upon him of the agreement.

The agreement not to make any more of the Goldthwait buttoners was founded upon a valuable consideration. It was a part of the arrangement between the parties for the purchase of the stock and materials Moorhouse had on hand. Such an agreement made with full knowledge of the facts, and not under duress, and with no evidence that it was unreasonable, a court of equity will enforce. The defendant, both by the proceedings in the action at law and the agreement signed by him, is concluded from contesting the validity of the patent.

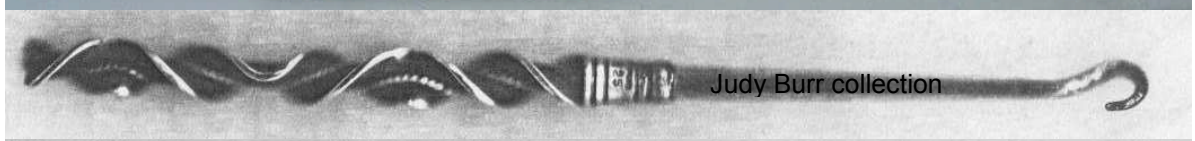
It was held that the defendant was estopped by his previous agreement from contesting the validity of complainant's patent.

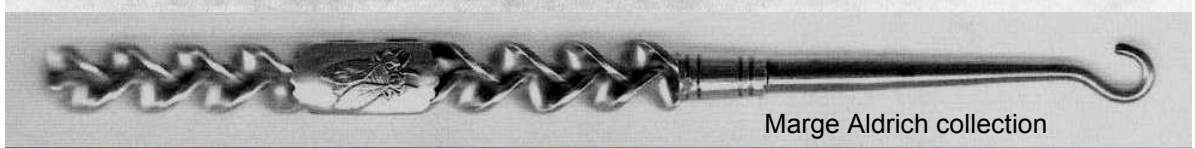
1878 Frank M Whiting & Co

(Not used after 1896)

William Whiting founded the Whiting Mfg Co. his son Frank having begun in the silver business with his father, left and formed the firm Holbrook, Whiting & Albee in 1878. Almost immediately he bought out his partners and continued as F M Whiting & Co. His father later joined

the company but on his death in 1891 Frank continued trading as Frank M Whiting. The following year Frank himself died and the business was continued by his widow, mother and two sisters reverting once more to F M Whiting & Co. After an action by the Whiting Mfg Co they agreed to be called Frank M Whiting & Co and to refrain from using their griffin trade mark.





Front & back John & Sue Brandon collection

Gerald Gould collection

John & Sue Brandon collection

Enamel

John & Sue Brandon, Audrey Longhurst and Margaret Jackson-Feilden collections

Pre 1896 mark

1878 National Bureau of Engraving

National Bureau of Engraving and Manufacturing Company, the commercially-oriented lithographic and printing firm established in 1876 by partners Joseph Carpenter, R. Evans Peterson, Charles E. Mass, and Henry Pennington, also of The Philadelphia Bank Note Company, operated in Philadelphia until 1909. The firm, created for the purpose of "designing and printing labels, show cards, bonds, cheques, drafts, and other work and engraving when that process was required," originally operated from Second and Gold Streets, then 435 Chestnut Street, and from 510-512 Pine Street by 1878. Work produced by National Bureau includes an interesting c.1880 advertisement using allegorical imagery for A. Marschall & Co. champagne titled "American Triumph" and a chromolithographic advertisement showing the manufacturing of coke at the works of H. C. Frick Company c.1885. They also produced the interesting card below.

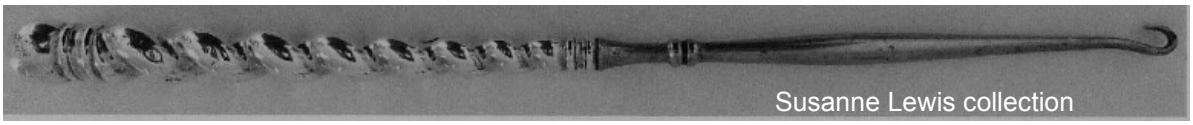
By 1880, the company maintained a branch in Burlington, N. J. and by the late 1880s was reported to have branches in "leading cities of the United States." The firm remained in business until 1909 with Henry Pennington as manager at 652 Philadelphia Bourse despite the company being sold at sheriff's sale in 1889 to businessman Enoch Pratt of Baltimore.

The above Bureau is not to be confused with the Bureau of Engraving and Printing which had its origins in legislation enacted to help fund the Civil War. In July 1861, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to issue paper currency in lieu of coins due to the lack of funds needed to support the conflict. The paper notes were essentially Government IOUs and were called Demand Notes because they were payable "on demand" in coin at certain Treasury facilities. At this time the Government had no facility for the production of paper money so a private firm produced the Demand Notes in sheets of four. These sheets were then sent to the Treasury Department where dozens of clerks signed the notes and scores of workers cut the sheets and trimmed the notes by hand.

1878 Howard Sterllng Co

This company began life as H Howard & Co with Hiram Howard, Arnold Nicoud and AJ Scherrieble manufacturing silver plate but when Nicoud retired the following year the name changed to Howard & Scherrieble when Sterns Hutchins joined. When Hutchins and Scherrieble left in1884 the name changed again to Howard & Son. In 1886 they began making silver flatware as The Sterling Co but in 1891 became the Howard Srerling Co.

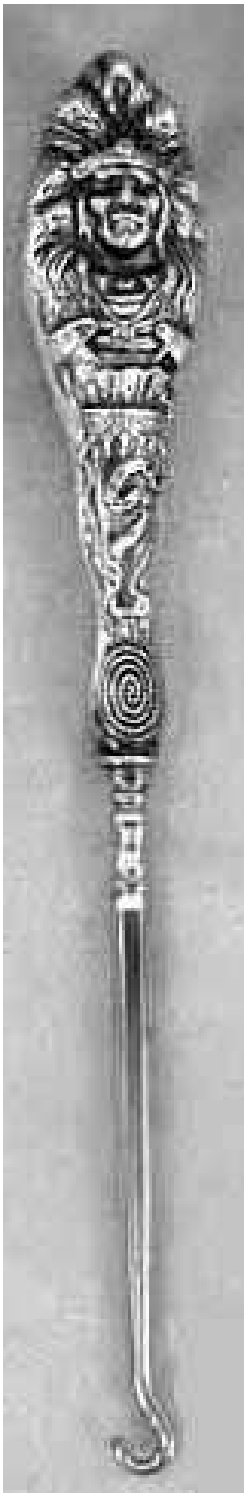
Their speciality was making lever cuff and collar buttons constructed from a single strip of rolled gold all made on a machine invented by Shubael Cottle. They went bust in 1901.



1878 Unger Brothers

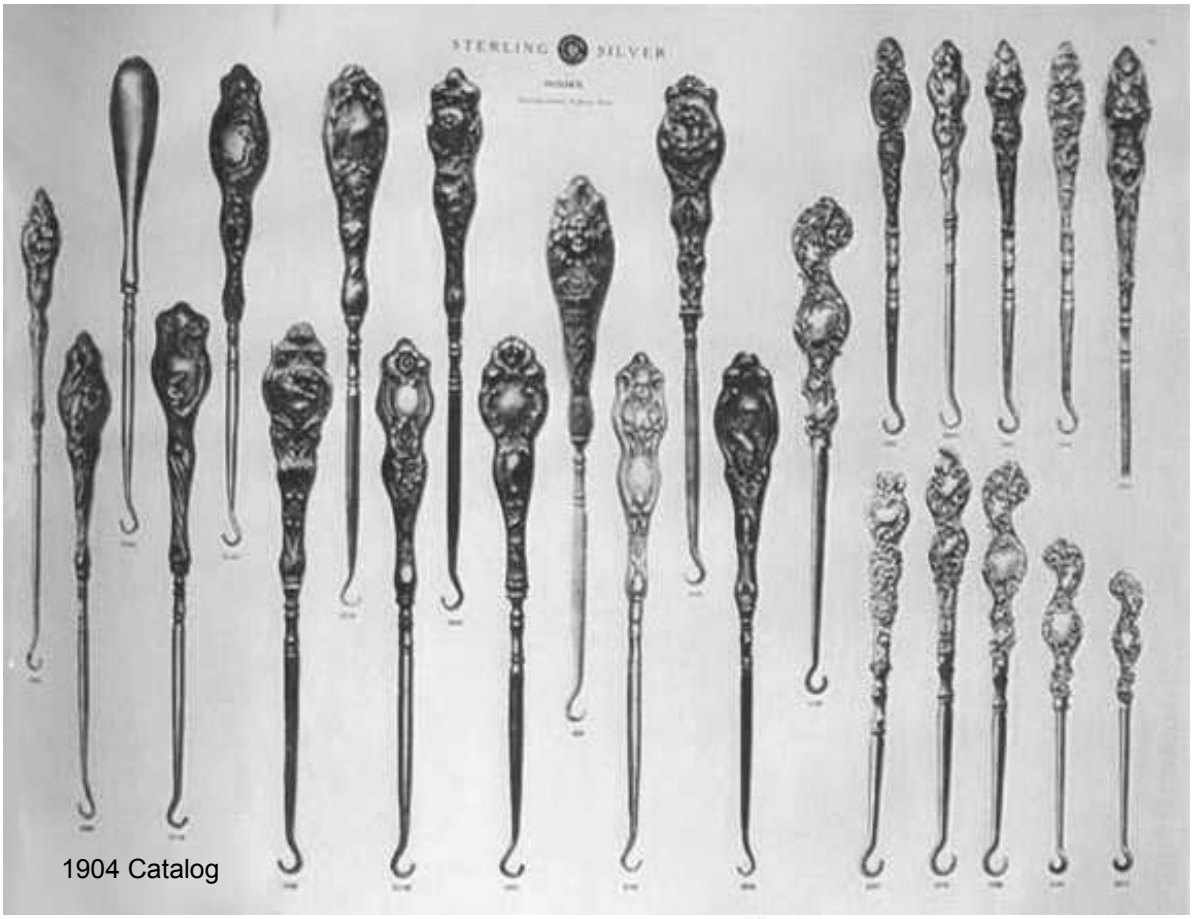
William Unger was a partner in Thomas A Edison from 1870 to 1872, but when it dissolved the five Unger brothers; William, George, Federick, Herman and Eugene set up Unger Brothers to manufacture pocket knives and hardware specialities. They began manufacturing silver goods in 1878. After William, George and Federick left the business, Herman and Eugene carried on, Herman being responsible for many innovative patents which gave an impetus to the new firm..

When Eugene married Emma Dickinson, her father joined the firm. It was Philomon Dickinson that was responsible for designing their extensive line in Art Nouveau items that are so sought after today. Unger Bros. was one of the most creative and premier manufacturers of Art Nouveau sterling silver items in the United States. The company's most popular lines were dresser sets (toilet sets) decorated with fantastic Art Nouveau designs incorporating flowers, heads of women with flowing tresses, ocean waves and seashells. Such articles were often ten

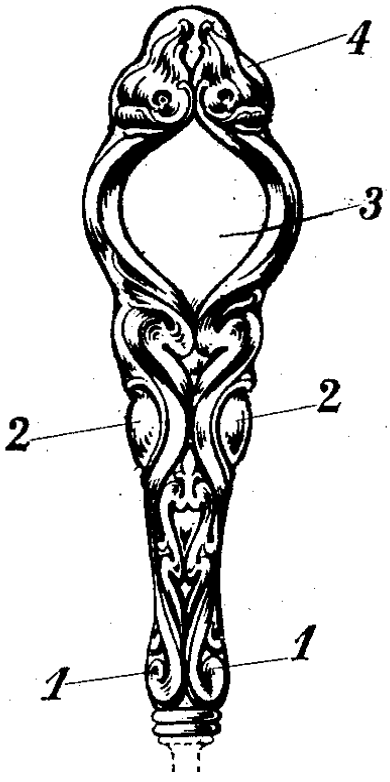


piece sets, which included cut glass hair receiver, powder, rouge and glove boxes, decorated with repousse silver lids, sterling silver hatpin holders and vase, hand mirror, comb, brushes, shoe horn and button hook.

In 1904 the firm incorporated itself becoming Unger Brothers Inc with Philomon Dickinson joining the board. By 1910 the last of the Unger Brothers had died and in 1914 their slver production ceased. In 1919 the firm was sold.



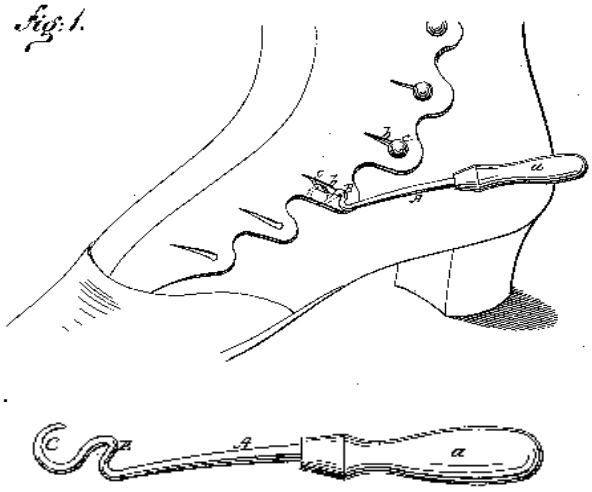
1904 Catalog



Design Patent No 36,221 for a handle for button hooks or similar articles issued to Otto Leigh as assignor to Unger Brothers on February 10th 1908. Otto Leigh was employed by Unger's as a designer.

1879 Two more patents associated with buttonhooks.

Patent no 218,570 August 12th 1879
to George L Platt



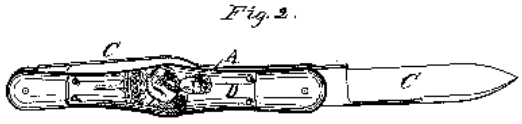
Be it known that I, GEORGE L. PLATT, of Waterbury, in the county of New Haven and State of Connecticut, have invented a new and Improved Button-Hook; and that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the letters of reference marked thereon, making part of this specification

This invention is in the nature of an improvement in button-hooks; and the invention consists in a button-hook constructed with the ordinary hook to engage with the button, and a second hook to engage with the buttonhole, substantially as is hereinafter more particularly described

The next patent is a forerunner of the photographic buttonhook, as it is the first patent to suggest that pictures and text could be placed under celluloid. In this case it is suggested for advertising purposes. This is the main thrust of their invention: -

Be it known that We, Henry. S. Landis and Rueben. S. Landis, of Canton, in the county of Stark and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Knives

Patent No 221,467 11th November 1879 to
HS & RS Landis for a Pocket knife



The object of this invention is to provide a cheap and simple but effective means for identifying a pocket knife, and at the same time furnish a greater ornamentation for the article.

The spring and the blades are secured between the side pieces, in any ordinary or desired manner. The side pieces are recessed, as shown, leaving enlarged end pieces, and adapting them to receive the separate cheek-pieces. These pieces may be made of any suitable material, though we prefer to manufacture them of celluloid, as they can be thus made not only transparent, but without the great liability to be fractured, which they would have if made of glass or other similar brittle and transparent substance. These transparent pieces upon the handle permit that the name of the owner, or that any other mark for identification, can be placed beneath them, and thus be removed from the danger of being erased or changed.

Moreover, this construction of handle enables us to greatly increase the ornamentation of the knife, as we can place beneath them small pictures or other ornamental objects. What we claim is a pocket-knife having marks of ornament or identification beneath transparent cheek pieces substantially as set forth.

1879 Henry Birks & Co

BIRKS STERLING

At the age of 17, Henry Birks became a junior partner of Savage & Lyman. In 1877 he sold his interest to make good on a note he had endorsed for his brother, but stayed with the firm as store manager. When the company folded in 1878 he carried out the liquidation on behalf of the liquidator. Next year he started his business trading as Henry Birks & Co with three employees; a watchmaker, book keeper salesman and a messenger boy.

His idea was that this would be a cash business for all purchases, without any haggling. This policy proved to be a resounding success. By 1887 he had moved to bigger premises, increased his staff to ten, and opened his first factory to produce jewellery. In 1898 he brought in his three sons and they traded as Henry Birks & Sons.

1879 Jacobi & Jenkins

The firm began as A Jacobi in 1879. Jacobi was trained in Germany and certified as a silversmith in the Brunswick Silversmith Guild and after arriving in America he did jobbing work all over the country. In 1890 they became Jacobi & Co. In 1894 he went into partnership with William Armour and Talbot Jenkins to become Jacobi & Jenkins.

The Jenkins family had been associated with the jewellery business for many years and were prominent in Maryland as being one of the oldest families.

The new company specialized in the production of sterling silverware. In 1895 they advertised that they *were 'the only silversmiths in Maryland making and retailing their own work.'*

In 1908 they became Jenkins and Jenkins but sold out in 1915.

The buttonhook on the left is the only one that has been found so far, fetching only $55 in 2004 on eBay. Not surprising really as it is a traditional design, and was probably cut from sheets in two halves, dating it after 1895.

Right see page 92.


STRING HERE.—And keep for Reference.

WINTER, 1881.

SHOE FINDINGS.

The immense increase in my business, (which extends to every State and Territory in the Union) has obliged me to add an additional building for manufacturing and sale purposes, No. 52 High Street, (three floors). Carefully inspect this book, as by BUYING FOR CASH AND IN ENORMOUS QUANTITIES, I am able to offer inducements to buyers in all parts of the country.

HEATON'S

Button Fasteners,

$1.70 per great gross.

BUTTON HOOKS,

45c per gro. See pages 18, 19, 20 & 21.

CORK SOLES,

55 & 56 cts. per doz. See page 10. &c., &c.

EDWARD HENSHAW,

48 & 52 High St., Boston, Mass.

List of Contents—Page 1.

REDUCED PRICES.

REDUCED PRICES.

1880 Ladies button boots.

Efficient and cost-effective sewing machines specialized for button attachment brought button shoes into mass production in the 1880s. Elias Howe first patented a hand-cranked lockstitch sewing machine for cloth in 1845, leading to a proliferation of sewing devices designed for specific tasks. James Morley, a sewing machine salesman from Massachusetts, began to patent industrial button-sewing devices around 1880, after 10 years of development. Morley adapted an existing automated eyelet feeder to feed buttons into his stitcher. He manufactured his own buttons for uniform size. High-button ankle boots became the fashion icon of the era and a hallmark of mass production.

In 1885, "Harper's Magazine" published a complete overview of industrial shoes manufacture: "A Pair of Shoes." For "Harper's" ladies' kidskin high-button shoes were the most interesting shoes in the factory. The first step was an inspection of the goat skin by the cutter to decide where to position his cuts, since different parts of a skin "stretched" or were suitable for different parts of the shoe. Next, women in the stitching rooms ran their remarkable steam-powered machines at 600 stitches a minute, sewing and trimming all the pieces. The button sewing machines installed the closures. Each pair took about 15 minutes.

Ladies' Buttoned Boots by Henry Wireman of Philadelphia in late 1860's

They are of off-white silk satin and blue silk ribbon with leather soles and heels.

Right English 1913

Left; a pair of Wedding boots. American 1865

Right; a pair of white kid ladies boots. American 1871

Ladies high button boots remained in fashion until the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century. It was not until the flapper age in the roaring twenties that its demise began. In the "Time" magazine of September 25th 1933 they published the announcement of the death of the high-button boot, as pronounced by President Roosevelt during his first year in office. The President had read through the Department of Labour's cost-of-living

index, which was used to adjust federal employees' wages. Seeing high-button boots among indexed items prompted the President to order the department's statisticians to revise the index's list to reflect a contemporary selection of consumer items. The high-button shoe was officially out.



1875 Lady's kid leather Boots; with side button closure and scalloped top edge. Medium vamp with rounded square toe. Eleven keyhole eyelets and white half dome buttons. Double rows of top-stitching on all seams. Top edge has scalloped shaping in front and back. Low shaped knock-on heel. American.
1870 Lady's silk Wedding Boots gold silk side buttons Tapered rounded toes. Buttons are white glossy half domes, 12 buttons and 12 buttonholes per boot. Edges at buttonholes and on top edge are scalloped, with narrow self binding and double rows of top-stitching. Leather facing in matching color is sewn inside at top of shoes. American
1890 black leather ladies boots. Fourteen buttons straight edges. American.

Left: 1885 pair of English brocade Ladies boots.

Right a pair of green patent leather boots, American 1890



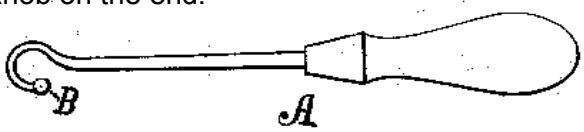
Children in the Victorian era tended to emulate their parents, as these two pairs show. First red leather 1885 American. Second white kid leather 1870. American.

A pair of leather triple strap evening shoes with three sizes of of beadwork in flower & star motifs. Insole stamped "Hanan & Son 1201 Broadway New York City" 1890

1881 Edward Henshaw's Shoe Finding Catalogue

Edward Henshaw of 48 -52 High Street, Boston, Massachusets was a wholesaler in shoe findings. What was available of this Catalogue was published some time ago by the Buttonhook Society. For those who bought it they will already be aware of the secrets it yielded.

On this page it advertises West's Patented buttonhook. The point of the patent is that it does not have a pointed hook but one with a small knob on the end.



Patent No 210,228 November 26th 1878

This the 'West' patent.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, Lucius G. West, of Kalamazoo, county of Kalamazoo, and State of Michigan, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Button-Hooks, of which the following is a specification:

With the common plain hook now so generally in use it is almost impossible to button a closely-fitting shoe without scratching or gouging the leather near the buttons, or, if the shoe be made of serge, without tearing the texture.

Buttoners have previously been invented to obviate this objectionable point, but are of little utility, because of their inconvenience and the loss of time and the great strain brought to bear upon the button-hole by using them.

The nature of my invention consists in providing a small spherical knob at the end of a curved hook, of the peculiar form shown in the accompanying drawings, which successfully prevents it from scratching or tearing the shoe, and also by its use the button is held more securely, and is thereby brought more accurately and quickly into place through the hole.

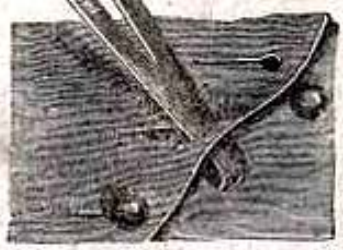
So there we have it. How many buttonhook collectors have hooks with that little 'spherical knob' on the end of the hook? How many have wondered why it came to be there? Well now you know!

On the same page there is a leg handled buttonhook sold at $0.75 per dozen. They are of cheap metal.

On page 20 there is an intriguing advert for the 'Jimmy Button Hook'. If you go back to the chapter on gloves you will find Hurlbut's patent which is where this comes from.

Sole Agent for

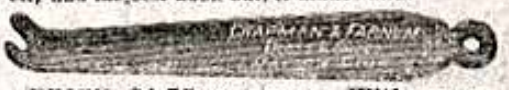
JIMMY BUTTON HOOK.



Buttons a boot in half the time.

Neither twists nor tears button holes.

A splendid advertising medium, as it is a novelty and the best hook out, it makes talk.



PRICE, $1.75 per gross. With name stamped on, 50c. extra per gross.

(Copy No. 1.) McKINNEY, TEXAS, Nov. 1878.

MR. E. HENSHAW, DEAR SIR:—The "Jimmy" Button Hooks are much better liked by our customers than the other kind.

Yours, A. & W. HUNSTABLE.

(Copy No. 2.) McKINNEY, TEXAS, Nov. 21, 1878.

Shall use no hook but the "Jimmy" as long as we are in the Shoe business.

Yours, A. & W. HUNSTABLE.

(Copy.) WATERLOO, IOWA, Sept. 28, 1880.

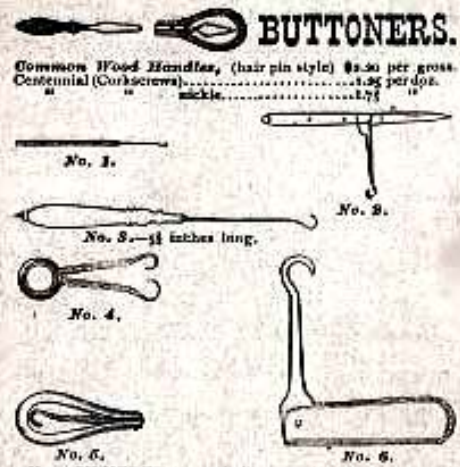
MR. EDWARD HENSHAW, DEAR SIR:—About a year ago I had one gross of Jimmy Button Hooks from you; my customers like them so well that I can't get along without them. Please send one gross with name stamped on, &c.

Yours respectfully, E. LESTER.

Use Armor Heel Plates.

BUTTONERS.

Common Wood Handles, (hair pin style) $2.50 per gross.
Centennial (Corkscrews).....1.25 per doz.
" " nickle.....1.75 " "



No. 1.

No. 2.

No. 3.—5½ inches long.

No. 4.

No. 5.

No. 6.

No. 1. SILVERED, turns in like a gold pencil, very handsome, $7.50 per doz.

No. 2. PENKNIFE and BUTTON HOOK. Bone, $5.25 per doz; Pearl, $7.50 per doz.

No. 3. PURE WHITE BONE HANDLE, very nice, $9.00 per doz.

No. 4. GLOVE and BUTTON HOOK combined; twirls around on the ring and closes very compactly; the most saleable fancy Hook I sell. Woman's size, $1.50 per doz; Men's size, $1.75 per doz.

No. 5. CORKSCREW STYLE, Nickel plated, $1.00 per doz. This is a heavy Hook; I have a lighter one at 75 cents per doz.

No. 6. KNIFE STYLE, $1.25 per doz.

And 50 to 100 other styles, the above are the most saleable.

For a full line of Children's Shoes See pages 62 & 63.

BLACK HANDLE BUTTON HOOKS.

65 cents per gro.; 5 gro. lots 60 cents per gro.;
10 gro. lots 55 cents per gro.

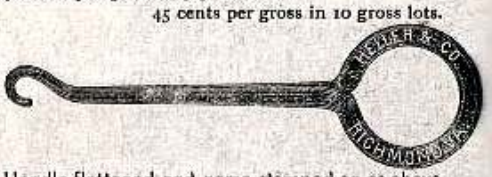
RING HANDLE HOOKS OR WIRE.

(Of good quality.)

50 cents per gross.

48 cents per gross in 5 gross lots.

45 cents per gross in 10 gross lots.



Handle flattened and name stamped on as above, $1.25 per gross.

In lots of 5 gross and over, $1.00 a gross.

I furnished a St. Louis house with 100 gro. recently.

This makes a very neat and serviceable Hook.

☞ I want to impress upon you the advantage accruing from this style of advertising. The cost of this Hook is LESS THAN A NICE BUSINESS CARD. No one would begrudge a business card. Well, WHEN ASKED FOR A CARD, GIVE ONE OF THE ABOVE HOOKS. It is not lost or destroyed, but is always in sight and mind, shown to others, &c.

Can print the name and business, or name and address.

JONES, ATWOOD & Co., Boots and Shoes. or A. G. JOHNSON, Albany, Ind.

For a full line of Children's Shoes. See pages 62 & 63

Display Forms.

Being shaped like the foot they make an attractive exhibition.

All ready for stockings.

LADIES' & MISSES', 75c. Each.
CHILDS', . . . 50c. Each.

FORMS

For the Display of

Boots, Slippers, &c.

Those who desire to make their SHOW WINDOWS ATTRACTIVE will find in this something

UNIQUE & NOVEL.

All ready for stocking.

$3.75 a Pair.

$2.00 A Single One.

Ten Times the amount in ordinary advertising will not bring you the same return.

can send here for goods and save money.

On page 19 there are several types of buttonhook. Note item 4 which shows the double hook that many of us have. It is described as a 'GLOVE and BUTTON HOOK combined.'

We now know that this type of double hook was around in 1881.

Moorehead collection

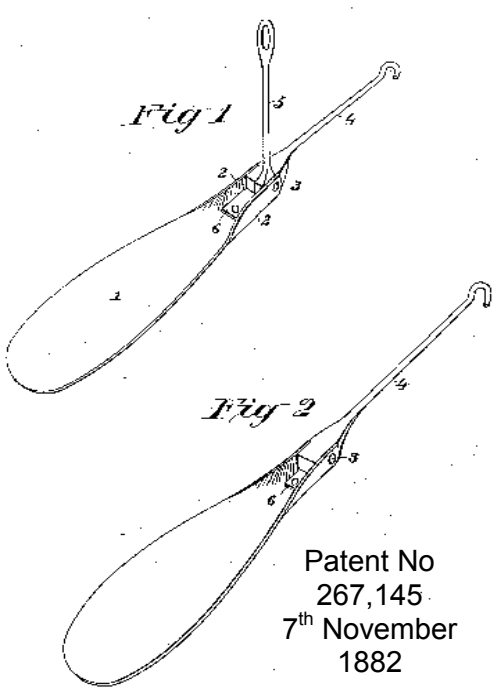
1882 John Bulkeley's combined shoe horn and buttoner

The picture that accompanied this patent speaks for itself. Here is John Bulkeley's explanation of his invention: -

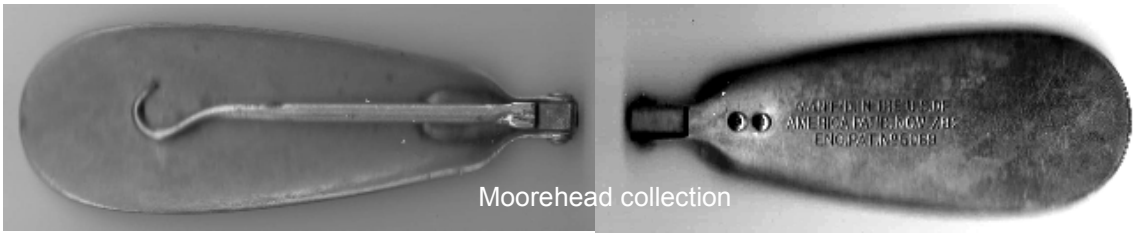
Be it known that I, John S. Bulkeley, a citizen of the United States, residing at Ballston Spa, Saratoga county, in the State of New York, have invented Improvements in a Combined Shoe Horn and Buttoner, of which the following is a specification.

My invention has for its object to so combine a shoe-horn and one or more buttoning devices that they shall be readily foldable for insertion into the pocket.

To this end my improvement consists in forming the shoe-horn with projecting flanges, to which I hinge one or more shoe or glove buttoners. To hold the buttoner to open or closed position, I employ a spring on the horn which bears on cam-surfaces on the hinged end of the buttoner, as hereinafter described.



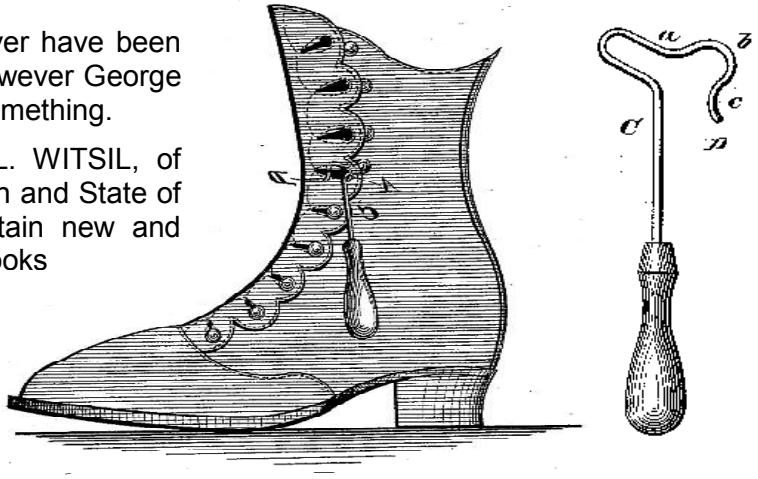
Patent No 267,145
7th November 1882



Moorehead collection

1883 George Witsil's Button Hook

This funny looking hook may never have been brought into mass production. However George obviously thought he was on to something.



Patent No 277,181 May 8th 1883

Be it known that I, GEORGE L. WITSIL, of Camden, in the county of Camden and State of New Jersey, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Button-Hooks

The object of this invention is to improve button-hooks which are especially adapted for buttoning the flaps of shoes, and also for buttoning gloves; and the nature of my invention consists in so curving the wire of a hooked button-fastener that the buttons can be adjusted into the button-holes without either injuring the button attachments or the buttonholes

It is well known that simple curved books have been used for buttoning gloves and shoe flaps, and it is also well known that several attempts have been made to improve said hook, all of which I disclaim as my invention.

To use my improved button-fastener I commence by passing the hooked end of the shank through the button-hole, keeping the hook directed toward the toe of the boot. The buttoner will naturally adjust itself toward the curve A, the point will protrude through the button-hole, and by a simple turn of the instrument the button will be inserted through the button-hole. I do not necessarily introduce the hook bodily through the button-hole. I may leave a protruding portion, which will serve as a guard for preventing the tearing of the ends of the button-hole. I also utilize the sides of the button-holes as purchases for enabling-me to draw the button-head through the same.

Note the little disclaimer slipped into the application. It obviously worked as the patent was granted!

In the same year Herbert Pratt had a bright idea of how to make a combined button hook and key ring.

Pratt Patent No 281297 July 17th 1883

Be it known that I, Herbert W. Pratt, a citizen of the United States, residing at Streator, in the county of La Salle and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in a Combined Key-Ring and Button-Hook

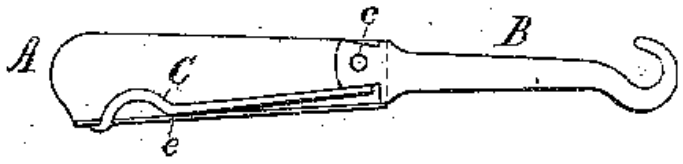
My improved combined buttoner and key ring consists of a piece of wire of any suitable kind, which is bent to form a stem or shank,"A", tapering at one end and bent to form the button hook B, while the other end is bent to form a loop or eye, 0. The free end D of this loop impinges upon the shank, and is provided with means for the ready insertion of the keys into the loop or their removal there from, which said means may consist either of a ball or knob, fastened on the free end of the loop,

1883 George Havell's specially constructed button hook.

He does not claim that the folded part of his patent is a shoe horn, just that it will encase the buttonhook in a similar way to a pen knife. He too puts in a disclaimer: -

"I am aware that a sheet-metal handle similar to that I employ is not new, as the same has been used heretofore with a different spring, and with special features adapted to the spring employed, as in United States Patent No. 240,749, of April 26, 1881. I do not, therefore, claim a sheet-metal handle and spring. except as described herein."

The patent cited has so far not been found but it thought to refer to penknives of similar construction.



Patent No 289,095 November 7th 1883

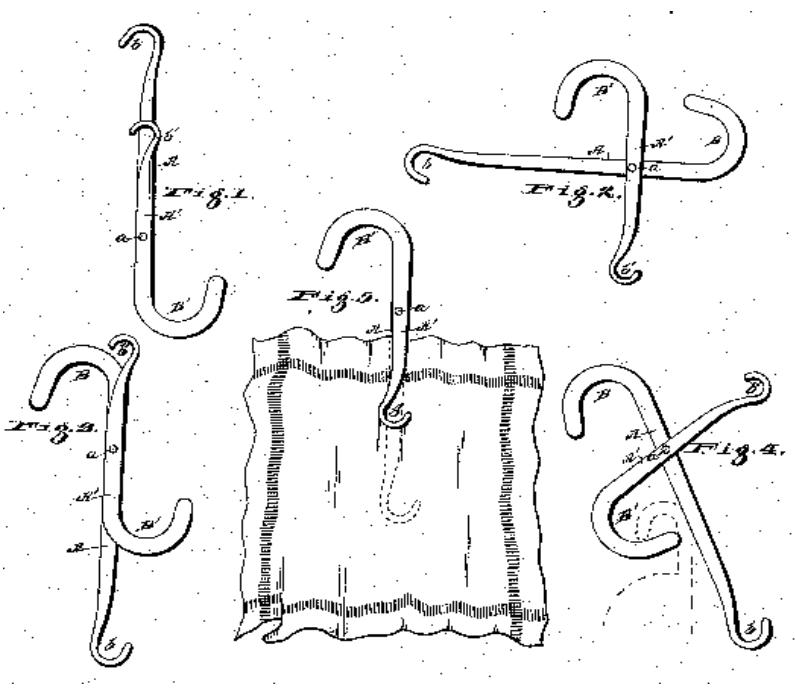
1883 Frank Bracking's button and glove hook

Actually this is a bit more than that as it is actually a multiple tool combining a coat or cloak hook, a hat hook, napkin holder and cigar cutter and cigar holder, as well as a button and glove hook. He also suggests that the glove hook could be replaced by a finger nail cleaner.

Here is the explanation

Be it known that I, FRANK B. BRACKING of the city of Cincinnati, in the county of Hamilton and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Combination Implements, of which the following is a specification.

The object of my invention is to provide in one implement a device which may be employed for a variety of purposes, the implement being in such a compact form that it may be conveniently carried in the pocket of the possessor.



Patent No 289,213 November 27th 1883

Figure 1. This implement consists in general of two pieces of strip metal pivoted together at the centre. One end of the piece is bent to form a hook, and on the other end of said piece is formed as a button-hook of the required size for `buttoning shoes. One end of the second piece is bent to form a hook, the curvature of which is similar to the curvature of the first hook on the piece. When these two hooks are brought parallel to each other, they will coincide with each other throughout, as shown in Fig. I. On the end of the first piece is formed a another button-hook, which is smaller than the first button-hook and is adapted for use as a glove buttoner. The piece A is shorter than the piece A, as shown, so that the glove-buttoner will not interfere with the shoe-buttoner when the latter is to be used.

When the glove hook is being used the two hooks are opened as in figure 2 to form a handle when in use as a glove buttoner.

Fig.. 3 represents the implement as employed for a coat or cloak hook, the levers A and A being so turned as that the hooks B and B will be opposite to each other. In this position the hook B may be hooked over the back of a chair, or onto a gas-fixture or other convenient point, and the coat may then be hung on the hook B.

Fig.- 4 represents the position of the implement when in use as a hat-hook, in which position the hook B is hooked under the edge or rim of the stiff hat-rim, the latter being shown in dotted lines, and the hook B is hung on the back of a chair or other convenient point. The lower end, m, of the lever A will keep the hat-rim in contact with the hook B, and the hat will thus be securely held by the implement. As a coat or hat-hook this implement will be a great convenience in a church or theater, or at any other crowded assemblage, or in the railroad-cars while travelling.

Fig. 5 represents the implement employed as a napkin-holder, the napkin being securely held between the pieces A and A'. The hooks B and B' coincide with each other, may be hooked over the collar, and the napkin will thus be held in a position to protect the breast of the wearer.

Fig. 6 represents the implement as employed for clipping off the end of a cigar, the outline of a cigar being denoted by dotted lines, and the. tip of the cigar to be cut oft' being represented by solid lines and indicated by letter T. The contact-surfaces between the pivoted levers A and A' being fiat, a shearing action is produced when the hooks B and B are separated and brought together. These hooks are separated, as shown in Fig. 6, and the tip of a cigar being placed under the hook B, the hooks are brought together, and the tip of the cigar is thus clipped on.

Fig. 7 represents the implement employed as a cigar-holder, a cigar being indicated by dotted lines, the piece A being turned so that the end which is provided with the buttonhook b' will be opposed to the hook B of the piece A, and the 'cigar may be held between this hook B and the end of the piece A', as shown in said Fig. 7.

I have thus illustrated seven different uses to which my invention is applicable. If desired, instead of forming a glove-buttoner on the end of the lever A', a finger-nail cleaner may be formed thereon. The pieces A and A', pivoted together and provided with 'the respective hooks B and B', are of primary importance, even when the button-hook or the IDO glove-hook, or both said button and glove hook, one end with a hook, B, and at the other end are dispensed with Y with a button-hook, b, and the lever A being,` The implement may be made of any suitable material provided at one end with a hook, B', of a similar material and shape to the hook B and at the other end b having portions of the levers various applications

This is an ingenious bit of kit but so far none has come to light that was actually produced.

1883 Matzeliger's Lasting Machine

Jan Earnst Matzeliger was a nineteenth-century inventor and machinist who revolutionized the shoemaking industry. By the 1870s, most of the steps in manufacturing shoes were already automated. In 1790, Thomas Saint, a London cabinetmaker, had invented the first sewing machine designed for use on shoe leather. In 1810, Marc Isambard Brunel, a Frenchman working in London, set up machines to mass produce nailed army shoes. In 1841, Thomas Archbold, an English machinist, applied the principle of the eye pointed needle to shoe production. A variety of other specialized machines sped the process of creating and manufacturing shoes in quantity.

It was the final step in the shoemaking process that proved to be the most difficult to automate. This final step involved connecting the upper part of the shoe to the inner sole, a process called *lasting*. Lasting, crucial to the quality of the shoe, determines its fit, walking ease, and look. A last was a wooden model of the foot, and stretching the shoe leather over the last took a great deal of skill. Tacking the finished shape into place was also difficult. When Jan Matzeliger came to work in the shoe factories, no machine had been invented that could complete the lasting process.

Matzeliger closely observed the final step of shoe lasting. Most of the time, the shoe lasters could not keep up with the machines in the factory. The lasters had a strong union and were considered kings of the shoemaking trade. To help him understand the lasting process he requested a job as a millwright in the Harney Brothers factory. His new job would be to circulate through the factory and check on, and repair, all of the machines. The new position also gave him the opportunity to watch the lasters at work.

By 1882, after several attempts Matzeliger had completed a workable model. He needed a backer and finally he found two, C. H. Delnow and M. S. Nichols, who agreed to back him in return for two-thirds of the profits the machine would realize. Together, the three men formed the Union Lasting Machine Company, and Matzeliger set about making his third model so that he could apply for a patent by submitting detailed drawings and a complete description of his invention.

In Washington, D.C., the patent officials could not understand the complicated drawings, and they didn't believe the machine could do what its inventor claimed it could. As a result, the patent office sent an examiner to the factory at Lynn in Massachusetts to inspect the machine. Matzeliger demonstrated how the machine worked. It held the last, gripped the leather, drew the leather over the last, fitted the leather at the heel and toe, moved the last forward, fed the nails, and drove the nails. The patent official was satisfied, and on March 20, 1883, Matzeliger was granted U.S. Patent No. 274,207 for his shoe-lasting machine.

The machine fully proved itself in a factory test set for May 29, 1885, lasting seventy-five pairs of women's shoes with no trouble. Later, the machine would be able to turn out 150 to 700 pairs of shoes in one day.

Production of the shoe-lasting machine began in the mid-1880s and expanded rapidly--every shoe manufacturer in Lynn wanted to buy one. Shoe manufacturing boomed in New England, and exports reached a new high. Shoe prices were cut in half, and many more people now found them affordable. It was a revolution in the shoe industry. Rather than putting the shoe lasters out of work, Matzeliger's machine gave them more work to do, and it was easier work, too.

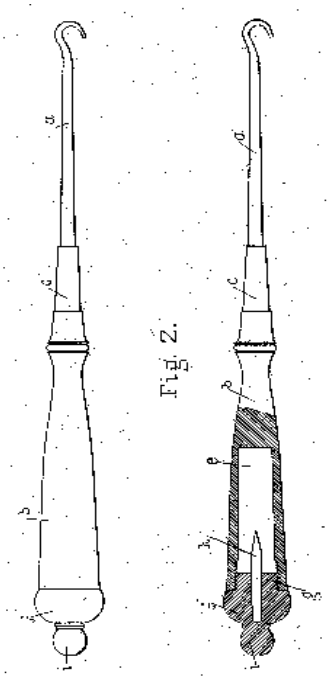
Demand for Matzeliger's machine was worldwide by 1889. He continued to improve the machine and received four additional patents. In 1886, Matzeliger developed a cold that was later diagnosed as tuberculosis. He died on August 24th 1889 aged thirty seven.

1884 John Sommer's buttonhook patent for a shoe buttoner

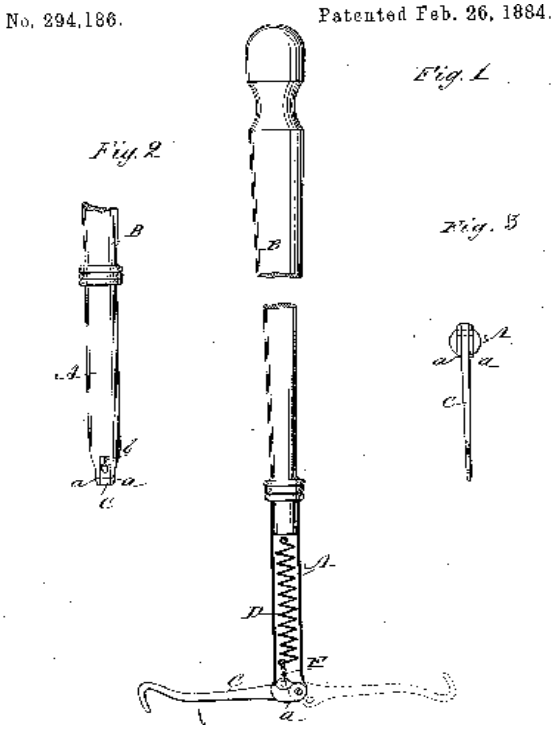
Yes, this is the same John Sommer whose 1926 catalogue has been reproduced by The Buttonhook Society. The hook shown here was not previously made until that catalogue.

John Sommer came from Newark, and applied for a patent for a combination implement, which not only serviced as a button-hook for fastening the buttons of shoes, but also formed a receptacle or case for containing loose buttons and their attachments for general use on shoes. With other advantages it also combined a means for piercing the material to permit of the insertion of the buttons. As the handle of the button-hook is made a receptacle for the buttons which are used upon the shoe and of the devices for securing the buttons in place, it is only necessary to unscrew the cap to have a button at hand to substitute for one found missing on the shoe; and in case an aperture is required to be made to receive the eye of the button the piercer is at once available for use.

Patent No. 294284 February 26 1884



1884 James Beetle's invention saves bending down!



The odd looking buttonhook has a serious intent and was aimed at those who had difficulty bending to put their shoes on. Here is James Beetle's application

Be it known that I, James C. Beetle, of New Bedford, in the county of Bristol and State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and Improved Button-Hook, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

The object of my invention is to provide a new and improved button-hook, by means of which shoes can be buttoned without requiring the person to stoop.

The invention consists in -a button -hook pivoted on the end of a handle. The invention further consists in the combination, with the said hook and handle, of a spring for holding the hook at right angles to the handle. The invention also consists in various parts and details and combinations of the same, as will be fully set forth hereinafter.

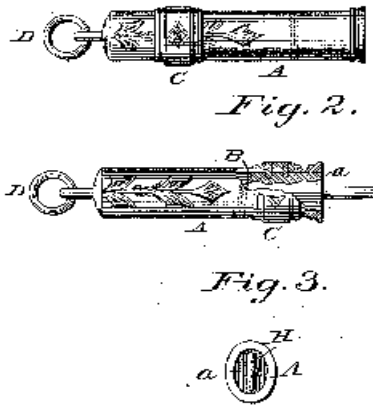
You will find that after a flurry of inventions early in the next century, that most are designed to help people cope with disabilities of various kinds. This particular buttonhook was designed for a disability which affects us all sooner or later; old age!

1885 Adverts of the time!

1885 Le Roy Fairchild

Be it known that I, LE ROY W'. FAIRCHILD, of New York city, in the county of New York and State of New York, have invented certain iprovements in Button-Hooks, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to that class of button-hooks designed to be carried on the person; and the invention consists in making the case of an oval form transversely, whereby a larger and stronger hook can be used than can be in the round cases heretofore made, and in attaching the hook to a slide in such a manner as to render it strong and rigid, and which when the hook is projected shall make a neat finish at the end of the case.



Patent No 312622 February 24th 1885

By this construction I am enabled to provide a hook of the proper size and strength for practical use in buttoning shoes, and which has a neat and ornamental appearance, so that it may be worn or carried about the person without objection. Although these cases are made of gold or silver, or of other metal and suitably ornamented and plated, they form a handsome ornament, which can be worn as other ornaments or charms are

1885 Mamie Frey's Improved buttonhook holder

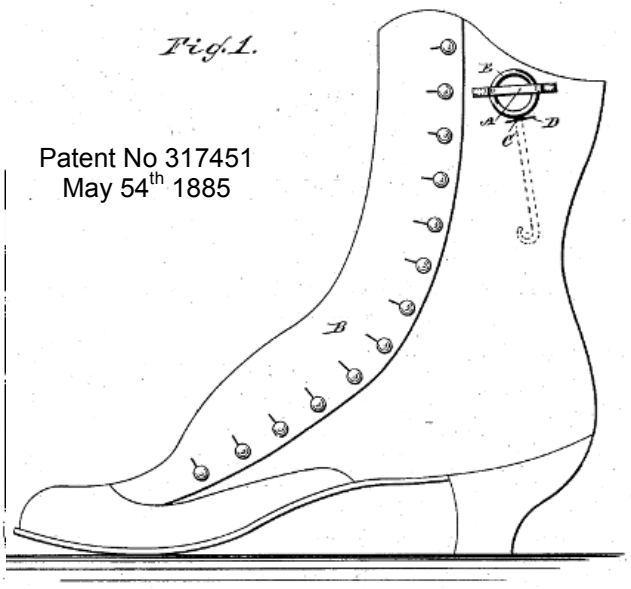
For a change we have a lady inventor who came up with a practical way of ensuring that her buttonhook was available at all times.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, MAMIE F. FREY, of Indianapolis, Marion county, Indiana, have invented a new and Improved Button-Hook Holder for Shoes, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

The object of my invention is to provide a new and improved attachment for shoes, for the purpose of holding the button hook on the shoe.

The invention consists in the combination, with a shoe, of a band on the leg portion of the shoe, an incision, through which the button-hook can be passed, being provided in the leather below the said band, all as hereinafter fully described, and pointed out in the claim.



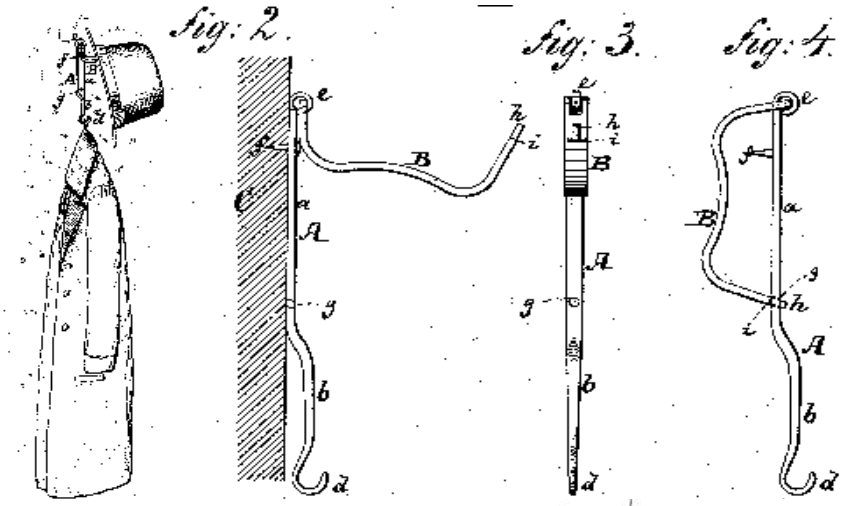
Patent No 317451
May 54th 1885

1885 Heiles combined buttonhook and coat hanger

This is the first of three such inventions that together try to combine a button hook, a glove hook, a cigar cutter and a coat and hat hanger. Hailes effort was quite crude compared with the two later efforts of Louis Prahar. His final version included all these elements whereas Heiles restricted his to the coat hanger and Prahars first patent just included a cigar cutter, and is a superb example of how these ideas can be streamlined and perfected.

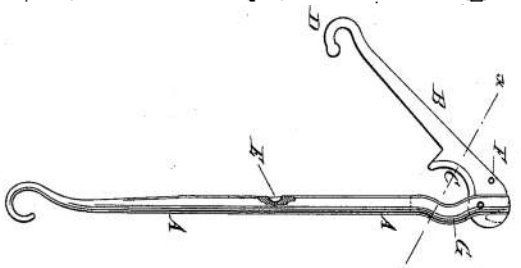
Patent No 315500 April 14th 1885

Be it known that I, GUSTAV HEILES, a resident of New York city, in the county and State of New York, have invented a Combined Button-Hook and Coat-Hanger



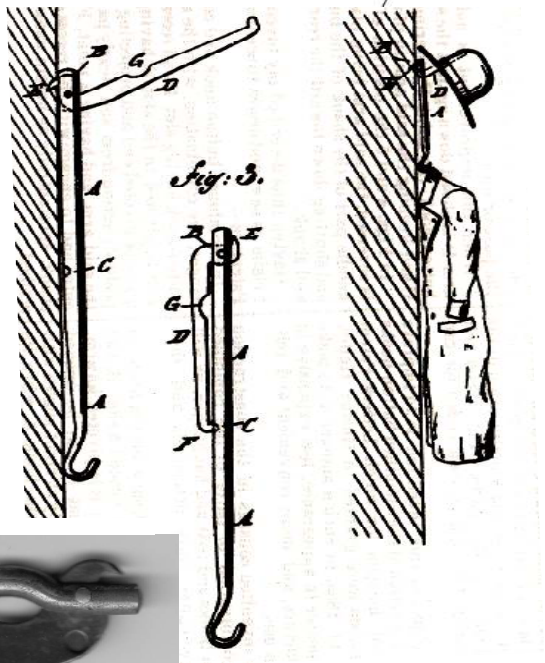
Patent No 336867 February 23rd 1886

Be it known that We, LOUIS B. PRAHAR and CHARLES S. SHEPARD, both of Brooklyn, in the county of Kings and State of New York, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Combined Button-Hooks and Cigar-Cutter.

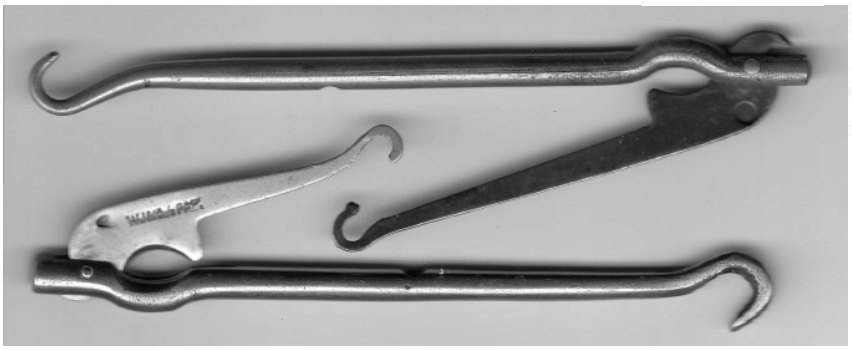


Patent No 337788 March 9th 1886

Be it known that I, LOUIS B. PRAHAR, of Brooklyn, in the county of Kings and State of New York, have invented a new and useful Improvement in a Combined Button-Hook and Coat and Hat Hanger, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description. The object of this invention is to improve the construction of the combined button-hooks and coat-hangers for which Letters Patent No. 315,500 were granted to Gustav Heiles, April 14, 1885, in such a manner as to make them neater in appearance, less expensive in manufacture, and more convenient and reliable in use.



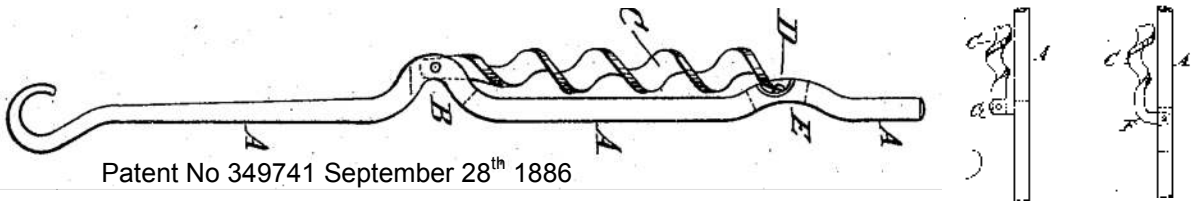
Below is the final version that many collectors have found where Prahar has combined his two inventions into one final version..



Two actual Prahar patented double hooks.

The bottom one is marked WG&Co's PAT.

Louis Prehar continued his inventive days later on in 1886 when, again in conjunction with Charles Shepard they invented a combined button hook and corkscrew.



Patent No 349741 September 28th 1886

The construction is simple enough and they provide for two types of connection between the hook and the corkscrew.

Earlier in the year there were three more buttonhook patents. The first was by Francis Henderson residing at Newton, in the county of Middlesex and State of Massachusetts, who invented a new and improved combined boot and glove buttoner.

Patent No 339055
March 30th 1886

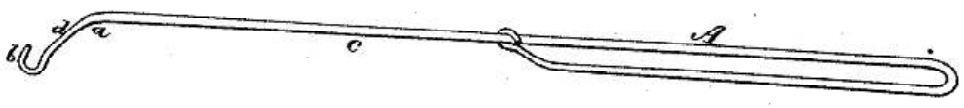
The design is simple to understand from the drawing but it takes two pages to explain.

The next is a design patent taken out by Frederick Brittin, residing at Birmingham, in the county of New Haven and State of Connecticut, who showed a buttonhook with a stepped handle. He explains how to make it but not its purpose.

Design Patent No 16776 July 6th 1886

Finally Charles Avery Taylor invents a very simple button hook in solid form. His claim was an improved article of manufacture, the continuous piece of wire, bent and hooked upon itself to form an open oblong handle, and having the shank or part extending from said handle bent transversely, and provided with a button-hook near the bend, as described.

Patent No 349415 September 21st 1886



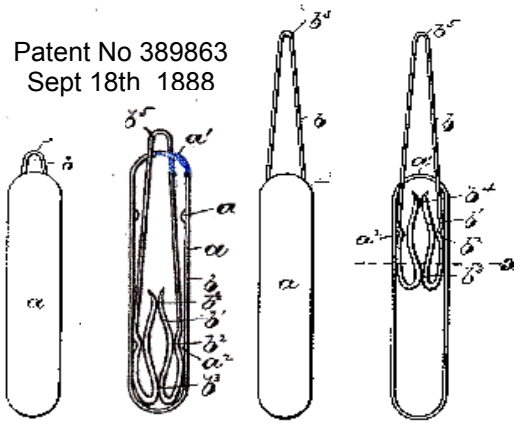
1888 Charles Uhry's Buttoner

The idea is simple enough, to shape a wire into a loop so that when it is placed in a case it can be pulled out for use but not removed, the shape thus prohibiting this.

The buttoner can be attached to a watch chain and when the buttoner is in use the chain is allowed to fall down the buttoner to the handle so that its use is then not impeded.

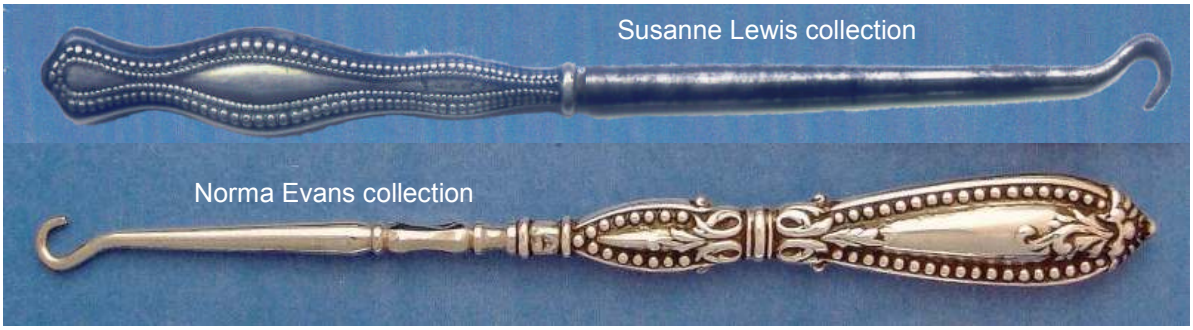
Another simple hook that would appear never to have been put into production!

Patent No 389863
Sept 18th 1888

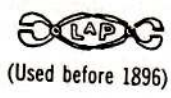


La Pierre Mfg Co

A modest little firm from Newark, New Jersey where Frank La Pierre started his little shop in 18 East 14th Street making novelties and small silver wares. By 1895 they were Incorporated and making dresser ware. In 1929 they were bought by he International Silver Company.



A similar glove hook was sold on eBay for $89 in 2004.



1888 Davis & Galt

This firm as registered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on 3rd January 1888 by Junious Davis and Charles Galt. In 1894 they appeared to have dissolved the partnership but by 1896 they were back in business together but no longer in partnership. There is only one known

example of a buttonhook by Davis & Galt, and that is in the Sue & John Brandon collection.

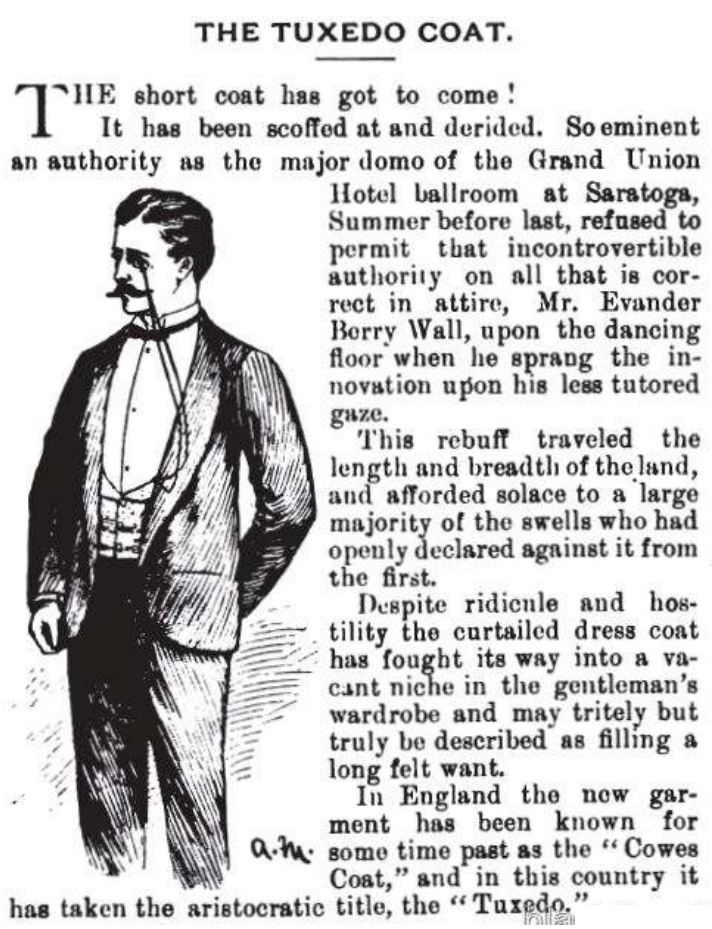
1888 The Tuxedo.

A formal evening suit in England is know as a dinner suit but in America it is a tuxedo, or tux for short. The evening suit distinguished primarily by satin or grosgrain facings on the jacket's lapels and buttons and a similar stripe along the outseam of the trousers. The suit is typically black and commonly worn with a formal shirt, shoes and other accessories, most traditionally in the form known as the ‘black tie’ dress code.

A tuxedo originates from Tuxedo Park, an upstate New York countryside enclave for Manhattan's wealthiest citizens. A son of one of the community’s founders, Griswold Lorillard, and his friends were widely reported in society columns for showing up at the club’s first Autumn Ball in October 1888 wearing "a tailless dress coat" Although it is not known whether this garment was a mess jacket or a conventional dinner jacket, it no doubt cemented the tailcoat substitute's association with Tuxedo Park in the mind of the public.

The earliest tuxedo jackets were of the same black material as the dress coat with one, two or no buttons and a shawl collar faced in satin or ribbed silk. By the turn of the twentieth century the peaked lapel was equally popular and the one-button model had become standard. When trousers were sold with the jacket they were of the same material. Edwardian dandies often opted for Oxford grey or a very dark blue for their evening wear.

By World War I, the grey option had fallen out of favour but the "midnight blue" alternative became increasingly popular and rivalled black by the mid 1930s. A single stripe of braid covering the outseam on each leg was an occasional variation at first, but became standard by the 1930s. At this time double-breasted jackets and white jackets became popular for wear in hot weather, and soon the white dinner jacket was accepted and was always referred to as a ‘Tux’.



THE TUXEDO COAT.

THE short coat has got to come! It has been scoffed at and derided. So eminent an authority as the major domo of the Grand Union Hotel ballroom at Saratoga, Summer before last, refused to permit that incontrovertible authority on all that is correct in attire, Mr. Evander Berry Wall, upon the dancing floor when he sprang the innovation upon his less tutored gaze.

This rebuff traveled the length and breadth of the land, and afforded solace to a large majority of the swells who had openly declared against it from the first.

Despite ridicule and hostility the curtailed dress coat has fought its way into a vacant niche in the gentleman’s wardrobe and may tritely but truly be described as filling a long felt want.

In England the new garment has been known for some time past as the “Cowes Coat,” and in this country it has taken the aristocratic title, the “Tuxedo.”

Clothier and Furnisher, October 1888

1888 Photographic buttonhooks

We don't know when the first photographic hooks appeared but the invention of the Kodak pocket camera by George Eastman of Rochester, New York, in 1888 made it possible to fulfil the promise held out by Henry and Rueben Landis pocket knife patent of 1879.

Photographic hooks seem to fall into two categories, advertising, which the Landis brothers foresaw and personal which enabled families to have personalised mementos of the major events of their lives; births, marriages and deaths.

Marika Pirie covers this topic in detail on the Buttonhook Society website.

Penny Savill collection

1889 The Busiest House in America

We know little about the *Busiest House in America* except that it began in 1876 when it produced its first catalogue. Apart from that we received this extract from Marge Aldrich in November 2004 which is a page from the 1889 Catalogue. Note the buttoner on the front cover!

1889 Dr Scott's amazing Hair Curler 1890

Few buttonhooks in our collections are as colourful and as controversial as this one. It was invented by a Dr Scott whose claims went world wide making him a fortune

Dr. George Augustus Scott, an Englishman, was the most prolific advertiser and maker of "electric hair brushes" and related quackery in America, in the 1880's. He received his first U.S. patent for a brush handle in 1872, and introduced his line of "electric brushes" in 1880. The Scott brushes and other devices all contain slightly magnetized iron rods in their handles, thus, the curative power could only have been provided by magnetism. However, Scott apparently preferred using the term "electric" in all of his advertising. Although, hair growth and relief from headaches are the two obvious claims that would come to mind for the possible use of an electric hair brush, Scott went on to make many wild claims for the curative power of his electric brushes. The conditions his brushes could 'cure' included constipation, malarial lameness, rheumatism, diseases of the blood, and paralysis. While such claims seem outlandish to most people (and would have in 1880), each disease added to the advertising claims opened up a wider potential market for his brushes. Most of the (financially) successful quacks advertised devices that were claimed to cure almost every ailment, or, at least, the most common ones. Perhaps more outlandish than the medical claims for Scott's brushes is this warning printed on the hair brush box "*In no case should more than one person use the brush. If always used by the same person it retains its full curative power.* Families sharing the brush, of course, wasn't in Scott's best interest - better to have two brushes in every home. Perhaps some of the dissatisfied users, for whom brushing their hair didn't cure their constipation, blamed their spouse for sucking up the power of their personal electric brush. In addition to his popular hair and flesh brushes, Scott marketed electric plasters, insoles, rheumatic rings, shoulder braces, throat protectors, nerve and lung invigorators, body belts, wristlets, sciatic appliances, anklets, leg appliances, office caps, and other special appliances made to order. He also offered electric curry combs for horses. His brochure states, "*There need not be a sick person in America (save from accidents), if our appliances become a part of the wardrobe of every lady and gentleman, as also of infants and children.* By the 1890's, the public's affinity for magnetic brushes appears to have waned, being replaced by Dr. Hercules Sanche's gas pipe devices.

None of Scott's patents directly addressed the curative power of his brushes and other gadgets. In his 1st March 1881 patent, he invented a brush with embedded magnet. While the patent claim did not mention the medical purpose of the brush, he did mention this in the third paragraph of the patent specification "*The object of the invention is to secure within the interior of the brush one or more natural or artificial magnets, which, according to the belief of many persons, founded upon a theory of magneto-therapeutics which has become widely prevalent, have the effect of rendering brushes to which they are applied advantageous in use for relieving headache, preventing baldness, and other similar purposes.* His first two patents, granted in 1872, were actually for something useful, a moulded brush handle, with the holes for attaching bristles and the decoration both moulded in one step. Other patents granted to Scott were for the elaborate designs on the backs of his brushes. His design patents may have served to prevent others from making

GIVEN AWAY ! DR. SCOTT'S ELECTRIC HAIR-CURLER.

To introduce Dr. Scott's beautiful new Electric High Hip, Dress Form and Summer Corsets to the readers of THE COMPANION, The Pall Mall Electric Association of London and New York will, until further notice, make the following inducements:

If you cannot get them at your nearest stores, remit at once for one of our High Hip Corsets at $1.25, or a Dress Form or Summer Corset at $1.50, accompanied by 15 cents for postage, and mention The Companion. We will send you FREE with the Corset, post-paid, one of our Dr. Scott's Electric Hair-Curlers, retailing at 50 cents, and a copy of that eminently interesting work, "The Doctor's Story," price 25 cents (not more than two Corsets, with this offer, to go to one family). This special offer to run for a limited period only, so that all feeling inclined to accept it should do so at once and not delay. Address, DR. SCOTT, 842 Broadway, N. Y.

We have other Electric Corsets retailing at $1.00 and $1.50. A short, low Bust Sateen at $2.00. An elegant English Sateen Corset at $3.00. Abdominal, $3.00. Nursing, $1.50. Misses, 75 cents. Electric Belts for men or women at $5.00 and $5.00. Supporters, Single and Double Trusses and Silk Elastic Hosiery. See catalogue.

DRESS FORM CORSET, $1.50.

DRESS FORM. $1.50 CORSET.

18 to 30 in. white and dove.

This Dress Form Corset is made with shoulder-straps, that are easily detached, in sizes from 18 to 30 inches, dove and white. This Corset is fitted with our patent combination spinal supporting back, invaluable to all Ladies. A beautiful silver-plated compass accompanies each corset, with which to test their power. Price, $1.50, and 15c. for postage.

HIGH HIP CORSET, $1.25.

It is made of fine Alexandria cloth, dove and white, in sizes 18 to 30 inches; it is unusually strong and durable; a perfect fit; its price is $1.25; it possesses strong Electro-Magnetic curative qualities, and as such is cheap at $5.00. It has our patent combination spinal supporting back, invaluable to all Ladies. Price, $1.25, with 15c. for postage.

Dr. Scott's Electric Hair-Curler.

PRICE, 50 CENTS.

By its aid the hair, beard or mustache can be curled in any desired style in from one to two minutes. For Ladies it produces the "Langtry style," the "Patti bang," the "Montague Curl," and any other form desired by ladies wearing their hair in the fashionable "loose and fluffy" mode. Those who wear crimps or other forms of false hair will find this Electric Curler a very useful article.

1-30 the size.

It does not break off and ruin the hair like the ordinary crimping process, and in wet or hot weather it works as quickly as in cold. For curling the mustache or beard in a moment, it has no equal, while it is so simple in its operation that any one can use it properly the first time. Directions accompany each one.

If you cannot obtain any of the above at your Druggists, Dry Goods or Fancy Stores, we will mail them, including the premium Curler, post-paid, on receipt of price, with 15 cts. for postage added. Make all remittances payable to GEO. A. SCOTT, 842 Broadway, New York. Mention paper.

SUMMER CORSET, $1.50.

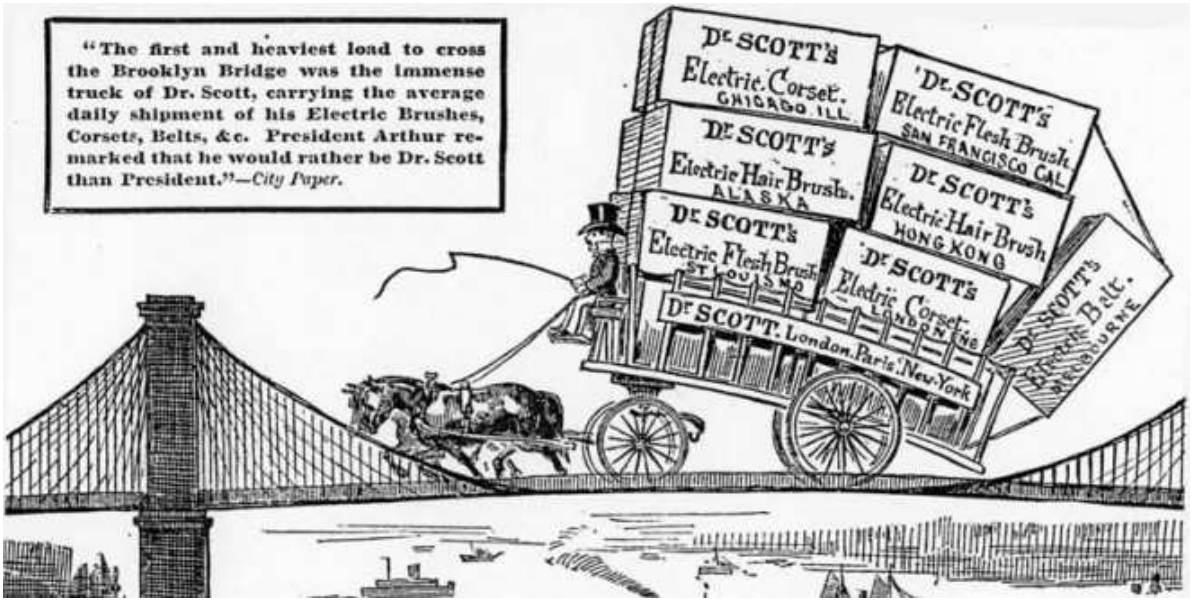
NEW SUMMER $150 CORSET

18 TO 30 INCHES WHITE

This is a beautiful Electric Summer Corset, made of extra strong and fine quality Nottingham net and of double thickness (made expressly for us). It has a duplex girdle-shaped waistband which firmly secures the material and prevents stretching and getting out of shape. This Summer Corset is made in white only, 18 to 30 inches. Price, $1.50, with our patent combination spinal supporting back, invaluable to all Ladies. Add 15c. for postage.

During the prevailing Epidemic Dr. Scott's Electric Plasters will be found of great value. Apply one to your chest and another between your shoulders on first symptoms. They act like a charm. Ask your Druggist for them or send $1.00 to GEO. A. SCOTT, 842 Broadway, N. Y., and you will receive 4 plasters and a pair Electric Insoles FREE. Mention Companion and size of shoe worn.

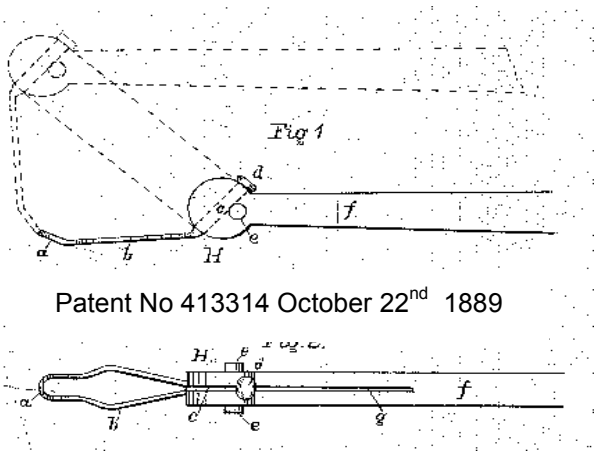
exact copies of his widely advertised brushes. They also served the purpose of allowing the term "patented" to appear in his ads, thus suggesting that the U.S. Patent Office had approved his devices on their medical merit. Scott's last patent, in 1889, for his improvements in his electric corsets, again alludes to the magnetic curative power in the third paragraph of the specification and mentions inducing galvanic action by use of dissimilar metal bands in the 2nd claim of the patent. He may have been making a last ditch effort to switch from magnetised gadgets to galvanic gadgets, however, other companies producing galvanic belts, insoles and other devices may have had too much of a lead on him. His advertising seems to have faded away by the end of the 1880's.



It was not just in America that Scott flourished. He built a large following in Australia by hinting that his patents enjoyed Royal patronage. By the time the fad faded he was a very wealthy man, but he died too young to enjoy it aged 48.

1889 Betzel's buttonhook

Theodore Betzel's buttonhook looks understandable in figure 2 but Figure 1 is rather difficult. The explanation does not help much either, until you see that the dotted parts of Figure 1 are intended to show you the direction of travel using a swivelling motion. Indeed this is what Betzel claimed was the unique feature of his invention when he wrote: -



Patent No 413314 October 22nd 1889

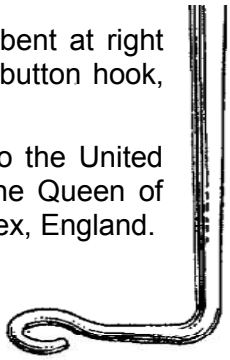
Be it known that I, Theodore R. Betzel, a citizen of the United States, residing in New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Button-Hooks, of which the following is a specification. The invention relates to the class of button-hooks in which a swivel is formed by the IO combination of the-handle and the hook.

1890 Buttonhook Design by William Jonathan Keys

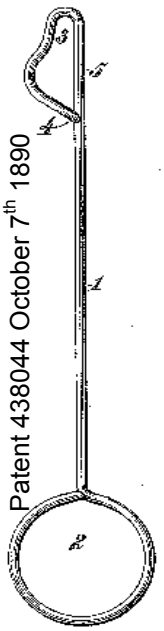
The essence of his design is the final section of the shaft is bent at right angles. No claims are made as to its increased efficiency as a button hook, so it is left for you to conjecture as to how it was to be used.

The really interesting thing is that this design was submitted to the United States Patent Office by William Jonathan Keys a subject of the Queen of Great Britain residing in York Hill, Loughton in the County of Essex, England.

He obviously hoped to make his fortune.



Design Patent No 20160
September 23nd 1890



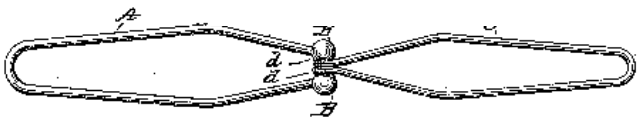
Patent 438044 October 7th 1890

Two more buttoners by Williams & Hodge

I Ernest Williams, residing at Tallahassee, in the county of Leon, State of Florida, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Shoe or Glove Buttoners. This relates to shoe or glove buttoners which are composed of a wire shank having a closed loop or eye at one end for encircling the button and pulling it through the button-hole whereby the loop or eye will not catch and tear the edges of the button-holes in pulling the buttons there through.

Secondly, I Thomas B. Hodge of Providence, in the State of Rhode Island, have invented a new and useful Combined Boot and Glove Buttoner. The object of my invention is to combine a boot and glove buttoner in a single article, and so construct the same that it can be folded up and conveniently carried in the purse or pocket; and it consists in the device hereinafter described

Patent 439751 October 21st 1890



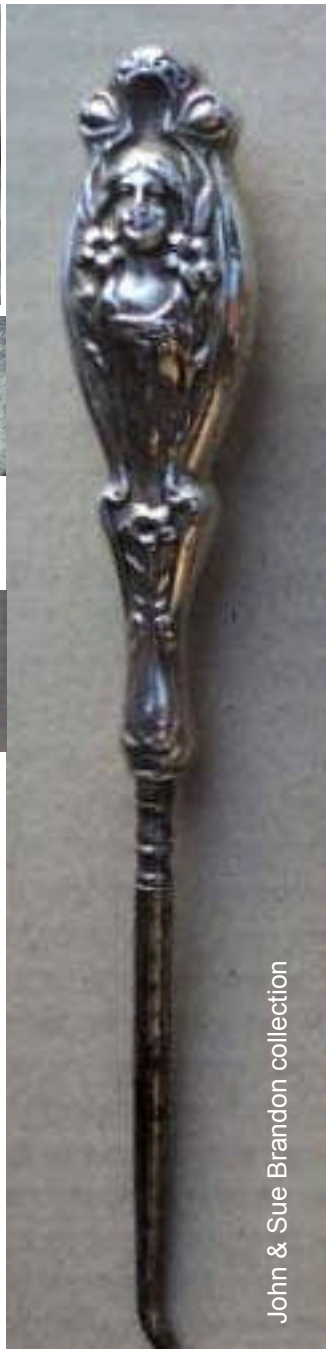
1890 E & J Bass

Another quite small firm that began in 1890. E & J Bass were Manufacturers of sterling silver wares, sterling deposit wares and plated silver and jewellery. They sold under the name Empire Art Gold, Imperial Art Silver and Empire Art Silver, their mark usually consisted of a Crown in a circle with E&JB Empire Art.

They also produced enamel and jewel combinations and a lot of silver plated goods.

Their business went under due to the Depression. There are only two examples of their buttonhooks found so far.

Margaret Jackson-Feilden collection



John & Sue Brandon collection

1891 Match safes

George Sparacio, Chairman of the International Match Safe Association summed up what match safes were in the Buttonhook Society Newsletter of September 2007.

“Creating fire was one of man’s earliest and most significant achievements. Fire provided light, heat and the capability to cook food. An instantaneous flame produced at will was only a dream until 1826 when John Walker of Stockton-on-Tees, England, invented the first successful match as we know today. This early match consisted of a wooden splint coated with sulphur and tipped with a mixture of chlorate of potash, gum and sulphide of antimony. The first recorded sale of this match was April 7, 1827. John Walker never patented his new invention, and within a few years other individuals in England and Continental Europe invented and perfected further versions of friction matches.

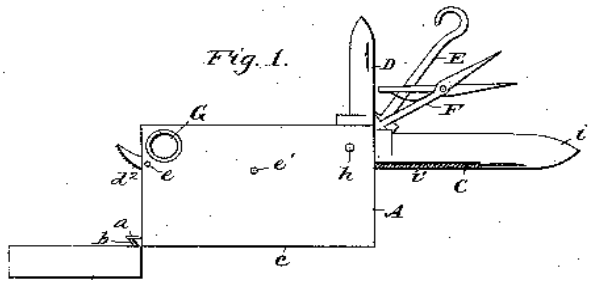
“Chemicals used in early matches were very combustible. This coupled with the necessity to keep the matches dry led to the need for a container to hold them. During the early years, these containers were usually crudely made tin boxes. They were not very appealing to many folks and the practice of converting snuff boxes by adding a striker emerged. Independent production of match safes or vesta boxes as referred to in England began around 1840, and lasted until the late 1920's. During this period, match safes were produced in enormous numbers, and their design and decoration illustrated the fashions and fads of the day.

“Match safes were produced from a multitude of materials. They were made from sterling,

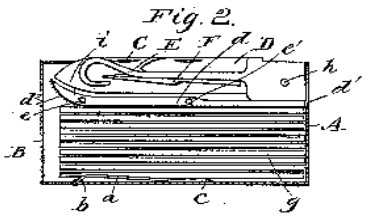
brass, wood, gold, ivory tortoiseshell, plated metals and a whole host of other materials. Gold and sterling examples were used by the wealthy while lesser materials were generally used by everyday people. The need for some type of match safe regardless of economic stature was universal and drove their popularity. The most distinguishing feature of pocket match safes is the striking area. Striking surfaces usually consist of a notched or ribbed surface located on the bottom or side of the container. Some use emery or sandpaper inserts. A few have the striker incorporated into the design, and some are designed to automatically ignite the match upon removal. Rarely will one be found without a striking surface. Shapes, sizes and designs were practically limitless. Shapes varied from square, rectangular and cylindrical to a wide range of popular and whimsical objects. A number of safes incorporate utilitarian peripherals such as cigar cutters, buttonhooks, coin holders, corkscrews, stamp holders, whistles and knives."

Despite the fact that there are hundreds of American match safes there has only been one patent that included a buttonhook. In fact those with buttonhooks found in America are invariably made in England, where they are known as vestas.

The patent was by Charles Widmann of Cincinnati, in the county of Hamilton and State of Ohio, who invented a new and useful Pocket Match Safe which relates to a combination of several useful implements in compact form for carriage in the pocket of the user, the object being to afford a convenient assemblage of instruments in one case that are usually carried separately.



Patent 464405 December 1st 1891



1891 Coca Cola

The first bottling of Coca-Cola occurred in Vicksburg, Mississippi, at the Biedenharn Candy Company in 1891. The proprietor of the bottling works was Joseph A. Biedenharn. The original bottles were Biedenharn bottles, very different from the much later hobble-skirt design of 1915 now so familiar.

However the story of how Coca Cola began originates much earlier when Colonel John Pemberton was wounded in the Civil War and became addicted to morphine. This started his quest to find a substitute to the dangerous opiate. The prototype Coca-Cola recipe was formulated at Pemberton's Eagle Drug and Chemical House, a drugstore in Columbus, Georgia, originally as a coca wine. He may have been inspired by the formidable success of Vin Mariani, a European coca wine.

In 1885, Pemberton registered his French Wine Coca nerve tonic. In 1886, when Atlanta and Fulton County passed prohibition legislation, Pemberton responded by developing Coca-Cola, essentially a nonalcoholic version of French Wine Coca. The first sales were at Jacob's Pharmacy in Atlanta, Georgia, on May 8, 1886. It was initially sold as a patent medicine for five cents a glass at soda fountains, which were popular in the United States at the time due to the belief that carbonated water was good for the health. Pemberton claimed Coca-Cola cured many diseases, including morphine addiction, dyspepsia, neurasthenia, headache, and impotence. Pemberton ran the first advertisement for the

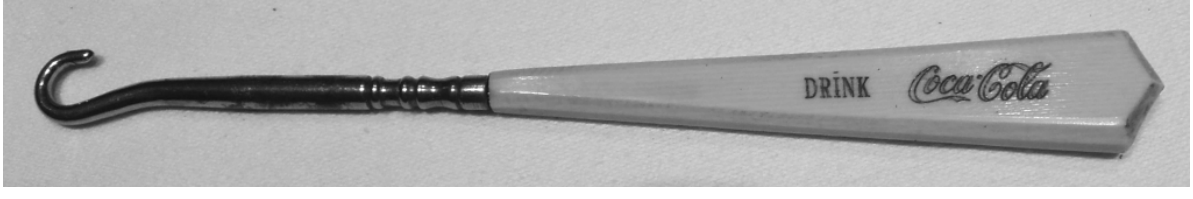
beverage on May 29 of the same year in the Atlanta Journal

By 1888, three versions of Coca-Cola; sold by three separate businesses, were on the market. A co-partnership had been formed on January 14, 1888 between Pemberton and four Atlanta businessmen. John Pemberton declared that the *name* "Coca-Cola" belonged to his son, Charley, but the other two manufacturers could continue to use the *formula*. However a young druggist called Asa Griggs Candler also claimed that on April 14, 1888, he had purchased a one-third interest in the formula of an almost completely unknown proprietary elixir known as Coca-Cola."

In fact the deal was actually between John Pemberton's son Charley and *Walker, Candler & Co*; with John Pemberton acting as co-signer for his son. For $50 down and $500 in 30 days, *Walker, Candler & Co*. obtained all of the one-third interest in the Coca-Cola Company that Charley held, all while Charley still held on to the name. After the April 14 deal, on April 17, 1888, one-half of the Walker/Dozier interest shares were acquired by Candler for an additional $750. Charley's position of holding exclusive control over the "Coca Cola" name continued to be a thorn in Asa Candler's side.

After Candler had gained a better foothold of Coca-Cola in April 1888, he nevertheless was forced to sell the beverage he produced with the recipe he had under the names "Yum Yum" and "Koke", whilst Charley Pemberton's cruder mixture, sold under the name "Coca-Cola", all with his father's blessing. After both names failed to catch on, by the summer of

Paul Moorehead collection



1888, the Atlanta pharmacist was quite anxious to establish a firmer legal claim to Coca-Cola, and hoped he could force his two competitors, Walker and Dozier, completely out of the business. When Dr. John Stith Pemberton suddenly died on August 16, 1888, Asa Candler moved swiftly to attain his vision of taking full control of the whole Coca-Cola operation.

Charley Pemberton, an alcoholic, and had been the one obstacle who unnerved Asa Candler more than anyone else. Candler quickly manoeuvred to purchase the exclusive rights to the name "Coca-Cola" from under Charley's nose immediately after Dr. Pemberton's death. It was believed that Candler bought the title to the name from Charley's mother for $300; approaching her at Dr. Pemberton's funeral. Eventually, Charley Pemberton was found on June 23, 1894, unconscious, with a stick of opium by his side. Ten days later, Charley died at Atlanta's Grady Hospital at the age of 40.

In 1914, Margaret Dozier, as co-owner of the original Coca-Cola Company in 1888, came forward to claim that her signature on the 1888 Coca-Cola Company bill of sale had been forged. Subsequent analysis of certain similar transfer documents had also indicated John Pemberton's signature was most likely a forgery, as well, which some accounts claim was precipitated by his son Charley.

When Coca Cola was first bottled in 1891 Candler took no control over the bottling being content to keep selling just the Coca Cola syrup. However tte drink was so successful that in 1892 Candler incorporated a second Coca Cola Company and the rest, as they say, is history.

1892 The Stieff Company

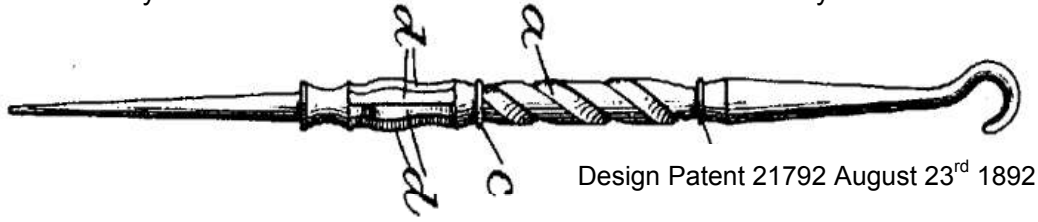
This company was founded in 1892 by Charles Stieff as The Baltimore Silver Company, changing to the Stieff company in 1904. It was as The Stieff Company that they made buttonhooks. They did become very well known later due to their appointment to make Williamsburg Restoration ware and old Sturbridge Village ware.

From 1901 they also used year marks which ran until 1974.

This is the only hook of theirs found.

1892 Webster's buttonhook design

Design patents are peculiar in that they rarely set out the purpose of their design. Charles Webster's design is just for a buttonhook shaft in which there are features which we would recognise in many of the hooks we have in our collections. See what you think!

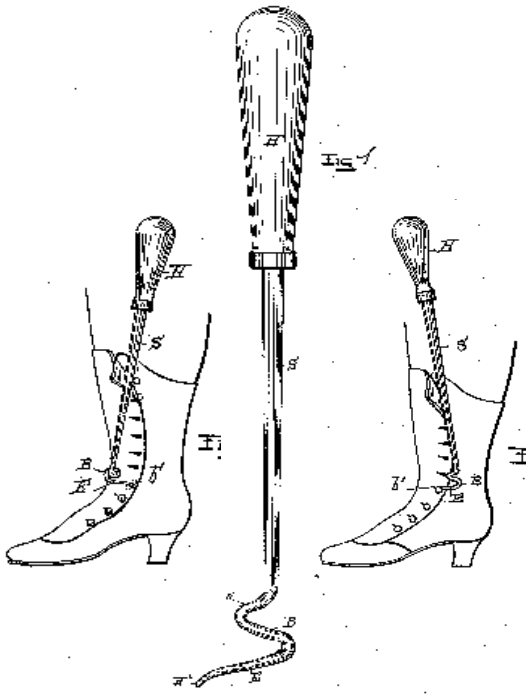


Design Patent 21792 August 23rd 1892

1892 Van Patten's buttonhook

JOHN VAN PATTEN, of the village of West Troy, county of Albany, and State of New York, has this to say about his invention.

My invention relates to improvements upon that class of devices which are termed button-hooks, and which are used to button shoes. This class of implements as heretofore constructed has been made with a handle and straight shank, upon the lower end of which was arranged a hook, and was operated by passing the hook end of the implement, with the shank and handle held horizontally, through one of the buttonholes of the shoe, so that the hook would engage with the button-eye shank, and then using the buttonhole as a fulcrum and the handle of the hook as a lever to draw the button under and up through the buttonhole, which being done the implement was again turned down laterally, so that the hook could be disengaged from the button-eye shank by pushing the hook away from its engagement with the latter.



Patent No 473035 April 19th 1892

There does seem to have been a great deal of concern about the entangling of buttonhooks with the boots they are trying to fasten.

18993 The World's Columbian Exposition

The World's Columbian Exposition was a World's Fair held in Chicago in 1893 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in the New World in 1492, so it was actually a year late. The iconic centrepiece of the Fair, the large water pool, represented the long voyage Columbus took to the New World. Chicago beat New York City; Washington, D.C. and St. Louis for the honour of hosting the fair which was to be an influential social and cultural event. It had a profound effect on architecture, sanitation, the arts, Chicago's self-image, and America's industrial optimism. The Chicago Columbian Exposition was, in large part, designed by Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted. It was the prototype of what Burnham and his colleagues thought a city should be. It was designed to follow Beaux Arts principles of design, namely French neoclassical architecture principles based on symmetry, balance, and splendour.

The fair was planned in the early 1890s, in a period of rapid industrial growth, immigration, and class tension. World's fairs, such as London's 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition, had been successful in Europe as a way to bring together societies fragmented along class lines. However, the first American attempt at world's fair in 1876 in Philadelphia, though hugely successful in attendance, lost money. Nonetheless, ideas about marking the 400th anniversary of Columbus' landing started to take hold in the 1880s. Towards the end of the decade, civic leaders in St. Louis, New York City, Washington DC and Chicago expressed interest in hosting a fair, in order to generate profits, boost real estate values, and promote their cities. Congress was called on to decide the location. Leading New York's financiers pledged $15 million to finance the fair if Congress awarded it to New York, while Chicagoan financiers matched the offer. What finally persuaded Congress was Chicago banker Lyman

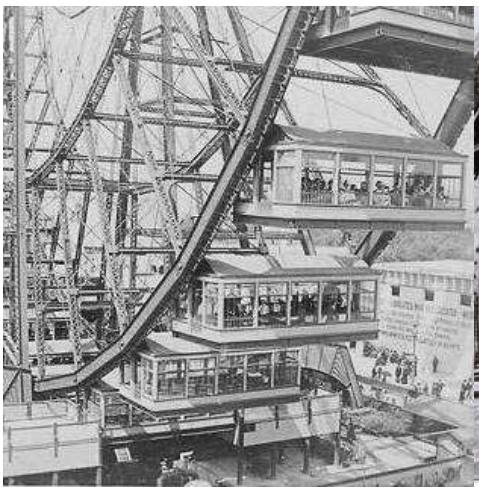
Gage who raised several million additional dollars in a 24-hour period, over and above New York's final offer.

The exposition corporation and national exposition commission settled on Jackson Park as the fair site. Daniel Burnham was selected as director of works, and George Davis as director-general. Burnham emphasized architecture and sculpture as central to the fair and assembled the period's top talent to design the buildings and grounds. The buildings were neoclassical and painted white, resulting in the name “White City” for the fair site. The Exposition's offices set up shop in the upper floors of the Rand McNally Building on Adams Street, the world's first all-steel-framed skyscraper.

The fair opened in May and ran through October 30, 1893. Forty-six nations participated in the fair. it was the first world's fair to have national pavilions. The Exposition drew nearly 26 million visitors. The fair ended with the city in shock, as popular mayor Carter Harrison, Sr. was assassinated by Patrick Eugene Prendergast two days before the fair's closing. Closing ceremonies were cancelled in favour of a public memorial service.

Jackson Park was returned to its status as a public park, in much better shape than its original swampy form. The lagoon was reshaped to give it a more natural appearance, except for the straight-line northern end where it still laps up against the steps on the south side of the Palace of Fine Arts/Museum of Science & Industry building. The Midway Plaisance, a park-like boulevard which extends west from Jackson Park, once formed the southern boundary of the University of Chicago, which was being built as the fair was closing.

The World's Columbian Exposition was the first world's fair with an area for amusements that was strictly separated from the exhibition halls. This area, developed by a young music promoter, Sol Bloom, concentrated on Midway Plaisance and introduced the term "midway" to describe the area of a carnival or fair where sideshows are located. This area included carnival rides, among them the original Ferris Wheel, built by George Ferris. It was 264 feet high and had 36 cars, each of which could accommodate 60 people.



It was the Ferris Wheel that turned the Columbian Exposition from being another financial disaster like the previous one in Philadelphia, into a great financial success. Visitors paid 25 cents to get into the Exposition and 50 cents to go on the Ferris Wheel. By November 6th 1893, 1,453,611 paid admissions had been received with possibly a thousand or more free trips having been given to various important people.

Such was the impact of the Exposition that its profound effects were felt in America for many years after, and there are still echoes of it today.

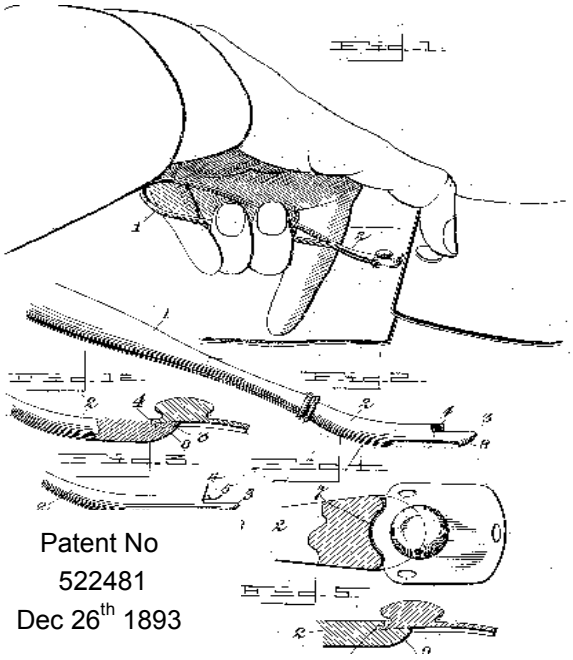
Many buttonhooks were made to commemorate the 1893 World Fair in Chicago. The sterling hook top left is slightly different in that it is dated 1892 which was the actual anniversary of Columbus's landing.

On April 25th 1890, the then President Benjamin Harrison signed the Act that designated Chicago as the site of the exposition.

Although the dedication ceremonies were held on October 21, 1892, the fairgrounds were not opened to the public until May 1, 1893.

Above: A souvenir buttonhook.
Right: The spirit of the Columbian Exposition.

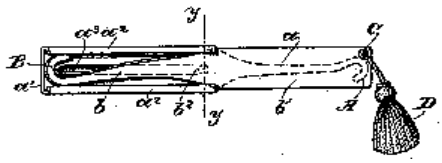
1893 Frank Williams' Patent



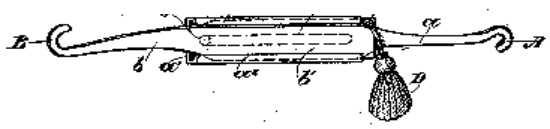
Patent No
522481
Dec 26th 1893

This is a straight forward lever buttoner, easy to see but hard to explain.

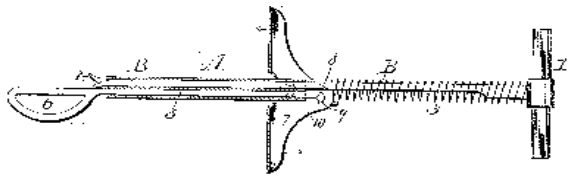
1894 Ida Mushette's combined shoe and glove buttoner



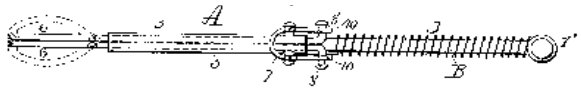
Patent No 525154 August 28th 1894



1894 Daniel Muir's Patent



Patent No 518619 April 24th 1894



Muir's patent is more difficult to explain. Even he had trouble!

My invention relates to an improvement in shoe buttoners, the object being to provide a simple and inexpensive device which maybe operated by one hand, one which will give a straight pull to the button being operated upon and which in consequence will lessen the liability of pulling off buttons or tearing the leather or button holes.

In operation the jaws are inserted in the button hole, the operator holding his first and second fingers upon the lever and his thumb upon the handle, he pressing upon the end of the lever which holds the jaws closed. Then to open the jaws the opposite end is pressed until the jaws separate and the button is caught between them. Then the jaws are closed and the rod pushed down so that the button is given a pull and the leather with the button hole therein given a push. In this manner the buttoning is done without any twisting or turning, simply by a straight pull.

Is that clear now?

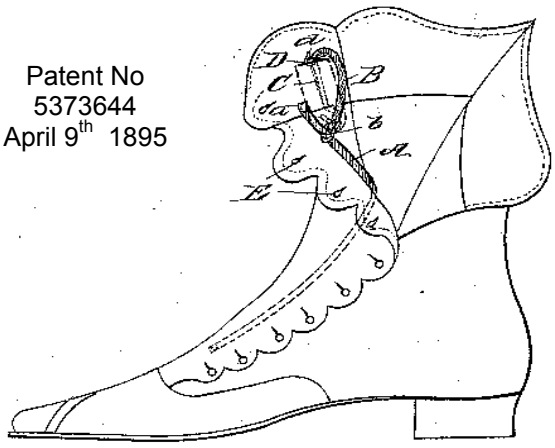
Another lady inventor, Ida E. Mushette, a citizen of the United States, residing in East Oakland, county of Alameda, State of California, who invented an Improvement in Combined Shoe and Glove Buttoners.

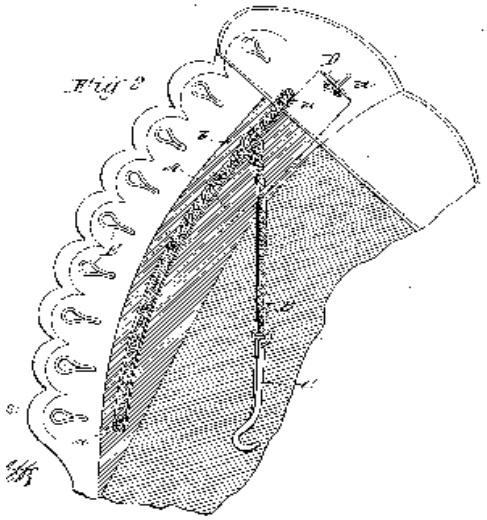
Her invention relates to the class of hooks for buttoning shoes and gloves, and it consists in the novel combination of the shoe button hook and the glove-button hook. The object of the invention is to provide a single article combining both hooks, being of simple construction, compact and neat in form, adapted to be readily carried in any pocket, with protection both for and from both hooks, and easily adapted to be extended for use when required.

The hooks lie beside the others body to be perfectly protected, so that the clothing is not liable to be caught by the hooks, and the whole device may be readily inserted in and removed from a pocket.

1895 James Knepley Rogers' buttonhook attachment

Patent No
5373644
April 9th 1895





James Knepley Rogers of Philadelphia, in the county of Philadelphia and State of Pennsylvania, invented a new and Improved Button Hook Attachment for Shoes, Gloves, and the Like. The object of the invention is to provide a means for attaching a button hook to a shoe, glove or other buttoned article, in such a manner as will permit a longitudinal movement of the button hook, adjacent to the line of button holes in such article, the hook being so attached and guided as to permit a convenient manipulation thereof in buttoning the shoe or other article.

This invention is totally barmy and not surprisingly was not taken up by boot manufacturers who would have seen it as a very impractical device that greatly increased their costs.

Some design patents

The first is by our old friend J L Sommer's who designed this hook recognized by all buttonhook collectors. Some of these are marked SWEET LONDON, which Carolyn Cooper conjectures comes from the Sweet Shoe Company in Maine, which was founded in 1903.

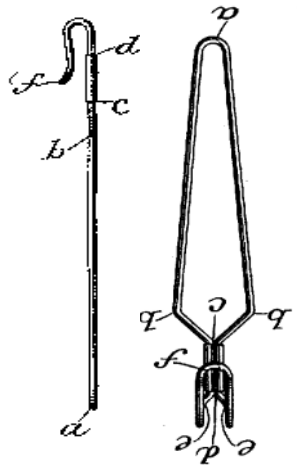
Design Patent No 23862 December 11th 1894

Moorehead collection

This is an earlier glove buttoner patent by Frank Larom in 1888. It follows other similar design patent involving a hand in glove. As you can see here, this design has actually been made.

Design Patent No 18783 December 4th 1888

1895 George Farmer's glove Buttoner design patent



Farmer Design Pat No 24997
December 24th 1895

George P. Farmer, a citizen of the United States, residing at Montclair, in the county of Essex, and the State of New Jersey, have invented a new and original Design for Glove-Buttoners, of which the leading feature of the design consists in the shape and configuration.

No advantages for this design are claimed! It is really surprising how some people go through the whole process of obtaining a patent that are unlikely to ever go into production because the difference between their patent and others is so miniscule that it is not worth while bothering with. Still it does confirm that the whole world operated with buttonhooks and would come to a stop without them!

1896 Pin Buttons

In a time when people tend to think of a Nixon button as being an antique, you might expect that political campaign buttons or pins are a modern device. It therefore will come as a surprise to many that George Washington wore the first political button in 1789 at his first Inauguration in New York. He, and many present, wore buttons, but these buttons were clothing buttons made of brass and proudly reading *"G.W.-Long Live the President*", modelling the phrase "Long live the King." Clothing-type buttons continued to be used by citizens in the early days of the United States, usually with the name of a hero like Andrew Jackson appearing on the reverse side of the button. Since most campaigns for the Presidency didn't then involve active campaigns, political memorabilia for the early Presidents consisted of the buttons and silk ribbons. It wasn't until the first "modern-style" election in 1840 that America saw a candidate actively admitting he even wanted the office with William Harrison's log cabin campaign. Literally hundreds of objects featuring the log cabin design were used to influence voters throughout the growing new country. The log cabin campaign belied the fact that Harrison wasn't born in a log cabin at all, but to considerable wealth. That didn't matter since the idea "sold" him as someone befitting to be elected President and he was.

The breakthrough to buttons as we know them today came with the 1860 campaign of Abraham Lincoln, along with other major party nominees for President. Because of the advent of the tintype or ferrotype photo process the likeness of a Presidential candidate was available for use on their campaign buttons. For the first time a voter hundreds of miles away from Washington could actually see what a candidate for President looked like. The 1860 ferrotype buttons for Lincoln are easily distinguishable from his 1864 re-election buttons as his famous beard was by then on all official photos of the Civil War President.

Calling these "buttons" is stretching it a bit since they were made of a metal ring surrounding a round tintype picture with a hole punched in the top, from which a ribbon was used to hang the picture on a supporter's lapel, or, as shown here the ferrotype of Abraham Lincoln, produced in 1864, when he campaigned for re-election, the button had a locking pin on the back.

This button predicted incorrectly, that Bryan would triumph over McKinley on Election Day Nov. 6, 1896

What we now know as a campaign button didn't come about until 1896 with the patent by the now famous Whitehead and Hoag Company. The device was made of 4 pieces sandwiched together -- a piece of metal on which was placed a printed image with a slogan or photo of 1896 candidate for President William McKinley or his Democratic opponent, William Jennings Bryan. On top of that printed image was a thin piece of see-through celluloid and all of this was placed together by a machine with a small metal pin attached on the reverse.

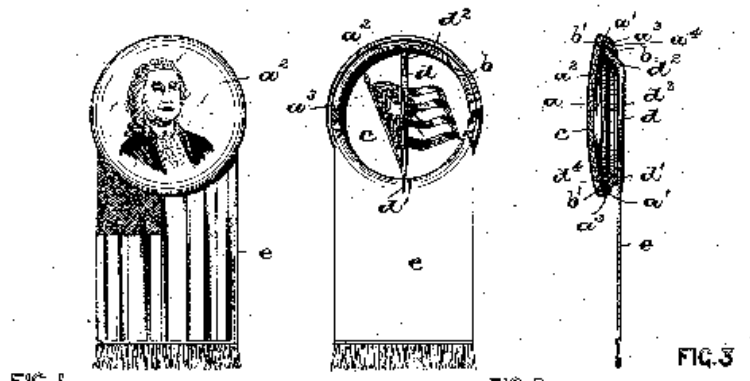
Another 20 years or so passed before a two-piece button was created with just one single piece of metal used with the lithograph printing made directly on the metal piece and the same type pin used on the reverse. These are still in use but the cost of initial setup for production of "litho" pins is such that these pins are produced when a run of thousands of buttons is needed. Celluloid buttons can be produced far less expensively when only a small run is needed.

Here we have the patent for the Whitehead & Hoag which was produced by George Adams as their assignee. The invention is described as follows: -

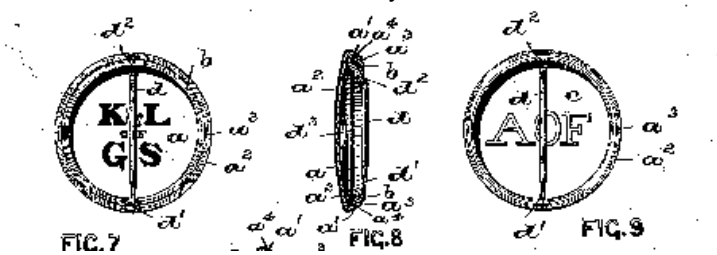
The invention has reference to improvements in badges for use as lapel pins or buttons, or other like uses, and has for its primary object to provide a badge of this class having a novel means for connecting the ornamental shell or button to the bar or pin for securing the badge to the lapel of the coat.

A further object of the invention is to provide, in connection with the shell or button and its pin, a means for reinforcing the back of said shell or button and thereby producing greater strength and rigidity, and a still further object of this invention is to provide a badge-pin bearing an inscription, design, emblem, or the like, not only on the face thereof but also on the back.

The invention therefore consists of several novel arrangements and combinations of parts to be hereinafter fully set forth



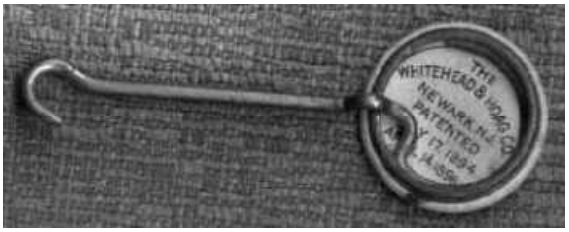
Patent No 564356 July 21st 1896



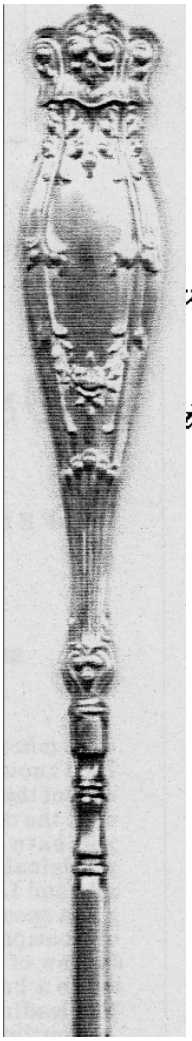
The essential features of the invention are a metallic or ornamental button-like portion of any desirable configuration in outline, and being provided with an inwardly-projecting marginal rim or bead. On the face of said button or shell may be arranged a flexible

covering which may be provided-with 'any suitable inscription, design, emblem, or the like. The annular edge a of said covering as will be seen, is arranged over and underneath the said marginal rim or bead where it is firmly held fast and pulled taut by a suitably-constructed reinforcing-ring made preferably as illustrated and is arranged and secured beneath said bead or rim a during the process of striking up the shells or buttons a in a die.

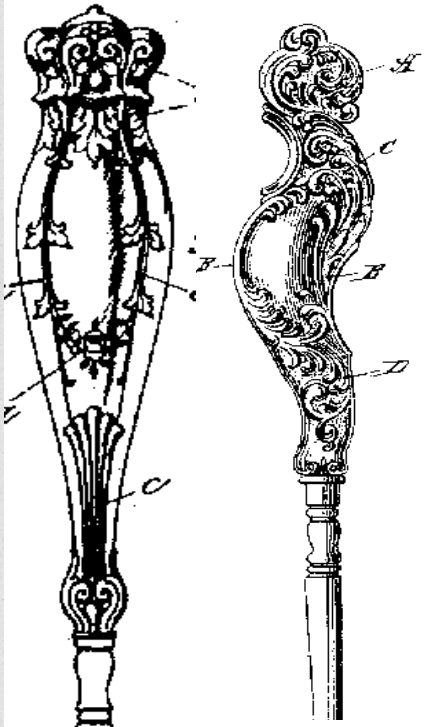
From our point of view the interest is in the fact that many of these pins were extended to form buttonhooks.



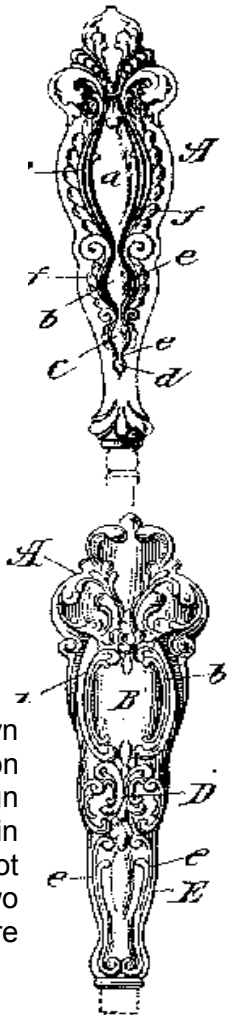
Design patents Ferdinand Thielk



Design Patent No 28518
April 26th 1898

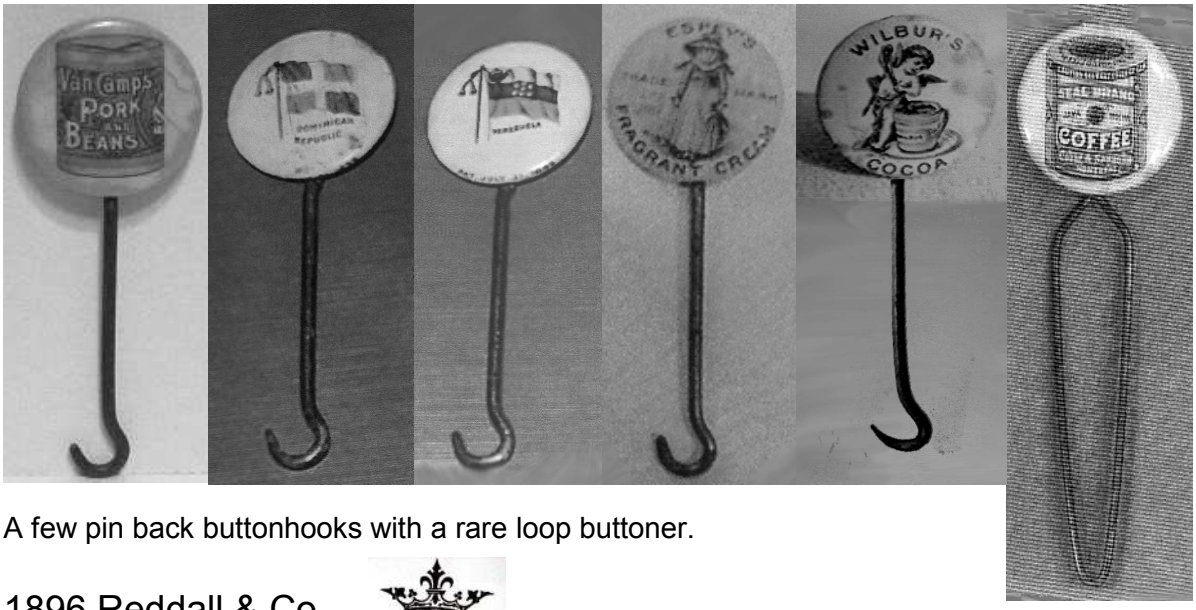


Design Patents No 25383
April 14th 1896, and 27090
May 25th 1897



Design Patents No 27736
October 19th 1897 and
26456 Dec 29th 1896

Ferdinand Thielk was from Brooklyn and was a prolific designer of button hook handles. Many of the design patents we see here resulted in actual buttonhooks, that were not necessarily American. The two outside examples shown here are English.



A few pin back buttonhooks with a rare loop buttoner.

1896 Reddall & Co

Listed as John W Reddall & Co in 1896 it went out of business about 1909

1896 Reeves & Sillcocks

First listed under this name in 1896 in Newark, New Jersey, it was succeeded by Reeves & Brown by 1904. It then became Brown, Jennings & Lauter by 1915. By 1922 it had become Jennings & Lauter. It operated in New York City during that period.

This hook was by Reeves & Browne wnıcn means that the first hook was made between 1896 and 1904, whereas this hook was made between 1904 and 1915.

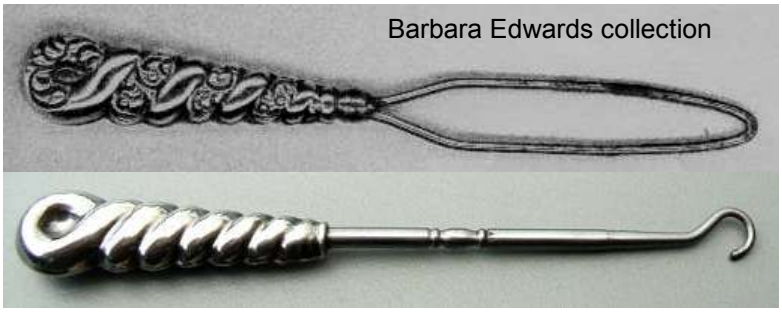
1896 Woodside Sterling Co and William C. Finck & Co

Both these firms were listed in 1896. There is no other information about them. Finck & Co did not survive past 1915 and Woodside Sterling disappeared about 1920. Whilst their buttonhooks are excellent, it is more likely that Finck's effort was a bent cocktail stick rather than the buttonhook it purports to be!

1896 Palmer & Peckham

P & P
STERLING.

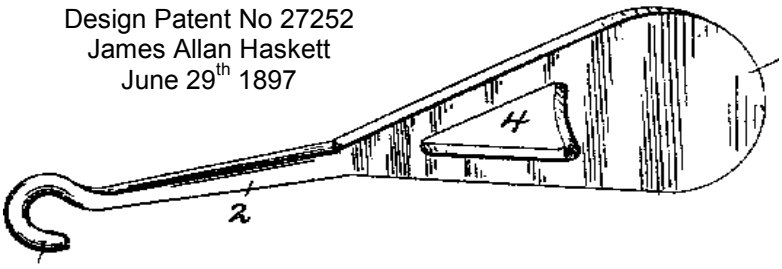
Also listed in 1896. Out of business by 1904.



Barbara Edwards collection

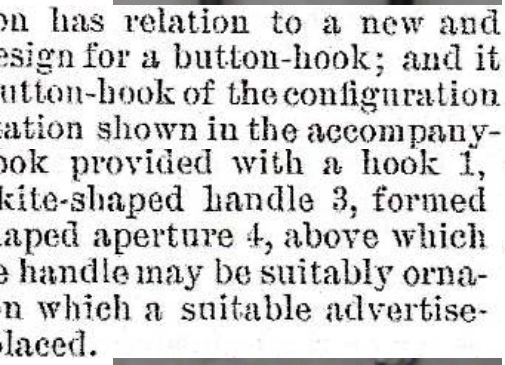
1897 Haskett's Buttonhook Design Patent

Design Patent No 27252
James Allan Haskett
June 29th 1897



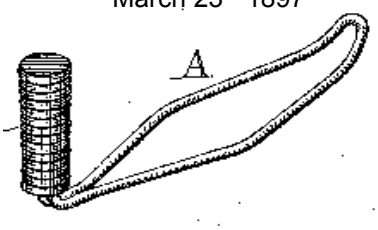
My invention is for a new and ornamental design for a buttonhook; and it consists of a button-hook of the configuration shown in the accompanying drawing, in which I have illustrated my invention in perspective.

The leading features of my design consists in a button-hook provided with a hook 1, a shank 2, a kite shaped handle 3, formed with a heart shaped aperture 4, above which the body of the handle may be suitably ornamented or upon which a suitable advertisement may be placed.

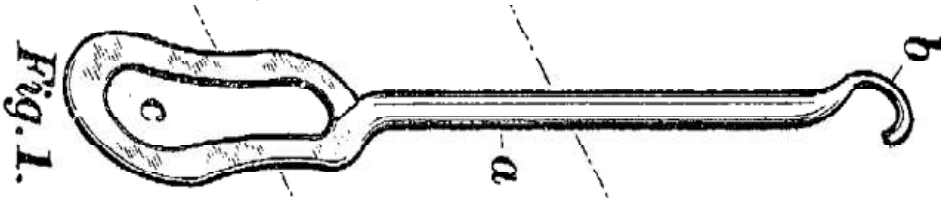


on has relation to a new and
esign for a button-hook; and it
utton-hook of the configuration
ation shown in the accompany-
ook provided with a hook 1,
kite-shaped handle 3, formed
aped aperture 4, above which
e handle may be suitably orna-
n which a suitable advertise-
laced.

Charles Esterly's buttoner
Patent No 575262
March 23rd 1897



J L Sommer's Design Patent No 25602 June 9th 1896,

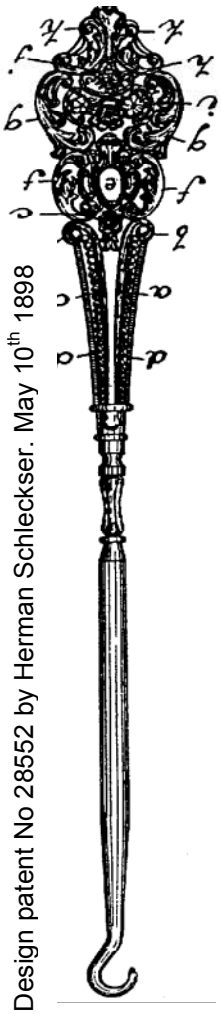


This is another John Sommer's patent of a form everyone who collects buttonhooks will be familiar with.

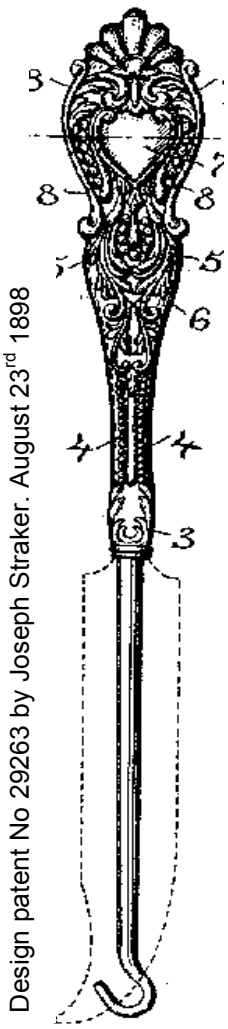
1897 Allison Clark's Design Patent No 27500 for a Glove buttoner

This design actually went into production and many of these glove hooks have been found. This was advertising Dent's gloves, Dents being a leading English glove manufacturer.

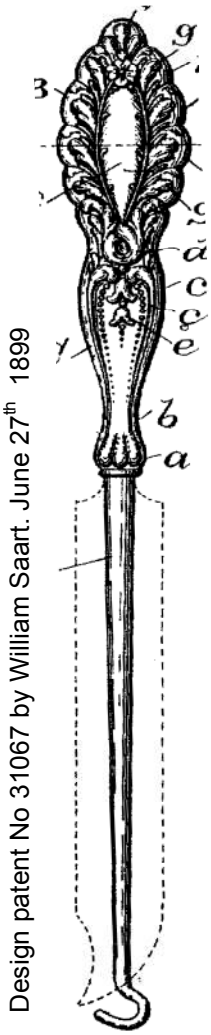
More Design Patents for buttonhooks



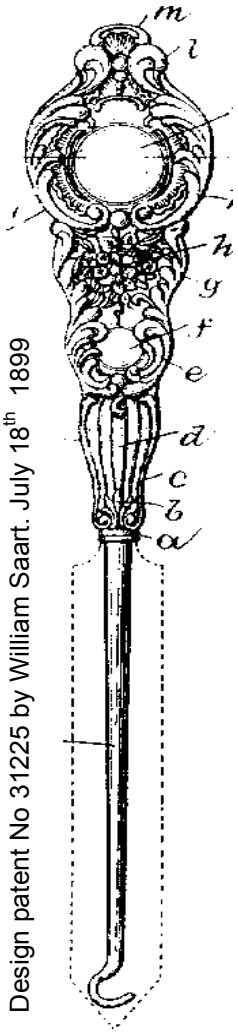
Design patent No 28552 by Herman Schleckser. May 10th 1898



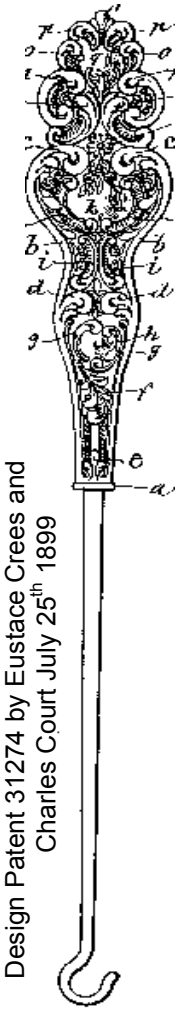
Design patent No 29263 by Joseph Straker. August 23rd 1898



Design patent No 31067 by William Saart. June 27th 1899



Design patent No 31225 by William Saart. July 18th 1899



Design Patent 31274 by Eustace Crees and Charles Court July 25th 1899

1900 Buck Silver Co

Buck Silver of Killbuck, New York, began in 1900, changed its name to Buck Plating Co. in 1915 and were out of business by 1922.

1900 Theodore B Starr

This company began in New York in 1900,and continued until 1924 when it became Reed & Barton. This hook is also stamped STERLING and has the Shiebler mark.

1901 Queen Victoria dies.

Victoria was the longest reigning British monarch and the figurehead of a vast empire. She oversaw huge changes in British society and gave her name to an age.

Victoria was born in London on 24 May 1819, the only child of Edward, Duke of Kent, and Victoria Maria Louisa of Saxe-Coburg. She succeeded her uncle, William IV, in 1837, at the age of 18, and her reign spanned the rest of the century. In 1840, she married her first cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. For the next 20 years they lived in close harmony and had a family of nine children, many of whom eventually married into the European monarchy.

On her accession, Victoria adopted the Whig Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne as her political mentor. In 1840, his influence was replaced by that of Prince Albert. In 1839, her first cousin Albert, a German prince, came to visit the English court at Windsor, and Victoria proposed to him five days after his arrival. Prince Albert accepted, and in February 1840 they were married. He soon became the dominant influence in her life and served as her private secretary. Among his greatest achievements as royal consort was his organization of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the first world's fair, in the Crystal Palace in London.

The German prince never really won the favour of the British public, and only after 17 years was he given official recognition, with the title of 'prince consort'. Victoria nonetheless relied heavily on Albert and it was during his lifetime that she was most active as a ruler. Britain was evolving into a constitutional monarchy in which the monarch had few powers and was expected to remain above party politics, although Victoria did sometimes express her views very forcefully in private.

Victoria never fully recovered from Albert's death in 1861 and she remained in mourning for the rest of her life. Her subsequent withdrawal from public life made her unpopular. The Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli coaxed her out of her seclusion. She was impressed by his efforts to strengthen and expand the British Empire. In 1876, he had her made "Empress of India," a title which pleased her and made her a symbol of imperial unity. As a result, during the late 1870s and 1880s she gradually returned to public view and, with increasingly pro-imperial sentiment, she was restored to favour with the British public. After the Indian Mutiny in 1857, the government of India was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown. In 1877, Victoria became empress of India. Her empire also included Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and large parts of Africa. During this period, Britain was largely uninvolved in European affairs, apart from the Crimean War from 1853 - 1856.

Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 and her Diamond Jubilee in 1897 were celebrated with great enthusiasm. Having witnessed a revolution in British government, huge industrial expansion and the growth of a worldwide empire, Victoria died on 22 January 1901 at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.

When she died, she had 37 surviving great-grandchildren, and their marriages with other monarchies gave her the name the "grandmother of Europe."

It is a testimony to her world standing that even today, most Americans refer to the latter part of the nineteenth century as Victorian.

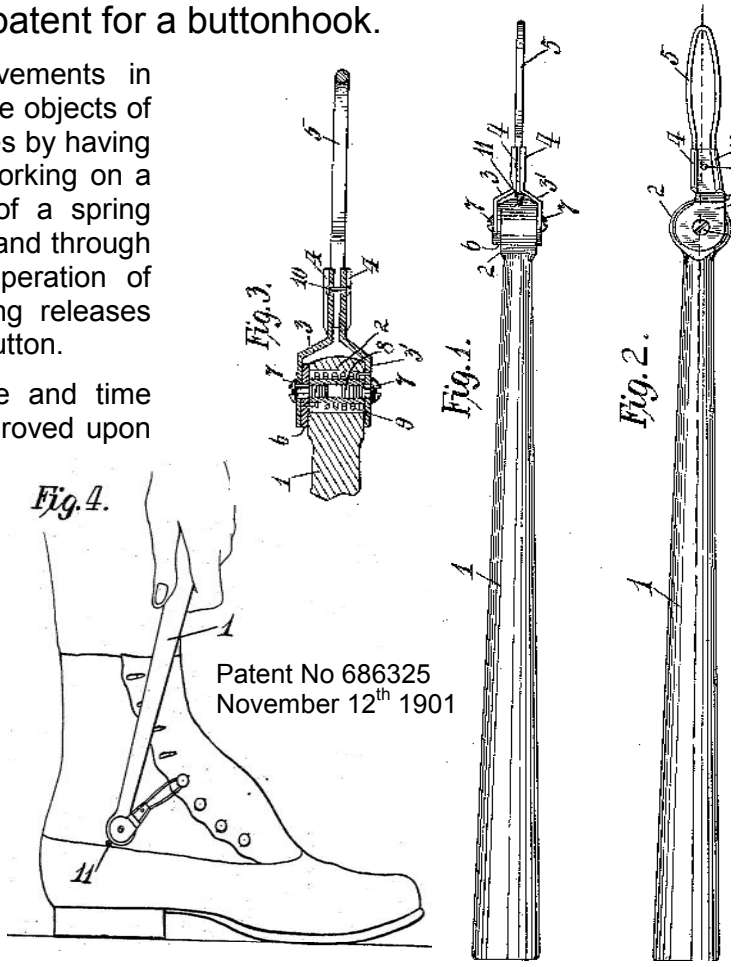
1901 Charles O'Connor's patent for a buttonhook.

His invention relates to improvements in hooks for buttoning shoes; and the objects of his improvement is to button shoes by having a hook attached to the handle working on a hinge or pivot and by means of a spring bringing the button directly up to and through the buttonhole and after the operation of buttoning is completed the spring releases the hook automatically from the button.

Similar buttonhooks appear time and time again, often the inventor has improved upon a similar idea.

This one certainly has the feel of Wm Jonathon Keys design patent of 1890.

You may be surprised having persevered to get this far in the book to see the many ingenious ideas that have been forthcoming in such a simple matter as to button ones shoes. Putting ones shoes on was obviously a tricky business, enough to call upon the finest minds to solve the problem!



1901 U.S. President William McKinley Assassinated

On September 6th 1901, President William McKinley spent the morning visiting Niagara Falls with his wife before returning to the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York to spend a few minutes greeting the public. He stood inside the Temple of Music building at the Exposition, ready to begin shaking the hands of the public as they streamed into the building. Many had been waiting for hours outside in the heat for their chance to meet the President. Unbeknownst to anyone, among those waiting outside was 28-year-old anarchist Leon Czolgosz who was planning to kill the President.

At 4 p.m. the doors to the building were opened and the mass of people waiting outside were forced into a single line as they entered the Temple of Music building. The line of people came up to the president in an organized fashion, with just enough time to whisper a "Nice to meet you, Mr. President," shake President McKinley's hand, and then be forced to continue along the line and out the door again.

President McKinley, the 25th president of the United States, was a popular president who had just started his second term in office and the people seemed clearly glad to get a chance to meet him. However, at 4:07 p.m. Leon Czolgosz had made it into the building and it was his turn to greet the President.

In Czolgosz's right hand, he held a .32 calibre Iver-Johnson revolver, which he had covered by wrapping a handkerchief around the gun and his hand. Although Czolgosz's swaddled hand was noticed before he reached the President, many thought it looked like it covered an injury and not that it was hiding a gun. Also, since the day had been hot, many of the visitors to see the President had been carrying handkerchiefs in their hands so that they could wipe the sweat off their faces.

When Czolgosz reached the President, President McKinley reached out to shake his left hand thinking his right hand was injured. Czolgosz pushed the President’s hand aside and fired two shots into President McKinley's chest.

One of the bullets didn't enter the president; some say it bounced off of a button or off the president's sternum and then got tucked into his clothing. The other bullet, however, entered the president's abdomen, tearing through his stomach, pancreas, and kidney. Shocked at being shot, President McKinley began to sag as blood stained his white shirt. He then told those around him, "Be careful how you tell my wife."

Those in line behind Czolgosz and guards in the room all jumped on Czolgosz and started to punch him. Seeing that the mob on Czolgosz might easily and quickly kill him, President McKinley whispered either, "Don't let them hurt him" or "Go easy on him, boys."

President McKinley was then whisked away in an electric ambulance to the hospital at the Exposition. Unfortunately, the hospital was not properly equipped for such a surgery and the very experienced doctor usually on premises was away doing a surgery in another town. Although several doctors were found, the most experienced doctor that could be found was Dr. Matthew Mann, a gynaecologist. The surgery began at 5:20 p.m.

During the operation, the doctors searched for the remains of the bullet that had entered the President's abdomen, but were unable to locate it. Worried that continued searching would tax the President's body too much, the doctors decided to discontinue looking for it and to sew up what they could. The surgery was completed a little before 7 p.m.

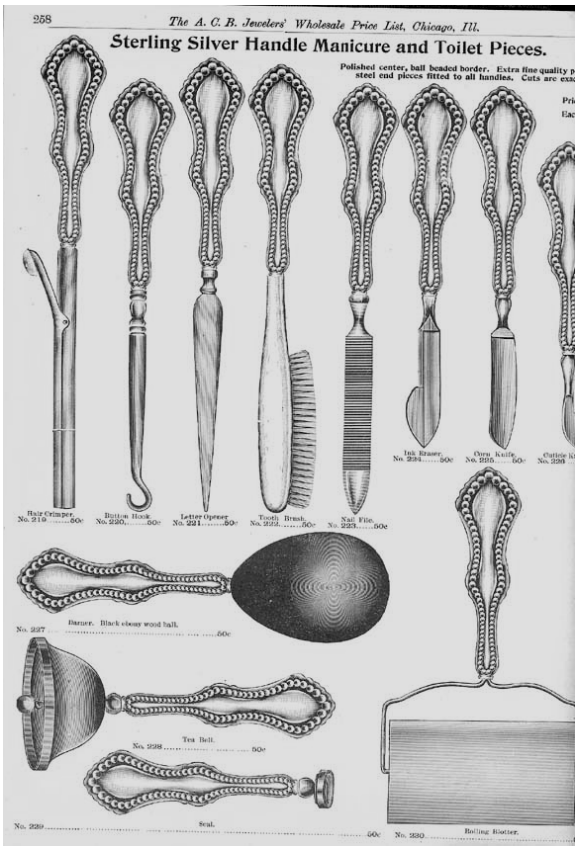
For several days, President McKinley seemed to be getting better. After the shock of the shooting, the nation was excited to hear some good news. However, what the doctors did not realize was that without drainage, an infection had built up inside the President. By

September 13th it was obvious the President was dying. At 2:15 a.m. on September 14, 1901, President William McKinley died of gangrene. That afternoon, Vice President Theodore Roosevelt was sworn in as President of the United States.

Czolgosz was brought to trial on September 23, 1901. He was quickly found guilty and sentenced to death. On October 29, 1901, Leon Czolgosz was electrocuted.

1902 A.C. Becken's Catalogue and Price List

A.C. Becken operated from 103 State Street, Columbus Memorial Building, Chicago, Illinois Their Catalogue of 1902 was for Wholesale Only and concentrated on all manner of fancy goods for the home. Here are two pages from it.



The implements in this set are as seen in the catalogue page above.

The set as shown here appears later in the catalogue and the description is as follows.

Sterling Victorian toiletries set of four pieces in an ornate scroll and dot design: a nail file, 6-1/2", button hook 7-1/4", brush 7", cuticle pusher 5". #a17411

These catalogues give a real insight into what was thought important at the turn of the 20th century.

1903 Nussbaum & Hunold N&H

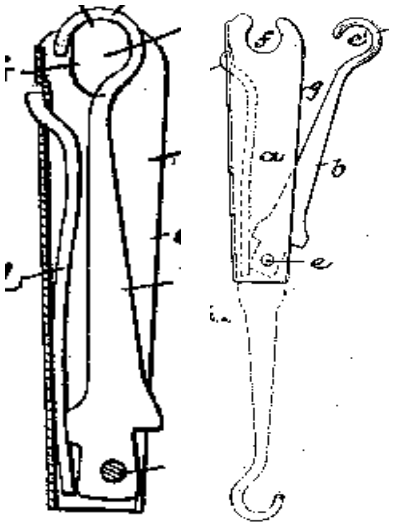
Walter Hunold began this firm in Providence, Rhode Island in 1903. In 1920 it was listed as Nussbaum & Hunold when Benjamin and J Nussbaum joined Walter Hunold. In 1921 it reverted back to Walter Hunold. It was during this short lived partnership that the followig two buttonhooks were made plus the glove hook..

1903 John L Sommer's patent button hook and key ring.

The object of this invention is to enable a folding or clasping button-hook to be suspended from a key-ring or the like, to simplify the construction of the means by which said result is accomplished, and to secure other advantages and results, some of which may be referred to hereinafter in connection with the description of the working parts.

This an actual JLS produced key ring buttonhook with J.L.S MFG CO. NEWARK. N.J. on the top of the hook and PATD APR 14 1903 on the other side.

Some of these hooks have SNAP ON YOUR KEY RING around the top, according to Cynthia Compton.



Patent No 725,166
April 14 1906

1903 Wright Brothers achieve first powered flight

On the 17th December 1903, near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Orville and Wilbur Wright make the first successful flight in history of a self-propelled, heavier-than-air aircraft. Orville piloted the gasoline-powered, propeller-driven biplane, which stayed aloft for 12 seconds and covered 120 feet on its inaugural flight.

Orville and Wilbur Wright grew up in Dayton, Ohio, and developed an interest in aviation after learning of the glider flights of the German engineer Otto Lilienthal in the 1890s. Unlike their older brothers, Orville and Wilbur did not attend college, but they possessed extraordinary technical ability and a sophisticated approach to solving problems in mechanical design. They built printing presses and in 1892 opened a bicycle sales and repair shop. Soon, they were building their own bicycles, and this experience, combined with profits from their various businesses, allowed them to pursue actively their dream of building the world's first airplane.

Orville and Wilbur Wright

After exhaustively researching other engineers' efforts to build a heavier-than-air, controlled aircraft, the Wright brothers wrote to the U.S. Weather Bureau inquiring about a suitable place to conduct glider tests. They settled on Kitty Hawk, an isolated village on North Carolina's Outer Banks, which offered steady winds and sand dunes from which to glide and land softly. Their first glider, tested in 1900, performed poorly, but a new design, tested in 1901, was more successful. Later that year, they built a wind tunnel where they tested nearly 200 wings and airframes of different shapes and designs. The brothers' systematic experimentations paid off and they flew hundreds of successful flights in their 1902 glider at Kill Devils Hills near Kitty Hawk. Their biplane glider featured a steering system, based on a movable rudder that solved the problem of controlled flight. They were now ready to undertake a powered flight.

In Dayton, they designed a 12-horsepower internal combustion engine with the assistance of machinist Charles Taylor and built a new aircraft to house it. They transported their aircraft in pieces to Kitty Hawk in the autumn of 1903, assembled it, made a few further tests, and on December 14th Orville made the first attempt at powered flight. The engine stalled during take-off and the plane was damaged, and they spent three days repairing it. Then at 10:35 a.m. on December 17th, in front of five witnesses, the aircraft ran down a monorail track and into the air, staying aloft for 12 seconds and flying 120 feet. The modern aviation age was born. Three more tests were made that day, with Wilbur and Orville alternately flying the airplane. Wilbur flew the last flight, covering 852 feet in 59 seconds.

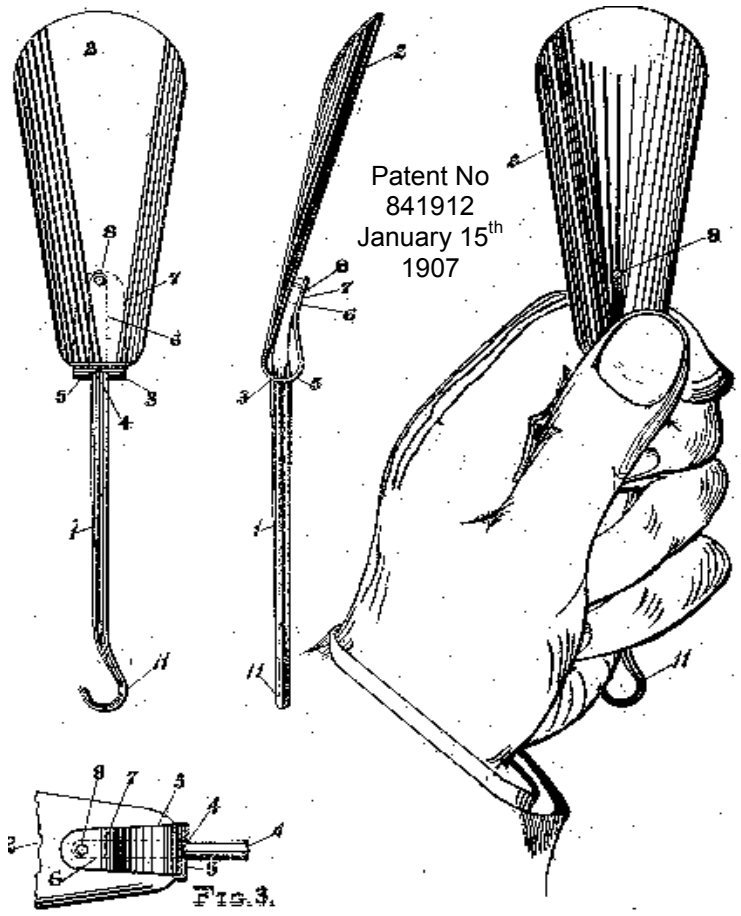
During the next few years, the Wright brothers further developed their airplanes but kept a low profile about their successes in order to secure patents and contracts for their flying machines. By 1905, their aircraft could perform complex manoeuvres and remain aloft for up to 39 minutes at a time. In 1908, they travelled to France and made their first public flights, arousing widespread public excitement. In 1909, the U.S. Army's Signal Corps purchased a specially constructed plane, and the brothers founded the Wright Company to build and market their aircraft. Wilbur Wright died of typhoid fever in 1912; Orville lived until 1948.

The historic Wright brothers' aircraft of 1903 is on permanent display at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

1907 J L Sommer's patent for a combined buttoner and horn

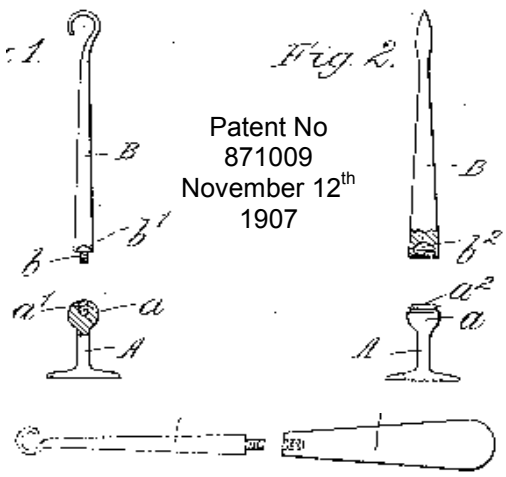
Yes our old friend John Sommer is at it again. His explanation is simple as to objective but the explanation as to how it all is put together goes on for pages.

The object of this invention is to combine in a single implement a shoe-horn and shoe buttoner, to secure a simple and yet secure fastening of the two "parts together", to provide such a construction which shall be convenient and comfortable to the grasp, to save cost and labor in the manufacture, and to obtain other advantages and results as may be brought out



1907 Frenchman's patent

Jonas Varet, a citizen of the Republic of France, residing at 522 Caledonian Road, has invented a buttoner that may be used on fastening of collars without disfiguring the latter, and the primary object of the present invention is to facilitate that operation, and to enable the same to be accomplished without injury to the shirt, collar or the like.



The invention also has for its object to enable buttons, such as those applied to gloves and other articles of wearing apparel, to be readily passed through their button holes.

According to the said invention, I employ a tool or instrument, hereinafter termed the buttoner, adapted to be detachably secured at one of its ends to the stud or button in such manner that the tool and stud or button are rigidly secured together, the buttoner then serves as a handle by which the stud or button can be drawn through the holes in the collar or other article, without the necessity of applying pressure or support to the back of the stud or button, after which the said buttoner can be disengaged from the stud or button. According to one form of construction, the head or other convenient part of the stud or button is formed or otherwise provided with a fastening device for engagement with the buttoner, the latter co-acting therewith. The free or outer end of said buttoner may be fashioned as a button hook, or other useful instrument.

1907 Plastic buttonhooks

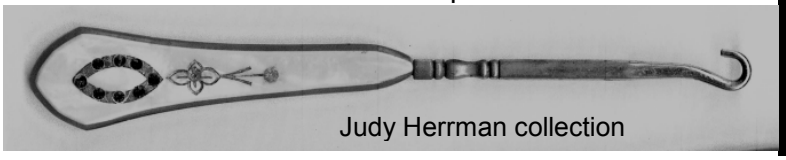
Polyoxybenzylmethylenglycolanhydride**,** Is an early plastic. It is a thermosetting phenol formaldehyde resin, formed from an elimination reaction of phenol with formaldehyde. It was developed by Belgian born chemist Leo Baekeland in New York in 1907. Thus Bakelite, the first true plastic as we know it today was born.

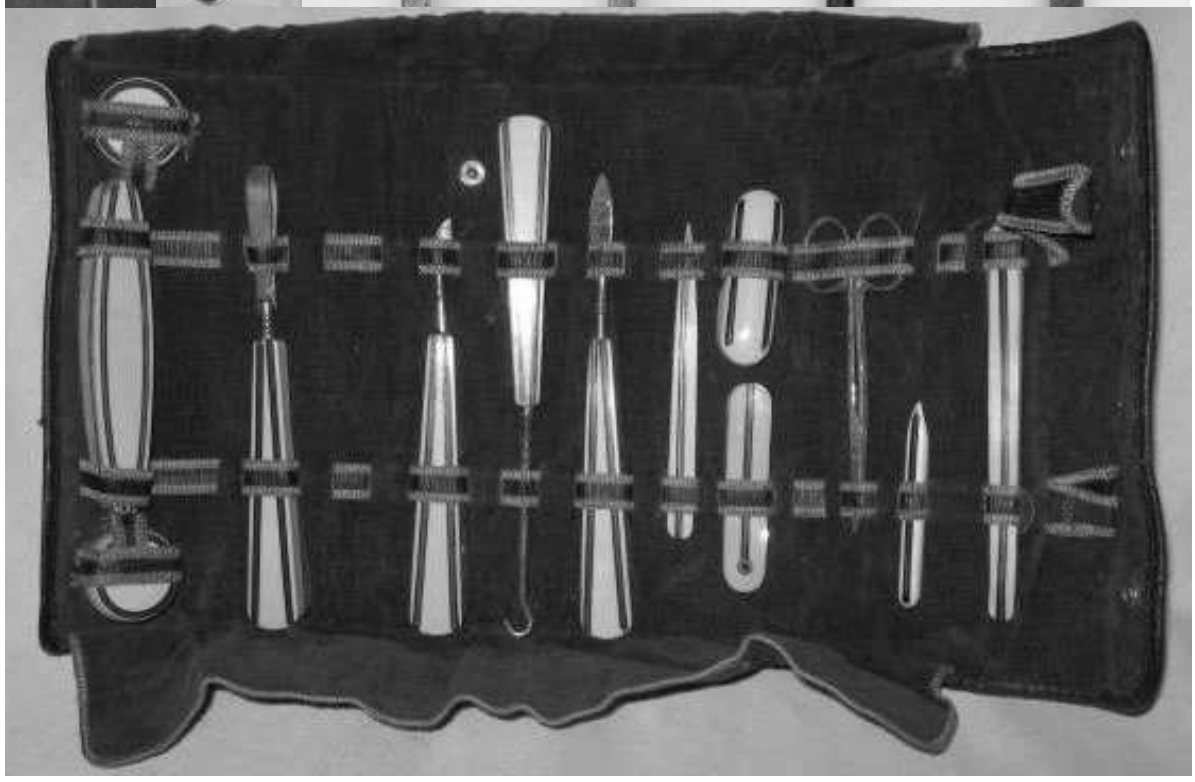
We have seen the breakthrough that Whitehead and Hoag made with celluloid; bakelite moved it on again. From this, more plastics developed and during the 1920's; the flapper era, plastic was the in thing. It was thought of as modern and cutting edge. Nowadays we tend to think of plastic as cheap and nasty, yet in 1916 Rolls Royce introduced.plastic into their car interiors and made a feature of it.

The new material was not only used for new designs but because of its properties, as a vehicle for advertising.

It also introduced the possibility of replacing previously used materials from endangered species, such as the Hawksbill Turtle and Ivory. These industries were virtually wiped out overnight. It also later spawned a new industry; fakes!

The Jockey and the leg were offered for sale in the J L Sommer catalog in the early 20's They were sold by the dozen but we do not know the prices.





1908 Henry Ford introduces the Model T

On October 1st 1908, the first production Model T Ford was completed at the company's Piquette Avenue plant in Detroit. Between 1908 and 1927, Ford would build some 15 million Model T cars. It was the longest production run of any automobile model in history until the Volkswagen Beetle surpassed it in 1972.

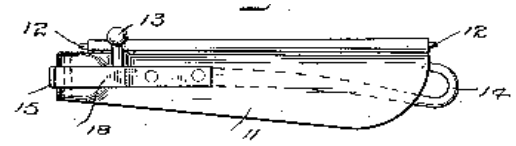
Before the Model T, cars were a luxury item. At the beginning of 1908, there were fewer than 200,000 on the road. Though the Model T was fairly expensive at first costing $825, or about $18,000 in today's dollars, it was built for ordinary people to drive every day. It had a 22-horsepower, four-cylinder engine and was made of a new kind of heat-treated steel, pioneered by French race car makers, that made it lighter at just 1,200 pounds, and stronger than its predecessors had been. It could go as fast as 40 miles per hour and could run on gasoline or hemp-based fuel.

When oil prices dropped in the early 20th century, making gasoline more affordable, Ford phased out the hemp option. "No car under $2,000 offers more," the adverts crowed, "and no car over $2,000 offers more except the trimmings."

Ford kept prices low by sticking to a single product. By building just one model, the company's engineers developed a system of interchangeable parts that reduced waste, saved time and made it easy for unskilled workers to assemble the cars. By 1914, the moving assembly line made it possible to produce thousands of cars every week and by 1924, workers at the River Rouge Ford plant in Dearborn, Michigan could cast more than 10,000 Model T cylinder blocks in a day.

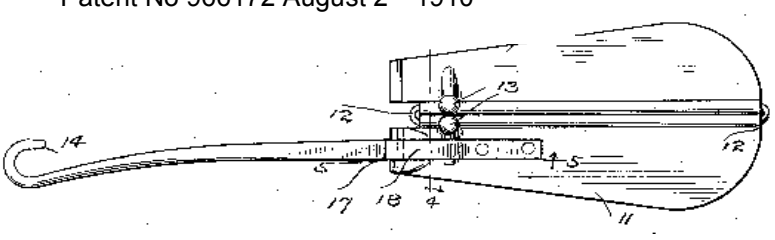
But by the 1920s, many Americans wanted more than just a sturdy, affordable car. They wanted style. Henry Ford's assertion that customers could have any colour they liked as long as it was black, was no longer and they wanted speed and luxury too. As tastes changed, the era of the Model T came to an end and the last one rolled off the assembly line on May 26th 1927.

1910 Davidoff's patent combined shoe horn and button hook.



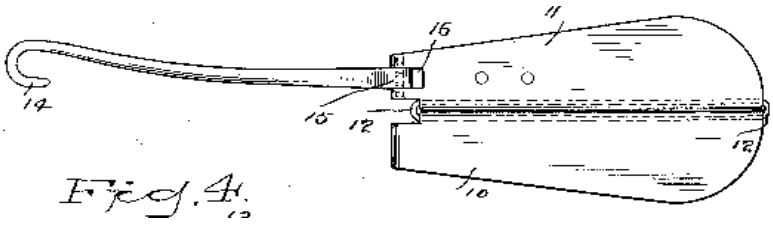
LOUIS DAVIDOFF of Stamford, county of Fairfield, State of Connecticut, invented an Improvement in Combined Shoe-Horns and Button-Hooks, of which the following is a specification.

Patent No 966172 August 2nd 1910



This invention has for its object to provide a folding shoe horn which shall serve as a case for a folding buttonhook and shall also be adapted to be detachably connected to a chain and to serve as an

anchor for one end of a double watch chain.



From the above it seems straightforward, however there is something strange about it because when it was actually produced, it is as shown as a later Patent No 1,097,684 May 26th 1914. This was in fact an improvement on the first patent.

When it was made It was shown as being by Simonson and the original Patent Number 966,172 was on it. The inscription on the inside flap actually reads.

UNITED STATES PATENT 966172
ROGER A. SIMONSON, CHICAGO.

The other strange fact is that in the second patent, Simonson claims it as his own, yet it is clearly the invention of Louis Davidoff. Now isn't that odd?

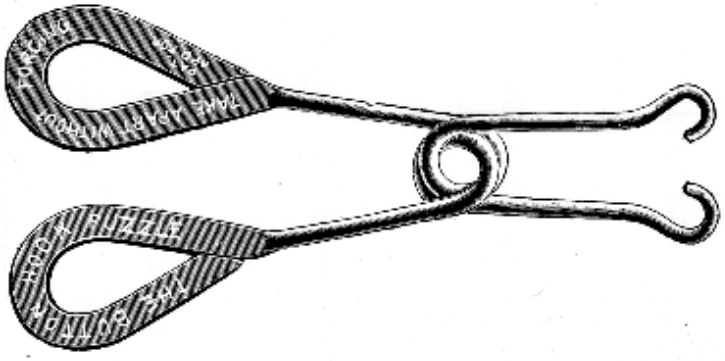
1910 Macomber Mfg Co MM Co.

Although listed in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1910, nothing is known about this company

1910 Puzzle hooks

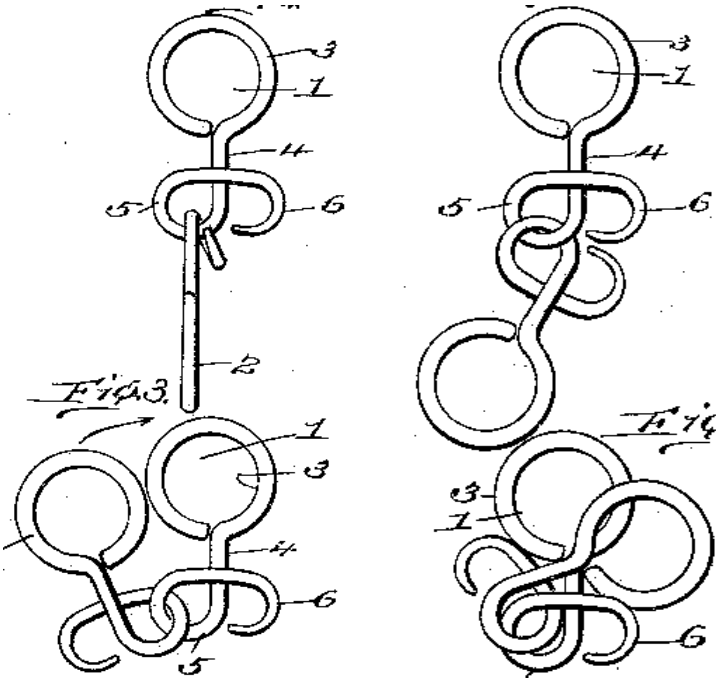
This example of puzzle hooks appears in the J L Sommer catalogue. Pg 15.

Only one patent has been found for puzzles which appear to be just for puzzles but a buttonhook is mentioned in the text.



1910 Joergen Von Brethorst puzzles

This has been included because many buttonhooks have taken the form of a puzzle.



Be it known that I, JOERGEN VON BRETHORST, a citizen of the United States, residing at Paxton, in the county of Ford and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Puzzles; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

This invention relates to improvements in puzzles, and has for an object the arrangement of entwined members, simple in form but so constructed as to require a plurality of turns or movements before the same are separated.

A still further object in view is the arrangement in a puzzle, of a pair of entwined members, identical in construction which when straightened out have the form of a button-hook.

The slogan on both shafts of the double hook shown reads READ PEARSON'S WEEKLY. This was a British magazine featuring the thoughts of all the luminaries of the time. It was first published in 1896.

1911 Joseph Johnson's strange buttonhook.

This is a most curious invention. Here are Joseph Johnson's claims: -

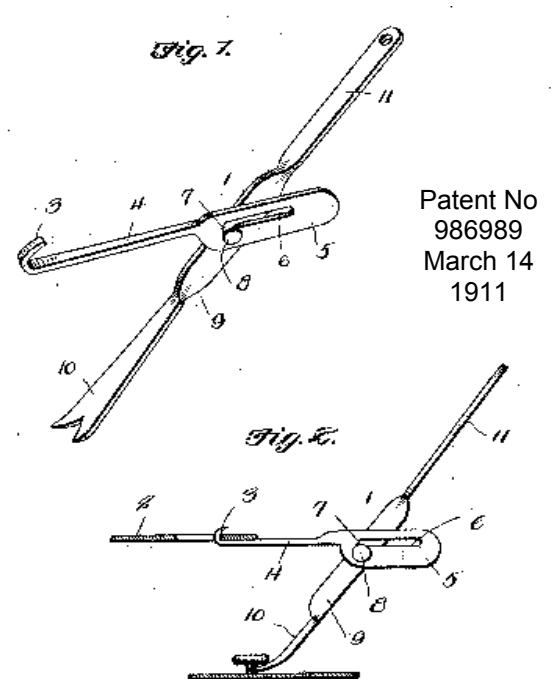
Be it known that I, Joseph Johnson, citizen of the United States, residing at Quartzsite, in the county of La Paz, Arizona, have made useful Improvements in Button-Hooks, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to new and useful improvements in button hooks or fasteners and has for an object to provide a device by which shoes or the like may be very quickly and easily fastened with little or no strain which might tend to either loosen the buttons or stretch and enlarge the button holes.

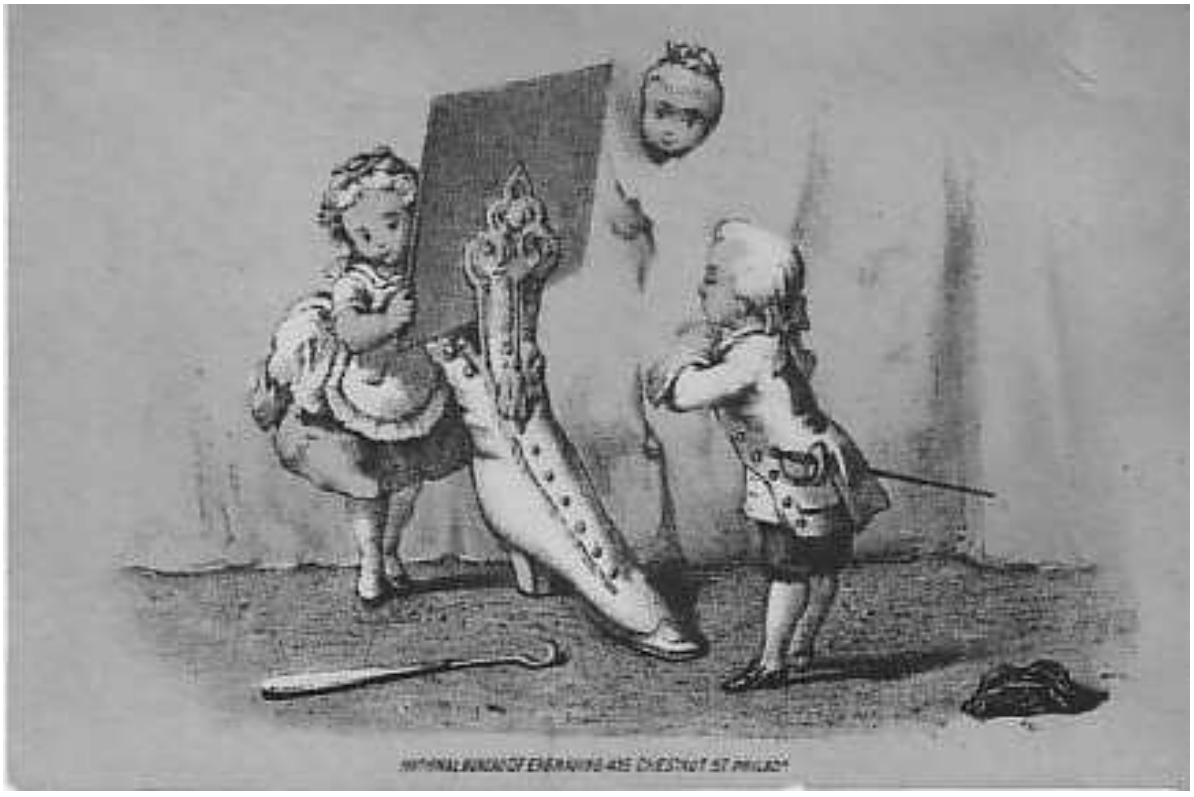
Another object of this invention is to construct a button fastener comprising a hooked arm adapted to engage a button-hole and a lever secured thereto and provided with a claw foot adapted to engage a button and be so manipulated as to force the button through the button-hole.

A further object is the provision of a button hook consisting of but few parts which are so simple in construction that the device as a whole can 'be manufactured at a minimum cost.

In order to accomplish these desiderata, this invention consists in certain novel features of construction, combinations and arrangements of parts to be hereinafter more fully described, claimed and illustrated in the accompanying drawing



Patent No 986989 March 14 1911



1912 National Bureau of Engraving and Manufacturing Company

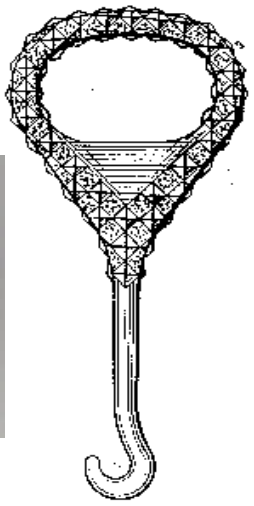
Henry Pennington, founder of the National Bureau of Engraving and Manufacturing Company died 24th December 1912. The Bureau was established in 1876 by partners Joseph Carpenter, R. Evans Peterson, Charles E. Mass, and Henry Pennington (also of

The Philadelphia Bank Note Company), operated in Philadelphia until 1909. The firm, created for the purpose of "designing and printing labels, show cards, bonds, checks, drafts, and other work and engraving when that process was required," originally operated from Second and Gold Streets, then 435 Chestnut Street, and from 510-512 Pine Street by 1878. Work produced bythe National Bureau includes an interesting 1880 advertisement using allegorical imagery for A. Marschall & Co. entitled "American Triumph" and a chromolithographic advertisement showing the manufacturing of coke at the works of H. C. Frick Company in 1885.

By 1880, the company maintained a branch in Burlington, N. J. and by the late 1880s was reported to have branches in "leading cities of the United States." The firm remained in business until 1909 with Henry Pennington as manager at 652 Philadelphia Bourse despite the company being sold at sheriff's sale in 1889 to businessman Enoch Pratt of Baltimore.

1912 Erwin Riechmuth's combined bottle opener and buttonhook.

Erwin Riechmuth, a citizen of the United States, residing at Denver, in the county of Denver and State of Colorado claimed to have invented a new, original, and ornamental Design for a bottle opener and button hook, as shown here.



No D42611
June 11th 1912

His idea was certaily taken up, or at least copied as you can see here with this combined bottle opener and buttonhook which has the slogan around the top CROWN CORK OPENER.

1910 Remington's amazing combination tool

To all whom it may concern Be it known that I, THOMAS A. REMINGTON, of Crystal Lake, County of McHenry, and State of Illinois, have invented a new and useful Improvement in. Combination- Tools, of which the following is a specification.

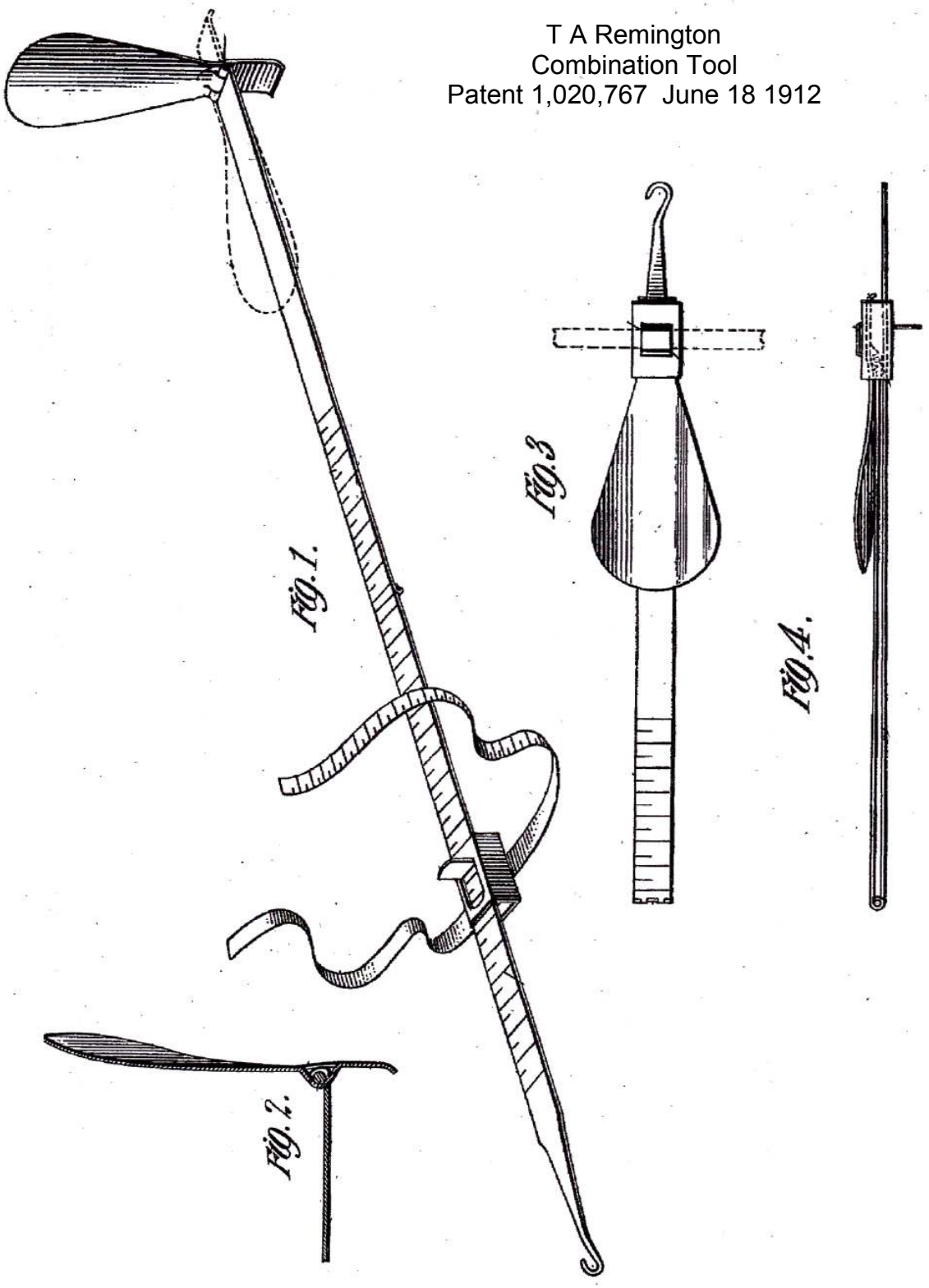
This invention relates to a combination tool designed for use by shoe dealers and salesmen, and the invention consists of a single structure in which there is combined, in neat, foldable and compact arrangement, a button-hook, a shoe-horn and a foot measure.

The structure embodying these several elements comprises, in its preferred form, a body portion consisting of folding sections provided with measuring graduations, a button-hook on the end of one of the sections, a shoe-horn connected with the other section so as to serve as a heel" stop in measuring the foot, and hinged thereto to fold against the section, whereby the device may be folded into compact form with the sections and shoe-horn lying flatly side by side.

The invention also consists in combining with the graduated body portion, a sliding member formed to constitute a toe-stop to cooperate with the heel-stop in measuring the length of

the foot, and adapted to carry a measuring tape for measuring the transverse dimensions of the foot, the said sliding member being adapted also to hold the parts of the device in folded condition.

T A Remington
Combination Tool
Patent 1,020,767 June 18 1912

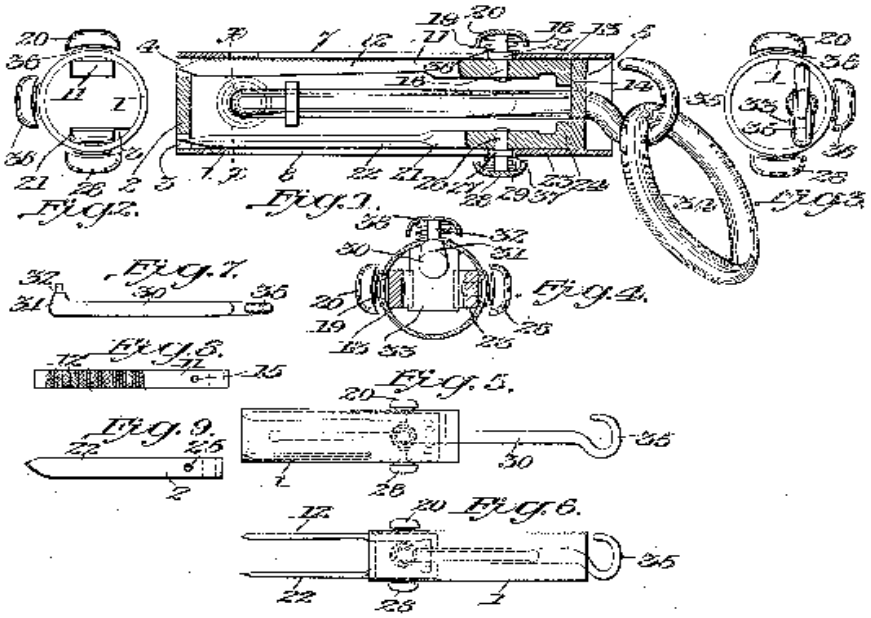


1913 Bruecker's combination tool

At first sight this looks extremely complicated but the mists clear when you look at Figures 5 and 6.

John Bruecker sets his stall out from the start.

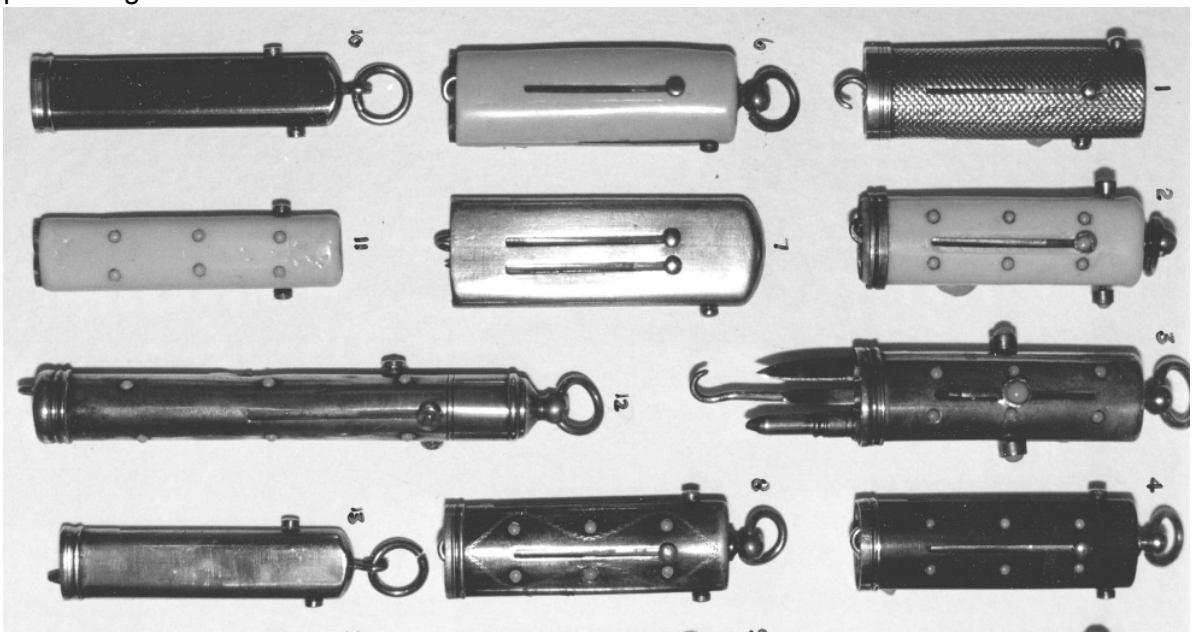
It is well known that a button hook is often indispensable and is inconvenient a device to carry, and yet is desirable to have in the pocket, particularly upon the train when a man is travelling long distances with the family.



Patent No 1,057,525 April 1st 1913

The object of my invention is to provide a pocket tool in which a button hook is conveniently combined with a knife blade and file in the same containing casing, so arranged that when the button hook is withdrawn for use it is impossible to withdraw the knife-blade or file, either by accident or by design; the whole being combined in a convenient and compact relation.

My invention consists of a cylindrical metallic casing closed at its ends and having a series of longitudinal slots from which the operating parts are suspended, and by which they are guided in their extension and withdrawal; a knife blade, a file blade, and a button hook all slidably mounted in the said casing; means for operating the same; and means for preventing the extension of the said blade or either of them when the button hook is in use.

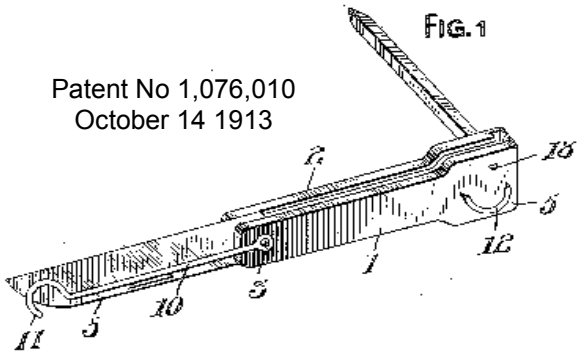


1913 Pocket implement by John Cameron

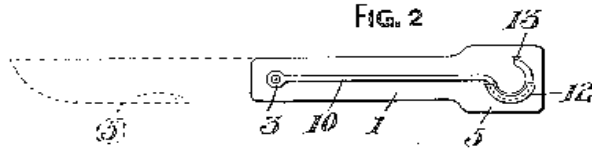
This is just like a knife except the buttonhook swings alongside the scale.

Be it known that I, JOHN S. CAMERON, a citizen of the United States of America, residing at McKeesport, in the county of Allegheny and State of Pennsylvania, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Pocket Implements, of which the following is a specification, reference being had therein to the accompanying drawing.

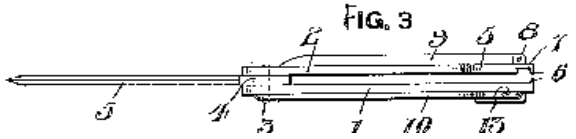
Patent No 1,076,010
October 14 1913



This invention relates to a pocket implement, and has for its object to provide, in a manner as hereinafter set forth, a shoe or glove buttoner which can be folded when not in use and conveniently carried in the pocket.



A further object of this invention is to provide an implement of the above type that is inexpensive to manufacture, not liable to injury for ordinary use, and highly efficient for various purposes.

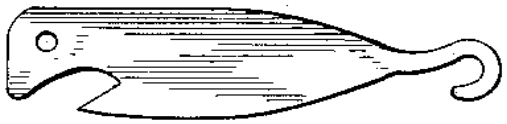


There is a lug that is a nut picker or nail cleaner that can be swung at right angles to the side plate 2, as best shown in Fig. 1.

A design for a bottle opener and buttonhook.

Be it known that I, RALPH H. FOSTER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Jersey City, in the county of Hudson State of New Jersey, have invented a new, combination bottle opener and button hook.

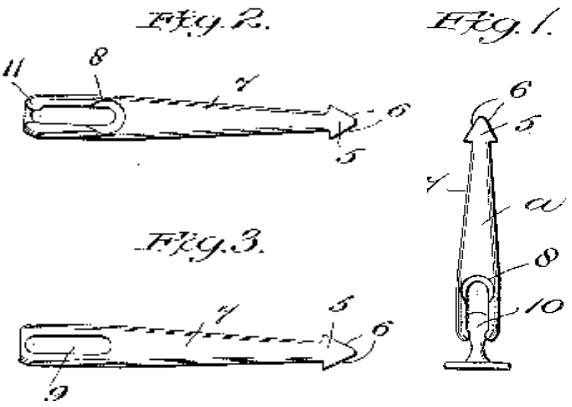
The ornamental design for a bottle opener original, and ornamental Design for a Bottle-Opener and Button-Hook, of which the following drawing.



Design Patent No 44,839
November 4 1913

William Goldstein's collar buttoner No 1,084,424 January 13th 1914

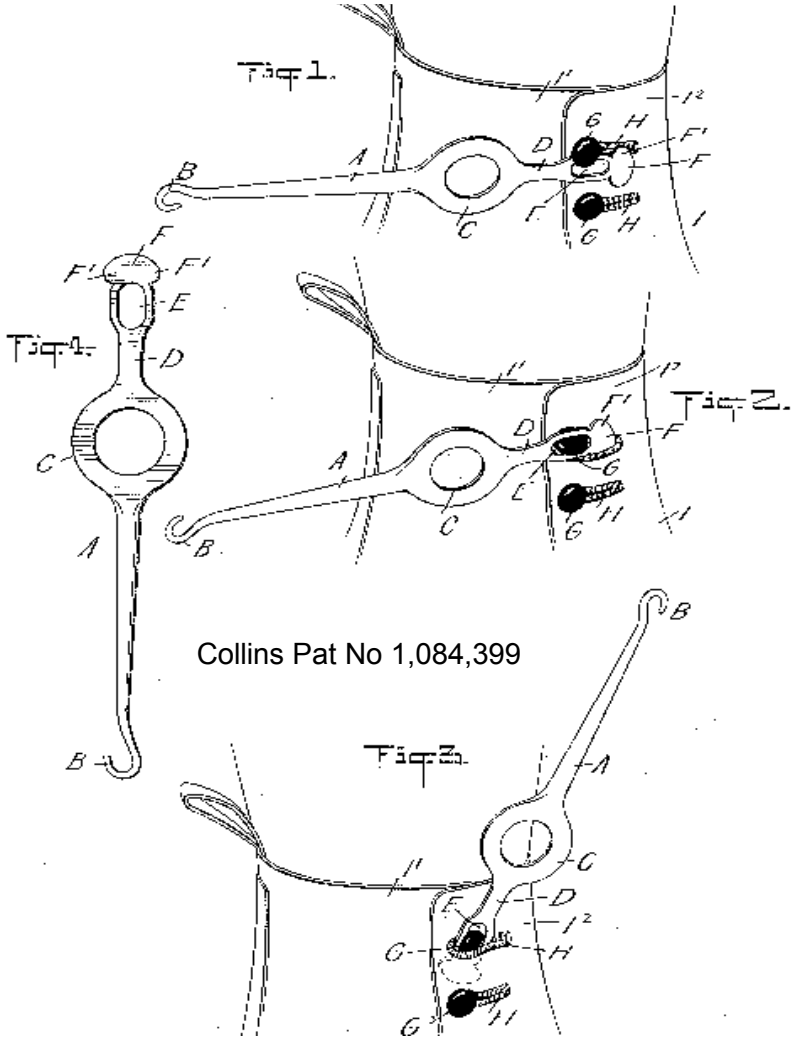
The object of the invention is to admit of the easy insertion of the collar button connecting the lapping parts of the collar band of a shirt, into the button holes of the lapping parts of a collar. And to this end the invention consists in a collar buttoner adapted to interlock with and surround the head of the front collar button and to pass through and gradually expand the button holes of the collar until the head of the collar button has passed through.



Charles Collins unbuttoning device Patent No 1,084,399 Jan 13 1914

To all whom it may concern Be it known that I, CHARLES E. COLLINS, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the city of New York, borough of Manhattan, in the county and State of New York, have invented a new and Improved Unbuttoning Implement, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

The object of the invention is to provide a new and improved implement for quickly unbuttoning buttoned shoes without danger of unduly straining the buttons or injuring the buttonholes and without requiring much physical exertion or skill on the part of the user or operator.



Collins Pat No 1,084,399

In order to accomplish the desired result use is made of a handle provided with a flat shank having an elongated aperture and a fiat head at the end of the shank, and having its sides projecting beyond the sides of the shank.

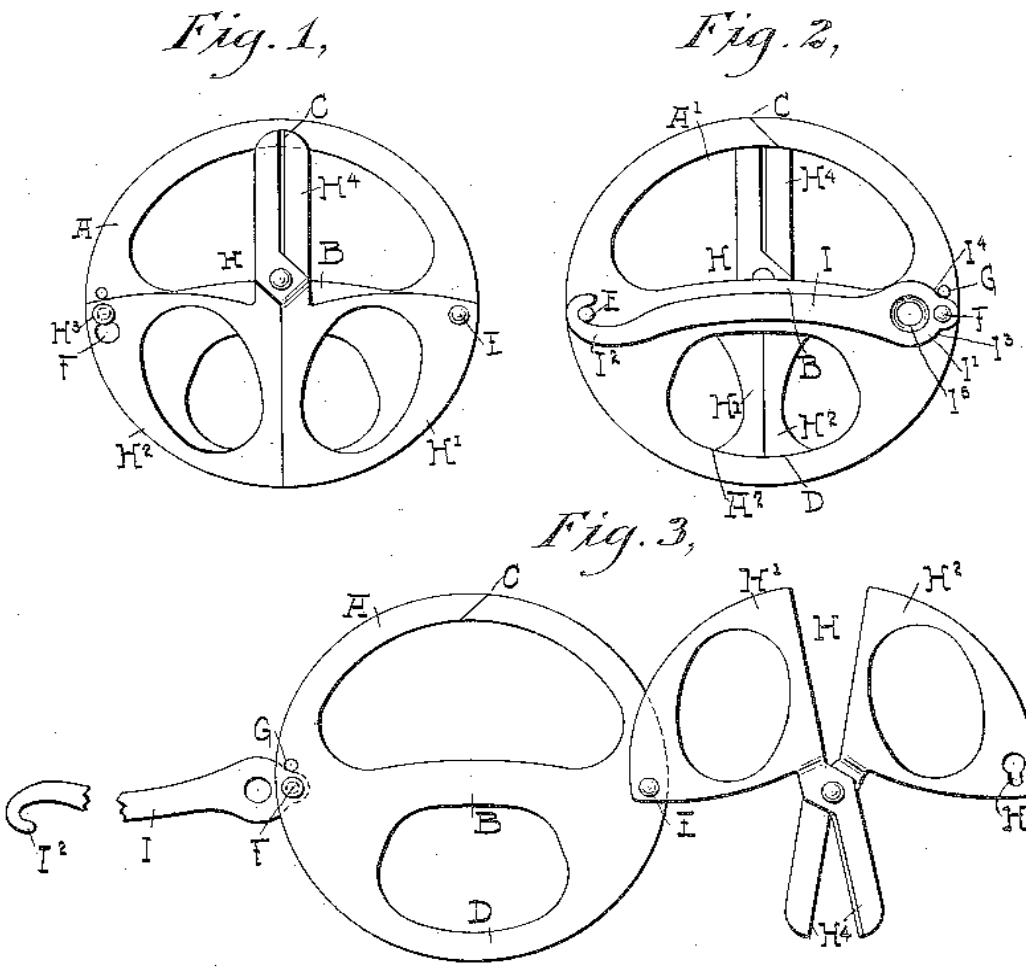
1914 The Kalina combination tool.

This is a favourite among all buttonhook collectors, due to its ingenuity and multifarious uses. As is here explained.

Be it known that I, LOESER KALINA, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the city of New York, borough of Brooklyn, in the county of Kings and State of New York, have invented a new and Improved Combination-Tool, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

The object of the invention is to provide a new and improved combination tool embracing a key ring, scissors, button hook, cigar cutter and bottle opener and arranged to take up very little space when the several devices are in folded position thus allowing of conveniently carrying the combination tool in a vest pocket.

There then follows a two page explanation as to how this is to be accomplished.



Patent No1,093,432
April 14 1914

The HESUAH combination buttonhook

22nd June 1914 Archduke Franz Ferdinand assasinated

In an event that is widely acknowledged to have sparked the outbreak of World War I, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, nephew of Emperor Franz Josef and heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, is shot to death along with his wife by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo, Bosnia, on this day in 1914.

The great Prussian statesman Otto von Bismarck, the man most responsible for the unification of Germany in 1871, was quoted as saying at the end of his life that "One day the great European War will come out of some damned foolish thing in the Balkans." It went as he predicted.

The archduke travelled to Sarajevo in June 1914 to inspect the imperial armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Ottoman territories in the turbulent Balkan region that were annexed by Austria-Hungary in 1908 to the indignation of Serbian nationalists, who believed they should become part of the newly independent and ambitious Serbian nation. The date scheduled for his visit, June 28, coincided with the anniversary of the First Battle of Kosovo in 1389, in which medieval Serbia was defeated by the Turks. Despite the fact that Serbia did not truly lose its independence until the Second Battle of Kosovo in 1448, June 28 was a day of great significance to Serbian nationalists, and one on which they could be expected to take exception to a demonstration of Austrian imperial strength in Bosnia.

June 28 was also Franz Ferdinand's wedding anniversary. His beloved wife, Sophie, a former lady-in-waiting, was denied royal status in Austria due to her birth as a poor Czech aristocrat, as were the couple's children. In Bosnia, however, due to its limbo status as an annexed territory, Sophie could appear beside him at official proceedings. On June 28th 1914, Franz Ferdinand and Sophie were touring Sarajevo in an open car, with surprisingly little security, when Serbian nationalist Nedjelko Cabrinovic threw a bomb at their car; it rolled off the back of the vehicle and wounded an officer and some bystanders. Later that day, on the way to visit the injured officer, the archduke's procession took a wrong turn at the junction of Appel quay and Franzjosefstrasse, where one of Cabrinovic's cohorts, 19-year-old Gavrilo Princip, happened to be loitering.

Seeing his opportunity, Princip fired into the car, shooting Franz Ferdinand and Sophie at point-blank range. Princip then turned the gun on himself, but was prevented from shooting it by a bystander who threw himself upon the young assassin. A mob of angry onlookers attacked Princip, who fought back and was subsequently wrestled away by the police. Meanwhile, Franz Ferdinand and Sophie lay fatally wounded in their limousine as it rushed to seek help; they both died within the hour.

The assassination of Franz-Ferdinand and Sophie set off a rapid chain of events: Austria-Hungary, like many in countries around the world, blamed the Serbian government for the attack and hoped to use the incident as justification for settling the question of Slav nationalism once and for all. As Russia supported Serbia, an Austro-Hungarian declaration of war was delayed until its leaders received assurances from German leader Kaiser

Wilhelm that Germany would support their cause in the event of a Russian intervention which would likely involve Russia's ally, France, and possibly Britain as well. On July 28th, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, and the tenuous peace between Europe's great powers collapsed. Within a week, Russia, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Serbia had lined up against Austria-Hungary and Germany, and World War I had begun.

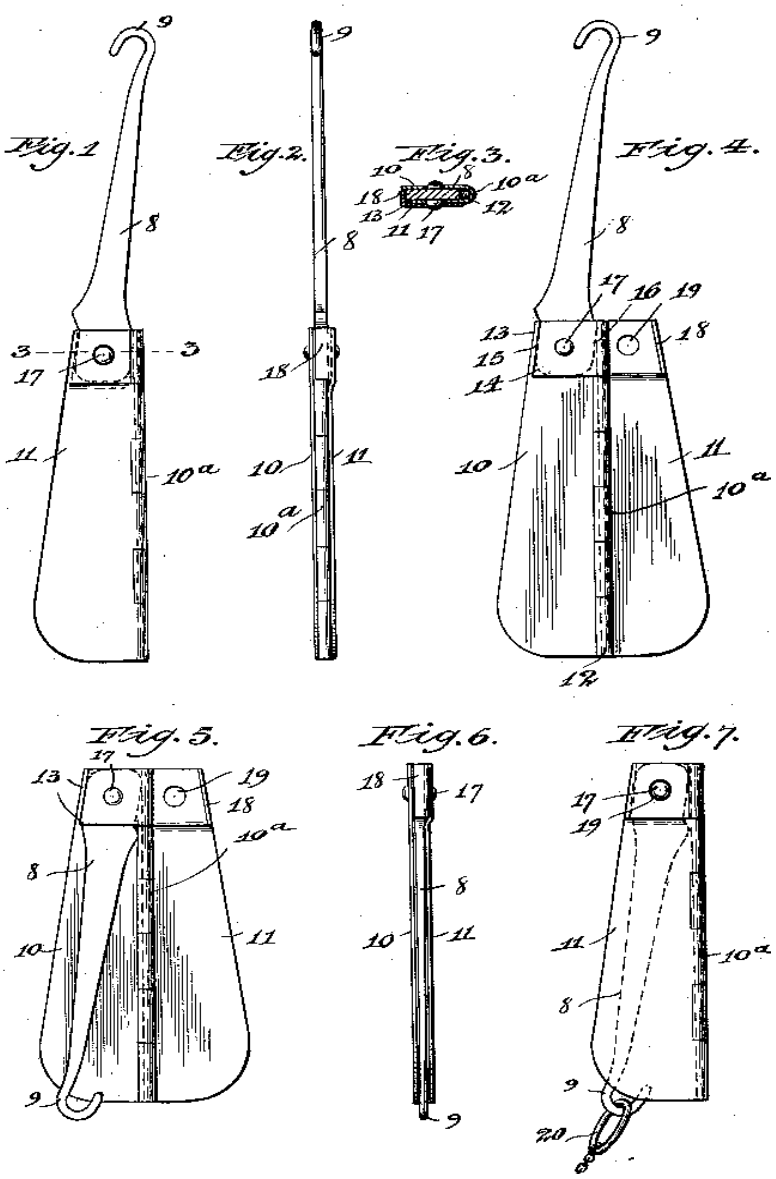
1914 Another combination of buttonhook and shoe horn.

Once again Roger Simonson is offering an improvement on a previous invention, which looks pretty similar, (page 136) as he explains: -

Be it known that I, Roger A. Simonson, a citizen of the United States, residing in Chicago, county of Cook, and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Combination Tools, of which the following is the specification.

My present invention is in the nature of a combination tool and more specifically resides in a device adapted to serve the function of a button-hook and shoe-horn, such as shown and described in Letters Patent of the United States, No. 1,050,242, dated January 14th, 1913, and issued to me.

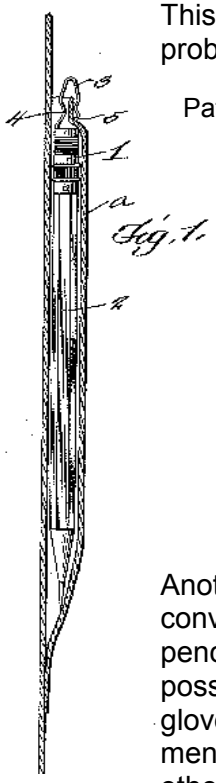
In the construction shown in my former patent the button-hook tends to turn upon its pivot when the device is being used for a button-hook and my present invention is designed to provide means to prevent the collapsing of the hook when in either an open or folded position.



Patent No 1,097,684 May 26 1914

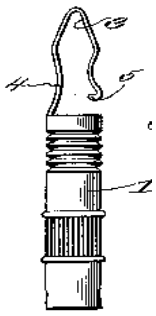
Another improvement over my former patent resides in making the shank of the button-hook of such length that the hook end will project beyond the body of the device so as to form an eye to receive a key ring and it being desirable to hold the hook end in closed position. I have therefore made the same means which holds the button-hook in open position, also hold it in closed position.

1914 An ingenious invention of a buttonhook as a pencil ferrule.



This invention by Robert Brunswick is portrayed as the answer to a perceived problem of the masses in 1914, as he sets out in his patent.

Patent No1,104,244
July 21 1914



Be it known that I, ROBERT B. BRUNSWICK, a citizen of the United States, residing at Philadelphia, in the county of Philadelphia and State of Pennsylvania, have invented a new and useful Button-Hook Attachment for Pencil-Ferrules; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

This invention relates to a new and useful buttonhook attachment for pencil ferrules.

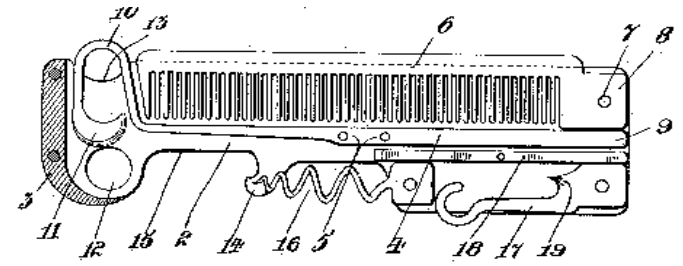
One of the objects of the invention is the provision of a device of this nature having desirable and practical features of construction.

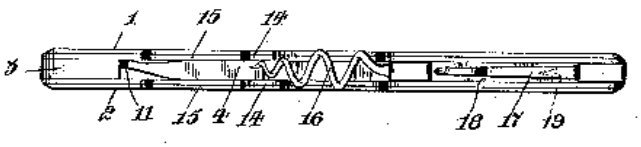
Another object of the invention is the provision of a buttonhook that is always convenient upon ones person, for instance a lady, as a rule, carries a small pencil by which she is able to make memorandums when shopping, and by possessing the pencil, the buttonhook is always convenient in order to fasten her gloves. This same rule holds good relative to pencils that may be carried by, men. In other words, a man having a pencil for his office work or for making other notes, while not in the office, likewise has a convenient buttonhook to fasten the gloves or the like.

1914 A cigar cutter combined with other implements

This most ingenious combination does include a buttonhook but it's primary objective is the cigar cutter as is explained.

Be it known that I JOSEPH CHARLES AUGUSTE LABRECHE, a subject of the King of Great Britain, and resident at Edmonton, in the Province of Alberta in the Dominion of Canada, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Cigar Cutting Tools, which has for its object simple and compact pocket tool with which the casing and any other tools. such as a pocket comb Knife or the like may be readily combined.





Patent No1,109,073 September 1 1914

Labreche suggests that the other tools that could be included as well as the cigar cutter are a buttonhook, a nail scraper, a comb, plus crown stopper remover and a cork puller. All in all it is a most ingenious gadget

Labreche's Toilet Necessity

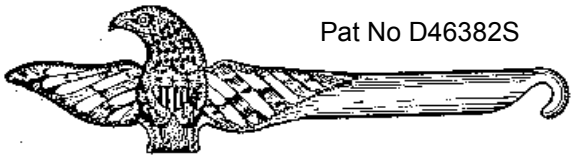
This Labreche's gadget which was described as: -

An unusual gentleman's gadget with corkscrew, knife, bottle opener, buttonhook and comb. It is nickel plated and marked "Labreche's Toilet Necessity, Patented 6th June 1911. This is the Canadian Patent of Labreche, who also had a 1914 USA patent. One end opens up, for storing small items such as matches or a toothbrush.

As you can see it is exactly as the US patent shown above. Labreche obviously felt he needed to patent it in America to get bigger sales and to ensure it was not copied.

Interesting to note it has a store area which is not mentioned in the American patent.

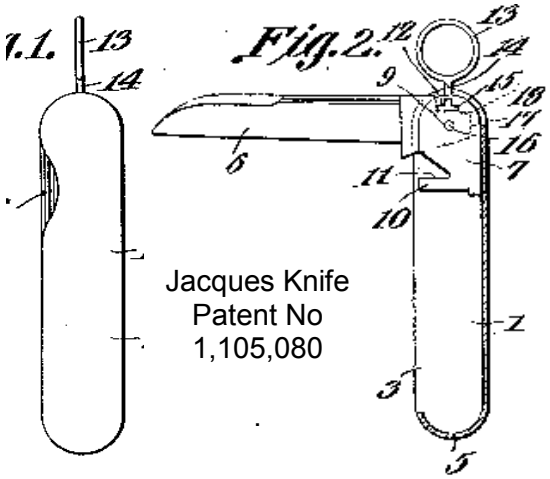
1914 Velenzuala's combination design, September 8th



Pat No D46382S

This is an imaginative design patent by Bernard Velenzuala for a bottle opener and buttonhook. The patent gives no clue as to why the design is a bit Axtec, yet is the American eagle with stars and stripes.

1914 Archile Jacques knife



An object of the present invention is to provide an improved construction in pendants for watch chains whereby the same may be quickly removed from the chain or secured thereto.

A further object is to provide means whereby it will be impossible for the pendant to become lost through accidental detachment from the chain…

From the foregoing it will be apparent that my invention is not limited to pen knife structures but can be suitably employed with watch charms or with a pendant wherein a blade is mounted to rotate adjacent the slots with an enlarged and a restricted portion. The outer formation of the blade may be varied such as to embody a button hook, pencil or similar article which may be used as a watch charm.

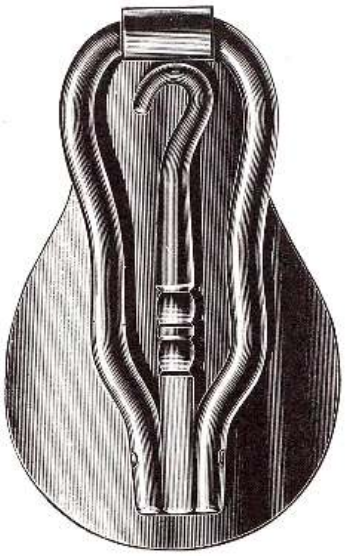
1915 Schmitz, Moore & Company

Schmitz, Moore & Company- Newark, NJ. were manufacturers of sterling silver dresser-ware. Advertisement was listed in Jewelers Circular in 1915. Succeeded by Moore & Hofman between 1915-1922.

All the items made by Schmitz, Moore & Company were in the Art Nouveau style, however this is the only buttonhook found made by them. Their successors, Moore & Hoffman made similar goods but no buttonhooks at all have been found so far.

1915 Design patent for advertising shoe horn and buttonhook

This patent is known to everybody but it was not an invention but a design patent issued to J L Sommers on 24th August 1915. It is illustrated on page 44 of his catalogue and is described as a method of advertising as he demonstrates. This does at least accurately pinpoint from which date this combined shoehorn and buttonhook was made. The fact that some of the advertising on these hooks precedes 1915 indicates that anything advertised was not necessarily made by J L Sommers.



Above from Sommer's catalogue. Middle has a Masonic symbol on the blade of the shoe horn. Right has a commemorative coin fixed to the buttonhook. The coin celebrates the opening of the Panama Canal by the SS Ancon August 15th 1914. Moorehead collection.

Shield Buttonhooks etc.

Some time ago Ian Wood wrote a very interesting article about shields found on button-hooks and included a similar folding hook. In the shield is the Union Station, Chicago.

Ian puts forward two candidates as the makers of these shields, Jennings Brothers Manufacturing Company who operated a foundry in Bridgeport, Connecticut who used the shield widely. The other firm is Kronheimer & Oldenbusch of New York.

All used the same shield on many items. Many examples can be found in The Weekly Screw. The Virtual Corkscrew Museum's Weekly Newspaper. In the issue of Sunday, June 16th 2007, they show a bottle opener the handle of which is of the same design as we have seen on our buttonhooks.

As the Union Station Chicago is made by Jennings and K & O made one showing the Union Station, Kansas City, MO, one could surmise that neither company were the originators of the shield and that they bought them in as required. One might also hazard a guess that these were the same people who made the handles used for the bottle opener and the buttonhooks. Unfortunately the maker of the bottle opener has not been revealed. As the dates of the views on the shields vary over such a long period from 1870 to 1925 they don't really help at all.

Moorehead collection

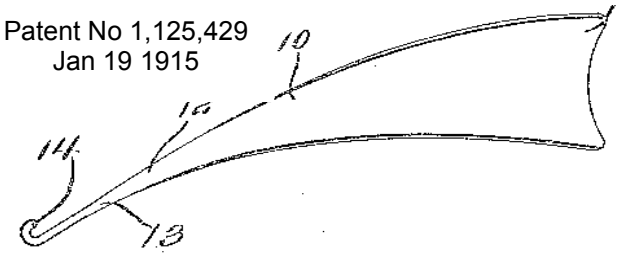
1915 Another design from J L Sommer

Many of you buttonhook collectors will have an example of this hook shown below in your collection. This and other designs are shown on page 18 of the Buttonhook Society's re-print of the J.L.Sommer

Mfg. Co, catalogue of Specialities and Novelties in Shoe Store Supply. Many other familiar hooks are to be found in this book, so it is a mine of information.

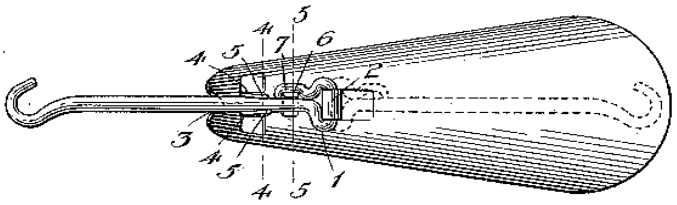
1915 Charles Woomert's very boring invention

It is quite surprising that this invention got off the drawing board it is so boring but no doubt it did the job although hardly revolutionary considering all the other inventions that preceded it. Maybe that was the plan – to bore everyone into submission!

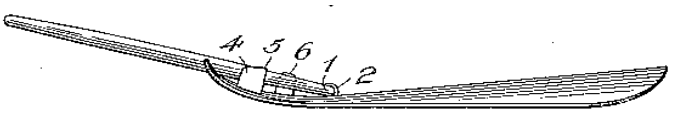


1915 A combined shoe horn and button hook

Be it known that I, RICHARD TOPHAM, a citizen of the United States, and resident of Washington, in the District of Columbia, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Combined Shoe-Horns and Button-Hooks, of which the following is a specification.



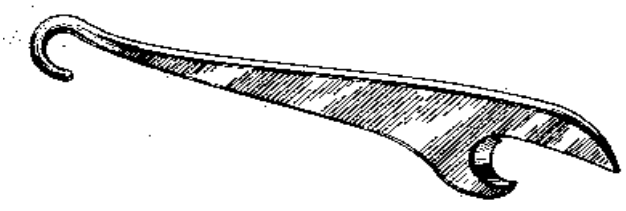
Topham's Patent No 1,150.403 August 17th 1915



The invention relates to improvements in a combined shoe-horn and button-hook in which the horn and hook are so hinged that they can be readily folded together to be conveniently carried in the pocket, so that when one member is being employed to perform its function the other member will form a handle to the implement.

It has for its principal object the provision of means whereby the hook can be firmly held in an extended position on the horn while the hook is being employed in its purpose.

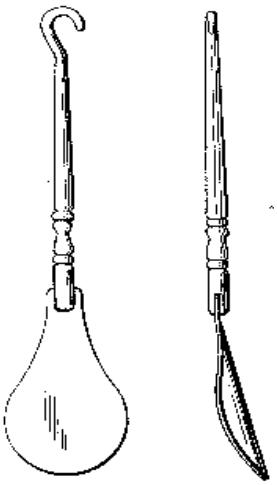
1915 A design for a combined bottle open and buttonhook



Design Patent by John Baumann
No D47096 March 16th 1915

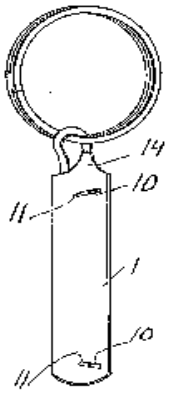
October 3rd 1916 A design by Thomas Harding

In his design Patent No 49731 THOMAS HARDING, of Newark, New Jersey, claims to have invented a new, original, and ornamental Design for a combined button hook and shoe horn, as shown here.



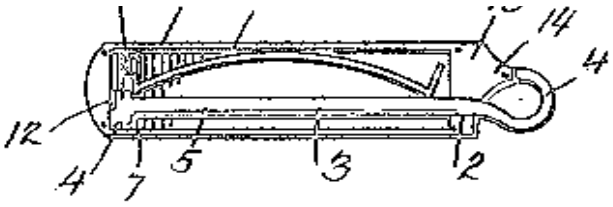
Patent No D49731
December 3rd 1916

Hardly revolutionary is it?



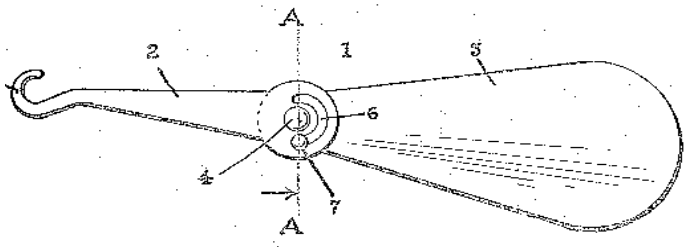
Of more interest is Cutler Fewell's invention of a buttonhook and key ring. The buttonhook pulls out for use.

Patent No 1.207,522 December 5th 1916



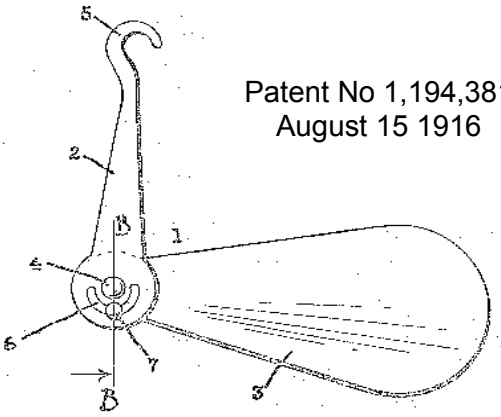
1916 A Folding Implement

The 'folding implement' turns out to be a combined buttonhook and shoe horn, as the inventor explains: -

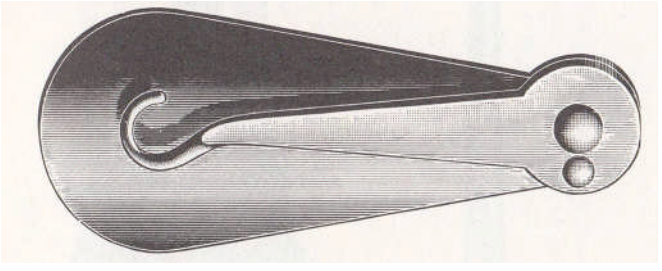


Be it known that I, THOMAS HARDING, a citizen of the United States, residing in Newark, in the county of Essex and State of New Jersey, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Folding Implements, of which the following is a specification.

The objects of this invention are to pro compass when not in use and protect th tool member in its open or closed posit positively prevent the tool member from to limit the inward or closing swing of th and operation, and to obtain other adva description



Patent No 1,194,381
August 15 1916



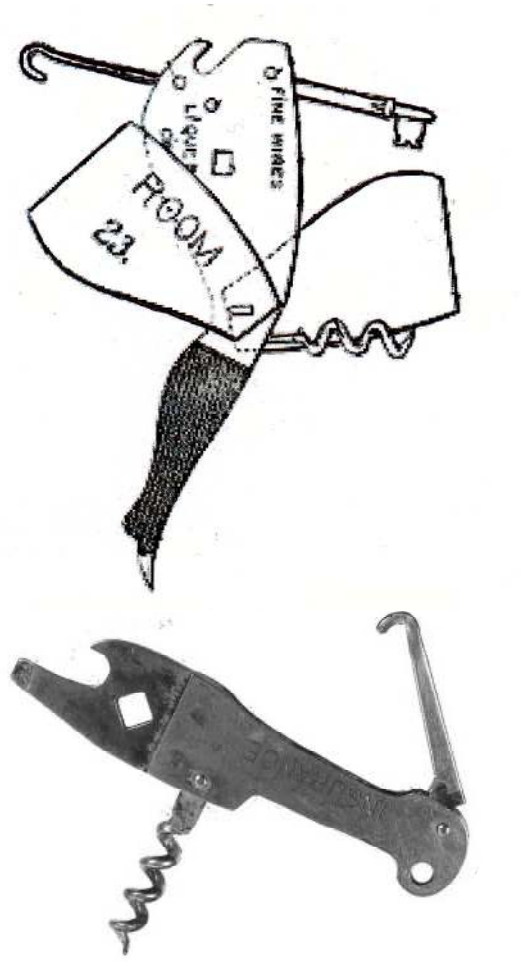
1916 Daniel Pettingall's advertising Novelty.

In his U. S. Patent No. 1,203,257 of October 31st 1916 for an "Advertising Novelty", Daniel Pettingell combines several useful tools including a corkscrew, a bottle opener, a button hook, a room key,

and a "Prestolite Key". He notes "...portion 4 is provided with the rectangular apertures which provide a means for engaging a square shank, as for instance, upon a 'Prestolite' tank."

So if you have ever wondered what the square hole found on part of many buttonhooks it is a key for filling tanks with acetylene gas (the traditional way was to drip water onto calcium carbide, which produces acetylene gas in real time). The small Prestolite tanks were mounted on bicycles and the running boards of early car and a copper or brass tube ran to the acetylene lamps on the front.

To light the lamp, the valve on the tank was opened using the "key" on a square shank on the valve by one person, and another person holding a match at the lamp, and being warned "stand back!" They existed on the cars until circa 1920's.



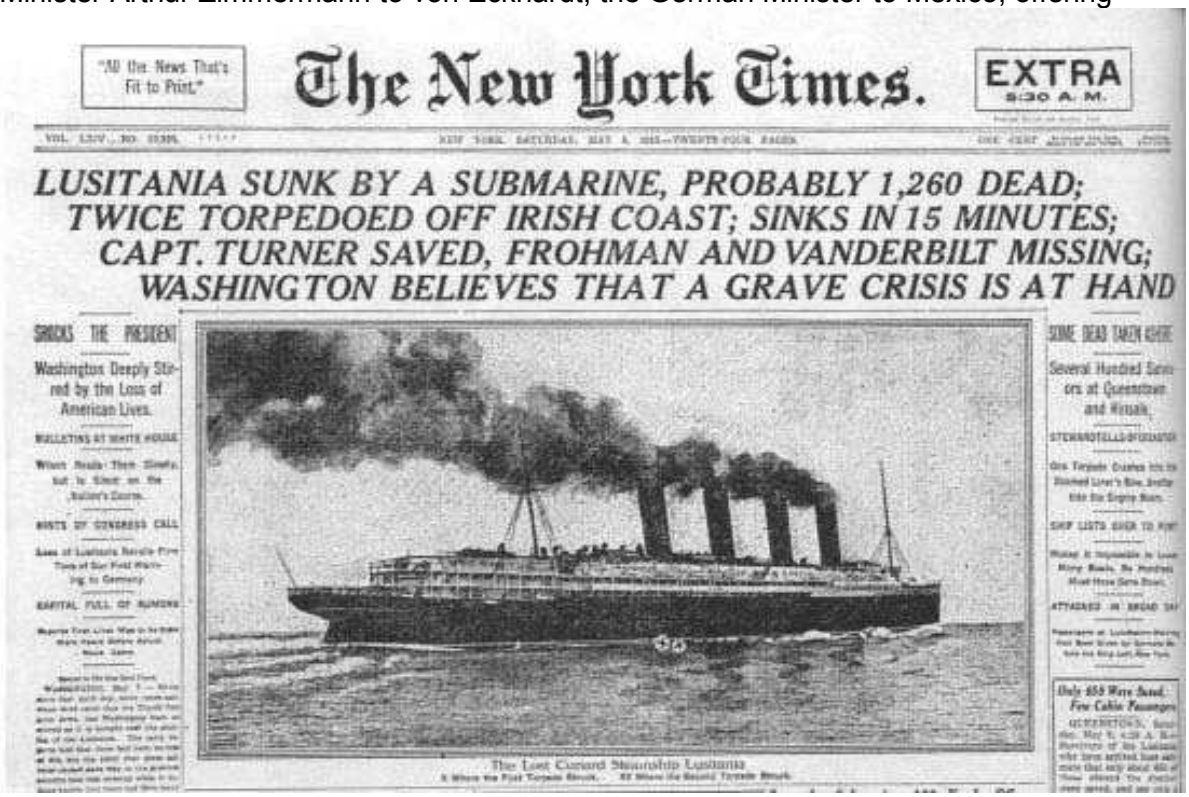
April 1917 America enters First World War.

The United States' entry into World War I came in April 1917, after two and a half years of efforts by President Woodrow Wilson to keep the United States neutral. Americans had no idea that war was imminent in Europe in the summer of 1914, and tens of thousands of tourists were caught by surprise. The U.S. government, under Wilson's firm control, called for neutrality "in thought and deed". Apart from an Anglophile element supporting the British, American public opinion went along with neutrality at first. The sentiment for neutrality was strong among Irish Americans, German Americans and Swedish Americans, as well as among church leaders and women. However, the citizenry increasingly came to see the German Empire as the villain after news of atrocities in Belgium in 1914, and the sinking of the passenger liner *RMS Lusitania* in 1915 in defiance of international law.

Wilson made all the key decisions and kept the economy on a peacetime basis, while allowing large-scale loans to the United Kingdom and France. To preclude making any military threat Wilson made no preparations for war and kept the army on its small peacetime basis despite increasing demands for preparedness.

Two things were to happen that brought America into the war. The first and most dramatic thing was the Zimmerman telegram. This was to have a profound effect in transforming public opinion.

In January of 1917, British cryptographers deciphered a telegram from German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann to von Eckhardt, the German Minister to Mexico, offering


"All the News That's Fit to Print."

The New York Times.

EXTRA 5:30 A.M.

LUSITANIA SUNK BY A SUBMARINE, PROBABLY 1,260 DEAD; TWICE TORPEDOED OFF IRISH COAST; SINKS IN 15 MINUTES; CAPT. TURNER SAVED, FROHMAN AND VANDERBILT MISSING; WASHINGTON BELIEVES THAT A GRAVE CRISIS IS AT HAND

SHOCKS THE PRESIDENT

Washington Deeply Stirred by the Loss of American Lives.

BULLETINS AT WHITE HOUSE

MEETS OF CONGRESS CALL

CAPITAL FULL OF RUMORS

The Last Cunard Steamship Lusitania

SOME DEAD TAKEN ASHORE

Several Hundred Survivors at Queenstown and Kinsale.

STEWARDTELLS OF DISASTER

SHIP LISTS OUT TO-DAY

ATTENDED IN BROAD DAY

Only 650 Were Saved: Few Cabin Passengers

United States territory to Mexico in return for joining the German cause. The telegram had such an impact on American opinion that, according to a White House representative "No other single cryptanalysis has had such enormous consequences." It is his opinion that "never before or since has so much turned upon the solution of a secret message." In an effort to protect their intelligence from detection and to capitalize on growing anti-German sentiment in the United States, the British waited until February 24th to present the telegram to Woodrow Wilson. The American press published news of the telegram on March 1st 1917.

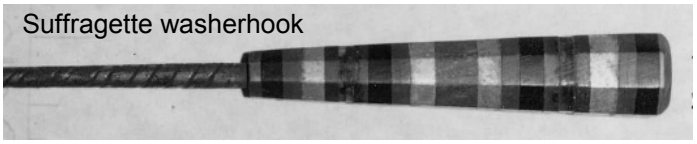
The other event that helped harden American public opinion was that at the beginning of 1917, Germany decided to resume all-out submarine warfare on all commercial ships headed toward Britain, realizing that this decision would almost certainly mean war with the United States. The publication of the Zimmerman Telegram, just as German U-boats started sinking American ships in the North Atlantic outraged America. President Wilson asked Congress for "a war to end all wars" that would "make the world safe for democracy", and the United States Congress formally declared war on Germany and its allies on April 6, 1917.

1917 Trench Art

Although Trench Art does exist in America, examples of the kind of articles that would have been made by Americans in the trenches are rare. This is because by 1917, the trench warfare of the first three years of the war had largely finished. Much of the war was static, advancing from trenches before retreating back again. The workshops behind the trenches were where most of the trench art was made, probably to order so that gifts could be sent back to loved ones. However rare American trench art examples are, they do exist.

What you are very unlikely to find are the washer type buttonhooks that were made by the Royal Flying Corps from crashed aircraft.

They form a distinct area of Trench Art collecting. Some of these handles are just random the washers forming a pattern as the maker's fancy took him. Others had more intent showing regimental colours or medal ribbons. The suffragettes produced buttonhooks reflecting their colours of purple white and green.


Suffragette washerhook

The most sought after washer hook are those with a flat shaft, as these are made from 'flying wire' which held biplanes wings together and reduced wind drag.

The Victory Medal

The Victory Medal (also called the Inter-Allied Victory Medal) was issued by all the allies who took part. The design was chosen by each nation, all based upon a winged victory, which was an historic Greek monument, except for the nations in the Far East who issued different medals. In all cases the 39mm wide ribbon has a 'two rainbow' design, with the violet from each rainbow on the outside edges moving through to a central red stripe where both rainbows meet.

The dates of the war were in every case

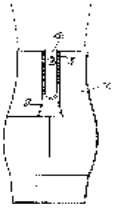
1914 to 1918, except that of the British Empire, which gave the dates as 1914 to 1919 for its Territorial Force War Medal. The Victory Medal was never awarded on its own.

The medal was adopted by Britain, Belgium, Brazil, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Romania, Siam, Union of South Africa and the USA in accordance with the decision of the Inter-Allied Peace Conference at Versailles.

In World War 1, the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) fought thirteen major engagements in Europe between 1917 and 1918.

The Silver Citation Star to the World War 1 Victory Medal was authorized by the United States Congress on February 4th 1919. A silver star was authorized to be worn on the ribbon of the Victory Medal for any member of the U.S. Army who had been cited for gallantry in action between 1917 and 1920. In 1932, the Silver Citation Star was redesigned and renamed the Silver Star Medal.

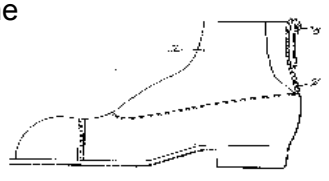
1917 A special shoe design to incorporate a buttonhook,



Patent No 1,213,036
January 16 1917

Be it known that I, Joseph G. TAYLOR, Jnr, a citizen of the United States, residing at Springfield, in the county of Sangamon and State of Illinois, have invented new and useful Improvements in Shoes, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to shoe attachments and the object of the invention is to provide a button shoe with a pocket for receiving a button hook and constructing the pocket in such manner that the ordinary rear reinforcing strip which joins the rear edges of the uppers may be utilized as one wall of the pocket.



What is claimed is that the combination with a shoe, of a rear reinforcing strip stitched along its marginal edges and transversely of its intermediate portion in an accurate shape to

form a pocket, the mouth of said pocket being flush with the top edge of the shoe and a tab secured to said shoe to form a closure for the pocket.

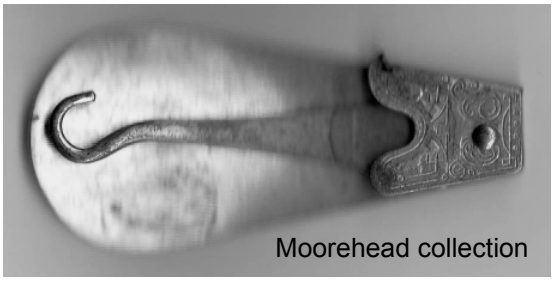
1917 A design for a combined buttonhook and bottle opener.

This Be it known that I, HILMA KORPI, a citizen of the United States, residing at Kinney, in the county of St. Louis and State. of Minnesota, have invented a new, original, ornamental design for a combination and ornamental button hook and bottle opener as shown

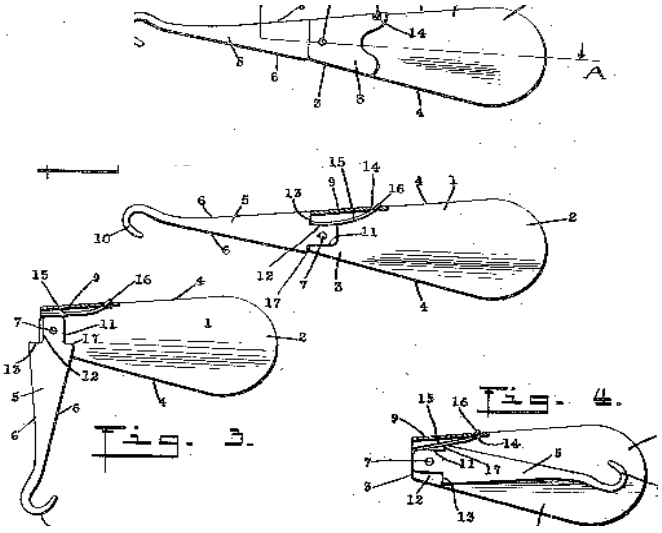
Design Patent No 90,509
June 19 1917

J L Sommer's folding Buttonhook and shoe horn.

This was already being marketed by J L Sommer in his catalogue as the 'Mylady' folding hook/horn combination which was described as 'a little jewel'.



Moorehead collection



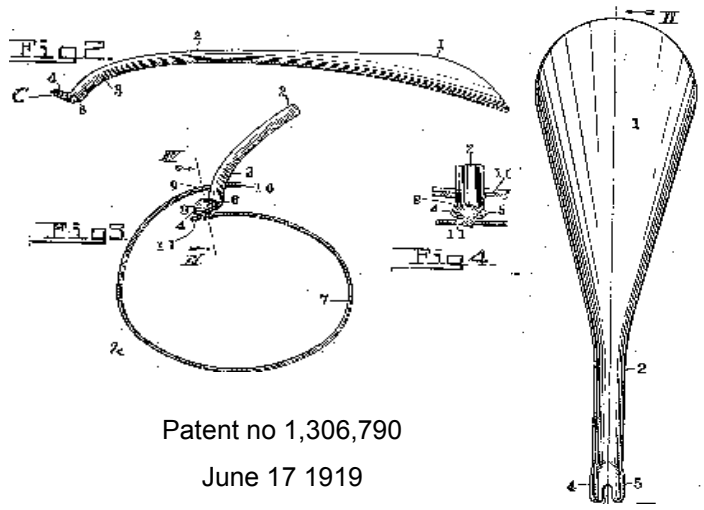
Patent No 1,242,615
October 9 1917

William Vogel's lever type shoe buttoner

We have seen these lever type buttoners before. Even with the drawings, it is difficult to work out exactly how it works, and the text is not much help either.

Be it known that I, WILLIAM VOGEL, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of No. 558 West 151st street, in the borough of Manhattan, county, city, and State of New York, and whose post office address is No. 82 Nassau street, in the said borough of Manhattan, county, city, and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements for Shoe-Buttoners, set forth in the following specification.

This invention relates to means for buttoning shoes. An object of the invention is to provide for the manipulation of a shoe buttoner in a manner so as to preserve the button-hole; to cause the button to be entered into the button-hole with convenience and despatch; and to make possible a quick buttoning action without a tendency to twist off the buttons or discommode the wearer. To the above ends there is contemplated within the invention the employment of a button-claw formed on a specially shaped lever,



Patent no 1,306,790

June 17 1919

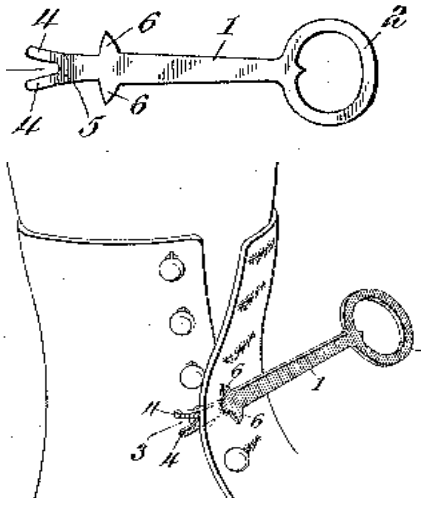
a portion of which operates as a cam with the button-hole as a cam follower and with an entire elimination of the usual rotary motion in shoe buttoning associated with the use of a button-hook. Further objects of the invention include novel structural embodiments and combination of various elements through the medium of the structural form.

1919 Shoe and Glove buttoner.

This is a very odd looking lever type buttoner but it actually looks to be very efficient. Here is what the inventor claims.

Be it known that I, HUGH B. LAUGHLIN, a citizen of the United States, residing at San Francisco, in the county of San Francisco and State of California, have invented a new and useful Shoe and Glove Buttoner, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to devices for buttoning gloves, shoes or like articles of apparel, and the object is to provide a simple device of this character which may be readily formed by stamping from the desired metal a suitable blank which, by a single bending operation, may be given the proper form for performing the function of quickly and easily forcing buttons within their respective buttonholes.



Patent No 1.291,563
January 14 1919

Another object is to provide a buttoning device which will successfully draw the button through the hole, without imparting thereto the usual circular roll or twisting motion as is the case with the ordinary button hook in common use, which results in often tearing the shank of the button loose from its fastening and also in mutilating the button hole.

1920 Prohibition

On Saturday, 17 January 1920, one of the most extraordinary experiments in modern democratic history occurred when at one minute after midnight America prohibited the sale of all intoxicating liquors. It had actually come into operation at midnight the day before. But the authorities had granted drinkers one last day, one last session at the bar, before the iron shutters of Prohibition came down.

Across the United States, many bars and restaurants marked the demise of the demon drink by handing out free glasses of wine, brandy and whisky. Others saw one last opportunity to make a killing, charging an eye-watering "20 to 30 dollars for a bottle of champagne, or a dollar to two dollars for a drink of whisky". In some establishments, mournful dirges played while coffins were carried through the crowds of drinkers; in others, the walls were hung with black crepe, and in the most prestigious establishments, placards carried the ominous words: "Exit booze. Doors close on Saturday."

In an age when individual freedom is all, it comes as something of a shock to reflect that in the world's most prosperous and dynamic country the prohibition of alcohol lasted for almost 14 years. However the campaign to prohibit alcohol had been deeply rooted in Anglo-American society for some two centuries. The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance was founded in 1826, and by the following decade as many as a million Americans belonged to an anti-alcohol group of some kind.

Far from being repressive authoritarians, Prohibition's largely Protestant champions – a large proportion of whom were high-minded middle-class women – were the do-gooders of the day. Often deeply religious, they saw Prohibition as a kind of social reform, a crusade to clean up the American city and restore the founding virtues of the godly republic. As American cities boomed after the civil war, swollen with immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, the campaigners' hatred of alcohol became steadily more ferocious. They looked in horror on the new saloons of the expanding cities, with their card games and fist fights, their bad boys and good-time girls. In particular, they became convinced that alcohol was a deadly threat to the health and virtue of American womanhood; not, perhaps entirely erroneously, since papers of the time were full of stories of battered wives and broken marriages.

The first state to outlaw alcohol entirely was, not surprisingly, a Protestant stronghold, the New England state of Maine, which introduced Prohibition in 1851. At the national level, though, Prohibition took a long time to get off the ground, and the Maine law was repealed only five years later. However the campaign for Prohibition was gathering momentum. This was the heyday of progressive reform: to a generation of Protestant reformers, using the power of the state to regulate the anarchy of the industrial city and improve the lot of ordinary workers seemed only natural and reasonable. Outlawing alcohol, which they associated with disease and disorder, fitted nicely into this agenda. As early as 1916, some 26 out of 48 states were already dry, and once the United States entered the first world war, Prohibition became identified with patriotism. By January 1919, the Eighteenth Amendment had been ratified by 36 states, and that October, the Volstead Act, gave the federal authorities the power to stop the manufacture, sale or importation of "intoxicating liquor".

Now prohibition was law. Unfortunately for its advocates, the federal government was never really equipped to enforce it. Almost incredibly, only 1,500 federal agents were given the job of enforcing Prohibition, that is, about 30 for every state in the union. On top of that, the new regime never had unanimous public support, while neighbouring countries remained defiantly wet. Neither Mexico nor Canada had any intention of clamping down on breweries and distilleries near the American border.

Above all, many Americans with a taste for liquor were determined to get hold of a drink one way or another. Illegal drinking dens had long flourished in big cities; indeed, the word "speakeasy" probably dates from the late 1880s. But now they bloomed as never before; historians estimate that by 1925, there were as many as 100,000 illegal bars in New York City alone, many of them tiny, spit-and-sawdust joints, others catering to the rich and well-connected. In Detroit, tantalisingly close to the Canadian border, smugglers used "false

floorboards in automobiles, second gas tanks, hidden compartments, even false-bottomed shopping baskets and suitcases, not to mention camouflaged flasks and hot water bottles", as one account has it, to bring alcohol into the city. And somehow it speaks volumes that when the Michigan state police raided one Detroit bar, they found the local congressman, the local sheriff and the city's mayor all enjoying a drink.

The big winners from Prohibition were, of course, the nation's gangsters. The law had only been in operation for an hour when the police recorded the first attempt to break it, with six armed men stealing some $100,000-worth of "medicinal" whisky from a train in Chicago. From the very beginning, criminals had recognised that Prohibition represented a marvellous business opportunity; in major cities, indeed, gangs had quietly been stockpiling booze supplies for weeks.

By far the most celebrated gangster of the day, though, was Al Capone, a New York born hoodlum who controlled much of the Chicago underworld in the mid 1920s. Living in splendour in the city's Lexington hotel, he was said to be raking in some $100m a year from casinos and speakeasies. To many people, he seemed a real-life Robin Hood, opening soup kitchens for the unemployed and giving large sums to charity. However, Capone had a pronounced taste for the good life, wearing smart suits and drinking expensive Templeton Rye whisky. "I'm just a businessman," he used to say, "giving the public what they want." But when, in 1929, Capone ordered the brutal machine-gunning of seven Chicago rivals in the Valentine's Day Massacre, public sympathy evaporated. That same year, Prohibition agent Eliot Ness began to investigate Capone's affairs, and in October 1931 he was sentenced to 11 years for tax evasion. He eventually died in prison of a heart attack.

By the time Capone died, support for Prohibition was already ebbing away. With newspapers alleging that as many as eight out of ten congressmen drank on the quiet, it was obvious that the attempt to outlaw alcohol had failed. In March 1933, just weeks after he had been inaugurated, President Franklin D Roosevelt signed an amendment to the Volstead Act permitting the sale and consumption of beer with no more than 3.2% alcohol content. The Depression was in full swing, national morale was at rock bottom and, as Roosevelt put it, "I think we could all do with a beer." And on 5th December 1933, Utah approved the Twenty-first Amendment, providing a majority for ratification and consigning national Prohibition to the history books.

Yet although the age of Prohibition now feels very remote, the idea lives on. We often forget that many states chose to remain dry after 1933. Mississippi, the last entirely dry state, only repealed Prohibition in 1966. Even today, more than 500 municipalities across the United States are dry, often in strongly evangelical states. The truth is that in many corners of the United States, opposition to alcohol dies hard. When Barack Obama was photographed with a very weak beer in hand at a Washington Wizards game, the phone-in lines smouldered with anger. "The president is the president 24 hours a day," one caller said. "I don't think he should drink on the job."

1920 Women Win the Vote

The demand for womans suffrage was first introduced in the U.S. at the First Women's Right's Convention, 1848 in Seneca Falls, N.Y. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the organizers of the meeting, introduced the resolution of women's suffrage knowing full well that it would be considered by the attendees as too radical. Frederick Douglas spoke to the convention, endorsing the Declaration of Sentiments which demanded rights for women; property rights, education rights, employment, rights over their own children, and the right to vote. The Declaration of Sentiments was signed by 100 attendants, but it was to take 72

years of continuous struggle and effort before the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was approved.

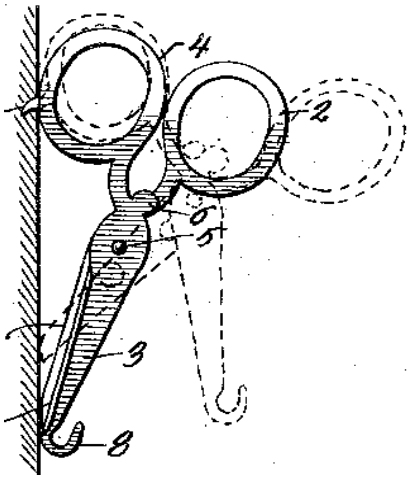
Many feminists were abolitionists and fought for the rights of blacks to vote, believing that this struggle would include all blacks, and women; all women. They thought they would win the vote with the 15th amendment, but they found when it passed that it excluded women, and this caused a rift among feminists. Many women felt that once the black man could vote, women's voting rights would soon follow. Susan Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others would not endorse the amendment, because it did not include women.

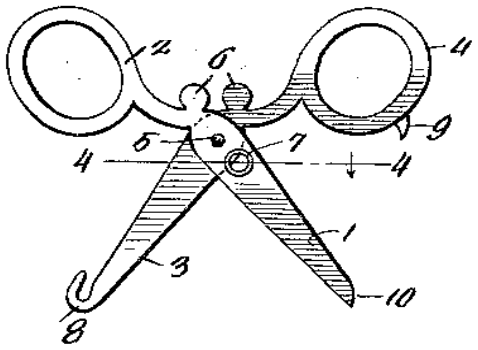
Two organizations resulted; The National Woman Suffrage Association, which worked on the federal level to secure suffrage and other rights for women; and the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) which targeted states for securing the ballot. Alice Paul was forced to resign from NAWSA because she believed in direct tactics. She organized the National Woman's Party, using strategies such as mass marches and hunger strikes. The efforts of both parties led to the passage of the 19th Amendment (The Anthony Amendment) on August 26th 1920 which states: the rights of citizens to vote: "shall not be denied or abridged by the U.S. or by any State on account of sex."

1920 Pocket scissors combined with coat hanger and other things

This is a strange one, although no doubt very handy should the occasion arise. The invention relates to scissors and has for its object to provide an article of this nature which may be utilized as a hanger for supporting a hat and coat when a peg or like means is not available and which article may be conveniently carried in 'the pocket and also utilized for other purposes, such as a cigar cutter and a button hook.

It is rather reminiscent of John Adams patent in 1876, but without all the additional features.





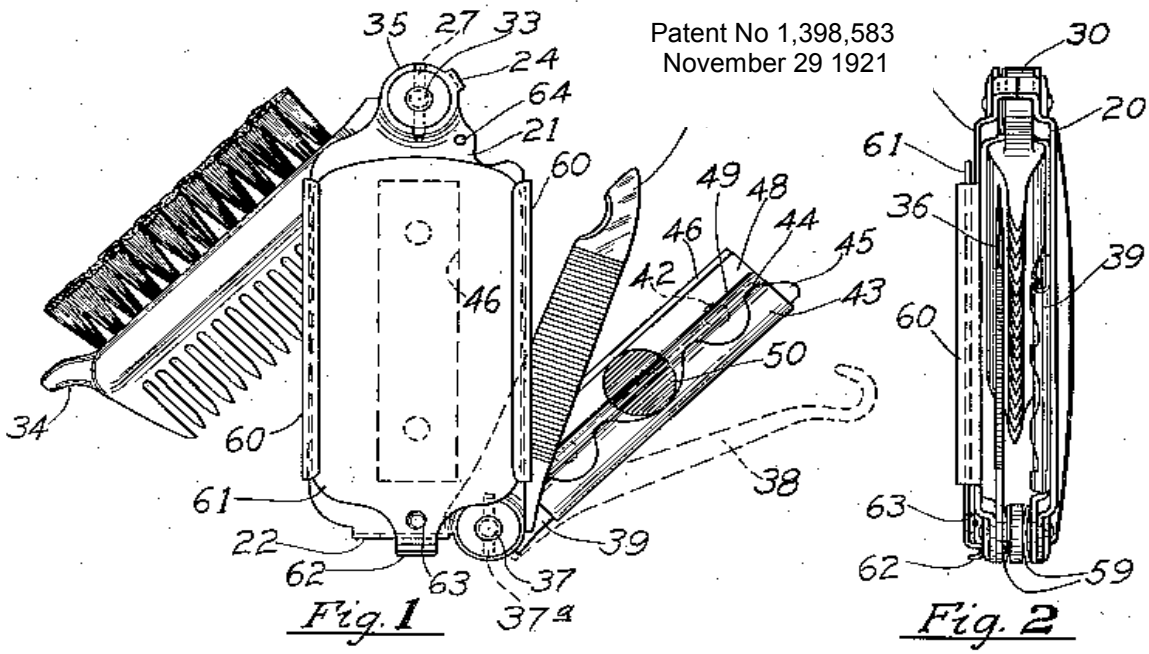
Patent No 1,354,807 October 5 1920
C.F.Dietrich

1920 P H Lochlin & Sons

This is the last of our American silversmiths. They were in business for ten years from 1920 making small silverware items of popular appeal. Their range was somewhat mundane and they never reached the heights of silversmithing.

1921 A real bobby dazzler!

Patent No 1,398,583
November 29 1921



As you can see from the drawing, this invention combines so many items of use incorporated into the one case, as the inventor explains.

Be it known that I, RANSOM Y. BOVEE, at Maywood, in the county of Cook and state of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Folding Combination Toilet Articles, of which the following is a specification.

His invention relates to improvements in a folding combination toilet article, and one of the objects of the invention is to provide an improved article of this character in which there is combined a plurality of toilet articles all adapted to be compactly folded when not in use, a portion of the device being shaped to form a storage receptacle which will not interfere with any of the other articles. A further object is to provide an improved article of this character embodying a foldable razor device and to provide an improved construction of razor.

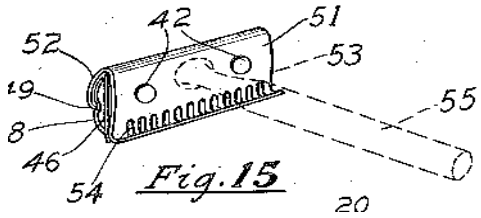
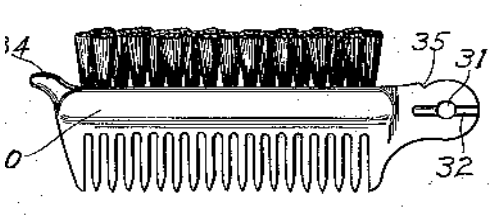


Fig. 15



1921 Glass buttonhooks

These have been a very contentious issue over the years. Some members say they are not really buttonhooks and could never have been used as such so why regard them as such?

True of course but they were produced as decorative objects and deserve a place in our collections. Bertha Betensley took up the cudgels on one occasion and had one made for

Paul Moorehead with an ‘M’ on it, at a passing Country Fair. Some more sophisticated glass handled hooks are really something else on close inspection. The facetted handled hook shown for example was a condiment spoon for taking dry mustard powder out of its flask, the handle being its stopper. When it was altered we don’t know, probably when the bottle was dropped.

Some serious glass buttonhooks were made in glass foundries, probably as end of day glass novelties by the workers.

A pair of top quality buttonhooks were made by the Dorflinger factory before 1921 when the factory closed. Apparently the Dorflinger Museum have several examples of such hooks but currently they cannot vouch for them as being stock items.

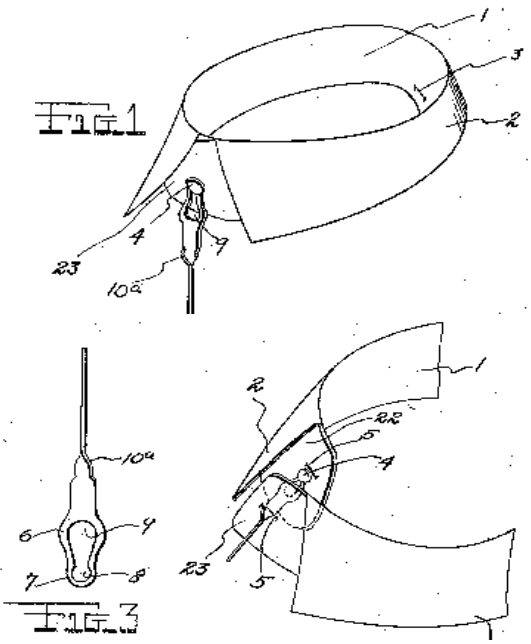
The museum is in the grounds of the old factory that was turned into a White Mills wild life sanctuary in Philadelphia. The museum was built and opened in 1987 and now houses the finest collection of Dorflinger glass in America. The museum's collection reflects the broad range of glass produced by Christian Dorflinger's companies from 1852-1921.

1923 A collar buttoner

Be it known that I, CARL NEUMANN, a citizen of Germany, residing at New York, in the county of New York and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Collar-Button Hooks, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to button hooks and the main object is to provide a device which will engage the collar button at the throat; and effectively slip the outer lap of a collar or other neckwear into engagement with the said button in a ready manner and without additional manipulation, thus avoiding obvious uncomfortable manipulation with the fingers.

Another object is to provide a modified type of button hook in which means are embodied whereby said button hook can be quickly enlarged or reduced for use with various sizes of buttons.

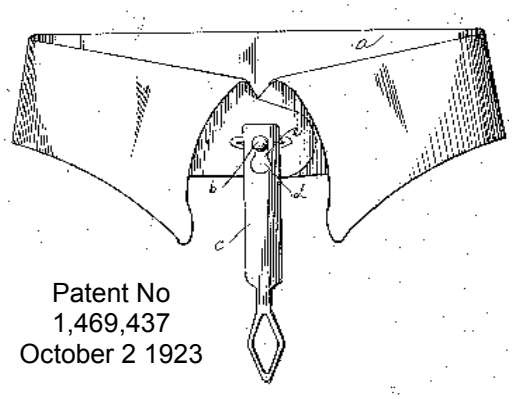


Patent No 1,463,400
July 31 1923

1923 A collar button and guard

The idea here is that the collar can be buttoned and kept in place while the tie is being tied. One would wonder whether this was a real or imagined difficulty that the inventor is trying to solve. Even after reading his explanation one still might wonder!

“In the ordinary course of events, in when fastening a collar and tie, great difficulty has been experienced, especially in the event of the



Patent No
1,469,437
October 2 1923

button hole being somewhat worn, or the collar confining the tie too tightly, so that when the ends are pulled together in tying or making up the tie, the two ends of the collar are pulled together, pulling one of the sides away from the button. This unfortunately happens after the tie is in place, in attempting to adjust the tie it is often difficult to rebutton the tie in place.

By the use of my device, however, after the collar is buttoned, my device is slipped over and pulled down, with the shank of the button in the groove 6, then it is possible to pull the tie in any desired way in evening up the ends or making them to conform. with each other, without any danger of unbuttoning the collar. The device itself is curved, lays out of the way, and forms no obstruction whatever to the tying of the tie; and when the tie is in proper place up snugly in position, if it is annoying to the wearer, as it is easy simply to push up my device until the tie fits well."

FRED FREDRICKSON: Inventor.

1928 Compound tool.

This is the last of the patents we will show as after this those that continue to appear are almost always to do with inventions to assist the physically impaired.

This is another of those inventions intended to combine a buttonhook with other tools.

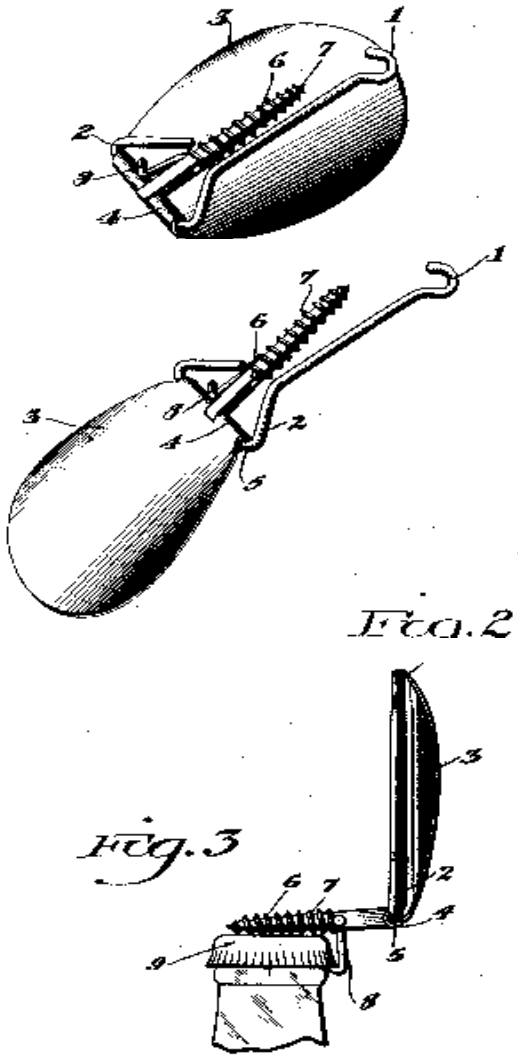
As the inventor James K Bingaman states: -

The object of this invention is to provide a small compact assembly of commonly used instruments, namely, a button-hook, shoehorn, corkscrew, and cap-puller, so constructed and assembled as to coordinate in hand usage.

Another object is to provide a combined corkscrew and cap-puller hinged to a handle member, as some other instrument, the corkscrew serving as a friction member, due to its screw characteristics, engaging the top of the cap to be pulled and coordinating with a hook hinged to the corkscrew and adapted to engage the lower edge of the cap.

Another object is to provide a small article suitable as an advertising novelty, which article comprises various useful instruments secured together and adapted to be folded upon each other to render the article as compact as possible when not in use so that it can be conveniently carried by the person.

So there we are. Nifty isn't it? As we have looked at all these inventions, some are clever, some are barmy, and all are quite amazing.



Patent No 1,668,262
May 1 1928

1929 Stock market crash

America's Stock Market Crash of 1929 started in October after the Roaring Twenties economic "bubble boom" had finally popped.

America experienced an era of great peace and prosperity during the 1920s. After World War 1, the so-called "Roaring Twenties" economic and cultural boom was fuelled by industrialisation and the popularisation of new technologies such as radio and the automobile. Air flight was becoming common as well.

The Dow stock average soared throughout the Roaring Twenties and many investors aggressively purchased shares, comforted by the fact that stocks were thought to be extremely safe by most economists due to the country's powerful economic boom. Investors soon purchased stocks on margin, which is the borrowing of stock for the purpose of gaining financial leverage. For every dollar invested, a margin user would borrow nine dollars worth of stock. The use of leverage meant that if a stock went up 1%, the investor would make 10%. Unfortunately, leverage also works the other way around and amplifies even minor losses. If a stock drops too much, a margin holder could lose all of their investment and possibly owe money to their broker as well.


BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

WALL ST. IN PANIC AS STOCKS CRASH

From 1921 to 1929, the Dow Jones rocketed from 60 to 400, creating many new millionaires. Very soon, stock trading became America's favourite pastime as investors jockeyed to make a quick killing. Investors mortgaged their homes and foolishly invested their life savings into hot stocks such as Ford and RCA. To the average investor, stocks were practically a sure thing. Few people actually studied the finances and underlying businesses of the companies that they invested in. Thousands of fraudulent companies were formed to hoodwink unsavvy investors. Most investors never even thought a crash was possible, in their minds, the stock market "always went up."

In 1929, the Federal Reserve raised interest rates several times in an attempt to cool the overheated economy and stock market. By October, a powerful bear market had commenced. On Thursday, October 24th 1929, a spate of panic selling occurred as investors began to realize that the stock boom was actually an over-inflated speculative bubble. Margin investors were being decimated as large numbers of stock investors tried to liquidate their shares to no avail. Millionaire margin investors went bankrupt almost instantly when the stock market crashed on October 28th and 29th. During November of 1929, the Dow sank from 400 to 145. In just three days, over $5 billion worth of market capitalization had been erased from stocks that were trading on the New York Stock Exchange. By the end of the 1929 stock market crash, a staggering $16 billion worth of market capitalization had been lost from New York Stock Exchange stocks.

To make matters worse, many banks had invested their deposits in the stock market, causing these banks to lose their depositors' savings as stocks plunged. Bank runs soon occurred when bank patrons tried to withdraw their savings from banks all at the same time. Major banks and brokerage firms became insolvent, adding more fuel to the stock market crash. The financial system was in shambles. Many bankrupt speculators, some who were once very affluent, committed suicide by jumping out of buildings. Even bank

patrons who had not invested in shares became broke as $140 billion of depositor money disappeared and 10,000 banks failed.

Soup kitchens were set up to feed the poor

The 1929 stock market crash was beneficial for some speculators, however. Jesse Livermore correctly predicted the crash and shorted stocks to profit from the decline, earning him over 100 million dollars. Joseph Kennedy, President John F. Kennedy's father, sold his stocks before the 1929 stock market crash and kept millions of dollars of profit. Kennedy decided to sell his stocks because he overheard shoeshine boys and other novices speculating on stocks, leading him to believe that the stock market had been experiencing a speculative bubble.

By the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president in March 1933, the banking system of the United States had largely ceased to function. Depositors had seen $140 billion disappear when their banks failed. Businesses could not get credit. Cheques could not be used for payments because no one knew which cheques were worthless and which were sound.

Roosevelt closed all the banks in the United States for three days; as a "bank holiday." Some banks were then cautiously re-opened with strict limits on withdrawals. Eventually, confidence returned to the system and banks were able to perform their economic function again. To prevent similar disasters, the federal government set up the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which eliminated the rationale for bank "runs" to get one's money before the bank "runs out." Backed by the FDIC, the bank could fail and go out of business, but then the government would reimburse depositors. Another crucial mechanism insulated commercial banks from stock market panics by banning banks from investing depositors' money in stocks.

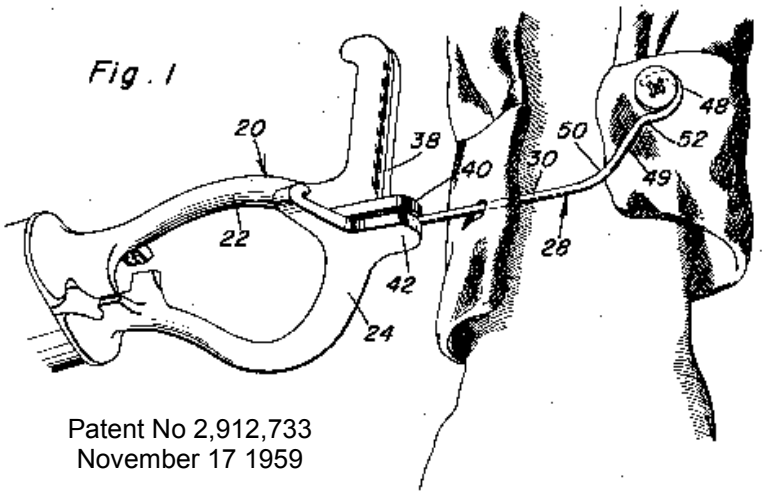
Relief and reform measures enacted by the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt helped lessen the worst effects of the Great Depression; however, the U.S. economy would not fully turn around until after 1939, when World War II revitalised American industry.

The decline and fall of the buttonhook

With the depression came changes in clothing and attitudes. As the general population suffered there was little appetite for flaunting wealth and everyone began to wear basic lace up shoes. The buttonhook was on its way out. Glove hook use persisted until well into the 1950's but otherwise buttonhook use was in decline. As mentioned earlier buttonhook inventions generally were confined to those that would improve the life of infirm or disabled people.

This invention by Loren J Laymen is a case in point.

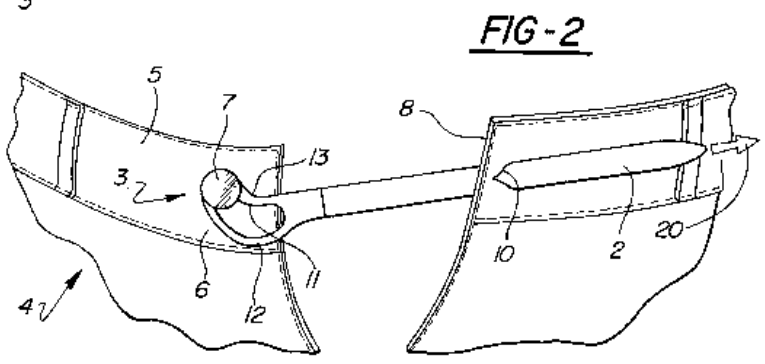
An object of the present invention is to provide means by which commercially available prosthetic terminal devices may be used for buttoning clothing, moving slide fasteners in dressing and undressing and for sundry other uses as will occur to those having need for prosthetic appliances.



Patent No 2,912,733
November 17 1959

A more specific object of the invention is to provide button hooks that are adapted to be connected in the jaws, clamps or the like of commercially available prosthetic appliances, the button hooks being small and easily carried in a small pocket, for example a watch pocket or vest pocket of an individual, and very quickly and easily attached and detached from the appliance. These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation

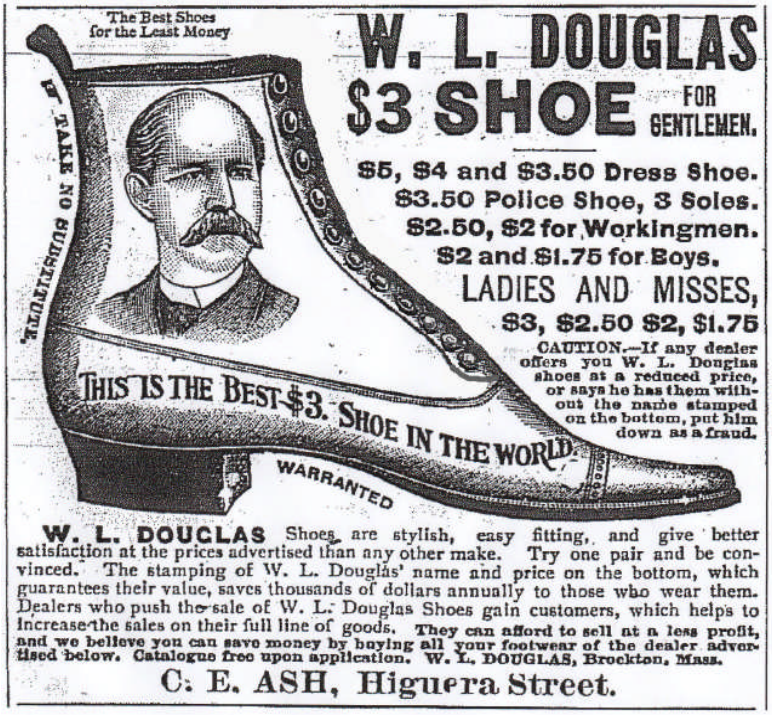
Another example is even later; 18th November 1999 in fact. This is for a one handed buttoner for use by someone who had lost an arm.

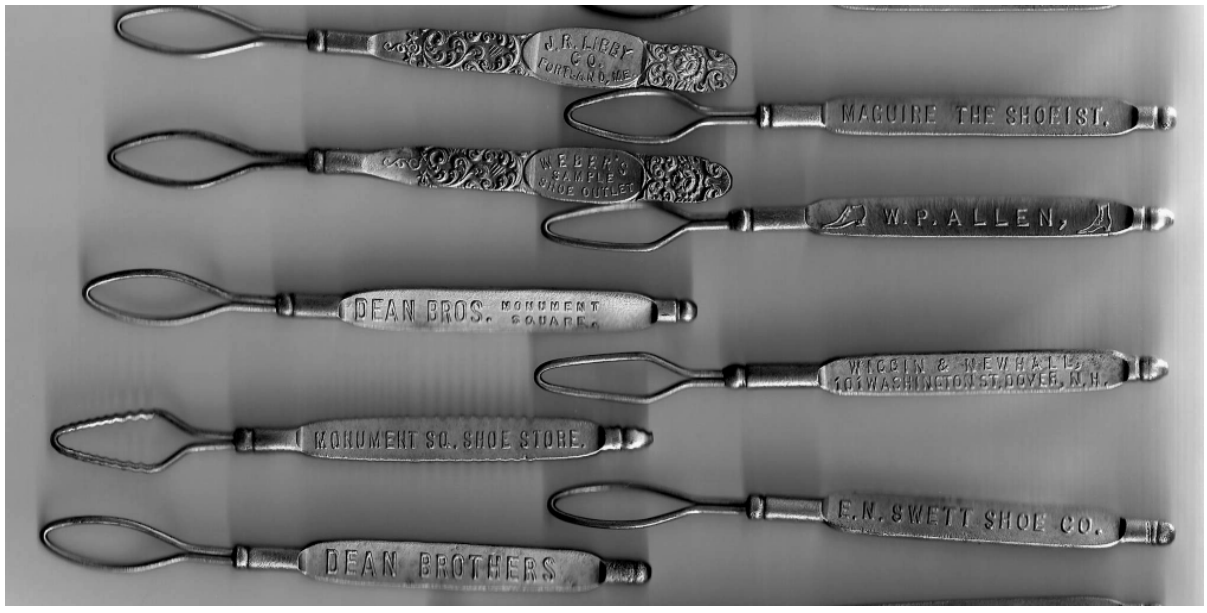


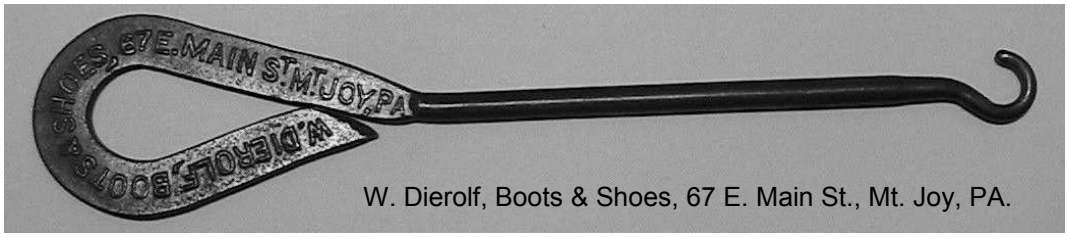
Buttonhooks were discovered again in the 1970's when there was a rage for girls to wear skin tight jeans. They used to lie in the bath full of water and wait a long time for them to shrink. If they were really keen they would get out of the bath and let the jeans dry on them. up. That is when the buttonhook came briefly back into its own. Even today girls buy buttonhooks to use to zip up their boots.

Advertising hooks

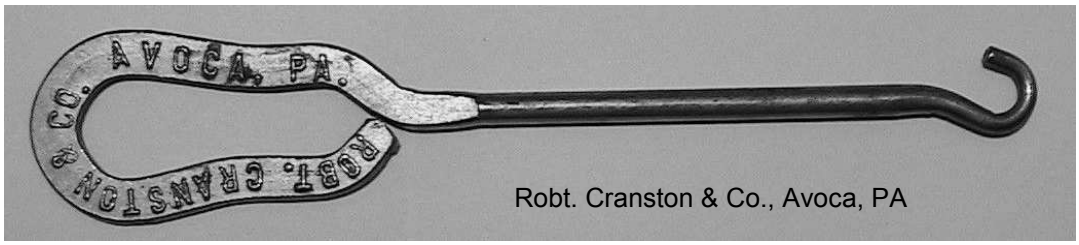
From the late nineteenth century, goods began to be heavily advertised to entice buyers. From about 1895 to 1914 the American shoe industry had virtually monoplised shoemaking all over Europe. Following the Civil War, there was a dearth of traditional shoe makers. As a result American shoe manufacturers had to devise other methods of production that were not so labour intensive. As a result by 1880 the manufacturers were completely geared up to outsell most Europen manufacturers who were still stuck in the old ways. American salesmen were now travelling all over Europe selling their boots and shoes and one of their sales tools was the humble buttonhook. For every gross of shoes bought, the retailer was supplied with a buttonhook with the firm's name stamped on it.



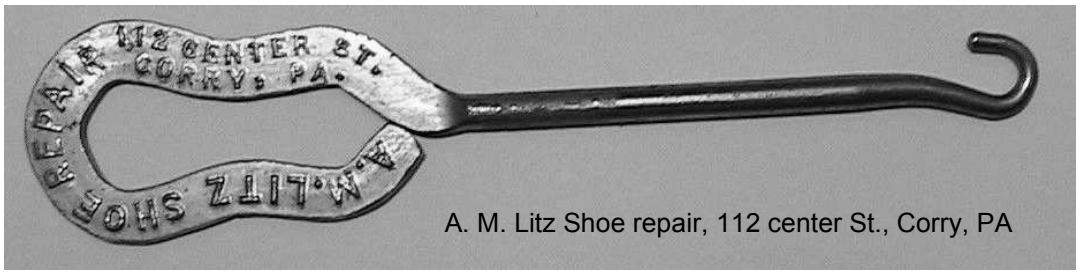




W. Dierolf, Boots & Shoes, 67 E. Main St., Mt. Joy, PA.



Robt. Cranston & Co., Avoca, PA



A. M. Litz Shoe repair, 112 center St., Corry, PA

This can be confusing because no matter what the address on it they were all made in America and stamped MADE U.S or MADE IN U.S.A. or just U.S.A..

Paul Moorehead bought this in Stockholm in a shop called Tilly's in Kōpmangetan. The hook was marked IMPORT AF: J.P.NORRMAN, VAKSALAGATAN 21. UPSALA. Upsala is a city about 70 kilometres north of Stockholm, but it was stamped MADE IN U.S.A.

Another problem is that many of the addresses might look English, but because so many

places in New England were called after England towns, collectors can get confused, unless they have the State marked on them as well. Many collectors collect twin hooks advertising shops in both New England and England of the same locality. i.e. Chelmsford, Manchester etc.

Occasionally you can get caught out as Paul Moorehead was with this one. On closed examination he found that it was stamped MADE IN GERMANY.

With the retailer's address on one side most shoe manufacturers put their own name on the other. One of the most famous makers to do this was Walk Over shoes.

Walk-Over Shoes is an American footwear brand founded in 1758 by George E. Keith. George, who was a part of the new generation of shoemaker during his time, and was kin to Reverend James Keith, the first minister of Bridgewater, Massachusetts in 1662. Rev. James' son, Levi, was the first shoemaker in the family. Levi so loved crafting shoes he decided to turn a part of his home into a workshop. He built a small tannery himself and his son, Franklin, joined him the business. Franklin then went on to pass what he knew about footwear making to his own son, George, who began making shoes as early as 10 years old!

In 1874, George Eldon Keith, set up his own enterprise and began the business that was to become Walk-Over. The thriving business was gaining a reputation for its value and integrity, and in 1899 Mr. Keith wanted to brand the company with a name that would reflect its growing prominence. Discussing it with his wife one evening while she was reading the newspaper, the headline caught his eye: "America's Cup defender *Columbia* wins in a Walk Over Sir Thomas Lipton's *Shamrock*." Strength, straight-forward, simplicity, and clear-cut victory - "Walk-Over" said it all, and thus was born the first brand name in men's footwear in the country.

Of course it was not just shoe companies that advertised themselves on buttonhooks, many an enterprising business did likewise.

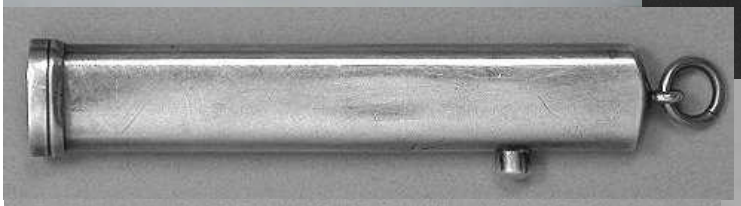
Sometimes they were kindred companies like this one for Bentley's spats below. However sometimes that seem so remote that one wonders what the connection is.

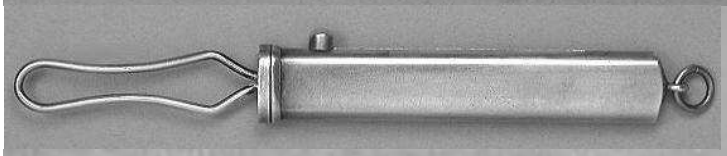
American Sterling buttonhooks.

We have now followed all the twists and turns of American buttonhooks, looked at all the patents that have been produced and all the silversmiths we know of who have produced buttonhooks. However we cannot finish without at least a backward glance at those makers who cannot be identified.

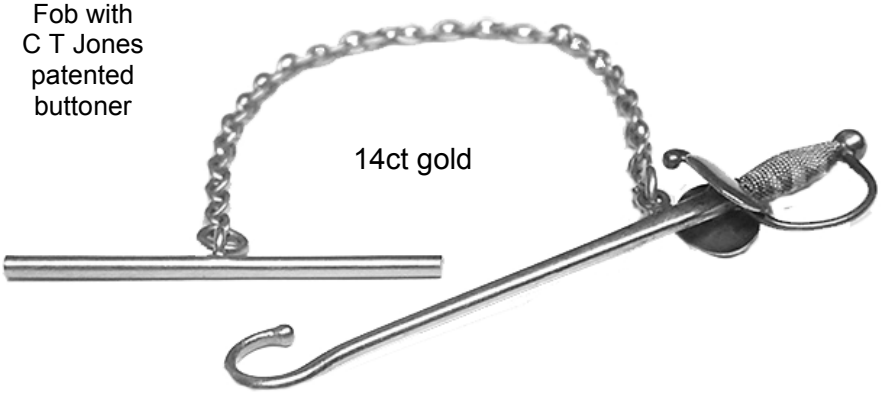
From the 1860's onward, American silver makers were making sterling silver items. This was mainly to allow themselves to compete with English silver. Many firms, like Gorham and Tiffany's also marked their silver with their own marks, just as English silver is marked. However side by side with that there was a host of American silversmiths making excellent goods of sterling quality who just marked them STERLING with no other marks.

Note C T Jones patented loop buttoners (pg 15)





Fob with C T Jones patented buttoner



14ct gold


White House glove hook



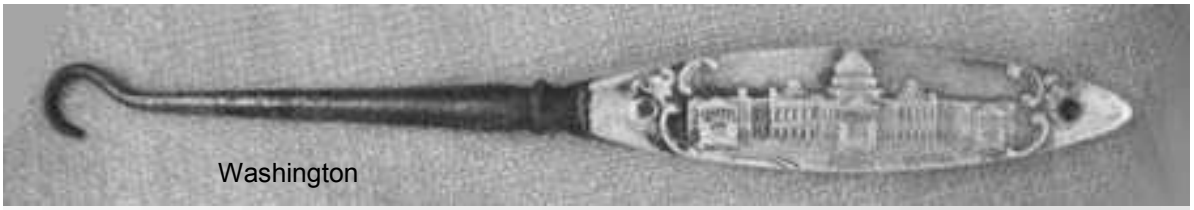


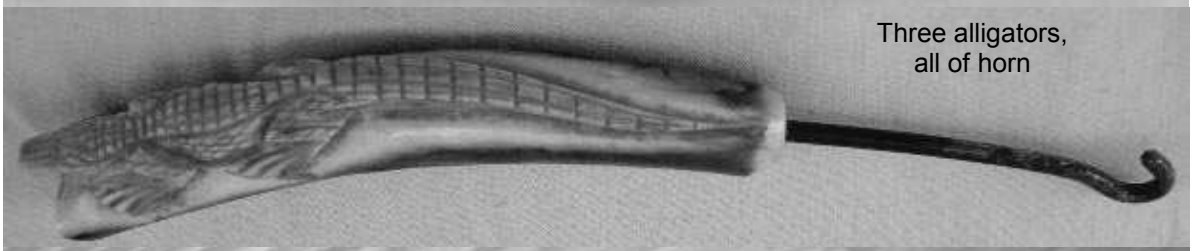
Fob with
C T Jones
buttoner



Bits and Bobs.

Along the way several odd buttonhooks turned up, many not silver, that did not fit into any particular category. However many buttonhook collectors actually prefer non-silver hooks. Sadly most of these cannot be attributed to any particular maker, so it's for those collectors that this final section is dedicated to.






Enamel scales


White metal turkey head..


Bone hound handle


BOTTINEAU, N. DAK.
Shoes


Carved Ivory


Manhattan Island

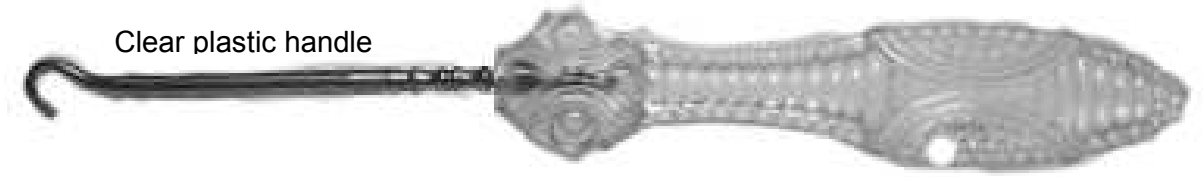

White metal seahorse glove hook dated 1888 on reverse.


Celluloid

Coin silver over horn

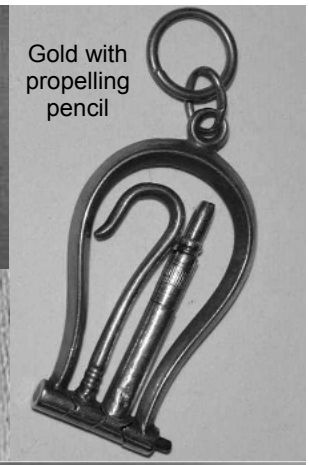
Sterling handle with container cover

Clear plastic handle



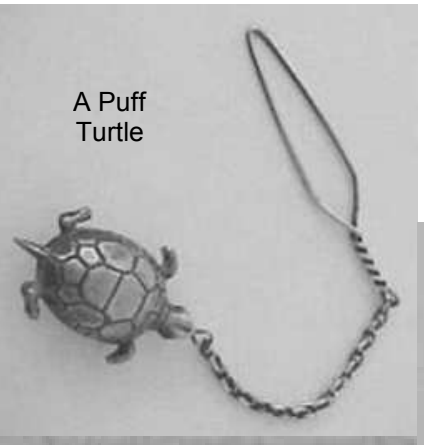
White metal claw clasping
a scent bottle

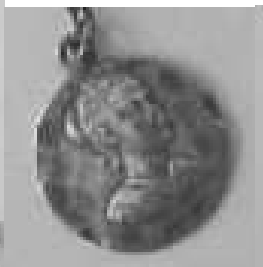
Gold with
propelling
pencil

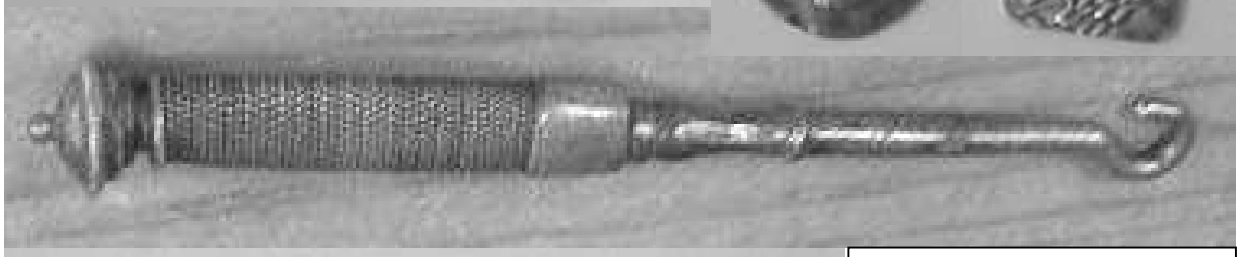


Sterling. Marked Hallie D Elkins

A Puff
Turtle







The twisted wire buttonhook above is claimed to have been made in the field in the Civil War period.

The Epilogue

The search for the American buttonhook is, of course, unending. However it is hoped that American collectors enjoyed the journey. This book set out to draw together all the information we have on American buttonhooks in an all encompassing way so that the development of them can be clearly demonstrated through the passage of time.

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