



AMERICAN HISTORY

June Anniversaries

June 4

80th Anniversary of the Battle of Midway (1942)

June 9

250th Anniversary of American patriots burning the British customs schooner HMS Gaspee off Rhode Island (1772)

June 10

John Adams proposes Continental Army (1775)

June 14

Congress establishes U.S. Army (1775)

Flag Day — commemorates the adoption of the Flag of the United States on June 14, 1777 by resolution of the Second Continental Congress

June 17

Battle of Bunker Hill begins (1775)

50th Anniversary of the Watergate scandal (1972)

June 19

Father's Day

June 20

Congress adopts The Great Seal of U.S. (1782)

Juneteenth

Bride and Groom— Wedding Cake Toppers

By Robert Reed

Symbols of love and togetherness, figures of the bride and groom have adorned the traditional wedding cake for well over a century.

They are known affectionately as toppers.

The most famous of all wedding cake toppers, the bride and groom, are no longer just keepsakes of the newly weds. They, like so many other vintage wedding items, are attracting collectors.

“Once considered valuable only to the persons who owned them,” proclaims the Antique Trader Antiques and Collectibles Price Guide, “wedding cake toppers have become increasingly sought after collectibles.”

While wedding cakes were frequently seen at gala weddings throughout the 19th century, most sources agree that wedding cake toppers first came into fashion in the 1890s.

Bells, flowers, and other artifacts decorated wedding cakes of that era. But especially charming were the bride and groom toppers which could be then removed from the cake a treasured as a keepsake by the happily wedded couple.

Early examples of such figures were usually made of plaster or a gum paste, but other materials were also pressed into use depending on the creativity of the baker or the homemaker.



Toppers of the 1900s could simply be figures of the bride and groom. However there were an increasing number of options such as adding love birds, silver bells, and archway, or even placing the symbolic couple in a miniature gazebo.

The dawning of the 20th century gradually saw bride and groom wedding cake toppers made of various substances including paper, glass, and wood. Some were simply homemade, but an increasing number were commercially manufactured in America as well as Germany and Japan.

Not that the wedding cake and its delightful toppers needed any help, but they became officially acceptable in high society by the 1920s.

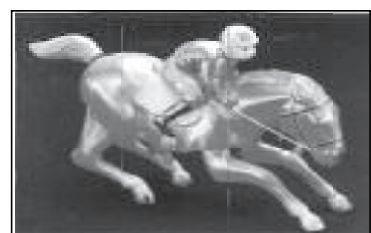
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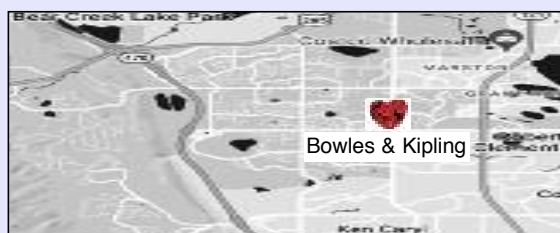
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Auction/Show Calendar June - August '22

JUNE 4: **OLD CROWS' ANTIQUES ROAD SHOW**, 12-3 p.m. (First Saturday of Every Month) 10081 West Bowles Avenue, Littleton. Get estimates on your favorite treasures. Talk to experts about your antiques, art, vintage and collectibles. Limit 1 item per person. Call 303-973-8648 for more information.

JUNE 11: **LITTLETON CAR SHOW** 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., weather permitting, at Old Crows Antique Mall, 10081 West Bowles Avenue, Littleton. Featuring vintage and collectible vehicles. Last month there were over 70 vehicles. An event that is fun for the whole family. Call 303-973-8648 for more info.

JUNE 11 & 12: **BRUHNS AUCTION GALLERY** presents **French Container Warehouse Sale**, 1395 West Alameda, Denver, Colorado, Fabulous original oil paintings, French bronzes, provincial furniture, garden statuary including sitting lions, urns, Persian carpets and more. Go to BruhnsAuction.com for more information.

JUNE 19: **DONUTS FOR DADS** at Sugar Mill Antiques and Vintage, 13788 Pacific Circle, Mead, Colorado. Tommy Boy Donuts will be at the Mall with free Donuts for Dads, 10-3 on Father's Day. Call 720-899-5570.

JULY 1: **JULY FOURTH SALE**, starts Friday, July 1 at the Colorado Antique Gallery, 5501 S. Broadway, Littleton, Colorado. Go to coloradoantiquegallery.com or call 303-794-8100 for more information.

JULY 8 & 9: **DENVER POSTCARD & PAPER SHOW**, Friday 11-6, Saturday 9:30 to 4. at the Holiday Inn Lakewood, 7390 W. Hampden Ave., Lakewood, Colorado, \$5 admission - good for both days. More info, www.denverpostcardshow.com or camobley@ephemeranet.com.

AUG. 5-6: **ON THE ROAD San Luis Valley**, Colorado, sponsored by Colorado Preservation, Inc., attendees will have access to unique behind-the-scenes ongoing preservation sites in the area. Early reservations recommended. 303-893-4260 x230.



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See ad on page 8.

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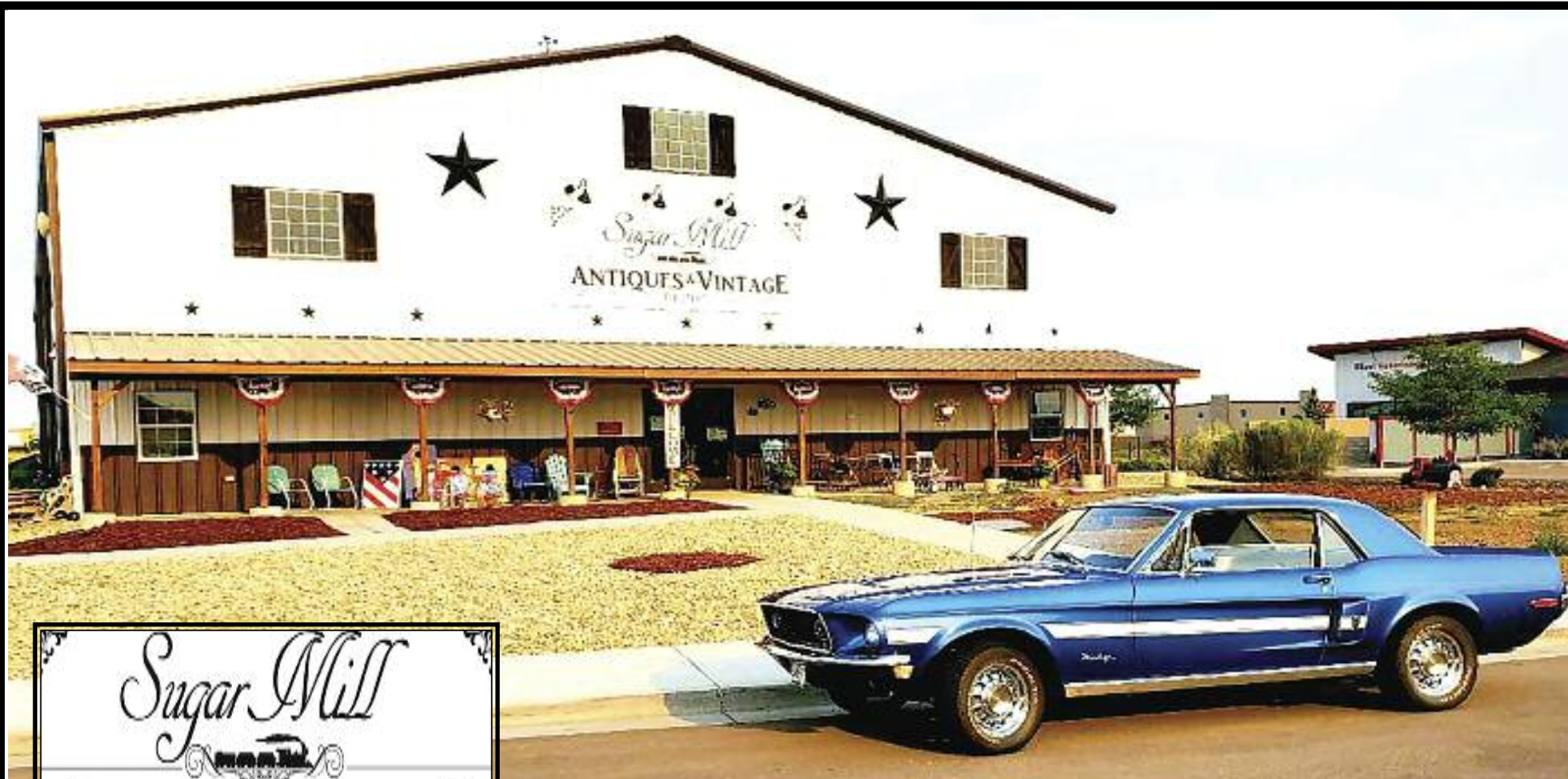
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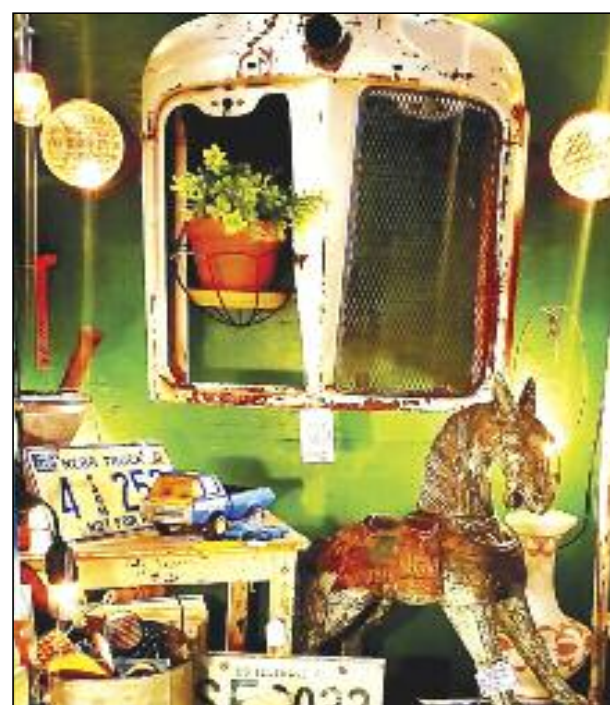
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Bride and Groom— Wedding Cake Toppers

Continued from page 1

The “wedding cake is an essential of every wedding reception,” wrote in immortal etiquette expert Emily Post in her 1922 book.

Miss Post added, “the wedding cake is almost always ordered from the caterer who delivers it shortly before the hour of the reception. It is usually in several tiers, beautifully decorated with white icing and topped by small figures of the bride and groom.”

However the etiquette lady, who would write volumes on the subject, warned such lay-outs could be expensive:

“Although the cost of ordering such a cake (complete with adorable topper figures) may be prohibitive, the charm remains, and it might be a suggestion for an unusual and thoughtful wedding gift from a family friend who is skilled in the art of baking---or very rich.”

In 1924 one U.S. wholesale catalog was offering an assortment of wax bride and groom wedding cake toppers. Selections included a hatless groom or a groom wearing a “high hat” or top hat. The bride meanwhile could come with or without a cloth veil. All of the bride and groom wax figures were about two inches tall. The catalog listing offered them as a couple, or in groups of 100 for wedding favors.

Also listed under “wedding favors and novelties” in the catalog were a cupid with a bow and arrow, cupid with a violin, cupid with a banjo, dove, lamb, dog, and a stork. Additionally there were also gnome figures in four styles and assorted colors.

Appearing in the marketplace recently was a ceramic bride and groom wedding topper from a 1925 event. The china figures compete with original cellophane paper and crepe paper wedding bell came with an original wedding invitation proclaiming the date. Overall the original wedding topper piece stood about seven inches tall.

The idea of wedding toppers in general and bride and groom toppers in particular had expanded enough in 1927 for the Sears and Roebuck mail order catalog it include a whole page of wedding cake ornaments. The following year Slack Manufacturing offered

bride and groom figures made of celluloid. The bride wore a paper dress and the groom wore a paper suit. Both figures were about two and a half inches tall.

There were lots more celluloid imported into the United States during the 1930s. Other choices included bisque, chalk ware, and even crepe paper. Professional cake makers sometimes went to great lengths to represent the bride and groom on towering cakes. One example featured two seven inch tall white china figures upon a three-inch silk floral accented base. Instead of merely standing side by side, this time the groom was carrying the bride over the threshold in traditional fashion.

Still other toppers of that era incorporated combinations of paper, wood, and perhaps metal. For a time tiny silver bells were a popular added decoration.

During the 1940s, with the onset of World War II, the groom topper figure often appeared in a military uniform. Army, Navy, and Marine versions were made. Some wore dress uniforms while others appeared in the more casual regular military duty attire. One chalk ware version had the groom in a U.S. Navy officer’s uniform beside a bride holding silk flowers. The over all piece including archway was six inches tall.

Yet another rare 1940s wedding cake topper put the chalk ware bride and groom in a hot air balloon, apparently about to embark on a lifetime journey.

Elaborations and materials varied considerably in the 1950s and 1960s. In the late 1950s the Coast Novelty Company produced a bride and groom topper holding hands beneath an arch. The arch itself was decorated with fabric flowers, and the plastic bride wore a gown of white satin. Early in the 1960s Wilton marketed a plastic couple complete with a battery operated light in the wedding bell above them.

Vintage Wedding Cake Toppers by Penny Henderson offers very generous coverage of such items from the 1890s through the 1980s. As an aide to dating various wedding couple toppers the book provides extensive comparisons on clothing styles. Also included are examples of the many substances used in construction in-



cluding earthenware, glass, marble-like, metal, plastic, and porcelain.

“Some collectors specialize in particular eras,” according to Henderson, “but I find that the majority of collectors, like me, collect every time period and every variety they can find.”

On occasion toppers were marked or even dated by the manufacturer. Generally however they lacked such details, leaving the collector to depend on other means. Clues include clothing styles of course, hairstyles, and vintage wedding photographs. The Henderson book includes 600 topper photographs as well as values.

Besides brides and grooms, the wedding topper field also expands to include doves, the bridal shoe, wax hands, cherubs, bells, and other decorative adornments relating to love and marriage.

“My love and passion for wedding cake toppers will never end,” concludes author Henderson.

Recommended reading:

Vintage Wedding Cake Toppers by Penny Henderson (Schiffer Publishing).

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High-Stepping Horse Collectibles

By Robert Reed

While horses may not be as vital to our civilization as they once were, things which relate to them or bear their image are treasured.

High-stepping horse collectibles from clocks to weathervanes are attracting a growing number of collectors these days.

Some with a fondness for horses specialize in saddles, harness and similar riding equipment. Others seek out three-dimensional figures. Still others may center on the so-called celebrity horses like Trigger, Silver or Gene Autry's Champion.

Additionally collectors may ride the trail specifically in search of horse-related banks, calendars, posters, puzzles, programs, toys, or even fruit crate labels.

Early 19th century weathervanes paid tribute to the horse. They were crafted from various metals, and sometimes even wood, to sit proudly atop churches, buildings and homes. Today surviving examples of the cast iron, copper, sheet metal and zinc horse weathervanes are highly prized.

One of the noblest causes in which horses served in the 19th century was a delivery service named in their regard, The Pony Express. In 1860 a Missouri newspaper advertised for Pony Express riders this way: "Wanted. Skinny, young wiry fellows not over 18. Must be expert riders, willing to risk death daily. Orphans preferred. Wages \$25 per week."

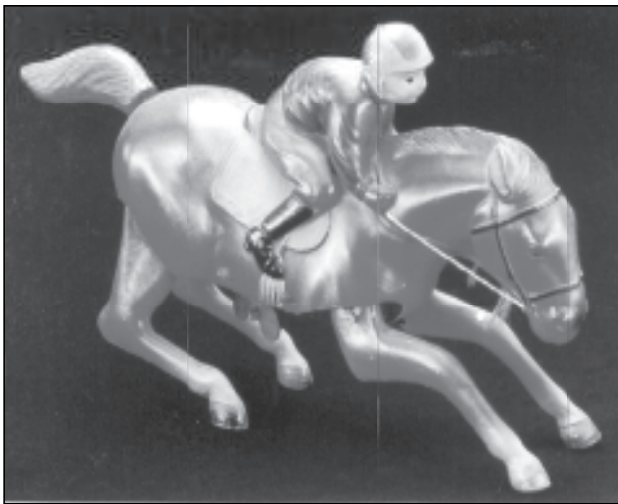
Eventually the express service assembled 100 riders and 500 horses. The young riders were required to take an oath not to swear, fight, or abuse their horses. Then they mounted up and rode at top speed from St. Joseph, Mo., to Sacramento, Calif.—stopping only for fresh horses—to deliver mail and dispatches.

At about the same time the Pony Express ended its brief 18 months of operation, the American-based Gong Bell Manufacturing Company offered toys as a sideline to their doorbell and sleigh bell operation in Connecticut. In the years that followed they produced toy horses which rang a bell as their wheels moved. Later other U.S. companies also produced similar toys horses, some with riders, and most with bells hung to their tails.

Clearly more advanced toy horses were offered in the 1870s by the Ives, Blakeslee and Company in the United States. When wound, these horse and buggy tinplated toys would move forward and rock, while the rider's arm would rise and fall.

By the 1890s major catalogs, like Carl P. Stirn's in New York City, offered scores of horse-related toys. Among them were toys of horse hide with iron wheels, tin horses complete with chimes and bells, and a wide array of cast-iron horses.

Elsewhere the endearing horse was featured on wonderfully lithographed cigar labels while the Harper's Weekly proclaimed the sport of harness racing. Unique cigar brands like Jockey Club, Derby King, Hoplah Chasters, Grand Circuit and Pacer paid tribute not only to the popular racing sport of the 1880s and 1890s



Wind-up celluloid horse with jockey, ca. 1930s, made in Japan for export. (Skinner auction photo.)

but to the horse as well.

Many more fine cast iron toy horses were being produced early in the 20th century. Besides basic toys, there were horse-image banks manufactured by A.C. Williams, Arcade and others. During the 1920s and 1930s the Hubley Manufacturing Company crafted heavy metal horses which served as trusty doorstops, and still others which were crafted as bookends.

For the most part the doorstops, while impressive, were not made to represent any particular horse. There were exceptions however, in the late 1930s the Rife-Loth Corporation produced a bronze image of King's Genius with the distinguished name along side of it.

During that period, and for part of the next decade especially inspiring horse-image bookends were also produced by such firms as the H.J. Judd Manufacturing Company and Frankart Company as well as the prolific Hubley company.

Just as horses had been richly illustrated in cigar labels of the latter 19th century, they were also celebrated in the fruit crate art of the 1920s and 1930s. During that time colorfully lithographed labels were essential to the on-site sale of fruits and vegetables in most markets. Thus the most distinguished label often attracted the greatest number of wholesale dealers.

Among the many produce brands which featured the horse in a prominent role on their labels were White Horse Grapes, Bronco Oranges, Mustang Vegetables, Pinto Vegetables and Rider Grapefruit.

During the 1940s the war years created severe shortages of most raw materials and the vast majority of America's industrial output was directed toward the war effort. But the image of horses did not completely disappear. The Beswick Company, for example, produced some of the finest ceramic horses, foals and ponies of the 20th century.

In 1942, The Pottery Gazette and Glass Trade Review noted that Beswick's remarkable wares that year included "a host of splendidly modeled and life-like animal subjects, including some particularly fine horses and foals—



Clockwork toy, E.R. Ives Company, Bridgeport, Conn., 1875. (Shelburne Museum.)



Horse figural with clock by Gibraltar of New Jersey, ca. 1950.

both hunters and shires (draft horses)...This being a type of potting for which the firm has established a big reputation."

In that decade and the one that followed it, Beswick featured a wide array of horse figures including a Shetland pony, Palomino, Pinto and others. Horses were also depicted in various activities including prancing, jumping and feeding. Through the years Beswick produced more than 100 different ceramic horses. The practice continued even after the firm was acquired by Royal Doulton in 1969.

Prior to World War II toy horses were still manufactured in abundance both in the United States and in foreign countries. Various materials were used, but a major factor in the marketplace were the celluloid wind-up and celluloid stationary toy horses manufactured in Japan. These colorful and relatively durable toys heavily exported to England and the United States during the 1930s.

During the 1950s celebrity horses came to fame.

These were the faithful horse companions of movie cowboy stars such as Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, or such fictional heroes as the Lone Ranger. Ultimately the horses were so popular they were even featured in their own spin-off comic book, which sold to children by the millions. Trigger appeared on lunch boxes too, along with Roy Rogers and Dale Evans.

The Marx toy company delighted youngsters in the 1950s with Roy Rogers western play sets which, not surprisingly, included plastic horses. One harnessed pair pulled Roy's chuck wagon. The Stanley Toy Company tried to turn back the clock with a cast iron surrey complete with cloth top and two horses. Meanwhile the Wolverine Toy Company offered a plastic horse with sulky racer as the decade ended.

Marx's Johnny West series was responsible some of most charming toy horses of the 1960s. Johnny West rode Thunderbolt, Jane West rode Buckskin. Other named horses from Marx during that period included Pancho, Storm Cloud and Commanche. Typically these 12-inch horses came with highly detailed vinyl equipment.

The lore of the horse can also be found in paper collectibles. Popular magazines which used famous artists to depict horses on covers are growing in appeal. Moreover there are older issues horse-specific magazines such as Western Horseman, Saddle and Bridle, Arabian Times and Paint Horse Journal are now attracting interest for their artful early design and contents.

Certainly the area of horse collectibles is highly varied today, and just as appealing to many as it is varied.

Recommended reading:

"500 Collectible Horses, 2nd edition," by Jan Lindenberg-er. (Schiffer Publishing).

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*—Marquis de
Lafayette, re-
ferring to the
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of America*

Outlaw Cookin’— The Arresting Recipes of Mrs. Frank James

If his wife's recipe books are any indication, Frank James—the infamous outlaw—must have been a happy man. After all, with his sweetheart making such special treats as "Love Cakes," "Chocolate Jumbles" and home-made "Blackberry Wine," what man would want to stray far from home?

Frank James didn't. He and brother Jesse were America's most hunted desperadoes during the wild and wooly post-Civil War era. Newspapers described the brothers as "cold-blooded killers," yet each man was a father and a happily married man—despite being the nation's most hunted outlaws for over 15 years.

For Jesse, the end came in 1882, when he was shot in the back of the head by an ex-gang member, eager to collect a \$10,000 reward. Brother Frank went into seclusion and vowed to never be taken alive. Yet just a few months later, the bandit unstrapped his guns and turned himself in, his love and concern for his wife and young son overriding his desire to fight to the end. The biggest gamble of his outlaw life paid off: Within a few months, Frank was acquitted of murder charges and returned home to Annie a free man.

Annie Ralston was 22 years old when she ran away from home in 1874 to marry the charismatic Frank James. Though he was branded a hardened criminal, the man Annie knew was a kind and gentle person who loved to read the Bible and quote Shakespeare. Annie's most cherished memories were the nights spent along the outlaw trail, listening to husband Frank as he quoted Shakespeare.

To Annie, Frank was a little boy in a man's body, yet someone who could feel emotions on a much deeper level than the average man. He never talked down to her, but treated her with respect as an equal. It wasn't so much a case of Annie being "his" woman, as it was Frank being "her" man. He would open up to her and share his innermost thoughts and feelings. Falling in love with Frank

James was an easy thing to do. Leaving home wasn't. But when the "law" started closing in on the man she loved, the young Missouri farm girl opted for the excitement of life on the outlaw trail.

Her departure was swift. Packing one suitcase and one valise, Annie boarded a train in Independence, and made good her escape. And safely packed away were two of Annie's most cherished possessions—recipe books containing her favorite meals and treats. She'd started entering special family recipes into the first book as a teenager in 1867, and added more as the years went by. Some were the very meals she later prepared for Frank and Jesse as they lived their wild and reckless days on the "dodge-em" trail.

After Frank's acquittal in 1882, the bent and tired one-time outlaw hung up his guns for good. Returning to Annie, Frank worked a variety of jobs until his death in 1915. A heartbroken Annie immediately went into seclusion, and was rarely seen in public. When she died nearly 30 years later, in 1944, her two worn and weathered recipe books were still on a cupboard shelf in her little kitchen. Though most of the recipes are in her handwriting, some were written by Annie's mother Mary, her sister Rowena, and several were even entered by none other than the old outlaw himself, husband Frank.

James Family descendants kept the two books until 1989, when both were sold to a private collector. The recipes include meat dishes, pies, cakes, vegetables, preserves, breads and home remedies.



Annie Ralston James

Readers, though we tried to find these cookbooks, we were unable to.

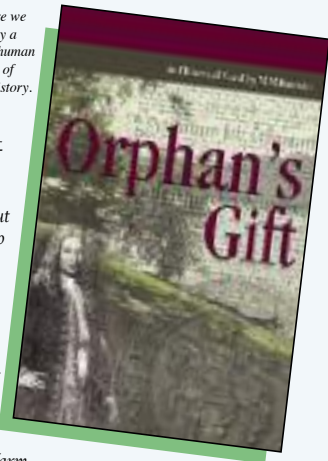
The last information we had said they were called 'Outlaw Cookin'. In all, nearly 120 recipes had been collected and published in the 70-page book. An address for the publisher was P.O. Box 461, Provo, UT 84603. There was a picture of Annie Ralston's book from July 22, 1867 in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. Let us know if you are able to locate this book or picture. We will be glad to update our readers. Thanks for your help.

WWW.ORPHANSGIFT.COM

Not to know what happened before we were born is to remain perpetually a child. For what is the worth of a human life unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history.
—Cicero

This journey of lifetimes follows Englishman Thomas Prater (later becoming Prather), young and without property, as he emigrates to Virginia in 1622 to seek his fortune in the New World, and ends in 20th century Ohio. When Thomas's son Jonathan dies in mysterious circumstances, the family emerges to become slaveholders, then ultimately abolitionists. They go from being planters, to farmers to participants in the industrialization of America. They participate in the American Revolution, the Civil War and the Second World War. Their story is the story of many American families who grew and changed as America grew and changed, never forgetting their land-loving roots.

Orphan's Gift is a fascinating story of an American family, a genealogical quest, written by three sisters with a passion for history and writing. M.M. Knowles is the pen name for sisters Mary Elizabeth Sikora, Margaret Rose DeStefano and Sally Ruth Gronauer.



Orphan's Gift is co-written by Margaret (Peggy) DeStefano, Mountain States Collector's Managing Editor. She and her sisters Mary Sikora and Sally Gronauer have captured the spirit of their Prather line of ancestors. The past has come to life in this historical novel. The book is a great example of taking your family genealogical research to a new level.

"Writing this book has been a fun and often surprising journey. Now that we have finished our first project together, my sisters and I are already fast at work on our second book in what we hope will be a series of historical novels," Peggy DeStefano explains.

You can order your copy of Orphan's Gift through Spree Publishing. Send your check or money order for \$19.95 to:

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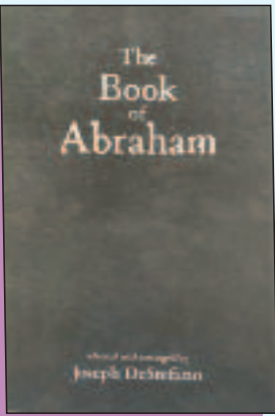
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CIVIL WAR BOOK

The subtitle of the book is "A Biblical Version of the American Civil War." Whether to distinguish it from, or to draw it closer to The Bible, one might suspect Joseph DeStefano is wanting to reclaim our attention with circumstances and characters of bygone, perhaps nobler times. But, as he makes clear in his preface, it is the times we are living in, "Now, in 2020," with their own potential of nobility, and of ruin, that makes his effort seem "especially relevant" to him. He writes:

"I take up the spiritual content of our worst national crisis to date in an attempt to inspire us to ask and answer old questions anew — within ourselves."



And, indeed, the first speech of Abraham Lincoln, only a few pages into the first part, might just as well have been written yesterday as 160 years ago. And so it is with the words and actions of Jefferson Davis, of Grant and Lee, of Sherman, Forrest, and Frederick Douglass, and of all the rest. In *The*

Book of Abraham, the crystalline prose of Bruce Catton, the breathtaking stories of Shelby Foote, together with the research of Joshua Wolf Shenk, James McPherson, and Ibram X. Kendi, are interfused with extractions of *The Old Testament*, and of other ancient works, and with poetry, oratory and song of more modern authors and actors—interfused, that is, with inspiration available to all our current creeds.

Answering old questions anew, himself, DeStefano is obviously only interested in that which has proved timeless. He offers it all as "A Gift," for us to wonder at its startling power, yes, but more to help us recognize the challenge of its continuing pertinence. This book believes in us—in what we are now: both what we have been and what we can be."

The Book of Abraham's author Joseph DeStefano is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. He teaches high school English in Littleton, Colorado where he lives with his wife and children.

You can order your copy of *The Book of Abraham* through Amazon. You can use this link:

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Great Furniture of the Old West

By Robert Reed

It was not just one style or one element that contributed to the great furniture of the Old West.

The distinctive nature of Old West furnishings came from such far reaching sources as the historic Spanish Colonials and Native Americans to the Eastern elite and progressive creators of Arts and Crafts.

It was a grouping of many such principles to form, when combined, a rather unique and attractive vogue.

"The raw data of the western ranch vernacular has been reworked, edited, abstracted, compressed and turned into a flexible architectural vocabulary," notes "Rancho Deluxe" author Alan Hess.

"The cowboy style is not simply a historical re-creation, it is a great work of the imagination."

Some of the very earliest furniture of the Old West was, of course, very basic. Many settlers from the early 17th century represented frugal lifestyles of the Iberian Peninsula, which bordered both Spain and Portugal. Small settlements in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas saw the most fundamental of furnishings of chairs, chests and tables. Typically whatever wood could be found in the region was put to use.

Chests, for example, were soundly made but not elaborate. It was not unusual for settlers to simply mount six boards together with the use of pegs and dovetail joints to construct a chest. Sometimes the chests were decorated with carvings or paintings of animals, birds, plants or simple geometric designs.

Such chests were found in most of the households of 18th century western regions, even when other surroundings were considered meager. In 1776, priest Fray Francisco Dominguez wrote in "The Missions of New Mexico" that in the interior of Indian homes "they usually have...some kind of chest, either plain or painted."

Throughout the 18th century and into the early 19th century the furniture of the Old West reflected the culture

of previous centuries. Some was imported from foreign lands, but much was crafted from native woods using methods from distant generations. Primitive chairs used splats or spindles to link the stretchers and rails much as they had the century before.

By the second half of the 19th century an alternative clearly loomed for furnishing fashion homes of the Old West. Thanks to industrial expansion in the East and Midwest, Westerners also had the choice of ordering the latest furniture direct from the factory.

Suddenly, with the completion of the coast-to-coast railroad, furniture manufacturers in 1870s locations like Grand Rapids, Mich., had clients in the Golden West.

Initially "a handful of wealthy Californians, at great expense, commissioned prestigious New York decorators to outfit their mansions," observe Brad and Brian Witherell, authors of the comprehensive "California's Best: Old West Art and Antiques." "An opulence was created there that would continue throughout the 19th century."

At one point in the latter 19th century leading furniture makers were manufacturing pieces especially for the growing market in California and other parts of the Old West. Major makers included Berkey and Gay, Phoenix Furniture Company, and the legendary Herter Brothers. Many California firms established themselves as master agents for quality Eastern-manufactured furniture before developing their own regional operations.

In 1874 a San Francisco newspaper reported on the lavish decorating of the mansion of Milton Latham. According to the account the library alone was "furnished with classic severity, but with perfect taste including a gilt rosewood table." The table and a number of other lovely marquetry items were directly from Herter Brothers.

Gradually furniture makers in the West were able to produce their own wares. The more successful went from merely stenciling their "local" name on prize pieces, to manufacturing their own.



Carved Tulip chair, 1850s, includes some bead work on front and back rails. (Albuquerque Museum.)

Continued on page 12

GOLDEN

Old West Furniture In Touch With Nature

Continued from page 11

By the latter 1880s a statewide California directory noted that there were 18 furniture manufacturing establishments in San Francisco alone. It added that furniture from that city was "sold all over the Pacific slope and for novelty of design, perfect finish, durability and cheapness, cannot be excelled."

As the 19th century neared a close on the West Coast some serious California furniture makers had stepped to the forefront including J.P. Goodwin and Company, J.B. Luschinger, W.J.T. Palmer and Company and Charles Plum and Company.

If the time and price were right that fall, front desk, marble dresser, or roomy bookcase could be produced right in the Old West itself.

But furniture of the Old West remained in touch with nature, too. Among other things there was the often elaborate use of steer horns and antlers. Primarily they were used on chairs and couches, but at times they were added as ornamentation to tables, sideboards and other pieces as well. Most better homes had at least one or two antler chairs on display from the 1890s into the early 20th century.

Historians attribute the use of horns and antlers in part to the German immigrants who drew on designs once popular in Europe to craft regional pieces. One significant contributor was Wenzel Freidrick of Texas who used the abundant supply of such items to supplement his furniture making.

Among the notable pieces was a hall tree with 32 individual steer horns. Freidrick was in the company of those who also used cowhide and goatskin to upholster hand-made furniture.

And yet even in the early 1900s, with options ranging from antlers to mahogany, furniture of the Old West was not clearly identified.

"An unmistakable Western style in furnishing was slow to develop, at least in part because most settlers in the frontier West hoped to recreate the comforts they had left behind," note documents in the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyo. "By the turn of the century a Wyoming ranch house was likely to be furnished with Mission Oak furniture. It was sturdy and stylish and available by catalog from Montgomery Ward or Sears and Roebuck."

By the same token homes might also feature locally crafted twig or rough pine furniture as well. More and more frequently seen were leather-covered cushions on chairs and couches, and more and more colorful Navajo rugs were being hung on walls rather than left of floors.

In the stylish homes of the Old West occasionally could be found glass-fronted cabinets and other pieces which clearly reflected the Arts and Crafts style which had swept the eastern half of the United States. The distinctly Eastern taste of dark wood, sometimes starkly mixed with lighter natural woods, also began to present.

Wood finish soon became a major part of the appeal of a new line of western-based furniture manufacturing, which began in 1929. In California furniture retailer Barker Brothers contacted the Mason Manufacturing Company and expressed an interest in a line of Spanish-styled furniture. Mason moved to produce a line, which they called Monterey.

Monterey furniture with its "old wood" finish, ornate wrought iron and floral designs was a major success in the 1930s. In 1932 a Barker Brothers catalog boasted "the charm and versatility of Monterey furniture definitely belongs in California homes." And from corner cupboards to club chairs it certainly seemed to for more than an entire decade.

A number of other firms also followed the remarkable style form soon afterwards with regional-sounding names like Coronado, Del Rey and Imperial. Even Sears and Roebuck had a "follow line" known as La Fiesta.

And finally there was the extraordinary work of Thomas Canada Molesworth in Cody, Wyo.

Operating as the Shoshone Furniture Company, Molesworth took the use of antlers to an art form. Likewise he blended the use of natural woods to further advance the Arts and Crafts movement. Gnarled pine burls and leather cushions joined the antler decorations in unique chairs. Carved animal figures adorned the beds while fiber-rush twigs dominated tables.



Wardrobe chest with carved base, ca. 1870s, New Mexico. Includes raised panels.

Whole rooms fell under the Molesworth influence from simple bark-covered work tables to custom-loomed carpet inserts.

"Each room was a landscape," remark Wally Reber and Paul Fees in the study "Interior West, The Craft and Style of Thomas Molesworth." "A unity of art and furnishings... that all worked together to enhance the Western experience of their owners and guests."

Molesworth, Monterey, rustic, Spanish influence, Native American, natural wood, and even Grand Rapids all served somehow to be part of the eclectic yet romantic great furniture of the Old West.



American steer horn armchair, early 20th century, leather seat. (Skinner Auction Inc.)

COLORADO SPRINGS

McAllister House Museum A Great Place to Visit

Major McAllister made his home in this small house until his death in 1921. For the next 30 plus years the house was rented by the family of Mrs. Fanny Robbins who used the house for a candy and "wedding gift" shop. Upon her death in 1958, the family sold the house.



In 1961 a historic preservation group, the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in Colorado, with the help of the El Pomar Foundation and Shepard's Citations, was able to buy and restore this Colorado Springs (Fountain Colony) house. Why not visit this lovely house and enjoy the historically true restorations?

GEORGETOWN



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The Swankyswig Story

By Carol J. Perry

All over the United States today colorful dinosaurs scamper across kitchen tumblers which used to hold grape jelly. Beverages are often poured from pitchers or decanters which may have originally contained maple syrup, vegetable oil or instant coffee. Recycling-conscious Americans have become accustomed to the thrifty convenience of reusable glass containers.

But it was only 89 years ago, in October of 1933, that Kraft Foods first introduced this pleasant feature to a receptive public. Kraft called their innovative jolly little glass containers "Swankyswigs," and they used them for packaging cheese spreads. Before the advent of these trim, straight-sided tumblers, glass food containers were clunky, thick-sided affairs with fat, bulky rims. It was Kraft's Vice President in charge of Advertising and Public Relations, John H. Platt, who thought up the idea.

He began a search for a company which could develop a cap to safely seal the product without marring the glass. The White Cap Company came up with the answer, a sealing cap with an attached natural rubber gasket. Decorations were Platt's next priority, and the Hazel Atlas Company won the assignment to provide a color decoration for the new "juice glasses." Their first design was a hand-applied red horizontal band 1/8-inch wide, with a hairline-width black stripe.

Kraft made five different varieties of cheese spreads at that time, and when the newly-colorful packages showed up on the nation's grocery shelves in the fall of 1933, they were an immediate hit. In fact, Kraft's cheese spreads sales jumped an incredible 601% that first year! By then the Hazel Atlas' Wheeling, West Virginia plant was operating around the clock, keeping 280 women busy applying the hand-painted designs, which had been updated to alternating stripes of black and red, two each. These glasses were so tremendously popular that they're still showing up at flea markets and garage sales with surprising frequency—more often than many of the later patterns, as a matter of fact. Both of these early striped glasses are just a hair over 3-1/4" tall and have vertical 1/4" paneled ridges on the inside.

Kraft's third design had a fairly short life. A little taller than the first two, 3-3/8", it featured two blue bands with two white hairlines. It's a rarity today.

Kraft's next design still required handwork, but a new squeegee technique using silk stencils made the decorating process a little more sophisticated. Consumers liked the all-over random dot-within-a-circle pattern rendered in red, green and black. The dot pattern glasses were 3-1/2" tall, as were the next ones presented to the cheese spread-buying public, an all-over star pattern in the same colors, offered in 1935.

Meanwhile, back at the glass plant, Hazel Atlas designers were scrambling around trying to produce better, more uniform silk screen stencils. They came up with a cheery, neat, red-and-white checkerboard pattern. A daintier checked pattern followed. Both of these prim and pretty designs are rarities now. At about the same time, Atlas



produced a trim, all-blue sailboat design, complete with waves and seagulls. This is another hard-to-find Swankyswig, although it occasionally turns up among Depression glass items mistakenly identified as part of a similarly-patterned cocktail set.

1937 saw the birth of Kraft's most famous cheese glass pattern ever—the tulip. The familiar 3-1/2" straight-sided glass was used, and stylized tulips bloomed in neat pots of red, green, blue and black. White leaves and stems provided contrast. The tulip glasses quickly eclipsed all the other designs in popularity and to this day are a favorite with collectors. The same design in the same colors was used again later on a 3-1/2" glass with a slightly flared top impressed with six horizontal rings. This was soon followed by a taller version, flared gracefully at the top with four rings of graduating widths. The black tulip design was replaced with an eye-catching pale blue, and the pot was deleted. Leaves and stems were green instead of white.

The last of the Kraft tulip patterns was offered in 1940 as one of a group of new designs dubbed "posy patterns." The brightly-colored straight-sided glasses stood 3-1/2" tall, and sprightly tulips were red with large, curving green leaves.

From time to time, over the years, Kraft introduced new varieties in their cheese spread line, but no attempt was ever made to put any one flavor into a specific container. A red tulip glass might contain pineapple, pimento, or any other of Kraft's spreads. The identification was always specified on the wash-off paper label. But the Kraft folks were sensitive to consumer preference and kept careful tabs on which of their innovative designs sold best. Oddly enough, Carnival glass, which had emerged as the darling of the American housewife, was not popular at all as a cheese tumbler. A trial run in 1939 consisted of four colors: blue, red, green and yellow. Grocers and shoppers alike turned thumbs-down on the product-obscuring, gaudy opaque glass.

Kraft's colorful glasses fell victim to strict World War II government regulations, so consumers had to make do with plain clear containers until 1946 when Swankyswigs next emerged—again in the familiar "posy" patterns. In addition to the red tulip design there were pale-blue cornflowers, bright-yellow jonquils and deep-blue violets, all with green leaves. A modern-looking flower with spikey



petals was introduced in 1947 in the familiar red, yellow, light-blue and dark-blue spectrum. This was followed in 1948 by a design featuring horizontal bands of forget-me-nots in the same four colors.

Kraft was honored in 1949 when Swankyswigs were nominated to Packaging's Hall of Fame. The colorful little containers were recognized as the world's most popular re-use package. They were also honored for making advances toward perfecting multicolor ceramic labeling on glass.

It wasn't until the early '50s that the bottom of the glasses were tapered inward to make stacking easier. At about the same time, a new "posy" appeared, a band of green leaves topped by one band each of red and white blossoms. In 1954 this same stackable 3-3/4" glass was used again: early American silhouettes showed spinning wheels, teapots, trivets and the like in red, black, green and blue. This theme was a successful one, and Kraft quickly followed up with another historical motif. This time an old-fashioned family was depicted in shades of red, green, blue, orange and a new rich-brown color. On each glass family members are occupied in various homey pursuits—viewing a stereoscope, having tea, chatting on an old-time telephone.

The last of the Swankyswig series appeared in the late '50s and delighted millions of American children. Cute baby animals cavort around the glasses. Bunnies, ducks, squirrels, pigs, bears, puppies, roosters and elephants are cleverly rendered in brown, black, green, blue, orange and red. Each design is topped with a border of miniature "toy" animals of the same species.

The last three mentioned designs are still the easiest for collectors to find, and it's possible with judicious searching of antiques shops, flea markets and church bazaars to collect complete sets without spending a fortune. The airy, modern flower of the 1948 series is still around in considerable numbers, too. But like all the other "new" collectibles, Swankyswigs are going fast. Be prepared to pay more for the more common patterns in a shop or at a show. The rarer ones are proportionately more expensive. But keep your eyes open for bargains at yard sales and flea markets, and don't forget to peek into Mom's or Grandma's cupboard. Your very own childhood Swankyswig juice glass may still be there!

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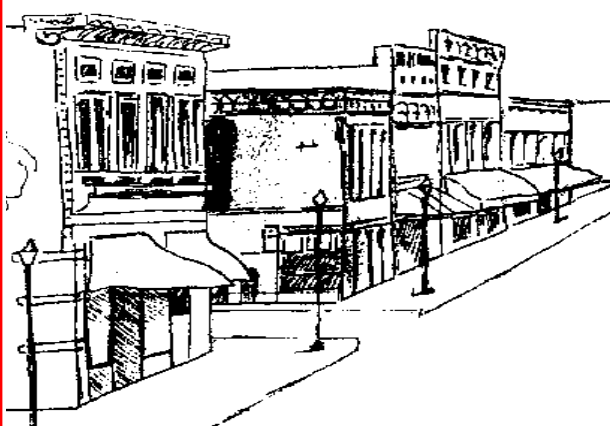
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Tell Me a Story

By Sandy Dale

Whew! Our sleepy little Florence town just had two of its biggest events back-to-back last weekend. Junktique (first "springtime" one) and the 20th Annual Merchants' Car Show. (Almost four hundred cars, I'm told.) I thought, while I'm recovering, I'd ramble a bit about one of my favorite hobbies - storytelling.

"Okay," you say, "I can't write" or "I have writers' block" or "I don't know what to tell a story about." There a million excuses, but I'll bet you love listening to stories, everyone does. Historical recountings or mysterious events. Fiction or true. Here's a way to start your own.

This is one of my favorite ways to begin. Because I love historical fiction (especially stories that take place in southeast Colorado), I pick up my phone (to take photos), my pen, and a notebook and I take a little walk downtown.

There's a great window display at The Loralie of 60's records, a drive-in restaurant tray on an old car door...and an old gas can. I'll bet anyone could make a story out of that. At the Artful Antiquarian (at the west end on Main) there is a case of fabulous replica guns, an old oil wagon, some old boots...see what I mean? Take notes, take photos, or take those old boots home to inspire you. Where might they have walked?

Sometimes, just seeing and touching these old things brings back memories of a story your grandpa told you. Your kids and grandkids need to hear these tales.

Almost all of the antique shops along Main Street have boxes of old photos. Sift through them and find fabulous characters for your stories. (Use them if you'd rather not embarrass your own relatives.)

While you're finding your muse, check out these three new shops - Trending On Main at its newer and bigger location, Just Julie's at Pike's Peak and Main, and Florence Hair Parlor and Antiques at Pike's Peak and Front Street. As we say here, Find All This in Florence.



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CONTEST

May's What Is It?



Marjorie McLaren of Anchorage, Alaska thought this object might be a metal wrist-bracelet with a keyring attached. It is actually a Victorian silvered metal adjustable dog collar.

The engraving on the collar says Frank Hamblin of City Coal Co. of Bath (England).

Marjorie found out that there is an interesting side story to this person. Frank (the son) and William (the father) were both indicted in 1918 for fraud against the City of Bath relating to forged billings to the City for day-work haulage by the father which were then paid by the son in his then capacity as a

clerk for the City. The loss to the City for fraud was stated as 8,727 English pounds. Following a jury trial, the son was sentenced to seven years in prison and the father to 18 months at hard labor. Subsequently, in 1921, the son died in prison at age 44.

The above information regarding the Hamblins was obtained from various online sources including memorials of the Lyncombe & Widcombe and St. James' Cemetery.

Thanks, Marjorie. You never disappoint. And, congratulations, you have won a year's subscription to *the Mountain States Collector*.

JUNE 4: OLD CROWS' ANTIQUES ROAD SHOW, 12-3 p.m. (First Saturday of Every Month) 10081 West Bowles Avenue, Littleton. Get estimates on your favorite treasures. Talk to experts about your antiques, art, vintage and collectibles. Limit 1 item per person. Call 303-973-8648 for more information.

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June's What Is It?

Send your answers to the What Is It contest, postmarked by June 20, to *the Mountain States Collector*, P.O. Box 1003, Bailey, CO 80421. At least three winners will be drawn. Winners will receive a year's subscription to *the Mountain States Collector*.

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