



LOCKS & KEYS



Issue 8

The Newsletter for lock collectors

March 1999

Congratulations

Congratulations to Jim Evans - his company history is now published. Finally seeing a book come from the printer is a very satisfying feeling, after all the hard work that goes into it.

This issue has several items on padlocks, as padlocks seems to be an interest of several readers. We shall return to padlocks in future issues.

I still look forward to contributions on locks - your favourite or most-prized item in your collection, for example. It is quite certain that there are readers who know more about locks than me, and have much to share.



Several books on collecting will be noticed in a forthcoming issue. If any reader would like to suggest subjects to include, do let me know.

I hope all readers will find something of use to them amongst the items listed. I would be pleased to know readers' interests, at any time, so the newsletter can be best tailored to what you would like.

Richard Phillips

Baldpate

The name Baldpate probably means little to most people now, including lock collectors, but it is still familiar to well-versed magicians.

In 1913 a successful journalist published a book variously described as a melodrama or a mystery romance. *Seven keys to Baldpate* was Earl Derr Biggers' first novel¹. It was set in a lonely hotel in the mountains. The essence of the plot is that there should only have been one key, but there were actually seven.

Plays, films

The following year George Cohan published a two-act play, a mysterious melodramatic farce, based on Biggers' novel. The book (and play) were exceedingly popular; both appeared in Britain, in several editions. It was filmed three times by RKO, in 1929, 1935, and 1947. There was a horror version made in 1983 with the title *House of the long shadows*, by the UK company Cannon, with a star cast. None of the versions was artistically as satisfactory as a good stage play. Most puzzling for the viewer was the 1935 remake, in which the director, curiously omitted the story's trick ending.

'Just chance'

A common magical demonstration is 'just chance': in which several spectators freely select from a small set of choices, leaving the last one to the magician. Only one selection is significant. Invariably, by magic, the last selection left to the magician is the

continued on p.2

"Locks & Keys" needs more subscribers. If you know any other collectors, please ask them to subscribe to their own copies!

"Locks & Keys" welcomes contributions, preferably with uncoloured illustrations on separate sheets. Unfortunately, colour photographs tend to be too dark to reproduce well. PC disks with files in Word2, Works3, Write, or saved as .rtf can be used.

Inside This Issue

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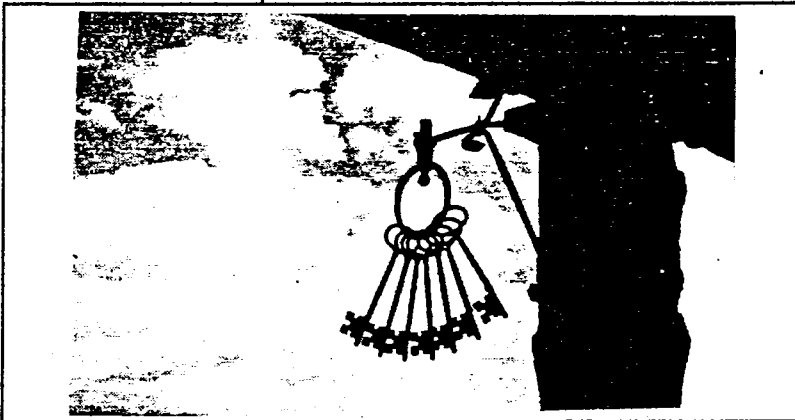
8 *Linley padlock*

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Peebleshire, UK EH46 7HE
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Baldpate (continued from p.1)

significant choice.

Ted Annemann was a US magician who died tragically young in 1936 after a long illness. He left behind a large body of magical effects, methods, and ideas. He was the first to apply the theme of *Seven keys to Baldpate* to the 'just chance' effect. Annemann displayed a padlock and seven similar keys; he showed that only one key worked the lock. All the keys were mixed in a bag, from which six spectators freely



Seven keys on a ring hang outside the front of Baldpate Inn

chose by feel one key each. Always, the key which was left to Annemann was the one which worked.

Annemann had an extra wrong key already in the bag when the six wrong ones were dropped in. He secretly retained the true key after showing it, and did not actually drop it into the bag. When he took out the 'last' key from the bag, he actually left the extra wrong key there and brought the true key into view.

Methods and more methods

This was originally a cabaret demonstration. It was later taken onto the stage, and also done close-up. Many presentations and methods have since been created. The very inventive Stewart Judah made a version called *The keys of Gibraltar*. Another version in wide use today is *Key-rect*. Often the props are impressive, and a valuable prize is offered. Paul Daniels and the BBC once offered a new Rolls Royce car, but Daniels kept the prize!

Some methods use sleight of hand; some use gimmicked locks. One padlock had a ratchet mechanism. Once locked, no one key (they were all alike) would open it with a single turn. Seven keys had to be tried to

fully unlock all the ratchet steps. (Actually, trying to turn one key seven times would also have worked, but spectators were not given the chance!) Another lock could be opened by any of the keys if inverted. It was a pin tumbler padlock without any springs and drivers - only the bottom pins.

Charlie Chan, and more keys

Biggers went on to create a Chinese-American detective called Charlie Chan. Biggers seems to have had some interest in keys. The first, and possibly best, Chan novel is *The house without a key* (1925). The last of six was *Keeper of the keys* (1932).

"My, aren't people forgetful?"

When Mr and Mrs Gordon Mace homesteaded their land in a remote mountain setting in Colorado in 1915, they called it Baldpate. When they built a hotel there in 1917, they called it Baldpate Inn. Over the entrance they hung a large replica of seven keys on a ring. By 1947 they had accumulated over 10,000 keys from all around the world, labelled to show their provenance. On being told that most of the keys had been left by guests, one lady responded "My, aren't people forgetful?" The keys range from under ½" to several feet. Mr Biggers left one with a tag inscribed in his own hand *This is the original key to Baldpate - all the rest are imitations. The old man gave it to me the day before he died.*¹

Many of the keys were left by famous persons, or have famous origins or associations. One key arrived by miniature parachute. There are also 'key' symbols. There is a description of some of the many famous and interesting keys which have been given to the inn, published in 1947.²

Richard Phillips

Baldpate Inn is at 4900 HWY7, Estes Park, Colorado 80517; telephone (970)586-6151.

¹BIGGERS, Earl Derr *Seven keys to Baldpate ...* illustrated by Frank Snapp. Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill Co, 1913

²PARK, Allen S *Keys to everything. Compressed air magazine* 1947 vol 52 Sep pp 223-225

Clarke combination padlock

The Clarke Patent Combination Padlock was made by Clarke Lock Company, Baltimore, Md. It was used to a considerable extent by the United States Treasury Department.

To unlock, open the hinged case on the front of the lock; draw the milled cylinder forward, then push it back, leaving the tumblers projecting above the dial or lettered plate. With the thumb push down only those tumblers which form the combination, being careful not to touch the others. Then turn the milled edge cylinder to the right, when the bolt will be withdrawn, the shackle is released and the lock is open. To lock, put the sliding rack firmly in its place. Do the same as to unlock, but turn the milled edge cylinder to the left; push in all the tumblers before putting the seal on; then place the seal case down upon it. Close the outside hinged case and spring the shackle in quickly.

Details from HOPKINS, Albert: *The lure of the lock*. 1928. [and later reprints]

This was supplied by Jon Millington to accompany his article which appeared in the last issue; it was held over for lack of space.

Decoupage

Recently I came across a book on decoupage which showed some very attractive designs with old tinplate deedboxes.

Decoupage is the art of sticking printed pictures (printed on paper) onto objects, as decoration, and varnishing. Sometimes a three-dimensional effect is achieved with several layers of paper, but this is mainly used for pictures in frames.

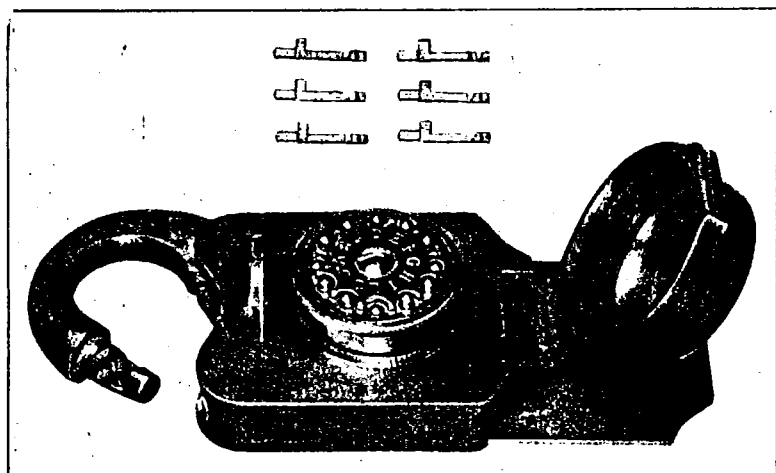
The choice of an appropriate picture is eased by the availability of colour photocopyers and books of copyright-free clip art. The picture must be neatly cut out. After being stuck on, it is coated in a varnish, which may be clear or faintly coloured. There are also crackle varnishes available. The object can eventually look hand-decorated, and old. Such decorated boxes might enhance a display, or add tastefully to a collection.

THOMAS, Denise *Practical decoupage*. London, Anaya Publishers, 1993.

1 85470135 5 £16 hardback

1 85470260 2 £10 paperback

Richard Phillips



Clarke Combination Padlock

Waine's world of padlocks

Patent details of the Waine's crab claw padlock shown in the last issue have been supplied by two readers. This is BP5176 of 1888. It was issued to David and Isaac Waine, who traded as John Waine & Sons, of Britannia Works, Willenhall, Lock Manufacturers.

Presumably the style of padlock was not popular with consumers, as so few are seen. Or perhaps they did not survive well.

Waine's patent, and production locks, have a small hole at the bottom of the body for fixing a chain to attach the lock when not locked.

The patent has numerous diagrams, not all of which will reproduce well. The patent drawings shown are from the US patent, but they are the same as as the British originals. Production locks have a curved shield covering the pivot of the shackle, which is not shown in the patent.

The bolt moves vertically, unlike most padlocks. It projects beyond the top of the case, and is there shaped to form part (preferably one half) of the shackle which is in the shape of a ring divided into halves vertically, the other half of the shackle being made loose from the bolt and hinged thereto at a point which, when the bolt is drawn back, is inside the padlock case but which is outside the case when the bolt is shot forward.

Alternatively, both parts of the shackle could be hinged; the shackle could be of different shapes; and the shackle size could easily be varied without altering the case size.

The mechanism inside the case for operating the bolt may be similar to that employed for operating other locks, such as lever locks.

In unlocking, the mechanism advances out

of the case, and the right part of the shackle swings open.

The padlock is self-locking, as on pushing the bolt inwards the stump pushes the inclined end of the lever(s), then locks behind the stump; and the pivoted half of the shackle is pushed up to the half forming the end of the bolt.

The patent also claims some variations; a large shackle, and both parts of the shackle moving outwards when unlocked.

The Waines disclaim infringing Linley's patent BP5378 of 1880. It does appear to be an infringement, but the patent examiners allowed it! At least it appears to be a more secure design.

What seems really curious is that there exist locks which are *copies* of the Waine padlock. Shown are two Indian locks. One is covered front and back with decoration, the other is rather plainer.

Sincere flattery?

Indeed, there exist copies of quite a number of modern padlocks. In most cases these are commercial piracy; a well-known branded product is copied. Sometimes the tradename or mark is copied, sometimes closely imitated, sufficient to deceive unwary customers. Copies of Yale padlocks have been sold marked with such names as VALE, and KALE.

Other copies appear to be of locks which are not from the top of the market. In some cases, possibly a maker of locks for another company has simply sold unbranded locks. Various Indian locks, probably made in small shops, appear to have been inspired by British designs.

Information and pictures from Don Jackson, Peter Schofield, Ingo Sckmoeckel and Russ Soderquist.

Xerox copiers

There's no need for it, the inventor was told, long before WW2. There is the diffusion transfer process, with a wet fixer -- sometimes you can make 2 copies from 1 negative sheet. And there's the Photostat™ machine, if your office can afford to buy one. And the blueprint process. Admittedly

both of these produce negative images.

J Arthur Rank in the 1950's was flush with money from taking over most of Britain's flour mills and small bakers, and from the film industry. He financed the development of the xerographic photocopier.

All Rank Xerox photocopiers still use the same disk tumbler lock, keyed to FFE3.



DRAWINGS OF PATENTS, APRIL 10, 1888.

283

(No Model.) D. & I. WAINE. PADLOCK. 3 Sheets—Sheet 1.
No. 380,961. Patented Apr. 10, 1888.

Fig. 1, Fig. 2, Fig. 3, Fig. 4, Fig. 5, Fig. 6

WITNESSES,
Charles Kenneth Kelly,
George Herbert, Esq.

INVENTORS,
David Waine,
James Waine.

(No Model.) D. & I. WAINE. PADLOCK. 3 Sheets—Sheet 2.
No. 380,961. Patented Apr. 10, 1888.

Fig. 7, Fig. 9, Fig. 10, Fig. 8, Fig. 11

WITNESSES,
Charles Kenneth Kelly,
George Herbert, Esq.

INVENTORS,
David Waine,
James Waine.

William Ryan's Crab Claw Lock

(No Model.) D. & I. WAINE. PADLOCK. 3 Sheets—Sheet 3.
No. 380,961. Patented Apr. 10, 1888.

Fig. 12, Fig. 14, Fig. 13, Fig. 15, Fig. 16, Fig. 17

WITNESSES,
Charles Kenneth Kelly,
George Herbert, Esq.

INVENTORS,
David Waine,
James Waine.

English production Waine padlock, left
Two Indian copies, below

⑦

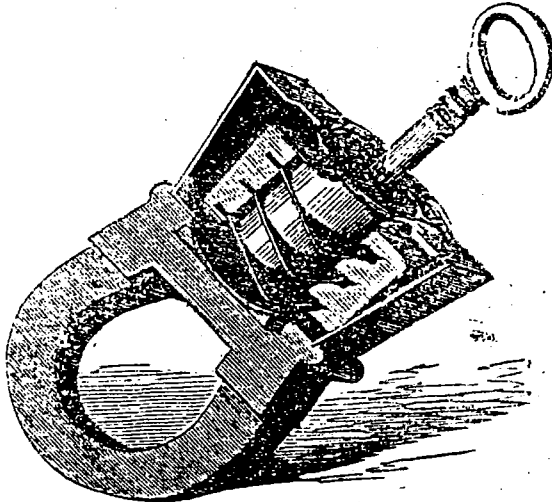
⑧

⑨

1 Inch

Russian padlock

The annexed drawing is taken from a padlock of Russian manufacture, which formed a part of the booty obtained at Balaklava, and is now in the possession of Mr. Chubb. It will be noticed that the shackle, or bow, instead of being hinged at one end, as in English padlocks, is withdrawn entirely after unlocking. When replaced, it is secured in its position by a



series of metal curtains, each fitted on a separate barrel, which, on being turned by the proper key, lock into the grooves shown in the shackle. The key hole is at the bottom of the lock. A Russian name (partly obliterated), supposed to be that of the maker, is stamped on the shackle. Although the lock has evidently been much worn, the workmanship is of very superior character.

An ingenious yet simple description of padlock is in ordinary use among the Chinese. Unlike the Russian lock, which has no springs, the shackle of this is secured by a number of latch springs, attached to one end, which on closing the lock are propelled through certain apertures in a metal plate, and spring out immediately behind it. The key is required only to open it, which it does on being inserted and pressed onwards so as to compress the springs and allow them again to pass through the corresponding apertures in the plate.

The Egyptian lock is the most ancient description of lock of which there is any record. For more than forty centuries it has been used in Egypt, and that which we engrave is one of the usual kind sold in Cairo. To the outside of the door is fixed a wooden staple, in the upper part of which are several loose pins. These pins drop into corresponding holes in the bolt, so as to fasten the door when the bolt is pushed home. The key is a piece of wood, at one end of which are fixed pegs corresponding to those in the lock. It is inserted through a slot, when the pegs in the key lift up the loose pins in the lock to their respective heights, and thus allow the bolt to move backward or forward. Although thus simple in its construction, it is more secure than many common English locks. It is well adapted for out-houses, field-gates and similar purposes; and both lock and key being made almost entirely of wood, they might easily be constructed by any person able to handle a few carpenter's tools. The combinations of the locks and keys may be varied to any extent.

The Chinese have in use a lock of similar principle, but far more cumbersome in construction.

The locks from which these drawings are taken form a portion of the collection made by Mr. Chubb, of St. Paul's Churchyard, who will show them to any of the curious in such matters.

Appropos the Houdini article in #7, Ian McColl of Stockade Locksmiths, 5 Wallaby Court, North Garfield, Australia, was commissioned to make a full working set of the handcuffs and padlocks seen in a famous Houdini poster. They were to be used in a new film called *Houdini - Believe*. It stars Jonathon Schaech, with Stacy Edwards as Bess; made by LMK Productions for TNT Turner, it was due for release in October 1998.

Some of the original spectacularly massive manacles and padlocks were actually concealed lockpicking toolkits!

Richard Hopkins

Questions from readers

Write in to "Locks & Keys" with your questions about locks. Somebody will surely be able to supply answers. The Editor will be pleased to print a composite answer to questions. When replying, please mention the number of the question.

17] Does anyone know anything about the Anglo-American Lock Company?

G H Harper

Wanted

Michael Larkin is a retired locksmith interested particularly in large old rimlocks. He is keen to find any information on such locks, e.g. from catalogues; and locks of 10" or larger, or any other unusual locks or keys.

59B Gavan Street, Bright, Victoria, Australia 3741.

For Sale

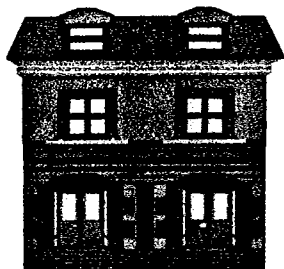
Ex-Nato Sargent & Greenleaf combination lock. Details from Colin Lewis, 11 Shackleton Drive, Bransgore, Christchurch Dorset BH23 8AJ; tel 01425 674216

EVANS, Jim 100 years plus of keymaking: the history of Arthur Hough & Sons Ltd. Essington, Arthur Hough & Sons Ltd, 1998.

Available by post from the company at Brownshore Lane, Essington, Wolverhampton WV11 2AD, price £6.99, or £9 airmail (including post and packing).

The cutting above left is from *The Illustrated London News* of 1856. Unfortunately, the small type of the original is poorly printed, and paper off-white, so that it does not reproduce well. Supplied by *Trevor Dowson*.





Places of interest

I have collected locks and keys (mainly keys) for about two years now and have travelled far and wide to buy. I visit the local fairs regularly but rarely see anything of interest. I have been to Newark three times this year and must recommend it as a source for the collector. I have been able to pick up keys, both English (Medieval keys seen) and continental and the odd lock of interest. It is interesting that one can see a fair amount of French keys at Newark (and some locks) as travel to France is somewhat easier nowadays.

I have also been to antique fairs in Paris, Lille (La Braderie) and Amsterdam and have been able to buy locks and keys. In fact it was a buy in Paris that got me hooked on collecting in this area. The French (19c) keys are arguably more stylish and attractive than equivalent English keys. They are also less expensive in France; I have picked up several lots for just a few pounds which would sell in the UK for 3 or 4 times the price. I must also recommend La Braderie (first weekend in September) at which I saw 16th century masterpiece keys, medieval keys and many 17/18c locks and keys.

Here are the dates of these fairs in 1999:

Newark - two day fair (Monday is for the trader at £20 admission and Tuesday for public at £5 admission)

12th/13th April, 7th/8th June, 9th/10th August, 18th/19th October, 6th/7th December.

Jon Osler



G H Harper has sent this picture (right) of a Polish church he visited on holiday last year. This reproduction does scant justice to the ironwork on the doors of St Marry's church, Kracow.

For those unable to travel so far, many British churches have treasures of ironwork, chests, and locks.



Network

Since last issue, I have been given the opportunity to have about twelve hours' looking at the Internet.

If I had been connected to the Net (which I do not expect to be for at least a year), this newsletter would probably not have started.

There is a large amount of material out there of interest; and I could spend so much time trying to look at it that the newsletter would not have been produced.

There are several guides to diary listings, some with Internet sites, and sites for collectors.

Antique Dealer and Collectors' Guide is available monthly from newsagents; telephone 0181 861 0690, e-mail antiquedealercollectorsguide@ukbusiness.com; <http://www.ukbusiness.com/antiquedealercollectorsguide>

http://www.yahoo.co.uk/Recreation/Hobbies_andCrafts_/Collecting is a comprehensive listing of sites for collectors of all persuasions.

<http://www.gwdg.de/~ifbg/collect.html> is an index of sites for general information on collecting and specific collectables.

Linley's padlock BP5376 of 1880

This invention relates to improvements in padlocks, the object being so to form a padlock that it cannot be held in its place on the article to be secured without its being fastened or locked.

Padlocks as usually made are provided with a bow which is pivoted at one side of the lock, and when in use the bow has to be passed through a staple, and then closed and secured by being locked with a key in the ordinary manner.

According to this invention the bow is made in two pieces, one being pivoted on each side of the lock. Each half forming the bow is provided with an arm attached to a sliding plate inside. A stump on the sliding plate takes into a spring tumbler having an aperture in it such that it holds the stump

and consequently the sliding plate when locked, preventing the halves of the bow opening. Inserting and turning the key acts on the tumbler and the sliding plate and opens the bow. To fasten the lock no key is required, it being only necessary to press the two halves of the bow together when they instantly close with a spring. The lock can then be opened only by the key.

Figure 1 shows the padlock unlocked, Figure 2 shows it locked; the lockcase cover has been removed for clarity in both figures.

a,a are the two pieces forming the bow; they are pivoted at *b,b*, and each half has an extension *c* which takes between two projections *d* and *e* forming part of the sliding plate *f*. The extremities of the of the bow pieces at *p,p*, are shaped so that they cannot be hung onto, say, a staple, unless the padlock is positively locked.

The sliding plate *f* has a stump *g* which takes into an aperture *h* in the spring tumbler *i*. To unlock, the pipe key (of ordinary form) is inserted and turned anti-clockwise. The key bit moves the tumbler to the right until the aperture *h* is opposite the stump *g* on the plate *f*, which is instantly propelled by the mainspring *m*.

To lock, it is only necessary to close the two halves of the bow *a,a* by finger pressure; this causes the arms *c,c*, to impart a sliding motion to the plate *f* downwards. This moves the stump *g* out of the tumbler *i*. Locking may also be effected by turning the key clockwise.

The inventor claims the improvement described and illustrated; and forming the bow in two pieces.

How secure?

It would appear that this design would not be physically strong. Moreover, even without the assistance of the mainspring, the design appears to facilitate picking. Later patents, such as Waine's (see this issue), would appear to infringe Linley's claim to a two piece bow. There is no information as to whether these locks were produced.

Arthur Linley Patent BP5376 of 1880 supplied by *Peter Schofield*

A.D. 1880. Dec. 22. N^o 5376.
LINLEY'S SPECIFICATION.

(1 SHEET)

