

# Many An Old Button Worth Weight In Gold to Collectors

## Kansas Enthusiasts Buy, Sell and Swap At State Meeting

That brass button saved from Grandpa's old overalls may be worth its weight in gold.

If you've got a button that looks like an old glass marble it may be worth \$20.

These facts came to light today at the W. E. Woodson home, 204 Crescent, where members of Kansas State Button club met with the Hutchinson club.

It soon became clear the club members were collectors — of a most virulent type. Talk of stamp collectors and pressed glass hunters paled beside their enthusiasm.

### Only Women At Meeting

All of them here today were women—though it is understood a few men collect buttons on the sly, probably saving them to have one to sew on a shirt when needed.

A button auction was the main attraction, with the hostess officiating for her first time as auctioneer, and on what was doubly an exciting day, because it was her 25th wedding anniversary.

The button collectors turned their attention away from their "paperweights" and "calicos" and "old castles" long enough to take note of Mrs. Woodson's anniversary before the auction began.

Mrs. T. E. Foster, 223 East 16th, presented her with a porcelain button, gift of the Hutchinson club, and a "silver paperweight" button, gift of Mrs. E. J. Shaffer, incoming president.

Mr. Woodson, as the cliché goes, was "conspicuous by his absence."

The auction soon had the women bidding up to \$1 and more for buttons put on sale by various collectors.

### Has Refused \$20

Not for sale was a prized item owned by Mrs. Shaffer, a glass marble button for which she said she had refused \$20.

Keen rivalry developed over some of the offerings, such as a black "paperweight," so named because it is shaped in miniature like old glass paperweights. Bidding ran from 80 cents up to \$1.45, with wive women getting into the race before it was knocked down.

Mrs. Woodson and others displayed some of their prizes, mounted on cards. The variety appeared endless. There were buttons decorated with pictures or embossed to represent dogs, old castles, sailing boats, cherubs, historical, Biblical and mythological scenes and characters, insects, owls, dragons, jello pudding, hobnails and famous people.

### Many Locomotives

A card labeled "transportation" contained a dozen or so brass buttons from old overalls, most of them stamped with pictures of railroad locomotives.

Mrs. Martha Engert, Manhattan, carried three prized buttons in a small jewel case. They proved to be shaped like walruses, carved from walrus tusk by natives in Alaska.

Recognition for the biggest collection went to Mrs. W. W. Wade, 728 North Plum, who has more than 18,000 of the clothes fasteners. Her favorite is one she said was worn by the soldier who carried the first flag into Germany with the World war army of occupation.

### Oldest Button

Mrs. C. A. Crebbs, Sterling, claimed the oldest button—a fossil from a Mexican volcanic ash bed supposed to be 8,000 years old.

The collectors reported the best finds come from old "charm strings," popular with girls 80, 90 and 100 years ago.

Nearly every one mentioned an old charm string as the source of her most valued buttons, and told of quaint superstition associated with the old custom.

### A Plat Against Males

The girl of a century ago was supposed to collect 999 buttons on a string, it was said. Then if she could get a 1,000th button from her sweetheart she had him clinched for matrimony.

The collectors are traders and many are ardent correspondents—sending their duplicate buttons around the country to other collectors to trade or sell.

Among early arrivals were Mrs. C. M. Anderson, McPherson, president, Mrs. Ethel Spence, McPherson, secretary, and Mrs. E. F. Houghton, Salina, vice president, of the state club.

Others: Mrs. A. B. Thiessen, 12 West 21st; Mrs. A. C. Sauberli, Lyons, owner of 6,500 buttons; Mrs. Emma Bourgain, Sterling, a

"beginner" who started last fall, now owing 4,000 buttons; Mrs. R. J. LaShelle, Junction City; Mrs. Charles Chambers, 205½ East 13th, whose hobby of collecting old dolls started her saving buttons; Mrs. F. C. Overstake, Salina; Mrs. Cora Churchill, Los Angeles; Mrs. Vic Anderson, RFD 4; Mrs. Mark Russell, 703 East Seventh; Mrs. H. L. Scales, 506 East A; Mrs. George Watson, Salina; Mrs. P. F. Wesley, 1601 North Main; Mrs. M. H. Brown, 103 South Poplar; Mrs. Martha Engert, Manhattan.