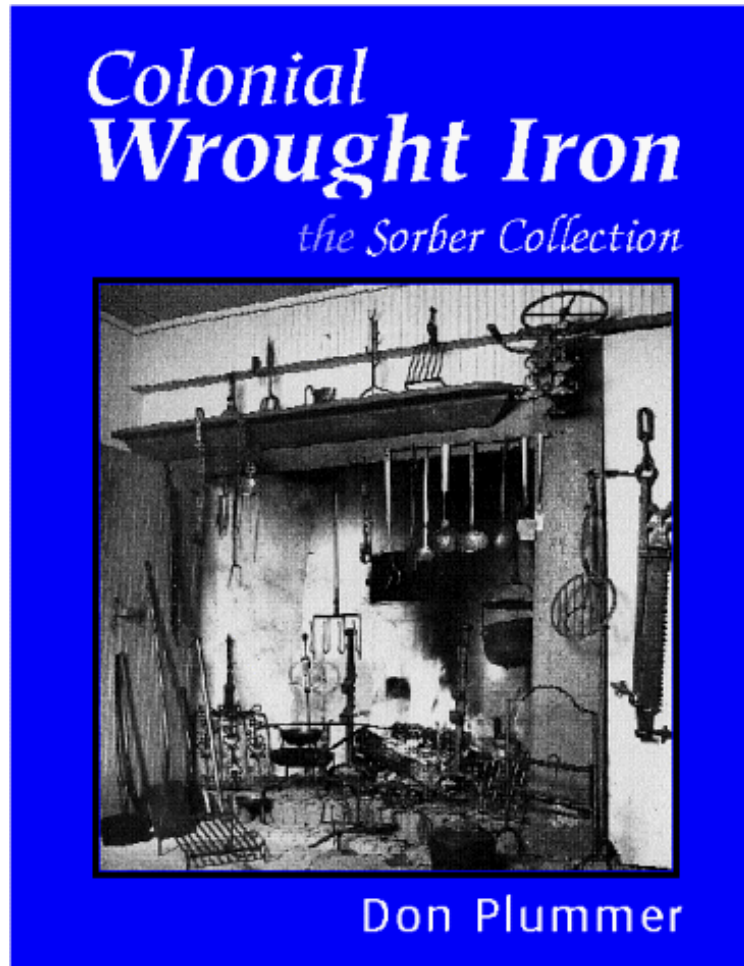


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## Colonial Wrought Iron, the Sorber Collection

*Don Plummer, Jack Andrews*

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**Don Plummer, Jack Andrews : Colonial Wrought Iron, the Sorber Collection** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Colonial Wrought Iron, the Sorber Collection:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Used but in great condition By Ncwo1fnprI bought the book for my brother so i havent seen it but he told me it was in great condition and shocked that it was a used book so you did great cause hard to please my brother 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. 18th and 19th Wrought Iron By A Customer Colonial Wrought Iron The Sorber Collection One of the main points of interest at the ABANA National Blacksmith Conference in Asheville NC was the Sorber exhibit. Mr. Jim Sorber, now in his eighties, has been a collector of colonial iron work most of his life. Much of his collection includes pieces of Pennsylvania Dutch and German American influence. After attending a lecture by Don Plummer on the Sorber exhibit, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Sorber and Don Plummer. We discussed the pieces in the exhibit and Don's upcoming book on the Sorber collection. They both assured me that the book would cover many unusual wrought iron pieces from Mr. Sorber's

lifetime of collecting and that it would be a must own reference book. I received my copy and it is everything they said it would be and more. Don Plummer and Jim Sorber both come from blacksmithing backgrounds and Mr. Sorber was a successful contractor and restorer of old homes as well. This helps Don bring out many details that most people would overlook on the manufacture of the pieces. Details such as many fireplace cranes having a hoist added to lift heavy cook pots and whether a trivet was used for a smoothing iron or for a cook pot. Colonial Wrought Iron is written with the collector, reenactor, museum curator, and modern blacksmith in mind. It has a very interesting text about the manufacture and usage of the pieces with hundreds of clear pictures. Many of the pieces pictured even have close measurements from the originals. This book covers every imaginable group of usable iron utensil from the 18th and 19th century from simple tools to complex clock jacks. There is even an appendix in the back with over 160 blacksmith signatures from the Sorber collection. If you are a collector of wrought iron, recreate early wrought iron pieces in the forge, use replicas of the older piece while buckskining, or reenacting this book needs to be on your must read list. Buster Grubbs<sup>3</sup> of 3 people found the following review helpful. Recommended book for both blacksmiths and collectors By Davie This is an excellent resource book for both collectors and individuals who enjoy making reproductions of period pieces. However, having looked at and handled a display of some of the items at a early ironwork conference, it should be noted that a number of those items, about 40 percent appeared to be dated from the Arts and Crafts Period. Arts and Crafts Period pieces, as pointed out to me by a person more experienced than myself at the conference, may be identified by unfinished punch holes, i.e. jagged edges on the back, as well as noticeable asymmetry. Before and after the Arts and Crafts Period apparently smiths were in less of a rush and spent the extra minute or two cleaning off rough edges and keeping the item symmetric. Otherwise, this book could not be more highly recommended. Buy this book while you can.

Colonial Wrought Iron is a photographic survey of early wrought iron work in America with 506 photographs from the Sorber Collection. The colonial period in America was centered around the blacksmith who was the maker and creator of these items. The informational text explains the characteristics and the conditions of the period in which the iron was forged. Colonial Wrought Iron is an invaluable resource tool for the blacksmith involved making reproduction hardware and related items, as well as an inspiration for merging form and function. In this book you will find the commonplace and the ornate but they all reflect the hand of fine craftsmanship. The work displayed in Colonial Wrought Iron is from the collection of Jim Sorber. Jim, now in his eighties, has been an avid collector for 70 years. This collection is a result of a life steeped in an enduring appreciation for the skills of his ancestors. Even as a child he was interested in their hand tools and the wonderful things they made. That interest soon grew into a passion. A unique aspect of Jims collection is that it reflects a certain ethnic influence. Much of his collecting has been done near his home in the counties of Berks, Chester, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery and Schuylkill. This area has been settled by German immigrants since the mid-to-late 17th century. Jims collection, many pieces of which are signed and dated, reflects an iron chronicle of the Pennsylvania Dutch migration westward from the Philadelphia area.

Illustrated in this book is the lifetime collection of James C. Sorber of West Chester, Pennsylvania. Sorber, now in his 80s, has amassed an astonishing array of objects, from andirons to woodworking tools, illustrated here in 505 black-and-white photographs, many of which depict multiple items. Items are grouped under five categories: hearth and kitchen, domestic items, tools, and Conestoga wagon. Theres a handy index in case your arent sure where to find, for example, ice tongs (under tools) or button-hole cutters (under domestic items). Also included is a list of blacksmiths signatures with the names of items (but not the page numbers) on which they are found. The drawback of basing a book on a single-owner collection is that it might be missing items, but this collection appears to be an exhaustive one. According to the author, Sorber often refers to his collection as the Blacksmiths Legacy Museum for it is, indeed, a legacy to the thousands of blacksmiths who la! bored...to help keep America growing. Readers with an interest in early American wrought iron can be grateful that Sorber has shared his legacy. -- Maine Antique Digest, August, 1999 About the Author Don Plummer has a long and enthusiastic fondness for blacksmithing and craftsmanship. He has been a practicing blacksmith for over ten years and maintains an active forge in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. He was an original founder and six year president of the Mid-Atlantic Blacksmiths Association and continues to contribute to blacksmithing organizations around the country. Plummer is an independent management consultant in information technology. He specializes in the area of project management for large information systems projects and provides general consulting and training in that area. He is an accomplished writer on that subject and has been frequently published in the industry.