

Watch Fobs Mark the Industry

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Watch fobs have decorated many a pocket watch. It's no wonder that businesses chose to use these decorative devices as a point of advertisement. Watch fobs were used by industries and manufacturers, unions, fraternal and professional organizations, tourism advocates and more. Some watch fob pendants served a double purpose, first being the pendant on a meeting ribbon, and second as a fob once the ribbon was discarded and a leather strap added. Presented here are a few of the fobs I have acquired over time.



Figure 1: (L) Steptoe Valley Smelters, McGill, Nevada, and (R) Copper Flat, Ely, Nevada

Figure 1 shows two brass fobs locally produced to advertise the copper mining industry in White Pine County, Nevada. These fobs are typical of a souvenir likely to be sold by just about any business catering to tourists. The first showcases the Steptoe Valley Smelters at McGill. The second gives the tourist a glimpse of the mining operations at Copper Flat, Ely (actually at Ruth, Nevada).



Figure 2: (L) United Mine Workers of America, and (R) U.M.W.A. District 10

Figure 2 shows two brass United Mine Workers of America union fobs. The first is a generic union fob suitable for any member. The second was produced for members of the union's District 10.



Figure 3: (L) U.M.W.A. Sub-District 5, Bellair, Ohio, (C) Utah Copper Company, and (R) American Legion, Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Figure 3 shows three fobs produced for various meetings. On the left is a United Mine Worker fob for Sub-district 5 of District 6, Bellair, Ohio. The brass and enamel fob was produced for local members attending the 18th Annual Convention in March 1916. The center fob features the open pit at Bingham Canyon and was produced for the Utah Copper Company. The brass fob was given to members of the American Mining Congress attending a national meeting in Salt Lake City in September 1924. The brass fob on the right was produced for the American Legion for members attending the 11th Annual Convention in Scranton, Pennsylvania in 1929. The fob features a coal breaker common to the anthracite district of northeast Pennsylvania. The reverse sides of the Bellair and Utah Copper Company fobs are shown in Figure 5.



Figure 4: (L) A.S. & R. Co. and Colorado Fuel & Iron Company

Figure 4 shows two fobs related to the metals processing industry. The first was produced for A. S. & R. Co. This was the old American Smelting and Refining Company before they became known as ASARCO. The brass fob features a slag pot used at their Omaha plant. The second fob is a safety award made for the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. C.F. & I. was an integrated company and operated coal, fluorite, and iron mines, and coke ovens. This white metal and

enamel fob was made for use at the Minnequa Works steel mill in Pueblo, Colorado. The reverse side of this fob is shown in Figure 7.



Figure 5: Reverse sides, (L) UMWA Sub-District 5, Bellair, Ohio, and (R) Utah Copper Company.



Figure 6: (L) Canadian Ingersoll-Rand and Murray Iron Works

Figure 6 shows two white metal fobs. The first is an advertising piece made for the Canadian Ingersoll-Rand Company. The company was a major manufacturer of mining machinery, air compressors, coal cutters and rock drills. The fob features an underground mining scene where light is being provided by two 8-hour hand lamps. The second was made for the Murray Iron Works of Burlington, Iowa. Murray was a manufacturer of Corliss steam engines and was pushing their cost-effectiveness and efficiency. The reverse sides of the Canadian Ingersoll-Rand, and Murray fobs are shown in Figure 7 (next page).



Figure 7: Reverse sides, (L) Colorado Fuel & Iron, (C) Canadian Ingersoll-Rand, and (R) Murray Iron Works

References

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