

A Varney Mystery Solved

by Tony Moon

One of the most difficult of the Varneys to find is the one marked CLEAN CUT/Clover TRADE MARK. The author is aware of only three examples and the one in his collection came via the Martin, Ramsdell, and Gresko collection. The marking is not clear with only the actual trademark and the words TRADE MARK plainly visible. It was not until the marking on the one in Ted Bobrink's collection was shown in the Wilson/Bobrink book on candlesticks that the remainder of the marking - the words CLEAN CUT - became known. The full marking from the candlestick book is shown below.

Some time after the Wilson/Bobrink book was published, I found a straight razor case marked with the same trademark and the words CLEAN CUT. The razor inside was not the original one and is only marked Sheffield, but the original instructions were still inside the case. A rubbing of the case marking and a copy of the instructions are illustrated. Now the hunt was on - who used this trademark? The answer came from a circa 1925 hardware catalog. The hardware company of Dunham, Carrigan, and Hayden Company of San Francisco used the trade mark on their cutlery.

One can speculate that this same hardware company was also responsible for the Varneys marked CLEAN CUT without the trademark. The larger stamp with the trademark was too wide for a candlestick and was probably designed for other objects (such as knives) and thus a smaller stamp was made when the larger stamp proved to be unreadable in its entirety.

Now that this mark seems to have been resolved, will somebody please figure out the origins of the MENLO and COLONIAL names?

