

# JUST BUTTONS

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AUGUST, 1954



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Aesops Fables

Signs of the Zodiacs in the Far East

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For PLEASURE, PASTIME and PROFIT

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## *Tid-Bits*

By Bertha A. Green

A recently published book, Robert Keith Leavitt's—The Chip on Grandma's Shoulder—is an amusing story of the memories of a boy's life in a Massachusetts town during the early 1900s. The book is filled with humorous descriptions of church suppers, auctions and other small-town events.

The author recalls the mental suffering that he and his brother experienced when their grandmother made them suits using cloth and patterns of the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial era. "The jackets were long, in an age when store-bought suit coats were short . . . with belts fastened with buttons that could be worn either very tight or very loose but not half way between. And the coats buttoned clear up to the neck . . . The buttons, moreover, were about the diameter of small saucers, and darkly iridescent in hue."

\* \* \* \*

The fashion notes of a New York local newspaper in 1904 described a new bathing suit, or "surf costume," of white brilliantine with bright green braid trimming. It was a two-piece model with a high necked blouse attached to a five-gored skirt. The blouse had box pleats back and front and the sleeves were pleated and finished with arm bands. Fancy buttons down the center pleat of the blouse fastened the suit. A medium size suit required 6½ yards of material 36 inches wide.

\* \* \* \*

No buttons are used on the swim suits and sub suits pictured and described in Collier's magazine of July 9, 1954 but a sun suit shows a bodice heavily encrusted with seed pearls and rhinestones.

\* \* \* \*

From 1866 to 1902 there were many eagle devices on general service buttons. On some buttons the eagle was standing, on others it was displayed, etc. In 1902, all general service buttons, except those of the engineer officers, were made with the eagle as shown on the U.S. Seal: a spread eagle, head to right, wings extended outward and upward, olive branch in right claw, bunch of arrows in left claw, barred shield on breast, a scroll bearing the words "E Pluribus Unum" in beak, 13 stars in cloud burst overhead.

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