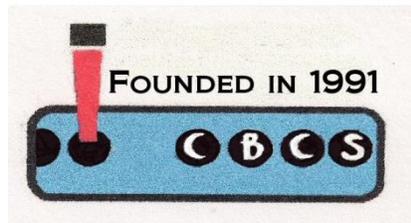




# MEMBERS OF THE BOARD



NEWSLETTER OF THE CRIBBAGE  
BOARD COLLECTORS SOCIETY  
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY



Volume 25   Number 2   Founded in 1991   Our Twenty-Fourth Year   May 2015

## Message from the president - Ed McLaughlin

Hello CBCS Members and Greetings to everyone!

### Bette's Collection is Available

Everyone will have a chance to purchase some very valuable and quite rare cribbage boards. We do not have space in this letter to describe the great variety of cribbage boards that will be for sale on EBAY but read carefully the following information.

Dave Schroeder acquired Bette's collection from her husband, Fred, and made an effort to find a museum to display her collection. Since this effort was unsuccessful, Dave has given Bette's collection to me to do with as I wish. He has also donated his own collection to me. It is my desire with Terry Coons help to sell as much of the two collections as we can. All of the net proceeds from the sale of these two collections will go toward establishing a nursing scholarship in Bette Bemis' name. The details of this scholarship will be worked out at a later date. Terry, in the process of selling the boards on EBAY, will also have the ability to archive the boards.

Watch EBAY for the sale of the boards to begin as quickly as possible following the mailing of this newsletter. You can do a search for the seller "**Bemisscholarship**" to see the boards we have listed for sale. There will also be an explanation with each board about the proceeds of the sale going to a nursing scholarship in Bette's name. When possible, we will reference the board to Bette's book or a newsletter (CBCS Members of the Board) when Bette discussed that particular type of board.

Jane and I have been going over the boards and sorting them into boxes in our garage. It is amazing the kinds and number of boards in these two collections. The **manufactured boards**, such as Drueke, Pleasant Time, Horn, Kingsbridge, Pattberg, Stancraft, Hoyle, etc. are being sorted out for sale at the convention in Branson. They will be sorted by brand and economically priced. Check your collections to see what manufactured boards you'd like to add to your collection! We will also be auctioning numerous extra **Commemorative boards** from past years at the convention in Branson. This will give all you convention goers a chance to complete your commemorative board collections.



At the back of this newsletter is the form for registering and also renewing membership IF you are not a life member. We would like to have a headcount as early as possible to know how many convention boards to make. Thanks.

The four of us (Bobbi and Bernie; Gail and Dave) were talking of points to mention in the newsletter to help encourage you to come. The last two newsletters have had some and here are a few more—Keep in mind we have mentioned only things so far that can be walked to or take the free trolley that comes around every 20 minutes.

First, and foremost to many of you—there is a Starbucks right across the street from the Hotel front door! What could be better than that?

Second- remember the “Five and Dime Stores “of days of yore? There is one just two blocks from the Hotel. It is uphill to the west but the trolley goes right by it, so jump on the trolley at the front door and get off when it get there. This “Dime Store” has everything imaginable!! It is crammed full of everything. You name it, they got it. If not, you didn’t need it, anyway. How about a 6 deck of cards, battery operated card shuffler? They have them!! Bobbi has suggested that rather than ride the trolley, there are numerous novelty and specialty shops on the way up including at least two antique stores. Just walk it, one shop at a time.

A fire and water show at sunset, straight down to the river from the Hotel.

The tethered balloon ride is now operating on the north end of the Landing (The mall on the river is called The Landing.) The landing has one street north to south and shops on both sides for a quarter mile each way. Also many restaurants intermingled among them. Very “uptown”!

So far we have mentioned stuff within walking distance. If you are coming earlier, there are about 50 shows in town to take in but you need to drive your car or take a taxi. We have seen some great ones and the price for most is tolerable depending on what or who it is. (We have also seen a few we wouldn’t recommend to our Mother-in-Law!!

Look on-line under “Branson Shows” The first thing on the list is probably “Branson Tourism center” There is listed every show that is in Branson or coming at some time during the year. ALSO, the prices listed are retail—Call the 800 number and see what kind of a deal is available. We are spoiled, since we live here and get “local discounts “which can be considerable, but we have to show a driver’s license to get them so can’t help you. Next newsletter, we will try and sum it all up for you. Hope to see you in Sept. Dave and Gail, Bobbi and Bernie



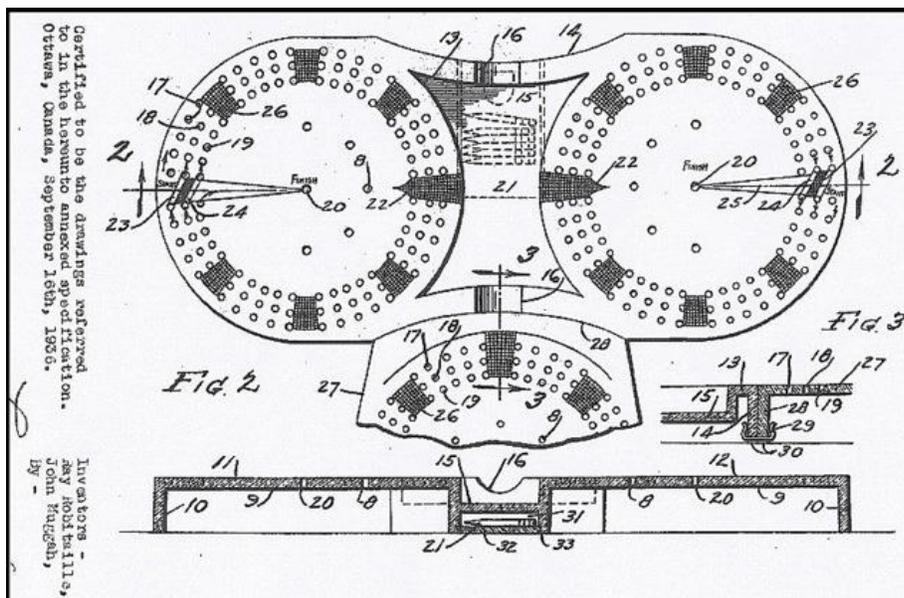
From Terry: These are known as end-of-day pieces. Left-over bits were ground up, re-melted and molded into worker projects.

He was under the impression I was asking if they had any left and replied "You're in luck! We managed to dig one up! We could only find this one. Don't worry about sending a cheque. This one's on us."

They sent me this one made from left-over black and white pieces.



Now for the patent search: #369282, Ottawa, Canada, 1936.



The Clipsal was clearly influenced by this much earlier board. Differences are:

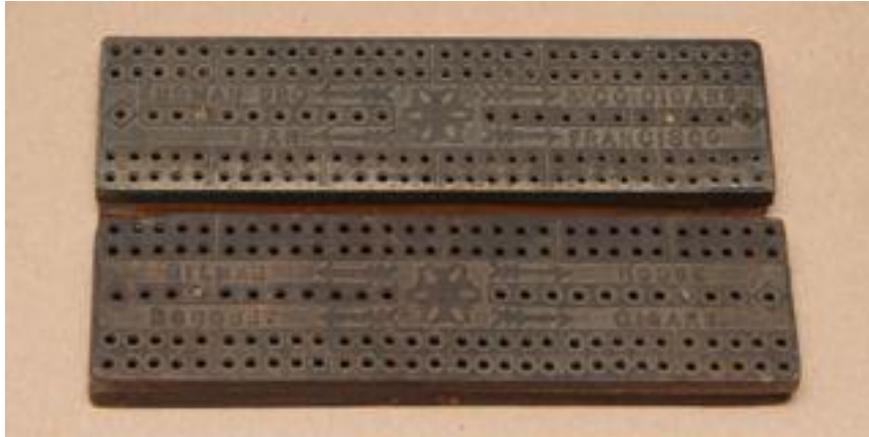
- This one has more complicated rules, for up to three players.
- There is a Finish hole in the center of each circle.
- There is a pull out tray under the ashtray for peg storage.

So the missing link is Ottawa, Canada, 1936 ..... Australia, 1980's?

Terry Coons, #187

## ***More Than You Really Want to Know about the 'Quitman Board'... Part 2***

**(This article is picking up from where we left off in the February newsletter.)**



Collection: David Zipkin #39

3C - EHRMAN BRO & CO  
CIGARS SAN FRANCISCO

3D - GILMAN HOUSE  
BOUQUET CIGARS

### ***So...who really made these boards?***

The short answer is, "Your guess is as good as mine." Any longer answer consists mainly of conjecture and educated guesses. I think Quitman himself probably made the original pattern. He had been working in New Haven as a machinist and would have had the necessary skills to make the pattern. *Why would he pay someone else to do a job he could easily do himself?* With the pattern in hand, who might have manufactured the boards for Quitman? IF they were related, Louis Quitman might have made the pattern as a favor AND/OR arranged for casting the plates at the lock factory. OR the job could have been done by any number of S. Norwalk machine shops and/or foundries. *BUT it seems most likely that Quitman wanted the boards to promote his new occupation as a 'liquor dealer' and employed Le Count to manufacture the boards.* This assumption is based on the following:

### ***But first...***

Before attempting to unravel the history of the seven boards I think it is well to keep in mind that when Le Count went to California in 1849, Quitman was three years old! In 1878 (an educated guess as to the date Board 1 was made) Le Count had operated a successful business in S. Norwalk for 15 years; Quitman had been in the United States for only eight years and was leaving the machinist's trade to become a liquor dealer. *Which man would likely have the upper hand in any design or business decisions?* [I'm betting on Le Count!]

### **Boards 1 & 2 (metal plate)**

Three changes were made in the pattern for Board 2.

A – The Quitman lettering was eliminated. This would mean no more "Quitman boards" could be produced, unless a new pattern was made. *If either of the men envisioned a future market for the boards,*

*it seems likely that Le Count, with his experience in selling tools (probably to both the retail and wholesale trade) would be the one.*

B – The decorative circle in the center of the medallion was eliminated. (Although it appears identical to all of the other circles, this one does not go all the way through the plate.) Frederick William Quitman bore the name of a long line of Prussian kings and emperors, starting with Frederick I (the first king 1701-1713) and continuing through Frederick II (Frederick the Great 1740 -1786) and Frederick William III (1797-1840...six years prior to Quitman’s birth). *Given this background, it seems likely that Quitman was firmly rooted in his Prussian heritage and that the medallion might have had some sort of nationalistic symbolism. I thought it might be an abstraction of the Prussian imperial eagle; Larry Snow #292 (the owner of 2B) suggested it could represent the cornflower, the Prussian national flower. In any event, Le Count probably had his reasons for wanting to make the symbol less obvious.*

C – The number of mounting screws was reduced from four to two. The dimpled patterning of 2A (see photo, pg. 3) clearly shows where the four holes were filled in. *Although the two screws utilized game won holes, Le Count may have thought it more important to have the extra space to accommodate different lettering at some future time (see 3C & 3D), plus this “...leaves a much neater looking plate.”*

### **Another slight digression...**

Contemplating the number of screw holes in a cribbage board made over 135 years ago seems a little like debating the number of angels that can dance on the head of a pin! However, a close reading of Le Count’s cribbage board patents reveals something bordering on an obsession regarding the mounting of the plates.

July 7, 1885 – No. 321,509: “In attaching the plate to the block I wholly do away with screws, which leaves a much neater looking plate, and is also a saving in metal, as the plate can be made considerably smaller when no allowance has to be made for screw holes outside the game holes. (See photo, Pg. 7) I secure the plate to the block by means of spurs upon the underside of the plate, which are forced into and engage the wood of the block.” [I have never seen a Le Count board with a plate mounted in the manner described! Further, I doubt that this would work!]

March 22, 1887 – No. 359,792: “In order to hold the plates firmly in place in the recesses, and at the same time dispense with screws and lugs, I provide a downwardly turned flange around the edges of the plate.” [This patent covers the Le Count boards with a ‘pressed tin’ metal plate. Although four tiny escutcheon pins secure the plates on the great majority of these boards I do own one board with the plate mounted as described and I have seen several others.]

Sept. 2, 1879 – No. 219,280 – Le Count’s first cribbage board patent is lacking in specific detail; there is no mention of the method used for mounting the plate. *The May 28, 1879 filing of the patent application may mark the date when Le Count decided that cribbage boards had commercial potential. Le Count’s design really bears no relationship to Quitman’s and the manufacturing process has been considerably simplified. [I wonder if Le Count might have been the first person to employ metal slides for closing the peg and card receptacles in the sides of the wood block.]*

### **Board 2B (wood base)**

There must have been some demand for a board that incorporated a method for storing a deck of cards. This was accomplished by providing an appropriately sized slot in a thicker wood base; the deck was held in place by a bent wire yoke under tension (not unlike a mouse trap). *This is strictly a guess, but this seems like a refinement that Le Count would have been more likely make.*



Board 3C – EHRMAN (plating corroded) above; Board 2A & B below.

### **Board 3 – A, B, C & D (metal plate – photo above)**

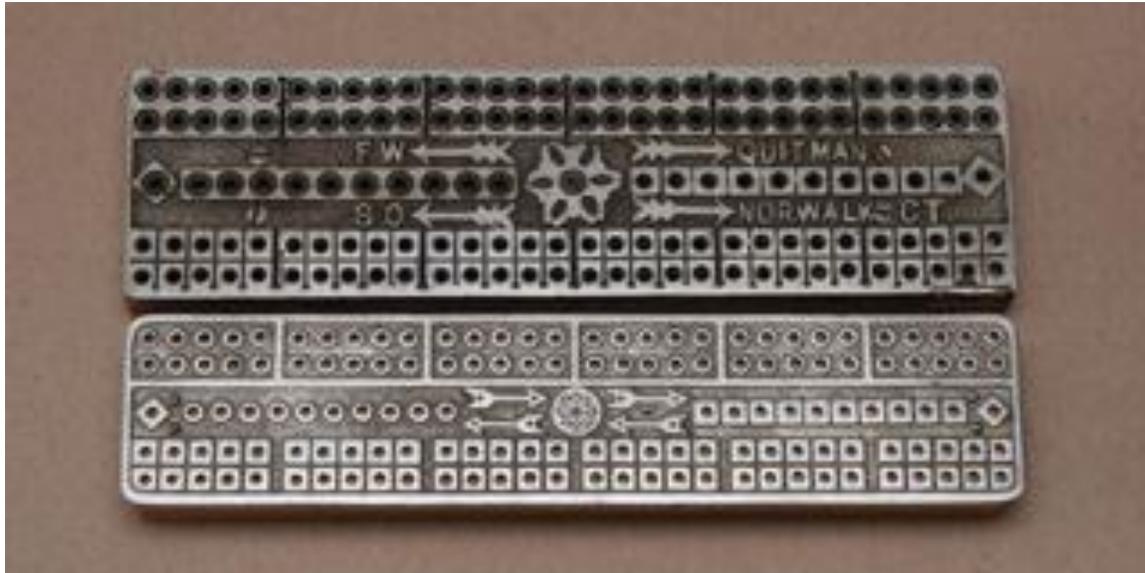
Any experienced cribbage player quickly finds the ‘square double 5’ side of boards 1 and 2 extremely frustrating. There is very little difference in the thickness of the lines dividing the pegging holes and those separating the blocks of five holes. As a result the usual practice of pegging in units of five becomes very difficult! The quick and dirty solution to this problem was the elimination of all of the ‘minor lines’ in the square double 5 blocks. Although it made pegging easier, it also made the design appear unbalanced and it eliminated the visual connection with the ‘games won holes.’ *If Quitman were still involved and looking to the future, one might think he would have made a new pattern incorporating all of the above changes. From Le Count’s perspective this might have been regarded as strictly a temporary fix while he finalized the patent application for his totally new design.*

Beyond all of the guesswork and speculation, the existence of a board with EHRMAN BRO & CO CIGARS SAN FRANCISCO firmly connects C. W. Le Count to these boards! Le Count had lived in San Francisco for ten years and was known to be a cigar smoker; it seems highly doubtful that Quitman would have had any connection with a company 3,000 miles away.

### ***Final thoughts...***

The first boards that Le Count made after the granting of the 1879 patent include the usual “...new and useful Improvements in Cribbage Boards.” Among the items that were eliminated from Quitman’s design: a – the separate casting for the peg drawer and the plating of same, b – the flat spring set into the wood

block (which held the peg drawer closed) and c – the bent wire ‘mouse trap’ in the boards with card storage. **Note:** All Le Count Boards before 1885 are three-player boards.



Apparently, Le Count later saw a demand for a two-player board; the 1885 patent drawing was followed exactly in producing the plates for all No. 2 and No 3 boards manufactured during Le Count’s lifetime (see photo above.) As previously noted, the 1879 patent was lacking in detail, but the 1885 patent application *“...declare(s) the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.”* [The last phrase seems like unusual language for a patent application!] In a final twist, the patent then proceeds to describe the basic design of Quitman’s board, *“In a board for two players the holes upon one side of the board are surrounded by circular beads, and those upon the other side by angular bosses.”* Is this Le Count having a little fun at Quitman’s expense or is he saying, *“This is how it should have been done?”* No matter what may have transpired, I think it’s safe to say, *“Without the ‘Quitman Board’ there would have been no Le Count Cribbage boards!”*

**Peter Leach #136L**

**January 2015**

***Official Registration***

Complete and send your Convention Registration form below to

Jim Herzog, Treasurer, 20068 Herzog Drive, Rockwood, MI 48173.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Convention Member Fee \$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Convention Associate Fee 50.00 \_\_\_\_\_

(Spouse or regular member living at same address)

2015 Convention Board Only \$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Dues \$10.00/year \_\_\_\_\_

Associate member Dues \$5.00/year \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_