

Database Update

February 1, 2011

Searching for those long pattern titles

It occurred to me as I was reading the interesting article by Michael Weinberg in the recent TCC Bulletin regarding "The Great New York City Fire of 1835" that if members want to search the database and find the three patterns in the series, they will not find them if they search the title of the article. Nor will the caption under the plates on p 12 (Great Fire of New York) give them the patterns in the database. Using the individual pattern names: "Exchange New York", "Ruins Merchants Exchange" and "View from Coenties Slip" will bring up each pattern. The quote marks used in the database indicate that these words appear on the pattern. In this case, the titles are found in the marks on the back of each plate. However, as in the case of this series, we find that there are words on the front of the plate as well. These are found in the border of the views and are entered in the database as an alternate name: "Great Fire of the City of New York, The". (In the database, we put the article at the end of the title as an aid to organizing the pattern names alphabetically.) If you had one of the plates at hand, you could enter that alternate title to find all three patterns in the series. It would be a great deal easier to enter 'Great Fire'. That search will bring up all three patterns. (LESS IS MORE!) And you can do that search without having a plate to look at. If you see a title of the series in one of your reference books such as Arman or Snyder: "Great Fire, City of New York", search for that title in the General Search where Additional information regarding the series is found.

If you have a mug in front of you with the following words: "Prince and Princess of Wales Married 10 March, 1863, The", you can type those words into the Pattern Name on the Search page and find the pattern. (Remember the words are in quotes because they are found on the mug.) However, if you don't have the mug – and in fact, don't know if any commemorative pieces exist of that marriage, use our #1 rule for searches: Less is More! Type in Prince of Wales, and at the present time you will get 6 patterns. Also, you will find at least one cross reference to the mug mentioned here. Use Princess of Wales for your search, and you will find only the mug. If you want more patterns with reference to Prince of Wales, type that title into the General Search. You will probably get more than you bargained for (31). That is because there are also patterns with reference to the Prince of Wales feathers. To narrow your search to the patterns referring to the man with the title Prince of Wales, choose the category British Themes/Souvenir or Commemorative, in addition to your General Search, and you will find 6 patterns.

There are many long titles in the category Children's Subjects /Piety and Virtue including Maxims. Search "Franklin's Maxims" and you will find 36 patterns with long titles. For instance, "Dost thou love life then do not squander time". The alternate title reads, "There will be sleeping enough in the grave." Both of those maxims are printed on the front of the plate surrounding the picture. Each is but one part of a whole maxim. The Additional Information in the pattern entry quotes both entire maxims. And we know that we need not enter all the prose found on the plate. "Dost thou love life" will bring up the pattern for us. You do not need to put quotes around your words for searches. Try some other short searches: "Light strokes", "Make Hay", or "no gains" and see what you find. Have fun searching!