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Dorflinger: America's Finest Glass, 1852-1921

John Quentin Feller

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#1058598 in Books Antique Publications 1988-12Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 11.50 x 9.25 x 1.25l,
#File Name: 0915410559392 pages | File size: 42.Mb

John Quentin Feller : Dorflinger: America's Finest Glass, 1852-1921 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dorflinger: America's Finest Glass, 1852-1921:

The story of Dorflinger's began in Brooklyn, NY, a heavily industrialized American city on the eve of the Civil War. By the mid-1860s, Christian Dorflinger decided to move the manufacturing of fine glass blanks for cutting and engraving to the village of White Mills, in northeastern Pennsylvania. Within ten years, Dorflinger's was recognized as the leader of the American glass industry. In 1904, Christian Dorflinger retired and his sons, William, Louis, and Charles assumed control over C. Dorflinger Sons, Inc. World War I had a devastating effect on production at White Mills and elsewhere in the glass industry, as essential glass-making ingredients became scarce. Orders for stemware dwindles with the passage of the Prohibition Amendment. In 1920, Lambert Dorflinger and Morton Howard tried to resuscitate the business at White Mills, but the effort was so plagued by financial problems and family disagreements that the factory closed for the last time in May 1921, just a half dozen years after the death of the founding father. Dorflinger American's Finest Glass, 1852-1921 contains the names of more than 500 individual patterns, many of which are reproduced for the first time from surviving company catalogs. In addition, the author has identified over 800 men, women, and children who eked out modest living in Wayne County, PA while working for Dorflinger's. Of special interest to the social historian is the author's success in rescuing the rapidly vanishing details of White Mills'

past. In addition, the names of more than 80 firms which purchased Dorflinger's "best metal" and "second quality" or commercial blanks are identified in chapter 9, as well as the names of more than 90 retail firms which regularly featured Dorflinger's fine crystal, such as Tiffany or Marshall Field, out of a list of more than 400 uncovered by the author during his research.