BACKGROUND BUTTONS #7:
GLASS & UNLISTED
Seventh in a Series Concerning Background Buttons
by Claudia Chalmers and Joy Journeay

Glass background buttons are not as common as wood or celluloid backgrounds, but just as beautiful! Check carefully to be sure that pearlized or lustered backgrounds are truly glass, as many can be celluloid imitating glass.

Background buttons of unlisted materials include those with vegetable ivory, galena, bone, enamel, leather, paper, parchment, tortoise shell, etc. Remember that the background must be a material as opposed to a decorative finish such as paint.

**RIGHT TOP**  Pierced brass conventional design over a glass background
With luster decorative finish.

**RIGHT MIDDLE**  Tinned brass Mercury over a white glass background, set in a tinned brass setting. Threadback. Mercury, was the Roman God of travelers. His Greek name was Hermes. Mercury had a winged hat and sandals, so that he could fly, and carried a staff which also has wings with two snakes winding around it. Mercury was also the god of thieves. When he was only a few days old, he stole the cows of Apollo. Mercury made shoes for the cows and taught them to walk backwards so they could not be followed. Apollo soon noticed Mercury playing a new musical instrument strung with cow-gut, the lyre. Apollo realized that Mercury stole his cows and was furious. But, he was enamored with the lyre, and agreed that Mercury could keep the cows if Apollo got the lyre.

**RIGHT BOTTOM**  Cut steel lattice above a blue glass background.
ENAMEL BACKGROUNDS
Domed enamel background button with three crowns. The enamel disk is mounted in a gilt setting. Swedish backmark: C.C.SPORRONG & Co. STOCKHOLM

Tinned white metal escutcheon of musical instruments above a black enameled metal disk set in brass with cut steel on the borders. This button qualifies as a background button because the enameled portion is a separate piece.

VEGETABLE IVORY BACKGROUND
Brass head above a tooled vegetable ivory background set in a steel cup.

ABOVE Radlauf the Miller. A man with an axe over his shoulder leads a young woman seated on a donkey. Like BBB—Page 479, Plate 203-10. (Button Classics 179-4)

ABOVE RIGHT Lohengrin’s Farewell. After championing Elsa, and winning her in marriage, Lohengrin is forced to leave because Elsa did the one thing she was forbidden to do: she asked her husband who he was. He leaves in the boat drawn by a dove. From the Lohengrin opera by Richard Wagner. Like BBB—Page 387.

RIGHT Frogs & Rickshaw design above an embossed and tinted parchment background. Note that this is a wallpaper design and not part of the button focus. White metal rim. Like BBB 471-18.
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**GALENA BACKGROUNDS** in brass.
ABOVE  Bird on a branch bordered by two large serpents entwined on branches.
RIGHT  Rubezahl, a Bohemian sprite, often assumed the form of a coal miner. Note the miner’s pick in his hand, the timber behind him, and his hand above his head holding the shining light. Scarce. BBB—Page 443. New BBB—Page 637, Plate 186–14 in both. (Button Classics 115-2)

**LEATHER BACKGROUNDS** in brass.
RIGHT  Leather background with stamped brass roaring lion head in high relief.
BOTTOM RIGHT  Paris back white metal Incroyable on leather mounted in white metal. Japanned back. BELOW Brass Buddha above a leather background, stamped with imitation stitching; set in brass.