

Mostly American Ornaments



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We begin this year with an overview of our first batch of American ornaments. We think these are all post WWII, with the latest ones probably from the 1960's. For those of us who grew up back then, many of these will be familiar. Stripes were popular with American manufacturers, and it seems the ornament designers explored every possible design. These ornaments came in many size, color, and stripe variations. And every time we get a new batch, we see styles we've never seen before. Shiny Brite was the most popular American brand back then, and I think virtually every ornament in the current group was made by them.



American Stencils 1



American Stencils 2

We also have a nice collection of bell ornaments, nearly all are American made. Some have designs painted on them. The biggest one is absolutely huge—about X” tall, and some are really tiny—ideal for a tabletop tree. Some even have a working clanger.



American Stencils 3



Bells

As we've talked about in years past, we're very fond of unsilvered ornaments. These were first introduced during WWII, when wartime shortages interrupted the supply of silver nitrate. Silver nitrate is used to coat the inside of ornaments, for a silvery look. Without the silver nitrate, the ornament would be transparent, so the manufacturers often used colored glass. The exterior could still be painted, and some of ours have that design feature. At some point during the war, aluminum also became scarce, so the manufacturers used paper or cardboard to fashion ornament caps. We have some of those, too. We've seen many different cap designs over the years. American ingenuity.



American Stripes 1



American Stripes 2

Last year I noticed that a lot of the really small ornaments I'd collected got kind of lost on my big tree. The bigger ornaments overshadowed them. I decided put the mini ornaments on a smaller tree in my front hall. Its decorated with only tiny ornaments. The biggest is maybe 1½" tall. Some are only ½" tall. The ornaments are much happier on the little tree, and much more appreciated.



Unsilvered Decorated



**Unsilvered War
Ornaments**

Please email me (kevin@milaegers.com) with your questions and comments!