

ANTIQUE BUTTON HOOKS

WHAT IS A BUTTON HOOK?

An 1876 button hook patent describes button hooks in the simplest possible of terms as "an instrument to facilitate the buttoning of shoes, gloves, and like puposes."

HOW TO USE A BUTTON HOOK

All sizes and types of button hooks work similarly: A user would insert the hook (or loop) end of the implement into the button hole, grab the button with the hook/loop, twist slightly, and pull the button through the hole.

This circa 1880's woman's boot with ten closely spaced buttons would have been manufactured out of stiff leather. Buttoning it up would have been time consuming but nearly impossible.



While button hooks made their first appearance in 17th century France (called *boutonneurs*), they entered more common usage during the 19th century. About that time various patents begin to appear.

Impossibly small buttons adorned all kinds of clothing during the Victorian period, including boots, gloves, spats, vests, and collars. Having a button hook handy could make life much easier.

In fact, most people, rich or poor, would have owned a button hook, which they might have carried on their person--in a pocket or purse or hanging on a chatelaine from one's waist.

FOR MORE DETAILS

Check out the blog post on this topic:
[Collecting Vintage & Antique Button Hooks](#)