

*a. m. morison*

Volume III No. 2

SUMMER, 1949

# The Decorator



*Is it Typical Pennsylvania or Connecticut?  
Florence E. Wright, Ithaca, New York, owner.*

Journal of the  
Esther Stevens Brazer Guild  
of the  
Historical Society of Early  
American Decoration, Inc.

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# The Decorator

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*Mirror owned by the Warren Family over 100 years.  
Picture through the courtesy of Mrs. C. F. Warren,  
Amesbury, Mass.*

# Editorial Notes



We congratulate the new officers as they take over the duties of laying a firm groundwork for the future. Each new phase of an organization presents new problems to solve and new challenges to meet—we wish them success.

\* \* \* \* \*

The resignation of Martha Muller as Editor of the Decorator has already been announced. We know she took that action only after careful consideration of all the demands on her time. Because of the tremendous task of cataloging and filing the contents of the portfolios at Innerwick it is her conclusion that at present all of her available spare time should be spent on that work. The Directors could not urge her to do otherwise, and accepted the decision very regretfully.

\* \* \* \* \*

"In passing on the problems and chores of planning, editing and publishing to you, I am happy to be able to point out that there are also some pleasures and rewards" writes Martha. "The little magazine seems to be flourishing: requests for it are increasing in numbers; advertisers report very good results; and best of all, I begin to hear persons frequently quoting from its pages. That to me means that it is being accepted as an authoritative source of information about old decorated pieces and problems of decorating in the Early American manner, and this, of course, is the main reason for the journal's existence.

"I don't know how to adequately thank my able editorial staff—Constance Klein, Emilie Underhill and Virginia Wheelock. The contributors too, have been most cooperative and generous in giving us the benefit of their knowledge. I am very grateful to them all.

"Please be assured that I am ready to help you whenever you want me, and I hope that, knowing your need for cooperation, the entire membership of the Guild will do the same. Good luck. Martha."

\* \* \* \* \*

The new staff accepts this responsibility with enthusiasm yet at the same time with full realization that we have a major assignment. Mrs. Muller merits a great deal of credit for the effectiveness with which the Decorator has been developed into an agency by which members can exchange ideas and knowledge for mutual enjoyment and improvement. She has put into it the same meticulous care that is reflected in her decorating, and it will not be easy for us to measure up to her exacting standards.

## GUEST EDITORIAL

I have been honored by the new Editor of the Decorator.

As the first "guest" Editor I am privileged to express my appreciation of the Guild magazine, the untiring efforts of Martha Muller and the many interesting and instructive articles by members.

It is the greatest memorial to Esther Stevens Brazer. To her it would be overwhelming. It is continuing and developing her ideals. Martha Muller may well be proud of her achievement. Emily Heath will be an able successor and the Decorator will continue to be our guide.

(by Mrs. Arthur B. Holmes, Kingston, Mass.;  
better known to many as Aunt Edith.)

\* \* \* \* \*

Much of the material in this issue was solicited and gathered by Mrs. Muller and her staff. To them, and to each contributor, we are duly grateful. In looking ahead to future issues, may we ask for

1. Suggestions    2. Articles    3. Photographs    4. Advertisements  
In fact we can use a great deal of assistance. If interested yourself, or if you know of possible sources of material or of any hidden talents, please let your Editor know.

\* \* \* \* \*

As though in answer to an unspoken question of why she was so interested in the many details of the Guild, Jean Wylie casually mentioned one day that her father used to do our kind of decorating. We learned that he did gilding in important Cathedrals and Monasteries in Britain at one time, as well as all kinds of antiquing, wall decorations and stencilling. But the records and working papers of Henry Montieth Hamilton Wylie have long since disappeared, and we are deprived of any first-hand information sometimes gained from such a source.

\* \* \* \* \*

Although the Guild organization has entered into its fourth year, this issue of the Decorator, the sixth, rounds out the third year of publication. Effective October first, the price of future issues and of back copies will be one dollar. Subscriptions may be entered by the year for two dollars, by writing to Jean Wylie. This would assure interested persons of receiving two copies a year, and relieve our business manager of the necessity for added correspondence and postage.

\* \* \* \* \*

All members, however, will continue to receive two issues yearly to which membership entitles them.

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Third Annual Meeting of the Esther Stevens Brazer Guild is now in the past. From all reports it was a fine meeting with an excellent program. I was many miles away but very close to you all in my thoughts.

In far away Colorado, where we have no members as yet, I found people very much interested in our work. One interested person said to me, "Couldn't there be journeymen to travel from place to place as they did in the old days?" The Guild has made remarkable progress in the three years of its existence but I hardly think we are quite ready to go out as journeymen.

I feel a very great responsibility has been placed upon me and I hope with everyone's co-operation, we can make the year 1949-50 a year of further progress.

Some of our goals we have reached. We have become incorporated in New York as the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. This makes it possible for us to lay plans for receiving gifts and maintaining a Museum and Library. We are making progress in protecting and filing, for our eventual use, Mrs. Brazer's designs which came to us through Mr. Brazer's generous gift to the Guild. Mrs. Muller's report at the meeting was certainly reassuring of that progress.

The Museum and Library Committee will develop a program of increasing the Fund, to give us means to meet the expense of maintaining the collection of patterns and a permanent home which might well be Innerwick. Both Mrs. Coggins and I have talked with Mr. Brazer, and he has reaffirmed his willingness to make it possible for the Guild to acquire Innerwick, with its furnishings, on very reasonable terms at some future time if we should so desire.

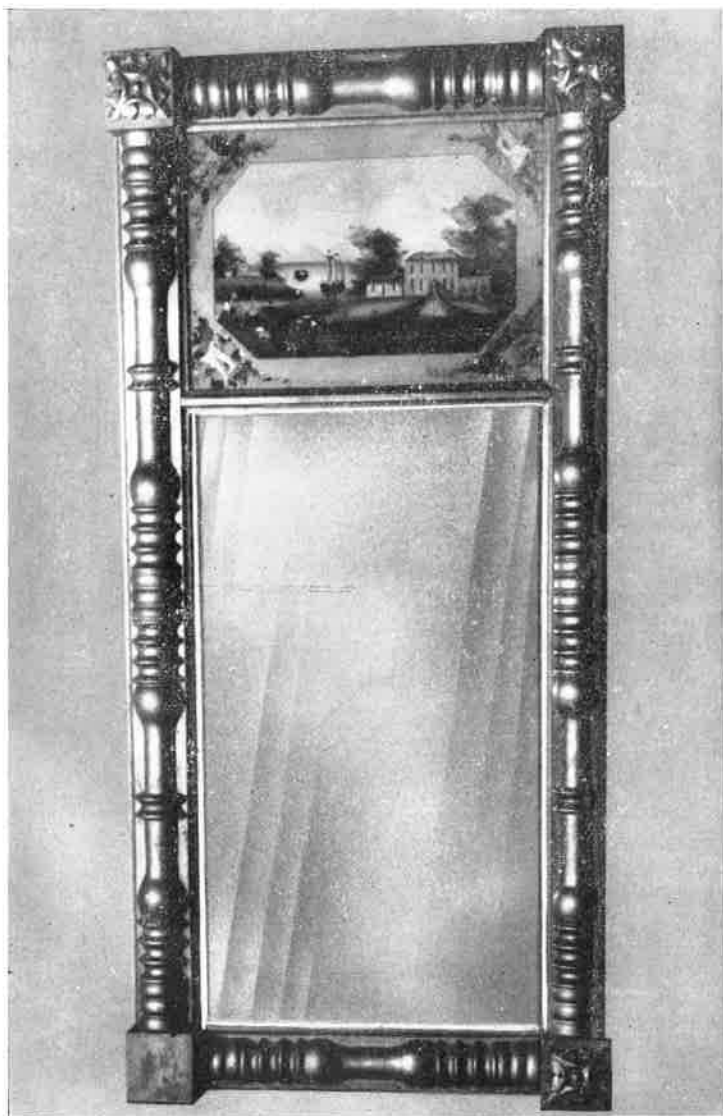
We definitely have made progress in establishing standards of workmanship. Our faithful Committee and Judges deserve much credit. The quality of work being submitted by new applicants attests to the wisdom of the Board in taking this stand. I would like to suggest that every teacher study the Guidance Sheets and help prospective applicants to select the proper design that answers all the questions. The Guidance Sheets may be obtained by writing Mrs. Gordon Scott, Uxbridge, Mass., or the Membership Chairman, Mrs. Elizabeth Gordon, Hanover, N. H.

The Decorator has become a Journal of which we are very proud. It is with regret that the Directors accepted Mrs. Muller's resignation as Editor. Her work at Innerwick as Curator of Mrs. Brazer's designs is certainly all we can expect of her just now.

The Esther Stevens Brazer Guild is our Guild which we are all striving to make worthy of her name. We must work co-operatively and I earnestly ask your help and suggestions.

A happy summer to you all.

HELEN W. CHIVERS



*Original glass painting depicts a soft pink main house, flanked by a wing or smaller building on left, and an open summer house on the right. The scene is framed with a band of a muted shade of yellow. Photographed with permission of the New Treasure Antique Shop, Noroton, Conn.*



## GOLD LEAF AND PICTORIAL WORK ON GLASS

by Joseph M. Spellman

*We are indebted to Mr. Spellman, of the Empire Artists' Materials in New York City, for writing out the following notes on his methods of laying gold leaf on glass.*

It is most advisable for the beginner to concentrate on an exact copy of what he intends to make. First, draw your design on a piece of thin parchmentized paper or a one ply bristol board. Then perforate the entire design by laying your copy on a piece of velvet or any other fairly soft material and using a long needle or similar thin sharp instrument. Keep the holes as close together as possible without tearing the paper, and as small as possible depending on the size of the design. It is necessary to make the tool very comfortable for working to improve perforation; either put a wooden handle on to needle or wrap upper part of needle with adhesive tape. When all through with perforating, turn the design face down and sandpaper the back of the copy with a very fine emery or sandpaper so that the perforating holes open more to allow the pounce chalk through.

The next step is the preparation for gilding. Clean both sides of your glass with newspaper soaked with plain water, and wipe with dry piece of newspaper. Prepare your water size as follows: put 4 empty opened gelatine capsules into a pint container about  $\frac{1}{4}$  full of plain water. They are about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " long and can be obtained at any drug store. Boil the contents and stir to make sure no gummy particles are visible. Fill pint container to the top and stir.

One way of proceeding with your work is to pounce the design on the face of the glass. Pour some whiting or powdered chalk on to a piece of cheesecloth, turn up and tie ends rightly with string. A good trick to know is to cut out small triangles (markers) on the empty part of the design to insure accuracy when re-pouncing is necessary. Pounce through the perforated pattern.

The actual gilding follows. Turn the glass around and leave either upright or at an angle so that the water sizing may run down. Brush the parts to be gilded with the solution. Always wet, do not flood the glass. Apply leaf on to the wet parts with a gilder's tip. The book of gold leaf may be placed on a piece of cardboard cut a hairline larger than the size of the book, and held in the left hand. Hold the gilder's tip in palm of right hand, leaving the thumb and first finger free to fold and cut the gold leaf with finger nail of first finger of right hand.

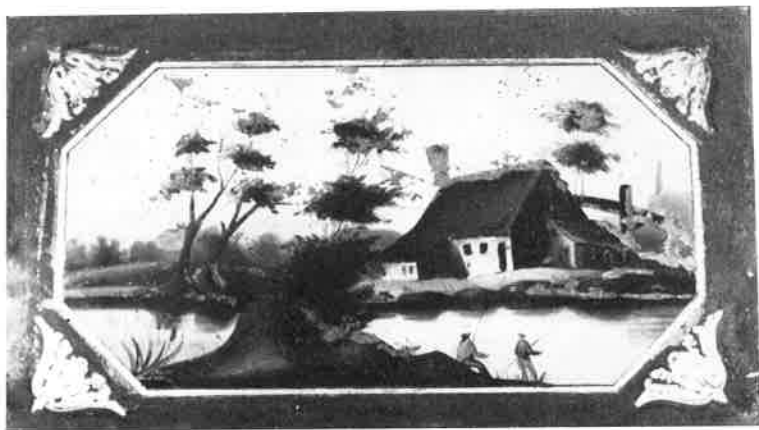
If the above method seems too difficult, cut the leaves of gold to desired size with a pair of scissors. Wet the glass with water sizing, and instead of using a gilder's tip, apply pieces of leaf with the leaf paper on back, using fingers of both hands. You can also gild a glass face down on a table, but when finished, immediately stand the glass upright so excess sizing can run down. Gold leaf will not dry properly if lying down flat.

If there is no gas near to boil the sizing, saturate a piece of absorbent cotton with denatured alcohol, place in sink, light a match to it and suspend the pint container ( $\frac{1}{4}$  full of plain water and ratio of 4 empty gelatine capsules to full pint) over the flame with a piece of stock or back of brush, and wait till solution boils. Put out the flame with water, and add proper amount of cold water to boiled solution and stir.

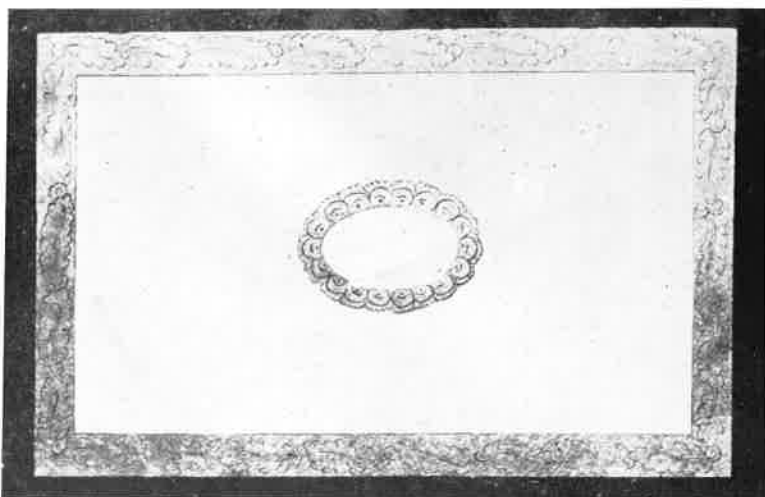
The materials needed in gilding on glass are as follows:

1. 23 kt. gold leaf (not patent or "windy" gold).
2. Gilder's tip, either camel or badger hair. It is possible to paste or glue two together and apply shellac to extreme foot of tip, which would prevent hairs from falling out.
3. Pint container, metal or porcelain, wide mouth, cover and handle secured at both ends.
4. Camel hair water-sizing brush either 1" or  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " depending on size of area to be gilded.
5. Old newspapers.
6. Empty gelatine capsules.
7. Piece of cardboard size of book of gold leaf.

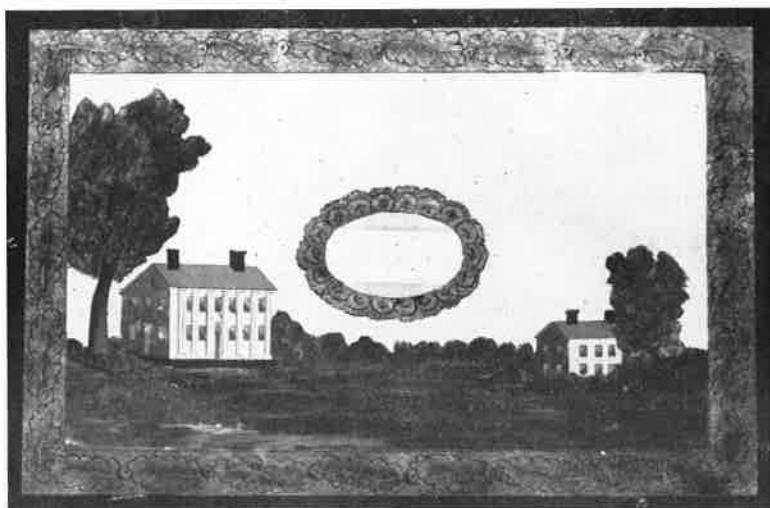
*(Will be continued in next issue.)*



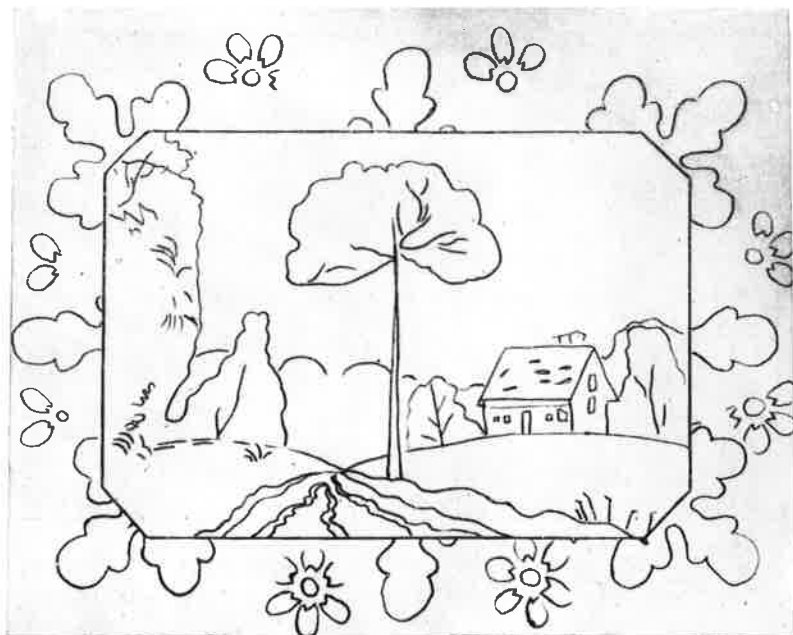
*Original Mirror Glass owned by Mrs. Walter Burrows, Noroton, Conn. Corners are gold leaf, etched, border a dark putty color. The cottage has coloring usually found in country cottages and the fishermen in the foreground are wearing bright red coats.*



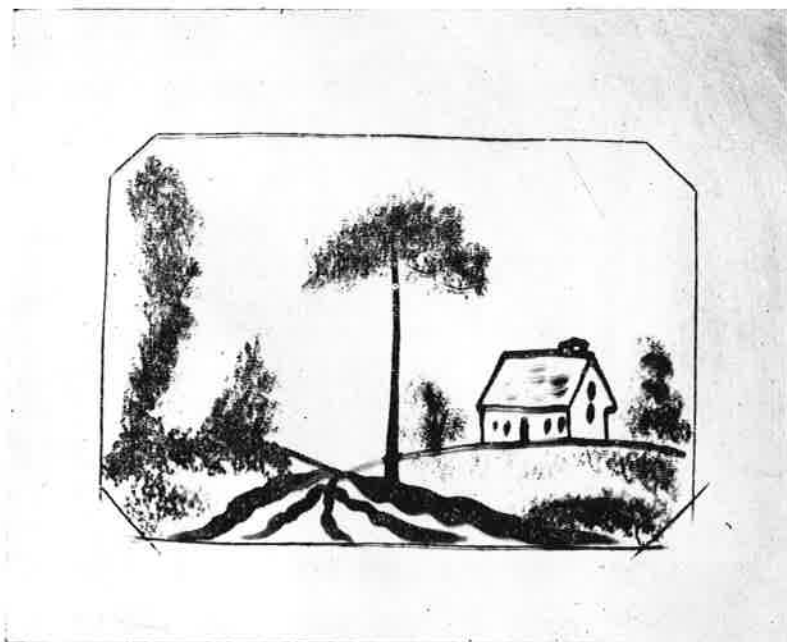
*The picture above illustrates steps one and two of the gold leaf border for the landscape painting. In the upper portion of the picture the leaves are traced on the glass. In the lower border the tracings shown in step one have been backed with gold leaf, with a black border outside.*



*In the completed picture the landscape has been penned in and painted with a soft sky as background. Pictures prepared by Irene Slater.*

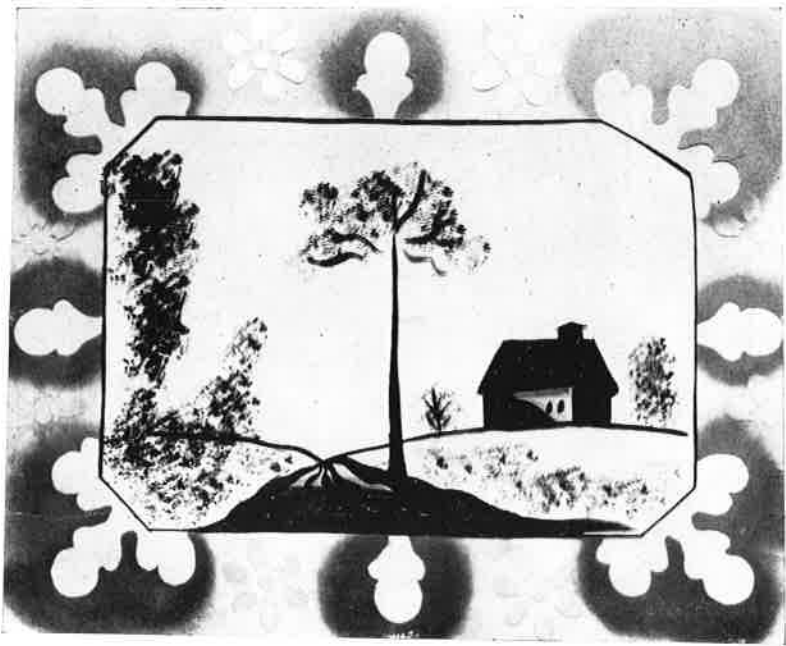


CUT 1



CUT 2

*Cottage type mirror, steps prepared by Muriel Link.*



CUT 3

- Cut 1, Shows Step I, Trace Outlines
- Cut 2, Shows Step II, Brown outlines and sponge work
- Step III, Black outline or stripe, going beyond corners, then wiping back.
- Cut 3, Shows Step IV, Stencil border, black end of house
- Step V, Blend colors in road, house front and roof

To complete the picture, proceed as follows:

- Step VI, Apply green and yellow paint to ground and trees
- Step VII, Apply red to corners and green to centers of border
- Step VIII, Apply background to border
- Step IX, Blend colors in sky; work in background trees



*Two original glasses owned by Viola Burrows.*

Glass painting will be judged at the fall meeting, and we are showing several pictures of originals. The frontispiece is an example of one type called for—with a stencilled border. The other type of which we could not get a picture in time for this issue, calls for a gold leaf border, as is often shown on a Terry or banjo clock. Complete details should be procured from Mrs. Gordon Scott, Uxbridge, Mass.

# THE PAINTED TINWARE OF PENNSYLVANIA

EARL F. ROBACKER

*A summary of his talk at the*

*Guild meeting, White Plains, April 29, 1949*

In no field of artistry is it so difficult to establish exact lines of demarcation as to times and places as it is with the work of the Pennsylvania Germans (more popularly known as the Pennsylvania "Dutch"). In the main, so little has actually been known of this minority group that misconceptions and misunderstandings seem always to have characterized their lives and their works. Awkward pieces of furniture, odd mannerisms in speech, garish color combinations, and gauche art forms have often been saddled with the epithet of Pennsylvania Dutch—to say nothing of the even more pointed "Dumb Dutch"—by a spurious sort of reasoning: The article under consideration seemed to evade any conventional category; it was rampantly individual; the Pennsylvania Dutch were said to be individualists; therefore it must be Pennsylvania Dutch! Once in a while the appellation proved to be correct, but just as often it was not.

In order properly to ascribe to Pennsylvania the pieces of painted tinware which belong there, it is necessary first to get rid of one of the most prevalent erroneous beliefs about Pennsylvania artistry—the idea that it is characterized by positive, unchanging motifs, set in a certain mold, and subject to little variation. One may peg the production of articles of Chippendale design to a fairly definite period; he may state indisputably the range of years in which Goddard breakfronts were made; he may set down without much fear of contradiction the dates of the making of Queen Anne chairs. In the field of things Pennsylvania Dutch such a limitation is impossible. The scope is too vast, the artistry is too variable in quality, and the changes are too irregular for anything like easy classification. Add to that the fact that the artists were seldom professionals, but rather individual and usually anonymous craftsmen who employed their traditional skills with varying degrees of success; note the fact that the time period begins as far back as 1683 and extends into the Twentieth Century; supply another link in that one group of workers strove zealously to repeat a well liked pattern while another branched out in original designs—take note of these details, and it is easy to see why it is difficult to ascribe a reasonable date to a given piece of supposed Pennsylvania Dutch origin.

Persistent claims are made that Pennsylvania tinware is part and parcel of the gallant heart-and-tulip decoration which characterizes the most venerable pieces of iron-work, of dower chests, and of *fraktur-schriften*. Well, it just isn't so! Tinware is not only much later than that; its design is much different from that kind of artistry. It is good Pennsylvania Dutch design, but it belongs to an entirely different period, with a different set of artistic standards applying to it. At the same time it is not so late that it fits into the category of Stahl pottery or the work now being done so effectively by the Home Craft Industries at Plymouth Meeting in Pennsylvania, which are likewise good Pennsylvania Dutch.

It should be evident, then, that there are at least three major periods in Pennsylvania Dutch design, with, of course, some inevitable overlapping. Each of these periods has some well marked characteristics, and for each period it is possible to ascribe fairly accurate dates. The student can hardly appraise the middle or intermediate period, which is the one of painted tinware, with any degree of confidence unless he knows what went before and what came after, since specimens of all three appear side by side wherever Pennsylvania Dutch artistry is studied. In consequence, it behooves us to examine the factors which make each period a recognizable one, at the same time realizing that within the period two seemingly identical articles may actually be separated from each other by a span of as much as fifty years.

First there is the time of individual craftsmanship, from 1683 to about 1820. These were the days when the newly arrived Germanic colonists, weary of religious persecution and impoverished by war and punitive raids, set about making homes in the wilderness. Their simple furniture was heavy, hand-made, and solid; their cooking utensils, geared to the limitations of the open hearth, were massive and cumbersome; their pottery was at once heavy and fragile. What they used, they first had to make. Through the 1700's, as by hard labor and persistence they pursued their way from poverty to self-sufficiency, they added to their household, farm, and religious equipment those touches which today are regarded as the "best" in Pennsylvania Dutch artistry. Of South German, Swiss, Huguenot, Lowland Dutch and other stock (but with German the prevailing strain) they reproduced the traditional European motifs remembered with affection and nostalgia: the slightly flattened, round-lobed heart; the five- and six-pointed stars; the infinitely varied tulip; the peacock; the tree of life; the pomegranate, both fruit and flower; the deer; the horse and rider; the rose; the cluster of flowers; the eagle, the pelican, and other birds. These designs they forged in their hinges and hardware, cast in iron, painted on chests, applied with pigment and brush or pen to their birth certificates and hymnals, and utilized as motifs for their pottery jugs, jars, mugs, and platters. Such practices and techniques were followed with varying degrees of skill all during the years when, if decoration was desired, there was no other way to secure it. Decoration was a prideful achievement, but it was a refinement applied to the necessary day-by-day equipment one needed in order to get along. If any ornamental tinware can honestly be traced to the "Dutch Country" in these years, it will be to the exceedingly rare household which now and then may have secured such elegant pieces from a French or English importer's shop in Philadelphia or Baltimore. Since the Pennsylvania Dutch seldom traveled, seldom spent money on luxuries, and valued the products of the outside world almost not at all, such pieces of tinware must be set down as doubtful quantities—and even if existent could not really be called Pennsylvania Dutch.

The second period extends from about 1820 to almost 1914, the time when America became appallingly conscious, not to say suspicious, of everything Germanic—even of the descendants of those long-ago first settlers—and local, traditional interests made way for things of national



significance. By 1820, housewives no longer had to use their heavy pottery unless they wished to; imports in abundance and at reasonable prices made it possible for them to discard slipware and sgraffito in favor of spatterware, Adams ware, strawberry china, and the like. The most massive furniture gave way gradually to lighter chairs, stools, rockers, and tables; the beautiful old hand-done *fraktur-schriften* yielded to certificates which had first gone through a printing press.

Most significantly, tin (that is, thin sheet iron, tin-plated) was now imported in quantity, and all along the coast and gradually extending westward the whitesmith's trade began to encroach on the blacksmith's territory. The new material, which England could hardly spare earlier, had an almost revolutionary effect on household gear. The cast iron pots and pans, the pottery bowls and jugs, the gourd dippers—all these moved aside to make a place for the products of the tinsmith's jingling cart. Itinerant peddlers traveled up and down, dispensing their wares; itinerant smiths traveled from house to house in Pennsylvania, looking for work and executing their orders on the spot.

With abundance came the desire for differentness. The traditional fondness of the Pennsylvania Dutch for bright color and marked design could not be ignored in the new scheme of things, and was not ignored. The English spatterware had deliberately been designed abroad for the Pennsylvania trade, and was wholeheartedly accepted. The newer furniture, made and decorated locally, was gay and colorful. Patterns in hand-woven coverlets multiplied. And the tinware?

The tinware seems to have offered a special challenge to Pennsylvania ingenuity. Some decorated New England ware undoubtedly found its way to Pennsylvania, and may or may not have supplied an impetus to local decoration; there is certainly an occasional overlapping in design. At any rate, in Lancaster, in York, in West Chester, and in smaller towns between, to say nothing of Philadelphia, which soon came to supply the increasing wants of the shops of the hinterland, businesses came into existence which had not previously been known—the shops of decorators whose specialty was turning a humdrum commodity into a work of art, whether it was an arrow-back chair, a coffee pot, or a painted tray.

By studying the specimens which have survived to the present day and by comparing them with what has been done elsewhere we can establish some distinguishing marks of Pennsylvania tin. These peculiarities seem to be three in number, but no one piece necessarily possesses them all. First, certain utensils commonly decorated in Pennsylvania were less commonly decorated elsewhere, or not decorated at all. These include lowly kitchen utensils—coffee pots, tea pots, sugar bowls, pitchers, mugs in a variety of sizes, and several sizes of tea caddies. Second, a simplification (with lamentable results!) in the basic coating was sometimes employed. Instead of the usual japanning or lacquering process, a mere coat of paint was used, and over this the decorations were applied. The condition was especially true in the case of red, though not all red-painted objects fall into that category



*Tray owned by Marjorie Milliman, Weatogue, Conn.*

Red coffee pots seem to have suffered most; it is all but impossible to come upon one in good condition, because ordinary oil paint on tin has poor staying qualities. Third, and perhaps most significant to the decorator of today, a considerable number of motifs appears to be peculiar to Pennsylvania.

These motifs, akin to the decorations on painted furniture, on barn signs, on later *fraktur*, and on various incidental bits of ornamentation, help to establish the over-all tone of the period—which, incidentally, is sometimes called the “Painted Period” of the Pennsylvania Dutch. For instance, there is the tulip found on trays, bowls, and tea and coffee pots. Less faithfully executed than the earlier tulips of dower chest and bride’s box, it indicates that general effect rather than naturalistic representation was the end desired. Large, tomato-like fruits, banked with green leaves and yellow curlicues or “petals” are characteristic of apple trays, bread trays, coffee pots, mugs, and creamers. Star shapes, or more accurately, perhaps, star-shaped flowers, seemed especially suitable for tea caddies. The pomegranate and the tree of life appear on sugar bowls. The peach is a favorite motif, often in combination with rounded green leaves and the ancient Chinese yin and yan symbols—(“commas”)—which are found on almost all Pennsylvania tin. Many designs defy exact classification. There are yellow flowers which may be sunflowers; there are representations which are thought to be cross sections of the pomegranate, showing seeds and varicolored strata of the flesh. Whether representations or abstractions, the result is bold, not always deftly done, but in the main pleasing, although lacking in the restraint which characterizes more professional work. An

especially appealing motif is the bird of paradise which appears in trays of many sizes, shapes, and depths. Found almost exclusively in the heart of the Dutch Country, it may or may not be of local inspiration.

Not all the patterns of this period, however, even when of attested Pennsylvania Dutch provenance, are lineal descendants of the traditional designs. Pennsylvania Dutch craftsmen of this period adapted freely, for their own purposes, what they saw and liked. Some of the legendary aloofness and seclusion of the Dutchland had disappeared by the middle of the Nineteenth Century, and American design, rather than New England or Pennsylvania Dutch, was coming to be admired and sought after. Thus it is that we find Victorian floral arrangements, peacocks, urns, and fountains in Pennsylvania just as we do elsewhere; we find stenciled borders, leaves of gilt, morning glories, roses, and bluebirds. Toward the end of the century there is an increasing use of stenciling, good and bad, less hand-work, and a tapering-off in brilliance and clarity of design, with a corresponding loss of effectiveness.

The third period in Pennsylvania Dutch artistry is the recreative period. With the general American resurgence of interest in folk ways and folk skills after the first world war, traditional industries have been widely studied and revived. Certainly the country at large has benefited by this interest in our cultural heritage. Inevitably, however, when new work follows the way of old-time workers, certain dangers present themselves. In the field of painted tinware the beginner must be particularly wary, for some extremely skillful imitations are being foisted upon the public as genuine. Even experts have been confused by beautifully executed, carefully "aged" coffee pots and other utensils which would seemingly defy every test of authenticity short of chemical analysis. These creations are exact copies of bona fide wares and bona fide 1820-1914 designs. If the student or purchaser is considering only the matter of pattern and execution, he is getting it straight; the old formulas have obviously been rediscovered, and the artistry is flawless. The less said of the ethics involved, the better.

Another type of reproduction, however, less skillful than the one mentioned above, is most productive of trouble for the tyro who is honestly trying to master the intricacies, for his own work, of what is and what is not Pennsylvania Dutch. Actually, the market is flooded with this spurious ware, which ranges from candlesticks and square spice boxes to sugar scoops, watering cans, tin lamp bases, pie pans, and fire shovels, none of which ever originally bore any fanciful decoration, but all of which now turn up gaudily betuliped and fancified to the hilt. Here the attempt is made to edge into the dwindling supply of genuine antique articles by offering something "hitherto undiscovered." The sad fact is that the forgers have used our *first-period*, pre-tin designs on previously undecorated articles of *second-period* manufacture, and have used *third-period* materials and techniques. When hearts, pelicans, mounted riders, precision-drawn hearts and flowers, deer, pomegranates, and tulips show up on painted tinware, it is time for the buyer to beware!



*An example of Filley Craftsmanship from the Collection of  
Oliver D. Filley, 4th, Hartford Conn.*

## IS IT TYPICAL CONNECTICUT OR "PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH"?

By EVERETT N. ROBINSON

In collecting tinware, as in many other items, the question of origin comes immediately after the establishment of authenticity. Is it Pennsylvania Dutch or Typical Connecticut is a question which often injects itself into a discussion with the appearance of the traditional tulip, heart, pomegranate or peacock in a design.

All are so well known that some antique dealers are apt to point to them as proof of Pennsylvania and the price is also apt to be upped in exact proportion to its crudeness in execution or the violence of its contrasts.

Connecticut, long since, placed its "gaudy Dutch" opprobrium upon Pennsylvania's unrestrained extremities and refused to be swayed from a technique of neatness in execution, quietness in blended overtones and subtlety in effects. Scornful of a slapdash technique or of the use of striking contrast in color arrangements of some of the Pennsylvania Dutch patterns, for the old time trader there still remained the problem of the Pennsylvania trade and of local competition. Among the early japanners that was strictly a democratic question in which they left the Connecticut preferences out of consideration when planning Pennsylvania patterns. Among the records of Oliver Filley, Connecticut japanner and tinsmith, there are many instances of an abandonment of the "neat but not gaudy" standard. "Please send me some of that Kings Yellow" wrote the Senior Filley to his younger brother who was operating in Pennsylvania. Something had to be done about it all. Japan was not up with plainware in sales.

Again from the manager of the Lansingburgh, N. Y. branch came a long complaint—"please see what you can do about changing the Pennsylvania money to Connecticut money. The best I can do here (N. Y. State) is 10% discount", but accompanied with a very flowery postscript request for "some more of the trays with the bird on them, if you please." The Pennsylvania peddlers, it seemed, would have nothing else after they had seen them.

There is a pertinent, long standing feud between Oliver Brunson and the foremen in these records. The Senior Filley's master mechanic, proud creator of the Filley "Crooked Spout Coffee Pot", was the product of old-world training and steadfastly refused to sacrifice one single whit of quality for speed in the American mode of production. Patient and careful always,

he would not hurry anything. Dutch to the bitter end, he could not be harried or hurried. Filley kept him working on coffeepots as much as possible and fended off the loud protests of the foreman. So Connecticut "Dutch" enters the equation too. Back-charged for not producing his "stint" while working on other than coffee pots, his pay record shows many sizeable deductions, and always present on the day of reckoning at the end of the month, were deductions for not doing his quota.

"What shall I do? Brunson refuses to work" was answered patiently by the Senior Filley, who at the time was starting up a new place in New Jersey, "Send Brunson down with me if he won't work for you". So typical Connecticut has its share in the management also. Brunson was his first, and was to the last, his master workman. In him he confided and placed his trust. Small matter the defiant entries on his time sheets, "thing for a grog shop—one day" and "to one day working on custom work doing what could be done". There was the perfect understanding. The foremen could complain, but to no avail.

It is not to be marveled at that the Filley "Crooked Spout Coffee Pot" appears in collections, ranging from the Metropolitan to Sturbridge Village and from illustrations of miscellaneous collections to illustrated articles on "Pennsylvania Types". It appears as both Pennsylvania Dutch and Typical Connecticut, and in every case is pronounced "good". It is one of those, "is it Typical Connecticut" or "Pennsylvania Dutch" examples.

To the practiced eye of the author, himself a credited sheet metal worker, the pattern of Brunson's specialty is unmistakeable and distinctive. Unsigned and until recently its origin unknown, it has been discovered and reported through the Esther Stevens Brazer Guild. With an authentic specimen by which to corroborate, the question is still one which is difficult to answer. Is it "Pennsylvania Dutch" or "Typical Connecticut"? Is it Connecticut-made for the Pennsylvania trade or Pennsylvania-accepted of the Connecticut traders? Many different patterns have been noted on the coffeepot.

What do you think Oliver Brunson and Oliver Filley would have answered? The sincerest flattery of all for the product of the inseparable Olivers is the fact both sides have claimed it. Look for it in your reading! It will nearly always be illustrated there representing Pennsylvania or Connecticut, as happens to be the topic selected by the writer. No collection is complete without it, so it would seem.

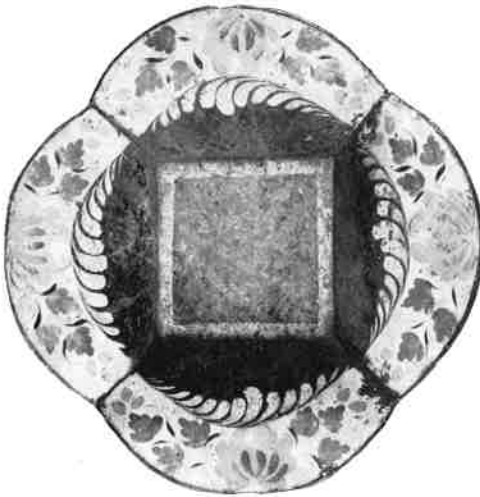
The author is still hoping to obtain one himself. One with a "Typical Connecticut" decoration would be preferred, but one with a "Pennsylvania Dutch" decoration would be entirely acceptable as would one with no decoration at all. Either, neither, or both. It would represent a monument to the friendship of the two Olivers, the friendship of the Old-World for the New. In answer to the two Olivers' "As you like it", which was their business policy as the two types, found and illustrated so often, will prove: make mine Connecticut. Neat but not gaudy, if you please!

## UNUSUAL ORIGINALS

VIRGINIA MILNES WHEELLOCK, *Editor*



*Document box from the  
Filley Collection.*



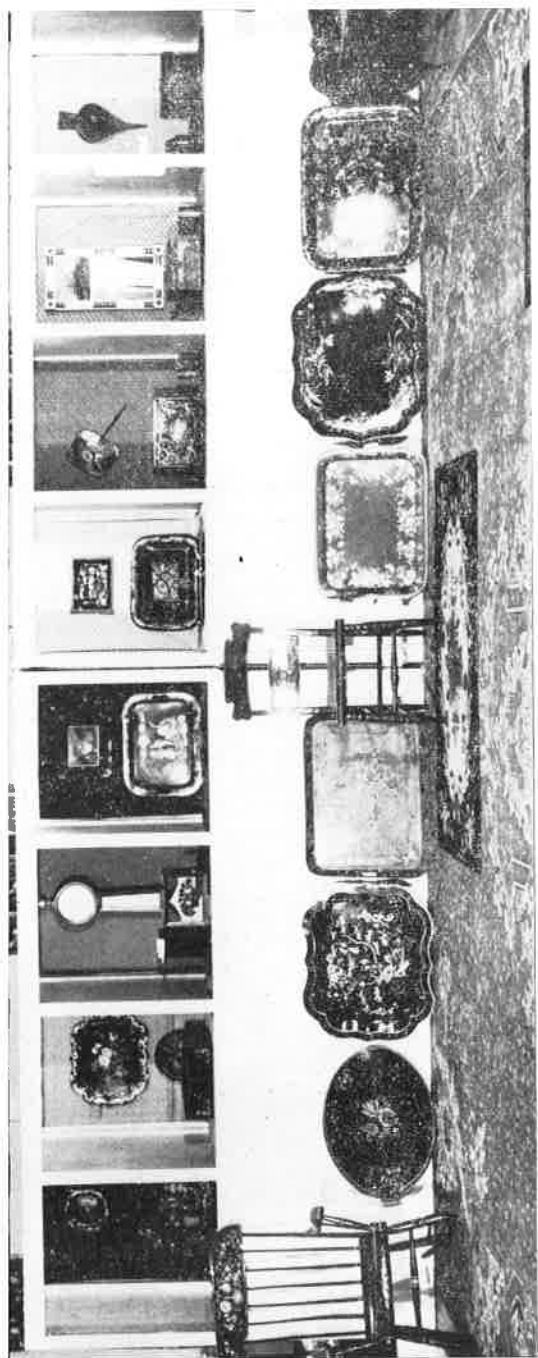
*Apple Dish*

*This old apple dish is one of a pair owned by Mrs. Robert Crouch of Gardner, Mass. They are known to have been in the family for at least three generations.*

*The tray measures 11½" square. Painted in dirty white, the outside border is decorated with a large central flower of english vermillion with white and crimson overtones. The leaves are a soft light green, while the stems and other*

*brush strokes are black. Below the white band, brush strokes are yellow, as is the band on the floor.*

*Photograph sent by Mrs. Llewellyn Jones, Gardner, Mass.*



### **Exhibition staged by the Long Island Chapter at the Garden City Casino, June 1st, 1949**

*The very attractive layout above is an innovation for Guild exhibitions. The niches allow articles to be shown to their best advantage with less distraction.*

The luncheon meeting was in charge of Mrs. Lewis Gordon, Chairman, and Mesdames Max Muller, John Klein, Robert Wyld, James Gambee, J. H. Gordon, F. R. Stanforth, Lally Alexander and Kenneth Raymond. Officers elected were: Mrs. Lewis Gordon, Chairman; Miss Elizabeth Fox, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Lally Alexander, Secretary-Treasurer.



## CHAPTER NEWS

The Pioneer Chapter met for a two day meeting April 12-13 at Lebanon, N. H. The officers elected for the year 1949-50 are Mrs. Mildred Sargent, Bethel, Vermont, President, and Mrs. Irene Slater, South Royalton, Vermont, Secretary, The Chapter will be entertained at Springfield, Vermont in September, subject for the meeting to be Country Tin Painting.

The Lexington Chapter of New York City held a meeting at the apartment of Mrs. Andrew Underhill on April 20, and have announced the following officers: President, Mrs. J. C. Andrews; Vice-President, Mrs. Irving Cabot; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Charles P. Fiske.

They voted to hold three meetings a year, and have started proceedings to compile a portfolio of original designs which will meet with the approval of the Committee on Standards.

Charter Oak Chapter of Hartford held a meeting in the spring and elected Mrs. James Crafts, President, and Mrs. Maxine Loveland, Secretary. Their next meeting will be held this fall.

## INVITATION TO FALL MEETING

Dear Members;

How our Plymouth Group did enjoy the first Guild meeting at Wellesley! Meeting new friends—old pupils of Esther's, all showing determination to carry on. Some, fortunately, have attended other meetings; I haven't been able to go, so have not seen many of you since the beginning.

Now we, the Plymouth Group, are asking you to come to us for the Fall meeting at the Reed Community House in Kingston, Massachusetts, September 28 and 29.

Plymouth Center is only four miles from Kingston with bus service every half hour. Plans are already being made for a very interesting and instructive meeting, and we are indeed happy to have this opportunity to extend our hospitality to you—Esther Stevens Brazer Guild Members.

Your early registration will make our task easier. Do come to us for this Fall meeting where we'll all again pay tribute to our Esther.

Cordially,

EDITH HOLMES  
(for the local members)

June 25, 1949.  
Mrs. Arthur B. Holmes  
Sunderland  
Kingston, Mass.

## **Report of Spring Meeting of Esther Stevens Brazer Guild Westchester County Center At White Plains, N. Y.**

It couldn't have been a more beautiful day as we rolled toward White Plains where, as members of the Esther Stevens Brazer Guild, we were to be entertained by the Fairchester Chapter at the Little Theatre and Rose Room of the County Center on Friday, April 29th and Saturday, April 30th. We were looking forward to meeting old friends, also making new ones, thus opening up new vistas in this wonderfield of antique decorating by discussing our problems.

Friday, April 29th, was registration day and most of us arrived early as we were anxious to be assigned to our various groups for demonstrations. We were greeted by Mrs. Ruth Coggins, of Greenwich, as Chairman of the Chapter, a most gracious hostess, and by Mrs. Louise McAuliffe, our President, also Mrs. Harry MacDuffie, program chairman.

The first demonstration I attended was given by Miss Florence Wright, of Ithaca, N. Y., in stencilling, and needless to say came away so inspired I immediately planned to find the correct pattern for the article to be done. Her expert highlights on fruits and flowers and blending of bronze powders were greatly admired.

The next demonstration I attended was given by Mr. Walter Wright, of Arlington, Vt., in freehand bronze. Most of us are very familiar with the fine quality of his work as evidenced by an exhibition of lamps, glove boxes, pen trays, letter holders, cigarette, button and pin boxes, also beautifully framed miniature paintings, some in pairs, which especially intrigued me.

The third demonstration was on backgrounds by Mrs. Elizabeth Gordon, Hanover, N. H., and proved very interesting under her expert handling of some difficult problems, such as smoothness in blending bronze powders, and application of asphaltum, allowing enough alizarin crimson to show. Her demonstration of graining was also very interesting.

Mrs. Sherwood Martin, of Glastonbury, Conn., gave an excellent demonstration on wall stencils. Many fine examples were displayed. The colors were particularly beautiful. Architects linen, which is very durable, was used in cutting the stencils and was held in place by scotch tape. The paint was scrubbed on. Mrs. Martin kindly extended an invitation to us to visit an old house belonging to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. Millard, Avery Road, Wapping, Conn., to see the restored stencilled walls, colored slides of which were shown in the evening.

Mrs. Walter Burrows, of Darien, Conn., gave a pleasing and beneficial demonstration in floating color, which reminded me of how I used to love to watch Esther Brazer make the roses, morning glories, peaches and birds grow so expertly.

After lunch Dr. Earl Robacker, of White Plains, author of "Pennsylvania Dutch Stuff" lectured on "The Painted Tin of Pennsylvania", and exhibited a rare and outstanding collection of some of the earliest tinware.

Mrs. Bernice Drury, of Springfield, Vt., demonstrated brush strokes with great precision and dexterity, fascinating those who watched, thus spurring us on to go back and practice.

Late in the afternoon the exhibition of articles, executed by members of the Guild, was opened to many who had been anxiously waiting to see them. There were beautifully executed lace-edge, Chippendale, and Pennsylvania Dutch trays, nicely stencilled chairs, bellows, boxes of all sizes and shapes, painted glass mirrors and clocks.

We were delighted to see Mr. and Mrs. Brazer at our meeting and to have him say a few words to us.

In the evening we were served a very nice dinner at the Roger Smith Hotel, after which we went to the County Center where Kodachrome slides of Norwegian designs, which I thought especially beautiful, were shown. Early American adaptations and members' work were also enjoyed.

The next morning the demonstrations continued for those who had not been able to see them all the previous day. After a business meeting we found ourselves returning to feast our eyes on the exhibition which had been so attractively arranged, the memory of which would have to last until the next meeting of our Guild.

ALMA M. BROCKWAY

## OFFICIAL BUSINESS

### Third Annual Meeting, White Plains, New York, April 30, 1949.

Mrs. Herbert Coggins, Chairman of the Fairchester Chapter which sponsored the meeting, welcomed the members and made announcements which were followed by brief remarks by our President, Mrs. John McAuliffe.

The Secretary's report was read and approved.

The Treasurer's report was read and its acceptance moved by Mrs. Knapp and seconded by Mrs. DeVoe. It was so voted.

Mrs. Scott read the new guidance sheets on glass painting, and after further explanation to clarify certain points, their acceptance was moved by Mrs. Drury, seconded by Mrs. Selden, and passed unanimously.

The following recommendation of the Board was presented: "New applicants shall be asked to submit applications with check to the membership chairman by February first or July first (approximately three months before Guild meetings), thus giving applicants sufficient time to prepare work for judging." Upon a motion made by Mrs. Howard and seconded by Mrs. Coggins, this recommendation was accepted.

A list of thirteen new applicants was presented. A motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mrs. Stanforth, that these names be accepted and placed on list of "Applicants Pending" until their entrance requirements are fulfilled was carried.

In the absence of Mrs. Underhill, Exhibitions Chairman, her report was read by the Secretary and placed on file.

The report of the Judging Committee was read by Mrs. Scott, Chairman.

As Mrs. Chivers, Membership Chairman, was unable to attend, her report was read by the Secretary.

The President then asked the Secretary to read the list of officers and trustees of the "Society of Early American Decoration, Inc.", and called on Mrs. Heath for remarks.

Mrs. McAuliffe called on Mrs. Muller regarding the work at Innerwick, and she responded with reassuring statements about the progress of the work there.

Mrs. MacDuffie, Chairman of the Program Committee, requested that the monitors appointed to take notes on the demonstrations please send their reports to The Decorator as soon as possible.

The President then called for the report of the nominating committee. In the absence of Miss Susan Hills, Chairman, the report was read by Mrs. Doble. The following names were proposed for Directors to serve for a three year term:

Mrs. S. Burton Heath  
Mrs. Edgar Knapp  
Mrs. John McAuliffe  
Mrs. Max Muller

As there were no further nominations from the floor the nominations were declared closed. On a motion made by Mrs. Martin and seconded by Mrs. Gordon the secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for the slate as read. It was so done and the Directors were declared elected.

By request, Mrs. McAuliffe re-read the deed of gift made by Mr. Brazer to the Guild.

A recommendation by the Board that an additional sum of \$500 be appropriated toward the completion of the work at Innerwick was presented. A motion to that effect was made by Mrs. Gambee, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and it was so voted.

Mr. Brazer was then called on for a few remarks. He expressed himself as delighted with the progress of the Guild, with the large attendance at the meeting, and at the high standard of articles in The Decorator.

The President closed the meeting by thanking the several committees for their fine work, and confirmed the general belief that the unspoken wishes of Esther Stevens Brazer are being carried out in the work of the Guild.

The meeting stood adjourned.

ALICE PLIMPTON  
Secretary, pro. tem.

At two o'clock in the afternoon the membership reconvened, following a meeting of the Board of Directors, and Mrs. McAuliffe presented the newly elected officers:

President, Mrs. Arthur Chivers  
1st Vice President, Mrs. Gordon Scott  
2nd Vice President, Mrs. Max Muller  
Recording Secretary, Mrs. G. L. Plimpton  
Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Edgar Knapp  
Treasurer, Mrs. Charles Safford

ALICE PLIMPTON, Secretary.

## THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

By LOUISE MCAULIFFE

*Highlights from her address at White Plains.*

"At this annual meeting the attendance is most gratifying and I know your belief, your interest and your cooperative spirit and earnest desire to carry on, are the reasons which bring you here today. When I look at this audience and know you are giving unselfishly of your time and interest, I can't help but feel your Guild is not only increasing its strength in membership but it is growing in the proper spirit so necessary to all successful organizations.

"May I say that we all should feel very proud of our Chapters. It is a definite indication that we are growing in the right direction. I believe that proper support and cooperation on the part of members and officers of this organization, have been and will become a very effective force in the field of art and decoration. The Chapters are one more thing Esther Stevens Brazer would approve, the sharing of patterns and working together in harmony.

"Esther Brazer was so generous with her patterns and talents that she seems to be the silent founder. It has always been my thought that the Guild shall be an every member's organization, and that every member should have sufficient interest to attend the meetings and to take part in the affairs of the organization. Thus, I am gratified at the number here today. As members you are part of this association and its affairs, just the same as I or any other Director, and as active members you should have a voice in its organization.

"We are still in a formative stage and it is up to you to make suggestions. And further, fellow members, this is the policy that Esther Stevens Brazer would be proud of, namely an organization where all members come forth.

"I want to express my appreciation of your loyal support as members. I can wish your new presiding officer to have this loyalty and I thank you all for permitting me to have had this intimate acquaintance with the work of the Guild.

"May I thank Ruth Coggins for her untiring efforts; she has been working on this meeting for months. To her and members of this Chapter may I extend my personal thanks. My thanks also go out to Emily Heath and Emilie Underhill for their work; to Martha Muller for her connection with The Decorator and her work at Innerwick on the portfolio; and to Isobel MacDuffie for her usual job of a fine Program Chairman."



*A Awards On Stencilled Chairs*

## REPORT OF THE JUDGING COMMITTEE

VIOLET MILNES SCOTT, *Chairman*

The judging committee met at 9 o'clock on April 27 and 28, 1949, in the dressing room of the Little Theatre at the Westchester County Center.

The first day, 35 applicants' and 43 regular members' exhibits were arranged on long tables. The problems of judging were discussed and the guidance sheets reviewed. The judges were divided into two groups, one jury judged Stencilling while the second jury judged the Country Painting. After a recess, the judges discussed the work submitted by applicants, and considered the points outlined on the guidance sheets which had not been covered by applicants. Many well executed and finished articles were not accepted because they failed to meet the requirements. Glass panels were studied and the guidance sheets for them revised.

The second day two guidance sheets for glass panels were compiled and a motion made that the sheets be submitted to the directors for their approval. A recommendation was made that new applicants be asked to send applications and checks to the membership chairman by February first, and by July first, which would be approximately three months before each meeting, to give ample time for applicants to prepare work to be judged.

Some exhibits arrived after the judging period had started, and the committee suggested that in the future no entries be accepted after the exhibition for judging has been arranged.

Mrs. Coggins and her committee tallied the judging sheets, attached them to the exhibits and with the help of Mr. Richard Dana and Mr. Walter Wright, arranged the display in the Rose Room. The "A" awards were photographed by Mr. Dana for *The Decorator*. The exhibition was an interesting one and it is encouraging to note that after each meeting many new names from the membership list are added to the files of exhibitors.

The Committee for Judging represented 6 states and its members were chosen for their discrimination, training, and judgment, or for their ability to decorate. The Committee asked that the purpose of the guidance sheets be brought to the attention of the Exhibitors so that in the future the importance of following these sheets will be more fully understood.

The Guidance Sheets have been made quite general, giving the Exhibitor a wide range in choice of design, but at the same time covering the numerous points which a craftsman should understand and be able to execute. They are meant to be a practical working plan for the Exhibitor to follow and for the judges to consult for impartial criticisms. Perhaps it has not been emphasized enough in the past that unless the Exhibitor demonstrates his ability to execute all specified points, his work will not be considered for Craftsman.



*A Awards On Stencilled Trays  
Martha Muller, Eleanor Jones, Ruth Brown  
A Awards On Country Tin Boxes  
Bernice Drury, Mrs. George Elder*



Many old pieces and designs do not include all the points outlined for judging. Rather than ask each exhibitor to submit several pieces to be judged for a craftsman's award, *all* the points are required on one piece. In future, perhaps, when more members are "Craftsmen", special classes will be judged to include the interesting patterns which are not acceptable at this time for Craftsman, and a special award could be given for distinguished work in any one class.

"A" Awards were received by the following:

5 Stencilling on Wood:—Ruth Coggins, Louise Crafts, Helen McCarthy, Glenna Welsh, Lucy Wightman.

3 Stencilling on Tin: Ruth Brown, Eleanor Jones, Martha Muller.

3 Country Painting: Bernice Drury, Mrs. George S. Elder (2).

4 Freehand Bronze: Ruth Brown, Helen Chivers, Bernice Drury, Irene Slater.

3 Gold Leaf: Helen Chivers, Greta Kidner, Nina L. Hauser.

2 Lace Edge: Ina Johnson, Gladys Symington.

The Judges were: Conn.: Viola Burrows, Ruth Selden, Mell Prescott; Md.: Jessica Bond; Mass.: Gladys Dana, Esther Hall; N. H.: Adele Ells, Elizabeth Gordon, Dorothy Howard; N. Y.: Esther Broughton, Florence Stanforth, Lucille Stuart; Vt.: Bernice Drury, Irene Slater.

*For the benefit of those who are working alone and not near a crafts center or teacher, the following remarks were taken from the comments made on the judging sheets of non-acceptable work.*

## Stencilling

Article too small to cover points.

Design—Poor choice, cut in one piece.

Stencil—Cutting angular and coarse.

Bronze Powders—Coarse, spattered, poorly polished.

Shading—Flat, does not show shading of one unit in back of another.

Color—Color applied unevenly, too heavy.

Striping—Fine lines too coarse, too bright, lack of broad bronze stripe or two narrow stripes on floor.

## Country Tin

Design—Too small to cover all points.

Basecoats—Uneven, too ridged, heavy.

Overtone—Lacks transparent brush strokes.

Brush Strokes—Too coarse and thick.

Border—Lacking brush stroke border.

Striping—Not sufficient striping to judge.

## REPORT OF EXHIBITION COMMITTEE

Let us try to paint a picture in words not in oils, of our Exhibition at the Westchester County Center, in order to refresh the memories of those who attended, and to furnish a picture for those who were unable to be present.

The soft rose colored walls and gray woodwork of the well proportioned room gave a warm and welcoming background for the Exhibit. A lovely old mantel marbleized with smoke painting, was placed at the far end of the Exhibition room. On the mantel were trays and pieces of country tin, and round it were placed stencilled chairs and a tip-top table, a very fine example of papier mache with mother-of-pearl inlay portraying Tintern Abbey.

At the side walls, facing each other, were two large Welsh cupboards, painted a wagon blue, loaned by Avis and Rockwell Gardiner of Stamford, Connecticut. These cupboards added materially to the background to display the excellent pieces of tinware from both members and new applicants.

On long tables in the center of the room were many A and B awards, together with some exquisite examples of originals, loaned by members of the Guild. Other exhibits were two interesting examples of the progress of gold leaf on glass, an antique clock showing gold leaf border on glass, also a beautifully painted Chippendale tray; a gallery with George Washington and tomb, and other A awards of former judging.

These all made a very interesting point of conversation and study. Although the exhibition was small, there were twenty A awards given to the work fulfilling required standards, and each piece was beautifully executed.

The lovely spring flowers, and beautiful weather, all added to a meeting well worth remembering.

HELEN McCARTHY  
for Emilie Underhill

*"Art of Painting"*—Lairesse MDCCXXXVIII

"Flower-painting is certainly a commendable study; but, as there are double and single flowers, so there are two sorts of flower-painters; the one single and simple, and the other rich and ingenious; of which latter sort we have but few, and of the former abundance." He goes on to name three requisites:

1. Choice and beautiful flowers.
2. Good disposition and harmony.
3. Neat and soft pencilling.

## DEMONSTRATIONS BY GUILD MEMBERS

Mrs. Harry MacDuffie, Program Chairman, in announcing the substitutions necessary at the last minute said "We have been very fortunate, and if you ever lose your faith in human nature, take the job of Program Chairman, because people do come to the fore in a pinch." Mrs. Elizabeth Gordon substituted for Mrs. Arthur Chivers, Mrs. Carroll Drury for Mrs. Mell Prescott, and Miss Florence Wright for Mrs. Harley Riga.

Six demonstrations were carried on simultaneously, with about twenty-five members around each table, absorbed in watching a well-qualified demonstrator. At the end of forty-five minutes the groups moved on, almost regretfully, but intent on another technique.

### The High Spots are taken from the excellent reports of the Monitors.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### BACKGROUNDS

by Mrs. Elisabeth Gordon

Mrs. Willis Howard, Monitor

*On Tin*, one or two coats of red sanding primer was recommended, to be followed by two coats of flat back; allow twenty-four hours, and sand, between each coat.

*Hitchcock Chairs* may be given a base coat of Tuscan or Venetian red; next flat black thinned with turpentine is applied with a brush, and grained with crumpled paper.

*Chippendale Trays* sometimes have a smudged background acquired by applying bronze powder to tacky varnish with a stuffed velour pad. Use Milwaukee rich gold in the center, next orange gold, then fire gold. For *tortoise shell* effect on lace-edge trays, apply silver leaf in irregular spots; cover the whole tray with alizarin crimson mixed with varnish; coat the entire tray with asphaltum mixed with varnish; always twenty-four hours between each coat.

*Colored Backgrounds* may be prepared with Japan colors in tubes, mixed with turpentine. A good *filler for cracks* is pigment from bottom of flat black can, mixed with pumice, applied with palette knife.

\* \* \* \* \*

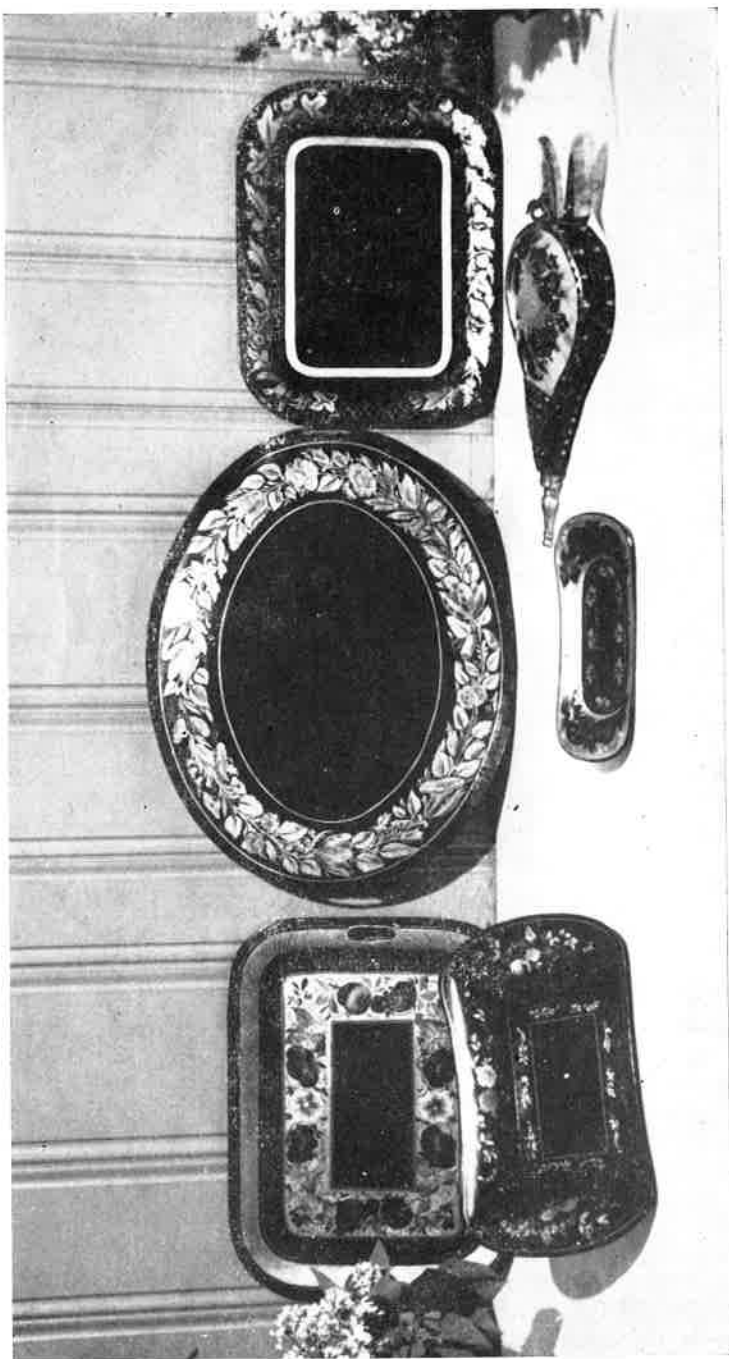
#### BRUSH STROKES

by Mrs. Carroll Drury

Edythe J. Piper, Monitor

"Anyone can make a good brush stroke with a good brush, but an expert can make a good stroke with any brush." A *good brush* is the first step; *keep it clean* is the second. Mrs. Drury prefers a flat-tipped French quill,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " long, sizes No. 1, 3, 5, except for brush strokes in Chippendale painting when she prefers a pointed brush. Quill will not split if you soak 15 minutes in warm water before inserting handle. Beginners should practice on a black paper as it gives a better idea of the color than does transparent paper.

*To begin to paint* clean brush with turpentine; make a "puddle" of varnish on palette beside the blobs of tube paint (Mrs. Drury used clear Serviceal which she feels produces fewer bubbles). To get the right "old yellow" she mixed chrome yellow medium, yellow ochre and raw umber.



*A Awards On Gold Leaf*  
 Helen Chivers, Nina Hauser, Greta Clark Kidner  
*A Awards On Freehand Bronze*  
 Ruth Broun, Helen Chivers, Bernice Drury, Irene Slater

Lay your left hand on the paper as a brace for painting arm. To make the "polliwogs" lay brush down, squash it out for round end, lift up to tip for fine tail. Color was rather thin on old pieces; but if feathering occurs, use less varnish; ridges will settle as it dries. Leave it alone or erase it—you can't doctor a brush stroke. If brush won't behave, try another. Veining is a fine brush stroke and should start at base of leaf and at center vein.

\* \* \* \* \*

## FLOATING COLOR

by Mrs. Walter Burrows

Mrs. Roswell Snell, Monitor

*Proper backing* was emphasized: for Chippendale roses she used dirty white, repainted in clear white; basic coat for the lace edge rose was poster vermillion. Mrs. Burrows prefers a Windsor-Newton red sable water color brush No. 4 for floating color; her medium is slow varnish, a mixture of three fourths regular clear varnish and one-fourth raw linseed oil. It may be made in quantity and kept air tight for future use.

The base coat of a bird or flower must be smooth and thoroughly dry before attempting to float color. Twenty-four hours is usually a safe drying period. *The first step* is to cover subject with slow varnish. The "cup" of a rose is painted first, then the "saucer." *Secondly* make all placements in the flower in the manner in which it grows, using dry pigment on the same brush just used to spread the varnish. If the rose is to be red, use alizarin crimson and burnt umber. After modelling the rose, add the "expression" by loading one side of the brush with burnt umber and accenting shaded sections of petals and the flower cup. *Set aside* for twenty-four hours while the color diffuses slightly in the setting varnish, and when thoroughly dry *apply the overtones of white* for the delicate veiling effect. Mrs. Burrows always works with a cloth in her left hand, frequently wiping her brush so as not to drag heavy pigment where it is not wanted. For a good effect in floating color there must be no definite line of color, but a gradual change from dark to light.

\* \* \* \* \*

## FREE HAND BRONZE

by Walter Wright

Mrs. Willis Howard, Monitor

*Practice work* may be done on cover paper from a printing company; this may be black, or a color such as gold leaf, red or green. The medium may be a mixture of varnish and Japan gold size. Mr. Wright uses a square tipped brush, saying "the larger the brush, the better the work." The motifs may be painted with black in Japan, or with pigment from the bottom of the flat black can, mixed with varnish, or varnish and size. *Highlight* with gold powder, and to achieve fine detail use:

1. Charcoal drawing stump
2. Chamois pulled through a quill
3. Velvet folded into a point

When thoroughly dry, in about six days, wash under water faucet; *make any corrections* with eraser, starting with the lightest, working up through to the heaviest. *Polish* with an old wool sock, and finish in the usual manner.

## STENCILLING

by Miss Florence Wright  
Mrs. E. M. Stanley, Monitor

*The type of pattern should match the age of the chairs.* The earliest were decorated with gold leaf and freehand bronze, with intricate and fine detail. In the next period, chairs were decorated with silver and gold bronze powders by stencils, shaded leaf veins, still with care and detail. Later stencilled veins and coarser motifs appear, with less care and detail. Still later, transparent colors were used over the bronzes, and finally, about 1860, colored bronzes were used, and many all-in-one patterns.

Using Hazencote prepared black paper for patterns, rub varnish, thinned with one-third turpentine, thoroughly into the paper with a nylon stocking. Work it in well and let stand a few minutes before stencilling. *Unless it is worked in well*, the black paper will come off on the back of stencils.

"Bench and Brush", Cohasset, Mass., supply squares of excellent, firm pure-silk velvet.

Miss Wright demonstrated the *stencilling of a peach*; the center was made brightest with silver; around that silver lightly applied, but pores not filled. This area was rubbed with pale gold, and beyond it an area with pale gold lightly applied. Continue in this manner, using darker shades of bronzes towards the outside where it fades away in shadow, except for outline rubbed in finely at the very edges. Highlight the other "cheek" of the peach, seen almost in silhouette, from the outer edge with silver and gold; fade off where it joins the main body of the peach. Correct errors with varnish on a nylon stocking, or paint out later.

## FROM MY MAIL BAG

One of our members has told me how she has been caring for her brushes and this information I am passing on to you.

She cleans quills and red sables after painting, first in turpentine, then Carbona, wipes dry, and then dips in lard oil, scraping the excess off on the side of the bottle and finally wraps them in aluminum foil, being careful that the bristles are shaped and pointed. If lard oil is not available, white vaseline may be used. Work it well into the bristles, shape and wrap. All of the lard oil or vaseline must be thoroughly cleaned out before using again. The oil or vaseline has a way of suspending any particles of paint that might be left in the heel of the brush. It also restores the natural oils that have been worn out of the bristles by use and cleanings.

Working vaseline into your big background brushes is a good way to revive them. Wrap as above. Caution must be taken not to store too long in this manner, as the bristles will become gummy in time. For brushes that are being used fairly regularly, however, this is an excellent way of keeping them in "good health".

## SWAP COLUMN

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WANTED: Old tin coffee pot with a long angled spout. Please send a drawing and price of what you have. Mrs. C. E. Dimon, Flying Point Road, Southampton, L. I.

## WALL STENCILLING

by Mrs. Sherwood Martin  
*Edythe Piper, Monitor*

If you are fortunate enough to have an old room with a patterned wall to start on, be sure to study the wall at different times of day to get a true idea of the colors used; then carefully measure the walls and apertures so you can make an accurate chart of the wall and design placement. If the wall is papered it must be soaked in water for removal. If a design is found underneath, save the paper, for the design will be on the back of it in reverse. If you are beginning on a brand new room you must still make a careful chart and plot placement of chosen designs.

Rooms seemed, in general, to have three types of decorations:

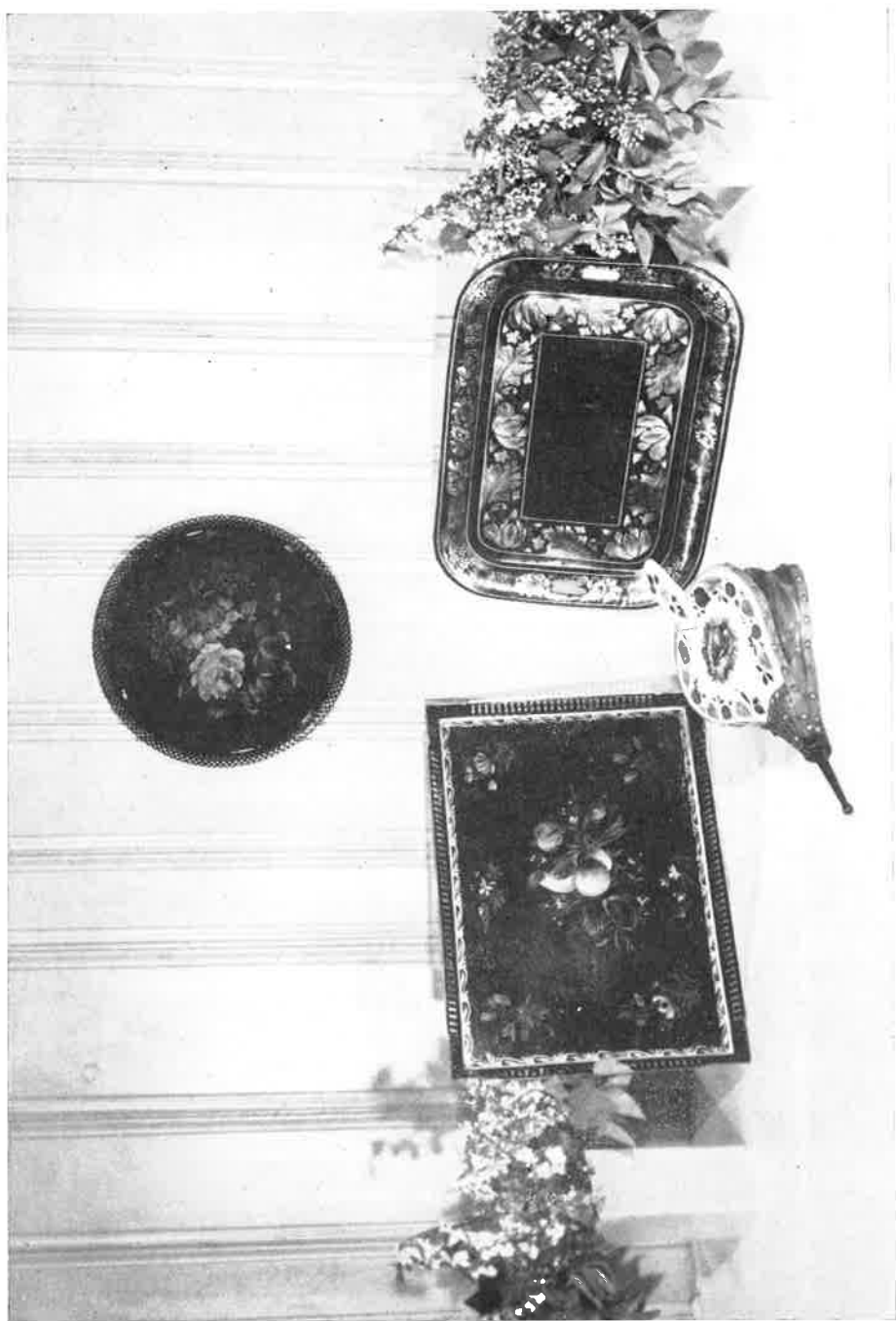
1. Frieze and border designs—these went around top of wall, around windows, doors, above and below chair rails, and above baseboards.
2. Checkerboards—designs alternated, usually had border too.
3. Uprights, which were placed about 19" apart, center to center and were combined with both above types.

It is easier and nicer to stencil on old plaster when possible. First patch the cracks, and give plaster a coat of inside primer sealer, then two coats of enamel underbody tinted the desired color. Background colors were pale pink, ochre, gray, red ochres, blue and rose.

Mrs. Martin has found it much easier to use heavy stencil linen (Phoenix No. 166 at Keuffel & Esser in Hoboken) for her patterns. It is transparent enough to assist in the placement of one piece over the other, a sharper line can be obtained, it is easier to cut, and when doing borders it will go around corners. She traces the design on backwards so the shiny side can be up when using pigment, and cuts with a razor on neutral color blotter to make lines easier to see.

For colors she uses Japan tube colors and mixes enough for an entire room before starting. It takes about one 4" tube of each color and "lots" of white to do a room. When mixed these colors are kept in screw top jars with covering of sub-turp. The design colors were black, green, yellow, pink, and reds with sometimes red-brown and blue. To obtain the red she mixed Signwriter's red, Signwriter's green, white, chrome yellow and Prussian blue.

Instead of velour and carbona, Mrs. Martin used Devoe textile stencil brushes. You need 2 or 3 for each color as they wear out. Sizes 2 and 4 were recommended. For a palette use an old plate or piece of glass. Place on it a blob of paint and less than a drop of sub-turp. If the paint is too runny it will get behind the stencil and run down the wall. Experience will tell you the correct consistency. Stick stencil to wall with scotch or masking tape, do green stencil first, in a few minutes you can do the red. Use a circular motion from outside in and do not shade. You can do all green at once, then red, but it gets boring. It was suggested anyone working on such a job charge \$4 an hour.





## HEARD AT WHITE PLAINS

I think it would be a good thing to ask the audience to refrain from smoking during a lecture. It not only affects the voice of the speaker but causes non-smokers to cough. . . . Please have a demonstration of LINING at next meeting. . . . We would like published a list of good teachers in the various localities. . . . The demonstrations are a wonderful addition to meetings. Let's have more of them! . . . Suggest only one meeting a year. This one very successful. . . . I wish that the membership list could be published at least once a year in "The Decorator". (We expect to include a supplement with our next issue.—Ed.)

Wouldn't it be a fine tribute to our loved Mrs. Brazer to have her pupils or the entire audience stand for a moment in respectful memory of her? It doesn't seem to me it would be at all emotional sentiment, but rather, in the name we carry, a loving mark of our thankful respect.—From Charter Member No. 36.

It might be advisable to say something in the next "Decorator" about admission fees and demonstrations for members only. We heard of some women getting up at 4 a. m. to go to White Plains and only one could get in before 3 p. m., while all the while non-members from other units had been there all day. Just a suggestion to make things go more smoothly, and one learns a lot by experience. (Please accept our apologies; we wish it hadn't happened. It has been suggested that in future our exhibition be open to members only on the first day.—R. C.)

### DUES PAYABLE

Dues of \$3.00 for the year 1949-1950 become payable July 1, 1949. Make checks payable to the Esther Stevens Brazer Guild and remit to Mrs. Elizabeth Gordon, 98 So. Main St., Hanover, N. H. No bills will be sent. A reminder will be sent in January to those whose dues remain unpaid.

This is the final issue of "The Decorator" included in the 1948-49 dues. No further copies will be sent to persons whose dues remain unpaid.

## QUESTION BOX

### Emilie Underhill

Question: What is the best filler for cracks and holes?

Answer: Putty is one of the best fillers.

Question: Is there any easy way to cut small round holes in a stencil, such as stamens in flowers?

Answer: Yes! A rubber dam punch with 5 to 6 sizes of holes will save hours of labor and keep many a hair in your head. It may be purchased at any dentist supply company or a bargain at a second hand instrument concern, or maybe your dentist, for the privilege of an extraction, might lend you his.

Question: Where do you look for the signature on old tin ware?

Answer: Usually on the back or bottom of pewter, tin or papier-mache.

## QUESTIONS FROM THE WHITE PLAINS MEETING

Question: How do you keep a white painted object white?

Answer: For a tray that requires an alcohol and heat proof finish, would suggest using two very thin coats of clear spar varnish and building up the rest of the finish with several coats of wax. For other painted objects you might try one of the new synthetics which claim to be absolutely clear and colorless, but be sure that you use it throughout the finish.

Question: Where can we get authentic large octagonal tray designs? Where can I find a design for a miniature lace edge tray? Floor about 4½" long.

Answer: Go to a good teacher. If one is not available in your territory, would suggest a museum or library. Antique and junk shops hide many an unknown treasure. Happy hunting!

Question: Is it necessary to have a design authentic, and who can say when it is?

Answer: One of the aims of the Guild is to search out the authentic, to learn periods and understand clearly what pattern is correct for each style of tray and each period of furniture. Just as with Sandwich glass, Duncan Phyfe, etc., the connoisseur can usually spot a phoney. You will have to rely on the honesty and integrity of the person from whom you get the design.

Question: How does one measure less than a drop?

Answer: This, I consider the \$64 question! On inquiring of a pharmacist, and later an atomic physicist, no less, about this subject, was told that from an analytical supply company a very intricate and costly instrument may be purchased that will measure less than a drop. In the meantime would suggest using an eye dropper held against a bottle cap. Just before drop is ready to take a tumble, hold your breath and scrape it off on rim of bottle cap. To avert the agony and suspense, would advise a bit of extravagance, by using sufficient "what-have-you" to require the addition of one full DROP.

Question: What is sub-turpentine?

Answer: A synthetic product, and inexpensive.

Question: Are there any distinguishing features between New England chests and Pennsylvania chests if they are not decorated?

Answer: Yes, there were individual features in every section. In general the Pennsylvania were heavier.—C. W. B.

Question: How can we find out more about striping? What kind of striping on the different trays?

Answer: Although there are exceptions to every rule, a study of many originals shows a conformity to the general rule of "following the construction". Read Mrs. Brazer's book, "Early American Decoration", pages 63, 64, 65. See also the illustrations on pages 210, 227, 229, 233, 243, 244, and the Frontispiece.

*Resume of the Board Meeting* held in White Plains at 2 P. M. on April 28, 1949, the President, Louise McAuliffe, presiding.

The report of the January meeting of the Board was read and approved.

Mrs. Safford, Treasurer, reported that total receipts had been \$4,308.64; expenditures \$2,381.91, leaving a balance of \$1,926.73.

The Membership report, sent in by Mrs. Chivers, showed a total of 512 members, composed of 169 charter members, 333 regular, 2 honorary, 6 associate and 78 pending. There were recorded 6 deaths, 1 resignation and 29 suspended under ruling of the by-laws.

The Curator, Mrs. Muller, reported on progress at Innerwick. Two 5-drawer cabinet units are set up which lock together very firmly, have good dividers and are proving most satisfactory. The approximate cost of these was \$193; the mounting paper to date cost \$216; and the Eastman Kodak acetate envelopes have cost \$340, making a total cost to date of \$960.73 for preserving and filing the patterns. As additional supplies for the completion of this work are needed, a motion was made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mrs. Knapp, that the Board recommend a further sum of \$500 be appropriated. The vote was unanimous.

Much discussion followed regarding the use of Mrs. Brazer's patterns by Guild members. Many factors are involved and any plan tried out at first will be merely tentative. A suggested plan is to open for out-of-town Guild members Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, one week each month, and for local members one other week. The patterns will be available at first for those members having obtained some of their ratings for master craftsmanship. It was decided that it is absolutely essential and to the advantage of all workers, to have a skilled and experienced instructor in attendance, whose charge will be about \$5 for a 6-hour day. A further fee of \$2 per person per day will be charged to cover other expenses. Mr. and Mrs. Brazer may also make a few rooms available at a nominal fee for those wishing to stay over night.

Mrs. Muller has expressed willingness to continue until everything is in readiness and the instruction is under way. No applications can be considered until all details are completed, but we now anticipate the patterns may be ready this fall. A full announcement of arrangements will be made as soon as available.

Because of the large amount of educational matter included in The Decorator it was moved by Mrs. Plimpton and seconded by Mrs. Scott that hereafter ADDITIONAL copies be priced at one dollar each. It was so voted.

Mrs. Scott reported on the work of the judges and read the two new guidance sheets on glass painting, one calling for stencilled border and one for a gold leaf border. Motion was made by Mrs. Heath and seconded by Miss Wright that the Board recommend the acceptance of these sheets by the Guild. The motion was approved.

On behalf of a number of donors Mrs. Heath presented to the Board for use of the Guild, a number of colored slides contributed by Viola Burrows, Helen Chivers, Bernice Drury and Emily Heath; also a set of black and white pictures (mostly of originals) contributed by May Hale Auer, Emily Heath and Violet Scott. Florence Wright and Louise McCauliffe also expressed a willingness to add to the collection. When these are mounted, they may become available as a loan collection for reference work. Other persons wishing to add to this collection are invited to do so.

Mrs. Safford, treasurer, was authorized to employ a duly certified auditor.

Mrs. Scott moved that the following recommendation be presented to the Guild: "New applicants shall be asked to submit applications with check to the membership chairman by February first or July first, thus giving applicants sufficient time to prepare work for judging." It is felt that a new applicant needs at least three months to become adequately informed and prepared to submit satisfactory work to the judging committee. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Heath and approved.

A list of twenty-nine names was submitted by the membership chairman, which, according to the by-laws, must now be suspended for non-payment of dues. Attention was called to the fact that any suspended member may be reinstated by fulfilling the requirements of a new member.

The names of thirteen new applicants were presented and approved for list of "Applicants Pending".

The meeting then stood adjourned.

ALICE PLIMPTON  
Secretary, pro. tem

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