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and the

Esther Stevens Brazer Guild

The Decorator

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EDITORIAL

Our Society is now officially five years old. As is the custom at anniversaries, I have spent some time in looking back over our records. With amazement, I have compiled the following facts:
Record of membership: 1946—125; 1947—360; 1948—454; 1949—approximately 500; 1950—593 members and applicants; 1951—697 members and applicants.

We have had eleven large meetings with exhibits, judging, demonstrations, speeches, and the like at different localities: Darien, Conn.; Wellesley, Mass.; New York City, N. Y.; Hanover, N. H.; Hartford, Conn.; Poland Springs, Me.; White Plains, N. Y.; Kingston, Mass.; Sturbridge, Mass.; Burlington, Vt.; and Princeton, N. J.

We have sponsored and conducted, either as a Guild or as Chapters of the Guild, exhibitions in the following places: Darien Community Centre, Darien, Conn.; Wellesley Hills Country Club, Wellesley Hills, Mass.; Barbizon Hotel, New York City, N. Y.; Carpenter Art Galleries, Hanover, N. H.; Suffolk Museum, Stony Brook, L. I. in the years, 1947, '48, and '51; Storrowton Eastern States Exposition, Springfield, Mass.; Sweat Memorial Art Museum, Portland, Me.; First Baptist Church, West Hartford, Conn.; Ricker Inn, Poland Springs, Me.; White Plains Community Centre, White Plains, N. Y.; Reed Community House, Kingston, Mass.; Mashapaug House, Sturbridge, Mass.; Massachusetts House Workshop, Lincolnsville, Me.; Fleming Art Museum, Burlington, Vt.; Princeton Inn, Princeton, N. J.; and again at Sturbridge Old Village, Sturbridge, Mass.

We have published nine issues of *THE DECORATOR*.

Our list of speakers at meetings has an imposing sound: Miss Alice Winchester, Mr. Chas. Messer Stowe, Miss Esther Oldham, Mr. Donald Shelley, Mr. E. N. Robinson, Mr. Wm. Galligan, Mr. Bartlett Hayes, Mrs. Nina Fletcher Little, Mr. Earle Newton, Miss Jean Lipman, and Dr. Clarence Brazer. Our cleverest decorators have given demonstrations in every type of technique, including stenciling on tin, wood, walls, and the like; gold leafing; free hand bronzing; floating color; glass painting and stenciling; paper marbleizing; striping; backgrounds and finishing and complete chair restoring.

We have received two most important bequests:

The Esther Stevens Brazer Collection of Early American Designs, presented by Dr. Clarence Brazer

The Ann Butler Tin collection of 7 pieces originally from Greenville, New York, presented in memory of Mrs. Arthur Oldham by Miss Esther Oldham and Mrs. Ann Oldham Borntraeger

We have sponsored and held 33 days of painting sessions at Innerwick, using the Esther Stevens Brazer Collection of Early American Designs for study.

We have eight chapters functioning locally in a lively and satisfactory manner: The Pioneer Chapter, Charter Oak Chapter, Fairchester Chapter, Lexington Chapter, Long Island Chapter, Pine Tree Chapter, New Jersey Chapter, and the Old Colony Chapter.

I think we can feel that Esther Brazer would have been proud of the Guild that bears her name. Every member and, most particularly, the officers and committee chairmen have a right to feel proud that we have ac-

Esther Stevens Brazer stenciling a Hitchcock chair at Innerwick

MY STORY

ESTHER STEVENS BRAZER (1940 ?)

THIS is my story: I started out in life by being a frail child (believe it or not), the daughter of a mother who was a brilliant writer and a founder of women's clubs in the days when women's place was in the home. My father was fond of music and of raising flowers; the musical strain was left out of my composition, but I love to make flowers blossom and can do so in just a fraction of the time that it took my father to grow them. You see I work in paint. During my childhood I was forever painting wildflowers, so often it was purple asters that my family came to call them "purple Esthers." This flower painting prolificacy led my family to believe that Esther was going to be an artist like her aunt who had really painted pictures accepted by and hung in the Paris Salon, and like her great grandmother who painted beautiful flower pictures now hanging on the walls of each of her descendants' homes.

When I was ten years of age, my mother died suddenly; during the next years I was stricken with a baffling illness that kept me much of the time in bed. To distract my mind, I had a special teacher in design, composition, and in color who evidently gave me fundamental sound training in both

the trick to someone whose interest was as keen as mine. So he varnished a piece of black paper, and reached up on a high shelf for his folders of stencils marked *flowers*, *leaves*, and *scrolls*. From these folders he selected some eight or nine units, and then opened up his cigar box in which he kept his bronze powders separated by little partitions. I watched him work for about fifteen minutes, and departed, to take up the practise of bronze stenciling at home during more leisurely hours. The little tricks he had shown me were enough to reveal the whole process, and I could figure everything out from there. If I had had longer to work with him, I am sure there were lots of freehand tricks he could have shown me.

As my interest in stencil designs increased, I realized that there were many other kinds of patterns accomplished by freehand methods, and I began to make records of all old painted designs that I could find available. For some reason, books had been very disappointing, since black and white illustrations often fail to give the details that an artist requires. Then I made the acquaintance of Homer Eaton Keyes, long beloved Editor of the magazine *Antiques*, who encouraged me to pursue my studies because he found in me the unusual combination of a good research mind, an art training, a love of history, and a keen interest in antiques. He showed me that I could be a pioneer in this field of antique painted design, and he guided me constantly in my research. He told me that I should start the life-long task of collecting material toward a history of early American decorative design, a task that seemed utterly beyond my abilities when he first proposed it. Next I had the rare good fortune of meeting an architect friend of his, Clarence Brazer, who joined Mr. Keyes in the scholarly education of my mind. Dr. Brazer taught me to know old houses, to read dates in mouldings and construction, to know the makers of fine Philadelphia furniture.

In the course of my career, I have done many unexpected things. While I was restoring the Hicks House in Cambridge I began wondering just what the original paper might have looked like when Mrs. Hicks picked it for her walls. Then I happened to observe that great wads of paper stripped from the walls of an upstairs bedroom were lying about the floor, some of the scraps being stiff enough to give the impression that they were built up of many layers. These thick scraps floated in the bathtub, and lo and behold! out of this "waste" I found remnants of fifteen layers of wallpaper. Most researchers would have stopped here, but I went on to the hand reproduction of the three oldest designs, because they so ideally suited the simple forthrightness of the house. Two of these papers were stenciled, which produced no problem for me, just called upon my store of patience to reproduce in the square or blocks each as they had been made originally. But the other was a block-printed pattern and I soon found that what I needed for the printing of so large a block was a rotary press. No letter press was large enough to take the pattern. I tried a large twelve-gallon crock, but no amount of experimenting would make its wavy surface print evenly. Finally, the idea dawned upon me that sewer pipe was cast in a mould, and should therefore have an evener surface. I have forgotten now where I got that eventful section of pipe, but I know that when I wrapped the linoleum block around it and got my first successful print from it, nothing under heaven would have been able to delay my printing the whole room full of paper. I had been experimenting to get the print for six whole weeks, and in one afternoon and evening the printing job was accomplished. Later, when I moved to a different old house in Cambridge, my paperhanger,

out that this was known to have been a fearfully cold winter, and he thinks that they built too large a fire to get warm. Anyhow, we have a mystery here, for we not only have the 1780 main house which Col. Hamilton rebuilt immediately, but we have a far older ell, with a great brick oven and fireplace that date back to the 1680's when New York was still Dutch. The brick in the large fireplace of my studio is Dutch brick, known by its peculiar dimensions, and originally covered with Delft tiles. I keep a fire burning here in the old kitchen I use as a studio on winter mornings, and the students enjoy the atmosphere of this early, crudely finished room. We like the house not only because it is the second oldest in Flushing, but it gives us a chance to have all our old things around us in a setting where they are most at home. I would not know myself if I did not have an old house to live in and feel with to recreate artistic rooms in the old styles I know so well. It seems to me that I can better restore the old appearance of a piece when I work here in this house surrounded by antiques which have lived through the years that made history.

ESTHER STEVENS BRAZER

VIOLET MILNES SCOTT

The first issue of *The Decorator*, published in October 1946, contained a fascinating article, *Esther Stevens Brazer*, written by Edith Holmes, in which she told of Esther Stevens Brazer and the outstanding events in her life. It is unfortunate that there are no more copies of the first issue for today's Guild members, since the following outline can only show the tremendous amount of research and effort Mrs. Brazer spent in bringing the history of early American Decoration to life.

Born . . . April 17, 1898, in Portland, Maine.
Daughter of Augustus Stevens of Portland, Maine, and Harriet Belt of Wilmington, Delaware.
Descendant of Paul Revere, Sr., of Boston, Massachusetts, and Zachariah Stevens of Stevens Plains, Maine, who established decorated tinware industry in Maine, in 1798.

Educated . . . in Portland schools.
Graduated from Wayneflete School for Girls.
Studied at Portland Art School, connected with the Sweat Memorial Art Museum. The school formerly Stevens' Portland home.
Took course in Interior Decoration at Columbia University, New York.

Research Worker . . . on filing for Government Fleet Corporation in New York, World War I.

Married . . . Cecil E. Fraser of Cambridge, Massachusetts, September 1, 1920.
Daughter Diana born October 1921.
Daughter Constance born January 1925.

John Hicks House . . . Dunster St., Cambridge, Massachusetts, occupied by the Frasers in 1921.
House moved to Boylston and South St., Cambridge, in December 1928.
Funds for transfer provided by Cambridge Historical Society.

Recorded patterns and techniques and continued research on old methods and craftsmen.

First Classes . . . in decorating started in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, 1931.
Class in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, 1932.
Class at Gray Gardens, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1934.
Class at Weston, Massachusetts, 1934.

Married . . . Clarence W. Brazer, June 30, 1937, and moved to New York.

Large Classes . . . formed in New York; Mineola, Long Island; Montclair, New Jersey; Springfield, Massachusetts; New Haven and Hartford, Connecticut; and Hanover, New Hampshire.
Continued teaching old pupils in Cambridge, Boston vicinity, and Wellesley.

Innerwick . . . Flushing, L. I., New York.
Bought by Brazers in 1938, second oldest house in Flushing, built about 1680. Three-story portion rebuilt after fire in 1780.
Redecorated with stencilled and painted walls and stairs by Mrs. Brazer.
Collection of Stevens Plains, Me., tin exhibited in old buttery.
Original kitchen ell, 1680, with large fireplace, used as studio and library for Early American Decoration.
Open to visitors during Flushing Tercentenary, 1945, Esther Stevens Brazer Guild invited to Open House, May, 1947.

Published . . . *Early American Decoration*, October 15, 1940.
Basic Instructions for Home Painting in the Early American Manner, August, 1943, Revised April, 1945, Illustrations added, 1948.
Seven Authentic Stencil Patterns for Hitchcock Type Chairs and Rockers, 1945.

Articles . . . appeared in *Avocations*, 1938.
Good Housekeeping, 1941.
Woman's Day, 1946.

Contributor . . . The Evening Transcript, Boston, Mass., Antiques Page.
The Evening Sun, New York, Antiques Page.
The Boston Evening American, *Antique A Day*, Series, 1930.

Interior Decorator . . . of First Congregational Church Parish House, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
Private Pavilion of Cambridge Hospital.
Delaware County Court House, Media, Pennsylvania, 1930.
Allyn K. Ford House, Minneapolis, Minn., a house designed by Clarence W. Brazer, and for which he received Minn. A.I.A. award for best house built 1925 to 1930.

Restored . . . Painted chests shown in Metropolitan Museum in New York City, and Pennsylvania Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Lecturer . . . Connecticut Historical Society, New Haven, Conn., 1935.
New Jersey Antiquarian Society, Montclair, New Jersey.
Special lecturer at Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts, New York, on *Early American Decoration.*

LACE-EDGE TRAYS

Viola A. Burrows

It takes a person with great courage to write anything about such a controversial subject as *Lace-Edge Trays*. I do not hesitate to admit that but for the discussion and encouragement from the members of Martha Muller's special class in my studio, I would not dare write even a sentence on the subject. The more lace-edge trays have been discussed, the more I have felt like "Alice in Wonderland," thoroughly confused. I felt it might not be too presumptuous if I put down what I had observed about the trays I have had the privilege of seeing.

Lace-edge trays, as you would suppose, take their name from the lacy piercings of the border. Not all were of the same pattern. Some seem to have been cut out with a hand tool, and Mrs. Brazer felt that some may have been formed by a mould. The later ones were stamped out by machine. We sometimes find a hole in the center of the round ones. This I have been told is because these trays have been put on a machine and spun into shape. The hole naturally was filled in. I have never seen a wobbly lace-edge tray like so many of the rectangular trays. These trays seem to be made of good-quality sheet iron covered with melted tin.

A pair of beautiful trays in perfect condition was brought into my studio this morning by the owner, Mrs. Ruth Coggins. One has a floral design with sprays, the other a bird, peach, and sprays, obviously done by the same artist to be used as a pair. The floors of both trays have been covered with gold leaf over which asphaltum was brushed on thinly in some places, darker in others, leaving much of the gold undercoat showing so the whole tray comes to "life." The orange-red base extends under the entire body of the bird. A floating color stage of Alizarian crimson into which the main body colors were incorporated came next. Details were added when dry. The peach seems to be done in like manner. Sprays were pure color definitely done in one brush stroke. Typical gold stripe and brush-stroke border were on the floor of the tray. Around the top of the pierced edge was another gold-leaf stripe, and gold-leaf brush strokes were in the corners of the tray. A protective coat was brushed over each painted unit only. Obviously, these trays were executed by a fine artist. The painting is as flat and smooth as any done on Chippendales. In my opinion, I have never seen two more glamorous trays. A lace-edge well done is a joy to behold and for me surpasses in beauty all others. I can well understand why Mrs. Brazer said that lace-edge was her favorite.

Like everything else in this world there are different interpretations of lace-edge. Some are not flat and smooth in execution, but chalky and ridgy. Still others have a definite country tin technique appearance.

Mrs. Brazer wrote an article in *Antiques* magazine February 1937, pages 76 and 77, wherein she said that she felt that lace-edge trays were turned out by Paul Revere and that they were decorated by local artists.*

Lace-Edge, I think we all will admit, has a definite style of painting. Why this particular type of painting was selected and adhered to through

Editor's note: Mrs. Brazer once told me that a keyhole piercing probably indicated a Paul Revere piece.

the years and has come to be characteristic for these trays, where and by whom they were first decorated, is still a mystery. I have failed to uncover any authentic information. I have contacted museums, libraries, and persons who reproduce the raw trays, even going so far as to write the "Answer MAN." Results were all negative. Perhaps there is a reader who has all these answers or at least some suggestions and ideas. If so, may we hear from you, and perhaps our combined knowledge will result in some definite facts.

THE TIN PEDDLER

RUTH T. BROWN

The peddler, like poverty, the world seems always to have with it. Shrouded in mist though his origin may be even from the days of the Trojan Wars he has trudged hatless and shoeless with a pack on his back over many lands. He emerges a versatile heroic character with power to captivate and wit to evaluate the dangers of his way.

The Fuller Brush man and magazine salesmen of our day are but poor descendants of the original New England peddler. There was much in New England in the late 1600's and early 1700's to create the daring spirit and mold a type. The Atlantic seaboard with its eastward opening harbors predestined a race of hardy fishermen while inland along the valleys of the few rivers farmers tilled their acres and early craftsmen developed their skill. But besides the topography of the country fashioning man's pursuits it did much more.

The rigor of the climate, the poor soil, the fear of Indian attacks produced a type of people distinguished for physical vigor and endurance, mental alertness, versatility, industrious persistence and readiness to gather profit from the toughest bargain. Such was the New England or Yankee type—such the Yankee Trader.

What the ocean was to the Yankee sailor the Continent was to the peddler. Both offered unlimited opportunity for adventure and enterprise. The geography of New England was the greatest determining factor in the industrial development of it. The settlements in the beginning were compact villages along the coast and main rivers, built around a church and later around a factory. The families were large so it was natural that many an enterprising son would be sent out to peddle wares made in his own home and later in commercial factories. This began early in New England, especially in Connecticut, even more than in Massachusetts where navigation and fishing took up the interest of the people.

In the early days, the cooking utensils were iron brought or imported from England and for tableware wood and pewter were used. In 1738 two brothers, William and Edgar Patterson, arrived from Ireland to settle in Berlin, Connecticut. They were tinsmiths by trade but tin plate was scarce in the colonies so it had to be imported from England for the utensils they were to make. They worked in their home beating the tin plate into vessels on anvils with wooden mallets. They made so much noise the neighbors called the house "Bang-All" and waited curiously to see what came of the clangor. When a supply was made up, they peddled the tin from door to door in Berlin and everyone liked the new shining tinware in place of the drab wood and dented pewter they had used so long.

license the peddler, hoping in this way to force him out of existence. At first peddlers and store keepers were great rivals but as time went on they found it to their advantage to cooperate. One good came of the license fees—the House of Burgesses of Virginia voted all proceeds from peddlers taxes to William and Mary College.

Bronson Alcott, the brilliant young brother of Louisa, having prepared for Yale, astonished his parents by announcing he preferred to take to the road and find teaching work, using peddling to pay his way. However, he became so successful as a peddler that after a year he persuaded his brother to join him. The roster of peddlar notables includes many names of prominent men in our nation's history, and many towns owe their industrial start to the peddling system.

Tales of his sly dealings ticked the humor of our forefathers, but in spite of this reputation he served a three-fold role as manufacturer, salesman, and transportation agent. He was patriot, politician, newsman and directory, but his economic need has passed. What a man he was—a man of broad vision and liberal ideas.

To quote—"The peddler served a purpose in the frontier life of America that cannot be forgotten as long as history endures. For he was a social figure in the existence of the common people and in that lies his immortality."

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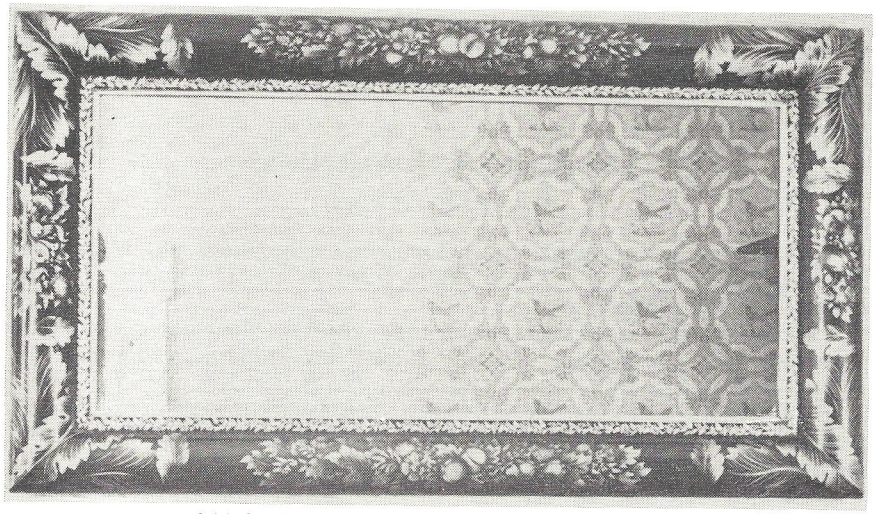
DECORATED FURNITURE IN THE CAMPBELL-WHITTLESEY HOUSE, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

FLORENCE E. WRIGHT

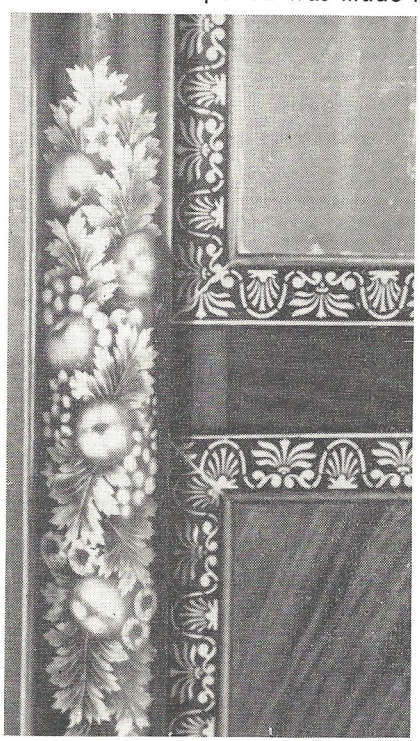
One of the most distinguished collections of decorated mahogany furniture of the 1825–1835 period may be found in the historic Campbell-Whittlesey House in Rochester, New York. This fine example of Greek Revival architecture, built in 1835–1836 at the corner of Troup and Fitzhugh streets by Benjamin Campbell, a prosperous merchant and miller, is now the property of the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York, and is open to the public each afternoon except Monday from 1 to 5.

The home is authentically restored, and here students of early American decoration may find many pieces that show the interesting development of gold decoration on furniture. Some have brass ormolu mounts and brass inlay; others have a combination of gold leaf (either flat in effect to look like the brass inlay or etched to resemble the light and shadow effects found on the bands of pressed brass) and stenciled decoration which closely followed the effect of the gold-leaf designs but was easier to do and much quicker to apply. All three techniques are used on the piano. The labeled George Miller card table illustrated in Janet Waring's book, *Early American Stencils on Walls and Furniture*, is one of the pieces that highlights the collection.

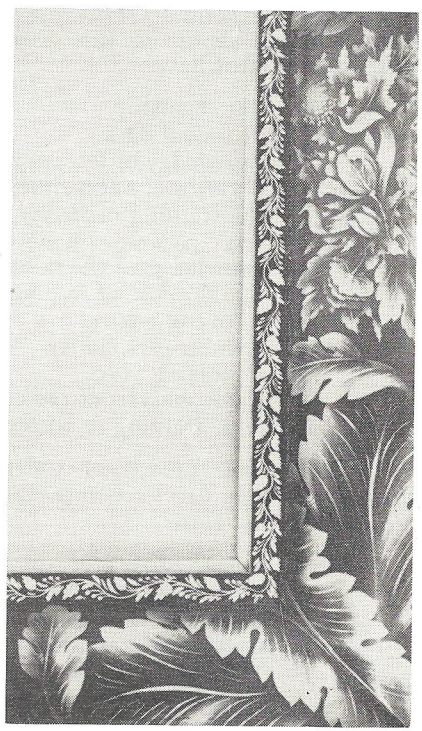


LARGE STENCILED MAHOGANY MIRROR

Formerly in an Albany, New York, home. Much of the decorated furniture of this period was made in Albany and New York City.



Detail of wardrobe (page 20)



Detail of mirror (above)

Everything before number 7 is merely background for our main job *How to Teach*.

There are some specific steps to be used in correct teaching procedure:

1. Preparation
   a. Put student at ease
   b. Find out what he already knows about the craft
   c. Get him interested in wanting to learn
2. Presentation
   a. Tell, show, illustrate, and question carefully and patiently
   b. Stress key points
   c. Instruct clearly and completely, taking up one point at a time—but no more than he can master
3. Application
   a. Have student perform the operation
   b. Have him *tell* and *show* you; have him explain key points
   c. Ask questions and correct answers
   d. Continue until you know *he* knows
4. Test
   a. Put him on his own
   b. Check frequently
   c. Encourage questions
   d. Have him look for key points as he progresses
   e. Taper off extra coaching

The following is of the utmost importance for the correct functioning of a lesson—

1. Have a plan—
   how much knowledge you expect him to have and how soon
2. Break down the lesson—
   list principal steps
   pick out key points
3. Have everything ready—
   the right equipment and materials
4. Have the teaching place properly arranged just as the student will be expected to keep it

The teacher has an infinite number of things to do to meet the needs of *all* the students. No two are exactly alike, and so the lesson presentation may have to vary from student to student. Also, no two classes are alike, and changes and revisions in the teaching plan are necessary.

Here are a few "dos" and "don'ts" for the craft teacher.—

1. Be exact and reproduce faithfully
2. Make your first project the poorest and your last one the best
3. Be a perfectionist, but don't admit perfection
4. Be true to your craft—don't slight it
5. Share your "tricks of the trade"
6. Be honest with yourself—don't alibi
7. Be honest with others, but ethical
8. Don't accept inferior work—even your own
9. Be an artist, but not "arty"
10. Be practical, but with a shading of idealism

A TRIBUTE TO ESTHER STEVENS BRAZER, RESEARCHER

EVERETT N. ROBINSON

The researcher in antiques finds many unexpected twists and angles in linguistic expressions and colloquialisms, so expressive when understood, and so baffling when not. Differences in grammar and construction sometimes render a passage quaint and difficult of interpretation, with all the elements of a puzzle to be solved.

Crystallized tinware, the subject of an old-time japanner's manual, is described there as "of a verigated primrose appearance." That means very little in present-day jargon, but substitute "prim" for "primrose," and it becomes quite clear. "Prim" is an abbreviated variant, and the "primrose" expression has become archaic. To discover that required an hour of reference work. A dictionary, the older the better, becomes a constant and necessary companion to the reading of such old documents. A sense of humor also helps.

Spelling is another hazard. "Bowl" was spelled four or five different ways in the Filley records, and sometimes in the same document by the same person there would be an amusing variety of spelling. B—O—W—L never appeared there! Yet Oliver Filley was a school teacher at one time. It makes the efforts of Webster to standardize American expressions and spellings a heroic undertaking.

"Bright but not too bright," said another japanner of a color—an exact statement of personal preference based on New England conservatism. Such lack of exactness is no help when one is attempting to produce a color or to describe it in intensity.

"Shellac is a pretty good varnish" would leave most of us wondering what is varnish and what is shellac, and in present-day terms the two are entirely differentiated. Especially true is this with the Brazer technique which recommends avoiding shellac and using varnish! Further along in the same treatise, shellac was listed as a good "lacker" when colored by tumeric to give the appearance of brass. Then when the same writer stated blandly that shellac was the most commonly used "spirit" varnish, it put shellac in their formulas as almost anything of everything that could be desired. Varnish was prohibitive in price, but the cheaper shellac was never called "cheap"—New England thrift forbade that. Seeking specific information in such manuals is a hazardous undertaking!

Dutch Pink (a light mustard-like pigment) was called a "cheap" color, and the manual discouraged its use. "Use umber," it recommended. Tumeric was also approved.

Vermillion, it stated, was too bright as a color unless overlaid with a rose pink, when it became a good color and the one most used for flesh tints in japanning. It leaves one pondering what color should be used if a barn was to be painted red; if the red was not to appear a bad color and if a flesh tint not desired. But it answers the question of how they arrived at those vivid reds in primitive portraits, those shades in flesh tints so aptly described by Mark Twain as "raw and red, apparently skinned," and by Dickens as "done by the same one who had touched up the doors in gold and red, for I recognized his style immediately." It was the artist-decorator who was following the manual notwithstanding the convention that if such color had been used in make-up in real life, the person would have been promptly punished by the stocks or a flogging.

PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN DECORATIONS. Part I

CLARENCE W. BRAZER, D.Sc.

"Pennsylvania Dutch" is an ignorant American corruption of pronouncing Pennsylvanische-Deutsche, which is German for Pennsylvania-German.[1] The Deutsche should be both properly spelled and pronounced. Very few Hollanders were early settlers in the German districts of Pennsylvania. Before William Penn came to America in 1682 he had travelled in 1671 and 1677 preaching the Quaker doctrine in the lowlands of Germany. After obtaining the grant of Pennsylvania land in 1681 he had circulars printed in German and distributed there, inviting the Germans to buy land and to settle in Pennsylvania. The first ship bringing Germans in large numbers was the *American*, which landed in Philadelphia on August 20, 1683.[1] They settled in Germantown township north of Philadelphia. The names of about 40,000 Germans who arrived in Philadelphia between 1727 and 1808 were recorded in *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*. Between 1727 and 1775 some 324 ships arrived with approximately 65,000 German passengers. The captains of the ships, in their carelessly prepared lists of passengers, generally described them as Palatines. When naturalized in Pennsylvania, many Germans translated their names into English, as *Zimmerman* to *Carpenter*. Their speech was that of the homeland at the time of emigration from the upper Rhine and the Neckar, as found in southwestern Germany, Rhenish Bavaria, Boden, Alsace, Wurtemberg, German Switzerland, and Darmstadt,[2] Silesia, and Moravia. In the districts of Pennsylvania settled by these pioneers, German was the common language. A state law of 1840 required teaching English in the public schools, and only in 1911 was English made compulsory as the common language in public schools.

The Settlements

These German pioneers settled in the southeastern section of Pennsylvania between the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers. Originally, William Penn in 1682 set out only the three counties of Chester, Philadelphia, and Bucks. Except in Germantown, laid out in 1684, the early English-speaking settlers dominated these three counties along the Delaware River, including the later separated counties of Delaware and Montgomery. Some pioneers from Germantown early emigrated to Ephrata and surrounding townships in Lancaster County, which was separated from Chester County in 1729. Montgomery County was largely settled by the English and Welsh and was not separated from Philadelphia until 1784.

Berks County was formed from parts of Philadelphia, Chester, and Lancaster Counties in 1752, and in 1772 a portion was set off to Northumberland County and another portion in 1811 to Schuylkill County. Dauphin County was separated from Lancaster County in 1785 and Lebanon County was separated from it in 1813. Two furnished rooms from the miller's house, built in 1758 at Millbach in Lebanon County, now in the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, give a clear idea of the interior of their homes, except that the heavy uncolored walnut woodwork was the background contrast for the many pieces of decorated furniture and crockery.

[1] *Pennsylvania German Illuminated Manuscripts*, by Henry S. Borneman, published by the Pennsylvania German Society, page 1.
[2] *Pennsylvania Dutch*, by S. S. Haldeman.

busy clearing the land and erecting homes and barns. It is in the districts occupied by German Reformed and Lutherans, especially in the territory between Allentown, Reading, and Lancaster, extending up to Lebanon, that we find the most prolific decoration.

Some of the German Reformed from the Palatinate also located in the upper part of Montgomery County. These people first, about 1740 to 1748, settled mostly in Lancaster and Berks Counties, and in what is now Lebanon County about 1751. Jonestown in the latter county was first settled by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians but they moved west and German Lutherans superseded them.

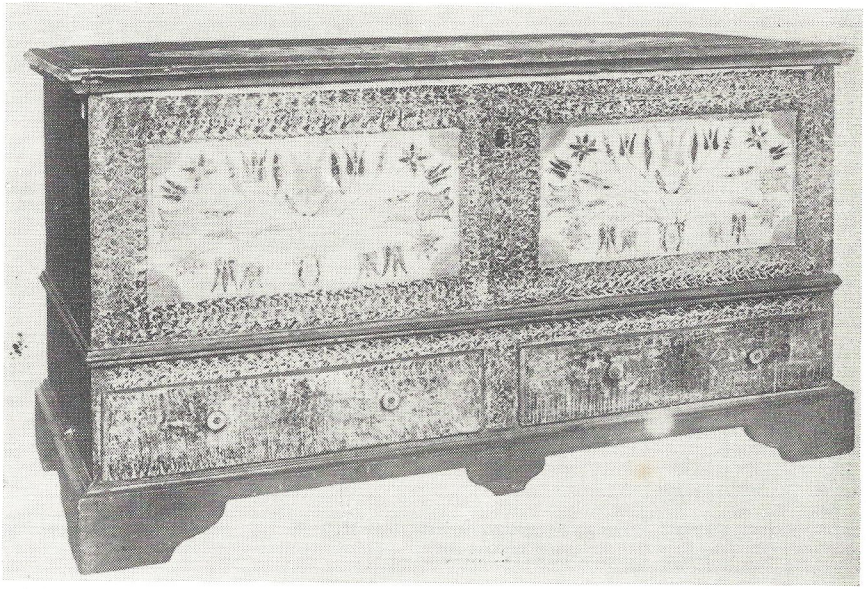
The Schwenkfelders also were natural decorators, largely on yellow backgrounds as may be seen in their museum at Pennsburg. They came from Nether Silesia and settled in corners of Montgomery, Bucks, and Berks Counties about 1732 (and later), soon after Thomas Penn bought the land from the Indians and opened it for settlement. Some Schwenkfelders also settled in what is now Lehigh County.

A few German Jews, also left some decorations, when they settled in Schaefertown in Lebanon County as early as 1732. It is in these territories that we also find the most elaborately decorated barns, in some districts mostly yellow and in other districts red, but both with the witch scaring "hex," or six-pointed star in a circle, in many forms and colors of yellow, blue, black, and white. I do not recall any green being used.[3]

We do not expect to find much decoration where the musical Moravians settled, after 1740, mostly about Bethlehem and Emmaus where they left beautiful wrought-iron hardware. Many of these Germans were plain people like the Quakers, and in their meetings also divided the male and female sexes. The Dunkers, plain-clothed and bonneted, First Day German Baptists, came to Germantown as early as 1719 from the Duchy of Cleves in Prussia, and to Muelbach in Lancaster County, from Schwardzenam in Germany, between 1718 and 1734. Even the Seventh Day Baptists at Ephrata Klosters used little color on their marvelously decorated black and white Fractur-Schrifften.

The plain-clothed Mennonites, also German Baptists, settled in Lancaster County as early as 1698 but mostly from 1717 to 1734.[4] The long-hair Amish, an even plainer sect of the Moravians, followed in 1742. They still wear plain clothes, hats, and bonnets of the same style as worn by the early emigrants from Germany more than 200 years ago, and abhor all modern innovations. Their red-brick houses are, however, sometimes painted with blue shutters on bright red window frames with dark green window shades, always pulled down to prevent sun fading. No pictures are on their walls. An Amish house may be told by its blue gate, which once indicated a marriageable daughter. Blue is their favorite color for walls and undergarments.[5]

[3] Hazard's Register, by John F. Watson and George W. Smith, quoted in *Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania*, by Sherman Day, 1843.
[4] *Hazard's Register*, by John F. Watson and George W. Smith, quoted in *Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania*, by Sherman Day, 1843.
[5] *The Amish of Lancaster County*, by Berenice Steinfeldt, 1940.



MOTTLED-GREEN LEHIGH COUNTY TYPE CHEST
Retouched by Esther Brazer. Formerly in Clarence W. Brazer collection.

ing colors greatly appealed to decorators and we find them painted on furniture and tinware in great profusion.

Religious symbolism frequently adopts flowers and other objects in its art. A religious student of Pennsylvania German decoration saw only lilies when he looked at tulip decorations. The black on white fractur schriften of the Ephrata Klosters did portray lilies. But lilies are generally white and thus did not fulfill the flair for gaudy deutsche colorful decoration that was available in tulips and pomegranates, the symbol of fertility and prosperity. Unicorns, the mythological protectors of virgins, were appropriately used on dower chests. People in antique costume, and mounted on horses and waving swords were also depicted after the Revolutionary War. Religions and superstition are evident in many decorative motives, such as the six pointed star (hex), hearts, love-birds, parrots, peacocks, the sun, moon, stars, roses, carnations, fuscia, and bunches of fruit. All this decoration was free hand and never stenciled. On chests, the geometric forms, and sometimes even the flowers, were drawn with compasses that scored the wood and the design was thus clearly visible to decorate after the ground color of paint was applied.

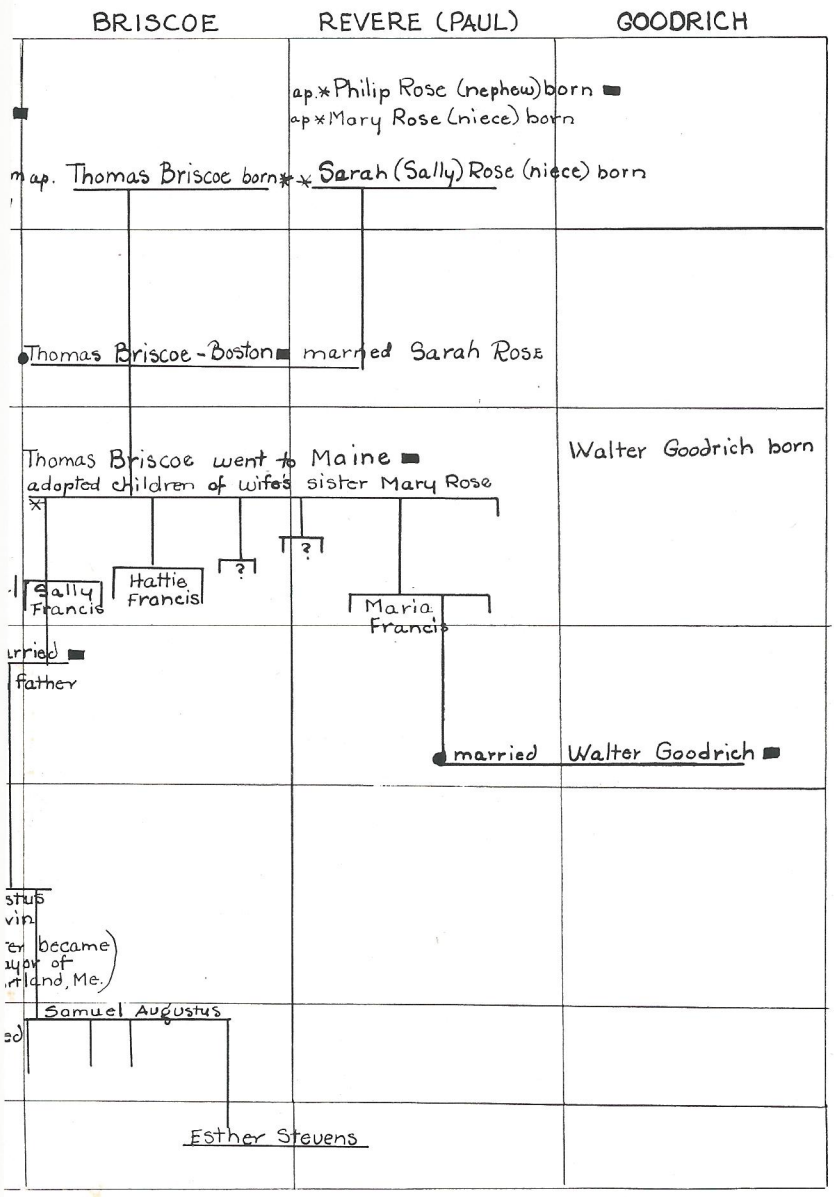
Some chests were decorated by the teachers of fractur decoration, as shown by a chest from my collection with the name of Maria Stohlern [6] dated 1788, on which the lines are thin as drawn with a pen. The taufscheine decorations were sometimes adapted to chest decorations. In the Jacob

[6] The final "n" or "en" added at the end of a girl's maiden name indicates the German feminine gender.

PLAINS TINSMITHS IN MAINE

RTICLES IN "ANTIQUES"

HALL



and Son, Guest, Chopping and Bill (and I wish someone would find out why they called themselves that) succeeded Clay in 1802, and Jennens and Bettridge in turn succeeded them in 1816. Jennens and Bettridge probably did more to bring the paper-ware trade to a high artistic standard than any other firm, and remained in business for more than 50 years. Many decorators who were trained at Jennens and Bettridge branched off to other places or by themselves and became famous in their own right. Among them were John Alsager, George Neville, James McCallum, and Edward Hodson. The Waltons of Wolverhampton is another famous firm in papier-mâché, and there are many more mentioned.

Between 1830 and 1850, the height of perfection in decorating papier-mâché was achieved—which seems a little strange to us, because of the decline of good taste in our own country at that time. The flowers and birds were painted in jewel-like tones in the finest manner imaginable, and the fineness of the gold-leaf borders defies any description. You will find this book good reading and very informative, and you can probably get it at your public library. Published by The Courier Press, London in 1925.

HANDBOOK OF EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION, by *Edith Cramer*. This is a very neatly compiled book and most of the designs for copying are good. There are chapters on restoring old tin, as well as simple directions for different types of decorating, such as stenciling, gold leaf, freehand bronze, and the like. The author is perhaps a little ambitious when it comes to Lace Edge and Chippendale, and undoubtedly eyebrows will be raised at other methods of decorating. But it wouldn't do anyone any harm to try them. Published 1951 by Charles & Branford Co., $3.00.

HOW TO PAINT TRAYS, by *Roberta Ray Blanchard*. The designs in this book are disappointing and are of the most elementary kind. Many of the photographs bearing the caption "Courtesy of Preservation of New England Antiquities," "Courtesy of Metropolitan Museum," are misleading, for they are copies rather than the originals themselves which the captions seem to indicate. However, the book may inspire those persons who think they can't do anything with their hands, because the flavor of the book is quite optimistic. There are working drawings along with the photograph of the finished article, and directions for base coats, decorating, and finish. Published 1949 by Charles T. Branford Co., $3.00.

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH AMERICAN FOLK ART, by *Henry Kauffman*. A small book, two third photographs, and a short text on the history of Pennsylvania Dutch people and their decorative arts. Included is the architecture of the early times; furniture and its construction; pottery; glass; metalwork; textiles; needlework; certificates and manuscripts. The same symbols were used on all of these things. Among the most familiar of these symbols is the tulip, usually painted in threes; pairs of birds; unicorns; hearts; bridal couples; Norsemen; angels; and various fruit and flower arrangements. There are two pages of excellent photographs of dower chests,

UNUSUAL ORIGINAL

The 18th century plate warmer owned by Nina Fletcher Little is beautifully decorated with lace-edge painting.

The bird with a blue head and neck, white breast and tail, and black wing is perched on a rose painted on the door. On the right of the bird is a spray of flowers and buds, and on the left are two rose buds and dark green leaves with white veins. The small clusters of flowers are white. The top is decorated with a peach, a plum, two strawberries, and sprays of small blue and white flowers. The scatter sprays in the four corners have morning-glory buds, red and white flowers, and green leaves with white brush strokes. The gold-leaf work is very fine.

REPORT OF BUSINESS MEETING

On Saturday morning, April 28th, the fifth annual business meeting was held at the McCarter Theatre. Following the reading of reports, Mrs. Muller introduced the three past presidents—Mrs. S. Burton Heath, Mrs. John McAuliffe, and Mrs. Arthur Chivers. They gave brief accounts of the organization and growth of the Guild.

The report of the nominating committee, Mrs. Mark Weiss, Ch., was read and the following directors were unanimously elected to serve for a three-year term: Mrs. Arthur Chivers, Mrs. Sherwood Martin, Mrs. Gordon Scott, and Mr. Walter Wright.

Mrs. Muller then introduced Mr. Lewis Clark, attorney representing us in our application for a permanent charter for the Historical Society of Early American Decoration. He explained the advantages of obtaining such a charter and the method of procedure, stressing the fact that all business should be consolidated and carried on under the one name of the Society.

After answering questions, he stated that a Board of Trustees for the Historical Society should be chosen. A motion was made and carried that the directors of the Esther Stevens Brazer Guild be elected as Trustees of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration. A motion was then made and carried to empower the Trustees to take necessary measures to obtain a permanent charter.

Mrs. Muller reported that the dues vote was favorable to raising the dues to $5. Since new by-laws must be set up, it was decided to take no further action.

Mrs. Andres Underhill, Meetings Chairman, stated that the fall meeting would be held in Ithaca, N. Y., and the sixth annual meeting at Bryn Mawr, Pa., in the spring of 1952.

After votes of thanks to Mrs. Little, General Chairman of the meeting, and to Mrs. Drury, Exhibition Chairman, the meeting was adjourned.

E. H.

TRUSTEES ELECTED

The Board of Trustees met and elected the following officers:
President: Mrs. S. Burton Heath, Box 3, Noroton, Conn.
1st Vice-Pres.: Mrs. Gordon Scott, Elmdale Farms, Uxbridge, Mass.
2nd. Vice-Pres.: Mrs. Henry Hughes, 1526 Third Ave., Watervliet, N. Y.
Recording Sec'y.: Mrs. Andrew Underhill, Bellport, Long Island
Corresp. Sec'y.: Mrs. Edgar Knapp, 21 Warwick Road, Brookline, Mass.
Treasurer: Mrs. Charles Safford, 187 Summer Street, Springfield, Vt.

Mrs. Max Muller presented her resignation from the board, which was very reluctantly accepted. Mrs. Sara Fuller, Bryn Mawr, Pa., was elected to fill the unexpired term.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND JUDGING

The Committee met April 24, 25, and 26, 1951 at the Princeton Inn, Princeton, N. J. Tuesday was spent revising the guidance sheets, working on a sheet for Chippendale and discussing ways to improve the standards of the Guild. At the close of the afternoon the committee was asked to make individual sheets covering the discussion to be compiled and read on Thursday at the Director's meeting.

Wednesday and Thursday the work of the applicants and the members was judged and tallied.

Exhibits (42)	Members	A	B	C	D	Rejects 2
	Stencil—Tin	2	6	4	1	
	Stencil—Wood	6	6	1	1	
	Country Tin	4				
	Gold Leaf	4	1			
	Lace Edge	2	1			
	Freehand Bronze	2				
	Glass Panels	1				
Exhibits (55)	Applicants	A	B	C	D	Rejects 9
	Stencil	2	15	7	4	
	Country Tin	4	9	12	2	

(23) Applicants passed our requirements for membership
(6) Applicants did not meet our standards

Total membership of Guild 519 from 22 states
(93) Exhibitors
(216) A awards
(326) Members not exhibiting
(104) Applicants — 23 passed requirements

The Committee moved to ask for the approval of the directors to work on the following recommendations:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Stamp of approval by Guild for undecorated authentic reproductions of tin and wood.
2. Articles and Book Reviews to be sent to Mrs. Bond for the Book Shelf in the *Decorator*.
3. Delegates to be chosen and sent by Chapters to serve on Standards Committee.
4. Guidance Sheet revised to read: Points judged—requirements, suggestions.
5. "A" award winners' names to be shown with exhibits.
6. Only "A" award winners who have completed all six classes toward Master Craftsman to submit Chippendales in Fall 1951, and Spring 1952.
7. New Exhibition card for Originals.
8. Bulletin Board for approval and disapproval of trends, ads and clippings.

EXHIBITION AT PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Many fine originals from the Esther Stevens Brazer Collection of Early American Designs were shown at the Princeton Inn at the time of the spring meeting of The Historical Society of Early American Decoration. A first showing of a few of Mrs. Brazer's large collection of Chippendale patterns, owned and preserved by the Historical Society, was a feature of the exhibition.

More than 100 rare and interesting originals were brought by the Society's members from all parts of the United States. Florence Wright's large collection from Ithaca, New York, and that of Viola Burrows, from Noroton, Connecticut, were generously represented. Rare antique stencils were shown by Adele Ells, of Dover, New Hampshire. Twenty-five lap desks shown by Dr. Ralph Little, of Princeton, New Jersey, added greatly to the exhibition.

The Standards and Judging Committees were busy a week before the meeting to grade reproductions of antique chairs, chests, trays, deed boxes, and the like sent in by 44 members and 65 applicants. Twenty-seven "A" awards were granted under the judging system which demands that all work shall be honestly and well executed after the manner of the early craftsman.

The resulting large and beautiful exhibition of members' work drew a host of interested friends, craftsmen, and collectors in the Princeton area.

MARGARET WATTS
DOROTHY MEEHAN
BERNICE DRURY, *Chairman*
Exhibition Committee

Handling Charge

The Exhibition Committee found a small room filled with express packages waiting at the Inn to be moved to the Exhibition Hall. Many of these were re-wrapped later and returned to the exhibitor (collect), as stated in the instructions by the Standards Committee.

The handling charge of $1.00 for each article judged (not including originals) is made in accordance with the usual practice of similar exhibitions and art museums to defray the expense of moving and of other bills incurred by the Exhibition and Judging Committees.

"A" AWARDS IN FREEHAND BRONZE, GLASS, AND STENCILED CHAIRS
Princeton, New Jersey

Margaret Watts
Mrs. Gilbert H. Wiley

Ruth Brown

Laura Nichols
Martha Muller

EXHIBITION MATERIAL

THE Committee on Standards is anxious to acquaint craftsmen with typical techniques found on traditional pieces. The originals that have been exhibited at meetings have been of great benefit to the Society. Those which covered all the points required for judging at the last two exhibitions have been starred. Originals that did not cover all the requirements were of equal value to the student of Early American Decoration. Many lovely old pieces are being decorated and restored, and cannot be classified for the judging program as they do not cover the requirements for craftsman awards. These pieces of exhibition quality would add much to the educational aspect of our exhibitions.

A member may exhibit only two pieces of her work for either exhibition or judging. Exhibition cards will be sent to members for reproductions, restorations, and originals. Members who wish to submit work for a craftsman award will receive the special cards and guidance sheets upon request.

The Guidance Sheets give the requirements on the points considered for judging exhibits submitted for craftsman awards. Two pieces in stenciling, one on tin and one on wood, are required for a craftsman award in stenciling; two pieces in country painting are required for a craftsman award in Country Tin; one piece only is required for craftsman awards in Gold Leaf, Lace Edge, and Freehand Bronze. All the techniques of the class must be executed on the piece for a craftsman award. Any piece submitted for judging that does not fulfil the requirements will be removed by the Committee before the judging takes place. If such a piece is discovered by a judge during the judging period, it will be removed and checked out by the Committee.

The following volumes in The *Decorator* contain suggestions and remarks which will help the exhibitor understand the requirements and the basis for judging.

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VIOLET MILNES SCOTT

OCTOBER 13–14, 1950—Fleming Museum, Burlington, Vermont.
Exhibition of Originals covering requirements starred. Gallery talks. Guidance Sheets displayed. Validity of judging proved. Lecture on Teaching and Standards.

JANUARY 18–19, 1951—Roger Smith Hotel, Stamford, Connecticut.
Program of Committee for next five years presented to Directors:

A. To present the members with information helpful in research on techniques of Early Decoration.

B. To create an interest in history and background of decoration.

C. To study originals and present any new theories or techniques.

D. To report in the *Decorator* on literature pertaining to Early Decoration and review current publications.

E. To visit local exhibitions and arts and crafts groups. Report on trends of decoration and teaching methods.

F. To assist in the program for teacher-training in every possible way.

G. To contact applicants and help them understand the aims, standards, obligations, and privileges of the Guild.

H. To continue to acquaint the public with authentic techniques and designs through our exhibitions and judging.

Changes made in:

1. Freehand Bronze	Color and wide bronze band no longer required. Word *band* changed to *border* in describing gold leaf.
2. Glass Panels	Both panels to have background or sky as described for gold-leaf bordered panels.

APRIL 27–28, 1951—Princeton Inn, Princeton, New Jersey.
Exhibition of Lace Edge originals and Gold Leaf starred. Seven chapters represented on Standards Committee seal of approval for reproductions of undecorated tin and wood. Guidance Sheets revised—chippendale requirements discussed.

There were eighteen members at Princeton, N. J. who attended the first Guild Meeting at Darien, Conn.

Seven, of the original nine who met with Mrs. Brazer at Mrs. Heath's home in Darien, Conn., in 1946 to discuss forming a society to carry on the work of Esther Stevens Brazer, were present at Princeton. Namely:

Viola Burrows—Conn.
Helen Chivers—N. H.
Shirley Devoe—Conn.
Emily Heath—Conn.
Louise McAuliffe—Mass.
Martha Muller—N. Y.
Violet Scott—Mass.

Absent

Ruth Leldon—Conn.
Virginia Wheelock—Mass.

For cleaning the hands and smudges on chairs, she suggested a waterless hand cleaner, such as "DL" and "Quickee."

Silicon carbide sanding paper (500-A wet-or-dry) is good for rubbing the varnish between coats. To use this:

"Dip a small piece in soapy water and rub a small area at a time until all is smooth. Then remove the soap by rubbing with clear water. Then wipe the surface dry with a cloth.

"As soon as the last coat of varnish is thoroughly hard (about one or two weeks), rub the surface to a satin finish with pumice and oil. Use a light-weight mineral oil, crude oil, or No. 10 motor oil. After at least one week, make the final rubbing with rotten stone and oil to give the special glow to the finish that is so highly prized."

Miss Wright stressed the importance of selecting patterns appropriate in age and character to the chair. She called attention to the balance of color found in old patterns that used colored bronzes. Each color was used in some way throughout the pattern.

To those who are just learning the fine techniques in shading and striping, as well as the authentic placing of patterns, she suggested the study of originals or photographs of originals. The secret of good blending of one color with another, is to leave halftones where blendings are wanted so the second color may be absorbed by the varnished surface. With this skillful overlapping, there is no hard edge where one color begins and the other stops.

THE PORTABLE WRITING DESK

Dr. Ralph Little

During the latter half of the seventeenth century and the whole of the eighteenth, a period often referred to as the Golden Age of letter writing and diary keeping, penmanship reached a perfection never before nor since surpassed. Letters in longhand, written on handmade paper with quill pens, travelled back and forth across the continent, the British Isles, and to and from the American colonies in ever increasing number. To accommodate this great volume of writing, it was necessary that new pieces of furniture come into existence or that old ones be adapted for the purpose.

Much of the writing was not done upon desks at all but upon chests in miniature, with flat or slanting lids. The fronts and sides of some were handsomely carved, decorated, or uniquely inlaid, while others were plain. They generally became known as Bible boxes because of the fact that the space beneath the lids was often used for storing the family Bible as well as for writing equipment.

As the great urge for writing continued during the eighteenth century, more elaborate equipment was required. The larger desks were, of course, highly to be desired but were expensive and not so abundant that more than one often were found in the same home. Hence portable desks of various contrasting woods, dimensions, and designs made their appearance; the small decorated pieces (painted and those in papier-mâché with Mother-of-pearl inlay) were made largely to attract a lady's fancy while the large, more sturdy desks were produced for the gentlemen.

Works of the late Esther Stevens Brazer

* * * *

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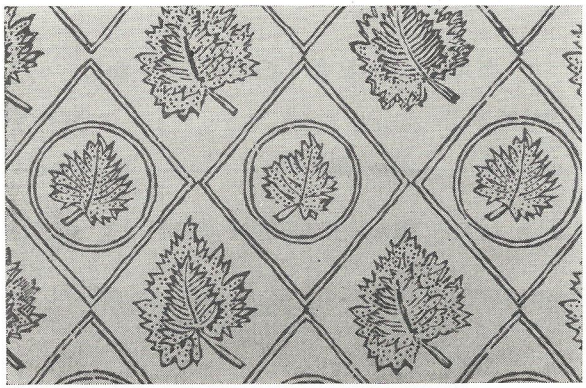

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