

THE DECORATOR

VOLUME VI, NO. 2

Bryn Mawr - Spring 1952 Meeting

FALL, 1952



ASHBRIDGE HOUSE, BRYN MAWR, PENNSYLVANIA

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

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The Decorator

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ORIGINALS SHOWN AT BRYN MAWR, PA.

EDITORIAL

Ashbridge House, which appears on the cover of this issue, was the scene of our Spring meeting in Bryn Mawr, Penn. It was built in 1769 by William and Rees Thomas. Shortly thereafter, it was sold to Peter Pechin, one of whose four daughters married Joshua Ashbridge. There were originally 200 acres to the property and in 1860 a part of it was given to the Pennsylvania Railroad for a station which is now called "Rosemont". The house is built of field stones with walls a foot and a half thick, and with Keystones of especial interest over the windows. The double Dutch door, now used as the kitchen entrance, was originally the front door. At the time of our meeting the gardens and flowering shrubs were a sight to behold.

Bernice Drury, as usual, put on an excellent exhibition, with the assistance of her able staff. As will be noted in the picture opposite, one room was devoted entirely to Pennsylvania Folk Art. It is with regret that we cannot show this in color as it is the colors in Pennsylvania decoration that really "sing" out.

Sara Fuller and Ruth Kephart, along with their cooperating Pennsylvanians, deserve high praise and many thanks for their fine job.

The demonstrations by Martha Muller, Adele Ells, Walter Wright, and William Hilton were enjoyed by all, and those of you who could not be at the meeting, will note herein the step-by-step version of such demonstrations.

Donald Shelley, Curator of Fine Arts, Henry Ford Museum, gave a delightful talk on "Pennsylvania German Folk Art" and showed many colored slides. Rev. Kriebel of the Schwenkfelder Church closed the meeting with a very interesting talk on "Fraktur and German Illuminated Writings".

At the dinner on Friday night, the highlight of the meeting was the presentation of gardenia corsages to the first four Master Craftsmen of the Guild. It is hoped there will be many more to follow.

All in all, the Bryn Mawr meeting was a huge success and everyone went home with the feeling of "Pennsylvania Dutch" oozing out of their veins.

* * * * *

The next issue, which will cover the Sturbridge meeting, will be devoted mainly to the application of gold leaf on glass, metal, and wood. If any of you have articles that you think will be interesting reading for our members, not only for this coming issue, but all subsequent issues, please do not hesitate to send them in.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NOTES

Total membership of Guild 612 from 23 States — January 1, 1952

Total membership of Guild 625 from 23 States — May 9, 1952

33 Applications for membership effective July 1, 1952

DUES PAYABLE

Dues of \$5.00 for the fiscal year 1952-1953 became payable July 1, 1952. Make checks payable to the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. Remit to —

Mrs. Herbert C. Freeman
51 Elm Street
Springfield, Vermont

This is the final issue of "The Decorator" included in the 1951-52 dues. No further copies will be sent to persons whose dues remain unpaid.

We regret the loss by death of the following members:

<i>Mrs. Bruce Barton</i>	New York, N. Y.
<i>Mrs. Arthur Harvey</i>	Wellesley Hills, Mass.
<i>Mrs. Henry C. Heissenbuttel</i>	New York, N. Y.
<i>Mrs. Wm. DeLancy Howe</i>	Cambridge, Mass.
<i>Mrs. Joseph E. Killian</i>	Cleveland Hgts., O.
<i>Mrs. Fleda Maranville</i>	Charlestown, N. H.
<i>Mrs. J. L. Pitman</i>	Springfield, Mass.
<i>Mrs. Kenneth Raymond</i>	Mineola, L. I.
<i>Miss Genevieve Waters</i>	W. Hartford, Conn.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Only applicants and members are permitted to attend business meetings and demonstrations unless otherwise specified on the program. The public is cordially invited to view our exhibits at a nominal fee.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAIRS

By RUTH HERSHEY IRION

The three Pennsylvania chairs pictured here are a characteristic representation of the types of decorating found in the Pennsylvania Dutch country, yet each has features which mark them unusual and of interest to those who ferret out American designs to perpetuate and preserve them.



Figure 1

The crudest of the group is the arrowback (Figure 1), yet its graceful shape, good leg splay, thick, unshaped seat and primitive color scheme give it a decided charm. The background color is bright green, enlivened with yellow striping and bold brush strokes. There is also a brick red striping on the splat and the back posts. The flowing leaves of the splat design are half yellow, half red with black accents. A curving line, which does not show well in the photograph, connects the leaves and the red bell. The design is crude, yet graceful. The decorated arrows, the seldom-found bell motif, the brush work carried over the chair and the general shape of the chair itself take it out of the run-of-the mill classification.



Figure 2

The background color of the rocker (Figure 2), loosely called "Windsor type", is dark brown with a narrow yellow stripe and a wider band that can best be described as muted peach, a mellowed yellow-pink with a touch of umber to dull it. The stenciled units of the design do not overlap, but are well placed. Silver and gold bronzes were used, with transparent colors floated over them, red on the birds, yellow, green and red on the leaves, and blue and red on the fruits, with the exception of the pineapples, which are green and red. Paint accents are the usual yellow. The birds in the "ears" are the outstanding part of this chair. Though common in most phases of Pennsylvania Dutch art, the bird does not perch as frequently in furniture designs.

Bright colors are another characteristic of the Pennsylvanian's brush. But the color scheme of this half spindle (Figure 3) is muted and refined. The wide stripe of transparent greyed green ties together the soft yellow background and narrow black striping into a harmonious whole. The stenciled grapes are silver on black — the free hand bronze leaves, copper and dull gold powder over a black base, with fine accents of much skill. (This same dull gold is also used on the knobs of the spindles and in the turnings of the upper part of the chair.) The brush strokes and leaves are dark green, with the shadows under the grapes and leaves

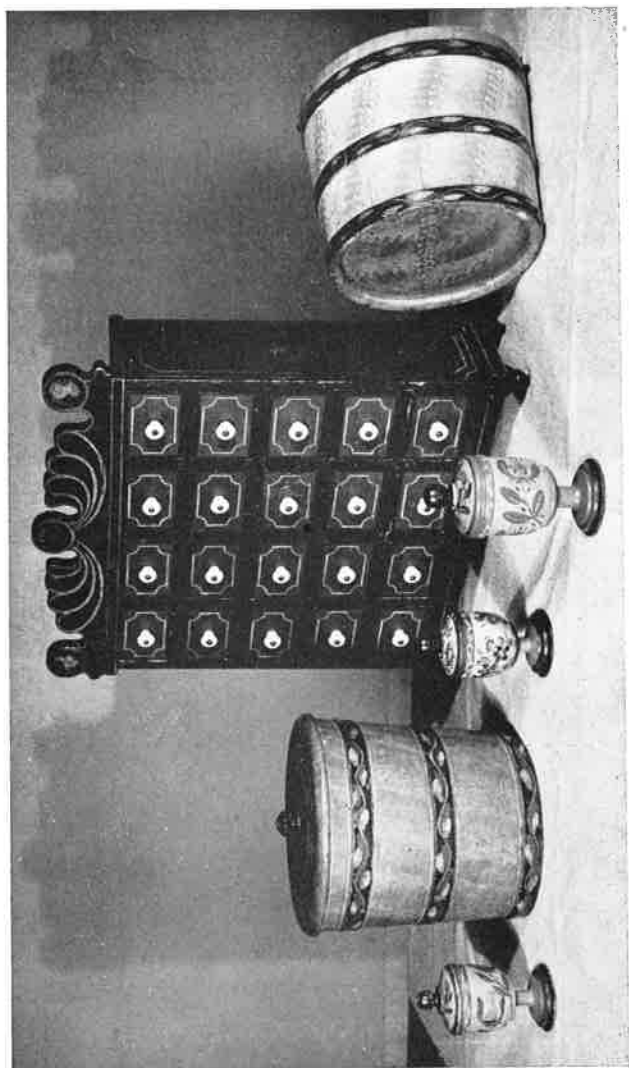
the same transparent greyed-green of the wide stripe. This is an outstanding half spindle, both in design and shape. Perhaps it might be that it was made for a finer home. The leaf formation used in this design is one often found on settees and chairs, particularly those from Lancaster County, but almost always in combination with morning glories and fruits instead of grapes.

It can be said in generalization of Pennsylvania chairs that usual background colors are dark brown, shades of green, and more occasionally variations of yellow tones. The decoration is for the most part bright and gay. The high degree of over-lapping stencil technique, such as is found on the Hitchcock chair of New England, is almost unknown here — stencil units are more detached, and, in later chairs, often quite scattered. Motifs frequently employed are fruits and flowers (such as morning glories and stylized roses) in many combinations with leaves to fill in. Freehand bronze work is found, but bows in quantity to the quicker stenciled method and bright brush work. There is, though, on the whole, especially in free hand brush designs, a good feeling of freedom, looseness and boldness, as if the designer loved the work he was creating and gave his imagination free rein. Even the cruder designs found have this charm.

Judging from these characteristics, the chairs reproduced here can lay their claim to both the common and the distinctive.



Figure 3



Decorated Objects by Joseph Lehn

JOSEPH LEHN, DRIVEN TO DESIGN

By EARL L. POOLE

Reprinted through the courtesy of The American German Review
and The Reading Public Museum and Art Gallery.

Of the many and varied types of "antiques" that have become eagerly sought after by collectors during the present interest in Pennsylvania Dutch folk art, one of the most distinctive and individual is the variety of decorated turned objects and cabinetware produced by Joseph Lehn at Clay, Lancaster county, in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Lehn's work apparently had no direct antecedents, nor has it had any imitators of consequence. It was evidently done in the traditional spirit of folk art, simply through a desire to make common utilitarian objects attractive or colorful.

As with many of the minor decorators and artisans who are responsible for such products, very little definite information appears to have been published on Lehn and his work. As a consequence, most collectors and museum people have been under the impression that these objects are much older than they actually are. One of our major museums has labeled its Lehnware as having been produced about 1800! For this reason I have attempted to bring together the ascertainable facts of Lehn's career as a cabinetmaker and decorator, as gathered from some of his direct descendants. Incidentally, I should acknowledge in this connection the help that has been given by Mr. Joseph Lehn Kreider of Reading, Mrs. Mary Graybill Landis and Miss Mary Louise Rick, who personally gathered much of the following information.

Joseph (Long) Lehn was born near Lehn's Church, in Manheim Township, Lancaster county, on February 6, 1798. Some interesting and relevant facts concerning his early life have been furnished by a granddaughter, Mary Graybill Landis, who listened to many of his reminiscences of earlier years. Apparently he developed a love for such music as was available at the time, mostly hymns, and early learned to play the zither. "He often talked of their sabbath morning rites, when as boys, he and his brothers Cornelius and Henry, with zither, violin and accordion, climbed to a platform they had constructed between two pine trees to play hymns and other music appropriate to the day."

When in his teens he was converted and joined the Long United Brethren Church at Landis Valley. Later he and his wife, who was a Mennonite, shared their devotions between the Hammer Creek Mennonite Church, where services were held every four weeks, and the United Brethren Church at Paradise (now Hopeland), walking the three miles to the place. In later years, after he was unable to attend church, he held services in his home with family worship both morning and evening.

An early incident of his boyhood gave him a lasting aversion to the



Saffron Cup decorated by Joseph Lehn

use of intoxicants. It appears that his father was driving a load of wheat to a mill near Lancaster, when a drunken man approached, causing the horses to become unmanageable. In the ensuing accident the father was so badly hurt that he never recovered from his injuries.

As may be expected, Lehn became a farmer, albeit an unsuccessful one according to local standards, and followed that vocation until 1860, when he retired and took up the manufacture of the decorated wood-ware that has come down to us. His woodworking was originally indulged in as a hobby, the products being intended as birthday and wedding gifts, until he found that people wanted to buy his wares. He worked on a hand-made foot lathe with tools of his own manufacture. The power was often provided by his own family and boys of the neighborhood, according to local reports. His workshop was a building originally designed for the manufacture of barrels, situated on a 22-acre tract near Hammer Creek, part of a farm that had been inherited by his wife. She was Elizabeth Erb, his stepsister. This tract, in addition to the workshop, was the site of the house built by Lehn, which he and his family, consisting of two sons and a daughter, occupied for their remaining years.

Physically Lehn was a small man, who frequently appeared in a high silk hat. Like most of his neighbors, he was very religious and noted for his knowledge of the Bible. It is said he was addicted to preaching sermons in his barn.

After his retirement from farming Lehn occupied his entire time at his work. Among the products of his labors were such articles as the following:

Buckets	Cups and Saucers	Water Kegs
Seed (or spice) Chests	Sewing Boxes	Sugar Stands
Egg Cups	Saffron Boxes	Salt Cellars
Tubs	Toys	Penny Banks

We are told that his water buckets and kegs were made of mulberry wood, since he had found that mulberry wood does not absorb water, but that most of the smaller pieces were turned out of carefully dried sassafras. Chests were usually made of white pine. The most remarkable feature of his work is that very few of these small turned objects have cracked or deteriorated in any way, and many of the pieces that have come to us are as fresh in color and as well preserved as though they had been made only yesterday. This is probably due, in part, to the fact that Lehn is said to have ground and mixed his own colors; but the peculiar wax-like texture of much of his work suggests a technique that was peculiar to Lehn, and indicates that he probably used some sort of filler before applying the colors.

His selection of motifs was rather limited, with the strawberry a strong favorite and a peculiar pomegranate-like object a close second. An undulating border that suggests the pussy-willow was also used extensively, as well as several others of uncertain origin. A characteristic decorative feature that appears on practically all of his work is a yellow stripe about one sixteenth of an inch in width that was used to simulate

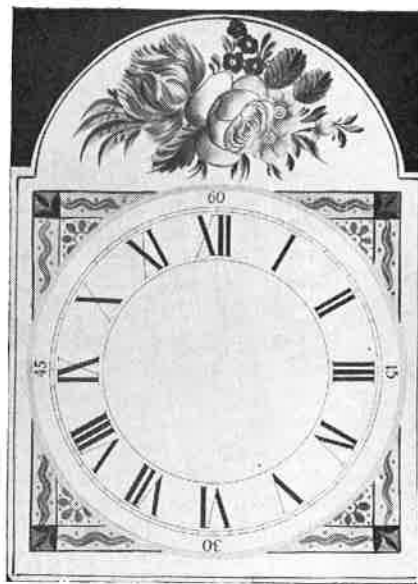
paneling or emphasize the structural function of the decoration. Buckets and similar forms were frequently grained in a reddish ochre over a pale yellow or reddish ground. This treatment was in many cases carried to the bottom of the vessel.

Some of Lehn's stencils are still in the possession of his descendants. However, many of his pieces were decorated by other hands. Mrs. Harvey Rock related that some of the Lehn work was done by a chair decorator in Ephrata named William Heilich, and later by one John Sechrist. Certainly some of the chests and sewing boxes are decorated in an altogether different style of decoration than the ones usually attributed to Lehn. They are done with a facility and freedom of brushwork that is entirely different from Lehn's usual manner, and display a greater variety of floral forms. Decalcomanias, both of floral sprays and female portraits, were also used. It appears quite possible that Lehn himself applied the ground colors to some of these pieces and then had the chair decorators apply the decorations.

Most of the saffron boxes and urn-shaped cups were colored according to a set formula, the edge of the foot (base) in dark blue, followed by a green stripe, a red stem, another green stripe, pink bowl, and finally a bright red border, the lid with a dark blue knob. Lehn is also said to have painted chairs, although he did not make them.

In 1862 Lehn's wife, who was six years his senior, died. He carried on his work until 1886, when he became blind for a period. Although he may have partially regained his sight, he produced little if any work after that time. One of his descendants tells us that he turned out a few objects a short time prior to his death "just to demonstrate that his hands had not lost their old skill." He died September 16, 1892, at the ripe age of ninety-four years and was buried in the Hammer Creek Meeting House Cemetery, near Lititz, Pennsylvania.





THE LITITZ CLOCK FACE

WILLIAM G. HILTON

For the painting demonstration at the Spring meeting of the Brazer Guild at Bryn Mawr, I chose a grandfather's clock face, which I referred to as the Lititz Clock Face. My choice of this design, I reasoned, would fit nicely into the theme of the Spring meeting, the emphasis of which was so-called, "Pennsylvania Dutch".

The original clock and face had just recently come to light in the heart of the Pennsylvania Dutch country. It was lately uncovered in an old barn where it has reposed for over eighty years and was found to be mostly intact, with only a few parts scattered. These were searched for and found with the exception of the top finial which to date has not been recovered, to my latest knowledge. With the exception of hands, bell, weights, and hinges, the clock was made of wood, and is today in working order and a handsome piece in its refinished beautifully colored pine case, with authenticated ownership in one family back to 1790. Truly a more authentic piece of local origin could not have come to light more timely for our meeting.

The original face was painted on a piece of poplar wood of about $\frac{3}{8}$ " thickness, the ground color was white. For the demonstration, I used

a piece of tempered masonite with a sprayed white lacquer surface. For a face to be put to actual use, unquestionably a piece of good quality $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood would be better suited and should be grounded out and finish coated to a smooth off-white and a coat of Copal varnish applied for protection. The Copal varnish, as supplied in art stores for oil paintings, is desirable in this instance as it is of thin consistency, flows well and affords sufficient protection with little or no discoloration.

The floral decoration in the arch or semicircular top was done as follows: the fine line of the rose was done with a #2 scroller and Alizarin Crimson with Gold Size Japan as the medium, the shading of the petals by finger stippling a stroke of Crimson, where called for. The tulip has a ground of very thin Medium Chrome Yellow in Gold Size with the outer tips in thin Alizarin Crimson. The small blue flowers are about medium strength Prussian Blue with the above yellow as centers. The larger yellow flower and bud are a slightly stronger tone of the same yellow. The leaves, lower left center and top right are made of a mixture of Yellow Lake and Prussian Blue with a little Raw Umber, to a dull apple green shade. The pointed leaves at the left and the other smaller leaves and tear-drops are a shade more blue, nearly Viridian, and are best done with a #5 quill. When these tints are set, the details of the tulip are stroked on with a #3 quill in Crimson and Prussian Blue.

The blue flowers are divided into petals and the edge touched and the yellow centers dotted and shaded in Crimson with the #2 scroller, the same being used to develop the yellow flowers and the bud.

The leaves are next developed with a darker green, ribs and veins as shown.

You are now ready for the numerals and the dial, for which a compass with the ruling pen fitted is used with India Ink, inscribing the fine line circles, then lay on the Roman numerals and minute lines with a straight edge and ruling pen, filling in the wide part of the numerals with the ruling pen held sideways.

The smaller Arabic numbers were done with a steel Spencerian pen point and India Ink. This seems to give the desired shaded line so characteristic to these numerals.

The border around the dial was started by following a very faint pencil line drawn with the compass around the dial to obtain the $\frac{3}{16}$ " wide pink circle, which was painted with a #3 quill with Crimson and Gold Size. The approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide bands at the corners are likewise of the same pink, care being taken to let the small squares at each corner unpainted, for they are done in Viridian Green. The enclosed triangles thus formed are next filled in with Gamboge or Yellow Lake.

By now the pink circle, having set a bit, can be scratched with the pointed end handle of the scroller, with a wavy line.

Now take a #3 quill and with a darker Crimson, lay on the pink corner bands, those wavy lines, the rosettes and dots on the yellow

triangles. When the darker pink wavy lines are set, they too are scratched in the center of their length. Black strokes are next on the green corners.

For the striping, a mixture of Prussian Blue and Black was used with a sword or dagger striper.

When decorating is complete and dry, a protective coat of good clear varnish should be applied.



FRESCO WALLS

A splendid demonstration was given by Adele Ells on the Painting of a Landscape Fresco. This demonstration was similar to the one Mrs. Ells gave at the meeting held in Ithaca, N.Y., in the Fall of 1951. For information concerning such demonstration, please refer to Volume 6, Number 1, page 23.

Pictures of Bryn Mawr and previous exhibitions, including "A" awards, are available by writing:

Mrs. C. H. Drury
9 Harvard Street
Springfield, Vermont

Glossy 8 x 10 prints for \$1.00 each

Glossy 5 x 7 prints for .75 each

Check, with 10¢ to cover postage, should accompany each order.



"A" AWARDS IN CHIPPENDALE PAINTING AT BRYN MAWR, PA.

Jessica Bond

Emily Underhill

Gina Martin

A BRIEF HISTORY AND INTERPRETATION OF PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN ILLUMINATED WRITINGS ("FRACTUR-SCHRIFTEN")

REV. LESTER K. KRIEBEL

The German word "Fraktur" refers to a certain type of design of Gothic letters, the verb form "fractura" meaning to write or make Gothic letters or figures. This form of writing and the accompanying illumination applies, then, to ornaments and other details adapted from the Gothic style and applied to manuscript pages. Thus, our subject, Pennsylvania German Fraktur, represents nothing less than the preservation in the modern age, and the further development of the ancient and medieval art of illuminated writing.

The prevalent use of, and interest in, this art throughout Europe extended during the "Middle Ages" and the Renaissance. Monasteries were the repositories of this beautiful and interesting work fostered and perpetuated by the monks. Bibles, Devotional books and kindred literature were favorite subjects for marginal and interlinear decoration and embellishments.

The illuminated writing or Fraktur in this country was characteristically Pennsylvania German. Its best examples came from the period when there had been little or no assimilation of the environment in America on the part of the pioneers. The beauty was generally limited to objects of utility. Useful things of the household were decorated. These included such objects as chests, barns, butter-molds, waffle-irons, baptismal and marriage certificates, house-blessings, hymn-books, etc.

The designs employed for decorative purposes in the Pennsylvania German Fraktur work were all symbolic types for the purpose of teaching some beautiful religious truth or lesson. Naturally, the artist would use the symbols with which he and his readers were best acquainted. The literature most familiar to them was the Bible. Moreover, its symbols afforded an excellent opportunity to teach fundamental truths as well as to beautify the home. So the artist used the symbols found in the Holy Scripture, and particularly those in the Song of Solomon and in the New Testament. The most common and outstanding of the symbols employed are: The lily, rose, pearl of great price, corner stone (which the builders rejected; diamond), Virgin Sophia (wisdom), stem of Jesse's rod, turtle-doves, pomegranates, tulip, circle, stars, peacocks, formal geometric designs, etc.

As a rule, the artist used little or no perspective in his designs and paintings. At once, this gave the impression of a primitive and ancient, but not crude, work. Moreover, he was dominated by a geometrical balance which was quite in harmony with good design. Thus, he acquired a directness and simplicity, not unlike the early masters, which is peculiar to all primitively executed arts.

The Pennsylvania German decorators employed an effective use of shadow behind the designs. This was accomplished by two methods. One method was by gradation of color with pressure on the brush. The other was by effective use of "cut-outs" frequently pasted on backgrounds of varying shades. This usage of shadow behind the designs was employed extensively by European decorators. The shadow scheme is lacking entirely in all Oriental influences.

The artists were conscious of the effective use of the balancing of opposites. The effect was striking and pleasing. Hence, light and shadow, as well as color, were employed to balance each other. This fact becomes very obvious in the construction of formal geometric designs, decorative borders, etc., as well as in the symbols and religious characters themselves. The rule of balancing of opposites was well studied in the use of color, design and light.

The decorators also had a thorough knowledge of the use of the primary colors, red, yellow, and blue, which they employed to great advantage. They never used the solid red and black colors which clash. Invariably they toned these colors into a beautiful shade of old rose, a mellow gold, and a dark blue. They also employed a fine use of the complimentary colors of red and green.

In composition and construction of the decorative elements, the artist had a unique way of avoiding monotony. This applies both to color and design. Large open spaces on the manuscript were avoided. Where small designs were employed to fill these spaces a large variety was introduced.

A favorite design was the heart, inside of which some favorite stanza of a hymn was inserted in decorative design. Frequently, on a rectangular page one such heart appeared in each of the four corners. A favorite Bible verse or several stanzas of a hymn would then occupy the center of the page with elaborate initial decoration and interlinear embellishments. From the heart design often was constructed a tree, vine or fruit, teaching the immortal lesson that out of the heart comes the issue of life.

The basic structure of many designs was a pot of earth, either plain or with elaborate decoration, suggesting the baser elements of nature and man. It represents an origin that was perishable. The design was then built up arising to a finer spiritual form, including the heart design in varying motifs and culminating at the top in a crown of righteousness, symbolized by the circle of perfection, and some form suggesting the Trinity, involving a combination of three objects or figures.

The use of stars provides an interesting subject for study. The five-pointed star stood for personality. The six-pointed star symbolized the star of David, and was used in connection with Old Testament prophecy concerning the coming and mission of the Christ. The seven-pointed star represents the soul. The eight-pointed star still presents an enigma, the meaning of which remains unknown. The nine-pointed star is the symbol of the spirit of perfection. Considerable originality, as well as creative artistic beauty and ability, was employed in weaving these various

star designs into the entire picture which was to teach its own unique lesson.

Continuing the interpretation of symbols employed, one must observe that the turtle-dove was a symbol of love and beauty. The peacock, a favorite subject, represented royalty and kingship of the spirit. Frequently, one observes in the Pennsylvania German "Fraktur" work curiously pointed designs, sprockets or radiating lines emerging from objects such as circles. This structure is the artist's method, primitive but effective, of teaching the lesson that all radiation proceeds from the heart. Often the circle of righteousness, constructed as the climax of some design, will possess this radiation.

The tulip is one of the most favorite designs for decorations in Pennsylvania German Fraktur. Its origin has been traced to Persia, and the name itself is derived from the Persian word "dulband" (turban) and gradually pronounced "tulband". This Eastern flower did not find its way into Western Europe until the middle of the sixth century, when it was received with great interest in Germany, the Low Countries, and England. Its use in art was not prevalent until about the fifteenth century. It is quite natural that the Pennsylvania German artists should have used the tulip as a favorite flower for decoration, especially because its outlines were so essentially simple and so rich in line and color. In the illuminated writings under consideration, the Pennsylvania German tulip design has been found as a decoration on about thirty-five different types of objects.

Various forms of the Trinity are expressed in "Fraktur" designs. A favorite teaching was the conception of the Trinity of the lower form of man, and of the higher form of man, finally radiating from the circle of perfection. This concept was woven into intricate and elaborate designs of flowers and figures.

In the later period of illuminated writings, crude figures of angels and angel heads appeared. Human figures and animal life are conspicuous because of their almost total absence. The entire artistic construction, thought and teaching centered around the Biblical symbols aforementioned.

There are two types of Pennsylvania German "Fraktur". The one is a transparent water-color type, painted directly with simple water colors. The other type, and the most prevalent one in use, is the tempera. The color pigment is taken from berries or vegetable matter, mixed with the albumen of eggs. A substantial base was formed by adding cedar, cherry, plum, or peach gum. This composition was applied while moist, employing the same method of painting in tempera as did the old masters. The colors remain fresh and fast to the present day and are preserved by a rich gloss which will crack and crumble if applied too thickly, as do the old paintings executed in tempera. Quills were employed for the writing of these manuscripts and for the finer design work. All brush work was made in Oriental style, holding the brush upright. Each line and design was constructed with a free swing of the hand, usually away from the body. Shading was produced by exerting various degrees of pressure upon the brush.

On the surface, it may astonish the casual observer to find a strong influence of Oriental designs in the Pennsylvania German Illuminated Writings. The technique in the actual painting was Oriental. The small designs, which give the beautifully decorated, colored capital letters their full rounded form, depth, and finished appearance, are typically Chinese. The fundamental design of the wave line, in all its modifying forms comes from the same origin. This structure so essential for the beauty, symmetry, and balance in Fraktur is employed more often than perhaps any other design or motif. The original meaning of this ancient wave line presumably indicated everything that juts out of water.

In conclusion, there were three outstanding schools of Fraktur in this country. One had its origin in the famous Ephrata Cloisters (founded in 1730), and developed by the brotherhood there. The draftsmanship, composition, and design were of excellent quality, but religious scruples prohibited the use of gay and fresh colors. Only a casual study will enable one to recognize the fine work of this school because of the subdued and sombre colors.

Another school of art was developed by the capable schoolmaster, Christopher Dock (? to 1771), who was brought from Germany to instruct the youth among the Mennonite and Schwenkfelders. His famous work was done at Skippack and Salford where he taught. He was an excellent master in the art of illuminated writing and unrestrained in his use of color. The influence of his art in connection with his school work left a profound impression upon the talented students of his day.

The third famous school came out of the Schwenkfelder group who settled in Pennsylvania in 1734. Its rich cultural background found delightful expression in this art. Unquestionably the leading artist was Susanna Hübner although many other names might be mentioned. This school, too, was free and unrestrained in its use of color and produced excellent specimens of the now lost art. A large collection of beautiful examples are preserved in the Schwenkfelder Historical Library, Pennsburg, Pa.

Only one master remains today who is able to reproduce copies of this interesting art, Mr. John Souder of Telford, Pa., a member of the Old Mennonite faith. He has compiled several manuscript volumes of illuminated writings as a hobby during the days of his retirement.

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STOUDT, JOHN JOSEPH

Consider the Lilies How They Grow. Allentown, Pa.

Pennsylvania German Folklore Society, V. II. c.1937. 333 p. Through the courtesy of the Pennsylvania Art Program, Index of American Design, a W.P.A. Project, the writer exhibited a portfolio of reproductions of Pennsylvania German Fraktur, along with several original specimens, and a few reproductions by Mr. John Souder.

P.S.: Mr. John Souder died August, 1942.

N.B. Another very capable artist who was able to reproduce from original specimens copies of Pennsylvania German Illuminated writings, in addition to composing original subjects, was Irwin P. Mensch, Barto, Pa. Mr. Mensch died in January, 1951.

A WILHELM SCHIMMEL BIRD

By NATALIE RAMSEY

Out of the scarcity of items in the early Pennsylvania Dutch household, there developed the folk art of wood carving. Wood was plentiful, easy to obtain and handle, and could, by even the most primitive craftsman, be fashioned into articles both useful and decorative. At first the wood was used in rough and simple form for utilitarian items, and in large part for the tools and utensils needed and used in the kitchen for the preparation of food. As life became easier and freedom from hardship allowed the busy farmer more time, the urge to please the housewife and delight the children gave him the impetus to embellish his hand work with the decorative carving we associate with Pennsylvania Dutch crafts. Much of his carving was used on furniture, bracket shelves, boxes and wall racks. The same birds, animals and human figures we see drawn and painted on early pottery, tin, glass and paper were also carved out of wood.

Many outstanding carved figures of the last half of the 19th Century have been attributed to a Wilhelm Schimmel. Little is known about him except that he is believed to have travelled over a part of Pennsylvania, and possibly New York and Connecticut for a period of about thirty years, selling his carvings of toy figures and birds. Often these were merely exchanged for food or a night's lodging. His eagles, roosters and parrots were carved from a single piece of wood; they were bold and vigorous in design and feeling, executed with detailed accuracy, and painted in the bright colors so beloved by the Pennsylvania Dutchman. These are rare items to be found today and to become familiar with them, we have to examine the few that are in museums or private hands. As a toy or decorative piece, one of these birds is not only an interesting and valuable little possession to own today, but a pleasant reminder of Pennsylvania Dutch artistry.



"A" AWARDS AT BRYN MAWR, PA.

Margaret Watts
Evelyn Benson
Elizabeth Martin

Gina Martin
Lucile Stuart Schectel

Helen McCarthy
Elizabeth Balsbaugh

PAINTING A LACE-EDGE TRAY

Demonstration by MARTHA MULLER

Reported by MARY JANE CLARK

In her experience, Mrs. Muller says, people are either most enthusiastic about lace-edge painting or are entirely unmoved by it. In the latter class belong those persons who simply do not understand it.

In the field of fine arts, there were periods when artists strove to capture only the mood of the scenes they were painting and so perhaps the lace-edge painter strove to get the feeling of a rose, for it appears that he made no attempt to paint any realistic flower. This is in direct opposition to the Chippendale or Victorian artist of the tray business who, like the expert china painter, strove to reproduce the real thing in outline and color. Mrs. Muller said that she felt it possible that canvas artists had painted the lace-edge trays using as motifs besides flowers, fruits and birds, the Adam urn, many scenes, figures and cherubs. She referred to page 151 of *Early American Decoration* by Esther Stevens Brazer, giving the dates of the lace-edge period as 1790 to 1810. Mrs. Brazer often said that lace-edge trays should be cherished, not only for their beauty, but also because they are so rare. She would have been amazed at the many that have turned up at our Guild meetings in recent years. Many of these are masterpieces but some are also quite crude and, tho' much of their history is still a mystery to us, with so many of us intent upon trying to dig up the shady past of the lace-edge painter, we will soon come much closer to the truth.

Mrs. Muller displayed a beautiful scenic pattern with an English vermillion background painted behind the entire scene. The tray, from which the pattern was copied, was an oval gallery, dated 1808, and it had never been out of Holland until this Spring. The foliage was partly done with a stiff brush and the rest was beautifully executed in very fine brush strokes, the green used throughout being our well-known lace-edge green made with yellow-ochre, raw umber and prussian blue.

Most lace-edge trays had a tortoise-shell background and the following steps were given to acquire such an effect.

- Step 1. Good metal primer
- Step 2. One coat of flat black
- Step 3. Second coat of flat black
- Step 4. Varnish complete tray with a good dependable stencilling varnish and, when tacky, lay silver leaf in patches in previously outlined areas planned around your pattern.
- Step 5. Using a fast-drying varnish as your medium, give the whole tray a coat of alizarin crimson oil paint.

- Step 6. When dry at least a week, remove dust and pour some asphaltum in the middle of your tray and with a good sized varnish brush, dip into varnish, then into the asphaltum on the tray floor and work fast in all directions. Repeat as needed, wiping the brush out on nylon as you change from asphaltum to varnish or vice versa. Bear down heavily with the brush and use extra varnish over the silver patches. Then let your work settle. The result should look like red rosettes over the silver leaf.
- Step 7. Two coats of varnish. Do not rub in between them.
- Step 8. Rub varnish coats with #800 wet or dry sandpaper until there are no specks and no shine left.
- Step 9. Do your gold leaf border and stripe.
- Step 10. Varnish this, if you wish, for protection.

Note: Remember that there is a drying stage of at least 24 hours between *each* stage, and between steps 4, 5, 6, and 9 allow at least a week. Alizarin crimson and asphaltum are slow driers.

The background of the flowers is very smooth and opaque and is most usually signwriter's red or vermillion. Allow all backgrounds to dry well. For the floating color stage, use one-third raw linseed oil and two-thirds varnish as your medium if you paint slowly, and be sure to use a large enough brush. Always start with your darkest side, work in the color, wipe out the brush and blend. For most roses use alizarin crimson, burnt umber and yellow ochre. If the rose is very dark, add prussian blue and/or black. Next, work on the light side. Never use plain white but make a mixture of white, yellow ochre and raw umber. This color is pulled into the rose in the floating color stage. Lace-edge leaves often have red backgrounds and the green, made of yellow ochre, prussian blue, raw umber, white and sometimes a bit of black, is painted over the red, starting at the darkest part and then adding yellow ochre and white to lighten the balance of the leaf. Wipe out the brush and blend smoothly. Change to a #4 square-tipped quill and stroke on the white highlights, being sure to paint in the direction that the leaf turns. The white strokes around the edge and down the centre of the leaf are also added at this time. However, the brown veins and some highlights are done later when the leaf is dry.

Mrs. Muller's demonstration was superbly executed. She held up the finished pattern and it was breath-taking!



CHIPPENDALE AND LACE EDGE FLOWERS

Demonstrated by WALTER H. WRIGHT

Following steps were given in painting a Chippendale flower:

1. Using a watercolor brush and varnish as his medium, Mr. Wright laid a very thin coat of Japan White over the entire form of the flower. Next, using more white, he formed the cup and the petals of the rose, leaving the thin white for shadows.
2. When dry, the base coat was covered with varnish, tinted to the lightest color wanted with transparent color, and the shadows worked into the wet varnish with almost dry transparent color, blending the edges lightly.
3. When the color coat was dry, the petal highlights were put on, or "veiled". Each petal was put on in pure white, and the bottom edge blended out to nothing with a brush dipped in varnish and wiped partly dry.

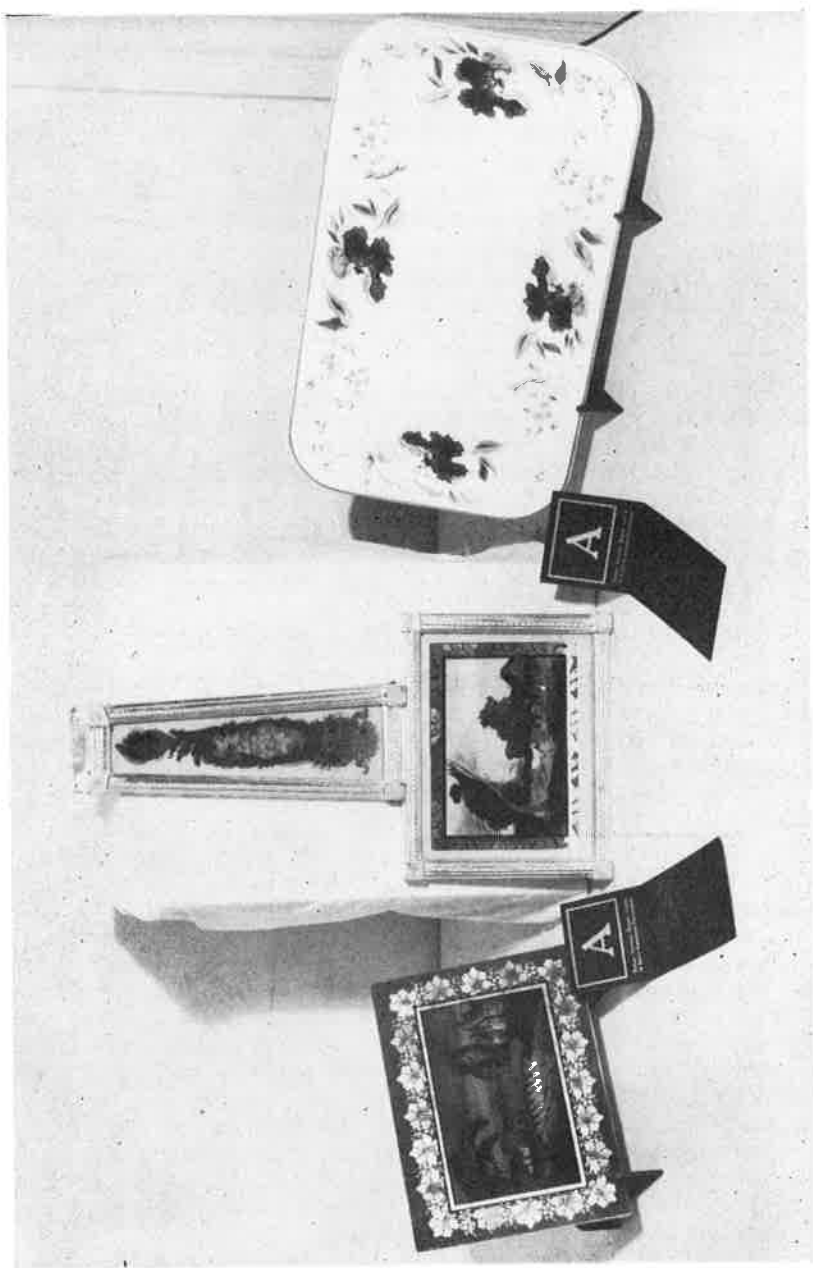
Lace Edge flowers are heavy in texture, not smooth as in Chippendale, and they were sometimes painted in one, two, or three stages. However, in most cases a base coat was laid, using varnish and a Japan paint (usually vermillion). When this was dry, the pulled-in color stage was ready. Mr. Wright used Bohemian Oil Wax as his medium and with a watercolor brush, pulled in the various colors to form the rose, accenting quite strongly with white. When dry, additional white was added to "pep" it up.

PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN FOLK ARTS

On Friday evening, May 9th, following dinner at the Deanery, Donald Shelley, Curator of Fine Arts, Henry Ford Museum, gave a talk on "Pennsylvania German Folk Art". This was an interesting, informative, illustrated lecture, which showed how the European and Medieval backgrounds of these German settlers were transferred to their life in this country.

Their decorative folk art talent was first used on the house structure itself, and its early application was to be seen in the thatched roofs and designs on blinds. Later, in the lovely grey stone buildings, there appeared the beautiful moldings, tiles, fanlights, and handsome doorways. Then came the time and need for beautifying the house interior and the first important accessories were the blanket and dower chests. These were beautifully decorated with the tulip, heart, rose, bird, and innumerable designs and motifs that were symbolic and dear to these people. Finally, small household articles, such as chairs, benches, Lehn's wooden cups and boxes and pails, Stiegel glass, pottery and crockery, textiles, samplers, spreads, runners, towels, tin, toys, in fact everything, was made colorful and beautiful. Craftsmanship became excellent and the people actually redesigned many old world products, as they remembered them, to their own need and to give them pleasure and beauty in their homes and lives.

The slides, which Mr. Shelley used, brought a vivid picture of the foregoing to those who were privileged to attend his lecture.



"A" AWARDS AT BRYN MAWR, PA.
Margaret Watts

Martha Muller

Helen McCarthy



REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND JUDGING

VIOLET MILNES SCOTT, *Chairman*

The Committee met on Monday, May 5, 1952 at Haverford Court in Haverford, Pa. Delegates from nine Chapters took part in the discussions following the review on judging and procedure. The requirements for applicants, and the new booklet "Standards for Craftsman Awards" were studied. The Seal of Approval for undecorated reproductions was approved.

Tuesday, May 6, the Committee met with the Exhibition Committee which had arranged an excellent exhibition in classes to be judged at Ashbridge House. Exhibits which did not cover all points required for Craftsman awards were removed. The judging and recording was completed Wednesday.

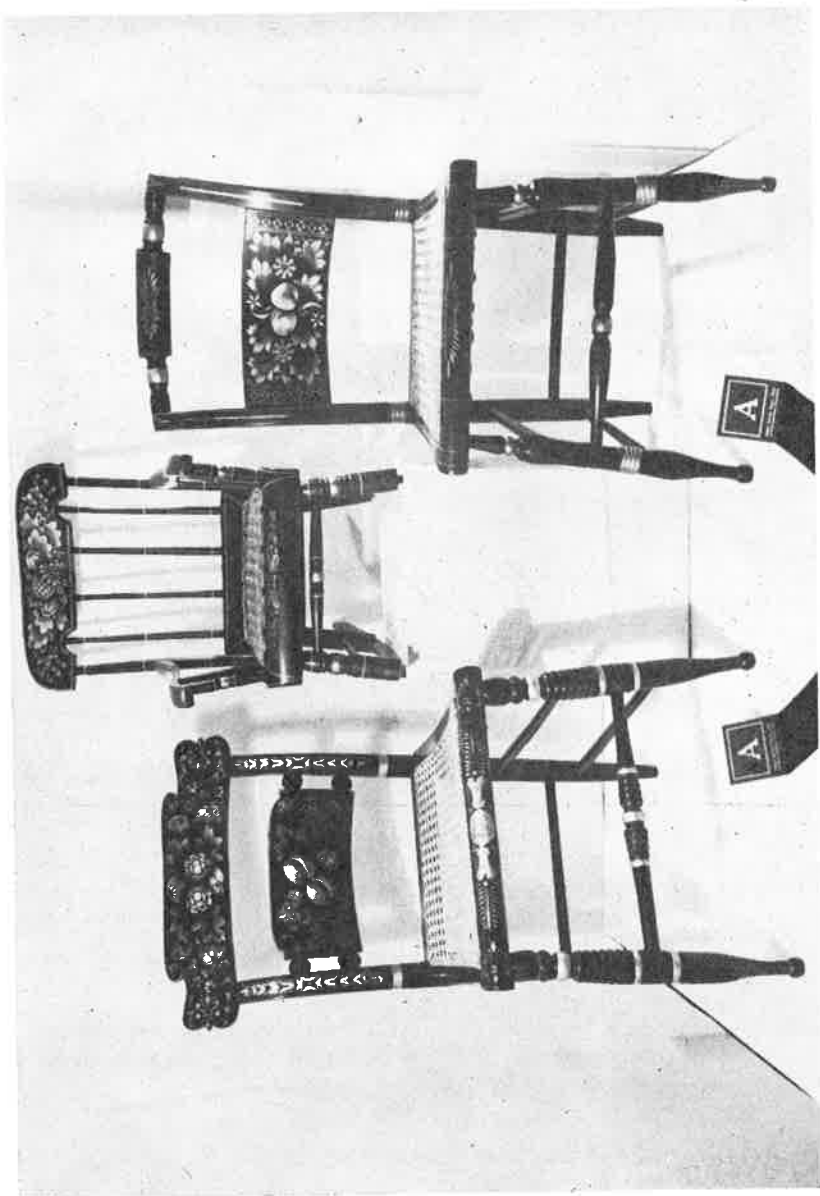
Thursday, "A" awards and judging sheets were placed on Members' exhibits. A Craftsman's Award and Seal of Approval was awarded to the manufacturers of undecorated reproductions which were judged to be authentic.

Friday, the Master Craftsman Award was awarded to four members at the Deanery.

The Committee voted:

1. Only one copy of "Standards for Craftsman Awards" to be sent each member.
2. Guidance sheets to be sent applicant only after application has been received by Membership Chairman.
3. The Seal won by a Master Craftsman cannot be reproduced or used on objects decorated by the Craftsman. (May be used for display or kept in archives.)
4. To plan a competition for Guild Members for the design of an official seal for the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc.

(a) Art Editor of Decorator and Master Craftsmen to plan Prospectus.



"A" AWARDS IN STENCILLING AT BRYN MAWR, PA.

Edith O. Thaxter

Maria Murray

Ellen Armstrong

BRYN MAWR MEETING — MAY 9, 1952

Exhibits	Award		Rating		Rejects
	A	B	C	D	
Exhibit (60) Members					
13 Stencil Tin	3	6	3	1	
17 Stencil Wood	8	7	2		
5 Country Painting	2	2	1		
7 Metal Leaf	2	3	-	1	1
9 Lace Edge Painting	4	5			
2 Freehand Bronze	1	-	1		
1 Metal Leaf on Glass Panel	1				
1 Stencil on Glass Panel	1				
5 Chippendale	4	-	1		
Totals	26	23	8	2	1
	A	B	C	D	Rejects
Exhibit (37) Applicants					
18 Stencil, Wood 3	-	2	1		
Tin 15	-	5	6	4	
19 Country Painting	2	6	5	3	3
13 Applicants passed our requirements					
6 Applicants did not meet our standards					

MASTER CRAFTSMAN AWARDS

Jessica H. Bond.....	Baltimore, Md.
Virginia Martin.....	South Windsor, Conn.
Emilie Underhill.....	Bellport, L.I., N.Y.
Margaret Watts.....	Harrington Park, N.J.

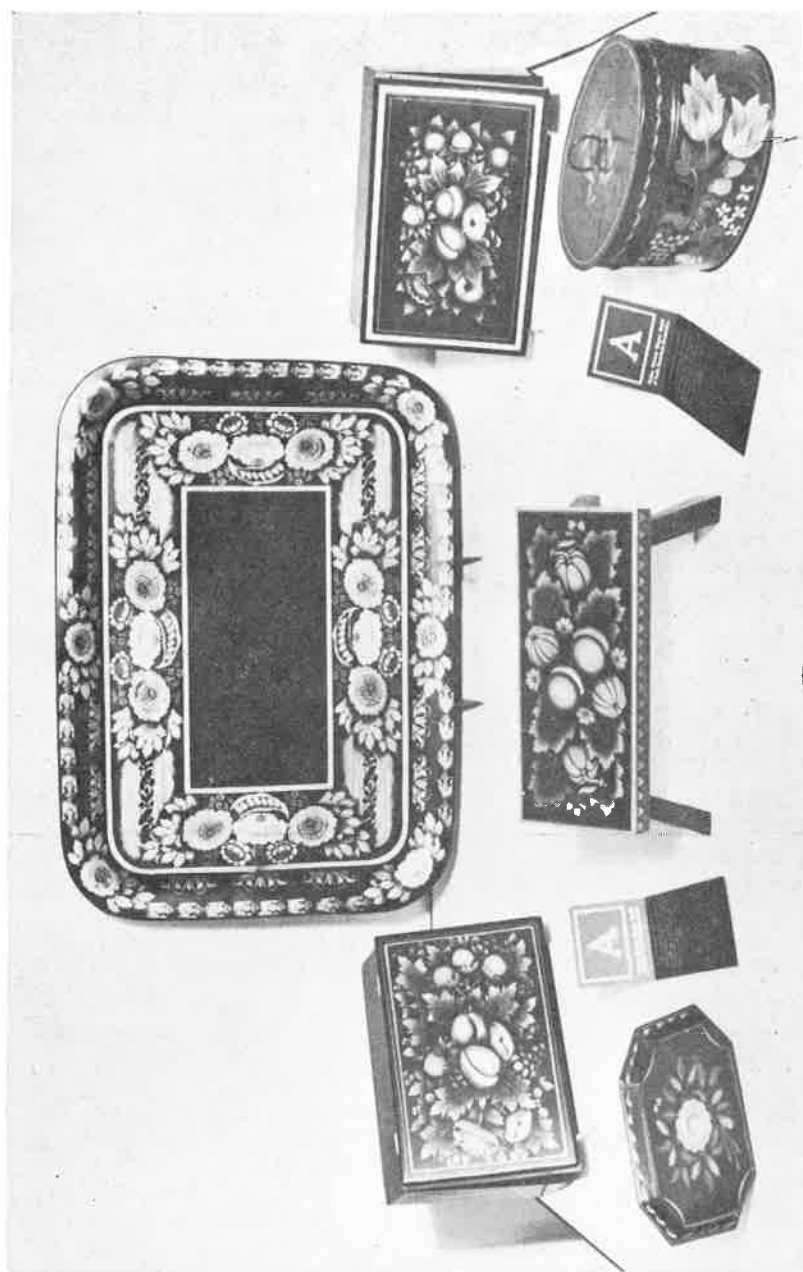
"A" AWARDS

Stencil on Tin

Pauline A. Clement.....	Belfast, Me.
Dorothy Hutchings.....	Cortland, N.Y.
Marion Poor.....	Augusta, Me.

Stencil on Wood

Ellen Armstrong.....	Ithaca, N.Y.
Mary Jane Clark.....	Norwell, Mass.
Pauline A. Clement.....	Belfast, Me.
Grace Meyers.....	Westfield, N.J.
Maria Murray.....	New Rochelle, N.Y.
Marion Poor.....	Augusta, Me.
Edith Thaxter.....	Bangor, Me.
Eleanor Van Riper.....	Yarmouthport, Mass.



"A" AWARDS AT BRYN MAWR, PA.

Mrs. S. V. Van Riper
Grace Meyers

Pauline Clement
Mrs. S. V. Van Riper

Dorothy Hutchings
Grace Meyers

<i>Country Painting</i>	
Grace Meyers.....	Westfield, N.J.
Eleanor Van Riper.....	Yarmouthport, Mass.
<i>Metal Leaf</i>	
Evelyn Benson.....	Worcester, Mass.
Elizabeth Martin.....	Oak Park, Ill.
<i>Lace Edge</i>	
Elizabeth Balsbaugh.....	Wellesley Hills, Mass.
Virginia Martin.....	South Windsor, Conn.
Helen McCarthy.....	Bronxville, N.Y.
Lucille Stuart Schecter.....	New York, N.Y.
<i>Freehand Bronze</i>	
Helen McCarthy.....	Bronxville, N.Y.
<i>Glass Panel, Stencilled Border</i>	
Martha Muller.....	Beechhurst, L.I., N.Y.
<i>Glass Panel, Etched Metal Leaf</i>	
Margaret Watts.....	Harrington Park, N.J.
<i>Chippendale</i>	
Jessica Bond.....	Baltimore, Md.
Virginia Martin.....	South Windsor, Conn.
Emilie Underhill.....	Bellport, L.I., N.Y.
Margaret Watts.....	Harrington Park, N.J.

CHAPTERS REPRESENTED ON COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDS AND AWARDS

Chairman: Violet Milnes Scott Mass. Old Colony Chapter

Judges:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------|---------------------|
| 1. Margaret Blouin | Me. | Pine Tree Chapter |
| 2. Jessica Bond | Md. | Maryland Chapter |
| 3. Adele Ells | N.H. | Pioneer Chapter |
| 4. Esther Hall | Mass. | |
| 5. Helen McCarthy | N.Y. | Fairchester Chapter |
| 6. Martha Muller | N.Y. | Long Island Chapter |
| 7. Lucille Schecter | N.Y. | Lexington Chapter |

Alternates:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------|---------------------|
| 8. Ruth Brown | Mass. | |
| 9. Charlotte Gordon | N.Y. | Long Island Chapter |
| 10. Margaret Watts | N.J. | New Jersey Chapter |

Recorders and Talliers:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------|------------------|
| 11. Virginia Carter | N.H. | Pioneer Chapter |
| 12. Mary Jane Clark | Mass. | |
| 13. Edith Hall | N.H. | Pioneer Chapter |
| 14. Marjorie Mattoon | Penn. | Wm. Penn Chapter |
| 15. Margaret Murphy | Md. | Maryland Chapter |
| 16. Clara Trowbridge | Mass. | |



"A" AWARDS IN STENCILLING AT BRYN MAWR, PA.
 Marion Poor Mary Jane Clark Pauline Clement
 Marion Poor

STANDARDS FOR CRAFTSMAN AWARDS

Corrections: May, 1952.

- Page 4 Metal Leaf
 III - 15%
 Etching — Strike out the words "Penwork or"
- Page 8 No. 1 Glass Panel with Metal Leaf Border
 III - 30% Painting
 Subject of picture painted and backed with
 paint.
- Page 9 No. 2 - Glass Panel of Etched Metal Leaf
 Border - strike out the word "Border".

REPORT OF THE SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ESTHER STEVENS BRAZER GUILD OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION, INC.

The Sixth Annual Business Meeting of the Esther Stevens Brazer Guild of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. was held in the Deanery, Bryn Mawr, Penna. on Friday, May 9, 1952, at 2 P. M. Mrs. Heath presided.

Mrs. Fuller, Hostess of the meeting, welcomed the members and their guests. She thanked Mrs. Lucille Schecter for making the drawings used on the programs.

All members of the William Penn Chapter were asked to stand.

The reading of the minutes of the Fall meeting at Ithaca were omitted. The minutes of the Trustees Meeting held in Bryn Mawr, May 8, 1952, were read and accepted.

Mrs. Heath read the temporary charter for the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. and announced that a permanent charter had been granted by the New York State Board of Regents.

Mrs. Coggins, Chairman of the Museum Fund Committee, announced that there would be a Silent Auction from 5:30-6:30.

Mrs. Martin, Chairman of Teacher Training Program, explained the requirements for the Seal of Approval for Teachers. Many questions were asked and a lengthy discussion followed. A vote by hand proved that the members were overwhelmingly in favor of the program.

Mrs. Drury, Exhibitions Chairman, reported that there were 60 exhibits by members and 37 by applicants.

Mrs. Scott, Chairman of Judging and Standards, announced that a competition for a design for an official seal for the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. would take place. Details will be drawn up by a committee headed by Mrs. Schecter, Art Director of the Decorator. She reported that Craftsman Awards and Seals of Approval had been awarded to the manufacturers of undecorated reproductions which were judged to be authentic. This was the first time this policy had been put into effect.

The names of the applicants who had met the requirements for membership were read.

Mrs. Little, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, recommended that the Board of Directors be enlarged. She presented the following names for election to the Board of Trustees, to serve for three years:

Mrs. Emily Heath

Mrs. Ada Knapp

Mrs. Sara Fuller

Mrs. Louise McAuliffe

There were no further nominations and they were elected.

Mrs. Kephart, Program Chairman, was introduced. She announced the addition to the program of a talk on Fractur by Dr. Lester Kriebel.

Mrs. Watts, the new Editor of the Decorator, and Mrs. Ramsey, Assistant Editor, were introduced to the members.

Mrs. Heath thanked Mrs. Fuller, Mrs. Kephart, and their committee for their work in presenting the interesting and delightful meeting at Bryn Mawr.

Mrs. Heath announced that plans were being made for the Fall meeting in Deerfield, Mass. A future meeting is being arranged for Cooperstown, N. Y.

Reported by Emily Underhill

Secretary

SWAP COLUMN

ADVERTISE YOUR WANTS, ETC.

WANTED: Old tin coffee pot, with or without decoration.
Mrs. N. K. Clark, 12 East 49th Street, Savannah, Georgia.

REPORT OF THE THIRTEENTH EXHIBITION AT BRYN MAWR, PA.

May 9 - 10, 1952

As the Guild grows and goes further afield for its meetings, our Exhibitions become more interesting and instructive.

Two rooms at Ashbridge House were filled with reproductions by members. Ninety-seven articles were entered. These included all classes of work judged by the Standards Committee. Chippendale Painting lent a glamorous note heretofore lacking. The array and the craftsmanship here demonstrated were truly impressive.

It was a great source of satisfaction to hang, for the first time, the full and unconditional Charter granted by the State of New York to: The Historical Society of Early American Decoration Inc.

The William Penn Chapter spared no effort to make this an outstanding exhibition of originals typical of Pennsylvania. Treasured family heir-looms were generously and proudly brought forth. Museums were persuaded to loan fine pieces, and dealers kindly offered antiques of Pennsylvania Dutch origin.

Especially worthy of mention was the first showing of 14 fractur loaned by the Schwenkfelder Historical Library of Pennsburg. The gallery talk by Dr. Lester Kriebel describing and explaining the significance of the fractur appears on another page of this issue.

Along with many pieces of Country Painting, the Schurz Museum loaned two early and unusually beautiful Bride's Boxes.

From the Reading Public Museum and Art Gallery came glass paintings of George Washington, the young Napoleon, Martin Luther and others — all with rose bud mouths!

The sturdy, gayly painted Pennsylvania Dutch chairs added a bright spot of color, so different from the stencilled Hitchcock type; even the Chippendale tray appeared in a different guise — bolder and brighter in design than when found in restrained New England and other parts of the country.

A typical Pennsylvania painted chest and spoon holder from Cowan's Antique Shop, a Pennsylvania painted settee, a Philadelphia Museum cross-stitch sampler, the pierced tin coffee-pots with traditional tulip design, the fast disappearing pieces of Lehn Ware, were just some of the fine originals shown.

Sara Fuller loaned a huge pine Dresser or Dutch Cupboard to display the large collection of Country Tin from Pennsylvania. Fifteen coffee-pots were included in this collection with the usual tin pieces made for the housewife, such as deed boxes, trays, tea-pots, sugar bowls, syrup jugs and tea caddies.

Martha Muller, the Curator of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, brought a large representative group of tin known

to have been decorated in Stevens Plains, Maine. She brought, also, the Ann Butler Collection painted in Greenville, New York. Many known family pieces were brought from upper New York State and other parts of New England.

It was confusing to find identical pieces in the Pennsylvania Dutch Cupboard. Shall we ever know whether it is "typical Connecticut or Penn. Dutch"? (See Decorator - Summer 1949)

The Reading Museum sells a small but comprehensive book by Ruth Adams, entitled "Penn. Dutch Art", First Printing 1950. Following is her only mention of decorated tin-ware:

"Tin, light and easily worked, was imported to the colonies and widely used for household objects. Whether or not the "tole ware" brightly painted with stylized designs, was actually painted in Pennsylvania or whether it was decorated in England and imported, is still a question being debated by authorities on Penn. Dutch antiques. There seems to be no doubt that the punched tin ware was made by local artisans."

The William Penn Chapter may well be proud of its heritage for Pennsylvania is truly rich in Early American Decoration.

EXHIBITION COMMITTEE

ZILLA LEA

DOROTHEA MEEHAN

NATALIE RAMSEY

MARGARET WATTS

CARROLL DRURY

BERNICE DRURY, *Chairman*

Schedule for Painting Sessions at Innerwick, Flushing, L.I. for 1953

January	27-28-29	May	26-27-28
February	24-25-26	June	23-24-25
March	24-25-26	October	27-28-29
April	28-29-30	November	17-18-19

Apply to Miss Jean Wylie, Business Manager, for your reservations.
Forty-eight hour cancellation notice is required.

REPORT ON CHAPTERS

The *New Jersey Chapter* held a meeting on May 25th, 1951, at the home of Mrs. Ray Hardie, Westfield, N. J. Mrs. Douglas Conover of Mt. Lakes, N. J. and Mrs. Clarence Meyers of Westfield, N. J. were accepted as members. The next meeting was held December 17th, 1951 at the home of Mrs. Albert Johnston in Madison, N. J. Members attended the Tenth Annual Christmas exhibit of Mrs. Johnston's trays at the Madison Free Public Library. It was voted to send notices to all New Jersey members of the Society, inviting them to attend and join the Chapter. On January 25th, 1952, members met at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York City. A donation of four dollars will be sent to the Museum Fund. This money was raised by members paying a small sum for the privilege of copying originals owned by fellow members. It was voted to allow Society members of another State to join this Chapter.

The annual meeting of the *Long Island Chapter* was held June 5th, 1952, at the Garden City Casino, Garden City, L. I. This was a work meeting — members bringing simple patterns from originals which could be copied and completed that day. Members enjoyed this plan and asked to have it repeated. During the day a "silent auction" was conducted. Articles of wood, china, and tin, brought in by members, were laid on a table and written bids were made. Every item was sold, the proceeds amounting to \$31.50. Members have raised \$24.00 for the Museum Fund by selling grainers. The following officers were elected:

Chairman Mrs. John Gordon
Vice-Chairman Mrs. Robert Wyld
Secretary Mrs. Sidney Alden
Treasurer Mrs. Lally Alexander

The newly organized *Maryland Chapter* met at the home of Mrs. Eugene Bond, Baltimore, Md., May 5th, 1952. The following officers were elected:

Chairman Mrs. Eugene Bond
Secretary Mrs. Dallas Barr

It was decided to hold meetings in some of the historic old homes in this area where original decorated pieces can be seen. The purpose of this Chapter is to pass on the knowledge of this art to the general public. Also, to learn to recognize original pieces and to carry on Mrs. Brazer's work.

There is no news from other Chapters at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Thelma C. Riga

Chairman of Chapters.

Advertise in
THE DECORATOR

— RATES —

\$20.00 full page per issue

\$10.00 half page per issue

\$6.00 quarter page per issue

Send ads and inquiries to

MISS JEAN WYLIE

40 Fitch Avenue, Noroton Heights, Connecticut

Patronize the Advertisers
and mention THE DECORATOR as reference.

BINDERS and CLIPS

"THE DECORATOR" BINDER, made exclusively for The Historical Society of Early American Decoration is now available. Each Binder holds six issues of "The Decorator." They are sturdy, well-constructed and may be decorated. Price \$2.25 plus 20¢ mailing expense.

* * * * *

STAINLESS STEEL CLIPS are also available, recommended by teachers for holding patterns securely. Price \$1.25 per dozen, plus 10¢ mailing expense.

Your orders for Binders and Clips should be sent to Jean W. Wylie, Business Manager, 40 Fitch Avenue, Noroton Heights, Connecticut. Your remittance should accompany your order.



THE BOOK SHELF

by

JESSICA H. BOND

THE INDEX OF AMERICAN DESIGN, by *Erwin O. Christensen*. In order to have a more thorough understanding of any subject, one must approach that subject from different channels. The American Index of Design is a series of just such channels, each one an absorbing interest in itself, and yet connected somehow to our own particular little world of painted decoration. "The Index" itself is located in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C. and Mr. Christensen, the curator, is almost always there, and eager to help his many, many visitors. The mounted designs are kept flat on long shelves and are indexed all the way around the room from A to Z. If you want to find designs on decorated tin you would look under T or perhaps S for stencilling, and there is always someone there to show you how. All branches of American design are represented and you will get completely sidetracked while looking for tin when you see the designs of costumes, furniture, textiles, all beautifully documented in water color. The book, *American Index of Design*, is the next best thing to visiting the Index. In the introduction, Holger Cahill, formerly National Director of the Federal Art Project, tells how the idea for the Index originated, how it was finally organized, who the people were who painted the designs, and of what use the Index is today. Here are documentary records of American craftsmanship in articles of daily use, such as pottery, furniture, coverlets, costumes, toys, painted tin, tavern signs, lamps, weathervanes and many, many more. They reflect the lives of our ancestors and show a remarkable beauty of line in even the simplest piece. There are only two pages of painted tin but they are quite representative of the articles used in those early days and they give us an idea of the way the designs are done for the Index itself. It is hard to believe that these pictures are not photographs of the actual article instead of a painted record. All the little chipped places in the paint, even the dents and rust are reproduced too. There are pictures on every page, 117 of them are in remarkably accurate color, and all are large enough to see details easily. The Macmillan Co., 1950, \$15.00

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH ART, by *Ruth Adams*. An artistic little book that would fit in your pocket, and the reading of it makes

you want more. Somehow the author seems to have captured the spirit of the Pennsylvania Dutch people and presents it in a very attractive manner. All phases of Pennsylvania crafts are touched upon; their pottery, Stiegel-type glass, textiles, wood carving, fractures, barn signs and decorated tin. The latter subject is condensed to about one paragraph and is truly a disappointment in its brevity. There is slightly more on painted furniture. There are no instructions on how to paint, it is merely a little history that could be read in an hour or less, but it gives an excellent idea of what the old settlers of Pennsylvania were really like. The World Pub. Co., 1950, \$1.00

THE HOBBY BOOK OF STENCILING AND BRUSH-STROKE PAINTING by *Raymond F. Yates*. No new ideas here. Most of the book deals in stencilling on chairs and trays, with a concentration on background paint and varnish coats rather than on the actual stencilling. There is very little about brush stroke painting. The chapter on glass painting is more informative, and the directions for marking out a clock face and making the numerals are very helpful. McGraw Hill Book Co., 1951, \$4.00

PENNSYLVANIA FOLK ART — An Interpretation, by *John Joseph Stoudt*. I've been yelling for a book with an intellectual approach and here it is! It is way over my head. The amount of research alone that must have gone into the writing of this scholarly book is overwhelming. Mr. Stoudt takes us far back into the German religious writings of past centuries in an endeavor to form a link between the drawings on these manuscripts and the German text. The drawings and paintings are certainly not from nature. What then is the thought behind them? The flowers, birds, stars and hearts, with which the Pennsylvania Dutch adorn their household objects, have a religious significance and spring from a deeply spiritual feeling within themselves. Mr. Stoudt emphasizes that we should interpret the meaning of these designs as a whole — find out what the artist was trying to say in pictures. He says that the only way by which we can find out what the artists had in mind is to find pieces on which words accompany the designs: "the grapes that bring sweet wine", "the Vine and its branches", "the sun of Righteousness", the turtledove's mate", "the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley" — all these are pictured in symbols which are familiar to us. In one old poem is perhaps a clue to the stiff straight stem with a lily (tulip) on top which we so often see:

*"A Flower of Nazareth was first it's Name
Who from the Rod of Jesse blooming came,
Springing in time of flowers, and all His aim,
Lone like a flame
Upon mankind to shower."*

And from a Christmas carol of 1606:

*"Lo! How a rose e'er blooming
Of tender stem hath sprung,
From Jesse's lineage coming . . ."*

Apparently what we call the tulip is really a lily. "The lily-twigg is the true image of God, for it is the new-born or regenerated spirit of the soul." The pelican is also a familiar symbol and we find reference to it in a hymn:

*"For he who accepts thy word
Is like the pelican bird.
When he goes away from his nest
The serpent slithers to his young
And puts their life in jeopardy.
But the bird's instinct is good,
Opens his breast and lets his blood."*

In their hymnal, the Psalterspiel, there are found many symbolismes of Christ which we can recognize in their drawings. "He is the Morning-Star which rises in the heart", "the dove's Beloved", "the Vine", "the Garden full of flowers", "thy Sun-Flower". Translated from a hymn is "My heart is narrow at the bottom and wide at the top, so that it is open to God and not to earthiness."

Mr. Stoudt does not believe that the barn symbols were hex signs because there was practically no witchcraft in Pennsylvania. Also, he has found the same signs painted on the cover of a bible. He believes there might be a relationship between the barn designs and the designs on the early Christian sarcophagi. One old Pennsylvania woman called them flower stars. About half the book is text and half illustrations. The latter include fractura, dower chests and other pieces of furniture, bride's boxes, butter molds, stove plates, a few pieces of tin, ceramics, textiles and barn signs. There is plenty to stir the imagination here, and those of you who read German will enjoy it particularly because of the many German passages given. Excellent bibliography. Schlecter's, Allentown, Pa., 1948, \$7.50.

There are a couple of new "booklets" out. (If there are more, let me know because our library doesn't have booklets.)

(Booklet) LET'S BEGIN DECORATING, by *Edith Ordway Hall*. This is a handbook for beginners to teach them the correct way to prepare tin and wood; how to apply backgrounds; the decorating and striping, and finish. There are some very good hints here. \$1.50



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