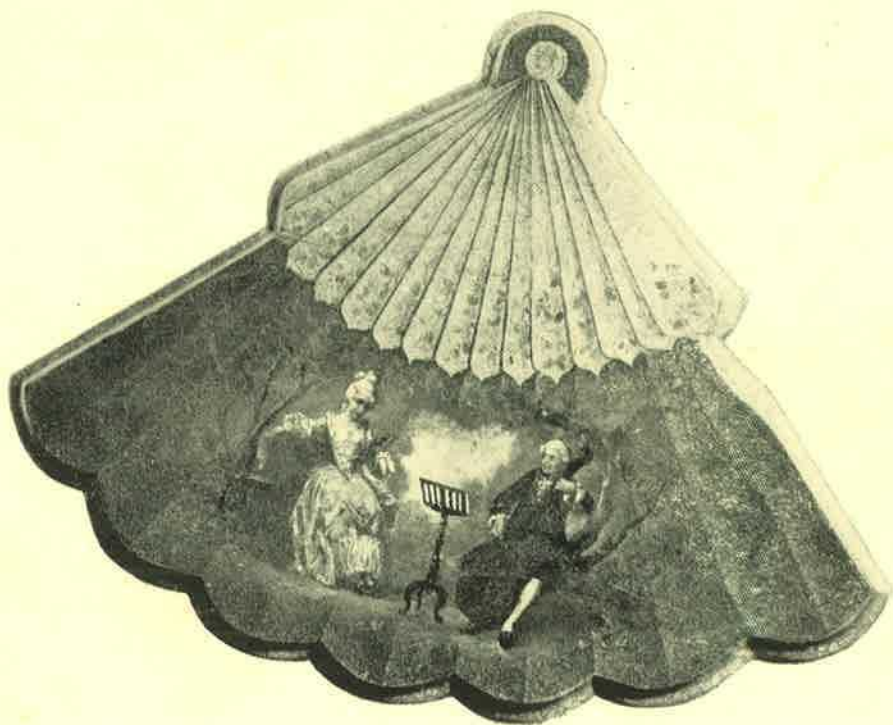


The Decorator

Volume XIII, No. 2

Cooperstown, N. Y.

Spring 1959



Journal of the
ESTHER STEVENS BRAZER GUILD
of the
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION, INC.

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Cover Photograph—Top of Fan Table
Owned by Esther Oldham

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EDITORIAL

Another business year of our organization has ended. This past year has been one of the most momentous in our history. Acquisition of decorated items from the Brazer and the Oldham collections is important. The growth of our Society in many directions is evident. Since we have chosen the New York-State Historical Association as a repository for our museum pieces and the Brazer patterns, we have become (with the help of that Association) better able to act as an educational organization — one of the aims listed in our constitution.

We are indebted to Miss Virginia Parslow of the Historical Association staff for the planning and work which has resulted in the tastefully arranged exhibition of decorated tin and wooden wares in the Farmers' Museum. Many Guild pieces are exhibited in a cozy room with a fireplace which looks like an old taproom. There is a map of tin centers with respective tinwares from each section. Chairs and cornices are also on display.

Our meeting at Cooperstown proved to those of us who attended that at last we have found a home. Members of the staff of the New-York Historical Association made this apparent.

I cannot end this editorial without expressing for individual members of our Society a deep feeling of appreciation and gratitude to Bernice Drury, Zilla Lea, Ruth Brown and the trustees who have worked so diligently for us in the last two years. Their efforts have been like seeds planted in fertile soil — since ours is a healthy, ambitious organization — even more abundant fruit will bear in the future.

Congratulations to the newly-elected trustees and the new officers, Walter Wright, Emilie Underhill and Isabel MacDuffie. Previous responsibilities have readied them for their present positions.

It seems to me that we have reached a new threshold from which we can look to a bright future for our Guild.

* * * *

The special paste used by Maria Murray in the scrap book is Cloy-Dainty Paste made in England; sole distributors in America: Ward's, 23-08 Jackson Avenue, Long Island City 1, New York.



"Victoria" tray by Ryton and Walton
of a type designed and painted by George Wallis
Owned by Mrs. Edward Byers

BILSTON AND WOLVERHAMPTON JAPANNED TIN-PLATE

by Shirley Spaulding DeVoe

Reprinted from *Antiques*, June 1959

When tin-plate was carried to the Midlands towns of Bilston and Wolverhampton from Monmouthshire, an industry was started which eventually grew to tremendous size. It began about the mid-eighteenth century and though reduced to four companies in 1953, lasted until the present day.

The industry was held back for lack of transportation, but by 1769, the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canals were opened and "goods were carried to every part of the Kingdom." Before the canals, pack horses and then lumbering wagons were the only means of transporting the products over the "old green roads."

To secure orders, the japan master went on a selling trip once a year. As he prepared to leave, the workers gathered around him wishing him a safe journey and return. He travelled with pack horses which carried the samples in saddle bags and "rested at old-fashioned inns along the way." The patterns were flat replicas, ornamented in the manner of the finished product, and which for safe keeping, were packed in shallow boxes of japanned tin.

History names Bilston as the first Midlands center for japanned metal, but the beginning is obscure. Until the arrival of tin-plate, Bilston's chief

products were toys, buckles and vitreous enamels. One authority concludes that the "craft of japanner like that of the enameler was introduced (in Bilston) because of the toy makers." By 1818 there was just one tin toy maker listed in the directory.

Bilston served the practical needs of the industry by specializing in blanks; namely, trays, waiters (round and oval trays), bread and snuffer trays, tea caddies and coal vases. In addition, cash boxes and trays of the "cheaper types" were made. Of the latter, many were gaudily painted with intense blue, red and yellow and were exported to Russia, Norway, South America and Spanish possessions. "At one time Bilston alone exported fifty thousand trays a week to foreign markets," and a large quantity, which were geared to our taste, were received in the United States.

In 1818 there were fifteen japanners in Bilston as well as workers in the kindred trades. The latter were tin-plate workers; makers of blank trays, spirit varnish, and small hardware such as knobs and paw feet for tea caddies; one candle spring maker and one caddie locksmith named Emanuel Jennings. In 1827, Thomas Swindley was the only "stenseller" and no doubt he used the bronze powders made by John Frederick Walker.

Women have taken part in the industry from the very beginning, doing all the necessary chores leading up to the ornamenting. In 1827 there were two in Bilston who were tin-plate workers—Hannah Barratt and Elizabeth Fullwood. Occasionally a widow carried on her late husband's business as in the case of Jane Becket and Son, manufacturer.

Wolverhampton, which is two and one-half miles northeast of Bilston, "soon caught up with and exceeded Bilston." There the industry began at the Old Hall or Turton's Hall, an Elizabethan mansion which had been the residence of the Turton family for years. It was converted to a factory by Taylor and Jones about 1760. Jones had been a foreman at Pontypool and was attracted to the Midlands by the new industry. They were succeeded by Ryton and Walton after 1810. Always known as the Old Hall Works, a Walton remained at the head of it for at least another forty-five years. Benjamin Walton who was described as "gentlemanly and attractive" drove a high dog-cart with space at the back for his patterns and samples.

The Old Hall was the most important producer of japanned wares in Wolverhampton, but hard times in the late 1840's forced it into bankruptcy. "A twenty day auction disposed of the stock by the wagonload to buyers from London, Birmingham, and other important towns." Shortly after the auction Benjamin Walton died. His son, Frederick, succeeded him and re-established the business after a great struggle.

Wolverhampton had another difficult time due to a strike in 1850. In an effort to keep up production, the japan masters sent to France for workers.



Travelers Sample Snuffer Tray Patterns
From Wolverhampton Museum



Black Japanned Tobacco Box
Used in public-houses



Salesman's Sample
Gold Leaf Tea Caddy

When they arrived in Wolverhampton, the people protested so strongly that the Frenchmen were sent back. After this unsuccessful effort the owners then brought workers from Germany, this time using great secrecy and inexplicably the plot succeeded.

The products were called Pontypool for a long time. Presumably the name was transplanted with the tin-plate, and strengthened by the arrival of Monmouthshire craftsmen. In 1834, four of the fourteen factories still called their products "Pontypool." In spite of the influence of Pontypool on the Midlands industry, there is so far no evidence that lace-edge trays were ever made there.

The term Pontypool applies to the early gold borders which contain the fine pen work known as Stormont work. (Fine serpentine lines that wander willy-nilly.) Stars of four lines crossed and criss-crossed were also used. The space fillers were a characteristic of Monmouthshire ornament.

At one time Ryton and Walton made articles of what was called Vallet's crystallized tin. The frosted look of the acid washed tin formed a design in itself and when coated with transparent yellow needed little or no decoration save striping. For a while this product replaced the popular "Indian" work, i.e. embossed chinoiserie.

Trays were a Wolverhampton specialty; and an outstanding one, exclusive with Walton's was called the Victoria "in honor of the young Queen"; possibly introduced in her coronation year, 1838. It was oval in shape with a scalloped edge and was ornamented with patterns designed by George Wallis. Wallis was an artist, an art authority and served as Artist Commissioner of the Great Exhibition.

After 1812 and for nearly twenty years bronze pictures were created by Hubbell's bronze method. They were of rural scenes with sheep predominating, or sun-lit church interiors. The latter with their precise architectural detail

are less free in style than the rural scenes. Straight or curved paper templets over which the bronze powders are rubbed, accounted for the perfection of line. Shadowy depths were achieved by the use of the darker powders which faded into the black japan. Chamois swabs in various sizes, dipped in bronzes were used to draw in the required contours and details on the almost dry varnished surface.

Tiger patterns were favorites in India and England and were made by the thousands for export. Tigers and lions were similarly used in settings of exotic foliage, trees and rocks. The demand inspired other ideas in which the animals were found in a variety of attitudes. One tray design shows a tiger attacking a deer from whose wound vermilion blood is spurting and was adapted from a Rousseau painting.

Pleasanter to see are the white trays in a variety of sizes with borders having tiny foliage, flowers and butterflies executed in color, bronzes and metal leaf. Collectors in this country know them as bride's trays, obviously because they are white. Wolverhampton favored white, plain or candle smoked, and colors, in addition to the standard black for backgrounds.

After 1850 cork was used for printing by a method similar to linoleum block printing. A single motif was cut in the cork, dipped in bronze varnish and stamped around the border of the tray. The center had a coarse one unit stencil washed with transparent color. Often a third step was a simple detail applied to flowers by cut cork dipped in paint.

The influence of the potteries can be seen in the commercial process called transferring. A copper plate, inked and wiped, was pressed on a tissue paper, which in turn was applied to the surface of the waiter. Interest could be added by bits of hand work in color and bronze to relieve a plain black pattern. This method became "generally accepted in the trade." George Barber and his son-in-law, Richard Lawley, are credited with the perfection of both transfer and cork work.

Coal vases in a variety of shapes were a late development, 1862, in the area. The most unusual had a glass panel with reverse painting set into the lid. A similar one had a wide ripple in the lid with the glass panel rippled to conform. Americans are more familiar with those having a painted tin lid which was more practical for shipping.

It is impossible to describe all, as there were literally thousands of designs, many resembling their source, i.e., potteries, enamels and furniture. (The shell on the Chippendale snuffer was adapted from a Robert Hancock enamel design.) From the uninteresting to the most extravagant, with excellent examples in between, they were used on the widest variety of japanned goods imaginable. The best work on Midlands metal covered well over one hundred years. Popular designs were used for so long it is difficult to date them.



Glass Panels for Coal Vases

The pattern books at Bantock House of the Wolverhampton Museum help to identify Wolverhampton pieces.

Japanners learned the trade as apprentices. Very young boys, often sons of japanners, were apprenticed for seven to ten years and led a "rough and cruel existence." They were expected to work a sixty-six hour week at a very small wage and if absent for one day or half a day, were sent to prison for one month. The long hours provided no opportunity for education or recreation.

Those who survived and reached the status of an accepted worker enjoyed a closely knit relationship with other men. After the day's work, they cleaned up at home, then gathered at the "Woolpack" or "Red Lion" where over a jug of ale the news of the day was discussed. Church-wardens were smoked and the "snuffbox was passed around as a token of good fellowship."

Japanners of furniture and coaches could turn to tin-plate; arabesque and flower painters were recruited from the local potteries. Others were self-trained artists who copied or adapted pictures from popular paintings and engravings. A few became recognized in the academic arts, and of these the most famous was Edward Bird, born in Wolverhampton in 1722. Bored by the uninspirational tray work, he left the industry for a successful career. He was elected to the Royal Academy in 1816.

Edwin Booth was a specialist in "Indian" designs and is always referred to as either the father of Lincoln's assassin or the actor. A study of the Booth biographies disproves any relationship to the American born actor or his family.

The men who painted the landscapes and picture trays were considered superior to the "ordinary workers who did borders." Stylized and commonplace, the borders nevertheless, required time, control and a special skill with the brush. Simple naive scenes (such as the one on the snuffer pattern) could be dashed off by a japanner, turning out two gross a day.

There is no evidence of a guild in the japanning trade but the competition between the shops kept the standards high. The workers joined the company that offered the best advantages. Local pride in the shops is evidenced by the fact that the people expressed a wish to see the articles prepared by Walton for the Great Exhibition in 1851. For two days the exhibit was shown at the Mechanic's Hall before going to London, where it received the highest award.

The japanned products which the Midlands exported to this country included about every household item from beds to candle snuffers, and bathtubs to ordinary kitchen graters, ornamented or simply coated with asphaltum varnish. This was possible because England controlled the tin market; tin-plate as well as the manufactured articles. When the imports of tin-plate reached a high of over twenty-one million dollars in 1889, the United States began

thinking seriously of an industry of its own. In 1890, the McKinley Tariff Act placed a price of 2.2 cents a pound on imported tin-plate, and the development of the industry began in this country.



Coal "vase" or scuttle, a late (1862) development of the industry
Some of these have églomisé panels set into the lid; export models have painted tin lids, more practical for shipping

REFERENCES

The Story of Japan and Tin-plating in Wolverhampton by W. H. Jones, 1900; Japanned Work in Wolverhampton by Gerald Mander, 1925; Lawley's History of Bilston, 1893.

OLD THEOREMS COME TO LIGHT

by Emilie Underbill

In the attic of a house in Seatauket, Long Island, in an old trunk a little school note-book was found. On the fly leaf was written in delicate script: "Elizabeth A. Burling, Wesleyan Seminary, New York. October 30, 1826." Between the pages, yellowed with age, were found six or seven exquisite theorems and some of the stencils for them. So brittle were they, that it took the greatest of care to remove them. There were pages of notes and directions recorded in the same neat feminine script.

Elizabeth Burling's granddaughter, Mrs. Raymond Lefferts, allowed me to mount the theorems and stencils and lent them together with the note-book to the Guild for the exhibition at Shelburne last fall. Many of you saw them. I am grateful to Mrs. Lefferts again who graciously has given me permission to copy some excerpts from the note-book for the *Decorator*.

To prepare transparent paper for Theorums

Take half a pint of Copal varnish, to which add half a pint of spirits of turpentine, put it on with a brush. This will render the paper perfectly transparent, when dry add an application of pure varnish, and cut your theorums from this paper.

Of Colouring Fruit

Pine Apples. Paint them an orange colour, shade them with raw, and burnt sienna; the leaves are painted with yellow and shaded with blue from the saucer, those that are decaying, first with yellow, and shaded with carmine and sienna.

Cherries. First paint with yellow, and shade them with carmine; in the dark shades, lake. *Dark Cherries.* First with yellow, then shaded with vermilion and lake mixed.

Strawberries. The first application shade light with carmine and yellow mixed; darken the shades with carmine or lake.

Purple Grapes. First paint them with a light purple from logwood, shaded with carmine.

White Grapes. Painted with a light yellow green, to which add a little verdigris.

Peaches. Thin masticot, shaded with raw sienna, the bloom of lake or carmine.

Pears. Masticot, deepened and mellowed with burnt sienna, the bloom the same as the apple.

The Purple Plum. Shaded very light with logwood purple, over which shade very light with saucer blue or ultra marine.

Red Currants. Shaded with carmine, spurted on the edges, light in the center.

To make liquid gold

Grind the finest leaf gold with strong gum water, very fine, adding, as you grind it, more gum water as you see necessary. When you have ground it as fine as you can, wash it in the saucer, then temper it with a little mercury sublimate, bind it in the saucer with a little dissolved gum, shake and spread it equally all over the saucer, use it with fair water only. Make liquid silver from the same process, observing in the using of it to temper it with glass of eggs instead of water.

(Here follow direction for some of her theorems. E. R. U.)

Plate Second represents the Damask Rose. It is painted with pink saucer, shaded darker with the same; the stalk is an olive green briared with carmine;

the leaves are first painted with a thin, soft crome, shaded with blue saucer or mineral green, some of the leaves are tinged on the edges with carmine, and veined with the same; the calix on the buds of a light green, touched off with carmine.

Plate Third is a Japonica, or Rose of Japan. It is shaded very light with lamp-black, and flushed with carmine very light. The seeds or pollen on the stamina are made of gambodge, and some of them are touched with carmine. There are many varieties of this rose, therefore it may be painted with light carmine and the light shades left white; the leaves on the under side are of a light yellow green, on the upper side of a bright dark green: the buds are of an olive colouring shaded, to form the embrocations with sienna or fine browns; the stalk of an olive green variagated with brown.

Plate Fourth is the Carnation Pink. It is shaded with pink saucer, in the dark shades, a repetition of the same, preserving the white or light shades, which produce a fine effect. The leaves are shaded first with crome, and some of them darkened with mineral green, others with the blue from the saucer, others again with carmine, representing some of the decay; stalks and calix of a light green.

Plate Fifth represents a group of Choice Flowers. The upper rose is of a very delicate tinge, painted first with the pink saucer, the second application is of a light wash of blue water, to give the tinge of the natural flower, and finished with pink saucer; the leaves and calix of the buds, of a light yellow green, made by applying crome first, and finished with mineral green and blue from the saucer, veined with carmine; the convolvulus and buds with ultra marine, blue saucer, or Antwerp blue; the leaves one shade darker than the rose leaves; the white lilly is shaded very light with lamp-black, the tops of the stamina a bright orange, the top of the pistle a light green, the leaves of a light yellow green. The tulip begins with carmine and yellow alternately, leaving a space of white, which will produce an effect very fine, the lower part of the leaves may be touched with a little light purple, and finished with carmine. The Stertion is painted yellow, and shaded with carmine. The rose which shows the calix is shaded in the darkest shades with lamp-black, and finished by two applications of dark carmine, maintaining light shades. This is a dark crimson rose, the leaves therefore will be a dark blue green, veined with lake. The poppy is a light purple heightened with carmine, shaded with darker purple in the dark shades; the seed vessel is light blue on top, and a light green under; the stamina is of gambodge; the leaves and stalk are of a bright green, made by applying crome, and finishing with saucer blue, excepting where the shades are very dark, those are made with Prussian blue and French berries.

THE MAYFLOWER MOTIF

by Isabel MacDuffie

To say that the brave little ship Mayflower II arrived at Plymouth Harbor on a beautiful sunny day in June under full sail would be a picturesque opening for this little story, but it would not be factual. Since we like to concern ourselves with facts it will be given in a forthright manner. However, in doing so, there is no need to sacrifice the picturesque and exciting. There were thousands of people lining the shores of Plymouth that cloudy day in June awaiting the first glimpse of the sturdy little vessel entering the harbor. There was an armada of small boats and large yachts following her progress with the east wind across Cape Cod Bay. In a thoroughly suitable twentieth century manner the Mayflower Transportation Vans (not to miss a commercial!) were lined up on the dock awaiting the unloading of her cargo. This was carried in handsome reproductions of old chests to be delivered across the nation in commemoration of the event. The great radio and television networks of the nation were represented there with necessary equipment mounted on boats to narrate the historical return of the Mayflower; and the jets, planes and helicopters dipping overhead all made for a festive welcome to Captain Alan Villiers and his Pilgrim-costumed crew.

The purpose of the voyage was to re-live a period in history with the hope of promoting good relations between England and the United States. In its home berth of Plymouth at the mouth of the Eel River, Mayflower II is to be the nucleus for the reconstruction of the original Pilgrim Colony for Americans to visit and learn more about the early days of our country. It is virtually history come alive.

As to the actual reconstruction of the ship, the amount of time and painstaking care to achieve this goal has been written in many books. It was the outcome of an Englishman's dream, Major Warwick Charlton, who was willing to devote much of his time to explore the possibilities of making this dream come true. By coincidence, the dream had been given some substance on this side of the Atlantic by a small group of Americans who had organized under Harry Hornblower and are known as Plimouth Plantation. William A. Baker, renowned naval architect, is a member of this group and had interested himself in gathering very spare material on 17th century shipbuilding in England and had drawn up some plans for a ship like Mayflower. Much research had been done in the hope for a reconstruction and rebuilding of Plymouth Colony. The actual building seemed all but impossible since there were no craftsmen known in this country who knew the old methods of shipbuilding, and the cost would have been prohibitive. The whole plan was dormant until Major Charlton's inquiries led him to contact the American planners. This story is told in the *Second Mayflower Adventure* by Warwick Charlton.

Ours was among the small boats steaming into Plymouth Harbor on the June day of her arrival. Captain Alan Villiers is one of the world's most able seamen. Among many of his adventures was the sailing of the Joseph Conrad—now berthed at Mystic Seaport—from Australia, and it was a disappointment for him to be obliged to accept a tow and not come into Plymouth under full sail (owing to time, tide and the narrow channel). The thousands of spectators on shore did not actually see her in the full splendor of sails unfurled.

As we cruised alongside we were able to get a very good view of the colorful costumes worn by the crew. They looked like real Pilgrims, and some had grown beards on the voyage. The complicated lines and rigging led me to wonder at the amazing amount of obscure detail which had been borrowed from the 17th century. Then,—as a decorator,—the color and the flower motif on the stern caught my attention. On a cloudy day the ship seemed to take on a mauve appearance with trim of blue. The Mayflower motif was a single large five-petal flower of white nestled between two green leaves with stems crossing. The thought came to me that surely this could not be authentic. The Pilgrims from my childhood history lessons had impressed me as being austere and not at all frivolous enough to paint a flower on their little craft. Volumes have been written on the project. Everything has been covered from the way the money was made available, materials provided, minute details concerning lines, dimensions, cargo—but nothing anywhere could I find about the painting of the vessel. No one I asked seemed to know. The answer came almost two years later under unexpected circumstances. It was by very good fortune that I happened to be invited to a party where Major Warwick Charlton was guest of honor. The group was small enough to permit me to talk with him quite some time. I could hardly wait to ask my question. He was most emphatic about the authenticity of the motif and maintained that the Pilgrims were a gay, adventurous little band,—the very nature of their voyage should have made it obvious. In his opinion it was not until much later when the Puritans dominated the colony that color, decoration and frivolity were frowned upon and austerity held forth.

The actual painting of the Mayflower motif was a labor of love done by the children of Brixham, England, where Mayflower II was reconstructed at an old ship yard. There 17th century methods were remembered by some of the older craftsmen. The Mayflower itself is a flower which blooms in England in May, the month the original ship sailed, and is not the trailing arbutus which we call mayflower in this country.

It was just about noon when the ship finally slipped into her mooring. As if in welcome, the sun filtered through the clouds as the little shallop rowed out to greet the captain and his crew. "America's Hometown" was gay with parades and celebrations the week that followed.

Already many of the old houses have been reproduced. Leyden Street, the

first street, leads up the hill towards the old fort where the Pilgrims attended church services. Plymouth Plantation is the directive body sponsoring the project which will grow as funds become available.

It should soon be one of the most interesting reconstructed historical villages in the country since it is truly "America's Hometown". Young America can learn its history lessons with pleasure to-day.

AN UNUSUAL ORIGINAL: A FAN TABLE

by Esther Oldham

Fan-shaped tables served the sole purpose of holding milady's choicest fans so that they might easily be exhibited and enjoyed by admirers. They were made especially for the grand salon and consequently were found in the drawing rooms of ladies who knew and appreciated the decorative arts of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries among which were beautiful fans.

The French fan table pictured here was made in about 1825-1835, and its cherry red brocaded interior holds about two dozen fans. Painted a soft, medium-green, its beauty is enhanced by small flecks of gold, covering its entire surface in imitation of Oriental lacquer. The wide scalloped edge is banded with gold leaf. The table top has for its scene a lady in a rose-colored costume of the eighteenth century. Her hair is powdered; she carries a fan, and is listening to a gentleman who is playing the cello. Each fan-stick is gold leaf decorated with small pink roses. The dimensions of the "fan" top are seventeen inches by twenty-one inches—which is the spread of the fan. The sides of the table display charming sprays of flowers. Graceful cabriole legs support the top which is about thirty-one inches from the floor.

Fan tables have become collectors' items and are so rare that they are to be found chiefly in museums abroad.

* * *

The Connoisseur Year Book for 1960 will be published in November 1959. Mr. Ramsey, Editor of The Connoisseur, London, England, will use Esther Oldham's article, "Hand Screens or Fire-fans" in the Year Book.



Top of Fan Table Original Fan Table
Owned by Esther Oldham

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

May 21-22-23, 1959

The Hudson Valley Chapter and the New-York State Historical Association were hosts at the Annual Meeting and Exhibition held at the Treadway Otesaga in Cooperstown, New York.

Last year a very happy agreement was concluded with the Association to house our Portfolio of Early American Designs, research material, and museum collection in the Farmer's Museum where the Association provides work rooms for members and prepares exhibitions for the general public.

Louis C. Jones, Director, with Frederick L. Rath, Jr., Vice-Director, stood at the door of beautiful Fenimore House on Thursday afternoon to welcome Guild members and guests for a cordial social hour.

It was a gay and friendly house-party where our Trustees and members became acquainted with Virginia Parslow, Assistant Curator at Farmer's Museum; Dorothy Barck, Librarian; Per Guldbeck, Research Associate; George Clay, Associate in Public Relations; and others of the Staff.

Mrs. John MacMorris, on Friday morning, introduced Dr. Jones who formally greeted the assembled members explaining the provisions of the agreement between the two societies and the mutual benefits that may be expected from this relationship.

Gold Leaf and Free-hand Bronze originals were featured at the Exhibition in the main ball-room of the Otesaga by Mrs. Spencer Avery, Chairman.

Demonstrations are for members, only, and are always a high spot of the meeting for those striving to elevate their craftsmanship. Mrs. Robert Keegan ably demonstrated the free-hand Bronze technique as a part of the program arranged by Walter Wright, Chairman.

During the three-day meetings, members and guests were privileged to roam at will through Fenimore House where the Guild is honored to have the Ann Butler Tin placed with the Association's outstanding collection of Folk Art. The fine, early stencilling on our Morgan Davis piano was admired in the Hall of Life Masks.

At the Farmer's Museum a special exhibition bearing our name had been thoughtfully and attractively set up by the Association staff utilizing the Society's recent purchases from the Brazer Estate and the Oldham Collection.

Registration Chairman, Mrs. H. J. Parliman, reported that 172 members and guests were present. Of this number 148 attended the social hour and gala dinner Friday evening, when it was our pleasure to entertain the Association staff with their spouses.

After dinner, many glass slides from Esther Brazer's large collection of designs on walls, floors, chairs and trays were shown by Mrs. Adrian Lea, Photograph Chairman. Valuable and often amusing comments were made by

Mrs. George DeVoe and other members, adding to the information needed to make this collection more useful when it, too, is housed at Cooperstown.

It was announced that plans are well underway for publishing a Guild book—

"THE ORNAMENTED CHAIR, ITS DEVELOPMENT IN AMERICA."

Zilla Lea, Editor, reported that Esther Brazer's unpublished research material and photographs are being used as a basis for this work with the addition of further research now being made by several members.

The Society is showing an encouraging and steady growth.

To the 606 members reported by Mrs. Willis Howard, Membership Chairman, the Trustees added the name of Julian I. Milliman as an Associate member. Mrs. Joseph Watts, Standards Charman, reported that 10 applicants qualified as members at Cooperstown making a total of 617.

The attendance at the annual business meeting Saturday morning numbered 72. The following Trustees were elected for a three-year term:

Mrs. Walter Burrows	Noroton, Conn.
Mrs. Adrian Lea	Glens Falls, N. Y.
Mrs. Harry MacDuffie	Nashua, N. H.
Mrs. Andrew Underhill	Bellport, N. Y.
Mrs. Charles Safford	Springfield, Vt.

General Chairmen Mrs. John MacMorris and Mrs. William Sheehan handled all the business details connected with this large meeting agreeably and efficiently. The hostesses, Mrs. Harold White and Mrs. Philip Peck, with other Chapter members, made this an unusually pleasant and friendly meeting. They were assisted cordially by Miss Amelia Bielaski, Otsego County Farm Bureau, who furnished a list of willing local hostesses. The Society extends grateful and sincere thanks to the New York State Historical Association and the Hudson Valley Chapter for their gracious hospitality.

At a Trustees meeting immediately following the annual business meeting, new officers were elected for a two-year term.

President Walter H. Wright, Harwichport, Mass.

Second Vice President Mrs. Andrew Underhill, Bellport, N. Y.

Corresponding Secretary .. Mrs. Harry MacDuffie, Nashua, N. H.

BERNICE M. DRURY,

President, 1957-1959

CHAPTERS' REPORT

Many Chapters were unable to meet during the past winter because of severe weather conditions and, as a result, there was less activity than usual.

Hudson Valley Chapter sponsored an outstanding exhibit during November and December at the Albany Institute of History and Art. The Traveling Exhibition was on display for one month; originals and the work of members for two months. The exhibit elicited great interest in the Albany area and received good publicity by the press and from literature distributed by the Institute.

An application for permission to form a Chapter in the Chicago area was submitted to the Board of Trustees for their consideration. When the application is approved, it will be our initial representation in the Middle West, and another milestone in our History.

Since the Fall Meeting at Shelburne, the Chapters made the following gifts to the Guild:

Hudson Valley: \$25.00 for a four drawer cabinet in which to keep Guild research material at Cooperstown.

New Jersey: \$106.00 for Museum Fund.

Pioneer: In Memory of the late Elizabeth Gordon, Pioneer Chapter voted to give \$40.00 as reimbursement to the Guild for an original from the Brazer Collection.

Sleepy Hollow: \$20.00 for the Museum Fund.

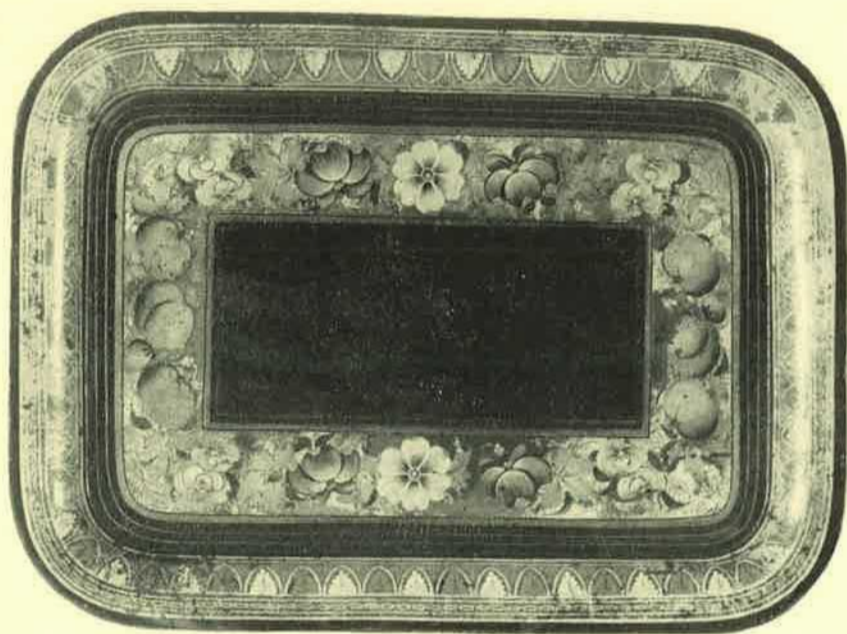
During the past year, there has been an increasing interest in portfolios, and many Chapters are presently enlarging and improving them.

The dissolution of Sleepy Hollow Chapter is reported with regret. It is hoped that at some time in the future it will again appear on the roll of Chapters.

I appreciate the cooperation of the Chapters during the year, and assure them that I am at their service at all times.

CLARA B. McCaw, *Chapters' Chairman*

May 21, 1959



Original
Owned by Gina Martin

REPORT OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION *by Anne E. Avery*

The exhibition, held in the main ballroom of the Otesaga Hotel, Coopers-town, demonstrated many of the aspects of a gala homecoming. A tastefully decorated room, with sparkling views of the lake and grounds, it afforded that supreme luxury—an abundance of space. The members and applicants pieces were arranged at the foot of a low platform which displayed the Travelling Museum to the delight of many first-time viewers. There were twenty-two members pieces in all, applicants submitted twenty-five. Of these twenty-two were placed on exhibition.

Freehand Bronze and Gold Leaf originals made up the greatest number of originals. While the total was small, twenty-seven in all, the quality of the workmanship and the perfection of many of the articles more than offset the size of the show.

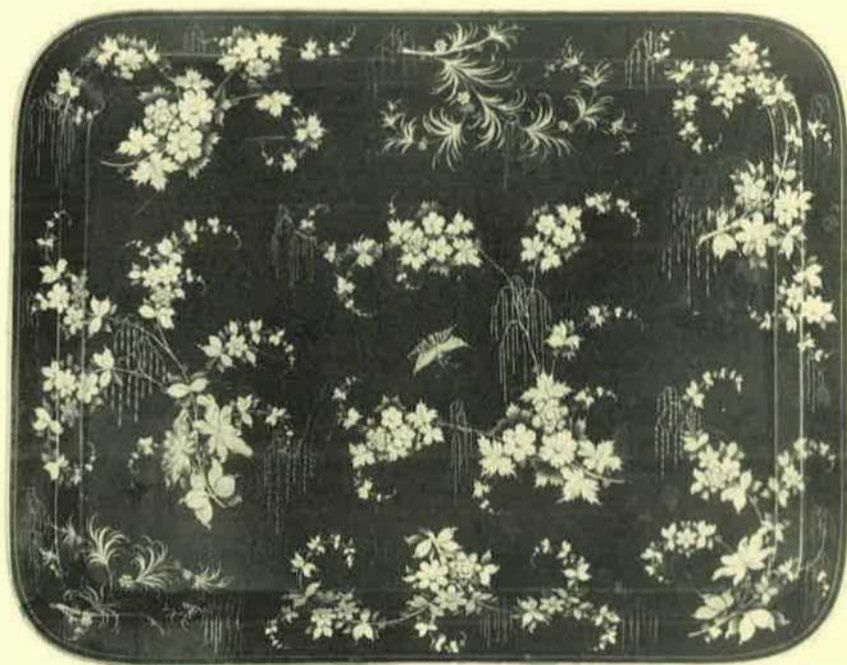
Several of the most unusual had been brought to illustrate various techniques in the excellent demonstration of freehand bronzing. One perfectly preserved little snuffer tray portrayed gold leaf cranes on each end. Graceful butterflies glazed a soft red and beautifully modelled leaves surrounded flowers of the same subdued red. A stunning bread tray patterned with

Chinese pagodas interpreted an unusual freehand bronze technique in the shaping of the bronzy ground and delicate waterfalls of silver powder.

The dark, crimson-red of a large rectangular tray afforded an ideal background for a stunning pair of herons executed in gold leaf with bright blue washes on their sinuous throats. This striking piece, with brilliant gold leaf scrolls in contrast to the artfully rendered bronze leaves and expert color washes, was much admired.

Distinguished by its mint condition and multiple flower bouquets, each of a different variety, was a black tray. Two shades of leaf, pale gold and deep gold, accented with shades of rose and blue-grey, produced a subtle effect. In direct contrast to all this richness, was an extremely large gothic tray. This depicted four boldly drawn, white lily sprays encircled by small gold leaves and tendrils.

A typical New York state cornice board painted a medium green attracted much attention. Shining gold leaf cornucopias and morning glories set off the masterfully cut and stenciled peaches, melons and strawberries. Centering the board was a bowl, also executed in gold leaf, brimming with fruit and flowers. Silver powder stars and ribbon-like motifs created a most effervescent effect.



Original
Owned by Mrs. Stephen Birdsall

Chinese, was the lady seated on a bench and squired by a gentleman with a lamp-pole which centered a white, oblong tray. The border, composed of "Stormont" work and pale blue medallions, displayed freehand-bronze peaches, pomegranites and other fruits. Another tray, of a rich dark red-brown, showed handsome bright-red flowers highlighted on the petals with gold stump work. The corners of the flange held expertly sculptured flowers and leaves, transparent and beautifully fragile.

In a different style were three papier maché trays of graduated sizes. The extremely elaborate painting featured much fine gold leaf work in feathery "drips". Similarly elegant, but of an Oriental pattern, was a large gothic tray said to have come from China and to have been treasured by the same family for many years. Worked out in two shades of leaf, it was literally covered with temples, sampans and bridges. The border on the flange featured extremely appealing rural scenes.

A change of pace was offered by an oval tray with a painted center representing a spacious mansion set in a deer park. Cool-feeling bluish greens dominated the landscape of sail boats on a tiny lake and a herdsman with his cattle. Shells, acorns and apple blossoms wreathed a large gallery which, unfortunately, had been heavily varnished.

Delightfully-handled stump work marked the craftsmanship on another rectangular tray. The combination of pale and dark leaf and several powders for the flowers was most effective, while the deftly contoured leaves and tiny blue forget-me-nots provided a stunning foil for their richness.

The uniqueness of our one "gold leaf on glass" could not be questioned. It was a framed picture, signed G. Geisser and dated 1887. The scene, of an old woman about to empty the rat cage and bestow the occupant on her expectant pussy, was distinguished by heavy black etching and enormous detail—complete even to the dangling tail of M. Rat, himself! A beautifully preserved theorem on velvet, of a basket holding a melange of currants, cherries, grapes, peaches and pears; plus a realistically speckled "over-ripe" apple drew much study.

A tray, referred to by its owner as "Florentine," completed this distinguished show. The shape itself was rare, for it had a concave scalloped edge. The pattern was floral, but such flowers!—tulips, canterbury bells, lilies, forget-me-nots and old fashioned nicotine. All were sculptured in powders by a knowing hand, in straight lines, giving a crisp "pleated" effect, then washed with extraordinary colors and subtle pastels.

It was a genuine pleasure to have so many of our Cooperstown friends as guests. Many of our own members who often are unable to attend the meetings, came, viewed and admired. The lovely flower arrangements sent to the hall by members of the local Garden Club added much to our welcome as well as to the attractiveness and informality of the exhibition.

APPLICANTS ACCEPTED AS MEMBERS

Cooperstown, N. Y. — May 1959

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>
Brand, Mrs. Howard	440 Herbert St., Orange, Ct.
Carey, Mrs. George	Sutton Rd., R. D. 2, Trucksville, Pa.
Hall, Mrs. Stuart	23 Victoria Dr., South Burlington, Vt.
Leffingwell, Mrs. R. D.	20 East Washington St., Glens Falls, N. Y.
Donald, Mrs. Harry W.	Egypt, Mass.
Peroni, Miss Neva	52 Spring Garden Ave., Norwich, Ct.
Rees, Miss Ann	320 State St., Nanticoke, Pa.
Smith, Mr. H. A. Jr.	Pioneer Ave., R. D. 3, Dallas, Pa.
Topping, Mrs. H. S.	Arrowhead Farm, Wainscott, L. I., N. Y.
Bogni, Mrs. R. D.	Montpelier, Vt.

MEMBERS "A" AWARDS

Cooperstown, N. Y. — May 1959

<i>Name and Address</i>	<i>Class</i>
Laura Burns	
17 Greenleaf St., Rye, N. Y.	Stencilling on Tin
Annetta Cruze	
Apartment 710, Riverhouse, Harrisburg, Pa.	Stencilling on Tin
Helen Gross	
Sutton Rd., Trucksville, Pa.	Stencilling on Tin
Natalie B. Pierson	
16 Alden Pl., Bronxville, N. Y.	Stencilling on Tin
Florence Bogert	
Closter, N. J.	Stencilling on Wood
Harriet Syversen	
1119 Bromley Ave., West Englewood, N. J.	Stencilling on Wood
Emilie Underhill	
Bellport, L. I.	Stencilling on Wood
Clara B. McCaw	
12 Breatly Crescent, Radburn, N. J.	Country Painting
Florence Bogert	
Closter, N. J.	Country Painting
Annetta Cruze	
Harrisburg, Pa.	Country Painting
Chester P. Galleher	
Roslyn Farms, Carnegie, Pa.	Country Painting
Mrs. Joshua Cookenbach	
2313 Chestnut St., Camp Hill, Pa.	Gold Leaf Painting

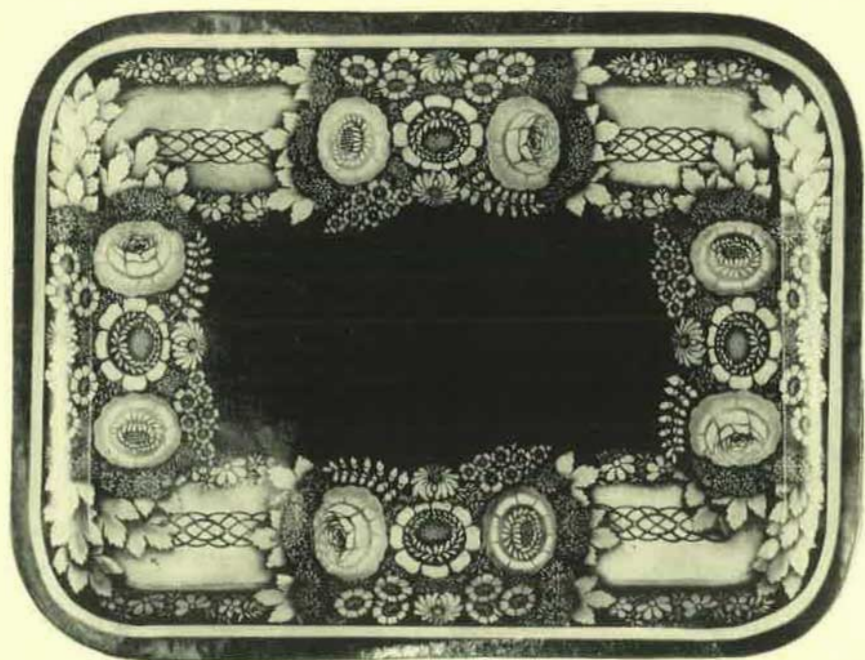
<i>Name and Address</i>	<i>Class</i>
Helen Gross Trucksville, Pa.	Gold Leaf Painting
Kay Fiske 23 Bob White Dr., Norwalk, Conn.	Gold Leaf Painting
Ellen Armstrong 141 Maple Ave., Ithaca, N. Y.	Lace Edge Painting
Maria Murray New Rochelle, N. Y.	Lace Edge Painting
Clara B. McCaw Radburn, N. J.	Freehand Bronze
Viola Brauns 52 Walnut Rd., Maywood, N. J.	Glass Panel—Stencil Border
Helen Pease 16 Griffen Ave., Scarsdale, N. Y.	Glass Panel—Stencil Border
Margaret Watts Westwood, N. J.	Glass Panel Gold Leaf #1
Margaret Watts Westwood, N. J.	Glass Panel Gold Leaf #1
Helen Pease Scarsdale, N. Y.	Glass Panel Gold Leaf #2
Natalie Pierson Bronxville, N. Y.	Gold Panel Gold Leaf #2
Viola Brauns Maywood, N. J.	Glass Panel Gold Leaf #2



A Award — Stencilling on Wood
Emilie Underhill

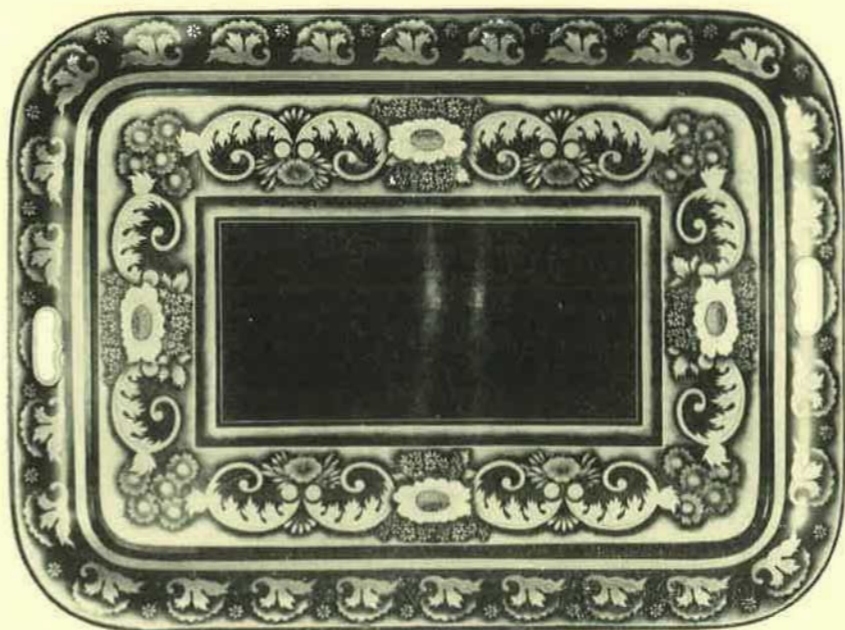
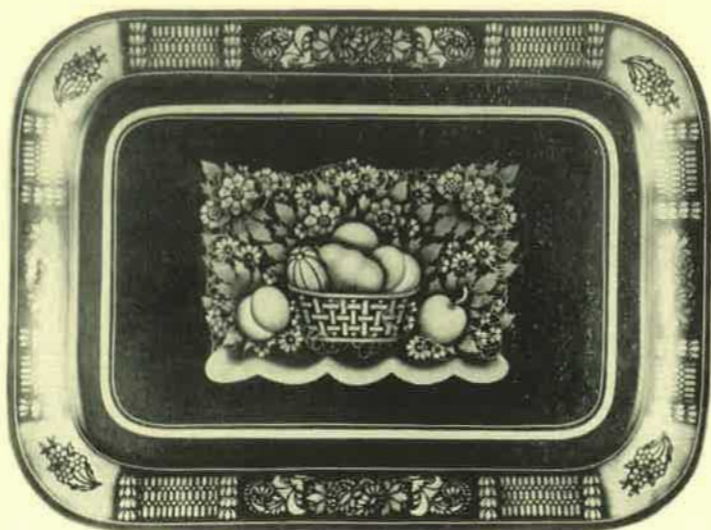


A Award — Stencilling on Wood
 Florence Bogert
 A Award — Stencilling on Wood
 Harriet Syverson



A Award — Stencilling on Tin
Laura Burns

A Award — Stencilling on Tin
Natalie Pearson

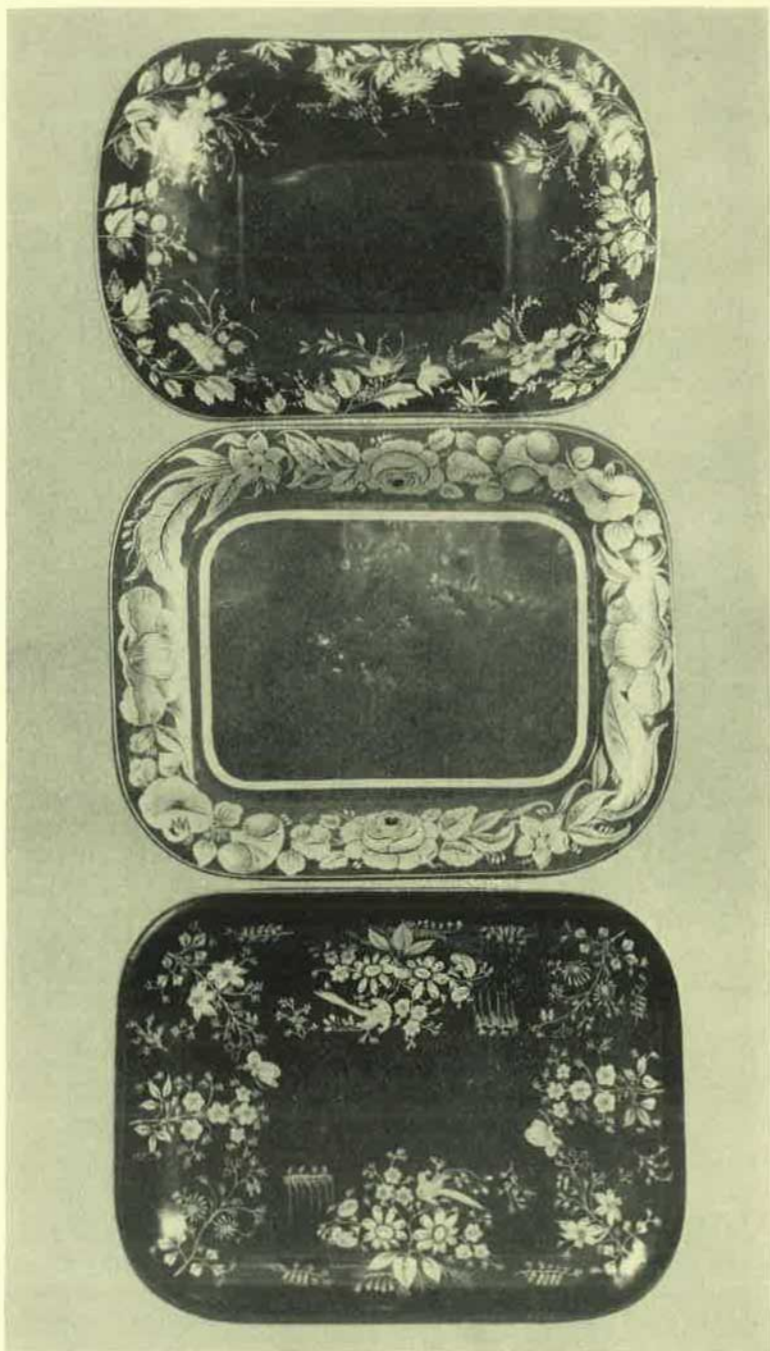


A Award — Stencilling on Tin
Helen Gross

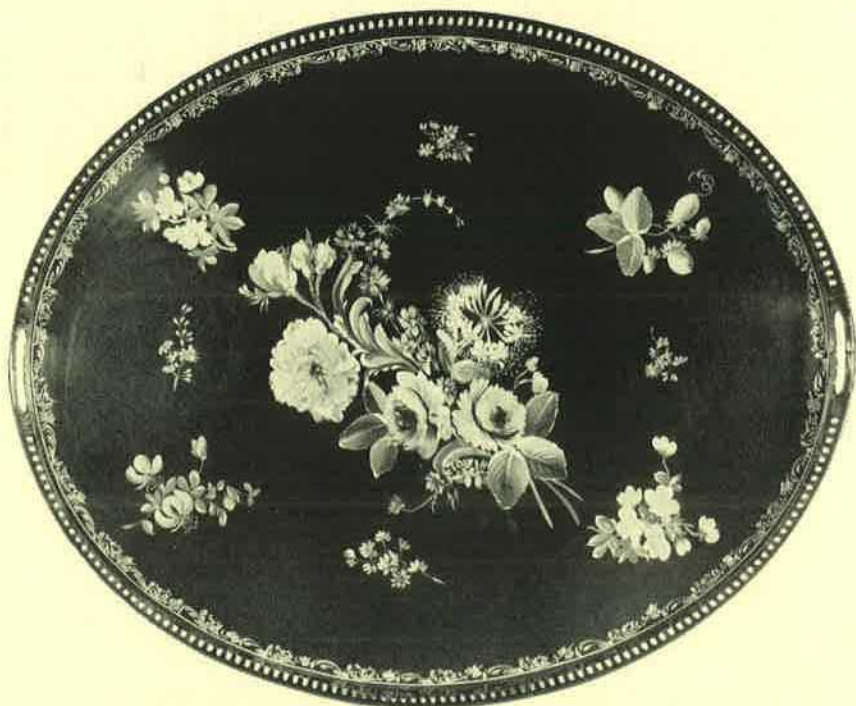
A Award — Stencilling on Tin
Annetta Cruze



A Awards — Country Painting
Clara McCaw, Annetta Cruze, Chester Galleher

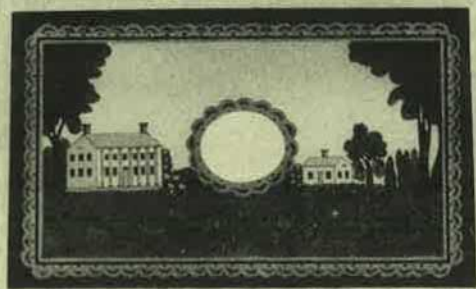


A Awards — Metal Leaf
Helen Gross, Kay Fiske, Forrest Cookenback

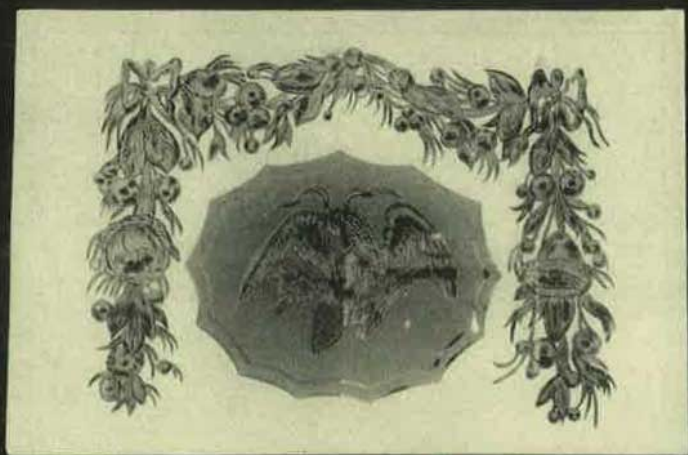


A Award — Lace Edge Painting — Ellen Armstrong

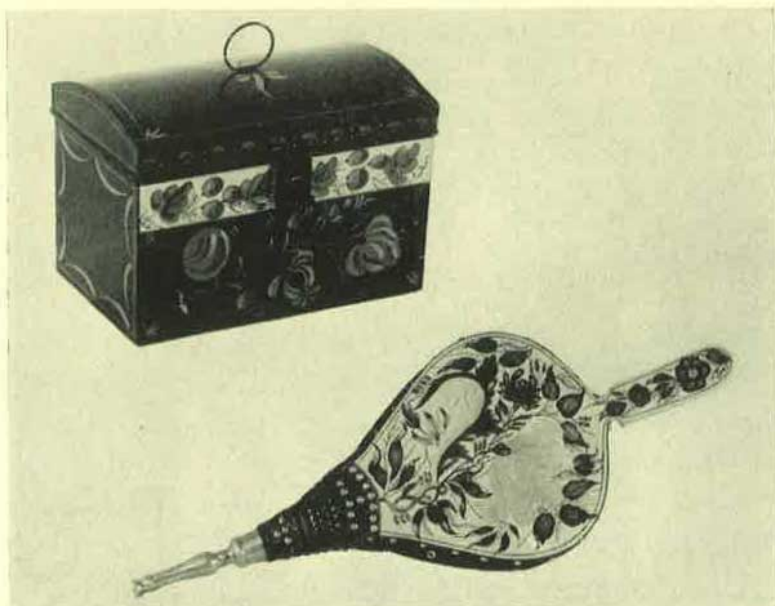
A Award — Lace Edge Painting — Maria Murray



A Awards — Glass Panels
Viola Brauns, Peg Watts, Peg Watts, Helen Pease



A Awards — Glass Panels
Natalie Pearson, Viola Brauns, Helen Pease



A Award — Country Painting — Florence Bogert

A Award — Freehand Bronze — Clara McCaw

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MUSEUM — 1958-1959

The Museum Committee was delighted to receive a number of very fine pieces from members. These pieces will be on exhibit at Cooperstown, N. Y., with the Brazer and Oldham Collections. The Society is grateful to the following members for their generous contributions.

Mrs. Frank Faccio

West Englewood, N. Y. Child's green rocker with painted design.

Mrs. Clyde B. Holmes

Belfast, Me. Papier maché card case, Victorian, with Mother of Pearl.

Mrs. Charles Welby Leslie

Wellesley Hills, Mass. White "Bride's" Tray, fine decoration.

Mrs. Henry Shepherd

New Boston, N. H. Decorated coffee pot, geometric design.
Large tin deed box, white band, country painting.

Seneca Chapter

New York Round papier maché card tray. Dusted background.

Maria Murray

New Rochelle, N. Y. Historical scrap book, illuminated.



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AMERICAN FOLK ART
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by

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In the preface of her second book—her first was *American Antique Decoration*, reviewed in the Spring 1957 *Decorator*—Mrs. Sabine says: "Folk Art could not be defined better than in these words, borrowed from William Morris, English poet and decorator of the last century, 'Art made by the people and for the people as a joy to the maker and the user'." And her pages are filled with ideas, designs and step-by-step instructions that will help to make painting a "joy to the maker and the user."


The chapters, which begin with a bit of historical background in *A Glance at the Past*, are filled with helpful hints and good ideas. The chapters on *Materials*, *How to Use Brushes*, *How to Prepare Wood and Tin for Decorations*, *How to Mix Background Colors*, *How to Transfer a Design*, *How to Stripe*, *Final Stages*, *How to Make Designs Larger or Smaller*, *How to Use and Adapt Designs*, *Reverse Painting on Glass*, *Designs from Old Fraktur Paintings*, *Decorated Barns* and *Hints on Learning and Working* are all rewarding, especially the last.

The book is well illustrated. There are 11 color plates and 12 photographs of objects from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Pennsylvania German Society and the New York Historical Society, as well as 34 line plates and 50 or more patterns.

There are also some sketches showing groups of objects that have been decorated recently. These, to this reviewer's eyes, are rather poor and detract from the book. I do not think that they would prove especially helpful to the novice decorator.

The instructions are very well done and seem easy to follow. The instructions in most "how-to-do-it" books are apt to be confusing but such is not the case here.

In Chapter 11 Mrs. Sabine herself states: "In this book nothing has been said in the way of instruction in the restoring of painted decorations on old pieces, because this is a book chiefly for those who are starting to learn to decorate." And so it is. But it is a book full of infectious enthusiasm for the craft and some of this enthusiasm seeps through the printed pages. Mrs. Sabine makes it sound like fun to paint!



Decorative Arts in the Cinema

by Evelyn M. Benson

Since space does not permit us to mention every good motion picture produced, we try to choose those having the most to offer in color and design. We hope you, too, will enjoy them.

"The Ten Commandments"

It would seem certain that this production will be counted among the best films of our times.

The set designs were supervised by the Department of Antiquities, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

This is a lesson in biblical history covering the thirty year period before the ten commandments were written, and a fine study of the peoples, so many centuries ago.

Fascinating to see is the method used to construct the sculptures, buildings, walls and cities of Egypt.

The palace of Pharaoh, surprisingly modern in comfort, is rich in murals, carved ivory chairs, decorated doors, and beautiful gardens.

One scene is lavish with gorgeous gifts brought to Pharaoh from many lands, another with decorated chariots used by men of war, yet others with the colorful clothing worn by the Egyptians.

A long picture, with many events almost beyond belief, perhaps the parting of the Red Sea is the most spectacular.

Surely, to accomplish this feat of engineering is an art in itself.

"The Barbarian and the Geisha"

The life of Townsend Harris, American Consul General, first foreign diplomat sent to Japan in 1856.

This picture is interesting for its photography, views of the harbor, houses, gardens, and lovely Japanese decoration.

Throughout the film there is something exquisite to see, such as painted kimonos, obis, fans, lanterns, screens, wall hangings, flower arrangements, and stenciled symbols on walls.

Outstanding is the palace of the Shogun, Military General of Japan.

The entire entrance hall is done in mountain and garden scenes. One wall slides back to reveal another room painted in the same manner, until several walls have rolled back making an enormous throne room.

Impressive to watch is the brush stroke technique of the Japanese secretaries. Design is everywhere, yet so subtle one is not aware of it at first glance.

"The Inn of the Sixth Happiness"

The true story of an Englishwoman and her missionary work in China. Typical Chinese color and pattern.

"Imitation of Life"

An excellent motion picture. Modern in treatment, this offers a very good lesson in interior decorating.

"A Certain Smile"

Very trite, yet enjoyable, due to the lovely views of Paris, Sorbonne University, and the Riviera. A blend of French provincial and modern settings.

"The King and I"

This film is making its second or third round of the theatres. If you missed it the first time, it is well worth seeing now.

Siam is the country, breathtaking the architecture, gardens, colors, and costumes.

NOTES FROM THE RESEARCH EDITOR

Isabel MacDuffie

Many comments have come to this desk in regard to lace edge-painted bellows; so far no one has seen any and there is some doubt that any were done in this technique. One writer considered it too elegant for the lowly fireplace. The ornate Chippendale, freehand bronze, and gold leaf ones which have been loaned for our exhibitions seem to indicate that beauty and elegance *did* grace the lowly hearth in our early houses.

Did you see the fine reproductions of bellows to paint at Cooperstown? Surely this is one step in the right direction. It's no longer necessary to paint on the flimsy little "giftee shoppee" items with funnels for nozzles, plastic for leather and carpet tacks to hold them together.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Many of the readers of the *Decorator* are interested in the work of the American portrait painters, as well as in the art of japaanning. Have you read James Thomas Flexner's *Gilbert Stuart*? The story of the snuff-grinder's son who was the rage of London at thirty, the darling of Washington society at forty, and the dissipated "Dr. Johnson" of Boston at seventy, is lively and informative. As Flexner says, "His life reflects the conflicts of the generation into which he was born, and so did his work."

NOTICES FROM THE TRUSTEES

FALL MEETING — HOTEL MARCY

Lake Placid — New York — October 8-9-10, 1959

USE OF THE NAME OF THE SOCIETY

The name of the Esther Stevens Brazer Guild of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. may not be used for personal advertising, for stationery, or for business cards.

POLICY

Motion carried June 4, 1958. "That after three notices of violation of any Guild policy, a member's name shall be dropped from the membership list by vote of the Board of Trustees."

Anyone writing an article or a book, wishing the approval of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. should send manuscript and illustrations to the President. A special committee has been appointed to review such work.

No articles will be accepted for judging unless they are permitted to be exhibited.

The Judging and Standards Committee have agreed to open up a Special Class for *Master Craftsman* only. Such class will have no requirements except that the design fits the article and must be authentic.

Member's booklet of Standards for Craftsman Awards are available by request. Send 25¢ to Jean Wylie for handling.

Send \$1.00 to Jean Wylie for your Index of the first 16 issues of the *Decorator*.

Send self-addressed 4-cent envelope 4½ x 9½ to Jean Wylie for the Society's brochure.

Send requests for Teacher Certification interviews to Mrs. S. V. VanRiper, chairman.

Send request for brochure on Traveling Exhibition to Mrs. Edwin W. Rowell, 102 Park Avenue, Whitman, Mass.

The prayer of St. Francis of Assisi is printed in Vol. I, No. 1, page 5, October 1946.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Payable July 1, 1959 to Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc.

Initiation Fee	\$10.00	Associate	\$ 10.00
Regular	5.00	Life	100.00
Benefactor			\$500.00

Mail to Mrs. Willis Howard, 78 Bank Street, Lebanon, N. H.

Motion: Carried January 18, 1957. "After dues are in arrears for one year, membership chairman will notify such members that their names will be taken from mailing list and no further notices or copies of the *Decorator* will be sent" until dues are paid.

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