

The Decorator

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Stockbridge, Massachusetts

Fall 1965



Journal of the
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION, INC.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION, INC.

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Esther Stevens Brazier*

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Original Caddy with Pierced Edge and Lace Edge Painting
Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence M. Sides

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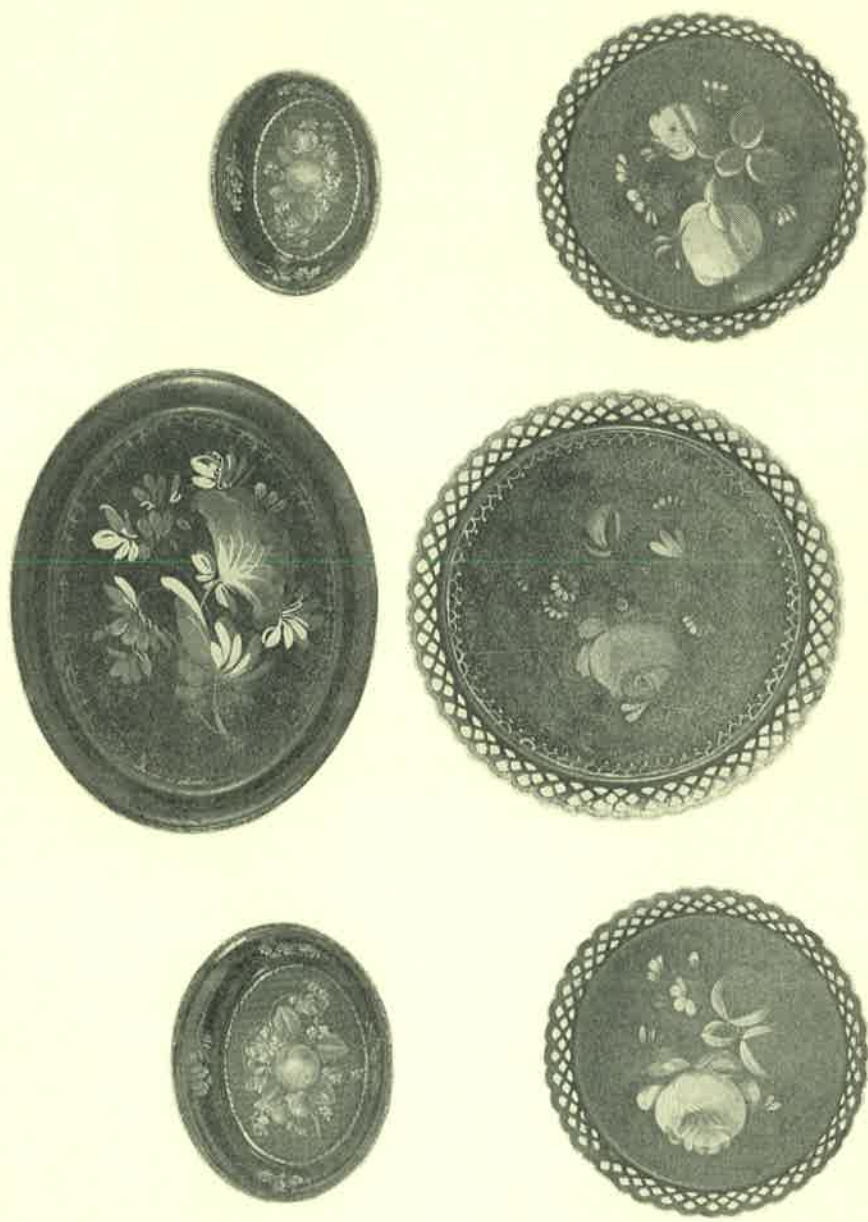
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Original Lace Edge Miniatures
Center Trays — Courtesy of Margaret Willey
Left and Right Trays — Courtesy of Dorothy Hurchings



Original Lace Edge Tray -- Courtesy of Gina Martin

EDITORIAL

An antique dealer in England recently made the statement that the English people must now come to the United States to try to recover some of their early ornamented pieces for their own collections. Viewing the magnificent display of original lace edge articles at the Stockbridge Meeting was convincing evidence that there is some truth in that statement.

It is apparent that the term "lace edge" is a colloquial expression which we have come to use in referring to both the type of piece and the technique of painting, for in the land of origin the article is described as "pierced edge" and no special term is used for the painting technique itself. It would be interesting and enlightening to learn if anyone has ever found the term "lace edge" in any article written previous to those of Esther Stevens Brazer.

The historical background of this category has been covered in two previous articles in *THE DECORATOR*, both of which also appear in our latest publication, *The Decorator Digest*. Typical motifs of the lace edge designs are well described in the Exhibition Report.

Appearing on the Cover is a photograph of an exquisite caddy which was exhibited at the Spring Meeting with piercing on the lower edge and beautifully decorated on the front, back, top, and sides with delicate sprays of flowers and fruits. Other choice originals appear throughout the issue, our only regret being that many fine originals arrive at the meetings too late for photographing.

MONA D. ROWELL

LOCAL COLOR
Carolyn H. Chouinard
(Part II)

It is a pity that Perry Tavern's competitor, the Smith Tavern on the Warwick Road, is not still standing, for history asserts that the ballroom and guest room in this hostelry were decorated with "hand-painted evergreen trees". The Smith Tavern, built c. 1805, was partially destroyed by an 1821 tornado, subsequently rebuilt, and in 1880 was totally destroyed by fire.

So this fragmentary record of a wall painting must be placed in the same intangible area as the painted floors with lamp-black spots called "marbleing" done with "a turkey or goose feather" and some stencilled walls in various colors with flowers and other figures, briefly referred to in 1904 by nonagenarian Jonas Wilder, in recalling his Wendell, Mass. boyhood.

One cannot help wondering now and then, though, if Captain Smith's "evergreen" trees were of the coniferous variety or a local play on words — for approximately four miles or so from Smith's Tavern — in Warwick Center, on the Athol Road, Colonel Lemuel Wheelock most certainly had evergreen trees — painted in his lower and upper halls and stairwell.

Colonel Wheelock's house was built for him by Chapin Holden of Warwick in 1828. The Colonel's reputation still comes through the century or more since his death most strongly as a shrewd hard-headed, hardhearted businessman, money-lender, and community pillar, and tales are still told of his vanity, pomposity and lack of charity. Most fortunately for posterity, his home only reflects his prosperity, a spacious two-story home, combining taste and utility with its graceful front door and upper hall window, wide central hall, carved fireplace mantels and nicely proportioned rooms within. It must have been an adroit appeal to his vanity which swayed him in 1830 to permit the "two painters (who) came from Boston" to adorn his hall with a mural of trees and to embellish his woodwork with graining.

The mural is painted against the white plaster background, the boughs of the trees bear feathery but full foliage and bend downward, and are supported by slim, palm-like trunks. However the trees do not truly picture the palm tree, nor any other known species, except for one small, crudely drawn Weeping Willow near the entrance. The trees

are in various sizes and executed in shades of green. The larger trees are highlighted by a line of yellow along one side. The trunks of the smaller trees are brushed with two rudimentary curved lines. Along the stairs, at mid-point, a trunk extends up beyond the upper hall floor, the top of the tree terminating next to the ceiling. A series of humped curves down the stairs apparently indicates the fall of the land. More curved lines indicate terrain and hills. Above the upper hall window, and extending about a foot on each side wall is a line of smaller trees — either a frieze or an attempt at perspective. Over the front door and extending on the walls in the same manner, small trees are also painted. One



Holbrook House
North Room Door Graining — Stencilled Basket of Fruit

segment is done in a very light greenish-yellow and the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Holbrook, stated that they had been told that this was done to achieve perspective. (See *DECORATOR* Vol. XIX, No. 2, Page 12.)

The mural bears a strong likeness to Figure 69, Hall Fresco, Mather House, Marlboro, Vermont in Edward B. Allen's *Early American Wall Painting*. The accompanying text compares this with some walls at the Cob Inn, Groton, Mass., and a Deerfield, Mass. mural (now destroyed).

The doors are grained in two tones, the panels are undercoated in yellow with an overcoat in thin dark brown. The dark brown picked up and swirled in a manner that strongly suggests finger-painting. The entire effect is very striking and the panels have a deep rich color. Frame and crosspieces are in the same combination of colors, but the graining is done in smooth strokes with an occasional knothole imitated. The dado in the north room or "best parlor" is executed in the same manner as the door panels, on twenty inch panels of wood. Originally, the owner stated, the graining was also on the board beneath the mantel shelf but had been painted over some years ago.

On either side of the fireplace, on the grained dado, in a space approximately twelve by twelve inches is a stencilled basket of fruit and leaves in a deep bronze, the basket accented in yellow-white paint and the tendrils also painted in the same yellow-white. The baskets of fruit are of slightly unequal size.

The names of the two painters from Boston are unrecorded as are the names of the persons who painted the Perry Tavern and the Whitaker-Clary House, but the name of one artist is known and there exists today a mural painted by Tryphenia Goldsbury Smith.

It may be logical to assume, for lack of any other evidence, that Tryphenia, wife of the Reverend Preserved Smith, might have watched the goings-on up the road from her house with some private thoughts of her own concerning Colonel Wheelock and his interior decorating.

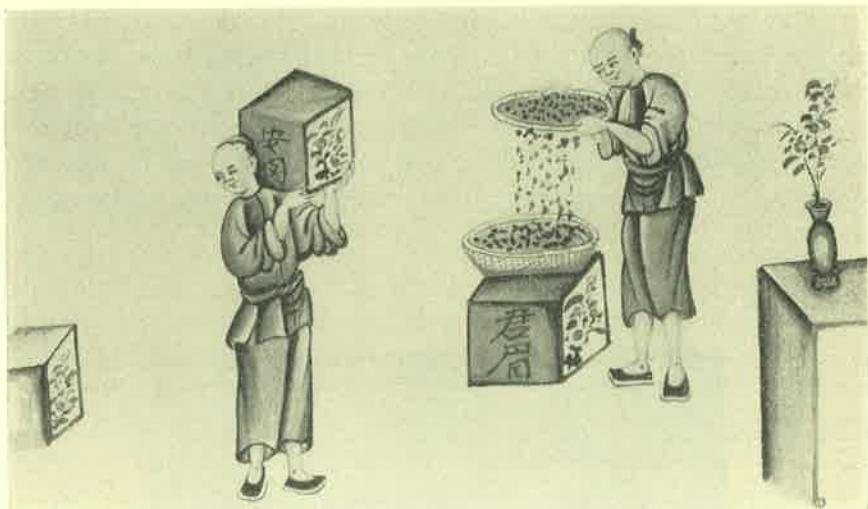
Shortly after Reverend Smith's call to serve the town of Warwick in 1814, a new house was built for him. In 1828 with the help of his parishioners and 20 yoke of oxen, it was moved almost a mile to a location on the Athol Road, Warwick Center. He married Tryphenia Goldsbury, daughter of Colonel James Goldsbury in 1823. Little is known about Tryphenia, but according to Warwick's historian, Mr. Charles Morse, she had some artistic talent of her own. Her death is recorded in 1835.

Her narrow two-story house, with a rear ell, is characterized by a steeply pitched roof; in 1936 it was purchased by the Congregational Society and remodeled to accommodate religious services and dedicated as the Metcalf Memorial Chapel.

One day, Tryphenia, motivated by a need for self-expression, went up the turned and narrow break-a-leg stairs and opened the attic door to the steep stairwell, and there on a triangular piece of plaster next to the stairway and under the angled roof she painted her own tree mural. Against an azure background she placed a sturdy tree and rounded the foliage with full strokes, using browns and yellow-green as her colors!



Attic Mural — Metcalf Chapel — Warwick, Mass.
Painted by Tryphenia Goldsbury Smith



Chinese Pith Painting — Courtesy of Mrs. Charles Welling

VELVET PAINTINGS

(Trompe l'Oeil)

Madeline W. Hampton

The origin of velvet painting and the use of the stencil appear to lie with the Chinese, in antiquity, as does so much of our other decorative work.

In the 1700s, along with lacquered objects, porcelains, etc., from China, there also appeared in the western world, whole albums of pictures done by the Chinese on what they called "rice-paper". The so-called "rice-paper" is not actually a paper at all, but a white, velvety pith derived from a tree in China resembling the sycamore. In an article entitled "Rice-paper Paintings; 'Trivialities' of the China Trade" which appeared in the March 1956 issue of *ANTIQUES*, Margaret E. Cobb wrote, "There is usually no background except the white of the pith, which in itself is effective".

There are several of these albums in the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, and I have seen two that are privately owned. These appear to be painted, but the paint does not come through to the back of the pith although it is opaque and very thin.

As with other Chinese decorated wares, the western world hastened to emulate, and, although pith was not available, its very texture suggested white velvet which was available.

The terminology is, in itself, deceiving, for although done by mechanical means, they were called "Paintings on Velvet". Surely, fine work was being done in this field by people in Europe long before 1800.

These aimed, with stencil, to create realistic flowers, fruits, etc., and we find very fine work primarily on face-fans and firescreens of this earlier period. None of these were crude or "primitive". It was a day of fine craftsmanship, and they were trying to copy the much admired Chinese wares by a technique then known to only a few. Probably none of these were ever originally protected by glass, and, therefore, they have been stained with time, sun and dust — not tea!

The early velvet was of a much finer weave and had a tighter, closer pile than our modern product. Some of these velvet paintings, although now framed, (dealer's choice) show plainly from the back the impression of the wooden frame over which they stayed stretched for the long years that they served as firescreens. These finest and earliest ones have been cleanly done with stencils, well shaded, meticulously joined, and had no overpainting other than nice fine veins, tendrils and stamens, none of which ran or showed from the back. All of the colors are somewhat muted, but none, fugitive as so often happened later. Trompe l'oeil (meaning literally 'fool the eye') realism was their aim, and that they succeeded and were much admired by the general public for their excellence is attested to by the fact that velvet painting became incorporated into the curricula of the girls' finishing schools in the early 1800s.

It would appear that the use of the stencil was, at first, a closely guarded secret. In 1805, J. W. Alston added "The Art of Painting on Velvet" to his book of the previous year on *Landscape Painting*. This was published in Edinburgh, Scotland, and was the earliest book we have found on the subject. Although he gives minute instructions regarding the paints to be used, he does not mention the stencil as part of the equipment. However, in 1804, the year before this book of instructions appeared, it was being taught in at least one of our American girls' schools.

While it is unfortunate that so few are signed or dated, we do not find signatures on any of our other decorated wares much before the early 1800s either. The earliest known date on a velvet is 1808.

R. Porter, Concord, Massachusetts had a book published in 1810 entitled, *A Select Collection of Approved, Genuine, Secret & Modern Receipts, valuable and curious arts, as practised by the best artists of the present age*, and another in 1825 with a similar title, *A Select Collection of Valuable and Curious Arts*, by Rufus Porter, Concord.

When velvet painting became part of the curriculum of the girls' school, deterioration set in, because the teacher either worked out patterns or bought them (they were advertised for sale in this country by 1816) and "the girls" did the best they individually could with the

designs, but they were, for the most, part, poorly executed. These are the so-called "primitives" of which we find so many today. Most of them are inept and easily recognized, for the same pattern appears over and over with slight variations in color and ability. Also, it must have been a great temptation, then as now, to "touch up" poor joinings and improbable flowers with all too much overpainting which does not appear on the finer ones. This is readily discernable from both the back and front.

For some reason not yet fully understood, many of the first commercially made paints in "saucers" were fugitive, and, surprisingly enough, it was the yellows and reds that disappeared over the years and the blue that held. Hence, blue watermelons, leaves, and cherries are found which must have been red and just shaded over with blue, and today only the blue shading remains!

Not until 1830 was the word "Theorem" publicly used in connection with Velvet Paintings. This appeared in a book written by Matthew D. Finn, and published in New York City entitled, *Theoremetical System of Painting or Modern Plan Fully Explained in Six Lessons*. On his list of necessary equipment are "Horn paper for patterns" and "Theorems to draw by". So, it would appear that the word "Theorem" applied to the picture that was copied by means of a pattern. Although we know from various records that "Velvet Paintings" were done by the stencil method long before this, the pictures to be copied were simply advertised as "velvet patterns" in 1816.

Eventually, one of the early embroidery companies put out perforated tissue paper patterns through the holes of which a blue powder was pounced. This gave an outline for a literal free-hand velvet painting, and the day of the stencilled velvets done in the Chinese manner was about over. These, too, are easily recognized, as an outline is always somewhere discernible, generally in blue dots which were later gone over with a scroller. The paint has invariably spread and most surely gone through. On one it was possible to trace a somewhat different pattern from the back, the original, no doubt!

The colors on the old Chinese pith paintings are still as clear, clean and vivid as the day they were painted, but since the pith itself has dried out over the years and become exceedingly brittle, many have been lost. It is unfortunate that only the word "Theorem" has come down to us. However, we could with better understanding restore this fine early craft convincingly in the old Chinese manner.

Editor's Note. The author has informed us that there is a collection of Chinese Pith Paintings at the American Museum in Bath, England which is included in the itinerary of the Second Tour.

MOTHER-OF-PEARL

Inlay and Overlay

Emily Milone

In China the early history of the use of Mother-of-Pearl in ornamentation, which also included the history and use of lacquer, may be traced back many centuries. The possible age of an article decorated with Mother-of-Pearl may be determined by the lacquer. The color, however, covers such a span of years, that even this is not a concluding factor. The color of the lacquer, gold, and the design all add to our knowledge.

The first date in which pearl is mentioned in China, although it was used before this time, was 708 when the work was done in the monasteries where its application was a closely guarded secret. The lacquer which was made from the sap of a tree growing abundantly in China at that time was gathered like maple sap and cooked down to form a hard finish when cold. Five different colors of lacquer were used.

The first pearl used was porcelaneous and was applied without thought to design. It was pressed into the lacquer while it was still warm. When cold, it was stoned till smooth. Then the piece was sent to the designer who created a design to fit the placement of pearl. During this period from 708 to 748 the Chinese worked for simplicity of design and the application followed a designer's pattern.

Nacreous pearl which includes Abalone, or Aurora as it is sometimes called, and Green Snail which has yellow, green and pink colors came into use by 748 and was much thinner as another process had been discovered for separation. These pieces were much lighter in weight, more delicate in form, and did not require as heavy a coat to make a smooth finish.

Either the secret leaked out of the Chinese monasteries or Japan had the world's best copiers, for they were using mother-of-pearl and lacquer in that country by 784.

Their early lacquer work was honey colored which differed from the Chinese. Later, it appeared a very dark brown, the color depending on the time of year that the sap was gathered. The red and black lacquers did not appear in Japan until 1185 and were used and improved until 1333.

Between 1334 and 1573 gold appeared in Japanese designs. Then a civil war broke out between 1574 and 1602 which broke up the bands of monks who had been doing this work.

When the war was over, schools were established to teach lacquering and the laying of pearl for fear that it would become a lost art.

In the Honami and Koetsu schools the illuminated sutras of the twelfth centuries were used as ideas for their designs. These schools were short lived, however, for as Christianity was driven out, all the schools disappeared, and all that was left of the art was that which was carried on by individual families. The Koma Family carried on the art for eleven generations.

India and the Middle East produced pearl and lacquer wares from 1131 to 1898. Lacquer to these people meant a hundred thousand insects that produced a substance which when cooked down made a lacquer. Their designs were garden scenes and festoons of small flowers.

The Dutch were the first people in Europe to try their hand at pearl decoration. Their designs were heavier with the pearl applied in larger pieces. In general, they imitated the oriental designs which had been imported up to this time.

France, not far behind, used mostly black backgrounds with mother-of-pearl in natural painted flowers with gold drips. The Martin Family, inventors of Vernis Martin, also invented a varnish which was built up level after the pearl was applied by coat after coat of varnish. This process was carried on by the Martin Family until 1706.

About this time, overlay came into being as a cheaper method of decoration with far less work. The pearl was applied, then gesso was smoothed around the edges.

In the year 1700 the first mother of pearl pieces came to this country on the "Empress of China", the first of our ships to enter the China trade.

Between 1660 and 1800 the Allgoods of Pontypool and Usk were decorating trays and other iron and tinware with pearl. In 1809 Bils-ton, England was using pearl on their papier mâché pieces. The period from 1837 to 1901 was known as the Victorian Era when there was a great rebirth of pearl decoration which was used with much gold Rocco. Some articles were almost completely covered with pearl even to whole bedroom sets.

There are many beautiful pieces of inlay in excellent condition still in existence. Almost every museum of fine arts contains a collection of fine originals decorated with mother-of-pearl.

Editor's Note. In 1825 Jennens and Bettridge of Birmingham, England obtained a patent for "certain improvements in preparing and working pearl shell into various forms, for applying it to ornamental uses in the manufacture of paper and other wares." On The Second Tour we hope to see an interesting collection of small papier mâché articles including some demonstration pieces made by Jennens and Bettridge illustrating their method of "mother-of-pearl inlay".



Child's Chair
Courtesy of Mrs. George Scriven

THE BALTIMORE CHAIR

1815 - 1840

ITS ORNAMENT AND STRUCTURE

by Elizabeth S. Hanna

The once popular Baltimore Chair, called Southern, Philadelphia, Washington, Lafayette or Adam chair, all one and the same, according to whose grandmother was who, has come into prominence again.

This article is concerned with the American Empire Period, circa 1815-1840, when these heavy, sturdy sway back chairs were fashionable.

These chairs usually had cane or rush seats but occasionally wooden seats are found. Though multitudes of them were black, many were white, soft green or other light colors. Some were artificially grained to simulate mahogany, rosewood or maple. Many were highly ornamented with classical motifs derived from either the Adam Brothers, English architects and furniture designers, or from the Egyptian styles introduced by Napoleon into France.

These ornaments which were transplanted to our sturdy Baltimore Chairs have taken many pleasing forms. Undoubtedly, this may account for the persistent use of the name "Adam". However, the chairs themselves bear no relation to any piece of furniture designed by the Adam Brothers. Another story tells us that John Quincy Adams had a large

set of such chairs made for a banquet honoring General Lafayette, so this could bring both the names, Adams and Lafayette, into prominence. Last, there was supposedly a man in the south named Adam who manufactured such chairs.

Many of these chairs had wide, deep, straight tops. The broad spaces which often rolled over provided an excellent place for a pattern. The stiles, seat rolls, sides of seats, legs, and arms, if there were any, also seemed made for decoration. The back splat whether vertical vase, lyre or harp shape or a horizontal splat usually reflected the ornament from the top of the chair. The seat roll almost invariably used a decorative form of bold acanthus (quite classical) held together in the middle with a ring. This so called "wedding ring" was usually used regardless of the type of design elsewhere on the chairs.

As a change from the classical designs, landscapes done in free hand bronze and loose stencils, sometimes rather crude, often covered the wide top back. Often a surprise motif was introduced, a delicate carefully executed little figure or figures in brightest gold leaf against the background. Such intriguing subjects as tiny stage coaches, foxes and hounds, riders and horses and Fishermen seem to survive. (These small spots of gold may have been stencilled leaf). Many remain clear and accurate even if the landscape has become bedraggled.

As a third type of ornament, fruit stencils on bronze powdered backgrounds or brushed fruit done on painted backgrounds give an intricate look to the design which takes a lot of detective work to decipher, but once the problem is solved, the patterns show interesting techniques well worth the effort of recording.

Drawing room, dining room and morning room groups were excellently executed. Gold leaf was skillfully applied, always creating an atmosphere of formality. Delicate veins and shadows were done with black, burnt sienna or the umbers in brush strokes. The whole pattern had a freedom and rhythm that is hard to duplicate. Numerous stripings and bandings were an integral part of each design and the chair ornament only seems complete when many of these are used.

If the structure of Baltimore Chairs is once observed, it is not likely to be confused with any other kind of chair. They look uncomfortable but they are not. The tremendous back slant and the deep seat are unusual but the slant of the back is compensated for by the backward and downward thrust of the back legs. The front legs stand straight but bulge with enormous often gilded turnings. One special characteristic of these chairs is a thick wedge shaped side of the seat. Into this wedge are set the back stiles. This wedge is entirely Empire in feeling. Again it provided a wonderful place for more and better ornament and strip-

ing. Strong and well placed rungs help account for the preservation of the chairs.

In addition to these heavy chairs, smaller but no less durable parlor ones developed. Their structure was the same except that many times they had tops with curved and curled corners somewhat resembling the Pennsylvania chairs. These "little chairs" were beauties. They sparkled with leaf or rubbed powder and delicate veins and shadings. Also, a surprising number of elegant very small chairs for children, perfect replicas of the regular size, have happily survived.

Of course, all good fairy tales come to an end, so with the advance of the machine age the chairs lost some of their original charm. They were reduced in their proportions and became spindly with badly placed turns. An unbecoming tallness and narrowness took over, and the ornament became feeble and carelessly done. However, there seem to be enough gems to be found to make hunting very rewarding.



Child's Chair — Courtesy of Mrs. George Scriven
Structure, Gold Leaf Ornamentation and Striping,
typical of the elegant Early Empire Period



ANOTHER NEW YORK STATE STENCILLED WALL

Annabelle J. Schwab

It is always exciting to discover a stencilled wall, but it is even more remarkable when the stencilled wall is located in Western New York State. Since three of the main units of this find are very similar to those uncovered on a wall in Genesee County, we feel that perhaps we may be one more link nearer the name of the early artisan who traveled these roads.

The building, located in the eastern part of Cattaraugus County, was once an inn, a stage coach stop between Albany and Buffalo in the very early 1800s. Only the main floor has been modernized. The third floor, unused at present, consists of one large room with a variety of stencils on the surrounding walls. Originally, one wall was divided into three or four small bedrooms, each just large enough for a bed, chest, and probably a chair, as is evidenced by a series of plasterless scars where the partitions once stood. The designs in each section, or room, vary presenting an unattached appearance with the partitions gone. Little history of the building is known although a gun bearing the date 1778 was found in the wall when the partitions were removed.

The front of the top floor shows no indication that it was ever used for anything other than a ballroom, for the fiddler's stand is still intact over the entrance stairway.

One of the designs appearing in both Western New York counties is identical to the one above the baseboard in the guest chamber of the Captain John Coolidge House pictured in Figure 83 of the Janet Waring's book, *Early American Stencil Decoration*. One of the small bedroom borders is like the one pictured in the same book in Figure 68, the Parlor of the Freese House, Deerfield. These units were stencilled in a deep country green shade with the reddish color common to so many other stencilled walls

An unusual feature found in the dance hall area is the lifelike red bird with black markings, the color similar to that of the cardinal, and another bird, the color of the Indigo Bunting with red wings and markings. The clear white plaster between the designs proved a temptation to visitors to the ballroom, for they left a record of names and dates from 1869 to 1921; a tribute to a road company, "Cass Berry's Great

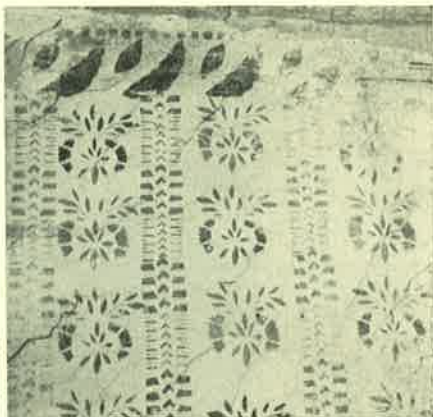
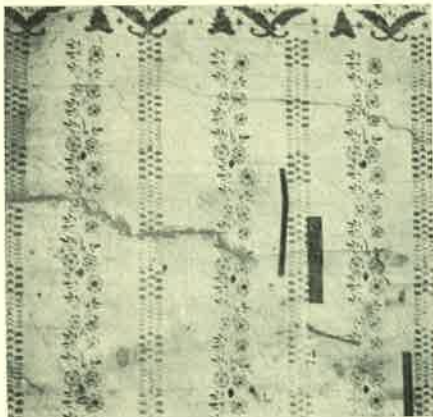




Show played here Tuesday evening, July 29, 1873, largest audience this hall has ever had, ask the citizens", and a poem:

"Where the years are fast elapsing
And the showers of old age fall
Then I hope you will remember
This was once a dancing Hall."

We hope another stencilled wall will one day come to light revealing the name of the stenciller who traveled through this area and brought a bit of color into the lives of these early settlers.





Original Chippendale Tray
Courtesy of Mrs. Nelson White

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

There seems to be a special aura surrounding a meeting held in an historic place. The conclave held on September 30, October 1st and 2nd at The Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, Massachusetts, was no exception. The sun, alas, did not choose to shine upon us, but the excellent program arranged by Mrs. Herbert Coggins kept everyone so busy that the weather faded well into the background.

Mrs. Donald Cooney assumed all the trials and tribulations that befall a meeting chairman and did so with considerable grace and aplomb. She was ably assisted by Mrs. J. Oswald Parisette and the members of the Charter Oak Chapter. The Stockbridge Indians had preceded us by many years, we were told they left "in peace" in 1785, but their features adorned the small wooden tavern signs used as registration pins. Guests and family members were given bright red tags stencilled with the figure of an Indian in bright gold. It was apparent that some of our members had spent quite a number of hours in painting "practice"! Attractive corsages of dried materials were presented to the Trustees and Committee Chairmen.

Despite the inclement weather the lounge of the Inn was warm and cheerful with flowers and a handsome tea table set with gleaming silver.



Original Chippendale Tray
Courtesy of Mona Rowell

It was a welcome respite for road-weary travellers and meeting-weary Board members to renew old acquaintances and to greet our new members and friends.

Following dinner, Harriet Clingman Kelly, well-known interior decorator from F. Schumacher and Company, delighted us for more than an hour by showing color and fabric schemes "For Every Room and Every Pocketbook". The ingenuity and skill she demonstrated in blending and re-arranging the many samples she had brought was much admired, with the possible exception of the 45 family guests (husbands!) who had visions of massive re-decoration programs when they returned home.

The Friday morning program opened with a warm welcome by Mrs. Graham D. Wilcox, Curator of the Historical Room of the Stockbridge Library Asociation. She told us what an unusual village Stockbridge is—and in tracing its origins and history from Indian days, we learned that labor and law reforms began here in this little town. It is not difficult to understand why people have been attracted to Stockbridge which is surrounded by the beautiful Berkshires and the handsome houses and estates.

The theme of the meeting, "Lace Edge Painting", was carried out with a skillful demonstration by Margaret Willey of the techniques of both backgrounds and painting. The exhibition of originals 165 in all, and 45 of them lace edge was simply outstanding! Mrs. George Watt and her committee were praised for their hard work and devotion.

Many thanks are due members and friends who responded to pleas for fine originals which resulted in one of the finest exhibitions to date.

The Teacher Certification Committee conducted three interviews. We now have a new Master Teacher, Margaret Watts, who was honored at the business meeting and the banquet. Mrs. Robert Keegan received her certification in Glass Painting. In looking over past records, it is interesting to note that during our early days there was little interest in glass and that members requested that it not be included in the requirements for Master Craftsman. In an effort to encourage our members to persevere in this field (which had interested Esther Brazer so much) it was retained with the astonishingly successful results now so apparent.

The Teacher Certification Committee is to be commended for the display of originals and 5 portfolios in the featured category. It was enthusiastically received by members and the public alike. Also shown were Mrs. Watts' Chippendale portfolio and Mrs. Keegan's glass portfolio, inspiration for all that saw them.

Stockbridge abounds in fascinating sights — The Old Mission House, The Choate residence — "Naumkeag" with its beautiful gardens, The Library and its Historical Room, an old Indian Burying Ground. One guest commented, "There is something here for everyone". Our more weather-proof members took a bus tour with undampened enthusiasm.

Following a delightful social hour and the banquet, we were treated to an after dinner "speech" by none other than Norman Rockwell, the



Original Pennsylvania Bride's Box
Courtesy of Flora Mears

SATURDAY EVENING POST cover man. We sat enthralled by his anecdotes and reminiscences, while he kept checking on the time and asking if he was boring us! Everyone was reminded of a favorite Rockwell painting, truly American folk art of a high degree.

The following morning our Chapters met, a feature that is always well-attended especially by our members who live far from our geographical center and are anxious to exchange ideas and information. Emily Milone closed this well-planned meeting by demonstrating "Mother of Pearl". We are much indebted to those who spend hours in advance making up demonstration pieces, organizing equipment and notes, and giving so graciously of their time and knowledge.

Business-wise the Society continues to grow and prosper. We have 751 members and received 10 applicants into membership at this meeting. The Standards and Judging Committee processed 67 pieces resulting in 13 A awards. In response to many requests the photographer took 9 pictures of 19 fine originals as well as 7 colored slides. Publicity continues to be expertly handled by Mrs. Louis Childs and her local



Original Country Tin Boxes

Courtesy of Dorothy Hutchings
Courtesy of Helene Britt

Courtesy of Norma Annabal
Courtesy of Dorothy Hutchings

assistant—for this meeting, Mrs. Oren Gilbert. This results not only in increased attendance at our Exhibition but in better public knowledge of our aims and aspirations.

Mrs. Philip Peck, Chairman of Promotion, reported that work continues on the Craftsman's Directory; YANKEE MAGAZINE projects an article on us in 1966; an article in THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, September 15, 1965 brought 112 inquiries from 32 states, Canada and Natal, South Africa. As a direct result of the former our Curator, Martha Muller, has been asked to write an article for the catalogue of the Winter Antiques Show of the East Side Settlement House. Mrs. George Watt, Miss Maria Murray and Mrs. Joseph Watts form the nucleus of the committee which will handle our display at the Antiques Festival at Madison Square Garden in November.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find a complete Curator's Report. It will tell you of the decision of the Trustees to purchase two Mississippi river boat plaques, handsomely painted on wood and outstanding examples of Americana, for inclusion in the Violet M. Scott Memorial Collection. Other generous gifts were received at this meeting from Mr. and Mrs. Walter McLean of Bay City, Michigan.

Alphabetically last but not least is our Ways and Means Committee. They stocked 25 different items, many of them hand made by the committee. This was in addition to all of our publications, binders, etc. In totalling their gross sales of \$1,153, they did not include the 83 copies of the *Decorator Digest* which were also sold at the meeting. Norma Stark and Lois Binley devoted much of their summer to planning and executing this project. As fairly new members they are to be commended for shouldering the responsibility.

In May we will celebrate our 20th Anniversary at Cooperstown. Total registration at the Stockbridge meeting was 215. Inasmuch as all planning must be done in advance, it is absolutely imperative that you follow the registration form that will be sent to you. Please do not make your own reservations as this will only confuse the chairmen. We have 79 Charter members and it is our hope that *many* of them will come and help us with the festivities. This will be a wonderful year for the Society; do plan to attend, to make suggestions, to actively participate.

ANNE E. AVERY



Reverse Side of Caddy on Cover
Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. L. M. Sides

REPORT OF THE FORTIETH EXHIBITION
Red Lion Inn — Stockbridge, Massachusetts
September 30, October 1, 2, 1965

The Fall Exhibition of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. officially opened Thursday evening, September 30, 1965, in the Conference Hall of the Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

The Conference Hall, a converted horse stable, was completely transformed by the beautiful lace edge and mother of pearl originals, the members A and B awards, the applicants pieces, and Volume II of our Publicity Scrap Book. Four flower arrangements in the corners of the room completed the disguise.

Thirty-nine applicants' pieces, twenty-eight members' pieces, and 165 originals were processed and exhibited by the committee. Twenty-one of the originals were Country Tin pieces slated for display at the National Arts and Antiques Festival opening in New York City, November 13, 1965.

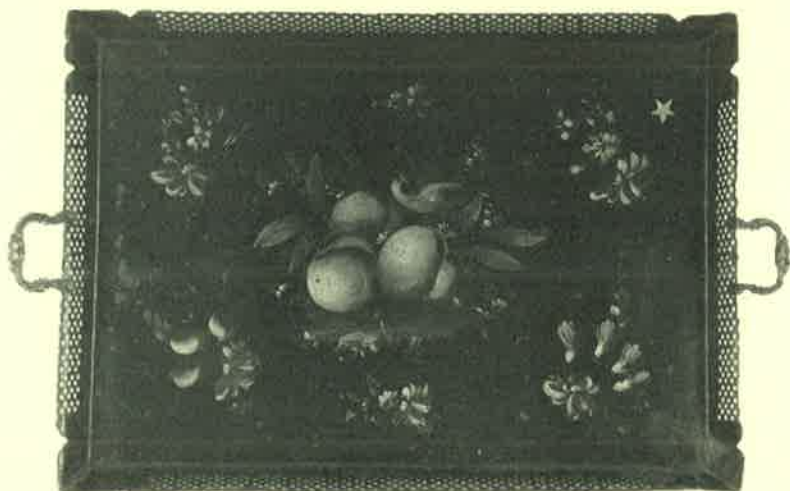
The response by the members to the plea for originals was tremendous, filling the exhibition room to capacity with excellent examples of all phases of our interest; from the typical, the atypical, the com-

pletely unusual, to the seldom seen pieces, in such excellent condition, it seemed impossible that they had not just come from a mastercraftsman's shop.

The exhibition was arranged in categories, enabling the viewers to study and compare the various techniques more easily. As an organization we have been growing in knowledge through research and study, and this diversified collection of the very primitive to the most breathtakingly perfect examples, gave ample opportunity for the individual members to advance their own knowledge.

The theme of the meeting was Lace Edge Painting, a category that sometimes seems to be illusive in its examples. However, the members again did their part in making the meeting an outstanding success, by bringing for display a surprisingly large number of articles, ranging from the tiniest of miniatures to an exceptionally large, round, pierced edge tray.

The trays had the conventional fruits, a pear, with a deep blush suffusing its cheek, juicy peaches, with the fuzz of freshness showing, luscious, bright red strawberries; flowers, in the rose, tulip, honeysuckle tradition, a white poppy, fringed in glowing red, bright blue morning glories, the convolutions of the stem twining up to full buds; exotic birds, perched amid flowers and fruit, resembled no species the Audubon Society would recognize in our Country. The familiar urn appeared on several trays, one centered on a velvety green lawn, so minutely detailed, it seemed that one could walk on the soft grass and feel its texture.



Original Lace Edge Tray
Courtesy of Emilie Underhill

The painting techniques included the chalky, or pasty, and the smooth, lovely textured effect we attempt to emulate. There were many representations of the tortoise shell finish; a tag attached to one tray called attention to the base coat of 'mercuric sulphide'; all offering examples of basic finishes for study.

The other pieces in the lace edge manner were many and varied from an elegant fruit basket, containing four rows of piercing and a pierced handle, to a large tankard with beaded top.

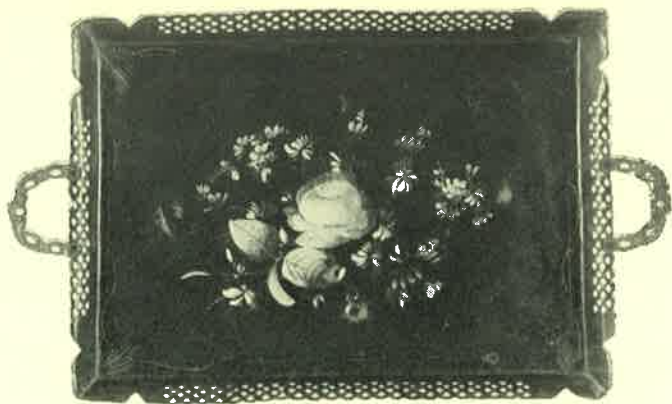
A gem, an early eighteenth century tea chest from the Hanbury Estate, attributed to Tom Allgood, dated 1755, is described in Vol. VIII of the DECORATOR, No. 2, Page 20 and 22. Another jewel in the same category, was the rare lace edge "Tobacco dish", described in the DECORATOR Vol. XIV No. 2, Page 23 and pictured on page 22, a delight to see and examine.

The display was of greater interest due to the lace edge demonstration which called attention to particular points of interest in execution and historically.

This, too, was true with the demonstration given on the handling and application of Mother-of-Pearl (See Vol. XI, No. 1, of the DECORATOR, Page 5), for after hearing of the long hours of tedious work necessary to produce an article containing just a small amount of nacre, one could imagine the painstaking effort required to finish an object



Original Chippendale Tray
Courtesy of Robert Keegan



Original Lace Edge Tray -- Courtesy of Dorothy Hutchings

such as the papier mâché tilt-top table, and the time needed to form the tiny flower petals branching from a silvery metal stem on a glasses case, lined in purple velvet.

To point up the source of the Mother-of-Pearl, two polished conk shells added their lustre to the large and small pieces glinting in the intricately scalloped and scrolled fans, the fire screens, daguerrotypes, card cases, book covers, and little file covers, all showing the Chippendale flowers and birds with the pearl used in the formation of the designs. A papier mâché letter holder in mint condition, the entire design cunningly formed from miniscule pieces of Mother-of-Pearl, connected by the finest of gold leaf stems and leaves, was from the same era as the lap desk generously decorated, the nacre showing the variations in color range of the soft pinks and greens, never contained on a man made palette.

It is difficult to describe adequately the beauty and appeal of the Chippendale pieces, the tea caddies, trays, a reading screen and candle in perfect condition, a card tray with a silver background complimenting the lifelike dragonfly and fluttering blue butterfly hovering over the flower bouquet. A Jennens and Bettridge Chippendale card tray of papier mâché was distinguished by the typical intertwining of snakes used to fashion the brass handle, the floor a rustic mill scene beautifully rendered.

A Pontypool snuffer tray nestled against a Pontypool crimson kettle and brazier, circa 1765, before which a copy of W. D. John's *Pontypool and Usk Japanned Wares* was opened to the description and picture. How much more it means to be able to see the actual piece! The rich feel of a Waterford glass compote, covered with a lid of metal hinged in the center and decorated in the Chippendale manner, caused



Original Lace Edge Tray -- Courtesy of Margaret Willey

many comments. A small Wolverhampton tea caddy in teal blue with gay little flowers in a basket set in a white panel must have been a gay addition to the breakfast or afternoon tea tray.

A collection of framed theorems was unusually beautiful in detail, even to the gold stump work on the wing of a life size moth. In connection with the theorems, a box, with the explanation, "an assortment of various colored powders required as part of a supply used by teachers of the Theorem Technique, early in the 19th century, these powders were applied to paper and velvet theorems", contained a little brush and eighteen little vials, holding the colors with such lucious names as middle pink, carmine, malaca green, nile green, fawn and cream. It is no wonder the resulting theorems were so colorful and lovely.

The stencilled articles were in interesting variety from the large tray showing an anchored side-wheeler, sails furled, the rigging beautifully formed by taut yellow stripes drawn by a steady hand, bright red flags fore and aft, a gay party in progress, the Empire period dress of the couples dating the piece, to a stencilled theorem scene on paper which produced many varying theories as to the actual method of execution.

The examples of country tin contained many of the known pieces from the Butler tin factory, the Buckley Maine pieces, the Stevens Plain, and typical Mercy North work. All were an inspiration to study.

Even though each piece in the exhibition merits mention, space is not adequate to do more than thank those who so generously brought their pieces for the enjoyment of all

My thanks to the members of my committee who worked so hard to make this exhibit possible: Norma Annabal who wrote the descriptions of the originals for this report, Elizabeth Bourdon, Celia Darch, Jane Hammond, Kitty Hutter, Connie Lightbourn, and Lynnette Smith.

MADGE M. WATT, *Exhibition Chairman*

REPORT OF THE CURATOR'S COMMITTEE

September, 1965, Stockbridge, Massachusetts

The Museum Committee met to work at Cooperstown from June 14th to June 17th and much was accomplished to prepare the Walter Wright patterns for membership use. About 75 patterns are now filed for copying. At their July meeting, the Trustees voted the necessary funds to purchase additional material needed to continue this work. This equipment was ordered and is now on hand.

The Museum Committee has been increased by several members and I am happy to announce that it now consists of: Mrs. George Watt, Mrs. George Morse, Mrs. John Gordon, Mrs. W. Stainton, Mrs. Spencer Avery, Custodian, and Mrs. M. E. Muller, Curator

With the approval of the Board of Trustees, we have purchased, for the Violet Milnes Scott collection, a pair of scenic plaques, once used as wall decoration in the drawing room of a Mississippi River boat. One is marked OHIO and one is WISCONSIN. We feel that these two American decorative pieces are important additions to our collection.

We are pleased to report that Mrs. Walter McLean of Bay City, Michigan, has donated to the Museum Collection, one fine papier-mâché tray in exceptional condition, one stencilled peacock tray, an unusual pen tray and an ornamented spectacle case with mother-of-pearl and metal inlay. We would like to express our thanks to Mr. and Mrs. McLean for these generous gifts.

MARTHA MULLER, *Curator*

APPLICANTS ACCEPTED AS MEMBERS

At Stockbridge, Massachusetts, September, 1965

Benjamin, Mrs. Stephen E. (Mary) Boston Road, Sutton, Mass.

✓ Corey, Mrs. Louis, Jr. (Theresa) Pine Island Road, Mattapoisett, Mass.

Carlson, Mrs. Arnold W. (Alice) 11 Riverside Drive, New York, N. Y.

Gadbois, Mrs. John S. (Elizabeth)

22 Black Point Road, Niantic, Conn. 06357

Perreault, Mrs. Lionel (Aurore) P. O. Box 255, Niantic, Conn. 06357

Reid, Mrs. E. Bruce (Carolyn) R. D. 2, Averill Park, New York 12018

Rogers, Miss Rebecca 23 Manor Drive, Hudson, Ohio

✓ Sawyer, Mrs. Ashton P. (Margaret)

161 West Shore Drive, Marblehead, Mass. 01945

Stevens, Mrs. John R. (Jane)

29860 Lake Road, Bay Village, Ohio 44140

Warner, Mrs. Kenneth H. (Marion)

Society Road, R.F.D. 1, East Lyme, Conn. 06333

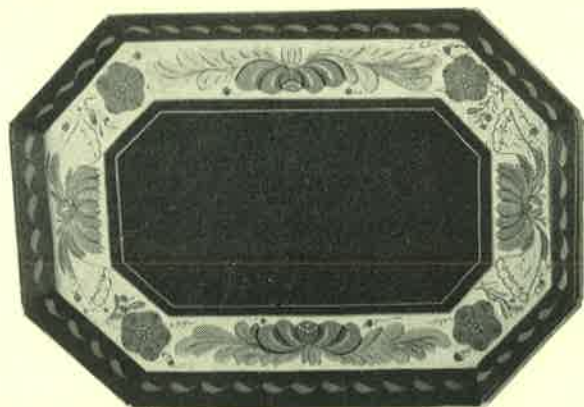
MEMBER'S "A" AWARDS



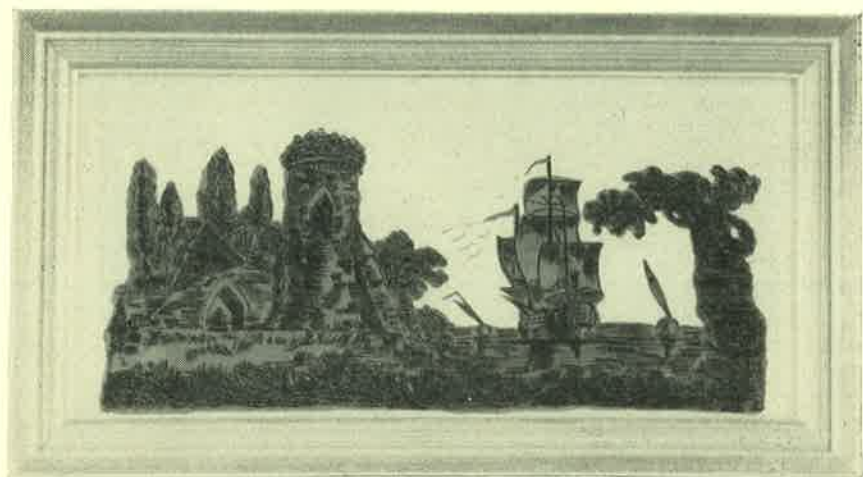
Stencilling on Tin
Edna Schmid
Laura Orcutt



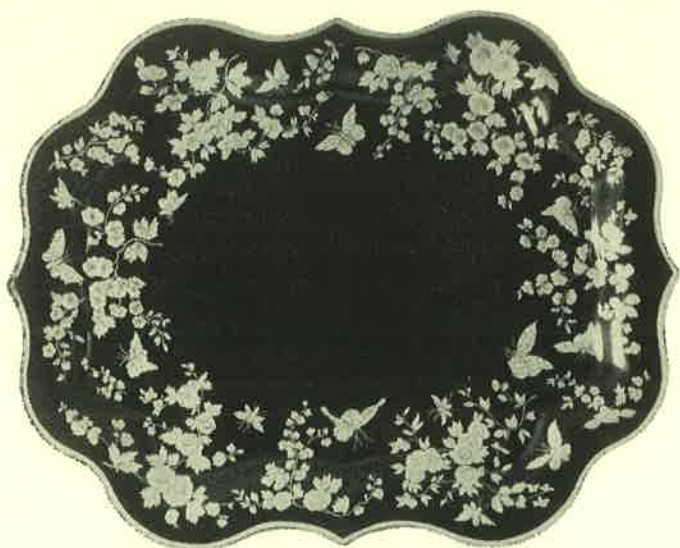
Stencilling on Wood
Natalie Ramsey
Eleanor Meredith
Evelyn Bartlett



Country Painting
Bernadette Thompson
Ruth Swenson
Marion Ludwig



Special Class - Margaret Watts
Glass Panel, Stencilled Border - Thelma Riga
Glass Panel, Etched Gold Leaf - Helen Pease



Metal Leaf - Margaret Watts
Freehand Bronze - Louise Wallace



THE BOOKSHELF

By Natalie Ramsey

The Decorator Digest — Chapters in the History of Early American Decoration. Publisher: Charles E. Tuttle of Rutland, Vermont, \$8.95. Edited by Natalie Ramsey.

Once again a reminder to our membership that this second Guild publication is ready to be put on your bookshelf next to our "*Ornamented Chair*" book. In this *Decorator Digest* you will find all the outstanding articles that have appeared in our DECORATOR magazine over the last twenty years. The articles chosen for this book have been assembled in categories that will most readily identify them for their specific interest or value. With the ownership of these two books, it is hoped you will be encouraged to continue your research in this field. It is such research material that broadens our knowledge and inspires a perfection in our work.

American Country Furniture 1780 - 1875: Ralph and Terry Kovel. Published by Crown Publishers, Inc., 419 Park Avenue South, New York 10016, N. Y. \$7.50. This book offers you an outstanding value for its purchase price. It was written by Ralph and Terry Kovel to bring to the collector a book on country furniture of the nineteenth century. Mr. and Mrs. Kovel's interest in antiques over a period of many years has provided them with the material for two previous books, as well as a nationally syndicated column "Know Your Antiques". This present book will have particular appeal to our Guild members because of the comprehensive chapters on Painted Chairs, Settees and Chests. Over 700 illustrations and captions are excellent, and the text is not only accurate and interesting to read, but it is easily assimilated. Aside from our particular interest in the painted furniture discussed in this book, all other chapters are most informative and will bring to the collectors in our society much valuable research material on Country Furniture. Since this book is the same size as our own book, *The Ornamented Chair*, it would tuck away cosily next to it on your bookshelf. Between the two you will find illustrations of almost any chair made in America during this period.

Early Pennsylvania Arts and Crafts by John Joseph Stoudt. 6 gns.
Published by — New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., Inc.
London: Thomas Yoseloff Ltd.

To own this magnificent book would be like owning a very special piece of fine jewelry. It is a most complete and handsome book on the subject of Early Pennsylvania Arts and Crafts. It covers all the categories of the arts and crafts that the Pennsylvania artisans produced, and, as said in the Foreword by Mr. S. K. Stevens, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, it is an interpretive work. This interpretation is delightfully detailed. The significance and meaning of the traditions behind the execution of this form of art and craft are beautifully explained by Mr. Stoudt. At least ten other books by Mr. Stoudt have preceded this work, and many of our members may own some of these. The Headings under the Table of Contents include Architecture, Furniture, Fine Arts, Crafts and the Illuminating Art. Under each of these you will find a very comprehensive listing. Aside from the excellent text, the colored plates and exquisite pictures will bring the reader many hours of pleasure. Mr. Stoudt's dedication, "To The Theological Faculty, Phillips University, Marburg", indicates the high standard and cultural importance of this work. A review of Mr. Stoudt's, *Pennsylvania Folk Art* — Schlechter's, Allentown, Pa. 1948, \$7.50, appears in THE DECORATOR, Vol. VI, No. 2. Fall of 1952. This review by Jessica Bond is excellent and will bring you in large part the flavor of this present work.

CHAPTERS' REPORT

On July 5th, 376 ordered Palettes were mailed out in bundles to the Secretaries of the Chapters.

The all-too-brief Chapters' meeting at Stockbridge was well attended, and we had reports from the Chairmen on some of their activities, including the status-quo of their portfolios.

Our new STRAWBERRY BANKE Chapter reported on their progress, as did another newer one, as yet un-named and without permanent officers. This Chapter has been approved and will cover the middle section of New York State between the Florence E. Wright Chapter on the west and the Hudson Valley Chapter on the east. We do wish them luck!

MADLINE W. HAMPTON, *Chairman*

NOTICES FROM THE TRUSTEES

20th ANNIVERSARY MEETING

May 6, 7, 8, 1966

Cooperstown, New York

Meetings Chairman, Mrs. Harold White

FALL MEETING

September 26, 27, 28, 1966

Equinox House, Manchester, Vermont

Meetings Chairman, Mrs. Eugene Bond

On Page 16 of the ANNUAL REPORT for 1964 - 1965 under the Teacher Certification Committee Report covering the meeting at Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania, there is a typographical error in line 9 where it now reads; "... signed by two Guild members of organization . . .". The word "of" should be "or".

The Standards and Judging Committee suggests that those planning to submit work at Cooperstown should carefully study the requirements of the Standards Booklet.

Help the judges, also, by having your entry in on time. No entry for the Spring Meeting will be accepted for judging after 10 A.M. May 4, 1966. Positively, there will be NO exception to this rule.

Members should keep the Standards Booklet, Teacher Certification Requirements, etc. up to date by recording any *changes* reported under Notices of the Trustees.

PROPOSED TOUR TO IRELAND, WALES, ENGLAND, FRANCE

June, 1966

Departure — Evening flight, Kennedy Airport, June 8th.

Return — Kennedy Airport, 3 P.M., June 28th.

Deadline — Twenty *must* register by February 15th. The registration Fee of \$10, payable to H.S.E.A.D., Inc. is non-returnable unless Tour is cancelled. It will cover a single registration, husband and wife, or mother and daughter. Friends may be accepted after February 1st. The Tour is limited to 27.

A Few Highlights:

Ireland — Dromoland Castle; Killarney; Limerick; Abbey Theatre; National Museum; Dublin.

Wales — National Museum, Cardiff; St. Fagans Folk Museum;
Mr. John's Home and Bookshop.

England — Chester; Wolverhampton; Bath; Torquay; Stone-
henge; London; Folk Painting Demonstration in the Canal
Country; Palladium.

France — Boattrain to Paris; Versailles, Chateau Country;
Tuileries Gardens; the Louvre.

Cost — \$875.

Additional details may be had by writing to the chairman. Send
registration fee to Mrs. Edwin W. Rowell, 102 Park Avenue, Whitman,
Mass. 02382.

CERTIFIED TEACHERS

Members who have been certified as teachers by the Historical
Society of Early American Decoration, and who can be recommended
by the Society:

Mrs. Chester Armstrong, Ithaca, N. Y.—Certified in: stencilling,
country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, glass painting.

Mrs. John Burke, Melbourne Beach, Florida—Certified in: stencilling,
country painting.

Mrs. Walter Burrows, 2591 Post Road, Noroton, Conn.—Certified in:
stencilling, country painting.

Mrs. John Clark, Norwell, Mass.—Certified in: stencilling, country
painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass
painting, Chippendale.

Mrs. Charles Coffin, 808 Wave Crest, Indialantic, Florida—Certified
in: country painting.

Mrs. Carroll Drury, Springfield, Vt.—Certified in: stencilling, country
painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass
painting.

Mrs. Robert Hutchings, 122 Andrews Rd., DeWitt, N. Y.—Certified
in: stencilling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace
edge painting, glass painting.

Mrs. Robert Keegan, Hudson, Ohio—Certified in: stencilling, country
painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass
painting.

Mrs. Adrian Lea, Glens Falls, N. Y.—Certified in: stencilling, country
painting.

Mrs. John A. MacMorris, Highland Acres, Argyle, New York—Certified
in: stencilling.

- Mrs. Sherwood Martin, Wapping, Conn.—Certified in: stencilling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass painting.
- Mrs. William N. Martin, Oak Park, Ill.—Certified in: stencilling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze.
- Mrs. Sylvester Poor, Augusta, Me.—Certified in: stencilling, country painting.
- Mrs. Raymond Ramsey, Orwell, Vt.—Certified in: stencilling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze.
- Mrs. Edwin W. Rowell, 102 Park Ave., Whitman, Mass.—Certified in: stencilling, country painting.
- Mrs. Andrew M. Underhill, 37 Bellport Lane, Bellport, L. I., N. Y.—Certified in: stencilling, country painting.
- Mrs. Joseph Watts, R.F.D. 1, Westwood, N. J.—Certified in: stencilling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass painting, Chippendale.
- Mrs. Herbert Willey, Norwich, Conn.—Certified in: stencilling, country painting, lace edge painting.
- Mrs. Harold White, Delmar, N. Y.—Certified in: country painting, stencilling, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, metal leaf.

MASTER TEACHERS

- Mrs. John Clark, Norwell, Mass.
Mrs. Joseph Watts, Westwood, N. J.

MASTER CRAFTSMEN

- Mrs. Eugene Bond, Dorset, Vt.
Mrs. John Clark, Norwell, Mass.
Mrs. George R. Cruze, Devon, Pennsylvania
Mrs. Carroll H. Drury, Springfield, Vt.
Mrs. Paul Gross, Trucksville, Pa.
Mrs. C. W. Hague, Concootook, N. H.
Mrs. Sherwood Martin, Wapping, Conn.
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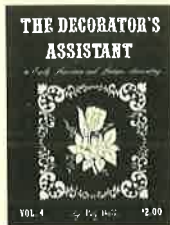
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