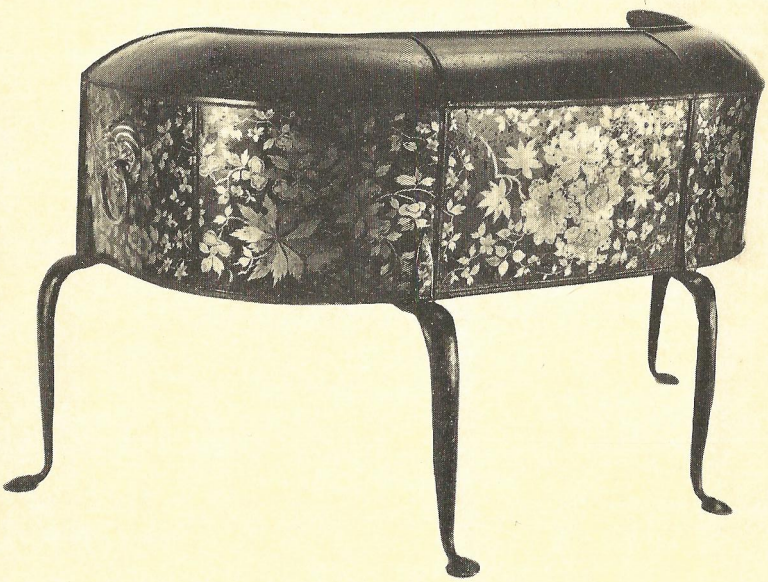
# The Decorator

Volume XXXIV No. 2 Cherry Hill, N.J. Spring 1980



Journal of the
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION, INC.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Journal of the
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A society organized to carry on the work and honor the memory of Esther Stevens Brazer, pioneer in the perpetuation of Early American Decoration as an art; to promote continued research in that field; to record and preserve examples of Early American Decoration; and to maintain such exhibits and publish such works on the subject of Early American Decoration and the history there of as will further the appreciation of such art and the elevation of the standards of its reproduction and utilization. To assist in efforts public and private, in locating and preserving material pertinent to our work, and to cooperate with other societies in the accomplishment of purposes of mutual concern.

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# THE DECORATOR

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH

English Double Plate Warmer. Courtesy, Martha M. Wilbur

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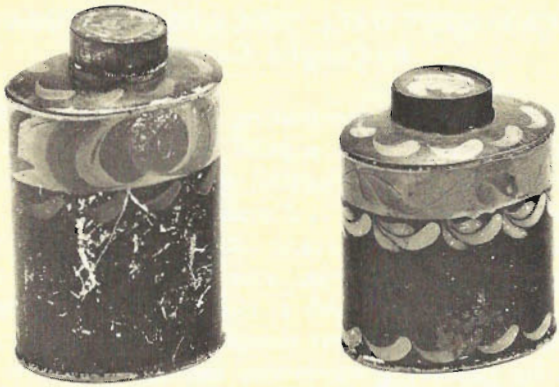

Original Tea Caddies – Courtesy, Sara Tiffany

## EDITORIAL

*"It is the modest, not the presumptuous inquirer who makes a real and safe progress." St. John*

The dictionary defines research as "diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories, applications, etc." Within the pages of the DECORATOR, and this issue is no exception, we consistently find articles which certainly adhere to this meaning, and in which careful and sustained investigation is clearly evident.

In keeping with our purpose to "perpetuate continued research", we can be grateful to those who contribute to the journal and who are willing to spend endless hours in the preparation of the articles. Much time is spent in concentrated study of the early decorated pieces, and conscientious examination of a wide range of previously published books and pamphlets. Sometimes it can be most discouraging and frustrating to approach a study with great hope and enthusiasm, only to find very little which is pertinent to a particular subject. Too often, in the field of the Decorative Arts, we find published articles which speelbind us with their air of authority, but which are utterly lacking in veracity, and because of their supreme confidence can tend to intimidate even the very knowledgeable researcher. It is imporant to bear in mind that the last word has not been written, and that continued questioning and delving will eventually bring forth new facts and ideas and thus give added dimension to our general knowledge.

Virginia M. Wheelock

## BLACK FOREST WALL CLOCK DIAL DECORATION

*By Cheryl A. Copeland*

In the early 1600's the clockmaking industry emerged in an isolated part of southwestern Germany around Baden and Neukirch near the Rhine River because of the plentiful supply of timber and proximity to a river for importing metal and scarce woods.

Woodcarvers had already constructed pieces relevant to their lives. Thus the pieces that they carved were of religious images, crucifixes, statues, and household items such as clocks and clock cases. The people who first made the Black Forest clocks were farmers occupying empty winter days by producing something useful, decorative, and affordable for the average person. The Kreuz Brothers are attributed to have made the first Black Forest clock around 1640 in the Waldau glassworks.

Black Forest clockmakers lacked the basic knowledge of mathematics and technology and had little contact with clockmakers from other regions. They experimented until they found useable and accurate constructions and then made all their clocks to that pattern. The designs were kept a family secret as much to demonstrate their independence as to safeguard their livelihood.

The Black Forest clock began as a simple mechanism containing three wooden wheels in the frame and one for the hour hand with a foliot balance driven by a stone weight. Most of the early clocks were open-sided. The face was an open dial in the form of a ring. Consequently the movements or works were subject to dust, dirt, and wind drafts. Some of the early clocks were musical and had glass bells which were located on top of the clock. Later the bells were made from brass. Some of the clocks also had cowtail pendulums, where the pendulum extended down in front of the dial. Only after 1740 was the anchor escapement and long pendulum introduced. The clocks were made with 12-hour, 30-hour, and 8-day movements.

About 1700 the second hand was added. It was enclosed in a smaller ring under the main hour chapter ring. This second ring had quarter-hour graduations marked, "I, II, III, IV." These two striking mechanisms however were relatively expensive, and many times the clockmakers substituted the cheaper "surrenwerk" or "whizzing works" to serve the same purpose. The clock was encased in a wooden box with sides consisting of doors. The front face was right-angled or square.

The history of Black Forest dial making and painting developed as the movement evolved to enhance the basically inexpensive and simple clock mechanism. In the beginning, the only decorations were

the numerals on the chapter ring and a slight decoration on the top and bottom. These figures were crudely painted with an opening in the middle of the dial for the hour hand wheel.

By 1740, the dial painters were auxiliary workers or "nebenarbeiter" to some 31 independent master clockmakers in the definite centers of Furtwangen and Neustadt. Matthias Grieshaber from Güttenbach began printing paper faces. He had a copper plate made in Freiburg and printed by a hermit with a printing press who lived near Kirchzarten. Grieshaber then stuck the paper dials onto the wooden faces and colored them with water colors. These paper faces however were subject to dampness and would lift up from the dial.

Abount 1780, the so-called Black Forest bow-form dial design had evolved. Two applications and discoveries assisted in this evolution. They were the use of oil paints for dials, which is attributed to Mathias Dilger, and Georg Gfell of Urach's introduction of varnish. The shape of the dial consisted of a square with a semi-circle above. The dials were made from pine planks which were planed and shaped by water-powered saws and in many cases also turned.

After the dial painter received the dial from the turner, he coated it with a chalk and limewater size. When it was dry, the dial was sanded with tripoli powder and pumice. The cream-white lead paint background was then applied and when dry the flowers, fruit, scenes, numerals, chapter ring and other decorations were added. The farmer-artist nebenarbeiter frequently did not understand perspective and the subtle use of color. Country folk in particular enjoyed bright, bold colors and designs. Therefore the colors on these clocks are usually very bold with yellows and reds predominating. Finally it was varnished. Some of the early painters used design books.

The clock shown in Figure 1 is a 12-hour Black Forest wag-on-the-wall clock circa 1800-1830. The movement is signed by an unknown maker with an asterisk (*). The movement is made of a soft wood, probably beech, with a brass escapement and wooden arbor. The combination of wooden painted dial and wood and brass movement is characteristic of Black Forest clocks. The going train (which keeps the time) is in front of the striking train (which strikes the hours). The dial is fastened to the movement by L-shape latches, which is an idiosyncracy of the maker. There are no doors to protect the movement from dust and dirt. The dial is decorated with a water-based paint. The large rose on the arch was painted in alizarin crimson with a side-loaded brush. Beside it, the royal blue lily-type flower is accented with black. There is also a solidly vermilion painted flower in the arch. On the spandrels in the four corners, there are small flowers which are

painted solidly with a full brush in vermilion overcoated with alizarin crimson. Leaves are deep blue-green and yellow-green. The chapter ring with the roman numerals, as well as along the edge of the dial, are outlined with a fine blue stripe.

One of the Black Forest clock dial styles is known as the Schild. It was made from about 1780 into the 19th century. In this style, the chapter ring with the numerals is raised. The dial turner constructed it by glueing an extra circular layer of wood to the base of the dial. The extra wood helped to stiffen the dial. The decorations on these Schild dials also varied from landscape and castle scenes to floral and agricultural motifs. Figure 2 is another wall clock with Schild dial with a reddish-purple basket of roses. The roses were painted with a side-loaded technique. The square part of the dial measures 11-3/4". The spandrels also contain reddish-purple flowers with dark olive green leaves and stems. There is a fake brass chapter ring rim with tiny hand-painted red and green leaves.

Figure 3's Schild dial depicts the four seasons. It is 12-1/4" square with a 10-1/2" diameter bow or semi-circle arch on top. The four corners or spandrels of the square dial contain tiny stylized pink roses and other blue and red flowers for spring; an autumnal sheaf of wheat, rake and sickle; a bunch of blueish-purple grapes for summer, and a winter motif of burning brush and logs. The semi-circle on top has a scene of a German castle.

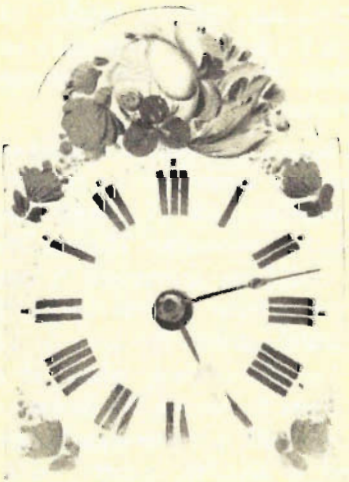

Fig. 1
Early 1800's wag-on-the-wall clock
Courtesy, Cheryl A. Copeland

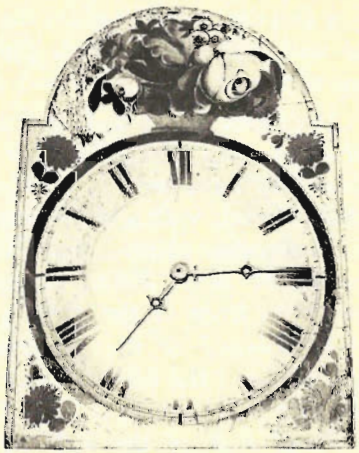

Fig. 2
Wall clock with floral basket motif.
Courtesy, Martha R. Peach.

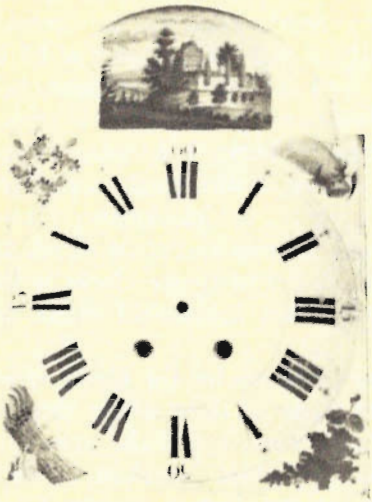

Fig. 3
Schild dial, scenes of agricultural seasons.
Courtesy, Arlene L. Clinkman.

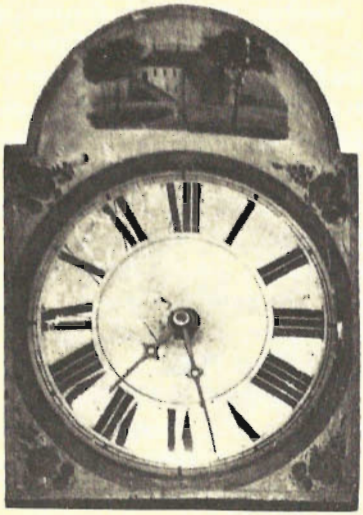

Fig. 4
Wag-on-the-wall clock, farmhouse scene.
Courtesy, Mr. & Mrs. Edward Tufts.

Figure 4 shows another type of decorative motif on the Schild dial. The dial is approximately 11-3/4" square with wooden works and case. This clock has side doors. The semi-circle scene is of a farmhouse. Orange-red flowers with greenish brown leaves are painted on the spandrels. The dial has cracked with age.

Black Forest clockmakers marketed their clocks throughout Europe and the world through travelling peddlers who strapped the clocks to their backs, packers, associations, and finally wholesalers. The decorations on the clocks were varied to appeal to the different tastes of people in these countries. For instance, French buyers liked large harsh glaring flowers. The Northern German and Scandinavian markets preferred smaller corner paintings with columns. For the British market, three types of dials were used. The first dial was plain except for the numerals. It was surrounded by a mahogany rim and covered by glass in a brass bezel. The weights and pendulum differentiated this clock from the English spring-driven wall clock. Some 8-day movements from the Black Forest were also fitted with dial plates made in Birmingham, England. Finally, some dials for the British market used the "lace edge" painting style for the decorations. Britain was the single largest foreign market for the Black Forest clocks.

Another means of decorating clocks was also employed by the Black Forest clockmaker. Michael Dorer is attributed to be the inventor of the figure clocks. The figures on the top of these clocks were of birds, such as the cuckoo, quail, and cock, as well as monks, trumpeters, bell strikers, watchmen, fighting rams, figures moving in circles, butchers, animals or people with turning eyes, gasping Turks, beheading scenes, dumpling eaters, tailors, dancing bears, millers, smiths, teachers scolding lazy pupils, and wood splitters, etc. In short, the clockmaker placed whichever figures his tastes preferred and his customers requested. Of course, the most popular of all these Black Forest figure clocks is the cuckoo clock. Supposedly Frank Ketterer from Schonwald made the first one about 1730.

Competition and tariffs were always problems for the Black Forest clockmakers. For years, France excluded many of these clocks through an import tariff. However, the Industrial Revolution and the growth of railroads made time-keeping much more important. Demand between 1800 and 1860 far exceeded the supply, and production increased dramatically. The peak was reached between 1830 and 1840.

By 1845 the Black Forest clockmaking industry was being forced to change its whole method of operation to keep pace with mass produced parts and clocks from the United States. Many clockmakers could not convert and went bankrupt. Several merged to form clock companies. The cottage industry of decorating clock dials was brought under the factory roof. An alternative to hand painting was developed with stick-on pictures which were then varnished or covered with glass. The development of modern painting and carving methods attracted more attention to the exteriors of the clocks. Of economic necessity, the era was ending for Black Forest clock and dial decoration.

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## JAPANNER'S FLOWERS

*By Martha Miles Wilbur*

The Japanners of England were knowledgeable in the field of botany as well as painting. Roses, tulips and daisies are familiar flowers which were repeated many times on painted tin and papier mache' items. There are other flowers not so familiar to some of us, and their identification may make the painting of them easier to accomplish in a more realistic fashion by the decorators of today.

First, a resume of the history of flower painting is necessary. The art of flower painting is as old as civilized man as evidenced by the cave men who drew representations of plants on the cave walls, possibly to help remember those that they had found edible or good for medicinal purposes. The first plants that are recognizable were painted and carved by Egyptian artists who were working under the patronage of Queen Hatshepsut, Thutmose III and Ikhoton, pharaohs who were enthusiastic plant collectors. We know this because plants were carved in bas relief, about 1500 B.C., in the hall of the great temple at Karnak and can be studied today.

Some centuries later the Greeks founded the science of botany, primarily to record the healing properties of plants. Anicenna, an Arab physician living in Greece (950-1037 A.D.), used colored drawings to instruct his pupils in botany. Some of these crude drawings were in existence until the 16th century and were available to students for study.

The next revival of flower representation was during the Renaissance when flowers in their realistic botanical form appeared in religious paintings. The lily, representing purity, accompanied many of the pictures of the Virgin. Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519), the most famous painter of his time, scattered small plants in the foreground of some of his works. The collection of the Academy at Venice includes a pen and ink study of flowers by Leonardo which shows violets viewed from all angles, primroses, and other flowers drawn with botanical accuracy. Sando Botticelli (1444-1510), a contemporary of Leonardo's, in his painting "Primovera" (Spring) has thirty botanically identifiable flowers in the landscape.

At the same time in Germany the painter Albrect Durer's (1471-1528) "Clump of Grass" is a familiar watercolor; less well known is his rendering of a "Clump of Sod with a Columbine" which is also botanically correct.

During this period herbals were being printed in the countries of Europe. The woodcuts from those books were copied by less skilled artists time after time until they became distorted and crude.

The end of the 14th century brought the emergence of the Flemish and French miniature painters who began to paint with realistic detail. By the 17th century artists such as Jean Baptiste Monnoyer (1634-1699), Jan Brueghel (1601-1678), Jan van Huysam (1687-1749) and many lesser known painters had mastered the technique of painting botanically accurate renditions, with a knowledge of "interior perspective" so the viewer can see into the interior of the flowers rendering them three-dimensional and realistic. This was the period of the painted vase crowded with blooms of many large, aristocratic, exotic super blooms and smaller flower heads. Frequently the flowers of different seasons were combined. Butterflies, bees, bugs, and sometimes even a bird's nest complete with eggs, were a part of the composition. Paulus Van Brussel (1754-1795), a master of this technique, is represented at the National Gallery, London, with at least two canvases with large vases filled to overflowing.

Many artists were painting in the Flemish manner but there were also those whose fame was in the field of the botanical drawing of a single flower which was rendered in a visually pleasing composition. Probably the two most widely acclaimed artists were Georg Ehret of England and Pierre Joseph Redoute' of France.

Georg Ehret (1708-1770) was born in Heidelburg, Germany. His father was a gardener, a man of artistic bent who taught his son to draw. Unfortunately the father died when George was quite young. The boy was apprenticed to his uncle who was also a gardener employed at Bessingen near Darmstadt. Georg was unhappy there but his cousin encouraged him to draw and helped supply Georg with material. After completing his apprenticeship Georg and his brother worked for various German aristocrats, including the Margrave, Karl III, William of Baden Dulach at his Karlsruthe estate. While there, Georg turned away from gardening and toward the study of botany. After leaving Karlsruthe he studied and traveled in Germany and France, and finally settled in England in 1736 where he was in great demand by the nobility for his ability in floral painting.

Pierre Joseph Redoute' (1750-1840) is best known for his rendering of roses. Redoute' was court painter to Marie Antoinette and Empress Josephine. His book, *Les Roses*, shows transparency and purity of color, both of which are characteristics of his craftsmanship. Redoute' maintained that a botanically accurate study need not be dull and lifeless.

In England about 1730 Robert Furber, a nurseryman, had a new idea for a seed catalogue. He made twelve engravings of flowers arranged in a vase, one for each month. Later he expanded the idea and printed one for each season. Each flower in the arrangement was numbered and at the bottom of each was printed a key with the names of the flowers.

These prints even included twelty-five native American plants! Gardeners could order flowers for their gardens from the prints because the four hundred or so flowers represented were botanically accurate and lifelike. The book of prints is still in use today and reprints from a complete original set owned by Colonial Williamsburg are very popular -- as they were to Furber's patrons.

Gerta Calmann in her biography of Ehret states:

> "Flower paintings and flower books had always been a source of inspiration for the Decorative Arts, such as embroidery, tapestry and pottery. It is not surprising that Chelsea Porcelain painters made use of some of the admired botanical engravings. Ehret's plants were reproduced during the 'red anchor' period of the Chelsea factory, said to have been the most beautiful period in its history"

Flower painting also appeared in various media. The Metropolitan Museum has several cabinets with French Sevres porcelain placque inserts that could well be a design found in the center of a painted papier mache' tray or table.

This long history gave the Japanners a firm foundation in floral decoration. With this heritage and source material plus the English love of gardens, the Japanners who decorated trays had a basis for painting recognizable flowers. The flowers painted on Chippendale trays and tables are the most botanically accurate and can be identified by name in a great many instances.

The family Ranunculaceae includes many of the flowers we see in tray paintings. The peony is a Ranunculaceae as are the pasque flowers, anemones, crowfoots, buttercups, pond lilies and others.

One of the most often painted flowers of this family which may not be familier is the anemone. It is grown in many forms, single and double, solid and bi-colored. The poppy flower anemone is the one most commonly seen on trays. Anemones are found throughout the world and it is believed that the Biblical reference to "The lilies of the field" referred to the red anemone. At the time of the second Crusade the Bishop of Pisa's ships returning from the Holy Land brought good soil instead of sand as ballast. The soil was spread on the consecrated burial ground of Campa Sancto, spring came, and the ground was red with blossoms which were then said to be the blood of the Crusaders. The reprint *Early Floral Engravings* by Emanuel Seveerts, first printed in 1612, devotes three pages with over twenty drawings of different anemones. Many of these varieties, by the way; were illustrated in Furber's prints. Fig. 1a, from a large tin tray, is an example of the bi-colored blooms with their white petals and red centers. Fig. 1b is white with a blue center and is from a small mammy tray.

Fig. 1a – Anenome. Detail from large tin tray.

Fig. 1b – Anenome. Detail from small mammy tray.

Fig. 2a — Peony. Detail from face screen.

Fig. 2b — Peony. Detail.

Another popular motif was the tree peony of China. It was called by the Chinese, the "king of flowers", symbolizing wealth and honor. A smaller species was grown in England from the time of the Middle Ages, probably having arrived there by way of Crete. In ancient Greece is was known as a healing plant and was named after Paeon, a famous physician of the day. The original color was a rich red or crimson. Fig. 2a is from a face screen. A wild single red peony grew in England on Stupholme Island off the Somerset Coast in the Bristol Channel. Hybridizing produced a range of flowers from single, Fig. 2b, to very double, and from deep red to pure white in color.

The carnation is a member of the Dianthus family and is one of the oldest cultivated flowers. Popular in literature and therefore in the vernacular mind, the carnation was mentioned by Chaucer in one of his Tales. The species includes single as well as the better known double fringed varieties. Fig. 3a illustrates a face screen with a carnation as a prominent flower in the design. Fig. 3b, a close-up, shows the detail of the painting. The sweet william is a member of the same family. John Gerard, in his famous *Herbal* written in 1597 noted the sweet william was "kept and sustained in gardens, more for to please the eye than either the nose or the belly. They are not used either in meat or medicine but esteemed for their beauty, to deck up gardens, the bosoms of the beautiful and garlands and crowns for pleasure". Mr. W. D. John, author of *English Decorated Trays,* a collector of decorated Japanned ware, owned a rectangular tray with a vase of flowers painted with a bunch of sweet william in a prominent position, fig. 4.

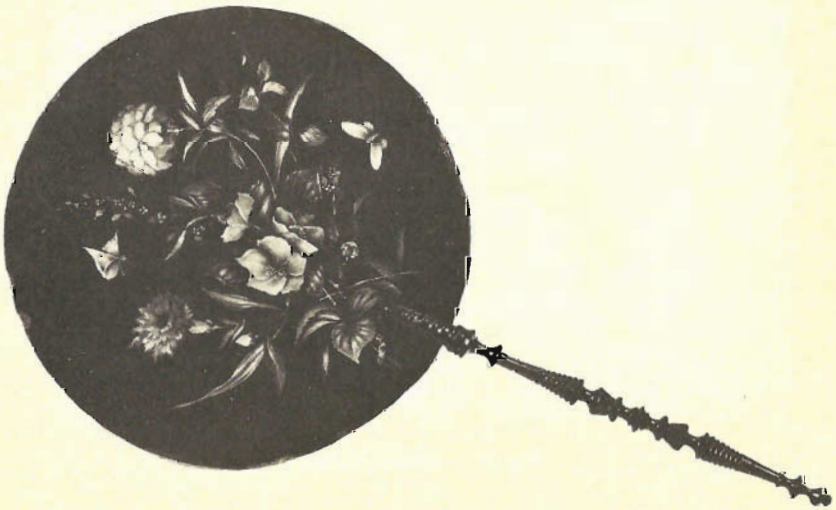

Fig. 3a – Original Papier-Mache Face Screen. Courtesy, Maryjane Clark.

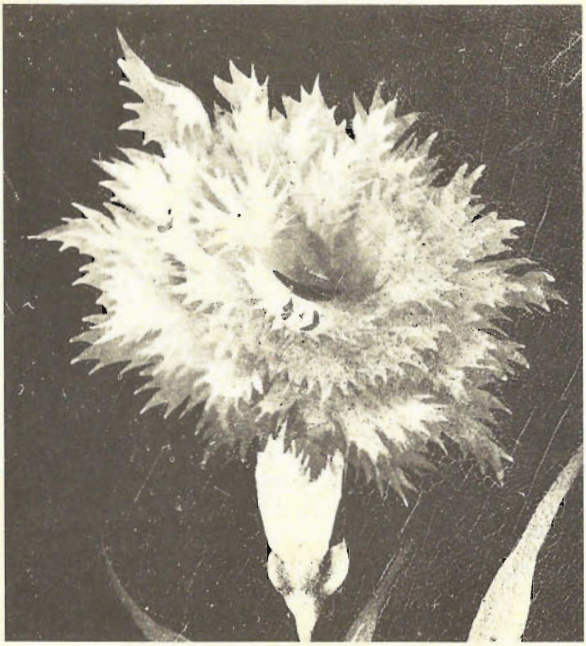

Fig. 3b – Carnation. Detail of Fig. 3a.

Fig. 4 – Sweet William Detail.

Fig. 5a – Original Papier-Mache Tray. Signed "Jennens & Bettridge." Courtesy, Maryjane Clark.

A papier mache tray Fig. 5a has two identifiable flowers, figs. 5b and 5c. The passion flower, Fig. 5b, a member of the Passifloraceae family, so named because a Catholic missionary thought it was symbolic of the Crucifixion. The ten petals represented to him the ten apostles who witnessed the crucifixion; the darker circle inside, the crown of thorns; and the five central stamens, the five wounds. Ehert painted several passion flowers, one of which is now in the British Museum. A native of tropical South America, the species most seen on trays is the Brazilian passion flower which is cultivated for its blue and white or rose colored blossoms. A blue passion flower is in Furber's bouquet for September. In addition to the passion flower there is a beautifully painted rose in the center Fig. 5c.

More common was the hawthorn, a small shrub seen in the hedgerows of England and a member of the rose family. The white blooms cover the tree in the Spring. The English call it "May" and there are references to it in English literature from William Shakespeare to Robert Bridges. Shakespeare in Sonnet XVIII wrote:

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou are more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all to short a date."

The Pilgrims sailed from England in a ship named for the English hawthorn – the Mayflower. This little bloom was so popular a motif

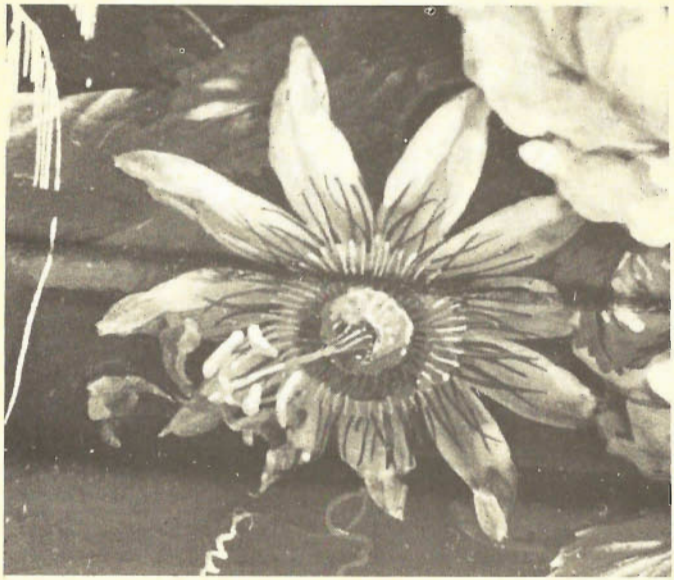

Fig. 5b – Passion Flower. Detail of Fig. 5a.

Fig. 5c – Rose. Detail of Fig. 5a.

Fig. 6 – Hawthorn. Detail from face screen.

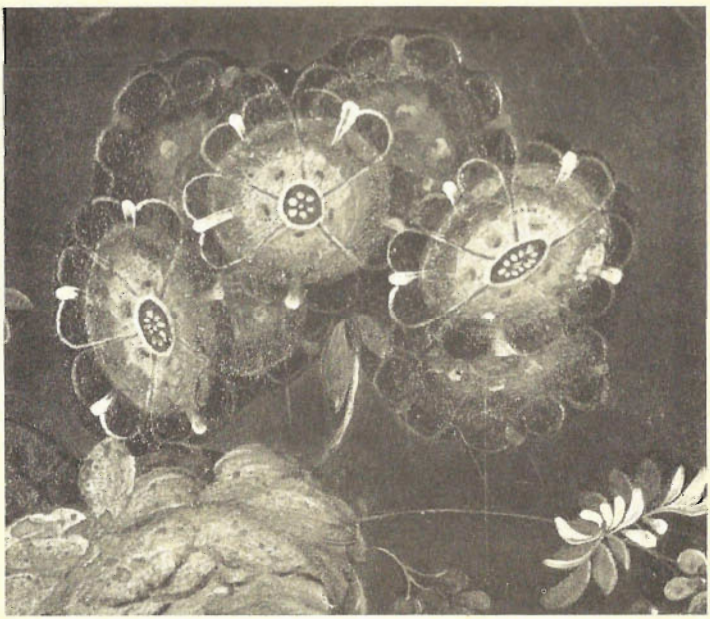

Fig. 7 – Primrose. Detail from Lace Edge Tray. Courtesy, Mrs. Gordon Hayes.

that it was constantly used as a filler – as evidenced on the edge of the face screen, Fig. 6, which has hawthorns in vignettes around the edge.

The Primula family includes the yellow primose which grows wild in English fields and low places, and blossoms in the spring. It is known there as cowslip and is usually yellow but sometimes it is found spotted or orange with crimson streaks. From these mutations the garden varieties were developed. The Furber prints call the cultivated varieties Auricula and they are found on many trays in blues, reds and oranges. The flowers grow in clusters with usually a prominent white eye and sometimes a white rim around the petals, Fig. 7. Some varieties were brought to England by Huguenots in 1757. Jans Douglas wrote a book, *The Distinguishing Properties of a Fine Auricula,* which illustrates the interest and popularity of this flower.

Verbenas originating in tropical and sub-tropical America are a showy flower with a wide range of color and color combinations with two to three inch heads. Fig. 8 was taken from a small round papier mache tray with its only decoration a wreath of verbenas just at the edge of the floor. The flowers are blue, lavender, and pink and the leaves are gold leaf.

There are many other flowers mixed with the familiar blue and white morning glories, fuchias, tulips and roses; for example, the blue bells, both the wild hyacinth called "blue bell" by the English and the more delicate harebell, a member of the Campanula family. Because the

Fig. 8 –Verbena. Detail from small round papier-mache tray.

hare is considered a witch animal in some parts of Scotland the flower is called a witchbell or witch's thimble and is never picked. This variety has very fine stems with delicate linear leaves. Furber shows the English bluebell in his bouquet for May.

Many small four and five-petaled flowers were used as fillers and without leaves they defy identification. There are others whose identification is uncertain. For example, a camellia and a pomegranate flower are so similar in the old pictures and prints as well as in their live form that it is difficult to tell which the artist used as a model. During the 18th century and early 19th century English botanists were so intrigued with the new plants being sent over from America that some like the honeysuckle, Carolina jasmine and marigolds were becoming very popular and were included in paintings.

The artists who painted the japanned products of England had examples of floral art for study as well as first hand knowledge from the cultivated flowers in the surrounding gardens. Because of this, their floral representations are accurate and convincing. Admittedly, sometimes artistic license was used and stylized flowers were included with the realistic ones. To obtain the perfection of the old work we should also know and study the flowers we paint, from existing prints available to us as well as from flowers in their natural environment.

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## THE STEVENS TAVERN-WESTBROOK, MAINE

*By Laura Orcutt*

Stevens Plains, until a short time ago, was a part of that small segment of history which is of special interest to our Society.

In the Fall of 1977, it came to life when I received my copy of the OBSERVER, the periodical issued by Greater Portland Landmarks. This organization was one of the first to become active in preservation and restoration and is responsible for much of the revitalization of various areas of Portland. Under the title "Historic Pre-Revolutionary House for Sale" was the name "Stevens Tavern, Stevens Avenue, Portland." I knew that Stevens Plains had been incorporated into what is now Westbrook and supposed that all traces of the Plains community had disappeared.

The Stevens homestead was the first frame dwelling built in the Deering section of Portland or Falmouth, as it was then called. Isaac Sawyer Stevens, a blacksmith, married Sarah, the daughter of Zachariah Brackett in 1767 and they built the house between 1767 and 1769.

When Isaac felt it his duty to enlist and left to fight in the Revolution, Sarah, being a resourceful Maine housewife, with two children to care for, opened her house as a tavern. As it was situated on what was the main road between Boston and Augusta at that time, it became a popular stopping place for stagecoaches and "Stevens" was listed in early handbooks as the chief "ordinary" for Portland.

Zachariah Brackett Stevens, the tinsmith, the fourth child of Sarah and Isaac, was born in 1778. His brother, William, eventually became the owner of the house and continued its use as a tavern. It was then known as "Uncle Billy's Tavern."

One historian says that the house was originally a story and a half high, probably a typical New England cape, and that the second story was added by William when he needed more room for the tavern. He also says that a great fireplace in the "lounging" place "or lobby," was removed about 1900.

William's daughter, Irene Stevens Record, bought the house in 1866 after William's death. It was no longer used as a tavern, and was considerably altered. The large central chimney and its fireplaces were removed when the house was adapted to heating by stoves. There is a graceful, late Federal circular staircase replacing an earlier one. Upstairs two rooms retain fine fireplace wall panelling, and at one time, two hinged panelled doors separated front and back bedrooms. A big room could thus become available for balls and other social gatherings.

The Stevens homestead belonged to family descendants for almost two hundred years until it was sold in 1957.

The house stands on Stevens Avenue next to Evergreen Cemetery. Beyond is Westbrook College, where Zachariah's daughter, Cordelia, taught drawing and painting when it was Westbrook Seminary. The older buildings of the college stand on eight acres of land given by Zachariah Stevens and Oliver Buckley.

Stevens Tavern remains as the last building of a busy community, with at least twelve more tinsmiths, makers of pewter and Britania ware, horn combs and brushes, and peddler's carts constantly arriving and departing.

The house looks rather sad and neglected now, but it has new owners and, at the time I write, a hugh forsythia bush is spraying its yellow blossoms by the front door, a promise of better days to come.

SOURCES:

Greater Portland Landmarks OBSERVER
November-December 1977- Text by Mary Eliza Wengren
THE MAGAZINE ANTIQUES, March 1936, "Zachariah Brackett Stevens", Esther Stevens Fraser
Mrs. Dorothy Healy – Curator, Westbrook College

Original Tin Trunk – Courtesy, G. Alexander

## CORNER OF FACTS

### The Method of Japanning Wood or Paper.

An extract from the UNIVERSAL MAGAZINE, 1752.

*Contributed by Shirley Spaulding DeVoe*

**To make a strong Japan varnish.** Take an ounce of colophony, (rosin) and having melted it in a glazed pipkin, and having ready three ounces of amber reduced to a fine powder, sprinkle it by little and little into it, adding now and then some spirit of turpentine; when this is melted, sprinkle in three ounces of sarcocolla, (a gum from an Eastern vetch) finely powdered, stirring all the while, and putting in frequently more spirit of turpentine, till all is melted; then pour it through a coarse hair bag, placed between two hot boards, and press gently till the clear is received into a warm, glazed vessel. Mix ground ivory black with this varnish, and, having fiirst warmed your paper plate, paint it and set it into a gentle oven, and on the third day into one very hot and let it stand in it till the oven is quite cold, and then it will be fit for any use.

### Gold Varnish

Do the object to be varnished over with size and when it begins to stick a little to the fingers lay on the leaf-gold. After the Gold has been laid on and the gold size is dry and the loose flying pieces brushed off, then lay the following varnish to brighten the gold and preserve it from rubbing: –

### Varnish for Gold and such Leaf Metals as imitates Gold,

Melt some colophony rosin, and then put in two ounces of amber well pulverised with some turpentine, as the amber thickens, stirring well; then add an ounce of gum elemi, (soft yellow resin) well powdered, and some more spirit of turpentine, still keeping the liquor stirring until it is well mixed; but take care to use as little spirit of turpentine as you can, because the thicker the varnish is the harder it will be. Let this operation be performed over a sand-heat* in an open glass and strain it as directed for the former varnish. Use this varnish alone, first warming your vessels (made with paper paste) and lay it on with a painting brush before a fire, and afterwards harden it by degrees at three separate times in ovens, the first being slow heat, the next a warmer oven and the third a very hot one, and these vessels will look like polished gold.

### The Method of Silvering paper Vessels.

Do the vessels over with size or with chalk or whiting; let them stand by till they are very dry and then paint them over again with the

*A description of a sand-heat or sand bath can be found on page 88 of Papier Mache of the *Georgian and Victorian Periods.* Wesleyan University Press, 1971.

lightest gold size you can get. When this size is almost dry lay on the leaf-silver and close it well to the size brushing off the loose parts when it is dry, with some cotton. Use the following varnish to clear the silver: –

Melt some turpentine in a fine glazed pipkin; then take one ounce and a half of white amber well pulverized, put it by degrees into the turpentine stirring it well until the amber is all dissolved; then put to it half an ounce of sarcocolla powdered and half an ounce of gum elemi well levigated (smooth) pouring in at times more of the turpentine-spirit till all is dissolved. Let it be done over a gentle fire and keep stirring the mixture continually while it is on the fire. This varnish will be as white and strong as the former and must be warm, and is as strong as that which is laid upon gold; and is to be afterwards hardened by degrees in an oven as the gold varnish and the vessel will look like polished silver.

### Red and Gilt Decoration.

Mix some vermilion with the varnish first directed and use it warm; stove it or warm it by degrees in an oven and it will be extremely bright; or else lay on the first ground with size and vermilion, and with gum arabic water, stick on, in proper places, some figures cut out of prints, as little sprigs of flowers or such like; and when they are dry do them over with gold size and let them remain till it is a little sticky to the touch. Then lay on the gold and let that be closed to the gold size and dried; then, if you have a mind to shade any part of the flower, trace over the shady parts on the leaf-gold with a fine pencil of camel's hair and some ox-gall, (light chrome yellow) and then paint upon that with a deep Dutch pink; (also a shade of yellow) and when that is dry use the varnish in a warm place (i.e. that varnish directed for the covering of gold) and, when you have done, set it to harden by degrees in an oven. This varnish will secure the leaf-gold from changing, by keeping the air from it.

### Directions in Colouring Draughts and Prints of Birds Flowers, etc.

If the prints or drawings of flowers be in black and white; if the centre of the flower is rising, you must touch the edges of the lights with a thin tincture of gamboge and lay in some Dutch pink, or gall-stone over the shades so as to run into the lights a very little. This is to be done because the thrums in the middle of the flowers are generally yellow; but if any other colour, (as sometimes blue etc. and sometimes lighter and sometimes darker) then touch the verges of the lights with a little ultramarine blue and over the shades, either some sanders blue, to run a little into ultramarine, or else shade with indigo; and some of the white of the print being left void of colour will then give light and spirit to the colours so disposed.

All flowers should be tenderly touched in the light just to give a little glare into the light parts of the colour you would give to the flower leaves; and, if you paint by a natural flavour you will presently see that on the shady side, you must lay on the most shady part such a colour as will force the rest to appear forward; but do not daub over the shades with too heavy a colour; let it be such as may be as transparent as possible and scrumble (a painters word for sort of scrubbing in a colour with the brush) it into the light colour that was laid before. On this occasion the pencil must be used lightly with a little gum-water in it, and it must be used before the colours are quite dry.

In painting the leaves of plants and herbs, regard must be had to the green that sometimes is the chief distinguishing character. Of greens, verdegrease is the lightest; therefore that colour should be placed into the lighter parts of the leaf, from the place that the lighter parts of the shades end; and then, in the shady parts, lay on some sap green so as to unite with the verdegrease green; and if the natural leaf should be of a darkish colour, touch the lighter sides of the leaves with a little verdegrease and Dutch (yellow) pink mixed together, or with a tincture of French berries (a fruit of the buckthorn used for yellow and green paint) but as to let the verdegrease shine more than the pink. The leaving the lights in colouring the print, has two advantages, viz: — If the whites be left on this occasion, the whiteness of the paper serves instead of white paint which is heavy in colour and would rather confound those that have been prescribed to be laid on than do them any service; but the colours before directed, where there is no white laid in, will shine agreeably into the white paper. I am the more particular in this because some persons will lay a blue flower all over with one colour tho' it be thick enough to hide both the lights and shades; and then it will look like a penny picture, where there is nothing but a jumble of reds, blues and greens. In such pieces of work be sure to scrumble the lights into the shades of every colour and leave the middle of the lights open to the paper; for as the paper is white of itself, it makes a light.

Papier-Mache Portfolio Gift of Walter Smith

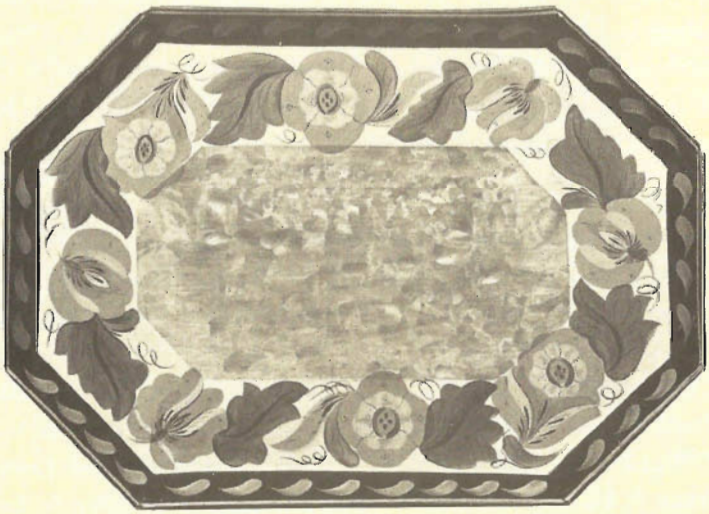
## APPLICANTS ACCEPTED AS MEMBERS
### Cherry Hill, New Jersey – May 1980

Mrs. Gerald F. (Antoinette) Allen, 35 Anthony Road, E. Weymouth, Mass. 02189
Mrs. Lloyd A. (Ann) Baker, Potter Hill Road, R.F.D. #3, Westerly, R.I. 02891
Mrs. W. (Marjorie Ann) Brown, Jr., 79 Barry Avenue, Ridgefield, Conn. 06877
Mrs. Albert L. (Anita) Brunner, 25 Brookside Road, Darien, Conn. 06820
Mrs. Michael (Susan) Caputo, 10 Old Farm Road, Bedford, N.H. 03102
Mrs. Henry C. (Elva) Clay, R.F.D. #1, Granger Dr., Durham, N.H. 03824
Mrs. James A. (Margaret) Farmer, 192 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Bethel, Conn. 06801
Mrs. R. C. (Marcia) Geckler, 485 Pine Street, Lockport, N.Y. 14094
Mrs. Joseph G. (Marianna) Hauck, 85 Brunswick Avenue, Lebanon, N.J. 08833
Mrs. Clifford (Winifred) LeGasse, 57 Layton Street, Lyons, N.Y. 14489
Mrs. Edward (Alice) Pilecki, Box 252, R.D. #3, Flemington, N.J. 08822
Mrs. John H. (Sally) Powell, Star Route, N. Lebanon, Me.. 04027
Mrs. J. G. (Marguerite) Rafter, Route 2, Box 40 Wiscasset, Me. 04578
Mrs. Frank W. (Courtney) Ricker, Memorial Drive, Winthrop, Me. 04364
Mrs. R. W. (Marion) Schmelter, 4 Northfield, West Hartford, Conn. 06107
Mrs. Frank A. (Christine) Small, 2262 S.E. Carnation Rd., Port St. Lucie, Fla
Mrs. J. M. (Margaret) Wehner, Jr., 521 Atterbury Road, Villanova, Pa. 19085

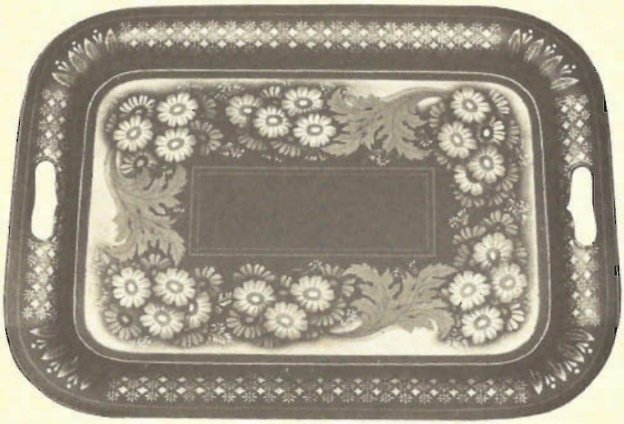
## MEMBER'S "A" AWARDS
### Cherry Hill, New Jersey – May 1980

Country Painting

Carolyn Hedge

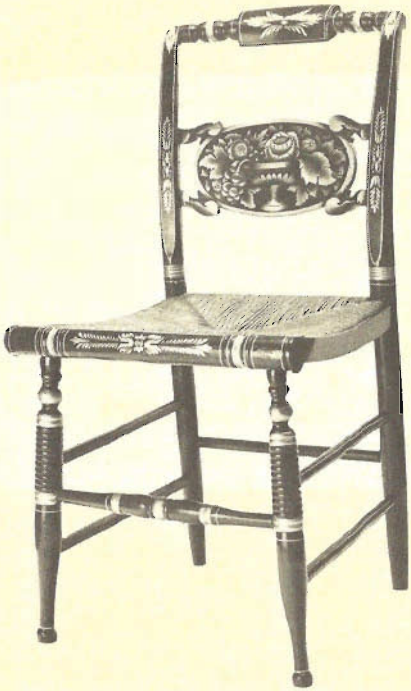


Dorothy Hallett



Alice D. Smith

Elaine Dalzell



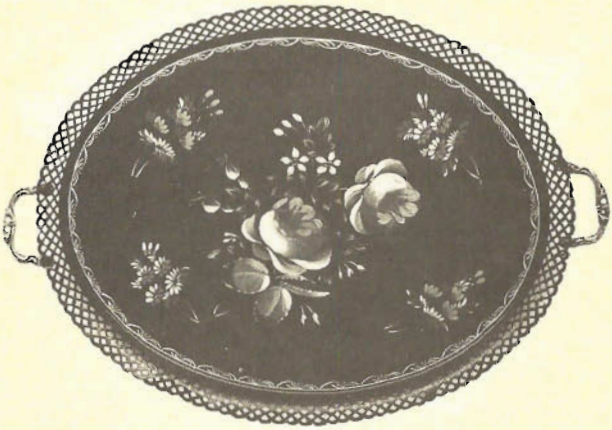
Dorma West

Kay Hogan

Elaine Dalzell

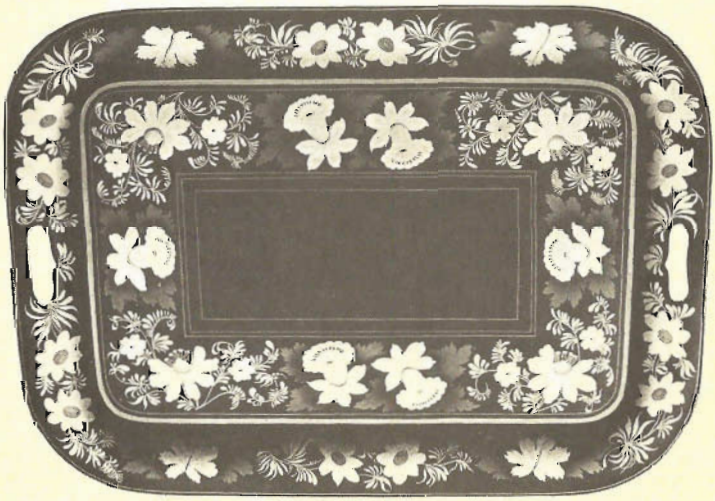
Roberta Edrington

Lace Edge



Deborah Lambeth

Metal Leaf



Joyce Holzer

Helen Gross

Helen Gross

Maryjane Clark

Photographs of the following members's "A" Awards will appear in a later issue:

Stencilling on Tin – Barbara Lee Smith

Glass Panel – Stencilled Border, Ingerid Pomeroy

Glass Panel – Metal Leaf Border, Barbara Hood

Glass Panel – Metal Leaf, Anne Gumaer and Harriet Syversen

Special Award – Glass Panel, Maryjane Clark

## STANDARDS AND JUDGING

Effective immediately the country painting design on Page 27 of the the Spring 1979 DECORATOR will no longer be accepted for judging.

This design is known to have been created for demonstration purposes. It is not authentic. Therefore, this design should not be submitted for judging in the category of Country Painting for members or applicants.

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## MEMBER'S "B" AWARDS

### Country Painting

Reggie Frost
Barbara Smith
Barbara Quirk (2 pieces)
Lois Tucker
Shirley Berman (2 pieces)
Lorania Blanchard
Anna Day
Georgia Everts
Laura Corvini (2 pieces)
Carolyn Ann McAdams
Nancy Toombs

### Stencilling on Tin

Ingerid Pomeroy
Jeanne Danyo
Janet Watkins
Trudy Valentine
Dorothy Williams

### Stencilling on Wood

Peggy Waldman
Astrid Thomas (2 pieces)
Eleanor Cook
Dolores Furnari
Barbara Lee Smith

### Metal Leaf Painting

Thekla Wiley
Sherry Dotter

### Lace Edge Painting

Ruth Berkey
Harriet Syversen

### Glass Panel – Metal Leaf Border

Ann Gumaer

### Glass Panel – Metal Leaf

Mary Lou Whitley
Barbara Hood

### Chippendale

Phyllis Sherman

### Special Class

Deborah Lambeth

We regret the incorrect listing of Members "B" Awards in the Fall 1979 issue of THE DECORATOR. The complete list follows:

### Country Painting

Anna Day (2 pieces)
Ardelle Steele
Frances Brand
Dolores Furnari

### Stencilling on Tin

Barbara Smith
Dorothy Fillmore

### Lace Edge

Maryjane Clark


## THE BOOKSHELF

*By Martha M. Wilbur*

*Three Centuries of Connecticut Folk Art* by Alexandra Grave
An Exhibition Organized by Art Resources of Connecticut

The catalog which accompanies the exhibit that is being shown this year in five museums in Connecticut is a soft bound volume. Fourteen color plates precede a brief introduction. The descriptions of the exhibits, with black and white photographs, are divided into categories. The chapter entitled "Signs, Pictures and Painted Walls: The Itinerant Artist" is where the author chose to include a short paragraph on painted and stenciled walls and fireboards. No mention was made of the tin industry which was a factor in the development of Connecticut industries. However, in the photo section following the chapter there is one picture of a cut corner tray, not a typical one, and two decorated chairs, again a poor choice as examples of the work done in Connecticut tin centers and furniture shops.

*Holders of Most Important Cultural Properties* by Dorothy Fields
Smithsonian, Vol. 10, Mo., 10, Smithsonian Associates, Publisher, Washington, D.C. 20560, p 50-58.

This article consists of short sketches of eleven of the seventy artisans designated by the Japanese Government as "Living National Treasures". The eleven discussed in the article range from those making "gampi" or Japanese paper to puppet makers. One of the most interesting sketches to practitioners of Early American Decoration is the detailed description of how the last master of stencil cutting, Hiroshi Kodama, cuts his stencil, the paper he uses and its preparation, as well as the part his wife plays in putting the silk threads between the pair of stencils.

Kodo Otomuru, 81, the lacquer maker, tells of the steps to be taken to produce the two beautiful lacquer objects illustrated. There is a short history of lacquer making in Japan and the different types of lacquer used in various techniques. In the preparation of lacquer for carving, for example, Mr. Otomaru applies one hundred layers of lacquer which takes more than a year.

A very interesting article that can be read in a short time in a local library.

"Reverse Painting Techniques" by Frances D. Burleigh
BULLETIN OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WATCH AND CLOCK COLLECTORS, INC. Vol. XXI No. 4, August 1979, p 339-422.

For the clock collector, the restoration of the glass as well as the replacement of a broken tablet is one important part in maintaining a collection.

The essay printed in this bulletin gives fully detailed instruction beginning with the selection of the proper glass to the final backing of the new or repaired glass. Each step is given under a bold-typed heading accompanied by half-page photographs of the materials needed and the techniques used. There are also line drawings of the construction of a light box, shading techniques used in gold leaf borders, closeups of a ship scene and a stenciled glass. An extremely well written explanation of the reverse glass techniques which also includes a bibliography and a list of suppliers of materials and available catalogues.

*Treasures of American Folk Art* by Robert Bishop
Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1979

A large, 16" x 11-1/2", soft bound picture book with exceptionally good color photographs of examples in the collection of The Museum of American Folk Art. Carvings predominate the collection illustrated. There are a few needlework examples and very few paintings. A disappointment for the student of Early American Decoration.

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## NOTICES FROM THE TRUSTEES

### FALL MEETING

**Holiday Inn Downtown, Portland, Me.**
**September 17, 18, 19, 1980**
Meeting Chairman: Mrs. Sylvester Poor
Program Chairman: Mrs. Ivan Orcutt

### SPRING MEETING

**Best Western Thruway House, Albany, N.Y.**
**May 13, 14, 15, 1981**

### POLICIES

**Use of Society Name and Seal**

**Exhibitions:**

Chapters or Members may sponsor Exhibitions using the name of the Society with written permission of the Treasurer of the Society provided that only originals, "A" or "B" awards, approved portfolios of Certified Teachers and applicant pieces submitted within the last five years, are exhibited. Any exception will be at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

**Opinions or Criticisms:**

Members should not use the name of the Society when writing personal opinions or criticisms to newspapers and magazines. Any matter requiring action by the Society should be referred to the President of the Society.

**The Official Seal:**

The Official Seal of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. shall not be duplicated or used by individuals or chapters.

(Exception: Upon application, Chapters will be granted permission to use the seal for the cover of their yearly program. Passed by the membership at Fall Meeting, 1966.)

**Membership List:**

Permission of the Board of Trustees must be obtained to release the Society's Membership List.

**Meetings:**

Taping of HSEAD, Inc. functions is not permitted.

**New Policies**

July, 1977 — There will be no refunds for meeting registrations, special, tours, and/or admission fees.

July, 1977 — An applicant may have three consecutive years in which to complete requirements for regular membership.

Sept. 1977 — Only members of the HSEAD, Inc. will be admitted to the Society's rooms in Bump Tavern, Cooperstown, N.Y.

Sept. 1977 — Under no conditions are the HSEAD, Inc. exhibition cases in the Farmer's Museum, Cooperstown, N.Y., to be opened, except at the direction of the HSEAD, Inc. Curator.

Sept. 1978 — Names of candidates for consideration by the Nominating Committee in the selection of nominations for the Board of Trustees must be sent to the Chairman of the Nominating Committee by September 1st.

**Change in By-Laws**

Article II

Section 4.

a. Annual dues for active and associate members shall be payable as of July 1, which shall be the beginning of each fiscal year.

b. If any member has not paid dues or other indebtedness to the Society by November 1, the membership shall be terminated. Reinstatement shall be at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

To avoid delay in receiving THE DECORATOR and other Society mailings and adding to the already heavy mailing costs, please notify the Membership Chairman promptly of any change of address.

## NOMINATIONS PLEASE

Each year members are given the opportunity to submit names for consideration by the Nominating Committee in selecting their nominations for the Board of Trustees. Four Trustees will be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Corporation at which time the terms of the following Trustees will expire:

Mrs. Louis Corey, Jr.
Mrs. D. F. Heatherington
Mrs. J. August Duval
Mrs. William Tiffany

Please send the names of your candidates to the Chairman no later than September 1, Mrs. Hollis F. Church, Jr., 47 Cider Brook Rd., R.D. #1, Avon, Conn. 06001

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## BEQUESTS TO H.S.E.A.D., Inc.

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. appreciates the generosity of its members as expressed through bequests. Such gifts serve as a memorial and also enable the Society to perpetuate the pursuits of the Society in the fields of education, history, preservation, publication, and research. While unrestricted gifts have more general uses, a member may designate a gift to serve a particular phase of endeavor.

Bequests should be left in proper legal form, as prepared by a lawyer, or following the general bequest form.

> I give, devise and bequeath to the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc., an organization incorporated in the State of New York, the sum of $..... to be used at the discretion of said corporation. (Or a specific purpose may be indicated.)

## ACTIVE CERTIFIED TEACHERS

MRS. L. R. ALDRICH, Keene, N. H. — country painting.

MRS. CHESTER ARMSTRONG, Ithaca, N. Y. — stenciling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, glass painting.

MRS. RAY BARTLETT, Niantic, Conn. — stenciling.

MRS. WILLIAM BERKEY, Wayne, Pa. — country painting.

MRS. JANE BOLSTER, Berwyn, Pa. — country painting, stenciling, glass painting.

MRS. JOHN CLARK, Norwell, Mass.— stencilling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass painting, Chippendale.

MRS. AUSTIN EMERY, Setauket, N. Y. — country painting, glass painting.

MRS. WAYNE F. FRY, Delmar, N. Y. — country painting, stenciling, metal leaf.

MRS. PAUL GROSS, Sebring, Florida — country painting, stenciling, lace edge painting, glass painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, chippendale.

MRS. JACK HENNESSEY, Albany, N. Y. — country painting.

MRS. KENNETH HOOD, Holcomb, N. Y. — country painting.

MRS. ROBERT HUTCHINGS, Tucson, Ariz. — country painting, stenciling, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass painting, chippendale.

MRS. ROBERT KEEGAN, Hudson, Ohio — country painting, stenciling, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass painting, chippendale.

MRS. SHERWOOD MARTIN, Wapping, Conn. — country painting, stenciling, metal leaf, freehand bronze, lace edge painting, glass painting, chippendale.

MRS. WILLIAM MARTIN, Tryon, N. C. — stenciling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze.

MRS. SYLVESTER POOR, Augusta, Me. — country painting, stenciling.

MRS. E. BRUCE REID, Averill Park, N. Y. — country painting.

MRS. EDWIN W. ROWELL, Pepperell, Mass. — stenciling, country painting, lace edge painting

MRS. DONALD STARK, Glens Falls, N. Y. — country painting.

MRS. DONALD STEELE, Chatham, N. J. — country painting.

MRS. HAROLD SYVERSEN, Closter, N. J. — stenciling, country painting, lace edge painting.

MRS. JOHN THOMAS, Hingham, Mass. — country painting, stenciling.

MRS. WILLIAM S. TIFFANY, Middletown, N.J. — country painting.

MRS. CHARLES C. WALL, Plymouth, Mass. — country painting.

MRS. JOSEPH WATTS, Tom's River, N. J. — stencilling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze, glass painting, lace edge painting, chippendale.

MRS. HERBERT WILLEY, Norwich, Conn. — stenciling, country painting, lace edge painting.

MRS. HARRY R. WILSON, New York, N. Y. — stenciling.

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### Retired Certified Teachers who are willing to serve as Consultants:

MRS. ADRIAN LEA, Glens Falls, N.Y. — stencilling, country painting.

MRS. RAYMOND RAMSEY, Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y. — stencilling, country painting, metal leaf, freehand bronze.

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