

# The Decorator

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Albany, New York

Spring 1984



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 thereof 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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## COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Ogee clock, most heavily produced by Connecticut manufacturers. Stencilled decoration by William Bennet Fenn.  
Courtesy of The American Clock and Watch Museum.

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## EDITORIAL

You will, I think, find this DECORATOR exciting, with its material adding to lectures in recent meetings by Cindy Servino and Dr. Blackburn (especially for those who were not privileged to hear their talks) and providing new insights through the research of our member, Marion Poor. Our next issue will feature New Hampshire murals, Wythe County, Virginia, chests, and English architectural ruins on papier maché.

As a York Stater, I cannot allow the death of researcher/writer/teacher Florence E. Wright on September 29, 1983, to pass unnoticed. Miss Wright, like her teacher, Mrs. Brazer, started many of us on our decorating careers. She taught classes in stencilling all over New York through our Cooperative Extension Service out of Cornell University where she worked from 1929-1951. Zilla Lea, Dorothy Hutchings, Della Harvey, Annabelle Schwab and Betty Goodwin were a few of the many she encouraged. *How to Stencil Chairs*, written by Florence and published in 1949, has been a popular manual over the years. Miss Wright accumulated one of the first fine collections of decorated items, many now at the New York State Historical Association. She shared her collection with others as she shared her knowledge. Florence Wright will live on in the name of our western New York chapter and in the memories of many as a pioneer decorator, a gentle, generous, self-effacing person, and a fine teacher.

Margaret Coffin

NOTE: Space in this journal will dictate whether or not bibliographies will accompany articles. Usually they can be obtained by writing your Editor.



## WILLIAM BENNET FENN'S CLOCK GLASSES

*by Lucinda Burleigh Servino*

This article is a preliminary report. We are very grateful to The American Clock and Watch Museum's curator, Chris H. Bailey, for encouraging publication at this time. The author thanks him for his help in preparing this material. The collection requires further study including (1) indexing the stencils with the specific clocks in which they were used, (2) manufacturing companies and their dates. Mr. Bailey is planning a more comprehensive publication in the future.

When the idea for this article was submitted to *THE DECORATOR*, The American Clock and Watch Museum of Bristol, Connecticut, had received a donation of 49 stencils, mostly for clock glasses cut by William Bennet Fenn. These beautiful cut-paper stencils made it clear that William B. Fenn had a tremendously important place in the Connecticut clock industry, and a unique position in the history of ornamental decoration. The complexity and variety of his work is fantastic. Because of recent additions through the kindness of William B. Fenn's relatives, the museum's collection of stencils now numbers 541. Almost all were used for reverse glass paintings for clocks.

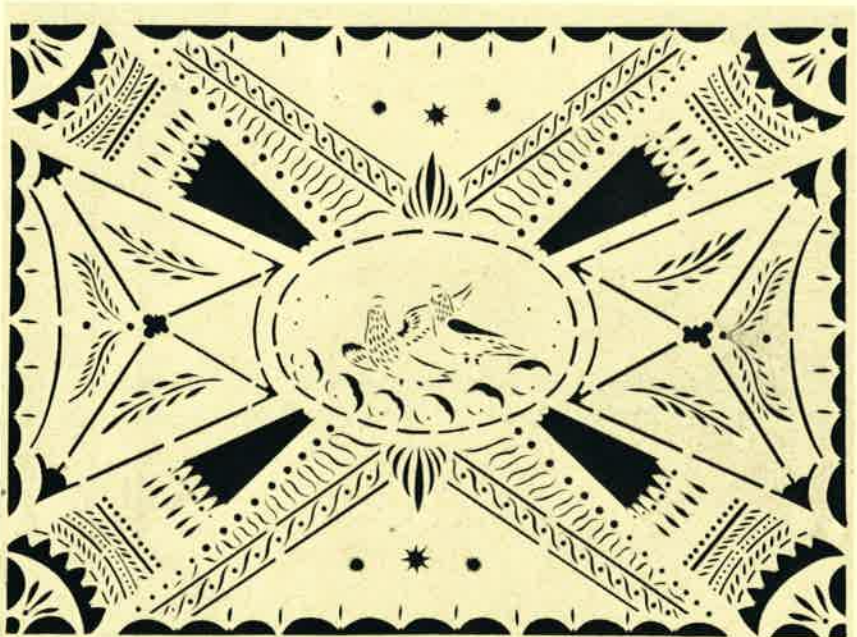


Fig. 1 — Stencil cut for glass 8x6". Ca. 1848. Glass stencilled in gold, masked and frosted; birds and blue border painted.

William Bennet Fenn was born on his father's farm in Plymouth, Litchfield County, Connecticut, in 1813. One of eight children, William always lived on the farm where he was born. *The History of Litchfield County* published in 1881 states that William "owns a fine farm of 150 acres, which is in a good state of cultivation. He has been quite largely engaged in dealing in fat cattle for the home market." The farm must have been managed so that other work was possible. William's father was a school teacher. Both William and his father held offices in the Town of Plymouth. One of the stencils in the collection is cut on a used ledger sheet signed "Wm. B. Fenn Assessor Dated at Plymouth April 12th 1853."

The county history states that at age 16 William B. Fenn "began work with Seth Thomas Sr. in the ornamental department of the Seth Thomas Clock Company," also of Plymouth, "which he continued to follow in connection with farming until 1863, since which time he has confined his time to agriculture." In 1863 Fenn would have been 50. He married for the first time in 1864, and had one daughter who preserved and valued his stencils.

Stencilled furniture first began to appear in about 1815. William B. Fenn started his ornamental work with Seth Thomas in 1829. By 1840 the Connecticut clock industry had already begun to turn to decalcomania, transferring lithographs and printed glasses to meet its increasingly large



Fig. 2 — Stencil cut for glass 8x6". Fenn used this eagle with different borders. Stencilled in silver, eagle painted. Steeple clocks made by Ansonia, Elisha Manross, S. B. Terry and Goodrich all use this. Ca. 1850.



Fig. 3 — J. A. Wells, Bristol, Conn. one user of motif. Ca. 1843-50.



factory production. Because of this, William B. Fenn's return to farming in 1863 is understandable, as handwork, including his stencilled glasses, was becoming less practical.

From *The History of Litchfield County* it would appear that Fenn worked entirely for the Seth Thomas Clock Company. My preliminary look, using the collection of The American Clock and Watch Museum, books on American clocks, and my own collection of photographs and work, shows that Fenn cut stencils for the glasses of at least 20 different manufacturers. Chris Bailey suggests that Fenn worked in the Seth Thomas department for 10 or 12 years. Then he probably set up an independent operation and supplied many other companies between 1840 and 1863. Because partnerships in clock companies dissolved and re-formed, and companies started and stopped during the time when he worked, William B. Fenn could have been supplying 16 companies at once. His most active period was between 1840 and 1852 and only four of the companies we know he had done work for still existed when he is said to have returned to agriculture in 1863.

Styles of clocks in which Fenn glasses are found vary. Many appear in empire shelf clocks. The most common is the ogee, named for its heavy S-shaped moldings. More ogees were made than any other type of clock in Connecticut manufacture. Fenn's glasses appear in the ogee clocks of at least 11 different makers. There are miniature ogees, ogees with double doors, double moldings, reverse curves, and a variety of veneers to give an idea of the variations. The Seth Thomas Clock Company produced a variety of large empire heavy-cased clocks with William B. Fenn glasses in them. The steeple clocks and other gothic variations of many manufacturers (including the double steeple, candlestick steeple and sharp gothic cases) show off his work. There are clocks with prominent columns and stencilled splats. The museum collection includes a few stencils for these case parts as well. The delicate stencilled glasses were a vital part of these wooden framed clocks which were not delicate by themselves, but were relatively simple adaptations of the empire style.

An interesting idea in a stencilled glass is the use of revival style columns and draped and tied curtains, an architectural motif in an ogee case. Fenn was certainly aware of the design motifs used in other ornamented furniture. (See cover.)

The style of William B. Fenn's stencils is always lacy and delicate. His designs were innovative and in great variety. Many use scroll borders. There are romantic motifs with cherubs, harps, lyres, nesting birds, and the wonderful "The Young Cavalier," a girl on her pony. Fenn's patriotic designs are fascinating "tours de force." His eagles are wonderful. The most intricate reverse stencil of an eagle and shield is particularly complicated. (Fig. 3). Notice the lettering "E Pluribus Unum" in the banner.



Fig. 4 — Popular on ogee clocks. Stencilled in gold, frosted. Bird painted.

There are bold reverse floral designs, not as lacy, but beautifully cut. (Fig. 6). There are strictly geometric designs, and geometric designs with beautifully fine vases of flowers or birds in the center. (Fig. 4). The museum collection includes several versions of a design I call "The Balloon Ascension" that was used in steeple clocks. It typifies a grand and exciting era early in American industrialization.

The collection includes stencils that are well used, some torn and worn out, some that were never completely cut, and some that appear never to have been used. All of the stencils are cut from paper - apparently rag paper - because, except for being worn from use, they are in excellent preservation. Some are on used pieces of stationery; others are cut from ledger and lined paper.



Fig. 5 — Stencil cut for 5¼ x 6½ glass.

Remarkably, the stencils are complete units. Where half of a border or quarter unit could have been turned and repeated, the stencil is cut completely. Everything is cut including the repeats so that the finished stencil needs only to be placed on the glass once.

The lines and cutouts of the stencils were not overcut in their preparation. Actually many are so intricate that overcutting would have made them weak. Fenn used a few stamps or punches; a multipointed small star in some of his eagle stencils, and a variety of sizes of circles. (Figs. 2, 5).

The stencils were made to stand by themselves. They don't rely on the use of shaded powders. Almost all of the stencils use a solid tone of either gold or silver. Painted backgrounds are often partially open to show pendulums or clockmakers' labels inside the clocks. Backgrounds were frosted, some show shaded brush work, and in the case of white backgrounds fine brushed scroll work was added to complement the stencilling.





Fig. 6 — Reverse stencil cut for 8 x 6" glass.

The collection includes many stencils whose designs were recut to make another version, to change the size, or to completely replace a broken stencil. Fenn's work does not show the use of broken stencils so often passed off by lesser craftsmen.

The detail and superior craftsmanship and design of William B. Fenn's stencils, along with the large number that exist, make the attribution of his work easy. Most of his work exemplifying the fine quality of empire furniture decoration must have gone to the Connecticut clock industry, a tremendous addition to the basic factory-made cases.



I have always been fascinated by the reverse glass paintings devised for the many types of Connecticut clocks. So often they show a true love of work as an occupation or as a pastime. There was also a joy in complicated things, perhaps in making something that no one else could copy easily. William Bennet Fenn embodied this spirit. He was a superb craftsman.

### **A List of Clockmakers Who Used Wm. B. Fenn's Glasses**

1. F. C. Andrews, Bristol CT & N.Y.C., 1848.
2. Ansonia Clock Co., Ansonia CT, 1850 - 1878.
3. Putnam Bailey, North Goshen CT, 1830 - 1840.
4. Birge & Fuller, Bristol CT, 1844 - 1847.
5. Birge & Peck, Bristol CT, 1848 - 1859.
6. Boardman & Wells, Bristol CT, 1832 - 1843.
7. Brewster & Ingraham, Bristol, CT, 1844 - 1852.
8. J. C. Brown, Bristol CT, 1831 - 1855.
9. Forestville Manufacturing Co., Bristol, CT, 1833 - 1853.
10. Wm. L. Gilbert Co., Winsted, CT, 1845 - 1866.
11. E. & A. Ingraham, Bristol, CT, 1852 - 1857.
12. Chauncey Jerome, Bristol CT, 1841 - 1844 (ca).
13. Elisha Manross, Bristol CT, 1813 - 1854.
14. George Marsh, Winsted, Bristol and Farmington CT, 1829 - 1833.
15. Smith & Goodrich, Bristol CT, 1847 - 1852.
16. Terry & Andrews, Bristol CT, 1842 - 1850.
17. Henry Terry, Plymouth CT, 1829 - 1836.
18. S. B. Terry, Plymouth CT, 1840 - 1859 (ca).
19. Seth Thomas, Plymouth CT, 1816 - 1842, Plymouth Hollow CT, 1842 - 1865, re-named Thomaston CT, 1866 - 1980's.
20. Daniel M. Tuthill, Saxons River VT, 1842.
21. Waterbury Clock Co., Waterbury CT, 1857 - 1930's.
22. Joseph A. Wells, Bristol CT, 1843 - 1850.
23. H. Welton & Co., Terryville CT, 1839 - 1845.

The dates given are approximate dates of manufacture. Although some of the dates for these companies are early, it appears that most of Wm. B. Fenn's work was done in the 1840's and 1850's. Usually it is not possible to pinpoint the date of a specific clock.

## "READING" STEVENS PLAINS TIN

by Marion Poor

Maine tin is unique. Recognizing and understanding the technical craftsmanship of these cheerful pieces requires the experience of studying originals.

One general characteristic of Maine designs is that there is *no* evidence of heavy pigment. At Stevens Plains we find: wet on dry, wet in wet, and wet on wet blended. The personal signature of the painter lies in the decorative design itself. It takes a design analyst to interpret the signature; just as in handwriting, general characteristics prevail for both (1) Stevens Plains wet-in-wet and (2) Buckley.

Probably it is unrealistic to say that any one tinware shape belonged to one center; however, the fact remains that *distinctive shapes and colors* give character to Maine tin. "Wet-in-wet" painting on a black background of a flat-top box is typically Maine.

Figs. 1 and 2: Here is a fine example of the "flowering" school of Zachariah Stevens. We see fluffy white and yellow flowers - imaginative, with varied petal structure - (perhaps they never grew). Here are the double cherries, Zachariah's favorite. Note the cross-hatching in the right-hand flower to represent highlights. Leaves include the almost transparent

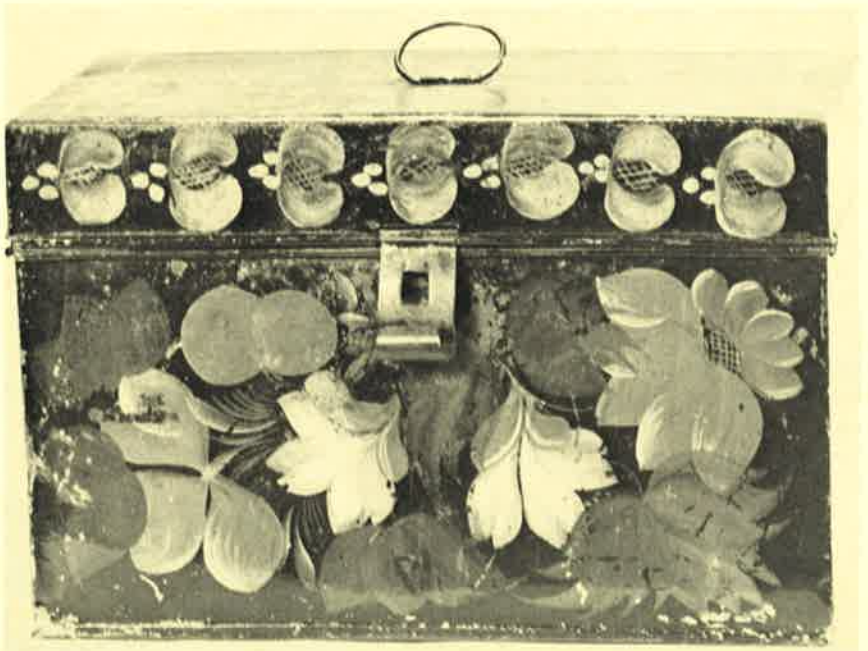


Fig. 1

three-leaf-clover type and the familiar brush-stroke form. Also present are many fine green strokes livened up with a speck of yellow. The interesting border is varied with dots, and cross-hatching again appears.

Figs. 3, 4, 5, 6: Two red boxes typify the designs of Buckley, himself. He often painted from the base. (Fig. 3). Here alizarin on the red ground forms the base of these three exquisite flowers which are semi-transparent, as are his greens. The leaves with beautiful detail are identical on both boxes, and dots are an integral part of each design. Transparent white petals form his daisy flowers. (Fig. 4). The rhythm and perfect formation of his bright yellow brush strokes become reality on these pieces. Elaborate conventional motifs decorate the ends of each. On the platform box

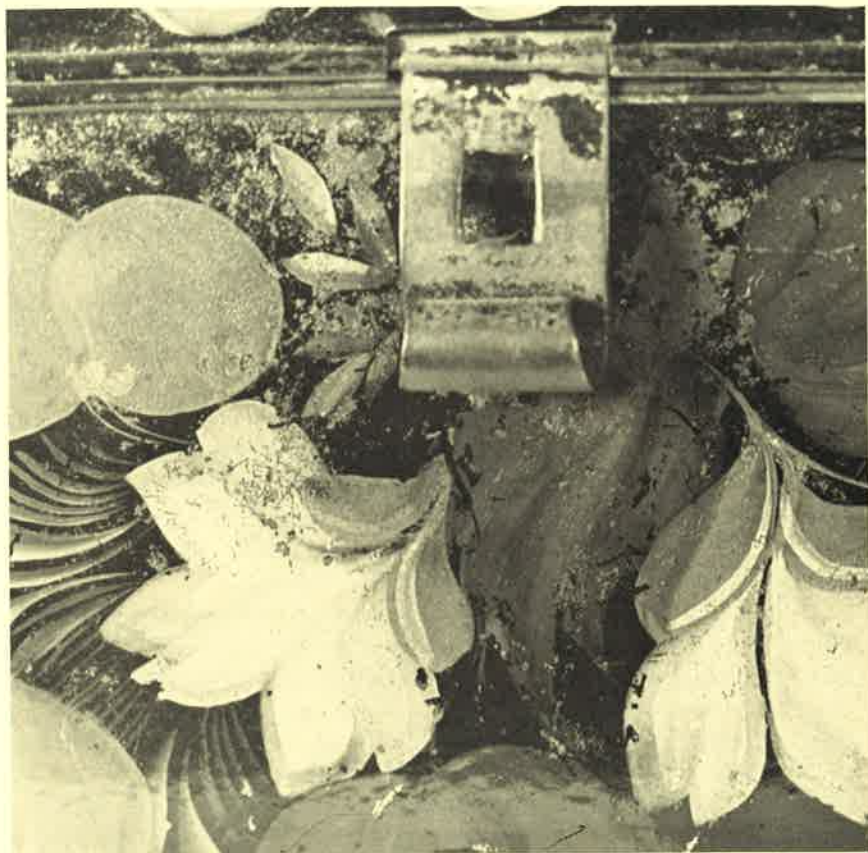


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

(Fig. 5) the ends are painted yellow, and the identical designs appear in black on the dome-top- box. Top brush-stroke decorations are in yellow (Fig. 6). On both, black rickrack is in evidence. When we see these characteristics so flawlessly executed, we have to say "Oliver Buckley." No teacher can substitute for a study of these originals.

Figs. 7, 8: These platform top boxes appear to have been painted by Oliver Buckley. The boxes, unlike in form, have closely related decoration. An oval canister in the E. M. Holmes Collection (DECORATOR Vol XXXI, No. 1) has an identical band in red. Scallops on the low trunk (Fig. 7) are red below the white band, the red of the band on the oval canister in Vol. XXXI, No. 1. Fine, intricate strokes on the white band are green, whereas on the square platform box with white band and scallops (Fig. 8), the same running border has both red and green strokes. The red scallops of the low box have alizarin strokes with white overtones: the white scallops of the





Fig. 4



Fig. 5

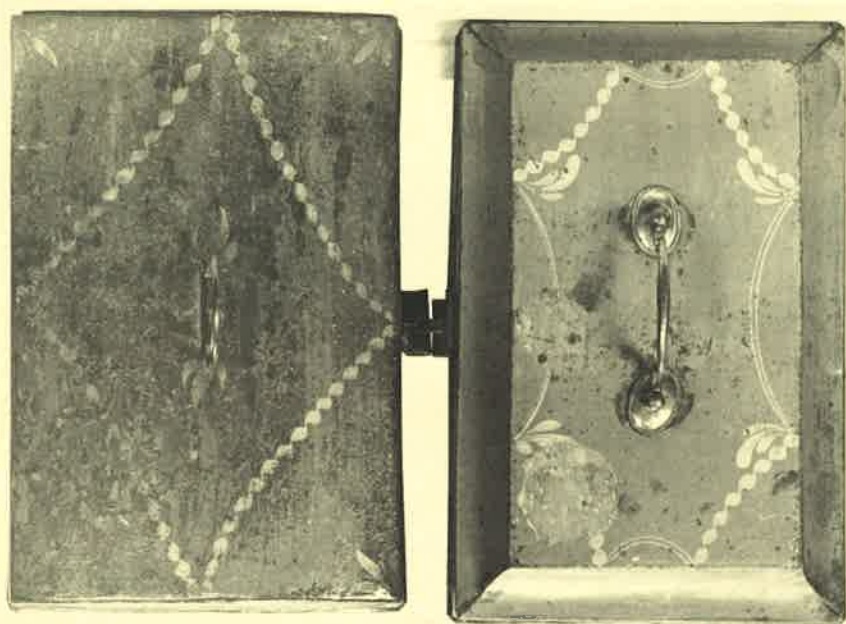


Fig. 6

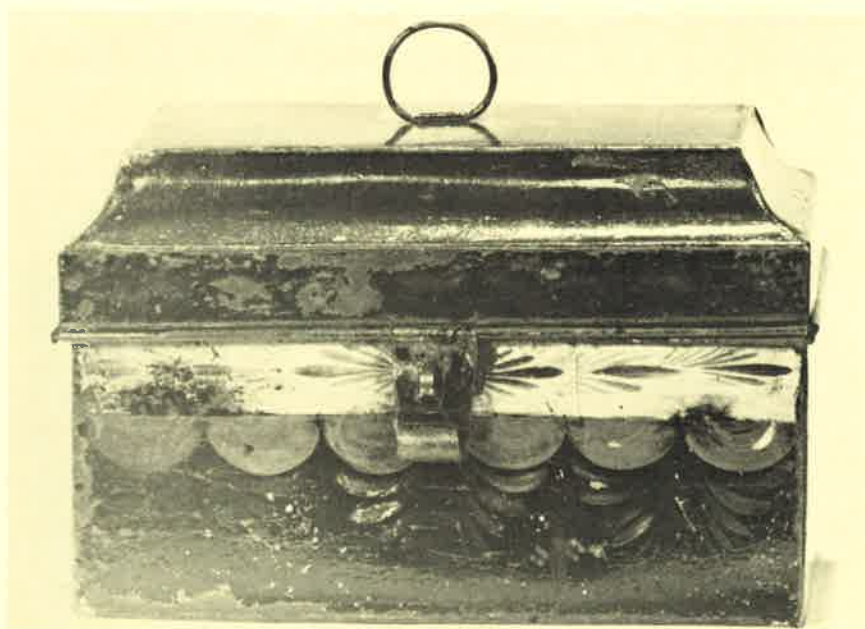


Fig. 7

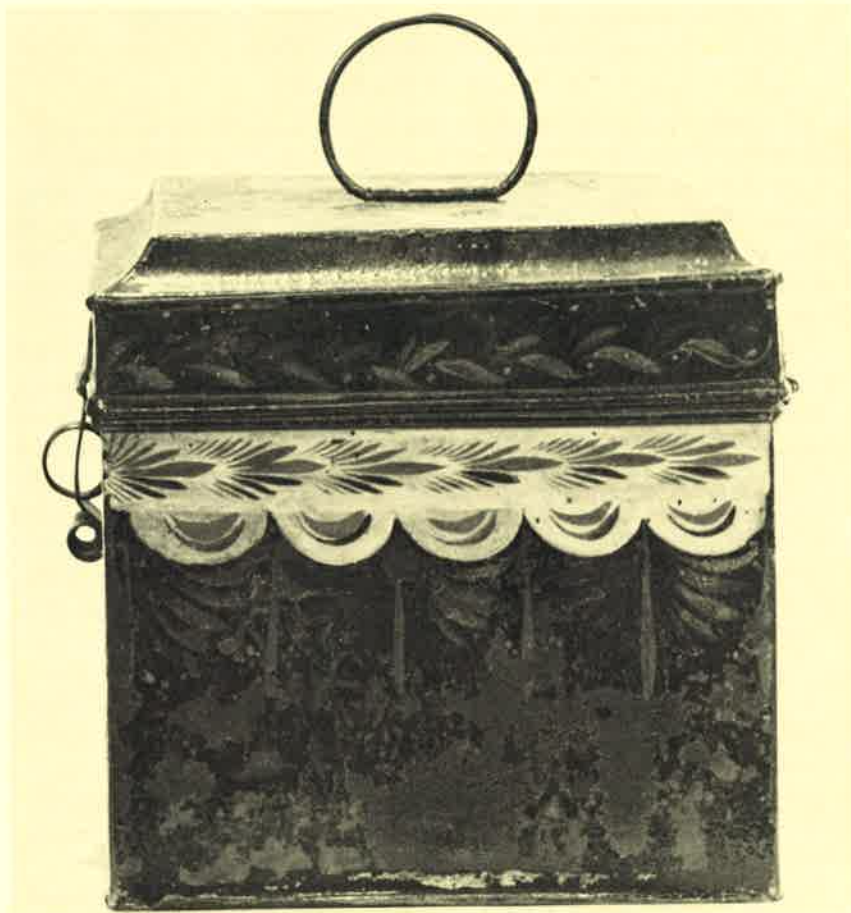


Fig. 8

square box have red and green overtones. Both boxes are completed with the same detailed drapery swag. Both have blue strokes on the left of the long teardrop stroke and ochre strokes on the right. But the teardrop stroke is blue on the low box and red on the square box. Ochre borders on these pieces are identical but simplified according to scale. The involved running border of Fig. 7 is the same as that on the oval canister, before mentioned. A simple running brush stroke separated by two dots adorns both Fig. 8 and the oval canister. It is interesting to observe the painter's skill in adapting the same design to various spaces. The same painter *had* to do all three pieces. It is satisfying to bring relatives together.

Many members have researched and written about Maine tin. It is my desire to further the study and urge a more accurate interpretation of Stevens Plains painting.

## DUTCH DECORATIVE PAINTED FURNITURE SINCE THE 17TH CENTURY

*by Roderic H. Blackburn*

My interest in Dutch decorative painted furniture derives from curiosity about a remarkable group of painted cupboards (Fig. 1) found in New York and New Jersey. These cupboards are among the most interesting examples of American folk art known, a distinction only exceeded by the mystery of their origin. Although they have been known to antiquarians for most of this century, their specific origin and the meaning of their decorative motifs have eluded researchers to this day.

They are presumed to have derived from Dutch prototypes because their form is that of the Dutch cupboard ("kas" or "kast" singular, "kassen" or "kasten" plural). These American versions, made in New York and New Jersey, are known from hundreds of surviving examples that were not decoratively painted. These were made in the 17th and throughout the 18th centuries. Yet most of the painted cupboards found in the same areas are sufficiently different in form from the others to raise some doubt as to their American origin, though no exact prototype has been found in the Netherlands. Researchers have thought the cupboards were made in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, apparently assuming that their un-American decoration would place them closer to the Dutch in time if not in place.

Recently two articles have been published: one is a careful evaluation of what is known of these cupboards (P.C. O'Donnell, "Grisaille decorated kasten of New York": *ANTIQUES* May 1980) and the other, speculation on the meaning of the decoration (F.H. Fabend, "Two 'New' Eighteenth-Century Grisaille Kasten": *THE CLARION*, Spring-Summer 1981). Yet still the basic identity of these cupboards remains unsolved.

I resolved to seek answers to the questions that these cupboards posed while I was conducting research during two trips to the Netherlands in 1983. Are these cupboards all of American origin? Are there Netherlands prototypes for their form and decoration? If so, when and where were they made? What are the immediate and the ultimate sources for the decoration? What is the meaning of the decoration? What are the functions of the cupboard?

These trips to the Netherlands were for the purpose of researching the origins of American Dutch material culture (paintings, silver, furniture, ceramics, textiles and architecture) in preparation for a book and exhibition. Quickly I discovered that the Dutch have a rich tradition of painted furniture encompassing over two dozen forms, not the least of which were painted cupboards (Figs. 2 and 3). Many examples were found in four museums that specialize in regional and rural Dutch life. With the generous assistance of interested museum directors, curators and other researchers, I began to piece together an understanding of painted decoration in the Netherlands.





Fig. 1 — New York or New Jersey cupboard, 18th century. Painted in grisaille (more accurately, in white, black and blue-grey). Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

This is one of 10 known American-made cupboards decorated with motifs of the type found on furniture made and decorated in the Netherlands in the 18th century. The swags and pendant fruit relate to a long tradition of architectural ornamentation begun in the Italian Renaissance and copied from printed sources by both northern European architects and decorative painters. The fruits, especially the pomegranate so prominently displayed, appear to be symbols of fertility appropriate to the function of these cupboards: to store the quantity of valuable linens and other cloth brought to a marriage by a bride and added to in subsequent years (and stored in more cupboards). Thus I believe the decorated cupboards were for marriage.



Fig. 2—Netherlands cupboard, 18th century. From an illustration in an 1914 article on painted Netherlands furniture from the Zaandam area. (G. J. Blees Kzn, "Oud-Zaansche Volkunst" in *Het Huis Oud en Nieuw*, 12 Jaarg 1914. Uitgave: Ed. Cuypers Arch J:Luyken str:2 AMST:).

This cupboard was then in the Friesian Mennonite Orphanage in Zaandam and was dated by the author ca. 1750. Its present existence hasn't been established. This cupboard is made in essentially the same design as three of the New York/New Jersey cupboards. All are of carpenter (not cabinetmaker) quality of construction and sign-painter quality of decoration (probably in grisaille). Such a close relationship between the Old and New Worlds is rare in furniture and, I think, means that the person or persons who built and/or painted the American cupboards was trained in this tradition in the Netherlands and emigrated, temporarily or permanently, to New York and possibly New Jersey and practiced his/their trade for at least a while in the 18th century.

Dating American cupboards is almost impossible because they were made in essentially the same form for over a century, from the late 17th century to the early 19th century. Surviving Netherlands-painted cupboards date from the 18th century and early 19th century. Most surviving Netherlands pieces appear to be from the mid- or late-18th century. So it is still not possible to say whether the New World painted cupboards are mid- or even late-18th century. The assumption has been that they were late-17th or early-18th century because they were so traditionally Dutch and thus early, not being influenced by English furniture and decorative styles. This can not be proved, especially since the Dutch maintained conservative styles and forms all through the 18th century in both countries.

The doors are painted with the usual architectural niches which here uniquely contain the images, as if stone statues, of Athena, left, goddess of beauty, and Juno, goddess of wisdom. Both appropriately symbolize virtues that a bride should bring to her marriage. The fact that they both hold weapons ought not be missed by the prospective groom.



Fig. 3 — Kast, or cupboard, of the Assendelft type, mid- to late-18th century.

Assendelft is one of the small towns near Zaandam in which such cupboards have been found. It has long been assumed that they were made there. This assumption has not been proven, though at least one cupboard of this style exists which was originally built into a house wall, suggesting a local maker. Documents and a late 18th century Amsterdam engraved view confirm that painted furniture was sold and probably made in that city. (Fig. 7). This does not mean that furniture was not also made in Zaandam and neighboring towns.



The origin of decorative painting on Dutch furniture undoubtedly dates back several centuries. Originally it may have been started by the wealthier class and later imitated by the less wealthy. But by the late 17th century it was primarily the furniture of the middle class, both urban and rural, while the upper classes tended to favor unpainted hardwood furniture (excepting special pieces like some tea tables, perhaps influenced by oriental lacquered furniture) usually oak in the early centuries and then walnut and mahogany in the 18th and 19th centuries. Documentation for the large-scale production of painted furniture begins about 1660 when mention is made in Amsterdam records of "witwerkers," meaning "white workers" or men who made things from white wood, soft wood, like spruce, which was largely imported from Scandinavia. It was not a valuable wood so it was cheap; it was also easy to fashion into furniture. You could make several pieces of soft wood in the time it would take a cabinetmaker to make a fine oak piece. So the furniture, also, was inexpensive. Softwoods, when freshly cut, did not have the attractive character of the hardwood pieces so they were painted either in solid colors, or, if the look of carved decoration on the hardwood pieces was desired, then decorative painting was applied in imitation of carving (leaf and vine, figures, pendant fruits) or of paintings (Biblical scenes, ships.)

By 1690 the witwerkers were members of the Guild of Furniture Makers and were required to make a masterwork (a proof of their mastery of the craft) before they were free to work on their own. They were restricted to working in soft woods, while other sections of the Guild worked in hardwoods. Although witwerkers were known to have been active in Amsterdam it is quite likely they were also to be found at least in Zaandam just north of Amsterdam where there were many sawmills and where in the 19th century a number of their products, principally the cupboards, were found. It is also likely that they sold their products to other areas or to people like ships' officers, who took them back to their home towns. A number of painted pieces of furniture have been found on the isolated island of Ameland in the north, some of which appear to be of the type found in and around Zaandam, suggesting they originally were made in the latter region or in Amsterdam. The principal surviving furniture pieces which may be associated with the Amsterdam/Zaandam region include cupboards (three types); bed benches (for getting into high cupboard beds); drop-leaf, tilt-top and folding tables; corner cupboards; trays; chests, and boxes. Almost all of these date from the 18th and early 19th centuries.

I should remark here that the Dutch understanding of their painted furniture is still speculative for little concentrated research has been done on this subject. There is only now a beginning consensus of hypotheses about when and where different pieces may have been made, with almost



no documentation to support these hypotheses. So what I write here is my own distillation of the ideas I have heard (often contradictory) influenced by the objects I have seen. This is especially true of the painted furniture which seems to be associated with the Amsterdam/Zaandam region. Less speculative is the second group of Dutch painted furniture which is found in the northeast province of Friesland.

Ironically, Friesland and the Amsterdam/Zaandam region are culturally poles apart, yet they are the two regions in the Netherlands that fostered a painted furniture tradition. Amsterdam was cosmopolitan, rich and progressive. Friesland was isolated geographically and culturally, its people speaking their own language and sharing a culture with the Germans and Danes of the North Sea coast more than with the rest of the Netherlands. The Friesian painting tradition, however, is associated with four small towns on or near the west coast of the province, bordering the Zuider Zee. Their orientation was to maritime commerce in this otherwise agricultural province. Lacking a suitable harbor, the men sought employment with the fleets sailing out of Amsterdam and Zaandam. So the story goes that the sailors brought home Chinese porcelains and Indian chintz textiles from Amsterdam which influenced their choice of colors and designs as they developed a distinctive painting style with which they literally covered their paneled walls and furniture. The town of Hindeloopen is best known among this group for the richness of its painted decoration, many pieces of which survive in museums and private collections. The nearby towns of Molkwerum, Workum and Koudum, judging from the few surviving pieces, developed similar but distinguishable styles.

Another traditional belief is that the seamen, on returning home for the winter, would occupy their time by painting, a way to augment their income and enhance their homes. No one knows for sure when this painting tradition started though the earliest dated piece is a cupboard made in 1713 (Fig. 4). It was executed with a sophisticated hand suggesting that this kind of decoration was well developed by the early 18th century. Although I doubt that this painting tradition would predate the advent of decorative painting in Amsterdam or Zaandam, it might well have been inspired by the latter in the last quarter of the 17th century, given the unusually close contacts between these villages and those ports.

The period of production for both regions seems to have been into the early 19th century with the interesting exception of Hindeloopen where it continued well into the 19th century and then, for the last century, has prospered primarily by catering to the tourist trade. Today six shops maintain the traditional style of decoration on all manner of wood objects. The colors are not quite as vibrant and pure as the originals (the commercial pigments of today are inferior) and most of the painting style is not as



Fig. 4 — Hindeloopen kas, dated 1713. Polychrome painted decoration. Collection of the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, Friesland.

The quality of construction and painting of this cupboard, the earliest dated Hindeloopen painted piece, suggests that the painted decoration tradition that this village is so well known for must have started in the late 17th century. The spindled openings are distinctive to at least some Hindeloopen cupboards. Also characteristic of Hindeloopen work is the vine and leaf decoration which appears on most painted pieces from this village. But this is also a common decorative element in Netherlands carved oak furniture and architecture of the 17th century and has its origins in the Renaissance.



Fig.5 — Mr. Roosje busy at work in his shop in Hindeloopen. Notice wood candlesticks on a turntable. For five generations his family has been painting many forms of furniture in the traditional Hindeloopen style in this small second floor workshop.

fully developed as before, being done with greater speed and less integrated design. I visited the shop of Mr. A. R. Roosje, the fifth generation of his family to be in the trade, and by acknowledgement of others, the best painter in the town. His shop and studio are in a 17th century house. The two main rooms of the first floor are a jumble of finished pieces for sale: chairs, chests, boxes, cradles, spoons, racks, etc. Up the steep stairway to the second floor and to the rear is a small room seemingly unchanged in a century. This is the studio or painting workshop. It is cluttered with magazine and other pictures pinned to the walls, paint spattered over the floor, four chairs and three small workbenches. Mr. Roosje is painting candlesticks and a chair (Fig. 5): his young wife is painting coat hangers; a young man is varnishing the finished products, and the elderly father is sitting and enjoying the company, as he has been retired for some years.





Fig. 6— In the room in front of Mr. Rooze's workshop, on the second floor, was found this elaborate painted decoration, characteristic of painted walls once found in many Hindeloopen houses. Unlike today, the early decoration was done with pure powdered pigments in oil and has retained its vibrant coloring unchanged.





GEZICHT van de NOORDER-MARKT en KERK,  
tot Amsterdam.

de Amsterdam by P. Fouquet junior.

Fig. 7 — View of the market at the North Church, Amsterdam. From P. Fouquet Jr.'s *Atlas* illustrating the buildings of Amsterdam in the 1780's.

They work at a good pace but are relaxed in their conversation. It is a family affair and if you were to overhear them you might think they were sitting around the kitchen table conversing as they ate. Mr. Roosje is proud of his work and hastens to show the visitor all that he does, not out of an excessive desire to sell but out of delight to find a visitor who has a real appreciation of his work. And then the *pièce de résistance*: he showed me what at first appeared to be just a dark storeroom on the second floor but with the drawing of the curtains revealed the most elegant painted decorations - all over the walls and ceiling (Fig. 6). These, he said, were done when the house was built in the late 17th century. What beauty to be hidden away! This was his private inspiration and pride.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I should like to express my deep appreciation to the following Netherlands colleagues who have assisted in my research: Dr. C. Boshma, Director of the Fries Museum, Dr. G. F. Walberg, Assistant Director of the Zuider Zee Museum, Mr. E. Klijn, Curator of the Nederlands Openluchtmuseum, Prof. Th. Lunsingh Schleurleer of Leiden University, Dr. and Mrs. Wassenberg of Deventer, and especially Mr. and Mrs. J. Schipper of Amsterdam whose extensive knowledge of this subject I have relied on most heavily.

## CORNER OF FACTS

### STRIPING COLORS

Marie Washer submitted the following information from an article in *The Hub*, a journal published from 1891-1897:

In the line of tube striping colors; white, black and some kinds of yellow are the most generally found short, especially is this true of flake white. To test a color as to this quality, mix some to the right spreading consistency, and then, dropping a little of the pigment on to the tip of a palette knife, allow it to run off. If it works off the knife in lumps and patches, it may be called short.

This fault may, to a certain extent, be remedied by mixing with an elastic body varnish, instead of oil. Caution should be observed in adding japan. We have seen a pretty free working color shortened up until it worked miserably by the addition of a drop or two of japan in excess of the proper quantity.

About the freest and pleasantest working colors for striping are Indian red, orange chrome, Naples yellow, Tuscan red and the various shades of green.

### NEWS FROM OUR MUSEUM:

Our special exhibit — from now until Labor Day 1984: "Brush-stroke Wall Painting," in the Upper Gallery. Photos of thirteen houses in which this painting is found in New York, Vermont and Massachusetts, photos of original walls, replicas of designs as they would have looked when new, and artifacts showing similar motifs make up the exhibition.

Anticipated in the near future: North-painted tinware. Exact mounting date of this exhibit not yet announced.

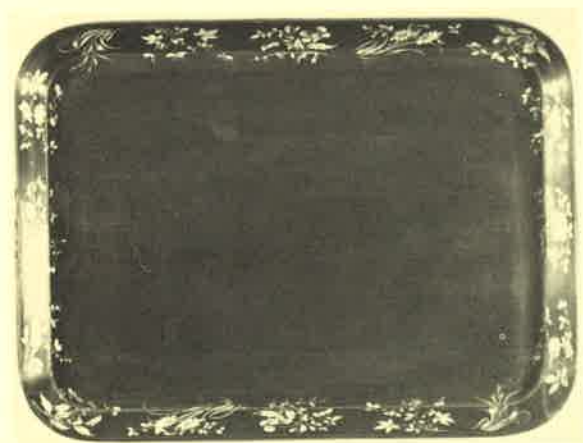
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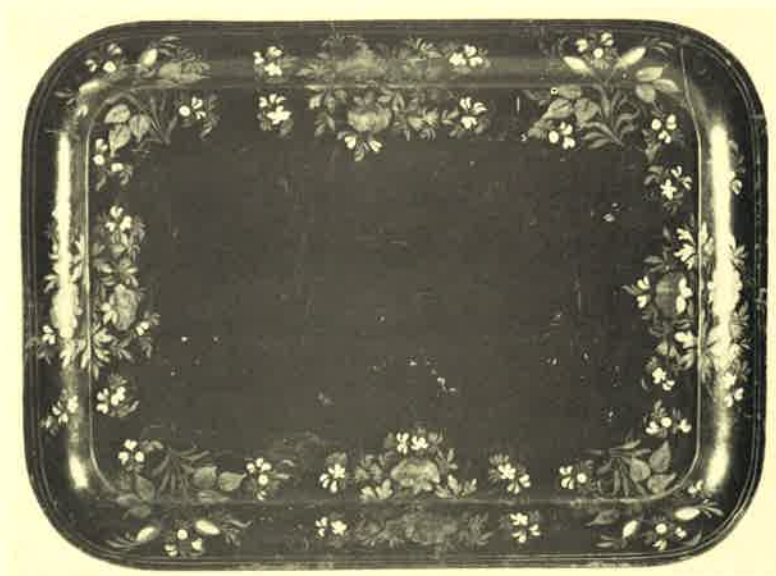
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HSEAD Museum Acquisitions



## HSEAD Museum Acquisitions



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Albany, New York — April 1984  
Country Painting



Pat Smith (Mrs. E.A.)



Lois Tucker



Arminda Tavares



Arminda Tavares



Country Painting



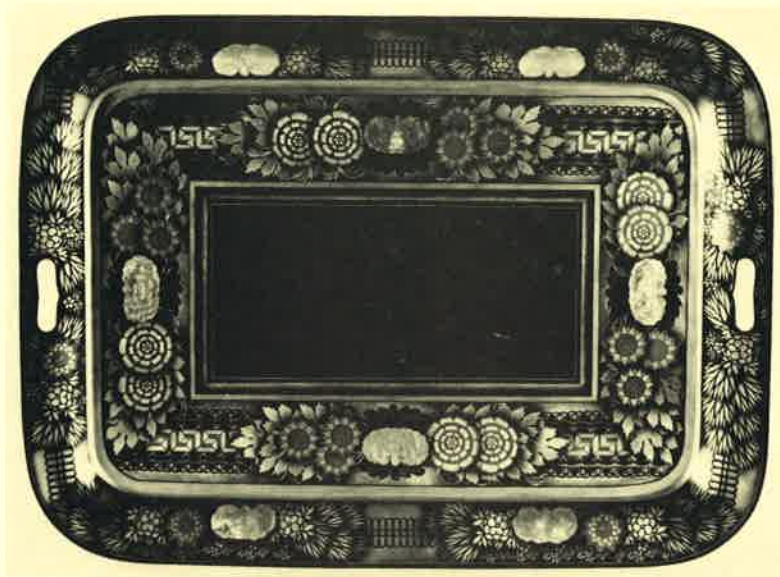
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Stencilling on Wood



Shirley Berman

Stencilling on Tin



Pat Smith (Mrs. Ronald W.)

Pontypool



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Glass-Stencilled Border



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Glass-Metal Leaf Panel



Joyce Holzer



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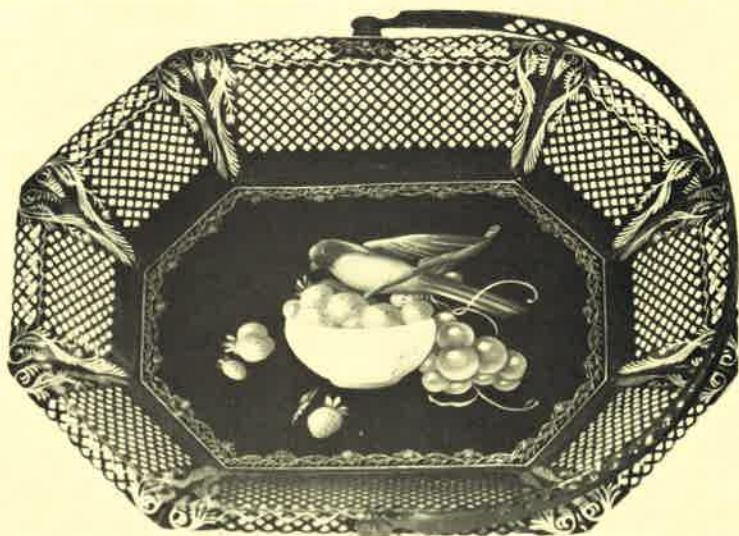


Margaret Watts





Astrid C. Thomas



Astrid C. Thomas



Phyllis Sherman



Maryjane Clark

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### Stencilling on Tin

Trudy Valentine

### Stencilling on Wood

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### Glass - Stencilled Border

Dorcas Layport

Trudy Valentine

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### Glass - Metal Leaf Panel

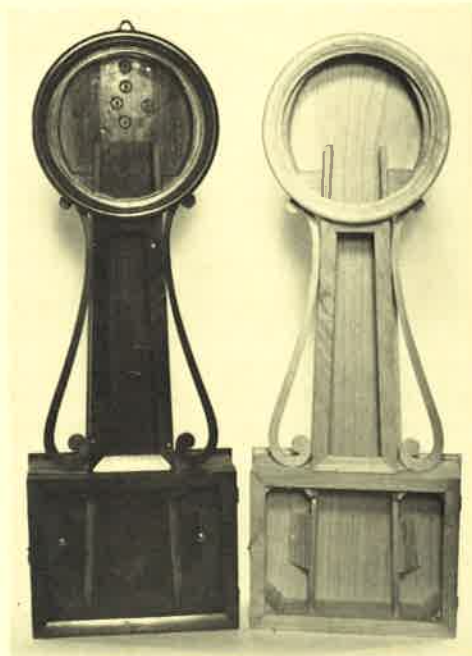
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Original Clock Case - Courtesy, Molly Porter  
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## THE BOOKSHELF

by Carol Heinz

*Meubles Peints, (Painted Furniture)* by Sophie Moutiers, 1980, translated by Frances Dees Jones 1983, Distributed in U.S.A. by Dees, Inc. Rt. 1, Box 148, Gold Hill, N.C. 28071.

*Meubles Peints, (Painted Furniture)* by Sophie Moutiers is a fine collection of color photographs and descriptions of European Painted Furniture. The introductions and descriptions are written in French.

Italy, Spain, Germany, Portugal and mainly France are the origins for the lovely pieces described by Sophie Moutiers. The book is organized into categories of furniture utility ie.; desks, chairs, armoires, etc. Sixty-four large pages present color photographs with narratives including origin, date and appearance of each piece. Fifteen specific techniques with color details used on the European painted furniture conclude this lovely book.

An English translation of furniture descriptions in small pamphlet form can be obtained with *Meubles Peints*.

A review of *Meubles Peints* poignantly illuminates the European influence on American furniture.

*American Folk Art, Expressions of a New Spirit*, Dr. Robert Bishop, Director, Museum of American Folk Art, Curator of the Exhibition, New York, November 1982.

*American Folk Art, Expressions of a New Spirit* by Dr. Robert Bishop is a catalogue and exhibition funded by United Technologies Corp. Various crafts are represented in the three categories of folk painting, folk sculpture and folk textiles in 119 pages of color photographs.

*American Folk Art* commences with a discussion of what characterizes folk art. The section on folk painting includes painted furniture, fracturs, theorems, tinsel pictures, graining and portraits. William Matthew Prior of Maine and Boston is portrayed as a portrait artist. Prior also painted portraits on reverse glass in a Gilbert Stuart style. The recent Exhibition at Danvers had a fine example of Prior's reverse glass - remember George Washington in the right hand corner?

Folk Sculpture is typified in imaginative whirligigs, decoys, weather-vanes and pottery. A fence gate made to look like a flag helped a farm in New York celebrate our country's centennial.

*American Folk Art, Expressions of a New Spirit* by Dr. Robert Bishop has an impressive bibliography and presents a unique selection of folk art. The catalogue fails to reveal a purpose, length or location of this exhibit.



## NOTICE FROM THE TRUSTEES

### FALL MEETING 1984

Genesee Plaza Holiday Inn, Rochester, NY

October 3, 4, 5, 1984

### SPRING MEETING 1985

The Worcester Marriott, Worcester, MA

April 26, 27, 28 1985

## NOTICES

### Bylaws

#### 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.

**Oct, 1983—Effective January 1, 1984, H.S.E.A.D. will no longer guarantee return postage.**

Anyone desiring to become a member must write to the Applicant Chairman for the necessary forms.

## 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. Arlene Clinkman	Mrs. M.I. Sherman
Mrs. Kenneth L. Day	Edward Stannard, M.D.

Please send the names of your candidates to the Chairman no later than September 1, 1984. Mrs. Robert Wilbur, 843 Green Way Circle, Waynesboro, VA 22980.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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

## **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.

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

#### **New Policies**

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

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.

Sept, 1980—That the Standards and Judging Committees be separated into two committees, the Standards Committee to set the Standards of Craftsmanship and the Judging Committee to judge those articles submitted for judging according to the established standards.

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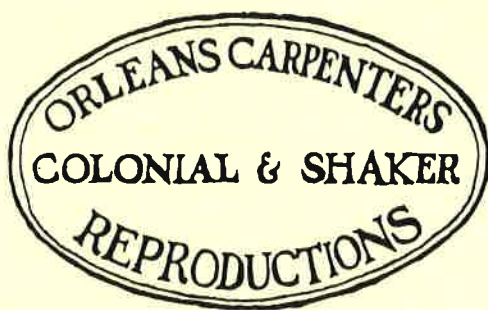
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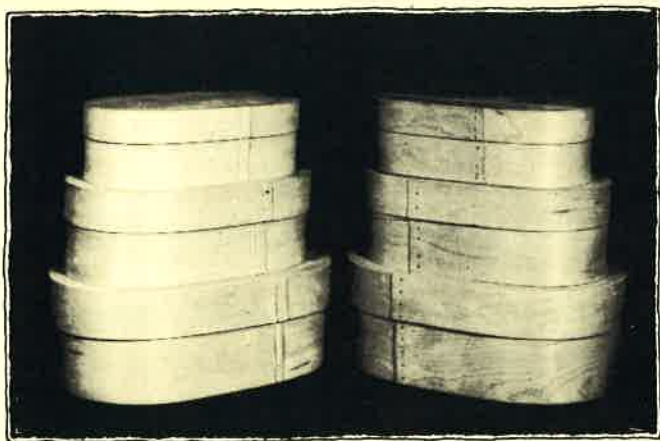


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