

The Decorator

Volume XLII No. 2

Lowell, Massachusetts

Spring-Summer 1988



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



**HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION, INC.**

*Organized in 1946 in Memory of
Esther Stevens Brazer*

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



**Historical Society of
Early American Decoration, Inc.**

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

A fire or pole screen formerly owned by Esther Stephens Brazer, on exhibit at the HSEAD Museum until October 1988. Photo by Timothy Raab.

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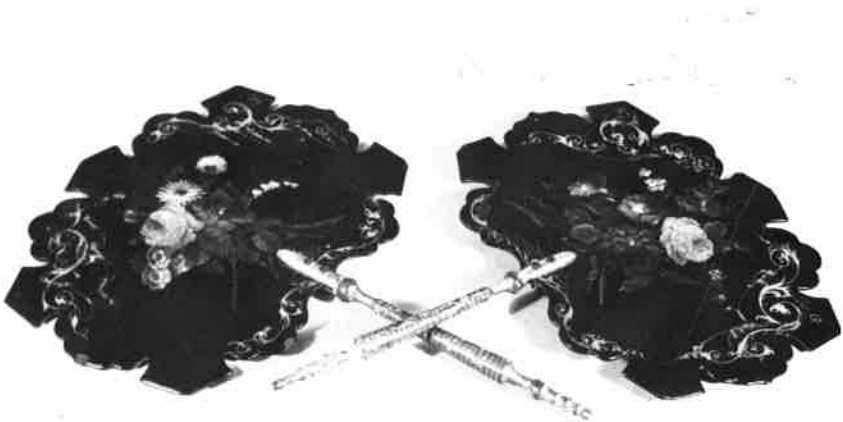
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EDITORIAL

With apologies to both my writers and my readers, I call your attention to errata in the last issue. On page 16, the portrait of Mrs. Daniel Borden should have been attributed to John Blunt. On page 17, Ammi Phillips' portrait is of Harriet Leavens (not Harriet Leavena). On page 24, need I say, "the title was misspelled." Sometimes proof-reading is like lettering. A calligrapher concentrates so much on the formation of each letter that he doesn't see the mistake in spelling. Here the concentration was on the text, and the spelling mistake was not picked up in the galley proof.

It was instructive and amusing to read the comments on THE DECORATOR that were submitted in answer to the questionnaire. I thank you for them. Many readers commented on the photographs - wishing for larger photos (especially of chairs) and more detailed pictures. We try to supply the latter in the text. So far, we have not done this in connection with the work of our members. Remember: you can order any of the pictures of members' pieces and museum acquisitions from our Photography Chairman. These will always be 8×10 pictures. The glossy white paper was chosen for the greatest clarity in the photographs.

Jane Bolster



Gift from New Jersey Chapter

CURIOUS ARTS OF 19TH CENTURY ENGLISH ORNAMENTATION

by Maryjane Clark

This exhibition, which is at the Museum of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration in Albany, New York, can be seen until October 1988. The craftsmanship of this period was particularly noteworthy in three painting techniques: Freehand Bronze, Metal Leaf and Victorian Flower Painting.

Japanning and painting reached a high point in England during the early 19th century. The finest work was done by professionals employed in the Midlands and in London factories. Household items of sheet metal, papier mâché and wood were skillfully ornamented with exotic Chinoiserie, realistic flowers, or romantic landscapes. Some of the decorators had been trained to be fine-artists; a few worked for the ceramic factories. Their inspiration came from Oriental Lacquer and from the current fashion for naturalism.

In the display cases viewed as you go up the stairway to the exhibit are many small decorated articles. One is the most beautiful blotter side that I have ever seen (Fig. 1). It is also called a portfolio, or blotter cover. The background looked like gold leaf. However, it went into another bronze color and then into a warm red-bronze. There are lovely bronze clouds around the perimeter and inside the delicate arabesque and gold leaf border. Ethereal flowers emanate from a beautiful scroll. A bird of paradise is perched on a gold-leaf-tipped limb. It is exquisite work done by a very fine artist. I am sure he must have used gold-leaf-powder! Another portfolio was in the opposite case. This one was filled with lovely flower painting. It, too, had a bronzed background, without the high polish of the first one described.

Along with these, there are a card case, a bread tray, and a counter tray for the game of Loo. The counters are of mother-of-pearl cut in different shapes: squares, rectangles, and fish-shape for a few. These trays are decorated with flowers, metal leaf, and bronze powders. This combination of techniques was a common one.

Papier mâché, a compound of paper pulp and size, was invented by the Chinese as early as the 3rd century A.D. The fashion for decorative wares made of this material spread to the Middle East and then to Europe. French emigré workers in 18th century London may have been the first to use the term "papier mâché": literally "chewed paper."

Henry Clay (1735-1812), a metal japanner in Birmingham, improved upon the pulped paper products by developing what he called "paper ware" in 1772. Clay's paper ware was constructed from layers of paper

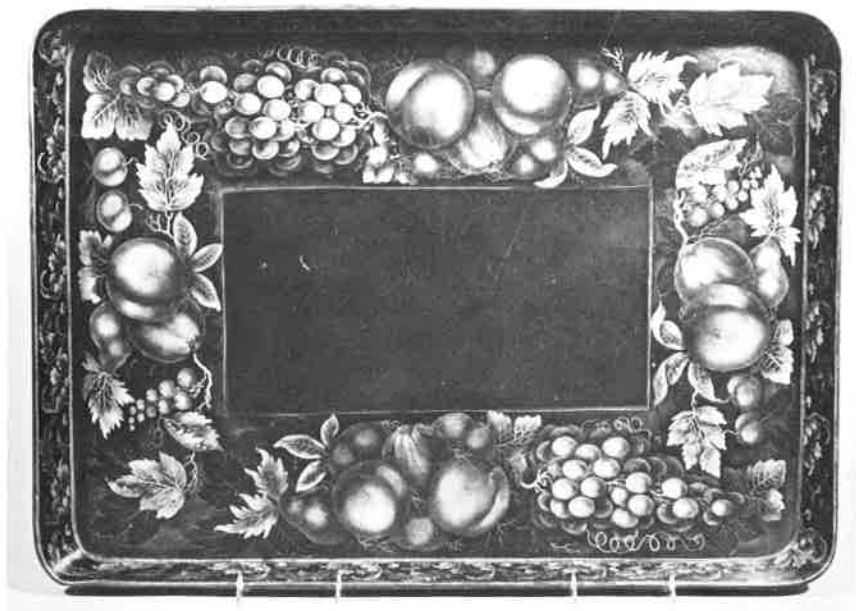


Fig. 1 - Blotter cover. 8½ × 11 inches. Note the four pearl buttons, one at each corner.

pressed and molded together. His firm and others soon used it to make a great variety of household items including furniture, trays, small boxes, hand screens, vases, clock cases, and buttons. Light, yet durable, these accessories were japanned and ornamented with metal leaf, freehand bronze, Victorian floral painting, stencilling and mother-of-pearl.

Birmingham's Jennens and Bettridge, the best-known manufacturer of paper ware, revived the term "papier mâché" around the middle of the 19th century. The last papier mâché factory, McCallum and Hodson, closed its doors in 1920. They were a great company, never letting an employee go - regardless of age. All papier mâché in England had a glossy finish, inside and out.

In the exhibition there is a large tea board of papier mâché (Fig. 2). The decoration uses a combination of stencilling and delicate freehand bronzing. The border has leaves with hand-worked veins (Fig. 3) and the outside surface of the flange is similarly decorated.



*Fig. 2 - Tea Board (large tray with a nearly perpendicular flange). ca. 1840.
Stamped on the back "paper/warranted." Size 30" x 20½".*



Fig. 3 - Detail of the border design on the flange of the tea board.

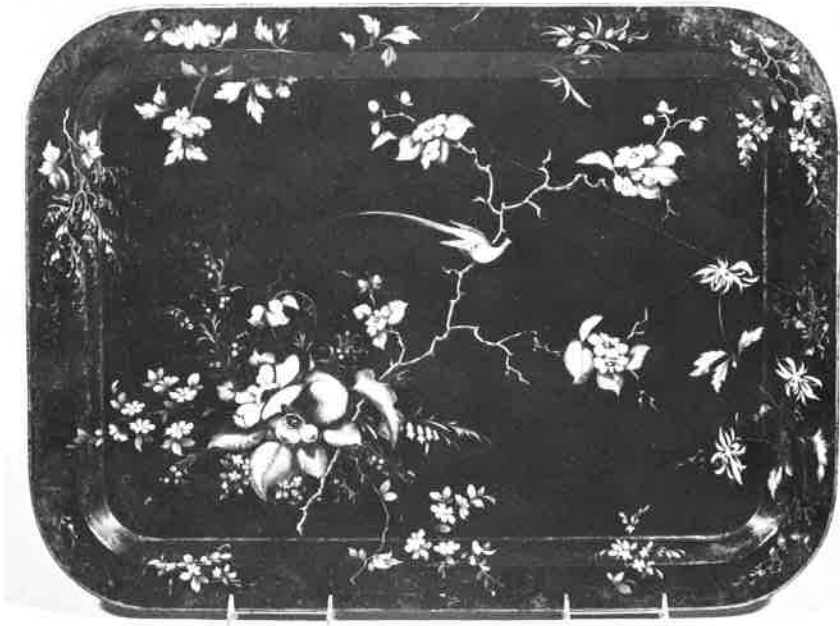


Fig. 4 - Rectangular tray with sandwich edge. 29½ inches.

In another case there is a rectangular tray with a sandwich edge (Fig. 4). The background is black and the decoration shows an oriental influence. There is a beautiful group of flowers at the lower left, out of which comes a branch highlighted with gold leaf. Bunches of white flowers are scattered over the top right section. The leaves are touched with bronzing powder, and the flowers are very realistic. It is a lovely composition with much restraint.

Next to the tray described above is a display of four king gothic trays with exceptionally fine painting; each tray carrying the same design (Fig. 5). In my collection is a pair of hand screens that would augment this set. (See Volume XXXVIII No. 2 DECORATOR, page 38 for the reproduction hand screen decorated by Helen Gross.) In this same case are a card tray, a papier mâché ink stand, and charts showing shapes, sizes, and cross sections of trays that were available. The charts were taken from Shirley DeVoe's book: "English Papier Mâché of the Georgian and Victorian Periods" (see page 67).



Fig. 5 - Matched set of king gothic trays, ink stand, card tray, and charts showing shapes and sizes of trays available.

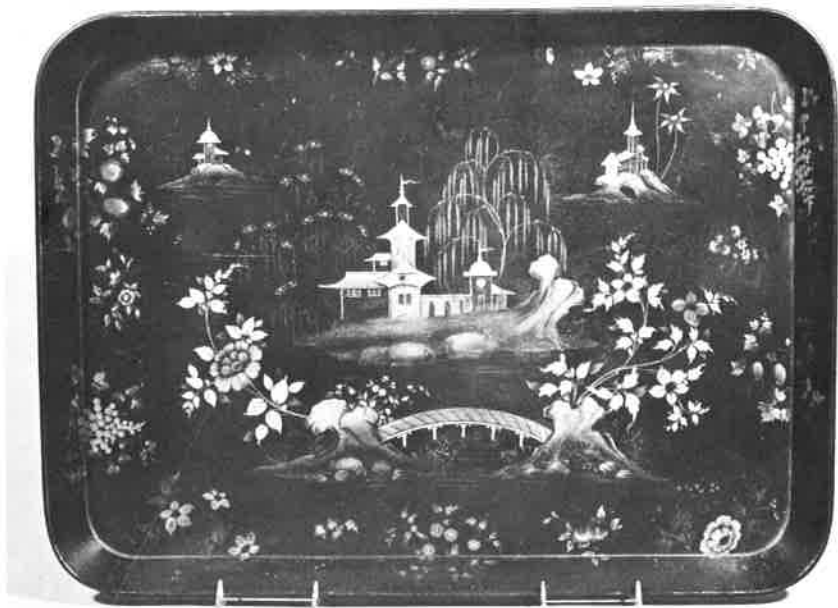


Fig. 6 - Tea Board, ca. 1825.

Metal Leaf Painting

Gold leaf has been used to decorate a great variety of objects since ancient times. In 18th century England, the highest quality gold-leaf work was reserved for the finest japanned pieces. Second quality leaf or various substitutes (alloys or silver washed with an amber-colored varnish) were more commonly used in later years. Gold leaf decoration was often combined with free-hand bronze work. (See Fig. 6).

To ornament with metal leaf, the article must be well sanded and thoroughly dry. The design is applied in a varnish or painting medium, and the leaf is laid on when the varnish or medium is nearly dry. Excess leaf is brushed into a box with a soft brush, cotton wool, or velvet. These pieces are called "skewings" and are used for fine gold-leaf detail which is called "sprigging." Form is given by etching the leaf or by fine detail executed with paint and brush. Depth is created by delicate washes of burnt umber or transparent paints. Several hues of gold leaf often appear in one design.

There is another tea board in the exhibition (Fig. 6). The background is a deep red and the design shows the oriental influence. The techniques employed are gold leaf and freehand bronze work. The tray possibly tells a story as each level seems to have a "message." Note how the design goes up onto the flange.

Freehand Bronze Painting

The technique of freehand bronze decoration was developed by Thomas Hubbell of Clerkenwell, England, in 1812. It is often combined with metal leaf decoration. Typical motifs include flowers, fruit, leaves and branches, animals, insects, and scenic themes.

The procedure is to paint the design with varnish or a pigment mixed with varnish. Then, when this mixture is almost dry, apply the bronze powders with small brushes, stumps, bobs, etc. As many as eighteen different hues and values of finely ground metals might be used at one time. Shadows are achieved by gradually diminishing the amount of powder imbedded into the background color. Freehand bronzing permits subtle variations and great depth of form. It is sometimes confused with bronze stencilling which was a later concession to mass production. Stencilling used repetitive shapes which never vary in outline. Freehand bronzing allows for great variety of forms.

A fine example of scenic freehand bronze painting is shown on the cover of this issue of THE DECORATOR. This is a fire screen (a pole screen) which Mrs. Brazer kept beside her living room fireplace. It is 44½ inches high with the decorated oval measuring 16 × 11¾ inches. It is sheet metal and the subject is a boy and a girl carrying water. On the right there are some polychrome leaves and branches but the remainder constitutes freehand bronze figures, sky, rocks, and water. This subject could have come from a George Moreland painting.

Mother-of-Pearl Work

The terms "pearl shell," "nacre," and mother-of-pearl refer to the iridescent interior scales of various bivalve shells. Inspired by its use in oriental lacquer ware, the English fashion for mother-of-pearl reached its peak between 1832 and 1850. As much as 2500 tons of pearl shell were imported to London in a single year.

The process for ornamenting papier mâché with mother-of-pearl was as follows. Pearl was cut to the desired shape under water. A blank article (Clay & Company produced blanks for use by others) was coated with size and the shell arranged and adhered to it. The article then received several layers of "black japan," each layer being thoroughly stove-dried.

The piece was then rubbed with pumice until the black was removed from the shell and the surface was level. Transparent paints were often used to highlight the beauty of the natural shell.

In the case showing items with mother-of-pearl are buttons, a game board, a card case, and a blotter side. There are also four clock inserts with lovely Victorian painting, and a gilder's box containing "Lustra painting, metallic colors." Daguerreotype cases were also found with pearl decoration.

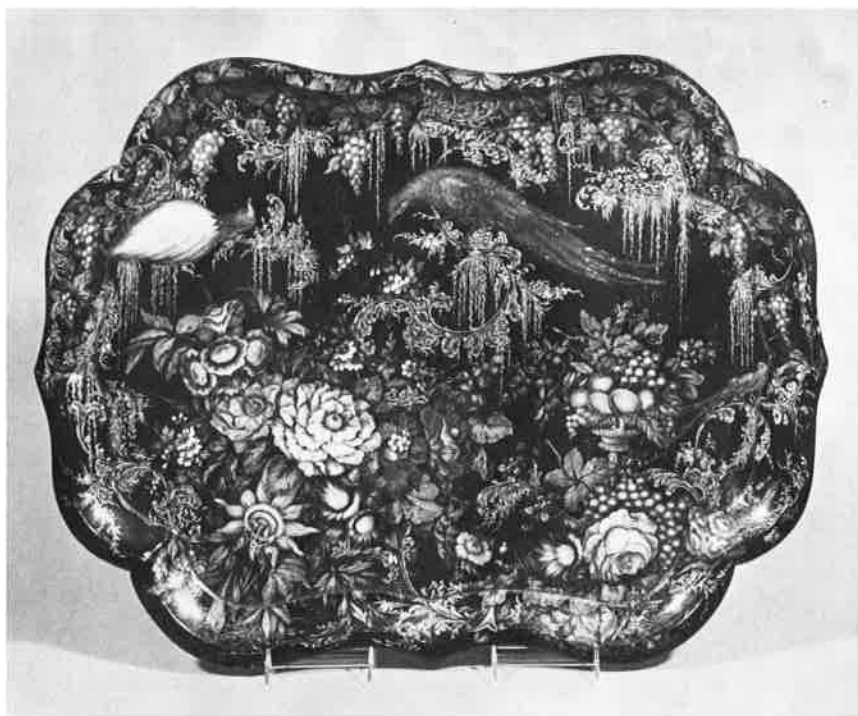


Fig. 7 - King Gothic papier mâché tray.

Victorian Flower Painting

Victorian flower painting is the term applied to a style of realistic decorative painting with a translucent and often iridescent quality. Found on metal, wood, and papier mâché wares, the best work was produced by 1850. Flowers, fountains, exotic birds, gold scrolls and bronzed skies are typical features.

The usual method for painting a flower is to paint a base using an opaque color – frequently white, on a black background. When the base is dry, transparent paint mixed with varnish is applied. The next day, more pigment is applied to form the petals, sometimes “floating” the color into wet varnish. The final touches are highlights, done with thin or intense white paint, and other detail.

One fine example is a King Gothic papier mâché tray which was formed by a press (Fig. 7). It has a narrow sandwich edge where the decoration comes up and covers much of it. The background is black. The artist was well acquainted with his subjects: fruit, flowers, and two lovely birds. In addition, there is very delicate gold leaf work. It is rare to see a tray in such excellent condition. It is stamped “Clay, King St., Cov’t Garden.” Clay died in 1812, but Clay & Co. continued to paint beautiful trays until about 1860.

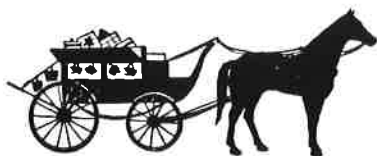
Not much has been written about tables. One of the most charming in this exhibition is a tripod tilt-top table measuring $27\frac{3}{4} \times 18\frac{1}{2}$ by $27\frac{1}{2}$ high. The border has scrolls in each long “corner” with small gold leaf flower units in between. The table is black with Victorian roses and other flowers. But the exciting thing is that it has five beautiful birds! In the center is a bird’s nest. Perhaps some of the Prang Lithographs were inspired by paintings like this. This table is probably from the Midlands, circa 1840.

Other items in this case are paper racks, an ink stand, card cases, and two more tilt-top tables – one round and the other oval.

The last case holds a step-by-step explanation of the techniques of freehand bronze, metal leaf, and Victorian flower painting; exhibiting excellent teaching aids.

I highly recommend that you make a trip to the HSEAD Museum to see this exhibition. You are in for a treat!

All photographs are by Timothy Raab, Delmar, New York



ANGELICA KAUFFMAN, ANTONIO ZUCCHI AND THE PHILADELPHIA CONNECTION

by Jane Bolster

Philadelphia is proud to be “owner” of a well-known painting – a self-portrait of Angelica Kauffman (Fig. 1). The Swiss born artist gained a well-deserved reputation for her work as a portraitist while she lived in Italy. While she lived in London, she was also quite successful as a decorative artist. She was among the artists who were commissioned by Robert Adam to paint some of the elements of design incorporated in the elegant Neoclassical interiors designed by him.

How did Angelica Kauffman’s self portrait come to Philadelphia? Samuel Powel, who was Philadelphia’s last mayor before the Revolutionary War and its first mayor after the establishment of the United States, went on “The Grand Tour” after graduation from college. His travelling companion was Dr. John Morgan who later served George Washington in setting up the medical corps for the army.

While Powel and Morgan were in Italy, they met Angelica Kauffman. In appreciation of Dr. Morgan’s medical advice given when Angelica was sick, she gave him her self-portrait, painted ca 1764. And thus the portrait came to Philadelphia. At a later date, the painting was given by Dr. Morgan to his friend and it can be seen today in the Powel House. This house, located at 244 South Third Street, has been restored with furnishings reflecting the Colonial and Federal eras.

Some time after the death of Samuel Powel, his widow gave the portrait to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. It was one of the earliest acquisitions of that institution.

Maria Anna Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807) was born and educated on the Continent. Her father, Johann Josef Kauffman was an itinerant painter. “As legend has it, Angelica was never content to play as other children did and was only happy with her pencils and her paints.”¹ After her mother’s death, Angelica and her father spent much time in Italy where she continued her studies. There she met the American expatriot, Benjamin West, who introduced her to the English colony, many of whom became her patrons. In 1766 Kauffman travelled alone to London where Lady Wentworth (wife of the Ambassador to Italy) sponsored her debut. She was welcomed into that society and soon became known as an excellent portraitist.

Beyond being a portrait painter, Kauffman began to portray her subjects in allegorical or mythological settings. These are the types of paintings that became so popular for the interiors designed by Robert Adam who had a strong influence in bringing Neo-Classicism to English design in the late 18th century.



*Fig. 1 – Self portrait of Angelica Kauffman
Courtesy of The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts*

In 1767, Angelica Kauffman secretly married the Count de Horn, an adventurer and imposter, whom she later discovered had another wife. He was obliged to leave England, yet she remained legally married until his death fourteen years later. In 1781, when she was forty years of age, Angelica married the Venetian decorative painter, Antonio Zucchi who had also been working on Robert Adam's Neoclassical interiors. He was fifteen years her senior.

Angelica and Antonio returned to Italy and settled in Rome. It was a cosmopolitan setting. "Artists from all over Europe and many from America came to study the antique and to attend the private academies. The Zucchis were at the center of this society and, while Angelica painted the passing parade of nobility, Antonio managed the household, ordered canvasses and frames... and kept a careful account of patrons and payments, leaving his wife free to paint and entertain guests."²

But this is not the only connection Philadelphia has with this couple. For those who desire to experience a Robert Adam interior, there is a splendid example at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, known as the Lansdowne Room. When "progress" required the demolition of a portion of a beautiful mansion known as "Lansdowne House" in London, the Philadelphia Museum of Art showed interest in acquiring one of the drawing rooms. This was in the spring of 1929. The demolition took place in 1931, and the final installation in Philadelphia was opened to the public in 1943.

Since its construction in 1766, Lansdowne House had seen many changes and many coats of paint. The effect was a quiet and sedate one, with emphasis on tan colors. And this muted quality was what Philadelphians saw for many years. However, detailed investigation of this room was started by the Museum's conservation department when they were asked to assess the problems of water damage that the room had suffered in previous years. After much research in contemporary documents in London and laboratory analysis of paints used in the original decoration of this room, it was decided to restore it to its original appearance. The earliest paints appeared to be pinks, blues, greens and other bright hues!

The two artists who were employed to implement Robert Adam's design for this room were Giovanni Battista Cipriani (1727-1785), a Florentine painter who moved to England in 1756 and Antonio Zucchi (1726-1795), a Venetian painter who was brought to London by Robert Adam in 1766. Zucchi was the painter most frequently employed by Adam until his marriage to Angelica Kauffman in 1781 and their move to Italy.

Antonio Zucchi was adept in carrying out the designs given to him by Adam, yet "he was an artist with a quickness of touch and a degree

of imagination that bespeak his Venetian background. Zucchi would follow the complex arabesques and decorative elements laid down for him.”³ On closer examination, as the restoration of the Lansdowne Room continued, “Zucchi’s contribution becomes progressively more engaging within a constant set of repetitions of the same basic elements, his pace of execution never lets up and a level of gaiety and high spirits abounds.”⁴ “Repeated forms reverse color . . . little allegorical figures change steadily, and a boy on a pony even stands in for a sea horse when least expected.” “When he works broad areas of color around the room – particularly in the illusionistic fan in the alcove – the effect is one of pure enchantment! It is as if the smiling presence of the Venetian Rococo tradition were just behind these ornaments, although they were destined to fit into the more weighty and ponderous mode”⁵ of the Neoclassical period.

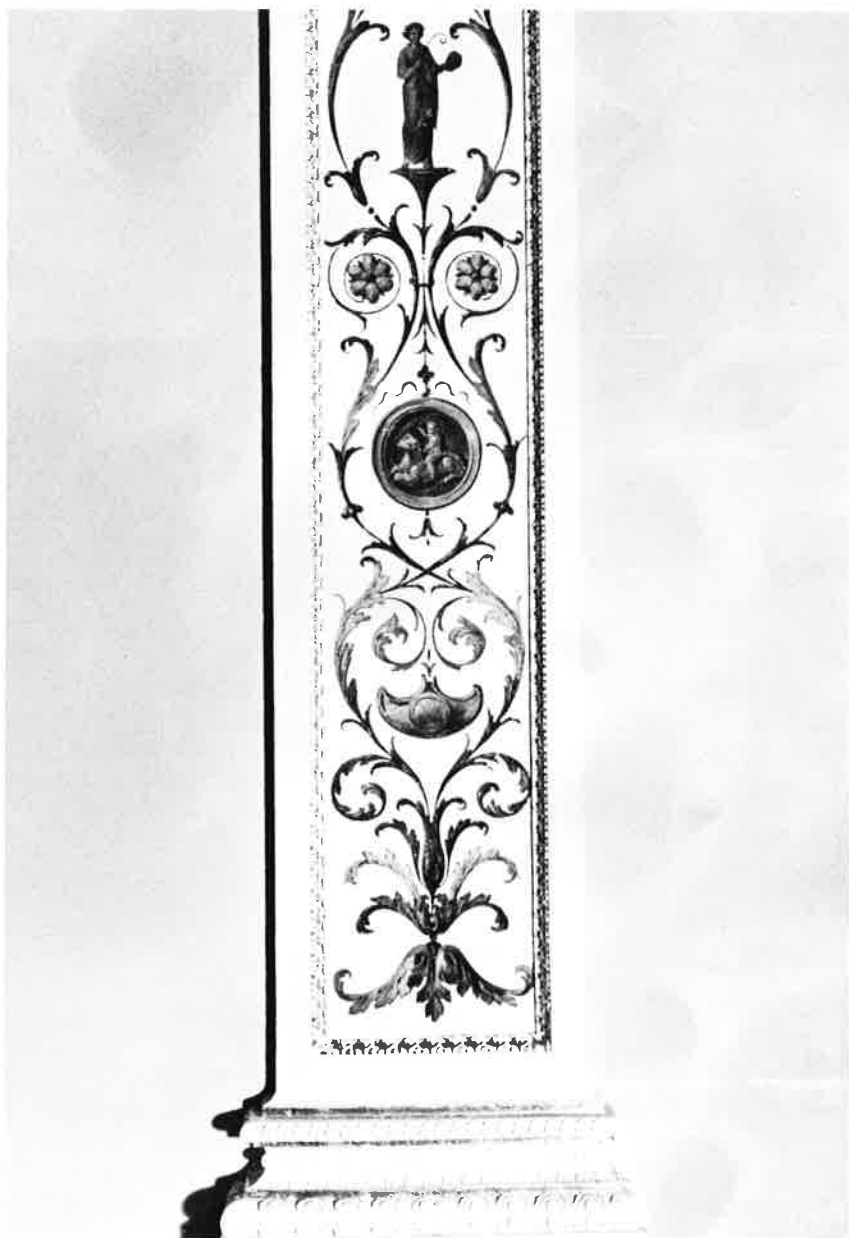
The research, technical analysis, and painstaking restoration of the Lansdowne Room to its former splendor occupied many of the Museum’s staff and consultants, as well as visiting conservators and technicians brought in on the project over a period of more than eight years. The results are the product of an extraordinary collaborative effort. The



*Fig. 2 – Restoration of the Lansdowne Room
Courtesy of The Philadelphia Museum of Art
A technician paints the background of the frieze
Photo by Joe Mikuliak*



*Fig. 3 - Restoration of the Lansdowne Room
Courtesy of The Philadelphia Museum of Art
A technician applies gold leaf to the molding of the frieze
Photo by Joe Mikuliak*



*Fig. 4 - Restoration of the Lansdowne Room
Courtesy of The Philadelphia Museum of Art
A portion of one of the fourteen pilasters; restoration complete
Photo by Joe Mikuliak*

repetitive decorative elements had to be painted *in situ*, and the restorers had to paint the fresh background around these elements (Fig. 2), necessitating many, many hours on the scaffolding.

The allegorical and mythological figures painted by Cipriani were done on canvas and then secured in the desired position. Zucchi painted his allegorical figures on hand-made paper which was later attached to the ceiling. Thus, this part of the work was originally done in the artist's studio. The restorers were not so fortunate! (Fig. 3).

When the restored Lansdowne Room (Fig. 4) was first opened to the public, no furniture was brought in, and so the viewers could go into the room to get the full effect and to view the results with the aid of many spotlights. Soon the room will be furnished again so that the final, lived-in effect is what one will see. The magnificent restoration will become the back-drop for the stage of drawing-room activities of the late 18th century.

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Neilson, Winthrop and Frances, Seven Women: Great Painters. Chilton, 1969.
Philadelphia Museum of Art, "*Drawing Room from Lansdowne House*." Bulletin* Vol. 82, numbers 351-52. Summer 1986.
*A copy of this Bulletin will be at the HSEAD Museum in Albany.

1. Elsa Honig Fine, Women in Art. (Montclair/London: Allenheld and Schram/Prior, 1978).
2. Ibid.
3. Philadelphia Museum of Art, "*Drawing Room from Lansdowne House*" Bulletin Vol. 82, Numbers 351-52. Summer 1986.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

Articles Donated to H.S.E.A.D. Inc.



Gift from Jane Koger



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Gift from Jane Koger



Margaret Watts



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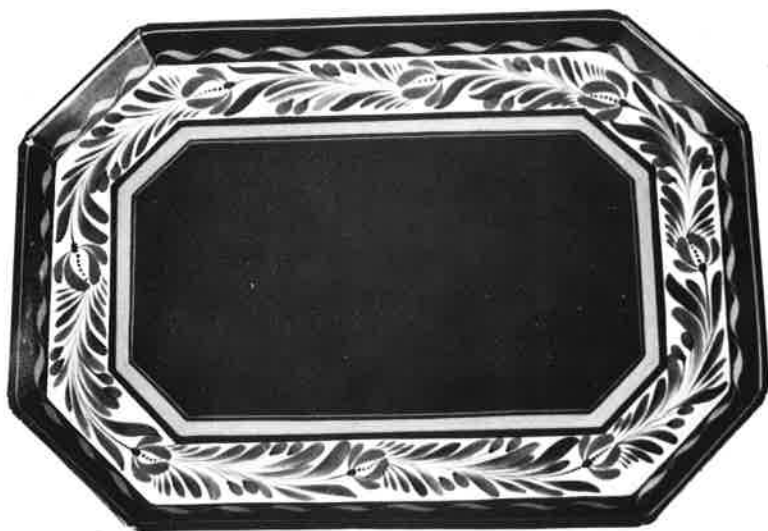
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MEMBERS' "A" AWARDS
Lowell, Massachusetts - April 29 - May 1, 1988

Country Painting



Lois Tucker



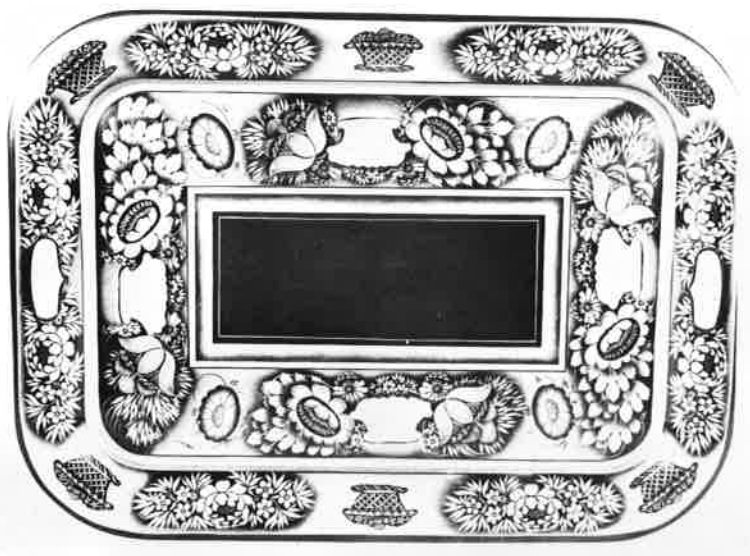
Lois Tucker

Country Painting



Dorothy H. Fillmore

Stencilling on Tin

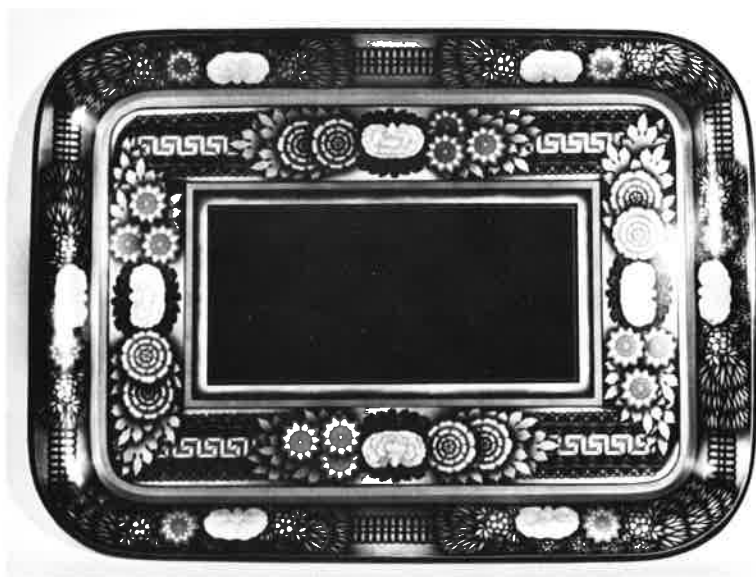


Elaine Dalzell

Stencilling on Tin



Dortia Davis



Gene Gardner

Freehand Bronze



Patricia Smith

Stencilling on Wood



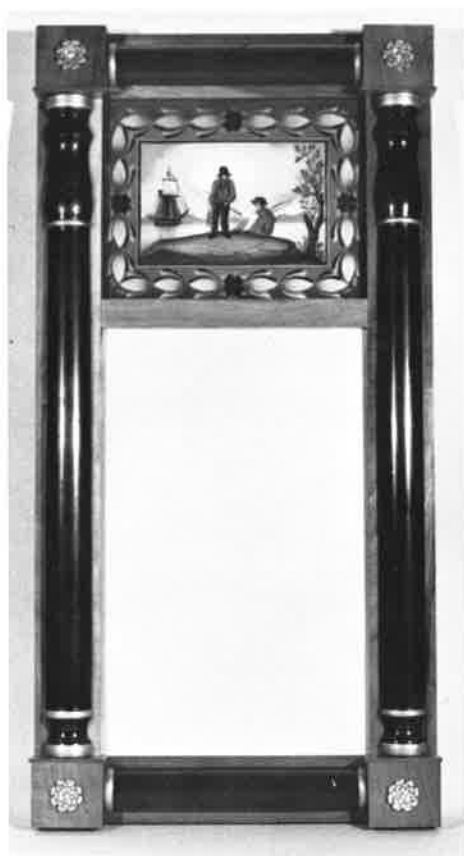
Joyce E. Holzer

Stencilling on Wood



Jane M. Cary

Glass Stencilled Border



Jane Bolster

Glass Stencilled Border



Alice Smith



Alice Smith

Special Class



Astrid Thomas



Phyllis Sherman

Special Class



Roberta Edrington



Roberta Edrington

MEMBERS' "B" AWARDS

Lowell, Massachusetts – April 29 - May 1, 1988

Country Painting

Dolores Furnari

Stencilling on Tin

Charlotte Duval

Metal Leaf

Elaine Dalzell

Shirley Berman

Dorothy Hallet

Pontypool

Sarah Drewry

Glass, Metal Leaf Border

Astrid C. Thomas

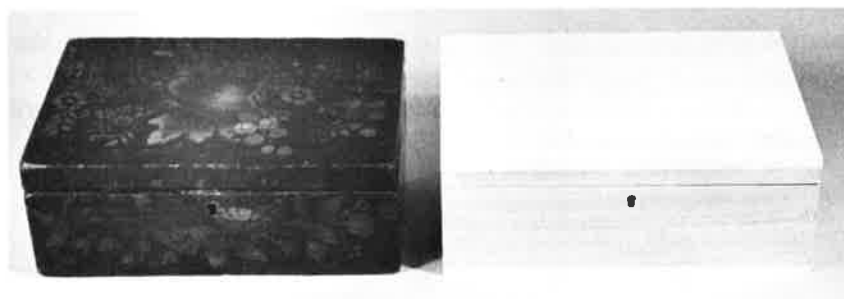
Special

Maryjane Clark (2 pieces)

SEAL OF APPROVAL AWARD



L. Steven Porter



L. Steven Porter

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Lowell, Massachusetts - Spring 1988

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SPECIAL RECOGNITION

This is a beautifully executed piece, demonstrating great craftsmanship and skill; however, it does not fall under any of the categories as required in our Standards book and therefore could not be judged.



Clock Face by Margaret Watts



THE BOOKSHELF

by Margaret K. Rodgers

Put this book on your gift list for your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. It will provide them with an entertaining and instructive look back into their history. It will also go far towards explaining just what you are doing with all that architect's linen, those tiny scissors, Exacto knives, bottles of black ink – and why.

Grandfather Clocks and Their Cases by Brian Loomes, David & Charles Newton Abbot, London. Arco Publishing, Inc., New York. 1985. Bib., Index, \$65.00. 422 Black and White plates, 351 pp.

The grandfather or tall case clock has the distinction of being perhaps the most imposing piece of furniture in the 18th and 19th century home. To my way of thinking it is the focal point of today's home as well. All one has to do is walk into a room with one of those splendred eight foot giants tick-tocking and chiming and you can't help but feel a sense of awe inspired by this traditional symbol of hearth and home. *Grandfather Clocks and their Cases* is replete with research concerning the styles of the several types of clocks produced in the British Isles with special emphasis on their cases. Brian Loomes is an acknowledged expert in clocks of all types and has written eight books concerning various types, styles, and periods of clocks. The one I most easily recall was his excellent book, *White Dial Clocks*.

In this most recent book, Loomes leads the reader through two major periods. The earlier one encompasses the 18th and early 19th centuries. The mid 19th century and later is the second area examined. The clocks are further categorized into styles from the London area, the north and the south of England, Ireland, and Scotland. There is even a chapter on fakes and how to spot them as well as one on special clocks that don't seem to fall into any particular category. Perhaps the most interesting chapter for members of our Society would be the one on White Dials. Loomes has conducted extensive research and makes some very astute

judgements concerning the makers of both the dials and the clock cases as well as the internal movements. However, he doesn't seem to appreciate the japanned cases. He only picks out one as special. I doubt that he was aware of the amount of work which went into the ornamentation of these laquered cases. If so, he might better appreciate these highly decorated clock cases.

All the plates are in black and white. I would have liked to have seen some of the dials in color, but that probably would have made the book even more costly. The dust jacket has one dial in color in the rocking ship motif as well as two displays of japanned clock cases. The black and white plates are each well documented and the descriptive text is adjacent which saves a lot of page turning.

The reader is provided with an excellent education in how to place a particular clock within the geographic area in which it was constructed as well as the proper time frame. As is widely known, the names which may appear on a particular dial do not always reflect the identity of the actual clock maker. Sometimes it is the clock owner. Sometimes an owner would request special decorations to be employed on "his" dial which could be very different from the norm. For example, a sportsman might request scenes of the hunt. There is even a clock which has a cabinet maker working in his shop painted on the dial. Those owners would have paid a hefty sum of money for the major piece of furniture in their home or office, and I suppose they might well have desired special treatment to individualize their considerable investment.

This is a fine book to study for further expert information concerning the grandfather clocks of the British Isles. If your own specialty is clocks or clock dials, I would highly recommend having a copy at your personal disposal. For others, it is well worth reading as background for an important area of our craft.

The American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum Of Art. Marshall B. Davidson and Elizabeth Stillinger. Harrison House, New York 1985. 352 pp, Bibliography, Index. Color Photos, Black and White Photos. \$50.00.

The American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art provides a very comprehensive overall view of the excellent collection contained within that venerable institution. The first several chapters address the Period Rooms in which are displayed the major stages in the development of the American decorative arts from 1630 into the Twentieth Century. Twelve rooms are described in great detail with several objects of particular interest highlighted. For example, in one room the item singled out might be a particular chair. This chair is pictured, described in detail and accompanied with a black and white drawing depicting its exact

position in the room. Several other special objects are similarly pictured and described. The text which accompanies each room is very informative including the source of the room and its function in the context of its period in our history. The chapters on the rooms are divided into time frames appropriate to the furniture and architectural style. The periods covered include the early Colonial era, the Federal period and the Pre-Civil War epoch.

This same methodology is carried over into the succeeding chapters on furniture, silver, pewter, ceramics, glass, paintings, prints, drawings, water colors and sculpture. Each phase in the development of the decorative arts in our republic, as represented by the collection in the American Wing, is covered in comprehensive detail. The photography is uniformly excellent. Color is employed where it is most advantageous to complementing the text. Close-up photos are used to provide detail where appropriate.

The best thing about this coffee table book is the clear and well illustrated definition provided by the authors of the various periods in which we labor in our craft. We can easily see how our individual work fits into the whole theme of Early American Decoration. In addition, a perusal of this volume can only whet the intellectual appetite for a thoughtful day in the American Wing. This book provides a fine Baedeker for that delightful experience.

Interior Affairs. Alex Davidson. Ward Lock Ltd. – London. 1986. Reprinted 1987. Index, suggested readings, supplies. Appendix. 127 pp.

Interior Affairs is yet another book dealing with the art of applying finishes to walls, ceilings, woodwork, furniture, and floors. As this is a book written by an Englishman, some of the phrases and supplies may not be familiar. However, the basic text is easy to follow, the formula descriptions are clear, and the appropriate photographs accurately depict the desired effect in color and black and white.

Several chapters are devoted to various forms of graining, marbling, tortoise-shell, bambooning, trompe l'oeil, and decoupage. Wall treatments are covered in two other chapters on oil and water-based glaze techniques. Many of the formulae are accompanied with two sets of directions so that the decorator can select the one best suited to the particular room. Helpful professional secrets for most efficiently employing the various tools of the trade are clearly explained. The list of supplies that follows the main body of the text would be useful for those touring in the British Isles, but it is not particularly handy for those of us who must be satisfied with a few glorious days in beautiful downtown Asbury Park.

The author does a fine job of highlighting all those troublesome trolls which lurk in the recesses of our homes ever ready to waylay the unwary decorator - new to the business. For those, his helpful hints and insights will be of major assistance. With some experimenting it should be relatively easy to duplicate most of the procedures he very adequately describes.

The contents of the chapter on Stenciling are at variance from our bronze powder methods. However, what it lacks in commonality across the Atlantic, is compensated for in the detailed coverage provided in fabric, floor cloth and leather work.

The author removes much of the mystery from the art of graining. This section, coupled with the excellent coverage devoted to glazes, makes this a valuable book for those of us particularly interested in these areas of the craft.

Folk Art's Many Faces - Portraits in the New York Historical Association by Paul S. D'Ambrosio and Charlotte M. Evans. New York Historical Association, Cooperstown, New York 13326. Salina Press, Syracuse, New York, 1987. Color plates, Black and White photos of many of the portraits. 224 pp, Index. Soft cover.

This book is a compilation of all the portraits which are included in the collection of the New York Historical Association (NYHA). A clear insight is provided as to how each major accession was accomplished. The chapter addressing the William Gunn Legacy is typical. This couple had eclectically collected all sorts of paintings and then placed them row upon row in an old barn. There they gathered dust and who knows what, unnoticed until the death of the Gunns. Ms. Mary Allis discovered this "find" and purchased 630 of them from the estate. Mr. Stephen Clark then bought the collection and donated many of them to the NYHA. After extensive restoration (barns don't make great galleries), they are now on display as an interesting insight into the portrait art of our past.

Included with each of the portraits is a caption in which is noted the condition, the provenance, where it has been exhibited, and if it has ever been depicted in a published work. The artists are listed alphabetically with a short comment containing interesting or pertinent facts. All the known artists are well documented. Each photo or plate is described in the text complete with notations about unusual marks found on the painting as well as extensive details concerning the process of restoration.

The chapter which treats the unknown artists is especially interesting. The reader is provided an excellent insight into the methods employed by the professional art historian in determining the subtle similarities which suggest a common hand in several creations. When the artist cannot

be determined, the subject, if known, becomes the title. Many of the portraits in this book can be seen at Fenimore House in which is also housed a fine collection of folk art of all types.

The serious student of primitive or naive portraits will find this book a valuable guide to this particular area of interest in our society.

My Friend Luke, The Stenciller by Margaret Williams Fabian. TBW Books, Falmouth, Maine 04105. 1987. 35 pp. Illustrated. \$9.95.

The author, a long time member of HSEAD, has written a delightful children's book which both educates and entertains. This short story is set in 1830 and concerns a twelve year old named Peter whose mother and father operate a tavern in the early days of our republic. This situation provides him with an excellent opportunity to study the various trades practiced by the swirl of individuals who pass through the tavern for food, drink and lodging. His favorite personality is an itinerant wall stenciller named Luke. Peter demonstrates a keen interest in the stencilling process and Luke reciprocates by teaching him (and us), the history and rudiments of the craft. The reasons for the popularity of the art form are clearly explained and demonstrated in the context of the times. Our forebears desired some color, design and art in their homes to balance the unrelenting toil associated with building a new nation. Most importantly the addition of these "grace notes" had to be tailored to the room, the taste of the occupants and be affordable.

You can imagine the thrill Peter experiences when Luke offers to take him along on his next commission and his parents agree. Very understanding parents these inn keepers. During the journey to and from the farm to be decorated, Luke passes on considerable information concerning life and procedures in the country to his young charge who is an avid pupil.

This charming volume is written for children 8 through 12 years of age. However, those of us of all ages who work in stencilling will find in it a fresh insight into our craft through the eyes of a bright young lad growing up when what we now preserve was a popular part of everyday life. Every other page contains a black and white representation of some of the stencils which the author traced during her own long journey of discovery among the older homes and taverns of New England. A note on the back cover indicates that this book is the first in a series concerned with the activities, thoughts and feelings of earlier Americans. Margaret Fabian is off to a great start.

Put this book on your gift list for your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. It will provide them with an entertaining and instructive look back into their history. It will also go far towards explaining just what you are doing with all that architect's linen, those tiny scissors, Exacto knives, bottles of black ink – an why.

The Mirror Book, English, American, and European

by Herbert F. Schiffer

Schiffer Publishing Ltd., Eaton, Pennsylvania 19341. 1983. Color Photos (6) and Black and White Photos. 255 ppf. Bib. Index. \$45.00.

The Mirror Book is Herbert Schiffer's eighth book addressing various specialties in the world of antiques. The photography in the book is well done. Anyone who has tried to take pictures of mirrors will appreciate the black and white photos. The few color ones are also well done and it is unfortunate that there are not more. The very first plate particularly intrigues me. It is of a wooden board displaying various types of color sizing used in gilding mirrors during different time periods. One might be able to chronologically place a gilded mirror by using this reference guide.

The author goes into excellent detail concerning the subject of the text. Even the earliest mirrors are pictured. Schiffer divides the chapters into time frames — Baroque through Rococo and Classical, to modern. Each photo picture is accompanied by a thorough description as well as all other significant information concerning that particular mirror.

One item which will attract the attention of our Society is the blanket use of the word "eglomisé". The author refers to all mirrors with any type of reverse glass painting, whether it is in gold leaf or painted, as eglomisé. This misuse of the term will put many off when first reading this book. However, the well researched historical features of the book, as well as the excellent photography, more than compensate for this lapse. I wish that there was more concerning the mirrors with reverse glass painting and that some mention had been made of stencilled mirror frames.

As a reference book, Mr. Schiffer has done a good job of sifting through thousands of mirrors and placing them historically in their proper time and date. For this reason alone the book is well worth studying.

NOTICE FROM THE TRUSTEES

FALL MEETING 1988

**Valley Forge Hilton – King of Prussia, PA
September 23-25, 1988**

SPRING MEETING 1989

**Queensbury Hotel, Glens Falls, NY
April 26-28, 1989**

FALL MEETING 1989

**McLean Hilton, McLean, VA
October 7-9, 1989**

NOTICES

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.

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. John L. Bremer, II
Mrs. Kenneth L. Day

Mrs. Donald F. Furnari
Mrs. M.I. Sherman

Please send the names of your candidates to the Chairman before the Fall Meeting and sign your name and Membership number.

Nominating Chairman:

Mrs. Lothrop Hedge, Long Pond Rd., Plymouth, MA 02360

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.

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.)

MEETINGS:

Taping of HSEAD, Inc. functions is not permitted.

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

MEMBERSHIP LIST

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

NEW POLICY

Applications for membership in HSEAD will be accepted at *any* time. If the applicant wishes to submit articles for judging at the Spring Meeting, the application must be received by January 1. If the applicant wishes to submit articles for judging at the Fall Meeting, the application must be received by July 1. Applicant fees cover the period July 1 to June 30.

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- MRS. CHARLES COFFIN, Saratoga Springs, NY — country painting.
- MRS. AUSTIN H. EMERY, Averill Park, NY — country painting, glass painting.
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- MRS. WILLIAM S. TIFFANY, Hilton Head Island, SC — country painting.
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- MRS. CHARLES C. WALL, Plymouth, MA — country painting, stencilling.
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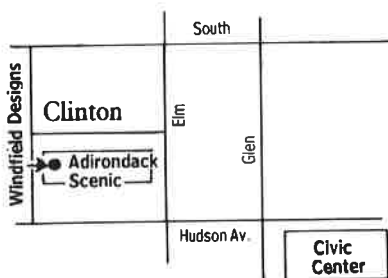
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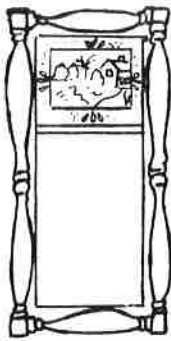
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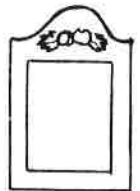
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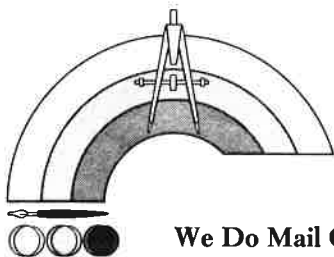
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