

The Decorator

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Syracuse, New York

Fall 1998



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*Front cover: Framed watercolor on paper with friendship poem inside heart shaped design.
Courtesy of Betsy K. Salm.*

*Back cover: Watercolor theorem on silver beaded purse, hand sewn to silver frame.
Courtesy of Betsy K. Salm.*

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Editor's Notes

What started out for Betsy Salm as a passion for collecting school girl art has culminated in an exquisite line of reproductions of these pieces, all authentically decorated by Betsy. At the Syracuse meeting some of the Salms' original schoolgirl art pieces were on exhibit, and Betsy has kindly allowed us to use photographs of them. Our thanks go to Betsy for sharing this information, for it is from such members that we continue to learn about the field of early American decoration.

It was while visiting another member's home that MJ and I discovered an unusual tin sugar bowl. MJ discusses our find at Anne Grinley's home in her column.

For years Martha Wilbur has been collecting and researching what she calls "daisy flowers". In this issue, she shares what information she has, along with photographs of some of her pieces. It is our hope that some of our readers may have similar pieces and will share with us what they know about "daisy flowers."

With this issue of *The Decorator* we welcome Sandra Cohen as our new Bookshelf Editor. As one who has worked as an editorial assistant and currently owns and operates Legacy Books, she will keep us abreast of the latest and most sought after books in our field. We're delighted to have her join our team.

While welcoming Sandra, we also want to thank her predecessor, Peg Rodgers. For many years Peg held that position, spending hours searching for and reviewing new books. It was and is a time consuming job that requires dedication, good taste, and a knowledge of the book market. As Sandra Cohen says, "Like all of us who love books, especially those filled with beautiful pictures of decorative and fine art, we imagine this job to be a labor of love. However, it also takes time and effort, and for that and more, Peg, we all thank you."

It has been a pleasure to work with Peg (and her husband, Mike).



A "Victoria" tray made of papier mache. 10" round, 13' with handles. Courtesy of Astrid Donnellan. See Letter from Birmingham.

American Schoolgirl Art 1790 to 1840

Betsy Krieg Sahn



Women who were fortunate enough to receive an education in the late 18th and early 19th centuries were taught the skills now called “American schoolgirl art.” The disciplines they learned included music and singing, embroidery, penmanship and watercolor painting on paper, velvet and silk. Poetry, friendship tokens, love knots, reticules (work bags), valentines, puzzle poems, theorems on paper, silk and velvet were often given as symbols of affection to their friends and classmates. Proud teachers gave them hand-painted awards of merit.

Often their greatest work was reserved for the pen and paint decoration of furniture and pieces to be used by those dearest to them. This work proved they had mastered the ornamental skills taught in the academies, seminaries and dame schools. Their families would commission cabinetmakers to create furniture and accessories for them to decorate. Often the pieces chosen, such as sewing boxes and worktables, had a utilitarian as well as a decorative purpose.

Above. A reticule (a woman's drawstring bag used as a carryall). Note delicate ink work. Dated 1818.

Bird's eye maple work box with sliding lid and inside compartments, watercolor paintings.



Silk face screen with cording around edges. Sprays of flowers done with watercolor and gouache.



Above: Incomplete watercolor and embroidery on silk, ca 1790. Excellent example of how watercolor was used to define future embroidery on silk. Large house on left is still in existence in Cooperstown, NY.



Left: Memorial theorem done in watercolor on velvet in antique gold frame. Urn in front of weeping tree is noted: "In memory of Elizabeth R. Daniels who died Oct. 15, 1833, at 24 years."



Above: Pair of face screens identical to those pictured in Ornamental & Useful Accomplishments, School Girl Education & Deerfield Academy 1800-1830, pg 37.



Above: Watercolor painting on paper. Passion flowers, nasturtiums, pansies, and Johnny jump ups are typical of flowers used during the schoolgirl art period of 1790-1820.

Right: Silver beaded purse decorated with theism. (See back cover for other side.)



Watercolor, ink and graphite spherical world map, ca 1821, signed by "William Drummond" (?). Similar to those paintings of watercolorist Joseph Davis.

The Stevens Tavern - Its Rise and Fall

by Lois Tucker

The taverner took me by the sleeve,
'Sir, 'saith he, 'will you our wine assay?'
I answered 'That cannot much me grieve,
A penny can do no more than it may.'
I drink a pint, and for it did pay.

Anonymous

1767: The first frame house built in the Deering section of ancient Falmouth was erected by Isaac Sawyer Stevens. In 1767 he started construction on the Georgian style house that would be finished in 1769, and ready for him and his new bride, Sarah Brackett. The one-and-a-half story center chimney cape stood on Stevens Plains, an area cleared by his father-in-law, Zachariah Brackett, Jr. In 1719 Zachariah had come from Hampton, New Hampshire with his parents to a farm bordering the Back Cove, land which had formerly belonged to his grandfather, Anthony. By the 1740s Zachariah owned that part of the farm known as the plains, and he proceeded to fell the pitch pines found there.

1775: Isaac Sawyer Stevens answered the call to arms at the beginning of the Revolutionary War. His wife Sarah, who had two small children by then, decided she would open her home to travelers in order to supplement her income. Her father had a retailer's license and had kept a tavern. His house was just north of her own, and was the half-way stopping point on the road from Stroudwater to Presumpscot Falls. Sarah served refreshments in her home situated along the main route between Boston and Augusta. The house had been constructed with the south side room containing a set of folding paneled doors which would



Fig. 1. The Stevens Tavern as it looked in the mid-twentieth century with asphalt shingles over the original yellow clapboards. Erected in 1767, it has undergone massive structural changes during its lifetime.

allow for two bedrooms or one larger room. This feature made a convenient place for Sarah to serve her guests. It became a popular stopover, and was listed in the handbooks of the period as the chief ordinary for the area. When Isaac returned, he and Sarah continued the tavern, and a liberty pole that flew the flag of the new country was placed in front. Long lines of horse teams would stand beside the road while both military and political matters were being discussed over a mug of flip in the bar room.

1778: Zachariah Brackett Stevens was born in this house. He became a blacksmith like his father but later learned the tinsmithing trade and started the tin industry at Stevens Plains. (Zachariah was the great, great grandfather of Esther Stevens Brazer.)

1798: Zachariah Brackett Stevens was married to Miriam Berry in his parent's house. The newlyweds likely resided with Isaac and Sarah until 1800 at which time Zachariah built his own home a short distance north on the Plains road.

1814: In April Isaac conveyed the tavern and land to his son William for \$500, "excepting the new part which I reserve." This new part referred to an ell built on the south side of the house. This ell was removed in the late 1800s, and another built on the west side. Isaac died in 1820, and Sarah followed him ten years later. William continued to run the tavern and it was known locally as Uncle Billy's Tavern.

1820-1840: It was probably during this period that William made some significant changes in the house. He enlarged the tavern by raising the original structure and adding a Federal style first floor, including a beautiful spiral staircase. The projection at the front door was likely added about this time.

1862: William died and the house passed to his daughter Irene Stevens Record, the wife of Rev. Lewis Record. It ceased to be a tavern, and many structural changes were made inside. At some point the center chimney was removed and replaced with a smaller one. Iron stoves were also installed. The house then passed to Irene's daughter Cynthia Record. It was likely she who added the pea-green asphalt shingles to the outside, covering up the old yellow clapboards.



Fig. 2. The beautifully graceful spiral staircase was added in the mid-nineteenth century when the tavern was enlarged by raising the entire building and adding a new first floor.

1957: Cynthia Record sold the house at 628 Stevens Avenue, and now for the first time in nearly 200 years the old tavern was no longer owned by Isaac Sawyer Stevens' descendants. The house had been

through many changes in its lifetime, but all were considered modernizations of the period and were quite tolerable. But the horrors of twentieth century restorations would be its final undoing.

1978: The house was purchased by James Grady, and what he did to it would gain the approval of any wrecking crew. His talent for architecture apparently laid only on the side of demolition and never on the side of re-construction. He very systematically proceeded to strip the old tavern of any evidence of its antiquity. He removed wallpapers, stripped paints, took down ceilings, and tore out walls. He dismantled it so much, that only one room was recognizable as a room. For two years there was not even a workable kitchen. The dead elm tree that stood in the front yard was another project for Grady. He hacked away at it daily, not being in any hurry to complete the task - or any task he undertook. Finally the town officials ordered him to finish the job as they felt the precariously chopped tree was a danger. So in his own inimitable fashion, Grady tied a rope between the tree and his truck. The tree came down - directly onto the six large granite steps at the front door, breaking most of them. Grady said, "As penance I'm leaving that stump right there until it rots away by itself."

1994: The poor old tavern was up for sale again, but this time the Friends of Evergreen took an interest. The Friends is a non-profit group pledged to protecting Evergreen Cemetery, a magnificent Victorian era cemetery with picturesque grounds and gardens that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As the building stood near the cemetery entrance and was surrounded by cemetery property, the Friends had legitimate concerns for the fate of the Stevens Tavern. The asking price was \$79,900 and it was estimated that \$200,000 would be needed for restoration. The early section of the house had no electricity, water, sewer, or heat. The roof had leaked for several years and caused serious structural damage, including rot to some of the original post-and-beam construction. The Friends hoped to obtain the house to ensure that it

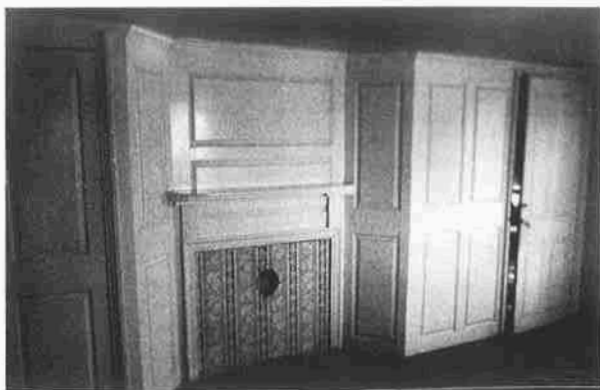


Fig. 3. The central chimney was replaced with a smaller one, but the original fireplace wall paneling was retained (although the mantel shelf is a later addition). This room was originally on the first floor.

would not be purchased by anyone who might change it for the worse, or use it in ways that might detract from the cemetery. They hoped to convert it into a museum, as well as a place to hold community events, weddings, receptions, funerals or meetings. The back ell had already been completely modernized, and could become the home for a caretaker.

The house was studied by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, and was deemed eligible for listing on the National Register. Even though the building had undergone many changes, its age and the fact that it was the homestead of a significant Portland family were enough to qualify it. Greater Portland Landmarks, a historic preservation organization, also offered their help. Two Portland professional fund-raisers volunteered to run a campaign to raise \$150,000 or more. Friends hoped that the city of Portland would become involved and use part of its \$2.2 million in trusts to cover the cemetery. The city made an arrangement with the owner to allow the city exclusive rights to buy the tavern, and to rent it for two years for \$500 a month. The agreement fell through, however, because the city felt its rent monies should be deducted from the purchase price, but the owner did not concur.

1995: HSEAD became interested in the tavern in the spring, and it was viewed by several members. The Board decided, however, that the project was not within the scope of its guidelines, and was too large a project to be prudent.

While all the various possibilities for saving the tavern fell by the wayside, the owner sold it for \$36,000 to Philip Beaumier Jr. It is unfortunate that the owner did not originally offer the tavern at that price to all the interested parties, any of whom would have then had no qualms about purchasing it. As if the tavern hadn't been violated enough by Grady, Beaumier continued its final disgrace. Every piece of original material on the outside was removed - windows, clapboards, pediments, entryway, the projection at the front door, and the remains of the granite steps. The interior was gutted back to the studs. Adjectives like 'appalling' and 'travesty' were now used to describe the 225 year old building. I closed my eyes whenever I passed by, and finally just avoided driving down Stevens Avenue.

Fig. 4. The projection at the front door adds to the charm of the old tavern. The small room at the top would have been brightly lit as it had windows on all three sides.



The few tiny windows now present looked like gunports and make the tavern appear like a fortress or stockade. *Old-House Journal* has a feature entitled "Remuddling". The tavern was shown in one issue and the writer said "It looks like the house is on guard in case of a frontal attack." One of the neighbors referred to it as "Fort Apache."

1998: By June, the city of Portland was again planning to purchase the house, but this time they wanted to demolish it, saying that the historic heart and architectural soul of it had already been killed. One of the directors of Greater Portland Landmarks was quoted as saying, "It's like a long slow death. It's already gone. All that's left is to bury it." The asking price this time was \$93,000 with 9,281 square feet of land. By July the price was down to \$80,000, and the city decided to buy it. The cost would be paid from the Evergreen Cemetery's perpetual care fund, and then repaid by the sale of new plots. The site where the tavern stood would have a historic marker or kiosk.

But the city never did get the chance to buy the tavern. On August 11, it was claimed by fire. Intense heat and twenty mph winds hampered the firemen's attempts to save it. They also feared that it might collapse and so dared not go inside. Unfortunately for the poor old tavern, it did not burn to the ground. It will still have to suffer the final assault of the wrecking company. The city will take the property for the Evergreen Cemetery.

The newspaper said that the fire was being examined by the arson investigators. As I looked at the picture of the burned shell in the paper, I wondered if the tavern that had been such an important part of Stevens Plains history had finally suffered just too much humiliation and debasement. Maybe the fire had been caused by spontaneous combustion. Perhaps the spirit of the Stevens family had chosen suicide as a more noble death.



Fig. 5. The 'restoration' done by the 1995 owner is referred to by a neighbor as Fort Apache and by historians as a travesty. The tavern is in its final death throes.

References:

- The Deering News*: Feb. 2, 1895; Feb. 6, 1897; Feb. 13, 1897; Aug. 31, 1912.
Portland Evening Express - Aug. 23, 1948.
Greater Portland Landmarks Observer - Nov/Dec 1977.
Maine Preservation News - Vol. 20, No. 1, Winter/Spring 1995.
Portland Press Herald - May 14, 1982; July 4, 1994; Oct. 10, 1994; Dec. 29, 1994; June 28, 1995; Sept. 30, 1995; June 4, 1998; July 23, 1998; Aug. 10, 1998; Aug. 11, 1998.
Old-House Journal - Jan/Feb 1996

* All photographs by Greater Portland Landmarks

"Daisy" Decorations

by Martha M. Wilbur



Where were the papier mâché articles that have daisies and other flowers on them made? They are found in many shapes. Usually the material is papier mâché with black lacquer on the outside with red paint inside. The flowers are paper cut-outs or transfers adhered to the lacquer. There is powder brushed to the tips of the leaves and heavy white strokes painted on the flower petals. Small butterflies, birds, and sprays of small flowers are added to fill in around the daisy sprays.

One of my wall shelves has "Schutz Marke" (German for trade mark) on the back in gold. I wrote the museum in Brunswick, Germany to ask if the boxes were made in a factory there. They did not have any records that were of help. In the June, 1990 issue of *Country Living* there was an article on papier mâché with a picture of many boxes, mostly with the daisies but some with other flowers. I wrote to the author to ask if she knew anything about the origin of the boxes or the country of origin. She wrote she had no idea of their origin. Later I saw in *Antiques Magazine* an advertisement for three wall shelves with a mirror inserted in the back. The daisies dripped down on the glass. I called the store and they said there were no marks, and they assured me they were English. "We bought them in London." Later the same shop advertised a small table with two shelves which were round with an edge like a tray also with daisies on the floor of the trays.

I own a pencil box and a small box with sunflowers on the top. On the bottom of the pencil box is stamped "Germany" in red on the floor. The accompanying pictures show the variety of these wares, and I hope continuing research will discover where these were made.

Above: A papier mâché desk set which has many daisies, small pink flowers, a small bird, and in the indentation a flying bird. There are also daisies and a bird on the cover of the box to hold stamps.



Above: Fig. 7



Above: Fig. 9



Above: Fig. 4



Above: Fig. 2



Left: Fig. 8



Above: Fig. 3



Right: Fig. 1



Above: Fig. 6



Right: Fig. 5



Above: Two shelves of identical shape but with different decorations. The one on the left has the daisies and all the other characteristics of the others, but on the back is the "Schutz Marke." The shelf on the right has a chinoiserie design. The shape and the hinges and latch and the saw marks on the back are identical.

Captions for figures on pages 14-15

- #1 The long box is for pens or pencils. It has a spray of orange flowers that resemble blackeyed susans. On the bottom in red is "Germany".
- #2 A small box with blackeyed susans. It is a hinged 5 3/4" by 4 3/4" box with a keyhole escutcheon.
- #3 Another handkerchief box with sprays of blue bells, yellow primroses and blue flowers that may be violets with appropriate leaves.
- #4 This box of the same size has on the top a bunch of chrysanthemums both orange and white with the heavy white overstrokes.
- #5 A small pin tray 6 1/2" by 4 1/2" introduces a different spray which looks like heather. There is also a butterfly added.
- #7 A round box with daisies.
- #8 Wall pockets were very popular. The largest one has many groupings of daisies. It also has blue flowers and pink bell-like sprays. There are two butterflies.
- #9 Another type of wall hanging is a shelf with a flat top on which to place decorative objects. They were of different sizes with small flowers and often butterflies.



Left. "Schutz Marke" stamped on the back of a wall hanging.

Right. A handkerchief box, 7 1/2" square.





The Bookshelf

"The Painted Furniture Sourcebook, Motifs from Medieval Times to the Present Day"

by Annie Sloan

Hard Cover, 160 pg., Rizzoli Books, 1998, \$26.95

Reviewed by Sandra Cohen

Annie Sloan is one of the most prolific authors on decorative painting techniques and finishes. Her most recent book, *The Painted Furniture Sourcebook* comes on the heels of *American Painted Furniture, 1790-1880*, by Schaffner & Kline (Reviewed by Margaret Rodgers, Spring/Summer issue of the *Decorator*). Schaffner & Kline meet the challenge and maintain the standard set by Dean Fales' book, *American Painted Furniture, 1660-1880*. The two latter books on American painted furniture present a scholarly text and a pictorial feast of decorated furnishings.

Although Sloan's title refers to her work as a "sourcebook," I'm afraid she falls a bit short in this regard. Also, the most beautifully detailed plates in Schaffner & Kline's book are photographs taken by Schechter M. Lee of furnishings in private collections and published for the first time. However, Sloan's publishers thank hundreds of organizations and photographers for permission to reproduce their works. Many of the pieces will look familiar. A global presentation of decorative, painted motifs from Medieval times to the present is an ambitious undertaking which could easily take more than 160 pages, given more time and research. That is why I refer to her book as an overview rather than a sourcebook. This is not necessarily a shortcoming, but is certainly an indication of one of the shortcuts taken in publishing this book. Let's face it, decorative furniture painting's time has come again, and my thinking is that Sloan's book is a quick attempt to strike while the genre is hot.

With this in mind, I do recommend the book for several reasons. Sloan and Rizzoli never disappoint. The book is published on heavy, glossy stock, and as we all know, the quality of your materials will either

enhance or flaw the aesthetics of your final product. In this respect Rizzoli always delivers the best. At her best, Sloan presents us with an interesting perspective on painted furniture. Here, she focuses on certain motifs: Fruits & Flowers, Figures & Animals, Classical, Abstract & Geometric, & Finishes.

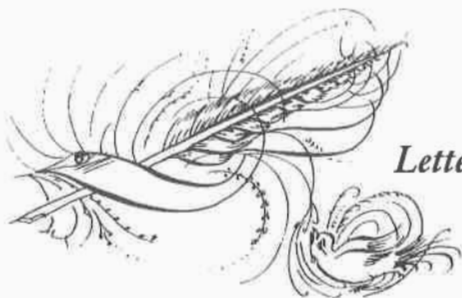
The geography of her designs covers American colonial, Dutch folk art, Irish vernacular, Scandinavian neoclassical, Oriental lacquerwork, German baroque, (and more). It's a stunning international buffet of motifs from medieval times to the present. Her descriptions tell us how the decorative effects were achieved as well as inform us on how we might reproduce these designs and finishes.

Aren't we fortunate that teaching is in her blood. It's not the illustrated, how-to-handholding, for which she is deservedly famous. However, you can refer to any of her previous books for that. Sloan does provide us with a glossary of over 50 motifs for reproduction as well as some helpful suggestions; the motifs on the furnishings that are illustrated are remarkable, and the clear details and vivid colors facilitate reproduction. There is also a "Glossary of Terms and Places to Visit."

Annie Sloan has earned her reputation and popularity as a respected authority and teacher of decorative painting techniques. *The Painted Furniture Sourcebook*, like so many of our books, is a visual feast. It is a beautifully and uniquely formatted odyssey through centuries and countries, focusing on authentic decorative motifs which will delight and satisfy the reader/decorator. Sloan also provides enough text to sufficiently whet your appetite, and provide you with some context for these designs. If you think of this as a reference book, with value in its numerous motifs, and wealth of colorful plates, you may consider this a worthy purchase



FYI: I'm sure you have all noticed how expensive books have become, especially those beautifully illustrated art books that capture our attention and hearts for a small ransom. Well, you might start thinking of some of your purchases as an investment. Some books are doing even better than the stock market. In some cases, you can turn paper into gold. For example, for those of you who own *Severin Roesen*, by Judith Hansen O'Toole, it is now selling for \$350 (in one case, without a dust jacket). Also, Shaffner & Kline's first book, *Folk Hearts*, now sells for \$200. Needless to say, books are meant to be read and enjoyed, but I urge you to protect your dust jackets and try to keep your books in good condition. They may be a legacy in more ways than one.



Letter from Birmingham

by Yvonne Jones

The Victoria Shape Tray

I have been asked to address the confusion surrounding the shape of the *Victoria* tray. I fear however, that I shall only add to it!

To the best of my current knowledge, the most widely accepted ideas can be sourced to the writings of two men: William Highfield Jones, and George Dickinson.

Highfield-Jones (1829-1903) had been apprenticed at the Old Hall Works in Wolverhampton, and in 1853, set up as a japanner in his own right. He wrote in 1900, that "Mr Wallis designed for them (Messrs Ryton & Walton) the shape of the Victoria Tray named after the young Queen Victoria. This shaped tray was very popular, and sold very well."¹

Writing twenty-five years later, George Dickinson, who had the good fortune to draw on the memories of "two or three old workers in papier maché factories", described the tray-shape in more detail. He wrote that "A pattern called "Victorian" [*sic*] was exclusively Walton's and is the only shape that is known to have been exclusive, this was a round tray the outline of which was a series of small semi-circles."² If as I suspect, this is the shape shown below, then it was continued by Benjamin Walton during his ownership of the Old Hall Works.

However, the shape shown below (right) is described as "Victoria" by Henry Loveridge & Co., in an illustrated list of tray shapes provided in the 1869 trade catalogue.

Thus, the shape may have been exclusive to Walton's, but not the name.



1. Jones, W.H. *Story of the Japan Tin-plate & Bicycling & Galvanising Trades in Wolverhampton*, London 1900

2. Dickinson, G. *English Papier Mache London* 1925.

Awards

President's Award Box

Bonnie DuMond

Reproduction of an Original

Harold Fisher

Applicants Accepted as Guild Members

Eldrid Arntzen

Patricia Evans



A finely detailed example of penwork on a cotton handkerchief. Part of the Salm Collection.

Members' "A" Awards



Doris Hynes
Stenciling on Wood

A



Ursula Erb
Painted Dials

A



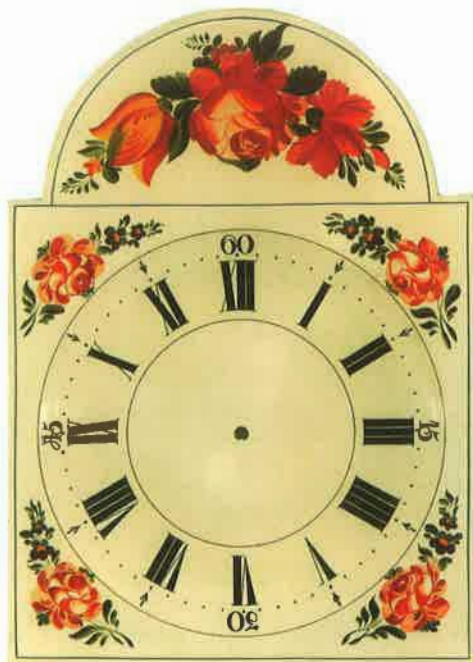
Carolyn McAdams

Theorems



Inez Gornall

Theorems



A

Ursula Erb
Painted Dials



A

Carol Tucker
Theorems



A

Martha Kinney

Theorems



A

Alexandra Perrot

Theorems

Members' "B" Awards



Anita Martinelli

Theorems

Mary Muench

Glass with Border



Trudy Valentine

Freeband Bronze

Susan Redfield

Theorems



Members' "B" Awards

Margaret Rodgers

Clock Dials



The unusual sugar bowl on the left is a perfect example of what is referred to as "end-of-the-day" tin. So as not to waste any leftover tin, the tinsmith used his last piece to make this shorter than standard tin, the tinsmith used his last piece to make this shorter than standard sugar bowl. Note that the "end-of-the-day" sugar bowl is not only shorter but has a wider base and a taller foot. The piece was probably made in Berlin, CT, and interestingly, no green appears anywhere on the pattern. The sugar bowl was purchased by the Grinleys in New Hampshire.



A Treasury of Old Stenciled Walls 1810-1840 (Part 3)

by Jessica Hill Bond

This installment covers wall stenciling in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Text begins on page 29.

Right: Fig. 162. Foster, RI. A room in the Daniel Hopkins House, c.1790.



Left: Fig. 167. Gloucester, RI. Detail of top border, and vertical borders with droopy foliage.

Right: Fig. 178. Dighton, MA. The main part of wall with very good combination of designs. The stenciling is all in original condition but has lost its color.



Left: Fig. 171. Ashley Falls, MA. Detail of overmantel urn of flowers. Courtesy of Deborah Lambeth



Above: Fig. 170. Ashley Falls, MA. Detail of frieze.
Courtesy of Deborah Lambeth



Fig. 182. Southfield, MA. The Baldwin-Craigmyle House. Effective diamond shape stripes in the original stenciling, changed in color.

Right: Fig. 175. Assonet, MA.
Border stenciling in a cupola used as an attic. All original in black, light brick red and dark blue on a yellow ochre background.



Above: Fig. 173. Williamstown, MA. Original stenciling retouched in an upstairs chamber. A high ceiling accomodates eight single motifs down the wall. These match "Austin" stencils.

Right: Fig. 181. So. Sandisfield, MA. In an upstairs chamber a delightful frieze of yellow pseudo pineapples with red markings.



RHODE ISLAND

Foster, near the Connecticut border is an early settlement of 18th century houses amidst the encroachment of modern times. The Deacon Daniel Hopkins House has two identical stenciled walls in remarkably fine condition. Fig. 162 shows the stenciling in drab green, dark brick red and touches of black on an unusually pleasing wall. Details of the wall show the upper and lower designs and a bonus was to see the name "J. Gleason" stenciled on one panel (Fig. 165). No records with this name have yet been found and it is assumed he was an itinerant.



Fig. 165. Foster, RI. "J. Gleason" stenciled on a panel in the Daniel Hopkins House

Another house in Foster was done in the same style as in the Deacon Daniel Hopkins House and with attractive uprights separating the single units.

North Scituate. In a tiny hallway are designs of a different style from the Foster ones. A variation of what has come to be known as the "telephone" frieze was used here with carnation-type flowers on the main wall and a wide meandering upright border to make a simple decoration.

Glocester is west of Harmony and I went there in 1968 to see if I could find an old tavern which was to be torn down. I saw the barn first and drove into the barnyard. The old house, sagging with neglect, had been known as the Cutler Stand built about 1800 as a stagecoach inn between Providence, R. I. and Hartford, Conn. Upon entering the forlorn house I saw vestiges of some of the most graceful and interesting stenciling I had ever seen. Over the wainscoting were rows of dark green uprights and no other color against a yellow ochre wall. The frieze above was freehand in the same green with touches of white and black to imitate the folds in drapery (Fig. 167). The house was beyond repair and in danger of falling into the highway but it was to be dismantled to save some of the old materials.

Dame Farm in **Johnston** is now a part of Snake Den State Park and is a living farm open to visitors. The farmhouse was built in 1789 by William and Samuel Steere and the fragmentary stenciled wall found on the second floor was carefully copied and reproduced by Susan Hibbitt. The patterns resemble a few from other New England states and New York and are in harmony with each other on these walls.

MASSACHUSETTS

Ashley Falls. After many years of neglect during the Depression years of the 1930's a brick house here was rescued by a family who had a desire to restore it and a knowledge of how to do it. Built as a stagecoach stop in the late 18th century on the Hartford-Albany turnpike the stenciled room was once a ballroom (Figs. 170-171). Eight layers of paper and paint were painstakingly removed and finally the patterns came to light. The walls were in fairly good condition but did need attention. Exact tracings were made by the owner, an artist. Stencils were cut and only touch-ups were required to bring the wall back. The patterns have the flavor of Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York and some of the "Austin" type. There is a gratifying dignity about the room with its subdued coloring of faded brick red, drab green and touches of black on a soft buff background.

Outside of **Williamstown** on a slope of land facing southwest is the large Colonial house built about 1792 by Ebenezer Foster. In a large square bed chamber upstairs old stenciling was found and skillfully retouched by the owner. Fig. 173 shows very cheerful walls in green and red with eight single motifs alternating down and across the wall divided by narrow uprights. It was exciting to find that the frieze matches the "Austin" stencils and the red part of both carnations match "Austin's".

Assonet near the Rhode Island border is a small town between Taunton and Fall River. The house I went to had a cupola on top and it was inside the cupola that original stenciling was found. Borderman put his familiar borders there in dark blue, red and black. The frieze is on a white band and edged with a red stripe (Fig. 175). The border over the baseboard, in black pointed ovals outlined in black dots and edged with black striping, is one of his favorite ways to finish a design. There was once floor stenciling on one of the stairways.

A little west of Assonet is **Dighton** and the work of a different stenciler (Fig. 178). The patterns are in dull green, a purple red and light gray on a soft yellow background all in exceptionally fine condition. The choice of patterns and their placement make an unusually artistic wall.

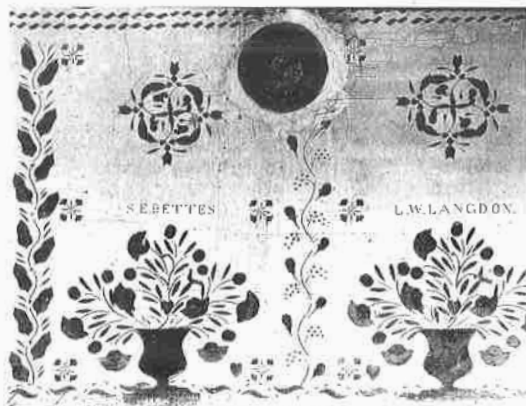


Fig. 185 Blandford, MA. Known as the Gibbs House, this overmantel shows original stenciling and the names "S.E. Bettes" and "L. W. Langdon". House no longer standing. Courtesy of Blandford Historical Society.

The frieze design is very close to one in the Daniel Hopkins House in Rhode Island.

In **South Sandisfield** is the Josiah Sage House. A prominent and wealthy man he was at one time a partner in Lambert Hitchcock's chair factory. The handsome walls are of particular interest because many of the designs match "Austin's" old stencils. The parlor downstairs shows how the diamond upright stencils look on a wall. In an upstairs chamber, (Fig.181), the frieze of stylized pineapples is also among "Austin's" stencils. Even though the colors have changed and faded with age, the artistry of this stenciler is felt.

Southfield. Another house where the "Austin" diamond uprights are found is in the township of New Marlborough. Hidden from sight by a

long driveway, the house is in a clearing overlooking the Berkshire Hills. Built in the late 18th century the house has had necessary alterations but the tiny entrance hall, winding stairway and upstairs chamber give off an aura of an early age. Figure 182 shows the original stenciling in the bed chamber. On a grayish background are the two diamond uprights in washed out colors of yellow ochre and blackish red which originally had been dark green, yellow ochre and brick red. The patterns were reproduced on the adjacent wall in slightly different colors and make a well tailored wall.

Blandford. Many years ago a photograph was taken in a house no longer standing. It was known as a Gibbs House and Fig.185 shows a part of what was over a mantel. I am indebted to the Blandford Historical Society for this print, and what a thrill it was to see the names "S E Bettes" and "L W Langdon" side by side on the wall. In another Gibbs House in Blandford, a sharp-eyed mother and daughter photographed the name "S. E. Bettes" on the wall just minutes before the house was demolished.

In **Amherst** the Simeon Clark House was found to have old stenciling covered up by another wall. All that could be salvaged in good condition was a panel that had been between windows (Fig. 186). From the photograph it looked like Borderman's stenciling and I sent tracings to the owner whose enthusiastic reply was that they matched the panel. The colors are black and red on a corn yellow background. These same



Fig. 186. Amherst, MA. A panel saved from the Simeon Clark House. Borders match "Borderman's" stencils. Courtesy of Blandford Historical Society

Fig. 187. N. Orange, MA. "Borderman" stenciling in Perry Tavern. Soft raspberry background. Courtesy of the late Shirley DeVoe.



designs have been found in several places in Vermont and give further indication of how far the early itinerants traveled.

North Orange in northern Massachusetts was in early days a much travelled route between Brattleboro, Vermont and Boston, Massachusetts. The Perry Tavern, built c. 1760, still stands and was stenciled in several rooms with classical designs in Borderman's refined style. In an upstairs chamber, the problem of the uneven joining of the beams has vexed many a modern stenciler as to where to put the frieze border. Here it is hardly noticeable. The walls are a pale raspberry with light gray bands and black and light brick red stenciling. In the ballroom is another design in black and brick red on a white band with the background a pleasing shade of yellow.

On the Common at **Royalston** above North Orange is the impressive Rufus Bullock House built in the early 1800s, with remains of stenciling in several rooms. The house was empty for over ten years and was finally rescued in 1978 by the present owners who are gradually getting it back to a semblance of what it once was. On one wall was the stylized urn of flowers seen in Canaan, New Hampshire and Ira, Vermont. Here it was used all across and down the wall in black and brick red. In another room are white bands with festoons in black and red along the top border and the trim around the door as seen in Perry Tavern. Not only was there fine stenciling on the walls but the doors and woodwork had unusual flame graining, each door different from the other.



Close-up of Josiah Sage House in So. Sandisfield, MA, Fig. 181.

(To be continued)

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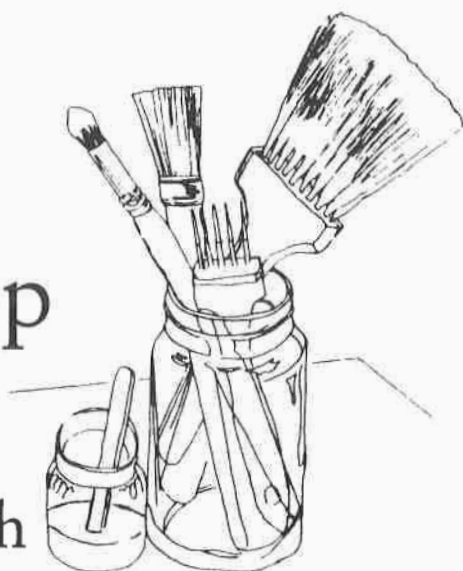
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