

# The Decorator

Vol. 53 No. 2

Burlington, VT

Spring 1999



*Journal of the*

Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc.

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*Front & Back covers: 19th century Chinese pith paintings. Courtesy of Dorcas Layport.*

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# Rufus Porter Murals in East Derry, NH

*by Shirley S. Baer*

**T**hirteen panels of a mural attributed to Rufus Porter are located in an historic home previously known as the Adams Female Academy, in Derry, New Hampshire. From 1823 to 1886 it served as a private high school for girls and was the first school in this country to award diplomas to female students. When a local school opened its doors to females in 1853, Adams Academy's enrollment began to decline. In 1887 it became part of the Derry School District.

Alan Shepard, America's first astronaut, entered the Adams Female Academy in 1929, when all six grades were in one room. He was a student there for five years until he was promoted to junior high. The school continued until 1953 when a new elementary school was built.

Today, the former academy is a private home. Its owner, Scott Richardson, graciously showed us the large school room and allowed us to photograph the walls. The colors are brilliant! The trees are numerous and of various shapes. Except for the small areas of new plaster, one would think the mural had been painted recently. Since the room is still in a state of restoration, one can immediately see why the colors are still so vivid: the original panels were between old beams and a second wall was attached to the face of the beams. Windows were added and in the process, three painted panels were cut out and discarded in the woods behind the school. They were destroyed by exposure to the elements.



*Mayjane Clark and Scott Richardson discuss the Rufus Porter mural behind them.*

Wall panels dominated by trees, with close-ups of some of those trees, are shown in this issue of *The Decorator*. In the next issue, the rest of the panels will be presented, showing the few houses and boats that are part of this beautiful mural.







*Above: Close-up of tree on right.*

*Below: Students have written on the wall around the lighthouse: "Tower of babel", "Bunkerhill Monument", and "tower of Babolon (sic)."*





*Above: Note the bulbous, almost topiary appearance of the tree on the right. Several trees with this shape are found on the walls. Also note the technique used in painting this tree. Compare this work with the sponge work look of the other trees.*



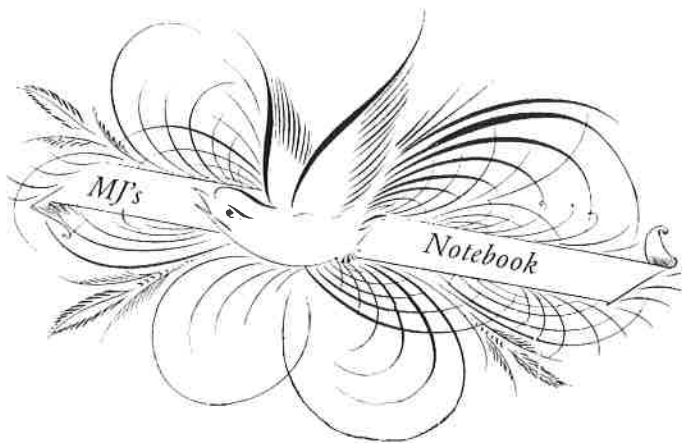




*Right: Closeup of a tree shown  
on page 5.*







### A Stenciler's Puffer

A few months ago, several students sent me copies of a "What Is It" column from *Yankee Magazine*. The object in question identified as a stenciler's puffer, was new to me. According to the article, "When held at the correct distance from the target and squeezed between the thumb and forefinger, it blew colored powder that left cloudy effects on whatever surface was being stenciled. These were used on chair backs, pianos, chests, mirror frames, pictures painted on velvet, and deed boxes. It was in use sometime between 1833 and 1929."

Recently another student purchased this "early tin powder puff" which is almost identical to the one in *Yankee Magazine*. Including the 2.25" snout, it is 5" long and just 1" high. The photographs shown here are approximately one-half the size of the actual piece.



*Continued on page 31*

# A Treasury of Old Stenciled Walls 1810-1840 (part 4)

by Jessica Hill Bond

## Connecticut

**Bolton.** In Fig. 193 (page 18), a wall has patterns like Moses Eaton's and patterns from walls that are not his. The stenciler here started out with quite simple patterns in green, then dressed them up with accents in black to make a strikingly handsome wall. Some of the patterns with their touches of black were found in the Connecticut towns of Andover, Southington and Willimantic.

In the central western part of Connecticut there are walls thought to have been stenciled about 1830 by a man called Stimp. Miss Waring heard this from some of the townspeople whose families had lived there for generations, and in *Early American Stencils* she tells some amazing anecdotes about this man whose reputation was somewhat tarnished.

In **New Milford** is the "Peet" House built on Peet Hill in the 1780's. Much of the stenciled room has dimmed with age but the patterns in one room are associated with Stimp. The colors are olive green and red, a favored choice among stencilers. The unique way of decorating a panel between windows shown in Fig. 199 (page 18) is usually reserved for overmantels, but this interesting artisan had a good time here and stenciled an urn in the center, filling it with a flower stencil four times in various positions. That was not enough, so he dotted around little quatrefoil hearts and placed two red birds facing each other among the leaves.

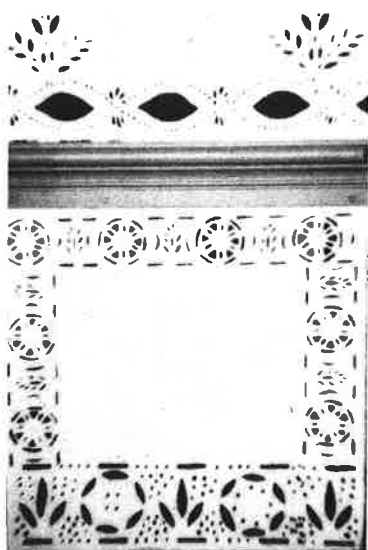


Fig. 206. Hampton, CT. Reproduction of upper and lower wall. All in black. Courtesy, Mrs. Louise Jones.

**Woodbury** has a wall attributed to Stimp with his frequently used trim of curved leaves beside a door and in corners of the room. The walls were in poor condition when discovered but showed faintly the dull green and red that would have made a simple but effective wall.

In **Washington** only one corner of a room was clear enough to save and again the same designs as in New Milford and Woodbury with an added pinwheel (Fig. 200, page 18).

In **East Granby** just over the Massachusetts border in Connecticut is the Hull-Thompson-Hall House. Only slight retouching was required in a few places on this well preserved wall. It was a surprise to see the name "L. W. Langdon" stenciled on a panel (Fig. 203, page 18), the same name seen on the Blandford, Massachusetts wall. Except for the name and one wavy border there is no similarity in the two walls. The designs here are a mixture of some found in New England and New York and make a very good wall.

In **Hampton** were original borders like two found in Norwich, Vermont. They were faint but clear enough to be traced and reproduced in black on the wall (Fig. 206, page 10). The house was built about 1760 and was once the home of John Brewster, Jr., (1766-1854) a deaf-mute portrait and miniature painter born in Hampton, and who studied painting with Rev. Joseph Steward. In spite of his handicap, he painted not only in Connecticut but in Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. At the age of 51 Brewster attended a very fine school for the deaf in Hartford, (the first one in the country), and it made a remarkable difference in this artist's life. It is unlikely that he ever did any stenciling.

In another house in **Hampton**, are seen faintly black stenciled borders as in the Brewster House, but used in a different way on a pale rose background. The complementary border design of pointed ovals surrounded by dots was used also in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. In the same house upstairs in a large closet is an entirely different type of decoration from the one downstairs and probably by a different stenciler. In practically untouched condition the designs of



*Fig. 216. Washington Depot, CT. A facsimile of part of the wall falls short of its beauty. Courtesy, the late Shirley De Voc.*

olive green and quite dark red show up well on a yellow ochre background.

In **South Windsor** on a fairly direct route from Hampton, the stenciler stopped again to put his one-color designs on a wall. A pinwheel design was found over the chair rail, beside the door frame and in the corners of the room, a design not common with this unknown stenciler.

In **Washington Depot** on the western side of central Connecticut is the Curtis Hickox House, with some of the finest original wall stenciling in existence today. Built in 1790 by Mr. Hickox, the house was lived in successively by four generations before it passed into other hands. The stenciling was discovered in the parlor by a great grandson when a partition was taken down and early wallpaper was removed that revealed the exquisite wall. A facsimile of part of the wall shows the yellow ochre background with a gray band at the top to accommodate the simple but effective frieze of black and white reeding with a white oval and a red heart in the center (Fig. 216, page 11). The broken reeding of the up-rights is very effective in black with small white overlay stencils in red and black. The other upright is a graceful vine with gray leaves, red flowers and buds. Horizontally across the wall under the frieze is a variation of a much favored design used by Borderman and seen in four New England states. This wall was photographed many years ago for Miss Waring's *Early American Stencils*.

In **Woodstock** stands a Colonial house built in the mid 18th century. Three rooms of border stenciling on white bands were found in sad condition. These were carefully traced and put back on the walls in the original colors. The patterns are different in each room and reflect the taste of Borderman. Two of the rooms have a soft rose background, a third is more apricot. Each room has the white bands, and in the corners, the quarter fan in classical style.

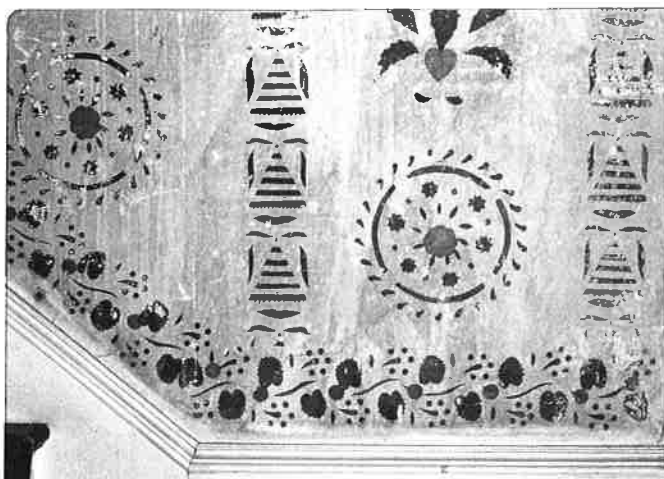


Fig. 221. Granville, NY. Lower part of wall and stairway. Colors: dull green and soft red.



## New York

**Granville.** Far out in the country and surrounded by valleys of farmland, is a brick house high on a bank and overlooking Vermont's Green Mountains bordering the east. The date over the front door is 1819. Upstairs in the hall and down the stairway is stenciling in soft red and dull green on a buff background, all in original condition (Figs. 220, page 19; 221,12). The ceilings are high, and it took a tall ladder to climb for a closer look at the unusual frieze border on a wide gray-blue band. The two-color swags have small pendants suspended from them and add a nice touch. More decoration was uncovered in a bed chamber and showed a well planned wall in untouched condition. The gray-blue band was used here also with a different frieze design. A black stencil was also used on the main wall.

On the fringes of **Argyle** in upper New York is an imposing house for such a rural area. The almost obliterated designs could be traced to make a facsimile (Fig. 224). The patterns are close to Austin's old stencils but there is also a flavor of Stimp in the layout.

Also in Argyle is a deserted house with a wall full of surprises—the decorator must have been carried away by his own decorating. A frieze border is similar to that in Granville but on a pink band. Some of the other designs are similar to Granville, but the layout of the wall is quite different. It shows the patterns in blue-green and red on a yellow or buff background. Part of this wall has been moved to Bristol, Rhode Island.

Another wall in Argyle was a single panel on the second floor of a small house. A gray-blue band had the same frieze design and "flower" as in the Granville bedroom and the same coloring. The tinted bands used with this type of stenciling would seem to point to a particular stenciler, as yet unknown.

*Fig. 224. Argyle, NY. The trim against a door frame with the upside down red heart.*





*Fig. 228. Salem, NY. An abandoned house in Salem has an upstairs hall and stairway with stenciling that matches a wall in Pawlett, VT. Courtesy, Jane Hanks.*

In **Salem**, still in upper New York, is the work of a different itinerant. I was told of an abandoned house on Bog Town Road, and there is never any doubt when such a place is spotted. There it was, poor thing. Climbing through high weeds we found the best way to enter the house seemed to be to go through a window without glass or muntins, climb the ladder, go through the window then pull the ladder inside. My friend and I were greeted by coil bedsprings lined up against the walls where chickens had at one time roosted. There was a tiny back stairway and we went up to find stenciling in the hall (Fig. 228). On what was once a white background were designs in green, faded red and touches of clear yellow that match those in Pawlet, Vermont.

Farther south in **Stephentown**, Rensselaer County, New York, a friend lead the way to another abandoned house. After many turns off the main highway we saw it, abandoned and forlorn but not falling down.

It was referred to locally as the Dan Watson House, but according to records, Asa Swan was the original owner. Every room was stenciled and most of it was in surprisingly good condition for a house without window panes. The layout of the stenciling was very well done and some of the same designs were used in more than one room but in different colors. One room has the same frieze as in Salem, New York and Pawlet, Vermont, but done in reverse and with an additional red stencil. The large leaf design on the main wall was stenciled first in dark green, then another stencil in white applied on the edges, an unusual treatment.

An old building in **St. Johnsville** was in the way of highway construction (c.1974) and was threatened with destruction, but fortunately this did not come to pass. Called the Nellis Tavern, it was built in the late 18th century as a stagecoach stop and in 1810 an addition was put on the building in which the stenciling was found. The frieze design in Fig. 233 (page 19) in blue-green and coral red is a variation of a design in favor among different stencilers. The main part of the wall is divided into panels by intertwining uprights with single designs between and yellow "pinwheels" filling in the voids. Another room has the same col-

ors and an interesting porpoise-like frieze at the top of the wall complemented on the lower part by a row of green S's that resemble shutter dogs. The name "JA C Nellis N Y was stenciled on the wall and it has not yet been found what the initials stand for.

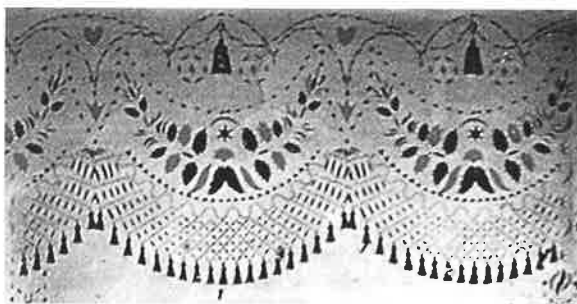
In **Berlin** another stenciler found his way in 1833 to the Craib House. The oldest part of the house is purported to have been the first frame house in Berlin, c. 1775-1780. As the family grew, more rooms were added and around 1830 the largest part of the house was added, the ceilings made higher and the fireplace removed to be replaced by a stove. A few years later two of the rooms were decorated. The talented decorator made a combination of freehand and stenciled designs and obligingly signed and dated the wall "I. H. De Forest Pittsfield 1833" (Fig. 238, page 18). There is a Pittsfield in New York and in Massachusetts, but the proximity to the latter seems the more likely place. On a background of off-white is a pale yellow ochre band at the top of the wall where this artisan put a row of dark green stenciled pine trees with freehand accents for branches. Along the edge of this frieze is what appears to be freehand painted picot. On the main wall the single motifs are a combination of stenciling and freehand painting in dark green, brick red and white with a small geometric stenciled motif in between. An adjoining chamber has one design repeated across and down the wall, topped with a dainty border befitting a bed chamber.

**Fredonia**, in western New York, is on the edge of Lake Erie. Photographs of sections of an original stenciled wall there show faintly some designs surprisingly like those in Massachusetts and Connecticut but grouped in a different way. I have no tracings so am unable to tell if there is a match in my files.

Also in western New York is **Farmersville** in Cattaraugus County. Once there was an inn there built about 1822 as a stagecoach stop and called "Union Inn". The colorful walls had a close resemblance to those of Stencil House from Chenango County, New York and now at Shelburne Museum in Vermont. This stenciler had a fondness for birds, and on one of the uprights he extended the branches for their perches and made a few birds on the wing all dominated by the spread eagle above (Figs. 240-241, page 19).



*Fig. 237. Berlin, NY. A combination of freehand painting and stenciling on a very dainty wall. A border of "pine trees" on a yellow band at the top.*



*Fig. 246. Treadwell, NY. This imaginatively designed wall and the cutting of the stencils defy description. Courtesy, the late Shirley DeVoe.*

The colors on what was once a white background are dark green, brick red and black, with the bodies of some of the birds blue. The feathers on the eagles and lettering on the banners are in white. Fire completely consumed the old landmark in 1971 (which emphasizes the importance of keeping records and photographs for posterity).

In **Jacksonville**, Tompkins County, New York, a house built in 1913 by Enoch Van Cuyk has stenciling found many years ago under wallpaper (Fig. 243, page 30). Someone sent me a newspaper clipping about the wall and in corresponding with the owner, photographs were sent to me, tracings went back and forth and it was soon established that the frieze design was like an Austin stencil. The most interesting part of the wall is a panel between windows. It has a Masonic emblem flanked on each side by a footed bowl of flowers. Parts of some of the other designs were like "Austin's" too, and it was possible to make a reasonable facsimile of this very interesting work.

**Treadwell**, Delaware County, New York, has a house built in the 1790's by Capt. Amos Bristol as a stagecoach stop on the Susquehanna Turnpike. On the second floor, the old ballroom was used as a meeting place by the Aurora Lodge of Masons in 1813. The intricate stenciling in that room (Fig. 246) was evidently done during this period because there are several stenciled Masonic emblems. Figs. 249-250 (page 30) show the exquisite work, not only in the designs but in the precise drawing and cutting of the stencils. The deep lacy swags of the frieze, (Fig. 252, page 17) look like an elaborate necklace in black and apricot, which show to advantage against an off white wall trimmed with a narrow simple border. The overmantel motif of just half of a compass, Fig. 248 (page 30) shows the discretion of this talented artisan. Attention is drawn to the ceiling where two circular motifs have Masonic emblems in the centers.

Stencil House at Shelburne Museum in **Shelburne**, Vermont was dismantled and moved to the museum from its original location between Sherburne and Columbus in Chenango County, New York. On matched pine boarding, some vertical, some horizontal, the unusual stenciling was found downstairs in the parlor, dining room and hall. The necessary retouching and some repainting was skillfully done by the late

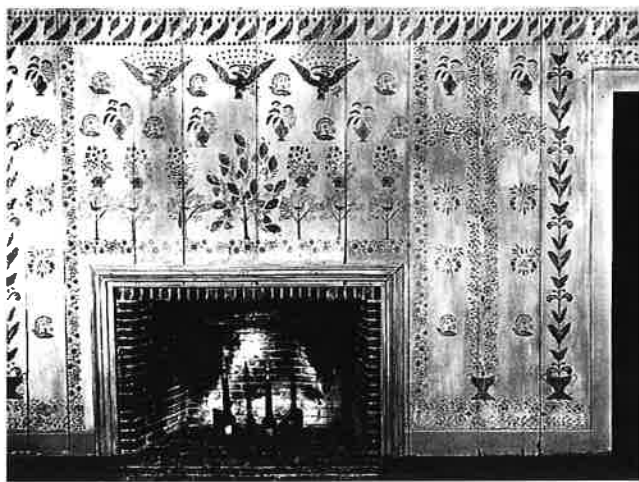


Duncan Munro. Except for over mantels, the walls are divided into panels by upright borders ascending the wall with stylized single motifs between. Spread eagles with twenty-six stars above their heads adorn many of the walls. Whether the stars indicate the twenty-sixth of the Union in 1837 (and thus a date for the stenciling) has not been proven. It could be the stenciler paid little heed to this and cut his stars where they fitted well. The rooms are full of surprises and make a fascinating study of designs. On backgrounds of light maize and gray-green, the stencil colors are a dark blue-green, dark red, and light coral, with white accents on the eagles.

In studying photographs taken when the house was being dismantled, it was exciting to find the name James Morrow stenciled over the mantel in the parlor, right side up in an arc, then turned around and stenciled again to make an oval. Some of the designs are close to those in Farmersville Inn. It is tempting to think James Morrow was the stenciler of these walls, but this has not been established.

Part of the Bonnell House from **Cherry Valley** in Otsego County is now at the New York State Historical Association in Cooperstown. This is an example of an effective layout for a room with a low ceiling. The proportions and spacing are good; the floral and geometric patterns go well together to reflect the ability of the stenciler.

In 1952 a tavern from **Windham** in Green County was moved to the grounds of the Farmers Museum at Cooperstown. Built by Jehiel Tuttle in the early 1800's, it was taken over by Ephraim Bump to make a tavern. After it was put in place, fragmentary stenciled walls were found and were carefully restored by Shirley DeVoe. Part of the wall was saved in its original condition and is now protected by a wallboard.



*Fig. 252. Stencil House, Shelburne Museum. The parlor with vertical boarding and interesting over mantel decoration.*



Above: Fig. 193. Bolton, CT. A lot of planning must have gone into this delightful wall. Lower wall with surbase border resembling one of Eaton's frieze patterns.



Above: Fig. 203. E. Granby, CT. The name "L. W. Langdon" in original condition on a panel. Photo courtesy, Gina Martin.

Right: Fig. 238. Berlin, NY. In a rectangle on the wall is written "I H DeForest Pittsfield 1833."



Below: Fig. 199. New Milford, CT. Focal point at the Peet House is panel between windows with an imaginative combination of designs.



Above: Fig. 200. Washington, CT. The upper and lower wall with the trim of curved leaves that are one of the trademarks of the legendary "Stimp."



Right: Fig. 220. Granville, NY. A brick house built in 1819 with large rooms and high ceilings. In upstairs hall is an elaborate frieze on a blue-gray band.



Above: 240. Farmersville, NY. The Farmersville Inn, no longer standing, had some exciting walls with many colorful birds. The eagles have twenty-six stars above their heads. Fig. 241, right, shows a panel between windows.



Left: Fig. 233. St. Johnsville, NY. Nellis Tavern, this is the top part of one of the walls

*Continued on page 30*

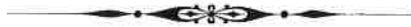
# Awards

## *President's Award Box*

Mary Beals

### Career

Alice Smith



## Applicants Accepted as Guild Members

Elizabeth C. Bogner

Evelyn Brumsted

Robert K. Flachbarth

Dianne Freiner

Jayne M. Hanscom

Tracy D. Harris

Martha Macfarland

Pauline McDonough

Rhonda M. Nolan

Beverly Ann Oehlert

Mary B. Perry

Patricia Ready



## Future Meetings

**Fall 1999**

Batavia, NY

September 23-25, 1999 (TFS)

**Spring 2000**

Stamford, CT

April 14-16, 2000 (FSS)

**Fall 2000**

Woodcliff, NJ

September 22-24, 2000 (FSS)



## The Pith Painting Collection of Inez Gornall

One of the attractions at the Nashua meeting last spring was the display of Inez Gornall's collection of pith paintings. The brightly painted figures on off-white backgrounds immediately caught one's eye.

While most of the paintings are simple in design, exquisite detail is found on the robes of the ladies.

This collection is shown here and on the next two pages. Our thanks to Inez for allowing us to use these pictures. In future issues of *The Decorator*, we will continue this subject with an article and pictures of other paintings.



*Figures are shown actual size.*





*These small paintings are not only decorative but are also important because they show some of the steps in the manufacturing and export process.*

*Photos of the Gornall pith paintings  
by Shirley S. Baer*



*Actual paintings are approximately 3.5" high.*



*Pith paintings from the collection  
of Inez Gornall*





*These paintings seem to depict children at play or as participants in a parade.*



*All paintings, courtesy of Inez Gornall*



## Members' "A" Awards



Carol Heinz

*Clock Dials*



Sonya Bridges

*Stenciling on Wood*



Elaine Dalzell

*Stenciling on Tin*

Ursula Erb  
*Country Painting*





## Members' "A" Awards



Joyce Holzer

*Stenciling on Wood*

Deborah Lambeth

*Clock Dials*



Linda Brubaker

*Country Painting*

Reproduction  
(of Sewing Box)

*Harold Fisher*

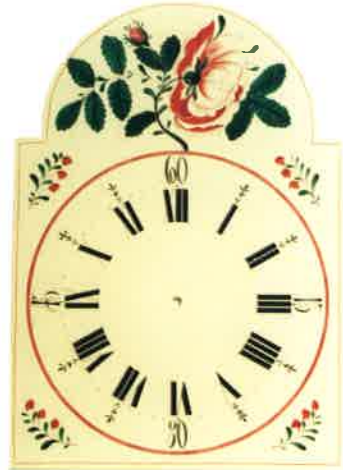


## Members' "B" Awards



Dolores Furnari

*Stenciling on Tin*



Ursula Erb

*Clock Dials*



Parma Jewett

*Stenciling on Wood*



Dolores Furnari

*Country Painting*

## Members' "B" Awards

Susan Redfield

*Country Painting*



Martha Kinney

*Stenciling on Wood*



Dorcas Layport

*Pontypool Painting*



Carol Buonato

*Clock Dials*

## Members' "B" Awards



Kimberlee Phillips

*Stenciling on Wood*



Carol Buonato

*Clock Dials*



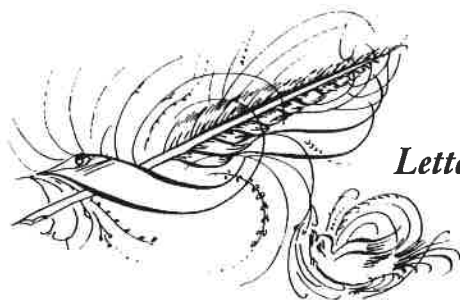
Judy Neumeyer

*Stenciling on Tin*



Martha Kinney

*Stenciling on Wood*



## *Letter from Birmingham*

by Yvonne Jones

### **Henry Clay and his rivals:**

A further reminder that Henry Clay was not without rivals in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, is offered by the following advertisement placed in a local newspaper. In this context, the claims of a Mr. Godfrey of Hertfordshire, and the sale of the stock-in-trade of Dyson & Benson, are particularly interesting:

Henry Clay, Japanner, and Papier Mache Manufacturer, by Virtue of his Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, makes and executes of Paper in a peculiar Manner, Pannels for Coaches, Sedan Chairs, Doors, Cabinets, and various other Uses; likewise Tables, Toilet Boxes, Tea Trays and Waiters, Cadees &c. &c. - And whereas Intimation hath been given to the said Patentee, that (notwithstanding his exclusive Right by Virtue of such Letters Patent) other Persons have begun or intend to make upon the Principles of his Invention, some of the Articles stipulated therein. Notice therefore is hereby given, that if any Person or Persons whomsoever, shall presume to infringe the said Patentee's Right, they will be proceeded against according to the Law.

Aris's Gazette, Birmingham, 29th May, 1775

A fire broke out, at nine o'clock at night, at Framsted's End, Cheshunt, at Mr Godfrey's, japanner,... It was occasioned by over-heating the stoves for new invented tea-tables composed of various layers of rags and paper pounded in a method superior to Clay's of Birmingham, and in three hours destroyed the dwelling-house, a large malting-house, and buildings adjoining. The family had received repeated warnings by the excessive heat, which had more than once threatened such consequences.

*The Annual Register for the Year 1806*





*Above: Fig. 248, Treadwell, NY. Overmantel with half of a compass. Colors are black, brick and burnt sienna on off-white background.*



*Fig. 243, Jacksonville, NY. A panel between windows with Masonic emblems flanked by urns of flowers.*



*Fig. 249, Treadwell, NY. Ceiling motif with Masonic emblems.*

*Photos from the home in Treadwell, NY. Courtesy of the late Shirley DeVoe.*



*Fig. 250, Treadwell, NY. Masonic emblem on ceiling with crowns at the compass points.*





### The Charm & Beauty of an Original Country Tin

**T**his large asphaltum tin trunk has very realistic white lilies on the front. Although similar lily-type flowers have been found in the Stevens Shop which gives this one the feeling of a Maine piece, the brushstroke work on the top and the ends are very similar to those found in the Pennsylvania Filley shop.

Upon close examination, the striping on the trunk top is not straight, the distance between the stripes is not uniform, one corner brush stroke sticks out like a handle...yet this piece is a gem. It has warmth, charm and beauty. It so beautifully demonstrates a relaxed execution of handiwork. There is nothing stiff or mechanical looking about the piece. It is an exquisite piece of work!

*If you have any information on where the brass handles were made, please let us know!*

*Use of photographs of this country tin trunk courtesy of Jane Domenico, owner.*





## The Bookshelf

### **“An Introduction to Water Gilding: A Guide for Gilding Picture Frames from Gesso to Patina”**

*by Marty Horowitz and Lou Tilmont*

*Soft Cover, 8 x 11, 37 pgs., PFM Pub. Co., Manalapan, NJ, 1998, \$24.95.*

*Reviewed by Sandra Cohen*

In his Introduction, Marty Horowitz tells us that he discovered techniques of gilding by “looking over the shoulders of other gilders.” However, what he learned was that “there were no written recipes...a bit of this, a touch of that...keep testing, keep adding, keep going. Yes, that’s it! See how beautiful. Now, you do it!” If that sounds familiar, then this is the book for you. After “peeking, sneaking, and trying” he and his partner, Lou Tilmont, have “refined and put down on paper actual recipes that work from coast to coast, from sea level to 12,000 ft., from hot to cold, from damp to dry, from morning to night.” It sounds too good to be true, and because I hardly have enough knowledge and experience under my belt to evaluate the authors’ claims, I asked a professional and a master painter, Astrid Donnellan, if she could confirm the value of the authors’ recipes and techniques. Astrid’s experience with gilding instructors and their measured potions, a dash of this, a pinch of that, now wait and see, seemed to echo the authors’. According to Astrid, Horowitz and Tilmont have translated “years of experience and given us in layman’s terms failsafe methods and recipes for water gilding. Written in layman’s language and at a beginner’s level, their step-by-step instruction is like having a teacher at your elbow. It’s a long awaited, one-of-a kind book.”

This book is replete with basic instructions, detailed photo illustrations with captions, and failsafe recipes for every process. There is also a good measure of meaningful anecdotal material as well as a touch

of humor. For example, a footnote for a jar to contain the “gilder’s liquor” states, “Here I suggest you buy a small jar of gefilte fish. Using plenty of white horseradish, eat the fish. Now you’ve got the jar! I have many bottles and jars in my shop, but the burnish is always better when I make my liquor in the gefilte fish jar.” He’s kidding, isn’t he?

Horowitz and Tilmont offer chapters on each of the following: Gesso, Clay, Laying Leaf, Burnishing, Patching and Finishing, Distressing & Antiquing, Toning and Sealing, Building a Patina, and Contemporary Frames. Three Appendices include Working With Metal Leaf, Types of Wood to Use for Gilding, and The Recipes.

Horowitz and Tilmont as well as Donnellan make this book sound like the gilders’ pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

## **Fraktur Writings and Folk Art Drawings of the Schwenkfelder Library Collection**

*by Dennis K. Moyer*

*Hard Cover, 9 1/2 x 11, more than 250 color illustrations of Frakturs, 320 pgs.,  
PA German Society Pub., 1998, \$69.95.*

If you love painting Frakturs or simply enjoy reading its history and looking at beautiful reproductions, then you will definitely treasure this book. Dennis Moyers has compiled one of the most comprehensive anthologies of German Fraktur from 1750 to 1850. This hundred-year layout spotlights the drawings of school teachers, students and the everyday folk of German immigrants known as the Schwenkfelders. This book includes information that is valuable for researchers, and is written in a style that can be appreciated by casual readers. It also contains plenty of colorful, authentic reproductions that will thoroughly satisfy the decorative painter’s “palette.” The color and detail are outstanding and demonstrated handsomely in their signature design motifs. Frakturs in vivid colors, with birds, tulips, stars, hearts, fan shaped flowers, six-pointed stars and palmiettes, along with feathered letters and intricate multiple borders inspire as well as entertain us. The collection includes birth certificates, book plates, manuscript pages, drawings, house blessings, Valentines and more. The frosting on the cake is that all the German text that is part of any Fraktur is translated. This book is truly a visual feast.

*Editor’s Note: Our Bookshelf Editor, Sandra Cohen, owns and operates Legacy Books.*

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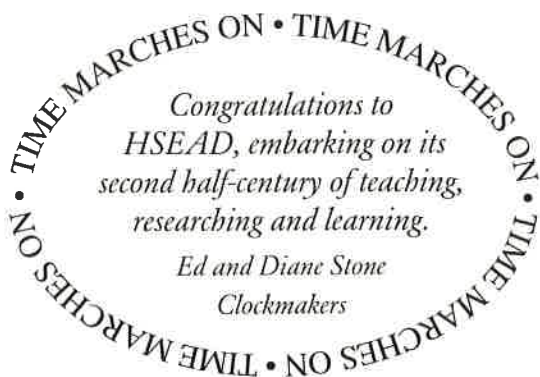
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