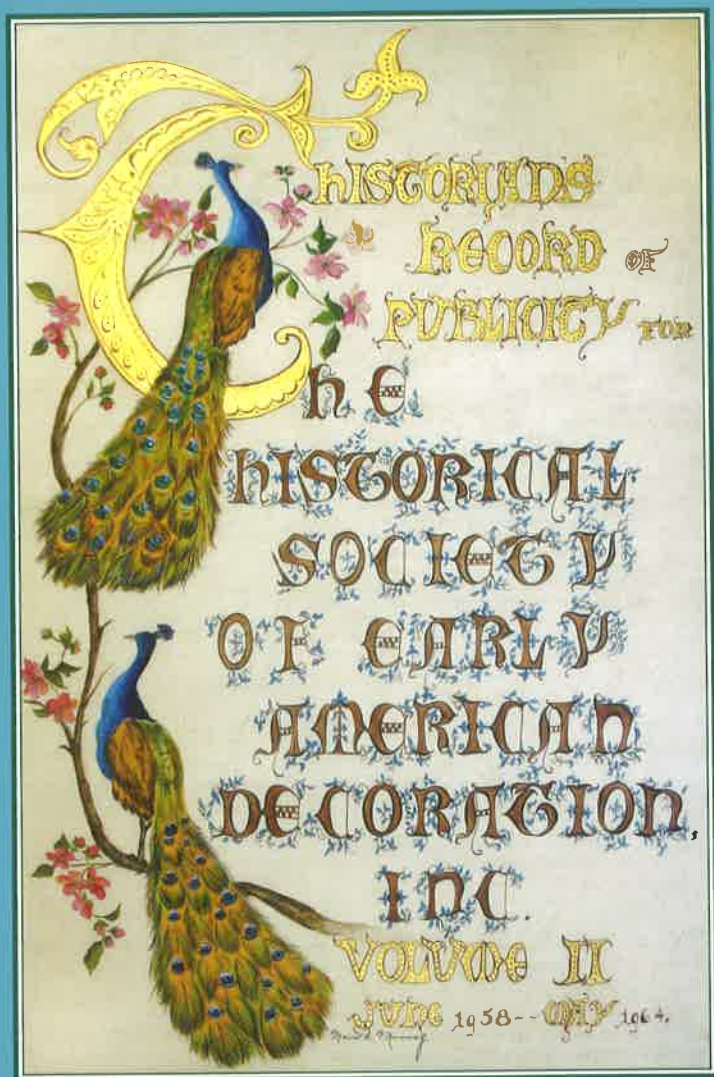


The Decorator

Fall 2012 Vol. 66 No. 2



Journal of

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc.

The Decorator

Fall 2012 Vol. 66 No. 2

Contents

Letter from the Editor	5
The Art of the Gameboard	6
<i>by Courtney Lancour</i>	
Illuminated Historical Scrapbooks of HSEAD	12
<i>by Lynne Richards</i>	
Secret Revealed.....	16
<i>by Astrid Donnellan</i>	
Members' "A" Awards	
2012 Annual Meeting, Danvers, Massachusetts	20
Members' "B" Awards	
2012 Annual Meeting, Danvers, Massachusetts	31
Book Review	34
Japanned Papier Mâché and Tinware C. 1740-1940	
<i>by Yvonne Jones</i>	
<i>Reviewed by Sandra Cohen</i>	
Decorator Sponsors	42

Front cover: Initial page of Volume II of the HSEAD Scrapbook.

Back cover: Cover of Volume II of the HSEAD Scrapbook.

Office Address:

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc.
at the Farmers' Museum

PO Box 30, Cooperstown, NY 13326

607-547-5667

Toll-free: 866-30H-SEAD

www.HSEAD.org • info@hsead.org

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration

A society with affiliated chapters 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; 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, 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.

HSEAD's Vision and Mission: HSEAD will be and will become recognized as a preeminent national authority on Early American Decoration. HSEAD will be a strong, growing organization committed to educating an increasingly diverse audience. Through the use of expanded marketing and educational outreach, HSEAD will promote the relevance of Early American Decoration's craftsmanship and design. HSEAD will provide an opportunity for future generations to gain new skills by seeing the beauty of the past through traditional and modern methods, as well as appreciating the values of preservation and authenticity.

Officers & Trustees

<i>President</i>	Valerie B. Oliver, <i>Charter Oak</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	Phyllis Fittipaldi, <i>New Jersey</i>
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	Sandra Cohen, <i>Old Colony</i>
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	Kay Hogan, <i>Strawbery Banke</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	Charlotte Read, <i>Shenandoah</i>

Dianne Freiner, *Central New York*; Karen Graves, *Nashoba Valley*; Parma Jewett, *Pioneer*;
Deborah Lambeth, *Hudson Valley*; Helen Meitzler, *William Penn*;
Maureen Morrison, *Stevens Plains*; Lucinda Perrin, *Florence Wright*

Advisory Council

Richard Berman	Thomas Bird
D. Stephen Elliott	Wendell Garret
Garet Livermore	Aari Ludvigsen
Sumpter Priddy	Frank Tetler

Editorial Staff

<i>Editor</i>	Lynne S. Richards
<i>Design & Production</i>	Lynne S. Richards & Joseph Rice
<i>Proofreader</i>	Nancy Conlan
<i>Sponsorship</i>	Lucylee Chiles
<i>Photography Chair</i>	Lynne Richards
<i>Photographer</i>	Andrew Gillis
<i>Printer</i>	Curry Printing

Published and copyright 2012 by The Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Inc. Permission must be obtained from the Editor to reprint any article or photograph from The Decorator. Printed on recycled paper.

Letter from the Editor

Our first article, "The Art of the Gameboard" was written by Courtney Lancour. Valerie Oliver first told me about this exhibit at the Rufus Porter Museum and said what a great article this would make. Courtney wrote this article with assistance from the museum's volunteer curator, Julie Lindberg, and executive director, Andrea Hawkes, Ph.D. We are grateful for all their efforts on our behalf.

For our next article I decided to write about HSEAD's scrapbooks to show what beautiful illumination work Maria Murray did back in the 1950's and 1960's. Although these books have been brought to several of our meetings, they are so fragile we could only show one or two pages. I feel that for the benefit of all the members who have been unable to come to these meetings we needed to show more of the many pages that she did.

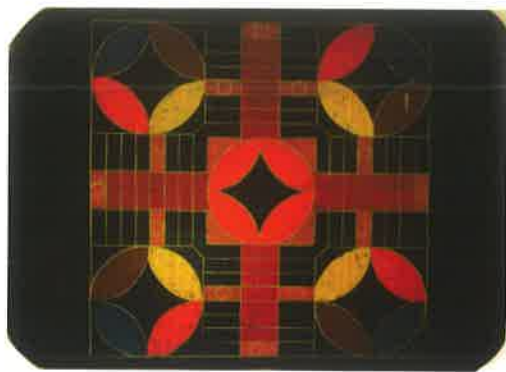
At the 2012 annual meeting in Danvers, everyone was awed by the beautiful tray submitted by Margaret Smith. Done under the auspices of Astrid Donnellan, Margaret submitted her first piece and received an "A". There were many trials and tribulations involved with this piece but in the end she got it right! Astrid Donnellan tells us the secrets of the tray.

All of our members' pieces were exquisite as you will see in the pages with the A and B awards. This time we had the Expanded Class, and several artists came through with pieces to be judged in this category. The Expanded Class, as you know from the Winter 2011/12 *Newsletter*, includes originals that do not meet the requirements of the Basic Class. For more information, please refer to the *Newsletter*, the Standards Manual, or the standards information on www.hsead.org.

In this issue Sandra Cohen reviews Yvonne Jones' anxiously awaited book on papier mâché and tinware and finds it worth the wait. It is a wonderful book with a wealth of information. Yvonne says that all that information opened up many new areas that need to be explored.

I have to thank all of you for your many ideas about new articles. Please keep them coming!!!

*Lynne Richards,
Decorator Editor*



The Art of the Gameboard

by Courtney Lancour

Colorful gameboards have long intrigued folk art collectors because of their small size, wonderful graphics, and association with fun times in the past. The Rufus Porter Museum's 2012 special exhibit "The Art of the Gameboard" featured 27 examples of 19th century decorative gameboards that captivated visitors and collectors alike. The exhibit was on display June 13 through October 13, 2012, and included a variety of decorative techniques ranging from a pearl inlay on a Parcheesi board to golden gilded horses racing around a "wheel of fortune."

Gameboards are a true example of American folk art created with a purpose in mind and not just for art's sake. However, there is nothing new about gameboards; they have been part of human culture from the earliest times. Using artifacts, drawings and writings, scholars have studied how games originated, moved and evolved throughout the world by way of trade routes and immigration.

When the first settlers arrived in America they brought the tradition and art of gameboards, handcrafted for the enjoyment of the elite and by ordinary folk for their own use. Even after the 19th century Industrial Age, folk artists continued to decorate boards for those who could not afford store-manufactured games as well as to show their skills and sense of whimsy.

While gameboards can reveal the values, beliefs, and aspirations of those who create and play them, they are also works of imaginative and skilled art, and, as such, are highly collectible. The Museum hopes its 2012 exhibit "The Art of the Gameboard" gave insight into the universal and deep-rooted tradition of playing games and perhaps encouraged budding collectors to rescue, preserve and exhibit gameboards in their own homes.

To purchase the exhibit catalog and for more information call 207-647-2828 or visit the Museum website at www.rufusportermuseum.org. The Rufus Porter Museum is located at 67 N. High Street in Bridgton, Maine and is dedicated to increasing the enjoyment, knowledge, and pride of our communities by bringing to life the world and the inspiring works of Rufus Porter - a remarkable American artist and inventor.

Parcheesi Board (previous page)

Late 19th century, 20" x 27", Wood, paint.

This stunning Parcheesi board exemplifies the combination of artistry and function. An oversized black board unifies warm tones of red, orange and yellow with cool shades of blue and purple resulting in a vibrant playing surface, prompting collector Tim Chambers to observe: "This board is extraordinary in its powerful composition and vibrant colors, which create an op art effect and evoke comparisons to modern art." Found in Albany, NY. Formerly in the Selby Shaver Collection. *Note: Parcheesi is an American adaptation of "Pachisi," a cross-and-circle game from India.*

Folding Checkerboard

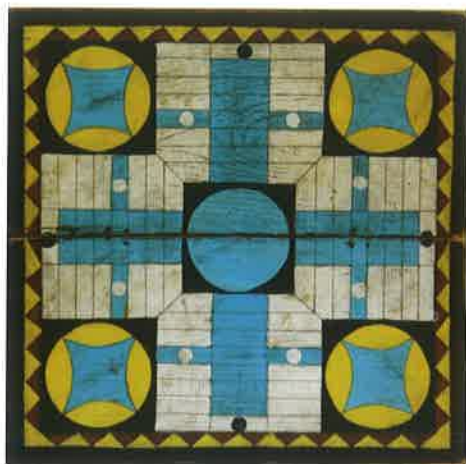
Circa 1930, 18" x 18", wood, paint, iron

This patriotic checkerboard features a flying American flag amidst a vivid red, white and blue color scheme with a matching colored backgammon board on the reverse. When this board was constructed Americans were struggling through the Great Depression and few households had extra money to spend on entertainment. As a result, families and friends would gather to play checkers, Parcheesi, and to try their hand at the newly released Monopoly and Sorry! While commercially produced board games were available in stores, it is clear from this piece that artisans continued to craft customized game boards, adding personal flair to familiar designs.



Folding Parcheesi Board

Dated 1901, 15" x 15", wood, paint, metal



A vibrant blue and white playing field, yellow and black home bases framed by red and yellow sawtooth edges and a black border make this a masterful board decoration emphasizing the geometric circles, squares and rectangular shapes that compose the playing field. Based on the board's relatively small size and the hinges that allow the board to fold in half, it is probable that this was designed to be a portable game set, entertaining players on their travels. Likely

crafted by a Pennsylvania Dutch (German) artisan, the reverse side has the date "1901" written in pencil along with "Lancaster County (PA)," "Fik Muhl" and the name "John Ullrich, Lititz."

Checkerboard (Civil War Scenes)

Circa 1870, 14.5" x 14.5", wood, paint, iron.

Sometimes the playing surface of a game board is not the most striking part of the piece. The back of this checkerboard is a work of art commemorating the Civil War. Stars in each corner and different scenes frame a central portrait of a Union Army general. A bald eagle and patriotic shield suggest victory while landscape scenes depict peace and calm.



The varnished wooden playing field on the other side echoes the corner stars surrounding the portrait. This is a defining example of its genre.



Fox and Geese

Circa 1830, 16" x 16", wood, paint, varnish, iron

An example of grained paint techniques is demonstrated on both sides of this game board, featuring "fox and geese" on one side and a checkerboard on the reverse. Appearing in Colonial households by the early 1700s, grain painting imitated the look of expensive wood. Grain painting adorned household furniture, floors, gameboards, boxes and other objects. In order to achieve the look of wood, an artist would start with a solid base coat and then apply a tinted glaze or varnish, making designs with fingers, combs and other tools while the paint was still wet.

Note: "Fox and Geese" is a game similar to checkers. The "fox" is in the middle, with the "geese" at one side. The geese try to surround the fox so that it cannot move. The fox wins if it captures enough geese to prevent this.

Marbelized Checkerboard

Circa 1930, 15" x 15", wood, paint

A marbleized green background contrasts with stark black lines framing a playing field of light and black squares, creating a style similar to the Art Deco designs of the 1920s. The directional pattern of the marbleized paint changes to simulate marble inlay.





Checker and Parcheesi Board

Circa 1840, 16"x16", wood, paint, gold leaf, iron

Gilded and painted with an interesting three-dimensional effect, the name "M.Newell" appears at the bottom of this checkerboard. Gilded scrolls in each corner highlight the playing field delineated by subtle painted black lines. Checker squares alternate between the natural wood and brightly painted gold, blue and green. The reverse is an outstanding Parcheesi design in similar decoration.



Checker and Backgammon Board (previous page)

Late 19th century, 15"x22" wood, paint

Red, black and yellow folk painted decoration completes the eye-catching display of this checkerboard. Like many boards in this exhibit, a similarly colored backgammon design is painted on the reverse so that players could use one board to play two games. A hole in the top creates a convenient storage option and a way to display this vibrant board in the home.

Rare Racehorse Gaming Wheel

Circa 1875, 25" diameter, wood, paint, gold leaf, iron.

A variation on "wheel of fortune", cartoonish images in the center of this carnival game are accented in red against a green background while the exterior circle features gilded racehorses, with numbers on the edge. Twelve of the fourteen horses named on the wheel were entered in the "Great Stallion Race for Championship of the US" held on July 15, 1874 in Mystic Park, Medford, Massachusetts. The winner was Smuggler who earned \$4,000 from a \$10,000 purse.



About the author:

Courtney Lancour recently graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Arts Management and Graphic Design. She completed her degree by receiving school credit for a marketing internship with the Rufus Porter Museum, Bridgton, Maine, during the summer of 2012.



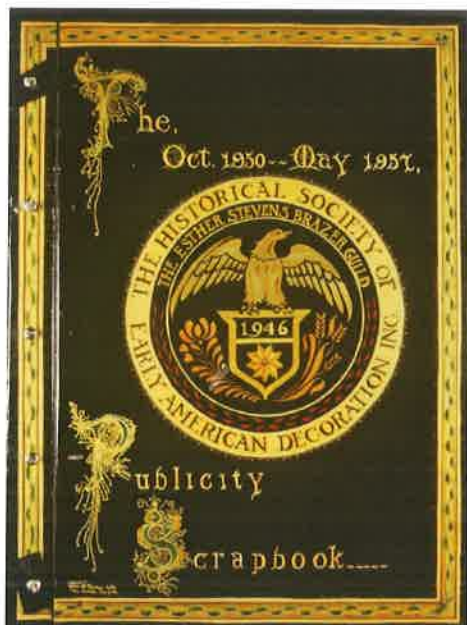
Illuminated Historical Scrapbooks of HSEAD

by *Lynne Richards*

HSEAD owns an archival treasure of its history that is rarely seen by newer members. These are scrapbooks which were compiled in order to record meeting and publicity events. In addition to recorded information, they contain many pieces of ephemera, including correspondence, meeting programs, hotel brochures and cards, tourism information booklets and more. These are occasionally displayed at meetings, but due to the increasing fragility of these books, display is not always practical.

Photographs were taken of the covers and interior artwork, and these images are used to introduce members to these books which are part of our archives. There are presently four scrapbooks; the first three cover the years 1950-1966 and were compiled and decorated by Maria Murray, our first Historian. Unfortunately, upon completion of the third volume Ms. Murray retired as Historian and the beautiful illumination was not continued into the fourth volume.

Ms. Murray, in a letter to the Guild president concerning her undertaking of this project in the early 1950's, says "since our Guild is not an ordinary one, it would not be appropriate to have an ordinary looking scrapbook." Her research on illuminated manuscripts and subsequent painstaking recording of the lettering and motifs took her well over a year prior to her illumination of the



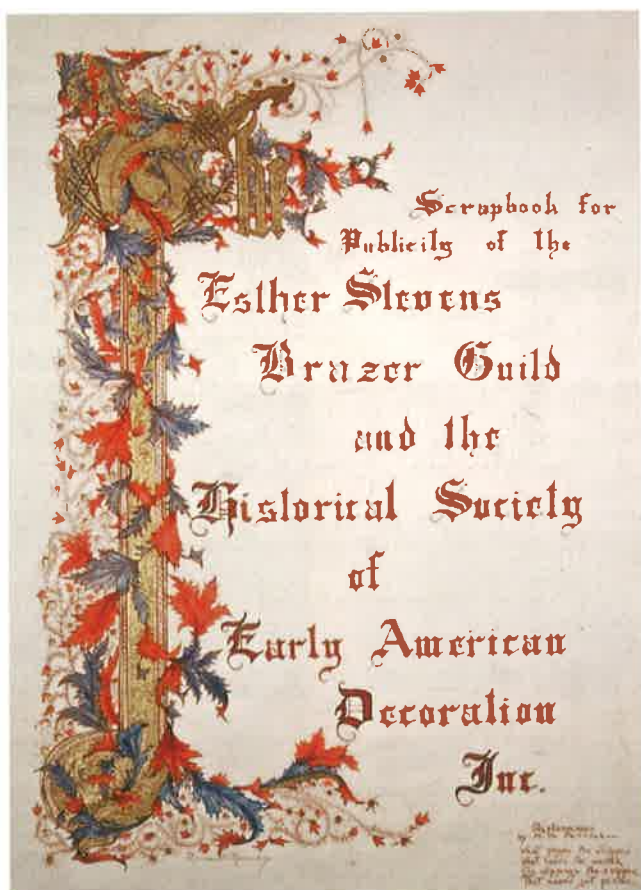
*At top: Detail from page devoted to the Cooperstown meeting of 1959;
at left: Cover of Volume I.*

first volume. These decorated pages are done in various colors of India ink, gouache, watercolor and gold leaf. Each specific style or ornamentation and lettering is attributed to its source in history.

Each of the volumes measures 19" x 14" and the covers are constructed of covered masonite and held together with album extenders allowing for infinite expansion. As in succeeding volumes, the focal point of the cover is the Seal of the Society.

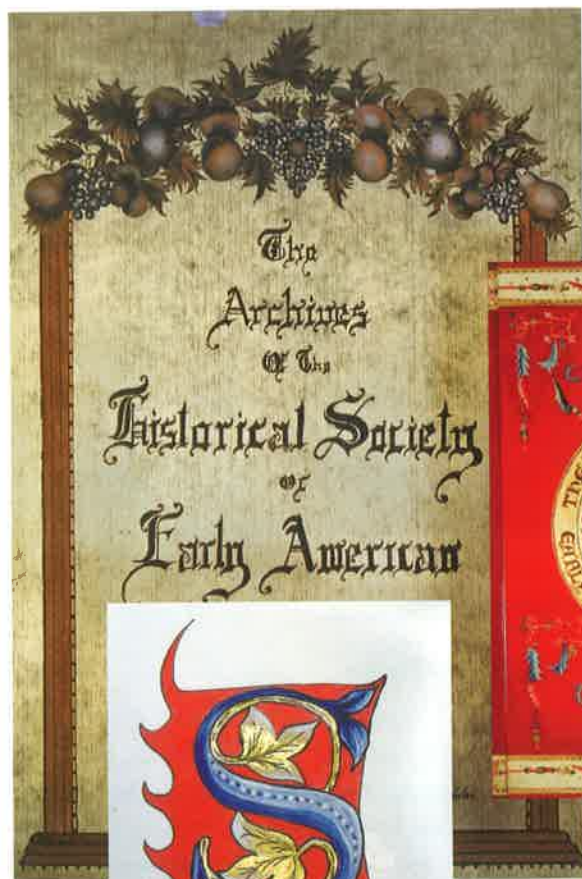
The title page of Volume I has elaborate illumination of the initial letters with swirls of red and blue leaves. In the lower right corner of the page is an appropriate poem, "Cliptomania" by M. M. Parish, which was sent to Maria Murray by Violet Scott:

*"What Pages I've stripped
What hours I've wasted,
On clippings I've snipped
That never got pasted"*





Fall 2012



At left: Title page with beautiful free-hand bronze decoration. Below: Cover of Volume II (also shown on back cover of this issue).



Bottom left: Detail of illuminated initial by Maria Murray, past Society Historian.

We are fortunate that the scrapbooks have survived for so long; however, they survived largely due to the fact that they were consulted very rarely. Now even to open pages does put a strain on them, and several of the decorated covers have come loose.

We are looking at methods of archival storage that will protect both the decorated pages, as well as the large number and variety of other materials included with them.

Since they are our “treasures,” it is important that we balance the needs for their physical survival with the desire to make the books or images of them available to all who wish to see them.

Editor’s Note: This article also contains contributions from Valerie Oliver, Joseph Rice and Sonja Bridges, HSEAD Historian.



Secret Revealed

by Astrid Donnellan

I can imagine how excited Thomas Allgood and his sons were in discovering the secret of the process of japanning sheet iron during the late 1600's in Pontypool, Wales. So one can imagine how excited my student, Margaret Smith, and I were to have worked our way through the background process of the beautiful original papier mâché tray that was on loan to us a year ago. Her reproduction was entered for judging and received an "A" award. Needless to say how pleased she was, as it was the first time she entered a piece for judging, and how thrilled I was for her. It took a long time with many discussions together on this project to work out the formula to produce this gem. Fortunately, she did keep good records of her process and offers them here for anyone wishing to try it themselves.

The sandwich edge tray used was metal, and she hand applied two coats of brown metal primer. Next, she applied two coats of flat black, sanded between coats. She sealed this base with one coat of McCloskey's Man O' War gloss varnish thinned with a little turpentine.

Before she went any further, she worked up some stenciling with tarnish-resist gold lining powder on a large sheet of black Duraglo. To this test sheet, she applied different combinations of red tinted varnish to solve two problems: first, how much color to add to the varnish to give the black undercoat a soft

At top and opposite are details from the tray decorated by Margaret Smith (full view is on page 22).

glow of color so as to eliminate the inky black background; second, to see how it would look over the gold powder stenciling. The following is what was decided: To a good amount of clear varnish, she added a small amount of One Shot Maroon enamel and a touch of One Shot Fire Red. These were mixed carefully and tested on Duraglo to see if it added a blush of color to the black background while remaining thin enough to add a blush over the gold stenciling without obscuring it. Once this was satisfactory, she proceeded to apply this mixture to the black surface of the tray. Because red is a color that bleeds, she sealed this coat with clear gloss varnish.

While this clear gloss varnish was setting up for stenciling, she assembled her positive stencil units and when the tack was ready, she used the tarnish resistant gold powder to apply the negative stencils, completing all the under stenciling. When dry, and after waiting a few days, she wiped the excess powder from the surface of the tray with an unscented Swiffer brand cleaning cloth. She then sealed this work with a coat of gloss varnish.



After a few days wait a light sanding followed. She then mixed one cup of water and the white of an egg in a covered jar, shook to mix, then applied all over the tray surface with a large wad of cotton to create a barrier in preparation for the gold leaf work. This egg white recipe is a medieval recipe, called glair, and was used by early gilders to prevent gold leaf from permanently attaching itself to places it is not wanted.

When the egg surface was dry, the gold leaf design was transferred from the tracing and work begun to paint on the size. She used gold size that was tinted with a little yellow One Shot. When the size reached the “almost dry to the touch” stage, lemon gold leaf was laid from a sheet of wax paper. Etching was done immediately if there was any to do. This work was continued around the tray using the vermiculation pen as well as fine liner brushes for some line work.

This work was allowed to sit for a few days before the egg white mixture was washed off with cool tap water and a large wad of cotton. After the tray was dried thoroughly it was sealed with a coat of gloss varnish. To this coat of varnish she applied her positive stencils that required bronzed stump work, again using tarnish resistant gold powder. When the tray was allowed to dry,

the bronzed band was painted on using pale gold powder. Two coats of gloss varnish were applied for final coverage, then hand polishing with pumice and water for the first rub. After letting this harden a few days, she switched to rottenstone and oil for a final rub to bring up the sheen.

Something that members might not be aware of is that Margaret painted this tray twice. The first one was done a year ago using ordinary rich gold lining powder, and within six months all the under stenciling had disappeared and the beautiful red tinted varnish had turned to a liver color. She insisted we get to the problem and try to understand what went wrong. This resulted in making changes in the tinting of the varnish red coats and switching to tarnish resistant gold powder; – a dedicated member for sure!

It is such a pleasure to share this process with the members and I thank my student Margaret Smith, for keeping such good notes. I want to thank the following members for their input when problems arose. Elaine Dalzell, for reminding us to use tarnish resistant gold lining powder (available from Dolores Furnari); Carolyn Hedge, who shared her technique using the Swiffer brand cloth to clear up loose powders; the son of deceased HSEAD member Jane Cote, for the loan of the tray. Altogether a good team dedicated in the art of our beloved Guild.



The papier mâché original owned by the late Jane Cote was used as the source for reproducing this design.



Step 1: Stencil the first layer with non-tarnishing gold lining powder over black base coat.



Step 2: Varnish tinted with One Shot is applied over the first layer of stenciling.



Step 3: Second layer of stenciling is applied, over the tinted varnish coat.



Step 4: Gold leaf elements applied over the completed stenciling.

Digital images by Joseph Rice

Members' "A" Awards
2012 Annual Meeting, Danvers, Massachusetts



Free Hand Bronze - *Lois Tucker*



Pontypool
(Honors Class)
Astrid Donnellan

Pontypool
(Honors Class)
Astrid Donnellan





Country Painting
Polly Bartow

**Country Painting
(Expanded Class)**
Lois Tucker

*Country painting is not typically found
on a pierced edge tray.*



**Country Painting
(Expanded Class)**
Linda Mason

Original does not have a stripe.

**Country Painting
(Expanded Class)**
Parma Jewett

*Original has insufficient base
coats for judging in Basic Class.*





Metal Leaf - *Margaret Smith*



Stenciling on Glass (Honors Class)
Carolyn Hedge



Pontypool (Honors Class) - Astrid Donnellan



Free Hand Bronze (Honors Class) - Roberta Edrington



Pontypool (Honors Class) - Astrid Donnellan



Theorem (Watercolor) - *Mary Avery*



Pontypool (Honors Class) - *Astrid Donnellan*



**Country Painting
(Expanded Class)**

Roberta Edrington

*Original does not have a
brush-stroke border.*



Pontypool - Astrid Donnellan



Penwork
Polly Bartow



Pontypool
Astrid Donnellan



**Victorian Flower
Painting**
Dortia Davis



Penwork
Lois Tucker



**Pontypool
(Honors Class)**
Astrid Donnellan



Penwork
Nancy Corcoran



**Reverse Painting on Glass
(Expanded Class)**

Pat Meitzler

*Asian Reverse Glass Painting uses a different technique
than American Reverse Glass Painting.*



Theorem (Oil) - *Parma Jeweett*



Theorem (Oil) - *Pamela Benoit*



Theorem (Oil) - *Joanne Balfour*



Reverse Painting on Glass
Anne Dimock

Members' "B" Awards
2012 Annual Meeting, Danvers, Massachusetts

Country Painting
Polly Bartow



Country Painting
Debra Fitts



Stenciling on Tin - Laura Bullitt



Free Hand Bronze (Honors Class) - Roberta Edrington



Metal Leaf (Expanded Class) - Astrid Donnellan

Original has insufficient large and small units for judging in Basic Class.



Victorian Flower Painting (Expanded Class) - Astrid Donnellan

Original does not have larger units for judging in Basic Class.



Reverse Painting on Glass - *Betty Nans*



Reverse Painting on Glass - *Anne Dimock*



Reverse Painting on Glass - *Betty Nans*



Book Review

Japanned Papier Mâché and Tinware C. 1740-1940

by Yvonne Jones

Published by Antiques Collectors' Club Ltd., 2012, Hard Cover, 335 pages, heavily illustrated with hundreds of color plates.

Reviewed by Sandra Cohen

In 1982, Yvonne Jones wrote the text for an exhibition catalogue of Georgian and Victorian Japanned Ware of the West Midlands displayed at the Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Museums. That 4" x 8" paperback's cover depicts the 1851 Exhibition Stand of Messrs. Jennens & Bettridge, taken from a lithograph from *Dickinsons' Comprehensive Pictures of the Great Exhibition of 1851*. Her forty-four page introduction to papier mâché and tinware and the documentation of the Exhibition's works gave us a preview of Jones' expertise and scholarly research into these decorative arts. Yvonne Jones, a member of the Society, is also a regular contributor to *The Decorator* of her research into papier mâché. Thirty years later and after much more research, she has chronicled a thoroughly comprehensive survey of these decorative arts in *Japanned Papier Mâché and Tinware C. 1740-1940*.

The history of papier mâché spans from ancient Egypt and later to China, India and Japan in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries where the production of decorative lacquer ware flourished. Known as "Oriental" lacquer ware, it made its debut in Europe in the early 16th century by Portuguese and Dutch merchants; early 17th century trade with India, China and Japan was formerly

Top: A sandwich-edge, papier mâché teaboard by Henry Clay, ca. 1810.

established through the English East India Company. The sailing vessel *Clove* returned in 1611 with “lacquered Scritoires, Trunkes, Beoubes [screens], Cupps and dishes of all sortes and of a most excellent varnish” filling the market with extravagantly designed wares, “richly decorated in gold and color on black.” Japan lacquer ware was superior, and all lacquer was to be referred to as Japan ware regardless of its origin.

With trade to the “Orient” suspended until 1854, John Stalker and other artisans visited Japan to learn about the materials and techniques that might enable them to reproduce these wares with patterns more appealing to European taste. Efforts to import (toxic) substances indigenous to Japan and used in making these lacquered items failed, but “Indian seed lac and shellac” were non-toxic, could survive the transport and inspired the recipe for early Western lacquer-substitutes. *A Treatise of Japanning and Varnishing*, 1688 by John Stalker and George Parker recommended materials and techniques for acquiring “as good, as glossy and beautiful a Black as was ever wrought by an English hand.”



*Tin waiter with asphaltum over gold leaf,
ca. 1850-60.*

However, durability was a problem and efforts to remedy this were addressed at the Major John Hanbury's Pontypool Ironworks in South Wales. Here, Wilhelm Kick developed a varnishing method for tin, and Thomas Allgood and his son Edward formulated a recipe for varnish, mainly asphaltum and linseed oil heated with other ingredients. After applying this “sticky tar-like varnish” to metal it was slowly baked in a stove. “It was this ‘stoving’ that gave japanned ware its characteristic luster and strength of surface,” and allowed it to accommodate painted decoration.

In the early 1730's, the Pontypool Japan Works began producing ornamented tinware for domestic use, from trays to teapots, much more affordable for a larger market than the expensive silver tea sets and Chinese porcelain imports. In 1740, an awareness of these wares caught the attention of John Taylor of Birmingham, “a leading enameller and gilt button-maker,” who included “japanned tin snuff boxes” in his array of wares, launching the production of decorated tinware in the Midlands.

The Japanning industry took hold in the Midlands, specifically Birmingham, Wolverton and Bilston. Their proximity to waterways and the newly

built canals, connecting them to major cities and ports, made them geographically conducive to trade. In addition, constructing land routes facilitated travel between countries. As well, a growing wealthy and entrepreneurial population promised potential commercial opportunities and a larger market for goods. Refining the recipe for varnishing/japanning would also lead to its use on other materials including and especially papier mâché.

Jones expounds on this fascinating account by considering three main branches – tinplate working, papier mâché production and japanning – separately in their historical contexts. The chapter entitled, “Enter the Dragon,” addresses tinplate working and the japanning trade. Terms are defined; tinned metal results when various metal objects are dipped in molten tin. Tinplate results by coating sheet metal with a thin coat of tin, thus rust-proofing it prior to shaping it into various objects (routinely referred to as tinware) prior to japanning. The cutting, hammering, etc. were time and labor intensive steps, and although these continued to be done by hand, others were eventually duplicated by machines. At the 1867



Paris Exhibition, “an American firm exhibited a pressure press capable of stamping, in one operation, a bowl 3½” (9 cm) deep where 1,000 articles could be produced in less time than 60 by the old method.” However, by the mid 19th century (coincidentally, the time of this Exhibition) the tinware manufacturing industry had waned.



Interestingly, paper making and lacquer ware dates from the 2nd century b.c. in China where the sap from the ‘lacquer tree’ (rhus vemiciflua, the Chinese lacquer tree,

Top: Examples of objects shown by Jennens & Bettridge at the Great Exhibition.

Left: Chair with steam-moulded motifs on apron and legs. Bettridge & Co., Birmingham, ca. 1865.

a source of a sap used as a durable lacquer) was used to coat various items. However, it wasn't until the 12th century that papier mâché reached Europe, and the location of the first paper mills appear in the late 15th century in France. Ironically, French dictionaries, as late as the 18th century, did not recognize the term and attributed the term, papier mâché, to England and Dossie's first edition of *The Handmaid to the Arts* (1758). It's believed that the mistaken derivation resulted from miscommunication between French émigré workers and English employers as well as the literal translation of the term, "chewed paper" and the image from a book referencing "two old French women who came over here to chew paper for the papier mâché people." However, following the sophistication and high style associated with French imports, the term was finally adopted to describe japanned objects from small decorative pieces to furniture made from layered/pulped paper.

"A Lion of the District," the chapter on papier mâché and the japanning trade, introduces us to Robert Boyle, who in the late 17th century, discusses the manufacture in England of papier mâché and its "common uses ... frames for pictures, fine embossed work and other parts of furniture." By the mid 18th century, Jones persuasively suggests, the manufacture of papier mâché may have been introduced in Birmingham, England by Stephan Bedford (not Henry Clay) its leading japanner and attributes Henry Clay for its strong commercial foundation. The manufacture and market for papier mâché thrived. Moulds were made of hardwood, and the basic material, paper, was ubiquitous, relatively inexpensive, easily malleable and lent itself to japanning; where japanning on tinware may flake from "battering," on the papier mâché item, "the japan forms as part of its substance."

In 1771, Henry Clay describes his process and specifications, "Papier Mâché Made by the Best Method." Clay along with Jennens and Bettridge, were among the best japanners in the Midlands. Like the French, Jennens and Bettridge maintained that they only used linen not rags. We learn that the various "materials" and their costs and preparations vary. Jones is fastidious about details, carefully acknowledging the number of people who were



Slate-topped table with wood and papier mâché base. Ca. 1845.

instrumental in the production of papier mâché. Holloware, from vases to baluster-shaped supports for tables, tea caddies, card cases and furniture made from papier mâché are profusely illustrated.

This innovative use of paper was fascinating to many in an age of scientific curiosity; it was permeable (successfully conducive to japanning), malleable, (accommodating any shape without requiring any joinery, and as strong as wood without the nuisance of grains, warping, splitting, etc.), thus making it superior to metal and wood.



Japanned copper coffee pot with tortoiseshell ground and gilt decoration, Pontypool, ca. 1760-70.

Creating works of beauty and art are illustrated in the chapter on “Japanning and Decorating.” Here Jones surveys the process of preparing pieces for decorating and discloses varnish recipes, stoving (the crucial baking process), techniques and bases other than black such as tortoise shell, colors, pearl, marbled and crystallized grounds on tinware. Decorative potting and china ware painters added papier mâché and tinware to their repertoire. Many eighteenth century decorative painters received no institutional training. Some apprenticed part-time, some were sponsored in private academies and others, like Henry Clay, apprenticed to easel painters. Jones introduces us to some of the artists, the factories, shops and locations along with a stunning array of decorated tinware and papier mâché.

In its heyday, many artists mixed their own pigments although the availability of prepared colors was increasing. Late nineteenth century tray painter, George Wallis, lamented those early times when artists “knew exactly what they were using [which] is more than can be said of nine-tenths of the painters nowadays.”

Still life, scenic, landscape and original designs were painted by master artists providing a pattern for apprentices and copyists. Interspersed throughout the text are excerpts from various sources that give this treatise a personal and realistic tone capturing the readers’ attention. In this chapter, Jones reveals the relationship between the apprentice and the master, often in their own words as well as public and professional critical commentary, both favorable and derogatory. The pages are filled with colorful works displaying a variety

of trays, containers, furniture, gothic-shaped hand-screens, tea caddies and so much more. Great rooms in English manors with all their accoutrements, exotic landscapes and ornately painted metal leaf designs compliment a text filled with primary references and supplementary passages that corroborate and enhance the research throughout this unique opus on Japanned papier mâché and tinware.

England was the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution and as history tells us, the initial physical transition in the manufacturing trades was, as stated in her chapter title, "Not a Bed of Roses." Quoting from George Dickinson, *English Papier Mâché*, 1925: "Apprenticeship in the japanning and papier mâché trade was not a bed of roses, and one gasps with astonishment at what the boys were expected and required to do." Here Jones addresses 'Workshops, Factories and Labour' and references a number of sources remarking on different aspects of the trade. The growth of factories, new production methods, apprenticeships, a growing group of artisans and a thriving carriage trade created a prosperous and exciting scene on one side, and "the shift from small workshop to factory, the replacement of people with machines and the concomitant rise in industrial hazards" that led to necessary legislation and strict supervision.

The rise of unions, inequality between men and women in the labor force and continued concern for work conditions in the factory in England had its genesis with the Industrial Revolution and testimonies from this time seem all too familiar. By 1864 efforts to improve working conditions such as ventilation, safety and other issues made the environment slowly but progressively bearable. However, other issues were having a deleterious effect on the japanning industry in the Midlands.

Increasing production and competition resulted in the proliferation of more "elaborate showpieces" that "began to attract undue public attention... and became fashionable both here and abroad." Papier mâché production catered to the smaller affluent local and international market with elaborately decorated works. It was perceived to be more profitable "to produce gaudy and meretricious decoration to the neglect of better and more studied work." Compromises in quality, a shift in consumer taste, an interest in imports from Japan, a switch from paper to Swedish wood-pulp, (facilitating the manufacture of smaller inexpensive decorated items) and the duty-free import of German decorated papier mâché exacerbated the vulnerability of the japanning industry in the Midlands. Another major factor contributing to the decline was the instability of American financial markets, the outbreak of the American Civil War and the Morrill Tariff prohibiting all 'external' trade. Different contributing factors resulted in the reversal of fortune in the production of tinware. Although Wolverhampton experienced a surge in production between 1849-1862, (tinware pieces were more utilitarian and had a larger market) the development of the electroplating industry (a finish resembling real silver) and a depression

in the iron trade took its toll. The decline of the japanning industry in the Midlands was a “source of bitter regret” to the talented decorative japanners.

The decorative painters of Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Bilston, London and Oxford are generously represented in four chapters, covering them in chronological order. The biological profiles are informative and satisfying with a plethora of information about these japanners now available in one source due to the in-depth research by Jones.

Accompanying his background sketch is the single surviving pierced edge tin tray by Stephan Bedford (1755-1773) signed ‘BEDFORD’ and ‘BHAM’ (Birmingham). A painted portrait of Henry Clay (1738-1812) is complemented with several pages of lengthy attributes and numerous illustrations of his works. It was said that Clay was to papier mâché what Josiah Wedgwood was to ceramics.

Many of the japanners were apprenticed to artists, and their work reflects still life and landscapes and scenes from mythology painted on walls, tables, cabinets, tea caddies and chairs as well as decorative pieces and trays. Many ornately embellished works are stamped JENNENS & BETTRIDGE. Documented works fill these pages.



The B. Walton & Co (1841-1847) Sandwich Edge trays and Henry Loveridge & Co. (1840-1947) octagon tray will look more familiar; they were ubiquitous shapes and reflect restraint in their design as compared to some of the more extraordinary shapes with their extravagant ornamentation.

Jones chapter on “Products,” is as comprehensive as possible given the space and ongoing change in products and materials. It is more than sufficient to convey that almost

Tin tray with pierced edge, made by Stephan Bedford of Birmingham, ca. 1765.

anything could be made from papier mâché and the reader will appreciate the condition and beautiful array of examples depicted in large color plates allowing the nuances of form and painted details to be assessed and appreciated by both the professional collector, practitioner as well as the ingénue.

Jones concludes with a chapter on “Other Western Japanning Centres” that include Great Britain, France (tole peinte), Germany, Russia (Zhostovo Trays), Holland and in America where around 1740 tinsmiths of Connecticut began



*Sandwich-edge papier-mâché visiting-card tray
ca. 1840-1850.*

“importing their tinplate from Pontypool ... and towards the end of the 18th century... [became] familiar with the practice of decorating domestic tinware.” The industry became competitive as it spread through Maine, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia with particular designs and patterns becoming attributable to the various regions and shops.

A member of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Jones recognizes the Society and its mentor Esther Stevens Brazer, a descendent of Zachariah Stevens, a tinsmith of Stevens Plains, Maine. Brazer was a researcher, teacher and author of *Early American Decoration* and profoundly instrumental in perpetuating an understanding and appreciation of painted decorative objects (painted papier mâché among them) and furnishings that were found in the homes of American settlers. The Society’s members record and preserve historically authentic painted decoration and several reproductions of originals by the Society’s Master Craftsmen are pictured.

Jones generously provides sections on Notes for the Collector, a Directory of Known Artists and Decorators, a Glossary of Terms, A Select Bibliography in addition to those that are listed in References. There is a lengthy list of information that includes additional books, articles, treatises, etc. that are noted as they are mentioned in each chapter. Last but not least is the Index.

Jones’ scholarly publication, *Japanned Papier Mâché and Tinware c. 1740-1940*, is a comprehensive and unique treatise on this subject. Hundreds of color plates provide a visual feast of this genre. This is a valuable resource for art historians as well as those who appreciate the beauty of this art and enjoy learning about it in an historical context.



Decorator Sponsors

With deep appreciation the following individuals and organizations are recognized for their fine goods and services, and for their generous support of the activities and mission of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration.

❧ HSEAD Member Sponsors ❧

Spring Green Studio (Ann Eckert Brown)

Author of *American Painted Floors before 1840* and
American Wall Stenciling

500 Spring Green Road, Warwick, RI 02888
greenshold@aol.com, 401-463-8321

Legacy Books (Sandra Cohen)

A source for out-of-print or rare books, specializing in early American decorative arts and related topics as well as other books from the arts to the sciences.

32 Maplecrest Drive, Southborough, MA 01772
legacy@earlyamerican.net, 508-485-4458

Handcrafted Turtle-Back Bellows (Ken Grimes)

Authentic reproductions, suitable for decoration;
bellows restoration and re-leathering.

16 Gay Road, Brookfield, MA 01506
kens.bellows@gmail.com 508.867.8120

Business Sponsors

Early American Life

A magazine dedicated to Early American style, decoration and traditions
16759 West Park Circle Drive, Chagrin Falls, OH 44023
www.ealonline.com, 717-362-9167

Liberty on Hudson

Specialty finishing products including black japanning asphaltum.
56 Second Street, Athens, NY 12015
www.libertyonthehudson.com
info@libertyonthehudson.com; 518-945-3880

Westlake Conservators Ltd.

Dedicated to providing the highest level of skilled care for the conservation of paintings, frames, murals, textiles, paper and photographic materials.
PO Box 45, Skaneateles, NY 13152
www.westlakeconservators.com
us@westlakeconservators.com, 315-685-8534

HSEAD RESEARCH CENTER AT OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE



The HSEAD Research Center is located in the David Wight House, on the OSV campus. Our space in this 18th century building is home to the HSEAD collection of Patterns and Research, as well as displays of EAD and HSEAD history.

The building's interior is now a showcase of EAD disciplines, where HSEAD can host both public and membership events.

Thank you to all who visited, taught, demonstrated and supported the HSEAD Research Center during 2012.

**Information about HSEAD Research Center classes,
displays and events on www.hsead.org**

Historical Society of Early American Decoration

Products and Publications



Instructional Videos:

Videos include pattern(s), materials/supply list, color data and instructions by “Masters” of the craft. Like having a teacher at your side, these videos allow you to learn or refresh your EAD skills.

Country Painting (VHS tape)	\$25
Bronze Powder Stenciling (DVD)	\$40
Freehand Bronze (DVD)	\$40
Clock Dials (DVD)	\$40
Theorems (DVD)	\$40
Gold Leaf (<i>New!</i>)	\$40

Coming soon: Reverse Glass Painting

Books

American Painted Tinware:

A Guide to Its Identification (Vol. I, II, III, IV), *hard cover*

This handsome, hard cover, four volume set is the only authoritative and comprehensive source on American painted tinware. A rich historical text, along with hundreds of full color photographs of original pieces and line illustrations of motifs and patterns, will allow you to visually identify the products of these regional tin shops.

\$55 each volume (plus S&H)

A list of HSEAD publications and supplies is available on the website or from the office in Cooperstown.



866 -304-7323 • info@hsead.org • www.hsead.org



Patterns and Supplies

Six stenciling and six country painting patterns are available and are appropriate for applicants. See images on HSEAD.org.

Country Painting on Tinware	\$25
Stenciling on Tinware	\$25

Theorem Kit: Includes tracing, laser cuts, color picture and instructions. Contact Office for price and information

Schnader Chair Patterns

Freehand Bronze & Painted Chair Patterns: (Include 8" X 12" digital color photo & tracing) \$12; Color Catalog of patterns: \$25



Trays:

Steel, 13.5" X 18.25" (Appropriate size for Applicant stenciled patterns)
~~\$12~~ reduced to **\$8** (plus shipping and handling)

Gifts and Accessories

Scarves:

36" square silk twill

Theorem Pattern Scarf	\$50
Tray Pattern Scarf	\$55



HSEAD Charms

(Available to HSEAD members only)

Gold Plated, Gold Filled,
 Sterling Silver, Rhodium,
 14 K Gold

Prices Available Upon Request

Visit the HSEAD Store on www.HSEAD.org



For additional information and catalogue contact:

HSEAD at the Farmers' Museum
PO Box 30, Cooperstown NY 13326

www.hsead.org

866 -304-7323 • info@hsead.org • www.hsead.org

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration

Publications Available

The Decorator (back issues, if available):

Vol. 1 - 46 (per copy)	\$7.50
Vol. 47 - 58	\$9.00
Vol. 59 - present issue (per copy)	\$15.00
Bibliography of early American decoration	\$6.00

(Prices include postage and handling)

The Decorator is published twice a year by

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration.

Subscription rate is \$25.00 for two issues (add \$3 per year for Canada).

Make check payable to HSEAD, Inc., and mail to:

HSEAD, at the Farmers' Museum,

PO Box 30, Cooperstown, NY 13326

Toll-free: 866-30H-SEAD (607-547-5667)

info@hsead.org



Membership Dues/Categories

Guild Members	\$40
Family Members (Spouses)	\$10
Applicant Members	\$40
Associate Members	\$40

Make check payable to HSEAD, Inc., and mail to above address.



Future Meetings

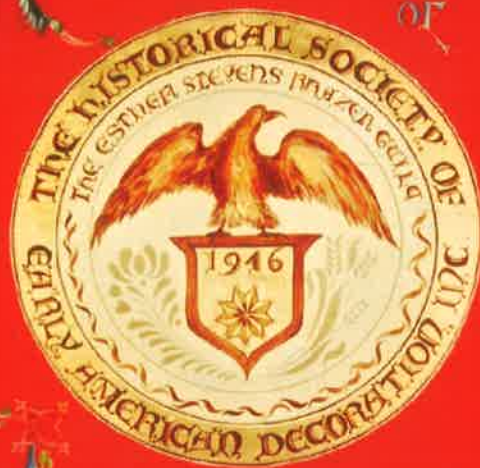
Spring 2013: Albany, NY - May 3-5 (*Friday - Sunday*)

Fall 2013: Rutland, VT- September 19-22 (*Thursday - Sunday*)

JUNE 1897

RECORDS

OF



PUBLICITY

VOLUME II