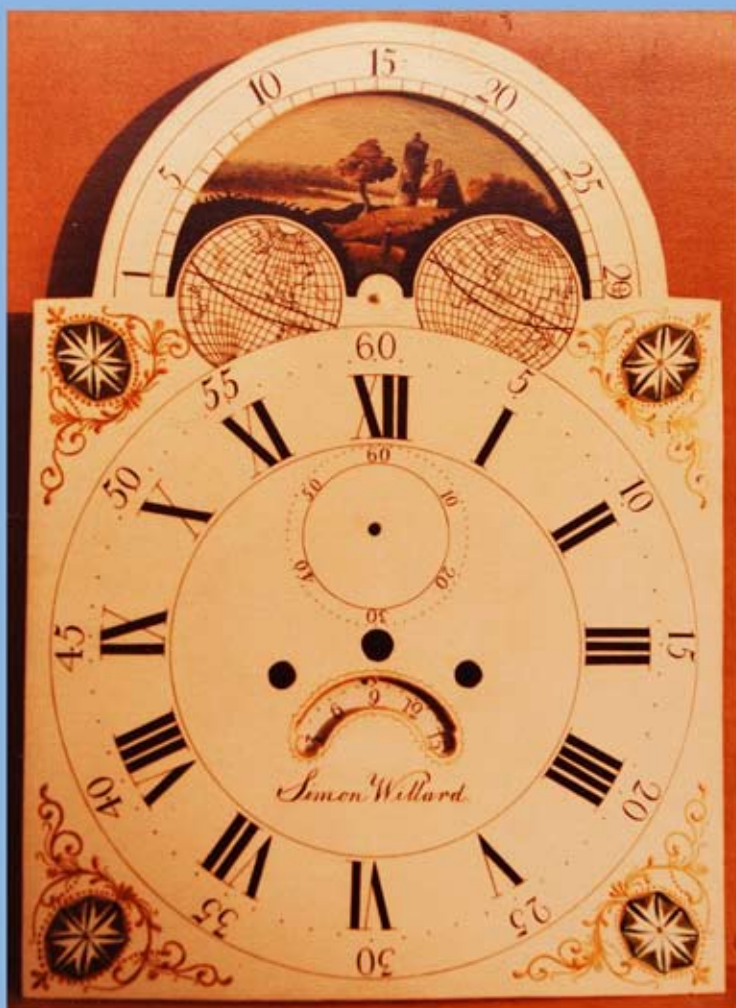


The
Decorator

*Journal of The Historical Society
of Early American Decoration*



Fall 2023 Vol. 79



The Historical Society of Early American Decoration

A Society with affiliated chapters was 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; promote continued research in that field; record and preserve examples of early American decoration; maintain exhibits and publish works on the subject of early American decoration and its history to further the appreciation of this art and the elevation of the standards of its reproduction and utilization; assist in public and private efforts in locating and preserving material pertinent to the Society's work and to cooperate with other societies in the accomplishment of purposes of mutual concern.

Vision: The Historical Society of Early American Decoration (HSEAD) perpetuates and expands the unique skills and knowledge of early American decoration.

Mission: HSEAD will develop new ways of growing and sharing its art and expertise, of expanding its membership and collaborative relationships and of awakening appreciation of early American decoration among new audiences.

Officers

President.....	Jeffrey Sheldon
Vice President	Pauline Bartow
Recording Secretary	Christine Gahagan
Corresponding Secretary	Debra Fitts
Treasurer	James Brubaker

Trustees

Jan. 2017 - Dec. 2025	Jan. 2018 - Dec. 2023	Jan. 2019 - Dec. 2025
Pauline Bartow - Debra Fitts	Shirley Hanley	Jeffrey Sheldon
Jan. 2019 - Dec. 2024	Jan. 2021 - Dec. 2023	
James Brubaker	Christine Gahagan – Paula Humber – Linda Mason	
Jan. 2022 – Dec. 2024	Jan. 2023 - Dec. 2025	
Martha Dolan - Patricia Olson	Parma Jewett	

Editorial Staff

Editor.....	Sandra Cohen
Assistant Editor	Valerie B. Oliver
Awards Photographer	Andrew Gillis
Layout and Printer.....	AlphaGraphics

Cover: A complete restoration of an original clock dial by Astrid Donnellan. Original possibly decorated by John Ritto Penniman, ornamental painter, known for his scenics, portraits and battle scenes.

Published 2023 and copyright by The Historical Society of Early American Decoration. Permission must be obtained from the Editor to reprint any article or photograph from *The Decorator*.

The Decorator

Fall 2023

Table of Contents

Editor's Letter	6
<i>Sandra Cohen</i>	
Ornamental Painting on Clock Dials and Glass: Select Examples From the Willard House and Clock Museum Collection.....	7
<i>Robert Cheney</i>	
Revolutionary Appearances: Female Portraiture and Its Evolution Around the American Revolution	26
<i>William Strollo</i>	
A Miniature Furniture Maker's Discovery: Antique Furniture's Construction Oddities	39
<i>James Hastrich</i>	
Book Shelf <i>Pleasing Truths: Power and Portraits in The American Home</i>	50
<i>Review by Sandra Cohen</i>	
HSEAD Archives and Research Center and Future Meetings	56
HSEAD Committee Chairs	63

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration
26 North College Street
Schenectady, New York 12305
(518) 372-2220 www.HSEAD.org info@hsead.org

Editor's Letter

I hope you all enjoyed the Spring issue of *The Decorator*, especially those of you who were unable to attend our Annual Membership Meeting in the Spring and this year's 77th Birthday. Recapturing the highlights reminded those of us in attendance how important our efforts have been and continue to be. Slow but steady replied the tortoise to the hare...

This Fall issue of *The Decorator* presents articles from two museum curators, Robert Chaney and William Strollo and an article from a master of the art of authentic reproduction, James Hastrich. Museums and libraries, a wealthy repository of the world's material and intellectual culture, are a gift to everyone interested in civilization's contribution to future generations. Esther Stevens Brazer referred to America's antiques as our "precious inheritance," reminders of our country's early arts and crafts and the personal context that is a rich and meaningful part of their history.

Robert Chaney, Director of the Simon Willard House and Clock Museum in No. Grafton, Mass, preserves the story of Simon and Aaron Willard's home, now the Museum of their handsome handiwork. The Museum houses the largest collection of authentic Willard Clocks. These impressive time pieces reflect the ingenuity of time-keeping along with the craftsmen's attention to housing the technology in attractive cases, some tall case clocks have a robust or curved case, some are slim waisted and all capped with various scrolled bonnets. They sit on mantels, hang on walls or sit on shelves. The variety of painted faces, reverse glass painting and gold leaf embellishments make them a welcome and attractive furnishing, their whispered ticking, a home's heartbeat. Chaney began his own education in the science and manufacture of clocks as a young boy in his father's shop, the traditional apprenticing approach of most fine craftsmen. As Director, Chaney shares his knowledge of these beautiful Willard timepieces and demonstrates to the Museum's visitors his expertise about the historical technical aspects of clock making and its relevance in a growing industrial country. His article documents the ornamental painters of the Museum's clock dials, and his illustrations speak to their timeless beauty.

James Hastrich has been making authentic early American (c.1680-1860) painted miniature furniture since 1979. He states that every aspect of his pieces is historically accurate. His construction em-

employs the traditional methods from square nails, mortise and tenon joints, wooden pegs and hand-cut dovetails. Fancy painted decoration enhances his reproductions using a putty or vinegar or smoked graining as well as painted designs accurately appropriate for his pieces. Like Esther Stevens Brazer, he values the importance of first-hand research and building on discoveries. Their nuances and stories contribute to the body of expertise in those areas of study. Hastrich's body of research is complemented with his handsome authentic reproductions, and his detailed descriptions are a gift to members of the Society's decorative painters.

William Strollo's article, "Revolutionary Appearances: Female Portraiture and Its Evolution Around the American Revolution," compares and contrasts the depiction of women in portraits, and it demonstrates the not-so-subtle ways that a women's primary responsibility was symbolically conveyed and how it gradually evolved between the 18th and 19th Centuries. A women's primary role, responsibility and value were to bear children. Strollo's generous selection of portraits detail paintings of women and their relationship with their children, and how it evolved over time. He identifies the accessories that historically symbolized fertility and femininity and their ubiquitous use by numerous artists. His article invites and teaches your eye to explore these portraits and read the abundance of information deliberately and stunningly presented on the canvas.

Pleasing Truths: Power and Portraits in The American Home, the catalogue of the exhibit currently on display at the Daughters of The American Revolution (DAR) Museum in Washington, D.C., is an informative and visually compelling presentation of 18th and 19th Century portraiture. Concise in its selection, the subjects, symbols, social and cultural traditions are handsomely illustrated in each portrait. The introductory texts provide an historical context, compel us to closely consider every intentional aspect of the painting. The sitters' expressions, clothing and accessories draw us into their time and roles in society. The catalogue and its essays would be an important addition to your library on portraiture, a meaningful primer to fully appreciate early portraits and their stories. The quality of the catalogue's paper illustrates the paintings beautifully, and you will enjoy viewing them, especially if you are interested in portraiture or if you were unable to attend the Exhibit.

To all of our members, I welcome your suggestions and feedback. America's early multicultural population encompasses a variety of

painted ornamentation. Researching, highlighting and preserving these handsomely decorated antiques are the Society's ongoing legacy. The staff at *The Decorator* takes pride in celebrating these pieces through its articles and photographs, and we look forward to hearing from our members, you thoughtful custodians of America's interesting heirlooms, and we invite you to share your treasures and their stories. Remember, your inherited legacy, that will be passed to future generations of your family, could also be shared with those of us who appreciate America's antiques and their stories. It's also an opportunity to chronicle the personal story behind your family's piece of Americana, the story that makes it a treasured inheritance. Everyone has a story to share about that special keepsake in our home.

Another year has passed all too quickly, and all of us at *The Decorator* wish you and yours a healthy and happy Holiday Season. Enjoy!

Sandra Cohen



Ornamental Painting on Clock Dials and Glass: Select Examples From the Willard House and Clock Museum Collection

by Robert C. Cheney, Fellow, NAWCC

In the words of an unknown travel writer, the Willard House and Clock Museum (WHCM) is a “hidden gem in a pristine landscape, nestled among the idyllic rolling hills of central Massachusetts, still patiently marking time exactly as it did in the 18th Century.” In fact, it is much more for the horologists among us, and certainly much more for the readers of *The Decorator*.¹

The Willard House and Clock Museum (WHCM) was the birthplace, homestead and workshop of four celebrated Willard clock makers

working in Grafton during the last half of the 18th Century. Benjamin (1743-1803), Simon (1753-1848), Ephraim (1755-after 1832) and Aaron (1757-1844) were the first generation of three in the Willard dynasty. This article will focus on first-generation makers,

Simon and Aaron, who were the most prolific of the brothers, utilizing ornamental painting in the production of their clocks. Aaron Willard, Jr. (1783-1864) is certainly the most notable of the second-generation using ornamentation and deserves his own in-depth study. By the third generation, there was little need for the work of ornamental painters in the age of precision horology or timekeeping for scientific purposes.

Celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2021 as a museum, the life-



*Recent view of the Willard homestead, restored to its circa 1720 appearance, attached workshop of 1766 and modern barn on the early location. The original homestead and workshop hide three connected modern galleries and the separate caretaker's cottage.
(Robert C. Cheney Photograph)*



The main gallery dedicated to the work of Simon Willard while living and working in the shadow of the First Church in Roxbury. The gallery clock made for the First Church in Roxbury in 1804 is shown on the far wall.

long passion and dedication of its founders is impressive. Dr. Roger (1909-2010) and Imogene (1901-2004) Robinson purchased the property in 1968 and systematically restored the homestead and workshop. In 1971 with a sparse collection, the Willard House and Clock Museum was opened to the public. Soon after, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and received its tax-exempt status. In stages, three modern galleries were built to house the collection, which over the last 50 years, grew to house the world's largest collection of Willard clocks and related family material. Wanting also to preserve the Willard "space," Roger Robinson eventually acquired 52 acres of surrounding farmland, 46 of which were original Willard acreage!

The collection includes over 90 Willard clocks and timepieces,² as well as the following: Willard family portraiture, furniture, clockmaking tools and a horological library of over 5,000 volumes. It also includes ephemera, including John Doggett's Daybook (1810-1822), and an important Thomas Jefferson Plan drafted in 1826 for a Simon Willard turret clock on the pediment of the iconic Jefferson



Simon Willard Gallery Clock, made for the First Church in Roxbury in 1805, is a masterpiece in gold leaf. Nearly 7-ft. tall with an eagle wingspan of 15-inches and lower door with églomisé; it fetched \$145 when the average eight-day clock sold for \$50-60.

College Rotunda.³ The members of HSEAD and other astute students will find the collection an encyclopedia of ornamental painting during the Federal period.

The Willard's workshop is the only 18th Century clockmaker's shop still standing on its original foundation in America. This is the humble 18'



The Willard workshop of 1766 where older brothers Benjamin and Simon made clocks and younger brothers, Ephraim and Aaron learned the trade. The shop is furnished with a typical assortment of period tools for the clockmaking trade, including the wheel-cutting engine shown in front-center.

x 14' space where Benjamin, Simon, Ephraim and Aaron received their early training and where the older brothers began making mechanical clocks in the late 1760's. By 1785, while keeping their family ties to the Grafton workshop, the brothers migrated to the city of Boston and nearby Roxbury to avail themselves

of the new opportunities and new buyers in the crowded port cities.

The landscape painting of *Meeting House Hill* by John Ritto Penniman (1782/1783 -1841) shows Simon's new neighborhood in 1799, centering the all-important First Church in Roxbury. Here, numerous ambitious young artisans, including Simon and Aaron, chose to live, practice their trade and go to church. A short distance away, Aaron's impressive home and "manufactory" was the first dwelling seen just over the Roxbury line for



Modern photographic enlargement of an oil painting of Meeting House Hill, 1799 by John Ritto Penniman, showing the all-important First Church in Roxbury, the epi-center of the decorative arts trades in Roxbury. (Robert C. Cheney Photograph)

those traveling into Boston via the Boston Neck. The membership records at Willard's church give us a glimpse into the trades and professions of those in the neighborhood. By 1800, members included four clockmakers, a brass founder, decorative painters for dials or "faces" and églomisé panels, five cabinetmakers, two carvers and gilders and seventy-five who described their occupation as merchants.⁵ During the Federal period, it was within the membership of the First Church of Roxbury that ornamental painting and horology partnered in magical ways to create the new objects of measure for status and wealth.

Birmingham Painted Dials

The eight-day clocks, now commonly called "Grandfather" clocks, became standard stock in trade for Simon and Aaron from 1790-1825, following the trend seen throughout the New Republic. The Birmingham 'japanned' or painted iron dial streamlined clock production. It was first advertised in 1772 and was first seen on American clocks a decade later. Birmingham, England became the center of Pontypool painted clock dials and soon were the most commonly found dials on eight-day clocks. America became engulfed by the painted dial throughout the Federal period, 1790-1830. At the WHCM we also have several examples of Boston painted dials offering a slightly different design than those from Birmingham.

The early manufacturers of painted dials designed a cast-iron, universal fitting device called a "false-plate" (or "backplate" in some references) which allowed the false-plate to connect painted dials made



An attributed Boston dial by John Minott could easily be confused with a Birmingham dial. There is no confusion with the case, c. 1800, marked "S. Badlam" for Stephen Badlam (1751-1815) of nearby Dorchester Lower Mills where the case displays an encyclopedic portfolio of inlays rarely ever seen on a single Massachusetts case.



A Birmingham painted dial by James Wilson (d. 1809). The Wilson firm is credited with “making dials in imitation of enamel” and the introduction of the “false plate” as a means to streamline the mounting of dials to movements.

This dial carries a statement that the clock is “Warranted for Mr. James” by the maker, circa 1795. Roman hour numerals, arabic minutes outside the hour track, spandrels matching right and left at the top section, and another variety matches at the bottom. Maker’s signature “Simon Willard” is just below a ‘sad’ recessed date dial, two winding arbors, center with pierced blued-steel hands, seconds above, and all capped by a moon’s age dial presently set in full moon position, and lunar cycle calendar marks “1-29- ½”, with full moon being the fifteenth day of the lunar month.

(Paul J. Foley Photograph)

in Birmingham with movements made anywhere in the world.⁶ Designed to bring painted clock dials into the vast realm of items for English export, the false-plate enabled an easy joining of the clock movement and dial with some standardization of the movements made elsewhere. The assembly was relatively simple: the unpainted dial was drilled for the center, winding and second’s dial holes.⁷ The false-plate was attached by riveting it through the front of the dial. Then the dial was painted with numerals and decoration leaving no trace of the false-plate attachment. When sold to a distant clockmaker, the movement was attached to the false-plate, not to the dial. By drilling the false-plate to attach the movement, the painting on the front of the dial was undisturbed. The clever devices are often seen with the names, “Wilson,” “Osborne,” and “Birmingham,” names that were cast into the plate to identify the maker of the dial. These names are often mis-identified as the maker of the clock when in fact,

they are only the dial makers.

The false-plate provided the universal fitting of a Birmingham painted dial to clock movements from anywhere in the world. For the first time, a standardization in the movement design became universal for anyone wanting to utilize the remarkable division of labor and the move towards mass production that painted dials offered. Later, painted dials with false-plates were produced throughout the UK by dozens of other



The top portion of the iron false plate with “Wilson” cast to identify the manufacturer of the dial. The Wilson firm teamed up with Osborne for a short period of time, with Osborne’s family and others continuing in the dial business after Wilson’s death in 1809. The painted dial business with attached false plate was copied by dozens of dial manufacturers until the end of the painted dial period in the UK about 1850. (Paul J. Foley Photograph)



Back view of the Osborne Manufactory/Birmingham dial with false plate cast with the company name. All iron components including the false plate are painted a brick-red ‘anti-rust’ primer. The visible rectangular dial plate with cast manufacturer’s name is attached to the painted dial with four short studs and pinned in place (pins visible). The three longer studs attach the front plate of the movement through three holes (at clockmaker determined position) and pinned.

Note at the top of the photo a portion of the large toothed brass disc (back of the moon’s age dial) and the smaller toothed disc (back of the date dial) are stamped with “Osborne’s Manufactory/Birmingham” in tiny print. Both the date and moon’s age dials are fit with a brass leaf spring to ‘index’ the disc during the twice daily advance by the movement.

(Paul J. Foley Photograph)

manufacturers and a few American outliers until the demise of the eight-day tall clock.

The Birmingham dial industry developed a finely divided trade, with female artists and their different skill sets populating the same “manufactory” as an example of an early factory system. The trade was so finely divided that different artists were utilized for the application of the various components of the paint-



Birmingham 12-inch painted dial by the Osborne’s Manufactory, circa 1792. Clock movement by Elnathan Taber (1768-1854), a favored past apprentice of Simon Willard living in the neighborhood. (Paul J. Foley Photograph)

ing, each within their own specialty such as: precise graphic workers for roman hour numerals and the lining enclosing the chapters; a more flowing stylist for the Arabic minutes; strawberries, clover or any combination of flowers in the spandrels and birds in the arch; raised gilded gesso patterns of raised dots or scrolls surrounding the colorful work; rolling moon's age dial with several specialists in the following areas: landscape, seascape, moon portraits or starry night to fill the space. Well, you get the idea. Today's artists will be relieved to know that the perfection shown in these painted dials is not the miracle work of one artist as it is in HSEAD circles, but the well-organized division of labor found within the Birmingham dial trade.⁸

The manufactured "White' Dial" was the primary development of eight-day clocks which enabled the meteoric rise in the distribution and

sale of these timekeepers throughout Britain and America. The earlier labor intensive, silvered, sheet-brass engraved dial looked neglected after a decade in rooms with fireplaces and candles burning constantly. The new "Birmingham" or "White" dial, with its clever universal fitting device on the back and the vivid painting on the front, soon became the consumer favorite by 1800.



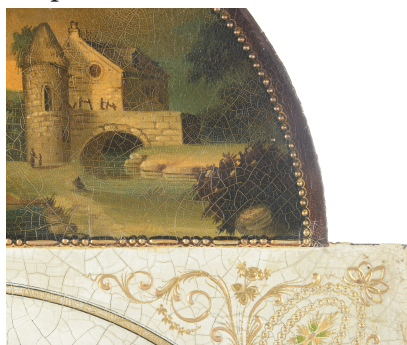
12-inch painted iron dial by John Minott, Boston, 1793, with clockmaker's name, Simon Willard, in block lettering. The back shown with Minott's initials and numbering system, "J. Minott/No. 221". Minott is perhaps the earliest ornamental painter for the Willards' dials, closely copying the English dials, but utilizing "half" hemispheres in the moon's age arch and no false plate. Active with ornamental dial painting 1790-1805 and numbered dials catalogued by Paul J. Foley up to 226. This example is dated precisely by a bill of sale with the clock. (Paul J. Foley Photograph)

Roxbury-Boston Clannish Collaboration: Aaron Willard (1757-1844)

Boston and Roxbury developed their own extensive center for decorative arts by 1790. Numerous ornamental painters filled the need for decorating everything from furniture to fire buckets and coaches to clock dials. Although much rarer than the Birmingham dial, the WHCM has in its Collection signed or attributed work of Roxbury-Boston eight-day

clock dials by John Minott (1772-1826), Spencer Nolen (1784-1849), the partnership of Nolen and Samuel Curtis (1785-1876), John Ritto Penniman (1782/1783-1841), and William Prescott, (birth and death dates unknown).⁹

In 1799, John Minott advertised that “he continues to carry on the coach, chaise and sign painting, gilding, japanning and varnishing business at his shop in Broomfield’s Lane...also



Inscription on the rock in the green bush in the lower right corner of the painted dial arch, “Nolen/ Jan. 15, 1806”. Note beautiful raised dot-dash gesso work.
(Paul J. Foley Photograph)

clock and timepiece faces...in the neatest manner”.¹⁰ Minott’s dial work is found on several examples in the Collection including the rare musical clock, marked “J. Minott/No. 152.”

One of the most prolific Roxbury/Boston artists involved with clocks and timepieces was Spencer Nolen.¹¹ He was an ornamental painter, gilder, clock dial manufacturer, looking glass maker and glass painter working in Boston and Philadelphia between 1804 and 1849. He



Back of the Minott dial with his initials and number system. (Paul J. Foley Photograph)



14 ½-inch Boston Dial by Aaron Willard and Spencer Nolen, dated “January 15, 1806” and “Nolen” on a small rock in the scenic arch.

The painted arch scene is outlined in raised dash and dots which mimic those found in the spandrel circles and scroll decoration. There is no recessed date dial on this example. It retains the original 2 x3-inch printed paper label stating “Clock Dial Manufactured by Willard and Nolen/Washington Street/Boston” (not shown).
(Paul J. Foley Photograph)



Simon Willard Patent Timepiece, Roxbury, Massachusetts, circa 1805 with carved and gilded eagle, carved rope moldings framing the eglomisé, carved pedestal and lower stylized acorn drop finial all carved and gilded by John Doggett, near Simon Willard's clock manufactory, Roxbury. One of the finest examples of the gilded timepiece painted white or "sand", these white-painted clocks are still called "Bride's Clocks" in general circles because of the color white being associated with weddings. This connection has now been debunked by noting that white was not popular for brides or weddings until Queen Victoria's time over 50-years later. It did however, match the white furniture being made in Boston at the same time period.



Detail showing the mahogany case in original white paint.



Finely done eglomisé in gold leaf, white and pale pink colors. "S. Willard's Patent" provides a verification of the ownership rights to produce the timepiece while on the lower glass the radiant sun reflects light every time the pendulum traverses the opening. The exquisite eglomisé was no doubt the work of Spencer Nolen in the partnership of "Willard and Nolen" who worked together from 1805 to 1806.



The back of the lower glass shows the graphite signature "Willard & Nolen/ Boston" just below the pendulum aperture, "No. 5 White" in upper left corner and repair notations from 1809 and 1853. The overall neatness of the work is measurably different than later Victorian replacements.



The lovely hatch work of the waist glass with flanking brass side ornaments and a beautifully executed recumbent man-in-the-moon in gold leaf. In the candlelight of a period home these gilded clocks sparkled!

partnered with Aaron Willard Sr. as "Willard and Nolen" in 1805-1806, working in Aaron's 'Manufactory' at 843 Washington Street, Boston just over the Roxbury line through the Boston 'Neck.' Later, he partnered with dial painter Samuel Curtis, as Nolen & Curtis.

In 1808, Nolen married Aaron Willard's daughter Nancy, thus securing an important 'sub-contractor' within the family for the manufacture of eight-day clocks, timepieces and shelf or 'half-clocks.' Probably working together with John Ritto Penniman in Aaron Willard's manufactory, the production of American painted dials and églomisé

in-house was an important step towards a self-sufficient craft and an early example of ‘vertical integration’ production as valued in modern business today.¹² Aaron Willard Sr.’s large home and manufactory, built in 1793, was the first house seen coming from Roxbury into Boston. The building was described in tax records as a ‘manufactory’ not for *making* clocks, but for *finishing* clocks (*italics added for emphasis*). The building was filled with dial and glass painters, gilders, carvers, and cabinetmakers. Surprisingly only two clockmakers were listed, as clock movements were undoubtedly outsourced for most of the clocks ‘finished’ at this shop.

WHCM has recently obtained at public auction the earliest documented patent timepiece known by Simon Willard. At Brunk’s Premier Auction in October 2022 a timepiece was offered with this inscription on the back side of the box glass: “Painted by John Ritto Penniman/Boston 1803.” This inscription for the first time documented Penniman’s glasses and dial painting, and also documented the nuances of clock hands, movement details, the cabinet work, side ornaments, brass bezel and finial only one year from the original patent signing. This information has already been put to work identifying unsigned Penniman’s glass at WHCM and on a patent timepiece variation



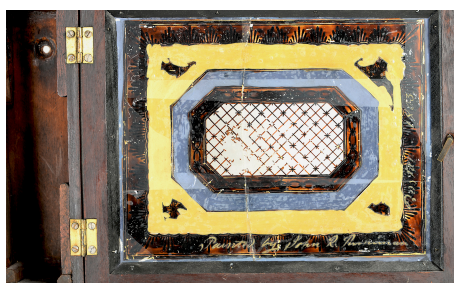
The earliest known documented patent timepiece by Simon Willard with the back of the lower glass marked “Painted by John Ritto Penniman/Boston/ 1803” purchased at auction by the Willard House and Clock Museum, October 2022. The important inscription is an extreme rarity and gives scholars new insights into the nuances of the timepiece only one year after the Patent was signed. (Paul J. Foley Photograph)



Lower box glass with Penniman’s inscription on the back (Paul J. Foley Photograph)



Back of the lower glass showing the inscription horizontally along the lower border and vertically along the right side. (Paul J. Foley Photograph)



Detail: vertical inscription with "Boston/1803" (Paul J. Foley Photograph)



John Ritto Penniman painted the children of Aaron Willard and his first wife, Catherine in 1804. These remarkable oil on canvas portraits of Aaron Jr. and sister Nancy are both signed on the front of the canvas "JRP" and inscribed in graphite on the back of the frame, "Painted by John Ritto Penniman in January 1804". The carved and gilded frames are firmly attributed to John Doggett. Both overall ht. 31.5 x wd 26.5-in. Portrait of Aaron Willard Jr. (1783-1864).

called a "Diamond-Head" at the Concord Museum. This is one way that our knowledge advances rapidly in this field.

1804 was a busy year for John Ritto Penniman doing portraits of Aaron Willard and his children by his first wife, Catherine (1762-1785). Sadly, Catherine died in childbirth with second child, Nancy. The now privately held portrait of Aaron Willard and a pair of oil portraits in our collection of Aaron Willard Jr. (1783-1864) at age 20 and sister Nancy (1785-1855) aged 18 add a rare family context to these craftsmen. Nancy married ornamental painter, Spencer Nolen, adding to the close ties of



Portrait of Nancy Willard, (1785-1855). Nancy's mother, Catherine (1762-1785) died in childbirth giving birth to Nancy. Nancy married ornamental painter, Spencer Nolen, in 1808, thus securing a major specialty talent within the family business.

family and business. Aaron Willard Jr., became a prolific clockmaker, including eight-day tall clocks, timepieces, shelf, church gallery and meeting house steeple-clocks, closely following in the footsteps of his uncle, Simon.

The gilded frames of this important pair of portraits of Aaron Jr. and Nancy are by John Doggett (1780-1857), who carried on the trade of a carver, gilder, looking glass maker and framer “near Mr. Simon Willard’s clock manufactory in Roxbury Street...”¹³ Doggett was another of the gifted craftsmen within the Willard circle who aided the vertical integration methodology by manufacturing the gilded twist rope moldings, drop pedestals and carved eagle finials for timepieces and gallery clocks.

Entering the 19th Century, Simon and Aaron Willard appeared to take different directions in their business models. Simon continued to produce eight-day clocks mostly with Birmingham dials and beautifully veneered and/or inlaid mahogany cases. However, by surviving numbers, his patent timepiece was a horological and decorative success story. It soon became the fashionable clock to own.

Aaron continued with the eight-day clock, some with Boston dials by his son-in-law, Spencer Nolen, and marketed many in southern destinations. He introduced a new shelf clock or “half clock” with glass fronts and ‘dish’ or concave dials using his manufactory staff to the fullest, painting glasses, dials and making cases. Occasionally, a shelf clock or eight-day clock is found with his son, Henry Willard (1802-1887), adding a stenciled mark as the cabinetmaker.

Gilding the Dynasty: Simon Willard (1753-1848)

Simon Willard was the most celebrated of the four Willard clockmakers and is highly represented in the museum’s collection by his clocks and patent-timepieces and other types by his son, Simon Willard, Jr. (1795-1874). Simon’s descendants were particularly generous to the WHCM, donating the following in part: an original 1802 Patent document for the Timepiece; a signed Thomas Jefferson drawing of the gable end of the rotunda of Jefferson’s College, showing placement for a Willard clock; an important unsigned portrait of Simon around 1800; a portrait of his daughter, Julia (1802-1861), around 20-years old; Simon’s fall front maple desk, his mahogany lolling chair, eyeglasses and psalm book.



A corner of the parlor of the Willard House showing a small selection of items which descended in the family of Simon Willard: Portrait of Simon Willard about 1800 by an unknown artist, his maple fall-front desk, his mahogany and upholstered lolling chair, his psalm book, an assortment of smaller books and his silver frame eye glasses. The clock in the corner is by his older brother Benjamin about 1785. (Robert C. Cheney Photograph)

Simon Willard held three patents: a state-issued patent for his Roasting Jack in 1781, which was a clockwork rotisserie sold through Paul Revere; a United States patent dated 1802 for his “Improved Timepiece” (commonly called a “banjo” clock), signed by President Thomas Jefferson and James Madison (the original copy donated to the museum) and in 1819, a patent for his “Patent Alarm Timepiece.” Today, it’s called a “lighthouse” clock due to its similarity in shape to the iconic lighthouses seen on the rugged New England shoreline. The original 1819 patent document was destroyed by fire in the 19th Century.

Simon’s successful eight-day clock and timepiece manufactory would surely be enough to secure a reputation as one of the premier clockmakers in New England, if not the entire new Republic. This reputation was amplified by his connections to Harvard and Jefferson College, as well as by his circle of important friends, including Paul Revere, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and John Quincy Adams. Adding further to his reputation were his role in making a gallery clock for the Supreme Court chamber. He also played a role in 1837, in the clock movement for the monumental Carlo Franzoni ‘Muse of History’ sculpture in the former Hall of the House of Representatives at the Capitol. The Willard name was soon synonymous with high-quality clocks, timepieces and good taste in decorative arts throughout the new Republic.

Églomisé, or simply ‘reverse-glass painting’, is found on a variety of wall and shelf timekeepers at the museum. Patent timepieces utilize this decorative feature in the waist and box door sections of the mahogany cases. Dateable patterns or subjects by known or attributable artists are found in the collection, from the earliest geometric designs with the banner “S. Willard’s Patent” found on Simon’s timepieces to



Simon Willard Patent Timepiece, Roxbury, Massachusetts c. 1810. A perfect combination of proportion, delicate inlay, brass hardware to highlight the art and a bright painted face to see the time.



The lower glass done by an unknown artist shows a very skilled hand at églomisé. The detail achieved with a fine brush, paint and gold leaf is remarkable and dramatically different from that shown by John Ritto Penniman, Page 17.



Aaron Willard, Boston, Massachusetts painted shelf clock, c. 1830. The mahogany case painted white or "sand" with gilded rope moldings framing the upper painted glass stating Aaron Willard/Boston amidst stenciled leafage and the lower glass depicting the 1830 nursery rhyme "Mary Had a Little Lamb", set against stenciled decoration.

the later more subject-oriented glasses. The 'Boston State House' and 'The Constitution's Escape' on timepieces by Aaron Willard Jr. are notable examples from the collection.¹⁴

Examples of églomisé, on 'dish dial' shelf or 'half-clocks' by the Willards around 1830, were heavily stenciled in bronzing paint and color in the borders and throughout the pattern. A rare example in the Collection by Simon Willard has a top glass signed by the artist "Charles Bullard 1821." While most of this period were limited in free-hand work, "Mary had a Little Lamb" was a popular subject.

These intricate patterns and subjects eventually transpired into a more utilitarian black background enclosed within gold borders with an opening for viewing the pendulum motion. This latter period of painted glass, appropriately called



Detail of the lower églomisé, stenciled floral/leafage border and gilded rope-molded frame.



The signature glass and "dished" or concave dial. Note the nod to the maritime trades with the anchors depicted in the four spandrels. Original blued-steel hands as seen on dish dial clocks. Painted glass by an unknown artist.

"Black and Gold," is found on five regulators in the collection and were intended for a commercial setting rather than a domestic one. Their story is largely of precision timekeeping rather than one of decoration. Other timepiece treatment other than églomisé includes veneered mahogany panels in place of glass, painted glass to simulate mahogany panels and looking glass.

During the last 50-years, the Willard House and Clock Museum has been a host to over 100,000 visitors from all walks of life. The genius of the Robinson family in preserving the earliest Willard House in Grafton with the important attached workshop is apparent when one notices how visitors with many different specialties view the collection with equal excitement. The collaboration of the many artisans producing timekeepers under the Willard banner is apparent in every example, as perfection transforms itself to magic. The magic will continue to inspire visitors, craftsmen and artists well beyond the next 50-years as the Willard House and Clock

Museum continues to display this remarkable work by a humble, rural family of clockmakers.



*The author in 1959 at age 7, learning the trade winding an Aaron Willard Jr. tower clock circa 1839, in the steeple of a New England church, one of many adventures that the author accompanied his father, the late Bradford W. Cheney, Clockmaker.
(Bradford W. Cheney Photograph)*

Acknowledgment

The author wishes to thank Paul J. Foley for his endless help with this study. His books, *Willard's Patent Timepieces* (Roxbury Village Publishing, 2002), *John Minott, Boston Ornamental and Clock Dial Painter, 1771-1826* (Willard House and Clock Museum, Inc., 2023) and his numerous articles, represent a lifetime of research of the highest order and a mastering of his own “eye candy” horological photography. There are no better reference books on the planet for the subject and surely, none as easy to appreciate the beauty of these timekeepers. I continue to draw heavily from Mr. Foley's work after 20 years.

Author's Endnotes and Commentary:

1. The following issues of *The Decorator* published excellent articles related to the decorative aspects of eight-day clocks and timepieces:
 i-Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall/Winter 1995-1996; Bruce R. Forman, *The American White Painted Dial*.
 ii-Vol. 58, No. 2, Fall 2004; Paul J. Foley, *Boston State House on Glass*
 iii-Vol. 59, No. 1, Spring 2005; Paul J. Foley, *Naval Battle Scenes from the War of 1812 on American Clocks*.
2. At WHCM, we try to use period terminology for the different types of timekeepers whenever possible. The distinction between a “clock” and a “timepiece” was well understood by the makers and owners of these luxuries in the 18th and 19th Centuries. A ‘clock’ by definition

must have a ‘bell’, as the origin of the word ‘clock’ means ‘bell’ in many languages. A “Timepiece,” was simply a timekeeper without a bell. These only required one weight, just keeping the pendulum going to tell the time. A Clock required two weights, one for the time-keeper and one for striking hours on the bell.

3. In 1802, Willard received a Patent from the US Patent office for his “Improved Timepiece” signed by President Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State James Madison and Attorney General, Levi Lincoln. The original Patent application and final description descended in the family of Simon Willard and is now part of the Willard House Collection.
4. Jefferson ordered the clock one month before he died in June 1826. Willard installed the clock as planned, but sadly, Jefferson did not live to see the clock finished and running on the pediment of the Rotunda at Jefferson College, now known as the University of Virginia. Willard’s original clock was destroyed by fire in 1895.
5. *Meeting House Hill* by John Ritto Penniman (1782 [or 3]-1841), WHCM’s enlarged photograph was created by permission from the original oil painting, *Meeting House Hill* by John Ritto Penniman (1782 [or 3]-1841), circa 1799. Art Institute Chicago, oil on canvas, 29x37-inches, #1979.1461. <https://www.artic.edu/artworks/59455/meetinghouse-hill-roxbury-massachusetts>
6. Walter Eliot Thwing, *History of the First Church in Roxbury, Massachusetts, 1630-1904*, (1908) author’s compilation from pp. 270-335.
7. Brian Loomes, *The White Dial Clock* (Drake Publishers, 1975), pp. 45-48
8. The holes needed to allow the winding squares, center hour/ minute hands and second’s hand arbors were standardized to be the same distance and angle on the dial regardless of where the movement was made. Clockmakers had to comply with the standard to use the Birmingham dial.
9. Numerous conversations with Mary Frances Tennant during her visits to the US or the author’s visits to the UK and author’s correspondence, 1996-2000. An excellent book by Mrs. Tennant is: *Longcase Painted Dials: Their History and Restoration* (NAG Press, 1995).

10. Paul J. Foley, *Willard's Patent Timepieces* (Roxbury Village Publishing, 2002), individual entries for painters pp. 205-339.
11. Foley, pp. 283-4. "Faces" is used interchangeably with "Dials" in some period references. Interested readers should check www.willard-house.org for a wonderful soft cover book, "John Minott Ornamental and Clock Dial Painter, 1771-1826" by scholar, Paul J. Foley, published by the Willard House and Clock Museum, Summer 2023 on Boston ornamental painter John Minott, for a wealth of new information and dozens of comparison dial photos of Minott's work.
12. Foley, p. 292.
13. A 'vertical integration' business model is obtained by the manufacturer acquiring or developing its own vendors, manufacturers, distributors, or retail locations in-house, rather than outsourcing.
14. Foley, pp. 242-3.
15. Please see Note 1, items ii and iii.
16. Charles Bullard (1794-1871), see biographical information in Foley, p. 226; The shelf clock at WHCM with Bullard signed glass is #2.96.34.



Robert C. Cheney is a third-generation clockmaker and antiquarian horologist. After an award-laden national career, he is now the executive director of the Willard House and Clock Museum in N. Grafton, Massachusetts. Robert@Willardhouse.org

Revolutionary Appearances: Female Portraiture and its Evolution Around the American Revolution

by William A. Stollo

"I am an enthusiast on the subject of the arts ... its object is to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation."

Thomas Jefferson, 1785¹

The 1760s portrait of a mother and child and Catherine and Jane Randel's circa 1815 portrait at the DAR Museum share many visual similarities, yet, their underlying messages are quite different. In one, the mother draws her son in while he writes in an open book. In the other, Jane Randel sits in her mother's lap and holds a book open in front of herself. In the first portrait, lush vegetation abounds behind the relaxed mother and child. Meanwhile behind the Randels, a vast and open landscape awaits. The first was painted when the American colonies were still young and inching toward independence. The latter was painted after the turn of the century when the new United States was still creating its own identity.

Portraits of women underwent a series of changes from the mid-18th century to the early-19th century. Over this short period, symbolism within women's portraits shifted from child-bearing to child-rearing. This essay will look at some of those symbols and how they changed over this pivotal period in American history.



Unidentified Artist, Mother and Child, North America, c. 1760, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.



Ezra Ames, Catherine and Jane Randel, Albany, New York, c. 1815, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.

This evolution of portraiture began to take shape as early as 1750. By this point in colonial America, portraits had become more prevalent across the region. The lack of locally trained artists opened the door to America for artists, trained in Europe and in search of commissions. Artists such as William Dering, Gustavus Hesselius, and John Wollaston arrived in North America in the first half of the 18th century and brought with them a style and format of portraiture already familiar to those on the European continent.² This style, for women at least, focuses largely on the ability to bear children.

This approach of focusing on the fertility of women and the future motherhood of young girls stems from the importance of showing the lineal strengths of the monarchy and gentry class in England.³ Portraits of members of the monarchy and other noble classes used this opportunity to show familial connections and assert their family line would and could continue on. This was especially important for the monarch, so as to avoid any suggestion of a royal crisis. There could be no concern about the future of the empire if the line of succession was firmly established.



Richard Earlom, after Johan Zoffany, The Most Sacred Majesties George III and Queen Charlotte, London, England, 1771, Mezzotint, Courtesy of the British Museum.

Engravings, such as mezzotints, were used to share likenesses of the Royal family. Famed English portrait artist Sir Joshua Reynolds was known to keep a portfolio of mezzotints in his studio.⁴ These prints were brought to North America and used as the source material for American portraits. When William Dering came to America, he brought with him over two hundred prints to use as inspiration for his sitters. Therefore, English and other European portraiture began to influence the style of American portraits. But this should come as no surprise since North American colonists were, in fact, English subjects. They took a lot of their direction from the English, as they did with many things related to the arts and decorative arts.⁵

Looking at the imagery embedded within the portraits from the 1750s to the 1790s, the modern viewer can begin to discern how 18th-century women and girls were perceived. Reconsider the 1760s portrait of a mother and child by an unidentified artist. Given its provenance, this piece was likely made in America early in the second half of the 18th century, and depicts a mother seated outside with one of her children. She wears a long, flowing blue dress adorned with lace. Over her shoulder is the base of a large classical column. Her son stands next to her left leg and writes his initials in the book his mother holds open for him. Here, the artist employed a few techniques and decorative elements to show the importance of female fertility in North America.



Unidentified Artist, Mother and Child, North America, c. 1760, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.

One of the most important details is how the artist chose to position the subjects; the book in which the child writes his initials, and the placement of their hands, draws the viewer's attention to her lower abdomen. By placing the subjects in this way, we can understand that this subject is ready and completely able to bear children.

John Singleton Copley and John Smibert both used this same technique to draw attention to the sitters' wombs in their 1762 and 1732 portraits, respectively. Copley's portrait



Elizabeth Storer Smith, John Singleton Copley, Boston, 1769, oil on canvas, courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery.



Jane Clark, John Smibert, Boston, 1732, oil on canvas, courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

of Elizabeth Storer Smith uses grapes resting in Mrs. Smith's lap to draw your eyes in that direction. Smibert's portrait of young Jane Clark does the same with a small basket of oranges and peaches. Not only are these



Anne Randolph, John Wollaston, Henrico County, Virginia, c. 1750, oil on canvas, courtesy of the Virginia Museum of History and Culture



Anne Harrison Randolph, John Wollaston, Henrico County, Virginia, c. 1750, oil on canvas, courtesy of the Virginia Museum of History and Culture.



John Moultrie III and Family, John Francis Rigaud, London, England, c. 1782, oil on canvas, courtesy of the Gibbs Museum of Art.

artists drawing attention to the female subjects' abdomens, they are also using objects like fruit to associate fertility. Here the abundant fruit in close proximity to this part of the body symbolizes their (i.e., the female figures) abundance to bear children. John Wollaston did the same when he painted a basket of flowers resting in front of the young Anne Randolph of Wilton, in Richmond, VA; and when he painted Anne Harrison Randolph's hands

to frame her abdominal area. This mother and daughter sat at the same time for Wollaston when he painted a group of portraits for the Wilton Randolphs in the 1750s. Finally, the Moultries, a wealthy Charlestonian family, painted by John Frances Rigaud around 1782, are depicted as very fashionable members of society. Catherine is depicted next to an

overflowing basket of fruit while wrapping her hands around young George Austin Moultrie.

While the DAR Museum's portrait of a mother and child does not contain fruit, it does have pearls, another symbol frequently used by artists to express the fertility of the subject. Here we see those pearls wrapped around the sitter's hair and down the front of her dress. By the time this portrait was painted, this symbol was common. Nearly a century earlier, Pierre Mignard painted this portrait of the Duchess of Portsmouth. Here, Mignard uses a shell as a stand-in for a cornucopia full of pearls. This imagery was new for the Duchess and her contemporaries but quickly became a commonly used motif.

Another element conveying fertility in this DAR Museum portrait is the child itself. He is leaning slightly into his mother and looks directly out at the viewer. He holds a writing utensil in his right hand and keeps his book open with the other. His mother places her left arm and hand around her child possessively, as if to say, "This is my son, the heir of my family." Source material for this pose was abundant in English portraits and prints. For example, in another mezzotint, the Countess of Pembroke sits with one arm around her son and holds his hand in hers. The close proximity of the two figures indicates the importance of one to the other. Indeed, the message is a powerful one, given that child mortality rates were low. Her message, as implied in this large portrait, indicates to the viewer that the future of this family, both financially and genetically, is well established in perpetuity.



Louise Renne de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth, Pierre Mignard, 1682, oil on canvas, courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.



Elizabeth, Countess of Pembroke and Her Son, John Dixon, after Joshua Reynolds, London, England, 1770, mezzotint, DAR Museum Collection.

By the time of the American Revolution, the use of symbols such as pearls, fruit, flowers, and abundant landscapes had become so ubiquitous that these portraits were essentially formulaic. Artists like Copley and Wollaston fell back on these symbols time and again to create the great works that are now icons of the American Colonial period.

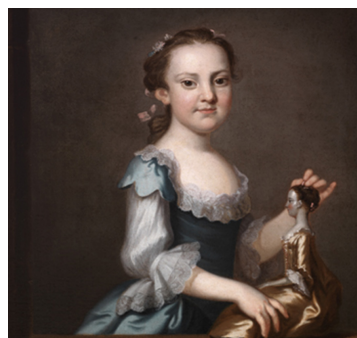
These symbols weren't reserved just for the adult members of society. Adolescent girls were also portrayed at a young age as being future child bearers and the next generation of mothers as seen in the DAR Museum's Wollaston portrait of Mary Lightfoot from around 1755. Her portrait is simple, yet incisive in its imagery. She wears a pink silk dress that is adorned with lace. She holds a doll with a yellow dress in front of her with both hands. The doll is the real tell. Viewed alongside her mother's portrait, which was also done by Wollaston, viewers saw Mary's mother was painted wearing a yellow dress just like the one seen on the doll. Wollaston equates young Mary's future to that of her mother by having the doll face Mary. This is not the only time Wollaston used this subtle imagery. In the portraits of Elizabeth Mann Page, Elizabeth Randolph, of Wilton, holds a very similar doll. In all three cases, Wollaston positions the doll in such a way that it appears the doll is facing the young girl. In all three cases, this use of the doll points to a desired future of motherhood. In other words, she will one day also be a childbearing caregiver and will help to



Mary Lightfoot, John Wollaston, Charles City County, Virginia, c. 1755, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.



Mann Page III and Elizabeth Page, John Wollaston, Virginia, 1754-1756, oil on canvas, Courtesy of the Virginia Museum of History and Culture.



Elizabeth Randolph, John Wollaston, Henrico County, Virginia, c. 1750, oil on canvas, courtesy of the Virginia Museum of History and Culture.

carry on familial connections.⁶

This artistic choice, presumably made by the parents, is not entirely surprising. Starting around the age of 10, children started their training to enter into society. Dancing and etiquette lessons as well as an update in gendered attire typically came with this period of transition. Another visual representation of the “taming of the wild side” of the child is marked in portraiture by the tamed wild animal. In this portrait of Rebeckah Barrett, a wild yellow bird rests on her finger. The same imagery is in Wollaston’s portrait of Mann Page III and his sister Elizabeth. This image of domestication is one of the few symbols that transcends gender, decades, and region. Indeed, the fascination with taming wild or exotic animals dates back to the early-18th century and has connections even to enslavement in America.⁷

All of these symbols and subtle messages reached their peak in the late-18th century and began to fade following the American Revolution. This pivotal moment in American history witnessed not only a major political shift, but a social one, one that favored an educated and well-rounded future as opposed to a future that was largely based on family heritage or lineage.⁸

With the Age of Enlightenment and the rise of neoclassicism in America came a new approach to portraiture. By the early 19th century, a well-established new style had emerged that reflected the new set of values and iconography of the new nation. New ways of positioning the body within the canvas, different settings, and modern props all contributed to the new image of the new nation. This transition, like many



Rebeckah Barrett, Joseph Badger, Boston, Massachusetts, c. 1765, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.



Mary Balfour, Matthew Pratt, Virginia, late 18th century, oil on canvas, courtesy of the Virginia Museum of History and Culture.

things, did not happen overnight, as is evident in the portrait of Mary Balfour of Virginia. While Mary is seated, draped in expensive fabrics and wearing her pearls, she holds an open book in front of her. Literacy in females was not widely promoted in colonial Virginia, and portraits of women in colonial America were rare.⁹ Mary Balfour's portrait evinces one of the largest shifts in values at the end of the 18th century: education.

Owning an abundance of land gave way to a well-rounded education. Jefferson and other intellectuals advocated for raising a nation of thinkers, women included, who could help advance the debate of the revolutionary government.¹⁰ The responsibility of early education fell largely on the women. Portraits of women with books increased during and after the revolution, suggesting that they could now practice more of their own interests and also that it was important for them to be educated so that they could educate their children.

In the portrait examined at the start of this essay, the presence of an open book in front of Jane Randel is telling. Similarly, Catherine no longer wears the decorations symbolic of the previous era—no pearls, fruits, or flowers. She has shifted her focus to childrearing, rather than childbearing. Nothing about her is lavish or excessive. Her intentions are clear. She is focused on raising this, her last child. Jane, who was born around 1800 would become part of that new nation of learners. By the middle of the 19th century, these young learners were raising another generation of learners. Increasingly, portraits of children, including those of girls, included more books and less exclusive symbols of fertility. Here, Clara Gross, age 7, stands with an open book and the wide world of possibilities over her shoulder. Both of her hands are engaged in the book in front of her while she looks directly at the viewer.



Clara Jane Gross, Robert Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1851, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.

Raising competent, young girls also led to contributors to the new American culture. Amelia Comfield's education gave her power that was not available to girls and women like her in the previous century. Comfield's education helped her become a successful author, pub-

lishing *Alida* first in 1841. Its success led to the publication of four editions in less than a decade. Comfield was so proud of the success of this novel that she features it not once but twice in her portrait. One of those includes a placement on a bookshelf alongside other notable authors of the 18th and early-19th century, such as Robert Burns and Edmund Burke. In effect, Comfield places herself on the same level as these well-known and collected male writers.

Clare, Jane, nor Amelia were depicted in ways that suggest fertility or motherhood. None of their bodies are being used to show how they are preparing to bear children of their own, which is another major shift in this new era of portraiture. In the 18th century, the female body was often positioned in a way that suggested childbearing. In the 19th century, however, this changed quite a bit. Attention to the woman's stomach is taken away by the placement of arms and hands. Legs, although unseen, are no longer pointed toward the viewer and splayed slightly open. Female sitters are turned more toward the side and legs are kept together.

When Elizabeth Graddy Martin remarried in 1832, she and her husband had their portraits painted by Patrick Henry Davenport. When Elizabeth's previous husband died, he left their daughter and his side of the family with all of his wealth and property. Elizabeth, left with little of her own, seems to have made it a point to show off her new wealth by the inclusion of a fine dress and numerous jewelry pieces in her picture. The placement of her arm and the abundance of these other features draw attention



Amelia Stratton Comfeild, David Rogers, 1852, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.



Elizabeth Graddy Martin, Patrick Henry Davenport, Kentucky, 1831, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.

away from her potential to be a mother and toward her own wealth and status in society.

By contrast, the 1839 portrait of Diadamia Doram, also painted by Davenport, lacks much of the expensive jewelry and accessories of Elizabeth's portrait. However, the pocket watch attached to a long chain around Diadamia's neck does stand out and therefore tells the viewer a bit about the sitter's status in society, the competent control of her domestic setting. She is also signaling to the viewer that she has attained a status in her society largely held by white women.



Diadamia Doram, Patrick Henry Davenport, Kentucky, 1839, oil on canvas, courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society.

Clothing in portraiture is a key indicator of one's values and beliefs. Beginning in the 1790s, elite women started to style themselves as "living statues." One tailor complained that, "Our girls and young women apologize for everything by saying they are making themselves into Greeks or statues, and that they drape themselves; they presently only want to wear quite clear and unfinished muslin." The style was a sheer, white, high-quality muslin dress worn with minimal undergarments and often accessorized with a shawl. The shawl in portraits of the 19th century came to represent virtuous motherhood and childrearing.¹¹

Moreover, the shawl, like the symbols of the previous century, became a formulaic feature of portraiture. Portraits of virtuous women from the late 18th century well into the 19th century often included a shawl.

The new style was closely tied with the philosophical movement of the new America. The values that once pervaded the colonies differed from those of the United States. Americans explored a new set of values and with that, they explored new attire that represented this new philosophy. They turned away from their English counterparts in both government and art, looking for new inspiration or source material. As previously mentioned, Greek statues were one inspiration. So too was the art of Renaissance Europe. One particular figure was more influential than another, the Madonna and Child. Renaissance paintings of Mary often

depict her with her head partially covered. In an effort to live up to virtuous standards, or at least appear to be, women began to incorporate this element into their dress as well.

Throughout her life, Sarah Hume Porter remained devoted to her family. In 1831, her husband, George, was appointed by Andrew Jackson to be Territorial Governor of Michigan and the family moved to Detroit. When Sarah and George moved west, they took their portraits along with them, thus carrying a visual symbol of their beliefs with them. When George died in 1834, Sarah moved back to Pennsylvania to be close to her family.

When she died in 1867, her will focused largely on her grandson, Oliver, establishing for him a stable education and financial security.

If a shawl could be used to symbolize a person of modesty and virtue, it could also be used for the opposite. While Elisabeth Haley's story is not fully known, various elements within her portrait can imply to the viewer that she carried a different set of values than Sarah Porter. Her



Madonna and Child, Master of the Winking Eye, c. 1450, tempura and gold on wood panel, Courtesy of the Grimaldi Fava Collection.



Elisabeth Haley, Unidentified Artist, France, 1810, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.



Sarah Hume Porter, Jacob Eichholtz, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1819, oil on canvas, DAR Museum Collection.

shawl does not wrap around her; rather, it is placed around the chair in which she sits. Elisabeth gazes directly at the viewer and not passively to the side. She commands an exotic bird's attention with a berry. And the use of red in her clothing and accessories alludes to love, passion, and seduction. Perhaps what she is trying to say here is that she has tried that "virtuous" approach to life but has chosen to set it aside for something a little more exotic.

So, what do the two portraits of a mother and child reveal about the changes taking place from the 1750s to the early-19th century in the United States? They reveal that priorities change with each new generation, and that portraiture was a tool that could help situate oneself in that change. One generation saw the potential for growth, abundance, and success and depicted themselves as participants in that growth. The next generation, the product of that concept, sought to capitalize on a new vision for a fledgling nation. They strove to establish themselves as enlightened individuals and raise their children based on those same ideals. Portraiture, much like the modern individual's use of profile photos and video conference backgrounds, was a means to convey to the viewer a subliminal message, namely, about the sitter and the beliefs they held.

Footnotes:

1. Letter from Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 20 September 1785.
2. Carolyn J. Weekley, *Painters and Paintings in the Early American South*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, 226.
3. Susan E. Klepp, *Revolutionary Conceptions: Women, Fertility, and Family Limitations in America, 1760-1820*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009, 129.
4. Margaretta M. Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution: Painters, Artists, and Patrons in Early America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, 76.
5. For more on the movement of images across the Atlantic, see Jennifer L. Roberts, *Transporting Visions: The Movement of Images in Early America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014.
6. Janine Yorimoto Boldt, "The Art of Plantation Authority: Domestic Portraiture in Colonial Virginia" PhD diss., College of William and Mary, 2018, 245.
7. Sarah Hand Meacham, "Pets, Status, and Slavery in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 77, no. 3, 2011, 524.
8. Klepp, *Revolutionary Conceptions*. 153.
9. Catherine Kerrison, *Claiming the Pen: Women and Intellectual Life in the*

- Early American South*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006, 11.
10. Klepp, *Revolutionary Conceptions*. 159.
 11. Amelia Rauser, *The Age of Undress: Art, Fashion, and the Classical Ideal in the 1790s*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020, 7.



William A. Strollo is the Curator of Exhibitions at the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Museum, where he oversees the art, print, metal, and numismatic collections as well as the Museum's exhibition program.

A Miniature Furniture Maker's Discovery: Antique Furniture's Construction Oddities

by James Hastrich

I have been a furniture maker for over 40 years, and I am very honored to be writing an article for HSEAD. I make authentic reproductions of American Painted Furniture, c. 1790-1840, in small scale, most in 1"=12", some in 2"=12" scale. Some of the most prestigious museums and historical societies on the East Coast have issued licensing contracts for my work. This has allowed my research to include my own photographs and authentic measuring of these museums' original quality antiques. With this information, I am able to make authentic reproductions of the chest, table, clock, etc., and after they are completed, they must be presented to the curatorial staff for its approval. After receiving the curators' acknowledgement of my research and craftsmanship, I am allowed to offer the reproduction with the Museum's seal of authenticity. In the process of thoroughly researching an item, I discover the quirks of construction details, the focus of my article.

Schwaben Creek (Mahantongo Valley) Chest of Drawers (Photo 1)

Imagine my thrill when I was given permission to research (photograph and measure) one of the iconic chest of drawers from the Schwaben Creek (Mahantongo Valley) of central Pennsylvania. My wife, Linda LaRoche, and I went to meet Alexandra Kirtley, Montgomery-Garvan Curator of American Decorative Arts, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art to do hands on research. I had wanted to make this chest for years, but I had questions about the construction and needed to closely examine it in order to make an accurate reproduction, with correct construction details. Here we were, in the museum doing hands on inspection of this great



*Photo 1. Author's reproduction of
Schwaben Creek Chest.*

Note: AP indicates Author's Photograph

chest. We were allowed to open drawers, crawl around to explore the back and bottom, all over.

I was puzzled by the way the recessed panels were created (Photo 2). My traditional woodworking background had me looking for signs of pegged mortise and tenon joints (Photo 3). Prior photos I had studied did not indicate that method. The mystery was quickly solved; I was, once again, impressed with the creative methods used in rural areas of America.

The photo shows the edges of the face horizontal rails (Photo 4) and vertical stiles with a molded edge. The front vertical stiles (those small dark up and down blue pieces), had a corresponding molded edge that allowed these smaller pieces to slide, from side to side, to create nicely spaced recessed panels (Photo 5). I noticed many were split right down the middle (Photos. 6, 7, 7a). This was caused when a wooden peg was inserted right in the middle to keep them in place. Well, this not only answered my question, but allowed me to make my chest in the same manner as



Photo 2. Detail of recessed panels, AP

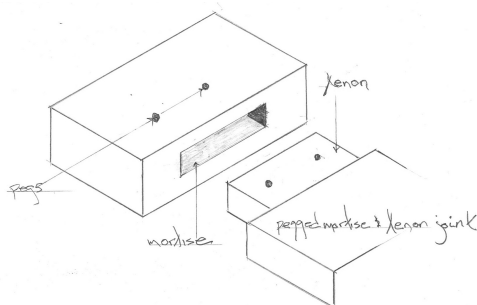


Photo 3. Drawing showing a typical pegged mortise and tenon joint, author's drawing.



Photo 4. Shows the molded edges on the horizontal rail and vertical stiles. Authors photo of original. Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Photo 5. Author's detail of molded edges on rails and stile. AP



*Photo 6, 7, 7a. Recessed panels with split stiles (vertical); photos from original.
Philadelphia Museum of Art. AP*

the original. This construction was done on the side recessed panels as well. There are mortise and tenon joints used on the major framing members on the chest. Because of the very thin recessed panels used on the side of the chest, I found angled wedges on the inside used to offer strength to those panels (Photo 8).

Simple blanket chests (Photo 9), often with a name written on the face, were the earliest form of furniture from this region. They date from c.1798 through 1830. A more favored and ambitious form, the chest of drawers, came into fashion around 1830-1835. (Photos 9a & 9b show my



Photo 8. Wedge inside chest to support thin side panel. AP



*Photo 9. Early chest, c. 1798-1828, with two drawers with name on the face, dated 1828.
Philadelphia Museum of Art. AP*



Photo 9a. Chest made by the author, c.1840. Transitioning to chest with more drawers. AP



Photo 9b. Chest of drawers, c. 1830, made by the author. AP

scale reproductions) The decoration on the chests is influenced by the religious birth and baptismal records seen on Frakturs (Photo 10). Individual decorators/painters had preferences. This can be seen on the number of petals (four, six or eight, (Photo 11) that were on the rosettes painted on the framing parts. Colors of the petals were typically yellow, green, blue and red, alternating (Photo 12). The corner detail (Photo 13) would also differ in color and number of



Photo 11. Rosettes with 8 petals. AP



Photo 10. Images seen on baptismal documents, aka Frakturs, AP



Photo 12. Corner rays on chest by author; AP



Photo 13. Shows geometric stars, corner rays and rosettes, AP

rays. The chart lists the furniture by decorators' hands, divided on the basis of the following details: (Photo 14).

- a. Rosette petals
- b. Arrangements of rays
- c. Placement of rays
- d. Cartouche design
- e. Other details

Decorator	A	B	C	D	E	F
Rosettes						
Rays						
Cartouches						
Butterflies						
Stars						

Photo 14. Chart of furniture decorators and preferred designs. *Something for Everyone, The Pennsylvania German Society, Volume 14, 1980, Frederick S. Weiser & Mary Hammond Sullivan, Decorated Furniture of the Schwaben Creek Valley, AP*

The motifs were often birds, angels, deer, floral, and babies praying, as shown in photo 9a.

The geometric stars found on the sides and top of the chests also differ as shown in photo 13. The pigments were Prussian blue (with a touch of white lead), chrome yellow, red lead, chrome oxide green and lamp black.

There are many well researched books that provide more historical information on Schwaben Creek (Mahantongo Valley) furniture.

Johannes Spitler Tall Case Clock (Photo 15)

When I first saw photos of this tall case clock I was, once again, curious about the construction of the front top panel and door panel (Photo 16).

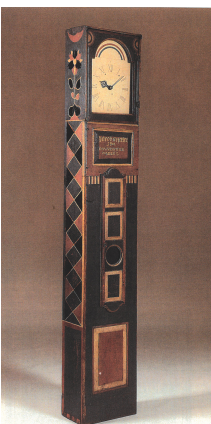


Photo 15. Johannes Spitler Tall Case Clock, American Folk Art Museum, AP

I could not see any seams where the vertical (stiles) and horizontal (rails) members crossed. Normally,



Photo 16. Clock door and top panel showing no seams. American Folk Art Museum, AP

one would construct these panels with individual pieces using the traditional mortise and tenon joint with a floating raised panel. I contacted Stacy Hollander, Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs, Chief Curator and Director of Exhibitions, to ar-

range a research trip to the American Folk Art Museum (AFAM) in New York. As always, AFAM was welcoming and excited to explore this clock together. There in the warehouse stood this wonderful clock. For the next two plus hours Stacy and I were hands on all over this great piece.

What I discovered was a surprise to both Stacy and me. The top raised panel and door panel were, amazingly, carved in a solid block of wood (Photo 17). Why not use that traditional mortise and tenon joint? Did the maker not know how to cut mortises and tenons? Did he (or they) not have the proper tools to accomplish that joint, or, did he simply decide this is the way he chose to create those panels? I had a lovely time recreating the solid raised panels and, have to confess, it was not a very laborious process. I think I was more impressed with this process than anyone else to whom I talked. In all the years I have been making authentic miniature furniture I have never encountered this approach.

The lettering on the top panel brought some curious questions (Photos 18 & 18a). Photo 18 shows the original panel; photo 18a shows my scale reproduction. Some have suggested the writing is that of Johannes Spitler's neighbor and relative, Jacob Strickler. Jacob was a Fraktur artist and educated enough to know proper spelling. However, the backward N's in the text point more directly to Johannes himself; he may have not known the proper layout of the letter N. Many of the Spitler group pieces are numbered. It is my opinion that they may have been decorated and lettered by Johannes himself

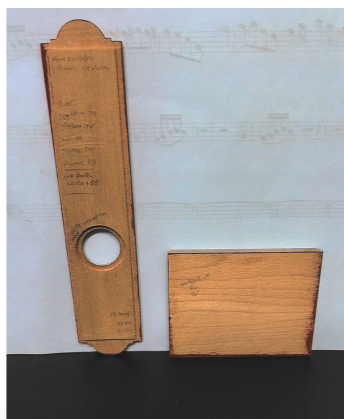


Photo 17. Showing the door and panel carved out of a single piece of wood.



Photo 18. Front top panel of the original clock. American Folk Art Museum. AP

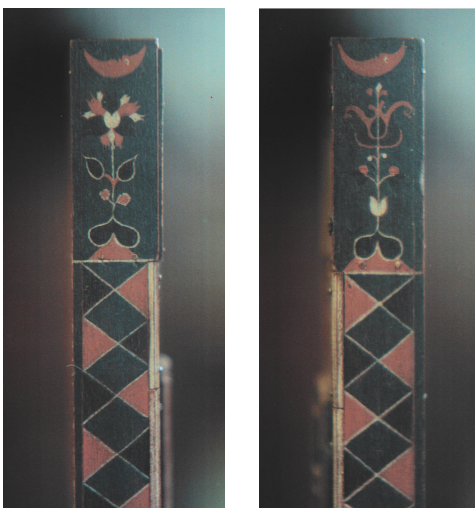


Photo 18a. The author's clock, close up of dial and top panel, AP

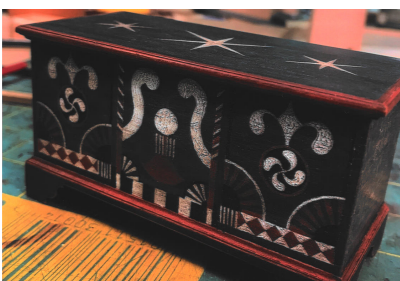
(Photos 18 & 18a). The clock sides show the creative spirit of the decorator. Although similar, there are slight variations with the floral application, while the half-moon face, popular with church goers at the time, appears on both sides. The geometric pattern remains the same on both sides (Photos 19a, 19b). As you can see by (Photos 20a, 20b, 20c.) Spitler chests have well executed floral, birds, vines and geometric designs, familiar and popular in the region he worked.

It is interesting to note how the furniture was painted. A prime coat of red lead was first applied to the piece. Then the design was laid out and painted, usually with white lead, lamp black or a lighter shade of red. Once the design was laid out on the red lead primer, the Prussian blue was painted around the designs. Laying out the design first and painting the blue around the design are both unique and characteristic of Spitler pieces. My Spitler Tall Case Clock in 1"=12" scale (Photo 21).

Since then, I have learned the Spitler group of furniture makers made things up as they went along. Another piece that is worth mentioning is the Spitler Wall Cabinet (Photo 22) I looked over all the photos I had and kept coming up with more questions. This is in a private collection so I did not have access to the cupboard.



Photos 19a, 19b. Sides of the clock with slight variation in design, similar geometric pattern, AP



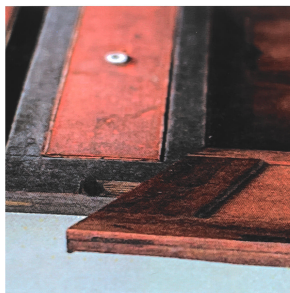
Photos 20a, 20b, 20c, Three Spitler blanket chests made by the author, AP



Photo 21. The author's 1"=12" scale Spitler Tall Case Clock, AP

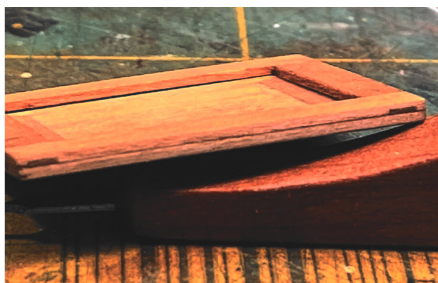


Photo 22 Jacob Stricker's Cupboard, attributed to Johannes Spitler; AP



Photos 23, 23a. Show the half lap joint used on the original cupboard, photos courtesy Jeffrey S. Evans and Associates Auctioneer

I did discover that instead of making a traditional pegged mortise and tenon door frame, the cabinet maker used a half lap joint (Photos 23, 23a). When making my reproduction of the Spitler Wall Cupboard I used that same half lap joint (Photos 24a & 24b) Quirky, but still effective and the preferred method by this maker. My 1"=12" scale reproduction of the Spitler Wall Cupboard (Photo 25).



Photos 24a, 24b. The author's door constructed with half lap joints, AP



Photo 25. The author's 1"=12" scale reproduction of the wall cupboard, AP

Maine Tall Case Clock (Photo 26)



Photo 26. Author's Maine Tall Case Clock in 1"=12" scale reproduction, AP

This fancy painted clock, with an interesting history and story, was first discovered by Ken and Paulette Tuttle. These two antiques dealers were cruising shops in the central Maine area, and just while leaving one shop, Paulette noticed this tall case clock with a very dark brown varnish. However, the light hit the clock to reveal a most interesting painted decoration under the varnish. Once the varnish was removed, this amazing decoration was revealed (Photo 27). This clock, with works by Riley Whiting of Winchester, Connecticut, was the featured item in the Maine Painted Furniture exhibit at the Maine State Museum in 1983. A



Photo 27. Side detail decoration, AP



Photo 28a, 28b. Decoration with pink and yellow embellishments, AP

highly illustrated catalog accompanied the exhibit, *Simple Forms and Vivid Colors* by Edwin Churchill is still available.

When I first saw the clock at the museum in Augusta, Maine, I was awestruck. Fortunately, my local Brick Store Museum was awarded the opportunity to show the Maine Painted Furniture collection in Kennebunk, Maine. I had the incredible opportunity to not only study the clock's construction, but also to take a week long class with two local decorative artists. The technique is quite simple, but we experimented with a formula that worked both for a primer and decorating medium. We chose an alkyd satin enamel (snowy white) for a primer. We used dry pigment (raw umber, mixed with water and vinegar) for the actual decoration. Window glazing (putty) was used to create the patterns. The yellow and pink embellishments (Photos 28a, 28b)) were done with thin oil paint. This was a wonderful lesson in letting loose.

I used a photographic process to create the numerals on the dial. The rest of the decoration, spandrels, etc. (Fig. 29), I painted using oil paints. The full size clock is in a collection in the Midwest, and I did have the opportunity to visit that collection. I'm happy to say, one of my miniature clocks is now part of that illustrious Americana Collec-

tion. This has been a popular item in my miniature repertoire, and I usually have a standing order for one of these spectacular clocks, my 1"=12" scale Fancy Painted Maine Tall Case Clock as shown above, in photo 26.

I have had the opportunity to do hands on research on a number of iconic pieces of furniture. My wife, Linda LaRoche, collaborated on an important Hadley Chest from the Historic Deerfield Collection. I made the chest using traditional Hadley Chest joinery, Linda did the shallow carving on the face. Once again, we were able to spend many hours crawling around the original chest. I have also had access to iconic Shaker chests, tables and counters, some pieces from private collections, others from Shaker Museums. It has been both a privilege and a wonderful learning experience doing such serious research. Museum curators, private collectors and antiques dealers have been generous with their time and knowledge. It has been a pleasure and privilege to share some of my 40 years of experiences and expertise with members of HSEAD through *The Decorator*. I hope to continue exploring early American furniture and discovering these creative solutions by rural furniture makers.



Photo 29. Author's detail of the dial decoration, AP



James Hastrich has been making authentic miniature reproductions of American Painted Furniture, 1790-1840, for over 40 years. His research takes him into the elite museums along the east coast. He has licensing agreements with many of these museums.

Book Shelf

Pleasing Truths: Power and Portraits in The American Home,

DAR Museum Exhibition Catalogue by William A. Stollo.

DAR Museum, Washington, D.C., 137 pages. Published 2023 by the DAR.

Overview by Sandra Cohen

In March 2023, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Museum in Washington, D.C. opened an Exhibition entitled, “Pleasing Truths: Power and Portraits in The American Home.” The catalogue features a generous array (42 paintings) of 18th and 19th Century portraits, profiles of early America’s promising and prominent men, women and children. The portraits capture not only their individual physical characteristics, but they also reveal personal traits and include symbols of fashion, propriety and the evolution of values, particularly for women.

Initially, the colonies were populated by immigrants, seeking a new way of life and bringing with them their traditions and skills. By the 18th and particularly, the 19th Century, American entrepreneurial spirit manifested itself in a robust economy. Trading took place across the country and across the “pond,” and included the prosperous East Asia and China Trade. The more affluent members of society purchased goods from abroad, but products such as wallpaper, fabrics, silverware and furnishings were manufactured and became more available in the colonies, especially after the American Revolution.

William A. Stollo, Curator of Exhibitions for the DAR and Editor of the Catalogue, *Pleasing Truths: Power and Portraits in The American Home*, assembled a collection of portraits that intentionally characterizes 18th and 19th Century Americans, their positions and responsibilities, and the accessories that convey the importance of their rank and roles. Having one’s portrait painted was a popular means of asserting and preserving one’s image for posterity. Their faces uniquely identify them, but their expressions, body language, attire, surroundings and embellishments complement, not only the sitters’ stories but a new country’s unfolding identity. The catalogue includes essays, written by Stollo and his colleagues, that paint a picture of portraiture’s historical context in a meaningful context.

Janine Yorimoto Boldt, Assoc. Curator of American Art at the University of Wisconsin's Chazen Museum of Art, invites us to examine "Lucy Parks Byrd's Body: Viewing Female Authority in Colonial Portraiture." Boldt's description includes Byrd's hand gesture and the painting's accessories, "an Indigenous basket and an enslaved attendant," at her side. Her gown's deep neckline accentuating her décolletage and femininity, conveyed the importance of fertility and the distinctive reference that held.

Katie McKinney, the Margaret Beck Pritchard Assoc. Curator of Maps and Prints at Colonial Williamsburg, contributed "Very Considerable Likenesses and Miserable Caricatures: The Portrait Print in Early America." Quoting John Neagle, an American artist, McKinney wrote "Engraving is not a Copy but a translation from color to black and white..." conveying that the lithographer "should enter into the spirit and feeling of the painter." The art of lithography, costly and requiring highly skilled artisans, was firmly established in England and provided colonists with a visual "who's who" in England, along with the latest styles and customs. Prints rarely depicted women, but Phyllis Wheatley, whose mezzotint appeared as the frontispiece of her book (1773), was a gifted African American poet and her print is believed to be the first portrait of a Black female author. American artists trained in lithography in London. Peter Pelham "taught his stepson, John Singleton Copley, the skill of mezzotint engraving. After the American Revolution, and in response to England's imagined depictions of prominent military and political figures, lithography became a popular means in America of proliferating accurate likenesses in opposition to England's "miserable caricatures." Paul Revere produced a lithograph of the Boston Massacre, days after it occurred, based on Pelham's drawing, inciting Americans who displayed the prints in their homes. By the mid-1820s, the availability of materials such as paper as well as more entrepreneurial interest and training in lithography, popularized print making. Print making made portraits and propaganda by Colonials more effective and affordable.

Neal Hurst, Assoc. curator of Costume and Textiles at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, began his commentary: "I Set Again to Take The Drapery: Clothing in Early American Portraits." The quote was recorded on May 21st, 1772, by George Washington in his diary as he prepared to have his portrait painted by Charles Wilson Peale; "drapery" referred to his clothing. I found this section fascinating because the viewer is initially captivated by the costuming of the sitter that covers

so much of the painting's surface. The artist's ability is successfully challenged to render realistic textures from flesh to furnishings to fabrics and jewels.

Regarding men's "drapery" (clothing), Hurst included a remark by John Harrower, "a Scottish servant," who wrote to his wife "They wash here the whitest that I have ever seed, for they first Boyle all the Cloaths (Linen) with soap, and then wash them..." White shirts were the most expensive and appealing and most often worn in portraits. Collars were folded over cravats, but in the early 19th Century, the "tall starched standing shirt collar appeared, and the opened coat and waistcoat revealed more of the shirt." Waistcoats, popular from the mid-17th Century, were handsomely tailored, shawl collared and double breasted with numerous buttons.

Breeches, worn by men since the 16th Century, extended to just below the knee. The "tight fitted" trousers, (pantaloons), replaced the breeches by the early 19th Century and disappeared from men's fashion in America. The final layer, the coat, is looser, has pockets with flaps and "buttons and buttonholes that extend from the neck to the hem." Numerous buttons were also considered a symbol of affluence. Books on fashion, fitting and tailoring men's "drapery" prompted a prosperous occupation during the early 19th Century.

Hurst further commented on female attire that the "mantua" was the typical style of gown worn by women in the late 17th Century. The dressmaker draped the fabric on the woman affixing the contours and pleats with pins. Mantua clothiers customized the gown, from "fancy and fine to the plain and work a day." The outer layer of women's fashion in portraiture is a feast for the eye. However, only the outer layer is visible. The first is a shift, from neck to knee and sometimes a three-quarter sleeve and with "a pocket tied around the waist, accessible through a slit in the gown and petticoat." (Historians noted that Abigail Adams kept the keys to her China and silver cupboard in such a pocket.) Over the shift were her stays, creating a tiny waist and compressed bust. However, most 18th Century women wore a gown, stomacher (a triangular piece worn in the front that allows one to adjust the fit) and the petticoat. By the end of the 18th Century, stays were replaced by corsets, much less constricting and providing a natural fit for the bust. Fashion, likely influenced by European designers, diversified over the 19th Century. Jewelry, attention to hair styles and a variety of adornments such as lace, shawls, and particularly books and letters, became more desirable.

Children are charmingly depicted as important members of the

family. Male and female toddlers are dressed alike and often in loose fitting gowns, allowing for easy changes of undergarments. However, once boys are “potty trained” and can master “buttoning,” they appear in breeches, later pantaloons, waistcoats and coats, echoing their future mode of “drapery.” Approaching their early teens, they “no longer wear wide ruffled collars,” that appear over the top of their coats. Girls invariably wear white gowns with colored sashes until they become adults or marry.

Strollo’s catalogue, essays and a diverse selection of 42 portraits, enhances one’s appreciation of not only the DAR’s exhibit, but portraiture in general. The curators invite you to spend time with each portrait and appreciate every intentional aspect of the sitters’ expression, body language, fashion and each accoutrement. Like many of the sitters, Rachel Marshall directly gazes at the viewer while an innocent uncertainty is reflected in the gaze of Rebeckah Barrett. There is a silhouette of Prince Simbo, a free black man, and a lithograph of Mo-Hon-Go, Osage Woman; the U.S. War Department had commissioned portraits of Native American delegations to Washington, D.C., and interest in them prompted the production of these prints. Hannah Morgan Stillman, an affluent matron, bore 14 children and having established the Boston Female Asylum and Boston Society for the Care of Girls, exudes a sense of achievement. The determination of Captain Christopher Marshall, 10th Massachusetts Regiment, inspires trust and respect during America’s war for independence. We defer to the gravity and dignity of Mary White Price, in command of her domain, and admire independent Amelia Stratton Comfield, author, seen holding the 4th edition of her novel, *Alida*. These are just a few of the captivating portraits in Strollo’s catalogue of the DAR’s Exhibition.

Pleasing Truths, Power and Portraits in The American Home offers you a way to recognize and understand 18th and 19th Century portraiture. The Exhibit was curated by William A. Strollo, Curator of Exhibitions at the DAR, who respectfully acknowledged the assistance of several colleagues over his years of research and preparation and expressed gratitude to the several museums who loaned portraits from their collections. “Pleasing Truths” will be on exhibit through December 2023; the catalogue is available from the DAR Museum store.





Standards for Excellence

“The Historical Society of Early American Decoration grants “A” and “B” and Reproduction Awards for those entries that show excellence in craftsmanship and meet the Society’s Standards” as outlined in more specific detail in *The Standards’ Manual*. The tradition of research and of encouraging excellence through evaluation of members’ work began at the Fall Meeting at the Wellesley Hills Country Club, Wellesley, Mass. in 1947 (recorded in Vol. 1, No.2 of *The Decorator*).

The following excerpted overview offers a perspective of the guidelines (reviewed and revised with respect to ongoing research over the years) for recording historically authentic reproductions submitted for Judging.

“The design of the article submitted must be authentic and appropriate for the piece in size, period and type of decoration. The work must demonstrate techniques that meet the requirements of the category.

The design must include adequate work to demonstrate the craftsman’s ability and to afford the judges enough painting to enable them to make their assessment.

The design and work must meet all General Requirements as well as the Category Requirements. If the design includes other techniques in addition to those of the category, each technique will be judged according to the requirements of that specific category.”

Congratulations and appreciation to all who choose to undergo this process.



Historical Society of Early American Decoration

Master Teachers, Master Craftsmen and Specialists

HSEAD Master Teachers

Clark, Maryjane 1962
Watts, Margaret 1965
Martin, Gina 1968

Hutchings, Dorothy 1969
Gross, Helen 1972
Donnellan, Astrid 1994

HSEAD Master Craftsmen

Bond, Jessica H. 1952
Martin, Virginia (Gina) 1952
Underhill, Emilie 1952
Watts, Margaret 1952
Clark, Maryjane 1955
Hague, Helen 1957
Drury, Bernice 1960
Murray, Maria 1960
Gross, Helen 1962
Cruze, Annetta 1964
Burns, Florence 1967

Hutchings, Dorothy 1967
Keegan, Cornelia (Phil) 1969
Wallace, Louise 1970
Lambeth, Deborah 1979
Donnellan, Astrid 1981
Sherman, Phyllis 1981
Edrington, Roberta 1983
Hedge, Carolyn 1989
Heinz, Carol 2010
Davis, Dortia 2012
Brubaker, Linda 2017
Bartow, Pauline 2022

HSEAD Specialists

Tucker, Lois / Country Painting 1993
Baker, Ann / Country Painting 1995-96
Edrington, Roberta / Free Hand Bronze 1997
Victorian Flower Painting 2000
Buonato, Carol / Clock Dials 2004
Dimock, Anne / Reverse Glass 2012
Jewett, Parma/ Country Painting 2016

Sources:

Chairmen of *The Decorator*, Standards & Judging, Specialist Awards





HSEAD Research Center



HSEAD Research Center, Historic Stockade District, Schenectady, N.Y.

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration (HSEAD) maintains its Archival Collections and Library at its facility in Schenectady, New York. Located in the Historic Stockade District at 26 N. College Street, the center also houses the research papers of several prominent experts and teachers of early American decoration. Visits are available by appointment.

(518) 372-2220 info@hsead.org

Future Meetings

Annual Membership Meeting

Wyndham Southbury
Southbury, Connecticut
May 17 – 19, 2024

HSEAD Fall Folk Art School

Wyndham Southbury
Southbury, Connecticut
September 26 – 29, 2024

Annual Membership Meeting

Sonesta Hotel
White Plains, New York
May 2 – 4, 2025



CALL FOR ENTRIES

ATTENTION

TRADITIONAL AND HOLIDAY ARTISANS

**Apply now for Early American Life's 2024
Directory of Traditional American Crafts®**

Join the roster of elite traditional artisans offering
wares for purchase to discriminating customers.

Juried selections will be published in the
August 2024 and Christmas 2024 issues.

NOVEMBER 15, 2023: Entry forms available at
www.EarlyAmericanLife.com

JANUARY 15, 2024: Entry forms and digital
images postmark deadline.

HSEAD2023

**Early American
Life**
traditions
period style
antiques
architecture
history

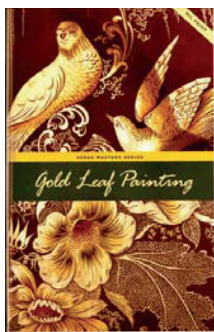
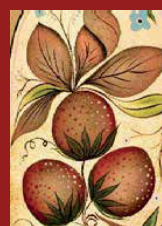
440-543-8566
Directory 2024
Early American Life
PO Box 221230
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122

Sponsors

The Historical Society of Early American Decoration (HSEAD) is grateful to its authors and advertisers who continue to offer their support, services and materials to members of HSEAD and *The Decorator*.

Historical Society of Early American Decoration

Products and Publications



Instructional Videos

Videos include instructions by "Masters" of the crafts. Like having a teacher at your side, these videos allow you to learn or refresh your EAD skills.

Country Painting (VHS tape)

Bronze Powder Stenciling (DVD)

Freehand Bronze (DVD)

Clock Dials (DVD)

Theorem (DVD)

Gold Leaf (DVD)

Reverse Glass Painting (DVD)

Videos are available for free. Go to hsead.org, Home Page, click on The Art We Love, Learn More and scroll down to available instructional videos.

Publications

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.

A list of HSEAD publications and supplies is available on the website. For ordering information, please contact HSEAD at info@hsead.org.

The Decorators

Decorators are available to read for free.

Go to hsead.org, Home Page, click on *The Decorator*, Learn More and choose from the list of *Decorator* issues.

Vol. 1 - 46

Vol. 47 - 58

Vol. 59 - present issue

Print Edition of *The Decorator* is included in the Membership Fee of \$40.00



(518) 372-2220 • info@hsead.org • www.hsead.org

Lending Library of Design

Patterns are available to members only as downloads from the HSEAD website.



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

Country Painting on Tinware
Stenciling on Tinware

Theorem Patterns: Includes tracing, color picture and instructions.

Schnader Chair Patterns

Freehand Bronze & Painted Chair Patterns
Each pattern includes tracing and 8" x 12" digital color photo.



Lending Library of Design:

Patterns include tracings and high-resolution photograph.

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,
14K Gold

Prices Available Upon Request

Order Information

Before placing an order, please contact us by e-mail at info@hsead.org or by telephone at (518)372-2220 to determine the availability of the item(s).

(Catalog is unavailable at this time.)

All Contact information for ordering is listed below.

Send order and make check payable to

HSEAD, Inc

P.O. Box 426, Lititz, PA 17543-0426



(518) 372-2220 • info@hsead.org • www.hsead.org

ALISTAIR JONES

HISTORIC BOXES & TEA CADDIES

Made with Select
Woods and Veneers



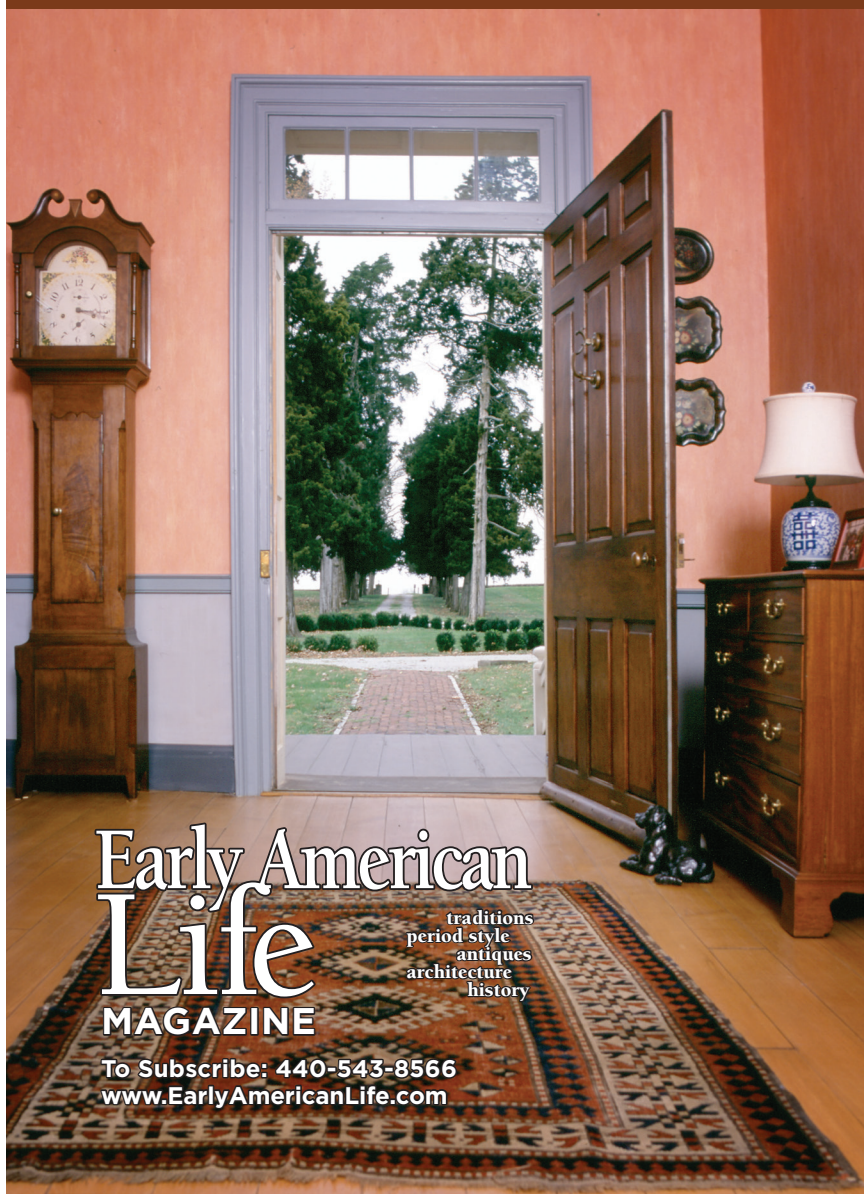
(860) 364-9866

ALISTAIRLJ@MSN.COM

SHARON, CT

Traditions. Period Style. Antiques.
Architecture. History.

For 50+ years, the authority.



Early American
Life
MAGAZINE

traditions
period style
antiques
architecture
history

To Subscribe: 440-543-8566
www.EarlyAmericanLife.com

AVAILABLE NOW



The Historical Society of Early American Decoration, Its Historical Record

by
Valerie B. Oliver

over 200 pages and over 120 colored photographs

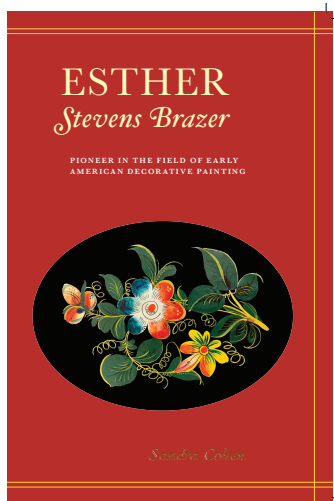
A fascinating and colorful history, the publication describes the dedicated efforts to preserve and continue the styles of early American painted decoration that are the focus of the Society. The index helps to identify the individual contributions of many over the years.

Orders: burnham.valerie.feb@gmail.com
\$35 plus shipping & handling

AVAILABLE NOW

ESTHER Stevens Brazer

Pioneer in The Field of Early American Decorative Painting, A Precious Inheritance
by Sandra Cohen



Esther Stevens Brazer's remarkable
life in over 300 pages and
135 photographs included in B & W and Color Inserts

\$35 plus shipping and handling
To order: earlyamericanlegacy@gmail.com

Esther Stevens Brazer loved telling the stories behind America's artifacts—what she called our “precious inheritance”—and the variety of painted decorations that embellish their surfaces. This biography tells her remarkable life story through family memories, her articles, work, professional correspondence and letters to dear friends. Her scholarship and dedication to early American decoration has inspired generations of artists and collectors with her sense of joy about everything to do with the techniques that captivated her—their history, styles, and execution. Everyone who cherishes early America's ornamented material legacy should know her name and celebrate her contribution to this genre.



HSEAD Committee Chairs

Awards Chair	Debra Fitts
Specialist	Parma Jewett
Chapters' Coordinator	Sandra Strong
Convention Planner	Pauline Bartow
Education Committee	Charlie Gruman, Chair
	Linda Brubaker and Rebecca Kidder
Exhibition	Linda Sheldon
Finance	James Brubaker
Folk Art School	Shirley Hanley
Historian	Valerie Oliver
Photographer	Andrew Gillis
Publicity	Susan Tash
Publications	
Annual Report	Jeffrey Sheldon
<i>Decorator</i> Editor	Sandra Cohen
Newsletter	
& Meeting Publications	Linda Sheldon
Registration	Pauline Bartow
Schenectady Property Manager	Kenneth Bartow
Social Media Coordinator	Bonnie Gerard
Standards and Judging	Linda Brubaker
The Painted Works	Eve Marschark





A reproduction by James Hastrich of a miniature Spittler blanket chest.