GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS

GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS JOURNAL

Volume V Number 3 · Spring 1967

Après les choses qui sont

AFTER THE BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE

de première nécessité

NOTHING IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN BOOKS.

pour la vie, rien n'est plus

FROM THE *MANUEL TYPOGRAPHIQUE* OF

précieux que les livres.

PIERRE SIMON FOURNIER, PARIS, 1764.

JOURNAL OF THE GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS

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Guild at the above address

(Editor of this issue: Duncan Andrews)

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The cover carries the first page of the Guild's brochure, somewhat reduced in size. The italic calligraphy is by Catharine Fournier.

HOPES AND FEARS FOR THE ITALIC HAND / Paul Standard

Most laymen who 'discover' the italic hand like to talk about its special qualities -- its slimness, its grace, its sudden opening of a vast, unsuspected horizon in aesthetics. But what they are generally silent about is the modest tool that makes the achievement at all possible -- the edged pen.

This simple, unregarded instrument is in fact among the most ingenious inventions known to man, and yet its special powers remain largely unrecognized and its benefits as largely ignored.

Edged pens were first cut from reeds or quills, but by the early 18th century they were stamped out of metal, and these latter are in general use today, except where a scribe needs hairlines extremely fine -- a task for which the quill's sharply cut bevel is supremely suited. The pens we know best are those with tips pointed or blunted. The Palmer or Zanerian business handwriting is done with a stiff, pointed steel nib; it can also be written with a ballpoint, since both these scripts are mono-weight, all strokes in whatever direction having a common thickness. The pointed pen works in principle like an ice-pick dipped in ink; the edged pen works more like a jeweler's screw-driver dipped in ink. The stroking of a pointed pen or a ballpoint is, alas! only too unvarying and produces a mere monotone of 'color' on its page.

In contrast, the edged pen records an undulating ribbon of thicks and thins, regularly alternating from one to the other without manual pressure; the scribe's only task is to maintain the pen's edge at some agreed angle to the established writing line. So maintained, the pen 'remembers' to yield the requisite variations of thickness, the scribe's heart skipping a beat as he delightedly watches the 'remembering' powers of this cooperative tool -- an experience he shares with so many departed scribes of Renaissance Italy, and with the many Britons who early acquired the italic hand.

In the noble quarto of Fairbank and Wolpe enti-

tled Renaissance Handwriting* appears a virtual gallery of scholars and sovereigns whom posterity can call italic's British pioneers, among whom are, with date affixed: Thomas Linacre 1517; 7-year-old Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond 1526; John Cheke 1543; Katherine Parr 1544; Lady Jane Grey 1552; Bartholomew Dodington 1561; Roger Ascham 1542, and his Princess pupil of 1552 who was to become Queen Elizabeth. Among the Mayflower's passengers arriving at Plymouth in 1620, only two or three wrote an italic hand, and those were the only college men on board.

The remembering quality above mentioned was what made the edged pen famous and universal in the western world from the earliest antiquity, famous, in the late Edward Johnston's phrase, as the supreme letter-shaping tool.

This tool it is that shaped not only the Latin alphabet but the Hebrew, Greek and Arabic as well, along with the variant scripts these languages were to develop through their histories. My Cooper Union students, for instance, spent virtually the whole spring term of their second year planning, writing and illustrating a quarto (in vertical or oblong format) titled Ten Historic Scripts Written with the Edged Pen, successive pages being devoted to each, arranged in chronological order. Each script of course has its own optimum pen-angle to the horizontal writing line. For italic and Arabic it is some 45°; for Hebrew and for Rustic caps, 75°; for the humanistic roman forms, some 25°. But the greatest surprise comes with the earliest roman letters -- the classical lapidary capitals still visible in Rome, notably those of the Trajan inscription dating from 114 A.D. Carved into their 9' x 4' oblong stone panel at the base of an 80' column, these letters were first written with an edged tool (this time an edged brush about $\frac{1}{2}$" wide, dipped

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*Alfred Fairbank & Berthold Wolpe: RENAISSANCE HANDWRITING. An Anthology of Italic Scripts. London: Faber, 1960. A most impressive collection of italic hands, with a matchless showing by English practitioners, many with scribal gifts worthy of the greatest Italian masters.

in whitewash) and then cut in V-incision, usually by the man who had done the writing. The Trajan characters show the brush-edge position at some 15° to the horizontal for all letters save O and Q, where the angle drops to 8°.

These lettershapes became the norms whence the ensuing variants were to develop in the centuries to come. An O, for example, is made of a backward crescent joined without seam to an answering forward crescent; the axis-line through the two thins running slightly northwest-southeast -- that is, at right angles to the brush-edge's sidling motion to northeast-southwest of the O's equator.

In italic, with the pen's edge riding a diagonal in the square, we get more than a mere variance in bulk of strokes. With each upward rebound from baseline, the hand is propelled forward by the angular spring as we write, and since the angle remains constant, the interval between downstroke and downstroke remains constant too, as if to assure the scribe of the very regularity he seeks in letter-spaces within each word. These are intervals the pen seems to measure for us, once we learn the general shapes of the italic letters.

And what spacing should we aim for? Arrighi's Operina tells us that the average small letter at x-height will fill a parallelogram whose height is double its breadth, and this goes for all letters except ijmw. Our task, then, is to contrive in every line a slightly-sloping picket fence with optically equal spaces between paling and paling. Each such space is to be as wide as that enclosed between the legs of the n, which means that each word's letters attain an optical equilibrium between their interior and exterior spaces. The eye, the mind, the hand -- and the subtle propulsion of the pen rebounding from baseline -- all these conspire to produce the regularity we seek. It is a regularity optical, not metrical; the eye is pleased so long as the intervals are not grossly irregular.

Indeed, if a scribe were cursed with the dubious boon of ultra-precision, his informal italic shapes would become disaffecting, as looking too measured, too mechanical, over-precise. It is worth remembering the late James Wardrop's acute observation that italic

is the only script which thrives upon informality. Every scribe will have noticed what added, unexpected grace a slightly wayward stroke may bring -- though here, as elsewhere, the problem is how to remain only slightly wayward, or only very occasionally wayward.

Italic's very modesty of form seems to contain within itself a self-destructive danger, which has been noted by historians of aesthetics. Its quiet patrician grace and its general avoidance of prettification have occasionally brought upon itself the crudest efforts at decoration -- mostly by eager beavers who have still to discern how much decoration is already built into this script, or by the tasteless, who will not scruple to impose alien traits from the gothic or the baroque. And since the edged pen enables a scribe (even when wearing a blindfold) to produce arabesques and flourishes at will, every page may become infested with them, their 'creator' alone unaware of the blight they bring to the scribal landscape. Even professional folk, who should know better, sometimes show this pathetic reliance upon a questionable asset that is certain, in the end, to displease creator and victim alike.

The simple way to avoid such temptations is to look at examples of italic at its best; and, like so many another art and craft, italic was at its very best when it was born; by the middle of the 1500's its decay was well begun -- in Italy itself and in the rest of Europe as well. Perhaps the best single source of spirited italic scripts is the Fairbank-Wolpe quarto already mentioned. A more modest working volume is Fairbank's earlier handy King Penguin title, A Book of Scripts, now being expanded to 80 plates from the present 60. Studying these the beginner -- or even the practised scribe -- will by degrees come to prefer some masters to others, and will thereby learn to discriminate between mere virtuosi (quickly recognizing their present-day counterparts) and the solid, tactful and legible scribes whose letters continue to reproach all pretentious excess.

The quondam user of a pointed pen or a ballpoint stylus who takes up an edged pen becomes at once a special person -- special not only to those destined

to read his improved script, but special even to himself.

He seems to be witnessing a recurrent miracle as each italic character in every line of his writing obeys a law dating back some two thousand years when the tool was first developed. By contrast, all hairline writing, so anaemic in its color as to be a simulacrum, a mere pretence of flesh-and-blood script -- all hairline writing suddenly becomes a reproach. Its period of widest acceptance came just before the emergence of the typewriter; but now that the typewriter and the business machine have taken over the drudgery of industrial correspondence and accounting, the hand can recapture the graces of writing too long sacrificed.

The experience of such a recapture by the use of the edged pen is no routine matter. It is an event, though in differing degree, for children and for adults. For children it is like their first response to the miracle of a snowfall. For adults it assumes rather the nature of Balboa's first sight of the Pacific. If I call each of these an understatement it is because every scribe discovers in his own way the promise of the edged pen, a promise that began as a truism, then lapsed into something long forgotten, then denied and now is newly revealed.

As practice continues, the writer's sense of rediscovery deepens; the sight of grace returning to his letter forms brings a continuing wonder and delight. As the characters improve, the scribe feels a fresh obligation to make his workaday prose worthy of its medium, the exemplar script. I began by thinking this curious response peculiar to myself; but the passing years have brought me ample evidence that such a response is well-nigh universal. If this be so, we owe to italic a cultural debt beyond calculation. Such a debt imposes one further obligation, to restore this script to general use in the land of its birth.

For it is Italy, I think, that needs italic as a matter of pride and of restitution. It was Dr. Claudio Bonacini of Verona, a bibliographer of calligraphy, who a dozen years ago could deplore that "nobody in Italy, alas! either cherishes or studies calligraphy." I remember how the sculptor Aristide Maillol took

heart at the destruction of some art treasures of antiquity during World War II by saying, "Yes, these are losses, but they will spur living masters to make fresh masterpieces." In his hands antiquity and creation were safe.

May one hope that even while Italy's flood-damaged art treasures are being restored, young Italians may resume work with the edged pen and, following the manuals and manuscripts of their own Arrighi, Tagliente and their disciples, recapture in depth what had so long slipped out of Italian awareness? If non-Italian neighbors can effect this recapture, surely native Italians can!

Paul Standard will be familiar to Journal readers as the eminent scribe, teacher, and authority on calligraphy and kindred subjects.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT / Laura S. Young

The Guild has enjoyed another successful season and continues to prosper. The reports of the members of the executive committee follow. Our chairmen continue to do a conscientious and responsible job in their respective areas.

There has been only one change on the committee. Mrs. Jean Burnham was appointed vice-president and membership chairman in Oct. 1966 to fill the vacancy left by Mrs. Eldridge's resignation. She was elected to the post at our recent annual meeting. She is an amateur binder and a professional librarian; and has assumed the duties of this important committee with interest and enthusiasm. We are delighted to have her join us.

All of our program activities have been or will be covered in the Journals for this year.

Our one major policy change -- the removal of our library from the custody of the American Craftsman's Council -- was reported in the winter issue of the Journal and orally at the annual meeting. The reason for the delay in the appearance of the fall issue of the Journal was explained at the annual meeting and appears in the minutes. With a new printer and a firmer editorial policy, hopefully the Journal will appear with more even regularity in future.

For the first time in many years our membership failed to show a net increase; we gained a number of new members, but lost more. This can possibly be attributed to the recent increase in dues, or more probably to a more realistic screening of members whose dues are unpaid. The AIGA now drops members after their third bill goes unacknowledged. The Guild, however, makes one further attempt in the form of a personal letter; if no response is forthcoming, their names are reluctantly removed from our rolls.

The rather large increase in both the volume of correspondence addressed to the Guild and in telephone inquiries (I would estimate some 500 this past season)

indicates that we are making steady progress toward one of our objectives, that of becoming the primary source for information in our field; and possibly is indicative of a growing interest in the hand book crafts.

We have received requests from all over the country for our membership list; our supply list (which is an exclusive service to our members); for help in locating certain types of equipment or materials; for our exhibition catalogs; and specific issues of our Journal (which we make available only to members and institutional libraries).

These inquiries -- all pertaining to Guild affairs -- are relatively easy to answer. They have all received prompt attention, and each reply includes an invitation to join the Guild. We get a number of new members and Journal subscribers each year through these channels.

The other types of inquiries, dealing with the field as a whole, are not so easy to answer in an encouraging and constructive way. We are continuously, though not frequently, asked to recommend teachers for organized or institutional classes; to supply a list of schools or private teachers to prospective students; to send a list of craftsmen who are qualified to do specific jobs or who are located in certain geographic areas; and to give advice and help in locating a job in the field.

In these areas, which are basic to the future of the hand book crafts, we are currently caught up in a dilemma; on one hand jobs are scarce and we can offer little encouragement to people seeking work, while on the other hand when job openings do occur qualified people to fill them are hard to find.

Most requests for teachers are from organized programs; these jobs are generally part-time. This means that the teacher must have some other source of income, and happen to live in the area from which the request comes.

There are, to the best of my knowledge, no schools in this country where an interested person can study in an organized and intensive program. The arts and crafts programs, the non-credit courses offered in some institutions of higher learning and private teachers serve adequately as a source of instruction

for the amateur who does not expect to devote a great deal of time to his avocation. Though many of us in the field today got our start in such programs, these means do not really answer the needs of younger people seeking the necessary education and training on a full-time basis in order to make a career for themselves in the field.

Only a small percentage of our members maintain full-time professional shops, and these are widely scattered, though there are small concentrations in the larger metropolitan areas. There are, however, many sections of the country where there are no professional hand book craftsmen in a radius of 300 miles or more. Should the demands increase appreciably, and there are many reasons to believe that they will, the present practitioners could not hope to cope with the situation. In addition to this, perhaps just as serious a situation exists in the fact that many of our most active and productive members are approaching retirement age.

The ability to produce when called upon is the only sure way to a successful and prosperous future whether it be an individual, a small organization or the automotive industry.

What is the Guild's responsibility in these situations; and what, if anything, can we do to remedy them? Shall we attempt to meet these challenges in a constructive way through the concerted effort and cooperation of our membership; shall we seek outside help, and if so, from whom; or shall we pretend that the situations cited above do not really exist?

I believe that the Guild should assume the responsibility for setting in motion projects that will bring about the necessary changes required to insure the future health and prosperity of the hand book crafts.

As a modest beginning, I offer the following proposals:

1. That we all work together in compiling a file of all hand book craftsmen and all courses offered in our field in the country, with as much detailed information as can be obtained. We have attempted in the past to gather this type of information from the questionnaire which is sent to each new member; while the response has been good, the information has been meager.

2. That all members receiving inquiries regarding employment, teachers, classes, etc., send a copy of their reply to the Guild's secretary (unless, of course, it pertains to your own affairs.) It would help if we knew the extent of such inquiries; and it would also help if we expressed a corporate opinion or belief in our replies.

If these two things were accomplished we would be in a better position to evaluate with reasonable accuracy the nation-wide activity in the field, and the role that the Guild is currently occupying in this picture. This information would also prove useful in recruiting new members.

3. On several occasions in the past the suggestion has been made that the Guild should have some objective way of determining the knowledge and competence of its professional members. While the idea is good, such a plan poses many problems in an organization as small as the Guild, particularly since "interest" in the hand book crafts has been our only prerequisite for membership; and in view of the fact that degrees, certificates and an organized apprentice system on which we might rely for this information are all lacking in this country. We cannot afford to nor do we have any desire to arbitrarily put into effect regulatory measures that might in any way embarrass or make unhappy our present membership.

In the field of calligraphy we might find a number of experts with no Guild ties who would be willing to advise us objectively; in the field of binding, however, most of the well-trained and reputable binders and restorers in the country belong to the Guild. It would be unrealistic to expect them to work out objectively a series of tests or examinations which they themselves might be required to take. Objectivity flees when subjectivity is imminent.

With a steadily increasing number of requests from all over the country for competent binders who can handle specific types of work, preferably in a given geographic area, it is becoming more and more obvious that if the Guild is to handle these inquiries efficiently and effectively it is essential that we have knowledge of our members' interests and abilities.

Perhaps the best way to get the program started is

to solicit the help of all members in formulating a series of tests based on the system of masters, journeymen, etc., with the definite understanding that only new professional members be required to take them; that present members, if they so desire, may take the examinations, but if they prefer not to, neither their reputation nor their position within or outside the Guild will in any way be affected or jeopardized.

If such a practice was well established and new members were informed of its existence, it should present no problems in future. It would, I believe, enhance the Guild's reputation the country over; be most helpful to an exhibtion jury; and put the task of commission referrals on a sound and efficient basis.

4. That every active professional give some serious thought to the employment and training of young people who want to earn while they learn.

Currently the paid apprentice or interne system seems to me to be the best solution in meeting the immediate needs in the field. Apprentices learn more, more rapidly, in an active shop than they could possibly learn as students in the same length of time; they are exposed to a greater variety of jobs and are expected and required to produce work that meets the standards of the shop.

If every professional member assumed the responsibility of employing at least one young person, it would increase the productivity of the shop; and in the course of time give us a group of trained people on which to draw when job openings occurred. This will possibly sound more altruistic than practical to some of you; but if provision is not made for passing on the knowledge gained from years of experience, does any specialized work have a future? The careers we create may save our own!

You may not approve of these suggestions; and even if you agree with them they cannot be brought to fruition without the active support and help of the entire membership. Please give them some thought; voice your opinion; and volunteer to help.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING, June 6, 1967 /
Mary S. Coryn

The sixty-first annual meeting of The Guild of Book Workers was held on Tuesday evening, June 6, 1967, in the headquarters of The American Institute of Graphic Arts, 1059 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Present at the meeting were: Mr. and Mrs. Louis Harrow, Mrs. Jean Burnham, Mrs. Lenore M. Dickinson, Mr. H. C. Granger, Mr. Edwin Popenoe, Miss Jerilyn G. Davis, Mrs. Maggy Magerstadt Fisher, Mrs. Mary Schlosser, Mr. Duncan Andrews, Mrs. Enid Perkins, Mrs. Laura S. Young, Miss Frances Manola, Mrs. Inez Pennybacker and Mrs. Mary Coryn.

Mrs. Laura Young, in her official capacity, presided over the meeting. After welcoming the members to the sixty-first annual meeting of The Guild, she asked if there were any corrections that should be made to the minutes of the sixtieth annual meeting which had been published in the third number of volume IV of the Journal. No corrections were offered. Reading of the minutes was duly dispensed with.

Committee Reports - Informal

In her capacity as Treasurer of The Guild, Mrs. Coryn stated that the formal report to be published in the Journal would show a balance of around $2900 in the Guild's favor. With customary caution, however, she warned that this balance would not be so great after printing bills are paid. (Unfortunate delays in scheduled Journal production resulted in late arrival of bills -- which bills will be paid after April 30.)

Mr. Andrews, Exhibition Chairman, reported development of plans for future exhibtions. The Program Chairman, Mrs. Schlosser, briefly summarized the year's events and led a short discussion concerning the proposed activities for next season. Mrs. Burnham said that her report, to be published in detail in the Journal, will show a slight decline in Guild membership -- but very slight. Mr. Jensen, Mrs. Horton, and Mrs. Greenfield -- respectively Publicity, Supply, and Library Chairmen -- were absent.

Mrs. Young reported to the members that the Executive Committee had acted to remove the Guild library from the Museum of American Crafts in order to render the books more accessible, and hence more useful, to Guild members. Through the kindness of Mrs. Greenfield, the books will be cared for in her home and will be made available to members as a circulating library. Mrs. Greenfield will prepare a list of the holdings which will be enclosed, along with rules of operation, with the next issue of the Journal.

Election

The secretary reported that 79 ballots had been received, checked, and counted. She announced the election of the following members to serve two-year terms on the Executive Committee:

Vice President-at-Large	Mrs. Margaret Lecky
Vice President & Membership Chairman	Mrs. Jean Burnham
Supply Chairman	Mrs. Carolyn Horton
Secretary-Treasurer	Mrs. Mary S. Coryn

Officers whose terms expire at the next annual meeting are:

President	Mrs. Laura S. Young
Exhibition Chairman	Mr. Duncan Andrews
Library Chairman	Mrs. Mary E. Greenfield
Program Chairman	Mrs. Mary C. Schlosser
Publicity Chairman	Mr. Grady E. Jensen

There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Young took the opportunity to introduce a new member who was present, Mr. H. C. Granger, and the meeting was adjourned in favor of conversation and refreshments.

TREASURER'S REPORT / Mary S. Coryn
5-1-66 to 4-30-67

Balance on hand May 1, 1966		$ 2,235.45
Receipts		
Dues credited by AIGA	$ 1727.00	
Journal Subscriptions	39.00	
Sale of Publications	6.46	
Sale of Equipment (YMHA & YWCA)	80.00	
Donations	20.00	
	$ 1872.46	
Disbursements		
Journal Costs	$ 647.44	
Executive Committee	165.99	
Exhibition Committee	145.97	
Library Committee	15.00	
Program Committee	161.62	
Publicity Committee	43.40	
Supply Committee	7.55	
	$ 1186.97	
Excess of receipts over disbursements		$ 685.49
Balance, April 30, 1967		$ 2,920.94

Note:
Receipts from Journal subscriptions appear to have fallen off only because of late billing to the libraries.

Receipts from the YMHA and the YWCA represent a part of the McCampbell Bequest Fund. Other monies are being withheld until all sales are final.

Disbursements for the Journal cover Nos. 2 & 3 of Volume IV.

EXHIBTION COMMITTEE / Duncan Andrews

It will be a busy spring for the Guild as, for the first time in several years, we will be having three separate exhibtions of members' work.

Sometime in late winter or early spring -- the dates have yet to be determined -- we will be holding an exhibit at Museum West, San Francisco, California. Museum West is maintained by the American Craftsmen's Council, and is a picturesque and active showcase of the arts. This exhibit was made possible through the efforts of Guild member Duncan Olmsted, President of the Book Club of California, and author of the Book Club Exhibit report contained in this issue.

The Museum West exhibition will be the first time in some years that the Guild, as a separate entity, has exhibited on the West Coast.

From April 3 through April 30, a somewhat smaller exhibit has been arranged at Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts, through the good offices of its alumna, Membership Chairman Jean Burnham.

And from May 6 through May 31, the Guild will hold an exhibit at the Library of Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York, Brooklyn, New York.

All three exhibitions will include work in all Guild categories -- full leather construction binding, case binding, restoration work, protective cases, calligraphy, illumination, decorated papers, and the like.

It is greatly hoped that as many Guild members as possible will contribute work to one, two, or all three of these exhibitions. Final details will shortly be forthcoming; but the time to get working is now!

LIBRARY / Mary E. Greenfield

Thanks to the customary generosity of members and friends, the Library has received the following:

From Mr. William W. Yardley, Rector of Chatham Hall:

The Chat. Chatham Hall Alumni Association, n.d. This bulletin contains an article on Laura S. Young.

Matthews, Brander. Bookbindings Old and New. New York and London: Macmillan & Co., 1895. 342 pp., numerous illustrations.

The Book Collector. London: The Shenval Press, Ltd.

Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring, 1955
No. 3, Autumn, 1955
No. 4, Winter, 1955
Vol. 12, No. 2, Summer, 1963
Vol. 13, No. 4, Winter, 1964
Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring, 1965
No. 2, Summer, 1965
No. 4, Winter, 1965
Vol. 15, No. 1, Spring, 1966
No. 2, Summer, 1966
No. 3, Autumn, 1966
Vol. 16, No. 1, Spring, 1967 (A special issue on Florence.)
No. 2, Summer, 1967

From Mr. Duncan Andrews:

Nixon, Howard M. Roger Powell and Peter Waters. 450 copies produced and bound at The Slade, Froxfield, 1965. 8 pp. of text, 27 plates.

From Polly Lada Mocarski:

Ray, Gordon N. "The Future of the Book." American Library Association Bulletin. September, 1966. 11 pp.

From Jean Burnham: $10.00.

Perhaps many of you already subscribe to The Book Collector. For those who don't, it is available at The Shenval Press, 58 Frith Street, London, W1. $6.50 yearly. This is a most interesting publication for book binders as well as collectors. The Library plans to subscribe to it, but members may well find it of sufficient interest to wish to have their own copies.

Miss Elizabeth Swaim has told us of a bibliography:

Payne, John R. "An Annotated List of Works on Fine Bindings." American Book Collector. Vol. 18, No. 1, September, 1967. pp. 11-22.

This is available from The American Book Collector, 1822 School Street, Chicago, 60657. $1.00.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE / Mary C. Schlosser

The Program Committee report need not be lengthy, as detailed reports of the individual programs appear in the various numbers of Volume V of the Journal.

I want to thank the several members who have from time to time most thoughtfully made donations to our refreshments at meetings, as it has been the Guild's policy not to expend our precious operating funds on these pleasant but non-essential libations.

As always, I need more ideas and suggestions so that programs can serve the interests of the membership as widely as possible.

And again this year I must thank the other members of the Executive Committee, all of whom do so much to keep your programs coming.

PUBLICITY & NEWS NOTES / Grady E. Jensen

The San Francisco Contemporary Hand Bookbinders held an exhibition in the clubrooms of The Book Club of California, San Francisco, from April 17 to May 12. GBW member Duncan Olmsted, who is Chairman of the San Francisco group, wrote a most interesting review of the exhibition which is included beginning on page 24.

The feature article in July 1967 issue of National Geographic magazine is entitled "Florence Rises From the Flood." This is an excellent review of the great flood of November 4, 1966 and, as might be expected, includes numerous fine color photographs of the extensive damage incurred. Of particular interest to BGW members are five photographs and related text of damage to and drying of books from a number of libraries.

The 1967 Bohemian Club annual exhibition was held at the Bohemian Art Gallery in San Francisco from May 8-26. In addition to painting and sculpture, GBW members William H. French and Anson Herrick exhibited hand bindings. Mr. French displayed eight bindings and the original drawing of his Bookplate. Mr. Herrick exhibited ten bindings.

During the 1966-67 year, in addition to Journal News Notes, the GBW Publicity Committee sent four mailings to members:

- In November 1966 a postal card was sent out announcing the December 10 talk by Frederick B. Adams, Jr. at The Frick Collection on "1,000 Years of Bookbinding."
- Also in November a postal card announcement was mailed to announce an exhibition of 16th Century bindings at the Grolier Club, "Bookbinding Styles During the Renaissance in France."
- In January 1967 a card was sent out to mention the article on the German fine binder Kurt Londenberg, which appeared in the January/February 1967 issue of Craft Horizons magazine.
- In February a reprint of an article in the New York Times was sent out. The article, about the New York Public Library, appeared in the February 20 edition and was entitled "Library Battles Decay of Books."

EXHIBITION NOTICE

As this issue goes to press, we learn that the dates for the Museum West exhibition (see page 17) have been determined. They are: June 27 through July 28, 1968.

ITALIC HANDWRITING IN ELEMENTARY GRADES / Mary L. Janes

When it was suggested to me that I write of the "success story" of italic handwriting in the school where I am a teacher, I was told that "we are all aware of the great benefit derived from learning the italic hand." Unfortunately, the word all in that statement is misleading: many elementary-school teachers today are firmly opposed to any calligraphic system which threatens to undermine the system they themselves have been taught, as, for example, the so-called Palmer Method. Further, there are also teachers who are indifferent to any instruction in the art of handwriting--those teachers believe that writing is merely a tool that pupils acquire along the way with little or no instruction. Consequently, before embarking upon any program for the introduction of italic writing into the curriculum of a school, it is necessary to "instruct the instructors," to persuade them of the value and aesthetics of the italic script, to point out the practical advantages, and to give the future instructors as much actual training in the techniques of the art as possible--in short, to provide an understanding calligraphic "missionary" who has himself had both professional and educational experience in the art.

Personally, it has been my good fortune to have studied italic handwriting for a number of years under Mr. Paul Standard; also, I have had some instruction in England from Mr. Alfred Fairbank. Further, I have been in the educational world for a long period, and at first needed some persuasion to abandon the Palmer Method and the print-script (the last point possibly attesting my "understanding" of the reluctant beginner!). Therefore, the school where I am at present teaching has given me the responsibility for training our teachers of handwriting, now that the school has formally adopted the italic hand. At my suggestion, when we began the program, the school arranged with Mr. Standard to give an extended series of lectures and practical demonstrations for the teachers involved; I, myself, now give brief weekly instruction to all

teachers of handwriting who are new to our school, instruction which is open to all other teachers who may be interested; and all new teachers are asked to study (and to follow in their teaching) the material described in the Alfred Fairbank Beacon Writing Series. (Incidentally, parents' interest is encouraged; some parents have even asked for instruction for themselves!) And I feel that I should here point out that the teachers of italic handwriting in my school have been most cooperative in following the program, and those who at the start were hesitant to acknowledge the legibility, speed, and distinguished quality of the italic script are now converted.

As to the actual curriculum in writing, we have, of course, worked out a procedure to satisfy our departmentalized and particular needs. Grades I, II, and III each has two thirty-minute periods per week allotted to handwriting; in those classes, the Beacon texts are used solely as references for the teacher. The pupils write on double-lined paper: Grade I uses pencil ("English Cumberland Beginners' Pencil"), but Grades II and III are introduced to ink ("William Mitchell Reservoir Dip Pens"). The natural desire of a child to create a "fair copy" is capitalized upon throughout: as W. R. Letheraby has said, everyone should be taught "to recognize his own handwriting as an art."

Grades IV and V (formal instruction in handwriting does not go beyond Grade V) each has two forty-minute periods per week allotted to handwriting; in those classes, the Beacon texts are used by the pupils themselves, paper is single-lined, and pupils may employ fountain-pens ("Osmiroid") or the dip pens (appropriate sizes) mentioned above in connection with Grades I, II, and III.

In all five grades, speed is held to be subsidiary to the mastery of the correct forms and to the development of the cursive. However, we have found that speed usually takes care of itself as soon as pupils have become really familiar with forms and joinings. (The degree of speed is obviously determined by the personal characteristics of the individual pupil.)

Yes, italic writing can be a "success," and as a small bit of evidence of that success in the calli-

graphic "story" of the school where I teach, I am able to report that one of our older pupils (Grade XI), trained by us in the italic hand, was the recipient of the second prize in the Fourth Annual Italic Handwriting Competition sponsored by the Arts Association of New England Preparatory Schools, and open to all pupils in secondary schools, both independent and public, throughout the nation. And here we hope that pride, our pride, goes before encouragement, instead of going before "destruction"!

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A SAN FRANCISCO EXHIBTION / Duncan H. Olmsted

An exhibit of work by the San Francisco Contemporary Hand Bookbinders was held at The Book Club of California, San Francisco, from April 17 to May 12, 1967. The exhibit committee consisted of Duncan H. Olmsted, chairman, Mrs. Herbert Fahey and Miss Eleanor Hesthal, with Mrs. Peter Fahey in charge of organizing, assembling and installing the exhibit.

There were 13 hand binders represented, six designers of boxes and slip cases, two designers of marbled papers, and one calligrapher.

The most versatile exhibitor in the show was Donald Brown, who was represented by original work in bookbinding, calligraphy and illumination, boxes and slip-cases, and decorative papers. His binding for The Four Gospels (Limited Editions Club) was of black Oasis morocco; on the front cover an orange cape morocco mosaic of the four Saints' initials and the cross; edges rough gilt; decorations and initials in the text colored and illuminated with shell gold; blue French marbled end papers; drop back box covered with dyed grey laminated papers and silk lined.

San Francisco members of the Guild of Book Workers who exhibited were: Anson Herrick, Paul Mucci, Duncan H. Olmsted and Stella Patri. The first two were represented by one binding each, Olmsted by five, and Mrs. Patri by two. Mrs. Patri had bound Michel Tapie's Claire Falkenstein in black Oasis morocco; on the front and back covers a striking design of yellow Oasis morocco mosaics in free forms; chemise covered with green paper and lined with grey Mingei Japanese paper; design on chemise a collage of grey Mingei; slip case lined with black skiver, leather edged and covered with Eishiro Abe's grey Mingei Japanese paper.

Of the five bindings shown by Duncan Olmsted, his own favorite is The Book of Geoffrey Chaucer, published by The Book Club of California. It is bound in tetranigre cape morocco; on the front cover a mosaic title designed from William Caxton type in orange morocco; doublures and fly-leaves of French marbled paper; head gilt; drop back box covered with brown Belgian linen and silk-lined.

Miss Eleanor Hesthal showed four bindings. She bound The Limited Editions Club edition of Oscar Wilde's Salome in natural niger morocco; both covers and spine displaying free form black Oasis morocco mosaics; doublures and fly leaves of French black suede; gardes of French decorative paper; air brushed bands of burnt sienna and sepia, gold sprinkled; drop back box covered with burnt sienna Kaji Japanese paper, brown silk lined.

Four bindings were also shown by Mrs. John I. Walter. Jules Renard's Histoire Naturelles was bound in yellow cape morocco; black and white calf mosaics on front and back covers; gold tooled lines and title on spine; French decorative end papers; mosaics on margins; head gilt; chemise and slip case lined with black skiver, leather edged and covered with black Fabriano paper.

Mrs. Harold A. Wollenberg also exhibited four bindings. She bound Henry James' The Beast in the Jungle, in black Mexican morocco; on both covers oval forms in a flowing line from the base of the board to the top of various colored Oasis morocco mosaics; blind tooled title on spine; head gilt; doublures of blue Oasis morocco; fly leaves of French marbled paper; slip case lined with black skiver, edged with blue Oasis morocco, red Tumba covering.

Of the two bindings shown by Mrs. Barbara Fallon Hiller, the one that attracted the most attention was on Albert Camus' The Fall. Bound in black Oasis morocco, it featured an onlay on the front cover of polished stainless steel, the design in four ovoid forms inspired from the head of man; title on spine cut from stainless steel; black and white marble end papers by Claude Delpierre; slip case lined with black skiver, black Oasis morocco edged and covered with white and black decorative paper by Ateliers Peyron.

Four binders: Miss Catherine Fanshawe, Miss Carol Reed, Miss Lois Stopple and Miss Grace Margaret Webster, showed one binding each. Miss Reed bound Danae, a poem by T. Sturge Moore, in black Oasis morocco; a blind tooled design on the front cover, the title in mosaic of orange Oasis morocco; end papers by Delpierre; drop back box covered with blue Kaji Japanese paper, blue silk lined.

The Limited Editions Club Lysistrata was bound by Miss Stopple in light brown cape morocco; oval forms in a mosaic of various colored leathers, and blind tooled flowing lines and oval forms on the front and back covers; Lois Stopple hand colored ends in Rives French paper; drop back box covered with blue Kaji Japanese paper, blue silk lined.

Marbled papers were exhibited by Miss H. Drew Crosby and Miss Kim Schwarcz. Those who exhibited slip cases or boxes were Mrs. O. C. Beumer, Mrs. Barton L. Davis and George D. Coolidge.

From the standpoint of attendance, this was one of the most popular shows The Book Club of California has had in many years.

On Friday evening, March 5, Duncan Olmsted gave a talk on the history and craft of bookbinding at The Book Club. This was one of a series of lectures sponsored by the Gleeson Library Associates, University of San Francisco, and this particular meeting was moved to The Book Club in order that those attending could take advantage of the binding exhibit. The talk was illustrated with examples of historical bindings loaned by San Francisco book dealers, with modern examples from his own collection, and with a display set showing the various steps in bookbinding. This display set had been put together by the Faheys (Herbert and Peter) and Miss Eleanor Hesthal for the bookbinding exhibit at the Golden Gate International Exhibition at San Francisco in 1939.

BOOK REVIEW / Duncan Andrews

Edward Johnston: A BOOK OF SAMPLE SCRIPTS: The House of David, His Inheritance. 32pp. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1966. (Obtainable in U.S.A. from the British Information Services, 845 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Cost $3.50).

On March 24, 1914, Edward Johnston completed, for Sir Sydney Cockerell, a series of Biblical texts relating to King David in Greek, Latin and English, chosen by Johnston and written out on vellum in black and red letters in a variety of scripts.

In 1959, Sir Sydney presented this manuscript to the Victoria and Albert Museum, who have selected it as the first in a series of facsimile reproductions. The book, printed in black and red, is a model of faithful reproduction, although the publishers have not sought to recapture the appearance of the original vellum with the result that Johnston's letters appear somewhat stark against the dead-white paper.

This is a book of interest to others besides calligraphers, although they will delight in the products of Johnston's incredible pen: italic, uncial, roman, foundational hands and their variants. It is a book to which anyone at all interested in the arts will immediately respond; it is a superb, human, work of art. More than any man, Edward Johnston pioneered the modern revival of calligraphy, resurrected its forgotten forms and techniques, and gave it an impetus and meaning that continues to grow. This book is a monument, and a worthy one: an accessible masterpiece.

(Note: For the record, the London Times, in reviewing this book, states: "The white on black endpapers are incorrectly attributed to blackboard demonstrations at the Central School of Arts and Crafts. They are actually alphabets written with double pencils on white paper for Dorothy Mohoney when she was a student at the Royal College of Art".)