


WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY

in the UNITED STATES

NEWSLETTER,

October, 1985

A. ANNOUNCEMENTS

 Two lectures have been scheduled this Fall at the University of Toronto by the William Morris Society of Canada. On October 17, Florence Boos will speak on William Morris's Love Is Enough (8 p.m., Massey College, Upper Library); and on November 13, Hans de Groot will deliver a slide lecture on Christina Rossetti and Pre-Raphaelite Art (8 p.m., University College, Room 179).

Florence Boos will deliver another lecture (also at the University of Toronto, but at meetings of the Society for Victorian Periodicals), on October 19, on William Morris's contribution to the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine.

On November 3rd, at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., a special ticket-only exhibition opens: "The Treasure Houses of Britain: Five Hundred Years of Private Patronage and Art Collecting." Marilyn Ibach reports that one of the "200 plus houses displayed will be Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton, where Morris and Co. tapestries, Burne-Jones' paintings, and C.E. Kempe stained glass reign supreme." Marilyn has made reservations for a special guided tour on Saturday, November 23rd. Society members from the Washington area (there is room for over two dozen) interested in joining this tour should write to Marilyn at 8625 Geren Road, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20901.

At the MLA meetings in Chicago in December, Marilyn Ibach will give a slide-lecture on William Morris and Morris and Co. stained glass in America; Gary Aho will speak on women in the Morris-Magnusson saga translations; William Peterson on Janey Morris, Blunt, the Kelmscott Press; Michael Holzman on Endogamy and Pre-Raphaelite Women; and Richard Stein on women and eros in News from Nowhere.

In Toronto on March 21-22 there will be a symposium on Architectural Protection and Restoration, with special emphasis given to William Morris and SPAB.

Antony Crane (grandson of both Walter Crane and Frederick Sandys) will lecture at Harvard on April 2nd or 3rd, in New York City on April 6th. He has other lecture dates open before April 18th, when he is scheduled to speak at Stanford; anyone interested in engaging him to speak should write to him at 110 High Street, Bathford, Bath BA1 7TH.

At New Brunswick, N.J., during April 3-5, the New England Modern Language Association meetings will take place; there will again be a session on William Morris (for the 4th consecutive year). Details will appear in the next Newsletter.

At the British Art Center, Yale University from April 18-20, the Northeast Victorian Studies Association will hold a Conference, Victorian Work and Workers. For program information write Professor Mary Davis, Chair, Department of English, Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, Connecticut, 06511.

B. PUBLICATIONS

Second printings have already been scheduled for two recent books on William Morris: (1) Norman Kelvin's definitive edition of volume one of The Collected Letters of William Morris: 1848-1880 (Princeton, 1984), and (2) William Peterson's A Bibliography of the Kelmscott Press (Oxford, 1984).

G.K. Hall will publish, in November 1985, William Morris: A Reference Guide by Gary L. Aho. This annotated bibliography includes over 1,850 entries.

C. NEWS OF MEMBERS

Joseph R. Dunlap has recently returned from a trip to China. In an exhibition hall at Wuhan, he saw two Morris chairs and learned that there was a good likelihood that they had been used, ca. 1926, by Mao himself.

Richard Mathews reports that his Konglomerati Press has recently produced a book-mark, set in Troy and Chaucer type, with a motto drawn from William Morris's writings: "I do not want art for the few any more than I want freedom for the few or education for the few." The book-mark can be obtained by sending fifty cents, plus postage, to the Konglomerati Press, P.O. Box 5001, Gulfport, Florida, 33737.

Elisa Campbell's 6-day journey up the Thames aboard the "Unicorn" was a great success. From Hampton Court to Lechlade, both she and Jeremy Scanlon, owner of the boat, pointed out to the other passengers scenes that Morris had written about in News from Nowhere. On the fifth night they moored the boat near Kelmscott Manor which they visited the following day.


Elisa also reports that she "took the underground to Hammersmith and walked to Kelmscott House where it overlooks Hammersmith Reach on the Thames. The workmen showed her the remaining bits of Morris paper on the walls of two rooms and the two tiled fireplaces in the large room upstairs. Neither had ever heard of Morris before they began working on the house, but clearly they were used to visitors now. When she told them Morris was a Socialist, one replied 'Not in this house!'"

Dan Murray from Vancouver, B.C. (mentioned in the April Newsletter) has continued to interview Morris scholars and critics for the three one-hour programs on William Morris scheduled to air on CBC early in 1986.

Susan Attwood has noticed that the Ladies Home Journal for December, 1917, in an ad titled "A New Book List for Christmas," contained (under the rubric "Books to Give a Girl of Sixteen") the following: The Well at the World's End, "a pageant of life in the healthiest terms."

D.M.R. Bentley, a Canadian member of the Society, reports that he "has been working on the impact of William Morris on nineteenth-century Canadian poetry. One result of his research, published recently in Essays on Canadian Writing, 30 (Winter, 1984-85), is an examination of an elegy on the death of Morris by the Canadian poet Francis Sherman. Entitled "In Memorabilia Mortis," Sherman's poem is a sequence of six sonnets that may qualify as the best-achieved elegy on William Morris written anywhere. Another result of Prof. Bentley's research is a paper entitled "A Wizard to the Northern Bards: William Morris in Nineteenth-Century Canadian Poetry" which he delivered to the William Morris Society of Canada at a meeting in Toronto earlier this year. The paper traces Morris's influence as a poet and as a thinker on the so-called Confederation School of Canadian poets."

D. OTHER NEWS

 The John J. Glessner house, mentioned in the last Newsletter, was written about in the NY Times on August 1, 1985. This Chicago mansion, designed by H.H. Richardson, has been called, because of its Arts and Crafts interiors, "one of the most William Morris houses in America." Now in the 100th anniversary of its design, the house is entering a three-year period of special lectures, programs and centennial tours. An attempt is being made to arrange a special tour for those Society members planning to attend the MLA meetings in Chicago in December.

We received the following note on July 17, 1985:

Dear Friends in the William Morris Society,

Just a few words from Los Angeles to let you know that William Morris is alive and well in this city. Our Los Angeles Book Collectors Club has had several Morris oriented activities, however we have been tardy in reporting them to you.

I thought some of the members might have an interest in the King Arthur article and exhibit. My topic at the opening will be "Edward Burne-Jones, William Morris, Dante Rossetti and Sir Thomas Malory." I will probably present an expanded version of the same topic at a one-day program on Malory and King Arthur which is planned at the Huntington Library for the Fall.

With all good wishes from a life-member. Sincerely, Charles Monell

We received news of the death, on September 19, 1984, of Ben Lieberman, founder and first president of the American Printing Association and long-time member of the William Morris Society. Lieberman's article, "The Liberty Bell on the Kelmscott Goudy Press," Black Art (Summer, 1962): 41-49, recounted the history and peregrinations of an Albion press that William Morris had used on the Kelmscott Chaucer. Later Ashbee used it at his Essex House Press, Goudy at his Village Press in America. Lieberman was delighted to acquire it, and he added atop it a bell: "So long as the private press wears liberty as her crown, the people are free."

Marilyn Ibach has learned that Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver, B.C. which owns two Morris windows (St. Andrew and St. Bartholomew) is being lent a sister window (St. James The Less) by the Vancouver museum. All three were once in the same larger window in Lancashire, and soon they will again appear together in the entrance hall at Christ Church Cathedral.

In 1895, Elbert Hubbard, called by some "the American William Morris," founded the Roycroft community of artisans at East Aurora, N.Y. Publications like the Philistine, Fra, and Little Journeys to the Homes of the Great, as well as a wide range of hand-crafted artifacts, from furniture to books and stained glass, made Arts and Crafts ideals and the achievements of John Ruskin and William Morris known to many Americans. Hubbard and the Roycrofters flourished in the early years of this century, but after he died in 1915 (he and his wife went down with the Lusitania), the "Roycroft Campus" and its works fell out of fashion, and Hubbard was remembered more for his melodramatic and didactic tract, "A Message to Garcia," than for his influence on the Arts and Crafts Movement in America. Now, however, and largely due to Robert Rust and Kitty Turgeon, a major effort is underway to restore Roycroft buildings, to nourish modern craftsfolk, and to educate visitors about the significance and relevance of Arts and Crafts traditions. The efforts of Rust and Turgeon (described in the NY Times of August 2, 1984) have yielded impressive results in the past few years. Those wishing to help can join "Roycrofters-at-Large," an association "dedicated to the Roycroft Renaissance." Further information can be obtained by writing to Roycroft Campus, East Aurora, Erie County, New York, 14052.

Yours in fellowship,

Gary L. Aho

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Governing Committee

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