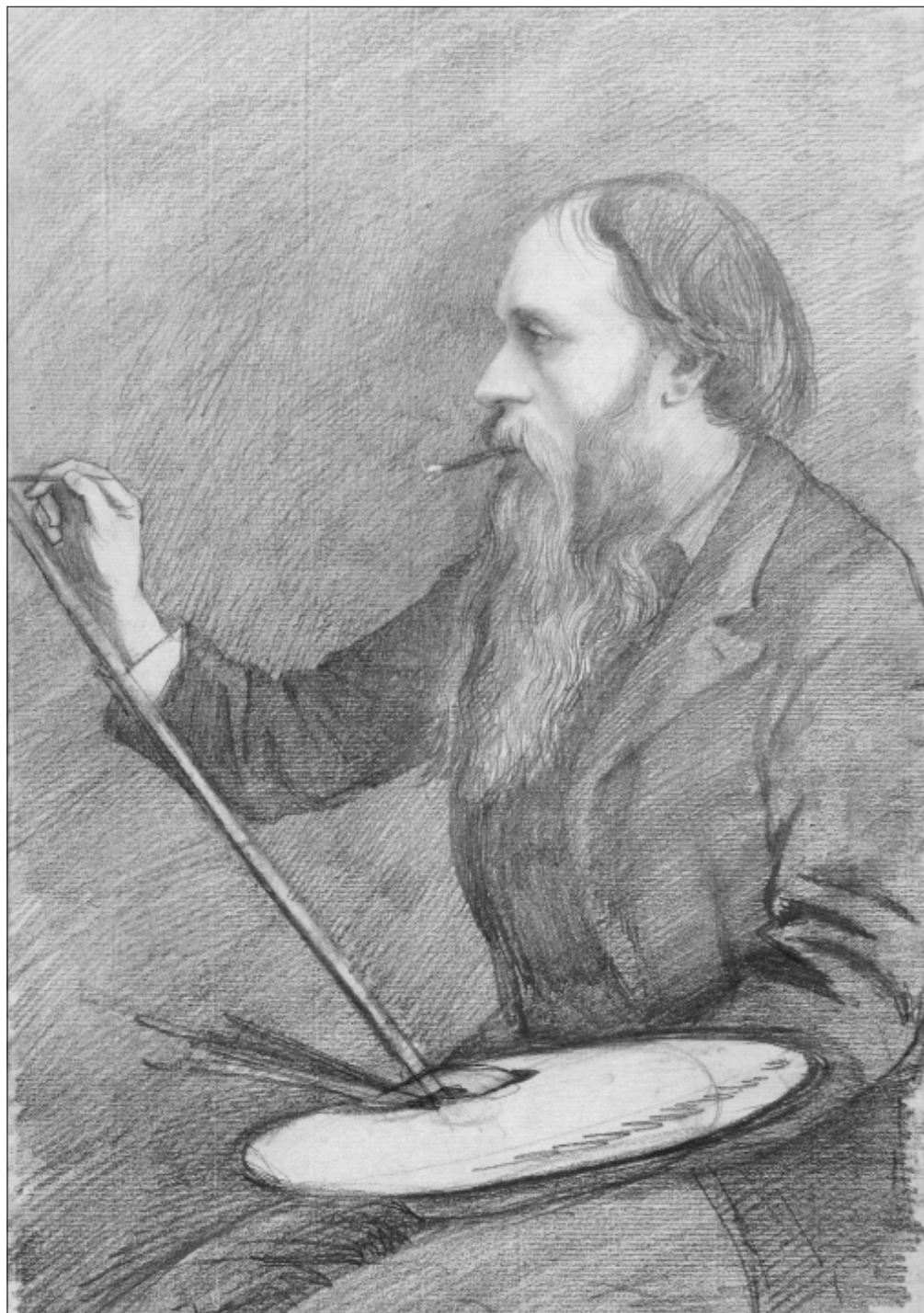


WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY IN THE UNITED STATES

NEWSLETTER

January 2010



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On the cover: George Howard, *Burne-Jones Painting*, pencil, ca. 1885–1895 (Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library).

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Website: www.morrissociety.org.

Blog: <http://morrissociety.blogspot.com>.

A LETTER TO MEMBERS

It is a pleasure to be able to offer a review of another successful year for the William Morris Society in the United States, and to provide a preview of 2010 events.

MORRIS SOCIETY MEETING AT THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION

By the time this reaches you, we will have held our annual meeting in conjunction with the MLA's convention in Philadelphia. The Society offered two interesting sessions, "Musical Pre-Raphaelitism" and "William Morris's Later Friends and Associates." Our governing

committee met early in the afternoon of 29 December. A special Society members' tour of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia (with a look at their fine collection of nineteenth-century books) took place later in the afternoon, followed by the annual meeting held over dinner that evening. As always, it was a wonderful opportunity to converse and socialize with fellow members. This will be the last year that our meeting will be held right after Christmas. The MLA is moving their annual convention to early January beginning in 2011.

MLA AFFILIATED STATUS

We are happy to announce that our application for renewal of Allied Organization status with the MLA was approved. This will allow us to continue to hold sessions of scholarly papers and other meetings at the MLA convention.

LECTURE BY MARY GREENSTED

Those of us who are fortunate to live in or within travel distance of New York City had the pleasure of hearing Mary Greensted give a lecture (10 December) at the Grolier Club on "Ernest Gimson and the Inspiration of William Morris." Ms. Greensted is a noted British curator, writer, and lecturer on the Arts and Crafts Movement. Ernest Gimson was a well known designer and furniture maker beginning in the 1880s. The talk was exceptionally interesting—Gimson is not as well known in this country as he should be—and Greensted received several questions from the audience of almost fifty attendees. A reception followed.

WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY WEBSITE, BLOG, AND NOW—FACEBOOK

A priority for 2010 is to complete a badly-needed overhaul of our website, which still retains elements of its original format dating back to 1995. Technology—and the internet—have moved on and what was suitable (or necessary) for dial-up modems and primitive web browsers has now become antiquated and inefficient. Our attention will be focused on improving the content and images as well as on providing better navigation. The redesign will also feature a shopping cart enabling purchasing of publications; online donations to the Society will also be possible for the first time.

Our blog, News from Anywhere, was revamped recently and has been very successful in conveying up-to-date information on activities and events of interest both in the US and in the UK. We are now so technologically savvy that we have a Facebook page! Search for the William Morris Society on their site and become a fan, write something, and bookmark it.

(continued on page 4)

USEFUL & BEAUTIFUL:
THE TRANSATLANTIC ARTS OF WILLIAM MORRIS
AND THE PRE-RAPHAELITES

Call for Papers

“Useful and Beautiful: The Transatlantic Arts of William Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites” will be the subject of a conference and related exhibitions to be held 7–9 October 2010, at the University of Delaware (Newark, DE) and at the Delaware Art Museum and the Winterthur Museum and Country Estate (Wilmington, DE). Organized with the assistance of the William Morris Society, “Useful and Beautiful” will highlight the strengths of the University of Delaware’s rare books, manuscripts, and art collections; Winterthur’s important holdings in American decorative arts; and the Delaware Art Museum’s superlative Pre-Raphaelite collection (the largest outside Britain). All events will focus on the multitude of transatlantic exchanges that involved Morris, the Pre-Raphaelites, and the Arts and Crafts and Aesthetic movements of the late nineteenth century.

We seek 250- to 500-word proposals for short papers (15 minutes reading time, maximum) that explore relationships and influences—whether personal, intellectual, political, or aesthetic—connecting William Morris, his friends, associates, and followers in Britain and Europe with their contemporaries and successors in the Americas. The “arts” will include not merely those at which Morris himself excelled—i.e., literature, design, and printing—but also painting, illustration, architecture, performance, and anything related to print culture in general. Papers that examine transatlantic politics, social movements, and environmental issues in light of Morrisian, Pre-Raphaelite, and Arts and Crafts perspectives are also welcome.

Possible topic areas include:

William Morris’s Influence in and on the Americas · The American Ruskinians · Transatlantic Arts and Crafts Architecture · British Connections to the American Aesthetic Movement · Designers Travelling, East to West or West to East · Arts and Crafts Places, Real and/ or Imaginary · British Aesthetic Ideals and American Domestic Interiors · The Kelmscott Press and Transatlantic Print Culture · Aesthetic Periodicals and/ or Little Magazines Crossing the Atlantic · Publishing the Pre-Raphaelites in the Americas · American Book Illustrators

and Pre-Raphaelite Influences · The Transatlantic Poster Craze · Exhibiting the Pre-Raphaelites in the Americas · Americans Collecting Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites · Selling Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts Across the Atlantic · Pre-Raphaelite Imagery and American Advertising · The Morris Chair as a Transatlantic Object · Morris and American Needlework · American Dress Reform and Pre-Raphaelite Influence · The Pre-Raphaelites and the Literature of the Americas · Oscar Wilde Visits America · Whitman and the Pre-Raphaelites · Morris and American Socialism · Morris & Co. Stained Glass in the Americas · American Drama and Pre-Raphaelite Figures · Pre-Raphaelitism and American Art Education · Photography and the Circulation of Pre-Raphaelite Images · Pre-Raphaelitism and American Music

The deadline for 250- to 500-word proposals is 15 March 2010. Please forward electronic submissions to: Mark Samuels Lasner, marks@udel.edu.

Limited funding may be available for speakers whose papers focus specifically on William Morris and who are in need of financial assistance. To be considered for support, please explain your circumstances when submitting your paper proposal.

In addition to conference sessions, there will be a keynote lecture, demonstrations by leading practitioners who make and design Arts and Crafts objects, special exhibitions, and related film, theater, and musical performances. The following exhibitions are anticipated at the time of the conference: Delaware Art Museum (*May Morris*, also permanent display of the Samuel and Mary Bancroft Pre-Raphaelite collection); University of Delaware Library (American literature, 1870–1916 exhibition and *William Morris*); University Gallery, University of Delaware (*Ethel Reed: Transatlantic Artist of the 1890s*); Winterthur (Arts and Crafts archival resources); and Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts (*David Mabb: The Morris Kitsch Archive*).

“Useful and Beautiful” is supported by the Delaware Art Museum, Winterthur Museum and Country Estate, the William Morris Society in the United States, the William Morris Society (UK), and the following University of Delaware departments and programs: College of Arts and Sciences, the University of Delaware Library, Art, Art Conservation, Art History, English, History, and Material Culture Studies.

(A Letter to Members, continued from page 2)

ANNE GORDON GIFT TO KELMSCOTT HOUSE

Anne Gordon has again contributed some fine and rare books to the library at Kelmscott House. The gift consisted of several Kelmscott Press titles that will now be available there for researchers and scholars to see and use. We thank her for her support and generosity.

USEFUL & BEAUTIFUL: 7–9 OCTOBER 2010

As many of you know, the William Morris Society in the United States is helping organize an international conference and exhibitions in October 2010 hosted by the University of Delaware, the Delaware Art Museum, and Winterthur Museum and Country Estate. Our previous newsletter contained a preliminary announcement of this important and multifaceted event, and a call for papers is printed on page 3 in this issue. More information will be provided regularly on our website, blog, and Facebook as things move forward.

MEMBERSHIP

The economic situation has, not unexpectedly, taken a toll on our membership roster. Several institutional members have been forced to cancel their subscription and overall there has been a drop of about fifteen percent since 2008. Please renew your membership. Note that Society dues have not increased, despite increased mailing costs. Renewals may be made online at www.morrissociety.org or by sending in the form sent with this newsletter. Credit card payments are accepted.

As always, I would like to thank all of you for your support of the Society. Without your continued membership and participation we could not go forward. We have had a successful year and look forward to an exciting 2010, but we strongly encourage you to contribute in any way you can, be it writing for the newsletter, posting to our blog or Facebook page, or making suggestions for programs and events. Please feel free to contact me with your concerns, comments, or suggestions. We seek your input.

Fran Durako
President

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call for Papers: Sessions at the January 2011 Modern Language Association Convention

After many years of holding its conventions in late December, the Modern Language Association (MLA) has changed the time of its annual meeting to early January, and will meet next on 6–9 January 2011 in Los

Angeles. Changes in Allied Organization session procedures mean that we have only one confirmed 2011 session, on “Morris and the Arts: Books, Painting, Crafts, Architecture.” Proposals for fifteen-minute papers for this session should be sent to Florence S. Boos, florence-boos@uiowa.edu by 20 March 2010.

We also hope to co-sponsor a second session on “Pre-Raphaelite Audiences: Editors, Readers, Critics”; details for this will be announced on the Society’s website after 1 February 2009.

MLA Allied Organization Status

We are delighted to report that the William Morris Society in the United States has again been granted an extension of its Allied Organization Status in the Modern Language Association. The renewal runs for seven years, from 2010 to 2017. We look forward to many stimulating sessions, cultural activities, and social gatherings at future conventions during this period.

Mary Greensted’s Lecture in New York: “Ernest Gimson and the Inspiration of William Morris”

Elaine Ellis has sent a report on Mary Greensted’s lecture on “Ernest Gimson and the Inspiration of William Morris,” the most recent of the Society’s events co-sponsored with the American Friends of Chipping Campden, the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms, and the Victorian Society in America.

It was a dark and stormy night. Well, perhaps not, but it was 10 December in New York City and, if not exactly stormy, the weather was more than a bit cold. Nonetheless, a most enthusiastic audience of Arts and Crafts devotees and fellow Morrisians came together at the Grolier Club to hear Mary Greensted talk about William Morris and his connections to the Cotswold designers and architecture. Many of you will know Mary from her many years as curator at the Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum. As the author of numerous books, including *Ernest Gimson and the Arts and Crafts Movement* and *The Arts and Crafts Movement in the Cotswold*, she is uniquely qualified to discuss where Morris fits with the history of the movement in the Cotswolds, and not merely in terms of his residence at Kelmscott Manor.

It was primarily Morris’s influence and writings that brought a number of designers such as C.R. Ashbee, Ernest and Sidney Barnsley, and Ernest Gimson from London and Birmingham to settle in the Cotswolds. Mary’s discussion that evening focused particularly to the special relationship between Morris and Gimson which began when Morris lectured at the Leicester Secular Society.

It was Gimson’s father who first invited Morris to speak at the society. Ernest met him at the station

and was immediately awed. Morris went to Leicester to lecture more than once, each time staying with the Grimsons, thus beginning a relationship with the young craftsman and designer that continued in London and remained when Ernest moved to Sapperton to live and work.

Mary offered this important aspect of Morris's aesthetic and Socialist influence in a well-presented and considered talk. For those of us who have long appreciated the work of these designers and their associates, her information and interpretation added immeasurably to our deeper understanding of their near-total involvement with the social and artistic reform activities of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In fact, we may even have felt as though we knew what it would have been like to be part of those exciting evenings in Leicester.

The Morris Online Edition Enters NINES

The Life and Death of Jason, edited by Florence S. Boos as the first "volume" of the Morris Online Edition, has been accepted by NINES (Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-Century Electronic Scholarship), a consortium of peer-reviewed scholarly websites, made accessible through software with names like "Collex" and "Juxta." Fostered and sponsored by the Morris Society, the Edition may be the only NINES project sponsored by a cultural organization rather than an academic institution. In addition, the University of Iowa Libraries' staff has offered active practical support, along with beautiful images from their rare book collection.

The most tangible benefit of NINES' acceptance is that the project's staff have now entered more than 2,600 virtual "pages"—text, notes, manuscript images, and images of the first edition and its Kelmscott counterpart—into their database. The project's reviewers singled out for praise *Jason's* extensive historical notes, which were carefully vetted by Peter Wright of the UK Morris Society. The Edition is has also benefited from scholarship by Morris Society members, including Peter Faulkner's *William Morris: The Critical Heritage* and David and Sheila Latham's *An Annotated and Critical Bibliography of William Morris*.

Future Edition texts will include *A Dream of John Ball*, by Peter Preston; "The Icelandic Diaries," by Gary Aho; "Unpublished Tales for *The Earthly Paradise*," by David Latham; "The Ordination of Knighthood" (a translation), by Yuri Cowan; *The Defence of Guenevere*, by Margaret Lourie; and "A Bibliography of Morris's Poems: Manuscripts, Drafts and Published Versions," by Florence Boos. We are also seeking editors for several of Morris's prose romances (among them, *The Story of the Glittering Plain*, *The Wood Beyond the World*, and *The Sundering Flood*) and his translations (*Beowulf*, *The Odyssey*, the *Volsungasaga*, and others).

Finally, we have tried to grace the Edition with newly designed portals and images, as well as site-maps, search capacities and supplementary texts. We hope that members will sample its offerings at <http://morrisedition.lib.uiowa.edu/index.html>, and we welcome comments and suggestions to Florence Boos, florence-boos@uiowa.edu.

Exhibition: Playing with Pictures: The Art of Victorian Photocollage

Sixty years before the embrace of collage techniques by avant-garde artists of the early twentieth-century, aristocratic Victorian women were already experimenting with photocollage in the 1850s and 1860s. The compositions they made with photographs and watercolors are whimsical and fantastical, combining human heads and animal bodies, placing people into imaginary landscapes, and morphing faces into common household objects. Such images, often made for albums, reveal the educated minds as well as the accomplished hands of their makers. With sharp wit and dramatic shifts of scale akin to those Alice experienced in Wonderland, these images stand the rather serious conventions of early photography on their heads. *Playing with Pictures* features approximately 55 works from public and private collections. Organized by the Art Institute of Chicago, This fascinating exhibition will travel to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2 February–9 May 2010) and then to the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (5 June–5 September).

FACING THE LATE VICTORIANS IN TAMPA

When the Tampa Bay Hotel opened in 1891, hotel guests were reading Robert Louis Stevenson, Thomas Hardy, and George Eliot and talking about the latest paintings by James McNeill Whistler and John Singer Sargent. They congregated on the veranda and in the Grand Salon to recite the poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson and chuckled with amusement at Oscar Wilde's witticisms. These celebrities and their works were part of their lives. Today, Museum guests will laugh and gossip as they explore the world made relevant by these famous artists and writers.

The Henry B. Plant Museum, located on the ground floor of the former hotel—one of largest and most luxurious when it was built and now preserved as the main building of the University of Tampa—will soon present an exhibition that examines noted Victorians through portraits. *Facing the Late Victorians: Portraits of Writers and Artists from the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection* will provide the opportunity for visitors to come

face to face with famous British poets, novelists, playwrights, artists, and illustrators. The exhibit opens on 5 March and continues until 5 June 2010.

Facing the Late Victorians will take audiences back more than one hundred years to explore a phenomenon that will seem astonishingly modern and familiar. Like the world we know now, Britain at the end of the nineteenth century was a nation filled with images. Whether circulating by means of posters, books, newspapers, magazines, cards, and advertisements, or hanging on the walls of art galleries and of private homes, images were everywhere. As is true today, what people most wanted to see then were images of faces and bodies, especially those of celebrities. A visual industry arose in the late Victorian period to satisfy the demand for portraits in every medium and to reproduce these on a mass scale. Pictures of monarchs and stage performers, of course, were in great demand; more surprisingly, so were portraits of what we might call cultural celebrities—that is, writers and artists. Figures such as Oscar Wilde, Robert Louis Stevenson, Aubrey Beardsley, James McNeill Whistler, W. B. Yeats, George Eliot, and the feminist “New Women” writers were as famous for the way they looked and dressed as for anything they created.

Writers and artists trafficked in commodities, and they became commodities. Their portraits also provided material for other workers in this industry, such as caricaturists, who knew that the public took just as great a delight in seeing its cultural heroes skewered as idealized. These caricature artists, in turn, became celebrities themselves thanks to the “New Journalism,” which was eager to circulate unflattering images of the same poets and painters it made famous.

Facing the Late Victorians features portraits of dozens of well-known figures such as George Bernard Shaw, J. M. Barrie, H. G. Wells, Arthur Conan Doyle, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, and John Singer Sargent, who dominated the world of the arts, along with pioneering children’s book authors and illustrators, such as E. Nesbit and Kate Greenaway. Many of these are rarely seen images, such as Max Beerbohm’s savage caricature of Oscar Wilde’s head, which seems to decay before our eyes faster than did Dorian Gray’s face. But the show ranges widely to include photographs and drawings of many lesser lights whose work was important in advancing British art and literature—once celebrated writers such as the feminist novelist Olive Schreiner and the Catholic poet Alice Meynell, as well as the artists Edward Burne-Jones, Ida Nettleship, and William Rothenstein. Of special note is a rare etching of the actress Sarah Bernhardt, who gave one of her farewell performances at the Tampa Bay Hotel’s casino in 1906. The sixty works on display are drawn from the

Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library.

The show, a version of an exhibition held at New York’s Grolier Club in 2008, is occasioned by the annual conference of the Nineteenth Century Studies Association, “Theatricality and the Performative in the Long Nineteenth Century,” 11–13 March at the University of Tampa. A round table discussion at the conference (11 March) will feature exhibition curator and noted scholar, Margaret D. Stetz, Professor of Women’s Studies and Humanities at the University of Delaware. Collector Mark Samuels Lasner will speak the next day on “Collecting the Late Victorians.” For more information about the NCSA conference, go to www.english.uwosh.edu/roth/ncsa/index.html.

The Henry B. Plant Museum interprets the turn-of-the-century Tampa Bay Hotel and the lifestyles of America’s Gilded Age. The Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10–4, Sunday 12–4. For more information: (813) 254-1891, www.plantmuseum.com.

GIFT OF BOOKS TO KELMSCOTT HOUSE MUSEUM

For the second time, life member Anne Gordon has made an extraordinary donation of books to the UK Society’s library at Kelmscott House. Although the library holds the majority of Morris’s writings and many works about him, the collection of Kelmscott Press volumes is far from complete. With her recent gift, Ms. Gordon has filled in some of the gaps with copies of *Poems Chosen Out of the Work of Robert Herrick* (1895), Ruskin’s *The Nature of Gothic* (1892, with Morris’s important preface), *The Poems of William Shakespeare* (1893), and Morris’s *The Sundering Flood* (1897). In a brief comment about her Morris Society membership, Gordon writes:

I first saw an example of Morris’s printing when my class in Library School (Pratt Institute) visited the Grolier Club and the librarian opened their copy of the Kelmscott *Chaucer*. I felt compelled to place my hands on the page to feel the texture of paper and type—needless to say, everyone was appalled at my boldness. I learned about the Morris Society and joined—think it was 1974. We used to meet at Joe Dunlap’s house on the Westside of Manhattan. I think I became a Life member about 10 years ago. I was an archivist and librarian for the New York City Department of Records and Information for a few years, but left to open an antiquarian bookshop in 1987. Gordon & Gordon Booksellers had as its logo the letter “G,” adapted from Morris’s Golden type. I built my collection of books by and about Morris over the years. Six years ago I retired from

the business and am now very involved in community affairs, currently serving as a County Historian here in the Hudson River Valley.

I am particularly glad to make these donations to the Morris Society. I feel strongly that exhibits and outreach programs in schools will keep alive the knowledge of his work and philosophy—he is so much more than trendy chintz designs.

Thank you, Anne Gordon, for your generosity. The books will be cherished and available to the scholars, students, and admirers of Morris who come to the new Kelmescott House Museum, today and in the future.

Just to let other members know, the Society welcomes gifts of books related to Morris, his circle, and related topics. Such contributions may be deductible for income tax purposes due to the Society's charitable tax-exempt status. Contact Mark Samuels Lasner, (302) 831-3250, marksl@udel.edu.

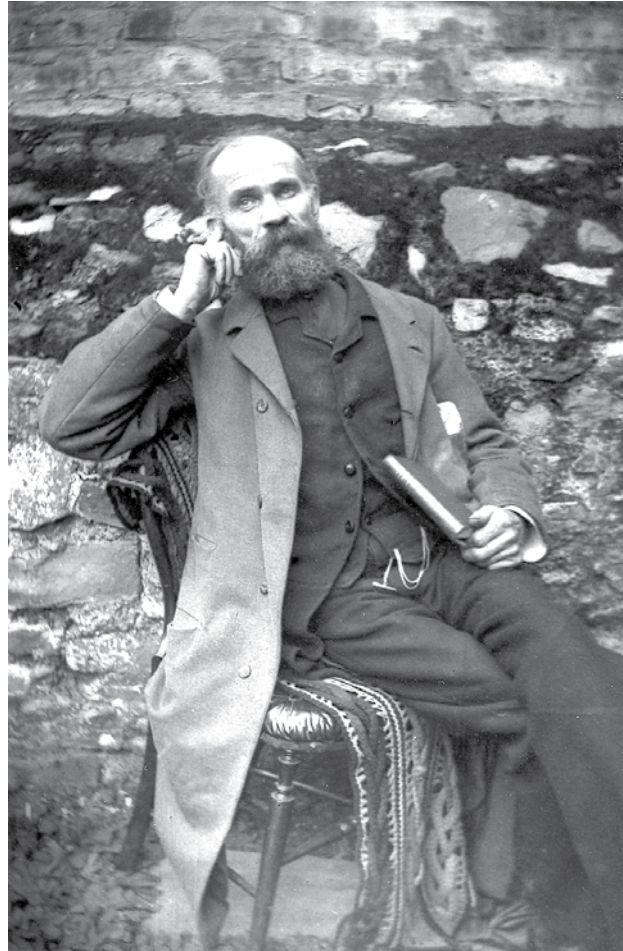
JOHN GREGORY, WILLIAM MORRIS, AND THE BRISTOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY

Gerrard Sables

The Summer 2009 issue of this Newsletter contained a transcript of William Morris's essay "Communism i.e. Property." His contemporary John Gregory would have agreed with every word of it.

Like William Morris, Gregory (1831–1922) was a poet and a socialist. However their lives were very different. John Gregory was born into a humble family in the small town of Bideford in Devon, England. Probably taught to read and write by his Methodist lay preacher father, he started work at age eleven as an apprentice shoemaker. He was to make and mend shoes all his working life. John became interested in working-class politics as an apprentice, being a Chartist and reading the *Northern Star* to his less literate fellow workers. After ending his seven-year apprenticeship at the age of eighteen he went "on the tramp." He went around South Wales and the area around Bristol getting work at his trade. He married in Bristol in 1856 and moved to Cardiff where he lived for four years. From 1860 until his death in 1922 he was a Bristolian.

Bristol was built on the proceeds of the slave and tobacco trades. Its various industries sucked in workers from the surrounding countryside who had been displaced by a declining agriculture. It was a bustling, thriving port where Isambard Kingdom Brunel built both the first transatlantic steamship and the famous Clifton suspension bridge. Like most busy port cities, it stank. Rows of terraced houses housed the working



Gregory in his fifties, from *Murmurs and Melodies* (1884)

population in overcrowded and unhealthy conditions. To get an idea of nineteenth century Bristol one simply needs to read Charles Dickens.

John Gregory was a lifelong poet whose work was admired by many in the literary and academic establishments including Alfred Tennyson and H. G. Wells. He wrote poems on nature, family life, and also on politics.

Like much of the English working class, John Gregory supported the Northern States in the American Civil War. He wrote three poems about the conflict: "Abraham Lincoln," "Reflections on the American War" and "Bertha." It is not known exactly when he became a trade union activist, but in 1874 he became the first secretary of the Amalgamated Boot and Shoe Rivetters' and Finishers' Society.

In the 1880s a group of Bristolians decided to form a branch of the Social Democratic Federation. They stayed with the SDF after William Morris and the Avelings had split away to found the Socialist League. Soon, however, Bristol's Socialists left over the Tory gold scandal to become the Bristol Socialist Society.

On 3 March 1885 William Morris went to Bristol to speak on "Art, Labour and Socialism" at the Clifton mu-

seum. Clifton was and still is the affluent part of Bristol. The tickets were one shilling each. Morris had insisted that half the tickets be given free to organisations of working people. By this time John Gregory was vice-president of Bristol Trades Council. Trades Councils are organisations of local trade union branches, so we can safely say that members of both the Trades Council and Bristol Socialist Society would have received tickets. In Morris's speech that evening in that highly middle class venue he said of the middle class, "Well, certainly they were a stout and vigorous set of men, those middle class people, their lives interesting enough, dear to the romance writer and the poet, not bad musicians, the bravest pirates, and among the greatest liars the world has ever seen." The next morning Morris had three breakfast guests: a clerk, a wire worker and a shoemaker. The shoemaker may or may not have been John Gregory. We do not know. However, I personally believe that William Morris and John Gregory would have known each other. Leading socialists would have known each other well and John Gregory was one of the best known of socialists, trade unionists, and poets in Bristol and the west country.

In Morris's utopian novel *News from Nowhere*, first published in 1890, Bristol and Glasgow are mentioned in chapter 17, "How the Change Came," as the two cities where the riots were most serious. Coincidentally Bristol and Glasgow were also the two cities which had independent Boot and Shoe trade unions, one of which was founded by John Gregory. Morris would have surely been aware of the 1889 Great Bristol Labour Revolt mass meeting in Bristol presided over by Gregory.

My website (www.johngregory.org.uk) makes available most of John Gregory's poetry and some of his prose. It also includes a chronological record of events in the poet's life and articles about Gregory I have written for various magazines. I would appreciate comments from readers, particularly Americans, who may contact me at gerrard.sables@phoncoop.coop.

John Gregory was a great admirer of William Morris as can be seen by this poem, published in the *Western Daily Press* following Morris's death.

WILLIAM MORRIS

Oh! my great comrade, to what lofty sphere
 Art thou uplifted from this lower state
 Of life, in which we are left desolate
 By thy departure. In our grief severe,
 Beloved bard, about thy sacred bier
 Our thoughts are crowding! Ah! the glorious mate
 Of thy dead body, through the gloomy gate
 Of death, to which we are in life so near,
 Alas! is gone. With tearful eyes we peer
 Into the blackness that may not abate,

Saying these words, our drooping hearts to cheer:
 With us in song, we have thy sweet soul here,
 Our love from thine death cannot separate,
 Poet of freedom, to its lovers dear.

In toil for good, with his inspiring lyre
 To us great strength he gave. His wise warm words
 Were in their fervent flow as flow'rs of fire,
 Or sparks of light that burst from clashing swords.
 Hope from his hymn it was our joy to cull.
 By his fine faith our own was fondly fed.
 His love of beauty made him beautiful.
 Us in the wilderness of doubt he led,
 Through cloudy days, along toward the grand
 City of love. We to that joyful place
 Were happy lovers marching hand in hand.
 But he by death is torn from our embrace;
 And lo! there lieth low on his dear face
 "The peace of God we cannot understand."

Gerrard Sables has made the life and works of John Gregory into his hobby. Now retired, he lives in an early seventeenth-century almshouse in Barnstaple, Devon, whose architecture would have delighted William Morris. He is a member of the William Morris Society in Britain and the proud possessor of a first edition of Socialism Its Growth and Outcome by Morris and E. Belfort Bax (1893). In addition to his website devoted to John Gregory, Sables has edited a booklet of his poems, A Souvenir of John Gregory. For a copy of a DVD of a talk he gave to the Bristol Radical History Society, contact him at gerrard.sables@phoncoop.coop.

WILLIAM MORRIS AND THE SPAB I: ORIGINS; THE TWENTIETH CENTURY; IRAQ

Andrea Donovan

When William Morris founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in 1877, he was initially motivated by the excesses of Gothic restoration in late nineteenth-century Britain. In the longer view, he wanted to prevent the unnecessary revision of any building to an inappropriate style. Morris and the SPAB maintained that buildings of any period had a life that was best protected through the conservative repair of what was falling into ruin and the prevention of injury to buildings by safeguarding them as much as was practical. The continued monitoring of the conservation of historic buildings kept the SPAB alive into the twenty-first century, making it the oldest conservation society in England. While the SPAB evolved to meet twentieth and twenty-first century challenges, it has managed to keep Morris's original ideas alive. The modern adaptations of the SPAB prove that the SPAB's work still influences public opinion, governmental integration, and the work of architects.

As much as the SPAB had to adapt in the twentieth century, the guiding force remained the *Manifesto* that

Morris wrote and issued in June 1877. The *Manifesto*, still printed on SPAB pamphlets and present on its website, starts with an attack on restoration:

No doubt within the last fifty years a new interest, almost like another sense, has arisen in these ancient monuments of art; and they have become the subject of one of the most interesting of studies, and of an enthusiasm, religious, historical, artistic, which is one of the undoubted gains of our time; yet we think that if the present treatment of them be continued, our descendants will find them useless for study and chilling to enthusiasm. We think that those last fifty years of knowledge and attention have done more for their destruction than all the foregoing centuries of revolution, violence and contempt.¹

The rationale that restorers may be attempting to “improve” a building does not take away from the fact that they are tearing parts of it apart to make it look different. The *Manifesto* continues:

For architecture, long decaying, died out, as a popular art at least, just as the knowledge of mediaeval art was born. So that the civilized world of the nineteenth century has no style of its own amidst its wide knowledge of the styles of other centuries. From this lack and this gain arose in men’s minds the strange idea of the Restoration of ancient buildings; and a strange and most fatal idea, which by its very name implies that it is possible to strip from a building this, that, and the other part of its history – of its life that is – and then to stay the hand at some arbitrary point, and leave it still historical, living, and even as it once was.

. . . [T]hose who make the changes wrought in our day under the name of Restoration, while professing to bring back a building to the best time of its history, have no guide but each his own individual whim to point out to them what is admirable and what contemptible; while the very nature of their task compels them to destroy something and to supply the gap by imagining what the earlier builders should or might have done.²

The *Manifesto* resumes by pleading with architects, as the “official guardians of buildings,” to take into consideration the historical aspect of each building and to remember that, in many cases, the architecture of times past is much of what we have to remind us of the history of that time and place.³ Finally, the *Manifesto* suggests an alternative to restoration, that is, preservation. Preservation would lead an architect to “prop a perilous wall or mend a leaky roof by such means as are obviously meant for support or covering, and show no pretence of other art, and otherwise to resist all tampering with either the fabric or ornament of the building as it stands.”⁴

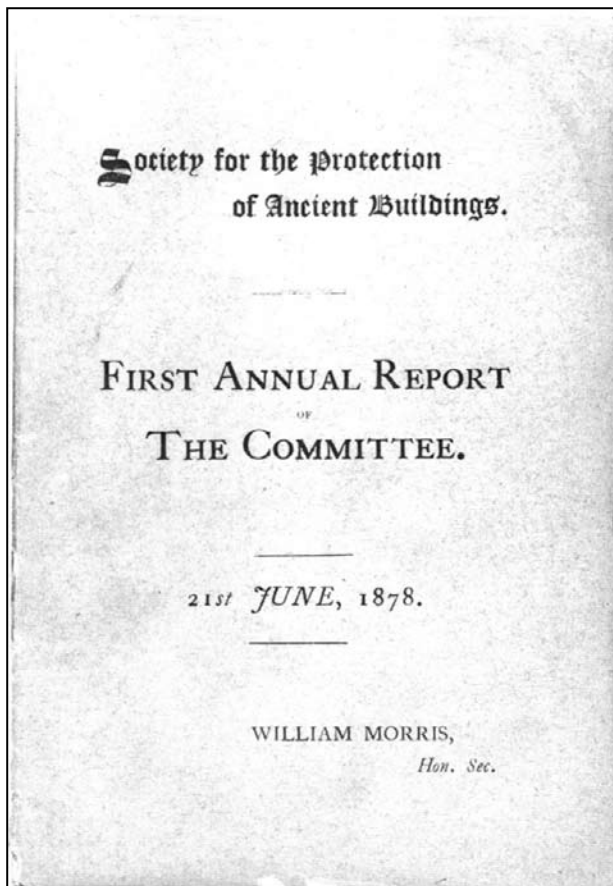
To this day, the SPAB proclaims the 1877 *Manifesto*. The current SPAB proclamation quotes Morris:

“although produced in response to the conservation problems of the 19th century, the *Manifesto* extends to ‘all times and styles’ and remains to this day the philosophical basis for the Society’s work.”⁵ The SPAB principles today are similar to those of the nineteenth century: historic buildings and sites are valuable in themselves; it is important to promote repair over restoration; the use of responsible methods of repair is essential; it is important to assure regular maintenance to decrease the need for repair; and the SPAB should provide information to those seeking advice.

A principle today that differs from the nineteenth century is that the SPAB supports necessary work on a building if it is done “in a modern language” without imitating a prior century.⁶ For example, if repairs needed to be done on a fifteenth century house and these repairs were stylistically from this century then this would be permissible according to SPAB standards. This may have been a preference in the late nineteenth century, but since Morris contended that his century had no style of its own, it would have been difficult to adhere to this principle. Further, most nineteenth century architects had little desire to stray from the Gothic Revival. The SPAB website discusses further its dislike for restoration:

In the architectural context “restoration” means work intended to return an old building to a perfect state. It can be the unnecessary renewal of worn features or the hypothetical reconstruction of whole or missing elements; in either case tidy reproduction is achieved at the expense of genuine but imperfect work. William Morris founded the SPAB in 1877 to defend old buildings from this treatment. He saw that the most vulnerable buildings were those of most eloquent craftsmanship, survivors from a time before mass-production took hold. In the manifesto which he wrote for the new Society, and which guides our work to this day, he put the strongest case against their restoration, proposing instead a policy of skillful repair.⁷

The SPAB of the nineteenth century typically dealt with problems by, first, notifying the person in charge about what the SPAB saw as the problem. Soon after, a representative from the SPAB would contact the person in charge to resolve any issues and, perhaps, educate them about a preferred method of dealing with a specific structure. Quite often, the person in charge was unaware that their methods would be inappropriate and were willing to work with the SPAB. If the person in charge was unable or unwilling to modify their plans, the SPAB would begin a public campaign, meaning that prominent individuals and the public would be informed of the issue through personal visits, meetings, public speeches, and letters to the editors of relevant publications. While it was true that the SPAB was



SPAB, *First Annual Report* (1878)

often over-ambitious and offensive in its approach, its members believed that they were being helpful in the long run.⁸ Often in dire situations, especially if previous governmental decisions were being compromised in any way, the government would be informed of the problem. Occasionally, the SPAB fought for amendments to governmental policy. While this was the typical course of action, each case was different.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the SPAB enjoyed increasing public support. Gothic Revival popularity waned and architects employed the ideals of preservation more legitimately. In his 1892 speech to the SPAB, Micklethwaite stated that he could testify to the “better position which this Society holds before the public,” that people are “ready to take the teachings of this Society seriously,” and finally that architects “are dreadfully ashamed of the word *restoration*.”⁹

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In the first years of the twentieth century, SPAB officers noted the changed climate of public opinion, stating that the Society was no longer controversial. Thackeray Turner, a retired secretary of the SPAB, observed that “we practically now have no opposition.”¹⁰ With the decrease in opposition, other groups began to join the

SPAB in the fight for accurate historic preservation in England. In addition, trusts and organizations were set up to benefit historic buildings and sites through funding. The SPAB adapted to this increased interest by pooling resources with these newer organizations to promote the most effective methods for the preservation of historic sites. Many were local groups, such as the City Church and Churchyard Protection Society in London, and some were widespread national groups, such as the National Trust. The Ancient Monuments Society was established in 1924 to promote “the study and conservation of ancient monuments, historic buildings, and fine old craftsmanship.”¹¹ The Bath Preservation Trust, founded in 1934, was established to care for the city’s many fine buildings. The motivating force for the founding was to pressure the government to stop plans to build a road through a Georgian section of the city. During the nineteenth century, Bath appeared on the SPAB casework reports several times and members would have been glad to know that the Trust was successful in this instance.¹² The Georgian Group was set up in 1937 to work for the preservation of Georgian buildings, parks, and gardens in England and Wales. John Betjeman and Nikolaus Pevsner founded the Victorian Society to protect Victorian and Edwardian architecture in 1958. This organization now has eight regional groups, including those in Wales, Birmingham, and the Yorkshires.¹³ In an attempt to help fund various preservation projects, the Churches Conservation Trust, founded in 1969, was set up “to preserve churches no longer needed for worship but which are of historic, architectural or archaeological importance.”¹⁴ The British government and the Church of England fund the CCT. Other societies and trusts that aid in preservation in England include the Landmark Trust (founded in 1965), SAVE (founded in 1975), and the Architectural Heritage Fund (founded in 1976).¹⁵

Although there are a wide range of preservationist societies in existence today, it is impressive that, for the first half of the twentieth century, the SPAB fought for historic architecture largely without assistance and still made an impact. For example, the Society attempted to save historic bridges in 1925 when they recorded over nine hundred examples in England and Wales. Specific photographs were given to the Ancient Monuments Department of the Office of Works in Parliament with a request that they be scheduled as ancient monuments. From this initiative, over three hundred bridges in England and Wales were listed.¹⁶ In addition, the SPAB had enough interest within its membership to develop a special committee, the Windmill Section of the SPAB. This committee worked for the protection of windmills in England and is still active.

Throughout the twentieth century, the SPAB continued to promote preservation while its ideals became

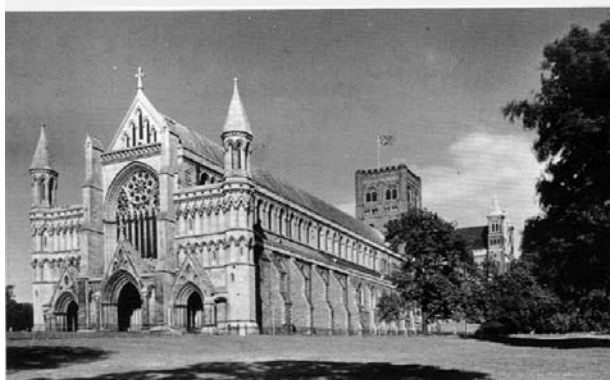
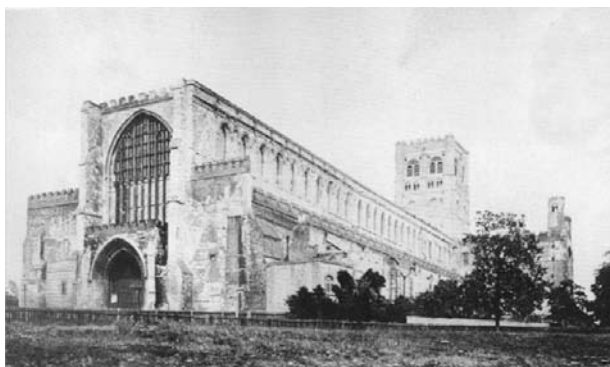
more widespread and accepted. Specific projects, such as the Windmill Section and its work with bridges as viable historic structures, along with the increase in regional SPAB chapters, the development of outside organizations dedicated to SPAB goals, and even its work overseas helped to spread SPAB ideals further. These SPAB involvements show some of the many ways it adapted to the changing attitudes and issues in the twentieth century. Many of the original SPAB goals were increasingly satisfied while new objectives, such as issues related to pollution and urban growth, were established and put into action.

While the SPAB interceded in situations throughout the twentieth century, its main focus was no longer the ignorance or non-caring attitude of the public and architects. Instead, the SPAB has needed to deal with a range of new obstacles: World War I and World War II, the increased effects of tourism, vandalism, and the damage brought about by technological advances in transportation. SPAB efforts became more preventative in the twentieth century: it focused on education, the consideration of technological developments in preservation, and delineating the closing gap between preservation and restoration.

In 1937, the Society printed its first quarterly report. It contained an assortment of material from the SPAB archives, including the letter that Morris wrote to the *Athenaeum* in 1877 and a short history of the Society's work.¹⁷ It again noted the changed climate of cooperation towards the SPAB:

When a fine old church comes to be repaired, the Society has not so often to fight its way into some sort of control of the processes by which this work is to be done; indeed, its advice is frequently and spontaneously sought.¹⁸

A major issue for the SPAB in the twentieth century was how to draw the line between restoration and preservation. There were many controversies in England concerning the possible validity of careful restoration projects. Age and pollution contribute jointly to the deterioration of historic sites to the point where sometimes even careful preservation techniques are not enough to secure their safety. Major disasters and the destruction of wars often necessitate alterations just to keep a building standing. Finally, modern versions of restoration are generally more reasonable than many nineteenth century restoration schemes due to advances in technology and an increased interest in historic accuracy. Still, the line between restoration and preservation has become blurred. For instance, note the current practice of disassembling a structure and recreating it using original parts. The London Bridge was disassembled and recreated in Lake Havasu City, Arizona. Would this be considered an "authentic"



St. Albans Cathedral, Hertfordshire, before and after restoration

historic structure? Morris and the SPAB would not think so but in the eyes of a restorer, especially with the "justification" of using original parts, it could be thought of as appropriate. Considering these factors, what does the SPAB currently support?

The SPAB does not philosophically support any type of restoration. However, it aids in preservation and maintenance and supports structural changes that do not destroy old materials and are obviously there for support, preservation, or covering. Further, each building is an individual case. Some historic structures can be safely left to ruin while others need to be maintained because of continued use.

Currently, the SPAB's first goal is to prevent or lessen decay by advocating daily care and maintenance. It supports any new technology in preservation and maintenance that can clean or repair a surface without damaging the historic fabric. It also encourages research in adequate preservation methods while promoting public education regarding preservation techniques.

The SPAB's second aim is to ensure the historical and aesthetic integrity of historic buildings. This is accomplished by supporting only repairs needed to prevent further decay and erosion. Currently, the SPAB offers various courses and lectures, publishes advice and essays, and provides experts for the evaluation of individual buildings.

A third goal of the SPAB is to safeguard historic sites from neglect. Included in this responsibility is the need

to maintain awareness in the care of historic sites, to correspond with preservation architects and societies, and to support and instigate the passing of legislation which could legally safeguard historic buildings and monuments. An example of this type of legislation is the revision of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1944, which put listing requirements on a national level based on historical significance. The Town and Country Planning Act of 1971 was an improvement since listing requirements included preservation needs along with historic desirability.¹⁹ Under this revised Act, the SPAB has to be notified of “every application to demolish or partly demolish any building listed by the Department of the Environment as being of architectural or historic interest, or in a conservation area.”²⁰ While this includes only a portion of relevant historic architecture, it provides additional support for the SPAB.

The SPAB has had setbacks in the past century but the successes have outnumbered these disappointments. The widespread acceptance of its ideals is probably the greatest SPAB success story. The SPAB continues to work on individual campaigns around the globe, but the bulk of the work is contained in the United Kingdom. This is primarily due to the large number of preservationist societies in other countries and even in areas of the United Kingdom, such as Scotland, making it almost unnecessary for the SPAB to work outside England, Ireland, and Wales. As noted with the SPAB in Scotland, it can be more efficient for local preservationist groups to effect change in areas with different laws and cultural norms.

The SPAB has needed to adapt to deal with a variety of issues in the twentieth century, such as the destruction of sites and the huge influx of repairs needed after World War II. In 1940, over a third of London was demolished, including many Christopher Wren City churches, the Museum of London, and many more historic buildings. The SPAB’s main concern during World War II was the damage caused by the Baedeker Bombings. These bombings were ordered by Hitler to target England’s historic towns in retaliation for the British bombing of Lübeck’s Old Town. Historic cities bombed included Exeter, Bath, Norwich, York, and Canterbury. Due to the quantity of damaged or destroyed sites, the SPAB could only urge against the “hasty demolition of damaged buildings” because they felt that many cathedrals and other historic buildings could be repaired.²¹ The SPAB advocated that those responsible for civic planning redevelopment “not think in terms of a narrow utilitarianism” but, instead, take the time to care for historic structures that could be saved.²² However, post-war reconstruction emphasized efficient regeneration over preservation. The SPAB took a step to remedy this problem by initiating an Annual

Repair Course for Professionals in 1951 to train professionals in the many preservation skills in “danger of extinction.”²³

The SPAB also continued to monitor the protection of historic sites overseas in the twentieth century. In 1914, the SPAB petitioned the U. S. government to “make representations to the German Government to protect works of Art in the war area.”²⁴ The effects of World War II on historic Europe also obviously alarmed the SPAB and they spoke out against hasty demolition.²⁵ However, the magnitude of the two world wars’ destruction and the need for swift regeneration obviously proved to be a greater driving force than the SPAB when it came to rebuilding war-torn Europe.

THE WAR IN IRAQ

The most recent example of SPAB attempts to protect historic sites during wartime can be found in its efforts to urge the protection of monuments and building sites in Iraq during the wars between the United States and coalition forces and Saddam Hussein’s government and its successors in Iraq. There are an estimated 100,000 sites of cultural or historical importance, of which approximately 10,000 have been specifically located and not yet excavated or studied.²⁶ Therefore, the potential archaeological and architectural loss in Iraq is staggering. The SPAB joined many world preservation groups in speaking against the destruction of Iraq’s cultural heritage. The largest organization to work for the preservation of Iraqi sites is the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), founded in 1945. UNESCO’s principle advisor, and the World Heritage Committee’s principle advisor, is the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), founded in 1965.²⁷ These organizations, along with a profusion of smaller groups, such as the German Museums Association, the American Association of Museums, the Archaeological Institute of America, and the Museum of Art and History in Paris, have written articles and letters and occasionally worked with the United States and the coalition to preserve what they can in Iraq.

Two of the biggest U. S. proponents for Iraqi sites are the American Council for Cultural Policy, founded by Ashton Hawkins, and an organization of collectors, curators, and lawyers, coordinated by Arthur Houghton.²⁸ Both groups have contacted the U. S. government about avoiding any damage to the many archaeological and building sites in Iraq. Their concern originates from U. S. military behavior during the 1991 Gulf War: twelve of the twenty-five most important known sites in Iraq were bombed, including the ancient town of Samarra, the ruins of pre-Islamic Anbar, the Baghdad National Museum of Antiquities, the unexcavated ar-

chaeological remains of Baija, and the earliest known city in the world, Ur.²⁹ The U.S. “observes the Hague Convention of 1954, which prohibits the targeting of cultural and religious sites in war.”³⁰ However, at Ur the U.S. “adherence to that policy was tested when Iraqi forces placed two fighter aircraft near the ziggurat at Ur, thought to be the oldest city in the world.”³¹ In this particular incident, the U.S. decided not to fire upon the planes since they were not firing upon U.S. forces. Although the site did not sustain damage in this situation, it did so in later activity.³² During the most recent U.S.-led war with Iraq, many Iraqi sites were left unharmed but many preservationist groups, along with the SPAB, understandably showed concern over the fate of Iraq’s cultural heritage.

There are a wide variety of organizations, universities, museums, publications, and even individuals who have spoken against the destruction of Iraqi monuments. Typically, they’ve written letters or articles to the general public to make their opinions known. This type of campaign can be influential. For example, during the Gulf War, bombing began in January of 1991. In February, the *Art Newspaper* and the *Washington Post* ran articles about Iraqi monuments. In March, the U.S. Defense Department enlisted the help of experts and archaeologists to determine sites that should be avoided in military action.³³ The SPAB announced “fears that famous sites such as Babylon, the Tower of Babel, the Assyrian cities of Ninevah, Khorasbad and Nimrud, the Sumerian city of Ur, Samarra and Borsippa could be damaged and these and less well known antiquities could be lost forever.”³⁴

Sometimes organizations have tried to instigate awareness by writing to specific individuals or groups who are in the position to promote some sort of change in attitude or procedure at a relevant level. This is the route that the SPAB took in 2003. The SPAB secretary, Phillip Venning, wrote to Geoffrey Hoon M, P, the British Secretary of State for Defense, on 19 March 2003. He opened by stating that it would be quite a “propaganda coup” for Saddam Hussein should “the Allies cause significant damage to any historic site in Iraq.”³⁵ The letter continues by urging all involved to be more “conscious of how rich Iraq is in archaeological sites and historic buildings, many of world importance.”³⁶ Venning pointed out that, although during World War I and World War II many historic cities, like Rome, were protected, there were losses as well, specifically in Dresden. In other words, being on a protected list may not be enough to safeguard a historic site. The SPAB, he said, is “not arguing that military operations should be compromised in any way, or that any lives are put at risk, but rather that where it is possible to avoid damage the armed forces should be encouraged to do so.”³⁷ This case is obviously not con-

cluded, although the war has been declared nearly over, since the political unrest and partial occupation still exists. The fact of the matter is, although in past wars the SPAB “has written many letters to defence secretaries, asking them to avoid sites of historic importance during military campaigns,”³⁸ that governments and organizations are limited as to what they can accomplish in the name of culture and history during a war. Further, the post-conflict period can be much worse for the cultural heritage of Iraq than the war itself, because “in the absence of a functioning government, looters move in.”³⁹ Apparently, “objects taken out of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. . . . and sent to museums in Kirkuk, Mosel, and Basra were looted after U.S. troops routed the Iraqi army in 1991” and “on sites in Kurdistan, illegal excavation has been taking place quite openly.”⁴⁰ By the summer of 2004 and afterwards, political unrest and terrorist militant groups were still bombing areas throughout Iraq, adding to the destructive toll of the war.

A further issue is the compromised ability that Iraqi archaeologists, historians, curators, and scholars have to endure to do their jobs, which adds to the potential overall damage of the war upon Iraqi archaeological, historical, and museum sites. Certainly, once Iraq is secure, organizations like UNESCO and ICOMOS will step in to help with the preservation and repair of Iraqi sites, and organizations like the SPAB will do what they can to encourage the practice of preservation and limited repair to damaged or compromised sites. The SPAB that fought for Iraqi sites is a somewhat different SPAB that fought for historic preservation during the nineteenth century. Although the original *Manifesto* drives the SPAB of both centuries, twentieth and twenty-first century work is more extensive and complex and SPAB work regarding both Iraq and the World Wars is more comprehensive politically and in scope.

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1. William Morris, *Manifesto*, June 1877. SPAB archive, London.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. For example, Cardiff Castle has many repairs on the outer castle walls. These repairs are obvious to the viewer because the color and texture is somewhat different. As I noticed in 1996, the castle walls were a faded grey color while the repair work had a slightly yellow tint. Further, the stones of the repair work were far less worn than those of the surrounding material. This conservation would be acceptable to Morris and the SPAB.
5. From the heading to the *Manifesto* on the SPAB website, www.spab.org.uk/whatis_manifesto.html.
6. SPAB website, www.spab.org.uk/whatis_purpose.html.
7. SPAB website, http://www.spab.org.uk/whatis_history.html.
8. It was far more necessary for the SPAB to use abrasive methods in the nineteenth century than today. Currently, techniques of preservation are the norm and proprietors of historic sites frequently seek out SPAB advice.

9. From Micklethwaite's speech at the SPAB annual meeting, printed in *Fifteenth Annual Report* (London: SPAB, 1892), 50–51.
10. *Notes on the Repair of Ancient Buildings* (London: SPAB, 1903), 75.
11. *Ancient Monuments Society: Transactions* 39 (1995): 41.
12. Bath Preservation Trust website, www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk.
13. Victorian Society website, www.victorian-society.org.uk.
14. *The Churches Conservation Trust: 25th Annual Report and Accounts, 1993–94*, (London: Church Conservation Trust, 1994), 1. In England a church that is no longer needed for religious services is referred to as a "redundant church." Efforts are being made by a variety of organizations, such as the Friends of Friendless Churches, to preserve these landmarks.
15. See the websites for Landmark Trust, www.landmarktrust.co.uk; SAVE, www.savebritainsheritage.org; Architectural Heritage Fund, www.ahfund.org.uk. The societies listed are only a fraction of the groups currently active in England and on the Continent.
16. William Palmer, ed., *Quarterly Report* (London: SPAB, 1937), 8–9. Palmer was the SPAB secretary at the time. Publications are housed in the SPAB archive in London.
17. *Ibid.*, I–II.
18. *Ibid.*, 5.
19. Hansard Parliamentary Debates, 3rd ser., 823 (1971): cols. 739–42.
20. *Ibid.*
21. File for World War II. SPAB archive, London. The file contains little about specific sites and concentrates on the quantity of damaged sites and the general SPAB stance involving reconstruction.
22. *Ibid.*
23. SPAB website, www.spab.org.uk.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. H-Museum, 10 May 2003, "Iraq-The Cradle of Civilization at Risk: Cultural Heritage and Historical Monuments." Retrieved May, 2004 from www.h-net.org/~museum/iraq.html.
27. More information about these organizations can be found at their websites. www.unesco.org and www.international.icomos.org.
28. David D'Arcy, "Iraq's History is Our History Too," *Art Newspaper*, November 2002, 1–4. Retrieved June 2004 from www.theartnewspaper.com/news/article.asp?idart.
29. *Ibid.*, 4.
30. *Ibid.*, 2.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*, 1.
34. SPAB website, www.spab.org.uk/noticeboard_bulletin_iraq.html.
35. Letter from Phillip Venning to Geoffrey Hoon, 19 March 2003. SPAB website, http://www.spab.org.uk/noticeboard_bulletin_iraq.html.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. SPAB website, www.spab.org.uk/noticeboard_bulletin_iraq.html.
39. D'Arcy, "Iraq's History," 2.
40. *Ibid.*

THE ADVENTURE OF TROY TYPE

Hans-Ulrich Frey and Stephan Burkhardt

Ten years ago botanist Hans-Ulrich Frey and theologian Stephan Burkhardt founded Offizin Parnassia which is situated in Vættis, a small village in the Swiss Alps. As in the period of early printed books, in Offizin Parnassia lead types are cast, texts are composed by hand and printed on the hand-press, and also craft-bookbinding is done under the same roof. Last winter the owners engraved the mats of William Morris' fa-

mous Troy-type. Now this beautiful typeface is again available for traditional letterpress printing.

AIMS OF OFFIZIN PARNASSIA

Long before founding Offizin Parnassia Stephan and Hans-Ulrich were fascinated by fine books and owned a large library of them. There was always a big desire to print books by their own hands.

By coincidence they got a first proofing press and four type cabinets. From the beginning it was their clear intention to make editions of substantial texts and print them as bibliophile books in the best letterpress tradition with beautiful illustrations by contemporary artists. The first font they bought in bigger amounts was Bodoni 14 point. Soon the desire for more beautiful fonts arose. But it was obvious that it was tremendously expensive to buy newly made types in quantity. They had to search for another solution which was found in the Monotype hot-metal composing system. Two years after founding the press two different Monotype casting machines were running in Offizin Parnassia. Now it was possible to cast types in sizes from 5 to 72 point in any amount needed.

They learned the skills of type-founding, composing, printing, and bookbinding by teaching themselves, from the advice of old craftsmen, and, of course, by doing.

Two extraordinary circumstances allowed them to acquire Monotype matrices of two famous foundries. Now Offizin Parnassia is equipped with matrices for more than 3,500 complete alphabets and 4,000 different borders.

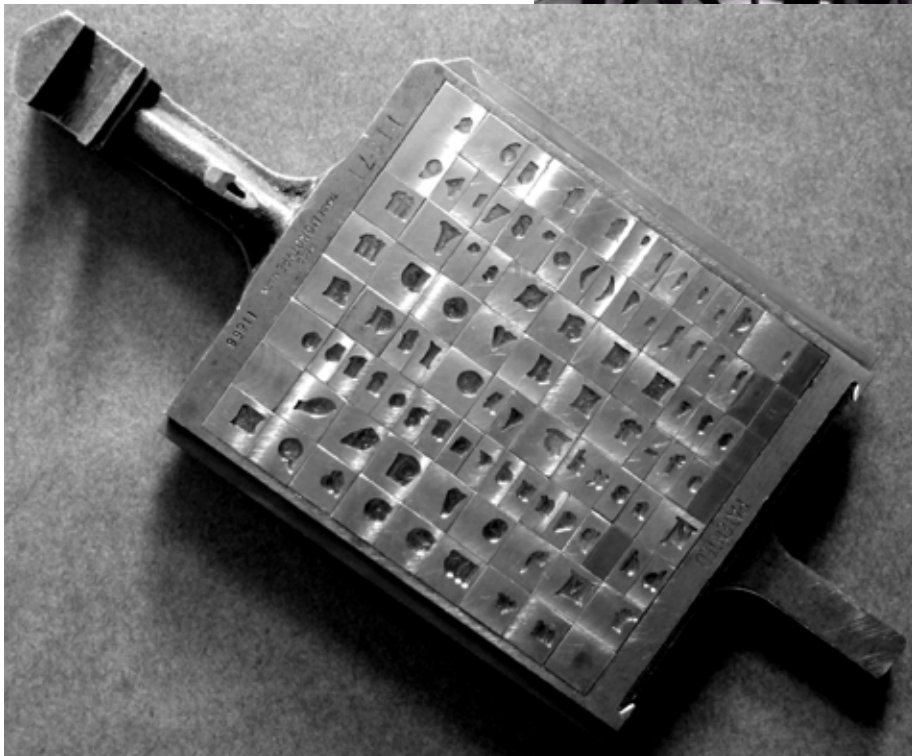
In the next years eight books and a Leporello were produced by Offizin Parnassia. Beside these, commissions for entirely hand-made books in small editions were filled and lead types of the rarest faces—Biblical Hebrew, Gaelic, Ancient Greek, Neuland by Rudolf Koch—could be delivered for customers all over the world.

OUR IMPULSES

There are three impulses that influence the work of Offizin Parnassia:

¶ The beauty, the simplicity, and the proportions of early Renaissance printing: the incunabla which are printed in only one typeface and one size. Offizin Parnassia is happy to have several of these printings at hand. The study of the typefaces, the proportion of the printed space, the straightforward design using one or two colours and the level of perfection is still truly amazing today.

¶ The second impulse came from the English private presses such as the Ashendene Press, the Doves Press, and particularly from William Morris's Kelmscott Press—not only the fascinating books but also the idea that books are entirely made by hand and that they





AVE MARIA AVE MARIA AVE MARIA

Bhüet s Gott und üsera liab Herr Jesus Christ,
Lyb, Ehr, Haab und Guat und alls, was do uma ischt.

Bhüet s Gott und der liab heilig Sant Jöüri,
der wohl uufwachí und höüri. ❀❀❀

Bhüet s Gott und dr liab heilig Sant Maarti,
der wohl uufwachí und waarti. ❀❀❀

Bhüet s Gott und dr liab heilig Sant Gall
mit syna Gottsheiligam/all. ❀❀❀

Bhüet s Gott und dr liab heilig Sant Peter.

Sant Peter, nimm dyna Schlüssel wohl in dyni ráchtí Hand
und bschlüss wohl us dem Bär syn Gang,
dem Wolf dr Zaa, dem Luchs dr Chräuel,
dem Rappa dr Schnaabel, dem Wurm dr Schweif,
dem Stei dr Sprung. ❀❀❀

Bhüet is Gott vor sonere böösa Stund.

Bhüet s Gott alles in úserem Ring,
und dí liab Mueter Gottes mit íhram Chind.

Bhüet s Gott alles in úserem Taal,
allhier und überall. ❀❀❀

Bhüet s Gott, und das waltí Gott, und das túa dr liab Gott.



are also designed and illustrated by the same craftsmen who become happier by this procedure.

¶ The third impulse is the reality of the actual handicraft. The slow working-progress, the handling of beautiful material, the restriction of printing technique, the exquisite texts, the small editions, the collaboration with artists, and the contact with very special customers provide the manufactures with pleasure—much more so than the modern industrial production process using loud and rapid machinery with the struggle for competition and rate of return. By using a hand-press, Offizin Parnassia prints 120 sheets per hour, in contrast to a modern Heidelberg Speedmaster which will do about 15,000 sheets in the same time!

THE TROY TYPE PROJECT

In 2005 Offizin Parnassia engraved matrices of a typeface for the first time: It was a revival of the earliest German face created in 1512 and used in Emperor Maximilian I's prayer book. The font is in 36 point and consists of 136 matrices with many Latin abbreviations and ligatures. The result was so encouraging that it prompted the initiation of a further project. By studying the works of William Morris Stephan and Hans-Ulrich became acquainted with the three types that were designed by Morris: Golden, Chaucer, and Troy, the last of which they favoured. Soon the idea was born to engrave new mats of this wonderful face so that it would be possible to cast and print it again in the traditional letterpress process.

The library of Offizin Parnassia held several Kelmescott Press volumes, including a copy of *Laudes Beatae Mariae Virginis* which is entirely printed in Troy type. Unfortunately, it is not possible to use printed books as references to make exact patterns for the engraving-process: the letters are often overinked and printed heavily in the soft mould-paper. Many types show traces of usage. Another problem is that the Kelmescott Press used dampened paper which shrinks when drying. So it was necessary to gain access to Morris's original material. With the help of contacts of the AEPM (Association of European Printing Museums) it was possible to locate the original steel punches of Troy type in the library of Cambridge University. Offizin Parnassia was allowed to take scans of the punches and of lead types. Now the original shape and size was guaranteed, and also the width and alignment of the original letters.

PINPOINT PRECISION

From every scan of the punches a tenfold enlargement was made and compared with original printed letters and types to avoid inaccuracies of the scans. A paper printout of these letters was cut out with a knife. By doing so, something of the hand-crafted process of the

punch-cutters' file was preserved. This exact paper pattern was again scanned and positioned into a coordinate system and retouched on the screen to the highest perfection. It took about four hours to achieve one letter.

From this digital letter a film was made and used to expose a photopolymer plate. After washing out the unexposed parts of the plate a three-dimensional pattern of the letter resulted. It was exactly positioned on a special scissors pantograph that was formerly used in German type-foundries. A letter reduced to one-tenth of the original size was now engraved in a brass block. This procedure was made in three steps with three different cutters. The last level required the utmost precision to a hundredth millimeter. To get the best printing results the depth of all the mats must be equal and the surface must be very smooth. The necessary cutters had to be made on a diamond grinder—the tiniest cutter had diameters of 0.117 mm. The brass blocks were made with the requirements of the Monotype Large-Composition system so that Troy type later on could be cast automatically on a Monotype machine. It took one hour to engrave a single matrix; in several cases it was necessary to make up to five trials until the result satisfied. After three months the complete alphabet with upper and lowercase, figures, punctuation marks, ligatures, and Morris-flower and leaf ornaments was finished. In addition all the German accents, an @-sign and a long-s as well as all the ligatures and the thorn (þ) necessary to compose medieval texts were designed and engraved in Morrisian style. The mats did run without problem on the Monotype machine.

The first text Stephan and Hans-Ulrich composed, cast and printed was William Morris's poem "The Briar Rose." After decades of Rosebud-sleep this beautiful typeface was revived again as a font to be used on the hand-press and give delight to readers and bibliophiles. Although it looks like a face of the Middle Ages, it is very readable, just as intended by William Morris.

PRINTED BOOKS IN TROY TYPE

For the public presentation of the new-born typeface held in Zurich on 20 June 2009 Hans-Ulrich Frey and Stephan Burkhardt printed a book with three completely different texts entitled (in English translation) *Dreams of a Better Life*. It begins with "In lond Cockayne," the first European description of the land of milk and honey dating back to 1305—a lovely poem painting the creature comforts on a secret island in the Atlantic. The second text is a shortened German adaptation of Morris's 1880 speech, "How We Live and How We Might Live." The third text is a recorded Slam Poem of the young contemporary German poet, Harry Kienzler: "I had a dream."

In the meantime Offizin Parnassia published a second book printed in Troy type: the famous speech of Chief Seattle from 1846. It is printed on straw-paper bound in handmade mould-paper with herbs and leaves of grass from the alps around Vættis. Offizin Parnassia also printed the text of blessings for the native alps on goat vellum with a big border with flowers in the style of Morris.

For their next project Stephan and Hans-Ulrich plan to make an exact reprint of the Morris edition of *Laudes Beatae Mariae Virginis*, one of two Kelmscott books printed in three colors. All the books and fonts of Troy type are available at Offizin Parnassia.

By these efforts a wonderful letterpress typeface of a great artist has come back to life. Old and new texts for cards and books now can be printed again in the Arts and Crafts tradition as dreamed by William Morris.

For more information: Offizin Parnassia Vættis, Unterdorf 2, Postbox 110, CH 7315 Vættis, Switzerland; Tel. 0041 81 3061470, info@parnassia.org, www.parnassia.org.

MORRIS, MARX, AND HOLMES: LEWIS S. FEUER'S *THE CASE OF THE REVOLUTIONIST'S DAUGHTER*

B. J. Robinson

The upcoming 25 December 2009 theatrical release of *Sherlock Holmes*, starring Robert Downey, Jr., adds to a still burgeoning Holmesiana comprising original titles as well as subsequent “imitations,” a work that boasts William Morris among its various casts of characters. The name William Morris appears in “The Red-Headed League,” a story from Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. The name serves as an alias for Duncan Ross (or vice versa) who, along with Vincent Spaulding, weaves an intricate deception around the parsimonious, geographically well-located, and red-headed Jabez Wilson.

The historical William Morris himself appears in one of the numerous “imitations” inspired by Doyle’s series: *The Case of the Revolutionist’s Daughter: Sherlock Holmes Meets Karl Marx* by Lewis S. Feuer (Prometheus Books 1983). In the forward to this novel, Feuer writes that during the summer of 1926 he studied under Harold J. Laski at the London School of Economics. Laski, author of *Communism* (1927) and an editor of *The Communist Manifesto*, belonged to the London School of Economic’s branch of the Baker Street Irregulars, a group to which Laski soon introduced Feuer. Indeed, Feuer quickly attended one of their meetings, where

Laski read a paper entitled “The Politics of Sherlock Holmes.”

That title might have served as a more direct title for this novel. Even more direct would have been “The Politics of Lewis K. Feuer.” A well-known sociology professor at Vassar, Cornell, and the University of Virginia, Feuer wrote such books as *Spinoza and the Rise of Liberalism* (1951), *Einstein and the Generations of Science* (1971), and *Imperialism and the Anti-Imperialist Mind* (1986). David Frum’s “In Memoriam” in his Diary for the *National Review* describes Feuer as “a scholar and teacher who belonged to that generation of intellectuals that migrated from the communist left to the patriotic right.”¹ That shift shapes this novel’s depiction of most of its characters, including Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, George Bernard Shaw, and Morris.

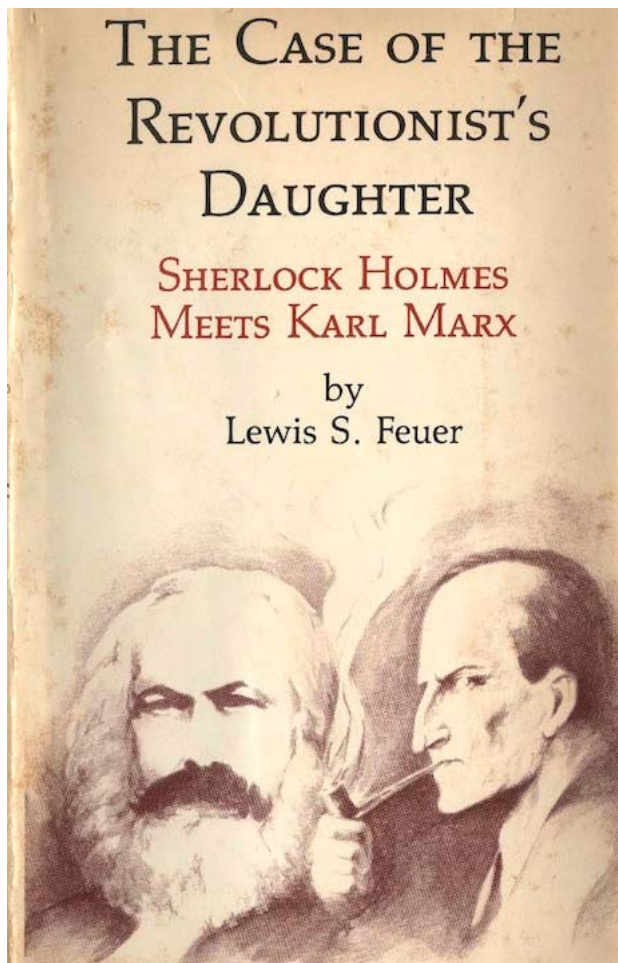
Morris appears in this novel several times, not only in person and within the conversation of other characters, but also as source for some of its décor. Holmes’s study has two Morris chairs, for example. Morris appears in the preface’s first page through a literary and political allusion:

The British general strike that very year [1926] . . . had made me [Feuer] feel that the working classes were now in genuine motion to achieve the socialist society. Who knows, I wondered, but perhaps in Britain I might witness the dream of John Ball, the fourteenth-century Lollard agitator for an equal society, realized through the courage and initiative of the British working-class movement.²

This allusion introduces the political focus of this novel that tells of a little-known association between Holmes and Marx. The political bent of Feuer, Laski, and several other of the LSE’s Baker Street Irregulars at the meeting during which Laski reads his paper leads one member to ask Laski whether or not “Sherlock Holmes had ever met Marx and Engels?” Laski can only answer that “the extant writings of Dr. Watson left the matter indeterminate, though Watson’s agent, Arthur Conan Doyle, had from time to time evinced a sympathetic interest in socialism” (9).

After the meeting concludes, an elderly Irregular, “very distinguished looking with his gray hair and mustache,” introduces himself to Laski and Feuer as Dr. John H. Watson and as one who wished to “bring some information that would answer the question as to whether Sherlock Holmes had known Dr. Karl Marx” (9). Watson’s military posture and distinguished bearing convince Laski that he is indeed Holmes’s ‘biographer’ and not a madman or impostor, so Laski invites Watson to his office the next afternoon where he can share his information. Feuer, whom Laski introduces to Watson as a “scholar in political theory and

Holmeseana" (10), is also invited to witness and record Watson's "unusual information" (10).



In this fortuitous position, Feuer learns how Holmes's detective abilities were called upon when "personal problems arose in the life of Dr. Karl Marx and his family" (11). Watson did not record these events "so long as any of Dr. Marx's children were alive. Then, the later rise of the European socialist parties and the Bolshevik Revolution made [Watson] reluctant to involve Holmes's name in political acrimony" (11–12). Laski accepts the "guardianship of the unpublished Holmes-Marx history" (12), a history that is ultimately left in Feuer's hands due to "recurrent political crises," including World War II, "as well as Laski's own evolution toward Marxism, [which] led [Laski] to keep postponing the publication of the Holmes-Marx story" (12). Only on his deathbed does Laski, now "disillusioned by Soviet actions during 1948 to 1950 in Berlin and Czechoslovakia," think it time to bring out a story in which Marx "did not fill the stage as an intellectual and spiritual giant" (12). Laski encourages Feuer to publish the story, but to wait to do so until the 1980s when "it would make good reading as 1984 approaches" (12).

The story that Feuer "records," is told from Watson's point of view. Watson tells how Engels approaches Holmes on Marx's behalf, asking him to discover the whereabouts of Marx's daughter, Eleanor, who has gone suddenly missing. Morris appears again in Engels's account of Eleanor's disappearance:

My friend Karl Marx is the father of three daughters . . . The third daughter, Eleanor, is Marx's favorite. To look at her is to be reminded of Marx in his youth—her eyes alert and poetic, her spirit ardent and self-sacrificing, her intelligence extraordinary. He calls her "Tussy," and he says "Tussy is I." She is the son he would have wanted. She goes among the gas workers to agitate and help them organize their union; she joined with William Morris in the Social Democratic studies, and translates the books of French novelists. (19)

She also suffers a form of spiritual sickness from the strain of her activities, whereupon she suddenly vanishes.

Holmes immediately indicates the direction the rest of the novel's plot will take when he declares that "Young women are . . . persuaded to escape their homes mainly by lovers" (23). Considering Eleanor Marx's intellectual bent, he assumes her supposed lover to exist "somewhere among political philosophers" (23). After meeting George Bernard Shaw at the British Museum, where Holmes hoped to read Marx's *Das Kapital*, Holmes learns of Eleanor Marx's connection with Dr. Edward Aveling and then tracks the couple down at William Morris's Kelmscott House, where a reading of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* is to be performed. Having solved the mystery of Eleanor Marx's whereabouts, the rest of Holmes's efforts, in terms of the plot, focus on his persuading "Tussy" to return home to her father.

This somewhat narrow plot structure supports Feuer's political commentary on Marx, Engels, Shaw, and Morris. His commentary itself seems somewhat narrow and one-sided. Feuer's Watson admires Morris's art more than his politics, and that bias never really changes throughout the novel; in fact, Morris's politics are mainly viewed here through his art. For example, Watson anticipates with pleasure visiting Kelmscott House to attend the Ibsen reading because Watson "enjoyed [Morris's] sagas of the Norse warriors, men of courage and simple ideas," and wonders "what this modern bard could feel in common with the likes of George Bernard Shaw and Edward Aveling, Bohemian anarchists with little sense of manly battle, and with no appreciation of the lance and sword that prove one's mettle" (53–54).

Far from being an ardent young socialist himself, Watson views Kelmscott House not as a shrine comparable to Mecca, the Mother Church at Rome, or "sacred precincts of Jerusalem" (56), but as a plain three-

story building, with two gabled attics, looking out through a fine row of

elm trees on the Thames River . . . Shown up the staircase to the first floor, [Watson and Holmes] walked on a lovely carpet, surrounded by a world of wallpapers decorated with the most exquisitely formed and colored flowers. I felt the sense of sacrilege that every child feels when it first enters a museum: beauty must be experienced to be enjoyed, yet every approach diminishes its physical existence.

The ethereal attribute of the house was enhanced by pictures placed at inobtrusive intervals that were all painted in the style called Pre-Raphaelite, and most depicted a woman. She had an angel-like, olive-complexioned face that was enveloped in long, flowing black hair; a gown delicately endraped her body, as if the fabrics felt privileged in their embrace. Her whole person suggested that her transcendent spirit was impatient with its earthly limitation. (56–57)

This unearthly presence materializes when the hostess introduces herself as Mrs. Morris: “Then Mr. William Morris greeted us. A stocky, broad-shouldered man, he gave the impression of immense physical vigor and strength. A childlike face with deep hazel eyes looked from behind an unkempt, somewhat straggly beard. His hair was only partially combed. Morris wore a blue suit, matched by a blue, cloudlike shirt that announced to all and sundry: ‘I am a craftsman’” (57).

By the time Watson leaves Kelmscott House he has been converted, not to socialism or intellectual bohemianism, but to beauty:

Never in my life had I been surrounded by so much beauty and brilliance. The truth or falsity of the ideas being propounded seemed altogether a secondary consideration; rather it was the comradeship that diffused the room in Kelmscott House, the sense of fellowship lived in the glorious search for a more beautiful and creative way of life. I felt myself in a sanctuary, privileged to glimpse for a few moments a harbinger of the future human society, and the image dazzled and confused me. (61)

After this visit to Kelmscott House, Holmes and Watson try to win Eleanor Marx’s confidence by associating with Aveling, who coaches zoology at University College of the University of London along with one Dr. Moriarty (called here Robert Owen Moriarty but indeed the future “Napoleon of crime”). Moriarty fuses mathematics, science, and politics (rather than art and politics) in an ominously efficient manner. As Brodetsky, a student in the Common Room, reveals,

Moriarty makes the solution of every equation the fulcrum for a reflection on human stupidity. There has

never been a mathematician in Parliament, he notes, nor a minister who could reason logically. It awaits for the men of intellect, he declares, to join in a conspiracy to rule as once the Pythagorean order, the first collectivity of mathematicians, aspired. And to achieve that aim, says Moriarty, every means would be justified, just as in mathematics when you can’t solve an equation by direct logical deduction you rely on techniques of approximation.

Moriarty believes too that just as university students in Russia turned into terrorist assassins and murdered the Czar, so likewise British university students will organize first as a criminal gang to demoralize society and thus prepare the advent of a scientific order. (50–51)

All that he learns of Moriarty and Aveling and of the Bakuninists, Anarchists, Communists, and Marxists who comprise their intellectual milieu, fills Holmes with disgust and despair. In a retrospective moment, he sits down on “another new Morris chair that Mrs. Hudson had provided” at 221B Baker Street and observes that

“Marx has the satisfaction of a philosopher’s vision, but those who try to realize it, like his daughter Eleanor, will forfeit with frustrated lives, especially as it transpires that Marx’s vision was the facile imagery of a fantasist rather than a scientific prevision.” Then, as if imbibing optimism from his Morris chair, Holmes remarked,

“However, grandiose social movements, let us not forget, have happier tangential consequences. William Morris preaches a return to medieval crafts and guilds; the world is pleased to accept his comfortable chairs and cheerful wallpaper. Robert Owen preached socialist factories; the world accepts his notion of schools for adults. Shaw’s comedies may make people laugh long after they have forgotten his socialist crotchets.” (97–98)

Holmes had earlier commented to Morris that Marx’s *Capital* seemed to be deeply influencing and guiding “young people” toward socialism. Morris replies thusly:

“Not as far as I am concerned!” boomed Morris. “I find Marx’s theories either boring or false. I subscribe to no Hegelian dialectic; I don’t even know what it means. Marx’s materialistic conception of history is patently false; none of us middle-class people would be here tonight if it were true. I am a prosperous manufacturer, and proud to be so. You must drop by at our showrooms, Mr. Holmes, at 449 Oxford Street, and study the samples we keep there of our fabrics, furniture, and pottery. I have decorated churches, factories, and St. James’s Palace. I believe in the beauty of work, Mr. Holmes, and in the use of one’s hands to create. Marx, on the other hand, advocates toil and worships the machine. The Middle Ages, in my opinion, was a time when the artisan loved his work, and his work was

his art; I think the workmen in the medieval towns were happier than they have ever been in modern times. To me the Industrial Revolution was an industrial counter-revolution as far as the nature of man is concerned. But Marx despises the Middle Ages; he prostrates himself before his bogus 'historical necessity,' and he calls me a Utopian socialist. To me socialism is a consummation of man's artistic impulse; to Marx, it's a mechanical by-product of machinery. No, Mr. Holmes, I am no Marxist." (57–58)

Although Morris himself does not appear again in the novel, Watson's assessment of the vibrancy and relevance of Morris's art (rather than his political views) is hinted at in the opening paragraph of the novel's Postscriptum: "During the seventeen years from 1881 to 1898, I watched the socialists gaining in influence; the Fabian Society caught the mood of young Britons eager for a more humane world, and Bernard Shaw was becoming the most talked about playwright, who had elevated lowly social problems onto the art of the stage" (146). Watson, an avowed conservative, supports and approves this (gradual) transformative power of art. He does not support agitation, anarchy, violence, or revolution. It seems, therefore, that Feuer has Watson remake Morris into his own image – one whom a conservative can admire, respect, and perhaps dismiss with a smile.

This novel artistically revives Morris and his contemporaries, which offers real pleasure in itself. Also, it highlights a conservatism intrinsic to the Holmes canon, a conservatism stemming, most probably, from Doyle's own politics—highlighted by the fact that the conservative Feuer feels compatible working with Holmes as a character and a thinker. Whether or not Morris would have felt equally compatible with Holmes—or with Feuer's presentation of Morris's politics—seems rather uncertain. His artistic influence, though, seems to me to be what inspired Feuer to try his hand at artistic production by writing this first and only novel of his career—perhaps to "elevate" his politics to the art of fiction, since art lives or survives sometimes beyond its motivational, political impulse (as Feuer suggests). Whatever we might think of his success in this attempt, the novel obliquely helps readers of Morris's literature appreciate even more fully the profundity, reach, and wisdom of his art and politics.

B. J. Robinson is professor of English at North Georgia College & State University, where she is also director of the University Press of North Georgia. She serves on the editorial committee of the Newsletter.

1. David Frum, "In Memoriam," in "David Frum's Diary, 27 November 2002," National Review Online, <http://frum.nationalreview.com/post/?q=ZDcyMGE5MzQ2YWYiMWYzNmZOTkoYjNlMzRmN2U5NTQ=>. Retrieved 8 December 2009.

2. Lewis S. Feuer, *The Case of the Revolutionist's Daughter: Sherlock Holmes Meets Karl Marx* (New York, Prometheus Books, 1983), 7. Subsequent quotations taken from this text.

TOM GALLANT AND WILLIAM MORRIS'S *GOLDEN LILY* AT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

Jane Tippet

Contemporary artist Tom Gallant and his William Morris inspired work, *Rose Window V* takes center stage at the recently opened *Slash: Paper Under the Knife* at New York's Museum of Arts and Design. (The museum is the former Museum of American Craft; the exhibition runs until 4 April 2010.) Focusing on contemporary use of paper as a source of philosophical and creative inspiration, *Slash* brings together over thirty internationally-recognized artists whose *oeuvre* engages with paper both as a medium and a subject. It is the third show in the museum's "Materials and Process Series," which examines the renaissance of traditional handwork/materials within a context of contemporary art and design.

British-born Tom Gallant's contribution is envisioned as an addition to his earliest series, *Collector II*, premiered in 2005 at London's Museum 52. For *Slash*, Gallant created a group of kirigami and origami paper collage fabrics based on the designs of William Morris. At first glance, Gallant's innovation in such works as *Rose Window V*, *After Morris's Golden Lily* appears to lie solely in that way he has used the media—cut paper resting aesthetically and compositionally within the same color schemes and motifs of easily identifiable Morris patterns. Yet these "textiles" are not those of a harmonious natural world, but turn out to be physical (and figurative) constructions of sexual deviance, made entirely from remnant swatches of current pornographic publications. Using fragments of both text and images, Gallant challenges the reverence for these celebrated cultural iconographic emblems of nineteenth century British Aestheticism as ones which negate the importance of the more troubling aspects of this (and ultimately our own) constructions of gender and sexual identities. Created by meticulously weaving together a multitude of small pieces, a process that has a clear reference to Morris's own interest in the handmade, Gallant's tapestry of paper creates a momentary, but illusory, impression of aesthetic harmony. Yet existing just below the surface is a foundation which forces the viewer to encounter the allure, both physical and mental, which the pornographic held for the Victorians and still holds for a contemporary social framework.

Rose Window V is so closely related thematically and compositionally with the *Collector II* series that the artist conceives them as a single unit. For the more recent work, Gallant took his inspiration from Morris's *Golden Lily* pattern, using it for a further exploration of the underlying themes of domestic and sexual repression in Victorian identity—which lie symbolized in the deceptive nature of the medium in which his “fabrics” are actually created. In a brief statement accompanying the work, Gallant affirms the piece's placement within a historical narrative of a collective sexual obsession, proclaiming, “[sex] encompasses so many aspects of our visual culture. It speaks on many levels that, on closer inspection, disappear into the tangle of flesh, taboos, icons, repetition, and banality.” The “tangle” of color and form, and its inherent homage to its artistic predecessor Morris, create a work of art which at once informs, delights, and disturbs. To the viewer Gallant provides a dialogue of artistic and social engagement which remains fundamental to the creation of fine and decorative art.

Jane Tippet is a PhD student in art history at the University of Delaware. In addition to the Slash exhibition currently on at the Museum of Arts and Design, Gallant's work was also featured in a solo exhibition at DCKT Contemporary, New York, NY, 17 October–15 November 2009.

BLOOD, ABSINTHE, AND APHORISMS: NEW CURRENTS IN AESTHETICISM AND DECADENCE: A CONFERENCE REVIEW

B. J. Robinson

“Blood, Absinthe, and Aphorisms: New Currents in Aestheticism and Decadence,” organized by Richard Kaye and Talia Schaffer and held at the CUNY Graduate Center, New York on 30 April–1 May 2009, considered such topics as “Art for Socialism's Sake,” “Applauding Decadence,” “Counter Aesthetics,” and “Popular Decadence.” Its participants comprised a veritable roll call of fin-de-siècle scholars: Margaret D. Stetz, Dennis Denisoff, Linda K. Hughes, Richard Dellamora, Regenia Gagnier, Diana Maltz, Ruth Livesey, Matthew Potolsky, Sharon Marcus, Stefano Evangelista, Michael Hatt, Rachel Teukolsky, and Susan Zieger.

Some of the subjects these conference participants covered included “Individualism and Globalization at the Fin-de-Siècle: On the Relationship of the Part to the Whole” (Regenia Gagnier's reading from her work-in-progress, *Individualism and Globalization*), “C. R. Ashbee's Chipping Campden and Two British Tolstoyan Colonies” (Diana Maltz), “The Ford Sisters and The Aestheticism of early Modernism in Leeds”

(Ruth Livesey), “Imagining Ancient Greece” (Stefano Evangelista), Edward Carpenter (Michael Hatt), Aubrey Beardsley (Rachel Teukolsky), and M. P. Shiel (Susan Sieger). Amongst these currents, topics, figures, and foci, the opening roundtable discussion came closest actually to identifying new currents in Aestheticism and Decadence.

Dennis Denisoff, in “From Animism to Animality: Pagan Decadence and the Posthuman Subject,” suggested that Post-Humanism and Animal Theory both derive from aesthetic and decadent concerns, citing the species transgressions and inter-species politics of *The Beetle*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, and *Dracula* as well as the turn-of-the-century trends of surgical rejuvenation (involving monkey testicles and evincing a desire to retain youth a la *The Picture of Dorian Gray*) and Anti-Vivisectionism.

Linda K. Hughes, in “Liminal Poetics,” pointed to the space between Aestheticism and Decadence as containing still fertile ground, citing the liminality of fin-de-siècle poetry—for example, in the two persons and one voice of Michael Field (the aunt and niece Katharine Bradley and Edith Cooper)—urbanism and transgressive desires, and, in particular, Queer Theory's disruption of fixed binaries. She typified Aestheticism—art and beauty—as the tension between the one and many, art and life.

Richard Dellamora, in “Promissory Aestheticism,” considered the freedom implied by the aesthetic focus on beauty, suggesting that only through beauty do humans make their way to freedom. The tension between the extant moment, the archivable (or archived) past, and the open future holds the promise of aestheticism. Among various approaches to the term/concept of aestheticism, Dellamora suggested linking time and aestheticism, particularly in stopped time--the moment-in both sublimating moments and fetishized discrete moments. Dorian Gray's fixity on his portrait thus joins with the “Purple and Rose” of James Whistler's painting which joins with Osmond's morbidity in Henry James's *Portrait of a Lady*. This focus on the moment elevates mundane execution—in Arts and Crafts, in Japanese art, in interior and exterior design. Most particularly, Dellamora asserted Aestheticism's feat in allowing people to imagine, think, and live otherwise—in allowing freedom.

In “The Afterlives of Aestheticism and Decadence,” Margaret D. Stetz suggested the vitality of Aestheticism and Decadence in the long nineteenth century—in which we still live and function. Some of the tenets that ring through this continuing afterlife are Neo-Victorianism's “Make it old” and our current fin de siècle's “Make it beautiful” and “Make it strange.” The influences of Modernism, of T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, are fast waning, quite unlike the still surging,

or resurgent, Aestheticism and Decadence of such artists as Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde. This afterlife is giving us the Gaslight Romance, Steampunk, and Gothic/Lolita dress, amongst other creative trends. It offers neither nostalgia nor escapism but instead philosophical lenses through which to examine the problems of our moment, including proper and improper ways to respond to beauty as a physical reality in the world, and the relationship of beauty to morality, amorality, and immorality (beauty and strangeness). Some of the works born in this afterlife, aligned with this movement and using its lenses, are Elise Broach's *Masterpiece* (2008), Louis Edwards's *Oscar Wilde Discovers America: A Novel* (2003), and the delightful *The Picture of Morty and Ray* by Daniel Pinkwater and Jack E. Davis (2003).

Other highlights of the conference included Regenia Gagnier's examination of William Morris's relationship to a problem in modern 'romance' through his questioning how the needs of the individual relate to those of the state; and Diana Maltz's relation of C. R. Ashbee's Chipping Campden to Morris's (and Wilde's) advocacy of simplicity as a refinement to life, a simplicity which leads (perhaps inevitably?) to materialistic aestheticism by revealing the necessity of crafts for survival, crafts such as carpentry, shoe-mending, fencing, etc.

One early goal/question raised by conference co-organizer Richard Kaye related to Morris's *News from Nowhere*: what permits the sublime moment/event that the agitator experiences as he steps off the Underground and then sees Japanese beauty that allows the book's dream within a dream in the first place, allows its coherent vision of society and relations of the sexes to be articulated in such a sublime framework? A beautiful question about a beautiful vision, and a revealing approach to Aestheticism and Decadence—as was this conference.

OBITUARY: CATHERINE TYLER BRODY

Long-time members of the Society will be saddened to learn of the death of Catherine Tyler Brody last 4 September at age 81. Brody joined the Society in 1957 at the behest of Joseph R. Dunlap, who served as "East Coast Secretary" of the "North American Section" of the William Morris Society in London. It would be fair therefore to consider her one of our founders. She was active in our affairs, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, helping Dunlap—a colleague in the City of New York's library system—with publications and meetings. Never one to miss a Morris event in New York, especially if it related to the world of books and fine printing, Brody made it a point in recent years to purchase any and all of the Society's publications missing from her collection.

Born on 7 September 1927 in Chicago, IL, Catherine Tyler Brody attended Rosary College, Pratt Institute, and Hunter College. For thirty years she was a professor of library science and administrator with the City University of New York. She also held the position of Chief Librarian and College Archivist at NYC Technical College. Brody was the author of several books on the history of printing and a contributor to many publications, notably the catalogue raisonné of the artist-illustrator, John DePol.

She was past-president and founding member of the American Printing History Association and served many years as secretary-treasurer of the Typophiles (an organization devoted to fine typography and bookmaking). In addition to the William Morris Society Brody belonged to the Grolier Club and the Princeton Club. A resident for many years of Rockland County, NY, she took great interest in the history of the Hudson Valley, serving for several years as Gallatin Town Historian and secretary of the Jackson Corners Vigilant Association.

Adapted from the obituary by Paul Romaine, published in the Fall 2009 newsletter of the American Printing History Association.

NEW WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY BOOK

The History of Kelmscott House

by Helen Elletson

The William Morris Society has just published *The History of Kelmscott House* by Helen Elletson. This new book by the curator of the William Morris Society and Kelmscott House Museum, tells the story of the "most beautiful house in London" in Hammersmith which Morris bought in 1879. While living there he set up the Kelmscott Press, established the Hammersmith branch of the Socialist League (in the Coach House, where speakers included George Bernard Shaw and W. B. Yeats), and continued his innovations in design, printing and dyeing techniques. This is the first fully-illustrated book about this most magical of Morris's homes. Helen Elletson's carefully researched and absorbing text, complemented by beautiful images—photographs and original prints, most in color—faithfully conveys the atmosphere of Kelmscott House, which Morris and his family welcomed some of the most influential minds of the late-Victorian period. The book also examines the history and the occupants of the house before and after Morris.

64 pp., 34 illus., most in color. November 2009
\$15 per copy, plus \$5 package and postage (in the US). Order from: Kelmscott Bookshop, 32 West 25th St., Baltimore, MD 21218
(410) 235-6810, info@kelmscottbookshop.com

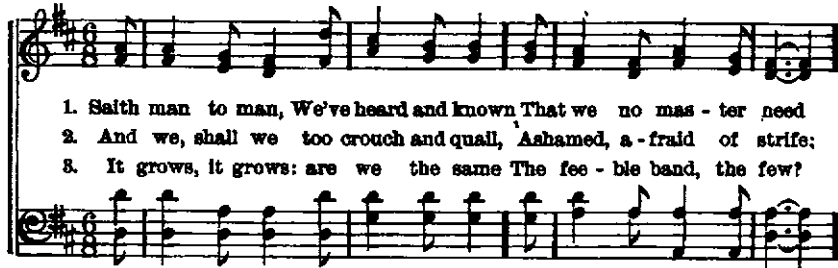
THE LAST WORD

Morris's poem, "No Master," from Charles H. Kerr, comp., *Socialist Songs: With Music* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1901).

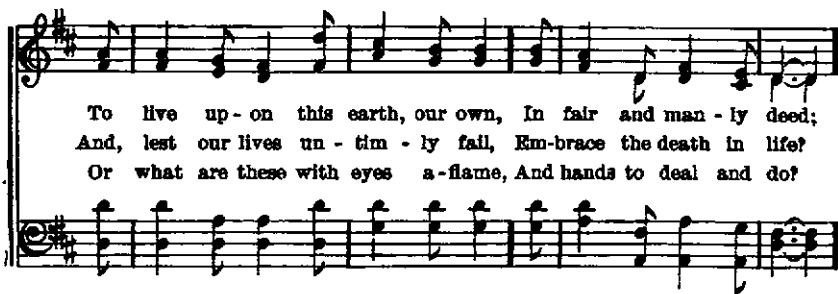
No. 17. No Master.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

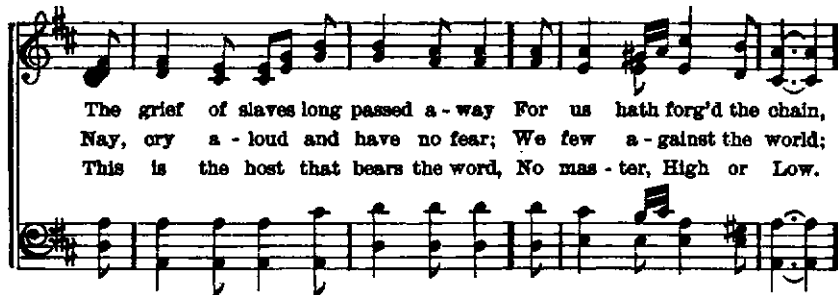
Arr. from LUDWIG SPOHR, (1784—1859.)



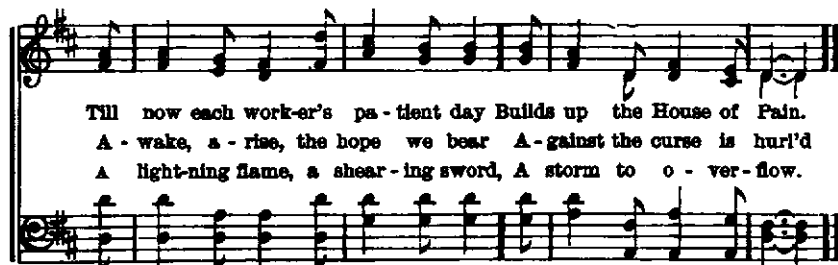
1. Saith man to man, We've heard and known That we no mas - ter need
2. And we, shall we too crouch and quail, Aahamed, a - fraid of strife;
3. It grows, it grows: are we the same The fee - ble band, the few?



To live up - on this earth, our own, In fair and man - ly deed;
And, lest our lives un - tim - ly fail, Em-brace the death in life?
Or what are these with eyes a - flame, And hands to deal and do?



The grief of slaves long passed a - way For us hath forg'd the chain,
Nay, cry a - loud and have no fear; We few a - gainst the world;
This is the host that bears the word, No mas - ter, High or Low.



Till now each work - er's pa - tient day Builds up the House of Pain.
A - wake, a - rise, the hope we bear A - gainst the curse is hurl'd
A light - ning flame, a shear - ing sword, A storm to o - ver - flow.