

Heart of America Chapter

The January 8th Meeting started at two o'clock at the A.A.A. Bldg. in Kansas City with fifty-four members and guests present. The President provided a novel way of having members meet members, and then introduced new guests and new members who had recently joined our Chapter. He then acquainted the members with several catalogues regarding wood and veneer products that can be used in refinishing.

Mr. Bruer brought up the question that the need for a small blackboard was becoming apparent with projects and reports being organized, and future programs being prepared where the speaker would need drawings to elaborate his ideas and discussions. Ervin Smith offered to correct this need by providing a blackboard. Then, Mr. Bruer also asked that an appropriate sum from the treasury be set aside to purchase filing cabinets to keep the mounting correspondence in some sort of order. Mr. McEowen made a motion to allocate \$15.00 to the purchase of such a cabinet, and Mr. Peck seconded. The motion was immediately approved by the members.

The next topic for discussion was a suggestion by Mr. Henry that rather than have Chapter Workshops, if a member in a certain locality is preparing to tackle a new job of repairing something not in the ordinary line, or doing a job of bushing that he thinks the other members might be interested in seeing, that he contact the Secretary giving him the particulars and the day or evening that this job is being undertaken, and then the Secretary notify the members in this particular area of the intended workshop and time, and the other members who are interested can gather at the member's basement or shop workbench, and learn from his experience. Not a bad idea!

Mr. Perotti mentioned that he has found that the Linda Hall Library here in Kansas City has several thousand horological books covering all types of clocks and watches, as well as repairs and the making of movements. Mr. Bruer appointed him as a committee of one to report back at our April Meeting and give us a brief summary of information available that would be of use to us--the collectors of these odd items. That is one report that hours of work will be spent in completing.

The Chapter has recently purchased plastic plates, cups, spoons, etc. that can be reused. Hereafter at all open houses, these will be offered to the hostesses to solve the problem of serving refreshments and should remove the problem of members scurrying around trying to scrape up enough service to serve fifty or more people at the open houses. In addition, the motion was made by Mr. McEowen that the Ladies Auxiliary have officers to whom all such problems could promptly be turned over to. This motion was seconded by Mr. Sayles, and passed upon by the members immediately. Mrs. Henry was nominated by Mrs. Motley as Chairman. Mrs. Henry declined but nominated Mrs. Wagner, and then made a motion that Mrs. Wagner be accepted by acclamation, which was speedily approved. All the knotty problems the men do not want to handle are now turned over to the Auxiliary, and the ladies grab them up and as quick as a wink have the whole situation solved and carried out. What efficiency.

Since the first Sunday of April is Easter Sunday, the motion was made by Mr. B. G. Smith and seconded by Mr. Henry that the April Meeting be held April 9th, the following Sunday. Later on in the Meeting, when the question of having a Dinner Meeting arose, Mr. Henry and Mr. Peck made their reports of available accommodations. Since this is our Anniversary Meeting, the motion to have a dinner meeting April 9th, carried and promptly was turned over to the Ladies Auxiliary to settle the question of where to eat and making all arrangements. Mrs. Wagner, the Chairman, has promised that by the next Report, either by the end of February or early March, full details will be ready, and you will be asked to return reservations to your Secretary so that the number expected can be determined. Additional reservations will be held open so do not fail to come if at the last minute you discover you can make it. Remember, this is our FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, and a big time is being prepared.

Incidentally, at this time, your Secretary, as well as the other Officers of the Chapter, would like to thank all those members who brought clocks, watches, and examples of their hobbies to this past meeting. It was tremendous. There were not enough tables to display all the many things that were brought, and many of the larger clocks took to the floor where they were inspected at even a closer range. The Auxiliary Members were overjoyed to find not only interesting clocks and watches on display, but also dolls, hand painted pictures, several different kinds of needlework, quilts, and many pieces of china including Flo-Blue China. The watches and clocks displayed ranged from rare Terry Clocks to the newest in plastic clocks that have just come out this past year. Words could not describe that exhibit room that day. We are in hopes that at our April Meeting, there will be an additional room available besides the dinning room where we can again have the many displays. Besides the wonderful benefit to all the members present, the guests were deeply impressed by the displays and made no bones about mentioning this. Lets keep up the good work. Nothing is more wonderful than learning, and our learning is beginning at home.

Besides the dinner question that day, there were several other committee reports that everyone was anxiously awaiting news. The question of having an auction or sale for the public was discussed and from the report turned in by Mr. Wagner, it seems that private auctions are alright in most of the halls available, but there is some question regarding a public one. Not only that, but at the present time considering the cost of engaging a room large enough to accommodate all the exhibits as well as the auction, the cost was beyond the limit of our one-year-old treasury, and until additional reserve could be built up, it was decided to postpone further consideration of the matter. Mr. Vandervort described the principal of "Silent Auctions" and later on when the matter is reconsidered, it is a safe bet that this novel new method will be employed.

At the last meeting, the project of reactivating the twin-tower clocks in the Fidelity Building was discussed. Mr. Henry reported that he had contacted the Government Representatives and permission was on its way, within a week or two, he hoped, but then due to the problem of access and liability, only five members would be permitted to be in the tower at one time in making the innitial inspection. It was decided that we would review the rack and ruin and determine if repairs were feasable, and if we could undertake such a project with-

out bankrupting anyone, and then report back to the officials and obtain their permission or explain what work was necessary. Either way, whether or not we do the work, we have done our civic duty to alert the City to the fact that someone is interested in the City's clocks and wants to see them properly treated. That alone is rewarding to any clock collector's spirit. But, as was said, we will just have to be a bit more patient. Naturally, the committee is on pins and needles raring to go, but waiting serves to sweeten the appetite, if any of our enthusiastic appetites can stand much more sweetening.

Then the Chapter received a very beneficial surprise. As mentioned in the previous Report, Mr. Henry was engaged in repairing a sculptured clock designed for former President Truman by the French Government, and he had graciously offered any fees he received to the Chapter. This time, he reported that the clock was finished, running as all good clocks should, and he presented to the Chapter Treasurer a check for ten dollars. To him and his work, the Chapter can only say "thankyou". We are indeed grateful.

Mr. Bruer, our President, had mentioned earlier about several books on wood supplies that were now available to members. One of these was a book put out by the Craftsman Wood Service Co., 2727 South Mary Street, Chicago 8, Illinois, the "1961 Catalog No. 27", and the cost of the catalog was 25¢; and the other was a book suggested by Mr. McEowen that he had found very valuable, "Catalog No. 60", Constantine's Catalog & Manual for Woodworkers, 2050 Eastchester Road, New York 61, N. Y. Both books carry all types of wood patchings, veneer, inlays in wood designs--real wood inlays with a paper backing for easy inserting into the finished slot cut for them--and all types of wooden dowels, pins, etc., all cut to fit and easily stained to match the rest of the wood.

Along this same idea, Mr. Ervin Smith who is a research developer for Cook Paint and Varnish Company, gave a very interesting discussion and explanation as how to properly refinish wood, proper techniques for filling and then staining, and he had sample boards already finished with different stains so that we could see how the stains would look and match up with the rest of the clock. He provided all the members present with many of the color charts and books put out by his Company as to how to obtain the desired result. In addition, he spent considerable time acquainting us with the new products that are soon to be available that make this rather trying job of refinishing more easier. Being a clock collector himself, he knew just where most of our hardest problems were, and he suggested all types of new ways that varnishing was being made easier, and staining, and what have you. There are many new products coming out in these economical spray cans and one can almost do the entire job now, without getting a brush out. Of course, there is still no easy way to get that old finish off, but many of our collectors have discovered easier and better removers, and it is your Secretary's fond hope that in time to come, we will be able to publish some of the better and more efficient ways of doing the job.

Most of our members are acquainted with the dial and face painting that Mrs. Vandervort does. We all have dials that would improve the looks and value of one of our rarities if it was properly redone.

Therefore, your Secretary now has in his files, a complete price list put out by Mrs. Vandervort for doing this very exacting work, and will be happy to forward it on to anyone who would like investigating the cost of having such a job done. Merely drop me a line anytime and I will forward on to you her complete price list.

All told, our meeting lasted until four-thirty, and then there was more visiting afterwards. As requested, Mr. Glenn Blair sent his Program for that meeting in to our President, just in the event bad weather kept him from being here, but fortunately, Sunday was a beautiful day. Due to the extraordinary length of the meeting that day, Mr. Blair agreed to present his program at our dinner meeting April 9th. It is one which all those who have had to repair verges will be happy to attend. But, let it be known, and your Officers have asked me to be emphatic about it, now that our Chapter is running smoothly, and most of the problems are out of the way, our meetings will run a bit faster and hereafter, all meetings will end prior to four o'clock so that more time may be devoted to seeing the exhibits, and going to Open Houses. The door prizes that day were contributed by Mrs. Bruer, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Wagner, and Mr. Smith and included three spray cans of varnish won by Mr. Motley, Mr. Sayles, and Mrs. Green. Mrs. Henry won the 1961 Calendar Towel, and Mrs. Vandervort won a lovely apron made by Mrs. Thomas.

Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Thomas had made leather badges and gave them to all the members to wear at Conventions, or meetings, or where ever our members might happen to go. They are of all colors, in the shape of watches with a big heart in the center to illustrate the Heart of America, with the Chapter Name written there. Whenever you see one of our members at the next Convention, or other Chapter Meetings, you will easily recognize him from our distinctive badges. I still have a few left for the members who were not able to attend the meeting, and for those who forgot to get theirs.

TIME ON MY LANDS

It was my pleasure to spend the holidays in New York. In the seven days that I was there I had to step quite lively to get in all the things I had planned to do, what with subwaying up to the Bronx, down again to Nassau Street and shuttling over to the Bowery and Canal in my quest for an elusive part, or in the hope I could turn up a rare movement or watch. Not being too inured to the New York weather in wintertime, at times it seemed bitter cold outside and the occasional stops for coffee seemed to have no warming effects. I had barely scratched the surface of my "to see, to do" list when it was time to head west and home again.

One of the most noteworthy events of my busy week was my visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and particularly to that part of the museum displaying the magnificent John Herpont Morgan Collection of Watches; incidently, the Mrs. George A. Hearn and the G. P. Morosini collections of clocks and watches are displayed in the same salon; be that as it may, my interest was mainly in the Morgan Collection. There are many enameled, jewelled and finely wrought gold watches; several in the shape of butterflies and musical instruments. In the Collection too are several watches made by some of the most renowned watchmakers, Thomas Tompion, Daniel Quare, Abraham Louis Broquet; and a clock and a watch made by Bartholomew

Newsam, he was the clockmaker to Queen Elizabeth and died in 1593, so Newsams' are to be considered in the very early history of watchmaking. The enameled watches are beautifully represented in the works of Auguste Bretonneau (1638), his case richly enameled with four scenes representing the chase of the Calydonian boar, and two watches made by Goullons of Paris, one showing two representations of the holy family and landscapes, the other having scenes from the story of Antony and Cleopatra both made in the 1860's. The collection also displays three examples of the famous "Nurnberg eggs" the early watch made in the shape of an oval or egg and made in the early 1500's. The watches made by Thomas Tompion and Daniel Quare were both in plain silver inner cases, Tompion's outer-case was in red tortoise shell, Quare's in leather, both piqued with gold and silver studs; similarly cased was a very rare Edward East alarm-watch; all of these watches were made in the late 1600's.

Several unusual watches are also displayed; of especial notice is the so-called pendulum watch made by David Lesturgeon of London in 1702. The balance of this watch was placed behind the dial and its arms weighted, a slit in the dial permitted the weights to be seen. A complicated watch, by an unknown watchmaker, but believed to be Swiss or German and of the 18th Century had moving automatons, enacting scenes; and an astronomical watch made by George Margetts in 1783 not only told the time but indicated the tide, moon's age, place of the moon, position of the sun, sun's declination, month, date and other things --- making it a wonderful watch to get lost with!

All of these watches in the Morgan Collection have been written up in bookform, namely, in a book compiled by G. C. Williamson CATALOGUE OF THE J. P. MORGAN COLLECTION OF WATCHES, a magnificent volume of 300 pages with superb colored illustrations of the watches, and published in London in 1912 with no expenses spared! It is a very rare and valuable book. The Morgan Collection is made up of the F. Hilton Price (English) and the Carl Marfels (German) watch collections which were acquired by purchase to make up one of the finest watch collections in the world; it was a "loan exhibit" for a long time but is now the property of the Museum.

Of some importance also was my visit to the New York Public Library. It was there that I examined the scrap-book compiled by Charles S. Crossman of the articles on the HISTORY OF WATCH AND CLOCKMAKING IN AMERICA he had written for the Jewelers' Circular 1882-1888. Charles S. Crossman (1856-1930) began in the jewelry business as a lad of 15 in 1871 in the employ of J. Watts & Brother of Ann Arbor, Michigan. In 1882, after considerable experience in the trade he began writing his history. His articles on the watch companies, in particular, are informative and authentic, his last article on the jewelry trade appeared in 1913. Most of the articles are of the watch companies, the originators, owners of the factories and their locations with some biographical sketches of the more important men connected with the enterprises of that time. In the scrap-book are two or more pages on American chronometer makers and some description of their works; of particular interest is the sketch of Albert W. Potter and of the fine chronometers and watches he made. Since Mr. Crossman seems to have been mainly interested in watches and jewelry, such as precious stones, his articles on

American clockmakers are rather sparse, the few he wrote have very little information on their productions.

In passing it may be interesting to note that the volume also contains an item of Kansas City interest; a letter, in holograph, written by a former Kansas Citian, Mr. C. B. Garrett, dated April 10, 1887, and written from St. Paul, where he had moved, to Mr. Crossman. It relates to Mr. Crossman's article on the United States Watch Company of Marion, New Jersey, and of the large balance wheel in their watches. In this letter Mr. Garrett states that the wheel was invented by Oliver J. Baldwin. I have ordered a positive micro-film of the volume for my own use --- I hope I have a loupe strong enough to reread it!

R. F. Perotti, January, 1961

For Sale Column

The following list of calendar clocks was sent in by Mr. Lee Seymour, Route 1, Box 114, Blackwell, Oklahoma:

- Shelf-type Ithaca Calendar Clock, walnut case and clock in wonderful shape although calendar part needs some repairs. \$60.00
Wall-type Ithaca Calendar Clock, oak case with lots of trimmings. \$125.00
Ithaca shelf-type round top Calendar Clock, walnut case with center door to start pendulum, has alarm attachment and all is in mint condition. \$70.00
All the above mentioned Ithacas have rolls for weekdays and months.
Shelf-type Ithaca--hand set weekdays and months, walnut case \$125.00
Waterbury double faced Calendar Clock in oak case, needs a new glass in the door (this is a painted glass). \$45.00
Wall-type Gilbert Calendar Clock, hand change dial first of each month, has jump opening at top of clock for the month. Round dial clock with pendulum hanging below. \$125.00
Fashion Calendar Clock dated 1876, brass finials on top, pillars down the side. \$150.00
Figure Eight weight driven Seth Thomas Calendar Clock, rosewood case. Calendar is the large dial below, excellent condition. \$150.00
All who are interested are requested to please contact Mr. Seymour.
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Your Secretary is happy to announce that we now have thirty-nine members with the promise of several more within a short time. We would like to remind the members that their \$2.00 dues are due April 1st, of this year, and become delinquent April 30th, after which time we must drop you from the Roster. More about this later. New members to be added to your Roster include:

Slyker, J. E.
602 S. Evergreen Street, Chanute, Kan.
Retired telephone company manager; Shelf Weight Clocks.
Mrs. Slyker--Coins

Vaughan, Hugh J.
1317 North 25th Street, Kansas City 2, Kan.
Student; Old Clocks and Watches
Mr. & Mrs. Vaughan

Incidentally, the last mentioned is a thirteen year old chap who is intensely interested and already has a fine collection started.

Sincerely yours,
Clement C. Wagner, Secy.