

WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY
PRESIDENT LORD BRIGGS OF LEWES
HONORARY SECRETARY P. PRESTON
KELMSCOTT HOUSE, 26 UPPER MALL,
HAMMERSMITH, LONDON W6 9TA

WILLIAM MORRIS
Born Walthamstow 1834

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS...

THREATS TO THE WILLIAM MORRIS GALLERY

You may be aware that the London Borough of Waltham Forest is allocated by rate-capping - one proposal to implement the cuts is to close down the William Morris Gallery, currently located by Waltham Forest. Since opening in 1939 the William Morris Gallery has gained a local, national and international reputation as the only museum devoted to the life, work and continuing influence of William Morris, who was born in Walthamstow in 1834 and who lived in Water House (which now houses the Gallery) during his teenage years.

The Gallery's collection includes a comprehensive range of material, such as its unique, relating to Morris and his associates and followers, as well as important paintings, drawings and sculpture by the Pre-Raphaelites and other nineteenth and early twentieth century artists. Over the years there has been a temporary exhibition programme which has proved a great success with a wide range of visitors. Many of these exhibitions have focused on subjects not previously dealt with such as Morris and Socialism, Women Gained Glass Artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Jane Morris, and currently Karl Parsons. The Gallery's research library, containing manuscripts and other source material which is not available elsewhere, is used by students, teachers, scholars and writers from all over Britain and the world. A comprehensive education service is provided including workshops and seminars for schools, colleges and the general public.

It has always been the Gallery's policy to make all of the collection as accessible as possible, something which is rarely possible for larger institutions. If the Gallery ceases to exist, people will be denied their right of easy access to one of the largest collections of work by this country's greatest decorative artists - including as it does the most important work of William Morris in more widespread than ever before, and Morris is not only a major figure in the visual arts, but also in literature and politics.

The local community is dismayed and outraged that the closure of the William Morris Gallery is even being considered - a leading concern of leading specialists in the history of the Arts and Crafts Movement. We urge you to find this proposal of concern and will help to secure the future of the Gallery by writing to Waltham Forest Council (Chair of the Leisure Committee) c/o William Morris Gallery. A petition will be presented to the Council at the end of October. Please contact the Gallery for copies of the petition form.

For further details please contact: Sarah Gillow, Peter Gouck or Helen Spear at WILLIAM MORRIS GALLERY, LLOYD PARK, FOREST ROAD, LONDON N14 4PP. Telephone 01-257-2544 ex.4300.

PR



WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY
President Lord Briggs of Lewes
Honorary Secretary P. Preston
Kelmescott House, 26 Upper Mall,
Hammersmith, London W6 9TA

RECEIVED

MAR 1 1988
NEWSLETTER

January 1988

Dear Member,

1. WILLIAM MORRIS GALLERY

Since the last report on the future of the Gallery, events have been moving with rapidity. Members will probably have seen articles and letters which have recently appeared in the press and the feature shown on BBC1's 'London Plus' evening news bulletin. These, together with numerous letters from individuals, societies and professional groups, have helped sustain the campaign of protest against the proposed reduction of staff and consequent diminution of the Gallery's services and activities. The response of the Council has been much more positive and it is hoped that reports currently being prepared by Gallery staff will be sympathetically received. These outline ways of generating necessary income, both within the Gallery and through attracting business sponsorship and grant-aid, to develop and improve facilities and services to the public. Matters will not finally be decided until early February, but there are grounds for cautious optimism. We hope that by 26 March, when members are invited to celebrate Morris's birthday at the Gallery, we shall be able to announce that the right decision has been taken and that the Gallery's future as a thriving institution will be assured.

Norah Gillow

2. KELMSCOTT HOUSE

Members who were able to come to our Yuletide Party in Kelmescott House in December will have noted the progress that has been made in fitting out our headquarters. The fine Hammersmith rug bequeathed to the Society by Miss Currey (see the January 1987 newsletter) has been professionally cleaned by conservation experts and now hangs in our library, only a few feet from the coach-house in which it was woven a century ago. The curtains in the library are a modern printing of Morris's design 'Pimpernel', and our thanks are due to Dorothy Coles for her skill in making these to fit.

A new acquisition in the workshop is a substantial woodwork bench, provided at a very favourable price by the noted Swedish firm, Sjöbergs. So we now have no excuse for not making our next bookcase ourselves! Meanwhile, further generous gifts of high quality craftsmanship continue to arrive, the most recent being a pair of trestle tables presented by Chris Whittaker and made of stout planks from a great Cedar of Lebanon which had once stood in his garden in Bedfordshire.

Help in the house is still needed: jobs to be done include carpentry, painting, sewing, work on books, refurbishing our printing equipment, making a garden in the courtyard outside the library windows, cleaning and polishing. You will be very welcome whether you can spare an hour or a day. Over the next quarter

the house will be open for this purpose to members and friends from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm on Tuesdays: 26 January, 9 and 23 February, 8 and 29 March; Friday: 11 March; Saturdays: 16 January, 6 and 20 February, 5 and 19 March.

John Kay

3. CURATORSHIP AT KELMSCOTT HOUSE

Hammersmith Leisure Services Committee has now confirmed that it will provide a grant towards the costs of this post. Applications have been received and interviews will take place in mid-January. If an appointment has been made before this Newsletter goes to press the Curator's name will be announced in a 'Stop Press' item.

4. SOCIETY NEWS

We are delighted to report that Fiona MacCarthy, a member of the Society, has been awarded the 1987 Royal Society of Arts Bicentenary Medal. The award is made annually to someone who, other than as an industrial designer, has exerted an exceptional influence on promoting art and design in British industry. Mrs MacCarthy is a well-known authority on the history of twentieth century design. Formerly Design Correspondent with The Guardian, she now reviews on a regular basis for The Times. Her books include A History of British Design and British Design since 1880. She has also written a study of C. R. Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft called The Simple Life. In recent years she has been involved in the organisation of a number of important design exhibitions: the innovative 'Homespan to Highspeed' at Sheffield City Art Gallery (1979); the Crafts Council's 'Omega Workshops' (1984); and last year's 'Eye for Industry' at the Victoria and Albert Museum, marking fifty years of the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry. The Society offers Mrs MacCarthy its congratulations on receiving this important award.

Joseph Mirwitch, also a Society member, has become Mayor of Hammersmith in succession to Mrs Janet Adegoke, who died in October. At the same time as wishing Cllr Mirwitch well, we send our condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Mrs Adegoke.

If any member of the Society is interested in acting as business and advertising manager for the Journal would he or she please get in touch with the Hon. Secretary.

Pamela Gulliver, one of our publicity officers, has offered to keep a list of those willing to help with catering at Society events. Those able to offer such help should get in touch with Mrs Gulliver at 35 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, Berks. RG2 7HE.

5. OBITUARIES

LESLIE MORTON

On Friday 23 October we lost a long-standing and much-loved member of the Society when Leslie Morton died at his home in Clare, Suffolk. He was born in Bury St. Edmunds on 4 July 1903 - a date which must have held wry ironies for him, learned as he was in the life of Tom Paine and living in a part of the country regularly over-flown by the USAAF. He leaves a widow, Vivien,

daughter of that remarkable man Tommy Jackson, last and not distinguished of the long line of radical printer-philosophers.

Fifty years ago, Leslie was busy writing A People's History of England, brought out in 1938 by Victor Gollancz's Left Book Club, and widely read and studied by thousands who had left school convinced that History was boring and not for them. A student at Cambridge in the early 1920s, he later joined the Communist Party and wrote often in the Daily Worker. He belonged, like G. D. H. Cole and Robin Page Arnot, to a generation of historians on whose work a younger and now more widely-known generation has built - Eric Hobsbawm, E. P. Thompson and Christopher Hill.

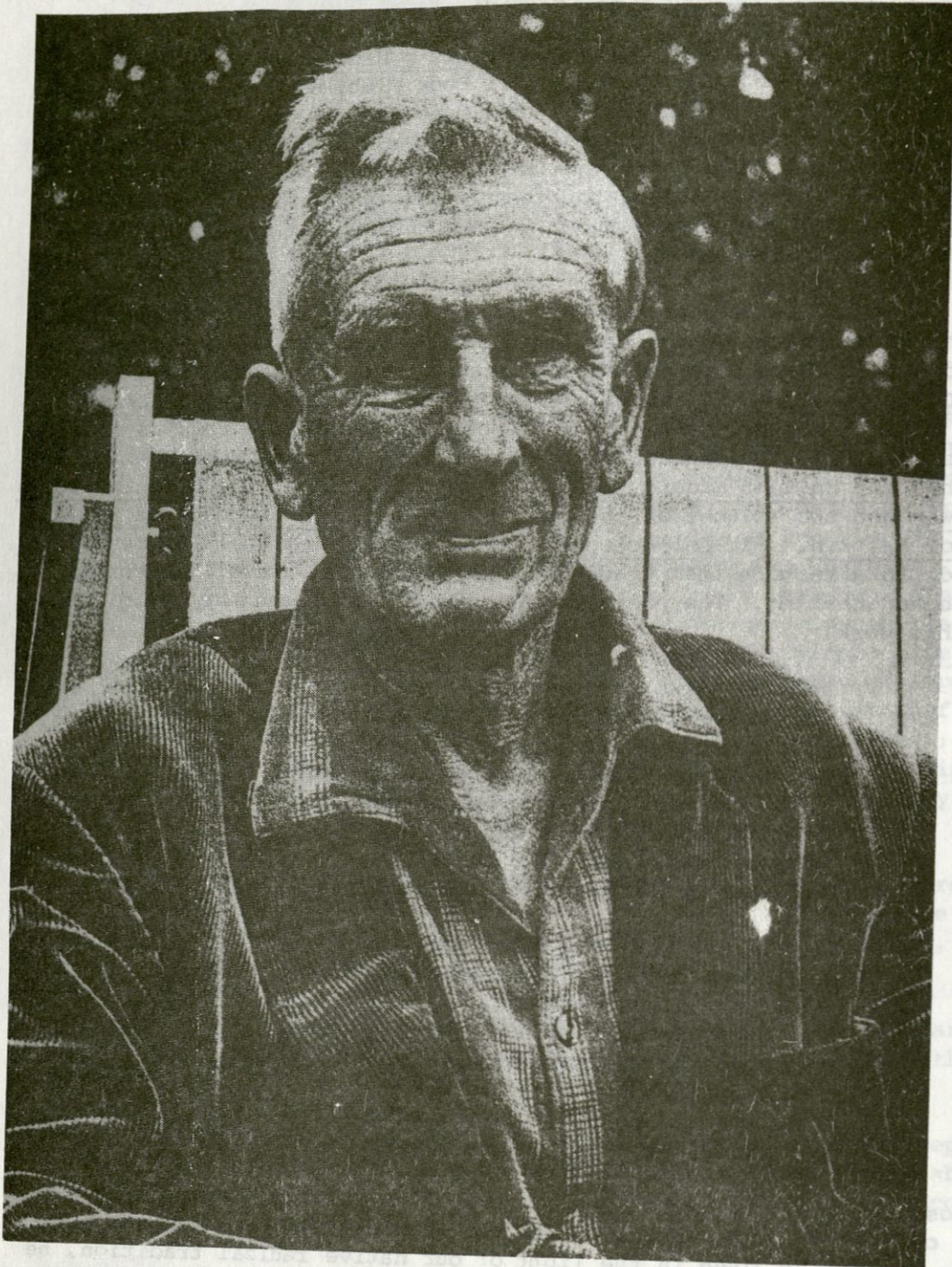
He was much in demand as teacher and lecturer; took part in these capacities in local schools and study groups organised by the Society; wrote for the Journal; and edited Three Works by William Morris, which contains News from Nowhere, A Dream of John Ball and Pilgrims of Hope. In 1984 his Political Writings of William Morris, a selection of Morris's lectures, articles and letters, was re-published for the 150th anniversary of Morris's birth. He also published The English Utopia, The World of the Ranters, The Life and Ideas of Robert Owen and two volumes of essays and articles, The Language of Men and The Matter of Britain. His Collected Poems, were published in 1976, revealing how he stands in a very English tradition which includes, as well as Morris, Blake, Clare and Shelley. The poem 'One Law for the Lion and the Ox' gives a flavour of his work.

Because Blake was a hosier's son
Instead of herding sheep in Palestine
He should have disciplined his senses
Or looked at life through yours and mine.
If he had been content with beauty
He might have woven a web of song
As passionate, soft and fanciful
As Keats or Shakespeare, and as strong.

Had he but followed out a plan
Laid down for him by men with sense,
And been an educated man,
He'd not have lifted his eyes far hence
And seen the Golden Builders laying
Their scaffolding upon the air
In spots unsanctioned by the Muses,
Like Paddington and Golden Square.

Over the post-war years he wrote much on Morris, on William Blake, on the Levellers, on the Peasants' Revolt and on the Utopian tradition. Kind, witty, shrewd, his whole life lived in the light of our native radical tradition, he will be missed by friends and fellow scholars not only in this country but in France, the Germanies, North America, Italy ... wherever the name of Morris is known.

Ray Watkinson



Leslie Morton

Morning Star photograph.

Leslie Jones, another longstanding member and friend of the Society, also died recently. A full obituary will appear in the next newsletter.

We have also learned with regret of the deaths of three other members. Mr I. Renson of Hackney, Dr A Horodisch of Amsterdam and Edmund N. Parker of British Columbia. Further information about these three members is being sought and if it is forthcoming fuller obituaries will appear in future issues.

6. LOCAL GROUPS

Since becoming Membership Secretary of the Society I've heard of several requests from other Northerners for events to be held in our area. Quite what "the North" encompasses is open to debate, but if you are one of those people who find the London area difficult logistically or financially, I would be pleased to hear from you.

I'd like to know what sort of events would interest you, within what area would daytime or evening meetings be viable for you and any suggestions for visits etc. in your locality. I could then compile a 'mailing list' and attempt to organise occasional events, perhaps in different centres in "The North".

Please write to me at 7 Spring Hill, Sheffield S10 1ET; an S.A.E. would be helpful.

Dawn Morris

Other requests for more meetings and groups based in the North continue to arrive. For some time now Rolf Rosner, a member of the Society living in Whitley, has been enquiring about the possibility of a group in the North-East. He has now offered the premises of the RIBA in Newcastle as the venue for an inaugural meeting. It is hoped that this will take place in the second half of March and that it will be convened by a London member, possibly by one of the Society's officers. Further details will be sent to members in the region when arrangements have been completed.

Also, Fred Pamphilon has just moved from Hertfordshire to Lancaster and wonders whether there is any possibility of starting a group in the North-West, particularly in the Lancaster-Kendal-Preston area. Anyone interested should write in the first instance to the Hon. Secretary.

7. THE SOCIETY'S 1988 PROGRAMME

The Society's printed programme to stand on your mantelpiece is enclosed with this Newsletter. Notice of the first two events was given in the October Newsletter. Tickets are still available for the visit to the Linley Sanbourne house in Kensington on 24 February. Details of other events in the first quarter are:

Saturday 20 February 2.30 pm at Kelmscott House MORRIS'S POETRY The second afternoon devoted to Morris's poetry will be on the Nordic poems from The Earthly Paradise and will be introduced by Dr Sheila Smith of Nottingham University. On Saturday 19 March Peter Faulkner will introduce 'Jason' and on Saturday 10 April Dorothy Coles will talk about 'Love is Enough'. Members who would like to have details of the whole series and/or are willing to read a poem aloud are invited to let Dorothy Coles know on 01-385 0023.

Saturday 5 March 2.30 pm at Society of Antiquaries, Piccadilly, W1 WILLIAM MORRIS AND CRAFTSMANSHIP TODAY The October 1987 Newsletter included a note on the William Morris Craft Fellowship scheme launched last year. This imaginative project is administered by the SPAB and is of great interest to the Society. This meeting will enable the initial group of Fellows to give a first-hand account of their work. The meeting will also hear a talk from Ian Tod, an architect member of the Society practising in Leeds, on the present state of craftsmanship in building in the light of Morris's ideas. Tickets £1.50, including tea.

Saturday 26 March WILLIAM MORRIS BIRTHDAY PARTY This year we go to Walthamstow to celebrate Morris's birthday at the William Morris Gallery, which has been in the news recently, as reported elsewhere in this Newsletter. Before visiting the Gallery itself, where we shall be welcomed by Norah Gillow, the Curator, Dick Smith, who is very knowledgeable about the area, has volunteered to show members some of Morris's boyhood haunts. The event will last from 2.00 pm to about 5.30 pm. Tickets £3.50, including the usual ample birthday tea. This event is always popular and early application is advised.

Saturday 9 April 2.30 pm at Kelmscott House MORRIS AND THE TEMPTRESS: "LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI" We are fortunate in having an opportunity to hear Professor Norman Talbot, an Australian member who is at Oxford University this year. His lecture will include readings from a wide range of nineteenth century literature. Tea will be available.

Saturday 23 April 2.00 pm A WALK IN CHELSEA The next in our popular series of London walks will visit the home ground of Carlyle, Oscar Wilde and Burne-Jones, with visits to buildings by Ashbee, Philip Webb and Sedding. We shall meet at 2.00 pm in Holy Trinity, Sloane Street ('freshness and daring ... the outstanding example of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the ecclesiastical field' - Pevsner). Judy Marsden has kindly offered tea at her home. Tickets £2.00.

Tickets for all these events may be obtained from Judy Marsden at Kelmscott House. Members are asked to include a self-addressed stamped envelope with their applications.

8. IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MORRIS: NORMANDY AND MONT ST MICHEL

The Society is arranging a coach tour of Normandy for the long weekend from Friday 27 May to Monday 30 May, visiting Le Havre, Caen, Bayeux, Coutances and Mont St Michel. This will complete the itinerary followed by Morris in 1855 which we pursued on last year's tour.

I don't think one can devise another architectural tour to equal the highlights of our last but all the same the proposed trip will not lack in interest with Gothic and Romanesque architecture, paintings, stained glass, historic landscapes and coastlines and the able guidance of John Purkis.

Le Havre is an interesting example of post war design, there is a - yes, remarkable - concrete church by Perret; we may find the location for Monet's most haunting picture 'The Terrace at Ste. Adresse'; and we will try to identify the quayside of 'that most memorable night' when Morris and Burne-Jones resolved 'that we would begin a life of art'. The Abbaye aux Hommes (St Etienne) and the Abbaye aux Dames are two key buildings at Caen for the

transition from Romanesque to English Gothic; the art gallery in William the Conqueror's citadel ranges from Perugino to Picasso. At Bayeux, Morris admired the Cathedral and found the tapestry 'rude' but very interesting. This great medieval masterpiece is now very well displayed. Coutances has one of the finest Norman Gothic cathedrals and good stained glass. Two great medieval masterpieces in one weekend is not too bad. The second of course is Mont St Michel. The 'marvel' and pilgrimage church make it one of the most impressive sites in France. Normally reached along a causeway, there is the possibility of a more unusual approach. There is a tidal rise and fall of 45 ft. - the greatest in France - so provided the moon keeps to schedule and there are no serious mistakes in our calculations members will have the option of walking some 10 kms. across the bay from Genets with a local guide and perhaps appreciating the old title of Mont St Michel: en peril de la mer.

Other places it is hoped to visit include Fecamp (pilgrimage church and Benedictine liqueurs), St. Jean d'Abbetot (Romanesque frescos), Honfleur (vernacular architecture and Boudin museum), Hanbye (picturesque ruins), Granville and Cherbourg.

The cost is expected to be £180. This will include all transport from and to London, entry fees, services of guide, accommodation in double or twin bedded rooms, three breakfasts and two dinners. It may also include picnic lunches but this is uncertain until we have a clearer idea of the outgoings. Supplement for single accommodation is £25. Cheques should be made out to the William Morris Society. For bookings or more information please write to Hans Brill at Kelmscott House or telephone 01 373 0667. (There is a possibility that we may leave London at 7 pm on the evening of Thursday 26 May rather than on Friday morning, members should bear this in mind when making their plans.)

Hans Brill

9. UPSTREAM: IN THE WAKE OF MORRIS

I wonder if members might be interested in a gentle voyage by rowing boat from Kelmscott House to Kelmscott Manor? We would leave Hammersmith on Saturday 18 June arriving at Kelmscott one week later, on Saturday 25 June to coincide with the Society's visit.

We would hire some light, comfortable skiffs which would carry between two and four persons and can be equipped for camping. The daily sections will be so arranged as to provide opportunities for staying in hotels and inns or camping as preferred. The party will be accompanied by a motor boat which will tow any skiffs requiring help to that day's destination, so it will not be a test of fitness or endurance but should be a pleasant voyage along a waterway whose importance for Morris can hardly be exaggerated. There will even be time for some visits on the way.

I would be very glad to hear as soon as possible from any one who might like to take part and also from anyone who can help us with camping sites or knows of a suitable boat to act as tender.

Hans Brill

10. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1988

This year's AGM will take place in the Green Dining Room at the Victoria and Albert Museum at 2.00 pm on Saturday 7 May. Members are reminded that notice of any motion to be placed before the AGM must be given to the Hon. Secretary four weeks, and any amendment to the rules, seven weeks before the meeting. The meeting will be followed by tea and a talk on items in the Museum's Morris collection.

11. THE PETER FLOUD AWARD

Arrangements for the first award in memory of Peter Floud, CBE (1921-1960), a founder-member of the Society, are almost complete. The award is worth £250 and will be offered biennially to postgraduate students working on some aspect of Morris's life and work, or on groups or individuals, historical or contemporary, known to be sympathetic to his ideas and beliefs. When they are ready, details will be sent to Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges, but any member of the Society interested in applying should write to the Hon. Secretary, marking the envelope 'PFA' and enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

12. SOCIETY PROGRAMME REPORT

The Printers of Hammersmith, Kelmscott House 3 October. The talk was very well attended, with members and their guests filling the Library/lecture room to capacity. John Dreyfus had brought along a beautiful selection of books originating from the Hammersmith presses - Kelmscott, Doves and Eragny - which included a fine copy of Morris's Chaucer, with wood engravings after Burne-Jones. John handed out maps showing exactly who lived where, and introduced the day with a talk explaining how Morris, Cobden-Sanderson, Emery Walker, Eric Gill, Edward Johnson and others had come to live or work in the area. Then the group moved out into a very bright and sunny afternoon and completed the walk from Sussex House on the edge of Furnival Gardens along the length of Upper Mall to Hammersmith Terrace and Chiswick Mall beyond. The sites of the old presses and the homes of their printers gave rise to much reminiscence and gossip of a typographical nature which all participated in, even including some speculative conjectures as to where exactly in the Thames the old Doves Press type might be found! The day was finished off with a large tea at Kelmscott House, where the Albion press was on view in the front room.

Anthony Eyre

"Ministering to the swinish luxury of the rich", Art Workers Guild, 21 October
The Kelmscott Lecture this year was delivered by Peyton Skipwith, director of The Fine Arts Society, a flourishing Bond Street gallery which specialises in work of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was a remarkable lecture - full of information, wit and stimulating judgements. But, sadly, one that is difficult to summarise, as the numerous stories Mr Skipwith told us would be spoilt by abbreviation and his superb colour slides are beyond the scope of our modest newsletter.

The title was taken from the well-known incident where Morris was discovered striding up and down a room in a grand house being decorated by the Firm, muttering furiously to himself. When asked (by his wealthy client) what was the matter, he burst out "It's only that I spend my life in ministering to the swinish luxury of the rich". And this was several years before he declared himself a socialist.

Mr Skipwith's theme was patronage and collecting, and the interplay of each with the Arts & Crafts movement. His view was that on balance it was better

to be a great patron than a great collector. A good patron needed a creative drive and should have a close personal relationship with the artist. Nevertheless collectors also could have a constructive part to play: Charles Handley Reid and his wife over many years built up a fine collection which was now largely in public galleries. Mr Skipwith reminded us of the importance of the public patrons of the 19th century, for example the South Kensington Museum (now the V & A), the church and the education authorities.

We must hope that we can persuade Peyton Skipwith to commit to paper some of his erudition on this subject. Meanwhile his attractive London gallery - facade by E. W. Godwin built in 1876, the same year that Morris was found muttering imprecations - is open for all to enjoy, and without an entry fee.

William Morris and Education, Leicester, 14 November Brian Simon, now Emeritus Professor of Education at Leicester University, opened our one-day symposium by observing that the essence of Morris's views on education (as well as on art) was his belief that the capacity to create is present in all human beings, if only it can be found and nurtured. How much can be achieved in this direction, even in today's circumstances, is shown by Robin Tanner's life's work, described in the article in the current WMS Journal. And we were meeting, he added, in a most successful multi-ethnic community college.

Joseph Acheson, painter and art historian, introduced the first seminar with a review of the contribution made by Morris and his circle to the teaching of the arts and crafts, vividly illustrated by admirable colour slides. The second session was opened by Bernard Aylward, President of the National Association for Design Education and an authority on 'CDT' (Craft Design and Technology). He explained that this is a new grouping of subjects, ideally bringing together the fine arts, craft and science, which encourages pupils to identify a particular need, perhaps in their own homes, and then to design and make something to meet that need. Though it may sound simple, this combination of theory and practice is a very powerful educational tool. Mr Aylward spoke of quite young children, shaking with excitement, showing him what they had created, "I made it!"

The symposium was rounded off with a most stimulating session led by Maureen Thomas, an educational advisor with extensive experience of community schools in the Midlands. She believes strongly that every school should be a community school. Every school had skills which can benefit the local community, and the local community can contribute to the school in many ways. HMI in 1983 had reviewed school curricula in terms of nine 'areas of experience'. Mrs Thomas had us write these down (ethical, mathematical, social and political, technological and so on) and then judge for ourselves how frequently they appeared in passages from 'News from Nowhere' which she read to us. None of the nine was omitted and it became clear that Morris's book itself was a contribution to a rounded curriculum.

Maureen Thomas and the other speakers left us with much to think about - this is clearly a field deserving much more attention by the Society. Certainly its importance was registered by BBC Leicester who interviewed several members involved in the symposium, including Rachel Pinder, a teacher and author of a recent book on parents and schools which has been well reviewed.

John Kay

Yuletide Party, Kelmscott House, 12 December This year's Yuletide party on the evening of 12 December was held for the first time in the Society's recently refurbished headquarters at Kelmscott House. The adjoining coach-house, used in Morris's time first as a workshop for the weaving of Hammersmith rugs and later for socialist meetings and events, had also been made available for the occasion, and with Morris "Blackthorn" curtains hung around the walls, was a fitting setting for the evening's musical entertainment provided by William South and a friend. An excellent cold buffet supper, augmented by a piping hot beef-and-bean casserole, was enjoyed by some 40 members and guests, gathered together from as far afield as Germany, Japan and the United States. We were particularly pleased to welcome the Mayor of Hammersmith and Fulham, Joseph Mirwitch, who has taken a keen interest in the Society's activities and in Kelmscott House. Slides taken on the May visit by members to the cathedral towns of northern France were also shown, reviving pleasant memories for those who had made the trip, and whetting appetites for the proposed return visit in 1988. Special thanks are extended to Janet Semple, Daphne Jennings, Dorothy Coles and John Kay who were all involved with the catering arrangements and other preparations, and to everyone who helped to make the evening a happy conclusion to the programme of events in 1987.

Norah Gillow

13. THE WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY OF CANADA

A highlight of the full season was a visit from Peter Preston of the British Society. This was the first time that an officer of the British WMS had visited the WMSC, and Canadian members were glad of the opportunity to meet and chat with him on matters of common interest. During his short September stay in Toronto Peter led a discussion on News from Nowhere for a small group of WMSC members.

Et in Arcadia Ego. The fall programme began with an October 3 promenade through Toronto's Mount Pleasant Cemetery led by graveyard enthusiast Corey Keeble. Founded in 1873, the cemetery has one of the finest tree collections in North America, with crypts and monuments by some of Toronto's most prolific architects. Family vaults in the mausoleum contain much good stained glass and other works of art. Unlike St. James, visited in the spring, Mt. Pleasant is nondenominational, making it the repository of some of Canada's wealthiest and most uninhibited nonconformist families.

On October 20 the WMSC was treated to a slide lecture on Toronto's recently restored Elgin and Winter Garden theatres by a staff member of the Ontario Heritage Foundation - the government agency responsible for the restorations. The two theatres - the Elgin at street level and the smaller Winter Garden above - were built in 1913-14 in the lavish theatre style of the period. The Winter Garden in particular was an exuberant fantasy, with festoons of decorative foliage suspended from a barrel-vaulted ceiling. The Elgin was converted to a moving picture house and the Winter Garden closed in 1928. Since then the Winter Garden has remained suspended in time, waiting to be rediscovered by a more appreciative 1980s audience. Among the priceless treasures exhumed from the Winter Garden were some of the finest scenic flats still in existence, the products of leading set designers and artists of the day.

On November 25 Professor William Blisset of University College, University of Toronto, lectured to the society on "The Scapegoat in Art: Holman Hunt". Painted on location at the Dead Sea, Hunt's painting suggests the old Hebrew

religious practice - abandoned since destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. - of sacrificing one goat on the altar while driving the other into the wilderness, symbolically carrying with it the sins of the community. The scapegoat has since been associated with Byron; has influenced the works of David Jones, who used it to symbolize the soldier; and has been used, with a discarded automobile tyre around its middle, by Robert Rauschenberg to depict environmental degradation.

The WMSC Christmas party was held on December 12 at the University College Union on the University of Toronto campus. In accordance with established tradition it was a do-it-yourself affair, with pot-luck food, readings, and carol singing provided by members.

Douglas Brown

14. OTHER FORTHCOMING EVENTS

19 December 1987 - 13 February 1988 ART NOUVEAU FROM THE SILVER STUDIO, 1885-1910. The Silver Studio was set up in West London in 1880 by Arthur Silver, who was influenced by William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement. His designs, frequently based on historical originals in the Victoria and Albert Museum, were sold to manufacturers, bringing high quality textiles and wallpapers to the new middle class in this country, Europe and America. The exhibition is at Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum, Clarence Street, Tel. 0242-237431 and is open Monday-Saturday 10 am - 5.15 pm, admission free. On 11 February at 1.00 pm, Mark Turner, Curator of the Silver Studio collection will give a free illustrated talk on Art Nouveau designs.

Saturday 9 April. ECCLESIASTICAL LINCS. A full-day coach tour of Lincolnshire churches to see work by Comper, Bodley, Pearson, Scott and Morris glass, organised by the Victorian Society West Yorkshire group and led by Fred Challenger. For further details and bookings please write to Sue Powell, 7 Woodbine Terrace, Leeds LS6 4AF.

Friday 1 - Sunday 3 July VICTORIAN STAINED GLASS More stained glass was produced in Britain during the 19th century than at any other period in the history of the craft but it is only in comparatively recent times that there has been an awakening of public interest in the material. Manchester is an ideal centre for a residential weekend course which will take a broad view of the period with such topics as the revival of techniques, Victorian Memorial Windows, Pre-Raphaelite Glass, and the Arts and Crafts Movement. Besides a series of lectures at Holly Royde there will be a day visit to look at windows in the Greater Manchester area by some of the leading exponents of the art, as well as local studios. The course director will be David O'Connor of the History of Art Department, University of Manchester, and other lecturers will include Peter Cormack of the William Morris Gallery, and Martin Harrison, author of the pioneering book Victorian Stained Glass. Fee: resident (tuition, full board and coach travel) approx. £69, non-resident approx. £59. The usual reductions are available on these prices. For further enquiries please contact Lynne Palethorpe, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL or telephone 061-275-3274/5.

15. THE EDWARDIAN ERA

The current exhibition at the Barbican, open until 7 February is unusual in its aim of presenting the social history of the era through its visual imagery.

It has excellent material on trade unions, suffragettes, the rural world, high fashion and new machines including a stunning aeroplane. It is inevitably uneven, both in its choice of subject matter and the quality of representations but never less than stimulating with new approaches and new evidence. The accompanying catalogue tries, perhaps too hard, to redress the balance of conventional views and get ill-digested theses into print. Lynne Walker, for instance, tries to contrast May Morris, self-effacing and dutiful 'within the bounds of the patriarchal status quo' becoming a teacher and designer and 'head of the embroidery department' for Morris & Co., thanks to the Arts and Crafts Movement - when surely it must be thanks to her father who can hardly at the same time be an example of the 'patriarchal status quo'. Thus new myths are born The strong feminist focus may be less than totally reliable but helps to give both the catalogue and this important exhibition some of its edge.

Hans Brill

16. MAY MORRIS

Central Television is planning a short documentary programme in 1988 on May Morris to mark the 50th anniversary of her death and the centenary of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, and would like to hear from any WMS member with personal recollections of May Morris or examples of her work. If you can help, please contact Jan Marsh, 25 Etheldene Avenue, London N10 3QC, telephone 01-883-1615.

17. MISCELLANY

Mr S. Lindsay is carrying out a private study of businesses and trades in the Merseyside area and of the families involved in them. He is seeking further information about John Frankland Criddle, who died in 1961 aged 86. Criddle was the son of a sugar refiner and a life-long active Socialist. His home in the Wirral was called 'Kelmscott' and it seems that Keir Hardie, Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden stayed there. If any members know anything about Criddle, in particular any connection he may have had with Morris, they should get in touch with Mr Lindsay at 27 Rimmington Road, Aigburth, Liverpool L17 0BD.

Our member Mrs Phyllis Millett has written to tell us that her brother, Tim Langley, formerly huntsman to the Berkeley Hunt, has just published his autobiography, entitled Good Morning ... Good Night. Mrs Millett and her brother are the grandchildren of Thomas Rendall Morris, William's brother. Their mother was Thomas's daughter, Daisy, who, after her father's early death, was brought up by her aunt, Deaconess Isabella Gilmore, Morris's third sister.

Another member, David Rose, who with Tanya Touwen runs the O Riada Gallery, Bantry, West Corke, writes as follows: 'The Gallery specialises in contemporary applied and decorative arts, with changing monthly exhibitions: as we believe that Morris was the ultimate progenitor of the Gallery, we should be happy to offer any member who visits the Gallery not only a glass of wine with our compliments but also a 10% discount on any purchase. In any case we should very much like to hear from any members living in Ireland. It is not as widely appreciated as it should be outside Ireland that in the number and excellence of its designer-craftworkers, this country is as rich as any in

Europe, with an abundance of workshops and studios, usually in the countryside - particularly in Counties Down, Cork and Kilkenny. We would always be glad to assist any member thinking of touring Ireland in general, and our own County of Cork in particular, who wishes to visit these studios; and we would provide introductions to those craftworkers whose studios are not open to the public at large.'

18. PUBLICATIONS

The Iceland Journal of Henry Holland 1810, edited by Andrew Wain, contains many fine and highly descriptive insights into the world and culture of the Icelandic peoples, written during a period of great upheaval for the island when many parts of Europe were torn apart by the Napoleonic Wars. Apart from the painstaking scientific work preserved in this journal - much of it altered by Sir George Mackenzie into a lesser form - that formed the basis of a deciding work in the long running Wernerian-Huttonian mineralogical debate on the possible origin of rocks, the Journal reveals much of the workings of the Enlightenment mind; where grotesque stories and rumours were to be dispelled finally and the truth, mainly thanks to men such as Holland, finally revealed to all. The Journal, with its excellent introduction and precise and full annotation allows the reader to explore many of the historical events that so greatly influenced the land Morris was later to visit. Although Morris and Holland, who met in Reykjavik in 1871 through the good offices of Eirikur Magnusson's sister-in-law Maria Einarsdottir, had decidedly different interests in Iceland, their journals and experiences are bound together by the insight and vast abilities of both men; Holland at the close of his life and Morris still beginning his. Should any members of the Society be interested in this publication further details may be obtained from: Mrs Alexa Barrow, The Hakluyt Society, c/o The Map Library, The British Library Reference Division, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG.

C. J. Macnab

Members may be interested to know that copies of the American edition of The Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood by Jan Marsh are to be found in some remainder shops, priced at either £4.50 or £4.95.

Norman Kelvin has written to say that Princeton University Press has now published volume II of his edition of Morris's letters. This volume is divided into two parts: A: 1881-84; B: 1885-88. They should be available in this country in late January or early February.

Norah Gillow has recently acquired a number of copies of the catalogue of the Society's 1957 exhibition 'The Typographical Adventure of William Morris' (grey printed wrapper, 55pp, including illustrations, 8½ by 11 inches). Only 1250 copies were printed and it is becoming something of a collectors item - a copy was recently advertised in an antiquarian book dealer's catalogue at £35.00. Norah is offering the catalogue to Society members for £15.00 (+ 50p postage/packing within the UK, or £1.50 surface mail to the US) from 17d Lancaster Grove, London NW3 4EU.

19. FOOTNOTE

The first item in this issue - the William Morris Gallery - was the 'Stop Press' of the last Newsletter. I am grateful to members for the splendid

manner in which they responded to appeals for support. It is clear that the scope and strength of the protest played a significant part in the modification of opinion about the future of the Gallery. There is still a good deal to be done, but the outlook is brighter than we might at one time have dared to hope.

The next issue is due in April and the closing date for contributions is 21 March. I shall probably be away in the early part of April, so I shall have to be very firm about this deadline.

Good wishes to you all.

Peter Preston,
Hon. Secretary.

Reformism vs. "the Social-Revolution": Eight Letters from Morris to James Mavor in the University of Toronto Library

At the founding of the Socialist League on December 30th, 1884, James Mavor was one of twenty-three signatories to its manifesto and original members of its Provisional Council, despite reservations which he later expressed in an exchange of letters with William Morris. The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library of the University of Toronto contains eight letters to Mavor from Morris, along with one from Andreas Scheu, and three from May Morris. These letters record the tensions between Morris' views and those of his more conservative correspondent, and Mavor's objections inspired Morris to an eloquent and principled defense of his revolutionary beliefs.

James Mavor was born in 1854, the eldest of the nine children of Mary Bridie, a Scottish sea captain's daughter, and James Mavor senior, a schoolteacher who moved with his family from Stranraer to Glasgow when the younger James was eight. Mavor completed Glasgow High School, and studied economics at night school while he worked. He was also aroused at the plight of the urban poor, did volunteer social work as a member of the Kyrle Society, and became a founding director of the Glasgow Workingmen's Dwellings Company, editor of the Scottish Art Review, and Professor of Political Economy and statistics at St. Mungo's College in 1889. The Fisher Library's biographical summary of Mavor does not mention the Socialist League, but records that he was a member of the Glasgow Fabian Society, and stood in 1892 as a Liberal candidate for the Glasgow suburb of Tradeston. He published The Scottish Railway Strike in 1891, and emigrated in 1892 to Ontario, where he became Professor of Political Economy at the University of Toronto. In Canada, he published a series of books on British, Russian, and Canadian economic policy: The English Railway Rate Question (1894); Emigration and Immigration (1899); Report to the Board of Trade on the North West of Canada with Special Reference to Wheat Production for Export (1905); Government Telephones (1914); Economic History of Russia (1914); Niagara in Politics (1925); and The Russian Revolution (posthumously, in 1928). His autobiography, My Windows on the Street of the World, appeared in 1923, and he died in 1925 at the age of 71. Mavor seems to have shared some of Morris' other interests: for many years he campaigned for the establishment of a Toronto art gallery and museum, and among the more than eighty boxes of papers and other items donated to the library at his death is a notebook of information on Iceland.

Morris did not date all his eight letters to Mavor by year, but he seems to have written them between December, 1884 and late 1887. Morris sent his first letter from 6 Chester Street, Edinburgh on December 13th [1884, from Le Mire's chronology], and invites Mavor to meet him when he arrives in Glasgow, preferably at St. Andrews Hall; if none of the comrades can join him there, Morris adds, they should write him at St. Andrews or at the home of Professor Nichol, 14 Montgomerie Crescent, Kelvinside. In the next letter, written at Kelmscott on February 21st, 1885, Morris agrees readily to a request that he speak in Glasgow on his next

trip north, and asks Mavor to "settle with Scheu and our other Edinburgh friends as to details, and also let me know what sort of address you want from me."

Mavor clearly disliked the inaugural issue of Commonweal, and Morris politely replies:

Re the Commonweal: couldn't you kindly go a little more into detail as to the grounds of your dissatisfaction However I want on all grounds to have a frank criticism on our doings, so please be more explicit. To my mind the second number will be a strong one; but perhaps you will not agree with me. Some space we have been obliged to give to the wretched Soudan business, but Bax's article I think very good: Engels' article is a very important one; and (with excuses for mentioning myself) I think my poem the best short poem I have written.

E. B. Bax's article for the March Commonweal, on "Gordon and the Soudan," is, in fact, an uncharacteristically forceful denunciation of the British slaughter of the forces of the Soudanese Mahdi.

Gordon is killed. Who is to blame? We answer proximately Gordon himself, and ultimately the English capitalist class . . . Spartanlike bravery, truly, to slaughter ill-armed and ill-disciplined barbarians with the odds, as proved again and again, a hundred to one in favour of your coming out with a whole skin.

Engels' article on "England in 1845 and in 1885" followed the poem Morris mentions, "The Message of the March Wind," which later became the preface to his narrative poem about the Paris Commune, "The Pilgrims of Hope;" Morris' remark confirms that he wrote "The Message of the March Wind" before he later decided to use it as the first installment of the longer work.

Morris continues:

I rejoice to hear that you are doing so well in Glasgow: we ought to spare no pains in spreading the light there.

I suppose you saw the reports of our would-be leader's speech on the Thames embankment last Monday? more preposterous humbug I never heard of. However it will answer his purpose for the time and make him notorious.

In his reply Mavor seems to have complained that provincial members had not been consulted about the Council's Soudanese resolution; Morris also enclosed a copy of "the Soudan manifesto" in a letter to May Morris on March 11th, so this seems to have been an independent document.

In any case, Morris apparently responded twice to Mavor's letter. On March 23rd, he confirmed plans for his visit to Glasgow, and apologized for his failure to consult provincial

representatives: "I quite admit that you are right, and that it was an oversight not sending proofs to country members of the Council. There was however no malice prepece in it; it was because of haste. On reflection I dont see why the names should have been appended at all to it or to any documents not of the first importance." On March 26th, Morris wrote again, at the behest of the Council, to defend the substance of their resolution and concur in their views. The substance of the letter is an eloquent denunciation of British imperialism, so it is sad that the autograph is now frayed and torn, and many words are lost (passages marked with [* . . .] are my interpolations).

Morris first apologizes again for the Council's failure to consult its out-of-London members, but remarks that Mavor's objections to the style of the "Soudan Manifesto" seem in fact to an implicit objection to its content, and personally defends what has been in part his draft: "the style & matter interpenetrate as they should do in all artistic work: in short you may object to the spirit of it, but I must assert that it is very well written." He adds that

in our opinion it was quite necessary to attack the Gordon-worship which has been used as a stalking-horse for such wide-spread [. . . ssion/*remission?] of Gordon from any [*responsibility; the Council's views are based not upon inference but on] his public actions: he betrayed the trust reposed in him, and used his military and administrative capacity for the purpose of bringing the Soudanese under the subjection [of British] tyranny: to make a hero of such a man is a direct attack on public morality. . . . We do not assume any facts but draw conclusions from events which undeniably took place.

Mavor may have objected that the Mahdi, a religious as well as political leader, was not a legitimate representative of the Soudanese, for Morris answers:

We assume (as we must) that the Mahdi is the representative of his countrymen in their heroic defence of their liberties: on this assumption we may well 'approve' of him, if we are not to condemn Garibaldi or "Wallace wight". As to his fanaticism, you should remember that any [*popular] movement in the East is bound to take a religious turn; the condition of development of the Eastern peoples [*brings] this on them. Surely it must be considered an article of faith with us to [*join with] all popular revolutionary [*movements, whether or not we agree] with all the tenets of the revolutionists: e. g., we are internationalists not nationalists, yet we sympathize with the Irish revolt against English tyranny; neither does any of us withhold his sympathy from the Highland Crofters because they mingle fanaticism with a righteous resistance to oppression.

Mavor also seems to have objected to disparagement of religion (i. e., Christianity) in the Soudan or League Manifestos or in Commonweal. Two entries in the first Commonweal column "Signs of the Times" comment acerbically on "'civilizers and

Christianisers' of savage races of all times and all countries," but the Manifesto itself makes no mention of Christianity. Without access to the actual text of the Soudan resolution, one can only speculate that Mavor may have objected to a general anticlerical tone, or to the League Manifesto's closing evocation of "the religion of Socialism, the only religion which the Socialist League professes."

Morris responds in any case that

This objection is properly one against the style; but it gives one the opportunity of saying that it is not religion which we attack in [our] manifesto, but that hypocrisy which has allied itself to the exploitation of barbarous peoples, and which is at once so detestable and so mean, that it is almost necessary to use mockery as a weapon against it.

Later in the letter, Morris responds to Mavor's apparent recommendation of a treatise by the positivist Edward Beesly, perhaps his International Policy, which was reprinted in 1884.

I have not Beesleys tract by me; but I have read it; and I must say that well-meaning as it is, it seems to me a frigid performance; besides it has to a socialist the capital defect of not even alluding to that market-hunting of the capitalist, which is really the key to the whole subject. As far as I know it has had no effect at all, whereas the League manifesto [*has not been criticized] except by you and our friends [*of the S. D. F., and has evoked much support.

Morris' conclusion is a strong denunciation of imperialism and all its works:

you must forgive my saying that however you may feel the atrocity of the Soudan War, I scarcely think you realize how entirely it is part and parcel of the system of [*artificial] shortage from which we [*suffer] at home, and which it is the aim of the Socialist League to attack and destroy.

I am Dear Mr. Mavor

Yours fraternally/ William Morris

Mavor was apparently not convinced, and the remaining four letters from Morris are less personal: one concerns a proposed speaking trip north, another invites Mavor to submit material for Commonweal, and two concern possible Morris and Company commissions. An internal reference dates one letter as October 15th, 1885, and another was written July 7th, 1887; the remaining two are dated only "September 11th" and "April 16th," without year.

The October 15th, 1885 letter notes that Morris is "not very well at present," but that he hopes to improve, and "if you could rub people up a bit I think I shall be able to make a stomping tour before next summer." Mavor seems to have asked whether Morris would like to meet Adam Birkmyre, the author of Practicable Socialism (54 pages; second ed., Glasgow, 1885).

Morris is willing but reserved:

I read Birkmyres pamphlet but thought it a very weak performance, and by no means calculated to advance the cause: though doubtless well meant: it is one of these attempts which people are always at now of trying to find a 'royal road' for revolution.

Mavor still seems a member of the Glasgow branch of the Socialist League at this stage, for Morris adds an exhortatory postscript: "I think you ought to try setting up more branches in Glasgow, this winter."

In the letter dated September 11th, Morris asks Mavor to write something for Commonweal, and his brief letter from Merton Abbey, dated July 7th, 1887, thanks Mavor for an order to Morris and Co., and accepts it gladly, "if we could agree as to conditions, time & C with your friends." In the letter dated April 16th, Morris makes a more substantive response to Mavor's apparent inquiry about design of attractive, cheap furniture for workpeople.

But I rather wonder that you a socialist should have anything to do with such a humbugging business as this workman's cheap (?) furniture. I tried to knock it on the head years & years ago. Here's the point--

Whatever is cheap is made by machinery and in huge quantities. A special design for a piece of furniture means at the least trebling its cost more likely 10 folding it. The cheapest chair that we can sell cost about 7s/0 (and they are made 4 or 5 dozen at a time too) a workman can get a chair for 1s/6, and as you very well know he must buy them as cheap as he can. I beg you to dismiss from your mind the idea that the workman can afford any art of any sort whatever in the teeth of the 'Iron Law.' The workmans two rooms at Manchester (which by the by were pretty dismal), could only be attained to by a jolly workman a foreman at 5 pounds per week. So here's '3 cheers for the Social Revolution.' For till it comes art must be in the hands of the Monopolists and their parasites--whereof I am one--/Yours very truly/ William Morris.

(Which is not to say that simple mass-produced designs--to be executed by others of the "Monopolists' parasites," of course-- might not provide the rest of us with more comfortable places from which to bring forth the cheers.)

The Mavor papers also include one letter, dated April 3rd, 1885, from Andreas Scheu, the Austrian-born socialist master-joiner and author of Umsturzkeime (Seeds of Revolution), and three from May Morris. In a graceful hand on Kelmscott House stationary, Scheu begins with a request on Morris' behalf for a contribution for Commonweal ("You must, in fact, write us something"), and stoically adds that "I have neither found work (bredwinning work) nor lodgings as yet. But next week I expect to get into something./ Until then you will have to wait for a decent letter from me. At present I am not in a mood to write."

He then appeals for a Commonweal contribution from Glasier as well, then closes with "Awaiting your early reply."

May Morris' letters date from 1910-1914. The first, written March 1st, 1910 from 224 Riverside Drive, New York, confirms the time of a visit to Canada later that month, and adds that "if the Montreal people are difficult about the fee," she will speak for "\$50 or \$60," "a far lower fee than I am taking now, but it will be something of a holiday. . . ." On September 30th of the same year, she encloses a description of her edition of the Collected Works, and remarks that this "long and serious undertaking, and absorbs all my time and energy." She hopes to return to North America the next year for a holiday, but is uncertain whether she will be able to do so (and indeed, did not).

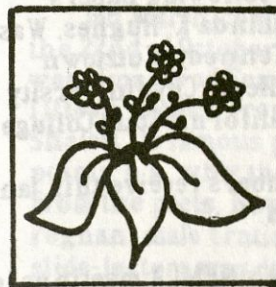
In her third letter, dated October 24th, 1914, from Kelmscott Manor, she thanks Mavor for a letter of praise for her introductions to the Collected Works, and concludes with her reactions to the two-month-old war:

In the middle of this time of disaster I have just finished the introduction to the 24th volume--and have now a moment's leisure to look back and wonder how they got done at all.

I had intended coming over in the spring for a month or two's change of scene, but one could not leave England, or 'rest' in such a mement. Right and left one is touched by deeds of great personal heroism, harrowed by unspeakable suffering borne with stoicism--touched among other things by the arrival of your Canadian troops--but all this majestic spectacle of human enthusiasm and endurance and sacrifice, what a price the whole world will have to pay for it.

Mavor never seems to have lost his qualified respect for Morris. Scribbled notes among his papers for a speech on Morris and socialism restate his reformist beliefs, but note Morris' opposition to them. According to Mavor, Morris was also not an admirer of the Scottish landscape; he "thought of Scotland as a raw-boned and artless country which men had not taken the trouble to make habitable." Curiously, Mavor assumes that Morris would have disliked the rugged and sublime scenery of the North American west; he "would have found no beauty in the limitless expanses of prairies and the inaccessible peaks of our mountains" (m. s. notebook, page 36).

And the limitless glaciers and inaccessible peaks of Iceland? Was this country not "raw-boned"--and impressive--as well? Here, as in his political exchanges, James Mavor may have simplified Morris' views and tried to smooth his rough edges; but these edges remain in the correspondence which Mavor took respectful care to preserve.



WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY

in the UNITED STATES

NEWSLETTER

January, 1988

A. ANNOUNCEMENTS

As reported in the October *Newsletter*, there will be two full sessions on William Morris at this year's Modern Language Association Convention in San Francisco. The general topic for the first session is "Morris and His Contemporaries: the Arts." At this session, Florence Boos, the University of Iowa, will speak on "Robert Browning and 'The Defence of Guenevere'"; Carole Silver, Yeshiva University, will speak on the Arthurian Woman and the Pre-Raphaelite Circle; and Jan Marsh, London, will speak on "Elizabeth Siddall, Dante Rossetti, and Morris." The general title for the second session is "Morris and His Contemporaries: Did He Make a Difference?" At this session, Gary Aho, the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, will speak on "Morris, Edward Bellamy, and American Socialism"; Hartley Spatt, the Maritime College at the State University of New York, will speak on "Morris and the Movements"; and Norman Kelvin, the City University of New York, will respond to these papers, paying particular attention to letters Morris wrote to Americans in the 1880's and 1890's.

Among the hundreds of other sessions scheduled for this huge convention are several that may be of interest to Society members:

A session on "Pre-Raphaelitism: A Reevaluation" includes the following papers: "Scholarship and the Pre-Raphaelites," by W.E. Fredeman, University of British Columbia; "Poetry and the Pre-Raphaelites," by David G. Riede, Ohio State University, Columbus; "Pre-Raphaelitism, Formalism, and Postmodernism," by Dianne S. Macleod, University of California, Davis; and "Reading Pre-Raphaelite Painting," by George P. Landow, Brown University.

A session on "When Writer is Equally Artist: Blake, Rossetti, Beerbohm" includes the following papers: "Blake: The Verbal in the Visual," by Stephen Leo Carr, University of Pittsburgh; "Out-Keatsing Keats, Rossetti as Poet-Painter," by W.E. Fredeman, University of British Columbia; "One Never Knows Where One is with These Ironists: Beerbohm's Dissimilar Arts," by N. John Hall. Anne K. Mellor, University of California, Los Angeles, will be the respondent.

A session on "The Victorian Sage as a Woman" includes the following papers: "Carlyle, Nightingale, and the Female Sage," by George P. Landow, Brown University; "Ruskin and the Matriarchal Logos," by Paul L. Sawyer, Cornell University; and "Victorian Women, Wisdom, and Southeast Asia," by Susan J. Morgan, Vassar College. John R. Kucich, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, will be the respondent.

A session on "Twentieth-Century Versions of Victorian Literature: Adaptations, Limitations, Continuities, Retellings, Subversions" includes the following papers: "Inventing Victorians: Virginia Woolf's 'Memoirs of a Novelist,'" by Mary Kaiser Loges, Viterbo College; "Distortion vs. Revaluation: Three Twentieth Century Responses," by Jerome Meckier, University of Kentucky; and "Two Readings of 'The Dover Bitch,'" by Gerhard J. Joseph, City University of New York.

A session on "Women Authors and the Victorian Publishing Industry" includes the following papers: "Publishing Victorian Womanhood: Sara Coleridge, S.T. Coleridge, and the Politics of Canonization," by Bradford K. Mudge, University of Colorado, Denver; "Making a Virtue out of Weakness: the Female Quest and the Victorian Publishing Industry," by Carol Hanbery Mackay, University of Texas, Austin; "On Becoming Beatrix Potter: Potter and Her Publishers," by Catherine Golden, Skidmore College. Patrick Brantlinger, Indiana University, Bloomington, will be the respondent.

A session on "Tennyson and His Contemporaries" includes the following papers:
 "Tennyson and Browning: Rival and Reciprocal Poetic Form," by Linda K. Hughes, Washburn University; "Tennyson and the Lushington Brothers," by Judith Kennedy, Kutztown University; "Tennyson and Carlyle," by Michael Timko, Queens College, City University of New York; "Tennyson and Frederic Harrison," by Martha S. Vogeler, California State College, Fullerton.

The MLA Convention will of course be over when Society members receive this January *Newsletter*, but requests for copies of papers are usually answered.

Carolyn Collette, slated to chair a Morris session at next Spring's NEMLA meetings in Providence, R.I., has just provided us with the sad news that that session is now officially cancelled, not because of a lack of interest in Morris, but because information about the session was somehow omitted from the original listings. Therefore, the lively discussions about Morris and the significance of his achievements that have graced the last half dozen NEMLA conventions will not be heard this Spring, but there will definitely be a Morris session at the 1989 NEMLA convention, to be held in Wilmington, Delaware. Paper proposals should be sent to Carolyn Collette, Department of English, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts.

The Victorian Society will sponsor summer schools at Newport, R.I., from June 4-18, 1988, focusing on nineteenth century material culture, and in London from July 4-24, 1988, studying Victorian and Edwardian architecture, decorative and fine arts. Further information is available from Maria Nocito, the Victorian Society of America, 19 South 6th St., Philadelphia, PA 19106.

The Victorian Studies Association of Ontario will hold its twentieth annual conference in Toronto on April 16, 1988. Judith R. Walkowitz (History, Rutgers University) will speak about "Melodrama and Victorian Political Culture: The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" and Michael R. Booth (Theatre, University of Victoria) will speak about "Melodrama and Crime." Membership in the Association costs \$10.00 a year. Membership applications, checks, and inquiries about the conference should be sent to Dr. Jean O'Grady, Secretary-Treasurer, Victorian Studies Association, Pratt 322, Victoria College, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1K7.

The Journal of Pre-Raphaelite & Aesthetic Studies (JPRAS) continues the *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies*, formerly edited by Francis Golffing, under a new name and new editors--W.E. Fredeman and Ira Nadel, both of the Department of English, University of British Columbia. To be published semi-annually, its first issue (Fall 1987) will be a festschrift for Francis Golffing.

Rates are \$15.00 for U.S. individuals, \$20.00 for institutions, annually, and one half these prices for the festschrift. Address all subscription inquiries to Joan Selby, Business Manager, 1649 Allison Road, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6T 1S7.

Indiana University Press will publish, in 1988, two recent special issues of *Victorian Studies* as separate anthologies. To be published are the issue on music, edited by Nicholas Temperly and including the cassette recording that accompanied the issue (Autumn 1986), as well as the one on science and culture (Autumn 1984) edited by Patrick Brantlinger and incorporating six additional essays in the history of science that have recently appeared in the journal. For more information, contact *Victorian Studies*, Indiana University, Bloomington IN 47405, or Indiana University Press, 10th and Morton Streets, Bloomington IN 47405.

The Midwest Victorian Studies Association will hold its twelfth annual meeting next April 28-29 at Indiana University, Bloomington. This past April, the MVSA addressed the theme of "Victorian Scandals: Decorum and its Enemies." For next April, the theme is "Victorian Belief and Unbelief."

B. NEWS OF MEMBERS

Jan Marsh completed a highly successful lecture tour of several American universities on the 22nd of October, when she spoke at the University of Massachusetts, in Amherst. Her topic was "Images of Femininity in Pre-Raphaelite Painting and Poetry." She presented some fifteen images, from William Holman Hunt's "Isabella and the Pot of Basil" and "The Lady of Shalott" to famous portraits by Rossetti and Burne-Jones, to exemplify and support a series of points, e.g., why the artists appropriated certain images (flowing hair, bare feet, and the like) from the poets, how mysterious and tempestuous and wild and irrational females supported a regnant male (rational) ideology, while at the same time titillating erotic male dreams. That slide-lecture was delivered to an appreciative audience of thirty or so Humanities professors and students. Jan Marsh later gave a longer lecture, one using many more slides, on the lives and careers of Jane and May Morris, this one to a select group of fellow Morrisians who enjoyed it immensely.

Jan Marsh writes,

I would like to thank all those members and friends of the William Morris Society in the United States who made my visit in October so pleasant and welcoming. I visited Boston, Bloomington, Indiana, Iowa City, Iowa, Lincoln, Nebraska; New York, New Haven, and Amherst, speaking on various aspects of Pre-Raphaelitism and women's biography. In March I am due to speak in Toronto on Jane Morris, and anyone else who might be interested in a lecture on some topic related to women and Pre-Raphaelitism or the Arts and Crafts in Britain (including Elizabeth Siddal and May Morris as artists) may contact the William Morris Society in Canada.

Holly Dworken, a PhD candidate in the English Department at Case Reserve University, in Cleveland, Ohio, is scheduled to defend her dissertation in January. Her subject is the poetry of William Morris, and last October she drew upon material in the final chapter of her dissertation to present a paper at the Twelfth Annual Colloquium on Literature and Film on "Imagery in Literature and Film from Romanticism to the Present." The title of her paper was "Arthurian Role-Modeling among the Pre-Raphaelites." She sent a synopsis:

The motifs of one of his favorite sets of legends, that of King Arthur, invaded almost every aspect of William Morris's homes, his work, his reading, even his identity and the identity of his friends and family. If every artist is on some manner of a quest, Morris's Questing Beast took shape in the form of all that attached itself to Arthurian myth. Consciously in his art and mostly unconsciously in his life, Morris surrounded himself with his Arthurian myth-making. From the mediaeval forests and moated island of his youth to the well by his marriage house, the identification of his wife in his own and Rossetti's art with Guenevere, to the barge-like wagon he rode in death, Arthurian symbols integrated his life with his art, his youth with his maturity, his idea of the medieval past with his efforts and plans to medievalize the present, his idea of love between men and women with his actual marriage, his utopian ideals with the reality of his own life and England's nineteenth century. Arthurian themes and landscapes can be traced almost everywhere throughout Morris's life, here I concentrate on one example of life paralleling literature: the way in which Jane Burden was modelled upon Guenevere.

Eugene D. Le Mire, well-known to Morris scholars for his important book, *The Unpublished Lectures of William Morris* (Detroit: Wayne State Press, 1969), has sent off-prints of two articles. In the first, "Morris and Hardy on Ancient Buildings," Le Mire points out several previously unnoted parallels between the careers and interests of Morris and Hardy: both became architectural apprentices (in the same year, 1856) but pursued other occupations; they remained, however, intensely interested in architecture. They both debated public issues relating to buildings and both made attempts to incorporate architectural ideas and techniques into their imaginative writing. Furthermore, "their two careers reveal that the single issue that touched their professional lives most profoundly was restoration." Their

works indicate that they both opposed the Whig view of historical progress, but Hardy writes of the "permanent disaffection of human beings," while Morris creates Utopias.

In the second article, "The Socialist League Leaflets and Manifestoes: An Annotated Checklist," Le Mire reminds us that Morris and the Council of the Socialist League "gave a special importance" to its pamphlets and leaflets, calling them "the only authoritative expositions of the League's creed and policy." Here 39 items are arranged under four categories: 1) the "Socialist Leaflets" series, 2) Topical Fly-Sheets, 3) Manifestoes, 4) Poetry and Music, and full annotation is provided, including dates and authors (often lacking on the originals). The checklist does not include leaflets prepared by League branches nor any done after May 25, 1890.

The first article appeared in a 1977 periodical, *Australasian Victorian Studies Association*. It is cited in my 1984 *Reference Guide*, but since I couldn't locate the periodical, no annotation accompanies it. The second article appeared in *International Review of Social History*, XXII (1977):21-29; it is neither cited nor annotated in my bibliography because I simply missed it.

C OTHER NEWS

A regular feature in the Sunday Book Review section of the *New York Times* is called "Noted with Pleasure," a single page of choice excerpts from recently published books. In this section on November 22, 1987, the following appeared (under the heading "The Art that was Everyone's"):

For an esthete, William Morris was a very persuasive man and his pleading for reform in design has some of the airy grace of the Gothic style he admired. He is quoted in "Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880's, and the Arts and Crafts," by Peter Stansky (Princeton University):

Art was once the common possession of the whole people, it was the rule in the Middle Ages that the produce of handicraft was beautiful. Doubtless, there were eyesores in the palmy days of medieval art, but these were caused by destruction of wares, not as now by making of them...Ruin bore on its face the tokens of its essential hideousness, today it is prosperity that is externally ugly...If...we can manage, some of us, to adorn our lives with some little pleasure of the eyes, it is well, but it is of no necessity; it is a luxury the lack of which we must endure. At present art is only enjoyed, or indeed thought of, by comparatively a few persons, broadly speaking, by the rich and the parasites that minister to them directly...[Art] is helpless and crippled amidst a sea of unitarian brutality.

While we can't help being pleased that Stansky's important book and Morris's lecture got such wide exposure, rhetoric like "esthete" and "airy grace" make one think of Wilde rather than Morris. And the *Times* reporter couldn't have read Stansky too carefully, for he has pointed out Morris's distaste for "esthetes" and discussed his sustained efforts to redefine "art" so that it could be separated from aesthetics. (The passage so "pleasurably noted" is from "The Socialist Ideal of Art.")

Some American politicians brag that they have checked inflation, but recently received brochures indicate that the price of Kelmscott Press books continues to rise steadily. A few examples: *The Golden Legend* \$1,750.00; Mackail's *Biblia Innocentium* \$1,250.00; *History of Godefrey of Boloyne* \$1,000.00; More's *Utopia* \$750.00; Morris's *Gothic Architecture: A Lecture* \$1,500.00; Rossetti's *Sonnets and Lyrical Poems* \$850.00; Keats's *Poems* \$1,000.00; Shelley's *The Poetical Works* \$1,650.00; *Psalmi Penitentiales* \$1,700.00; *Syr Percyvalle of Gales* \$1,850.00; Herrick's *Poems* \$1,100.00; Chaucer's *Works* \$35,000.00. These prices are drawn from a list (there are some fifteen other Kelmscott Press titles on it) sent by the Heritage Book Shop, 8540 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

This Shop also has available--or they did last October--five autograph letters from Morris: to an unknown correspondent (\$400.00), to May Morris (\$225.00) and to Aglaia Ionides; there are three of these, two of them at \$600.00 each, the last at \$225.00.

The Book Block, located at 8 Loughlin Avenue in Cos Cob, Connecticut, 06807, has put together a kind of package deal, and is "pleased to offer four examples of a William Morris Kelmscott Press book, each in a different binding." So you can obtain *A Tale of Emperor Coustans and of Oversea* in its original binding and also in "prime examples from three of England's finest binders: The Doves Bindery, Riviere and Sons, and Cedric Chevers of Bath." This gathering, "priced somewhat lower than the total of the individual volumes," will cost you \$5,500.00.

We received a letter recently from Linda Ostrove, President of the Cranbrook House and Gardens Auxiliary in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, she requested information about the William Morris Society, and she sent along a packet of materials about Cranbrook House, the family home--from 1908 until 1949--of George G. and Ellen Scripps Booth and their five children. The house, full of art treasures and set amidst fine gardens, is now part of the Cranbrook Educational Community, which includes an institute of science and an academy of art, as well as elementary, middle, and upper schools.

Booth became business manager of the *Detroit News* in 1888 and its president in 1906. He was an early member of the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts, and in 1900 he founded the Cranbrook Press. The Press lasted only two years, one of many in America inspired by Morris's Kelmscott Press, the several books Booth produced, according to Susan Otis Thompson, "provide excellent examples of both the advantages and disadvantages of Morrisian inspiration. They are admirable for the quality of their materials and craftsmanship, but the decorative design falls short" (*American Book Design and William Morris* (New York and London: R.R. Bowker, 1977), p. 201). In a short article about this press, a contemporary wrote, "Rarely, indeed, has the conception of art which we owe to William Morris, that it consists in 'the expression by man of his pleasure in labor,' been more thoroughly expressed than in the work of George G. Booth of the Cranbrook Press, Detroit." Booth's workshop is described in it "portraits of Ruskin and Morris indicate a reverence for these two great apostles of artist-artisanship. Mr. Booth freely acknowledges his indebtedness to 'Morris, who relit the lamp of art in perfect bookmaking in modern times.'" (John Spargo, "The Cranbrook Press and its Work," *The Comrade*, I, no. 12 (September, 1901):271-72)

D TURN OF THE CENTURY AMERICAN PERIODICALS AND WILLIAM MORRIS

Eileen Boris, in *Art and Labor: Ruskin, Morris and the Craftsman Ideal in America* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1986) claims that "Morris even more than Ruskin became a cult figure whose actual politics were ignored in favor of his inspirational vision, especially by Bellamyite Nationalists and American Fabians" (p. 173). As all Morrisians know, Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward, 2000-1887* is directly responsible for William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, for upon reading Bellamy's utopia, Morris vowed to write a "counterblast" to this "cockney paradise," and gave it a harsh review in *Commonweal*. And then, six months later, in January, 1890, the first installment of his utopia appeared in the same journal. Most Morrisians know these facts, but how many know what Bellamy thought of Morris's utopia? Or what American leftists and reformers in the 1890's thought of Morris generally? Was he indeed a "cult figure" in leftist and socialist journals? Here are some interesting passages to ponder from five such journals.

The New Nation 1891-94 (Edward Bellamy was the editor of this Boston weekly, and it was the organ for the Nationalist Movement, for Nationalist clubs across the nation)

"Every Nationalist should read and ponder this message. This book and the tale it tells are not extravagant, but show a condition of life which, although not perfect, would be a long step toward the end sought by all who have the 'greatest good for the greatest number' in their hearts" (from a quarter-page ad for *News from Nowhere*, placed right next to one for Keep's shirts: "Our Underwear Department the largest and most complete in the city. Prices the lowest" vol. 1, 1891, p. 5)

"Perhaps the most distinguished of the many converts which socialism in England has made from among the cultured class is William Morris, author of 'The Earthly Paradise,' his *News from Nowhere* just published in this country by Roberts Brothers, is a setting forth in the form of a clever fiction of his ideal of the good time coming, and is exceedingly well worth reading. Mr Morris appears to belong to the school of anarchistic rather than to the state socialists. That is to say, he believes that the present system of capitalism once destroyed, voluntary co-operation, with little or no administration, will be necessary to bring about the ideal social system. This is in strong contrast with the theory of nationalism. It is found that society, being justly organized and artificial temptations to crime being absent, there is very little of it, and that the force of an absolutely unified sentiment of public reprobation, together with his own conscience, is quite sufficient punishment for an offender. We believe that Mr Morris is right in describing this order of things as a characteristic of the coming order of social improvement." (from a review of *News from Nowhere* by Bellamy, vol. 1, 1891, p. 47).

"On the extreme left wing we find the anarchists, who disbelieve in government pretty much altogether, and look askance even at any sort of general industrial organization. This wing of the socialists, which is represented in England by William Morris, is altogether the largest element of the socialist party. Not only does this class of socialists aim at an anarchic or unorganized social state as the ultimate ideal, but it proposes and expects to attain it by violent and revolutionary methods. This is the form of socialism which in Europe has undertaken not only a social but a religious revolution by making atheism almost an obligatory plank in its platform." (from an editorial, "In the Interest of a Clear Use of Terms," by Bellamy, vol. 1, 1891, p. 725.)

"It is indeed interesting to reflect that Mr William Morris the English Socialist, in his recent book, *News from Nowhere*, depicting a future social state which seems to him ideal, expressly admits that crimes growing out of sexual passion are still known, and indeed makes an incident in the story the murder of a successful lover by a disappointed rival. We believe however that the poet-socialist has erred here, and that a truer calculation of the mollifying effect upon human passions of better conditions would have led him to discard this incident as improbable. . . . brawls and personal collisions become rare in direct proportion to the degree of education and refinement enjoyed by a social class. . . . The idea [of regarding women as property] is absolute with barbarous races and strongly affects sexual relations among civilized people, especially among the coarser and more ignorant classes, where husbands claim ownership of their wives and suitors of their sweethearts. Scores of cruel girl murders in this country as well as others are yearly traceable to this savage notion." (from a Bellamy editorial, "Will Erotic Crimes ever Become Unknown?" vol. 1, 1891, p. 456)

The American Fabian, 1895-1900 (A Boston-based monthly, organ for the American Fabian League, both established by William Bliss in 1895. In 1896 the magazine moved to New York and under the editorship of Prestonia Mann and William Ghent it attracted new writers and ideas drawing from foreign thinkers like Ruskin, Mazzini, and Tolstoi. Edited by John Preston in 1900.)

The opening number has a large photograph of William Morris on its first page, even though there is nothing in the lead article about Morris. Since there is also no caption, it must have been assumed that the magazine's readers would have no problems identifying him. On the third page appears Morris's "The Voice of Toil," identified but without commentary. In the second number (March, 1895), again given pride of place right in the middle of page one is a large reproduction of Burne-Jones's famous illustration of Adam and Eve ("Whanne Adam delved, . . .") for *A Dream of John Ball*. Again, there is no caption, and nothing in the surrounding story about Burne-Jones, John Ball, or William Morris. In the May and August numbers appear the Walter Crane cartoons, "The Workers' Maypole" and "The Solidarity of Labor." In a section called "The Fabian Lending Library" and in reading lists for Fabian Clubs, both *News from Nowhere* and *A Dream of John Ball* regularly appear.

"Up to this time [1878], he had been, as he called himself, 'the idle singer of an empty day.' His experience in the commercialism and consequent degradation of modern art now drove him to Socialism. . . . Although he has retired from the editorship of *Commonweal*, Mr. Morris still works most fruitfully as 'Poet, Artist, and Socialist.'" (from "Facts for American Socialists," a section that appeared in several early numbers, the short articles and definitions drawn from the *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*. This paragraph, "Morris, W." appears in vol. 1, no. 10, December, 1895.)

"Having read in some magazine article that Mr. Morris had 'changed his mind' regarding Socialism, particularly as to the relation of Socialism to art, the undersigned [Louis E. Van Norman] wrote him asking what truth, if any, there was in the report. In due course a reply came, the pertinent portions of which I give below: [The letter, dated January 9, 1896, follows, the only elisions are apparently at the end and amount to permission to publish the letter and some titles of Morris's works which clarify his position on art and socialism]

My Dear Sir:--I am a very busy man, but on this subject I will answer you briefly. I have *not* changed my views on Socialism. My view on the point of relation between art and Socialism is as follows: Society (so-called) at present is organized entirely for the benefit of a privileged class, the working class being only considered in the arrangement as so much machinery. This involves perpetual and enormous waste, as the organization for the production of genuine utilities is only a secondary consideration. This waste lands the whole civilized world in a position of *artificial poverty*, which again debars men of all classes from satisfying their rational desires. Rich men are in slavery to Philistinism, poor men to penury. We can none of us have what we want, except (partially only) by making prodigious sacrifices, which very few men can ever do. Before, therefore, we can as much as hope for any art, we must be free from this artificial poverty. When we are thus free, in my opinion the natural instincts of mankind toward beauty and incident will take their due place; we shall *want* art, and since we shall be really wealthy, we shall be able to have what we want. . . .

I am, dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

William Morris.

(Appears under the title, "A Letter from Mr. Morris," in vol. 2, no. 2, April, 1896)

"To William Morris Perfection was first and last--Beauty, and its chief manifestation was the man-made beauty of Art. He was first an artist, then a Socialist--and he was Socialist only because he had first been an Artist. His aesthetic sense was continually shocked by the hideousness which he saw about him. The love of nature which he had, in common with so many English poets, was outraged by the spoliation wreaked upon his sea-girt isle by the coarse hand of Greed. In *News from Nowhere* he draws exquisite sketches of an idyllic England--a great garden peopled by happy, simple-minded, superbly healthy men and women, pursuing their innocent, joyous lives in gentle friendliness and freedom, drinking out of artistic mugs, fashioning aesthetic household articles.

It is an artist's heaven. . . . He saw that all great art springs from a super abundant joy of existence in the breasts of a free, healthy, active and happy nation. There were plenty of rich people who would buy beautiful things which others had made, but they could not make any themselves. Art never grew in the luxurious halls of the rich. Stifled by the surfeit in which they live, the rich can admire, but cannot create. Great art can come from the people alone and must be the expression of their common, national life. How poor and mean this life was any observer might see, and to expect beauty to be the outcome of it was to look for grapes on thistles.

Thus William Morris came to see that before there could be any place for the art he hoped for, there must be brought forth a new social order which would insure greater equality of opportunity, greater liberty of development, greater hope and safety for the masses, and he turned to Socialism as to a gospel of social regeneration, destined to make art possible." (from the obituary by Prestonia Mann, in vol. 2, no. 7, November, 1896)

In this same number appear two other pieces: "William Morris at Hammersmith," a description of a Sunday evening lecture at what is called "Kelmscott Hall." But this piece, which had originally appeared in the *New York Evening Sun*, is generally reliable. The final piece--merely a few quotations drawn from Morris's socialist lectures, is called "William Morris's Creed."

"William Morris was one of those who, in this generation, have redeemed the name 'socialist' from disgrace, and put it alongside of philanthropist and Christian, as one who loves his fellow-men. The plaint came from the well-to-do that the proposed day of equality would be stale and monotonous, there would be no spice of struggle for space or gain; the ambitions would be taken out of the lives of men; there would be no wealth left to seek after, no honors to acquire. To such selfishness, desiring that the oppressed might continue in misery, because of the spice it lent to the existence of those who escaped oppression, what answer could be more true or more effective, and withal more genuinely poetical?" (What follows as "answer" are five couplets from *The Pilgrims of Hope*, and then, "Church Union," so evidently this little piece was borrowed from another periodical, it appears here under the title, "What William Morris Thought of the Dead Level," vol. 2, no. 8, December, 1896)

"Tell romantic people to read *News from Nowhere*. Tell practical people to read the *Fabian Tracts*; beg religious people to read Kingsley and Maurice and Professor Herron in connection with their New Testament; advise scientific people to read Karl Marx. . . ." (from an article about personal libraries and useful books; its title: "What to Lend," vol. 3 no. 1 January, 1897; the injunction linking "romantic people" to *Nowhere* is often repeated in ads for books)

"Work is still a hard necessity in *Looking Backwards* [sic] a thing to be got rid of as soon as possible, so citizens, after serving the community as clerks, waiters or what not until the age of forty-five, are exempt. With Morris work gives the zest to life, and all labor has its own touch of art--even the dustman can indulge in it in the form of rich embroidery upon his coat." (from a short passage that appears on a page with a dozen others; such homiletic squibs, rather than substantial articles or essays, are common in these journals and sometimes become more frequent as the magazine's fortunes decline. This passage is sandwiched between an observation from Mark Twain on revolution and a comment on wages in the reign of Elizabeth.)

The Philistine: A Periodical of Protest, 1895-1915 (This huckstering monthly was edited by "Fra Elbertus," alias Elbert Hubbard, founder of the Roycroft Shops and the Roycroft Press in East Aurora, New York. Hubbard liked to call himself the "American William Morris," and he claimed that a meeting with Morris in 1892 had changed his life forever, putting him on the high road to joyful crafts work, etc. But reports of his meeting with Morris, in the *Little Journeys* series, in a short biography he wrote of Morris, in many references in *The Philistine*, are full of outrageous errors and bold lies. Hubbard was an American original; he went down on the Lusitania, and his associates claimed the Germans sunk it because he was aboard.)

"William Morris was the strongest all-round man the century has produced. He was an Artist and a Poet in the broadest and best sense of those much-banded terms. William Morris could do more things, and do them well, than any other man of either ancient or modern times whom we can name. William Morris was master of six distinct trades. He was a weaver, a blacksmith, a wood-carver, a painter, a dyer and a printer, and he was a musical composer of no mean ability" (from *The Philistine*, vol. 4, no. 9, 1899)

The Comrade, 1901-1905 (This "illustrated socialist monthly," published in New York City, was edited by John Spargo, a prolific writer and lecturer for socialist causes, author of an excellent monograph, *The Socialism of William Morris* (Westwood, Mass.: Ariel Press, 1906) that deserves to be better known. His aim with this magazine was to bring Socialist *belles lettres* to the "great mass of the world's disinherited." Its first number had a short article on Morris as a poet, "Topsy, or the Discovery of a Poet," by Spargo, and in the second number, in November, 1901, began a serialization of *News from Nowhere*, of particular interest because it was accompanied by illustrations; these were done by H. G. Jentsch. Regular features were

autobiographical essays by prominent figures, people like Eugene Debs and Jack London, called "How I Became a Socialist" and a "Views and Reviews" column with substantial short articles. An early advertisement claimed that the monthly, "inspired by the ideals of William Morris and his co-workers, seeks to develop from within the ranks of the worker an art and a literature worthy of so great a movement."

"It is perhaps too soon to attempt to determine with any degree of accuracy Morris's true place as one of the forces in modern art and literature, but this much is certain: his influence was never so great and far-reaching as it is today. He is the great inspirer of thousands of souls.

The weakest point of Miss Cary's work, I think, lies in her almost slavish following of Mackail, which, excellent in so many respects, is, nevertheless, lacking in insight, and even in sympathy, in its treatment of Morris's Socialist career. So much that is pertinent to that phase of his life has been ignored by Mackail that I had hoped to find it set forth by Miss Cary. Everyone who knows the part played by Morris in the English Socialist movement knows that his interest in the cause, and his activity in its propaganda, were much greater in the last two years of his life than Miss Cary's account of those years would indicate" (from a review by Spargo of Elizabeth Cary's 1902 biography of Morris, in vol. 2, no. 3, December, 1902)

"It has been said that he was impatient in discussion. I do not agree. He and Auberon Herbert met to fight the battle of Socialism and Individualism, and never did two more courteous opponents meet in debate" (from "Reminiscences of William Morris," by Sophie R. Sharman, vol. 2, no. 4, January, 1903)

"On the whole, experience has shown me that the parents are the unfittest persons to educate a child, and I entirely deny their right to do so, because that would interfere with the right of the child as a member of the community from its birth to enjoy all the advantages which the community can give it. Of course, so far as grown people are concerned I quite agree with your view of complete freedom to teach anything that any one will listen to. But for children, I feel that they have as much need for the revolution as the proletariat have." (from a letter Morris wrote to the Rev. William Sharman, probably in 1886-87, here reprinted under the rubric, "Right of the Child: A Letter by William Morris," vol. 2, no. 6 March, 1903)

"An amusing anecdote is connected with my earliest researches in Socialist literature. I took into school with me one day Morris's pamphlet, 'Useful Work versus Useless Toil,' and was detected reading it by the master in charge. He was a lean, cadaverous individual, and he picked up the pamphlet with painful solicitude. "Useful Work versus Useless Toil," he sniffed. "I should say so! You have neglected useful work to engage in the useless toil of reading this rubbish." He turned the pamphlet over and revealed, to my consternation and confusion, the advertisement, 'Read the Torch, a Journal of Revolutionary Communism.' All hope of lenient treatment vanished" (from "How I Became a Socialist," by Leonard D. Abbott, vol. 3, no. 1, October 1903)

"I have linked together in the title of this paper the names of three men of superlative greatness. Marx appears to me as the greatest economist of modern times; Morris as the greatest artist-craftsman; Hubbard as the greatest bluffer. Now, there is no pleasure whatever in pushing Fra Elbertus to the wall and incurring the risk of ruffling either his sweet temper or his handmade sailcloth necktie." (from an article, "Elbert Hubbard, Karl Marx, and William Morris," by Spargo, vol. 3, no. 5, February, 1904)

The Craftsman, 1901-1918 (Edited by Gustav Stickley and his associates at the United Crafts of Eastwood, New York, who claimed that their association was a Guild which "has had but one parallel in modern times, and this is found in the firm organized in London by the great decorator and socialist, William Morris." And they promised "to promote and to extend the principles established by Morris in both the artistic and socialistic sense." The entire first issue was devoted to Morris, and his name and works are often mentioned in subsequent issues)

"Although the name of William Morris has long since become a household word throughout America, yet the personality of the man, as well as his great part in the world's work, is definitely known but to the few" (the opening lines of the first essay, "William Morris: Some Thoughts upon his Life and Influence," in the

first issue, a biographical sketch that is reliable despite its hagiographic tone, it and the four other essays (three on Morris) in this number were written by Irene Sargent)

"Morris had now in middle life shown himself keenly sensitive to the problems of modern civilization. Through a deep study of medieval art and citizenship, he had come to be a Socialist in the true sense - not a propagandist and a destructive agent, but rather one who regarded his fellow beings in some degree as companions, and who ceased not to advocate equity, good-will and kindness" (from "William Morris: His Career as a Socialist," by Irene Sargent, vol 1, no 1, October, 1901)

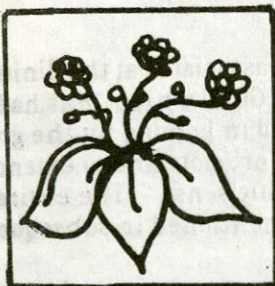
"Consequent upon the decorative reform in England the Applied Arts have risen from their decadence in France and have become established in the United States among a people most ready of all to receive the lessons of a true aestheticism. And thus the chance meeting of two youths, a half-century since, on the benches of an Oxford College, led to the opening of a vista into the past, wherein we see the ancestors of the modern nations building and carving, painting and spinning, throwing into their work their strength, their love and very souls. And the lesson to be learned from the vision is that a real art, created by the people for the people, is able not only to beautify, but also to simplify life, to unify the interests of all sorts and conditions of men, and finally to realize the meaning of the word commonwealth (from "Two Friends: Morris and Burne-Jones," by Irene Sargent, vol.1, no.1, October, 1901)

"The movement initiated by Ruskin and Morris will be vigorously carried forward by other no less sincere disciples of the Religion of Beauty, until the time shall again come when every artist shall be a workman and every workman an artist in his own field of activity. The advancement of the cause demands thorough and practical measures. In our own country and colonies we must profit by the experience of England, lest with us industrialism also secure its sacrifice of human happiness, energy, and joy. The trades and crafts must be raised from the disrepute into which they fell through the division of labor. The laboring class must be wisely guided by State and School until, self-respecting and thoroughly enlightened, they shall be heard to declare: 'We are men and nothing that is human is foreign to us.'

In this work, art must be the prime factor, and a practical knowledge of drawing be made the basis of all the handicrafts. Thus, through the widened avenues of perception, Beauty will pass to relieve fatigue, to create pleasure for the toiler, and to show things in their true proportions and relations: in a word to re-incarnate the citizen spirit of the Middle Ages in a community purified by Science from all superstitions." (the concluding lines of "The Rise and Decadence of the Craftsman: An Historical Note," by Irene Sargent, vol 1, no 2, November, 1901)

While I do not think that these passages suggest that William Morris was a "cult figure" for middle-class American reformers during a decade of deep social unrest, they do indicate that he was well-known and admired, perhaps more for his poetic and artistic achievements than for his revolutionary politics.

Florence Boos recently spent some time at the University of Toronto working with the papers of James Mavor, one of Morris's colleagues in the Socialist League. Appended herewith is her detailed description of certain letters in the Mavor collection.



Yours in fellowship,

Gary L Aho for the
Governing Committee

Department of English
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003



WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY
President Lord Briggs of Lewes
Honorary Secretary P. Preston
Kelmescott House, 26 Upper Mall,
Hammersmith, London W6 9TA

NEWSLETTER

April 1988

Dear Member,

1. WILLIAM MORRIS GALLERY

It now seems clear that, as a result of the energetic work of the Gallery's staff and the widespread public protests, the immediate danger of closure has been removed. Recent meetings of the various Waltham Forest Council committees concerned with the Gallery have also confirmed that there will be no reduction of the present level of staffing. At the same time, the Council will be expecting a much greater emphasis on publicity, sales and the marketing of what the Gallery has to offer. The staff have plenty of ideas as to how this may be achieved and also are seeking the advice of specialist consultants. Since the Council is offering no seedcorn capital for these new developments, a business sponsorship scheme is being planned and arrangements are in hand to establish a group of 'Friends of the Gallery'. Details of the latter scheme are included with this Newsletter, and it is hoped that as many members as possible will become Friends and attend the inaugural meeting on Thursday, 28 April. All these new activities will inevitably take up a good deal of staff time, particularly as Waltham Forest wishes the Gallery to meet some of its financial targets within a year. Nevertheless, Norah Gillow and her colleagues will do their best to ensure that the curatorial and service aspects of the Gallery are not neglected.

One event which no doubt contributed to modifying the attitude of Waltham Forest towards the Gallery took place on 19 January, when members of the all-party Parliamentary Arts and Heritage Group paid a special visit to the Water House. Thirty-six members of the group of peers and MPs were present, and enjoyed a tour of the principal exhibits. Patrick Cormack, MP, Chairman of the Group, paid tribute to the Gallery in his speech of thanks:

We have been most impressed by the quiet and unobtrusive efficiency with which the Gallery is run, the range of the collections and the very graphic way that it brings to life one of the most important and influential figures of the Victorian period.

Speaking of the current exhibition on the Arts and Crafts stained glass artist, Karl Parsons, Mr Cormack described it as 'the sort of innovative exhibition which has gained the Gallery its reputation for excellence. It introduces an outstanding artist to a wide public previously unfamiliar with his work.'. He emphasised that the Group, whose members are drawn from all political parties, warmly supported the Gallery and its activities, and expressed the hope that these would continue: 'It would certainly be a great local and national loss if the Gallery's future development were threatened.'