

William Morris Society in the United States Newsletter November 1995

THIS NEWSLETTER

The usual October "Newsletter" from London has been delayed in order to incorporate listings and descriptions of the numerous events planned for the centenary year of 1996. Hence this interim publication. Members should receive the augmented regular issue (it runs to more than 40 pages) before Christmas. Future numbers will probably appear on a February/May/August/November basis but this is a little uncertain, depending on decisions to be made in London. A special announcement of topics for the 1996 Modern Language Association convention--to be held in Washington, DC, 27-30 December--will be sent out in early January in any case.

WMS IN THE US CENTENARY PLANS

When we began work on the exhibition scheduled for The Grolier Club we understood that the Morgan Library had decided not to do anything with Morris in 1996. Their plans have changed and so have ours. What has happened is that the Morgan has now scheduled "Being William Morris: A Centenary Exhibition" for the summer, to run more or less concurrently with the big Victoria and Albert Museum show in London. The theme is Morris's life and works in general, of course drawing primarily on the books and manuscripts in the Morgan's collection. So as not to compete directly, the Grolier exhibition has been put off until December. We have also changed the topic to "William Morris and the Revival of Printing" in order to differentiate us from the Morgan and to focus more broadly on Morris's achievement in the book arts within the Victorian worlds of printing, publishing, and literature. to trace the factors which influenced him, and his own influence--in style and ideology--on others; The books, manuscripts, and graphics on display will be superb and derive, as before, from the Grolier Club's holdings and from institutional and private collections in the U.S. and elsewhere. Opening on 10 December, the exhibition will be preceded on 6-7 December by "William Morris in Our Time," a symposium co-sponsored by the Society to be held at the City University of New York Graduate Center and at the Grolier Club. This event has been expanded from one to two days and is designed to serve as a summing-up of the centenary year's activities throughout the world. A number of distinguished figures have accepted our invitation to speak. Other events "in the works" include a "William Morris Home Page" on the Internet, a multimedia presentation on the Kelmscott Press, and additional lectures at the Grolier and elsewhere during the run of the exhibition and symposium. In putting all this together we are grateful for the generous help of the Grolier Club, the International Typeface Corporation (which supplied the Golden Type you are reading), the Humanities Division of City College, and the English Program and the Humanities Institute at the CUNY Graduate Center. Another meeting of our ad-hoc "Centenary Committee" is planned for New York before the end of the year--let Mark Samuels Lasner know if you wish to be put on the mailing list.

OTHER CENTENARY EXHIBITIONS

More details will come in the next "Newsletter," but here is advance word of some of the undoubtedly many exhibitions proposed to mark the centenary of Morris's death (it may well be that every institution owning a Kelmscott "Chaucer" will place it--and whatever else they might have--on display):

 Kelmscott Gallery, Chicago, IL. January-February 1996. Works by Morris and his associates and followers--offered for sale by this commercial gallery specializing in the Arts and Crafts through Art Deco movements. Includes the original watercolor by Morris for the "Woodpecker" tapestry and examples by Crane, De Morgan, Will Bradley, Frank Lloyd Wright, etc. Organizer: Scott Elliott.

 University of San Francisco Library, San Francisco, CA. Late January?--March 1996" Includes books, etc. from the collection of Sanford and Helen Berger. Organizer: Adela Spindler Roatcap.

 Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX. Spring 1996? Kelmscott Press, Ashendene Press, Doves Press, etc. Organizer: Isaac Gewirtz, Curator, Special Collections, Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University.

 "William Morris and his Circle," Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin, TX. February 1996. Morris and Pre-Raphaelites, books, manuscripts, some artworks. Organizer: Richard Orem, HRHRC, University of Texas. Talk by Colin Franklin planned.

 "Being William Morris: A Centenary Exhibition." Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, NY. 1 May-1 September (tentative) 1996. The Morgan's collection of Morris, also loans of decorative art, etc. Organizer: George Fletcher, Curator of Rare Books, Pierpont Morgan Library.

 "Morris and Medievalism," Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. Summer 1996.

Early printed books, MSS, Morris's works. Organizer: Thomas Amos, Houghton Library.
Connecticut College Library, New London, CT. Fall? 1996. Kelmscott "Chaucer" and other Morris books. Organizer: Brian Rogers, Special Collections Librarian, Connecticut College.

VICTORIANS IN CYBERSPACE

The Society has produced a flyer describing various "places" (mostly "World Wide Web" sites) on the Internet which may be of interest to members, particularly those engaged in the study of Victorian literature and art. Copies are free for the asking. We will cheerfully answer questions about the use of 20th century high technology to investigate the 19th century: contact Mark Samuels Lasner telephonically or electronically as given below.

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