

# Art of making stained glass

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## ART OF MAKING STAINED GLASS.

By ALFRED WERCK.

The author of this article is Mr. Alfred Werck, Artist and Expert in stained glass, a native of Ruemlingen (District of Sissach) Basle County, who had his preliminary training as artist and craftsman at Lucerne, Cologne and Paris. Coming to this country in 1899, he founded in 1904 the Holbein-Studio at Fitzroy Street, W.1, where in turn he worked invariably for Lords and Dukes and was recommended by the South Kensington Museum. He is collaborator with F. Morris Drake's famous book, "A History of English Glasspainting," published in London 1912. He moved in 1916 to the United States where he stayed for fifteen years, acting at times as Appraiser at the American Art Galleries, Madison Avenue and 57th Street, New York City, he published in 1922 a book on stained glass — its origin and development from the time of Charlemagne to its decadence 800-1650 A.D. Mr. Werck is now established at the Holbein Studio, Mardley Hill, Welwyn, (Herts) on the Great North Road, where he holds a permanent Exhibition on Stained glass and allied arts belonging to four different centuries.

Ed.

Happiness is to be found in any occupation, but painting on glass, in particular, has a charm of its own. What little I know of my handicraft I owe to my own endeavours and experiments, both in laying out a cartoon or in cutting, painting or leading panels, big or small.

It is with mixed emotions that one studies the history of his art, when we consider the ups and downs we glass painters have had through all the long centuries from the time of Charlemagne up to the present day. In one century we were petted by kings and abbots, in the next utterly disregarded or worse yet, hanged as idle rascals. France is the birthplace of our art, though no glass of the days of the pioneers has come down on us. Wars and epidemics, where they were raging, have played havoc with such frail objects,

but more so through sheer ignorance on the part of the plebeians did most of these treasures come to grief. To Charlemagne we owe much with regards to our handicraft, also to one of his successors, Charles the Bald, who, in the year 873, drew up a charter in which he accords privileges to two glaziers (Ragenulf and Balderic) by granting them common holding of some manse with the Abbey of St. Amand en Pevele; one Abbot Girard in the eleventh century grants lifeholding of a house and an arpent (one acre of vineyard) to Fulk, painter-glazier, on condition of his spending that life on the decorations and windows of Girard's Abbey. Prebendships were granted to a goldsmith, a painter and a glazier by Bishop Geoffrey de Champ Alleman of Auxerre (1052-1073) in order to retain their services for the cathedral's benefit. A clause in the treaty of peace concluded between Henry II. of England and Philip of France at Tours in 1189 bound Philip to allow one of his best glass painters to come to England. Glass painters were a very flourishing community for over three hundred years.

## Wars Interfere.

The fourteenth century, however, brought wars and consecutively troubles of all kinds throughout all France. Battles were waged at Cressy, Shuys, Poitiers, &c., and finally the great plague of 1348, which exterminated the population of whole cities and villages, but more so in Germany, where half of the population perished through this dreadful epidemic. The nobles, fortifying their castles in haste, had little time to spare to order stained-glass windows; the bishops, with depleted revenues, had other things to think about than building cathedrals. The windows erected by former generations were smashed by raging peasants and angry soldiery and the men that made their living at stained glass were all scattered. As there was a corresponding increase in the output of stained-glass windows at this period, we cannot but surmise that a good many of the glass painters, after being driven from their homes, went to England.

The fifteenth century shows a marked improvement and the art again rises to its former standard. Charles V. and VI. in their letters patent, declare glass-painters "free, quit and

exempt of all taxes, aids and subsidies," as well as exempt from civil duties as gatekeepers, guards and postern — guards in whatever cities they might favour with their residences. These privileges were again confirmed in 1431 by Charles VII. at the request of Henry Mellein, a glass-painter of Bourges, "in his person and for all others of his condition," on July 6th, 1555. Henry II. confirmed them anew.

But, if Charles VII. loved and favoured the noble art, Rene of Provence, his contemporary, went further and practiced it himself. Poet, musician and painter, to his court at Roussillon came with pomp Duke Charles of Orleans, came lean and ragged Francois Villon to try his skill in ballade, lay and virelai. And with them came lesser men, glass-painters, whose names are partly forgotten, and from them Rene learned glass-painting as from their betters he learned the makings of songs. A prisoner at Dijon after the battle of Bulligneville in 1431, and visited one day by his conqueror, Philip the Good, he offered his visitor portraits and armorial bearings, painted on glass by his own Royal hand — one of Jean-sans-Peur and one of Philip himself. They were graciously accepted and ordered by Philip to be placed in the chapel windows at Chartreux.

## Its Ups and Downs.

Ups and downs, indeed. The pastime of a captive king in the fifteenth century, a flourishing handicraft in the sixteenth, a decaying one in the seventeenth. In the eighteenth — well, it was different. During James Wyatt's "restoration" of the Cathedral of Salisbury one could have seen "whole cartloads of glass, painted and otherwise, lead and other rubbish removed from the nave and transepts and shot into the town ditch . . . whilst a good deal of similar rubbish was used to level the ground near the chapter house." And this is no isolated instance. What was going on at Salisbury was going on freely all over England during the whole of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. Even after Winston's "Hints on Glass-painting," published in 1847, had drawn the attention of the cultured to the beauty and interest of the early examples spared by vandals like John Berry and his followers, bludgeon and whitewash were still merely a work.

## LES SUISSES A L'ETRANGER ET LA MERE-PATRIE.

Conférence de Mlle. A. Briod donnée au "Foyer Suisse" le 15 Février, 1935.

C'est tout d'abord un merci que je tiens à vous adresser ce soir. Merci de votre accueil et merci du grand privilège que vous m'avez accordé en m'invitant à passer ces quelques heures avec vous. Elles ne seront pas pour moi un souvenir passager. Vous, lorsque vous venez vous retremper dans l'atmosphère du pays, vous enfeinez ensuite jalousement en votre âme ce que vous y avez goûté de meilleur afin de le conserver comme un précieux trésor. Je vous étonnerai peut-être en vous disant que c'est à mon tour un peu de notre commune patrie que je suis venue chercher auprès de vous. Car, en vos coeurs transplantés, elle continue à vivre et à palper. Veuillez bien le croire, il n'y a rien de plus émouvant pour nous autres Suisses du dedans que de retrouver soudain, dans le dépaysement que nous donnent les contrées inconnues, ce reflet du pays que vous portez en vous. Mélangé à d'autres images, il est peut-être différent de celui auquel nous sommes accoutumés et c'est justement ce qui en fait la valeur et le charme.

Cependant, ce n'est pas une visite comme une autre que je suis venue faire à Londres. C'est encore un pèlerinage. Votre colonie n'est-elle pas le berceau de l'oeuvre à laquelle j'ai le bonheur de collaborer depuis bientôt huit ans? Londres est un peu le Grütli de la Suisse à l'étranger. C'est d'ici que sont parties les premières ramifications qui devaient aboutir à l'immense réseau de 200 groupes que forme actuellement l'Organisation des Suisses à l'étranger de la Nouvelle Société Helvétique, réseau qui va de Sydney à travers l'Europe jusqu'à San Francisco et d'Helsingfors à Capetown.

Les temps héroïques du groupe N.S.H. de Londres, je ne les connais pas seulement par les volumineux dossiers que nous avons au Secrétariat, et où je ne me plonge jamais sans profit, mais j'ai eu le privilège d'entendre parler combien de fois du groupe de Londres par votre président-fondateur, le très regretté M. Jean Baer. Il aimait toujours à évoquer, au cours des conversations qui suivaient nos séances de la Commission des Suisses à l'étranger, les débuts de votre groupe. M. Lätt ajoutait tel ou tel détail et moi j'écoutais et je tâchais de retenir et c'est ainsi que notre Secrétariat a reçu lui aussi la marque de cette personnalité si haute et si droite qui restera à jamais associée aux plus nobles réalisations de la N.S.H. à l'étranger.

Quant à la colonie suisse d'aujourd'hui, c'est M. Suter qui m'a appris à la connaître un peu, au cours de ses visites en Suisse; c'est lui qui m'a révélé surtout le Suisse d'Angleterre, ce type si sympathique d'humanité qui, sans perdre ses qualités originelles, a su en acquérir d'autres qui sont un admirable complément des premières. Je ne saurais oublier la manière si subtile et si fine dont M. Suter sut le démontrer à la Journée des Suisses à l'étranger de Fribourg, sous le regard attentif et charmé du Chef de notre Département Politique.

Combien de fois, en écoutant soit M. Jean Baer, soit M. Suter, ai-je rêvé de connaître un jour de plus près cette brillante colonie suisse de Londres. D'autant plus que, lorsque je revenais enchantée, d'une visite à telle ou telle colonie, d'Allemagne, d'Italie ou de France, notre président, M. Lätt, me disait toujours: "Vous n'avez rien vu tant que vous n'avez pas visité la colonie suisse de Londres." Et voici maintenant le rêve transformé en réalité. Je suis ici parmi vous, dans cette grande ville que je vois, pour la première fois; et tout à l'heure j'aurai l'occasion de vous entendre, car je ne suis pas venue ici pour parler, mais bien plutôt pour voir, pour écouter et pour m'instruire.

Nos colonies sont si différentes les unes des autres. Nous avons le devoir de les connaître, nous qui sommes chargés de faire le pont entre elles et le pays. A quoi cela nous servirait-il en effet de construire en Suisse un solide pilier, si celui qui doit supporter l'autre extrémité du pont devait plonger dans le vide.

Si vous représentez un élément essentiel de notre nationalité, ce n'est pas seulement par les sentiments que vous éprouvez au fond de votre coeur pour notre pays. Votre mission est autrement plus grande: Vous êtes vous Suisses répandus sur toute la surface du globe les canaux par lesquels nos idées se répandent dans le monde, par lesquels aussi les idées et les expériences de l'étranger nous parviennent. Et la grande tâche du Secrétariat des Suisses à l'étranger c'est d'intensifier ce courant qui doit aller de la mère-patrie aux Suisses à l'étranger et des Suisses à l'étranger à la mère-patrie, et c'est d'écartier de lui tout ce qui risque de l'obstruer. De là notre triple tâche:

1°) Rendre la Suisse présente aux Suisses à l'étranger afin de leur permettre de vivre en contact plus étroit avec elle et de la représenter ainsi d'autant mieux au dehors.

2°) Rendre les Suisses à l'étranger présents aux Suisses du pays, afin de leur donner chez nous la place à laquelle ils ont droit et de faire bénéficier notre pays de ce qu'ils sont et de ce qu'ils font.

3°) Faire tomber les obstacles qui se dressent trop souvent entre l'expatrié et son pays: malentendus de toutes sortes, incompréhensions réciproques, apâtres de la taxe militaire . . .

Rendre la Suisse présente aux Suisses à l'étranger: C'est la première de nos missions. Vous savez déjà ce que nous faisons pour aider vos groupements à se maintenir en contact avec la patrie. Les conférences, les films, les circulaires, les journaux, les livres, tout est mis en oeuvre pour cela. Dans un pays voisin du nôtre, où nos journaux sont frappés d'interdiction, — ce qui fait que nos concitoyens sont tout à fait coupés d'avec le pays, — nous avons cherché à y remédier par le moyen de la radio. Vous écoutez peut-être vous-mêmes les excellentes chroniques suisses données chaque jeudi soir à Bâle par M. Hermann Buchi. Vous lisez peut-être aussi l'Echo Suisse. Il est des faits de notre vie nationale qui sont jugés en effet de manière très tendancieuse par certaine presse étrangère: on grossit ou on rapetisse à plaisir, aussi nos compatriotes qui n'ont ni les moyens, ni le temps de lire, à côté des journaux locaux, les quotidiens suisses se trouvent parfois complètement désorientés, et leur jugement à la longue s'en trouve faussé. Ceux qui n'ont lu que les journaux du dehors ont pu facilement croire, à un moment donné, que la Suisse marchait tout droit au fascisme et à l'hitlérisme. En d'autres pays, nos concitoyens ont cru tout au contraire que la Suisse allait passer bientôt tout entière au régime Nicole! On n'entend de loin que ceux qui crient le plus fort.

J'en viens maintenant à l'autre courant dont je voulais vous parler, au courant qui, de nos colonies doit aller vers le pays. Comme nous nous efforçons de vous rendre la patrie présente, nous cherchons aussi à ce qu'une place plus grande soit faite, dans les préoccupations de notre peuple, aux Suisses à l'étranger. Nous voulons non seulement que chez nous on sympathise avec vos difficultés morales et matérielles, mais nous voulons que les Suisses de l'intérieur apprennent à connaître la belle et fructueuse activité développée dans tous les domaines par nos compatriotes de l'étranger. Nous voulons aussi qu'ils s'appliquent à comprendre mieux le caractère du Suisse à l'étranger, sa tournure d'esprit, un peu différente parfois de la nôtre, mais qui lui permet justement d'être cet intermédiaire précieux dont nous avons besoin dans nos relations avec l'étranger. C'est pour nous révéler davantage au pays, que nous avons organisé un peu partout des conférences sur les Suisses à l'étranger, des causeries par radio; c'est dans le même but que nous avons édité le livre que vous connaissez tous: "Les Suisses dans le Vaste Monde."

à suivre.

But now, after a century or more of neglect, glass painting is coming into its own again. To those interested in the art, whether professionally or as amateurs, few things have been more noticeable than the recent decorations of stained glass windows, with heraldic panels and medallion portrait busts, so extremely decorative for the house of to-day. The chief glory of ancient stained glass is its beautiful colourization; not the individual colours only, but the marvelous distinction attained by the rarely skillful disposition and balance of the colours to one another, rendered even more beautiful by the masterly conception and easy drawing of the subject delineated. Sapphire, blues of the rarest tonality in juxtaposition to fine ambers, amethyst, emerald, green and ruby that scintillate with gemlike radiance when touched with a glorious gleam of sunlight and produce a note of joyous colour impossible to arrive at from any other source, for stained glass stands alone in this wonderful characterization.

Only a generation ago, such decorations were usually regarded as mild-mannered mental aberrations, but the past ten years have changed all that. Our more catholic system of art training has excited a new interest in, and a greater reverence and care of, the work of departed generations of hand craftsmen. Modern stained glass is more intelligently criticized, ancient glass more cherished than ever before.

Glass painting is a highly fascinating occupation, not necessarily to be considered a useless luxury, it, by all means, develops an interest in mediaeval history, promotes an intelligent curiosity in architecture and the allied arts, and last but not least, it beautifies its owners home as does no other Art — and this applies as much to the lady of limited means as to her richer sister. Indeed, with judgment, it will prove a surprising fascination, a good specimen of stained glass hung or inserted into a window, always bestows a touch of colour and brightness that no other material can give.

Many books have already been devoted to the history of the art of glass painting and names of some of the most useful are very familiar to me. And though books upon the subject are legion, they are for the most part written only for the historian, the craftsman, or the artist, it is therefore obvious, that anyone desirous of having their windows decorated in a highly artistic manner, should not hesitate to consult the artist who has devoted his life to this noble task and therefore opens the way to the decoration of a window or windows in small or large homes, in which brilliancy of colour can be satisfactorily combined with the romance of the periods portrayed and the transmissions of sufficient light into the rooms thus decorated.

**NEWS FROM THE COLONY.**

**SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY LTD.**

The Fourth Ordinary General Meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd., was held on Wednesday, February 20th, 1935, at Swiss House, 34/35, Fitzroy Square, London, W.1.

Mr. A. Steinmann, President of the Society, was in the Chair.

The Secretary read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditor.

The auditor, Mr. Percy H. Green, F.C.A., elucidated the accounts for the period under review which could be considered a year of satisfactory achievement. Some discussion ensued and the accounts were unanimously adopted.

The Chairman surveyed the activities of the London Section during 1934, the 46th year of its existence. In the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of the Education Committee (Mr. E. Hardmeier), the report of the Education Committee was read by the Vice-Chairman, Mr. W. Meier. Mr. J. J. Boos, Chairman of the House Committee, reported on the work of his Committee.

A resolution for the adoption of the reports was carried unanimously and a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the various chairmen for the excellent manner in which the reports were drawn up.

The auditor, Mr. Percy H. Green, F.C.A., was reappointed.

Mr. A. C. Stahelin, on behalf of the Council proposed, and Mr. J. J. Pfander seconded, that "Mr. Ph. Schmid-Ruedin, Secretary General of the S.K.V., and Dr. K. Böschenstein of the Bundesamt für Gewerbe, Industrie und Arbeit be elected Honorary Members of our Society."

In moving this proposal, Mr. Stahelin stated that the professional education of commercial employees is one of the foremost aims of the S.K.V. and all its Sections, and that both those Gentlemen had rendered great and valuable services in that direction. He added that in our own case, they helped us to overcome obstacles of an almost forbidding aspect by their constant encouragement and help.

The resolution was carried with acclamation. The list of nominations for members of the Council and Committees was submitted. Mr. A.

C. Stahelin, Vice-Chairman of the Council, Mr. E. Hardmeier, Chairman of the Education Committee and Mr. J. H. Attinger, member of the Education Committee, did not offer themselves for re-election. Mr. Hardmeier, however, consented to carry on as a member of the Council and the Education Committee.

The Chairman, in expressing hearty thanks to the retiring members of the Council and Committees for their collaboration regretted the loss of Mr. Stahelin as Vice-Chairman of the Council and commented upon the signal services he had rendered to the Society for many years. Various speakers voiced similar sentiments. Mr. Stahelin however, assured the Meeting that he would still continue closely to follow the activities of the Society.

The Chairman also regretted Mr. Hardmeier's retirement from the Chairmanship of the Education Committee who had proved a faithful and hard-working Chairman and was pleased that Mr. Hardmeier was willing to give his services as an ordinary member of that Committee.

He also expressed thanks to Mr. Attinger for his many years' services on the Education Committee and appreciated the reasons which had prompted his retirement.

The following nominations to fill the various vacancies had been duly proposed and seconded:

Mr. W. Meier as Chairman of the Education Committee,

Mr. H. H. Baumann as Vice-Chairman of the Education Committee,

Mr. M. Röthlisberger as a member of the Education Committee,

Mr. J. Trachsel as a member of the General Purposes Committee.

The nominees for the Council and Committees were declared elected, unopposed.

The Council and Committees for the year 1935 are constituted as follows:

**Council:** Chairman: Mr. A. Steinmann; Vice-Chairman: Mr. J. J. Boos; Members: Messrs. Ch. Chapuis, G. E. De Brunner (Trustee), W. Deutsch, O. Grob, E. Hardmeier, G. Jenne, W. Meier, L. W. Krucker, J. J. Pfander, M. Schneider.

**General Purposes Committee:** President: Mr. A. Steinmann; Vice-President (Chairman Education Committee): Mr. W. Meier; Vice-President (Chairman House Committee): Mr. J. J. Boos; Hon. Secretary: Mr. M. Schneider; Hon. Treasurer: M. O. Grob; Members: Messrs. R. Chappuis, M. O. Henchoz, J. Trachsel.

**Education Committee:** Chairman: Mr. W. Meier; Vice-Chairman: Mr. H. H. Baumann; Members: Messrs. E. Hardmeier, M. Röthlisberger, F. Streit, R. Weist.

**House Committee:** Chairman: Mr. J. J. Boos; Vice-Chairman: Mr. J. Trachsel; Members: Mrs. T. Lughli-Rezzonico, Mr. P. Mathys.

**Auditor:** Mr. Percy H. Green, F.C.A.

**Press Reporter:** Mr. W. Burren.

**Delegate on the Advisory Board of the Employment Department:** Mr. Ch. Chapuis.

**Delegates on the Swiss Sports Committee:** Messrs. W. Burren, M. O. Henchoz, J. J. Schneider.

**Delegate to the N. S. H.:** Mr. F. Streit.

The Chairman apprised the members that our air-famed compatriot, Walter Mittelholzer, would come to London to give a lecture on Friday, April 5th, and asked them to reserve that date.

Mr. J. J. Boos made a fervent appeal to the members to attend the Annual Banquet and Ball to be held at the Trocadero Restaurant on Saturday, February 23rd.

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. A. Stauffer, a former President of the Society for his very active co-operation in getting a very large number of members and friends to attend the Annual Banquet.

This terminated the proceedings and a hearty vote of thanks was passed to the Chairman.

The Annual General Meeting was followed by an Ordinary Monthly Meeting.

W.B.

**WALTER MITTELHOLZER.**

We are pleased to inform our readers that the celebrated Swiss airman, Walter Mittelholzer, will give an illustrated lecture about his flights from the Arctic to the Equator, conquering the Alps, the Ice Peaks of Spitsbergen, of Persia, and Africa's Mountains of the Moon, at King George's Hall, Caroline Street, Tottenham Court Road., W.C.1, on Monday, April 15th. Further details will follow.

**CONCERT NEWS.**

A Lieder Recital will be given on Monday, March 11th, at 8.30 p.m., at the Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, W.1, by Lily Zaehner. The programme will include songs by Beethoven, Weber, Schubert, Hugo Wolf and Adolf Jensen.

Madame Zaehner has a fine mezzo-soprano voice, and is well-known as a Lieder singer both in London and on the Continent.



**Oscar Gambazzi**

President of the Unione Ticinese

We have great pleasure in publishing herewith the portrait of Mr. Oscar Gambazzi, the newly elected President of the Unione Ticinese.

Mr. Gambazzi succeeds Mr. W. Notari, who has for the last 16 years been at the head of the Society. This establishes no doubt a record in the Swiss Colony, but those who know the great services, which the late President has rendered to his Society, during the years he has held his high office, will appreciate their endeavours to keep him at the helm. If the Unione Ticinese ranks to-day amongst the important Societies in the Colony it is principally due to the enthusiasm, and to the patriotic work which Mr. Notari has rendered; the taking up of a high position in another sphere of activity has compelled him to lay down his office. Mr. Notari is the Manager of the famous Paganis' Restaurant which is jointly owned by our compatriots Madame Linda Meschini and M. Arthur Meschini.

The Unione Ticinese has been fortunate enough to find a worthy successor in the person of Mr. Oscar Gambazzi, who has been hon. secretary of the Society for 31 years, and also Vice-President during 1933/34. The new President is a "Socio Benemerito" of the Unione Ticinese.

Mr. Gambazzi landed in this country in 1894, and following the natural course of most Ticinese entered the catering trade, he was for many years connected with such famous firms as "Gatti's" and "The Monico."

During the war Mr. Gambazzi has rendered many services to our country, for which he received the official thanks from Dr. Carlin, then Swiss Minister in London.

We tender Mr. Gambazzi our heartiest wishes for his year of office; his experience and faithful work for a great number of years have been fittingly rewarded.

**POETRY SOCIETY'S HIGHEST AWARDS.**



Photo by Courtesy of The Daily Sketch. MISS ADRIENNE CAMPART.

We are extending heartiest congratulations to Miss Adrienne Campart, of 33, Heathfield Park, Willesden Lane, N.W.2, who has been awarded the "Lady Margaret Gold Medal" for verse speaking of the Poetry Society.

Only recently we had the pleasure of announcing that our gifted compatriot received the gold medal of the Poetry Society for verse-speaking, this second award is a still higher distinction, as a matter of fact, it is the highest honour for verse-speaking awarded in this country.

The competition pieces were, a sonnet by W. Shakespeare, "Pauline" by Browning, and John Massfield's "Sea Fever."

During the last three years, Miss Campart has toured in several companies, and has done quite a lot of film work.

In between her radio, stage and film work, Miss Campart, who speaks French and German fluently, teaches elocution.