

***Legendary Penmanship Collection Surfaces:  
IAMPETH granted permission to scan artwork***

by Michael Sull

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If this story were written for Hollywood, it could easily have been made into a movie of adventure or an inspirational drama. The following narrative however is quite true, and I'm extremely excited to announce that IAMPETH has been given an unprecedented opportunity to scan the contents of a fabled penmanship collection for our electronic archives. In succinct terms, this is the most significant event in IAMPETH history, for the results of this project will benefit our members in perpetuity-beyond our own lifetimes and into the future. Once the scanning process is complete, we will be able to study in detail the most remarkable assortment of business writing, ornamental penmanship, and engrossing techniques that has ever found its way to our Association. Through these scans, members can look into the nuances of pristine work done more than a century ago by Zaner, Bloser, Dennis, Ames, Marlatt, Malone, Moore, Chambers, Canan, Flickinger, Tamblyn, Schofield, and many others. Members can make reproduction prints for their own use as well, with the sole stipulation that no images, either electronic or paper prints, be sold, displayed or exchanged for profit. This volume of artwork is known as the "Healey Collection" and its history is as fascinating as the specimens themselves.

***The Collection***

Horace G. Healey (1867-1938) was a respected and industrious penman during America's Golden Age of Penmanship. In 1892 he became associated with Austin N. Palmer in the ownership of the Cedar Rapids Business College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. During his years at this institution, he taught shorthand and penmanship. He was highly skilled in business writing and widely admired for his superb talent in rendering Engrosser's Script. In approximately 1898-1899 he moved to New York City, where he became acquainted with Daniel Ames - one of America's most admired and established penmen. It is here that the story of this collection really begins.

Among the ranks of professional penmen, Daniel Ames (1835-1909) was noteworthy for several reasons. He was one of the most prolific engrossers our country ever produced, creating countless certificates and promotional pieces that featured exceptional lettering in numerous alphabet styles, off-hand flourishing, portraiture, banners, scrolls, line-work and compositions so complex that they defied description. His skill was truly legendary. In addition to his engrossing abilities, he was also America's most recognized examiner of questioned documents, detecting forgeries and testifying in this regard at numerous court proceedings. He authored several significant books on penmanship, but his work *Ames On Forgery* (1900) was regarded as the definitive text on the subject. (Throughout his career he served as a handwriting expert in over 1,200 forgery cases in 4 countries!) In 1876 he became founder and editor of the *Penman's Art Journal*

and served in that capacity for over 20 years. During this period, the *Penman's Art Journal* was the leading penmanship magazine in America.

Due to his professional commitment of maintaining the highest standards of quality in all his endeavors, Mr. Ames himself penned the artwork for many of his magazines and books, including the covers, articles, lessons, headings and promotional advertising. In later years he commissioned such pen masters as Dennis, Brown, Marlatt and Malone to contribute artwork for this purpose. And as the decades went by, he saved all of this artwork as an on-going collection in his studio.

The majority of Daniel Ames' career found him working in New York City, where he met Charles Rollinson, a reputable penman and engrosser from the area. Together they co-founded the Ames & Rollinson Company, a firm that became a leader in its field of providing engrossing services on a commercial basis (the company still exists today!). In the late 1890's, however, Mr. Ames decided that with his busy schedule divided between his engrossing company and forgery detection business, he no longer had time to invest his energies in the realm of publishing. Also, his health had begun to decline by this time and he desired to relocate to California in a manner of semi-retirement. Indeed, six years earlier, in 1894, Ames had hired William J. Kinsley, a penman he had known since 1884, to become the new managing editor of *The Penman's Art Journal*. Times were changing, however. It was now 1900 and a new century had dawned with an increasing focus on other business-related subjects besides penmanship. Healey had become acquainted with Messrs. Ames and Kinsley during the previous year and had shown a serious interest in becoming involved with the publication. Later that same year, in 1899, Daniel Ames moved to Mountain View, California, a city in the San Francisco Bay area. After Mr. Ames' departure, Kinsley no longer wished to continue his responsibilities with the magazine. Horace G. Healey - an energetic 33 year-old man of ability, enthusiasm and business experience in teaching and penmanship, was the perfect individual to take over the obligations of running the *Penman's Art Journal*. The December 1900 edition of the PAJ, which listed both Kinsley and Healey as co-editors, announced on the front page the following:

“Horace G. Healey has joined the *Penman's Art Journal*. He displaces no one- is just so much in addition to the others who for years have given the best that they have- in time and talent- to the making of a paper worthy of its heritage as the representative journal of commercial educational interest in America.

For some time past the Journal has been figuring quietly on some problems of expansion along the line of its dead-in-earnest aim and ambition to be of use. The solution has awaited the man. We believe Mr. Healey to be ***The*** man. That is why he now has an interest in the business and will make it his life's work.”

Beginning with the next issue, in early 1901, Mr. Healey was listed solely as the editor. Becoming responsible for the entire publication was certainly a career-change for him, and it did, in fact, become his life's work. Among the resources that came with the

Penman's Art Journal, was Ames' large collection of pen-art that had been commissioned since the 1880's for the magazine. Mr. Ames had taken his three personal scrapbooks and one large folder, all of which contained specimens of his own penmanship, with him to California along with a number of his writing tools, publications and a slender journal in which he pasted dozens of newspaper clippings that cited references to noted forgery cases in which he was involved. Also, included were photographs of him and his wife. In 1906 his residence and studio were heavily damaged in the famous San Francisco earthquake - and photographs of this incident were taken and added to the large folder. He re-built his facilities and persevered, but his fragile health continued to decline. He died at his home in Mountain View at age 74 on August 26, 1909.

Thus, Mr. Healey's realm as managing editor for the Penman's Art Journal began with the twentieth century. The penmanship era in America was at its height, and since most of the top-rated penmen and engrossers were employed on a free-lance basis by the various penmanship magazines and business publications, these pen artists frequently corresponded with one another. In one sense they were competitors, but more often they considered each other as colleagues, and not infrequently, as friends. It was in this way that Charles P. Zaner, Elmer W. Bloser and Horace G. Healey formed such a bond - as professional competitors to be sure, but sharing a mutual respect for each other as well. They developed a friendship that lasted throughout their lifetimes.

Meanwhile the industrialization of America began to broaden the range of skills necessary to fill the various demands of an increasingly mechanized work environment. Both publishers - Healey and Zaner, recognized this change and added a wider emphasis of articles pertaining to other business subjects, such as accounting, management, and basic finance. In March, 1910, the Penman's Art Journal changed its official name to The Business Journal, and stated in that issue:

“The field covered by such a magazine as this is broader than the one branch mentioned in the name of Penman's Art Journal. The entire range of business education has been touched upon, and to a certain extent the old name has been a handicap in developing the rich territory covered by business education.”

Then, in 1916, the Healey and Zaner-Bloser publications became one. Announced from the September, 1916 edition of The Business Educator:

#### “CONSOLIDATION”

“After a portion of this number of the Business Educator was printed, arrangements were hastily completed to take over the good will, subscriptions, and prestige of The Business Journal, formerly the Penman's Art Journal of New York City, the oldest journal in the commercial teaching profession and merge it with The Business Educator, Columbus, Ohio.”

With this change of ownership, Horace Healey continued to work for the new publication in the Zaner-Bloser Company as a member of *The Business Educator's* staff. Shortly after the death of C.P. Zaner in 1918, Healey became editor of *The Business Educator*, and served in that capacity until June 1925. Throughout his years as a publisher, Mr. Healey exhibited a personal interest in his accumulation of pen art and it grew into one of the finest existing collections of its kind. He realized the historical significance of it as well, for it represented the chronology of the era's first professional publication- *The Penman's Art Journal*. Prior to his death in 1938 he left instructions that through his estate, approximately one-half of his collection be donated to the New York Public Library (where it still remains), and the second half donated to the Zaner-Bloser Company. These actions took place the following year, in 1939. Thus, the "Healey Collection" destined for the ZB company was carefully boxed, labeled, and stored, joining the company's own massive collection. The quantity of individual specimens in the portion of the Healey Collection easily numbers several hundred or more, and for seventy years, the boxes were pretty much left alone and undisturbed.

### **How the Collection was made available to IAMPETH**

In October 2009, IAMPETH member Tom Costello succeeded in his dream of organizing a retrospective exhibition of his legendary great-grandfather, Patrick W. Costello (1866-1935). It was, indeed, a fantastic exhibition. An article of the event will be featured in a forth-coming edition of *The Penman's Journal*, and the exhibition catalog is being scanned for our website. In addition, Tom will be giving scans of the artwork shown in the exhibition to IAMPETH for our website. Also, I asked the curator, Darlene Miller-Lanning, for those extra copies of the catalog so that interested members might have the opportunity to obtain one. I've got 20 copies that are available on a first-come-first-served basis. The only charge is simply for postage. If you'd like a copy, please send me your request with \$3.00 for shipments within the United States or \$5.00 for international shipping. We are deeply indebted to Darlene for her kindness and generosity. Regarding the exhibition, I was asked to speak at the opening ceremony about P.W.'s stature and legacy as one of our greatest engrossers. I also taught a Spencerian workshop in conjunction with the exhibition; everything took place at the University of Scranton in Costello's hometown of Scranton, Pennsylvania. During Tom's efforts of researching material for the exhibition, he contacted the Zaner-Bloser Company, requesting permission to look through their collection of Business Educator magazines for issues containing examples of P.W.'s work. After being granted such permission, Tom went to Columbus to meet with Mrs. Pat Mikelson, Vice-President of Corporate Communications, *Highlights for Children*. *Highlights for Children* (HFC), is the company that purchased the Zaner-Bloser Company in 1972. Mrs. Mikelson was in the process of examining and itemizing the ZB and Healey collections at the time, and Tom's exhibition project increased her interest in the historical and educational value the collections might represent.

Tom told her about my efforts in American penmanship, my association with IAMPETH and ties to Daniel Ames through the Ames family and his own collection, and my interest in the Zanerian College of Penmanship through my mentor- Paul O'Hara, who

was a 1909 graduate. Interestingly enough - P.W. Costello and Mr. O'Hara were acquaintances; they corresponded with each other on an infrequent basis. Mrs. Mikelson attended the exhibition, the opening program and my workshop. She then told me about these special collections. I was fascinated as she spoke! She cordially invited me to visit Columbus, view the collections, and offer my opinion on what I regarded as the significance of the artwork. I made the trip, stayed for three days, and was spell bound the entire time.

The collection is absolutely amazing: phenomenal *Penman's Art Journal* cover art, engrossing art, flourishing, penmanship, broad-pen as well as drawn alphabets, lessons in business writing, Engrosser's script, Old English, line art illustration and much more. Legendary names that make all students of the penman's art bow in reverence are represented. Yet, the collection has far greater worth than merely the specimens it contains, for it offers a view into the time-line of America's Golden Age of Penmanship through the work of those individuals who defined the era. Horace Healey was a key figure in this entire drama because it was he alone who was so intimately involved with the two primary business related penmanship magazines of the period, as well as their founders - Daniel Ames and C.P. Zaner. For the purpose of teaching, it's invaluable to see: actual brushstrokes of Dennis, Brown, and Malone, the unbelievable dimensional quality of Journal covers and title art by Marlatt, the famous peacock and crane flourishes by Schofield, dozens of original masterpieces by Ames, the actual exemplars penned by Henry Flickinger for his book on alphabets, Earl Lupfer's glass-plated class specimens, Chamber's lessons in business writing, Tamblyn's original work, dozens of engrossing exemplars showing line-work, scrolls, watercolor washes, foliation and the largest volume of Sickel's alphabet use I've ever seen, and on and on and on....And throughout it all, the human side of artwork produced for reproduction, with liberal re-positioning, over-lettering, cut-and-paste, enlarged artwork and the opaque on selected pieces where flawless originals were not required.

I told all this to Mrs. Mikelson and she asked my advice as to what would be the best use for the collection. My answer was simple - the collection must be archivally stored and protected, but before this is done, the entire collection should be scanned and photographed so that once the artwork is archived, everyone with an interest in this subject will easily be able to study each piece of art, and it will be available in this manner in perpetuity. This way the collection will always be teaching and shall remain a vibrant part of our heritage for future students. She asked how I would accomplish this, and I told her about the scanning projects I've done over the years for IAMPETH. She smiled and gave me permission to get the job done. I met with Mr. Robert Page, President of Zaner-Bloser, and spoke to his staff about the importance of this heritage and of "handwriting's" value today. Everyone was encouraging to me about this project.

I flew back to Kansas, called Neil McCaffery (who shares the caring of IAMPETH'S artwork collection with me), and the week before Christmas we drove 1,800 miles round-trip to bring the collection to Kansas. Within days of its arrival at my studio, I invited our President, Vivian Mungall, and her husband Rich, to stop by and have a look. They were as amazed at the artwork as Neil and I have been and wholeheartedly agree as

to the wonderful opportunity this project will afford our members. As of this writing, the scanning process has begun. Details about the scanning process will appear in a future article in *The Penman's Journal*. In their agreement with us, *Highlights for Children* has graciously given us this entire year to accomplish this project; Neil and I must return the collection to them by year's end. Due to the rare and frail nature of the artwork, as well as its sheer volume, it must stay in my studio with two exceptions: the first being for me to transport it to the scanning company and the second being for the one weekend in which I will organize an exhibition for anyone who wishes to come and study the actual specimens. This will be the only chance to see the entire Healey Collection at one time. Once it is returned, the artwork will join the Zaner-Bloser collection in being donated to the University of Scranton Archives Collection. You may go there if you wish to see individual pieces. No one will probably see it all together at one time ever again. Fortunately, there is a possibility that we may be allowed to borrow and scan other items in the future from the Zaner-Bloser Collection, which includes artwork created for Mr. Zaner's publications, *The Business Educator*, and over a dozen scrapbooks.

This is a remarkable opportunity for our Association. We will have original-sized prints of many of the largest and most significant pieces to display at this year's conference. We also hope to have most of the scanning completed by that time. I have organized a special committee to manage this endeavor known as The Healey Collection Project. The members are: Neil McCaffery, Vivian and Rich Mungall, Bob Hurford, Rick and Jenny Muffler and myself.

In closing, on behalf of IAMPETH, I wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude and deepest respect to Pat Mikelson, *Highlights for Children*, Bob Page, the Zaner-Bloser Company and its staff members for their generosity, vision and trust in us. We cannot adequately express our sincere appreciation in a manner that would convey what this means to us. I especially wish to thank my dear friend, Neil McCaffery, for sharing this, as well as many other IAMPETH adventures with me. His dedication, enthusiasm and selfless generosity are strengths I cherish. And to Vivian, Rich and Bob, Rick and Jenny - thank you also for your forth-coming efforts and encouragement. I have shared this story in length because I believe that all members deserve to know how this unique opportunity happened. Please excuse my personal references; I just wanted to share the experience with you.

Very Sincerely,  
Michael Sull