

Coats Brown is a senior member of IAMPETH and a truly wonderful gentleman and penman. The following was taken from The IAMPETH Newsletter, Summer 1995

Joe Vitolo

Member Spotlight: Coats Brown

Coats Brown. His roots, in life and penmanship, reflect those of the Master Penmen born in the early part of this century. At the age of seven, he was inspired by his mother's handwriting the Spencerian Method, taught in her school during the late 1800's. Coats would watch intently as she wrote letters and addressed envelopes to her friends. He fell in love with the way she addressed the envelopes, and began to try to copy her work.

At the age of fifteen, he saw an advertisement in a magazine that read, "Write like this." It was for the Tamblyn Correspondence School in Kansas City, Missouri. By picking cotton on Saturdays, Coats was able to get the \$12.00 enrollment fee for the course. After he finished his daily job of plowing the fields with the help of two mules, he would study and practice the course into the night, with his way

illuminated by an old kerosene lamp. "I still have my rosewood oblique pen that I bought for \$1.50, and a full gross of Tamblyn #1 pens cost \$1.00. The Tamblyn #1 is much like a 604 EF. I have purchased a total of five gross in my life - I will be 86 in November!"

"I do several different hands, but I like the formal Old English the best, and the German Text the second best."

In 1935, Coats enlisted in the Army Corps of Engineers doing mapping, where he worked for a seasoned veteran. "He was a good man and taught me much. With his help I was able to pass the examination for Warrant Officer, and out of 200 applicants, I was one of two that made the grade."

"I shed a few tears when the promotion came through, for I had only finished the sixth grade of formal education. My father died when I was 4, and it was a struggle for my family not to have me working. Back then, if you didn't work, you didn't eat!"

"After the war, I was fortunate to be able to work with the U. S. Army and the German government in remapping Germany and Austria. It was beautiful country, and I met so many interesting people."

"My life has been rewarding, and children and young people keep me young! So as I go into second childhood, (at least my little Scotty dog thinks so), I will continue to do lettering for my church, family and friends, and look forward to the upcoming convention. God bless you!"