

From WE Dennis' Studies in Pen Art (1914)

## DEDICATION

WILLIAM E. DENNIS and I were pupils together in the Gaskell, Bryant & Stratton Business College of Manchester, New Hampshire. We were then in our teens, and to our youthful minds nothing else in the world was quite so important or beautiful as ornate penmanship.

No matter how hot the weather, no matter how luring the outdoor with its swimming pool, trees and flowers, young Dennis and I, from choice, would climb to the fourth floor of the business block in which Gaskell kept school, and revel in the fascinating compound curves, shades and hair-lines that made up the anatomy of birds, which had neither home nor ancestry.

My boy friend and chum, "Bill" Dennis, was grace personified in all his manipulations of the pen. I was the opposite. The strokes I made lacked symmetry and grace. Men practicing in my room, seeing only my own work, and having none of my boy friend's penmanship to contrast with it, I frequently thought I was doing beautifully. All I had to do, however, to reduce my pride and satisfaction to the ashes of a dead hope, was to go to Dennis' room and contrast my work with what he had been doing at the same time.

Frequently, during that hot summer, Dennis would write a dozen cards which had been ordered; we would deliver them, and with the twenty-five cents thus obtained would buy a watermelon. Young Dennis was generous then; he is generous now. He has always been free-hearted, and his purse often has been opened too widely for his own good.

I long ago gave up the race for supremacy in this branch of penmanship and turned my attention to the plain, unshaded, coarse pen style, which I believe everyone should learn. Had my muscles been as supple, my eye as true, and my hand as steady as were those of William E. Dennis, I might at this time be dividing honors with him.

I believe that every penman who turns the following pages will be willing to join me in proclaiming William E. Dennis the most expert ornate penman of the world. Perhaps there will never be another penman with the same artistic nature and the same ability and patience that have been displayed by him. He is the king of ornate penmanship.

Because of our old friendship, I am deeply grateful for this opportunity of preserving to posterity some of the very finest of Mr. Dennis' gems of pen-art made when he had reached the height of his skill.

I dedicate the following pages to all lovers of the beautiful in penmanship.