Horologica

Contributors this issue Fortunat F. Mueller-Maerki and Bob Frishman

Share reviews and announcements of new and interesting books, websites, digital media programs, periodicals, exhibits, and all else pertaining to horology. Send contributions to Editor Therese Umerlik at tumerlik@nawcc.org or NAWCC, Inc., 514 Poplar St., Columbia, PA 17512-2130, c/o Publications Department.

Thorough Examination of the Decorative Arts Aspect of Pennsylvania Dutch Clocks and Other Furniture

Winterthur Museum in Delaware is one of the foremost museums of decorative arts in the United States. It also houses one of the more important museum collections of clocks in America.

Winterthur Museum's Wendy Cooper, senior curator of furniture, and Lisa Minardi, assistant curator for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Furniture Project, are the authors. The book provides in-depth cultural and ethnic background on the heavily Germanic recent immigrant population, including the Anabaptists and Mennonites, from 1725 to 1850. This broader context is essential to any clock collector interested in that part of the state.

Approximately 30 major clocks—mostly tall-case clocks—are illustrated and discussed in detail, many of which are not documented anywhere in the specialized horological literature on the subject. The full- or half-page photo spreads on these one-of-a-kind clocks alone are worth buying this book for any horologist seriously interested in this genre.

About twice as many nonhorological furniture pieces—mainly armoires, chests, desks, and tables—are also described in similar detail. The rest of the book is devoted to smaller wooden objects, such as chairs, benches, boxes, and household implements. There is a significant chapter on iconography and decorating techniques that apply equally to horological and other objects.

I assume that few readers will read this book cover to cover, but many will be glad to have it on their bookshelf as a resource for examples of particular craftsmen or specialized decorating styles or techniques. Therefore, it is worth mentioning that there are extensive footnotes and comprehensive indexes, as appropriate for a scholarly and gorgeously illustrated text.

Winterthur Museum deserves the appreciation of that part of the horological collectors' community whose interest goes beyond gears and considers fine and decorated clock cases as part of our cultural heritage and history.

The 2016 Ward Francillon Time Symposium will be held at Winterthur Museum from October 6 to 8. More information can be found at http://clocksatwinterthur.com/program.html.

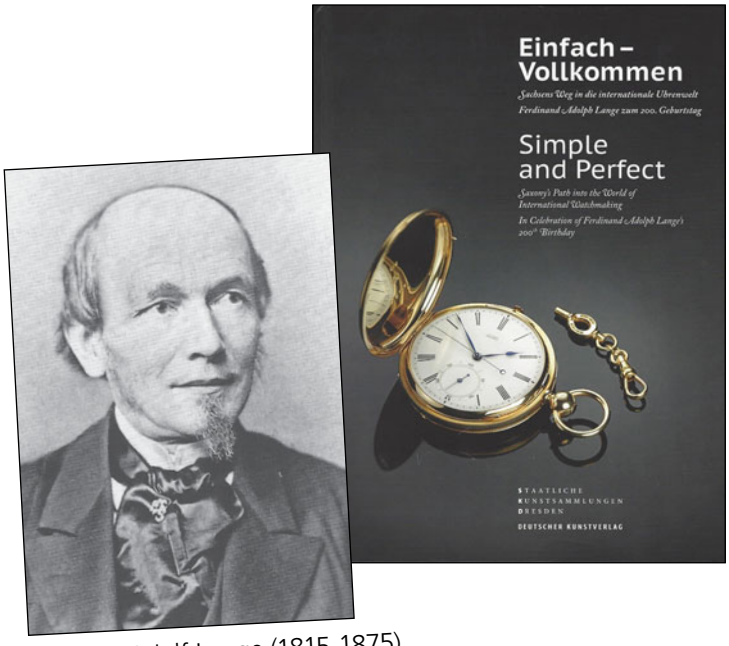
Paint, Pattern and People: Furniture of Southeastern Pennsylvania 1725-1850 by Wendy A. Cooper and Lisa Minardi. With a foreword by David P. Roselle. Photography by Lazlo Bodo. ISBN 978-0-912724-74-4. Published by the University of Pennsylvania Press. Distributed for Winterthur Museum and Country Estate; 2nd edition 2015 (1st published 2011). 304 pages, 9" x 11", in hardcover and paperback. Available at http://www.amazon.com/Paint-Pattern-People-Southeastern-Pennsylvania/dp/0912724749/, $27 paperback, $89 hardcover, plus postage.

—*Fortunat Mueller-Maerki*, FNAWCC (NJ)

Broad New Perspective on High-Grade Watchmaking in Saxony, on the Adolf Lange Brand, and a Superb Exhibit Catalog

Most serious scholars of horological history are probably aware of the pivotal role the Mathematisch Physikalischer Salon (MPS) in Dresden—the flagship horological museum in former Eastern Germany—has played throughout the centuries in preserving core elements of the world's horological history. Such cornerstones of humanity's horological history include Zech's small clock watch (1527 Prague), the Baldewein Planetary Clock (circa 1565, displaying a high-precision geocentric view of all then-known planets), one of Jost Bürgi's cross-beat escapement observatory clocks (1725 Prague), and Mudge Blue (1778 London).

Few people realize that MPS was closed from 2007 to 2013 for a complete renovation, and the musty, overstuffed display cases of the Communist era have been



Ferdinand Adolf Lange (1815-1875).

replaced with a modern, highly attractive, well-labeled—fully bilingual German and English—presentation of its treasures.

In its current incarnation the museum has again become a must-see point on any horological tour of Germany. Creating special temporary exhibits and publishing scholarly catalogs understandably have not been a priority in recent years. The book under review and the eponymous five-month temporary exhibit earlier this year it refers to keep up the high standards horologists have come to expect of MPS.

The book and the exhibit commemorate one of the most important horological personalities of the region, Ferdinand Adolf Lange (1815-1875), who brought the industrial making of high-grade pocket watches to the Saxony region by establishing the watch factories in the nearby town of Glashütte.

The book is fully bilingual—all texts appear as a pair of columns, in German and English, in different fonts—and explores how the small mountain town of Glashütte (about 29 miles south of Dresden) became a center of high-grade watchmaking in the middle of the nineteenth century. After an introductory overview (12 pages) by MPS Director Peter Plassmeyer on "The MPS and Saxony's Path to the World of International Watchmaking," the book's core is organized into seven chapters in roughly chronological order. Each chapter opens with a one-page introductory text on the subject by Gluch, the curator of the exhibit, and then has one (in one case two essays) by one of the global top authorities on the chapter subject.

Following are the chapters and their associated essays:

- "Keeping Time" by David Thomson (British Museum): Watchmaking in England in the 18th Century, 18 pages and 12 illustrations. On the role of Graham, Mudge (including the first detached lever escapement watch, i.e., Queen Charlotte Watch 1769) Arnold, Earnshaw, Emery.
- "Time at Sea" by Jonathan Betts (Greenwich): The Birth of the Precision Watch, 16 pages and five illustrations. Primarily on Harrison but also Jeffries, LeRoy, Breguet.
- "Transporting the Precise Time" by Sibylle Gluch (MPS): The Beginnings and Challenges of Precision Clock- and Watchmaking in Dresden, 26 pages and 29 illustrations. Seyffert, Count von Brühl, Weisse, Gutkaes.
- "4a: Quality in Series" by Mathias Ullmann (Glashütte): The Journey from Dresden to Glashütte, 14 pages and one illustration. F. A. Lange, Adolf Schneider, G. A. Lehmann, Richard Lange, Moritz Grossmann, Julius Assmann.
- "4b: Quality in Series" by Eduard Saluz (Furtwangen): Not only in Saxony/On the Fabrication of Pocket Watches in Germany in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century, 21 pages and 16 illustrations. Silesia: Eduard Eppner, Lahn, Freiburg, Silberberg; Black Forest: Grossherzoglich Badische Uhrmacherschule, J. H. Martens.
- "The Right Measure" by Pierre-Yves Donzé (Swiss historian of horology, Osaka University): How Switzerland Became the Largest Watchmaking Nation in the World, 11 pages and three illustrations. Artisans and guilds, Geneva fabrique, Jura Etablisseurs, specialization.
- "The Glashütte Watch" by David Penney (UK watch historian): Ingold, Nicole and Lange—A New Way of Making Watches, 15 pages and 14 illustrations. Ebauches, Friedberg "London fakes," opposition by guilds, Nicole, Capt, Dent, Versailles, USA.
- "Lange's Long Road to Success" by the curator: A Portfolio of Eleven Superb Lange Pocket watches, 1850-1878, 12 pages and 12 illustrations.

I consider several of these essays to be some of the most insightful and enlightening on pocket watch history I have ever read. In particular the pieces by Betts, Donzé, and Penney describe crucial turning points in the history of the pocket watch. These essays alone are worth the cost of the book.

By taking a decidedly broad and global perspective of the subject in this book, MPS created an interesting story line—and a great book—but it created a problem for setting up its exhibit. Some key timekeepers featured prominently in the "story" of the exhibit, such as Queen Charlotte's watch or Harrison's H3 and H4, are British national treasures and are as unlikely to be available for borrowing by a German museum, as the US National Archives would allow the Declaration of Independence to leave its display vault in Washington, DC.

Lange pocket watch 3543 (1865).

I applaud MPS's decision to stick to the broad story line and make do with only photographic images of some of the "main stars" of the story for the exhibit. The British institutions—British Museum, Greenwich Observatory—and other museums in Europe—Beyer Museum, Deutsches Museum, Deutsches Schifffahrtsmuseum, Landesmuseum Stuttgart, Uhrenmuseum Glashütte—as well as corporate and private collections generously lent MPS 39 of the 64 objects selected to tell the story. The 64 objects in the exhibit include 13 made in Glasshütte, and/or by F. A. Lange, or the company he founded there.

The 122 images—mostly high-resolution color photographs of one-of-a-kind watches—include many objects not shown in previous publications and probably by themselves make this book a must-buy for any horologist interested in such rare pocket watches dating before 1880. The serious horological scholar will also appreciate the extensive and detailed endnotes and comprehensive image credits.

Peter Plassmeyer and Sibylle Gluch deserve gratitude for setting a high benchmark for the intellectual standards of future exhibits at MPS and the quality and comprehensiveness of future exhibit catalogs.

Simple and Perfect—Saxony's Path into the World of International Watchmaking by Sibylle Gluch and Peter Plassmeyer, with contributions by David Thompson, Jonathan Betts, Matthias Ullmann, Eduard Saluz, Pierre-Yves Donzé, and David Penney. In Celebration of Ferdinand Lange's 200th birthday. Published in 2015 by Deutscher Kunstverlag, Berlin, Germany, for Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. ISBN 978-3-422-07309-8. 200 pages, 11" x 8.5", hardcover. Fully bilingual edition German and English (German title: *Einfach—Vollkommen—Sachsens Weg in die internationale Uhrenwelt).* 180 illustrations (majority color photographs and reproduced historic documents, comprehensive illustration credits). Foreword by Willhelm Schmid, preface by Hartwig Fischer. Available through Amazon at http://www.amazon.de/Einfach-Vollkommen-internationale-International-Watchmaking/dp/3422073094/.

—*Fortunat Mueller-Maerki*, FNAWCC (NJ)

Ships, Clocks & Stars: Longitude Exhibit at Mystic Seaport

Most NAWCC members are familiar with the story of John Harrison and the eighteenth-century search for determining longitude at sea. To commemorate the 300th anniversary of the British Longitude Act of 1714, the National Maritime Museum in London created an outstanding exhibit and published a related hardcover book. Until March 28, 2016, nearly half of the objects exhibited in London in 2014 will be on view at Mystic Seaport in Connecticut. The exhibit's final venue will be Sidney, Australia, before the objects return to their various museums and private owners.

On September 17 at Mystic, I was treated to more than two hours of conversation with Richard Dunn, co-author of *Finding Longitude* and senior curator for the History of Science at the National Maritime Museum. He also made an elegant presentation that evening to an audience of more than 200 supporters.

The new book is not a catalog of the exhibition—sadly, there is none—but an updated telling of the longitude saga, which greatly expands on the 1995 best-selling book by Dava Sobel titled *Longitude: The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time*. In his talk and book, Dunn objects to the "villain" role assigned to Nevel Maskelyne. The astronomer certainly had his problems with Harrison, but evidence is clear that he also actively supported the development of high-precision "sea watches."

We are reminded that chronometers were always just a part of longitude determination; celestial observations using finely made octants and sextants were just as vital to discover local noons and positions. The exhibit includes early examples of these instruments, plus an engraved 1791 portrait of sextant manufacturer Jesse Ramsden and his second dividing engine. The various thick almanacs of related data, produced by the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England, were invaluable as well.

We learn, too, about the parallel horological work by Berthoud, LeRoy, and others outside of England. An unusual but failed Dutch "sea clock" made by Franciscus le Dieu in 1749 is shown but without the heated glass dome in which it supposedly would run at a constant temperature. The post-Harrison decades are addressed, when, as chronometers became more affordable and widely available, the world witnessed a "virtuous circle" of global commerce, marine charting, and technological advances.

Two additional iconic marine timekeepers on view deserve special mention. During 1766-1769, Larcum Kend-

Working replicas of John Harrison's first three marine clocks are highlights of the *Ships, Clocks & Stars* exhibit at Mystic Seaport in Connecticut. COURTESY OF ANDY PRICE/ MYSTIC SEAPORT.

Detail of the John Arnold family portrait, showing the chronometer he holds.

all was commissioned by the British Board of Longitude to produce an exact copy of H4. Known as K1, it accompanied Captain Cook on his second and third voyages, and Cook called it his "trusty friend" and "never-failing guide." Kendall's 1771 K2 traveled with Captain Bligh on the Bounty, but it remained with the mutineers and only through extremely fortunate circumstances returned to England in 1840.

Certainly a star of the exhibit is John Harrison's 1725 wood-movement longcase clock, actually signed by his brother James, featuring two significant inventions: a temperature-compensating gridiron pendulum and a low-friction grasshopper escapement. Its accuracy of a second per month exceeded anything else of the era and that of most other precision timekeepers made during the next two centuries. It was lent to the exhibit by John C. Taylor who so generously delivered his collection of Tompion material to the 2013 Ward Francillon Symposium in Pasadena, CA. Another Taylor loan is the Thomas Mudge Green timekeeper made around 1777.

Hanging, and dramatically lit, is the 1785 large portrait by artist Robert Davy of John Arnold, his wife, Margaret, and son John Roger. Centered on the oil painting is one of Arnold's chronometer movements, visible in fine detail. The artwork is owned by the Science Museum in London where it is seldom on public view. Other large portraits are also present. The earliest surviving image of Galileo Galilei from 1602 to 1607 shows the Italian shortly before he discovered the moons of Jupiter. The 1765 large formal portrait of John Harrison shows him holding the Jefferys watch, predecessor of H4. Behind him we see H3 in a gimbaled frame—now lost, but a hardwood replica is shown in a nearby case.

While many of the most important objects in the exhibit are pictured and described in Richard Dunn's *Finding Longitude*, many more are not. A visit, therefore, would be extremely worthwhile, not only to commune with Harrison's H4 and running reproductions of H1, H2, and H3, but also to examine displays of other important timepieces, navigational instruments, artwork, documents, and all their informative labels.

Mystic Seaport, even without this exhibit, is a lovely and educational destination. For more information, visit www.mysticseaport.org.

—*Bob Frishman,* FNAWCC (MA)

MET to Open Exhibit *The Luxury of Time*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City is opening an exhibit that explores the decorative qualities of its holdings of French, English, Dutch, German, and Swiss horological instruments from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century. During this time people purchased clocks and watches for decoration or as furniture, but many epitomized important developments in clock making.

The Luxury of Time: European Clocks and Watches exhibit includes objects from the museum's Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts as well as those that have not been displayed for decades. Among the familiar objects is Berthoud's ebony, gilt bronze, longcase astronomical regulator clock. The installation's highlight is the recently acquired automaton clock made in the early seventeenth century that depicts Urania, muse of astronomy, according to a recent news release from the museum.

The exhibit will be displayed from November 16, 2015, to March 27, 2016. It also will be featured on the museum's website at www.metmuseum.org and on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter with the hashtag #LuxuryofTime.

—Editor *Therese Umerlik*