

## The Roycroft Shops of East Aurora, New York

Edward S. Hoyt (#292)

In June 1985, Elbert Green Hubbard published the first issue of *The Philistine*, a pocket size magazine, printed in a small shop in East Aurora, New York. The magazine was well accepted and from this beginning grew the Roycroft Shops.

Elbert Hubbard, a former advertising and promotional partner in the Larkin Soap Company of Buffalo, NY, felt he had something to say

about the conditions of the world and the way these conditions affected the common man. Because the printing concerns of his day did not agree with his ideas totally, he resigned his position in the business world and struck out on his own. He had a strong belief in the abilities of the average man and woman, when they were given the opportunity to prove themselves. Using mainly local home talents, he built his own print shop. This home built shop grew into a book bindery specializing in fine papers and leather

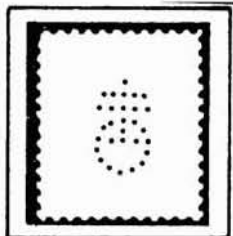
works. The magazine *Philistine* also prospered reaching a circulation of 100,000. A companion magazine, *Little Journeys*, had a circulation of 50,000. In addition the shop produced fine printing of great books.

Hubbard traveled the lecture circuit contacted many other businessmen of the day and arranged for his publishing house to print industrial pamphlets, both advertising material and for circulation among the employees of large institutions. Among the most important was a reprint of an article he had written entitled "A Message to Garcia." This was eventually printed in a dozen languages and over 25 million copies were distributed.

As the workshop grew a powerplant was added and this was followed by a hotel for visitors, a furniture shop, a leather specialty shop, a metal jewelry shop and a stained glass shop. A large farm was incorporated into the businesses and supplied them with produce. The employees maintained a brass band, baseball team and a fire-company. The eventual expansion included a chapel and Emerson Hall, a training school for boys. Emerson Hall taught the youths the finer points of farming and printing.

Elbert Hubbard and his wife Alice were lost when the S.S. *Lusitania* was sunk at the beginning of World War I. His son, Elbert Hubbard II was treasure of the corporation at the time of his parent's deaths. The younger Hubbard and his wife Alta, continued in the business until the great depression spelled the end of the Hubbard dream.

The following data about the Hubbard perfin appeared in the October 1978, issue of *The Perfins Bulletin*. It was originally contributed by Ed. Haack.



Elbert Hubbard. The Roycroft mark which comprises perfin design #14 (the identifying number in the Perfins Club catalog) was first used by Cassiodorus, a monk who lived in the Middle Ages. He was one of the first book

binders and on every book he placed his mark, which was the cross and circle representing "Unity" and "Infinity."

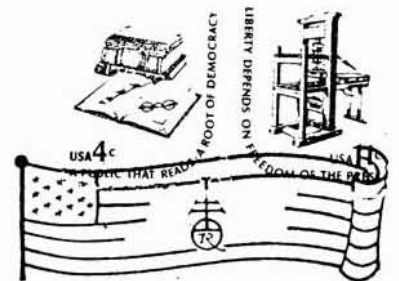
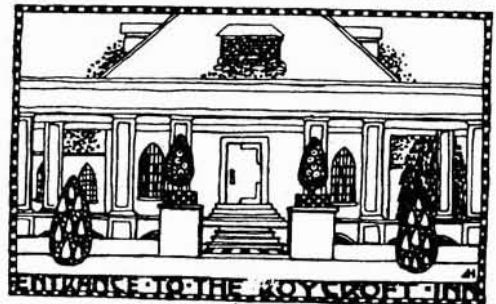
When Elbert Hubbard adopted this colophon as his own mark, he divided the circle into three parts, signifying "Faith, Hope, and Love", and added the "R" to stand for Roycrofters. The name "Roycrofters" is coined from "Roi Craft" or "Royal Craftsman", and as such, may be interpreted as the King's Craft.

Elbert Hubbard (1854-1915) was an American Philosopher and writer who was a master of pungent one-liner reflecting his views on life, education, the martial, and politics.

The perfin pattern continued to be used after Hubbard's death, by the Roycroft Shop in East Arora, NY.

The East Aurora Philatelic Society produced a Cachet theme from local history for there annual Stamp Show "EAPEX". This practice continued at least until 1986 and the 1981 through 1985 issues of the series (1972-1986) have Roycroft as the subject. Shown with this article is the 1981 issue featuring the Roycroft Craft Series.

### THE ROYCROFT-CRAFT-SERIES



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EAST-AURORA  
PHILATELIC-SOCIETY

