



The Proper Decoration of Book Covers: The Life and Work of Alice C. Morse

Mindell Dubansky

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This is a ground-breaking study of one of America's leading designers of nineteenth-century publishers' highly decorated bookbindings. This fully illustrated volume documents the life and work of Alice C. Morse. Included in this book is a biography of Morse by Grolier Club member Mindell Dubansky and two essays on her work and influence by scholars in the field of nineteenth-century decorative arts, followed by a comprehensive and lavishly illustrated survey of all the known works by the designer drawn from the personal collection of Mindell Dubansky and from the resources of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Alice C. Morse (1863-1961) was a prolific and versatile designer during the heyday of the American Decorative Arts Movement. Though her fame has waned since the early twentieth century, her work will be familiar to admirers of artist-designed publishers' bindings of the period 1890-1910. She came to prominence during the late 1880s, when a small group of exceptional American publishers began to commission artist-designers such as Morse, and her contemporaries Sarah Wyman Whitman and Margaret Armstrong, to design the covers of case bindings. The Grolier Club exhibition marked the first time since 1923 that Morse's work was displayed to the public; and this present volume is the first to collect all of Morse's book design work, as well as literary posters and other ephemeral materials relating to her work.

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