

Gary L. Aho. *William Morris, a Reference Guide*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1985. xliii, 428 pp. \$48.00

I lived for two summers in Kelmscott House, William Morris's Hammersmith home on the Thames. From 1975 to 1980, Kelmscott House provided a communal residence for people studying the work of Morris. With my wife and me, there were—from Canada, the United States, Hungary, and Japan—a weaver, a printer, an architect, a calligrapher, and several professors studying Morris's poetry, his textiles, and his politics. Each day we met visitors interested in aspects of Morris's work as a poet, painter, printer, editor, translator, architect, designer, manufacturer, and socialist. The exchange of knowledge was invigorating and continually increased each resident's awe for the breadth and depth of Morris's interests.

To prepare a comprehensive reference guide to the books and articles written about a man like Morris requires a Morrissean amount of energy, versatility, and dedication. The academic journals that serve as the standard source for most bibliographies provide no more than a starting point for the bibliography of a man who was a jack of all trades and somehow master of them all. Morris is the subject of not only political weeklies and literary quarterlies, but of those home-and-garden magazines found in the check-out lines at grocery stores.

Gary Aho has proven himself worthy of the task. He has read and annotated more than 1800 writings about Morris published from 1897 to 1982. The annotation for his own 1982 article in the *Iceland Review*—"Following in the Footsteps of William Morris"—reveals that he travelled "afoot and on horseback" across Iceland to read on location Morris's *Icelandic Journals*. If the Morris Centre ever opens again then Gary is one my wife and I would love to meet for dinner and conversation in the grand dining-room of Kelmscott House.

In the meantime, he has provided us with this key to a vast amount of knowledge. The book is divided into (1) a chronology of Mor-

ris's life and publications; (2) a preface explaining what is included and excluded; (3) an introduction which is firstly an elaboration of the chronology and secondly a review of the trends in criticism since 1897 of Morris as a socialist, a writer, and a designer; (4) eighty-six annotated lists of books, articles, and exhibition catalogues about Morris published from 1897 to 1982; (5) an author index; (6) a subject index.

In his preface, Aho qualifies his attempt to be comprehensive by explaining the need for discriminating judgement. Thus he excludes those encyclopedias and general histories whose references to Morris are predictable. When I compare his entries for 1981 and 1982 with those in the biennial bibliography Sheila and I compile for *The Journal of the William Morris Society*, I find that for 1981 he includes ten entries which we have not cited, while we include thirty-one entries which he has not cited (This number excludes the reviews we cite of exhibitions.) For 1982, he includes five items which we've not cited, while we include eighteen which he's not cited. Most of these differences can be attributed to discriminating judgement. I believe that two of Aho's entries which we overlooked are important, while thirteen of our entries which he overlooked are important (including work by Hanna, Holtzman, Kirchoff, Shippey, Tietzel, and Watkinson.) I do not for a moment mean to suggest that Sheila and I are more thorough than Aho: we have the advantage of casting our net over two- or three-year periods rather than the vast eighty-six years which Aho is surveying. (Readers should be reminded that because this bibliography begins after Morris's death, it must omit such essential works as Walter Pater's 1868 essay from the *Westminster Review*, "Poems by William Morris.")

I have mixed feelings about the chronological organization of the entries. Sheila and I defend the similar organization of our own bibliography by claiming that each of Morris's interests is best understood in the context of his whole life's work; hence the poetry