

Lapsus Calami

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Loss by a Landslide

MOTHER Nature played a cruel April Fool trick on Bill and Ruth Boys this year. They planned to drive north to Lexington, Kentucky, to the King Library on the campus of the University of Kentucky to attend one of the fine graphic arts seminars regularly sponsored by the library in the spring and fall. The programs are varied and very interesting, featuring such distinguished speakers as Roderick Cave, the world expert on the private press; Peter Thomas, who spoke on miniature books; Barbara Henry, who talked about 19th Century typography; Gabrielle Fox, a master bookbinder from Cincinnati; and Howard and Cathy Clark of the Twin-Rocker Paper Mill, who spoke about the art of making paper by hand. On April 1, this year Janet Lorence of New Harmony, Indiana, was scheduled to present a seminar and workshop on calligraphy. She was intrigued by the uncial letterforms of Rudolph Koch and Victor Hammer. Bill and I planned to participate in both events and he called me to see if we could get together for dinner before the seminar. I jumped at the chance to see him again, and we agreed on a time and place to dine and chat. We never made it because when he started driving north out of Knoxville, he encountered an unbelievable traffic jam caused by a major landslide which had

blocked I-75, the only major highway through the mountains between Tennessee and Kentucky. He called me on his cell phone reporting his traffic stoppage and said he would be late. Over an hour later he gave up and returned home and called me again to say that it was impossible to get through the mountains on narrow, traffic-jammed roads in time even to attend the seminar. We both were disappointed. Bill is a very fine calligrapher, a rare talent and skill today. But there will be other seminars and workshops and we hope to get together in the near future and talk about the most interesting Renaissance topics – the black art of printing, calligraphy, and papermaking..

Kentucky is such a fine arts desert that I cherish every opportunity to nourish my typographic soul by seeking out interesting people and attending seminars and workshops. This is a land of trivia, of basketball and poisons – tobacco and whiskey. There are over a dozen major distilleries located within a 50 mile radius of Lexington. But amateur journalists have to learn to function in a vacuum. I am sustained by my multiple interests and e-mail correspondence with fascinating friends.

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