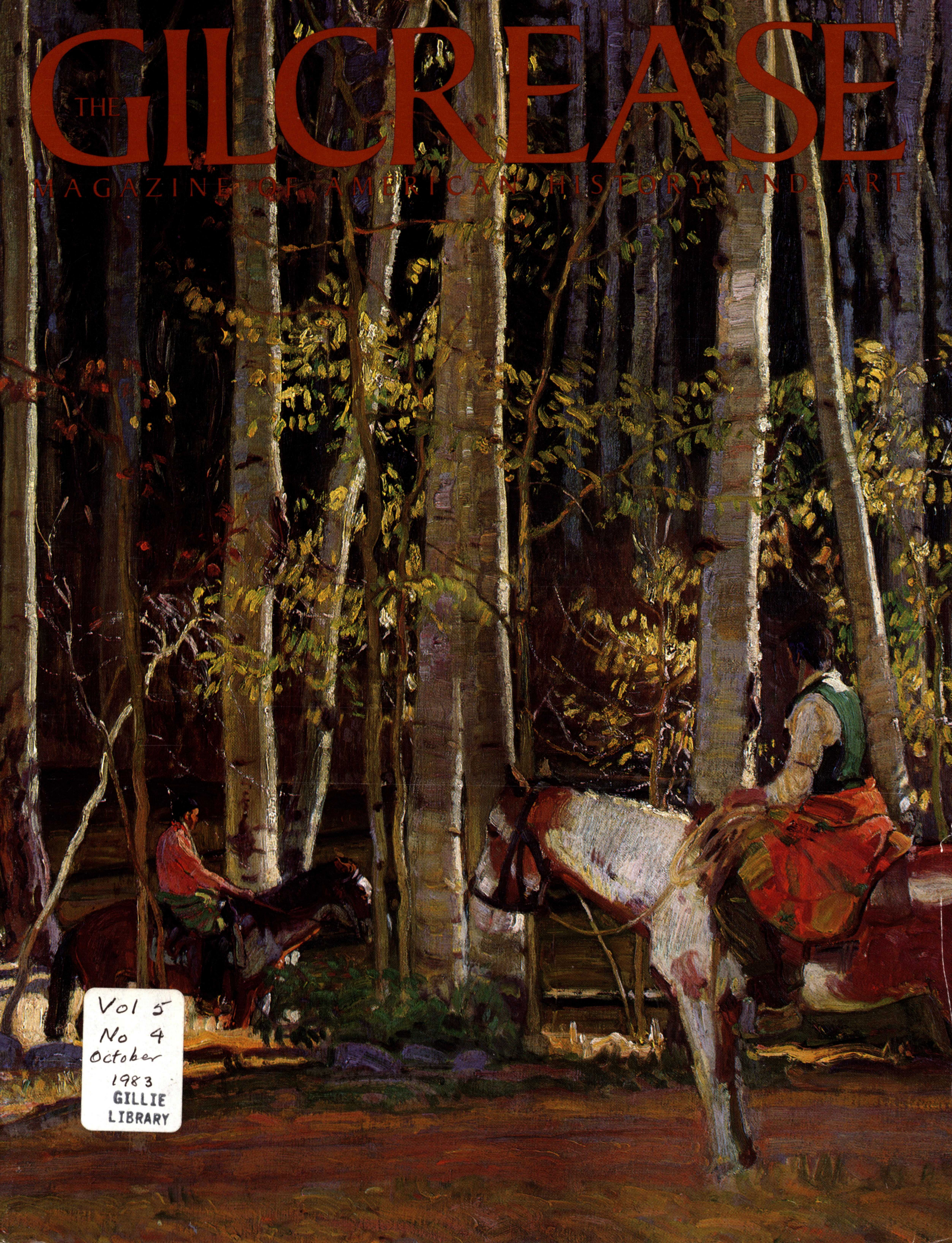


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This is an excerpt from the new book,
THE SANTA FE AND TAOS COLONIES, AGE OF THE MUSES, 1900 - 1942,
by Arrell M. Gibson, George Lynn Cross Research Professor of History
at the University of Oklahoma in Norman.

The Pioneer Aesthetes

THE TAOS and Santa Fe colonies were founded around 1900, but, fifty years before this, northern New Mexico's scintillating vistas were attracting the attention of creative folk. The first to come were artists. During 1846-47, John Mix Stanley, America's frontier painter, sketched northern New Mexican scenes. A year later, Richard H. Kern, the artist-cartographer of the Frémont Expedition, visited Taos. Portrait-painter Worthington Whittredge sketched northern New Mexican subjects in 1865, and, beginning in 1880, Thomas Moran, the internationally famous landscape artist, regularly visited the Rio Grande valley to paint pueblo scenes. Montgomery Roosevelt, the portrait painter and cousin of Theodore Roosevelt, visited Taos in 1881. About the same time, Colin Campbell, Henry R. Poore, Alexis Compere, Frank Sauerwin, and G.H. Bentley sojourned in Santa Fe and Taos rendering paintings of landscapes, villages, churches, and natives. F. H. Lundgren used Santa Fe as a base to draw Hopis, Navajos, and other Indians of the region. Frederic Remington sketched northern New Mexican scenes several times in the period 1880-95 and in 1902 spend the best part of a year at Taos painting.

Each visitor was struck with northern New Mexico's non-pareil natural beauty and ethnic charm. Several predicted that the region could become a haven for disenchanted artists and writers. Frederic Remington, in referring to Taos, stated: "Americans have gashed this

country up so horribly with their axes, hammers, scrapers and plows that I always like to see a place which they have overlooked; some place before they arrive with their heavy-handed God of Progress."

Taos was the first New Mexican community to become a colony. Initially it served as a refuge for painters; writers settled there later. Joseph Henry Sharp is credited with being the major influence in its founding. Sharp, from Bridgeport, Ohio, studied at the Cincinnati Art Academy and at Academy Julien, in Paris. He first visited Santa Fe and Taos in the 1880s during a wide search across the West for new scenes and subjects, "fresh material" for his compositions. Sharp returned to Taos in 1893 and spent several months there, painting scenes set in the Pueblo and the Hispanic settlement. During 1895 at Academy Julien he shared with two young American artists — Bert Greer Phillips and Ernest L. Blumenschein — his fascination for the place and his view of its prospects for becoming an ideal place for painters.

Phillips and Blumenschein returned to New York where they resumed their work as illustrators for *McClures*, *Century*, *Harper's*, and other national magazines, but, eager to visit the places Sharp had described so alluringly to them, they set out during 1898 on a sketching tour of the Southwest. They approached New Mexico by way of southern Colorado over a dim traders' trace threading the southern Rocky

Ernest L. Blumenschein, "Evening at Pueblo of Taos," 28½ inches by 41¼ inches, oil on canvas





Mountains' lofty passes and deep canyons, finally reaching Taos, where they repaired their battered wagon. Sharp's superlatives for the region, particularly Taos, were verified; Blumenschein and Phillips, too, were mesmerized by the miniature village, its plural ethnic character, and awesome natural setting. Blumenschein reluctantly returned to New York to continue work as a magazine illustrator but Phillips remained at Taos, taking a job as ranger in nearby Carson National Forest until he could devote full time to painting. Blumenschein visited Phillips and Sharp at Taos each summer for several years before moving there permanently.

Rather soon these three were joined by five other artists. The eight formed a coterie called *Los Ochos Pintores*. Oscar E. Berninghaus, a New York artist, heard of Taos from Blumenschein and Phillips; he first visited Taos in 1899. He, too, was an illustrator who hoped for the day that he could paint full time. Irving Couse, from Michigan, while studying art in Europe, met Sharp and Berninghaus, who told him of Taos. Couse arrived there in 1902. W. Herbert ("Buck") Dunton studied at the Students' Art League in New York; he learned of Taos from his teacher, Blumenschein. Dunton reached Taos in 1912. Victor Higgins, another New York illustrator, arrived in Taos two years later. Walter Ufer, born of German parents in Louisville, Kentucky, studied engraving and painting in Germany. He settled for a time in Chicago, a protégé of the Munich School, and worked for a time as an engraver, illustrator, and portrait painter. Ufer visited Taos in 1914 and eventually moved there permanently.

Los Ochos Pintores were well educated for the times, and, except for Dunton who was just beginning his career in art, were keenly experienced as commercial artists. For example, Blumenschein had studied in Paris on four different occasions. Certainly these men brought to Taos a fresh, surging spirit of creativity and an elegant cosmopolitanism.

For a time most of *Los Ochos Pintores* spent their summers in Taos painting, returning to illustrator jobs in the East during the winter; however, each had the dream of settling in

Taos to paint full time. Sharp joined Phillips as a permanent resident, establishing a home there in 1902. Each of the other *Pintores* eventually made the move to Taos; Berninghaus moved there in 1925 and Couse was the last, making Taos his home in 1927.

In the early life of Taos colony each of *Los Ochos Pintores* followed a more or less different style. Several specialized in particular subjects, but all of them focused on the Taos environment and used the all-powerful nature of northern New Mexico as the stimulus for their creative work. Initially the paintings of each artist showed the influence of "academic realism," and critics claimed that in the early years their work bore the influence of their cognate careers in illustrating. Also, in the early years, the stream of dogma and doctrine issuing from the European and American art worlds had little effect on the emerging colony. This came later. For the time being, each artist was striving to be creative and innovative and at the same time make a living by selling his paintings.

Couse primarily painted Indians. While his work became stereotyped from the art-critic viewpoint, he was immensely successful in sales because he painted what the public desired. His paintings depicted "Indian innocence," and portrayed the "fanciful and poetic ideal associated with the concept of man's goodness when existing in a state of primitive freedom." Sharp has been characterized as ethnological in his aesthetic interpretation because of his devotion to detail and the authenticity in his Indian paintings; and he emphasized the theme of "nobility of man living close to nature." Dunton exploited an interest in the Anglo-American frontier, painting Western scenes and figures, particularly cattle ranges and cowboys. Ufer painted local subjects and scenes with the exactness and heavy color of the Munich School; his work was popular both with museum curators and the general public. Berninghaus, Blumenschein, and Higgins were less traditional in their treatment of subjects in the Taos milieu. Blumenschein was the most plastic of *Los Ochos Pintores*, increasingly applying the exotic Cubist and Impressionistic techniques to his paintings.

While aesthetes cherished the isolation of Taos, it had its handicaps. A principal one was remoteness from galleries in cities where artists could exhibit paintings for peer judgment, critic evaluation, and marketing. And tourists, who later became a major source of painting sales, rarely reached Taos in those early days of the colony.

To resolve this problem *Los Ochos Pintores*, in 1912, formed the Taos Society of Artists, its purpose "to develop a high standard of art among its members, and to aid in the diffusion of a taste for art in the general public." Officers of the society were responsible for collecting paintings from members and arranging an itinerary for spring and autumn exhibitions. Each exhibition season began with a showing of



Taos artists' works in the Palace of the Governors, at Santa Fe; from there the exhibit moved by rail express on a circuit of major cities.

During the society's early years, women's clubs were the most reliable sources for gaining access to display space in local libraries and public halls. By 1915, largely because of the society's traveling exhibitions, the Taos painters were well known across the nation, their paintings had become increasingly popular, and museums and galleries in the major cities welcomed Taos Society of Artists' exhibitions. The semi-annual exhibition circuit, beginning at Santa Fe, proceeded to New York; then moved back west to Detroit, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Minneapolis, Kansas City, and Denver; then to San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego; and on to Honolulu, Shanghai, and several Australian cities.

Taos Society of Artists' members gradually achieved national, even international, acclaim. Couse, Berninghaus, Blumenschein, Ufer, and Higgins won the coveted Altman Prize, the most sought-after award presented by the National Academy; and Blumenschein, Ufer, Higgins, and Berninghaus became National Academicians.

Taos Society of Artists' by-laws permitted enlargement of membership from the original eight with the requirement that candidates must have worked in the Taos area for three successive years and received a prize in a national exhibition. And eventually the society's membership was increased to eleven (E. Martin Hennings, Catherine C. Crichter, and Kenneth M. Adams). In addition, the Society of Taos Artists' roster contained what the by-laws identified as nonactive members and honorary members. As the colony at Santa Fe grew, the Taos Society of Artists' exhibition program was expanded to include in its traveling displays paintings by certain Santa Fe artists; by 1922 the Taos Society of Artists' exhibition might contain the work of from fifteen to forty artists.

The northern New Mexico aesthetes stressed art for art's sake and disclaimed any overriding concern for material return on their work, declaring that their primary interest was the peer judgment and critic evaluation that their work received during these itinerant exhibitions. Be that as it may, several Taos Society of Artists members became wealthy



from sales of paintings. Couse and Ufer were the top money-makers in the society. At the peak of his career, Couse often received \$20,000 a year from the sale of paintings, which, for the time, was an affluence-level income. Members dissolved the Taos Society of Artists in 1927 because they believed its aims had been achieved — Taos artists were recognized by critics, museums, galleries, and buyers; most were selling successfully; and individual marketing of paintings had become so successful that society officers found it increasingly difficult to collect enough paintings for the semiannual exhibition tours.

Taos artists became nationally known through the traveling exhibits, their success drew attention to Taos, and the number of artists venturing to the northern New Mexican village increased each year after 1912. During the summer of 1915 over one hundred artists appeared in Taos, taxing the limited local facilities. Most of the newcomers remained to paint during the summer months; many returned each painting season for a period of several years; and some of the newcomers became permanent residents. The Taos environmental draw was a widely acknowledged motive for this inpouring of creative people, but several also came because of the enlarging war in Europe.



Louis Akin, "El Tovar Hotel, Grand Canyon," 25 inches by 50 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches, oil on canvas

The more notable artists in Taos at this time included Maurice Sterne, painter and sculptor, and, at the time, husband of Mabel Dodge; Julius Rolshoven, a native of Detroit but an itinerant painter who had lived in Düsseldorf, Munich, Florence, and Paris before settling in Taos; Leon Gaspard, a Russian artist searching for a place to recover from war wounds and to paint; Marsden Hartley, a pioneer of the modern art movement in America; Grace Ravlin, who was committed to paint people and scenes as she found them rather than to compose or rearrange, who was also regarded as an ethnologist or comparative analyst, and, having studied and painted the peoples of Morocco, was drawn to Taos to paint the people of the Pueblos; Bert and Elizabeth Harwood, Paris-trained artists; John Younghunter, painter of portraits and landscapes; John Sloan, eminent New York painter; and Andrew Dasburg, who was to become the strongest and most influential artist in both the Taos and Santa Fe colonies.

Initially the founders of Taos colony regarded its rapid growth with satisfaction. Ufer, who frequently served as the executive-secretary of the Taos Society of Artists and therefore its spokesman, exulted in the expansion of the Taos colony with the prophecy: "Here, some day, will be written the great American opera, the great American novel, the

great American epic! . . . This country will never be painted out . . . for it has an infinite variety of moods and types." And whether the artist be "conservative or an ultra-modernist, finds what he is looking for." And all this will bring about "a new and more virile epoch in American art."

Ufer miscalculated the halcyon surface calm at Taos, because, as events progressed there, the influx of artists brought new dogma, design, and style that threatened *Los Ochos Pintores*, challenged this coterie's domination of the community, created some disunity, and had the effect of driving away some of the newcomers. Most took up residence at the growing colony at Santa Fe. Hartley and Sloan, in particular, scorned the conservative, realism-type painting produced by most of the Taos Society of Artists' members, and reportedly detested them as persons. And *Los Ochos Pintores* regarded the former as "egotistical" and condemned them for their "superior attitude." After a time Hartley and Sloan moved down to Santa Fe. Rolshoven and Dasburg joined them, but they eventually returned to Taos.

Santa Fe became an aesthetic colony later than Taos. The ancient village was larger than Taos and less primitive in its amenities, but it had the same natural and social environmental draw that had made Taos so attractive to creative persons

— isolation; a 7,000-foot elevation producing cool summers; cobalt-blue sky trimmed with silver-edged cloudlets; brilliant light; narrow, crooked streets; and hollyhock-flanked walls guarding patios with flashing fountains and adobe *casas*, domiciles for the colorful tri-ethnic cultures.

And Santa Fe expressed the same simpatico stance. Robert Henri, one of America's foremost painters, commented when he found Santa Fe: "There is a place in America — and that place is Santa Fe — where an artist can feel" that he is welcome. And Hartley, the modernist painter who first settled at Taos and subsequently moved to Santa Fe, added: "I have heard before of the hospitality of the people of Santa Fe toward artists . . . It is so seldom that the artist is considered in the scheme of things, that it sounds like a miracle. That is the attitude in Europe, even in the uttermost parts; the artist is looked upon as something worth having and holding, and he is respected for his talents and devotion to an idea, which I am sorry to say in our country is not felt as well as I hope it will be in the not far future. Artists are useful citizens, despite the tendency among laymen such as merchants and other money-makers to count them as idlers."

Artists appearing in Santa Fe on the eve of the founding included Warren Rollins, an established painter from San Gabriel, California, who, in 1900, spent the summer in northern New Mexico and visited Santa Fe to show his work. At the time the town had no exhibition space, and the local archaeological society arranged for Rollins to display his paintings in the Governor's Palace. The exhibit was enthusiastically received by townsmen. While Rollins was in Santa Fe, Carl Lotave, the muralist, was decorating the walls of the Governor's Palace, and Charles Rawles, artist and lecturer, painted in his studio in Seña Plaza.

The founders of the Santa Fe colony were Carlos Vierra and Kenneth M. Chapman. Vierra, a native of California, studied painting in San Francisco and New York. He also became a skilled photographer. Stricken with tuberculosis while in New York, Vierra came west seeking a high, dry

climate. During 1904 he was a patient at Sunmount Sanitarium, in Santa Fe; he recovered and resided in Santa Fe for the rest of his life. Vierra painted landscapes and historical subjects; he was fascinated with adobe structures — mission churches and public buildings. He came to be called the "scenic architect," and was a passionate advocate for preserving and restoring old-style adobe buildings. His work drew the attention of artists in the East and on the West Coast to Santa Fe.

Chapman was a successful New York illustrator before coming west in 1889 to teach art at New Mexico Normal (Highlands University), at Las Vegas. Edgar L. Hewitt, president of the institution, moved to Santa Fe in 1907 as director of the newly founded Museum of New Mexico and School of American Archeology (later the School of American Research), both housed in the Governor's Palace. Chapman followed Hewitt to Santa Fe and became a museum staff member. He continued sketching and painting and developed a strong interest in Indian art; he brought to public attention the then unrecognized Pueblo Indian art, and he published several books on Pueblo pottery design. Above all else, Chapman popularized Santa Fe as an artists' haven through his writings on art in *El Palacio*, publication of the Museum of New Mexico, and in national art magazines.

Shortly, Vierra and Chapman were joined by other artists in numbers sufficient to comprise a nucleus for the gestating Santa Fe colony, its principal pioneers Gerald Cassidy, Sheldon Parsons, Paul Burlin, Olive Rush, William Penhallow Henderson, Gustave Baumann, and Robert Henri. Most of the immigrants became permanent residents of Santa Fe.

Like Vierra, Cassidy was a sufferer from tuberculosis who left a successful commercial-artist business in New York to seek a cure in the West. During 1912 he first settled in Albuquerque, then moved up to Santa Fe. After achieving a recovery, Cassidy continued as a commercial artist, painting Western scenes that were reproduced on postcards and on Santa Fe Railway travel posters, but he also worked as a serious painter of northern New Mexican vistas. His paintings of landscapes and Indians were of striking quality, received critic approval, and were purchased by many museums, including the New York Museum of Art. Cassidy received international recognition in 1915 when his murals for the Indian Arts Building of the Panama-California Exposition, in San Diego, were awarded the grand-prize gold medal.

Parsons, a portrait painter from New York, joined the Santa Fe colony in 1913. In the northern New Mexican milieu he concentrated on landscapes, rendering them in impressionistic style. Parsons became director of the new state art museum, at Santa Fe, in 1918.

Burlin — New York artist, Armory Show exhibitor, and Cubism-Expressionism advocate — also arrived in Santa Fe



during 1913. Burlin was strongly influenced by European Modernists; he painted traditional New Mexican subjects in impressionistic and semiabstract style. He also was influenced by abstract elements in Indian art and introduced them into his work. Until Hartley moved from Taos to Santa Fe in 1917, Burlin was the avant-garde painter of the colony. He left Santa Fe in 1920, moving to Europe where his "increasingly modernistic style was considered less revolutionary than in the Southwest." He carried to Europe elements of Indian art that he integrated into his work.

Rush, from Indiana, reached Santa Fe in 1914. She painted there summers until 1920 when she established a permanent home in Santa Fe and became a leading member of the colony. Rush applied what she called "liberating forces" of Expressionism to the New Mexico environment to produce her semiabstract work, identified by the "geometric forms and bright light."

Henderson, a nationally prominent portrait painter and teacher at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, came west with his wife, Alice Corbin Henderson, the writer, who was suffering from tuberculosis. The couple settled in Santa Fe during 1916, where she recovered at Sunmount, then resumed her literary career; Henderson became the most versatile member of the Santa Fe colony. As an artist he is best known for his paintings of New Mexican landscapes. In addition, he designed furniture and worked as an architect. The Museum of Navajo Ceremonial Art, in Santa Fe, is regarded as "the best evidence of his architectural originality." The Hendersons settled in a house on Coral Road that had been renamed Telephone Road because the telephone line into town followed it. Henderson renamed it Camino del Monte Sol, a street that became famous for the artists and writers living along it.

Baumann, born in Germany and trained at Munich and Chicago, was among the last of the Santa Fe-colony pioneers, arriving there during 1918. He painted in oils but received primary recognition in the Santa Fe colony and the world of art as a printmaker, specializing in exquisite colored woodcuts. In his studio on Canyon Road, Baumann produced, on a press, color prints dealing with New Mexican subjects. He rendered his best-known work, including the incomparable reproduction of the "Deer Hunt" fresco, from paleo-Indian cave drawings at Rito de los Frijoles, a prime archaeological site near Santa Fe.

Henri was the Santa Fe-colony pioneer most responsible for enlarging its membership and expanding its recognition and respect around the nation and world. During 1914, Henri met Hewitt in San Diego and expressed an interest in painting Indians. Hewitt invited him to Santa Fe; he arrived there in 1916 and became one of the colony's most productive and dedicated members. Unlike most of the other colony pioneers who established permanent residences in Santa Fe, Henri lived elsewhere during the winter months and returned there each summer. Henri gloried in the brilliant light,



Victor Higgins, "Three Women of Taos," 36½ inches by 40½ inches, oil on canvas

color, and variegated landscapes of northern New Mexico, he exulted in Santa Fe's "wonderful climate and colorful subject matter," and, when away from the place, he pined for it: "I'm really hungry for the sun, the feel and the look of Santa Fe." As an internationally prominent painter and teacher he influenced many pupils and friends to join the Santa Fe colony. Some became permanent residents, others became affiliated as summer painters. Among students and friends drawn there by his enthusiastic urging were George Bellows, Leon Kroll, Randall Davey, and John Marin, the last rated by critics during the 1920s as the most consistently strong and produc-



tive artist in America. Also, somewhat through his influence, his former pupil and close friend John Sloan moved from Taos to Santa Fe. With these men in its constituency, the Santa Fe colony could boast of two of the nation's best-known and highly regarded painters. Sloan returned to Santa Fe every summer until his death in 1951, becoming the dominating figure in the colony.

Isolated like the Taos colony, the Santa Fe colony also faced the problem of exposing colony members' work to the world for peer judgment, critic evaluation, and markets, although to a lesser degree because in the early years Santa

Fe was not quite as isolated as Taos. The town had relatively more direct access to the outside world, and an important future source of sales for New Mexican artists — the tourist — was coming to Santa Fe in increasing numbers before 1920. As indicated, the Taos Society of Artists permitted some Santa Fe painters to include their works in the very successful traveling exhibits. Also, local citizens worked to promote interest in art produced by the Santa Fe colony. Beginning in 1915, officers of the Santa Fe Women's Club called for an intensive effort to expose the region to art and literature. Phoebe McCulloch, head of that organization's Art and Literature Department, stated that "In working together along the lines of beauty there is a specific benefit" for the community. And the State Federation of Women's Clubs, working with art-curator Olive Wilson, influenced establishment of the New Mexico Museum of Art, first in the Governor's Palace and later in a separate adjacent building, the facility containing both studios for artists and display space for paintings. Other efforts to promote paintings by Santa Fe-colony artists included the opening of a print shop in Sēna Plaza during 1917 by Alice Corbin Henderson and Marjory Smith, and organization of the Santa Fe Art Club to sponsor exhibitions of Santa Fe colony paintings locally and in surrounding towns and in cities across the Southwest.

The formative period for the Santa Fe and Taos colonies extended from about 1900 to 1920. By 1920 these two northern New Mexican settlements were flourishing artistic communities, recognized nationally, even internationally. While the colonies had, for the most part, attracted persons of considerable ability, and would continue to do so, in the formative years two persons dominated — Ernest L. Blumenschein, at Taos, and John Sloan, at Santa Fe.

Blumenschein's paintings came to be exhibited in and were purchased for museums in Paris, Venice, Budapest, Berlin, and in several cities in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa. The prizes he received for painting excellence included the Chicago Art Institute Palmer Gold Medal, the National Academy of Design Altman Prize, the Isador Gold Medal, and the National Arts Club Medal. He was a high-ranking member of the National Academy of Design, the Arts Club of New York, the Society of Illustrators, the American Society of Painters, Sculptors, and Gravers, the Salmagundi Club of New York, a Fellow of the Grand Central Art Galleries, and a National Academician, one of the highest honors for American painters. This recognition and these honors were derived from his Taos-colony experience and from exploiting the northern New Mexican natural and social environmental elements. In addition to being the acknowledged leading artist of the colony during the formative years, he was also its catalyst and principal internal critic and, according to reports, he "relished his reputation as an eccentric and even a difficult man."

Sloan was the overpowering personality in the Santa Fe colony. His paintings were a mix of New York sidewalk scenes

and northern New Mexican subjects, but he surpassed Blumenschein in recognition from the art world, eminence among critics and peers, prizes awarded for paintings, membership in status professional organizations, and distribution of works in museums and private collections. Like Blumenschein for the Taos colony, Sloan was catalyst and internal critic for the Santa Fe colony. His colleagues there rated him "perpetually inquisitive," and a "humorous, acid and violent child of art . . . He whipped young men's minds with his extreme statements, his humor, his theories, his paradoxes, and his novelties. He was Irish, combative, never dull, pugnacious, sincere. His company was electric and always fun."

During the formative years of the Santa Fe and Taos colonies, painters were stimulated by the northern New Mexican milieu, which they also drew on for subjects for painting. They concentrated on Indians, Spanish Americans, village scenes, landscapes, and other environmental subjects. The traveling exhibitions and the increasing numbers of paintings by Santa Fe and Taos artists purchased by tourists, private collectors, and museums had the effect of permitting the viewing public to discover the Southwest.

The quality of work produced during the formative period by Santa Fe and Taos artists varied; some paintings were of considerable merit, others were attractive but neither "pictorially perplexing" nor "intellectually challenging." Artists producing this latter class of paintings pandered to the public, which expected pictures "thematically pleasing and colorfully decorative." They quickly learned that there was a ready market for paintings that presented the uniqueness of New Mexico, with the result that many became stereotyped, notably landscapes depicting different seasons showing snow-covered mountain peaks or Pueblo Indians with pottery. Much of the work by Ufer and Couse fell in this class. Ufer, a painter of great ability but pressed financially, sold a reported \$150,000 worth of paintings in three years, his model a stereotyped Taos Mountain, an Indian on a white

horse in the foreground. Blumenschein, Berninghaus, and Sloan studiously avoided this; yet, they were successful professionally and modestly successful financially. Cassidy was able to produce drawings for railroad posters promoting tourist travel in the Southwest and still do magnificent, critically acclaimed paintings, his *Juan Pino* an example.

During the formative years the Santa Fe and Taos colonies differed from other colonies around the country. Most aesthetic communities were short-lived; the Santa Fe and Taos colonies, well established between 1900-1920, maintained a vital life until 1942. These colonies also differed from most of the others in that the artist often settled as a permanent resident or he established a second home in Santa Fe or Taos and used it during the summer painting season. And pioneer members of the Santa Fe and Taos colonies just did not behave as the public expected of creative people. Rather than being permissive, reckless, uncommitted, and nonconformist, they were remarkably stable in their family life. At that stage in colony development there was little of the "romanticized Bohemianism" and Greenwich Village behavior. The local muses were generally free of "temperamental eccentricities" that in other colonies created "notoriously difficult" situations and expressed themselves in "communism, scandal and disaster."

Another difference that distinguished the Santa Fe and Taos colonies from fine-arts settlements elsewhere was that, at the time, there was no school of art (that is, coterie of artists obsessively committed to a particular aesthetic dogma or thematic philosophy) in either colony. Rather, the Santa Fe and Taos colonies were simply communities of creative persons, each largely independent, following his or her personal conviction and penchant.

But if Santa Fe and Taos aesthetes were independent in their art, they were dependent otherwise. Propinquity in awesome isolation required cooperation. Thus in each colony there evolved a sense of community, drawn from the natural environmental fact of remoteness, but also from the social environmental models provided by Indians in the cooperative pueblos and Hispanics in their tightly knit family communities. Most colony members developed a sense of community that tempered their individualism and competitiveness, at least in their social relations. And it became a conspicuous characteristic of both colonies, particularly after 1920 when the aesthetes became regularly involved in local civic and ethnic causes.

As indicated, while the natural environment was the dominating influence in colony members' activity and response, the multiethnic social environment was a factor of no little consequence. Artists brought with them their preconceptions of art, methodology, and style, and applied them to





Ferdinand Burgdorff, "Interior, Isleta Missions," 25¼ inches by 30 inches, oil on canvas

local subjects. Indian and Hispanic art appealed to them and influenced the work of several. The Indian's abstract values and expression in his art were adopted by many of the later-arriving painters. Also, it was comforting for the immigrant artists to find a place where artists were not treated as pariahs, where many male Indians and Hispanics were practicing artists and were not scorned (as was the lot of creative persons in the industrial society of the East) but rather were honored by their communities.

The Taos and Santa Fe colonies had been accepted by the

world of art as places where creative persons could find fulfillment apart from the pernicious distractions of the age. One advocate for northern New Mexican artistic settlements emoted that in either place one would find "the quaintest and most picturesque community in all of America . . . It is simply too good to leave. It's the best stuff in America and has scarcely been touched . . . It is the variety, the depth and breadth of it, rooted in aeons of time which explain the secret of its infinite charm." △



Gerald Cassidy, "The Priestesses," 40¼ inches by 30½ inches, oil on canvas

Artists of the Santa Fe

BY LOUISA B. COLLETT

THE ROUTE OF the Santa Fe Railway, as it followed the line of least resistance across the Great American Desert, as it was called some eighty odd years ago, skimmed the cream of the artist's interest in the Southwest. This happy circumstance led to the beginning of one of the earliest of corporate art collections, the Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art. Selections from the collection, now on exhibition at Gilcrease Museum from September 27 to November 21, are shown on the front cover and the first 16 pages of this *Gilcrease Magazine*.

More importantly, according to Arrell Morgan Gibson, author of *The Santa Fe and Taos Colonies* and of the essay, "The Visual Feast," in the catalogue to the Gilcrease exhibition of the Santa Fe Collection, "the art combined with the promotion genius of the railway plus the railway itself made the Southwest more attractive to the outside world and abetted its settlement and development."

There were three essentials in this trilogy, according to Gibson. First was the railway, then known as the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company. Second principal was the artist, primarily American artists, both those who exemplified the currents that stirred the art world of the times and those who strove to assert the importance of American life through a vigorous realism, most of them disenchanted with the escalating industrialism of the times. The artists turned to the primal West to paint for posterity a natural environment which they feared would soon suffer the same reckless rape which Americans had already inflicted upon the Eastern environment.

At the same time, Gibson points out, "the surviving Indian tribes, also resident in the West, were regarded as a 'dying race.' Many artists believed it their mis-

sion to sojourn with embattled tribesmen and record their colorful culture, natural nobility and ethnic pride before their ultimate demise."

The third essential which helped to change the public attitude toward the Southwest, Gibson declares, was the "promotion genius of workers in the Santa Fe passenger department. They recruited several score artists, commissioned them to capture the Southwest's raw beauty and varied ethnic charm on canvas, and used their renderings to promote travel over the Santa Fe line. Inadvertently they were establishing the foundations for the huge and incomparable Santa Fe Railway Collection of Southwestern Art. W. H. Simpson, assistant general passenger agent and head of advertising operations, was largely responsible for the innovative application of art to commerce."

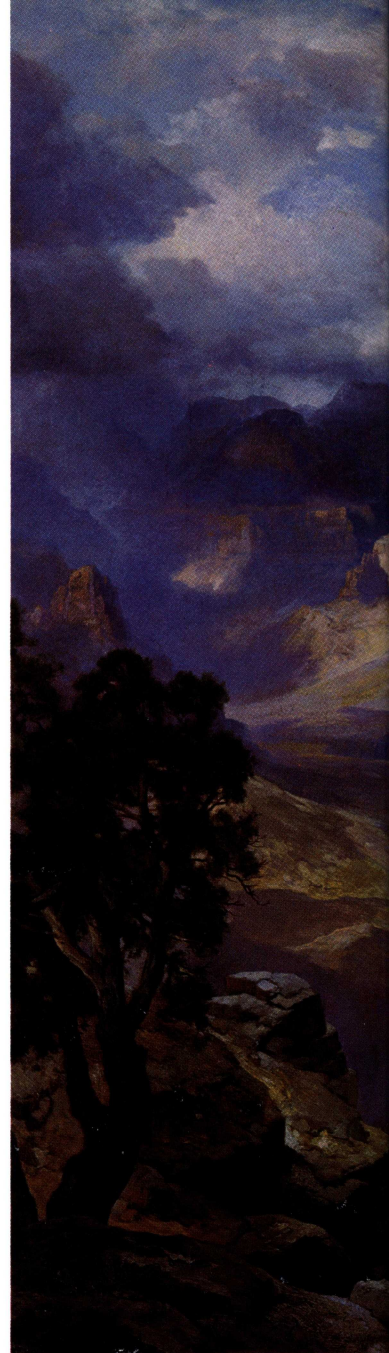
Thomas Moran, whose "Grand Canyon" is shown opposite, was one of the first to benefit from the interest of Santa Fe in the art of the Southwest. This "Grand Canyon," one of the stars of the Santa Fe collection, was painted in 1890 when Moran traveled to the Grand Canyon as a guest of the Santa Fe Railway and then gave the painting to the railway in return. A six-color lithograph, made after the painting, was spread across the nation by the railway to entice the tourists of the East to travel to the West.

Moran was only one of the many artists to benefit from such exchanges with Santa Fe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The railway sponsored trips by artists to the Southwest so they might paint the spectacular scenery and record its Indian cultures and Spanish heritage.

These expeditions became annual affairs when William H. Simpson estab-

lished the railway's first advertising department in 1896. He saw the value of having artists paint the beautiful landscapes of the Southwest, and then to reproduce their works in colorful promotion calendars and posters. Simpson had the foresight to acquire the works he used, usually in exchange for railway trips to the Southwest. Santa Fe published its first advertising calendar in 1907 and thereafter was chief among the very few early patrons of western art.

Simpson arranged three to four week long excursions and invited Moran, Fernand Lungren, George Inness, Jr., and



Thomas Moran, "Grand Canyon," 30½ in.



40½ inches, oil on canvas

others to join them. These annual trips resulted in numerous drawings, paintings and lithographs all glorifying the majesty of the West, for museums, individuals, magazines, and books.

The railway was soon to discover the Indians of Arizona and New Mexico. Beginning in 1903 the company aided famed Indian portrait painter Louis Akin, who toured Arizona painting the Hopi. A student of William Merritt Chase, Akin produced excellent depictions of Indian life.

Simpson was to achieve an artistic coup in 1906 when Santa Fe provided transportation to painter William R. Leigh for his

first western visit. Leigh's fame as an illustrator and painter came to rival that of Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell. Leigh specialized in cowboy life and frontier scenes, as well as landscapes. Santa Fe bought five of Leigh's paintings of the Grand Canyon and used them to publicize its recently constructed branch to the Canyon and El Tovar Hotel.

Simpson bought paintings of the Grand Canyon and the Petrified Forest, frontier scenes, portraits of southwestern Indians, and landscapes of the region. He looked for color, for realism, and for romanticism in his pictures. His quest for

such paintings began as Taos and Santa Fe emerged as artistic colonies. Artist Joseph Henry Sharp was the discoverer of the wonders of northern New Mexico. Through his encouragement Ernest L. Blumenschein and Bert Phillips toured the west. Phillips decided to become a permanent resident but Blumenschein returned to Paris where he extolled the virtues of the area to E. Irving Couse, who would come in 1902. Earlier Oscar E. Berninghaus had visited Taos and determined to return each summer. The foundation of the Taos colony was laid.

Sharp, Phillips, Blumenschein and Couse would be joined in Taos by E. Martin Hennings and by Walter Ufer.

In 1912 six of these artists — Berninghaus, Blumenschein, Dunton, Couse, Sharp and Phillips — formed the Taos Society of Artist and two years later, added Ufer and Victor Higgins. No one labored harder to publicize their work than did Simpson.

The circumstances of geography

helped to influence the painters to produce the art the railway needed. The Taos painters also owed a debt to the Indian artists and craftsmen as sources of design and as subjects for their paintings.

The nearby town of Santa Fe also developed a flourishing art colony. As early as 1914 Gerald Cassidy and Sheldon Parsons had painted there. By 1920 the colonies at Taos and Santa Fe could claim to be the most vigorous art centers in the West and a major tourist attraction for the railway.

Throughout the first two decades of the colonies' existence, the Santa Fe supported individual artists with purchases and the communities with publicity. Many of the artists lived in New Mexico only in the spring and summer months. Santa Fe provided transportation in exchange for paintings to enable them to travel between their studios.

The railway continued to purchase paintings through the early part of this century until the thirties and the Depres-

sion. However, Couse remained a favorite and produced a painting each year that was purchased by Santa Fe for its annual calendar, the most widely used advertising medium using Southwestern scenes. After Simpson left in 1933, his successors continued to use the art collection as an important part of the advertising program.

The Santa Fe Railway Company Collection of Southwestern Art had its formal beginning in 1903, according to Gibson, when company officials acquired the San Francisco Peak painting, the setting near Flagstaff, Arizona, by Bertha Menzler Dressler. Today it numbers 590 paintings.

Not until 1966 did Santa Fe begin to exhibit its holdings, and only then did recognition come for the depth and breadth of the art collection. An exhibit in 1976 as part of the Bicentennial Observance, in the Americana Project in the National Archives, Washington, D. C., enhanced appreciation for the artists of the Santa Fe.

Gibson concludes his catalogue essay with the comment, "The seventy-two paintings selected from the Santa Fe Railway Company Collection of Southwestern Art for the Gilcrease Exhibition exemplify the Southwest's vitality and earthy charm. Most of the works were produced by artists resident in the Santa Fe and Taos art-literary colonies — nine depict the Grand Canyon, ten interpret Navajo ethnicity, thirty-six are of the Santa Fe-Taos setting, and eighteen are peripheral Southwestern scenes."

For over 80 years Santa Fe has supported the artists of the Southwest through purchases of their paintings, reproduction of their works, and by bringing tourists to the region and to the artists' studios. The artists' responses were the paintings shown in the Santa Fe collection. It was a happy collaboration that has found recognition in the exhibit of the Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art at Gilcrease. ◻



Detail, Louis Akin, "Street Scene Hopi Pueblo," 29 inches by 20¾ inches, oil on canvas



BY 1850 AMERICA had 8,000 miles of railroad, all east of the Mississippi River.

The vast domain between this great river and the Pacific was developing rapidly.

Already there were six states and the remainder was under territorial government.

There was California with its link to Oriental trade, its fertile valleys, and gold, and the Utah Territory, prospering under the industrious Mormons, both in urgent need of closer ties with the rest of the nation. That need could best be met by the railroad. But there were barriers to the dream

of a railroad to the Pacific — hostile Indians, gaping canyons, and great stretches of wastelands — but these paled with the rise of a more threatening problem.

Although rivalry for the railroad route among the cities on the river was expected, the country was also torn by sectionalism and continuing disagreement over the issue of slavery.

History and Art of the Pacific Railroad Surveys

BY ERNEST F. DARLING

Tulsa writer Ernest F. Darling is a favorite of *Gilcrease Magazine* readers.

Recently he has contributed "The Book That Put America on the Map," and "How Printing Came to the New World." His area of expertise is American history.

When the Federal government realized its responsibility, the competition over the route for a railroad had reached a feverish peak. Congress then authorized a series of surveys of possible routes and with the Army Appropriation Bill of March, 1853, appropriated \$150,000 for the project.

The politics of the question were not helped by the fact that Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was Secretary of War. Nevertheless, Davis tactfully ordered four main parties to carry out the terms of the Appropriations Act, to survey two routes for the North and two for the South.

The Corps of Topographic Engineers was assigned, not to make specific projections for the laying of track, but to seek out mountain passes, to collect data on elevations and grades, and to make estimates of costs for the proposed routes.

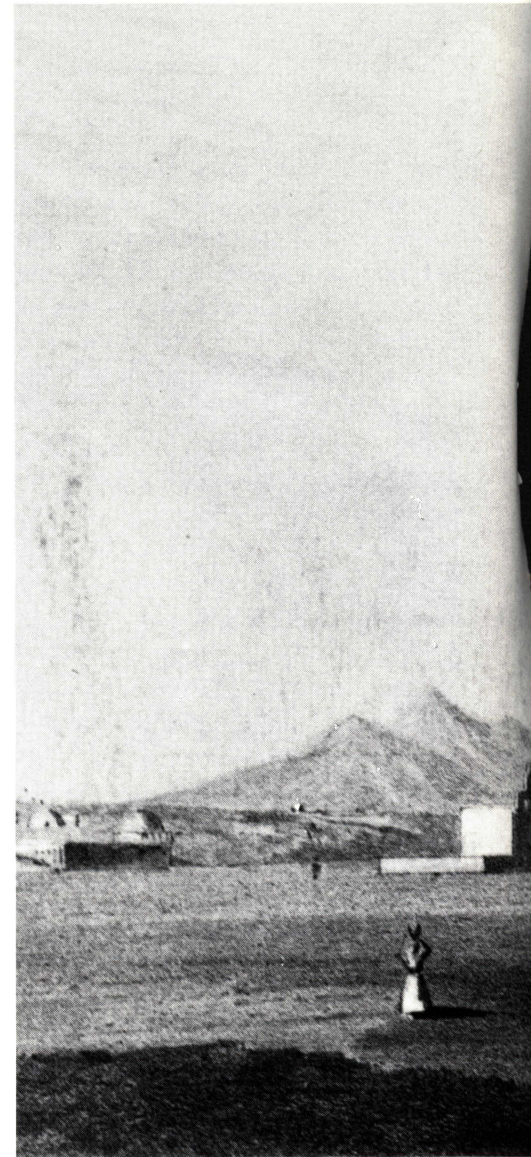
More interesting was the inclusion of an accompanying order for "information on the natural environment which might affect a railroad." Consequently, each survey party contained a quota of botanists, geologists, zoologists, meteorologists, naturalists, and artists, in addition to the

physicians, cooks, hunters, teamsters, and the military escort.

The importance and enthusiasm generated by the scientific expeditions were shown by the support and recommendations from a wide range of institutions and individuals. The Smithsonian Institution, Princeton University, foreign embassies, and many politicians offered suggestions and nominations of personnel. Louis Agassiz, renowned Swiss natural scientist, managed to gain a position for his protege, Jules Marcou, and the famous German scientist, Alexander von Humboldt, was responsible for the appointment of the colorful Heinrich Mollhausen as a chief artist.

Professor William H. Goetzmann of the University of Texas has written, "Not since Napoleon had taken his company of savants into Egypt had the world seen such an assemblage of scientists and technicians marshaled under one banner."

The most northern route for the railroad to be examined ran from Ft. Snelling, Minnesota, across the buffalo-covered plains, at times along the old Lewis and Clark Trail, and through the

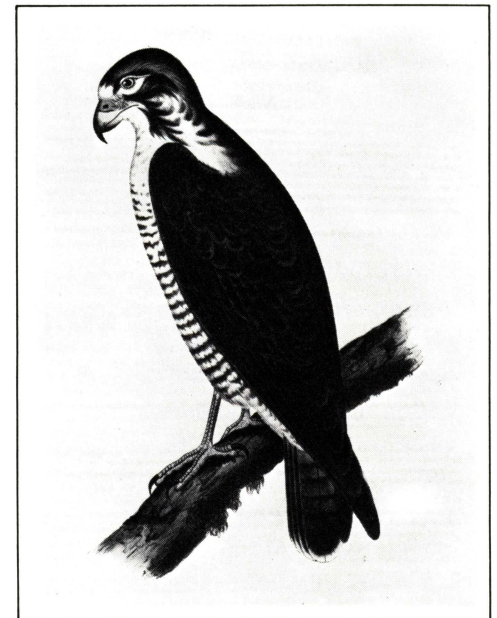


TOP: "Mission Church of San Xavier Del Bac." Color lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. VII, p. 36.

RIGHT: "Podiceps Cristatus." Color lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. XII, part 1, Birds — plate XXXVIII.

FAR RIGHT: "Western Duck Hawk." Color lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, vol. XII, part 1, Birds — plate XI.

PRECEDING PAGE: "Entrance of Livermore's Pass." Charles Koppel. Color lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. IV, p. 13.





deep gorges and high peaks of the northern Rockies. I. I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory, was in command. His assistant was Capt. George B. McClellan who became General-in-Chief of the Union Army in the Civil War.

A central course, starting at St. Louis and winding through Colorado and Utah, was under the direction of Capt. John W. Gunnison and Lt. E. O. Beckwith. At Sevier Lake in Utah, Capt. Gunnison, artist Richard Kern, and five crew members were slain by Indians. Mormon settlers were able to recover only a few instruments, field notes, and a sketchbook of Kern's. The surviving members

under Beckwith crossed the Sierras to California the following spring.

The route which seemed to satisfy the largest number of states was called the 35th Parallel Survey. Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, southern Missouri, and southern Illinois agreed on a railroad terminal at Fort Smith, Arkansas, for a route which would lead across Indian Territory and the New Mexico-Arizona Territory. Lt. Amiel W. Whipple was given this assignment.

Since there was a heavy demand for another southern route, Capt. John Pope and Lt. John G. Parke were ordered to check out one through southwestern

Texas and the Gila River region, along the 32nd Parallel.

The surveying parties moved immediately into the field, and by the end of 1854 their reports began coming in. Compiling and printing went on for the next five years. All the while news accounts were being released, which created a tremendous interest.

Congress continued debating the subject, while street-corner orators did the same. Newspapers ran editorials, and *Harper's* and *North American Review* carried commentaries. As tempers and emotions on the slavery issue were uppermost, this new railroad route was a



welcome new topic for discussion.

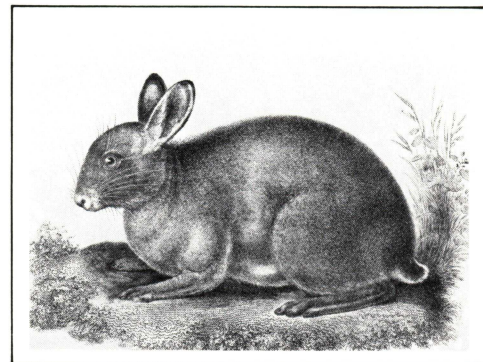
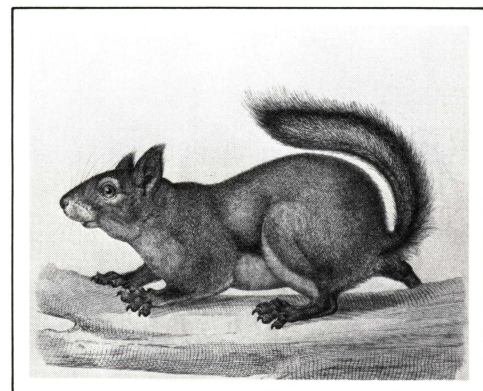
When the publishing job was complete, the result was "Reports of Explorations and Surveys to Ascertain The Most Practicable and Economical Route for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean" in 13 colossal volumes. The cost was \$1,000,000. The lavish art work, especially the lithography, necessitated much of the expense.

Discrepancies are numerous in the printing, in some of the lithographs and the crediting of many drawings. These irregularities can be blamed on the fact that the work was doled out to a number

of businesses in different cities.

There is a multitude of illustrations in color and in black and white. Several are woodcuts and there are a few delicately wrought steel engravings, but the so-called "views," numbering well over a hundred, are full-page lithographs in tints of green, brown, yellow, and blue.

John Mix Stanley was by far the best known of the dozen artists associated with the project. After completing his assignment on the Northern Route, he was called to Washington to finish some art and edit other works. Stanley is represented by more plates than any other of



TOP: "San Francisco Mountain." Color lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. III, p. 81.

CENTER: J. H. Richard and R. Metzgeroth, "Squirrel." Black and white lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. XII, part 1, Mammals — plate VII.

BOTTOM: J. H. Richard and R. Metzgeroth, "Rabbit." Black and white lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. XII, part 1, Mammals — plate XV.

the artists, and justly so, as few western artists had more intimate knowledge by personal experience of this land than he. In 1842 he was in the Cherokee Nation to paint Indians. He moved on west to California and Hawaii, then returned to join the railroad surveys.

The best of Stanley's numerous landscapes in the Pacific Railroad Surveys books shows a huge buffalo herd stretching for miles over the Dakota prairies. "St. Paul, Minnesota," "Ft. Walla Walla," and "Mt. Baker" are typical of his other works. Certain of the plates are labeled "Kern and Stanley" because Stanley was asked to complete the slain Kern's sketches. From Kern's rough drafts Stanley made various scenes of Colorado and Utah, including "Spanish Peaks," "Sangre

de Christo Pass," and "San Luis Valley."

Also on the Northern Party was Dr. James G. Cooper, who served in a dual capacity as physician and artist and who left good views of "Mt. Rainier" and "Puget Sound."

Lt. Whipple's 35th Parallel Party contained as official illustrator, Heinrich Balduin Mollhausen, and two others listed as topographic artists, John C. Tidball and Albert H. Campbell. Mollhausen began his series of drawings with a "View of Ft. Smith" where the group started west. There are many sketches of Indians and camp sites made while moving across Indian Territory and along the Canadian River. Later came Navajo villages and scenes of the San Francisco Mountains in Arizona. He also kept a journal of the

experience which was published in 1868 in London.

At the Colorado River topo/artist Albert Campbell went downstream to Yuma and joined Parke's 32nd Parallel Party working eastward. His version of "San Xavier del Bac Mission" near Tucson is a classic.

A variety of creditable pieces was turned in by artists on other shorter survey crews. John J. Young, Charles Koppel, William P. Blake, and von Egloffstein all left first likenesses of now-familiar sights like Mt. Shasta, Mt. Hood, Crater Lake, and scenes along the Willamette River.

While the earlier news reports attracted considerable attention, the very nature of the heavy volumes of the Pacific



"Ravines in the Bed of the Ancient Lake," from a sketch by Charles Koppel. Color lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. IV, p. 100.

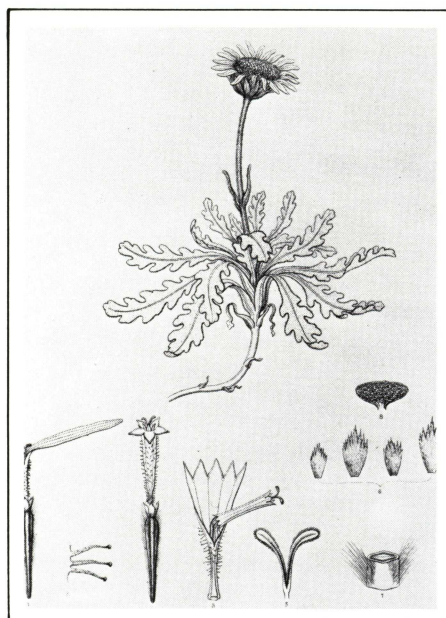


"Rounded Hills, Tertiary, (Between Ocoya Creek and Posuncula River)," from a sketch by Charles Koppel. Color lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. IV, p. 166.

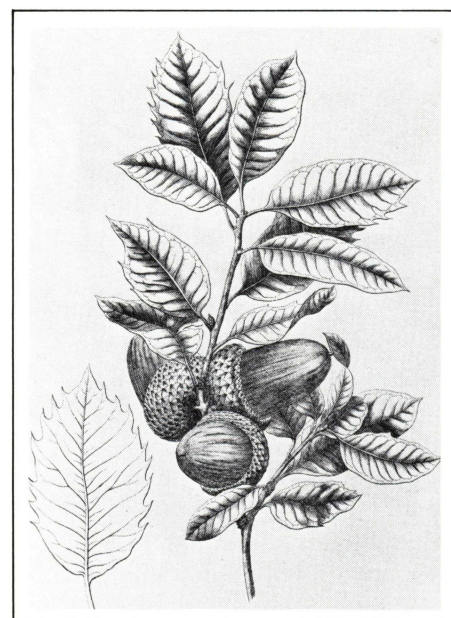
Railroad Surveys, with technical data and engineering profiles, did not tempt the average reader. With the hovering war clouds closing in, the voluminous work was easily forgotten.

Shortly after the Civil War, interest in the railroad revived and the first trans-continental line was built in 1869, more or less along the Central Survey of 1854.

The Gilcrease Research Library possesses a full set of the "Reports," Mollhausen's two-volume "Diary," and another "Diary" on the same expedition by Lt. David S. Stanley. These works embody a treasure trove of primary source history, natural science, geography, and documentary art of the western United States. ▽



"Hulsea Nana." Black and white lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. VI, Botany — plate XIII.



"Quercus Crassipocula." Black and white lithograph from *Exploration and Surveys for a Railroad Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, 1857, vol. IV, Botany — plate IX.

Gilcrease Book Reviews

BY MILDRED D. LADNER

SELDOM HAS THERE been published such a compendium of elusive information on early western artists as is contained in *The Rocky Mountains — A Vision for Artists in the Nineteenth Century* (University of Oklahoma Press, \$65) by Patricia Trenton and Peter Hassrick. This scholarly book is published in association with the Buffalo Bill Historical Center of Cody, Wyoming, for which Hassrick is director.

The artists' vision, revealing "the full splendor, the commanding allure of the West," began with the white man's penetration of the forbidding Rockies. From the beginning, it was obvious that "the breadth and variety of the subject decreed the necessity for more than mere verbal description."

This is not an easy book to curl up with for entertainment. Seriously perused, it provides as much solidly documented information as one might attain in a graduate art history course.

From the University of Nebraska Press comes *Historians and the American West*, (\$24.95) edited by Michael P. Malone and including seventeen essays beginning with a survey of American Indians from prehistoric times to the Civil War. Subjects such as the Western Spanish Borderlands, the fur trade, mining, transportation, women and ethnic minority groups, Mormon literature, and politics in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are covered.

There are several references in this valuable book to the work of University of Tulsa professor of history emeritus William A. Settle, Jr. on Jesse James and his outlaw colleagues.

Those who remember the earlier books of Adolf and Beverly Hungry Wolf will welcome *Shadows of the Buffalo — A Family Odyssey Among the Indians* (William Morrow and Co., \$12.95).

Adolf, born in Germany to Swiss parents, was always forced into the role of the Nazi when he played with the kids in

his California neighborhood at age ten, but when the game changed to cowboys and Indians, he chose to be an Indian. Now a member of the Blood people of the Blackfoot nation, he and Beverly, an Indian, are recording the passing ways and stories of the "Old People."

The couple and their five children live on a farm in the Canadian Rockies.

The fur trade in the Canadian Northwest is the subject of companion books from the University of Oklahoma Press.

Fur Trade and Exploration — Opening the Far Northwest 1821-1852 (\$22.95) details the extraordinary achievements of trader-adventurers such as Samuel Black, John Bell, and Robert Campbell. Sylvia Van Kirk's *Many Tender Ties — Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (\$22.50) spans a longer period of development and indicates the influence of traders' wives on trade relations in the Canadian Northwest.

Those who collect books as they do art will appreciate balladeer Bobby Bridger's epic ballad cycles, "Seekers of the Fleece" and "Lakota," published as

A Ballad of the West, (Wiyaka Press, Austin, Texas, \$150).

Bridger, a great nephew of the famed mountain man Jim Bridger, bases his first cycle on the intrepid mountain men and their incredible experiences in forging into the awesome Rockies. The second cycle tells of the Sioux shaman Black Elk.

Done up in a slipcovered volume that is a work of art in itself, this limited edition contains both the ballad and verse versions of the tales, along with historic background. Bridger has worked twenty years on this slender book.

Based on diaries of William Swain preserved in the Yale University library, J. S. Holiday has written *The World Rushed In — The California Gold Rush Experience* (Touchstone/Simon and Schuster, \$9.95) with the subtitle, "An Eyewitness Account of a Nation Heading West."

Swain left Youngstown, N. Y., in April of 1849 to search for gold in California. He returned home in 1850 after an incredible 21-month adventure.

Carefully documented and attractively presented, this is a book that should be included in every library rich with history.

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

• A VISION FOR ARTISTS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY •



• BY PATRICIA TRENTON & PETER H. HASSRICK •

Albert Bierstadt's "A Storm in the Rocky Mountains — Mt. Rosalie" graces the cover of the new epic of western art, *The Rocky Mountains — A Vision for Artists in the Nineteenth Century*, by Patricia Trenton and Peter H. Hassrick, newly published by the University of Oklahoma Press.



The Loom of Spider Woman

BY BETSY OLSON

Betsy Olson is Curator of Anthropology for Gilcrease Museum. Her exhibitions of items from the Gilcrease collection of more than 41,000 artifacts bring aficionados from across the region to view objects in exhibitions like "Donde Cantan Las Aracangas" and "No Silent Drums." These notes on Navajo rugs and Indian jewelry are drawn from her researches into the history of Gilcrease textiles and metalwork.



CARMINE-COLORED BUTTES stand alongside kaleidoscopes of green and brown mesas in the lands of the Navajo. The bleakness of the desert floor beneath is lightened by clusters of cottonwood trees nurtured by intermittent streams. Spectacular canyons such as Canyon De Chelly, an area of close to 84,000 acres, drop beneath the sage-covered desert floor. This is home to the Navajo.

Is it any wonder then that Navajo philosophy is summarized in such ceremonies as the Blessing Way and the Night Chant, "I Walk in Beauty?" Or that a high

regard for their environment is shown in their weavings with terraced patterns, diamonds, bars, and stripes worked in natural earth colors?

Inquiries reach Gilcrease Museum at least once a week on the identification of "Indian rugs," as owners describe them. A brief introduction to some of the descriptive terms and types of Navajo weavings might be helpful to anyone interested in these valuable and beautiful textiles.

Although commercial yarns and dyes are used by most weavers today, natural

LEFT: A Navajo brother and sister pose with Navajo rugs and blankets, circa 1900.

CENTER: In the winter months looms were set up in hogans, and during the summer they were erected outdoors under an improvised shelter or beneath a tree.

RIGHT: 1945 postcard shows Doris Yazzie, a Navajo weaver and wife of Maxwell Yazzie of Kerley's Trading Post in Arizona.

carded wool is used almost exclusively in some regional styles. Rugs are classified by regional area, styles, and by Phases, as well as patterns and colors. For instance, Chief's Blankets are identified in four Phases: the earliest (encompassing the entire 19th century) being a simple white and natural brown-black design. As blacks and reds were added, a second Phase was established between 1850 and 1870. From 1865 through 1875, diamond motifs, terraced, quartered, and halved, were blended successfully by the weavers into the designs of the two earlier Phases. Some scholars identify a Fourth Phase in which the corner designs can be folded inward to the center thereby making a single design element.

Gilbert Maxwell wrote that the Navajo Reservation can be divided into thirteen regions and rug styles. One of the best-known and beautifully made of these styles is that of Two Gray Hills. Located between Shiprock and Gallup, Two Gray Hills boasts tapestries characterized by natural colors of black, white, gray, and shades of brown, woven in sophisticated geometric patterns with an over-all symmetry unequaled in other Navajo weaving. Toadlina and Tocito are two additional posts in this area.

Home of the outline design and unusually vivid colors, Teec Nos Pos is in the Four Corners area. Complex designs and unrestrained use of color are the identifying marks of weavings from this area of Northeastern Arizona.

One of the few survivors of the old Eye-Dazzler pattern of the late 1800s is that of Red Mesa. Located along with Mexican Water and Sweetwater, the posts are west of the Four Corners area and slightly north, touching the Utah border.

The gift of simplicity lies with the Crystal weavers. Designs and colors symbolize the beauty of the mountain area

around Washington Pass. Characterized by natural vegetable dyes of soft golds, light browns or rust, grays and greens, Crystal rugs have no borders, and designs are worked in edge-to-edge, wavy lines with geometric elements occurring sometimes between these bands. Crystal rugs are usually heavy because of the handspun wool and are especially suitable for floor use.

Located just south of Highway 3 in Arizona, Ganado makes rugs known as Ganado Reds. A large central pattern is bordered by complex, oriental-type designs. J. Lorenzo Hubbell's trading post has a vast selection of Navajo weavings. Uncluttered, almost simple designs employ usually large quantities of deep, rich red along with white and black, together with a single or double border. Large sizes are also typical of Ganados. Klegatoh rugs show a great similarity to Ganados.

Tuba City and Western Reservation produce interestingly designed rugs called Storm Patterns. J. B. Moore stated that this complicated design expresses a part of Navajo mythology. Although variations do exist, the Storm Pattern has certain standard features: a square or rectangular center motif, with zigzags emanating from the center to smaller but comparable themes in the corners.

Lack of article space to catalog the details of the many additional styles should not in the least negate their interest or value. Kayenta, Coal Mine Mesa, Chinle, Gallup, Wide Ruins, Yeis, and Yeibechais of the Ship-Rock-Farmington and Lukachuai-Greasewood areas, along with Pictorial and Sandpainting rugs, are all highly deserving of mention and study.

So — enjoy the fruits of the weavers' arts and their wonderful teacher, Spider Woman, here in these pages and again in the Gilcrease collection. ◡



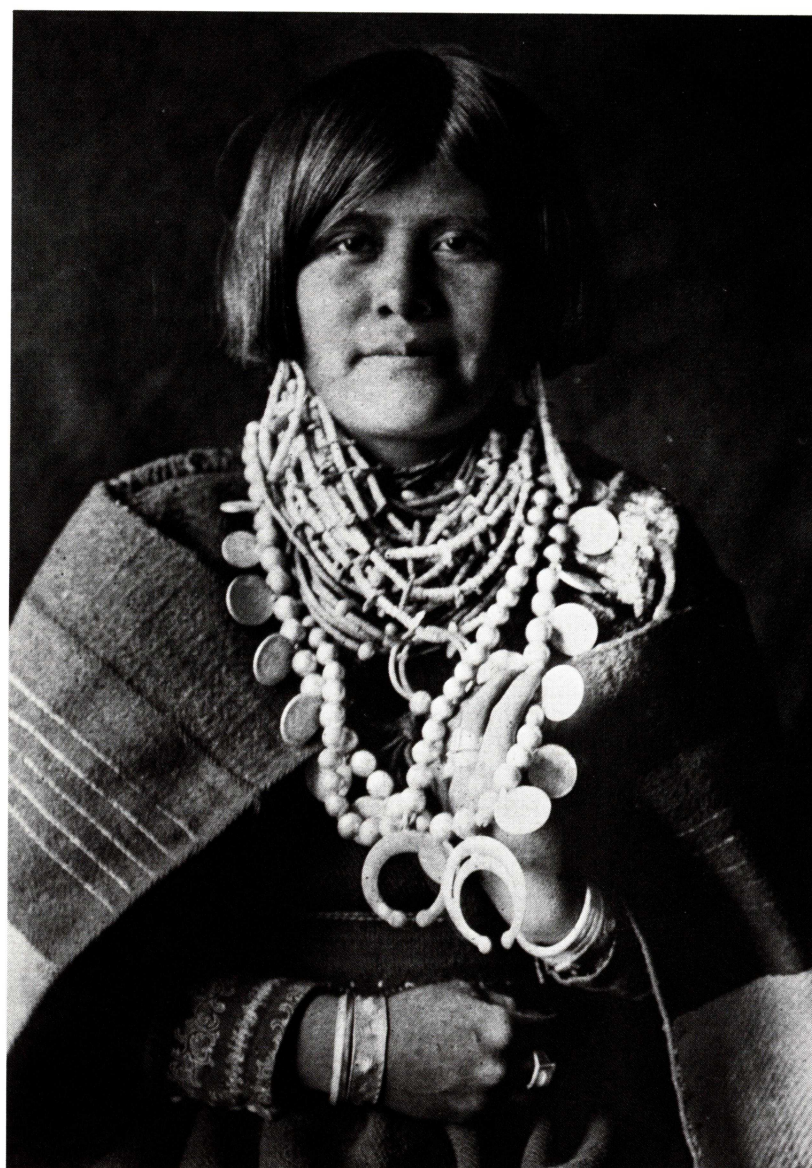
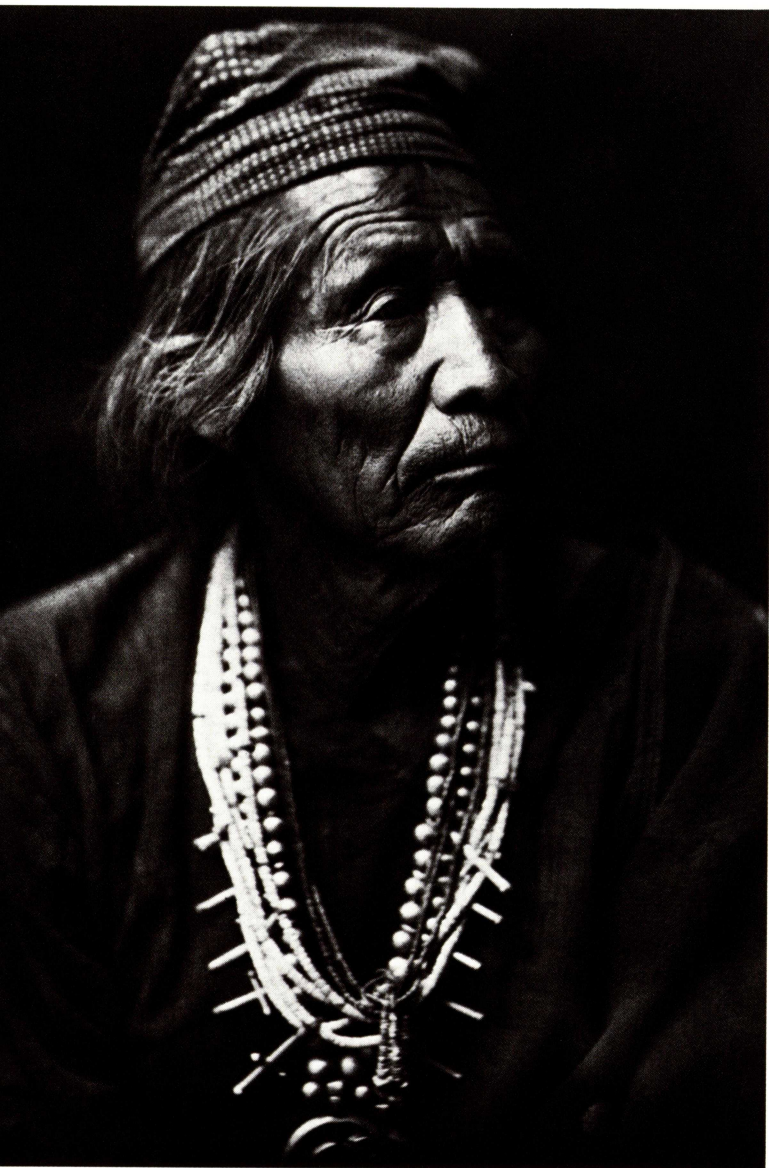
OPPOSITE: These rugs are some of the many designs in the Gilcrease collection. Top left, bordered style Navajo; top right, pictorial Navajo; and bottom, Yeibechai.





The Shape of Beauty in Silver and Stones

BY BETSY OLSON



EARLY IN PREHISTORY itinerant artists crossed the Bering Sea land bridge to the American continent or sailed across oceans to the New World, bringing with them tools of stone and bone along with a primitive technology. By the time the Europeans came to America, the most memorable characteristic of Indian art of all the tribes was the precision and beauty of their creations. Without metal tools, without potter's wheels, and using hand-spun cotton and wool yarns, Indian artisans startled the European world of the 16th century and thereafter with the beauty of their products.

One of the most beautiful was their jewelry. Though people have adorned

themselves since early times for decoration, to denote authority, as insignia of rank or position, or to satisfy pride of possession, the jewelry of the American Indians is unique.

Today the materials of the prehistoric artisans seem quite limited. Shell, bone, pottery, and stones were basic materials. Feathers, fur or bits of copper were considered as beautiful as jade or gold.

It is well established that Northeastern Indians worked silver beginning about 1700. But it was not until after 1864 that the Navajo of the Southwest learned silversmithing. It was near the year of the forced "Long Walk" taken by people of the Navajo Nation to Bosque Rendondo in

LEFT: A Navajo man wears a necklace of pomegranate blossoms, sometimes known as squash blossoms. He was photographed by Pennington in the early 1900s.

CENTER: "Nesjaja Hatali — Navajo," photographed by Edward S. Curtis in 1904. This is a portrait from his portfolio, "North American Indian." The Navajo is wearing his wealth.

RIGHT: "A Zuni Girl," photographed by Edward S. Curtis in 1903, another portrait from his portfolio, "North American Indian." She wears traditional Zuni jewelry.

New Mexico. Here they were to be introduced to white civilization and culture and to be educated as useful members in a society which to the Navajo was totally alien.

From that enforced confinement, however, came a craft of such beauty that it is one of our most cherished possessions.

It was not one of the lessons taught by the Army. Rather it was a craft learned by a Navajo head man, Atsidi Sani, from a Mexican platero or silversmith named Casillio. Others joined Atsidi Sani, or Herrero Delgadito, as he was known in Spanish. These artists included Very Slim Maker of Silver, Big Smith, Smith-Who-Walks-Around, Crying Smith, and Atsidi Chon.

The early silver necklaces were quite simple. Clothing and horse trappings provided inspiration for designs for these first Navajo smiths. Arthur Woodward wrote: "The bead stalls, conchas, were favorite ornaments near the ears; while crescent shaped ornaments lay against the animal's forehead . . ." He reported the origin of the Najahe (naja) as follows, "This emblem was old when Columbus crossed the ocean to the New World . . . It was an Old World amulet fastened to horse trappings, preferably the bridle, to ward off the evil eye from the animal . . . The Romans had them, so did the Moors." Woodward stated that the first Navajo designs were made from dies used by Mexican leather workers. The Navajo also made ingenious use of broken tools or nails in order to work their designs.

Conchas, or shells, were copies from Mexican bead stalls. Designs evolved, as did shapes, from plain, undecorated ones to fluted and stamped conchas of oval shapes. Silver buttons and ketohs or the wrist guards are also among the earliest pieces of silver.

Influences from other Indian tribes can be seen in bracelets and armlets. The Navajo also copied the twisted silver of

the Mexicans. Rings reached the Navajo via Plains trade routes from the north and east.

Melted U.S. coins and Mexican pesos provided the silver ingots before 1890 when the government declared this practice illegal, although the practice continued until the 1940s.

In Navajo necklaces can be found pomegranate blossoms, commonly called squash blossoms, shaped after early Mexican clothing decorations. Also crosses, coins, and matched turquoise stones are usually interspersed among the handmade silver beads in these necklaces.

Turquoise, the stone so highly prized by Egyptian jewelers, one of the favorites of Persian artisans, and much esteemed by Renaissance man, was also favored by Southwestern Indians. Archaeologists date turquoise beads found in the Southwest to the year 200 A.D. at Snaketown.

Around 1878 turquoise was incorporated into Navajo silver work. Used simply as a decoration for their work, turquoise was mounted on silver by means of a bezel or cup to hold the stone. Today, modern technology provides almost unlimited techniques for stone setting.

Also in present times Zunis, another tribe whose superb lapidaries learned silversmithing from the Navajo, produce memorable jewelry of needlepoint or cluster work. They also carve popular fetish figures for necklaces.

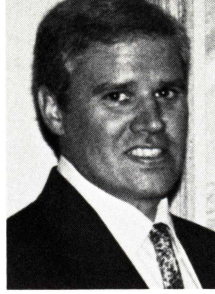
Turquoise in a different form is available in beautiful strands of tab or chunk turquoise from the Pueblos. Hopi silver overlay work invites one to study further their traditional designs or to invest in the contemporary works of channel inlay.

Transcending the stereotypes of ethnic curiosities, Indian jewelry of today — and yesterday as shown in the Gilcrease collection — is admired as much for its majesty and elegance as it is for its value as an investment. ◡

OPPOSITE: Indian jewelry from the Gilcrease collection includes examples from two centuries of silversmithing. Left, early twentieth century Navajo concha belt. Top center, coral and silver Pueblo (possibly Laguna or Isleta) Cross of Lorraine necklace, circa 1870. Top right, old style Navajo pomegranate blossom necklace with naja. Bottom center, old style Navajo coin (silver quarters) necklace. Bottom right, turquoise and silver Zuni needlepoint necklace. These last three necklaces may be dated to the early to mid-twentieth century.



Message From the Director



MUSEUMS ARE TREASURE houses and Gilcrease Museum is, I believe, among the most wondrous. Visitors to Gilcrease, especially first time visitors, find rarities of Americana in unanticipated richness. Regular visitors enjoy experiencing again and again their favorite Bierstadt, Moran, Remington or Russell. Or Hopi pot or Navajo blanket.

One connotation of the idea of a treasure house no longer describes Gilcrease, however, and that is the notion that it is changeless. Changes in the exhibitions, most of which we hope are improvements, are being made regularly. If you doubt the director's objectivity in this matter of change in "permanent" exhibitions, grab a docent the next time you have a chance and ask her (or him) whether there are periodic changes in even the most hallowed galleries. I wager that you will get a surprisingly vehement conformation that there is a good deal of rearranging that goes on. Let me tell you about a few recently new installations in the galleries that house the Gilcrease permanent collection.

The first painting gallery that you come to in your tour of the Museum, the gallery that we in our perhaps perverse way call gallery 3, now houses several new paintings and several that have not been on view for a long time, if ever. Right in the middle of the main wall is "Soft Green of August" by Wilson Hurley. This large painting was acquired from our most recent *Redezvous* exhibition by subscription in honor of Charles E. Thornton, chairman of the Thomas Gilcrease Museum Association Board of Directors. It is a large painting that is typical of Hurley's heroic treatment of the grandeur of the Southwest.

To its left and right are some old favorites by people like Homer and Inness, but on the facing wall is a painting that is entirely new to us, an Andrew Wyeth snow scene. Depicted in Wyeth's inimi-

table style of tempera painting is the side porch of what appears to be a deserted house. That so much realism fraught with mystery is achieved within the confines of a severely restricted palette identifies "Winfield's Porch" as Wyeth at the top of his form.

Other permanent galleries that have new looks are the Modern Indian Gallery, gallery 19 in our numbering scheme, and the Special Events Gallery, number 13. Modern Indian has been reorganized to give a clear view of the early development of Indian painting in our century and to concentrate on the two main elements of the classic style — the Plains and the Southwest.

The Special Events Gallery, which to my eye always looks best when a meeting or a party is in progress, has been filled much more densely with art works that relate to the Indian Wars and especially to Custer. Featured here are works from the unparalleled Gilcrease collection of paintings by Charles Schreyvogel as well as the best works of H. H. Cross and William Cary. Works by the latter two are not much seen, but in each instance the Gilcrease collection includes large and representative selections of their historically important canvases. What were once the bare spaces of the Special Events Gallery are also now graced by the distinguished Gilcrease collection of American bronzes.

This season's schedule is also fuller than ever with special changing exhibitions of borrowed material. Brought to Tulsa from other museums and collections, these special exhibitions are planned to augment the story told by the permanent collection.

On view right now in the Gena Gilcrease Gallery is the "Santa Fe Collection of Southwest Art." This exhibition of 72 paintings is a selection from the corporate collection of the Santa Fe Railway Company, one of the first businesses in the

world who actually went out and commissioned art works to be made. The objective was to depict the scenic wonders of the West; what remains to our generation are colorful paintings by some of the best known artists who worked in the Southwest, such people as Thomas Moran, Louis Akin, W. R. Leigh, H. L. Blumenschein, E. Martin Hennings, E. I. Couse, Walter Ufer, W. Herbert Dunton, Victor Higgins, Gerald Cassidy, and others.

The other major exhibition of the fall, opening in early December, is "Buffalo Bill and the Wild West." This huge exhibition was organized by the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, and draws on the extensive collections of that sister museum. There is a section of masterworks of art from the Old West, but the bulk of the exhibition — and there are more than 350 items in the show — is made up of pictures and things that recreate the amazing career of William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody from his early days as a scout and hunter through his time on the stage and culminating, of course, in the famous Wild West shows that toured America and Europe from 1883 to 1913. The richness and significance of the Wild West phenomenon are suggested by posters, photographs, props, apparel, video, film, and even a seven foot tall stuffed bison.

Nothing like "BB and the WW" has ever been seen in the Gilcrease galleries. Which leads me back to the beginning: things do change at Gilcrease all of the time. You owe it to yourself to visit often in order to gaze at the familiar treasures, at the until-recently-hidden treasures, and at the borrowed treasures that are being brought to Tulsa just for your enjoyment.

Fred A. Tager

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FRONT COVER: E. Martin Hennings, "Canyon Aspens," 30 inches by 30½ inches, oil on canvas, from the Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art.

BACK COVER: Terraced style Navajo blanket, circa 1870, made from Saxony yarn, from the Gilcrease collection.

OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS: Pictures on pages 1 - 16 are from the Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art. Illustrations on pages 17 - 22, 24 - 31 are of items in the collection of the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art.

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*Director, Thomas Gilcrease
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Louisa B. Collett
Director of Development

Melinda Beard
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Mark Haynes
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Bill Patterson
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