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BIERSTADT'S SMALL PAINTINGS:

The Intimate Aspect of Grand Opera

BY FRED A. MYERS

IN 1864 ALBERT BIERSTADT was one of the two most famous artists in America. He had just exhibited his 10 foot painting "The Rocky Mountains" in an exhibition which also featured Frederic Church's even larger painting, "The Heart of the Andes." Bierstadt was the challenger, Church was the recognized champion of big picture making in the United States. The paintings were hung on opposite walls in the exhibition salon in tacit recognition of the competition between the two artists (a duel which continues to our day in a similar hanging of paintings in the Metropolitan Museum in New York City). No victor can be declared, but that salon exhibition in 1864 marked Albert Bierstadt's entry into the top rank of American artists. Bierstadt lived on until 1902, outliving his original critical, popular, and financial success. In fact, although he retained many of his powerful friends

throughout his life, he was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1895. At the time of his death his reputation was nowhere near as lofty as it had been in what were for him the heady years of the 1860s and 70s.

Since that time Bierstadt's reputation with critics and collectors has had its ups and downs. E. P. Richardson, whose mid-1950s book on American painting became the standard text, supplied the most pithy assessment of Bierstadt of that day in his remark that Albert Bierstadt was for him a "first-rate, second-rate painter." Perhaps the most convincing evidence of the recovery of Bierstadt's reputation was the hitherto unheard of price of \$500,000 paid for his canvas by the Brooklyn Museum in the 1970s.

The Gilcrease Museum collection comprises 30 works by Albert Bierstadt. The largest is "Sierra Nevada Morning,"

Fred Myers, director of Gilcrease Museum, shares with us his personal pleasure in the oil sketches of Albert Bierstadt in the Gilcrease collection.



Albert Bierstadt, "Indian Canoes,"
13 inches by 18¼ inches, oil on paper

"A composition of great formal power and simplicity is combined with the human interest of a few sketchy figures of men and their dogs." FAM

one of the perennial favorites at Gilcrease. Six or seven other sizable Bierstadt paintings make their occasional appearance in the museum galleries, such works as "Multnomah Falls" and "Point Lobos." Twenty-three of the Gilcrease Bierstadts, however, are small paintings typically measuring 14 by 20 inches. It is these small paintings and others like them that suggest yet another reassessment of Bierstadt is now in order, for they reveal an artist of delicate touch and concentration — two characteristics not usually associated with Bierstadt.

Although Bierstadt's life and artistic career have not been studied in the same detail as some of his contemporaries, the known facts suggest a vivid and intriguing personality. Although he was born in Germany, Bierstadt was brought by his parents to New Bedford, Massachusetts, at age two. He makes his entry into the written record as an artist at the age of 20 when he placed an advertisement in the local newspaper promoting himself as a teacher of art. Where his art skill (and his confidence) was gained is not known. It is known that his students found him stimulating as an instructor and that he himself was exhibiting paintings in Boston as early as 1851.

To advance his success as an artist, however, Bierstadt in 1853 went to Dusseldorf, Germany. It was not entirely necessary for an aspiring artist in mid-nineteenth century Amer-

ica to undertake a European wunderjahre. Such apprenticeship, for instance, was not indulged by Church before his success. European credentials, however, were useful for most artists, and it is not surprising that Bierstadt returned to his natal area for the art prestige that it could provide. Emanuel Leutze was the leading instructor in Dusseldorf. He and other academicians there purveyed a style of grand aspirations combined with meticulous realization and sometimes sentimental content. Leutze, who is recorded as an American-German artist, is best known on this side of the Atlantic for two huge paintings. One, "Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way," is in the House of Representatives in Washington (the Gilcrease collection includes a study for this painting). Leutze's other huge work is "Washington Crossing the Delaware," one of the icons of American art and history.

It appears that Bierstadt did not take any regular course of instruction while he was in Dusseldorf. Rather he, always the convivial companion, seems to have simply associated himself with the teachers and their pupils in everything that they did outside the studio. Bierstadt took trips through the Alps and to Italy. Some of the paintings of this period are remarkably accomplished and display the assurance of a mature artist. Typically, Bierstadt was already a commercial success. He regularly sent paintings home to Massachusetts where



Albert Bierstadt, *Untitled (Antelope)*, 9 inches by 15 inches, oil on paper
 "A lone (and somewhat chubby) antelope bounds in a jaunty manner in a mountain meadow. The grandeur of his wilderness home is economically suggested by an undifferentiated foreground, by distance-greyed hills, and by the off-center placement of the antelope — a placement that implies great distance to be covered in the next leaps." FAM



Albert Bierstadt, *Untitled (Mountain Range)*,
7½ inches by 9 inches, oil on paper

“The simple forms of two snow-covered mountains are combined into a composition of powerful design by a mid-distance shadow and a hulking grey form on the extreme left.” FAM



Albert Bierstadt, "Bison,"
20 inches by 28 inches, oil on paper

"Against a scumbled background that suggests grass through color alone, Bierstadt captures the big beasts with the informality of a snapshot. The cropping of head on the left and hindquarter on the right is the kind of incompleteness that is unlikely to make its appearance in a finished studio piece of Bierstadt's." FAM

his brothers marketed them.

After four years in Europe, Bierstadt was back in America and found himself a studio in New York City. He exhibited for the first time in 1858 at the annual exhibition sponsored by the National Academy of Design in that city. Since 1826, the date of its foundation, the National Academy was the primary instruction and exhibition locus in America. Along with the European trip, acceptance by the National Academy was a hallmark of artistic success in nineteenth century America. Bierstadt made his first big success in that exhibition in 1862. By that time he had discovered his most favored subject — the grand mountains of the American West. His first trip west was in 1859 with a wagon road survey excursion funded by the Department of the Interior and headed by Colonel Frederic W. Lander. It was Bierstadt's intention to attach himself to this excursion, planning to pay his own expenses, but it was typical of his approach to life that he announced his appointment to the expedition before he was actually accepted. On this trip Bierstadt got as far as central Wyoming. His

observations on the western scene are intriguing. In an article he prepared for *The Crayon* magazine he wrote: "The color of the mountains and of the plains, and indeed that of the entire country, reminds one of the color of Italy; in fact, we have here the Italy of America in a primitive condition." These first impressions, which Europeanized the American West, are best understood in the context of Bierstadt's recent return from the European Valhalla of art experience.

Perhaps the most surprising product of Bierstadt's first trip into the American West was a series of photographs taken there. It's not known whether Bierstadt himself was the photographer or whether it was his traveling companion F. S. Frost. What is known is that in the year following his trip Bierstadt's brothers brought out a sales catalogue of stereoscopic views of some 56 subjects.

The advent of photography in the mid-nineteenth century was thought to pose a real challenge to the painter. Especially in portraiture was the competition from the photographic images feared. As the history of the aesthetics rolled on,



Albert Bierstadt, "White Mountains,"
11 inches by 15 inches, oil on paper

"Laconically entitled, this small painting conveys the ferocity of a woodland conflagration with the utmost economy of means." FAM

however, it became clear that most painters and sculptors used photography only as an aid and in effect surmounted the challenge of photographic reproduction. This was certainly the case with Bierstadt who found the limitations of early photography not to his liking. First of all there was no color in the printed image, and then the process was very cumbersome involving as it did heavy glass negatives that needed to be developed in the field. The images that Bierstadt/Frost produced were disappointing to Bierstadt, the artist of the sublime. His comment again in *The Crayon* article is: "We have taken many stereoscopic views, but not so many of the mountain scenery as I could wish, owing to various obstacles attached to the process, but still a goodly number. We have a great many Indian subjects."

It seems that the grandeur of the mountain scenery Bierstadt longed to paint materialized in the imaginative eye of the artist rather than in the mechanical eye of the camera. 1863 was the year of Bierstadt's most seminal western trip. Traveling through Nebraska and Colorado he went the whole way to San Francisco doing studies that he used all his life.

It is worth noting here that Bierstadt followed what was standard artistic practice in the nineteenth century. In order

to capture the look of the real world he made small study paintings on the motif, that is, out in the open while directly confronting the natural scene. Like the Hudson River Valley artists, Bierstadt preferred oil for these study paintings rather than the watercolor preferred by many later artists. The studies were then used in the studio where, under conditions of controlled atmosphere, the artist was able to complete his large paintings at his leisure, free from the vagaries of weather and topography. It was on this '63 trip when Bierstadt first travelled into the Yosemite Valley. The grandeur of the scenery there appealed greatly to him, and he laid claim for his palette to the cliffs and waterfalls of that dramatic region.

Although the focus here is on Bierstadt's small paintings, it needs to be said that his own interests seem to have been most engaged in producing very large paintings for display in the grand exhibitions of his time. Indeed, of the 635 paintings shown in Bierstadt's initial venture with the National Academy annual exhibition his was the largest. And, of course in 1864, when he threw down the gauntlet to Church in their rival renderings of the Rocky Mountains and the Andes, the battle lines were drawn with very large paintings.



Albert Bierstadt,
"Wind River Mountains, Nebraska,"
7 inches by 12 inches, oil on paper

"Bierstadt titled this painting in a manner appropriate to the geographic terminology of his day in that Nebraska territory extended west to the Rockies. It is now thought, however, that Bierstadt, at least on his first western trip, never reached the Wind River range in present-day Wyoming. The stark beauty of the mountains, wherever they are, is well-conveyed by the painting." FAM



Albert Bierstadt, "On the Platte River, Nebraska,"
8 inches by 10 inches, oil on paper

"On the reverse side of this painting there are pencil sketches of three faces shown in profile, an indication of the scarcity of artists' materials in the West. Bierstadt would, of course, have brought his pencils, paints, and canvases with him when he journeyed westward. Also on the reverse, in Bierstadt's handwriting, is the descriptive title still used for the painting suggesting that it may have been made on the artist's first trip west, a trip which followed the Platte River through Nebraska Territory." FAM



Albert Bierstadt, "Wind River Mountains, Rocky Mountain Chain,"
10 inches by 13 inches, oil on paper

"The power of a dramatic mountain range is
conveyed in small format." FAM

The equating of size with achievement in the mid and late nineteenth century seems to have been fostered by the traditional art academies in Europe and their American counterparts. Looking back to the large paintings of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, art officials felt that a painter's skill was most convincingly displayed in large works. Aspiring artists intentionally planned and executed large machines, to use the French word, as the equivalent of a modern PhD thesis to gain the ultimate acceptance of teachers and peers.

It is also possible that the nineteenth century fondness for panoramas was partially responsible for fostering Bierstadt's love of the very large painting. Panoramas were precursors of the motion picture. They were continuous paintings meant to be unrolled and viewed to the accompaniment of spoken narratives. One would assume that Bierstadt had no conscious intention of recreating in some way the effect of the panorama in his grand paintings. None the less, the association occurred to at least one of his more astute associates, the art critic James Jackson Jarves, who wrote, "The countryman that mistook the 'Rocky Mountains' for a panorama and after waiting for a while asked when the thing was going to move was a more sagacious critic than he knew himself to be." Another somewhat less than kind comment on

Bierstadt's work was made in *Watson's Weekly Art Journal*, where the reviewer suggested that Bierstadt's next painting be titled "All Outdoors."

These sorts of critical comments on Bierstadt's work from his own day perhaps furnish a clue to the resistance to his work that has typified reaction ever since. There is something about the size of the painting, something about the grandeur of the chosen scenes and the flourish with which they were presented that raises questions of good taste in some observers.

Similar reactions seem to inform Bierstadt's fall from favor in the closing decade of the nineteenth century when a taste for the intimate informality of French impressionism made Bierstadt's drama seem old fashioned. Even through his most difficult critical and financial times, however, Bierstadt retained the friendship of powerful persons and was able to make a very profitable occasional sale to a wealthy industrial baron whose view of the world was compatible with Bierstadt's.

Given the changing history of taste it is all the more refreshing to reassess Bierstadt now through the examination of his small study paintings. ☹



Albert Bierstadt, "Indian on Horse in Mountains,"
9 by 16 inches, oil on paper

"Here a lone Indian rider establishes a near distance against a bank of mist with brilliantly sunlit mountains in the far distance." FAM

SCHWIERING AT GILCREASE

BY FRED A. MYERS

THE VIEW OUT THE BIG WINDOWS could not have been more spectacular. Rearing up their lofty heads across Antelope Flats were South Teton, Middle Teton, Grand Teton, and Teewinot, mountains forming the spectacular east front of the Teton Range just south of Yellowstone Park in Wyoming. Conrad Schwiering and I were comfortably settled in the living room of his house in Jackson Hole preparing to discuss his forthcoming exhibition at Gilcrease Museum and the events of his life that have led to his success as a painter. Our conversation was joined occasionally by Robert Biolchini, Connie's long-term friend and former chairman of the board of the Thomas Gilcrease Museum Association, and Mary Ethel Schwiering, Connie's wife of 46 years. Mary Ethel occasionally broke in to call Connie to the phone or sometimes to ask him to help greet a visitor who had dropped by to get a look at Connie's new paintings. Mary Ethel also occasionally provided the sandwiches and potato chips which fueled our long conversation, some of which is excerpted word by word in what follows.

FM: *I'd like to ask you — why Jackson, why this country?*

CS: I was lucky to be raised in Wyoming. My Dad, who was a professor at the College of Education at the University of Wyoming, used to make trips around the state for school evaluation. On one of the trips, when I was about fifth grade, he took me along for company. When we came down into this valley you could see that great range of mountains off in the distance, and it just stuck with me all my life. Dad was a great fisherman, and he made a fisherman out of me. We traveled everywhere there was a good fishing stream. When he was

"The American Landscapes of Conrad Schwiering" is the first special exhibition of fall, 1985 at Gilcrease Museum. This interview of Connie Schwiering by Fred Myers, Gilcrease Museum director, provides background on the featured artist.



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Conrad Schwiering, "A Watchful Eye," 24 inches by 36 inches, oil on board





Conrad Schwiering, "Firehole Falls," 25 inches by 30 inches, oil on board

teaching in Rock Springs, we used to come up to the Pinedale area and fish. My father had a lot of botany training. We didn't ever pass a plant that he didn't stop and explain to me what was the Latin derivation of its name and all of the rest that went with it. In fact, when he first came to visit me on this property he catalogued 32 different varieties of wild flowers that were growing here. Just something that he wanted to do. Liked to do. But he knew what every plant was. I was very lucky. I never travel the state that I don't think a lot of the trips I had with him.

FM: *So you're really Wyoming born and bred?*

CS: Dad was going to the University of Colorado at the time I was born. So I was born in Boulder, Colorado. He was just going to summer school there for two weeks or a little longer.

He was a principal at Douglas, Wyoming. I just happened to come along at that time. They were living in Wyoming. My whole life has really been in Wyoming.

FM: *How many people were living in Wyoming at that time when you were a child?*

CS: I don't know. I do know this, the University of Wyoming, when I went to the University, had less than 3,000 students on the campus.

FM: *What is the population now?*

CS: I can't tell you what the population of Wyoming is now. We're one of the lowest states. Denver, the population of Denver, is greater than the population of Wyoming.

FM: *You certainly have seen a lot of changes in the state.*

CS: It's true. Everywhere you go there's change. One thing that doesn't change is the land and the effects of nature on the land and the mountains. Those things remain pretty much the same for eons of time I guess. And there's not enough building in Wyoming to really infringe upon the great prairies, the great plains, and the great mountains. Truly, some of it is locked up in national forests and some of it's locked up in national parks. Some, a good part of it, is Bureau of Land Management land, but the grazing of cattle and sheep and wild animals hasn't depleted the land. It looks pretty much to me as it did when I was a kid. The town of Laramie has expanded considerably. The place where I used to go swimming is now a supermarket.

FM: *Jackson certainly has become more of a tourist center.*

CS: Once I decided I wanted to be an artist, I knew this is where I wanted to come to live to do it, because I had a feeling there were so many things available to an artist in this area that he could never want for material. You had, to begin with, the great mountains, the great weather changes that take place in those mountains, and you had the cow business. At that time it was a big business in the valley. There were lots of big ranches and lots of cattle. So you had that plus the cowboys that go with it. You had the big packing, guiding, and hunting activity that gave another aspect to the things that I could do in this valley. And then you had all the wonderful wildlife. Elk and moose, antelope and deer, some bear, not an

awful lot of bear. What more could you ask for? It just was ready-made. I am enough of a businessman to realize that if you want to make a success out of your profession you ought to be in an area where you're going to have people come by and see it. Potential customers. And this was it. The potential to me in the valley was phenomenal in terms of making a living and doing what I wanted to do. There's hardly anybody that has a chance at wildlife like I do. You slip up to Yellowstone Park in the early spring or in the late fall and the animals will shake hands with you. It's really just wonderful.

FM: *You don't really think of yourself as a wildlife painter do you?*

CS: I think of myself as an artist who is trying to tell the story as he reacts to the things that are around him. Whatever it is. I haven't painted many coyotes. We have quite a few coyotes around our place but I haven't got interested in that small a subject. I'm more enamored with the moose and the elk and the antelope and the deer.

FM: *Not so many cowboys in the area now.*

CS: No. I know enough about riding and handling horses to know if you're a dude on a horse it shows, and if you're a cowboy on a horse you handle the horse. A good cowboy really reacts to the horse so they are one. Often when people that don't know how to ride are on a horse, the horse and the rider are two different things. So I have tried, through all my years, to find a good, authentic model when I work with a cowboy. I often go down in the Big Piney area and work. That's good cow country. They're extremely helpful to me down there. Let me work right when they're doing what they do.

FM: *Do you make sketches in situations like that?*

CS: I really start a painting, if I have mentally some idea of what I want to get. Oftentimes I don't preconceive what the picture is going to be until I land where things are happening. Then I just make the picture up out of the subject matter that's available to me. This is the way I've really always worked. That way you get variety that you can't conceive any other way. There's a certain set of circumstances that will decide what you want to do in a composition.

FM: *You're really saying the world is more rich than your own imagination.*

CS: I think you're right. I say it just a little differently. I say what God does with nature is so full of wonderful variety that it's very difficult for me standing in front of my easel, in the studio, to conceive all of those wonderful nuances in nature



Conrad Schwiering at work on a new painting near his home at Jackson Hole

that you get when you're out there experiencing it. I realize you have to edit that material. You can't just take it all because it won't make a picture. The association of the elements affected by the light changes the subject so much that it makes you full of enthusiasm to do it. I think that this is the important thing. I think that when you start a picture — mentally inside you — you should be convinced, this is going to be a masterpiece. I am. Everytime I start one I think, this picture is going to be a masterpiece. It's got everything that I could want. The only trouble is that I am not sometimes able to get it to that point because of my inability, can't make it happen the way I thought it was going to happen. This is really not a good admission to make. But it's the truth.

FM: *Do you ever simply throw one away?*

CS: I burn a lot of pictures. If you work the way I do, you're bound to strike out quite a few times. I give them a fair chance, I don't just quit. When I begin a painting and it doesn't begin to happen, I don't just throw it away at that point. Sometimes I even hold them a year. Each one of your pictures is a footprint. At least I think of them as footprints. You can put out good footprints or the best footprints you can put out. Or you can put out duds. You're going to be judged by what the public sees. The thing the artist has to do is edit. Many artists can't edit their bad stuff. You've got to be your own toughest critic. You've got to look at it with a jaundiced eye. Is this going to say what I want it to say or is it falling miserably short of what I want to say? And if it is, it ought to be burned.

FM: *Does Mary Ethel have any persuasions on this line?*

CS: She's the greatest thing in the world to have as a helpmate. She's grown up with art. She went to school with me, she was back in New York with me. She went to every museum I went to. She went to every lecture I went to. Experienced all of the things that help make an artist grow. She's an extremely intelligent woman. She learned what's good and what's bad. She can pick a place that I've been battling with in a picture as well as I can. She's got a terrific eye and a terrific sense of how it feels. If it doesn't feel right to her, I know it. She's honest enough to tell me what she thinks. How she reacts to a picture. And I'm glad for her opinion. An artist paints for people. An artist doesn't paint just for himself. I think this is the first thing all of us ought to realize in our hearts. We have a message we want to get across to someone else. And if we don't get that message across we're the ones that fail, not the individual looking at the picture. It's not his fault if he doesn't get the message. Think back through history. The pictures that have really lived, not period pieces, the great pictures, the great artists, all have a theme, all have a rapport with the viewer instantly.

It just comes across.

FM: *You're rather isolated here in Jackson. Have you felt the lack of art talk with other producing artists?*

CS: Well, one of the things that I felt most keenly when I came up here to work was that it was better not to have other artists to talk to, better not to be associated with other artists because the dominant influence in a group tends to influence the whole group of artists. If you've got one that has a strong mind and is an articulate man, he will convince you that his way is the better way to solve things. And you're not solving things your own way.

FM: *Have you taught art?*

CS: I taught art. We ran an art school here. Paul Bramson, Grant Hagen and I ran a school in the summer we called Teton Artists Associated. Each one of us taught one day a week. We had a long run of it, five or six years. It was rewarding, but I felt it inhibited me in doing my own work. It slowed me down in that it was hard for me not to think about all the things I'd been telling the students. When I paint, after I've decided on the big areas in the picture, I go to work on just trying to get things solved. Eventually after you get things to where they begin to relate to one another — it's a surprising thing — then the picture tells you what to do. The pictures tells you what it needs. So you're working *with* it. It's a wonderful feeling. And it's automatic. I'm sure a lot of artists have a more methodical way they go through the whole thing. My method is just to get it going. Solve the problems and pretty soon things begin to happen.

FM: *Well, I think certainly, Connie, that you're indicating that you have a level of comfort with your experience with making pictures that allows you to let the picture help solve itself at some point. I think you must be able to say that now after how many years have you been painting?*

CS: About fifty years. In the beginning it was trying to solve the problem. Trying to make a horse look like a horse. Water look like water. Trees look like trees. How to find the color. Now when I paint I'm not even conscious of where I go to get the color to make what I need for the picture. It needs to be a little grayer. It needs to be a little warmer. It needs to have more green in it. It needs this or that. I often say, I think that it's a lot like a music composer. I think a composer probably works on the piano and he hears three or four notes that sound good together and he writes those down. Pretty soon he's got a phrase. I kind of think my work is an awful lot like that. I really get a lot of adrenaline flowing when things are happening. I think this is helpful in my pictures. That this is a way I do best with a high sense of urgency. I don't mean that I do a lot of fast brush strokes, I'm not talking about that. I just mean that the excitement of the mood and the instant that will



Conrad Schwiering, "Wildcat Cove," 12 inches by 18 inches, oil on board



Conrad Schwiering, "Going to High Country," 12 inches by 18 inches, oil on board

be gone soon makes you try to record as quickly as possible the thing that is out there. And that helps the picture.

FM: *The thing that I think is clear from your painting is that you continue to have a great enthusiasm for the nature that you find around you. Can you explain why that might be the case?*

CS: I think this, that if you are a student of the subject matter that's around you, you're always discovering something new. That sounds trite, but it is true. In painting the mountains for all these years, I find something new nearly every time I go out. Suddenly in an area that I've walked by for years, I find a terrific foreground. It's just that I was not ready to be in tune with it the time I walked by it before. I really think it's like the fountain of youth, nature. There's not a season I don't love. There isn't a season when I'm painting that I don't think, Oh God, why can't this last forever?

FM: *You manage to preserve a certain innocence in the face of nature. You are awed.*

CS: I'm thinking about a man like Olaus Murie; he was a terrific naturalist, a very wonderful man. He had such a basic reverence for everything in nature. Everything that he came in contact with was an exciting new discovery. The more I thought about that philosophy the more I thought it's the way I want to live; it is the kind of thing I want to try to get across in my pictures. I want my paintings to be a revelation of my direct reaction to the fundamental elements in nature. It's a translation, not an attempt at a photographic reality. I have no objection to photographs. I use them in my work all the time. There are many things that you have to correct, you have to straighten out when you get back in the studio. But if an artist has anything to give, it is his personal reaction to the subject matter. That's what art is. You know, this business of faking light is tough. And that's what we try to do as impressionists. We try to translate the effect of light onto a flat board. When you're working out there in nature it is so glorious and you're task is to do it in paint. You really know how limited you are.

FM: *You know, the nineteenth century landscape painters in this country, early in particular, felt that the wilderness areas and the paintings they were making of wild scenery really were an indication of the diety, that the world was the creation of an awesome but benevolent God. Do you share any of that feeling?*

CS: I certainly feel that privilege I have to see these things is given to me by God. I offer a little prayer every time I start a painting. My prayer is that the language that I use will evoke a feeling in the viewer that gives him a rapport with the sub-



Conrad Schwiering, "Mountain Serenity,"
24 inches by 36 inches, oil on board





Conrad Schwiering, "Frosty Morning," 25 inches by 30 inches, oil on board



Conrad Schwiering, "First Light," 12 inches by 24 inches, oil on board



Conrad Schwiering, "Patriarch of Yo Ho," 30 inches by 40 inches, oil on board

ject. I'm anxious that that happens. I hope that happens when I paint. If we're honest with ourselves we know that we are so far short of what we should be able to do. I've been climbing a ladder all my life, trying, trying. And I remember asking Chapman (artist Charles S. Chapman, Connie's most influential teacher) a question once. I said, Gosh, I'll sure be happy when I'm able to paint flesh tones just right. And he said to me, "Connie, there's always going to be a plateau above you, all your life, or you're never going to be an artist." That's the real essence to what art is. Your taste rises way above you and your ability falls below. I don't approach a picture the same way every time. Once I get into it, I just let it happen, which does help you in many ways. It gives you variety in your work. There's a different reaction or approach to each subject that you decide to do, which is the joy of art. To swim in the water and be able to stop at this rock or that tree. Wherever you want. Just float with it and enjoy all of those things that you try to do. When you're doing them they are not a joy, they are work. When the picture starts to work for you, that's when it becomes a joy. The picture calls for the thing that it needs to put it together, to make it happen.

FM: *I'm interested in the kind of training you had. So you decided you wanted to be an artist, what do you think made you come to that decision?*

CS: I started college. I had done a lot of art work in high school, all the art classes they had, drew pictures on every-

body's slicker. It was just fun. I started into college and was taking a combination commerce and law degree; about the time I was a sophomore I got to thinking, I'd like to try to do some painting. My folks were receptive. It takes stick-to-it-iveness, it takes desire. I had gone through those things. And I fought with the art department at the University of Wyoming; they were all modern. I thought if you painted a tree it ought to look like a tree. This was in '36. I got in trouble with them and got my dad in trouble. My dad didn't argue with them. He said, "If you want to study art we'll send you to Denver." So I used to drive down to Denver on weekends and study with a man named Robert Graham. He was an illustrator until he moved up to Denver for his health. That was my first real beginning. The man was a fine artist and a fine man. I had good rapport with him. He made me do still lifes and all of that sort of stuff. Still lifes are great teachers. Gradually I began to think, I don't want to go to college, I want to go to art school. I want to be an artist. And my dad said, "Let me tell you something, Connie. You're very lucky that you're able to go to college. Many, many young men your age can't come to college; they can't afford it. Artists can't make a living. You go ahead and get your education and when you get your degree, if you want to go to study art that's your business. I'll have given you a college education and a good business education. So I'll feel confident that I've done my part in your training."



Conrad Schwierring, "Spring Thaw," 25 inches by 30 inches, oil on board

In my spare time I went down to Taos to study with Bert Phillips. He was a kind man. He sent me to study with Bistram. He was into circles and spheres, but my mind wasn't ready to receive the abstract that was out there in nature. So he refunded my money, and as a courtesy I went down to Bert Phillips and I explained to him what had gone on. And Bert said, "Young man, if you feel that keenly about it you just go out and paint. You bring your work into me and I'll grade you." I had something there three times a day. I hit him at eight o'clock in the morning, I hit him at one o'clock in the afternoon, and I hit him about five o'clock in the afternoon. He put up with it.

If I see in somebody that comes to me a strong desire to learn I'm so happy. The desire to learn has got to be overwhelming in the artist. You find it every once in a while. That's what makes an artist. You cannot stand it until you learn it somehow. Phillips took care of me, he put up with me for a month. He never said, "Connie, bring it tomorrow morning, I

can't see you tonight." He always took me in, he always gave me a grade on what I'd done. He was tough pointing out the things that you didn't see when you were out there working. In later years I came back to apologize for what I'd done, taking up his time and he said to me, "It was just a pleasure to have someone like you around with that much enthusiasm for learning. It was no hardship for me."

He taught me a lot about business too. All of the Taos people were his friends. He arranged it so I could watch Sharp when he was showing to potential customers. This would be in '37 or '38. Phillips said, "You need to go east to study. You can get the fundamentals back East. And you can also make contacts in the East that you can't make here." It was good advice. He said to send for brochures on all the teachers and pick out the ones I wanted. So I did and I picked out Charles S. Chapman and George Bridgman. I didn't know who Bridgman was. But I sure knew he knew how to draw. I went to the Art Students League to study with these men.

We went into that League, kids from Wyoming with hay sticking out all over them. But they're used to that at the League. They see a lot of that kind of kid. They got us an apartment up on one of the brownstones on 99th Street just off Amsterdam Avenue. We stuck it out there for a month. It was pretty rough.

Chapman and I hit it off pretty well as we started the classes. He said, "You know, somebody like you ought to be living out in Leonia, New Jersey; you shouldn't be living in New York City. You can get into the city on the subway without too much trouble from Leonia." We lived with Howard McCormick. He was a wood engraver, very capable man. Harvey Dunn was a good friend. Harvey lived in Englewood, but I didn't ever study with him, to my regret. I wish I had. He was a dynamic teacher. He and Chapman had had a class in school together. Chapman got me out of the city and out where I could walk to the Hackensack meadows, see blackbirds, see the muskrats, a little bit of the country. I was a lonesome boy back then. After about a month of studying with Chapman he said to me, "Where's your sketch book?" I said, God, what would I sketch, Mr. Chapman? And he said, "Well, what do you do when you're riding the subway?" I said, you don't mean you want me to draw on the subway with all those people around. He said, "Yes, that's exactly what I mean. I want you to get so comfortable that people around you don't bother you at all, that you will concentrate on what you want to do." That was a real good lesson. I just picked things that interested me. A lady with an interesting hat, a guy with a cane, maybe not more than his hands on the cane.

FM: *Sounds like he was an excellent teacher.*

CS: Yeah. He was a great teacher because he made you do it.



Conrad Schwiering, "Balsamroot,"
25 inches by 30 inches, oil on board

FM: *Think it through yourself. No formulas then? You don't believe there are formulas for doing art?*

CS: I think they're dead. When I was studying in New York I didn't know what I was. I just wanted to paint. I wanted to paint this western country. I wanted to paint the light that I knew. And I didn't study the impressionists any more than I studied anybody else. I spent a lot of time on Rembrandt; I spent a lot of time on the impressionists, and a lot of time on others because they were available to me in the museums. When I got home here and started to really do what I wanted to do, I found out it has to be done in an impressionistic way or else your work looks too much like a photograph or looks too much like a chicken walked over it, one or the other. It does not have the big feeling, so for me impressionism was the solution.

FM: *How long were you in New York?*

CS: Two and a half years. We just went there and dug in.

FM: *We?*

CS: Mary Ethel; we were married just before we went back there. She worked for Russecks as a secretary. I got a job with Schrafft's, working as a cashier. Something else happened while I was . . . you know, God had his arm around my shoulder to put me with a man like Chapman. He had a real philosophy towards art. He felt that artists are a certain breed of cat that should have an ethical love for one another and for their accomplishments. He exhibited that in his way of life. He did things for artists, tried to help them, tried to push jobs in their direction. He was a pretty remarkable individual. After about the second year, he had a job at the American Museum of Natural History to do the Grand Canyon background. He needed some legs to climb the scaffold and carry things around and lay in the big areas. He took me up there to do it. What a wonderful experience it was for me, to get up in a heaven like that. Belmore Browne was there. W. R. Leigh was there. Rungius was there. These are some of the greatest painters that America ever had. I got a chance to visit with them, talk to them, ask them questions. It was just phenomenal. The back part of that museum is just full of studies, full of little lay-ups. I had that experience. I remember asking Belmore Browne how he painted in the winter because I was going to be painting in the winter. He said, "I'd take somebody along to build a big bonfire." That was his solution, not mine.

FM: *What did you finally work out?*

CS: I've painted out in pretty cold weather. Around 28 to 36 degrees is pretty good painting weather. I use a woven mitt. I stick the brush in through the mitt so my hands can be warm. If it's really cold, I use a Johnny Hand Warmer and just slide it



Conrad Schwiering, "Safe Haven," 30 inches by 48 inches, oil on board

up back against my wrist. When I'm ready to work, my hands are still warm. You can handle a brush pretty well. It sometimes is very helpful to have it a little tougher thing to do. Your work becomes a little more direct.

FM: *I like the word you use a lot, translation.*

CS: That's what it really is. When I work out there, there's an awful lot of material there that I edit. It's an impression. It's hard to say that the painting is of a moment because it's of a series of moments that you're able to see. In all the years of

painting I've devised some fairly direct, shortcut methods to get at it right away. I started using toned boards with the tone very close to the general idea of the thing that I'm doing. That way a few simple lines give you the big shapes that you're concerned with. I hate to fill in lines. I just think that's a terrible way to paint. I can't understand how W. R. Leigh can have worked the way he did. His underdrawings are so beautiful and then he painted over them. Many artists work that way. If I've done a very careful black and white drawing,



Conrad Schwiering, "Wind Sculpture,"
25 inches by 30 inches, oil on board



Conrad Schwiering, "Burnished Gold," 30 inches by 40 inches, oil on board

I'm not interested in doing a painting. I think it should be a discovery. The association of colors, this is really the key to good painting. If you get the color of the mountain right against the color of the tree, the mountain will stay back where it should be and the tree will come up where it should be. If you get those two colors — this also includes values when I say color — if you get these fundamental colors right and you begin to get the silhouette right you can pretty much give the feeling of the landscape.

When I teach I talk an awful lot about that. Students know that trees way off on the mountain are composed of green, so they make them green. They're not thinking of the atmosphere that is involved in the situation. Anybody that doesn't know that a good abstract form has to be in a picture to make it good doesn't know much about art. I think of these abstract forms a great deal now. I can remember when I was going through a show at the National Academy one year with Chapman. I was lucky to have someone that paid that much

attention to me, and we went through the show. There was a Bistram that I had walked right by, and he said, "Connie, what's the matter with that picture?" And I said, Oh, it's too decorative. But he said, "You'd better stop and look at that, it's a very fine piece of art. Look at the great rhythm that man has developed. Look at the associations."

FM: *Can you think of any highlights or breakthroughs in what you were doing?*

CS: I'm considerably different from any of the current western painters because many of them came out of the illustration game into the field of western art. During the time that they were doing their illustrations I was stumbling around trying to do landscapes and trying to do translations of the subject matter that were around me. It was the same fundamental training period though, but mine was just kind of a gradual climb. No meteoric ascents to the top of the hill. When I was asked to submit to become a member of the Grand Central Galleries, I thought I'd arrived at a great high pinnacle. They sold for me but they didn't sell enough to live on.

FM: *Were you able to make a living at your art by the time you moved here?*

CS: No. The first three years Mary Ethel taught school. I just had a terrible blind faith that I could paint pictures of this country and sell them and make a living. It was a bad time. Not very many people were interested in art right after WW II. It began to grow though. The appreciation of art began to grow and the affluence in the American public began to grow. That's what supports art. The second year here I bet I didn't make a thousand dollars, probably around 800 dollars. The third year it began to pick up a little bit. We were in the Wort Hotel. My gallery was in the upper balcony there and I was selling fairly well. It wasn't too tough to get by. I got her to quit after the third year of teaching. From then on we made it off the painting one way or another. I've done everything. I used to paint on the square to try and attract people to the gallery. We got in the print business. We've done just about everything that an artist has to do. I used to take shows around. I'm the one that opened the banks to shows. I started showing in the banks. I've hauled the pictures all over Wyoming and out to Chicago and up to Milwaukee, all around. So I really was my own dealer. If you want to stay alive in this game you have got to be a businessman. You can't just dream that you're going to be a successful artist.



Conrad Schwiering, "Silent Solitude,"
30 inches by 40 inches, oil on board



FM: *Do you consider yourself a western artist?*

CS: I surely do! I feel keenly about the fact the artists of America ought to be painting America. They ought to be painting the thing that they're most familiar with or that they make themselves familiar with. I would encourage American artists to stick to our turf and translate the wonderful subject matter available to us. It's a chance to produce something that's truly American, not so heavily influenced by Europe. Maybe the translation of the West is enough to be an art movement, because there's such a great wealth of subject matter.

FM: *What do you think about the market for western subject matter?*

CS: I think that there's going to be a market for good art, good fundamental art. If it is western, that's fine. If it's done of New Orleans or Mississippi Delta, if it's good art, there is going to be a market for it. A lot of western art has been pretty bad. Unfortunately there have been an awful lot of people that have very little training but do have a camera and a projector and who have produced pictures that have nothing to do with art. They may be good renderings, but the skill of rendering is not art. That kind of art I think isn't going to do very well no matter how skillful the renderer is.

FM: *You do the ocean. I've seen lily ponds that you've done.*

CS: I feel the same way about the ocean that I feel about this

country. There's an awesomeness about that ocean. You can travel as fast as you want to till you get to the shore and you stop because that ocean is coming at you. It's tearing away at the shore all the time. I just love to paint the ocean, one of the most difficult subjects that I've ever tried to tackle. There is a perpetual motion about the ocean that never allows you to see it the same way twice. It teaches you to look. It makes your mind and your hands concentrate very quickly on the effect that you're trying to get. It makes you able to decide what you want to do and then execute. And you haven't got all day to execute because you may only see the big wave two or three more times. The elements play against the sea just the way they play against the mountains. The sea chews away at the land, that strife is just fascinating to me. I'm not much interested in sandy beaches. I like where the ocean is working on the rocks.

FM: *You're comfortable then with being called a landscape painter?*

CS: Yes. I don't know. I'm a lot of things. I'm not one thing. Which I think is a little different than some artist that specialize. There's so much that's so great. There's so much that's so beautiful. And you ought to try your hand at it. That's the way I feel about it. Whenever I see something that interests me I want to work on it. Not just do something because you know it's going to sell. I could do that. I don't think that would be living. I like to fly a little bit. ☹



Conrad Schwiering, "Evening Tide," 24 inches by 36 inches, oil on board



Theodor de Bry, *Great Voyages* (1634), title page engraving

The Great and Small Voyages of Theodor de Bry

BY EVELYN SHARP

IT WAS 400 YEARS AGO in April that seven ships left England headed west in the first of the ventures recounted in Theodor de Bry's monumental series, *Great and Small Voyages*. By summer, 1585, they reached the destination picked in a reconnoitering trip the previous year — Roanoke Island, near the border of present-day Virginia and North Carolina.

Before the Pilgrims, before Jamestown, even before the "Lost Colony" of Roanoke, these were the earliest of all Englishmen to attempt a settlement in America. They built a fort named for the recently knighted Sir Walter Raleigh (who backed the expedition) and managed to subsist for 12 months. Then, when Sir

Sir Francis Drake came by after harassing the Spanish in the Caribbean and offered to take them home, they left.

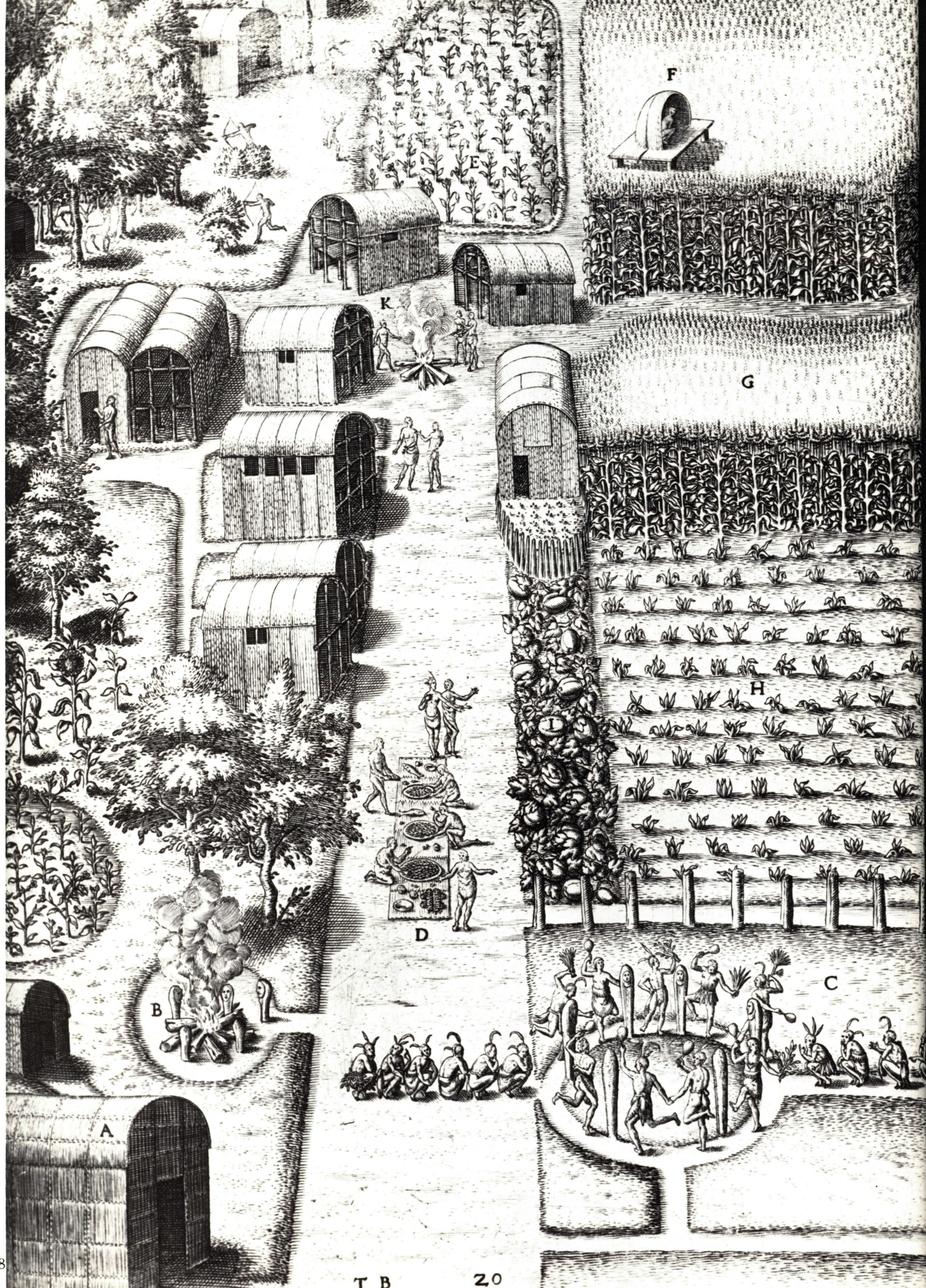
In 1590 De Bry published, in four languages, an account of the adventure — the text by a man who was there, the illustrations by the expedition's artist. It was Part I of an undertaking that eventually extended to 25 parts and occupied three generations of De Brys.

Gilcrease Museum has in its rare book collection a complete set in Latin from the 1634 edition published by Theodor de Bry's grandson-in-law, Mathew Merian. Incidentally, the "Great" and "Small" in the title refer to the dimensions of the books. The volumes in the *Great Voyages*

(about America) are taller and wider than those in the *Small Voyages* (about Africa and the East Indies).

De Bry was a goldsmith and an engraver, a rather frequent combination. Engraving copperplate for the purpose of taking impressions on paper had originated barely a century earlier and was an offshoot of the goldsmith's craft. He was born in 1528 in Liege, Flanders, which was under Spanish rule at the time. Neither Charles I nor his son, Philip II, cared much for their Flemish domains, looking on them as a source of revenue for their other enterprises, especially in America. The Flemish resisted the levies since they were, in effect, paying taxes for the

Evelyn Sharp is a Gillie as well as author. She has written five books, contributed to several encyclopedias, and a number of magazines including *Saturday Review* and *Psychology Today*.





privilege of being oppressed, but repeated revolts were brutally put down.

In addition to the political turmoil, this was the time of the Inquisition, with torture and death for any who deviated from the Catholic Church. Many Protestant artisans emigrated, De Bry among them. He went to Strasbourg, a free city ruled by a guild corporation, and later to Frankfort-on-the-Main in Germany.

When De Bry was almost 60 years old, he traveled to London with a commission to engrave drawings of the ceremonies attending the funeral of Sir Philip Sidney. The fact that an engraver was imported from the Continent shows the rudimentary state of the art in Queen Elizabeth's England. *The Grand Funeral Procession and Obsequies of Sir Philip Sidney* was a major work, extending over 30 plates, and had considerable artistic influence there.

Of greater importance to De Bry personally was his introduction to the colonizing circle in England, possibly through the Sidney family. The circle's most prominent member was Sir Walter Raleigh, who held a patent from Queen Elizabeth

to "discover, search, find out and view" the new territory in the west, which he named "Virginia." However, as the queen's current favorite, he was not allowed to leave England and go on an expedition himself. His role was to organize and finance the venture, with what help he could get from other courtiers and city merchants. Royal support for the 1585 trip was meager; Elizabeth lent one of the seven ships, the Tiger, and some of her soldiers.

Most of the men on that first expedition were from the military, but not all. One was the artist-explorer John White, who brought back to England paintings of the Virginia Indians. When De Bry saw them, he conceived the idea of making engravings of the pictures and publishing them, with an accompanying text, as an illustrated book of the Virginia voyage.

He also saw the Indian watercolors of another artist-explorer, Jacques Le Moyne, who had been with the French Huguenots in their unsuccessful attempt to make a settlement in Florida. When the Spanish destroyed the French fort he managed to escape and later settled in

London. Before De Bry went back to Frankfort after his stay in England he acquired sets of pictures of Indian life from both artists.

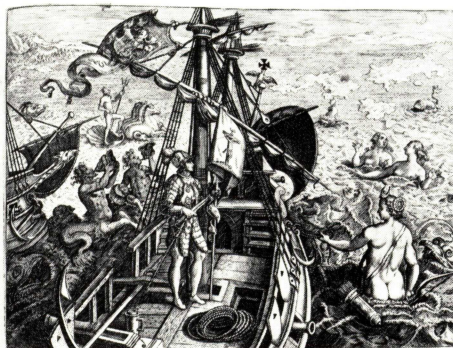
De Bry intended to publish his *Florida* first because, as he said, Florida was discovered long before Virginia, but there was pressure to do the *Virginia*. A second group of Raleigh's settlers was already on Roanoke Island (unaware that in a few years they would disappear without a trace — the famous "Lost Colony"). Promotional literature pointing out the commercial advantages to England of settling the newly discovered lands was being passed about, much of it by Richard Hakluyt, whom De Bry had met in London. If Raleigh was, in modern terms, the colonial entrepreneur, then Hakluyt was the public relations man. The colonizing circle wanted to arouse interest and to challenge Spanish domination of the New World.

Possibly he was persuaded by Hakluyt. The fact that the English language edition of *Virginia* is dedicated to Sir Walter Raleigh suggests that Raleigh may have offered financial support for this volume.

Preceding pages: Many of the illustrations in De Bry's *Great and Small Voyages* appear in both black and white and again in color on succeeding pages, as shown on pages 28 and 29. The Secotan Village is shown first as a black and white engraving, then on the following page, the same Secotan Village engraving is displayed in a hand-colored version.

Right: Some of the most fascinating illustrations in *Great and Small Voyages* are those showing the great explorers, Christopher Columbus, Ferdinand Magellan, Hernando de Soto, Francisco Pizarro, and Sir Walter Raleigh.

Columbus primus inuentor Indiarum Occidentalis. V I.



COLUMBUS stram Gades in Portugalliam, et omnem illam Oceanorum nauigans, sapienter animaduertit, et diligenter obseruauit, centos quosdam statim annis temporibus ab occasu solis, qui multos dies constanti tractu perirent: quos quum non aliunde, quam ex transmarina ora proficisci posse iudicaret, tandem circa eam rem cogitando animum versauit, ut eius certitudinem quare aliquando constitueret. Quapropter et Reipub. Genuesi, et Principibus aliquot suam operam obtulit, ut illam oram indagaret: sed ab omnibus neglectus, tandem sumptibus Ferdinandi et Isabella Regum Hispania, nauigationem instituit.

B 3 Colum.

Inuentio Maris Magallanic. XV.



FERDINANDVS Magallanus à Rege Portugallia offensus, Carolum V. Imperatorem adit, atq. illi demonstrat Moluccas Insulas Castellorum turis esse: sperare se, nauigatione ad Occidentem facta, fretum inuenturum in Occidentali India, per quod in mare Australe penetraret, et inde ad Moluccas insulas peruenire posset. Ea autem sua minoribus sumptibus, et minore difficultate, aromata, aliq. Orientis merces inueniri posset. Carolo ex eorum sententia quae rerum indicarum Concilio praeerant, illi naves instruit quibus eum praeficit. Is Hispani soluit, post longam nauigationem tandem fretum inuenit centum decem leucas in longitudine patens, binas in latitudine, inter quodum plures, cui ab Inuentore u nomine, Magallanicus cognomen inditum.

Hispani



VIRGINIAE maritima Insulis abundante, qua difficilem admodum praeberi in eam regionem aditum: nam licet frequentibus et laxis intervallis sint inter se discretæ, qua commodum ingressum polliceri videtur, magno tamen nostro damno expertissimus vadosa esse et vendarum breuibis infesta, nec unquam interiora penetrare potuimus, donec multis et variis locis minore naui periculum faceremus: litum tandem inuenimus loco quodam nostris Anglis bene cognito. Ingressi igitur, et navigatione aliquamdiu continuata, magnum flumen obseruauimus, e regione prædictarum insularum exonerans, quod tamen subire non licuit, ob angustias, arenarum aestu replente eius ostium. Longius igitur navigationem prosequuti, ad magnam insulam peruenimus, cuius incolæ, nobis conspectis immensum et horridum clamorem tollere ceperunt, ut potest, qui homines nobis similes numquam antea conspexissent, et in fugam se conicientes, ululatibus ferarum vel furiosorum ritu omnia compleverunt: sed amice reuocati, propositisque nostris mercibus, veluti speculis cultellis, pueris, et aliis quicquid, quas ipsi gratas futuras existimabamus, substituerunt, et obseruata nostra inuolentia atque amicitia, blanditi nobis, et de aduentu gratulati sunt: deinde in suam urbem, ROANOAC nomine, atque adeo ad suum WEROANSIUE Regulum deduxerunt, qui satis humaniter nos excepit, nostro tamen conspectu attonitus.

Talis fuit noster in eam NOVIORIS partem, quam VIRGINIAM appellamus, aduentus: cuius incolarum staturam corporis et ornatum, victusque rationem, festis, et conuiuiis, illam vobis proponam.

These maps in Great Voyages are both true maps and works of art. Given the limited map-making aids available, they are remarkably accurate.

Whatever the reason, De Bry did publish the *Virginia* first.

The text was written by Thomas Harriot who, along with White, was one of the few specialists in the pioneer group. (A third was a metallurgist, for always the hope was of finding gold as the Spanish had done.) The 25 year old Harriot had previously been employed by Raleigh as a tutor in his household for science, mathematics and navigation.

His report glossed over the hardships of their year in America. The climate was so healthful, he said, that out of the whole company of 108, only four died and three of those were sickly before they came. This document was intended as a prospectus to attract new investors and colonists.

First priority was given to marketable commodities found in Virginia. His list included turpentine, tar, otter and marten furs, deer skins and copper, plus a few items (such as silkworms) that are plainly erroneous.

Next came those commodities necessary for the sustenance of life. Maize is prominently mentioned. Not only did he

Ad Cap. III.
Ferdinandus de Sotomilitum Tribunus cum aliquot alijs ad Regem Atabalibam a Pizarro ablegatum.



Pizarro cum suo exercitu ad Caxamalca perueniens, nobilium quendam Indum reperit, qui ipsum quouan diuertere cœtaret, donec Atabaliba aditum fieri. Ille nullo dato responso, ad occupat in quibus se et suos recipi, atque confectum Tribunal Ferdinandum de Soto cum aliquot alijs equis in ad Atabalibam ablegat, ipsum eius nomine salutariarum, et reuocatarum, iam fidei accipere, ut ipsum conuenire liceat. Sotus equum in eum faciem ad aua faciens, adeo prope Atabalibam accedit, ut equi spuma in eum faciem ad aua amem ea re non comotus, grauatam cultum non remisit, sed multos exiit quatuor ab equi spuma reuoluit, et ipsum non effugerunt. Ferdinandum Pizarro deinde missum, qui se Hispanorum Præsidi fratrem esse, quæ Caxamala mandata Pontifici, et ipsorum nomine cum eo amicitiam contraheret, cuius rei gratia de regere, Caxamalam sibi conferre dignaretur, ut de rebus magni momenti in e possent.

B 2 Ataba

Ad Cap. XVI.
Confalvus Pizarro vincitur, capitur et supplicio afficitur.



STRATO non sine difficultate Apurimac flumine, Præfex de committenda pugna leno cogit, et oratione ad suos milites habita, strenue sese gerant, adhortatur, magna præmia pollicetur. Contra Pizarro Curcos egressus, ex aduerso castra figit. Altero die pugna ignum datur, deservunt interea plerique Pizarro, et inter ceteros Audito Cepeda. Pizarro valde commotus, et cum militum animos valde fregit illarum toga præteritis. Cepeda nihilominus suos hortatur, eos in aciem distulit. Aenea tormentis interea disfoliunt, quæ magnam faciunt irragem, præteritis Præfex Gaica in Pizarro milites, quorum magna pars fugiens ad Præfex tentis se conuulsi, plerique etiam absque armis negant se perperatos. Hac ratione breui soluta est viuetoria Pizarro exercitus, et attonitus remanente Pizarro cum Tribuni ipsi, quia neq. paginare poterant, atq. fugæ voluerant. Confusos autem Villancentium, interrogat quis sit reponens le primatum esse Centurionem Gaicæ exercitus, et ego, inquit, dum innotuissent Confalvus Pizarro, omnesque cum dido emicem illi trahit. Valde sibi gratulatus est talis capto Villancentium, flammæ illum, vi armatus erat, ad Præfex Gaicam duam in portu Jacobo Centeno custodiendum trahit. Postremo datam mandatum Licentato Caxaca, et Præfex Gaicam Aluarado, ut de capto cognoscere et supplicium sibi curare Pizarro foret, ut ceruice præcisa. Accipit militem ciuitatem delatum, maris etque columarum impolitæ, ferrea reuoluit, cum hac inscriptione. Huc caput est proditori Confalvi Pizarro, qui in valle Xayucagana acie aduersus Caxaca vexilla decurare non dubitauit. Illo sublato, Præfex Gaica Cuzco profectus est. Pizarroque et aliorum proditorum et leno dicitur et laqueis, lapsum item foret cum innotuisset erat. Ille adeo fuerat proditor Confalvi Pizarro.

F 4 Milites

XIII.
GUALTHERUS RALEGH,
EXPVGNATA CIVITATE, HISPANVM
Gubernatorem captiuum abduxit.



Vm Gualtherus Raleigh, natus suis ad Insulam TRINIDAD appulset, Hispanos in PIERTO DE LOS ESPANVOLES, blandis verbis egessit, ad se iuuauit, et nota tantum Insularum statum, sed et Hispanorum vires atque potentiam ab eis explorauit, postea vero cognitis rebus omnibus, Capitaneum CALVELL cum 100 armatis sibi adiuuauit. Et circa vespertam ciuitatem S. JOSEPHI, in qua regius Gubernator DON ANTONIO DE BERRIO erat, oppugnata facile superauit. Quo facto, dimisit omnes qui in ciuitate erant, excepto solo BERRIO quem cum sociis captiuum abduxit.

d 2



In the 17th century people read the illustrations in books as they did the text. Though charming and decorative, the engravings in the *Great and Small Voyages* were designed to carry the content of the book.

recommend it for bread, but they had made some malt out of the grain and brewed very good ale. For meat there were deer, rabbits, squirrels, black bear, turkeys and fish.

Last, Harriot set out those things that it behooved future settlers to know about the nature and manners of the people of the country.

For his part, White drew these people with their dress and weapons, their villages and their rituals. He showed the crops they planted, the way they fished, and how they preserved the corpses of their chieftains. De Bry engraved most of the plates himself — they are signed with his “T.B.” To him the illustrations were of paramount importance. (In the introduction he says that to foil counterfeiters he has put secret marks in the pictures.) The purpose of the words was so that every man could better understand the figures. He followed White’s drawings faithfully, although he tended to modify the features of the Indians, especially the women, to conform more to European ideals

of beauty.

The following year De Bry published the *Florida*, using Le Moyne’s paintings (which were somewhat more gory than White’s) and also his written descriptions of Florida and its strange flora and fauna. Despite the fact that the original account was written in French, he did not publish a French edition, nor an English one either. After all, the English had a special interest in the first book. *Florida* and all the succeeding volumes were published only in Latin, the universal language of scholars, and in German as befitted a Frankfort publishing house.

A year later came Part III, *Brazil* — an account of two voyages to that country. In his engravings for the title page De Bry made use of the fact that the natives were reported to be cannibals. Against a framework of elaborately ornamented columns, arches, and festoons he placed the figure of a man in a feathered head-dress and a woman, each nibbling on what appear to be severed human limbs.

The series was well under way. Parts

IV, V, and VI are about New Spain and all were written by Girolamo Benzoni, an Italian, who was said to have spent 14 years observing the “India of the West.” He recounts local events in the Spanish colony, tells of a clash with the French, and devotes a great deal of space to Pizarro’s conquest of Peru. Unlike White’s and Le Moyne’s drawings, these illustrations show Europeans and natives together.

After Theodor de Bry’s death in 1598, his widow and two sons, Johann Theodor and Johann Israel, continued with three more parts, possibly from plans and material already in hand. For example, the title page of Part VII (another voyage to Brazil) uses the identical engraved cannibalistic plate as Part III. They evidently intended to end the series, for Part IX is headed “Ninth and Last Part.” The two brothers inaugurated a new series of their own, the so called *Small Voyages*, about the seamen, mostly Portuguese and Dutch, who sailed east instead of west.

An interval of 17 years elapses with no new publications about America, although to supply popular demand more editions of some of the earlier part were issued. Then Johann Theodor, the surviving brother, took the series up again with Part X, a sort of sequel to his father’s *Virginia*. Here is the story of Jamestown and of Chief Powhatan and his daughter Pocahontas, who was kidnaped by the English and later married one of them, John Rolfe.

Johann Theodor also brought out a part XI. Then, shortly after his death, his heirs published Part XII, a miscellaneous collection of half a dozen different pieces all of which had been published before. It lacked the focus and impact of Theodor de Bry’s earlier volumes. The great series was winding down. Ten years later with the appearance of XIII, also a melange, it ended. But the reputation of what came to be called the *Great and Small Voyages* has been enough to secure it a distinguished place in nearly all the great libraries of Europe and America.

GILCREASE

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FRONT COVER:

"Cloud Study," a study in oil on paper by Albert Bierstadt, 6½ inches by 10½ inches, from the collection of the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art.

BACK COVER:

"Santa Fe Sundown," a miniature painting in oil on board by Wayne Wolfe, 8 inches by 12 inches, to be featured in the "American Art in Miniature" exhibition at Gilcrease Museum.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

All illustrations from the front cover through page 9, and pages 27 through 32 of this issue are of paintings and books in the collection of the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art.

The paintings of Conrad Schwiering, pages 10 through 26, were photographed by Abi Garaman.

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AMERICAN ART IN MINIATURE



Small paintings by 50 notable living artists will be shown in the "American Art in Miniature: 1985" exhibition which opens November 23 at Gilcrease Museum. Many of the artists are Gilcrease Rendezvous artists of past or future years, or who may be featured in future Gilcrease exhibitions. Among them are Joe Beeler, James Boren, Glenna Goodacre, Frank McCarthy, Richard Schmid, Gordon Snidow, Bettina Steinke, Steve Seltzer and Wayne Wolfe, who will be represented by his new work, "Santa Fe Sundown," shown here. The preview and wall sale of "American Art in Miniature" for Gilcrease members will be November 22 and the exhibition will be on display through December 15.