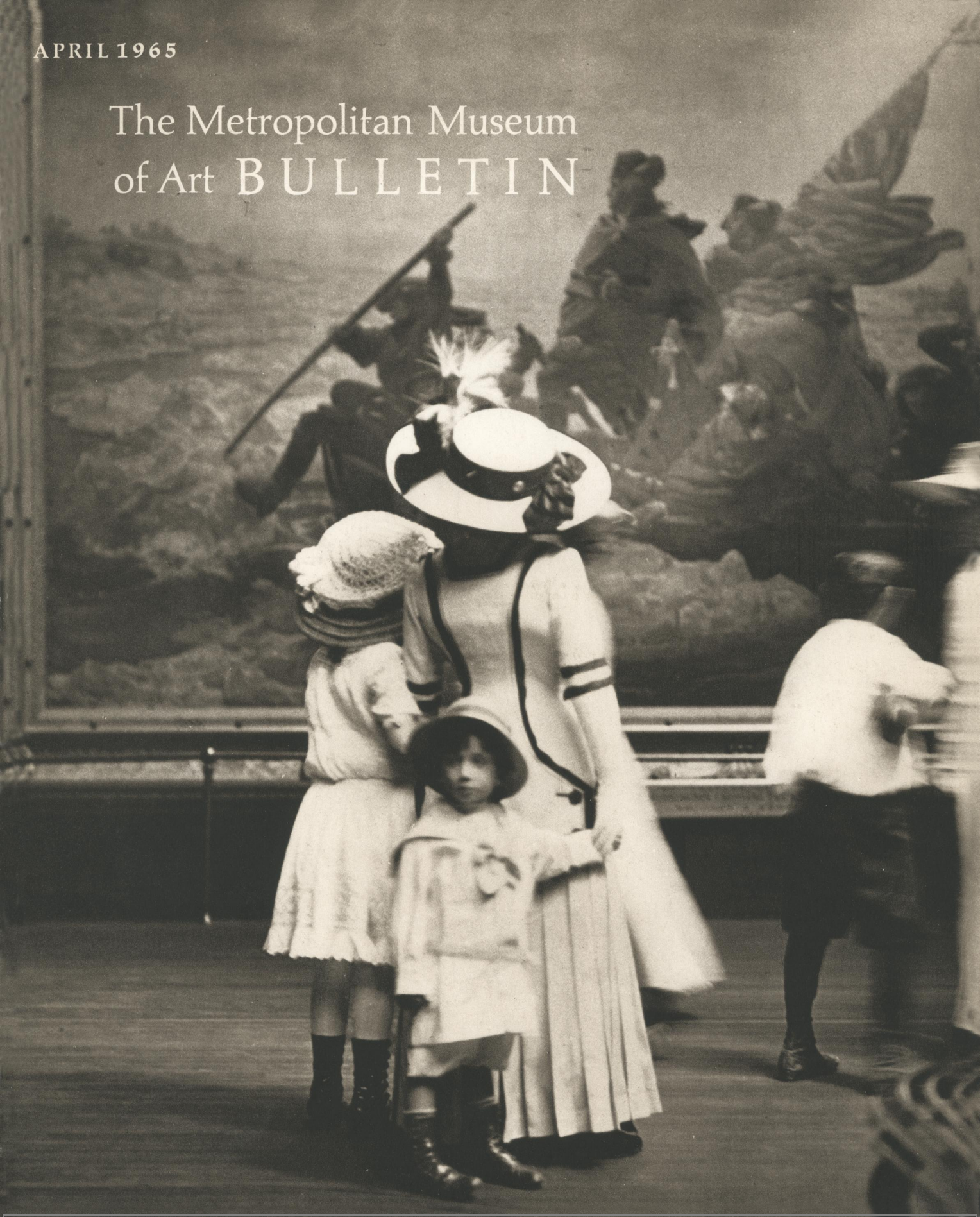
APRIL 1965

The Metropolitan Museum of Art BULLETIN



FRONTISPIECE: *A corner of the Museum's Gallery of American Paintings as it was in 1899. The majority of the paintings are easily recognized. Among those mentioned in this article are (from left to right): Benjamin West's Hagar and Ishmael, Thomas Sully's Portrait of the Artist, C. L. Elliott's Portrait of Mathew Brady, John Trumbull's Alexander Hamilton, Charles Willson Peale's George Washington, and, at the far right, a part of Emmanuel Leutze's Washington Crossing the Delaware*

ON THE COVER: *Visitors in the Gallery of American Paintings, about 1908 or 1909, in front of Emmanuel Leutze's Washington Crossing the Delaware*

The First Thirty Years

ALBERT TEN EYCK GARDNER
Associate Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture

The exhibition *Three Centuries of American Painting*, which opens on April 9 and will run through October 17, provides an appropriate occasion for a review of some of the forgotten aspects of the Metropolitan Museum's collection. One of the most interesting phases of this development is the growth of the collection in the three decades before 1900, when the Museum depended almost entirely on the generosity of donors of works of art, for lack of sufficient funds to buy pictures. Many important American paintings were acquired in this period, however, and these formed the nucleus about which the present collection, acquired for the most part in the twentieth century, was gathered.

At the time of the foundation of the Museum many of the most prominent artists of New York were active participants in forwarding the project. When the Metropolitan was chartered in 1870 some of these men were listed among the founders, notably the

1. The Wages of War, 1849, by Henry Peters Gray (1819-1877). Oil on canvas, 48¼ x 76¼ inches. Gift of Several Gentlemen, 73.5

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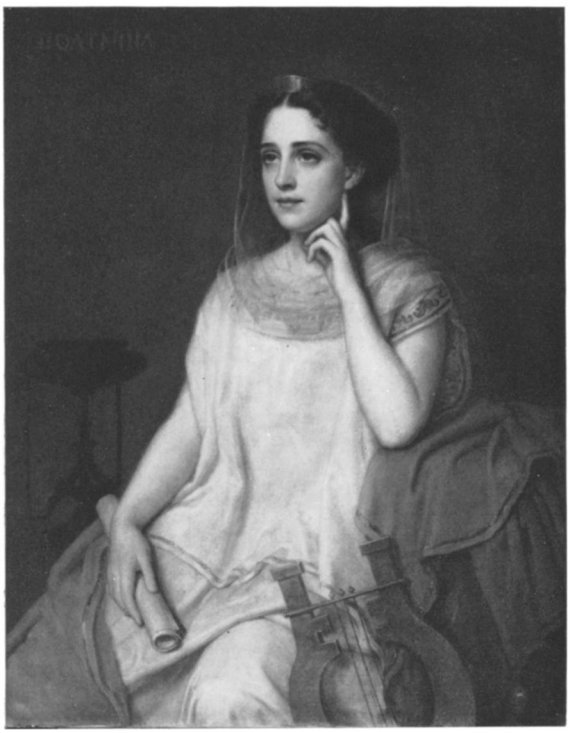
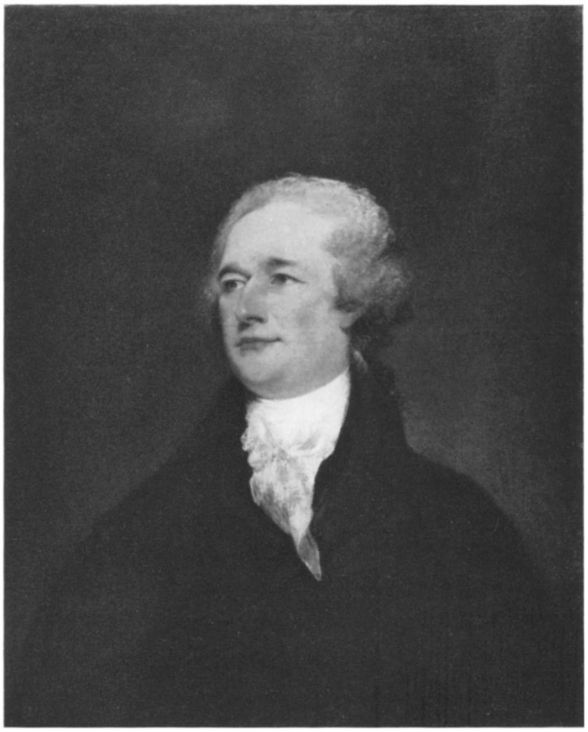
AMERICAN PAINTING





landscape painter John F. Kensett, the portrait painters Daniel Huntington and Eastman Johnson, the sculptor John Q. A. Ward, and Samuel P. Avery, who, although trained as an engraver, was then one of the most prominent art dealers in the city. The presence of these professionals naturally oriented the institution to the acquisition and display of the work of American artists, and of study materials for the instruction and inspiration of American art students. Thus, although one of the first actions of the Trustees was the purchase of a collection of old masters (mostly Flemish and Dutch), it was in response to the longstanding plea of American artists for European paintings to study. Before this collection was opened to the public it was shown to the artists of New York at a special reception and preview.

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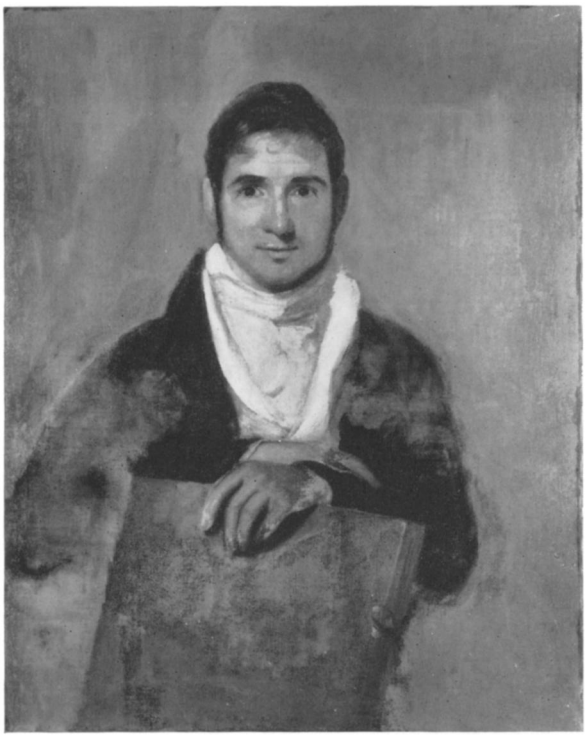
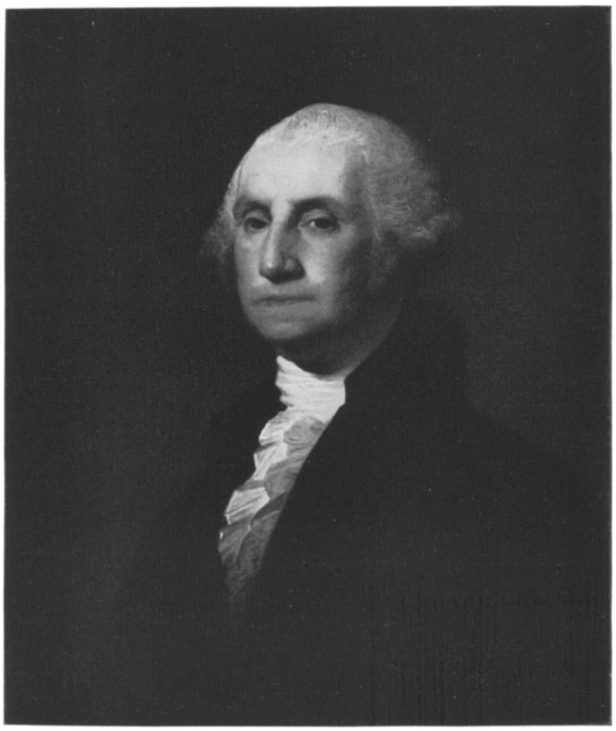




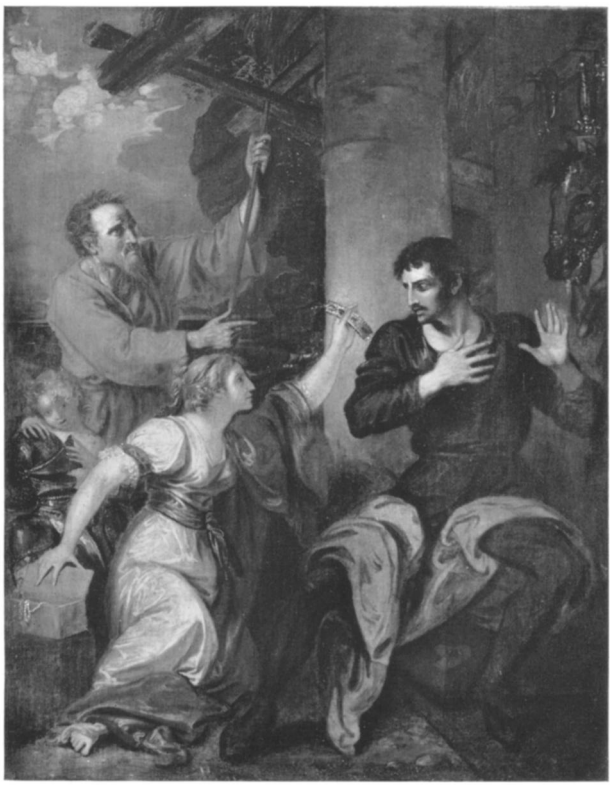
2. *Polyhymnia: Mrs. Francis C. Barlow, 1869, by Joseph Fagnani (1819-1873). Oil on canvas, 43½ x 33½ inches. Gift of an Association of Gentlemen, 74.45*

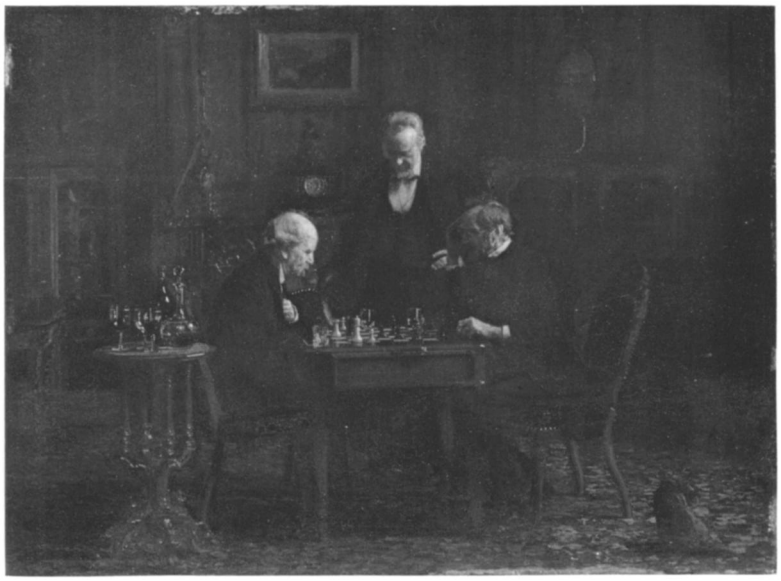
3. *Alexander Hamilton, about 1804, by John Trumbull (1756-1843). Oil on canvas, 30¾ x 24⅜ inches. Gift of Henry J. Marquand, 81.11*

4. *Alexander Anderson, 1815, by John Wesley Jarvis (1780-1840). Oil on canvas, 34 x 27 inches. Gift of Robert Hoe, Jr., 81.16*

5. *George Washington, 1803, by Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828). Oil on canvas, 29⅛ x 24⅛ inches. Gift of H. O. Havemeyer, 88.18*

6. *Scene from* Orlando Furioso, *about 1793, by Benjamin West (1738-1820). Oil on canvas, 36 x 28 inches. Deposited by Mrs. Arthur Seguin, 1881. Purchase, Maria DeWitt Jesup Fund, 95.22.1*





7 (left). The Chess Players, 1876, by Thomas Eakins (1844-1916). Oil on wood, 11¾ x 16¾ inches. Gift of the Artist, 81.14

8 (below). The Spanish Quartette, 1884, by William Dannat (1853-1929). Oil on canvas, 94⅜ x 91¾ inches. Gift of Mrs. William H. Dannat, 87.26

OPPOSITE:

9. The American School, 1765, by Matthew Pratt (1734-1805). Oil on canvas, 36 x 50¼ inches. Gift of Samuel P. Avery, 97.29.3

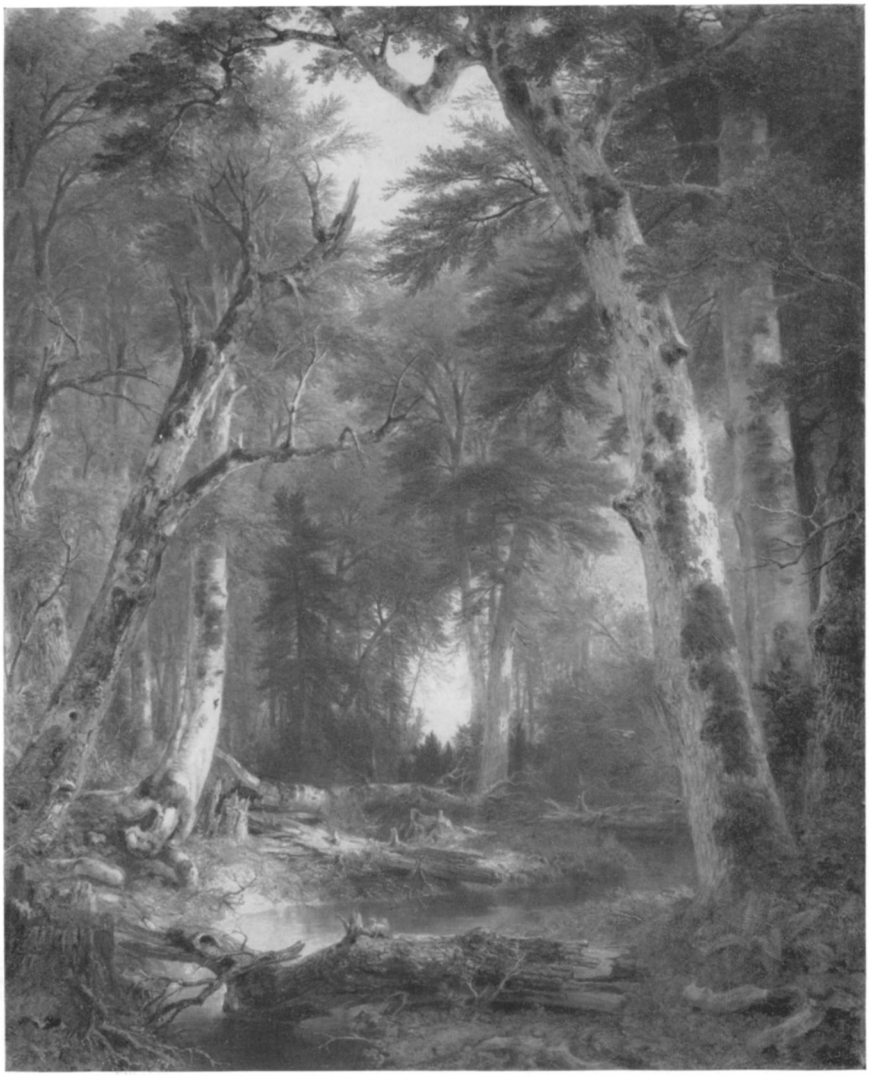
The domination of European traditions and European taste is strongly evident in the first painting by an American artist to come to the Museum, The Wages of War (Figure 1) by Henry Peters Gray, presented in 1873. It is a curious picture, by a New York painter now more or less forgotten, yet it records a significant moment in the history of American painting. It was painted in 1849, after the artist had been in Italy, and in it one finds echoes of his study of Giorgione and Titian. In buying the picture and presenting it to the Museum the donors were honoring the artist not so much for his art as for his extraordinary success in managing a fund-raising campaign in 1865 that resulted in putting the National Academy of Design on a sound financial basis. Thus the picture has a peculiar local historical significance to add to its awkward charms as a relic of an age of artistic innocence. Perhaps this strange canvas should be considered an academic "primitive," since it has a dangerously close relationship to the allegorical panels that used to adorn steamboats, fire engines, and circus wagons.

In the 1870s the Museum's progress in making a permanent collection of paintings was greatly hampered by the financial panic of 1873 and the following five or six years of depression. Fifty-three American paintings were acquired by gift, but of these thirty-eight were unfinished landscape studies by John F. Kensett. When the contents of Kensett's studio were put up at auction after his death these pictures were considered unsuitable for sale because of their unfinished state, and were presented to the Museum in 1874. At first they were exhibited as a group called The Last Summer's Work, but as better examples of Kensett's work were acquired these pictures were retired to the reserve collection. Nine of the others, moreover, formed a group of portraits of contemporary belles by Joseph Fagnani, which was presented by "an association of gentlemen" in the same year as the Kensett gift. This quaint suite of pictures was known as American Beauty Personified as the Nine Muses. "I think," said one of the misses (Figure 2) later, "they all look like ladies on prune boxes." At any rate, they joined the unfinished Kensetts in the reserve early in the twentieth century.

The Museum's first director, General Luigi Palma di Cesnola, suggested in 1879 that the

Museum should collect pictures by early American painters, a suggestion conscientiously pursued during his long directorate (1879-1904). In the eighties, twenty-nine American pictures were added to the collection, and in general their quality and interest show a decided improvement over the pictures received in the previous decade. In 1881 a serious beginning to the collection of early American pictures was made when Henry Marquand presented a portrait of Alexander Hamilton (Figure 3) by John Trumbull, and the Trustees subscribed to a fund for the purchase of a portrait of David Sears by Gilbert Stuart. In the same year Robert Hoe gave the portrait of Alexander Anderson (Figure 4) by John Wesley Jarvis, a beautiful and lively sketch that is perhaps as good a demonstration of Jarvis's technical skill as can be found. When the picture was received in 1881 some later hand had "finished" it by filling in the background and smoothing over the dashing strokes in the face, reducing it to a commonplace, run-of-the-mill effigy, but the recent removal of the later repaint and heavy brown varnish have freed Jarvis's work and reveal the attractive features of the subject. Anderson was known in the later years of the nineteenth century as "the father of American wood-engraving," for he worked as an engraver in New York from boyhood, in 1787, until 1868, when he was ninety-three years old.

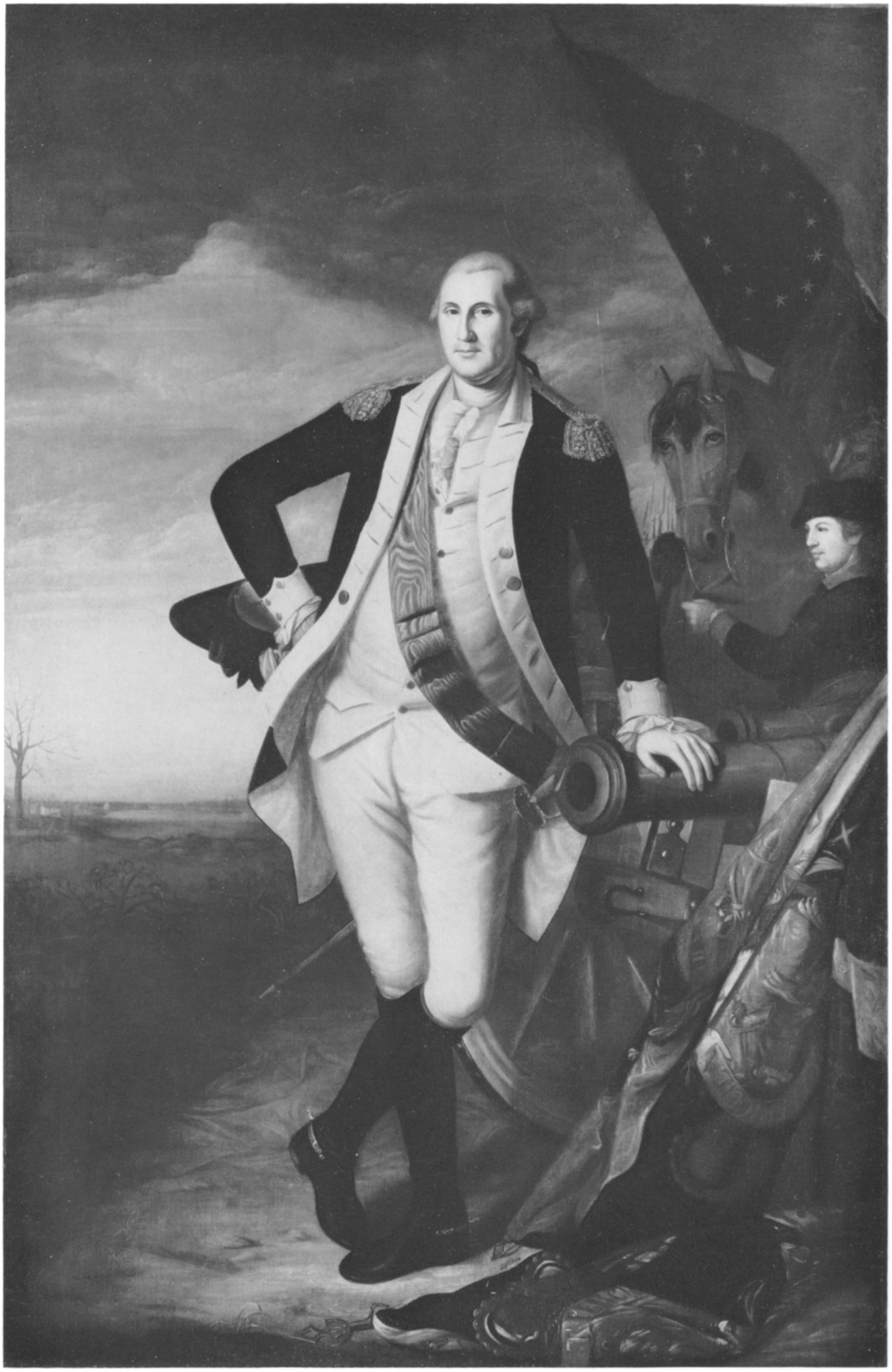
10. In the Woods, 1855, by Asher B. Durand (1796-1886). Oil on canvas, 60¾ x 48⅝ inches. Gift in memory of Jonathan Sturges by his children, 95.13.1



Among the other early pictures received in the 1880s was a Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington (Figure 5), known as the "Carroll Washington" to differentiate it from Stuart's many other replicas of his famous Athenaeum portrait. This was the first of many important gifts received from H. O. Havemeyer. (His famous collection of paintings and other works of art was given to the Museum in 1929 as the bequest of Mrs. Havemeyer.) Another interesting early American picture received in the eighties was the James Peale portrait of Washington at Yorktown, from the collection of William Henry Huntington.

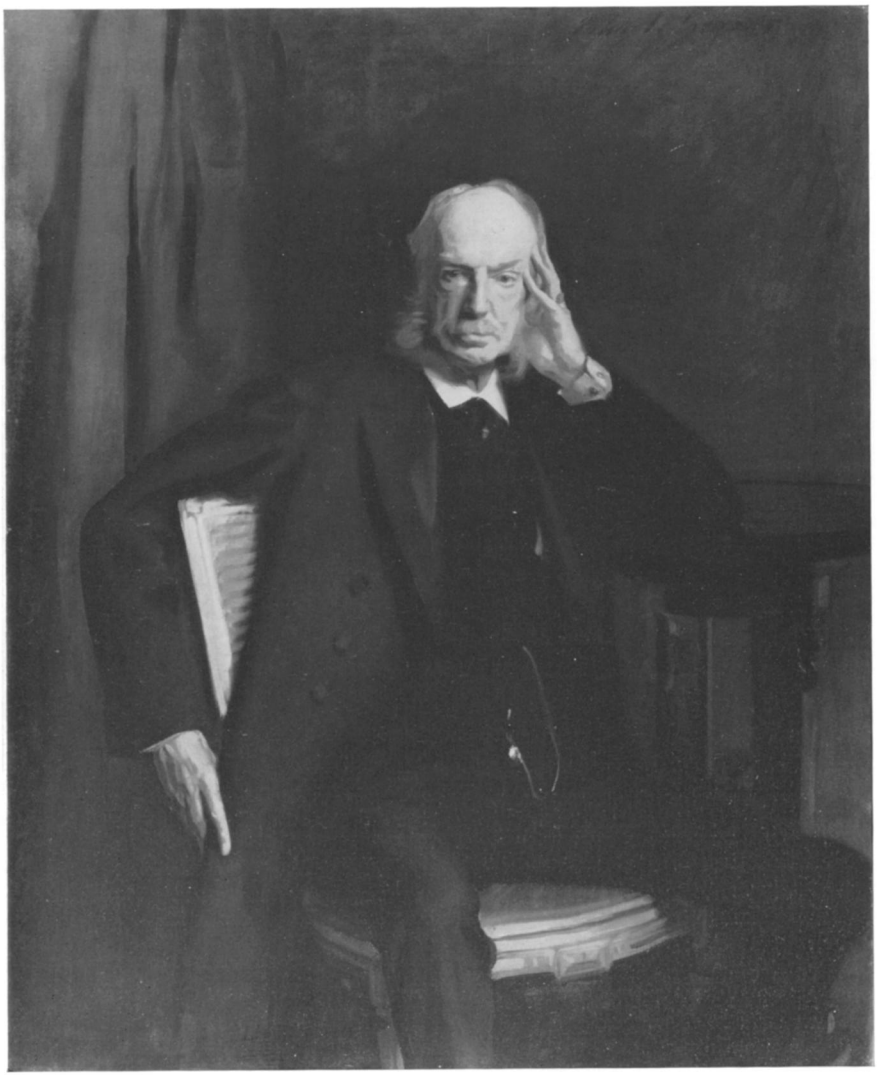
The collection of paintings by Benjamin West has a long and curious history. A group of nine paintings by (or attributed to) him was lent to the Museum in 1881 by Mrs. Arthur Seguin and remained as a loan from her heirs until 1923, when they were purchased for a modest sum to settle the estate of her daughter-in-law. Mr. and Mrs. Seguin had both been noted opera singers, who came from London to settle in this country about 1838. They are said to have received their collection of Wests in England as collateral for a loan. At least three of the pictures, including a spirited scene from *Orlando Furioso* (Figure 6), are known to have been painted by West to hang in his own gallery and studio in Newman Street, London, and to have been sold at auction by his sons in 1829.

A number of interesting modern pictures were also added to the collection in the eighties. Perhaps the most important of them were The



11. George Washington, 1780, by Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827). Oil on canvas, 95 x 61¾ inches. Gift of Collis P. Huntington, 97.33

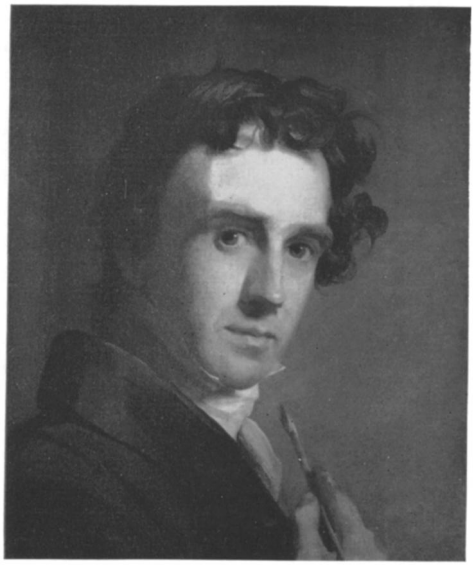
Chess Players (Figure 7) by Thomas Eakins, presented by the artist, and the group of paintings by George Fuller and George Inness presented by George I. Seney in 1887. However, the painting that aroused the greatest interest then was The Spanish Quartette (Figure 8) by William Dannat, a huge tour de force that established the reputation of the painter when it was exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1884. At least one French critic, Albert Wolf, claimed that it was the best piece of painting in the Salon. In the Paris Exposition of 1889 this picture occupied the place of honor in the American section. Today it stands as a monument to the French academic influence that had such a profound effect on American painting of the time.



12. Henry G. Marquand, 1897, by John Singer Sargent (1856-1925). Oil on canvas, 52 x 41¾ inches. Gift of the Trustees, 97.43

In the 1890s several very important early American pictures were given. The large retrospective exhibition of American paintings in the winter of 1895-1896 helped lay the groundwork for the acquisition of several pictures received many years later. For example, two Dering family portraits by Joseph Blackburn that were borrowed for the exhibition were presented to the Museum twenty years later. A number of other pictures in the exhibition were also given to the Museum, the most notable of these being the now famous conversation group The American School (Figure 9) by Matthew Pratt. It is an important document in American art history, showing Benjamin West in his London studio surrounded by some of his American pupils. The picture was painted in 1765, and its historic significance somewhat overshadows its artistic shortcomings. It was bought by Samuel Avery from the artist's daughters and given to the Museum in 1897. In the same year Collis P. Huntington presented the Charles Willson Peale full-length portrait of George Washington (Figure 11). This is a replica of the portrait painted in 1779, with minor changes in costume and background.

Two landscapes were received in 1895 from the collection of Jonathan Sturges, who had been one of the most liberal patrons of American painters in the 1840s: Thomas Cole's View on the Catskill—Early Autumn, and Asher B. Durand's In the Woods (Figure 10). View on the Catskill was painted in 1837 and is considered one of Cole's best works. Durand's romantic vision of the American wilderness, painted in 1855, won similar praise from the time it was first shown at the National Academy of Design. Another picture of note in the history of American painting is the humorous genre scene Raffling for the Goose (Figure 14) by William Sidney Mount. Some critics complained that Mount should apply his talents to subjects of a more genteel character. His preoccupation with rural barnyard scenes was not in keeping with their romantic



13. Portrait of the Artist, 1821, by Thomas Sully (1783-1872). Oil on canvas, 17⅛ x 14 inches. Gift of Mrs. Rosa C. Stanfield, 94.23.3

ideal of an artist "seeking The Beautiful." Fortunately, Mount paid these refined gentlemen little heed. Among the early portraits acquired in the 1890s were Charles Elliott's portrait of the famous Civil War photographer Mathew Brady, a self-portrait by Thomas Sully (Figure 13), and Henry Inman's portrait of President Martin Van Buren.

In the 1890s over thirty contemporary American pictures were added to the collection, among them some that have remained continuously popular. One of them is George Inness's Peace and Plenty, given in 1894 by George A. Hearn. Two additional paintings by Inness were also acquired, The Pine Grove of the Villa Barberini and a landscape of the Delaware Valley. Another popular landscape was Homer Martin's Harp of the Winds. Among the portraits acquired in this decade were Sargent's masterly rendering of Henry Marquand, then president of the Museum (Figure 12); Eastman Johnson's large double portrait (Figure 15) called The Funding Bill (because the two subjects were discussing this hot political issue when Johnson painted them); and John Alexander's idealized portrait of Walt Whitman.

Not to be forgotten is Emmanuel Leutze's colossal Washington Crossing the Delaware, which is now deposited on loan at the Wash-

14. Raffling for the Goose, 1837, by William Sidney Mount (1807-1868). Oil on wood, 17 x 23⅛ inches. Gift of John D. Crimmins, 97.36

ington's Crossing State Park in Pennsylvania. This picture, in spite of its historical inaccuracy and theatrical Germanic style, has become, by repeated publication in schoolbooks, one of the most widely known paintings in America. It is one of the permanent monuments in the folklore of history, regardless of its position as a work of art.

Shortly after the turn of the century, purchase funds became available and a new generation of trustees, administrators, and curators took over, bringing to a close the first phase of the history of the Museum. Fortunately, the well-established custom of giving pictures to the Museum has continued to the present, and the gifts have been supplemented with pictures the Museum was able to purchase, so that the collection of American paintings now numbers over 1250 and forms a panorama from colonial times to the present. It illustrates every phase of American painting and reflects every artistic influence that affected American painters over the last three hundred years. It also reflects the changes in taste among patrons and collectors, and gives sound evidence of the American tradition of generosity and concern with the welfare of artists and the arts.

15. The Funding Bill, 1881, by Eastman Johnson (1824-1906). Oil on canvas, 60½ x 78¼ inches. Gift of Robert Gordon, 98.14

"Loan Collection," 1965

STUART P. FELD *Assistant Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture*

This month The Metropolitan Museum of Art will put on exhibition 425 American paintings dating from 1670 to 1963—the most comprehensive showing of American pictures seen in New York in many years. Among the earliest exhibitions held by the Metropolitan were "Loan Collections," pictures borrowed from private collectors in order to make available to the public paintings by many of the leading masters at a time when the Museum's own collection was very limited. For the Museum's last comprehensive retrospective show of American painting, the *Life in America* exhibition of 1939, more than eighty per cent of the pictures were borrowed from private collectors and from museums, historical societies, and other institutions. The present show, by contrast, is drawn almost entirely from the Museum's permanent collection of more than 1250 American paintings by nearly 625 artists. We have, however, also followed tradition, and have once again turned to twenty-one private collectors and two artists, who have generously lent twenty-nine pictures. Thus we are able to show the work of twelve artists not included in our collection—the unidentified "Freake limner," John Greenwood, Reuben Moulthrop, William Jennys, Joshua Johnston, George Catlin, Fitz Hugh Lane, John F. Francis, Man Ray, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, and Mark Rothko—as well as to represent more adequately the production of eleven others.

Since the Metropolitan owns no American paintings of the seventeenth century, we are particularly grateful to have been able to borrow the three portraits of the Gibbs children, which, incidentally, are seen here together for the first time since the memorable exhibition of seventeenth century painting in New England held at the Worcester Art Museum in 1934. The Museum also owns no family groups of the pre-Revolutionary period, a gap nicely filled by John Greenwood's unique conversation piece. The two pictures by Ralph Earl are noteworthy additions since they are the only known pair of full-length life-size portraits by him. The few primitive paintings are a welcome supplement to our own collection, which has been greatly improved during the past few years through the generosity of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch. The paintings by James Peale, John F. Peto, and John F. Francis have bolstered the Museum's own

small collection of still lifes, which has only recently been strengthened by the addition of major works by William Michael Harnett and Severin Roesen. The paintings by Thomas Sully and Jasper F. Cropsey are especially interesting additions, for in both cases the Museum has owned for many years the oil sketches on which they were based. The charming group portrait by Samuel F. B. Morse is an unusual and amusing complement to the three fine pictures by him in the permanent collection.

Some of the loans are familiar through reproductions in books and magazine articles, but most of them have not been widely exhibited in many years. Although Cropsey's The Valley of Wyoming was included in a Cropsey retrospective at the Bruce Museum in Greenwich in 1964, it was last seen in New York at the annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design just a hundred years ago. For seventy-seven of the intervening years it hung, virtually unnoticed, in a warehouse in Erie, Pennsylvania. It is possible that Sully's full-length of Queen Victoria has never before been exhibited in New York; it is, at any rate, brought together with the sketch from life for the first time since it left Sully's studio more than 125 years ago. The portraits by Ralph Earl descended to two branches of the Boardman family about 1909 or 1910, and are here reunited for the first time since then. It seems particularly appropriate that this should occur at a moment when the Museum is placing on exhibition its newly acquired monumental group portrait by Earl, Mrs. Noah Smith and Her Children (see page 300). Similarly, the works by John Greenwood, James Peale, William Jennys, and Mather Brown have probably never been seen in New York, and most of the others have made only brief appearances. We are fortunate to have been able to bring this distinguished group of pictures together for this exhibition and are deeply indebted to their owners for their cooperation and understanding in making them available for so long a period of time.

OPPOSITE:

At left: ROBERT GIBBS *(1665-1702), 1670. Oil on canvas, 40 x 30 inches. Lent by Theron J. Damon. Photograph: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*

HENRY GIBBS *(1668-1723), 1670. Oil on canvas, 40½ x 33 inches. Lent by Mrs. David M. Giltinan. Photograph: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*

MARGARET GIBBS *(1663-?), 1670. Oil on canvas, 40½ x 33 inches. Lent by Mrs. David M. Giltinan*

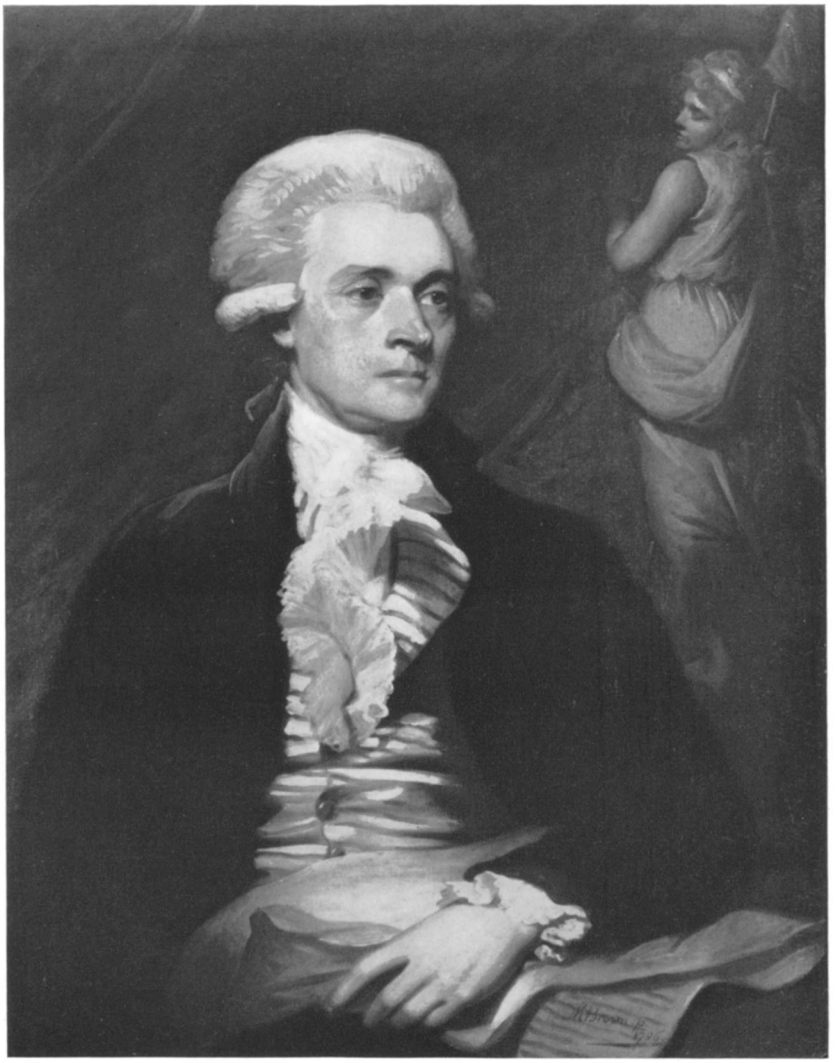
These portraits of the children of Robert Gibbs, a Boston merchant, are among the approximately two dozen American paintings that can be assigned confidently to artists active in New England in the seventeenth century. The identity of the painter has not been established, but the pictures have been attributed to the so-called "Freake limner" on the basis of their similarity to the portraits of John Freake and Mrs. Freake and Baby Mary, both in the collection of the Worcester Art Museum. The artist was very possibly a jack-of-all-trades, a skilled artisan who only occasionally rose above the

level of house painter, glazier, and sign painter to the exalted position of portrait painter. Although it would seem likely that his immediate artistic source was English, the style of the pictures is similar to that seen in provincial Netherlandish portraits of the preceding generation. The pictures show the artist's limited skill in draughtsmanship and in the delineation of sculptural forms, but in the customary fashion of the primitive painter he ignored his limitations and proceeded to create pictures in which he displayed a remarkable sense of design and a fine feeling for color. Small considerations such as the respective ages and sizes of the subjects did not concern him.

THE GREENWOOD-LEE FAMILY, *about 1747, by John Greenwood (1727-1792). Oil on canvas, 56 x 68 inches. Lent anonymously. Photograph: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*

Greenwood was born in Boston, where at fifteen he was apprenticed to Thomas Johnston, who operated a shop specializing in heraldic devices, japanned decoration, and other types of ornamental painting. About 1745 he established himself as an independent portrait painter. After working with little competition in Boston until 1752, for some unknown reason he departed for Surinam, British Guinea, where he is known to have painted 115 portraits during the next half dozen years. Subsequently he studied mezzotint engraving in Amsterdam; he spent the last thirty years of his life in London, enjoying great success as a dealer in paintings and art objects.

This group portrait is the most ambitious work by Greenwood that has come down to us. He shows himself with palette in hand in the right background, and his fiancée and first cousin Elizabeth Lee in the right foreground. The others are, from left to right, his youngest sister, Hannah, his mother, his sister Mary or his sister Elizabeth, and his cousin Martha Lee. For the composition of the picture, which was certainly unusually elaborate for an American artist of that period, Greenwood probably referred to John Smibert's well-known conversation piece, Bishop George Berkeley and His Family (Yale University Art Gallery), which still remained in Smibert's studio along with some of Smibert's other pictures and his collection of old masters. His attempt to be elegant and fashionable was tempered by his naiveté; the result was a spirited picture in which the figures dance with vitality and display a wonderful sense of well-being.



THOMAS JEFFERSON, *1786, by Mather Brown (1761-1831). Oil on canvas, 35¾ x 28⅛ inches. Lent by Charles Francis Adams. Photograph: G. M. Cushing*

Brown was born in Boston, a descendant of the divines Mather Byles, Cotton Mather, Increase Mather, and John Cotton. At sixteen he was active as an itinerant painter, and by nineteen he had accumulated enough money to go abroad. After studying with Benjamin West in London, in 1784 he established himself as a portrait painter in fashionable Cavendish Square. At first he received few commissions, but an Englishman writing to a friend in Boston tells us that by the age of twenty-five Brown was enjoying "the highest state of success." Brown painted a portrait of Jefferson between March 11 and April 26, 1786, when the American statesman, then United States Plenipotentiary to the Court of Versailles, was visiting London. That portrait, which remained in Brown's studio until 1788 while Brown was completing a companion portrait of John Adams, was then sent to Jefferson in Paris. Before Jefferson received the portrait, his friend the painter John Trumbull wrote him his opinion: "Mr. Adams is like—yours I do not think so well of." The portrait painted for Jefferson no longer survives, but while Brown had it in his studio he made a replica of it for John Adams. A receipt to Adams, dated May 12, 1786, for the payment of six guineas is attached to the back of this picture. Although the portrait is less well known than the likenesses of Jefferson by Trumbull, Stuart, Houdon, and Rembrandt Peale, it is distinguished as the earliest known portrait of Jefferson and as one of Brown's most dashing works.

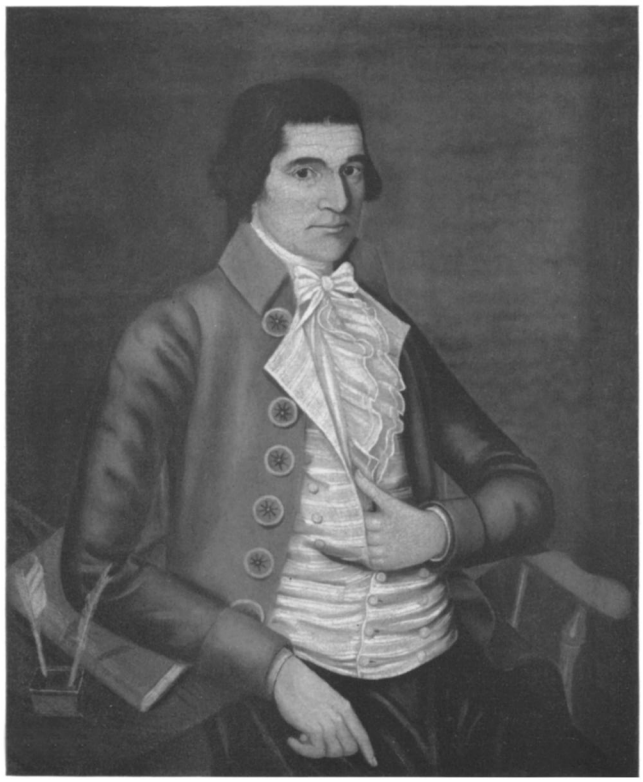
BENJAMIN LAMING AND HIS WIFE, *1788, by Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827). Oil on canvas, 41½ x 60 inches. Lent by Morris Schapiro. Photograph: Taylor and Dull*

Peale was an extremely versatile man, who worked as inventor, museum proprietor, scientist, writer, naturalist, and painter, all with equal facility. He was one of the best and most prolific artists in America during the last three decades of the eighteenth century, and he can be credited with having faithfully recorded the faces of most of the prominent individuals living in the Middle States at the time. Benjamin Laming was born in the West Indies, but settled in Baltimore, where he became a prosperous businessman. He married Eleanor Ridgely in 1784. This painting of the Lamings is probably Peale's most successful double portrait. According to Peale's diary, he "sketched out the design" on September 18, 1788. From then until October 5, he made daily visits to the Laming's country seat to work on the picture. His diary chronicles his progress; at one point he complained, "Mr. Laming sat for his face 2 [nd] sitting and yet meant for a finishing." We learn that on a single day he painted the parrot and the flowers in Mrs. Laming's hands and worked on the background, "a view of part of Baltimore town." When the Lamings could not sit, Peale spent an afternoon catching bullfrogs and an evening dressing two woodpeckers for his museum.

JOB PERIT, *1790, by Reuben Moulthrop (1763-1814). Oil on canvas, 36⅛ x 29¾ inches. Lent by Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch*

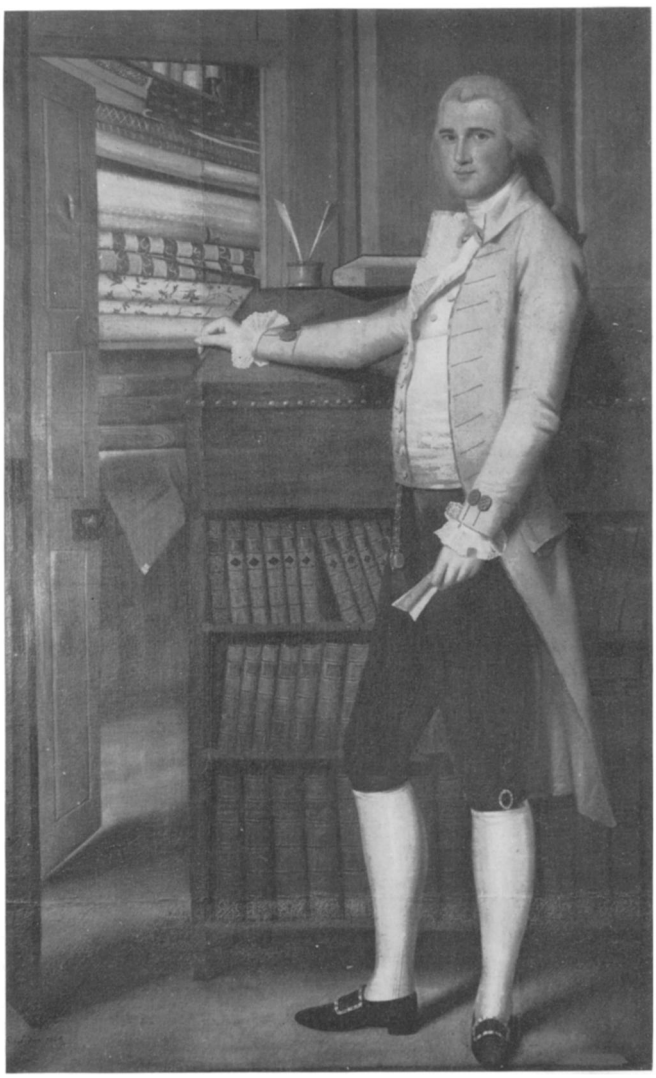
SALLY SANFORD PERIT, *1790, by Reuben Moulthrop. Oil on canvas, 36¼ x 29¾ inches. Lent by Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch*

Moulthrop spent most of his life in the vicinity of New Haven, Connecticut. Although he is known today as a portrait painter, contemporary notices show that he also did portraits in wax and owned a waxworks museum and a traveling waxworks exhibition, which was shown in many towns in Connecticut, as well as in New York and Boston. As a painter Moulthrop appears to have been largely self-taught: he was probably influenced by the work of Winthrop Chandler, John Durand, and others active in the area. These portraits, which are among the very few signed and dated works by Moulthrop that have been recorded, fall near the beginning of his career, but already show a distinctly personal style. Perit (1751-1794) was living in New Haven at the time the portraits were painted. The elaborate headdress worn by Mrs. Perit (1760-1829) is an unusual detail. The miniature she wears shows her daughter Elizabeth Sanford Perit at the age of five.



MRS. ELIJAH BOARDMAN AND HER SON WILLIAM WHITING BOARDMAN, *about 1797-1798, by Ralph Earl (1751-1801). Oil on canvas, 85 x 56 inches. Lent by Henry B. Mosle*

ELIJAH BOARDMAN, *1789, by Ralph Earl. Oil on canvas, 83 x 51 inches. Lent by Mrs. Cornelius Boardman Tyler. Photograph: Frick Art Reference Library*

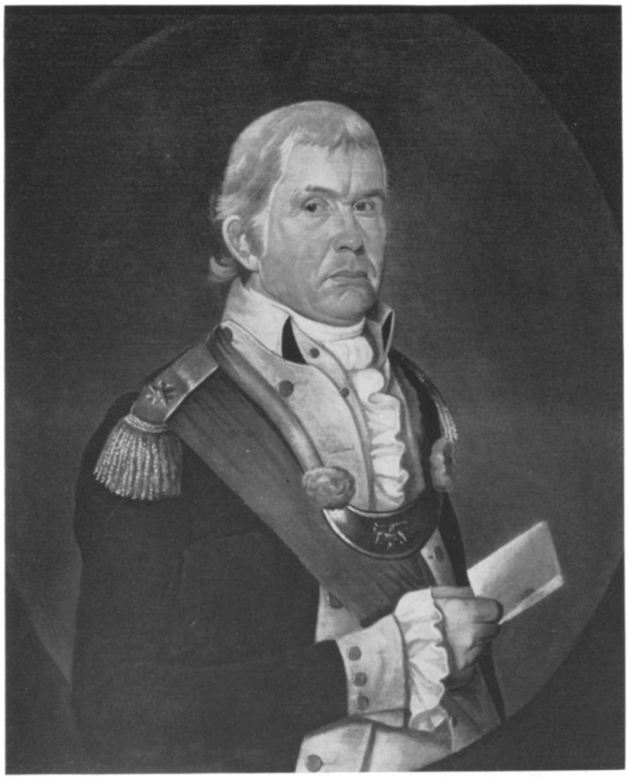


Earl first set himself up as a portrait painter in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1775. Three years later he went to England, apparently with the intention of improving his art. Although he received instruction from Benjamin West and possibly from some of the other leading painters of the day, his style seems to have been little affected, and the paintings he did after his return from England in 1785 retained the direct primitive quality found in his earliest works. Most of the portraits for which he is known date from the last fifteen years of his life.

Among the best of them are those of the Boardman family of New Milford, Connecticut. Elijah Boardman (1760-1823) was a prosperous merchant whose business interests extended as far as the Connecticut lands in Ohio, where he founded the town of Boardman. He was elected to the Connecticut state legislature six times, first as representative, then as senator. He served in the United States senate from 1821 until his death. Boardman married Mary Anna Whiting (1767-1848) of Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in 1792. The child shown was their eldest son, William (1794-1871), who also served in both houses of the state legislature as well as in Congress. The portrait of Elijah Boardman is dated 1789, as are Earl's portrait of Boardman's brother Daniel in the National Gallery and several other family portraits. The one of Mrs. Boardman is not dated, but the apparent age of the child suggests that it was painted shortly before 1800. In his customary manner, Earl placed the figures in the ample surroundings of office or parlor. Boardman stands next to his desk, on the shelves of which are seen such books as *Martin's Grammar*, *Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, *London Magazine*, a volume of Shakespeare, and another of Milton. Bolts of yardgoods are visible through the door at the left. The landscape background in Mrs. Boardman's portrait probably represents a view of the countryside surrounding their house in New Milford. The colorful "ingrain" or painted carpet is nearly identical to that found in several of Earl's other portraits, including the Museum's monumental group, Mrs. Noah Smith and Her Children, of 1798.

RUBENS PEALE, WITH A GERANIUM PLANT, *1801, by Rembrandt Peale (1778-1860). Oil on canvas, 28 x 24 inches. Lent by Pauline E. Woolworth. Photograph: Brenwasser. (On exhibition June 1 through September 10)*

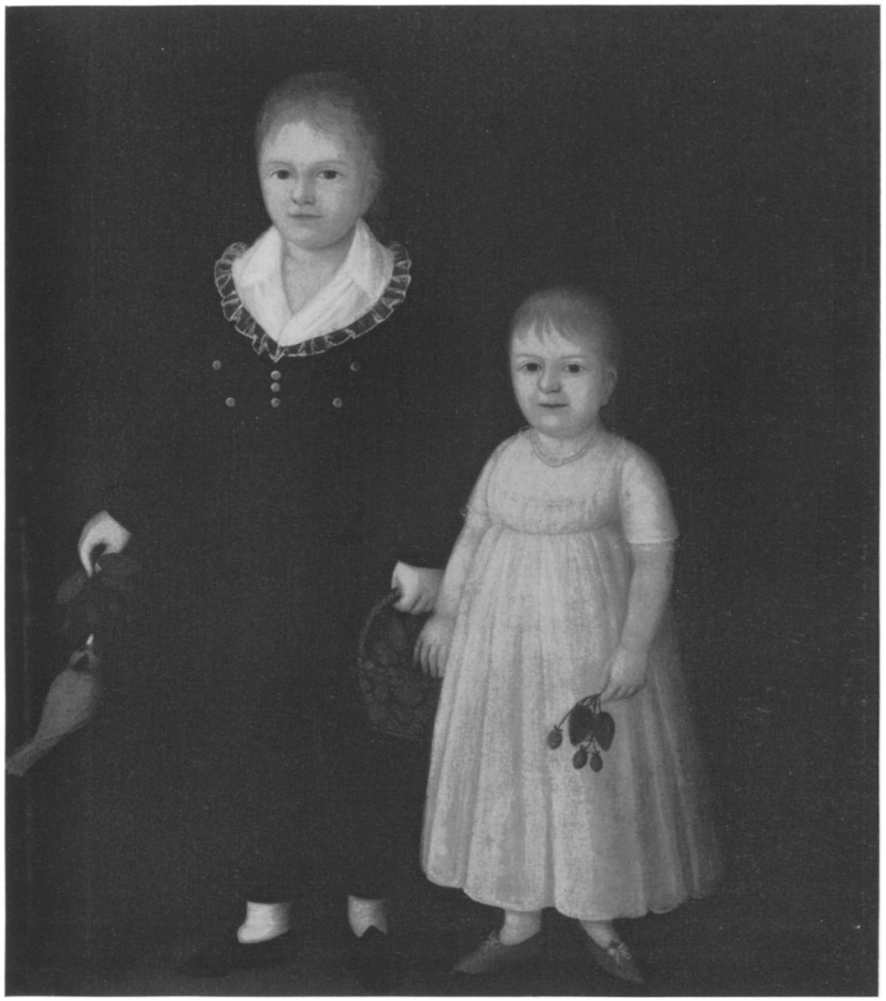
Rembrandt Peale was the second son of Charles Willson Peale, from whom he not only learned to paint but also acquired a taste for scientific projects and museum management. He spent a considerable amount of time helping his father excavate several mastodon skeletons in Ulster County, New York, and also executed a number of portraits for his father's portrait gallery and natural history museum, but he is best remembered today for his "porthole" portrait of George Washington, of which he painted nearly eighty replicas. In contrast to the stereotyped, idealized representation of Washington, this sensitive likeness of his brother Rubens (1784-1865) is spirited and refreshing. The geranium plant on the table was the first of the species to be brought to the United States, probably for display in the Peale Museum. Just several months before this picture was painted, Peale had boldly announced that he was dropping his surname and would henceforth be known simply as Rembrandt, because few people bothered to distinguish between the work of his father, his brother, his uncle, and himself, thus creating "a confusion disadvantageous to the distinct merit of each of us as an artist." This picture, however, is carefully inscribed *Rem Peale.*



BRIGADIER GENERAL AMASA ALLEN, *about 1802, by William Jennys (active about 1795-1810). Oil on canvas, 33¼ x 26¾ inches. Lent anonymously*

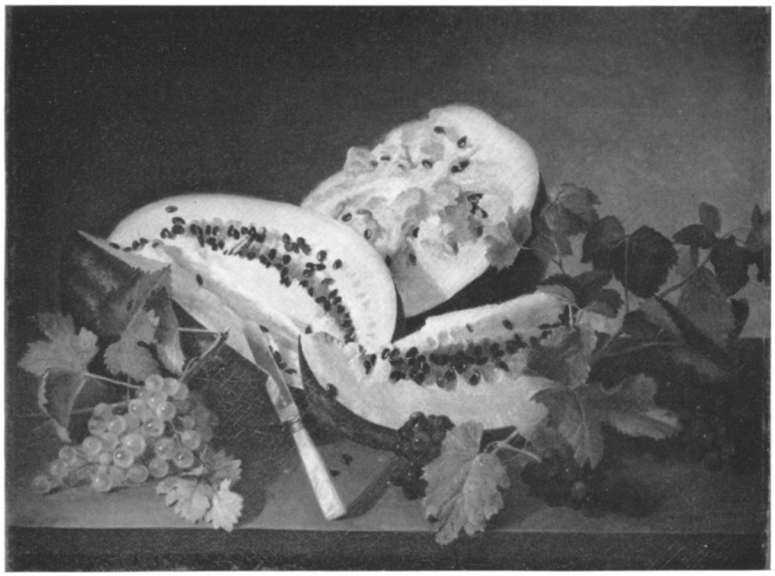
DEBORAH ALLEN, *about 1802, by William Jennys. Oil on canvas, 33¼ x 26¾ inches. Lent anonymously. Photographs: Minneapolis Institute of Arts*

Although more than a hundred portraits have been attributed to Jennys, we know nothing about his life except what can be learned from the pictures themselves. He may have been the brother or son of the itinerant portrait painter Richard Jennys, for there is a stylistic unity between Richard's work and the early paintings by William. William himself traveled widely in search of commissions. After about 1800 one can trace his path northward along the Connecticut Valley, into central Massachusetts, and then into Vermont and New Hampshire. About this time he developed a highly personal style, in which he showed an extraordinary capacity to record the character of his hardy New England subjects. This pair of portraits was probably painted in New Hampshire in 1802, the year Allen was elected to the state senate. Allen was also a prosperous merchant and the publisher of a political journal. His colorful uniform, complete with scarlet sash and silver gorget, was the one he had worn years before as a general in the Continental Army.



EDWARD AND SARAH RUTTER, *about 1805, by Joshua Johnston (or Johnson) (active about 1789-1824). Oil on canvas, 36 x 32 inches. Lent by Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch*

Johnston appears to have been the first Negro portrait painter active in the United States. He is listed in the Baltimore city directories between 1796 and 1824, and a few paintings by him have been placed as early as 1789. Nothing is known about his training, but a study of his pictures suggests that he may have received some instruction from Charles Peale Polk, a nephew of Charles Willson Peale. His draughtsmanship was somewhat more refined than Polk's, however, and his figures less wooden. Johnston seems to have specialized in painting family groups; more than half of his known portraits include children. One of the most charming of them is this portrait of the children of Captain Joshua Rutter of Baltimore. Like all of Johnston's paintings, it is unsigned, but the wicker basket filled with strawberries and the bunches of strawberry leaves and berries held by the children recur throughout his work and virtually constitute a signature.



STILL LIFE: WATERMELONS AND GRAPES, *1829, by James Peale (1749-1831). Oil on canvas, 19¾ x 26¾ inches. Lent anonymously*

James Peale was the youngest brother of Charles Willson Peale, from whom he received instruction in watercolor and oil painting. Much of his career was linked closely to that of his brother, whom he assisted in painting and also in a variety of activities in conjunction with his museum. After working together for a number of years, the two brothers advertised in 1786 that they were dividing the painting business between them, with James becoming a specialist in miniatures. He continued to paint some larger portraits, however, as well as landscapes and historical compositions. About 1818 failing eyesight forced him to give up miniature painting, but he soon started painting still lifes and produced an extraordinary group of them in his last years. This impeccably arranged composition of yellow and red watermelons, grapes, and a pearl-handled knife is inscribed on the back, "Painted by James Peale/ in the 79th year of his age. 1829."

MRS. RICHARD C. MORSE AND HER CHILDREN, *about 1835, by Samuel F. B. Morse (1791-1872). Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 inches. Lent by Mrs. J. Wright Rumbough*

Morse's brilliant response to a commission from the City of New York for a full-length portrait of Lafayette for City Hall and the active role he played as one of the founders and first president of the National Academy of Design established him in the mid-1820s as one of the leading figures in the New York art world. When Morse first exhibited this picture at the National Academy in 1835, it was called The Gold Fish, A Family Group. The subjects are Morse's sister-in-law and her children Elizabeth Ann and Charlotte. A critic for the *New York Mirror* called special attention to it as "the best painting we have ever seen from the worthy president," and described it as a "masterly specimen of taste in composition." The interior represented is typical of the classical revival style of the New York architect Alexander J. Davis. A couple of years later, Morse gave up painting in order to devote himself more fully to his experiments with electricity, which led eventually to the invention of the telegraph.

THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM, *about 1834, by Edward Hicks (1780-1849). Oil on canvas, 30 x 35⅛ inches. Lent by Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch*

Hicks was born in Newtown, Pennsylvania, and spent most of his life in that vicinity. At thirteen he was apprenticed to a coachmaker and by twenty-one he was a partner in a coachmaking and painting business. Besides painting tavern signs, oil cloth, clock faces, milk buckets, furniture, street signs, and fireboards, he created a remarkable group of pictures that have won him a reputation as the foremost primitive painter in America during the first half of the nineteenth century. Hicks is best known for his Peaceable Kingdoms, the theme of which he derived from the eleventh chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah; in the last thirty years of his life he did about fifty versions of the subject. He regarded Penn's treaty with the Indians as a fulfillment of the prophecy and introduced into the background of some of the paintings, including this example, a representation of the scene, taken from an engraving after Benjamin West's well-known painting of the subject. Some of the other details he borrowed from Biblical illustrations and popular engravings. Hicks painted this picture as a gift for Joseph Foulke of Three Tuns, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, and presented it to him in 1834. Foulke was his constant traveling companion when, as ministers in the Religious Society of Friends, they visited Quaker meeting houses in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and New England.

QUEEN VICTORIA, *1838, by Thomas Sully (1783-1872). Oil on canvas, 94 x 58 inches. Lent by Arthur A. Houghton, Jr.*

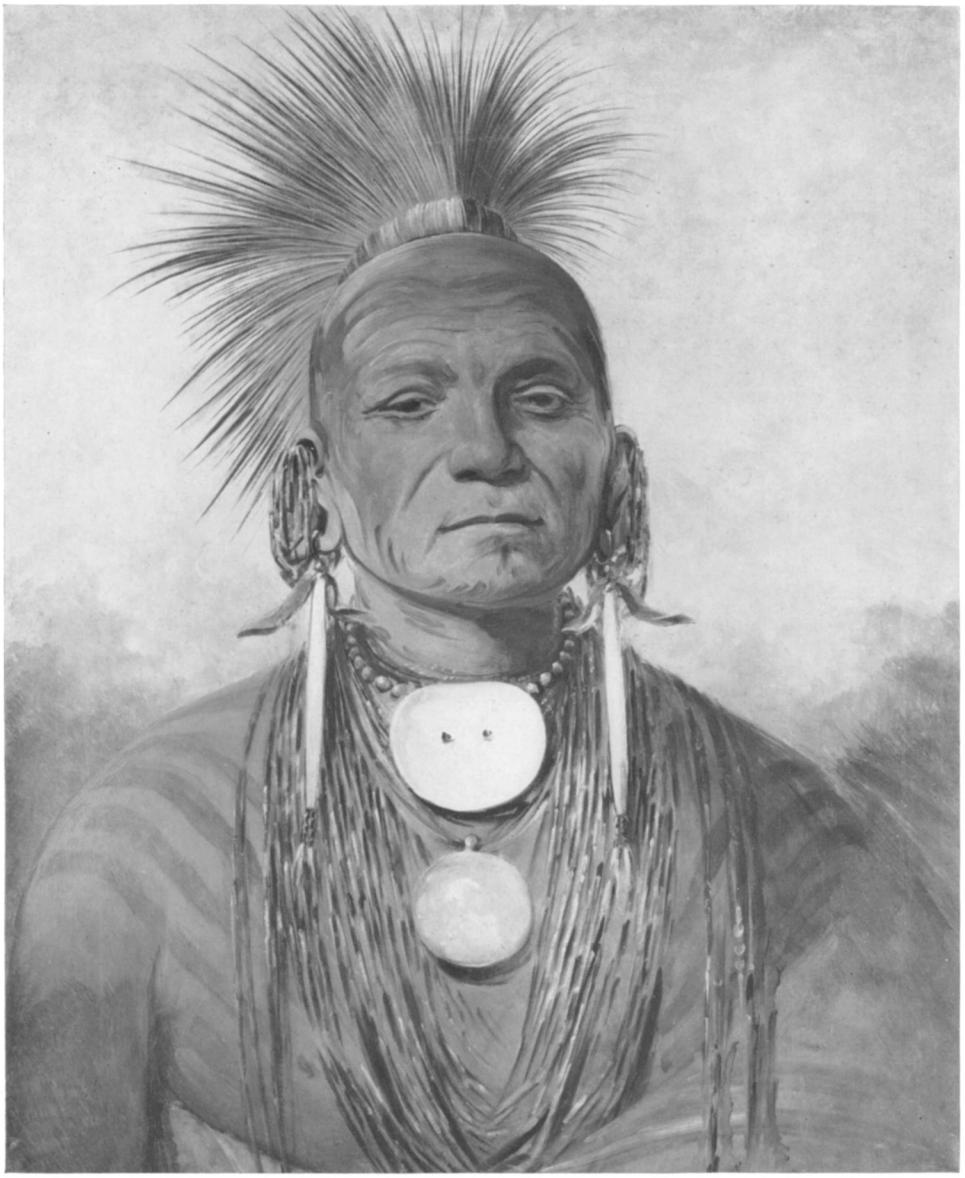
During a career of seventy years, Sully recorded more than 2600 pictures in his account book, or Register. One of the most important was this portrait of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, which he painted for the Society of the Sons of St. George, a charitable organization established at Philadelphia for the advice and assistance of Englishmen in distress. Learning shortly after Victoria's accession to the throne that Sully was about to depart for England, the Society resolved "to memorialize her Majesty to sit for her picture to Mr. Sully, for the gratification and use of the Society." During sittings in the spring of 1838, Sully painted several studies, including a "sketch of the Queen on a kit-kat canvas," which was bequeathed to the Museum by one of his grandsons in 1914. According to Sully's Register, the full-length portrait for the Society was begun on September 30, 1838, and finished January 14, 1839. Sully painted a second full-length for himself, but later gave it to the St. Andrew's Society in Charleston, South Carolina. (It was destroyed by fire in 1865.) Hoping to realize a substantial sum by the display of its picture, the St. George Society sought by legal means to obtain Sully's oil sketch to prevent him from making further replicas or exhibiting any of them for his own benefit. After attempting to negotiate with Sully, the Society gave the matter to "three legal gentlemen," who awarded to Sully as "author and exclusive owner of the invention and design" the right to retain and duplicate the original portrait of the Queen. When the Society finally unveiled its portrait to the public, it issued a pamphlet, dated June 13, 1839, explaining the legal action involved, and giving a lengthy rebuttal of the official opinion.

BOSTON HARBOR, SUNSET, *about 1850-1860, by Fitz Hugh Lane (1804-1865). Oil on canvas, 24 x 39¼ inches. Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Bronson Trevor. Photograph: Brenwasser*

Lane received his training as an apprentice in the shop of the Boston lithographer William Pendleton. From about 1835 to 1849 he had his own lithographic firm, but in the latter year he returned to his home in Gloucester, Massachusetts, where he spent the rest of his life as a marine painter. Although obliged to walk with crutches throughout his life, Lane is known to have made several trips along the coast of Maine, and his detailed paintings of the harbors of New York, Baltimore, Havana, and San Juan, Puerto Rico, indicate that he probably traveled even farther afield. His remarkable ability to render effects of light and atmosphere is demonstrated in this view of Boston harbor, which dates from his best and most productive period. Lane's work was neglected for many years, but he is now recognized as one of the leading marine painters of his generation.

MU-HÚ-SHE-KAW, THE WHITE CLOUD, CHIEF OF THE IOWAS, *1845, by George Catlin (1796-1872). Oil on canvas, 27⅞ x 22⅞ inches. Lent anonymously*

After working as a portrait and miniature painter for about ten years, Catlin determined to devote his life to recording for posterity the appearance and customs of the American Indian. During his initial trip to St. Louis in 1830, he painted tribal delegates who came to town, visited encampments in the vicinity, and began his collection of Indian costumes and artifacts. In 1832 he ascended the Missouri River, visiting Indian settlements and living with certain tribes for days at a time. He developed a shorthand technique in order to paint rapidly and made a great many sketches showing Indian life in all its variety and color. After exhibiting his pictures in Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Louisville, New Orleans, and Buffalo,



SEE-NÓN-TY-A, IOWA MEDICINE MAN, *1845, by George Catlin. Oil on canvas, 28⅛ x 23 inches. Lent anonymously*

Catlin brought his Indian Gallery to New York in 1837. After an unsuccessful attempt to sell his six hundred paintings to the United States government, Catlin took the pictures and several thousand Indian articles to London, where his exhibition at Egyptian Hall became a tremendous success. Some of its leading attractions were *tableaux vivants* staged by groups of visiting Indians, among them fourteen Iowas who arrived in 1845. These two portraits of members of this group were done in London at the time. With their dazzling colors and vivid characterizations, they stand at the summit of Catlin's enormous production.

THUNDERSTORM–NARRAGANSETT BAY, *1868, by Martin Johnson Heade (1819-1904). Oil on canvas, 32⅛ x 54⅜ inches. Lent by Ernest Rosenfeld*

Heade was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and worked at various periods in Trenton, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Chicago, New York, and St. Augustine. As Henry Tuckerman observed, "the love of travel was strong within him," and besides making several trips to Europe, he went to South America on the recommendation of his friend the painter Frederic E. Church. An exhibition of his pictures in Rio de Janeiro so impressed the Emperor Don Pedro II that Heade was made a Knight of the Order of the Rose, an honor reserved for those having rendered unusual service to the country. Most of Heade's works are small views of the meadows of New Jersey and Newburyport, Massachusetts, arrangements of orchids and hummingbirds, and still lifes. Occasionally, he attempted a larger, more dramatic painting, such as this one, which he exhibited at the National Academy in 1868. Although at that time a critic said it showed "a painful amount of labor with a corresponding feeling of hardness in color and execution" and regretted that "so hard and chilling a painting . . . should have been allowed to leave his studio," the picture is now considered Heade's masterpiece. When it was shown in 1943 at the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition *Romantic Painting in America*, it was widely admired and quickly aroused a renewed interest in his work.

A DESSERT, *1860, by John F. Francis (1808-1886). Oil on canvas, 25 x 30 inches. Lent by James H. Ricau*

Francis was born in Philadelphia and spent most of his life in Pennsylvania. He painted portraits, animal pictures, and, as he himself recorded, "fancy Signs—Banners—and Scarfes for . . . Different Societies," but it is his still lifes that are of most interest today. He appears to have specialized in informal table-top arrangements of fruits and nuts, cheese and biscuits, wine bottles, pitchers, compotes, and glasses. Like his contemporary Severin Roesen, he used the same props repeatedly, sometimes placing them against a blank wall, sometimes, as here, happily introducing a landscape background. A replica of this picture, dated 1879, is in the Shelburne Museum, Vermont.

THE VALLEY OF WYOMING, *1865, by Jasper F. Cropsey (1823-1900). Oil on canvas, 48 x 84 inches. Lent by Mrs. John C. Newington*

Cropsey was one of the leading painters of the Hudson River School. For more than a half century he specialized in painting autumnal landscapes. Although he maintained a studio for many years in New York City, he made frequent sketching trips to New England, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, and also went abroad several times. This picture, one of his largest and finest works, was based on a sketch, now in the Museum's collection, that Cropsey had made in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania in 1864. The original owner of the large painting was Milton Courtright, who is variously listed as "capitalist" and "gentleman" in the early directories of Erie, Pennsylvania. Courtright was born and raised on the Courtright Farm in Plains, Pennsylvania, in the heart of the Wyoming Valley, between Scranton and Wilkes-Barre. It was for his home in Erie that he commissioned Cropsey to paint this panoramic view, in which all the minute details of town and countryside were faithfully recorded. The picture retains its original frame, which bears a plaque with a dozen lines from a poem by Thomas Campbell proclaiming the beauties of the Wyoming:

On Susquehana's side, fair Wyoming!
Although the wild-flower on thy ruin'd wall
And roofless homes, a sad remembrance bring
Of what thy gentle people did befall;
Yet thou wert once the loveliest land of all
That see the Atlantic wave their morn restore
* * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * beneath thy skies.

The happy shepherd swains had naught to do
But feed their flocks on green declivities,
Or skim perchance thy lake with light canoe.
* * * * * * * * * * * * *
So sweet a spot of earth, you might, (I ween)
Have guess'd some congregation of the elves,
To sport by summer moons, had shaped it
for themselves.

PATCH SELF-PORTRAIT WITH SMALL PICTURES, *1890 or later, by John F. Peto (1854-1907). Oil on canvas, 26¾ x 24¾ inches. Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Donald S. Stralem. Photograph: Brenwasser*

Although Peto studied briefly at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, he was largely self-taught. The greatest influence on his career was exerted by the still-life paintings of William Michael Harnett, with whom he became acquainted sometime between 1876 and 1880, when Harnett departed for Europe. In contrast to Harnett, who enjoyed a notable success in the 1880s, Peto was unable to earn a living from his paintings, and as early as 1889 he made frequent trips to Island Heights, New Jersey, to augment his income by playing the cornet at religious revival meetings sponsored by the Island Heights Camp Meeting Association. He settled permanently at Island Heights in 1891 and retreated from the outside world, frustrated by a lack of recognition, and most of his work remained in his studio. As a result, he and his still lifes had passed into obscurity even before his death, and many of his pictures (including the Museum's The Old Cremona) were sold as the work of Harnett. Although Peto depicted many objects similar to those used by Harnett—the mug and pipe at the lower left of this picture, for example—he painted in a soft, impressionistic style quite different from Harnett's tight, illusionistic manner. This picture is a striking example of his work, for it is, in effect, a trompe l'oeil of trompe l'oeil. It is a whimisical variation of his familiar "office boards," or rack pictures. Surrounding the self-portrait are several of Peto's own pictures as well as two views he copied from paintings by Frederick Briscoe in his possession.

NOTE: In addition to the pictures discussed above, four twentieth century paintings were borrowed for the show—Man Ray's Dance, of 1915, lent by Mr. and Mrs. William N. Copley, Jasper Johns's White Flag and Robert Rauschenberg's Rebus, both of 1955 and lent by the artists, and Mark Rothko's Number 2, of 1962, lent by Mrs. Albert D. Lasker. These paintings are illustrated and discussed in Henry Geldzahler's *American Painting in the Twentieth Century*, published this month by the Museum. Pictures on long-term loan from Adelaide Milton de Groot, Georgia O'Keeffe, Lucille S. Pfeffer, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Schwartz, and Mrs. Edward P. Sharretts will also be on view. A group of portraits of American artists from the collections of the Century Club, the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, and the National Academy of Design will be shown in the entrance gallery to the exhibition.

Numbers in Time: Two American Paintings

HENRY GELDZAHLER
Associate Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture

A work of art must always, obviously, be made at a specific moment in time; yet to describe that moment, to isolate it, is to cut the artist's career off from much of its context, to separate it from its implications and from the work that it will do in the world. To see a painting only in terms of itself, as a unique concretion of the sensibility of its moment, is an enriching experience, yet no picture can be painted as if nothing else had ever happened. Other paintings and ideas lie behind it: paintings by the same man, paintings he has seen by his contemporaries, the entire history of painting up to this moment, his life experiences. The work of art is the summation of all that the painter then knows. After its execution the situation changes. Other works, paintings undreamed of at its inception, intervene, and we find not only that the original painting is connected to the past but that it enters into an active dialogue with the paintings that follow. At times it may be dim and out of favor, at other times sharply in focus and apposite. The relationship of a work of art to time, then, is complex and ever changing. Unless it is wholly forgotten, it will continue to act and be reacted to.

In 1928 the American artist Charles Demuth painted one of his most important oils, I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold. Some years before this the American poet William Carlos Williams had written "The Great Figure," the brief poem that was to be the inspiration for the painting. Years later Jasper Johns, a young American artist, painted his Black Figure 5, a work that refers back to the Demuth, but with the changed premises of contemporary painting. Thus we find I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold a work with a past and with a future. It is also a painting whose origins and implications are clearer and more isolable than is generally the case.

William Carlos Williams, who was a major poet of the American idiom, first knew Demuth in 1905 when both were students in Philadelphia, Williams at the medical school of the University of Pennsylvania, Demuth at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. "I met Charles Demuth over a dish of prunes at Mrs. Chain's boarding house on Locust Street," the poet-physician wrote in his autobiography, "and formed a lifelong friendship on the spot with dear Charlie. . . ." It is typical of both Williams's writing and Demuth's art to pin down an experience by reference to everyday aspects. It is through the specific, the homely, in their work that the universal is reached. "In the spring among the back streets," Williams continues, "when supper would be over and we felt disinclined to return to our rooms, Charlie Demuth used to take long walks with me in West Philadelphia (where Grandma Wellcome, my father's mother, had just come to live). There was a

high brick wall along the south side of Locust Street, just west of Thirty-sixth, inside of which there must have been an old garden, long neglected. The thought of it fascinated me. Charlie laughed when I spoke of it. 'Not many could enjoy such a thing as that,' he said, 'by merely looking at the outside of a wall.' " These men were obviously in sympathy. In later years, Williams tells us, the pictures he always went to see were those by Demuth, Charles Sheeler, and Marsden Hartley. The poet had a good eye.

I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold was called by Williams a "literary" picture. From one of his letters, written in 1928, we know that he saw it while Demuth was still working on it: "Dear Deem: the unfinished poster is the most distinguished American painting that I have seen in years. I enjoy it for five or six distinct reasons, color, composition, clarity, thought, emotional force, ingenuity—and its completeness. Well, it's very satisfying to me and I congratulate you."

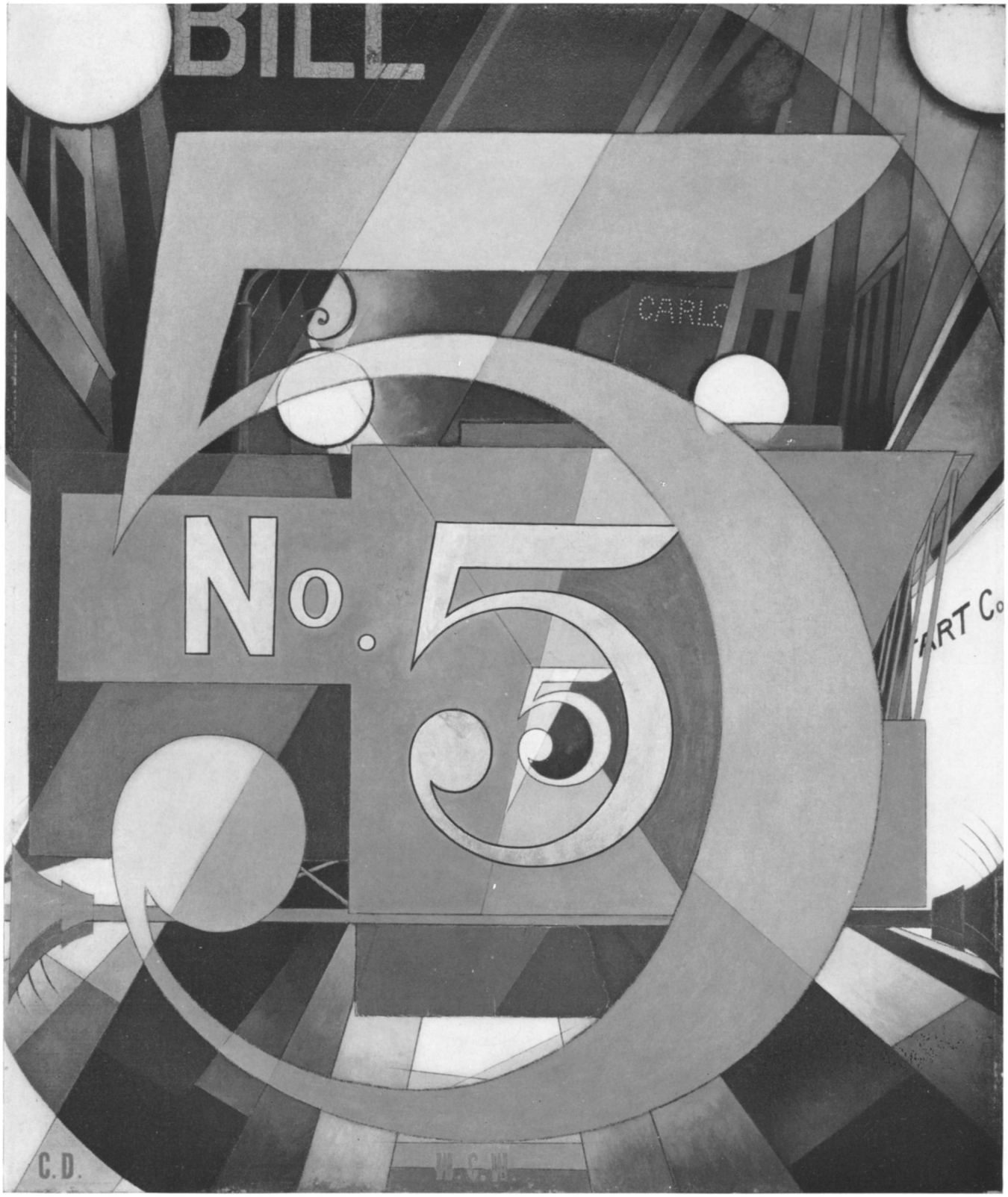
It was Demuth who named the painting, and it is sometimes thought that he chose for his title the first words of the poem. In fact, the poem begins with the mention of rain and lights, setting the mood for the central image:

THE GREAT FIGURE
Among the rain
and lights
I saw the figure 5
in gold
on a red
firetruck
moving
tense
unheeded
to gong clangs
siren howls
and wheels rumbling
through the dark city.

The painting has futurist and cubist features: the prismatic breakdown of space and light, which in part refers to the rain and lights, and the use of words and numbers to help establish the two-dimensionality of the picture plane, as in the largest 5, the word BILL, and at the bottom of the painting the initials C.D. and W.C.W., referring to the artist and the poet. However, the letters and numbers are used not only to establish the surface plane but also to suggest the opposite: deep space. We see this, obviously, in the diminishing and therefore receding 5's and in the word CARLOS, the latter cut off by an element that lies behind the planes of the 5's. The painting is pulled back from being a complete abstraction only by the use of the words and letters and by the presence of the street lamp and distorted buildings. The angularity of the prismatic background is played off against the recurring circles: those of the four lights in the top half, the curve of the street-lamp standard, the bulbs at the lower tips of the 5's, and the quite arbitrary curve at the lower left and upper right of the painting. We feel not only the tremendous activity within the picture but also its final calm and control. Despite the directional lines borrowed from the futurists and the intellectually organized space that comes from cubism, the cumulative effect of immediacy, sense of scale, and clarity is American. Of his relationship to the work of a fellow American painter Demuth once observed, "John Marin and I drew our inspiration from the same source, French modernism. He brought his up in buckets and spilt much along the way. I dipped mine out with a teaspoon but I never spilled a drop."

We have traced Demuth's painting back to the poem that inspired it, and seen how the picture reflects an awareness of the art of its time. We may now move forward to 1960 and to a painting by one of the most important

I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold, 1928, by Charles Demuth (1883-1935). Oil on composition board, 36 x 29¾ inches. The Alfred Steiglitz Collection, 49.59.1


BILL
CARL
No. 5
C.D.

artists working today. In the interim there developed a great movement in American art, the first American school to attain worldwide significance and influence. Most often called the abstract expressionist school, it was devoted to totally abstract painting, with an unprecedented openness and freedom of expression. After the achievements of Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Franz Kline, it looked for a while in the mid-fifties as if modern painting could not retreat from total abstraction without a loss of energy and impact. The much-longed-for return to the figure seemed impossible in any traditional way, since whatever figurative painting was to be done would have to be comparable in vitality, passion, and originality to the best of the abstract work.

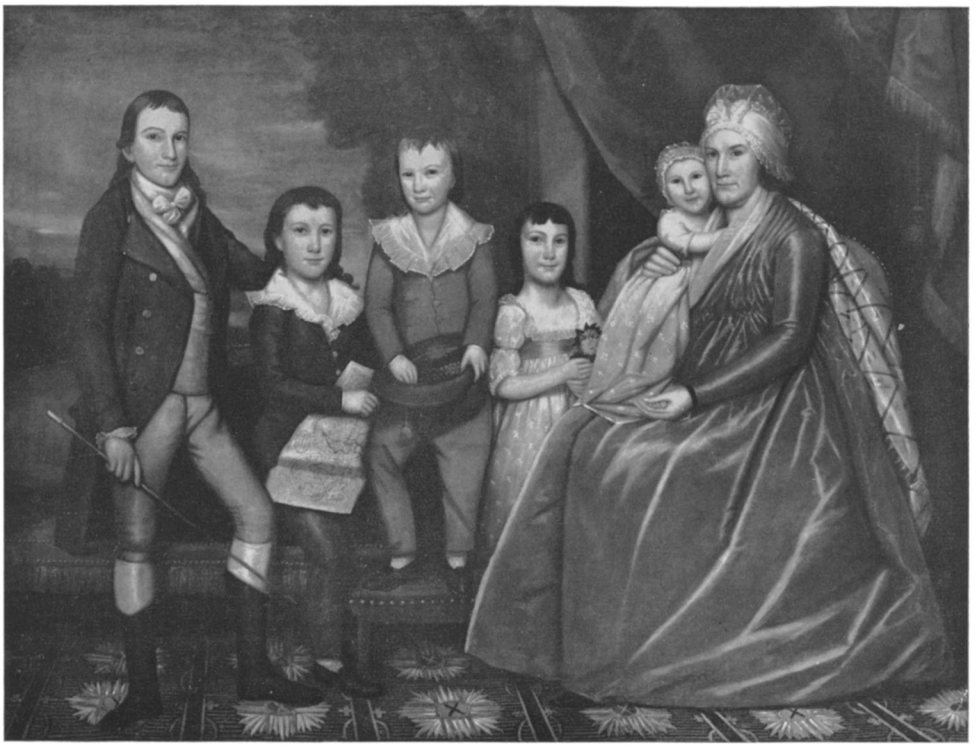
Jasper Johns, a twenty-two-year-old South Carolinian, came into this artistic situation in New York following his service in the Army. He found himself confronted with paintings of tremendous energy and integrity, paintings he admired but did not want to imitate. He solved his problem by choosing subjects that are sufficiently familiar to focus our attention on an image but not so emotionally strong as to take our attention from the way in which the paint is applied—for in many cases, in the abstract expressionist painting Johns admired, it was the brushing, dripping, or other working of the paint, in effect the handwriting of the artist, that was the actual subject. Depicting subjects that we read naturally as two-dimensional—an American flag, a map of the United States, a target, a number or series of numbers—Johns questions the problem of space and depth by painting the representation of the third dimension on a two-dimensional surface. In every aspect of his work he presents us with paradoxes. He uses conflicting devices, denying the two-dimensionality of the subject-image by the way in which he lays down the paint, alternating dark and light. The artist's fascination with the total surface, as in abstract expressionism, enables us both to see his Black Figure 5 and to lose it in our examination of and delight in his overlaying and overlapping of the colors and brushstrokes. The strokes and drips that run from the number tend to flatten the picture, yet the over-all richness of the surface suggests depth, and we are finally forced to read the work as flat and deep at the same time. "Generally, I am opposed to painting which is concerned with conceptions of simplicity," Johns has written. "Everything looks busy to me."

Johns had been doing his paintings of numbers for three years when, in 1960, he was commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Scull of New York to paint a large single number. Asking which number would be preferred, he was told five. Although our Demuth painting was not mentioned, both the patron and the artist have subsequently said that it lay behind the decision. Johns has said that he was very much aware of this Demuth when he began the painting.

The Demuth, with its hard edges, the clarity of its images, is a picture from the period when American art was dominated by cubism and futurism. The Johns, with its great freedom of gesture and its interest in the possibilities of paint itself, belongs to the period when much American art is being pulled back from the purely abstract toward the familiar. Related in theme but different in approach, method, and ultimately in feeling, both are superb pictures. As such, each bears looking at alone. It is only the art historian who must point his finger and make the connection.

The Black Figure 5, 1960, by Jasper Johns (b. 1930). Encaustic on canvas, 72 x 54 inches. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Scull, New York. Photograph: Rudolph Burckhardt

Note: The first volume of the catalogue of American paintings in the Museum's collection, which will be published this month, is happily already somewhat out of date because of the continuing generosity of members and friends of the Museum. One of the most important American paintings we have acquired in recent years is Ralph Earl's monumental group portrait, Mrs. Noah Smith and Her Children, presented by Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch at the end of 1964. It is the most ambitious composition by Earl that has come to light, and it ranks among his best works, along with his double portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Ellsworth (Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford) and several of his full-length portraits of members of the Boardman family (see pages 282-283). This group and a companion portrait of Noah Smith (Art Institute of Chicago) were painted in Bennington, Vermont, in 1798. Mrs. Smith was the former Chloe Burrall of Canaan, Connecticut. The five children, from left to right, are Henry (called Harry), Daniel, Noah, Jr., Eliza, and Celia. After graduating from Yale in 1778, Noah Smith was active in political affairs in Vermont, serving as the state's attorney, a member of the Governor's Council, judge of the Supreme Court, and United States collector of internal revenue. His son Harry died at twenty-seven. Daniel and Noah, Jr., graduated from Middlebury College: Daniel went to Andover Theological Seminary, was ordained a minister, and became a missionary in Natchez, Mississippi, and Louisville, Kentucky; Noah, Jr., became a teacher at Natchez. Eliza and Celia married men from Vergennes, Vermont, and spent most of their lives there. The portrait descended from Eliza to a daughter and then to a cousin, remaining hidden in the family parlors until it was sold in 1958. Before then it was known only through an anonymous late nineteenth century copy included in the exhibition *From Colony to Nation* at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1949. Now, after completing a tour of nineteen museums across the country as part of the exhibition *101 Masterpieces of American Primitive Painting from the Collection of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch*, which opened at the Metropolitan in November 1961, the picture has gratefully come to rest here as a part of the permanent collection of American paintings. S.P.F.



Mrs. Noah Smith and Her Children, 1798, by Ralph Earl (1751-1801). Oil on canvas, 64 x 85¾ inches. Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch, 64.309.1

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Information

THE MAIN BUILDING: Open weekdays 10-5; Sundays and holidays 1-5. Telephone: TRafalgar 9-5500. The Restaurant is open weekdays 11:30-2:30; Sundays 12-3; closed holidays. Coffee hours: Saturdays 3-4:30; Sundays 3:30-4:30.

THE CLOISTERS: Open weekdays, except Mondays, 10-5; Sundays and holidays 1-5 (May-September, Sundays 1-6). Telephone: WAdsworth 3-3700.

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