The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin
Spring 1980

At long last, after years of hard work, thoughtful planning, intensive fund raising—and not a little anguish and frustration—The Metropolitan Museum of Art will open its new American Wing on June 11. This will be a proud moment for us at the Metropolitan and for all Americans interested in their artistic heritage. What we gain in this strikingly beautiful addition is not simply a building but a full-scale museum in its own right—a museum, moreover, that is unrivaled in the quality and comprehensiveness of its collections of American art.

The new wing—six times the size of the original 1924 American Wing around which it was constructed—makes possible the exhibition of virtually all of our collection of paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, furniture, and period rooms. It encompasses a garden court with sculpture and major architectural elements, including the 1823 façade of the United States Branch Bank on Wall Street, two staircases from Louis Sullivan's Chicago Stock Exchange, and the loggia from Louis Comfort Tiffany's house, Laurelton Hall.

Designed by Kevin Roche, John Dinkeloo and Associates, the new wing is remarkable not only for its architectural majesty, but also for the manner in which it suits the collections; the most important works are exhibited in spacious galleries arranged chronologically by media and in period rooms. In accord with a policy of displaying the majority of the American holdings yet emphasizing the primary works of art, the wing will later include an invaluable open study-storage area, in which almost all the reserves will be accessible to the public.

The decision to collect American art was made by the Museum's founders, and it has been continuously implemented since the first American paintings and sculptures were acquired in the early 1870s. A major gift of paintings from George A. Hearn, in 1906, and the establishment of a fund in his name in 1911 greatly enhanced the growing collection. In 1910 Mrs. Russell Sage purchased for the Museum almost 700 pieces of seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and early nineteenth-century furniture from Eugene Bolles, some of which had been lent to the Hudson-Fulton Celebration of 1909—an exhibition in which American decorative arts had been displayed at the Metropolitan for the first time. This purchase was the determining factor in the development of a decorative arts collection and led eventually to the construction of the American Wing in 1924. Donated by Museum President and Mrs. Robert W. de Forest, the wing was devoted mainly to the decorative arts and to period rooms of the seventeenth through the early nineteenth centuries. In subsequent years the Museum acquired American decorative arts and fine arts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with the result that its American collections are now remarkable for their size, range, and quality, with outstanding examples in all categories. Almost every aspect of our nation's heritage in the visual arts is represented.

The new American Wing could not have been achieved without the support of corporations, foundations, and loyal friends, but limited space permits me to cite only a few here. An extraordinary gift was received from the late Joan Whitney Payson, and the City of New York and The Charles Engelhard Foundation have also been extremely generous.

The inaugural exhibition in The Erving and Joyce Wolf Gallery will put on display the Museum's most significant American drawings, watercolors, and prints, sixty of which are discussed in this publication by the coordinators of the exhibition: Kathleen A. Foster, Assistant Curator, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; John Caldwell, Assistant Curator, American Paintings and Sculpture; and David W. Kiehl, Assistant Curator, Prints and Photographs. This show is an auspicious beginning for this handsome new gallery and for the new wing itself.

Philippe de Montebello
Director

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin Volume XXXVII, Number 4 (ISSN 0026-1521) **Spring 1980**

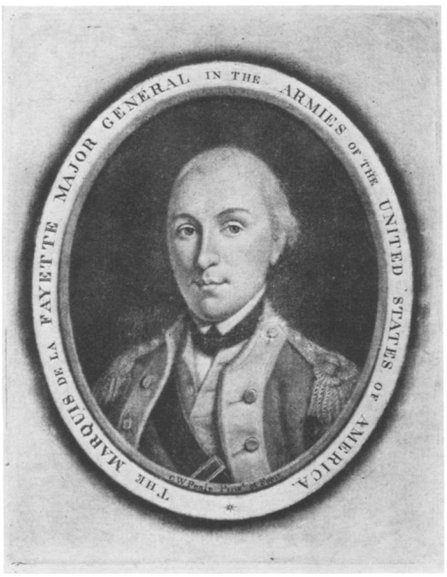
Published quarterly. Copyright © 1980 by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Avenue and 82nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10028. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and Additional Mailing Offices. Subscriptions $14.00 a year. Single copies $3.75. Sent free to Museum members. Four weeks' notice required for change of address. Back issues available on microfilm, from University Microfilms, 313 N. First Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Volumes I-XXVIII (1905–1942) available as a clothbound reprint set or as individual yearly volumes from Arno Press, 3 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016, or from the Museum, Box 255, Gracie Station, New York, N.Y. 10028. Color photography in this issue by Geoffrey Clements except pp. 9, 16, 17, 25 (top), 28, 29, 41, and 44 by The Metropolitan Museum of Art Photograph Studio. General Manager of Publications: John P. O'Neill. Editor in Chief of the *Bulletin*: Joan Holt. Associate Editor: Joanna Ekman. Design: Irwin Glusker with Miriam Haas.

On *the cover:* Courtyard, West End Library, Boston, 1901, by Maurice Prendergast (see p. 52)

GERALD M. THAYER Male Ruffed Grouse in the Forest, about 1905–1909

Prepared as an illustration for the book *Concealing Coloration in the Animal Kingdom* (1909), written by the artist and his father, Abbott H. Thayer, this watercolor continues the tradition of artist-scientists like J.J. Audubon; who valued the precision and delicacy possible in the medium.

American Drawings, Watercolors, and Prints



CHARLES WILLSON PEALE
The Marquis de LaFayette, 1787
This portrait of Lafayette is one of a group of mezzotints of major Revolutionary War figures by Peale. Although he learned the grand manner of portraiture in London under Benjamin West, this likeness is unaffectedly naturalistic (see p. 7).

The misty abstraction of Whistler's Nocturne, the transfixing stare of Currier's Favorite Cat—what do such diverse images have in common? To understand the logic and the special rewards of assembling these and other prints, drawings, and watercolors in an exhibition celebrating the opening of the new American Wing, we begin with the simplest answers: all the works are on paper, and all are by American artists. Curatorial necessity brings these prints together, and isolates them from the rest of the Metropolitan's collection on permanent view, because long exposure to light will harm them. Their special sensitivity demands low lighting and such limited exposure that, like all other works in this show, they must be returned to storage and replaced with new selections before the exhibition closes.

Fragility, then, unites an otherwise confusing mix of styles, techniques, and purposes that challenges conventional notions of American art. But is there also a native thread that runs through a Benjamin West sketch, a Thomas Nast cartoon, and a Hudson River School drawing? Can we discover an American vision that encompasses the sparkling naturalism of a foreign-born expatriate like John Singer Sargent, as well as the abstraction of a native like the Pennsylvania German artist Johan Henrich Otto? Clearly, the heterogeneity of works on paper breaks down the categories constructed from our experience of oil paintings by presenting a wider sample of the art made by, and for, American people.

Today, just as a century ago, most American homes are decorated with art on paper: drawings and watercolors made by the family, photographs, posters and prints, including reproductions of priceless works in other media. Art on paper is familiar, affordable, and approachable; it welcomes amateur, provincial, and folk artists, commercial designers, and craftsmen—all of whom are often excluded from surveys based on oil painting. Paper media also reveal the more informal, experimental, or workaday moments of the "fine" artists who are associated principally with other media. Potentially, then, an exhibition of works on paper makes an inviting and democratic introduction to American art. The complexity of such a show results from its attempt to present a more provoking, more representative survey.

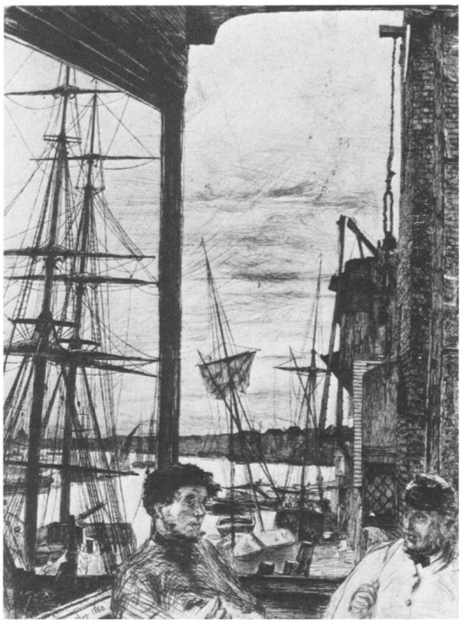
The exhibition cannot, in fact, survey the entire history of American prints, watercolors, and drawings because it is designed primarily to introduce the best work in the Metropolitan's collection. The several hundred items chosen for the show and the sixty works illustrated here can hardly represent all aspects of the Metropolitan Museum's holdings, much less American art history. Furthermore, a century of acquisition has favored certain media (particularly watercolor), and this lopsidedness only increases as an exhibition selection is made. The biases built into the collection have been given new twists by the curators, too, for even a committee agreement on quality and importance inevitably accommodates soft spots: for most curators, there can never be too many Winslow Homer watercolors on the list. Finally, current notions of historical importance, representativeness, or rarity have been allowed consideration alongside our demands for beauty, excellence, and meaning.

The selection shows us the dominant aesthetic tradition in American art. The Metropolitan Museum has not been an avant-garde tastemaker

so much as a guardian of standards inherited from the European middle and upper classes. Thus American folk and popular art, not yet well understood or widely valued, are still vastly underrepresented in the collection, even though they make up the bulk of our art, and their excellence deserves both respect and attention. Johan Henrich Otto's fraktur was the product of an aesthetic as complex, disciplined, and academically bound as Thomas Eakins's John Biglin in a Single Scull; each demonstrates the application of its culture's most refined artistic skills to the service of its most profound values. Eakins's Biglin embodies the tense rationalism and materialism of the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie; Otto's work displays the abstract form and symbolic content of an earlier, basically medieval European aesthetic. Like many of the other watercolors in the American Wing exhibition, these works rightfully belong in the paintings department, being comparable in scale, content, and intention to oils. This is particularly true in Otto's case, because his Pennsylvania German community had no great oil painting tradition; fraktur and ceramics were the prestige arts of his culture, and they deserve the status accorded the highest genres in the mainstream hierarchy.

The Metropolitan's pattern of collection and exhibition gives us, then, a picture of shifting tastes today, and a history of these changes in the past. The appearance of six of Edwin Austin Abbey's illustrations amidst the great Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works donated to the Museum by the H.O. Havemeyers provides a new insight into turn-of-the-century avant-garde collecting. Likewise, the many William Trost Richards watercolors presented to the Museum in 1880 testify to the vitality of English taste a century ago. The donor, the Reverend E.L. Magoon, envisioned the group as the core of a "Richards Gallery" modeled after the Turner Gallery in London (now part of the Tate). Magoon's faith in Richards set an enthusiastic precedent for the acquisition of important prints and drawings by contemporary artists. During their lifetimes, both Homer and Sargent were asked to select examples from their best work in watercolor for sale to the Metropolitan. These early acquisitions, including Richards's Lake Squam from Red Hill, Homer's Fishing Boats, Key West, and Sargent's Escutcheon of Charles V, remain highlights of the collection and challenges to present curators and benefactors.

The history told by the pictures themselves also reveals truths about American art that are not seen so clearly in other media. The earlier works poignantly demonstrate the difficulties of New World draftsmen emulating the naturalistic conventions of post-Renaissance Europe. The fluidity and conviction of Sargent, Homer, and Eakins was hard won in America, where figure subjects were a torture for artists without good teachers, live models, and Old Master precedents to copy. The conceptual vision of the "primitive," untutored in illusionistic modeling or anatomy, was slow to change its flat and linear ways, especially when current fashion—such as neoclassicism—or the major sources of outside information (that is, books and engravings) were only applied in ways that reinforced these modes. For some, distance lent authority to the few books and works of art encountered, but eager submission to European models often brought revolutionary results. As the scholar Jules Prown has remarked, West and Copley arrived in London with bright provincial ideals and a dim sense of conventional



J. A. M. WHISTLER **Rotherhithe, 1860**
Rotherhithe displays the clarity and control that characterized Whistler's early etchings. Later, he would experiment with atmospheric toning in prints such as Nocturne (see p. 38).

practice, and both proceeded to enact the principles of Joshua Reynolds's *Discourses on Art* with an energetic literalness that astonished the jaded regulars of the English art world.

West and Copley were two of the most successful Americans to outdo the British on their own terms, but they were only the first in a succession of American champions of English taste. At mid-century the staunchest followers of the great art critic John Ruskin could be found in America, where disciples like J.W. Hill or W.T. Richards, who were trained by Ruskin's books and Turner's engravings, kept Pre-Raphaelite ideals pure for decades. American Anglophilia is evident in our landscape art, and it is clearest of all in drawings and watercolors, where the style and technique of the late eighteenth-century English topographical draftsmen especially held sway. The ascendancy of this taste was partly a continuation of colonial tradition, and mostly the accomplishment of British émigrés like the Hills, Thomas Cole, or William Guy Wall, who founded the American landscape school. Many of these artists were watercolor specialists, who sponsored a national fondness for this medium that led to the triumphs of Homer and Sargent a few decades later. Often, these émigrés were printmakers, so that the same artist could at once provide models for American engravers, watercolor painters, and landscape draftsmen. British engravings taught the importance of contour, detail, and value contrast, and they established compositional models and subject categories. In the spirit of West and Copley, printmakers pushed their technique to innovative extremes; the plates are ambitiously big, the panoramas extravagantly detailed, and the effects of color and chiaroscuro boldly experimental.

If their style teaches us about the training of these printmakers, their subject matter tells us what Americans wanted to celebrate and what they wanted to know. The face of George Washington, the skyline of New York, battles, clipper ships and cats—all came out of a dialogue between what the public would buy, and what the artist cared to offer. Some artists openly flouted popular taste, others willingly bent to please, and excellence—or success—occurred at all stages of this interchange. Paul Revere's lumpish and largely plagiarized Boston Massacre is a demonstration of brash journalistic energy powered by an astute sense of what Boston wanted. Eakins, with some of the same hopes for his print of The Gross Clinic and with considerably more care, sadly misjudged Philadelphia's response. The success of Revere's image and the critical failure of Eakins's tell us little about the artistic quality of each print, and much about the power of content over formal considerations in American popular media.

When appealing subject matter allied with sophisticated technique, prints became effective educators of American taste, especially on the frontier. In the 1840s the engravings distributed by the American Art-Union promoted the imagery of the best American painters by the country's subtlest engravers. A traveler in Frankfort, Kentucky, in 1855 wrote back to the New York art journal *The Crayon* that "the only evidence I had of Art in this town, were a couple of pencil lithographs in a drygoods store window, heaps of vulgar valentines, and three copies in the hotel office of an engraving from Bingham's picture of the county election." Prints of all kinds found their way to the frontier, and as the standards of design and engraving improved, the entire country learned.

Nineteenth-century art crusaders understood the potential outreach of prints and the great hunger for gentility in the American middle class.

JOHN WILLIAM HILL **Plums, 1870**
Hill's watercolor of plums was painted with careful attention to detail. The artist, son of John Hill, is also known for his landscape paintings (see p. 25).

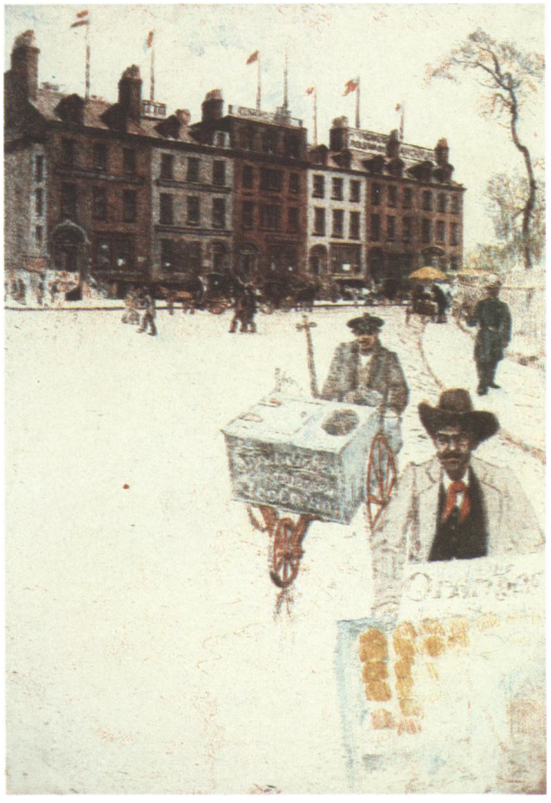
Publishers with a keen business sense and altruistic goals for the future of native art hired the best talent and employed the media capable of the cheapest, largest editions. Their patronage set off a spiral of challenges between artists and technicians that produced, by 1890, the most sophisticated, widely circulated illustrated press in the world. American periodicals encouraged the virtuosity of wood engravers like Henry Marsh, they built Thomas Nast into a political force, and they brought Abbey's illustrations to the doors of admirers as distant as Vincent Van Gogh.

The power of this late nineteenth-century phenomenon drew the diverse talents of Eakins, Homer, and John La Farge into the related fields of illustration, watercolor, and printmaking, and it inspired a host of artists' clubs promoting "minor" media. The proliferation of these specialized groups indicates the new sophistication and ambition of the American art community after the Civil War. These clubs wanted to educate artists and collectors about watercolor, or etching, or pastel, and they had a professional interest in establishing the legitimacy, importance, and expressive power of these media. Their campaign succeeded as the intimacy and spontaneity of impressionistic art gained favor, and works on paper were prized for their revelation of process and inspiration. Younger artists abandoned the popular in search of an individualistic avant-garde, and techniques like monotype—a printing process that perversely makes an edition of one—were eagerly cultivated. The new patrons of the eighties and nineties shared these tastes, and were attracted by the domestic scale and modest prices of drawings, watercolors, and prints. Given the strong competition from foreign art, it soon became clear that American artists were more likely to sell a work on paper than an oil, and interest in alternate media grew.

A century has passed. The split between popular and avant-garde art that opened around 1880 widened as the most adventuresome artists willfully detached themselves from the mainstream, and as photography changed the nature of popular illustration and printmaking. Just as woodcuts replaced hand-decorated fraktur certificates and lithographed mourning pictures replaced watercolor and needlework originals, the photograph or the photographic reproduction eliminated the engraver and often the draftsman, too. Photographic techniques have realized the democratic dream of the Art-Union by providing full-color reproductions of Homer's watercolors for the walls of any home, but they have also endangered today's regional artists by throwing them into a discouraging marketplace competition with the greatest art of the past.

Some innovative artists, like Will Bradley, adapted to the machine age and exploited commercial techniques with great elegance and force. Bradley's work joined a design tradition running from William Morris to Walter Gropius that has made the poster into the Currier & Ives solution of the twentieth century and has inspired a renaissance in printmaking during the last two decades. Others, in reaction to the chilly and alienating excesses of the modern aesthetic, have rediscovered the intimate scale and individualized touch of drawings. Today, the separation of the personal, private expression and the democratic, public statement has become extreme, but the opposition lurks already in the nineteenth-century confrontation of Nocturne and The Favorite Cat, where Whistler's nuance, suggestion, and idiosyncrasy meet Currier's unnerving simplicity. The Metropolitan's great collection of works on paper embraces this conflict and celebrates it as part of the American tradition.

—Kathleen A. Foster



C. F. W. MIELATZ Bowling Green, 1910
Mielatz, one of the first etchers to celebrate the buildings and localities of New York, experimented with various processes in the medium. In this view of Bowling Green and old "Shipmasters' Row," (now the site of the Custom House), he created the effect of pastels by applying colored inks before printing.

THOMAS EMMES Increase Mather, 1701

The earliest publication of books and prints in English-speaking North America occurred in the Puritan colony of Massachusetts. It is appropriate that the Mather family provided subjects for the three milestones of American printmaking produced in that theocratic society. John Foster's woodcut of Richard Mather (about 1670) is generally acknowledged as the first American print. Approximately thirty years later, Emmes engraved a likeness of Increase Mather for use as a frontispiece in three of the clergyman's religious tracts. The Museum's impression is bound in a copy of his *Blessed Hope,* published in 1702. Even though it appears that the plate was battered and worn at the time of printing, the engraved line shows a fine sensitivity. The attempt at modeling in the face and the delicate handling of the curls contrast with the flat pattern of the torso and crosshatched background.

While the portraits of Richard and Increase Mather display a marked provinciality, Pelham's mezzotint of Cotton Mather competes favorably with English prints of the period. Soon after emigrating to Boston, Pelham, trained as a mezzotint engraver and painter in London, decided to make this portrait of one of the most

PETER PELHAM Cotton Mather, 1728

eminent theologians in the colony as an advertisement of his skills. In this, probably the first mezzotint produced in America, he has created a lifelike, sophisticated representation of Mather's proud visage. During the years of his activity in America, Pelham completed several more mezzotints, mainly of Puritan divines and other clergymen, none of which were as skillfully drawn or as realistic as this image.

Some fifty years after the publication of Pelham's Cotton Mather, portraiture continued to be the mainstay of a printmaker's production. Few painters had the skill and versatility of Charles Willson Peale in capturing the painted likeness on the copperplate (see p. 2). As early as 1777, he proposed a series of mezzotints of the leading figures of the Revolutionary War based on his own work, but it was not until 1787 that the first examples were issued: Benjamin Franklin, General Lafayette, George Washington, and the Reverend Pilmore from Philadelphia. Peale's realistic and straightforward images, set within oval frames, have an unaffected naturalism, in contrast to the grand manner of portraiture he learned in London under Benjamin West.

PAUL REVERE **The Bloody Massacre, 1770**

Accustomed as we are to the instantaneous reproduction of images chronicling the events of any given day, we tend to forget our forefathers could wait months for even a written description. Visual documentation was yet more uncommon. These three engravings are remarkable because each appeared at printsellers within a short time after the events they record.

Probably the most famous of all colonial American prints is The Bloody Massacre, by Revere, which appeared on the market three weeks after the fracas of March 5, 1770. This scene is instilled with a revolutionary fervor that transcends Revere's apparent awkwardness with the engraving process. Revere, ever a businessman, plagiarized this image from the finished plate of another Bostonian, Henry Pelham, and with great industry had his version ready a week before his rival's.

An Exact View of the Late Battle at Charlestown documents the battle known today as Bunker Hill. Just three months after the conflict, Romans advertised this print in the September 20, 1775, issue of *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. With an assurance as evident in his title "An Exact View" as in his careful detail, the provin-

BERNARD ROMANS An Exact View of the Late Battle at Charlestown, 1775

AMOS DOOLITTLE after LACOUR
Federal Hall, 1790

cial artist engraved the fury and smoke of battle from his own eyewitness drawing of the fray. Aware of the conventions for portraying battle scenes, he framed his view with a stage-set clump of vegetation and a tree at the left.

On April 30, 1789, George Washington took the oath as the first president on the balcony of Federal Hall in New York City. Using an eyewitness drawing by the Frenchman Peter Lacour, Doolittle provided in his engraving the only contemporary visual account of this important event. With great care he delineated this view of the then newly remodeled City Hall. The engraved title of the print proudly notes that Federal Hall is the seat of the Congress, the branch of government where each formerly independent state had equal voice.

BENJAMIN WEST Study for Alexander III, 1784

Because of the predominance of portraiture in American painting during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, drawing in the traditional sense of figure studies and compositional sketches was slow to develop. West's youthful drawings were crude and unimpressive, and it was only after he left for Europe in 1760, that his draftsmanship improved. This beautiful sketch in light brown ink with brown wash reveals his careful attention to sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Italian masters, both in that country and later in the great English private collections. One of a series in preparation for a painting (Fortrose Town Hall, Ross and Cromarty, Scotland), it shows how he worked out the contours of the figures in rapid, delicate, almost wispy strokes and clarified their relationship to each other in the elaborate composition. The subject, Alexander III, King of Scotland, Rescued from the Fury of a Stag by Colin Fitzgerald, was undoubtedly suggested by West's Scottish patron, Francis Humberstone Mackenzie, whose ancestor, Fitzgerald, is at the center bravely fighting off the stag threatening the thirteenth-century king. Although West, who settled permanently in London in 1763

J. S. COPLEY Study for the Siege of Gibraltar, 1785–86

and became the second president of the Royal Academy, is best known as one of the founders of neoclassicism, this drawing represents a later phase in his career when he turned to compositions of baroque art—here evidently Rubens's battle and hunt scenes.

Copley emigrated abroad, like West, and after 1775 lived in London, where his drawing style profited immensely from awareness of work by European artists. This sketch for Copley's Siege of Gibraltar is evidently a study for the central group of figures (Spanish sailors in a wrecked longboat) in a painting (Guildhall, London) commemorating the British victory of September 14 and 15, 1782, over combined French and Spanish forces attacking Gibraltar. Depicting a subject popular with the London public, it helped to establish Copley as one of the leading British artists of his time. The drawing displays a radically simple, almost abstract style of neoclassicism, of an elegance and grace not often encountered. The figures done essentially in outline and the hatched shading recall prints of Copley's great contemporary, John Flaxman, whose popular illustrations influenced two generations of American draftsmen.

J. S. COPLEY Mrs. Edward Green, about 1790

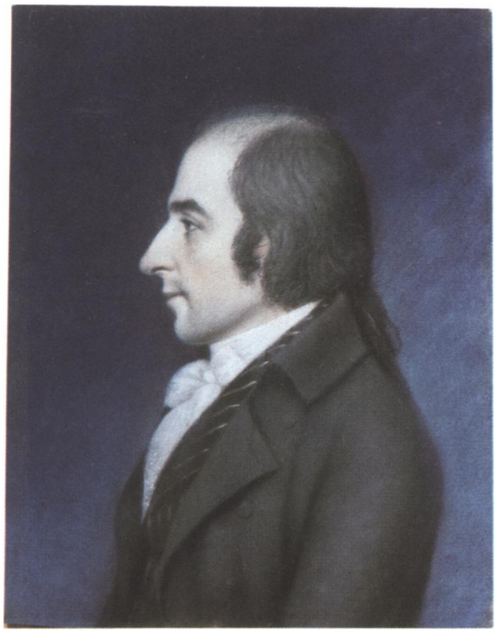
American drawing was restricted almost entirely to portraiture until well into the nineteenth century. Early patrons had little interest in art beyond the utilitarian purpose of preserving likenesses, preferably as fashionably as possible.

Copley's pastel portraits are some of the finest works of American eighteenth-century art. How he developed his skill is a mystery, because pastel, popular in France, was little known here, and he could have seen few examples in Boston before he left for Europe in 1773. His drawing of Mrs. Edward Green, dated 1765, was done at the beginning of his best period of work in this medium. Masterfully colored, particularly in its daring shades of blue, it represents Copley's rich Boston sitter as elegant and perhaps slightly fastidious.

Unlike Copley, Vanderlyn went to Europe early in life and was the first American artist to study in Paris. In contrast to Copley's rococo concern for color and luscious fabric, Vanderlyn's approach in his chalk drawing of Sarah Russell Church is contemplative and restrained. Like the French neoclassical artists he emulated, Vanderlyn opted for subtlety and reserve. Miss Church, wearing a Directoire gown, is a beautifully lit

JOHN VANDERLYN **Sarah Russell Church, 1799**

C. DE SAINT-MEMIN **An Osage Warrior, about 1804**



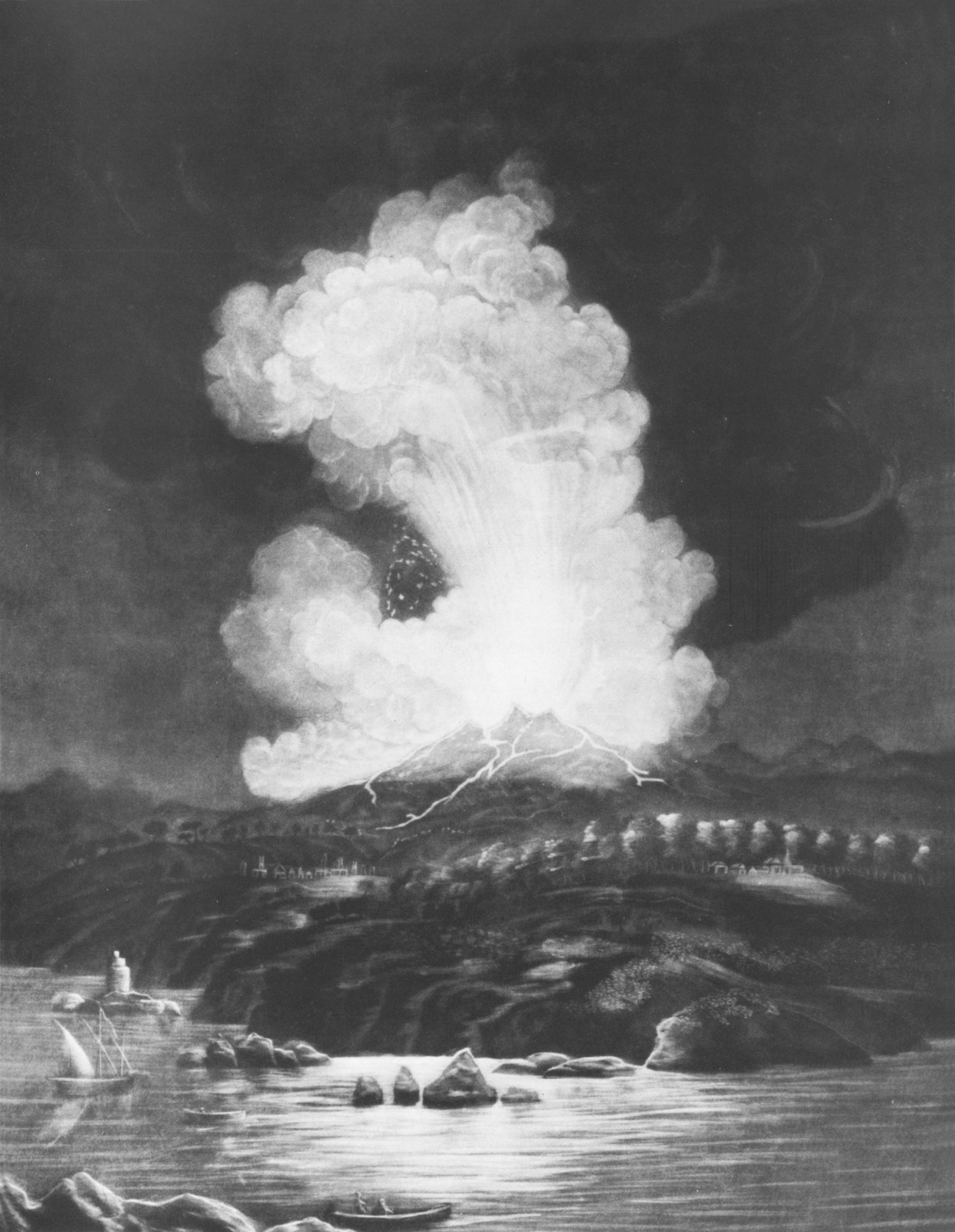
JAMES SHARPLES **Albert Gallatin, about 1797**

---

figure of calm grace in a classical landscape.

Saint-Mémin, a Frenchman, came to this country in 1793. With his estates confiscated during the revolutions in France and Haiti, he turned to his earlier training as a draftsman and earned a living in America drawing portraits—many nearly life-size—and engraving them. He produced more than 800, usually in pencil and black and white chalk on pink prepared paper, using a physiognotrace, a device something like a pantograph that enabled him to trace his subjects' features. Neoclassical in its dignity and refinement, this small watercolor of an Osage warrior is unusual in execution. Adopting the stippling technique of miniature painting in most of the picture, Saint-Mémin applied colors in tiny discrete strokes.

Sharples is said to have studied with George Romney in England. He settled in Philadelphia, probably about the time he drew this pastel of Albert Gallatin, then leader of the Republican opposition in Congress and later Secretary of the Treasury under Jefferson and Madison. Gallatin, an aristocrat from Geneva, is skillfully portrayed against a deep blue background in this remarkably well-preserved picture, which is as fresh as the day it was created.

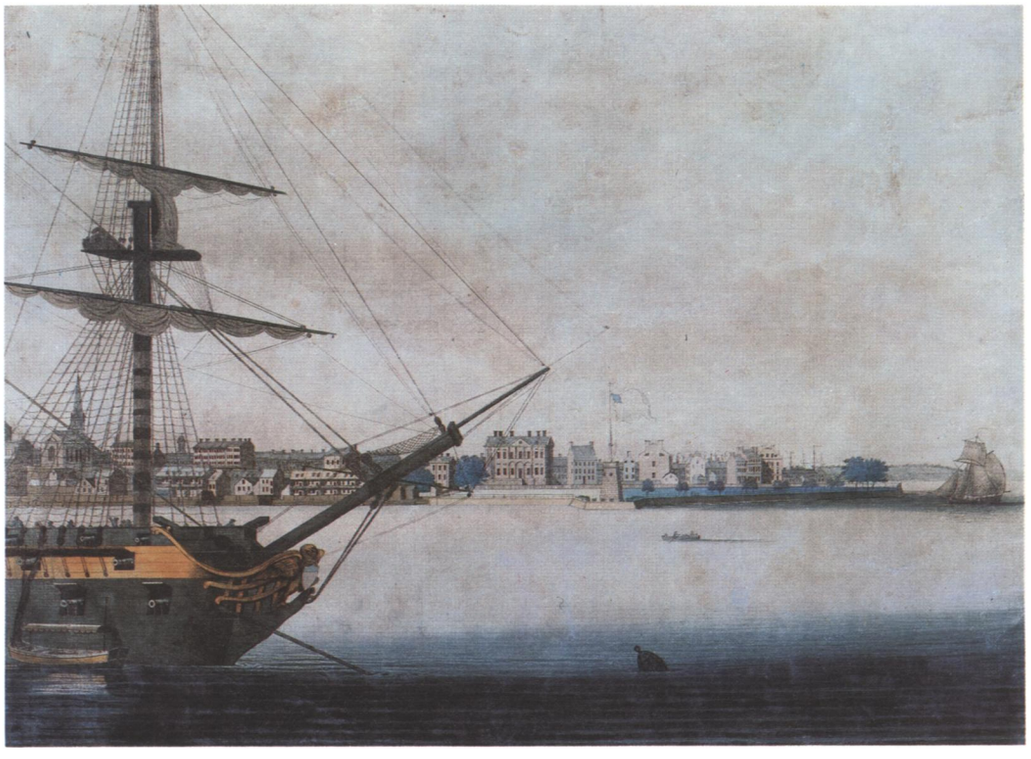


ASHER BROWN DURAND **Ariadne, 1835**

EDWARD SAVAGE **The Eruption of Mt. Etna in 1787, 1799**

Printed full-color mezzotints like Savage's Eruption of Mount Etna were rare even in England. Few impressions of this image were probably made, since the artist applied the color by hand to the plate prior to printing. Although it is unlikely that Savage was present at the 1787 eruption, he created a vivid view of the roiling cloud of flame and gas. This landscape was an ambitious subject for Savage, who is best known for his portraits of Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Dr. Rush, David Rittenhouse, and General Wayne, and for the print of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

As a printmaker, Durand is noted for his excellent portrait and banknote engravings. His most famous print, however, is this very painterly engraving of John Vanderlyn's oil Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos (Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia). The care and control lavished on this plate are indicative of Durand's great admiration for the original work, which was in his possession for almost twenty years. In addition, he made a copy in oils, which is also in the Museum's collection.



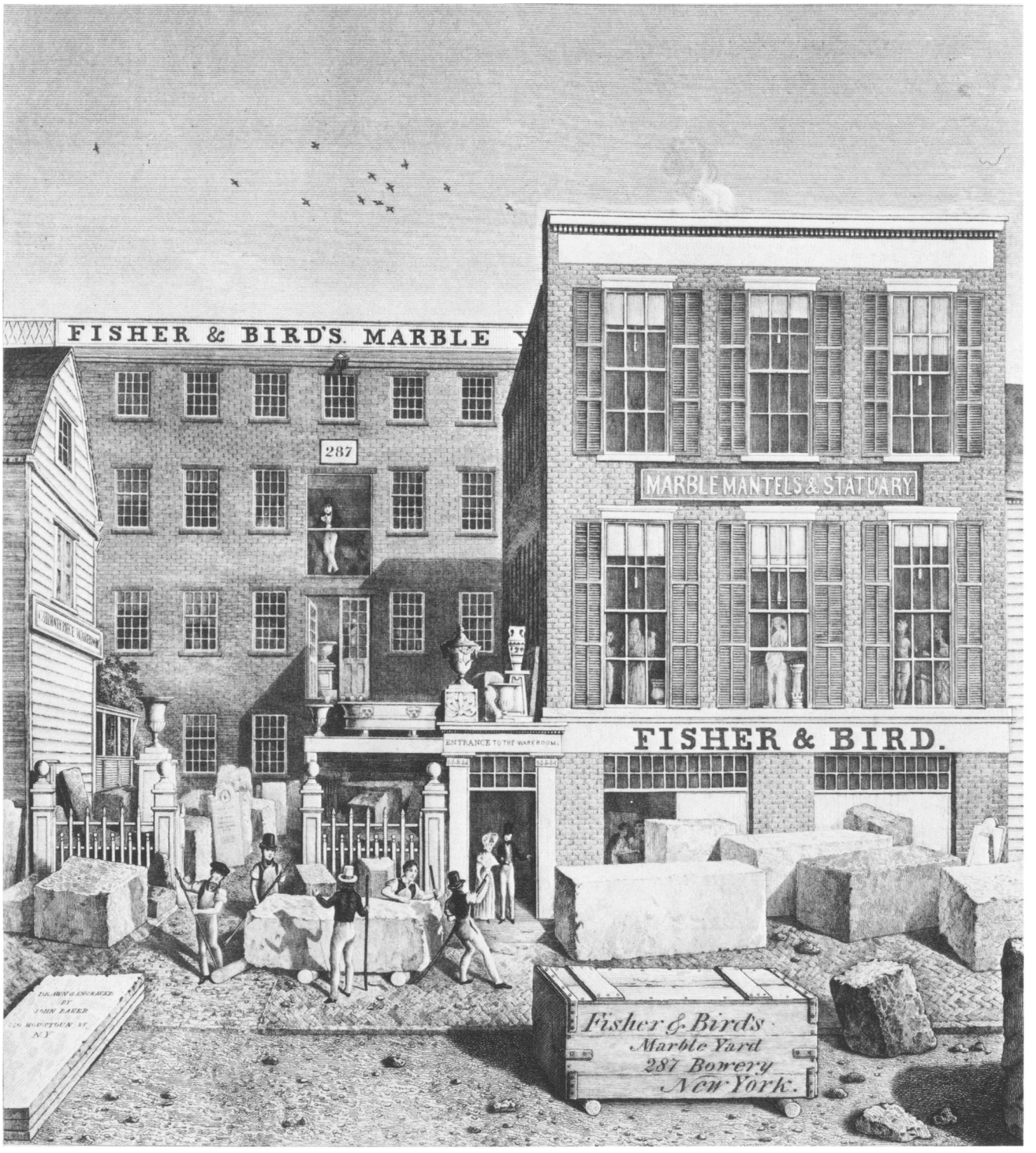
A. ROBERTSON New York (New York as Washington Knew It), 1794–97

SAMUEL SEYMOUR after BIRCH The City of New York, 1803

Traditionally entitled New York as Washington Knew It, this engraved view, which has a still, peaceful quality, is most likely by Robertson after his own watercolor of 1793. Archibald and his brother Alexander, immigrating from Scotland in 1791 and 1792 respectively, were watercolorists, and the former also had a knowledge of engraving. In 1793, they opened an art academy for young ladies. A few copies of this scene by talented students survive. Several of them, like this engraving, lack the additional shipping found at the right in Robertson's original watercolor; perhaps the sensitively colored print was made for special use in the school.

Prominent in this view is the Government House, then recently built on the site of old Fort George and facing Bowling Green. The building, an early example of the Federal style, was planned originally as the presidential mansion before Congress moved to Philadelphia. At the far left is Trinity Church, rebuilt in modified Gothic style after it was burned during the war. New town houses and hotels line Broadway between these two landmarks.

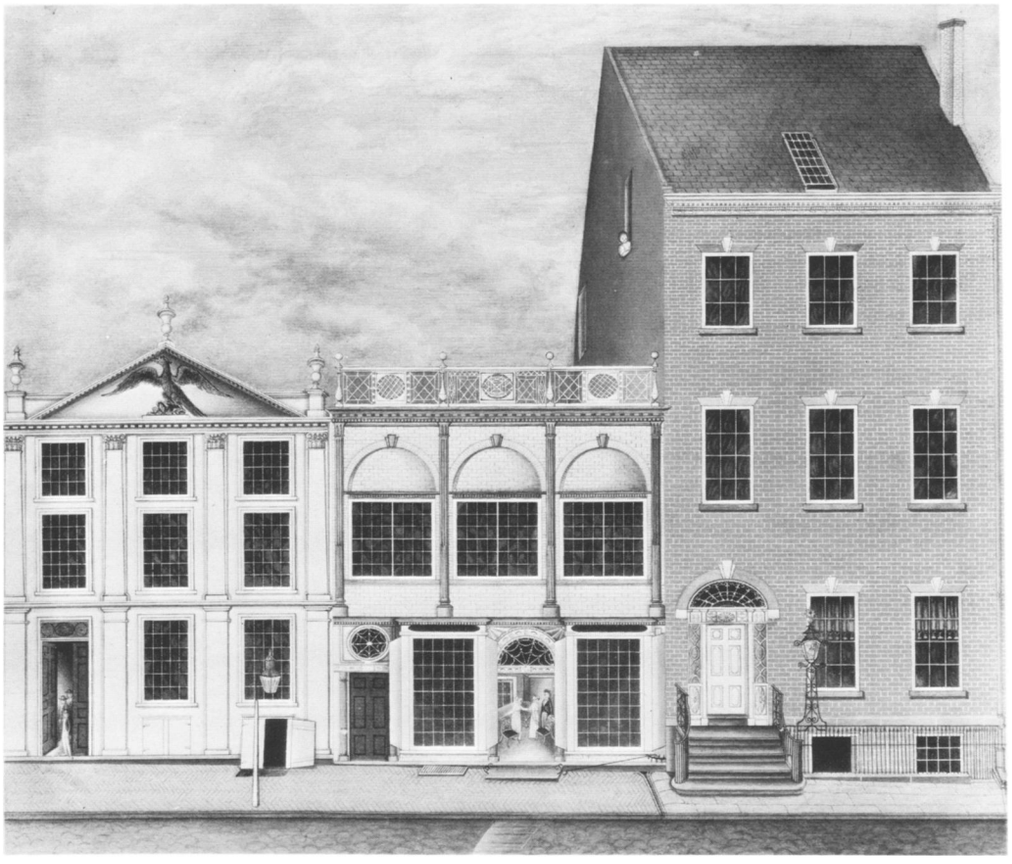
There is simultaneously an enigmatic and a theatrical quality to Birch's richly colored, rare engraving of New York from Brooklyn Heights. The white horse grazes peacefully beneath the storm-blasted tree, a dramatic device much like the proplike trees and shrubbery that figure in the foreground of many maps and battle scenes of the period. The urban and commercial congestion of the city of New York, the real subject of the print, is only perceived once the viewer has taken in the incongruously pastoral scene. Birch himself must have had second thoughts, as he erased the horse in later states of the print and substituted a sedate picnic party under additional trees. In this view, he has silhouetted the spires and cupolas of various churches and civic structures against the New Jersey Palisades, including those of rebuilt Trinity Church, Federal Hall, Middle Dutch Church, Saint Paul's Church, and the Brick Presbyterian Church. Birch is best known for various series of engravings that document the fashionable new buildings and other notable religious and secular structures in Philaldelphia and environs.



JOHN BAKER Fisher and Bird's Marble Yard, about 1837

Baker's engraving of the 1830s for the marble firm of Fisher & Bird at 350 Houston Street in New York resembles other trade cards of the period. The format is larger than that of most cards or billheads, however, with a full view of the establishment and its merchandise, suggesting that the engraving may have been intended for a merchant's directory or a label attached to finished goods or packing crates. The fact that so few examples have survived would point to its use on the more perishable labels. In this advertising image, as in the painting of Duncan Phyfe's cabinetmaking shop on the facing page, an atmosphere of gentility prevails that downplays industrial grime. The fashionable couple inspecting the premises seems unconcerned about soiling their clothes, and their presence implies that only the latest styles and the best workmanship characterize this firm's products, which are prominently displayed.

The charming watercolor of Phyfe's shop and warehouse on Fulton Street in New York has only recently been convincingly attributed to John Rubens Smith, who was born in England the son of the British engraver John Raphael Smith. The younger Smith, a peripatetic figure, lived

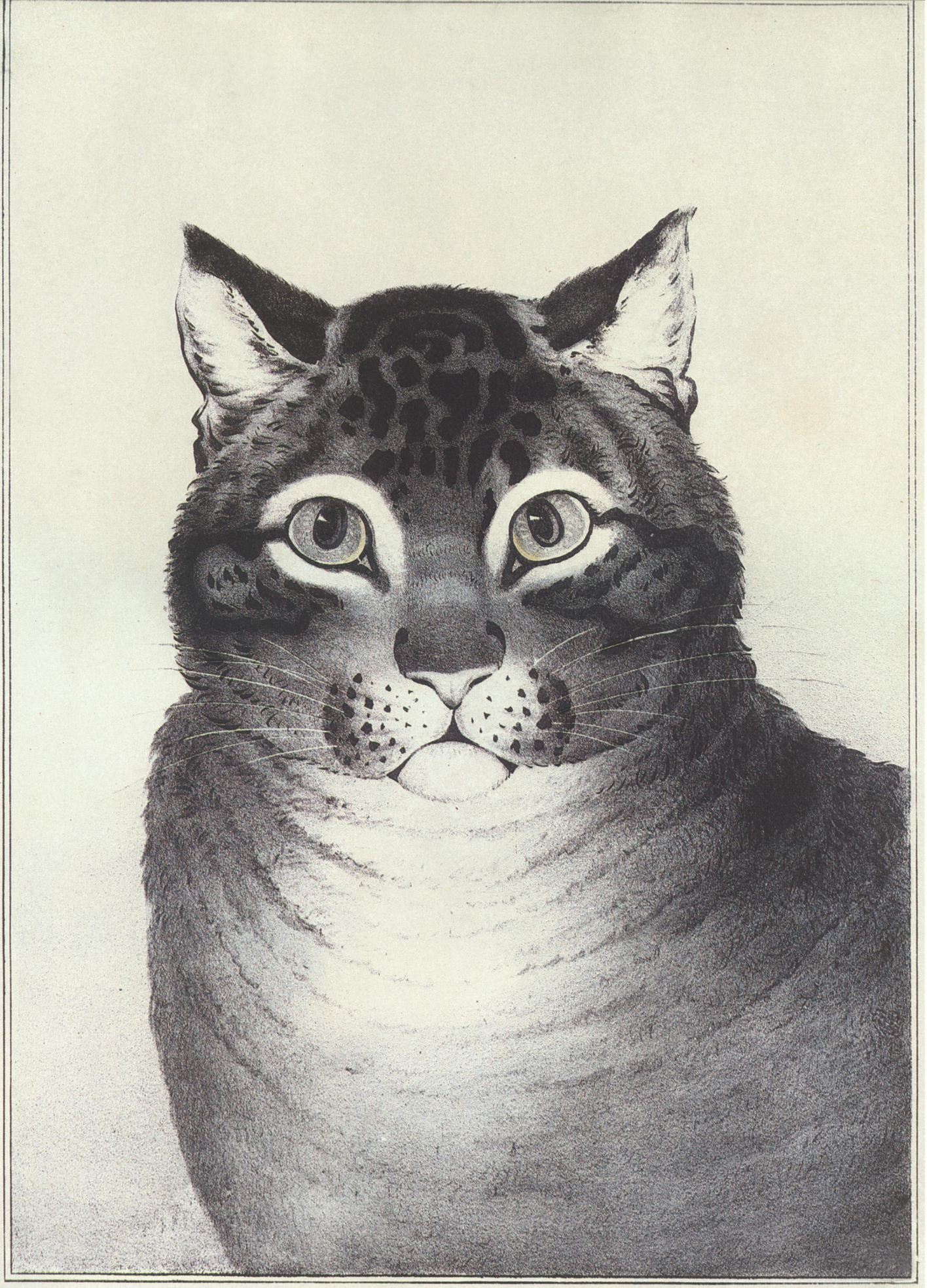


J. R. SMITH Shop and Warehouse of Duncan Phyfe, about 1816–17

A. J. DAVIS Design for a Bank or Public Building, about 1835–40

at various times in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. In each city he ran a drawing school, and among his students were Sanford Gifford and Emanuel Leutze. Phyfe, who occupied buildings on Fulton Street from about 1803 to 1847, was noted for his fine interpretations of English Regency forms. The ornamental woodwork on the central building and the eagle and urns on the left were probably the work of his shop.

The watercolor below is by Alexander Jackson Davis, an architect, who is best known for his role in the American Gothic revival, although he created neoclassical structures of real distinction as well. This bank façade is striking in its severity and purity of design. Beautifully placed on the sheet of paper, the building, rendered in delicate green and white, contrasts strongly with the black background. Although the project was never realized, the watercolor is evidence of Davis's finesse as an architect. What at first appears to be a small Greek temple becomes, when we compare the scale of the figures, a monumental four-story building. Davis, in effect, succeeded in concealing a practical amount of space behind a beautifully balanced and serene classical façade.



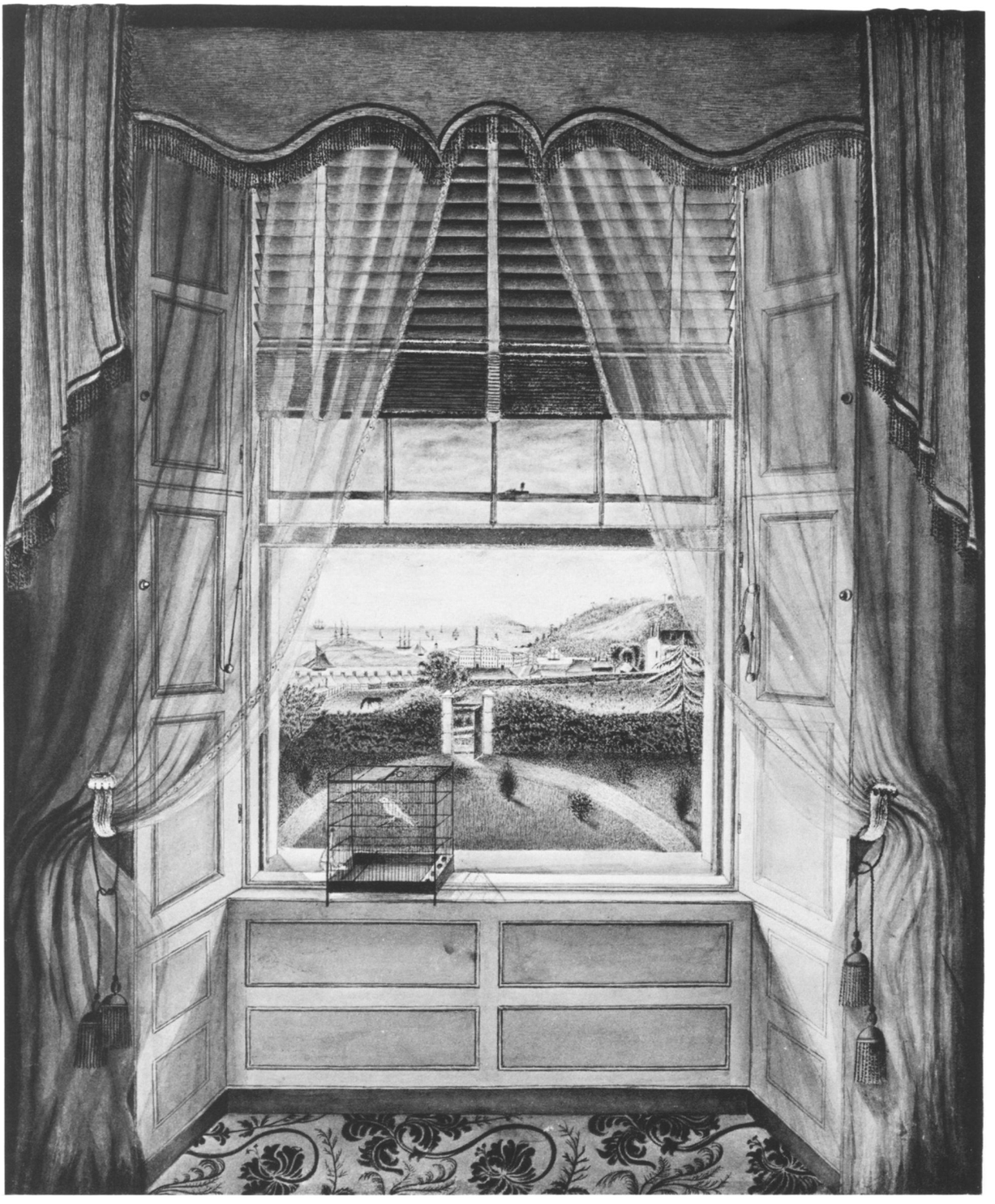
THE FAVORITE CAT.

JOHAN HENRICH OTTO **Fraktur Motifs, about 1780–90**

NATHANIEL CURRIER **The Favorite Cat, about 1840–50**

The Favorite Cat captures the essence of the animal in a manner associated more with country or "naïve" artists than with the firm of Nathaniel Currier, later Currier & Ives. Its bold iconic frontality has an abstraction not normally found in the lithographs of these famous printmakers. The palest watercolor washes give a watchful sparkle to the cat's eyes.

Not much is known about Otto, who did the design above. He may have come from Ephrata, Pennsylvania, and he worked in Lancaster and Bucks counties between 1772 and 1778. Watercolors of this type are called frakturs because they usually adorn documents—such as birth and marriage certificates—bearing the old German script of that name. This one is unusual because it is entirely ornament, and the exuberant birds, crowns, and flowers were probably done purely for the artist's amusement. Created primarily for the Pennsylvania German community, fraktur continued a tradition dating back to illuminated manuscripts of the middle ages. This work, which was gradually supplanted by printing techniques, is a rare example of pure folk art, or that produced completely outside of the fine arts tradition.



The striking and unusual image above is probably from the hand of a partly trained artist, who worked meticulously in pen and black ink combined with gray and white washes. The building in the center distance may be a factory, perhaps the source of Mr. Thomas's wealth. Although the landscape in the background—with its great variety of boats—is charmingly portrayed, the drapery is monumental and intensely, almost obsessively studied (even to a cut silhouette along the top margin), giving the whole an eerie, nearly surreal quality reminiscent of such disparate nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists as Caspar David Friedrich, René Magritte, and Andrew Wyeth. One senses that there must be a meaning to this picture, and a reason for its oddly composed viewpoint, but most likely none was intended. It is this disjunction between intent and effect that gives such works by folk or "country" artists their extraordinary appeal today.

The drawing was probably preserved more because of a sentimental tie to the view than for its artistic merit. After the invention of the camera in the mid-nineteenth century, such scenes were usually recorded on film, and the market for pictures by practicing country artists

D. W. KELLOGG & CO. Memorial Print, about 1836

UNIDENTIFIED ARTIST View from the House of Henry Briscoe Thomas, about 1841

largely disappeared.

The memorial print from the Hartford lithographers D. W. Kellogg & Co. is a late manifestation of a tradition that first appeared in America at the end of the eighteenth century. During the early period of popularity, these images were elaborate productions embroidered and watercolored by women to commemorate the deaths of family members and national heroes. By the 1830s the tradition of hand craftsmanship was replaced by such commercially printed images as this example, left blank so that the family could fill in the names. The careful hand-coloring and the lack of any added dedicatory inscription on the base of the urn suggest that this may have been a proof impression to advertise the company's stock.

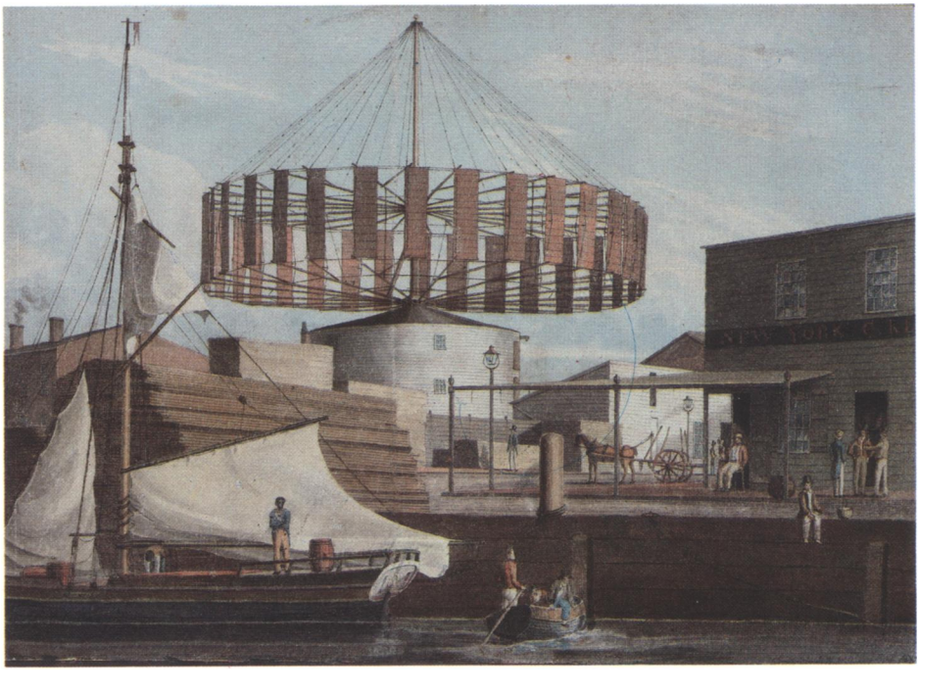
Like many of the lithography firms of the day, D. W. Kellogg & Co. issued large numbers of prints at low cost to a wide audience. These companies would frequently adapt popular subjects by competitors with only the slightest variations. The Kelloggs were not above the practice, as this one was probably copied from a similar lithograph published by the Pendletons of Boston.

WILLIAM GUY WALL **New York from Weehawk, about 1823**

Wall's New York from Weehawk reflects the Dublin-born artist's awareness of the remarkable achievement of British watercolorists of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the tradition of such artists as Paul Sandby, Wall's watercolor is an unusually well colored and composed topographical view, in which gauzy washes of green and brown create subtle color harmonies with the sparkling blue of the Hudson. Although Wall may have intended it for his Hudson River Portfolio, a series of engravings of the 1820s, he decided in 1823 to issue separately a print by John Hill after this view and one of New York from Brooklyn Heights, and exhibited the watercolors when he offered subscriptions for the prints. He clearly regarded these two impressive pictures as special in his work, a judgment supported by his contemporaries and modern-day viewers.

Hill, who emigrated to America in 1815, pursued an active and influential career engraving in aquatint views of the American urban and natural landscape. For most of these, other artists provided the original drawings, and Wall's watercolors were the basis for many of Hill's prints, including this impression of The Palisades, a magnif-

JOHN HILL after WALL
The Palisades, 1823–24

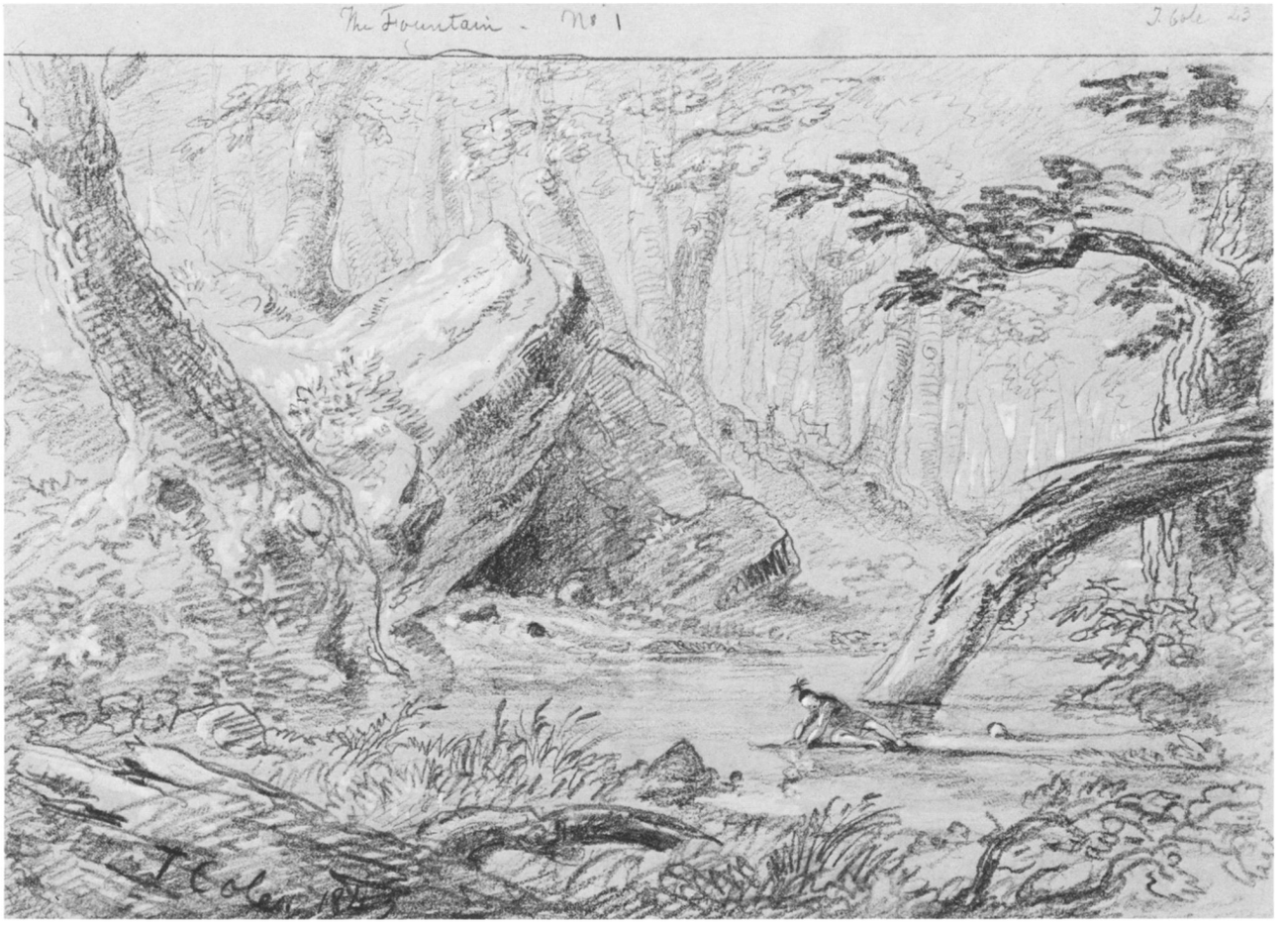


JOHN WILLIAM HILL
Circular Mill,
King Street, New York, 1823

icent aquatint in brown ink with additional hand coloring, and a rare proof. The published versions were intended for the Hudson River Portfolio; this image, No. 2 of the fourth part, was issued in 1823–24.

John William Hill, whose watercolor of plums is reproduced on page 4, was the son of John Hill. The younger Hill is best known as a follower of the British art critic John Ruskin, and his delicate, close-up still lifes, such as Plums, often in jewel-like colors, follow Ruskin's prescription for fine observation and meticulous detail. Hill also created a number of less precise compositions, many of which continue the Hudson River School type of landscape painting.

Circular Mill, King Street, drawn in ink with watercolor added, was done when Hill was twenty-one, and its style derives from the topographical watercolor painting he must have learned from British-trained artists like his father and Wall. Hill's picture is unusually fine because of the delicacy of color, as in the dark pink sails of the mill and the subtle blue sky. Historically it is of interest for it preserves the mill's unusual shape and the almost bucolic appearance of the New York waterfront in a more innocent time.



THOMAS COLE The Fountain, 1843

The founder of the Hudson River school of landscape painting, Cole was a fine draftsman as well. In this pencil drawing heightened with white on green paper, Cole illustrated a scene from *The Fountain,* a poem by his friend William Cullen Bryant that followed the history of this country from Indian times to Bryant's own day through a series of incidents occurring at a single place. Cole chose to depict a moment early in the poem when an Indian warrior, mortally wounded in battle, crawls to a fountain to "slake his death thirst." Cole's inscription, "The Fountain No. 1," probably indicates that he intended the drawing to be a study for one of a series of paintings illustrating Bryant's poem, and the artist may well have given the poet this work, which came from the family of one of Bryant's descendants, as an example of the planned series.

The drawing was done late in the artist's short career, and reflects his study of the drawings of the British landscapist John Constable. The soft pencil strokes and evocative use of Chinese white in the sky mark a loosening of his earlier, tighter style. Although Cole is well known for large, even grandiose series of paintings on high moral themes, such as The Course of

JOHN F. KENSETT **Birch Tree, Niagara, 1851**

Empire (New-York Historical Society), his patrons preferred his pure landscapes, particularly American views like The Oxbow (Metropolitan Museum). This lack of enthusiasm for what Cole termed "historical landscapes" may explain why his project for The Fountain apparently never progressed beyond this sketch.

Far quieter and simpler is Kensett's pencil study of birches near Niagara Falls. Where Cole depicted a whole scene within a highly developed composition, Kensett has concentrated on drawing with great subtlety and refinement a sharply focused detail of several trees, carefully recording the curve of the central tree. Kensett rarely signed his drawings, and that he chose to do so on this occasion suggests he was especially pleased with this work. He seems, however, to have dated it incorrectly. His letters indicate that he was in Maine in late July 1850 and at Niagara Falls in August 1851, and this picture was probably done at that time.

Kensett, a member of the second generation of Hudson River School painters, studied drawing in London, Paris, and Rome. This example, which may be his best, reflects the skills he learned abroad; it is in effect a figure study of a tree.

ROBERT HAVELL **Panoramic View of New York from the East River, 1844**

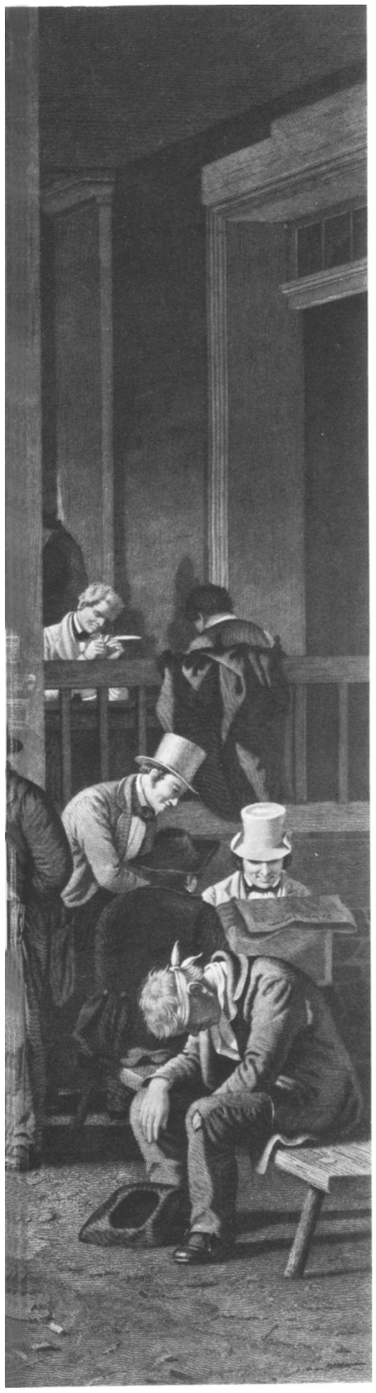
The large number of printed views documenting the expansion of New York during the second quarter of the nineteenth century reflected the pride and satisfaction of its citizens in the growing mercantile prominence of their city. Both of these prints depict a city that has surpassed that engraved by Robertson and Birch. Lower Manhattan was becoming increasingly commercial as residences and churches moved uptown. The demand for images of buildings, civic events, and broad vistas made this an active period for printmakers of all degrees of competence. Havell, best known for his aquatints of Audubon's *Birds of America,* emigrated to New York in 1839. His view of New York from the East River and its companion view from the Hudson River, both published in 1844, are noted for the excellence of the aquatint and the rich hand-coloring. In the Hill-Papprill view, the sweep of Broadway leads the eye through the dense urban fabric to the Gothic-style edifice of Trinity Church, then recently completed. Barnum's famous museum, Mathew Brady's daguerreotype studio, and Genin's well-advertised hat store are clearly visible in the foreground.

H. PAPPRILL after J. W. HILL
New York from the Steeple of St. Paul's Church, 1848

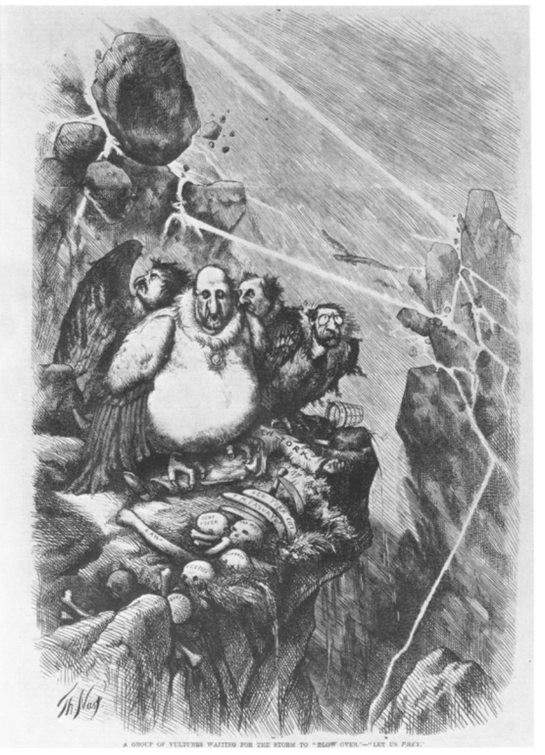
JOHN SARTAIN after BINGHAM **The County Election, 1854**

The quality and innovative force of art created for wider audiences in the second half of the nineteenth century earned the period its name as a Golden Age for American printmaking and illustration. Sartain's steel engraving of Bingham's painting shows the skill and ambition of the line and mezzotint technique that flourished after 1844, when the American Art-Union began to distribute large, high-quality engravings after the work of American painters. In 1852 Bingham contracted the English-trained engraver Sartain, who worked on the plate for almost two years while the artist canvassed the country for ten-dollar subscriptions. The print was considerably more expensive than the contemporary lithographs of Currier & Ives, or the cruder wood engravings that illustrated most books and magazines.

Nast exploited the power of the popular medium of wood engraving, as the technique grew more refined in the 1870s. His drawings attacking the corrupt William M. "Boss" Tweed and "Tammany Hall" were reproduced alongside G. W. Curtis's scathing editorials in *Harper's Weekly*. The grotesque caricature and unforgettable visual metaphor of Nast's satire was



THOMAS NAST
"Let Us Prey," 1871



EDWIN AUSTIN ABBEY In a Tavern, 1886

credited with Tweed's initial overthrow in 1871 and his conviction—on 204 counts of fraud—in 1873. Three weeks after the public investigation began, Nast published "Let Us Prey" to warn that Tweed and his henchmen were merely lying low, waiting for public outrage to "blow over."

The year Nast tackled Boss Tweed, *Harper's* hired young Abbey, a dreamer whose pen and ink drawings rarely touched on modern subjects. His illustrations of Shakespeare, Herrick, and Goldsmith became internationally famous, partly because they were photographically reproduced in *Harper's Monthly* and then published in elegant gift books. In a Tavern, from the book *Old Songs* (1889), was the second of eight drawings for the poem "Phillada Flouts Me," a tragicomic lament by a country boy rejected in favor of a flashy cavalier. The poem suggested the seventeenth century to Abbey, who carefully researched and lovingly rendered the evocative period setting. His lively, splintered line recorded a delightful range of textures and values, suggesting both color and motion. Such naturalism, informed by a sensitive narrative vision, brings the poem, and the past, to life.

JAMES HAMILTON Beach Scene, about 1865

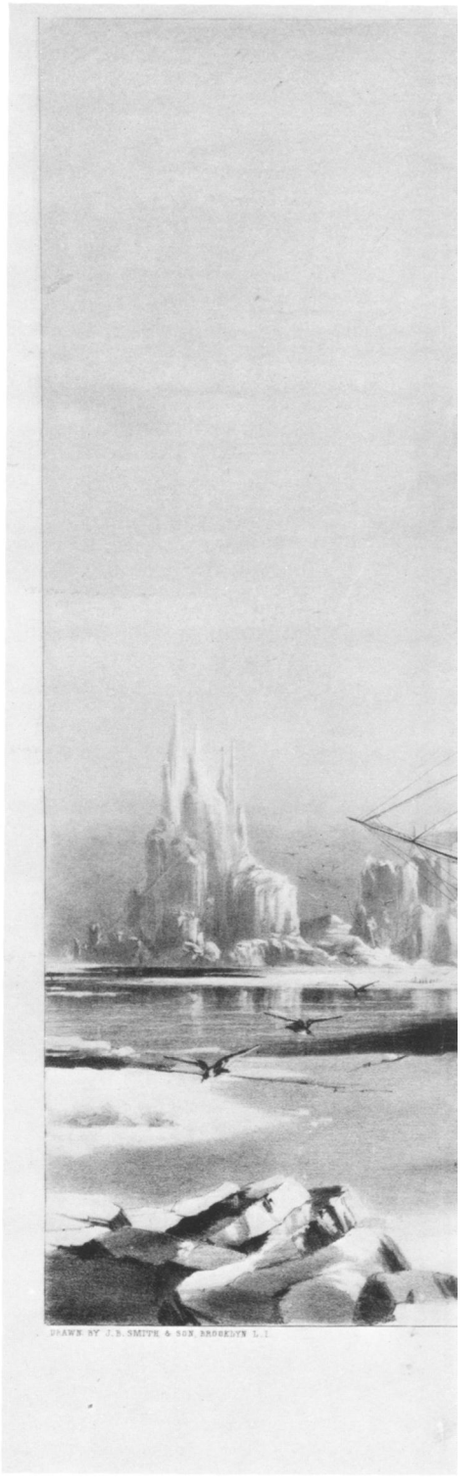
The British tradition in watercolor continued to inspire American landscape painting through the 1870s. At mid-century, the medium was still dominated by British émigrés like Hamilton, who left Ireland for Philadelphia only to rely on an English-born engraver, John Sartain, for artistic advice, and engravings of J. M. W. Turner's work for instruction. Hamilton, later known as "the American Turner," displayed his command of the master's varied watercolor technique and his grasp of Turner's sweeping spatial constructions in Beach Scene, with its great breadth and brilliance. Like Turner, Hamilton dragged drier, denser pigment over wet washes on tinted paper, and suggested movement and detail with bright flecks of gouache and brown pen line. By the time this work was painted, in the mid-60s, Hamilton had spent two years in England, where he probably studied Turner's work at first hand as well as similar coastal views by David Cox, and two other Turner followers, J. B. Pyne and Copley Fielding. However, the geometric spareness of the composition, the striking value contrasts, and the color are Hamilton's own.

Hamilton was succeeded as the most popular American painter of the coastline

WILLIAM TROST RICHARDS Lake Squam from Red Hill, 1874

by another Philadelphian, Richards, whose sensibility was shaped by a younger generation of English artists, the Pre-Raphaelites, and their persuasive apologist, John Ruskin. Richards also admired Turner, but agreed with Ruskin that Turner's freedom could only be earned after careful study of nature. Though his technique was similar to Hamilton's, Richards's delicately detailed method was inherently critical of artists who painted, as Hamilton did, largely from memory and imagination. The special affection for watercolor among Richards and his fellow "American Pre-Raphaelites" reveals their British sensibilities, though Lake Squam from Red Hill demonstrates how well this taste harmonized with contemporary Hudson River School Luminism in oils. The shallow bowl of light that curves up to meet the sun conveys a Luminist sense of panorama, while the quiet mood and handling create a Luminist moment of breathless contemplation. Such evocation of spacious vistas within small watercolor formats was partly learned from Turner, but Richards's elegiac response connects him to the American vision expressed in Frederic Church's great Twilight in the Wilderness of 1860.

WINSLOW HOMER Eight Bells, 1887



NATHANIEL CURRIER Clipper Ship *Red Jacket*, 1855

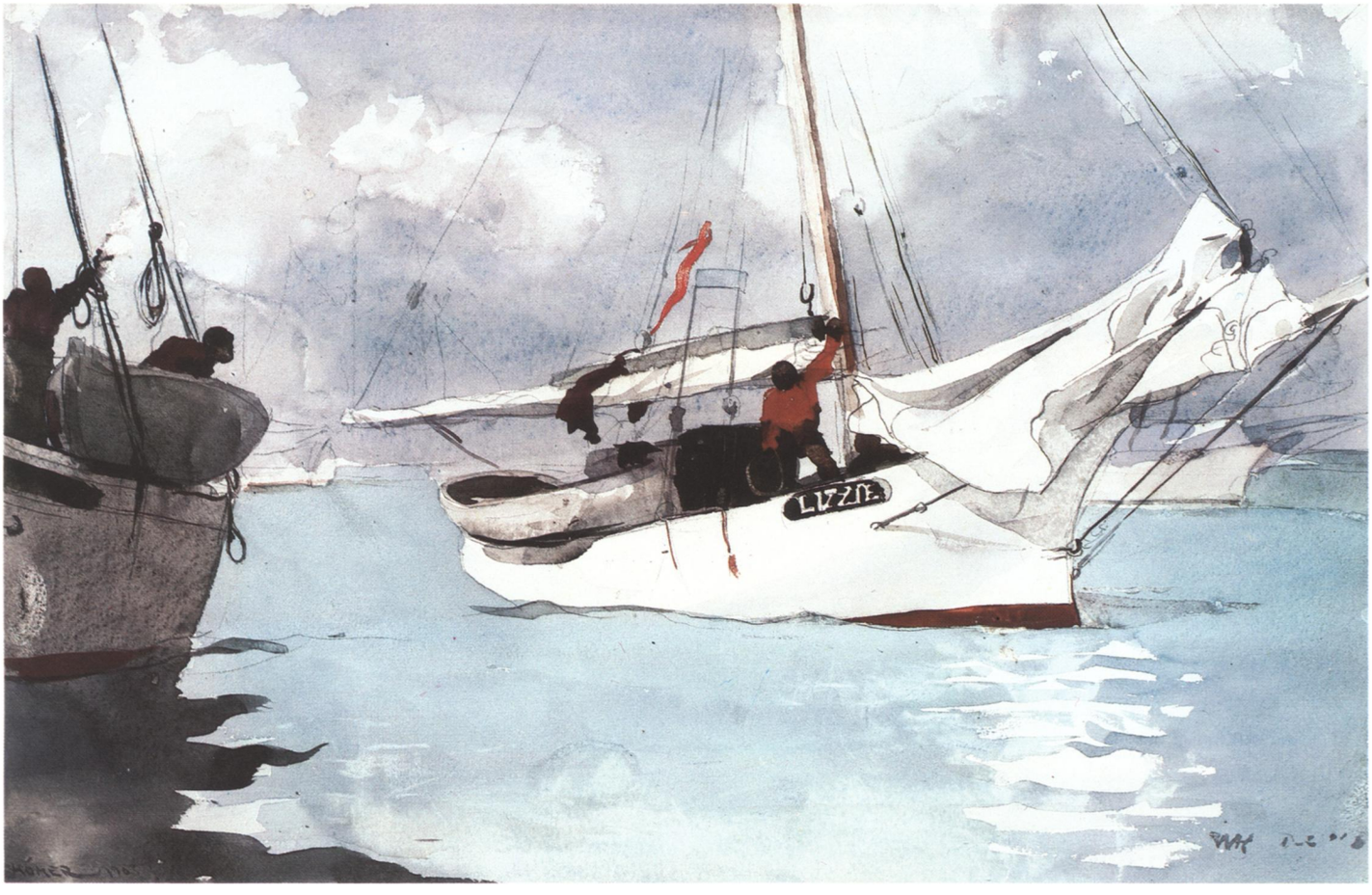
Eight large-plate etchings created between 1884 and 1889, including Eight Bells, represent the culmination of Homer's experience with printmaking. Though based on oils and watercolors, the etchings were not literal translations, as Homer consistently edited and recreated details to produce compositions that emphasized linear rather than painterly qualities. In Eight Bells, he not only increased the scale of the figures, but also eliminated much of the surrounding detail of the original painting. In contrast to many of his contemporaries, Homer was interested in the quality of his etched lines. Therefore, his plates were cleanly printed, with little ink left on their surfaces. Here, silhouetting the figures against the more lightly etched waves, Homer dramatized the timeless relationship between sailors and the sea.

Homer started his artistic career as a draftsman in the Boston lithography firm of John H. Bufford, but his best-known graphic images are those he produced for *Harper's Weekly* and other illustrated periodicals starting during the Civil War and continuing until 1874. In the intervening ten years, he devoted his time to painting, and Eight Bells and the seven other etchings of this group draw on the work

from this period.

The lithography firm of Nathaniel Currier and later partnership with Charles Ives published, at low cost for mass distribution, many of the most interesting and well-known images of a prosperous America conscious of its manifest destiny. Their prints mirrored popular attitudes, whether depicting scenes of rural abundance, happy families, sweet girls and adorable pets, hunters and fishermen, fast trotters, flourishing cities, patriotic events, or mighty steamships, yachts, and clipper ships. One is rarely aware of the evils of growing industrialism, war, urban poverty, or death in these pictures. With uncolored prints available at low prices, even the poor could purchase a dream.

Numerous artists of varying talents were employed by Currier & Ives. While draftsmen of the small prints have often remained anonymous, those for the larger and more lavish were frequently acknowledged on the prints themselves along with artists of the original works. The hand-colored Clipper Ship Red Jacket by Charles Parsons after J.B. Smith & Son, is an excellent example of the firm's large prints, and is one of the more desirable among collectors.



WINSLOW HOMER Fishing Boats, Key West, 1903

In 1881 and 1882 Homer spent several months in the English fishing village of Cullercoats rethinking his entire approach to watercolor. Already a leader in the American watercolor movement, Homer returned to surprise his New York contemporaries with a technique and content transformed by his exposure to modern British watercolor. Where previously he had studied novel American subjects in a personal and impressionistic manner, his English work showed a more conventional notion of the picturesque, delivered in a monumental and deliberate style. Inside the Bar, one of the most powerful products of his Cullercoats experience, demonstrates the disciplined complexity of Homer's new technique and its heroic concept of the struggle between humans and their environment.

His fascination with the sea continued throughout Homer's career, but after 1885, when he began to spend his winters in the Caribbean, the earlier spontaneous *plein air* style returned to modify his English method. The confidence of his maturity, earned from thirty years of constant practice, is evident in A Wall, Nassau, with its bright, tropical splashes of red against blue and its fresh, open

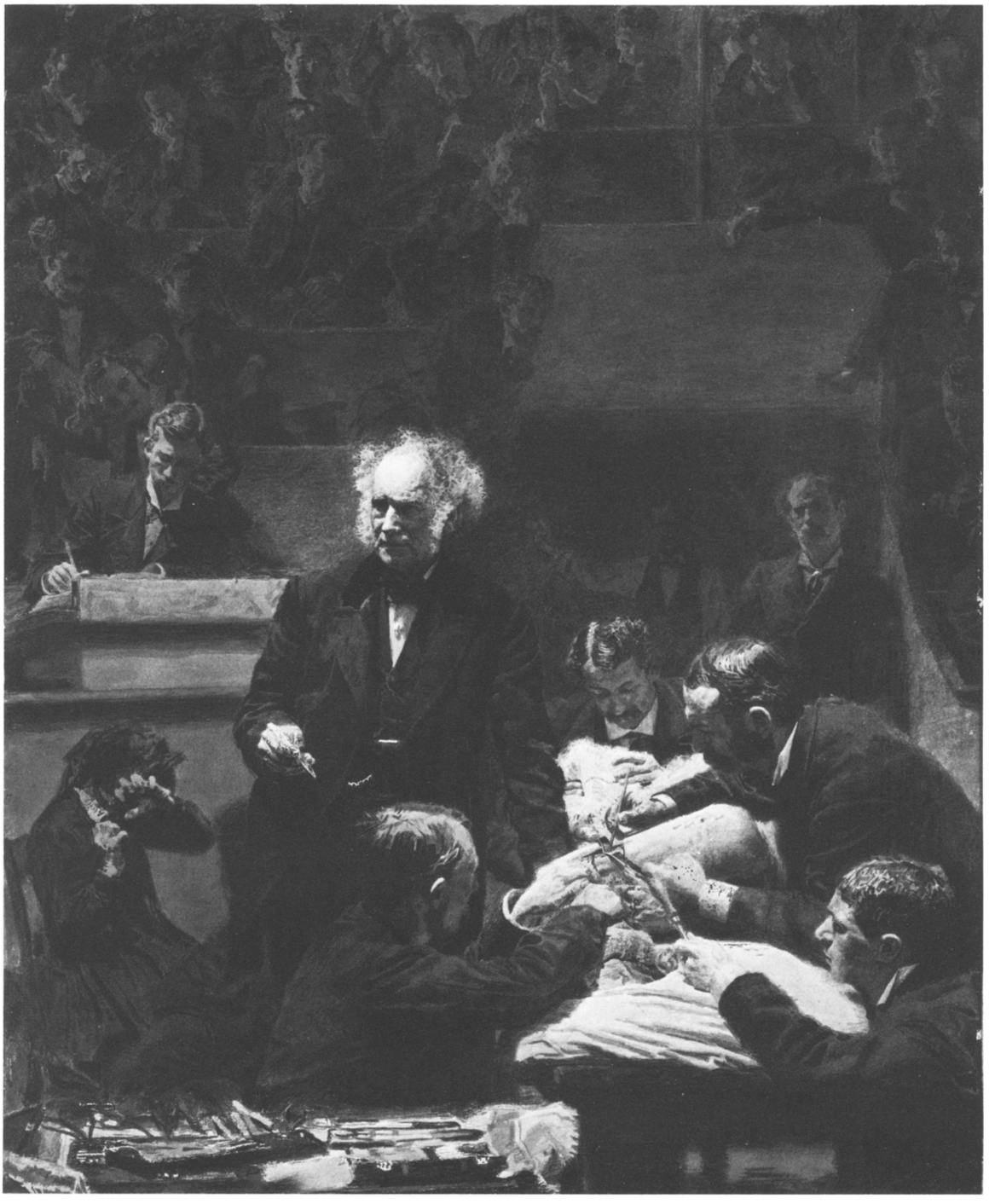
WINSLOW HOMER Inside the Bar, Tynemouth, 1883

WINSLOW HOMER A Wall, Nassau, 1898

handling. The slightly later, even more fluid Fishing Boats, Key West, reveals the energy and assurance of the master of the medium as he approached the age of seventy. His quick pencil sketch first organized the geometry of the boats within the page and captured the movement of the figures and flapping canvas, but his colors freely override these notations, eliminating detail (as in Inside the Bar) for greater breadth. This drive toward simplicity affected Homer's palette, too, which contained only a few colors and black, though he used such small means to suggest a variety of textures—from the loose and blotchy clouds to the crisp shadow on the hull. The most dazzling effect, however, comes from Homer's skill in reserving the bare paper for highlights, for the brilliant whiteness of the page conveys the reflected glare of Florida sunlight on the *Lizzie* with astonishing economy and truth. The directness of such technique helps us reconstruct the creation of Fishing Boats, while two large thumb prints at right and left give an even livelier sense of the artist himself, informally sketching on some sunny dock in Key West.

J. A. M. WHISTLER Nocturne, 1878

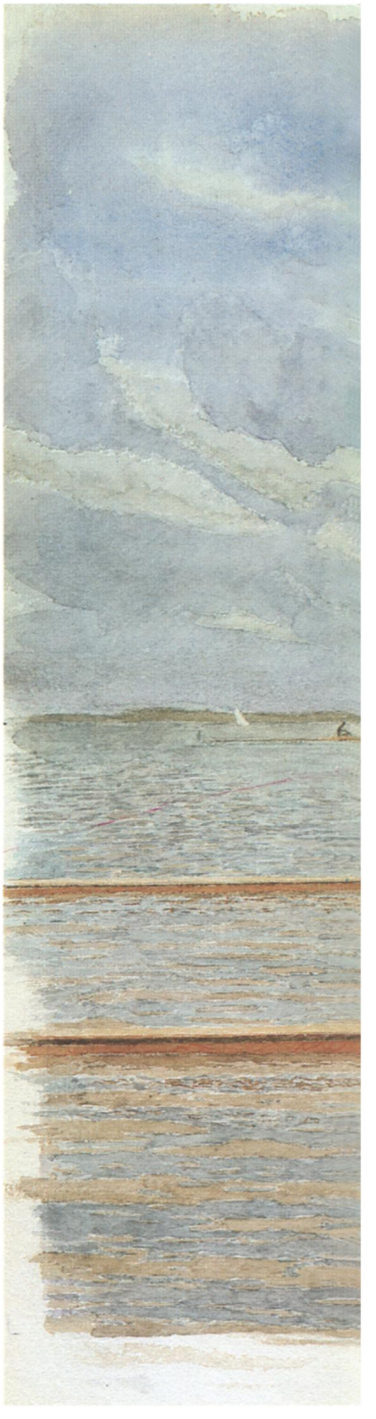
Probably the most influential printmaker of the nineteenth century was the expatriate Whistler, who sparked a revival of etching and lithography among his colleagues. Rotherhithe (see p. 3) is an excellent example of the controlled technique so characteristic of his etchings made in the late 1850s and early 60s. To modulate dark and light values, Whistler paid close attention to the careful biting of the etched line and to detail. He would change the latter practice in the First Venice Set of 1880, where hand-applied plate tone greatly enhanced the delicate images. Prior to these prints, he experimented with atmospheric toning in his lithotints of the late 1870s, including Nocturne, but, working with layers of diluted inks fixed to the surface of the stone, he was not always able to achieve the subtle gradations that characterize the Venice Set. In Nocturne, however, blue paper adds a richness comparable to that of his paintings of the same period. Because of artistic indifference to lithography, considered tainted by commercialism, Whistler abandoned the process until the late 1880s, when a revival of interest among artists coincided with new methods for transferring a drawing to the stone.



THOMAS EAKINS The Gross Clinic, 1875–76

Eakins was proud of his masterpiece, The Gross Clinic, and anxious to have it known abroad. To get a reliable black and white reproduction, he prepared a small ink-wash duplicate to be copied photographically by the world's best-known art reproduction firm, Adolph Braun and Company, of Germany. Early photographic plates, being inequally sensitive to colors, registered blues as white and reds as almost black, and therefore confused both value structure and areas of detail like The Gross Clinic's bright drops of blood. Perhaps Eakins knew that the first corrected color-sensitive plates were being produced in Germany in the mid-1870s, but to ensure accuracy, he translated his own painting into the proper values, being careful not to use opaque white, which might have contributed false texture or density to highlights. Eakins prepared for all later reproductions in this manner; few American painters were so fastidious, or so attuned to the latest photographic technology. Evidently Eakins was pleased with Braun's collotype, for he exhibited it twice before showing the painting. When the Centennial Exposition opened in 1876, The Gross Clinic and its print were hanging side by side.

THOMAS EAKINS The Pathetic Song, about 1881



THOMAS EAKINS John Biglin in a Single Scull, 1873–74

Eakins painted about two dozen watercolors, mostly in the critical years between 1873 and 1882, when American watercolor painting was enjoying its greatest growth. The works on these two pages bracket his major decade of activity with its changing subject matter. Before 1875, all of his watercolors were outdoor scenes, usually featuring male athletes like his friend Biglin, who gave Eakins a chance to paint active bodies unhampered by clothing, amidst bright effects of sunlight and reflection. Watercolor, with its clean washes and reflecting surface, was well suited to the haze and sparkle of his sunny river scenes. The large scale and delicate finish of John Biglin was not unusual among watercolorists of this period, but few undertook the elaborate pencil and oil studies that Eakins made for this picture. His academic training, or perhaps his insecurity, demanded such a method, for John Biglin was one of Eakins's début entries at the American Watercolor Society's exhibition in New York in 1874.

After 1875 Eakins turned to warm, dark interiors dominated by women and old people. Though more confined by space and clothing, these figures gained expressive range. While the masculine, outdoor

world liberated the body, Eakins's indoor, feminine world allowed emotion, contemplation, and art, especially music. The Pathetic Song, a watercolor replica of the larger oil of the same title from 1881, depicts the center of this cultural sphere, the parlor, where the taste and aspirations of the women in a Victorian home held sway. In an age when most middle-class ladies could display some musical accomplishment, a Sunday afternoon concert at home drew upon the talents of family members and friends; here, both Margaret Harrison (the singer, who was given the watercolor copy for her help modeling) and Susan MacDowell (later Mrs. Eakins) were students in Eakins's art classes, and not professional musicians like the cellist, Mr. Stolte. As a predominantly feminine genre, the parlor song was usually a lyric ballad with "pathetic" themes of love, untimely death, and virtue. Eakins's restrained treatment of this scene proves again his subtlety with material from everyday life. Without attempting to flatter the ordinary faces and ungainly dresses of the day, he made a gentle study of light and mood, and let his own sympathetic response reveal the affecting quality of this Victorian experience.

WILLIAM M. CHASE Reverie: A Portrait of a Woman, about 1890–95

The sensitive portraits on these two pages are examples of the most painterly printmaking process, the monotype. The method was introduced in the seventeenth century by Castiglione in an attempt to capture the tonal qualities of Rembrandt's prints. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the monotype was revived and further developed. As plate tone, or extra ink left on the surface of the copper sheet prior to printing, became more essential to their images, artists completely dispensed with the etched lines. They would paint directly on the clean plate with printer's ink or wipe areas away from the fully inked surface. Frequently both methods would be employed, as in these portraits. Because there was no etched or engraved line to hold the image after the inked plate was printed, only one print exactly like each of these could be produced. A second impression could be made if enough ink remained on the surface, but pastels and watercolors would then be added to complete the image.

One of the first American painters to use the monotype was Chase. He exhibited several examples in 1881, and continued to make them throughout his career.

CHARLES ABEL CORWIN **Portrait of Whistler, 1880**

Reverie, most likely a portrait of his wife, and probably from about 1895, is a masterful image equal to his work in oils. The freedom and assurance of his bravura strokes of wiped area are even more spontaneous and tactile in the face, where the artist's use of the thumb is evident on close observation. The obvious emotional involvement of the artist with the subject he has so affectingly portrayed, in conjunction with the print's large size, gives this monotype an extraordinary impact.

Frank Duveneck and the group of American artist-friends studying with him in Venice also employed the technique in 1880. During one of their gatherings a student, Charles Abel Corwin, caught a distinguished visitor, Whistler, in a contemplative moment. The quick, sketchlike quality of this print is enhanced by the bold appearance of the artist's thumbprint in the face, and the stark highlighting of Whistler's shirt and coat, profile, and dramatic lock of white hair. Himself a skilled printmaker, Whistler was in Venice to work on his famous First Venice Set of etchings. His exposure to the monotype process may have influenced the painterly use of plate tone in that series.

JOHN LA FARGE The Strange Thing Little Kiosai Saw in the River, 1897

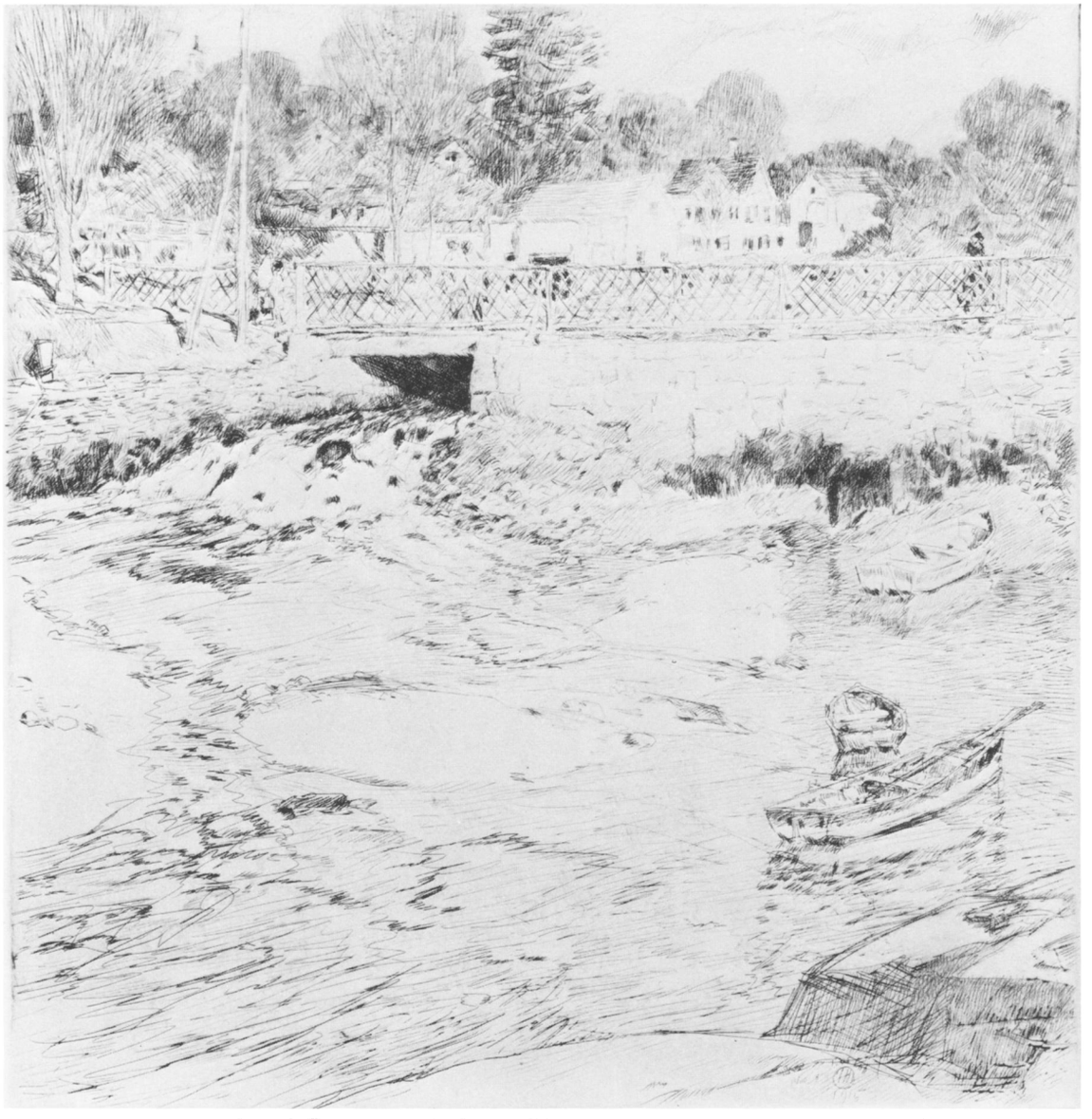
La Farge integrated Japanese principles of design and color into his own French artistic tradition. His interest drew him to Japan in 1886 and 1890, and in 1897 he painted a series of watercolors inspired by Japanese folklore, particularly themes of mystery, deception, and hallucination, including The Strange Thing Little Kiosai Saw. In the catalogue of the picture's first exhibition, La Farge explained that his subject came from the life story of the Japanese painter Kiosai. As a child, Kiosai mistook a "strange thing" floating in the river for the "fairy tortoise" of Japanese nursery tales. Hauling it onto the bank, he found it was the severed head of a political murder victim. Ever the artist, little Kiosai took the head home to draw, and then gave it an "honorable burial."

La Farge's work recreates Kiosai's succession of contradictory responses; at first mysterious and attractive, the image becomes sinister and repulsive as closer inspection reveals traces of blood. Distaste and curiosity then yield to aesthetic consideration, and finally to a mood of macabre lyricism. As La Farge's elegant Japanese treatment of the subject demonstrates, the artist's detachment renders reality abstract much as the child's imagination trans-

MARY CASSATT **The Fitting, 1891**

forms it. Asymmetrically balanced against a wild rose, the face floats luminously, like a lost petal in an eerie void.

The American expatriate Mary Cassatt was introduced to the lessons of Japanese prints by her friends Degas and Pisarro, who like most French Impressionists were greatly influenced by Japanese art. Inspired by the ukiyo-e prints exhibited at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1890, Cassatt began what was to be her most important contribution to printmaking history—the set of ten color prints for which she adapted Japanese woodblock methods to a combination of etching and engraving. Not only was she successful in translating the Japanese domestic scenes into the context of the secure and prosperous French household, but she also managed to capture the lush, flat quality of the blockprint with her innovative use of soft-ground etching, drypoint, and aquatint in which color was hand-applied to the plate. In The Fitting, the introduction of the mirror reinforces the flat pattern of wallpaper and carpet so reminiscent of Japanese screens and prints, by rendering the main figure a repeated shape, yet at the same time relieves this one-dimensionality by adding depth and perspective.



CHILDE HASSAM Old Lace, Cos Cob, 1915

JOSEPH PENNELL Lower Falls, Yosemite, 1912

Hassam, an American Impressionist painter, turned to printmaking in 1915, the year in which he etched Old Lace, Cos Cob. His fine lines and delicate use of plate tone successfully capture the light-drenched Connecticut harbor scene. To heighten the effect of the swirling water in this particular impression, Hassam carefully wiped all excess ink from the plate in that area before printing. In later prints, Hassam often explored the patterning effects of strong lights and shadows.

The etchings, engravings, and lithographs of printmaker Joseph Pennell focus on physical settings, whether steel mills, skyscrapers, historic buildings, or natural wonders, in which the human element is purely incidental. Lower Falls, Yosemite, of 1912, is a striking print not only for its bold use of the lithographic crayon, but also for the novelty of restricting the view to only the lower portion of this well-known spectacle. In the Museum's impression, the first trial proof from the stone, one is more aware of light and atmosphere than in the more heavily inked published state, in which plate tone conceals much of Pennell's drawing and creates a more menacing effect.

JOHN SINGER SARGENT **The Escutcheon of Charles V of Spain, about 1912**

JOHN SINGER SARGENT **Spanish Fountain, about 1914**

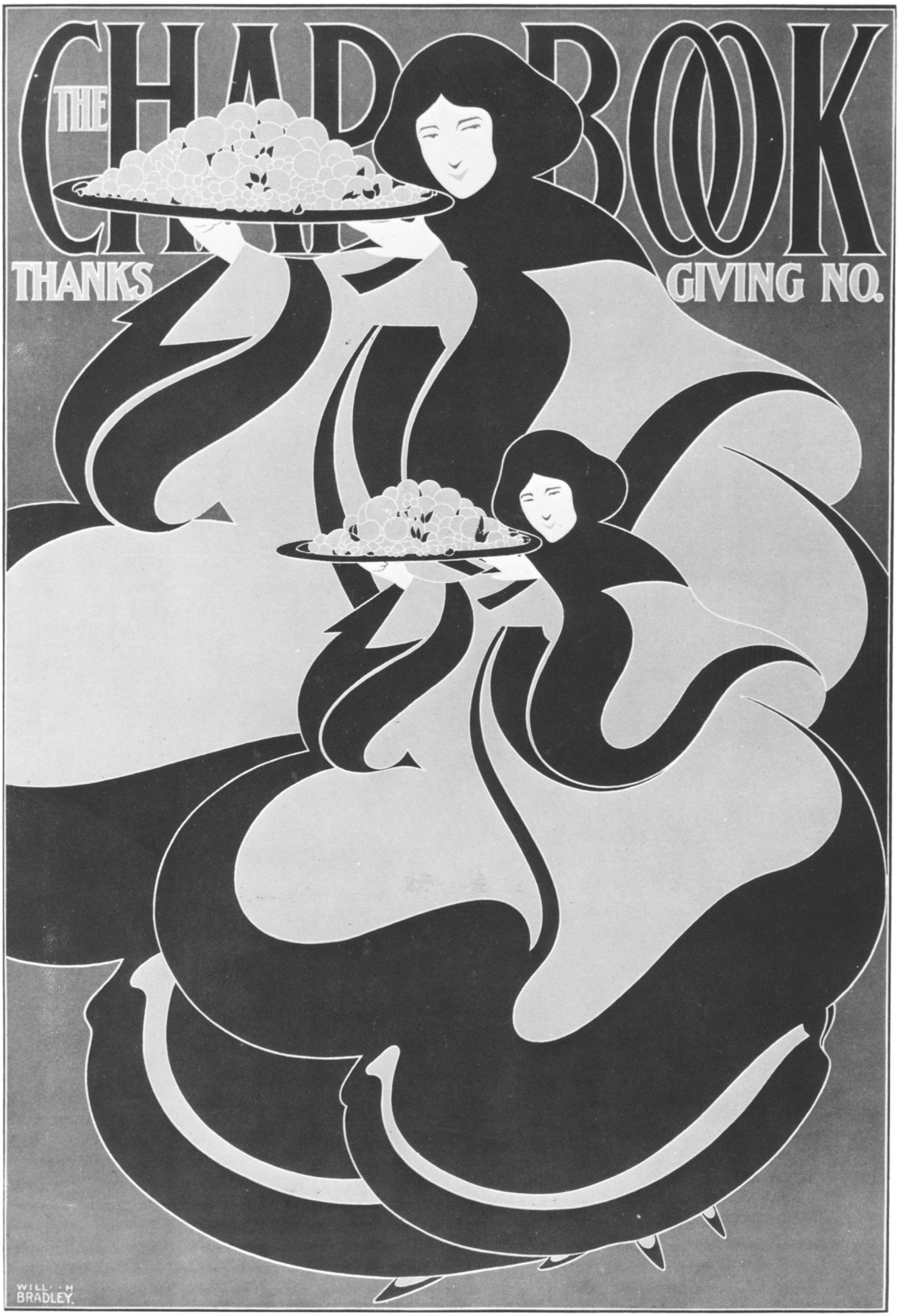
Sargent turned to watercolor for the pleasures his portrait commissions denied: spontaneity, informality, the color and movement of outdoor light, and the freedom of self-chosen subjects. After 1903, when he began to work extensively in the medium, Sargent gave Impressionist aesthetics their most dazzling realization in watercolor. His approach was shaped by contact with Monet in the late 1880s, and though Sargent remained more illusionistic and less interested in broken color, he shared Monet's delight in pure visual sensation. Both artists insisted that their *plein air* subjects had no special meaning or picturesqueness, and were selected at random, or deliberately left uncomposed. This risky objectivity was most successful when motifs lent structure to the design; Sargent repeatedly relied on symmetry and coherence of architecture or sculpture to control the fluid asymmetrical motion of his color and brushwork. This method organizes Spanish Fountain and The Escutcheon of Charles V, where the doorway has been plotted with ruler and compass. Both works display the astonishing mixture of swiftness and precision in Sargent's touch, and the brilliance of his usual Mediterranean palette.

JULIAN ALDEN WEIR **Anna Dwight Weir Reading a Letter, about 1890**

WILL H. BRADLEY **Thanksgiving, 1895**

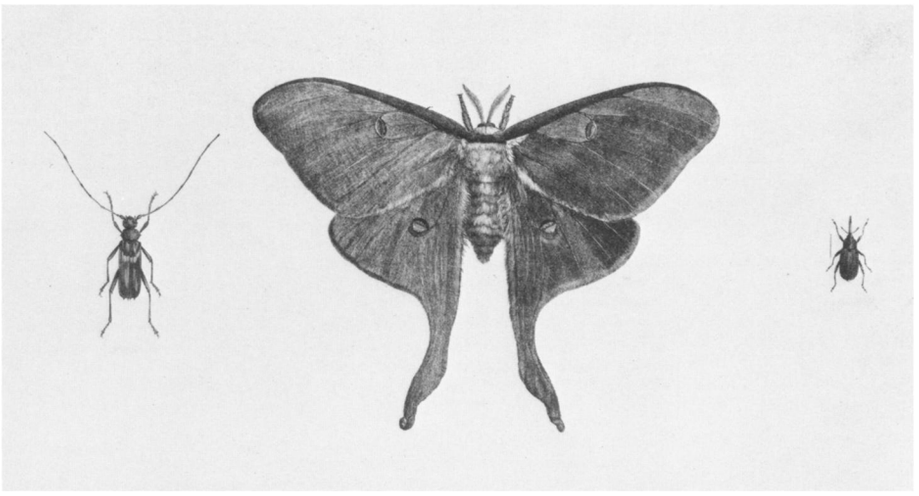
Weir's tender watercolor of his first wife echoes many of his interests before 1890. Trained at the Ecole de Beaux-Arts, Weir applied the precision of the academic tradition with special grace to his portraits of women and children. His affection for still-lifes and watercolors is reflected in the flowers and landscape sketch, while his fondness for Spanish art comes through in the print after Velazquez and the emphasis on dark and light values rather than strong color. This taste, as well as the informal mood and geometric organization, could have been influenced by the portraits of Degas, Whistler, and especially Manet. A year or two after this watercolor was begun, Weir turned wholeheartedly to Impressionism, and perhaps this change in style, or more likely, the sadness of his wife's death in 1892, kept Weir from finishing it.

Bradley's bold colors and curvilinear masses and lines, as in this poster for the *Chap Book*, helped to popularize posters in America. His art nouveau style owed much to the English artists Aubrey Beardsley and Charles Ricketts, here especially in the depiction of the heads, and was readily adaptable to new methods of photomechanical reproduction.


THE CHAP BOOK
THANKS GIVING NO.
WILL H BRADLEY.

MAURICE PRENDERGAST **Piazza di San Marco, about 1898**

Prendergast brought the decorative principles of Post-Impressionism to watercolor ten years before Sargent's Impressionist style bloomed in that medium. Prendergast was an accomplished watercolorist in the mid-90s, but his technique reached maturity during a two-year trip to Italy in 1898–99, when he began to work intensively in translucent colors on paper. In Piazza di San Marco, painted in Venice, Prendergast characteristically added a Post-Impressionist play between the surface pattern and the illusion of deep space to the Impressionist street scene with its bird's-eye perspective and abstracted detail. His taste for decorative flatness grew quickly, for Courtyard, West End Library, Boston, 1901 (on the cover), with its shallow space, close-valued colors, and even emphasis, has a stronger sense of Cézanne's compositional geometry, reinforced by a surface network of pen contours and scrapings. Prendergast was at his best in watercolor, and his example, combined with the tremendous prestige of Homer's and Sargent's work, guided the younger modernists who made watercolor a distinctly American medium in the early twentieth century.



HENRY MARSH Moth and Beetles, 1862

Henry Marsh's minutely detailed renderings of moths and beetles on wood blocks greatly enhanced the new edition of Harris's *Report on the Insects of Massachusetts Injurious to Vegetables*, published in a limited edition by the state in 1862. Marsh's work surpasses much of the contemporary wood-engraved illustration in magazines and other publications.

CREDITS

Cover Maurice Prendergast (1859–1924). Courtyard, West End Library, Boston, 1901. Watercolor and pen and ink, 14⅝ x 21¼ inches. Gift of the Estate of Mrs. Edward Robinson, 1952. 52.126.7 **IFC** Gerald M. Thayer (1883–1939). Male Ruffed Grouse in the Forest, c. 1905–1909. Watercolor, 19¾ x 20 inches. Rogers Fund, 1916. 16.167 **2** James A. McNeill Whistler (1834–1903). Rotherhithe, 1860. Etching, 10⅞ x 7⅞ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1917. 17.3.49 **3** Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827). The Marquis de LaFayette, 1787. Mezzotint, 7⅛ x 5⅝ inches. Gift of Samuel P. Avery, 1894. 94.1 **4** John William Hill (1812–79). Plums, 1870. Watercolor and pencil, 7 x 11⅞ inches. Gift of J. Henry Hill, 1882. 82.9.1 **5** Charles Frederick William Mielatz (1860–1919). Bowling Green, 1910. Etching printed in colors, 10 x 7 inches. Purchase, Robert B. Dodson Gift, 1931. 31.40.45 **6** Thomas Emmes (active c. 1700). Increase Mather, 1701. In Increase Mather, *The Blessed Hope*, Boston, 1701; 5 1/16 x 3⅛ inches. Bequest of Charles Allen Munn, 1924. 24.90.1821 **7** Peter Pelham (c. 1695–1751). Cotton Mather, 1728. Engraving, 13⅜ x 9¾ inches. Bequest of Charles Allen Munn, 1924. 24.90.14 **8** Paul Revere (1735–1818). The Bloody Massacre, 1770. Mezzotint, 10⅜ x 9 inches. Gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, 1909. 10.125.103 **9** Bernard Romans (c. 1720–84). An Exact View of the Late Battle at Charlestown, 1775. Hand-colored engraving, 12⅛ x 16⅞ inches. Bequest of Charles Allen Munn, 1924. 24.90.46. **9** Amos Doolittle (1754–1832) after Peter Lacour (active 1785–99). Federal Hall, The Seat of Congress, 1790. Hand-colored engraving, 16⅝ x 12 15/16 inches. The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.743. **10** Benjamin West (1738–1820). Study for Alexander III, King of Scotland, Rescued from the Fury of a Stag by Colin Fitzgerald, c. 1789. Light brown ink and light brown wash, 17⅜ x 24½ inches. Promised gift of Mr. and Mrs. Erving Wolf. **11** John Singleton Copley (1738–1815). Study for the Siege of Gibraltar, 1785–86. Pen and ink, 10⅜ x 20¾ inches. Purchase, Louisa Eldridge McBurney Gift. 60.44.12 **12** John Singleton Copley. Mrs. Edward Green, c. 1790. Pastel, 23 x 17½ inches. Curtis Fund, 1908. 08.1 **13** Charles Balthazar-Julien Fevret de Saint-Mémin (1770–1852). An Osage Warrior, c. 1804. Watercolor, 7¼ x 6 5/16 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1954. 54.82 **13** James Sharples (c. 1751–1811). Albert Gallatin, c. 1797. Pastel, 9⅛ x 7⅜ inches. Gift of Josephine L. Stevens, 1908. 08.144 **13** John Vanderlyn (1775–1852). Sarah Russell Church, 1799. Black and white chalk, 8 7/16 x 6⅜ inches. Bequest of Ella Church Strobell, 1917. 17.134.4 **14** Edward Savage (1761–1817). The Eruption of Mount Etna in 1787, 1799. Mezzotint printed in colors, 28 11/16 x 20 3/16 inches. Purchase, Gift of William H. Huntington, by exchange, 1977. 1977.551 **15** Asher Brown Durand (1796–1886). Ariadne, 1835. Engraving, 17½ x 20¾ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1927. 27.10.12 **16** Archibald Robertson (1765–1835). New York (New York as Washington Knew It), 1794–97. Hand-colored engraving, 20 15/16 x 15 3/32 inches. The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.612 **17** Samuel Seymour (active 1796–1823) after William Birch (1755–1834). The City of New York in the State of New York, North America, 1803. Hand-colored engraving, 24 x 18¾ inches. The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.612 **18** John Baker (active 1831–41). Fisher and Bird's Marble Yard, c. 1837. Engraving, 9⅞ x 8 13/16 inches. The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.673 **19** John Rubens Smith (1775–1849). Shop and Warehouse of Duncan Phyfe, c. 1816–17. Watercolor and pen and brown ink 15¾ x 18⅞ inches. Rogers Fund, 1922. 22.28.1 **19** Alexander Jackson Davis (1803–92). Design for a Bank or Public Building, c. 1835–40. Pen and ink, pencil, and watercolor, 12 3/16 x 17½ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1924. 24.66.457 **20** Nathaniel Currier (1813–88). The Favorite Cat, c. 1840–50. Hand-colored lithograph, 12⅛ x 8 11/16 inches. Bequest of Adele S. Colgate, 1962. 63.550.159 **21** Johan Henrich Otto (active 1772–88). Fraktur Motifs, c. 1780–90. Pen and red ink and watercolor, 13⅛ x 16½ inches. Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch, 1966. 66.242.1 **22** Unidentified American artist. View from the House of Henry Briscoe Thomas, Maryland c. 1841. Pen and ink and wash, 14 x 11½ inches. Gift of Lydia Bond Powel, 1967. 67.143 **23** D. W. Kellogg & Co., Memorial Print, c. 1836. Hand-colored lithograph, 12½ x 15 11/16 inches. Gift of Marie L. Russell, 1942. 42.8.1 **24** William Guy Wall (1792–after 1864). New York from Weehawk, c. 1823. Watercolor, 16⅛ x 25½ inches. The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.109 **25** John Hill (1770–1850) after William Guy Wall. The Palisades, 1823–24. Hand-and plate-colored aquatint, plate: 17 15/16 x 24¼ inches, The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.601 **25** John William Hill (1812–79). Circular Mill, King Street, New York, 1833. Pen and ink and watercolor, 9 11/16 x 13½ inches. The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.170 **26** Thomas Cole (1801–48). The Fountain, 1843. Pencil with white on light green paper, 7 x 9¾ inches. Gift of Erving Wolf Foundation, 1977. 1977.182.7 **27** John F. Kensett (1816–72). Birch Tree, Niagara, 1851. Pencil, 16⅝ x 10⅝ inches, Morris K. Jesup Fund, 1976. 1976.19 **28** Robert Havell (1793–1878). Panoramic View of New York from the East River, 1844. Hand-colored aquatint, plate: 35¼ x 12 inches. The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.643 **29** Henry Papprill (active 1840s) after John William Hill. New York from the Steeple of Saint Paul's Church, Looking East, South and West, 1848. Hand-colored aquatint, 36⅜ x 21¼ inches. The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. 54.90.587 **30** John Sartain (1808–97) after George Caleb Bingham (1811–79). The County Election, 1854. Engraving, 26¼ x 32⅛ inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1952. 52.572 **31** Thomas Nast (1840–1902). A Group of Vultures Waiting for the Storm to "Blow Over"—"Let Us Prey." Published in *Harper's Weekly*, Sept. 23, 1871. Woodcut, 14 3/16 x 9 5/16 inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1928. 28.111.4 (1) **31** Edwin Austin Abbey (1852–1911). In a Tavern—"Phillada Flouts Me," 1886. Published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, July 1887. Pen and ink on board, 11¼ x 17⅞ inches. Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929. The H. O. Havemeyer, Collection. 29.100.928 **32** James Hamilton (1819–78). Beach Scene, c. 1865. Watercolor, gouache, pen and ink on light blue paper, 11⅞ x 16 inches. Rogers Fund, 1966. 66.142 **33** William Trost Richards (1833–1910). Lake Squam from Red Hill, 1874. Watercolor and gouache, 8 11/16 x 13½ inches. Gift of Rev. E. L. Magoon, 1880. 80.1.6 **34** Winslow Homer (1836–1910). Eight Bells, 1887. Etching, 19 x 24¼ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1924. 24.39.4 **35** Nathaniel Currier (1813–88). Clipper Ship *Red Jacket*, 1855. Hand-colored lithograph, 16⅛ x 23 11/16 inches. Bequest of Adele S. Colgate, 1962. 63.550.17 **36** Winslow Homer. Fishing Boats, Key West, 1903. Watercolor and pencil, 13⅜ x 21½ inches. Amelia B. Lazarus Fund, 1910. 10.228.1 **37** Winslow Homer. Inside the Bar, Tynemouth, 1883. Watercolor, gouache, and pencil, 15⅜ x 28½ inches. Gift of Louise Ryals Arkell, in memory of her husband, Bartlett Arkell, 1954. 54.183 **37** Winslow Homer. A Wall, Nassau, 1898. Watercolor and pencil, 14¾ x 21½ inches. Amelia B. Lazarus Fund, 1910. 10.228.9 **38** James A. McNeill Whistler. Nocturne, 1878 (printed in 1887). Lithotint, 6¾ x 10¼ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1917. 17.3.159 **39** Thomas Eakins (1844–1916). The Gross Clinic, 1875–76. Ink wash and pencil on cardboard, 23⅜ x 19⅛ inches. Fletcher Fund, 1923. 23.94 **40** Thomas Eakins. The Pathetic Song, c. 1881. Watercolor and pencil, sheet: 16¾ x 11⅜ inches. Bequest of Joan Whitney Payson, 1975. 1976.201.1 **41** Thomas Eakins. John Biglin in a Single Scull, 1873–74. Watercolor and pencil, 17⅛ x 23 inches. Fletcher Fund, 1924. 24.108 **42** William Merritt Chase (1844–1916). Reverie: A Portrait of a Woman, c. 1890–95. Monotype, 19½ x 15¾ inches. Purchase, Louis V. Bell, William E. Dodge, and Fletcher Funds; Murray Rafsky Gift; and funds from various donors, 1974. 1974.544 **43** Charles Abel Corwin (1857–1938). Portrait of Whistler, 1880. Monotype, 8 13/16 x 6 1/16 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1960. 60.611.134 **44** John La Farge (1835–1910). The Strange Thing Little Kiosai Saw in the River, 1897. Watercolor, gouache, and pencil, 12¾ x 18½ inches. Rogers Fund, 1917. 17.180.2 **45** Mary Cassatt (1845–1926). The Fitting, 1891. Drypoint, soft-ground etching, and aquatint; printed in color, 14 13/16 x 10⅛ inches. Gift of Paul J. Sachs, 1916. 16.2.8 **46** Childe Hassam (1859–1935). Old Lace, Cos Cob, 1915. Etching, 6 15/16 x 6 13/16 inches. Gift of Mrs. Childe Hassam, 1940. 40.30.16 **47** Joseph Pennell (1857–1926). Lower Falls, Yosemite, 1912. Lithograph, 22 7/16 x 17 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1975. 1975.617.1 **48** John Singer Sargent (1856–1925). Spanish Fountain, c. 1914. Watercolor and pencil, 20⅞ x 13 9/16 inches. Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1915. 15.142.6 **49** John Singer Sargent. The Escutcheon of Charles V of Spain, c. 1912. Watercolor and pencil, 11⅞ x 17¼ inches. Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1915. 15.142.11 **50** Julian Alden Weir (1852–1919). Anna Dwight Weir Reading a Letter, c. 1890. Watercolor, gouache, and pencil, 12½ x 9¼ inches. Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Norman M. Schneider Gift, 1966. 66.193 **51** Will H. Bradley (1868–1962). Thanksgiving. Poster for the *Chap Book*. Zincograph printed in color, 1895. 19⅜ x 13¼ inches. Gift of Mrs. Bessie Potter Vonnoh, 1941. 41.12.85 **52** Maurice Prendergast. Piazza di San Marco, c. 1898. Watercolor and pencil, 16⅛ x 15 inches. Gift of the Estate of Mrs. Edward Robinson, 1952. 52.126.6 **IBC** Henry Marsh (active 1848–at least 1862). Moths and Beetles, 1862. Proof for an illustration in the new edition of Thaddeus William Harris's *Report on the Insects of Massachusetts Injurious to Vegetation*. Boston: Crosby & Nichols, 1862. Wood engraving, 4⅛ x 9 inches. Rogers Fund, 1919. 19.16.17 a-c