MURAL PAINTING IN IOWA

The purpose of this essay is to interpret and evaluate mural paintings in Iowa and to indicate their relation to the development of mural painting in America. The term "mural paintings" is interpreted to mean pictures on a wall, whether done directly on the plaster in the mediums of fresco, fresco-secco, tempera, encaustic, and spirit fresco, or painted on canvas which is pasted on the wall.

In the process of true or "buon" fresco the muralist lays over the rough plaster a very fine mixture, made like the preceding coats of sand and lime or cement, but of the highest quality and absolutely clean. Of this last mixture he puts as much on as he can finish painting in a day. As the colors, which are ground in water, penetrate the surface of the plaster and combine with it, a thin crust of carbonate of lime forms over the plaster and fixes them within it.

Fresco-secco, or dry fresco, differs from this method in that the finishing coat of plaster is first allowed to dry and is then saturated with lime water before the colors are applied, while in tempera the colors are mixed with the white or the yolk of an egg or both or with glue, gum, or juice of the fig tree, and spread on the dry plaster. The encaustic process requires the application of heat to the wall since wax is used as the binding medium. In a modification of this method, known as spirit fresco, the wax is thinned with spirits of turpentine or oil of spike.

Painting in oil on canvas is the most commonly used type in this country since no distinction was made at first between easel and wall painting, and since, until recently, the artist was ignorant of other processes. Painting on can-

vas has the advantages of permitting the artist to work in his studio instead of under the confining conditions that a scaffold often entails and of allowing the easy removal of the paintings, if this is desired. Furthermore, it protects the paintings from saltpetre, a disease of walls which has been the principal cause of the destruction of many masterpieces done directly on the wall.[1] On the other hand it has the disadvantages of darkening due to the varnishes used, and, unless waxed, of presenting a shiny and glaring surface which in certain lights makes the picture undiscernible.

The mural painter has to cope not only with the inherent difficulties of his medium but also with the peculiarities of the structure to be decorated. His first problems concern the style and function of the building and the character of the other decorations. The solution of these requires cooperation with the architect, sculptors, and other painters in making the work harmonize in style, color, and subject matter with the general scheme of the architecture. For instance, symbolical figures with their flowing curved lines, so prevalent in wall decoration about the turn of the century, would not look well in a modern skyscraper with simplified planes and straight lines; neither would the pale tonalities of a Puvis de Chavannes blend with dark woodwork or rich and colorful decorations, nor would the frivolous and gay subjects suitable for a theater or ballroom be appropriate in a church.

The muralist's next step is to fit his composition into the space to be decorated, a practice contrary to that usually followed by easel painters who fit their canvas to the composition. Edwin Howland Blashfield classified the various shapes to be decorated as wide and narrow pendentives, collar beneath the dome and the dome crown, lunette and depressed lunette, square, rectangle, and rectangle with

[1] Gardner Hale's *Fresco Painting*, p. 4.

rounded ends.[2] The position of these spaces again presents problems, since the distance from the spectator and the lighting of the building affect the size of figures as well as the breadth and style of working and the intensity of colors. These difficulties are still further complicated by the rapid construction of modern buildings which allows the mural painter no opportunity to study the lighting effects, points of view, and distances in the room which is to contain his work.

There also arises the question of maintaining the flat character of the wall, so that it may have the appearance of supporting a cornice. During the early Renaissance, when fresco painting was at its height, Giotto and his followers kept the wall flat because their knowledge of perspective was extremely limited. Though they composed the figures in three dimensions they placed them parallel to the picture plane and against a two dimensional background, thus preventing a window from being opened in the wall. Michelangelo, however, and the later painters who had full command of the laws of both aerial and linear perspective, paid no heed to the wall's architectural function, and at times went to the extreme lengths of painting it away altogether.[3]

Not until the latter half of the nineteenth century, with a renewed interest in Italian primitives and the formulation of theoretical standards of good mural decoration by Puvis de Chavannes, was the practice of flat wall painting revived. Much talk and writing about "keeping the wall flat" and about not "making a hole in the wall" followed. The development of abstract design aided the movement

[2] Edwin Howland Blashfield's *Mural Painting in America,* 2 plates between pp. 6 and 7.

[3] H. G. Beyen's *Andrea Mantegna* ('S-Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff, 1931), Plates XVI, XX, XXI; Georg Gronau's *Correggio* (Stuttgart und Leipzig, 1907), pp. 27, 59, 99.

which continued to gain momentum until a few years ago, when Thomas H. Benton and others revolted against the abstractionists and deliberately strove for the third dimension in both figures and setting, thus reverting to the practice of the late Renaissance of destroying the architectural character of the wall. Though this is not considered good from the architect's point of view, the use of two or of three dimensions is doubtless a matter of preference to be decided upon by the painter, if not otherwise specified.

MURAL PAINTING BEFORE THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION

The first mural paintings in this country were executed, not to decorate public buildings, as is usually the case today, but to beautify the homes of the colonial aristocracy. The majority of these paintings are to be found in New England, some in Virginia, and a few in Charleston and New Orleans.

The first serious effort to decorate a public building was made in 1817 when $32,000 was voted by Congress for four historical panels to be painted by John Trumbull in the National Capitol at Washington.[4] These were not mural paintings in the true sense of the word, but rather easel pictures in heavy frames placed on the wall. Commissions for four similar panels were given to John Vanderlyn, William Powell, John Chapin, and Robert Weir.[5]

The first mural painters in America worthy of the name were John La Farge and William Morris Hunt. Both studied with Thomas Couture in Paris and both did much

[4] C. H. Caffin's *The Story of American Painting,* p. 304. For illustrations of the originals see J. H. Morgan's *Paintings of John Trumbull at Yale University,* pp. 37, 53, 57, 63.

[5] Edward Bruce and Forbes Watson's *Art in Federal Buildings,* Vol. I, pp. 15, 16.

to initiate the French manner of painting in America. Couture had a number of followers, the best known of whom were Cabanel and Carolus-Duran. Among the Americans to study under the latter were John Singer Sargent, Kenyon Cox, Douglas Volk, and Carroll Beckwith. Sargent became the leader of the Couture tradition in England and America, and Benjamin Constant, one of his French students, in France. Constant in turn became the master of Bert Phillips and Charles A. Cumming, two men to be considered later with Cox and Volk as painters of murals in Des Moines.

Another branch of the academic tradition was upheld by Léon Gérôme who dominated the École des Beaux Arts for many years. Like Jean Ingres he believed in the supremacy of line over color, but like Couture he realized that the classical tradition was dying out. He therefore tried to give it new life by introducing genre subjects. His American students who were later to do murals for Iowa buildings were Kenyon Cox, who also studied under Carolus-Duran, and William de Leftwich Dodge. Edwin Howland Blashfield did not actually work in his studio but received criticisms from him.

The conservative phase of the school was represented by Léon Bonnat, and with him scholasticism perished. It was under him that Blashfield studied.

La Farge and Hunt advocated the union between architecture and mural decoration. In colonial days the architect gave no thought to the decoration of the walls when he was constructing a building. If the patron desired to have his walls painted, he hired some one to do it after the architect was through. Later, in Trumbull's generation, when there was an almost complete disappearance of mural painting, the wall came to be considered as a background for pictures which were put into heavy frames and hung or

placed against it. This idea persisted until Hunt, La Farge, and Henry H. Richardson, the architect, returned from Paris and spread the doctrine of the unity of the arts. They believed that decorative painting and sculpture should be planned as an integral part of the structure at the time of its building.

Richardson put his theory into practice when, in 1876, as architect of Trinity Church, Boston, he gave La Farge charge of the decorative scheme. La Farge had assistants at Trinity, but the designs and color scheme were under his direct supervision, and he in turn conferred with the architect.[6]

At the time that La Farge was painting his decorations for the New York churches the State of Iowa was building a new Capitol at Des Moines. The Board of Capitol Commissioners gave to August Knorr, a Des Moines decorator, full charge of designing the decorations. He planned for the ceiling of the Supreme Court Room three large panels to be surrounded by one large and six small medallions. After the designs were approved by R. S. Finkbine, one of the Commissioners, they were sent to Germany to be painted on canvas by Fritz Melzer, who was then at the height of his popularity as a decorative painter.

Upon the receipt of the paintings, the Board of Capitol Commissioners entered in the minutes of the meeting for April 14, 1886, a bill for $949.76 along with a brief description of each painting.[7] They remained on the ceiling of the room occupied by the Supreme Court until 1904 when the building was partly burned and the paintings somewhat damaged by smoke and water. As no place was found for them in the scheme of decoration when the building was re-

[6] Bruce and Watson's *Art in Federal Buildings*, Vol. I, p. 9.

[7] Ida M. Huntington's *Art at the Capitol* (Manuscript at the Historical Building, Des Moines), p. 2. This may not have been the only payment made to Melzer.

modelled, they were removed by T. I. Stoner, who was in charge of the redecorating,[8] and placed in the garret. There they lay forgotten until plans were being made for the decoration of the State Historical Building. At that time, the Curator of the State Historical Department recalled the paintings and requested that a search be made for them and that they be placed in the new building. This was done, and they may now be seen in the Autograph Collection Room of the Historical Building. Charles A. Cumming, a Des Moines artist, restored them.[9]

It was at the time of renewed interest in the paintings that Mr. Harlan wrote to Mr. Knorr for information regarding the canvases. Mr. Knorr replied as follows:

Napa, California, March 28, 1914

Mr. Edgar R. Harlan, Curator,
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Sir:

Acknowledging the receipt of your esteemed letter of March 11th, which was directed to my Kentucky home, but sent from there to my present domicile.

I take pleasure to give the requested information in regard to the paintings on the ceiling of the Supreme Court of the Iowa State Capitol.

When I had the honor to be trusted with the decorating of that room, I made several sketches which I rendered to Mr. Finkbine for his judgment.

The motive of these sketches was founded on the purpose for which the room was intended. The color scheme of the whole decoration dark and sombre, with only the panels impressive through their allegoric paintings.

That I succeeded in this, [is evident from] your description of same in the annex of your letter which is written exactly in the spirit of composition, and to which I have nothing to add.

Except that I was personally inspired when I composed picture

[8] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. VIII (1908-1909), pp. 314, 315.

[9] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. VIII, p. 315.

No. 3, of Shakespeare's sentence in Henry IV: "Rebellion in this land shall lose his sway," etc.

Your further inquiry in regard to Fritz Melzer, the artist who painted the pictures, and a biography of him is very simple. Melzer was born in Freiburg, a town in the Province of Silesia, about 1837. After learning his trade as fresco painter in Schweidnitz with Karl Hoffman, he went to Berlin and worked himself up from the ranks like most all great artists (f. I. Anton von Werner, Adolf Menzel, Duzette and others).

Melzer's work is not historic, just plain decorative figure work. One of his colossal convases (may be 12x24′) of which he was especially proud, I saw in a Jewish meat market in Berlin, representing Moses giving the laws to his people in the desert. That picture was much admired. He also did some work under direction of Raurash Weseman, Architect of the Berlin Rathhaus (City Hall).

But most of his work is on ceilings in private houses all over Germany.

He was much in vogue as decorative artist at the time he painted those pictures for the Supreme Court Room for the Iowa State Capitol.

Respectfully,

Aug. Knorr[10]

We have already seen that four large canvases and six smaller ones make up this set.[11] Each of the large canvases is now numbered. The first represents Columbia sitting on her throne. Below her is a globe over which soars the American eagle, holding in his beak a streamer with the motto, "E Pluribus Unum". To Columbia's left is Justice who shares with her the homage paid by the patrons of the States who come bringing their children, the Territories. Iowa, a special favorite of Columbia, is sitting on the steps of the throne with a club and a coat of arms, ready to defend Columbia. The figures are grouped over the top of the globe in a semi-circular design.

[10] Huntington's *Art at the Capitol* (manuscript), pp. 4, 5.

[11] *Iowa Official Register*, 1898, pp. xii–xvi.

In number two, Justice and Peace are represented as ruling over the land and bringing prosperity, plenty, culture, and happiness. Rebellion is put down by Justice, whose face resembles that of General Grant. This picture is inferior to the preceding one in unity, for there is much scattered detail which has not been brought into close relationship with the main figures in the composition.

In the third canvas, Justice is seated on her throne, while to her left stands Columbia, always ready to sustain her decisions. At the right of Justice a woman rejoices that the decision is in her favor. The seated figure at the right is grieving because the decision was against her, but is somewhat consoled by the fact that the decision was rendered according to law. To the left is seated a mother who is explaining the laws to her son. A too obvious balance in the last two groups makes the composition uninteresting. In each group appears a woman, a child, and a book, in slightly different positions, it is true, but without enough variety to break the monotony. More displeasing is the wide unfilled space at either end of the canvas. This same feature is found to a greater degree in number four and in the smaller canvases, but in these one feels that the space is an integral part of the composition.

Painting number four is the principal picture around which the six smaller medallions were grouped. The theme throughout is Agriculture, celebrating Iowa's greatness as a farming State. In the larger picture Ceres, the goddess of agriculture, is reclining with a sickle in her hand. Two genii are at the left and behind her; one carries a scythe, the other is binding the grain. It is a rather pleasing but not an impressive painting. In the center of each of the smaller canvases is a genius representing some phase of agriculture. Each harmonizes with the other and with the larger panel in subject, color-scheme, and composition.

The colors of the entire set are subdued and drab in tone, with a definite brownish cast. However, those who saw them in their original place said that they harmonized with their surroundings. In style they belong to the academic tradition of the latter half of the nineteenth century in which inspiration and originality are almost entirely lacking. The designs have no special merit and, in fact, are often monotonous. In subject matter they exhibit the academic practice of the day, an inheritance of the Renaissance, of using classically draped figures to represent abstract qualities such as Justice, Rebellion, and Peace.

THE WORLD'S FAIR GENERATION: PSEUDO-CLASSICISM

Not until the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 was mural painting taken seriously in America. The importance of this event lay not in the quality of the work produced, for on the whole it was not good, but rather in the interest that was aroused, the example that was set of coöperation among architects, sculptors, and painters, and the practice that was given to some of the most promising painters of the time. Francis D. Millet, who was in charge of the painting, summoned, among others, C. Y. Turner, J. Alden Weir, Edwin Howland Blashfield, Kenyon Cox, Edward Simmons, and William de Leftwich Dodge as assistants.[12]

Soon afterwards commissions were given to decorate the new library in Boston. The work of the highest merit was done by Puvis de Chavannes, already referred to as reviving the practice of retaining the flat appearance of the wall in his paintings.[13] During the time that this work was progressing in Boston, commissions increased rapidly.

[12] Pauline King's *American Mural Painting,* pp. 65, 66. See also illustrations of sketches for paintings on pp. 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 85, 86, 87, 89, 91.

[13] King's *American Mural Painting,* illustrations on pp. 95, 100–103.

State Houses, courthouses, banks, theaters, clubs, and private houses were embellished with murals. The largest undertaking of the time was the decoration of the Library of Congress, significant, in the first place, because spaces for mural paintings were planned at the time of its erection. In the second place it proved that murals may cost no more than expensive marble, inlaid woods, and gilded bronze.[14]

There followed commissions to decorate the old Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, the Manhattan Hotel, and the Appellate Court Building, all in New York City, and the State Houses at Boston, St. Paul, Harrisburg, and Des Moines. The murals at Des Moines consist of one large panel by Blashfield for which he received $10,000 and eight lunettes by Cox who was paid $8,000.

Blashfield, one of our most prolific mural painters, was born in New York City in 1848. After attending the Boston Latin School he went to Paris in 1867, where, finding Gérôme's studio filled, he studied under Bonnat but received criticisms from Gérôme. He spent a number of years in Europe studying, traveling, exhibiting. While in Florence, where he stayed for eight months, he gave special attention to the works of Donatello and Giotto, becoming much more interested in character and costume than in technique. Returning home in 1881, he established himself in New York City in the Sherwood studios, where he remained eighteen years.

After his decorations for the Exposition buildings at Chicago in 1893, Blashfield's work consisted almost entirely of murals. A survey of his work in this field shows that he developed from a rigid adherence to rules toward a greater freedom in composition and figure style. This progression of style may be divided into four periods. The first com-

[14] Bruce and Watson's *Art in Federal Buildings*, Vol. I, p. 21.

prised the work at Chicago and the paintings of 1896 in the dome of the Library of Congress.[15] They are characterized by the use of symbolic figures, by flatness, carrying power, and strict adherence to scale.

His second period he called his "gridiron stage"[16] from the heavy outlines employed. He continued to paint symbolical figures but introduced with them historical and contemporary personages, while to gain a harmonious effect he glazed his strong colors with quiet tones. The works of this period of his full maturity include "The Power of the Law" (1899) in the High Appellate Court, New York,[17] and "Prudence Binding Fortune" (1901) in the Board Room of the Prudential Insurance Company, Newark, N. J.

In his third stage he developed more robustness and freedom of rendering, though still bound by rules of decoration. Thus his outlines tend to become less distinct and to melt into the general form of the figures, as, for example, in the "Westward" in the Iowa State Capitol. However, in the pendentives of the Essex County Courthouse at Newark, painted in 1906,[18] one year after the work at Des Moines, he returned in some degree to his "gridiron" style. Other decorations of this phase are found in the Citizens Bank in Cleveland (1903), the courthouse at Baltimore (1903), and the Capitol in St. Paul (1904).[19]

In his last period Blashfield broke away still more from set rules of composition until, in his panel of the "Graphic Arts" in the Detroit Public Library,[20] he freed himself

[15] King's *American Mural Painting,* illustrations on pp. 71, 198, 199.

[16] *The International Studio,* Vol. XXXV (1908), p. lxxiii.

[17] King's *American Mural Painting,* illustration on p. 231.

[18] *American Architect and Building News,* Vol. CIII (February 5, 1913), illustration on p. 75; *The International Studio,* Vol. XXXV (1908), p. lxxvi.

[19] *The International Studio,* Vol. XXVI (1905), p. lxxxvii, Vol. XXXV (1908), illustrations on pp. lxxi, lxxiv, lxxvi.

[20] *Arts & Decoration,* Vol. XIX, October, 1923, pp. 18, 19.

entirely from his old formula of a central figure or motif flanked on either side by figures or groups, substituting for this three-part horizontal composition a vertical scheme as in the panel above mentioned and in that of "Music". The figures, too, are less mannered and some show more vitality than usual in his work. This final phase may be said to extend from 1908,[21] when he did the latter work, up to the time of his death in 1936.

In 1934 he was awarded the President's Gold Medal by the National Academy of Design. He had been elected a member of the organization in 1888 and had served as its president from 1919 until the awarding of the medal.[22] He also held the office of President of the National Society of Mural Painters. In addition to his mural paintings, for which he is best known, he has painted easel pictures, designed stained glass windows and mosaics, and written a book on *Mural Painting in America.* He died on October 12, 1936.

Blashfield chose as his subject for the panel in the Capitol at Des Moines the pioneer and the prairie schooner, prominent factors in the development of Iowa.[23] The significance of this subject is obvious. It is especially fitting for a State House, since a building of that nature belongs to the people and what it represents today rests upon what has gone before.

Both present and future are symbolized in the painting by the spirits of Civilization and Enlightenment, represented as floating female figures leading the van in the conquest of the West by cultivation. One holds an open book symbolizing enlightenment, another bears a shield with the

[21] *Fine Arts Journal,* Vol. XXIII (1910), p. 286.

[22] *The Art Digest,* January 15, 1934, p. 14.

[23] *American Architect and Building News,* Vol. LXXXIX (1906), p. 1574; *The International Studio,* Vol. XXXV (1908), illustration (detail) on p. lxxv.

arms of the State of Iowa upon it, while two others carry a basket of seeds which they scatter to symbolize the change from wilderness to ploughed fields.

Behind the wagon and floating also in air are two more female figures, one holding a model of a stationary steam engine and the other an electric dynamo to represent the advancement to come with the men who follow the pioneer and his family, and who are seen to the right of the picture through the stalks of corn. The buffalo skull at the left suggests the prairie as the pioneers found it, while the melons, pumpkins, corn, etc. at the right, among which a farmer and young woman stand, represent the new civilization they leave behind.

One of the problems the artist had to solve was where to place the driver of the oxen. If Blashfield placed him in the conventional position on the left of the oxen, he would have thrown the composition out of balance; if the group were made to move to the right of the canvas they would appear to be going east instead of west, thus defeating the underlying motive of the painting. Hence the solution was to have the driver momentarily leave his place, a liberty permissible in a work intended to beautify and symbolize rather than record, and to place him to the right of the oxen. Another liberty was taken in showing a very small child keeping pace with the men and women on foot. Although such a feat is physically impossible, artistically speaking a small figure was needed in just that place. A dog would have filled the space, but two dogs already appeared in the picture, and hence the figure of a child better served the purpose.

Blashfield himself describes the composition and color of his painting as follows:

> Considered technically, the dominant motive of the composition of the picture is the festoon or Roman garland. This is carried

out by the planes of light color, commencing at the left with the group of spirits, carried downward by the white bodice of the girl gathering flowers, onward through the mass of light in the center, to the white overdress of the girl leading the child and finally toward the right and upward, in the figures of the farmer girl and the spirits of Steam and Electricity. The dark accents in the composition are furnished by the three men grouped together and the skirt of the flower-gathering girl.

The hour chosen for the subject is the late afternoon, since Westward suggests into the setting sun. The scheme of color of the picture is based upon this choice of hour, being in the main made up of orange-pink sunset light and its natural complement bluish shadows, with a few spots of dark blue and red-brown given as aforesaid by the costumes of the men and the skirt of the kneeling girl.[24]

The colors serve not only to bring out the idea of the picture but to make it harmonize with the cream-tan and dull orange-red of the walls and with the light woodwork and the mosaic by Frederick Dielman above it. As a decoration the painting is good, for it is appropriate in subject matter, color, composition, and style. The first two have already been noted. Compositionally the two-dimensional character of the work maintains the flatness of the wall while the diluted classical style is in the same vein as the eclectic classicism of the architecture. Yet as a work of art it lacks originality and inspiration. Repose is needed in wall decoration, it is true, but not, as here, a lifeless repose.

However, some may, like Welker Given, wish to read into this lifelessness a bit of pleasing fancy. Mr. Given wrote as follows for *The Mail and Times*:

> Blashfield calls up the realms of fairy where we behold not only pioneers but the art glory of the future Iowa. Nowhere in his picture is there any exertion of strength or force. Even the sleek well-fed oxen hardly seem to be pulling; the prairie schooner

[24] The interpretation is that given by the artist in L. G. Lasher's *Biennial Report on Public Buildings and Property*, 1916–1918, p. 7.

glides on as if moved by the "angel band" rather than the cattle, the very dogs are utterly subject to the woman with a wand. The suggestions of force are all subordinate to the maiden on the white horse. Beautiful feminine figures hold the front and sides of the picture and all the air above; no choppers, no crag scalers here; the few men have the faces of artists rather than pioneers and are thoroughly subordinate to the prominence of the feminine figures. No rugged lines mar the beauty of the dream-like advance of the women and the graces if they herald prosperity and a ripened civilization do not prefigure but present absolutely the coming of high art to the Hawkeye land.[25]

Criticism complementary to this is contained in a story told by Benj. F. Shambaugh of a very unimaginative pioneer who was introduced to him after a talk he gave on the painting. The old gentleman discredited the work because of the symbolical figures in it and said that when he came west there were no angels hovering over his outfit.

It will be noticed that, in selecting and planning his subject matter, Blashfield painted few pictures in which ideal or symbolical figures were not included. In "Westward", for example, there are six — Enlightenment, Steam, Electricity, and three representing Civilization. In support of this method he says, "No art is good for much unless it is at one and the same time realistic and idealistic, realistic, that is to say like nature, and idealistic, that is to say informed with a sense of beauty, a sense of individual selection from nature, by the creator — the artist." He continues, "We surely want historical decorations, but we also want these symbolical figures because they are beautiful and graceful, and because decorative art needs them peculiarly."[26]

Though admitting the basis on which he chose his sub-

[25] *The High Art of the Prairie Schooner* in *The Mail and Times* (Des Moines, newspaper clipping, no date), p. 5.

[26] Blashfield's *A Word for Municipal Art* in *Municipal Affairs*, Vol. III (1899), p. 588.

jects, few critics today will agree that decorative art requires symbolical figures to lend it grace and beauty. The modern tendency is rather to obtain these qualities by idealizing the real world, as is well illustrated by designs for the murals in the new government buildings at Washington, D. C.[27]

A second point in Mr. Blashfield's choice of subject is its general obviousness. He believed that "the decoration in a building which belongs to the public must speak to the people — to the man in the street. It *must* embody thought and significance, and that so plainly that he who runs may read."[28] This theory did not originate with Blashfield, for the same idea inspired the sculptors of the great Gothic cathedrals and the fresco painters of the early Renaissance.

It will be noticed also that most of Blashfield's symbolical figures resemble each other and, in fact, are reminiscent of the pictures of pretty girls on calendars of thirty or forty years ago, for, though their garments suggest the classical period, their features remain very American. Furthermore, their facial expression depends upon the rôle he wishes them to play — meek for the angel in the "Edict of Toleration" in the courthouse in Baltimore, stern in "Westward", and very stern for law in the "Power of the Law" in the High Appellate Court Building in New York.

Whatever the merit of Blashfield's work as a mural painter, he is important for spreading the principles that led toward better decoration. He made his own works comply with the rules of decoration, and through speeches and writings urged coöperation between architect, painter, and sculptor, as well as among painters themselves. Further, like Puvis de Chavannes, he believed that murals

[27] Bruce and Watson's *Art in Federal Buildings,* Vol. I, numerous illustrations.

[28] Blashfield's *Mural Painting in America,* pp. 175, 176.

should be subordinate to the architecture. The contrast between this theory and that of certain modern painters was well expressed by Mr. Cortissoz when he said, "we are told we can't be good mural painters unless we subscribe to the hypothesis of Diego Rivera, but I prefer to subscribe to that of Mr. Blashfield, a painter who sees mural decoration not as an opportunity for self-expression, but as a part in the construction of a building."[29] A comparison of the works of the two men shows that Blashfield's primary consideration was to make his paintings fit the building for which they were intended while that of Rivera is to express his social theories.

Kenyon Cox, who painted the lunettes for the Capitol at Des Moines, was born in 1856, eight years after Blashfield, at Warren, Ohio, and died at New York in 1919. A wide learning and culture formed his background since his mother was the daughter of Dr. Charles G. Finney, the first President of Oberlin College, and his father was Jacob G. Cox, who achieved distinction in many fields, being at various times Governor of Ohio, Secretary of the Interior under Grant, and President of the University of Cincinnati. Cox received his art education in Cincinnati and Philadelphia and later under Carolus-Duran and Gérôme in Paris. Because he could find no sale for his pictures when he returned from his studies, he was driven into the fields of teaching and writing, and continued in these even after he had made his place in mural painting. The best known of his books are *The Classic Point of View; Old Masters and New; Painters and Sculptors;* and *Artists and Public.*

His career as mural painter began when he assisted La Farge at Trinity. His first independent work was done at the World's Columbian Exposition where he and Edward Simmons decorated the pendentives of the Manufactures

[29] *The Art Digest,* January 15, 1934, p. 14.

and Liberal Arts Building. In 1894[30] he was commissioned to decorate one of the four large tympana beneath the dome in the Sculpture Hall of the Walker Art Building at Bowdoin College. He chose the subject "Venice" and, to become better acquainted with the city, he spent several months there studying the great Venetian painters.

For the Library of Congress he did two lunettes, "The Arts" and "The Sciences",[31] distinctly formal compositions in which he was confronted with the problem of a highly illuminated room with rows of windows set close together. To prevent his paintings from appearing dark and spotted he rendered them in a very high key with extremely light shadows. In the Appellate Court Building, New York, where "The Power of the Law" by Blashfield is located, he painted in 1899 a frieze of symbolical figures relating to law and its benefits.[32]

Frank J. Mather, Jr., observed that "From the year 1900 or thereabout Cox's decorative style assumed more urbanity and sureness in design while his color grew richer and more unified."[33] His work at Des Moines done in 1905 profits by this change. Other murals belonging to this later period are "The Beneficence of Law" in the Essex County Courthouse, Newark, New Jersey;[34] "The Judicial Virtues" in the Luzerne County Courthouse at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania;[35] and "The Light of Learning" in the Public Library at Winona, Minnesota.[36]

[30] Kenyon Cox's *Concerning Painting,* p. 253; *American Architect and Building News,* Vol. LXX (1900), Plate 1297. For a biographical sketch of Kenyon Cox see *The International Studio,* Vol. XXXII, pp. iii–xiii.

[31] King's *American Mural Painting,* illustrations on pp. 208, 209.

[32] King's *American Mural Painting,* illustrations on p. 235.

[33] *Scribner's Magazine,* Vol. LXV (1919), p. 766.

[34] *The International Studio,* Vol. XXXII (1907), illustration opposite p. iii.

[35] Bruce and Watson's *Art in Federal Buildings,* Vol. I, illustration on p. 18.

[36] Blashfield's *Mural Painting in America,* illustration opposite p. 74.

Cox's decorations at Des Moines are placed in eight of the twelve equal arched spaces forming lunettes below the dome of the Capitol, the remaining four spaces being left open. In choosing his subject for the lunettes several problems confronted the artist. First, large figures were needed to carry at a distance of thirty feet; second, the lunettes necessitated placing the figures in reclining or sitting positions if they were to be of the required scale; and third, strong colors were essential to produce a decorative effect. For these reasons an allegorical rather than realistic or historical subject was indicated, and "The Progress of Civilization" was finally chosen as most fitting under the circumstances. Unlike Blashfield's panel, it has for the most part universal rather than local significance, as it traces the history of mankind from prehistoric times to the present.

The first in the series is "Hunting"[37] which carries one back in imagination to an early stage of civilization. A primitive man, clothed in a wolfskin with the scalp of the animal over his head, reclines against a rock beneath a pine. He carries a quiver of arrows and holds a lance in his hand, while a half domesticated dog sits at his feet and a dead wild goose lies by his side. An atmosphere of primitive times is evoked by the tense muscles of man and dog and by the alert and listening attitude of the animal.

The pastoral stage is represented by "Herding",[38] in which a note of curiosity has largely taken the place of primitive tension. Something has attracted the attention of the herdsman, his cow and swine, and all gaze intently at it. The herdsman, with classical drapery thrown across his body and a rather modern hat on his head, sits on a hillside

[37] *Appleton's Booklover's Magazine*, illustration on p. 717 (No volume or year given, in the copy at the Metropolitan Museum Library).

[38] *The International Studio*, Vol. XXXII (1907), illustration on p. iii.

holding the pipes of pan. He has interrupted his playing to look at the new object. A staff lies at his side on the stony ground which suggests a New England rather than an Iowa landscape.

In "Agriculture"[39] Ceres, the goddess of grain, partly draped in classical fashion, a crown of oats on her head and a sickle in her hand, sits gracefully in a stubble field contemplating the bountiful harvest. Behind her stands a shock of wheat and in front is a cloak on which is lying a gourd water-bottle. With true artistic license Mr. Cox has in the same picture grains which mature at different times, oats, wheat, and corn, his purpose being to indicate the variety of crops raised in Iowa.

In the lunette of "The Forge",[40] the industrial age, that of coal and iron, is symbolized by a muscular young man seated before an old fashioned smithy studying a working drawing of the object he is to make. The artist's fondness for the nude and his ability to portray it is here well illustrated.

Having traced civilization through the hunting, pastoral, agricultural, and industrial phases, the artist now turns to a series of subjects which may be considered as attributes of the industrial age and contributing to its progress, rather than definite stages in themselves. Industry could make little progress without commerce to transport its raw products and manufactured goods. The artist therefore shows us Commerce, a female figure dressed in gold and white with the winged headdress and Caduceus of Mercury. She leans upon a pile of sacks, the wares of commerce, and directs a child representing Transportation in removing them.

A second factor in the advancement of industrialism is

[39] *The International Studio,* Vol. XXXII (1907), illustration on p. vii.

[40] *The International Studio,* Vol. XXXII (1907), illustration on p. v.

Education, and the latter is hence symbolized by a mother seated on a bank teaching her child to read from a large book. Mr. Cox writes in his description of this lunette, "In the tranquil landscape beyond, as elsewhere in the series, the artist has felt at liberty to introduce some features of the landscape he best knows and loves, that of his own country home in New England, but he has so simplified it as to approximate the abstract or universal."[41]

Another important factor in industrial progress is Science. Here it is not the intention of the artist to represent scientific thought alone, but thought in general, the whole life of the intellect. In the words of the artist, "The scene is the parapet of a house by moonlight. The lamp of truth burns brightly and a single planet shines in the quiet sky. In the left corner is a terrestrial globe, emblem of the world-wide nature of the studies in which the figure is engaged. At the right is a pile of folio volumes — the records of the wisdom of the past. The figure, a stalwart man in draperies of dim blue, is sunk in brooding contemplation."[42]

The last picture in the series represents Art, "the highest form of energy displayed at the zenith of civilization in all ages", and for this reason art may be considered a separate stage in the progress of civilization. History shows that when individuals or nations have progressed to the stage where the necessities of life no longer occupy all their attention, they turn to the arts — music, painting, sculpture, and architecture. Music is represented in this lunette by a violoncello, painting by a palette and brushes, and sculpture and architecture by a classical building decorated with statues.

In the personification of Art, an ideal figure, the artist

[41] Lasher's *Biennial Report on Public Buildings and Property,* 1916–1918, p. 11.

[42] Lasher's *Biennial Report on Public Buildings and Property,* 1916–1918, p. 11; *The International Studio,* Vol. XXXII (1907), illustration on p. iv.

has combined innocence and purity with power in a female form partly draped in a glowing gold and crimson robe, wearing a golden wreath, and holding a mirror of polished metal which reflects the light of the sky to man. The artist explains that he made this panel as brilliant as possible in contrast with the graver tone of "Science".[43]

When Mr. Cox was asked to state what he believed to be his best picture, he wrote as follows concerning the series, and the "Art" lunette in particular: "I consider my work in mural painting the best and most characteristic part of my productions, and the series of decorative lunettes just completed for the State capitol of Iowa at Des Moines, the best of my mural painting. The series represents 'The Progress of Civilization' and if I were to choose one picture of the series it would be the culmination in the lunette entitled 'Art'. My reason for this choice is simply that the picture more nearly realizes my ideal of the combination of sumptuousness of decoration with purity of design and severity of style than anything else I have done".[44]

Though Cox's work betrays a conscious striving for "purity of design and severity of style", it is these very characteristics that give it a greater mural quality than Blashfield achieved in many of his works. A comparison of the works of the two men at Des Moines makes this evident. It is also noticeable that though the works of both men harmonize in color with their surroundings the Cox lunettes are deeper and richer in color and repeat the tones of the other decorations and of the wall in a more intense degree. Red predominates, while blue, purple, and gold also appear. The green grass and the blue sky with white clouds serve as foils to the numerous warm colors and provide a unifying note throughout.

[43] Lasher's *Biennial Report on Public Buildings and Property*, 1916–1918, p. 11; *The Strand Magazine*, Vol. XXXII, illustration on p. 498.

[44] *The Strand Magazine*, Vol. XXXII, illustrations on pp. 498, 499.

Naturalistic backgrounds, which are simplified in design, were introduced for the same reason as in Pompeiian wall paintings — to give through the use of the third dimension an illusion of greater space. Moreover, in order to give carrying power at a distance, one large figure was used in each composition; and by placing these with their backs to the openings, which alternate with every two lunettes, they appear to serve as buttresses to the open arches and form a rhythmic line about the rotunda. As a whole they make a pleasing decoration, harmonious in line, color, and style with the architecture and surrounding decorations.

Cox belonged to the same tradition as Blashfield, yet his work is more dignified and formal; and though he grew toward a greater breadth of style, he never achieved the freedom that Blashfield did in his later work. He was a strong champion of the great traditions of painting and was recognized for many years as the leader of conservative and academic teaching in this country. He was much feared by his younger and more individualistic contemporaries, for he had no time for fads or the anarchistic methods in which restraint is removed and the pupil goes his own way. As a teacher he gave a thorough academic training of such rigorous nature that many of his students became discouraged and sought easier masters. His artistic work, while academically correct and technically finished, seems lacking in the originality and depth of feeling which marks the works of the masters.

A third mural painter of the period who ranks close to Blashfield and Cox was Edward E. Simmons. He painted historical as well as symbolical subjects, but since the majority of his work is pseudo-classical in character, he will be discussed here rather than with the historical painters.[45] When one considers his family connections and the environ-

[45] See below, pp. 254–263.

ment in which he was reared, it may seem a little strange that Edward Simmons became an artist, for he was cousin to Ralph Waldo Emerson and grew up in the literary group composed of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Thoreau. The Old Manse from which Hawthorne "plucked his mosses" at Concord, Massachusetts, was the place of his birth in 1852. Graduating from Harvard with honors, he spent three years travelling in the West, his first stop being at Cincinnati where he met Frank Duveneck, known as the master of the West. He now realized that the thing he wanted most to do was to paint, and we later find him studying art in Boston and still later in Julian's studio in Paris where Lefebure and Boulanger were teaching. He spent some time painting in Brittany, France, and in Cornwall, England.

After remaining abroad more than ten years, an opportunity to return to America came in the form of an invitation from his former class to design a memorial window at Harvard College. His next important task was the decoration of the dome of the Liberal Arts Building at the Columbian Exposition, where his success soon won for him a commission to decorate the Criminal Court Building of Oyer and Terminer in New York City. Here he chose for his subject "Justice", symbolized by a dignified figure holding the scales in one hand and a globe in the other. On the left of Justice three panels represent Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, while on the right appear the three Fates.[46] Then came a commission for nine paintings for the Library of Congress. In each he pictured a muse and in some he added genii to help portray the character of the principal figure.[47] For the Astor Gallery of the old Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, he painted in gay colors "The Seasons"

[46] King's *American Mural Painting*, illustrations on pp. 147, 150, 151.

[47] King's *American Mural Painting*, pp. 174–178.

and "The Months"[48] which are now located in the new building. In the Appellate Court Building, where Blashfield and Cox are represented, his "Justice of the Law" pictures a merciful and kind judge in place of the usual stern and exacting figure.[49] At St. Paul he painted one of the four panels representing "The Progress of the American Spirit in the Northwest",[50] the other three being done by La Farge, Blashfield, and Cox. At the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1914 he executed in the Court of the Universe two murals, poetic in feeling and treatment, expressing the "Romance and Adventure of the Atlantic".[51]

In the same year Simmons painted two historical pictures, "The Battle of Concord" and "The Return of the Battle Flags", for the State House in Boston. Two years previously he had painted for the Polk County Courthouse, Des Moines, one of four lunettes depicting the early history of the county. Bert Phillips executed the first in the series, "The Indian Before the Coming of the White Man"; the second, "The Fur Trading Period", was painted by Douglas Volk; Charles A. Cumming did the third, "The Departure of the Indians from Fort Des Moines", and Simmons concluded the series with a picture of the women of Polk County presenting a flag to the local troops at the beginning of the Civil War.

Simmons writes as follows in his book of reminiscences concerning his commission for this work: "at Des Moines, Iowa, I was given a long and narrow half-moon panel, twenty-five or thirty feet in length and only about five feet in width at the center, and they *would* have for a subject, the Presentation of the Flag to the First Regiment that

[48] King's *American Mural Painting,* illustrations on pp. 244, 245.

[49] King's *American Mural Painting,* illustrations on p. 230.

[50] *The International Studio,* Vol. XLII (1910-1911), illustration on p. 189.

[51] *Scribner's Magazine,* Vol. LVI (1914), illustration on p. 287.

went to the Civil War. Of course, I couldn't get in a human figure and a flag in the proper way, so I made an awkward girl holding it and letting it sag to the ground."[52]

Russell Cowles, who did two panels for the Register and Tribune Building at Des Moines, was not so pessimistic about the result as was Simmons, the artist. In writing for a Des Moines newspaper Cowles commented upon the painting as follows: "The composition of the picture is satisfying because it lends itself well to the rather unusual shape of the panel. The two central groups attract the interest at once, and the eye, after scanning the rest of the picture and getting a general impression of soldiers and women and children, is unconsciously led back to the central figure in white, presenting the flag to the officers of the company."[53] Though an examination of the picture shows that the composition is much better suited to a rectangular space than a lunette, the artist must be given credit for doing his best in a difficult situation.

Not only was Simmons confronted with the problem offered by the peculiar shape of the allotted space but also with that of producing a picture equally effective when seen from a distance on the second floor or at close range on the fourth. This problem, common to all four painters, was solved quite successfully.

Mr. Cowles continued his impression of the Simmons painting by saying: "If we now examine the individual figures we shall find that their action is very expressive and yet simple and dignified. There is no self-consciousness, no affectation in their pose. The volunteer company on the left shows an amusing variety of types and characters, while on the other hand, the women and children, in the quaint dress of the day, serve perhaps more than anything

[52] Edward E. Simmons's *From Seven to Seventy*, pp. 270–273, 331, 332.

[53] *The Register and Leader* (Des Moines), Sunday, January 5, 1913, p. 10.

else to carry us back in imagination to that period in our history which furnished the artist with his theme.''[54] And, in fact, Simmons' work, though realistic in appearance, well fits the modernized classical architecture and at the same time lends it ornament, harmonizing with the light tan and green tones of the walls and with the naturalistic color scheme of the other paintings. It forms, with the other three lunettes of the group, a pleasing decoration appropriate to a courthouse in commemorating the history of the county.

Simmons believed beauty to be the sole aim of art and joined with Blashfield and Cox in abhorring shortcuts, fads, and all but a thorough training in fundamental principles. Though his inspiration is uneven, he at times reaches greater aesthetic heights than any of his contemporaries, as his work at St. Paul demonstrates; for this last, in contrast to his earlier symbolical painting, shows much originality and imagination. His early work suggests pictures painted of his fellow-citizens costumed to take part in a pageant, with hairdress, features, and expressions realistic. And indeed this tendency to impart to symbolical themes a contemporary tone served him well in historical compositions where his aim was to give a true picture.

EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY: HISTORY AND REALISM

Bert Phillips, painter of Indian subjects, and the portrait painters, Douglas Volk and Charles A. Cumming, have already been mentioned in connection with Edward E. Simmons,[55] as doing historical paintings in the Polk County Courthouse, Des Moines. Phillips, who was commissioned to portray ''The Indian Before the Coming of the White Man'', was well fitted for the task since he is a specialist in

[54] *The Register and Leader* (Des Moines), Sunday, January 5, 1913, p. 10.

[55] See below, pp. 250–253.

Indian subjects. His interest in the Indian dates back to about 1900 when he and E. L. Blumenschein travelled through the southwest, finally settling at Taos, New Mexico. Other painters soon joined them, but it is largely due to Phillips, since he lives there the year round, that Taos is today a recognized art center, sending out annual art exhibits to the chief cities of the country. His murals consist, in addition to the one in Des Moines, of a decoration in the San Marcos Hotel, Chandler, Arizona, and three panels in the Capitol at Jefferson City, Missouri.

In his Des Moines lunette Phillips portrayed what he believed to be the chief characteristic of the Indian — his hospitality. This idea he carried throughout his composition, both in the major figures, two chiefs greeting each other, and in the minor figures, women grouped about to receive the guest; it continues with young men playing their musical instruments and preparing for the dance, the building of a tepee as a lodging for the guest, and the stretching of a buckskin to be presented as a gift when the visitor departs. Though the colors are realistic, one wishes they were a little stronger to accord with the deeper tones of the walls. However, the harmony with the Volk painting opposite is very noticeable and pleasing.

Volk continued the Indian theme by representing Indian life after the coming of the white man. The center of his composition is occupied by two fur traders bargaining with an Indian for a pelt. A squaw seated near the Indian is physically a part of the central group but psychologically belongs to the group on the right which is composed of women preparing articles for trade and a young Indian returning from the hunt. To the left the presence of a priest shows that religion as well as the occupation of the Indian changed with the coming of the white man. In the background flow the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers, signi-

fying the future site of the city of Des Moines. Volk, like Phillips, has treated the Indian very sympathetically and has idealized certain phases of his life. His color scheme is pleasing, the ivory tints of the high lights blend with the light tan of the walls, while the rich but not bright tones of blues, browns, and plum used with the blue sky and olive green foliage give a realistic effect that harmonizes with the other paintings.

The artist spent about a year painting the picture, which is thirty-five feet in length and eight feet in height. Part of the work was done in Volk's New York studio and part in his summer home in Maine. Russell Cowles assisted him in transferring part of the drawings to the canvas and in painting some of the details.[56]

Like Blashfield and Cox, Volk set up high standards of achievement, and considered certain of the tendencies current at the time of his visit as neither new nor good. In speaking to the students of the Cumming School of Art, Des Moines, he said: "What the cubists claim to be new is merely an echo of ancient Egyptian art. The tendency of the last few years to cut loose from all tradition will be art's ruin if it is not stopped. Science cannot afford to ignore the past. The effort is not put forth today by even the best artists that was put forth by the old masters. Students are consequently much more lax . . . Too much haste is reflecting itself in even the effort for the attainment of the beautiful."[57]

The reason for Volk's position can be easily understood when one considers his own training. At the age of fourteen he accompanied his parents to Rome where he studied in the Saint Luke Academy. Three years later he went to Paris to study under Gérôme, with whom Cox was to study

[56] *The Register and Leader* (Des Moines), November 9, 1913.

[57] *The Register and Leader* (Des Moines), November 10, 1913.

in a few years and from whom Blashfield was already receiving advice. His perfection of form and definiteness of outline is due partly also to the influence of his father, Leonard Wells Volk, who was a sculptor. Though his favorite subjects deal with colonial days, such as "The Puritan Mother", "Accused of Witchcraft", and "The Belle of the Colony",[58] he is best known for his portraits of Lincoln, in which he was inspired by the stories of his father who had modelled a portrait of Lincoln from life and made casts of his face and hands.[59] Among his other portraits are Dr. Felix Adler,[60] King Albert of Belgium,[61] Premier Lloyd George, and General Pershing.

Volk was also well known as a teacher. He was an instructor in Cooper Institute, New York, for five years after returning from Paris, and at various times from 1893 until his death in 1935 he instructed at the Art Students League, New York. In the museum field his work consisted of founding the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts, which he directed from 1886 to 1893, and of assisting in raising nearly three quarters of a million dollars for a municipal art gallery for the same city. He was born in 1856 at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and died at his home in Maine.

The first artist to be considered in this account of mural painting who was a native of Iowa is Charles A. Cumming. Though born in Illinois in 1858, he is claimed by Iowa, since he lived and worked in the State most of his life until his death in 1932. During the greater part of his boyhood and youth he resided on a farm in Linn County, Iowa, and, after attending Cornell College and the Art Institute at Chicago, he continued his art studies under Boulanger, Lefebure, and

[58] *The Century Magazine,* Vol. LXVIII (1904), illustration on p. 573.

[59] Rilla E. Jackman's *American Arts,* Plates LVI, CLV; *The Art Digest,* Vol. X (February 15, 1936), illustration on p. 8.

[60] *The International Studio,* Vol. LV (1915), illustration supplement, p. lxxiii.

[61] Jackman's *American Arts,* Plate LV.

Constant in Paris. Upon his return to Iowa he established the Cumming School of Art in Des Moines in 1895, and a Department of Graphic and Plastic Arts at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, in 1910, of which he acted as head until 1927.

Mr. Cumming's paintings consist mostly of portraits, nineteen in the memorial collection, Iowa Historical Gallery, Des Moines, and eight in the memorial collection at the State University of Iowa at Iowa City. He also did some landscapes which are now in the Women's Club galleries in Des Moines and in the gallery of the Art Association in Cedar Rapids. He did not regret that he had comparatively few paintings to his credit, for he once said: "My name is not often in the catalogs. My exhibitions are infrequent, but a good many of my young people are crying to be heard. Some of them have already made good. Several now have pictures hung in exhibitions in the east. Prizes have come to many and those who are still groping are hoping to see. All, I think I may say every one, has intensified his love for the beautiful. If some of them never become creative artists, they will still make a discriminating audience, and Iowa needs art lovers, too. Without them, no exhibit can be successful."[62] Mr. Cumming, like the pseudo-classical painters in Iowa, stood for the conservative element in art and for the French tradition as it was taught in the ateliers of the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Cumming painted but one mural, "The Departure of the Indians from Fort Des Moines", in the Polk County Courthouse. In this he told simply and plainly the story of the Indians leaving the Fort. On the right of the picture a white man and his family have arrived in a boat and are coming ashore, while on the left Indians are leaving with

[62] *The Des Moines Register*, Sunday, November 12, 1916.

their tepees and ponies. The center of interest is occupied by the leaders of each group, the Indian chief and two white men. The former, who must give up his land, stands dignified and proud in his bright blanket, without sign of malice toward the latter, who have come to take possession of it and who face him calmly and undisturbed. Compositionally the three Indians on the left balance the three whites on the right, while the prominence of the chief balances the two white men in the center. By placing the chief to the right instead of the left the artist has saved the picture from being divided, with Indians on one side and whites on the other. The spots of duller red on the sides not only balance one another, but keep the intense red of the chief's blanket within the picture plane. The entire painting harmonizes well with the color scheme of the room.

An artist who spent considerable time in historical research before attempting to carry on his work was James E. McBurney. He was commissioned in 1923 by the officials of the Federal Bank and Trust Company of Dubuque, Iowa, to adorn their new building with paintings that would portray accurately the early history of Dubuque as well as beautify the building. After seeing some of Mr. McBurney's paintings in Chicago, they believed he was the man to do the work. In contemplating the subject matter for the paintings Mr. McBurney said: "In selecting subjects which will add atmosphere, warmth and decoration to so friendly yet dignified a setting as is the banking room of the Federal Bank & Trust company, it becomes obligatory to choose such as will contribute to the historical education of the youth, create a community spirit, stimulate civic pride, and beautify the room to such a degree that the patron may feel commendable pleasure, and the chance visitor wish to become a depositor."[63]

[63] *The Telegraph-Herald* (Dubuque), November 25, 1923.

The artist spent nearly a year in studying the history and topography of Dubuque and vicinity. During this time he made a number of small sketches of possible subjects before finally deciding upon the following: "Julien Du Buque Being Shown the Lead Mines, 1780"; "The First Steamboat to Pass Dubuque, 1811–1815"; and "The Ferry, 1830–1845". He was aided in obtaining some of the historic details by Milford Chandler of the Historical Department, who permitted him to study the costumes of the Fox Indians, and by Herbert Quick, the author of "Vandemark's Folly", who, in answer to a letter of J. Rider Wallis, cashier of the bank, informing him of the plans for decorating the new building, replied in part as follows:

"The fact that you are making your new bank building a sort of historical monument representing the intensely interesting history of Dubuque and your state is a movement which interests me greatly. It proves that the people of Iowa are beginning to feel the sense of history — and this is a noteworthy thing in the development of any people." [64]

In the painting representing the first, or mining and trapping, period of the city's history McBurney pictures Du Buque being shown the lead mines. The artist sought to paint accurately not only the costumes but also the topography of the scene which he studied with such thoroughness that he was able to locate almost the very spot upon which Du Buque is supposed to have stood when he discussed the mines with the Fox Indians.

The artist has arranged three groups of figures near the entrance to the mine. The central group, pyramidal in form, comprises Du Buque standing conversing with four Indians, two seated Indians on the right, and an Indian advancing from the left carrying lead. The flanking portions

[64] *The Telegraph-Herald* (Dubuque), November 25, 1923.

of the composition are tied to this main group by the above mentioned seated Indians, who are physically a part of the central group but who psychologically belong with the figures on the right around the fire, and by the Indian advancing from the left followed by another Indian. One's attention is thus first attracted by the main figures, wanders to the Indians seated about the fire, then jumps to the group at the extreme left and is led back to the center by the Indians carrying lead.

The color scheme is equally interesting. The cream color of Du Buque's buckskin suit holds the center of interest, contrasting with the brown of the Indians on either side, and is repeated in the costumes of various Indians throughout the picture and on the ground where the sunlight falls. The red in the blanket of one of the seated Indians of the central group is too bright, for it tends to detract from Du Buque, but, as a mass of color, it is balanced on the right by the fire and on the left by ornaments and trimmings of the costumes and by the robe of one of the standing Indians where the large amount of black intensifies the comparatively small area of red. Blues, blue-violets, tans, and greens make up the background colors.

In the painting representing the second period of the city's history the artist has pictured Indians gazing with wonder and amazement upon the first "'Fire Canoe' to push its prow between the banks of the Father of Waters to the very heart of their hunting ground".[65] The artist has succeeded in portraying, through posture and expression, the emotions that these primitive people must have felt — curiosity, fear, mistrust — when they first beheld this strange object. Only three red men are pictured, but they speak for their race. The mounted Indian with large headdress and standard is doubtless a chief, while near

[65] *The Federal Bank & Trust Company* (pamphlet), p. 10.

him a follower sits and another stands. The setting is a typical scene along the Mississippi River near Dubuque, with bluffs rising on either side. The artist has painted in realistic color and detail the pines, spruces, oaks, weeds, grass, and rocks of the near shore, while through the employment of aerial perspective he has indicated the effect of intervening atmosphere upon the appearance of objects by using for the far side purplish-blue tones and indefinite contours. The chief object of interest, the steamboat, also is blurred in outline.

The third picture shows the coming of civilization in full force. The pioneer arrives with his family to take possession of the Indian's hunting ground. He is not the idealized pioneer that Blashfield pictured, but rather the pioneer settler that one would have met any day fifty or a hundred years ago in the Middle West. The painting follows quite closely Mr. Quick's description in *Vandemark's Folly* of ox-cart travel, as given through his principal character, Jacob Vandemark. The latter tells as follows of the ferry at Dubuque in those early days:

> I camped that night in the northwestern corner of Illinois, in a regular city of movers, all waiting their turns at the ferry which crossed the Mississippi to the Land of Promise.
>
> Iowa did not look much like a prairie country from where I stood. The Iowa shore towered above the town of Dubuque, clothed with woods to the top . . . . I drove down to the ferry, without stopping for my breakfast. A few others . . . had got there ahead of me, and we waited in line. I saw that I should have to go on the second trip . . . but movers can not be impatient, and the driving of cattle cures a person of being in a hurry.[66]

The artist has stressed the slowness of the cattle not only by showing two men attempting to start one yoke of oxen but also in the lazy attitude of the cattle themselves. The colors follow the same palette as used for the preced-

[66] Herbert Quick's *Vandemark's Folly*, p. 106.

ing paintings. In the position of the various hues it will be noticed that the red of the man's shirt and the woman's shawl is repeated in the reflection in the water and in the kerchief about the neck of the man behind the first yoke of oxen, while the black dog prevents the eye from oscillating between the two principal masses of red. A diluted red appears again in the oxen, in the trousers of one man, the wagon, and the flowers near the bridge. By means of aerial perspective, distant hills are suggested beyond the wagon to the left.

The pictures possess the good decorative qualities of harmonizing with one another in color, subject matter, and style and with the architecture in color but the realism of the scenes, painted in a tight meticulous style suitable to easel painting, clashes with the large unbroken surfaces and straight lines of the modern architecture. One feels that these pictures should be placed in frames and hung on the wall, rather than attached to it, since they do not form an integral part of the architectural design.

Mr. McBurney has done numerous other murals, many in Chicago. For that city he painted eight panels in the National Bank of Woodlawn, twenty in the D. C. Wentworth School, three of the "Life of George Rogers Clark" in the Parkside School, and fourteen in the Tilden Technical High School. For the State Agricultural Exposition Building, Los Angeles, he executed twelve industrial panels, and in the Women's League Building at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, twelve panels entitled "Women Through the Ages".

EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY: PREDOMINANCE OF DESIGN

The vogue of classical symbolism in mural painting began to wane in the first decade of the twentieth century. Native subjects, as we have seen, became more popular and

the influences of cubism made itself felt in an increasing preoccupation with design. Nevertheless, no sharp dividing line can be drawn between the two periods. William de Leftwich Dodge, for example, continued throughout his career to employ much symbolism, thus differing little from the earlier men in subject matter. Dodge, however, identified himself with the new group the members of which centered their attention upon technique in art rather than subject matter.

Dodge was born at Liberty, Virginia, in 1867 and died in 1935 at the age of sixty-eight. He received his art education in Munich and in Paris under Gérôme, and began his career as mural painter at Chicago in 1893 where he decorated the huge dome of the Administration Building. Like many painters who worked at Chicago his next commission was for the Library of Congress in which he painted four tympana and a ceiling,[67] the latter especially noteworthy in spirit and action. At the Panama-Pacific Exposition he showed the same qualities in his decorations for the Tower Gate.[68] In 1920 he executed a series of murals for the reading room of the library of the State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, Iowa. In the Flag Room of the Capitol at Albany he painted twenty-one murals, and for a room in the residence of Arthur Brisbane a very fine series of fourteen panels, allegorical in conception, representing "Europe Through the Ages".[69] The latter illustrate a tendency, noticeable in recent years, of attempting a fuller concept of a theme by uniting in a single work a number of scenes unrelated in specific time and place yet related in general time and place.

The subjects which Dodge chose for the Iowa murals are

[67] King's *American Mural Painting,* illustration on p. 216.

[68] *Scribner's Magazine,* Vol. LVI (1914), illustrations on pp. 282, 283.

[69] *The Architect,* Vol. XV (September, 1930), illustrations on pp. 563–568.

appropriate locally and to the type of building, for they treat of "Education", "The Glory and Grandeur of Iowa", and "In Memoriam". In the first picture, the artist has drawn from both history and allegory for his characters. Upon the steps of the Temple of Knowledge is seen Knowledge, herself, teaching truth to the world; to her left is Fortune, a result of education, and to the right is Time, a necessary factor in acquiring knowledge and eliminating the incompetent and listless. The child, sole object of education, is taught by his first teacher, his mother.

The material of education, illustrated by representatives of various countries and fields of learning, comprises Greek Civilization personified in Homer who, with his musical instrument, is seated near Fortune, and Roman Civilization represented by Virgil and Dante, grouped with Time. In the background Justinian and Napoleon typify Law, an important part of education; before them appears Shakespeare, representative of Literature, while in the background may be seen Columbus and the Greek philosophers, representing Science, apparently discussing what sciences should be taught.

The large painting on the side wall, entitled "The Glory and Grandeur of Iowa" depends still more upon symbolism. It is divided into three sections: "Agriculture", "The Council of Indians", and "The Commonwealth". In the first scene the artist has represented agriculture by Ceres, goddess of agriculture. It will be recalled that Melzer painted the goddess with sickle in hand, suspended and reclining in air, while Cox showed her in a stubble field, crowned with oats and garbed in classical costume contemplating the harvest. Dodge, with a different conception, portrays her at work plowing with two white oxen representing Action and Labor, both of which are necessary to make the fertile soil yield a bountiful harvest. The Indians

in front and the birds on the ground and in the air represent Iowa before the coming of the white man.

The second panel shows an Indian council, with a large central figure, the Great Spirit, presiding over the meeting. Seated cross-legged upon a platform and wearing a picturesque feather headdress, he holds in his right hand the pipe of peace while with his uplifted left hand he gives approval to the coming of the new civilization to the territory. Before him on the platform are seated two medicine men who interpret his wishes to the people. The members of the council, both white men and Indians, smoke the pipe of peace, while warriors in the background stand guard to see that the council is properly conducted. At the left appears a chief of the Ioway Indians and behind him a warrior in an attitude of peace. At the extreme left an Indian and a white boy have a friendly scuffle while at the extreme right a squaw is preparing the feast which will follow the completion of the ceremonies.

"Agriculture", as has been seen, represents the importance of the soil for future prosperity and pictures Iowa before the coming of the pioneer; "The Council of Indians" shows the peaceful way in which the white man superseded the Indian in Iowa, and finally "The Commonwealth" signals the departure of the Indian and the coming of civilization to Iowa. In this last composition the State, as an organized institution, is symbolized by a young woman in a chariot drawn by two white horses representing Destiny. Before her, Progress holds a torch as a guide in achieving success. Vegetables, flowers, and grain in the chariot represent Agriculture while Industry and Mining are typified by marching men in the background. To the left are Indians representing the Past, one of whom, not wishing to see the advent of civilization, turns away, while the other shades his eyes the better to view its brilliant arrival.

The scene of the last picture, "In Memoriam", is laid in France at the signing of the Armistice. Peace, the central figure, holds the sword of the Allies upon her lap; behind her to the left stand the Allies with flags furled, while to the right the Americans advance with flags flying. This distinction indicates that whereas the Allies signed a treaty with Germany, the United States has only temporarily suspended hostilities and the troops must be ready at any moment to march into Germany. Technically a state of war continued to exist between the United States and Germany until the treaty of 1921. The Mother Heart of America, seen to the right of Peace, tries to check the soldiers from continuing the war. To the extreme right is shown the chief sufferers in all wars, the Family. The father with shield in hand stands ready to defend his wife and children, while the little son tells his mother that he, too, is ready to fight if need be. Conflict, the group at the left representing Iowa troops in action, is followed by Grief, a mother with her dead boy.

Mr. Dodge's principal aim was to design color patterns with the complements blue and orange in their various hues, values, and intensities. The deep blues of the shadows are rich and intense while those in illumination show light greenish tones. The blues and gray of the ceiling and the walls harmonize with these.

In figure composition the series shows various degrees of merit; the finest is "The Council of Indians" in its nearly circular scheme dominated by the Great Spirit. "In Memoriam", with its three-part horizontal design (a central section with flanking groups), is unusual in having its axial element cast in the form of an upright triangle within an inverted one. The three parts are tied together very successfully by rifles and fifes and by the position and direction of attention of the figures.

In "Education" the composition shows a combination of the centralized and the rhythmical types of designs; Knowledge is seated at the center with two groups of standing figures separated by seated ones on either side of her, while the composition may also be resolved into an alternation of tall and shorter figures. The least interesting schemes are those of "Agriculture" and the "Commonwealth", each planned on the diagonal. In the former the figures move from left to right out of the picture while in the latter they come from right to left into the picture. In this series Mr. Dodge exhibits a freshness of imagination, especially in "The Council of Indians" and "In Memoriam", that makes one feel a new type of mural painting is coming into existence.

A less powerful figure was John Warner Norton who painted four murals in the rotunda of the Woodbury County Courthouse, Sioux City, Iowa.[70] In subject matter his paintings are appropriate, suggesting the purpose of the building and its location, and commemorating those who served their country at home and abroad during the World War.

The mural over the main entrance, a scene of the administration of justice in a primitive court, reveals the purpose of the building. Justice holds a human heart, symbol of the hopeful tendency to interpret justice as dealing with the problems of human beings, and although the conventional scales appear, they are used as mere decoration for her place of honor. Justice herself is not of the Blashfield, Cox, or Simmons type but a new stylized form created to harmonize with the rather formal design. The men with the halberds who stand guard represent the powers of Law and Government, while the female figure at the elbow of the judge represents emancipated woman. She points to cer-

[70] *The Western Architect*, Vol. XXX (1921), pp. 15, 16.

tain passages of the law to which she wishes attention given, presumably in regard to a woman standing with a child in her arms who may or may not be a culprit. The glowing disc in the background probably represents Justice and Enlightenment.

The panel to the right of this is a pleasing and restful scene of urban life. It is easy to imagine that the various groups enjoying themselves on a late summer's day are on one of the many hills that are within view of Sioux City and that the outlines of the buildings seen in the distance are those of the city itself. An older woman sits under the tree at the right, dreaming, probably, of the past, while the child is conscious only of the joy of the present. The young man and young woman may, like the child, be finding enjoyment in the present moment or, like the two youths under the tree, be dreaming of the future. The mother approaching with a basket of Iowa apples stops an instant to look with pride upon the two stalwart youths. The artist has divided the background into blue and tan panels of various widths, the latter serving as background for the people while the outline of the distant city appears against the blue. The whole is united by the wall, shrubbery, and branches of the large tree around which most of the figures are grouped. The birds flying about add not only to the decorative quality but also to the restful atmosphere of the scene.

The canvas on the opposite wall represents Farming, the principal occupation of Iowa. A young farmer with a load of hay has just driven into the barnyard where his wife and child with the dog await him. Cattle are standing in the yard and at the extreme left is a gate, probably to the pasture. Trees play an important part in the composition, those with straight trunks of different sizes to the left of the center adding strength to the design and counteracting the horizontal line of the low wall in the center; the small

ash and willow near the wall, and the weeping willow to the right, furnish softer and more graceful lines. The color scheme is the same as in the other pictures, primary tones combined with the neutrals, black, white, and gray. Simplicity, peace, and repose make this picture, like the others, beautiful and restful to look upon.

A balcony cuts deeply into the panel over the stairway, leaving merely a border at top and sides to be decorated. The subject of the picture was suggested by the troubled times of the World War during which the courthouse was built. A man on the right in classical costume and helmet represents the soldier, while the woman on the left signifies the mother, sister, or nurse. The names of the battles in which Sioux City boys took part are in a vivid blue on a gold background. It was possible to obtain a complete list of these because the Armistice was signed a short time before the picture was placed.

These paintings, through their simplified designs in mass and color and the use of local subject matter in two of the panels, "Urban Life" and "Rural Life", show that Norton represents the new tendency in art. The other two, however, are symbolic. Though he has used realistic subject matter, he has idealized it instead of picturing a particular scene. In this idealization he has produced paintings which have something of the quality of Japanese art in their delicacy and simplicity and in this respect find their counterpart in the Sullivanesque and Wright character of the architectural decoration. The harmony in style and color with the other decorations and the flatness of the design all aid in making the paintings appear to be an integral part of the structure and thus good architectural decoration.

Mr. Norton was born at Lockport, Illinois, in 1876. He was reared in a well-to-do home and had begun his college education at Harvard when business reverses changed his

plans. He, thereupon, took up tutoring and later went to Arizona as a cow hand where he joined Roosevelt's Rough Riders. Soon after his return from the war he entered the Art Institute. His early art work was influenced by an older sister who possessed considerable art ability and who had travelled in Japan, studying extensively the art of that country. Among the books that she brought back was Hokasai's *Sketch Book*. John constantly studied it and became adept in dry brush work, a method that led to his beauty of line and his use of continuous lines. To get brushes he made occasional trips to Chinatown. On one such excursion he found a Chinese proverb inscribed in Chinese chirography which meant, "Nothing is difficult when you know how to do it".[71] He purchased it and copied it in Chinese red across the top of his desk. It so inspired him to perfect his technical ability that in his later years the most difficult problems in design and color were done with apparent ease.

Concerning Norton's style Thomas E. Tallmadge wrote: "His work was utterly his own — though its characteristics group him with George Bellows, Rockwell Kent, and Leon Kroll. . . . He had no master and the men whose work is most in common with his are his juniors and yet he was a great teacher and in his youthful days an avid and brilliant student. Though he learned life drawing from Vanderpool, his figure drawings, in which domain he was preëminent, are poles apart from those of his teacher".[72]

Norton was almost free of outside influences, for he seldom went to galleries and his family and friends always had great difficulty in getting him to exhibit. Tallmadge once heard him say, "the most important thing is not na-

[71] Thomas E. Tallmadge's *John Warner Norton, 1876–1934* (a typed manuscript in the Art Institute Library, Chicago), p. 10.

[72] Tallmadge's *John Warner Norton, 1876–1934* (manuscript), pp. 2. 3.

ture; it's your picture''. A picture should have an ''idea'' or a purposeful program in the mind of the artist. ''A picture that does not express a fresh idea has no right to live in this age'', he said.[73]

About 1912 Mr. Norton began teaching mural painting at the Art Institute and, with a class, decorated some of the South Park field houses. In addition to the work mentioned above he did a monumental terrazzo pavement and waterway in front of the planetarium at Chicago and a series of eight panels depicting the evolution of man for the Logan Museum, Beloit, Wisconsin, which were exhibited at the Century of Progress Exposition, 1933. He died in 1934 in South Carolina.

A native of Iowa, who has done work that can be classed with the paintings of the artists considered in the preceding as well as in the succeeding chapter, but which as a whole goes better with that now under discussion, is Russell Cowles. Mr. Cowles was born at Algona, Iowa, in 1887, and received his college education at Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa, and at Dartmouth where he was graduated *cum laude*. After spending several months in Paris studying art he found that he could get his rudimentary training as profitably in this country. Hence he returned to Des Moines and entered the Cumming School of Art where he said that the students were doing as good work as that done in the more noted schools of the East.

Later Cowles went to New York to study under Cox and Volk and spent one or two summers at the art school at Woodstock and one at the summer home of Mr. Volk where he assisted in painting the ''Fur Trading Period''.[74] Winning the Prix de Rome in 1915 he spent three years in Italy where he was greatly influenced by the old masters.

[73] Tallmadge's *John Warner Norton, 1876–1934* (manuscript), pp. 3, 4.

[74] See above, pp. 255–257.

"But", he says, "when I came back here the modern school of painting seemed more logical. Now I am definitely in sympathy with the modern point of view, though I don't consider my work extreme".[75] The break with classicism was made more complete by two years of travel in the Orient, following which he settled in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where there is an active art colony working in the modern mode.

In a recent interview with a representative of *The Art Digest* Mr. Cowles expressed his views on art education as follows: "In spite of the misfortunes of college and the Prix de Rome, I don't think my work is either academic or conventional. It is American and modern because I am American and modern. I do not recommend college for any young artist. Our whole system of education is based on the literary, or, perhaps I should say, the archaeological and factual approach of life. During his formative years I think an artist had better remain as far removed from this influence as possible. My biggest burden was our American he-man tradition that art was 'a lady's trade.' That was still the good old pioneer idea in the Middle West when I grew up, but fortunately this attitude has changed. Probably no other section of America today is more 'art conscious.' "[76]

Cowles sees even greater threats to the freedom of the artists of the future when he says: "If certain tendencies continue, such as the prevailing tendency toward collectivism, and with it the suppression of free individual expression, and toward Fascism with its demand for nationalistic propaganda in art, the artist will soon be reduced to a state of slavery. No doubt his technical talents will find employ-

[75] *"Free Artist" Cowles' Plea,* from a clipping from a Des Moines paper, dated February 5, 1935.

[76] *The Art Digest,* February 15, 1935, p. 13.

ment still, but his free creative spirit, the thing that characterizes him as an artist, will be killed''.[77]

The work done by Russell Cowles is of two types: one realistic and conservative, the other abstract and experimental. He says he is trying in both ''to create a heightened sense of reality through a rhythmic organization of space, and believes that abstract painting if approached with an open mind can convey the same feeling of significance, the same character of being, and be as convincing and satisfying as more realistic painting. He further contends that clear expression of rhythmic space is the basic source of all satisfaction in art.[78] Howard Devree, in commenting on the Cowles' exhibition at the Ferargil Galleries in February, 1935, consisting of New Mexican landscapes and types, still-life, and abstraction, wrote as follows in the *New York Times*: ''his work is vigorous, original and not lacking in color. . . . One or two of the landscapes indicate some slight influence of Segonzac or Derain, but all the work is essentially Russell Cowles, versatile American painter.''[79]

These words of high praise might not be applied to his two murals in the office of the Register and Tribune Building, Des Moines, which are early works in the pseudo-classical style. True to the traditions of classicism he presented his ideas through symbolical figures. In each of the panels, ''The Press Reaching Out for News'' and ''The Moral Aspects of the Press'', a female figure represents the Press and putti (small Cupid-like children) the attributes of the Press.

In the first panel the Press, clothed in semiclassical draperies, reaches for a carrier pigeon. The putto to the im-

[77] *Cowles Sees Threat to Art* in *The Des Moines Tribune*, February 4, 1935.

[78] *Cowles Exhibit Reveals Trends* in *The Des Moines Register*, November 30, 1934.

[79] *New York Times*, February 10, 1935, Section 8.

mediate right reflects in his mirror a panoramic view of the daily events. Printing of the news is symbolized by a putto on the left who is operating a primitive press, while Publicity, including Advertising, is characterized by one holding a trumpet. In the second panel the figure of the Press holds a torch representing the illumination of Public Affairs and is guided by Wisdom pointing to an open book. Defence of the ballot box and good government is typified by Courage on the left, holding a sword, while on the right two putti representing Freedom of Speech are discussing questions of social justice. The scenes of both panels are laid in front of a parapet on the edge of a park, the tops of various trees showing in the background.

The compositions are formal and academic, for in the center of each is a female figure and two putti, on the left a putto and some object such as a printing press, sword, or ballot box, which balance two putti on the right. The color scheme of red, violet-red, green, and blue is kept low in key to harmonize with the dark woodwork of the room. These paintings fulfill what Cowles believed at that time to be the two-fold function of a mural. He said, "it must tell a story, and it must serve to decorate the building in which it is placed. The story may be told in a symbolic or allegorical manner or it may be realistic in treatment and represent an actual historical incident."[80] It is interesting to conjecture the type of decoration Mr. Cowles would paint if given the commission today.

Roland J. McKinney, former director of the Tri-City Art League and now holding the same position at the Baltimore Museum, painted in the chancel of the First Presbyterian Church at Davenport, an ascension in the Byzantine style to harmonize with the Byzantine type of architecture chosen in remodelling the old structure. Byzantine wall

[80] *The Register and Leader* (Des Moines), January 5, 1913, p. 10.

decoration and modern murals are basically alike in their simplicity, vivid clear colors, and breadth of execution. Some murals of today are like the medieval decorations also in being designed in two instead of three dimensions and in having the folds and contours of figures indicated with decided lines. In these respects the Davenport murals are modern as well as Byzantine in character. The subject and design, too, are thoroughly Byzantine in picturing Christ, the evangelists, apostles, and angels in a rhythmical composition of strong verticals, though not placed in a straight line as is often the case in the early work. Against a deep dull red background the figures are painted in flat tones of intense dark greens, yellows, blues, reds, and some light violet. Only a little shading is noticed in the faces. The coloring is so strong that one wishes to remain in the rear of the church in order to view them in the correct perspective. Though the decoration clashes in style with the stained-glass windows, it does harmonize with the architecture and dark woodwork and forms a strong and simplified decoration.

Dr. Hageboeck of the Davenport Municipal Art Gallery said in part in a letter to Mr. McKinney printed in the *Davenport Democrat* for March 29, 1925:

> My candid opinion is that you have produced a real work of art, one that will be a lasting monument both to your technique and your taste. The handling of the faces of the apostles is superb. The expression of quizzical doubt on Thomas's face, the youthful glowing enthusiasm of the young John, the sober earnestness of Peter, struck me forcibly. The figure of Christ is indeed that of a Man of Sorrows, and each of the twelve is a study in character. There has been much comment upon the glowing colors that you used, but it would seem to me that is decidedly necessary and most appropriate.
>
> The object of the picture is to attract and hold attention, to arouse the religious spirit; and it must speak in clear tones. The contrasts between your faces and those of the sugar-water saints

of the stained-glass windows is particularly striking. You know my particular love for the Renaissance period, but with all my admiration for the sweetness of Raphael's figures I am convinced that the bold realism of your group will impress one with the idea that these simple, plain Jews were real men, men of flesh and blood, with much of the feelings and passions that we all have. And I particularly admire them because they are not made beautiful, young, and handsome. They all show character, and no doubt at the time they were called fanatics. In other words, every one of the faces is full of the strength and character that were necessary for them to make their influence felt.

I don't like the angels and feel your picture would have been much stronger without them. It seems to me that the realistic, strong, simple treatment of the Apostles and Christ Himself makes the presence of the angels rather awkward. You have shown simplicity and strength in the characters, and I cannot reconcile the presence of angels in such a group. Furthermore, if for theological or artistic reasons the angels are necessary to round out the group one might understand the necessity in the composition. Under these circumstances possibly they should be left. But the wings seem to be a jarring note. I appreciate that theologically it may be necessary to leave the angels, but for physical reasons the wings had better been left off. Every modern aviator would certainly not grant that wings of that size and shape could possibly sustain figures in the air.

THE AMERICAN SCENE: REALISM

The depression gave speedy growth to the infant tendency on the part of American artists to paint local subject matter in a naturalistic manner. Forced to remain in their home communities, painters became more and more aware of the possible themes for pictures hidden in their everyday environment and grew increasingly interested in the life and traditions of which they were a part. They began to realize that we have a tradition, though a very young one, and that our life and people afford as much inspiration, if they but look for it, as do those abroad. As a result, flourishing art groups have grown up in many centers through-

out the country, the more important in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis, Cedar Rapids, San Francisco, and Seattle.[81] The movement received great impetus in 1933 from the organization of the Public Works of Art Project under the direction of Edward Bruce and Forbes Watson. The country was divided into sixteen regions, each presided over by a volunteer chairman who subdivided his territory according to State lines, and over each State in turn was a committee. The committee for Iowa was composed of Grant Wood and Leata Peer Rowan. The "American Scene" as a general subject was suggested by the national authorities but not insisted upon, the greatest freedom being allowed.

Grant Wood is usually cited as one of the three leaders of regional art; the other two, also from the Middle West, are Thomas H. Benton from Missouri and John Steuart Curry from Kansas. Benton is the outstanding mural painter of the group, having painted doubtlessly more murals than any contemporary artist in this country. His best known works are in New York in the library of the Whitney Museum[82] and in the New School for Social Research.[83] In Indianapolis, in storage for lack of a suitable place to put them, is the series depicting the history of Indiana which was exhibited at the Century of Progress Exposition;[84] and in the Capitol at Jefferson City are scenes from the social history of his native State.[85]

[81] Holger Cahill and A. H. Barr's *Art in America; a Complete Survey,* pp. 106, 107.

[82] Thomas H. Benton's *The Arts of Life in America* in the *Catalog of the Whitney Museum of American Art* (New York City, December 6–13, 1932), pp. 4–13; Bruce and Watson's *Art in Federal Buildings,* Vol. I, illustration on p. 24; Cahill and Barr's *Art in America; a Complete Survey,* p. 105.

[83] *The Arts,* Vol. XVII (1930-31), illustrations on pp. 327, 399; *Atelier,* Vol. I (1931), p. 287; *Creative Art,* Vol. VII (1930), supplement, p. 106.

[84] Thomas Craven's *Modern Art,* illustrations opposite pp. 337, 344.

[85] *The Art Digest,* February 1, 1937, pp. 10, 11; *Life,* March 1, 1937.

Both Wood and Curry won their recognition through easel painting but each has done something with wall decoration. Curry has a mural in the Bedford Junior High School, Westport, Connecticut, and two in the Department of Justice Building, Washington, D. C., while Wood has decorations in the Montrose Coffee Shop in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and with the aid of P. W. A. P. artists is painting a series of murals in the library of the State College at Ames.

Born at Anamosa, Iowa, in 1892, Grant Wood studied a year at the State University, and later at the Minneapolis Handicraft Guild and the Art Institute in Chicago. During the war he joined the army and, after the signing of the armistice, returned to Cedar Rapids to teach art in the public schools. During summer vacations, between 1920 and 1928, he made four trips to Europe where he spent much time in France, Italy, and Germany.

During his fourth visit, while watching a painter copy a picture in the glazing technique of the old masters in a museum in Munich, he became impressed with the German primitives. This was the turning point in his style. Previously he had painted in the impressionistic technique,[86] but upon his return to Iowa he looked for and found motives for decorative patterns in the dress of the people and in the country-side. At this time the lithographs of Currier and Ives came to his attention and aided his progress in the direction of decorative design. He discovered possibilities for pleasing designs in ric-rac braid, trees, and fields. His first painting in this new vein, "Woman with Plants", was really a portrait of his mother.[87] He also

[86] *Grant Wood* (a catalogue published by the Ferargil Galleries, New York City, April, 1935), pp. 14, 15.

[87] *Grant Wood* (a catalogue published by the Ferargil Galleries, New York City, April, 1935), illustration on p. 17; *Scribner's Magazine,* Vol. CI (June, 1937), colored illustration opposite p. 16.

came under the influence of the patterns on Willow-ware china, as first reflected in his over-mantel decoration in the collection of Herbert Stamats, Cedar Rapids.[88]

"At first", he said, "I had difficulty in finding subject matter. I felt that I had to search for old things to paint — something soft and mellow. But now I have discovered a decorative quality in American newness".[89] Since discovering America he has become strongly pro-American, even pro-Middle-Western, and has fought the "colonial idea" and all influences that divert an artist in painting from his own experience. He writes, "Our Middle West, and indeed the 'provinces' in general, have long had much the same attitude toward the East that the coastal cities had toward Europe."[90] Again he says, "We have not a chance to produce anything of our own culturally until the whole colonial idea is put in the museum where it belongs".[91] He believes, however, that the painter has already declared his independence, not only from Paris but from our own great cities, and is retreating "to the more American village and country life",[92] and furthermore that our art patrons have fallen in with the movement and are purchasing pictures by American artists about American life. The artist today has come to look upon a trip to Europe much as any tourist does, as a means to broaden his experience. This is a victory of great value to American art.

The seven murals painted by Wood for the Montrose

[88] *Grant Wood* (a catalogue published by the Ferargil Galleries, New York City, April, 1935), illustration on p. 21.

[89] *Grant Wood* (a catalogue published by the Ferargil Galleries, New York City, April, 1935), p. 6.

[90] Grant Wood's *Revolt Against the City,* p. 17.

[91] *Grant Wood* (a catalogue published by the Ferargil Galleries, New York City, April, 1935), p. 11.

[92] Wood's *Revolt Against the City,* p. 21.

Coffee Shop are centered around the theme "Fruits of Iowa" and show a farm scene, a basket of fruit, and a family displaying products of the State.[93] Each person with his produce stands on a little island of earth, suggesting the cardboard stands of paper dolls. The figures, too, show affinities with these childhood toys. They are painted symbols rather than life-like representations, flat, with little modelling and have broadly patterned or plain surfaces. The murals were painted in the artist's studio, cut from the canvas and pasted on the walls of the Coffee Shop. A simple palette was used. Much yellow ochre, pure and mixed with other colors, was employed to make the paintings harmonize with and at the same time decorate the dull greenish walls which had been toned with yellow.

About half of the projected decorations for the library of the State College have been completed to date. The uncompleted part will consist of six panels representing the fine arts. The finished paintings were designed by Mr. Wood for the alcove on the first floor at the foot of the stairs and for the stairway leading to the second floor. The painting was done in his studio at the State University at Iowa City. Those who assisted him with the alcove panels were Lee Allen, Richard Gates, John Houglund, Foster Holland, Howard James, Joseph Swan, and Aurin Lee Hunt while those who worked with him on the stairway decorations were Bertrand Adams, Lee Allen, John Bloom, Dan Finch, Elwyn Giles, Gregory Hull, Harry Jones, Lowell Houser, Howard Johnson, Arthur Munch, Francis McCray, Arnold Pyle, Thomas Savage, and Jack Van Dyck.

The general subject of the murals, particularly appropriate for a State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, was suggested by a quotation from Daniel Webster,

[93] *The American Magazine of Art,* Vol. XXVIII (1935), illustration on p. 404, Vol. XXVI (1933), illustration on p. 151.

"When tillage begins, other arts follow. The farmers therefore are the founders of human civilization". The three canvases in the alcove portray the beginning of tillage. The large central panel shows in the foreground a pioneer plowing with horses which he guides with rope lines while in the background is another plowing with oxen. Mr. Wood explained that the background represents the first year's plowing or breaking and that oxen were used because of the difficulty of the task while the foreground shows the easier work of the second year's plowing being done with horses.

Further variety is added to the two groups by the man in the foreground stopping to drink from a jug which his wife, who stands nearby, probably brought to him. The two side panels show early settlers felling trees to build their cabins. Months were spent in research that the paintings might be accurate in the least detail. The plows were copied from actual examples in the State Historical Building while experts were consulted as to the proper way to drink from a jug and to fell trees. It was discovered that there are two schools of tree chopping and three of jug drinking.[94]

Further study was given to the types of flowers to use in the foreground of the panels, for many wild flowers now grow in Iowa that were not there in pioneer days. The task was to discover which are native and which like the pioneer are immigrants. A number of sketches both small and large, in black and white and in color were made before the design was finally transferred to canvas. Wherever the opportunity afforded, the artist has utilized the design possibilities in realistic details to the last degree as in the stubble field, flowers, and in the bark and graining of the wood of the trees that are being chopped down. On the

[94] *The Des Moines Register*, Sunday, November 29, 1936.

other hand such realistic touches as wrinkles in face and clothing are omitted. Characteristic actions and postures rather than realistic rendering mark his portrayal of people and animals which are painted broadly.

In the stairway are shown the arts that follow tillage. To the right and left of the window above the landing are represented the household arts, care of the home and children, sewing, and cooking. On the right as one ascends further up the stairs are three panels, "Veterinary Medicine", "Farm Crops", and "Animal Husbandry"; on the left are "Ceramics and Chemistry", "Mechanical Engineering", and "Aeronautics and Civil Engineering".

The group on the right of the stairway is united by a common background and an inter-relation of activities. Farm crops are represented by a load of hay while the team of horses representing animal husbandry appears to have been just unhitched from the wagon. On the left two men vaccinate hogs. Perfect, almost mathematical, balance characterizes these panels as well as the whole series. A man appears in the upper half of the right and left panels, one man and two horses in the lower right, and two men and a hog in the left; in the central panel the human figure is placed a little lower than those in the upper ranges of the side panels, thus adding variety as well as tying the two ranges together.

The side panels to the left of the stairway are also composed in two ranges and, like those on the opposite wall, are weighted by a larger number of figures in the lower range. The style of these panels, like the preceding ones, shows a simplification of the general elements with emphasis on the particular. The men's overalls lack wrinkles, not a spear of hay has fallen to the ground, and everything is spotlessly clean. Decorative emphasis, however, is placed on the stitching and buttons of overalls, patterns in dresses,

aprons, and wall paper, the grain of the wood, the pattern of the nails in barn and hay rack, and the outlines of the bricks. Extreme realism in these minor details has been raised to a decorative height. The general aspects are as accurate as the details. The breeds of horses and hogs and the chemical experiments in progress were passed upon by members of the faculty, while in "Aeronautics and Civil Engineering" the blue print on the wall is painted from an actual print. It is the type of accuracy McBurney achieved at Dubuque.

The palette, Mr. Wood said, consisted of yellow ochre, red, black, and white. Blue was not used except for some of the flowers in the pioneer panels because the yellowish Minnesota travertine would cause the blue to "jump out" of the picture. The reason for this is that a hue appears more intense when placed close to its complement or near-complement. The bluish effect was therefore obtained by a mixture of yellow ochre, black, and white. The use of much yellow ochre in the paintings unites them with the architecture in color while the combination of minute details and simplified planes brings them into a harmonious relation with the modernized classical style of the building.

Nancy Finnigan of Cedar Rapids has painted in the Wahkonsa Hotel at Fort Dodge scenes of the past and present history of the city. She describes her work as follows:

> The designs on the two decorated walls, in the Fort Dodge Room are done in soft colors to represent a haziness that is about a river. The pilasters used to separate the different periods of the history of Fort Dodge on the west wall are also used on the wall showing an industrial group to form the effect of an open porch over-looking the Des Moines River. A cloud pattern covers the ceiling. The view on the west wall shows the east branch of the river and we see the historical development on this site as a panorama. Beginning at the left we see Indian life and buffalo, wild turkey and a large branch of a walnut tree extending above. The third panel

shows the military post. In the fourth, the "Charley Rodgers" comes steaming up the river; at the extreme right, a wood burning locomotive puffs into the picture. . . . The design on the north wall shows the present day industries, grouped to appear as a view across the river from this porch. The figure of Wahkonsa, former Indian chief of the neighborhood and friend of the white man, holds the map of Iowa and points to the location of Fort Dodge. The city seal is incorporated in the design. It is however separated from the background by a warmer coloring and rests on the red band on which is lettered, "Fort Dodge, an industrial center in the heart of the corn belt".

Miss Finnigan received her art education at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts and the Chicago Art Institute, studying under John Norton, Leon Kroll, and others. Besides teaching art she has designed for the Animated Sign Corporation of New York City and exhibited at the Iowa Artists' Club and the Little Gallery in Cedar Rapids.

In 1934 Mildred W. Pelzer (Mrs. Louis Pelzer) of Iowa City was commissioned by the Jefferson Hotel of that city to paint a series of eight panels showing the early history of the community. In the first panel she pictures Chief Poweshiek or "Roused Bear" wave a farewell to the white men on the Iowa River as he and his Fox Indians in 1838 retreat from their homes just below Iowa City.[95] The second panel represents two commissioners, Chauncey Swan and John Ronalds, after receiving the oath of office from justice of the peace, Robert Walker, choosing and marking the site for Iowa City. In the third the "First Families", men, women, and children come to make their homes on the rich prairie lands. One year after the location of the site the "Building of the First Territorial Capitol" was begun and in December, 1842, the Assembly first met there. In the fifth panel the artist shows the docking of the *Agatha* in 1844, the third of seven steamboats to

[95] *Iowa City and Its Past* (pamphlet distributed by Hotel Jefferson).

arrive during the forties. The remaining panels continue the story of transportation by showing scenes from the stagecoach days and of the completion of the first railroad to Iowa City.

The paintings form a frieze just below the ceiling. Each panel is a unit in itself and is separated from its neighbors by pilasters which give the appearance of supporting the ceiling. Blue skies with tones of burnt sienna at the horizon serve to unite the panels and with the landscape and buildings act as a background for the more intensely colored figures. The figures themselves are warm and rich in hue but are sufficiently toned to remain well within the wall plane and to form a pleasing decoration above the dark oak panelling.

The artist has employed various types of composition. In "First Families" the "line of march" is from right to left slightly on the diagonal. The diagonal is also used in "Stage Ready" while in the building of the Capitol, the docking of the steamboat, and the arrival of the railroad a semi-circular design proved more suitable. Mrs. Pelzer says that she likes the composition of the steamboat picture the best.

The figures in these realistic scenes are very solidly painted in broad simplified planes and at times the artist is so conscious of the planes that the figures appear blocky or wooden, especially in the "First Families 1840". More freedom, however, is obtained in the others, especially in the scenes of the building of the Capitol and the arrival of the steamboat. The numerous figures employed make the compositions appear sufficiently complicated in spite of the attempt to make them harmonize with the modernized classical decoration of the lobby. As a whole the paintings form an appropriate and colorful commemorative decoration.

For the new Press-Citizen building, also in Iowa City, Mrs. Pelzer has painted "1833 Symphony of Iowa 1933" in the style of a mural map. Within this one picture she depicts representative scenes from the history of Iowa covering the period of a century. Prominent in the foreground are a present-day farmer and the pioneers with their prairie schooners and stagecoaches. The farmer from a knoll of the cornfield which he is plowing looks out over the State and sees its development since the coming of the white man.

The Capitol at Des Moines holds the center of interest and from it stretching in all directions and far into the distance are rolling hills between which the plowman beholds the pioneers wending their way on foot and horseback or in wagons and coaches. Contrasting with this he sees also the modern mode of living in towns and cities that dot the landscape and which show by the number of their grain elevators and factories that the State is developing an industrial as well as an agricultural side. On the Mississippi River are pictured the early ferries and boats while spanning it are modern bridges.

The artist has painted the foreground figures in deep rich colors like the ones in the Jefferson Hotel while the background is higher in key and bluish in tone to harmonize with the blue decoration of the setting. Mrs. Pelzer said that the blue used was cobalt and that the painting was accurate historically and in the location of towns.

In May, 1938, Mrs. Pelzer completed for the Waverly post office a government commission for a mural entitled "A Letter from Home in 1856". It pictures a young wife followed by the little daughter rushing out to the field to read a letter that has just arrived to the husband who is plowing. The figures are designed in full life size.[96]

Mrs. Pelzer received her art education at Pratt Institute

[96] *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, May 31, 1938, illustration on p. 7.

and Columbia University in New York. At the latter she was a student of the well-known designer, W. W. Dow. She has exhibited at Hibbing, Minnesota, Dubuque, Ames, and Des Moines. She has served as Art Chairman of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs and has published three historical maps: "Dubuque — A Prelude in Picture", "Burlington — Glimpses Across the Century", and "Iowa — Prairie Chronicles in Picture".

With the increased interest in mural painting, school buildings as well as hotels and government buildings have received their share of decoration. In Sioux City two buildings are fortunate in having such paintings. The work in the Central and East High Schools was done by Rollin E. Beard and Herman O. Myre who began the work under the W. P. A. and completed only the central panels before funds were exhausted. The June graduating classes of each school thereupon contracted to finance the side panels.[97]

The panels by Beard in the Central High School, painted in the simplified modern style, form an appropriate decoration in both subject and color. The artist describes his work as follows:

> The setting for these murals is severely plain architecture with buff walls and warm dark trim. Consequently the warm colors dominate the murals and harmonize with the surroundings. The subject matter deals with a short but colorful period about 1840 to 1860. Left panel: "Council Oak". 7′X16′. In one of the Sioux City parks stands a giant oak estimated to be a thousand years old. This tree is known as "Council Oak" and according to local legend it was here the Indians held their tribal councils. Middle panel: "Arrival of the First White Settler". 6′X23½′. In the spring of 1849, Theophile Brughier, a French-Canadian fur trader, arrived with his Indian Squaws, Dawn and Blazing Cloud, and his father-in-law War Eagle, a chief of the Yankton Sioux. Right

[97] From a Sioux City newspaper, January 26, 1935.

panel: "River Traffic and the Fur Trade". 7′X16′. In 1857 the fur trade at Sioux City reached its height and steamboats brought the furs down from the headwaters of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers. One shipment is reported to have consisted of 7000 buffalo hides and many smaller pelts. Both figures and background are treated in a simple manner as I aimed to combine a rather accurate record of the time with a suitable wall decoration. The Central High School murals are my only work in that line, my preference being for landscape.[98]

Mr. Beard was born at Moville, Iowa, and studied at the Chicago Art Institute, the Pennsylvania Art Academy, and with Elmer Brown at Provincetown. He has exhibited with Indiana artists in Indianapolis, at the Joslyn Memorial Art Gallery, and with the Iowa Artists of Sioux City.[99]

The murals at the East High School at Waterloo by Herman O. Myre are similar in subject and treatment to those just discussed. He, too, depicts an Indian council while his panel entitled "The First Cabin" corresponds to "The Arrival of the First White Settler". His "Arrival of the First School Teacher", like Beard's "River Traffic and Fur Trade", pictures a river boat as the means of transportation. Both sets of murals are painted broadly in clear bright colors with realism predominating in Myre's work and design in Beard's. "The First Cabin" pictures a pioneer standing with gun in hand in front of a cabin surrounded by trees. He is conversing with an Indian and his squaw. In the background a youth rides one horse and appears to be leading another. The central panel shows the arrival in 1857 of Sioux City's first school teacher, Mary E. Wilkins on the steamer *Omaha.* She is greeted by a local dignitary and a mother whose children she will teach. Other residents of the town and Indians have gathered to watch the arrival of the boat. The panel on the

[98] Personal letter to the writer.

[99] Mrs. Louis Pelzer's *Bulletin of Art News in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1936).

right represents an Indian council as taking place under a tree with wigwams and hills in the background. A chief stands and speaks to his followers, most of whom are seated in a circle. A few, however, are standing in the background. Myre gathered the material for his paintings from old newspapers and authentic accounts of that date.

In the corridor of the Harrison School at Cedar Rapids William E. Henning of the same city has painted a mural giving the history of transportation. He writes concerning his art training and the mural as follows:

> The formal art training I have had was acquired under David McCosh and Adrian Dornbush. However, I am principally self-taught. Grant Wood has helped me considerably in my mural, and his influence is evident in it.
>
> The mural was painted in 1934-1935, in oil on absorbent canvas. The subject of the mural is "Transportation". A set palette of colors was used, the pigments being zinc white, ivory black, emeraude green, venetian red, and yellow ochre. These colors include all the various colors of the surroundings, i. e., with these pigments the colors of the floor, walls, ceiling, etc. could be mixed. The floor is a rich red, but it can be procured with the venetian red, and the wall is close to yellow ochre mixed with white. To provide a color more or less complementary to these to work with I used emeraude green.
>
> "As the mural was so placed that children could approach it very closely it was best, I thought, to paint it so that it would stand up under close inspection. In fact, the greatest distance from which it can be viewed is only about twenty feet. This fact entailed a great deal more detail work, at least doubling the time necessary to paint the mural.
>
> The mural was worked up gradually from small thumbnail sketches. I made 45 of these, and one drawing about five feet long. This was squared off, and then drawings the size of the finished painting were made for transferring to the canvas. Two color sketches were made. The preliminary work took more time than the actual painting.
>
> I am not a believer in the architect's theory that a mural painting must lie flat on the wall. While a "flat" painting can of course

be a real work of art and enhance the wall, it by no means follows that murals painted so as to accentuate the third dimension are not good art. The surface of the wall is not a holy thing — at least no more so than a good artist's three dimensional conception. Flat paintings — the finest examples being in Oriental art — are less disturbing, much easier to produce by the yard for the mural trade. But saying that they are "less disturbing" is only a left-handed compliment, for a large proportion of great art is disturbing, exciting. Michelangelo's paintings are not flat — much of his energy was spent in seeking sculptural form in paint. Large areas of flat paint that register neither as a portion of the mural nor as a portion of the wall are annoying to me.

If a mural in three dimensions is well composed it will, while not providing the impression of the wall, give the impression that it is supporting the ceiling, especially if there are strong vertical lines in the mural. The murals of Benton are examples of the best that is being done in three-dimensional mural painting. In addition, they are the more disturbing because he strives after dynamic composition. But by being disturbing they are none the less art.

This is the only mural I have painted, although I have made studies for a number of others. My easel paintings have been exhibited at the Chicago Art Institute, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Kansas City Art Institute, and many other places. I have been doing cartoon and illustration work of late.[100]

In 1935, Cyril P. Ferring painted for the Dubuque Senior High School a mural depicting the early transportation of the region, the first inspiration for which he received in the art classes of the same school. He describes the artistic problems with which he had to deal and how he met them in the following words:

> From a design standpoint, the actual physical problems involved were rather difficult to overcome. First, there was the area, a wall space about 15 feet high and 45 feet long, a large space in itself and of a proportion not easy to compose within. Besides, this room had a very heavy ceiling. By that I mean it was dark in color and weighty in architectural treatment.
>
> It was necessary to hold up this ceiling, figuratively, in any de-

[100] Personal letter to the writer.

sign used, therefore the decoration would need a certain amount of value contrast and would lean toward a colorful, opposition scheme of color rather than one too light or too unified.

The composition required a series of uprights as well. These were arranged in three groups. On the extreme left, some slight saplings and an arrangement of steamboat stacks accomplished this purpose. Closer to the center a large, dark colored Y-shaped tree is the main vertical support, while to the right a mass of trees of various sizes, some in the foreground, others in the background, complete the pillar arrangement.

Horizontally, there are four main movements, each a purposeful disposition of lines, areas and color tones to carry the eye in a fluctuating up and down manner, yet constantly moving from left to right.

The first and most important movement was the arrangement of figures. The second movement, which may be called a counter movement, is in the dark and light contrasts in the foreground. The third movement takes in the hills and foliage, the fourth the sky shapes. These all have their own variations for the sake of creating a continual change.

My desire was to keep up an interesting visual movement and still retain the structural effect on the thing as a part of the wall and not as being seen through the wall.

The area to cover having been long and narrow, it was essential that a "long" subject be selected, that is, something that could be strung out over an extended space. Partly for this reason, early transportation in this region was selected, using the early paddle wheel steamboats and the covered wagon as the principal motifs, with pioneer types arranged around them.

The bustling activity of arrivals and meetings and the preparations to move still farther on offered enticing possibilities. This seemed to be particularly suitable to the country in or around Dubuque, inasmuch as beginning of almost every phase of human activity in the northwest country took place here — settlement, trade, agriculture, mining and industry.[101]

In the Callahan Junior High School at Des Moines Glen Chamberlain and George Grooms were commissioned by the professional projects department of the Iowa Works

[101] *The Telegraph-Herald* (Dubuque), Sunday, November 17, 1935.

Progress Administration to paint two murals, one in each stairway leading to the second floor. The compositions were based on sketches made from life of activities familiar and interesting to children. Chamberlain depicted sports and recreational activities such as track, tennis, marble playing, band, and Boy Scouts while Grooms pictured building activities, shop, natural science, typing, and sewing. Both panels are painted in the modern broad simplified technic in vivid color slightly subdued. The warm hues predominate to contrast with the blue-green and tan walls. The figures are kept well within the wall plane by being placed above and slightly behind one another.

The same artists decorated also the "Mexican Room" in the home of Harry M. Weinberg, Des Moines. The scenes are typical of Mexico: cock fighting, native dances, burros, Chihuahua dogs, mountain scenery, cacti, and the barren plains. The ventilators, light switches, and other architectural conditions were incorporated in the design.[102]

Both Chamberlain and Grooms studied under Lowell Houser at the Art Students' Workshop, Des Moines. Chamberlain studied also at Stone City under Adrian Dornbush and at the Minneapolis School of Art to which he won a year's scholarship. His "Country Road" was one of the W. P. A. pictures chosen by President and Mrs. Roosevelt for the White House.

William H. Perkins of Council Bluffs has painted three murals in his native city, one in the Abraham Lincoln High School, another in the Salvation Army church, and a third in the home of Dr. Lloyd Howard. He describes his paintings in these words:

> The first is a historical mural, four by twenty feet which is installed as an over-door decoration, the title of which is, "Lewis and

[102] *The Des Moines Register,* February 21, 1937; *Des Moines Tribune,* December 18, 1935.

Clark at Council Bluffs'' which depicts the explorers of 1804 accompanied by retainers and a few Indians, looking out over the vast territories of the Missouri. The picture is hung in the Abraham Lincoln High School front hall, directly behind a statue of the Emancipator. . . . The color scheme is simple, blue-green set off by low values of orange-red. The ''style'' may be called ''naturalistic''. The composition is based on long horizontals, punctuated variously by elements of an upright character.

I have painted for the Salvation Army in Council Bluffs two twin pieces for the altar of their church, that is, behind the rostrum on the back wall, two near-life size paintings of Christ painted on prepared ply-board, six by four feet. The wood is pre-shrunk and the medium oil. . . . Subject: Come Unto Me and The Lamb of God. The interior of the church is quite light, both the walls and the many windows contributing to my decision to paint in a rather frescoesque style. Actually, the colors have some of the light tonality and airiness of a pastel. . . . The style is naturalistic, though some of the drapery arrangement is somewhat arbitrary.

[The third] is a decoration (four walls) in the home of Dr. Lloyd Howard in Council Bluffs. It is a basement room used as a card and general recreation room. . . . The subjects are taken from fairy tales and depict Sin-Bad . . . Aladdin conjuring the genii out of the flask, the Elysian fields, the Flying Carpet, Cinderella tripping down the stairs, and on the west wall Don Quixote and his squire Sancho Panza riding out to save fair damsels. The Don is riding a white nag nearly life size, all bones and hocks, and caparisoned in simple magnificence. Quixote is arrayed in junkey, tin-can armour, wears a too-long sword, and carries a lance. His squire is riding the proverbial donkey, which is fat, and so is the squire. Rocks and crags are in the background, on the summit of one a castle.[103]

In the building of the Davenport Bank and Trust Company are small paintings above each of the ten columns in the main banking room and one large one on the end wall. All commemorate events connected with the history of the community and picture scenes of fur trading, Indian wars, buffalo hunting, the coming of the steamboat, the prairie

[103] Personal letter to the writer.

schooner, the first schoolhouse, the building of the first railroad, and the Civil War.

The large panel picturing "The Black Hawk Purchase" in 1832 was painted by Hiram H. Thompson who was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1885, lived for a time at Davenport, and later went to New York. He studied at the Art Institute, Chicago, at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, and with Walter Ufer. In the Davenport mural he has placed the treaty table against a background of trees with white clouds floating in the blue sky above. At the table is seated Governor Reynolds of Illinois and behind him stands General W. Scott. To the left are soldiers, while the right field is occupied by Chiefs Keokuk and Pashepaho and other braves representing the Sac and Fox Indians.[104] The colors are warm in tone representing autumn and harmonizing with the ceiling decorations. In style the paintings are realistic and simplified, the non-essentials having been omitted.

One of the chief features of the Davenport Centennial celebration in 1936 was the presentation of the mural painted by Helen Johnson Hinrichsen for the Walgreen Store at Second and Main streets. Very appropriately the subject deals with the history of the city during the preceding hundred years. Three phases mark its development, the Indian Period, the Pioneer Period, and the Expansion Period. In the foreground of the section on the left representing the Indian Period the artist pictures Chiefs Black Hawk and Keokuk, trappers, rangers, and fighting Indians; in the middle distance Dr. John Emerson assisted by his famous slave, Dred Scott, is dressing a soldier's wound; while in the background appears a blockhouse.

A large tree divides these scenes from the Pioneer Period which features most prominently the original proprietors

[104] Martin Geiken's *The Davenport Bank Murals* (typed manuscript).

of Davenport, Colonel George Davenport, Antoine Le Claire, Major Gordon and others discussing the details of the proposed townsite. Other scenes show a minister preaching to his congregation, a group gathered in front of the log cabin voting place that marked Davenport as the county seat of Scott County, and a small group representing the so-called "forty-eighters", Germans who left their Fatherland for political reasons and who dominated cultural interests of early Davenport.

The means of transportation by which the pioneers reached the new settlement is depicted in the steamboat which brought immigrants up the river from New Orleans and St. Louis, the covered wagon that conveyed them from the East across the prairies, and the locomotive, the coming of which in 1855 marked the close of the Pioneer Period.

Many elements and types of work characterize the last period. The large size of the figures representing the farmer and education show the importance of these as compared, for example, to the Civil, Spanish, and World Wars, each typified by a small figure of a veteran. Next in importance to the farmer and education are engineering and construction symbolized by a draughtsman working on a blue print of a suspension bridge. There follow literature, business, and newspapers represented by a young man sitting at a typewriter with a telephone at his side; lectures, politics, and civic and business leadership embodied in the standing figure with upraised hand; organized women's activities and the emancipation of women by the woman with gavel in hand seated at a table; and medicine, nursing, and charity by the Red Cross nurse.

Labor is portrayed by a workman standing against a background of factory buildings and modern transportation by a twin-motor aeroplane and a monoplane. The sky, too, is symbolic. The clouds which gather during the Indian

period begin to clear in the pioneer days and in the age of the builders a shaft of light pours into the picture. The painting is skillfully composed of diagonals arranged about three main axes. The employment of a dynamic composition gives a sense of movement and life characteristic of the city portrayed. The use of large and small figures regardless of perspective and the placing of figures above as well as behind one another produces partially the effect of a flat all-over design, thus keeping the decoration within the wall plane.

The painting was done on a specially prepared board so that it could be easily removed. Mrs. Hinrichsen was assisted by John Bloom of De Witt in making the large scale charcoal drawings from small working paintings. Dickman Walker of Rock Island helped to prepare the mural surfaces and did the flat underpainting while Mrs. Hinrichsen herself finished the mural.[105]

Another mural by Mrs. Hinrichsen, "The Prairie Pioneer" painted for the Masonic Temple at Cherokee was dedicated in March, 1937. In so far as possible she made it historically accurate in the minutest detail. In a booklet on the mural written by the Masons of Cherokee appears the following description of the painting:

> The central figure is a good portrait of John F. Potter, who presents a vivid picture of the intelligence, the vision and the inflexible determination of the pioneer. Behind him, sitting in the Pennsylvania linchpin wagon, is his wife, "Aunt Mary Potter". Near the rear wheel of her covered wagon is Charles A. Stiles, then a youth of nineteen, carrying a gun, but only for shooting prairie chickens or other game. The rest of the wagon train can be seen at the ford. The wagons across the river are on the old road from Sioux City to Fort Snelling, which runs diagonally northeast, disappears, but reappears at the hilltop far to the left.

Mrs. Hinrichsen received her art training at the Art

[105] *Tri-City Star*, May 1, 1936.

Institute in Chicago where she studied under George Bellows. She has won a number of prizes at the State Fair at Des Moines and during the past few years has had pictures in the Iowa art collection which has been exhibited in over thirty cities of the country. Her painting entitled "Rotundities", being portraits of John Steuart Curry and Grant Wood, was accepted for the 1935 Pennsylvania Academy Exhibition at Philadelphia. She has done some illustrating and was at one time art director for the Fleischman Company.

The Public Works of Art Project, under which worked some of the artists just considered, had a short life, lasting from December, 1933, to June 30, 1934,[106] but its success led to the formation in the Treasury Department of a permanent Section of Painting and Sculpture whose purpose is to acquire the best available art for Federal buildings and to encourage artists of talent. The artists are chosen by anonymous competition from the region, in so far as possible, in which the work is to be done. Those whose designs were accepted for Federal buildings in Iowa are: Francis Robert White and his associates for the courthouse at Cedar Rapids; for post offices, Bertrand R. Adams and William Bunn for Dubuque, Lee Allen for Onawa, Byron Ben Boyd for Osceola, Richard Gates for Harlan, Richard Haines for Cresco, Lowell Houser for Ames, Mrs. Pelzer for Waverly already considered, and Robert Tabor for Independence. The studies of each, except those by Allen, Gates, and Pelzer, are reproduced in Bruce and Watson's *Art in Federal Buildings.*

In the courtroom of the new courthouse and post office at Cedar Rapids, Francis Robert White, Don Glasell, Harry D. Jones, and Everett Jeffrey, with Sam Schminkey and Walters acting as models and general assistants, painted a

[106] Bruce and Watson's *Art in Federal Buildings,* Vol. I, preface, p. xi.

frieze just below the ceiling of the room. An unusual feature of the mural is the employment of tempera instead of oil as a medium. After preliminary small sketches were composed in black and white and in color, large full sized drawings were made on paper on the back of which was put burnt sienna to act as a carbon in transferring the drawing to the canvas.

Kacine, a mixture of lead, ammonia, milk, and lime, was first applied on the canvas, and on this surface were painted the designs with water colors mixed with a binding medium consisting of the yolk of an egg and water, half and half. The effect produced is that of painting in oil. The compositions were carefully planned with occasional strong uprights to give the impression of there being supports for the cornice despite the continuous form of the decoration. In the color scheme one discovers opposing forces, the gray and tan which by repeating the colors of the ceiling makes the painting a part of the wall and the strong bright colors which tend to make it come forward from the wall surface. The flat static character of the wall is also disturbed by the dynamic compositions, especially of White and Jones who show the influence of the Mexican mural painters, Rivera and Orozco.

In his landscapes White shows the influence of Curry under whom he studied. He also studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, at the Art Students' League under John Sloan and in Paris and Rome. He has exhibited in the Little Gallery, Cedar Rapids, of which he is now director; the Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D. C.; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. One of his works is owned by the Whitney Museum, New York, and two of his murals are in Philadelphia.

Mr. Jones received his art education at the Cumming School of Art, Iowa University, and the School of Fine

Arts, Boston. He has won many prizes and assisted with the P. W. A. P. murals for Ames and with the murals done by John Pusey in 1935 in Indiana. Unlike most of the contemporary Iowa artists Mr. Glasell is not a native of the State but was born in Denmark in 1895. "He came to America at the age of seventeen. Always interested in art, he took lessons while very young with Danish artists. In America he studied at the Art Institute and after coming to Iowa continued his painting studies at Stone City while that colony still functioned. Mr. Glasell exhibits regularly at many exhibitions".[107]

Mr. White writes as follows concerning the work:

> The project from first to last has been coöperative. I do not feel that to speak of my murals and my assistants is correct. Each one of us as individual artists are responsible for the section of the mural as indicated on the chart. Our subject matter, questions of scale and palette were all taken up collectively and there is a unity to the four walls which has resulted from group criticism and co-operation. . . . The basic plan of our mural enterprise was to allow the greatest possible freedom to individual expression within the limits imposed by the space and particularly to get away from the dictatorial relationship of a designer and his assistants. This naturally could only work where the coöperative designers were trained and experienced in the field of art.
>
> Howard Johnson worked on a mural design for the post office lobby together with H. D. Jones but the termination of the P. W. A. P. caused this to fall through. . . . Jones, Johnson, and myself have been doing a set of murals for the Sunshine Mission of Cedar Rapids. They are not yet complete but it is safe to say that they take up a social theme, contrasting the constructive and destructive uses of education, science, and technology. The general motto is "Without vision the people perish!" The colour range is extremely brilliant — the medium tempera.[108]

Bertrand R. Adams, in his mural, "Early Settlers of Du-

[107] Pelzer's *Bulletin of Art News in Iowa*, p. 16.

[108] Personal letter to the writer.

buque'', for the vestibule to the lobby of the post office and courthouse at Dubuque, shows the influence of Wood in the clean broad surfaces of the wagon and barn and in the simplified hills and trees, though they are not as definitely outlined and as lacking in atmosphere as Wood's. When Mr. Adams was asked if he thought that Mr. Wood had influenced him more in his style than any other artist, he replied: ''Possibly in mural requirements. However, many others have had more to do in aiding my development of design, handling of mediums, and visual analysis of forms, rhythms, and proportions. An architect, an interior decorator, a commercial designer, and Dr. Meier of the University aided a great deal through his course, Psychology of Advertising.'' In regard to realism in his painting he says:

> The elements in themselves are quite realistic I would say. I have made no attempt to stylize. Realism is, however, sacrificed to some extent in the arrangements on the mural. . . . The bridge is a composite of several of the bridges and in this mural stands as a symbol, the forerunner of human civilization. Then too, I feel it helps to tie the other historical elements up with the modern architecture. The colors used were white, dark blue, cadmium red light, cadmium yellow pale, cadmium orange, alizarin crimson, cobalt blue, ochre. All values were slightly saturated with the ochre in order that it might harmonize with the warm stone wall.[109]

Both the color scheme and the style of the mural harmonize with the architecture in simplicity. This painting makes an interesting comparison with the two pictures of similar subject already considered, Blashfield's ''Westward'' and McBurney's ''The Ferry, 1830–1845''. The latter is treated realistically and historically, the type of painting found in all periods of American mural painting regardless of the prevailing fashion of the moment. The pictures of Blashfield and Adams, on the other hand, reflect

[109] Personal letter to the writer.

the styles of their periods. The former is pseudo-classical in its symbolical figures, idealized pioneers, and academic treatment, while the latter is modern in its simplicity of treatment, broad planes, and emphasis on design.

William Bunn's "Early Mississippi Steamboat", in the same vestibule as Adams's "Early Settlers of Dubuque", shows, in the employment of characteristic and essential features, the influence of the artist's study with Wood, but he creates greater atmospheric effects in the trees. The scene is dominated by a river steamboat with tree-covered hills in the background. The artist was chiefly interested in the possibilities for design in line and in light and dark offered by the steamboat. Mr. Bunn was born in 1910 at Muscatine, Iowa. After receiving his B. A. in Graphic and Plastic Arts at the University of Iowa, he became graduate assistant in Dramatic Arts at the State University. He has held a Carnegie Fellowship in Art and has studied at the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, Oyster Bay, Long Island, N. Y.

Lee Allen painted for the Onawa post office the very timely subject of "Erosion and Soil Control". On the left of a stream he pictures the wrong methods of farming — cutting down trees and plowing up and down hills which results in erosion and finally in cattle starving in suffocating dust storms. Contrasting with this on the right are shown correct methods of farming, planting trees and plowing around hills with the result of the sunshine being undimmed by dust. The clean cut design of the work shows that Allen has worked under Wood.

For the Harlan post office Richard Gates, who also studied under Wood, painted a panel representing the dependence of industry upon agriculture. The idea is expressed by a farmer handing a sheaf of wheat to an industrial laborer. Each is depicted against his respective envi-

ronmental background. Directly behind the farmer stands his wife and in the distance are horses, cattle, and a truck while on the opposite side are pictured steel mills and blast furnaces. The medium employed was oil on canvas and the colors used were yellow ochre, light red, ultramarine blue, and vine black. Mr. Gates is working on a mural for the graduate reading room in the Physics Library at Iowa City. His subject is the contribution of science to man's understanding of his environment, especially in relation to electrical force.

Byron Ben Boyd, who painted the decoration at Osceola, is from Des Moines, where he has lived since he took a position there as architectural designer after receiving his Master of Arts degree in architecture at Columbia University. In 1916 he organized the firm of Boyd and Moore and continued the practice of architecture until 1926. Meanwhile he studied painting at the National Academy for two seasons and later with Henry Leith Rose and Henry Hensche. Pictures painted during extended trips to Europe, Africa, and the Near East have been exhibited in New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia and other large cities.

Boyd expresses the spirit of the true artist when he says: "I like to preserve the impression of unfamiliar places where beauty is, whether the place is Grimes, Iowa, or Dalmatia. To me, absence from New York as a place to work is no handicap. I find Des Moines immeasurably better suited to work than Manhattan Island. I don't believe artistic accomplishment primarily is a matter of place. If the urge is strong enough any artist will find the way to do the things he wishes to accomplish".[110]

Boyd's mural in the post office at Osceola represents a local historical event, the arrival of the first train with

[110] *Des Moines Tribune*, April 29, 1929.

groups of people standing and cheering as it pulls in. The dress of both men and women is historically correct for the time and place. The women wear bonnets, jackets, and long flaring skirts and carry parasols, while the men are dressed variously in business suits or frontiersmen's outfits with high-topped boots. The grouping and poses of the figures, though somewhat theatrical, are realistic rather than formalized. The composition is determined by the shape of the space to be decorated which is above and on either side of a door. Crowds of people flank the doorway, while above it is pictured the train and a few by-standers. The doorway cuts into a pile of logs intended for the completion of a building, probably a depot, on the right. The subject is appropriate, for it commemorates an event of local history.

Richard Haines was well prepared, in knowledge both of subject and craft, to paint the scene entitled "Iowa Farming" for the lobby of the post office at Cresco. He was born in Iowa where he lived on a farm and worked in the harvest fields. He studied at the Minneapolis School of Art, under John Norton, and at Fontainebleau in France. In a letter to the writer he describes his Cresco mural as follows:

> The subject-matter of this mural depicts a farm family preparing for the noon meal on any day in the height of their farm season — the Harvest Time. The secondary interest is the arrival of the mail by R. F. D. which is the tie-up for the mural's place in this Post Office. The town of Cresco, Ia. where this painting has been placed is a small village surrounded by quite prosperous farm lands. For that reason I purposely idealized or glorified the position of the farmer in the painting by a cleanness of treatment and a bountiful color scheme, strong colors and warm. The general color scheme is yellow ochre and greens with pinkish earth and blues and reds for costumes. The more or less geometrical arrangement of details, buildings, fields and the like tend to give a well ordered atmosphere to the farm and surroundings.
>
> The painting is done in oil on canvas and fixed to the wall with white lead and varnish. I lived on a farm the first 20 years of my

life so naturally the preparation and preliminary sketches on this job were quite easy, most of it from memory. I used posed figures for preliminary drawings of the costumes and developed these drawings to fit my composition.

Other decorations by Mr. Haines are two murals in West High School, Denver, Colorado, seven panels in the South High School, Minneapolis, one for a high school in Sebeka, Minnesota, a government mural in the post office at Wichita, Kansas, and a mural in the post office at Hastings, Minnesota.

Lowell Houser was given at first a space similar to that of Boyd's to decorate, above and on either side of a doorway, but since the postmaster refused to remove the bulletin boards on either side of the door, it has been necessary for the artist to revise his compositions. The new design he describes in a letter to the writer as follows:

> It was an awkward set back for me, for the all-over wall design was complete, and had been approved by the Washington office before the local postmaster decided that the boards could not be moved. And it was necessary for me to make a new design of about half of the original height and of the same length. This panel we now think will be placed over the boards.
>
> In the new design I tried to keep to the same subject. The arrangement and proportions, of course, are different. . . . The central panel appears over the door. It is a formal design made up of parts of corn, the kernel, roots, stalk and ear. On either side are corn fields. The one on the left or Maya side is green, the one on the right or Iowa side is ripe. On the left is a Maya Indian cultivating the ground with a stick. On the right is a modern farmer husking. Continuing out each way the same subject is repeated in both sides, on the left in a Maya way, on the right in a modern way. Over the Indian is the rain god carrying a lighting snake and behind him the Maya sun god in a sun disk. . . .
>
> A Maya temple is on the left and some Ames buildings on the right. In the left foreground is the Maya corn god holding the corn hieroglyph in his hand. He is somewhat entangled with vines and tree roots which are meant to suggest a jungle background.

On the right is a microscope as a symbol of botanical research, and as a back drop, some ticker tape with grain quotations.

As to color, the scheme is mostly light browns and gray. It picks up from the floor, woodwork and marble of the room. The color is not particularly real or naturalistic. And it is not symmetrical in arrangement. The sun on one side is red, on the other a white-yellow, etc. Besides browns and grays there are yellows, warm greens and reds.

In style it is somewhat Mayan, I suppose. I lived in Mexico a number of years and two of them I spent a Chichen-Itza, Yucatan, where it was my job to help copy the sculpture and frescoes in the "Temple of the Warriors". I was forced to study the Maya style rather carefully and came to admire it very much. Since then all my work has looked a little Mayan whether I wanted it to or not. I suspect Jean Charlot has been even more of an influence on my work than I realize. I think he is one of the best painters today. And one painter is sure to use much of the sort of thing he admires in another.

Mr. Houser was born at Ames and studied at the Art Institute, Chicago. After his return from Mexico he taught in the Students Work Shop in Des Moines and he is now teaching in the Iowa State College at Ames.

Of the group who have received government commissions there remains to be considered Robert Tabor, a native of Independence and the winner in the competition for a mural in the post office of his home town. He is thoroughly an Iowa product, having received his art education at Cedar Rapids. His "Postman in Storm" is realistic, rendering mood in nature and its effect upon human beings. Though the postman is well placed in the composition, naturalism, not design, is the dominant motive. As a whole it suggests a close-up snapshot in which the principal object is shown in detail and the background seen impressionistically.

Mr. Tabor has also painted a mural in the Randolph Hotel in Des Moines which he describes in these words: "This piece was painted in 1935 in oil on wood; size about

6 ft. by 2½ ft.; subject, the old covered wagon trains of the late 60's. A palette of burnt sienna, yellow ochre and cobalt blue was used, the warm colors predominating. The subject was treated in a conservative manner and conforms to the architecture of the room with its pioneer type of furnishings. The setting is a recessed panel with concealed top lighting".

GLADYS E. HAMLIN

SIOUX FALLS SOUTH DAKOTA