

Illustration



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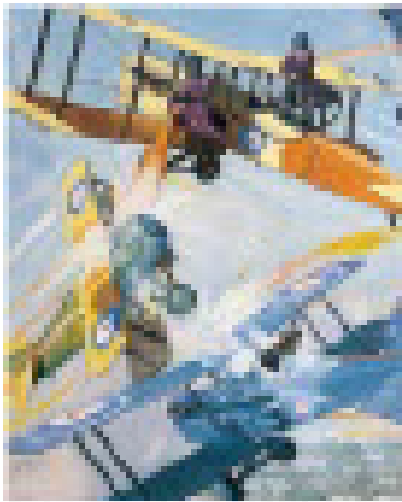
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Cover illustration by
Frederick Blakeslee
(1898–1973)

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Illustration

VOLUME SIX, ISSUE NUMBER TWENTY-TWO — SPRING 2025

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From the Editor...

In this issue, my good friend and regular contributor David Saunders returns with one of his best features yet—an in-depth look at the life and art of Frederick Blakeslee, one of the giants in the vintage pulp genre. While his many hundreds of covers have been admired by pulp fans for generations, very little has been known about the man himself. Thanks to David's extensive feature, we now have new light on the artist, and our story about some magnificent and rare examples of his original cover artwork.

Author Abu Schererba teams up with previous contributor Barry Huggeman to share some of his memories of the life and work of Morten Roberts, a fantastic magazine artist who whose career was cut tragically short by his premature death at the age of 37. Our story features many examples of his original illustration work.

Our final story in this issue presents a brief history of The Merrill Company Publishers, one of the premier children's book publishers of the 1940s and 50s. The current owner of the company, Jean Woodcock, shares her story of being in the right place and the right time to save the company's warehouses of original paintings and files from destruction. We showcase one of her paintings out of her collection of over 100! Jean is interested in selling her paintings, as well, so if you see something you like be sure you drop her an email! I have a feeling these will be very popular.

In other news, if you are a collector and you aren't sure if this might be your last issue, never fear... renewal notices are mailed separately to all subscribers upon the expiration of your subscription. As always, I thank you for your prompt response and continued support.

If you are aware of any exhibitions or events related to illustration history, no matter how obscure or isolated, please let me know about it. And be sure to let us know that I may share this information with my readers!

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Letters to the Editor:

Dear Mr. Zarnes:

I have received in the mail issues number 10 and 11 of *Illustration*... *Illustration* is the most beautiful magazine I regularly receive, and I wanted to congratulate you on the excellent work you are doing. In this age of instant communication and images, I am happy to see someone still holding onto great paper and high production values. The experience of handling and reading such a printed object cannot be replaced by anything the computer has to offer.

I wanted to thank you for something else, too—the excellent article you ran in your very first issue on James Armit by Fred Schreiner. It brought Armit to my attention, and I began to research his paintings for the covers of the month of *William Faulkner*. I have attempted to demonstrate that Armit's covers influenced the reputation of *Faulkner* in an article to be published in a forthcoming book on *Faulkner* and the visual arts by the University of Tennessee Press. Fred Schreiner was very helpful to me in that project. It will see print sometime in 2008.

I hope *Illustration* thrives for many years to come!

Dr. Thomas Igo
Richard Professor of Literature,
Rutgers-Morris County

Dear *Illustration*:

This is a great magazine! I have all of them. They are becoming a great book on pure illustrations. Thanks for the good work. The print quality is hard and beautiful above the rest. When that box arrives in the mail, I get a thrill! I hope you go to six issues a year!

Francis Lee
Birmingham, AL

Dear Friends:

A big THANKS for your group's reply to my recent letter in which I stated I hadn't received issues 10 and 11. They came in Monday and when I opened the package I was transfixed by what I saw: the *Loomis* cover on issue 10! It literally took my breath away! What a knockout piece of painting, and so beautifully presented...

I've long been a *Loomis* fan, since *Five With A Head* drew me into the story of his life and career—and the many drawings and paintings included...it was just right. (I also attended the American Academy of Artists, unfortunately twenty years too late to have some under his tutelage.)

I will be renewing my subscription to *Illustration*. I think it's terrific; you guys are doing a great job... Best wishes for continued success!

Steve H.
Melbourne, FL

Dear Dan:

It gives me great pleasure to renew my subscription to your amazing magazine.

For me, there is no better magazine being published today. I can't tell you how excited I get every time a new issue arrives. I hope it is a successful business venture for you, and I hope it will continue for many years to come!

Jim B.

Danah:

I just received issues #18 and #21 today, and while I haven't had a chance to read the articles, I wanted to congratulate you on the high quality of *Illustration*. I started receiving the magazine at issue #13, and although you had quite a few back issues available at that time I chose not to purchase them, thinking I would just pick them up cheaply on ebay over time. With issue #5 selling for \$10.00 on 2/18, issue #7 selling for \$40.00 on 2/19, issue #2 selling for \$46.00 on 11/11, and issue #1 selling for \$57.00 on 12/5, I guess I was wrong! The high price for back issues is definitely a testament to the quality and desirability of the magazine, and shows that it's a "keeper." Again, keep up the good work! 🍀

Jim B.

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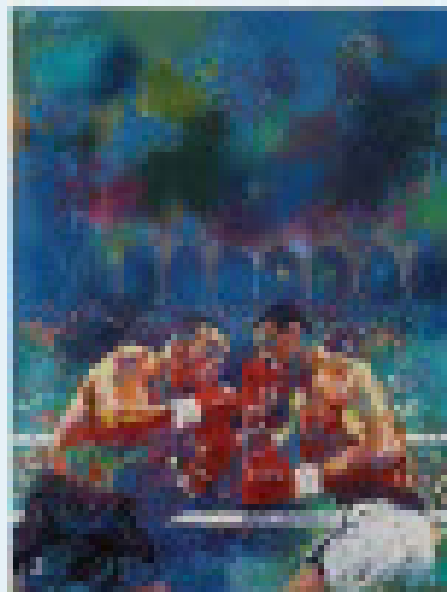
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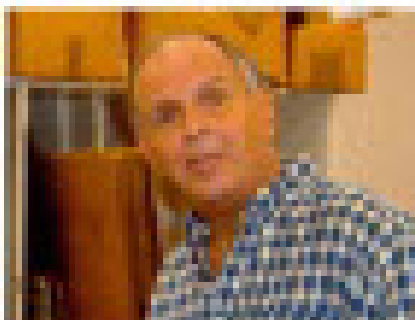
IN MEMORIAM

CHARLES G. MARTIGNETTE, JR.

September 6, 1950 — February 3, 2008

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of my dear friend, mentor, and supporter Charles G. Martignette, Jr.

Over the past few years I have had the pleasure of spending many hours talking on the phone with Charles. Though we never met in the flesh, we became close friends. He would regale me with endless stories of his life, and I would sit in rapt attention absorbing it all. He was a brilliant and funny man, a gifted storyteller, and a compulsive collector. He had a



Charles G. Martignette, Jr., 1998

huge heart, as his close friends will tell you. I've never known a more entertaining character in my entire life. He was a lover with illustration art, and he was a tremendous supporter of his magazine and myself. As I write this I'm still in a state of shock, and I can't really believe that someone so much larger than life could be gone from this world so soon.

For those who may not know, Charles was the author of several best-selling books—*The Great American Pin-Up*, *Old Hysteria—All His Colossal American Pin-Ups*, and *Pin-Up—The Edward Hopper Collection*. He was a self-made man and a pioneer in the field of collecting American illustration. His mentor was Will Reed, and for many years Charles was a steady customer of the Illustration House. From the moment he discovered and purchased his first painting in the late 1970s, he was hooked. Over the years he accumulated many thousands of original works. I'm not sure if Charles owned the collection or if the collection owned him, but the sheer volume of material was staggering. During the past year Charles was looking to restore order to his chaotic life, and to reap some financial rewards from his lifetime of collecting. As he frequently told me, he was rich in art but cash poor, and he "lived like an animal in ten rooms." I don't know if this colorful depiction was true or not, but as I said, Charles was a character! He invited me down to Florida many times, and I regret to say I never made the journey.

Charles always thought I should devote an entire issue to the story of his life (his age was legendary) so it is heart-breaking for me to attempt to paraphrase his accomplishments in so few words here.

Various Charles private collections have been exhibited by The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History and the National Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, The High Museum, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Carnegie Institute Museum of Art, The Henry Ford Museum, The Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, the Oakland Museum, The Boston Museum

of Science, The Museum of American Illustration at the Society of Illustrators, and many more.

Between 1988 and 1998, Charles was a regular contributor to *PinUp*. The magazine published an annual series of articles called "Prominent Period Pieces," which featured works from his collection of antique erotica.

Over the last 25 years, Charles was interviewed and quoted by the *New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and scores of newspaper articles have been published including prominent feature stories in *The Boston Globe*, *The Miami Herald*, *The Denver Herald*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Fort Lauderdale News*, *The Arizona Republic*, *The Des Moines*, *The Albany City Press*, and periodicals such as *Force Majeure*, *Boston Magazine*, *Miami Magazine*, *Milwaukee Magazine*, *Pittsburgh Magazine*, *Scranton Magazine*, *Topic Magazine*, *The Boston Sunday-Globe Magazine*, and dozens more.

At present time I have no idea of what will become of "The World's Largest Collection of American Illustration Art." Charles leaves behind warehouses and storage units full of material, the accumulation of a lifetime of compulsive collecting. I am not sure who will be heir to this fortune, or if portions of the collection will begin appearing on the market any time soon. It breaks my heart to think of the volume of art Charles held his art dear, and as anyone who has seen his price lists would know, he wasn't particularly interested in selling anything. Even if you were a "qualified buyer" (whatever the hell that means!)

Charles, whatever you are, I love you buddy. 🍀

— David Greene



© Coyne, New York City, 1934. Illustration 10

IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT GEORGE HARRIS

September 9, 1911 – December 21, 2007

Robert George Harris, nationally known American illustrator and portrait painter, passed away peacefully on December 21, 2007.

He was born Sept. 9, 1911 in Kansas City, Missouri.

While still attending high school, he was preparing for a career in Art by attending night and summer school at the Kansas City Art Institute—studying illustration under the noted Alexis Cowan. He also studied at the Grand Central Art School in New York, under illustrator Harry Davis, and at the Art Students League under famous artist George Bridgman.

He set up his own art studio in New Rochelle, New York, in 1933. Artistic success soon followed, with his colorful paintings of Western story scenes for the pulp magazines flourishing at the time.

In 1931, he married Marjorie Elmore King, also a student at the Kansas City Art Institute. With her help and encouragement, painting story illustrations for the leading women's magazines began in 1939 and continued for the next thirty years. His art was seen on a regular basis in the *Kentucky Racing Post*, *McCall's*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Fashion*, *Competition*, and *Ladies Home Journal*. These were interspersed with illustrations for national advertising accounts—*Coca Cola*, *Carnegie Books*, and many more.

In 1958, he moved his family to Scottsdale, Arizona, and continued in the field of illustration until 1961. At that time he began also painting portraits. He was honored in 1962 with a one-man show of portraits at the Phoenix Art Museum.

In 1976 a new home and studio was built in Caveiro, Arizona, where he continued in portraiture until his retirement in 1988. His oil portraits hang in the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., and in many private collections in the U.S.

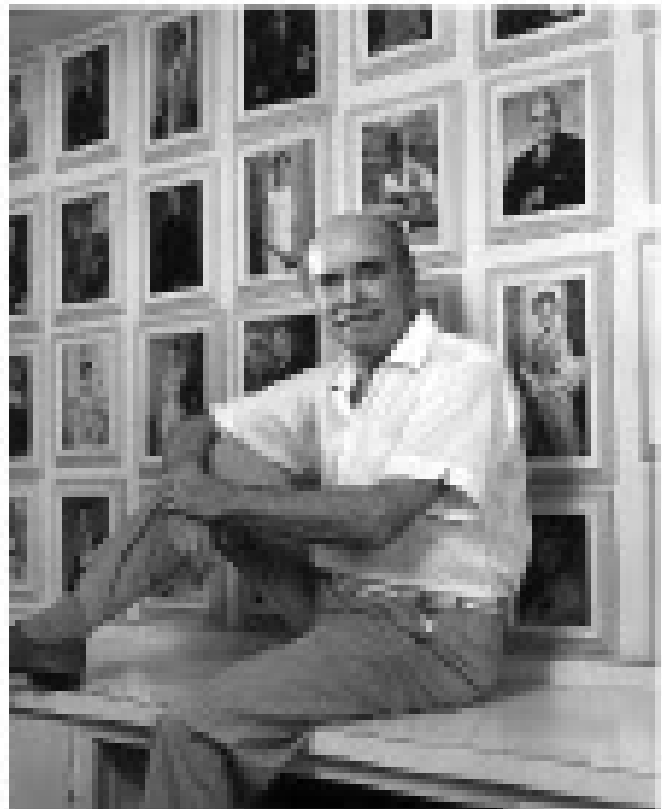
Bob is a lifetime member of the Society of Illustrators. He is listed in *Who's Who in American Art*, *Who's Who in the*

West, *Who's Who in Arizona*, *The Illustrator in America 1900 to 1960* and *The Illustrators in America 1900-1960*.

His hobbies were flying, boat racing, and classic cars. He is survived and well beloved by his children, (son) Craig and Jane Harris, and (daughter) Maria and Terry Sewell, his grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Donations may be made to Hospice of the Valley. ♦

PHOTO: HARRIS WAS SEATED IN HIS STUDIO IN FLZ.

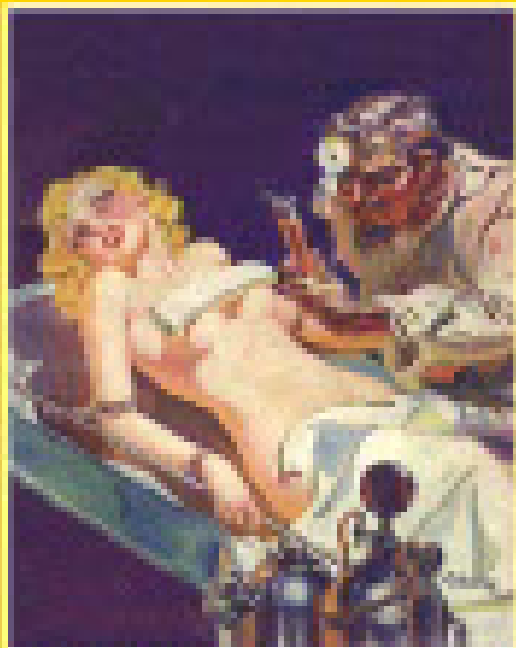




Robert R. Hecht, original illustration for *Compulsion*, from *1944-1945*, 1944

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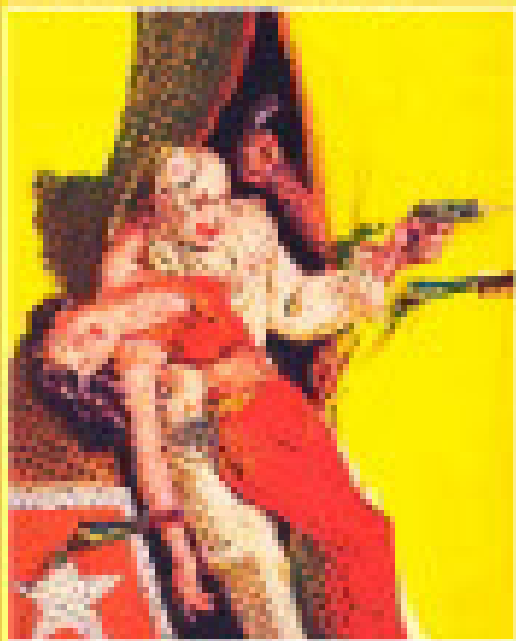
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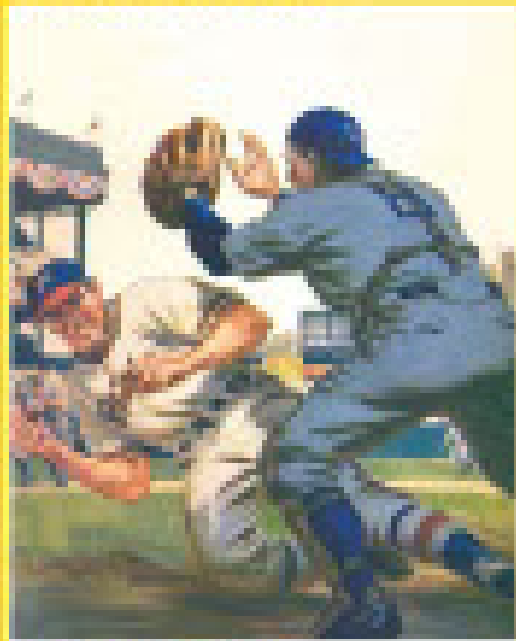
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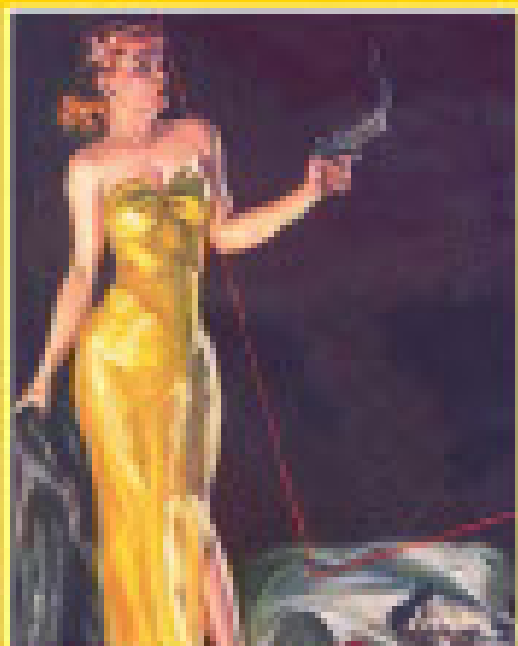
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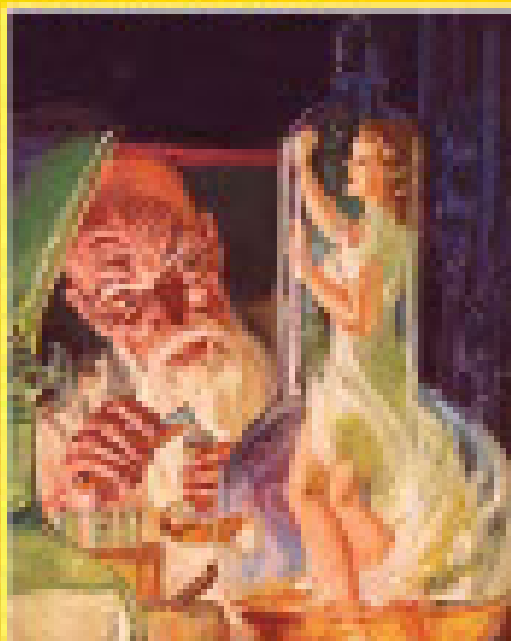
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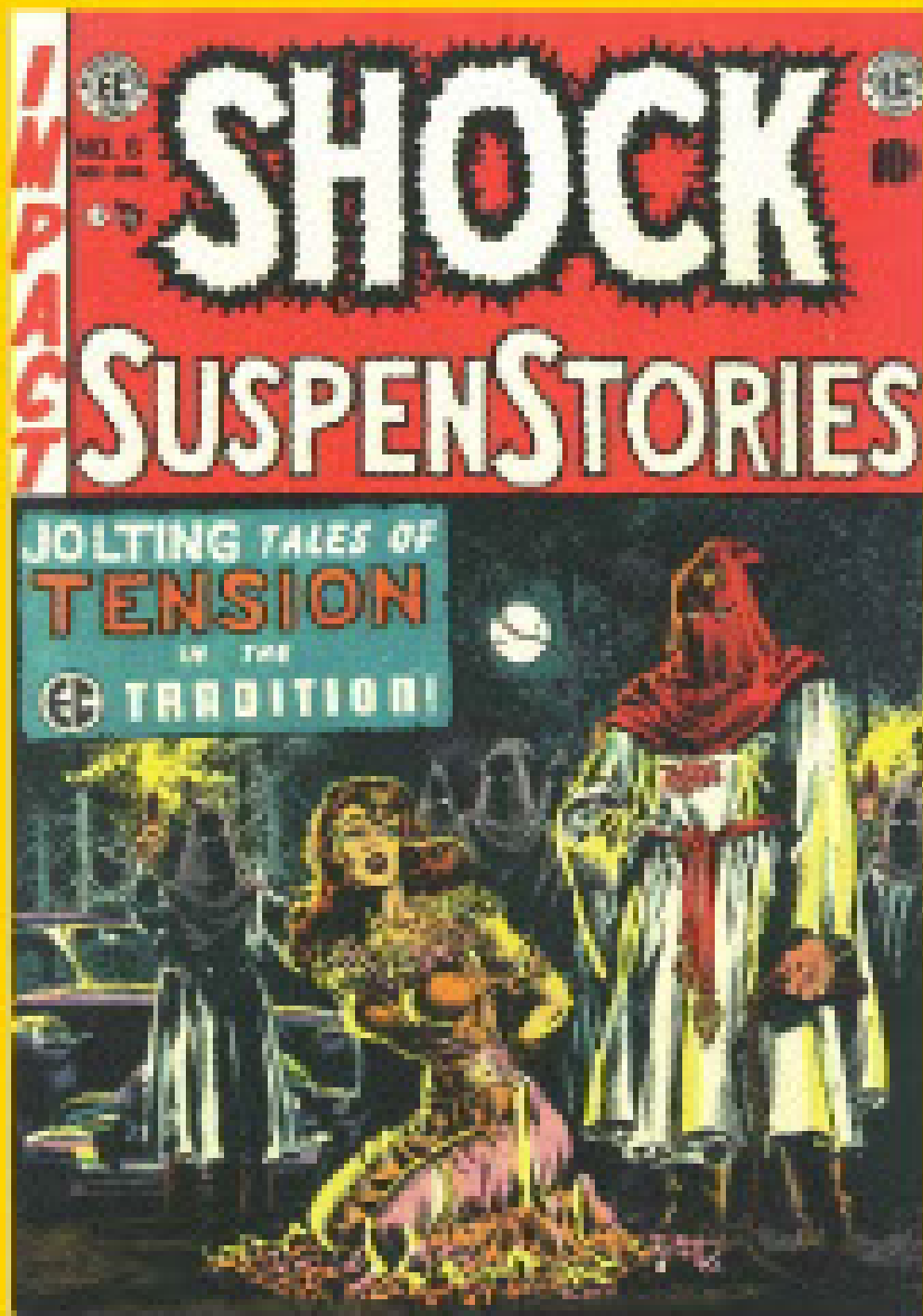
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Frederick Blakeslee, c. 1881.
Photocourtesy of Fred Blakeslee

FREDERICK BLAKESLEE

(1898–1973)

by David Saunders

Searing through fish-spattered clouds to protect their angry tickler bombs, two warlike Japanese ward off a vibrant ring of Pokkers high above a grand industrial vista of abuzzing factory rail yard. One flaming Albansoo becomes a black streak of smoke, adding its own fatal breath to the hell below, where anti-like people dash to anti-aircraft batteries of Bee in harness from the convective spectacle, whose detailed rendering-deserve through inspection—especially the lower-right corner, where the artist has signed his name in black letters above a waring line, ‘FREDERICK BLAKESLEE.’

Frederick Stanley Blakeslee was born in Buffalo on December 4, 1898. His parents were Bertha and Clifford (Harvey) Stanley Blakeslee. Harvey was descended from early English settlers and Bertha was a daughter of an English immigrant. They were married in 1897, when the groom was 21 and the bride was 18, in Trinity Episcopal Church. The Anglican tradition of the Episcopalian faith played a central role in the Blakeslee family.

Buffalo is located in the northwest corner of New York State, on the Niagara River between Lake Erie and Ontario just below Niagara Falls. By the turn of the century, Buffalo was an industrial center that dominated the trade routes between Chicago and New York City. The 1904 Pan-American Exposition was held in Buffalo, and the city's phenomenal prosperity was reflected in the fair's central edifice, the Fountain of Abundance—a neo-classical ring of affaring river nymphs, cradling ancient amphoras in their white marble bosoms and pouring forth a cascade of symbolic bounty. The fair became headline news around the world when President William McKinley, while greeting the public at the Temple of Music, was assassinated by a conspiratorial death from an anarchist. To quell national hysteria following his death, Vice President Theodore Roosevelt immediately took the seat of office in Buffalo and became the 26th, and the youngest, U.S. president at age 42.

Buffalo's wealth came from the power of the railroad and the engineering marvel of the Erie Canal, which extended international shipping 200 miles into America's heartland. The canal began in Buffalo and carries ships eastward to connect with the Hudson River near Albany, and then south to New York. It was one of the 19th century's most ambitious construction projects, and was the world's largest man-made canal. The third improved artery, called the St. Regis Canal, was begun in 1900, and is still in use today. Buffalo was also a massive rail center with over thirty different lines moving rail passengers and freight throughout the country.

Three forces of commerce combined to make Buffalo a dynamic factory town of historic proportions at the time of Fred Blakeslee's childhood. The visual impact of these massive industries left a significant impression on his creative imagination. This was the era of Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, and the Wright brothers. In keeping with the times, Fred's father, who was a skilled factory machanic, invented a tabulator mechanism for typewriting machines and submitted his design to the U.S. Patent Office in 1894. It was approved and produced by the Janis Typewriter Company and paid royalties, which allowed the family to move to a more home where Fred's sister Helen was born in 1900.

One of the greatest achievements of Buffalo history was Glenn Hammond Curtiss (1878–1930). He was America's top designer and manufacturer of high performance motorcycles, and he was also an enterprising genius on the scale of Ford, Hoover, and Bell. He worked with Alexander Graham Bell and the Wright brothers to remold his motorcycle engine into a lightweight aircraft motor. By 1909 Curtiss was setting new air speed records with a plane of his own design. Louis Blériot was rated as the greatest pilot in Europe, but Glenn Curtiss was rated number two. In 1910 he flew from Albany to New York City to win a \$1,000 prize from Joseph Pulitzer amid cheering acclaim from newspaper nationwide.



The Wright Air School, Buffalo, circa 1910

Curiss was issued the first pilot's license in U.S. history among his many accomplishments recorded in the Aviation Hall of Fame. In 1911 Curiss started a flying school. In June of that same year, during the Buffalo aviation Meet, one of his first graduates made a sensational short flight in a Curiss plane over Niagara Falls. Twenty thousand spectators gathered along the shoreline in Downing Park, which was only a short walk from Fred Hales' home. It was summer vacation, and Fred was twelve years old, when he and every other kid from Buffalo were thrilled to witness the impressive day-to-day test of the world's first crossing of Niagara Falls in an airplane.

Besides trainers and biplanes, Curiss also produced the Triad A-1 airplane, which was purchased by the navies of the U.S., France, Russia, Japan, and Germany. Curiss opened his first Buffalo manufacturing plant in 1915, only three blocks from the Hales' home. One year later, Curiss opened the world's largest airplane factory on a thirty-one acre industrial complex in Buffalo. It employed 1,000 workers. Among those new employees was the seventeen-year-old Fred Hales, who was delighted to be an office boy in the design department where Curiss himself worked at a drafting table. As diplomatic pressure mounted for America to enter the war in Europe, the U.S. Army Air Corps ordered Curiss to develop reliable military aircraft. He produced the JH-4, a four-engine biplane, popularly known as "The Jolly" and the JH-9 airplane version for the navy. Thousands were sold to the militaries of the U.S., Canada and Britain. The Great War officially began for Americans on April 6, 1917. It also began a rapid promotion via for the Curiss Aeroplane Company.

By that time, Fred Hales had been promoted to assistant-draftsman in the Curiss design department. Along with the planes that Curiss produced, the young draftsman was also able to inspect the construction of sample aircraft from Germany, Italy, Britain, and France. The most thrilling aspect of the job was the occasional chance to accompany pilots on test flights, where Fred learned the flying capabilities of each design. The opportunity to work in the poster years with some of the legends of aviation design was a probably formative experience of lifelong inspiration.

To pursue the popular dream of becoming America's next inventive genius, Hales studied drafting, lettering, drawing, and design, in night classes at the Albright Art School. The classes were conducted in a wing of the former Temple of Art Pavilion, which had been built during the Pan-American Exposition to showcase Buffalo's cultural refinement, but in fact, most of the old master paintings on exhibit were an temporary loan from anonymous New York art galleries eager to sell to the nervous-niche aristocrat of Buffalo industry. After the exposition ended, the impressive white-marble pavilion was one of the few structures that remained on the park grounds as a modest enhancement of Buffalo's crucible.

A portion of the new museum building was reserved for the art school, which was named after its generous benefactor, John Joseph Albright. The art teachers included the illustrator Lucas W. Hitchcock, and the portraitist Edward Dalton. They taught Hales color theory, design, and composition. Although he was a good student, his main interest at art school was to improve his drafting skills for a career



The Curiss Airplane Factory (Roh Plant) Buffalo, NY

Photo Courtesy: Curiss (1978-1998)



Original cover illustration for *El Fuzil No. 8* (1933). Photo courtesy of Robert Lauer

in aviation design. New art students were all required to take Introductory Drawing to study the human figure from plaster casts and even make models. Bakerian dutifully fulfilled that requirement in order to qualify for more interesting courses in advanced graphics, but privately he considered the compulsory "Life Class" to be an embarrassing waste of time.

The first day that Frederick Binkley was eligible for the mandatory national draft registration was on September 12, 1918. He reported to his local board for registration and a physical exam. He was recorded as being nineteen years old, medium height, medium build, with brown eyes and black hair. Despite his employment as "draftsman" in the design department of Curtiss Aeroplane Company and the government recognition of the national defense value of the airplane industry, Binkley was accepted for induction in the Army. As this would have it, the war ended just two months later and the young draftsman was never mobilized.

After the war, the mass production of military aircraft slowed as government orders scaled back to peacetime production schedules. Curtiss stockholders voted to transfer the company management to a businessman, and that bred Glenn Curtiss to focus on research and development. He moved his Buffalo design department to a Long Island testing-ground in Jerichoville, New York. Curtiss had made a fortune through his aviation contacts, but other aviation companies were less fortunate. The Wright brothers began to lose money, and Curtiss bought them out to create the Curtiss-Wright Aviation Company. Another company, Sperry Gyroscope of Brooklyn, manufactured precision instruments for ships and aircraft, such as the gyrocompass, gyroaltitude indicator, and bomb-sights.

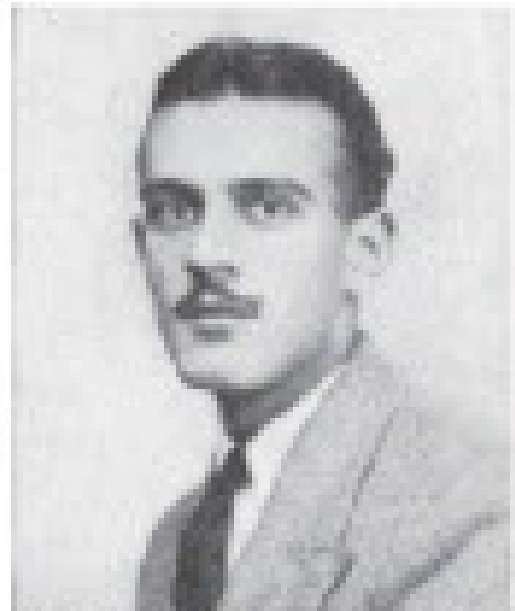
Sperry wanted to develop a pilotless, radio-controlled, aerial torpedo, but he needed Curtiss to supply the working capital, access to government contracts, and a fleet of reliable aircraft for tests, so they created the Curtiss-Sperry Company in 1920, with a design team that happened to include the twenty-one-year-old Frederick Binkley.

Fred was excited to be a part of the project, and he commuted from home to an apartment near the Sperry factory in Brooklyn, where the design team struggled to refine the stability, altitude, and guidance of the explosive-packed torpedoes. Their goal was to achieve detonation within two miles of the target from a sixty-mile-per-hour radio controller, but their greatest challenge turned out to be a successful pilotless launch. A solution came when a member of the design team suggested using a spur of the Long Island Rail Road track as a cable launching system. After two years, and the destruction of all but one prototype torpedo, the Curtiss-Sperry Flying Bomb accomplished the controlled flight of an unmanned, heavier-than-air vehicle, for the first time in history. Due to its high cost and lack of reliability (or practical applications), it never went into mass production.

While working at the Curtiss-Sperry Company, Binkley discovered that several senior draftsmen had received professional certification from the nearby Pratt Institute—a technical school funded by a benevolent oil tycoon to provide training in practical skills with commercial applications, such as architecture, illustration, printing design, drafting, and engineering. Although certification was not a college degree, it did qualify the recipient to work at the highest industrial standards. Most students held full-time jobs and could only supplement their skills by enrolling in night school upon coming work, but by 1924 Binkley was working part-time for Sperry Gyroscope, so he decided to concentrate on earning his certification as a professional draftsman. He signed up for the certificate program, which was administered by the School of Drawing, Painting, and Engraving. The Pratt year-books of 1925 and 1926 list Binkley as the President of the Artimes Club, where he was commonly referred to as "Fish" because of his habit of wearing a pencil case behind his right ear. His other nickname at Pratt was "Old English," presumably because of his Anglican ancestry, his proper diction, and his quipping of broad puns—as well as his use of a popular literary idiom.



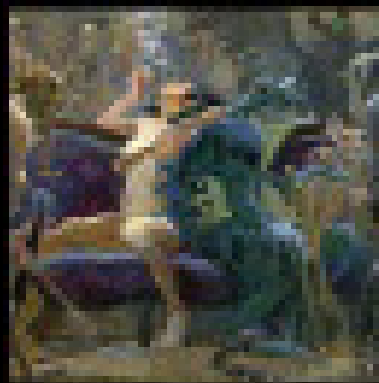
The attempted launch of the Curtiss-Sperry Aerial Torpedo from a vintage car in Jerichoville, NY, 1924



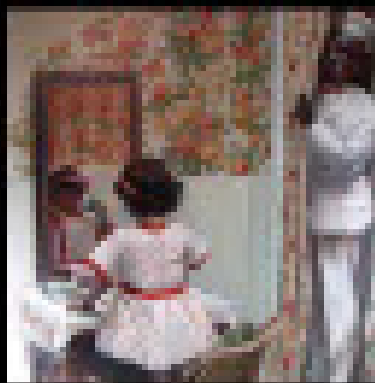
Frederick Binkley, from The Prattian yearbook, 1924. Photo courtesy of Pratt Institute

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Original Artwork from the Golden Age of Illustration



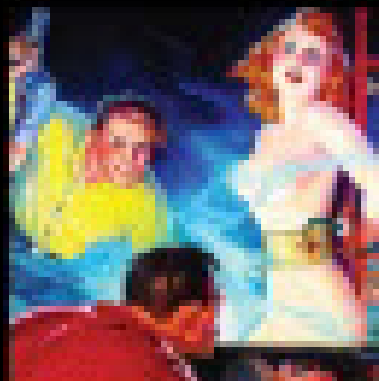
Joseph Kay
The Unborn King, 1918
Eau Claire



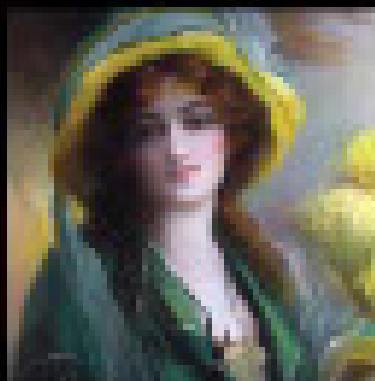
William Todd
Breakfast Ready, 1918
Eau Claire (Washburne) Art



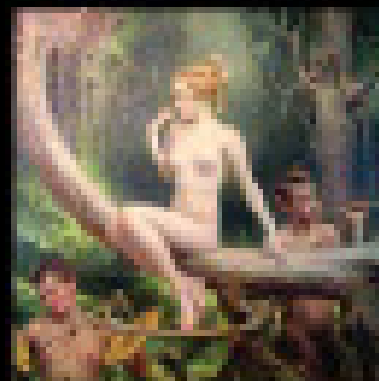
Ed Moore
Parade of Eros, 1918
Eau Claire (Eau Claire) Art



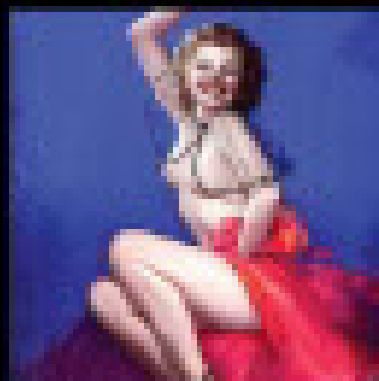
William Scott
Doubt-Forest, 1918
Eau Claire (Eau Claire) Art



James Ross Bryan
Woman in Green, 1918
Eau Claire (Eau Claire) Art



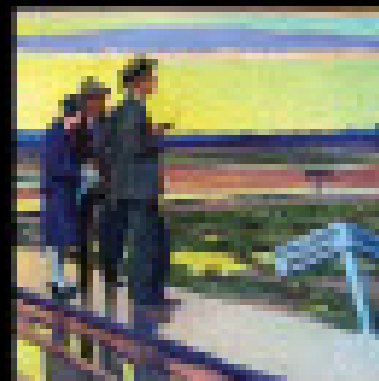
Charles Beaman Chambers
Forest, 1918
Eau Claire



Ed Manning
The Unborn King, 1918
Eau Claire Art



Edward Taylor
The Unborn King, 1918
Eau Claire (Eau Claire) Art



Ed Manning
The Unborn King, 1918
Eau Claire Art

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While a student at Pratt, Bakewell faithfully continued his family tradition of attending lip-synched Sunday services. Saint Mary's Church was a corner street from the school, and there Fred met the priest. Reverend Doctor James Claxton Jones, a distinguished early-five-year-old dandyman, whose austere attire seemed profoundly impressed Bakewell—almost as much as his pretty twenty-year-old daughter, Lorna Conant Jones. Lorna had graduated from Parker College in Brooklyn and was studying Library and Archival Sciences at Pratt in order to qualify for work as a certified librarian. Lorna's parents approved of Fred, as he was soon named to family meals in the church's rectory, where the couple began their formal courtship.

In 1926, Bakewell earned his degree from Pratt to become a professionally certified draftsman, interior, and commercial artist, after crossing paths with several other outstanding students—Walter Martin Baumhofer, Rudolph Isidorick, Eugene M. Strachan, John Fleming Gould, and Arthur Leslie Ross—all of whom remained lifelong friends. He also studied with the charismatic painting teacher, Harold Winfield Scott (1895–1977), whom that time was already a famous freelance illustrator who worked for many publishers, including Street & Smith. H. M. Scott was one of the most impressive men in the history of pulp art. Named after his relative, the national hero of the Mexican American War General Winfield Scott, H. M. Scott also held a commanding influence over his own art student “troop.” One of Scott's many adventures was his service as a flight mechanic for the Lafayette Escadrille, where several pilots, such as Billy Mitchell, were alumni of the Curtis Flying School. Bakewell's training as a draftsman under Curtis impressed Scott, who was impressed for generously helping his pupils to find employment. Scott was instrumental in the fact that two of his former students, Bakewell and Isidorick, were both hired as art teachers on the staff of Pratt Institute. Bakewell taught classes in Lettering and Advanced Design. Scott also encouraged his graduates to find freelance work in the publishing industry by personally introducing them to art directors. By 1927 Bakewell was supplementing his teacher's income with small freelance jobs, doing pen and ink graphic design work for several New York publishers.

At that time, the most important trend in design was the Art Deco movement, so teaching the basics of this style to students was an essential task for a professor of Lettering and Advanced Design. Art Deco was the popular design style of the modern Machine Age, composed of both figures and symmetrical repetitions of angles, horizontals, and zoning lines. Because of its high regard for luxurious streamlined efficiency and speedy aerodynamic mechanics, Art Deco was widely used in the decoration of airports, train stations, and boarding offices.

In 1927, Bakewell got his first big freelance assignment to design a book jacket for Harper & Brothers Publishers of London and New York. *The King of the Crossbow* was the first novel by a London stage actor, Ernest Milton, who later starred as Shakespeare opposite Leslie Howard in film *The Scarlet Empress*, and as Super Cadill in the Hitchcock film

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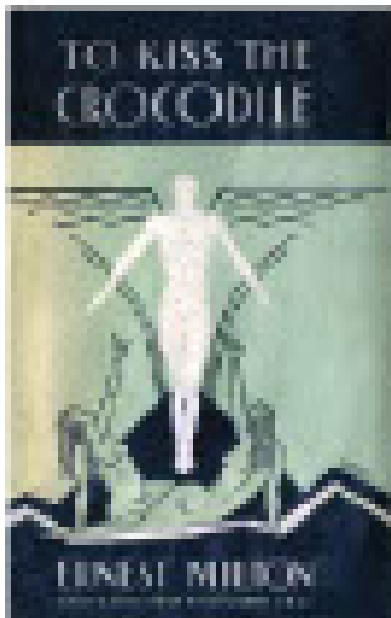
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Book design for *To Kiss the Crocodile*, 1911



Book design for the distribution of *Waters*, 1918

days). This project was exceptional for at least three reasons: 1. It was Blakelee's first cover assignment; 2. it was the first appearance of nude figures in his cover art; 3. It was the first appearance of nude figures in his cover art; 4. it was Blakelee's first artwork to feature the wavy line motif that became his signature trademark. In many ways, this book cover design project was the milestone at the start of Blakelee's art career.

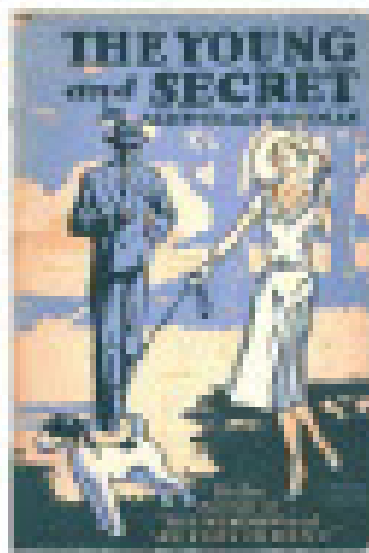
Naturally, the artist wanted to make a grand first impression on his public by illustrating the essence of the story in a captivating way. *To Kiss the Crocodile* is a tragic, humorous tale of an effeminate and immature young man with no goal in life, and his downward spiral of depression, drug addiction, madness, and masochistic suicide. His only redemption is the enduring affection for his ultimate lover in the moments of his frustrated oblivion. Rather than portraying the tragic protagonist in his wretched dissolution, Blakelee created a die-cut Art Deco design that celebrates the resurrection of his

damned spirit. A nude man of pure white skin erect on perfectly symmetrical wings of wavy lines above two exhausted, earth-bound women, who pose like discarded harlot slaves, yearning for the unattainable man. The still position in these three nude bodies provides a rare glimpse of Blakelee's temperate feelings about sex. Even in this one exceptional display of overt nudity, out of respect for propriety, the body's crutch is blank. The wavy lines in his ethereal wings flow horizontally in a weightless manner, in contrast to the heavy downward flow of the woman's unattainable hair. Wavy lines are used in Art Deco to symbolize a primal flowing force, the wind or water. Blakelee uses these symbols to poignantly illustrate the essential conflict of the novel,

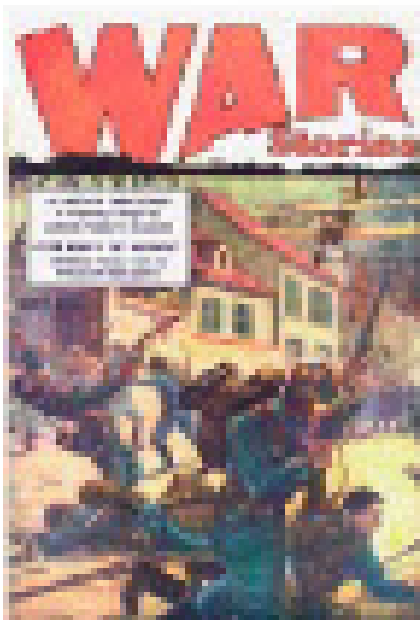
when ignoring the sexual specifics. The literal pictographic message of this book cover is that a sex-free man rises above the jagged earth of lust and yearning and attains miraculous triumphant redemption thanks to the angelic support of wings that are upheld by a divine flowing force. Blakelee's cover features a primal hero, who resembles the crucifixion as well as Icarus (the mythological ancestor of Charles Lindbergh), to mean this sensationally scandalous novel as a story of spiritual redemption for Adam and Eve's original sin.

Most young artists in the era of Joseph Christian Leyendecker struggled to find a recognizable style that could be identified by a distinctive signature. The self-conscious pressure to derive an artistic persona reaches the critical stage when signing that first important publication. Up until this time, Blakelee had always trained to be a practical draftsman, and had never presented himself as a "great artist." But in the process of designing this book cover Blakelee did find something meaningful, which he could identify with

and incorporate into an artistic signature. Notice that the wavy lines within the splitting wings do not include curved like natural feathers. Instead, these wavy lines are Art Deco symbols that represent a flowing force, and, considering their context on the wings of a purified soul ascending towards heaven, that force would seem to be heavenly redemption. A miniature version of that same wavy line also splits "FREDERICK BLAKELEE" in his tiny signature. This compelling derivation suggests that the wavy line in Blakelee's signature is a covert declaration, "I too have been redeemed." The addition of the private statement of such writer. Blakelee's artistic signature may have served some meaningful purpose, because he continued



Book design for *The Young City of Secret*, 1918



War Series, September 14, 1918

to sign his name to the edition on all of his artworks for the rest of his life, while all of his correspondence was signed with a regular cursive signature. The only cursive element in Blakelee's artistic signature is the writing line itself, which upholds an otherwise impersonal group of block letters. Artists were expected to sign their work with clearly recognizable signatures, but a flamboyant signature is the sign of an exhibitionist man. Blakelee was a faithful Christian who preferred to present himself as an unpretentious man. He was marrying a woman's daughter and was well aware that the seventh deadly sin was committed. Perhaps the inclusion of this discreet symbol of both writer Blakelee's artistic signature helped to reconcile the moral dilemma of his conflicted identity as a mask exhibitionist. Whatever purpose it served, the splitting vein was first invented in the process of designing the marriage cover for *The Star the Crucible*, and was forever afterwards used as the trademark signature of Blakelee's professional artistic identity.

FREDERICK BLAKELEE

July 1891 he claimed to have first "surrendered" Fred Blakelee to work for pulp magazines after becoming swamped with more freelance assignments than he could deliver, but whether it was H. M. Hunt or Roberts, the fact remains that Blakelee's pen and ink story illustrations began to appear on the inside pages of pulp adventure magazines, and on September 26, 1918, his name first appeared on a pulp cover paying for their services. One month later, the shocking collapse of the stock market introduced the historic beginning of the Great Depression, and, eventually, the pulp magazine industry's greatest period of prosperity.



Saint Mary's Episcopal Church, Brooklyn, NY, circa 1918

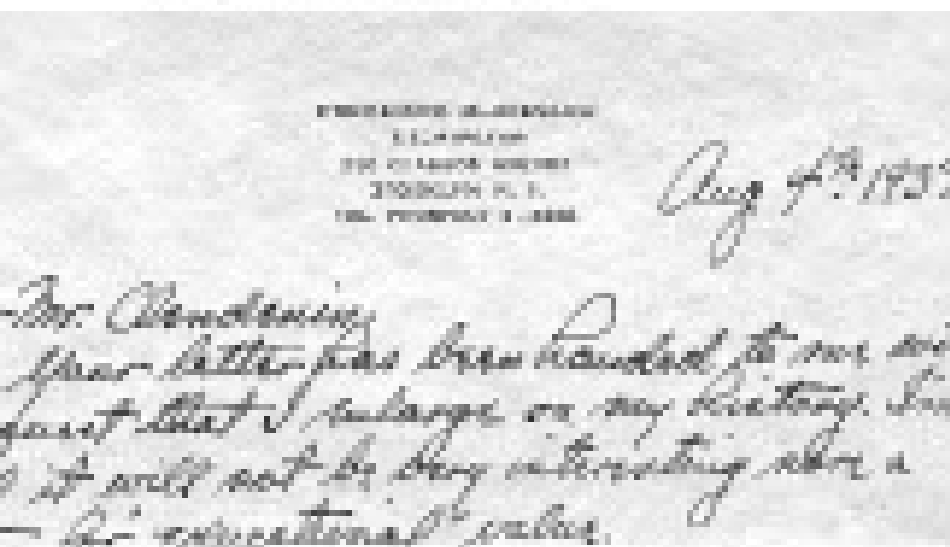
Fred was suddenly making good money from freelance assignments, along with his steady income from teaching at Pratt. His proposed marriage to the Kew-Forest's daughter and she accepted his engagement ring. Lorna Jones had finished her own training at Pratt and was hired to work at the school library, so the happy fiancés were also professional co-workers. Every day the couple met for lunch and dinner at Lorna's home in the rectory of Saint Mary's Church. Lorna was devoted to her parents, who were both prominent community leaders with full schedules of social functions, family weddings, and service as local members of charitable institutions. Mrs. & Rev. Dr. J. Clarence Jones associated with international dignitaries, church officers, bankers, politicians, and philanthropists, such as John Augustus Morgan, Jr., who was actively involved with the Episcopal Church. Cardinal Vanderbilt III allowed them to use his private railroad car on several occasions. Lorna's father had once even traveled to Bermuda on Vanderbilt's private yacht as the ship's captain. The Jones' rectory was a large Victorian house that routinely hosted formal affairs. It was decorated with antique furniture, Persian rugs, and colorful draperies. The fireplace was always aglow on cool or rainy days. The food was delicious and attractively served on fine china with gleaming silver. Both Dr. and Mrs. Jones were cordial hosts who charmed their guests with conversational streams. According to the diary account of one visitor, "Their house was alive with so much warm conversation and humor!" The rectory had a full staff. There was a cook, cleaning woman, upstairs and downstairs maids, and there had been nurses for their three children when they were young.—Lorna, her older brother Frederick, and sister Katherine. They had all been raised in the rectory and looked for nothing. Lorna had life-sized porcelain dolls and even a fancy pony cart.

Unfortunately, Lorna had scarlet fever as a child, which left her with a rheumatic heart condition that chronically weakened her health. After accepting Fred's engagement ring,

their happy marriage was tragically disrupted when Lorna contracted tuberculosis, an often-fatal and extremely contagious disease. Luckily the young lovers could not kiss, hold hands, or even breathe on each other. In the days before the antibiotic streptomycin, the only treatment for TB was years of tedious confinement in a sanatorium where hygienic conditions, warm food, and fresh air helped the body's immune system long enough to destroy the bacteria. But even under the best conditions, this treatment was only partly effective—half of all TB sanatorium patients died within five years. Lorna was sent to upstate New York's Mount St. Agnes, the finest TB sanatorium in America. Fred wrote her love letters and visited on weekend trips by train. The sanatorium even had its own small-gauge railroad that traveled up to the top of the mountain from nearby Saratoga Springs. After two years Lorna was sent back home to the Westlyn's rectory for another year of bed rest, and the rest of years of daily visits with Fred. When the family doctors finally decided Lorna was "cured," she and Fred were immediately married. The father performed the ceremony in St. Mary's Church on June 20, 1938. Fred was thirty-one and Lorna was twenty-five. The couple moved into a small well-furnished apartment on Hamilton Parkway in a fashionable part of Brooklyn. To preserve the domestic sanctity of their new home, Fred decided to have his studio separate from his living space, so he began looking for a business space to rent. Lorna's mother insisted that Fred occupy the vacant third floor of the rectory, which Fred was happy to accept. To establish his new business address, he ordered gilt-lettered stationery, which identified the proprietor as FREDERICK BLAKESLEE—ILLUSTRATOR, 238 CLAYTON AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N.Y. Telephone: PRospect 9-1562, the forwarding America's only (since) illustration to point pulp magazine covers to an Episcopal rectory. Up until this time, Blakeslee had considered himself a technical draftsman, or a design teacher who declined to freelance work, but this new milestone marked the beginning of his professional career as an illustrator. During the Depression, most people learned to change their lives to follow any source of steady income, and the pulps were paying very handsomely.

Fred continued to teach at Pratt, but Lorna never returned to work as a librarian. Nevertheless, she and Fred drove back and forth to the rectory every day in his new Oldsmobile. While he taught across the street or pointed upstairs in his studio, Lorna wrote letters, read books, or rested with her parents' formal guests. Fred and Lorna ate lunch and dinner at the rectory seven days a week. According to their sister-in-law, Mary Irving Jones, who also lived in the rectory with her husband and son,

"Fred was tall and thin and a bundle of energy. His jaws could never break him of the habit of running up and down the long flights of stairs taking two or three steps at a time up to his studio under the roof. She could also never break his habit of saying 'ho!' instead of 'wo!' Fred was devoted to Lorna and thought she was the most beautiful person he had ever seen. He'd often jump from his chair in the dining room and dash over and kiss her, saying how much he adored her. I never thought Lorna was pretty—she looked a bit like her mother, with crooked teeth, and a rather intense look on her face, but she was fairly tall—five feet five I expect, and very slim and graceful. She had style, and she moved beautifully—her evening-wear was stylish, and with her slim figure and tiny waist she always looked stunning. She ate very little and weighed under one hundred pounds. She had long curly legs. Fred would say to anyone around, Lorna has the most beautiful legs I've ever seen—so sexy!" and Mrs. Jones would immediately take charge of the conversation. Lorna wore extremely high heels, and very expensive shoes, one I, I believe. While she wasn't beautiful in my way of thinking, she was very attractive, very artistic. She had *personna*. I suppose you'd call it. She was very sophisticated and had grace. She had a good sense of humor, and was very original. She was a Junior League member, and went to many lunches with girl friends, and always looked stunning, with soft wavy black hair in a cloud around her face—and those large-brimmed hats with fur."



Blakeslee's professional address during the address of the rectory.



Rectory of St. Mary's Church, 238 Clayton Ave., Brooklyn, c. 1932



Digital work/Book cover for *War Birds*, June 1964. Photo courtesy of Robert Lewis



High-speed illustration for *War-Birds* magazine, December 1916-17 or earlier, 30" x 40"





Model Comet with propeller (left), c. 1930s



Shop advertisement during World War II, c. 1940s

In the fall of 1931, Fred and Lolita took a honeymoon voyage to Europe on the White Star ocean liner, the *S.S. Homeric*. They visited families of both Lolita and Fred's maternal grandparents near London. Fred also used the trip to reacquaint himself with old friends from his years in aircraft design, who had since developed aviation careers in England, France, and Germany. Through these professional contacts, Blakelock was able to familiarize himself with innovative design developments in airframes and turbines, where he gathered material for his milestone *History of Aviation* series, sketches, photos, and technical brochures.

During this transitional era of Charles Lindbergh, the market for aviation pulp was widely competitive. Publishers produced forty-eight different titles of pulp aviation magazines. Lindbergh's transatlantic flight was a turning point in the self-image of modern man. Ancient earthy limitations were almost magically conquered by science and dedicated perseverance. News letters in history had civilization focused all nations on celebrating the triumph of one man and his faithful flying machine. Millions of children admired the vibrant aviator and wore homemade versions of his leather jacket, oil-stained goggles and a windproof scarf. Kids were fascinated with the trans-verse hobby of scale model aeroplanes. The hobby model kits were displayed at local hobby stores, or available by mail order in magazine advertisements for a wide range of prices. The beauty of the finished product was a reflection of the model-maker's pride, as they were hand-decorated with carefully embedded details. This popular hobby increased the social importance of knowing the technical and historical accuracy of aircraft. Thanks to Blakelock's intimate familiarity with the processes and principles of aviation design, his renderings of aircraft in dramatic action were a delight to both knowledgeable and novice readers.

A poignant example of that rare fascination with the technical details of aircraft is the artist's following response to his letter from a teenage airplane fan:

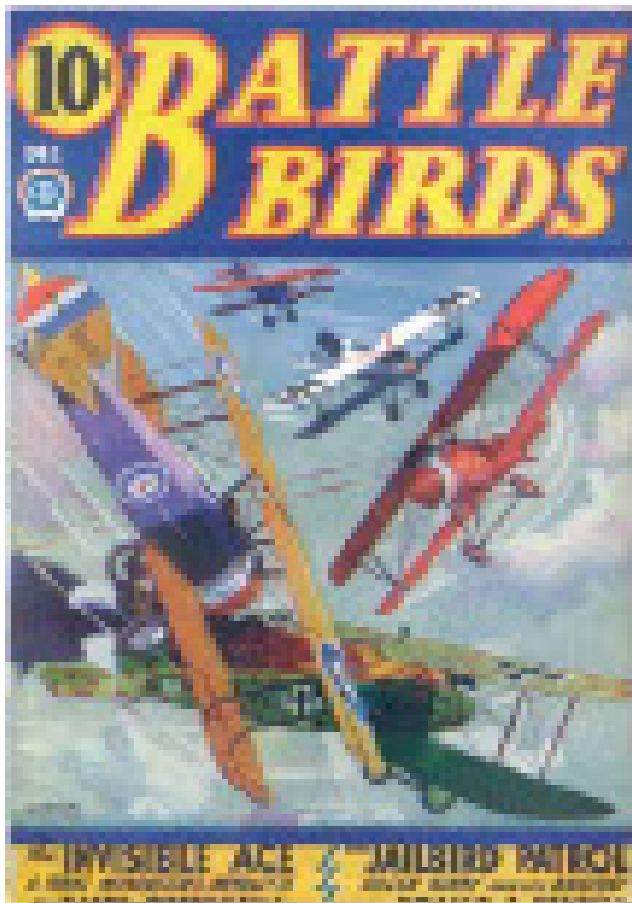
"The cockpit on the transport is a new one on me. I've seen many transports in France but never one with a windguard. I have seen no reason to have them on tractor ships anyway. On some pusher types they were used to protect the propellers from flying mud, such as a Friedrichshafen Bomber where the propellers were directly behind the wheels. I'm inclined to think that the transport with the windguards was a fresh idea by a pilot who was afraid of getting mud in his eye. You'll never see a windguard on any transport I draw."

The wire screen you see on the Friedrichshafen was another means of protecting the propellers in the event of a bank against but has been known to swing his gun around and shoot off his prop. The screen was put on so that couldn't happen.

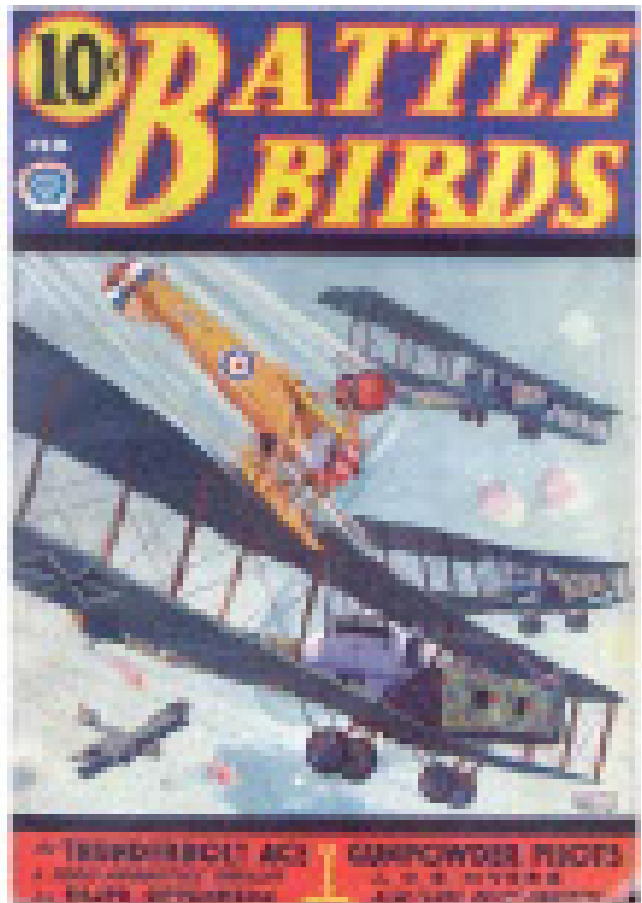
I think if you examine my drawing carefully you will find an even amount of fire coming upper and lower on the tilted fighter. If I drew it otherwise I'm ashamed myself."

The technical authority in his portrayal of aircraft was a hit with enthusiastic readers who prided themselves on their encyclopedic knowledge of airplane details. Blakelock's art skyrocketed to the height of popularity.

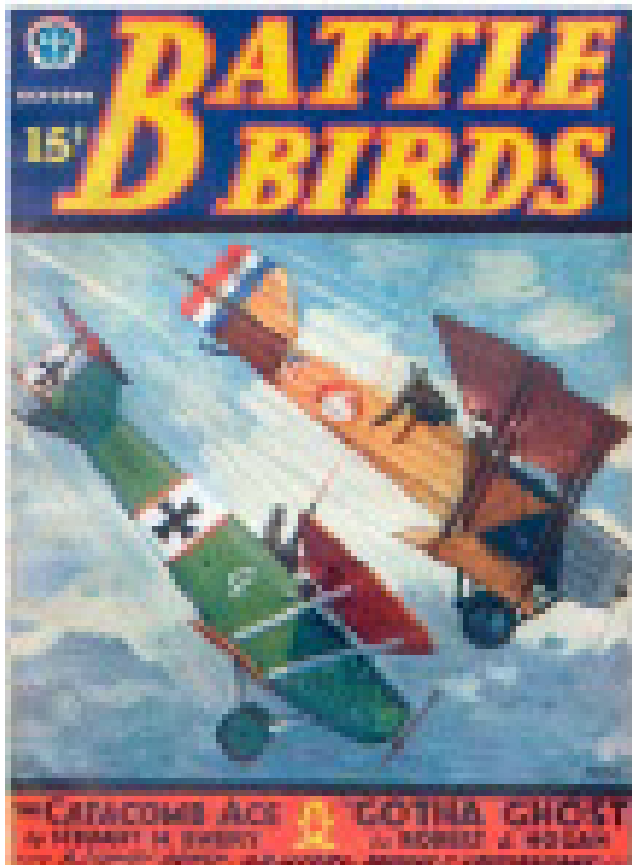
Soon he was creating cover art for most of the aviation pulp titles: *Battle Aces*, *Battle Birds*, *Dare-Devil Aces*, *Fighting Aces*, *Flyer*, *G-I And His Battle Aces*, *Saboteurs Stories*, *War Aces*, and *War Birds*. He was widely considered among the best of his peers—Frank Tinley, Rudolph Berhardt, George Gross, James E. Artley, Charles Darrow, Eugene M. Prandoni, and the brothers August and Alex Schamburg. In addition to his paintings for cover assignments, Blakelock drew over one thousand black-and-white interior story illustrations. He also created novel cartoon features such as *Strut 'Em Down!* and *Dad 'Em Knew*, which he wrote under the alias "Larry Jones." Blakelock privately admitted that the name "Larry Jones"



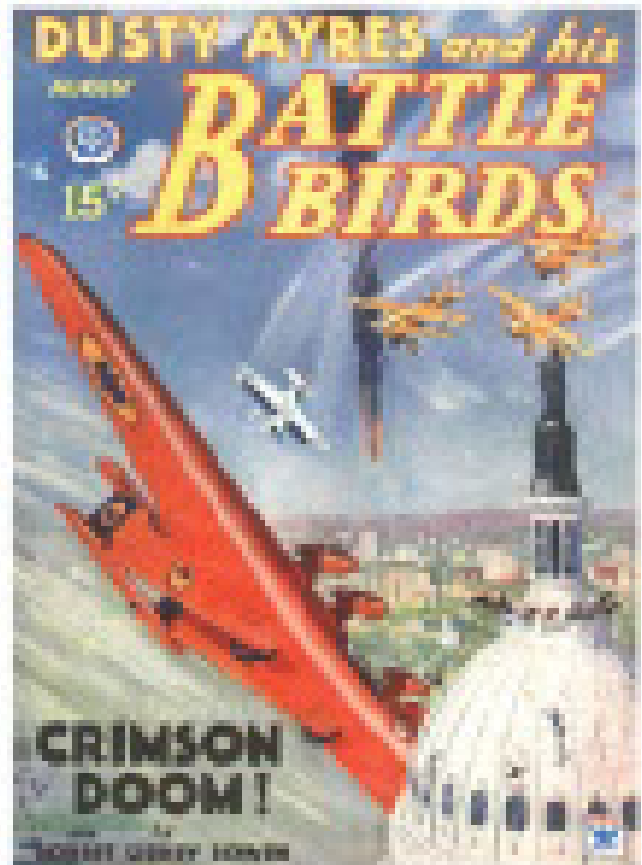
10¢ Battle Birds, November 1944



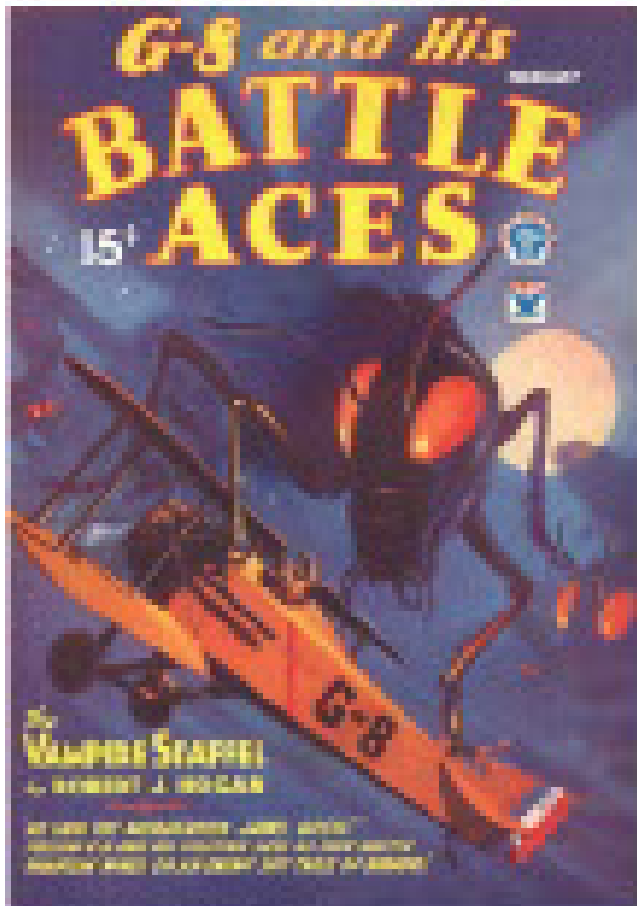
10¢ Battle Birds, February 1945



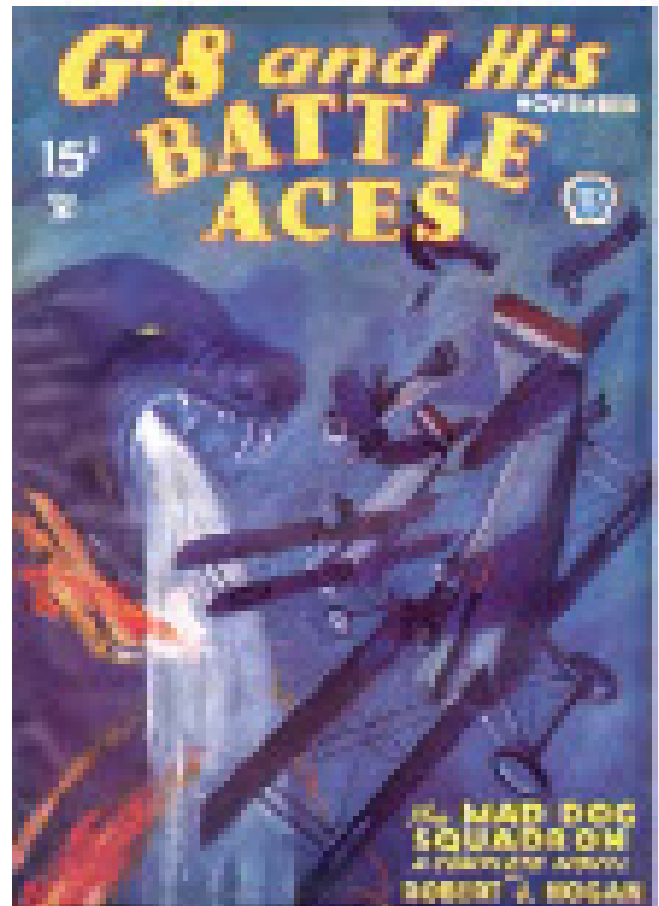
15¢ Battle Birds, August 1944



15¢ Battle Birds, August 1945



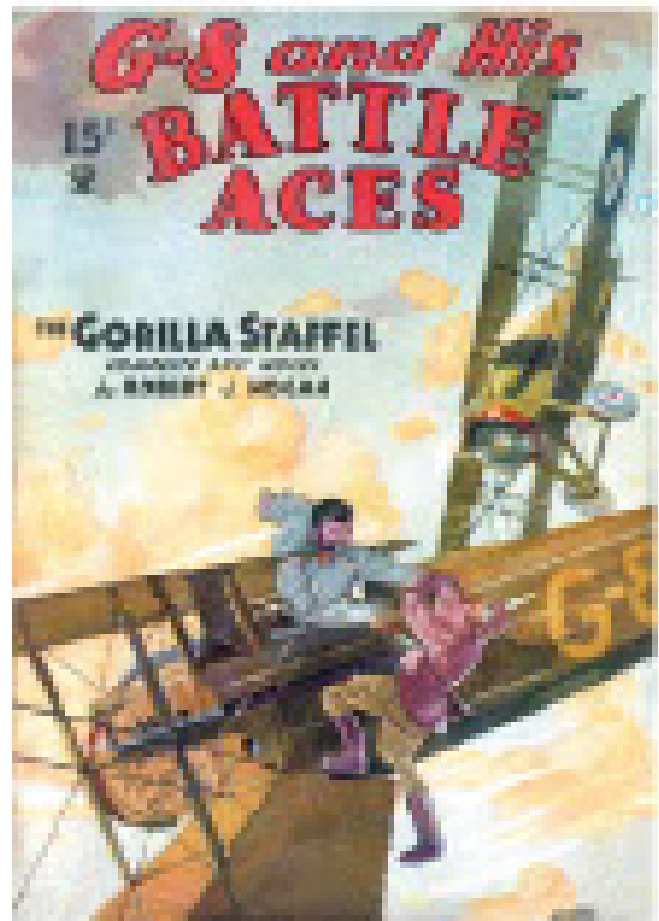
#151 and His Battle Aces, November, 1942



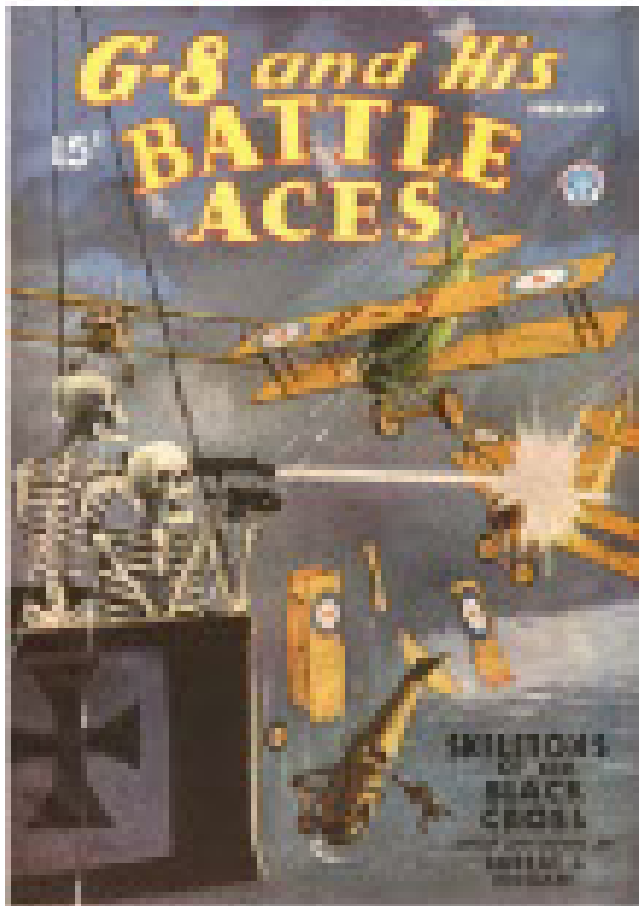
#152 and His Battle Aces, December, 1942



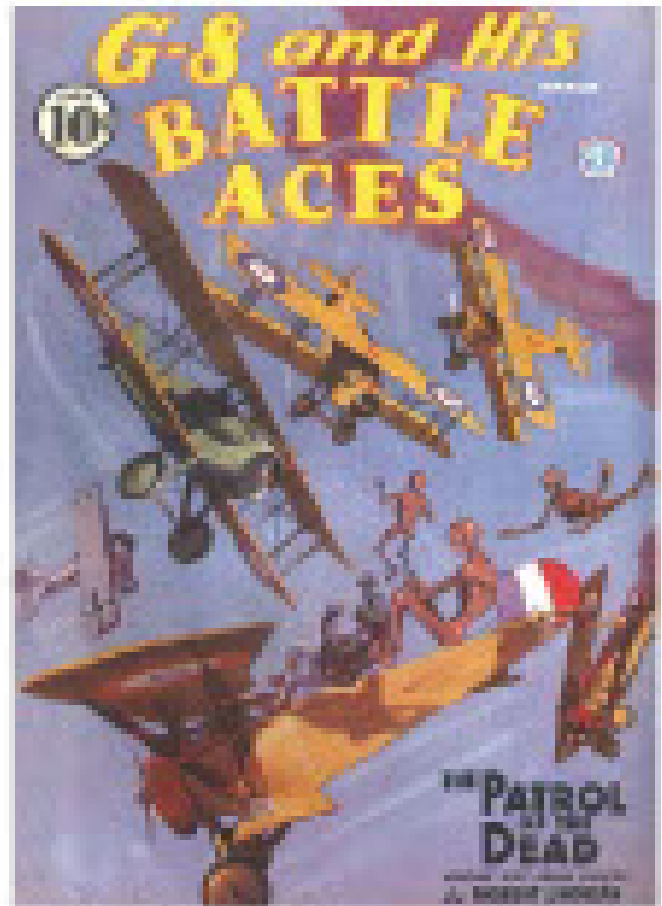
#153 and His Battle Aces, January 1943



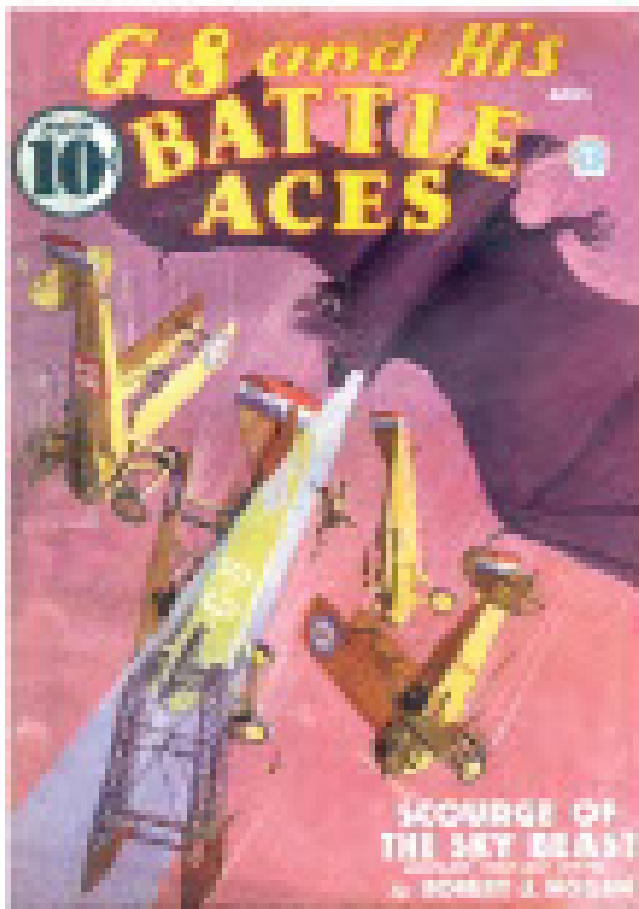
#154 and His Battle Aces, May 1943



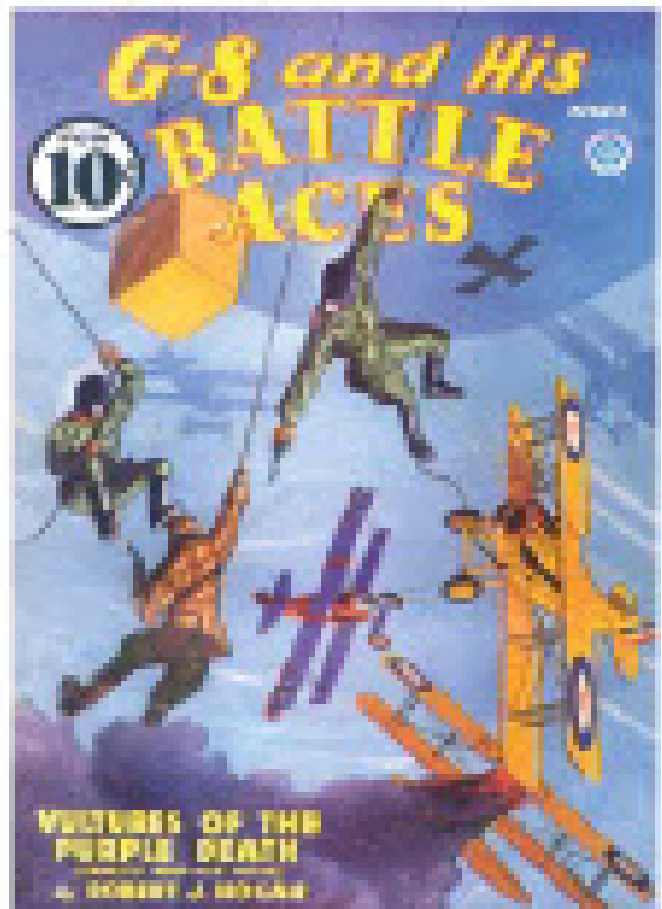
#157 and His Battle Aces, February, 1942



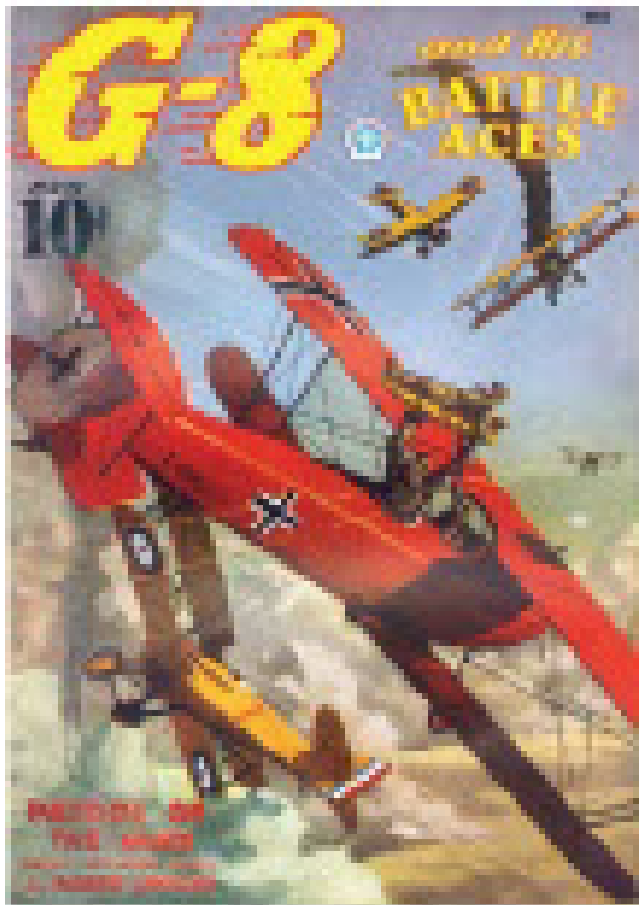
#158 and His Battle Aces, March, 1942



#159 and His Battle Aces, April, 1942



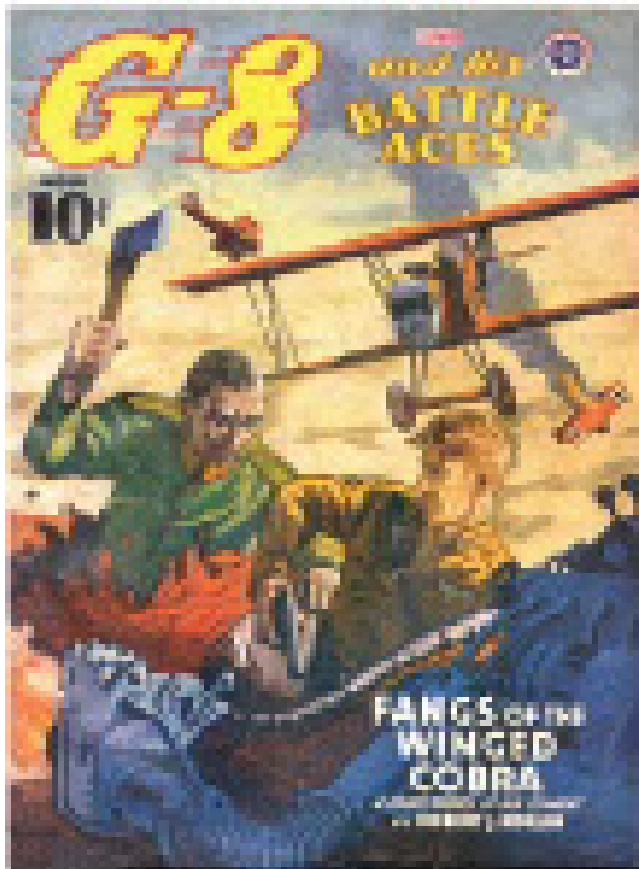
#160 and His Battle Aces, August, 1942



#10 and the Battle Aces, December, 1942



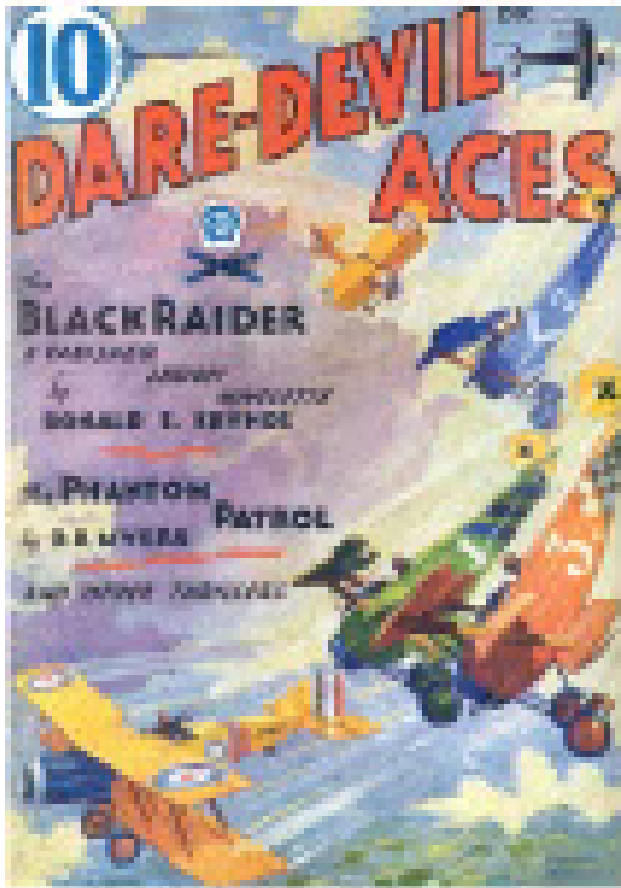
#10 and the Battle Aces, May 1943



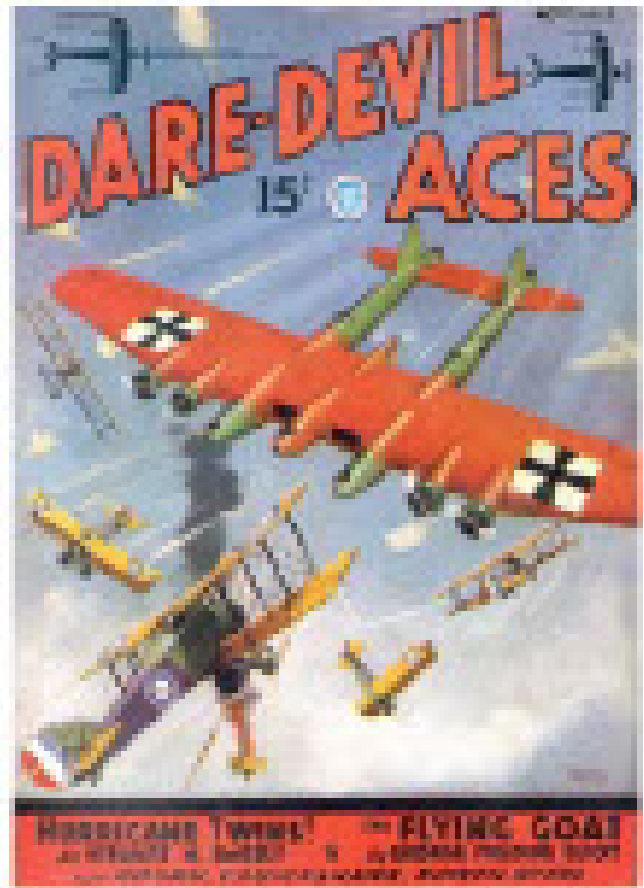
#10 and the Battle Aces, June, 1943



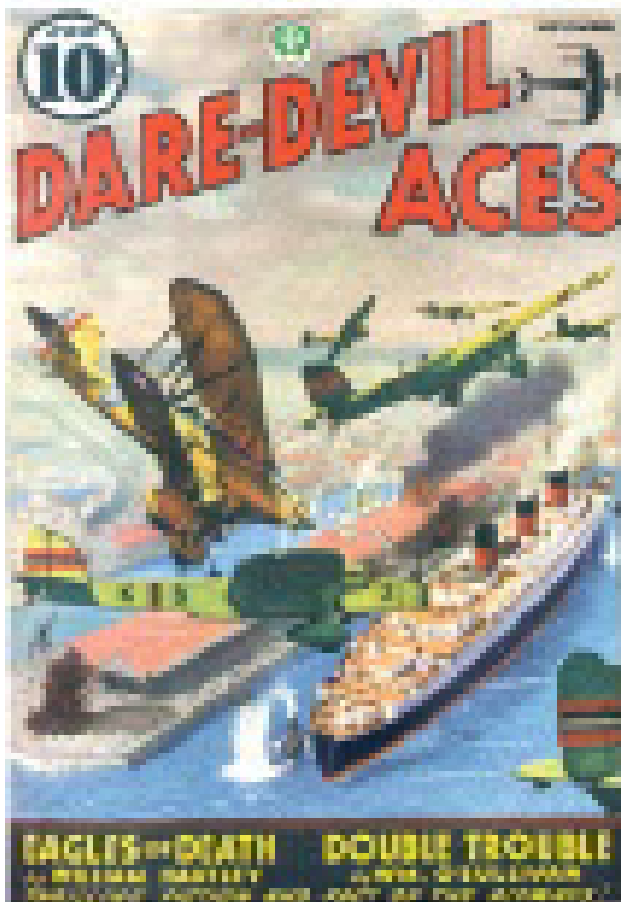
#10 and the Battle Aces, October, 1943



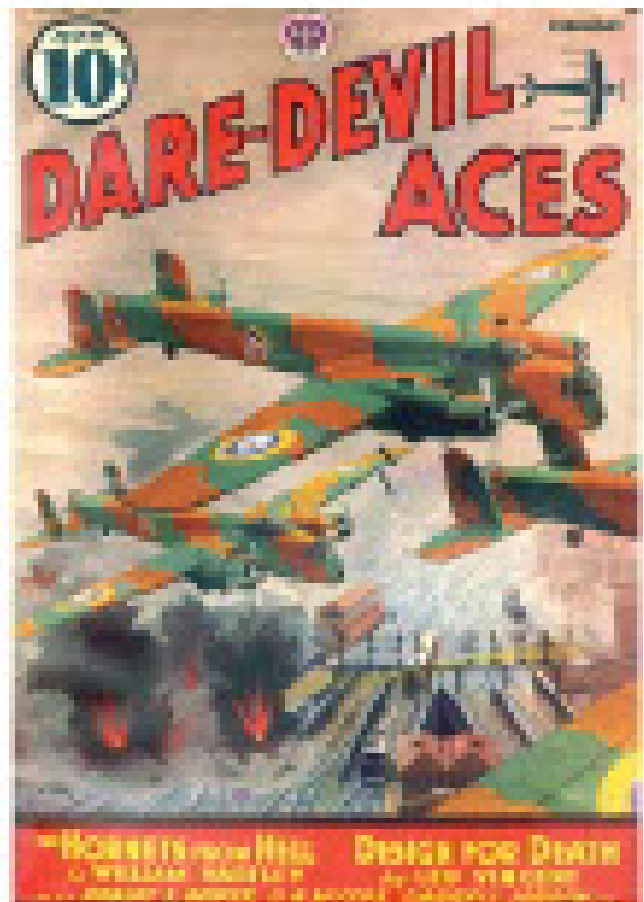
Dare-Devil Aces, December, 1932



Dare-Devil Aces, December, 1932



Dare-Devil Aces, December, 1932



Dare-Devil Aces, February, 1933



Original cover illustration for *Star-Bull News*, September 1919. Photo courtesy of the *Illustration Museum Inc.*



Original cover illustration for *Star-Bull News*, November, 1919. Photo courtesy of the *Illustration Museum Inc.*



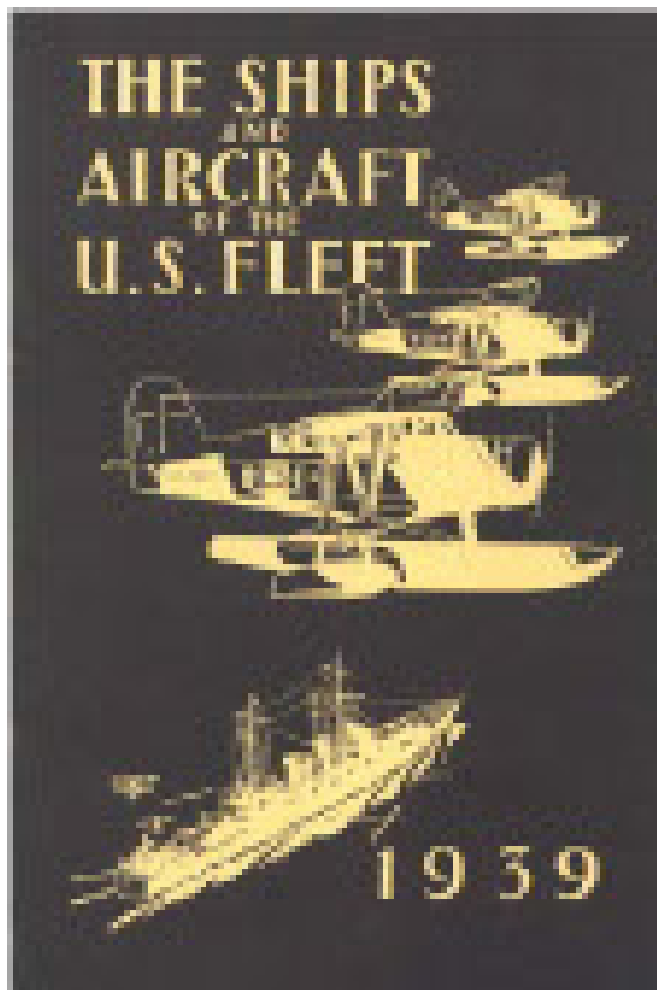
Original cover illustration for *Star-Bull News*, October 1919. Photo courtesy of the *Illustration Museum Inc.*



Original cover illustration for *Star-Bull News*, November 1919. Photo courtesy of the *Illustration Museum Inc.*



Illustration by John Smith, Boston, U.S.A. Photo courtesy of The Illustration House, Inc.



The Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet, 1939

boat" was derived from his father-in-law's name, the Rev. Dr. J. Clarence Jones.

By 1924, the artist had developed his closest business relationship with the pulp publisher Harry Berger at Popular Publications, where the major portion of the artist's subsequent work (notwithstanding Blakelock's art career) had grown. For demanding, low payoffs, and low royalties to permit him to continue teaching at Pratt, he was compelled to stop teaching in order to concentrate on studio production.

Harry Berger was the world's greatest patron of Blakelock's artistic vision, and he relied on him to consistently produce the finest aviation covers for Popular Publications. But Berger was also interested in motivating Fred to produce even greater covers by encouraging him to collaborate with the narrative gifts of his finest aviation authors. This pressure helped to generate many of Blakelock's most sensational paintings, which would have never existed without the challenge of Berger's creative input, but it also made work more stressful. Fred's workload became even more demanding in 1924 when Lorna again came down with symptoms of tuberculosis. He needed peace and quiet, warm foods and fresh air, but instead of prescribing an isolated TB sanatorium, the family doctor sug-

gested the try-on ocean voyage. Fred and Lorna welcomed the suggestion and, in September, they took a second European tour—this time steaming on the *S. S. President of the Red Star Lines*. The artist again visited his aviation contacts in Europe to research new design developments as various air air shows in Paris, London and Berlin, but on this trip the artist was embarrassed to be greeted as a celebrity in his own right. Thanks to worldwide magazine distribution, Frederick M. Blakelock had become a famous name in the world of aviation art.

As the skies across the world darkened with the evil squallions of Fascism, the public's interest in air warfare grew more intense with each new senseless bombardment of a civilian population. From Germany in 1937, to the Japanese bombing of Changai in 1938, the blinding invasion of Poland in 1939, the Lusitania sinking 1915 to 1940, the Japanese bombings of Canton, Hanking, and their infamous attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941—and America's subsequent declaration of war—the entire world was eager for stories about heroic aviator-warriors, and Blakelock was the best man to illustrate those daring exploits.

Although his age disqualified him for military service in World War II, the artist worked at his usual to support the needs of American servicemen. To demonstrate the significance of Blakelock's art to the minds of his public in 1942, consider the following letter from an air cadet written to the editor of *Aviation News*: "If you could possibly spare us a Blakelock, I promise it would occupy a prominent space on our barracks wall. Undoubtedly it would be an incentive to all the men within, and might even be the crucial thing that helps us to win the war by spurring us all on to do our best. How about it?" —Pvt. A.E.F. Georgia. To which Berger responded, "Put it in from the Great Grasshopper to submerge the nation's war effort by being right-faced with the Blakelocks. Keep your eye on the company mail bag, soldier—there's a big beautiful Blakelock winging its way to you!"—The Publishers."

The artist valued his letters from his public, and thoughtfully responded to each one. All artists long for recognition, but freelance illustrators rarely get to meet their audience. Pulp artists painted for cheap, disposable magazines with a narrow-based "shelf-life" of only a few days. The artist's only feedback was from art directors and other illustrators, whose comments were often distorted by personal prejudice, so fan letters were gratefully appreciated. A West Virginia high school student named Kenay Chaudhary wrote such meaningful letters to Blakelock that the two became lifelong correspondents.

In 1943 an Air Force cadet wrote a letter to the publisher asking why Blakelock's black-and-white drawings had become so less heavy and substantial. The observer fan soon received a few drawings as a friendly gift, and a hand-written response from Blakelock himself, explaining, "My previous drawings used a pen and ink process, but war production materials have become very scarce with the war, so I have started using an old-fashioned lithographic process instead for my latest efforts. This is why the new black and white drawings lack the clarity of my earlier illustrations."



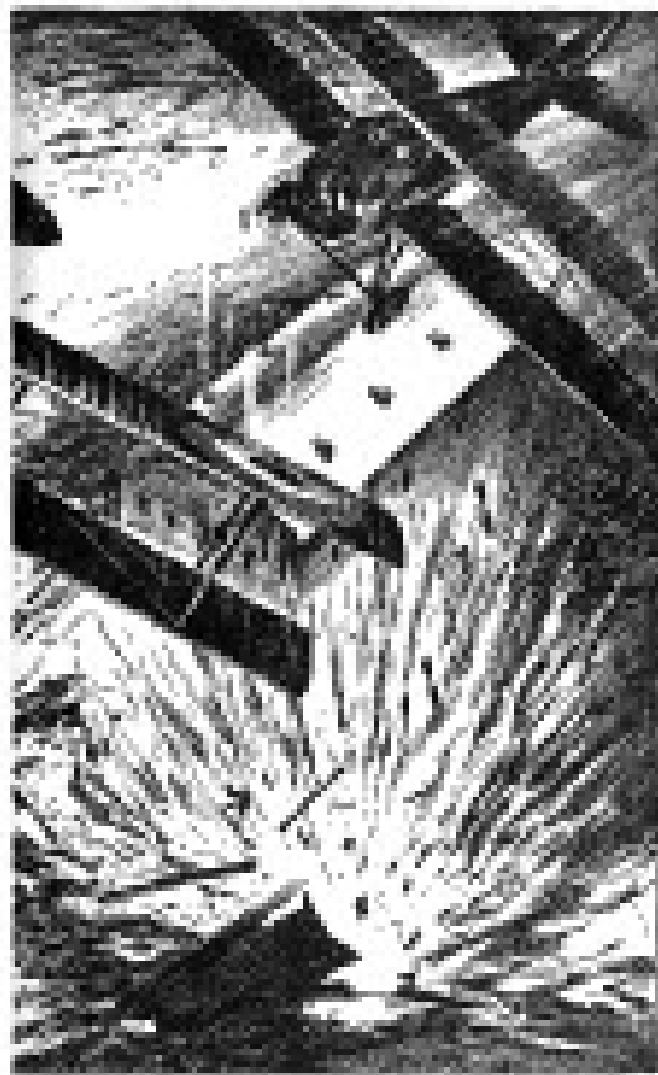
Weekly Illustration by [Name Redacted], December, 1918



Weekly Illustration by [Name Redacted] from April, 1918



Weekly Illustration by [Name Redacted] and [Name Redacted] from April, 1918



Another noteworthy development of Bakula's career was his novel invention of *ASSEMBLY*, a full-page parade of scribbled plans parts. Each were challenged to make their own tracings of these detailed diagrams and cut them out and assemble their own jig-aw puzzle aircraft. These pages regularly appeared in *More-Model-Aer* and were listed as a feature in the current page. Bakula also had another black-and-white feature entitled, *STUMP BURNING TAIL COVER*, which reproduced a silhouette of the airplane on the cover of the magazine, with technical descriptions of the aircraft. One remarkable thing about *ASSEMBLY* and *STUMP BURNING THE COVER* is how well they demonstrate the artist's background as a drafting engineer. In fact, the artist was a sensitive, low-key, mild-mannered personality who confided to friends that he hated to paint the most garish scenes that were so often required by the pulp industry. Another unique quality of Bakula's pulp covers is that they are regularly devoid of details or distress. This extraordinary omission may be partly explained by the fact that the artist's studio was located in the society of St. Mary's Church, where one did not expect to find the usual array of fancy displays that were so heavily flaunted at elsewhere.

By the time Louis Lohat, Rev. Clarence Jones, retired from St. Mary's Church, his career had advanced through the hierarchy of Episcopal Church ranks. He was given the title of rector emeritus and he retained the presidency of the standing committee of the Long Island Diocese, as well as the chairmanship of the board of examining chaplains of the diocese. He was also the chancellor of the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City, where the diocesan bishop presides. So at the age of 88, his remaining church duties started from Brooklyn to Long Island.

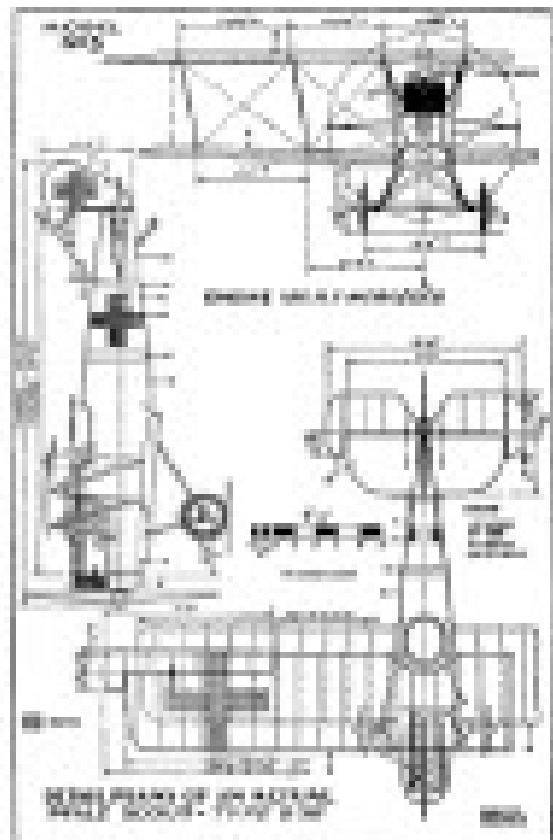
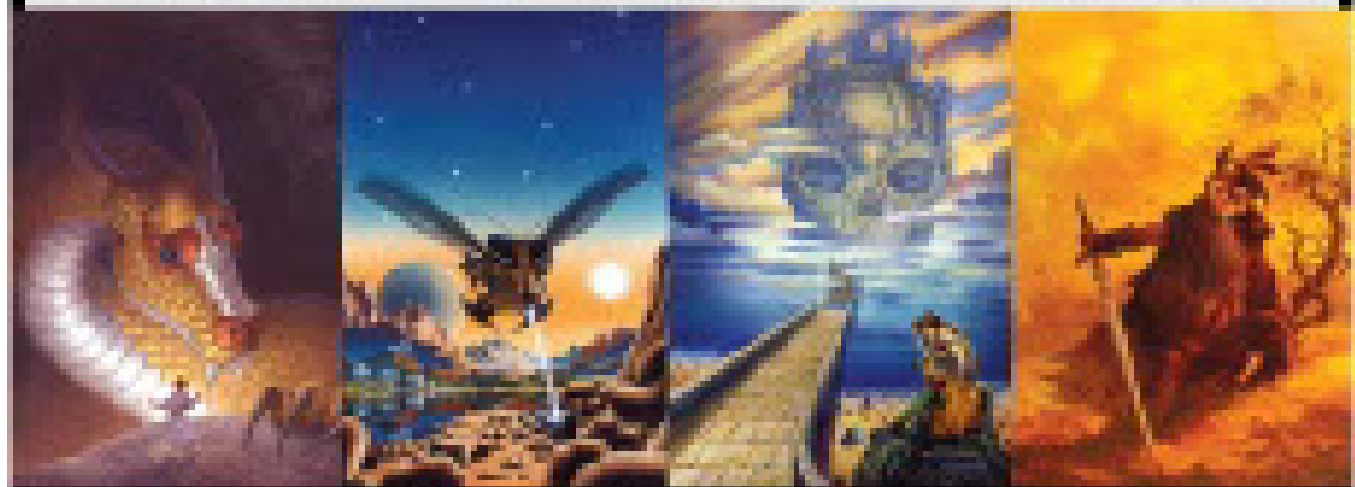


Illustration from *More-Model-Aer*, February 1934

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Frederick H. Stoeber, *Sloop and Schooner*, 1941

To spare her father the long drive, and to be closer to her aging parents, Lorna and Fred bought a house on Long Island near the Episcopal Cathedral, and Lorna's parents spent the remainder of their lives in Fred's home. Fred packed up his art studio in the rectory and moved everything into a spare bedroom on the second floor. Fred and Lorna still ate their meals with her parents and, in the evenings, Lorna would usually go for a drive with Fred. Although this was a wealthy section of Long Island, the Haskobers lived as an average middle-class family. One neighbor who became a good friend was the author Christopher Morley, who wrote the bestseller *Nitty Gritty*, which became a Hollywood motion picture and won an academy award for Garret Rootes.

The Haskobers also enjoyed being close to their circle of social and business friends on Long Island—Walter and his wife "Frit" Baumhofer, Bruce and Katherine Chirnack, and Harry and Shirley Siegel. Years later, the Siegels would recall that they came on week to dinner with the Haskobers when they heard the news over the car radio of Franklin D. Roosevelt's death. Siegel owned a yacht and Haskober owned a small sailboat. They both spent weekends cruising the coastlines and had volunteered for civil defense coastal patrol during the war. This meant keeping a vigilant lookout for

U-boats and radio reports to the U. S. Coast Guard. Although they never saw any Nazi submarines (or as the Germans say "U-Bootschiff") Siegel and Haskober were both keen to their series of their nautical exploits on the Long Island Sound.

Fred was inspired to express these feelings in a series of maritime paintings, some of which Siegel published in *Agony* magazine. When comparing Haskober's ship paintings with his more reserved paintings of airplanes and tanks, it becomes clear that the artist treated all these subjects with the same unique viewpoint—a sense of tiny men heroically struggling with massive machinery in an otherwise awesome river. The artist's fondness for compositions that emphasize mankind's tiny insignificance in proportion to vast clashes of natural and mechanical forces suggests that Frederick Haskober philosophically agreed with the Romantic's view of the Industrial Age. Painters of the Romantic movement—Caspar David Friedrich, J.M.W. Turner, John Constable, Thomas Cole, and Winslow Homer, for example—all painted scenes of tiny men heroically struggling in a world of overwhelming forces.

In 1943, Popular Publications bought *Artists' Magazine*, and Haskober was able to publish another youthful expression. Ever since his Baltic childhood, the artist had been



Engine and structure in Railroad Museum, May, 1949. Photo courtesy of Andrew Black



Engine and structure in Railroad Museum, August, 1949. Photo courtesy of Andrew Black



Engine and structure in Railroad Museum, February, 1949. Photo courtesy of Andrew Black



Engine and structure in Railroad Museum, May, 1949. Photo courtesy of Andrew Black



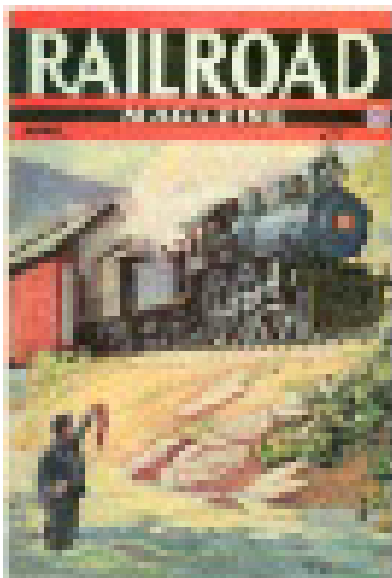
"Illustrated for the Unknown," from The Unknown, Volume 1, 1949

facinated by steam locomotives, and these were cover assignments (finally allowed his room of the non-home to move out from the background of his artistic covers and steam bill-boarding into the center stage of his fifty-one cover paintings for Railroad Magazine. These feature impressive portraits of a wide range of locomotive engines and rolling stock in decreasing situations. Bakula composed the shapes and colors of these covers with a mastery of formal mathematics, which elevates these paintings to his highest level of technical accomplishment.

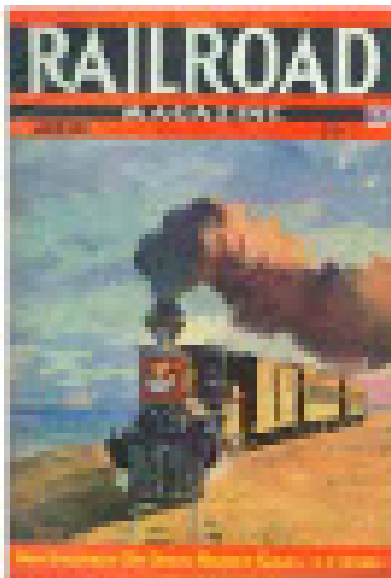
During the post-war period, everyone involved in publishing had to adapt to changing times. While Bakula had plenty of assignments to paint railroad covers, Popular Publications sent the last issue of an aviation pulp to the newsstands in November 1946, marking the end of Bakula's career in pulp aviation. Luckily the artist needed more income. He was considering an ambitious plan for a new career as a syndicated cartoonist, with a topical version of his earlier series "Would You Believe It?" which was itself a revision of the classic comic (Plym) Believe It Or Not. By 1947, Bakula's pen-and-ink two-page spreads, with compositely incredible-but-true historic facts, were regularly appearing in Popular Publications magazines. He received a featured byline, based on the contents page of several Western adventure, detec-

tive and horror pulps, such as Pique Star Weekly, its Mystery Series, New Detective, True History and Story, His Fiction version was called The Inquiring Jones, the adventure version, Lord of Adventure; the detective version, Strange Truth to believe; and the horror version, Adventures over the Unknown. They were all fairly prominent, in keeping with the custom of popular culture in these hard-boiled post-war years. The artist sought but did not receive adequate syndication for this inventive-cartoon concept. In 1948, Bakula did receive several assignments from King Features Syndicate to illustrate a short-lived mystery-detective series that was distributed in Heart newspapers in scattered installments. Unfortunately, Adventures into the Unknown was the same title as an unknown comic book, produced by the American Comics Group, which was one of the more horrifying comics ever marketed to children. That same comic was already titled by Dr. Frederick Wertham during Estes Kefauver's Senate hearings on indecency in comic books, and their impact on adolescent delinquency. In response, the publishing industry imposed strict new guidelines for self-censorship in 1953, so the comic book code of decency put an end to Bakula's dream of a syndicated comic strip.

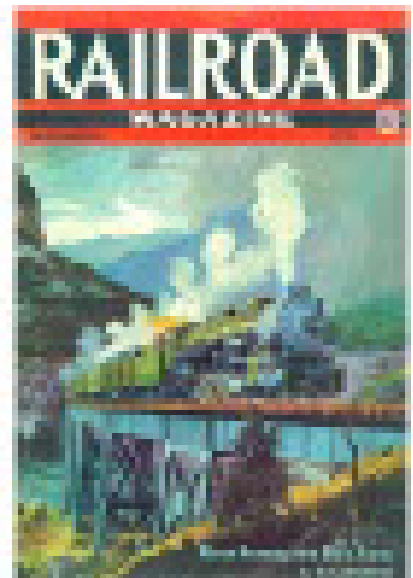
The June 1948 issue of Railroad Magazine was the last pulp published with a Bakula cover. Harry Siegel followed the



Railroad Magazine, April, 1942



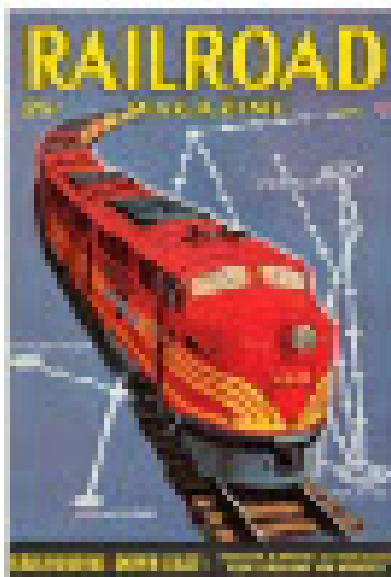
Railroad Magazine, August, 1942



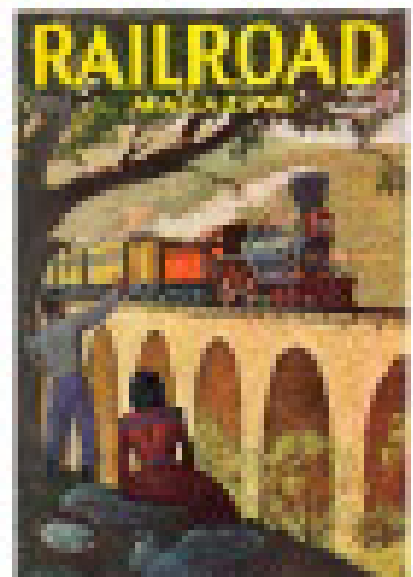
Railroad Magazine, December, 1942



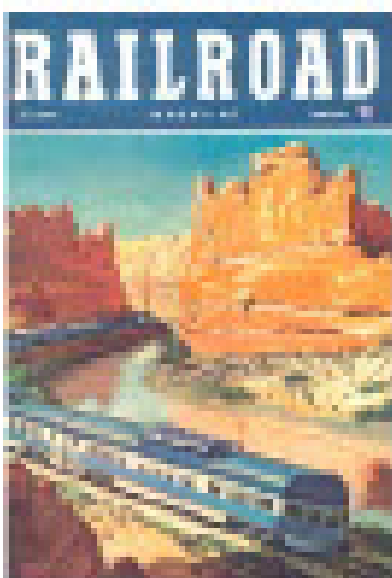
Railroad Magazine, November, 1943



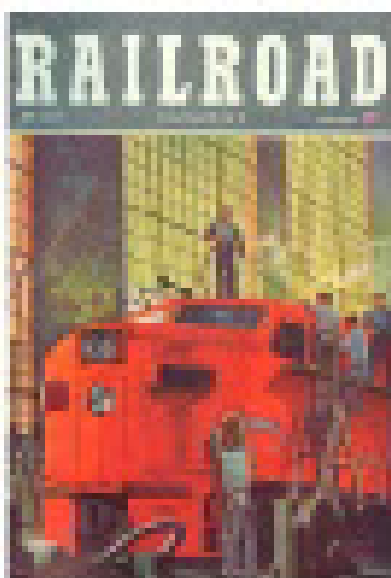
Railroad Magazine, January 1944



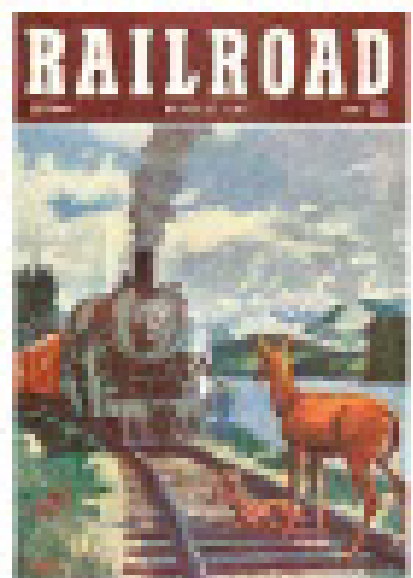
Railroad Magazine, February 1944



Railroad Magazine, February 1945



Railroad Magazine, October 1945



Railroad Magazine, June, 1946



The commercial illustration, circa 1948 to 1949



public, whose reading habits were moving away from the pulps and toward the men's adventure magazines, of which *Argo* became the bestseller. Blakelock received occasional assignments for these magazines, but he was no longer able to depend on a steady income from Popular Publications. Through his connections with Baxendale and Characka, who were both under contract with American Artist Agency, Blakelock secured a few freelance assignments for *American Hobby Magazine*, but although these jobs paid better than the pulps, there were only sporadic assignments. The layout and composition of most slick illustrations were predetermined by art directors, and the scenes were typically a human-interest drama involving interesting personalities. Blakelock's devoted producer for slick magazines was multicores, probably because of his lifelong lack of interest in painting people. Although he had worked in the pulps as long as his old classmates from art school days, Baxendale had shied away from painting scenes that depended on live models. As a result, his work was not in the same league as other top illustrators. Inlandia, Characka, and Baxendale were all able to secure lucrative long-term contracts with slick magazines, and they managed to earn superior incomes after the end of the pulp magazine market.

Blakelock needed more income. John Herring Gould was a friend and neighbor, as well as an old classmate from Pratt. After his own distinguished career as a pulp illustrator, Gould had found steady work creating over 200 designs for a Long Island ceramics manufacturer, Delano Studios. Delano asked Gould to paint ceramic images for a series of decorative plates commemorating the early history of the railroad in the strange Americana style of Carrer & Frye. Gould kindly suggested Delano hire Blakelock as a specialist in railroad art. Fred was

grateful for the opportunity and was soon regularly producing freelance assignments for Delano Studios. They used an advanced process of printing screened images onto glaze-backed dishes with ceramic glazes. The dried dishes were then applied to ceramic objects and fired in a low-temperature kiln. Delano produced commemorative plates, ashtrays, and other items for the gift shops in hundreds of national historic landmarks, including the White House. Although these collectibles were marketed as artistic "hand-painted" ceramics, they were actually manufactured in an assembly line. Blakelock was hired to make the original paintings, which were reproduced in the ceramic process. It was easy work because Delano Studios was close to Fred's Long Island home, but there were simple low-paying jobs, and the Blakelocks still needed more income.



Design for Delano Studios, 1950

In 1941 he offered his drafting services to his old friends in the design department of Sperry Gyroscopic. The company had since improved their Brooklyn plant and moved into a grander new facility on Long Island built for them by the government during WWII. Remarkably, the Sperry Gyroscopic complex in Lake Success also housed the United Nations from 1946 until they moved into their landmark building on the East River of midtown Manhattan in 1950. Bakulic was hired by Sperry to produce technical drawings from engineer's design specifics for precision equipment for aviation, radio submarine detection systems, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and anti-ballistic missile systems. Ironically, Bakulic was hired to do design work on Sperry's advanced missile systems twenty-five years after his last design work on the first Curtiss-Sperry aerial-torpedo Project. It must have been an incredible challenge for the "old timer" to adjust to the space-age environment at the new Sperry design department, but at least his financial problems were solved. Considering the threat of Soviet espionage in those Cold War years, Bakulic's security clearance had to have been top secret. His continuing years of employment were kept at a drafting table under fluorescent lighting in the enormous military-industrial complex in Lake Success, which in 1955 was renamed the Sperry Rand Corporation.

Every summer Fred received a month of paid vacation, so the Bakulics decided to buy a summerhouse in New



The Bakulics came here to New England. 27

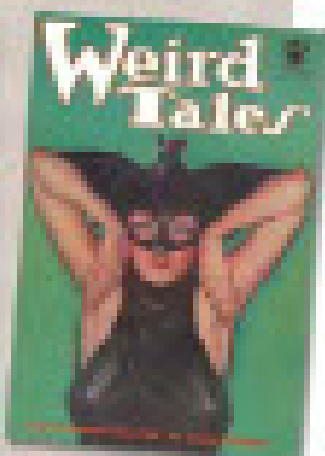
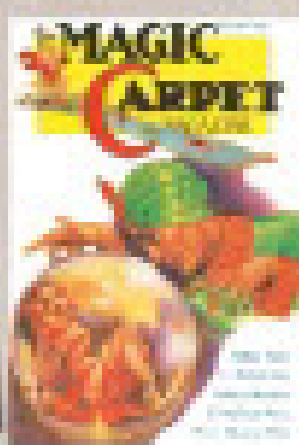
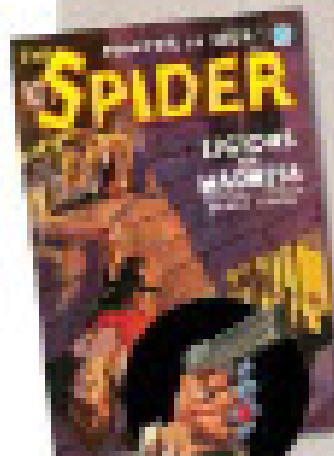
England. Fred and Lorna had usually summered with her parents in a friend's Victorian estate in Poughkeepsie. Fred had always enjoyed the diversion of taking the family on car trips to explore the region, and they had discovered the scenery of the White Mountains in Vermont. Lorna and Fred had first admired the region from the mountaintop panoramas at Mount McGee in 1917 during their casually abstinent but romantic two-year courtship at the TB sanatorium, as the area held both useful and sentimental associations. They found an old-fashioned New England farmhouse in Barreille with an atmosphere that the artist intended to capture using painting media, but according to his friendly neighbors, "Fred didn't know which end of a hammer to pick up." In contrast

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28 in color, 1964. First version of *After Dark*

of making his friends, Fred "renovated" the kitchen by painting charming floral decorations on the cupboards, walls, and trim, which were a delight to Lorna.

The Blakelocks had no children but after twenty years of correspondence with one particular fan, Fred had developed a potential bond with Kerry Cindoran. During summer vacations, Kerry visited the Blakelock home in Vermont with his wife and daughter, and, in turn, Fred visited Kerry's home in Parkersburg, West Virginia, where the Cindorans family had worked for the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad for several generations. Kerry pulled a few strings and the artist was treated to the deluxe B & O best, usually reserved for visiting dignitaries. Fred was outfitted in an official B & O engineer's hat, gloves, boilerman's lamp, and was allowed to sit in the driver's seat and operate the behemoth diesel train on a regular freight run. It was a thrilling experience for the little boy from Buffalo who was a lifelong train enthusiast.

By 1963, Lorna's parents had passed away and the urban sprawl from New York City had reached Boston Heights, bringing traffic congestion, higher taxes, and inflated property values. Lorna had hurt surgery and the operation was a "success" but a



28 in color, 1971. Fifth version of *After Dark*

learned blood clot caused a stroke that impaired her mental clarity and paralyzed her left leg. She also developed diabetes. Fred was very fond, so he decided it was time to move. They sold their Long Island home and permanently moved to their summerhouse. They lived a modest life, attending the All Saints Episcopal Church in Littleton, New Hampshire, where the artist was happy to contribute his design services to the church believers and paragoners.

One noteworthy instance of the maturing role that fandom can play in clearing up mental pulp artists occurred in 1964 when Kerry Cindoran suggested making some color-slide photographs of a select group of twenty original Blakelock paintings and then offering to manage the sale of duplicate copies through an advertisement in the *Crow & Castle Journal*, a World War I era-history fanzine whose readers appreciated Blakelock's aviation art. This promotional project was a thrill for Fred. For the first time in twenty years, he was getting fan mail again. He was delighted to connect with the few fans that remembered his pulp cover art, and wrote to express their heartfelt admiration.

Blakelock's retirement years were spent in a relaxed country village, where the artist was fortunate around the White Mountain



Blakelock's beloved All Saints, 1971



Blakelock and Lorna-Blakelock, 1962



On an engine, 1911. First-creation of motor biplane

National Forest with his folding French road and discover climbing scenes for the traditional American landscape paintings that occupied his creative energies during the final decade of his life.

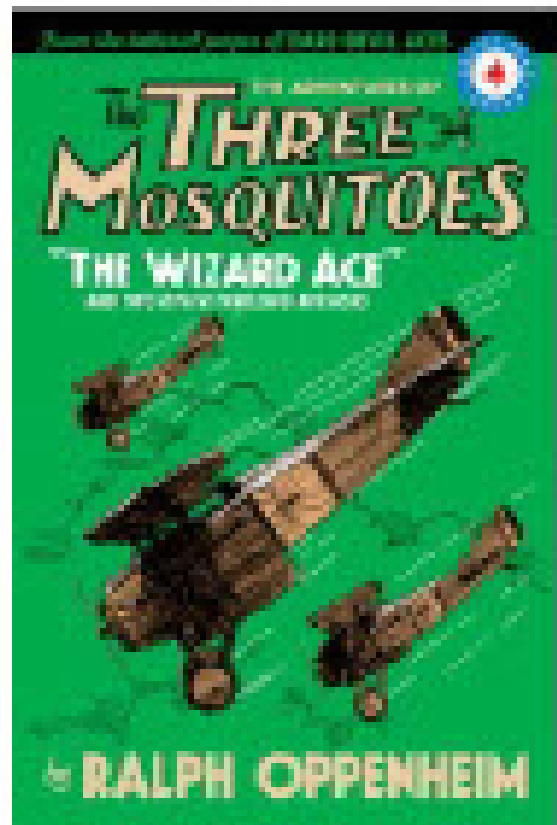
On March 5, 1974, Frederick Manley Blakelock died of a heart attack at age 74. The *Litchton Courier* published the following obituary:

"Fred M. Blakelock died Monday at the Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital in Hanover, N.H. He was born in Buffalo, N.Y. December 4, 1898, the son of Marley and Fertia Blakelock. A graduate of Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y., he became well known as an illustrator specializing in nautical and aviation subjects. His work appeared regularly on the covers of *Argosy* magazine and other popular publications. Following World War II, Mr. Blakelock served as a technical draftsman for Sperry Rand at Lake Success, N.Y. for three years. On his retirement in 1960 he moved to New England.

"Mass gravesite/historian/Lotha Blakelock, Rev. Catherine Schaller will conduct a funeral service in All Saints' Episcopal Church in Litchton at 1:40 pm Friday, March 8. In lieu of flowers, it is suggested that those wishing to, may make a contribution to All Saints' Episcopal Church in his memory."

Lorna married to Pine Knoll wearing home three miles north of Danville, where she died five years later on March 28, 1978, at the age of 73.

Frederick M. Blakelock was a pulp art master. Besides his cover art, more than a thousand of his pen and ink illustrations were published. For his most remarkable career achievement was to dominate the field of aviation pulps to such an extent that his covers appeared on all issues of the complete



Illustrations of *The Three Mosquitoes*, 1917

runs of the different pulp magazine titles...it's such a competitive industry that it is an amazing feat which no other artist can claim. Blakelock painted 400 pulp covers. Three hundred-and-six of his covers appeared on every issue of *Battle Ship*, *Captain Corcoran*, *Dare-Devil Ace*, *Downy Aves* and *Hot Shots* *Knit*, and *G-4 and the Battle Ace*. Those same classic covers continue to reappear on today's paperback editions and pulp reprints. Blakelock left behind a legacy of images that inspire his viewers to share his vision of soaring through many disciplines with real-air collisions, and finding a note of grace in the turbulent air, where life is colorfully poised in a fragrant, weightless, and colorful delight. The artist has long since landed at his final resting place, but his extraordinary winged fleet will always remain in flight, to thrill his viewers for years to come. He always signed his fan letters with the classic wish, "Happy Landings!"—Frederick Blakelock. ♦

—© 2007 David Saunders

Funerals were conducted with the artist's family and friends. Special thanks to Bill Stone of Age of Air, the Institution, and Le Runney for calling. Also thanks to Arthur Brock, Ed Smith, Bill Polanski, and to the staff/owners at the Post Buffalo Station. A special thank you was extended to the New York Public Library, the U. S. Census Bureau, the Social Security Administration, and the New York Times. The pulp magazine checklist was compiled from the author's collection, as well as the collections of John Carroll, Harold Holt, and the U. S. Library of Congress. Thanks to Mike Gordon from, Doug Ellis, Paul Jones, Robert Jones, Jim Gardner, and the illustration team for images, original paintings in their various collections.



Digital cover illustration for *Dare Devil Aces*, April, 1944. Collection of Wilbur Martin



Digital cover illustration for *Dare Devil Aces*, September, 1943. Collection of Doug Sims www.flyguy.com



Digital cover illustration for *Fighting Aces*, July, 1943. Collection of Wilbur Martin

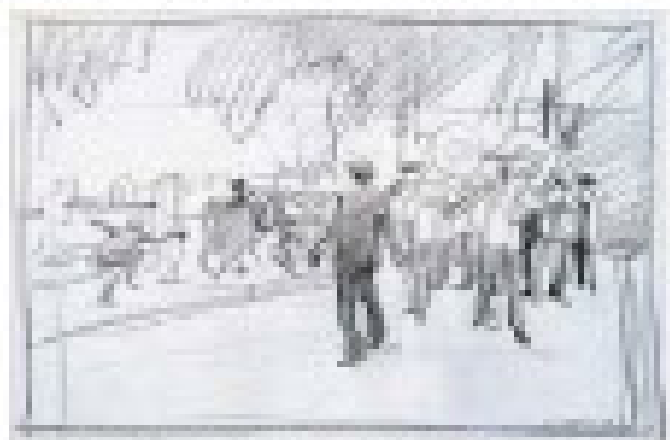


Digital cover illustration for *Battle Aces*, October, 1943



MORTON ROBERTS:

BY ABE ECHEVARRIA
AND BARRY KLUGERMAN



Preparatory sketch for *A Portrait of an Artist in Action*, an illustration for *APY* magazine, 1968



AN ILLUSION OF LIFE

If you had the good fortune to visit New Orleans during the 1950s, you might have come upon a great funeral procession winding its way down the streets of the French Quarter. The leisurely stride of the marching jazz band, the music pouring of festive black youths following alongside, and the infectious spirit of the mourners rhythmically swaying to the beat of the music might have struck you at first as incongruous, given the gravity of the occasion. To the participants, however, such an occasion was not always a cause for ill spirits. Children, families belonging to one of the local lodges gathered to see their loved ones go out in style—with dancing, music, and the familiar strains of such songs as “Sing On,” “The Saints,” or “March He Kambé,” rather than with the same somber hue one might expect. The festivities would usually last two and

the procession reached the lodge hall before breaking up, for in the neighborhood this was always the end of a perfect death.

In 1958 a young man stood alongside the cobble streets of Saint Peter and Rue Royale and sketched the Young Men’s Brass Band as they wound their way toward Jackson Square in just such a procession. He had to sketch rapidly, for the figures hardly stopped long enough for the artist to record any more than the most fleeting of gestures. Yet the painting he produced of the event, the *Life* magazine captured to perfection both the pagantry and the passion that bubbled around him as he stood amidst the musicians on that hot summer afternoon. It is a painting of immense visual appeal, and in its own way reflects the very essence of Matisse’s life and work.



Digital Illustration for LFT magazine, 1981

St Illustration



Armstrong in the Ring by Joseph Mortimer Roberts, 1933

I first met the painter Morton Roberts when I was a fledgling art student. My father, who was also an art student at the time, had encouraged me to enroll in an evening painting class being taught by the then remarkably youthful teacher at the National Academy of Design. I remember clearly one remarkable occasion shortly after I had enrolled in the Academy, when I journeyed home after attending Morton's class. My face exposed to the cold winds that whirled across Fifth Avenue, I left the protection of the tall Upper East Side apartment buildings and bravely navigated my way through the high numbered streets and park avenues with their capriciously elegant pre-war buildings. Doormen posed at their stations behind glass doors, rigid and motionless in their spotless, almost military uniforms. I darted down the stairs at the 76th and Lexington Avenue subway station, leaned my body against the steadily working turnstile, and pushed my way through. Boarding the train I began my long journey through the underground profusion of Manhattan to Brooklyn. The car harbored only a few late-night stragglers on this cold evening, and like myself they huddled in isolation on the worn colored, beaded seats. It was winter, and the year was 1933.

I settled in my seat and closed my eyes to shut out the flickering glare of the lights in the stations whizzed by, while my closed arms rested in a proprietary manner atop the painting held in my lap. The painting was a portrait of the model who had posed for our art class that evening, the dark features of her face subtly recalled to a class demonstration by our in-



Morton Roberts in the class, 1933

structor Morton Roberts. I found myself the keeper of a treasure that evening, a treasure which my generous teacher in a benevolent moment had bestowed upon me. I was not about to let it get away!

My brother Bill had shown me countless of Morton's paintings for 4th exposure. Bill, who had been painting and studying fine art, was enrolled in Morton's evening painting class at the National Academy of Design at 90th Street and FIVE Avenue. I am thankful for my brother's encouragement to enroll with him, as it proved to be the turning point of my life, and crystallized my own quest to become an illustrator.



Raphael: Study for the Fall of Man in the Vatican Museums, 1509



Portrait drawing, 1962

One evening each week, during the winter of '61, we made the arduous subway journey to the Academy. Morton was a robust man who wore a smock during class, and warmed the room with an air of confidence. At first he paid little attention to my labors at painting the model. I had yet to meet his expectations. My painting of the figure was flat, but I worked hard and continued to make progress. It was necessary to determine the underlying bone and muscle structure that gave the model form. I needed to master the skill which would breathe life into the figure; I labored so hard to duplicate Morton would catch attention the class. In my zeal, grit, and more so, leaving me to further search the mystery of the human form. It seemed as if my eyes were open but I was blind.

To work to succeed on the same a study of the subject in dimension. My problem was to create a sense of relief on a two-dimensional surface. After weeks of guess, groans, and more groans, he stepped in front of my camera. Suddenly I had his attention. I recall the pose he struck, arms folded over the grille of his chair, right foot pointing forward and head held high; he exuded good cheer and energy. He smiled at me. "You've got it!" he proclaimed. "The form!" He pointed to the elbow of the model on my camera. What he had drawn attention to, and what I had finally captured on my camera, was an illusion of life. The arm existed in space. The study of light, color, and shading created a sense of relief. You could reach around the arm as if it were a hologram. He seemed inspired by my accomplishment and gathered other students before my model, offering a demonstration of his own.



Woman with Flowers: an illustration from the first issue of *SPY* magazine, 1958



The Girl from Bridge, 1961



"The Good Sheriff", an illustration from the last issue of *QJ* magazine, 1994

Examining a spare easel-size panel from my brother painted and covered with a spare tone, Morton began a portrait of the model. He drew her dark features with the brush using raw umber. Then he loaded another brush with titanium white. Using the white to establish the light areas, he created subtle peady tones by fixing the white and umber. His left hand held a mahl stick to support the palm of his brush-wielding hand. He applied a Venetian red glaze over the white and umber passages and reworked them again, brightening them with white. I stood transfixed in awe of this masterful orchestration of glaze application in red over umber and white. His eyes concentrated on the model's facial features and magically transported them onto the panel. The face came to life within minutes, on a surface that was normally only sparsely ground, making it the most subtle study in use we all thought that here was an artist living out of his time. Here was a true genius, a painter who could have achieved lasting fame had he lived during the High Renaissance. "This portrait is for Abe," Morton told the students, waving aside the requests of others who had asked if they might keep the remarkable study. The following week, Morton invited Bill and myself to stop after class. "Would you like to apprentice with me?" he inquired. "Yes," we replied immediately. There was no need to think about it, only to get started.

The weekend trip to Harrison was adventures of their own. At that time the Hochmann River Highway was a winding, treacherous, narrow stretch of highway in need of repair. We drove up in a '34, white, two-door Buick Special. Its distinguishing features were four holes on each side of the hood, a hulking V8 engine, and a massive 11-volt battery in constant need of recharging. We referred to it appropriately, and perhaps tongue-in-cheek, as "the Tank." The rims of the car were embellished with great metal, evidence which the neighborhood kids ultimately ground off with turbo-chip operators. The stylish front fenders were famous hot bushes or protrusions.

My brother Bill and I who grew up in Spanish Harlem, the Lower East Side, and Brooklyn, regarded this trip the surrogate of Rochester as a big deal. Morton's home was on Highland Road. On the way we passed the homes of some of the most prominent figures of that time: Fugate, the touring magician; the comic Jonathan Winters; the talk show host Jack Paar; and Johnny Carson, then the host of *Who Do You Trust on ABC*. These were past names of Morton's illustrious neighbors.

Arriving at Morton's studio, we took our way through the studio and down. These were necessary to keep out the cold. In the dead of winter the studio could be chilly in late evenings when Morton's wife, Kay, and his three boys, Michael, Keith, and Alan were upstairs asleep, well over the doors that behind us. Morton would then station himself in front of the easel that cradled a work in progress. "Can I offer you guys some Great Martinis and a cigar?" he would ask.



Portrait of Jean Sibelius, 1914

...sweeping, we settled into chains around tables, made rolls of canvas, and an assortment of passages started impressing against the stretched walls. The air was heavily laden with the aroma of oil, and the familiar red-covered sheet papers and linseed oil. Lighting fires and feeling a warming hope in the grasp of our palms, we began the nightly talk that lay before us. These nights and days held great heart and spirit, and all the expansion and consequences of life. Ideas were disclosed unobscuredly and conclusions were drawn. With the hours of youth we were fervently high on the ideal that anything could be accomplished. The belief that something of acute significance could happen at any moment added vitality to our lives and transformed the everyday toils of mere existence into something magical, transcendent.

...Feeling the subtle hairs, Sibelius would close his brush. Raising his arm in the mild risk, he made a flurry of passages. Redrawing and applying layers of glaze, he finished whole sections of the composition before moving to work on other sections with an ease and gusto that was something behind, especially for my brother and myself, who had never been in the company of such an accomplished virtuoso.

...These variations within the private domain of an artist possessed of such genius granted a sense of privilege for the Communist member in the process of Merton Sibelius' work like the flare of a conductor's baton. His brush would articulate an exact statement, using swatches of pigment with complete precision. The total effect seemed like the harmony



Reproduction painted by Friis, given to her subjects



Watanabe, 1883

demonstrated by seasoned musicians. He spoke to us as he worked. Conversation would fire Morton and compel his will to accelerate the painted composition to an orchestrated pitch announcing its conclusion. This was Morton at work. These night sessions gave way to the dawning of day, and we would part as light filled the studio.

It was Morton's plan at that time to establish a paint factory, a method of working created by the 17th-century artist Peter Paul Rubens. Morton adopted this idea in order to accelerate the amount of commissions he could accept. My brother and I would prepare the panels and work through the underpainting stage, following Herbert's initial sketches as a guide. Morton only needed to make minor corrections, adding the color over glass and signing the completed painting. The client, unaware of the process, delighted in the resulting results.

The trust Morton installed in me often fulfilled my wish. I knew that my contribution was of importance to the final work. This system of working allowed Morton to concentrate on the panel composition for the MacArthur medals, a prestigious commission that would take several years to complete, dedicated to General Douglas MacArthur, the noted commander in WWII and Korea. Six medals would decorate

the ribbons at Norfolk, Virginia. The six would serve as the final testing piece for the most distinguished general.

It was the artist Allen Tobey who, after Morton's death, would complete the medals at the MacArthur Memorial. Tobey, an academician and colleague, faithfully adhered to the initial vision of Morton's original design. The medals today reflect the promise Morton instilled so many years ago.

A commission of this size called for great experimentation. Morton would use to it that he would prove method of application. Fresco, a technique of applying color to wet plaster, was discussed and rejected. Herbert left most of our adhering canvas to the wall as a working surface. My brother and I cracked eggs, rolling the egg yolk in sawdust to remove the cream white. The yolk served as binding in our tempera formula. Mixed in an array of colors using ground pigments. Our surroundings seemed more like a chemistry lab than a paint factory. We used our concoctions to paint copies copied from old master prints. These studies served as tests for longevity and color traction. This required expertise would lead to the strategy necessary to complete the medals.

I had an occasional glimpse of Morton creating the sketches from a wealth of reference materials stored around the stu-



Washers, 1933

do. I regret that I am now unable to locate those choxy pencil drawings that Moton graciously assembled for this heritage to SincArthur. The draftsmanship imbued in each of the six compositions, depicting a stage in the painter's career, was testament of the quintessential drawing of the 20th century artist Jean-Louis Dominique Ingres. Moton's study of past artists such as Paolo Veronese, Diego Velazquez, Peter Paul Rubens, Rembrandt Van Rijn, Caravaggio, John Singer Sargent, George Bellows, Jack Levine, and others, culminated into a school vision of virtuosity, a veritable museum of his world carried to the sounds of the Maccabean Memorial.

Moton, stand over our progress, shared his confidence at Radio Radio Tavern & Restaurant off Main Street in Harrison became a routine stop after evening classes at the Academy. The proprietor, Joe Skalk, would greet Moton and lead us to the dining area. The restaurant was the fare recommended by Moton. We indulged in rich helpings served to us at his expense. Conversation included heated issues covered by the media that day. Disaggregation was one topic that resonated everywhere. I remember at that moment in time, and would remain a continuing political goal of the 60s. Concluding the meals, Moton would light a cigarette and beam as he redoubtlessly return to his studio. Each evening spent in close to the day we would begin work on the murals, the grand illusion.

One evening as we were working in his studio, a call rang out from



Portrait of William H. Johnson, colored pen, 1940



An unpublished sketch from the book *Before Is (P)reposterous*, 1993

the kitchen area handling the dishes in the air. "Thirty" Morton set down his brush and mild sock, looked at us, and exclaimed, "Hi Jonathan!" The cousin Jonathan Wierzy was one of Morton's closest and closest friends, and his unannounced visit was a welcome Morton enthusiastically embraced. We made our way out of the studio through the living room and into the kitchen. At the time Jonathan was enjoying a boost in his career, appearing regularly on Jack Paar's *Tonight Show*.

At first glance Jonathan seemed surprised by the presence of my brother and myself. Morton habit mentioned our apprenticeship. After introductions we sat around the oak country kitchen table. I felt Jonathan's attention about our being there, but he soon relaxed upon hearing that Bill had served as a *Matine*. Jonathan immediately launched emotional tales of his own *Matine* experiences. We reacted with laughter in response to his spontaneous monologue.

This was a conclusive moment for Morton. A steady but long hours of labor spent at the end, this moment of lightness was delivered through the fact that of his own fame by one of the leading harmonists of the day. The brilliance of Jonathan's humor was matched by the brilliance of Morton's wit, and there I sat prey to the bond of friendship. I remember feeling that there was a sense of Laurel and Hardy about them as they shared in the repartee.

On one balmy Tuesday afternoon, I came upon the two of them on a stretch of road leading towards Morton's house. They were walking on the side of the road laughing with abandon as I approached. I pulled my car over and greeted them. It happened that they had been joy-riding in Jonathan's newly delivered *Ford Vign*, a very expensive, fast, and sophisticated sedan produced in France. Their raucous merriment ended abruptly at the bottom of the hill when this elite automobile suddenly quit running. Using the incident as an excuse to exercise, they proceeded down the road. I watched the two animated figures fade through the forest all that afternoon, distancing themselves like ascending to a high School level. It seemed ironic that maintaining a good sense of humor was a required prescription in 1961, and Morton would simply take time out to joke around and laugh. Despite the momentary and drama in his approach to illustration, he never took himself too seriously.

Meanwhile, the trend in illustration was moving away from a highly representational approach toward a more stylized and simplistic rendering of figurative composition. This change in approach came at a time when Morton had no equals, only admirers, among colleagues and friends. He was at this time at the very pinnacle of the profession and approaching the top of his form as an artist. Still, he feared the high-circulation publications would embrace this new wave in illustration and diminish his contributions. This was an erroneous thought that seemed inappropriate since his powerful, inspirational work as the *MacArthur* master would surely have secured the serious recognition and acclaim he pursued to achieve.

We worked hard and had to meet assignments deadlines,



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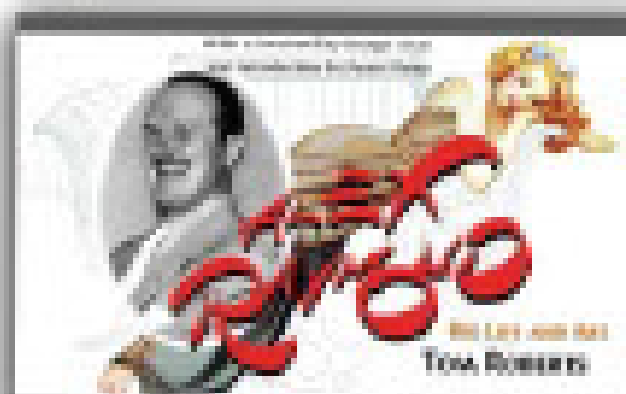
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"Violence Evoked," original illustration for *Duffell's magazine*, 1898



Illustration from *Western paperbacks* series, 1964

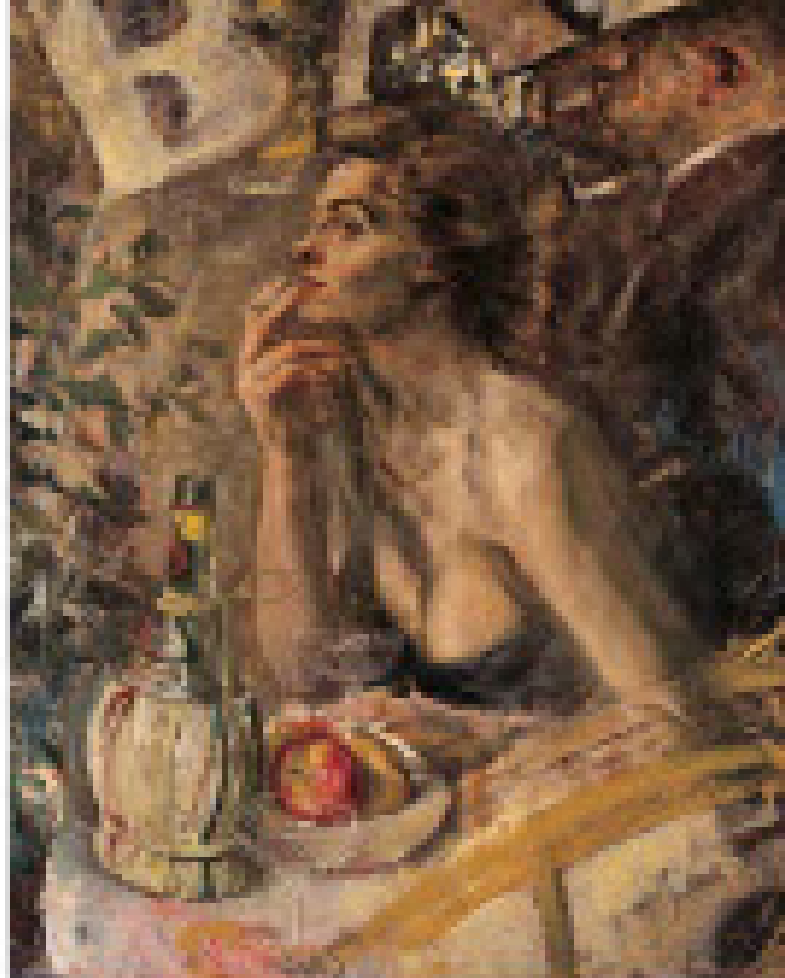
for his art remained in strong demand. And yet, I soon felt the depth of Johnston's concern for the future. As I parked my car and pined at the end of a Thursday evening class, the artist advised I would accompany him back to his studio. I sensed by his demeanor that he needed to talk, so we shared a Taxi down Fifth Avenue to Grand Central Station.

Once inside the taxi he handed me the latest issue of *Life* magazine. On its cover was an illustration depicting the execution of the Bay of Pigs. The work was by the artist Sanford Kossin, whose edgy and kinetic style exemplified the new trend in illustration. It no longer reflected the bold, jaunty, freewheeling framework Horison favored in his illustrations, with its echoes of the gusto of a bygone age of sand painting, but showed a more linear, experimental, and graphic approach.

"What do you think?" Johnston asked, although I felt Kossin's work was unusually good, and gave the reader the feeling that the illustrations might have been drawn from life. I still wondered whether he had seen what Johnston could have done with the subject matter. He had shown such great reticence

in his paintings for *Spectator*, *The Glory of John*,
Agitation, and the Russian Revolution that
 had appeared in the magazine in previous years.
 The paintings documenting the Bay of Pigs mis-
 sion might have established a new benchmark
 for Horne, and given him a chance to put down
 in paint some of the passionate feelings he har-
 bored regarding America's place in the world.

He arrived at Grand Central, stepped out
 of the taxi, and made our way down the stairs
 inside the Vanderbilt Avenue entrance. Above
 us, the British display illuminated the Grand
 Concourse of the station. A large mural of
 photos of the late John F. Kennedy expressed an
 America in mourning. The image held Horne's
 attention, staring up at the dedication, to make
 reference to America's loss and the prospect of
 future disaster. It seemed popular, but the men
 would indeed prove to be a decade of torment
 and division. It saddened me to leave Manca
 that evening. As he turned, making his way to
 the gate, I fixed my gaze on his short jet black
 hair, framed heavily in silhouette in the en-
 tranceway. The waiting train moved imperceptibly
 as Manca vanished from sight. It was the last
 time I would see him.



An illustration of painting, 1950s.

Graphic

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"Good Addressing Times," original illustration for LIFE magazine, 1944. Photo courtesy of The Rockefeller Foundation.

Mostan Robert Schwartz (he later dropped his last name to avoid confusion with another contemporary artist) was born in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1927. A child prodigy, his family attempted, despite their modest income, to provide him with both an income and all of the costly materials he needed for his paintings and drawings of New England life that he was completing in studios.

In the late 1950s the family left Worcester and moved to the neighboring town of Uxma, where Mostan attended high school. Friends and acquaintances remember him as a

rather shy but engaging youth, whose every free moment was spent prowling the winding streets of the town or near by ponds, sketchbook in hand, upon one of the rocky pathstones that dot the benches of this seacoast town, if seeing necessarily anything that caught his fancy. This might take the form of a somewhat cluttered of trees, a leaning wall breaking on the shore, the shyness of the local church, or on some that one occasion, the pure and delicate features of a pretty classroom, preferably one with anatomically high ceilings.

After graduating from high school and a short stint in the

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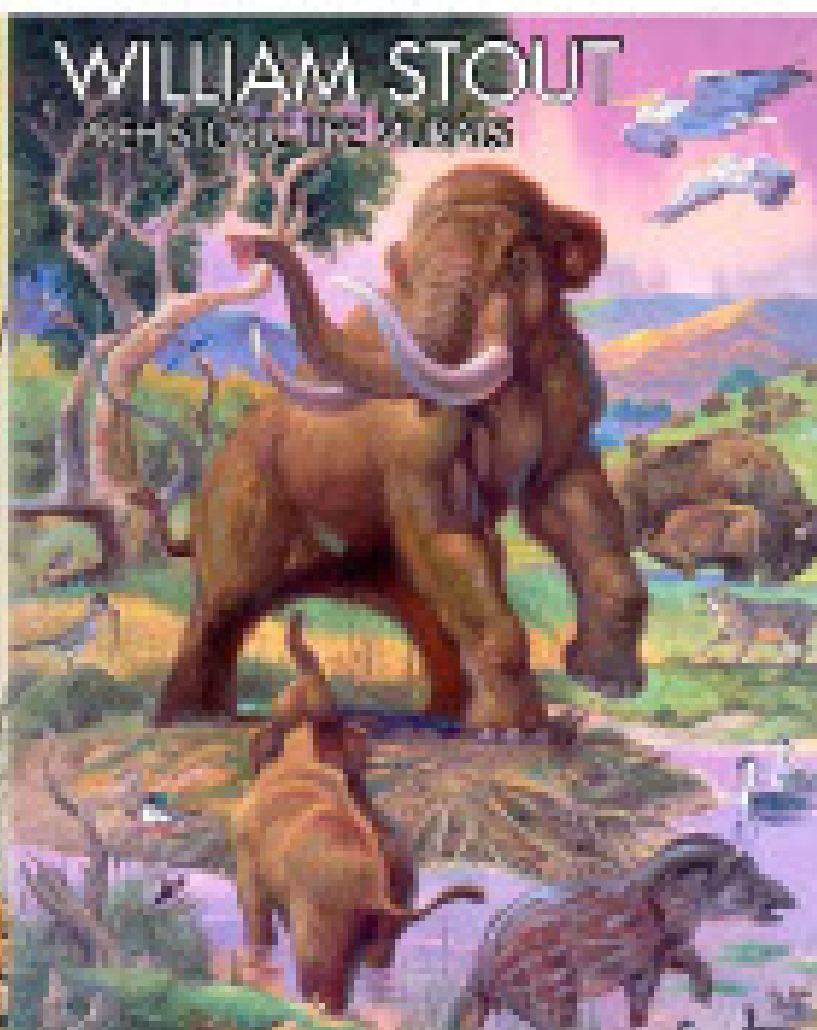
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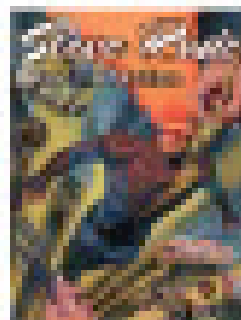


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88 John Singer Sargent, original illustration for the "Epitaph" column, *McClure's*, 1898

Nary during the late 1880s, Norton applied and gained admission to Yale University's prestigious School of Fine Arts, completing the traditional four-year curriculum in only three, and graduating with honors with the Edwin Austin Abbey Fellowship for figurative painting. It is worth noting that the fellowship had been won the previous year by another Yale alumna, the distinguished artist/painter Robert Vallery, who had himself recommended that Roberts apply for it.

Upon leaving Yale, the budding painter lived and worked for a time in both Rochester and Gloucester, Massachusetts, producing in professional-level quantities of the local landscape, all handled with the kind of virtuosity one associates with a Sargent or a Homer, and winning for himself many gold medals from exhibiting societies. However, with a new wife and a growing family to support, the sale of his artwork at galleries was not sufficient for his needs. On the advice of friends, he journeyed down to New York City to see if he could find work as an illustrator.

At this point in time the great American magazines were entering one of their most lucrative periods, fueled by America's prosperity after the war. They could compete successfully for and obtain the services of the world's most distinguished artists and writers, and they paid handsomely. New York City was the cultural mecca of the nation, and its magazines the pride in the corner. Competition for assignments on the lavishly-produced, high-circulation journals was enormous, and only the most accomplished could expect to gain admission and ac-



89 Study, *Photography of Douglass*



Richard Lohman, *Richard Lohman Looking Through a Glass Ball*, 1958



Richard Lohman, *Richard Lohman*, circa 1955

optimal in three-related realms. It therefore says much about Richard's accomplishments as a painter even at this early stage in his career that he was able to equally obtain work as an illustrator at the very top of the profession, and to stay there throughout the course of his career.

Like many other artists whose life it was to die young, Richard was prolific. During his short lifetime he was to complete scores of paintings on assignment for many of the most prominent magazines of the day, such as *McCall's*, *Artwork*, *Reader's Digest*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Life* magazine, where he was a great favorite with the editors. He continued to be active as well as a genre painter, portraitist, and watercolorist, exhibiting at galleries throughout the Northeast in great numbers, and winning numerous medals and citations. Many of these works have found their way into important private collections, and can be seen gracing the walls of prominent museums in both the United States and Europe.

His approach to painting could be described as, at times, highly eclectic and amongst his numerous influences can be found those reflecting the influences of Vermeer, Velázquez, Hals, and Rubens, not to mention artists of more recent vintage such as John Singer Sargent and George Bellows. There even exist paintings executed at an early age showing his respect for the work of his talented contemporary Jack Levine. Yet evident as it often was in both subject matter and technique, his work

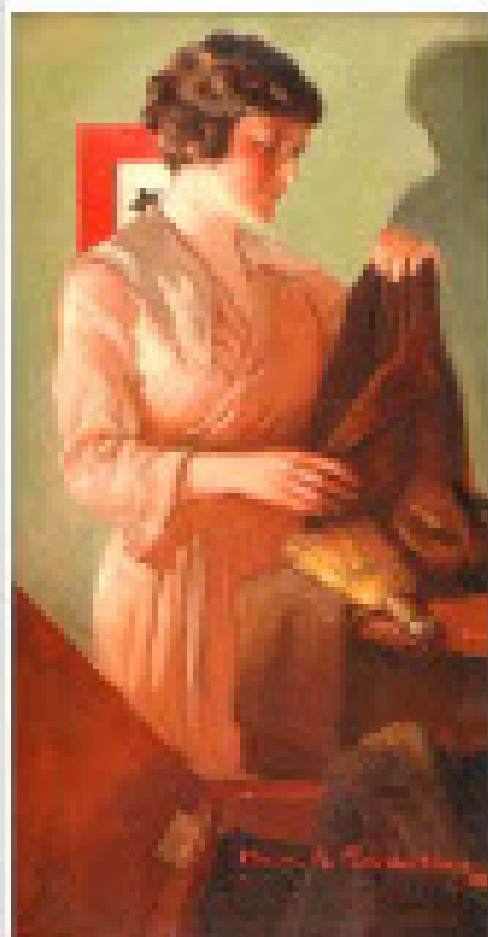
always contained an extra indefinable dimension, a feeling of life, a heat, a breadth and freedom all its own. The Ballroom Scene he executed for *Unk's opera* (1946) is a case in point, as are the finely painted tables he produced for *The Story of Joe*—where the fire and soap suds of the brush strokes, and the intensity of the colors suggest the ebullience and exultation at the heart of the music. From now on, there is the painting alluded to at the beginning of this essay titled, *The Perfect Death*, a canvas so alive that its creator was known to have designed an entire room in his home to showcase it.

It seems fitting that Heston's last commission should have been the execution of a vast series of murals commemorating the life and achievements of General Douglas MacArthur. The renowned and imperious World War II general was a visionary figure of larger-than-life dimensions, and his exploits would have lent themselves admirably to the kind of painting in which Heston excelled. Over the years, as if in preparation for such a commission, he had been working on canvases of ever increasing size, while his imagery had become correspondingly bolder and broader in treatment, the scale of the figures more heroic. Heston painting seemed the next logical step in his development as an artist, and such a commission, if properly carried out, would surely have secured for him the serious recognition and acclaim he yearned to achieve.

I recall that he worked long and hard on the chosen period canvases, taking himself to capture the right effects. The dramatic drawings he completed looked intriguingly at the great work to come, but there was to be no laurel glory or commensation. For suddenly on January 19, 1964, the tragically untimely and heroic Heston died of a final heart attack at the age of 67.

A few weeks after his death, there appeared in the pages of *The Art Taster* an anonymous eulogy written in his memory. It seems appropriate to quote it in full for the poignancy of its prose.

He was our friend. He was an artist. He was young. He was not given the years which were necessary to advance a prodigious talent into that last finish which accompanies the discipline and maturation of age. He left us in the month which is the early promise of the year, just as his youth was the early promise of an already accomplished life. We regret the loss of the enthusiastic and exuberant man. His life exemplified an additive form of vitality such as we cannot ever spare, and must always be regretful of losing.



Charles Maclellan (1887—1961)

A Soldier's Mother

Oil on canvas, 24" x 12"; 1918

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I can still remember Alton Roberts almost as if it were yesterday, a Havana cigar in one hand, a liquor in the other. The impetuous wit of Art sitting before his easel in the early morning light. Although level of years, he left behind a legacy of paintings that continue to speak to us with poignancy and grace in their own visual language. Taken together, they are as much a celebration of life as the songs sung by the mourners at that New Orleans funeral Monumented so many years ago. Had the guys down on Jackson Square been able to view the fruits of his labor years later when the painting "A Festival Break" was installed in a place of honor at the Lincoln Center Hall of Art, they would no-doubt have put it back. Using a vernacular all their own, "Man! they might have said, "Could that car handle?" It's doubtful I could come up Marlene special gift to a painter and illustrator any better. ♦

with MAC by the Editor-in-Chief and Barry Kligerman

Alto Sotocento, a noted Brazilian educator and artist, is a free Mitchell resident and has worked for a diverse list of clients including the corporate world, book publishers, movie studios, and ad agencies. He has a long list of exhibitions and awards, including a Gold Medal from the Society of Illustrators. His work is collected by private and public art patrons.

Barry Kligerman is a business writer in the field of illustration, and has worked as both a commercial illustrator and an editor. In 1988 he founded The Life Light Press along with his friends the illustrators James Runkle and Jan McFady. The press published numerous limited edition signed prints featuring artwork of children's illustrators. He is also the creator of the Rio S. Market Estate and along with his other clients he is also has written articles and co-authored several books on Runkle's work. Most recently *RIO—the art of Rio S. Runkle* published by Vanguard Press in 2008. Currently he is working on a book on the Spanish/Brazilian Area together, and preparing a monograph on Runkle's work to be titled *Stance and Style—the Artwork of Rio S. Runkle* from Dutton in Chicago, IL.



A sketch for the Rio Sotocento magazine, 1988

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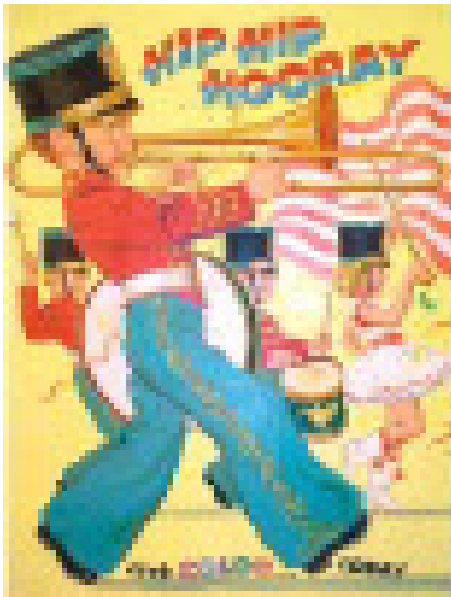


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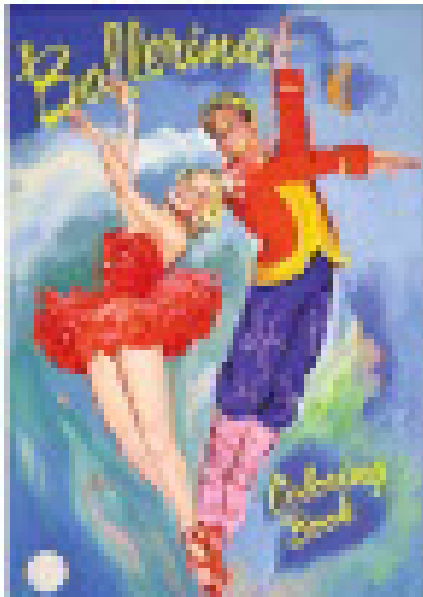


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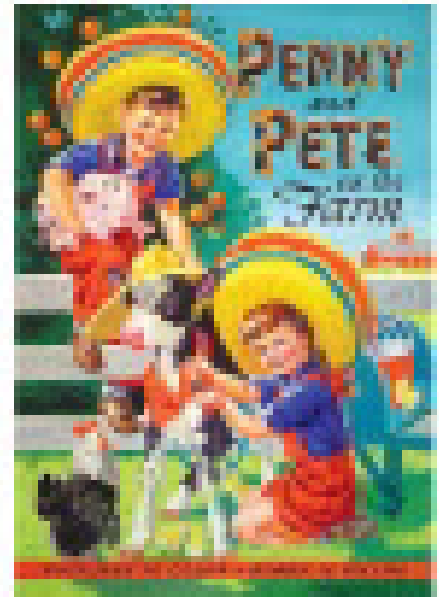
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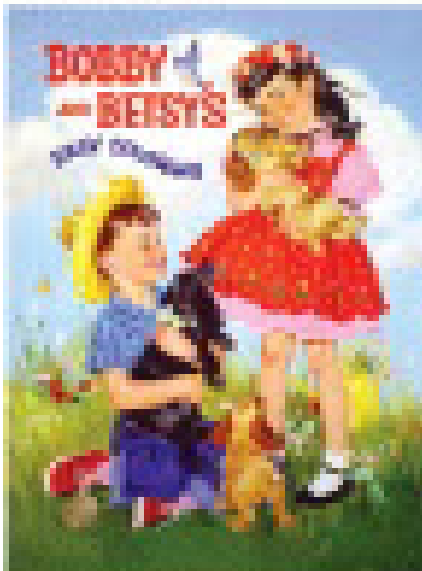
Hip-Hip Hurray, 1950. Cover/Helen Gougeon, gouache on board, 11 1/2" x 14 1/2"



12 Hilarious Jokes, 1953. Cover/John W. North, ink, gouache on board, 10" x 14 1/2"



Penny and Pete Go to the Fair, 1950. Cover/Helen Gougeon, gouache on board, 10 1/2" x 14 1/2"



Bobby and Betty's Day-Afternoon, 1955. Cover/Barbara Haggart, gouache on board, 10 1/2" x 14 1/2"



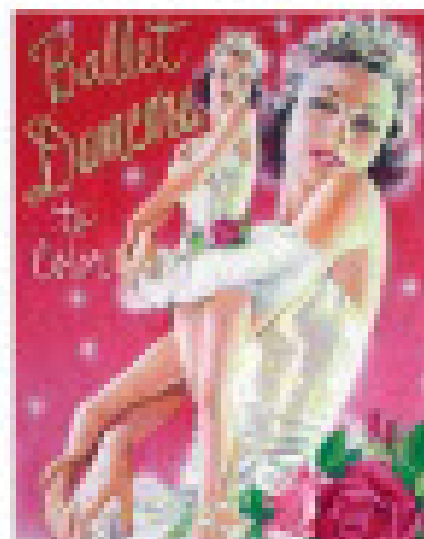
Read-Color, 1955. Cover/Helen Gougeon, gouache on board, 10" x 10"



Pete the Mouse, 1955. Cover/Betty Haggart, gouache on board, 7 1/2" x 10"



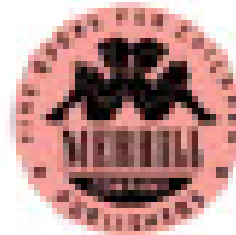
Trace-Color, 1955. Cover/Helen Gougeon, gouache on board, 11 1/2" x 14 1/2"



Ballot Stencils to Color, 1955. Cover/Helen Gougeon, gouache on board, 10" x 13 1/2"



The Stained Glass and Their Stencil Templates, 1955. Cover/Barbara Haggart, gouache on board, 11 1/2" x 14 1/2"



THE STORY OF THE MERRILL COMPANY PUBLISHERS

BY JEAN WOODCOCK

In April of 1939, I had the good fortune to purchase The Merrill Company Publishers of Chicago, Illinois. My original intention in contacting the company, as a collector and fan of paper doll books and toys, was to perhaps find some back stock of old books stored away in the warehouse somewhere. The last thing I thought I would do was purchase the entire publishing company. As you will soon discover, however, this is exactly what happened! For first, here's a little background to the story.

MARION E. MERRILL AND THE HUGENSTIMMER CO.

Marion Elizabeth Merrill, the founder of the Merrill Company Publishers, was born May 4, 1902, in Chicago. The only child of Sara Merrill, she began her publishing career selling magazine ads. Shortly thereafter, she became a layout artist first for the Chicago Tribune, and then for a time at The Whitman Publishing Company in Racine, Wisconsin. Whitman was a publisher of 14-cent children's books, and it may be assumed that this was Marion's first exposure to the children's book publishing business.

Marion was not content to simply work for others in the children's book field; she felt the quality of the current books was poor and unimaginative, and she knew that she could do better. In 1933, Marion planned and drafted a few books of her own, and began to search for a printing firm that would wish her to publish the books. She eventually presented her designs to the Hugensstimmer Co., and convinced them that she had first-hand knowledge of the business. They became interested in her plans, and told her to prepare six or seven of her books in perfect "dummy" form. If she could present them to a few of the larger chain stores in New York and secure orders from their buyers, Hugensstimmer would immediately proceed to manufacture the first series of 14 books.



Marion E. Merrill

Marion made her presentations, gathered the initial orders, and thereby began her career as a children's book publisher. She formed a contract and went into partnership with The Hugensstimmer Co. from 1934 to March 1945, calling her organization "The Merrill Publishing Company." Marion oversaw the creation of all of the books, and Hugensstimmer printed them. In a mere five years The Merrill Publishing Company became the second-largest publisher of children's books in the United States, and the name Merrill became synonymous with excellence in children's publishing.

THE MERRILL COMPANY PUBLISHERS

After Miss Merrill's contract with Hugensstimmer expired on May 12, 1945, she quickly formed her own independent company—the Merrill Company Publishers. The company name may have changed slightly but nothing else was lost in translation. The new company's books were as fine as any published before.

From all accounts, founder Marion Merrill was a steered and dedicated leader, a dynamic and highly motivated business woman who directed her company with a firm hand. She was never married, and proudly referred to her books as her children, directing every element of them from beginning to end. She selected the artists, suggested cover concepts, and supervised every facet of their production.

Records of this process are clearly documented in the company archives. Marion first decided what type of books she wanted to publish in a certain year, and then she decided on the cover concepts. After choosing an appropriate artist, she instructed them of what she was looking for. The artist then sent her a rough line drawing of the cover. Among the Merrill files there are hundreds of these sketches, one for each book published. I like Merrill made notes on the rough



Illustrated Paper Dolls, 1944. Front and back covers (left and right) made on hand-cut 1/2" x 10"

drawing with her comments, and sent it back to the artist. Another round rough drawing was sent back, and when it was acceptable, another round drawing was furnished in color. Further notes about color and other details were made and scribbled. I must say here that Miss Merrill was perfectionist, and she rarely illustrated many of her artists. She made positive comments and criticisms, and often said, "You can do better than that."

When the color line drawing was finally accepted, the artist proceeded with the final artwork, which on occasion was itself returned for revisions. A four-color separation in glass negative was created in the final stages, and a color progressive print was made for approval. A progressive was a composite print made from the four negative plates, each plate representing one of the four colors used in the printing process (cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, referred to in the trade as CMYK.) Miss Merrill critiqued the separations, made her recommendations, then sent them back for revision. This process could take place any number of times until perfection was achieved. The archives contain complete files on every Merrill book that was produced, and this relentless pursuit of perfection may be seen time and again.

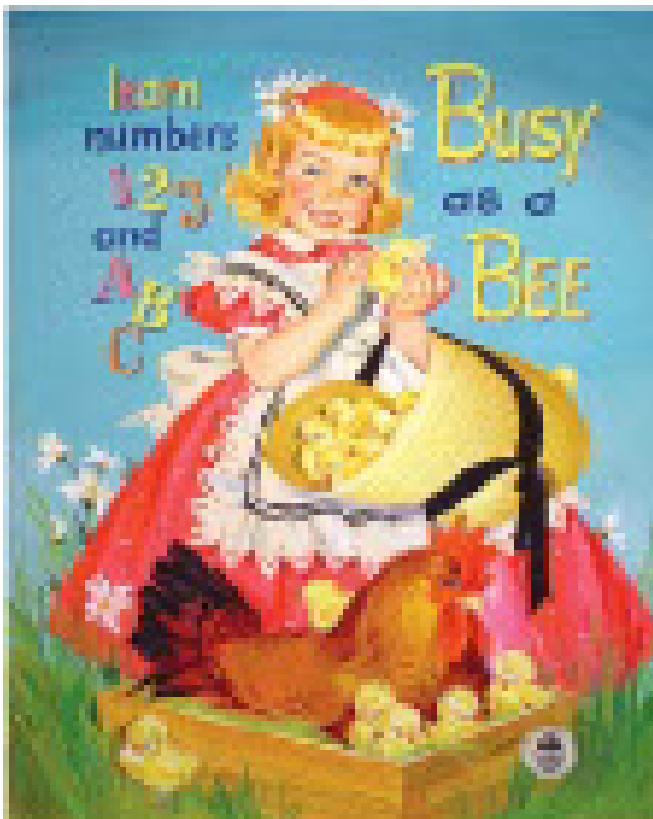
Miss Merrill's file drawers also contain index cards on hundreds of artists and illustrators. Each card contains an artist's name and address, date, type of artwork he or she specialized in, and personal notes about his or her work. Some of the concerns included: "Nice children"; "Color questionable"; "Too glibly"; "Largest talent on the Coast" (that was in

reference to Arthur Sattag in "Not the best artist," "Younger version of Harry Anderson—a little more contemporary oriented but certainly less" (she was speaking of Bob Barry), and so on. Also in her files were literally thousands of magazine tear-sheets culled from contemporary periodicals. It was from these clippings that she chose the Merrill Company's five artists—Hudson Sandison, Louise Farnley, Charlie Eg, Peter Harker, Pearl Frank, Burton Briggs Bradley, Victor Kuhn, Joe Fowler, Arthur Sattag, by Charles, Eben Magagna, Albert Naalik, Tracy J. Mendon, George Titman, Freeman Elliott, and Elizabeth Voss, to name a few.

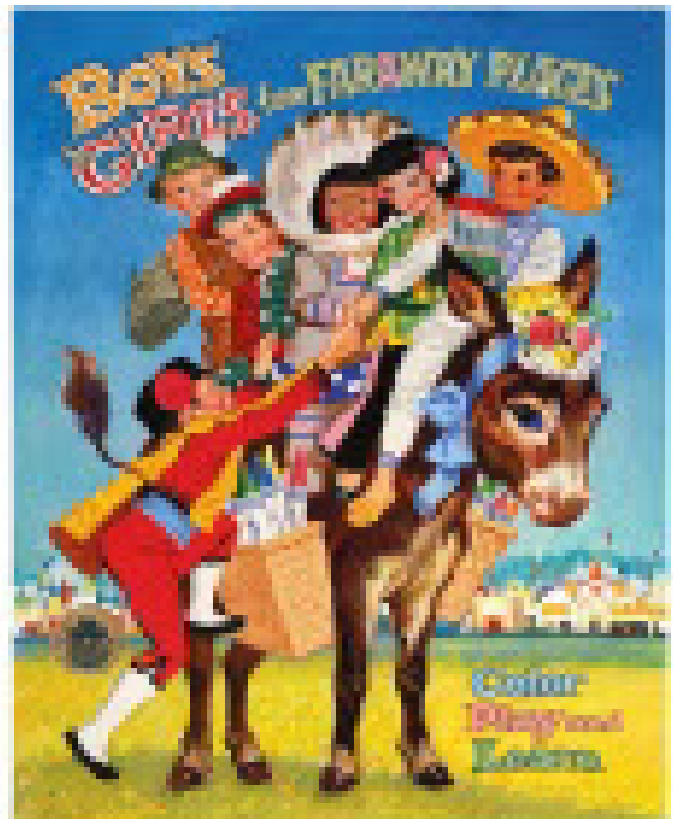
FINE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Miss Merrill's education and love for fine books was expressed in her lifetime pursuit of publishing "Beautiful Books" and "Fine Books for Children" for two company divisions. She was not merely interested in raising children, but she was also interested in teaching them, and many of her coloring books were geared toward educational themes. A testimony to her dedication is found in the 441 original books published by the Merrill Co. Publishers between 1941 and 1965. Each book was an elaborate production, featuring the original front-cover art, separate artwork for the back cover, and numerous interior illustrations.

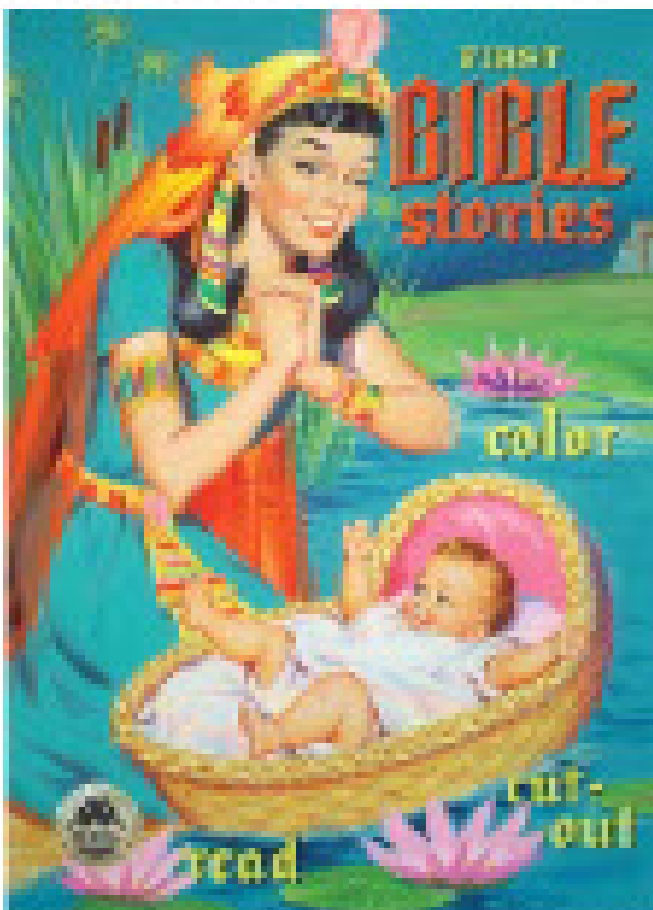
Due to Miss Merrill's ill health in the late 1950s, many of the Merrill books published in this period were reprints of older books with recycled covers. There were 179 of these from 1957 through 1964. In addition to the original published



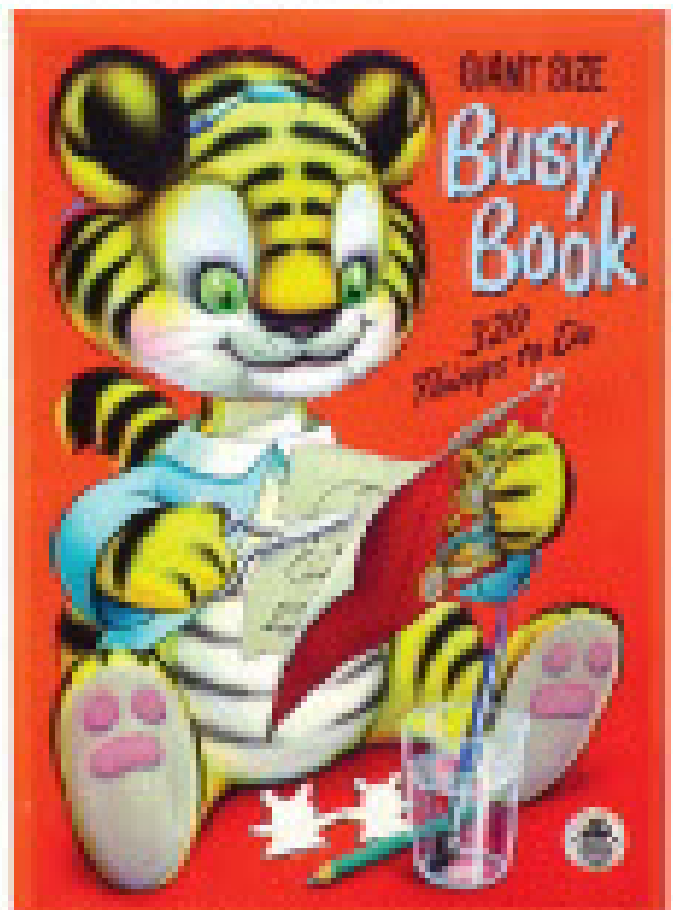
Learn Numbers 12 & 18 and A B C Busy as a Bee, 1964. Cover: Barbara Krings Brackley, painter on board, 12" x 10 1/2"



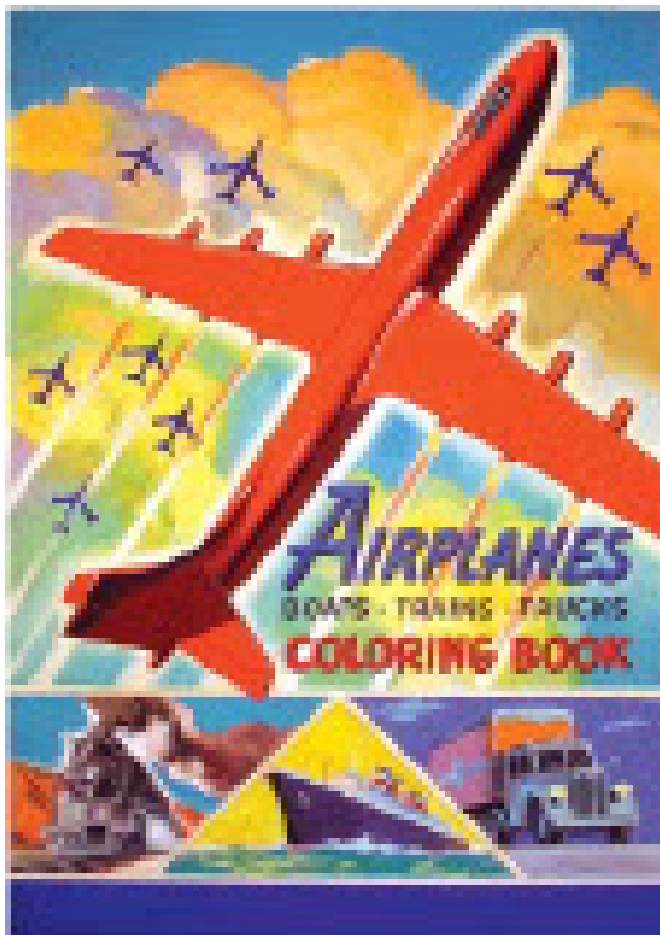
Boys & Girls Forward Flurry, 1965. Cover: Thomas Alexander, painter on board, 12 1/4" x 10 1/2"



First Bible Stories: Color, Read, Cut Out, 1959. Cover: Wilton Francis, painter on board, 11 1/2" x 10 1/2"



Giant Size Busy Book: 200 Things to Do, 1984. Cover: Freddy Spinks, painter on board, 10" x 12"



Airplanes, Boats, Trains, Trucks Coloring Book, 1955. Cover: William Thomas, graphic artist. 18 1/2" x 12 1/2"

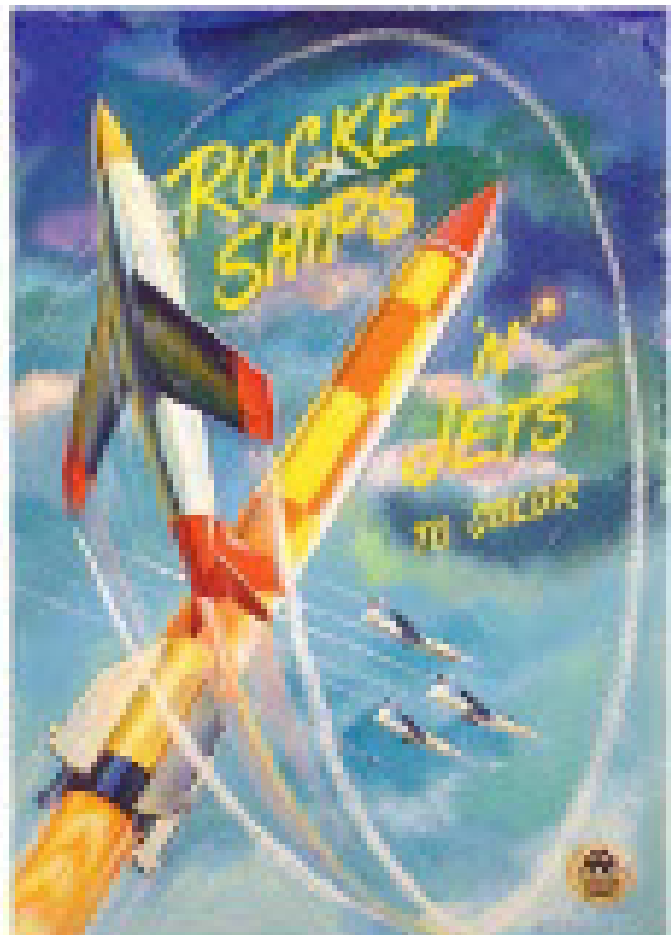
Among these were many pieces of finished artwork that she had planned to publish. The bulk of the artwork was done in tempera, gouache, watercolor, or pencil. The only oil painting in the collection was by Haddon Sundblom.

Miss Merrill passed away in May of 1976, however, her children look for us. Their colorful and exciting covers remain exhilaratingly in the memory of many children. I know this to be true, as I was one of them!

THE MERRILL COMPANY AND ME

After William's death, The Merrill Company Publishers was sold to The Scholastic Inc. of Chicago, to be sold in turn to a company, which I myself purchased in April of 1975. The story behind my acquisition and ownership of the company is a very unusual one. As it turned out, if I had not discovered and purchased the company and its archives, everything would have been destroyed after April 30, 1976.

My involvement with the Merrill Company Publishers began in 1971. I had been a collector of paper toys for many years, and since paper doll books were my favorite, I decided to publish a pictorial reference book on the subject. As I was not familiar with copyright laws, I thought I should contact every publisher still in business and seek their permission to use images of their books. I was able to contact publishers such as Whitman, Sunfield, and Lowe with no problem. The only one that



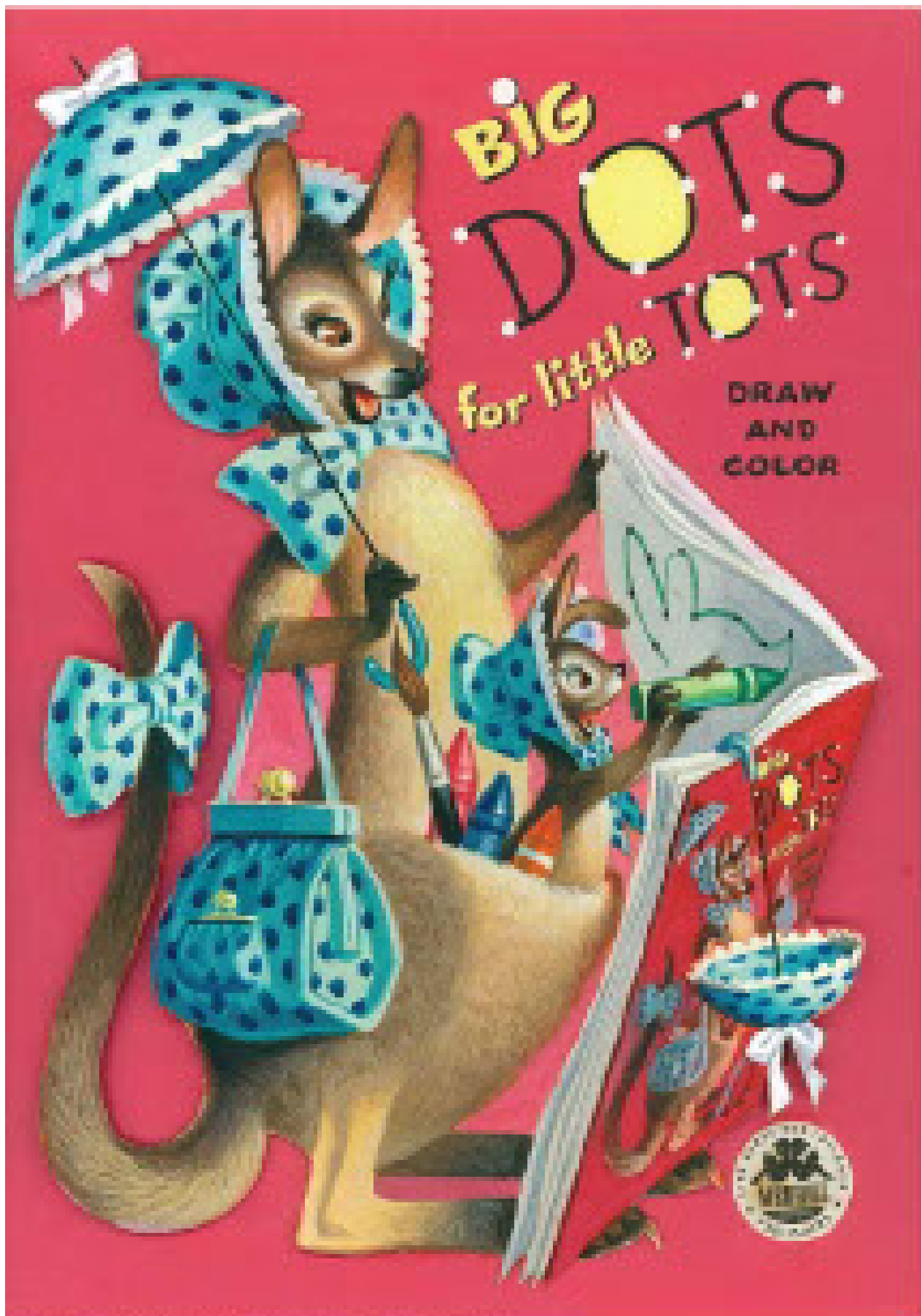
Rocket Ships 'n' Jetts to Space, 1952. Cover: Ted Neale, graphic artist. 10" x 10 1/2"

remained was the Merrill Co. I sent them a legatimated letter requesting their permission. We received no reply. Even the return envelope was not sent back to me. When I didn't hear from them I started calling. Each time I called, an elderly lady would answer the phone and in a little voice voice say "Good Morning... The Merrill Company Publishers." The lady, however, would not let me speak to anyone, nor would she answer any of my questions. I called in the afternoon, there was no answer at all. Since I had no problem getting permission from the other publishers, I decided to go ahead and publish the Merrill books in my Paper Dolls of Famous Faces, Volume 1 and 2.

Over the next few years I gave no particular thought to the Merrill Co. But, however, had something amazing in store for me. One day I decided to once again call the Merrill Co. I didn't know if they were still in business, but when I called I heard the familiar voice and there, "Good Morning... The Merrill Company Publishers." I was truly surprised when the woman, who had never had any conversation with me, asked, "Who may I say I am calling?" I am not given to subterfuge, but when she asked I immediately replied, "Edith Lowe." The woman said, "I am sorry to tell you Mrs. Lowe, but Miss Merrill passed away." She further told me Miss Merrill had been sick for a long time, and had died of a heart attack several months before. I gave my condolences and got off the phone.



Space Happy, 1953 Cover Box & Marble, printed on stock, 18 1/2" x 18 1/2"



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Then began my journey to find the Merrill Company archives—if they still existed. In retrospect, if it had not been for my curiosity, determination, tenacity, and dogged, every-thing-proceeds-by-Merrill-would-no-longer-exist.

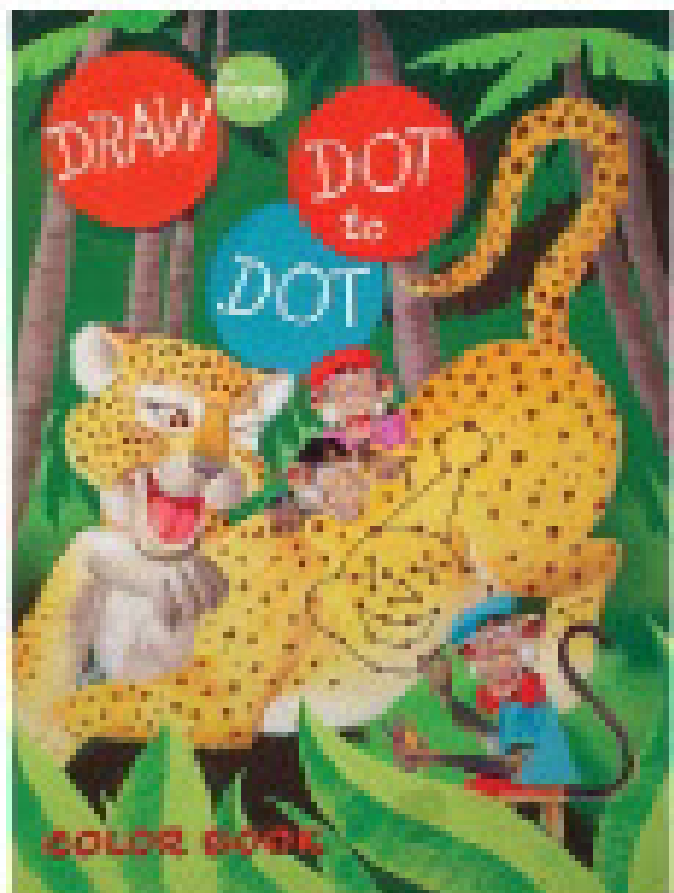
First I had to find out when she died, and then I needed to know the name of the trustee either prior. No small feat! I called the obituary archives of every Chicago newspaper and finally found out the date of her death. It was a very simple and short entry telling where and when she died, and where she was buried. That information sent me on another journey. I called the cemetery office and they found the record of her burial as well as the name of the funeral home involved. I called the funeral home and explained to the man that I was trying to locate the trustee of Miss Merrill's estate, and was told he had no idea. He did remember that only a few people attended her funeral, and said it was possible that he might have some records of people who attended and that he would get back to me. Time passed and I heard nothing. A couple of months later I received a letter from the funeral home giving me the name of a few of Miss Merrill's relatives, and the name of the trustee of her estate. He used the day and—unknown to me at the time—the Merrill Co. Publishers.

My interest at that time was solely in purchasing some of the beautiful Merrill paper doll books for my personal collection and investment, as I was hoping there might be some left-over stock. Purchasing the Merrill Company itself never entered into my mind. When I called the trustee I told him I was interested in purchasing some books—the trustee never mentioned to me that Miss Merrill's will stipulated that everything had to be sold together, as a company. He said I could come to Chicago and take a look, and it was a good thing he didn't tell me that it had to be sold as a Company—book, stock, and barrel—or I would never have gone. In September of 1978 my son Mark and I made plans to fly to Chicago to meet the trustee, who would take us to Lake Mead Drive where the company was headquartered. I called him when we arrived and was told he was very ill, and that someone else would meet us there, and to give him a call before we left. He was staying two days. When we arrived, being us was a door with frosted glass at the top with no markings except a number. I knocked on the door and it opened, just a crack, and there stood an older lady. Guess what? It was the "Good Morning—The Merrill Co. Publishers lady" Ms. Jarrold—the guardian of the gate as it turned out. She informed us that we could come in and look around, but that she was leaving for the day (it was 1 pm) and she locked the door behind us. I was hounded by their trust. In a dilapidated position it would have been like turning left loose in a candy store!

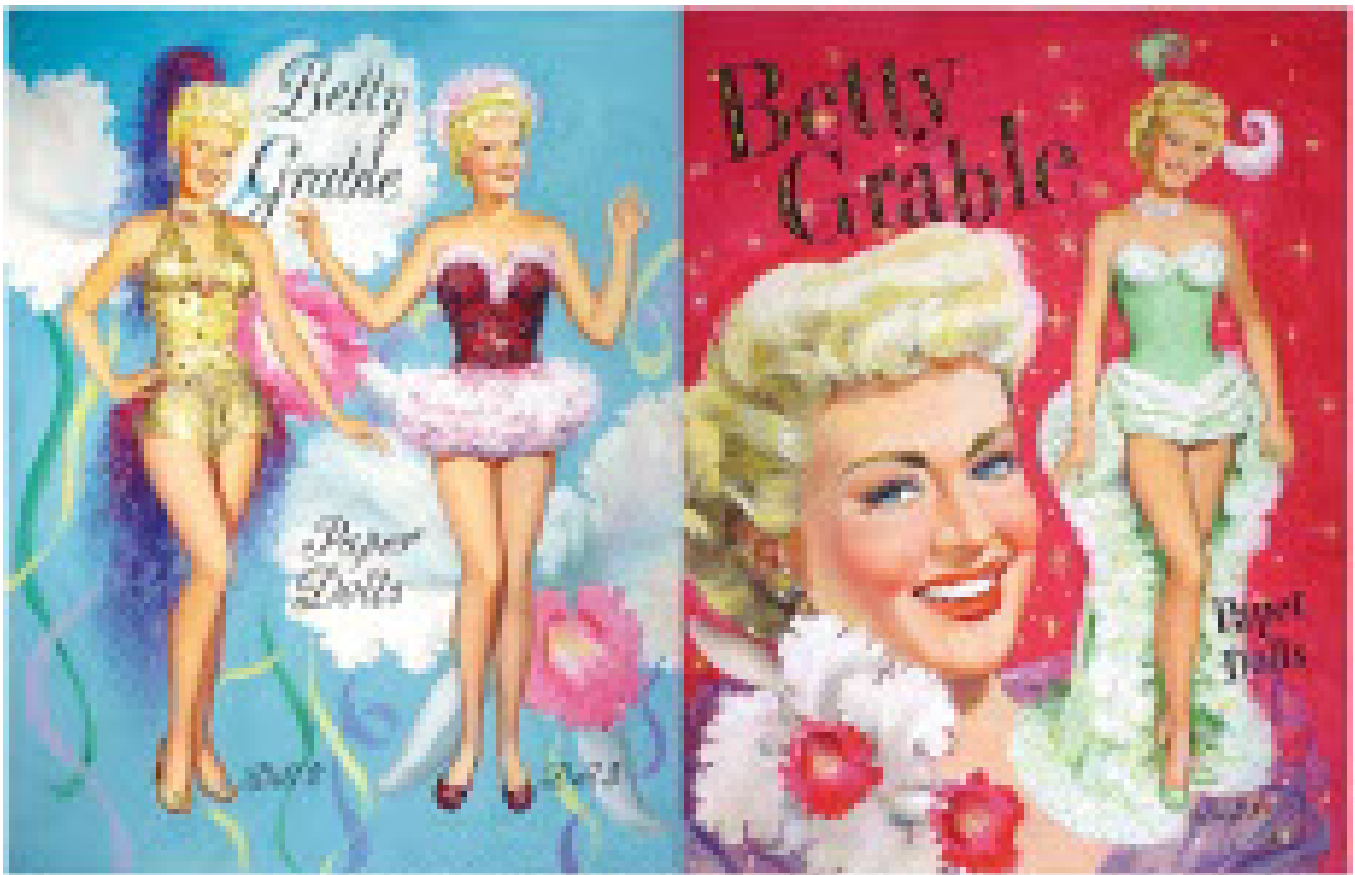
We had no idea what awaited us inside. What we saw was overwhelming! It was typical warehouse with extremely high ceilings and four open floors. There was a small office in the back that was Miss Merrill's, overwhelmed by her things on the desk and in the drawers. Stacked in no order, almost to the ceiling, were thousands of cartons of books. There was hardly space to walk down the aisles. There were some large flat top cabinets, and flat open flat where the artwork was



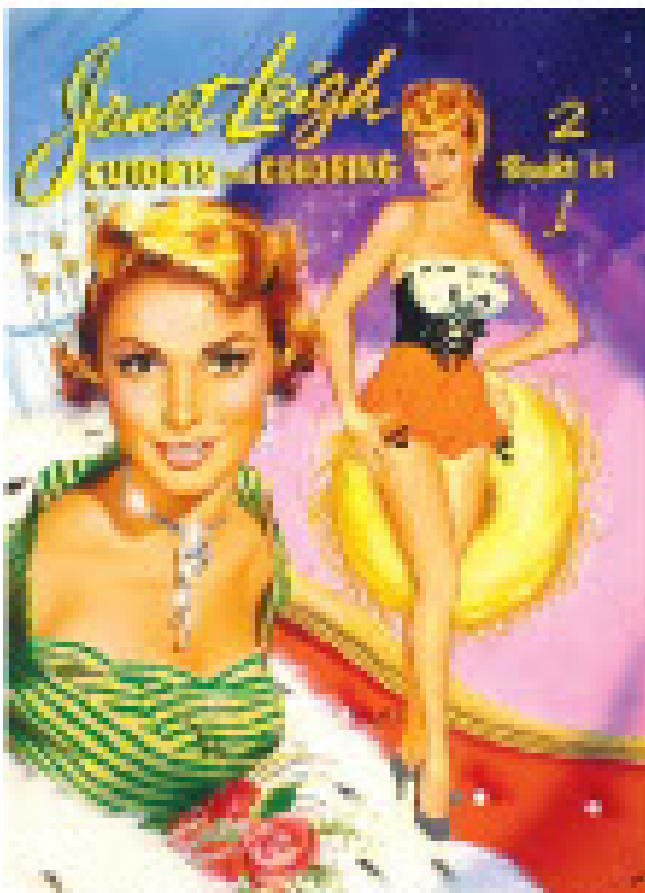
By Ann Fink. Cover book number, publisher's book, 75 (M) x 10 (M)



Ann Fink and Son, 1981. Cover Number 100, publisher's book, 100 x 10 (M)



Betty Grable Paper Dolls, 1953. From: McMillan, postcard, 10" x 11 1/2"



Janet Leigh Cutouts & Coloring, 1953. From: Green/Pearson/Bliss, postcard on board, 10" x 11 1/2"

© Illustration



Janet Leigh Cutouts & Coloring, 1953. From: Green/Pearson/Bliss, postcard on board, 10" x 11 1/2"



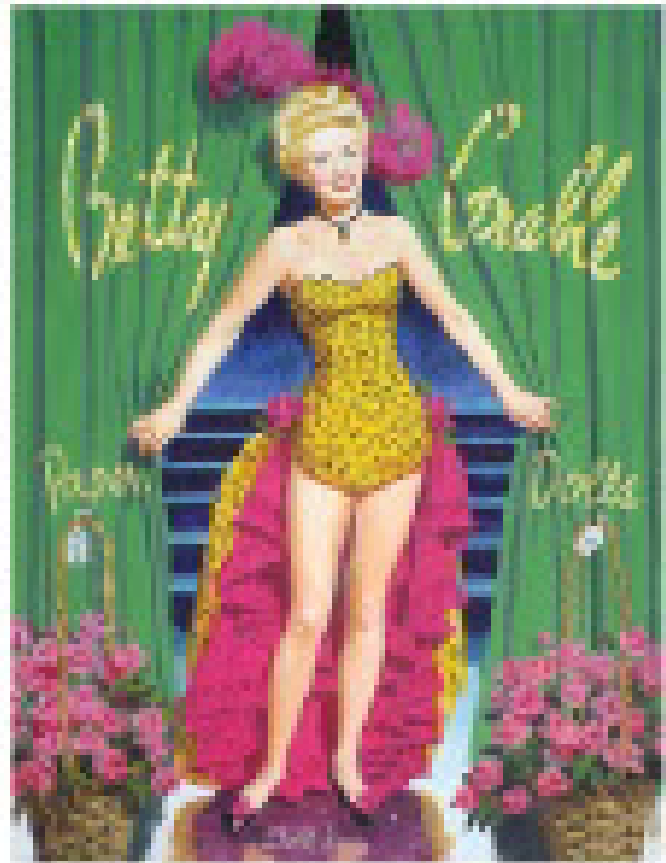
Betty Grable Paper Dolls, A "Cash Box" Book, 1954. Post Office Artist Society, printed in black, 10 1/2" x 11 1/2"

placed. Each page was wrapped in butcher paper and labeled with the title, year, and artist—by the artist's initials name. After I purchased the company, I discovered there were also three printing plates for her catalogs: a large folder on every published book containing everything there in beginning to end; files of artists and illustrators books containing the copyright company meeting books, and record books of everything produced; files and files of transcripts with the artist's name indicated and so on. As it turned out there were over 4000 cartons alone, not counting everything else.

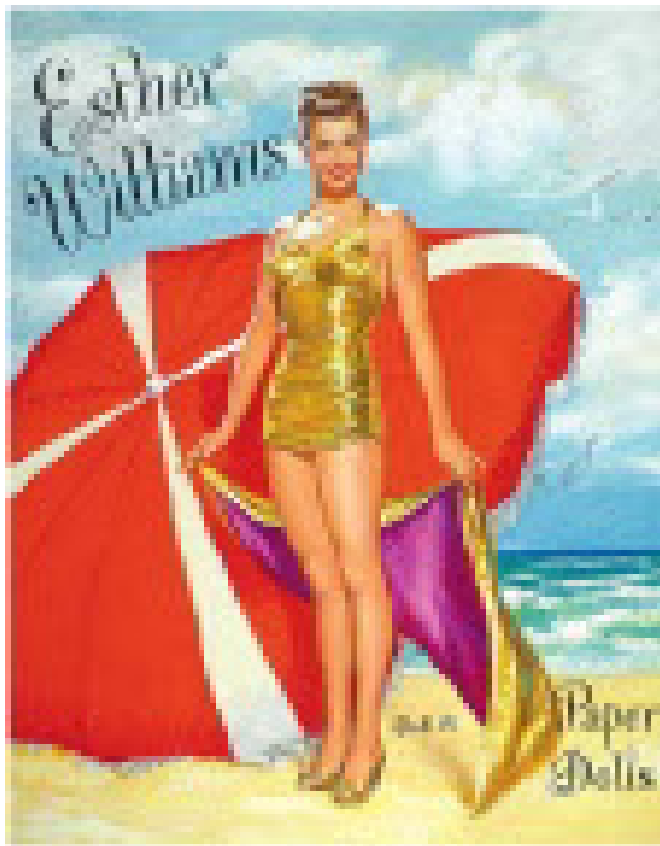
There are no words to describe our reaction upon seeing this overwhelming, unbelievable mass! My son looked at me and I looked at him, and he laughingly said, "There it is, mother!" In a haze, Mark squeezed himself through a few aisles, and since every carton was marked, he started looking as high up as he could, for something he might recognize. By some miracle he located a few cartons full of paper doll books. At least what we came for existed, to some degree. After announcing his success find, Mark proceeded to put his feet up on Mr. Samuels' desk and took a nap. My son and I turned out to be less than thrilled. I woke up Mark, we checked our books, and decided this had been a wilds errand. We were very discouraged. There seemed to be one dozen or more to what was there. After ultimately purchasing the company and going through everything, I was convinced that Mrs. Belmont never threw away a single scrap of paper, or anything else relative to her beloved books.



Betty Grable Paper Dolls, A "Cash Box" Book, 1954. Illustration Artist Society, printed in black, 10 1/2" x 11 1/2"



Betty Grable Paper Dolls, A "Cash Box" Book, 1954. Post Office Artist Society, printed in black, 10 1/2" x 11 1/2"



Esther Williams Paper Moon, Jan. 1964. Cover: Peter Kelly, graphic artist; \$2.95 x 36"



Esther Williams Casting Stars, 1956. Cover: Peter Kelly, graphic artist; \$2.95 x 36"



Esther Williams Entails and Entails, 1953. Cover: Arthur Sarnoff, graphic artist; \$2.95 x 36"



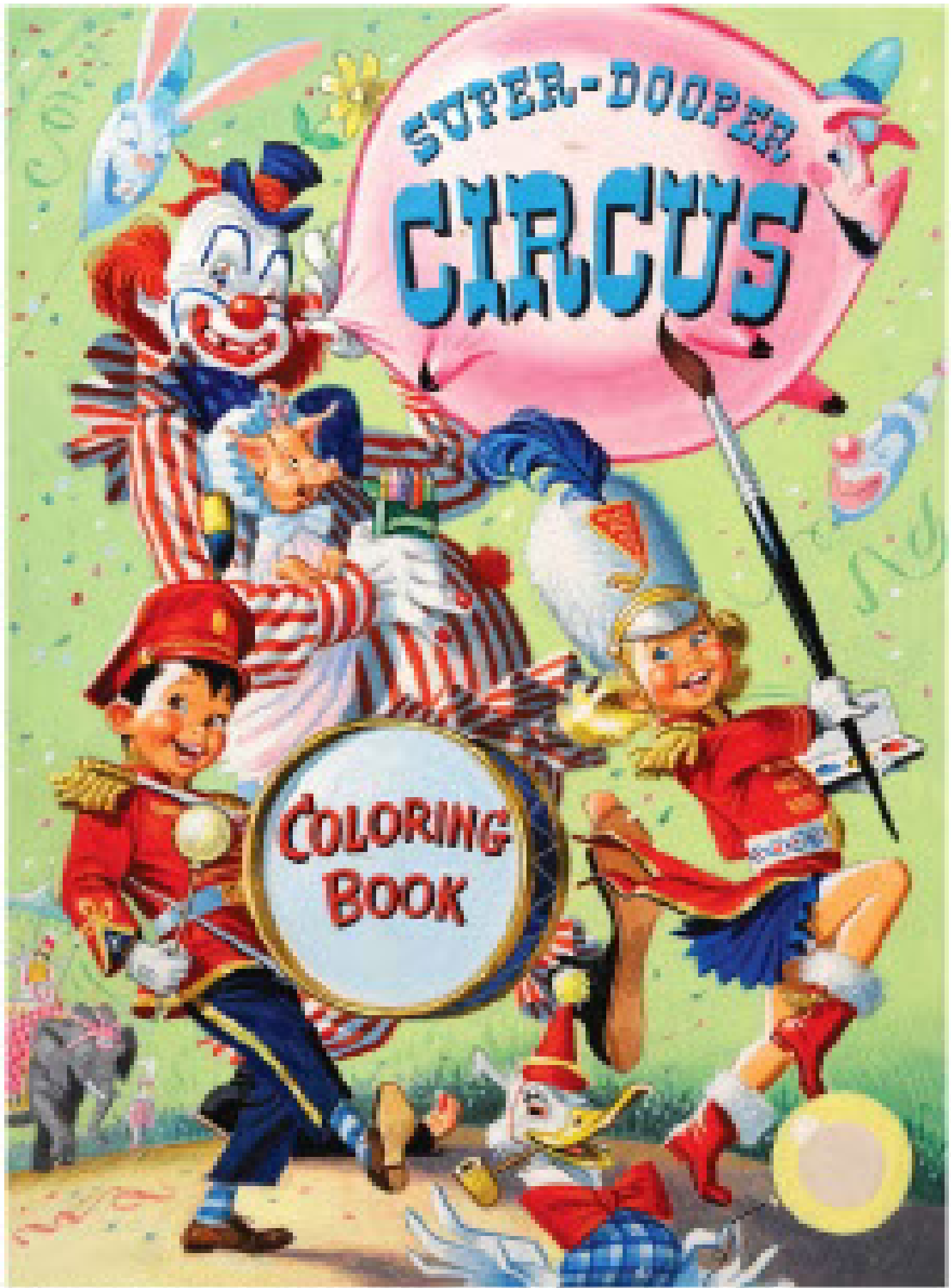
Esther Williams (Cutouts and Coloring) © H&M Book Co., Inc. Esther Williams, picture on board, 10 1/2" x 10 1/2"



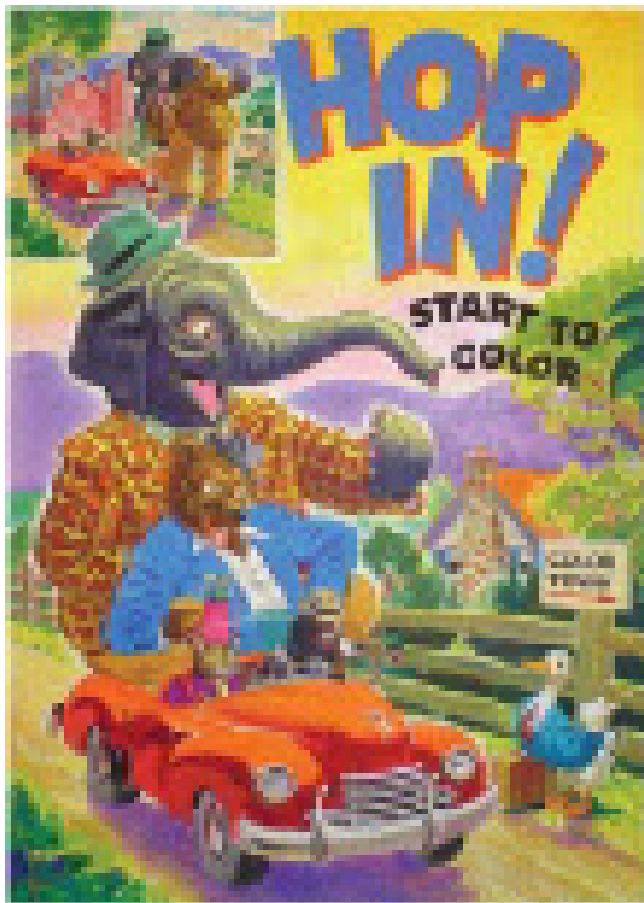
From 1951 Paper Dolls, 1941, Head and Neck-Cover, Bodice-Cover, gowns at back, with garter* & 10"



New Look! Paper Dolls, "Good Girl" Book, 1951, Bodice and Neck-Cover, the Bodice, gowns at back, 10" KEEF 10"



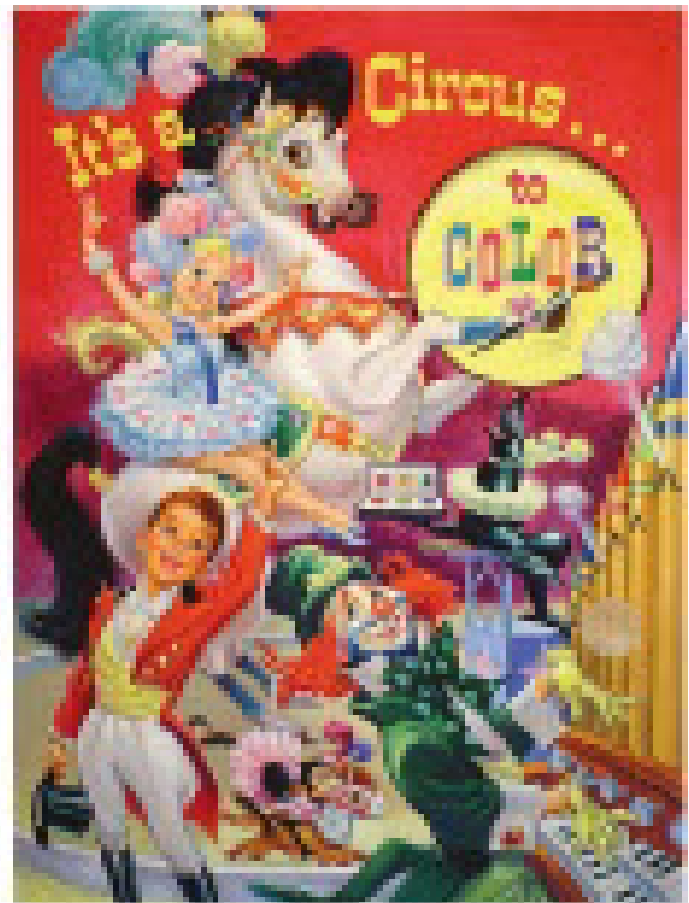
Agnes Repp, 1951 Cover Photo (Hobby press) artwork, 14" x 11"



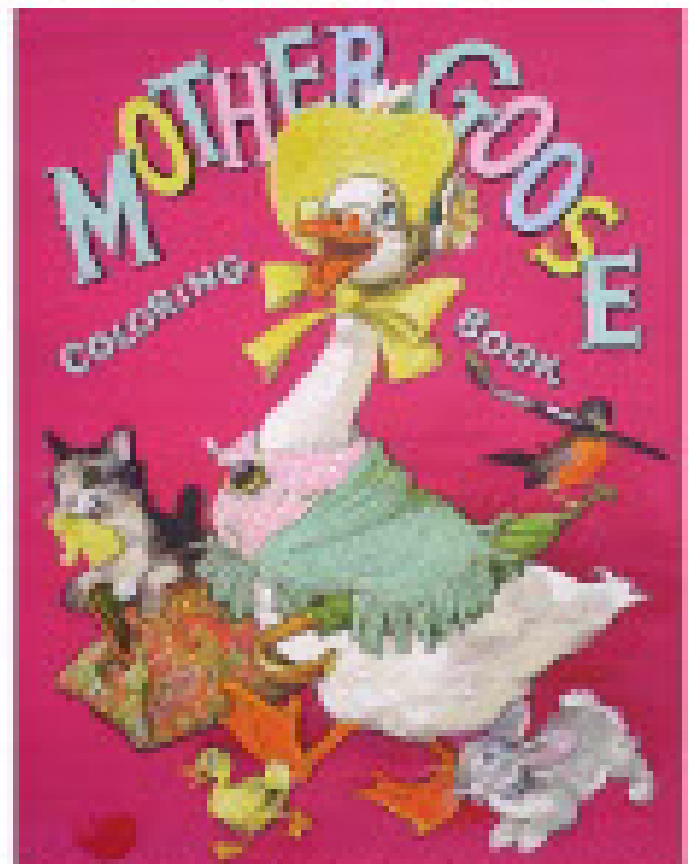
Hop In! Start to Color (1958). Cover: Albert Barthel, painter on board. 11 1/2" x 10 1/2"

After assessing our position and its facility, I called the trustee and once again told him I had come to buy some books, but that this was a nightmare. He asked us to come back the next day as planned to see if we could perhaps get a better overview of what was there. We went back the next day and made a general list, but it was a daunting task. I called the trustee again, and it was then that I was informed that nothing could be sold separately. It had to be bought as a total as The Merril Company Publishers, but out of courtesy, I asked how much they were asking for it. He said they had not decided, but that it was insured for \$1 million. After I had asked another, he told me to go home and think about it, and then I could write him and make an offer on the company. He stated that to be sold by April 20, 1979, or it would be disposed of on April 20, 1979. The lease on the warehouse was going to run out, and they were not renewing the lease.

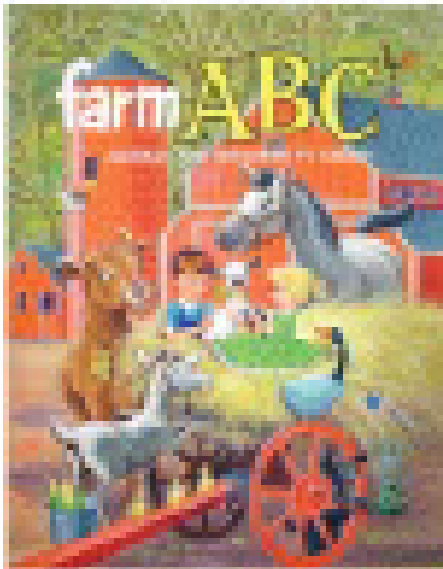
After I went home, I gave careful thought to the trustee's dilemma. How could he sell the company when you couldn't see anything? Without a detailed inventory, which he said they did not have, it would be almost impossible. If there was an inventory of the Merril Co., which surely there was for insurance purposes, no one seemed to have it or care. All the trustee wanted to do was dump the company before the warehouse lease expired. I wrote a six-page, detailed letter giving him a run-down of what we comprised, and all of the securities involved in trying to sell everything, prices and interest. As it turned out, everything I said was true. I made



Circus... to Color (1958). Cover: Albert Barthel, painter on board. 11 1/2" x 10 1/2"



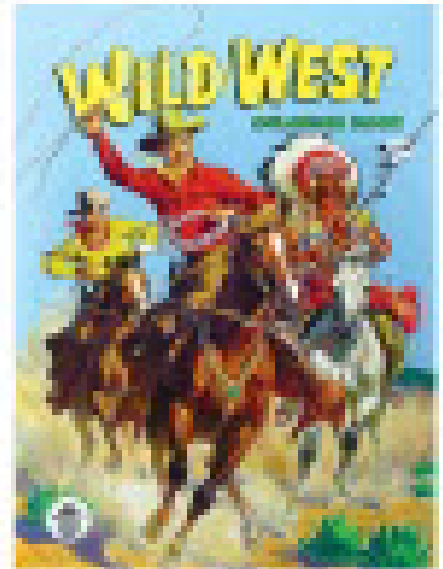
Mother Goose Coloring Book (1958). Cover: Albert Barthel, painter on board. 11 1/2" x 10 1/2"



Farm ABC, 1993. Cover: Nancy Green; graphics on board, 11 1/2" x 11 1/2"



Sweet Little Miss Pink, 1988. Cover: Betty Kestel; graphics on board, 10 1/2" x 10 1/2"



Wild West Coloring Book, 1988. Cover: Walter Davis; letter-graphics on board, 10 1/2" x 10 1/2"



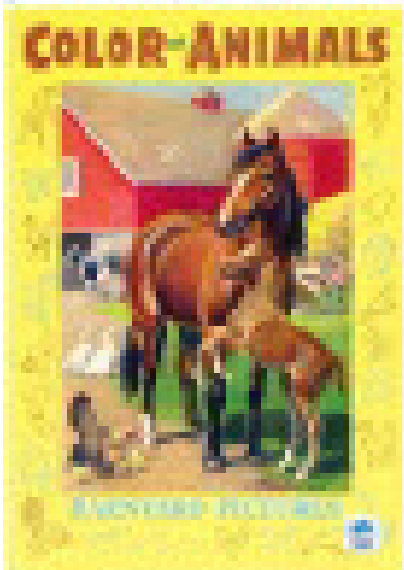
Susie Says Let's Color, 1988. Cover: Charlotte A. Rice; graphics on board, 8 1/2" x 11 1/2"



Puppy's Coloring Book, 1988. Cover: Charlotte A. Rice; graphics on board, 11 1/2" x 8 1/2"



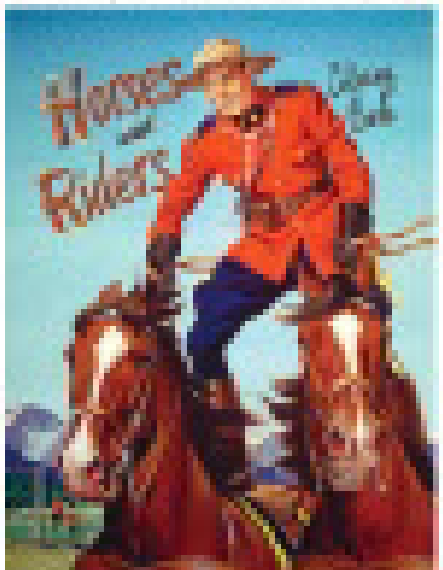
Happy Time Coloring Book, 1988. Cover: Charlotte A. Rice; graphics on board, 11 1/2" x 11 1/2"



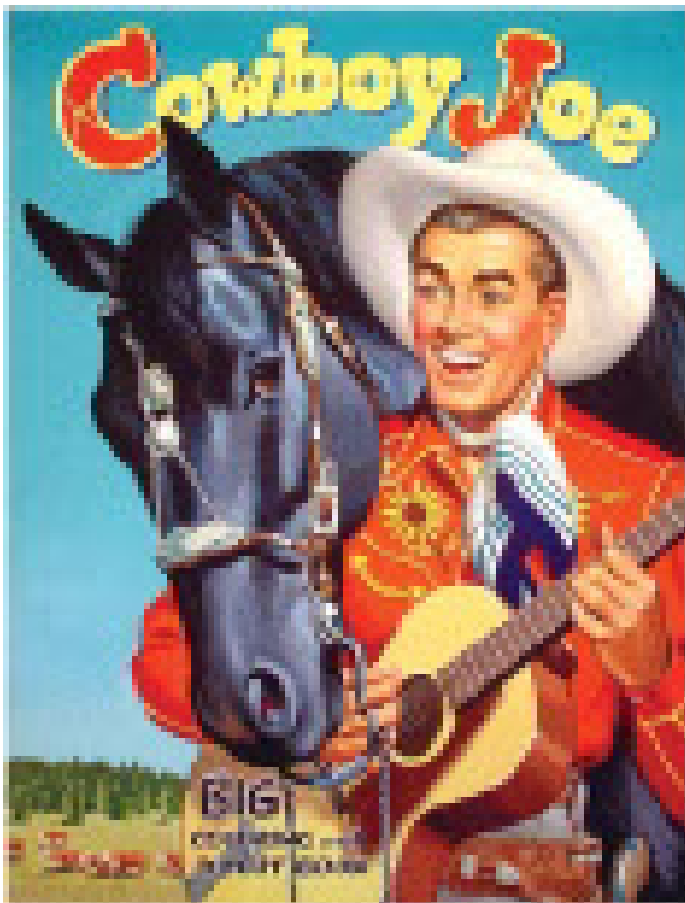
Color the Animals, 1990. Cover: Ethel Ripstein; graphics on board, 11" x 11 1/2"



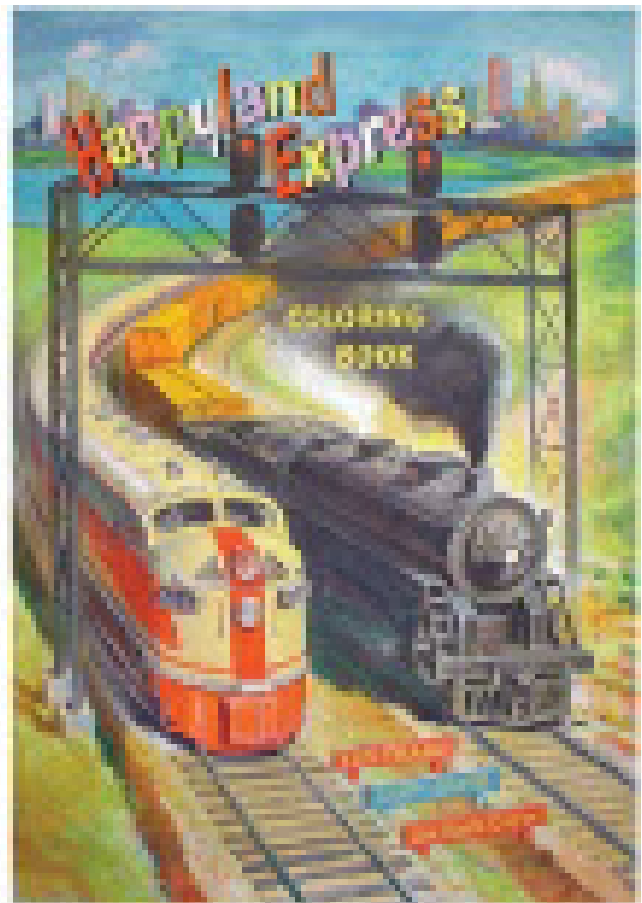
A to Z Animal Coloring Book, 1982. Cover: George Brown; graphics on board, 10 1/2" x 10 1/2"



Horses & Riders, 1984. Cover: Karl Kestel; graphics on board, 10" x 11"



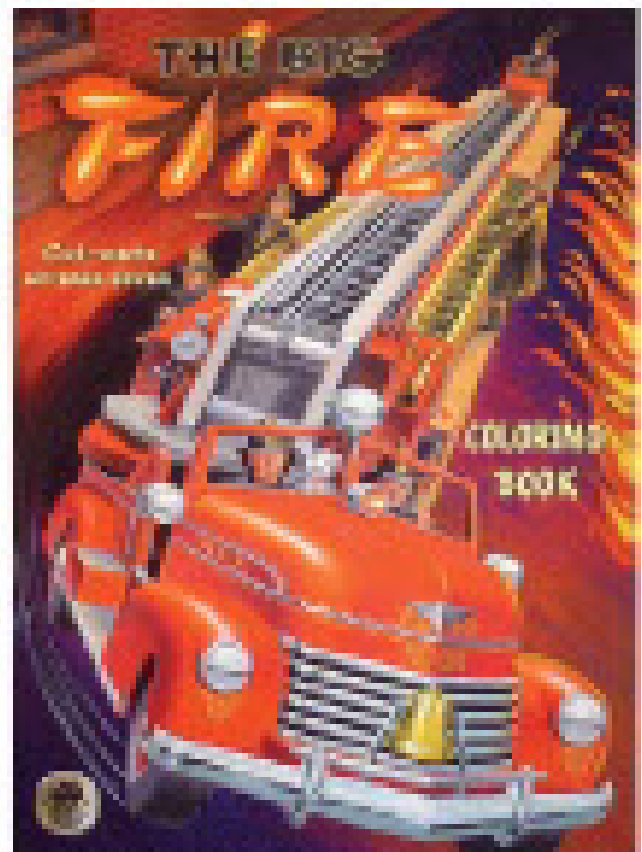
October 1951. Cover design/illustration: goods on board. 18 1/2" x 21 1/2"



November 1951. Cover: Edith Powell, goods on board. 18 1/2" x 21"

have separate offices for different categories of material, and then I left it at that.

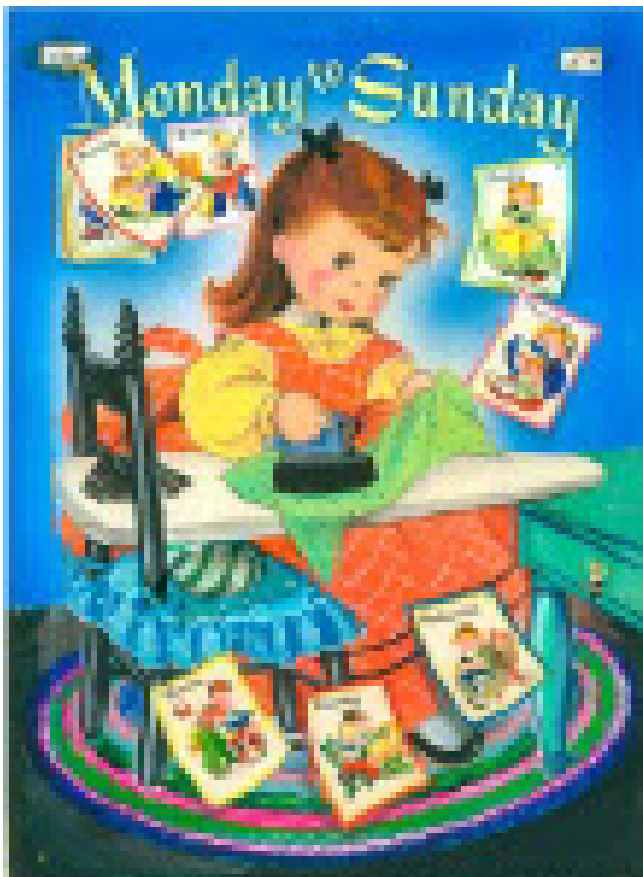
Time marched on...and on...and on. I never heard from him again until the second week of April of the next year. He told me he had contacted different publishers and prospective buyers, and that they had all looked at it and were unable to make offers because they couldn't see anything. They too were overwhelmed and walked away. The trustee had exhausted all his leads, except for ME, and he was in a bind time-wise. Oh happy me! He said that if I could get everything out before April 30th that I could buy it all at a certain price. It was a done deal, and Superman never lies as fast as I did. I found publishers, rented vans, recruited family, and we were Chicago-bound. Unfortunately I was not able to go, but my husband and son and son-in-law went. I immediately went to work renting a huge warehouse to house the material, files to put the records on, etc...and then I sat and waited. Before the 30th, there was a call from Tulsa with my prize! What a thrill! It is impossible to describe what it felt like to look upon all of the beautiful, prime-condition trucks, and gaze piece-by-piece at the magnificent artwork. It was as if all of my childhood visions from Santa Claus were wrapped up into one event. I am sure the wonderful artists of these books would be surprised to learn their work survived. And to think from time all of this was to being destroyed. (And destroyed it would have been!) The thrill of looking at this artwork has never diminished for me. Every time I look at one of these bright, colorful, amusing, detailed, and amusing



October 1956. Cover: John Wilkey, goods on board. 18 1/2" x 21 1/2"

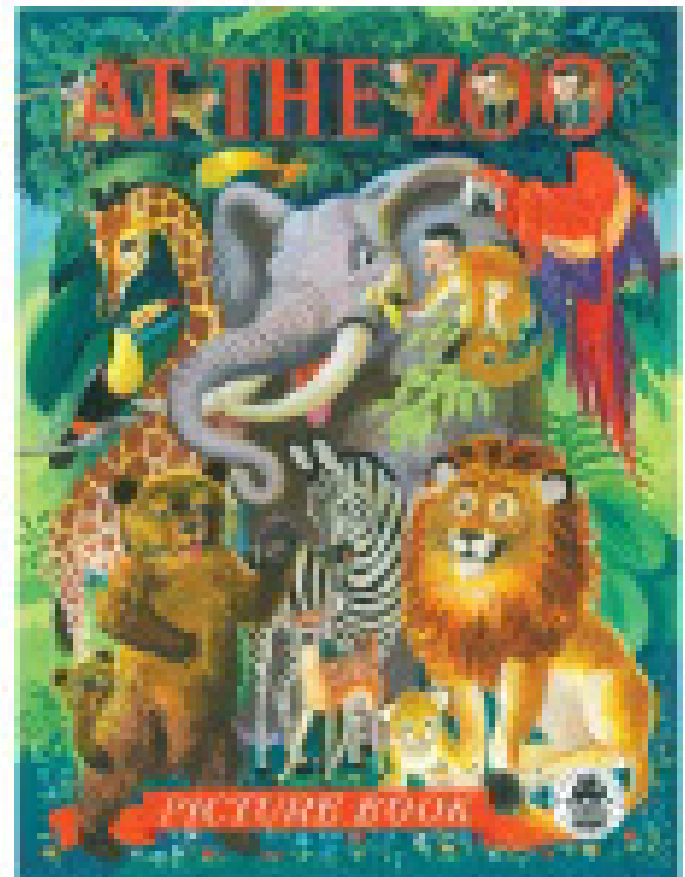


Baby's ABC Picture Book, 1955. Cover: Peter Hinchey; graphics on book, 18 1/2" x 18 1/2"



Monday & Sunday Picture Book, 1955. Cover: Mary Murray; graphics on book, 18 1/2" x 18"

© Illustration



At the Zoo Picture Book, 1955. Cover: George Thomas; graphics on book, 18 1/2" x 18 1/2"



Little Red Riding Hood by Miss Merril Co., 1911. Cover: Norman Bethke, painter at home, 11 1/2" x 11 1/2"



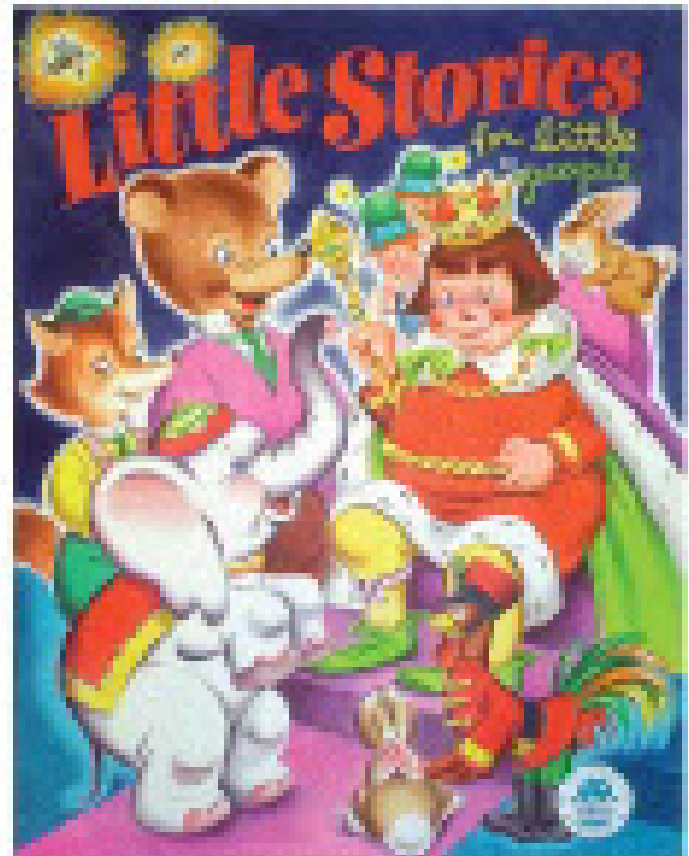
Three Little Kittens by Miss Merril Co., 1911. Cover: Norman Bethke, painter at home, 11 1/2" x 11 1/2"

paintings that is a feeling of excitement. I truly experience joy and appreciation for the work that went into it, and I say, "Thank you, Miss Merril."

In 1960 I met Miss Merril Co. Convention Committee, Oklahoma, and over a period of two days exhibited every piece of artwork along with its corresponding publication. Since no Merril Co. book had been published since 1953, I decided to produce a new current paper doll book especially for the convention. I contacted Norman Kings, the famous MME magazine artist who had also done many books for Miss Merril's company, and he happily agreed to participate. We decided to do a book on "Three Little Kittens" and Norman sent me three drawings of the front and back covers. Unfortunately he soon became very ill, and passed away. Miss Betty Flory, a well-known artist of contemporary paper dolls, and Norman's great niece and neepled it to create a beautiful new Merril book.

After the Convention, a tornado hit one of my warehouses and completely demolished it. Before I could get out to the site to see if anything was salvagable, the manager had bulldozed everything into a pile. Luckily most of the contents of the warehouse was comprised of last book stock, and glass printing separations. It was a tragedy, most indeed.

Overall, the Merril Company produced 441 original book titles. The following is a breakdown by year of the number of books published by The Merril Co., followed by a breakdown of the total number of books by subject matter:



Little Stories for Little People, 1911. Cover: Betty Flory, painter at home, 11 1/2" x 11 1/2"



Ketch's Surprise Paint Book, 1985 - Green Hobbler's Editions, all in color, 10 1/2" x 11 1/2"



The Night Before Christmas Picture Story Book, 100+ Color Stencil Master, 64 pp/11 1/2" x 9"

Books Published by Year:

2009: 10; 2008: 110; 2007: 100; 2006: 104; 2005: 42; 2004: 210;
 2003: 40; 2002: 40; 2001: 60; 2000: 40; 1999: 40; 1998:
 10; 1997: 4; 1996: 4; 1995: 10; 1994: 4; 1993: 11; 1992:
 4; 1991: 3; 1990: 1; 1989: 1.

Quantity of Books by Subject Matter:

- 100 Paper Doll Books
- 200 Coloring Books
- 24 Picture Books
- 24 Picture Story Books
- 9 Sticker Books
- 5 Stencil Books
- 50 Educational Coloring Books
- 3 Paint with Water
- 32 Poem Books

It has been a pleasure to share the story of the magnificent Maritima artwork with you. I wish you had a chance to see the entire collection, as there are probably around 700 individual pieces! It is wonderful that this artwork has survived, and I am confident that Miss Merrill would be pleased to know that the fruits of her labors and love have endured, and are being enjoyed by the readers of this magazine today. ♥

©2009 by Leo Winkler

The author wishes to thank her daughter, Bernice Winkler, for her help in photographing and organizing the content of this article. If you are interested in purchasing a piece of Maritima art, you may contact me at leo@leoart.com

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New and Notable:



CHARLEY HARPER— AN ILLUSTRATED LIFE

BY TODD BLUHM
200 PAGES, \$35.00 HARDCOVER
ISBN: 978 1 56806 282 8
FUEL BOOKS, 2017

This beautiful, large-format tale is the definitive monograph of artist Charley Harper's six-decade-long career, and is perhaps one of the finest books I have ever seen devoted to an illustrator. Renowned New York-based designer Todd Oldham rediscovered Harper's work in 2000, and collaborated closely with him until his death last year, combing through his sprawling archive to edit and design this stunning volume.

Charley Harper was an American original who created his art from his home studio in Cincinnati, Ohio, until his death on June 18, 2007, at the age of 84. His style was graphic and area-harmonious, a type of minimal realism, as he called it, that continues to mesmerize and inspire his admirers today.

Charley Harper—An Illustrated Life, showcases illustrations that appeared from 1958–1975 in the *Ford Times* magazine, as well as in books such as the beloved *The Giant Golden Book of Biology* in 1961, Betty Carter's *Dance for Two* in 1964, and *The Aerial Explorer* in 1968, among many others. His well-loved book, *Birds and Herk*, first published in 1974, is considered a classic. Remarkably, however, Charley's work has never before been published in one complete retrospective. This massive 432-page volume is the definitive collection.



HELIODYSSEY

BY TOM
FUCHS
104 PAGES
\$24.95 HARDCOVER
FUEL PUBLISHING, 2017

HeliOdyssey the book (and the well-known blog) features classic and new book illustrations derived from many daily and obscure digital reproductions from around the world, brought together day-by-day and accompanied by insightful background commentary. Although about two-thirds of the images in the book have appeared on the site previously, this is not simply a reprint of the archive. There are many new colors added here.

The book (like the site) covers a very wide spectrum of styles, time periods, and subject matter. You can expect everything from abstract to realism, and from Art Decoism to the Renaissance. PK, the creator of the blog, scans the internet daily in search of new web wonders, and he has managed to discover all manner of unusual images and unearthly delights. While it may sound like a haphazard collection of unrelated visual material, the book is in fact much more of a cohesive and interesting survey of 21st-century history that these few words may suggest. The book is also a beautiful product—FUEL have done a wonderful job including the text using little object



STEVE RUDE: ARTIST IN MOTION

BY STEVE RUDE & JOHN FINKLER
INTRODUCTION BY MIKE BISHOP
JOB FINKLER
200 PAGES, \$24.95 HARDCOVER
FUEL BOOKS, 2017

I would've exposed to Steve Rude's work in the early '90s when I began reading his *Mojo* comic. His fluid dynamism, and the pointed irony of his comic were an immediate influence on my growth as an illustrator. Interviews with Steve in magazines such as *The Comics Journal* and elsewhere led to my discovery of the work of Andrew Loomis, John Gorman, and other early illustrators. A glance through his sketchbooks at a comic convention in the early '90s was a similar revelation. In many ways, Steve's influence led directly to my discovery of classic illustration, and ultimately to the existence of this very magazine. I have always been a fan of Steve's work, and I am very happy to see that John Finkler has now assembled a long-overdue retrospective of "the Rude" career, filled with beautiful full-color reproductions of his amazing artwork.

The book explores Rude's versatility in several subjects and mediums. Chapters cover his comics and illustration work, print visualizations, animation material, life-drawings, and an elaborate sketchbook section. Numerous finished paintings are accompanied by preliminary work, such as sketches, color proofs, and use of reference material. In addition, there is a "how to" segment, which shows a painting project from start to finish. Almost all of the works are scanned directly from the original artwork. Many are published for the first time.

Fans of Rude's comic work, art students, and admirers of complex illustration will all be thrilled by this beautifully produced new book.



ALEX RAYMOND: HIS LIFE AND ART

BY TOM ROBERTS
120 PAGES, FULL COLOR
\$24.95 HARDCOVER
ADVENTURE HOUSE, 2016

Best known as the creator of *Flash Gordon*, Alex Raymond (1907–1976) revolutionized the comic world with his reality-by-drawing style and Warren breakthrough. In addition to *Flash Gordon*, Raymond also applied his prodigious skills to the creation of a number of other comic strips including *Secret Agent X-9*, *Rip Kirby*, *Jungle Jim*, *The Tyle's Luck*, and *Tillie the Toiler*. In 1949, Raymond received a Pulitzer Award from the National Cartoonists Society for his work on *Rip Kirby*. Tragically, Alex Raymond's life was cut short when he was killed in an automobile accident in Westport, Connecticut, at the age of 68. He is buried in St. John's Roman Catholic Cemetery in Danbury, Connecticut. The new 120-page volume is an authoritative and in-depth artist's life story, and features an introduction by James Bama, as well as a foreword by director (and Raymond collector) George Lucas.



**THE AGE OF ENCHANTMENT:
BEARDSLEY, MULG, AND THEIR
CONTEMPORARIES, 1890-1910**

BY JOSEPH DUNN
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
BY G. K. MULLIGAN
WALKER PUBLISHERS, 2008

Published to accompany the first major exhibition of British literary-illustrators to be held in London (at the Dulwich Picture Gallery, November 2007–February 2008), *The Age of Enchantment* marks the rise of the Golden Age of Book Illustration. During the 1890s/Edwardian Art, the growth of mechanical printing methods, and significant social mobility in Edwardian England, illustrated books of fairy stories and myths published with lavish plates became the coffee-table books of the era, bought and consumed by adults.

The book begins with Aubrey Beardsley, whose short career (he died of consumption at 26) was dedicated to "fantastical decadence and wit, as the chief artistic analysis of Oscar Wilde, a romanticist and oddball for his illustrations of Wilde's *Salome*, and for the groundbreaking magazine *The Yellow Book* where he was the artistic director. One review of *The Yellow Book* called for an Act of Parliament "to make this kind of thing illegal," referring to Beardsley's illustrations.

Beardsley set loose a new spirit of hedonism, and although the spirit of decadence waned after Wilde's trial for sodomy in 1895, and Beardsley's death in 1902, the genre was not of the brief: a new generation of illustrators emerged (some by borrowing from the past—especially from fin-de-siècle and renaissance—the rich decorative elements of the Orient, the Near East, and the ethereal fairy-world of the Victorians).

The Age of Enchantment pays homage to the many local-famed names of English illustration including Beardsley, Rackham, Dabry, Nielsen, Popery and Charles Robinson, but also introduces us to the Danish/Scottish, Irish, and the leadership of just 14 exhibited at The Royal Academy's The Glasgow School Artists, and Henry Charles who brought the Beardsley religion to Ireland. This new book is a marvelous survey of one of the subgenres of the history of fantasy illustrations and will appeal to anyone who appreciates drawing, children's literature, or the book, etc.



**PRINT OR PIXEL: THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN
ILLUSTRATION ART**

EDITED BY JANE WAIN
208 PAGES
EBOOK SOFTWARE
MORGAN PUBLISH, 2008

This fascinating collection of art and essays, by the best of today's science fiction and fantasy artists, presents candid opinions behind the revolution now taking place in the illustration field. Are computers creating a creative shift in the creation of science fiction and fantasy art, or are they just another tool in the artist's past tool? Covering original fantasy and science fiction art may never be the same! 📖



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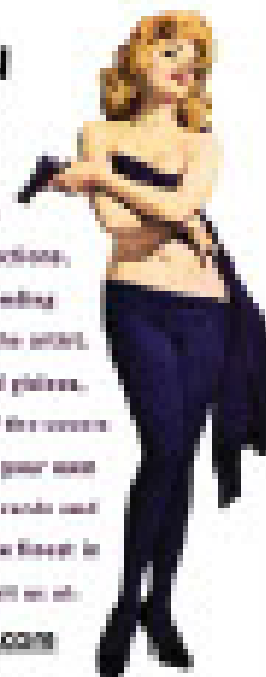
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EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

Double Lives: American Painters as Illustrators, 1880-1950

September 7 through November 21, 2006
The Andy Warhol Museum, PA

This exhibition and its accompanying catalogue explore the often uneasy relationship between the art of easel painting and the art of illustration. It focuses on artists who were an important part of the history of the nation's tradition in American culture, and who practiced both easel painting and illustration in the years between 1880 and 1950. Among the artists represented are Winslow Homer, J.C. Mundy, Frederick Remington, John Sloan, Grant Wood, and Rockwell Kent. The exhibition is organized by guest curator Richard Taylor and the New Britain Museum of American Art (Connecticut).

For more information, visit www.wamuseum.org

Americans Abroad: J.C. Leyendecker and the European Academic Tradition's Influence on American Illustration

May 29 through June 21, 2006
The Society of Illustrators, NY

For more information, please visit www.societyofillustrators.org

Cathie Black: 28 Years of Artistic Expression

February 8 through May 4, 2006
The New Britain Museum of American Art, CT

Nationally known artist/illustrator Cathie Black will be featured in a retrospective of her work at the New Britain Museum of American Art opening February 8.

Black is best known for her distinctive scratchboard illustrations, involving a process similar in concept to woodblock printing. Working on clayboard, Black carves delicate yet powerful black and white illustrations that have become her trademark. Her illustrations have appeared in such publications as *Esquire*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Time Magazine*, and the *Washington Post*. Her clients have included Random House and Warner Brothers Records, among many others.

For info, visit www.illustrat.org

Lithographic: The World of the Graphic Novel

November 18, 2007 through May 25, 2008
The Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, MA

This exhibition explores the history of the graphic novel, featuring personal commentary and artworks by celebrated historic and contemporary practitioners.

Original book pages and studies, sketchbooks, and video interviews provide insights into an exciting and exciting art form. Artworks by Isamu Abe, Sam Coe, R. Crumb, Howard Chaykin, Steve Ditko, Will Eisner (Brian Fies), Gerhard Hilt Gross, Marc Hempel, Mike Harrison, Mark Kaskasian, Peter Kuper, Harvey Kurtzman, Matt Mahler, Dave Coverly, Frank Miller, Terry Moore, Dave Coverly, Art Spiegelman, Syd Mead, Lewis Mumford, Mark Vanzant, Dennis Story and others will be on view. For more information, visit www.nrm.org

National Geographic: The Art of Exploration

January 27, 2006 through May 25, 2006
Albion Art Museum, Albion, PA

For more than a century the National Geographic Society's illustrators have taken readers to places beyond the reach of a camera's lens or beyond the imagination's domain—a feat achieved only through the artist's eye. Vivid and compelling, their images have altered us to witness the birth of our planet and look forward to the colonization of space—helping us to understand our history and the mysteries of the natural world. Renowned artists H.C. Wyeth, Andrew Wyeth, Charles Knight, Jean-Léon Erard, Tom Lovell, Robert McColl, Percy Hill, Thornton Oakley, James Gurney and many others are represented in this exciting exhibition celebrating more than one hundred years of National Geographic art.

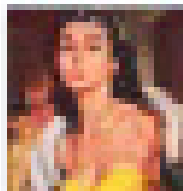
The Windy City Pulp and Paper Convention

April 28 through April 29, 2006
Meads Limited, Fortson, GA

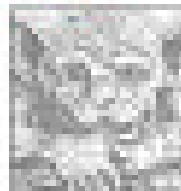
Featuring prints, paperbacks, and much more! Special guests include Ben Cardak and Will Murray. Art show sponsored by Illustration magazine!

For more info, visit www.windycitypulpcon.com ■

In the Next Issues...



McClellan



Friedman



Fleck

The Illustrations of Robert McClellan by Art Scott

The art of Murray Friedman by Dan Dineen

The art of Will Fleck by John Crund

Illustrators and Books, Book Reviews...and much more!