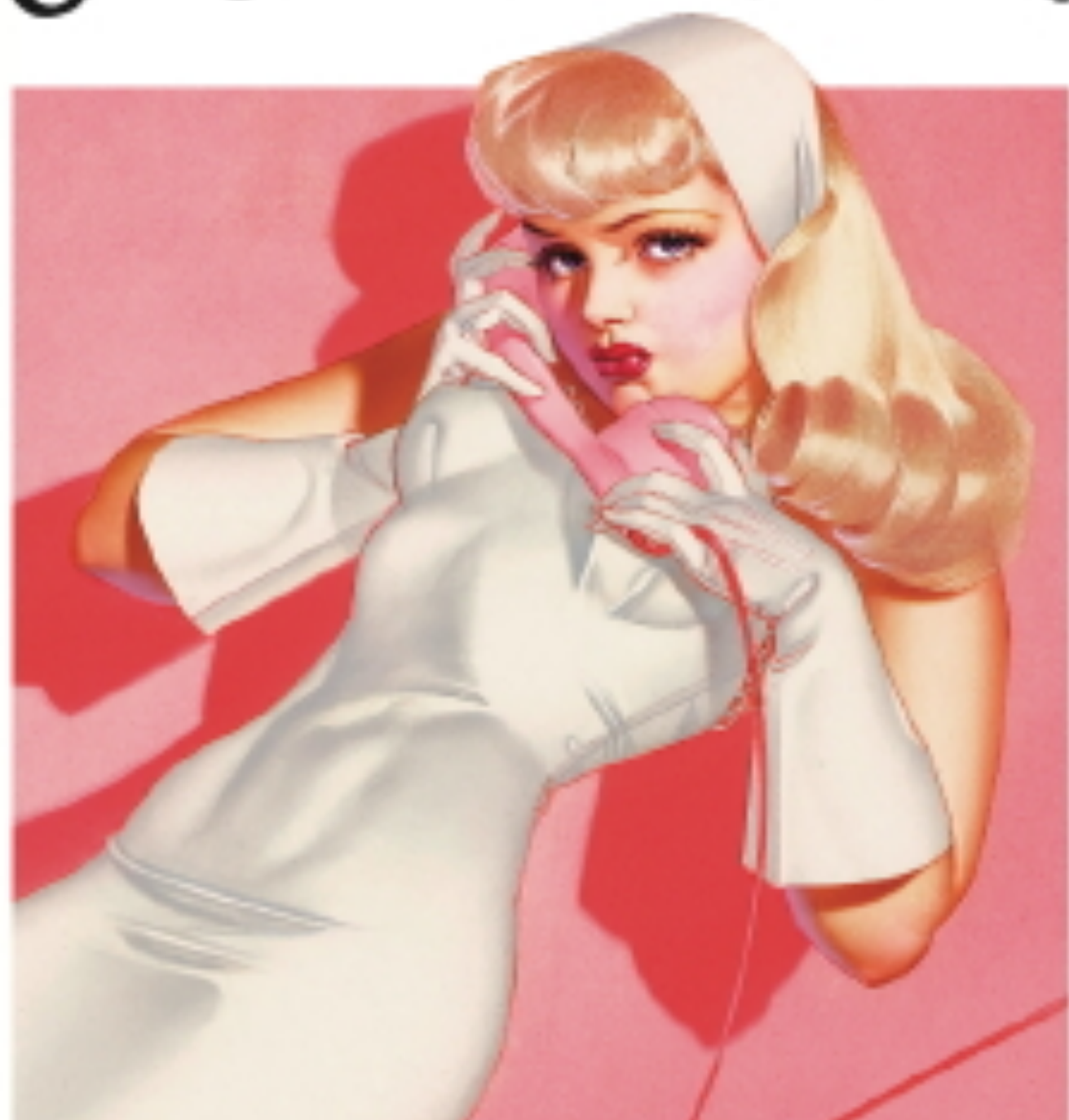


Illustration



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COVER ILLUSTRATION BY
GEORGE PETTY
(1884 - 1970)

Calendar pick-up for True, 1955

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Executive logo inspired by
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From the Editor...

This issue features two of the greatest of the "girl artists" in illustration history—Charles Dana Gibson and George Petty.

Our story on George Petty in particular has been a long time coming. Before his death in 1970, Reid Stewart Austin had proposed a long-form article on Petty. He would gather together notes and photographs left over from his book *The Glamour Pin-Up Art of George Petty* (1967), and our intention was to present as much original artwork as possible, reproductions that never made it into his original book. Unfortunately life got in the way, and one day I received the sad news that Reid had passed away.

I didn't think about Petty again until a few years later, when a friend in charge of Reid's estate sent me a large box full of material. It was a staggering collection of sketches and photographs, notes and letters. The story of George Petty's life is a long one, and it was a bit overwhelming, so I simply sat on this material for a long time, a trial to begin the process of trying to do justice to Reid's passion. I finally got up the gumption to tackle the task, and so here at last is the result—Reid's final article on one of his favorite subjects, The Petty Girl. Only a book-length treatment could truly do justice to all of his material, but I've tried to do my best. I hope you will enjoy it.

Speaking of books, as you may or may not be aware, I have recently launched a few book projects on the "omnivorous" website called Kukuarter. My latest Kukuarter project, *The Golden Age*, is available now. This new book weighs in at 220 pages, and features the work of 114 artists, with 111 full-page illustrations photographed directly from the original artwork, representing some of the greatest works created during the Golden Age of Illustration. This book may be ordered through the mail directly, or from my website at www.IllustrationMagazine.com. You will find an advertisement for the new book on page 11 of this issue.

Daniel Zimmer, Publisher

the illustrated gallery

We take great pride in announcing the addition of these truly exceptional new works to our extensive collection of American illustrated art. They richly embody all the aesthetic and historical values to be found in this popular and sought after genre.

Norman Rockwell (1894-1978)



"Santa On a Train"
Cover for The Saturday Evening Post
December 28, 1948
Oil on Canvas, 18" x 30"

At the heart of this touching and humorous Christmas work, which appeared on the December 28, 1948 cover of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, is the juxtaposition of the heads of the astonished boy holding a Drysdale package, the Drysdale picture of the same Santa in costume, and the delivery man wearing the Santa pants and boots under his overcoat, obviously on his way home from work. Rockwell's gift is a storyteller in pictures, unplayed here at its best. The simple use of predominantly three colors – red, black, and white – and the omission of any extraneous detail, add to the strength of this fine example of illustration art.

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Maxfield Parrish

(1870-1966)

"The Little Peach"

Book illustration for

Froms of Childhood by Eugene Field, 1904

Oil on paper, 21" x 14.75"

This illustration by Parrish of the poem "The Little Peach" by Eugene Field, has a signature device: frequently used by the painter, two figures in profile framing a central space or scene. It also contains one of his typical luminous glazes over a dark, distant landscape, a role of composition originating in Renaissance portraiture. The thoughtful boy and girl are very suggestive, as is the cloudy sky. But what this suggests is mythical, its ambiguity in art is an exceptional value, and this illustration makes it beautifully.

Elizabeth Shippen Green

(1871-1954)

"The Little Gate"

Illustration for Harper's New Monthly Magazine

Volume 130, December 1914 - May 1915

Oil on board, 26" x 16"

This charming painting of two children going eagerly into the garden beyond, captures the sense of absent awe that the desire to explore would inspire. It is based on a poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning and appeared in HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE, Volume 130, December 1914 - May 1915. The picture is an example of the expressive use of contrast, between the pastel shades of the children's clothing and the dark pines, like gaps and mysterious gaps beyond. It also makes use of the special representativeness of the children's backs, an idea that leaves something to the imaginations of the viewer.





Original illustration for *Time*, 1944. Winsor and you make us learn! 20.07's 10". Photo courtesy of Vintage Artworks, MA.com



Image from Petty IV

George Petty

by Reid Stewart Austin

To the artist, exposure is success. By 1931, George Petty's "Petty Girl" could be found in newspapers, magazines, billboards, and even the movies. Few artists' creations knew such organic, un-hyped visibility. *Starline* was by millions. The artist professed himself "bewildered" by such public approval. One of those who saw her through rapt eyes was a 13-year-old boy from the Chicago suburbs, Hugh Marston Hefner, who later said, "When she appeared on the first girlie show in *Esquire*, that's when I first made her acquaintance. . . for me she was the stuff dreams are made of." Life for Hugh, and the rest of us, would never be the same, for the sexual revolution had begun. It is quite possible that, for better or worse, had Hefner never realized—particularly head-on with the momentous unfolding of that first triple girlie in the December 1939 issue—we would never have heard of Hugh Hefner, nor experienced the sexual arena of the 1960s and '70s.

George Brown Petty IV was born April 27, 1894, in Abbeville, Louisiana. He was born into what has been described by historian Paul Johnson as "the world's wealthiest country, a nation that looked to living standards unprecedented in the history of humanity." The American magazine had become the patchwork form of entertainment, dominating the burgeoning movie business and easily coexisting with it through the first four decades of the 20th Century, until television scored its disruptive lead.

Technical advances in color printing and a competitive grab for advertising dollars created demand for talented artists to give visual punch to both editorial and advertising elements of these new publications, as mass production methods fed an ever-growing eager-to-consume middle class. By the 1930s, one in five Americans owned an automobile. This mobile public extended the reach of business to the distant spectacle of the billboard—which was to advertising what "ballies" was to Hollywood.

Into this clamoring sea of capitalism, George Brown Petty was launched. He would prove a most adept navigator.

THE PETTY STORY

George showed artistic talent early. His formal art education had impressive credentials: Chicago Art Institute's young student classes in 1912 and '13; Paris' Academie Julian, 1914 into '15. His foundation with the maverick airbrush preceded this by some years, having mastered it at age 13, etching negatives in his father's photo studio. His skill with the instrument extended to other, more novel areas as well. "I learned to play *louisiana lute* and *Anglo-Sovier* on it quite well," he said in later life.

At the time of his father's untimely death in 1916, 22-year-old George was hired by R.R. Donnelly, a large printing company where he picked up many aspects of the engraving busi-



Adkins's trademark photographing George G. Kelly III (George Peck's father)



Marshall Field's Company catalog cover, late 1920



Wire, February 1911



George Kelly (far right), an occasional married fashion designer at the business school, 1928. Photo by SA. Photo



Wire, March 1911

son—a process that would affect his painting in the future. His abundant use of warm tones for clothing his creations resulted from this theory, as he learned that some colors were easier to reproduce than others with the four-color printing process.

Upon his marriage to Julia (Julia Denton) in 1918, he was hired by the ad agency Ruffalo & Byers, where he did everything from page-top lettering, with an emphasis on photo retouching, and even an occasional cover illustration for Marshall Field's fashion catalogs. In 1922 a son, George Kelly V ("Boy") was born, followed sister Marjorie ("Maggie"), born in 1928. By 1934, Marjorie became a working member of the family corporation as head studio dress-maker, idea-person, and model.

After a vain attempt to partner in a studio in 1921, George opted to go it alone, finding that split profits were no profits. By the early 1930s, he was up to his armpits in ladies' studios—his accounts littered by stocking and girdle accounts, and most notably, Alka-Seltzer (see) Brewer's.



An advertisement for Berrycraft Germ-Kill, June 1921



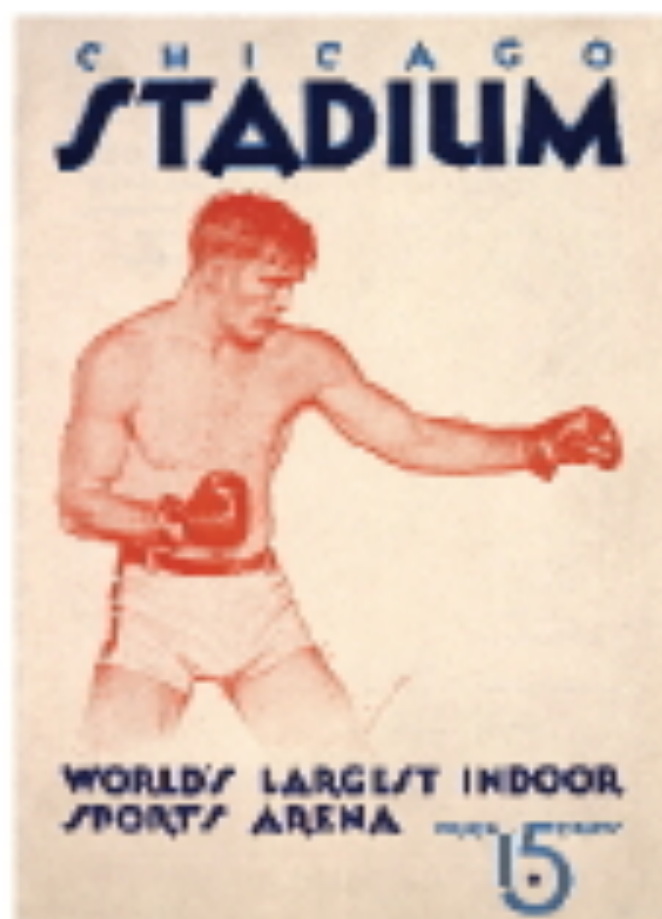
An advertisement for Lessor Skin-Figuring Bath, 1921



A window display of Lessor Soap in Chicago, 1921



An advertisement for Lessor's Skin-Figuring Bath, 1921



Chicago Stadium poster (1929), 1929



Ad for Venus Swimsuits Co., The Standard and Broadway Building, January 1929



Ad for Quaker Oats Co., The Standard and Broadway Building, October 1928



Poster for Atlas Beer, 1928



Illustration for Atlas Beer advertisement, 1938. Knauff and associates art team, 18 1/2" x 10" Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, 18.com



Ad for Atlas Beer, May 14, 1938



Ad for Atlas Beer, May 29, 1938



Ad for Atlas Beer, 1938



Original illustration by George Petty, 1936. *Illustration and graphics*, 22.1" x 17.3"
 Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Dallas, Texas

Though not the national success the ambitious artist sought, it did offer maximum exposure in everything from newspapers, counter cards, and billboards all over the South and Midwest. When these billboards caught the eye of Arnold Gingrich in the summer of 1935, George Petty was invited a very promising letter:

In early 1933—while Roosevelt closed banks, Prohibition was repealed, and the nation was shocked in gloom—David Smart, dapper publisher of *Apparel Arts*, an elegant and successful men's fashion magazine, and his creative editor, Arnold Gingrich, were assembling the fantasy for a unique venture—an elegant, ironic and humorous men's magazine to be called *Esquire*. When the budget suddenly allowed for 12 additional color pages, and it was realized that driving them in more fashion plates wouldn't work, an anxious search for additional cartoonists resulted. At that point George Petty walked in.

A friend kept urging George: "Charlie Davis ragged at me and I said, 'They were operating on a shoestring.... Arnold wrote me a personal check for the first drawings—\$25 each. I told him they wouldn't be funny.' Gingrich waved that away and handed him a sheaf of cartoons roughly done by the talented and poetic R. James Campbell. To everyone's surprised pleasure, *Esquire* took off. The first issue of 105,000 copies sold out. Within two years circulation shot to 600,000 a month.



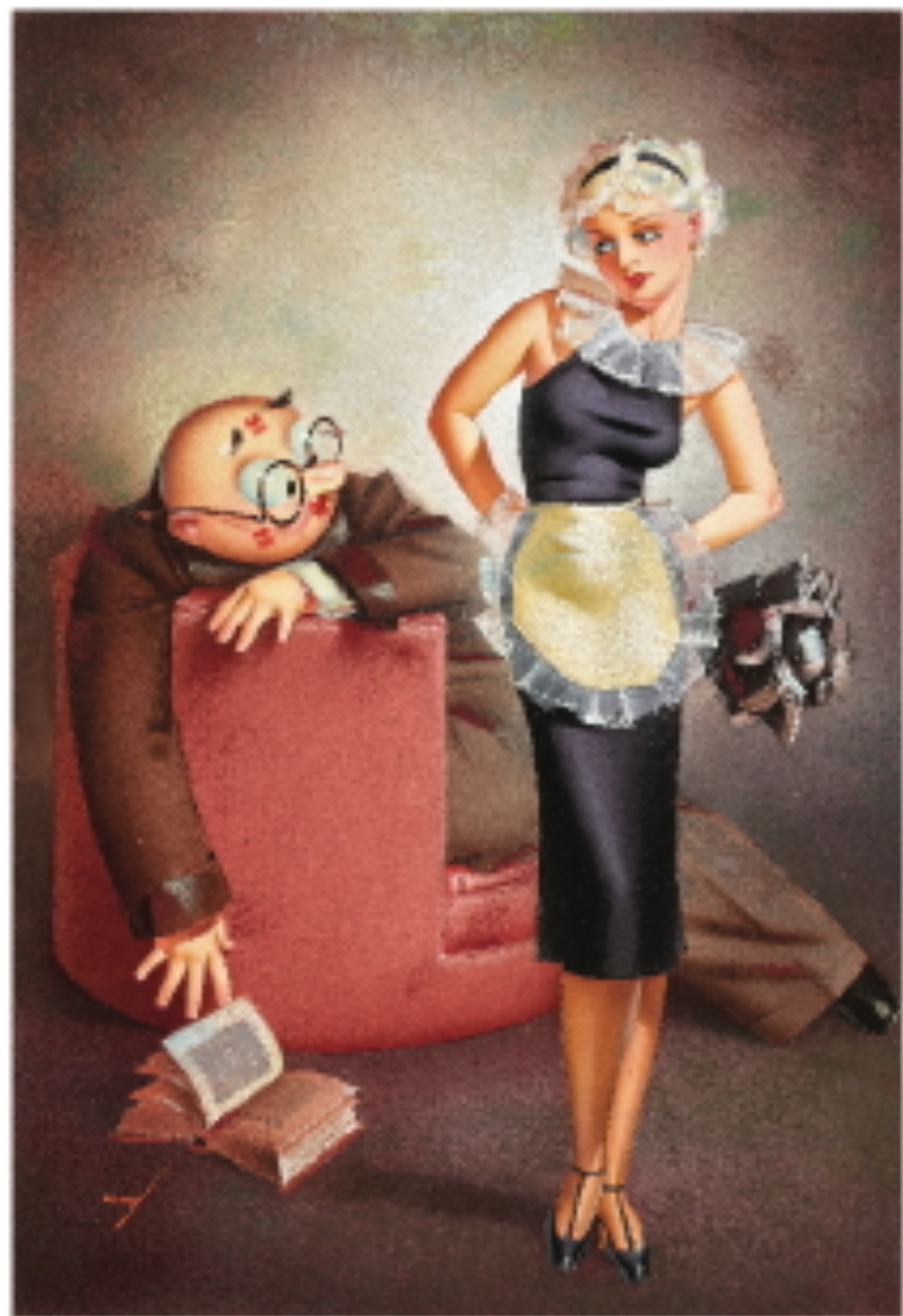
Original illustration by George Petty, 1936. *Illustration and graphics*, 22.1" x 17.3"
 Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Dallas, Texas

While perhaps hard to understand today, the untroubled perfection of Petty's art does creations was soles revolutionary than the T-bone (roast) tipper advertised in those early issues. It is worth noting that although George's work appeared in only six of those first 12 issues, his popularity soared and was made manifest by a highly popular ad series for Old Gold cigarettes that began in early 1933—appearing in *Esquire*, *The New Yorker*, and sports programs and newspapers nationwide. Reflecting this, in 1936, *Esquire*—in answer to popular demand—offered a deluxe, spiral bound Petty Portfolio consisting of 26 cartoons. A second printing was issued in 1937.

George's run of a magic mix of good luck and good management actually began the previous winter. In response to samples submitted in the autumn of 1935, he secured a lucrative contract with J. Walter Ewing Mills—a 1905 millionaire, and subsequently all of their major print advertising. Within a matter of months, George had captured two national accounts that would catapult him among the most visible, highly paid American illustrators. It was as though the Depression that continued to oppress the country career existed. Over the next half-dozen years he would attract one-after-the-other clients that included *Fortune* Magazine, *Pepsi Cola*, *1936 Century Fox*, *Time* magazine, *TWA*, *Brown & Siglow*, *Acme Feet*, *Warner Bros.*, *Quaker* Stockings, and *Baron & Black*, among others.



Original illustration for Esquire, c. 1930s. Wikimedia and gnomes, 17 x 12". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, www.rockwell.com



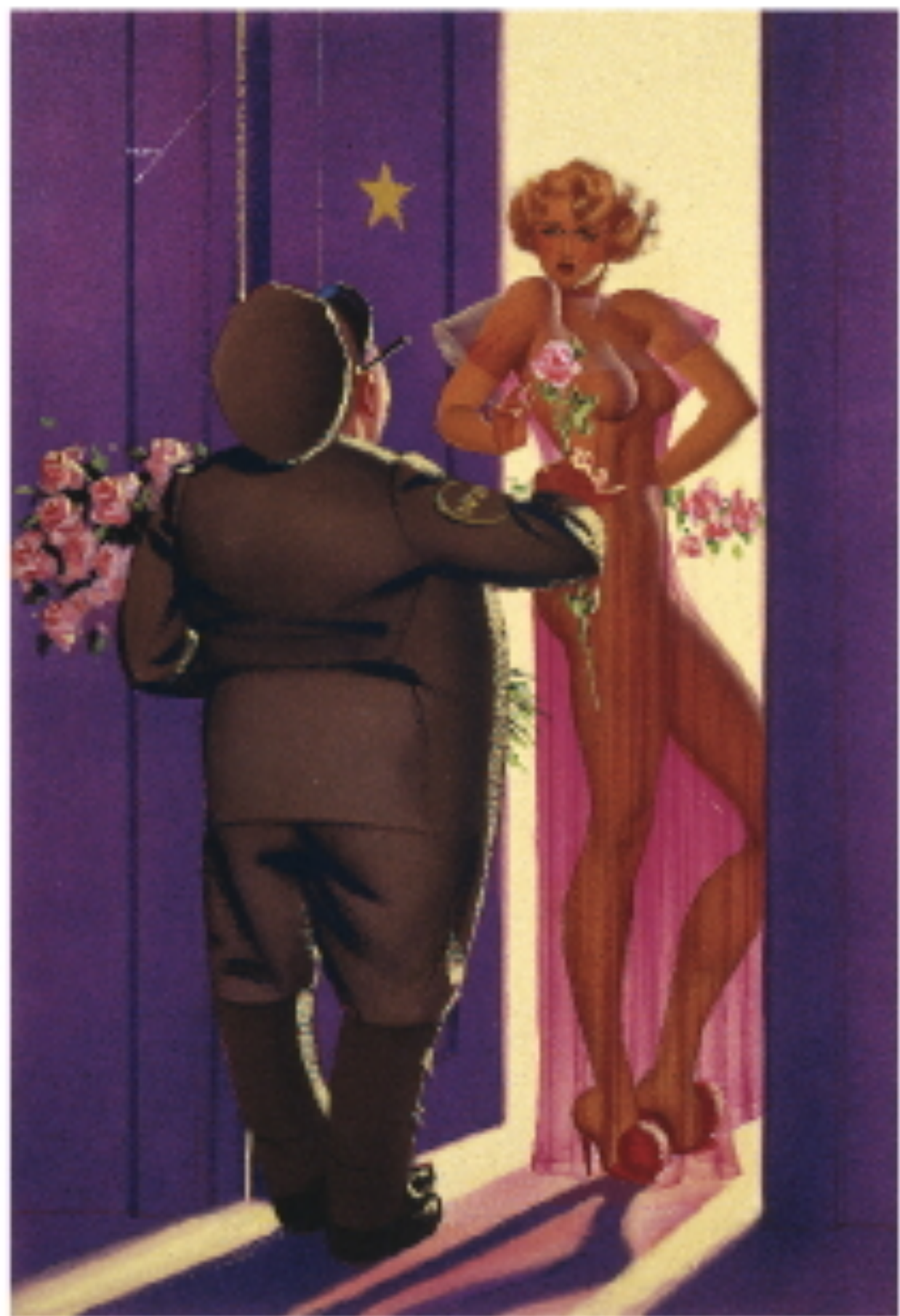
Original illustration by Norman, c. 1940s. Reprinted and painted, 2013, in £1,200. Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, www.ha.com



Original illustration by Eugene J. Webb. Reprinted and modified, 2014, by E.J. Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Dallas



Digital illustration by Japane, 2012. Illustration and graphics: ©2012 by G.2011. Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, M.com



Digital illustration by Aquino, c. 1930s. Stencils and gouache, 11.18" x 14.70"



Original illustration for *Spazio*, c. 1916. *Substrato analitico*, 147 x 127. Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Houston



Original illustration for Espino, September 1934. (Black and white, 27.2" x 11.75"). Photo courtesy of Heritage-Action, SA.com



Advertisement for Old Gold cigarettes, January 24, 1939

While the Old Gold series successfully perpetuated the "old-differ-aging-a-pretty-girl" theme of the first Esquire cartoons, the cartoons themselves evolved dramatically. One day David Smart casually observed to Gingrich, "Get rid of the daffier and you've got something." Smart had no idea.

The March '35 issue would see the daffier ditched. Job would see all the background props jettisoned, leaving the Girl glacially pale against a white background...essentially holding a telephone to facilitate writing gag lines. The Petty Girl concept, while not quite achieved, was born.

Through all this, George's great love and lover was hunting, a passion inherited from his father who was said to trim dead limbs from tall trees with a single shot. George's increasing income allowed him the luxury of jaunts he previously only dreamed of. In addition to his usual domestic jaunts, in 1936 he took the first of three expeditions to hunt the great bears of Eschak Island. This particular trip was chosen over the opportunity to appear in the Warner Bros. film *Arctic and Alaskan*, along with a number of other top illustrations, which like Petty had hoped would mean a paid California vacation. His most elaborate hunt lay ahead in 1938—two months in Korea—two months that would exacerbate his rapidly increasing work load—but more on that later.

Old Gold signed George for a series that would prove critical to defining the Petty Girl. The series of illustrations debuted in early 1938, and lasted into the mid-1940s, dropping the old



Advertisement for Old Gold cigarettes, November 7, 1939

man business and concentrating on what already, by the time, realized the most—the Girl. Petty's take on femininity necessarily changed, from the Esquire woman of questionable character and want alike to the girl next door: from Harlow to Gable. This era of Petty Girl art is among George's finest.

Petty was eagerly embraced by Madison Avenue. Most off-artist who specialized in "girly" illustrations on pulp magazine covers and on calendars were discouraged from signing their name mainstream ad artwork—while Petty was hired specifically for his name. Indeed, Old Gold carried the name Betty Petty and offered reproductions of their ads was advertising copy. In 1940, they introduced the first Petty Girl calendar and playing cards. Paramount Pictures, in 1939's *Man About Town*, in addition to a heavily promoted Betty ad campaign, gave Betty Gable and a chorus of harem girls a production number lyric by a young Frank Loesser) that sang the praises of "...that brilliant young artist—George Petty!... That subtle designer of feminine charms—George Petty! Unfortunately this homage was cut, leaving a mysteriously wordless series of coverage of veiled and smiling blondes under white umbrellas with the Petty signature. It was also a year of uncollected accolades. Princeton's class of '39 voted George their favorite artist, and *Life* magazine's June 26, 1939 issue devoted four pages headlined, "The Petty Girl, Triumph of Artwork, is Feminine Ideal of American Men." Nowadays this would be like a week's exposure on the Today Show.



Original illustration for Die Gold Zigarette, 1944. Watercolor and gouache on board, 80" x 50"



Digital Restoration for Old Gold Cigarettes, 1938. Maleswete and penwork



Digital Restoration for Old Gold Cigarettes, 1938. Maleswete and penwork

To some extent, the Perry Girl's broad acceptance is explained by Zupin's prestige—as reader of literary excellence Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, etc.—which paved its way into the living rooms of America, where Perry's creation was discovered by the whole family. Most other artists who dealt in "jinks" or calendar art (the word "jinks" originated in England and wouldn't find general usage in the States until 1942) found their audience limited to the male-dominated customers of garages, barbershops, tobacco shops, and such.

Great success means hard work. By 1938, George's workload was immense. As he pointed that year, "... when I got down with a bad case of jittery over doing days, Mama was smart enough to know that I'd soon be cutting out paper dolls unless I got away from deadlines... and I'd had a yen to hunt African game..." "We undertake the issue. George was determined to experience the greatest of hunting challenges. Six weeks was deemed necessary to accomplish the complexities of such an undertaking—plus two weeks allowed for travel to and from East Africa. Even working ahead, fulfilling two or three months of deadlines while physically preparing for such an ordeal (including animal anatomy and rules of walking, fully backpacked, among other things) one can only ponder ignoring the potential pandemonium upon return. Existing



Italy on safari in Africa, 1938

photos of the hunt show a man totally at ease and clearly having the time of his life.

Two things indicated resulting hazards of two months off. An intensive memo from Guggenheim secretary, Helene Richards, dated 8/17/38: "Mr Perry will sail on the S.S. Paris from Southampton 8/24 and dock at NY 18/1—the Old Gold gag is being sent to him at NY so he can work out the drawing in his mind and meet the 10/31 deadline." So much for six restless weeks (including the wilds of Africa). Then, interoffice memos indicate that Richards' job of dogging Perry re: gags and deadlines goes into full gear post-Africa, with George falling steadily behind in delivery, until by November (and December of 1938, after dogging him in the March, 1938 art, on December 28 we find the scribbled note, "Perry in hospital.")

No matter how unconvincing sounds, the family remembers nothing, and all indications are that work for Old Gold, Katana, and others flowed like a stream. True. In fact, some of his best work was done over the winter and spring of 1938. Whether deadlines were being met were not so sure.

The issue to David Zupin's fury, Zupin's wrath. The Perry Girl would be missing from the magazine for the balance of 1940. The special giftsets that was being rushed into the magazine, beginning with the April issue, especially for



Original illustration for Brown & Bigelow-Calendar Co., 1888. Watercolor and gouache on board, 32 1/2 x 26 1/2. Photo courtesy of Shutterstock Inc., NY



Digital illustration: Shutterstock, c. 2006. Watercolor and pencil on board: 24.8" x 26.8". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, NY.com

the Perry Girl, would go Perryless. Smart started rumormongering with his inclusion of a biased notice in the March issue: "George Perry couldn't contribute to this issue through illness induced by overwork. He will try to be back with another drawing next month." Smart would apparently be less subtle in a September *Newsweek* interview stating the "Varga" Girl's Eigure debut, resulting in *Newsweek's* bold statement that the Perry Girl had not appeared since the February issue. "... because her creator suffered a nervous breakdown last winter." The family's memory of an "angry" father around this time very likely stemmed from this September incident.

At this point the issue of money should be explored. For the bulk of his *Esquire* tenure, George received \$100 a page. Only with the December '38 paycheck did that rate go to \$150 a page, and that only at George's persistent urging. Under both rates he got the original back with the magazine getting only reprint rights. Existing letters indicate Smart bending over backwards to keep the status quo—praising George for submissions that generally were a disarray of work delivered to Old Gold or *Jet*...of course he was pulling down two grand or better from each of these accounts. It is our belief that under the abrupt note, "Perry is hospitalized" lay a good deal of heavy financial brushing. Believing he had made Perry, Smart balked at giving in to his demands, considering him ungrateful. Yet, with US involvement in the European war inevitable, a Khloia did Eigure without its star attraction was unthinkable. We may assume that the gloves came off in January 1943. George

was well aware he had the upper hand, as were Gingrich (who was fairly ill clearly, on George's side) and Smart.

While details are sketchy, it is known that an agreement with Eigure was hammered out in the winter of 1943, guaranteeing George \$1,000 per "drawing" for the twelve months of 1943. Eigure would own the art, but couldn't reprint it without recognition, whereas George could sell rights to anyone except a competing magazine (there were no competing magazines at the time). It was a lopsided, though the-looking-glass arrangement that demonstrated just how vital the Perry Girl was to the magazine—Eigure was essentially sabotaging the paintings. Perry's demands surely vexed David Smart, who wouldn't even attend negotiations, leaving that onerous task to Arnold Gingrich. Might we prove Smart had a terrible, terrible headache. Then, one sunny day in June, at the time the Germans were occupying Paris, a diminutive, pitifully humble, out-of-work Peruvian artist named Alberto Eigure bravely entered Eigure's New York office, portfolio in hand—a living antidote to Smart's migraine.

Within the week, a run-placed Varga was mailed to Chicago, set up at the Drake hotel, put under contract (with no less on the amount of work required) at \$75 a week for three years (he asked for \$100), and had at work attempting to please an impatient "Uncle Dave" team by producing the first "Varga" Girl. His name was shortened with no argument and subsequently returned by Eigure in a move guaranteed to prevent the artist from ever hitting the hand that fed him.



Original illustration for Jantzen Swimsuits; 1950s. Materials and graphics on hand, 18.00" x 1.0"



Original illustration for Justice Robinson, "The Petty Girl Suit of 1940"
 Widespread and popular as heard, 20.8" x 38.0"

Unfortunately he did not change his name legally.

1940 was fraught on a number of other levels. Paradoxically, Justice's numerically successful "Petty Girl Suit of 1940" campaign, which capitalized totally on the artist and his which George got his highest price, 12,000 (and he got the original back), would prove to be his last. Garry Miller, who was with Justice from 1935 to 1940, recalled George being dropped because, "...Petty's price increased steadily and he was often very late delivering art scheduled under non-negotiable space contracts—the latter was very much a problem at times."

Thanks to Elizabeth Eberly, who had the Justice account at the time, we know what, under the counter fees were at work. She attended a meeting in Justice's office in the late summer of 1940, at which Justice executives were matched with fast-talking finance regarding *Esquire*'s brilliant new, highly publicized artist Varga, and vied to get thought to using him for their 1941 advertising—the entire scheme proved by the offer of five Varga artworks for Justice's new campaign. Eberly was appalled at the whole idea while Justice execs were enchanted. Thus the 1941 Justice/Varga campaign was ultimately a dismal flop was of little matter to David Smart.

The Old Gold series coming to an end the same summer of 1940 may be less noticeable than it appears. While George was well paid (\$1500 per illustration in today's terms almost 100,000) his deal with Old Gold included their ownership of the paintings. Being so acutely aware of the resale potential of his work, it would not have been lost on him that here were over two dozen potentially valuable pieces, the best work he'd done, resale rights for which were lost to him. His new arrangement with *Esquire* gave him financial security (without the demanding workload he'd been under for two years) particularly the vitally important second, third, and often fourth resale rights he needed. And, secondarily, the fact that at *Esquire* there was an almost total lack of an auction. Though there is no record, we believe George happily acquiesced to corporate decisions to end the Old Gold series, or very possibly negotiated the end himself. In any event, aside from a number of one-time clients, all of his eggs were now tucked firmly in *Esquire*'s basket and the Petty Girl was on an unassailable roll.

The Petty Girl ruled into 1941 on a flood-tide of popularity rarely equaled. In retrospect this may be seen as the apex of the artist's success. George had the best part dealt with Varga consciously buried further back on his own. Each monthly paycheck was offered framed and laminated, and in return the Petty Dumbbell, a compendium of past images, enjoyed great success. Two photographs accounts in 1941 were *UFO*, for Capades, and *Armen Shara*. Most striking *Time* magazine, in a break with its usual polar-stiff head and shoulder cover portraits, commissioned an exceptionally large image of Rita Hayworth which received letters of choice and condemnation in equal proportion.

Despite his initial tooth-pushing at Smart's determined promotion of Varga (Smart appropriated two Old Gold



Original illustration for Jantzen Swimsuits, 1936. Illustration and graphics collected by Jantzen's IP. Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, TX, USA
1937. Jantzen Swimsuits for Jantzen Swimsuits, L. USA 1936



Nov. November 16, 1941



WARRENT SPARS recruitment poster (George Fitzma) at April 6, 1942

ideas with the introduction of the Varga playing cards and the wildly successful Varga Calendar) he came to accept that, with the December '41 issue, Varga was to make his exit. The pressure was off. The hating was good. He was able to relax for the first time in a long time, but not too relaxed. With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and full mobilization, George jumped in with both feet, autographing prints in answer to many military requests. He also created at least three known recruitment posters, only one of which, for the FOOTSPARS, is certain to have been used.

In 1942, negotiations with RKO Pictures for a film to be called *The Petty Girl* were finalized. Also, perhaps the most life-filled and meaningful career for artist's popularity was proclaimed amid war news on the front page of the June 4-Chicago Daily News: OLD MASTERS LIKE SCAND TO PETTY GIRL. Further reading revealed that under a grant from the Reddick Foundation, 1,700 Chicago area high school students were involved in a three-year program on art appreciation. "...studying such matters as color, technique, texture and composition. Instructors have pointed out all the fine points of the greatest paintings in Chicago's venerable Art Institute. ..." Upon completion, the students were queried as to their favorite artists. Tabulated



Petty presents his art to the King, 1942

results disclosed that George had been needed to see he wasn't on the list. So, it came to pass that a Petty Girl hung among the Masters in the Chicago Art Institute. Many years later George recalled, "Then I was with Fairbank and all these other second-best guys—you couldn't speak to me for a week after that."

George's major clients in the early '40s were Western Foundations and MGM Studios, for which he did six wildly seen and promoted images. He licensed out a line of neckties and offered his own Petty Portfolio of four prints—three from the 1941 figure series. He belonged to a number of sports clubs, including Leo Ruderman's Vitabees, and the

Adventures Club, and found often domestically since wartime restrictions now made out-of-country trips difficult if not impossible. On one of these trips his hating companion was Mrs. "Burr" Fawcett, Midwestern-born widow of Mrs. Fawcett St. better known as Captain Billy, creator of *Capt. Billy White Dog*, the forerunner of today's comic book and base of the Fawcett publishing empire of which "Burr" was President. As it turned out, Fawcett was planning to revamp their *True* magazine from a hairy-chested adventure pulp into a low budget, family-man oriented best aimed at capturing the returning military. Fawcett knew that the Petty Girl was the

A vintage illustration in a classic style, possibly by Norman Rockwell. It depicts a man and a woman in a domestic setting. The man, on the left, is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and a watch on his left wrist. He is holding a large, light-colored, fluffy animal, possibly a dog or a bear, which is sitting on the woman's lap. The woman, on the right, is wearing a light blue dress and a white hat. She is smiling and looking towards the viewer. The background is a simple, light-colored wall with a wooden chair or table leg visible on the left. The overall style is soft and detailed, characteristic of mid-20th-century American illustration.

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Poster for Ice-Capades of 1943



Original illustration for Ice Capades poster, 1946. Watercolor and gouache on board. 1946. Poster for Ice Capades of 1946.



Original illustration for *The collector* (December), 1947. Watercolor and gouache on board

lowered fantasy of many about-to-be-discharged servicemen. Subsequently, a contract was signed for one painting a month for three years, at \$1,500 per, to begin with the January 1946 issue. (And he got the originals back.) Throughout this tenure, the Foxton brothers and George continued to share the occasional feud.

As with his entry into *Esquire* in January 1941, George came in sideways. Both initial fantasies were puzzling in that they were voluminously posed, only hinting bare shoulders lining at the fish, and those famous Peety legs buried beneath. As the year progressed those famous legs, now revealed, grew to obsessive proportions, causing a public outcry that was abetted by helpful editors eager to make them public in the magazine's letter columns:

Sir: I like Peety's picture OK, but Sila Peet had legs like streamlined crocodiles.

Sir: Why, oh why! must he put draft-horse legs on a peety class?

Sir: At last we know why there's a meat shortage. Peety used the August and September issues to reveal out his girl's calves and ankles... get in the groove, boy, or we'll start looking out windows again.

The message got through, for at least five of the pieces in question were originally edited before being reproduced on subsequent editions, with legs being reduced by as little as

3/64ths of an inch and as much as a 1/2 inch. Thereafter, beginning with the February '46 issue, the Peety Girls' legs lost considerable breadth while maintaining their famous length. As Milton Smith points out, "In an age of leg man, George was the ultimate leg man. He probably wasn't even aware of the self-indulgence." This example of through-the-back-door editorial manipulation speaks to the art direction, or lack of same, that George received.

In the '30s, *Esquire* had no A.D. per se—in its rigid page layout required little design augmentation. George was supplied with gag lines or roughs supplied by Smart or Gingrich that he followed or not as it suited him. His art work was generally loosely art directed. The art director at *Time* was (typically) used to dealing with conventional, European illustrators who were illustrating a text—"Put the Indians over there." Peety didn't fit this category. Like the 300 pound gorilla, he did as he pleased, not through any arrogance, it's just the way it was. No one could imagine telling him to "Make the dress blue," or "Fix her hair," or "Make her a redhead." Interestingly enough, David Smart was directing the dickens out of Virginia, at least initially and going men and women at Brown & Bigelow-Columbia Co. were losing the art directed mark. Even when Peety started to *Esquire* in 1944, the then A.D. the redoubtable Henry Wolf, who would normally have direct input into all graphic matters, to our knowledge had little if anything to say about Peety's work, which at that point could really have used a little artistic T.C.



SPORTSMAN LANTING TROUT
Frank K. Schoonover
 Oil on canvas, 24" x 44", 1943
 Cover: *The Popular Magazine*
 PAPA 1812
 Cover: *Sporting Classics*
 May - June, 1993
 # 348 in the Catalogue Raisonné



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Original Illustration: Marjorie and George on board (1941)

21 Illustration





Argue whether or not, based on the evidence and points in text, it is or is not



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Digital Illustration for *Yes*, January 1987. Stethoscope and gynecite on breast



Digital Illustration for *Yes*, November 1987. Stethoscope on breast



Original illustration, Winsor and Gordon, 19" x 29" Photo courtesy of Heritage Artworks, MA, ca. 1945; reference photograph

She's
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in
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The Petty Girl

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THE ORIGINAL
ONE IS BLONDIES
PETTY GIRLS

with Elsa Lanchester -
Screen Play by Mel Frank - Music by Kurt
Produced by NUT FURMAN



Poster used for The Petty Girl, 1948. © 1948 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

All in all, the *True* work was the best work since the *Old Gold* series—technically proficient and generally exhibiting his strong sense of design and composition. It came to an end with the December 1947 issue. (I've tried keeping the program alive by having Bradshaw Crandall take up the bat, but the readers just weren't interested.)

Meanwhile, as though life were as carefully planned as an ocean cruise, Columbia pictures scheduled the long-delayed *Petty Girl* film. After RKO contracted for *The Petty Girl* in '42, Howard Hughes bought the studio and sold off most of their planned properties. Columbia got *The Petty Girl* and as early as 1947 Jean Miller was announced to star. Jean opted for marriage and pregnancy, followed by miscarriage and divorce, instead, and by 1949 Jean Crandall had the part, co-starring with Robert Cummings as George. By this time Marjorie and George Y. left the nest and married, living their own lives, and George was at liberty, so to speak. Hollywood was just the diversion George and Jean needed. Publicity shots of him posing Crandall indicate clearly that George was having the time of his life. Also, at a time when the *Petty Girl* might have died of lack of exposure, the film, while "...so great stakes..." as George put it, did remind everyone that she was still very much alive. (Incidentally, the portrait of Crandall done to advertise the film showed her in bathing suit and white chel, ballet shoes.) The *Petty Girl* remains the

only film referenced to an American illustration.

Throughout the 1930s, at the same time Duchemin's Fuller, Norman the Golden, and Raymond Leary were streamlining everything from trains to toasters, Petty was determinedly engaged in streamlining the human body. It was a process that reached its questionable apex in 1936. When George was fat, his designs were streaming in their energy. Tangentary, curvy, parents, often of the most subtle kind, produced a sense of tension, of stilled motion, even in repose. With his discovery of the ballet shoe in 1940, his creativity achieved lift-off. While never troubled by that artistic life's not, the hand, feet were at-stake when redefining matter. There is no doubt that he could draw a credible foot, as can be seen in any number of images from the '30s, but as the '40s approached and his obligations of the figure grew ever more idiosyncratic, too for whatever reason were increasingly to be wrestled with. The adoption of the ballet shoe, as some cost to reality and sexuality, banished the foot's intractable anchoring and achieved maximum float.

Commissions came in from General Motors for two different "Flying Lady" hood ornaments, and from the Ridge Tool Co. for 1952 and '53 calendars, both of which would feature ladies in beautiful costumes, reclining with or reclining upon industrial machines and tools—in ballet shoes. And because of the theatrical conviction of the whole concept, they worked.



Foot ornament for Nash Automobiles, 1932

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Digital illustration for Ritey's Record Company website, 1952-1953. Nubretter and graphics, 10" x 14". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Houston

© Illustration



Digital illustration by Caprice, October 2004, 2005. Polychrome and gouache, 12" x 12"

In 1952, the same Hedra Richards—who had been watching over George's mailing schedule since back in 1939, advised Arnold Gingrich that George had called to see if he could "pick up" differences with David Smart and perhaps resume relations. I discussed the matter with Dave, who wasn't at all interested—I am passing this along as you will know that Betty, at that time, was receptive, should you have any interest in *lira uca contribute*?

David Smart's death in the interim opened up this possibility, which Gingrich pursued immediately. Discussions led to George getting the '58 and '59 calendar assignments and soon logic flying right out the window. We have today an hard pressed to understand what Gingrich or Wall or anyone at Esquire might have made of George submitting a girl in an inner tube-wearing bikini swims, a country girl in cutoff overalls, straw hat and fishing pole going fishing—or picnic, a cowgirl, in vest, gun belt and holster, strumming a lute violin or whale/ballet shoes. Today, with the words round so accessible daily on television and in film, we might accept this idiosyncrasy without hesitation, but people in the '50s were far more literal in their perceptions. Miss perplexing, what could the artist be thinking of when he depicts a girl going off to bed, holding a candle, wearing a very fetching, sheer nightgown—in bikini swims? We can only wonder Ernest Christy had most recently done a splendid job on the calendar, one in a lengthy line of other artists, and his calendar sales showed a "...steady slow downward in this field since the immediate postwar period." George's figures were even worse. Under the

circumstances it's hard to know whether it was the art or the times. We suspect a little of both. Nevertheless, in 1950 Decca Records bought the rights to a bunch of the Esquire pieces for use on album sleeves. The Decca Co. used Petty images on boxer shorts and pajamas in 1958. George in all events and pajamas retired. Her suit—business is business, friends are friends. Old differences are patched up. That same year, the first *Los Capades* art since a falling out with owner John Harris in 1947, is commissioned for the 1950 edition. George would also do the art for four more editions, which would be interrupted by tragedy.

The Betty's had relocated to Scottsdale, Arizona in 1954. It was a lonely life punctuated by small charms, such as George's falling from a ladder during roof repairs and breaking his arm. Since pain wouldn't drive, George drove himself to the hospital—one arm off. Life was otherwise quiet, dotted with visits to and from California where the children had located—George Jr. and wife Eric in L.A., and Marjorie and husband Calvin in Los Altos. Setting out early one dark December evening for a California Christmas, the truck loaded with hiked goods and bright packages, they were broadsided by an erratically speeding car. Both were unconscious, only to be roused by the ambulance crew. George had struck his head, but no concussion. Though bruised and limping, nothing was broken. Life wasn't so lucky. At the Glendale, Arizona hospital she required heavy stitches to her forehead. Her nose was broken and four ribs and her left wrist were fractured. Her leg was black with bruising.



Original illustration by Eugene Ivinovitch. Photo by 1950s Illustrations and Graphics, 877-2-ART

Anxiety short-circuited the holiday glow in Los Altos and Los Angeles, calmed only by the slow improvement of both parents. George was released to his wife's care after three weeks. Maryona called her mother every day. On January 1943, the day after her father arrived in Los Angeles, he was cheerful, looking forward to her imminent release. An hour later George E called—the hospital had just advised him of their mother's death of a pulmonary embolism. "Max and Colin flew down from Los Altos on the news in Top. We went to his bedroom first thing next morning. I sat down and wailed...before much came out I started to cry. He knew immediately and all of us cried like babies. He just kept saying, 'Why wasn't it me?'"

George returned to Newcastle and managed to hold on for three interminably lengthy months, finally returning to California and relocating in a retirement complex, Hacienda Carmel, in Carmel. That summer George's beloved sister Bess died. In the fall of 1962 he met and quickly married widow and fellow resident Elizabeth Heitler. The wire services picked this up as the first marriage between persons over fifty-five on the Monterey Peninsula...they were the only ones to find the marriage anything less than a disaster. The family thought the action too soon, too sudden. It took some time to convince George that this was the next uncertain move of a man stacked with inseparable loss and loneliness. Once the sense of his work in it, as a general sign of relief, George and Elizabeth agreed and lost little time in annulling the marriage.

The George was not to be denied romance and companionship was evident from the following 1964 newspaper quote: "Petaluma, California: A shipboard romance and a November wedding bring a starboard touch to the retirement of Mrs. Gladys Wallin, city clerk, after more than forty years of service...she will marry George Perry, famous as the creator of the Perry Girk." Gladys charmed not only George, but the family as well. For four years the Perry's enjoyed the social atmosphere of the Monterey peninsula and an occasional cruise until Gladys died in 1969 after a lingering illness. She left a husband able only to show the depths of death, a man deeply marked by its selfishness. With no little effort George regained his dexterity and began running between Los Altos and Los Angeles, and squiring various ladies at the Hacienda, scaring them to death with his devil-may-care driving skills. Marriage was not on his mind.

A series of mild heart attacks had plagued George since the late '50s. On one occasion in 1978 he was removed from a cruise ship and hospitalized in Hawaii, and in an interview in the Honolulu Star Bulletin drops some revealing insights: "I've always been afraid of beautiful girls, particularly beautiful and intelligent or beautiful and ambitious girls. Beautiful girls know what the score is, and I'm just an old-fashioned country boy. A good-looking gal with ambitions is explosively dangerous. She'd do things her mother wouldn't want her to do." He went on to say that if he had to mingle with such ladies



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W. T. Benda (1873-1948) *Narcissus*, ink and colored pencil, 7 x 8 1/2", remaining part of *Aphelognathus* series March 3, 1923
This is a duplicate of the first mask Benda made, which he called *The Blue Horror*, in February 1916.



Digital restoration by Easystudio.com (May 1996). Vectorize and upscale, 1120' x 17'. Photo courtesy of Heritage Images, 60.com

he'd take Mary along for protection. He next described his creation: "A boy reflecting young innocence through half-closed eyes, long legs like a dancer; a good pair of lungs that can't manipulate a boy in a sweater, and a muscular torso—all in all the kind of girl you'd want your son to marry." He concluded by averring that there wasn't a girl in the world who looked like the Peety-Girl, "But the way I pose her and put her together makes her thoroughly intriguing."

Again, as though life was turned with a calendar, in 1971 Arnold Gingrich fathered *Esquire's* "Welcome Back to the Forties" issue, with a George Lene-designed 160-page cover of the reigning Peety Girl from 1941. Inside, a double-page spread contained four other images from the '41 series. Because of this, in his San Francisco *Examiner* column, Herb Caen revealed George's whereabouts. George wrote Arnold, "It seems you started something. Increased mail and phone calls to me supposedly dead. All suggest Norman Rockwell-type consolidation of Peety-Girls with legend."

Herein, Peety as being published, circa 1970, as told by Harold Hayes, editor of *Esquire*, to Harry Abrams, publisher.

"I spoke to George Peety again. If nothing of value for the magazine came of our discussions, I think, at the very least, I am assured a marriage proposal—but to business. Peety is flattered by the fact that Harry Abrams has indicated an interest in publishing a book on his work. He feels the book should

be a less ambitious undertaking than the Rockwell—in size, scope and price. (Peety views Rockwell as an important and venerable artist of international renown, and himself, quite modestly, as a "that is the par who got lucky, a bartender who gives the boys a fair shake.") He suggested something in soft cover that would sell for under \$100. Quite modest, indeed.

"As you know Peety met with some people in L.A. whom he describes as artists and promoters—he is disinclined to talk of their proposal in detail. What he is willing to say, the L.A. folks want his permission to package his work and sell it where they choose. That is, if they can't find the right publisher, they want to sell it to any publisher, perhaps print and peddle it themselves. Peety does not like the idea of a brand X impersonator. What he does like, they are willing—he says they are willing—to reproduce from reproductions. How so come to the important stipulation: he wants to use old plates or reproductions in production of the book. I said I was not familiar with all types of reproductions, but around here we substitute best results by showing first original art or transparencies. He is quite firm about not wishing to supply originals, because he doesn't want the bother of packing, logging, and shipping, etc.—I told him if necessary we would supply the help he needed or arrange to have the art shipped there. He did not change his stand.

"Regarding money. Can he be paid, in one lump sum, says. He isn't interested in some protracted royalty basis.



Digital illustration for *Los Angeles*, 1985. Illustration and graphics, JEP + CIP. Photo courtesy of Heritage Artless, Moscow

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Here's one of the sketchy details (1984)

As he puts it, "I don't know how much longer I've got. The seventy-sevens. I'd like to be paid off and enjoy it while I can." As to the book's content, he isn't interested in going into "historical detail. The picture is the thing, not history." It's a difficult, copy-and-paste. Unless we go to him with something specific, say to him, this is what we'd like to do—we are going to have to continue this verbal fencing, with each conversation producing a new party." Needless to say, Abrams up-stood away from the whole idea. (It would be another 20 years before a book on George Petty was published, and then under the liberal and patient auspices of Marjorie Petty.)

The following year, in a burst of nostalgia, Gingrich commissioned George to render his interpretation of the Petty Girl as Perry. "I received them for over a month," said George. "I told you that the Petty Girl was about 20 years old when I started her in 1935, which would make her 55 now. And wasn't ludicrous?" Nevertheless, he did it. "I felt sure they'd shoot it right back to me and didn't care if they did. Maybe I'm coming back. Maybe I'm large" if I understand the meaning of the word.

Far from it. The concept stands with his best work, looking back to his first years—bearing a freshness of pose, paint applications, and anatomy that had appeared to be lost to him. And in no little way is this due to the absence of the ballet shoe. Upon publication in the February '73 issue, George wrote candidly: "It's so nice to be remembered—and your editorial crew did a delightful job on an old friend... you have made an old man/petty happy."

Encouraged, George produced a handful of paintings for special events at the Hacienda, his former residence regarding his work and his person seemed to dwindle in direct proportion to his distance from the public eye. Around this time Marjorie took him along, home looking. George made it a point to introduce himself and make it very clear just who the current occupant had looking over their property. "I didn't know whether to gag him or hug him," Marjorie recalled with a little smile.

These last few works, done just a year before his death, show an artist of remarkably undiminished power. They reflect the elegance and humor of the '30s as well as the compositional dynamics and technical finesse of the '40s. They are uniquely the work of George Petty—a fitting final statement from a great and innovative American artist who, abashed by any such talk, preferred to be thought "a great American businessman."

George Petty was hospitalized with chronic colitis in the spring of 1973. He died of natural causes on July 21. ♦

— by Neil Stewart Austin, 2006

Neil Stewart Austin has an art studio for Perry's magazine, and worked personally with Marjorie Petty for over 20 years. He was the author of *Abraham Lincoln: The Artist's Perspective* (2010) as well as *Wages The Superheroes* (2007), *The Classic Newspaper/George Petty* (2006), and several others on topics for Playboy and other cultural magazines. Neil passed away in 2008.

Special thanks to Heritage Auctions, HA.com, and to Illustration House, IH, for the use of many of the photographs featured in this article.



Black copy of preliminary sketch, 1933

"The Petty Girl as Petty" George Petty's last cultural illustration. August, February 1973. Wikimedia Commons/public domain



Original magazine illustration, circa 1890 ink on paper, 21" x 14" Photo courtesy of thetopography.com, 8/4/2018



Charles Dana Gibson at work

Charles Dana Gibson

Master Illustrator

by R. Gary Land

Today the term Gibson Girl is a scantily-defined nod to an earlier era, a label referring to women who wore their hair up or around the turn of the last century. That definition sets the term aside. In her day, the Gibson Girl was a fashion icon who helped legitimize American culture, freeing it from being the ugly step-child of European haute couture.

Although hard to imagine today, at one time American culture was considered the province of bumpkins, and barely-handwritten sketches. No artist, however, we insisted—and peevily at that. No member of high society would be caught in London that wasn't produced in Europe. Anglophilia was rampant. American fashion took its lead without question from the cities of Europe. Gibson's maternal great-grandfather William Lovett, a painter, went so far as to Gallicize his name to "Gullaxano Lovett," and ran ads collecting her work in French in a London paper. It was into this world Charles Dana Gibson was born, and his pen would have a major role in tearing down its barriers.

THE KIRBY BOYS

Charles Dana Gibson was born on September 14, 1867 to Charles DeWitt Gibson, a Civil War lieutenant, and Josephine Elizabeth Lovett. Both parents came from an almost unbroken chain of New Englanders that stretched all the way back to the early settlers. In a biography of Gibson's life published in 1986, author Furtus Downey refers to an incident several years earlier when 17-year-old Charles Jr., full of patriotic

fervor and armed with letters of reference, took himself to the White House (according to legend for an appointment to West Point. For three days he waited in an anteroom, until he was at last ushered in to Lincoln's presence. He pled his case and handed the letters of reference to the President. Lincoln gratefully handed them back, stating that while he was sure they verified his good character, the West Point positions were going to the sons of officers killed in battle, and wasn't that the right thing to do? Gibson left without his desired result, but with a precious memory.¹

Circumstances would not delay him for long. Harry Jones levered the age requirements, and he soon found a lieutenancy in the 1st1 Rhode Island Heavy Artillery. After several campaigns, in 1864 he came home on furlough to the family home, "The Mount." A lady named Josephine, his cousin several times removed, was down for a visit, and the gallant soldier and the beautiful young woman were swept away in a war-time romance. They married several months later at Niagara Falls. Their first child, Langdon, was born in Boston in 1866. A brother, Charles Dana, followed 20 months later. Another son was born, but he died in infancy. This tragedy was followed by the births of three sisters, Elizabeth, Anne, and Josephine.

At age five Dana fell ill, and his father took to entertaining the youngster by cutting silhouettes out of paper for the child to play with. Soon playing with them wasn't enough, and Dana began to cut his own figures. When he was over his illness,



Original illustration for *Master Gibbon* by Charles Robinson, 1865. Engraving on paper, 17" x 10 1/2". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Dallas

Dana took to creating a pair of blunt scissors on a ribbon around his neck, so as to be handy should he want to create more silhouettes. This went on for several years, and Dana became so proficient at sculpting images with paper and scissors that what at first was merely a curiosity that his proud parents would display to visitors, led to his presenting a number of these works in a local art show at age 11. A critic at the time said, "Perhaps the most remarkable thing in the whole exhibition are the frames that contain the silhouettes on white paper cut by Master Dana Gibbon, a boy now of eleven or twelve years old, but who cut many of these figures—and many of the best of them—when he was but eight years old. In almost every case they are cut from the idea in his own mind, not copied from other pictures, and they are done without any aid whatever from teaching; the work is the product of instinct without training. The subjects are all of his own choice. Whatever is done is done with a perfection that we never see surpassed."

But paper and scissors weren't the only thing keeping Gibbon occupied. Langdon and Dana fell in with an older boy, Daniel Carter Beane, a wildcat and woodcraft aficionado.



A cut paper silhouette by Gibbon

Beane would later go on to found the "Sons of Daniel Boone," a scouting group for boys that would later merge with the Boy Scouts of America. The three boys would go on long winter hikes in driving snow and in the summer jog through the woodlands following a compass bearing. The mammals and a host of exploration madrics would stalk with both boys. Langdon was later the weatherologist on one of Peary's Arctic expeditions, thanks to the love of birds he picked up during these explorations.

In an attempt to put Dana into a trade that would allow him to exploit his artistic talents,

the family enlisted the aid of a cousin, Mrs. Robert Caring, who knew the 'right people' to get him an apprenticeship. Mrs. Caring took Dana in tow to the office of George R. Post, a noted architect of the era. As he was responsible for the decorative arts then in fashion being implemented on a number of mansions, it was thought one of the workmen doing the implementation would be a good master for the boy. Augustus Eastman was selected, and Post entrusted his carriage and took his charge to the master's workshop. Initially impressed by the boy's skill, he assigned him to work



Original magazine illustration, *Illustration* paper, 11 1/2" x 13 1/2" Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, 66.com



Digital Restoration for *Red magazine*, December 1, 1887. Ink on paper, 20" x 20". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Dallas

on sculpture, but they held no interest with Dana and his time with Saint-Gaudens was short.

In the summer of 1881, Dana got a job as a messenger boy on Wall Street. He did his job well enough, but on July 2, President Garfield was shot, resulting in patriotic fervor. A contest was held among the messenger boys to draw the best portrait of the fallen President, with the prize being funded by the entrants themselves. Dana won handsily and netted the dollar in prize money. Small though the prize was, it was a turning point for him: he had concrete assurance that he could turn his skills to making a living.

Three years later, in 1884, with high school behind him and college beyond his family's financial means, he took the entrance exam for the Art Students League of New York, whose \$5 a month tuition was more in line with their budget. The League featured a 100-student student body, and a corps of instructors that included luminaries such as Thomas Edison, William Merritt Chase, Erastus Cor, J. Aldin Weir, and others. It was run cooperatively by the students, and housed a number of graduates that went on to fame and fortune, including Howard Pyle. This was a place for serious trade work and "only serious work" were allowed to

join classes." For a short span of time, one of his classmates was Frederick Remington, who'd bored Gibson in arm wrestling for the position of class strong man. But Remington was won for the wide open spaces of the West. Gibson would continue on at the League for two years before striking out on his own.

But fame was not quick in coming to Gibson. He drew and drew. He submitted and submitted. He got a few occasional pieces of work on minor projects, but more often than not he was mainly shown the door. In the winter of 1886, it was a beaten down and frazzled Charles Dana Gibson that brought a stack full of drawings to the office of *Life*. The magazine was launched in 1883 by John Mitchell, Edward Martin, a founder of the *Harvard Lampoon*, and Andrew Miller. The magazine as it existed then was a bastion of satire and social conscience, capably picking fights when it found a just cause, and just as likely to wince sentimentally. It was a magazine whose popularity was reflected in a readership belonging to all strata of New York Society. It was into this office, with low expectations, that Gibson entered. Mitchell, the editor, reviewed the various items and settled on one in particular. A cartoon of a dog baying at the moon with a bird



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Original illustration for *Six*, April 16, 1904 (see account, 18.57 + 24.07). Photo courtesy of Illustration House, NY

quote from the *Mikado*, "Oh pray make no mistake, we are not dry, there very wide awake, the moon and I." For this illustration *Draw* earned \$4. As he left the office, he walked on air.

In the 1890s issue, Mitchell would later recount, "Having myself as a professional, drew some climbing up the slippery hill of Art, I detected beneath the superficiality of these drawings personalities rarely discovered in the efforts of a beginner. For the beginner, as a rule, draws far more admiration for technical cleverness than for the more serious qualities of drawing and composition, and he endeavors to conceal his shortcomings by elaborate and unadvised labor. But this beginner had started out on freer lines. His lines were good, able-bodied facts that held their heads up and looked you in the eye. No dodging of the difficult points, no tricks, no uncertainty, no starting of sentences. To be sure his lines, in consequence, were often clad in boiler-iron and although he and the Almighty, at that time, were holding different views as to the effects of light and shade, there was always courage and honesty in whatever he undertook."

He didn't find himself as fortunate with the next several submissions. Mitchell rejected them one after another, but with a sincere regret that convinced Gibson to persevere, and little by little more pieces saw publication. *Lit* wasn't alone in valuing Gibson. *Past* published several pieces and tried to get him under contract. His first month's income was \$35, rising eventually to a November total of \$194.50. Other similar magazines hired his services. *Six*-*Six*, perhaps a few more

down the ladder from *Lit*, became another regular buyer of his drawings. eager for work, Gibson became the talent Charles Beitzler's go-to man. He would take on all the work other more established artists might pass on. Had he the use to have a piece commissioned at noon ready to go to press before three. Beitzler convinced him to move into a studio at 33rd and Broadway, so with hawthorn close at hand, Gibson would follow Beitzler to the theatre with pencil and paper to sketch some dramatic scenes that would shortly appear as a double spread in *Six*-*Six*. Although he would get more wide acclaim with his later work, his talents were forged and refined in this unadorned atmosphere. He stayed at the magazine until 1893, when publications with deeper pockets began soliciting him for work. By this time, he was regularly drawing \$250 a month from *Lit* alone, with his total in October of that year at \$408.

A EUROPEAN ADVENTURE

By 1898, at the age of 11, Gibson had a regular enough income, and enough saved to make his own way to Europe to study. His first stop after arriving in London was the house of George Du Maurier. He introduced himself this way: "I'm Charles Dana Gibson. I'm an American. I draw, and you have been my master for years." Du Maurier was at the time famous for his drawings of party scenes, and in the coming years the two artists would often be compared and contrasted in *Lit* and other magazines. The two became fast friends



Original Illustration into artwork. Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Museum, NY



Original Illustration into artwork. Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Museum, NY



Digital Restoration into sepia; 18.5" x 26.5". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, www.HA.com



Digital Restoration into sepia; 14" x 18". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, www.HA.com



Original illustration for magazine, 1887, p. 24. 18" Photo courtesy of Heritage Institute, Boston

and friendly work. The Harvard edition of the *Psychopoeia* Bransford remarked, "His admitted devotion to Du Maurier in reverence for beautiful women beautifully attained, has led some critics to set him down as a mere disciple, while his powerful individuality has led others to accuse of mimicry; but a serious examination of his work has shown beyond doubt that he has gone beyond the genius of Du Maurier in sophistication, if not in variety of subjects and treatment. As much as any other artist, Mr. Gibson has steadily tried new experiments in the new fields opened by modern and processes of photo-engraving, and has been an important influence in both English and American line illustration."¹

Gibson spent the next two months in Paris at the *Académie Julian*, a noted art school. He spent his days in stuffy, dimly-lit classrooms, eagerly drawing nude after nude, both the beautiful and the grotesque. He and his fellow students received critiques and advice twice weekly from the professors. By evening, he and his fellows would take in the Paris night life. This was the summer the Eiffel Tower opened, and the city was in celebration.

SUCCESS BACK HOME

Although brief, his stay in Paris was a watershed on his technique. Gone was the traditional, and in its place was a new rigor. The diamond was no longer in the rough. His work in *Life* was opening other doors. Harper's, *The Century* and Scribner's, the powerhouses of publishing in New York, all offered work to the newly returned artist. The Malmaguard Club, whose membership was a 'who who' of New York's

most talented, held a show of Gibson's black and white work. Among those in attendance were John Singer Sargent and Edwin Austin Abbey who both highly praised Gibson's work. Abbey went so far as to invite Dana to stop by his studio the next day. When Gibson arrived, he found that master of detail engrossed in drawing an old silver tea set, which would serve as a minor figure in a picture he was working on. The two got along famously, and Abbey invited him to his bachelor dinner and to serve as an usher at his wedding. The dinner, held in Abbey's studio at the ledge building at Fifth Avenue and 175th Street, had an à la carte menu. Sargent, of course, who would also usher at the wedding; John Tinsleyman, Charles F. McKim, a celebrated architect, Gibson's former mentor Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Stanford White, soon to design Madison Square Garden, and A.R. Frost, as a memento, the gathered artists each donated one another's best prints, and Gibson would leave with a single carving featuring the work of all those attending.

The next morning tragedy struck. Gibson's mother summoned him to the family home in Hingham. His father had developed a rapid and mortal case of pneumonia. Langdon was unavailing, exploring the Grand Canyon with the Gardner expedition. Charles De Wolf Gibson had been an ardent follower of his son's work in *Life*, and his last hours were devoted hearing about his son's new celebrated friends.

When Gibson moved his quarters to a studio in the Alpine building in 1876, it was decided that his sister Josephine would stay with him on the weekends. Josephine, who was about 10 at the time, gives us a window into his life.



Original illustration, circa 1908. Ink on paper, 11" x 15". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, www.ha.com

It was a protection to him; places he couldn't take his little sister' he didn't want to go. People, even his friends who might have used Dana's studio as a meeting place, were elsewhere. His work was too important for him to waste time doing things he didn't enjoy. He spent hours at his drawing board, and I have seen a model fall to the floor after posing for a long time in one position. I know from my own experience how difficult it is to hold one position for any length of time without tiring. Nearly all Dana's early pictures were posed for by Miss Miriam Claba, a professional model who not only was willing to let others help, but was able to portray any type needed: old, young, fat or thin. She entered into the spirit of the picture and was largely responsible for the success of Dana's early drawings. She might have been called 'The Original Gibson Girl' as she appeared so often. . . Some models were easier to draw than others, and when a difficult model left I could always tell as the floor would be covered with sheets of cardboard, each with a new start of the figure he was trying to portray. Dana disliked to have people come to the studio when he was at work. It disturbed his thoughts and I have seen him quite upset by an interruption. He never showed his drawings to anyone and there were very few of his pictures about the studio. He was seldom satisfied with his own work, but not because he didn't try. There was a lot of talent

in everything he did, and at the end of the day he was tired. The hours allowed him and made him forget his work. . . There was the studio engagement book to be kept. I marked the good models with two stars and the others with one and some I crossed off, but always kept their addresses, just in case they were needed. Those that were difficult and untrained took much longer to draw. There was quite a responsibility in drawing a model, as was proved one day when Dana received a letter which read: 'When you receive this I will be dead.'

A little man had come to the studio one day asking for work. He said he had never been a model, but it was very urgent that he make some money. Dana gave him ten dollars and told him to come back but that he had no place for him at present. I was not at the studio when he returned, but Dana drew him twice. The second time he came he left a 'vest' which was filled with whole bones like a ladies' corset. When he called for it, Dana told him that he wouldn't need it again. He was a tall little man and spoke very little English, but seemed to understand, and was grateful for what Dana had done and tried to kiss his hand in parting. The letter arrived a few days later. It was to have been a busy day at the studio, but Dana couldn't work. What if it was a hoax to create sympathy? He cancelled all engagements, notified the police and instructed me to open the door to no one, and left for the man's address which

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Original illustration ink on paper, 12.5" x 13". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, 04/2018



From illustration for *A Million and One Nights*, 1908. Ink on paper, 11.5" x 13.5". Photo courtesy of the Hagley Foundation, US.com



Another illustration of a "Million and One Nights" ink on paper, 10" x 10". Photo courtesy of the Hagley Foundation, US.com

we had recorded in the book... Dana had reached the little man's hotel just after the police had broken into the gas-filled room. It was not too late, but the liver had been bad. Another five minutes and he would have been dead. Dana paid his hotel bill, sent him to a hospital, and arranged for a return trip to Russia if he recovered.¹

Dana's method of education was unique perhaps but very effective. There was never a day but many words of praise. If I was thorough in the bathrooms before breakfast, this was 'good.' If I washed my hands or brushed my hair without being told, he was 'proud of me.' He didn't punish him while he was at work, I was rewarded by being told that 'no one else could possibly be such a scoundrel.' Nothing in earth would have made me undervalue of his praise.²

THE GIRISH GIRL

F. Hopkinson Smith, in his five-part tabloid series *American Illustration* in 1901, writes:

"He is it, his hand when he draws the American girl, and that girl is a lady!" Rejoined the critic. "One of our few good writers on art is right when she says he is a chronicler of well-bred American life. Mr. Gibson stands easily first. Listen to this from her pen, commenting on a recent exhibition of his. I have it here in my pocket. No one is so sure as Mr. Gibson to make

his young women look like ladies and his young men like manly gentlemen; and he has caught and fixed the true air and spirit of the American Girl. Of course, he has not caught her soul or her protean variations. The action of different climates, the inter-mixture of different races, have made as many types of American girls as of chrysanthemums. English, too, is a lady; and while most American daughters can get the real type after a fashion, they can't draw ladies as Mr. Gibson does." It is a difficult thing to compose a large group well, and most of Mr. Gibson's are extremely well composed. They are full of a variety that does not seem forced, but appears to result naturally from the exigencies of the subject. Their chief figures immediately assert themselves as such, although they are brought into true pictorial union with the accessory ones, and their story is always clearly suggested. They are strong and telling arrangements of line. And in the distribution of their main masses of light and shade, they are admirably conceived for execution in pen and ink. If Mr. Gibson's pictures are always effective, it is largely because he draws both with force and grace, but largely, too, because he is never afraid of strong, big contrasts of color. The many delicate works as though a generally grayish rose were their aim, or, in striving for sufficient contrast, cut their work up into meaningless bits of white and black. They don't make pictures—and Mr. Gibson does."



Original cover illustration for *The Edge of the Arctic*, 1896. Ink on paper (24.5" x 24"). Photo courtesy of [Heritage-Images.com](http://heritage-images.com)



Original illustration, full size paper, 27" x 38.5". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, www.ah.com



Original illustration. Ink on paper. Photo courtesy of IllustrationHouse, NY



Abner Paris, 1865. Ink on paper, 18.7" x 22.7". Book cover of *Book of Days*, 84 cm

A RETURN TO PARIS

In early 1894, Gibson returned to France and set about capturing Paris on paper. Although not able to speak even possible French, Evans spent most of his time out on the town with the American Ambassador, James B. Ennis, the two visiting the theatre scene and attempting to teach the French the fine art of polite Richard Harding Davis was also taking the grand tour that year, and exhibited Gibson for what would become *Abner Paris*, serialized in *Harper's Magazine*. Trama, calls, and themes were transcribed by Gibson's pen while in Davis's company. He also spent time in his studio. Eugenie, a popular French model immortalized in MacMonnies' *Backstage* bronze in the New York Metropolitan Museum's collection, became Americanized as a Gibson curl along with Summer, another model, who posed for *No Exposure of a Woman's Gown*. The models usually had to be made to understand Gibson wanted to draw them with their clothes on.

Charles Edmund Davis would later write, "Gibson's experience in Paris was a most important one for it unquestionably had more effect on his work than any of his later travels. Almost the first of his sketches to reach this country show the effect of the French school of black-and-white art. He gradually drops away from his line-line drawing, and told his story in a few bold strokes, where he would formerly have used a hundred. The change may have been due altogether to an appreciation and to a more intimate knowledge of the French artist and their work, or it is possible that the artist's

stare with which he was received as a master of his art in Paris may have inspired him to strike out in bolder methods."

MARRIAGE

Although love and romance had been his province for years on the printed page, it was not until 1894 that it would strike him personally. Evie Langhorne of Richmond Virginia had been introduced to society in 1893, and later that season was invited by Ward McCillenc, the de facto ruler of New York 'Society' to walk with him to the Putnam's Ball, a keystone of the social calendar. The event was all promised, and there was no taken by New York that she attended the *Bliss* there a year later. Dining at Delmonico's one evening, she spotted acquaintance Robert Marshall dining with Max and Richard Harding Davis, freshly returned from Paris. On the way out, she passed the table and Russell rose and followed her to the door. Upon his return, he informed his companions that they were invited to tea at his residence the following day and meet this beauty. Gibson was smitten and proceeded to court her, making his way down to Richmond to call on her several times in the coming months. Her father, the colonel, at first referred to him as "that damn Yankee" but soon warmed to the charming Gibson.

The couple were married on November 7, 1895, in Richmond. They then embarked on a tour of the Continent, visiting Gibraltar, Spain, Naples, Rome, Florence, Monte Carlo, Paris, and London. Even on his honeymoon, Gibson's



English Illustration, 1867. Front cover pages, 24.1P & 26.1P. Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, HMA.com

you want still. His sketches would have been compiled into London As Seen by Charles Dana Gibson. During their London visit they were the toast of the town. The US Ambassador invited the Gibsons to be presented at the first drawing room soiree of the year at Buckingham Palace, and Gibson was commissioned by the London Graphic to provide illustrations of the event. The critic raved, "In all the crowd of American men-of-talent who have delighted and fascinated the British people, none has more firmly established himself in favor than Mr. Charles Dana Gibson... His English pictures nearly persuade us that we are almost as clever and charming and beautiful as Americans. We realize that his British 'subjects' are only puppets in a marionette show. He understands and interprets us."

Upon their return to New York, the Gibsons moved into a Studio atop the new Lipp building at 17 West 13th Street. Irene was delighted by the location, right in the heart of the shops and theater district. 1887 brought a new member into the family, Irene Langhorne Gibson. She would be immortalized many times in her father's drawings. Her brother Langhorne would come two years later.

Doubleday, McClure commissioned Gibson to do a series of drawings in Egypt, and the new family came in tow.



London as Seen by Charles Dana Gibson, 1887

Although probably proud of his sketches, Gibson agonized and struggled when the publisher insisted he write text to go along with them. It was an ordeal, and one he would never repeat. They returned from Egypt by way of Munich. While there, he was commissioned to illustrate Paper of Mummies, the sequel to the *Penetration of Egypt*. It was a great opportunity, as the background of Munich was a perfect stage

for the story. In his quest for models, he discovered Mr. Pipp Gibson was intrigued by the idea of doing a series of illustrations for *Life* about Americans traveling abroad, but was stuck for a book to hang it on.

"At this juncture, an old German wandered into the studio of the American artist, who he had heard was hiring models, and apologetically asked to be employed. As an old man 'type' he could have been in no more than occasional demand in the Munich art colony. A small, bald, downy-fellows fellow, it seemed to be written all over him that a son Peter Hall had ordered him out to find work and not to come home with any of his excess. Traced in the doorway, he appeared to be the composite portrait of a thousand hen-podded husbands."



Original Illustration for *Ulls*, circa 1887. Ink on paper. Photo courtesy of Illustration House, NY



Original Illustration for *Ulls*, circa 1887. Ink on paper. Photo courtesy of Illustration House, NY



Original Illustration for *Post*, November 1, 1899. Ink on paper, 13" x 21.5". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, www.ha.com

In September of 1898, *Lip* published the first in what would be collected into *The Education of Mr. Pipp*. Pipp, a man of means, is accompanied by a stout, darning-wig wife and two beautiful daughters. The series was a hit, and what was initially only six drawings expanded to meet public demand.

SUCCESS

Gibson was on top of the world. In 1899, he was elected to the American Institute of Arts and Letters, the would later serve as a director in 1911, and joined the Society of Illustrators in 1901, a year after its founding. Initially passed over for consideration because it was thought he was too busy and too famous for such things, he was elected President and served from 1904-1907, and 1909-1911. And the financial rewards were substantial too. Collier's, rapidly becoming home to Frost, Pyle, Stoughton, and Parrish, set its sights on Gibson and offered the priority sum of \$500-500 a drawing if they could get him exclusively. But Gibson was unwilling to cut his ties with *Lip* out of loyalty to Mitchell, who had started and fostered his career. Collier's changed tactics and offered to share exclusivity with *Lip*. This brought consideration from Edward Fisk of the *Ladies Home Journal*. A bidding war ensued, with Collier's coming out on top after agreeing to buy 100 double-page illustrations for \$100,000 over four years, and Gibson agreeing to work only for Collier's and *Lip*. Initially the investment was doubtful, so long time Collier's subscribers found Gibson's satirical drawings too delicate a

face and cancellation notices started coming in. But new subscribers, eager to get more Gibson, more than compensated in both number and income class, delighting advertisers and more than paying for the work involved. Collier's went so far as to produce a special issue on October 11, 1904, sporting a Gibson cover, *Inter-space*, a letter by Gibson to young artists, multiple illustrations, and a tribute to Gibson by Robert Ridgway.

Money flowed in freely and the Gibsons abandoned apartment dwelling for a house they built on East 73rd. Soon after, in 1903, while sailing into blockers, Maine, he spotted a 700-acre island. He purchased the island and built a summer home on it that he would later retire to.

At the height of his fame, Gibson took a radical step. Taking an example many of his fellow illustrators, he wanted to make the jump to painting. In November of 1905, Gibson and his family left for Spain, and then on to Paris, but success in the new field proved elusive. Fellow artists felt his paintings lacked distinction, and Gibson himself threw out many of his paintings. In 1907, the choice was taken out of his hands. The Panic of 1907, which would end only when JP Morgan stepped in to shore up the finances of the United States, ravaged the economy, including the Knickerbocker Trust Company which held a large part of Gibson's savings. He wasn't married, but the life of an itinerant painter was beyond his means. The Gibsons returned to America.

Writing for him at home was a message that William C.



Girl in Red and Blue, 1944. Oil on canvas, 37" x 26". Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, www.ah.com



THE FRIENDS FROM 37TH ST. IN 1862, 28" x 22", OIL ON CANVAS, ARTIST'S ROOM, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Gibson had come down from New York to see him. "Pop" Gibson, former art editor at *Puck*, was now in that position at *Constitution*, and came bearing a commission to serialize Robert Chambers' *The Communist Law*. The series was a popular hit, and once again Gibson was a sought after property. The Gibson Girl began making her rounds again, playing golf, dancing to popular music and even taking on careers. She was aware of the English Suffragettes and often gave a nod to their cause. Her last most important calling came in August of 1914.

THE DIVISION OF PICTORIAL PUBLICITY

While Gibson had often championed social causes and dabbled in politics, the sinking of the *Lusitania* lit a passion for in him that would inflame his pen for the duration of the war. Using the membership of the Society of Illustrators as a nucleus, the *Vigilantes* were formed. Gibson was nominated their leader, and modestly agreed to take the post, knowing full well the temperaments involved in such a group of artists would be difficult to manage. He appointed Frank Du S. Casey as his second in command. They offered their services to the Government without compensation. The group ran into problems almost at once. The Administration had been preoccupied running a patriotic cartoon contest, and didn't respond with much interest at first to the group's ability to contribute. When they finally did, they were more efficacious than expected. Treasury Secretary William McAdoo attended a dinner held for the purpose of working out details and proceeded to read out a long and condescending contract that all artists would have to sign for their involvement. Attendees



THE ARTIST'S ROOM, 1882, OIL ON CANVAS, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

responded by picking premises at the back of the room, and one who was quoted shouting, "McAdoo about nothing!" But Gibson persevered, traveling to Washington to realize ruffled knickers with McAdoo, and continued to hold meetings of the Society in Chicago, Philadelphia, and other cities, traveling on his own dime until a fund was formed to pay for the modest expenses of the Division's operating budget. After jumping through hoops and dealing with red tape, the newly formed Division of Pictorial Publicity got approval for the production of several posters, and they were a hit. Sweet Casey was shuttling regularly between New York and Washington with huge bundles of art, returning with rare requests to be filled for various branches of government. Gibson handed these assignments out to those best suited to the subject. William Morgan, Harvey Dunn, Ernest Proctor, George Harding, Harry Townsend, J. André Smith, Ives Abner, and Walter Jack Driscoll were given commissions to capture and send to France to stand at the front.

The Division also participated in public events, erecting huge 90 x 15 foot canopies at the New York Public Library and filling it in front of crowds while promoting Liberty Loans. The various branches of the military and the allies were hooked out on the canopies, and specific artists were assigned to each one. H.C. Wirth was given the Army, Henry Boardfield the Navy and on it went, down to the smallest nation of Allies. Gibson for his part was given the United States.

Over the next several years, Gibson gave assiduously to the Division. Serving regularly as Treasurer for their Thursday night meetings at the Salmagundi Club, where tonight

**CAN YOU DRIVE A CAR?
WILL YOU DRIVE ONE IN FRANCE?
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Original illustration into magazine. Photo courtesy of Illustration House, NY

officers, civilians involved in the War effort, and returned American officers would speak, his days and evenings were spent in the Division's business, while still managing to fit in many drawings for *Lyle* often of the patriotic vein.

When victory came at last, Gibson's efforts were recognized by his fellows, who presented him with a bust of himself by James L. Swan. France, for its part, made him a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, and Belgium an Officer of the Crown. Gibson continued to make the war and its after effects his subject matter because he believed what he was doing meant something. In an essay published in *The Atlantic*, Gibson opines on the cartoon:

"With it, Hogarth scoured and corrected many of the abuses of his age. With it, the half-insane Gillray kept England in a fever of heat and hatred against Napoleon. With it, Philipon, with the famous 'Père', drove Louis Philippe from the French throne. With it, 'Grand' brought down the full flood of the British Lion's vengeance upon the Bengal Tiger at the time of the Sepoy Rebellion. With it, Larch made the whole world shudder when the Russian Czar died in 1855. With it, Van drew tens of thousands of volunteers to the flag, and won President Lincoln's commendation of his pictures as 'the best recruiting sergeant on the side of the Union.' With it, after Luchas, Daubier solidified

the French Republic by putting the extent of the disaster which the Empire had brought. With it, De Maurier laughed the authors of London into oblivion. Its power undiminished, it has served to mold the events of history within the memory of the present generation. Old is the saying that the pen is mightier than the sword. This is the nineteenth century; the pencil was a sweeping force—as it is in the present day!"

LIFE

In the waning days of the War, *Lyle* lost its long time editor, John Mitchell. Andrew Miller, long time business manager, took over for his fallen partner, but a year and a half later he too was dead. *Lyle* was placed on the block by the Mitchell estate. The staff, many of whom had been at *Lyle* for most of their careers, were alarmed that the magazine stay in familiar hands. They set up a syndicate and put Gibson at its head. They engaged in a bidding war with Doubleday, raising the bid up to \$1001 a share, and walked away the winners. At first, all was well. New talent poured in and steadily. Tracy Cradley's *Stogie*, James Otto Fischer and J.C. Leyendecker were regularly featured. A.B. Frost, back from Europe, was contracted to take up the pen again. And John Held chronicled the age of the flapper. Gibson himself was a lesser presence. The Gibson Girl was of the past, and Gibson himself wasn't in tune with the new sensibilities. As time went on, Gibson's lack of taste



Original illustration for *Life*, circa 1910s. Ink on paper, 8 1/2 x 14 1/2". Photo courtesy of www.istockphoto.com



Digital Restoration by the author, 127 x 1017. Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, 04.1.2018

talent as an editor began to show. Too much democracy in the boardroom and too many conflicting visions. Gibson wasn't willing to hurt feelings or bruise egos. The magazine needed a director, and hired itself with a diplomat. Even his ability to identify new talent was questionable. He turned down Fitz Anon, who would contribute to much of the early success of *The New Yorker*, one of *Life's* new rivals. New directions were tried and abandoned, ripe, once a class of innovative satires and social commentary had become stodgy and conservative in spite of itself. Gibson soldiered on, although the work took a toll on him. He finally arranged a sale for his stake in the magazine to Clay Maxwell and Henry Richer in 1932, and retreated to his home on 708 Ave. Road.

THE GOLDEN YEARS

Free from the concerns of running a business, and working with 80 years of artistic experience, Gibson gave himself over to the canvas and took up the paintbrush again. He painted landscapes and portraits, and his children and grandchildren became subjects. In 1934 the Academy of Arts and Letters invited him to exhibit. The show consisted of a retrospective of his pen and ink work in two smaller rooms, and a larger exhibit hall with more than 80 paintings. A review in the *New York Times* stated:

One approaches this exhibition prepared to renew one's acquaintance with the famous Gibson Girl of

yesterday and with other celebrated creations of this ubiquitous pen. They are, indeed, all there, bringing the long-ago most vividly back to us. However, few are likely to be prepared for the spectacle provided by nearly a hundred paintings, a large part of them produced within the last two or three years, by an artist who recently passed his sixty-seventh birthday. Never before, so far as I know, has Charles Dana Gibson held a painting show. We do not all associate his name with coarse and trash. The surprise thus afforded is considerable, but it becomes enhanced as, crossing the threshold of so amazing a demonstration of inextinguishable youth, one goes about the gallery, impelled, step by step, to recognition of a talent audacious in its attack, absolutely unshaken by any painting problem that might present itself, and technically equipped to carry every an exploit through with real determination. Make no mistake about it, Charles Dana Gibson is a painter. He persists again and again in a way the reader is not likely soon to forget. This is scarcely the gesture of a fire-eater black and white artist who tentatively tries his hand in another medium, just as a lark, or to see if he can manage a surprise come-back. This is really painting. The exuberance, the blithe letting go, is pervasively underlined by an intelligent, though not available, knowledge of craft. The technique pursued, and for the most part employed, is one that makes



Digital Illustration into e-graphic. Photo courtesy of Shutterstock.com, #9



Original Illustration. Ink on paper, 1871 (1871). Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions, US.com

heavy towards upon the painter's supply of material. It is an impasto technique. Pigment lathers the canvas with what often looks like privileged abundance. But there is method in this looking: an impasto procedure that as a rule justifies itself and leaves the subject robustly articulate.”¹

Gibson continued to read and paint at 790 Acres Island until 1944, when he suffered a heart attack. By order of the President, a Navy plane evacuated the artist to a hospital in New York. Charles Dana Gibson died several weeks later.

THE GIBSON LEGACY

The impact of the Gibson Girl on her society was seismic. Women, once relegated to front porches and sitting rooms in 'polite society' were given a role model who played tennis, rode to the sea, rode bicycles, and took control of the environment around her. Gibson even suggested in a tongue-in-cheek fashion that she would soon be on the Gridiron playing football with the boys. She was the vehicle of social progress for her era, and only the wildest did not want to come along for the ride. Without her, would there have been Suffragettes? Every man wanted her, and every woman wanted to be her. She was dramatized into plays, surrounded in popular ballads, and found on pins, pillows, posters, and magazine covers. And her creator was a celebrity in his own right. Imitated by thousands, loved by millions, and respected by his peers. Even the Kaiser was said to have a collection of Gibson illustrated books. Charles Dana Gibson was a leader in his field, long time President of the Society and a patriot. ♦

— by R. Gary Cook, 2015

R. Gary Cook is a long time collector of comic book and magazine art. A graduate of Paper College, he lives with his wife and three sons in Fairport, Michigan. He is also the 3rd owner of *Illustration Magazine* and *Illustration Group* in White House, with over 2000 members.

Special thanks to Heritage Auctions, So.com, and Illustration House, for the images used in this article.

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New and Notable:



A WEIRD OH WORLD: THE ART OF BILL CAMPBELL

BY MARK CHITRELL
200 PAGES, FULL COLOR
\$34.95, HARDCOVER
NOVEMBER PUBLISHING, 2014

You may recall Bill Campbell's work from *Etherealis* #1, but if you don't see that particular issue, you've almost certainly have seen the strange and wonderful "Weird-Oh" model kits Campbell designed in the 1960s. This new reference book is an extensive overview of the career of this colorful artist, and features over 700 illustrations from Bill's early days painting model bus tops for the Hask Model Company, to his invention of the iconic Weird-Oh model kits. The book also features his work for national ad campaigns, editorial cartoons, his fine art, and designs for Weird-Oh models that never reached final production. Much of the art is presented here for the very first time.



THE COLLECTOR'S BOOK OF VIRGIL FINLAY

BY ROBERT NEWBOLD, DONALD CLAY,
AND KENNETH JARVIS
200 PAGES, BLACK AND WHITE AND COLOR
ILLUSTRATIONS
AMERICAN SCIENCE PRESS, 2014

Virgil Finlay was one of the most accomplished line artists working in the genres of science fiction and fantasy from 1936 to 1971. He illustrated an astounding amount of pulp fiction. His wonderfully detailed interior art appeared in 62 issues of *Mind Tales*, and he painted 19 covers. (His run only ended when the magazine ceased publication in 1961.) For years afterward, his illustrations appeared in *Amazing*, *Omni*, *Science Fiction*, *Fantasy*, *Universe*, *N*, *Galaxy*, and many more. While he passed away in 1971, in 2012 Virgil Finlay was posthumously inducted into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame. This new collection, the first in almost 30 years, contains some of the best reproductions of his work to date, with most illustrations printed at their original size. The book also includes an extensive gallery of his other work, most often omitted in previous volumes of his art.



HEROES OF THE COMICS: PORTRAITS OF THE PIONEERING LEGENDS OF COMIC BOOKS

BY DREW PHEASANT
160 PAGES, FULL COLOR
\$24.95, HARDCOVER
NOVEMBER PUBLISHING, 2014

For a number of years now, Drew Friedman has been creating a fantastic series of booklets which he renders intricate and

amazing watercolor portraits of some of his favorite figures from popular culture—usually old Jewish comedians, and celebrity fossils. Drew has now decided to turn his attention to another group of interesting old characters, famous and often not so famous cartoonists: the men and women who created superheroes, *MAD* magazine, and much more.

This book features over 80 full-color portraits of the pioneering legends of the American comic book, including publishers, editors, and artists from the industry's birth in the '30s, through the brilliant artists and writers of DC Comics in the '50s. All of the portraits are classic and lovingly rendered by Friedman in his inimitable "wavy and all" style. Featuring figures popular and obscure, each subject features a short essay by Friedman, who grew up tracing many of the artists included—guys like Stan Lee, Harvey Kurtzman, Jack Davis, Will Eisner, and Bill Gaines. Other names you might recognize: Crumb, Wood, Wilverton, Frazetta, Kirby, Cole, DeLoe... the book is a veritable Hall of Fame of comic book history.



THE ART OF JOHN ALVIN

BY ANDREA ALVIN
200 PAGES, FULL COLOR
\$34.95, HARDCOVER
NOVEMBER PUBLISHING, 2014

John Alvin said that as a child he eagerly anticipated the arrival of the Sunday paper, so that he could peruse the ads for all of the new movies playing at the local theaters. He was enraptured with the images of movies, and would create art inspired by his love of film for the rest of his life.

Alvin's career began in 1954, with his creations of the iconic movie poster for Mel Brooks' *Blazing Saddles*. The success of this campaign led to Alvin creating the images for numerous other Brooks' films, including *Young Frankenstein*. His presence in the industry was firmly established with his creation of the movie posters for Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*, Steven Spielberg's *E.T.—The Extra-Terrestrial*, and Mike Edmonds' *Vibes/Viviana*. Some of his iconic images include the posters for *The Godfather*, *Hook*, *Aladdin*, and more. In all, Alvin created the posters for over 130 movies in a 31 year career.

John Alvin passed away in 2009 at the age of 58. In his most recent work, he continued to create iconic images for contemporary films like *The Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, *Lord of the Rings*, and the *Prince of the Castle* series.



THE ART OF PIN-UP

EDITED BY CASH HANSON WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY
SAPHIENNE BLAIN AND LOUIS MARTEL
160 PAGES, FULL COLOR
\$24.95, HARDCOVER
NOVEMBER PUBLISHING, 2014

In the 15 years since *Dooney Books* released *The Great American Pin-up*, international interest in this distinctly American art form has increased exponentially. Paintings by leading pin-up artists such as Alberto Vargas, George Petty, and Gil Elvgren that sold for \$1,000 in 1996 are going for \$200,000 and more today.

The Art of Pin-up is a monumental treat that will be covered by over the most coveted pin-up collections. The lavish format and gigantic size (19 x 11 x 1 inches) more than make up for any overlap existing between any previous books on the subject. The top 30 pin-up artists are profiled in depth. Each chapter opens with a typographic reproduction of an original calendar or magazine cover by that artist, printed on a waterproof and tear-resistant plastic sheet. The reproduction quality of the paintings, posters, and preparatory sketches that follow—largely sourced from the original art—invites the viewer to trace the brush strokes, while the exquisite period calendars, vintage prints, and original model photos document the artists' creative process. Much of these ephemera were photographed on-site at the historic Baron & Bigelow Campers, home to the world's largest archive of vintage pin-up calendars.

In addition to the chapters on the 10 featured artists, the book includes brief biographies and the work of 60 additional artists. Weighing in at a whopping 11 pounds, this is one of the most impressive books ever produced on the subject of American illustration art. I can only hope that similarly lavish volumes will be someday be produced on other great illustrators, such as Norman Rockwell or J.C. Leyendecker.



**DOONEY AND OTIS:
DESIGNING THE AMERICAN DREAM**
BY NORMAN DOONEY AND OTIS SHEPARD
250 PAGES, PELLICOLEN
\$30.00 / \$45.00
HARVARD, 2014

This beautifully designed full-color collection showcases the work of Dooney and Otis Shepard, two groundbreaking giants of early 20th century American advertising. The book chronicles their story in detail for the first time. It explores the Shepards' penchant for abstraction and modernism, and shows how the advent of billboard advertising inspired their creativity—large campaigns that reached the grandeur of their lifestyle. Throughout, it demonstrates how their influence touched all aspects of consumer culture—from collaborating on the packaging for Wrigley's Gum and designing uniforms and logos for the Chicago Cubs, to planning and promoting the resort island Catalina, where Stan Laed, Oliver Hardy, Clark Gable, and other celebrities frequented.

The book illuminates their personal lives as well, from their origins and early years, to the eventual dissolution of their marriage. As it brings to life these pioneering artists and their remarkable partnership, it elevates them to their rightful place in popular culture and makes clear how their legendary work reflected and exemplified the American Dream. ●



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EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

A Renaissance Man:

The Art of Fred Marschall

June 18 through October 20, 2015

The Eric Lyle Blumens of Picture Book Art, MA

This exhibition comprises over 90 works and shows the full range of Marschall's talent, from youthful Abstract-Expressionism through record cover and book jacket design to the crowning achievements of his career—illustrations for children's books. As he noted about his picture-book art, "each picture is a link in a chain, and they all exist in counterpoint with the text. And although you must catch each picture to have impact, just like a jacket, the best illustration can also be much more subtle. It can be positioned and covered over a period of time. It's a very different discipline from what I was used to, but I must say it was love at first sight." Of special focus will be the art for *Pan in Boots* (1960), for which he won a Caldecott Honor award. The exhibition coincides with the 25th anniversary of the book's publication. A 48-page soft-cover book by Nicholas Follis, *The Art of Fred Marschall*, will accompany the exhibition.

For more information, visit www.ericblumens.org.

The Puzzling World of John Sloan

June 5 through September 8, 2015

The Blanton Art Museum, UT

Between 1909 and 1916, John Sloan produced a weekly series of word and picture puzzles for the Sunday supplement of the *Philadelphia Free*, one of the country's leading illustrated newspapers. *The Puzzling World of John Sloan* will explore this little-known facet of Sloan's early newspaper career, presenting more than 21 works from the Museum's collection. On view for the first time, the puzzles demonstrate the artist's imagination and verbal and visual wit, as well as the fluid boundaries between fine art and newspaper illustration in the first decade of the 20th century. This exhibition encourages visitors to solve Sloan's complex puzzles.

For more information, visit www.blanton.org.

J.C. Leyendecker and the Saturday Evening Post

March 21 through June 14, 2015

The Norman Rockwell Museum, MA

Admired by Norman Rockwell as a master in the field, Joseph Christian Leyendecker (1874-1951) was one of the preeminent American illustrators of the early 20th century. Often remembered for his beautifully conceived posters and advertisements—particularly those featuring

The Arrow Collar Man—he also created 312 covers for the *Saturday Evening Post*, a number that would be later matched by Rockwell himself. This special exhibition features such of J.C. Leyendecker's legendary *Post* cover tributes. Gifted to the Norman Rockwell Museum by William Hargreaves, they are testament to the artist's exceptional vision and talent. Included, Leyendecker's *Post* covers reflect the social and cultural history of his times, featuring such memorable characters as his popular New Year's Baby, Santa Claus, and the stylish men and women who became his hallmark. A selection of original paintings by the artist will also be on view.

For more information, visit nm.org.

Golden Legacy: Original Art from 60 Years of Golden Books

June 1 through August 31, 2015

From Picture Library, UT

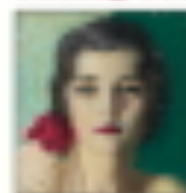
This exhibition will present the most extensive public showing ever of original illustration art from America's publishing's best loved and most successful picture-book series, Little Golden Books.

Launched in 1942, Little Golden Books made high quality illustrated books available at affordable prices. This series features 60 masterpieces of original illustration art by such artists as Gustaf Tenggren, Martin Provensen, Elsie Wilks, Richard Scarry, Emily Knight, and Mary Blair—chosen from the vast Random House archives—and includes examples from each picture-book classic, as *The Puffy Little Piggy*, *Teenie Mouse for a Bunny*, *The Kitten Who Thought He Was a Mouse*, *The Caterpillar*, *I Can Fly*, and more. 🐰

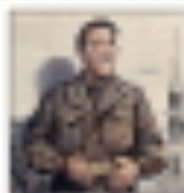
For more information, visit rhc.org.

None of my upcoming exhibitions or events related to the world of classic illustration? Email henry@pict.com

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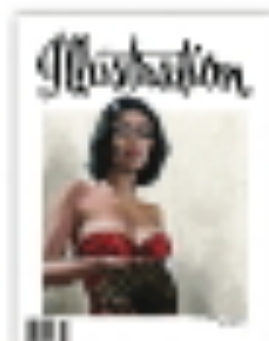
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