



# “The Influence of This Master”

## The Legacy of Howard Pyle in the 1920s and 1930s

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Biggs Museum of American Art  
March 28, 2015

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A student of illustrations... cannot fail to be struck by the influence of this master... The little city of Wilmington, Delaware, where Mr. Pyle lives, is a Mecca for serious art students.  
*The Art Interchange, 1903*



Howard Pyle (1853-1911)

Master illustrator and teacher, Howard Pyle, created close to 3,000 illustrations in a 35 year career that was cut short by his death in 1911 at only 58 years of age.



Pyle with students outside his Wilmington studio.



Pyle with a group enjoying a picnic at his Chadds Ford summer school.



A quick montage representing the Delaware Art Museum's collection reminds us of the broad array of subjects Pyle painted and drew, quite often adding his skills as an author of the texts.



Pirates

History – especially American history





Historical Fiction –

Funny stories for kids and adults, the King Arthur tales, literature, and the history of Pyle's own time.



Here are three iconic images among Pyle's most widely-recognized works:

The Mermaid, Marooned, and The Flying Dutchman.



Pyle taught over 165 students, formally in classroom and studio settings, and informally as mentor offering critiques to more advanced students, who were often already working illustrators. **All of these students in their lifetimes were his legacy.** They absorbed not just his curriculum, but also his philosophy of the art of illustration, condensed in these phrases that crystallize his approach, and the expressive and emotional intensity that he so valued in illustration .

Project your mind into your subject until you actually live it. Make your pictures live.

Let your soul flow into your picture.

Throw your heart into the picture and then jump in after it.            Howard Pyle



Not all his students went on to careers in illustration or even in art, but about 50 did. We'll take a look at the works of his students who worked as illustrators in the 1920s and 1930s. A number of them remarked many decades after their study with Pyle about how he informed their art, even though we can readily see that we would never mistake their art for his. Some of these artists are not household names today, but they definitely were in their day.

## STANLEY ARTHURS 1877-1950

Born in Kenton, Delaware. Arthurs his whole career in DE, taking over Pyle's own studio at his death.



Just as they do today, businesses gave away calendars as a marketing tool. Often the calendars went up on the wall at home. It's often remarked that calendar images, magazine covers, and posters were "art" for many Americans who never visited museums.

Here is the night watchman in a colonial village on his rounds with his lantern and other provisions, knocking at The Traveler's Rest Inn, its sign noting the year 1789. American historical scenes were Arthurs' specialty, and they were very popular during this time of the "Colonial Revival," a movement whose origins go back to the 1876 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the nation. This Centennial Exposition, celebrated in Philadelphia, helped motivate Pyle's body of work centering on the American Revolution .



Advertising calendar for Brown and Bigelow, 1928. Oil. 36 × 27"

The colonial style was promoted in house décor and home products. For those who did go to museums or wanted to build an art collection around this theme, artists such as Childe Hassam depicted New England villages like Old Lyme CT, one of several towns that had actually carried out plans to remodel or rebuild buildings in colonial styles. Restoration of Colonial Williamsburg , underway in 1929, would open five years later.



COLONIAL QUILTS LIKE COLONIAL GARDENS WERE GAY IN COLOR AND QUAINT IN DESIGN

*These Faithful Copies of Famous Old Quilts will Transform your Bedrooms*

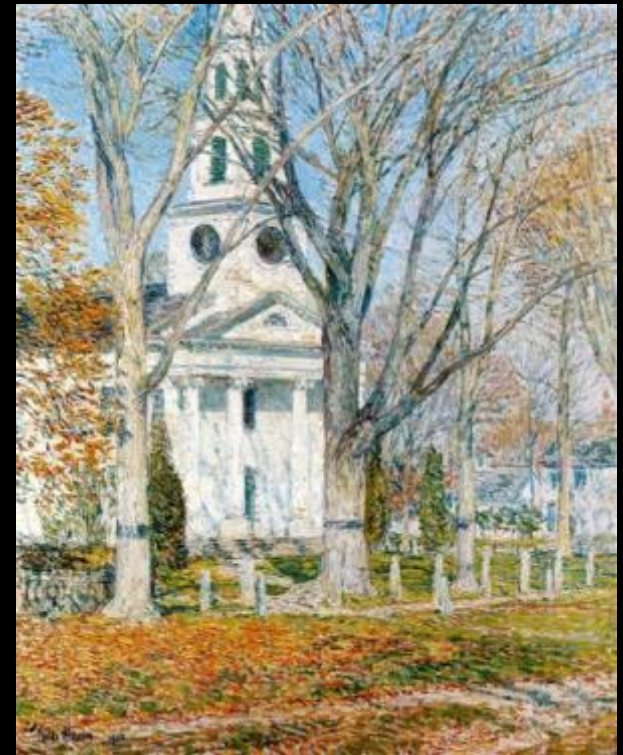
Colonial gardens, with their quaint, boxwood-bordered beds filled with vivid flowers, offered continual inspiration to Colonial quilt makers. The unusual success of *Old Kentucky Quilts* is due to the great care that has been taken in copying faithfully every detail of famous old geometric and floral designs.

Place an *Old Kentucky Quilt* on your bed and immediately the covered charm of Early America becomes predominant in your room. These quilts, made of fine linen or good soft-finished cloth and filled with fluffy new cotton, make the ideal bed covering for fall and winter. Lovely colors are strictly tub-dyed.

Look for label, *Old Kentucky Quilt*, to be sure of exact reproductions. Priced from \$4 to \$8. At leading stores. Send 10¢ for the beautifully illustrated booklet, "Decorative Details from Historic Bedrooms." LOUISVILLE BEDDING CO., Incorporated, Louisville, Kentucky.

*Old<sup>er</sup> Kentucky Quilts*

When Arthurs' Night Watchman appeared in his book the American Historical Scene in 1935, one critic noted the "universality" of the theme and how anyone of any culture could appreciate this picture. However, these illustrators all worked in a market that targeted audiences who were mostly white, middle-class, and not inclusive of many segments of the population, especially African Americans, who made appearances as servants if at all, and Native-Americans, whose genocide escaped notice. So, the imagery and underlying narratives of their art were aimed at one group that shared certain values and aspired to a certain way of life that did exclude a large part of the American experience.



Childe Hassam

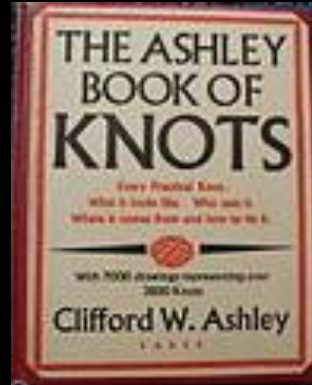
*Church at Old Lyme, oil on canvas, 1905.*  
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York



CLIFFORD  
ASHLEY  
1881-1947



From 1916 Ashley made his permanent home in Massachusetts, though he often returned to Wilmington during the winter and retained a studio there into the 1930s.



The **ULTIMATE** knot book is called the Ashley Book of Knots... it's got almost 4,000 knots in it. The dude invented some of the knots in the book, too. If you want the knot bible, that's it by far.

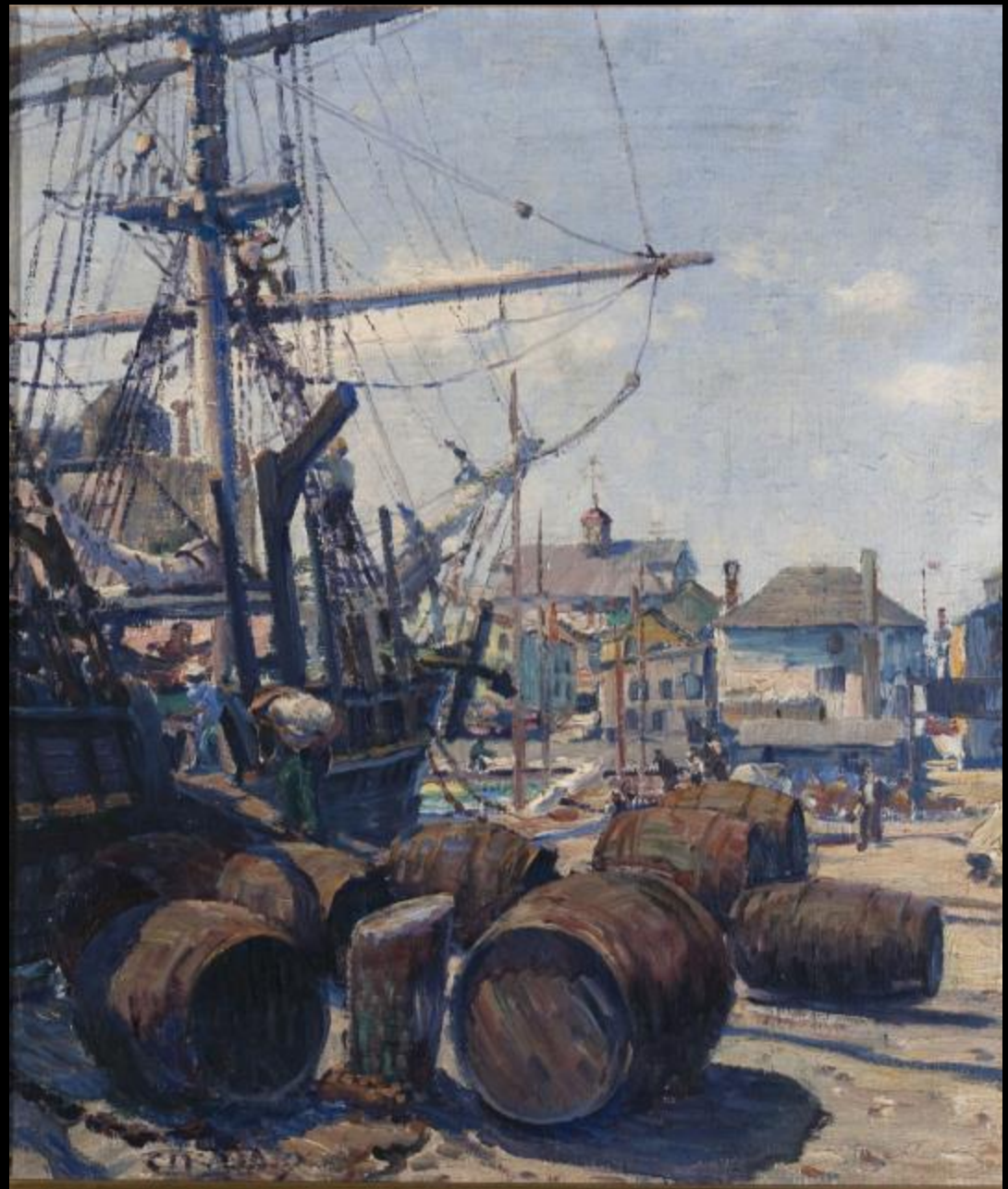
Internet forum, **2010**

Ashley was a native of America's great whaling city, New Bedford MA, and grew up with an interest in everything nautical. He especially loved maritime history and took time out from his studies with Pyle in 1904 to sail on a whaler, experiencing life at sea at the end of America's whaling industry.

Ashley's **Outfitting the Charles W. Morgan**, was painted 1916 and published in 1926 in his book *Yankee Whaler*. The Morgan was one of the last of the American wooden square-rigged whalers, still sailing when Ashley painted it. The ship, eventually preserved and restored, is now at Mystic Seaport.

It's not a formal ship's portrait, but it conveys the working activities of the ship – the immense structure of the riggings, the loading of provisions, the home port in fine weather promising an auspicious voyage. I think that's the spirit in which Ashley painted it. By 1926, when it's published as an illustration, it's a picture of a memory, of a vanished era and a reminder of a now-derelict ship.

Outfitting the C. W. Morgan. 1917.  
Oil. 30 x 26". Variant published 1926



## WILLIAM AYLWARD 1875-1956



What sort of man was this who equally at home in literature and art could ...bring the past to life again? **1933**  
Aylward, on Pyle

Aylward grew up in Milwaukee, where his father was a ship's captain on the Great Lakes, and went to sea in 1905, visiting seaports around the world. Pictured here in his World War I army uniform, he was one of 8 artists commissioned as captain to record the activities of the American Expeditionary Forces. Five of the 8 were Pyle students: Aylward, Dunn, Peixotto, Harding, and Townsend.

This unpublished watercolor is a variant of one of Aylward's illustrations for the article, **Clipper Ships and Her Seamen**, published in Scriber's Magazine in 1917. It's South Street seaport in NYC, as it was at its peak in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the hub of numerous competing shipping enterprises, banks, trading companies, working shops, and workers high and low, and the fashionable strolling about. The great prow of the ship and its sails, portrayed in almost blinding light, manages to be both charming and triumphant.



1916. Watercolor & graphite. 30 x 23" Published 1926.

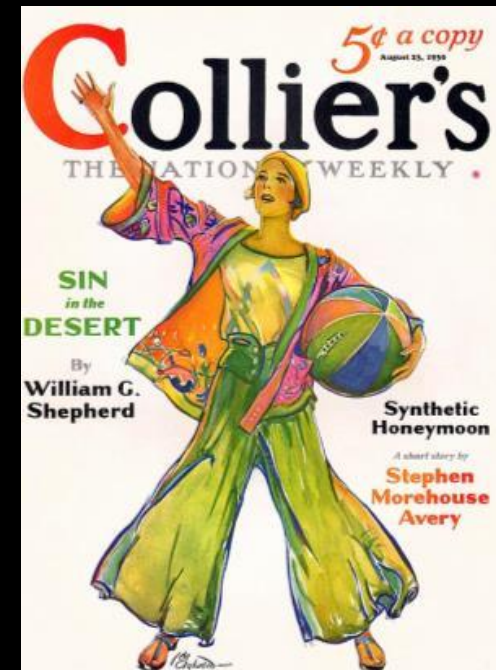
## IDA DOUGHERTY AYLWARD 1878-1955



Gouache, watercolor, and charcoal. Not dated

Aylward met his wife, Ida, when they were students in Wilmington; she was from Long Island NY. No photo or identification has been found for this illustration – a problem with quite a few illustrations in our collection. Once the work was published, its job was done. Publishing companies often did not keep the works, or lost track of them, and some illustrators did the same.

Both these illustrations show the artist's mastery of beautiful color, long graceful lines, and individualized faces, gestures, and emotional interactions.



# ARTHUR BECHER

1877-1960

Born in Germany, Becher came to Milwaukee with his family at age 8.



In Milwaukee, Becker received academic training and worked for a lithography company. In 1902 he came to Wilmington and entered Pyle's school of illustration as an advanced student.

PICTORIAL REVIEW was a women's magazine covering fashion, style, homemaking, and things the male editors thought women needed to know. These illustrations depict a New England socialite who marries a wheat farmer and moves to the Alberta plains with hope for a happy family life. She and her husband are at first successful, but they then face financial losses and personal trials (lower right) that eventually end her marriage and force her into independence.

In this scene (upper right), a man to whom she has grown close has announced that he is leaving her household. You can see her shock and regret in her hand gesture, and their joined hands hint that there may be something unspoken in their relationship.



For *Prairie Mother*, by Arthur John Arbuthnott Stringer, **Pictorial Review**, April 1920. Crayon, graphite, and gouache. 18 x 19" and 20 x 15"

# FRANK SCHOONOVER

1877-1972

New Jersey native, Frank Schoonover, remained in Wilmington his entire career.



In this illustration, Macbeth faces the witches who are conjuring up apparitions from their cauldron. Macbeth's expression is apprehensive, but his stance—combined with his glinting armor and brilliant red shield—conveys his stalwart determination.



Good illustrations are storied pictures...they must convey the same thought and as do the stories. They must be convincing... embodying the same power of imagination...Howard Pyle taught us this. Schoonover, on Pyle



Blackbeard the Buccaneer. 1922. Private Collection

Frontispiece, cover, and dust jacket for **Tales from Shakespeare**, by Charles and Mary Lamb. 1921. Oil. 36 × 28". Private Collection

A quick comparison to Blackbeard shows how illustrators could rely on similar compositions and devices, such as the swirling mists here, and poses, and adapt them to different characters and plots.

**Oklahoma**, by Courtney Ryley Cooper, in **The Country Gentleman**, 1926. Oil. 26 x 36”

Three Cowpunchers, for **The Bar-20 Three**, by Clarence E. Mulford. 1921. Oil. 35 x 24”



Schoonover began illustrating **Hopalong Cassidy** books in 1905.



Besides familiar cowboy stories such as Hopalong Cassidy, Schoonover also illustration Western narrative like this one - a story centering on the Oklahoma land rush. In a palette that conveys the monochrome harshness of the surroundings, we see a woman keeping house, a sod hut actually, on the prairie – working at the laundry, the cooking...looking at a man on horseback in the distance. She is a self-sacrificing woman who denies herself love and a family because she feels responsible for her deadbeat nephew and his irresponsible father. Ultimately, circumstances allow her to join the man she loves. The plot emphasizes her initial victimhood, which she eventually throws off to become her own person, though still defined by a man’s terms. Female characters often lived out this formulaic persona in Western genre novels and movies.

## GAYLE HOSKINS 1887-1962



Howard Pyle invited 20 year-old Indiana native, Gayle Hoskins, to study with him in 1907. Already a cartoonist for the Denver Post, a mural designer for the Marshall Field Company stores, and an illustrator for Redbook magazine, Hoskins also studied at the Chicago Art Institute.

"Roads of Doubt" involves an elegantly dressed , flapper-style young woman, her suave fiancée, and another man in practical working clothes who finds the couple stranded by a boulder. Her moral quandary involves whether to remain through the night with a man while awaiting help, which could compromise her reputation.



Hoskins loved the theater and was a founder of the Wilmington Drama League. His use of dramatic lighting is seen in the spiky shadows which add to the dangerous mood. The young woman's face conveys her mood of emotional conflict.



For Roads of Doubt, by William MacLeon Raine, in **Woman's Home Companion**, 1925. Oil. 26 x 36"





While the publishing industry suffered setbacks during the Depression, the inexpensive fiction magazines, called pulps, prospered; this was one of Hoskins's covers for the pulp **Romantic Range**. As the 1930s ended, and for the rest of his career, Hoskins returned to historical subjects and portraits.

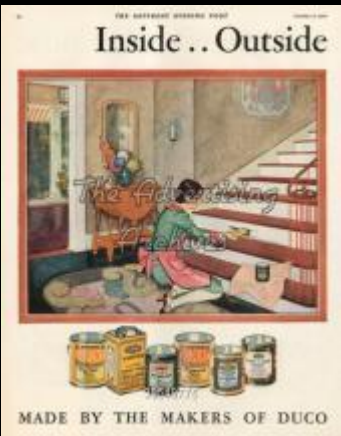


Cover for Romantic Range, 1937. Oil. 37 x 27"

# HARVEY DUNN 1884-1952

Born in the Dakota Territory, Dunn attended South Dakota Agricultural College, and the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1904, Howard Pyle invited him to study with him.

Dunn's advertisement for du Pont's Duco paint allows us to focus on the colors by placing us behind the crowd, where we see everything in motion - moving figures and windblown objects.



Ad for Duco Paints,  
**The Saturday Evening  
Post**, 1928. Oil, 30 x 40"

# DEAN CORNWELL

1892-1960



Born in Louisville, Kentucky, the son of a civil engineer, who studied at the Art Students League in NYC, and then with Harvey Dunn.

This tense scene, done in vignette style to accommodate the text, illustrates a story with a theme about class conflicts interwoven with individual emotional crises – which often surfaced as part of the social effects of World War I.

Here, a successful officer in the war has fallen on hard times, which he explains to the woman he's in love with – he looks at her, but Cornwell has her look at us to convey her unhappiness, shown not just in her face but her posture and hands. The detailed background still life, with the textures of stone, metal, and wood are done in a restrained palette appropriate for the story, but also less expensive to print than full color.



"I'd give you all I have, if I had anything to give," said Sherring. For Seven Men Came Back, by Warwick Deeping, **Hearst's International combined with Cosmopolitan**, 1934. Oil. 34 x 45"

# ELIZABETH BONSAALL 1861-1956



The Pied Piper of Hamelin, A Child's Story.  
1927. Gouache and graphite. 28 x 20"



Disney's Silly Symphony:  
The Pied Piper. Dick Huemer  
& Art Babbitt, animators. 1933

Tinker Bell from Peter Pan  
(Paramount Pictures, 1924;  
Roy Pomeroy, special effects)



Gustaf Tenggren, Snow White, 1937.  
Walt Disney Productions



Bonsall illustrated an edition of **The Pied Piper** in 1927, where she brought her skills as a cat specialist. She illustrated a number of cat books and calendars. Her vivid brushstroke suggests the frenetic scramble at the sound of the piper. Folk and fairy tales are a form of literature that never die out – there's always a market. In the 1920's, Hollywood took up this eternal genre, which lent itself well to animation and special effects. Just a few examples, here are the animated Disney version of The Pied Piper, Disney's Snow White, and very early special effects-enabled Tinker Bell from Paramount's 1924 Peter Pan.

# CLYDE DELAND

1872-1947



Clyde Osmer DeLand studied with Pyle at Drexel and the Chadds Ford summer school. He was an accomplished musician and writer as well as an illustrator. In finest Howard Pyle tradition, he illustrated **Captain Blood**, the first of several wildly popular stories by Raphael Sabatini, centering on the fictional 17<sup>th</sup> century pirate captive Peter Blood who fights his way through various adventures – as do Errol Flynn and Basil Rathbone in the 1935 film.



For **Captain Blood**, by Raphael Sabatini. 1924. Oil. 30 x 21”



**Captain Blood**. 1935.  
First National Pictures  
and Warner Bros. Pictures



Howard Pyle, for **To Have and To Hold**. 1900. Ink and gouache. 24 x 18”

## DOUGLAS DUER 1887-1964



This two-part watercolor is **about** a movie. It appeared on opposite pages as one seamless illustration. Author Albert Payson Terhune was known for his books about his collie Lad; these and his other dog stories were made into movies beginning in 1919. The story here begins somberly as a young man suffering from shell shock after World War I decides to live alone in the mountains with the family dog to recover his mental stability. He comes upon a young woman jumping into a river, and he and the dog heroically save her. He then realizes that it's all part of a movie being filmed. He's mortally embarrassed but the director notes that he's quite handsome and invites him to Hollywood to become a star, an offer that delights him and ignites his hopes not just for stardom but for a further relationship with the heroine. After his studies with Pyle, Duer kept a studio in Wilmington until 1920, moved to New York City after the war, and later moved back to the Philadelphia area.



For Shell Shocked Limited, by Albert Payson Terhune, in **Liberty Magazine**. 1924. Gouache. 12 x 14" each

# CHARLES DE FEO

1892-1978



DeFoe was born in New Castle, DE, studied with Pyle, and began his illustration career at age 16 with a cover for *Outdoor Life*. He was the uncle of Charles Colombo, a Delaware artist who died recently.

In this story, Toinette appears as an extra when a film crew comes to her Louisiana town. The couple agree that she should travel to New York City to find lucrative work in movies while he remains at home. You sense that Toinette is pleased, but that her husband, Basile, is not. The illustrator shows just enough to inspire a browser to delve into the story, but not enough to give away the plot.

Basile carried Toinette's bags to the station...and very soon after that he began to look for her in all the pictures that came to town.



Play Girl, by Margaret Bell Houston, *American Magazine*, 1931, Watercolor and graphite. 8 x 8"

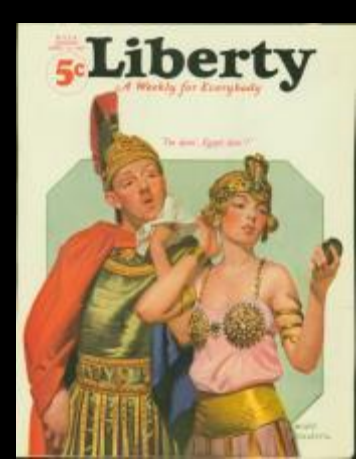
# LESLIE THRASHER 1889-1936



These characters are the fictional Lil Morse and Sandy Jenkins, whose daily married life was depicted on Liberty's cover by Thrasher from 1926 to 1932. The covers were accompanied by a page in the magazine describing the scene. Here they're getting ready to attend a costume party dressed as Antony and Cleopatra. Lil and Sandy were so popular that they became characters in a radio soap opera and in the movie *For the Love 'o Lil* (1930).



"'I'm Dyin', Egypt, Dyin'," cover, Liberty Magazine. 1927. Oil 20 x 16"



Cleopatra was a recognizable figure of the day in movies and advertisements.



KATHARINE  
RICHARDSON  
WIREMAN  
1878-1966



She studied with Pyle when he taught illustration at Drexel in the 1890s, and by 1900 she was at work on her own.

Hearth and Home was a magazine aimed primarily at rural women, and was sent to subscribers all over the country. It focused on domestic life, but also poetry, romantic fiction, short stories, and editorials. Such mail-order magazines offered women the opportunities to buy the numerous advertised items.

The published cover of this Hearth and Home has been changed from an original design by the artist – now includes a solid table with a tablecloth, tidier radio wiring, that help transform the room to a more identifiably middle-class one. But the change in mood centers on the little girl: gone are her garters and most of her petticoat, now we have a bow at her back, lace at her sleeves and Mary-Jane-style shoes. Her face is more fully turned toward us, as if she is consciously performing, carefully watching her steps, rather than in her own private reverie; her doll has disappeared. Richardson Wireman may have done more than one design and submitted this one; or the editor may have requested the changes that we see here.



(Pyle) was to be the greatest influence of my life...he was a great teacher, and first of all he taught us to see. Wireman, on Pyle 1961



Watercolor & pencil. 9 x 8". 1925  
Private collection.



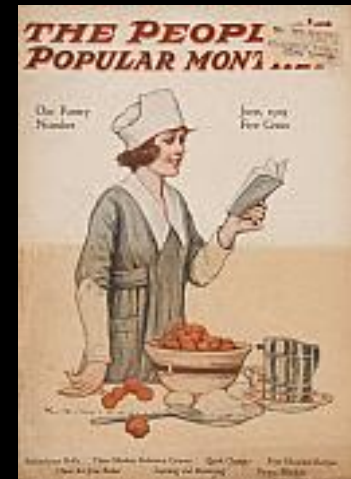
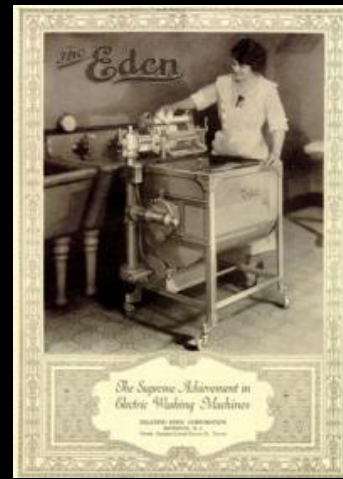
Wireman in her Germantown studio; and a suffrage poster reminding us of the historical advance of American women in 1920. She was a prolific cover artist., specializing in scenes of women and children, a sphere historically occupied by many women illustrators.



Motherhood remained a primary theme of women's magazines such as *Modern Priscilla*. As modern appliances reduced a woman's household work, we find images indicating that one's self-image – literally – still resided in care for the family home; and the two covers at right reflect a movement to portray housewives as domestic engineers, concentrating on efficiency and sanitation in the home.



Oil. 21 x 17. Private Collection. 1922





Private collection

Wireman supported her family after separating from her husband before 1920. She often used her children as models; from 1915 to 1940, every month, she received from **The Country Gentleman** magazine the patterns of fashions to be shown that month (for which reader could order patterns). She then devised the layout, and sketched figures in the featured clothing. At one point she was paid \$350 a month for this work and told her daughter that she did it solely because it was a reliable income.



1924



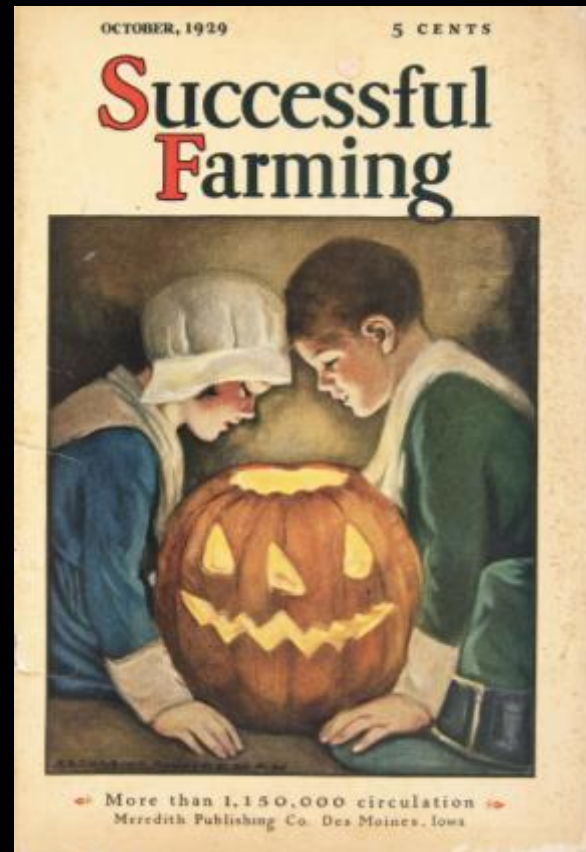
1915-1940



Both covers from 1930



She also illustrated for farming magazines. By this period more Americans lived in cities and suburbs than on farms, a number further driven down by the catastrophic Dust Bowl.



Agricultural families were a market for magazines. Farm women had a distinct identity especially as farms became more industrialized and they had more of a business role. Many of them identified equally with urban and suburban women in terms of fashion and literary interests, especially as mass transportation, communication and accessible consumer goods shrunk the distance – physical and otherwise – between rural and urban communities.

Still, covers were designed to capture what was still seen as women's primary role in the home.

God's Gift of Night. Poster for the Christian Board of Publications. Oil. 20 x 16". 1935



In the 30s, Wireman, like many illustrators, moved to opportunities that were available during the Depression, when some magazines did not survive. One avenue was religious publishers who supplied the Sunday school market, and children's book illustration.



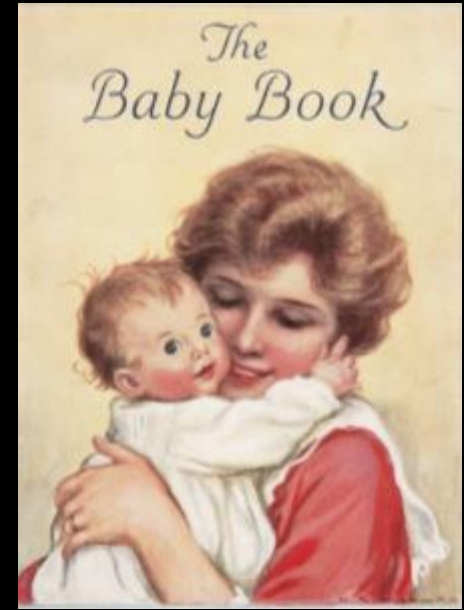
For *The Wonderful Window and Other Stories*, by Carlyn Sherwin Bailey. 1926. Graphite & watercolor. 8 x 5" Private Collection



1906



1918



1922



For *Merrily, Merrily!*, 1948.  
Watercolor. 16 x 12"



1950 Private Collection

Here is a quick overview of an illustrator's life of adaptation to changing styles and tastes: here she is in 1906 with an Ivory Soap ad with this quiet, reverential interaction. Here, late in her life, she is pictured with this 1918 **Saturday Evening Post** cover.

Throughout World War I, Wireman was a pacifist and did not take any assignments showing actual military scenes. In 1922, we see an updated advertising booklet where a modern mother and baby enjoy a good time together. By 1948 & 1950, She has thoroughly adapted to the prevailing styles of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

EDWARD A. WILSON  
1886-1970



On my way east from Chicago I stopped off at Wilmington, got Howard Pyle's address from a phone book, and went and rang his bell. This was one time I pushed the right button...Pyle and his group set my sights a little higher and I have been grateful ever since. 1962



Born in Scotland and raised in Holland until he moved with his family to Chicago when he was 7, Wilson attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, coming to study with Pyle in 1910, the year that Pyle left for Italy. He lived in New York, and Massachusetts and at the end of his life lived in the Hudson Valley.

He was commissioned by Doubleday in 1924 for the cover and illustrations of Men and Wooden Ships, a collection of sea chanties, which he created as woodcuts in this archaic style. It was a book that made Wilson a leading illustrator of sea stories.



Howard Pyle  
1853-1911