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SIR FRANK BRANGWYN AND THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

City University of New York

Ph.D. 1985

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SIR FRANK BRANGWYN AND THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

by

ROBERT JOHN LAMB

A dissertation submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Art History in
partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City
University of New York.

1985

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Abstract

SIR FRANK BRANGWYN AND THE SPRIT OF THE AGE

by

Robert J. Lamb

Adviser: Professor William H. Gerdts

The painter and designer Sir Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956) was one of the most famous British artists of his time. His career spanned over sixty years but his most active period was during the Edwardian age. He was then the foremost British exponent of an internationally popular mural painting revival. He was also a major link between British art and such new artistic movements as art nouveau, both in Europe and America. He dealt with the grand themes of Edwardian public discourse: nature, progress, labour, commerce, war and empire. His treatment of them was often seen to embody British national virtues that were threatened in a changing world. This identification of Brangwyn with the spirit of the nation is the core of the dissertation. Though much of his work does not appeal to contemporary taste and is riddled with a rich mix of contradictory traits, it is these that make him typical, that make him of major importance for the study of Edwardian art. Brangwyn was typically eclectic, intellectually and stylistically. He absorbed influences from the gothic revival, the arts and crafts movement, the plein air realist tradition, impressionism, seascape painting, orientalist painting and the classical revival of the 1890's. His synthesis of them well suited the spirit of the Edwardian age but, after World War I and changed political and economic fortunes, their contradictions became more obvious and Brangwyn gradually fell from critical favour.

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Robert J. Lamb

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CHAPTER ONE

CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

The British painter and designer Sir Frank Brangwyn (1867 - 1956) was one of the most famous British artists of his age. His career spanned over sixty years from the 1880's to the early 1950's but his period of greatest activity fell between the mid 1890's and the end of World War I, in other words the Edwardian age. As a youth, Brangwyn was steeped in the values of the Arts and Crafts movement and, though he became an all round designer, his main activity was painting, especially mural painting, in which he became the foremost British exponent of a strong mural movement then sweeping the western world. In his painting he absorbed the realism of the Barbizon tradition, a proto-Impressionist or plein air style and ideas of imperial adventure embodied in Victorian seascape and orientalist traditions. From the late eighties through mid-nineties his style changed rapidly from a subdued tonalism to the use of broader, brighter colour areas. His subjects were scenes of English rural life, of life at sea and exotic foreign climes. During the latter half of the 'nineties his ambitions increased through his involvement in an expanding, historicizing mural painting movement. His earlier style and subjects were not abandoned but now were slightly historicized, turned into veiled allegories and greatly enlarged in scale. Brangwyn was quickly and immensely successful and soon had an international reputation. Among many critics his work was seen as showing those virtues that had made Britain great and that were threatened in a changing world. After World War I his work (with the exception of his religious subjects) changed little but the virtues it was seen to possess came under increasing fire. It was Brangwyn's misfortune to live long enough to see his reputation vanish, buried by major changes in modern British society and by the artistic and critical triumph of French derived modernism.

For this dissertation I have appropriated the title of the first book to

appear on Brangwyn, in 1905, Walter Shaw Sparrow's The Spirit of the Age. I hope to establish a close connection between Brangwyn's work and the spirit of Edwardian Britain and even to assert Brangwyn's greater importance in Edwardian art than all but a handful of his contemporaries. This is not because of major stylistic or thematic innovations or any transcendent qualities in his work (though some of the latter do exist) but for his very typicality, his embodying in his work a richer synthesis of Edwardian stylistic and intellectual ideas than most major artists of his day.

The Edwardian age is known more for its range and contradictions than for its coherence¹. According to the literary historian Jefferson Hunter,

The dangerous illusion is that the Edwardian era can be comprehended by a single myth or mood or symbol, can be perfectly understood and so reproduced as a painter reproduces a landscape consistent in all its parts....The Edwardians saw the particulars of their time with a vividness which prevented easy categorizations. They were aware of checks to their social and literary progress and of contradictions in their most calculated theories of art and civilization. They felt change all around them and yet could not specify the differences between their spirit and that of the late 19th century.²

Brangwyn too is riddled with contradictory traits, not always comparably balanced but there nevertheless and fitting the spirit of the age better than did those of more consistent, coherent artists such as Walter Sickert or William Nicholson, John Singer Sargent or Augustus John. Both Brangwyn and other Edwardians were rather unintellectual and muddle headed, if anything because of the very richness of their artistic and intellectual inheritance and their own inability to make of it a new and vigorous synthesis. Despite their ultimate failure, their struggle with this inheritance in itself makes a fascinating subject for enquiry.

Of what did this richness consist? For Brangwyn it consisted - on a direct,

sensuous level - of traditional virtuoso drawing, bold, self-contained compositions and rich, bright colour. On an art historical level it consisted of an eclectic synthesis of styles and motifs from every major artistic movement from 1850 to 1900, from Realism and Impressionism, from a revived Renaissance classicism, from the Arts and Crafts Movement and from Art Nouveau. On an intellectual, historical level it consisted in the use of the grand themes of Edwardian public discourse, of nationalism and empire, labour, industry and trade, progress, war, religion and nature. Working with such richness it would be hard to produce completely dull works. Brangwyn was a prolific artist and, like many of his generation, worked in a wide range of media. The whole of his oeuvre, while still individual, shows strong contradictions in style and motif. Sometimes he was almost an Impressionist and at other times almost an academic classicist. Sometimes he was a Christian socialist of an almost Tolstoyan stamp and at other times a rampant individualist and imperialist. His best works, however, show a vividness and exhilaration of feeling, an insatiable curiosity about the world and seven league boots sense of confidence.

The contradictions that riddle Brangwyn's oeuvre grow from his very eclecticism, an eclecticism that was scorned by succeeding generations. From the Realists, Impressionists and Pre-Raphaelites came the idea that the artist must begin with "Nature", with life as it is lived in the present. From the Pre-Raphaelites and the Victorian academic tradition came the contrary idea of the validity of imaginative and historical subjects. From the Arts and Crafts Movement and Art Nouveau came an emphasis on both natural and abstract qualities of design, the socially integrated role of the artist and his ability to turn his hand to any design problem. From a number of sources came a strong historicism, and admiration for both the mediaeval and classical traditions.

From the larger Victorian society came a belief in progress, social struggle, individual worldly success, machine production and expansionist trade and politics, yet in Brangwyn these coexisted with elements of traditional catholic theology, with an Arts and Crafts hatred of the machine and belief in "organic" community and with the Little Englander's³ "small is beautiful" tradition. Even the Victorian confidence that moves Brangwyn's oeuvre was more instinctual with him than emotional or intellectual. Far from indicating any basic shallowness and vulgarity, it was an element in his character at which he marvelled and pondered but little understood.

What was the Edwardian context in which Frank Brangwyn was a typical figure? How did this context change after World War I, leaving him eventually an embittered reactionary? The Edwardian age was perilously balanced between opposing forces. Social peace was maintained but only just barely and many ills were concealed beneath a healthy surface which were to erupt and destroy the social balance after 1910. It was an age in which Britain's power and wealth reached their greatest height yet in which they were increasingly challenged and drained on all sides. British industrial prosperity was based on outmoded manufacturing and distribution methods and world markets were being eroded by the more efficient systems of Germany, the United States and Japan. The power of the British Empire was still growing but obscure rumblings were heard from nationalist groups around the globe. Coincident with these challenges came a rise in British nationalism, the crystalization of a self-conscious cult of Empire - "the white man's burden" - , and a paranoia of other powers and of change in general. British industry might be declining but at home the investments of over a century were paying handsome dividends that, in the short run, allowed for conspicuous consumption and general middle class prosperity. Industry and trade

were also gaining a stronger voice in government as the land based wealth and power of the aristocracy were declining. At the same time, their power was starting to be challenged by trade unionism (and with it income tax and social welfare legislation) and women's suffrage.

The arts in Edwardian Britain did not form a true avant-garde but were well absorbed into the social system. Art patronage and the building of reputations consisted of a complex system of group and dealer exhibitions, media reviews, private and public commissions and the granting of jobs in the fields of teaching and commercial art. The money to support it came not from the landed aristocracy so much as from the rising industrialists and merchants. In this establishment Brangwyn became the establishment artist par excellence, the beau ideal for many other artists. He was never a committee man or art politician and, in that sense, had little power. He and his work were not universally liked and often stirred up controversy but, for every rebuff, Brangwyn received some honour or compensation. In his early years at least, he was a prolific exhibitor and he never lacked commercial work. His major mural commissions came from industry and commerce (Sir Edmund Davis, Lloyd's Register, etc.), from the expanding colonies (the Canadian National Grand Trunk Railway, the Manitoba government) and from the rising Americans and Japanese (the Rockefellers and Matsukata). They share, as a result, some of these groups' ideals.

After 1910 and especially World War I, the balance of opposing forces, that had hitherto worked to Brangwyn's advantage, shifted and he found himself increasingly out of synch with the age. The momentum of his career and the lack of strong artistic alternatives in Britain helped to carry him through the twenties and early thirties, but with younger artists, such as Wyndham Lewis,

Paul Nash and Ben Nicholson, critics such as Roger Fry, Clive Bell and Herbert Read and collectors, such as Hugh Walpole, Edward Marsh, Kenneth Clark and Edward James, he became a symbol of the old order against which they were rebelling. Sometimes with artists as abrasive as Wyndham Lewis this led to open attacks⁴ on Brangwyn but more often it led merely to his neglect. This rebellion took place against the background of a severely weakened British economy, by now surpassed by that of the Americans, still in competition with that of the Japanese and plagued with declining prosperity and expectations. Various nationalisms were rising against the Empire and, at home, labour and industry were having more bitter confrontations. The social mood was naturally acrimonious and questions and accusations of responsibility were common. Decreasing numbers believed in progress, science and social sacrifice and pacifism, aestheticism, cynicism and class struggle were more popular ideas. Edwardians and Victorians were mocked by Lytton Strachey, the Sitwells and Vita Sackville-West. They were seen as stupid, shallow, bombastic, hypocritical, repressed, tyrannical and corrupt. Some of these epithets were applied to Brangwyn and his work.

Brangwyn's friends and patrons stood by him but had less money to spend. Modernist artists and critics saw him as a nineteenth century survivor, a sloppy eclectic, impure in his inspiration and irrelevant to the concerns of the twentieth century, of everything from fauvism to surrealism. In their eyes the artist had to play a role more alienated, socially antagonistic. The socially integrated craftsman they saw as inevitably compromised. A typical expression of their attitude is Clive Bell's statement that

There is no place for them (the artist and the saint) in a social system based on the theory that what men desire is prolonged and pleasant existence. You cannot fit them into

the machine, you must make them extraneous to it. You must make pariahs of them, since they are not a part of society but the salt of the earth.⁵

Many of them had little interest in practical design and those who did, the constructivists, wrote off the Arts and Crafts generation as reactionaries, unable to accept the machine and thus delaying the twentieth century utopia. Given such attitudes, it was natural that Brangwyn's Edwardian reputation would not survive intact. Unfortunately for him, he was so long lived that he had to experience the process of becoming almost a living anachronism. During the last twenty years, however, with the end of the Empire, the troubled maturity of the British welfare state and the general reappraisal of modernist artistic ideas, Brangwyn and the Edwardians can now be appreciated for their richness more than derided for their contradictions.

CHAPTER ONE

1. A basic question of historical debate is still the very existence of an Edwardian age as distinct from a late Victorian one.
2. Jefferson Hunter, Edwardian Fiction, Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1982, pp. 7, 3-4.
3. In the 19th century, the Little England movement sought to restrict the dimensions and responsibilities of Empire.
4. In Blast, no. 1, June 20, 1914, p. 21; no. 2, July 1915, p. 92.
5. Clive Bell, "Society & Art," in Art, Capricorn Books, N.Y.: 1958, p. 172. First published by Chatto and Windus, London: 1914.

CHAPTER TWO

CHILDHOOD 1867 - 1882

François Guillaume Brangwyn (fig. 1) was born in Bruges, at 20 Rue du Vieux Bourg¹, on May 12th, 1867. He was of Anglo-Welsh ancestry and his parents William Curtis Brangwyn (1840-1907) and Eleanor Griffiths (1844- ?) had moved to this picturesque backwater about three years before, attracted by its cheap living, strong mediaeval atmosphere and devout Catholicism. Curtis Brangwyn was an architect and ecclesiastical decorator in the Gothic Revival tradition of Pugin. With few worldly and financial skills, he had probably been bankrupt and forced to go abroad. In Bruges he was soon established in the large English colony and was friendly with William Henry James Weale, an expert and author of books on mediaeval Flemish arts and crafts.² Weale's guidebook to Bruges mentions Curtis Brangwyn several times³ and it was probably through Weale that he received the commission to restore the church of St.-Basile, to redecorate the Basiliek van het Heilig Bloed (Chapel of the Holy Blood - a major religious shrine) (fig. 2) and to rebuild the Benedictine monastery of St. André, on the outskirts of the city. For this work he is supposed to have been awarded a gold medal by the city fathers.

Within the protected artistic atmosphere of his family and his father's workshops, Frank spent his first years. Later in life he looked back on them nostalgically⁴, as an enchanted time of discovery and security, filled with the tolling of cathedral bells and contentment with a firm place in the community. The later implications of such security and community are revealed in Brangwyn's comments on one of his family's maids.

The maid, like all true Flemings of the working class, was a good and true Catholic. But unfortunately that type of maid no longer exists.....owing to the so called socialistic ideas. Yet if one thinks seriously - these people lived, and worked, as true Socialists - and followed the example of the greatest Socialist who ever lived and will live on this earth - OUR LORD.⁵

He was happy within his family - his parents, his older sisters Edith and Eleanor, his younger brothers Philip, Cuthbert and Lawrence and his aunt, Julia Griffiths - but his feeling of security was based on illusions that in youth would soon be cruelly shattered. His family would be scattered and, in his maturity, it played a small role in his life. It is seldom mentioned in his memoirs or letters, save as recipient of his occasional generosity. A desire to regain his childhood paradise would become a motive force in Brangwyn's mature life and career and was, no doubt, spurred by youthful insecurities.

His artistic inclinations grew slowly and naturally, as he popped in and out of his father's workrooms, watching the craftsmen plying their materials. Through watching and then doing, he learned the use of tools and later would expound on the value of such direct practice, without the befuddling effects of theory. His first experience of pictures was also at home, in his father's print portfolios, where he copied engravings of humble labourers after works by Millet and the Belgian artist, Charles de Groux (1825-1870).⁶ One de Groux engraving in particular remained in his memory, "a conscript taking farewell of his family in the evening light"⁷. Sympathy for the common people and the heroization of their labour would become major themes in Brangwyn's work.

His childhood security first began to crack in the mid-1870's. Curtis Brangwyn had not been a success in Bruges, in spite of his gold medal, and he and his family again had to pull up stakes and move back to London about 1873-74. They settled first at 19 Richmond Gardens, in Hammersmith,⁸ and Curtis got a job as chief draughtsman to the City Architect, then at work designing Tower Bridge. By 1875 he had opened his own office at 6 John Street, just off the Adelphi. From there, he sent designs for several buildings to that year's Royal Academy.⁹ Frank was enrolled in a Hammersmith kindergarten, then in a small

local school and finally (c. 1877-79) in Westminster City School. He was soon bored by his studies. His attendance grew irregular and, when his father could no longer afford the fees, his formal education came to an end. It lasted only five or six years. His poor education caused him life long anxieties, often covered by bluster, in the company of more educated men.

Out of school, he spent several years doing chores in his father's office and making drawings of furniture and other objects for him in the Victoria and Albert Museum. He now started sketching regularly, visiting the museums and galleries on his own, wandering about the streets and recording all he saw. He was especially fond of walking by the Thames, watching the ships go to and fro and sketching their unloading at the docks. Like many boys, he dreamed of running away to sea and adventuring about the world. Much of his later work dealt with these subjects and, during his late teens and early twenties, he even signed on as a sailor for voyages along the English coast and through the Mediterranean.

In the meantime his family was breaking up. Curtis Brangwyn had been no more successful in London than in Bruges and was often strained for money to support his family. His Hammersmith home had to be sold for back taxes.¹⁰ He was embittered by his repeated failures and quarreled with this wife over money. The home atmosphere was poisonous and, by the early nineties they had separated, he going to Cardiff and she remaining in London. Frank escaped about 1882 and had to support himself but bore the emotional scars of this breakup for many years.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Brangwyn's family had, in 1866, been living at 20 Rue des Pierres. By 1869, they were living at 8 Rue des Dominicains. Bruges civic census, 1866, and civic birth records for Philip Brangwyn, 1869.
2. On Weale's association with Curtis Brangwyn see William de Belleroyche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London; 1948, p. 71. Weale (1832-1917) was educated at King's College, London, and lived in Bruges from 1855 to 1878. He was later Keeper of the National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Among his many books on Flemish and Netherlandish art are an artistic history of Bruges (1862), a book on Bruges Churches (1874), one on Memling (1865) and one on the Van Eycks (1907-08). For further information see Maurice W. Brockwell, "W.H. James Weale, The Pioneer," The Library, vol. 6, December 1951, pp. 200-211.
3. William Henry James Weale, Bruges et ses environs, Collections des Guides Belges, Bruges: 1884
4. William de Belleroyche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London; 1948, pp.2-5.
5. William de Belleroyche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, p. 6.
6. *ibid.*, p. 7
7. *ibid.* The painting referred to is probably The Departure of the Conscript now in the Musée Communal de Bruxelles.
8. Hammersmith rates books for February 1874, Hammersmith Public Library.
9. No. 976: Grocers' Company Schools, Hackney; No. 1002; Hastings Town Hall.
10. William de Belleroyche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, pp. 27-28.

CHAPTER THREE

CONSOLIDATING A PERSONAL STYLE 1882-1893

About 1882 Brangwyn started to venture beyond his family circle and into the larger world of art. With him he brought a taste both for the Realist's heroic labouring subjects and for the more abstract yet still highly moral decoration of the Gothic Revival. During the next two decades, his mature style emerged, a style in which these childhood tastes were developed, in which the decorative became dominant and was joined by a taste for classicism. This emerging taste for decoration was strengthened in the second decade by his winning two small mural commissions, yet a balance between decoration, realism and classicism was not achieved until after 1900 with the start of his murals for the Royal Exchange and the Skinners' Hall.

Brangwyn's emergence must also be seen against the background of various trends of the eighties and nineties. These are the Arts & Crafts Movement; Art Nouveau; the spread of Impressionist and plein-air painting; the revival of interest in the classical tradition, culminating in the "Wrenaissance" architectural style and in the international mural movement; and the climax of the older British imperialist traditions of adventure narrative, as expressed in marine and orientalist painting.

Brangwyn's first non-family mentor was Harold Steward Rathbone.¹ Scion of a Liverpool merchant family, Rathbone was assistant to Ford Madox Brown on his Manchester Town Hall murals, one of the main mural projects of the time. They met in the Victoria and Albert Museum, where Brangwyn was sketching and Rathbone, with his passionate reverence for the works of the early quattrocento, set him to make hard line drawings from reliefs by Donatello² and other sculptors and, later, from Durer engravings. He also introduced Brangwyn to oil painting and, though no early works remain to demonstrate his influence, Brangwyn later felt Rathbone had strengthened his respect for traditional

craftsmanship and classical linear compositions.

A teacher of greater consequence was Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo, architect, designer and leading figure in the Arts and Crafts movement. The two of them met through Rathbone while Brangwyn was apparently sketching on Oxford Street³. Mackmurdo, like Rathbone, came of a good family but possessed greater energy, a stronger mind and a greater range of social connections from Ruskin to Whistler, Herbert Spencer to Thomas Henry Huxley, Oscar Wilde to Robert Browning. He had collaborated with William Morris in the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, had been strongly influenced by Whistler's ideas on interior decoration⁴ and, in 1882, was forming The Century Guild of Artists, the first of the major Arts & Crafts societies,

to render all branches of art the sphere no longer of the tradesman but the artist. It would restore building, decoration, glass painting, pottery, wood carving and metal working to their right place beside painting and sculpture.⁵

During the next few years, when Brangwyn was close to him, Mackmurdo was finishing his Wren's City Churches⁶, the first important book leading to the "Wrenaissance" classical revival⁷, was editing The Hobby Horse⁸, forerunner to Morris's Kelmscott Press, and was carrying on a full range of design activities. Mackmurdo was a complex, highly individual designer. His early sketchbooks contain close Ruskinian studies of floral forms and show an interest in plant-like linear rhythms foreshadowing that of the art nouveau (fig. 3). According to Alastair Service,

Mackmurdo's furniture illustrates his style most clearly. The keynote in both is the ubiquitous mannered pillar (almost Adamesque)⁹ stretched to a slender vertical elegance and forming part of an essentially simple grid framework; functional yet clearly linked to the Aesthetic movement. Within that frame, the decorative patterns sway and billow in seaweed fronds.¹⁰

Brooklyn (Enfield, Middlesex), the house Mackmurdo designed for his brother in 1887, shows the same elegant Adamesque forms and use of non-vernacular materials, combined with a severe Arts & Crafts simplicity. The furniture Brangwyn later designed and collected showed a similar geometric simplicity and the tension between a strong grid framework and linear, decorative patterning within it was also a basic feature of his painting style. Later, when he worked for Samuel Bing, Brangwyn was a major personal link between the Mackmurdo side of the Arts & Crafts Movement and the Franco-Belgian Art Nouveau.¹¹

At the beginning of their relationship, Macmurdo saw great promise in Brangwyn and encouraged his development, while trying to discipline his impetuous nature. Socially he was a disappointment. When Mackmurdo invited him home to meet his cultivated friends, Brangwyn's own shyness would often lead him to flee to his old, low-life haunts. On a one-to-one basis, he was more receptive. Mackmurdo got him to paint colour copies of works in the Victoria and Albert Museum. One of these was Mantegna's The Triumphs of Caesar (fig. 4) (now at Hampton Court Palace), later a probable influence on his Skinners' Hall murals. With such associates as Selwyn Image, Brangwyn and Mackmurdo took long evening walks through the city streets or sat in cafes, talking of architecture and things in general. It was probably Mackmurdo who got Brangwyn interested in etching, showing him works in his own collection by Turner, Seymour Haden, Alphonse Legros and Whistler and letting him experiment with his own plates. None of Brangwyn's earliest etchings are extant yet he was soon competent enough to give Selwyn Image his first etching lesson.¹² In 1885, Mackmurdo paid Brangwyn's rent on a studio at 55 Newman Street to be shared with Herbert Horne.¹³ Through Mackmurdo he also met the sculptor Thomas Stirling Lee¹⁴ and poet and designer William Morris. Lee, who

had just finished his classical relief panels for St. George's Hall in Liverpool, was his first impressive role model of the exhuberant bohemian artist.¹⁵

Of greater consequence for the development of Brangwyn's style was his introduction to William Morris who, for several years, gave him employment in the Morris & Co. workshops. Brangwyn had little personal contact with him, as Morris had ceased active involvement in the firm in 1881. In later years, he remembered Morris only as "the boss"¹⁶ and, on a daily basis, probably worked under his assistant, J.N. Dearle. The work he did for the firm, however, was significant for him. He copied Flemish tapestries as raw motifs for pattern designs and then enlarged and translated these designs onto their appropriate material, for craftsmen to execute. This work gave him a discipline in firm, accurate and boldly stylized drawing that would last throughout his career. Morris's romantic ideal of the artist as craftsman, concerned more with technique than ideas, working with a range of materials and integrated with his society would also influence Brangwyn. It would not, however, lead him to the antagonistic role of the socialist or avant-garde artist. Instead, it would lead him to work for the establishment, which alone could afford his price.

Brangwyn, as a painter, emerged on the scene during the late 1880's when British art was becoming more cosmopolitan and influences were starting to flow back and forth from the continent. One of these was the influence of French Impressionism. What was then called Impressionism in England was not the pure style of Monet, Pissarro or Sisley but a distant relation to it in its loosening of brushwork, lightening of palette and use of non-ideal subjects. Thus Brangwyn's early contacts were not with the purest Impressionism. Years later, he recalled his regular passing of a French pastry shop in Notting Hill Gate, which displayed works by Sisley, Manet, Degas and Corot in the window¹⁷. If he saw Durand-

Ruel's two important Impressionist exhibitions in London in 1882 and 1883, they seem not to have impressed him. Neither did he mention Monet's works at the 1887 exhibition of Whistler's Royal Society of British Artists, though he was exhibiting there himself and likely saw the show.

Brangwyn's links were the more conventional ones of progressive British painters of his time, with the Barbizon-derived plein-air naturalism of Jules Bastien-Lepage and the Hague School and of their British followers. The followers were the "social realists" of the seventies and eighties, George Clausen, and the painters of the Newlyn School, Glasgow School and New English Art Club. A purer Impressionist-pointillist style would emerge briefly in the work of Wilson Steer but, by the mid-nineties, would succumb to a rising artistic nationalism and historicism. It would not surface again in England until the return of Sickert from the continent in 1905 and the creation of the Camden Town Group.

The attraction of naturalism to British painters is understandable. Part of the strong Pre-Raphaelite tradition was based upon it. By the eighties, most of the foreign, contemporary painting sold and exhibited in Britain came from the Barbizon tradition or Hague School tradition of Israels, Mauve, the Maris brothers and Mesdag.¹⁸ With their emphasis on humble subjects, directly observed, these traditions were morally attractive to the increased social consciousness of the time.¹⁹ They had inspired a short-lived school of "social realists" such as Hubert von Herkomer, Fred Walker, Frank Holl and Luke Fildes. Though their approach to their subjects was more critical than that of the continental artists and their concern with natural light less, the social realists were important forerunners for the young artists of the eighties. Like them as well, the "social realists" were tamed and pursued less critical subjects than

before during the conservative period after 1895.

The most innovative and influential painter working within this naturalist tradition was the young Frenchman, Jules Bastien-Lepage, who developed a strong following in Britain by the mid-eighties.²⁰ Bastien's was a consensus style, acceptable in many artistic camps (fig. 5). It showed a concern with humble subjects, direct observation and effects of light, yet was compatible with the Pre-Raphaelite tradition in its concern for high finish and what was considered "significant", non-banal subject matter. The Impressionists' dissolving of traditional form-space distinctions under effects of light never developed enough with Bastien to become a critical issue. In Britain, he and his followers were noted for their bold, square brush technique, emphasis on tone and value and low keyed yet intimate, sympathetic treatment of rural and fisherfolk subjects.

The two main groups of his British followers were found in the Newlyn School (Stanhope Forbes, Frank Bramley, Henry Scott Tuke, Thomas Cooper Gotch, etc.)²¹ and in the moderate wing of the New English Art Club (George Clausen, Herbert H. LaThangue, Forbes, Tuke and Gotch). Most of these had trained at the Académie Julian in Paris or in Antwerp where styles similar to Bastien's were already "the coming thing". To emphasize this fact and contrast themselves with the insular Royal Academicians, they had seriously thought of calling the New English Art Club "The Society of Anglo-French Painters". In the traditional British manner, however, they compromised and thus were easily absorbed by the Academy. Many of them had never ceased to exhibit at Burlington House and, by osmosis, their work by the mid-nineties became increasingly sentimental and narrative in approach.

Brangwyn neither painted at Newlyn nor was he an active member of the

New English Art Club but he was certainly within the broader compass of both. He would have known their works from the annual Royal Academy exhibitions. He had travelled to the painting grounds in Cornwall.²² He had attended the N.E.A.C.'s founding meetings ²³ and exhibited with them.²⁴ An analysis of his circle of friends from the mid-eighties to the mid-nineties makes this very clear.

On leaving Mackmurdo's Newman Street studio in 1885, Brangwyn lived briefly in Kew and in Bloomsbury before finally settling in Chelsea in 1887. Here he was in the heart of the bohemian quarter, occupying one of a terrace of artists' studio flats in the Wentworth Studios and Trafalgar Studios on Manresa Road and, later, the Stratford Studios on Stratford Road. Until he married in 1896 and, in 1898, took Temple Lodge in Hammersmith, he lived and worked in this intense atmosphere of youthful high spirits, passionate discussion and shared poverty. His companions were William Llewellyn, Henry Herbert La Thangue, Nelson E. Dawson, Havard Thomas, George Percy Jacomb-Hood, Dudley Hardy, Arthur D. McCormick, James J. Shannon, Frederick William Pomeroy, Frank Short, and Ernest Dade. Of this group, at least two thirds had studied in Paris at the Académie Julian or similar atelier and half exhibited with the New English Art Club. Dawson and Dade were known as marine painters and half the group led active lives as illustrator adventurers or seamen. For a while, Brangwyn, Short, Dawson and Jacomb-Hood joined the Naval Volunteers.²⁵ Within this group many of the artistic and intellectual attitudes of Brangwyn's later life were formed.

Brangwyn's contacts with older, established artists such as Colin Hunter, Wilfred Williams Ball, John Macallum Swan and Charles Napier Hemy probably helped to point him in much the same direction. Hunter, the Scottish born painter

of grim seascapes and fisherfolk subjects and a regular Royal Academy exhibitor, thought Brangwyn's work showed great potential and encouraged him to continue.²⁶ Ball, a landscape and marine painter whom he met briefly in Sandwich, in the mid-eighties, made a strong enough impression on him to be recalled over fifty years later.²⁷ Ball too was part of the illustrator adventurer tradition mentioned earlier and eventually died of heatstroke in far off Khartoum. Swan, a pupil of Bastien-Lepage and friend and follower of Matthew Maris, probably became friendly with Brangwyn through the Royal Academy during the early nineties. In 1897 he substituted for Brangwyn as a juror for the Carnegie International Exhibition and, in 1907, they teamed up to open the London School of Art.²⁸ Hemy was a seascape and coastal painter Brangwyn observed painting on the Thames at Putney in the mid-eighties.²⁹ He watched Hemy's methods closely and gloated afterward over the rich colour of the palette scrapings Hemy left on a nearby wall. Hemy had roughed it about in the world as a sailor and Dominican priest and worked, at the same time as Brangwyn, for William Morris and likely reinforced the craftsmanly and adventurous role model Brangwyn would follow.

The links between such illustrator adventurers, marine painters and orientalist painters as Ball and Hemy and the spirit of British imperialism are an important factor in understanding Brangwyn's work. Obvious parallel links exist between imperialism and the adventure tale tradition in English literature. According to Martin Green,

the adventure tales that formed the light reading of Englishmen for two hundred years or more after Robinson Crusoe were, in fact, the energizing myth of English imperialism. They were, collectively, the story England told itself as it went to sleep at night; and, in the form of its dreams, they charged England's will with the energy to go out into the world and explore, conquer and rule.³⁰

These tales were considered part of a popular rather than "serious" literary genre in that they narrated actions, dealt in stereotypes and did not probe psychological or sociological reality from a detached intellectual position. In Brangwyn's time they were the realm of such writers as his Chelsea friend Morley Roberts, of Rider Haggard, George Alfred Henty, John Masefield and John Buchan and, on a more "serious" intellectual level, of Rudyard Kipling and Joseph Conrad. Their popularity, their closeness to the spirit of the common man makes them historically very important and was a matter of conscious pride to their authors, who, like William Morris's craftsmen, conceived of themselves as tribal bards, integrated within the social hierarchy, embodying its mythology in their work. For a mercantile power like Britain, the Royal Navy and merchant marine were a major part of this national mythology. For a power with a stifling class system at home and widely dispersed Empire, they were a major means of defence, prosperity, communication, social liberation and, on an imaginative level, adventure. In popular literature, this developed into such adventure tale sub-genres as pirate stories, explorer stories, tales of heroes like Drake and Hakluyt³¹ and travel stories of exotic scenery and peoples. On a more intellectual level, it was seen in the boom, during the nineties, in the production of such histories as Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's Story of the Sea, 1895-96, or the ten major biographies of Nelson to appear between 1885 and 1905.³²

In the visual arts, this adventure tale tradition was paralleled in such genres as marine painting, orientalist painting and much of commercial illustration. British marine painting, at its best, had produced such masters as Turner and, at a less inspired level, Clarkson Stanfield, Henry Moore, John Brett, James Clarke Hook and William Lionel Wyllie. By Brangwyn's time, Turner and

Stanfield were dead and their sublime, romantic seascapes and shipwrecks outmoded. Moore and Brett were popular, established figures whose purer, more lyrical seascapes were still justified by their Ruskinian "truth to nature" and, especially their sensitivity to subtle effects of light. Only occasionally, through such titles as Brett's Britannia's Realm, (1880, Tate Gallery, fig. 6), were they directly linked to larger imperial ideas. Hook was especially popular, though his picturesque, idealized fisherfolk subjects were more sentimental than Brett's and such of his titles as Hearts of Oak, (1875, Castle Museum, Nottingham, fig. 7) more calculated to appeal to national feelings. William Lionel Wyllie was the main marine painter to rise to popularity in the early eighties.³³ Unlike his predecessors, Wyllie concentrated on painting shipping and sailors rather than the sea itself. In his romantic attitude, however, his concern with precise, accurate technique and subtle effects of light and his evocative titles (ie. Commerce and Sea Power, (1898, Guildhall Art Gallery, London, fig. 8), he continued much of their tradition.

The major differences between this earlier tradition and that of Brangwyn's generation were the latter's greater emphasis on mood than on accuracy of detail and on the increasing grimness of that mood. These have both social and artistic explanations. The last three decades of the nineteenth century were ones of fierce competition in maritime commerce between sail and steam power. As a result, unemployment rates rose and safety precautions, quality of training, and rates of pay deteriorated. So many lives were lost at sea that two royal commissions were appointed, in 1874 and 1887, to look into the situation.³⁴ This heightened social consciousness could not but effect younger marine painters. As a result, the example of the flourishing "social realist" school, mentioned earlier, was morally and artistically an attractive one to follow.

Closely related to the marine painting tradition was that of orientalist painting. If both involved travel and adventure, the one showed the means of commerce, the other the victims. In France, the orientalist tradition was very well developed and could claim such major talents as Delacroix, Decamps, Fromentin, Constant and Gérôme.³⁵ In Britain, the use of oriental subject matter went back to the earliest topographical illustrators on voyages of exploration and to the engravings of their work included in lavish travel books. Fewer British painters specialized in this genre than in France, though they included such notables as William James Muller, David Roberts, Henry Wallis and John Frederick Lewis. How these painters treated native life reflected very much the social realities of colonialism. Many of them had few roots in the colonies, little knowledge of them and many ideas about their inferiority. Absorbed in the European cult of adventure, they were dazzled by the sheer "differentness" of the spectacle passing before them. Their paintings, whatever their formal charms, seldom went beyond stereotyped European fantasies of the "exotic" east. They showed a new interest in effects of bright light and brilliant colour but not in individual psychology or social dynamics. Even those like Brangwyn, who mixed freely and roughed it with the natives, did so in a superficial, paternalistic way which would not disturb their patrons.

Stemming from the spirit of adventure seen in marine and orientalist painting was much of the commercial illustration of the day. Painters relied on illustration as a sure source of income and, naturally, there was some blurring of distinctions between their personal and their commercial work. Until he became prosperous, after 1900, Brangwyn relied on it also. He continued to accept illustration assignments, however, throughout his career, purely for his delight in

the craft. The main sources for his assignments were such large illustrated, mass-circulation magazines as the Illustrated London News and The Graphic, which had sprung up in the middle of the century. During the eighties and nineties, before half-tone photoengraving had wiped out traditional "black and white" wood or steel engraving as the main means of illustration, the roving illustrator, off on assignments around the world, was a glamorous figure to many. In the twentieth century he has been succeeded by the photojournalist. Though Brangwyn's works were paintings, reproduced in half-tone, his role as illustrator was otherwise traditional. Between 1890 and 1900, he submitted to The Graphic over fifty full-page illustrations for £16. each. Most of them related to his many sea voyages. Over half were of grim subjects such as storms, fires, shipwrecks and disease. Many of the rest were of hearty marine subjects and a few were of exotic foreign scenery. In the main, they were not tied to specific texts, though two of them, The Devil and the Deep Sea and Bread Upon the Waters³⁶ accompanied short stories by Rudyard Kipling.

The second part of Brangwyn's career in illustration was as a book illustrator, often for the London publisher Gibbings and Company. Here he contributed not only full-page, half-tone illustrations but also decorative headpieces, tailpieces and title page designs to over a dozen books between 1890 and 1914. To what extent he read these books and absorbed them or to what extent they were grist for his mill is difficult to say. The kinds of books he illustrated, however, show a strong consistency. Most were popular maritime adventure tales such as S.R. Crockett's Tales of our Coast (1896) or Henry Newbolt's The Last Fight of the Revenge (1908). A few like Robert Southey's Life of Nelson (1911) were naval biographies and at least three, The Arabian Nights (1896), The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (1911) and Eothen (1913) were

books of oriental exoticism.

Brangwyn's paintings themselves reflected all the above mentioned influences. His first exhibited work was a small seascape in oils, A Bit on the Esk (near Whitby), shown at the Royal Academy in 1885. It was not noticed in the press and, like many of his early works, is now lost. It is 1887 before enough dated works appear to give us an idea of his style. It is 1888 before his works are discussed at all in the press, 1890 before they are discussed at any length and 1891-92 before they show a major change of style.

Barkstrippers (1887) was the first important Brangwyn work to be discussed in the press, after its showing at the Royal Academy in 1888. It was a scene of men on a hillside stripping trees, done during one of his visits to the popular painting grounds in Cornwall. The painting is now lost and has never been reproduced³⁷ but the critical consensus of the day was that it was competent but uninspired and very much in debt to the Newlyn School style.³⁸ Though this was not literally true as a question of influence, it was an understandable and correct assessment of similarity. At the 1889 R.A., his Minutes are Like Hours (1889, lost, unreproduced) got at best mixed reviews and its square brushstroke compared with that of Stanhope Forbes and Frank Bramley.³⁹ In 1890, he exhibited many more works (at the Royal Academy, Royal Society of British Artists and Grosvenor Gallery) and found them discussed by the critics. The reaction was still mixed but a slight improvement on the year before. Comparisons to the Newlyn School again were made and Brangwyn's dull grey colouring received both praise and blame. The most consistently positive reaction was to his composition, described as forceful, solid and dramatic. This reaction would later be a commonplace in Brangwyn criticism. Probably Brangwyn's best received work was All Hands Shorten Sail

(1889, Rochdale Art Gallery, Lancashire), a large painting of seamen working furiously in a storm. In 1891 it was one of two of his works exhibited in the Paris Salon and was well received . This was a good start for what would be a major international exhibiting career.

The other painting exhibited in Paris was Funeral at Sea (1890, Glasgow Art Gallery, fig. 9), the largest (61 in. x 92 in.) and best of his early marine works. It won him a medal and was his first big critical success. Despite its emotional subject, its mood is cool, sombre and realistic. Very appropriately, Funeral at Sea was used as the cover illustration for a recent Penguin paperback edition of Conrad's Lord Jim⁴⁰. The muted colours - greys, browns and whites, accented with touches of navy and pale blue - concentrate the mood. Despite its diffusion in the atmosphere, Brangwyn is much aware of light, its reflection off surfaces and its creation of silhouettes. This is seen especially on the deck, on the white shirts of several seamen and in the silhouettes of the two foreground seamen. His heightening of the reflections around the central group serves to confirm its importance. The bold, balanced, graphic composition does very much the same.

When first hung at the Royal Society of British Artists, in 1891, Funeral at Sea got a subdued reception. Many critics disliked its grim subject yet generally appreciated its acute observation and strong composition. Frederick Wedmore, in the Magazine of Art⁴¹ also contrasted it with the lyrical, richly coloured works of Henry Moore, James Clarke Hook and other established marine painters. In Paris, on the other hand, it was very well received and Leonce Benedite tried to buy it for the Luxembourg. There it was also admired for its observation and composition and for its evoking of stoic British character. One anonymous French reviewer simply declared, "C'est l'Angleterre!"⁴² Walter Shaw-Sparrow, Brangwyn's first biographer, would later write of Funeral at Sea that,

This work, so true, so poignant, is but a symbol of our national destiny. For England - "Our Lady of the Sea", as Camden called her - has all her fortunes on the deep, and one day they will be lost there and buried.⁴³

The second stage in Brangwyn's artistic development began in 1891-92, with major works of oriental subjects, a brighter palette and a more sensuous, decorative mood. These changes were largely due to his experience of bright light on trips around the Mediterranean in 1888 and 1890, a trip to Spain with Arthur Melville in 1891 and a trip to South Africa in the same year. They were neither as sudden as has been supposed nor due solely to Melville's influence. They stemmed instead from Brangwyn's long dissatisfaction with much of his existing work. In the only statement he ever made on the subject, he wrote,

Always hearing that my work was flimsy and grey, such criticism - true though it might be - made me so disgusted that I determined to go in for a bit of colour, pure and undefiled.⁴⁴

His going in "for a bit of colour", however, could be seen in vivid blues, whites, greens and pinks of such of his minor works as On the Coast, Tangiers (fig. 10, Collection Forbes Magazine, London) as far back as 1888. Now he had the courage to apply bright colours to his major exhibited works. He did not, however, give up his earlier style completely. It continues to appear through the nineties in many of his illustrations for The Graphic and in such works as Into Port (1894, unlocated, fig. 11).

In taking up a more colourful palette, Brangwyn was part of a general shift in western painting at the time from plein-air tonalism to a brighter, though modified Impressionism. This Impressionism still did not lead to prismatic colour and the dissolving of form but to what William H. Gerdts has termed the "glare aesthetic". Those subscribing to this aesthetic,

were interested in the effects of intense daylight, portrayed

in strong tonal contrasts, often achieving the powerful effect of glare from reflecting surfaces. Thus flat, or near flat, areas and surfaces are often significant spatial forms in their paintings. These may appear as broad areas of background or horizontal "support" areas on which figures, merchandise and buildings stand, but they function more significantly than only in such a passive manner. They are mirrors from which dazzling sunlight is reflected back toward the spectator and upon which strong silhouettes of still clearly rendered forms may be cast allowing for the intensification of colour and light without dissolution of form.⁴⁵

This description almost as easily fits the works of Arthur Melville as it does the new works of Brangwyn. Melville was more the catalyst than the cause in Brangwyn's change of style. The two of them met probably on Stratford Place, where they both maintained studios and, coming from a similar artistic background, likely found friendship easy. Scottish born Melville had studied at the Academie Julian, had been influenced by the Hague School and by Velasquez' tonal realism. During the eighties, he had associated with the members of the Glasgow School, the Scottish equivalent to the New English Art Club. At the same time, he had made extensive trips to the Middle East and India, where he had developed an interest in effects of light and colour and a novel watercolour technique to capture them. He may well have seen works by Monet on an 1889 visit to Paris⁴⁶, though by then his own style was mature and set. From 1890 to 1900 he made five trips to Spain and North Africa, where he produced his best known works. His Bravo Toro, (undated, Victoria and Albert Museum, fig. 12), A Spanish Sunday: Going to the Bullfight (1891, University of Dundee) and The Captured Spy (1895, Glasgow Art Gallery) all show bright, flat, reflective areas, against which darker figures are placed. Together, the two form strong traditional compositions, the antithesis of loose, Impressionist ones. Brangwyn's Pilots, Puerto de los Pasajes (c.1891, Art Institute of Chicago, fig. 13), painted

on or shortly after his trip with Melville, shows many of the same characteristics. It is a scene of five pilots in the foreground standing and talking on a large, shaded porch. They are painted in tones of dark tan to grey, set off by areas of grey-white, red and ochre on their shirts and black on their caps. They are realistically observed and modelled, though not in great detail, and are free from the linear stylization later seen in Brangwyn's work. At the same time, Brangwyn's interest in them is more formal than narrative or psychological, as it had been in his earlier works. Seen through the vertical posts of the porch - the main structural elements in the composition - is a brilliantly lit view of the harbour with buildings beyond. The background forms are flattened and bleached white by the lights, with only small areas of brown and sky blue for contrast. As in Gerdt's definition, they form a horizontal band, stretching across the upper half of the canvas, against which posts and pilots are silhouetted. When Pilots. . and two similar works, Slave Traders (c.1892, lost) and The Slave Market (1892, Atkinson Art Gallery, Southport), were first exhibited⁴⁷, the critics were shocked at Brangwyn's change of style and the reviews were mixed. The most common adjectives used to describe these works were "bold", "brilliant", "barbaric" and "uncompromising".⁴⁸ Several critics saw them as examples of Impressionism or of related experiments by such Glasgow School painters as E. A. Hornell, who had been working in a bright, decorative style since the late 1880's.⁴⁹ Others, noting their decorative quality, compared them to stained glass windows.⁵⁰ This comparison too would soon become a commonplace. No one lamented their decreased psychological interest but, instead, what was seen as their lack of modelling and aerial perspective and resulting lack of unity.⁵¹ In spite of this British response, Pilots. . . was sent to the World's Columbian Exposition, in Chicago in 1893, where it received a bronze medal and was bought for the Art Institute.

Something similar happened with Brangwyn's The Buccaneers (1892, Washington University, St. Louis, fig. 14). Based on studies made during his trip with Melville, it shows a boatload of pirates in the foreground, with a brilliant red flag waving in the stern. Both are silhouetted against the bright blue and tan, relatively flat planes of the sea and hill town in the background. At the Grafton Gallery, in February 1893, the reviews of the work were mixed, with the comparisons and criticisms much the same as before. Later that spring, at the Paris Salon, it caused a sensation, for it was bolder and more dramatic than his earlier work, than that of his British contemporaries and almost everything else in the Salon. A few critics disliked it. Gustave Geffroy, for instance, in the May 7th issue of Echo de la Semaine, described it as "a ragout of Delacroix and Manet but without the air".⁵² On the whole, however, it was strongly admired for its boldness and brightness. Again the Luxembourg tried and failed to buy it, though it did go into a private Parisian collection.⁵³

CHAPTER THREE

1. Harold Steward Rathbone (1858-1929) Landscape, portrait and subject painter, pottery manufacturer and poet. Trained at Slade School under Legros and with Ford Madox Brown. Later at Académie Julian and in Italy. Close to Brown through 1880's. Founded Della Robbia Pottery Co. (1894-1906) and was strongly influenced by the early Renaissance in his pottery designs. See Mary Bennett, Merseyside Painters People and Places, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool: 1978, pp.175-76.
2. These are probably The Ascension with Christ Giving the Keys to St. Peter, The Dead Christ Tended by Angels or Virgin and Child. See John Pope-Hennessy, Catalogue of Italian Sculpture in the Victoria and Albert Museum, HMSO, London: 1964, vol.1, pp. 70-78, vol.3, plates 75, 78 & 80.
3. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, p.13.
4. On Whistler's influence on Mackmurdo see Lionel Lambourne Utopian Craftsmen, Peregrine Smith Inc., Salt Lake City: 1980, p.39 and Robert Schmutzler, Art Nouveau, Harry N. Abrams Inc., New York: 1978, p. 40.
5. Catalogue of A.H. Mackmurdo and the Century Guild Collection, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow: 1967, p. viii.
6. Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo, Wren's City Churches. George Allen, Orpington: 1883.
7. The "Wrenaissance" was a nationalist revival, starting in the 1890's, of the English Baroque style of the time of Wren. It was used mainly for public buildings. Leading architects of the revival were John M. Bryden, John Belcher, Edwin Lutyens, Reginald Blomfield, Aston Webb and Edward Mountford.
8. The Hobby Horse was the official organ of The Century Guild. Edited by Mackmurdo and Horne, it first appeared in April 1884 and then appeared irregularly through 1893, when it was taken over by the Bodley Head.
9. Mackmurdo's own London house was described by William Rothenstein as being an Adam house. See Gillian Naylor, The Arts & Crafts Movement, Studio Vista, London: 1971, p.116.
10. Alastair Service, Edwardian Architecture, Oxford University Press, New York: 1977, p.18.
11. Other Arts and Crafts figures such as Selwyn Image, Herbert Horne, Walter Crane, Charles F.A. Voysey and Charles Robert Ashbee did exhibit works with the Franco-Belgian group, Les XX. See Bruce Laughton, "The British and American Contribution to Les XX," Apollo, vol. 86, November 1967, pp. 372-79.

12. Selwyn Image, Letters, Arthur H. Mackmurdo, ed., Grant Richards, London: 1932, p.208.
13. Herbert Percy Horne (1864-1916) Apprenticed to Mackmurdo as architect in 1883 and became his partner in 1885. Designed for The Century Guild and co-edited The Hobby Horse. Later concentrated on literary matters and art historical and retired to Florence in 1900. Published major book on Botticelli in 1908. Left his house (Museo Horne) to city of Florence.
14. Thomas Stirling Lee (1857-1916) Mainly portrait sculptor. Studied at R.A. schools, at Ecole de Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1880-81, and in Rome, 1881-83. For repr. of St. George's Hall panels see Alfred Lys Baldry, Modern Mural Decoration, George Newnes Ltd., London: 1902, pp.68-69.
15. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman & Hall, London: 1948, p.24.
16. *ibid.*, p.15.
17. *ibid.*, p.13.
18. Brangwyn's dealer, at one point, would be David Croal Thompson of the gallery, Barbizon House, author of The Brothers Maris, The Studio, London: 1907. On Thomson see Simon Houfe, "David Croal Thomson: Whistler's 'Aide-de-Camp'," Apollo, vol. 119, February 1984, pp. 112-119. In 1903 Brangwyn was elected a member of the Pulchri Studio, the main gathering place of the Hague School. See Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber and Co., London: 1978, p.86.
19. Howard D. Rodee, "The Dreary Landscape as a Background for Scenes of Rural Poverty in Victorian Painting", Art Journal, vol.36, Summer 1977, pp.307-313.
20. Kenneth McConkey, "The Bouguereau of the Naturalists: Bastien Lepage and British Art", Art History, vol.1, September 1978, pp.371-382.
21. On Newlyn see Caroline Fox and Francis Greenacre, Artists of the Newlyn School, Newlyn Orion Galleries, Newlyn: 1979.
22. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman & Hall, London: 1948, pp.90-93.
23. *ibid.*, p.65.
24. 1889, The Last Load, #8, (now lost).
25. G.P. Jacomb-Hood, With Brush and Pencil, John Murray, London; 1925, pp.73-74, and William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman & Hall, London: 1948, pp.85-86.

26. Colin Hunter (1841-1904). Exhibited at R.A. 1868-1903 and was elected A.R.A.. See Philip Macer-Wright, Brangwyn, Hutchinson & Co., London: 1940, p.41.
27. Wilfred Williams Ball (1853-1917) . Landscape and marine watercolour painter, etcher. Lived in Putney. Did many watercolours of Sussex and views of the Thames in the style of Whistler. Travelled and worked in Holland, Italy and Germany.
28. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman & Hall, London: 1948, pp.247-248.
29. Charles Napier Hemy (1841-1917) Marine and landscape painter. Student of William Bell Scott in Newcastle School of Art. Raised in Australia. Studied in Antwerp with Baron Leys. Exhibited at R.A. after 1865 and was elected R.A.. Later became friend of Brangwyn, who bought some of his furniture after Hemy's death. For initial meeting see William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman & Hall, London: 1948, pp.20-22.
30. Martin Green, Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire, Basic Books Inc., New York: 1979, p.3.
31. In 1912, Brangwyn devised plans for a Drake monument. He also made several paintings on the same theme and illustrated The Boys Hakluyt in 1909.
32. Green, p. 322.
33. On Wyllie see Roger Quarm and John Wyllie, W.L. Wyllie: Marine Artist 1851-1931, Barrie and Jenkins, London: 1981.
34. Ian Watt, Conrad in the Nineteenth Century, Chatto and Windus, London: 1980, p.17.
35. For the subject of orientalist painters see Phillippe Jullian, The Orientalists, Phaidon/Oxford, London: 1977 and the exhibition catalogue, Eastern Encounters, The Fine Art Society, London: 1978.
36. See Christmas issues of 1895 and 1896 respectively.
37. A 1903 Brangwyn etching of the same title, made from an earlier drawing, may give some indication of the look of the 1887 painting.
38. Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber & Co. Ltd., London: 1978, p.40.
39. "The Royal Academy," The Saturday Review, vol. 67, May 18, 1889, p.606.
40. Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim: A Tale, Penguin Paperback Edition, Harmondsworth: 1972.

41. Frederick Wedmore, "Current Art," Magazine of Art, vol.14, 1891, p.110.
42. Walter Shaw-Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London: 1910, p.39. Barbara W. Tuchman, in The Proud Tower, Bantam Books, New York: 1967, p. 17 notes a similar French response to things English when Sargent's portrait of Lord Ribblesdale was exhibited in the Paris Salon. Ribblesdale himself visited the exhibition and was recognized and followed by the crowds, who called him "ce grand diable de milord anglais".
43. *ibid.*, p.39.
44. Frank Brangwyn, "Letters from Artists to Artists - Sketching Grounds. No. 1-Spain," The Studio, vol. 1, April 1893, p.12.
45. William H. Gerds, American Impressionism, Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle: 1980, p.17.
46. Gerald Deslandes, Arthur Melville 1855-1904, Dundee Museums and Art Galleries, Dundee: 1977, p.6.
47. Exhibited at Royal Society of British Artists, 1892, Institute of Painters in Oil Colour, 1892 and Royal Academy, 1893, respectively.
48. See Claude Phillips, "The Institute of Painters in Oil Colour," Magazine of Art, vol. 16, December 1892, p. 75; "Institute of Painters in Oils Exhibition," The Times, 29 October 1892, p. 6; F.G. Stephens, "Oil Painters' Exhibition," The Athenaeum, no. 3393, 5 November 1892, p. 635.
49. See "Grafton Gallery Exhibition," The Portfolio, vol. 24, 1 March 1893, p.v.; "The Royal Academy," The Portfolio, vol. 24, 1 June 1893, p. xii; F.G. Stephens, "Oil Painters' Exhibition," The Athenaeum, no. 3393, 5 November 1892, p. 635; F.G. Stephens, "Royal Academy Exhibition," The Athenaeum, no. 3418, 29 April 1893, p. 546; "The Royal Academy Show," The Times, 29 April 1893, p. 13. Such Glasgow School painters as Hornell and George Henry may well have influenced Brangwyn through showing their work at the New English Art Club.
50. Claude Phillips, "The Royal Society of British Artists," Magazine of Art, vol. 16, December 1892, p. 78.
51. Claude Phillips, "The Institute of Painters in Oil Colour," Magazine of Art, vol. 16, December 1892, p. 75.
52. Quoted by Walter Shaw-Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London: 1910, p.46.
53. See Leonce Benedite's introduction to Walter Shaw-Sparrow's, The Spirit of the Age, Hodder & Stoughton, London: 1908, for story of successive attempts to buy a Brangwyn painting. Buccaneers was bought first by a M. Stany Oppenheim and, later, a M. Pacquement, both private Parisian collectors.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE UP AND COMING PAINTER 1893-1900

1893 was a crucial year for Brangwyn's development as an international presence, a man with a rising reputation who had to be watched. This reputation would soon bring him new artistic contacts and commissions in mural painting and the decorative arts, which would slowly and subtly change his painting style. The main vehicles on which it was based were early exposure in The Studio and subsequent commissions for Samuel Bing's L'Art Nouveau.

The Studio first appears in April 1893. It was the brainchild of the critic C. Lewis Hind¹ and the retired textile merchant, Charles Holme², Japanese art enthusiast, former partner of designer Christopher Dresser, and owner of William Morris's Red House. Hind retired early from the scene and it was Gleeson White³, editor for its first two years, who set the direction the magazine would follow. The Studio encouraged new developments both in painting and in the decorative arts. It was very successful and influential, quickly developing an international circulation and gradually replacing the Art Journal as the leading British art magazine. Its first two issues contained articles by Brangwyn on Spain as a sketching ground, reminiscent of his travels there with Melville.⁴ In December 1897, it published a seventeen page, illustrated article on Brangwyn's work by James Stanley Little, the first large article on him to appear anywhere.⁵ Within the next three years, its pages contained two more articles about him.⁶ The first issue also boasted a cover by and article on Beardsley, a pioneering article on posters as an art form and other articles on Japanese gardens (by Holme), on gesso work (by Walter Crane) and on Spitalfields silk (by Lasenby Liberty). It reproduced works by Toorop, Boudin and Monet. Through later issues, British Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau ideas were spread around the world. Beardsley became known to Klimt, Horta, Toorop, Vallotton, Bakst and Bradley. Voysey and Mackintosh were discovered by the Austrians and Germans.

The current of influence flowed in reverse as well. Samuel Bing, the Parisian dealer in Japanese art and, soon, Art Nouveau, had been known to the British since 1875, when he started selling works to the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁷ In February 1895, The Studio carried an article by him on the printmaker Utamaro.

The Studio soon spawned such imitators in France and Germany as Pan (1893), Dekorative Kunst (1897), L'Art Decoratif (1898), Die Jugend (1896) and Art et decoration (1897). The first three of these were published by Bing's friend, Julius Meier-Graefe. Brangwyn was in contact with Meier-Graefe probably during the latter's first trip to England in 1893. His painting of A Goatherd, Gulur (1893, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow) bears a dedication to him from the same year. Meier-Graefe was encouraging Bing to shift his energies from Japonisme to contemporary arts⁸ and Brangwyn was an obvious choice as a young artist deserving patronage. In December 1897, his Dekorative Kunst published a long article on Brangwyn's work.⁹ When Meier-Graefe opened La Maison Modern, in Paris, he gave Brangwyn several decorative arts commissions. In 1899, he included Brangwyn's lithograph, La Flutiste in his print portfolio, Germinal, along with works by such progressives as Degas, Renoir, Gauguin, Van Gogh, the Nabis, Toulouse-Lautrec, Rodin, Liebermann, Minne and Zuloaga. In later years, however, Meier-Graefe seems to have cooled on Brangwyn, for his Modern Art treats him only in passing and that in a negative comparison with Charles Conder.¹⁰

Given Brangwyn's background, his growing interest in the decorative arts - especially mural painting - during the mid-nineties is very understandable. This interest was first seen in his unsuccessful attempt, in 1894, to obtain a commission for a mural panel in the Royal Exchange in London.¹¹ Only six years

later would he be given such a commission.

The history of mural painting in Britain from the Renaissance to the early 19th century has been solidly traced by Edward Croft-Murray,¹² who writes that by Victorian times,

The tradition of what may be called professional decorative painting was in fact dead. The essential qualities of Victorian art were opposed to the effective use of mural painting as decoration.

Attempts to revive the mural painting tradition were made, however, starting in the 1840's with the competitions to decorate the new Houses of Parliament.¹³ Murals of historical and allegorical subjects were seen, both by the governing classes and Gothic Revival architects, as a means of raising the educational and moral standards of the public. Given the lack of a living mural tradition, however, existing styles and techniques were seldom adequate for their artistic success. Given also their great expense, the government was reluctant to commission them. Few others could afford to do so. As a result, a British mural movement with broad public support never became established. What murals were painted were relatively isolated, unsupported efforts. The unsuccessful Houses of Parliament murals had been based on a mock fresco technique and classical pictorial, illusionistic conventions. During the late 1850's a second attempt at a revival, this time using tempera techniques and "primitive", decorative, mediaeval conventions, was made by such Gothic Revival architects as George Street, George Gilbert Scott and William Burges, in conjunction with some of the Pre-Raphaelites. Ruskin too, in The Stones of Venice, had encouraged these developments.¹⁴ The best known example of them, the Oxford Union murals, painted by Rossetti, Morris, Burne-Jones and Spencer Stanhope, failed for lack of an adequate technique. From 1855 to 1864

William Bell Scott painted a mural series on the history of Northumberland for the Trevelyan family seat, Wallington Hall. During the sixties, George Watts and Spencer Stanhope tried unsuccessfully to develop a mock fresco technique for murals in Lincoln's Inn and then gave up on the prospects. Watts's interest in mural decoration was expressed again only in the 'nineties, in several large easel paintings in tempera. Frederick Leighton also attempted large mural frescos in his two lunettes for the Victoria and Albert Museum.¹⁵ The Arts of Industry applied to War and The Arts of Industry applied to Peace were based on the classical conventions of Raphael, as seen in The School of Athens. About the same time, Morris and Co. aimed to provide murals for private homes, as part of an overall decorative scheme. Though few patrons for these materialized, Morris's ideas became a central part of the Arts and Crafts Movement's philosophy. The best known example of them was Ford Madox Brown's set of mural frescos in the Manchester Town Hall, painted during the seventies and eighties and mentioned in connection with Harold Rathbone. Walter Crane, in various smaller commissions, carried these ideas on into the nineties.

During the nineties, a mural painting revival seemed to become a reality. Britain was enjoying tremendous prosperity and a vast building boom was underway. More patrons now had the means, ambition and self-confidence to commission lavish decorative schemes. The architects of both the Free Style¹⁶ and "Wrenaissance" revival believed strongly in mural decoration as an important adjunct to building, whether for public enlightenment or private delight. Painters were improving their style and technique by studying mediaeval and classical precedents. This retrospective quality would dominate the mural revival until its end in the 1920's. Brangwyn would become its most original painter for, though his works showed many traditional influences, they were

noted equally for their new "impressionist" technique and the heroic realism of their modern subjects.

Brangwyn's first commission for mural paintings and other decorative works came from France rather than Britain. He was asked by Samuel Bing, in 1895, to decorate the facade of his new Parisian gallery, L'Art Nouveau, and to paint two panels in the entrance hall. Other commissions soon followed for designs for stained glass windows, carpets, tapestries, furniture, objets d'art and complete room ensembles. These would bring Brangwyn to the heart of the Parisian avant-garde and from there to international attention. He seems to have made few Parisian contacts, however, and these among moderates and conservatives. The Post-Impressionist and art nouveau works he probably saw at Bing's seem to have made no impact on him.

He received his first commission during the summer of 1895 and, by August 7th, had mailed Bing his basic proposal, writing,

I think it is unlike anything in Paris and, when carried out with the proper mouldings, it will look dignified and rich.¹⁷

As his plans are now lost and the building dismantled after Bing's death, knowledge of his design comes from the above quoted letter, from several contemporary photos of the facade (fig. 15) and from sketches for the friezes (fig. 16, 17), reproduced in a contemporary magazine article.¹⁸ His limitations were the basic structure of the facade, remodelled by Louis Bonnier, and Bing's desire for two painted friezes. One was to go under the cornice, the other between the first and second storey windows. Brangwyn proposed a structured, rectilinear, colourful design of reds, greens and harmonizing tones. It was composed of the two friezes (spirit fresco on laid down canvas), contrasting horizontal mouldings, coloured tiles on most of the wall surface and mosaics and tiled pillars around the main doorway. Bing was probably shocked by its severity,

for he sent it off to the Belgian architect, Victor Horta, for commentary and modification. When Horta's whole new design was judged unacceptable, Brangwyn's was resurrected and modified slightly. The tiles were replaced with cheaper coloured plaster and the moldings toned down to shades of brown, olive green and greyish ochre.¹⁹ In order to meet Bing's December 26th opening deadline, Brangwyn now came to Paris and worked on the spot. This procedure would never be repeated in his later mural commissions. Despite rain and cold, with no working drawings and using a difficult process²⁰, he finished the facade on time.

Unlike their British predecessors, his friezes were neither classical nor mediaeval in inspiration. Sketches for the upper frieze show strongly outlined, realistically rendered potters, working against a largely flat ground. Sketches for the lower one show groups of vaguely Oriental figures, sitting and playing pipes. Tying the groups together is a flat, decorative, leaf and vine motif. In their flatness, stylization and subordination to his total scheme, if not in their details, Brangwyn's friezes still obey the principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement, in which he had been raised.

The two large canvases painted for Bing's entrance hallway are better documented. These measured about ten feet by seven feet each and were based on the themes of Music (fig. 18) and Dance (fig. 19). Dance is now lost and Music exists only in cut down form (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow). Large photos of each were published in The Studio²¹ and a colour photo of Music in a recent book on Art Nouveau.²² These reveal landscapes, painted in a broad, decorative manner. Both compositions are ordered by the verticals of tree trunks and the patterned silhouettes of their branches against a brighter toned sky. Both show the tonal contrasts of the glare aesthetic and the stable

compositions of Brangwyn's earlier works. Both, however, show more linear stylization and both now are based on larger, mythological subjects, subjects thought appropriate for public works of art.

In painting his murals for Bing, Brangwyn also brought together the British and French mural traditions. Though the French admired his easel paintings²³, few of them admired his scheme for Bing.²⁴ With its rectilinear structure, it was seen as old-fashioned, harking back to the aesthetic movement rather than developing with the curvilinear art nouveau, then popular in France.

French mural painting had more government patronage than in Britain and could be seen in many public buildings: the Opéra, Hotel de Ville, Pantheon, etc. The effect of this patronage was conservative. It perpetuated academic, classical ideas on suitably elevated subject matter and the means of presenting it. The classicists, led by Jean-Paul Laurens and Paul Baudry, were thus more dominant than in Britain and their works dependent on Renaissance and Baroque conventions of illusionistic space, chiaroscuro and well modelled form. The alternate tradition, that of Puvis de Chavannes and his followers, was archaizing but not as overtly medievalizing as that of its British counterpart. In the ascendancy at the end of the century, it too emphasized the flatness of the wall surface, not through gilding or abstract patterning, but through the use of large, flat, simple forms, strong outlines, rhythmic compositions and light, matt surfaces. Though different in its sources, Brangwyn's style was obviously related to that of the Puvis tradition.

During the nineties, with the work of the Nabis, the Puvis tradition was updated and was combined with abstracting influences from Gauguin and William Morris's ideas on the unity of the arts, the place of murals in unified decorative schemes.²⁵ In the eyes of the Nabi, Jan Verkade,

There are no paintings, only decorations.²⁶

Such ideas reinforced the synthetist ones already in the air. Shedding the vague public symbolism of Puvis and concentrating on the domestic scene, the Nabis made murals on an intimate scale, for the apartments of a rich, enlightened circle of patrons. As a result, their work was little known. After 1900, Maurice Denis became better known for his religious murals and younger, more eclectic painters like José Maria Sert established reputations in the field. Brangwyn may well have seen Nabi paintings and their stained glass window designs in Bing's salons but, if so, he never mentioned the fact.

This puzzling lack of contact with the avant-garde is most likely due to Brangwyn's not speaking French and to the insularity typical of English artists in France. The only times he discussed what he did and whom he knew in Paris were once to William de Belleruche when he mentioned the excellence of Bing's Oriental pottery collection²⁷ and again, in a 1951 letter to the daughter of the American painter William de Leftwich Dodge. Here he wrote,

I recall visiting him (Dodge) in Paris when he was doing a big dome, and I was doing decorations for a building in the Rue de Provence...my thoughts go back to all those good fellows in Paris who were friends of your father's, Guerin, Reid, MacMonnies, Blashfield and dear old Chase.²⁸

Though hardly mentioning the whole of his acquaintance, this letter suggests a banding together of English speaking artists that is only too common. It also shows Brangwyn's strong early ties with American artists, ties that, later, were important in his career. It finally shows his sympathy with artists of the "juste milieu". The only French artist Brangwyn ever mentioned as a friend was Theophile Steinlen, the poster designer and painter of the poor. How and where their friendship began is not known. The only artists of the Bing Salons whom he and his biographers mentioned at all were the "juste milieu" figures of Albert

Besnard, Eugène Carrière and Auguste Rodin.²⁹ He is known, however, in 1899, to have become a member of a new society, the Société Nouvelle de Peintres et de Sculpteurs, which exhibited at the Galerie Georges Petit in March 1900 (fig. 20). Among the members were such popular figures as Lucien Simon, Fritz Thaulow, Constantin Meunier, Henri Le Sidaner, Charles Cottet, Gaston Latouche and Edmond Aman-Jean.³⁰

For several years after the opening of Bing's shop, Brangwyn worked on decorative arts commissions for both him and La Maison Moderne. His designs for stained glass windows and carpets became well known and form an important part of his oeuvre. His designs for tapestries, painted fans, lamps, jewellery, furniture and room ensembles are either incidental or are practically undocumented.³¹

Through his father, the artists of The Century Guild and his work for Morris and Co., Brangwyn was likely exposed to stained glass window design, seen probably at its best in the windows of Burne-Jones. He seems, however, to have been little influenced by them, for Burne-Jones' designs were strongly mediaevalizing, with obvious debts to illuminated manuscripts and the Flemish and Italian primitives. They were broken up into relatively small, regularly shaped glass sections, etched with considerable detail. The leading often crossed body sections in arbitrary places, thus dematerializing the images. Their subjects were usually religious or taken from such literary sources as Mallory's Morte d'Arthur.

Brangwyn's freedom from Arts and Crafts precedent is probably due to his association with Louis Comfort Tiffany and his New York workshops. Bing had come to know Tiffany during his investigation of American industrial and decorative arts for the French government. In his 1895 report, La Culture

artistique en Amérique, he described Tiffany's aims as follows. "Tiffany", he wrote,

saw only one means of effecting this perfect union between the various branches of industry: the establishment of a large factory, a vast central workshop that would consolidate under one roof an army of craftsmen representing every relevant technique: glassmakers and stone setters, silversmiths, embroiderers and weavers, casemakers and carvers, gilders, jewellers, cabinet makers - all working to give shape to the carefully planned concepts of a group of directing artists, themselves united by a common current of ideas.³²

During the last half of the nineties, Bing and Tiffany collaborated on a number of projects, among which was a series of stained glass windows designed by some of the Nabis, Toulouse-Lautrec and Brangwyn and executed in the New York workshops. Brangwyn produced designs for at least six windows, based on the subjects: Music, Flute Players, Girl with Fruit Bowl, Boy with Gourds, Youth and Age and The Baptism of Christ. Besides being shown at Bing's gallery, some of them appeared in the 1898 Salon, where The Baptism of Christ won a medal, and again in London, at the Grafton Gallery in May 1899. No records remain of the collaborative process between Brangwyn and Tiffany's craftsmen and how it effected the genesis of the designs. The finished windows, with the exceptions of Boy with Gourds (Morse Foundation, Winter Park, Florida, fig. 21) and The Baptism of Christ (Baltimore Museum of Art), are now lost and may never have been executed. None of them have been studied technically and knowledge of them comes from several contemporary magazine articles.³³ In his designs, Brangwyn avoided mediaevalism in style and subject matter for a more classical, pastoral approach. Trying to avoid formalized leading patterns and have his leading conform to the contours of his figures, he wound up using large, irregular pieces of glass for the main parts of his designs. Often these were interspersed

and contrasted with small pieces. Finer linear detail was etched on each piece. As in his other designs, his contour patterns are ultimately fixed in a stable, rectilinear grid. As finally executed by Tiffany, the windows combined pieces of irregularly molded glass, opaline glass, and multilayered glass for various complex colour effects. They were very costly and heavy and thus not widely imitated. The Baptism of Christ, measuring about 17 ft. x 4 ft., was one of the largest single windows Tiffany ever made and had to be built in two sections, 7 ft. and 10 ft. each.

Besides stained glass windows, Brangwyn designed at least five carpets for Bing and La Maison Moderne. Carpets were one of the loves of his life. When he became prosperous, he collected Persian and Turkish ones. When he was an old man, he recalled, to William de Belleruche, his father's love of carpets and a Persian carpet owned by William Morris, which had made a great impression on him. When de Belleruche observed, "many of your pictures have the quality of an oriental carpet.", he replied, "That's the greatest compliment anyone can pay me...."³⁴ For Brangwyn, the Persians had set a standard of carpet design never equalled in the illusionistic carpets and tapestries of Europe, let alone the mass produced Brussels and Axminster carpets of his own time. Carpets, he felt, must be created to form a harmonious ensemble within a room. As they lie flat on the floor, their designs should be equally flat and, for visual interest, neither fully abstract nor fully naturalistic but based on a conventionalizing of form. Balance, symmetry and strength at the points of visual emphasis (corners, the centre and the middle of each side) were all necessary principles of good carpet design. In these beliefs Brangwyn was typical of the post-Morris arts and crafts designers of his day, with their combination of oriental, mediaeval and celtic motifs in their works.

Brangwyn's best known design for Bing was of a stylized trellis, grape cluster, leaf and tendril motif, in tones of dark blue, tan, brown, rust and green (fig. 22). Its broad tan border, sprinkled irregularly with a darker leaf motif, is a purely formal device, fixing the whole in a two dimensional frame. The trellis, grape clusters, leaves and tendrils, seen against the blue tones of the sky, form a stable, inherently two dimensional motif, as seen in Brangwyn's paintings, and are sufficiently stylized into connected, block-like sections to simplify the design yet not make it boringly symmetrical. The comparison of his paintings with carpet designs would soon become common.

The first chance for Brangwyn to expand from designing objects to designing whole ensembles came in Paris, in the wake of his Bing commissions. Practically nothing is known of these ensembles. The first discussed will be a British one, designed for the Anglo-South African mining magnate, Edmund Davis.³⁵ Davis, a major art collector and patron, had, in 1896, commissioned a Free Style house and block of artists' studio flats to be built for him in London. Charles Conder had painted decorative silk panels for his drawing room and study. Now he wanted Brangwyn to design a frieze and other fittings for his downstairs music room and an ensemble for his master bedroom. The Studio, in May 1899, reported that Brangwyn had recently "been fully occupied in carrying out a scheme of adornment for a private house"³⁶ and, in April 1900 it published an article on the bedroom, by then largely complete.³⁷

Brangwyn's music room frieze ran around the upper walls on three sides of the oak panelled, 35 foot by 40 foot room (fig. 23). It was divided by pilasters into separate panels and varied in height from 2 feet to nearly 4 feet over the fireplace. Its theme, naturally, was music. The conception of this theme, however, was more traditional than it had been for Bing, with musicians and

their instruments grouped between sections of foliage and harking back to the concerts champêtres of the Venetians. The musicians wore the same timeless draperies as in Bing's murals but now were more androgynous. In order that the frieze harmonize with the dark woodwork, it was painted in subdued tones of tan and forest green. Several copper radiator and fireplace grills, two clear, leaded glass windows and a painted triptych of musicians and flowers³⁸ completed Brangwyn's decorations. Davis was pleased with the results and would sometimes hire an orchestra to play for him, while he sat alone in the room. Within a decade, however, his pleasure turned to dismay, for Brangwyn's use of bitumen had resulted in the darkening of the frieze. Despite several attempts at cleaning and restoration, it is now completely ruined. This problem would recur in several of Brangwyn's later murals.

In the bedroom (fig. 24), Brangwyn had a free hand. The walls he partitioned in a rectilinear way. Broad baseboards and a 1½ foot high frieze were the main horizontal elements. Running between them at regular intervals were twelve sets of waxed cherrywood strips, in the centre of which were painted panels. Between each set of strips, the walls were covered in plain paper. The doors and cupboards over the fireplace were also of cherrywood and the fireplace itself (fig. 26) was surrounded with tiles. The colour scheme was soft and subtle, with tones of mauve and smoky grey in the cherrywood, grey-brown in the wallpaper and pale grey, flesh, blue and green in the frieze. The iconographical scheme was more complex than in the music room. Here Brangwyn utilized the old cyclical imagery of the months (the panels, fig. 29) and the seasons (the frieze, fig. 27, 28). This was combined with a quotation from Virgil's *Bucolics*, "Deus nobis haec otia fecit" (God has given us this repose.)³⁹ inlaid at the head of the Davis's bed (fig. 25). Feelings of repose and enjoyment

of the earth's beauty, especially reminiscent of Puvis, dominated the frieze and panels, with their androgynous, child-like figures, nude or draped from the waist, carrying baskets, fruit and flowers and placed in pastoral landscapes. As in Brangwyn's earlier works, flatness and stability of composition were emphasized by heavy contouring of the figures, patterning of their draperies and the building of a vertical-horizontal grid, in the lines of the trees, landscape and clouds. A similar securing of biomorphic patterns within rectangular frames was carried through even in the oxidized silver door handles, light switches and hardware on the furniture.

Brangwyn's furniture, also of cherrywood, consisted of a large bed, night table, drop front desk (fig. 30), and unfolding dressing table. A chaise lounge (fig. 31), several benches and a set of chairs were upholstered in antelope hide. The foot and head of the bed echoed the vertical stripping of the walls and set it off against horizontal friezes of flowers and foliage. The backs of the chairs were similarly vertical and accented by inlaid panels with darker floral patterning. Inlaid panels were also placed on the otherwise plain wood surfaces of the desk and dressing table. With the exception of slightly curving arms on the chairs, the lines of the furniture were fully rectilinear and the effect produced was one of cleanness and lightness, combined with solidity. The furniture was both typical and atypical of the arts and crafts inspired work of the 'nineties, seen in pieces by Ernest Gimson, Ambrose Heal, C.F.A. Voysey and W.R. Lethaby. Its typical features are its rectilinear constructivism, restrained decoration, emphasis on wood grain and use of frame and panel motifs. Its lightness and elegance almost Sheratonian, are in strong contrast to the massive, rustic mediaevalism of most such pieces. It was executed by the firm of Norman and Stacey, who then asked Brangwyn to design a cheaper line of furniture, in fumed oak and without the costly inlays. Some of these pieces are stripped down

versions of the Davis ones, yet others show a more typical massiveness.⁴⁰ Brangwyn was supposed to have finished the Davis bedroom with designs for draperies, carpets and possibly a bedspread. These were not in place by April 1900 and cannot be firmly identified in later illustrations.⁴¹

As a result, in part, of his working on decorative commissions, Brangwyn's easel painting changed significantly between 1893 and 1902. His bright colours and bold compositions continued in use. More of his subjects, however, were historical, religious or allegorical. He replaced his visual realism with a linear stylization and simplification of form. He developed a personal cast of characters, common, picturesque types who would appear ever afterward in his works.

These changes reflect the increasing conservatism and historicism that dominated British art through the late nineties and early 1900's. If ever Brangwyn was representative of the spirit of British art, it was then. It is ironic that, at this time, his reputation grew more abroad than at home. In the first major article to discuss his work, in 1897,⁴² he was characterized in a very significant way. He was accepted as being important and his detractors were written off as "academics, decadent aestheticists, formalists and prudes".⁴³ Two years after the Oscar Wilde scandal, this defining of what he was not put him, by elimination, solidly in the middle, as a liberal consensus artist who all healthy Englishmen could admire. This is confirmed by the positive descriptions of him as "fresh, strong, manly, courageous" and as showing a "robust vitality" and "capacity to enjoy the beautiful".⁴⁴

Brangwyn's changing style can be seen in five of his major paintings, starting with St. Simon Stylites (Museo D'Arte Moderna, Venice, fig. 32)) in 1894. St. Simon... is one of his earliest religious works. His motivation for

painting such works at this time is uncertain.⁴⁵ In style, the works reveal little. They are neither conventionally iconic nor emotionally penetrating. Their blending of realism and decorative design seems to be their real rationale and implies an indifference to subject matter. This is shown in the averting of the saint's face and lack of dramatic gestures, which prevent strong involvement in the story. None of the critics dwelt on the story at all but rather on composition, colour and tonal contrast, especially the luminous golden haze which unifies the work.

In The Blood of the Grape (now lost, formerly in collection of Ernst Seegar, Berlin, fig. 33) in 1895, Brangwyn used the same stylistic devices yet appeared more traditional. Here classical mythology enters, dressed in contemporary guise. The painting shows a boisterous procession of Mediterranean peasants, celebrating a festival of Bacchus with music, wine and vines in their hair. Both subject and frieze-like composition show obvious parallels with such standard depictions of The Triumph of Bacchus as Annibale Caracci's ceiling for the Farnese Gallery in Rome (1597-1600).

In The Market at Bushire (now lost, fig. 34), of 1897, winner of a silver medal at the 1900 Paris World's Fair, Brangwyn further developed his oriental subjects in a different direction from other areas of his work. His grid composition is present but muted, his use of tonal contrast still strong. His major colours are as bright as those in Buccaneers but are more dispersed, more thickly impasted and more involved in the modelling and patterning of form.

In Charity (National Gallery of Canada, fig. 35), from 1900, the classical, symbolic and decorative traits, seen before in The Blood of the Grape and the Davis murals, now emerge full blown. The subject is overtly allegorical.

Charity, a young woman on the left, ringed by children, dispenses alms to the aged, halt, blind and helpless, all lined up on the right. Neither an empty classical cliché nor a realistic study, Charity is simply decorative. What realism exists in it, is only realism by contrast with the norm. None of the children are standard types yet all form a distinct type, seen in the Davis murals. The picturesque, broken old men are reminiscent of many classical prototypes and of the Barbizon peasant figures that Brangwyn knew so well. The mood of the work is not one of overwhelming pity for humanity but one of serene contemplation of the human spectacle. The frieze-like composition and cool, blue-white tonality of the sky, preserve this contemplative mood.

Brangwyn's growing artistic ambitions came to a climax in The Cider Press (now lost, fig. 36), in 1902. This work also forms the bridge to a mature period in his development, starting with his murals for the Royal Exchange and Skinners' Hall. When Sir Alfred East bought it for £300, he rescued Brangwyn from economic uncertainty. A large and steady income for him would soon be assured.

The Cider Press is a "lyrical fantasy from the conditions of modern life"⁴⁶, a typically Edwardian fantasy of labour, fruitfulness and enjoyment, of an ordered and secure world, a refuge from the reality of Edwardian London. Though presided over by the goddess Pomona, it is also a particularly English world, English in the homely goodness of its figures. On many levels, it is an updating of a myth of rural England seen, for instance, in William Powell Frith's Coming of Age in the Olden Time (1849). The rediscovery of rural England would become a common feature, not only of Brangwyn's oeuvre but of Edwardian art in general and would provide a contrast to the more dominant theme of imperial adventure.⁴⁷ In literature it is seen in such works as Rudyard Kipling's Puck of

Pook's Hill (1906) or Maurice Hewlett's epic poem The Song of the Plow (1916). It is found too in the activities of The Folk Song Society, in Ralph Vaughan Williams' The English Hymnal (1906) and in such pictures as George Clausen's The Golden Barn (1901, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool) or The Boy and the Man (1908, Bradford Art Gallery and Museum, fig. 37).

Though not the largest painting Brangwyn had done so far (it measured 78 inches x 78 inches), The Cider Press was certainly the most monumental. Its composition is based, in part, on all the standard devices. It is also based on the stable pyramidal compositions of the High Renaissance, often showing the Madonna and Child enthroned, flanked by saints and donors. This was sensed by Marion Spielmann, when he described The Cider Press as,

one of (Brangwyn's) most opulent designs, such as Titian might rejoice in could he come to life in the twentieth century.⁴⁸

Another design area explored by Brangwyn about this time was graphics. During the course of his career, he would use most graphic processes: etching, lithography, woodcut, wood engraving, etc., and would apply them both to fine art prints and to posters and bookplates. The bulk of his activity was with etching.

He had experimented with etching when he was a protege of Mackmurdo⁴⁹. He had returned to it again during the nineties, encouraged by Alphonse Legros, who had given him one of his etchings. About 1900 he started it in earnest and, by 1903, had hit his stride. Even as an occasional etcher, he made over 400 plates and set new precedents in the field.

Most English etchings since the etching revival of the sixties had been relatively small and had emphasized delicacy of line and subtlety of tone. They were kept in special portfolios or hung in groups on a wall and were best seen

intimately, held in the hand. Whistler had been the leader of the revival and notable works had been produced by Seymour Haden, Jacques Joseph Tissot, Hubert von Herkomer and Legros. This tradition of etching would be continued in Brangwyn's generation, most notably by Walter Sickert, Joseph Pennell and Muirhead Bone. Whistler had laid down the law in declaring that any image drawn with a small point must necessarily be small in size. Many etchers agreed, so when Brangwyn ignored their prescriptions, he was denounced for his impurity in using the medium.⁵⁰ His images were drawn directly from nature, mainly on large zinc plates averaging over 18 inches x 24 inches. They were deeply bitten with acid, which often produced a coarse, strong line and dramatic effects of chiaroscuro. Chiaroscuro and accompanying atmospherics were often heightened in printing, through mixing sienna pigments with the inks for effects of translucency, through wiping the plate so a film of ink lay on the surface, not just in the lines. Brangwyn's final prints were bold and theatrical, with compositions similar to those in his paintings, and were best hung alone and viewed at a distance, as part of a decorative ensemble (fig. 38, 39). Their subjects, to a degree, were also similar (landscape, humble genre, architectural townscape, heroic labour and modern industry). It was the balance between them that was different, with townscape, labour and industry dominant and oriental genre almost disappearing. Despite reactions against their technical impurity or melodrama, Brangwyn's etchings were soon quite popular. In London they were distributed by The Fine Art Society and, in Paris, by the *Galérie d'Art Decoratif*.⁵¹ Exhibitions of them were held in London in 1908, 1910 and 1912, in Paris in 1906 and 1909 and in New York in 1909, 1911 and 1912. Others followed in Vienna, Stockholm, Brussels, Florence and Rome and continued during and after World War I. Aside from the technical, discussion of Brangwyn's etchings,

pro and con, centred on their boldness, their "manliness"⁵², their acceptance of modern life and work. The broader implications of these ideas will be discussed later. Here they will just be suggested in a quotation from Walter Shaw-Sparrow, author of the first two books on the artist. Writing in 1910, Sparrow declared,

...Brangwyn alone in his work symbolizes the daring manliness of the British temperament;...he alone represents his time and race, showing courage, indomitable energy, and blending knowledge of the East with an intense sympathy for the grim stress and strain of Western industrialism.⁵³

During the late nineties, Brangwyn's international reputation grew quickly. More of his works were included in foreign exhibitions, more won medals, were reviewed and were collected. By 1900, he was known as a leading British artist, along with Burne-Jones, Whistler, Sargent, Walter Crane, John Lavery and Aubrey Beardsley. In Germany, Austria, Russia and the United States interest in his work was especially strong.

In 1893, a year after its founding, Brangwyn was elected a corresponding member of the Munich Secession. In 1897, with five of his works in their international exhibition, he was awarded a gold medal.⁵⁴ Assisi (1897) was bought by the Munich Pinakothek and the Baptism of Christ (undated) and Turkish Fishermen (1897) by the museums in Stuttgart and Prague respectively. By 1897, Ernst Seeger, a noted dealer and collector in Berlin, had bought at least four of his works: The Adoration of the Magi (c.1893, now lost), St. Simon Stylites (1894, Galleria Internazionale D'Arte Moderna, Venice), Rest (c.1894, Des Moines Art Centre), and The Blood of the Grape (1895, now lost). In December of the same year, Meier-Graefe's Dekorative Kunst published its first article on his work.⁵⁵ In 1900, other major articles appeared in Kunst und

Kunsthandwerk and Kunst und Dekoration Deutsche.⁵⁶ By World War I, about a dozen more followed. The critic Max Nordau, in his book On Art and Artists, included a section on Brangwyn between ones on Bouguereau and Cezanne. While dismissing them, he wrote of Brangwyn that,

This young Englishman...is a painter of the great class from which the kings of art spring. In his delight in colour, he reminds us of Delacroix..., in the dauntlessness with which he wields the brush, of Frans Hals...Brangwyn is an impressionist in the best use of the work, a perfect representative of what Impressionism contains that is justifiable. He does not stop over trivialities and accessories. He sees only the essential in phenomena, but this he sees with infallible certainty and intensity.⁵⁷

In 1907, Richard Muther's History of Modern Painting, Brangwyn was seen as the leader of the emerging generation of English muralists. According to Muther,

All his works are imposing through the decisive way in which he builds up his masses and the wonderful rhythmic articulation of forms and colours combined.⁵⁸

Another important figure to notice him was Hermann Muthesius, the architect, whose books on modern English architecture and decorative arts were having a great effect in Germany at the time. In 1905, in Das Englische Haus, he reproduced Brangwyn designs for a carpet and stained glass window and wrote that,

Modern carpets, in today's continental sense, have been designed only by Brangwyn. The patterns embody that mysterious uncertainty which works so attractively yet in colour especially are fresh without hitting you in the eye, saturated without becoming brutal. In England, however, Brangwyn stands alone with these nice designs.⁵⁹

His etchings found similar admiration, especially from Dr. Hans W. Singer, Keeper of the Royal Print Room in Dresden and frequent contributor to The Studio.⁶⁰ Huge collections of them were formed in the museums in Dresden and Munich and smaller ones in Berlin, Stuttgart, Frankfurt and Bremen.

Appreciation of Brangwyn's works came from a broad range of the German

artistic community. At the 1912 Salon of the conservative Imperial Art Academy in Berlin, he was awarded a gold medal and, in 1913, an honorary membership.⁶¹ On the other hand, Wassily Kandinsky, who could well have seen his works at the Munich Secession, mentioned him favourably in Concerning the Spiritual in Art. While discussing the use of primitive, red-blue colour contrasts, "one of the most frequent occurrences in modern structure", he noted that,

Frank Brangwyn, strongly defending his colours in his early painting, was probably the first to use this mixture in the recent past.⁶²

In fin-de-siecle Vienna, especially in the decorative arts, a strong Anglophilia had existed since the mid-century. Even with the Vienna Secession, in 1897, English influence was strong.⁶³ In planning its first exhibition, for 1898, the Secession invited many foreign artists to show with them. Josef Engelhart, the group's main ambassador, recalled in his memoirs,

One of the most important tasks of the association was that of making friends among artists abroad, and of making the public acquainted with our aims by showing their pictures in our exhibitions.

Since I knew many of the artists in questions through my studies in Germany and France, and also possessed the necessary knowledge of languages, it devolved upon me to undertake trips to Germany, France, Belgium and England in the service of the organization. On these trips, I made the personal acquaintance of nearly all the great painters and sculptors of the day, and for the most part succeeded in convincing them of the honourable, artistic intentions of the newly founded association. In this way I met the sculptors Rodin, Bartholomé, Lagae, the painters Besnard, Boldini, Brangwyn, Carrière, Dagnan-Bouveret, Dill, Herterich, Khnopff, Klinger, Lavery, Meunier, Puvis de Chavannes, Raffaelli, Roll, Rops, Sargent, Swan, Uhde, Whistler and others.

All of these and many other important artists, willingly declared their support and made their works available for the exhibitions of the Secession..."⁶⁴

When the first exhibition opened, Brangwyn's three paintings were the first entries in the catalogue. The fifth exhibition, in 1899, held four of his paintings

and four of his prints. Succeeding exhibitions showed more of his works.⁶⁵ In 1909, the "rump Secession" devoted a whole room to his etchings. Here his Bridge of Sighs was awarded a gold medal by the Austrian Emperor. In return, in April 1914, he gave a gift of his prints and drawings to the Albertina.⁶⁶ His friendships with the Secession members continued through the economic chaos of the twenties, when he put up money for Edmund von Hellmer's Johann Strauss monument and sent his friends scarce colour pigments, so they could continue working.⁶⁷ This long, stable friendship, though cemented by mutual kindness, was based on the Secessionists' high regard for the decorativeness of Brangwyn's works. Often they compared them to oriental carpets. Ludwig Hevesi, in his Acht Jahre Sezession, asked,

Isn't Brangwyn, who translated oriental carpets into colours,
a son of the red Mars?⁶⁸

Hermann Bahr, in his Secession, in 1900, invented a long dialogue about the carpet-like qualities of Brangwyn's work. He had obviously been reading the Brangwyn article in The Studio of October 1897, for he incorporated quotations from it into his text.⁶⁹ To the usual viewer's comment that Brangwyn's works were just too modern for him, Bahr's narrator replies,

- Do you like a carpet? What do you think of a carpet?
- With a carpet you don't have to think because you're pleased by the beautiful vibrancy of the colours.
- Well, and don't these colours also reverberate like deep, clear, indescribably mild bells?
- Yes, that's true, but a picture is still not a carpet.
- Why not? Why can't the painter give us the same pleasure with his picture that a beautiful carpet gives?⁷⁰

The narrator then outlines Brangwyn's background with embroideries and tapestries and with William Morris, where he learned,

to create beautiful things for the decoration of dwelling places. - So he defines a picture, to him it's a beautiful thing for the decoration of a dwelling place. He also defines it as

"a decorative square of colour which, within its frame, should be a pleasant ocular entertainment". From now on he doesn't want to tell you a story. He won't tell you, "A carpet tells nothing." either. He wants to please the eye by offering something beautiful, as can be seen in Nature.

- But why does he paint figures? You have to conclude he wants to tell something.
- Figures, indeed, can be novelistic signs, but they don't have to be. In his case they are carriers of colour. They become carriers for the radiance of a body.⁷¹

Following closely on events in France, Germany and Austria, Brangwyn's reputation spread to Russia, especially to members of Diaghilev's Mir Iskusstva circle. In 1898, two Brangwyn works, In the Shade (identification uncertain) and Venice (identification uncertain) were included in a large English art exhibition at the Imperial Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts, in St. Petersburg.⁷² The next year, three of his works, Musicians (unidentified), A Story (unidentified)⁷³ and Pastry Cook (unidentified), were included in the first of Diaghilev's Mir Iskusstva exhibitions. As Whistler was considered American, Brangwyn was the only Englishman in the show. Other international names were Anders Zorn, Fritz Thaulow, L.C. Tiffany, Bocklin, Boldini, Liebermann, Besnard, Carrière, Puvis de Chavannes, Degas and Monet. It is a list of the liberal establishment of the day. During the next four years, Brangwyn was mentioned several times in Diaghilev's journal, Mir Iskusstva. Reviewing the 1899 Venice Biennale, Igor Grabar felt that Brangwyn's entries (The Adoration of the Magi, The Blood of the Grape, and Evening) were boring in comparison to what he had shown in St. Petersburg.⁷⁴ Reviewing German exhibitions, in 1901, Diaghilev himself referred to "the lustreless tapestries of Brangwyn".⁷⁵ In 1902, a charcoal sketch and an oil titled Boat Wharf (unidentified) were reproduced.⁷⁶ In the same year, Brangwyn was mentioned in passing, in Kandinsky's review of the Munich Secession.⁷⁷ Sergei Shchukin, the important collector of contem-

porary European art, is also supposed to have bought Brangwyn's The Market (c. 1895-96, now lost) and a version of Charity (c.1900, Hermitage Museum, Leningrad). The members of the Russian avant-garde were not interested in Brangwyn's work, yet, as the artistic climate turned more conservative during the twenties, interest in his heroic labouring subjects increased. Brangwyn had presented a collection of his graphics to the Soviet Union, in the early twenties, as a gesture of sympathy with the "great social experiment". In 1926, in Moscow, a large exhibition of them was staged.⁷⁸ The Fine Art Society, the London art dealer who handles much of his work, reports that Russian interest in it continues to this day.⁷⁹

Brangwyn's ties with America were long and mutually beneficial. They spanned a forty year period, from his winning a medal at the World's Columbian Exposition to his painting murals for Rockefeller Center. Four of his largest mural commissions were done for Americans. Many of his works were collected by Americans. Many of his studio assistants were Americans. His actual mural commissions came only after 1911 and will be discussed in a later chapter. His reputation, however, long preceded them.

Brangwyn's initial ties with America were indirect ones - exposure in The Studio, winning the Chicago medal, working for Tiffany and meeting in Paris with Chase, Dodge, Macmonnies, etc. More substantial ties came in 1896 when he exhibited his Venice (unidentified) in the first Carnegie International Exhibition in Pittsburgh. In December 1897, a four page illustrated article on his work appeared, written by Lorado Taft, the young Chicago Beaux-Arts sculptor. Taft had travelled to Paris and London and had seen Brangwyn's works (The Miraculous Draught of Fishes (c.1894, unlocated), Rest (c.1894, Des Moines Art Center) and St. Simon Stylites) in the major exhibitions. Though shocked at first

by their "arbitrary and fanciful" decorative effects, by their naturalistic treatment of religious subjects, Taft was soon charmed by their rich colouring, "vigour and confidence".⁸⁰ From 1897 to 1899 – probably through Chase, who sat on the juries – Brangwyn was asked to sit on three successive juries for the Carnegie International Exhibition. For personal reasons he never went and was replaced by J.M. Swan and John Lavery.⁸¹ He did send his paintings, though, and in 1898 his Sweetmeat Seller (c.1896, now lost) was bought from the exhibition by Andrew Carnegie himself and was shipped off to his castle in Scotland. In 1900 and 1907 respectively, he exhibited Rest and Gypsey Tinker at the important Pennsylvania Academy exhibitions. At least two other early collectors, Chase and Robert Collier, of Collier's Magazine, are known to have owned Brangwyn's works.⁸² Collier may well have been advised in his collecting by his art director, Will Bradley, who seems to have known Brangwyn well enough (probably through Samuel Bing) to have a personal bookplate designed by him. In August 1903, Scribner's Magazine published several Brangwyn illustrations for Hilaire Belloc's tale, "The Sea Fight Off Brunswick and Ushant".⁸³ In January 1904, it carried a long illustrated article by the British critic Marion H. Spielmann, who saw Brangwyn as an original rather than revolutionary artist, an artist who combined Impressionism with traditional composition. "The strength of his originality," Spielmann wrote,

lies in his having based his impressionism upon the most academic knowledge; yet...he is wholly detached from the great band which is nowadays bringing chaos into art...He paints with the careful yet large deliberation of an old master – quiet forcefulness relieved by an occasional flash, like a touch of fire – and yet he is modern among the moderns, alike in thought and treatment.⁸⁴

Scribners also included Brangwyn illustrations in a 1909 edition of adventure tales, The Boys' Hakluyt.⁸⁵ His illustrations were by now well known in

America, for in 1906, he had been elected a corresponding member of the Society of Illustrators in New York.⁸⁶

Another interesting American connection, though made in London, was with the young, Stieglitz circle photographer, Alvin Langdon Coburn. Coburn was in London in the summer and fall of 1904, making portraits of noted writers and artists for his book, Men of Mark.⁸⁷ In September he photographed Brangwyn in his Hammersmith studio (fig. 1)⁸⁸ and soon joined his still-life and wood engraving classes at the London School of Art. In return for copies of the photograph, Brangwyn gave Coburn one of his etchings.⁸⁹ They continued to correspond and, in November 1913, Coburn again photographed him working on St. Paul Shipwrecked..., one of his panels for the chapel at Christ's Hospital School.⁹⁰

Brangwyn's etchings first got American attention in a 1906 article, written by his former studio assistant, Arthur Covey, in the small Chicago art magazine, Sketch Book.⁹¹ They were also the basis of one man shows at the Wunderlich and Kraushaar galleries in New York in 1909, 1911 and 1912 and at the Worcester Art Museum in 1912.⁹² Their first important critical notice came from James Gibbons Huneker, in 1910, in his Promenades of an Impressionist. In between discussions of Anders Zorn and Daumier, Huneker gave four pages to Brangwyn, whom he described as,

the foremost English impressionist...practically the first among latter-day artists to apply boldly to etching the methods of the impressionists...He sees largely. His dream of the visible world is one of patches and masses, of luminous shadows, of animated rhythms, of rich arabesques...Brangwyn is never exquisite, though he is often poetic, even epical.⁹³

By July 1912, an unsigned review in the New York Times could describe Brangwyn as "the most forcible exponent of contemporary British art."⁹⁴

CHAPTER FOUR

1. C. Lewis Hind (1862-1927) journalist and critic. Sub-editor of Art Journal 1887-92, editor of Pall Mall Budget 1893-95 and editor of The Academy 1896-1903. Author of books on Velasquez, Rembrandt, Post-Impressionism, Beardsley and others.
2. Charles Holme (1848-1923) Successful in woolen business in Bradford. Toured world and spent time in Japan in 1889. Founder of Japan Society in 1891. Retired in 1892 and founded The Studio. Was editor until 1922, when he was succeeded by his son.
3. Gleeson White (1851-1898) Associate Editor of the Art Amateur 1891-92, Editor of The Studio 1893-94. Member of Art Workers Guild. Wrote several books of poetry and a 4 volume Master Painters of Great Britain, 1897-98.
4. Frank Brangwyn, "Letters from Artists to Artists - Sketching Grounds. No. 1 -Spain," The Studio, vol. 1, April 1893, pp. 12-14
Frank Brangwyn "Letters from Artists to Artists - Sketching Grounds. No. 2 -Spain," The Studio, vol. 1, May 1893, pp. 72-74.
5. James Stanley Little, "Frank Brangwyn and his Art," The Studio, vol. 12, October 1897, pp. 3-20.
6. "Frank Brangwyn's Stained-Glass Designs," The Studio, vol. 16, May 1899, pp. 252-259.
"A Bedroom Decorated by Frank Brangwyn," The Studio, vol. 19, April 1900, pp. 173-180.
7. Gabriel Weisberg, "Samuel Bing: International Dealer of Art Nouveau," The Connoisseur, vol. 176, April 1971, p. 275. See also Weisberg's 3 articles on "Samuel Bing: patron of art nouveau," The Connoisseur, vol. 172, October 1969, pp. 119-125; vol. 172, December 1969, pp. 294-299; vol. 173, January 1970, pp. 61-68.
8. On Meier-Graefe (1867-1935) see Kenworth Moffet, Meier-Graefe as Art Critic, Prestel-Verlag, Munich: 1973, p. 28.
9. G. Lemmen, "Modern Teppiche," Dekorative Kunst, vol. 1, December 1897, pp. 97-105.
10. Julius Meier-Graefe, Modern Art, William Heinemann, London: 1908, vol. 2, p. 261.
11. Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber & Co. Ltd., London: 1978, p. 83.
12. Edward Croft-Murray, Decorative Painting in England 1537-1837, Country Life, London: 1970, vol. 2, p. 78.

13. Helen Smith, Revivals in techniques of Mural Decoration in the Arts & Crafts Movement. Paper given to convention of the Victorian Society, University of Birmingham, 1978.
14. John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice, Smith Elder & Co., London: 1851, book I, chapters 11 & 12, "The Material of Ornament" & "Treatment of Ornament".
15. For Brangwyn's admiration of Leighton's frescos see William de Belleroyche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman & Hall, London: 1948, p. 127.
16. "Free Style" refers to the varied attempts by British architects such as Richard Norman Shaw, Wm. Lethaby, Charles Robert Ashbee and Charles Rennie Mackintosh to create a new, non historicist architectural style or at least a "free" version of particular historical styles.
17. Letter in files of Horta Museum, Brussels. Xerox thanks to Martin Eidelberg.
18. For the photos and general background see Martin Eidelberg and Suzanne Henrion-Giele, "Horta and Bing: An Unwritten Episode of Art Nouveau," The Burlington Magazine, vol. 119, November 1977, pp. 747-752. For the sketches see P.G. Konody, "Frank Brangwyn," The Artist, vol. 19, May 1897, pp. 194-195.
19. Martin Eidelberg and Suzanne Henrion-Giele, "Horta and Bing: An Unwritten Episode of Art Nouveau," The Burlington Magazine, vol. 119, November 1977, p. 751.
20. For the Bing friezes, Brangwyn used Keims Process, a type of spirit fresco process. For an explanation of it see Alfred Lys Baldry, Modern Mural Decoration, George Newnes Ltd., London: 1902, pp. 23-26.
21. James Stanley Little, "Frank Brangwyn and his Art," The Studio, vol. 12, October 1897, pp. 13-14.
22. Geoffrey Warren, All Colour Book of Art Nouveau, Octopus Books, London: 1974, plate 85.
23. In 1895, the Luxembourg Museum finally acquired a Brangwyn painting, Trade on the Beach, Morocco (1893), from that year's Salon.
24. Martin Eidelberg and Suzanne Henrion-Giele, "Horta and Bing: An Unwritten Episode of Art Nouveau," The Burlington Magazine, vol. 119, November 1977, p. 752.
25. Roseline Bacou, "Decors d'appartements au temps des nabis," Art de France, vol. 4, 1964, pp. 190-205 and James Dugdale, "Vuillard, the Decorator," Apollo, vol. 81, February 1965, pp. 94-101 and vol. 86, October 1967, pp. 272-77.
26. Robert Schmutzler, Art Nouveau, Harry N. Abrams, New York: 1978, p. 67.

27. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, pp. 25-26.
28. Letter from Frank Brangwyn to Sara Dodge Kimbrough, July 24, 1951, quoted in Sara Dodge Kimbrough, Drawn From Life, University Press of Mississippi, Jackson: 1976, p. 23.
29. On Besnard see Walter Shaw Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, pp. 130, 133; on Carriere see William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, p. 100; on Rodin see Belleruche, p. 14.
30. For information on the group see Gabriel Mourey, "Studio Talk: Paris," The Studio, vol. 17, August 1899, p. 190 and vol. 19, March 1900, p. 93.
31. Mention of him designing several ensembles is in James Stanley Little, "Frank Brangwyn and his Art," The Studio, vol. 12, October 1897, p. 20. A reproduction of an ensemble design, probably one of these, is in P.G. Konody, "The Decorative Figure-Work of Mr. Frank Brangwyn," The Magazine of Art, vol. 1, February 1903, p. 488. Some of the wall panels in this design show typically art nouveau curvilinear motifs, set within stable rectangular frames. They are atypical for Brangwyn and are reminiscent of the back of Mackmurdo's famous 1882 chair, with its undulating seaweed stalk motif.
32. Robert Koch, ed., Artistic America, Tiffany Glass and Art Nouveau M.I.T. Press, Cambridge: 1970, p. 146.
33. "Stained Glass Designs by Frank Brangwyn," The Studio, vol. 16, May 1899, p. 252-259. H. Fierens-Gevaert, "Frank Brangwyn," Art et Decoration, vol. 3, July 1899, pp. 23-31. P.G. Konody, "The Decorative Designs of Mr. Frank Brangwyn: His Carpets and Metal Fittings," The Magazine of Art, vol. 1, January 1903, pp. 391-395. P.G. Konody, "The Decorative Figure-Work of Mr. Frank Brangwyn," The Magazine of Art, vol. 1, 1903, pp. 483-489.
34. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman & Hall, London: 1948, p. 15.
35. On Davis see Simon Reynolds, "Sir Edmund Davis, Collector and Patron of the Arts," Apollo, vol. 111, June 1980, pp. 459-463.
36. "Stained Glass Designs by Frank Brangwyn," The Studio, vol. 16, May 1899, p. 255.
37. "A Bedroom Decorated by Mr. Frank Brangwyn," The Studio, vol. 19, April 1900, pp. 173-180.
38. The triptych is illustrated in The Magazine of Art, vol. 1, 1903, p. 489.
39. Virgil, Bucolics, first eclogue, 7th verse. An 1883 edition of the Bucolics, illustrated and translated by Samuel Palmer, was part of Brangwyn's

library, now in University College of North Wales in Bangor.

40. Reproductions of both the Davis and Norman and Stacey furniture are in P.G. Konody, "The Work of an Unprofessional Designer - Mr. Frank Brangwyn's Furniture," Magazine of Art, vol. 1, 1903, pp. 111-116.
41. A possible bedspread for the Davis bedroom is reproduced in Charles Holme, ed., Modern British Domestic Architecture and Decoration, The Studio Ltd., Special Supplement, London: 1901, p. 45.
42. James Stanley Little, "Frank Brangwyn and his Art," The Studio, vol. 12, October 1897, pp. 3-20.
43. Ibid., p. 7.
44. Ibid., p. 7.
45. His rationale may be devout or shrewdly commercial. His religious works after World War I are almost certainly exercises in devotion, however.
46. Unknown article, The Athenaeum, 1902. Quoted by Walter Shaw Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, p. 231.
47. The significance of this theme is discussed by Jefferson Hunter, Edwardian Fiction, Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1982, chapter 11.
48. Marion H. Spielmann, "Frank Brangwyn," Scribner's Magazine, vol. 35, January 1904, p. 46.
49. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, p. 73.
50. Sparrow, in his Prints & Drawings of Frank Brangwyn, p. 54-58 singles out Sir Frederick Wedmore, in his Fine Prints (1910) as a noted hostile critic in this vein.
51. Walter Shaw Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd., London: 1910, p. 245.
52. Ibid., p. 101.
53. Ibid.
54. The medal is now at the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.
55. G. Lemmen, "Modern Teppiche," Dekorative Kunst, vol. 1, December 1897, pp. 97-105. Lemmen was a Belgian Neo-Impressionist painter and Art Nouveau designer.
56. P.G. Konody, "Frank Brangwyn und Seine Kunst," Kunst und Kunsthandwerk, vol. 3, 1900, pp. 317-330. A. Layard, "Frank Brangwyn,"

Kunst und Dekoration Deutsche, vol. 5, 1900, pp. 198-203.

57. Max Nordau, On Art and Artists, T. Fisher Unwin, London: 1901, pp. 230 and 234-235.
58. Richard Muther, History of Modern Painting, revised edition, J.M. Dent & Co., London: 1907, vol. 3, pp. 402-403.
59. Hermann Muthesius, Das Englische Haus, Verlegt bei Ernst Wasmuth A.G., Berlin: 1905, vol. 3, p. 124. Own translation.
60. When Frank Newbolt's catalogue of Brangwyn etchings was published in 1908, Singer contributed an appreciatory essay to it.
61. Both the medal and certificate are now in the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.
62. Wassily Kandinsky, Concerning the Spiritual in Art, George Wittenborn, New York: 1947, p. 66 and footnote 30. First published as Über das Geistige in der Kunst, R. Piper, Munich: 1912.
63. See for instance, Horst-Herbert Kassatz, "The Vienna Secession and its early relations with Great Britain," Studio International, vol. 181, January 1971, pp. 9-20.
64. Josef Engelhart, Ein Wiener Maler Erzählt: Mein Leben und Meine Modelle, Wilhelm Andermann Verlag, Vienna: 1943, p. 80. Translated by Peter Vergo, Art in Vienna 1898-1918, Phaidon Press Ltd., London: 1975, pp. 27-28.
65. In 1900 Ver Sacrum vol. III, pp. 265-70, contained reproductions of five of his drawings.
66. See untitled announcement, The Times, April 27, 1914, p. 7. Note also the continued British interest in Austrian art in the publication of Charles Holmes, The Art Revival in Austria, The Studio Ltd., London: 1906. The decorative arts writer for this volume, Amelia Sarah Levetus, seems to have become some sort of Brangwyn agent in Austria. She wrote Frank Brangwyn de Radierer, Rikola Verlag, Wien: 1924. Her memoirs, a manuscript titled An Englishwoman in Old Austria were for sale c. 1976 at Sheppard Books, London. See also her entry in Who's Who in Art, 1934.
67. William de Bellerroche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, p. 204-205.
68. Ludwig Hevesi, Acht Jahre Sezession, C. Konegen, Vienna: 1906, p. 40. Own translation.
69. Bahr lifts several passages from pp. 7-8 of The Studio article and places them on p. 19 of his book. These are the passage: "a decorative square of colour which within its frame should be a pleasant ocular entertainment", the passage on his family background and the passage "to produce beautiful

things to embellish and render more habitable a well designed habitation".

70. Hermann Bahr, Secession, Wiener Verlag, Vienna: 1900, pp. 18-19.
71. Ibid., p. 19.
72. This is reported in G.K. "Studio Talk - St. Petersburg," The Studio, vol. 13, March 1898, p. 126.
73. This may possibly be the same work listed in Vincent Galloway's catalogue of Brangwyn's oils, #661. It is listed as being lost but was reproduced in the Art Journal, vol. , March 1903, p. 81 and in Art et Decoration, vol. 3, July 1899, p. 27.
74. Igor Grabar, "International Exhibitions: Venice," Mir Iskusstva, 1899, section 2, p. 54.
75. Sergei Diaghilev, "Exhibitions in Germany," Mir Iskusstva, 1901, no. 8-9, p. 147.
76. The sketch was on p. 224 and Boat Wharf on p. 225.
77. Wassily Kandinsky, "Munich Secession," Mir Iskusstva, 1902, no. 5-6, pp. 96-98.
78. H. Pomahob, Katalog vystavki gravyury Franka Brenguina, Gosudarstvennyi muzei izobrazitel'nykh iskusstv Kabinet gravyur, Moscow: 1926.
79. Conversation with Mr. Andrew M. Patrick, Managing Director of The Fine Art Society Ltd., during the winter of 1975-76.
80. Lorado Taft, "Frank Brangwyn," Arts for America, vol. 7, December 1897, pp. 202-205.
81. William de Belleroyche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, pp. 247-248.
82. Chase is known to have owned at least three Brangwyn oils, A French Farmyard, Montreuil (1902, now lost), A Group of Arabs (1896, now lost), and Sunlight and Shadow (undated, now lost). The last two are described and reproduced in the auction catalogue, The Private Collection of William Merritt Chase, N.A., American Art Association, N.Y., March 8, 1912, lots 121 and 151. Collier is known to have owned The Departure of Columbus (1904, now lost). This is reproduced by Shaw-Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, opposite p. 104. A companion piece, The Return of Columbus, is in the St. Louis Art Museum. These are obviously related in theme and date to the Queen Elizabeth and Blake panels at Lloyd's.
83. Conversation with Laurence Bradshaw (1899-1979), former Brangwyn studio assistant during early 1920's, December 1975.

84. Marion H. Speilmann, "Frank Brangwyn," Scribner's Magazine, vol. 35, January 1904, p. 34.
85. Edwin Monroe Bacon, ed., The Boys' Hakluyt: English Voyages of Adventure and Discovery, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York: 1909.
86. Walter Shaw-Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd., London; 1910, p. 234.
87. Alvin Langdon Coburn, Men of Mark, Duckworth and Co., London: 1913, pp. 13-14 and plate IV.
88. Ibid. and Alvin Langdon Coburn, Alvin Langdon Coburn: Photographer, An Autobiography, Helmut and Alison Gernsheim, eds., Frederick A. Praeger, New York: 1966, pp. 92, 94.
89. Letter from Frank Brangwyn to Alvin Langdon Coburn, December 17, 1904, part of the Coburn papers, International Museum of Photography, George Eastman House, Rochester, N.Y.
90. This photograph is reproduced in Alvin Langdon Coburn, Alvin Langdon Coburn: Photographer, An Autobiography, Helmut and Alison Gernsheim, Eds., Frederick A. Praeger, New York: 1966, plate 19.
91. A.S. Covey, "Some late Etchings of Frank Brangwyn," Sketch Book, vol. 6, 1906, pp. 147-151.
92. The show at H. Wunderlich & Co. was in 1909 and at C.W. Kraushaar & Co. in 1911 and November 1912. The show at the Worcester Art Museum was in May-June 1912. Catalogues for these are in the Brangwyn clippings file of the Print Room, New York Public Library. This file lists eight other Brangwyn etching shows in America dating up to the April 1929 show at Kennedy and Co., New York.
93. James Gibbons Huneker, Promenades of an Impressionist, Scribner's, New York: 1910, pp. 199, 201, 200.
94. "Travel has hurt England's art, says Brangwyn," New York Times, July 21, 1912, part 6, p. 10.

CHAPTER FIVE**THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE 1900-1918**

In January 1900 the Gresham Committee of the Royal Exchange accepted the offer of Thomas Lane Devitt, President of the Shipping Federation, to commission Brangwyn to paint one of twenty-four large panels decorating the Exchange building in the City of London. The theme of the panel was to be Commerce.¹ Though not unveiled until October 1906, this was the first of Brangwyn's public murals in Britain and signalled the start of a new period in his development, when he came to the full realization of his powers. This period lasted until World War I, though its momentum would carry him through until the 1930's. While it lasted, a peculiar and intense relationship was maintained between Brangwyn and the British art public. More than any other artist, Brangwyn became identified with the destiny of the nation. This identification was not sought and was not the result of active involvement in establishment art affairs. Neither was it the result of unanimous admiration for Brangwyn's talents. His reputation was as much popular as critical and so he was detested as much as admired. That this identification existed and that Brangwyn had a passionate following, however, cannot be in doubt. One measure of this is the number and tone of serious books published on Brangwyn in comparison to any other British artist of his generation. By 1914, four had come out; by 1930, five more; since 1930, eight more.² As for the tone of these books, it is strongly nationalistic and based on the concept of "virility", on all its levels of meaning. This is especially the case in the books of Walter Shaw-Sparrow.³ Sparrow's first book, published in 1905, bears the resonant title, The Spirit of the Age. In it he describes Brangwyn as,

the most notable representative of the British School in all that appertains to contemporary feeling expressed with genius in a fearless style. It is felt abroad that his work symbolizes the singular manliness of the Anglo-Celtic temperament, with that building tenacity, that far

journeying enterprise and strength, which have enriched so many lands in remote seas with England's unpremeditated greatness...In the unceasing war that attends all human effort and accompanies all phases of evolution, British art and British literature are too often lacking in those very qualities that win victories; it is partly because foreigners are surprised by this anomaly that they take particular pleasure in studying the puissant masculinity of Brangwyn's style.⁴

The overwhelming nationalism, imperialism and social Darwinism expressed in Sparrow's description are tempered, however slightly, when he says that,

Brangwyn, also, responds to and typifies the Spirit of the Age, and is full of deep sympathy for every form of work that helps to support the masses of mankind. Wherever he is it is the toiling life of the people that appeals to him, and he accepts it always as a life that should develop manliness and ennobled character. Like Carlyle, he is a believer in the nobility of toil, toil accompanied by heroic obedience to the calls of duty and by stealthy and ravaging attacks on physical strength; but he has no touch of Carlyle's want of faith in his own time and civilization.⁵

Sparrow's statements embody much of the spirit of the Edwardian age. They are based on rational Victorian beliefs yet are expressed with such a metaphysical passion that the balance between the two is precarious. This precarious balance of contradictory elements was maintained only for about fifteen years. After the retirement of Gladstone, the temporary defeat of Irish home rule, the sending of Oscar Wilde to prison, the appointment of Alfred Austin as Poet Laureate, and the massive Conservative victory in the 1895 election the "dominant influences"⁶ were in power again. The public mood was one of confidence, of settling down sensibly to peace and business as usual. Despite the Boer War, this confidence came under serious attack only after 1910, with the Parliament Bill crisis and the combined onslaught of Irish nationalists, suffragettes and working class unionists. During the interval all was not well, yet, outwardly, all was confident and calm. Agriculture was in a decline.

Germany, the United States and Japan were slowly surpassing Britain in industry and technology and were starting to chip away at her established markets. Protectionism was slowly replacing free-trade as the dominant industrial philosophy. In the short term, however, Britain's skill in international finance and commerce masked these weaknesses. Stock Exchange prices reached a peak in 1901-02 that wouldn't be equalled until 1911. Overseas investments in America, the Argentine and South Africa started paying vast dividends. Established class lines, always weaker in Britain than on the continent, were increasingly crossed by intermarriage with American heiresses or by aggressive, rootless new millionaires from the colonies and abroad, come "home" to enjoy their wealth.

That artists like Brangwyn embodied the spirit of the age yet were not the fire-eating supermen Sparrow suggests, is a typical Edwardian contradiction. By birth, temperament and training they were outsiders, hardly candidates for the ideal imperial class of soldiers, sailors, merchants and administrators. They were not conventional philistines yet were not so alienated from their society to become an avant-garde, revelling in its own defiance, decadence or aestheticism. Following Ruskin and Morris in their idealization of mediaeval community, they saw their role as the traditional one of craftsman, troubadour or tribal bard, continuing and expanding their national mythology. The composer Sir Edward Elgar, for instance, claimed,

I like to look on the composer's vocation as the old troubadours and bards did. In those days it was no disgrace for a man to be turned on to step in front of an army and inspire them with a song. For my part, I know there are a lot of people who like to celebrate events with music. To these people I have given tunes. Is that wrong? Why should I write a fugue or something which won't appeal to anyone, when the people yearn for things which can stir them.⁷

At the same time they were highly desirous of individual success and fortune in the artistic marketplace. Few of them, however, went so far as Morris to work out and act politically on these contradictions. Their ideal community remained a romantic one of individual preference rather than rational ideology or inescapable tradition. It tended to stop with national and racial boundaries or dissolved into a vague, metaphysical freemasonry that in practice meant little. Their craftsmanship, while superb, was tied to a pre-industrial mode of production, and a holier-than-thou attitude toward industry that made for high prices, elite consumption and little social impact. These contradictions and the balance Brangwyn achieved between them are apparent in Sparrow's description of how he embodied English character. "English character", he wrote,

at its best is a fine sportsman, and sportsmanship is conservative, running risks in order that old customs and pleasures may be repeated and renewed.⁸

Brangwyn expressed similar sentiments when he said that, "Inspiration is individuality added to tradition."⁹

The style most expressive of English national greatness was felt to be a classical one. The English upper class had long been bred in a classical cultural tradition and drew naturally on classical examples for its inspiration. Making classicism a national expression was often very difficult as England had no classical mural tradition. Edwardian muralists looked to the Italian Renaissance for their style and technique. What the classicists were interested in was not the primitives of the early quattrocento but the mature, High Renaissance masters such as Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto. These were the ones whose works were discussed in such mural revival texts as Alfred Lys Baldry's Modern Mural Decoration¹⁰, F.H. Jackson's Mural Painting¹¹, Aymer Vallance's Mural Painting Revived¹² or James Ward's Fresco Painting¹³.

Admiration for the Venetian masters was especially widespread and had been developed by John Ruskin's Modern Painters¹⁴ and The Stones of Venice¹⁵, Walter Pater's essay on "The School of Giorgione"¹⁶ and, by the end of the century, such scholarly works as Crowe and Cavalcaselle's Life and Times of Titian¹⁷ and Bernard Berenson's Venetian Painters of the Renaissance.¹⁸ Describing his travels in Italy during the late nineties, Brangwyn confessed, "One was filled with admiration for Tintoretto, Titian and others."¹⁹ Later, when he grew prosperous, he bought a Tintoretto²⁰ and, whenever comparisons were made between his murals and others, they were usually with the murals of the Venetians: Titian, Tintoretto or Veronese. Frank Rutter, for instance, wrote, in 1933, that Brangwyn,

was the first seriously to challenge the authority of Puvis de Chavannes, to abandon his pale, flat, linear tradition based on early Florentine Art, and to evolve in its stead a new style, strongly personal, but based none the less on the colour opulence and full blooded vigour of Venetian painting. As I have remarked elsewhere, 'If Puvis harked back to Giotto, Brangwyn replied with the thunder of Tintoretto.'²¹

Of him Vincent Galloway wrote, in 1962,

no one since Veronese showed himself capable of working with so much skill, ease and success on such a big scale.²²

The catchwords in these passages: "opulence", "vigour" and "scale" were also the catchwords of Edwardian classicism.

Edwardian mural decoration was not exclusively classical, neither with Brangwyn nor with its other major practitioners. Much of the Brangwyn literature treats him as if he were a lonely giant, the only muralist on the scene. This was not literally true, though in output and reputation he far outstripped all his competitors. If we exempt Abbey and Sargent, Americans whose murals were in their own country, we are left with only four other British muralists who made

any impact at all. They were Gerald Moira, John Byam Shaw, Frederick Cayley Robinson and Robert Anning Bell. What little information is available on them shows the range of styles and influences within the mural movement, its historicism, its concern with technique and why Brangwyn stood out within it.

Moira²³, Professor at the Royal College of Art, was known for a half dozen murals. These ranged from a painted plaster relief frieze in the Trocadero Restaurant (1896), influenced by late Pre-Raphaelite fantasies, to several large lunettes in Edward Mountford's grandiose Old Bailey Criminal Court Building (1902-06), a key monument of Edwardian Baroque classicism (fig. 40). His lunettes deal with the themes of Justice (fig. 41), Mosaic Law and English Law and were painted in an allegorical, illusionistic style derived from Raphael's Stanza frescos.

Byam Shaw²⁴ was not properly a muralist but a painter of vast easel works often used as decorations. He worked in a lush, lyrical, late Pre-Raphaelite style, strongly influenced by John William Waterhouse (fig. 42).

Frederick Cayley Robinson²⁵ was only an occasional muralist, with four works to his credit. He had lived in Paris and Florence, had studied tempera technique and strongly admired the works of Giotto, Mantegna, Michaelangelo and Puvis de Chavannes. The influence of Puvis de Chavannes, one of the few French muralists known and admired in Britain,²⁶ was strong in Robinson's works. His Middlesex Hospital murals (1910/11-1920, fig. 43) show the same still, bare, quasi-archaic style applied to contemporary subjects. Their effect is charming and highly precious yet anything but monumental.

Anning Bell²⁷ was trained as an architect as well as a painter (under Fred Brown and Walter Crane), was active in Arts and Crafts circles, and eventually became Master of the Art Workers Guild. His murals were executed mainly in mosaic. Mosaic was the major alternative medium to fresco and tempera. Mural

revival artists often championed it on grounds of its permanence and durability in a polluted urban atmosphere²⁸. The best known of Anning Bell's murals were in J.F. Bentley's Westminster Cathedral (1895-1903)²⁹, C. Harrison Townsend's Horniman Museum (1896-1901) and the Houses of Parliament (1922-1928). His large, main door tympanum of Westminster Cathedral was archaistically, almost archaeologically, Byzantine, in harmony with the style of the Cathedral. His panel on the facade of the Horniman Museum, a complex allegory titled Humanity in the House of Circumstance (fig. 44), uses a direct, Byzantine mosaic technique but in style shows strong late Pre-Raphaelite influences from artists such as Botticelli, Burne-Jones and Walter Crane. This is obvious in its decorative linearity of contour and frieze-like composition. One of his lesser works was done for the Skinners' Hall and placed in the same room as Brangwyn's important murals.³⁰

What distinguished Brangwyn from other British muralists was not a basic difference in purpose or in attitude to the past. In this they all were traditionalists. It was, in part, such vague things as luck, individuality, talent and sheer prolificness. His murals, also, seem modern in comparison. They are relatively free from allegory and archaeological historicism and they deal more often in modern themes of labour, trade, industry and imperial adventure. Their combination of modernity and tradition made them a safe yet bold choice for many Edwardian patrons. The choice of such patrons was often guided by architects, whose buildings would contain mural decorations. Edwardian architects were also often classicists but of a particular, nationalistic stamp. They looked to the Baroque classicism of Wren (hence the fashionable "Wrenaissance" style) and went to some lengths to prove its Englishness. According to a speaker at the Architectural Association, in 1898,

It is only natural that architects should hark back to the time when architecture in England was on the progressive wane, and attempt to start afresh from the point where inventive genius gave place to mere copyism. This point would seem to be soon after the Renaissance architecture of Europe became incorporated and joined to English tendencies...The possibilities of the style seem infinite, and...who can say that it may not lead to what must be the desire of us all, namely the formulating of a truly English twentieth century progressive architecture.³¹

Some architects, like Edwin Lutyens, were thrilled more by the universality of classicism. Around 1900, Lutyens abandoned his early, country house style for what he called "the high game"³².

He was becoming convinced that the heights of architecture as an art were attainable only through classic finitude and therefore determined that in that realm his future must lie. As he became more conscious of his powers, he discovered delightedly the logic, force and subtlety of the Orders and impatience began to consume him for opportunities wider than the largest of country houses could afford for exercising his and their capacities.³³

Soon Lutyens would get the opportunity to design a whole imperial city, the city of New Delhi.

Part of Lutyens' thrill with classicism is conveyed in the drawings made of his buildings. These were often the work of his friend William Walcott³⁴, an artist known for his architectural townscapes. Walcott took a grand, confident view of his subjects. Usually they were seen from a low viewpoint and magnified in scale like the ruins of Piranesi (fig. 45, 46). Artists like Brangwyn and James Pryde often adopted the same viewpoint. Walcott relished,

the metropolitan urban scene, busy with life and movement, with elegant carriages and reassuring cabs, successful but dignified businessmen, and gifted aristocrats running a great Empire from their fog-bound capital. He felt, too, a particular kinship with ancient Rome. His especial gift was to animate his intelligent reconstructions of ancient buildings with large numbers of confident, well dressed Romans bustling about in pleasure or duty - the Edwardians of the ancient world.³⁵

The perfect image of an Edwardian Rome could easily be found in the bustle surrounding the Royal Exchange. The exchange is an early Victorian classical structure, opened in 1844 and closely modelled on Roman temple prototypes. Above its massive portico is a large pedimental sculpture on the theme of commerce, Richard Westmacott's The Earth is the Lord's, And the Fullness thereof (1842-44, fig. 47). This Biblical title (Psalm 24:1), writes Benedict Read,

is no doubt intended to demonstrate the divine sanction behind the fact that...the Lord's agents on earth in this respect were the merchants and bankers of the City of London.³⁶

Westmacott's pediment also serves to show the continuities and differences between a traditional Victorian approach to public art and that used by Brangwyn in his panel Modern Commerce (fig. 48). Thematically, they are very similar, both embodying the same social beliefs. Westmacott's pediment, however, is far more explicitly allegorical with a figure of Commerce holding the Charter of the Exchange in the centre and groupings of figures on either side, each showing different aspects of commerce.

Brangwyn's panel is one of many on the inside of the building. Inside is a large, skylighted courtyard, surrounded by dark, arcaded aisles. In the outer wall, paralleling the arcade, are twenty-four shallow, arched recesses for a mural cycle devoted to scenes from English history. This cycle was one of the most noticed mural projects of the 'nineties. Begun in 1892 and supervised initially by Sir Frederick Leighton, it employed the talents of many artists but was not generally thought an aesthetic success. Brangwyn's panel, one of the last in the cycle, is immediately to the right of the front entrance and stands 17½ feet tall by 11 feet wide. Given the dim lighting and cramped viewing

space, its composition is large, simple and clearly read and executed on canvas in a spirit fresco technique. The use of spirit fresco and the laying down of the canvas upon a slate slab were designed to ensure the panel's permanence, though Brangwyn soon found it darkening in the polluted London air and began experiments with tempera and matt oil techniques. He started, as usual, with many sketches from nature and then worked up his composition in three large oil studies. The final composition makes a basic "U" shape, with a crowd of longshoremen, crates and piles of produce at the base and strong, flanking verticals of dockside cranes, ships, funnels and scaffolding designed to tie in with the overall architectural scheme.³⁷

Brangwyn's figures are larger than life yet otherwise realistically observed. Two, however, sitting in the lower right, might well have been taken from the seer figures in many classical compositions. The key figures in the foreground are well lit and the composition behind them is built up of alternating, tonally contrasting planes. Towards the top of the panel, where it receives the least real light from the courtyard, the tones gradually lighten. The original colour scheme (before it darkened) was based on tones of cerulean blue and golden tan, harmonized with rich oranges, reds and yellows and neutral greys and whites. In an article in The Studio, Brangwyn's studio assistant, Arthur Covey, went to some length to insist that the panel was a decoration pure and simple. He quoted Brangwyn as saying that,

A decoration must primarily be a fine arrangement of masses, and into this must be infused an equally fine and harmonious pattern of colour. These two factors can only be produced by infinite planning...The subject matter must ever be subservient to decorative qualities expressed in a conventional manner, (everything) only lending itself to the decoration of space - bringing out the spirit, not the reality of the subject.³⁸

Brangwyn's mentioning of the spirit of the subject, "a vast field of modern human activity"³⁹, is especially revealing. Neither an educated nor especially philosophical man, yet dealing with the themes of grand public discourse, he absorbed uncritically the conventional opinions of his day, the opinions his patrons liked to see expressed. Here, his view of modern commerce is the romantic, expansive one of the ideal technocrat or entrepreneur, concerned with the movement of vast numbers of goods about the earth, with honest labour and the creation of wealth. Labour is central to this view. It is, of course, the easily dramatized physical labour of the common man, not the mental labour of the entrepreneur. The low, closeup angle of vision, not that of the entrepreneur, gives this labour dignity and meaning as the link between foreign commerce (shipping) and abundance on the British marketplace (the cornucopia of fruit in the centre foreground).⁴⁰ Sparrow said as much when he wrote that,

Brangwyn looked at his subject from the standpoint of its vague impressiveness as an international agent, and then made up his mind to show...such types of action as would connect sea-coming produce with the labour and life of Great Britain.⁴¹

Covey amplified on this. "The incidents occurring in the picture," he wrote,

tell of the expenditure of untold human energy, yet free from the spirit which complains of the hardships of human toil. Indeed, the composition is so full of life and light and action that the beholder must feel the joy of living expressed - a genuine pleasure which only healthy, wholesome toil can give.⁴²

These statements from the world of art are paralleled by several from the world of commerce. Several months after Modern Commerce was unveiled, the Magazine of Commerce published an appreciation of Brangwyn and "his fine treatment of commercial subjects".⁴³ According to the author, his work,

has taught many of us to appreciate more fully the inherent beauty of ordinary common work, and of ordinary common

objects with which work is associated...These are neither sordid nor squalid, the essence of art is in them. It rests with us to see that we conform with the artist's outlook, and that we impart to the real thing the ideal truth he conveys to us through his canvas. As common-place moral, no doubt, but still a useful moral.⁴⁴

Another interesting comparison is with The Romance of Commerce, an apologia by H. Gordon Selfridge, the American born department store magnate and future Brangwyn patron. Here Selfridge wrote that,

To work is elevating. To accomplish is superb. To fill one's time with profitable enterprise is to leap forward in the world's race and to place beside one's name the credit mark of effort.⁴⁵

Wealth with its accompanying power has been since earliest time the goal that no honest effort can be too great to reach; and the goal it must always remain for peoples who have the red blood of progress in their veins...Commerce creates wealth, and is the foundation of the great state.⁴⁶... Commerce is the mother of the arts, the sciences, the professions, and in this twentieth century has itself become an art, a science, a profession.⁴⁷

Selfridge then went on to quote Addison and Defoe and call up the spirit and imagination of England's early merchant adventurers, who established the Empire and made England rich. This imagination he saw as faltering in his own time.

And this faculty of imagination is one of the most useful that the real man of commerce can possess. It cuts the path through the forest of inexperience upon which judgement can more carefully walk. Imagination urges on. It is the yeast of progress.⁴⁸

When thinking of Modern Commerce in 1910, Walter Shaw-Sparrow was rather more pessimistic. Reflecting rising British paranoia in the years before the war⁴⁹, he wrote,

We as a nation have fallen into the perilous position of owing nearly all our food-stuffs to seafaring imports from distant and foreign orchards and farms. There is coming tragedy in that one fact...If again, we...consider those imports of raw stuffs that our craftsfolk turn into manufactured articles for export, we find another fact as sinister and threatening as the first, since in this matter also we get

life-blood from many countries overseas that may veer from friendliness into enmity at any moment. The heart of Britain throbs in the engine-rooms of her battleships. She herself is defenceless, nourished on a diet of cosmopolitanism in the necessities of each day's labour and hunger. That is Modern Commerce as applied to the British Isles.⁵⁰

Another mural commission, undertaken during the winter of 1901-02 and worked on concurrently with Modern Commerce, was for a series of panels in the dining hall of the Worshipful Company of Skinners, one of the City of London's old liveried companies, descended from the mediaeval furriers' guild. Supported by Thomas Lane Devitt, Brangwyn's Royal Exchange patron and a past Master of the Company, this commission was both larger in scale and smaller in conception than the previous one. It consisted of eleven decorative panels executed in oil on canvas; six measuring 9½ feet by 10½ feet, four 9½ feet by 5½ feet and one 5 feet by 13 feet. Of the various themes relevant to its history, the Company seems to have chosen the most muddled or private one, with few inherent possibilities for clear development. In Brangwyn's contract, it specified treatment of ten arcane incidents from its history plus a panel symbolic of the harmony between the arts and commerce. These incidents were:

1. The guild of Corpus Christi surveying pelts and furs at the City Mart in the days before the granting of their charter.
2. The granting of their charter to the Skinners Company by Edward III, 1st March 1327. (fig. 49).
3. A river procession of the City's and the Company's barges to Westminster, AD 1453. (fig. 50).
4. An incident in the strife between the Skinners and the Merchant Taylors, AD 1483.
5. The founding of Tonbridge School by Sir Andrew Judd, AD 1553.
6. An incident in the defence of London Bridge by Sir Andrew Judd, AD 1554.
7. A City pageant on Lord Mayor's day in olden times.
8. The departure of Sir James Lancaster for the East Indies, AD 1591.
9. The reception of General Monk at the Skinners' Hall, 4th April 1660. (fig. 51).

10. Lord Mayor Pilkington entertaining King William III and Queen Mary.

Even a broad reading of these separate incidents gives no clear unifying theme. Many may indicate the role of the Company in the life of City of London. A few may indicate Royal patronage and hospitality, philanthropy or mercantile adventure. The unity Brangwyn had to impart to them thus had to be purely stylistic or at least careless of historical accuracy and the conventions for depicting such incidents. Ford Madox Brown's Manchester Town Hall murals (1879-93) had dealt with similar thematic problems and may well have influenced Brangwyn in how to proceed here.⁵¹

What he did was to seize on the intangible, the spirit of "just civic pride and national power"⁵² pervading the whole scheme. Pride and power are often expressed in pageantry and Brangwyn interpreted each incident as such. The critics compared this scheme, with its boisterous crowds and exuberant love of pomp, with such famous ones as Rubens' Marie de Medici cycle (Louvre), or Mantegna's The Triumph of Caesar (Hampton Court Palace, fig. 52).⁵³ Less focussed than either as propaganda and eschewing the allegorical devices of Rubens, the Skinners' Hall murals, like The Triumph of Caesar, focus more on the crowd than on the main characters. This focus, this lack of hierarchy, combined with his use of picturesque yet modern types, is partly a decorative mannerism, yet also shows the survival of Brangwyn's early Realist attitudes, his sympathy with the common man.

Several details illustrate the fact. In no. 2, no. 5, no. 8 and no. 9, for instance, he concentrates much of his interest on the page boys. Often they are placed in the foreground and stand out with their light coloured costumes. They are all about nine or ten years old, slender and impish looking. Their costumes

are exotic, much like those of Rembrandt's models, yet they are clearly small boys who are bored with the ceremonies, fidgeting, looking in different directions or, leaning on a globe, dreaming of far off adventure. The same model - a neighbour boy in London, perhaps - may well have posed for all of them and Brangwyn has studied him very closely. Though each panel is obviously a fantasy, each is built of these realistic details, details Brangwyn cherished.

When we move from details to the whole, Brangwyn the designer takes over. All the panels are hung high on the dining hall walls, above rich panelling. The figures are about life size and those in the foreground often give the illusion of standing on the ledge below each panel, in the same space as the diners. A slightly lowered viewpoint contributes both to their grandeur and their immediacy. The composition, however, plays down this immediacy. Like earlier Brangwyn compositions, it is built on a vertical-horizontal grid, emphasizing its essential flatness. Other standard features like the tonal contrast of dark and light planes with resulting silhouettes, bold contouring and spatial clarity are much in evidence.

Brangwyn's debt to the Venetians lies in the richness of his colours. This richness was necessary to hold up against the light of the dining hall's stained glass window. Possible reflections from a skylight dictated a matt surface. Within their respective contours, his colours are applied in a broad, painterly manner. He chooses three or four contrasting ones to sing out in the foreground and harmonizes all the others around them. In no. 2 his harmonies are based around cream, orange-gold and charcoal tones, in no. 8 around black, orange-red and white and in no. 9 around pale yellow, pink and green. Whenever he needs some extra colour to decorate the foreground, he simply piles up pots, flowers or vegetables to achieve his colour effect.

While completing Modern Commerce and the Skinners' Hall murals, Brangwyn received two smaller commissions for the decoration of the British section at the 1905 and 1907 Venice Biennales. These commissions brought him further international renown.

Brangwyn's ties with the Biennale went back to 1897, when he exhibited four paintings, among them St. Simon Stylites and The Baptism of Christ by St. John (undated, Kunstmuseum, Stuttgart, Germany). These were followed in 1899 by three more, including The Blood of the Grape, in 1901 by two more and in 1903 by The Cider Press. Though none of these had won medals, they had established Brangwyn's name as Britain's leading decorative painter. When the Biennale's organizers, inspired by the examples of the Vienna and Munich Secession exhibitions⁵⁴, now became interested in the artistic presentation of works, they commissioned artists to decorate each national room. Brangwyn was thus an obvious choice for the British one.

The British room at the 1905 Biennale (fig. 54) measured 75 feet by 40 feet and was to contain four large mural panels (two measuring 65 inches by 81 inches and two 65 inches x 213 inches) representing British industry. These Brangwyn devoted to potters, blacksmiths, steelworkers and navvies. They were placed within an overall scheme similar to his earlier one for Edmund Davis's bedroom. The walls of the room were divided, as before, into a rectilinear grid, each section separated by pilasters and horizontal mouldings (fig. 53). Aiming for a "quiet richness" and "sense of harmony"⁵⁵ with the different pictures to be hung on the walls, Brangwyn again coloured the largest part of them a warm grey-tan. Above this came a three foot band of pale yellow and, above that, a 2½ foot band of dark blue spangled with stars. The wood mouldings were of a bleached, golden walnut, and in the centre of the room, stood a walnut sculpture pedestal, two high-backed benches and four ornamental bay trees. Around the

walls stood more sculpture pedestals. Above the entrance doors and in the centre of each wall, parallel with the yellow and blue bands, went the four industrial panels(fig. 55, 56).⁵⁶

These were painted in oils, largely in neutral tones of grey-blue, heightened with touches of orange-gold and violet blue. In order to produce a matt surface and minimize skylight reflections, wax was mixed with the oils.

All the standard features of Brangwyn's style are present; the compositional grid, the traditional, painterly modelling of figures, the flattening effects of heavy contours and silhouettes, the tonal contrast of planes. As in the Skinners' Hall panels, wall placement and the correspondingly low viewpoint work for the heroizing of the industrial subjects.

Whatever their titles, the panels' subject is still essential labour, operating in different contexts, strong male bodies, nude to the waist, lifting, carrying, wielding tools and operating machinery. Art historically, the inspiration for such industrial labouring subjects goes back to the traditional Forge of Vulcan images by artists such as Velasquez. During the 19th century, when labour became a moral imperative equal to that of religious faith, images of all kinds of labour became common. Labour was part of "the heroism of modern life." More traditional and romantic artists indulged in a large scale rhetoric of heroism. This can be seen in Puvis de Chavanne's Work (1863), Auguste Rodin's Tower of Labour (1898) and the labouring figures in Jules Dalou's Triumph of the Third Republic (1899). Realists such as Courbet in The Stonebreakers (1849) and Adolf von Menzel in The Rolling Mill (1875) avoided this rhetoric. The Pre-Raphaelites and many other artists stuck to a broad middle course, as seen in William Bell Scott's Iron and Coal (1861) or Ford Madox Brown's Work (1852-65).⁵⁷

Many of Brangwyn's contemporaries stuck to this middle course. The

sculptor Constantin Meunier was known for realistic yet subtly heroized figures of labourers. Edwin Austin Abbey, in his Pennsylvania State Capitol mural, The Spirit of Vulcan (1902-11), was rather less subtle. Here Vulcan himself awkwardly floats over a group of realistically depicted steel workers. In Britain, heroic labour, sometimes with a strong national identity, was depicted by the painters Stanhope Forbes, George Clausen and Henry Scott Tuke, the printmakers Muirhead Bone and Joseph Pennell and the sculptors Hamo Thornycroft, Albert Toft and Thomas Brock. Often this labour was industrial but sometimes it was part of an agricultural idyll. Brangwyn painted both types of labour but here chose the industrial type. Writing of his panels in The Studio, Arthur Covey claimed,

They certainly carry with them splendid suggestions of the strength and bigness of the nation from which they came, and prove, as the finest examples of the art of any period do prove, that the artist is best found treating his own life and his own time.⁵⁸

The very history of the panels after their completion emphasizes how true they were felt to be. Covey reported that, during his stay in Venice, he "heard on every side most flattering comments on the 'Sala Inglese' both from press and people..."⁵⁹ and, not surprisingly, it won Brangwyn a gold medal. The panels were then bought by Samuel Eyre Wilson, a Midlands textile manufacturer and art collector, who gave them to the Leeds City Art Museum and commissioned a fifth panel, Spinners (fig. 57), to make the series better fit their new display space. Built originally to fit around the top of a doorway, Spinners eventually was moved and a motto inserted into the empty space; "Herein lies Beauty, Wisdom and Increase."⁶⁰

So successful was the 1905 scheme that Brangwyn was asked to design another for the 1907 Biennale. Details are now lost, but this was probably not a

completely new scheme but a set of new panels, the same size as the earlier ones, placed within the 1905 ensemble. Due to a misunderstanding and lack of time on Brangwyn's part, these panels were less successful than the 1905 ones. The Biennale organizers had assumed that Brangwyn would again paint contemporary British subjects, he that he would paint Venetian ones. When he was corrected, he had already finished the two larger panels; Venetian Commerce (fig. 58) and Venetian Serenaders. He then switched course in mid-stream and painted Miners (fig. 59) and Agricultural Labourers and hoped that their similar style would mask their lack of thematic unity. This seems to have been the case. The 1907 murals fulfilled their purpose but were still a hasty "slap-up" that developed his oeuvre neither stylistically nor thematically.⁶¹ Together with his 1905 murals and his 1907 Gold Medal etching, Santa Maria della Salute, they did, however, win him the medal of Knight of the Order of the Crown of Italy, conferred by the King of Italy in 1911.⁶² They also led to further Italian artistic contacts. He may well have been an influence on the work of Adolfo de Carolis, painter, engraver and illustrator to D'Annunzio, a real life Brangwyn hero.⁶³ He also arranged an exhibition for the Association of Italian Etchers and Engravers at the R.B.A. in 1916, was elected an honorary member of this body and contributed several poster designs to Italian wartime charities.⁶⁴

During the spring of 1908, Brangwyn received a commission for a mural in the ticket offices of the Canadian Grand Trunk Railway, just off Trafalgar Square in London (fig. 60). The architect, Sir Aston Webb, was one of the most successful Baroque classical revivalists of the day and likely had recommended Brangwyn to the railway company. He and Brangwyn had contacts at several points in their careers. Brangwyn had offered to do a mural for the rotunda of his Victoria and Albert Museum⁶⁵ and, in 1911, he would again suggest Brangwyn

for the mural decorations in the chapel of his Christ's Hospital boys' school. In this case, Webb's offices were relatively neutral spaces with few Baroque or Free-Style features to suggest a mural treatment. The furniture and panelling were of a rich, dark mahogany that demanded bright colours in the mural and the whole was set off by the white marble floor with black banding. The mural itself (fig. 61-63) formed a continuous frieze 4½ feet high by 66 feet long and was fitted on a semi-circular wall behind the main desk. It was painted in tempera on canvas which was then glued to the wall. The colours were the same subdued ones used in Venice. Only in later murals would Brangwyn realize the pure, bright tones available with tempera pigments. For his colour interaction, he simply relied on his usual tonal contrasts between planes, alternating regularly from foreground to background, upper to lower parts of the frieze. As the frieze is continuous and narrow, it is given a strong structure by the grouping of vertical foreground figures at regular intervals along its length. These groupings alternate with in depth views of landscape and middle ground activity and are united horizontally by a constant horizon line.

Neither in detail nor in overall composition are there any of the overt classical influences seen in earlier murals. This point was stressed in The Studio, which contrasted Brangwyn's work with the archaistic work of other mural revival artists. "Others," it said,

have wrought in tempera, and wrought astounding well. But they have sought their inspiration in the traditions of the past...They have been content to bring us the Italian vision, and to state their ideas in a foreign tongue. Mr. Brangwyn, schooled in these great traditions, has founded himself upon the bedrock of their technique...and then...has developed the medium to his own ends, using it decisively and with forthright intention of getting from its colours a wider and fuller gamut and a larger and more national utterance.⁶⁶

Part of this national utterance was seen in theme of the mural. At the

company's request, this was "The Introduction of European Civilization into the Country of the Red Indian", as symbolized by the building of the transcontinental railway. Imperial ideas had been more or less implicit in many of Brangwyn's earlier works but now they were stated outright. Moving stage by stage, grouping by grouping, from left to right in the frieze, we can see the original Indian civilization and its slow retreat before the successive waves of explorers, prospectors, surveyors, railway builders and, finally, white settlers. In The Studio, this process was termed a "world drama" portrayed with "epic force".⁶⁷ It showed "pride in the splendour of man's achievement in subduing and controlling to his own ends the stern forces of nature"⁶⁸, "the triumph of science and modern civilization over the rude forces of nature and barbarism".⁶⁹ In contrast, the usually fire-eating Walter Shaw-Sparrow was subdued in his characterization of the frieze as,

incidents from the colonization of Canada, its traffic with Red Indians, its march through forests, its bridge building, and glimpses of that victorious sea that ebbs and flows at present as an emblem of union between Great Britain and her scattered dominions.⁷⁰

In the more cynical atmosphere of the 1920's, however, Herbert Furst could ponder the role of the frieze in the Grand Trunk Railway's advertising campaign and could conclude that,

Art is still only a consumption and production increasing stimulant in Modern Commerce...⁷¹

Terms like "civilization", "nature" and "barbarism", taken as absolutes in 1909, are referred to by Furst only in quotation marks.⁷²

About the same time as he received the Grand Trunk Railway commission, Brangwyn also accepted a commission from Lloyd's Register of Shipping. He was to paint ten mural panels (all 4½ feet high and ranging in width from 3 feet to 8 feet) and one lunette (about 8 feet x 22 feet) for their committee luncheon room

(fig. 64). With all his previous commitments, these took over four years to paint, were not installed until January 1914, and only received their finishing touches in the spring of 1917. Brangwyn was already well known to the members of Lloyd's. Their Chairman was his old patron, Thomas Lane Devitt, who helped secure him the commission. In 1903, Devitt's General Shipowners' Society had presented Lloyd's with Brangwyn's Queen Elizabeth Going Aboard the Golden Hind at Deptford. This had been let into a wall over the mantelpiece in Devitt's office. In 1907, Sir John Davison Milburn, Bt. had presented them with the artist's Blake's Return After the Capture of the Plate Ships, which had then been hung in their boardroom. Though these works will be fully discussed later, with other easel paintings, it should be noted that their themes were ones with which the Edwardian shipping industry strongly identified. The theme of the Lloyd's mural panels, longshoremen unloading meat, fruit, vegetables, tea, carpets, etc.(fig. 65, 66)., was another variation on that of Modern Commerce. The panels were to run in a narrow frieze along both sides of the room, between the dark oak wall panelling and the low, beamed, barrel-vaulted plaster ceiling. Brangwyn therefore, used the same compositional devices as in the Grand Trunk Railway frieze, accentuating the shallowness of space, bringing his massed figures close to the picture plane and stringing them out so they filled up large blocks of space with their repeated verticals, thus echoing the ceiling beams and lines of the panelling and stabilizing the composition within the ensemble. Alternating with the figures were backdrops of the sea, masts, docks and factories, echoing again the dominant verticals. Brangwyn's ennobling of rough labouring types is here especially noticeable. The viewer has to look up at them and, with their feet seeming to rest on the molding beneath each panel, they seem more to act within the diners' own space and thus impress themselves upon them. Their colouring -

an overall pinkish tan, accented by rich areas of cream, red, green, yellow and navy blue -ties them to the room as well, to its rich panelling and furniture, the silver ribbing and blue panels on the ceiling and the bright red and blue carpet. What most gives the figures their dramatic power is the harsh, theatrical lighting. More strongly and arbitrarily than before, it silhouettes them against the backdrop, accentuating their coarsely drawn contours and block-like massing. So forcefully did Brangwyn's longshoremen impress themselves on the restricted dining room space that Lloyd's diners were likely overwhelmed by their realism.⁷³

A better setting for the panels, designed by Brangwyn himself, was built in 1913, for their showing at the Ghent International Exhibition, a major trade fair in Belgium (fig. 67). Here they were placed in a loftier vaulted space and kept completely vertical, just below the springing line of the vault. The colouring of the grey-gold plaster walls and dark blue vault covered with silver-gold stars was more natural than at Lloyd's, closer to Brangwyn's optimum scheme (as seen in Venice in 1905) for displaying such panels. For the exhibition, he painted a new lunette (about 14 feet x 16 feet, fig. 68). This showed a huge ship's boiler, about to be hoisted by a crane and placed within a hull. A crowd of workmen, some with planes, some with sledgehammers driving the last rivets and some with a grappling hook swarm around. In the background, the chimneys and flame and smoke of steel mills and shipyards are silhouetted against the blue sky. The centrality of the boiler, the continuing of the frieze effect in the massing of the workmen, the contrast of this massing with the vast space above and the overall buildup of a stable, grid structure create a more striking, less oppressive effect than at Lloyd's. For the Ghent room, Brangwyn also designed a simple cubic table and set of chairs, made of Circassian wood and inlaid with walnut. With

them went a large carpet, closely modelled on one of his Bing designs.⁷⁴ All were made by his friend Paul Turpin, whose workshops would execute many of Brangwyn's later designs.

Until 1912, Brangwyn's murals had been purely secular in tone; only a few of his easel paintings had shown religious themes and in those there was more interest in style than in devotion. He now received one of the largest commissions of his career, to paint sixteen large panels for the chapel of Christ's Hospital, the famous charity boys' public school, in Horsham, Sussex. The chapel (fig. 69) was a plain, red brick, Gothic style building designed in 1902 by his friend Sir Aston Webb and his partner E. Ingress Bell. When the school's Council of Almoners met in December 1911, to discuss proposed chapel decorations, it was on Webb's suggestion that earlier proposals were scrapped and Brangwyn was called in. By November 1912, the Council had formally approved the sample work he had prepared and his range of subjects for the rest of the scheme. Due to his overcommitment on other commissions, problems with his health and the intervention of the war, the scheme was finished only in 1923, by which time inflation had multiplied his costs and forced him to renegotiate his fee with the school.

The theme of the panels as defined by the Council was,

the mission and expansion of Christianity, beginning with the Acts, and leading to the conversion of our own islands and foreign missionary work.⁷⁵

Specific subjects were set, though several of these were changed between 1915 and 1917. As finally executed, they were,

1. Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake. (fig. 70).
2. The martyrdom of St. Stephen.
3. And the men led Saul by the hand and brought him into Damascus.

4. St. Paul Shipwrecked.
5. The arrival of St. Paul in Rome.
6. The conversion of St. Augustine in Milan, A.D. 387.
7. St. Ambrose training the choir in his church at Milan, A.D. 385.
8. St. Columba landing at Iona, A.D. 563.
9. St. Patrick in the forest, A.D. 450.
10. St. Alban, Martyr.
11. St. Augustine at Ebbsfleet.
12. St. Aidan, Bishop of Northumbria, A.D. 635, training boys at Lindisfarne.
13. St. Wilfrid, Bishop of Selsey, teaching the South Saxons, A.D. 681.
14. William Caxton printing Bibles at Westminster, A.D. 1476.
15. John Eliot giving Bibles to the Mohicans, A.D. 1660. (fig. 71).
16. Let the people praise Thee, O God, let all the people praise Thee (fig. 72).⁷⁶

As in Skinners' Hall, the program was the muddled product of a committee, though the general theme had obviously broader appeal. The theme, in its context, would seem to be meant to inspire the boys, through historical examples, to a more militant support of foreign missions. An active - not contemplative - approach to Christianity was assumed. In this respect the mural scheme was an artistic counterpart to the many series of popular missionary biographies aimed at boys by the publishers of the day.⁷⁷ With this particular audience in mind, the treatment of each subject became crucial. Whatever their historical importance, some of these subjects were inherently undramatic (ie. the conversion of St. Augustine) or were so obscure as to reek of mouldy history to a boyish imagination. The emphasis placed on Early Christian subjects at the expense of foreign missions increased this effect. While Brangwyn liked the overall theme, he was not pleased with each subject and felt he had to transcend historical accuracy to appeal specially to the boys, through the inclusion of "innocent worldly matter": humour, caricature, realism of typical detail, etc. Out came his standard cast of picturesque, rough old men, cripples, winsome

children, birds and dogs. In all the panels but the last (a scene of hymn singing in an East London mission), Brangwyn's figures existed in the long ago and far away, yet in all they were based on obviously contemporary models. In most of the panels Brangwyn attempted to develop an identification between the school boys and his cast of characters. He grouped his characters in crowds watching the central action and, by their presence, turning it into a larger drama. He took the viewpoint of a member of the crowd and often placed several figures in the extreme foreground, sitting, opening a book, pouring water, etc., to catch and hold the viewer's eye. He also piled up his usual fruits and vegetables, flowers and other objects, partly to catch and hold and partly for decorative effect.

Most of Brangwyn's panels measure 7 x 14 feet with two being 7 x 7 feet. They line either side of the nave, sitting about sixteen feet above the floor. Below them are golden brown oak stalls and wall panelling and, above, plain, large windows, soft red brick pillars, grey stone trim and a dark reddish brown, hammer beam ceiling. Each panel is separated from the next by oak panelling. Like the panels for Lloyd's, they were painted in an unglazed egg tempera, with its flat, bright colours. They are also compositionally similar yet far more aesthetically successful. Brangwyn's figures are arranged in the same frieze-like manner, are massed asymmetrically and are silhouetted against the background. Their vertical and horizontal lines together form a unified composition. The high, accentuated horizon line and the band of explanatory lettering running across the top of each panel are a vital part in this composition. They emphasize its flatness and help to unify the whole mural scheme. Another such device is the constant yet unpredictable colour scheme. Looking at the whole ensemble, one is immediately struck by the tonic contrast of the dominant cerulean blue in the panels with the warm golds, reddish browns and greys of the surrounding

walls. Each panel is limited to a range of four or five major colours besides blue. These are repeated in different combinations from panel to panel. - For decorative effect Brangwyn also plays off broad, flat areas of colour against smaller areas of pattern or intricate detail.

The effect of Brangwyn's panels on the boys is unknown for only their elders have left their impressions. Many, it would seem, were shocked at the historical inaccuracies and decorative formalism of Brangwyn's style. Writers such as W. R. Macklin and H.A. Rigby, in their 1925 book on the panels,⁷⁸ took pains to explain the decorative principles on which they were based. They did not comment at all on the subjects or purpose of the panels, one presumes because these were taken for granted. Herbert Furst, writing during the cynical twenties, felt that, except in the last panel, the subject matter was irrelevant.⁷⁹ Arthur Reddie, however, in an article in The Studio, in December 1915, expressed the typical pre-war attitude to sacrifice and missions in his comment that the panels' pervading brightness typified,

the dawn of the Church, and (reminds) us that, even where it is some scene of martyrdom that is depicted, the early saints went with happy hearts and souls transfigured by the joy of suffering for the faith.⁸⁰

He then went on to say that,

In marked contrast to the oft-times dull, conventional treatment of religious themes, there is in all these panels, replete with the great qualities of Mr. Brangwyn's art, a feeling of reality and actuality; there has been a certain deliberate preservation of simplicity, a purposed and considered naivete that consorts well not merely with the early period of church history they evoke, but with the needs of the youthful congregation for a robust humanity and an unaffectedness which, added to their superb decorative qualities, invest them with a deep and moving appeal. They bear, indeed, the great message of sincerity and of vitality in religion, for the strengthening of practical ideals an evangel such as is easily to be appreciated and apprehended by all who see them; and one cannot but feel confident that

to the boys as they sit in their beautiful chapel, their eloquent message will come to form an integral part of school-day memories.⁸¹

Brangwyn's second major religious commission was for a vast mosaic on the life of St. Aidan, to decorate the apse of St. Aidan's church in Leeds, Yorkshire (fig. 73). This commission came from his friend, Robert Hawthorne Kitson⁸², member of the congregation and of a local manufacturing family. It started in 1908 as a commission for a large painting, was changed about 1913 to one for a mosaic (to better resist the effects of pollution) and was executed between September 1914 and October 1916.

The revival of mosaic decoration had a parallel history to that of mural painting within the Arts and Crafts Movement and showed a similar historicism and emphasis on technique.⁸³ It emerged in Britain during the late 1850's, was strongly inspired by the restoration of the mosaics in Hagia Sophia and was justified to building committees for its durability and ease of maintenance. It was long closely associated with the activities of the Venetian firm of Salviati and Co., who pioneered and popularized the use of mosaic, particularly the reverse technique, during the latter half of the century. The reverse technique was akin to painting by numbers. A design was made and its parts numbered to correspond with the different coloured tesserae. The tesserae were placed on it upside down and then held in place by an adhesive paper facing. Each section was then pressed into the setting bed and the paper facing soaked away, leaving it in finished form. The reverse technique

had obvious practical advantages; designs could be prepared by an artist elsewhere and shipped to Salviati's for execution, the completed panels, in turn, being transported to their destination⁸⁴

Up until the 1890's most large mosaic murals used the reverse technique.

Important mosaic murals were executed in a variety of historical styles for the Albert Memorial and Albert Hall, the Houses of Parliament, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the pendentives of St. Paul's Cathedral. Burne-Jones, with Morris and Co., also designed a reverse technique mosaic for the American church in Rome during the 'nineties.⁸⁵ About this time, there was a shift in preference toward the direct, Byzantine technique of working in situ and placing the tesserae individually, at varying angles, in the setting bed. The direct technique was obviously more compatible with Arts and Crafts principles and dominated British mosaics from Sir William Blake Richmond's decorations in St. Paul's (1894-1907) to Boris Anrep's in Westminster Cathedral during the 'twenties. With it went the dominance of Byzantine stylistic conventions. Though Brangwyn used a form of the old fashioned reverse technique for his St. Aidan's mosaic⁸⁶ he would be the only major British artist to use a fairly modern style.

St. Aidan's is a red brick basilica church completed in 1894 and designed in a plain, Early Christian style.⁸⁷ Brangwyn's mosaic, measuring about 20 x 50 feet, lies behind a large diaphragm arch on a curved apse wall. Above is a gilded half-dome and below a ten foot high beige mosaic dado. When properly lit, the mosaic's richness presents a startling, almost miraculous contrast to the plainness of the rest of the church. Brangwyn also designed a mosaic chancel screen, about nine feet high, showing a procession of praying figures who come from either side and appear to climb the steps and enter the choir. The main mosaic itself (fig. 74-76) shows a pastoral Puvis landscape, marked vertically by poplar trees, massed on either side of the centre, and horizontally by rich effects of sky and cloud, the horizon line and a frieze of slightly over life-size figures, on the lower third. Corresponding to the tripartite division of the landscape, the

frieze is divided into three main parts, reading sequentially from left to right. These are 1. the landing of St. Aidan on the coast of Yorkshire and his feeding of the poor, 2. the preaching of St. Aidan and 3. the death of St. Aidan. This sequential grouping of figures and the way in which they are massed are clearly adapted from traditional donor or adoration figures. Brangwyn shows his awareness of Renaissance mural traditions while never being dependent on them. Despite the linearity of the figures and strong overall structuring of the whole, the mosaic's ultimate effect verges on the pictorial and painterly and is far removed from the flat, disembodied forms and vague, shimmering spaces of Byzantine inspired work. Brangwyn uses his standard tonal contrasts in whites, creams, reds, blues and blacks to focus the centre of the action and strengthen his composition yet within each compositional area -especially that of the clouds and sky - he uses the softest colour gradations to achieve his painterly effects.

Between 1900 and World War I, Brangwyn also became involved in several minor decorative commissions which, because of their location or social implications, merit our interest.

The first of these commissions dates probably from the spring of 1905, when Brangwyn was in Venice, to install the first of his Biennale ensembles. It came from Count Lionel Hirschel de Minerbi, a Venetian antiquary and art dealer, who lived in the historic Palazzo Rezzonico, on the Grand Canal, and used it as a fancy shop for his wares. The Palazzo, originally designed by Baldassare Longhena in the late 1600's, came into the hands of the Rezzonico family about fifty years later, was expanded by them and remained with them until about 1810, when they became extinct.⁸⁸ In 1748 Tiepolo had painted two ceiling panels in the State Rooms and Pietro Longhi had decorated the walls. Through most of the nineteenth century the Palazzo had a succession of owners,

crowned, in 1888, by "Pen" Browning, son of the poet Robert Browning.⁸⁹ Robert Browning had died here, in 1889, and "Pen" had carried on in a flamboyant, spendthrift style until just after the turn of the century. Minerbi succeeded him for a number of years and, in the 1920's, the Palazzo was even rented by the songwriter, Cole Porter.

Years later, Brangwyn recalled the circumstances of the commission.⁹⁰ Minerbi had asked him to design a first floor dining room ensemble with furniture and murals on modern Venetian life. He had also asked Charles Robert Ashbee to design silver for the table and William Powell and Sons to design the glass pieces. Several of Brangwyn's colour sketches for the room (fig. 78, 79) were reproduced in 1907 in Frank T. Verity's Flats, Urban Houses and Cottage Homes⁹¹. They show a painted frieze on the upper part of the wall, oak and ebony panelling below and a small steel and marble fireplace, all in tones of greys, pinks and blues. The ensemble recalled to the writer

the beautiful rooms at Venice of San Giorgio dei Schiavoni by Carpaccio and the exquisite cabinet built by Isotta da Rimini at Mantua to receive pictures by Mantegna.⁹²

Both Brangwyn and Ashbee intimated that Minerbi was a difficult character who changed his mind often and was very dictatorial. According to Brangwyn, he wanted his murals more pictorial than decorative and, according to Ashbee, he wanted something closer to continental art nouveau.⁹³ After a row over the subject, the commission was abandoned and the partially finished silver pieces melted down. Brangwyn's only finished works relating to the episode were a watercolour view of the Palazzo (now unlocated) and a 1912 etching based upon it and titled Browning's House, Venice.⁹⁴

A second commission came early in 1910, when he made one of several visits to the Casa Cuseni, the villa built in 1906-07 for Robert Kitson, in

Taormina, Sicily. During his visits he travelled to nearby Messina to make sketches of the ruins of the 1908 earthquake and lunched with the famous photographer of nudes, the Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden.⁹⁵ In the dining room of the villa itself (fig. 79), he created an ensemble consisting of a mural frieze, panelling, sideboard, table and chairs, executed mainly by local craftsmen, and even enamelled ashtrays.⁹⁶ He also designed several other pieces of furniture (bed, settee and print cabinet) for other parts of the house. The frieze, executed in true fresco, consists of pairs of draped, standing figures, placed almost like caryatids at the major structural junctions of the room (corners of doors, windows, etc.) and carrying bowls or baskets of fruit and flowers. They are placed against a plain ground, the top edge of which is festooned with wistaria and the bottom sprinkled with flowers. The colour scheme is subdued with the ground a rich, medium beige, the festoons a dark green and the draperies a grey-white-blue. The panelling and furniture are of a local hickory, in a complementary reddish-gold tone and the blue in the frieze is picked up in a broad band along the top, in the fireplace tiles, the upholstery and ashtrays. The chairs show a solid but elegant Sheratonian style, similar to that of his Edmund Davis furniture. The table and sideboard are less elegant in proportion and plainer in detail, slightly mediaeval in character yet not massive in scale. Let into the wall above the fireplace is a pastoral landscape by Sir Alfred East, a friend both of Brangwyn and Kitson. The freshness of its colours (and its deep space, unrelated to that of the frieze) make the frieze look drab and create ambiguous visual-structural effects.

While many of Brangwyn's commissions were public ones, few were actually done for government. Brangwyn's experience in working for government was usually negative. Like many artists, he would have preferred an enlightened

despot for a patron, someone in sympathy with his ideas, who would back him financially, protect him politically and let him get on with the job. As it was, his imagination was hamstrung by bureaucratic caution and he was left fuming with indignation. In the beginning, however, he was enthusiastic to put his art to public service and threw himself into devising street decorations for the coronation of George V (fig. 80) and a post-war naval peace pageant on the Thames in 1919 (fig. 81). Coronations and pageants were traditionally "extravagant assertions of a mirage of power"⁹⁷. Brangwyn's designs for these were well within that tradition. For the coronation, he and his colleagues (Sir Aston Webb, Sir William Blake Richmond, Gerald Moira and Edward Lanteri) devised schemes for the processional routes on Whitehall, Piccadilly and Bond Street. These schemes employed many elements of Renaissance and Baroque pageantry: lath and plaster triumphal arches adorned with allegorical statuary, columns topped with vases or flambeaux, decorated with bunting and medallions and linked by swags of laurel. Modern effects of massed electric lighting were also employed. Some of Brangwyn's sketches even pictured processions of richly caparisoned elephants, straight from his paintings of oriental subjects. In their original offer to the Westminster Borough Council, the artists described their imagery as "imperial in character, representing in symbolic form the various States and Dominions of the Empire"⁹⁸. One of their proposed triumphal arches was described in The Standard as being topped by a figure of

Britannia seated on a globe, the centre of a gigantic group of statuary typifying the Empire, the surrounding figures being symbolical of the various overseas Dominions. In the spandrels are other figures emblematical of commerce, industry, civilization and power...⁹⁹

The New Zealand arch, as finally executed, was topped off with

four cupids holding aloft an Imperial crown and with

cornucopias full of fruit and ram's heads to indicate the fertility of the Dominion.¹⁰⁰

When the above schemes were submitted for approval, officials judged them too costly and vulgar and they were executed in a severely stripped down form from which their creators dissociated themselves in a letter of protest to The Times.¹⁰¹ An even worse fate - not being executed at all - befell Brangwyn's scheme for the naval peace pageant. Here he had planned to rig up motor launches as fantastic state barges, decorated with red, yellow, blue and green flags, canopies, garlands, shields and monumental gilded figures of Neptune, dolphins and tritons two and a half times life size.¹⁰²

A third project, also never executed, was a 1912 design for a Sir Francis Drake memorial (fig. 82) to go in the East End of London. As mentioned earlier, Drake was a central figure in the maritime adventure cult of the Edwardians. For his memorial, Brangwyn imagined a square surrounded by a colonnaded ambulatory. The walls of the colonnade were to be decorated with a frieze of Drake's exploits. In the centre of the square was a fountain described in the press as

surmounted by the World and supported by the Elizabethans who under and with Drake largely wrested the new world from the hands of Spain and so gave to the old world a new commercial field. The sphere on the fountain was to be a clear crystal Globe which at night should be illuminated by powerful electric light - typifying the light and life of adventure upon the high seas, which made England what it is.¹⁰³

The purpose of the monument, said Brangwyn in an interview, was to

light once again in the breast of our youths the spirit of adventure practically killed now by the cigarette, the football craze and the music hall. If the sight of Drake's sea-fights on the frieze would give the loafer and the larrikin, idly smoking his cigarette in the cloister, the thirst for the sea and a free and healthier and more adventurous life, the money will have been well spent...There would be hope for England still to remember that these are just the same sort of material out of which Drake made his seamen. Upon this

material to-day Navy and Army depend, and, therefore, with them largely rests the fate of the Empire.¹⁰⁴

Brangwyn's hope is especially interesting in the light of official British military reports and subsequent paranoia on the physical degeneration of the race. These were occasioned by the poor condition of working class recruits for the military. In the years just before the war, such fears swept the establishment and were used to justify faster rearmament and stepped up military training.¹⁰⁵ They also inspired General Robert Baden-Powell to found the Boy Scouts to nurture the spirit of adventure, the martial virtues, in British youth.¹⁰⁶

Contemporary with the above projects was the first of Brangwyn's American mural commissions (fig. 83-85), painted for the Cuyahoga County Courthouse in Cleveland, Ohio. Just as in Britain, there was a revival of interest in mural painting in America between the 1890's and 1920's. Though he never came to America, Brangwyn, like Puvis de Chavannes, was one of the most important foreign artists to participate in this revival. Like their British counterparts, American muralists believed in the socially uplifting nature of their works and showed a similar concern with technique and historicism.¹⁰⁷ Perhaps even more, they were inspired by the classical, allegorical tradition of Renaissance and baroque masters.

The Cuyahoga County Courthouse, finished in 1912, was part of a large, Beaux Arts civic centre in downtown Cleveland. On the recommendation of the architect, Charles F. Schweinfurth, in May 1911, both Brangwyn and Maxfield Parrish were approached for mural designs. Parrish pleaded overwork and ill health. Brangwyn accepted and his proposals were passed in September of that year. Schweinfurth was delighted and wrote to the members of the County Building Commission,

Mr. Brangwyn is the leading Mural artist in England today, and ranks with Sargent, and I am impelled to say we are to be congratulated in securing his work.¹⁰⁸

The two murals in the courthouse were based on the theme of justice. Brangwyn's dealt with King John signing the Magna Carta. Opposite was another mural, by Violet Oakley, on the American constitutional convention of 1787.¹⁰⁹ Both filled large flattened lunettes, 15 x 50 feet, over courtroom entrances on the second floor mezzanine. Brangwyn's was painted in oil encaustic on canvas, which was then marouflaged to the wall. It was executed entirely in London, in a large, specially rented studio and was finished early in the fall of 1913. It was then shipped to Cleveland and, during October, installed by one of Brangwyn's assistants. For it Brangwyn was paid \$20,000. The mural seems to have generated no specific publicity or literature in the local press. The only contemporary evaluation of it came from Arthur Covey, writing in Collier's Magazine. According to Covey, Brangwyn was one of the world's ablest mural painters and his King John mural was destined to be as well known as the murals in the Boston Public Library.¹¹⁰

Brangwyn's major problem was that the lunette was partly bisected by the courtroom entrance. Its composition thus had to be balanced on either side though its subject had only one logical focus. His solution was to mass the sulking King John with bishops and barons on the right and to place a corresponding mass of barons and boatmen on the left. The King, on his side, is brightly lit and balanced by correspondingly lit figures on the left. The dominant colours are bright reds, harmonized with softer greens, blues and yellows. Unifying both halves of the lunette are the strong verticals of tree trunks silhouetted against the horizontals of distant clouds.

By 1913, Brangwyn was also hard at work on eight large panels for the 1915

Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco (fig. 86-88). The planners of the Exposition were putting great emphasis on mural decoration and had asked Jules Guerin, Brangwyn's old friend from Paris, to choose the artists and coordinate their colour schemes. Other muralists chosen by Guerin were Americans, among them Childe Hassam, Robert Reid, William de Leftwich Dodge and Arthur Mathews. Brangwyn also participated, with over eighty of his etchings, in the art section of the Exposition, where he won the Medal of Honour.¹¹¹ His mural panels were placed in pairs in the four corners of the ambulatory surrounding Louis Christian Mullgardt's "Court of Abundance".¹¹² They were based on a free adaptation from Mullgardt's architectural symbolism of the four elements: Earth, Air, Fire and Water, in their traditional and modern roles. Painted in flat oils on canvas, each panel measured a monumental 25 x 12 feet. For them, Brangwyn was paid \$60,000.

Mullgardt saw the Exposition's architecture as a series of "Phantom Kingdoms"¹¹³. His "Court of Abundance", an exotic concoction of vaguely Moorish style, was a grandiose allegory of,

the world's progressive march from its nebulous state, out of which came the elementary forces of nature, symbolized in water by a basin, two columns on either side of the Tower represent Earth and Air, and Fire is depicted in the braziers and cauldrons. The upward advances, through the ages, are seen in decorative motifs on the columns to represent the movement of the animal kingdom from its preceding plant life. Then the Stone Age is indicated by means of prehistoric types in nature mounting the arcade, within which are Brangwyn's murals...Man next plants his feet on the altar tower, though he is seen engaged in fierce combat to withstand the Powers of Darkness. The blazing torches above symbolize the Dawn of Understanding, and in the finials are set chantcleers, to herald the Dawn of Christianity. Man soars upward to his goal, represented, by the central figure in the highest part of the tower, embodying, however ironical it may seem to Europeans, "Peace on Earth, goodwill toward Men". It is accompanied by Learning and Industry, with Thought close by; and, near at hand, in

the form of masks are Intelligence and Ignorance.¹¹⁴

In the context of Mullgardt's allegory, Brangwyn's eight panels were more vaguely symbolic and, at the same time, more lyrical than literal in treatment. Their groups of outdoor labourers were only real in the picturesque Brangwyn manner of archetypes rather than people in a specific time and place. Their depiction of the "wealth of Nature's gifts" was described by one California writer in such words as "opulent", "luminous", "vivid" and "lush".¹¹⁵ The well known critic Christian Brinton, described them as capturing the feel of

the days when the world was young and the primal wonder of man began to manifest itself in countless questing ways.¹¹⁶

Mullgardt, however, was less pleased and criticized them for their lack of specificity, their lack of up-to-date imagery.¹¹⁷ When the exposition was over, the panels were put in storage and only reerected in 1932, when they were put in the Auditorium of the Veterans Building in San Francisco's beaux arts Civic Center.

Between 1900 and World War I, Brangwyn's easel paintings reached the same state of maturity as his mural decorations. Their classicism and historicism were absorbed and personalized beyond that seen in the 1900 Charity or 1902 The Cider Press. Their fantasy increased greatly and their strength of composition relaxed a little into sumptuous, glittering surfaces.

These changes are seen in the two paintings commissioned for presentation to Lloyd's Register of Shipping, Queen Elizabeth Going Aboard the Golden Hind at Deptford (c. 1903, fig. 89) and Blake's Return After the Capture of the Plate Ships (1907, fig. 90). The place of these works within the adventure tradition has already been mentioned. Part of this tradition involves scenes of departure and return (often with treasure or glory)¹¹⁸ seen also in such contemporary works

such as the, Return of the Messengers from the Promised Land (1908, Johannesburg Art Gallery, fig. 94), The Return of Marco Polo (1910, National Gallery of Canada) and The Departure and Return of Columbus (c. 1904, unlocated and St. Louis Art Museum, fig. 91). It has further been suggested that with these romantic pictures of galleons, Brangwyn inspired a tradition of galleon motifs popular early in the century in decorative friezes and interior design.¹¹⁹ Though this is an interesting suggestion, it must remain that here. Stylistically Queen Elizabeth... and Blake's Return... show the gradual loosening of composition mentioned earlier. The former is still highly structured by the verticals and horizontals of masts, spars and oars and divides very neatly into contrasting areas of light and dark. In the latter, the only strong compositional feature is the gradual movement from dark to light, from the edges to the centre of the painting. In the former, the shimmering light surfaces are still relatively contained within contours while in the latter they are far more flickering and dispersed, a bit like the late works of Monet. Colouristically, both works are increasingly sumptuous with their rich golds and tans set off by smaller areas of scarlet, white and blue.

This sumptuous air is darkened and intensified in Venetian Funeral (1906, Leeds City Art Gallery, fig. 92). It almost brings to mind Luchino Visconti's movie production of Thomas Mann's Death in Venice though without the redeeming intelligence of Mann's original text. Here the large central mass of dark blue-greens, blue-greys and blue-purples establishes the overall mood, even when placed against the yellow-oranges of the background. None of the colours interact in the bracing, tonic way of the primaries in Queen Elizabeth... and the dark mass, combined with the abundance of pale flowers and heavily loaded brushstrokes, produces an overwhelming effect. Though strongly structured in the central mass, the light forms in the background are quite far dissolved into

shimmering colour blotches.

With The Rajah's Birthday (1908, Leeds, City Art Gallery, fig. 93) and The Return of the Messengers from the Promised Land (1908, Johannesburg Art Gallery, fig. 94) Brangwyn continued the development of his oriental subjects into this century. In contrast to such earlier works as The Market at Bushire (1897), these are far less realistic and are involved more in fantasies of colour and abundance, seen in elaborate processions.

This increasingly fantastic elaboration of themes is often found in Edwardian art and literature. Jefferson Hunter quotes passages from such typical adventure tales as Erskine Childers' The Riddle of the Sands (1903) and Robert Hichens' The Garden of Allah (1905) and sees them as "parables of escape from the complications of life" that "lie at the heart "of Edwardian literature. Such parables were often written by the Victorians but

as the Edwardians grew more certain of the Balfourian qualities of their decade, their fictional adventures abroad grew more artificial, escapist, and un-Balfourian.¹²⁰

In book illustration, art historians have noted similar tendencies and attributed them to similar causes.¹²¹ They posit a tradition of fantastic illustration, parallel but opposed to the realist tradition of such artists as George Du Maurier and Phil May. In Britain, some leading Edwardian fantasists were Arthur Rackham, Edmund Dulac and Heath Robinson. In America, they were N.C. Wyeth, Howard Pyle and Maxfield Parrish.

Both of Brangwyn's paintings are carefully, though more complexly, structured than before and, despite tendencies toward the dissolving of form, are still more united than Blake's Return.... Brangwyn had feared that The Return of the Messengers... especially might be judged ostentatious¹²² but, instead, it was greeted with enthusiasm. The critic Haldane MacFall, for instance, wrote,

What sumptuous, rich and decorative splendour! Then slowly out of that splendour there emerge and come towards us the picturesque labourers of the vineyard, moving under the burden of heavy masses of the gloriously hued fruit of the vine, as they top the rising ground before us, their many coloured apparel lit by the declining sun and counter lit by its golden reflected radiance.¹²³

In 1912, in The Glory of Venice (unlocated, fig. 95), Brangwyn reached an extreme in grandiosity and decorative abstraction. Picturesque Venetian subjects were popular both with Victorian artists and with Brangwyn¹²⁴, (ie. Venetian Funeral). This work, however, is not just picturesque. In dealing with a concept like "glory" it assumes a larger, metaphysical content and implies an Edwardian identification with the maritime republic.

The Glory of Venice, an architectural cityscape, is closer to many of Brangwyn's etchings than to his paintings. It is a highly structured work with the verticals exaggerated. As with Piranesi, the point of view is low, to give a feeling of vastness and sublimity. Crowds of tiny people in the foreground increase this effect. The facade of the Doge's Palace, at the centre of the composition, shows a flattening, form dissolving painterliness, almost akin to that in Monet's Rouen Cathedrals. Other factors, however, modify Monet's all-over effect.

Another interesting and closer-to-home comparison is with Walter Sickert's Venetian paintings of 1901¹²⁵, especially his views of St. Mark's and Santa Maria della Salute (fig. 96, 97). Sickert was no great admirer of Brangwyn's works. Two years previously, for instance, he had criticized one of Brangwyn's oriental market scenes as lacking "lucidity" of design and covering this up with a vulgar virtuoso handling of paint.¹²⁶ The Glory of Venice, though well enough designed, also deserves Sickert's criticism of vulgar virtuosity. Its treatment of light, modelling of form and low point of view are generally similar to those of Sickert's

own works. Its grandiose vertical exaggeration, however, and brighter, dramatically contrasted colours seem merely showy in comparison with Sickert's tonal subtleties.

One general topic that becomes important during the Edwardian age is Brangwyn's widening influence, through his studio assistants and pupils. As his prosperity increased, Brangwyn employed several assistants at a time, to keep the studio clean, buy materials, prepare canvases and enlarge working drawings. He also taught between the years 1904 and 1908 at the London School of Art and so broadened his student following. While many of his assistants developed reputations as solid professionals, and in various ways showed his influence, none ever broke new ground or developed reputations that rivalled Brangwyn's own. Those who became well known, did so, moreover, as commercial artists or in radically different fields. Of his London School of Art students, only Nina Hamnett, Alvin Langdon Coburn, and Bernard Leach are remembered much today, the first as a bohemian character, the second as a Vorticist photographer and the third as one of the most important potters of his time.

Over the course of forty years, Brangwyn employed about fourteen assistants. The scale of his work and his sheer prolificness demanded such help. At least six of his assistants were American, drawn to him probably by his growing American reputation and by the prestige of things British, combined with the advantage of sharing the same language and cultural traditions. When they returned home they helped spread his reputation further. The first of these assistants was Arthur Sinclair Covey (1877-1960),¹²⁷ who arrived on his doorstep in September 1904, volunteered his services and stayed for four years. Covey had been trained at the Art Institute of Chicago and, after a year with Karl von Marr, in Munich, came to London deliberately to work for Brangwyn. He gained

an introduction through Charles Holme of The Studio and soon was enlarging drawings for Brangwyn's 1905 Venice Biennale murals. Over the next four years, he assisted him on Modern Commerce, the Skinners' Hall murals, the 1907 Venice murals, and numerous smaller projects. He also taught classes at the London School of Art and wrote four major articles in The Studio on Brangwyn's works.¹²⁸ In 1908, he married and returned to the United States (fig. 98). He later kept in touch with Brangwyn, assisted Robert Reid on murals for the Panama Pacific Exposition and painted murals on The Romance of Trade for Lord and Taylor's department store in New York (1916-17). During the twenties he painted murals on industrial subjects (for the Kohler Co. in Kohler, Wisconsin and the Norton Co., Worcester, Mass.) and, during the thirties, murals in post offices in Bridgeport and Torrington, Connecticut and Andersonville, S.C. At the end of the decade, he also did murals for the Contemporary Arts Building at the New York's World's Fair and Land Plane Building at New York's La Guardia Airport. During the teens and twenties, he won major competition medals from the Architectural League of New York, became a National Academician and was President of the National Mural Painters Society. Many of Covey's themes, his closeness to architects, his philosophy of mural decoration and his use of colour and form were certainly derived from Brangwyn. Through him, Brangwyn's influence would certainly have been spread in conservative American art circles.

A second American assistant was Edward D. Trumbull (1884-1968), who had studied with Robert Reid in New York and came to London to work with Brangwyn in 1908.¹²⁹ He stayed for about four years to work on murals for Skinners' Hall, the Canadian National Grand Trunk Railway and Lloyd's Register. On returning to America, Trumbull painted murals for the Pennsylvania Pavillion at the Panama-Pacific Exposition and, later, industrial murals in Pittsburgh.

Back in New York, during the twenties, he painted murals in the Chrysler Building, Grand Central Station, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building and various other structures. During the thirties, he was colour director of the mural program at Rockefeller Centre and made an abortive attempt¹³⁰ to assist Brangwyn on his Rockefeller murals. Only Trumbull's early works show much Brangwyn influence. His later ones are stylized in an Art Deco manner.

Shortly after Trumbull, came Allen Tupper True (1881 - 1955)¹³¹ and a young Englishman, Elijah Albert Cox (1876 - 1955). True stayed only two years but Cox about a decade. True had studied at the Corcoran School in Washington and had spent six years with the illustrator Howard Pyle. He arrived in London about 1908 and may first have studied at the London School of Art. He assisted Brangwyn on the murals for Lloyd's Register and the Canadian Grand Trunk Railway. After returning to America he installed Brangwyn's murals for the Panama-Pacific Exposition and Missouri State Capitol. On his own, True got a reputation, first as an illustrator and then as a mural painter whose works decorated many public buildings in his home state of Colorado. He also executed some heavily Brangwynian murals for the Missouri State Capitol (fig. 99).

Cox had worked as an illustrator before coming to Brangwyn and afterward continued in this field, showing a strong Brangwyn influence. His jackets for H.V. Morton's popular books, In the Steps of the Master and In the Steps of St. Paul¹³² are close adaptations from Brangwyn's Christ's Hospital panels. His posters of London Characters for the Underground¹³³ show Brangwynian working types and his panel of Philip the Good of Burgundy Presenting a Charter to the Merchant Adventurers (c. 1915-16, fig. 100) in the Royal Exchange¹³⁴ is a frank pastiche from Queen Elizabeth Going Aboard the Golden Hind at Deptford and such figural compositions as the Cleveland mural.

Shortly before World War I, John J. A. Murphy (1888-1967) appeared in the studio.¹³⁵ Trained as a wood engraver and portrait painter at the Boston Museum School and Art Students League, Murphy remained with Brangwyn until 1922. He then returned to New York to a career as an illustrator and printmaker. Murphy assisted on the Christ's Hospital and earlier American murals. His sketchbooks¹³⁶ show strongly Brangwynian drawings of St. Paul preaching and the Stations of the Cross and his etching Potsellers (1916) shows Brangwyn's rough cast of characters. Back in New York, however, Brangwyn's influence faded and Murphy's style grew smoother, harder and more closely tied to Art Deco.

After the war, another generation of assistants, which would last through most of the twenties, took over. These were the Englishmen Frank Alford (1896-1962), Laurence Bradshaw (1899-1979) and Reginald A. Lewis (1901- ?) and the Americans C. Peter Helck (1893-) and Dean Cornwell (1892-1960). Alford, Bradshaw and Lewis showed little of Brangwyn's influence and eventually wound up working in different fields. Alford became an architect and Bradshaw and Lewis worked mainly as sculptors. On Helck and Cornwell, later well known illustrators and muralists, Brangwyn's influence was strong. Both remained friends for years after their assistantships and Helck even named his daughter Priscilla Brangwyn Helck¹³⁷. Helck became known for his illustrations of heavy industry and automobiles. Though his style was tighter and less painterly than Brangwyn's, his works showed a similar strong design, rich colour and dark/light contrast. Much the same could be said of Cornwell's illustrations.¹³⁸ His large set of murals on California history (1931-33, fig. 101, 102) for Bertram G. Goodhue's Los Angeles Public Library were closely modelled on Brangwyn's British Empire Panels for the House of Lords.

During Brangwyn's later years, he had two main assistants, E. Kenneth Center (1903-) and William Stewart (1886- ?). Center worked with him from 1928 until about 1943, on the British Empire Panels, Rockefeller Center murals and smaller projects, while Stewart assisted him in the quiet years after World War II. Brangwyn undoubtedly influenced Center but his effect on Stewart is unknown. Neither man achieved any prominence, so the question is unimportant.

Another part of Brangwyn's influence was his teaching at the London School of Art from 1904 to 1908. This was a school set up with John Macallam Swan in the Stratford Studios. Each taught their appropriate classes once a week and hired Channel Pickering Townsley (1867-1921), a former assistant to William Merritt Chase, to be the school's administrator. Soon it became popular, a summer school in Belgium was organized and more teachers were hired. Some of these were Joseph Simpson, Arthur Covey, William Nicholson, George Washington Lambert and Philippe de Laszlo.¹³⁹ When Brangwyn left, the school soon got into trouble. Swan died in 1910, Townsley resigned his directorship and the school seems to have closed in 1911. Brangwyn inspired his pupils more by his fame and direct example than by being a good teacher. One student later wrote that,

It was rather advanced at that time to be a Brangwyn "fan"; and we felt very dashing when we went en bande from the school to the Royal Exchange... We were quite sure Brangwyn was a major artist; and twenty years later our judgement seemed to have been confirmed triumphantly in three continents.¹⁴⁰

Nina Hamnett also recalled that,

most of the students imitated Brangwyn and their work was atrocious. They imitated his mannerisms instead of learning from his real qualities. He was not a good professor, he had too much personality to teach well.¹³¹

Despite these enthusiastic pupils, the effect of Brangwyn's influence was minor and did not last past the twenties. Herbert Davis Richter (1874-1955) developed a moderate British reputation as a still life painter, influenced by Brangwyn's later flower still lifes.¹⁴² Robert Douglas Wells (1875-1963) and his wife Madeline became long term friends and developed moderate reputations for the many Brangwynian watercolour landscapes of Spain, France and Italy they exhibited with the Royal Society of British Artists. Other students he may well have influenced were the landscape painter Hilda May Gordon (1874-1972), the painter and critic Godfrey J. Gordon (1882-1944) and the Australian born etchers Jessie C.A. Traill (1881-1972) and Edith A. Hope (active 1907-1945). Too little of their work is known, however, to give a firm opinion on the matter. Of his many foreign students, the Anglo-Canadians Robert Allan Barr (1890-1959), Arthur H. H. Hammond (1870-1940) and Katherine Maltwood (1878-1961) showed little of his influence in their mature work. Several of his students such as Alvin Langdon Coburn, Reginald H. Wilenski (1887-1945), James Henry Daugherty (1887-1974), and Bernard Leach (1887-1979) made larger reputations as modernists. Coburn's involvement with the Vorticists has already been mentioned. Wilenski became a noted art critic and historian and author of books on English and modern art. Daugherty, an American pupil of William Merritt Chase, later renounced Brangwyn's early influence and was known as a Synchromist, though his Mural Decoration of 1918¹⁴³ still utilizes a Brangwynian heroic labourer. Leach studied etching with Brangwyn and shared his interest in Japanese pottery but was not especially influenced by him in his later adaptation of Japanese ideas to the creation of modern pottery.¹⁴⁴ Several minor artists who were never normal pupils of Brangwyn but who were encouraged by him and

showed his personal influence were the National Academician Donald Teague (1897-), the automotive engineer Charles Brady King (1868-1957) and the young Canadian painter Thomas Luzny (1926-). Several other artists he never met but is known to have influenced were the novelist D.H. Lawrence and the Canadian painters Marc-Aurele Fortin (1888-1972), Charles John Collings (1848-1931) and Lemoine L. Fitzgerald (1890-1956). None of these influences were lasting or very important though the one on Lawrence is by far the most interesting. Writing from Italy to a friend, in 1912, Lawrence confided,

I sketch in watercolour myself as a hopeless amateur. But it is such healing work, I find, to paint a bit, even if it is only to copy, after one has frayed out one's soul with damned emotional drawing...To copy a Frank Brangwyn is a joy so refreshing. Do you mind that attitude to art?¹⁴⁵

Three years later, Lawrence cast an Ursula Brangwyn as the heroine in his novel, The Rainbow. Her name was almost certainly taken from that of the painter.

When the war came, Brangwyn was still busy with his murals for Christ's Hospital and the Panama-Pacific Exposition. In between working on these, he managed to contribute enormously to the war effort, mainly through designing lithographed posters for war relief charities. He had long been interested in lithography, had become, in 1907, a member of the Senefelder Club to promote its use in art and had designed a few posters¹⁴⁶, so his turning to this medium was not surprising. He never became an official war artist for either the British or the Canadians¹⁴⁷ but, in an unofficial way, was probably the most ubiquitous creator of artistic war propaganda in Britain. This can be gleaned from the comments of the novelist Arnold Bennett, who sat on the Imperial War Memorial Committee to choose official war artists. Bennett, with his progressive tastes in the arts, had little sympathy with Brangwyn and, writing to a friend in 1918, commented,

I have succeeded in turning down all R.A. painters except (George) Clausen. Some feat, believe me! Yes, I have turned down even the inevitable Brangwyn.¹⁴⁸

Brangwyn initially showed the conventional patriotism and idealism in his support of the war. He had no children of his own to lose and was far too busy to go directly to the front. As a result, his preconceptions were not challenged by reality until well into the struggle and he relied on the censored media for his information, the same as the general public. His other major sources were the conventions of the battle painting tradition and his studies of working men and heroic labour. His war images thus break down into several major types; scenes of support on the home front, scenes of the wounded, of refugees and war prisoners, designed to elicit sympathy and indignation, genre scenes of army life and comradeship in the trenches, to build up public solidarity, and scenes of violence and vengeance against the foe. Aside from their being lithographs, there was little artistically new in these images. Extremes of violence and squalor and the purposelessness of it all were not included. Neither, for the most part¹⁴⁹, were allegorical figures of Britannia, Victory, Mars or Vulcan. Occasionally, as in his painting Mater Dolorosa Belgica, (1915, William Morris Gallery, fig. 103) he utilizes traditional religious iconography, dressed in modern guise. When he shows violence, as in The Submarine Menace and The Zeppelin Raids (fig. 104), he uses at most a standard image of a fallen warrior and concentrates more feeling on the figure shaking his fist at the foe and vowing revenge. Even his most violent poster, Put Strength in the Final Blow (fig. 105), (a Tommy bayonetting a German Soldier and lifting him off the ground) shows a purposeful, outward, unquestioning violence contrasting that in the poems of Siegfried Sassoon, who was out in the trenches. Sassoon's poem The Hero

(Brother officer giving white haired mother fictitious account of her cold-footed son's death at the front), ends with a verse that embodies this contrast. After telling "the poor old dear some gallant lies", the officer,

...thought how "Jack", cold-footed useless swine,
 had panicked down the trench that night the mine
 went up at Wicked Corner; how he'd tried
 To get sent home, and how, at last, he died,
 Blown to small bits. And no one seemed to care
 Except that lonely woman with white hair.¹⁵⁰

As the war continued, however, Brangwyn's confidence was shaken, though he never shared Sassoon's bitterness and cynicism. He felt guilty that as an artist, who should have been devoted to furthering human brotherhood and love of nature, he was now inciting hatred and vengeance. He also felt that one of his naval recruiting posters had lured one of his nephews to his death. Plagued by conflicting loyalties of conscience and duty, he grimly sided with the latter and went on producing poster designs. After the war, he still designed occasional posters.

CHAPTER 5

1. During the development of the oil sketches, the theme was changed slightly, from Commerce to Modern Commerce. See Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber & Co. Ltd., London: 1978, p. 84.
2. By 1914, two titles by Walter Shaw-Sparrow and one apiece by Warwick Draper and Frank Newbolt. By 1930, titles by Sparrow, Herbert Furst, William Gaunt, G. S. Sandilands, and Jean Richepin and Theophile Steinlen. After 1930, titles by Frank Rutter, Philip Macer-Wright, William de Belleruche (two), C.G.E. Bunt, James D. Boyd, Vincent Galloway and Rodney Brangwyn. For full information see bibliography.
3. Walter Shaw-Sparrow (1862-1940) critic and journalist. Studied at Slade School under Legros and at Brussels Academy of Art. Worked on Magazine of Art, 1880's. Asst. Editor of The Studio 1899-1904 and then free-lance journalist and author. Wrote over 40 books, mainly on British art topics. His memoirs, Memories of Life and Art Through Sixty Years, was published by John Lane, London: 1925.
4. Walter Shaw-Sparrow, The Spirit of the Age, Hodder and Stoughton, London: 1905, p. 12.
5. Ibid., p. 13
6. A term used by William Ewart Gladstone and quoted by Barbara W. Tuchman, The Proud Tower, Bantam Books, New York: 1967, p. 13.
7. Michael Kennedy, Portrait of Elgar, Oxford Univeristy Press, Oxford: 1968, p. 132.
8. Walter Shaw-Sparrow, The Spirit of the Age, Hodder & Stoughton, London: 1905, p. 7.
9. Philip Macer-Wright, Brangwyn: a study of genius at close quarters, Hutchinson, London: 1940, p.259.
10. Alfred Lys Baldry, Modern Mural Decoration, George Newnes Ltd., London, 1902.
11. F. Hamilton Jackson, Mural Painting, Sands & Co., London: 1904.
12. Aymer Vallance, Mural Painting Revived, John Lines & Sons Ltd., London: 1908.
13. James Ward, Fresco Painting: its art and technique, Chapman & Hall Ltd., London: 1913.
14. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, 5 vols., Smith Elder & Co., London: 1843-1860.

15. John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice, Smith Elder & Co., London: 1851.
16. Walter Pater, The Renaissance, 3rd edition, Macmillan & Co., London: 1888.
17. Sir J. A. Crowe and G.B. Cavalcaselle, Life and Times of Titian, 2 vols., John Murray, London: 1877.
18. Bernard Berenson, Venetian Painters of the Renaissance, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London: 1894
19. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, p. 139.
20. Ibid. p. 49
21. Frank Rutter, Art in My Time, Rich and Cowan Ltd., London: 1933, pp. 92-93.
22. Vincent Galloway, The Oils and Murals of Sir Frank Brangwyn, R.A. 1867-1956, F. Lewis, Leigh-on-Sea: 1962, p. 11.
23. Gerald Edward Moira (1867-1959) Mural decorator and landscape and figure painter. Studied at R.A. schools with Byam Shaw and in Paris. Taught at Royal College of Art 1900-1922 and Edinburgh College of Art 1924-32. See J.Harold Watkins, The Art of Gerald Moira, E. W. Dickens Ltd., London: 1922.
24. John Byam Shaw (1872-1919) Studied at St. John's Wood School and R.A. schools. Strongly influenced by late works of Holman Hunt and by J.W. Waterhouse. Did many book illustrations and literary subject paintings. Did decorative series on coronation of Edward VII, panel for House of Lords, and decorative painting for Canadian War Memorial. Founded Byam Shaw School of Art. See Rex Vicat Cole, The Life and Art of Byam Shaw, Seeley Service & Co., London 1932 and Peyton Skipwith, "Byam Shaw," The Connoisseur, vol. 191, March 1976, pp. 189-199.
25. Frederick Cayley Robinson (186-1927) Genre and figure painter, illustrator and mural decorator. Trained at R.A. schools, St. John's Wood School and Academie Julian. Worked in Florence 1898-1902 and Paris 1902-1906. Later lived in one of Edmund Davis's studio flats in Landowne House, London. Taught at University of Glasgow 1914-24. See Mary Anne Stevens, "Frederick Cayley Robinson," The Connoisseur, vol. 196, September 1977, pp. 23-35 and the catalogue Frederick Cayley Robinson, A.R.A., The Fine Art Society Ltd., London: 1977.
26. Puvis' reputation in Britain dated after 1884-85, when Claude Phillips published several major articles on him in The Magazine of Art.
27. Robert Anning Bell (1863-1933) Painter of figures portraits, landscapes, religious works, mosaics and coloured bas reliefs. Educated at University

College, London, Westminster School of Art, R.A. schools and in Paris. Master of Art Workers Guild in 1921. Taught in Liverpool, Glasgow and at R.A. schools 1918-24.

28. Dorothy D. Reynolds, "The Revival of Mosaic as a Technique of Wall Decoration in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century", Paper given at convention of The Victorian Society, University of Birmingham, 1978. Note also that Brangwyn would later create a mosaic for St. Aidan's Church, Leeds.
29. Brangwyn is supposed to have been asked by Bentley to make a design for the Cathedral's main door tympanum. The design was rejected. See William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman & Hall, London: 1948, p. 135.
30. Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber & Co. Ltd., London: 1978, pp. 97, 280.
31. Architectural Association Notes, vol. 13, 1898, p. 172, quoted by Alastair Service, Edwardian Architecture, Oxford University Press, New York: 1977, p. 142.
32. Christopher Hussey, The Life of Sir Edwin Lutyens, Country Life Ltd., London: 1950, p. 77.
33. Ibid., chapter 6.
34. William Walcott (1874-1943), Architect, etcher and watercolour artist of architectural subjects. Born in Russia and trained as architect in St. Petersburg. Later studied in Paris at Ecole des Beaux Arts and Atelier Redon. Settled in London in 1907. Was a good friend of both Lutyens and Brangwyn and died in Brangwyn's Jointure Cottage in May 1943. See catalogue, William Walcott 1874-1943: Centenary Exhibition, The Fine Art Society Ltd., London: 1974.
35. David Watkin, "Edwardian Panache: The Work of William Walcott (1874-1943)," Country Life, vol. 156, October 10, 1974, pp. 1032-1033.
36. Benedict Read, Victorian Sculpture, Yale University Press, New Haven: 1982, p. 215.
37. With the exception of the panels by Brangwyn and Sir Frederick Leighton, most critics felt that the Royal Exchange panels were too pictorial in conception, with too much detail and little sense of scale. Little had been done to create a sense of unity between the various panels.
38. Arthur S. Covey, "Mr. Frank Brangwyn's New Panel for the Royal Exchange," The Studio, vol. 39, January 1907, p. 240.
39. Ibid., p. 240.

40. Note that in Westmacott's pediment Commerce is flanked by the prow of a ship and an actual cornucopia.
41. Walter Shaw-Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London: 1910, p. 142.
42. Arthur C. Covey, "Mr. Frank Brangwyn's New Panel for the Royal Exchange," The Studio, vol. 39, January 1907, p. 243.
43. Henry A. Thomas, "An Appreciation of the Work of Mr. Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A. - His Fine Treatment of Commercial Subjects," Magazine of Commerce, vol. 10, March 1907, p. 191.
44. Ibid., p. 191.
45. H. Gordon Selfridge, The Romance of Commerce, John Lane, the Bodley Head, London: 1918, p. 2.
46. Ibid., p. 3.
47. Ibid., p. 4.
48. Ibid., p. 16.
49. See Samuel Hynes, The Edwardian Turn of Mind, Princeton University Press, Princeton: 1968, chapter II, "The Decline and Fall of Tory England", pp. 34-53.
50. Walter Shaw-Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and His Work, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London: 1910, p. 141-142.
51. The Manchester mural cycle was one of the best known murals of the day. Though there is no evidence that he ever saw it directly, Brangwyn would likely have known of it through Harold Rathbone or Ford Madox Ford's 1896 study of Madox Brown. Late in life, in talking to William de Belleruche (Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, p. 127), Brangwyn expressed mixed feelings about the cycle, admiring it as painting but not as decoration.
52. Walter Shaw-Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and His Work, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London: 1910, p. 150.
53. Note that the latter was one of the works Mackmurdo had Brangwyn copy, when it was in the Victoria and Albert Museum.
54. A.S. Covey, "Frank Brangwyn's Scheme for the Decoration of the British Section at the Venice Exhibition," The Studio, vol. 34, May 1905, pp. 285-286.
55. Ibid., p. 291.
56. Covey reproduces Brangwyn's initial design on p. 284. A photograph of the

final installation, slightly changed, is reproduced in Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane The Bodley Head Ltd., London: 1924, p. 55.

57. On Ford Madox Brown and this middle course see Albert Boime, "Ford Madox Brown, Thomas Carlyle, and Karl Marx: Meaning and Mystification of Work in the Nineteenth Century," Arts Magazine, vol. 56, September 1981, pp. 116-125.
58. A.S. Covey, "The Brangwyn Room at The City Art Gallery, Leeds," The Studio, vol. 40, April 1907, p. 182.
59. A.S. Covey, "The Venice Exhibition: Mr. Brangwyn's Decorative Panels in the British Section," The Studio, vol. 41, June 1907, p. 10.
60. Unidentified clipping and reproduction, Brangwyn clippings file, New York Public Library.
61. In 1916-17, these panels were adapted by Brangwyn for billiard room decorations in G.H. Winterbottom's Horton House, Northampton. When the house was torn down during the late 1930's the panels went to The Fine Art Society Ltd., which, in 1951, sold them to the Sargood Trust. The Trust then presented them to the Art Galleries of Wellington and Dunedin, New Zealand.
62. See "British Artists Honoured," The Times, June 20, 1911, p. 13. The medal and certificate are now in the William Morris Gallery.
63. De Carolis (1874-1928) was very strongly influenced by such artists and designers as Walter Crane, William Morris, and Edward Burne-Jones. He was also included in the 1916 exhibition Brangwyn organized in London. See Phillippe Jullian, D'Annunzio, Viking Press, New York: 1973, p. 138.
64. See "Mr. Brangwyn and Italian Art," The Times, March 28, 1916, p. 10. D'Annunzio wrote the preface to the exhibition catalogue and Brangwyn designed the poster. See also Estella Canziani, Round About Three Palace Green, Methuen and Co., London: 1939, p. 179.
65. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, p. 120.
66. E. Trumbull, "Mr. Brangwyn's Tempera Frieze at the London Offices of the Grand Trunk Railway," The Studio, vol. 48, October 1909, pp. 32-33.
67. Ibid., p. 34.
68. Ibid., p. 34.
69. Ibid., p. 33.
70. Walter Shaw-Sparrow, Frank Brangwyn and his Work, Kegan Paul, Trench,

Trubner & Co. Ltd., London: 1910, p. 129.

71. Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane The Bodley Head, London: 1924, p. 82.
72. Ibid., p. 83. The mural remained in place, overpainted and cut down, until the mid-1970's when it was roughly removed from its wall and given by the Railway to the Canadian Government. After sitting for several years in National Gallery of Canada storage rooms it was thoroughly restored and mounted in 1982 in the National Conference Centre, Ottawa. On this see Kay Kritzwiser, 'Preserving the romance of the railways,' The Globe and Mail (Toronto), 14 May, 1983, Entertainment Section, p. 15.
73. Ibid., pp. 93-94. By the late 1960's the Lloyd's Register Panels had so darkened, they were taken down and put in storage.
74. Part of the Ghent carpet is reproduced in Gerald C. Siordet, "Mr. Brangwyn's Tempera Paintings at the Ghent Exhibition," The Studio, vol. 59, June 1913, p. 10. A very similar Bing carpet is reproduced in the Magazine of Art, vol. 1, 1903, p. 394.
75. Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane The Bodley Head, London: 1924, p. 110.
76. Ibid., p. 113-131.
77. An example of this is seen in a catalogue at the back of an edition of Tom Brown's School Days, published by S.W. Partiridge and Co. Ltd., London: 1903. Besides the "popular missionary biographies" such as Jesse Page's Captain Allen Gardiner: Sailor and Saint and the Rev. James Ellis's John Williams: The Martyr Missionary of Polynesia, there were series such as the "Empire Library", "True Grit Series" and "Up to Date Library".
78. W. Macklin and H.A. Rigby, The Decorative Paintings in Christ's Hospital Chapel, St. Dominic's Press, Ditchling: 1925.
79. Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1924, p. 110.
80. Arthur Reddie, "Mr. Brangwyn's Mural Paintings in Christ's Hospital Chapel," The Studio, vol. 66, December 1915, p. 151.
81. Ibid., p. 152.
82. Kitson (1873-1947) was a member of a prominent Leeds family who manufactured locomotives. He was a collector and minor artist who exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists and the Royal Academy. On the mosaic see Arthur Finch, "Recent Decorative Work of Frank Brangwyn: Mosaic Decorations for St. Aidan's Church, Leeds," The Studio, vol. 72, January 1918, pp. 142-47.

83. Dorothy D. Reynolds, "The Revival of Mosaic as a Technique of Wall Decoration in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," paper given at annual conference, The Victorian Society, University of Birmingham, 1978.
84. Ibid., p. 9.
85. Richard Dormont, "Burne-Jones's Roman Mosaics," The Burlington Magazine, vol. 120, February 1978, pp. 73-82.
86. Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber and Co. Ltd., London: 1978, p. 144.
87. The name of the architect of St. Aidan's has never been recorded in the Brangwyn literature.
88. John McAndrew, "The Palazzo Rezzonico: a study of its architecture," Apollo, vol. 105, January 1977, pp. 8-16.
89. Maisie Ward, The Tragi-Comedy of Pen Browning (1849-1912), Sheed and Ward Inc., New York: 1972.
90. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, p. 145-46 and Brangwyn Letter to Elinor Pugh, undated (Spring 1942), William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.
91. Frank T. Verity, Edwin T. Hall, Gerald C. Horsley and Walter Shaw Sparrow, Flats, Urban Houses and Cottage Homes, Hodder and Stoughton, London: 1907, pp. 112-13.
92. Ibid., p. 117.
93. Charles Robert Ashbee, Modern English Silverwork, B.T. Batsford, London: 1909, no. 99, 100.
94. The Watercolour is no. 718 in Bunt and the etching is no. 197 in Gaunt.
95. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, p. 150.
96. On the Casa Cuseni see Isa Vercelloni, "Uno Sconosciuto Gioiello del Primo Novecento Inglese," Casa Vogue, no. 53-54, January-February 1976, pp. 102-107 and Kathy Kurland McCoy, "Casa Cuseni and the Interior Designs of Frank Brangwyn," Apollo, vol. 114, August 1981, pp. 104-08.
97. Roy Strong, Splendour at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and Illusion, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London: 1973, p. 247.
98. "Artists and the Coronation," The Times, 15 March 1911, p. 9.
99. London Standard, 24 February 1911. Reported in Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London:

1924, p. 183.

100. "The New Zealand Coronation Arch," The Times, 3 June 1911, p. 10.
101. "Artists and Decorations - Protest Against the Westminster Council," The Times, 22 June 1911, p. 10.
102. "The Peace Decorations," Architectural Review, vol. 46, December 1919, p. 131. Reported in Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1924, pp. 187-89.
103. Ibid., p. 186.
104. Ibid.
105. Samuel Hynes, The Edwardian Turn of Mind, Princeton University Press, Princeton: 1968, pp. 22-34.
106. Piers Brendon, Eminent Edwardians, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: 1979, chapter 4.
107. On the American mural movement see Pauline King, American Mural Painting, Noyes, Platt and Co., Boston: 1902 and Richard Murray, Art for Architecture, Washington D.C. 1895-1925, National Collection of Fine Arts, Washington: 1975.
108. Charles F. Schweinfurth to County Building Commission, letter of 16 September 1911, Cuyahoga County Archives, Cleveland.
109. The only other artists to work on the courthouse were the sculptors Karl Bitter and Herbert Adams and the stained glass designer Frederick Wilson.
110. Arthur S. Covey, "A Brangwyn Masterpiece for Cleveland's New Courthouse," Colliers Magazine, vol. 52, 18 October 1913, p. 10. No further literature exists in the Cuyahoga County Archives and a fruitless search has been made in the Cleveland newspapers. No one apparently commented on Brangwyn not being an American artist. An important later article on the work is Gertrude Underhill, "Mural Decorations in Cleveland," Art and Archaeology, vol. 16, October-November 1923, pp. 202-205.
111. The medal is now in the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.
112. The courtyard was also known as the "Court of the Ages".
113. Louis Christian Mullgardt, The Architecture and Landscape Gardens of the Exposition, Paul Elder and Co., San Francisco: 1915, foreward.
114. Arthur Finch, "Recent Decorative Work of Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A. - Mural Painting in the Panama-Pacific Exposition," The Studio, vol. 72, October 1917, p. 3.

115. Hamilton Wright, "Mural Decorations at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition," California's Magazine, vol. 2, 1916, pp. 130-31.
116. Christian Brinton, Impressions of the Art at the Panama-Pacific Exposition, John Lane Co., New York: 1916, pp. 47-48.
117. San Francisco Bulletin, 25 May 1915. Reported in Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, p. 103.
118. The role of treasure as an adventure motif can also be seen in such novels as Rider Haggard's King Solomon's Mines (1885) and Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island (1882).
119. "The Art of Sir Frank Brangwyn," The Times, 10 October 1952, p. 2.
120. Jefferson Hunter, Edwardian Fiction, Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1982, p. 79. The term "Balfourian" refers to the Edwardian Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, and his book, A Defence of Philosophic Doubt.
121. Diana L. Johnson and George P. Landow, Fantastic Illustration and Design in Britain, 1850-1930, Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence: 1979.
122. Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber and Co. Ltd., London: 1978, p. 124.
123. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
124. Galloway lists nearly sixty and Bunt a similar number of Venetian subjects in Brangwyn's oeuvre. Brangwyn also illustrated Edward Hutton's, The Pageant of Venice, in 1922.
125. Wendy Baron, Sickert, Phaidon Press, London: 1973, cat. no. 132-34, plates 92-94.
126. Walter Richard Sickert, "Culture for the East End", The Art News, 26 May 1910, reprinted in A Free House, Osbert Sitwell, ed., Macmillan and Co., London: 1947, pp. 187-88.
127. Information on Covey comes from Who's Who in American Art, artist's clippings file at New York Public Library and Covey memoir manuscript with his son, Laird Covey, Easton, Connecticut.
128. Arthur S. Covey, "Frank Brangwyn's scheme for the Decoration of the British Section at the Venice Exhibition," The Studio, vol. 34, May 1905, pp. 284-92.
 Arthur S. Covey, "The Brangwyn Room at the City Art Gallery, Leeds," The Studio, vol. 40, April 1907, pp. 181-87.
 Arthur S. Covey, "The Venice Exhibition: Mr. Brangwyn's Decorative Panels in the British Section," The Studio, vol. 41, June 1907, pp. 9-21.

Arthur S. Covey, "Mr. Frank Brangwyn's New Panel for the Royal Exchange," The Studio, vol. 39, January 1907, pp. 239-43.

129. Information on Trumbull comes from Who's Who in American Art, the artist's clippings file, New York Public Library, and his obituary, "Edward Trumbull, Painter of Murals," New York Times, 28 May 1968, p. 47.
130. Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber and Co. Ltd., London: 1978, pp. 275-76.
131. Information on True comes from Who's Who in American Art, the artist's clippings file at the New York Public Library and True's obituary, "Allen True, 73, Mural Painter, Dies in Denver," Rocky Mountain News, 9 November 1955, pp. 5-6.
132. Henry C.V. Morton, In the Steps of the Master, Rich and Cowan Ltd., London: 1934; In the Steps of St. Paul, Rich and Cowan Ltd., London: 1936.
133. Reproduced in Percy V. Bradshaw, Art in Advertising, The Press Art School, London: 1925, p. 263.
134. Reproduced in The Studio, vol. 57, February 1916, p. 49.
135. For Murphy's obituary see "Death of Noted Illustrator," New York Times, 25 January 1967, p. 43.
136. With his son, Dr. Sean B. Murphy, in Montreal, Canada.
137. C. Peter Helck, letter to Robert J. Lamb, 22 August 1978.
138. Information on Cornwell comes from the artist's clippings file, New York Public Library, from Patricia Janis Broder, Dean Cornwell, Watson Guptill, New York: 1978 and from Cornwell's son, Kirkham, letter to Robert J. Lamb, 12 August 1978.
139. Information about the school is found in its advertisements in The Year's Art, Hutchinson & Co., London: 1907-11.
140. "Was Frank Brangwyn a Great Artist?," The Times, 6 March 1962, p. 5.
141. Nina Hamnett, Laughing Torso, Ray Long and Richard R. Smith Inc., New York: 1932, p. 20.
142. On Richter see H. Granville Fell, The Art of H. Davis Richter, foreward by Frank Brangwyn, F. Lewis Publishers, Benfleet, Essex: 1935.
143. Gail Levin, Synchromism and American Colour Abstraction 1910-1925, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York: 1978, cat. no. 138.
144. On their contact see Bernard Leach, Beyond East and West, Watson-Guptill

Publications, New York: 1978, pp. 35-36.

145. D. H. Lawrence, letter to Ernest Collings, 24 December 1912, in The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, William Heinemann Ltd., London: 1932, p. 86.
146. On the Senefelder Club see A.S. Hartrick, A Painter's Pilgrimage Through Fifty Years, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1939 and Campbell Dodgson and Joseph Pennell, The Senefelder Club, Twenty-One Gallery, London: 1922. On Brangwyn's pre-war posters see Walter Shaw Sparrow, Prints and Drawings by Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1919, Chapter 13. Brangwyn's earliest known poster was for The Studio in 1899. Another was done for the P. & O. shipping line about 1902. It was based on a water colour view of the S.S. Ophir at Port Said (Bunt no. 472).
147. In 1919, in conjunction with a Royal Academy exhibition of Canadian war art, the Canadian War Records Office commissioned Brangwyn to design six lithographs, The Ruins of War, commemorating places where Canadian had fought. This was the closest Brangwyn came to being an official war artist.
148. Arnold Bennett, letter to Thomas Bodkin, 4 April 1918, in The Letters of Arnold Bennett, vol. III, Oxford University Press, London: 1970, p. 54. Other members of the Committee were Lord Beaverbrook, Charles Masterman, Campbell Dodgson, P.G. Konody, Muirhead Bone and Robert Ross.
149. One exception to this rule was the stamp Brangwyn designed on the theme of Mars Appeals to Vulcan. See A Catalogue of War Auto-Lithographs designed by Frank Brangwyn, the Avenue Press, London: 1920.
150. Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory, Oxford University Press, London: 1977, p. 7.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SPIRIT SHAKEN 1918 - 1933

In 1918 Frank Brangwyn was fifty-one years old and the Edwardian age was over. He, and Britain, were now entering a new, more disturbing period in their lives. Up until now they had enjoyed a rare rapport. Brangwyn had worked very hard, had gone from one success to another, was rich, honoured around the world and admired by his many devoted friends. At the time, he was probably the most famous of living British artists. His life was not perfect but his problems seemed manageable. A slow transformation now began. The corrosive acid of doubt began to work, both on Brangwyn's confidence and on British confidence in general. Both were increasingly forced to examine their principles and failings. This process went on at least through the 1950's. It left Britain a shaky, second rate power and Brangwyn an embittered reactionary.

In 1918, however, all this seemed far away. "Business as usual" and a "return to normalcy" were the brave slogans of the day. Brangwyn was still finishing his murals for Christ's Hospital and would soon be caught up in major commissions from Selfridge's, Manitoba and Missouri. In 1918, he was elected to the Institut de France. In 1919 he was elected a full Royal Academician and a commander of the order of Leopold of Belgium. In 1920 he was elected an officer of the Legion of Honour and, in 1921, the President of the Society of Graphic Arts. In 1919, 1924 and 1926, major books on his work appeared¹ and in 1924 he was given a large retrospective in London.²

On the other hand, he was disgruntled over what he saw as a lack of recognition at home and a long overdue advancement in the Royal Academy. For his passion for work, he had paid dearly, in the ruining of his health and marriage. During the war, he had worked himself to a state of exhaustion and had undergone several major operations. He had been out of action for much of 1917 and, though he was now back at work, he would be increasingly plagued by

ailments for the rest of his life. Some were undoubtedly real but many were psychosomatic and would turn him into a complete hypochondriac. As for his marriage, he had probably neglected his wife. Unable to understand and participate in his career and, after a miscarriage, unable to bear children, she had gradually been frustrated and turned to alcohol. Brangwyn, in turn, had taken a mistress and fathered an illegitimate son. The tension and guilt thus generated, combined with the pressures of his work, had greatly worsened his temper and intensified his social isolation. His wife's death, in December 1924, and his already strong doubts over his role in the War multiplied this guilt and loneliness and, in part, drove him more closely to the consolations of religion and outright superstition, which slowly came to dominate his life.

Another factor in his isolation was his retreat from London to the village of Ditchling, in Sussex (fig. 106). This had started during the War, when he had bought a house in Ditchling to escape the zeppelin raids. Through the twenties, he spent winters in London and summers in Ditchling but, after 1930, he lived exclusively in Ditchling. While friends and admirers still came to visit him, his contacts with the larger world grew more and more restricted. Edward VIII once commented on George V waging "a private war with the twentieth century".³ During the last twenty years of his life, much the same could have been said of Frank Brangwyn.

What were and what caused the changes in British society in which Brangwyn did not participate or fully understand? Many of these changes were the result of the war but many had started previously and were accelerated by it. The industrial stagnation of the country had been growing for over thirty years. Little had been done to modernize industry, fast and easy profits had been taken and reliance had been placed on the declining fields of coal, textiles and

shipbuilding. America, Germany and Japan had grown as economic powers and begun to cut into traditional British markets. This basic stagnation intensified during the interwar period due mainly to massive war debts - especially to America - which drained away reconstruction capital, and to the economic timidity of successive British governments.

Connected to these economic changes were a series of intellectual changes that can be summarized as "the rise of doubt". A belief in reason, the inevitability of progress and the superiority of British culture were basic parts of Victorian and Edwardian society. They had, of course, been challenged before the war by the teachings of Marx and Freud and by various nationalisms, trade unionism and women's suffrage. Only the massive slaughter of the war, however, was a strong enough challenge to shake their hold on the national mind and permit opposing beliefs to gain greater currency. Among the middle-aged the result was often fatalism or a blind obstinacy to change. Among the young it often led to the myth of the lost generation, betrayed by the "old men"⁴, and to a cynicism over the "old men's" ideals: the life of action, "the white man's burden", "the war to end wars", etc. It was a broad yet not revitalizing doubt about all aspects of British society both at home and internationally.

Stemming from the abovementioned economic and political changes were a whole range of secondary social changes. The rise of unionism and chronic unemployment led to an increased radicalism among the working class and subsequent denial of broad social solidarity. Unionism and colonial nationalism led to a loosening of imperial ties -especially in India and Ireland - to the replacement of a "mother country" theory of Empire by a vaguer one of the Commonwealth of Nations, and even to a belief in pacifism and internationalism. The rise of America to power meant that currents of cultural influence were

reversed, that Britain now was being Americanized by new technologies, modes of organization and social mores. Women's suffrage, the popularization of Freud and religious doubt led to the questioning of a whole range of social and familial relationships and then to the emancipated woman, the rise of the divorce rate and the decline of church attendance. During the 'twenties the "bright young things" cultivated alternative styles of manhood - the dandy and the naïf⁵, abandoned an interest in politics and business, flirted with decadence and satirized Edwardian values. During the 'thirties, a more active, earnest approach to life was in vogue but one that was social democratic, pacifist, even utopian and equally hostile to Edwardian values.

In the arts in Britain, similar massive changes in values were occurring and deep divisions over them between the "old men" and the younger intelligentsia. In the musical world, Elgar was still active, Vaughan Williams was becoming the beau-ideal and William Walton was the enfant terrible. In literature, the pre-war giants, Kipling, Masfield, Galsworthy, Wells, Forster and Shaw still dominated the 'twenties' scene while Eliot and Lawrence began to establish their names. During the thirties, writers like Waugh, Huxley and Orwell came to critical attention. In painting, the right was held by the Royal Academy, with such Presidents as the Victorian classicist, Sir Edward Poynter, to 1918, the architect Sir Aston Webb to 1924 and the late Pre-Raphaelite, Sir Frank Dicksee, to 1928. Not until the mid-1950's, would the Academy have a president who was not molded by the Edwardian age. Even the artistic modernists of the twenties were tame. They were consolidating and domesticating the artistic lessons of pre-war Paris, of post-impressionism, cubism, fauvism, etc. and of Roger Fry's two Post-Impressionist exhibitions, in 1910 and 1912. Fry, with his strong formalist ideas, was the leading modernist critic. Active younger artists included Mark Gertler,

Duncan Grant, Matthew Smith, Stanley Spencer, Paul Nash and Jacob Epstein. During the 'thirties, British modernism took on a more crusading role, with native movements developing in abstraction, surrealism, constructivism and functionalist architecture. Herbert Read became the leading critic and Ben Nicholson, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Graham Sutherland all came to the forefront of British art. For them, Brangwyn and his ilk were irrelevant to modern artistic concerns. By 1939, standards had changed such that a Tate Gallery exhibition on Mural Painting in Great Britain 1919-1939 could, in its catalogue, barely mention the Edwardian mural movement and Brangwyn not at all.⁶ Among over eighty muralists, most of them minor modernists,⁷ only three Edwardians were included: Sir George Clausen, Sir William Rothenstein and Augustus John. Of these, only Clausen had done much work as a muralist. Another Exhibition of Contemporary British Art, organized the same year by the British Council and sent to the New York World's Fair, included over 120 artists. Seventeen well known Edwardians were included but not Frank Brangwyn. Of the remaining modernists, only about thirty are at all remembered today.

In 1918, however, Brangwyn was still at the centre of the action and, naturally, got involved in the making of war memorials, in which the Edwardians commemorated their lost sons. That many of these showed heightened religious feeling is only expected, but in Brangwyn's case this was especially strong. During the nineties he had painted religious works (ie. St. Simon Stylites), but with little religious emotion. During the teens he had designed the St. Aidan's Mosaic and was still working for Christ's Hospital. He had painted a Crucifixion in 1911 (Glasgow Museum and Art Gallery) and had used religious imagery in his war painting, Mater Dolorosa Belgica, (1915, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow). Now he got involved in a scheme for the rebuilding and

redcoration of war damaged churches in Belgium and France. Recommended by his friend, Theophile Steinlen, he was commissioned to paint a series of Stations of the Cross for Arras Cathedral. Reproductions of these were to be distributed to other churches. Over the next six years, Brangwyn made many drawings and studies but finished only three Stations (fig. 107). After the death of Steinlen in 1924, the death of his model for Christ and the dwindling interest of the organizing committee, he abandoned the project but not the general idea.

About the same time as he received the Arras commission, Brangwyn accepted a second Stations commission (fig. 108, 109), for a leper mission church, at Westfort, just west of Pretoria, South Africa.⁸ Father Thomas Ryan, the mission's priest, had solicited donations from around the world and thus financed the building of the church during the teens. When he made a second appeal, for church decorations, he asked artists to donate one station apiece for a series of Stations of the Cross. Brangwyn was touched by his appeal and, though he was busy, volunteered to paint the whole series. This consisted of fourteen panels measuring about 3 x 4 feet and painted in tempera. For them, he changed and adapted designs he was working on for Arras so that the genesis of the two series is, in effect, one. Because of time pressure, both from Ryan and from other commissions, Brangwyn's designs were hurried and had to be executed by the less skillful hand of an assistant. When the Stations were shipped to South Africa in 1922⁹, he was dissatisfied with them. By the time he abandoned the Arras Stations in 1924, he was still dissatisfied. During the next ten years he was preoccupied with the British Empire Panels for the House of Lords and with the Rockefeller Center murals but, about 1931, had treated religious subjects in his illustrations for an edition of Jean and Jérôme Tharaud's The Shadow of the Cross.¹⁰ The theme of Stations of the Cross was taken up again about 1934.

This time Brangwyn worked in lithography (fig. 110, 111) and his drawings were printed, by an experimental process, on sycamore blocks, 30 x 32 inches. Three sets were printed and given to Campion Hall, Oxford, the monastery of St. André near Bruges and the Brighton Art Gallery. An additional sixteen sets were also printed on paper. Their publication was accompanied by a book of illustrations, The Way of the Cross, with an introduction by the writer and Catholic apologist, G. K. Chesterton.¹¹

Brangwyn's three Stations of the Cross stand out from the rest of his works in their emotional intensity. This feeling increases from the earliest studies to the finished 1935 lithographs in line with the artist's increasing religiosity. If Brangwyn's other works are decorative in an epic or lyric mode, the Stations are communicative of anguish and suffering, in an almost expressionist manner. They might even be compared, in their intensity, to Emil Nolde's famous cycle of religious paintings of 1909-12, especially The Last Supper (1909, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Copenhagen) and Christ Among the Children (1910, Museum of Modern Art, New York). Herbert Furst quoted Brangwyn as saying that he aimed to work within yet still stretch the strict conventions of the Stations theme to raise the empathy of the modern viewer.¹² His means of doing so were the compression of space, the simplification and grotesque exaggeration of form and gesture and the dramatic contrast of dark and light. Brangwyn's figures, however exaggerated, are still well modelled, still well within the classical tradition of drawing. It is tradition that limits their intensity, that denies them the timelessness Brangwyn so desired.

Of strong, but less personal meaning than the Stations was Brangwyn's next mural commission, The Canadian War Record, painted for the Manitoba Legislative Building in Winnipeg, Canada (fig. 112-114). The Legislative Building

expressed the high cultural ambitions of the elite in the new and booming prairie province. The subject of an Empire-wide competition, it was designed in a plain classical style by the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Frank Worthington Simon, and was erected between 1913 and 1919. Simon probably recommended Brangwyn as "the greatest living master of mural decoration"¹³ and, enthusiastic about the subject, Brangwyn is supposed to have accepted the commission for the cut rate of just over \$10,000.¹⁴ Started in 1919, the mural was finished by December 1920 and installed in Winnipeg by March 1921. It was painted in tempera and fitted into a lunette, 15 x 22 feet, over the doorway to the legislative chamber. The subject may have been chosen in Winnipeg but the treatment was Brangwyn's own. His scene was a badly shelled wood, with the ruins of a church and a large field gun in the background. Amid the ruins stands a statue of the Virgin and Child. In the foreground, soldiers go about their business, talking, playing musical instruments, carrying the wounded, eating and drinking, and tending the gun. At their feet, flowers spring up through the mud. The composition is standard, a horizontal mass of figures balanced and ordered by the vertical tree trunks. The colour is a contrast to warm tans and orange reds against a blue-grey ground and the warm grey of the building stone. Dappled light breaks through the foliage and falls on the soldiers. Several major critics¹⁵ interpreted the mural as a realistic allegory of war, emphasizing the role of the Virgin and Child and of the cyclical imagery of life springing from death and destruction. This combined method of realism and allegory is made clearer by contrast with other contemporary war paintings, done for the Canadian War Records Office.¹⁶ John Byam Shaw's The Flag (c. 1918, National Gallery of Canada, fig. 115), for instance, is an outright allegory of ritualistic sacrifice and prayer, with a frieze of representative Canadian types

converging from left and right to pay homage at a large monument. Atop the monument, between the paws of the British lion, rests the dead body of a soldier. Still grasped in his hands and falling down the front of the monument is the Canadian red ensign. Falling into the old tradition of battle painting, with panoramic views, massed figures, precise detail and the conventional heroism of war are Edgar Bundy's Landing of the 1st Canadian Division at St. Nazaire (1918, The Senate, Ottawa, fig. 116)) and Richard Jack's The Second Battle of Ypres (c. 1918, The Senate, Ottawa, fig. 117). Whatever their precision of detail, they are as a whole, grand idealizations of their subjects. The First German Gas Attack at Ypres (c. 1918, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, fig. 118), by William Roberts, the Vorticist painter, is a war painting of another stamp. Representational, but highly arbitrary in colour, space and form, it nevertheless conveys the terrible emotional impact of its subject more strongly than do Shaw's, Bundy's and Jack's paintings. Brangwyn's mural falls somewhere between these alternatives. Its allegory is very subdued and its realism, that of humble Brangwyn "types", makes its heroic action more prosaic and believable than that of Bundy and Jack. It is neither a glorification nor a condemnation of war but rather a testament to the strength and endurance of ordinary men caught in an extraordinary situation. Its upbeat but humane message is very un-modern in comparison to the horror of Roberts' painting and the cynical black humour of contemporary attitudes to war. It is typical not so much of war paintings as of post-war memorials, the tone of which was generally subdued.

Artists and architects found it almost impossible to present the soldier as a heroic figure, for the horror of the war had touched everyone...The impulses of the major architects and artists appear to have been two-fold, on the one hand a form of naturalism (with implied heroism) and on the other a restrained classicism culminating in Lutyen's geometrically complex designs for the monuments at Thiepval and the Cenotaph.¹⁷

Reflective of the "business as usual" approach of the twenties, were Brangwyn's next two commissions, both for the decoration of domes, one for Selfridge's Department Store, in London, and the other for the Missouri State Capitol, in Jefferson City. The former came from Harry Gordon Selfridge (1857-1947) - "Mile a Minute Harry" - the Wisconsin born, Horatio Alger hero who introduced American push into British business, in 1906, with the modern department store and high powered advertising methods. Selfridge spent lavishly and with great panache. His book, The Romance of Commerce, has already been mentioned and his regular column in The Times made him a well known lay-philosopher of the capitalist ideal. According to his friend, Ralph Blumenfeld, Editor of The Daily Express, Selfridge,

was fully aflame with what he called the Romance of Commerce. His greatest heroes were the German Fuggers and the merchant princes of Venice, Genoa and Florence. To be a Medici; to command caravans and direct ships; to live in palaces like Oriental despots; to roam the world in a golden galleon -these were the dreams of Gordon Selfridge.¹⁸

They were also, in part, the dreams of Frank Brangwyn, who in Selfridge found a patron after his own heart. Many of Selfridge's dreams concerned megalomaniac building schemes, most of which were never completed and which eventually brought him to ruin. His original, classically styled, Oxford Street store of 1907-09, a collaboration between the American architects Daniel Burnham and Albert D. Miller and the British architects Sir John J. Burnet, Francis Swales and R. Frank Atkinson, was already the largest in the land. Over the next twenty years, he expanded it even further. One part of this expansion was to have been a vast tower, about 350 feet high, which would have dwarfed the store beneath it and outtopped the dome of St. Paul's. The exact history of this tower is uncertain, but it seems to have been an on-again, off-again project, dependent on

Selfridge's finances, from as early as 1915 to as late as the mid-twenties.¹⁹ Philip A. Tilden, Selfridge's personal architect, made designs for the tower (fig. 119)²⁰ yet the only preserved plans for it are those of Sir John Burnet (fig. 120), dating from December 1918.²¹ Brangwyn's involvement in the project seems to have come between 1921 and 1923. He was asked to decorate a vast interior dome, pendentives and soffits, about a third of the way up the tower. The crown of the dome was about 130 feet above the floor, its diameter about 70 feet and its area about 4700 square feet. It was lit by four windows 24 feet high. Because of pollution, Brangwyn wanted his decorations in mosaic and in a reverse technique, much as he had used at St. Aidan's. The technical difficulties of working on such a large scale, on a curved surface, were tremendous and Brangwyn, no mathematician himself, got engineering help to calculate and correct problems of visual distortion, etc. He also had built an eight foot high model of the dome, which he set up in his studio to help in his conception. The theme of the decorations was International Commerce, in keeping with Selfridge's fantasies. The inside of the dome was conceived of as the globe, with contrasting dark and light bands of land and sea representing its various nations (identified in lettering), linked by commerce (fig. 121, 122). Sailing the sea, lower on the dome, were large galleons and other ships. Filling the pendentives were exotic figural compositions representing four major commercial peoples in history; the Phoenicians, Greeks, Venetians, and British, all engaged in trading, loading and unloading goods, etc. Brangwyn's designs are known only by drawings and large coloured studies²², for the tower was never erected, due in part, to Selfridge's blind optimism in the face of such practical problems as shaky finances, County Council building permits and the vast weight of the tower threatening the Oxford Street Underground. By the mid-twenties, in any case,

such a project and the idealism that generated it were starting to appear ridiculous. Herbert Furst, for instance, in his chapter on the project, quoted typically effusive passages from Selfridge's The Romance of Commerce and then remarked ironically that,

This is not the place to comment on such statements or to questions their validity. They explain, however, sufficiently the temperament that decided on the grandiose Oxford St. building scheme and the choice of an Artist of Brangwyn's calibre to assist in it, is further accounted for by the following utterance; "it is also well to remember that beauty is always of advantage in commerce.²³

Furst, however, insisted on Brangwyn's purely professional interest in the project. This seems a case of special pleading, of preserving his hero from his, by then, less fashionable sympathies.

A second case of carrying the pre-war spirit into the post-war age was Brangwyn's next American commission, the painting of the dome, pendentives and lower rotunda dome panels for the Missouri State Capitol, between 1919 and 1925.²⁴ One of the last of the now declining line of American Renaissance state capitols, the Missouri capitol was built between 1913 and 1917. Designed by the New York architects, Evarts Tracy and Egerton Swarthout (formerly with McKim, Mead and White), it is a vast, sumptuous structure of pale grey limestone (fig. 123), completely dwarfing the surrounding town. When public interest in it started to decline, during the war, the State created the Capitol Decoration Commission²⁵, gave them a budget of over a million dollars and directed them to garnish the bare building. Working through Swarthout, over the next decade, they commissioned murals, sculptures and stained glass windows from many artists, such as Brangwyn, Gari Melchers, N.C. Wyeth, A. Stirling Calder, Herman Atkins McNeill, Karl Bitter and Allen True. That a foreigner got the most prestigious commission and was paid \$70,000. for it brought the inevitable protest from artistic nationalists.²⁶ Most people, however, thought

his murals the best in the capitol, an opinion still supported today.²⁷

The problems of scale and distortion here²⁸ were as complicated as those in the Selfridge dome (fig. 124). Where Brangwyn had used a model before, he now obtained papier maché casts and elaborate sectional drawings of the pendentives and lower dome panels to help him. Pollution, however, was not a problem, so instead of mosaic, he now worked in flat oils on linen canvas, which was then marouflaged to the dome surface.²⁹ The iconographical scheme laid out for the murals is typical in showing the march of progress in Missouri to its prosperous and perfected present. The eye of the dome contains four frankly allegorical figures; Agriculture, Commerce, Science and Education, main-springs of the state's wealth. The four pendentives, more realistic in treatment, show "Missouri in Four Great Historial Periods": the landing of Laclede in 1764 (fig. 125), the pioneers coming from the east, the home builders taming the land, and the modern builders of Missouri commerce and industry (fig. 126). The eight lower dome panels (fig. 127), done between 1923 and 1925, were seen as an allegorical introduction to the dome murals above. They show the now familiar four elements: Earth, Air, Fire and Water, tamed by man through Agriculture, Science, Education and Art. There is little new in Brangwyn's style and treatment of the these subjects but in formal power and coherence they are among the handsomest decorations of his career. Though their theme no longer convinces, it once inspired Brangwyn's friend, the critic Crossley Davies, to write,

Brangwyn has written anew the history of man. It is an illustrated history that needs no text. It is a document as well as a decoration. Missouri has no finer monument, mankind no better history.³⁰

Back in Britain, this confidence in progress and prosperity was increasingly forced. The hard facts of national decline could not easily be ignored. This is

seen in several statements regarding the 1924 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley. In its editorial on the Exhibition opening, The Times admitted the insufficiency of the adventurous spirit in making the Empire great. "Many a young man of our cities," it wrote,

will find it difficult to walk past the overseas pavillions...without feeling that almost irresistible tugging at the heart-strings which drew the pioneers of old to cross the oceans and to blaze the trail for those who followed. But, when it comes to hard facts, it is no use for our young men to go, and it is no use our sending them, unless we find markets for their produce.³¹

Even the official organizers were defensive in stating the Exhibition's aims.

The British Empire Exhibitions is a patriotic undertaking in the most definite sense of the word. It will be in effect an Imperial stock-taking and a vast window display. Those who doubt the Empire's potentialities, and those who simply do not consider them, will be confronted with a clear sight of what this great community of free nations can produce...

It will show that the raw materials and the manufactures of the Empire need fear no foreign competition...We possess every kind of climate, every kind of mineral wealth, every potentiality that is known in the world. We have the best race of men to use and develop them. Increased production and scientific distribution in our own lands are essential if we are to recover our former strength and remove the burden of debt that lies upon us.³²

Many of the festivities of the Exhibition were therefore an attempt to restore British confidence. One was a vast Pageant of Empire, held in the exhibition stadium from late July through August. It cost over £100,000, employed over fifteen thousand performers and took three days for each performance. It was plagued with organizational problems and many of its participants withdrew, but it finally opened on July 21st. Brangwyn designed the scenery and considered the Pageant "one of the most thrilling experiences I've ever had."³³ Other famous participants were the poets Rudyard Kipling and Alfred Noyes, the composers Sir Edward Elgar and Ralph Vaughan Williams, and the theatre director Harley

Granville-Barker.³⁴ The Pageant was divided into three parts: Westward Ho (the British in North America), Eastward Ho (the British in South Africa and India) and Southward Ho (the British in Australia and New Zealand).³⁵ Its uniting spirit came from Kipling's image of a "Bridge of Empire",

a bridge started by the heros of the past and completed by the Dominions and Colonies, with their achievements and sacrifices for the common cause...

Spanning a harbour basin between great towers, the bridge is gradually put together by the devoted men and women of whose ideal...it presents a symbol. Each episode is considered as a block of stone that is swung up on a scaffolding and placed in a position in the architectural scene. Only at the end of the Pageant is the bridge completed. Sacrifice, loyalty and love are the factors in its accomplishment. Now at last the peoples of the Empire can pass freely over in one humane fellowship.³⁶

The allegory of the bridge was one that meant a lot to Brangwyn. He had long been interested in bridges, had put them in his murals (i.e. Canadian National Grand Trunk Railway mural), and in 1914-15, had collaborated with Walter Shaw-Sparrow on a history, A Book of Bridges.³⁷ In his preface, Sparrow spoke more bluntly than Kipling of the meaning of bridges. He did not mention Empire but his statements are compatible with it. Sparrow wrote that,

bridges have represented types of societies, every change in their development having been brought about by changes in social needs.

One thing more than any other is attractive to a pontist: it is the varied strife that bridges and roads have circulated...in the thronged struggle for existence - the one incessant war in the affairs of man. A routine of idle sentiment prattles about an illusion named Peace, yet strife everywhere remains the historian of life...Even sleep, the nearest kinswoman of peace, is united to the law of battle by dreams that torture. A pontist, then, when studying the strife that roads and bridges have distributed, must clear from his mind the fanciful ideas that pacifism has invented; he is an adventurer in history, not an idler in the world of visions.³⁸

Another book, Charles Whitney's Bridges, a copy of which was in Brangwyn's

library³⁹, describes its subject in complementary terms. "Bridges," it says,

are among the most ancient and honorable members of society, with a backbround rich in tradition and culture. For countless generations they have borne the burdens of the world and many of them have been great works of arts.⁴⁰

Little is known today of Brangwyn's contribution to the Pageant beyond a hazy memoir⁴¹ and a poor newspaper photograph, from *Westward Ho*, of John Cabot's discovery of North America.⁴² He is supposed to have transformed the Wembley stadium almost in the manner of the Romans in their Colosseum spectacles, with vast canvas backdrops for the varied mountains and forests of the Empire and a life-sized lake and galleon in the centre. His images were consistent with those of his murals but it pleased him even more to communicate them to so much larger an audience.

Another project which absorbed Brangwyn's energies at the time was the designing of an art museum in Tokyo, Japan (fig. 128). Like several of his twenties' projects, it started with high hopes but ended in disaster and shook Brangwyn's confidence severely. It came from the Japanese shipping magnate and industrialist, Kojiro Matsukata (1865-1950), son of Prince Masayoshi Matsukata (1835-1924), the premier statesman of Meiji era Japan⁴³. The Matsukatas were strongly westernized. Kojiro had a law degree from Rutgers University, in New Jersey, and his brothers had studied at Harvard, in England and in Germany. He first came in contact with Brangwyn through his older brother Shosaku (1863-?), a diplomat serving in the London embassy, around 1908. With his strong Arts and Crafts background, Brangwyn was fascinated by things Japanese. Shosaku would visit him in his Hammersmith home to discuss Japanese pottery, part of Brangwyn's large pottery collection. He brought friends with him and, on one occasion, his younger brother. Kojiro Matsukata

was a major collector of western art, whose collection at the time included works by Puvis, Rodin, Bocklin, Denis, Sargent, Monet, Gauguin, Cézanne and Matisse. Among British artists, he owned works by Orpen, John and D.Y. Cameron. His collection would go eventually toward the founding of Tokyo's Museum of Western Art.⁴⁴

Matsukata's vast wealth and collecting ambitions created unease about his motives in British circles. Brangwyn seems to have taken him at face value but one writer quoted him as admitting he wanted,

To enable my countrymen to understand the psychology of Western peoples. It will help them in the application of Occidental methods in manufacturing, and in many phases of industrial life. Art is the expression of the soul of an people. I care nothing about your controversies over different schools of art; I buy examples of them all for all are expressive of your psychology.⁴⁵

The writer then went on to suggest that Matsukata's collecting was part of a Japanese government plot for world supremacy.⁴⁶ Another writer disclaimed these impure motives and felt Matsukata genuinely loved western art and, in opening his museum, was a public spirited citizen of the highest order.⁴⁷ Herbert Furst inclined toward the former view. "It is probably true," he wrote,

that Orientals in general, and the Japanese in particular, are making a closer and more purposeful study of Western mentality and its thousand years of piebald achievement than we Occidentals are making of theirs, and so one never meets a yellow man whose eyes do not speak, however wreathed in smiles his countenance, however aimiable his tongue, a deep down, silent, but eloquent contempt for our "superiority". The East is determined to beat us at our own game, as no doubt it will, but our game is not everything, as even we are beginning to find out.⁴⁸

During the post-war period, Furst's demoralization was a common feeling in Britain.

Matsukata and Brangwyn soon became close and it was probably through his doing that Brangwyn was appointed to the Fine Arts Committee of the Japan-

British Exhibition of 1910⁴⁹ and later awarded the Order of the Rising Sun. He soon began buying Brangwyn paintings and eventually owned about sixty to seventy of them.⁵⁰ In 1916 Brangwyn painted his portrait (Museum of Western Art, Tokyo) and, in 1918, Matsukata presented Mrs. Brangwyn with a bronze bust of her husband (Wolverhampton Art Gallery) by the sculptor Alfred Drury. During the war, Matsukata had the idea of building a gallery to house the collection and, when his father offered him a site overlooking Tokyo, he decided to make it a public museum and commissioned Brangwyn to design it. Brangwyn worked on his plans for about three or four years and, by 1922, had sent them to Tokyo, for modification by Japanese architects and engineers. His drawings were published in several magazines, both in Britain and Japan,⁵¹ and it is from these that we get our information about the building. The museum was to have consisted of two buildings; a gallery proper and a smaller building containing a decorative arts gallery, library and guest house. They were to sit on a large, paved, tree-shaded terrace, were to be linked by a sunken garden and were to cover over two acres and exceed both the Tate and Luxembourg Galleries combined in their accomodation.⁵²

Brangwyn's design was for a one storey reddish brick structure, quadrangular in shape, with a portico at the entrance (fig. 129) and an arcaded courtyard and fountain at the centre (fig. 130). The sloping roof was of teak, covered with Japanese tiles, and the galleries themselves (fig. 131) were lit by skylights. The building was vaguely classical in its symmetry and proportions but was stripped of almost all period detail and, in its plain, straightforward use of materials, showed affinities with traditional Japanese architecture. Only the entrance foyer, with a blue and gold mosaic ceiling, fountain and stained glass windows illustrating modern industries, was lavishly decorated. Spaces were

reserved in the galleries for later mural decorations.

Reports in The Times⁵³ and the International Studio⁵⁴ say that, in 1922, construction of the museum was already underway, yet, on September 1st, 1923, everything ground to a halt with the great Tokyo earthquake. Construction was delayed and Matsukata's collection kept in storage. Then, in 1927, came major financial reverses⁵⁵ that killed the project completely. The collection remained in storage in London, Paris and Tokyo. The London part (about 600 works, including forty Brangwyns) was destroyed in a fire in October 1939.⁵⁶ The Paris part was confiscated during World War II and only returned to Japan after Matsukata's death, for the opening of a new Museum of Western Art, designed by Le Corbusier, in 1959.⁵⁷

The main positive event in Brangwyn's 'twenties career was a massive retrospective exhibition organized for May to July 1924 by his dealer, David Croal Thomson. It was the largest one man show ever held in England, including about 500 works, and it may still be one of the largest held anywhere. Since no public museums were available and the show was too large for Thomson's own gallery, Barbizon House, it was held in the galleries of a private mansion of a Mrs. Coutts-Michie, loaned for the purpose, at 184 Queen's Gate. About 750 people attended the opening⁵⁸ and over ten thousand visited the exhibition.⁵⁹ The opening day audience was a distinguished one including G. K. Chesterton, Sir John Lavery, Sir D. Y. Cameron and the French, Belgian and Japanese ambassadors. Brangwyn was too shy to attend and hear the opening speech given by the new Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald.⁶⁰ The broad appeal of Brangwyn's works, their combination of old and new, is emphasized by the choice of Macdonald - that old fashioned socialist - as the opening speaker. The peculiar tone of Macdonald's speech was set by his statement that "one of the essentials

of Labour's strength is in the appreciation of duty." He then went on to emphasize both the realism and idealism in Brangwyn's works and to claim that,

A great artist is the artist that symbolizes the fundamental and eternal verities of the struggles of humanity, not in the persons of dead people, but in the persons of his own generation. No artist's hand and no artist's eye have performed that with more reverence, more profound respect and more power in our time than the hand and eye of the artist whose work is on the walls of the house where we are now meeting...

The great task of every public spirited person is to educate the masses of the people in good taste...Until my people can also appreciate Art, my people cannot enter into their inheritance. Mr. Brangwyn is a great democratic artist, and no artist had really been great unless in his mind he had the Catholicity of the worker.⁶¹

Most other admiring critics said little that was new about Brangwyn's work. Its painterliness and grasp of design, its Oriental richness, its humanity, its overwhelming rhetoric and its variety were all mentioned. Comparisons were made with Rubens and Baudelaire and one American critic, emphasizing Brangwyn's modernity, even made the fanciful claim that

Brangwyn has kept pace with modern thought and has let it influence him without running away with him. The elements of Cubism can be discerned in his lithographs and etchings of ships and guns, and Futurism has not entirely been ignored by him, though he has chosen his own way of presenting movement.⁶²

Truly modernist critics, like Roger Fry and Clive Bell, chose to ignore the Brangwyn show completely.

Almost a sequel to the Queen's Gate retrospective and arranged by Robert Vose through Barbizon House, was Brangwyn's Vose Galleries exhibition in Boston, in March 1925. Brangwyn had had exhibitions of his etchings in America since early in the century⁶³ but this was his first major show, including about 56 works, over 80% of which were sold. The press was favourable and Brangwyn was called all the standard things, the "greatest living British painter"⁶⁴ and the

"Kipling of art today".⁶⁵ In the long run, however, the show had little effect, either on public taste or on the development of individual artists.

At the time, this hardly seemed to matter for, in the spring of 1925, Brangwyn began work on a project that promised to be the magnum opus of his career, the painting of a set of mural decorations for the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords (fig. 132). That his decorations were refused, five years later, was due, first, to the way in which it was commissioned, by a single peer, and his and Brangwyn's failure to develop broad support for it from its very inception and, second, by their ignoring the strong aesthetic conservatism of the Lords themselves.

In 1919, the Lords had decided that they should commission a memorial to their war dead. They had raised about ₹7000 and had asked the sculptor John Tweed (1869–1933) to prepare drawings and models. Little more had happened by early 1925, when the Earl of Iveagh had decided to augment their efforts by personally commissioning mural decorations for the Royal Gallery to the tune of ₹20,000.⁶⁶

Lord Iveagh (1847–1927) was a typically expansive Brangwyn patron.⁶⁷ Immensely rich and ambitious and head of the Guinness brewing family, he had bought his way into the English aristocracy through lavish hospitality and philanthropy and even reached the entourage of Edward VII. His home, Elvedon Hall, was an exotic Indian fantasy built in the 1860s for the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh of Lahore with a beaten and carved copper dome in the style of the Taj Mahal, walls of carrara marble and pavements inlaid with the same material.

In the spring of 1925, Iveagh approached Brangwyn as the artist best qualified to paint the decorations and, by August, the Lords had approved of the project in principle, though without seeing any designs and without knowing how

it would relate (if at all) to Tweed's memorial.

During the following winter, Brangwyn worked away on scenes from different periods of the war (fig. 133). One of his major problems was how much or how little to change the existing decoration of the Royal Gallery in order to achieve a unified ensemble. As it was, the Gallery was a hodgepodge of different features added over the years rather than a reflection of the architect's original plans. Stained glass windows competed for effect with a heavily gilded ceiling and stonework, dull brown walls, portraits of kings and, most importantly, two large faded murals by Daniel Maclise, Wellington meeting Blucher after the Battle of Waterloo and The Death of Nelson on board the Victory. Little light entered the Gallery and that was flickering, due to the stained glass windows. The Gallery, nevertheless, was in the Houses of Parliament, on sacred ground, and thus any changes in it were likely to be opposed.

In his initial designs, Brangwyn subdued his normal colour scheme to a range to khaki tones in order to more easily blend with the existing decorations. In the spring of 1926, however, he and Lord Iveagh agreed to abandon the war scenes as too negative a memorial and, after toying with a short-lived heraldic decorative scheme, they had settled on a far more ambitious and lyrical idea of depicting the glorious Empire for which the young lords had died. The new scheme, of course, was far more colourful than the old one and Brangwyn then had to suggest major changes in order to achieve unity. The stained glass was to be replaced by clear glass. The ceiling was to be repainted in a lighter tone and all gilding removed. The artificial lighting was to be improved. Brangwyn, Iveagh and the Marquess of Lincolnshire, another major supporter of the scheme, were so enthusiastic about it that they didn't foresee the passionate opposition it would arouse.

Earlier it was mentioned (in the context of parade decorations) that Brangwyn would have preferred an enlightened despot for a patron, who would back him financially, protect him politically and let him get on with the job. In the past he had often found one and, until recently, his patrons hadn't failed him. His contract now was exclusively with Iveagh and they had agreed that he would be allowed to finish the whole project before the Lords could pass approval on it. This independence from the normal parliamentary process of endless committee meetings, coupled with the unexpected deaths of Iveagh and Lincolnshire, in 1927 and 1928, would ultimately doom the project. Without their prestige and political skills, Brangwyn was left exposed to the ignorant criticism of any lord who cared to voice it. Now his romantic imagination and short temper only made his situation worse.

Brangwyn's contract stated that he would paint six mural panels measuring 20 x 13 feet and ten panels 12 feet square (fig. 135-138). Three large and two small panels were to go on each of the end walls of the Gallery and the other, smaller panels on the long walls in between. Brangwyn and his assistants threw themselves into the usual process of developing sketches, full scale cartoons and then the panels themselves. In keeping with the nature of the Gothic Revival interior of the Gallery, Brangwyn devised panel designs reminiscent of the intricate, flamboyant French "verdure" tapestries of the fifteenth century. He had long been acquainted with tapestries and carpets and his earlier works had sometimes shown their influence. He had probably seen the tapestries in the Victoria and Albert Museum and may well have read G.L. Hunter's Tapestries, then the major historical book on the subject.⁶⁸ His library contained a copy of the 1930 edition of W.G. Thomson's important work, A History of Tapestry,⁶⁹ though when it was acquired is uncertain.

Brangwyn's designs, with their bright colours, minimal tonal contrast and strong all-over patterning, are far flatter and more abstract than those in his earlier murals. His colours had gradually been brightening since the turn of the century and many of his easel paintings already showed a looser composition. This was a mural cycle, however, where an obvious historical scheme, based on the human figure, was not already formulated. Given a new freedom, Brangwyn opened himself up to fresh ideas and produced a work that not only shows a new direction in his oeuvre but also stands out sharply against typical late mural revival works. The 1927 cycle, The Building of Britain, in St. Stephen's Hall,⁷⁰ shows similar bright colour and anti-historicism but otherwise shows austerity and clarity in its compositions.

Brangwyn's designs show a teeming profusion of motifs from all parts of the Empire: birds and beasts of every description, crowds of natives and masses of fruit, flowers and foliage. No motif dominates another. There is no set sequence to the motifs by geographical or political area but rather a shifting, kaleidoscopic arrangement that makes up in evocativeness what it lacks in clarity. The whole romantic dream of abundance and its ties to Empire, Industry and Commerce had long been implicit in Brangwyn's works and here was developed to the full. By the late 1920's, it was a dream increasingly out of touch with the realities of the age.

This, however, was not the immediate issue. In 1927, enquiries started being made about the progress of the panels by the various parliamentary committees concerned. As it turned out, there were ultimately eight committees with overlapping responsibilities for them. Given his responsibility only to Lord Iveagh and their understanding that the scheme would be revealed only in its completion, Brangwyn rebuffed these committees until early 1930

when, under ever increasing pressure, he set up five sample panels on one of the end walls of the Royal Gallery (fig. 134). These were to be judged by the members of the Royal Fine Art Commission, a professional advisory body to Parliament, and its report submitted to the Lords. Their report passed a damning judgement on the panels. It stated that they would not harmonize with the rest of the Royal Gallery, especially the Maclise murals and Tweed's war memorial, and that they would require major changes in a historically important Gothic Revival structure. It further observed that,

Mr. Brangwyn's paintings of oriental processions and exotic scenery indicate no connection with the Empire as such; nor does the subject matter or its treatment suggest any degree of relation to Imperial or Dominion Parliaments.⁷¹

Some of Brangwyn's friends, mainly from the Royal Academy, protested this judgement in letters to The Times, asking for fair play and the finishing of the scheme before a decision would be made.⁷² The Lords, however, proceeded and, on the 3 April, debated the issue before refusing the panels by a vote of fifty-five to eleven.

Any exact analysis of the reasons for the Lords' refusal is difficult for much of their debate centered not on the panels themselves but on the procedural chaos surrounding the commission and on the insult to the memory of Lord Iveagh and to the artist in refusing them. Some of the Lords, no doubt, were influenced by the report of the Royal Fine Art Commission and, as true conservatives, were aghast at the changes Brangwyn's scheme would have entailed. Few seemed to like the panels themselves yet the only real rationale for this came from Lord Newton who claimed

They seem to me far too exuberant for our conventional and restrained surrounding. I cannot help thinking that they would be much more appropriate in some other building, say the legislative palace of one of the states that have sprung

into existence since the war or the palace that I understand the League of Nations is now constructing at Geneva. They may be properly utilised for one of the super-luxury clubs which I understand are likely to be erected in this city, or they might possibly be acquired by some multi-millionaire democrat...⁷³

Lord Newton's use of the word "exuberant" and his ideas on where the panels would be appropriate (places of new wealth, idealism and democratic tendencies) give the impression that he thought them rather vulgar, possibly reflecting the nouveau riche flamboyance of the man who commissioned them. He and the other Lords were hardly burning radicals and, unlike the young or even the government (increasingly dependent on popular support), were probably not offended so much by the imperial content of the panels as by their form. They did not associate Empire with militarism and still probably believed in the old "mother country" theory of Empire rather than the more ambiguous Commonwealth theory outlined by Lord Balfour at the 1926 Imperial Conference and embodied in the 1931 Statute of Westminster.⁷⁴ Also, they may not have thought it diplomatically wise to advertise their true feeling of Empire in so flamboyant a way. After the Parliament Act of 1911, the Lords were generally careful not to nail their colours to the mast.

After the Lords' decision, a short lived scandal erupted in the popular press, centred mainly on the humiliation of the artist. Brangwyn, himself, was devastated but worked on until late 1932, finishing the rest of the panels to fulfill his contract with Lord Iveagh's trustees. There was still strong popular interest in the panels for the trustees were requested to display them in a specially designed setting in the 1933 Ideal Home Show in London. Many offers had been received of a permanent home for them, and, later that year, the trustees presented them to the City of Swansea, in Wales, which had agreed to

incorporate them into a large hall, "The Brangwyn Hall", in the new Guildhall then being built. The Guildhall was officially opened in 1934 by the Duke of Kent and the panels have remained there ever since, though hardly in the perfect setting Brangwyn first envisioned for them. The critic Frank Rutter wrote a book on the panels and their fate in 1933, in which he called them,

the most splendid and distinguished unit of decorative painting executed in Europe since Tintoretto ceased his work in the Doge's Palace at Venice.⁷⁵

Twenty-five years later, when the City of Swansea published a short book on the panels, their curator, David Bell, would write,

The Panels are not and, given Brangwyn's background and capacities, could not be, great painting.⁷⁶

Contemporary opinion is far more positive in its evaluations. T.S.R. Boase, in a recent book on the houses of Parliament, claims them as,

remarkable examples of decorative ingenuity...The glow of colour they would have added to the Gallery would have been strikingly effective and their at times almost total abstract design would not have competed with NELSON and WELLINGTON. It is hard not to feel a great opportunity was missed.⁷⁷

Dennis Farr, in the latest volume of the Oxford History of English Art, concluded that,

The panels have a joyous vigour, a decorative elan which would have complimented Maclise's Nelson and Wellington. As so often happened, the panjandrums of official taste played for safety.⁷⁸

If the disaster of the British Empire Panels was symbolic of Brangwyn's failing grip on the pulse of Britain, so too was the relative success of his last major mural commission, for Rockefeller Center in New York City. If the Lords had been conservative in almost every way, his new patrons, the Rockefellers, were more typical of those he had enjoyed before, dynamic men of business who,

however conventional their style, still had their eye on the future. They were, however, Americans, and far richer, and the future they envisioned was a rather different one, not only from that of his British patrons but also from that of his earlier American ones.⁷⁹ Brangwyn had often been compared to Americans in his dynamism and largeness of vision yet it is here, in Rockefeller Center, that much of his datedness was revealed.

Rockefeller Center looked both forward and backward. It was a commercial building project and thus had to turn a profit yet its planners were intent on providing it with the "maximum beauty consistent with profitability"⁸⁰. It was the first fully realized skyscraper city, a coordinated building group developed under a unified control and was the prototype for many later urban renewal projects all over the western world. During the 1930's, it became

the symbol for the new metropolis, the embodiment of the dream for a healthy and humane urban future.⁸¹

On the other hand, its individual buildings and the art decorating them were fairly conventional, even conservative, for their time.

The project was well under way in 1931 when its committee of architects decided that the buildings had to be decorated. They proposed that a unified theme should be set, not just for the sake of unity and consistency but to invest the decoration with a spiritual content appropriate for the importance of the project and morally uplifting for all who saw it. To do this they hired a philosopher, Prof. Hartley Burr Alexander (1893-1939) of Scripps College in California, who had earlier developed themes for Bertram Goodhue's Nebraska State Capitol. Alexander came up with a grand and pretentious theme, "Homofabor" (Man the Builder), developed in great detail for specific buildings and parts thereof. As he explained it in his preliminary report,

Civilization is...what Man adds to Nature...by their handiwork and arts (they) reshape it, "molding the World nearer to the heart's desire."...Rockefeller City is surely being planned in some such measure. As a monument of human skill and taste and imagination it will be famous throughout the world of men; none will view it with indifference. On American life and society, and on the country at large, it is inevitable that it will have a profound influence. It will be influential first as a building enterprise, in the narrower sense of this phrase...for both the nature of its architecture and the character of the venture as a business enterprise are bound to be watched with a keen eye to the following or rejection of its leads. It will be influential secondly in its effect on American taste, for the conscious effort to create beauty in the Center will compel the development of forms of expression which are novel and which if successful will open new avenues to American art. Finally, it will be influential socially, for it has at least the chance of becoming the first clear expression in our economic life of a new social ideal, that is, of human welfare and happiness as centering in the work that we do, and not in some incidental wage: if a whole population, such as Rockefeller City will possess, can be lifted into a finer life in their working hours, then the economic democracy of America will have begun its answer to the Bolshevik challenge. In all these phases then Rockefeller City is a builders' enterprise, and it is appropriate to announce its theme as "Homo Fabor, Man the Builder".⁸²

John D. Rockefeller Jr. was not excited by Alexander's proposal and asked several learned friends for other ones. In the end, his public relations staff synthesized all of these to come up with a theme of "New Frontiers and the March of Civilization". As expressed in their report,

This theme is intended to interpret our American civilization of the moment, its manifestations, its meanings, its premises. We are considering specifically the pictorial representation in Rockefeller City of where we have arrived and what we are going through as a people, physically, mentally and spiritually...as well as what we are about to go through. The past will be brought in naturally and briefly as background, but the points of special interest will be developed from our life today.⁸³

Since few of the architects knew much about art, a blue chip Advisory Art Committee was established with members mainly from the large eastern

museums and ivy league art schools. They formed a conservative body with many ties to the American Academy in Rome and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Most of their choice artists (among them Lee Lawrie, Paul Manship, Gaston Lachaise, Carl Milles, Ezra Winter and Isamu Noguchi) fitted this mold and were characterized by what Alfred Barr, of the Museum of Modern Art, described as "good taste" and "competent mediocrity".⁸⁴ Of all the committee members only the young Nelson Rockefeller was interested in Parisian modernism. In most cases he did not dominate the committee but, when it came to the choice of artists to do murals for the R.C.A. Building, the major structure in the Center, it was probably his choices (Matisse, Picasso and Diego Rivera) that prevailed, thus encouraging international participation in the project. Rivera was contacted and accepted by cable, and, early in September 1932, the architects Raymond Hood and John Todd set out for Paris to see Matisse and Picasso. They probably had a list of second choices in hand for, when Matisse turned them down and Picasso studiously ignored them, they were quick to contact two more conventional artists, José Maria Sert and Frank Brangwyn. In his report to John D. Rockefeller Jr., Hood wrote that,

Following a week in Paris we went to England to see Brangwyn...and found him very eager to do the work. He liked very much the fact that he would be alone on one side and he liked the association with Sert and Rivera, neither one of whom he has met personally, but both of whom he admires.⁸⁵

Replying to Hood, several days later, Rockefeller expressed his reservations with the final choice of artists. "For advertising purposes," he wrote,

I felt that Matisse and Picasso had the greatest drawing value, and irrespective of my feeling about their work, felt it was highly important to secure them...I hope the artistic public will not regard Sert and Brangwyn as on a lower level, while as for Rivera, although I do not personally care for much of his work, he seems to have become very popular

just now and will probably be a good drawing card.⁸⁶

Rivera too was displeased on learning that Matisse and Picasso had been replaced by what he considered inferior artists.⁸⁷ He resigned his commission and was only talked into staying by Nelson Rockefeller himself.

The teaming of Brangwyn, Sert and Rivera was artistically and ideologically ludicrous and, in many ways, shows the supreme self-confidence of the Rockefeller public relations team in being able to rationalize anything if it brought results. The ambiguities and contradictions in Brangwyn's life are, by now, well known. Rivera (1886-1957) had been a young cubist painter in Paris from 1909 to 1921.⁸⁸ Returning home to Mexico, he had received government commissions for monumental frescos and, inspired by Communist sympathies for the Mexican revolution and grass roots traditions of Mexican Indian art, had forged a strong, simplified style in which heroic labour and the machine were dominant themes.

Sert (1876-1945), by contrast, was an extremely conservative, a backer of Franco in the Spanish Civil War, honorary attaché in his embassy to the Vatican and, with his wife Misia, a glittering social ornament in fashionable Parisian salons.⁸⁹ He was, in many ways, the continental counterpart to Brangwyn as a large scale mural decorator. His father had been a tapestry and textile designer. He too had worked for Samuel Bing and later as a designer for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. He had painted many murals in the houses of the rich, both in Europe and America, and had also enjoyed public commissions in the Cathedral of Vich in Spain, the palace of the League of Nations in Geneva and the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. Like Brangwyn, he showed admiration for the murals of Tiepolo, Veronese and Tintoretto and, in his own work, a rich use of colour and large cast of exotically dressed characters and animals. In his later works,

however, he abandoned colour for monochrome painting and showed a taste for a dramatic Baroque illusionism of exaggerated perspectives, heavy modelling and trompe l'oeil that contrasted strongly with Brangwyn's relatively tight compositions and flat forms. They were, however, often compared for their heroic scale and subjects, as seen in a reviewer's comment on a 1920 Sert exhibition in London.

The whole gives the impression of having been carried out in the joy and excitement of great hurry - too like American railway advertising or Mr. Frank Brangwyn on a coronation day.⁹⁰

Rivera, Sert and Brangwyn were to paint their murals for the large spaces of the lobby of the R.C.A. Building. Rivera was given the main wall of the lobby, Sert a series of four panels on the north side of the elevator bank and Brangwyn another series on the south side. As elaborated, probably by Alexander, their themes were to be as follows:

Rivera - Man at the Crossroads Looking with Uncertainty but with Hope and High Vision to the Choosing of a Course Leading to a New and Better Future (fig. 142)

Sert - Man's new Mastery of the Material Universe, his Power, his Will, his Imagination and his Genius (fig. 143)

Brangwyn - Man's New Relationship to Society and his Fellow Men, his family relationships, his relationships as a worker, his relationships as part of government and his ethical and religious relationships.

Each Brangwyn panel measured 17 x 25 feet, and according to his contract, had to be painted in grisaille and to incorporate lettering, explaining the theme. The set themes were vague enough that Brangwyn felt lost in devising imagery for them. A correspondence with New York followed. He also enlisted the aid of his friend and future biographer, Philip Macer-Wright, who invented titles suggesting more concrete imagery, inspired by passages in the Bible. As finally

placed on the panels, these titles read:

1. Man labouring painfully with his own hands; living precariously and adventurously, with courage, fortitude and the indomitable will to survive. (fig. 139).
2. Man the creator and master of the tool. Strengthening the foundations and multiplying the comforts of his abiding place.
3. Man the master and servant of the machine; harnessing to his will the forces of the material world, mechanising labour and adding thereto the promise of leisure. (fig. 140).
4. Man's ultimate destiny depends not on whether he can learn new lessons or make new discoveries, but on his acceptance of the lesson taught close upon two thousand years ago. (fig. 141).

Brangwyn got to work with models, assistants, sketches and cartoons. Soon, however, problems cropped up. A controversy had arisen between Rivera and the Rockefellers over the artist's inclusion of the figure of Lenin in a major position in his mural. When he refused to remove it, a torrent of bad publicity on the theme of capitalist censorship broke loose and eventually the mural was destroyed.⁹¹ As a result of the controversy, Brangwyn was asked, in September 1933, to delete overt reference to Christ in his Sermon on the Mount from his fourth panel. This thoroughly confused him, and, when he spoke of his confusion to the press, another wave of bad publicity broke loose and he received letters and telegrams urging him to refuse the Rockefellers' request. In the end, however, he complied and modified the title and imagery accordingly. The panels were finished in November 1933 and shipped to New York, where they were installed during the first week in December. Brangwyn was not very happy with them and how they compared with those of Sert and Rivera. Neither artist had complied with the original demands to work in grisaille on canvas and to include lettering.⁹² As a result, their panels had a stronger impact than Brangwyn's. John D. Rockefeller expressed his satisfaction with Brangwyn's panels but Edward Alden Jewell, the critic of the New York Times, dismissed

them as "disappointing on just about every score". Brangwyn, he felt, had not be sufficiently moved by the sublimity of the theme.

He has managed it quite cheerfully, and without the least spark of what, in the vernacular, is spoken of as inspiration.⁹³

Sert's murals, with their greater tonal range, more in the spirit than the letter of the contract, he felt made a stronger impact. How many people agreed with Jewell is not known.

Brangwyn's four panels in the R.C.A. Building add little new to his oeuvre. His themes of the domination of the material world and challenge of ethical human relationships had been treated in various guises in much of his earlier work. Many of the same boldly stylized figures, exotic and ordinary, appear again here. So too do dramatic dark light contrasts. His compositions, however, are no longer frieze-like but circular and based around voids. They incorporate lettering not just as a band along the top but as an integral part of the composition. They also show stronger use of bold diagonal light shafts to enliven the composition, especially in his third panel, Man, the master and servant of the machine.... This is the strongest panel of the four. In subject it harkens back to his panels for the 1905 Venice Biennale, yet here the scale of both the workers and the machines (especially the latter) is dramatically increased. The scene is no longer even roughly realistic but almost a futuristic fantasy from an early Soviet or German expressionist film.

The British Empire Panels and Rockefeller Center murals were the last important mural commissions of Brangwyn's career. About the same time, however, there was a brief revival in his turn-of-the-century career as a furniture and interior designer. Between 1927 and 1930, he was asked to design several new lines of furniture, textiles, carpets, glass and ceramics and finally

three complete dining rooms for a new ocean liner. These commissions, like most others of the period, were not a complete success, financially, critically or historically. They were, instead, a swansong for the Arts and Crafts ideals that Brangwyn stood for, ideals by then outdated in the development of modern design.

Brangwyn's involvement in design and commercial art has been mentioned often before. They were not his major fields yet, during the post-war period in Britain, he became their elder statesman, who could always say something fitting and inspirational when the need arose. He supplied short introductions to "puff" a number of books⁹⁴, among them the interview, "Art and the Public", for Percy V. Bradshaw's Art and Advertising and the preface to the Studio Year-Book of Decorative Art, both from 1925. To Bradshaw, Brangwyn declared that,

there should be a lot more common sense in Art, and a lot less affectation; and perhaps the worst affectation is this nonsense about vulgarising Art by associating it with Commerce. I hope to see it associated a good deal more not only with Commerce but with everyday Life. I want Art to be more useful, comforting and helpful to the people; and, of course, I want to see more Art used in advertising, because advertising is a tremendous force which needs handling with much more Art and common sense than it is getting at present.⁹⁵

Brangwyn might supply the ideal of collaboration but his final comments confirm that advertisers and manufacturers seldom tried to live up to it. If they had, they were now probably inured to the "Holier than thou", anti-industrial attitude of many British artists. Despite the efforts of such groups as the Design and Industry Association, founded in 1915, British design was uninspired during the twenties and only slowly improved during the thirties. A few original Arts and Crafts designers such as Ambrose Heal were still active. Roger Fry had ended his more innovative efforts at the Omega Workshops in 1919. Frank Pick

of London Transport and graphic designers like E. McKnight Kauffer were rare in their patronage and production of modern designs. The industrial designer Gordon Russell would not reach his prime until the thirties. In the realm of furniture design and interior decoration, British styles of the period were dominated by antiques or reproductions and by the suave eclecticism of such decorators as Syrie Maugham and Sybil Colefax. There were no British designers to compare to Emile-Jacques Ruhlman in technical sophistication, to Alvar Aalto in innovative uses of wood laminates or to such purists as Le Corbusier, Marcel Breuer and Mies van der Rohe in radically new design philosophies and in the use of tubular steel and cantilevering.

One of the few British firms that attempted to develop new furniture designs was E. Pollard and Co. Ltd., who first approached Brangwyn in 1927. About this time, Brangwyn designed them a poster⁹⁶ and three years later, in October 1930, an exhibition of his furniture was held in their London gallery. It was arranged in three room ensembles (dining room, drawing room and bedroom), also completely designed by Brangwyn and executed by different firms (fig. 144). A thirty-five page illustrated catalogue was issued, the introduction of which claimed that,

Designing during the last decade has gradually changed its character, simplicity is the keynote of today;...at this critical period Frank Brangwyn takes us a long stride forward on a definite path...the same characteristics that have marked his work in the past are once more displayed. Severe simplicity, fine proportion and boldness of outline distinguish the furniture, and in the arrangements and combinations of the beautiful woods his wonderful feeling for colour and texture is brilliantly exercised.⁹⁷

Brangwyn's furniture was indeed simple, well proportioned, and beautifully coloured but it did not take a "long stride forward". Most of its basics have already been seen in his Edmund Davis furniture from 1900. It was designed to

be produced by machine, was technically well constructed and was comfortable. On the other hand, its use of rare woods and marquetry and its still existing in prototype, not mass production, made it very expensive (between £200 and £300 for a bedroom suite), especially at a time of economic depression. Some of the designs (ie. p. 9, 11, 13 of catalogue, fig. 145, 146) were reminiscent not so much of the twentieth century as of a traditional English folk idiom of ladder back chairs with rush seats or of heavy, early Arts and Crafts furniture (ie. p. 13, 19, 29). Others were for nearly archaic types of furniture such as separate wash stands and wardrobes. Only a few, such as an ash dresser (p. 15), a bed (p. 23), gate leg and book tables (p. 31) and an upholstered armchair (p. 33, fig. 147) seem at all innovative and without historical overtones and in this they pale in comparison to works created by contemporary continental designers. The press reviews for the exhibition were mixed and the prices so high that the exhibition was a commercial failure and the prototypes never reached mass production.

Closely related both to his Pollard's furniture and to the British Empire Panels was Brangwyn's 1929-30 commission to design the first class dining room, the Salle Jacques Cartier (fig. 149), and two adjacent private dining rooms, the Salles Montcalm and Wolfe, on the new Canadian Pacific liner, the Empress of Britain.⁹⁸ At 758 feet long and with a cruising speed of $24\frac{1}{2}$ knots, the Empress was then the largest and fastest ship to emerge from British shipyards since World War I. British prestige was riding on her success and her owners and builders (the John Brown Shipyard of Glasgow) were determined that she would be a showcase for the finest of modern British design. Besides Brangwyn, several other such notable artists as Sir John Lavery, Edmund Dulac and Heath Robinson were commissioned to design her public rooms. The Prince of Wales became personally interested in the project. On June 11, 1930, he launched the liner in

Glasgow and, after its outfitting, dedicated it in Southampton. On May 27, 1931, it sailed on its maiden voyage, laden with a glittering list of passengers, among them Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks. The prestige of the Empress was soon obscured by the larger Cunard liners, Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, but it performed honorably until sunk by German submarines in 1940.

The Salle Jacques Cartier was the largest single space on the ship, measuring 120 feet long and nineteen feet high and having a seating capacity of 452 diners. For it Brangwyn devised a scheme of golden oak panelling and furniture, concealed ceiling lighting, a wood and gold tinted glass buffet in the centre of the room, specially patterned linoleum tiles and several decorative panels adapted from his British Empire motifs and going under the closely related theme of A Vision of the Lavish Gifts of Mother Earth. The two largest panels, each 12 feet high (one concealing the musicians' gallery), were placed at opposite ends of the room while smaller, connecting panels were placed along the sides in an upper level gallery. For the walls of the two private dining rooms, Brangwyn designed decorative wood inlay panels. Those in the Salle Montcalm showed stars against a night sky while those in the Salle Wolfe, a variety of fruit and flower still lifes. The effect of the whole scheme was luxurious yet still quite plain, modern yet not at all radical. It had none of the art deco ostentation of the interiors of the Normandie yet none of the puritan sparseness of Mies' German Pavillion at Barcelona. The furniture, while heavy and solid enough to hold up to public use, showed none of the historicist influences of most of Brangwyn's Pollards furniture but was generally similar to the rest. A faintly Chinese influence shows in the chairs with their very low cross bars and wide back splats, stretching their entire height.

CHAPTER 6

1. Walter Shaw Sparrow, Prints and Drawings by Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1919.
Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1924.
William Gaunt, The Etchings of Frank Brangwyn, R.A.: a catalogue raisonnee, The Studio Ltd., London: 1926.
2. Catalogue of an Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings and Etchings by Frank Brangwyn, R.A., held at 184 Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London, May, June, July 1924, Barbizon House, London: 1924.
3. Quoted by David Thomson, England in the Twentieth Century, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: 1965, p. 151.
4. On the rise of generational antagonism all across Europe after the war and on this myth in Britain see, Robert Wohl, The Generation of 1914, Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1979.
5. On the "bright young things" see Martin Green, Children of the Sun: A Narrative of "Decadence" in England After 1918, Basic Books Inc., New York: 1976.
6. Mural Painting in Great Britain 1919-1939, Tate Gallery, London: 1939, p. 4 mention of mural movement.
7. Of the modernists, only Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, Stanley Spencer and Rex Whistler are well known as muralists.
8. In 1972, when a new church was built, the Stations were transferred to the Native Mission at Diepkloof, Soweto, near Johannesburg. Shortly after they first arrived in South Africa, 17 sets of steel engravings were made after them and were distributed to different churches. Letter from Father J.E. Brady, Catholic History Bureau, South Africa, 25 August 1976.
9. Crossley Davies, "Mr. Frank Brangwyn's Stations of the Cross for the New Leper Settlement Church," Building (Johannesburg), September 1922, p. 74.
10. Jean and Jérôme Tharaud, L'Ombre de la Croix, Editions Lapina, Paris: 1931.
11. G.K. Chesterton, The Way of the Cross, Hodder and Stoughton, London: 1935.
12. Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1924, pp. 143-48.
13. "Brangwyn Painting in Hall of Capitol Depicts Canuck Soldiers' Life in France," Winnipeg Tribune, 19 March 1921.

14. Brangwyn's exact fee was \$10,104.61. This was published in the provincial public accounts for 1921.
15. Crossley Davies, "Mr. Brangwyn's New Panel," Architectural Review, vol. 49, March 1921, pp. 55-56; Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1924, p. 141.
16. One of the best collections of reproductions of World War I paintings, done for the Canadian War Records Office, is P.G. Konody's Art and War, Colour Ltd., London: 1919, unpaginated. The following four paintings mentioned in the text are reproduced in it.
17. Richard Francis "War Memorials" in British Sculpture in the 20th Century, Sandy Nairn and Nicolas Serota, eds., Whitechapel Art Gallery, London: 1981, p. 63.
18. Richard Kenin, Return to Albion: Americans in England 1760-1940, Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York: 1979, p. 226.
19. Some of this is seen in Reginald Pound, Selfridge: A Biography, William Heinemann Ltd., London: 1960, pp. 135, 151-52.
20. Four of Tilden's designs were reproduced in his autobiography, True Remembrances, Country Life Ltd., London: 1954, plates 34-37.
21. One blueprint sheet of these plans, dating 30 December 1918, is in the files of Selfridges, London.
22. Reproduced in Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1924, pp. 166-75.
23. Ibid., p. 167.
24. Brangwyn's first formal contract dates from 10 November 1919. On the Missouri murals see *ibid.*, pp. 151-57; Emily Grant Hutchings, "Brangwyn's Missouri Murals," International Studio, vol. 78, January 1924, pp. 322-26; Crossley Davies, "Mr. Frank Brangwyn's Mural Decorations for Missouri," Apollo, vol. 3, April 1926, pp. 199-205.
25. The Commission held its first formal meeting on 16 June 1917.
26. This protest is referred to by Emily Grant Hutchings in her column, "Art and Artists" in the Saint Louis Globe-Democrat. Undated clipping, Brangwyn file, State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia.
27. Henry-Russell Hitchcock and William Seale, Temples of Democracy: The State Capitols of the U.S.A., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York: 1976, p. 271.
28. The eye of the dome is 36 feet in diameter and the dome itself 68 feet in diameter. Each pendentive measures about $48\frac{1}{2} \times 16 \times 22\frac{1}{2}$ feet and each

lower panel about 16 x 28 feet.

29. A description of the complex installation process is in L.S. Parker, The State Capitol of Missouri: Official Guide Book, Hugh Stephens Publishers, Jefferson City: 1924, p. 48.
30. Crossley Davies, "Mr. Frank Brangwyn's Mural Decorations for Missouri," Apollo, vol. 3, April 1926, p. 205.
31. David Thomson, England in the Twentieth Century, Penquin Books, Harmondsworth; 1965, p. 104.
32. The British Empire Exhibition, publicity booklet put out by the organizers, London: 1924, unpaginated.
33. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, p. 132.
34. "Pageant of Empire," The Times, British Empire Section, 29 July 1924, p. xi.
35. "The British Empire Exhibition," The Times, 12 June 1924, p. 7.
36. "The British Empire Exhibition," The Times, 23 April 1924, supplement, p. xii.
37. A similarly romantic homage to basic human inventions is found in Brangwyn's illustrations for Hayter Preston's Windmills, 1923.
38. Walter Shaw Sparrow and Frank Brangwyn, A Book of Bridges, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1915, pp. vi-vii.
39. Brangwyn gave his library to the University College of North Wales, in Bangor, during the 1950's.
40. Charles Whitney, Bridges, W. E. Rudge, New York: 1929, p. 19.
41. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948, pp. 132-34.
42. "British Empire Section," The Times, 29 July 1924, p. xi; The Illustrated London News, 2 August 1924, pp. 232-33, 9 August 1924, pp. 274-75.
43. On Matsukata see his entry in Who's Who in Japan, 1912, p. 454 or his biography, Mitsushiro Fujimoto and Kaneko Matsukata, The Story of Kojiro Matsukata and Naokichi Kaneko, Hyogo Shimbunsha, Kyoto: 1960.
44. Soichi Tominaga, Musée National d'Art Occidental: Catalogue, Tokyo: 1961, preface.

45. Willard Slater, "Why Japan Collects Western Art," International Studio, vol. 75, April 1922, p. 151.
46. Ibid., p. 152.
47. Mrs. Gordon-Stables, "Tokio's Occidental Museum," International Studio, vol. 75, September 1922, pp. 455-56.
48. Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London: 1924, p. 159.
49. For a list of the committee members see The Year's Art, 1911, pp. 408-11.
50. Willard Slater, "Why Japan Collects Western Art," International Studio, vol. 75, April 1922, p. 152.
51. Mrs. Gordon-Stables, "Tokio's Occidental Museum," International Studio, vol. 75, September 1922, pp. 455-56; Herbert Furst, The Decorative Art of Frank Brangwyn, John Lane the Bodley Head, London 1924, p. 159; also undated issue of Matsukata Ginko Butsu-Go Kinsu.
52. Willard Slater, "Why Japan Collects Western Art," International Studio, vol. 75, April 1922, p. 151.
53. A correspondent, "Japanese Palace of Art - Mr. Brangwyn R.A. as Architect -A Dream Come True," The Times, 20 April 1922, p. 18.
54. Mrs. Gordon-Stables, "Tokio's Occidental Museum," International Studio, vol. 75, September 1922, p. 456.
55. Matsukata was President of the Kawasaki Shipbuilding Yard, one of the largest companies in Japan. In 1927, its bank, The Fifteenth Bank, failed and it had to shut down for lack of working capital. Matsukata ceased being President in 1928.
56. The fire, in the Belgravia Pantechnicon, was reported in The Times, 9 October 1939, second edition, p. 10; and 10 October 1939, p. 4.
57. Soichi Tominaga, Musée National d'Art Occidental: Catalogue, Tokyo: 1961, preface.
58. Barbizon House Record 1924, Barbizon House, London: 1925, unpaginated.
59. Ibid.
60. The fullest published text of Macdonald's speech is in the Barbizon House Record 1924. Photos of the opening and the installation are also included.
61. Ibid.
62. Amelia Defries, "Frank Brangwyn, R.A., Master Craftsman," American Magazine of Art, vol. 15, November 1924, p. 561.

63. Brangwyn had had print shows at the Wunderlich, Kraushaar and Kennedy Galleries, in New York, in 1909, 1922, 1912, 1916 and 1929, at the Worcester Art Museum in 1912, at the Albert Roulier Gallery, in Chicago, in 1915 and 1917 and at the Cincinnati Art Museum in 1920.
64. Boston Herald, 15 March 1925, reported in Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, p. 223.
65. The Boston Globe, reported in Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, pp. 223.
66. Since the mid-nineteenth century there had been a revival of the tradition of aristocratic patronage in Parliament only acquiring works of art through private presentation. Few murals, naturally, were commissioned. Several panels were painted in a hallway between 1908 and 1910 by E.A. Abbey, Frank O. Salisbury and John Byam Shaw. In 1927, a mural scheme on the theme "The Building of Britain" was painted in St. Stephen's Hall by William Rothenstein, George Clausen, Glyn Philpot and W.T. Monnington.
67. On Lord Iveagh see Jamie Camplin, The Rise of the Plutocrats: Wealth and Power in Edwardian England, Constable and Co. Ltd., London: 1978, pp. 219-23.
68. G. L. Hunter, Tapestries, John Lane, London: 1913.
69. W.G. Thomson, A History of Tapestry, rev. ed., Hodder and Stoughton, London: 1930.
70. On this cycle, see footnote 66.
71. Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber and Co. Ltd., London: 1978, p. 248. For the personal reaction of one of the Commission members see William Rothenstein, Since Fifty, Faber and Faber, London: 1939, pp. 166-67.
72. Among the letters supporting Brangwyn was a joint letter by Sir Herbert Hughes-Stanton, Sir William Orpen, Sir William Goscombe John, Sir George Clausen, Sir John Burnet, Sir Aston Webb and Sir Arthur Cope. It was published in The Times 13 March 1930, p. 12. Other letters were received at The Times from Walter Sickert (15 March 1930, p. 13), A. S. Cope (19 March 1930, p. 10), and Selwyn Image (1 April 1930, p. 12).
73. Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, p. 251.
74. Balfour, a virtuoso in creating high sounding but opaque phrases, defined the Dominions as "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate to one another in any aspects of domestic or internal affairs, though united through common allegiance to the crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

75. Frank Rutter, The British Empire Panels by Frank Brangwyn, R.A., F. Lewis Ltd., Benfleet, Essex: 1933, p 29.
76. David Bell, The British Empire Panels, County Borough of Swansea, Swansea: 1958, p. 8.
77. T.S.R. Boase, "Painting", in The Houses of Parliament, Michael H. Port, ed., Paul Mellon Center for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, New Haven: 1976, p. 281.
78. Dennis Farr, English Art 1870-1940, Oxford History of English Art, Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1978, pp. 334-35.
79. An indication of how the Rockefellers looked on Britain was the inclusion of a low British Empire Building flanking the major promenade in Rockefeller Center that lead to the towering R.C.A. Building. It was probably the smallest building in the complex.
80. Carol Herselle Krinsky, Rockefeller Center, Oxford Univeristy Press, New York: 1978, p. xxiii.
81. Alan Balfour, Rockefeller Center: Architecture as Theatre, McGraw Hill Inc., New York, 1978, p. vii.
82. Ibid., p. 137.
83. Ibid., p. 139.
84. Ibid., p. 146.
85. Raymond Hood to John D. Rockefeller Jr., 7 October 1932, letter in Rockefeller Family Archives, New York. Quoted in Balfour, p. 151.
86. John D. Rockefeller Jr. to Raymond Hood, 12 October 1932. Quoted in Balfour p. 152.
87. Balfour, p. 181.
88. On Rivera see Bertram D. Wolfe, The Fabulous Life of Diego Rivera, Stein and Day, New York: 1963.
89. On Sert see Alberto del Castillo, José Maria Sert - su vida y su obra, Libreria Editorial Argox, Barcelona: 1947.
90. R.R.T., "Reviews," The Burlington Magazine, vol. 37, September 1920, pp. 162-63.
91. None too enthusiastically (despite a cut rate), the Rockefellers asked Sert to paint a mural to replace the Rivera. His subject was "American Progress, The Triumph of Man's Accomplishments Through Physical and Mental Labour" and his mural was finished in 1937. About the same time,

he also painted murals in the R.C.A. building lobby on the themes of "Time", "Spirit of the Dance", "Man's Triumph in Communications", "Conquest" and "The Fraternity of Man".

92. Rivera had worked in tempera with colour and Sert had used a richer, purple black pigment than stipulated.
93. Edward Alden Jewell, "In the Realm of Art," New York Times, 24 December 1933, section 9, p. 9.
94. Among the books "puffed" by Brangwyn were Haldane Macfall, The Renaissance in Central Italy, 1911; Haldane Macfall, A History of Painting, 1911; Jan Poortenaar, An Artist in the Tropics, undated; Leonard Richmond, The Art of Painting in Pastel, 1917; The Studio Year Book of Decorative Art, 1925; Percy V. Brandshaw, Art and Advertising, 1925; E. Noble, Animal Drawing and Anatomy, 1928; H. Davis Richter, Floral Art, 1932; H. Granville Fell, The Art of H. Davis Richter, 1935.
95. Percy V. Bradshaw, Art and Advertising, The Press Art School, London: 1925, pp. 8, 10.
96. The poster is reproduced in Sydney R. Jones Posters and Publicity, The Studio Ltd., London: 1928, p. 111.
97. Exhibition of Furniture made by E. Pollard and Co. Ltd., from designs by Frank Brangwyn, R.A., Autumn 1930, pp. 6-7.
98. On this commission see "The Canadian Pacific Quadruple Screw Atlantic Liner and Pleasure-cruising Steamship Empress of Britain," The Shipbuilders and Marine Engine Builder, Souvenir Number, May 1931, pp. 90-94, Frida Wolfe, "The Empress of Britain," The Studio, vol. 102, July 1931, pp. 20-21; "New Canadian Pacific Liner: Decorations by Famous Artists," The Times, November 14, 1929, p. 16; "Eight English Artists Decorate Canadian Liner," Art News, vol. 29, June 6, 1931, p. 18; Gunn Gwennet, "Les Panneaux en bois incrusté de Frank Brangwyn," Clarté, vol. 7, July 1, 1934, pp. 7-10.

CHAPTER SEVEN

OUT OF JOINT WITH THE AGE: 1933-1956

In 1933, Brangwyn was sixty-six years old. His career as a mural painter was effectively over and his health uncertain yet he still had twenty-three years to live. Without his wife or any intimate family and with his friends dying off around him he was a very lonely man. He was also out of fashion and could not rest confident over his place in history. Increasingly, he brooded over his failures, scorned the contemporary art world and found increasing admiration for artists of the Renaissance and Victorian periods, for Rubens, Degas and Renoir. One typically scornful outburst was in a letter to a friend, where he wrote,

I hear that the Director of the Tate has just bought a picture by Chagall the Russian Jew, for £1000. It is disgraceful, that such a work should be bought and shown in a National Gallery - a very bad influence for the public. What they can see (in) it is beyond me - no colour, design, composition or meaning other than what the silly fools write about: one can only think that we have gone to bits in every way.¹

As for his heroes, he wrote,

My chief pleasure now is to read the lives of the Victorian painters. There is no doubt, whatever the Moderns say, that these men and women were the best this old earth has seen...They seem to have been more noble in intention and production and more placid in their outlook.²

Few younger artists now sought him out or admired his work but those who did were sometimes generously helped. The young Canadian-born mural painter, Thomas Luzny (1926 -) met Brangwyn in 1946 and was encouraged by him and, when he completed his murals for the Canadian War Veterans Office in London, about 1953, Brangwyn contributed a forward to the catalogue accompanying them. Occasionally Brangwyn came to public attention or received official honours, such as his knighthood in 1941, yet while he did appreciate these, he felt them increasingly meaningless in an unsympathetic world. On a daily basis, however, he still enjoyed small pleasures and was generous both to his friends

and to public institutions. Many friends received small gifts from him and two, the artists William Walcot and Sir Frank Short, were given the use of an outlying cottage on the grounds of the Jointure when they were driven from London during the blitz. He also presided over the slow dispersal of his estate – both his own works and those of others – to various art museums. From 1935 to 1950 he was involved in the planning of a gallery in Walthamstow dedicated to William Morris and the artists of his time. So much did he give to the project that the museum was finally named The William Morris Gallery and Brangwyn Gift.

His greatest pleasure, however, still came from work. In February 1934 it was announced that he would paint murals for the Banqueting Chamber of the Guildhall in Hull³. This project fell through, though, probably due to finances.⁴ In 1935 he completed his Stations of the Cross and the next year both a lunette for Odham's Press, The Printed Word Makes the Peoples of the World One (now with Cider House Galleries, Bletchingly, Surrey) and two small panels on the themes of Charity and Education to go with his early Skinners' Hall panels. About 1936 or 1937 he designed his last poster, for the General Relief Fund for the Women and Children of Spain.⁵ About 1938 he started a panel of The Last Supper (fig. 150) as a reredos for the chapel at St. Mary's College in Middlesborough, Yorkshire. Due to his health and declining powers of concentration, it wasn't finished for almost a decade. He had practically ceased painting in oils⁶ but still enjoyed working in watercolours. Most of his commissions were for drawings and watercolours to illustrate books, most of them issued by his friend, the Essex publisher and collector, Frank Lewis. In 1944, came George Emslie's The Last of the Wooden Walls of England⁷; in 1945, C. Fox Smith's Here and There in England with the Painter Brangwyn⁸; and in 1950, Herbert E. Julyan's Sixty Years of Yachts⁹. He also spent over five years

doing drawings for a proposed Lewis book on the life of St. Francis but, in 1946, the project was abandoned due to rising costs. Between 1946 and 1948 he prepared two large scale cartoons, The Wine Press¹⁰ and The Last Supper¹¹, to be woven into tapestries in the Marquess of Bute's Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh.¹² The first of these was woven in 1947¹³ but the second was never begun as it was a very expensive project and no immediate buyer could be found.¹⁴

During this final stage of his life, Brangwyn's admirers were generally less important than before and able to do less to defend his reputation against the effects of time and fashion. They existed, for the most part, in very conservative circles on the fringes of the art world or in provincial art museums and were passionate fans rather than judicious critics. The most prominent of them was Count William de Belleroyche (1913-1969), a well connected dilettante collector and son of an old artist friend (fig. 151). Belleroyche first came to The Jointure in the spring of 1934 and soon began devoting more and more of his life to Brangwyn's welfare. It was due to his efforts that museums of Brangwyn's works were opened in Bruges in July, 1936 and in Orange, France in October 1947.¹⁵ He also played Boswell to Brangwyn's Dr. Johnson and turned their conversations into two books, Brangwyn Talks¹⁶ and Brangwyn's Pilgrimage¹⁷. These contained much interesting material but were rambling and poorly edited and not widely reviewed. Even the reviewer of The Studio described the latter as "entertaining and exasperating" and as giving a

picture of an old yet lovable character looking backward over a long life, rather than the development of a gifted artist and strong personality. To appreciate Brangwyn we need a work which sifts from his words and his works the thread of his evolution, the growth of his power and the strength of his convictions.¹⁸

Belleroyche also had a hand in encouraging exhibitions of Brangwyn's work and

formed a large collection of it himself.¹⁹

Another important admirer was the journalist, Philip Macer-Wright who, in 1940, came out with a competent but otherwise discreet and uncritical biography, Brangwyn: A Study of Genius at Close Quarters.²⁰ Because of the war, it was not widely noticed but, for many years, was the best book on the artist in existence. When it was released, Brangwyn wrote to a friend,

A silly book has just been published, the little affairs of one's life, at the moment make one feel like weeping. I wish I had not let them do it, but the writer was hard up and I thought it might help him. It makes one feel on reading it like a sanctimonious pirate...It should not have been done until after my death and much more interesting stuff could have been put in it. Macer-Wright really knows very little about me, but he did his best in a short time.²¹

Brangwyn's supporters in provincial art museums were led by the portrait painter, Vincent Galloway (1894 - ?), Director of the Ferens Art Gallery in Hull. Galloway had been instrumental in arranging for Brangwyn to paint murals in the Hull Guildhall and, in 1933, Brangwyn had given a collection of his works to the Ferens Gallery. Later that year, Galloway organized an exhibition of them, and in 1936, prepared an illustrated catalogue of all the Brangwyn works in the gallery collection. During the late 1950's, he and the publisher Frank Lewis collaborated on a useful but grossly imperfect catalogue raisonnée of Brangwyn's oils and mural paintings, published in 1962. Even at this late date, Galloway's introduction betrayed neither doubts about his subject nor any serious critical or historical understanding at all. Several short quotations indicate his sentimental and gushing tone.

What a pity it is that genius is so rare or that life is so short and our strength so feeble? What a wealth of beauty we might have if there were born more people like Brangwyn or if one like him could go on producing it at top speed for nearly century...It would have easier twenty years ago to appraise Brangwyn and assess his merit than it is today, when the standard of values has changed so and when all that matters is something new and sensational; but a respon-

sible account of him would, with reason, have called him an original genius. And if ever this epithet could be applied with truth, there is no one whom it would better suit; for he was practically self-taught, and went on to be the best known and biggest artist of his day.²²

Besides the exhibition in Hull, two further Brangwyn exhibitions were held during the thirties, in Wolverhampton in 1933 and in Brighton in 1935. During the forties, none were held but, in 1951, one went on in Worthing. None of these exhibitions were especially important nor did they generate more than local discussion. Their provincial tone is shown in the amazing speech made by the aged Hilaire Belloc, at the opening in Brighton. As reported in The Times,

Belloc claimed that in his own lifetime Britain had come to lead France and the world in drawing and painting. Mr. Brangwyn's work was the best being done in Britain. Brangwyn is so good because of his regard for tradition as well as his creative power. The English are leading due to a spontaneity of the English soul which has never wholly failed despite England's lagging behind in politics, economics and journalism.²³

The only Brangwyn exhibition of large enough scale (470 works) and powerful enough backing to get attention was the Royal Academy exhibition of 1952. Born of the enthusiasm of Sir Gerald Kelly, the R.A. President, and of William de Belleruche, it was the first one man show granted by the Academy to a living painter. Despite its size, however, it did not include many of the painter's best works and, for this reason, combined with Brangwyn's pessimism over the state of his reputation, he was against its even being held, did not help its organizers and never visited in the R.A. galleries. The exhibition also failed in its aim to spark a major revaluation of Brangwyn's work. The backing for the show came from his own contemporaries rather than a younger generation and the catalogue did not contain a lengthy or serious critical essay. Its historical timing was also completely wrong in several major ways. In 1952 the prestige of

modernist ideas was at its height; of Victorian and Edwardian art its nadir. In post-war Labourite Britain, with its grinding austerity, the romantic amplitude of Brangwyn's style couldn't help but be seen as an anachronism. The response of the press reflected these facts. Modernist critics of the stature of Herbert Read ignored the exhibition and one can guess at the lack of sympathy for Brangwyn among such leading painters of the day as Victor Pasmore, Francis Bacon and Graham Sutherland. John Russell, the critic of The Times, described Brangwyn as

an artist who for many years, it must be frankly admitted, has not commanded the attention of critics and connoisseurs as he once so conspicuously did.²⁴

Russell praised his range and the quality of his drawing but disliked the rhetoric of his larger, more ambitious works. "When his eye is kept firmly on the object," Russell wrote,

when he is content with a small canvas, and a limited and lucid definable intention, the result is often astonishingly fresh, lively, natural and direct.²⁵

The critic of the Manchester Guardian called him a "brilliant technician"²⁶ and Sir John Rothenstein of the Tate Gallery, otherwise unsympathetic to his work, praised especially the freshness of his drawings for the British Empire Panels.²⁷ The critic from Apollo praised his drawing and colour but rejected the opulent decorativeness of much of his work.²⁸ In The Studio, Clifford Musgrove wrote that Brangwyn's reputation had suffered because the disillusioned post-war generation had turned to,

the intellectual and psychological complexities of the new movements rather than to the simple poetry of common life which he (Brangwyn) had expressed.²⁹

Today, he felt,

Brangwyn's sense of the richness and poetry of the world is

not without importance at a time when the fears and ironies of our modern predicament cause these values so frequently to be disregarded.³⁰

Probably the most intelligent and thorough discussion of his work came from the young Denys Sutton, writing in Country Life, who placed Brangwyn as an Art Nouveau decorative painter of the same generation as Klimt, Van de Velde, Meier-Graefe, Seurat and Beardsley, as once a part of the avant-garde, "even if the wing to which he belonged did not consistently maintain its grip on public taste."³¹ He too felt that Brangwyn's unity of design was often lost in sumptuous over-elaboration, though he admitted that a taste for the sumptuous was common in Brangwyn's generation. He speculated also on Brangwyn's influence, especially in the areas of poster and stage design.

About 1953 or 1954, Brangwyn's faculties quickly began to fail. He produced no more works and his letters to friends ceased. His loyal housekeeper, Lizzie Peacock, remained with him to nurse him to the end which came on June 11, 1956.³² He was buried four days later, next to his wife in St. Mary's Cemetary, Kensall Green, London.³³ After taxes, he left an estate of £38,704; most of it to his housekeeper.³⁴ Obituaries on him appeared all over the world. In them he appeared a figure from a distant age. The critic of The Times struck a typical note in his evaluation.

It would be altogether too simple a statement to say that his work is more remarkable for quantity than quality, but the inclination is nevertheless to dwell on his range, variety and fertility, rather than on the artistic merits of any individual example of his work, or even of his work in any particular medium...At his R.A. retrospective some indeed felt that, like Shakespeare, "he was too full of quotations", for his work offered a rich quarry for the practitioners of applied or commercial art, which has been exploited to the full and often vulgarized in the process...What stands out now is his ability to produce designs that are really adapted to their large scale - an aptitude so rare among English artists that it may account more than anything else for his great

reputaiton abroad...What struck one most was his combination of imagination and severe technical practicality.³⁵

Nearly thirty years after Brangwyn's death, few would radically challenge this judgement. Brangwyn's work is no longer scorned yet no longer does it receive the extravagant praise of seventy years ago. Interest in it has grown along with the growth of Victorian studies yet now this interest is confined to specialized, historically minded circles (i.e. scholars, curators, dealers and period collectors). Brangwyn's style and technical virtuosity at their best still command admiration, yet as concept now is favoured over craft in art, these are not his ultimate defence. Concept both limits and explains Brangwyn's present status. His smaller, less public works are now the easiest to accept. His "grandes machines", the murals that made his reputation, are now far more difficult. Their complex blend of social and artistic ideas that once gave them such power no longer has this effect. Such isolated features as an exhilarating sense of adventure will sometimes strike a contemporary chord yet these are the exceptions. For the historical imagination, however, the ideas Brangwyn deals with are even now challenging in their ambition. Few Edwardian artists were as ambitious as Brangwyn. Though his achievement does not match his ambition, his ambition is awesome in itself and brings him closer to the spirit of his age than all but a few of his contemporaries.

CHAPTER 7

1. Frank Brangwyn to Elinor Pugh, March 1, 1948, letter at William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.
2. *ibid.*, September 26 1943 and March 3 1944.
3. "Brangwyn Friezes for Hull Guildhall", The Times, 14 February 1934, p. 15.
4. Vincent Galloway to Robert J. Lamb, Letter of 12 January 1976. This project was revived about 1948-49 but Brangwyn had to refuse it due to ill health. On this see Frank Brangwyn to Elinor Pugh, 28, March 1949.
5. A photograph of Brangwyn with this poster is owned by Mr. Crosby Cook, The Jointure, Ditchling, Sussex.
6. Galloway lists only about ten oils painted after 1933. Only one or two of these postdate World War II.
7. George Emslie, The Last of the Wooden Walls of England, F. Lewis, Benfleet, Essex: 1944.
8. C. Fox Smith, Here and There in England with the Painter Brangwyn, F. Lewis, Benfleet, Essex: 1945.
9. Herbert E. Julyan, Sixty Years of Yachts, Hutchinson and Co., London: 1950.
10. This cartoon was based on the 1943-46 painting of the same subject, done for the Dudley Art Gallery. See Galloway no. 798.
11. The cartoon is now lost but probably related to the painting of the same subject in the chapel of St. Mary's College, in Middlesborough.
12. On the history of the Dovecot Studios see Arts Council of Great Britain (Scottish Committee), The Jubilee of the Dovecot Tapestries, Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh: 1962.
13. In 1962 the tapestry was owned by Mr. Henry Cordier of Santa Monica, California, U.S.A.
14. Managing Director of Dovecot Studios to Robert J. Lamb, letter of 8 April 1976.
15. The Bruges museum still exists as part of the city's museum system. The Orange museum seems to have disappeared and no information can be found about it.
16. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn Talks, Chapman and Hall, London: 1944.
17. William de Belleruche, Brangwyn's Pilgrimage, Chapman and Hall, London: 1948.

18. "New Books", The Studio, vol. 138, December 1949, p. 198.
19. Belleruche tried to sell his collection at Christie's when the market for Victorian paintings was still fairly soft. The first half of the collection went for very low prices on 18 July 1961. The second half was scheduled to be sold in October 1961 but was then withdrawn. Some works have since been sold individually but the rest of the collection now rests with Mr. Kenneth Anderson, Belleruche's former secretary, in Brighton.
20. Philip Macer-Wright, Brangwyn: A Study of Genius at Close Quarters, Hutchinson and Co., London: 1940.
21. Frank Brangwyn to Elinor Pugh, letters of 26 May and 7 July 1940, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.
22. Vincent Galloway, The Oils and Mural Paintings of Sir Frank Brangwyn, R.A., 1867-1956, Frank Lewis Publishers Ltd., Leigh-on-Sea, Essex: 1962.
23. "Mr. Brangwyn's Gift to Brighton: British Advance in Art," The Times, 9 September 1935, p. 12.
24. John Russell, "The Art of Sir Frank Brangwyn," The Times, 10 October 1952, p. 2.
25. *ibid.*
26. Quoted by Rodney Brangwyn, Brangwyn, William Kimber and Co. Ltd., London: 1978, p. 303.
27. Sir John Rothenstein, "Letters to the Editor," The Times, 29 October 1952, p. 7.
28. Perspex, "Current Shows and Comments," Apollo, vol. 56, November 1952, pp. 135-36.
29. Clifford Musgrove, "Sir Frank Brangwyn, R.A.," The Studio, vol. 145, April 1953, p. 140.
30. *ibid.*
31. Denys Sutton, "The Art of Frank Brangwyn," Country Life, vol. 112, 24 October 1952, pp. 1282-83.
32. On Brangwyn's final days see Lizzie Peacock to Elinor Pugh, undated letters circa. 1956-57 with Mr. Crosby Cook, The Jointure, Ditchling, Sussex.
33. "Funerals," The Times, 16 June 1956, p. 8.
34. "Sir Frank Brangwyn's Estate," The Times, 20 August 1956, p. 10.

35. "Obituaries: Sir Frank Brangwyn R.A.: An Artist of Wide Range," The Times, 13 June 1956, p. 13.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 1. Alvin Langdon Coburn. Frank Brangwyn. 1904. Photogravure. International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House, Rochester, New York.



Fig. 2. William Curtis Brangwyn. Restoration of the Chapel of the Holy Blood. c. 1864-66. Bruges.

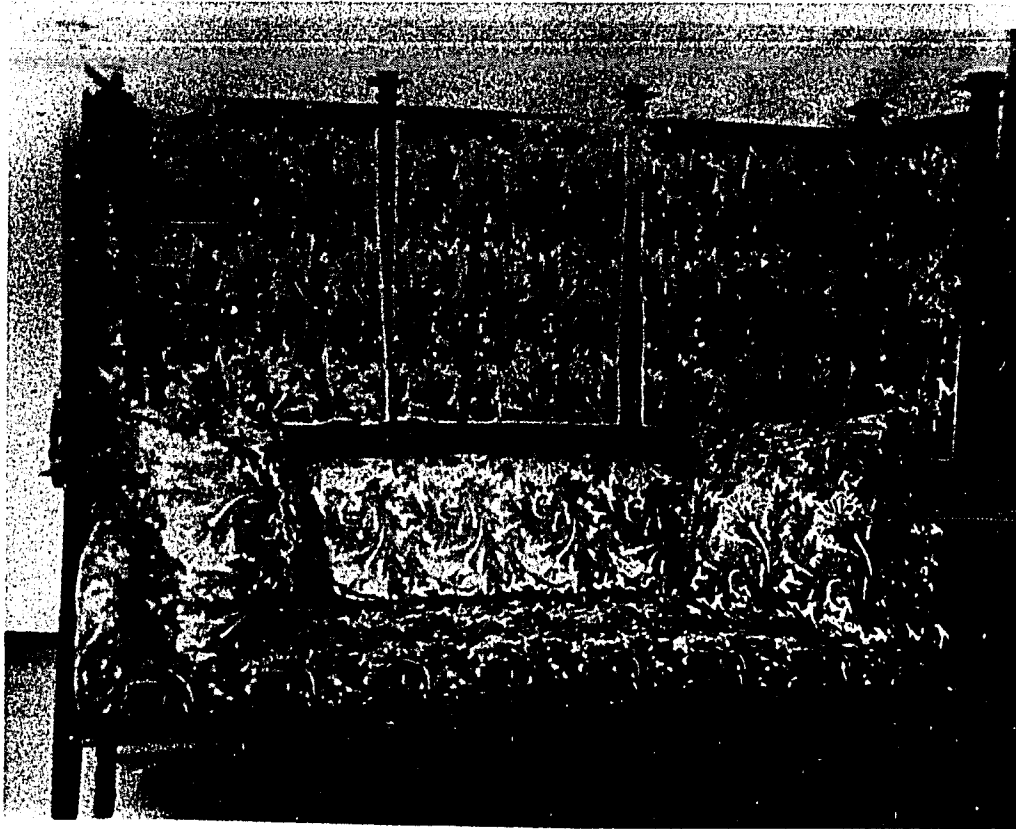


**Fig. 3. Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo. Love settle and fabric design. c. 1886.
William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.**

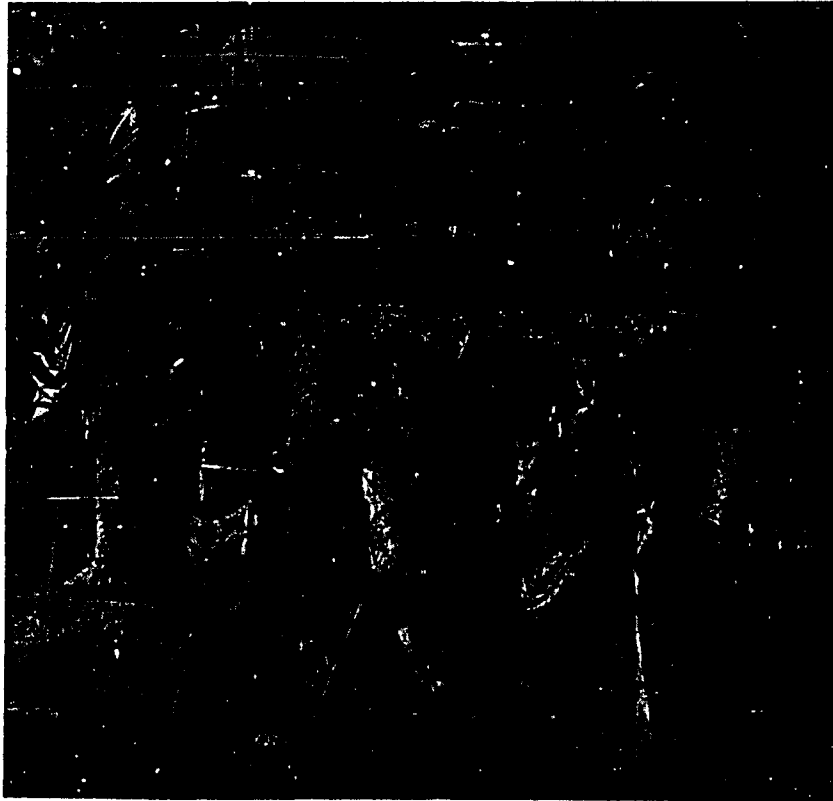


Fig. 4. Andrea Mantegna. The Trimp[h] of Caesar: The Triumphal Car. 1486-94. Oil on canvas, 108 x 108 in. Royal Collection, Hampton Court Palace, London.



Fig. 5. Jules Bastien-Lepage. Joan of Arc. 1879. Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 in. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of Erwin Davis, 1889.



Fig. 6. John Brett. Britannia's Realm. c. 1893. Oil on canvas, 41 x 84 in. Tate Gallery, London.



Fig. 7. J.C. Hook. Hearts of Oak. 1875. Oil on canvas, 37 1/2 x 56 1/2 in.
Castle Museum, Nottingham.



Fig. 8. William Lionel Wyllie. Commerce and Sea Power. 1898. Oil on canvas, 36 x 60 in. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.

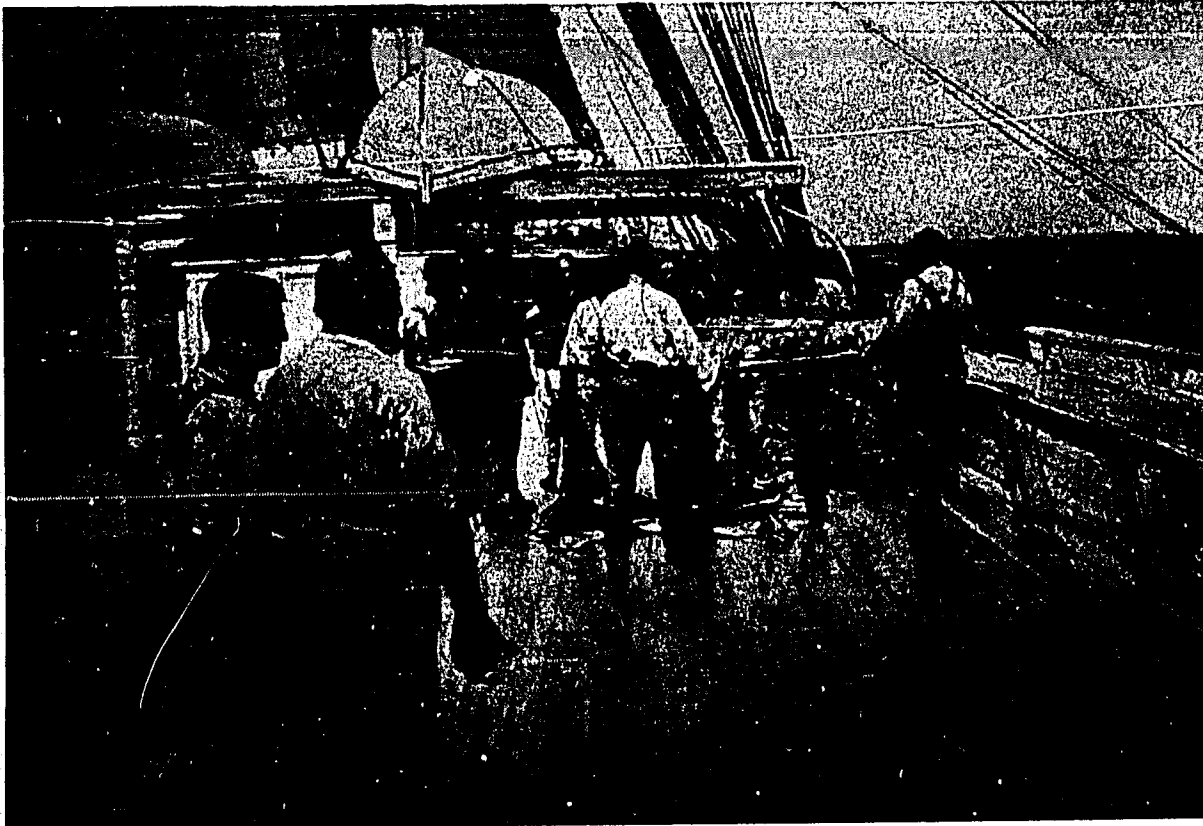


Fig. 9. Funeral at Sea. 1890. Oil on canvas, 61 x 92 in. Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow, Scotland.

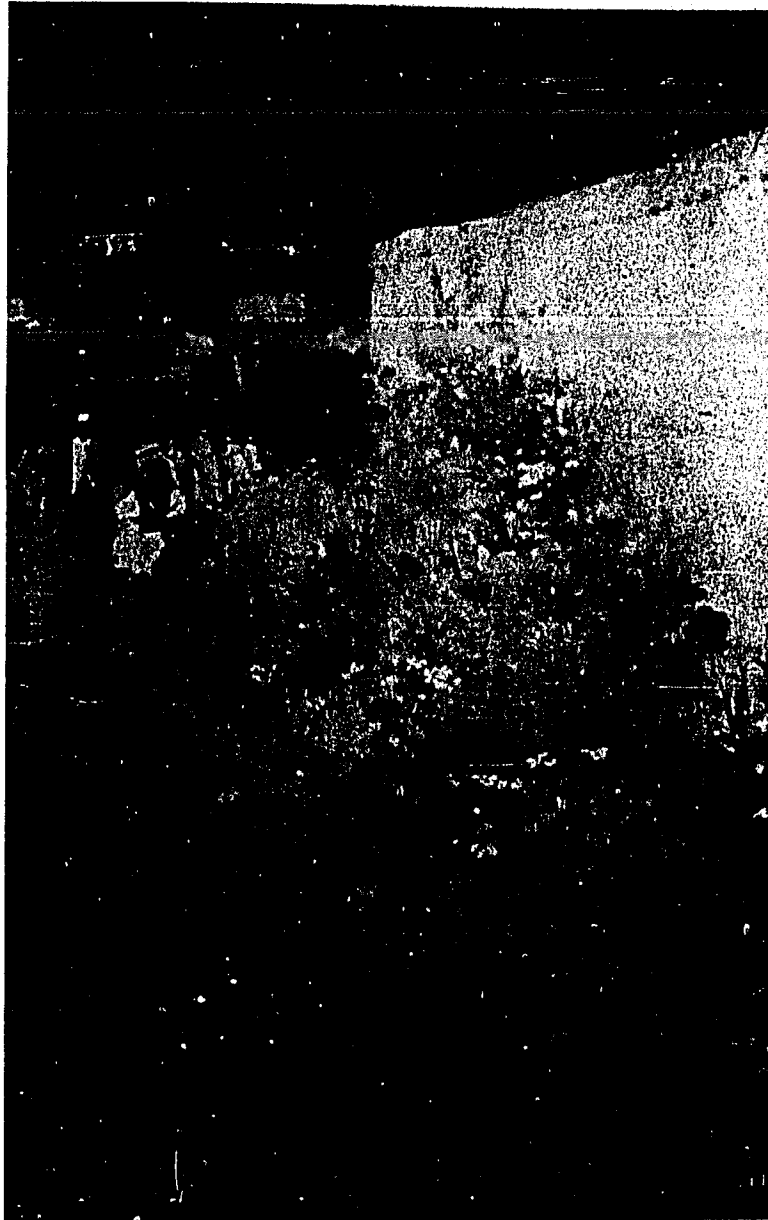


**Fig. 10. On the Coast, Tangiers. 1888. Oil on canvas, 30 x 20 in.,
Forbes Magazine Collection, New York.**



Fig. 11. Into Port. 1894. Oil on canvas. now unlocated.



Fig. 12. Arthur Melville. Bravo Toro: The Little Bullfight. undated. Water-colour, 22 x 30 1/2 in. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 13. Pilots, Puerto de los Pasajes. c. 1891. Oil on canvas, 40 x 50 in. The Art Institute of Chicago. The Stickeny Fund.



Fig. 14. The Buccaneers. 1892. Oil on canvas, 81 x 91 in. Washington University, St. Louis.

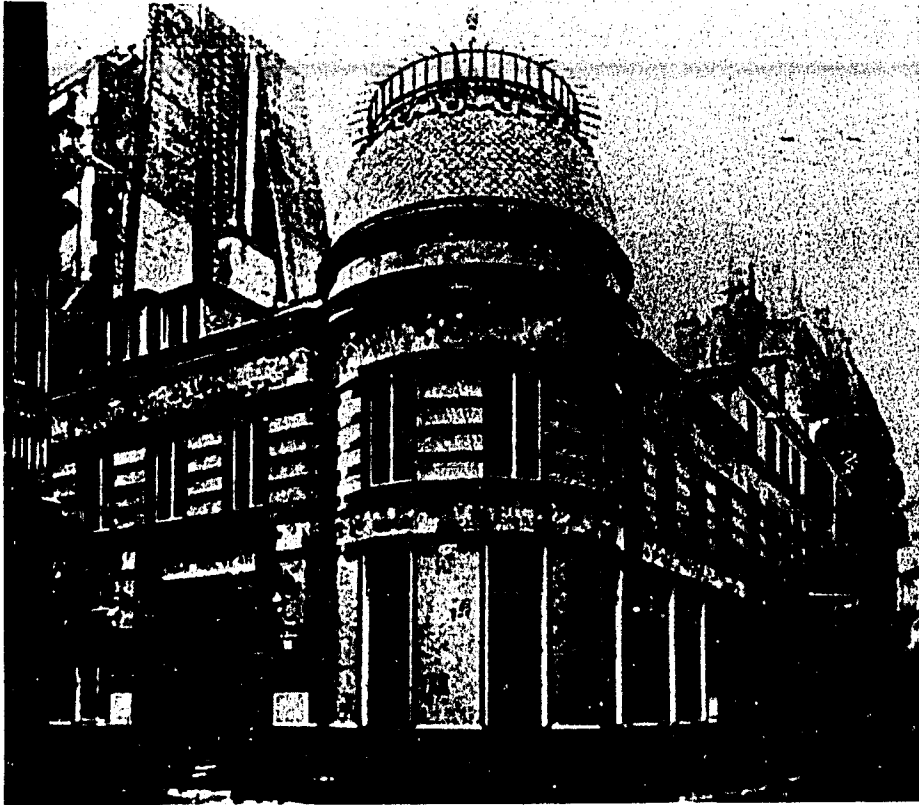


Fig. 15. Facade of Hotel de l'Art Nouveau, Paris. c. 1898.

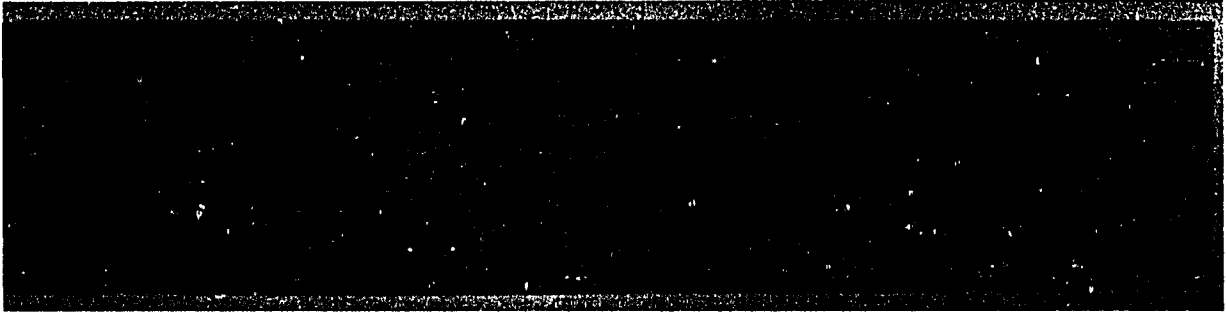


Fig. 16. Sketch for frieze on Hotel de l'Art Nouveau. 1895. now unlocated.



Fig. 17. Sketch for frieze on Hotel de l'Art Nouveau. 1894. now unlocated.

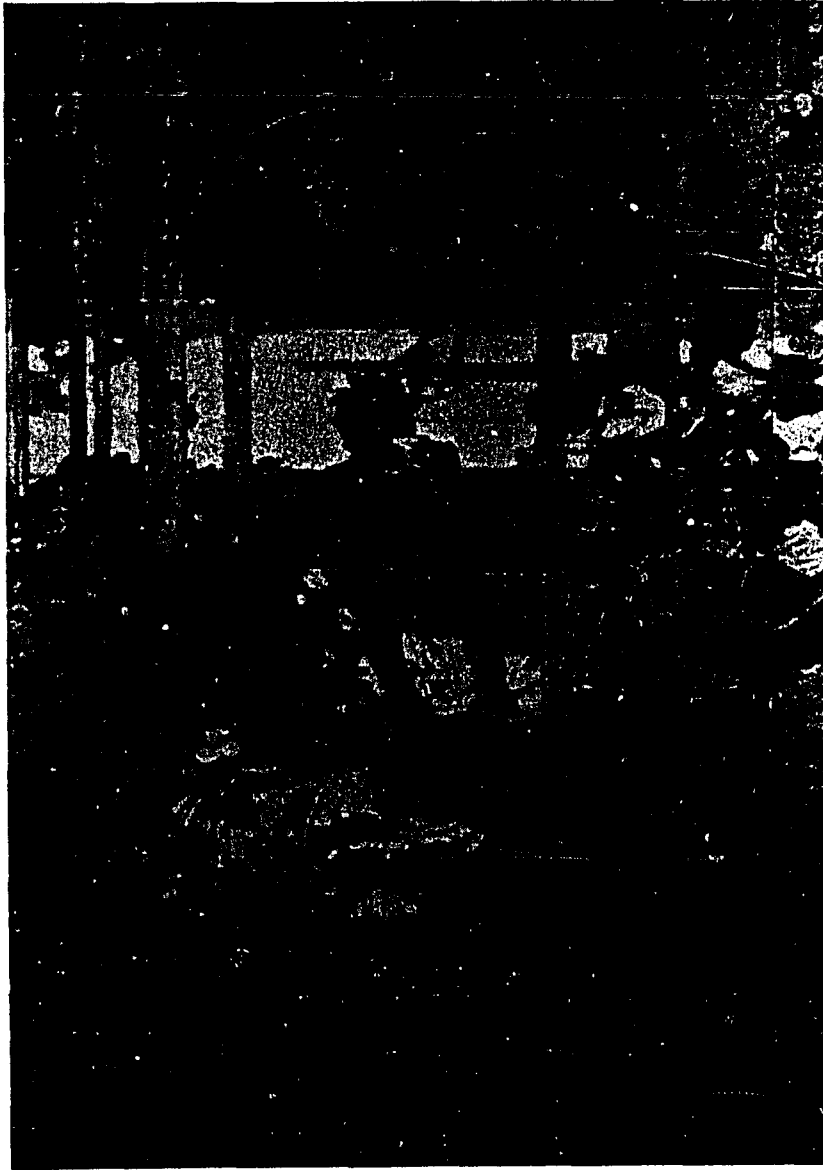


Fig. 18. Music. 1895. Spirit fresco on canvas, c. 10 x 7 ft. now William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.



Fig. 19. Dance. 1895. Spirit fresco on canvas, c. 10 x 7 ft. now unlocated.

FIRST EXHIBITION OF THE WORKS OF THE "SOCIÉTÉ NOUVELLE DE PEINTRES ET DE SCULPTEURS"

PARIS: GALERIE GEORGES PETIT
MARCH, 1900



THE MEMBERS OF THE "SOCIÉTÉ NOUVELLE."

ALEXANDRE	A. CHARPENTIER	GABRIEL MOUREY (<i>President</i>)	CAMILLE LÉVÉY	LOUIS SIMON
ALFRED	EMIL CLAU	A. DELANESCHE	RENÉ MARTIN	RENÉ PRINCE
CHARLES	CHARLES COTTET	HENRI DUBREUIL	RENÉ MÉNARD	FRITSZ TRAPLOW
CHARLES	CHARLES	WALTER GAY	G. MEUNIER	ROGER VAIL

Fig. 20. Announcement for exhibition of Société Nouvelle de Peintres et de Sculpteurs. Galerie Georges Petit, Paris. March 1900.



Fig. 21. Boy with Gourds. 1897. Stained glass window executed by Tiffany, 60 in. high. The Morse Gallery of Art, Winter Park, Florida.

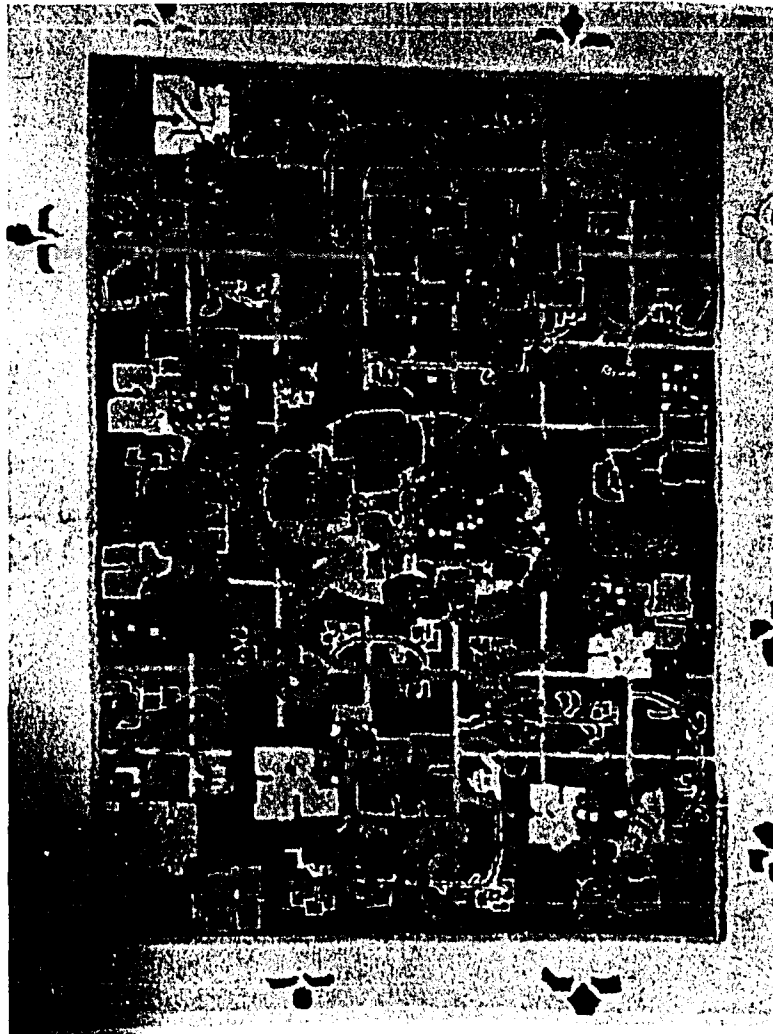


Fig. 22. Carpet. c. 1895-1900. now unlocated.



Fig. 23. Music Room for Sir Edmund Davis, London. 1899-1900.

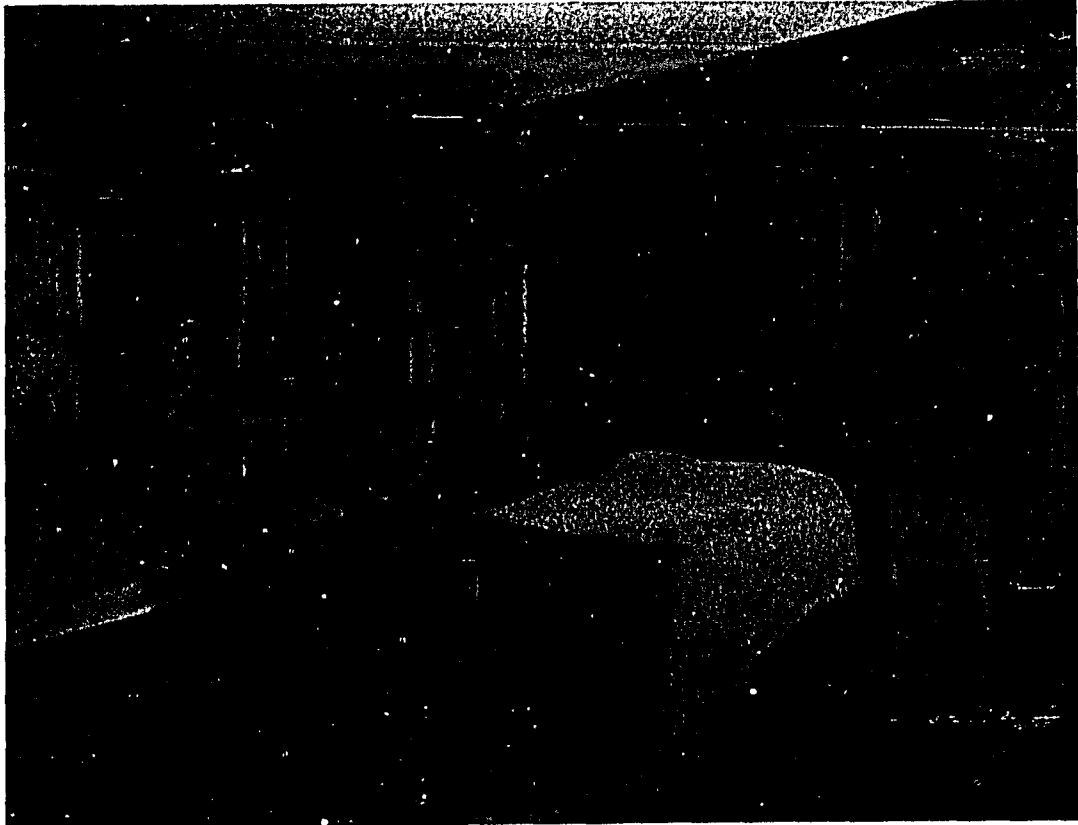


Fig. 24. Bedroom for Sir Edmund Davis, London, 1899-1900.



Fig. 25. Bed for Davis bedroom.



Fig. 26. Fireplace, Davis bedroom.



Fig. 27. Detail of frieze, Davis bedroom.

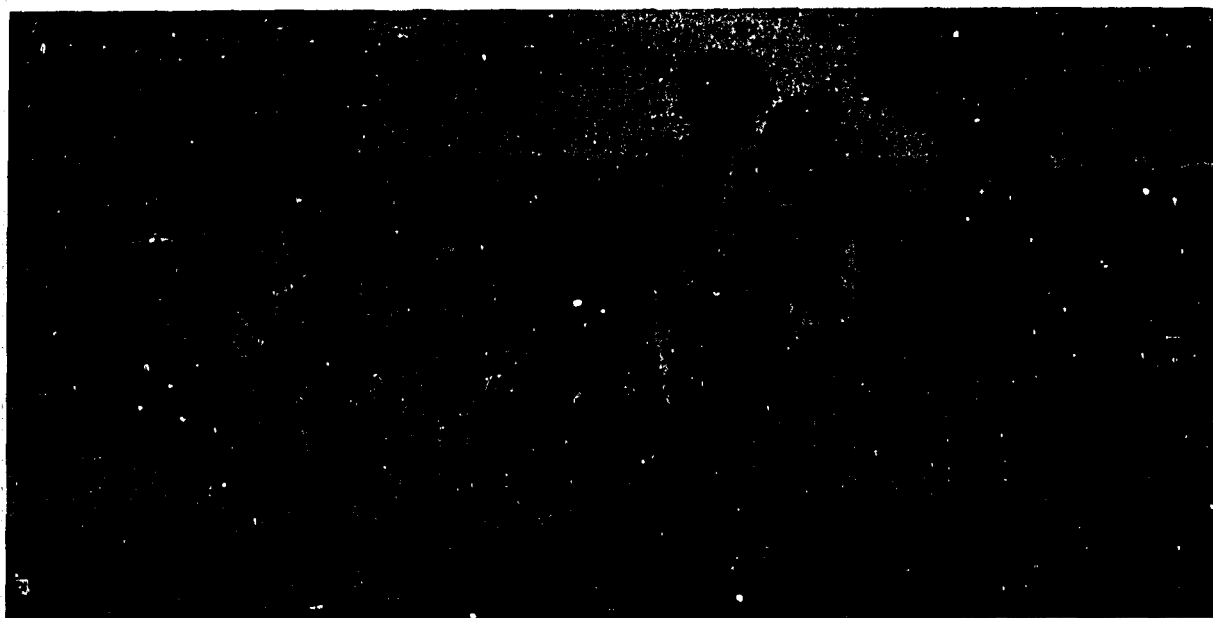


Fig. 28. Detail of frieze, Davis bedroom.

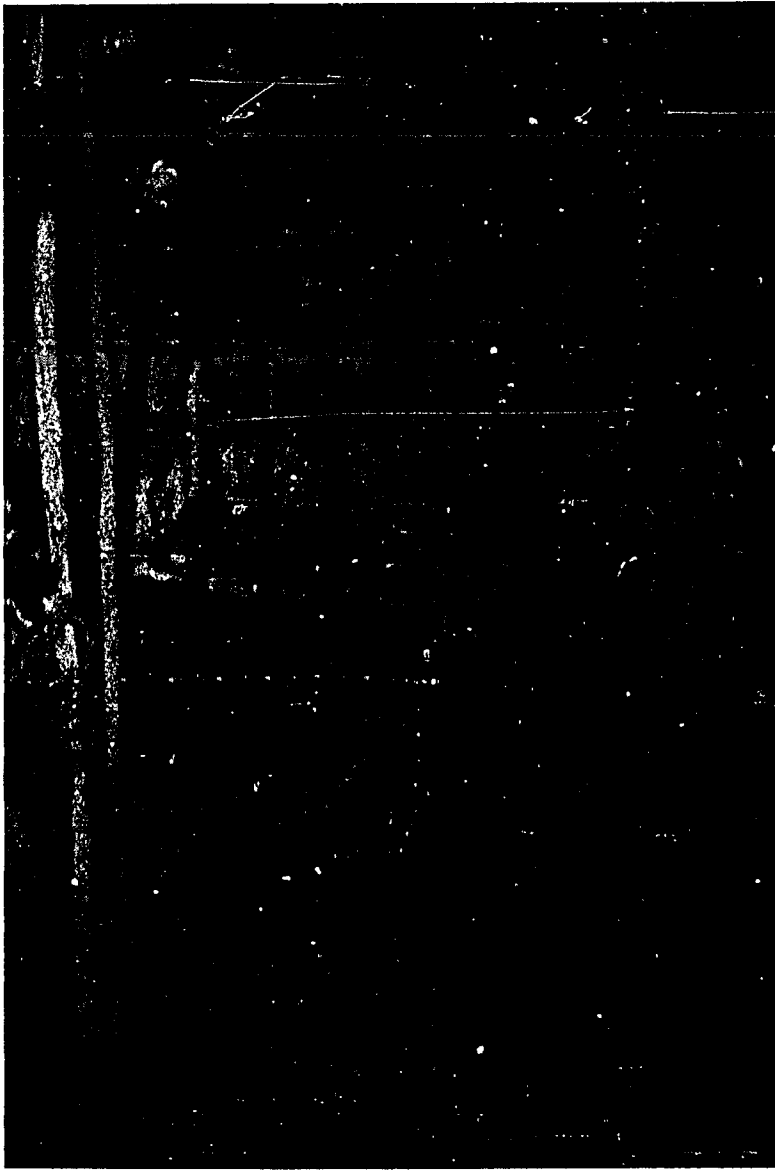


Fig. 29. Wall panel, Davis bedroom.

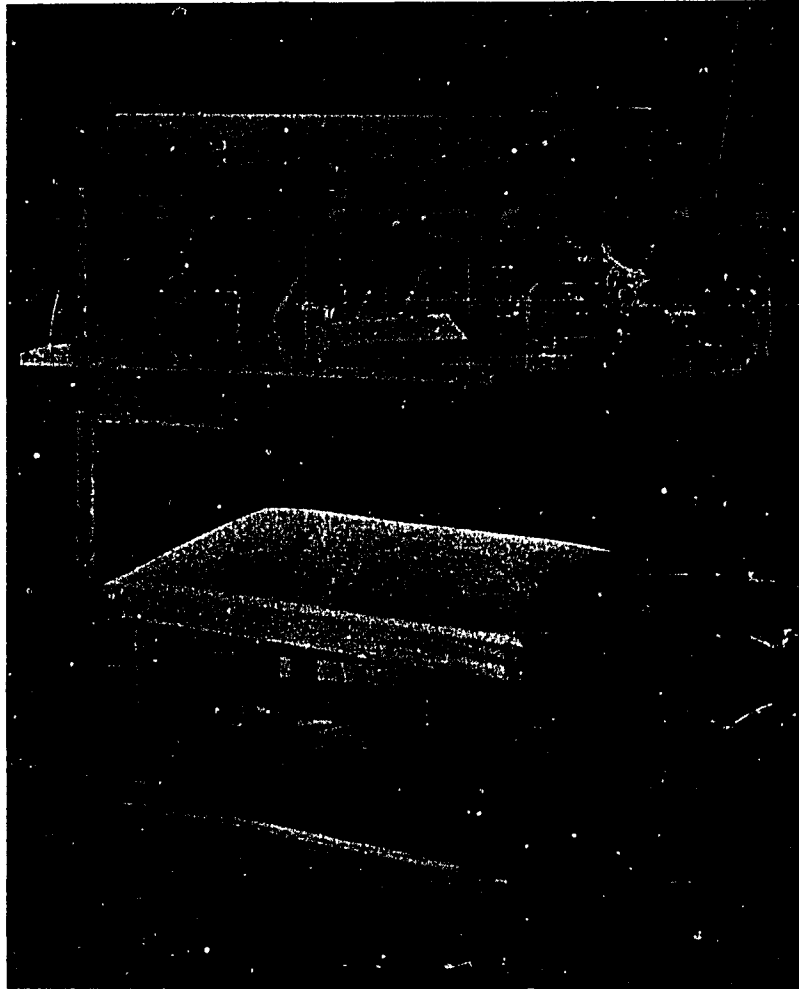


Fig. 30. Drop-front desk and bench. Cherrywood. Davis bedroom. now unlocated.

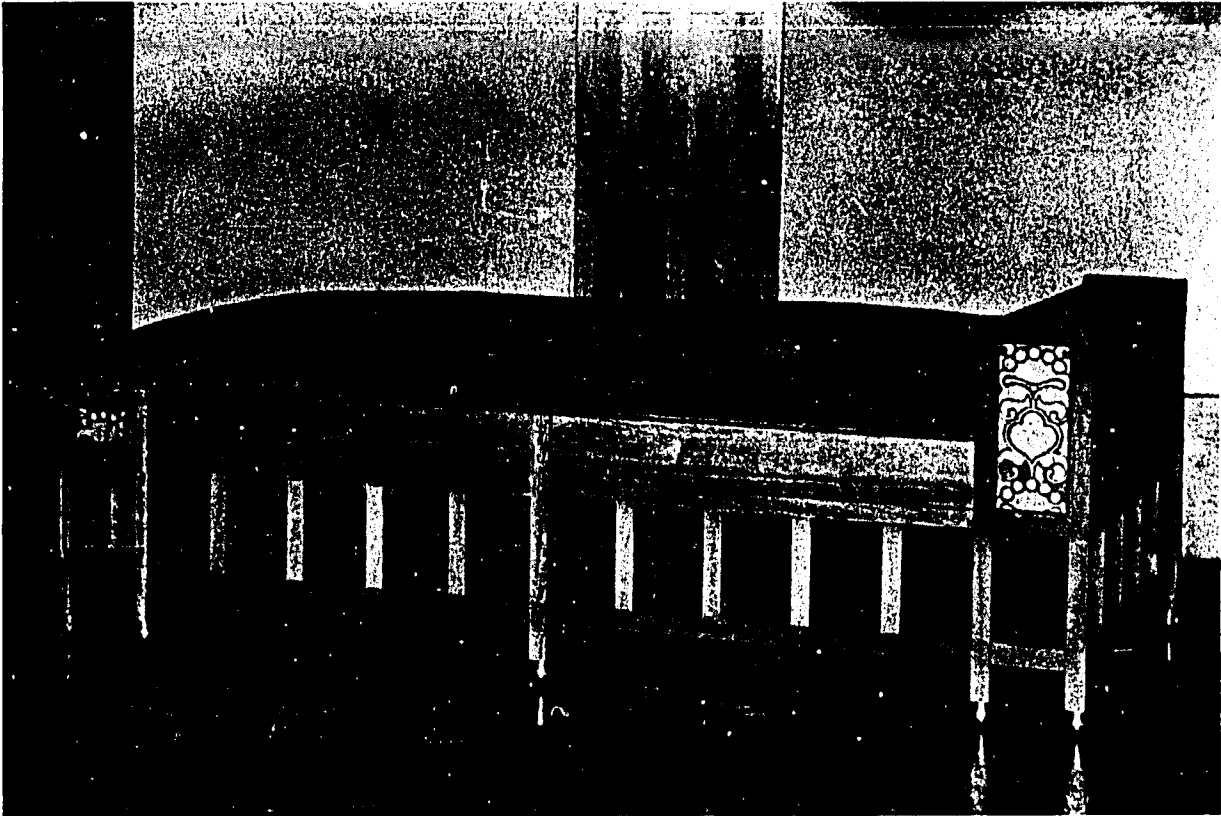


Fig. 31. Chaise lounge. Inlaid cherrywood. Davis bedroom. now unlocated.



Fig. 32. St. Simon Stylites. 1894. Oil on canvas, 82 x 44 in. Museo d'Arte Moderna, Venice.



Fig. 33. The Blood of the Grape. 1895. Oil on canvas, 55 x 91 in. now unlocated.



Fig. 34. The Market at Bushire. 1897. Oil on canvas. now unlocated.



Fig. 35. Charity. 1900. Oil on canvas, 55 x 60 1/2 in. The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



Fig. 36. The Cider Press. 1902. Oil on canvas, 78 x 78 in. now unlocated.



Fig. 37. Sir George Clausen. The Boy and the Man. 1908. Oil on canvas, 77 3/4 x 64 1/2 in. Bradford Art Galleries and Museums, Bradford.



Fig. 38. Old Hammersmith. 1908. Etching.

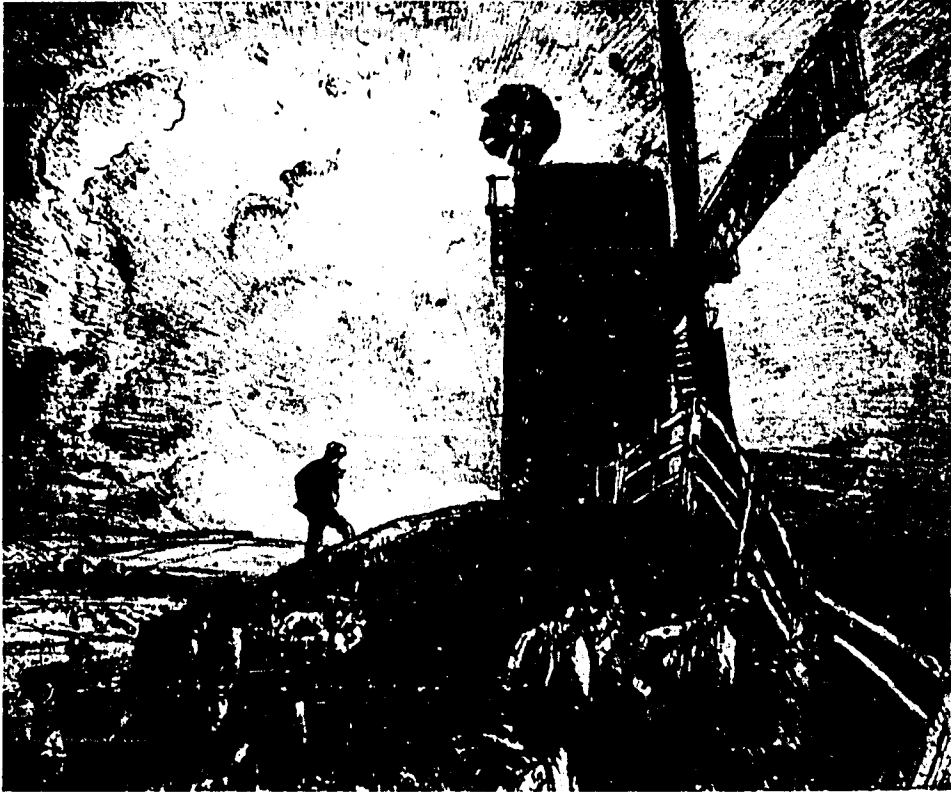


Fig. 39. The Black Mill, Winchelsea. 1908. Etching.

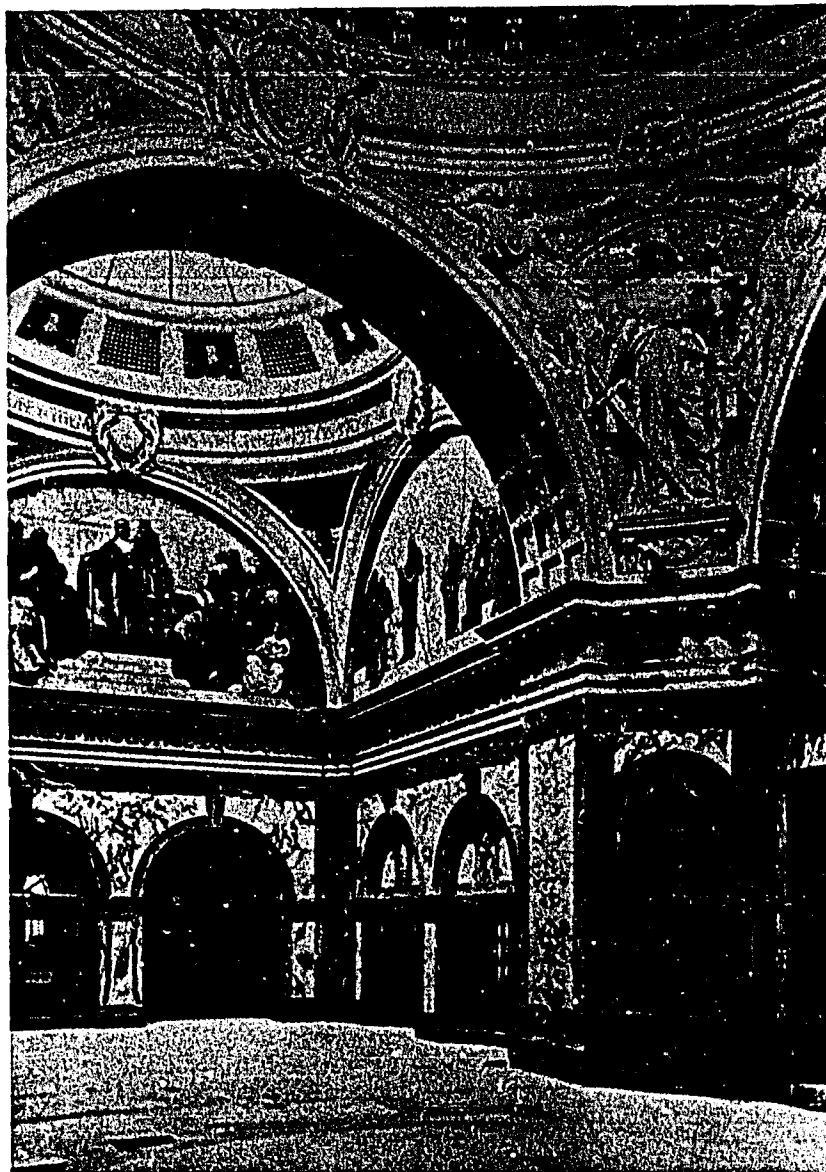


Fig. 40. Edward Mountford. The Great Hall, Old Bailey Criminal Court Building. 1900-06. London.

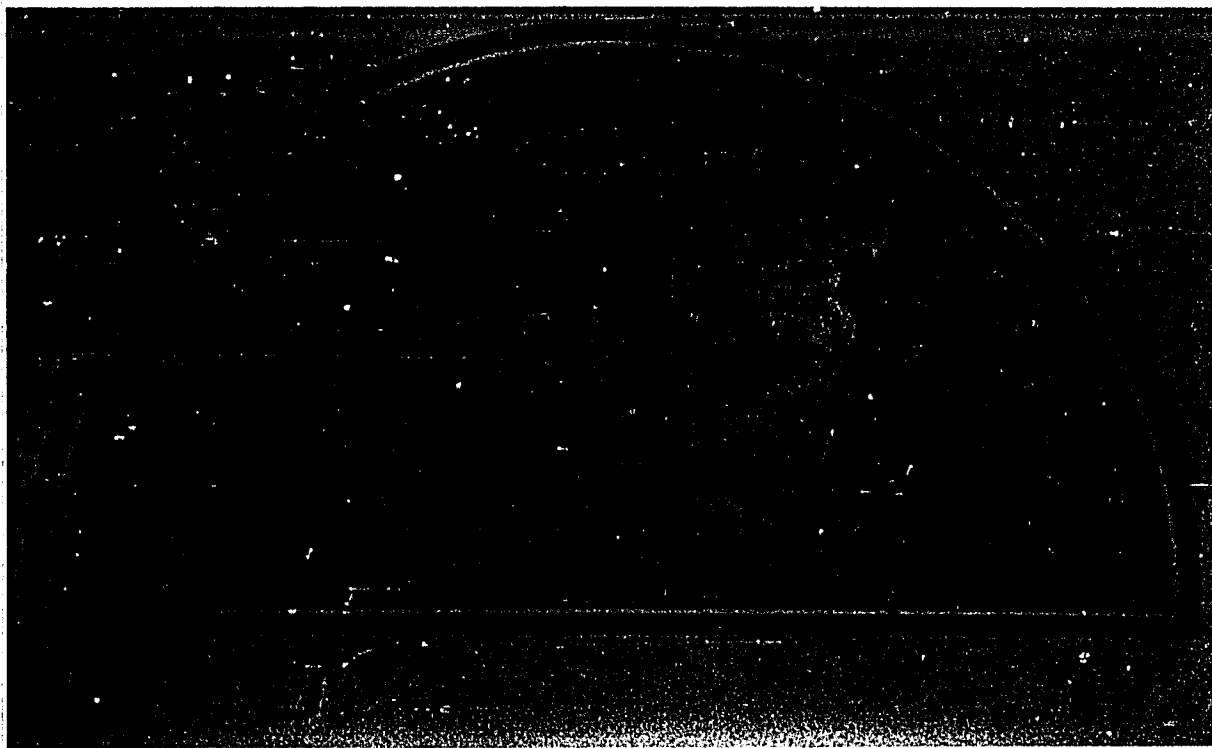


Fig. 41. Gerald Moira. Justice. 1902-06. Mural in Old Bailey Criminal Court Building, London.



Fig. 42. John Byam Shaw. The Blessed Damozel. 1895. Oil on canvas, 37 x 71 in. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.



Fig. 43. Frederick Cayley Robinson. Orphans. 1915. Part of mural cycle, Acts of Mercy. 1910-20. Middlesex Hospital, London.



Fig. 44. Robert Anning Bell. Drawing for Humanity in the House of Circumstance. c. 1896-1901. Mosaic, 10 x 32 ft. Horniman Museum, London.

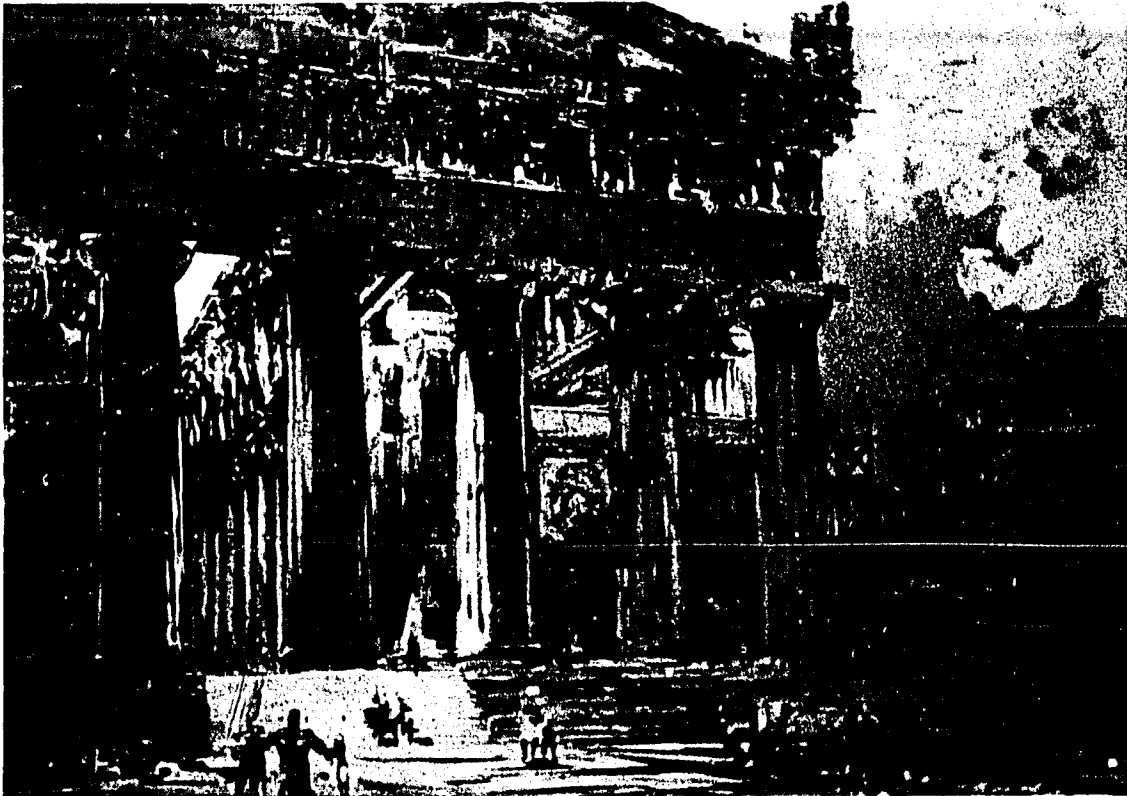


Fig. 45. William Walcott. Temple of Zeus, Olympus, Agrigentum. 1939. Pencil and gouache, 38 x 50 1/2 in. The Fine Art Society Ltd., London.

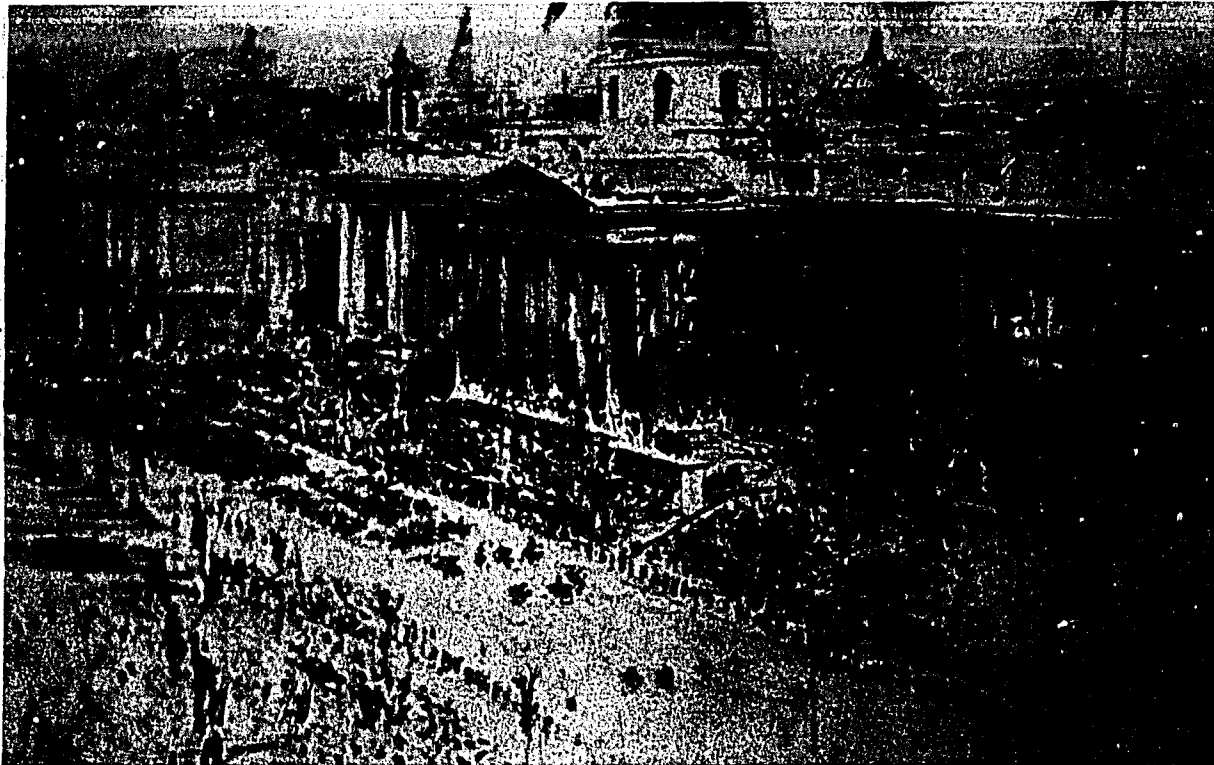


Fig. 46. William Walcot. Victory Parade Passing the National Gallery. 1919.
Pencil and gouache, 13 x 19 in. The Fine Art Society Ltd., London.



Fig. 47. Richard Westmacott. The Earth is the Lord's and the Fullness Thereof. 1842-44. Pediment group, Royal Exchange, London.



Fig. 48. Modern Commerce. 1900-06. Spirit fresco on canvas, 17 1/2 x 11 ft. Royal Exchange, London.



Fig. 49. The Granting of their Charter to the Skinners Company by Edward III.
1902-04. Oil on canvas, 9 1/2 x 10 1/2 ft. Skinners Hall, London.

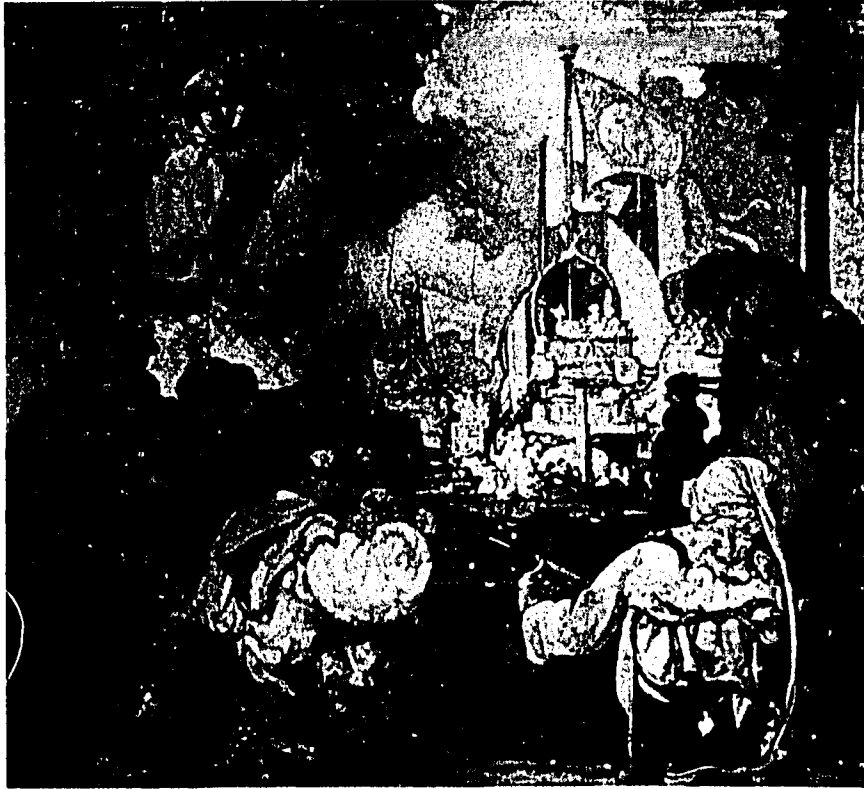


Fig. 50. A River Procession of the City's and Company's Barges to Westminster.
1902-04. Oil on canvas, 9 1/2 x 10 1/2 ft. Skinners Hall, London.



Fig. 51. The Reception of Genral Monk at the Skinners Hall. 1902-08. Oil on canvas, 9 1/2 x 10 1/2 ft. Skinners Hall, London.



Fig. 52. Andrea Mantegna. The Triumph of Caesar: The Picture Bearers. 1486-94. Oil on canvas, 108 x 108 in. Royal Collection, Hampton Court Palace, London.

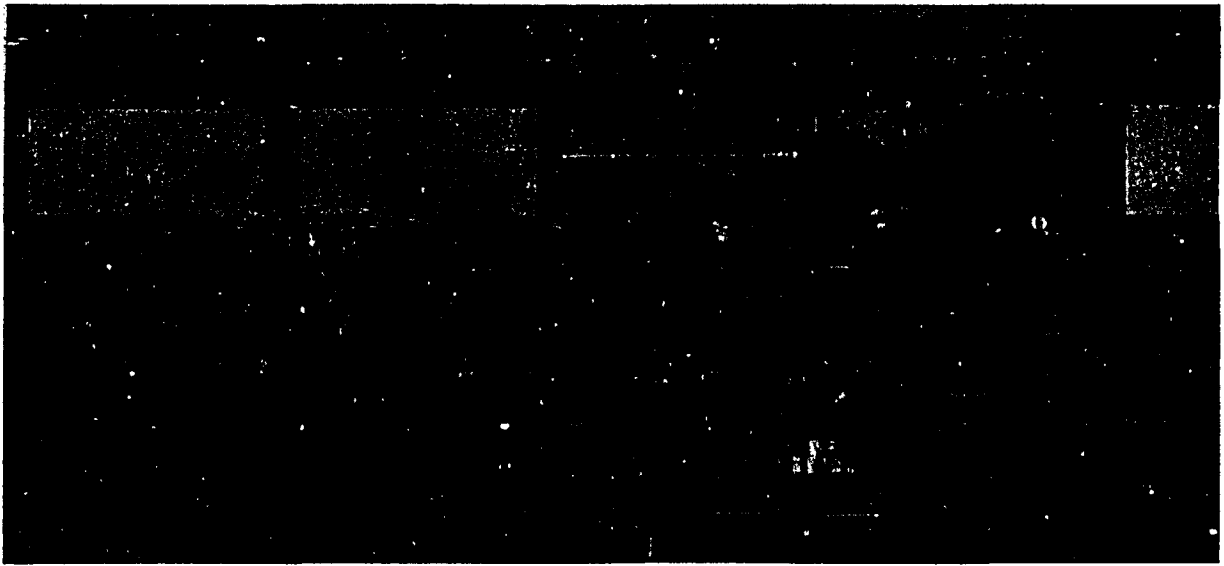


Fig. 53. Design for British Section, Venice Biennale, 1905.



Fig. 54. Photograph of British Section, Venice Biennale, 1905.



Fig. 55. Cartoon for Naavies. British Section, Venice Biennale, 1905.



Fig. 56. Blacksmiths. Oil on canvas, 65 x 81 in. British Section, Venice Biennale, 1905.

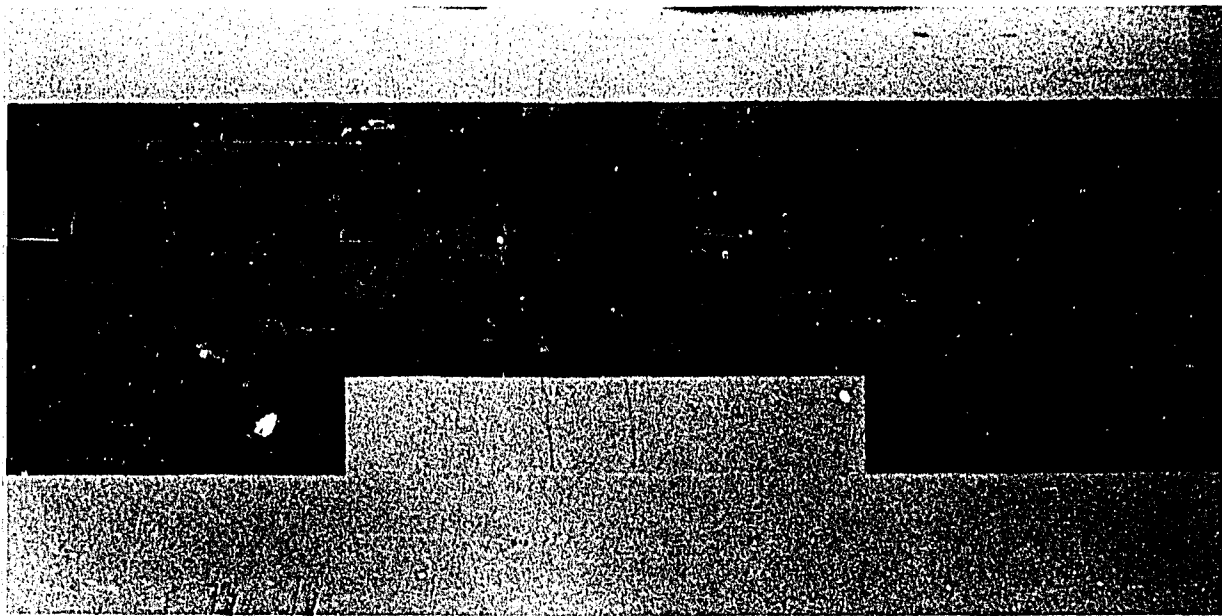


Fig. 57. Spinners. c. 1906. Oil on canvas, 65 x 213 in. City Art Gallery, Leeds.



Fig. 58. Venetian Commerce. Oil on canvas, 60 x 216 in. British Section, Venice Biennale, 1907.

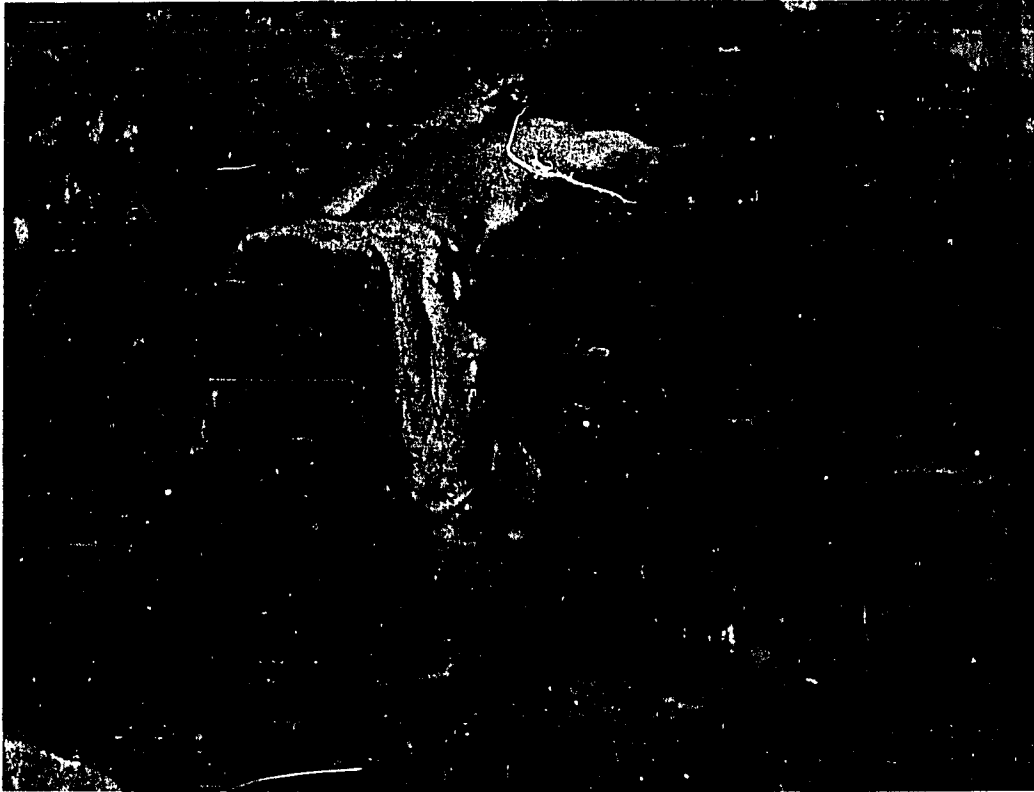


Fig. 59. Miners. Oil on canvas, 65 x 81 in. British Section, Venice Biennale, 1907.

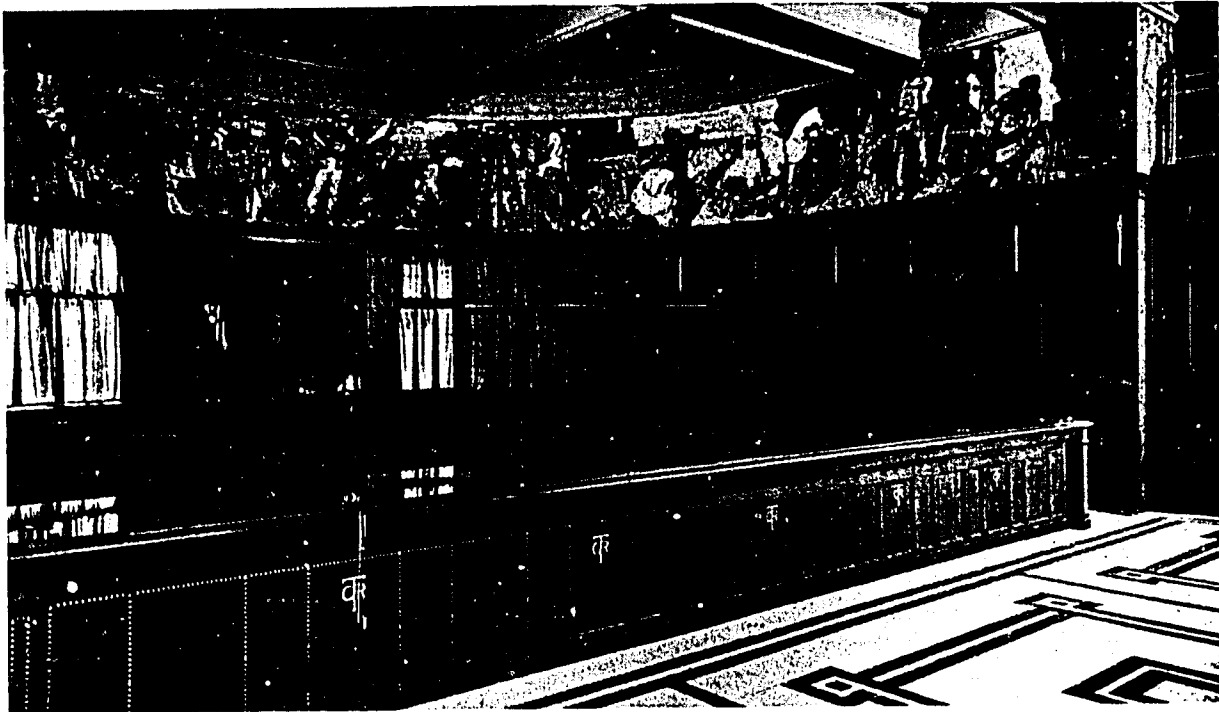


Fig. 60. Sir Aston Webb. Offices of Canadian Grand Trunk Railway, London, 1908.

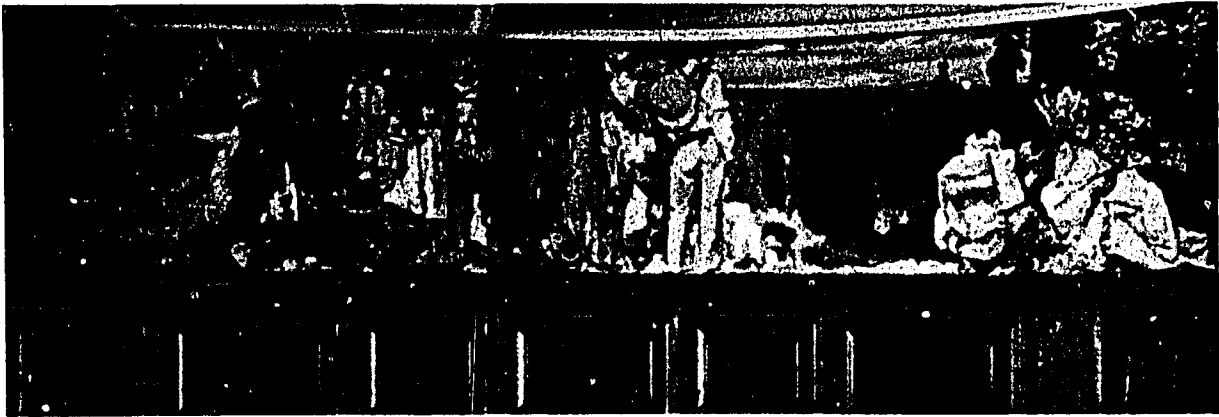


Fig. 61. Detail of Canadian Grand Trunk Railway mural. 1908-09. Tempera on canvas, 4 1/2 x 66 ft., London.



Fig. 62. Detail of Grand Trunk Railway mural.



Fig. 63. Detail of Grand Trunk Railway mural.

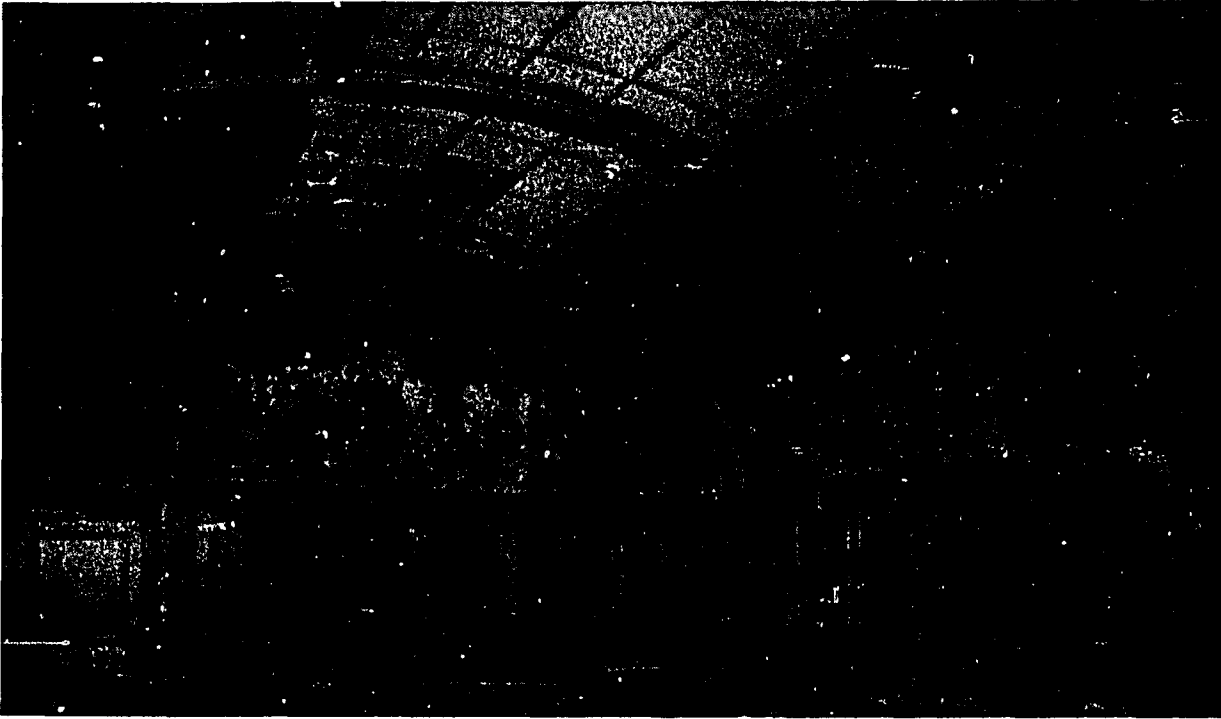


Fig. 64. Photograph of Committee Luncheon Room, Lloyd's Register of Shipping, London.



Fig. 65. Detail of Lunette. 1908-12. Tempera on canvas, c. 8 x 22 ft. Lloyd's Register, London.



Fig. 66. Mural panel. 1908-12. Tempera on canvas, 4 1/2 x 8 ft. Lloyd's Register, London.

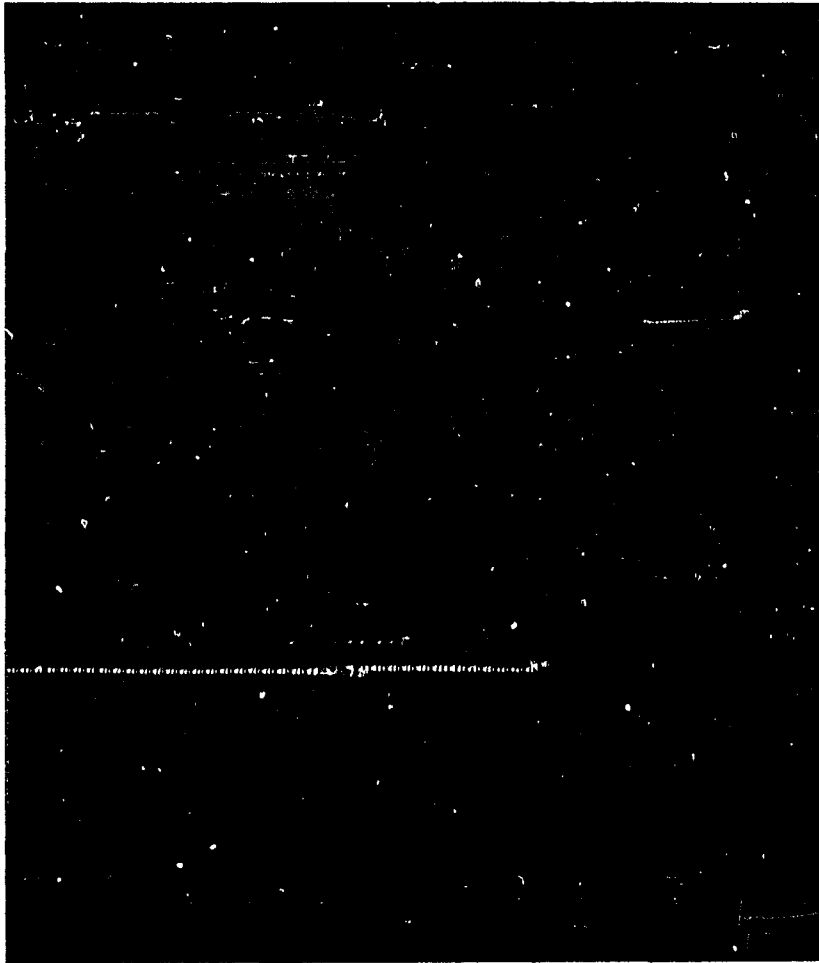


**Fig. 67. Photograph of Brangwyn Room, Ghent International Exhibition.
1913.**



Fig. 68. Boilermakers. 1913. Oil on canvas, 168 x 200 in. Ghent International Exhibition.

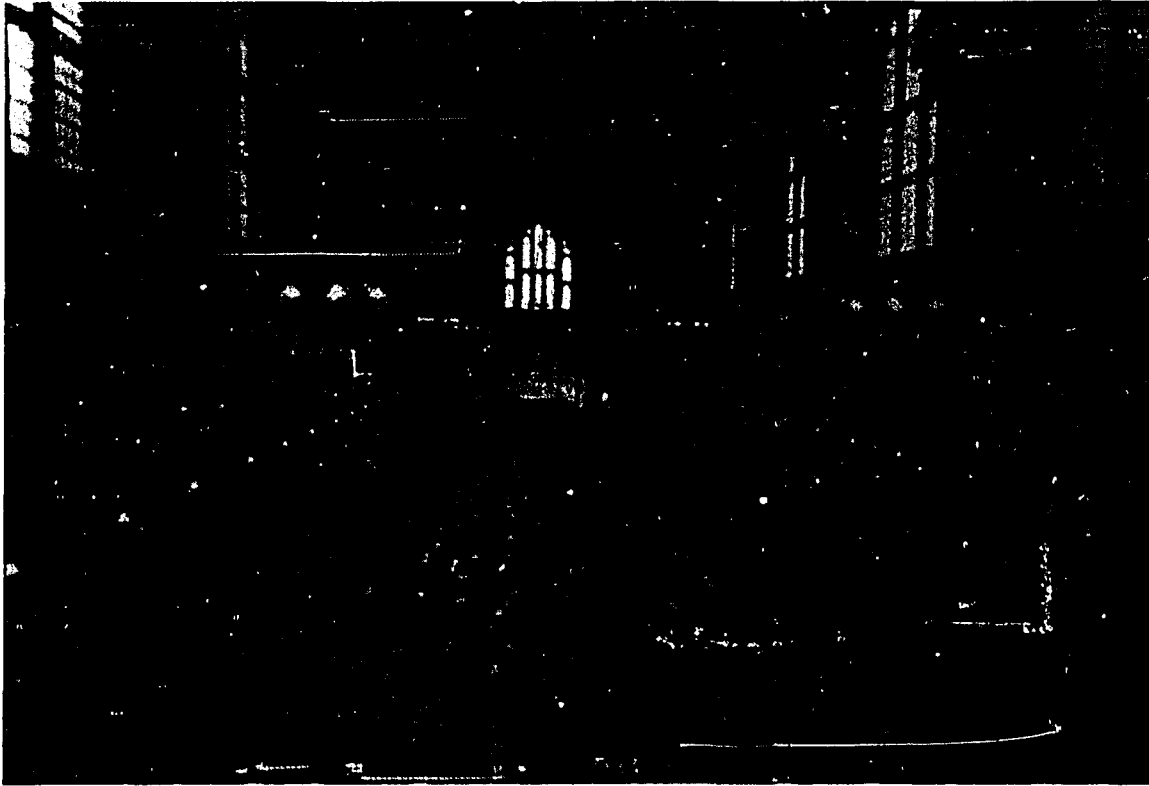


Fig. 69. Sir Aston Webb and E. Ingress Bell, Interior of Christ's Hospital Chapel. 1902. Horsham, Sussex.



Fig. 70. Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake. 1911-23. Tempera on canvas, 7 x 14 ft. Christ's Hospital Chapel, Horsham.



Fig. 71. John Eliot giving Bibles to the Mohicans: AD 1660. 1911-23. Tempera on canvas, 7 x 14 ft. Christ's Hospital Chapel, Horsham.

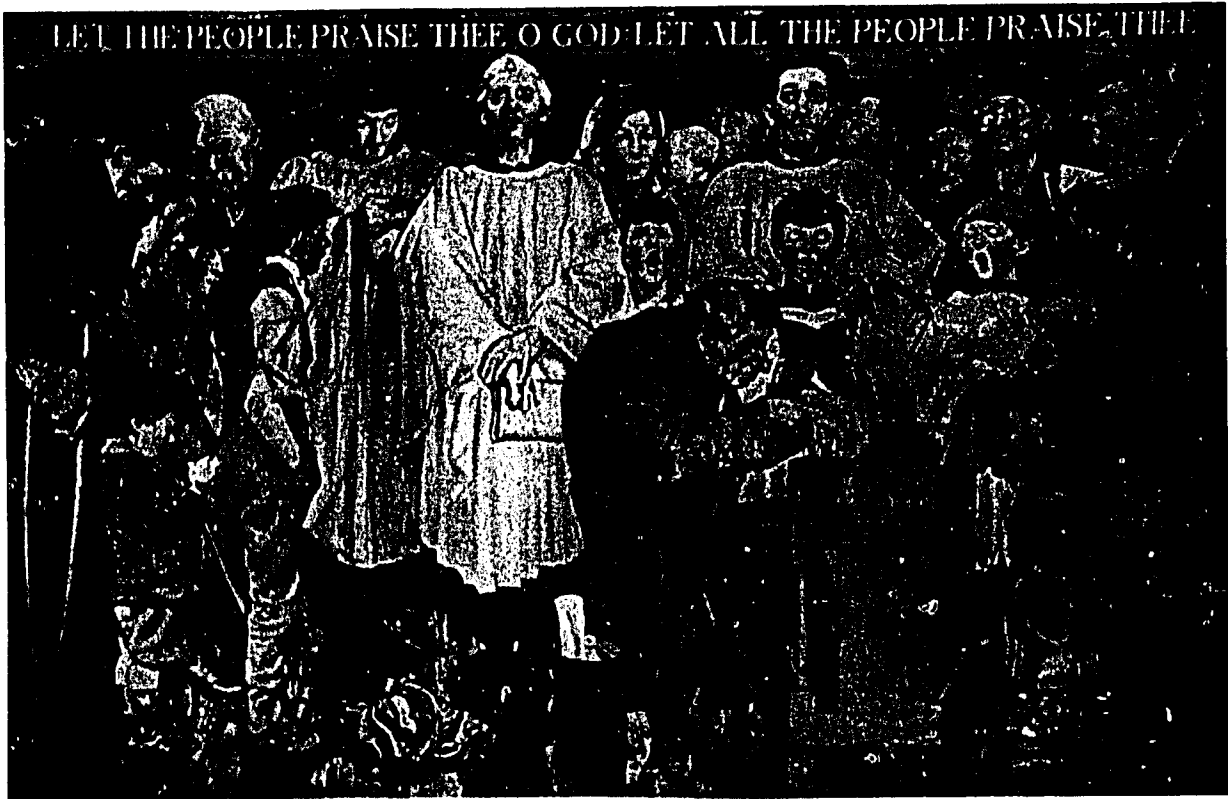


Fig. 72. Let the people praise Thee, O God, let all the people praise Thee. 1911-23. Tempera on canvas, 7 x 14 ft. Christ's Hospital Chapel, Horsham.



Fig. 73. General view of apse mosaic and chancel screen. 1914-16. St. Aidan's Church, Leeds.

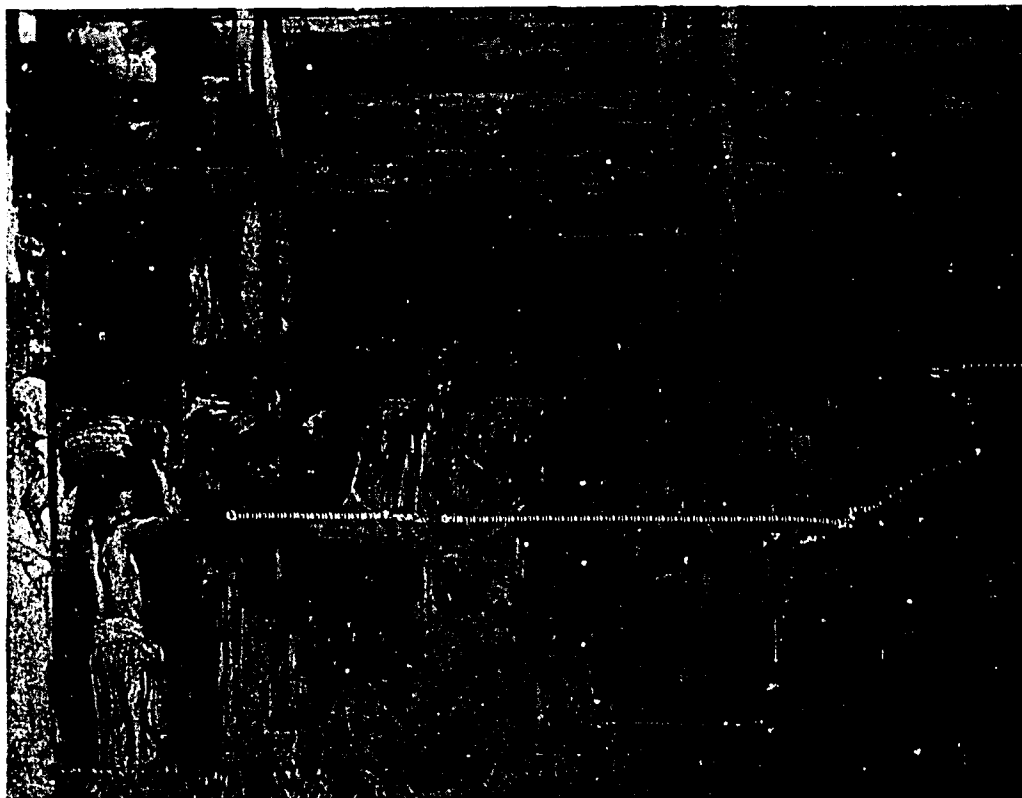


Fig. 74. Detail of cartoon for The Life of St. Aidan. 1914-16. Mosaic, c. 20 x 50 ft. St. Aidan's Church, Leeds.

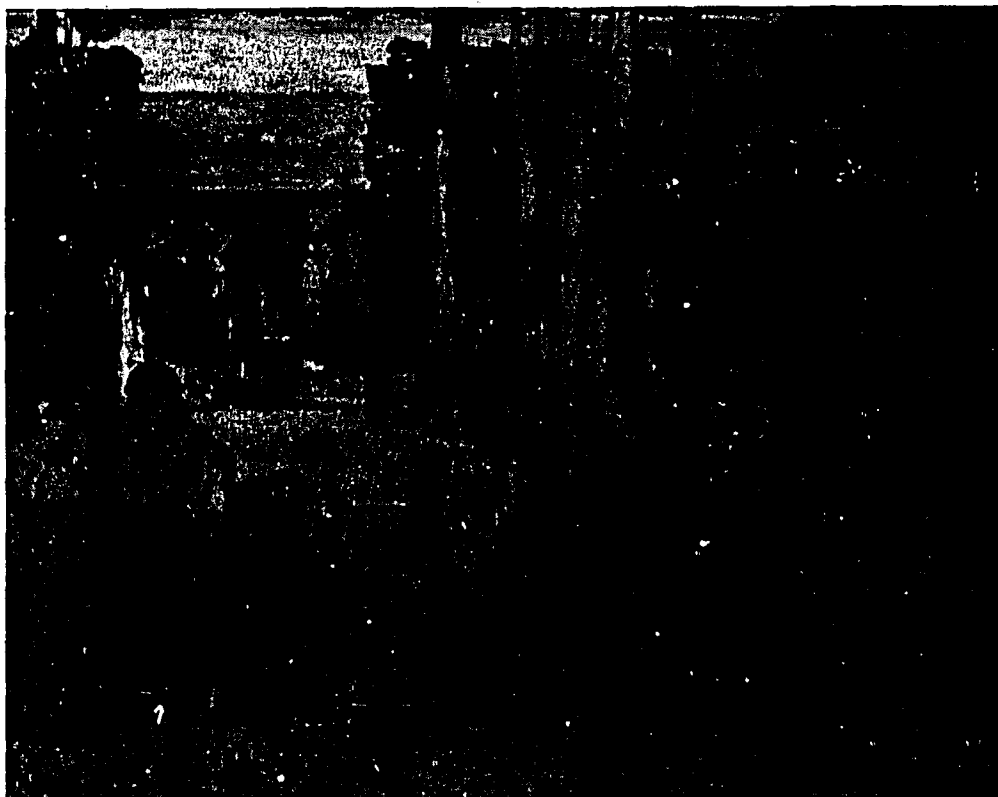


Fig. 75. Detail of cartoon for The Life of St. Aidan.



Fig. 76. Detail of The Life of St. Aidan.

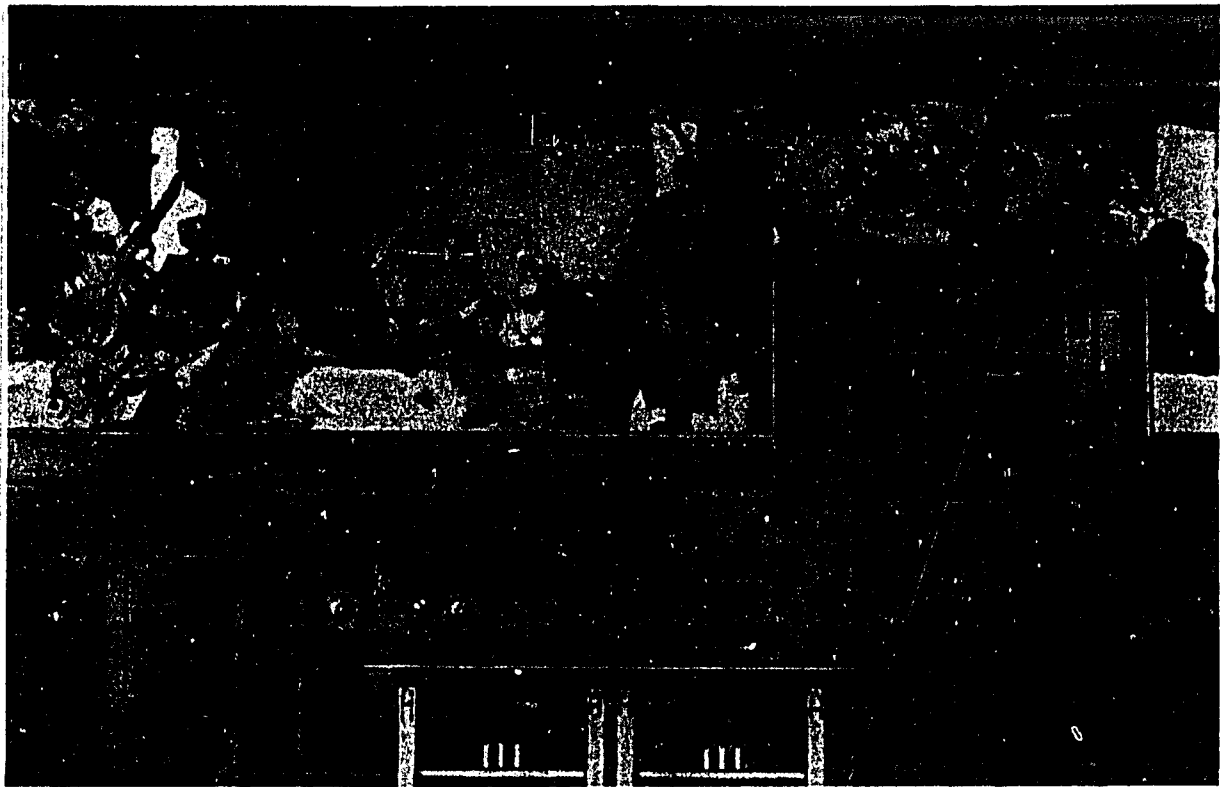


Fig. 77. Design for dining room, Palazzo Rezzonico, Venice, c. 1905-06.



Fig. 78. Design for dining room, Palazzo Rezzonico, Venice, c. 1905-06.



Fig. 79. Dining room. 1910. Casa Cuseni, Taormina, Sicily.



Fig. 80. Sketch for George V coronation parade decorations, London. 1911.



Fig. 81. Sketch for naval peace pageant decorations, London. 1919.

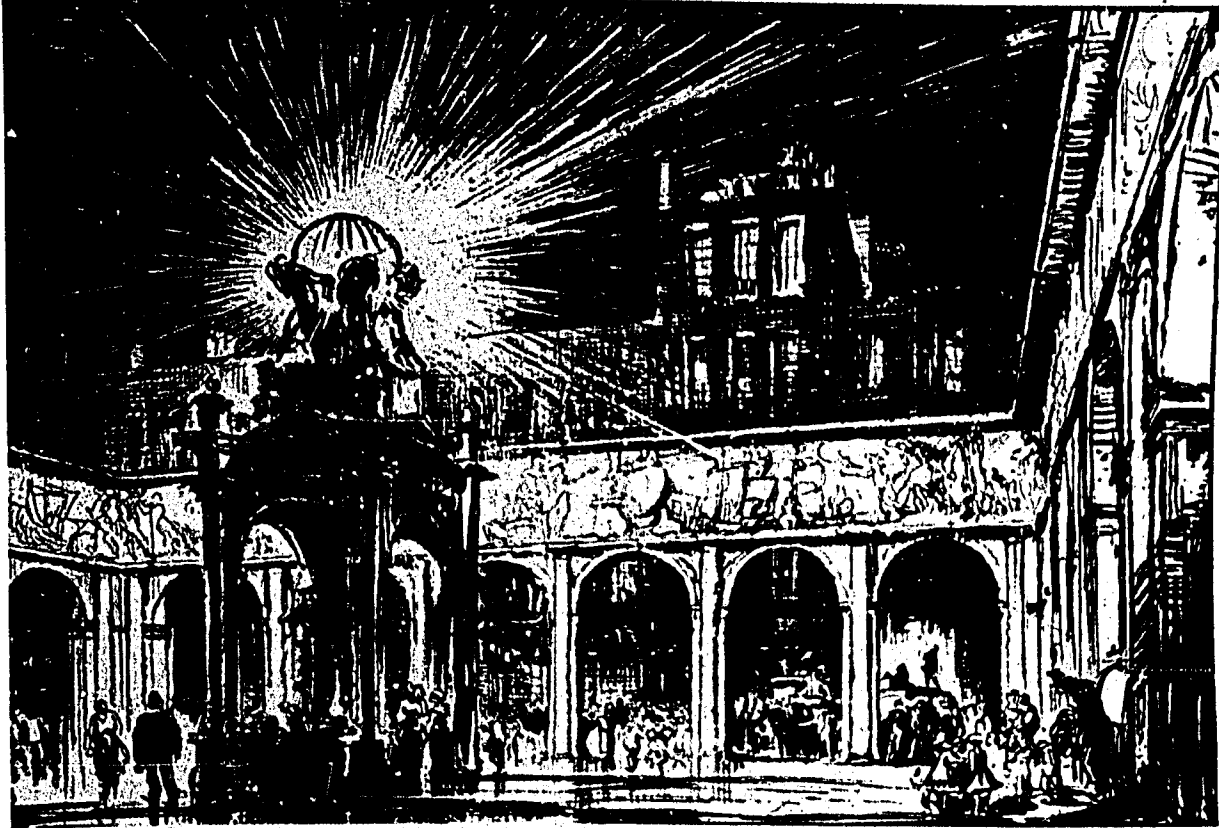


Fig. 82. Sketch for Sir Francis Drake memorial, London, 1912.

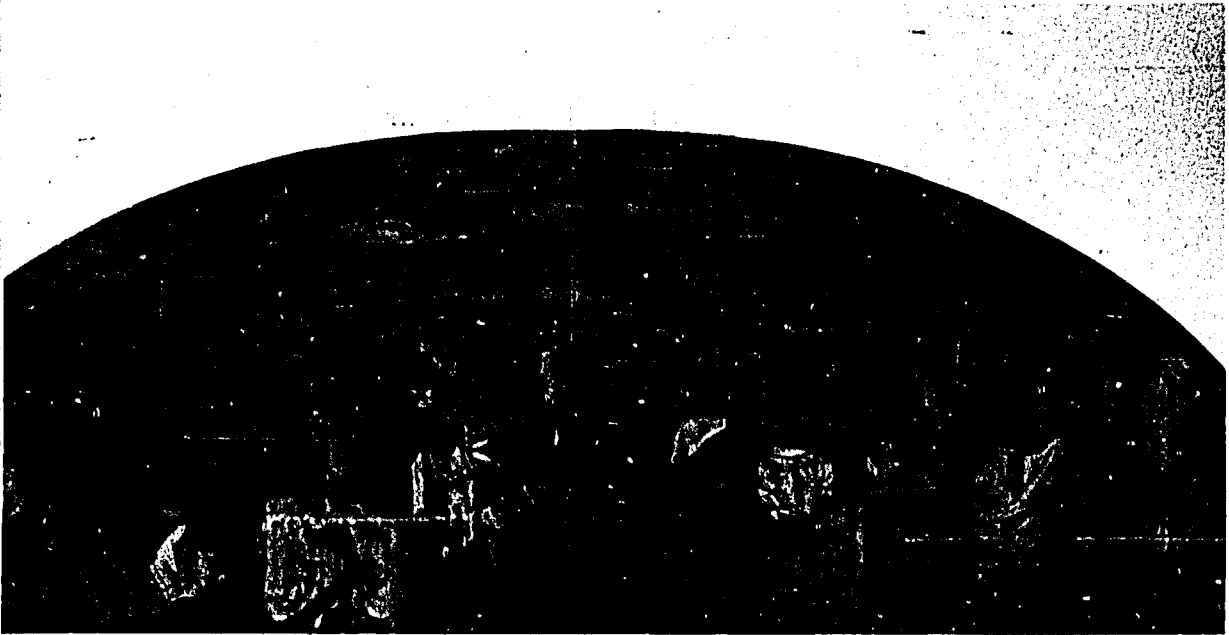


Fig. 83. Study for King John Signing the Magna Carta. 1912. Oil on canvas, 26 1/2 x 78 in. San Joaquin Pioneer Museum, Stockton, California.



Fig. 84. Photograph of mezzanine level, Cuyahoga County Courthouse, Cleveland.

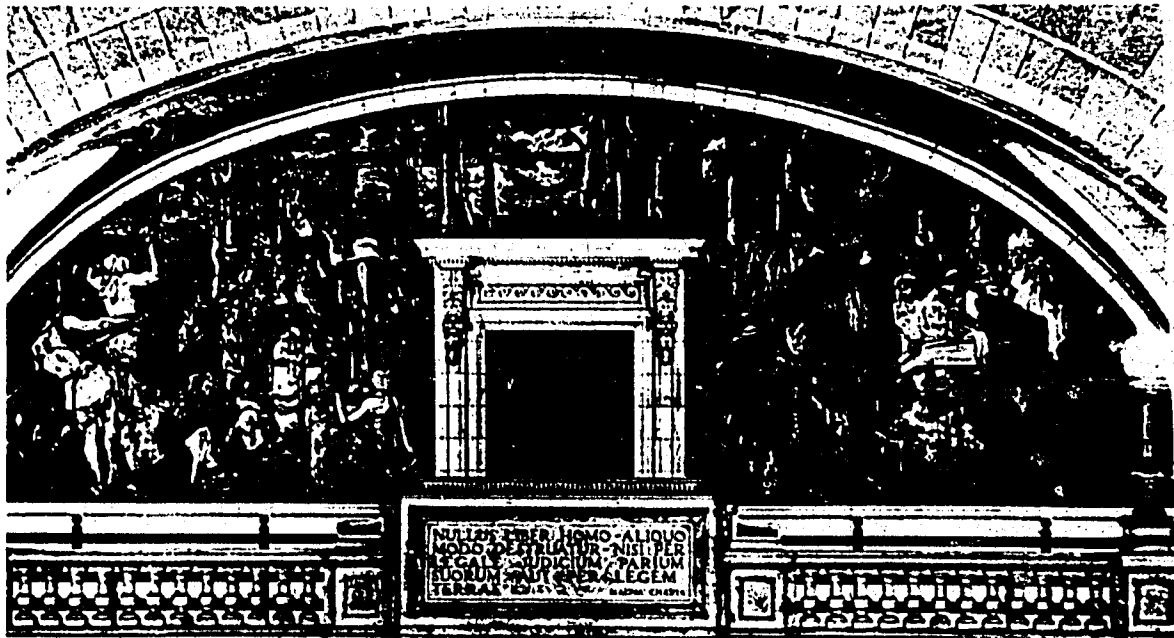


Fig. 85. King John Signing the Magna Carta. 1911-13. Oil encaustic on canvas, 15 x 50 ft. Cuyahoga County Courthouse, Cleveland.

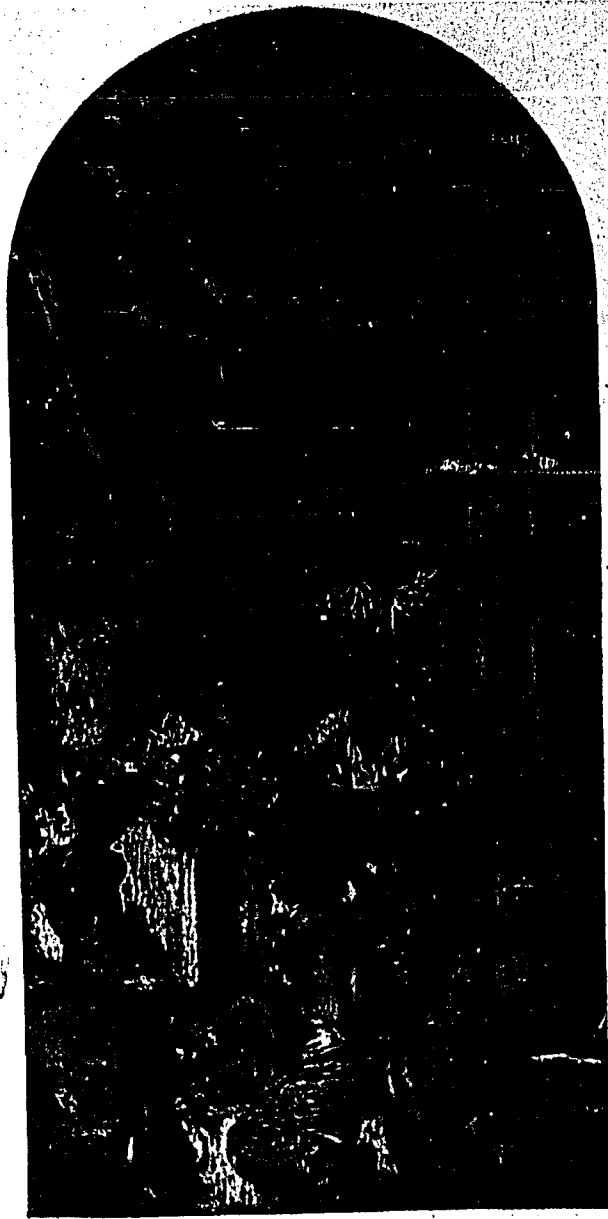


Fig. 86. Sketch for Earth - The Fruit Pickers. 1913-15. Oil on canvas, 25 x 12 ft. Panama Pacific Exhibition, San Francisco.



Fig. 87. Air - The Windmill. 1913-15. Oil on canvas, 25 x 12 ft. Panama Pacific Exhibition, San Francisco.



**Fig. 88. Water - The Fountain. 1913-15. Oil on canvas, 25 x 12 ft.
Panama Pacific Exhibition, San Francisco.**



Fig. 89. Queen Elizabeth going aboard the Golden Hind at Deptford. c. 1903. Oil on canvas, 34 1/2 x 56 1/2 in. Lloyd's Register of Shipping, London.

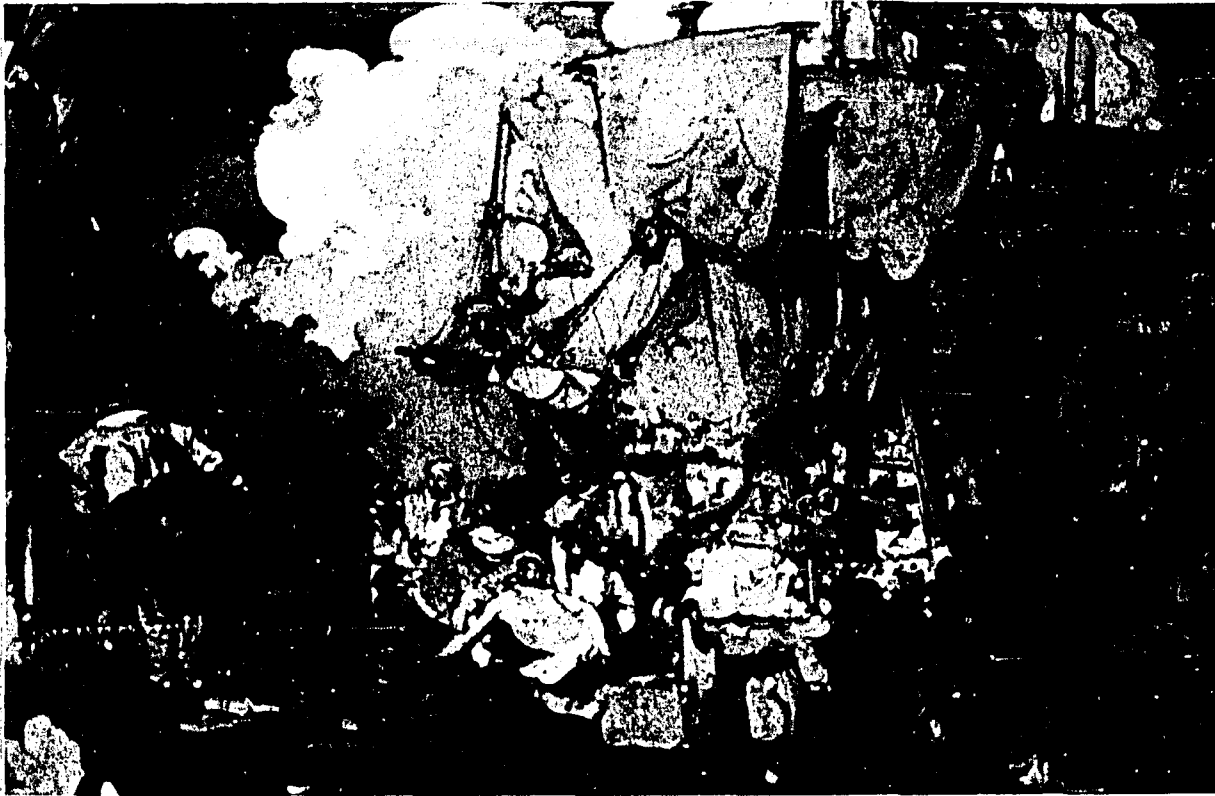


Fig. 90. Blake's Return after the Capture of the Plate Ships. 1907. Oil on canvas, 53 x 84 in. Lloyd's Register of Shipping, London.



Fig. 91. The Departure of Columbus. 1904. Oil on canvas. now unlocated.



Fig. 92. Venetian Funeral. 1906. Oil on canvas, 90 x 114 in. Leeds City Art Gallery.



Fig. 93. The Rajah's Birthday. 1908. Oil on canvas, 46 1/2 in. x 61 3/4 in. Leeds City Art Gallery.



Fig. 94. The Return of the Messengers from the Promised Land. 1908. Oil on canvas, 78 x 118 in. Johannesburg Art Gallery, South Africa.



Fig. 95. The Glory of Venice - Doge's Palace and Library. 1912. Oil on canvas, 40 x 30 in. now unlocated.



Fig. 96. Walter Sickert. St. Mark's. 1901. Oil on canvas, 23 3/4 x 19 1/2 in. Private Collection, London.

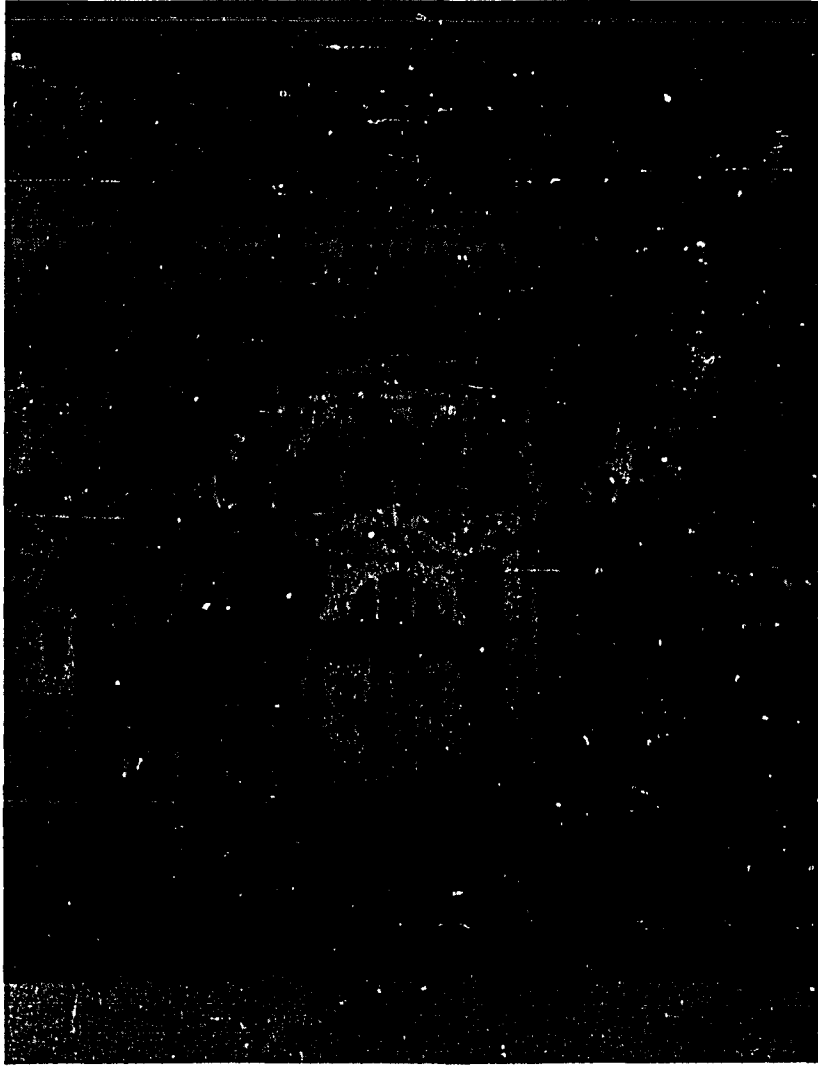


Fig. 97. Walter Sickert. Santa Maria della Salute. c. 1901. Oil on canvas, 22 x 18 in. Royal Academy of Arts, London.



Fig. 98. Arthur S. Covey. Detail of The Education of the Children of Kansas. 1915. Three part mural. Wichita Public Library, Wichita, Kansas.

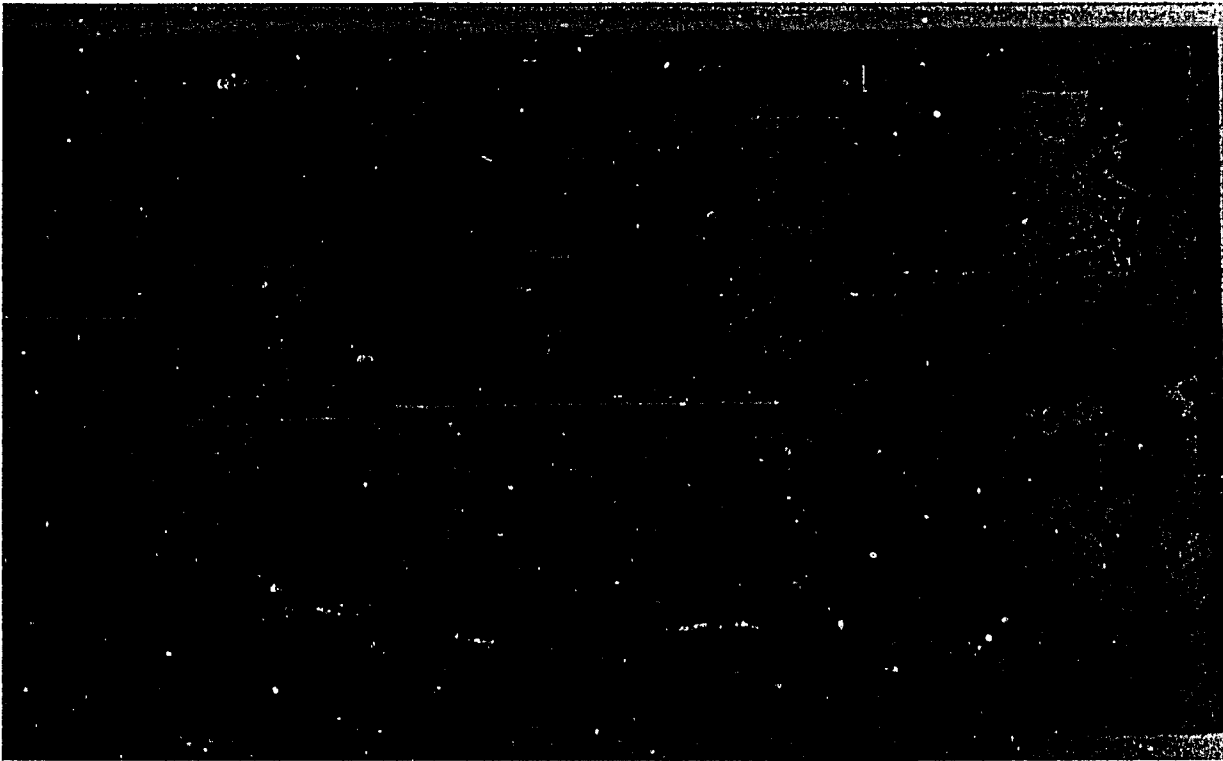


Fig. 99. Allen T. True. Pendentives for four small domes, Missouri State Capitol, Jefferson City.



Fig. 100. E.A. Cox. Philip the Good of Burgundy Presenting a Charter to the Merchant Adventurers. c. 1915. 17 1/2 x 11 ft. Royal Exchange, London.



Fig. 101. Dean Cornwell. Study for The Mission Building Era, part of Los Angeles Public Library murals. c. 1931-33.



Fig. 102. Dean Cornwell. Cartoon for Fire-Kiln Baked Pottery, part of Los Angeles Public Library murals. c. 1931-33.



Fig. 103. Mater Dolorosa Belgica. 1915. Oil on canvas, 62 x 100 in. William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.

THE ZEPPELIN RAIDS: THE VOW OF VENGEANCE
Drawn for 'The Daily Chronicle' by Frank BrangwynARA



**'DAILY CHRONICLE' READERS ARE
COVERED AGAINST THE RISKS OF
BOMBARDMENT BY ZEPPELIN OR
AEROPLANE**

Fig. 104. The Zeppelin Raids: The Vow of Vengeance. undated. Lithograph poster, 30 x 20 in. Imperial War Museum, London.



Fig. 105. Put Strength in the Final Blow, Buy War Bonds. c. 1917. Lithograph poster, 69 x 39 3/4 in. Imperial War Museum, London.

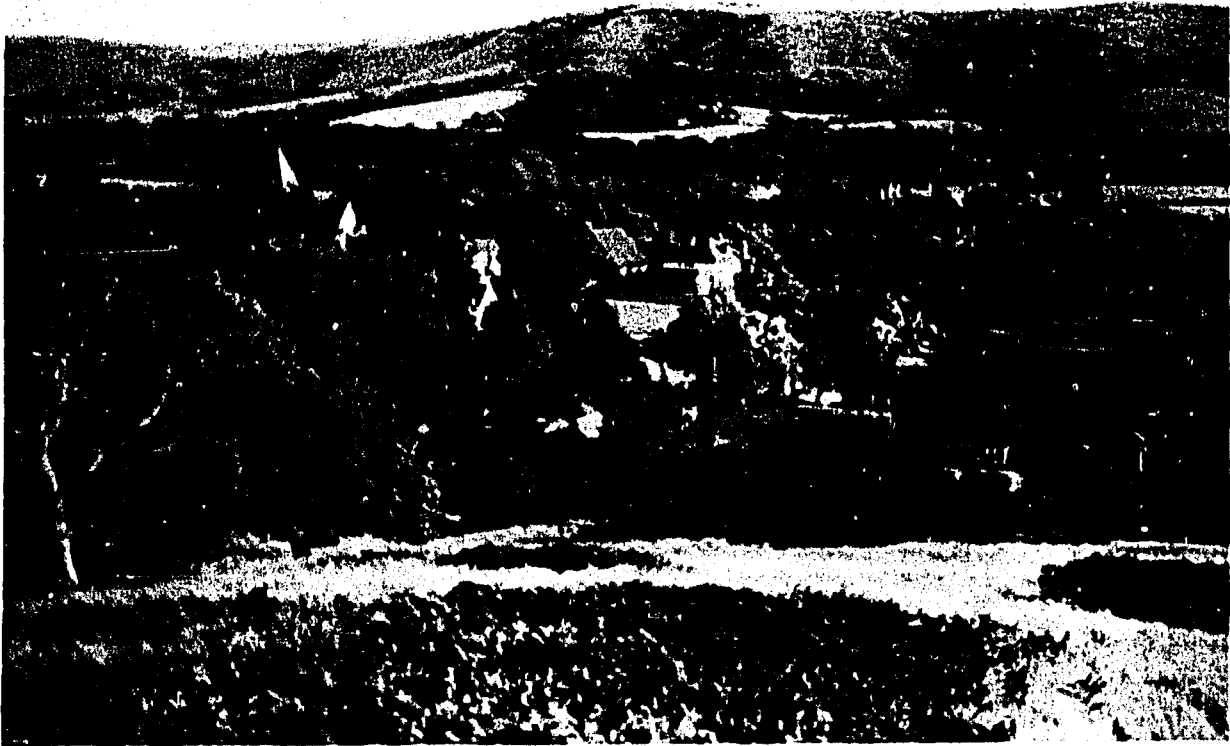


Fig. 106. View of Ditchling, Sussex, looking toward South Downs.



Fig. 107. Stations of the Cross: Jesus Falls for the Second Time. undated. Oil on canvas, 32 x 55 in. (For Arras Cathedral) Campion Hall, Oxford.

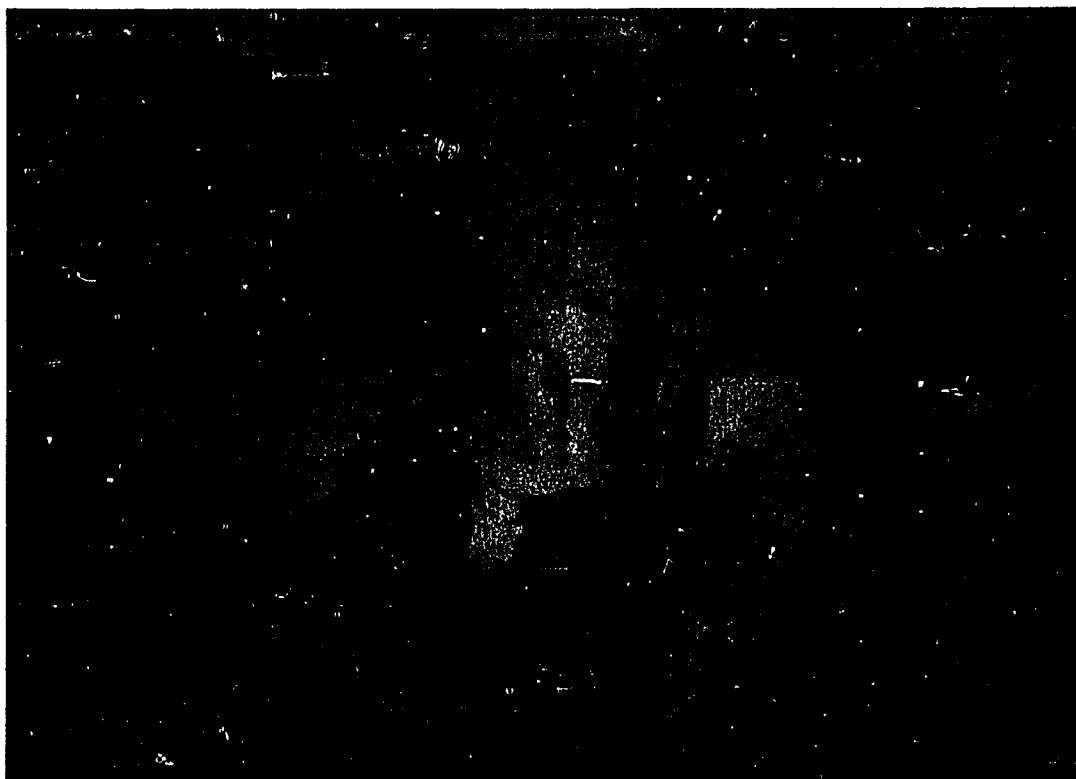


Fig. 108. Stations of the Cross: Jesus Dies on the Cross. undated, Tempera on panel, c. 3 x 4 ft. (For Leper Colony Chapel, Westfort). Native Mission, Diepkloof, South Africa.

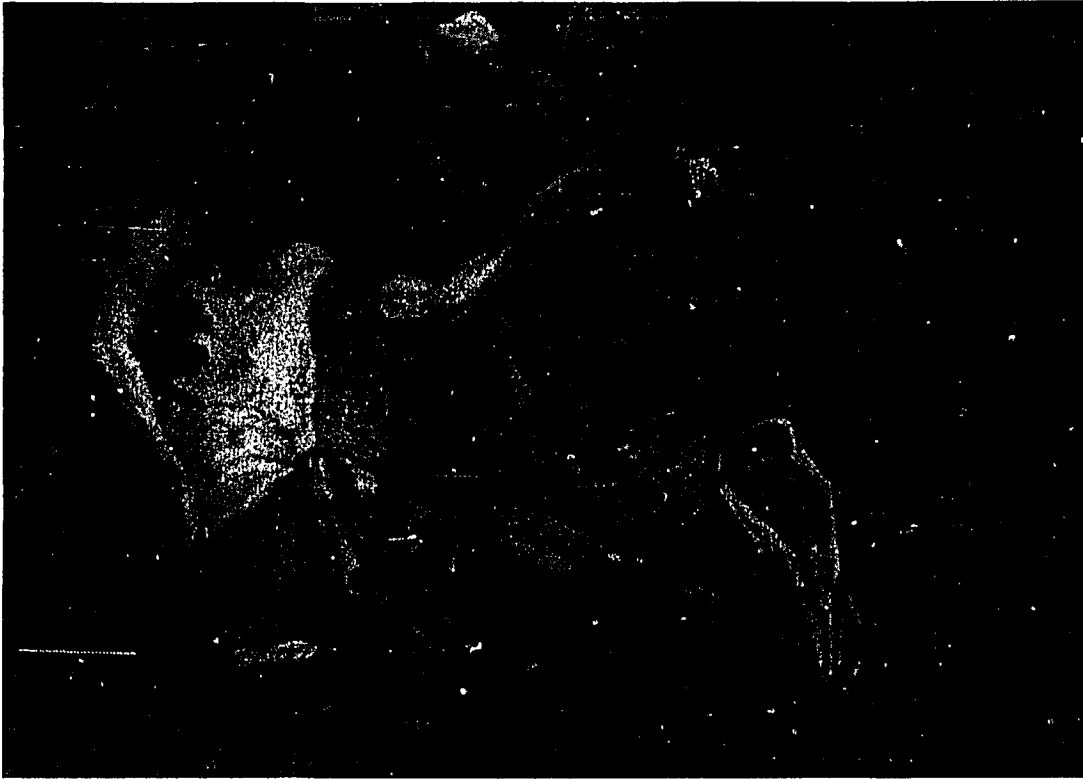


Fig. 109. Stations of the Cross: The Descent from the Cross. undated. Tempera on panel, c. 3 x 4 ft. (For Leper Colony Chapel, Westfort).



Fig. 110. Stations of the Cross: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus. c. 1934-35.
Lithograph, 30 x 32 in.

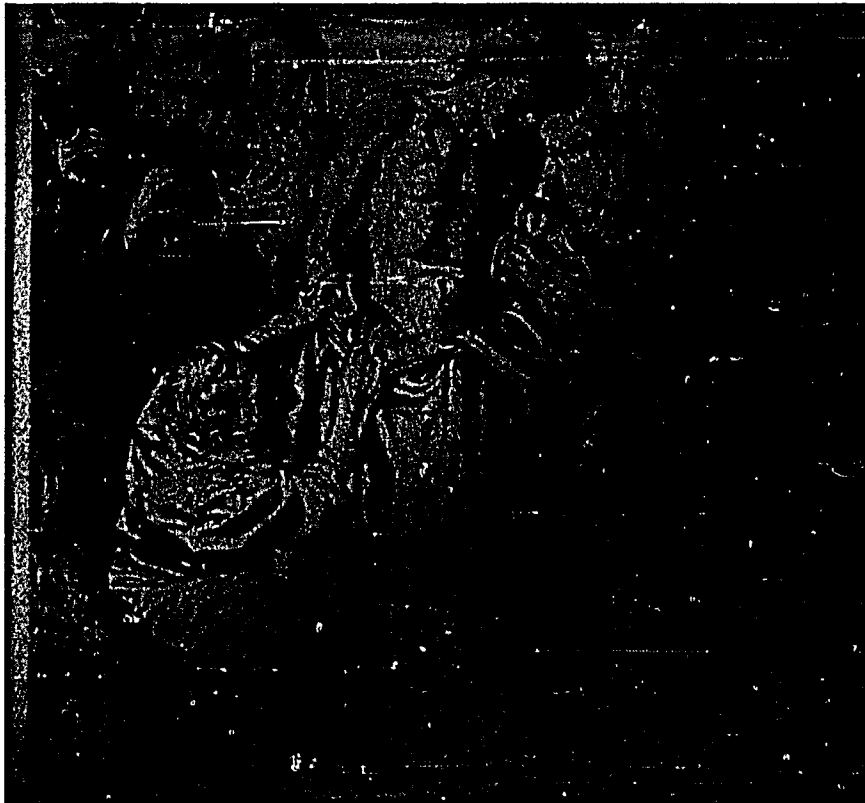


Fig. 111. Stations of the Cross: Jesus is Stripped of his Garments. c. 1934-35.
Lithograph, 30 x 32 in.

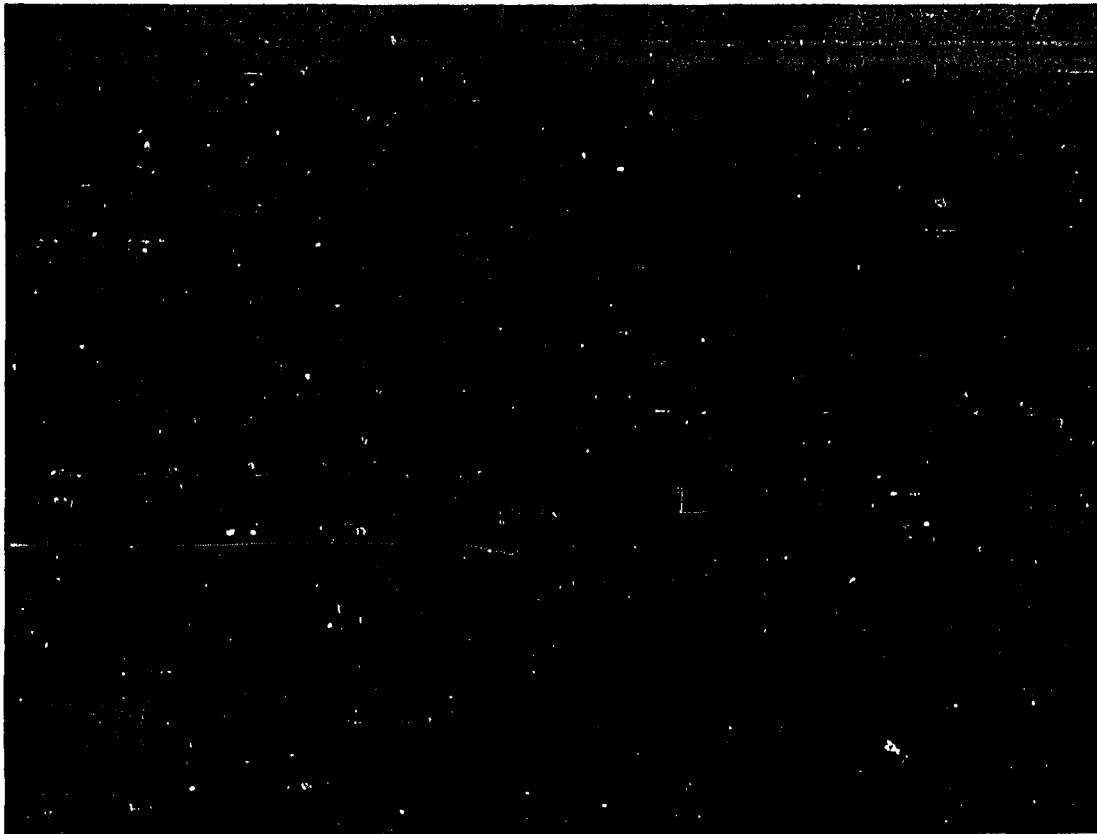


Fig. 112. Photograph of Brangwyn painting The Canadian War Record. Manitoba Provincial Archives, Winnipeg.



Fig. 113. The Canadian War Record. 1919-20. Tempera on canvas, 15 x 22 ft.
Manitoba Legislative Building, Winnipeg.



Fig. 114. The Canadian War Record in its architectural setting.

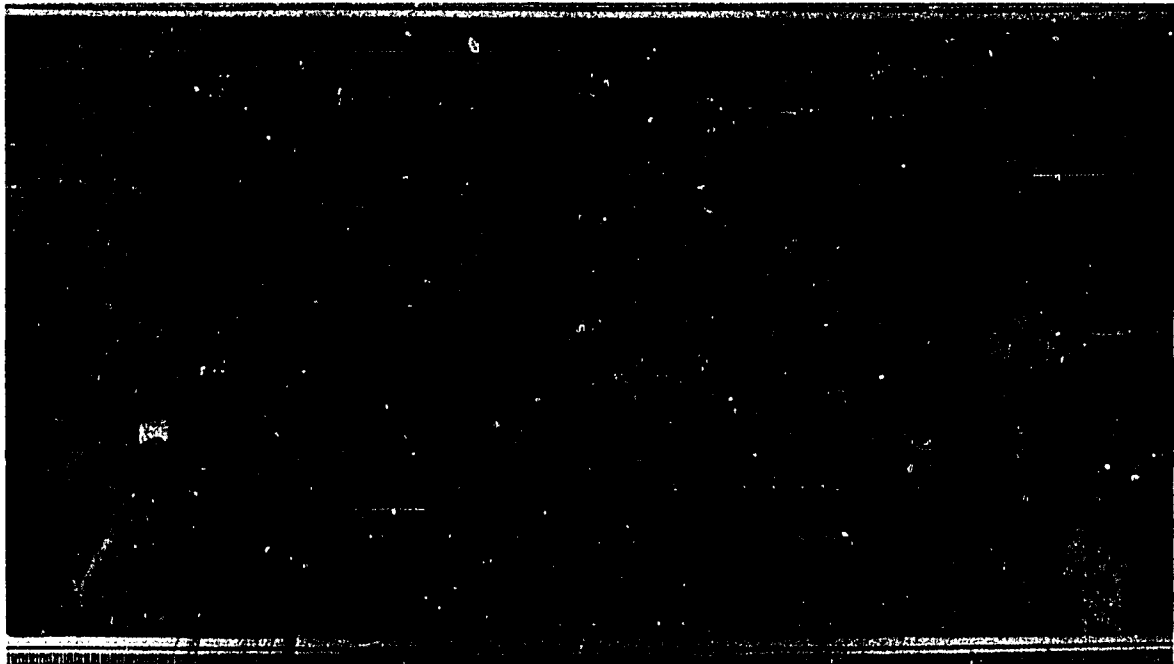


Fig. 115. John Byam Shaw. The Flag. c. 1918. Oil on canvas, 78 x 144 in.
National War Museum, Ottawa.

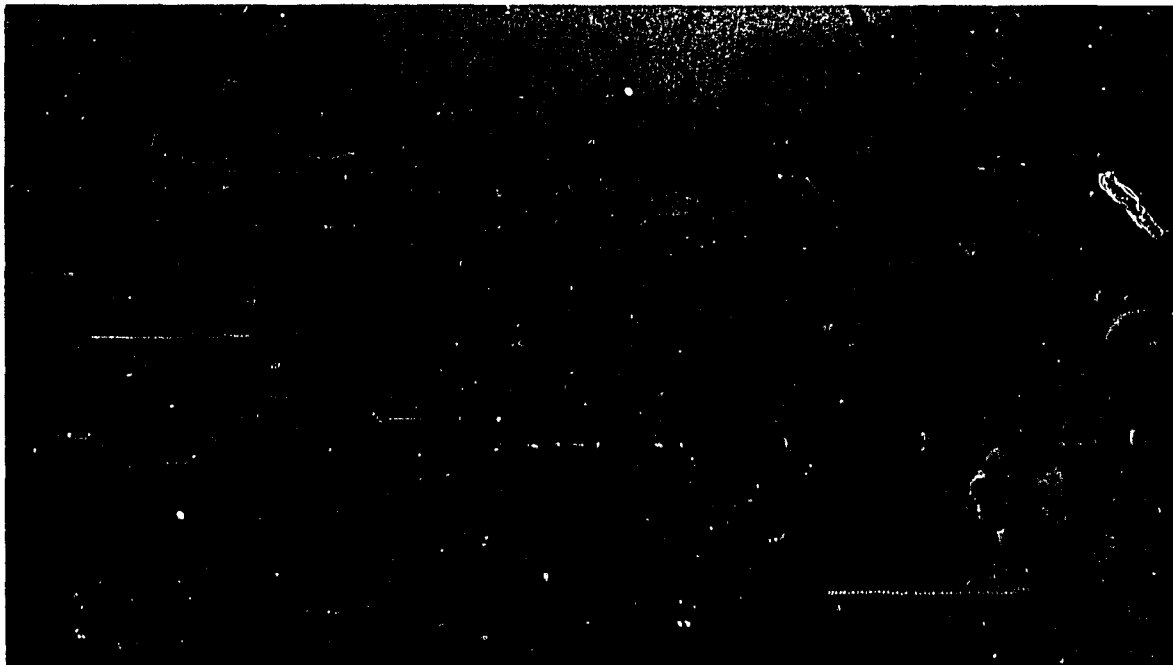


Fig. 116. Edgar Bundy. The Landing of the First Canadian Division at St. Nazaire, February 1915. c. 1918. Oil on canvas, 102 x 180 in. The Senate, Parliament Building, Ottawa.



Fig. 117. Richard Jack. The Second Battle of Ypres, 1915. c. 1918. Oil on canvas, 146 x 234 1/2 in. The Senate, Parliament Building, Ottawa.



Fig. 118. William Roberts. The First German Gas Attack at Ypres. c. 1918. Oil on canvas, 120 x 144 in. National War Museum, Ottawa.

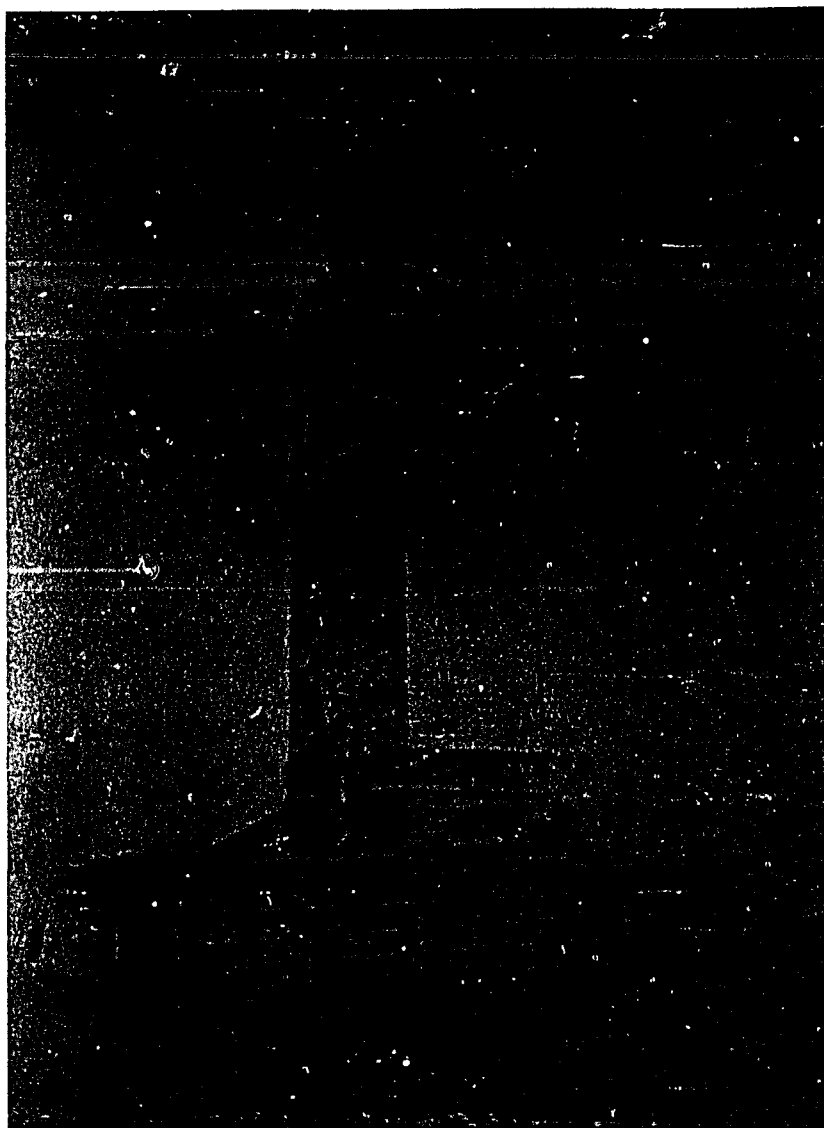


Fig. 119. Philip Tilden. Drawing for proposed Selfridge tower.

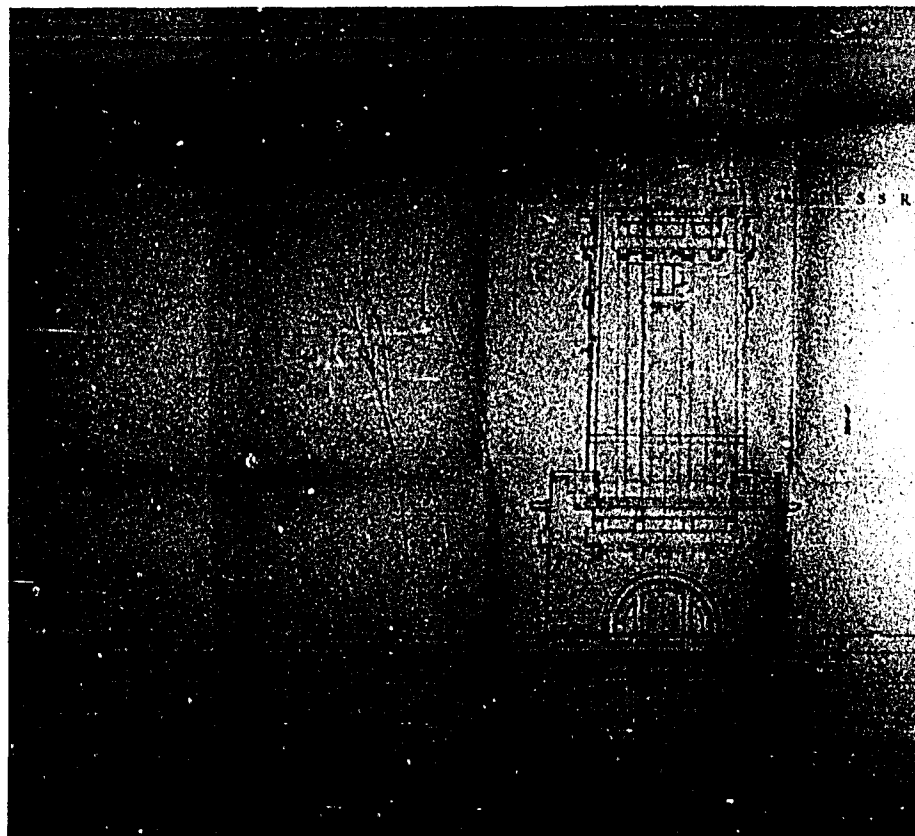


**Fig. 120. Sir John Burnet. Elevation view of proposed Selfridge tower. 1918.
Selfridge and Co., London.**



Fig. 121. Sketch for proposed Selfridge dome mosaic.

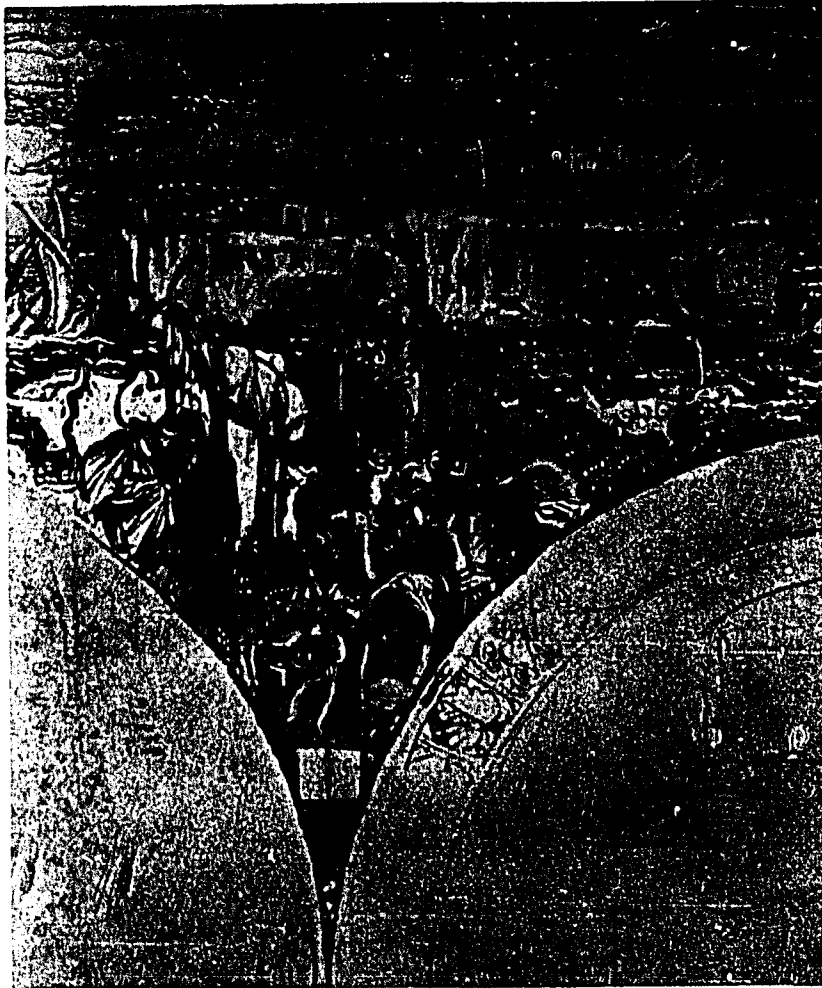


Fig. 122. Sketch for proposed Selfridge dome mosaic.



**Fig. 123. Evarts Tracy and Egerton Swarthout. Missouri State Capitol. 1913-17.
Jefferson City.**

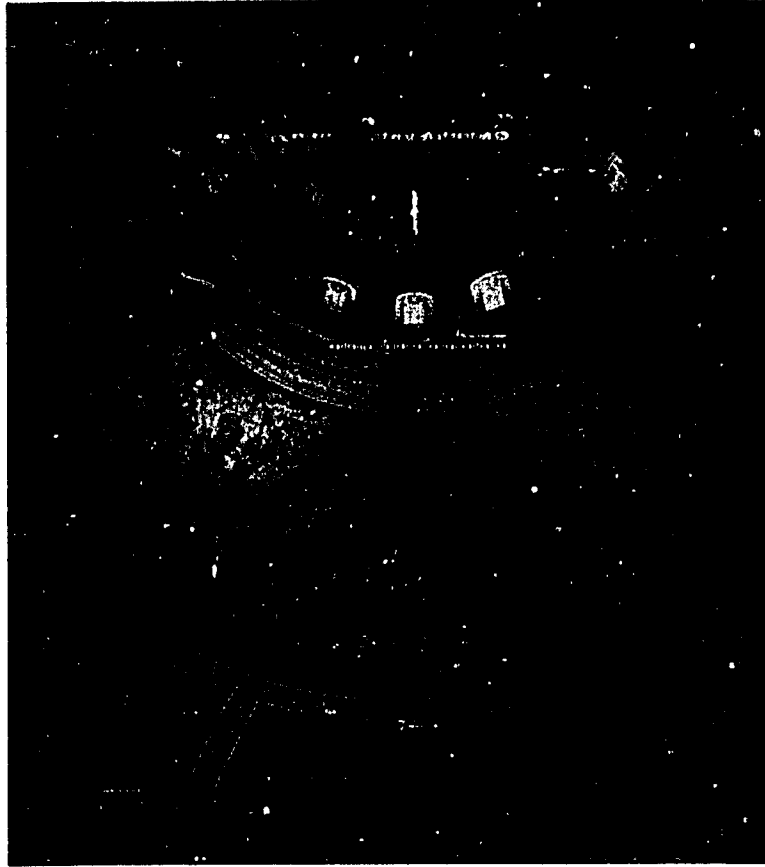


Fig. 124. View into central dome, Missouri State Capitol.



"LACLEDE PARLEYING WITH THE INDIANS."
DECORATION IN THE MISSOURI STATE CAPITOL.

Fig. 125. Laclede Parleying with the Indians. 1919-23. Oil on canvas, 22 1/2 ft. high. Pendentive, Missouri State Capitol.



"MODERN INDUSTRIAL ST. LOUIS" DECORATION
IN THE MISSOURI STATE CAPITOL

**Fig. 126. Modern Industrial St. Louis. 1919-23. Oil on canvas,
22 1/2 ft. high. Pendentive, Missouri State Capitol.**

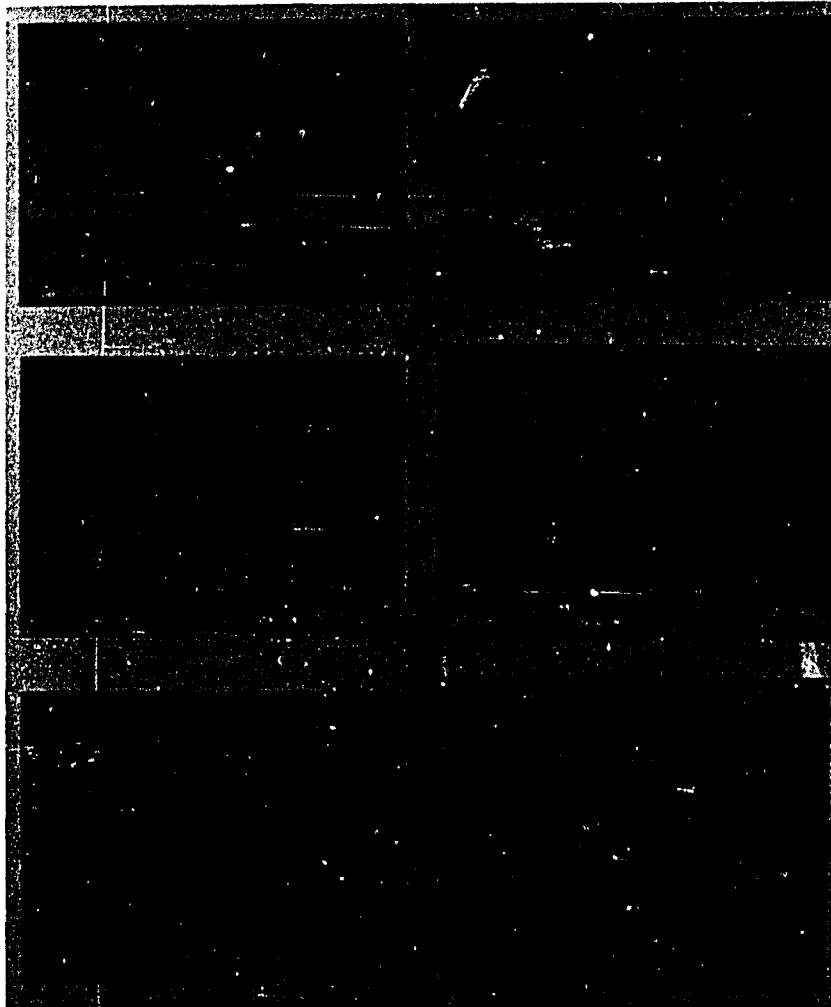


Fig. 127. Lower dome mural panels. 1923-25. Oil on canvas, 16 ft. high. Missouri State Capitol.



Fig. 128. Aerial view drawing of proposed art museum, Tokyo. c. 1918-22.

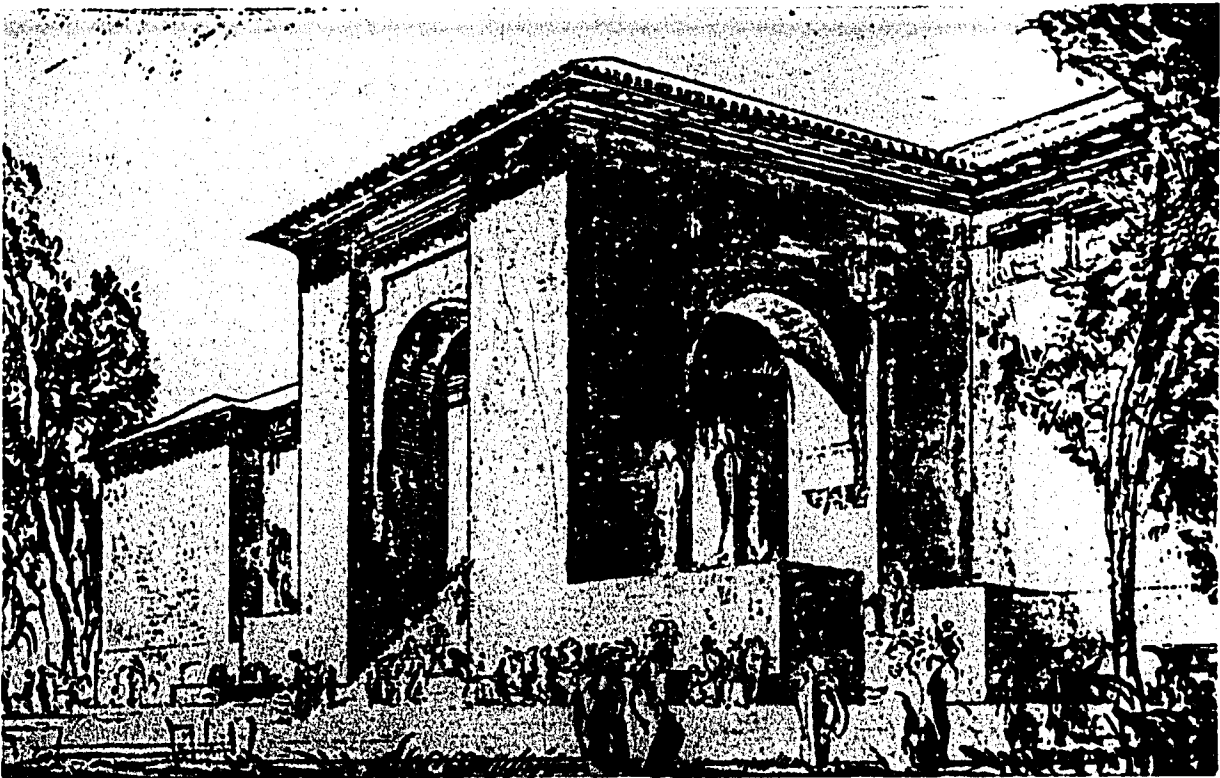


Fig. 129. Drawing of entrance portico of proposed art museum, Tokyo.



Fig. 130. Drawing of inner courtyard of proposed art museum, Tokyo.



Fig. 131. Drawing of gallery interior of proposed art museum, Tokyo.



Fig. 132. Photograph of The Royal Gallery to the House of Lords, Houses of Parliament, London.

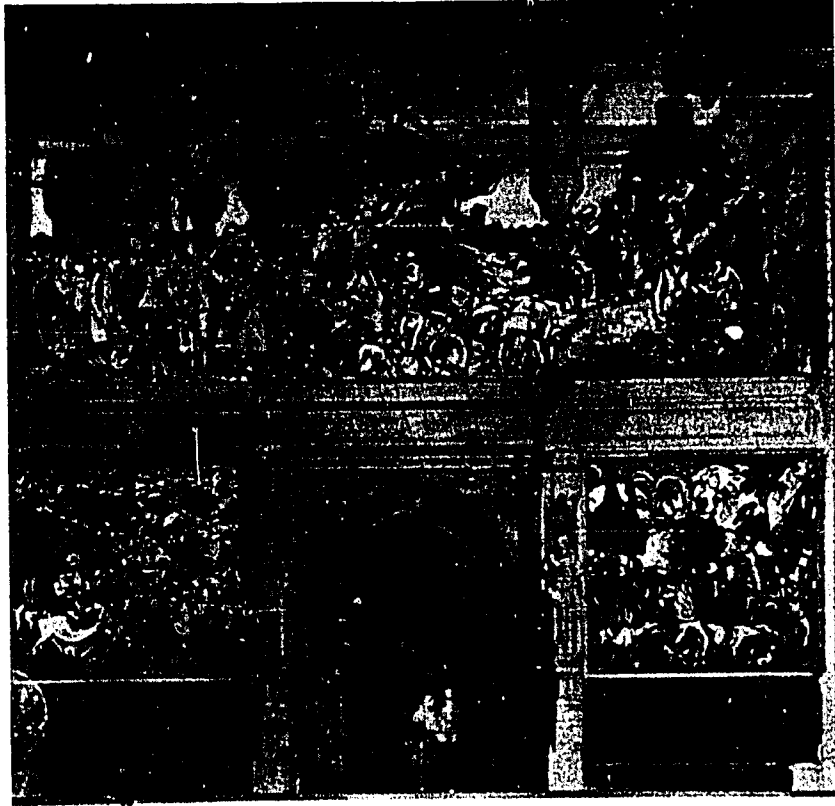


Fig. 133. Drawing for first scheme of decoration in The Royal Gallery.



Fig. 134. Five of the British Empire Panels on display in The Royal Gallery, 1930.

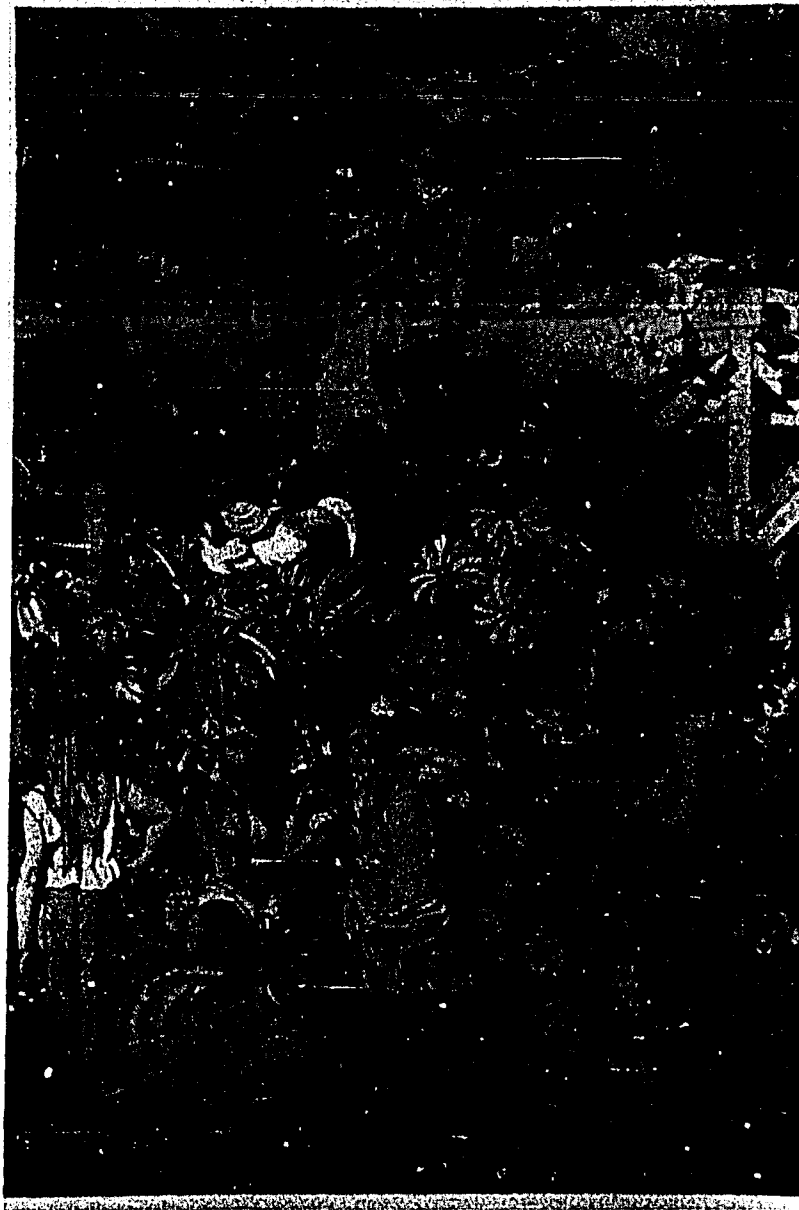


Fig. 135. Panel from the British Empire Panels. 1925-32. Oil on canvas, 20 x 13 ft. Guildhall, Swansea.

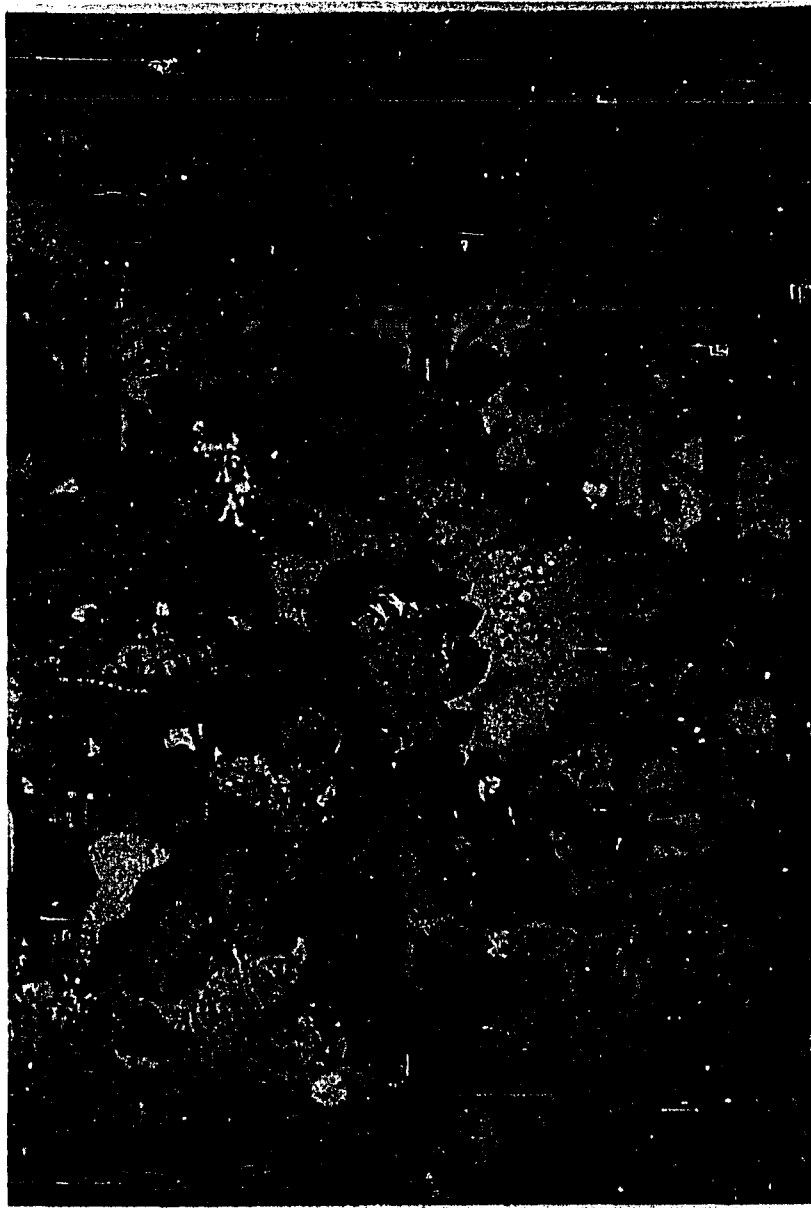


Fig. 136. Panel from the British Empire Panels.

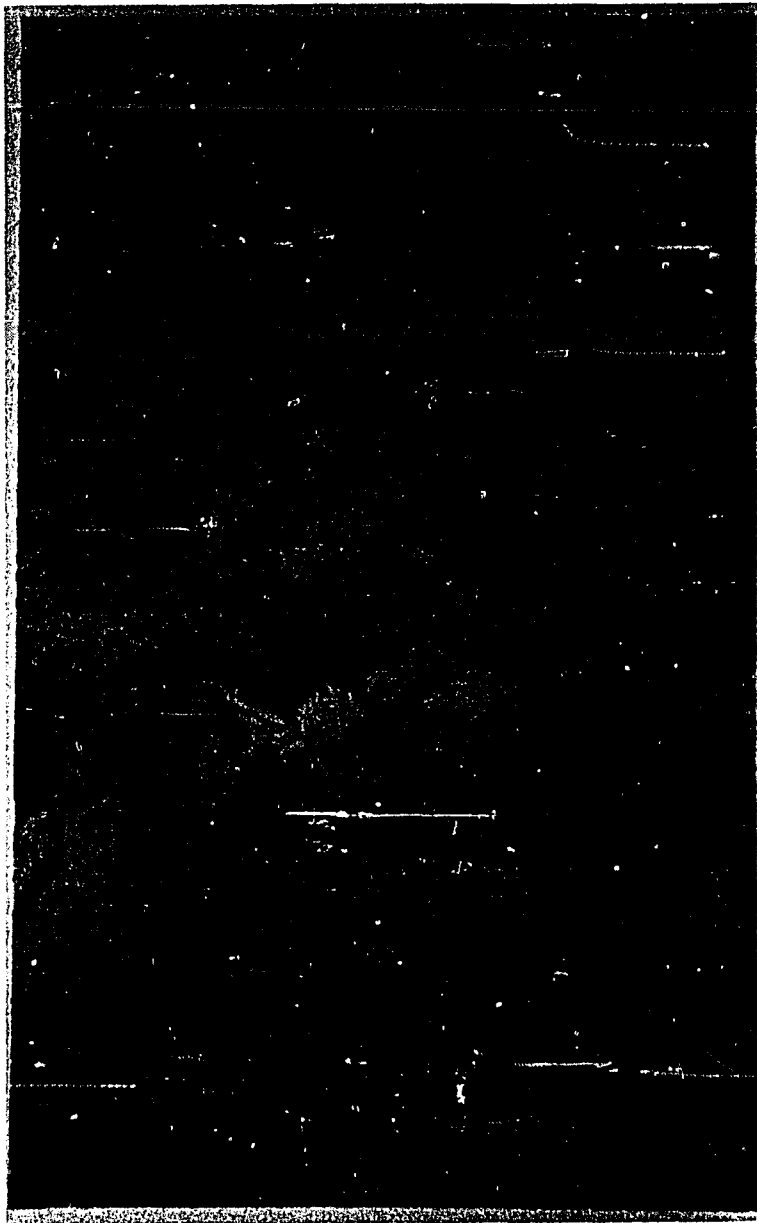


Fig. 137. Panel from the British Empire Panels.



Fig. 138. Side Panel from the British Empire Panels. 1925-32. Oil on canvas, 12 x 12 ft. Guildhall, Swansea.



Fig. 139. Man Labouring Painfully with his own Hands.... 1932-33. Oil on canvas, 17 x 25 ft. R.C.A. Building, Rockefeller Center, New York.

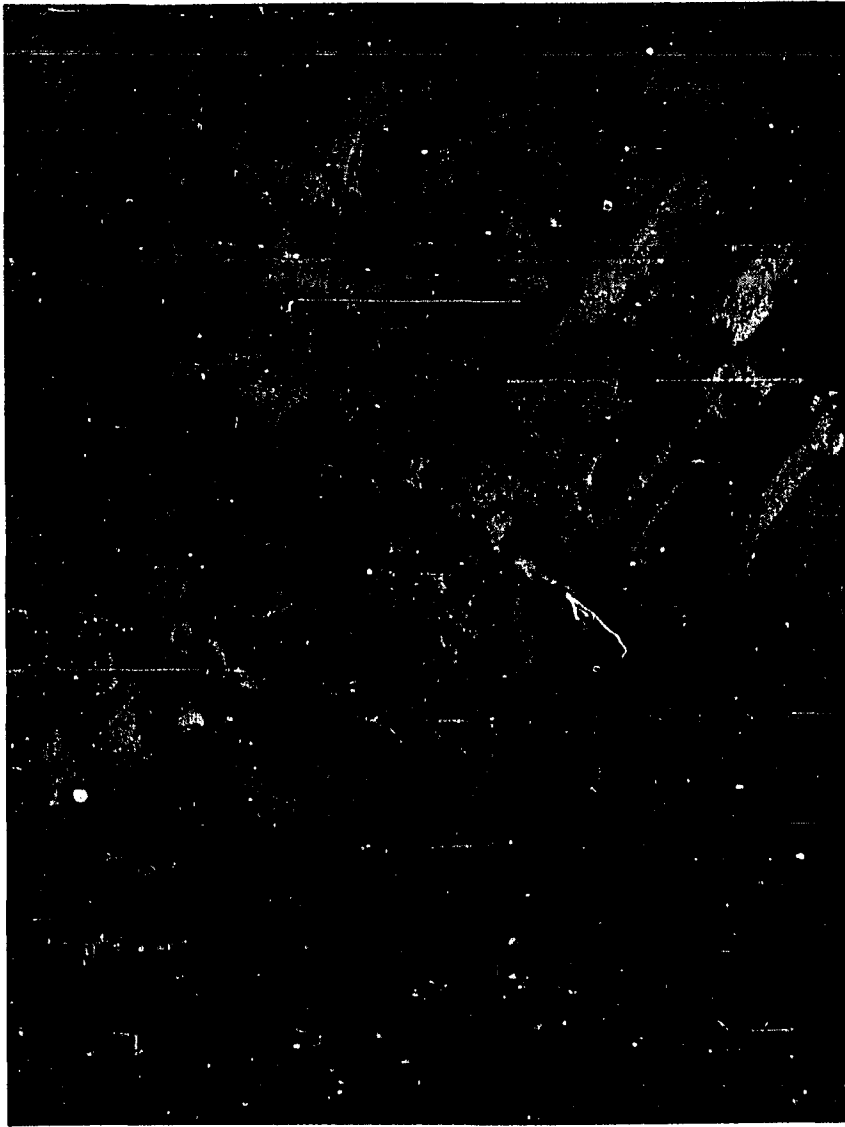


Fig. 140. Man the Master and Servant of the Machine.... 1932-33. Oil on canvas, 17 x 25 ft. R.C.A. Building.

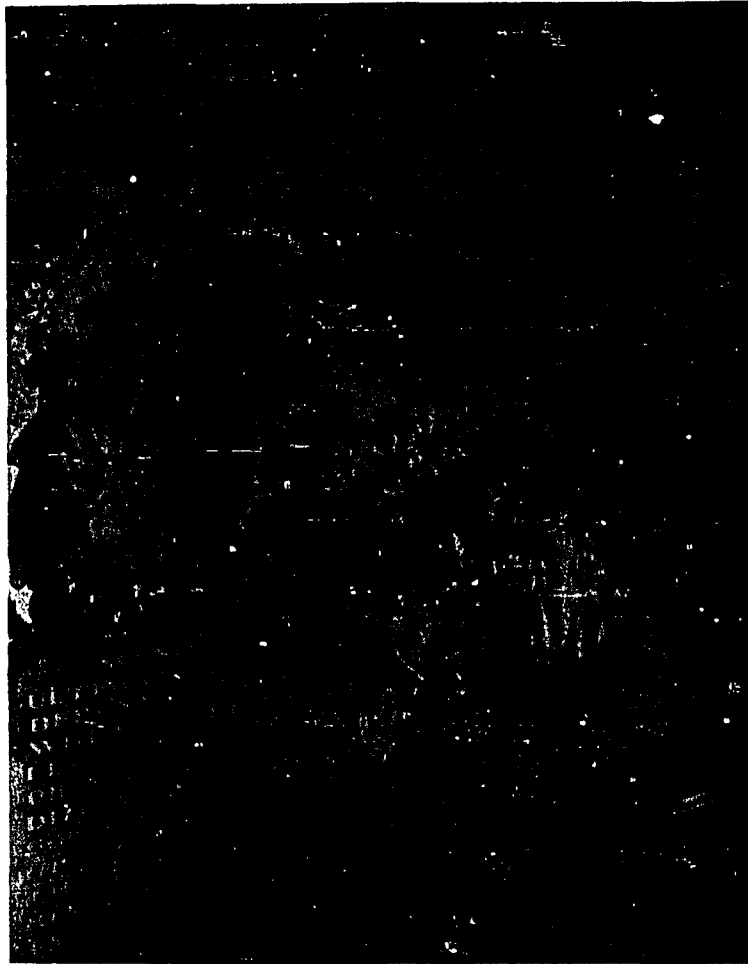


Fig. 141. Man's Ultimate Destiny... 1932-33. Oil on canvas, 17 x 25 ft.
R.C.A. Building.

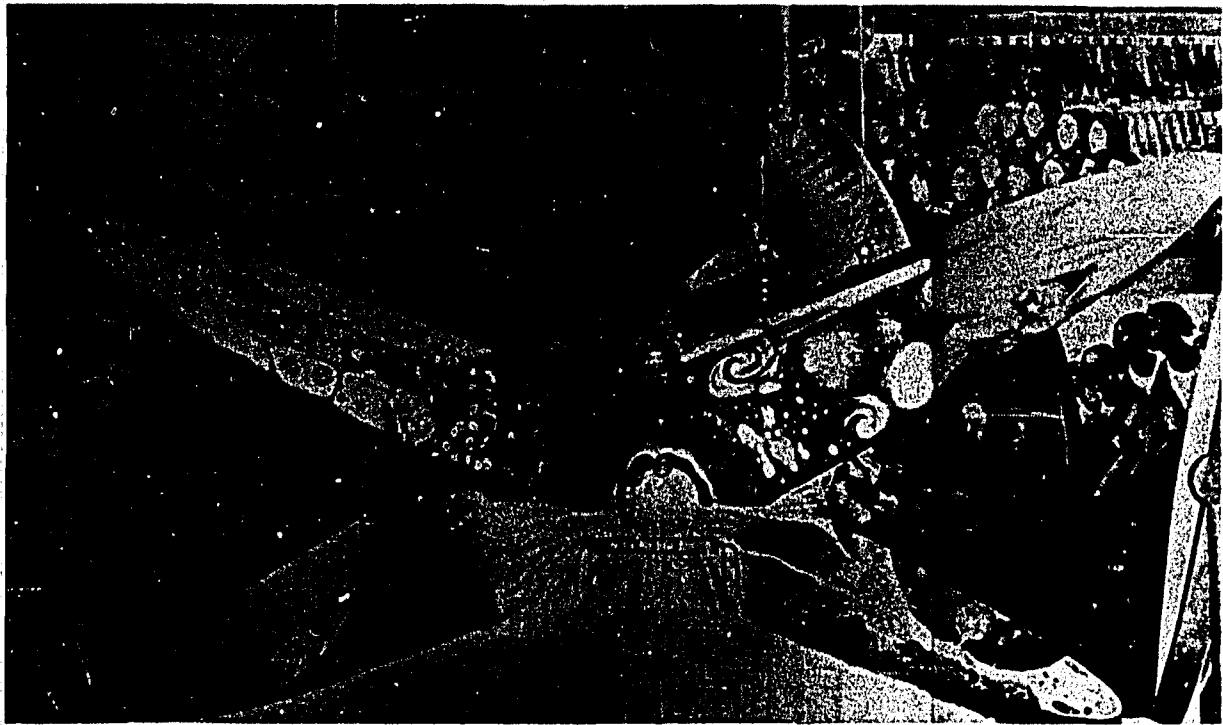


Fig. 142. Diego Rivera. Man at the Crossroads..... 1932-33. Mural destroyed in R.C.A. Building.



Fig. 143. José María Sert. Man's New Mastery of the Material Universe..... 1932-33. Oil on canvas, each panel 17 x 25 ft. R.C.A. Building.

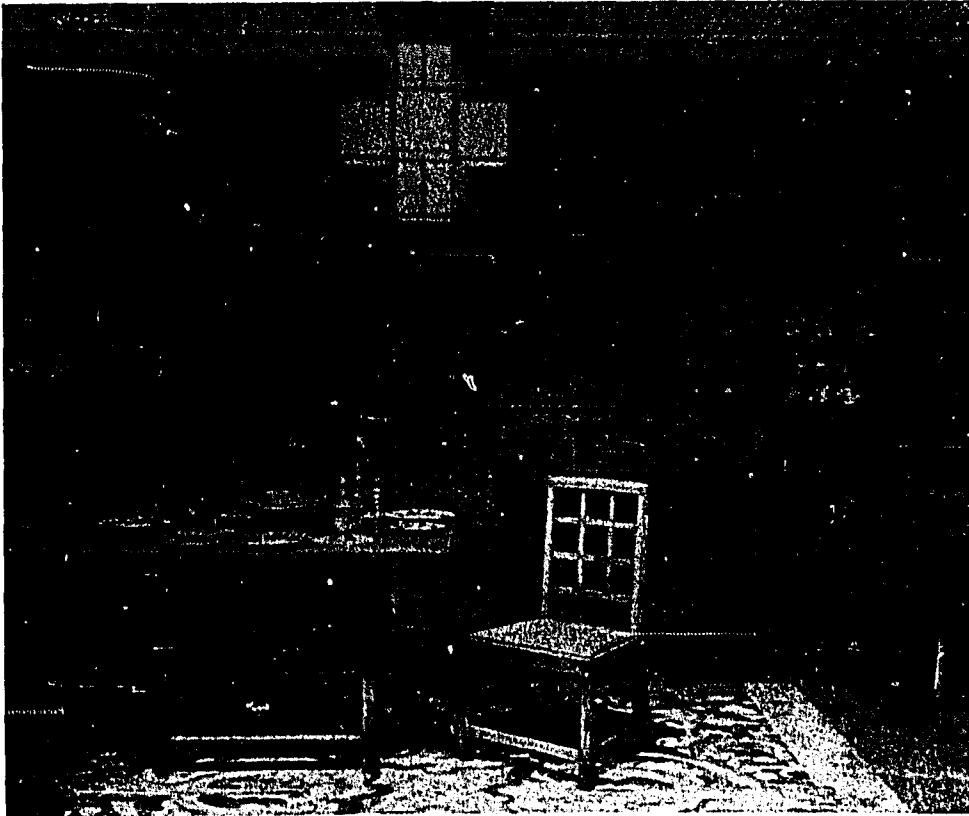


Fig. 144. Dining room installation. October 1930. E. Pollard and Co. Ltd, London.

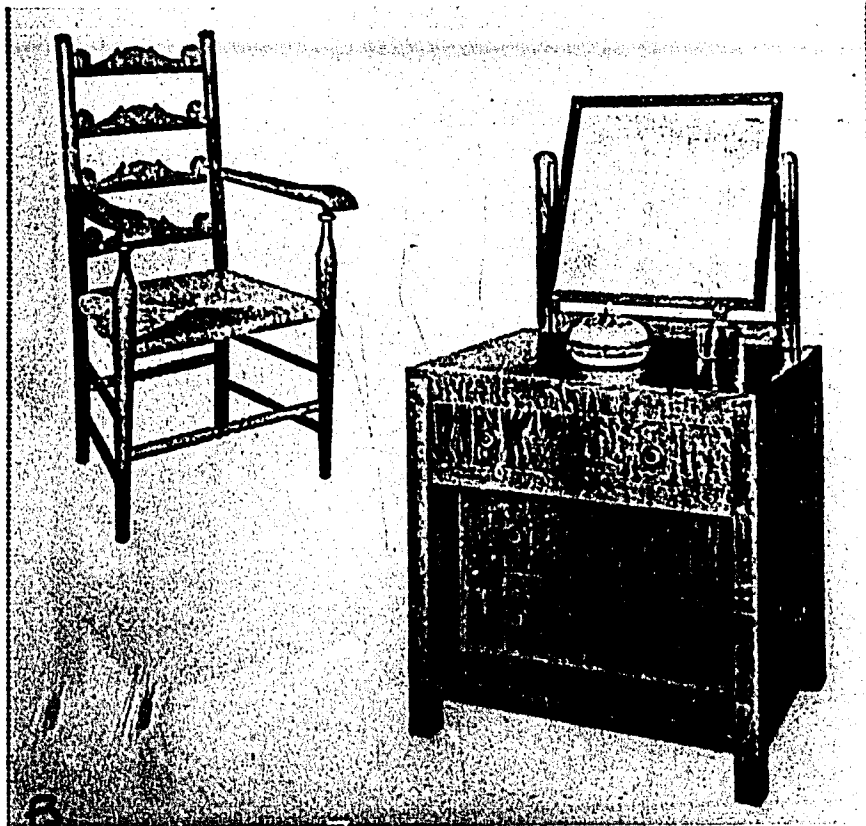


Fig. 145. Oak armchair and dressing table. 1927-30. Made for Pollards.

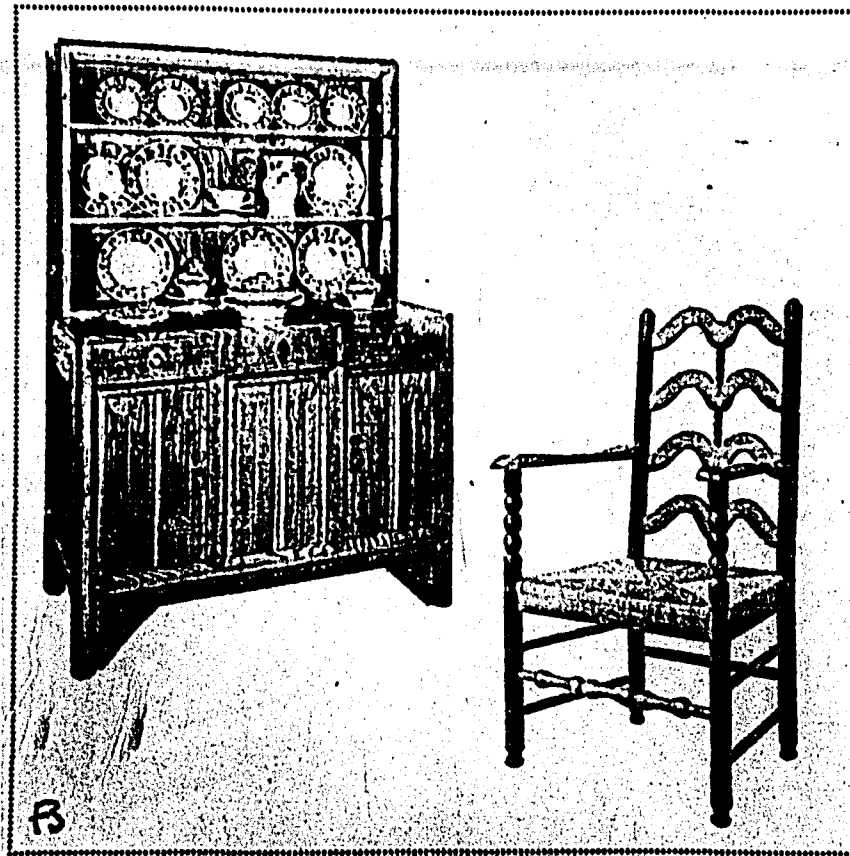


Fig. 146. Oak buffet (with Brangwyn pottery) and armchair. 1927-30. Made for Pollards.



Fig. 147. Upholstered walnut armchair. 1927-30. Made for Pollards.

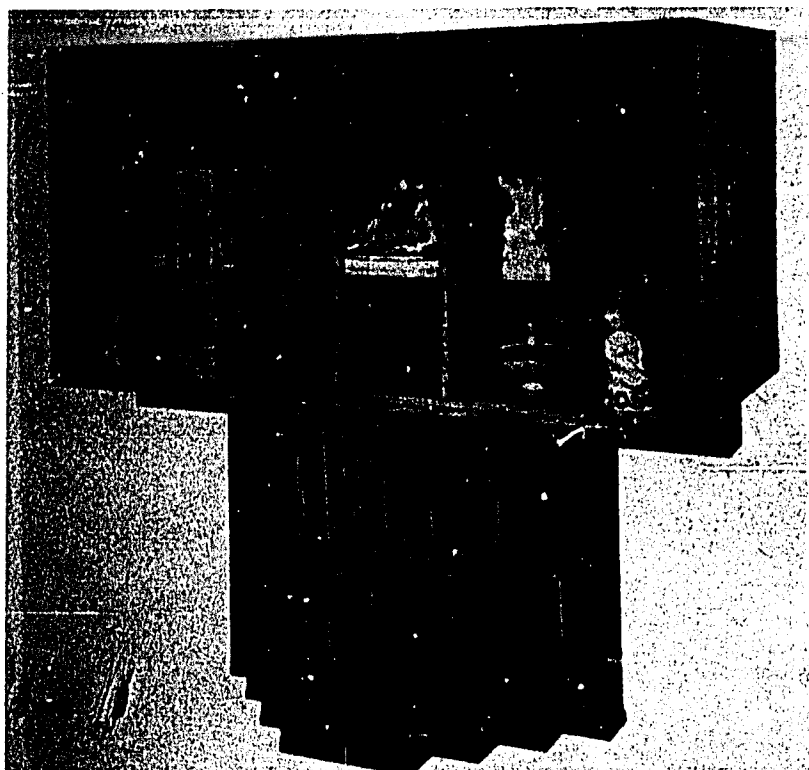


Fig. 148. China cabinet. 1927-30. Made for Pollards.



Fig. 149. Interior of Salle Jacques Cartier. 1929-30. Empress of Britain.



Fig. 150. The Last Supper. c. 1938-47. Oil on canvas, 54 x 158 in. St. Mary's College Chapel, Middlesbrough.



Fig. 151. Photograph of Brangwyn with William de Belleruche, 1930's.

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