

Washington Allston

1779-1843



LITTLE WASHINGTON ALLSTON sat by the fire, listening to the eerie voice of old Uncle Ned tell about "the Great White Spook" that haunted the place where buried treasure might be found.

"Chile," said Uncle Ned, "Dem niggus knew that dey was diggin' fo' buried treasure where the Great White Spook kept guard. Co'se you know, if you have a preacher 'long, dey scares off the spooks, so dey took the preacher 'long. The white man what was bossin' the job look up in the sky and Lo'd a mercy there was that great white spook jus' a coming closer and closer. Every time he see the spook he poked the preacher, but the preacher he so interested in the treasure he ain't never once look up. Co'se the niggus what was diggin', dey was jus' a gruntin' and a diggin', and dey ain' look up neder. But all of a sudden dey felt sumpin'. It was cold and clammy and all the countryside was gettin' "

Unfinished portrait of Washington Allston by himself when a young man. From Flagg's *Life and Letters of Washington Allston*, published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

ark and Lo'd when dey look up dere was that white spook right on top of 'em. Dey was so scared dey never tho't of the preacher or nothin'. Dey just gave one yell and lit out and nobody ain' never seed 'em till yit."

Just as the great climax was reached a voice from the "big house" was heard: "Washington, Washington Allston, come in this minute. Don't you know it's time for you to go to bed? Every evening I have to call you in from the slave quarters. What do you find so fascinating out there?"

Perhaps the little boy, who was to grow up to be one of the famous painters of America, thought, as most children do, that mothers always call at the wrong time. He hated to be taken from the circle of friendly Negroes, who would tell him ghost stories by the hour—and how he did love to hear them! Try as they might, they couldn't find stories too scary for this young South Carolinian. Here he learned the delight of wild, frightening, ghostly stories. Here, too, he learned about bandits and pirates, and for many years he used them as the subjects for his paintings.

Washington Allston was born November 5, 1779, in South Carolina, probably at Brookgreen Plantation, which is now a beautiful museum-garden, given to the state of South Carolina by Mr. Archer Milton Huntington. It seems fitting that the birthplace of one of America's great artists should now be a museum of some of America's finest art.

The first of the Allston family to come from England to America probably landed here in 1685 and settled on the rich rice lands which border the Waccamaw River near Georgetown and Pawley's Island. Here the family became rich and influential. If you should try to study something about the history of Waccamaw Neck, you would find yourselves greatly confused by the number of famous All-

stones whose land holdings were scattered up and down the river.

On his mother's side, also, Washington Allston had some famous ancestors. In the family Bible, Washington's birth was recorded by his father, William, "My son, Washington, was born Friday night, half after eleven o'clock, the fifth of November, 1779."

During the Revolutionary War Washington Allston's father served as a captain in Marion's Brigade. Shortly after the battle of Cowpens, Captain Allston returned to his home in Waccamaw and died. Just before his death he asked to have the child Washington brought to him. When he saw his little son, he made this interesting prophecy: "He will live to see this child grow up will see a great man." Mr. Allston had a feeling that these words, coming from a dying man, were a sacred trust and that she must give Washington Allston every opportunity to make them come true.

The spring after the death of Captain William Allston Cornwallis, the head of the British forces, made his headquarters in the home of the Widow Allston. He and his officers treated her with great respect. One evening when they were dining, someone mentioned to the British officer that there was a son in the family who was named for great American General Washington. The officers asked how Washington Allston presented to them, and it is said that the boy behaved in just the way all mothers want their children to behave when being shown off. Because of his perfect behavior, and in spite of the fact that he was named for an enemy general, Cornwallis is said to have kissed the young American.

Some years after the death of her first husband, Mrs.



Portrait of Allston's Mother, by Washington Allston.

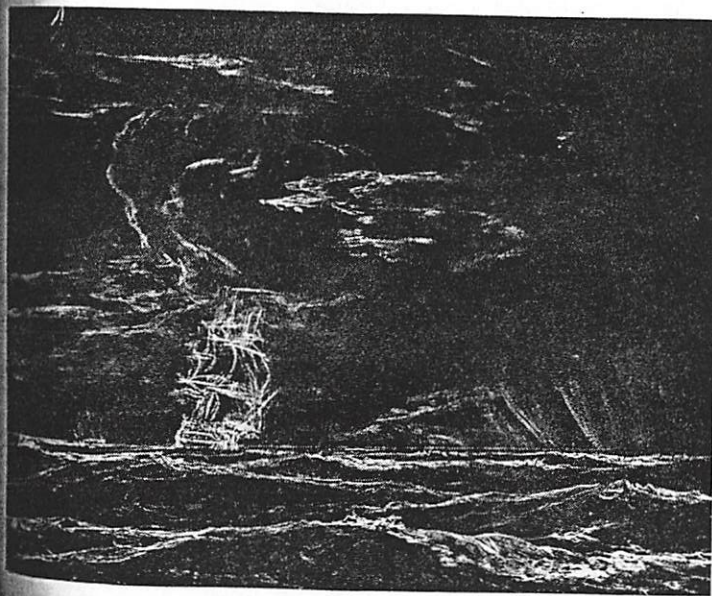
From Flagg's Life and Letters of Washington Allston

ston said that she was going to marry Dr. Henry C. Flagg, former chief medical officer in Greene's army. Her family objected, mainly because Dr. Flagg was a Yankee. Mrs. Allston, however, said that she had married the first time to please her family; this time she was going to please herself. And marry she did, although by that marriage she was cut off from her share in the family estate. As far as the children were concerned, having Dr. Flagg become their stepfather was one of the best things that could have happened to them, for he was much interested in their education and training. He was particularly eager to see Washington succeed and gave a great deal of time and attention to him.

After having been taught a little at home, Washington Allston was sent to school in Charleston. His first teacher was a Mrs. Colcott. Once when young Washington was naughty, Mrs. Colcott made him sit alone for an hour or so. Having nothing else to do, Allston drew a picture of a boat on the bottom of a chair. This was such a remarkable piece of work for a child that Mrs. Colcott kept the chair carefully locked away from harm, as long as she lived. If you were particularly good, or a very important person, you might be given a look at the famous Washington Allston chair.

All during his school days, Washington Allston was playing at some sort of art. He would dress up sticks so that they would look like real people. He modeled in sand and amused himself in what seemed to his family very queer ways. During one vacation he painted a picture of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. When he showed the picture to his family, they thought it was so good that they were afraid he might disgrace them by becoming, of all things in the world, a professional painter. Dr. Flagg particularly

that this could never be allowed. Of all his step-children, he had chosen Washington to be the one to follow his own profession and become a physician. There was a Mr. Rogers



A Marine in Chalk.

From the original in the Boston Museum of Art, as reproduced in Flagg's Life and Letters of Washington Allston

in Newport, Rhode Island, who ran an excellent school. So young Washington was shipped off to be educated at the Rogers school.

There were good pictures in Newport, lovely colorful prints, and nothing could stop the young painter from copying them. He also formed a friendship, at this time, with the young painter, Malbone, whose miniatures were to become famous. Young Allston moved in the best society,

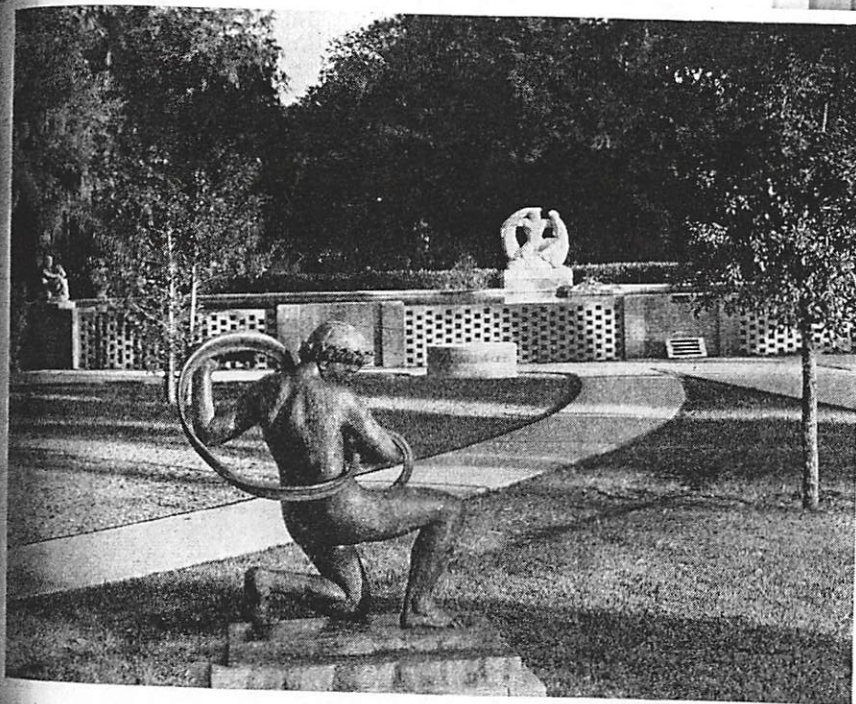
painted to his heart's content, and learned enough to satisfy the high standards of Mr. Rogers.

When he was sixteen, he entered Harvard. His preparation had been so good that, after doing his required work, he still had a few hours each day left over. Perhaps you can imagine how he used them. Of course he painted. First he made a survey of all the good pictures to be found at Harvard, and then he copied, copied, copied them, all the time learning more about mixing colors, handling his brush, and getting the effects which the great artists had put on canvas. Here his friendship with Malbone became even stronger. Allston's admiration for the work of his friend led him to try his hand at painting miniatures, but, as he himself expressed it: "It was no go," and he left the painting of the tiny pictures to his friend. Not all of Allston's painting at this time was of a serious nature. He did one ridiculous series in water colors, called the "Buck's Progress," buck, in this instance, being not an animal, but a drunkard.

In 1800 Allston was graduated from Harvard. Although he had been more interested in art than in his studies, he was always conscientious in whatever he had to do, and so was graduated with honors. He was also made poet of his class, for his classmates knew that he could write as well as paint.

One of his classmates, Leonard Jarvis, has left an interesting description of Washington's life at Harvard. It seems that the class was greatly excited by a report that two South Carolinians had arrived. Everybody was eager to see them, for South Carolinians were an unknown quantity to the class. How would they look? What would they wear?

Jarvis records that the two young South Carolinians were dressed far more fashionably than anybody else in the class. One of them was Washington Allston, who was quite a



The fountain and pool on the site where the house in which Washington Allston was probably born used to stand.

Courtesy of Brookgreen Gardens

graceful gentleman. His handsome body and beautiful face were in harmony with his gentle, delightful manners. Those who hated one another most heartily—and there were good haters in our class—and who agreed in nothing else, united in respectful and kindly feelings toward him." Allston's room was the stopping place for many of his friends who lived in Boston. Jarvis tells an amusing story about a cold night when two friends, Leonard Jarvis and Ned Dana, had happened to stay quite late visiting and both dropped by to spend the night with Allston. Unfortunately the bed would not hold more than two sleepers. Allston very wisely refused to say which one should stay. It was agreed that, as Jarvis said, "He who first undressed and got

into bed should stay there. Dana consented to the proposal, and never were garments slipped off more rapidly. Ned beat me by a stocking, so I had to dress myself again and plod my solitary way homeward, of a bitter cold night."

Dr. Flagg had never given up the idea of making a doctor out of Washington Allston. But Allston himself had decided to become a painter. Finally his family consented, and he started his career as an artist. Shortly after his graduation from Harvard, he returned to South Carolina. There he renewed his friendship with Malbone, who was then living in Charleston. He also became intimate with another South Carolina artist, Charles Fraser.

Allston now felt that he had reached the point where he had to visit Europe and study the great paintings of the world. Before he left Charleston, he arranged to have the money which had been left to him by his father turned over to him to pay his expenses in Europe. Many of his friends, who had great faith in him, offered to lend him enough money for his great adventure, but he preferred to be independent and therefore refused help.

In 1801 Washington Allston and Malbone landed in London. Young Allston at once registered at the famous art school, the Royal Academy, of which his fellow countryman, Benjamin West, was president. This was the first formal training in art which the young American had received. It is amazing that in just a year he was ready to exhibit some pictures. Three pictures from his brush created much comment. They were "French Soldier Telling a Story," "Rocky Coast with Banditti," and "A Landscape and Horseman." The first one, which was a comic study, was sold at once and received favorable comment from no less a person than the great English painter Sir Thomas

Lawrence. Evidently Allston had not expected such quick success, for not long after arriving in London he had taken several water-color paintings to an art dealer. The dealer promised that he would sell all that Allston could supply. So Allston, who had a horror of being stranded far from home without money, set to work, with his mind at ease. He had arranged for what he called "a way of escape."

Allston had invested all he had in his great adventure, and he did not intend to let it end in England. Very soon he left London for Paris. With him went another American painter, John Vanderlyne. Perhaps nowhere in the world at that time was there a more complete collection of great art than at the Louvre Art Gallery in Paris. Whenever Napoleon conquered a country, he would bring back to the Louvre the greatest treasures of the conquered land. He himself gloatingly said, "Every victory gives me a *master*." The Louvre was at this time entirely filled with the treasures of the world, many of which were returned to their rightful owners after Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of Waterloo. Allston had the great opportunity of studying at the Louvre at this time. Having viewed its many treasures he wrote, "I am by nature, as it respects the arts, a wide liker." Being a "wide liker" in the arts is a sure way of bringing great pleasure into our lives.

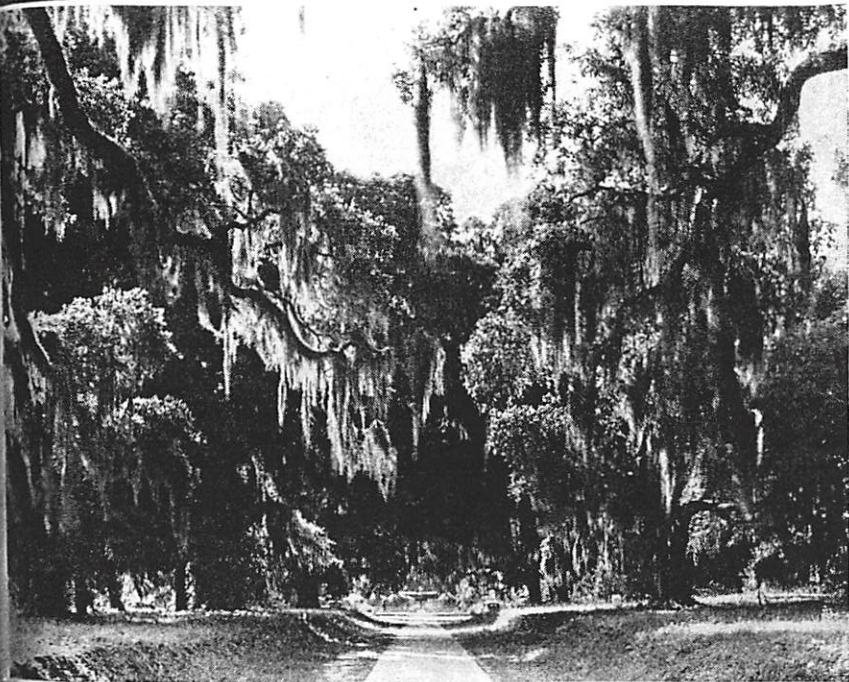
Paris was delightful. But Allston longed to get to Italy, which he considered the home of great art. After several months in France, he left for Italy, stopping for several months at Sienna in order to learn the Italian language. When he thought that he had learned enough to ask questions and understand the answers, he went first to Venice, next, to the great art galleries in Florence, and finally, to Rome, where he was joined by Vanderlyne. The two young

men were, at that time, the only American art students in Rome.

In his four years in Italy, Allston learned a great deal about art, but he did more—he began the great friendships of his life. Here James Fenimore Cooper, who wrote the famous “Leather-stocking Tales,” was visiting. In the world-famed Cafe Greco, Cooper and Allston met Shelley, Keats, and Byron, three of the greatest writers of English poetry. In Rome Allston first knew his friend, Washington Irving, the man who wrote “The Tale of Rip Van Winkle.” The two Washingtons became the intimate companions of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the English poet who wrote “The Ancient Mariner.” Washington Irving, who had a slight talent for painting, became so interested in it, because of his friendship with Allston, that he decided to become a painter instead of a writer. Fortunately for American literature, he found that he could not do as well with the brush as with the pen, and so he went back to writing.

Let us hope that his enjoyment of painting was made greater by the advice Allston gave him on how to view a great picture gallery. Allston said, “Never attempt to enjoy every picture in a great collection unless you have a year to bestow upon it. You may as well attempt to enjoy every dish in a Lord Mayor’s feast. . . . Study the choice piece in each collection; look upon none else, and you will afterward find them hanging up in your memory.”

During the time that Allston was in Europe, there was a great political upheaval. Many important changes took place. One thing that happened was rather unimportant to the world, but it is very interesting to us. When the poet Coleridge was on his way back to England, he was told that Napoleon was trying to capture him. This was to punish



The avenue of oaks in Brookgreen Gardens supposed to have been planted by William Allston, the father of Washington Allston.

Courtesy of Brookgreen Gardens

him for some criticisms which he had written about Napoleon. The boat on which he was traveling was pursued by a French ship; and when it seemed that Coleridge was going to be captured, he hastily threw overboard all his papers. In the bag was his famous diary, which contained many pages about his American friend, Washington Allston. Down to Davy Jones’ locker went the work of years—and what is far more important to us) Coleridge’s description of Allston.

It was this same political upset which caused Allston to decide to return to the United States. In 1809 he landed in Boston, Massachusetts. His reputation had crossed the ocean before him, and he was received with many honors. He

wrote to a friend that he had been so honored and had so many engagements and so much excitement that he didn't have a single hour in which to sit down calmly and think. In 1819 he was made an honorary member of the New York Historical Society. His visit to America was a very important one to Miss Anne Channing. This young lady, at the age of thirty-one, finally became Mrs. Washington Allston, ending an engagement which had lasted from the time that Allston was a junior at college.

Few Americans had ever received such good art training as Allston had. He had studied under the finest masters in every department of painting, and he had also studied anatomy so that he knew the structure of the human body. Finding that it was easier to paint his figures if he could work from plaster models, he studied sculpture also. Thus he was prepared in every way to become a great painter.

In 1811 Mr. and Mrs. Allston sailed again to England. This time they took with them a pupil, Samuel F. B. Morse, and were later joined by another famous American artist, Charles F. Leslie. With this return to England, Allston's period of most brilliant work began. Practically all of his finest paintings belong to this time. The picture which won for him the English Academy first prize and a purse of 200 guineas, was "The Dead Man Revived." The art world praised his picture highly and acknowledged that he was a great artist.

The painting of this tremendous work taxed Allston's strength to the limit. Sometimes he would forget to eat and most of the time he neglected to sleep. As a result, in 1813 he became very ill and never entirely recovered. From that time on, he had not one single day in which he was entirely

well. Following closely upon his illness, the death of his wife was a great shock to Allston. For weeks he was so distressed that his friends wondered if he would ever be able to paint again; but he did work on for many years.

One of the most interesting things we know about Allston is the way he prepared his palette. A painter's palette is a shield-shaped piece of wood or metal, on which he mixes and tests the colors he is going to use in his painting. This is an important matter for a painter. Allston says, "For the next painting I prepare my palette thus: At the top I put a good lump of white; next to it some yellow (say yellow ochre, raw sienna, or Naples yellow, according to the complexion I am to paint). Then red (vermilion is the best, but I always put by it some Indian red and lake to strengthen the lowest tints if required), lastly, ultramarine blue, and by the side of it a little black. My palette, you perceive, now has white, black, and the three primitive colors."

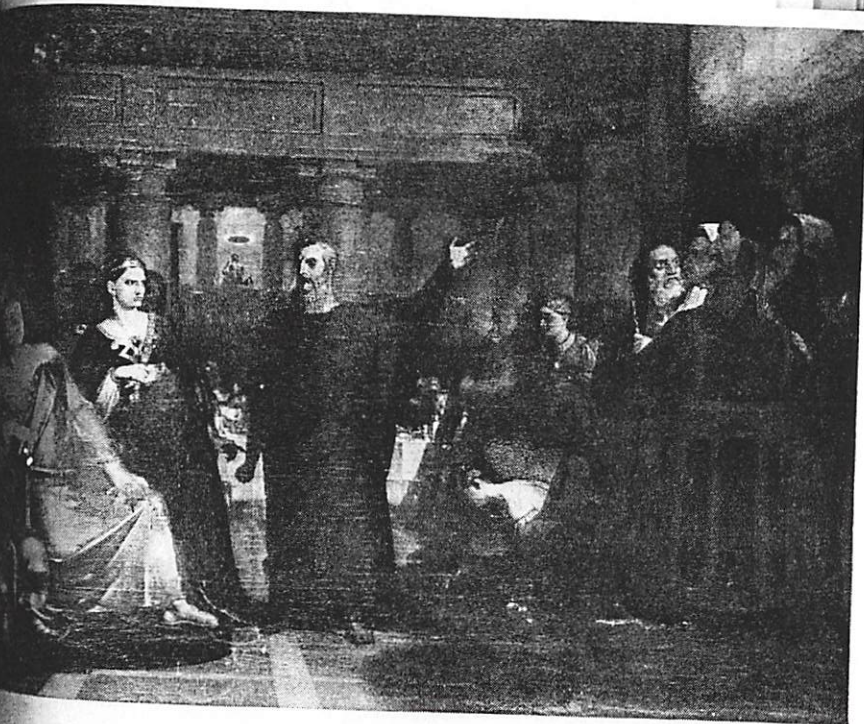
From this Allston went on to explain how he used the colors to get the effects he wanted. Perhaps he was more famous for his ability to portray light than for any other single quality in his paintings. One of his paintings, "Uriel in the Sun," is especially famous for its sense and feeling of sunlight. An amusing story is told about a little girl who, when she first saw his picture of "The Mysteries of Udolfo," went around the room closing all the window blinds. When asked why she did this, she said, "I'm shutting the light off that picture." Imagine her surprise when she discovered that the light was *in* and not *on* the picture! To get ideas for his pictures, Allston went either to the Bible or to other famous books. He read as many novels and plays as he could get his hands on. He painted sublime,

grandly beautiful subjects. He did not often paint pictures of the ordinary or familiar things of life. Portraits were not popular with him, and he did very few of them. Among the best are one of his mother, whom he loved devotedly, and one of his brother-in-law, Dr. Channing, who was a great friend. Of all his portraits, the most famous is that of Coleridge, a famous portrait of a famous man. It was painted in England, but there was another one, begun in the happy days of their friendship in Rome, which was never finished.

Not a great many of the fine pieces painted by Allston during this period of work in England have found their way to America. Another American painter, Thomas Sully, brought the famous "Cavern Scene from Gil Blas" to America. He considered it so fine that he raised, by public subscription, \$3,500 with which to buy it for the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Allston was very appreciative of this compliment paid by a fellow artist and considered the price a generous one. Today the picture would bring many times that amount if the Academy were willing to sell it.

Have you ever heard the story of the old man of the sea who climbed upon the back of Sinbad the Sailor and refused to be shaken off? Wherever Sinbad went, he had to lug around the heavy old man of the sea. Finally he made the old man so drunk that he rolled off.

Washington Allston had his "old man of the sea." It was a tremendous picture called "The Feast of Belshazzar." For more than thirty years he worked on this enormous painting, which he based strictly on the Bible story in the Fifth Chapter of Daniel. It tells of the handwriting on the wall which none of the King's wise men could read, but which Daniel said meant the downfall of Babylon. This picture was the "doom of Allston's art, the gloom of Allston's life."



"The Feast of Belshazzar," by WASHINGTON ALLSTON.

Courtesy of the Boston Athenaeum

The task of finishing it hung over his head like a heavy weight. Ten friends, who had great faith in this picture, had promised to pay \$10,000 when it was finished. In fact, some of the friends paid their \$1,000 ahead of time. Each month, each year, Allston expected to finish the picture. To him, it seemed a debt of honor which must be paid.

In 1820 he wrote from England to Leslie, who lived in Charleston, "The finishing of Belshazzar is all I wait for to be once more a happy husband." When he died, twenty-five years later, "Belshazzar" was still unfinished. Allston declared that no human eye should see it until it was finished, and it was not until after his death that his friends looked upon it. The picture was to have had two hundred complete, individual figures, and was to be as large as the

side of an ordinary room. Even in its unfinished state, it is a magnificent work, and it does not look unfinished to its admirers.

In 1839 Allston was offered a commission to paint two handsome pictures for the rotunda of the new Capitol in Washington. This was, of course, a great honor, but he regretfully refused. He gave as his reason that he was unfamiliar with the painting of war subjects and that he did not know United States history well enough; but his friends knew that the real reason was that he did not think it right to give up his work on "Belshazzar" to begin another big picture.

Honors were being showered upon Allston in England. The art world recognized him as a genius, and he was being spoken of as a possible president of the Royal Academy, to follow Benjamin West. He was elected an associate of the Academy after he left England, a rare honor for an American.

Suddenly he announced that he was returning to the United States. "Why?" asked everyone. Homesickness? An irresistible longing for America? Or was it because his South Carolina agent had been either careless or dishonest and had allowed his property to get into very bad shape? His friends were distressed to have him leave England. West declared that Allston's return to America was a tragedy. But this did not change Allston's plan. In 1818 he returned to the United States and went again to New England.

The English poet Southey wrote of him:

"... he who, returning
Rich in praise to his native shores, hath
left a remembrance

Long to be honored and loved on the banks
of Thames and Tiber:
So may America, prizing in time the worth
she possesses,
Give to that hand free scope and boast here-
after of Allston."

It is sad to relate that Allston's return to his native country brought only disappointment and some unhappiness. Ill health, debt, the lack of fellow artists would have been bad enough, but he had other troubles. His studio was a poorly lighted barn; he had no models and no means with which to employ them. Never again was he able to paint as he had in England.

There was one great happiness in store for him in America however. On June 1 he was married to Miss Martha R. Dana, daughter of Chief Justice Dana of Massachusetts and sister of his friend, Richard Henry Dana. There must have been great patience in the Channing-Dana family. For this wife, who was a cousin of the first Mrs. Allston, also waited ten years to marry him.

Perhaps next to his art, Allston showed the greatest enthusiasm for his friends. His devotion to Coleridge has been mentioned, and a letter from Coleridge shows his friendship for Allston. He wrote, "Had I not known the Wordsworths I should have esteemed and loved you first and most; and, as it is, next to them I love and honor you." The friendship with Washington Irving, which was begun in Rome, became ever dearer as the years passed. Malbone, Fraser, Greenough, Morse, and Leslie were devoted friends of Allston. Many years after his period of study in England, Morse wrote that his dearest hope in connection with his new in-

ation, the telegraph, was that it might make enough money for him to relieve Allston of all financial worries.

Allston's main interests were, of course, art and literature, but he had another very attractive side. He was a great rickler for good eating; he loved parties, theatre, and the dance, though he never played cards. His elegant manners and charm earned for him in college the nickname of "Count." If he had not been a great artist, he might have become famous as a brilliant talker. Night after night, his friends would gather in his home to hear him talk into the early morning hours. No one was ever known to be bored. His habit of staying up late at night rather shocked the quiet neighbors in Cambridge, the little college town where he made his home after his second marriage. However, everyone liked him. He was popular with young and old. His daily routine would certainly justify the old remark, "Artists are queer people anyhow." In the first place, he had two rather amusing habits left over from his bachelor days: He insisted on getting his own breakfast and making his own bed. Immediately after breakfast he would light a cigar and read a book on art, to put him in the right mood for painting. About one o'clock he would take a pitcher of water to his studio, and then begin preparing his palette, which took about a half an hour. Next he would gaze at a picture, awaiting the proper inspiration; a few hours of work would follow; then home to dinner, usually with friends. Afterwards there would be talk on art, science, literature, politics, myths, ghost stories—every subject under the sun. At nine, tea, toast, cake, and preserves would be served and there would be more of the famous conversation. In spite of all this, it is recorded that he was a very hard worker.



"The Youthful Franklin," by ROBERT TAIT MCKENZIE.
One of the many statues in Brookgreen Gardens, Washington. Allston's former home. Courtesy of Brookgreen Gardens

Religion meant much to **Allston**. Many times he said in jest that, next to religion, his cigar was the greatest consolation in his life. Soon after his marriage to **Martha Dana**, he and his wife joined the Congregational Church. When some of his Episcopal friends criticized him for leaving that church, he said, "I am not an Episcopalian nor a Congregationalist. I hope I am a good Christian."

Perhaps it was just a part of being a good Christian that he could never pass a beggar. His friends felt that he often was imposed upon, but when they told him so he smilingly replied, "I would far rather give to one unworthy person than to have someone go in need." He himself, after the first years of his manhood, was always in need of funds.

Once he was down to his last sixpence, but as soon as he sold a painting, he shared the small sum he received for it with a fellow artist who, he said, needed it more than he did. At the time of his sister's death he was supposed to inherit something of her estate, but he signed his share over to his brother, **William Moore**, for, he declared, "William has children, and I have none. I have a profession and he has not."

Perhaps a better nickname than the college one of "Count" was "Father of American Painting." If **Allston** had done nothing but help young American artists as he did, he would have earned a place in our affection. He knew what struggles the young artist faced. Once a young painter came to him for advice. The young man was rather lukewarm about painting as a profession, and we can well imagine that he was completely discouraged by **Allston's** answer: "If a man *must* be a painter let him come prepared to bear up a mighty burden." "The love of money never made a painter, but it has ruined many." He knew how



"Reaching Jaguar," by ANNA HYATT HUNTINGTON.

Courtesy of Brookgreen Gardens

honest criticism was the best gift he could give to a student, and so he mixed his praise with a little needed harshness, as when he told a student, "Your trees do not look as if birds could fly through them."

Allston was never fortunate enough to have children of his own, and so his pictures were his children. Once a friend asked him which of his pictures he liked best. He replied, "I love all my children."

Allston was a very conscientious man and sometimes sacrificed his own good for what he thought was right. For instance, his painting of the "Agony of Judas," which he did while he was discouraged and distressed after his own illness and the death of his wife, was considered the best head he had ever done. He himself was afraid that it might some day cause someone to do a horrible deed, even commit a murder, so terrible had he made the face of Judas. Rather than have this happen, he himself destroyed this fine piece of work. While working on the "Feast of Belshazzar" he decided that it would be more artistic to have a lamp lowered a few inches. This meant that every single line in the picture had to be redrawn in order to fit the change. Allston worked hours upon hours, days upon days, for one solid month, to redraw every line of his tremendous picture, all in order to lower an unimportant lamp a few inches.

Besides being a painter, Allston was a poet. In 1850 it was said that he was one of the chief poets of America. This is perhaps too high praise, but he is generally considered one of the better minor poets of this country. His ability as a writer was recognized in Europe sooner than it was in this country. In fact, all of his art was recognized earlier abroad. One interesting phase of Allston's poems

cannot be overlooked—he had a way of writing a poem to accompany a picture. Of course we've all heard of music written for poems, but it is not often that the same man paints a picture and writes a poem about it.

The only long tale written by Allston was "Monaldi," published in 1841 although it had been written twenty years earlier. The scene of this story is Allston's beloved Italy. The hero was an artist who defeated the villain, a discouraged man of letters. Jealousy, envy, and revenge are all to be found in this hair-raising tale.

After the death of Allston his *Lectures on Art* were published by R. H. Dana, Jr. They had been prepared to deliver to a class, but were never used in that way.

Allston's death came very suddenly, on July 9, 1843. Mrs. Allston had invited some of her family to dine and spend the evening. Mr. Allston came in at dinner time, completely exhausted. He had spent the day working on the "Feast of Belshazzar." In order to paint the face of the soothsayer, it was necessary for him to stand on a ladder. All day he had gone up and down, up and down that ladder, and he was worn out. However, after rest and a good dinner he seemed to feel like himself again. After the guests had left, he sat in his chair and "fell asleep," never to waken again. His funeral was held as the rays of the setting sun fell on the many mourners gathered around his grave. Harvard students, bearing lighted torches, formed a guard of honor. The Dana family had been completely dazed by the shock of his sudden death, but they finally realized that perhaps his passing was a joyous one, for "he had escaped that terrible vision—the nightmare, the incubus, the tormentor of his life—his unfinished picture."

Just a few years before his death, an exhibition was held

in Boston at which the public had an opportunity to see all of Allston's American-owned paintings. The exhibition met with great success, and in 1842 his picture "Spalatro" was exhibited in Charleston. Fraser considered it an unforgettable picture, and South Carolina now adds Allston's name to the list of her unforgettable sons.

Robert Mills

1781-1855



ON THAT August day in 1781 when Robert Mills was born in Charles Town, the South Carolina seaport was still in the hands of the British. If the people of Charles Town could have looked years ahead, they would have seen that this little baby, born to the Scottish William Mills and his wife, Ann Taylor, was to become the first real American architect, and that, one hundred and fifty years after his birth, Americans would be praising his work.

Robert's parents had six children to educate, but they were able to send Robert to the College of Charleston, which even then was an excellent school. Robert was a great reader, and he made the best of his opportunities while in school. This, combined with his knowledge of nature, gave him a well-rounded education. He was graduated from the College of Charleston about the year 1800, and very soon began the study of architecture.

Robert Mills.

*From a portrait bust made by A. WOLFE DAVIDSON.
Courtesy of David Kohn*

though in the very early days of Hayne's practice, Stephen Elliott probably was the most influential man in the state. The whole town talked politics, and this is not surprising when we remember that in 1800 Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of Charleston had been the Federalist candidate for the president of the United States, and in 1821 the South Carolina legislature nominated another Charlestonian, William Lowndes, for the same high office.

Before he was twenty-one, Hayne was a member of the bar, and at twenty-two he had a wife. On November 3, 1813, he married Miss Frances Henrietta Pinckney, daughter of Governor Charles Pinckney. After her death Hayne was again married, this time to Miss Rebecca Motte Alston. Family ties were very strong to Hayne. He took care of his own immediate family, and he reached out to help more distant relatives.

While he was in the militia, a great honor came to him, an honor which was to prove a training school for his great success. He was invited to make the July Fourth oration before the "Seventy-six Society" and the "Palmetto Society," meeting in St. Philip's Church. To be asked to make this oration was a much-sought-after honor, and before he was twenty-two years of age Hayne had won it. His company of cadet riflemen escorted their captain to his great triumph. His speech was given, and the papers spoke well of it. Perhaps no one was more surprised than Hayne when his speech caused a "paper war" between two people signing themselves, "Veritas" and "Philo." Each one wrote the newspaper about the success or failure of Hayne's speech. Instead of sulking because of the criticism, young Hayne carefully studied everything that was said and decided to correct his mistakes. As a result of his efforts

teen years later he could hold his own with Daniel Webster, the man who was known as the greatest orator and debater in America, if not in the world.

Hayne himself soon stepped into the political arena. In 1814 he went to the legislature as the candidate of the Democratic-Republican party. He had hardly reached Columbia when Governor Alston appointed him quartermaster general, a position which really was an important one. In time of war this officer had to see that the troops were supplied with all that they needed. At this time the coast was threatened by the British and the frontier by the Indians, so that the quartermaster general was kept busy. Certainly Hayne had little time to rest, for he was conducting his own business, taking care of his legislative duties, running the office of quartermaster general, and acting as one of the trustees of the estate of his father-in-law, Charles Pinckney.

In 1818 Robert Young Hayne was elected speaker of the state House of Representatives, which meant that he would have to conduct its meetings. This election was a great surprise to young Hayne. He had been in the legislature for four years, and had observed the proper way to conduct a meeting, but he did not feel that he knew enough to carry on the business of the legislature in the orderly, quiet manner which was best for getting things done. So he borrowed a copy of Jefferson's *Manual of Parliamentary Procedure*, locked himself in his room, and spent the entire night memorizing what he should do in every situation. He learned his lesson so well that his rulings were never overthrown. In fact, they were seldom even questioned.

Immediately after the adjournment of the legislature, Hayne became the attorney general of South Carolina. In