

1976

Ruth Twigg Carr: A Visual Interpretation

Belinda Carr Beccue

Eastern Illinois University

This research is a product of the graduate program in [Art](#) at Eastern Illinois University. [Find out more](#) about the program.

Recommended Citation

Beccue, Belinda Carr, "Ruth Twigg Carr: A Visual Interpretation" (1976). *Masters Theses*. 3366.
<https://thekeep.eiu.edu/theses/3366>

This is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Theses & Publications at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

Ruth Twigg Carr: A Visual Interpretation

(TITLE)

BY

Belinda Carr Beccue

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Arts

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1976

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

10/11/76

DATE

ADVISER

10/11/76

DATE

PAPER CERTIFICATE #2

TO: Graduate Degree Candidates who have written formal theses.

SUBJECT: Permission to reproduce theses.

The University Library is receiving a number of requests from other institutions asking permission to reproduce dissertations for inclusion in their library holdings. Although no copyright laws are involved, we feel that professional courtesy demands that permission be obtained from the author before we allow theses to be copied.

Please sign one of the following statements:

Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University has my permission to lend my thesis to a reputable college or university for the purpose of copying it for inclusion in that institution's library or research holdings.

Oct 11 / 76.
Date

Author

I respectfully request Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University not allow my thesis be reproduced because _____

Date

Author

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	1v
PREFACE	v
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. ARTISTS OF THE PAST WHO DEALT WITH THE HUMAN SPIRIT	3
Rembrandt Van Rijn Kaethe Kollwitz	
III. RUTH TWIGG CARR--A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP	6
Grandmother Friend Confidant Model	
IV. AESTHETIC MOTIVATION AND PROCESS	13
Pencil Drawing Photo Silk-Screen Watercolor Oil Painting	
V. EARLY YEARS--MOLDING OF CHARACTER	29
Homelife Family Religion Education Teaching in a One-Room School House Marriage	

VI. LATER YEARS 39

Family
Death of Husband
Return to Teaching
Philosophy of Life
Philosophy of Death
Philosophy of Religion

VII. CONCLUSION 46

Personal Tribute to My Grandmother
Value as an Aesthetic Statement
Significance in Today's Society

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Head of a Man
2. Portrait of His Mother
3. Portrait of a Woman Worker with Blue Shawl
4. Ruth
5. Three Sisters
6. Grandma Noonan
7. Mother and Dad
8. Four Maidens in a Row
9. Two Brothers
10. The Sitting
11. Confirmation
12. High School Graduation
13. The Only Soda Jerk in Town
14. College Days
15. Miss Twigg in Hat
16. Oh, Miss Twigg
17. My Miss Twigg
18. Off to Catfish
19. Miss Twigg's School House
20. School Play (detail)
21. School-Marm
22. Voyager
23. Tom Carr
24. Tom Carr at His Garage
25. Wedding Portrait
26. Teaching in Hume
27. Thinking
28. Eyes: Windows to the Soul
29. In Bed (detail)
30. My Old Friend
31. Wooden Blocks
32. Small China Doll
33. Down in the Cellar
34. Looking Out the Window
35. Reaching for Rebirth
36. Grandma and I
37. Quilted Memories
38. The Sitting--Variation #2

DEDICATION

I dedicate this documentary to the woman who inspired it--my grandmother, Ruth Twigg Carr. Her beauty and wisdom have encompassed my life and given me a legacy of love.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is a comprehensive look into the personality and life of my grandmother, Mrs. Ruth Twigg Carr. I will present Mrs. Carr's transformation of character by means of a visual interpretation using various media and composition. The personage of my grandmother is revealed through thirty-five portraits, people and places which have touched her life, and the intimate keepsakes she holds dear.

The character study begins with Ruth Twigg, an innocent and joyful girl of sixteen, and ends with Ruth Twigg Carr, a wise and beautiful woman of eighty-eight. Various media explored included pencil, watercolor, mixed media, oil painting, and photo-silkscreen printing on paper and on fabric.

To further construct the character of my grandmother, my program will include an audio-visual rendering of her as seen and heard today. I have employed colored slides, eight millimeter films and cassette interviews to encompass the integral qualities she possesses as an individual. Other resource materials include old photographs, letters, a diary of thoughts and philosophy compiled by Mrs. Carr and her personal possessions.

I presented the total essence of my grandmother's character by creating a gallery environment which enhances the distinctive qualities of her personality and the time in which she has lived. In addition to artistic interpretations of Mrs. Carr, there were on display personal memorabilia and possessions which symbolize stages of her life. Such items include some of her long hair cut and tied, china dolls, her wedding gown, pieces of jewelry, old hats and other expressive paraphernalia. Backdrops of flocked wallpaper, antique furniture, and old frames will transform the gallery into a positive visual statement of the life and life-sustaining qualities of Ruth Twigg Carr.

By this means, I augment the essence of Ruth Twigg Carr, disclose my personal relationship to her, manifest the aesthetic and representational qualities of the artistic interpretations, and affirm the value of the study to myself and to those who view it.

The documenting of the personality and life of Ruth Twigg Carr was an invigorating and fortifying experience--one which has afforded me great personal pleasure and insight into her life. It is my intention that this project possess an artistic vitality and an attempt to pursue personal aesthetic refinement.

CHAPTER II

SOME ARTISTS OF THE PAST WHO DEALT WITH THE HUMAN SPIRIT

It has been the purpose of many artists throughout history to reveal the altruistic quality of the human spirit, to capture and illumine the life-sustaining attributes of human emotion.

Two such artists stand out in my judgement from the multitude of talents. They are the German Expressionist, Kaethe Kollwitz (1867-1945), and the Dutch painter, Rembrandt Van Rijn (1606-1669). Both artists reflect an uncanny power in their work which arouses the viewer's mind and heart with genuine emotional empathy. The observer feels acutely the human condition which transcends the work of these two individuals.

Rembrandt Van Rijn is acknowledged as one of the great masters of art. He is renowned as an artist of superb versatility and pictorial genius. Rembrandt ranks the very greatest among those artists who have interpreted the status of the human soul.

Rembrandt's extraordinary achievement as a great artist lies in his mastery of the portrait. He captured with uncompromising observation the character of those people he loved

dearly. Rembrandt's mother, wife Saskia, son Titus, and second wife, Hendrickje, were to become principal subjects of his prodigious talents. The portraits, Head of a Man (illustration 1) and Portrait of His Mother (illustration 2) serve to manifest his genius.

His pictorial achievement is to use the Caravaggesque method and to add to this his deep insight into human nature and the pictorial means to express it. This included both a mastery of the significance of human gesture and expression, and the effect of light and color.¹

His genius is dramatically observed by the multitude of self-portraits painted by Rembrandt throughout his life.

No one painted himself, from eager youth to failing old age, as many times as Rembrandt, and the portraits are the result of urgent analysis rather than personal egoism. They show him laughing, eager, quizzical, confident, disdainful, worried, gay, sad and, in the last painting, in senile decay.²

Kaethe Kollwitz, one of the outstanding woman artists of the twentieth century, produced a classic presentation of human compassion in her work.

The substance of Kaethe Kollwitz's art is dominated by compassion, strength, and self-control . . . Her strength is the deep understanding of misery of her neighbors, the oppressed and downtrodden--the mother, the young and old men, the children--and their poverty, hunger, sorrow, and death.³

¹Trewin Copplestone, Rembrandt (New York: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1960-71), p. 12.

²Ibid.

³Herbert Bittner and Thomas Yoseloff, Kaethe Kollwitz Drawings (New York: Sagamore Press, Inc., 1959), p. 8.

Kollwitz identified with the idea of a united brotherhood of mankind. She paralleled Rembrandt's character studies through the same deep interest in her models.

With her great heart she identified herself with the fate and burdens of the oppressed and heavy laden, especially the mother. She suffered with them in their grief--in birth, life, and death. Her sympathy was so strong that she gave her own form and features to most of the women she drew and took under the protective wings of her heart.⁴

Kaethe Kollwitz poignantly expressed pity for the poor and downtrodden in her moving prints. She views her subjects with compelling kindness and dignity. The rendering, Portrait of a Woman Worker with Blue Shawl (illustration 3), depicts Kollwitz's style.

Just as Rembrandt and Kollwitz generated a gifted dexterity for capturing the human spirit, I will in turn explore the most subtle nuances of character in Ruth Twigg Carr. The prevailing moods and spiritual quality of my grandmother shall be interpreted throughout this study. She is shown merely as she is--a human being traveling through the journey of life.

⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER III

RUTH TWIGG CARR: A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

My relationship with my grandmother has always been a very intimate one. It has provided me with the inherent qualities of a friend, confident, and model. I am enchanted by this wise and reverent lady; how wonderful it would be to possess her vigor and love of life.

Ruth Twigg Carr exemplifies the role of the compassionate and compellingly kind grandmother. She is a woman I have experienced only as loving and gentle since my childhood. Memories of her evolve out of vacations spent with her. It was during these visits that our kinship flourished. Grandma and I had long quiet talks; subjects were varied and numerous.

No matter how many stories she told me, my favorites were always those of her as a young girl. The tales she told were so wonderous and exotic I could hardly imagine them happening. Days of horse-drawn buggies, box suppers, and one room school houses seemed so distant yet remarkably real through the narratives she conveyed. The romance of these brilliant flashes into the past provided me with a secret key to another world. This was a world I would never see except through her eyes.

The culminating point of our visit was always the sorting through of memorabilia hidden within my grandmother's hope chest. In that cedar chest were the most treasured of possessions--those which served to perpetuate a phase of my grandmother's life long past. I remember burrowing down into antiquity: photo albums, quilt blocks, forgotten love letters, china dolls, lace handiwork, long hair cut and tied, precious jewelry, old hats bearing lace and plumage, wooden alphabet blocks, a silk flowered wedding gown and other treasures too numerous to mention. Each keepsake was as diverse as the next and had its own poignant story to tell. My awareness of my grandmother was heightened by those excursions into the past: its laughter and its tears, its hopes and dreams, its sadness and despair.

The quality of friendship between Ruth Carr and myself primarily supersedes that of the conventional grandmother-granddaughter relationship. We are friends in the truest sense of the word. Confidants who have entrusted each other with the most private of secrets.

I recall hours spent on warm summer evenings swinging in my grandmother's porch swing. It was an old swing, one which squeaked incessantly with each backward and forward motion. The relaxed rhythm of that creaking bench seemed to provide an impetus for soft conversation. All my dreams, fears, insecurities, and hopes lay prostrate. I was assured that she would support and sympathize, listen and care.

She, in turn, confided in me her own anxieties and expectations she had had as a girl. There was gentle empathy in her eyes and in her voice as she identified with my innermost feelings.

Wisdom and compassion compose the nucleus of my grandmother's distinct character. During the summers when I was a child, she possessed the power to perceive the innerworkings of my mind. She maintained and supported the childlike fantasies I adhered to. She pledged her alliance to my schemes and games with ardent zeal. Never did she discourage or discredit my proposals, but instead volunteered her efforts towards their completion.

The alliance between Ruth T. Carr and myself constitutes an enduring feeling of companionship. In many ways, this dear person became the sister I never had. The more-than-sixty years which separate me from this venerable woman in no way impede the power of our relationship. She draws from her years sagacity and tenderness to bestow a caliber of responsiveness to our kinship. Our friendship possesses an immense fluidity. Grandmother alters her perspective from that of an octogenarian to that of a girl of eighteen living life again for the first time. She offers me advice and counseling as an adult when I am in need of it, yet maintains her girlish charm and lightheartedness. I am privileged to know Ruth Twigg and Grandma Carr as distinct and diverse personalities--both of whom I cherish.

My grandmother has always been a constant and stalwart model to me. She has guided me throughout life with invigorating puissance and sagacity. Of the many principles endorsed by this woman, I recall being influenced remarkably by three: belief in life, belief in God, and belief in yourself.

Grandma Carr is a lover of life. She believes in its strength. For more than twenty years my grandmother has taught me to look at life with a positive outlook. The journey of life is to be embarked upon confidently with unyielding vitality. Ruth Twigg Carr is the embodiment of all that life holds in store: laughter, tears, strife, toil, love, diligence, joy, faith and wisdom. I have determined from her steadfast example that there are two ways to go through life. Life can be affirming and good or it can be taken negatively. My grandmother has always lived life affirmatively. Thus, she has become an exemplar to me. I hope to fortify my own life with the quality of invincibility with which she has lived.

An intangible part of my grandmother's character is her persistent faith in God. She has relentlessly lived her eighty-eight years with pious ardor. As a small child, I recall being mystified by the religious paraphernalia treasured by this benevolent human being. Being a devout member of the Roman Catholic Faith, such items as rosary beads, cards and medals honoring saints, missals, portraits of Christ, and

statuary penetrated the inner realms of her home. I was perplexed by the solemn propriety they emanated.

Grandma would sit down and explain what each symbol meant, the doctrines of the Church, and the importance of Christian devotion. As she talked, she was filled with virtuous enthusiasm. I became enthralled by her principles and beliefs; therefore, I began to idealize her and the fundamentals she stood for.

Since my earliest visits to my grandmother's home, I recall a vivid memory of a religious ritual performed every day by this woman. For more than two decades she has worn a large safety pin with many religious medals attached to it. The pin housed twenty or more separate medals denoting various saints and religious figures. Each holy entity represented in the collection energized my grandmother's faith. She has felt safe and protected with the assemblage for the saints are all special friends to her. Each one is honored and respected by my grandmother. Each evening during those memorable summers, I would watch this complaisant woman remove the pin from her slip and repin it to her nightgown. In the morning, the procedure was reversed; for she was never to be without her medals. She still honors the tradition today with enduring fervor.

Undying faith has been the foundation of my grandmother's life. She draws from it a focus on life's misgivings. Ruth Carr is a tough individual. She has never

succumbed to tragedy and discord but retaliates with allegiance to God and forbearance.

My grandmother has strengthened my own personal faith in God and in the Church. She has been a resolute archetype of religious fidelity to me. Undaunted trust in life and its Creator predicate my alliance to the life-affirming philosophy Ruth Twigg Carr lives by.

An individual's belief in himself has been a philosophy adhered to tenaciously by my grandmother. She has lived her own life with distinctness and prides herself in teaching her children and grandchildren to do the same. It has been the credence of this woman that everyone should proclaim a purpose in life and strenuously affirm it every day of his existence.

One of Ruth Twigg Carr's major goals in life was to become a teacher. She persisted in this objective with a rigorous tenacity. There were obstacles to forbear, the main one being the dogmas of what a proper teacher could and could not do. The private and public life of a school teacher during the early part of the century was under strict jurisdiction. A teacher was regarded as a staunch moralistic model. Ruth Twigg remained steadfast to her objective. She resigned herself to the limitations placed on her so that she might become a teacher, the profession she had set as a goal.

My grandmother has instilled in me a desire to expand my abilities--to set high goals for myself. I have acquired

assurance and faith in my capabilities as an individual. As a young girl, I became aware that my grandmother represented an ideal--a model of what I wanted to become. Ruth Carr is a woman who has experienced a satisfying and rewarding career. She has been a compelling influence in my own decision to become a teacher--to seek a career.

The quality of my personal relationship to my grandmother, Ruth T. Carr, is a major determinant for the value of this program. I feel the intimacy of our bond will fortify the interpretation of her personage and amplify my aesthetic awareness to capture her graphically with sensitive discernment.

CHAPTER IV

AESTHETIC MOTIVATION AND PROCESS

The subject of this thesis, Ruth Twigg Carr, provided me with an impetus to seek true character revelation. The visual evidence of her spiritual and bodily strength compelled me to capture her artistically. Paul Hogarth, artist, discloses his feelings concerning the value of a portrait.

Portraiture demands an awareness of people in all their frailty and variety. It is a social art which makes big demands on the artist and sitter alike. You become involved with people often on the closest terms. To draw an effective portrait, you must exercise your own personality on the subject you portray.⁵

I decided to articulate the personage of my subject in a variety of mediums: pencil drawing, photo silk-screen, watercolor, and oil painting. It was my contention that these diversified processes would define and interpret different phases of my grandmother's life and personality. Each medium became for me, a tool of conveying emotion and feeling.

I have found pencil drawing especially valuable in character interpretation. The spontaneity and graphic power of the pencil offers an immense range of expression and freedom. The act of drawing is very natural; it conveys a personal message, much the same as one's private letter

⁵Paul Hogarth, Creative Pencil Drawing, (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1964), p. 89.

correspondence or diary of thoughts and feelings. I was compelled to extract what I felt significant in various people, objects, and events in my grandmother's life and interpret them through the subtle and intricate properties of pencil. This personal translation provided an added dimension to an otherwise literal report.

In order for an artist to work naturally and successfully, he must have confidence in his tools and materials. He must rely on them for constant performance. When building up a drawing by the use of line and texture, it may be necessary to employ a wide range of pencil media. I have found 2B, 3B, and .5B Koh-i-Noor leads best for my purposes. The lead, usually six inches in length, is placed in a push action metal holder. The Koh-i-Noor Adapto 5611 lead holder is recommended. It is hexagonal in shape allowing for a firmer, easier grip. I have discovered that there is great flexibility of hand movement when using a lead holder. Another benefit of this tool is that the lead rarely breaks when supported by the holder.

I used a variety of papers for my drawings. My preference is a smooth (hot pressed) white paper. Strathmore makes several good papers which I would recommend. I try not to overlook the possibilities of good print stock to draw on; I have tried many that lend themselves well to pencil.

The soft pliable quality of the gum eraser was an indispensable tool for making corrections; it does not mark

or scratch the paper. I use the kneaded eraser for clean-up. It is easily shaped with the fingers for cleaning fine details making it an excellent addition to one's drawing materials.

I am captivated by the strength of the pencil portrait. The face becomes a supreme reflection of personal experiences, attitudes, and feelings. The artist must not feel restricted to reproducing every detail in a perfect likeness, but to give witness to a "feeling." Seek the special message of your subject; every man and woman has something individual to convey. I believe it to be an absolute necessity to know something of the character or life of your subject. For only then can you make a subjective and intensely personal interpretation. This kind of drama is unrivaled by the camera.

When drawing the human face, I build up the textural effects and tonal emphasis much like one would depict the terrain of a landscape. Each line, texture, or value that emerges is an image in its own right. From the juxtapositioning of these elements evolves the complex entities of the human face. When I start to address the face, my interest immediately moves to the eyes. I find them fascinating as indicators of character. It is my contention that the true analysis of my subject lies at this point. I work in a clockwise manner, starting with the right eye and then moving down past the cheek to the right side of the nose. I then build up the mouth and chin before moving upward to the left side of the face. I complete the left side of the nose, chin, and

cheek area until I find myself at the left eye. After the completion of the facial features, I turn my efforts to the ears, forehead, hair, etc. I employed this technique when drawing the following pencil portraits: Grandma Noonan (illustration 6), Two Brothers (illustration 9), College Days (illustration 14), My Miss Twigg (illustration 17), Voyager (illustration 22), Tom Carr (illustration 23), Teaching in Hume (illustration 26), In Bed (illustration 29), and Grandma and I (illustration 36).

I made the drawing, Grandma Noonan (illustration 6), primarily to express the influence of this strong-willed woman on Ruth Twigg. The bold forthrightness of her face reflects the pioneering fortitude she must have possessed. This woman was always a jolly and amiable soul. In her face is interwoven the tenacious strength needed to survive the hardships of life during the eighteen hundreds and the good humored approach to life she took. I used an oil-bound crayon or grease pencil to build up this composition. To emphasize the bold unyielding sturdiness of her nature, I relied on the thrust and sweep of heavy accents from the oil pencil. The drawing was the second of two attempts and was made in about an hour.

In contrast to working with the bold lines of an oil pencil, I worked with a highly sharpened 5B lead to express the intricate and subtle properties of pencil. This kind of drawing allows for a greater definition of detail and precision. Pencil portraits exploiting the delicacy and soft

beauty found in its subject include: My Miss Twigg (illustration 17) and College Days (illustration 14). The accuracy of fine line can be assisted with the constant sharpening of one's lead. Note the intricate pencil work of the young woman's lace dress in My Miss Twigg. I completed this pencil drawing in four hours.

Often one seldom knows exactly when to stop working on a drawing. A drawing is finished when I feel I have succeeded in interpreting its original message. The entire paper need not be covered. The white un-used portion of the paper can indeed be proven valuable in a pencil composition. When working on the triptych portrait, College Days (illustration 14), I became aware of a developing problem. The piece of work was becoming very complex; three highly finished portraits, each one professing a mood and expression of Ruth Twigg. I decided to leave a portion of the hair unfinished in each portrait so that the work might maintain a spontaneity and freshness. I picked up the outside silhouetted shape of the hair by lightly shading away from the head. The effect is somewhat like that of backlighting, in which the main light source shines from behind the model. The center figure becomes the focal point as a lightly sketched oval surrounds her. This pencil study is the result of more than twelve hours of work.

The portrait, In Bed (illustration 29) is a large drawing with a high degree of dramatic emphasis and tonal density. My grandmother lies in bed propped by several

pillows with the covers drawn up around her. The effect is sad and foreboding. It is a graphic depiction of age. The face is comprised of countless lines and creases, each one the result of life's experiences. I am quite taken by the quality of my grandmother's face--its highly-sculptured bone structure, deeply furrowed skin, and sparkling dark eyes. I heavily accented the wrinkled nature of the fabric to draw attention to the engraved surface of Mrs. Carr's face. Thus, her face becomes much like a piece of fabric--wrinkled and worn. My intention was to represent the great toll life takes on its people. The wide variety of textures, linear description, and tonal emphasis offered a complex undertaking. I built up the composition using a variety of pencil medium: 2B, 3B, 5B, and 6B leads were employed. The heavier accents were drawn with a common 6B graphite pencil. It was an exacting task--one which took the better part of five weeks to complete. The pencil renderings Teaching in Hume (illustration 26), Two Brothers (illustration 9), and Reaching for Rebirth (illustration 35) manifest the technique of a gradual build-up of textures or tonal effects.

In comparison to a highly developed drawing is the light and frivolous rendering, Eyes: Windows to the Soul (illustration 28). As mentioned before, the eyes are the ultimate expression of one's personality. I sought to capture this feeling of undaunted character through two sets of eyes: the eyes of youth on the left and the eyes of age on

the right. The success of a drawing is often a combination of pure intuition and luck. I worked quickly and instinctively on this work and completed it inside of an hour. I used a 2B lead in this pencil drawing and concentrated on the immense complexities of the human eye and its surrounding tissue.

As an artist, I find myself drawn to the medium of pencil drawing more and more. Your ability to appraise the possibilities of a situation are limitless given the remarkable flexibility and ease of the pencil. For, by reacting to a face, setting, gesture, pose, etc., the artist is responding in a personal and creative manner. I feel the experience I have gained from this thesis has increased my potential as a draftsman and enabled me to develop a personal means of understanding and expressing my feelings.

The stenciling technique of photo silk-screen provides a contemporary and graphic flavor to this project.

The characteristic ability of the photo stencil to reproduce a photographic image makes it a unique tool in printmaking and painting. In addition to this characteristic, it is one of the best means of printing the detail of a fine line drawing or a half-tone drawing with accuracy and sharpness.⁶

When researching this pictorial documentary of my grandmothers life, I discovered and became engrossed in several old photographs which exemplified the time period. The essence of these excursions into the past motivated me to renew their vitality through the photo silk-screen process:

⁶Clifford Cheffio T., Silk Screen As a Fine Art, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1967), p. 69.

The basic principle behind the photographic stencil process is simple. A chemically light-sensitive gelatin is placed either directly on the screen or on a temporary support of polyester film such as Mylar or a photographic positive is placed over the gelatin film and both are exposed to light. The light passing through the clear, non-opaque part of the design causes the gelatin to harden; the gelatin areas below the opaque areas of the design remain soft and are eventually washed away with water. Thus, that which was opaque in the original becomes the blackout stencil.⁷

To facilitate the process of silk-screening, I used a baseboard made from one-half inch plywood to which I fastened each screen with two "slip-pin" hinges. The hinges were attached to the long side of the frame and directly to the baseboard which was six inches larger than the frame on all sides. This enabled the screen to be lifted up and down easily when placing each piece of paper on the baseboard.

My first attempt at photo silk-screen was somewhat confusing and disheartening. In the five-color print, Miss Twigg's School House (illustration 19), the registration posed a serious problem. When the photographic image was exposed to the screen, the image was unparallel to the wood frame surrounding the silk. As a result, the picture was uneven and extremely difficult to register. The series of prints was slightly off on registration. I was determined to maintain accurate alignment of the prints in the next series, The Only Soda Jerk in Town, (illustration 13). Register tabs were attached to the baseboard. The tab is

⁷Ibid.

easily made from slightly stiff paper cut into a strip approximately one-half inch by two inches. This strip is then folded in half with both halves then folded back to the center fold creating an accordion-type fold. The two ends are flattened out and pushed together toward the center. Three tabs were attached to the baseboard--two on the bottom or top of the print and one on either the right or left side. This device also functions to hold the paper in place during printing once the screen has been lowered. The addition of registration tabs proved highly beneficial in the printing of the three-color screen, The Only Soda Jerk in Town. In this depiction of an early nineteenth century scene, I made two series of prints. The first one was a series of seventeen prints comprised of pink, grey, and dark violet on white printing stock. The second set consisted of six prints placed on editorial and comic pages of a newspaper. In this exercise, I explored the possibilities of the silk-screen image combined with the printed area of type and color. It proved most interesting to view the "chance" combination of color and the tonal value of the black and white printed page with the photo image.

I was pleased with the outcome of the remaining two photo silk-screens, Four Maidens in a Row (illustration 8) and The Sitting (illustration 10). The five-color photo stencil, Four Maidens in a Row, represents three men seated in the grass at a "box supper." Providing the immediate

background are four long skirts of the ladies standing behind them. This composition offered unlimited color possibilities. I chose a rainbow effect of bright pastel hues: green, blue, yellow, and lavender. The intensity of color furnishes an interesting contrast to the dark brown tones of the men. The grass in the foreground is also printed green to supply unity throughout the piece. I printed two series of the photo image: a five-color series of fourteen on tan paper and a series of six on white paper.

The three-color print, The Sitting (illustration 10), is a nostalgic look into the Victorian setting of the turn of the century. This photo image concentrates on the grouped textures of fabric, flocked wallpaper, and wicker chair. I used pink, light brown, and dark brown in this successful series of seventeen.

The possibilities of the photo stencil are limited only by the artist's imagination. The effect of the printed image on fabric was investigated. Two one-color series of prints were made on cotton and on muslin. The photo silk-screen images on cotton were converted into three pillows, each housing two photo images. The collection of prints made on muslin were sewn and quilted into a four-foot by five-foot wall hanging. The printed fabric renderings, The Sitting-Variation #2 (illustration 38) and Quilted Memories (illustration 37) add an element of textile art to this project.

Since watercolor may be used in a fresh and spontaneous manner, it seemed appropriate to give witness to the

youthful years of Ruth Twigg. The watercolor paintings which serve to represent the joy and carefree happiness of that time include: Mother and Dad (illustration 7), Confirmation (illustration 11), Miss Twigg in Hat (illustration 15), Oh, Miss Twigg (illustration 16), Off to Catfish (illustration 17), School Marm (illustration 21), My Old Friend (illustration 30), and Small China Doll (illustration 32).

When watercolor painting, I prefer a basic palette of the following colors: Cadmium Yellow, Pale; Grumbacher Red; Alizarin Crimson, Light Red (English Red); Payne's Gray; Cerulean Blue; Cobalt Blue; Yellow Ochre; Burnt Sienna, Burnt Umber; French Ultramarine Blue; Thalo Blue; Thalo Green; and Ivory Black. I use a size 12 red sable brush for all around painting and find the effects of 190-pound rough finish paper most desirable. Additional tools include blotters, sponges, and masking materials.

In the watercolor, Confirmation (illustration 11), the young girl dressed in white stands amid trees and sky. It is interesting to note that when painting a white object, the subtle play of values and color can be influenced by color from the light source and from surrounding objects. If you examine the dress closely, it contains some coloration from the light sources of the warm sun tones, the blue of the sky, and the variety of greens found in the trees. I used the white of the paper alone to indicate light-struck areas on the face and on the gown.

I articulated the form in the face quite carefully and I really tried to capture a good rendering of the young girl's characteristic features.

The portraits, Oh Miss Twigg (illustration 16) and Miss Twigg in Hat (illustration 15), serve to give witness to the beauty and spirit of Ruth Twigg at age nineteen. I was particularly intrigued by the prominent eyes in Oh Miss Twigg and felt compelled to stress them. The delicate and lovely skintones of the young woman are made up of a wide spectrum of colors: violet, lavender, pink, mauve, rust, orange, blue, etc. Although the values in the background are much darker than the values in the figure, I often used the same value in both areas. Occasionally, I will use some of the same colors to provide a unifying element in the painting. Many of the initial washes are left to describe the light areas of the composition. The watercolor, Miss Twigg in Hat, is a subtle blending of colors; thus, there is a great deal of variety and excitement in this work. The model's opalescent skin tones are balanced by the stronger colors of her clothing. Basically, the shadows of the skin are cool, tending toward a soft violet and blue gray. The addition of various reflected colors help with the modeling and provides both interest and variety in the flesh areas.

I found a marked contrast in the work, My Old Friend (illustration 30), as compared to other watercolors in this study. In this piece of work, I altered my perspective from

photographs of the past to present day stilllife. The battered antique body of the beloved doll was placed in the midst of several potted plants of varying sizes and shapes. Although the years have aged and worn her frail body, the shining glow of her china face and twinkling eyes is unchanged. I was not in any way restricted by a photograph or a narrative story. The handling of the medium became very loose and intuitive. My interpretation was totally free. This was watercolor for watercolor's sake. I left definite boundaries in some areas while I softened other boundaries. It is not necessary to state an entire boundary--merely articulate certain sections of it. I loosely construed the plant life and background and placed my attention on the beautifully fine delicacies of the small head. The lightness of shadows in the complexion values create the feeling of luminosity. I learned an important lesson from this painting--be willing to understate color. It is better to leave a picture understated than to work at it too long, or the result might be a haggard, tired painting.

Many pieces of work in this thesis were the result of a mixed media technique. Its purpose was to capture the nostalgia that I have for the turn of the century. In this procedure, I made light watercolor washes to indicate subtle areas of color. After these washes had dried, I worked soft tonal pencil areas over the pale color. The result was a nebulous illusion of the past comparable to the old color

tinted photograph. This technique was employed in the following pieces of work: Ruth (illustration 4), Three Sisters (illustration 5), High School Graduation (illustration 12), School Play (illustration 20), Wedding Portrait (illustration 25), and Wooden Blocks (illustration 31).

Oil painting is renowned for its permanence, adaptability, and richness. Therefore, the medium of oil paint was chosen in an effort to instill a quality of directness associated with the later years of my grandmother's life. The oil portraits impart a forthright respect for tradition. Oil is respected for it implies a lasting impression. The image of Ruth Carr as seen today is captured in three oil renderings: Down in the Cellar (illustration 33), Thinking (illustration 27), and Looking Out the Window (illustration 34). I am amazed at the spectrum of colors found in the richly sculptured face of my grandmother. The distinctly different and exciting hues of color range from bright, warm yellows and oranges to cool and serene blues and violets. The juxtapositioning of this array of colors simulate the depth and scope of the furrows and well-defined planes in her head.

My oil palette included: Zinc Yellow; Cadmuim Yellow, Medium; Cadmuim Red, Light; Alizarin Crimson; French Ultramarine Blue; Thalo Blue; Yellow Ochre; Burnt Sienna, Burnt Umber, Thalo Green, and Superba White. Grumbacher, Inc. manufactures a flesh color to simplify mixing when painting portraits. This color can be modified with additional color

for a great variety of subtle skin tones. I find chromiim oxide, Grumbacher Red and Mars Violet excellent choices to add to your palette for this purpose. Oil paints lend themselves to the study of color and color mixing because they do not change appreciably in color from the wet to the dry state. Mixture can also be adjusted without concern that the paints will become dry on the palette before the desired result is achieved.

The bulk of my painting in oil was done with bristle brushes in a variety of shapes and sizes: Brights, Flats, and Rounds. I often use a small round sable to work on intricate detail work in the eyes, nose, corners of the mouth, etc.

To begin the execution of the portrait, Looking Out the Window, I did a preliminary sketch on canvas with a 5B standard graphite pencil. I find the soft lead of the pencil more applicable than charcoal for my purposes. The drawing was next sketched in with a mixture of Raw Seinna thinned with turpentine, and the shadow areas put in with a heavier mixture of the same combination. Then color was blocked in on the over-all painting. It is important to remember not to concentrate on any one area. Instead, work over the entire canvas to bring all sections along at the same time. In this way, you can balance color and make adjustments where necessary. The colors in the background were a mixture of French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Umber in varying degrees. I wanted a dramatic effect so the right side of the canvas was

kept quite dark. The light pastel assemblage of colors in the curtains provide a strong contrast to the dark interior of the room. I was particularly intrigued by the very strong light source coming in from the window. The initial effect is a silhouetted shape against the background. This created a challenging and interesting problem because the modeling of form must be accomplished by the most subtle changes in both color and value. The shadows of the skin are cool--blue gray in color. The light-struck areas are warm oranges and light yellows. The portrait was finished by refining areas, picking up accents, softening and blending edges, and adding texture to the background by applying additional color.

CHAPTER V

EARLY YEARS: MOLDING OF CHARACTER

Ester Ruth Twigg was born in 1888, daughter to Hansen and Nelle Twigg of rural Paris, Illinois. The Twiggs were a close-knit family--one which regarded life and its responsibilities in a serious and steadfast manner. Ruth Twigg, or "Rukie" as she was nicknamed, grew up in an atmosphere of family love and togetherness. Her youth was a happy and busy time. There were always playmates for there were nine children in the Twigg household--Mary, Lenny, Ruth, Jim, Helen, Byron, Marguerite, Leo, and Josephine.

In the portrait Ruth (illustration 4) "Rukie" is captured as a young girl of sixteen in the year 1904. She is a symbol of innocence--the pure of spirit. Life awaits her. She seems to welcome the challenge with outstretched arms. The medium employed in this rendering of the subject is a combination of watercolor underlays with pencil overtones.

The rural atmosphere of Edgar County was the environment for Ruth's youthful recreation. The Twigg children took great delight in creative diversion. Marguerite Twigg Fitzgerald, younger sister to my grandmother, recalls an amusing story about Ruth:

One day three or four of us younger children were playing in the new hay which had just been

put in the haymow. Mother sent her to get us out of there before we fell and got hurt. She came up the stairs to the mow and had a rag over her head, her face screwed up, her hair hanging loose (which wasn't fone in those days), her arms out, and her fingers in a scratching motion, saying, 'I ain't Rukie, I'm the devil,' and growled like a demon.

We younger ones were really scared, all but Jim. No, not him! He wasn't scared. The rest of us began to cry and she had to let us in on the secret. I guess Mother had sent her to get us out of the haymow, but we didn't know it.

That is only one of the hundreds of memories I have of your grandmother.⁸

The galty with which the Twigg family lived is depicted in the picture, Three Sisters (illustration 5). Watercolor and pencil show the frolic of the Fourth of July, 1904 celebration. Ruth (right) and her two younger sisters, Helen (center) and Marguerite (left), celebrated the festive holiday by dressing up as American Liberty figures and as an American Indian in tribal dress. The long uncut hair of the three girls displays the honor of tradition in the family. Two American flags crossed in the center of the picture further enhance the galty of the occasion.

When asked what comments and memories the portraits, Ruth and Three Sisters, arouse in her, my grandmother responded:

Yes, I remember this day. It was a Fourth of July. We were wanting to have a picture of us taken by our new camera so we decided to dress up for the 'fun of it' and have a picture of we three sisters on that day. I look back fondly on those days. They were happy days since my sisters were

⁸Marguerite Twigg Fitzgerald, to Belinda Carr Beccue, Charleston, Illinois, 8 April 1974, Personal Files of Belinda Carr Beccue, Monticello, Illinois.

growing up and enjoying the same things I enjoyed. Helen and Marguerite enjoyed doing almost everything I did because it made them seem older.⁹

A lasting impression was made on Ruth by her parents and her Grandmother Noonan. Each of these individuals contributed to the molding of the young girl's character. She describes them as warm vibrant people, instrumental in her life. The portraits, Grandma Noonan (illustration 6), Mother and Dad (illustration 7), and Four Maidens in a Row (illustration 8) serve to illustrate their sturdy personalities.

School occupied much of the Twigg children's time. As a girl, Ruth walked one mile from her home to Asher School, a one-room school building. There were about forty students, ranging from first grade through the eighth, attending from the county sector. Mrs. Carr looks back to those days fondly and speaks of them as being happy, fun-filled experiences.

While growing up, Ruth formed a very special bond of companionship with a cousin, Harry Twigg. The boy's mother died suddenly; consequently, Hanson and Nelle Twigg took him into their home. For more than a year Harry stayed with the family, became part of the large household and a close friend to the Twigg children. The pictorial renderings, Two Brothers (illustration 9) and The Sitting (illustration 10), depict Harry Twigg with his own two brothers. The boys painstakingly hold poses reminiscent of the early 1900's. The rich Victorian furnishings of the time and the solemn facial

⁹Interview with Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois, 13 April 1974.

expressions provide one with a nostalgic look into the past.

The Roman Catholic Faith was an important part of the Twigg's family life. For both the Noonan and Twigg families came from devout Catholic backgrounds. After having studied her faith for many years, Ruth, at seventeen, was confirmed into the Church. Confirmation is a most holy and solemn ceremony regarded as a serious step in one's religious life. Her mother made Ruth a beautiful white gown to wear at Confirmation. The hand sewn dress was a delicate assemblage of lace, decorative pleats and small covered buttons. The watercolor, Confirmation (illustration 11), represents Ester Ruth Twigg as she looked that bright summer day in 1905. During the sanctimonious rite, the young woman acknowledged and confirmed her belief in God and in the Catholic Church, a vow she would uphold all of her life.

Upon completion of her years at Asher School, the daughter of Hanson and Nelle Twigg moved to Paris where she attended high school. Ruth lived with her mother's family, the Noonans. The household consisted of grandfather, grandmother, and two daughters--Tresa and Margaret. Both matronly aunts were to influence the girl's personality and to spark an interest in her becoming a teacher. Margaret was an elementary teacher in the Paris school system and Tresa taught music at the family home. Mrs. Carr describes the effect of the two women on her:

Both were very important to me and a good many of my questions were answered by them. No

doubt the influence of my two aunts has had much to do with my goals and ambitions.¹⁰

Her aunts became exemplars to Ruth. They were professional women whose work became their life. For neither of the Noonan sisters ever married. It was at this point that the young girl realized her destiny as a teacher.

In the spring of 1906, Ester Ruth Twigg completed her high school education. The beauty and diverse character of the young woman of eighteen is captured in the portrait, High School Graduation (illustration 12). Watercolor and pencil combine to interpret the invincible spirit of the maturing girl. Her regal stature reflects a gentle, yet intrinsically strong individual. Her long hair is drawn up as though to suggest her initiation into the adult world.

Being the lovely young lady that she was, Ruth had a great following of gentleman friends. One man in particular was after her heart. My grandmother recalls this time in her life with amusement:

There was one guy who used to claim me as his girlfriend. He was a wealthy man. He was quite a bit older than I at that time. I always felt like he was more of a father to me than a sweetheart! But he was a nice guy. His name was Charles Merkle. But I never wanted to marry him. At that time I told him I was just starting in to school and didn't have much time to visit with men and boys. I had to look after my school life if I was going to be a teacher.¹¹

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

Ruth received several marriage proposals during this time in her life. She chose to forego them as she had a teaching career to embark upon. Her gentlemen callers included a quiet young man who worked at a local drug store. The flavor of the times is captured in the photo-silkscreen, The Only Soda Jerk in Town (illustration 13).

The determined young woman of nineteen adhered to her goal with great zeal and energy by enrolling at Eastern Illinois State Teachers College at Charleston, Illinois, in the year 1907. Campus life proved to be fun and excitement for Ruth because she loved meeting people and making new friends. The pencil drawing, College Days (illustration 14), depicts Ruth Twigg in a triptych portrait as she appeared while attending school at Charleston.

The distinctive nuances of character in this individual are also explored in the watercolors, Miss Twigg in Hat (illustration 15) and Oh Miss Twigg (illustration 16). Many people in the early 1900's loved dressing up to have their pictures taken. Ruth Twigg donned her Sunday hat, complete with satin ribbon and ostrich plumes, to have her picture taken. Her demure expression is characteristic of a proper young lady.

It was a happy day when Ruth Twigg realized her dreams of becoming a school teacher had come true. The aspiring young educator received her first assignment--a one-room school in Edgar County known as Bentwood. It was located only

a half-mile from her parent's home enabling Ruth to stay with her family three years while at the small school. There were fifteen children from the country section in attendance: three in the first grade, two in the second grade, three in the third grade, five in the fifth grade, and two in the seventh grade. Today, Mrs. Carr entertains herself with memories of school days:

Some of my happiest times were teaching . . . having school parties such as box suppers, spelling bees, and programs with other schools. I enjoyed learning the different personalities of children. It is much easier to understand their dispositions when you know their personalities . . . you get interested in them just like you would if they belonged to you--at least I did.¹²

The pencil study, My Miss Twigg (illustration 17), characterized the bright young teacher as she was known and loved by her students at Bentwood.

Another of the several rural schools taught by Ruth Twigg was known affectionately as Catfish. Every day she hitched her horse and buggy and started toward the small school, a distance of nearly four miles from the Twigg home. The watercolor, Off to Catfish (illustration 18), illustrates the journey to and from school by the young woman. When asked what memories the painting aroused, Mrs. Carr replied:

I think the buggy is just the very picture of the buggy I used to drive. And I was very fond of it because I used to drive it back and forth to school. I could always tell from a distance if it were mine because of the streak in the back. I used to drive that to my school or any place I

¹²Ibid.

needed to go. We had a horse that was gentle and he'd "jet" up and away I'd go! I was mighty glad to see my outfit again. It took me back to the days when I used it.¹³

It was often customary in the spring for each country school to have a portrait of the children taken. Such was the case at Catfish School where Ruth taught grades one through eight. The students stand next to and in front of their teacher in the photo-silkscreen portrait, Miss Twigg's School House (illustration 19).

Other local schools taught by the young woman included Doles, Stewart, and Asher--her alma mater. The charm and sentiment of school days and pupils dear to Ruth Twigg are related in the portraits, School Play (illustration 20) and School Marn (illustration 21). Both pictures provide the viewer with an affectionate look at the teaching career of the aspiring young instructor.

My grandmother delighted in the children she taught. Her compassion, cheerful disposition, and vigorous concern for her pupils became fundamental traits in her character as a teacher. She was to be admired and thought of warmly by her students everafter.

In 1919, at the age of thirty-one, Ruth Twigg met a wonderful young man and future husband, Thomas L. Carr. He had recently returned from the war where he served as a member of the United States Navy. The amiable young sailor is

¹³Interview with Ruth Twigg Carr, Villa Grove, Illinois, 15 March 1976.

limned by charcoal and pencil in the portraits, Voyager (illustration 22) and Tom Carr (illustration 23). Ruth was captivated by the sparkling personality of the gentleman. They became close friends quickly. When asked to describe Tom, my grandmother expounded:

Being with him was like being among your own people. He was always very polite. We were good friends long before we dated. He taught me how to be happy and to enjoy myself.¹⁴

Ruth and Tom dated for two years before marrying. During their courtship they attended church, parties, dances, and box suppers together. While living in Hume, Tom, with his brother-in-law, Leonard Armstrong, owned and operated a garage and service station known as The Hume Motor Company. The thirty-year-old Tom at work is depicted in the inkwash, Tom Carr at His Garage (illustration 24). The couple maintained an energetic correspondence by mail during their period of courtship and engagement. The following passage from a letter dated November 2, 1921 imparts a humorous tale as reported by Mr. Carr:

I left my Ford out last night when I got home and I had a hard time starting it this morning. I am going to fix it so it won't be so hard to start. Last night when I went out to crank it down at your house, I was already to crank it up and a horse ran down the road and into the lot and snorted like a wildcat! He scared me so that I cranked old lizzie with ease and got away before he got me!¹⁵

¹⁴Interview with Ruth Twigg Carr, Monticello, Illinois, 12 July 1976.

¹⁵Tom Carr, to Ruth Twigg, Brocton, Illinois, 2 November 1921, Personal Files of Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois.

Tom Carr was a merry and lighthearted soul, who enjoyed people and going places. He was a dynamic individual who lived his life completely with profound vitality. Mr. Carr professed a humorous outlook on life, yet found time to expose his serious nature to his fiancée, Ruth. In this letter of November 14, 1921, he reflects with moving sentiment, his affection for her:

Dear Girlie- I will drop you a few lines to-night before I go to bed as I might not have time tomorrow at noon. Well, Dear, I got home without any trouble. I think the moon must have dried the roads up as they seemed good all the way home, but, of course, a fellow couldn't expect to have any trouble going home after spending a pleasant evening with a nice little girl like you. A fellow feels so good that the road seems like pavement if it is a little bad in places. Ruth, you are the sweetest girl I ever knew and I am sure glad that I have passed up so many others and waited for you. But you know the old saying-- It comes to he who waits . . . I must close now with love and kisses to you. Tom¹⁶

On July 18, 1922, Ester Ruth Twigg became the bride of Mr. Thomas L. Carr at Brocton, Illinois. The newly-married couple strike a pose on this most happy occasion in the watercolor and pencil depiction, Wedding Portrait (illustration 25). After a wedding trip to Chicago, Mr. and Mrs. Carr returned to the small town of Hume, Illinois where they were to live all their married life.

¹⁶Tom Carr, to Ruth Twigg, Brocton, Illinois, 2 November 1921, Personal Files of Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois.

CHAPTER VI

LATER YEARS

In the fall Ruth T. Carr embarked upon a new experience--teaching in town. She taught first and second grade at Hume Grade School. Tom, who had always entertained thoughts of farming, left The Hume Motor Company to pursue his new profession, one which he would engage in the rest of his life. The Carr family steadily grew to five during the next ten years. Tom and Ruth were very happy and the proud parents of a daughter and two sons: Julia Ellen, Pat, and Mike. Ruth Carr recalls memories of her husband and marriage:

My marriage to Thomas L. Carr gave me a very fine husband, whom I knew was as honest and true as the day is long, not only to me, but to others with whom he came in contact. He had many friends, and I know it was the result of his jolly disposition which also kept his children in good humor along with me most of the time.¹⁷

The happiness of the young family was to be short-lived for Thomas Carr fell ill of pneumonia and died in the winter of 1936 at the age of forty-six. The loss of the beloved husband and father was felt strongly as Mrs. Carr searched for strength and fortitude to raise the family alone. The young widow resolved herself to the difficult undertaking

¹⁷Interview with Ruth Twigg Carr, Villa Grove, Illinois, 15 March 1976.

with firm conviction. After her youngest son started school, Mrs. Carr returned to Hume Grade School and resumed her teaching career. The family unit derived special strength during those years as my grandmother remembers:

The fact that I taught school where my children attended made our lives at this particular time more happy. I know that if we were at different schools we would have felt much worse than we already did.¹⁸

Although a difficult task, the woman became both mother and father to Julia Ellen, Pat and Mike. The following poem written by Patrick Carr, eldest son to Tom and Ruth, provides a poignant view of the children's mother while they were growing up:

AN ANGEL ON EARTH

Dear Mom,

For a number of years now you've really been living,
You've never had a thought of taking; always just
giving.

An angel on earth is the only proper way to describe,
Each of your children three will certainly subscribe.

You watched over us completely with some help from
above,
Offering us everything that you had; especially your
love.

We know that you did without things over and over
again,
There's no way to describe how much we owe from
within.

As we grew up from young children into full adulthood,
We were envied by others; and to have been envied,
we should.

¹⁸Ibid.

For people saw a mother so anxious to offer her life,
Left alone with three small youngsters, a husband-
less wife.

So you acted as both with your Tom guiding your hand,
As he was still with you, that lovable Irish man.

Nothing else mattered but your children's happiness,
And your efforts on our behalf was the recipe of
success.

You sprinkled in character and added a small pinch
of your smile,
Then you stirred together all the ingredients, pray-
ing all the while.

Lincoln's "ALL THAT I AM AND ALL THAT I EVER HOPE TO
BE,
I OWE TO MY DARLING MOTHER" are our feelings too,
we three.

Bo, Pat, Mike¹⁹

Ruth Carr continued to teach until 1953, when she
retired at the age of sixty-five. The pencil characteri-
zation entitled Teaching in Hume (illustration 26) exempli-
fies the role she played as a primary teacher for many years.
She was always in good humor and loved reciting poems and
stories to her students. The following excerpt from James
W. Riley's poem, Little Orphan Annie, was always a favorite:

Once there was a little boy who wouldn't say his
prayers,
And when he went to bed at night--a way upstairs-

His Mammy heard him holler and his Daddy heard him
bawl,
And when they turned the covers down, he wasn't
there at all.

They searched him through the meadow--and every-
wheres I guess,

¹⁹Pat Carr, to Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois,
12 May 1975. Personal Files of Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Ill.

But all they ever found of him was just his pants and roundabouts.

And the goblins will get you, if you don't watch out.²⁰

After having taught Edgar County schools for twenty-two years, Mrs. Carr acquired the love and respect of scores of former students.

The more than twenty years that have passed since the retirement of Ruth Carr have been happy, productive, and enlightening ones. She has enjoyed the wealth of having a loving family and good health. She lives today with her daughter and son-in-law, Julia Ellen and Bill Bounds, of Danville, Illinois. At eighty-eight, Mrs. Carr is bright, alert, and active. Age has not dimmed her joyful, buoyant nature nor dulled the delight she takes in life.

In contemplating her own life, my grandmother cites experience as being a significant factor in building character. It is her conviction that experience is a good teacher, an indispensable tool of learning. This wise woman is the reflection of all the forces, failings, aspirations and abilities in life. Her experiences have been many; they have fortified and energized her.

Mrs. Carr believes the foundation of good character is honesty, truthfulness, and self-respect. She professes the importance of being kind and thoughtful to people and all living things. My grandmother affirms the credence that life

²⁰Interview with Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois, 13 April 1974.

is good; it is to be honored and respected. The strength of life's experiences is manifest in portraits, Thinking (illustration 27) and Eyes: Windows to the Soul (illustration 28). She is depicted in the oil painting, Thinking, as being absorbed in thought as she relives the past through her memories. Mrs. Carr comments:

I think the artist knew me better than I knew myself when thinking of situations that were quite serious to me. The mood in this picture shows my mental feelings concerning my life in later years. I must still show in my face what the tragedy of my earlier life endured.²¹

The essence of Ruth's character is explored through her eyes in the drawing, Eyes: Windows to the Soul. In this drawing, the eyes on the left are hers at age nineteen and the ones on the right are her eyes as seen today. During one's life the eyes become the reflection of a person's experiences, hopes, and dreams. Unaltered through the years is the twinkling brilliance of her warm eyes. Here is age glowing with joy.

My grandmother does not find growing old depressing or sad. Age imparts wisdom. She is very wise because she has experienced the magnitude of life. There is a quiet and resolute joy gained from the process of sustaining life. The pencil rendering, In Bed (illustration 29), gives witness to this feeling. Ruth Carr professes her thoughts about age in this often cited poem:

²¹Interview with Ruth Twigg Carr, Monticello, Illinois, 12 July 1976.

Grow old along with me.
 The best of life is yet to be.
 The last of life for which the first was made.
 Our times are in His hand.
 Who saith "A whole I planned,
 Youth shows but half; trust God, see all, nor
 be afraid."²²

My grandmother believes that by looking to each day as a new and exciting experience, one remains vital and young at heart. Daily happenings when you're eighty-eight years old should prove just as exciting and rewarding as they did at eighteen. For, by living life with enthusiasm, we retain our youthful heart. She confirms her realistic attitude about aging as she recalls memories of a very special childhood toy:

Santa Claus brought me the doll and I appreciated it and felt like I was doing the right thing by keeping that doll in order and seeing that nothing happened to it. I thought an awful lot of it, just like you would a person. I'm going to try and see her again sometime and see if she's grown old like I have. But that's one thing about a doll; they don't have to grow old; they can stay young and beautiful. I don't envy her because she stays young because she isn't the one that keeps herself young. The Lord made us all and we have to get old as the years go by.²³

The china doll described by my grandmother is represented in the watercolor, My Old Friend (illustration 30). Other playthings treasured at the turn of the century are shown in the renderings, Wooden Blocks (illustration 31) and Small China Doll (illustration 32).

²²Interview with Ruth Twigg Carr, Villa Grove, Illinois, 15 March 1976.

²³Ibid.

Ruth T. Carr's philosophy of death and religion are closely interwoven. Death is an inevitable and natural experience that everyone must contend with. Through our passing, we are rewarded for living a good life. My grandmother's faith has given her a great abundance of courage. The oil portrait, Down in the Cellar (illustration 33), sanctions the tragedies of her life. But she reacts by turning on a light to soften the darkness. Throughout her life, this single, shining light called hope sustains her. She firmly believes in life everlasting. The following passage states many of her tenets concerning religion and death:

We'll all meet eternity sometime. Everybody has to die. We don't want to give up our families and all; it's like going to a strange place. But afterwards, if you've lived a life where you get to go to Heaven or Purgatory where you will eventually get to Heaven, it's good. We all have something to think about regardless of our religion or our walk in life. The good Lord is wise enough to take care of us and put us where we belong.²⁴

The two portraits, Looking Out the Window (illustration 34) and Reaching for Rebirth (illustration 35), symbolize this very special woman's belief in her own eternal continuance. In the oil painting, Looking Out the Window, Ruth Carr is peering out from an intense darkness which represents death, into a brilliant light streaming through the curtains, which expresses her own resurrection. The pencil drawing, Reaching for Rebirth, serves to portray her unchallenged belief in God as she reaches to grasp His hand so that she might begin a new life eternal.

²⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The very nature of this thesis suggests the intimacy between the subject and myself. The value of the program, therefore, can be assessed as a personal tribute to my grandmother. I am intrigued by this woman. I felt activated and inspired by her vivacious personality. I was compelled to articulate the form in the face--to capture her intrepid spirit. From these facts emerged in me a desire to express pictorially the great character of this human being. I sought to relay my own experience and relationship with her. My sole intention was not to reproduce an exact likeness of my grandmother, for that would result in a glorified, colored portrait, but rather to give witness to her bold impetuous soul.

I feel that I have been successful in interpreting this woman's life, her forthright likeness, and her invincible nature. Thus, I have a greater insight into her personality and life. Our relationship has flourished and achieved an unyielding intimacy. In the process of working, I felt as though I were conversing with her; getting to know her innermost feelings. I experienced a phenomenal revelation when depicting my grandmother as a young woman. I

became acquainted with the girl of eighteen. It was as though we were contemporaries.

Our family has been affected by this testimonial. It has instilled a feeling of honor and respect in the people who know and love my grandmother. This documentary of Ruth Twigg Carr will become a family legacy. It will represent a family tree of sorts, to be passed down from generation to generation.

It goes without saying that my grandmother's reaction to this personal tribute was a pleasant and gratifying one. When I first told her about my plans for the artwork, she just couldn't understand why anyone would want to do a picture of her. That's how unassuming she is. As each picture was completed, she became more excited and taken with the project. Each drawing, painting, or print served to perpetuate a phase of her life. My grandmother would entertain herself with memories of earlier times when viewing the work. The tribute has bestowed a great sense of personal worth and pride in Ruth Twigg Carr. It is a poignant view of the life she has lived. She draws from it integrity. From this feeling of completeness emerges beauty. For there is aesthetic awareness of life and its purpose.

As an artist, I have matured and grown. I have learned the potential of my medium and I have learned to respect its limitations. I have become more adept at externalizing myself through the mediums of pencil drawing, water-color, photo silk-screen printing, and oil painting. It is

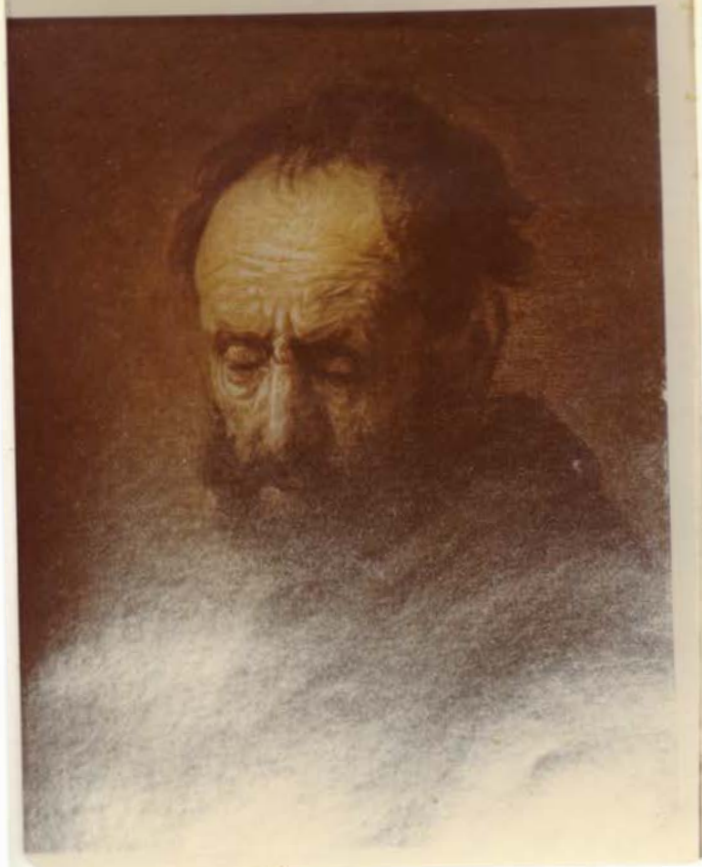
only when your ability in technique is "second nature," will you work freely. This power of expression approaches true art.

In many ways I am not the same person I was two years ago prior to this thesis. During the course of this study I have become more complete as an individual. This project has enabled me to develop a personal vision. I have established a closer relationship with myself and learned to communicate my impressions, feelings, and concepts through my art. The personal style and technique I have built will no doubt prove to be the foundation of creative expression.

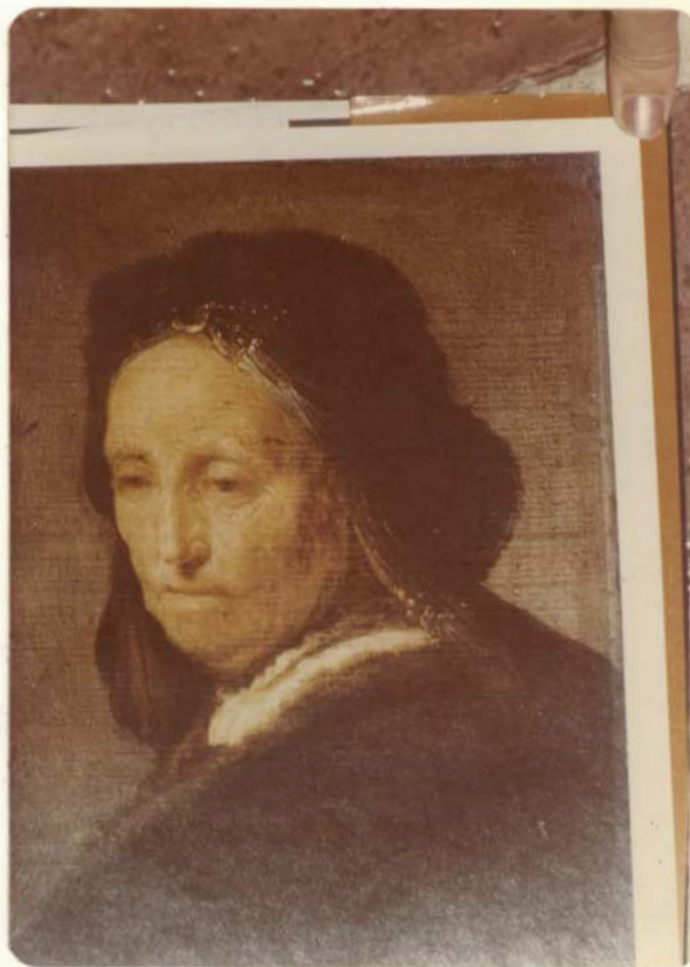
The significance of this program in today's society deals in strength as its human experience. It is a beautiful and enlightening realization to witness the expanse of a life. Ruth Twigg Carr began her journey with open arms and a smile. Let her firm example prove that the experience of life is good. It is an unrivaled gift--given only once.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bittner, Herbert, and Yoseloff, Thomas. Kaethe Kollwitz Drawings. New York: Sagamore Press, Inc., 1959.
- Carr, James Patrick, to Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois, 12 May 1975, Personal Files of Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois.
- Carr, Ruth Twigg, Danville, Illinois. Interview, 13 April 1974.
- Carr, Ruth Twigg, Monticello, Illinois. Interview, 12 July 1975.
- Carr, Ruth Twigg, Villa Grove, Illinois. Interview, 15 March 1976.
- Carr, Thomas, to Ruth Twigg, Brocton, Illinois, 2 November 1921, Personal Files of Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois.
- Carr, Thomas, to Ruth Twigg, Brocton, Illinois, 14 November 1921, Personal Files of Ruth Twigg Carr, Danville, Illinois.
- Cheffio, Clifford T. Silk Screen as a Fine Art. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1967.
- Copplestone, Trewin. Rembrandt. New York: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1960-71.
- Fitzgerald, Marguerite Twigg, to Belinda Carr Beccue, Charleston, Illinois, 8 April 1974, Personal Files of Belinda Carr Beccue, Monticello, Illinois.
- Hogarth, Paul. Creative Pencil Drawing. New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1964.
- Reid, Charles. Portrait Painting in Watercolor. New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1973.



1. Head of a Man



2. Portrait of His
Mother

...the... something of a scandal. His illustrations... The Drowning Children of that year show traces of the... of Gustav Klimt and the Jugendstil manner in their... yet decorative linear effects. In 1909 a second... exhibition and the performance of two of his... *Woman's Hope* and *Spiders and Vipers*. Man... Vienna made his this disquieting artist and he went to... Berlin he contributed to *Der Sturm*... and did his five penetrating psychological portraits... time. On his 1911 show in Vienna, the Austrian Crown... expressed the opinion that he deserved to have "every... in his body broken." From Kokoschka's friendship with... Moller came the marvelous *The Tempest* and other... Seriously wounded in the war, he was installed on a... slight mental isolation. Appointed to a professorship... in 1919 he suddenly gave up this job in 1924 and... the years of wandering. The rise of the Nazis drove... from Berlin to Vienna, to Prague and finally to London... he spent World War II. Long before, however, his... business was already clear, especially in its stimulus to... strike group in Berlin; it led the way toward distortion... in color and space for the sake of greater expressiveness... of penetration beneath the surface of everyday reality.



...the... something of a scandal. His illustrations... The Drowning Children of that year show traces of the... of Gustav Klimt and the Jugendstil manner in their... yet decorative linear effects. In 1909 a second... exhibition and the performance of two of his... *Woman's Hope* and *Spiders and Vipers*. Man... Vienna made his this disquieting artist and he went to... Berlin he contributed to *Der Sturm*... and did his five penetrating psychological portraits... time. On his 1911 show in Vienna, the Austrian Crown... expressed the opinion that he deserved to have "every... in his body broken." From Kokoschka's friendship with... Moller came the marvelous *The Tempest* and other... Seriously wounded in the war, he was installed on a... slight mental isolation. Appointed to a professorship... in 1919 he suddenly gave up this job in 1924 and... the years of wandering. The rise of the Nazis drove... from Berlin to Vienna, to Prague and finally to London... he spent World War II. Long before, however, his... business was already clear, especially in its stimulus to... strike group in Berlin; it led the way toward distortion... in color and space for the sake of greater expressiveness... of penetration beneath the surface of everyday reality.

Kunijenburg, Willem van (1868-1943), Netherlands painter associated with the modern Symbolist movement at the end of the nineteenth century. He went through a period of Baroque imitations and from there into Expressionism. By the end of the century, like many of his contemporaries, he arrived at a linear kind of synthetic representation that idealized his subject matter.

Kunze, Philipp (1856-1908), Dutch painter of wide panoramic landscapes, grand in their scope and lighting and with fine effects of clouds and sky. He studied with his brother Jacob in Rotterdam and early in the 1880's with Rembrandt in Amsterdam, where he worked. He had an extremely individual style, preferring views of his country



KUNZE, Illustration, Private Collection, Germany

and composing them with great subtlety.

Kornel of Saint (active first quarter of 19th century), German painter. A large altarpiece in the church at Weidenburg is dated 1814 and names him as its author. His work, graceful and still profound, has been identified in several other paintings. His subjects are taken from the Bible.

Kopman, Benjamin (1887-), Contemporary American Expressionist painter and lithographer. Born in Russia, he came to the U.S. in 1904 and studied at the National School of Design. His early work was related to German Expressionism and the fauvist of Chagall. He later turned to the French Expressionism of Braque.

Korin (see JAPANESE PAINTERS: TORIKAWA, FUKUNO)

Koryun (see JAPANESE PAINTERS: TORIKAWA, FUKUNO)

Krimmel, John Lewis (1792-1821), American portrait painter and miniaturist born in Germany. He came to Philadelphia in 1816 and produced great success in the national vein of Hogarth and Wilson, but with little financial success.

Kudo, Poo (1888-), Norwegian artist and social painter best known to his native land for his work made in public buildings. One of a large group of Scandinavian painters who left their respective countries for Paris in the early 1900's, he studied with Matisse and for a long time showed clear traces of that influence in large flat decorative areas of color. During the 1930's he returned to Norway and developed a more national style, although the influence of Van Gogh and Matisse was still evident.

3. Portrait of a Woman Worker with Blue Shawl



4. Ruth



5. Three Sisters



6. Grandma Noonan



7. Mother and Dad



8. Four Maidens in
a Row



9. Two Brothers



10. The Sitting



11. Confirmation



12. High School.
Graduation



13. The Only Soda
Jerk in Town



14. College Days



15. Miss Twigg in Hat



16. Oh, Miss Twigg



17. My Miss Twigg



18. Off to Catfish



19. Miss Twigg's
School House



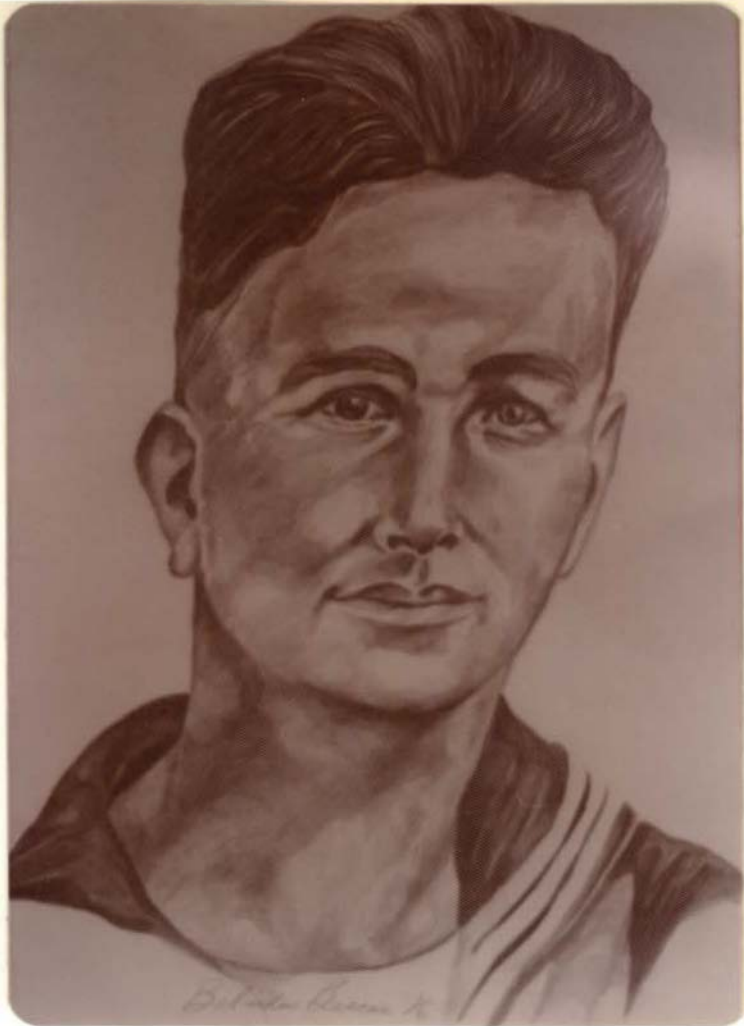
20. School Play
(detail)



21. School Marm



22. Voyager



23. Tom Carr



24. Tom Carr at His
Garage



25. Wedding Portrait



26. Teaching in Hume



27. Thinking



28. Eyes: Windows to
the Soul



29. In Bed (detail)



30. My Old Friend



31. Wooden Blocks



32. Small China Doll



33. Down in the Celler



34. Looking Out the Window



35. Reaching for
Rebirth



36. Grandma and I



37. Quilted Memories



38. The Sitting
Variation #2