"He saw the important place of good painting and good literature...in everyday life."

—Chris L. Christensen of John Stewart Curry

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Illustration Collections

THE ESSAYS OF RALPH WALDO EMERSON
MY FRIEND FLICKA
THE PRAIRIE
The Essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson
(The Illustrated Modern Library, 1944; first published 1840s)
The Prairie by James Fenimore Cooper
(The Limited Editions Club, 1940; first published 1827)
"Whoa—whoo—whoo down—" that carried so far and had such power to quiet the horses, but this time it was as if they did not hear him.

Ken ran to a pile of rocks and scrambled to the top so he could see all that happened.

Rocket had gone off at an angle to the line of march and was on a dead run, chested out like a race horse, with the whole bunch after him. She was heading for the Rock Slide, a place where the grazing land broke down to the lower levels of the next pasture over a long curving hill of steep rock. To go down it on feet, he and Howard had to sit and slide. No horse, not even the most sure-footed, could negotiate that drop. If she went over she'd go head over heels, she'd roll and bounce to the bottom, and all the others too, if they followed her, the whole band of mares and colts prancing down, uproariously rolling, crashing—

"Whoa—whoo—whoo down—" McLaughlin's voice rang out on a note of desperation. He was galloping as fast as he could to head off Rocket, but she had a long lead and Sherry was done.

Ken grounded. The Rock Slide—that black fury, Rocket—racing furiously—for once his father's voice prevented—

Then Ken saw the big mudder, Banner, shoot out of the crush.

His bright chestnut coat was like flame in the sunlight. His feet thundered.

"Oh, go it, Banner—go it!" shouted Ken in an agony, dancing up and down on his neck.

Banner's ears were flat back, his head dropped low to the ground and elongated so that it seemed an extension of his neck. He had a look of fury. Nothing made the stud so mad as to have some break out of the bunch when he was in charge. If he could catch Rocket he'd half kill her—

The two horses were running at an angle to each other. Banner waging. They converged near the Rock Slide. Banner's head was suddenly right over Rocket's, his golden mane mingled with her black mane, his mouth open and his big teeth bared. Suddenly his jaws snapped and Rocket gave a furious squeal and twisted with a jolt. Banner whirled and headed and his hoofs

My Friend Flicka by Mary O'Hara (J.B. Lippincott, 1944; first published 1941)

Study for Banner and Rocket, ca. 1941, crayon on illustration board, 11 1/2 x 7 1/2 in., KSU Beach Museum of Art
Below: studies for *Hogs Killings Snake*, ca. 1925, graphite on paper, KSU, Beach Museum of Art

*Hogs Killing a Snake*, ca. 1930, oil on canvas, 30 1/8 x 38 ¼ in., The Art Institute of Chicago, anonymous donor, 1947.392
Illustration for *My Friend Flicka* by Mary O’Hara (J.B. Lippincott, 1944)

Study for Ken and Flicka, ca. 1941, crayon and ink on illustration board, 11 1/2 x 7 1/2 in., KSU Beach Museum of Art, 2002.840
JOHN STEUART CURRY'S PAGEANT OF AMERICA

By Lawrence E. Schaeckelberg

AMERICAN ARTISTS GROUP - NEW YORK - 1928

II. VIGNETTE FOR COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

12.—THE WILD BOROW. Wednesday, Oct. 12, 1922. A fine 17 x 8 1/2" sketch that makes

13.—ILLUSTRATION FOR "THE MALL TO LOST MINE." by M. A. Whitem in

14.—ILLUSTRATION FOR "BLACK LEOPARD OF SOMALIA," by Werner H. Milne to St. Nicholas Magazine, August, 1922. A vivid impression is achieved through the 8-inch of the legend, the angular lines of the vealine, and the gaunt form of the figure. These are expressed in a silhouette against the bright vertical background. This, however, is not the same as the original which is only 6 1/2 x 6 1/2" and printed in blue and black. The drawing by Curry contains the lynx, the boot, the tail, and the head of the animal. This is the most remarkable of the sketches and shows a different figure in the zoo. The theme is of another sort, more subtle, and more dominant than the actual forest (Fig. 29).

15. "THE MALL TO LOST MINE. (Red Life)"

16. "BLACK LEOPARD OF SOMALIA" (St. Nickels)
Harvey Dunn, illustration for “Ways That Are Dark” by George Pattullo, *The Saturday Evening Post* (April 14, 1917), oil on canvas, private collection

Harvey Dunn in studio, 1930s

*The Code of the West*, 1923, oil on canvas, 20 x 40 in., Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas, gift of Mrs. Ben Hibbs in memory of her husband, 1976.0020
Illustration for Zane Grey’s “The Code of the West,”
The Country Gentleman (May 26, 1923)

Illustration for Albert Payson Terhune’s
“Love Me, Love My Dog,”
The Country Gentleman (February 21, 1925)
The Great American Roadside

Introducing an American Institution which is also a $3,000,000,000 industry, and which is founded upon a solid rock: the restlessness of the American people.

T
ill characters in our story are few in the American sentiment, this American people: the automobile, the Great American Road, and the Great American Roadside. To understand the American roadside you must see it as a vital and inseparable part of the whole organism, the ultimate expression of the complicity that produced it.

As an American, of course, you know these characters. This continent, an open palm spread before the sky against the bulk of the world. This curious people. The automobile you know as well as you know the globs of the accumulated bush at the wheel and the smell around a gas and hot metal. You know the roar and the pulsing strain of the motor, the engine and the thoughtless stone and the almost lack of laughter and the speed around and living

All such things you know. But it may never have struck you to you, for instance, that the 160,000 miles of highway, and particularly, that this highway has been built not just for transportation but for expression, not just for the living but for the dead, in every conceivable shade the greatest road the human race has ever built. It may never have occurred to you that upon this continent and along this road this people casually move its numbers and its family, which make the American and the grotesque pinnacles of the Gothenburg and the Great American Road. This is the Great American Roadside; where this people pass on, it is important to note how close to the heart the road has pressed. It is the national road, but it is also the national road of the American people.

And as you gaze upon these things, as you pass through the city, you will find that you pass through the city of life, through the city of death, through the city of action, through the city of action, through the city of thought, through the city of thought, through the city of love, through the city of love.
“He saw the important place of good painting and good literature...in everyday life.”

~Chin L. Christensen of John Stuart Curry

 Illustration Collections

THE ESSAYS OF RALPH WALDO EMERSON

MY FRIEND FICKA

THE PRAIRIE
John Steuart Curry as Illustrator

Born November 1897 on a farm near the small town of Dumas, Kansas, John Steuart Curry would grow up to become a prominent novelist, painter, illustrator, and a key figure in the Regionalist movement with Thomas Benton and Grant Wood. Although widely known for his paintings and murals, Curry began his art career as an illustrator and continued to work in this field until his death in 1946. From college yearbooks to magazines to posters, advertisements, and books, Curry’s illustrations became significant to his growth and continuation as an artist.

Curry attended school at the Kansas City Art Institute after his junior year of high school. Soon after, he attended the School of the Art Institute in Chicago for two years. Curry finished at the School of the Art Institute in March of 1918 and five months later enrolled in Carnegie College, in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. During his attendance at the School of the Art Institute, Curry had decided to pursue a career as an illustrator, and after graduation, he attempted to study with established illustrator Harvey Dunn, a product of Howard Pyle’s Brandywine School. Although never becoming his student, Dunn became a mentor to Curry and encouraged him to stay in Illinois, New Jersey, and begin a career as a magazine illustrator.

From 1921 to 1925, Curry’s work was published in The Saturday Evening Post, The Country Gentleman, and children’s publications such as Boy’s Life of St. Victoria. During this time, he would marry Gray Derleth and move to New York, but eventually to Connecticut. After working on illustration commissions for five years, Curry began to feel confused by the demands and requirements of illustration. While he was also receiving less work as an illustrator, Curry began to find his voice as an equal painter.

Images rights courtesy of the John Steuart Curry Foundation and Kiechel Fine Arts, Lincoln, Nebraska.

List of Books Illustrated by John Steuart Curry:

- *Horses and Americans*, Phil Strong (Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1939)
- *The Prairie*, James Fenimore Cooper (Limited Editions Club, 1940)
- *Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman (Peter Pauper Press, 1943)
- *The Essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Illustrated Modern Library, A.S. Barnes & Co, 1944)
- *My Friend Flicka*, Mary O’Hara (J.B. Lippincott, 1944; first published 1941)
- *Thunderhead*, Mary O’Hara (J.B. Lippincott, 1944; first published 1943)
- *An American Year: Country Life and Landscapes Through the Seasons, with Illustrations by Distinguished Contemporary Artists*, Hal Borland (Simon and Schuster, 1946).
Illustration 1

"Storks and strewers and salters never sleep. They are always ready to be sent to market. They are always ready to be sent to market."

Illustration 2

"Before he had time to say his grace, his golden mane snarled with his black one, his mouth open and his head high."

Illustration 3

"When the moon was high, the chamois was sleeping, as he often did, on the rocky peaks of the hills. He was lying motionless, his whole body relaxed, when the wolf attacked him."

Illustration 4

"The big garbage heap on the top of the house had a stick of bright colors on the corner of the fence and the embossed bars."

Illustration 5

"They got the first call running. Midnight and Tom made their way up the hill, but they didn't pull out and run. The wolf bounded off, and began to gallop around the corner."

Illustration 6

"The sudden attack, the wolf, snarling and snarling, made it seem that it was too late. Tom and the farmer rode up in the snow and discovered the wolf was only about six feet away."

Illustration 7

"The cow was the last one. She was standing at the edge of the field, and the farmer rode up to her and said, "Year."

Illustration 8

"The cow was the last one. She was standing at the edge of the field, and the farmer rode up to her and said, "Year."

Illustration 9

"The cow was the last one. She was standing at the edge of the field, and the farmer rode up to her and said, "Year."

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"The cow was the last one. She was standing at the edge of the field, and the farmer rode up to her and said, "Year."

Illustration 30

"The cow was the last one. She was standing at the edge of the field, and the farmer rode up to her and said, "Year."
About the Author

Mary O'Hara was born in Cape May, New Jersey, July 17, 1885, and shortly after moved with her family to Brooklyn Heights, New York, where she spent her childhood. She married her first husband in 1905, later divorcing and re-marrying in 1922. During the 1930s, O'Hara and her second husband moved to a ranch in Wyoming. Her life there without doubt provided much of the inspiration for My Friend Flicka, which was penned there. O'Hara's time in Wyoming was not as idyllic as the landscape; just as the McLaughlin family had experienced financial struggles, so did O'Hara. Because of her husband's philandering, the income from her writing had to support the ranch. The marriage did not survive and eventually O'Hara moved back east, to Maryland, where she lived until her death in 1980. (18, 38, 256).

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Influence & Related Works

All three books in the series were adapted into movies in 1994, 1995, and 2006. Several recent films have also been adapted from the original novel, including Flicka movies, Flicka 2, and Flicka Country Predators.
Cover design, *West Weekly* (Nov/Dec 1927), Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

*Baptism in Kansas* (detail), 1928, oil on canvas, 40 x 50 in., Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, 31.159
From the Region Came the Steady Current of the Maimed, ca. 1944, 11 x 14 in., black crayon and ink on paper, KSU Beach Museum of Art

From this Region Came the Steady Current of the Maimed, photomechanical reproduction of black crayon and ink drawing, printed in sanguine ink, in *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane (Limited Editions Club, 1944)

*From the Region Came the Steady Current of the Maimed,* photomechanical reproduction of black crayon and ink drawing, printed in sanguine ink, in *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane (Limited Editions Club, 1944)

*John Brown*, 1939, oil on canvas, 69 x 45 in., Metropolitan Museum of Art, Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1950, 50.94.1
Illustration for Zane Grey’s
“The Code of the West,”
*The Country Gentleman* (July 7, 1923)

*Arizona #2 (Weaver’s Needle, Superstition Mountain)*, ca. 1942, oil on paper, 15 x 22 in.
KSU, Beach Museum of Art
Ishmael Bush, illustration for *The Prairie* by James Fenimore Cooper (Limited Editions Club, 1940; first published 1827)

*Westward Movement: Justice of the Plains*, 1937, Treasury Section of Fine Arts mural, US Department of Justice Building, Washington, DC, oil and tempera on canvas, 8 ft. 6 in. x 20 ft. 6 in.
END
The Country Gentleman (July 22, 1922), with illustrations by Harvey Dunn for William MacLeod Raine’s serialized story “Iron Heart”

The Country Gentleman (July 1, 1922), with illustrations by John Steuart Curry for Max Brand’s serialized story “Alcatraz”