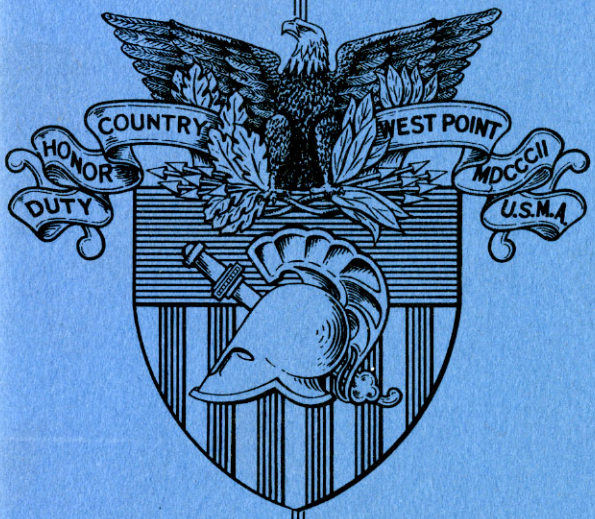

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

WEST POINT · NEW YORK

WATER COLOR AND DRAWINGS

BY

BREVET MAJOR GENERAL
TRUMAN SEYMOUR
USMA 1846

AUDIO/VISUAL LOUNGE
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
LIBRARY
APRIL 1974

WATER COLOR AND DRAWINGS
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LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM A. KNOWLTON
PREFACE

EARLE WHITMORE
INTRODUCTION

KENT AHRENS
ESSAY

PREFACE

The long and distinguished association of the United States Military Academy with art and artists commenced in 1803 with the appointment of the first teacher of drawing, Francis Desiré Masson. Two of Masson's successors, Seth Eastman (USMA, Class of 1829) and Robert W. Weir gained national prominence, and one, Charles Leslie, was an artist of international repute.

Of these men, Robert Weir is the most significant to the Academy. He not only was an important artist in mid-nineteenth century America-- one of that famed group of Knickerbockers which came to be known as the Hudson River School, and father of two sons, Julian Alden and John Ferguson, who like their father achieved prominence in the art world, but also was a member of the USMA faculty for forty-two years. From 1834 to 1876, Weir taught drawing to scores of cadets. At the same time, he assisted faculty members in expanding their artistic capabilities.

It is this last aspect of Weir's work which is important to us today, because the Academy has the honor of exhibiting for the first time the work of one of Professor Weir's students, Brevet Major General Truman Seymour (USMA, Class of 1846), later Assistant Professor of Drawing at the Military Academy from 1850 to 1853.

The Seymour drawings and water colors on display have been generously loaned to the United States Military Academy by descendants of Robert Weir-- Reverend and Mrs. DeWolf Perry and Dr. John Perry. Their interest and generosity have made this exhibit possible.

William A. Knowlton
WILLIAM A. KNOWLTON
Lieutenant General, USA
Superintendent

March 1974

INTRODUCTION

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this essay about Truman Seymour and his art works. With the essay and the accompanying exhibition, Seymour's artistic talent is receiving its first public recognition. That such a talent would have gone unnoticed for almost a century is remarkable. It is particularly fitting that the initial showing of the Truman Seymour Water Colors and Drawings Exhibition is here at West Point.

Seymour, as a cadet (1842 to 1846) when drawing was part of the United States Military Academy curriculum, studied with and was influenced by Robert W. Weir, USMA Teacher of Drawing. Later, as a career Army officer, Seymour returned to the Academy for a tour of duty as one of Weir's assistant teachers. His ties with West Point and his artistic mentor remained strong since he married Robert Weir's eldest daughter, Louisa, while he was stationed at the Academy as a faculty member. [1]

On July 1, 1846, Truman Seymour graduated from the United States Military Academy and was appointed brevet second lieutenant, 1st Artillery. He served with his regiment at Fort Pickens, Florida, and then in the War with Mexico. His distinguished service in the latter resulted in the brevets to 1st lieutenant and captain for gallant and meritorious conduct at Cerro Gordo, Contreras, and Churubusco.

In 1850, Seymour joined the USMA faculty as an assistant to Robert Weir. He remained at West Point for three years before he returned to troop duty with his regiment at Fort Moultrie, South Carolina, and then in Florida in action against the Seminoles.

At the close of the 1850's he served as a recruiting officer before taking a lengthy leave of absence for a European trip. By May 1860, Seymour had rejoined the 1st Artillery for service at Forts Moultrie and Sumter. He remained with the regiment in the defense of the latter until its evacuation on 14 April 1861. Seymour's presence during the event which marks the outbreak of the Civil War, the bombardment of Fort Sumter, is noteworthy. It is even more so since he also witnessed Robert E. Lee terminate the hostilities by signing the surrender documents at Appomattox. During the four intervening years, Seymour was brevetted six times for his services; by March 1865 he was a brevet major general in both the volunteer and the Regular Army.

In the early months of the Civil War, he served as a training camp commander in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a regimental commander in the defenses of Washington, and a divisional chief of

artillery. By the spring of 1862, as a brigadier general of volunteers, he was commanding a brigade. In this position, he guided his unit in the late spring and early summer 1862 in the Department of the Rappahannock, in the early summer 1862 in the Virginia Peninsular Campaign (including a division command during the battle at Malvern Hill), in August 1862 in the Northern Virginia Campaign (including the second battle at Manassas) and in the fall 1862 in the Maryland Campaign (including the battles at South Mountain and Antietam).

In November 1862, Seymour joined the Department of the South first as chief of staff and of artillery, then as a division commander. While serving as the latter, he commanded the assault of Fort Wagner, a battery in Charleston Harbor, and was severely wounded. In early 1864, he commanded the expedition to Florida. By May of that year, he had returned to the 6th Corps, Army of the Potomac, as a brigade commander and was captured the next day during the Battle of the Wilderness. After his release, he returned to the 6th Corps as a division commander for the operations in the Shenandoah Valley and the Richmond Campaign (including the siege of Petersburg).

Following the Civil War, he reverted to his permanent rank of major and commanded a number of posts in the East including Key West, Florida, Fort Warren, Massachusetts, Fort Preble, Maine, and Fort Barrancas, Florida.

In 1876, after thirty years of active duty, Seymour retired at his own request. Shortly thereafter, he moved to Europe with his wife, Louisa.

In retirement, Truman Seymour was able to devote his full attention to art. In these years, he became a master of capturing a mood or recording a particular moment. His skill in utilizing the white of the ground as an integral part of the painting is unsurpassed. This can easily be seen in viewing the water colors in the exhibition.

There are many people to acknowledge and thank for their aid and support during the preparations of this first major historical loan show at West Point. The Reverend and Mrs. DeWolf Perry have been extremely helpful with their time, knowledge and interest. Both the DeWolf Perrys and Dr. John Perry have been very generous in loaning their Truman Seymour water colors and sketch books.

Kent Ahrens of the Florida State University faculty wrote the essay and completed the tedious task of initially sifting through the hundreds of Truman Seymour water colors.

Many members of the West Point community, too numerous to be able to be named here, have contributed enthusiastically and willingly much time and effort. Without their assistance and cooperation, the exhibition could not have become a reality.

Finally, this project was also supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C.

Earle Whitmore

EARLE WHITMORE
Director

FOOTNOTE:

[1]Sources of Seymour Biographical information include the entry Truman Seymour in United States, National Archives, Record Group 15, Records of the Veteran's Administration Pension File (Certificate no. 400123); Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), Vol. IX, p. 12; 23rd Annual Reunion of the Association of Graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, June 9th, 1892 (Saginaw, Michigan: Seeman & Peters, 1892), pp. 35-37; George W. Cullum, Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. (3rd ed.; New York & Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1891), vol. II, pp. 270-272.

THE DRAWINGS AND WATERCOLORS BY TRUMAN SEYMOUR (1824 - 1891)

By Kent Ahrens

Truman Seymour's illustrious military career is well documented, but to date almost nothing has been written about his avocation as an artist. Seymour was born in Burlington, Vermont, in September, 1824. His father was a clergyman, and during the subsequent years, the family moved from parish to parish throughout New York state and New England. Little is known about Seymour's childhood before 1840, when he first applied for admission to the United States Military Academy from New York (Albany) in the latter part of the year. His letter to Joel R. Poinsett, Secretary of War, indicates that he was a precocious youth: "My age is 16 yrs 4 months....I have been for two years an asst. Geologist of this state & for the same time Asst Prof of Chemistry in the Albany Medical College."[1] When his first application was rejected, he reapplied to the Military Academy in the fall of 1841, this time from West Poultney, Vermont. He was formally accepted in April, 1842, and his name first appears on the cadet rolls in July. Seymour graduated in the class of 1846, and was appointed second lieutenant with the First Artillery.

At West Point, each cadet was required to follow the same prescribed course of study, which emphasized the natural sciences and mathematics, the science of war, French and English, conduct, and drawing. The first professional painter to instruct drawing at the Military Academy was Charles R. Leslie, who was preceded by three men with little or no training in art-- Francois Masson, Christian Zoeller, and Thomas Gimbrede. After Gimbrede's death in 1832, Leslie was appointed to the position in 1833. But he and his wife quickly tired of the quiet life along the Hudson River, and in the spring of 1834 they returned to England. Leslie was succeeded by Robert W. Weir (1803-1881), who headed the drawing department from 1834 to 1876.

After studying art for three years in Italy, Weir had returned to the United States in 1827 to become part of the circle of artists and writers who were thriving in New York City and along the Hudson Riber; Thomas Cole, Asher B. Duran, William Cullen Bryant, and Washington Irving were among his close friends. His national reputation was secured in 1843 when his Embarkation of the Pilgrims from Delft Haven, in Holland was installed in the rotunda of the Capitol. And, of course, he is remembered as the father of John Ferguson Weir (1841-1926) and Julian Alden Weir (1852-1919), who were to contribute substantially to the development of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American art. More than any other person, it was Weir who was responsible for improving the drawing department at West Point. The curriculum was elaborated under his direction, and in 1846 he succeeded in having the drawing teacher's title elevated from Instructor to Professor.[2]

According to the cadet Regulations (1839), the drawing teacher and his assistants were to give instruction to the cadets during their second and third years. Cadets in their second year studied topography and the human figure. Seth Eastman (1808-1875) graduated from the Military Academy in 1829, and from 1833 to 1840 he was back at West Point as the assistant instructor of drawing. His Treatise on Topographical Drawing (New York, 1837) was probably used as a textbook in the topography courses; in it he considered such subjects as oblique light and the method of sketching ground. Also part of the curriculum was the use of pencil, ink, and water color. Figure drawing was designed to teach free-hand work, and it consisted of "...outline drawings of the human figure (anatomical) in three positions, and outline drawings from Flaxman and Retzch [sic.]...."[3] The Military Academy owned a collection of plaster casts-- copies of antique and later European statuary--, and the cadets may have followed the standard academic procedure of sketching these models.

Cadets in their third year completed drawing instruction by studying landscape drawing: aerial perspective; the art of shading to produce solid forms; and the use of pencil, wash, and color. A strong emphasis was probably placed on copying the work of other artists from books and engravings, or after Weir. We know that the drawing hall was "...decorated with a series of paintings by Mr. Weir, illustrating the effects of light and shade."[4] No doubt, the cadets also went out of doors to sketch local scenery.

The primary concern of the drawing department was to prepare the cadets for the day when they would be called upon as officers to prepare accurately sketches of the terrain, maps, and drawings of field fortifications. Nevertheless, a cadet with the inclination would have found the necessary background in drawing to enable him to develop his talent with continued practice. Indeed, several cadets have distinguished themselves as artists, among them Seth Eastman, James A.M. Whistler, and, of course, Truman Seymour. To encourage the cadets, Weir set aside one of the galleries for the purpose of exhibiting the best work of the cadets.[5] And in those days there was a custom at West Point among the cadets and the faculty of exchanging sketches as a token of mutual respect and friendship.

One drawing in this exhibition (no. 45) was identified by Seymour as "...the first drawing made in the drawing school, West Point, 1844." The inscription indicates that this was his first finished drawing to be executed at West Point, not that it was his first attempt at drawing. His control in rendering form, light, and perspective reveal the skill he had already developed as a draughtsman. But he probably relied on the work of another artist for his pictorial inspiration, since both the subject and the composition are types which were standard in the nineteenth century. The subject recalls such mid-century paintings as William Sidney Mount's Long Island Farmhouse (Metropolitan Museum of Art) and Robert Weir's

Lane Cottage (West Point Museum Collections). Seymour's Landscape with Trees, a water color owned by the West Point Museum Collections, may have been painted during his third year drawing class in landscapes. It is typical of the elaborate academic drawings which the cadets practiced.

After his graduation, Seymour was assigned initially to Fort Pickens, Florida; in 1847 he was ordered to Mexico, where he served until July, 1848. In spite of the war, Seymour found time to do some sketching. His San Juan Teotihuacán (1848), a finely executed pen and ink drawing still owned by the family shows the ancient pyramids of the sun and of the moon rising from the flat valley floor. Less than a decade earlier Thomas Cole had romanticized the Roman campagna with its vegetated ruins of a past civilization, but Seymour saw the pre-Columbian site as a detached observer. His water colors (nos. 1-2, fig. 1) capture the heat and intense light which characterize the Mexican landscape. Stylistically, they are typical of his work during the 1840s and 1850s. He emphasized the panoramic view, and his restricted color range-- greens, browns, yellows, greys, and blues-- are characteristic of the earthy hues which were favored by Robert Weir and other painters of the Hudson River School.

From Mexico Seymour went to Fort Columbus, New York, where he remained until April, 1850, when he was assigned to the Military Academy as one of the assistant professors of drawing under the supervision of Robert Weir. And in August, 1852, he married Weir's daughter Louisa in the little gothic revival Church of the Holy Innocents in Highland Falls.

This must have been a stimulating period for Seymour. As Weir's assistant and his son-in-law, he probably had almost unlimited access to the professor's studio and to his vast collection of prints after European paintings. Although it is not always possible to distinguish between the drawings Seymour executed as a cadet and those he did when he returned as an instructor, Weir's influence is unmistakable in many of Seymour's sketches before 1877. Through Weir he could have met many of the important artists and writers of the day who visited West Point.

When Seymour left the Military Academy in 1853, John Weir was only a boy, and Alden Weir a newly born baby. But as the years passed, the ties of friendship which were to grow between Seymour and the two young men were nourished by their mutual love of art.

Seymour's sketchbooks from his military days abound with drawings in various media representing a wide variety of subjects: landscapes depicting the environs of his duty stations; topographical views; and sketches of fortifications, gun emplacements, and military equipment. In Florida he did a series of delicate pen and ink drawings of the forts and the picturesque vegetation of the southern

swamps (fig. 17). Even during the Civil War years he found time to sketch, the Camp Scene near Poplar Springs, Maryland, September 11, 1862 (no. 4), for example, readily reveals the sureness of his draughtsmanship.

Seymour's career often took him to isolated parts of the country, especially in the South, but he strove to remain abreast of the New York art world. While he was stationed in South Carolina in the 1850s, he subscribed to The Crayon, an important magazine devoted to art. In it Asher B. Durand had published his famous essays on landscape painting, which Seymour must have read with interest.[6] We know from family correspondence that whenever Seymour had the opportunity he visited art galleries in the United States. In August, 1861, Robert Weir wrote to his son John, "...Wednesday I went to the city [New York City] with Seymour to see the Exhibition, and Church's picture of the icebergs." And in 1869, Seymour described a visit to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, which did not please him: "...[the pictures] produced anything but agreeable sensations, and nearly drove me wild with dissatisfaction...."[7]

In April, 1859, poor health, which plagued Seymour throughout his career, prompted him to request a year's leave of absence, with permission to visit Europe. This was the Seymours' first trip to Europe, and they made the grand tour: Spain, Italy, Germany, the Low Countries, and France. A decade later, when John Weir was travelling in Europe, Seymour discussed in his letters the great art he had seen. His comments about Rome are surprising for the time: "I think you should not have expected so much in the way of pictures at Rome-- altho' the Popes had the best chances to make the greatest collection of the world (which is really at Madrid). You'll like Titian & P. Veronese at Venice, where you must not fail to go." He was enthusiastic about Dutch and Flemish painting: "...you will hardly see them in all their glory until you go to Holland. Rubens is grand at Munich however, grander only at Madrid. You should go to Holland old boy, and you will find there something besides Meins [Myn], Terbourg [Ter Borch], Wouvermans [sic.] & Co."[8] He had mixed feelings about Paris, perhaps because his health failed him there. Europe heightened Seymour's appreciation of the old masters, but the experience effected no profound change in his own work.

One of the most exciting periods in Seymour's life was the winter of 1869, which he spent in New York City. Although the joys of the winter were dulled by the absence of John Weir, who was in Europe, Seymour seems to have thrived in the art world which he encountered there. His letters to Weir are long, and they mostly discuss art. The painters he mentions are now regarded as major figures in the development of nineteenth-century American art: Eastman Johnson, John Frederick Kensett, Worthington Whittredge, John William Casilaer, and Elihu Vedder, to mention the

most notable. He enjoyed their company, but was careful not to impose upon their time: "I have not often been into the Studio Building this winter, because the days have been short, and the painters all seem so hard at work that I do not like to steal even a minute of their precious daylight." Of course, Seymour haunted the New York galleries that winter. By spring it was necessary to leave New York for Fort Warren, near Boston. The move did not please Seymour, and in May he lamented to John: "Of Boston we have had but occasional glimpses, but I have looked into the picture shops sufficiently to satisfy me that its appreciation of pictures is not very high....There is only one New York, and there is but one Whittredge, or Hubbard, or Kensett, or Johnson--and to suppose for an instant that Boston can hold such fellows is to become irrational. And from all contact with these men I am now as thoroughly cut off as if I were in Alaska: and my past winter has been a dream that can never be recalled."[9]

By 1876 Seymour had been in the Army for thirty years, during which time he had achieved an impressive military record: he had served courageously in the Mexican War, the Florida campaign against the Seminole Indians, and the Civil War. He had been promoted to the ranks of Major in the Fifth Artillery and Brevet Major General in the Volunteers. But his health was poor, he was understandably tired, and he was anxious to retire. His military career ended on 1 November 1876. Still to follow, however, was his brilliant career as an amateur watercolorist.

As early as the winter of 1869, the Seymours had considered the possibility of retiring in Europe, but it was not until March, 1877, that he requested permission from the Army to do so. They left America in the summer. At the time Alden Weir was studying art in Paris, and he joined the Seymours for part of the summer in London. The three revelled in the London art world. In August Alden wrote his brother John: "Seymour and Louisa are enjoying themselves and studying like real students. I am in clover with them. We pass most of our time in galleries, all of which we talk over at leisure...." In the same letter Alden described their visit with Whistler, who had known the Weir family since his cadet days at West Point. Whistler had been at the Military Academy from 1851 to 1854, and he may have been one of Seymour's students. Alden introduced Seymour to John Varley, grandson of the English water colorist John Varley (1778-1842); Seymour was pleased to see the family's collection of paintings. And, of course, there was a visit to the house in which the great Joseph M.W. Turner (1775-1851) died.[10] The Seymours also toured such English towns as York and Ely before leaving for the continent in the fall. In England Seymour began a series of sketchbooks (nos. 47, 48 and 50) which he continued to maintain as long as he was able to travel.

Seymour and his wife went to France in late October, 1877. Apparently they spent the winter in Paris, where he studied the old masters in the Louvre (see no. 49). We know from his sketchbooks

that the following summer they visited such cathedral towns as Autun and Reims before continuing on to Holland, Germany, and Switzerland. They spent at least a part of the next winter in Florence, but by the end of May, 1879, they were travelling again, this time to Spain by way of Ravenna, Venice, Vienna, Nuremberg, and Arles. His sketchbooks and water colors leave us a record of other trips during the 1880s. Seymour and Louisa considered Florence to be home, but it is not known exactly when they settled there. They are listed as residents of Florence in the consular's report of December, 1881, but not the following year. As an example of their sojourns, they spent Christmas, 1884, in Tangier. But by 1885 Seymour's failing health forced them to take an apartment in Florence at 22 Via dei Bardi, where they lived until Seymour died in October, 1891, and his widow returned to the United States.[11] He was buried in the Cimitero Evangelico degli Allori, Florence.

In addition to his sketchbooks, Seymour completed over five hundred water colors of consistently high quality during the period from about 1881 to 1885. Most were painted in southern Spain, Florence, or in the vicinity of the Alps. This outburst of creative energy is reminiscent of those few highly productive years which Vincent van Gogh was to spend in the south of France before his untimely death in 1890. Then there was a sudden decline in the quantity of Seymour's work, corresponding to their settling permanently in Florence. No doubt, his poor health drained him of his energy.

During the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, American artists flocked to Florence and Rome for their training. Although many of them returned to the United States after a few years, others-- especially the sculptors-- chose to remain in Italy. By 1876 Munich and Paris were attracting more and more of the younger art students, but Florence still had her colony of English speaking artists. Documents related to Seymour's activities in Florence are scant, but he seems to have lived a very quiet, retiring life. Nevertheless, he probably maintained contact with such old artist friends as Elihu Vedder and Launt Thompson, who spent some time in Italy. Thompson, for example, executed the relief portrait of Seymour which is now in Cullum Hall at the Military Academy.

The friendship between Seymour and the American artist Henry Roederick Newman (died c. 1918) is more easily traced.[12] Newman had studied art briefly in Paris in 1869 before settling in Florence the following year. His apartment in the Piazza dei Rossi was a gathering place for such members of the English speaking community as Robert Browning, William Wetmore Story, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry James. Newman had been championed by John Ruskin, and in his day he was considered an excellent water colorist, but today his work is all but unknown. Although an accurate evaluation of the relationship between Seymour's and Newman's art must

await a reappraisal of the latter's painting, it is apparent from such pictures as Newman's Loggia del Bigallo, Florence, known by a photograph in the Frick Art Reference Library, that both men shared an interest in accurately observed architectural views. That interest was to take Newman to Egypt in the late 1880s to paint the ancient ruins.

Where is the traveler familiar with Europe who is not excited by Seymour's paintings of the Giralda in Seville, the Alhambra, or the Palazzo Vecchio, towering over Florence? Indeed, it is Seymour's immediacy-- his unromanticized objectivity-- which appeals to the modern viewer. John Ruskin, whose writing stimulated a new interest in the history of Italian monuments, encouraged young artists to record the rich heritage of Italy.

The viewer will notice that Seymour often uses for his subject little more than an archway, a portion of a roof, or a section of a tower (see, for example, nos. 17, 24, 27, and fig. 2). The artistic possibilities of this type of clipped view, which owes its origin in part to photography, was most fully explored in the nineteenth century by French artists like Edgar Degas. In Seymour's water colors, however, artistic precedent for his fragmentary views of architectural monuments may have come from Ruskin, whose books frequently illustrate architectural details such as doorways and window framings. Although Seymour's style is distinctly his own, in subject matter a few of his water colors are remarkably similar to Ruskin's sketches. One case in point is Seymour's Ponte Vecchio (fig. 12) and Ruskin's pencil drawing of the bridge which is owned by the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University. And in comparing Seymour's work to that by such artists of the day as Angelo Alessandri or Thomas Rooke, who sometimes contributed illustrations to Ruskin's books, it is evident that he was working within the framework of contemporary trends. Rooke's In the Piazza S. Maria Novella, Florence, known by a reproduction after his 1887 water color, reveals an approach to the subject akin to Seymour's: it is a view of three ancient wall tombs painted in an objective manner with fresh, bright colors.

Seymour's early work hardly prepares us for his late water colors, in which the somber hues of his army years have given way to a symphony of light and color. There was a general lightening of palettes on either side of the Atlantic after mid-century, and his development reflects the evolution of nineteenth-century painting. We know that Seymour had studied color carefully. For instance, the following notation in pencil is found on the back of one of his color charts: "Lights are generally white, yellow or orange/Yellow lights are painted in with y[ellow] ochre, /Shadows-- purple or Lake [blue] & Indigo-- & Red & Indigo/Orange lights with: 1st y[ellow] ochre then V[enetian] Red or Light Red/2d pure Venetian Red/Shadows-- Indigo or Cobalt." Often he increased the relative intensity of his colors by permitting the untinted paper to

function as color; large areas of white in the sketches of Spain and Tangier present the illusion of brilliant sunlight reflected from the white walls of churches and houses (see fig. 15).

In order to study the changing effect of light, Seymour sometimes repeated the same subject at different times of the day. During the spring of 1882 he painted the view from Henry Newman's window at least ten times (nos. 5-8, figs. 2-3). Actually, this series is made up of two distinct views, taken from different windows, but the pencil inscriptions on the backs put them in a set. Without dissolving form, as Claude Monet was to do later in his famous studies of the cathedral at Rouen, Seymour captured the varying effect of spring light on the Florentine architecture. The play of reflected light across large expanses of flat wall remained one of Seymour's favorite motifs; his subtle hues and tones delight the modern eye.

Seymour also appreciated the effect of light and color in creating mood. In dramatic contrast to the bright, sunny scenes of Italy and southern Spain, for example, is the somber Interior of a Gothic Church (fig. 14). The darkness is relieved only by light streaming in through an unseen window to the upper left, and by the small window in the center of the picture. The latter is a bright jewel which draws the eye into the composition. These dark gothic interiors are rare in his work; only two water colors are known. There are in his sketchbooks, however, several pencil drawings of similar subjects from England, France, and Belgium.

The warm climate of southern Spain seems to have agreed with Seymour's health, and he painted unceasingly there. The Alhambra, which had been popularized earlier in the century by Washington Irving in his book The Alhambra, provided him with one of his favorite subjects: cool interiors opening through exotic moorish arches into sunlit courtyards (see fig. 5).

Although figures usually play a secondary role in Seymour's water colors, there are exceptions in which they impart a genre quality to his paintings. The most notable example in this exhibition is A Woman in Black Visiting the Torre de las Infantas (no. 12). Perhaps this is Louisa taking an afternoon stroll through the Alhambra. Direct sunlight falls on the floor in front of the figure through the two windows which we see beyond her. But she is illuminated only by reflected light within the Alhambra. Both the casual genre quality of this scene and the treatment of light recall the domestic interiors which were popularized in the United States during the late nineteenth century by such artists as Eastman Johnson and William M. Chase.[13]

The Seymours vacationed more than once in the lake regions of southern Germany, Switzerland, and northern Italy. Although architectural views like A Street Scene in Clarens (fig. 13) continued to occupy his attention during these visits, he also turned his attention to landscapes. He was especially fond of painting the Dents du Midi and other scenes around Lake Geneva. In these lake and mountain scenes he captured the cool, moist atmosphere of the alpine climate (see fig. 10). They often recall Turner, who had sketched in the Alps during his tours of the continent. There are in Seymour's sketchbooks approximately a dozen water colors which show even more dramatically the influence of Turner's style. During the nineteenth century Turner enjoyed a reputation as one of the greatest painters of his time. Robert Weir and his sons John and Alden admired Turner. All evidence at hand indicates that Seymour did also. The violent energy of natural forces in his Landscape with a Bridge (fig. 16) is decidedly Turneresque in its conception. And his latest known work-- Seascape with Boats, April 22, 1891 (no. 28)-- is also reminiscent of Turner; in it, the boats are all but consumed by the slashing brushwork and the bold reds and violets in the sky and water. Due to poor health, Seymour painted very little during the last years of his life, but this seascape proves without doubt that his creative power had not diminished.

Except for the drawings in his sketchbooks, Seymour worked exclusively in water colors during his retirement in Europe. With a few exceptions, the sketchbooks do not repeat the subjects found in the water colors. It can be concluded, therefore, that he painted his water colors without preliminary sketches. He probably finished them on the spot.

In spite of his interest in art throughout his life, he seems to have not considered himself more than an amateur artist. As far as we know, he exhibited only once; that was in 1872 when two scenes, Passing Showers and Twilight, were shown at the National Academy of Design.[14] And the consular reports from Florence did not list Seymour among the artists living there. Nevertheless, his European watercolors have justly earned him a place in the history of nineteenth-century American art.

NOTES

1. Seymour to Poinsett, 5 January 1841, United States Military Academy Cadet Application Papers, 1805-1866, RG 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives, Washington. Sources containing published information and unpublished documents related to Seymour's cadet years, his military record, his marriage, his retirement, his death, and his wife's application (1892) for a widow's pension are listed in the bibliography. William Abra Ellis, Norwich University, 1819-1911. Her History, Her Graduates, Her Roll of Honor, vol. 2 (Montpelier, 1911), p. 372, wrote that Seymour attended Norwich University from 1840 to 1842. In his application to the Military Academy, Seymour did not mention attending that university. Unfortunately, fire has destroyed the early records of Norwich University. Consequently, we have no documents related to his possible attendance there. As a matter of interest, topographical and military drawing were taught at Norwich University in the 1840s; see Catalogue of the Corporation, Officers and Cadets of the Norwich University, for the Academic Year 1845-6 (Hanover, New Hampshire, 1846), p. X.

2. For a history of the department of drawing and the curriculum see: 54th Congress, 2d sess., Hos. D. 2, vol. 1, and 58th Congress, 2d sess., Hos. D. 789, vol. 1; Regulations Established for the Organization and Government of the Military Academy, at West Point, New-York, by Order of the President of the United States... (New York, 1839); A Guide Book to West Point and Vicinity; Containing Descriptive, Historical, and Statistical Sketches of the United States Military Academy, and of other objects of interest (New York, 1844); Conduct Roll of the Cadets of the U. S. Military Academy..., RG 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives.

3. 58th Congress, 2d sess., H. Doc. 789, vol. 1, p. 294.

4. According to chart "A" of the Guide Book (1844) "Employment of time daring [sic.] the day, at the United States' Military Academy," Regulations (1839), seniors devoted three hours each morning to "Recitation in Civil or Military Engineering, or Drawing in the same branches of study." And page 23 lists drawing as carrying the relative weight of one"...in forming the general merit roll..." of the first class (seniors). Nevertheless, as page 19 indicates, drawing was taught during the second and third years only.

5. Guide Book, pp. 28-29.

6. Two letters related to Seymour's subscription to The Crayon are found in the John Durand Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library: Seymour to F. W. Christern, 8 September 1856, and Seymour to Stillman and Durand, 9 October 1856.

7. Robert Weir to John Weir, 26 April 1861, Collection of The Reverend and Mrs. DeWolf Perry, and Seymour to John Weir, 1 February 1869 [continued on 4 February], John Ferguson Weir Papers, Yale University Library, New Haven.

8. Seymour to John Weir, 11 March 1869, John Ferguson Weir Papers. In his letter of 1 February 1869 Seymour had written John: "To me there was much out of Paris far more pleasing then anything in it (and I was in it for three months) yet you are quite right in your extatic [sic.] commendation of some of those Louvre pictures. I'm glad you feel the greatness of Rubens....The Entombment of Christ, by Titian, I think is the greatest thing in the collection....I tell Louisa this morning that if there is any insurmountable obstacle eventually in our going abroad to live, that we certainly go to Paris for six months...."

9. Seymour to John Weir, 11 March 1869, and 16 May 1869, John Ferguson Weir Papers.

10. Information concerning Alden Weir's stay in London with the Seymours is found in Dorothy Weir Young, The Life and Letters of J. Alden Weir (New Haven, 1960), quotation from p. 134. On 28 August 1877 Seymour wrote in one of his notebooks (collection of The Reverend and Mrs. DeWolf Perry): "As a colorist, Turner seems to me supreme. What is color? Harmony is not color, altho good color must be harmonious....To me color must be warmth & sunshine, or both--& here Turner was supreme...."

11. As closely as can be determined from Louisa Seymour's diaries and daybooks, they left England October 26, 1877, and began their residence in Paris; information courtesy Mr. Chad J. Flake, Curator, Special Collections, Clark Library, Brigham Young University, Provo. See note 8 for Seymour's comments (1869) about Paris. As John Rewald points out in his Histoire de l'Impressionnisme (Paris, n.d.), pp. 380-82, the Impressionists held their third group show in 1877, and the following year Théodore Duret published Les peintres impressionnistes. And the viewer will note that in his water colors Seymour often employs stylistic elements-- as for example the bird's-eye view-- which are associated with the modern movement in late nineteenth-century France. Nevertheless, there are no known letters or other documents to indicate that Seymour was interested in avant-garde French painting. Information concerning Seymour and other Americans residing in Florence, along with several informative reports discussing the state of the American art colony, will be found in the Despatches from United States Consuls in Florence, 1824-1906, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, National Archives. On 3 April 1879 Seymour wrote in his notebook (no. 49) in Florence: "The winter has not permitted study in these galleries, as they are not warmed, although 1 franc is charged for admission evry [sic.] day but Sunday: even now they are not dangerously comfortable, especially for an invalid."

12. Seymour may have also known the artist Gabriel Carelli, but their relationship cannot be established with any certainty. Among Seymour's pictures in the collection of The Reverend and Mrs. De Wolf Perry there are about fifteen water colors by Carelli; most are signed "Gal. Carelli". Carelli resided for some years in Kenilworth, England, and he exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1874-1880. He was known for his views of Italian architecture.

13. During their stay in Seville in 1884 Seymour painted From Our Window (not in show; collection of The Reverend and Mrs. De Wolf Perry), representing a woman-- probably Louisa-- seated by a large window through which we can see a view of the city. The subject is uncommon for him, but not unique. Similar domestic scenes were popular in both Europe and America during the second half of the nineteenth century.

14. Catalogue of the Forty-Seventh Annual Exhibition, Corner Twenty-Third St., & Fourth Avenue, 1872, National Academy of Design (New York, n. d.), p. 12.

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Provo, Utah. Brigham Young University. Clark Library. Louisa Seymour's diaries and daybooks; and letters and miscellaneous manuscript material related to the Weir family.

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EXHIBITION LIST

NOTES

The sketchbooks listed in number 50 were lent by Dr. John Weir Perry. All other sketchbooks, notebooks, drawings, and water colors were lent by The Reverend and Mrs. DeWolf Perry.

Inscriptions are not generally quoted. However, whenever possible the titles have been based on information found on the objects.

No attempt has been made to date precisely drawings which do not already bear that information. All water colors depicting European scenes were executed after Seymour's retirement to Europe in 1877. The views of Tangier date from late 1884 or early 1885.

Dimensions are in inches. Height precedes width (left edge and bottom). Sketchbooks and notebooks are measured in height only.

The medium is watercolor, except where otherwise stated. All supports are paper.

1. "Sur le toit." A View from Seymour's Window, Jalapa, Mexico, 1847. 5 3/4 x 9 3/8.

2. Landscape, Iztaccihuatl, Mexico, 1848. 8 x 11 13/16. Figure 1.

3. Fort Sumter. 1862[?]. 6 7/8 x 15 15/16.

4. A Camp Scene near Poplar Springs, Maryland, September 11, 1862. 5 x 8 1/4. Pen and ink.

5. View from Newman's Window, 1 Piazza Rossi, Florence, No. 1, Thursday, March 23, 1882. 11 13/16 x 8 5/8.

6. View from Newman's Window, 1 Piazza Rossi, Florence, No. 3, Saturday, March 25, 1882. 9 5/16 x 11 11/16.

7. View from Newman's Window, 1 Piazza Rossi, Florence, No. 6, Thursday, March 30, 1882. 12 3/16 x 8 3/4. Figure 2.

8. View from Newman's Window, 1 Piazza Rossi, Florence, No. 9, Wednesday, April 5, 1882. 11 13/16 x 8 1/4. Figure 3.

9. A View Through An Archway, into the Yard of a Spanish House, Seville, April 17, 1884. 5 5/16 x 7 13/16. Figure 4.

10. A View of the Alemeda, the Alhambra, June 21, 1884. 9 1/16 x 13 3/16.

11. The Garden of the Lindaraja Seen Through An Archway, the Alhambra, July 23, 1884. 9 13/16 x 6 3/8. Figure 5.

12. A Woman in Black Visiting the Torre de las Infantas, the Alhambra, Afternoon, July 3, 1884. 13 x 9 1/16.

13. The Dome over the Sala de las dos Hermanas, the Alhambra, September 17, 1884. 9 x 11 7/8.

14. A Street Scene in Seville with the Giralda. 21 1/2 x 15 1/8. Figure 6.

15. Interior of the Mosque, the Alhambra, August 11, 1884. 9 1/16 x 13 1/16.

16. Interior of San Francisco, the Alhambra, Afternoon, July 30, 1884. 9 1/4 x 14.

17. View through an Arch into an Unidentified Chamber, the Alhambra, October 14, 1884. 13 x 9 1/16.

18. Remains of a Roman Aqueduct near Tangier. 2 11/16 x 4 13/16.

19. A Street Scene in Tangier, December 25, 1884. 9 x 6 15/16.

20. A Street Scene in Tangier with a Minaret. 11 1/8 x 7 11/16.

21. A View of Tangier from a Terrace with a Clothesline. 5 5/8 x 12.

22. A View of Tangier across a Crenelated Wall. 8 1/8 x 11 13/16.

23. San Pablo, Seville, March 16-17, 1885. 10 15/16 x 7 3/8. Figure 8.

24. The Principle Entrance into the Mosque at Cordova, April 27, 1885. 10 x 10 13/16. Figure 9.

25. A Scene with Boats on Lake Geneva near Clarens, Noon, September 5[?], 1885. 8 x 10 1/4. Figure 10.

26. The Dents du Midi from Clarens, Morning, September 6[?], 1885. 10 1/16 x 9.

27. View from Seymour's Window, Hotel Suiza, Cordova, 1885. 7 3/8 x 10 9/16.

28. Seascape with Boats, April 22, 1891. 5 1/8 x 8 15/16.

29. Florence from Across the Arno River. 5 7/16 x 8 3/8. Figure 11.

30. The Ponte Vecchio. 14 7/8 x 10 11/16. Figure 12.

31. A Street Scene in Florence with the Palazzo Vecchio. 14 15/16 x 10 9/16.

32. A Street Scene in Clarens. 7 3/8 x 10 7/8. Figure 13.

33. Interior of a Gothic Church. 8 1/2 x 6 1/16. Figure 14.

34. Spanish Architecture with a Square Crenelated Tower. 8 1/4 x 11 1/2.

35. A Spanish Church with a Belfry. 8 5/8 x 11 11/16. Figure 15.

36. A Landscape with a Bridge. 4 9/16 x 6 15/16. Figure 16.

37. A House with French Windows. 8 1/2 x 6.

38. Italian Houses with Figures and a Donkey Cart. 7 x 9 1/4.

39. A Street Scene with a Woman and Some Chickens. 7 9/16 x 10 13/16.

40. A Spanish Square. 7 3/8 x 11.

41. The Giralda from the Convent of Santa Paula. 9 11/16 x 6 5/16.

42. A Moorish Arch at the End of an Architectural Vista. 9 1/8 x 6 5/16.

43. A Street Scene with the Dome of a Church. 8 3/4 x 5 11/16.

44. Number 25. A Street Scene. 8 9/16 x 5 3/4.

45. Drawing Book. Dated sketches range from 1844 to 1861. Height 11 5/16. Medium varies.

46. Sketchbook. Dates range from c. 1857 to 1866. Height 8 7/16. Sketches in pen and ink with some pencil; and in pencil. Figure 17.

47. Six European Sketchbooks:

1. No. 1. May 1877 to October 1878. Height 6 7/16.
2. No. 2. May 1879 to January 1880. Height 6 15/16.
3. No. 6. March 1881 to August 1881. Height 7 1/16.

4. No. 7 1/2. October 1882. Height 5 1/2.
5. No. 9. September 1883 to January 1885. Height 7.
6. Unnumbered. Dates range from 1883 to 1884. Height 5 1/2.

Mostly pencil sketches, with a few watercolors and a few ink drawings.

48. Two Small European Sketchbooks:

1. Inscribed in ink inside the cover: "T. Seymour;/ Florence, April 14, 79." 1879-1880. Height 3 11/16.

2. Inscribed in pencil on the first page: "T. Seymour;/ Drawing Book/June 6th 1883/Ferrara." 1883-1884. Height 4 1/4.

Mostly pencil sketches, some with water color; number 2 also contains a few water color drawings.

49. Two Notebooks:

1. Inscribed in pencil on the first page: "Memo of the/ Louvre Gallery./1877-78./T. Seymour." Height 5 15/16.

2. Notes on the Old Masters. 1878-1879. Height 5 13/16.

Both contain pencil sketches after European paintings, and written commentary.

50. Six European Sketchbooks:

1. No. 3. January - April 1880. 9 1/2 x 6 7/8.
2. No. 4. April - June 1880. 9 1/2 x 6 7/8.
3. No. 5. June 1880 - February 1881. 9 1/2 x 6 7/8.
4. No. 7. August 1881 - September 1882. 9 1/2 x 7.
5. No. 8. May - August 1883. 9 1/2 x 7.
6. No.10. February 1884 - September 1885. 9 1/2 x 6 7/8.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. Landscape. Iztaccihuatl, Mexico.

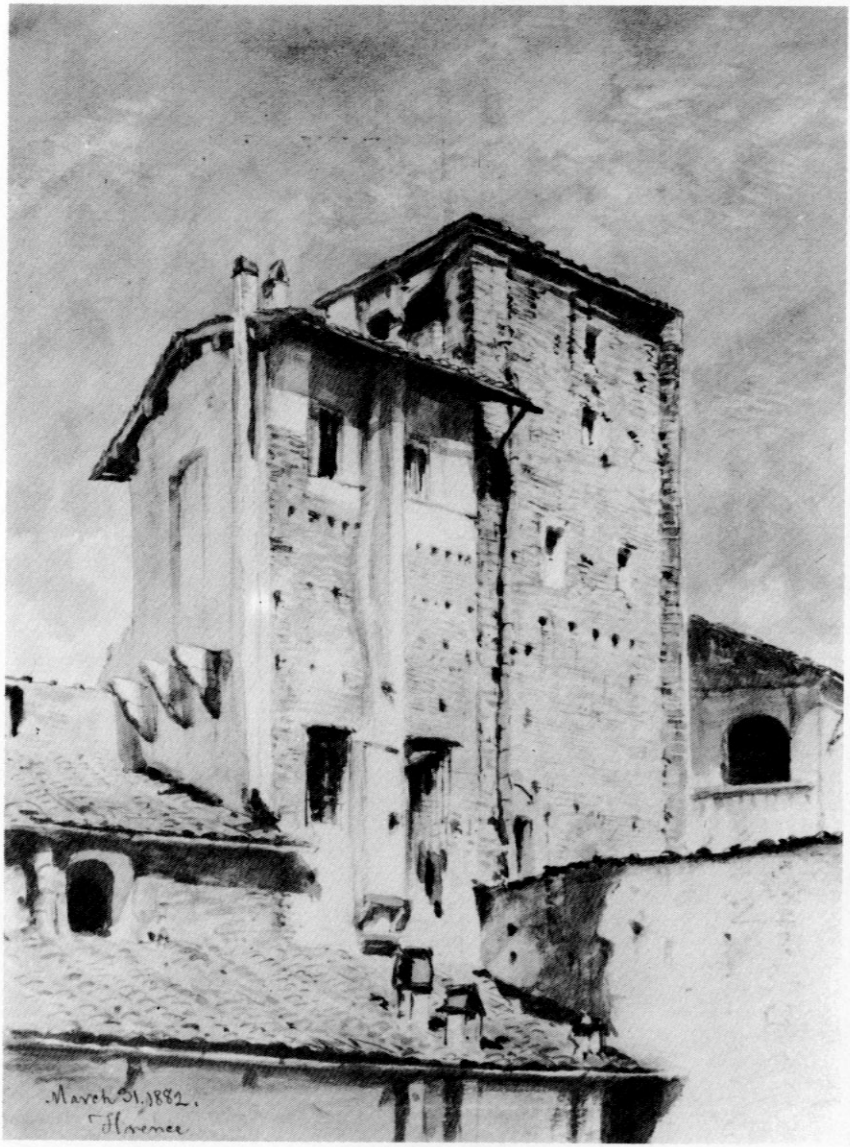

Fig. 2. View from Newman's Window, No. 6.

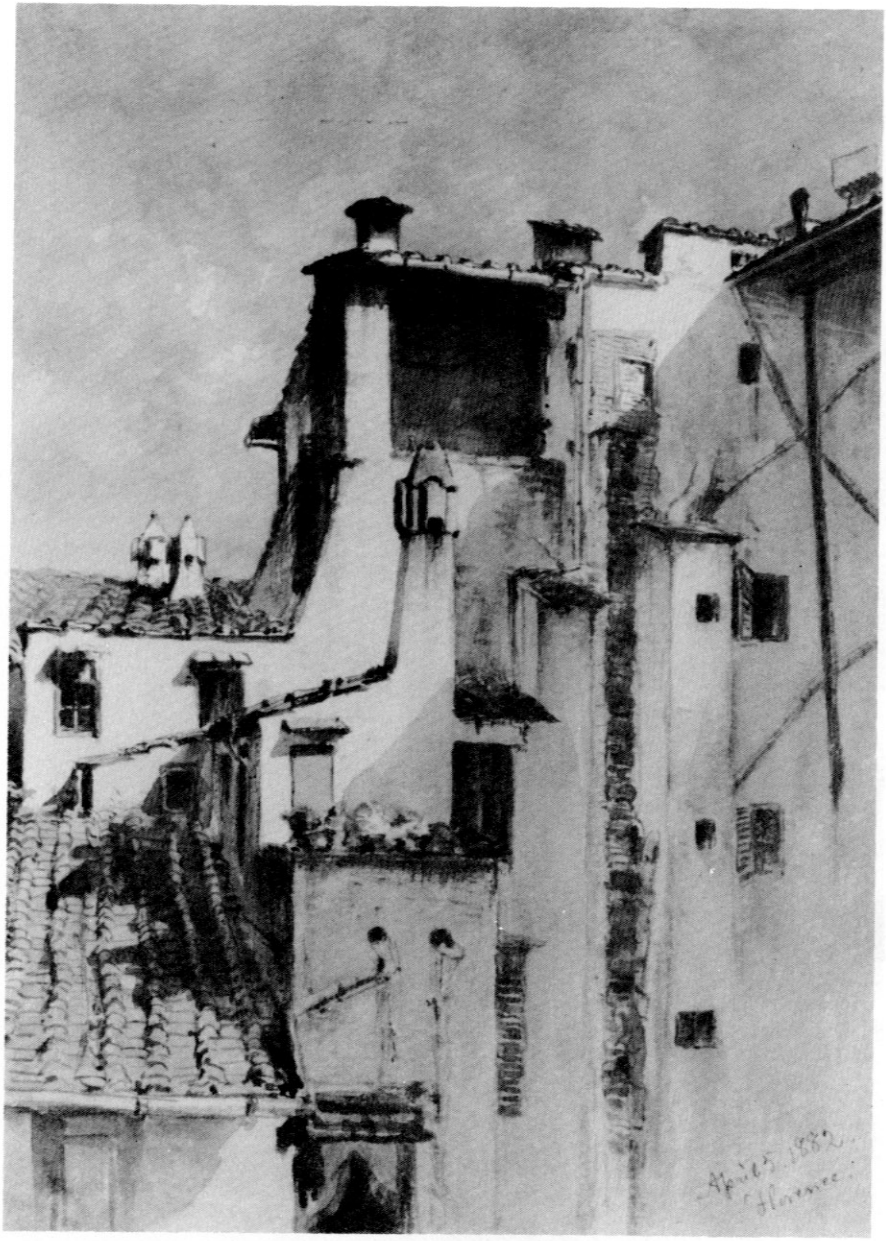

Fig. 3. View from Newman's Window, No. 9.

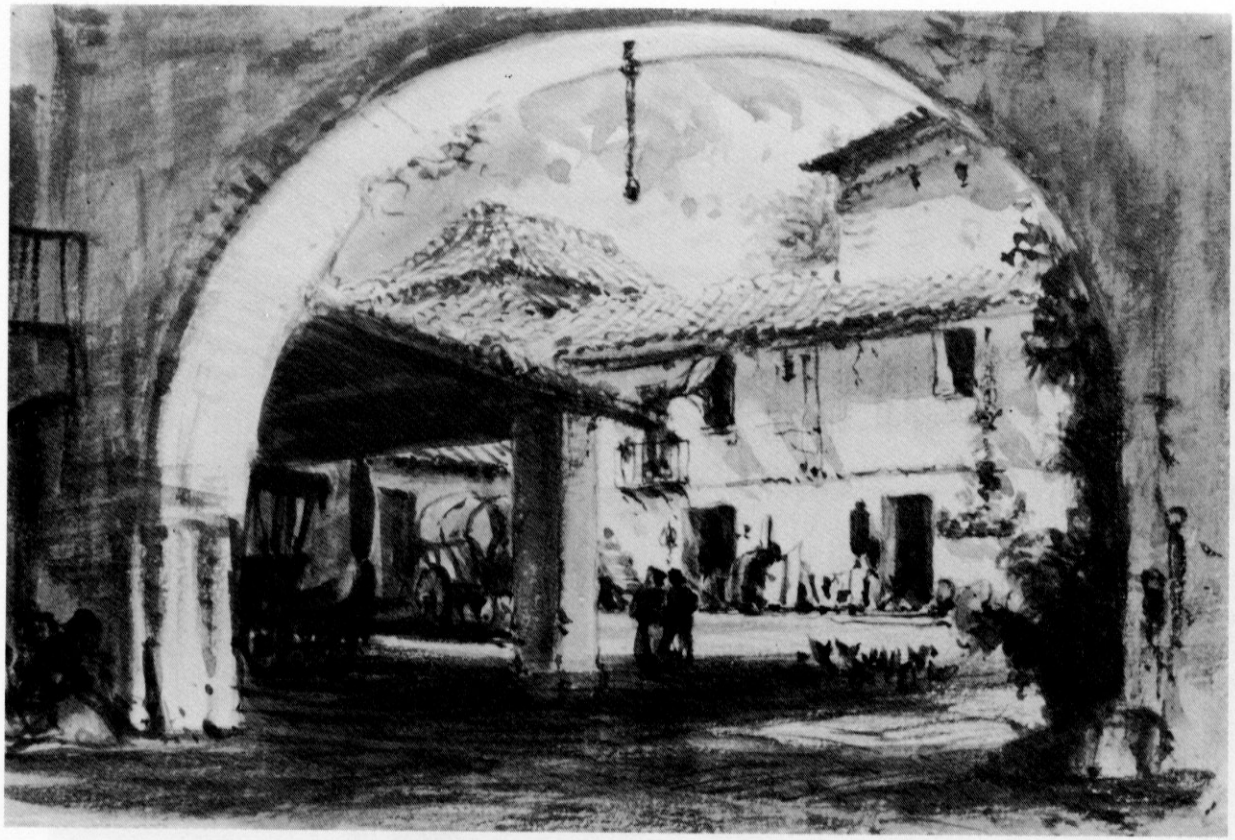

Fig. 4. View Through an Archway, Seville.

Fig. 5. Garden of the Lindaraja, Alhambra.

Fig. 6. Street Scene in Seville with the Giralda.

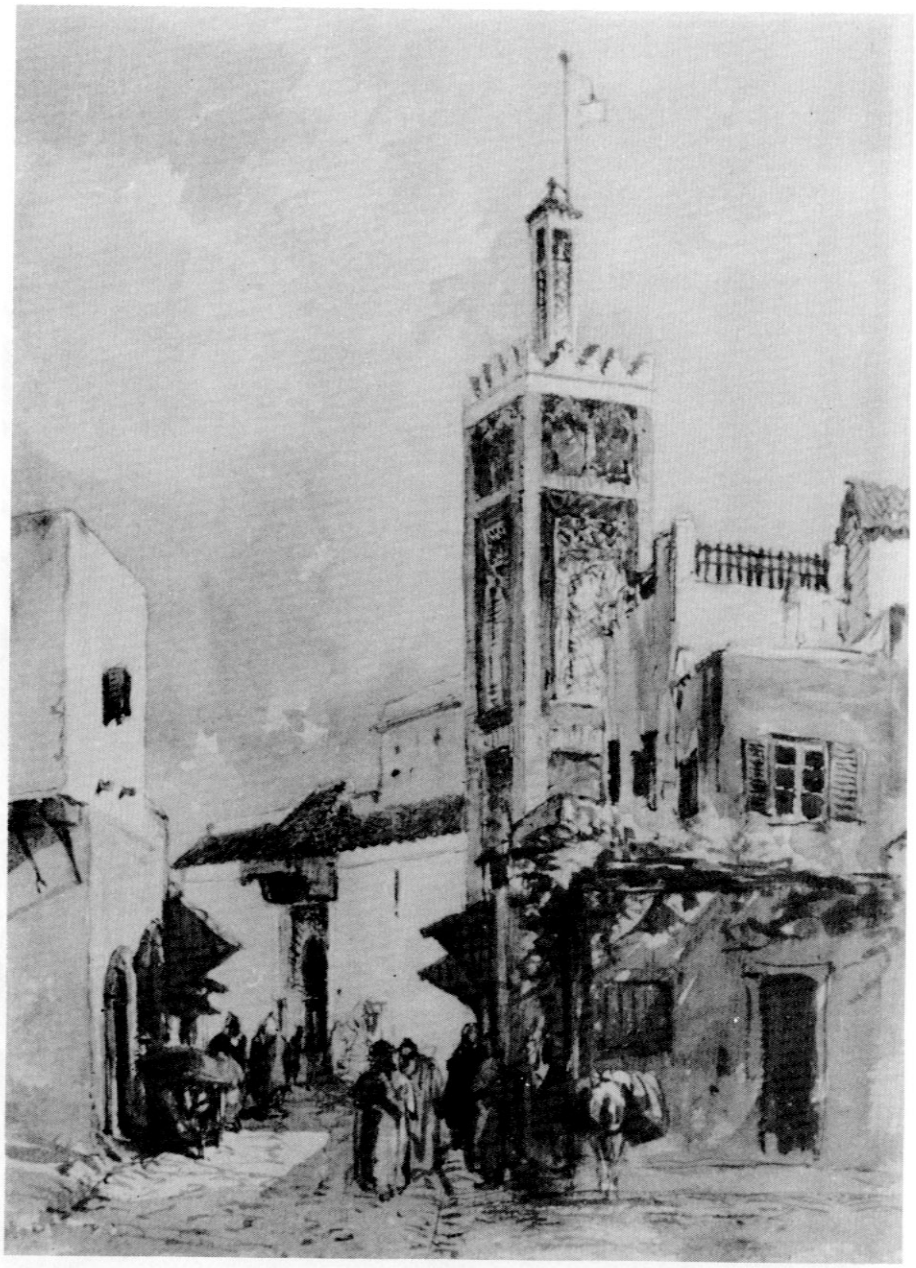

Fig. 7. Street Scene in Tangier.

Fig. 8. San Pablo, Seville.

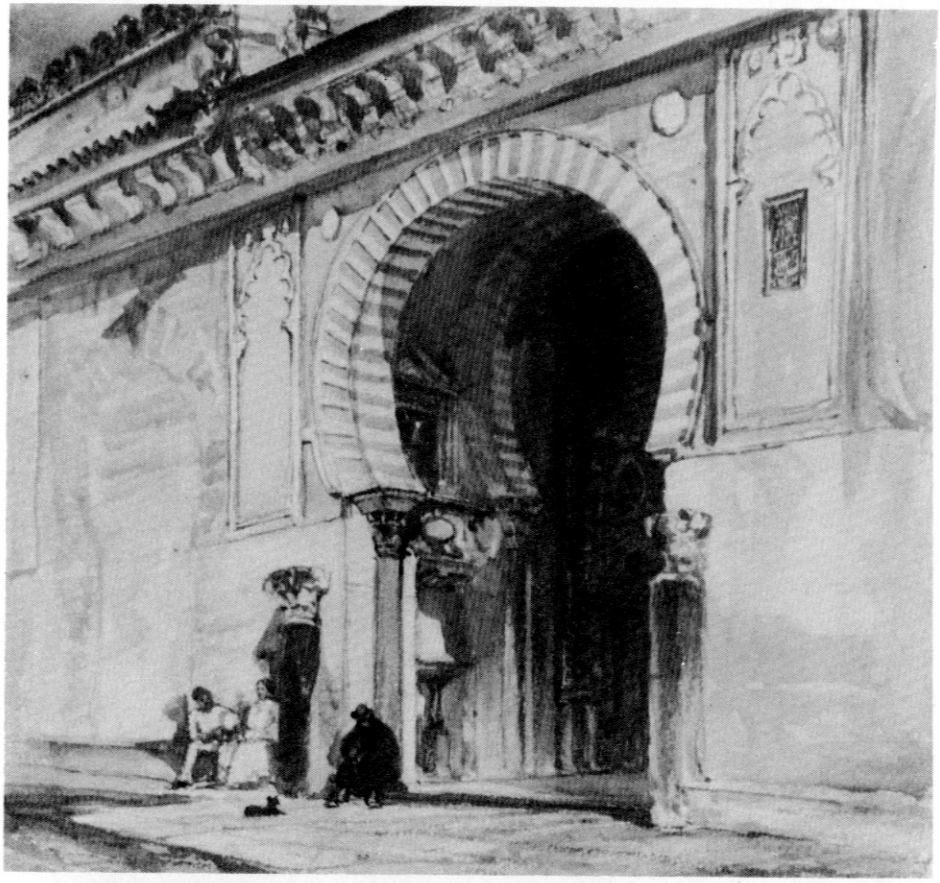

Fig. 9. Principle Entrance into the Mosque at Cordova.

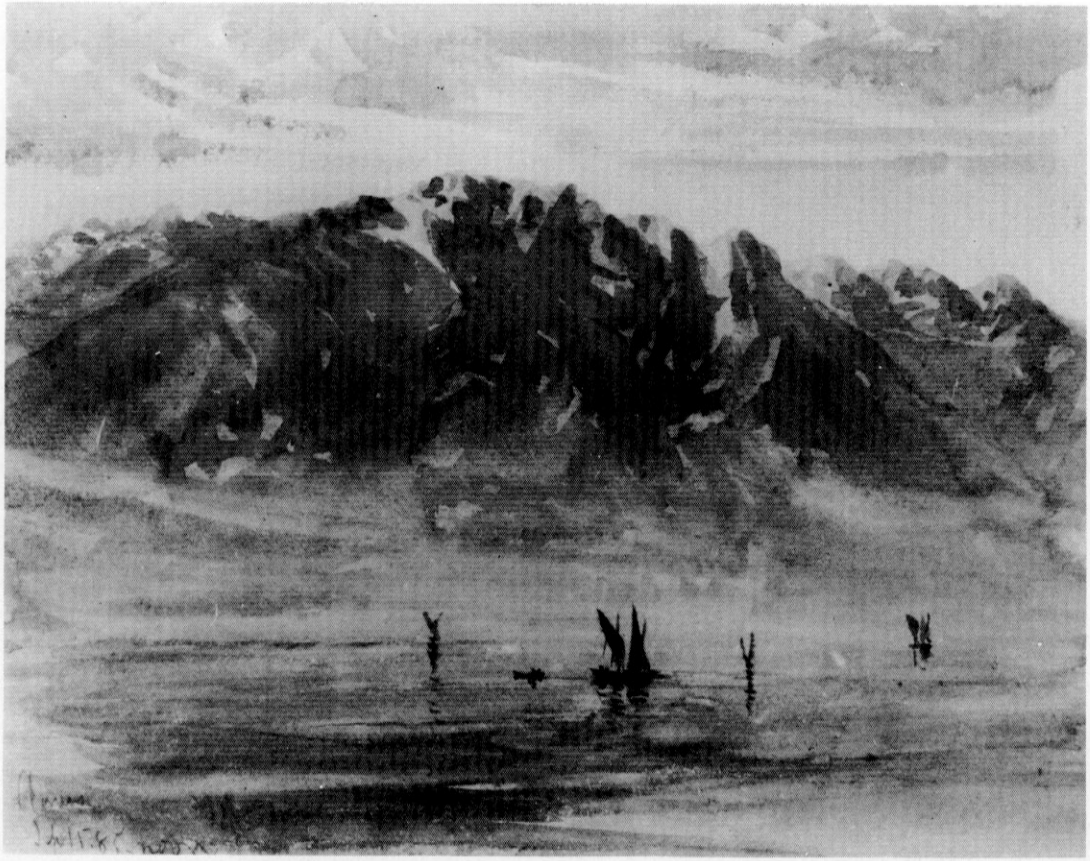

Fig. 10. Scene with Boats on Lake Geneva.

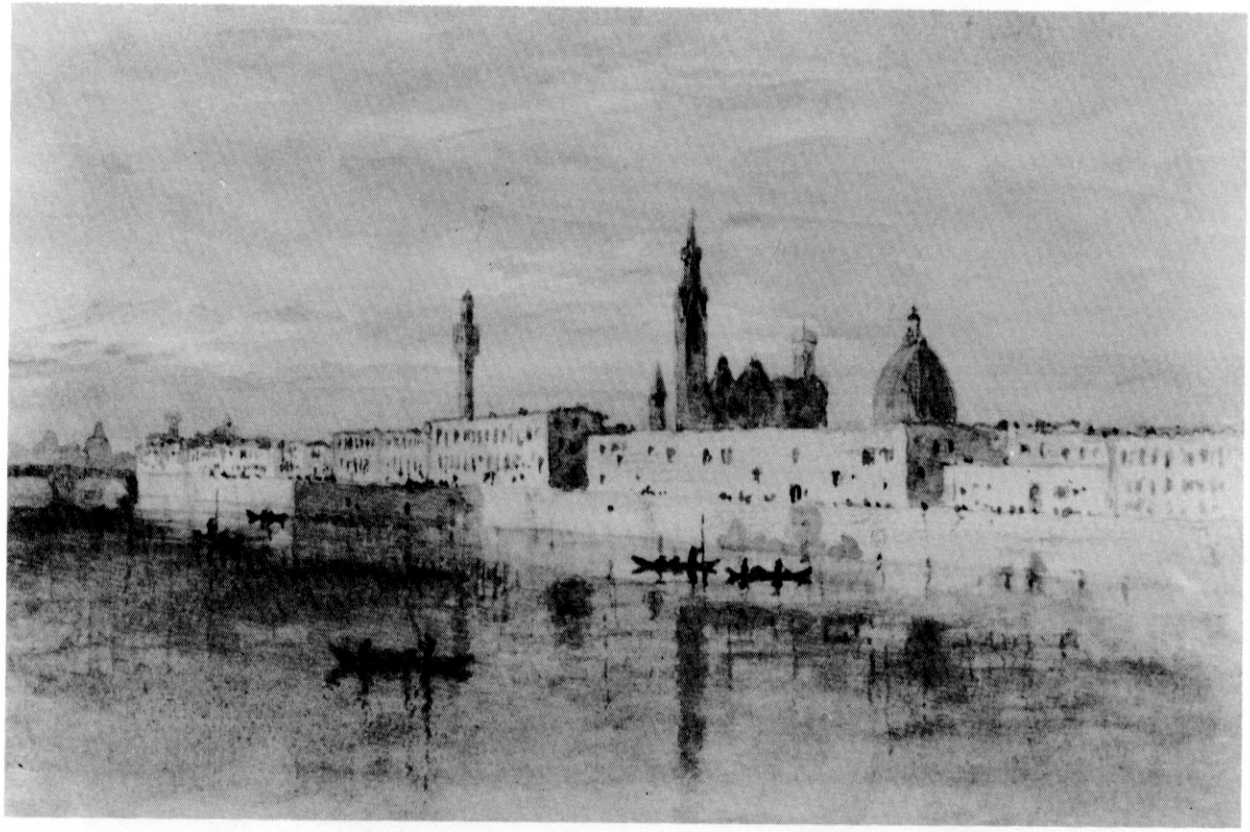

Fig. 11. Florence from across the Arno River.

Fig. 12. Ponte Vecchio.

Fig. 13. Street Scene in Clarens.

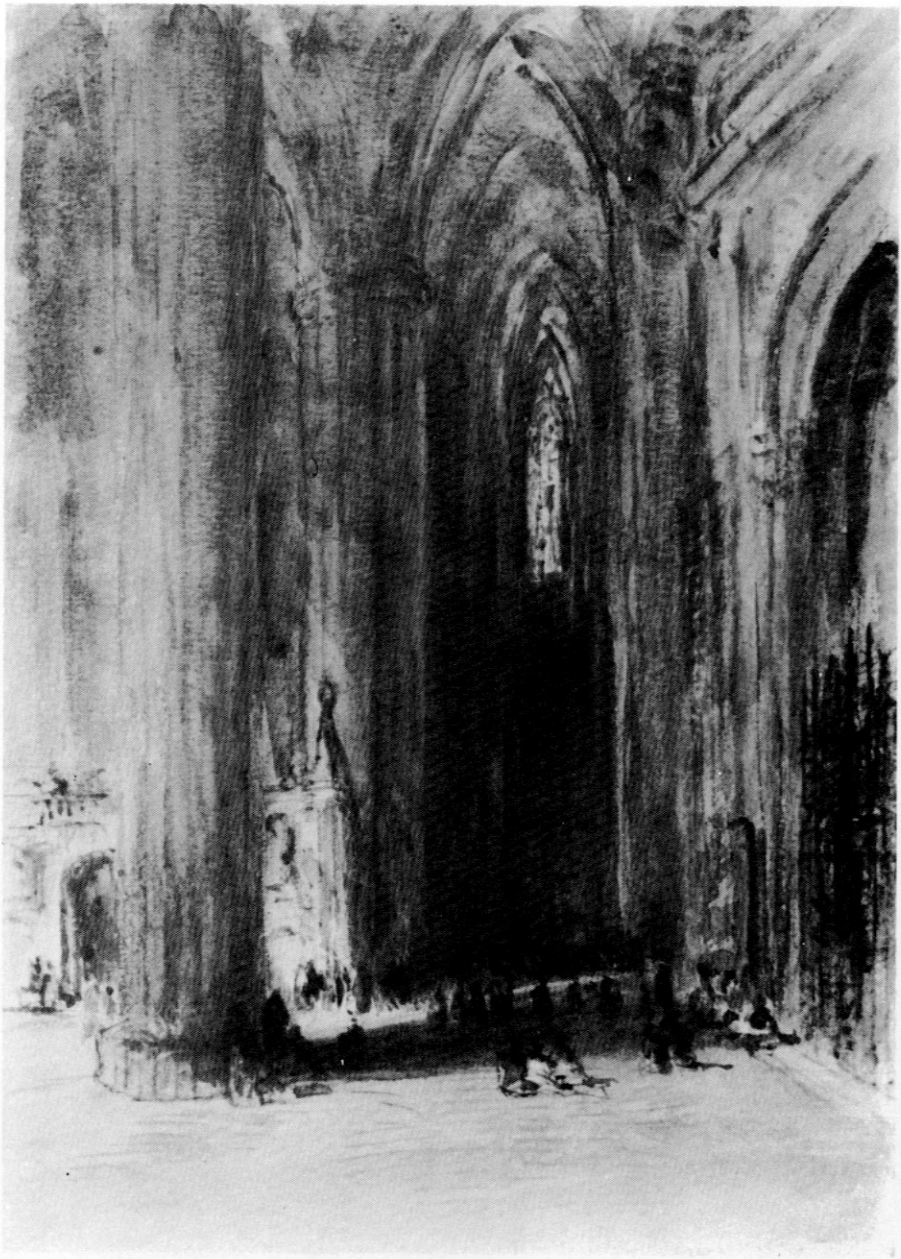

Fig. 14. Interior of a Gothic Church.

Fig. 15. Spanish Church with a Belfry.

Fig. 16. Landscape with Bridge.

Fig. 17. Old Fort Deynand, Florida.