

Volume 26 — 2020

Bulletin

GEORGIA MUSEUM OF ART
University of Georgia



Victoria Hartman Huntley, 1949

GEORGIA MUSEUM OF ART

Bulletin

Volume 26 – 2020

University of Georgia

© 2020 Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia

Published by the Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia.
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced
without the written consent of the publishers.

Printed in an edition of 100 by Greater Georgia Printers.

Design: Noelle Shuck

Department of Publications: Hillary Brown and Candice Lawrence

Publications Interns: Anika Chaturvedi and Hana Rehman

Partial support for the exhibitions and programs at the Georgia Museum
of Art is provided by the Georgia Council for the Arts through the
appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. The Georgia National
Council for the Arts also receives support from its partner agency,
the National Endowment for the Arts. Individuals, foundations and
corporations provide additional museum support through their gifts to the
University of Georgia Foundation.

Cover: Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Ocklawaha River #1*, n.d. Lithograph on paper,
13 1/16 x 9 3/4 inches. Private collection.

Contents

- 5 A Note from the Director
William Underwood Eiland
- 7 Victoria Hutson Huntley: An Oeuvre in Lithography
Lynn Barstis Williams Katz
- 42 An Autobiography of Victoria Hutson Huntley
Victoria Hutson Huntley
(compiled by Stephen J. Goldfarb)
- 65 An Artist Explores the Everglades
Victoria Hutson Huntley
- 82 Victoria Hutson Huntley's Health
Stephen J. Goldfarb
- 88 Victoria Hutson Huntley at the University of Georgia
Stephen J. Goldfarb



Victoria Hutson Huntley

A Note from the Director

STEPHEN GOLDFARB AND I had talked for several years about the somewhat neglected career and contributions to twentieth-century printmaking of Victoria Hutson Huntley. Hers was a life of physical challenge, as we see here, but also one of significant accomplishment. This *Bulletin* devoted to her life and career attempts to remedy some of that neglect, much of it attributable to her status as a “woman artist,” and about which you can read her own words herein.

On the occasion of the reopening of the Whitney Museum of American Art, I noted that one of Huntley’s industrial-site prints had pride of place on a wall devoted to works on paper, and I believed the Georgia Museum of Art even more justified in bringing the body of her work to more recognition by the scholarly and lay public. Thanks to the research and collecting of Lynn Barstis Williams Katz and Stephen Goldfarb and their love of American printmakers, we are able to do so with this volume of our *Bulletin*.

I was not prepared, nor was my staff, for what our writers would uncover and present. The heretofore unpublished autobiography here, with Goldfarb’s careful redaction, is a powerful document, recounting years of struggle and success, of ambition and perseverance. For anyone interested in the history of American art in the twentieth century, Huntley’s description of her travails as well as her triumphs is intrinsically of importance for its cast of characters, who were the teachers, the prophets, and the practitioners of new styles, new schools, and new ideas in the story of American art, especially printmaking. As an example, we read Huntley’s emphatic assertion that she is not attracted to the mid-century resurgence of abstraction and expressionism and why.

Surprises await the reader of this volume, chief among them the beautifully written, impressionistic, and stirring account of Huntley’s nights in the Everglades. This short but powerfully described chapter in her life makes this reader wonder if she did not have another, undeveloped, career as a writer. I am grateful to our writers and to our editor, Hillary Brown, for teaching me that, while I thought I knew the work of this brave and relentless woman, in many ways, my eyes were, indeed, wide shut.

William Underwood Eiland, Director



Fig. 1. Victoria Hutson Huntley, untitled, n.d. Oil on board, 11 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Private collection.

Victoria Hutson Huntley: An Oeuvre in Lithography

Lynn Barstis Williams Katz

DURING THE 1930S AND 1940S Victoria Hutson Huntley was considered one of America's leading lithographers. Her recognition as a lithographer was almost immediate, and major museums across the country purchased her work. She produced more than one hundred lithographs and a small number of intaglio prints over four decades, from 1930 to her death, in 1971.¹ That oeuvre can be divided into three periods based on geographical areas where she lived—the North, the South, and back to the North—and her stage of life as an artist. The selection in this exhibition represents examples of the iconography of those three stages.

A painting in the exhibition reveals that before Huntley was a printmaker, she was a painter (fig. 1). The work depicts a woman in the lower center, who walks a dog. The figure is rather stiff, with little delineation of the shoulder to the free arm, which hangs rather awkwardly. It is probably an early work. The elaborate architectural background of a building, however, is impressive for a young painter. Two different shapes, one triangular and one circular, frame window complexes in the lower part with a projecting window structure in the upper right that.

The first stage of Huntley's prints spans the years 1930 to 1946 and consists mainly of lithographs. During these years, she lived in New York City, where she grew up, as well as in rural areas in Caldwell, New Jersey, and two small towns in Connecticut, milieus that influenced her iconography. These years were ones during which the realism of the American Scene



Fig. 2. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Interior*, 1930. Lithograph on paper, 12 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; Gift of Lynn Barstis Williams Katz. GMOA 2018.130.



Fig. 3. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *The Stairway*, 1931. Lithograph on paper, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 inches. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; Gift of Stephen Goldfarb. GMOA 2016.21.

movement was firmly entrenched. Modernism was making inroads, with the advent of the Armory show in 1913, but did not begin to prevail until after 1946. Huntley wrote about her life in documents that have been previously unpublished, some of which are reproduced in this *Bulletin*. Comments in her writing and images of her sketches in archives reveal her general method of work. She depicted scenes she observed by painting her first responses, then drawing, redrawing, redesigning, reducing in scale, and “last comes the lithograph.”²

As she notes in her autobiography, the second lithograph she ever made, *Interior* (fig. 2), received the first prize in lithography in the International Graphic Art Exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago.³ She writes that it was composed from a drawing of her dining room in “the old farmhouse in Caldwell.” The composition presents a corner of that room with details such as a painting and a rug, but the focus is on two objects with structure and shapes that offer a challenge: the complex structure of an early domestic spinning wheel and an early-nineteenth-century Windsor chair. One might



Fig. 4. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Cabin* (also known as *Hunkie's House*), 1931. Lithograph on paper, 10 x 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Private collection.

surmise that the work shows how antiques in the home keep one in touch with history, and historical subjects were a minor interest of Huntley's.

Another early lithograph, usually titled *The Stairway* (fig. 3), appears to derive from the same farmhouse interior, as the doors are in the same style. The viewpoint is through a doorway from an interior room into the hall and to a stairway, up which a young girl walks. Value contrast highlights the hall and stairs. The young girl is Huntley's daughter, born in 1925, who would have been six years old in 1931.⁴ The composition could be seen symbolically with the open door representing a new life and the stairs representing the stages of life on the way. The scene shows how Huntley, a homemaker and mother, took advantage of her domestic surroundings for her subjects.

An exterior domestic view in a rural setting appears in another early lithograph usually titled *Cabin*, although an impression at the Philadelphia

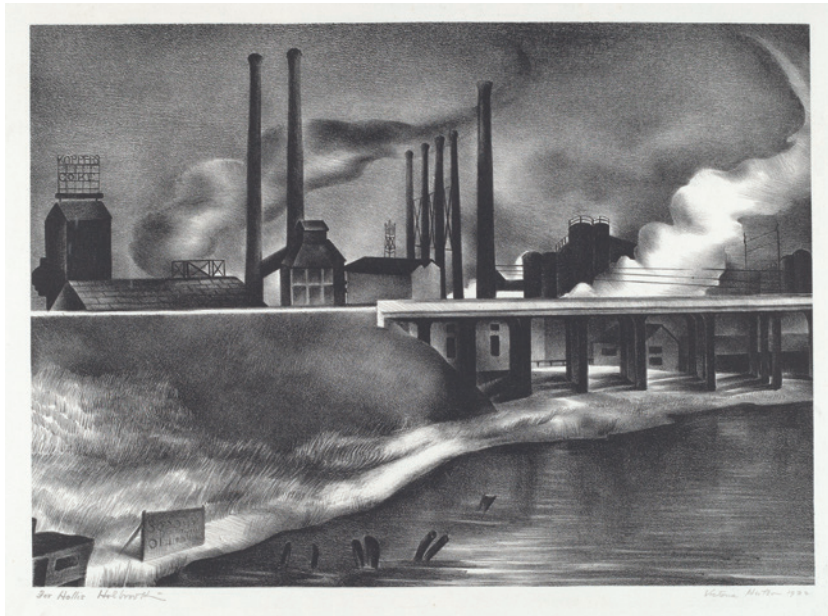


Fig. 5. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Koppers Coke*, 1932. Lithograph on paper, 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. National Gallery of Art; Reba and Dave Williams Collection, Gift of Reba and Dave Williams. 2008.115.2631.

Museum of Art bears the title *Hunkie's House* (fig. 4). Presumably, Hunkie is the name of the man who stands beside the chimney of the small clapboard dwelling. The image area has an unusual circular form that the tree's dark, bare branches echo. One set of branches splays in the lower foreground, and another, on the left, circles from left to right. Together they connect to encircle the house and well to suggest a life lived close to nature in its barest form. This image shows that Huntley could diverge from strict realism for more dramatic artistic ends.

In Huntley's opinion, as expressed in her autobiography, only two of her early lithographs stood the test of time: *Koppers Coke* and *Lower New York* (figs. 5 and 6). *Koppers* is an industrial firm that was originally based in Chicago but moved to Pittsburgh. Apparently, the location in New Jersey that she saw as she rode the train from Montclair produced coke, a carbon-based fuel derived from coal. As she notes in her autobiography, this lithograph, made in 1932, won first prize in lithography at the Philadelphia Print Club



Fig. 6. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Lower New York*, 1934. Lithograph on paper, 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University; Imprinting the South Collection.

in 1933. The excellence of the print is based on its formal, abstract qualities. A strong, white, horizontal line in the center of the composition, presumably a train bridge, divides it into upper and lower portions. Below the line is a river and its shore, with some short verticals as supports for the bridge and windows of buildings. Above the line are the tops of factory buildings, and strong, dark verticals of smokestacks balance the strong horizontal. Against this structure, diagonals from smoke and shoreline cut across the composition. One might see the top, more distant portion as representing humanity's use of the natural world and the bottom foreground as the bare, natural world struggling to survive industrialization.

Huntley's other favorite early lithograph, *Lower New York*, also receives attention in her autobiography. This print was one of three lithographs she did of New York City and is by far the best of them. She notes that the scene is a view from a friend's office on the 26th floor on Lower Broadway and shows the port of New York.⁵ The scene projects a view from a window



Fig. 7. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Vermont Covered Bridge*, 1946. Lithograph on paper, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. Private collection.



Fig. 8. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Moonlight on the Mountain*, 1938. Lithograph on paper, 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Private collection.

that cuts off the tops of the skyscrapers and includes the Hudson River with a view of the Statue of Liberty in the background. Like *Koppers Coke*, its excellence derives from formal qualities. We see light entering from the left for subtle value contrasts on a variety of verticals and horizontals that make up the cluster of buildings in the center. The complex rooflines of what is likely a more traditional nineteenth-century building are at the lower right. Huntley notes the symbolic value of the Statue of Liberty in the distant right. Although she did not overtly express sociopolitical views in her works, unlike many other artists of the 1930s, one might venture an interpretation that associates liberty with grandeur and prosperity represented by the dense architectural scene; ironically, she made *Lower New York* in 1934, close to the nadir of the Great Depression, so many of the buildings it pictures might be empty. This lithograph was selected for inclusion in the Kraefts' *Great American Prints, 1900–1950*.⁶

Huntley again showed her interest in more historical subjects, specifically architecture, in her lithographs of covered bridges. *Vermont Covered Bridge* (fig. 7) reveals a structure with trusses from the viewpoint of the entrance. Huntley wrote about this bridge on a card included in a portfolio titled *Portraits of Plants and Places* for her print club in 1946.⁷ She stated that the bridge, built in 1836, “spans the Ottauquechee River at Taftsville, Vermont near Woodstock.” She noted the X braces in the truss as well as arch forms and explained that what mattered to her was its “dramatic contour, its massive structure, and the play of light streaming through in open spaces, cutting patterns on its floor.”

Huntley was preoccupied with light, an archetype in both literature and art, in a number of landscapes. One, usually titled *Moonlight* (1935), depicts light breaking through a dark sky in a horizontal rural landscape with a distant view of a dwelling as well as a tiny human figure between two haystacks. Yet another, usually titled *Moonlight on the Mountain* (fig. 8), is a vertical composition that presents a pure landscape with fir trees and rocks, moonlight breaking through the center clouds in a dark sky and casting light on the ground. All these scenes could metaphorically suggest positive qualities breaking through negative ones, whether emotional, spiritual, or cognitive.

This interpretation also fits *Dawn Came* (fig. 9), in which the light is resplendent, dominating the space just above the low horizon line, where



Fig. 9. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Dawn Came*, 1946. Lithograph on paper, 9 ½ x 12 ⅝ inches. Private collection.

we see small buildings denoting a farm. Higher up in the sky it appears to be pushing away dark clouds from lines we detect splaying out in the upper sky. The title could imply a new stage of life, sudden mental or spiritual illumination, or even transcendence. *Dawn Came* won the prize for Best American Lithograph of 1946 in the First Annual Print Club Competition of Associated American Artists.

More subdued light from a cloudy sky is evident in *White World* (fig. 10), also a selection for Huntley's print club of 1946. On the back of a small card with a reproduction, she wrote that it was a winter landscape, showing fields that she saw from her studio windows in Pomfret, Connecticut. We see strong, irregular horizontals defining the snow-covered fields with rolling hills in the background as well as layers of dark clouds in the sky. The scene is punctuated by the contrasting central vertical of a bare tree, a typical composition strategy of Huntley's. Its branches connect to a hill line on the left; on the right, the lowest branch circles around a house to connect to another tree



Fig. 10. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *White World*, 1946. Lithograph on paper, 14 ⅝ x 10 15/16 inches. Private collection.

that circles to the left, a design similar to that of *Cabin*. William U. Eiland, director of the Georgia Museum of Art, views the scene as emotional expression, writing, "it is a lonely, sort of aching so, image."⁸ Huntley, however, felt positively about it, writing, "I love winter and the magic of snow is still a miracle for me."

Turning in another direction, Huntley depicted the human figure from her early years in lithography, beginning with a lateral portrait head of a young girl of 1932 and a female nude around the same time. She then progressed to multiple figures. In 1936, she created three group genre scenes, typical of the 1930s, in which figures interact with each other: *Skating on the Pond* (fig. 11), *Adults at a Lake*, and *Barrels*. In the former, two young women on the left skate in tandem, their arms interlocked. All the other figures on the pond except one are turned to observe this pair as if watching to see what they will do, acknowledging them, or offering support if needed. The viewer is invited to complete the narrative, which is somewhat ambiguous. Is one of the pair a

novice who needs help to skate, or are they just expressing their friendship? Whatever the story, the viewer is left with admiration for this image of individuals working together well. Another small figure group, which appears to be a family, appears outside the pond on the left and asks us to continue the narrative. A village snowscape provides the background.

One unambiguous representation of human aid is a maternal scene depicting a seated woman with child, usually titled *Babe in Arms* (fig. 12), based on Huntley's painting of the same subject.⁹ The figures are fully modeled, with the woman's arms encircling the child. The child places one hand on the woman's breast, usually a source of nourishment, and the left arm of the woman joins that of the child, suggesting the close connection between the two. The child appears to sleep while the woman looks on tenderly. The scene may have been inspired by Huntley's own experience of motherhood.

A later lithograph with three figures probably was inspired by a mural Huntley painted in 1938 for the post office in Springville, New York (fig. 13). Titled *Fiddler's Green*, it depicts fiddlers accompanying a dance in the town



Fig. 11. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Skating on the Pond* (also known as *Skaters*), 1936. Lithograph on paper, 17 1/8 x 20 3/4 inches (framed). Private collection.

square. She asked a local fiddler to pose for her.¹⁰ In the lithograph *Old Fiddler Dreams* (fig. 14), the image complex is isolated from surroundings to focus on an old man, seated, playing the fiddle. The neck of the fiddle points down to direct our attention to smaller figures of a young man and woman dancing, who could represent his thoughts. What specifically he is dreaming in reference to the young dancers is left to the viewer's imagination, but one could see it as memories of romance or just yearning for youthful energy and agility.

On the Top (fig. 15) offers a contrast, picturing three young people who do not interact. A girl looks at the viewer, one boy looks out at the view of



Fig. 12. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Babe in Arms*, 1937. Lithograph on paper, 10 x 8 3/4 inches. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; Gift of Stephen Goldfarb. GMOA 2016.17.



Fig. 13. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Fiddler's Green*, n.d. Tempera, pencil, and conté crayon, 8 x 24 inches. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of the artist, 1971.361.10.



Fig. 14. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Old Fiddler Dreams*, 1943. Lithograph on paper, 15 x 11 1/2 inches (sheet). Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; Gift of Stephen J. Goldfarb. GMA 2016.20.

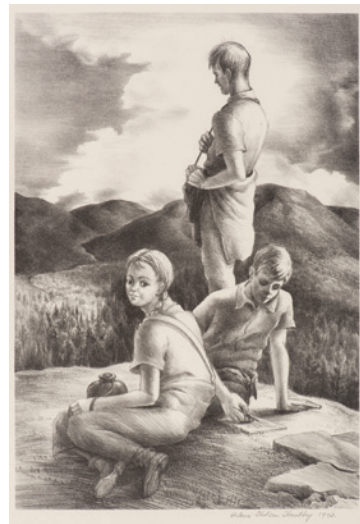


Fig. 15. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *On the Top* (also known as *Three Friends*), 1943. Lithograph on paper, 11 7/16 x 7 15/16 inches. Private collection.



Fig. 16. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Petunias with Butterfly*, 1935. Lithograph on paper, 8 1/4 x 6 inches. Private collection.

mountains, and another boy appears absorbed in drawing the scene. The image could be a comment on the adolescent tendency toward self-absorption or just an exercise in different postures for distinct figures. It is tempting to identify the girl as Huntley's daughter, who would have been thirteen in 1943, but documentary evidence for this has not been found.

Huntley was interested in the natural world, too, from the beginning of her career as a printmaker. She made numerous lithographs of flowers. *Petunias with Butterfly* (fig. 16) is typical of her approach. She isolates the bloom and stem in the center of the composition with only a swath of almost transparent gray area, maybe made by the lithographic crayon on its side, as background. The petunia grandiflora, a common annual, offers interest and challenge in its crinkled edge, which she accentuates and delineates with value contrast in the middle and center. The dark, complex pattern of the butterfly contrasts with the flowing edge of the blooms and represents the interdependence of flora and fauna due to its role in pollination. Some of Huntley's impressions of this print were hand colored.

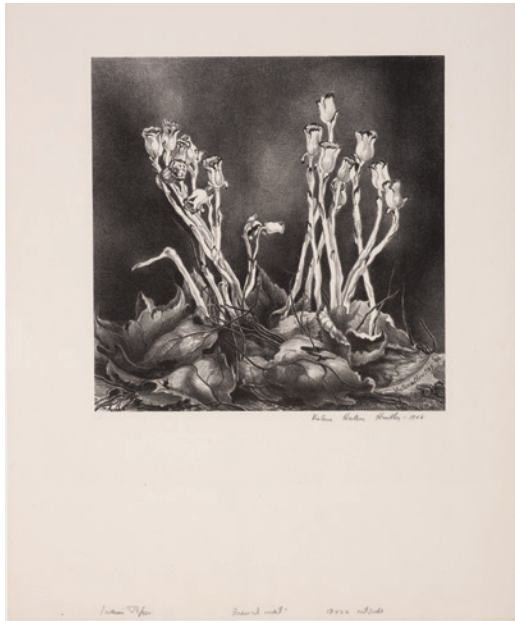


Fig. 17. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Indian Pipes*, 1946. Lithograph on paper, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 8 inches. Private collection.

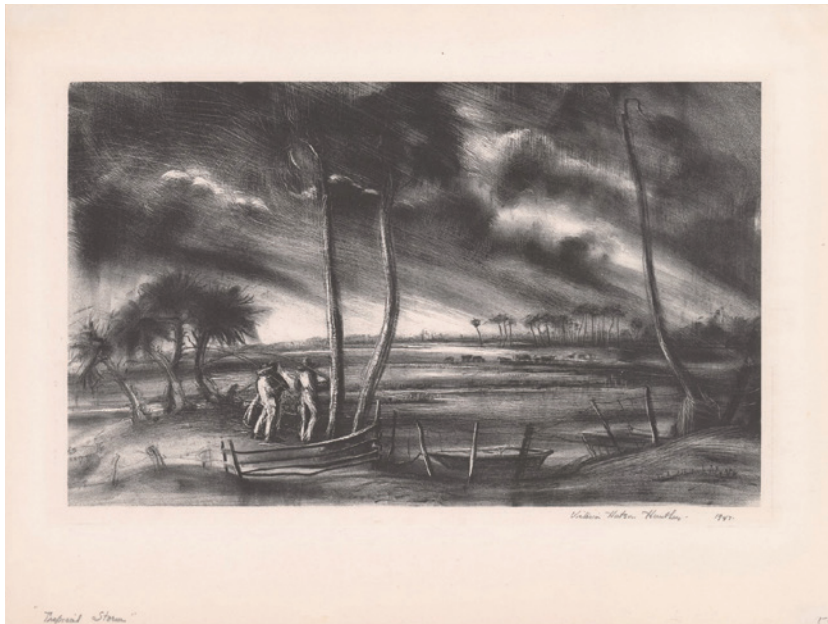


Fig. 18. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Tropical Storm*, 1947. Lithograph on paper, 8 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{16}$ inches. Private collection.

Indian Pipes (fig. 17) shows a more exotic plant in close-up in the foreground. This parasitic plant is waxy white because it has no chlorophyll and lives off the photosynthesis of other plants, usually trees and decaying plant matter. Because it does not photosynthesize, it is able to live in the darkest forests, and Huntley appropriately leaves the background for her rendering dark. The plant does flower; she shows buds at the end of its stems. She offered this lithograph to her print club subscribers and wrote that “nowhere in nature is natural design and complicated pattern more in evidence than in white flowers. The almost architectural beauty of the Indian Pipes is both classic and fantastic, like an ordered whim, or a cool complicated dream of abstract beauty.”

When Huntley and her husband moved to the outskirts of Orlando, Florida, in 1946, she began a new phase of work inspired by the subtropical and tropical world around her that lasted until they left in 1953. Her lithographs fall into the scenic landscape category or focus on individual animals, particularly birds. She appears to have created prints of this location as early as 1947. These works seem simply to show the beauty and variety of nature, rather than having a more figurative import. In a letter to her friend Carl Zigrosser, she stated that her prints of Florida, particularly the Everglades, derived from “deep experience” and were “documentary.”¹¹

In her autobiography, she mentions *Tropical Storm* (fig. 18), a lithograph that records the beginning of a hurricane on the St. Johns River, near her home. We see a dark landscape with tall palm trees and a few human figures standing nearby. Black-and-white horizontal lines denote the land. The approaching storm is dramatically rendered in dark clouds with light peeking through that move with strong diagonal lines in a definite contrast to the horizontals of the land. The lithograph was awarded the University of Florida purchase prize in 1948.

Another landscape of 1947, usually titled *Florida Swamp* (fig. 19), incorporates three egrets, although it is difficult to tell which kind because they are small in proportion to the setting. These white birds with the typical S-shaped neck appear elegant against moss-hung cypress trees and swamp water below. The birds and the moss give a distinctive romantic aura to the natural world of Florida wetlands.



Fig. 19. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Florida Swamp*, 1947. Lithograph on paper, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14 inches. Private collection.

In 1947 Huntley received a grant from the National Academy of Arts and Letters and in 1948 one from the Guggenheim Foundation to depict the fauna of Florida, experiences that she details in her autobiography and an essay “An Artist Explores the Everglades,” both published here for the first time. She created a total of twenty-five lithographs on the Guggenheim fellowship from 1948 to 1949. Three of her lithographs show Cuthbert Rookery, a well-known nesting place for wading birds in Lake Cuthbert; this islet of about two acres in the mangrove swamps on the tip of the Florida peninsula was brimming with birds, their nests, eggs, and chicks.

Two very similar lithographs from 1948 show the entire island mound of the rookery, apparently composed of mangrove sticks with numerous small forms of the birds that inhabit it (fig. 20). Both show mangrove roots and

limbs, on which birds perch. They differ in the number of birds and the different cloud formations in the sky; in other words, although the vegetation appears to match, they are not different states of the same lithograph. In some of Huntley’s loose notes in her archives she describes the scene: “It was interesting to note that each species has its special area on the island to live. It was like a huge apartment house: the snowy egrets in the basement—the water line of mangrove roots their territory: the American egrets took the floor above, the wood ibis stood on the upper stories while the Anhingas took over the penthouse located on the outspread branches of the Buttonwoods [a form of mangrove].” She also notes that wood ibis soar into the sky.¹² The variety of birds on the islet is evident.

Another well-known lithograph Huntley made of the rookery is a close-up, titled *Detail, Cuthbert Rookery* (fig. 21). It shows small ibis in the background on a nest high off the ground. In the foreground, we see three forms



Fig. 20. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Lake Cuthbert Rookery, the Everglades*, 1948. Lithograph on paper, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 inches. Private collection.



Fig. 21. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *In the Everglades, Detail, Cuthbert Rookery*, 1948. Lithograph on paper, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art; Gift of Lynn Barstis Williams Katz for the Imprinting the South Collection. 2016.21.04.

of what Huntley describes in her commentary as the American egret; however, the bird collection manager at the Florida Museum of Natural History of the University of Florida claims that these are actually the white form of the great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), which has neck plumes that the great egret lacks.¹³ The design of the foreground scene is appealing, with dark mangrove roots and limbs gracefully circling around the white birds perched upon them as if to embrace them; Huntley includes a plain, dark gray ground to make the white of the birds stand out.

Two more lithographs show wetland vistas with swamp water and sawgrass as well as birds. Concerning *Evening in the Everglades* (fig. 22), Huntley wrote, "This lithograph was created at the same time as 'Sawgrass Country', later in the day as evening came in the 'Glades and the birds came in, looking for places to sleep. A white Ibis is in the sky, a Great Blue Heron is landing, right hand side, two Louisiana herons are on the left above the white American [Great] egrets." Although her words convey a variety of birds, it is



Fig. 22. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Evening in the Everglades*, 1949. Lithograph on paper, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Private collection.

difficult to detect these species in the semi-panoramic view the scene projects. Concerning the sawgrass, she wrote that it was a kind of sedge with a shining blade that is "extremely sharp." This lithograph won the First Purchase Prize at the 7th Annual Exhibition of Prints, Library of Congress, in 1949.

Nocturne (fig. 23) shows a similar sawgrass landscape, presumably in the evening, without the variegated sky of *Evening in the Everglades*. Various forms of heron, from great egrets on the left to small figures that are difficult to distinguish, fly low above the swamp. Huntley created this lithograph as a presentation print awarded to supporting members for the Society of American Graphic Artists in 1952. The text for the brochure praises Huntley's artistry, stating, "one is impressed by her ability, apparent in every print, to translate the objective elements of a scene into its subjective mood by means of a harmonious, well integrated design, in terms of lucid and eloquent drawing."

One exotic wading bird of the Everglades region that Huntley highlighted in a number of lithographs is the roseate spoonbill. This bird has an unusually



Fig. 23. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Nocturne*, 1951. Lithograph on paper, 7 $\frac{13}{16}$ x 12 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. Private collection.



Fig. 24. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Roseate Spoonbills, Florida Bay*, 1948. Lithograph on paper, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Private collection.



Fig. 25. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *The Flame Bird, Roseate Spoonbill*, 1952. Lithograph on paper, 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Private collection.

long beak that is wider at the end than in the center, long legs, and a large wingspan. Huntley depicted it in *Roseate Spoonbills* (fig. 24), a lithograph in which the entire bird is shown in a profile view, gathering twigs and mangrove remnants for a nest. It also seems to be the sole subject of *Ancient Bird* (1950). Its deep pink color is also distinctive, and Huntley shows this color in *The Flame Bird* (fig. 25). Its neck is partially hidden by mangrove roots and branches, a tangle of which occupy a good portion of the picture space, but we can see its wide beak and color. Huntley worked more and more in color as the years passed and color lithography became more widely known.

Huntley depicted other parts of Florida besides the Everglades. *Ocklawaha River #1* (fig. 26), sometimes titled *Florida Fairyland*, is a vertical composition with a dark background of moss hanging from cypress trees. A great egret is dramatically highlighted, and a smaller dark bird, which may be a purple gallinule, sits below it and slightly to the right. She also made images



Fig. 26. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Ocklawaha River #1*, n.d. Lithograph on paper, 13 $\frac{11}{16}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Private collection.



Fig. 28. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Andante*, 1963. Lithograph on paper, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 14 inches. Private collection.



Fig. 27. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Wild Birds*, 1949. Lithograph on paper, 11 $\frac{15}{16}$ x 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. Private collection.

of shore birds. *Wild Birds* (fig. 27) includes gulls in the foreground of a beach. A smaller bird to the left may be a black skimmer, while the five small birds at the water's edge are probably sandpipers.¹⁴ The setting may be the Gulf of Mexico. The gulls in the sky add slight diagonals to the horizontal strata of cumulus clouds and sky that take up much of the picture space.

In 1963, years after she had left Florida, Huntley returned to the birds of the Everglades as a subject in a lithograph she did from memory. In a letter to Zigrosser after she had left, she exclaimed, "the drama and lyric beauty of the remote wilderness of the Everglades was material peculiarly close to my sensibilities."¹⁵ Titled *Andante* for the emotion the subject aroused in her, it shows three egrets flying in natural parallel formation above the sawgrass; the curves of their necks and outspread wings create a rhythm echoing the slow rhythm of an andante musical passage (fig. 28). Birds had become a staple of her repertoire, and she returned to the subject in 1971, the year she died, when she made an image of a flock of geese.



Fig. 29. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Florida Deer Resting*, 1949. Lithograph on paper, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Private collection.

Huntley loved animals besides birds. In 1942, she made a simple engraving of the head of a sleeping calf.¹⁶ In Florida, she depicted deer resting in two lithographs set in the Ocala Forest Preserve (figs. 29 and 30). She commented that their bodies were “drawn at high noon when sunlight filters through dense shaded forests where trees are hung heavy with moss.” She also visited Sanford Zoo to study these creatures. One lithograph of a raccoon charging forward (fig. 31) is mentioned in her writing as one of the many forms of Florida wildlife it is necessary to first find, “then draw them, in conjunction with research as to their anatomy and observation of their characteristic posture and movements.”¹⁷ The raccoon has an Everglades context from what look like mangrove branches in the background and would have been an enemy to many other animals, especially wading birds, as it eats their eggs.

In June 1948, Huntley made a trip to Charleston and the surrounding cypress swamps of South Carolina to study bird structure under Burnham



Fig. 30. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Florida Deer*, 1949. Lithograph on paper, 11 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 15 inches. Private collection.

Chamberlain, a distinguished ornithologist and curator of vertebrate zoology at the Charleston Museum.¹⁸ That journey resulted in three lithographs, two of Charleston scenes and one of a cypress swamp. She found the charm of Charleston, like so many visiting artists, in its architecture and its black folk.

Charleston #1 (fig. 32) is a small view of an ornate cast-iron gate and fence. According to Virginia Ellison, of the South Carolina Historical Society, it is loosely based on a view of the courtyard of the Fireproof Building (County Records Building) from Meeting Street. As in some earlier lithographs, Huntley is preoccupied with the effects of light in a pattern of shadows that occupy considerable space in the foreground. The gate appears to be the entrance to a garden with a column, bushes, a statue, and moss-hung trees before a double portico house we partially glimpse in the distance. We see layers of space with other plain buildings behind the house. Huntley thus projects Charleston as both a historically beautiful city and a modern one. The



Fig. 31. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *The Enemy*, 1953. Lithograph on paper, 6 ¼ x 8 ½ inches. Collection of Peter Schwartz.

complexity of the composition, with the intricate pattern of the gate, fence, and shadows, demonstrates her skill as a mature artist working in realism.

Charleston #2 (fig. 33) focuses on one of the city's black inhabitants, an elderly flower lady who sits below the stairs of South Carolina Society Hall on Meeting Street. Two monumental columns on the left dwarf the woman, as do the ornate lamppost and even the door of the building. Here we have a symbolic scenario: the woman would not, because of her race, be allowed through that front door. The white columns could easily represent the powerful, monolithic white society determined to exclude a segment of the population because of skin color. The woman is in the lower center of the composition, and our eye goes straight to her due to the detail and value contrast she provides.

Huntley's work entered its final phase with her move from Florida to the North for health reasons detailed in her autobiography. She and her

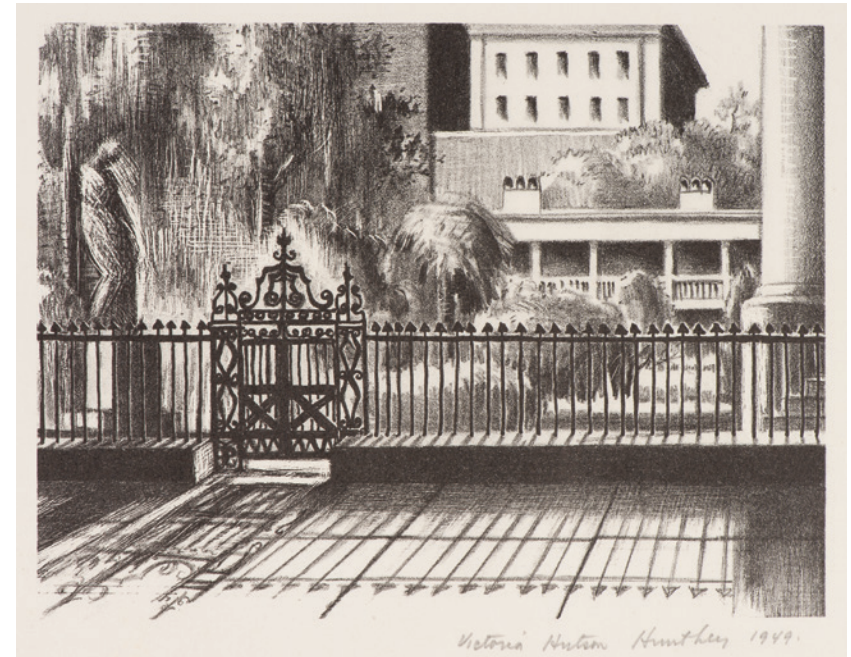


Fig. 32. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Charleston #1*, 1949. Lithograph on paper, 4 ¾ x 6 ½ inches. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; the Imprinting the South Collection, gift of Lynn Barstis Williams. GMOA 2009.19.

husband moved to Chicago in 1953, to nearby Geneva, Illinois, in 1955, and to Chatham Township, New Jersey, in 1963. This period was less productive due to her health problems, but the art world had also changed. During the years she spent depicting the natural world of Florida the realism in which she excelled was pushed to the periphery of the art world as modernism—and specifically abstraction—prevailed. Images on the website of the Philadelphia Museum of Art show that she did experiment with abstraction, but she reverted to her realistic style, sometimes with variations that show the influence of abstraction.

Huntley writes of how she found inspiration in heavy industry, such as the steel mills on the Southside of Chicago, and returned to industrial subjects best delineated through realism. She wrote to Zigrosser, "South Chicago is [a] smelly paradise of gargantuan factories . . . many of which are miraculously beautiful."¹⁹ She also noted in a Chicago newspaper article that "many



Fig. 33. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Charleston #2*, 1949. Lithograph on paper, 6 $\frac{11}{16}$ x 5 inches. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; Museum purchase in memory of W. Newton Morris. GMA 2000.39.

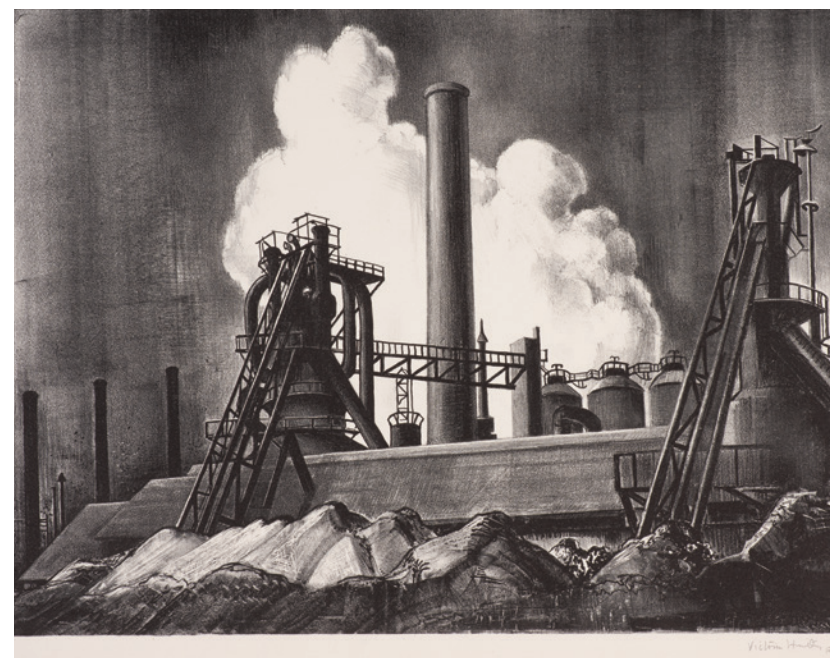


Fig. 34. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Steel*, 1957. Lithograph on paper, 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. Private collection.

of the leading steel producers allowed her to tour their plants to get realistic subject matter for her prints.²⁰ *Steel* (fig. 34) and *Steam* (1958) are two of the most impressive of the industrial subjects that resulted. Both highlight a smokestack, a large puff of steam behind it in white, and the blast furnace. In *Steel*, the composition is fairly symmetrical, with a large smokestack in the center and white steam behind it on a dark ground. Blast furnaces where molten iron or pig iron is produced stand on either side with a horizontal structure separating the two parts of each furnace. Piles of dirt, probably iron ore, lie in the foreground. The perspective is from those piles so that the viewer looks up at the industrial complex signifying the majesty of the modern, industrial world.

Huntley also returned to animal imagery in *Frieze* (fig. 35). She had rendered horses earlier—one of her first lithographs was *Mare and Foal* (1930)—and she executed more in this later phase of her work. *Frieze* combines



Fig. 35. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Frieze*, 1963. Lithograph on paper, 10 x 13 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. Private collection.

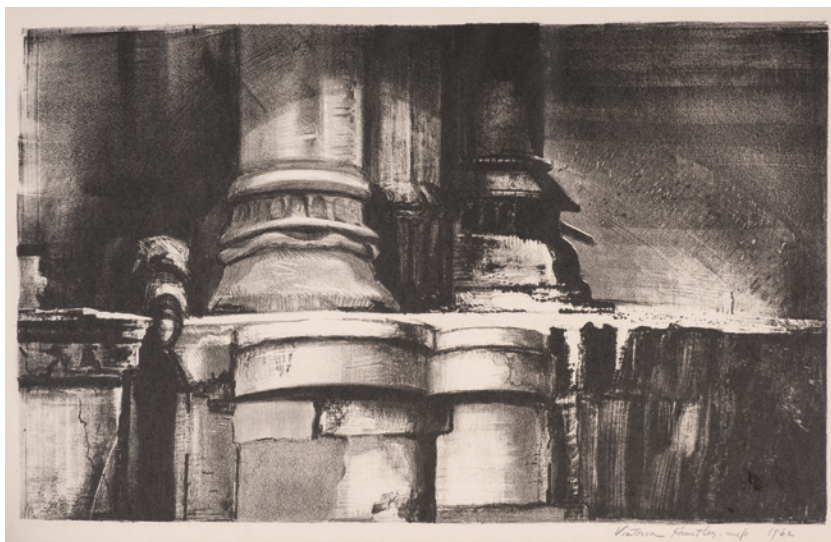


Fig. 36. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Monument*, 1962. Lithograph on paper, 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 15 inches. Private collection.



Fig. 37. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *Ancient Place*, 1964. Lithograph on paper, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 14 inches. Private collection.

realism and abstraction as the ground behind the animals is devoid of imagery, with swaths of black, gray, and white as if tusche were applied quickly with a large brush. A small horse, possibly a foal, stands to the right, maybe watching. Three other horses are in the air, leaping too high for their actions to be a realistic jump. All in all, the composition appears to be a fanciful or dreamlike scenario that suggests creatures pushing themselves to their natural limits. The horse to the left is barely realistically rendered, almost a silhouette in its head and forelegs.

More often, Huntley tried for a more contemporary style that approached abstraction through magnification and simplification of forms, especially in architecture. In *Monument* (fig. 36), for example, she presents an ambiguous composition that shows the base of several columns above a horizontal white line near the center that may be a surface on which light falls. Below the line appear to be sections of two other columns on which those above rest. The space surrounding these column forms is unclear. What we see is forms that



Fig. 38. Victoria Hutson Huntley, untitled, n.d. Pastel on paper, 8 9/16 x 12 inches. Private collection.



Fig. 39. Victoria Hutson Huntley, *The Portal*, 1971. Lithograph on paper, 15 5/16 x 11 3/8 inches. Private collection.

are partly recognizable and realistic and partly abstract, presumably to suggest the importance of a firm foundation. *Ancient Place* (fig. 37) presents a row of one-story buildings in which shadow and possibly dark paint create alternating large unadorned panes of black and white. A pastel reveals she was following a similar stylistic trajectory of simplification in her painting (fig. 38).

A figurative interpretation might be possible for an architectural lithograph of 1971, *The Portal* (fig. 39), which could be seen as representing, if not Huntley's death that year, at least the end of her career, as it shows a closed door. Framed by Doric columns on either side and topped by a cornice and pediment, the door might suggest the dignity of that career. Plain wall is visible on either side, and in front is a horizontal sidewalk section in pure white with street stones in the immediate foreground.

Huntley's usual edition size in lithography ranged from a few impressions in some trial pieces to 150, with many at fifty or seventy-five. Her more popular editions show her oeuvre fully implanted in American scene realism, often with configurations that make it more significant and reflect a strong design. In introductory text for her print club brochure, she stated that her "aim as an artist is to create documentary prints which register the look and feeling of our land, and what grows on it, uniting mood and imagination with authentic record." With large edition numbers and a wide range of subject matter to interest the viewer—in architecture, the human figure, landscape, fauna, and flora—her representation in many museums and private collections is assured.²¹

Notes

1. This number comes from a notebook compiled by Stephen Goldfarb of Huntley's print images and relevant data found on museum and dealer websites as well as a list in Huntley's archives. This tally includes three etchings, one soft-ground etching and aquatint, and one engraving; it does not include a small number of holiday cards.

2. Victoria Hutson Huntley letter to Carl Zigrosser, January 23, 1952, Carl Zigrosser Papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Penn Libraries, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (hereafter cited as Zigrosser Papers), folder 750.

3. Huntley usually signed and dated her prints but did not assign titles on the works themselves. Titles appear in her writings in the Victoria Hutson Huntley papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, box 1, folder 7. They are also listed in exhibition catalogues and brochures.

4. Ronald Newsome, *Victoria Hutson Huntley: The Florida Art and Life's Work of an American Treasure* (Privately printed, 2019), 36.

5. Goldfarb's research has identified that person as James N. Rosenberg (1874–1970), a lawyer and fellow printmaker.

6. June and Norman Kraeft, *138 Lithographs, Etchings and Woodcuts* (New York: Dover, 1984), no. 71.

7. On an introductory card, Huntley stated that “the program of the Print Club is to present each year four portraits of plants and places in the United States.” Documentary evidence and lack of discussion of it in her autobiography suggest that it was in existence only for 1946. Three of its prints are discussed in this essay. The fourth is a botanical titled *Hepaticas*. In her essay on Huntley in *Paths to the Press: Printmaking and American Women Artists, 1910–1960* [exhibition catalogue] (Manhattan, KS: Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, Kansas State University, 2006), 160, Elizabeth G. Seaton correctly terms this organization a “personal ‘print club.’”

8. William U. Eiland, email to Stephen Goldfarb, September 23, 2018.

9. See F. A. Whiting Jr., “Victoria Hutson Huntley,” *Magazine of Art*, November 1938, 639.

10. Newsome, 48.

11. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, December 17, 1950, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750.

12. Victoria Hutson Huntley papers. All subsequent comments Huntley makes about individual prints are from these papers unless otherwise noted.

13. Tom Webber, letter to author, June 5, 2000.

14. I am grateful to Tom Webber, bird collection manager at the Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, for his assistance in identifying the birds in this and the preceding paragraph. Email to author, August 28, 2018.

15. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, July 29, 1954, Zigrosser Papers, folder 752.

16. This engraving may have been inspired by another mural Huntley painted for the New Deal Treasury Department in Greenwich, Connecticut, entitled *The Packet Sails from Greenwich*, which includes the full figure of a calf.

17. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, January 12, 1949, and January 23, 1952, Zigrosser Papers, folder 752.

18. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Henry Allen Moe, June 3, 1948, Huntley correspondence file; Guggenheim Foundation Archives. For more information on Chamberlain, see William D. Anderson Jr., “Chamberlain, Edward Burnham,” *South Carolina Encyclopedia*, April 15, 2016, www.scencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/chamberlain-edward-burnham/, last updated July 28, 2016. Alexander Sprunt III helped her, too (see note 28 in Huntley's autobiography, in this volume).

19. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, July 29, 1954, Zigrosser papers, folder 752.

20. Edward Spellman, “Geneva Lithographer Finds Subject in Steel Industry,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 18, 1956.

21. Huntley's inclusion as one of the artists featured in *Paths to the Press* (see note 7) reveals that her high status as a female printmaker has been recognized.

An Autobiography

Victoria Hutson Huntley
(Compiled by Stephen J. Goldfarb)

I COMPILED THIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY of Victoria Hutson Huntley from two documents that are part of her papers in the Archives of American Art (AAA).¹ She wrote both documents for her friend and fellow artist Norman Kent, who was at the time editor of *American Artist*.² The first eight pages are the same in both documents, one being what appears to be a carbon copy of the other, but after that they diverge. By using both documents, I have pieced together a whole. Huntley wrote both documents around 1965, after she and her husband had moved to Chatham Township in New Jersey.³ In addition, I have added passages in the footnotes from other autobiographical writings, which are also part of Huntley's papers at AAA: "A short synopsis of my personal history," written for the National Society of Mural Painters, and "Victoria Hutson Huntley/Biographical Notes" (cited as VHH/BN). In addition, I have quoted generously from her correspondence with Carl and Laura Zigrosser, which is housed in the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania, where they add important details to her life. All the footnotes are mine, and I have silently corrected some of Huntley's misspellings; I have maintained her often idiosyncratic capitalization and made the punctuation conform to proper usage.

On a stormy night in Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, at one A.M. on October 9, 1900, I was born before the doctor could arrive. My Father had gone off in a heavy rain to fetch the doctor. A horse and buggy were slow and when they returned, I was already twenty-five minutes old. My Mother has often remarked, "You were eager and couldn't wait even then!"

1. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, box 1, folder 5.
2. Norman Howe Kent (1903–1972). See obituary in the *New York Times*, January 29, 1972, 32.
3. This date is based on Huntley's statement that she remarried in 1934, thirty-one years ago.

It is dubious to suppose that weather can influence a newly born infant, but the fact is that I love storms, find them creatively stirring, and I am not afraid of them. Some of my most creative periods have been in heavy rains, and snow and at night in moonlight. In Florida, I became very well acquainted with hurricanes, and I recorded the beginning of one on the St. Johns river in "Tropical Storm," 1947.

My Father was a city man and did not like the country. It may have been a plot on his part (we suspected it) that he selected an unpropitious rural community in response to my Mother's request to live in the country. For in those days Hasbrouck Heights was swampy and infested with mosquitos.

My Father did not get malaria, the rest of us did. I was very ill with it, so when I was six months old we moved back to New York City, where I was brought up.

Until the age of seven, I was not sturdy.⁴ I was kept home more than other children. I drew and painted as soon as I could hold a brush and pencil. After I became healthy I continued to draw to the extent that my family responded to the advice of an artist friend to let me attend art school. At twelve I went to the Art Students League on Saturday mornings all through grade school, and to private art classes in an artist's studio on Saturday mornings throughout the high school period. I begged to attend art school instead of going to college. My family co-operated, and I attended the Art Students League, studying with John Sloan, George Bridgman, and Max Weber, and later on with Kenneth Hayes Miller.⁵ I knew Robert Henri and George Bellows, though I did not study with them. I did study for one month with George Luks, but he made me mad because he painted on my pictures.⁶ I was impatient and stormy and as soon as a teacher praised my work several times, I left the class. Sloan was smart. He was kindly, but his Irish temper and salty wisdom kept me with him. We became real friends. Weber only praised my work once, saying, "You will do things." Luks prophesied that I would be a mural painter, and I would rather paint walls with heroic composition than anything else.⁷ I did create two murals for the Section of Fine Arts in 1937 "Fiddlers' Green" in Springfield New York Post Office, and in 1938, "The Packet Sails from Greenwich" in Greenwich, Conn. Post Office.

6. George Luks (1866–1933), like John Sloan, exhibited in 1908 with the Eight and in 1913 in the Armory Show; he was described as being both "Irascible and impetuous." Morgan, 288.

7. In the document that Huntley wrote for the National Society of Mural Painters (see note 4), she tells an uncomfortable story of an incident that took place in Luks's class at the Art Students League: "In my first year at the Art Student's [sic] League, George Luks remarked one day as I was painting in his class, 'Look at this little cricket painting an heroic figure, And look at this young lady next to her painting miniature scale.' I was pleased! But the young lady next to me blushed painfully for she was an abnormally large and stout girl who longed to be delicate and petite. Obviously I longed to be large and strong. Later on Mr. Luks said to me, 'You are a potential mural painter.' Maybe it is wish-fulfillment still but give me heroic scale and I feel let out of prison."

4. In "A short synopsis of my personal history," written for the National Society of Mural Painters, a copy of which is in her papers at the Archives of American art, Huntley expands on her "early years": "Impatience marked my early years, a period of delicate health. I was what is called a frail child, small in skeleton and kept home for long periods because of minor ailments, which I believe a doctor would have lightly regarded and swiftly eliminated. But since my mother had lost her second daughter shortly before my birth, she coddled me. I was impatient of illness and wanted always to be strong and free. During those long periods at home, I drew and painted figures crudely monumental in scale. I had never heard of a mural. My father was musical and literary and my mother a homebody. Neither knew much about art. So not until my teens, when I began to wander around the Metropolitan Museum, did I discover wall painting."

5. In "Victoria Hutson Huntley/Biographical Notes" (hereafter VHH/BN), Huntley wrote: "I stayed at the [Art Students] League for two years, and I became dissatisfied with the teaching and worked for the most part with an unknow[n] painter Frank van Sloan [very likely Frank Joseph van Sloun (1879–1938)], who did not bother me and left me free to work out my own problems." Van Sloun was a painter and etcher as well as a teacher. Along with Robert Henri, he helped found the Society of Independent Artists. Although he taught for a time at the Art Students League, he spent most of his career in California. Peter Hastings Falk et al., *Who Was Who in American Art: 1564–1975: 400 Years of Artists in America*, 3 vols (Madison, WI: Sound View Press, 1999), 3:3393. John Sloan (1871–1951) was both a painter and printmaker, best remembered for his images of the urban landscape. He taught at the Art Students League from 1916 to 1938 and exhibited with the Eight in 1908 and at the Armory Show in 1913. Ann Lee Morgan, *The Oxford Dictionary of American Art and Artists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 446–47. George Brant Bridgman (ca. 1864–1943) wrote several popular art instruction books (Falk, 1:440). He was also a longtime teacher at the Art Students League. Marchal E. Landgren, *Years of Art: The Story of the Art Students League of New York* (New York: Robert M. McBride & Co., 1940), 97. Max Weber (1881–1961) was a painter and printmaker as well as a sculptor. Born in Russia, he immigrated to the United States with his parents as a child but returned to Europe before World War I, where he was introduced to modernist trends in art. After returning to the United States he is said to have painted the first cubist painting by an American, even before the Amory show in 1913. In his later years, he returned to a more representational style. Morgan, 510–11; and Falk, 3:3491. Kenneth Hayes Miller (1876–1952) taught at the Art Students League for forty years, beginning in 1911. Huntley wrote, "After my first marriage in 1925, I studied with Kenneth Hayes Miller, who had a deep influence on my creative thinking. He was the great teacher of that period." VHH/BN; and Falk, 2:2280.

After three years of art school, my Father died suddenly. His estate was complicated because he had just invested in his own private business and his stock was valueless for some time. To the surprise of everyone (I was regarded as extremely impractical), I got a job teaching art. The summer after my Father's death, I went to Teacher's College with the idea of getting training to teach art. They recommended me for a position in the College of Industrial Arts in Denton, Texas—now called The State College for Women.⁸ I taught there for two years and learned more teaching than I learned in art school.⁹ I have continued to teach art off and on, ever since. Teaching is the best discipline an artist can receive, and it is also creatively stimulating. I continue to teach privately here in my home studio..... Work with both adults and children keeps me searching for basic knowledge, so as I help them I help myself.

8. Now Texas Woman's University.

9. 1921 to 1923.

The year following our return from Texas, I married and lived in N.Y.C. and then in Caldwell, New Jersey. My daughter Hazel was born on October 29th, 1925. By that time and shortly afterwards, I stopped painting, feeling as do most young Mother[s] that there just wasn't time. But two good artist friends visited me and urged me to unpack my materials, set up my easel anywhere in the house, of course I had no real studio but at least I could think in terms of work. This was excellent. Ideas began to come again, and I found that I could work fifteen minutes and even longer and still care for my daughter and run the household.¹⁰

10. In VHH/BN, Huntley expanded her thoughts about marriage, birthing a daughter, and her art: "In 1925 I married, and everyone said 'how dreadful, you'll never be an artist now!' In those days everyone was talking about 'free love.' Modern Art had come to town in 1914, and all the artists talked of Freud, Proust, psychoanalysis, sex, along with the school of Paris. I was very stirred by the French painters but a little bored with the too much talk at the League, and I became entirely domestic, a daughter was born, and for a year I did no creative work. The[n] one day an artist friend said—'Get out your easel-paint!' I did. Sometimes only for short intervals, ten minutes, twenty minutes seemed like heaven, gradually I could increase these periods. The important thing was that I could think and feel painting while doing domestic chores."

In Texas one of my students carved extraordinarily beautiful figurines from gum wood blocks which I had gotten for wood block printing at Teachers College.¹¹ I wrote John Sloan about her work, and he urged me to send them north to one of the early exhibitions of the Society of Independent Artists. I did. They received unusual attention professionally. The student had given me her carvings, and I thought they should be shown to the fine art gallery, so in 1926, I took them to Carl Zigrosser at Weyhe Gallery in N.Y.C.

11. Extensive research failed to turn up the name of the student.

Carl Zigrosser was impressed with them and asked to show them. As I was leaving, he asked, "How about you? You are an artist, I would like to see your work." My response was, "Well, I am just a student, and now I am busy with my little daughter." His answer was in brief, "Bring in your work." I did. And Carl Zigrosser kept everything I brought and offered me an exhibition, if I felt I could continue in the direction of several of the paintings.¹²

12. In VHH/BN, Huntley recalled this pivotal moment in her art career somewhat differently: "I . . . was about to leave when [Carl Zigrosser] said 'But your work? You are an artist too. I would like to see some of your things.' This was, of course, for me a great moment, and I hardly could believe it, and I stuttered that I was only a student, and now caring for my baby daughter. But I did, some weeks later, bring in quite a selection of drawings and paintings. Carl Zigrosser said, 'Continue and we will give you an exhibition if what promises here in this early work continues to grow.'"

Four years later in 1930, I had my first exhibition at the Weyhe Gallery, a group of oil paintings and a dozen or so drawings in black and white.¹³ These drawings especially interested Carl and Mr. Weyhe, and they suggested that I draw on the lithograph stone. They sent me to George Miller and I drew some ten or twelve lithographs that first year.¹⁴ I was enchanted with lithography. For me no paper could or still can compare with the velvety surface of a finely grained lithograph stone. For five years I worked exclusively in lithography and painting, my first love, was momentarily put aside.

Professionally this early work was most successful due certainly to the quality of Carl Zigrosser's presentation of my prints and the timing. As I look critically at those early prints only a few hold up. "Interior," the second lithograph made in the first year, received the first prize in lithography, the Logan prize, in the International Graphic Art Exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago, in 1930. This lithograph was composed from a drawing of my dining room in the old farmhouse in Caldwell. The first lithograph, "Snow Scene" was exhibited in London where it received a warm reception and the review spoke of me as a man. In fact, all responses from England have credited my work to a man, and checks sent in receipt of sales curiously enough have been made out to Mr. Victor Hutson. All my early work bears the signature of Hutson, my first husband's name. Several years after my divorce I added Huntley, my second husband's name to my signature.

During the first year of work in lithography, five Museums purchased prints. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts purchased several, including two lithographs of flowers. The Metropolitan Museum had five of the early ones. The Chicago Art Institute included "Interior" in their print collection. "Jack in the Pulpit" was purchased by the Houston Art Museum in Texas, and the Newark Library purchased "Nantucket Beach."

Frequently I took the train from Montclair, New Jersey, and passed the Koppers Coke factory. The view into the factory was fleeting but compelling. Great puffs of pure white steam billowed forth from the dark stacks; glowing red fire burned between black pillars close to the earth below the bridge. I determined to get there to draw and record this dramatic subject. From many sketches, I composed the lithograph, "Koppers Coke," in 1932. This lithograph received first prize in lithography, the Mary Collins prize, in the National Exhibition of Graphic Art in Philadelphia Print Club in 1933. I was asked to

13. The exhibition took place February 3–22, 1930. A copy of the checklist is in Huntley's artist file at the Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives. I would like to thank Ashley Hinshaw for sending copies of the contents of this file, the record of which can be accessed at <https://arcade.nyarc.org:443/record=b512107~S2>.

14. Apparently Zigrosser frequently sent up-and-coming artists to George Miller, the most prominent lithographic printer of the time, to introduce them to lithography. According to the artist Howard Cook, "All budding artists of the Weyhe Gallery were sent by Carl Zigrosser down to George Miller's studio." Quoted in Janet A. Flint, *George Miller and American Lithography* [exhibition catalogue] (Washington, DC; Smithsonian Institution, 1976), n.p.

15. Benton (Murdock) Spruance (1904–1967) spent most of his life in and around Philadelphia. He is best known for his numerous prints, for which he received many awards. His prints are in the collections of most major museums. Falk 3:3131.

16. Lozowick (1892–1973) was "A precisionist and master lithographer best known for his modernist urban and industrial scenes." Falk, 2:2073.

journey to Philadelphia to receive the prize. When my turn came, the donor of the prize, Mary Collins remarked sharply that though she gave the money for this prize she had nothing to do with the print selected. As she gave me the envelope which contained the prize money, she stated with intense feeling that it was incredible than any artist, and especially a woman, could consider an ugly factory suitable matter for art. Her withering scorn included the jury. Meekly I took the envelope and made for the door and reached the railroad station far in advance of my train. Benton Spruance saw my exit and caught up with me at the station, very kind and assuring me of his high regard for "Koppers Coke."¹⁵ He was on the jury.

At this time few artists had been attracted to industrial themes. Louis Lozowick and others followed with handsome compositions of industry.¹⁶ This theme has a deep meaning for me, and though I did not follow with any other industrial subjects until our arrival in Chicago in April 1953, it was not due to Mary Collins.

My life began to change with a separation and divorce from my first husband, whose interests in life were directed in an entirely different channel than mine as an artist. In 1933 we parted on good terms, I, with my daughter, took a studio in New York City, where I continued work in lithography

and taught art in the Birch-Wathen school for two days a week.¹⁷ In 1934, I re-married. My second husband, a scientist and mathematician, has been and is the right husband for me. We recently celebrated our 31st wedding anniversary.¹⁸

In 1934, James Rosenbery asked me to draw the view from his office on lower Broadway, on the 26th floor.¹⁹ From his window the port of New York spread forth in sublime grandeur. Here were powerful sturdy forms, comparable to the structural strength of Koppers Coke. This was a commission which was completely inspiring. Mr. Rosenbery was delighted with the large black and white drawing and urged, in fact insisted, that I have a photostat made to scale from the drawing for a drawing on the lithograph stone. The lithograph "Lower New York" was drawn and printed. This subject is included in some thirteen American and foreign art museums. I consider it and Koppers Coke to be my two best early lithographs. "Lower New York" now is a documentary record of the port of New York. The port is changed. The Battery is gone, and the Aquarium has been moved to Central Park, and the elevated railway has been torn down. Some years later this lithograph was shown with a group of five other of my lithographs in the American pavilion in the International in Italy. Mussolini selected it for the Italian Bureau of Education. It was difficult to agree to this sale, however my dealer at the time, Kennedy and co. advised me to accept. It was curious that this lithograph which recorded the Statue of Liberty, and all the symbolism of our democratic life should appeal to the Italian dictator. An Italian Count whom I met socially suggested that what appealed to Mussolini in the composition was the use of the verticals, which he would regard as the upraised fist of dynamic power as contrasted to the peace of the horizontal, which he would regard as decadent. In fact, in both Koppers Coke and in Lower New York, I was criticized by other artists because in the case of Koppers Coke, I cut a horizontal across the rectangle of the composition, and in Lower New York I drew the vertical and let the top of the buildings be left to the imagination.

In 1935 Modern art was beginning to be officially accepted in N.Y.C. and elsewhere. Previous to that date I had regarded myself as a modern. I had painted cubist paintings, while in art school, experimented with the abstract, and regarded traditional drawing as academic. I was at this time a comparatively successful artist. I had re-married. I lived in N.Y.C. And I began to

17. Founded in 1921 by Louise Birch and Edith Wathen, the Birch Wathen School merged with the Lenox School to become the Birch Wathen Lenox School in 1991. Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birch_Wathen_Lenox_School, accessed September 24, 2019.

18. From January to April 1934, while a single mother, Huntley was employed by the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) during which time she executed two lithographs: *Canning Factory, Maryland* and *Lackawanna Bridge*. Ronald Newsome, *Victoria Hutson Huntley: The Florida Art and Life's Work of an America Treasure* (Privately printed, 2019), 37–38. She also executed "a small gesso panel . . . painted in egg and tempera," the subject of which is not known. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Mr. Goodrich, March 1, 1934, New Deal and the Arts, PWAP, Record Group 121, Correspondence of Region 2 office (New York area) with artists, 1933–34, roll 2 (of 3), Archives of American Art/Smithsonian Institution. Later in the same letter, Huntley expressed her desire to paint murals after she had finished with her two lithographs, but the PWAP ended in the summer of 1934. In an earlier letter to Edward Bruce (director of the PWAP), Huntley expressed her gratitude at being a part of it: "Aside from my personal appreciation of the job, which has made me feel for the first time, I am functioning as a regular worker with a definite place as an artist in the present economic system. I am stirred by the significance of the whole plan of the Public Works Art Project. It is a grand opportunity for the American artist to show that after all we too are hard working individuals, striving in our way to contribute the finest we see and understand of the life we have around us. I can think of no more secure and profoundly satisfying existence for the real artist." New Deal and the Arts, 1933–34, Edward Bruce and Edward Rowan Correspondence with Artists listed alphabetically, roll 2 (of 3), frames 61–62, Archives of American Art/Smithsonian Institution. The PWAP was the first of four New Deal art programs. For a short history of it, see Martin R. Kalfatovic, *The New Deal Fine Arts Projects: A Bibliography, 1933–1992* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1994), xxii–xxv.

19. Although Huntley wrote "Rosenbery," this is almost certainly James N. Rosenberg (1874–1970), who was both a lawyer and an artist and is listed in the 1940 *Manhattan White Pages* (863), as having an office at 165 Broadway. This is confirmed in VHH/BN, where Huntley writes that James N. Rosenberg bought ten of her lithographs and gave five to the Metropolitan Museum of Art (the catalog records of Huntley's works owned by the Met are available online at metmuseum.org).

feel the danger inherent in the modern movement.²⁰ For me it began to be a dead-end street. I began to long to know more, to be able to draw with mastery. I longed to return to painting, and the city became too tense, too demanding in professional commitments. I worked at night, had done so for years, especially when drawing on the lithograph stone. I gathered material and went out in the day drawing and composing and painting. Soon the long hours at night drawing until two A.M., after a long day teaching and running my household fatigued me. We began to think of the country. In 1936 we moved to West Cornwall, Conn., where we lived in a fine old Victorian house near the Housatonic river. How fresh, how quiet the country, how simple and wholesome our life. All three of us loved it; my husband had time to do research in physics, my daughter loved her school and outdoor sports. We had a dog, a cat. We went to bed early—got up early. No parties, no commitments professionally or socially. I continued to teach two days a week in N.Y. at Birch-Wathen school. The rest of the week I had free for exploring the woods and the river. I painted. I made fewer lithographs—Covered Bridge, West Cornwall, and “The Housatonic River in Spring.” I began to draw wild flowers—flowers from the beginning have fascinated me. Always I have remembered that Leonardo da Vinci said “anyone who can draw a flower can draw anything.” They are miraculous and intricate. I had begun to study old master drawings and paintings in contrast to my earlier interest in the School of Paris.

While still in N.Y.C. I had sold a painting to a Washington collector, and a friend in the city told me it was cracking, and the painting [was] a few months old. I recalled the painting and began to do research in the painting method of the old Masters, the Mixed Technique, —the use of egg emulsion underpainting with resin-oil top painting. This is the method I have used ever since. After arrival in West Cornwall, the year following I entered The Department of Interior’s competition for mural design for their building in Washington. I did not win the competition to design for this building in Washington, but I did receive a lesser commission which turned out to fulfill what was for me the perfect subject,—“Fiddler’s Green” for the little Post Office in Springville, N.Y.²¹ This mural shows a square dance of early American pioneers, the women dancing in homespun and the men in buckskin. I selected a grande right and left. The cartoon for this mural was exhibited at the

20. In VHH/BN, Huntley further develops her antipathy to the latest developments in twentieth-century art: “By this time the Modern movement was taking hold, and abstract impressionism was coming to the fore, and I who had been a modern in the art school period became less and less intrigued with what the modern movement was turning toward. . . . Maybe I am too independent, but whatever the reasons, I suddenly longed to really learn to draw and design, for actually the [Art Students] League, when I studied there, practical instruction just wasn’t given. The teachers were terrifically inspiring, talked brilliantly about art in general but presented little in sound [strike-through in the original] drawing or the craft of painting. I learned the Mixed Technique of the Old Masters, learned to mix oil pigments, grinding the dry pigments with a muller and fine oil, all later and mostly alone. So, at this time I turned to [words left out] most artists to Europe and abroad, but instead I’ve explored parts of the Everglades.”

21. “Springville, forty miles south of Buffalo, was settled in 1808. Pioneers in covered wagons came from the East, broke ground, built their homes, and planted grass in the square of their little settlement. Because of this grass the settlement was called in those early days the Green. Shortly thereafter a fiddler named Leroy built a log cabin near the Green. Their history book says, ‘He fiddled day and night and on occasion other fiddlers visited him. And when they did the pioneers, the men in buckskins and the women in homespun had a square-dance on the Green.’ So it was that the town’s name came to be Fiddler’s Green. Unfortunately, about fifty years ago, they changed the name of their town to Springville. This was my theme—a square dance, great robust figures moving in free rhythm. In one year I drew the cartoon and painted the mural.” Huntley, “A short synopsis of my personal history.”

Whitney Museum in an Exhibition of the National Society of American Mural Painters to which I had just been elected. My mural was reproduced in the N.Y. Times, the only mural reproduced, and has subsequently been reproduced in the Christian Science Monitor, in Forbes Watson’s book “American Painting To-Day,” and various other places. The cartoon of “Fiddler’s Green” is on permanent loan to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The post office officials in Springville, N.Y., where the mural is installed, tell me that many visitors come just especially to see the mural. This is warming to me for the creation of this mural was probably the most absorbing and satisfactory experience of my life as an artist.

While painting “Fiddler’s Green,” I entered a second competition offered by the Section of Fine Arts to design for the Bronx Postal Station in N.Y.C.

Ben Shahn won the competition.²² I won second place and was given the Greenwich, Conn. Post Office job. The second mural was completed and installed in 1939. This ended my painting of murals for I was unable to design for the War Department or Social Security [Administration]. After that the Section of Fine Arts went out of existence.

During the period in Cornwall, four years, I became eager to print and for some reason I never thought of buying a lithograph press. Instead, I purchased an etching press. Etching was not my medium; however, engraving in copper interested me more, and I made several plates of animals, young calves. This period was one of expansion and search. My work changed and looked “old fashioned.” I made fewer lithographs. One, “Moonlight on the Mountain,” a view from a mountain on some land we had purchased is valued by Carl Zigrosser, who regards it as poetic and lyric[al]. I do not like the print.

In 1942 we moved to Pomfret, Conn. where my husband headed the Physics department in the Pomfret School for Boys, and I was appointed the resident artist, teaching one morning a week and giving public lectures on art in the school, and arranging exhibitions of professional art—print shows etc. I had John Taylor Arms come to the school and give an etching demonstration, and Adolph Dehn gave a water color demonstration. I discovered and taught Robert Vickrey at Pomfret.²³ He was fifteen years old at that time, and he studied with me after leaving Pomfret and is now a most distinguished and successful artist.²⁴

22. Ben Shahn (1898–1969) was a well-known social realist artist and activist who made paintings, photographs, and prints. See Frances Pohl, *Ben Shahn* (New York: Praeger, 1972), for a biography of him.

23. Robert Remsen Vickrey (1926–2011) was best known for his paintings in egg tempera. In his memoirs, Vickrey remembered Huntley, though not wholly in a positive light, writing, “In 1942 . . . the prospects improved when Victoria Huntley, a difficult person but a brilliant teacher, arrived at the school. Mrs. Huntley was a nationally known lithographer who seemed to look down upon this skill and yearned to be known as a painter. She began the laborious task of prying me away from my old bad habits, whereupon I promptly developed new bad habits. She used to sock me in the arm when I was too obtuse or unwilling to understand. My arm was sore for weeks at a time.” Robert Vickrey, *Robert Vickrey: Artist at Work* (New York: Watson-Guption, 1979), 13–14.

In 1946 Hamilton Holt, the President of Rollins College, who lived near us in Woodstock, Conn., asked us to join the faculty of Rollins in Winter Park, Florida. We accepted and moved to Florida in late August of 1946. We lived in Florida for seven years. I taught part time at Rollins and the[n] resigned.²⁵ I felt the need to stay quietly at home in my little studio and work. The climate was a shock to me. I am a cold weather person, though my husband who was born in China, one of seven children of British medical missionaries, loved the climate, which was similar to China.

24. The years at Pomfret were not happy ones for Huntley. In a letter to her now confidant Carl Zigrosser, she writes, “Ralph and I are very, very different personalities . . . with different potentialities and capacities. . . . [I have] accepted my fate without rebellion. . . . I have worked and worked . . . accepted rebuff after rebuff at home and from the world’s hand. . . . There is so much that I long to do, to know, is way outside this life. . . . Oh my good friend, here I wrote out to you the sorrow of my heart, which one proudly hides from all others. I wear alternately a mash of gaiety or remoteness, both real enough.” June 30, 1944, Zigrosser Papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania (hereafter Zigrosser Papers), folder 749. The following year, in another letter to Zigrosser (November 12, 1945), she writes about what appears to be some kind of mental breakdown: “Around the middle of Sept. I became suddenly, completely empty, filled only with a searing bitter disillusionment & dark depression. I could not paint. I could not write.” In the same letter, she speaks about an improvement in her relationship with her husband: “One glorious & I think permanent result [of what?] is the closeness, which now is [a] daily reality between Ralph and me. We are married now spiritually. . . . Now whole again.” Zigrosser Papers, folder 749. A few months later, Ralph learned that his contract at Pomfret would not be renewed. Letter from Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, February 16, 1946, Zigrosser Papers, folder 749. Needless to say, this was upsetting. Later the same year, after settling in Florida, Huntley reflected on their last months at Pomfret: “Even the enemies in Pomfret seemed suddenly to become friends at the end of that long four months there. I never told you details, never will. It was ugly, searing & I’ll never be able to forget the bitter lessons learned there or the disillusionment when I saw behind [the] scenes and discovered the causes for R’s dismissal.” Letter from Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, September 3, 1946, Zigrosser Papers, folder 749.

25. Huntley taught art at Rollins at two separate times: first during the regular school year of 1946–47 and then two courses in Rollins’s adult education program in 1951. Her husband taught physics there from 1946 to 53. Email from Wenxian Zhang, head of archives and special collections, Rollins College, to the author, April 23, 2019.

A tourist state, though gay and colorful and fun, was not a permanent living place I best liked. The intense heat and humidity also were difficult for me.²⁶ But the rest of my family were completely happy. My daughter loved warm weather also. So, I determined to find some aspect of life in Florida which might save me from becoming a frustrated woman and artist! I heard about the Everglades—the fabulous Florida Everglades. I determined to explore it and other remote regions of Florida. The St. Johns River, the Ocklawaha River all were extraordinary in beauty and rich in wild life—birds, birds of rare beauty like the American egrets, which I had previously known only through Audubon, the great American artist of birds, plants & animals.

These seven years in Florida proved fruitful for me. In 1947 I was awarded an honorary grant for lithography by the Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters in N.Y.C.²⁷ This gave me money for expeditions into the Everglades.²⁸ The saw grass country to the 'glades was miraculously beautiful, as were the remote mangrove swamps on the extreme tip of the peninsula. I went into Florida Bay and saw glorious Roseate Spoonbills. I became very “Birdy”!! Birds became the people in my prints. I joined the National Audubon Society. And in 1948, when I was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship for creative work in lithography in Florida, the Audubon Society and The National Everglades Park were marvelous in aiding me to reach rare,

26. In a letter of July 9, 1947, to Laura and Carl Zigrosser, Huntley wrote, “When I am tired and not working, I suddenly almost savagely hate it. . . . Heat is repugnant to me, it seems unclean, lazy, slothful; it takes such will power, some times to overcome it. I long for a sharp, cold wing and snow and ice.” Later in the same letter, she takes a more promising outlook: “the major material here which attracts me is sinister because it is so dark, so fear fully mysterious, so wild, so poignant in shapes which awe you, frighten you. Damn fascinating. . . . It is Florida, not the vacation land, but a kind of garden of Eden and serpents fit in such a setting! The skies are noble, however, like symphonies, grandiose, flamboyant and Wagnerian. Great thunder heads rear up in the sky, gargantuan in scale. . . . I am in a passionate frenzy, trying to catch them, record them. They are huge, so solid, you would think that nothing could dissolve them, yet in a twinkling of an eye they are gone.” Zigrosser Papers, folder 749.

27. Nominated by John Taylor Arms, Huntley received a grant for \$1000 from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Institute of Arts and Letters at a ceremony on May 22, 1947. Other artists receiving a \$1000 grant were Peter Blume, Dorothea Greenbaum, Joseph Hirsch, Mitchell Jamison, and Carl Schmitz. There were additional grants in the categories of literature and music. In a letter of August 11, 1947, to Laura and Carl Zigrosser, Huntley admitted that although the grant was to do lithography, she spent her time painting: “I feel a little guilty—Carl (at rare moments) because I do not get to Graphic art!—My grant was given for graphic art and I have had every intention of plunging into experiment. When I returned my mind was buzzing with it. But Siesta & those sensuous cloud, that color demands Painting. I just have to. It is the easiest for me—so free—so expanding. I seem to learn & experiment in paint. I think in terms of it & any future prints will need to find their form of technique in some equally broad fluid method. I can't seem to visualize just how—at the moment. . . . But Carl I am working full tilt & sails are full. . . . Maybe when the dull dry fall comes, I'll get into the necessary enthusiasm for print making.” Zigrosser Papers, folder 750.

28. To further her knowledge of birds to render them better, Huntley traveled to South Carolina from June 8 to July 1, 1948. (These dates are confirmed in a letter to Carl Zigrosser of October 10, 1948; Zigrosser Papers, folder 750.) First, she worked under the direction of (Edward) Burnham Chamberlain (1895–1986) at the Charleston Museum and then with Alexander Sprunt III (1898–1973) at the Cape Romain Wildlife Refuge at Bull's Island, South Carolina. Writing to Carl and Laura Zigrosser, Huntley explained that Sprunt, a “distinguished naturalist . . . is taking me ‘under his wing’ and I need wings in more ways than you might imagine!—They are the hardest part to draw the bird's anatomy. He is taking me to the rare and hardly known cypress lagoons of the mainland!” Letter to Carl and Laura Zigrosser, June 1, 1948, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750. Her trip to South Carolina resulted in three lithographs, two of Charleston and one of the countryside, which she titled *Cypress Swamp*.

wild places where no one but naturalists are allowed to go.²⁹ I was taken to Cuthbert rookery and given two days in which to work close to a rookery of wild birds in Cuthbert Lake, one of a chain of three inland lakes, tidal waters, in the dense mangrove swamps at the tip of the peninsula.³⁰ The National Everglades Park, Dan Beard the Director, provided me with a boat which was towed by a naturalist from the Audubon Society.³¹ The lithograph, which I made from the material gathered here, hangs in the Guggenheim office in N.Y.C. and is one of the best lithographs of this period. I sent it to you. I drew 25 lithographs during the tenure of my fellowship, painted seven canvases, all sold, and made 200 large drawings in pastel, water color and ink line, a combination of several mediums.³² In 1949 I had a large exhibition of the Florida work at the Kennedy Gallery in the month of May.

When Carl Zigrosser left Weyhe Gallery to become Curator of Prints at the Philadelphia Museum, Kennedys asked to handle my work. They have been my dealer ever since, until this year when they no longer wish to represent me in their new gallery. Present dealer—FAR Gallery-746 Madison Ave., N.Y.C.

30. Writing to Carl Zigrosser about this visit to the Everglades on its second anniversary, Huntley expressed her initial fear of the Everglades given its dangerous fauna: "Fear of the unknown, fully realizing that I would be completely alone in that glorious wilderness of the southern tip of the Everglades where I might encounter poisonous snakes or crocodiles!!" There are crocodiles in the Everglades, but they are less aggressive than Florida alligators, which can be very dangerous. Huntley continues: "The honor and golden wonder of those days, when as a Guggenheim fellow, a woman artist, I was dedicated to fulfilling my program of creative exploration. No woman has slept there for sure, for entrance into that special paradise is difficult. I dream of returning and have been promised the means and aid (boat and a naturalist to guide the way through those secret and mysterious canals, which connect the chain of three lakes in the Mangrove Barrier Swamps)." Letter to Carl Zigrosser, May 7, 1950, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750.

31. "Made another and utterly glorious trip to the Everglades and also one to Florida Bay; have so many ideas that I cannot keep up with myself. This has been without question the most golden and inspiring year of my life." Letter to Laura and Carl Zigrosser, January 1, 1949, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750.

29. This was not the first time that Huntley had applied for a Guggenheim Fellowship. She did so as early as 1932 and then again in 1934, 1935, 1941, and 1942. The reason that she succeeded in 1948 may have to do with the strong letters of recommendation she received from friends and fellow artists John Taylor, Zigrosser, Leon Kroll, Rockwell Kent, and Isabel Bishop. These letters and the rest of her Guggenheim Foundation file were supplied to me by André Bernard, vice president and secretary of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. The \$2500 grant (for twelve months, beginning on May 1, 1948) enabled Huntley to travel to the Everglades (her budget for the journey can be found in one of her sketching notebooks), where she did preparatory drawings for what would turn out to be some of her best and best-known lithographs. In a letter of January 5, 1949, to Henry Allen Moe of the Guggenheim Foundation, she expressed her gratitude: "I want to say now in fullest, warmest reality how grateful I am for what has been given me in 1948 and this part of 1949. This year of my fellowship has been the golden era of my life. Never have I experienced so constant a flood of creative ideas, never has my energy been more fired and with it all that sweet feeling of the invaluable encouragement of the great honor and confidence paid me by this fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation." Huntley applied for but not did not receive a renewal of her Guggenheim; the foundation did supply her with a supplemental grant for \$300, with which she purchased a lithograph press and associated supplies, the arrival of which she related in a letter to Laura and Carl Zigrosser: "On Thursday [December 30, 1948], the lithograph press arrived. . . . The extra money which Mr. Moe so marvelously added to my stipend has almost covered the heavy cost of this most important event in my life as a lithographer." Letter to Carl and Laura Zigrosser, January 1, 1949, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750. Financial woes continued to be a concern, especially after Huntley took ill in 1952. Help came through the offices of her friend and fellow printmaker Isabel Bishop, who informed the National Institute of Arts and Letters of Huntley's "illness and difficulties." On November 15, 1952, Huntley received a much-needed check for \$300. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, November 20, 1952, Zigrosser Papers, folder 752.

32. In the letter to Carl Zigrosser dated October 10, 1948, Huntley described her working on lithographs of the Everglades: "I, at last, to my complete astonishment & with great ease, suddenly pulled it all to-gether after our return here from Gainesville on Sept. 6th [1948] I worked on that [lithograph] stone during hideously hot weather & thro[ugh] 2 hurricanes, putting in 12 to 14 hours a day—technical [word indecipherable] under these conditions is demanding beyond any words to describe."

The Florida experience was a happy, busy one, with much success, and many professional honors, but apparently, unknown to me, I became infected by amoebas, shortly after I arrived, and suffered from chronic amoebiasis according to N.Y. doctors who cared for me after I became acutely ill in 1952.³³ The chronic condition had then moved into an acute state and the last summer in Florida, just as I was learning to print lithographs, was broken abruptly by this illness. The following Autumn, after the long acute attack had abated, as is characteristic of this disease, I knew I had to do something healthwise, for it was evident that my Florida doctor did not know what was wrong with me. I went to N.Y.C. in early November and found a specialist who cared for me. I was extremely ill in N.Y.C. and stayed there for three months. I was able to do some painting, and I worked on a book for children about a crab, *The Ghost crab* which is so amusing and playful, which I had seen many times in Florida on the beaches. I made one lithograph "Only a Prawn" in four colors, printed by John Munch at the Contemporaries. I was not strong enough to print. This color lithograph was shown at the International Exhibition of Contemporary Color Lithography at the Cincinnati Museum of Art in 1954, along with "Flame Bird," a four-color lithograph of a Roseate Spoonbill printed by George Miller while I still lived in Florida.³⁴

My doctors thought it would be best if I did not return to the semi-tropics to live. As a result my husband accepted a position as Associate physicist in Acoustics with the Armour Research Foundation of Chicago.³⁵ We moved

35. Ralph was able to get this position as he had earned his doctoral degree in physics from the University of Minnesota, which required that he and Huntley spend the summers of 1949 and 1950 in Minneapolis. While "Ralph thanks be has benefited so major objective has been realized," Huntley found Minneapolis a "dull HOT city. . . [in which she] searched for material but I am at a dead end. Nothing lights a torch Official art here in Minneapolis is all out on one limb: it depresses and baffles. . . . Picasso is a great God. Prints appear to begin and end with Stanley William and [Mauricio] Lasansky and their followers. . . . [Adolph] Dehn [is] sneered at, Wanda [Gág] a little better than Dehn never heard of Ben Spruance. At the University Lasankky is the BIG BOY." Letter to Carl Zigrosser, August 17, 1949, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750. The following year was better: "This year we have a fine studio apartment with marvelous painting light. I paint from 8:30 A.M. until dinner time." Letter to Carl Zigrosser, July 11, 1950, Zigrosser Papers, folder 751.

33. Writing to Zigrosser about a month after her fiftieth birthday, Huntley had a gloomy assessment of her achievements as an artist: "I don't mind getting old. I accept the trials of the post-menopause and even the spiritual travail, grim and barren as it is—but I cannot seem to conquer the death-like despair when I view the non-achievement of my work to date. Would that there were just one lithograph among the many I have so ardently created, that could meet the acid eye of my own critical appraisal. One that might live on. One that might justify my total dedication—twenty years of it 1930 till now." Letter to Carl Zigrosser, November 11, 1950, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750. About five weeks later, she had a more sanguine opinion of her art: "The searing criticism which I level at my production to date, does not cloud one quiet, comforting conviction,—the prints of the Everglades, rookeries and Florida swamps have as threshold genuine and deep experience, further they are documentary. No one else has dared to touch the 'Glades or the remote Mangrove swamps, dangerous to get to and difficult to organize. I shrug my shoulders and am content to accept neglect. For all the inadequacy Of my art form of which I am critical, those lithographs have more possible claim to lasting than most of the phoney abstractions and such which get the press, the magazine reviews and crowd the current shows." Letter to Carl Zigrosser, December 17, 1950, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750. While still recovering from her first bout with (the yet to be correctly diagnosed) amebic dysentery, Huntley was in a state of gloom about her accomplishments as an artist: "I am deeply discouraged at the moment. Illness, subsequent weakness, terrific bills, and professional set-backs do influence the emotions and spirit, despite my recent effort to not identify with my profession, - but to sustain a detached objective attitude." Letter to Carl Zigrosser, October 23, 1952, Zigrosser Papers, folder 751. Amebic dysentery or amebiasis results from an infection of the large intestine by parasitic amoebas.

34. Zigrosser approved of Huntley's earliest color lithographs, writing, "Now to your new prints especially the color ones—I like your own printing ever so much better than [George] Millers. *Wild Birds Big Cypress* has warmth and a certain freedom and range of technique as well as sensitivity of color that is more becoming to you than *Everglades* which has little slickness of a calendar cover. I feel in the latter a little of Miller's influence and authority in a medium that was new to you. *Flame Bird* is better but still not as moving as *Wild Birds*." Carl Zigrosser to Victoria Hutson Huntley, October 13, 1952, Zigrosser Papers, folder 752. Zigrosser's letters appear to be handwritten copies, as they are not signed.

to Chicago in April 1953. It was wonderful to be north again, to experience the change of seasons and to see snow and briskly walk in bitter cold. It was wonderful to be near a great art museum. Of course, I had no relationship to the professional artists in Chicago and I sought none. I am not a modernist. I knew Francis Chapin in the south and he had helped me to print "Wild Birds," a lithograph in four colors, which won Honorable Mention in Audubon Artists in 1953. Both he and Max Kahn have helped in technical aspects of printing lithographs.³⁶

During our first summer in Chicago, returning from a picnic in the Indiana dunes on Lake Michigan, we drove through the industrial region of Indiana Harbor and south Chicago. Never had I seen so magnificent and dramatically beautiful panorama of heavy industry, oil and steel. Living in Chicago now took on meaning to me as an artist. I spent hours drawing in south Chicago, trying to understand how a blast furnace was really constructed. I used binoculars but still had to do plenty of guessing. Time was again broken by illness. I had to have a second rectal operation, after having had two in Florida, which were not successful. The rectal operation in Florida was caused by lifting heavy lithograph stones. The third operation was very successful, but it took time to recuperate and all lithographic printing was prohibited. The drawings of steel and oil plants lay waiting.

A year and a half later, my husband was asked if he would like to supervise acoustical research in Armour Research Foundations out of town testing laboratory located in Geneva Illinois. The prospect was wonderful, country living again and a wonderful old house of many rooms as our residence. We moved there in January 1955, where I had two large rooms for lithograph equipment. A separate studio for painting, frame making and teaching. I love to cook and garden. I ran a nine-room house and entertained for my husband—visiting scientists and they come from all over the world for this is a famous laboratory and my husband has increased its prestige. Otherwise we try to maintain a quiet life to carry on our respective professions. I love animals and have a young German Shepard puppy, four and a half years [ed.: months?] old, who I am training at the moment, and we have two wonderful cats, one pure white who looks like a princess, the other a handsome tiger—both of them may get into photographs I will send you. The Shepard is also white, unusual and handsome. His name is Moby Dick.

36. Huntley took a course in lithography from Max Kahn at the Art Institute of Chicago in October and November 1954. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, November 3, 1954, Zigrosser Papers, folder 752. James Watrous, in *A Century of American Printmaking, 1880–1980* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), called Kahn a "fine lithographer and master-printer from Chicago" (183). Francis Chapin (1899–1965) taught lithography at the University of Georgia from 1951 to 1953 (Falk, 1:615). Huntley renewed her friendship with Chapin after she and her husband moved to Chicago in 1953.

37. Writing in "Background material on V.H.H" (Victoria Hutson Huntley papers, box 1, folder 5), Huntley described her life in her last home in Chatham Township, New Jersey: "We wish that you might visit us in this fine old house where conditions for our respective professions are just about perfect. You would find that I like to cook, and in fact, have a reputation for being a good one. I garden, wash and iron cloths and am a housekeeper, of course. To say nothing of our animals who are a most important part of our lives. We have two charming cats, one pure white who looks like a princess out of an animal fairy tale and a regal and handsome tiger [cat] who is lithe, graceful and very amusing. Our beloved black cocker died this October, and we were presented with a wonderful white German Shepherd puppy, three months old. Since he is white and promises to be very, very large, we named him Moby Dick! He will be six months old on January 10th, and weighs sixty lbs. now. Be prepared to see him accompany me some day into your office at American Artist! This should bring you more or less up to date on the Huntley household."

Since our arrival here, I have had two recurrences of amebiasis, one lasted five months starting with the hot weather, the other the summer following of a much shorter duration. Each attack came after a period of real work printing lithographs, and it has been a little discouraging to have illness obtrude and prevent sustained work at the press. The recent bout with pneumonia is in the same annoying category! None the less, in this period I have produced "Steel" and "Steam" two of the best lithographs of my entire career.

[In] 1963, we returned East. Home at last in the same state where I was born and near New York City where my friends live, where I can now participate in professional activities at the National Academy of Design, (I was elected an Associate in the early forties), at the Society of American Graphic Artists and in Audubon Artists where I served on the jury of selection for their recent annual exhibition.

We have bought a small and charming Cape Cod cottage here Chatham Township and I have a large basement where I print lithographs.³⁷ There are

inevitable problems to prevent a full schedule of work. Amoebic dysentery plagued me during the period in Florida and now I have osteo-arthritis. This does curtail my work in lithographic printing which requires a sturdy body, but through exercises, frequent rests, I am now able to walk without a cane, paint, do my own housework, cook of course!! And resume printing lithographs. The first stone done here—"Dreams of Youth," which is included in your group.

No one detail in the work of printing stones is, in itself, exhausting. For instance, resurfacing and graining stones is rhythmical exercise. Charging the roller is FUN. Mixing stiff ink in cold weather is strenuous and dampening paper proves for me the most tiring part of preparation in the process. However, the entire procedure is strenuous because it must be carried through at one stretch, with no rests between activities. Dampened paper molds if left. Roller must always be scraped and carefully cared for, before and after printing. It is the important tool to learn to use and to care for between periods of printing. Lithographic printing is time consuming and, of course, it would be ideal to spend every day working at the press and grinding stand. I am working toward that end.

Lithography to-day is not a medium popular with contemporary print-makers who create large prints and who seem to like wood or cooper intaglio plates far better as their medium of work. None the less, lithography is a great medium and much exploration could be made in it. It is flexible and free and very close to painting.³⁸

38. In a letter to Carl Zigrosser, she rhapsodized on working with the lithograph stones: "How I love graining them out in the warm sun with my birds all around, entirely quiet save for that special pleasant sound of the abrasive rhythmically grinding a fine surface for drawing!" Letter to Carl Zigrosser, November 30, 1949, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750.

An Artist Explores the Everglades

Victoria Hutson Huntley

THE GENESIS OF THIS DOCUMENT may be explained in a letter that Victoria Hutson Huntley sent to Henry Allen Moe of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation on December 17, 1951, in which she wrote, "Carl Zigrosser has said many times that I should write, as an adjunct to my many drawings. I have an article written in '49 directly after my experience in [the] Cuthbert Rookery, and re-worked often since then." The manuscript reproduced here is labeled by Huntley as "draft 6" and dated June 30, 1952. The original can be found in the Victoria Hutson Huntley Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, box 1, folder 8. As with her autobiography, some misspellings, typos, and punctuation have been corrected but not capitalization. For more on the Everglades, see Marjory Stoneman Douglas, *The Everglades: River of Grass* (1947) and Jack E. Davis, *An Everglades Providence: Marjory Stoneman Douglas and the American Environmental Century* (University of Georgia Press, 2009).

"It is impossible. You cannot return alone. The mangrove swamps of the Everglades are no place for a woman." Charles Brookfield, Director of the Tropical Branch of the National Audubon Society in Miami, turned away, glared at the huge pile of mail, settled his tall body into the chair for work, the lean lines of his chin set like stone.

I remained in my chair. On the wall directly in front of the chair from which I seemed unable to move, I saw those famous photographs by Alan Cruickshank of wood ibis flying over the mangrove island, Cuthbert Rookery, where wild birds lived, built their nests, and raised their young—the rookery to which I must return.

I had hurried, jumped out of bed early, rushed through breakfast, and raced to the Audubon office located in the arcade near the hotel, to find the

door closed. For two restless hours I had waited outside that door, an inner ferment so in process that my sunburned skin seemed to reach fever heat. Passersby had looked at me curiously; a woman dressed in blue slacks, white silk blouse, sneakers, a red vizored hunter's cap, with a drawing bag slung over the shoulder; a woman who alternately stood still, then paced back and forth in front of a closed office door.—“Can I help you, lady,” the real estate man from a nearby office had come out to ask. “If you're waiting for Brookfield,—chances are he won't be in at all. He took a group out yesterday, back last night.”

“Thank you. I'll wait.” Yes, I had been in that group which had returned last night. No use telling him. Only one thing to think of now. Mr. Brookfield must come in. He must take me back.

A policeman had passed and eyed me suspiciously. Swiftly I opened my drawing bag, took out my sketch stool, sat down on it in front of the closed door, pad and pencil in hand. “Oh,—you're an artist, Ma'am?” he had asked.

“Yes, that's right. I am waiting for the naturalist, Mr. Charles Brookfield because I want to return to the Everglades.”

“The Everglades! Gosh, Ah been here all my life and never been there. No place for a woman either. You kin get plenty lost down there. They say, you just turn round and you get going round in circles,—everything looks the same. Lost, real lost—yes Ma'am. No use tangling down there. Ain't safe—snakes, crocodiles—poisonous snakes.”

And then the sharp voice of Charles Brookfield had intervened, for he had arrived at last. “Snakes,” he had said, “are hard to find in the Everglades.” He had brushed past me, fumbled for his keys, opened the door and marched into his office. I had followed clutching my bag, stool, pad and pencil. The husky policeman had vanished down the street whistling “Dixie.”

From the beginning his manner had been formidable. I talked to a cool wall of indifference. And now three words, “It is impossible,” annihilated my high hopes, my fiery plans, and a leaden weariness prevented me from leaving.

He turned and said as an afterthought, “you went on the tour, yesterday? Yes I remember. You are an artist, but to go back alone. Why we can't let anyone in there. The birds might be disturbed. The National Audubon Society had been protecting that rookery for years, now it's part of the new National Everglades Park. Dan Beard, the Director, and the wardens are swamped

with work, and requests, everyone wants to go in—important visitors, and “Big Brass.” He wheeled back to his desk swiftly, and I could see the American egret embroidered white on his tan sleeve, the emblem of the Society.

Even without that official uniform of an Audubon naturalist and guide, it would be easy to know he was an outdoor man. His eyes had that faraway look, with little wrinkles at the corners from squinting. He sighed, tore envelopes open, and ran boney fingers through [his] blond hair, bleached more yellow by the merciless sunshine. An intelligent face—a high scholar's forehead, deep sunken eye cavities with large blue eyes, prominent cheek bones, and skin burned bronze. No fat anywhere, though bone and skin tight over it; so with his words, brief, condensed. But to-day fatigue showed on him, the morning after a two day tour. Tired, of course, who wouldn't be after being in charge of a station wagon, then a boat, filled to capacity with bird enthusiasts some of whom were women who asked incessant questions, and never waited to hear his answers. They had tired me too. It would be bliss to get back alone, without a crowd. But there was to be no return. His words had been final—“It is impossible.”

I had better leave swiftly before tears came. I reached for my bag, closed the folding stool, blindly fumbled to get it into the tightly packed case. In went the stool, out tumbled boxes of chalk, pencils and sketch pads. He turned and looked at the mess I had made on the floor. Our heads cracked as we met, both leaning over to pick up my scattered art materials. He stared furiously at me. Tears filled my eyes. He waved a sketch pad at me, open[ed] at a page on which I had made a line drawing of an orchid at Cuthbert during the trip. He looked at it.

“Fairly good. Lacks detail,” his voice growled—“O.K.—O.K., I got to go back there anyhow to pull up roots from the canal to Cuthbert, so the boat can get through more easily on next year's tours,” He grinned. “Did you hear me? You look dazed—I'll take you back.” His eyes teased, “but you'll be on your own, alone in the lake at the rookery, miles away from where I shall work in the canal.” He raised his eye brow quizzically,—“Snakes? Crocodiles? You asked for it.” He turned to the telephone, —“Mr. Brookfield—”, I gasped

“Name's Charlie—might as well start out informally. Trip like this is apt to be rugged. Diet, beans out of a can. How about May 6th?”

Without waiting for further response from me he started making arrangements. In no time at all simple plans were set. I was half way out the door, making a swift departure before he could change his mind, when suddenly I thought heavens, —then out loud—“Mr. Brookfield, —Char’—I can’t go into the mangrove swamp with you alone. I am the wife of a college professor.”

“I don’t bite,” he snapped, “so you want a chaperon?”

“I don’t want. But you see—”

“Yeah, I see. Well, wait.” He telephoned some more. A couple were reached and they drove to the office immediately, for they had been begging to get into the rookery to take photographs. The party was formed with them, and Mr. John to help Charlie pull out roots. The door had opened. I could return home.

For days I prepared for the expedition as if I were to live near the Cuthbert Rookery for weeks, but two days were all the time Charlie could allow for it. The torrential rains of summer, usually scheduled to arrive in June, might start earlier, so a raincoat with hood must be taken. In the surplus army store in Orlando I purchased two water proof army bags in which to pack art supplies; one, a paratrooper’s bag, the other a dispatch case which slung over the shoulder. I removed the paratrooper’s felt cushion and put in its place a celotex drawing board cut out to fit exactly, —a stack of drawing paper, sketch books, a thermos, and lots of Kleenex. The dispatch case with its many pockets proved ideal for packing pens, pencils, crayons, pastels, brushes, ink, water colors, a folding palette, and the multitude of small objects which an artist regards as essential for work.

Since insects might also arrive in swarms, earlier than usual, I selected long sleeved white silk blouses to wear,—just two, since luggage had to be kept at a minimum: a large kerchief to tie on under my hunters’ cap and tuck under my collar, and clips to gather the bottom of my blue slacks close to my socks to prevent mosquitos, deer flies, and gnats from getting inside any openings. A bottle of army insect repellent, and long sleeved pajamas to wear the one night we would spend in Cuthbert lake. At last May fifth arrived.

During those some two hundred miles to Miami on the Greyhound bus, I was aware that this time, and for the first time, I would be left to my own resources and common sense. I had begged for it. I had asked to return to the wild and lonely mangrove lake, deep hidden in the remote barrier swamps of

the Everglades, and here I was on my way. Creative eagerness, my two water-proof bags, binoculars, a huge flashlight, a red cross kit, anti-venom, and a snake-bite outfit went with me,—my only armor.

Relaxed, almost asleep in the bus, I remembered both previous trips, both official Audubon tours under the guidance of Charles Brookfield. The first one during the year of the art grant from the American Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters, my first initiation into the heart and meaning of the Everglades—the river of saw grass. I already knew how different the ‘Glades were from what I, like so many other people, had imagined them to be. No dismal swamp. No trees hung heavy with snakes. No dark and forbidding mystery. Eyes closed, I could see that first incredible— vista of endless saw grass as it spread measureless before our astonished eyes, a place almost magical in its un-expected openness, as we rounded a bend in the narrow road, some forty or more miles south of Miami—cities and civilization far behind us. At the last tiny town, Florida City where we stopped briefly, Charlie had called out,—“Get your cigarettes, anything you will need. This is the last point of call, folks. Now, the wilderness. Let’s go!”

Then the station wagon had moved through the tall piney woods and palmettos which the rattlers like, through the jungle of Royal Palm Park, completing the one day tour in the saw grass,—that last region of earth in the Everglades before the mangrove trees build their barriers in the tidal waters which finally merge and vanish into the Atlantic and Florida Bay.

I remembered the rich red-rust of the grass, its color in winter, the season of drought which includes the constant threat of fire, fire the most deadly enemy of the ‘Glades. Until the rains flood down in late spring, the grass turns from rust to dull burnt brown, so arid in texture that wind currents moving through it, strike stiff blade against stiff blade. In this season the great, long legged birds, egrets, herons, and ibis are seen only rarely for no water and food in any quantity are to be found. The vast prairie of grass extends beyond the vision of the eye or comprehension of the mind,—un-touched and impersonal, austere and majestic.

As the bus swayed and bumped, speeding closer and closer to Miami all the past months unfurled in my mind, like a movie run backwards. Months of absorbed creative work at my easel and print table recording first vivid impressions of the ‘Glades, work and research made possible during the year

of the institute grant, awarded the previous May, just seven months after our arrival from N.Y.C. and New England into the very different world, Florida. The Everglades once only a musical name to me which meant shining water,—wet glade, or grassy water as early Seminole Indians called it: the Everglades once only a large area marked on the Florida road map, now become the mecca of my artistic intentions. Those drawings and lithographs had been shipped to N.Y.C. for I had applied for a Guggenheim fellowship. My plan for work, a pre-requisite in such an application, had concentrated on creative explorations of the Everglades. Four months later, on April 6th the letter came. I had been awarded a Guggenheim fellowship.

My first self selected assignment, the two day tour into Cuthbert rookery and Florida Bay, had moved into reality. In middle April; that two day interlude in paradise which had stirred the urgent need to return and provoked my approach to Charles Brookfield ten days ago.

The bus pulled in. Early next morning we all started off, hoping to reach Coot's dock in West Lake before noon if possible. One stop was necessary at the office of the National Everglades Park in Homestead. Dan Beard, the director had been told of our expedition by Charlie, and had loaned a new skiff for my use while working at the rookery, a row boat without oars. A pole re-places oars in the shallow water of these lakes. The wardens and Dan Beard came out to wish us well. Much teasing and bantering went on. Tall tales were told, directed at me, of snakes and crocodiles who might call.

I asked that we make one more stop, so that I might get out alone when we reached the saw grass. As we emerged around the bend, as before, I got out and stood on the tiny highway of bleached white broken shells. For the third time, I again experienced that electric shock of blazing light, and limitless space; a miracle this rare river of grass, this grassy water, unique, no other like it in the world. Water? Only little pools which gleamed and glistened in the sunshine. Fish jumped in the watery ditch along the highway: huge turtles, medium ones to small, sun-bathed in lines on a fallen log: an alligator lay immobile on a mud bank. Semi-circular hammocks, shaped like islands, rose up from the flat, thick grass. On them grow hard wood trees for this is the beginning of the tropics, or the end of the tropics if you measure from south to north. These curious islands, fertile oases, probably named hammocks by the Seminole Indians, are crowded with vegetation, vines, bushes, and trees.

Sometimes tall palms spring up from the verdant tangle, their shaggy heads high in silhouette above the low horizon. Only these hammocks and the wild birds break the profound monotony of the saw grass.

I picked a blade of saw grass and brought it to the car for inspection. Charlie told us that it got its name from its construction for underneath each glossy blade of grass are a series of saws, tiny teeth-like prongs which are sharp as glass, needles which can rip and cut un-protected skin. This grass is not like other grass. It is fierce. It is old in botanical time actually it is a sedge. Charlie also told us that sometimes rare orchids grew at the base of the tall saw grass, hidden from easy view, well shaded from searing sunshine, kept moist by the heavy mulch, that rich top soil of the 'Glades, the decay deposited through long decades. The water of the river of grass moves way below, hidden, only the fierce, tall, thick saw grass can be seen. It receives the overflow from many Florida rivers and lakes, but most especially the overflow from Lake Okeechobee, or "Big Water" as the Seminoles call it.

The saw grass which seemed endless—ended. Back in the car we drove swiftly, eager to reach West Lake in the mangrove swamps at the tip of the peninsula: that final tour de force of the Everglades, an impenetrable labyrinth of sturdy roots, branches and interwoven tree trunks. By middle morning we reached Coot's dock, transferred provisions and luggage into the two Audubon boats anchored in the bay. The party divided into the two boats, behind one a rope attached my bright new skiff, behind the other the scow with out board motor which Charlie would use for work and to take me back and forth to the rookery. A happy, excited quiet prevailed. I could hear only the thug-thug of the motor, and the water curling and gurgling along the side of the moving boat. A soft wind lifted my hair as I sat alone on the bow.

We crossed West Lake as before. To reach Lake Cuthbert it is necessary to cross two lakes, first West, then Long Lake. Each lake in this chain of three, is connected by a narrow canal. The first two lakes are devoid of wildlife; Cuthbert teems with it. Charlie, a veteran explorer of long experience, knew the right canal openings. There were many of those openings in the dense mangroves, and to us they all looked the same. So it is easy to understand how simple it had been to keep the location of Cuthbert rookery a secret. Cuthbert, the notorious hunter of plumes, for whom the rookery and lake are named, alone knew for many long years just how to reach it. After nesting

season each year, for too many long years, he killed thousands of birds, selling their plumage for high prices in the old days when ladies of fashion wore hats decorated with egrets. Just exactly when it was that the National Audubon Society discovered the canal opening to Cuthbert and the rookery, I do not know. But they found it and placed a warden on the only spot of soil in the canal, for earth as we know it does not exist in this region of roots and water. Charlie showed us the circle of sandy soil where the warden's tent had been pitched. The story is told that Cuthbert met his death while killing birds in the rookery, shot by persons unknown years ago. His death and the end of his plundering came just in time to prevent total extinction of many species of birds, birds which now under protection again can be counted in thousands.

We moored the boats in Long Lake, for the canal to Cuthbert was too narrow then for easy passage of the big boats, and that's why Charlie had come in to work on pulling up roots. It was hot, still, not a leaf stirred. High noon had passed but great thunder heads, gargantuan in scale, reared up, one piled above another, —the alto cumulus and cumulo nimbus clouds which heat creates in the South; clouds gold-edged in beaten blue. We had our first meal. A short siesta was suggested because of the heat.

As I relaxed on the leather bunk in the shade of the cabin, I could hear the soft lapping of the water, water which in these lakes so close to the Atlantic [Ocean] and Florida Bay, is all salt part of the year, all fresh another part, and half salt and fresh for the remainder of the year. I looked out of the small cabin window and saw the stark white on the forked roots of the mangrove just above the water line, bar barnacles, bleached white, left there from the high water mark of the salty period. Oysters I had heard sometimes clung to the rough barnacles, and a deadly but pretty coral snake might be curled around a forked root. And they said too that three crocodiles, the last free ones not in zoos, were reputed to live in this region. But tales were told. All I saw was classic beauty, sheltering arms of green trees encircling still water; enchantment lay all around us.

Charlie called, "Come on, Vicky, you ready?" He had the scow along side, with my skiff tied behind. Even though he and Mr. John had lots of work to do in the narrow, wild canal that afternoon, he took me slowly in the scow, close to the shore line, so that I could distinguish red mangroves from black ones, and the large buttonwoods, the three kinds of trees which grow in

the Barriers. From the boat I looked deep into dark tunnels, sort of zig-zag avenues between roots. On long smooth branches I saw beautiful orchids fan out on greyish wood; time to notice their curious bulb-like structure and the graceful spray of their oblong leaves. Huge cactus, four or five feet in length, reached out long, thick, prickly fingers of cool green. Air plants can be seen growing on trees throughout the state of Florida, but in the mangroves are many extraordinary varieties, some giant in size, reminiscent of Grecian ornament. Snails were attached to branches and the resurrection fern grew in abundance.

Nature is still the most original abstractionist, for the formation of the mangrove trees is arresting, different, and as geometric as a non-objective composition. At the water line their smallest forked roots, tiny tooth picks white with barnacles, appear first. From these forks larger roots fork into bigger angles repeating the same kind of triangular shape in increasingly larger dimensions until, at last, the larger limbs reach out richly covered with smooth yellow-green leaves. From these large limbs close to the top of the mangroves, aerial roots sprout forth, turning at an acute angle directly down again into the saffron water to grasp into the nourishing muck and start more roots for new trees. This is the good earth for trees, plants, flowers, fish, reptiles, birds and mammals, but not the good earth for man. A boat is your land, and stay well within it. I looked at the wall the forked roots built, knew it to be impenetrable, and realized that here too, the place had been well named,—the "Barriers."

From the shore Charlie steered the scow toward the rookery. From a distance it looked like an island on which large white flowers were blooming, flowers which turn out to be birds, —thousands of them. It is astonishing to see them perching on every available branch. "Charlie, how is it their weight doesn't bend and break the tree down?"

"Their size fools you. Many a hunter learns that, when they shoot them in hopes of a juicy meal, for their bodies are small and light, their legs are hollow. It's their plumage and height which makes them appear enormous."

Around the lake foliage made a canopy of green but on the island rookery most of the trees are dead. "The hurricane of '35, or the 'Big Blow' as the Florida cracker calls the September storms," Charlie told me, "Blew most of the trees over. See that mammoth Butt wood up-rooted?" Yes, we were now

close enough for me to see it without using binoculars. "The birds like bare branches," he said.

With that he cut off the motor, un-tied the skiff, stuck the pole into the sandy marl at the bottom of the water, and tied the rope around it. He casually tossed my bags into the skiff and offered his hand to help me in. I was installed and moored in the choppy water at the proper distance from the rookery. He left.

As I heard the comfortable, familiar put-put of the Evinrude motor grow dim and finally vanish as a sound, I knew that I was alone. A cold, stiff fright paralyzed me in those first moments. I cautiously regarded the water, muddy and innocent looking. No snakes. The boat kept swinging around. I examined it, like an exploring cat in new territory. It was a neat trusty boat, this bright new skiff sent by Dan Beard. While still observing the water, sudden shadows darkened its surface and simultaneously I heard the whirring of wings. Two wood ibis were flying over my head. They and the thousands of birds in the rookery appeared totally un-aware of my presence.

The rookery sparkled with animation; birds flying in and out, circling, curving, gliding, gleaming white against grey wood and glossy green: birds landing, raising their wings, lowering them, preening their feathers: others were feeding in quiet coves which indented the shore line where water swashed and rippled around the roots. Countless others, headed into the wind, stood still on bare branches. Hoarse cries filled the air for these heroic birds are not songsters like the tiny warblers, cardinals and mockingbirds. I watched breathless. This stupendous circus was more fascinating than any man-made theatrical I had ever witnessed. All fear vanished. Two days of paradise started. A warmth and security possessed me then, and for all that too brief time there.

I kept very still, watching for hours, watching, for long watching is the secret and the only way to observe and assimilate new creative material. Slowly I prepared my equipment with guarded movements, so as to not disturb the birds. The grace and speed of their flight flashed before me. Each species of birds had movement special to it; in flight egrets and herons pull in their long, thin necks, tucking them close to their bodies: Wood ibis and water turkeys, like geese, keep their necks out stretched. Four kinds of birds live in Cuthbert rookery, wood ibis, American egrets, snowy egrets,

and aningas, the ornithologists' name for water turkeys. The panorama of this paradise alternately delighted me, then bewildered me. How to begin? I pulled a soft broad lead pencil from the dispatch case, one good for swiftly massing in large areas, then I removed the drawing board and paper from the paratrooper's bag, telling myself,—first things first. Begin with the overall structure of the mangrove island.

What was it like? How did it look? I drew the firm pedestal of its base,—the line of the first forked roots which dug into the horizontal sweep of yellow-brown, choppy water. In the foreground of the rookery, to the right, a huge, dead Buttonwood, up-rooted in the hurricane, reared high against the rookery and sky. Its wild façade, a gigantic lattice of angular branches and twigs, looked savage, almost pre-historic, black birds roosted on its gnarled formation. The form of the total shape of the island was a semi-circle, built in marked layers with green foliage at the top. It reminded me of an apartment house with many floors, and many tenants.

Behind the line of first forked roots, in shadowy, cellar-like apartments, I saw little snowy egrets. No snowys appeared above. They darted around with swift, erratic movements, then froze, still as stone statues, waiting and watching for food. With lightning speed they suddenly would thrust their sharp bills down into the water and swallow some fish whole. The baby birds would grasp the Mother's bill ferociously and push inside to gobble the regurgitated meal she provided for them. These dainty little birds appeared saucy. They scolded and squacked considerably, bossing the baby birds around. Yet no bird has more exquisite plumage in mating season. During that period, a crest of soft, lacey feathers rises up from their pure white heads,—and from their backs and tails long plumes flow, tipped with tiny fans of fine feathers,—the egrets so sought for by milliners in the late nineties. Their bill and legs are black, but their feet are bright yellow, for this reason they sometimes are called "The Bird with the golden slippers."

Directly above them on the next layers of the rookery, the middle floors in the apartment house, I saw hundreds of American egrets, pure white birds of stately and noble beauty, taller than the Snowys, possibly four feet high when mature. They did not hop around like the Snowys, but stood aloof, haughty and aristocratic, gazing intently into space, their round yellow eyes with black pupils had a wild and regal stare as if to say—Watch out. We are royalty.

Their bills or mandibles as the naturalists name the bills, are yellow-orange, legs and feet black, Their spring plumage was also regarded as valuable by hunters, the egrets which are long, silken-soft plumes starting on the back, hanging below their bodies, fluttering and waving in the wind.

On the last layers in the foliage of the mangroves,—top floor apartments, the wood ibis takes possession. They create an arabesque of white and black against gold clouds and blue-green sky. They are sturdy, comical birds with long, green-brown legs and feet, heavy, thick bodies with black wing tips and tail feathers. Heads are bald grey with scythe-like mandibles of darkish hue which curve in at the end. They were crowded close, one next to another, balanced precariously on the top twigs of the mangroves, all looking down with an air of perplexed reflection. Un-gainly and awkward when standing, they are transformed into birds of heroic grandeur when flying. Once they take off and rise into the lofty sky, their rhythm of movement is incomparable. They glide and soar, long legs hanging behind with feet clipped to-gether, their necks curved forward and heads lifted, as if they were searching. I watched them circling around in flocks, always to-gether, high over the rookery. The American egrets and Snowys fly alone, but ibis, like the pelicans, go to-gether in flight formation.

High against the sky on the protruding branches of the up-rooted Buttonwood,— the penthouse location,—the Anhingas or water turkeys perched. The Florida cracker calls them the “Snake Bird” because when this bird senses danger it dives down into the water, submerging like a submarine, shortly revealing only its thin, black neck which then resembles a snake. These birds are full of fun: black or brownish black in color with decorative white and black designs on their backs and tails, they are capable of delightful contortions. They can pull their flexible necks close to their bodies, fat bulges, or stretch them thin as a wire. They balance sticks on their mandibles, throw them up, catch them, dive into the water, swim and play. Their gait is a ridiculous waddle because their legs are extremely short with large webbed feet. After swimming they spread their wings wide to dry, heads and necks stuck forward, a most characteristic posture. Many were perched on the highest prongs of the dead Buttonwood, thin, sharp mandibles held upward, necks tucked in; male next to female. The female’s neck is pale pinkish-ochre color, flesh tint, the male’s is dark black. Their wild protruding round eyes have a

blue skin around them which catches the light, iridescent. They seemed to me symbols of the wild poetry of this hidden place, for all that was before me suggested the beginning of the world,—timeless and glorious. Weeds, burnt brown, rust and orange in color grew from the water around the rookery, and dead growth dripped from forked roots, fitfully blowing in the breeze.

As the sun slipped down closer and closer to the horizon, fewer birds flew out from the rookery, more and more flew in, hunting roosts for the night. Contests for the best places occurred, squabbling and angry switching of tails and raising of wings. Once in possession of the coveted branch, the birds calmly tucked their long mandibles into the soft plumage at their backs, their position for sleep. Gold, orange, and flame stained the sky, gilding the edges of the great clouds, veils of blue-black created long liquid shadows. Evening quiet suggested wild cries and staccato energy. Sundown.

Charlie came then to fetch me back to the big boats where dinner was to be cooked. After our meal, better than beans out of a can, we talked and smoked, then went to our respective boats, the three men in one, we, two women, in the other. The mosquitos were tuning up. Their hum rose and fell, plaintive wails, sounding like a great orchestra getting ready to bite us. We had no screens. But Mrs. G’s husband had brought a potent D.D.T. bomb, along, one similar to those used by our boys in Guadalcanal, and sprayed vigorously before going to our bunks. Mosquitos stayed outside, and I fell asleep immediately, eager for to-morrow.

Several hours later a crashing noise wakened me. I leapt from the bunk, collided into Mrs. G. We both wondered. A Panther? A crocodile? But no,—only a falling board loosened by the rocking of the boat, injuring nothing but our sleep. The two of us talked for awhile, then Mrs. G. turned in. Sleep had departed for me and I continued to sit in the open cock-pit of the boat. There was no moon. A thin mist shrouded the night, turning all forms into fantasy. I could just discern the clouds sail by, blurred, vague. I focused my flashlight with the long beam playing on the shore but all was muffled, blue-white fog curtains destroyed all visibility. The moist air was so damp that I became cold and wrapped my rain coat around me, waiting, watching, determined that I should not miss any drama which night might reveal in the Everglades. No wild cat screeched. No panther screamed. No crocodiles hissed. No sounds

save the hypnotic lapping of the water and the groaning of the boat. The silence of mist.

Faint dawn finally came. I must sleep, for a day of work was ahead, my only day for work. I got an hour or so of it. I was cook and breakfast was coming up. I cannot claim to any good nature during the business of it. I was snappy, in crumpled slacks and I just managed to fulfill my share of the chores. I could hardly wait until Charlie took me back to the rookery. I hardly noticed when he left.

The mist had cleared and fresh morning light bathed the rookery in pale luminous gold. Each mangrove leaf glistened and shone as if it had been polished by a faithful hand maiden. Many birds had already left the rookery, out getting food. With the bright morning light full on the rookery, a multitude of details came into sharp focus. Deep coves, inlets and tunnels formed interstices just above the water line. Here masses of young birds were well hidden. They were busy, hopping around. This early in the morning, there was a little breeze, so that everything was reflected in the still water; the jade and pale blue of the sky, the milky white of the baby cloud puffs, deep blue-green shadows of foliage, and wiggly lines of grasses, roots and three trunks. The entire rookery was mirrored in the cool limpid water.

Long sleeves of my silk blouse rolled up, collar wide open. I worked through the morning,—no rain, few insects. Pages and pages were covered in my sketch books, —rough, swift lines recording first responses to the wild wonder of this hidden place. One sketch book I devoted exclusively to notes on the egrets who this morning were dancing around like so many young ballerinas in white tulle, practicing their routines,—legs up, legs down, legs scratching. Sometimes I drew without looking at the paper, because it happens that when the eye looks with intensity, the hand takes on an authentic innocence and the impact of the emotion in seeing, flows through the fingers. The swift sequences from one flight movement into another defied analysis. I did find that individual movements of each bird in flight group, if drawn in detail too accurately, destroyed the total implication of terrific speed. No one posture was held long enough to complete a single drawing. Change. Change. So little time. Nothing was still save the trees, they were easy. But the island without the birds was nothing. An artist has to develop and sustain an almost mystic patience, and persevere with modest industry. I continued to draw

without looking at the paper, pages lay around my feet. A water turkey dried its wings on the bleached white of the Buttonwood, holding the same posture for quite a while, giving me enough time to look back and forth, bird to paper, from paper to bird. A bald headed eagle arrived, settled on a high branch and caused excitement. I paused to watch and rest my back, and smoke a cigarette. Sitting there relaxed I looked again at the total rookery, masking out details by squinting my eyes. It had the formal grandeur and complexity comparable to the subtle organization of a Beethoven symphony—An Heroica.

The light changed to burning yellow. I lowered my green visor. A brisk wind raised small waves, and caught my papers and off they sailed into the water. No use trying to rescue them. I got out elastic bands made of garter material which I had made at home for such an emergency when thumb tacks did not hold papers firm on the drawing board, and slipped them on. Paper was now secure, and I took out the folding palette and paints and started to catch the intense colors. Drawing and composing is more mental, but color is entirely emotional. It was delicious to squeeze the brilliant colors from their tubes and float them on the paper. The hours were moments, and the ruthless stride of time brought lunch too soon.

Again the scow, again the meal. I hardly ate. I could not talk. I was not there. I did not hear the clatter of dishes and the murmur of small talk. A mood of enchantment held me. I must get back, back to the rookery, no time for rest, not now. Charlie seemed to understand, and he interrupted his lunch to take me back, saying “I can eat any time.” Even in the shade of the canal, rays of heat now poured down, blazing and burning hot on our heads. Deer flies swarmed out from the muck and dark tunnel between mangrove roots, and attacked us—electric needles dug in deep, a searing thing in sunburn.

“Don’t start swatting them, Vicky,” Charlie said, “For once you start doing that, you never stop. Men have been known to go crazy in the ‘Glades from striking at insects and they wander off demented to get lost. Stay quiet. Remember.”

The scow left the canal at last, and cut into the open water and fresh breeze cleared us of deer flies. The sting remained. The lake lay still. Heat rose in steaming strands, a vapor, from the glazed greenish surface. Colossal thunder heads mounted in the sky, and moldered thick ladders to heaven. Large dragon flies with iridescent wings of cobalt blue hovered around our heads

and along the boat. On the water little water bugs skidded around in circles. A black turkey vulture glided over our heads.

Back in the skiff, with Charlie gone, I worked, hand busy with brush, chalk and pen. My blouse was drenched with perspiration, little drops of sweat mixed with paint and blurred edges, my hands were so wet I could hardly hold a brush firmly. The birds were quiet. A stillness as of eternity pervaded the island. The heat had smell, a curious perfume filtered out from the rookery, filling my nostrils, a strange but familiar fragrance of decaying leaves, wet wood, weeds and grasses,—marl and muck, the sediment of swamp. Under the shallow water, not more than a foot or so deep now in the half salt, half fresh period, the bottom could be seen when the wind stopped blowing and the water cleared. It was composed of a deposit special to these tidal regions; sand and shells broken into marl, and muck, fertile from seasons of green leaves changed to slim, ripe food for killifish, crawfish and millions of tiny fish which looked like minnows of many sizes. Marl and muck loaded with life, food for the birds. Rattlesnakes are said to swim in this water during the salty period, and cotton mouthed water moccasins during the fresh interval, but now, if snakes were present, I did not see them.

Suddenly a strong wind rattled the leaves of the mangroves and agitated the water, bringing up the bottom so it became [a] dense, oily saffron color. The birds awoke as if alarm clock had gone off, and the silence was broken by the tumult of beating wings as hundreds of birds took off leaving the baby birds behind. The little birds squacked constant cries, of hunger or fury, possibly both. But the big birds vanished into the distance.

Soon all my paper was used up. I was to be ready for Charlie by four, a long return trip ahead of us, three lakes to cross, closing up the boats, the station wagon to pack, and the long drive back. I inspected my watch,—not much left. Time please stop. But all things must end. And the habit of punctuality finally brought me to slow, sure packing of all the art materials spread around the skiff.

My water proof bags lay at my feet, packed. As I waited for Charlie, I watched the young wood ibis, all grey and pink in their first year plumage, as they stood mournfully like old men with heads bent down, on their huge nests of sticks wedged on tall dead mangrove branches. One of their parents returned to the nest with food, and a violent battle started, with each young

bird trying to get to the mother first. Their mandibles locked, the baby bird's bill inside the parents, pulling the food from her throat. Another adult Wood ibis returned to a frail branch over the nest, flapping its wings vigorously, teetering back and forth to keep its balance, encouraging, ordering them to fly. Their response was a feeble flap or so, and the young birds resumed their apathetic posture. These young ibis are afraid of flying. Their wings are heavy, their bones are heavy and their muscles take long practice to prepare them for taking off with sure strength to soar with their parents in the heavens. Some fall when they try to learn, fall into the water and drown if the water is deep, for only the water turkeys can swim.

It was almost four,—no sight or sound of Charlie. I was very sleepy, sun, fresh air, and a night of wakefulness. I slid down in my skiff and soon was fast asleep. I woke what seemed years later to find Charlie along side in the scow, a curious, tight expression on his face. As I sat up, he said, "Oh."

He had entered the lake and seen in the distance only an empty skiff bobbing up and down in the water; a woman in blue slacks, and red vizored hunter's cap had not been visible until I sat up.

"You might as well stay there for the trip back," he said, smiling gently. "you would like that?"

Yes I nodded. It was good to remain there at last, for this was farewell to wonder. A last look at the rookery, and then its vibrant life and urgent sounds dimmed, the green walls of mangroves flowed by, as the Evinrude motor chugged on, relentlessly carrying me back. So short an interval in Eden,—the Garden of Eden, in which no serpent had intruded,—no sight of snakes, poisonous or otherwise, and snubbed by crocodiles who did not call. A few mosquito bites and deer fly stings, and notes in sketch books to carry back: thoughts, an abundance of vivid imagery to take with me: memories of a place of peace and natural order,—a mangrove island where wild birds lived, built their nests and raised their young.

The little skiff moved rhythmically with the waves. A fluid feeling of complete happiness enfolded me.

Victoria Hutson Huntley's Health

Stephen J. Goldfarb

IN HER FIRST YEAR, while still living in New Jersey, Victoria Ebbels (as she was then named), along with her mother and two sisters although not her father, had malaria, and she “was very ill with it.”¹ Whether it was due to chronic malaria or not, Huntley did not enjoy robust health. Many years later, she wrote:

Impatience marked my early years, a period of delicate health. I was what is called a fragile child, small in skeleton and kept home for long periods because of minor ailments which, I believe, a modern doctor would have lightly regarded and swiftly eliminated. But since my mother had lost her second daughter shortly before my birth she coddled me. I was impatient of illness and wanted always to be strong and free.²

Eventually, she “became healthy,” which seems to have lasted until she moved to Florida in 1946, where she “became infected by amoebas”; for the rest of her life, she suffered from chronic amebiasis.³ In 1952, her last summer in Florida, she “became acutely ill,” as the “chronic condition had then moved into an acute state.”⁴ Her Florida doctors did not correctly diagnose her, so in early November she traveled to New York City, where she “found a specialist who cared for me. I was extremely ill in N.Y.C. and stayed there for three

months.”⁵ In a document that she wrote for her friend Norman Kent some years later, she completed the history of her illness:

Nothing is more dull than a recounting of illness! But I am forced to include them in this account to you, because they explain why I have been unable to sustain any long period of concentrated work at my press. Even after our life had been so happily and healthily established there [in Geneva, Illinois], and just when I was beginning to gain some control in color printing, I became ill in June 1956 with a second attack of amebiosis. I was in St. Lukes Hospital for ten days and ill at home for five and a half months. I resumed printing when stronger and each time showed an advance, but not sufficient control over the stone to print a large edition. I could only manage an edition of 15 impressions. As a result both “Steel” and “Steam” have been printed by George Miller. I printed a first stone somewhat similar to “Steel,” entitled “Towers of Industry” which was exhibited in the Society of American Graphic Artists in 1957; edition of eight proofs were all sold. One was purchased by the New York Public Library.

In 1957, again in the summer, I had a third but milder attack of amebiosis. I have a doctor now who understands how to control this annoying and persistent infection, and I have preventative medicine every three months, and a laboratory analysis every sixth month. Last summer was blissfully free from any recurrence.

It is always important to remember that illness, especially when chronic, forces a person to take care of themselves! That is why I have to avoid fatigue. I shall probably live to a disgusting old age, and really be able to etch and print stones through the winter months for this year and many years to come.⁶

Another health problem that Huntley faced was tears in her rectum. In a letter to Carl Zigrosser, she explained that the problem could be traced back to the birth of her child in 1925. With her husband, Ralph, at work, Huntley had to lift her own heavy lithograph stones, which she wanted to do “on my own independent of anyone.” She admitted that she could not lift the largest stone “but I have two which take 10’ x 14’ drawings and they were the ones I carried.” While doing this “this business of my rear end started.”⁷

As a result, on November 21, 1949, Huntley was “operated [on], not in hospital but in doctors office. I drove home afterwards and have managed the temporary torture.” Her “two doctors warn sternly no more lifting . . . or Else!—a serious operation on rectum.” She then ruminated on her situation: “I suppose it is futile to rebel that this happens because I am a woman. I gather that men too have this kind of mis-adventure.”⁸ She had a second surgery on April 25, 1950, and was home from the hospital on April 30, as

she had no complications, though she could not continue with her lithography for several months.⁹ She had one more operation, after leaving Florida, the date of which is unknown, and reported in her autobiography that it was successful.

In her sixties, Huntley suffered from “osteo-arthritis,” which curtailed her work in lithographic printing; however, as she explained in her autobiography, “through exercises, frequent rests, I am now able to walk without a cane, paint, do my own housework, cook of course!” The first mention of her arthritis in her letters to Carl Zigrosser appears near the end of 1963, only a couple of weeks before she and Ralph moved to Chatham Township, New Jersey: “my arthritis is much better . . . only bothers me occasionally. I do use a cane for safety when walking.” She then adds, “I’m not crippled like Renoir and refuse to become so.”¹⁰

Apparently, the pain continued, as she wrote a year later that “I still have periods of pain, and though I still have to be very carefull [sic], I can walk and WORK!” She was mobile enough to teach at the Birch-Wathen School in New York City “all day on Wednesdays [and] get home [the] same day in time to have dinner ready for Ralph!”¹¹ In the fall of 1965, she was again ready to return to her art: “after the first two years here when I really was not moved to do creative work [and spent time] in fixing [up] the new house . . . but now I sense a new impulse.”¹²

The following year saw a turn for the worse. As she explained to Carl and Laura Zigrosser,

The osteoarthritis has severely damaged the joint between the upper leg bone and the pelvic cavity to which it joins. There should be a ¼ of an inch between these bones, but that is all gone, and now bone rides on bone, grinding away, causing more pain and serious lameness. As the left hip gets worse, it in turn affects the right hip and that has worsened. So surgery is recommended. In fact it is my only hope, for the doctors tell me if this operation is not done now, I will become a complete cripple in a wheel chair for the rest of my life.¹³

The surgery took place in late August 1966, and, writing ten days later, Huntley was pleased with her progress: “each day I can do a little more & sometimes I feel like Alice in Wonderland, as I say to my left foot (surgery on left hip) Please Foot move!”¹⁴ In the months that followed the pain got worse;

she wrote Carl Zigrosser, “the surgeon doesn’t tell the patient that extreme pain & constant discomfort will arrive when the thigh bone is grinding a necessary and new adjustment to the pelvic cavity socket So this has passed.”¹⁵ Recovery was slow and required “daily patience.” By the middle of 1967, she was able to drive again, and “paint short periods standing at the easel . . . But I cannot walk yet. I have a lot of arthritis and am [in] pain every day especially at night.” Her condition improved, allowing her to visit her daughter Hazel in Caracas, Venezuela, for the entire month of October, during which she experienced no pain and “was able to swim without a tube.”¹⁷

For the next eighteen months Huntley seems to have enjoyed good health and relative mobility, but near the end of 1969, a “devastating sequence of afflictions” (in Zigrosser’s words) struck.¹⁸ On December 18, 1969, she had a “total hip replacement.” It seemed to help. Huntley wrote four months later that she “feels full of hardware [and that it is] difficult still to do certain movements, like putting on socks & bending over to pick up things from the floor”; however, she had “been drawing and slowly resuming activities.”¹⁹ By January 1971, however, she was suffering from a “weakened condition, extreme pain [had] started in the right hip,” though she carried on with “creating & printing some linoleum prints for Christmas.” Her surgeon was optimistic about her recovery, but she became despondent: “I couldn’t sit—I cried a lot & became more & more emotionally unstable & Christmas day was misery!” In the same letter she wrote that she has decided to sell “all that wonderful lithographic equipment which was given to me by the Guggenheim Foundation so long ago.”²⁰ Huntley died on July 3, 1971, at the age of seventy.²¹

Notes

1. See Huntley’s autobiography, published elsewhere in this volume for the first time.
2. Victoria Hutson Huntley, “A short synopsis of my personal history as a mural painter” [unpublished manuscript written for the National Society of Mural Painters], October 23, 1946, Victoria Hutson Huntley papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, box 1, folder 5.
3. Huntley described a bout of illness she had in 1950 in a letter to Carl Zigrosser: “No sooner did I send off your birthday letter with its glowing remarks about my continued creative fecundity than a terrific blight came upon me. Everything since has

seemed almost at zero point on my personal barometer, illish, no vitality in body or spirit and creatively an empty shell. . . . At darkest moments I felt that as an artist I am done for—burned out. . . . I cannot draw, design or paint.” It is not possible to know whether this describes amebic dysentery, which later plagued her life. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, November 11, 1950, Zigrosser Papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania (hereafter Zigrosser Papers), folder 751.

4. In a comment on her lithograph *Return Flight*, Huntley wrote that the edition was limited to five, as she was “stopped by illness, an attack of amoebic dysentery which the artist contracted during residence in Florida.” In her comment on the lithograph *Enchantment*, she wrote that “A few hours after the first proof had been printed, the artist became acutely ill with an attack of amoebic dysentery.” Victoria Hutson Huntley papers, box 1, folder 7. Here is her description of the illness in a letter to Carl Zigrosser: “For six weeks I was extremely ill, a curious food poisoning which attacked mucus membranes, and in particular the scar tissue of the two operations. It was a long siege. Heat appears to bring on this condition when foods normally acceptable change their chemistry and turn traitor to V.H.H.! Am 100% FINE now and back in harness. Pain has it’s [sic] great value.” Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, October 13, 1952, Zigrosser Papers, folder 752.

5. “Background Material on V.H.H./Draft 2,” Victoria Hutson Huntley papers, box 1, folder 5.

6. “Background Material on V.H.H./Draft 2.” For a brief history of the diagnosis and treatment of amebic dysentery, see P.J. Imperato, “A Historical Overview of Amebiasis,” *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 57 (April 1981): 175–87. I would like to thank Shenita Peterson, public health informationist, Woodruff Health Science Center Library, Emory University, for sending me this article.

7. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, November 30, 1949, Zigrosser Papers, folder 750.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, December 1, 1963, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

11. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, October 20, 1964, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

12. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, October 15, 1965, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

13. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl and Laura Zigrosser, July 22, 1966, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

14. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, September 5, 1966, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

15. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, December 16, 1966, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

16. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, July 25, 1967, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

17. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl and Laura Zigrosser, October 15, 1967, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

18. Copy of letter from Carl Zigrosser to Victoria Hutson Huntley, December 12, 1969, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753. He added that “you are a brave soul to endure it so cheerfully.”

19. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, April 17, 1970, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753. The hip replacement that VHH had was the McKee-Farrar; like other early prostheses it failed at a high rate. M. Munemoto et al., “The McKee-Farrar and Other First-generation Prostheses Failed at a High Rate Because Impingement Caused Early Component Loosening,” *Journal of Arthroplasty* 14 (1999): 326–32.

20. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, January 13, 1971, Zigrosser Papers, folder 753.

21. For other examples of printmakers contending with disabilities, see Gladys Engel Lang and Kurt Lang, *Etched in Memory: The Building and Survival of Artistic Reputation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 213–18.

Victoria Hutson Huntley at the University of Georgia

Stephen J. Goldfarb

ON MARCH 28 AND 29, 1952, Victoria Hutson Huntley attended the third annual meeting of the Florida Artist Group, at the Fort Harrison Hotel in Clearwater.¹ In a letter to her confidant Carl Zigrosser, she wrote that there she met:

Lamar Dodd, the southern painter [who] was the guest speaker of importance[;] he gave a painting demonstration as well. I got to know him and he has invited me to be the guest of the University of Georgia (where he is director of a large art department) & work in their lithographic studio with Francis Chapin their printer whom he says is excellent. This will provide the opportunity I longed for in working with an expert technician—graining, etching & printing stones—especially in color lithography—my only expense will be board & room, go up on April 9.²

While at the University of Georgia, Huntley mastered the printing of color lithographs. In a letter to Samuel Golden of American Artists Group, she states that “I made my first color lithograph, etched and printed by myself . . . in the Graphics Arts Department of the University of Georgia, invited by Lamar Dodd. It is, of course, less skillful than the other two printed by [George] Miller. . . . Carl Zigrosser likes it better, however, than the ones printed by Miller. !! It’s [sic] title is *Wild Birds, Big Cypress*.”³

The only other information available about Huntley’s visit to Athens is in an undated clipping from the *Orlando Sunday Sentinel-Star*. In an article entitled “Victoria Huntley Doesn’t Cotton To Time-Worn Ideas About Artists,” an (unnamed) writer states that Huntley “has just concluded a series of lithographic lectures at the University of Georgia, going to Athens several weeks ago at the invitation of Lamar Dodd, director of the university’s art department.”⁴

Notes

1. *Sun Clearwater, Florida*, March 30, 1952, 15. Huntley was on a panel that discussed the topic “Evaluation—what . . . constitutes a good painting today?” I would like to thank April Troyer, reference librarian, Clearwater Public Library System, Clearwater, Florida, for supplying this and other clippings about the 1952 meeting of the Florida Artist Group. A copy of the program can be found in the Victoria Hutson Huntley papers, 1929–1999, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, box 1, folder 24.

2. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Carl Zigrosser, April 2, 1952, Zigrosser Papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania, folder 752. According to the program cited above, Dodd gave a talk entitled “Art in the South Today” on Saturday morning and “demonstrate[d] his procedure in the production of an oil painting” that afternoon. For more on Lamar Dodd (1909–1996), see William U. Eiland’s entry on him in the *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/arts-culture/lamar-dodd-1909-1996>, last edited September 18, 2019. On Chapin, see pages 62–63 of this Bulletin.

3. Victoria Hutson Huntley to Samuel Golden, September 15, 1952, American Artists Group archives. I would like to thank Deena Kushner for making available and allowing me to quote from the correspondence between her grandfather Samuel Golden and Huntley.

4. *Orlando Sunday Sentinel-Star*, n.d. [probably late April/early May 1952], Victoria Hutson Huntley papers, box 1, folder 23, frame 41.

