



PAINTING AS A PASTIME

[1948]

(Cohen A235) (Woods A125)

Churchill's charming essay about his painting hobby first appeared in *The Strand Magazine* in two parts: "Hobbies" (December 1921) and "Painting as a Pastime" (January 1922). He had been offered £1000 to write the essay, though his wife tried to torpedo the project. The Churchill's daughter Mary, in her magnificent survey, *Winston Churchill: His Life as a Painter* (1990), records that Clementine "was in principle opposed to Winston's writing what she regarded as 'pot-boilers' to boost their domestic economy." Clemmie protested that writing about his painting would vex professional painters and "cause you to be discussed trivially." Winston often took his wife's advice, but on this occasion we

may be glad he didn't. *Painting as a Pastime* "is pure enchantment to read," his daughter continues, "throbbing as it does with enthusiasm and encouragement to others to seize brush and canvas and 'have a go,' as Winston himself had done before, when, under the flail of misfortune, he had discovered in painting a companion with whom he was to walk for the greater part of the long years which remained to him."

There was nothing avant-garde about Churchill the artist. He worked in traditional oil-on-canvas, and he painted mainly landscapes—"Trees don't complain," he was wont to say about his subjects. Yet he was not untalented at still life and even at portraiture. He had lessons from accomplished painters like Sir John and Lady Lavery, Richard Sickert and Paul Maze, and he effected a somewhat impressionistic style, though he "threw in plenty of my own," as he said of his writing. Although he produced well over 500 paintings he was consistently modest about them, at first exhibiting under a pseudonym and putting none up for sale, though he did allow one to be auctioned for charity. Such shyness seems peculiar for a man so many have described as a towering egotist.

He loved to give paintings away, but would carefully consider any potential beneficiary, and which painting they might receive. Those who wanted one did best not to ask, but trust that a proper expression of enthusiasm for his "daubs" would result in a presentation. Winston couldn't bear to part with most of his works: the largest collection remains in his studio at Chartwell, where they may be admired at leisure by the visitor. Most experts agree that Churchill had real talent and could easily have developed into a professional, if only he had had the time.

The development of the text as it appears in this book was gradual. The "Hobbies" article appeared again in *Nash's Pall Mall* (December 1925) and the *Sunday Chronicle* ("A Man's Hobbies," 20 April 1930); the two articles were excerpted as "I Ride My Hobby" in America's *Cosmopolitan* (February 1926, reprinted March 1961). But complete, connected text was not published until Churchill's friend Lord Birkenhead did so in *The Hundred Best English Essays*

(Cassell: 1929). The two articles were split again in *Thoughts and Adventures* (1932). In 1965, the complete essay was republished in *Country Beautiful* magazine (Vol. 4, No. 2).

By the end of World War II Churchill's hobby was well known and of considerable public fascination, so Odhams Press persuaded him to issue his painting essay in book form, incorporating eighteen colour plates of his works to date, mostly recent ones. Publication was timely, since Churchill had just been elected "Honorary Academician Extraordinary" by the Royal Academy, and his paintings had been on display at the Academy's 1948 summer exhibitions. Thus the little book was an instant success, and had the widest circulation of any of his postwar single volume works.

-Richard M. Langworth

From the Reviews

"Birkenhead's inclusion of this text in *The Hundred Best English Essays* was ridiculous; *Painting as a Pastime* has its merits, and is certainly pleasant reading, but by no stretch of the imagination can it rank among the great essays. One can only suppose its inclusion was a triumph of friendship over judgment; it was thus, however, that the book text was established, enabling Churchill in later years to offer art among his many talents. Its publication also produced a curious trend: quite suddenly prominent people became artists, including many wartime generals, admirals and ministers; and the rush for paints and easels became universal. Those who were not so successful were soon able to 'paint by numbers.' No one will blame Churchill for this, but alas he has a lot to answer for.

"The real interest of the book lies in the reason given by Churchill for taking up this pastime. After leaving the Admiralty in shame and despair in 1915, he writes, 'the change from the intense executive activities of each day's work at the Admiralty to the narrowly measured duties of a councilor left me gasping. Like a sea-beast fished up from the depths, or a diver too suddenly hoisted, my veins threatened to burst from the fall in pressure...And then it was that the Muse of Painting came to my rescue—out of charity and out of chivalry, because after all she had nothing to do with me—and said, "Are these toys any good to you?" They amuse some people.'

"In mythology there never was a Muse of Painting; perhaps it was some unknown, kindly goddess who offered him the 'toys' of his new trade. It hardly matters, for he accepted them with joy, and a new Corregio burst upon the world."

-Henry Fearon (privately published)

Comments and Appraisal

The First Edition is always needed to make collections complete, but fine copies are in short supply: the ivory cloth soils as easily as the thin dust jacket tears or chips. Top boards often contain an offset jacket pattern. Brilliant copies are rarities.

-EDITIONS-

[PAINTING AS A PASTIME]
First Edition: Cohen A235.1/ ICS A125a

Publisher: Odhams Press Ltd. / Ernest Benn Ltd., London: 1948

Ivory cloth blocked gilt with title and author's name top board and (reading up) on spine. 8vo, 66 pages numbered (i)-(ii) (+2), (iii)-(vi) and 7-32 plus frontispiece and 32 pages of colour plates on coated stock. Published December 1948 at 10s. 6d. (\$2.10). Price in 1965 12s. 6d. (\$1.75).

Impressions and Quantities

At least seven impressions: 1948 (25,000 copies), June 1949 (12,000), October 1949 (20,000), 1962, 1965 (twice), 1966. The 1962-65 impressions were bound in red leatherette with dark red round Churchill artwork on top board and blocked gilt and black on the spine. Some 1965 impressions were sold individually; some 1965 and all 1966 impressions were sold in sets of three with other Churchill or related books, similarly bound. The 1966 impression was in the Odhams Bookplan club series, maroon boards blocked black.

Identifying first editions: verso of title page states, "First published in Volume Form. 1948."

Variants

No variants of the First Edition are reported.

Dust Jackets

First Edition jackets are printed maroon with a black halftone photograph of Churchill at his easel (same as frontispiece) on top face.

The 1965 jacket, printed red and halftone, retains the original front face format and repeats it on the back face. The 1966 Bookplan jacket is blank on spine and rear face; front face carries a halftone photo bust of the author with "CHURCHILL" printed black, "Painting as a Pastime" red and a line stating, "A Part of a collection of three illustrated volumes". Rear flap is blank, front flap lists the three volumes: this one, *Tomson's Life and Times* and Heath's *Churchill Anthology*.

[PAINTING AS A PASTIME]
American Issue: Cohen A235.2 / ICS A125b

Publisher: McGraw-Hill / Whittlesey House, New York 1950

Bluish-green cloth blocked gilt on spine: "WINSTON S. CHURCHILL...PAINTING AS A PASTIME" and publisher's name, reading down. 8vo, 66 pages numbered (i)-(ii) (+2), (iii)-(vi) and 7-32 plus frontispiece and 32 pages of colour plates on coated stock. Published 1950 at \$3.00.

Impressions and Quantities

There were at least three impressions, the first being of 20,000 copies. Sheets were supplied by the British printers, Hazell, Watson and Viney, Ltd.; the title page is altered only for the U.S. publisher's name and its verso credits Amid These Storms (instead of Thoughts and Adventures) for the essay's first appearance in volume form. Identifying first editions: title page verso lists first publication in USA (1950) with no notice of subsequent impressions.

Variants and Dust Jackets

There are three distinct variants of this issue: 1) Whittlesey House: bluish-green cloth, reading "Whittlesey House" on the jacket spine and "WHITTLESEY HOUSE | McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. ... New York 18, N.Y." on the back face. 2) As above but in medium blue cloth binding. 3) McGraw-Hill: dark blue cloth; "McGraw-Hill" on the jacket spine and "McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC. | 330 West 42nd Street...New York 36, N.Y." on the back face. (All variants carry "Whittlesey House" on the spine). The jackets are otherwise identical, containing a colour drawing taken from the frontispiece photo on the front face and the painting "Near Antibes" in colour on the back face.

Comments and Appraisal

American Issues are of superior quality to the English and the Whittlesey House version is often found in bright condition with clean dust jackets. The McGraw-Hill version is extremely rare. Whittlesey was a specialty subdivision of McGraw-Hill, so perhaps the latter imprint was produced as the official trade edition, while the volume went to Whittlesey. A truly fine jacketed McGraw-Hill format is probably worth double that. of a Whittlesey format.

[PAINTING AS A PASTIME]
Cornerstone Library Issue: Cohen A235.4 / ICS A125c

Publisher: Pocket Books, Inc., New York 1961

This offprint from the First American Edition, subtitled "An instructive and inspiring invitation to the joy of painting," was first published in 1961. It was reprinted twice in 1965 and once in 1966; the 1965 reprint was also offered in hardcover. All four paperbacks known carry a halftone cover photo of Churchill by Philippe Halsman and a price of \$1.00.

Paperback variants: *First impression*: uncoated wrappers, black spine, blank on the insides; verso of title page states, "Reprinted, 1961". *Second impression*: coated wrappers, black spine, book lists inside both covers; verso notes "Reprinted 1965." *Third impression*: coated wrappers, solid black panels above and below cover photo with extra type ("Includes 16 full color reproductions of Churchill's paintings"), white spine, book lists inside both covers. (The second impression publisher's address on inside back cover is "New York 20"; on the third impression this is updated to the new postal "Zip" code: "10020.") Verso notes "Reprinted 1965." *Fourth impression*: as the third, but "Reprinted 1966" on title page verso.

Hardback variant: bound in laid white paper printed brown, green and red with repeat oak leaf design on boards and spine; on top board the title, author name and a drawing of brushes and oil tube are printed red and green on white panel.

[PAINTING AS A PASTIME]
English Paperback Edition: Cohen A235.3 / ICS A125d

Publisher: Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Mdlsx. 1964

The text was completely reset for this paperback, Penguin Book number 2169, though the trimmed 32-page coated paper section contained the same plates as the original. Published 1964 at 6s. (84¢). At least three impressions, the second in 1965, the third 1968. Wrappers printed orange and mauve. The front wrap contains a colour picture by Leif Frimann Anisdahl of an artist's palette complete with cigar, the back a photograph of a very old Churchill and quotes from the book. Trifling value, although I know of one of these inscribed by Churchill in late 1964—undoubtedly one of the last, if not *the* last, he ever signed.

[PAINTING AS A PASTIME]
Limited Edition: Not in ICS

Publisher: Gump's, San Francisco 1985

This odd little edition of 500 copies uses the same cover titles (reset) and artwork as the hardbound Cornerstone, but is otherwise very different. Boards are printed red and silver with a repeat oak leaf and acorn design; the frontispiece is the author's painting, "Lady Churchill at the Launching of HMS Indomitable"; the cover title box and "GUMP'S | SINCE 1861" appears on the title page. An acknowledgement to *Amid These Storms* on the verso is followed by a new introduction by Winston S. Churchill, M.P. (the author's grandson). Another sheet contains a handwritten number (1-500) and note: "This book was printed at the Feathered Serpent Press, from type set by Anchor & Acorn, and bound by Cardoza-James in an edition of 500 copies." Textual pages are numbered (i)-(viii) and 1-25 (+3). The edition was produced by the famous San Francisco department store and many if not all copies were inscribed by Mr. Churchill.

Foreign Translations

Finnish: MAALAUUS AJANVIETTEENä

Published by K. J. Gummerus Osakeyhtiö: Jyväskylä 1950 in blue cloth; republished 1966 in bright green cloth with white dust jacket.

French: LA PEINTURE MON PASSE-TEMPS

Published by Editions de la Pax: Paris 1949 in pale green paper boards with photo of the author painting and a white dust jacket printed brown. A limited, numbered edition (1-3000, the first twenty "hors commerce") was published in ivory cloth in the style of the English first edition; it came with the trade dust jacket.

German: PENSIL UND PALETTE ALS ZEITVERTREIB

Published by Hallwag: Bern, n.d. in dark green cloth; dust jacket black with red and white type and painting of "Near Antibes" in colour.

Japanese: EGAKU TANOSHISHA

Published at 280 yen by Bijutsu Shuppansha: 1951 in dark grey green cloth; white dust jacket printed brown.

TERMINOLOGY

This guide follows John Carter's *ABC for Book Collectors* commonly used terms:

Edition: "All copies of a book printed at any time or times from one setting-up of type without substantial change, including copies printed from stereotype, electrotype [we must now add 'computer scanning'] or similar plates made from that setting of type."

Impression: "The whole number of copies of that edition printed at *one* time, i.e., without the type or plates being removed from the press." A particular conundrum was posed by the discovery that the stated third impression of the Colonial *Malakand Field Force* (pressed November 1898) carried the same extensive textual corrections of the Silver Library Edition (pressed at the same time—indeed both these books used the same sheets). How then to classify the third Colonial? It is clearly not a new impression. Our solution was to make it part of a new entry, not cited by Woods, the "Second Edition," along with the Silver Library Edition.

State: "When alterations, corrections, additions or excisions are effected in a book during the process of manufacture, so that copies exhibiting variations go on sale on publication day indiscriminately, these variant copies are conveniently classified as belonging to different states of the edition." Example: the two states of the first English *My Early Life*.

Issue: "An exception [to the above] is the regular use of issue for variant title pages, usually in respect of the publisher's imprint...[also] when similar variations can be clearly shown to have originated in some action taken after the book was published, two [or more] *issues* are distinguished." Example: the two issues of *The People's Rights*, one with an index and appendix, the other with two appendices and no index.

We occasionally sidestep Carter's strict definitions for clarity. With *Savrola*, for example, Woods states that the first English "edition" was produced from a set of electroplates made up in Boston, a duplicate set to the First American Edition. The English "edition" might therefore be called an "issue," but we do not do so because no one else does, including Woods, and because this book is quite distinct in appearance.

Offprints: Carter defines this as "a separate printing of a section of a larger publication," which is not exactly how modern publishers use it. To us an offprint is a reprint, sometimes reduced but sometimes same-size, of *all* the pages of an earlier printing (for example the five Canadian offprints of American war speech volumes from *The Unrelenting Struggle through Victory*. In earlier years offprinting was accomplished by using plates from the original (like the Canadian issue of *My African Journey*) or by reproducing the type on negatives (like the Australian issue of *Secret Session Speeches*) In the latter case, the offprint usually exhibits heavy looking type, not as finely printed as the original. Offprints are not usually considered separate editions, but a contretemps arises with modern reprints of long out-of-print works made by photo-reproduction.

Proof copies: From *The World Crisis* on, proof copies bound in paper wrappers are occasionally encountered. This is a task best left to the bibliographer, except to say that in general they tend to lack illustrations, maps and plans that appear in the published volumes. Although not widely collected, proofs do usually command high prices when they are offered for sale.

Dust Jackets = Dust Wrappers: We generally use the term "dust jacket" to refer to what English bibliophiles usually call a "dust wrapper." The two terms are interchangeable, though words that describe the *parts* of the dust jacket, aside from "spine," are common to both countries. These are as follows: *Flap:* The parts of the jacket that fold in around the edge of the boards, front and rear. *Face:* The front or back panel of the jacket that you see with the book lying flat in front of you.

SIZE

Books vary—especially old books—and one finds variations between identical editions. Except where distinct size differences help identify various editions or impressions of the same title, one from another, this guide describes books by the traditional cataloguer's terms:

Folio (Fo.): Very large format, now commonly known as "coffee table" size; among Churchill folio works is the Time-Life two-volume *Second World War*, measuring 14 x 12 inches (365 x 305mm) which deserves this description.

Quarto (4to): Normally lying between folio and octavo in size, though varying considerably in this respect. A telephone directory is quarto; but so is *The Island Race*, A138(c), which measures 12 1/4 x 9 3/4 inches (310 x 248mm), although Woods calls it "octavo" and says it measures 12 x 9 1/2! Other quarto volumes are the Danish and Norwegian translations of *The Great War*, which measure 8 1/2 x 11 1/2."

Octavo (8vo): The commonest size of book since the early 17th century. A large (demy) octavo is about the size of *Frontiers and Wars*, A142/1, which measures 9 1/2 x 6 3/8 inches (232 x 162mm). A small (crown) octavo is about the size of the English *Young Winston's Wars*, A143(a), which measures 8 3/4 x 5 5/8 inches (222 x 143mm), although Woods calls it "16mo" and says it measures 8 1/2 x 5 1/2! (You see the problem...)

Duodecimo (12mo, commonly called "twelvemo"): A bit smaller than 8vo but taller than 16mo: the size of a conventional paperback, say 6 7/8 x 4 1/4 inches (175 x 107mm).

Sextodecimo (16mo, usually pronounced "sixteenmo"): The smallest size of book covered herein, shorter but perhaps wider than a paperback, for example the 1915 edition of *Savrola*, which measures 6 5/8 x 4 1/2 inches (168 x 114mm).

My only other reference to size will be when an obvious difference can be ascertained between related editions or issues: I thought it useful to mention, for example, that the first edition *Malakand* bulks about 1 1/2 inches, while the first Colonial issue bulks only about 1 1/4 inches; or that there's about a half inch difference between the first impression Macmillan *Aftermath* and the later impressions. Even here, the key word is "about," since old books swell or shrink depending on storage conditions, and many were not uniform to begin with.

FOREIGN TRANSLATIONS

Collectors of editions in foreign languages are enjoying a little-known but rewarding branch of Churchill bibliophilia, not the least for the sometimes magnificent bindings of these works (leading examples: the Monaco edition of *Savrola*, Scandinavian editions of *The Great War* and the Belgian French edition of *The Second World War*). Foreign translations also often differ importantly from the English editions, depending on what Churchill wished to emphasize or de-emphasize. For example, Sir Martin Gilbert's official biography records that the Dutch, through Churchill's foreign language impresario Emery Reves, were offended by no mention in *The Grand Alliance* of the activities of Dutch submarines in the Allied cause. Churchill replied that he would make no alteration in his English text but had no objection to an amplifying footnote on this subject in the Dutch edition, which was duly entered. (*Winston S. Churchill*, Vol. VIII, "Never Despair," London: Heinemann 1988 page 549). While we have not gone into great descriptive detail, we have indicated the broad reach of Churchill's foreign translations.

MAJOR WORKS CITED

Three works are commonly referred to in this guide:

Woods is shorthand for *A Bibliography of the Works of Sir Winston Churchill, KG, OM, CH* by the late Frederick Woods, the Second Revised Edition, second issue (Godalming, Surrey: St. Paul's Bibliographies 1975). The late Mr. Woods recognized that his work badly needed updating, and was beginning work on the update before his untimely death in 1994.

Frederick Woods, the pioneer bibliographer of Sir Winston, published his first edition in 1963, astonishing not only bibliophiles but also the Churchill family with the number of items he uncovered. Dissatisfaction with the completeness and accuracy of his work was inevitable as time passed, and Fred, to whom many of us passed our corrections and suggestions, characteristically recognized this. He was hoping to rectify the situation before his death. He can truly be said to have inspired everyone who has researched or seriously collected the works of Churchill.

Cohen is the new Ronald Cohen Bibliography, published by Continuum, a product of more than twenty-five years' labour by the author, aided and abetted by scores of bibliophiles and, through the pages of *Finest Hour*, journal of The Churchill Centre.

Both Frederick Woods, before he died, and Ronald Cohen kindly gave permission to quote their bibliographic numbers here as a cross reference.

ICS refers to a publication of the International Churchill Societies, *Churchill Bibliographic Data, Part 1* ("Works by Churchill"). Pending release of the update, which he did not succeed in publishing, Mr. Woods also permitted the International Churchill Society to publish an "Amplified list" based on his numbers, but with more detailed sub-designations to pinpoint the various editions and issues. For example, *The World Crisis* has assigned three "Woods" numbers: A31(a) through A31(c). The ICS "Amplified Woods list" runs from A31a through A31k (in order to distinguish certain deservingly distinct editions and issues. Except for deleting the parentheses, in no case did ICS alter any basic Woods numbers. For example, even *Blenheim*, which undeservedly holds Woods number A40(c)—it is only an excerpt, and probably should not be among the "A" titles at all—is retained by ICS. Thus, "ICS" numbers are merely an extension of Woods numbers.

END