

A RETROSPECTIVE  
EXHIBITION OF  
THE WORK  
OF *Van Soelen*



On the Cover:

"THE QUICK AND THE DEAD"

Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hubbard

# An Exercise

With the Awarding of an Honorary Fellowship in Fine Arts  
by the School of American Research, Santa Fe

## HONORING

**THEODORE VAN SOELEN, N. A.**

**NEW MEXICO PAINTER AND LITHOGRAPHER**

## INTRODUCTIONS

By FREDERICK BLACK,  
Acting Associate Director, Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

## SOELIE, FROM A LAYMAN'S POINT OF VIEW

By JOHN GAW MEEM, Architect  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

## VAN SOELEN, THE ARTIST

By PETER HURD, Artist  
San Patricio, New Mexico

## VAN SOELEN, PHILOSOPHER AND HISTORIAN

By DR. REGINALD FISHER,  
Director, El Paso Museum of Art  
El Paso, Texas

## CITATION

By BOAZ LONG,  
Chairman, School of American Research  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

**MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO ART GALLERY,  
MAY 1, 1960**

St. Francis Auditorium, 3:30 p.m.



Theodore and Virginia Van Soelen

## Appreciation

is expressed by the artist and the Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery to the friends who have loaned their pictures for this exhibition, and to the School of American Research who has made it possible.

One of these days New Mexico should erect a monument to the tubercle bacillus, which has brought to the state so many outstanding citizens, from politicians to poets. One of these is Theodore Van Soelen, a native of Saint Paul, Minnesota, who arrived in New Mexico in 1916, to become one of the pioneers of the state's art group.

He had had a brief experience of the desert west of Utah and Nevada a few years earlier. He had completed an artist's training and was winning recognition. Just turning twenty-six, he was at the point at which the mature young artist is in the process of breaking away from the gravitational pull of his teachers and exemplars, to form his own manner as an artist, to finish forming himself as a person.

That process can be seen in the sequence of his paintings, as also we can see how he incorporated New Mexico into himself. He is not merely an artist who moved to New Mexico, but deeply a New Mexico artist.

He has never been limited to the New Mexico scene, as witness his portraits, but he has done a mighty work of recording that scene, including drab, wooden shacks and adobe houses with pitched, tin roofs. To this layman, it seems that he takes scenes that it is a cliché with us to deplore and, with effective under-emphasis, reveals the beauty in them. Perhaps some of his painting in this group could be looked upon as an application of the principles of the famous, urban Ash Can School to the great open spaces.

Inevitably, he has painted Indians. They are his neighbors at Tesuque and he has ranged among the Apaches and Navajos. He portrays them with a gratifying lack of sentimentality. Among the people of the Southwest, however, his first love seems to be the cattlemen. Beginning at San Mateo when he first came here, he has seen, and taken part in, all aspects of cattle ranching. He has recorded them in a variety of media, including his telling lithographs. The depictions are literal; they are fraught with intimate knowledge and deep feeling.

There are working cattle ranches within an hour's drive of Santa Fe; most Santa Feans know nothing of them. The standardized mythology of much of Western fiction, of almost all the movies and TV, has all but erased from American memory the true image of the cowboy, replacing him with a ham actor wearing two guns and a fancy shirt, the beau ideal of all red-blooded Americans under ten.

Although more of it disappears every year, there still remains a good deal of the West that Wister described and Remington painted. Van Soelen's Western subjects are in their tradition. He has lived with the land, the people, and the animals, and set them down as they are. This is what working cowboys look like, this is catching a horse in a rope corral, this is meal time by the chuck wagon, this is the landscape, these are the dwellings. When

marauding space cadets have driven the last two-gun man from the celluloid ranges, this corpus will stand with that of earlier men, to tell our grandchildren the truth about the West.

The reader may feel that this introduction has gone overboard on one aspect of Van Soelen's work at the expense of the rest, such as his impressive roster of portraits of adults and his appealing, sympathetic portraits of children. I am not a critic and cannot attempt a technical discussion of his output. I emphasize what most interests a layman who loves the Southwest.

Another thing must be said. Van Soelen joined the Santa Fe art colony in 1922, when it was young and full of beans. In those days it had an ancient Greek quality in that its members considered anyone who was not civically active to be, as the Greeks said, an idiot. No other artist has followed that fine tradition more thoroughly than Van Soelen, leading to his long and selfless service on the State Police Commission, which ended only recently. That early illness brought to New Mexico a man who has enriched the state as artist and as citizen.

**OLIVER LaFARGE**

Since, roughly, the middle of the nineteenth century much has been written about art. Before then, for twenty-five thousand years, more or less, artists managed to create and others managed to understand and appreciate these creations without benefit of explanation or interpretation. If it should be necessary to describe paintings and postulate how they were executed, it could be done without pseudo-technical terms in words everyone could understand. However, it is the pictures themselves that tell all there is to say about what an artist has accomplished. Of course everyone should not be expected to see the same thing in a picture and admire it; neither should they be told what to admire. The painting that is considered a masterpiece today often becomes a "buckeye" tomorrow because those who praised it put something in it which was not there—originality, for instance. Originality is the very core of great art, yet the pictures that have always received highest praise are those which fit nicely into the prevailing style, although artists are not supposed to swim in schools like fish.

Of course artists have always borrowed from one another. Nevertheless, to paraphrase Hemingway, a masterpiece can not derive from, or resemble, a previous masterpiece, which does not mean that a painting is great simply because it is different. Regardless of the kind of painting being done, there must be talent and the ability to execute the conception skillfully while the creative flame burns brightly; otherwise the work will be commonplace and dead. The required factors do not always come together

even for the gifted artist so the signature on a painting does not necessarily guarantee that it is good, for it may be quite bad, as sometimes happens. Yet most galleries and collectors buy signatures—which does not benefit the living artist much for it takes time and publicity to build up a name. So the artist learns to accept the silly economics of his profession and live for what he is doing, believing it is worth while and convinced that if he can create something truly beautiful nothing else matters.

THEODORE VAN SOELEN

## Chronology

- 1890 Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, February 15.
- 1908 Studied art at St. Paul Institute of Arts and Sciences.
- 1910 Salt Lake City, Utah, and Nevada
- 1911 Studied at Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia
- 1913-14 Studied in Europe; Cresson Travelling Scholarship from Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.
- 1915-16 Began exhibiting professionally at Exhibitions of Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and Corcoran Gallery.
- 1916 Sold first pictures from Exhibitions, first to the permanent collection of Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, "Summer Morning" painted in June 1915.
- 1916 on Exhibited:  
The National Academy of Design, New York  
The Metropolitan Museum, New York  
The Modern Museum, New York  
The Ferargil Gallery, New York  
The Macbeth Gallery, New York  
The Century Association, New York  
Grand Central Gallery, New York  
Rockefeller Plaza Gallery, New York  
The Chicago Art Institute, Chicago  
The Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pa.

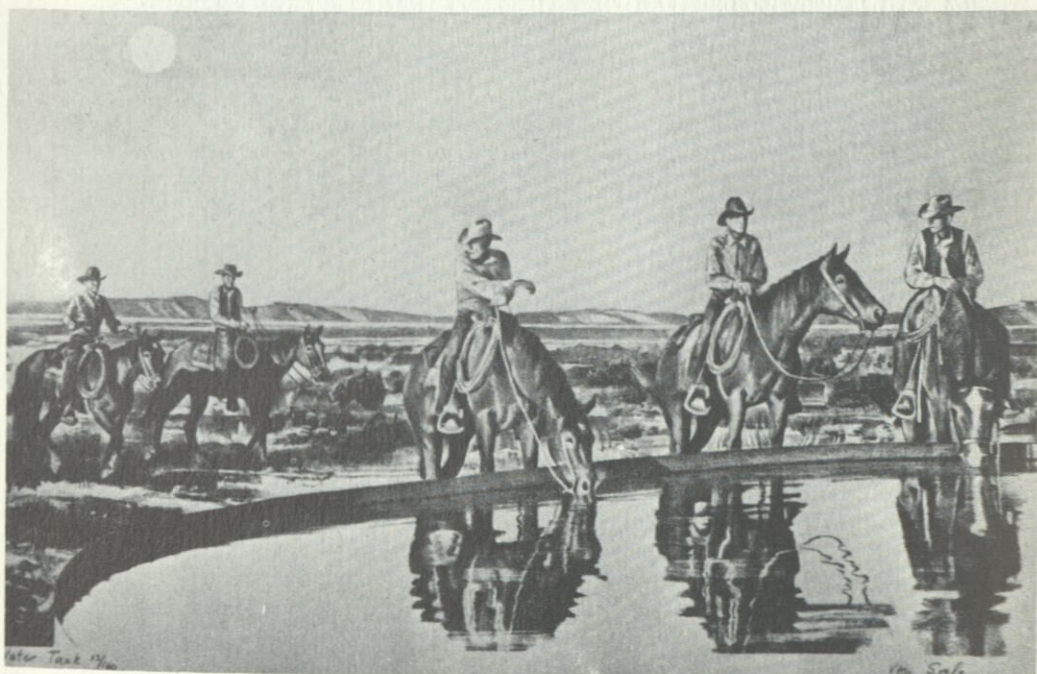
- The Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D. C.  
 The Cincinnati Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio  
 The Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, Columbus, Ohio  
 The Boston Art Club, Boston, Mass.  
 The Philadelphia Art Club, Philadelphia, Pa.  
 Many other galleries in the United States.
- 1916 Came to New Mexico for tuberculosis.
- 1917 Exhibited in dedication exhibition of the Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery.
- 1919 San Mateo, New Mexico, Fernandez Company ranch
- 1920 First one-man show, St. Paul, Minnesota.
- 1920-21 Lived at trading post part of time, San Ysidro, N. M.
- 1921 One-man show in Cincinnati Museum.
- 1921 Married Virginia Morrison Carr, Albuquerque, December 28.
- 1922 Moved to Santa Fe.
- 1926 Moved to Tesuque.
- 1926 on Many one-man shows, several in New York, Ferargil Gallery, etc.; galleries in Pasadena; Hollywood; El Paso, Texas; Tucson, Arizona; The Botts Memorial Gallery, Albuquerque; The University of Chihuahua, Mexico.
- 1926 Bronze Medal Sesqui-Centennial International Exhibition, Philadelphia.
- 1927 J. Francis Murphy Prize, National Academy of Design, New York.
- 1930 First Altman Prize, National Academy of Design, New York.
- 1931 May Audubon Post Prize, Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia.
- 1932 Ranger Fund Purchase, National Academy of Design, New York.
- 1933 Elected Associate Member of National Academy of Design
- 1934 Opened studio in Cornwall, Connecticut, thereafter commuting between Tesuque and Cornwall.
- 1940 Elected National Academician.
- 1948 Started lithography. Pictures and prints in numerous public and private collections: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; National Academy of Design; Everhart Museum; Museum of



**"MY DAUGHTER JAY"**  
*(deceased)*  
Loaned by the Artist

New Mexico; International Business Machines Collection;  
Library of Congress; Public Schools of Philadelphia;  
Public Schools of Denver; Post Office, Livingston, Texas;  
Post Office, Waureka, Oklahoma; Grant County Court House,  
Silver City, N. M.; Post Office, Portales, N. M.

1960 Retrospective Exhibition, Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery.  
Member of Century Association, New York and Salmagundi Club,  
New York.  
Home and studio, Tesuque, N. M.  
Children: Daniel Donaldson Van Soelen  
Theodore Van Soelen, Jr.  
Virginia Van Soelen, deceased



"LONG DAY"  
Loaned by the Artist



"JUDGE SAM BRATTON"

Loaned by the United States District Court



"BURIAL"  
May Audubon Post Prize Fellowship,  
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts



"THE BISHOP'S CHAPEL"  
Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery Permanent Collection  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dendahl

# Catalogue

1. "PAULINE"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mrs. A. K. Mills  
Princeton, N. J.
2. "LAURENCE F. LEE"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Occidental Life Insurance Co.  
Raleigh, N. C.
3. "SHADOWS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Herbert W. Clark  
San Francisco, Calif.
4. "ROBERT E. DIETZ II"—*Charcoal Drawing*  
Loaned by Robert E. Dietz  
Syracuse, N. Y.
5. "MRS. KENNON DUNHAM"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Miss Amelia K. Dunham  
Cincinnati, Ohio
6. "AMELIA DUNHAM"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Miss Amelia K. Dunham  
Cincinnati, Ohio
7. "YESTERDAY"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Delta Drilling Company  
Tyler, Texas
8. "ROAD TO SANTA FE"—*Oil*  
Loaned by U. S. Borax and Chemical  
Corporation, Carlsbad, N. M.
9. "GATHERING FOR VESPERS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mrs. Wallace Perry  
Las Cruces, N. M.
10. "BRIGHT MORNING"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Lee Phillips, Jr.  
Wichita, Kan.
11. "THE QUICK AND THE DEAD"—*Tempera*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hubbard  
Corona Del Mar, Calif.
12. "WORKING WITH THE WAGON"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Ralph M. Rounds, Wichita, Kan.
13. "JEAN COE"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. John A. Coe  
Waterbury, Conn.
14. "SUMMER MORNING"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Pennsylvania Academy of  
the Fine Arts  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
Purchased from the Academy's 111th  
Annual Exhibition, 1916
15. "BRANDING"—*Oil*  
Loaned by David T. Beals  
Kansas City, Mo.
16. "JOAN"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mrs. Georgine McFarlane  
Las Vegas, Nev.
17. "FRANCIS HENRY HASEROT"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Miss Margaret Haserot  
Novelty, Ohio
18. "NOON ON THE DIAMOND A"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred King  
McAllen, Texas
19. "DEEP SHADOWS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe  
Railway Company, Chicago, Ill.
20. "BENEATH THE CROSSES"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mrs. John Bushnell  
Decatur, Ga.
21. "ADOBES, SNOW AND SUNSHINE"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Women's National  
Republican Club, New York, N. Y.  
J. Francis Murphy Prize, National  
Academy of Design
22. "COWBOY'S HOME"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. I. M. Smalley  
Deming, N. M.

23. "SNOW"—*Oil*  
Loaned by John Stephen Burke  
New York, N. Y.  
First Altman Prize, National Academy  
of Design
24. "V. F. NEUHAUS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. V. F. Neuhaus  
Mission, Texas
25. "RICHARD KING"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Richard King  
Corpus Christi, Texas
26. "BETTY"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mrs. Theodore S. Woolsey  
New Haven, Conn.
27. "THE FLAMINGO GATE"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Fyfe Peters  
Gallup, N. M.
28. "THE LAST SNOW"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Everhart Museum  
Scranton, Pa.
29. "MRS. JOHN CALHOUN"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Calhoun  
Cornwall, Conn.
30. "WHITE HILLS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Loomis Institute  
Windsor, Conn.
31. "WEEK BEFORE CHRISTMAS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Loomis Institute  
Windsor, Conn.
32. "CORRAL"—*Oil*  
From International Business Machines  
Corporation Collection  
New York, N. Y.
33. "CIENEGA"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Laurence F. Lee  
Jacksonville, Fla.
34. "LAURENCE F. LEE"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Laurence F. Lee  
Jacksonville, Fla.
35. "MORNING—OLD TOWN  
ALBUQUERQUE"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Laurence F. Lee  
Jacksonville, Fla.  
Exhibited in opening of Museum of  
New Mexico Art Gallery, 1917
36. "TAMARISK"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mrs. P. G. Cornish, Sr.  
Albuquerque, N. M.
37. "STILLNESS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Albuquerque National Bank  
Albuquerque, N. M.
38. "ANITA"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mrs. Anita O. Carr  
Albuquerque, N. M.
39. "VIRGINIA"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mrs. Anita O. Carr  
Albuquerque, N. M.
40. "JUDGE SAM BRATTON"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the United States District Court  
District of New Mexico
41. "JUDGE COLIN NEBLETT"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the United States District Court  
District of New Mexico
42. "LANDSCAPE"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. James Clarkson  
Santa Fe, N. M.
43. "CHANGING MOUNTS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by First National Bank  
Santa Fe, N. M.
44. "DAVID"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by David Hughes, Sr.  
Santa Fe, N. M.

45. "COMPOSITION"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Cole  
Santa Fe, N. M.
46. "NANCY"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. John Gaw Meem  
Santa Fe, N. M.
47. "NAVAJOS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Daniel T. Kelly, Sr.  
Santa Fe, N. M.
48. "FARMYARD, NEW ENGLAND"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hoyt  
Santa Fe, N. M.
49. "EDWARD"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hoyt  
Santa Fe, N. M.
50. "ALFRED"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hoyt  
Santa Fe, N. M.
51. "GORDON STEVENSON"—*Sanguine  
and Pastel Drawing*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Stevenson  
Santa Fe, N. M.
52. "DARK HOUSES"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mrs. Louise Wright Hoover  
Santa Fe, N. M.
53. "BARBARA"—*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. John Dendahl  
Santa Fe, N. M.
54. "FRANK C. RAND, JR."—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Frank C. Rand, Jr.  
Santa Fe, N. M.
55. "RICHARD BOKUM"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bokum  
Santa Fe, N. M.
56. "PLACITA"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mrs. Henry Dendahl  
Santa Fe, N. M.
57. "BURROS, MOUNTAINS AND JUAN"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mrs. Henry Dendahl  
Santa Fe, N. M.
58. "ADOBE WINTER"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Marshall McCune  
Tesuque, N. M.
59. "FARMYARD"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Edward R. Wood  
Santa Fe, N. M.
60. "CYRUS MORE"—*Charcoal Drawing*  
Loaned by Mrs. Cyrus More  
Tesuque, N. M.
61. "MRS. ROBERT E. DIETZ III"—  
*Sanguine Drawing*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Dietz III  
Albuquerque, N. M.
62. "THE KELEHER BOYS"—*Oil*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Keleher  
Albuquerque, N. M.
63. "THE BISHOP'S CHAPEL"—*Oil*  
Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery  
Permanent Collection  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dendahl
64. "SANTA FE HILLSIDE"—*Oil*  
Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery  
Permanent Collection  
Bronze Medal, Sesqui-Centennial  
International  
Philadelphia, Pa.
65. "ABSTRACTION"—*Water Color*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hoyt  
Santa Fe, N. M.
66. "LITTLE BLUE SAINT"—*Water Color*  
Loaned by Mrs. Cyrus More  
Tesuque, N. M.
67. "SERENADE"—*Water Color*  
Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Marshall McCune  
Tesuque, N. M.

68. "MY DAUGHTER JAY"—*Egg Tempera*  
(deceased)  
Loaned by the artist
69. "DON"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the artist
70. "MY FATHER"—*Charcoal Drawing*  
Loaned by the artist
71. "TED"—*Pastel*  
Loaned by the artist
72. "HOME"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the artist
73. "SUMMER BATTLE"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the artist
74. "JAY IN COSTUME"—*Oil*  
(deceased)  
Loaned by the artist

75. "SPRING WORK"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the artist
76. "FIESTA"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the artist
77. "ANASTACIO'S HOUSE"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the artist
78. "BURIAL"—*Oil*  
May Audubon Post Prize Fellowship  
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
79. "FILLING STATION"—*Egg Tempera*  
Loaned by the artist
80. "EARLY AMERICANS"—*Egg Tempera*  
Loaned by the artist
81. "LONG DAY"—*Oil*  
Loaned by the artist

## Lithographs Loaned By The Artist

82. "THE GREEN BRONC"—*Out of Print*
83. "COW COUNTRY"—*Out of Print*
84. "AFTER SUPPER"
85. "BEANS FOR SUPPER"
86. "SPRING BRANDING"
87. "WORKING WITH THE WAGON"
88. "MORNING"
89. "WATER TANK"—*Out of Print*
90. "THE COOK"—*Out of Print*
91. "FLANKING TEAMS"—*Out of Print*
92. "BRIDLING THE BUCKSKIN"

93. "THE WRANGLER"
94. "GENTLE PONY"
95. "ROPE CORRAL"
96. "SHIPPING"
97. "NEW SLIPPERS"
98. "NOON ON THE DIAMOND A"—  
*Out of Print*
99. "SPRING WORK"

A number of these works are for sale. Prices upon inquiry at the Desk.



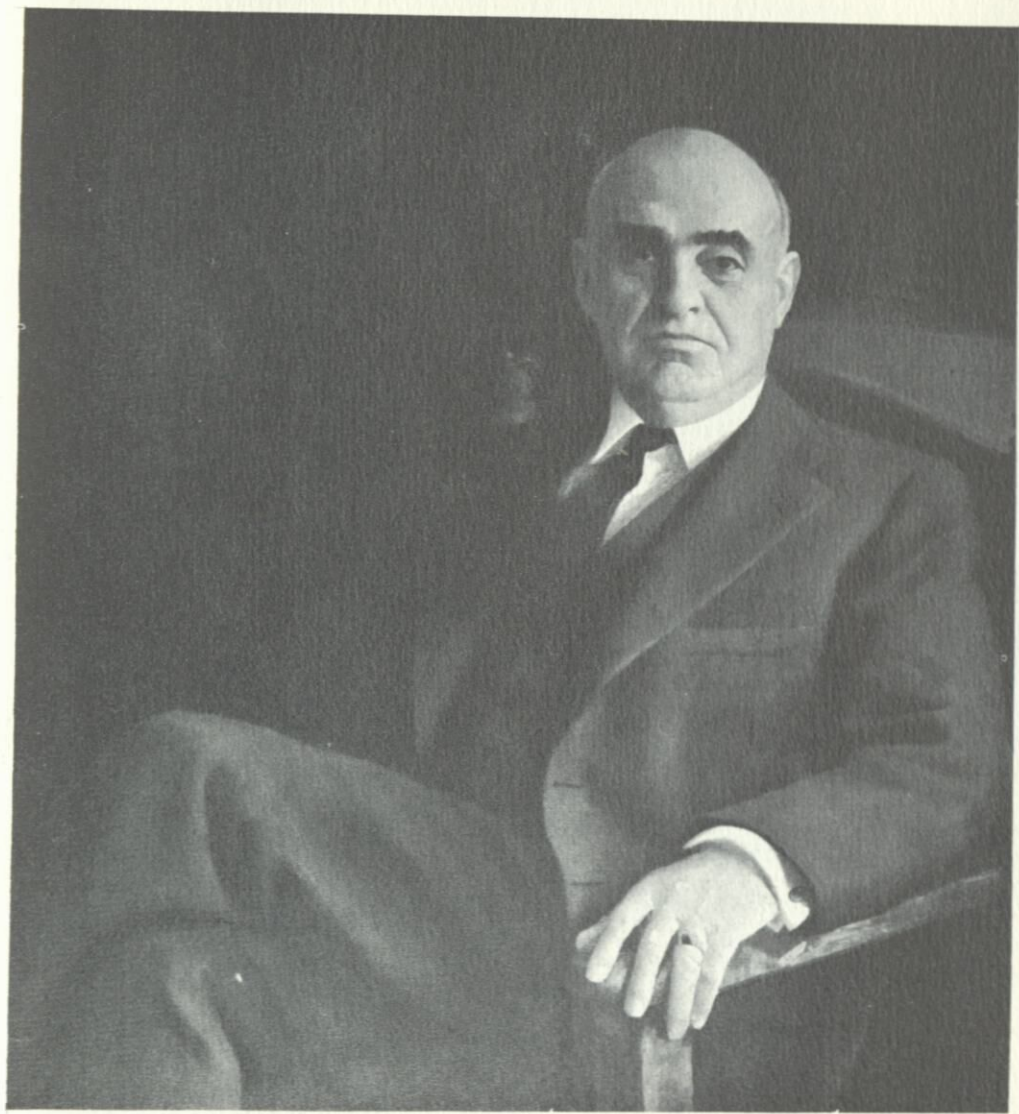
"LAURENCE F. LEE"

Loaned by the Occidental Life Insurance Company



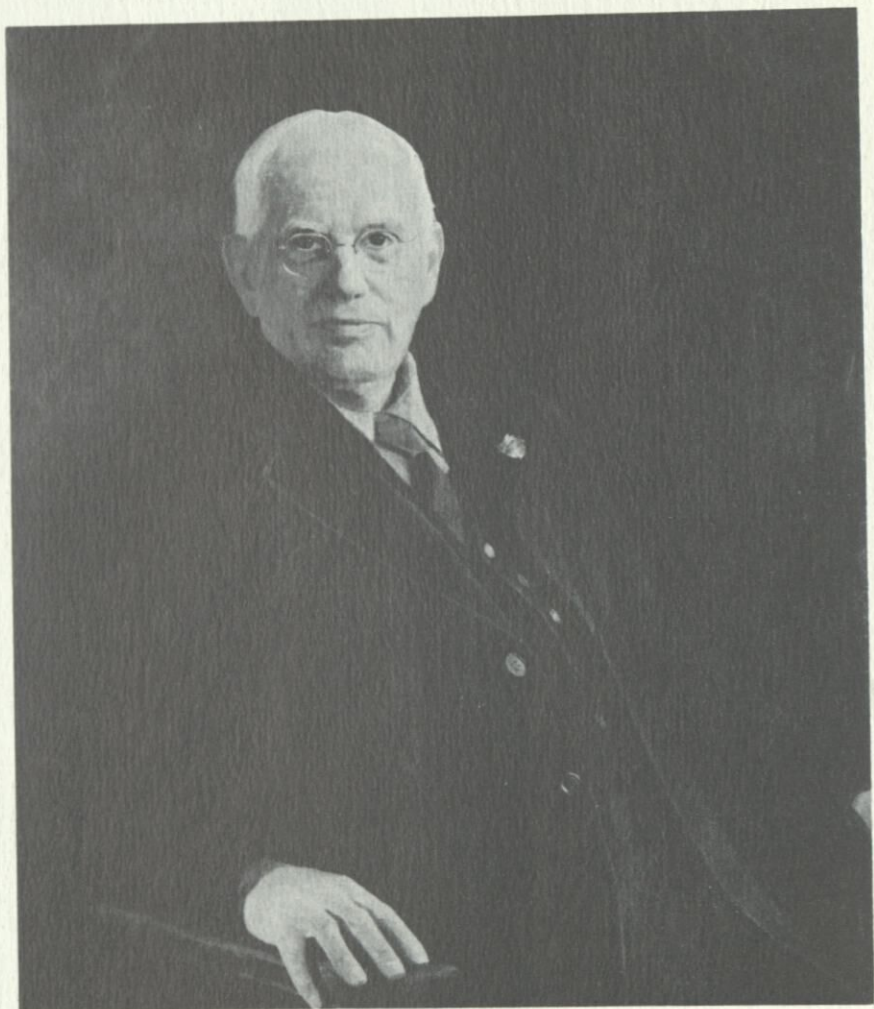
"GORDON STEVENSON"

Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Stevenson



"JUDGE COLIN NEBLETT"

Loaned by the United States District Court



"FRANCIS HENRY HASEROT"  
Loaned by Miss Margaret Haserot

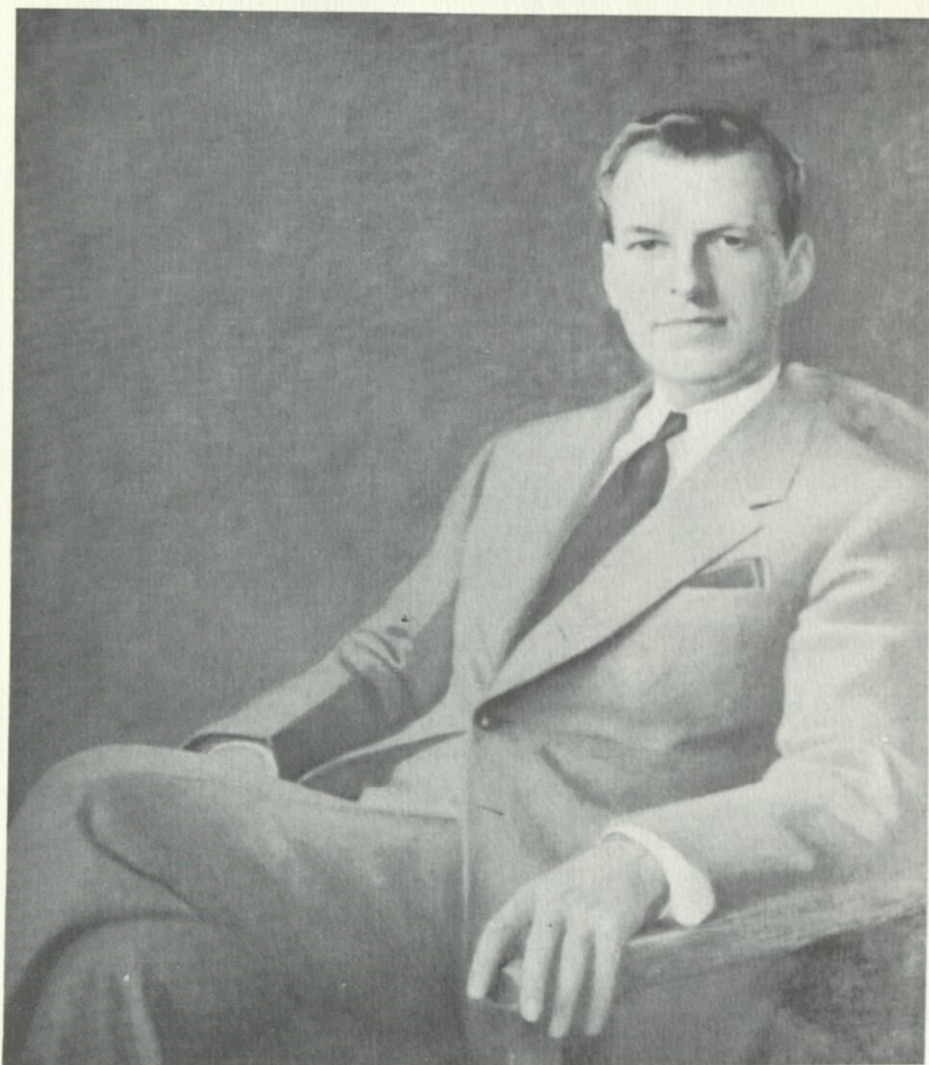


"THE LAST SNOW"  
Loaned by the Everhart Museum



"CIENEGA"

Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Laurence F. Lee



"FRANK C. RAND, JR."

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