



CATLIN
BODMER
MILLER

JOSLYN
ART
MUSEUM

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Jo

AT JOSLYN ART MUSEUM
MAY 1-SEPTEMBER 2, 1963

Catlin exhibition will close May 26th to continue
on the Smithsonian Institution's traveling circuit.

THE COVER

*Leather Tents of the
Assiniboinas, Summer 1833*

by Karl Bodmer

© Northern Natural Gas Company

THE CATALOG

Edited by Mildred Goosman

Designed by Walter LaHue

Printed by Redfield Printing Company

ARTIST EXPLORERS OF THE 1830'S

GEORGE CATLIN 1796-1872

Paintings and lithographs from the collections of the United States National Museum, circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

KARL BODMER 1809-1893

Watercolor paintings for Prince Maximilian of Wied's *Travels in the Interior of North America*, 1832-1834. THE MAXIMILIAN-BODMER COLLECTION purchased in 1962 by the Northern Natural Gas Company, Omaha, Nebraska.

ALFRED JACOB MILLER 1810-1874

Watercolor field sketches and oil paintings prepared for Sir William Drummond Stewart. Collections of Mrs. Clyde H. Porter and of the Miller family, acquisition of which has recently been committed by Joslyn Art Museum.

ALSO

DRAWINGS BY PLAINS INDIANS

Selected from the collection of Captain John G. Bourke (1846-1896), U. S. Cavalry, lent by his daughter, Mrs. A. H. Richardson, Omaha, Nebraska.

FOREWARD

Man's artistic creations are, to the historian, invaluable keys to an understanding of the past. For just as artifacts reveal the way of life of past generations and written documents the extent of intellectual endeavor, so do paintings and statues and architectural masterpieces make clear cultural aspirations and spiritual depths.

Without such clues, no true knowledge of bygone ages is possible. What historian could comprehend the culture of the Ancient World, the spirit of the Middle Ages or the accomplishments of the Renaissance without studying the remnants of their magnificent monuments. And historians of the future will more clearly comprehend the America of the twentieth century when they study the remains of Louis Sullivan's first skyscrapers and Frank Lloyd Wright's function-oriented homes. The student of the American West has few such guides to an understanding of the beginnings of civilization on plains and mountains. Most of the forts and mission stations and trading posts that were visible symbols of the clash between the ways of life of Indian and European have crumbled away or reduced to rubble to make way for more "useful" edifices. That was a conquering generation, and as the frontiersmen swept westward there was no time to build enduring reminders of its triumphs.

So it is that today's historian must depend for his knowledge of the look of the Old West on the paintings and sketches of the artists who were on the vanguard of the frontier. Fortunately they were many and able; during the decades after 1832 when George Catlin succumbed to his life-long compulsion to picture the civilization of the Indians there was scarcely a scenic wonder or a native village that was not captured on canvas.

And what revealing canvases those are. No modern scholar can hope to understand the unspoiled natural wonders of the untamed West without studying the work of the early artists. These were the artists—and true artists some of them were—who captured the spirit of the far western frontier in a medium far more meaningful than the printed word.

None among these portrayers of the West has proven more useful to the historian than Karl Bodmer, whose few published works have long been recognized as classics of accurate depiction. That over 400 original sketches from his 1832-1834 journey with Prince Maximilian are now available is an event of extraordinary interest to every student of Western America.

The Mississippi Valley Historical Association, a national society of American historians, welcomes this opportunity to salute the Northern Natural Gas Company's magnificent bequest of these treasures to the scholarly world and to thank the Joslyn Art Museum for allowing its members to share in the first viewing of the new Miller collection. The work of these artists, together with the Catlin paintings from the Smithsonian Institution are an enduring monument to our pioneering forefathers.

Northwestern University

Ray Allen Billington
President, Mississippi Valley
Historical Association

THE EXHIBITION

Several years ago the first invitations went to the Mississippi Valley Historical Association to hold its annual meetings in Omaha. This organization represents the country's leading students and scholars of American History, and it was appropriate that we reserve major gallery space at Joslyn for a western exhibition. Confirmation of the convention plans for 1963 came two years ago, and we immediately scheduled the Smithsonian Institution's George Catlin exhibition as a focal point. It was our plan to represent a small, carefully selected group of western artists by many works each, rather than to undertake again the survey type of show so effectively done already by western museums.

At this point, an unexpected windfall—the availability of the Maximilian Collection, with all the original Karl Bodmer watercolors and drawings—confirmed the direction of the exhibition. Northern Natural Gas Company of Omaha had acquired this distinguished collection as a service to the area. Shortly thereafter, the original field watercolors of Alfred Jacob Miller which had been assembled by Mrs. Clyde H. Porter of Kansas City came to the Joslyn Art Museum. With the notable collection of drawings by Plains Indians collected by Captain John G. Bourke in the late 1870's, our exhibition was complete.

The distinctive features of the present exhibition are that it brings together the three most important artists of the early period of the Trans-Mississippi West, artists who worked within six years of each other in this area. It gives a picture of the West in the pre-Indian War days, the last era before the land was settled; and finally, the superlative work of Karl Bodmer, with Maximilian's journals and other expedition records, is shown nearly in its entirety for the first time.

Joslyn Art Museum is fortunate to honor these artist-explorers and their Indian counterparts by presenting such a comprehensive collection of their work on the occasion of the 1963 meetings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association.

Eugene Kingman
Director, Joslyn Art Museum

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In addition to the loans of major collections from the Smithsonian Institution, Northern Natural Gas Company and Mrs. A. H. Richardson, we wish to acknowledge the following from whom we have received individual exhibits:

Mr. Stewart Fotheringham, Perthshire, Scotland, painting by A. J. Miller; William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, painting by George Catlin; M. Knoedler & Company, New York, paintings by George Catlin and C. M. Russell; Mrs. Peter P. Schmalenbach, print by Karl Bodmer; Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska, historical map; Colonel and Mrs. Claude A. Black, Knoxville, Tennessee, historical maps; Dr. J. M. Christlieb, first editions of books by Catlin.

We express our appreciation also to the following for their advice and services:

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE CATALOG: Mr. Ray Allen Billington, Mr. John C. Ewers, Mrs. Clyde H. Porter, Mr. Marvin C. Ross.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH: Mr. Merrill J. Mattes and Mr. Ray Mattison, Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service; Joslyn Research Committee, Mrs. Robert Duncan, Chairman.

EXHIBIT PRODUCTION: Junior League Arts Committee, Professional Members, Mrs. William Otis, Chairman; Joslyn Exhibits Committee, Mrs. Raymond Farquhar, Chairman.

Also, from the beginning we have had the continuous help of Dr. A. Stanley Trickett, Head of the History Department, University of Omaha, and Chairman of the Omaha Arrangements Committee, Mississippi Valley Historical Association.



PETER RINDISBACHER 1806 - 1831

INDIAN BUFFALO HUNT, *watercolor*

Northern Natural Gas Company Collection.

One of three original Rindisbacher paintings acquired by Prince Maximilian for his extensive collection of early Americana.



SAMUEL SEYMOUR 1796 - 1823

WESTERN LANDSCAPE, *oil*

Joslyn Art Museum Collection, gift of W. F. Davidson, New York, 1962.

As a member of Major Long's 1820 expedition, Seymour made sketches which are among the first pictures of the Rocky Mountains.

EARLY EXPLORATION ON THE PLAINS

GALLERY C

In 1803 the vast unknown wilderness west of the Mississippi River became part of the United States by the Louisiana Purchase. From then until 1840 the prairies and mountains were chiefly the domain of the fur traders who traced out the rivers and mingled with Indian tribes. Others came whose motives were not for commerce, but for scientific exploration and adventure and whose findings contributed to knowledge of the region. Some are listed here.

MERIWETHER LEWIS & WILLIAM CLARK 1804 - 1806

Lewis and Clark were commissioned by President Jefferson to explore the distant boundaries of the Louisiana Territory and find a passage to the Pacific Ocean. Their epic journey up the Missouri River and across the mountains was the greatest of all American explorations.

ZEBULON M. PIKE 1806 - 1807

Lieutenant Pike led the first American expedition across the Central Plains, discovering the peak that bears his name. He and his party reached Spanish Territory, were captured and taken to Santa Fe before returning to the United States.

BRACKENRIDGE, BRADBURY & NUTTALL 1811

Traveling with separate rival trading parties, Henry Brackenridge, an American lawyer, and John Bradbury, an English naturalist accompanied by Thomas Nuttall, the great ornithologist, followed the Missouri north of present-day Bismarck, North Dakota. Narratives about their journeys were published.

STEPHEN H. LONG 1819 - 1820

Major Long's government expedition included scientists and the artist Seymour. The party left the Missouri north of present Omaha and struck west to the Platte River and the Rocky Mountains. It was Long who created the "Great American Desert" myth.

PAUL WILHELM OF WÜRTTEMBERG 1822 - 1830

Duke Paul, a naturalist, made several extended trips from his native Germany to the interior of North America, writing one book. Having gone to the headwaters of the Missouri in 1830, he later advised Prince Maximilian of Wied on his forthcoming trip.

ATKINSON - O'FALLON 1825

A major military expedition under General Henry Atkinson and Major Benjamin O'Fallon was sent up the Missouri following attacks on fur traders by the Indians. The formal peace treaties give valuable information on the various tribes and their chiefs.

GEORGE CATLIN, ARTIST 1832 - 1836

Catlin was the first artist to make a serious project of painting the American Indians. During these years he traveled in the West, going up the Missouri to Fort Union in 1832 and making many pictures of the Plains Indians and the region.

ALEXANDER PHILIP MAXIMILIAN 1833 - 1834

Prince Maximilian's journey to the Upper Missouri was in the interest of science and ethnology, and was especially noteworthy because he brought with him the talented artist, Karl Bodmer.

SIR WILLIAM DRUMMOND STEWART 1832 - 1843

Stewart, a Scottish nobleman, hunted with the fur traders in the Rockies. In 1837 he followed the Platte route to the trappers' rendezvous on the Green River, accompanied by his artist, Alfred Jacob Miller, who made an extensive pictorial record.

**MANDAN CHIEF:
MAH-TO-TOH-PA
(FOUR BEARS)**

watercolor by George Catlin

Joslyn Art Museum Collection
gift of W. F. Davidson, New York.



George Catlin, the most prolific painter of American Indians, was born in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, July 26, 1796. As a boy Catlin was more interested in hunting, fishing, and collecting Indian relics than in schoolroom studies. Yet his lawyer father encouraged him to study law. He actually began the practice of that profession before he made up his mind that art had a greater attraction for him.

In Philadelphia with dogged determination Catlin taught himself to paint portraits in watercolor and oils so successfully that in 1824 he was elected academician of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He was receiving important commissions to execute portraits of prominent and wealthy Americans, but nevertheless was restless and dissatisfied.

While he was trying to find himself, Catlin saw the members of an Indian delegation from the "Far West" passing through Philadelphia on their way to visit the Great White Father in Washington. Sight of their handsome features and their picturesque costumes rekindled Catlin's boyhood enthusiasm for Indians, and inspired him toward a new goal in life. Convinced that the Indians and their traditional cultures would be destroyed by the relentless advance of the white man's frontier, Catlin set himself the task of "rescuing from oblivion the looks and customs of the vanishing races of native men in America."

To this task George Catlin devoted the best years of a very active life. Without governmental or private patronage for his ambitious project, his initial progress was slow. Not until the spring of 1830 was he able to finance a trip to St. Louis where he won the encouragement of General William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for all of the western tribes, and of the Chouteau family, leading Indian traders among the tribes of the Great Plains.

GEORGE CATLIN

1796 - 1872

GALLERY D

During five of the next six years, Catlin traveled widely among the Indians of the Plains, the Upper Mississippi and the Western Great Lakes regions, painting portraits of prominent chiefs and warriors of nearly 40 tribes, in addition to scenes in Indian life, and the typical landscapes and wildlife of the Indian Country beyond the frontier of white settlement. He spent his summers in the field, his winters in the studio repainting or applying the finishing touches to his field paintings.

Gradually he accumulated hundreds of pictures for an extensive "Indian Gallery," a great traveling exhibition which would enable him to show the peoples of the civilized world how the Indians looked and lived before the white man's civilization engulfed them.

Catlin himself recognized that the most stimulating and the most productive of his western travels was the journey which he made up the Missouri in the spring and summer of 1832. He ascended the treacherous Missouri as a passenger on the American Fur Company's *Yellowstone*, the first steamboat to travel some 2,000 miles up river from St. Louis to Fort Union at the mouth of the Yellowstone near the present North Dakota-Montana boundary. Catlin was following the course of the famed Lewis and Clark Expedition on the first leg of its history-making overland exploration to the shores of the far-off Pacific some 28 years earlier. Save for the establishment of trading posts at fixed points on the river, the Upper Missouri country had changed but little in the intervening years.

On its way up the Missouri the *Yellowstone* stopped at the three most important American Fur Company posts, Fort Pierre among the powerful, nomadic Sioux at the mouth of the Teton River, Fort Clark in the vicinity of the earthlodge villages of the horticultural Mandan and Hidatsa, and finally at Fort Union in the Assiniboiné Country. It was at or near these posts that George Catlin painted the earliest known portraits of Teton Sioux, Cheyenne, Arikara, Hidatsa, Assiniboiné, Plains Cree, Blackfoot and Crow Indians. He also painted panoramic views of Indian villages, and lively scenes showing some of their inhabitants playing games, dancing or performing sacred ceremonies. He went hunting and pictured the exciting action of the buffalo chase as it was practiced by skillful Indian big-game hunters.

CATLIN

As had Lewis and Clark before him, Catlin was especially impressed by the relatively complex culture of the Mandan Indians. On his way down stream he revisited Fort Clark in time to witness and to paint the only known pictures of the Mandan *Okipa*, the major, summer religious ceremony of that tribe.

Within a period of 86 days he either completed or executed field sketches for more than 135 paintings and collected the greater part of the biographical and ethnological information for his two-volume work, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs and Condition of the North American Indians*, first published in London nine years later. This is still a standard reference for all serious students of the Indian tribes of the Upper Missouri.

As a painter Catlin's real forte was portraiture. He possessed an uncommon ability to define the individual character of an Indian's face with a few deft strokes of his brush. The detailed rendering of Indian costume and accessories generally was of less interest to Catlin than was the achievement of a recognizable likeness of the Indian himself.

George Catlin made a virtual second career of showing his paintings to the public. He began exhibiting some of them in Pittsburgh in 1833, and displayed larger numbers of them in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and Boston before taking his entire collection across the Atlantic in the fall of 1839. For twelve years thereafter he showed his paintings in England, France, and Belgium. The high watermark of Catlin's career was reached in 1845 when he was invited to hang his extensive collection in one of the large galleries of the world famous Louvre to provide a special showing for King Louis Philippe of France and his guests.

In 1871, a year before his death, George Catlin expressed a modest hope that viewers of his pictures would "find enough of historical interest excited by faithful resemblance to the physiognomy and customs of these people, to compensate for what may be deficient in them as works of art." Most viewers of Catlin's paintings are willing to judge them on his own terms — as pictorial documents of the Old West and of Indian life.

The oil paintings in this exhibition comprise a small part of George Catlin's much traveled, original Indian Gallery. Nearly 450 paintings from that collection are preserved in the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. The colored lithographs are part of a series of 25 reproductions of some of Catlin's most popular paintings which was published in London in 1844 under the title *Catlin's North American Indian Portfolio*. Both the paintings and the lithographs have been lent through the courtesy of the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Service.

John C. Ewers

Smithsonian Institution



Crystal Stone, Wife of Chief Buffalo-Bull's Back-Fat of the Blood Tribe of Blackfeet, oil, 1832



Red Thunder, Son of Chief Black Moccasin, Hidatsa Tribe, oil, 1832

Pictures of Red Thunder and Crystal Stone are from the exhibition of 35 oil paintings and 12 lithographs by George Catlin lent by the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., on view May 1 — May 26.

PORTRAIT OF GEORGE CATLIN,

by William H. Fisk, 1827-1884

National Collection of Fine Arts
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

Indian Buffalo Hunter
oil
Joslyn Art Museum Collection



Karl Bodmer, the ablest pictorial interpreter of the American Indian, was born in Tiefenbrunnen near Zurich, Switzerland. Under the tutelage of his maternal uncle, Johan Jacob Meier, a noted Swiss water-colorist and etcher, young Karl acquired a thorough training in both drawing and painting. His first works prepared for reproduction were views in the valleys of the Rhine and Moselle, which were engraved by his older brother, Rudolf. It was a far cry from the Moselle to the wilds of the Upper Missouri. Whether Karl Bodmer had youthful dreams of painting wild Indians in far-off America is not known. It is certain, however, that he was offered this opportunity because of his exceptional artistic ability. He was recommended by Prof. Heinrich Rudolf Schinz of Zurich, one of Europe's outstanding zoologists at that time, to Prince Maximilian of Wied, a German naturalist who was planning a scientific expedition to North America.

So when the 50-year old scientist arrived in Boston on the fourth of July, 1832, he was accompanied by the 23-year old artist, Karl Bodmer. En route west the Prince wrote down his detailed observations of aspects of life in America, while the young artist recorded the American scene in pencil and watercolors.

In the bookshops and museums of the larger cities, the Prince examined and purchased examples of paintings and prints of North American Indians. He was disappointed to find that so few American artists and scholars had demonstrated a serious interest in the Indians of their own country.

While Prince Maximilian wintered at New Harmony, the painter traveled southward to New Orleans. On this side trip Bodmer painted his first pictures of live Indians, members of the semicivilized Choctaw tribe of the Lower Mississippi.

When the travelers reached St. Louis, the gateway to the trans-Mississippi West, in March, 1833, Prince Maximilian was still undecided whether to journey overland by caravan to Santa Fe or to follow the river route up the Missouri. After consulting many knowledgeable people in St. Louis, he concluded that the Missouri River route offered better opportunities to meet friendly Indians and to make scientific collections. So he arranged passage for himself, Bodmer, and his faithful hunter, Dreidoppel, on the American Fur Company's steamboat *Yellowstone*, the same vessel that carried George Catlin up river the previous spring. Meanwhile, General Clark afforded the visitors from abroad an opportunity to meet and to paint members of a Sauk and Fox delegation as well as the privilege of viewing some of George Catlin's Indian paintings owned by Clark's nephew, Major Benjamin O'Fallon.

L BODMER

1809 - 1893

GALLERY B

Fellow passengers on the *Yellowstone*, when it departed from St. Louis on April 10, 1833, were the Indian Agents for the Upper Missouri tribes, Majors Dougherty and Sanford, and Kenneth McKenzie, the American Fur Company's principal trader on the Upper Missouri. These men greatly aided the European travelers by introducing them to the Indian tribes they encountered on the Missouri.

As had George Catlin before them, Maximilian and Bodmer stopped at Fort Pierre, Fort Clark, and Fort Union on their way upstream. At each of these posts, and at the Sioux Agency, Fort Lookout, they observed and painted Indians. Fort Union, at the mouth of the Yellowstone, was the head of steamboat navigation on the Missouri at that time. But Prince Maximilian was not content to end his penetration of the wilderness at that point. Purchasing a keelboat, and hiring a crew to man it, he pushed on slowly upstream to Fort McKenzie, some 500 miles west of Fort Union at the mouth of the Marias. There, in the very heart of the country of the warlike Blackfoot tribes, they spent a full month. While the Prince collected specimens and took copious notes on the geology, plant and animal life, and Indian customs of the region, Bodmer made numerous portraits of Blackfoot men and women and sketched the earliest known view of a great Piegan Indian summer encampment, panoramas of the mountains from the heights above Fort McKenzie, and the only known picture of the historic trading post itself. Early one morning, from the elevated platform within the palisaded fort, the travelers witnessed the desperate battle which ensued when a large war party of Assiniboiné and Cree attacked a small camp of Piegan just outside the gates of the trading post. Bodmer later made this action the subject of a lively print which is the most detailed and informative portrayal of combat in Plains Indian intertribal warfare created by any artist.

The explorers wintered at Fort Clark near the villages of the Mandan and the Hidatsa. There, amid the hardships of a bitter Dakota winter, the Prince and the painter continued their scientific and artistic research. One night it became so cold that Bodmer's colors and pencils froze. During five month's stay at Fort Clark, the Europeans made many good friends among the neighboring Indians, some of whom paid repeated visits to their quarters at the fort. While he amused them with the strains from a portable music box, Bodmer captured the likenesses of these Indian visitors on paper. His pictorial record of the daily life and winter ceremonies of the Mandan is remarkable for its variety as well as its quality. This was fortunate, for Karl Bodmer was the last artist to picture this most remarkable Indian tribe of the Upper Missouri.

BODMER

before it was decimated by the white man's smallpox in 1837. Never did the Mandan regain their position of cultural prominence among the tribes of the region.

Thirteen months after they had embarked on their journey up the Missouri, Prince Maximilian and Bodmer reached St. Louis on their way homeward. The close association between the mature scientist and the young artist in the field had produced significant results. Permitted to concentrate his rare talents upon his picture making, Bodmer had worked steadily but unhurriedly. When the subject merited particular care he devoted several days to portraying it—whether it was a handsomely painted and clothed Indian chief, the interior of a Mandan earthlodge filled with a variety of useful objects, or a view of the Bear Paw Mountains from the heights above Fort McKenzie. The key to this versatile artist's remarkable success in depicting Indians, wildlife, and landscapes may be found in his consummated skill as a draftsman. Before he applied colors to his work he rendered an exquisite pencil drawing of his subject. With infinite pains he developed every detail of the picture. He was as much concerned with recording the exact form, color, and texture of a garment as he was with portraying the likeness of the man or woman who wore it. Students of the arts and crafts of the Upper Missouri tribes can rely upon Bodmer's renderings of the forms and colors of porcupine-quilled decorations on shirts, dresses, leggings and moccasins, of the painted designs on buffalo robes, shields, or rawhide containers, or of the minute details of hair, ear, or neck ornaments. The same qualities of close observation and precise execution may be seen in Bodmer's scenes of Indian villages and trading posts, of Indian burial or sacrificial places. His landscapes faithfully recorded the varied character of the Indian country, its tree bordered rivers, its broad plains, its eroded bluffs, and its imposing mountains.

We must remember, also, that Bodmer was engaged in preparing pictorial source materials to be used in illustrating the text of Prince Maximilian's writings. If his landscapes appear more finished than some of his Indian subjects, that was because it was not always necessary to render both moccasins worn by an Indian or both sides of a bilaterally symmetrical decoration in detail in order to be able to prepare at a later date a complete and accurate picture for reproduction. Bodmer himself is said to have played an active role in translating his field sketches into the superb copperplate engravings which accompanied Prince Maximilian's great work, *Riese in das Innere Nord-America in den Jahren 1832 bis 1834*, first published in Coblenz in 1839-41, and reprinted in both French and English. In the text of that work Prince Maxi-

milian paid tribute to Bodmer's unique contribution. He wrote that Bodmer "represented the Indian nations with great truth", and he prophesied that "his drawings will prove an important addition to our knowledge of this race of men." Modern anthropologists and historians approve this high appraisal of Karl Bodmer's contribution.

After the publication of the findings of Prince Maximilian's scientific expedition, Karl Bodmer never returned to America. He made his home in France and became a citizen of that country.

He continued to create works of art based upon European themes which were exhibited in Paris, Vienna and other European cities. He won honors and awards for his entries in the Paris Salon and other important exhibitions. In 1876 he was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor. He also contributed to such leading magazines as "L'Illustration" and "Le Monde Illustre".

During his later years, Bodmer was associated with the famous Barbizon artists. He died in Barbizon in his 84th year, on October 13, 1893. Some of his European works may be seen in leading museums in Paris, London, and Zurich. Nevertheless, Karl Bodmer will be remembered primarily for the remarkable drawings and paintings which he created in the wilderness of the Upper Missouri during his young manhood.

Smithsonian Institution

John C. Ewers

The Travellers Meeting with the Minnataree Indians, title vignette for Chapter XXVI from Travels in the Interior of North America by Prince Maximilian.



MAXIMILIAN-BODMER COLLECTION

"TRAVELS IN THE INTERIOR OF NORTH AMERICA"

Alexander Philip Maximilian

(1782-1867) was a prince of the German principality of Wied-Neuwied just north of Koblenz on the Rhine River. Although his early scientific studies were interrupted by service in the Napoleonic War, in which he achieved the rank of general, his reputation as a scientist was firmly established by the published account of his 1815-1817 journey in Brazil. To continue his studies in ethnology he visited North America in 1832-1834, accompanied by his hunter Dreidoppel and the artist Karl Bodmer. The result of this trip was a scholarly book, *Travels in the Interior of North America* published in three languages, with an atlas of 81 plates prepared from field sketches by Bodmer.



The portrait above shows Prince Maximilian with his brother, Prince Charles (at left) and Dreidoppel, painted in 1839 by Prince Charles.



Library-Museum



Schloss Neuwied, Germany



In early 19th Century

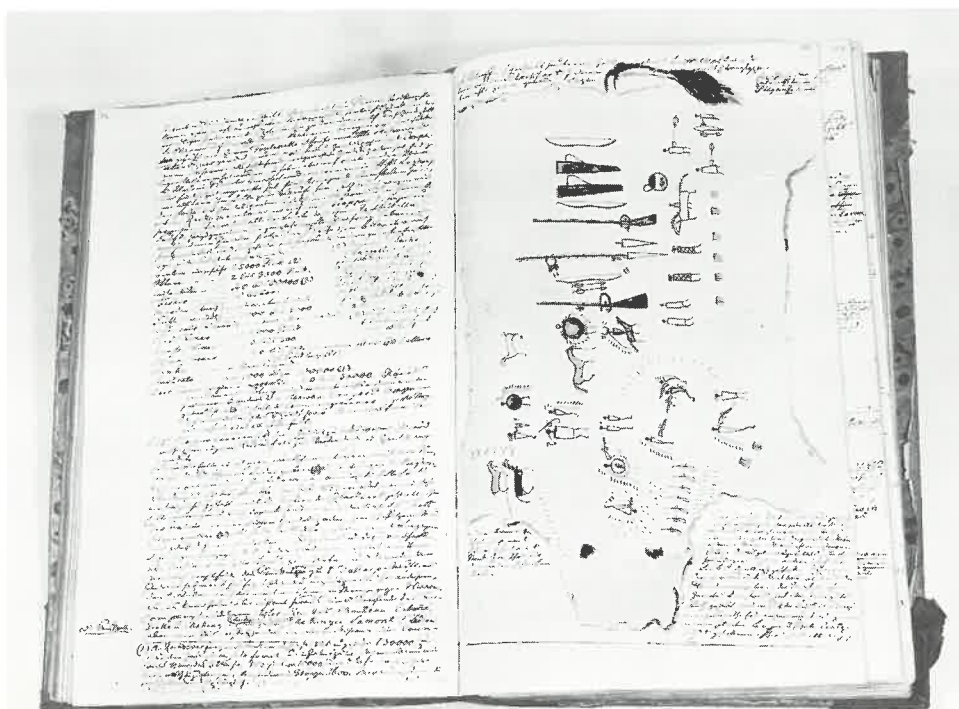
THE COLLECTION

On his return to Germany, Maximilian continued his studies and correspondence with leading scientists until his death at the age of 85. His books and papers, his American diaries and notes, and over 400 of Bodmer's field sketches remained in his house or in the archives on the grounds of the family estate in Neuwied, being gradually forgotten until this century. Following their rediscovery, an exhibition of 100 paintings by Bodmer were circulated to American museums by the Smithsonian Institution.

Later, the present hereditary prince, Friederick Wilhelm, graciously permitted the entire North American collection—which has such historical significance—to be brought to the United States.

The collection includes copies of the original publication in all the various editions, together with the publisher's and artist's correspondence; the metal engraving plates; nearly 90 reference books on North America; 16 drawings of Indians by the Prince himself; documents and letters about preparations for the trip; as well as an 1839 oil portrait and the unique double-barrelled rifle and knapsacks used by the Prince. Also included are examples of political and sale handbills, a file of newspapers, bills for supplies from the American Fur Company, and 85 rare prints depicting the native inhabitants of different regions of North America.

This entire collection which pertains to Maximilian's North American journey was acquired in 1962 by the Northern Natural Gas Company of Omaha as a public service and assigned to the Joslyn Art Museum as custodian. A portion of the collection was placed on view in August of last year, but the current exhibition is the first extensive showing of nearly the entire collection.



*Volume II of
Maximilian's Diary
of his North
American Journey*

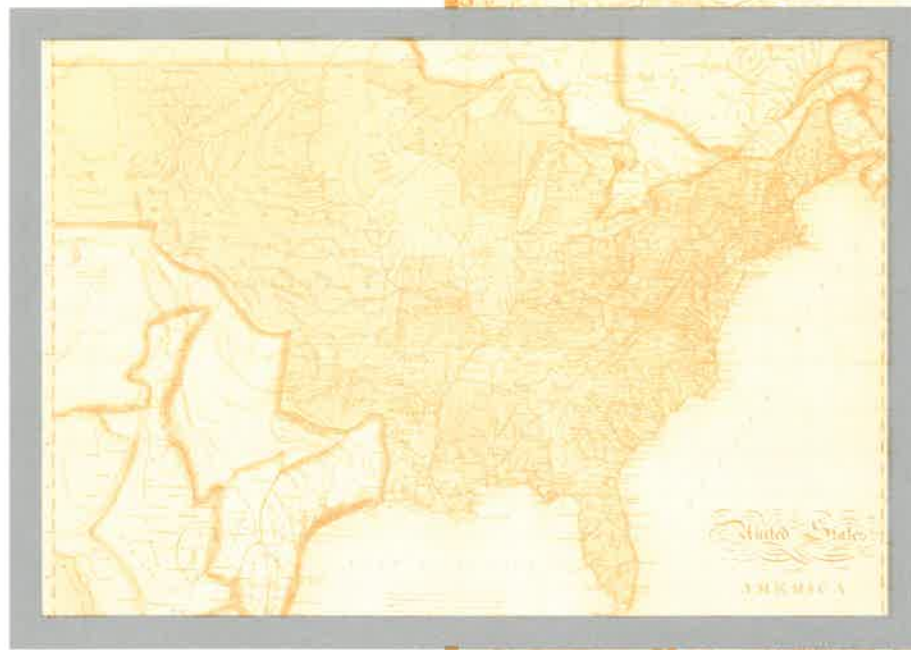
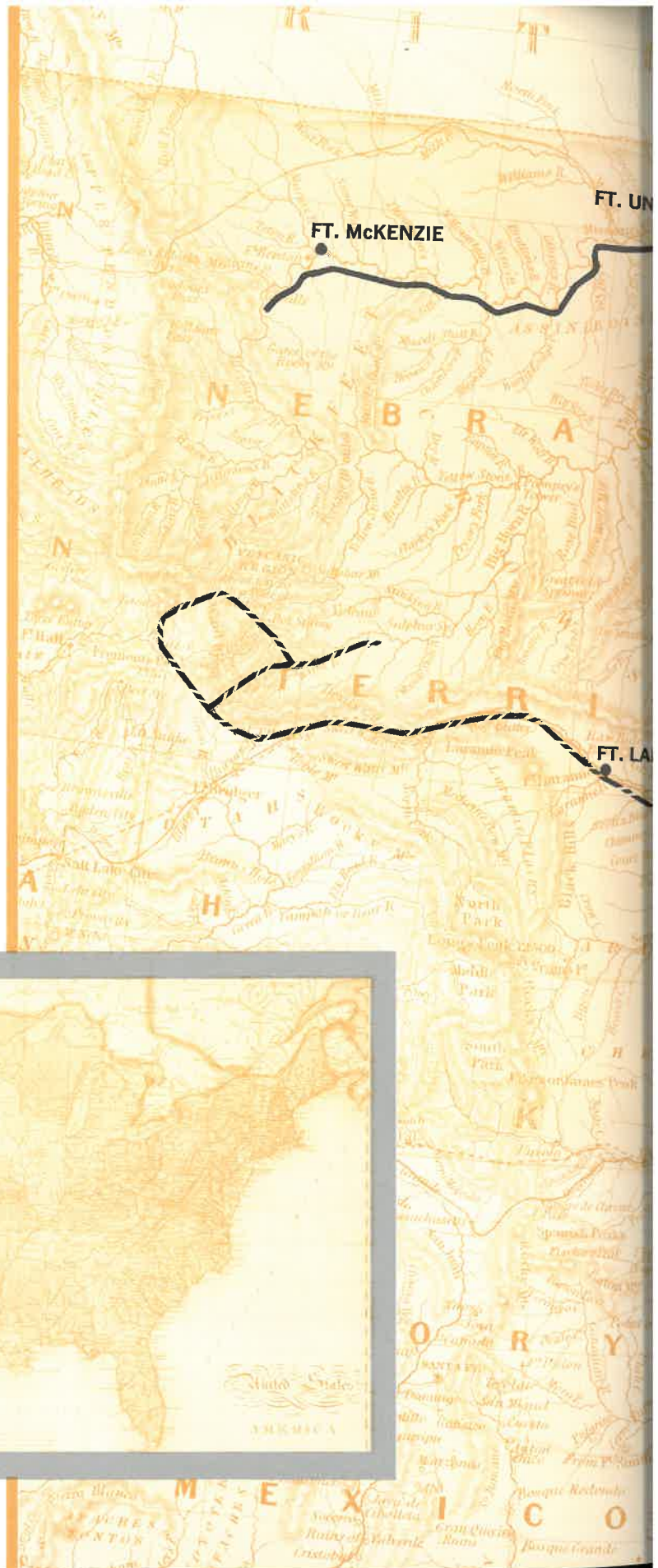
EARLY MAPS

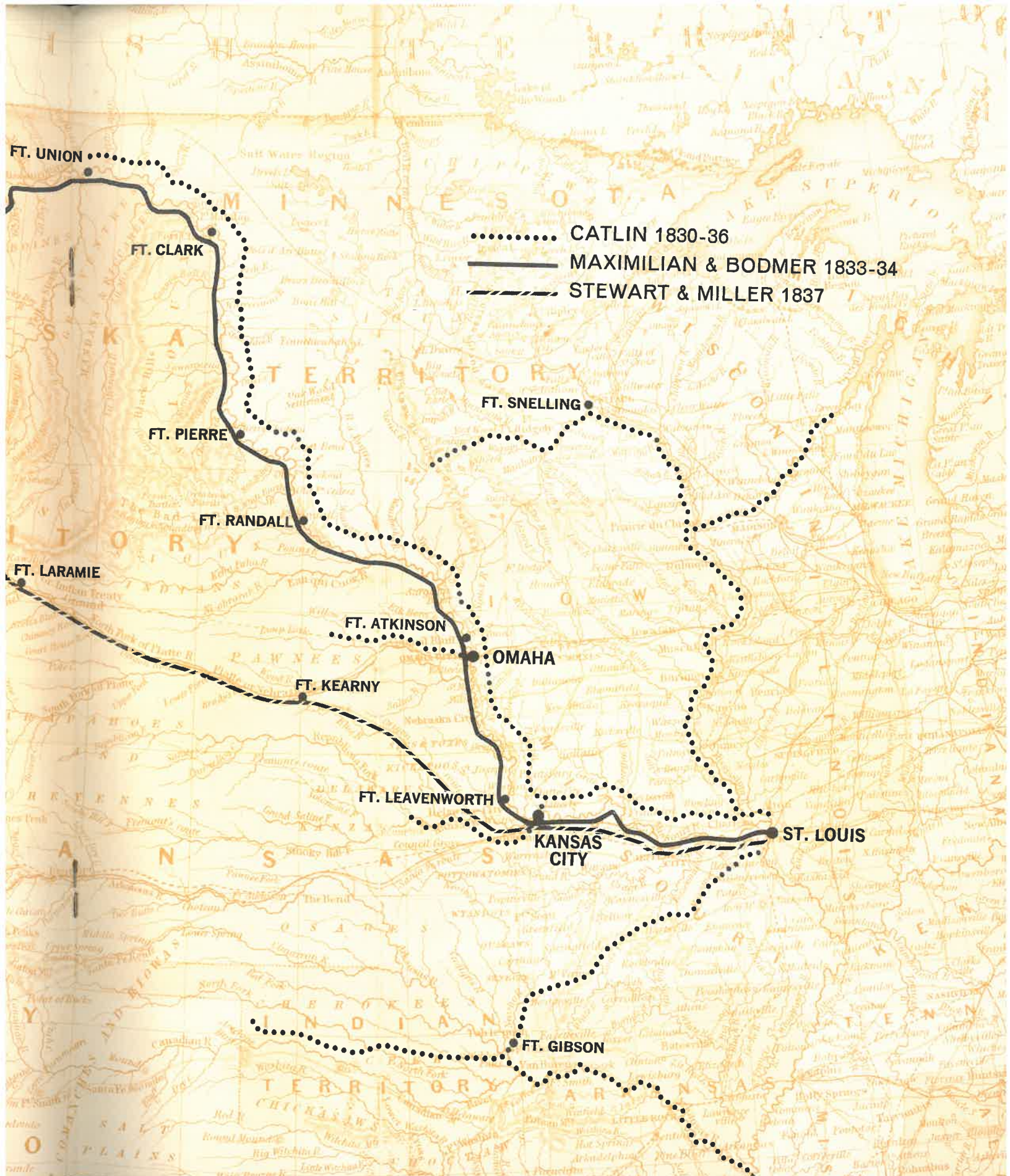
A MAP OF 1856

Detail enlargement at right from original 1856 United States map by J. H. Young, published by Charles Desilver, Philadelphia, 1857. Joslyn Art Museum Collection.

A MAP OF THE 1830'S

Map below of the time of Catlin, Bodmer, and Miller, shows how little was known about the western regions. Joslyn Art Museum Collection.





..... CATLIN 1830-36
—— MAXIMILIAN & BODMER 1833-34
- - - STEWART & MILLER 1837

FT. UNION

FT. CLARK

FT. PIERRE

FT. RANDALL

FT. LARAMIE

FT. ATKINSON

OMAHA

FT. KEARNY

FT. LEAVENWORTH

KANSAS CITY

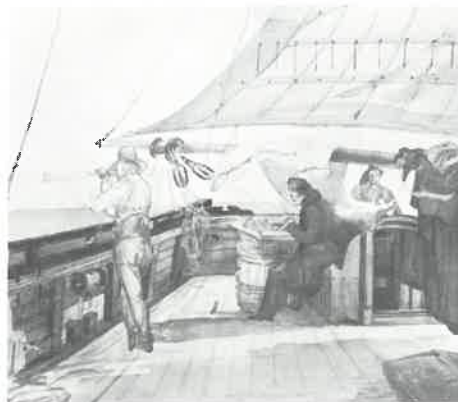
ST. LOUIS

FT. GIBSON

BODMER

TO AMERICA

Several paintings of Dutch and English coasts, shipping scenes, life on shipboard, Boston and New York harbors.



*Scene on the Janus,
Captain Robenss
with the telescope*

IN THE EAST

Scenes in New Jersey, German settlements in Pennsylvania, a coal mine and railroad, Niagara Falls and Delaware Gap.



*The Bunker's Hill
Memorial, Boston,
July 6, 1832*

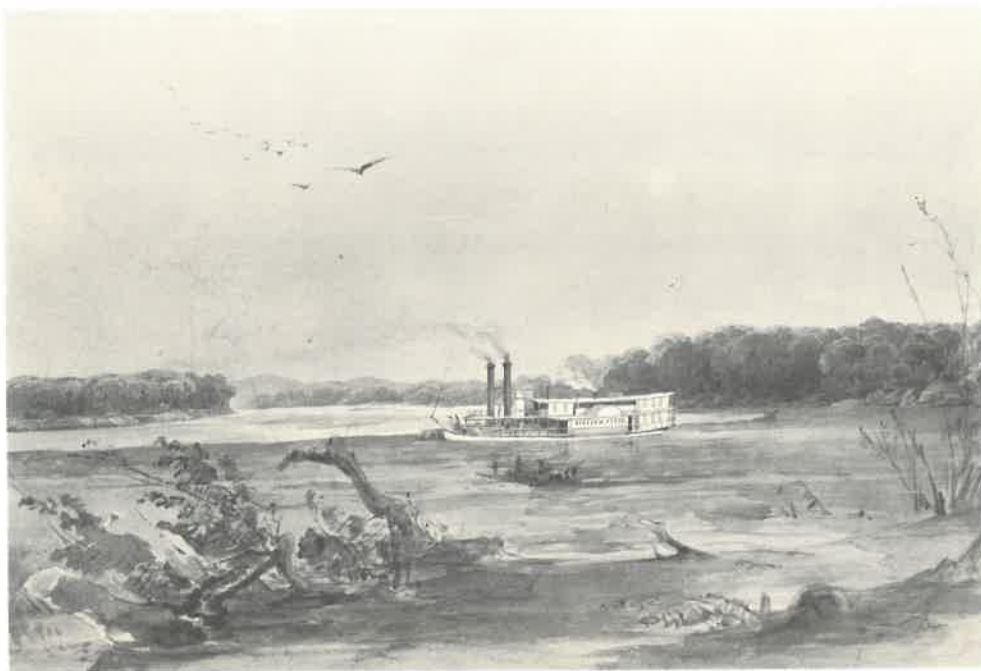
OVERLAND

Views of Pittsburgh, the Allegheny Mountains, steamboats on the Ohio River, and the towns of New Harmony and Vincennes in Indiana.



*Dwelling of a settler
in Indiana*

THE MISSOURI



Unloading of the steamboat

Watercolors and sketches of the wooded banks, the prairies, the snags and sandbars, tributary streams, the high blue skies.

From the day Prince Maximilian's party embarked in Holland, Karl Bodmer made over 400 illustrations of the journey. Some are unfinished pencil drawings, some finished watercolor paintings. Some were used for composite groupings for plates for the book, others have never been published. The majority are views up the Missouri River and Indian subjects, but others picture scenes of America in the 1830's.

INDIANS

Portraits and figure sketches of chiefs and their families, all identified by tribe, some in full regalia.



Up-sich-te, a Mandan Warrior, February 7, 1834

BODMER

GEOLOGY, FAUNA

*Terrain studies of
Upper Missouri*



*Canadian deer, with
outline of footprint,
killed September 19, 1833*

Series of sketches showing typical terrain and unusual rock formations on the Upper Missouri.

Buffalo and deer, small game animals, reptiles and birds, identified by scientific names. A few detail drawings later used in a publication on reptiles.

FORTS, TRADING POSTS

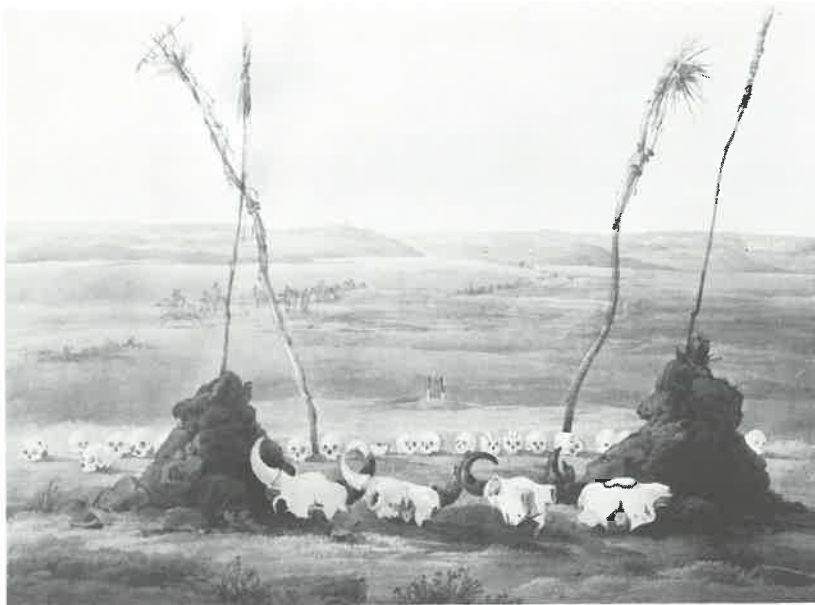


*Print of Indian fight outside
Fort McKenzie, with study
sketch used as background
for print*



General views and diagrams of the fur company posts of Fort Pierre, Fort Clark, Fort Union and Fort McKenzie; also the Indian agency at Bellevue and a distant view of abandoned Fort Atkinson.

ETHNOLOGY



*Skull medicine, near
Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush,
Mandan Village near Fort Clark,
November, 1833*

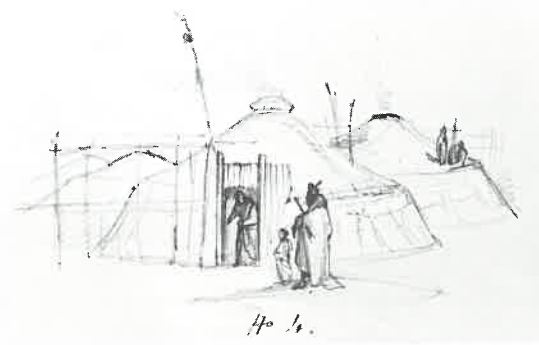
Exact representations of weapons and utensils;
details in color of decorative designs and sym-
bols; ceremonial rites and dances.



*Detail from page
of ethnological
drawings*



*Sketches of Scalp
Dance of the
Minatarre Indians*



*Huts of Mandan Indians.
(Sketch used for woodcut
in text of Maximilian's
Travels)*



*The Cavalcade — showing the expedition party
with Capt. Stewart on a white horse.*

In 1933 the Peale Museum in Baltimore held the first exhibition since 1839 of the Indian paintings of the Baltimore artist, Alfred Jacob Miller. Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Clyde Porter became interested in the artist as one of the first painters of the "Far West", as the country between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains was known in the second quarter of the 19th Century. Later Bernard DeVoto used the artist's work to illustrate his book *Across the Wide Missouri*. Since that time Miller's watercolours and oils of the Far West—authentic records of a "lost world"—have appeared in many exhibitions and been used to illustrate many books.

The artist was born in Baltimore and early in life showed a talent for drawing. His family was able to send him to Europe for a period of study, as was the general custom in those days. Rather than London where earlier generations of aspiring young Americans had gone to study painting, Miller went first to Paris and was enabled by our Consul there to attend the Ecole des Beaux Arts, possibly the first American student to do so. He later studied in Italy, visiting Rome, Florence and Venice. He led the pleasant life of the student and his notebooks record many incidents of his life in Europe.

JACOB MILLER

1810 - 1874

GALLERY A

On returning to Baltimore, Miller opened a studio, advertising that copies of great works of painting in Europe as well as his own original work could be seen. This project was not successful and he went to New Orleans where he enjoyed comparative success. One day in March or April of 1837, a visitor came to the studio who was to greatly influence his life. He paused before a large landscape of Baltimore and remarked, "I like the management of the painting and the view". This visitor was an eccentric Scotsman, Captain William Drummond Stewart, who had fought with Wellington in Spain. He had first visited the Green River country in 1833 and had made several return trips there, and announced that he planned to make another trip to those regions. For this occasion he wanted an artist to accompany him for the purpose of making sketches of the sights along the way, as well as portraits of the Indians, guides and trappers. Later some of those were to be reproduced in oil paintings to hang in the family castles in Scotland.

Shortly after the agreement was made, Miller met with Stewart and his party in Saint Louis. From there they proceeded to Independence, Missouri—the meeting place for the representatives of the American Fur Company who were leading a caravan to the thirteenth rendezvous of the trappers at Green River. Captain Stewart was put in charge of the whole body by the Company because he had had not only experience in charge of men during the war, but had traversed this area and had some knowledge of the Indians.

The final preparations were made at Westport (now a part of Kansas City) and the caravan started for Fort Laramie, a journey that would take about five weeks.

The result of Miller's accompanying Stewart and painting along the way was a most remarkable record of how, in 1837, one traveled across the prairies without roads, forded the great rivers without bridges, defended oneself against the unfriendly Indians, and hunted for food. This was also a daily record of the trip, the people, the Indians, and amusing incidents along the way, ending with pictures of Fort Laramie with the Indians congregated there. And finally we see the last great rendezvous of the trappers, Indians, and fur traders at Green River with the impressive procession of Snake Indians in honor of their friend Stewart.

One sees all the paraphernalia of horseback riding, packs of the trader, trappers, and Indians. There are pictures of hunting the buffalo, the bear, elk and the mountain goat, as well as the hunting and fighting equipment of the White man and the Indians.

MILLER

From the on-the-spot sketches, many of which remain unedited, and the finished watercolours and paintings, one can reconstruct *in colour* the trip across the prairies from Missouri to the Rocky Mountains in 1837, long before colour photography was even dreamed of. Stewart probably had no inkling of what he was doing for posterity when he asked Miller to record his western adventure in sketches and paintings for his own personal gratification and the decoration of his castles. Miller, himself, may not have realized what he was accomplishing until later. After he returned to Baltimore, he began to understand because of the many commissions for replicas that came to him throughout the remainder of his life.

When the caravan returned to Missouri, Stewart learned of the death of his brother and of his great inheritance in Scotland. Miller returned to his studio in New Orleans to paint in oil the pictures Stewart wanted for his Scottish castle. In 1839 these were exhibited in Baltimore and New York, then shipped to Scotland. One of these paintings was the *Surround* now shown here.

In 1840 Miller followed Stewart to Murthly Castle in Scotland. He wrote his family "the sketches selected for pictures in oil will occupy me busily through the winter. *The Trapper's Bride* [the large version, not the one in this exhibition] is progressing rapidly and seems to give much satisfaction to Sir William Stewart who visits the painting almost every day after luncheon, to examine and perhaps offer a criticism on any point wherein he thinks I may be wrong—and Woe! to the Indian who has not sufficient dignity in expression and carriage, for out he must come. His conception of a picture, both as regards composition and colouring is excellent and when I see the justice of his criticism, of course, I alter, but if I do not, I take my own way."

Stewart had taken Antoine, his half-French, half-Indian guide back with him to Scotland and had him elegantly dressed in black to serve at table.

Miller wrote again to his brother in 1840 this description of the place where Stewart slept in the lodge at the bottom of the garden, "The floor is spread with Persian prayer carpets fringed with silk, and the walls are covered with cloth (crimson) hangings. Along the ceiling extend brass rods from which are suspended reminiscences of the Rocky Mountains painted by your own unworthy brother . . . On one side rises a cushioned divan of damask cloth, over which is spread some magnificent buffalo robes. On these he sleeps. A glittering tomahawk, the one worn by him in the mountains, is placed on a small table near the divan. Surrounded with such associations, how often must his mind revert to scenes far distant; the happy hunting grounds of the poor Indian! How often must his imagination picture to him the broad, boundless prairie, the rapid tumultuous whirl of the mountain torrent, the gigantic mountains themselves, the plain filled with innumerable herds of buffalo, the wild but picturesque sons of the forest, among whom he lived. These recollections

must be to him grateful and pleasant, for our own remembrance of pleasure is always more vivid than reality." It is to this fascination of the West felt by Stewart that we owe these pictures.

After Miller returned to Baltimore where he spent the remainder of his life, he made many replicas in both watercolour and oil of his western scenes, the largest group being the two hundred commissioned by William T. Walters now in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore. He painted also many portraits, and became known as the Lawrence of Baltimore. In our time, at least, Miller will not be known for his portraits, but for his pictures of the Far West. These contain a record that was not equaled by any artist who visited that area at so early a date. Catlin was more concerned with Indian portraiture and Indian scenes. In any case, Miller did not cover the same territory of either Catlin or Bodmer.

For most connoisseurs there seems to be no hesitation in ranking the watercolours above the oil paintings of the Far West. The watercolours are of two kinds, those that were made on-the-spot and the studio versions sometimes on commission and sometimes with only the hope that they could be sold, which explains the duplication of scenes among the watercolours inherited by members of his family.



*Self Portrait, pencil
by Alfred Jacob Miller*



*Sir William Drummond Stewart,
oil by Henry Inman*

MILLER

The studio versions are more finished and have quite different appeal, which pleased contemporary collectors who would not have appreciated the rough sketches which were often incomplete with only notes indicating the colours, clouds, or various details to be added later. These have, however, a greater freshness in many instances and may have details not always incorporated in the studio versions. Besides, there are a number of them that were never transposed in the studio so that one finds rare material among them.

It is fortunate that this collection of 109 watercolours and 7 oils is rich in these intrinsically valuable on-the-spot sketches made on Alfred Jacob Miller's trip to the West with William Drummond Stewart in 1837.

Marvin C. Ross

Hillwood
Washington, D. C.



Watercolor sketch for The Surround

THE MILLER COLLECTION



The Surround, one of the large oil paintings from Murthly Castle. Size 9 feet by 6½ feet.

It was the vain search for specimens sent to President Jefferson by Lewis and Clark from their historic trek across America in 1804 that led me inadvertently to ownership of the Alfred Jacob Miller watercolor sketches now so appropriately housed at the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha.

Inquiring at the Peale Museum in Baltimore in 1935, I found no artifacts, but was shown a box of watercolors of the West—small in size but impressive by their beauty and by the stories they told. I coveted them; and finally, after several disappointments, they became mine. After a period of research, the fun that has lasted for twenty-four years was on. Exhibitions and lectures in various parts of the country and assistance in the birth of six books partially illustrated by Miller sketches followed.

In addition to the watercolors I acquired several larger oil paintings. Also, chance led me to the handsome portrait of Sir William Drummond Stewart by Henry Inman, a fitting addition to accompany the Miller Collection at Joslyn.

As Bernard De Voto says in his *Across the Wide Missouri*, "When Captain Stewart took an artist to the Far West he was, so to speak, assigning a news photographer to cover an area and a way of life that had never been pictured by anyone . . . there is nothing like them in American Art."

Mae Reed Porter

MILLER
TRAPPERS, TRADERS, INDIANS



*Snake
Indian Council*



*Bull Boating
across the Platte*

*Fort Laramie, or Sublette's Fort
near the Nebraska, or Platte River*



*Kansas Indian
Indian of Shoshone Tribe*



MOUNTAINS, PLAINS, GAME



**Selected from
Joslyn Art Museum
collection of
watercolors by
Alfred Jacob Miller**

*Lake Scene,
Wind River Mountains*



*Fire on the Prairie —
Setting Fire to the Camp*



*Rock of Independence —
Groups of Antelope and Buffalo*

PLAINS INDIAN



*Indian Drawing of Chief Yellow Nose
Bourke Collection*

*Indian Drawing,
Maximilian-Bodmer Collection*



Prior to the year 1833, successful warriors among the Mandan and neighboring tribes of the Upper Missouri recorded their deeds of valor in intertribal warfare by painting crude pictures of the battle actions in which they had won war honors on the soft skin surfaces of the buffalo robes which they wore as outer clothing. These primitive artists were content to depict a human being simply in terms of a knob-like, featureless head surmounting an outlined rectangular body from which arms and legs extended as linear appendages. With similar unconcern for detail, they pictured horses with stick-like legs in sideview poses. Nevertheless, these simple picture-writings served their intended purpose. They showed all other Indians who saw a warrior clad in a painted robe that he was a man of no mean achievement.

MANDAN INDIAN WATERCOLORS COLLECTED BY PRINCE MAXIMILIAN

During their winter's sojourn at Fort Clark, near the Mandan villages, in 1833-34, Prince Maximilian and Karl Bodmer were visited by a number of Indians who were fascinated by Bodmer's artistic talents. The white artist gave pencils, watercolors, and paper to some of these Indians and encouraged them to make pictures for the Prince's collection. These watercolors are the earliest known examples of paintings executed by Plains Indians in the white man's art medium. In their striving to portray the details of human and horse

N DRAWING AND PAINTING

anatomy, of costume and accessories, these Indian artists produced paintings which were quite unlike the traditional picture-writing of their people.

There are nine examples of this new style of Indian painting in Prince Maximilian's collection. Four of them were executed by Yellow Feather (Sih-Chida), the son of a prominent Mandan chief, of whom the Prince wrote: "He came almost every evening, when his favorite employment was drawing, for which he had some talent, though his figures were no better than those drawn by our children." A fifth was painted by Four Bears (Mato-Tope), the second chief and most prominent warrior in the tribe. Both of these Indians had sat for their portraits by George Catlin and Karl Bodmer. It seems fair to assume that in their eager striving for realism in their new style of painting, these Indians had been inspired by the example of those two white artists.

CHEYENNE INDIAN DRAWINGS COLLECTED BY CAPT. JOHN G. BOURKE

No skilled combat artist accompanied the United States Army in its campaign against the hostile Sioux and Cheyenne Indians in the summer of 1876 when the aroused red men stood off Crook's force on the Rosebud and wiped out Custer's immediate command on the Little Big Horn. However, Lieutenant (later Captain) John G. Bourke, who had been General George Crook's aide-de-camp during that campaign, later obtained from Cheyenne Indian artists a number of lively drawings which depicted incidents in the bitter fighting of that fateful summer as the Indians recalled them. Other Indian pictures in Bourke's collection show heroic actions of Cheyenne warriors in conflicts with the Crow, Shoshoni, Nez Perce, and other enemy tribes.

These drawings on transparent sheets of paper, in sure pen-and-ink outlines, filled in with pencil, crayon and watercolor, are good examples of the prevailing art style among Cheyenne and Sioux artists of the 1870's. The quest for realistic rendering of humans and horses seems to have been tempered by an employment of form and color to achieve decorative effects. However, the subject matter of most of these paintings is in the old Plains Indian painting tradition. Tribal war heroes are pictured in combat with tribal enemies — whether they be uniformed soldiers or breech-clouted Indians.

These pictures have been selected from the collection of 388 Plains Indian drawings lent to the Joslyn Art Museum by Mrs. A. H. Richardson, daughter of Captain Bourke.

Smithsonian Institution

John C. Ewers

GALLERY D



Drawings above from Bourke Collection

*Buffalo Dance and Hunt
tempera on buffalo hide
Lent by Mrs. Abbott Folsom*





© Northern Natural Gas Company, Omaha, Nebraska

An Assiniboin, Fort Union,
late in June, 1833
Maximilian-Bodmer Collection