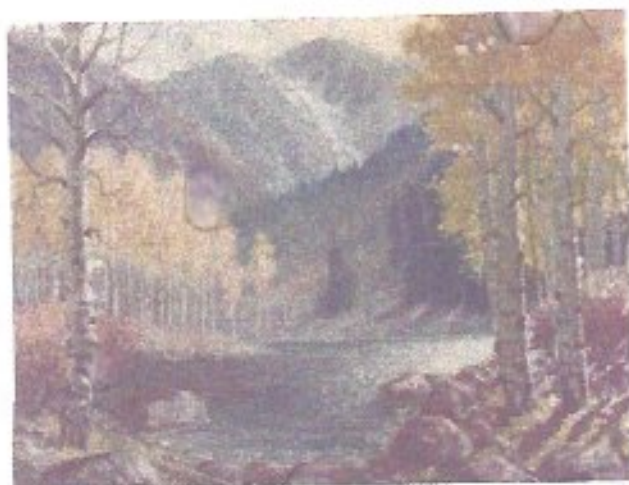


THE STORY OF ARTIST BEN TURNER
1912-1966

by Blanche Beach Turner 1967



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FOREWORD

The assembling of the material herein has been a LABOR OF LOVE. I humbly submit it for the enlightenment and enjoyment of the present and future generations. It is my deepest regret that this is but a fraction of the great achievements in Art of this greatly talented and dedicated Artist, and the great humorist and humanitarian that was BEN TURNER.

It is my intention, based upon my knowledge and the material left in the studio of my late husband, to tell what I know of him and his life's work. You will agree, I am sure, that he was a very prolific painter; serious, yet a man of profound humor.

By --- Blanche Beach Turner,
1967

Christened Albert Benjamin, BEN TURNER was born May 29, 1912 in Gallup, New Mexico, the year New Mexico became a State. At an early age his God-given talent was recognized. His dedication to developing this talent was his first consideration and consumed much of his thinking, energy and time. He was seldom without charcoal, a very short pencil which he carried in his pocket and joked about, or pen and paper for sketching something which might be developed into or incorporated with another sketch for a painting. These items for sketching were standard equipment in his automobile, part of the sundry paraphernalia in his fishing creel. A matchbook cover, although he did not smoke, might serve in an emergency for a "fingernail" sketch. Ben was the first talented descendant in the family of Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851), the famous British painter of marines and seascapes principally. Ben, however, was more versatile.

As a school boy, when his textbooks became available for resale, the students dickered for them. Why? He made numerous drawings (principally cartoons) in them, and they were simply in demand for their humorous and artistic worth. Naturally, he received a good price for those textbooks.

In the teen years Ben and older brother Bill formed a dance band. Ben was drummer and Bill a saxophonist. Their little band played for school and private parties. Ben had a wonderful sense of rhythm, and played piano for a time. He loved to "Charleston", the dance craze of that era, and once received a nice sum for dancing underground in the Gameroo Coal Mine near Gallup for a large banquet. Yes, a banquet was held inside the mine.

His art teacher at Albuquerque High School flunked him, but years later when he became a successful artist she bought one of his paintings. At that time she admitted to being jealous; that she resented the fact he knew more about art than did she. Both laughed and enjoyed the present situation. The high school principal frequently went sketching with him on a particularly fine afternoon, knowing full well that Ben was playing hockey in order to pursue his first love. The principal also bought paintings from him, and one of the graduating classes (about 1960) bought one for the school.

His first drawings were copied from newspapers, magazines, or from the work of others. Especially appealing to him at this early age was the art of cartooning, then more serious subjects were copied. Then began the freehand sketches with pencil, charcoal, pen and ink, pastels, water colors, and finally oils. A working knowledge of sculpture was also part of his formal training, and he executed several good pieces. He studied at the University of New Mexico, Chicago Art Institute, but always insisted that his most priceless instruction came from the great artists of Taos; namely, Couse, Sharp, Berninghaus, Phillips, Blumenshein, Imhof, Higgins, and others equally successful. At that time Taos was The Art Capital, composed of distinguished, educated, neatly attired and greatly talented people. He studied under the critical eye of these successful men in his studio, or painting with them in their studios, or by accompanying them on field sketching trips. This serious study with the famous Taos artists followed his brief career as a daily strip cartoonist. But more of this later in the story. We shall remain with Taos and its artists for a brief time.

Once when Ben was painting in his Taos studio and famous Artist Irving Couse had been dropping in to watch him work this incident occurred: Ben was engrossed in a painting, and Mr. Couse offered constructive criticism to the hopeful young painter. A few days later he dropped by again and was amazed that Ben was still working on the same one. He stormed "Ben, you had finished that painting when I was here the other day. You're tearing it down, Boy. You've got to know when to quit!" This really impressed the young painter, and I believe that perhaps then and there he vowed to either finish a painting in two or three days --- or forget it altogether. He painted very fast, but when someone would ask the inevitable and most tiresome and frustrating question possible of an artist "How long did it take you to paint that?" he would patiently answer "It took me (30) years to learn to paint it". He often said "I wouldn't dare tell them it took me two days to paint it, for people want an artist to suffer and starve, or it just isn't worth the price they are asked for it".

Soon after our marriage in 1939 we met Artist Ernest Blumenshein on the street in Albuquerque and Ben introduced us. Without even acknowledging the introduction Mr. Blumenshein said sadly "Ben, I'm sorry you've married. An artist should never marry if he's to become a fine painter". Ben detected my shock and irritation, smiled and said, "Mr. Blumenshein, I expect to become a fine painter because of her".

Rarely did he complete a painting if it dried due to a prolonged interruption, for wet paint stop dry or sticky paint would not blend; also he had lost his enthusiasm for it by this time. His best work was done rapidly. When a painting dried before completion it was set aside for a time, then resized with oil and an entirely new subject painted over it.

Family and friends often watched him paint, and without exception, I believe they all marveled at how quickly he completed one. So "how long" it took him to do a painting was not always a secret, but those who knew were greatly impressed and did not seemingly mind the price when they purchased. He disliked doing small landscapes, which were an order from time to time. He would grumble "It takes just as much out of me as the larger ones, and they're too condensed".

During his stay in Taos he enjoyed painting the Taos Indian. One Indian in particular, Jerry Martinez, posed for several paintings, but not without benefit of "firewater". He would excuse himself for a time, only to return filled to the gills; he would pose a bit longer, again excuse himself and repeat the performance. During his absences Ben would work on the less important parts of the painting. In later years whenever we went to Taos and Jerry spied us he would head for the car, and after an affectionate greeting he'd ask "Benny, I'm short of cash; could you let me have a little?" Ben never refused him, except on one occasion. We saw him heading for us, and Ben said to me "Watch this one; I am going to have some fun at his expense". When Jerry approached the car, tendered the usual affectionate greeting, Ben said to him "Golly, Jerry, am I glad to see you! I'm flat broke and could sure use a little money". Jerry's face clouded and he very convincingly answered "Gee, Benny, you know I'd give it to you if I had it". That encounter was brief, but on the next trip the usual routine was resumed.

Juan Mirabal, an Isleta Indian from a pueblo south of Albuquerque, often visited Ben at his Old Albuquerque studio, and a few times posed

for portraits. Modeling fees were paid to him, of course, but Ben also gave him his deer and elk hides which Juan made into attractive boots and moccasins. Quite unlike Jerry, Juan was a sober man, well-educated and of great principal. He was several times Governor of his pueblo.

In the first years of his work in the media of oils, he was set up outdoors to paint Sanctuario de Chimayo in northern New Mexico. In his audience was a little mongrel who preferred to do his viewing while sitting in the middle of Ben's palette. The following day the dog returned to keep him company, assuming again his favorite grandstand seat, thus adding another multi-colored coat of paint to his already colorful coat. Some time later when Ben returned there again from another painting location, he saw the mongrel still wearing traces of oil paint. Greatly amused he remarked "Well, at least the dog liked my painting".

To further illustrate Ben's sense of humor: Years ago he was showing paintings to a prospective buyer. Paintings were standing on the floor propped against the furniture. The small dog of the household came along and heisted his leg and "piddled" on an aspen painting, much to the profound horror of his mistress. Her apologies were profuse indeed, to which Ben quickly quipped "That's the nicest compliment I've had today. They must look like trees. Dogs are my best critics". The tense embarrassment of the moment had vanished with those words.

When he first began painting with oils he wanted to do BIG things with his new-found interest. So BIG paintings he did. A much older and successful Albuquerque artist asked of him "Why don't you paint something your size?" (meaning something smaller as he was so young). This hurt his feelings, but the two eventually became good friends and one another's best critic.

In his desire to do BIG things he started a large portrait of his mother. Accomplishing an excellent likeness, his mother upon viewing it remarked "I don't like it. You've made me look too old", to which he replied "Okay, I'll just set it aside until you catch up with it". He never finished it.

In the first years of his painting his father helped him construct his frames. They had a mitre box saw, glue and corrugated fasteners to put them together. Then Ben would hand-carve and leaf them with either German-made or Japanese-made gold or silver leaf, a time-consuming project. In later years he ordered ready-made frames, but more often than not he retouched them with leaf and toned them to place on a particular painting. His father encouraged him to continue with his painting, to make the most of his talent and his life, advising "Son, go places and do things while you are young and feel well, for when you get older you don't feel like it". A broken-hearted young man watched his father die of cancer mid-year of the second year of our marriage. Ben followed his advice, for he painted up to within a few days of his own death, although suffering excruciating headaches and dreading possible surgery for what he believed to be a brain tumor. He did go places and do things during his lifetime.

As a cartoonist, he syndicated a daily comic strip JERRY 'N' JAKE in several Scripps-Howard newspapers during the great depression years of 1931 and 1932 when he was but 19 and 20 years old. He was reputed to be the youngest daily strip cartoonist in the business at the time. His

older brother Bill was Business Manager and also helped with ideas for the strip, often using some of their own experiences for subject matter. The venture was a success, except financially. It was too costly to produce and the newspapers lacked advertisers. He drew many political cartoons for newspapers, and submitted a few comic cartoons to ESQUIRE MAGAZINE. These were returned as "REJECTED", but they later appeared under the signature of one of their own artists. They had not been copyrighted, so there was no recourse.

In 1934 he drew the official New Mexico Brand Book for the Cattle Sanitary Board. This was a very meticulous assignment.

He had no formal training as an Interior Decorator or as an Architect, but he possessed natural talent in both fields, which he exercised to help his family and friends in planning their homes, business structures, etc. He dabbled occasionally in Commercial Art designing letterheads, food and drink labels, interior arrangements for home furnishings advertisements and the like. As a natural architect he had the ability not only to draw floor plans, but could also draw "exteriors" from blueprints of floor plans. He was frequently called upon to collaborate with architects to make a structure more artistic and eye-appealing.

He decorated the walls and drapes of Salazar Mortuary, and was occasionally summoned by Mr. Salazar to bring his paints and brushes and make "life-like" a corpse, much to the delight of the family of the deceased. As Ben termed it "I put the blood back into the body".

In 1939 when Albuquerque's Hotel Hilton was built, he received his first sizeable commission for murals. He painted directly on the walls of LaCopita Cocktail Lounge five humorous murals depicting Indian and Mexican life. This work did much to make LaCopita a favorite gathering place for those with a thirst and a sense of humor. A large pictorial map showing points of interest in New Mexico adorned the foyer wall at the Copper Avenue entrance to the hotel lobby. The second manager, obviously lacking art appreciation and a sense of humor, had the murals painted out in his enthusiasm to redecorate. Mr. Conrad Hilton, President of the hotel chain was not consulted on this. When he learned the murals had been painted out, he promptly fired the manager. Later, in 1942, he was again commissioned to paint more murals for the hotel so popular with the clientele. These were executed just prior to his war service.

I shall endeavor to explain the first murals for LaCopita. They were: (1) Three Mexicans (two very skinny, bowlegged and knock-kneed, and one fat and bowlegged, complete with fancy shirts, sombreros, serapes, and one with a guitar, all obviously singing lustily; (2) Three skinny Indian bucks (one is the chief), all bowlegged and with tremendous Roman noses on expressionless faces are chanting in time to the drumming of the center one; (3) Four skinny Indian bucks with potbellies are involved in a tribal dance at the Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonials at Gallup, New Mexico, while in the background, stealing the show, is a naked little Indian boy; and (4) Four skinny potbellied Indian bucks are doing the age-old Snake Dance, a ceremonial, using four of the more modern white man's dance steps. In the left foreground two snakes, with a feather in their headbands, are also going through the paces. The right foreground has the "show-stealer" bambino trying to pull a very large snake out of the ground.

About 1940 we were enroute to Gallup from Albuquerque to attend the Ceremonials, his cousin from Colorado accompanying us. We stopped at one of those "tourist traps" to see the big snakes. While standing looking down upon them in their boxed cages, Ben moved his foot gently up his cousin's leg. Her first reaction was that a snake was crawling up her leg. You could not believe the volume of her screams! How he enjoyed that. Later, while watching the Ceremonials Parade at Gallup, he reached around me and patted her rear. She turned around and gave a dirty look to the tall Apache standing directly behind her: Ben again patted her on the rear; she turned again with that dirty look, while the Apache stood very erect with folded arms intently viewing the parade. Ben did it again a few minutes later, but this time he was caught in the act. She exclaimed "Ben Turner, it's a good thing I caught you, for I was about to clobber that Indian". Ben laughed and said "It's a good thing you didn't, Cuz. You'd have started an Indian war right here, and we're outnumbered".

In 1942 for wall mounting, he painted on masonite these humorous murals, explained briefly as follows: (1) A sleeping Mexican about to get a "hot foot" treatment from a devilish-looking muchacho; (2) An emaciated Indian buck riding a burro is being followed by 21 children, one of which is very blond and blue-eyed, and another looking like the popular comedian, Bob Hope. This brood is accompanied by a very fat and contented squaw; (3) A skinny and heavily bearded shepherd is taking a bath in a small stream while a goat eats his clothing from a nearby bush; (4) A Mexican trio apparently playing and singing badly, with a howling dog, a braying burro, and a rabbit with its paws to its ears; (5) A fat Mexican with a peg leg chatting happily with a beautiful senorita, the dogs making "use" of his wooden leg; (6) Two bears with bulging stomachs are picking their teeth contentedly, with nothing but a huge sombrero, boots and spurs in view; (7) A little boy arrayed in chaps, boots, sombrero, ammunition belt and pistol shooting holes in the hats of a skinny and a fat cowboy; and (8) Three fat squaws in a tribal dance being "speared" on their rears by a fun-loving buck. A toddling naked child is crying because he just came in contact with a cactus at his rear. These murals received wider acclaim than those painted in 1939.

Immediately following the comic murals, Hilton commissioned him to paint a "continuing Western theme" (on the walls) immediately under the ceiling between the timber beams. These consisted of a range chuckwagon scene; a cattle roundup and branding; evening campfire songfest by the cowpunchers; and various wildlife sequences. These were for the Greer Dining Rooms set aside for private banquets. There were folding doors to provide one large room or three smaller rooms for private parties. Mr. Hilton assured Ben at the time that these would never be painted out. To this writing they have remained intact.

He was inducted into the Army Air Corps on August 22, 1942. He received training as a Radio Operator while stationed at Truax Field, Wisconsin, near Madison. He detested the racket and mechanics involved; his artistic nature rebelled. He flew many dangerous missions as a Radioman from Anti-Submarine duty at Westover Field, Massachusetts (over the Atlantic) to actual battle areas in the European Theatre of Operations while stationed in Italy with the 484th Bomb Squadron.

When they arrived in Italy from the States, as they were setting up camp a German Messerschmidt flew over and dropped some leaflets, declaring "WELCOME AMERICANS. WE SHALL SEE YOU SOON". This, of course, meant that Germany would soon send bombers, so "on-the-double" for everything

was ordered in camp. Colonel Keese, Commander of 484th, ordered Ben and Jim Philpott to dig a "foxhole" for him. Ben said that they dug, and dug and dug some more, and earth was as hard as cement and rocks were plentiful. When they were nearly exhausted from this manual labor, neither of them being accustomed to such strenuous work, Ben saw Colonel Keese emerge from his headquarters tent and an idea struck him. He told tall and lanky 6' 3" Philpott "Phil, enough is enough. Get down on your knees in this thing; here comes Colonel Keese. Let's call and ask if this is deep enough" With Ben also on his knees, when asked the question, the Colonel replied "Yeah, that's deep enough. Thanks a lot". That evening the "Jerries" (also called "Krauts") flew over and strafed them. When Colonel Keese ran for his "foxhole" he could barely crouch below the surface. After the raid, you can bet that two GI's were called on the carpet and beaten down quite a bit. Said the Colonel "You lazy good-for-nothings. I could have been killed. Now get out there and make that thing about two feet deeper and long enough for this torso of mine". He was about the size of Philpott. When General Keese visited us in Colorado the autumn of 1965 Ben asked if he remembered it. He said "How could I forget it? I hit that shallow ditch so hard thinking I had a distance to go that I nearly fractured all my bones". He laughed heartily about it, however.

At every opportunity he observed "battles", which he painted in his leisure time, finally convincing THE BRASS that he was a better Artist than he was a Radioman. General Nathan F. Twining, Commanding the 15th Air Corps, Bari, Italy, "requisitioned" Ben from Colonel William B. Keese at Cerignola. He was requested to organize and supervise the Headquarters Art Staff. Other talented men submitted sketches to Ben, selections were made and the Art Staff came into being, functioning for a time even after D-Day in Europe.

At Bari he drew propaganda posters, cartoons, humorous and "morale" posters and cartoons for the 15th Army Air Corps (later named Army Air Force), many of which are the property of various Air Force officers, of the War Department itself, and The Library of Congress.

While at Bari, he was sitting on a rock painting a scene on the Isle of Capri. An Italian among the interested spectators, who spoke fairly good English, struck up a conversation with the American artist. He said that only a few days prior another artist sat on the same rock and painted the same scene; that he was also a good artist -- and his name was Winston Churchill. Ben could see that another artist had indeed been there recently, for he had cleaned his palette in the sand and rocks.

He illustrated many of his V-Mail letters, or oftentimes a cartoon was the sole message sent home. These were not in the material which he left in his studio. It is my belief that he came upon them probably at the time we moved from Albuquerque, and deciding they were not important and were taking up valuable space, he threw them away. I vividly recall one V-Mail cartoon, and what a psychological impact it had upon me at the time. I had been mailing a letter a day to Ben, then came this "un-funny" cartoon: A dejected, worried and frantic looking GI in a foxhole, with bullets flying around him, bombs bursting in the air, etc. shouts "Why in hell don't you write?" The following day came a brief V-Mail message "Disregard the cartoon --- I got 21 letters from you today!" The delivery of mail from home was way down on the Priorities list.

While with the 484th for extra pocket money, he painted "Cheese cake" on bombers. Members of a crew chipped in to pay for the work. "Pretty girls" was the usual order, but one pilot wanted his young wife and two small children with him on his missions, and for this Ben used photographs supplied by the airman in order to have an animated likeness of the trio. Halos crowned their heads, while their faces bore satanic expressions. "Tids and the Kids" flew the skies with their beloved airman. After so many of the "Cheese cake" bombers were shot down, the men grew superstitious and discontinued having their bombers painted.

He decorated Officers' and Enlisted Mens' Clubs at Cerignola and Bari; painted portraits of General Twining and other high-ranking officers; did original drawings and paintings for officers. Much of his work and that of his staff became RECORD for War Department and Library of Congress files. He did map work for "future usability", so termed by The Military. He disliked the map-drawing assignments, declaring "I never was any good in geography". He covered the air battles of Ploesti in Roumania, a decisive battle of the European war. "The Air Battles of Ploesti" was compiled as a documentary, quite a sizeable and impressive book, a copy of which was given to the artist in charge, Ben Turner. All through his war service he made countless sketches. A series of sketches pictured "Life on a Convoy Ship" bound for Europe, and included the shore line in the Mediterranean area. He sketched these in pencil or water colors on whatever type of paper he could mustre. Several of these were later done in oil for the War Department. Also sketched were people, places and things. (For a more knowledgeable record of this work see the special scrap book WORLD WAR II AND BEN TURNER, THE ARTIST).

The night before the boys were to sail for home after D-Day they were in Bari for a last bit of vino and spaghetti. On the street they encountered an Italian who obviously had an axe to grind with the American GI. He approached them with a knife calling them names. Naturally, they began to run. For as long as he lived, Ben had nightmares of this frightening and heartbreaking experience and would call out in the night "Run, Smiley, run! O, my God, he got Smiley!" Smiley had tripped and fallen and the enraged Italian stabbed him to death on the spot. Ben often said that this hurt him worse than when he lost a buddy in actual battle, for being close friends, they were making plans for returning home.

Upon his discharge from the Air Force on September 30, 1945 at El Paso, Texas, he returned home the following day. There occurred an incident which he never allowed me to live down: Daughter Bonnie, three years old the following month after her father's arrival home from war, was standing in her crib, hands gripping the railing, peering down upon us that first morning we were together as a family. Ben had the feeling that he was being stared at, and upon opening his eyes she calmly inquired of him "Do you know my daddy?" His sense of humor prompted this --- "What's been going on here? I'm tempted to get up and put on my soldier suit and reenlist". I was five months pregnant when he left for war service, and she had seen her father but for short periods while too young to remember him (at 5½ months and again at 11½ months). "Daddy" was mostly a photograph which she kissed nightly upon retiring saying "Good night, Daddy". The man who returned bore little resemblance to the one in the photograph taken in 1939.

Shortly after World War II brother Bill and three other Albuquerque men combined their begged-borrowed-or-stolen resources to build Laloma

Ballroom. Ben was made responsible for all interior decorations, and he did much of the work himself. Gladys, Bill's wife, made all the drapes, which Ben decorated. He made huge elaborate hand-carved chandeliers, murals and other decorations for the walls; painted special decorative motifs for the bar and cocktail lounge, etc., but the growing town was not quite ready for a large ballroom featuring Big Name Bands, so its existence was short. He received but a portion of the money due him, consequently it became a LOSS on his income tax return.

Soon after LaLoma Ballroom closed, brother Bill was engaged as his sales representative, which arrangement lasted some twenty years. As might be expected when associated too intimately with "family", the inevitable became routine --- older brother told younger brother what to paint and when to paint it --- how he cracked that whip! This was an intolerable and frustrating existence for a sensitive artist. How he managed to cope with the situation was always a source of wonderment to me. Finally, after years of soul-searching and being unable to bear it any longer, Bill was discharged in August of 1965. As Ben had expected, a wedge was driven into the family structure and much ill-feeling prevailed against him. This grieved him. He had been close to severing the business arrangement several times only to postpone the action, knowing that his aged mother would not approve, and indeed she did not. It was the following month that a noticeable decline in his health became alarmingly apparent. He suffered a heart attack, but electrocardiographs indicated no heart damage. Other attacks followed at intervals, each taking its toll.

After Ben's return from the war, in 1947 the Hilton chain again commissioned him to paint for their Albuquerque hotel. This time, there were three very large landscapes of New Mexico and Colorado, which would be viewed through the windows of the cocktail lounge from the lobby, one to be viewed from the lounge. There were two 4' x 6' and one 4' x 12', painted on masonite and framed. These were later purchased from Hilton by Sunset Inn, Albuquerque. In 1952 he did some Southwestern desert murals for Hilton of miscellaneous cacti, yucca, mesquite, etc. as minor wall decorations for the bar and cocktail lounge.

Of these mural jobs he said "I lose money through loss of time in doing other paintings, but it's good advertising". Needless to say, many requests for his murals fell on deaf ears.

Most of the time he called me "Miss Beach", my maiden name. At first this embarrassed me, for I feared that people might think of us as unmarried. Our friends also came to call me this --- all in fun, and there were a few instances which could have backfired, one in particular: While on a trip to Kansas City to visit my family, we stopped rather late at a motel in Enid, Oklahoma. An elderly woman in nightgown and robe sleepily answered the bell. Ben asked her if she had a double room; she did, and asked if he wanted to see it. Being very tired, for I did not drive at that time, he answered "Oh, no, I'm sure it will be all right. Come on, Miss Beach, grab your bag and let's go to bed". Up, up, up went her eyebrows; she looked horrified, asking "Oh, my goodness, aren't you married?" There were no explanations given; we merely went to bed to sleep --- she to wonder, no doubt.

In Redstone, Ben would come into the house from the studio and very solemnly declare "I hate to tell you this, but I've forgotten how to paint". This declaration would come when he was very tired after complet-

ing a strenuous series of paintings, or when he was just beginning after a prolonged lull. I'd laugh, of course, for it was a ridiculous statement. Quite seriously, he'd insist "Yep, I've forgotten how to paint". Then he'd say something like (in substance) --- "poor naive wife is prejudiced and thinks I can paint".

On many occasions I talked him out of scraping off a partially completed painting because he was dissatisfied with it. I'd go to the studio and point out all its good features and potential worth, so more to satisfy me, I think, he'd resume painting and within a few minutes cure the ills. Oftentimes his most self-satisfying work would come of these sessions. He'd remark with a chuckle "You stick with me, Kid, and some day you'll be wearing big diamonds". I was pleased that my advice had been followed.

He was not a stranger to frustration and temperament. The preceding paragraph is but a minor frustration compared with some he had. He lived pretty much by "mood", and except for the work itself (he painted many times when he was not at all in the mood), he would not do something unless he was in the mood for it. This was rather frustrating to me at times, but somehow it was worked out --- later when he was in the mood. His commissioned portraits "bugged" him plenty when he'd get a good likeness, but in smoothing out a line or enhancing the skin tone he would tear down the basic structure. He'd very soon detect the "overstep", would become furious, throw down his brush and walk off. Seldom did he ever curse, and obscene words were not in his vocabulary. Later he would return more confident and repair his mistakes, chuckling "It's a nice thing about oil paint --- it's easy to erase mistakes by just covering them up with more paint".

Soon after his war service he maintained a studio at Santa Fe for approximately a year and a half. The famous Artist John Young-Hunter dropped by frequently to watch him paint. This was a nice quiet place for him to work, but it was a little too remote for him to forge ahead in his profession, so we returned to Albuquerque. He set up a studio in the oldest structure in Old Albuquerque, LaPlacita (from 1948-1951). The studio had previously been occupied by Carl VonHassler for several years, and following Ben's departure in January 1951, it was then occupied by Walter Bambrook, both fine artists. He was seldom alone in the studio --- he usually had an audience, but amazingly enough he turned out some very fine work there and in great volume.

Since the painting of aspens seemed to be his specialty, we first seriously considered Aspen, Colorado as a permanent residence, but after much searching there we discovered that one pays for the "privilege" of living there. How glad we were that we stumbled upon Redstone, which is in the same county, the scenic benefits being even greater. We located on a hill overlooking the village below. The house was built at the turn of the century (about 1900) by John Cleveland Osgood, Founder of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, a company-owned house at that time. Structurally sound, the house was remodeled and added to over the years. A large 26' x 38' log studio with a sizeable fireplace of native stone was built at the outset, and realizing his dream of being situated in beautiful surroundings and in a building of his own design, he was truly inspired to paint, paint, paint. Of necessity he became an apt carpenter, plumber and electrician, and many times swung a wide brush on inter-

ior and exterior walls of the house. However, he could not be induced to tackle any of these odd jobs if he had an unfinished painting on the easel, unless there was an emergency. We had a few emergencies, especially with the antiquated plumbing.

He was also quite a chef, especially with any type of meat, and his sauces were delectable. Many times he laughingly remarked "If the time ever comes when I can't paint I can open a hamburger joint". On his numerous camping trips he was usually self-appointed camp cook, doing all the cooking seemingly without effort. This special talent was inherited from his father "Parson" Turner, who cooked for the Santa Fe train crews in the caboose. A brakeman, they called him "Parson" because he was such a kind and good man and they respected him.

We had a telephone before we moved to Colorado and he enjoyed answering the ring with "Joe's Inn" (a bar north of town). Also, when a certain aunt of his visited in Albuquerque and would wish the number of another member of the family he would inform her "It's 604" (at that time the number of the Police Department). She always quite innocently fell for this one. Upon moving to Colorado he would not install a telephone, saying "No telephone; it would defeat our purpose in being here. One of the things I'm going to enjoy most about this is the quiet atmosphere". And speaking of atmosphere --- when cobwebs formed on the studio ceiling between the beams he would say "Leave them there. They're part of the atmosphere".

A certain bunch of his men friends hunted together in New Mexico every November for years, staying at Nourse's Ranch near Datil. After several trips out with the same hunting partner, one time they came upon a herd of mostly does, which Ben would never kill, declaring "That's destroying the seeds". The hunting partner got "trigger-happy" and opened fire, knocking down several deer before Ben could stop him. That did it! Ben told his partner in no uncertain terms that they were through as of that moment. He was never reinstated.

We had a very fine black Cocker Spaniel whom we named "Sam" (for Little Black Sambo). Ben had found Sam in open country between Questa and Taos while returning to Albuquerque from a Colorado hunting trip, a pitifully thin bundle of black hair matted with sticks, burrs, etc. and loaded with fleas and lice. He had a bad case of tonsillitis, but when he was bathed and de-loused and was eating regularly he was a very fine looking animal, and he truly appreciated his new home. After we had been in Colorado for a few years, Sam became a father. We desired one of his sons, a lovely reddish-blond long-eared puppy. He was the only one in the litter not jet black like father and mother. In deciding what to name him we thought first of "Samson" (Sam's son), but Sam hearing part of his name would come running, so we thought best to choose another in order not to confuse him. I asked "How about Junior?" Ben protested "I don't want him to grow up to be a sissy-dog. How about J. R., and no one needs to know it's for Junior?" We agreed, so "J.R." he became. A few days later we had some house guests ask Ben "What do the initials stand for?" Out of the blue he replied "Jefferson Richardson". Noting their puzzled expressions he said "We'd feel silly going out and calling "Here, Jefferson Richardson. Here, Jefferson Richardson. So we shortened it to J. R.". I never knew what that man was going to say if it meant a laugh.

Of the short pencil he carried in his deepest pocket for sketching, when asked by someone if he had a pen or pencil they could borrow for a moment he would ask "Are your hands clean?" then he'd produce that sawed-off 1½" pencil. He said it was one which no one would steal, so he'd always have one when ~~when~~-needed.

He also had an old felt Stetson hat which he wore fishing for many years. The hatband was loaded with trout flies, hooks, lures, etc. until there was no hatband to be seen. It was a horrible looking thing and ridiculously comical to behold. He was many times photographed wearing that silly hat, and many of our guests were also photographed wearing it. Ben would say "I'm proud of this hat. It's the most expensive hat in Colorado". With all that paraphernalia attached to it it likely was the most expensive in the State.

At Redstone he painted, fished, hunted, performed odd jobs around the house, entertained our friends and their friends during the summer - autumn months, spending the winters in Mexico headquartered at Mazatlan on the Pacific Coast. There he concentrated upon painting seascapes, Mexican character portraits, village scenes and still-life studies of the flowering vine, Bugambilia (Spanish spelling. The English equivalent is Bougainvillea). It would seem that he truly believed his philosophy that "Every day a man spends in hunting or fishing he is adding that day to his lifespan", for he loved doing both for relaxation and the sheer pleasure of being out-of-doors with nature. Always in his possession was a sketching pad of some sort. He studied and sketched the mountains, clouds, trees and streams while engaged in stream or lake fishing. While deep-sea fishing he would study and sketch ocean waves and their color as related to the sky. He painted a few "Marlin and Sailfish Marines", and these action paintings were very popular with sportsmen. He was a most successful fisherman and hunter, and his limit was usually in possession.

Once in Colorado when he and Monsignor Ament were stream fishing this took place: The Monsignor, normally an excellent fisherman, wasn't doing so well, but Ben was having good luck. The Monsignor watched his technique for a time then asked "Ben, I fished in that hole, that one, and that one, and you come along behind me and pull them out. What's wrong with me?" He was promptly informed "You have to live a good clean life and go to church every Sunday". He also told this to a Presbyterian minister from Roswell on a similar occasion.

He had quite a library of fine music in his studio of both records and tapes, and on his trips to Mexico took a portable record player until such time as it was replaced with a tape recorder. He had to have music --- he relaxed to it; he worked to it; and he hired a lot of music in Mexico on the street, or he would bring mariachis, miramba bands, and other musical combinations to the studio apartment and make recordings. These sessions were so much fun. Some of them had never before recorded and they were a bit tense, but they relaxed a bit after a few shots of tequila.

Of a heavy snowfall in the mountains he would remark "It's rump-deep to a tall Indian out there". It could happen in one night too.

In the mountains we had an outside toilet for "emergencies"; for use when there were inside plumbing troubles, or we had so many house

guests we couldn't get into our own bathroom. One spring Ben decided to clean out the toilet, so he dug a deep hole down the trail some distance from the house, cleaned out the toilet using an old rickety wheelbarrow for hauling. He started down the trail, called back to me "Bring the shovel". I followed with the shovel. Midway, while laboring under the load and the rickety vehicle, he set it down, solemnly declaring "You know, I wish I had all the money this represents". I could scarcely hold that shovel I was so weak from laughter.

A Jeep was a necessary item in Colorado. On excursions into the higher country with house guests, on a certain downgrade near Crystal, he would (pretend to) close his eyes saying "Look, I've made this trip so often that I can do it with my eyes closed". Imagine, if you can, the screams of the ladies, especially those from the flatlands. Occasionally he'd pull this one (for only a split second, which seemed an eternity to the flatlanders) "Look, the Jeep has come this way so often I don't even have to guide it". There was always a reaction.

Colorado living brought us so many house guests through the summer and autumn months that we actually felt guilty when we sat down to a meal alone, so often when this happened Ben would jump into the Jeep and go scouting for someone in the village to share the meal with us, especially someone who was alone. He loved people, being with them, and simply could not bear the thought of someone being alone when they could be eating with us. This wasn't always welcomed by his wife, for I longed at times for just our little family to have a little peace and quiet; to catch up on our communion with each other, and to discuss family business. This, however, had to be managed at another time --- oftentimes in the middle of the night.

Being a good neighbor, at Redstone he painted signs gratis for the Catholic Chapel, the grocery stores, a liquor store, a hamburger stand, and a motel. Each time he'd make this request "Don't tell anyone that I painted these, for I'd be ruined as an artist". Keep any secret in a village of this size? Hardly!

One year when we stayed in Redstone during the Christmas holidays, we invited four friends who lived alone. Bonnie had received a large sled for Christmas. There was considerable snow; the countryside was so beautiful. He asked of the men "Boys, how would you like to go back a few years and belly-bust down the hill a few times?" They spent the entire afternoon doing just that and loving every minute. One was the aged cowboy whom Ben had painted, Tom Kenney. He was well over 70.

Most of his outer clothing showed traces of paint, for when he had a painting in the process, even though attired in his best for an appointment or an evening out, he would stop by the studio to study his work for a moment, pick up a brush and again lose himself in his work, most generally getting paint on his clothing. He had a habit of standing with his left hand on his hip just inside the pocket. Since there was usually paint on his fingers his pockets would become encrusted with it and would eventually have to be replaced. How many pockets I replaced I could not possibly know.

He would ask someone whom perhaps he had just met "Would you like to see a picture of what I consider to be my best endeavor?" While they

were probably thinking "Oh, the modesty of this guy", he would produce one of many photographs of daughter Bonnie which he always carried. He'd say "This is a picture of my masterpiece". He was so proud of her.

He was not without a distorted sense of humor either. This was told to me by his mother: His younger brother Bob, eleven years his junior, would be sound asleep when Ben would return home late. He would shake Bob and with great urgency in his voice say "Come on; come on; let's go"! He would then lead a still sleeping brother into the clothes closet and shut the door and go to bed. Later when Bob would awaken to his predicament and would call out, Ben would then lead him back to his bed. Finally, his father forbid a repetition of this caper. Actually, he adored his younger brother. He ignored people he did not especially like, so to be noticed, to be teased was proof enough of his love. He was never curt with someone he did not especially admire, he simply ignored them if possible. He never left you in doubt of your present standing with him.

Once when his older brother, a cousin and he fished in Colorado before our residence there, they had put up three separate lunches with chicken for the main course. Bill, always a half mile ahead to get in on the best fishing, said he'd eat alone when he got hungry. Somehow the other two managed to get his lunch and remove the chicken, substituting sticks and rocks. They had a "feast" at Bill's expense. Bill was so angry he could have been placed in a straight-jacket.

Ben loved children if they were nice, and it grieves me that he will never know his grandchildren. He would have thought them GRAND indeed, and how they would have loved him. Small children who visited our home followed him about like puppies. He had quite a way with youngsters. He also loved animals, and even though an avid hunter he finally gave up the sport. He actually mourned the wildlife vanishing from the scene. He often said that if hunting wasn't curtailed that he would have to take his grandchildren to the zoo to show them a deer. The first few years we were in Colorado there were large herds of deer to be seen regularly. Alas, not now. It is now a treat to see even one.

He had great compassion for animals in trouble. A Redstone neighbor's dog, Kai, while chasing a deer became marooned on a ledge of the high red cliffs behind the village. It was wintertime and very very cold, the radio weatherman reporting it would be well below zero during the night. No amount of calling and coaxing would bring the dog down. We couldn't do anything about it that night, but somehow he survived the bitter cold and resumed his barking the following morning. To make a long story short, Ben phoned the sheriff at Aspen and had him bring an experienced mountain climber. The climber wanted \$50.00 to bring the dog down, a sum the owner could ill afford. It was a highly hazardous climb through deep snow and rocks, so Ben wrote him out a check for \$60.00 when he arrived back with a weary, bleary-eyed and frost-bitten Kai. After food, rest and tender loving care he was good as new. The story was written up in The Denver Post, a reporter being dispatched to get the details. It was valuable to The Post as a true human-interest feature.

You might say that Ben was allergic to publicity with regard to his work. He insisted "You can't eat it" or "The most sincere compliment an artist can get for his work is a check", and for this philosophy his con-

temporaries often called him a "Commercial Artist". He did try to paint what would sell, and he often wearied of doing just that. How he wished that he could afford to paint according to the dictates of his heart. He said "We have to live and pay taxes, and to do that I must paint what they want". Likewise, he disliked to stage art exhibits and avoided them whenever possible, but he was forced into many during his lifetime. Besides his showings in galleries throughout the country, many exhibits were sponsored by various clubs, fraternal and social organizations, and charities. He donated many paintings to these and to hospitals and educational edifices. He donated many paintings as "door prizes".

He painted many prominent people in his time and could easily have made a good living doing only portraits, but he disliked commissioned portrait painting. Through his experience he learned that a photographic likeness was expected, a flattering one. He thought "It isn't possible to paint a commissioned portrait and have a work of art as well". He loved doing character portraits, especially of old Mexicans or Indians, for in this type of portrait an exact likeness was incidental. Usually a very good likeness was accomplished because it was "incidental" and not all-important --- no stress; no pressures.

The eyes in his portraits were so expressive. This impressed more people than any other feature in his portraits. I have seen him get a perfect eye-expression in as little as four or five brush strokes. Background was the least important in a portrait; purely incidental to the subject itself which was, of course, the focal point. When he was what he called "clicking" I've seen him paint two or three character portraits in a day, often two in an afternoon.

At Redstone he painted the Kenney brothers, Tom and John. Tom, the cowboy, was painted about our second year (1952) in Colorado, and John, whom he called "Mr. Redstone", was painted from photographs the summer of 1965. Tom's portrait was kept for daughter Bonnie, and John's portrait was given to his widow. Ben wanted to do another of John for Bonnie's collection, but time ran out for him. People who knew the Kenneys came from miles around to see the portraits. Without exception, all were lavish with their praise.

He obtained some of his most interesting effects in painting with other than the business-end of a brush. For instance: The palette knife might be used for bold strokes, minute strokes, to accent sunlight or shadow, a shimmering on stream or ocean wave, or for plastering an adobe. He painted many exclusively with a palette knife. In painting foliage of trees, bushes, etc., he often gained some rather startling effects with the opposite end of his brush, a nail or a hairpin; mere scratching on close observation, but for the effect back it was superb. He strove constantly for "clear" colors. He had no time for "muddy" colors. Aspens, his specialty, were certainly clear colors, with deep contrasts between light and shadows, and "back-lighting" of aspens, cottonwoods, still-life studies, etc. was practically his TRADE MARK.

In the early days his pre-sketches for his paintings were quite detailed, taking several minutes to complete. However, with time and experience, these became less detailed. In his latter years they were what he termed "my shorthand, which no one but me can read once it's cold". He had heard me make this remark regarding my shorthand characters, so he adopted it since it also applied to his sketchy-sketches. He made abbre-

viated color, substance and subject notes on his sketches, while his brain actually photographed the scene. His power to retain what he observed was another great talent.

For most of his painting career he did not consider a painting finished until it was suitably framed and a picture light and switch attached. After he initiated this practice he gave many lights and switches to early day customers, all part of his program to have an entirely satisfied customer. No sale was ever final unless it was a commissioned project which met all the demands. He traded several paintings from his current stock for his older ones, often re-touching and re-framing them for future sale, for there was no deterioration. "Paintings, he said, are an investment which grows more valuable with time".

He often said to me "If I ever feel that I have reached my peak then I will be all through. I must always strive to better the quality of my work". He joked about his "bread-and-butter" and "potboiler" paintings, saying "I've never really painted anything good". He was never entirely satisfied with a finished work, saying "Maybe I can fool the buyer, but I can't fool myself. I know it could be much better". He was very modest and humble about his work. As soon as he completed a painting he immediately lost interest in it, and became absorbed in the planning and creation of the next one to go to the easel. At such times he was too preoccupied to be cognizant of activity around him. I learned to remain silent, for I would not be heard anyway.

Once before World War II we were traveling through Texas, and he had several requests for Texas Bluebonnets. He obliged by painting several in motels where we stayed. All sold before the paint dried. A wealthy oilman-rancher of Midland asked if he could paint a mammoth fish hook in his recreation room, a hook complete with blue nylon leader. He did this in a few hours to the rancher's complete satisfaction. It was quite effective high on the long wall of that huge room, and it was destined to become a "conversation" piece as well.

Wherever he went he painted. Wherever he went and there was an art gallery he hungrily studied each one. He was always studying and observing the work and technique of other painters. While stationed in Italy he made several trips to Rome taking binoculars so that he might study the works of Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel. He always hoped to return to Europe some day to make another tour of the great galleries, as many were closed during the war and their treasures stored for safekeeping. Also everywhere he went and there were frame shops or second-hand stores, he was on the lookout for good frames which he might work over into something really fine. He would not miss an opportunity to improve the calibre of his merchandise.

Painting was his life, but he did not neglect his duties toward family or friends. He was an "easy touch" for the less fortunate when he believed them to be sincere in their plea for financial assistance. How many benefitted is known only to God. He sent two children in Mexico to school to study English, paying their tuition and buying their clothing and supplies. He had little love for organized charities, believing in giving aid direct to the one needing it. His kind and generous heart are legend.

He was never too busy painting to give gratis instruction or constructive criticism to a young or old aspiring artist; to give a word of

encouragement, or to be a gracious host to invited or casual drop-in guests. It would interrupt his work-thoughts, but this did not especially bother him until about the last two years of his life after his health began failing. Then at times, it would seem that he resented these interruptions in his desire to drive, drive, drive. He seemed to acquire a compulsion to paint; to cram what he could into such time as he had remaining. There were times when he would not come for meals when they were prepared. He would keep putting me off saying "This is more important; let me finish this brush out (the color in it) then I'll come." He would usually become so involved in the meantime that he'd forget a meal awaited him. If wakeful during the night he'd paint for an hour or so, or begin very early in the morning before interruptions began.

Through the years many young hopefuls trying to gain a foothold in the art world came to him for criticism, actual instruction, or a mere word of encouragement when the going seemed impossible to bear. He often declared "I will never teach, for I haven't the time", but this was true in essence only. He always had the time. He never discouraged an untalented beginner, but would rather advise that one to study under a good teacher. He told me "Let the teacher tell him there is no talent; I can't." He took several young artists under his wing, taking them on sketching trips and more often than not would pay all their expenses.

Our middle-of-the-night discussions were sometimes quite lengthy, so a few times I was guilty of ignoring his "Are you awake" plea. This was his best time to get things off his chest, or we'd make some important decisions, then we'd say "Good night" again and return to sleep. I realize now that it was a compliment for him to want to talk things over with me. Why do we so often learn too late what is important or not important to our well-being?

The best buyers for his murals were cocktail bars and recreational and entertainment facilities. For his paintings, banks were the best among business. Private collectors filled their walls. He would often give a painting or so to a person who had bought several, or to someone whom he felt would especially appreciate it but could not afford to buy one. A struggling young couple, a spinster, or an old retired buyer might well receive a great reduction in the price of a painting. It was important to him that a buyer really wanted to own his work. LaPlacita Dining Rooms, Old Albuquerque, purchased dozens of his paintings and occasionally sold some for profit. Then they bought others from him to fill those particular vacancies on their walls.

The largest private collector of his paintings was Stella Dysart, New Mexico's Uranium Queen. She commissioned him late in 1964 to do her portrait. It was a tough assignment, for at the time she was 85 years old (but didn't look it), but she wanted to look about twenty years younger. He painted from life before leaving for Mexico after the holidays and did another "practice" portrait while in Mexico. The third one was begun and finished in Albuquerque while she posed; finally she was permitted to look. She liked it! They had been very close friends for years, with almost a Mother-Son relationship, so he gifted her with the portrait. She had many times asked him what he was charging. His stock answer was "Stella, you can't afford this one but I'll try to be reasonable". She died the following month after Ben.

Bill Cutter, Cutter-Carr Flying Service, Albuquerque, who was a dear and personal friend, bought paintings from Ben for every room in his fine home, and often gave newly purchased ones to his best customers. He was

agent for Beechcraft Bonanzas. Following Bill's death Ben painted his portrait from photographs and donated it to the Cutter Memorial, of which he was a committee member. A bronzed plaque portrait was being executed by an Italian artist in New York City, but it was rejected by Mrs. Cutter as not resembling her husband, which it did not. The Cutter Memorial Committee voted to send Ben with Mrs. Cutter to help the artist secure a good likeness. The Committee purchased his plane ticket and offered to pay all of his expenses while he was away, but in memory of his friend Bill Cutter he paid his own expenses for those several days. This was no small amount. He also gave a \$50.00 donation toward the Memorial in the beginning. Bill Cutter was a pioneering pilot, flying "crates" under the worst possible weather conditions on many a cross-country mercy mission, which he took in stride as well as he did in later years in the more modern up-to-date planes. His ready smile was his TRADE MARK.

Before we left for Mexico for the last time Ben arranged with George Mason, a Public Relations Representative in Albuquerque, to take over for the next few years the handling of all of his publicity, scheduling of one-man art exhibits, etc., a systematic program designed to keep his name and work constantly before the public. This would have lessened Ben's volume of work and raised the price of his work. This was scheduled to begin immediately upon our return from Mexico in the spring, but alas, God called the artist. Barely a year later Mr. Mason too was dead.

After our arrival in Mexico about a week following daughter Bonnie's wedding on January 8, 1966, he told his new son-in-law "I feel that this will be my most creative year". The headaches were increasing in intensity and duration, but he set to work very soon and painted two before his death. In Mexico he poured out to me his innermost yearnings concerning his future work plans. He felt that now there would be just the two of us, we could therefore live cheaper, and he could begin to paint subjects he had been longing to paint. He said "I'll be pleasing myself for a change, and I believe what I paint will sell anyway. Granted, there will be a big difference in subject material, but my work will continue to sell, I know it. Perhaps even better than before, for I won't be under a strain". I understood this and believed it to be entirely true.

The children had flown home after their Mexico honeymoon, and a few days later he said to me "Let's go home! This is no ordinary headache. I must see about it". That morning he had loaned the station wagon to Dr. Robles and family to drive to Guadalajara for his sister's wedding that coming Tuesday. He promised to return it by Wednesday evening, which he did. On Monday I began to pack (we had been there a little less than three weeks). Wednesday my husband had a severe angina attack, but after rest and his usual medication he seemed fairly well. Thursday morning early he arose and proceeded to pack the station wagon. We had gathered up all our belongings which we'd been leaving there in storage for the past few years, for he said "Somehow I'm going to get everything we own into that station wagon". Somehow he did, though it took hours of packing, unpacking, rearranging the load, and he was exhausted. He was determined, however, that we should leave that day, so we bid "adios" to our Godson and his family downtown and returned to the waterfront to pick up the road which lead out to the highway to Culiacan.

He had said earlier than we would go only as far as Culiacan that day, approximately a three-hour drive. At the edge of Mazatlan he said "Let's go to a motel. I don't feel like going". He then slept for about three hours. A piercing headache awakened him and he asked me to call Dr. Robles. Less than three hours later he was dead of a massive brain hemorrhage as revealed by autopsy. Those headaches were indicative of a collapsed artery on the right side of his head just above the hair line.

God was merciful, for Ben would not have welcomed a day which would have denied him the pursuit of his great and first love, painting.

Dr. Robles took me immediately to his home, volunteering to handle all arrangements if I so wished. Since he was a trusted friend of long-standing and I was suffering from shock, I asked him to please proceed. That was Thursday, February 3, and by Saturday afternoon I was enroute to Albuquerque with his body by chartered plane. He was laid to rest in a crypt at the French Memorial Mausoleum, Sunset Memorial Park, on February 9. It was a very large funeral. Eighty-two floral pieces and many Memorials were sent in his memory.

If there is such a thing as WORK in Heaven, then BEN TURNER very probably did have his most creative year after all. He has created his "masterpiece", for There there is no such thing as tears, time or taxes. He has been talking "SHOP" with the Old Masters and telling them how much their genius inspired him. He has also sought out the great composers whose music he so enjoyed and who also inspired his work.

As the wife of a hard-working and dedicated painter, I believe that my Beloved Husband would leave this message to his family and friends. It was copied from a condolence card:

I am Home in Heaven, Dear Ones;
Oh, so happy and so bright;
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.
All the pain and grief is over,
Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever,
Safely Home in Heaven at last.

There is work still waiting for you,
So you must not idly stand;
Do it now while life remaineth,
You shall rest in God's own land.
When that work is all completed,
He will gently call YOU Home;
Oh, the rapture of that meeting,
Oh, the joy to see you come!

That BEN TURNER, the man and the artist, left this a richer world than when he entered it will never be debated. Ask anyone who knew him. Look about you for the countless evidences of his inspired life's work.