

Rediscovering the Art Collection of John W. Gates

A Collection Hidden in Plain Sight for More Than a Century-A Supplement to “Bet-a-Million, The Man History Forgot.”

By Archie L Bentz, Jr

"The Gates Art Collection survived not because it remained together, but because each generation unknowingly preserved a part of its story."

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AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

When I wrote the biography *Bet-a-Million Gates: The Man History Forgot*, there were many discoveries about the man, his family, and his legacy. One part of that legacy continued to perplex me and fuel my curiosity: the art collection that repeatedly surfaced in my research, often through little more than obscure mentions in family wills, old photographs, and scattered records.

As you join me on this journey, one theme will appear again and again: **“There is no complete inventory.”**

And yet, I knew that some of the art once belonging to the Gates family had been displayed publicly in St. Charles, Illinois. That knowledge raised a larger question: If these pieces could still be identified, how much more of the collection might be rediscovered?

Some of the collection remains in St. Charles. Other works remain with descendants and family members scattered across the country, while still others have found homes elsewhere in the United States and around the world. Some pieces have been identified with considerable certainty; others survive only as names in inventories, glimpses in old photographs, or tantalizing references waiting to be connected.

It has never been my intention to place a monetary value on works remaining in the hands of family members. The purpose of this research is something quite different: to gain some understanding of the scope and character of the collection amassed by John W. and Dellora Baker Gates, and in doing so, to preserve another important part of their legacy—one that extends far beyond the monetary value of their estate.

What began as a curiosity became an investigation, and the investigation became an adventure. There have been discoveries and disappointments, answers that produced still more questions, and unexpected connections that brought pieces of the collection back into view after decades of obscurity.

I invite you to join me through all of those peaks and valleys as we attempt to rediscover the remarkable art collection of John W. and Dellora Baker Gates.

Archie L. Bentz, Jr.

PROLOGUE

Hidden in Plain Sight

For more than a century, the Gates Art Collection survived in plain sight.

Visitors admired paintings hanging in the Hotel Baker. Patrons of the Arcada Theatre passed beneath works of art whose history had long since been forgotten. Sculptures decorated homes, public buildings, and private collections throughout St. Charles, while museums preserved paintings whose connection to John Warne Gates had gradually faded from memory. Individually these works were appreciated for their beauty. Collectively, they represented the scattered remains of one of America's remarkable private art collections.

Few people recognized the connection.

John R. Collins, a fourth-generation descendant of John Warne Gates, grew up surrounded by many of these works in the home of his grandmother, Dellora Angell Norris. To him they were simply part of the family home. I experienced something similar. Having spent much of my life in St. Charles, I encountered many of the same paintings and sculptures without realizing they had once belonged to a single collection assembled during America's Gilded Age.

The story remained hidden because the collection itself never disappeared. Instead, it followed the natural course of a family.

As generations passed, paintings, sculpture, furniture, porcelains, and decorative arts were inherited, displayed in new homes, loaned to museums, placed in storage, and occasionally sold. Without a surviving master inventory, the history of the collection gradually became fragmented. Individual works remained visible, but the story connecting them slowly faded.

Only by comparing family photographs, newspaper accounts, appraisal inventories, museum accession records, auction catalogs, and personal recollections did the larger picture begin to emerge. Each source answered one question while raising another. A childhood memory corresponded with a forgotten appraisal. A bronze sculpture identified in a 1968 inventory appeared decades earlier in a photograph of the Gates Chicago mansion. A painting recorded in a museum collection

matched one illustrated in a newspaper nearly a century before. Piece by piece, a remarkable history began to reveal itself.

This book is not intended to be a complete inventory of the Gates Art Collection. Such an inventory may never exist. Rather, it is the story of how John Warne Gates and Dellora Baker Gates assembled an extraordinary collection, how successive generations of one family unknowingly preserved its legacy, and how that history has gradually been reconstructed more than one hundred years later.

Many mysteries remain. Historic photographs continue to reveal unidentified paintings and sculptures. Previously unknown documents continue to surface. Every new discovery expands our understanding of a collection whose full scope may never be completely known.

That, perhaps, is part of its enduring fascination. His art collection had many homes:



Gates' Michigan Avenue Mansion, Chicago



“MEADOW COURT” the home of Gates in New London, Connecticut. Officed in the Trinity Building, Trinity Place and Broadway.

There were other properties listed in the 1918 Will of Mrs. Gates of a home in St Charles, Lake Tomahawk, Wisconsin. She had already divested herself of other properties, such as Meadow Court in Connecticut and a hunting lodge in the Colorado area, and another possibly in Florida.



Gates' Mansion, Port Arthur, Texas

CHAPTER 1

Building the Gates Art Collection

The history of the Gates Art Collection begins with a husband and wife whose shared appreciation for fine art transformed extraordinary business success into a lasting cultural legacy.

John Warne Gates is remembered as one of the foremost industrialists of America's Gilded Age. His influence extended from barbed wire and steel to railroads, finance, and the founding of The Texas Company, later known as Texaco. While his achievements in business have been well documented, far less attention has been given to another passion that occupied much of his adult life—the creation of one of America's remarkable private art collections.

Neither John nor **Dellora Baker Gates** was born into wealth. Their appreciation for fine art developed as Gates' business success carried them into the cultural centers of America and Europe during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. As their homes became grander and their travels more extensive, so too did their interest in paintings, sculpture, furniture, porcelains, and decorative arts of exceptional quality.

One of the best illustrations of Gates' approach to collecting appears in Lloyd Wendt and Herman Kogan's 1948 biography, *Bet-a-Million: The Story of John W. Gates*. After purchasing the former **George C. Boldt mansion in New York**, Gates retained the mansion's valet, Francis, whose artistic judgment Gates respected while furnishing the residence.

When Francis suggested that the new mansion required an exceptional collection of paintings, Gates replied that he already owned more than enough artwork in his Chicago residence. Francis respectfully disagreed. The New York mansion, he explained, should possess its own artistic identity rather than simply duplicate another home. The paintings selected for its rooms should complement the architecture and character of the residence itself.

Gates accepted his advice.

The two men visited a New York art gallery together. After surveying the principal exhibition room, Gates turned to his trusted advisor.

"What do you think of them, Francis?"

"I think they are excellent, sir."

Without hesitation, Gates swept his hand across the gallery and replied,

"Tell the fellow to pack them up and send them to the house."

Whether every detail occurred exactly as remembered is less important than what the story reveals. Gates valued informed artistic judgment. Francis was more than a household employee; he became a trusted advisor whose recommendations helped shape the character of one of America's remarkable private art collections.

John Warne Gates, however, was not the collection's only architect.

Dellora Baker Gates possessed her own appreciation for fine art and actively participated in selecting works for the family's homes. Wendt and Kogan recount another revealing incident during one of the family's European journeys. While John waited impatiently to board a departing train, Dellora remained behind completing the purchase of paintings by Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot and Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier, carefully arranging for their shipment to Chicago. The incident demonstrates that she was not merely accompanying her husband through Europe's galleries. She shared responsibility for shaping the collection that would eventually become one of the family's defining legacies.

As the years passed, the Gates Art Collection expanded far beyond a single residence. Paintings, sculpture, furniture, porcelains, and decorative arts furnished the family's Chicago mansion before extending to homes in New York, Port Arthur, and Connecticut. Even after the family established its residence in the Plaza Hotel, the collection continued to grow until additional rooms on the floor below the penthouse were required to accommodate paintings, furnishings, and decorative objects awaiting display.

A COLLECTION SPREAD AMONG MANY HOMES

The dispersal of the Gates Art Collection among several residences helps explain why no comprehensive inventory has yet been found. An unusually revealing glimpse appeared during a 1921 New York inheritance-tax proceeding involving the estate of Dellora Baker Gates. Court papers valued paintings in four areas of her Plaza Hotel apartment: \$146,300 in the drawing room, \$81,900 in the living room,

\$49,750 in the dining room, and \$14,450 in the Fifth Avenue hall—a combined \$292,400 in paintings.

These figures are important, but they should not be mistaken for a valuation of the entire Gates Art Collection. The proceeding concerned property identified with Dellora's New York estate and specifically described the contents of her Plaza apartment. The newspaper account makes no mention of paintings held in Plaza storage or of artwork at the family's other residences. Other contemporary evidence confirms that the collection was distributed among several locations.

The estate proceeding therefore provides another important snapshot rather than the missing Gates inventory. It illustrates the problem that continues throughout this investigation: surviving records document portions of the collection, but rarely the collection as a whole.

The surviving photographs of the Plaza Penthouse offer only a glimpse of the collection's original scope. Every room was richly furnished with paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts. Careful examination of those photographs continues to reveal previously overlooked works that have never been matched with surviving inventories or museum records. The 1968 appraisal prepared for Dellora Angell Norris has identified some of those pieces, while others remain unknown, reminding us that the documented Gates Art Collection almost certainly represents only a portion of what once existed.

By the opening years of the twentieth century, John and Dellora Gates had assembled a collection that had outgrown the residences originally intended to display it. What began as the furnishing of elegant homes had evolved into one of America's remarkable private collections. The question was no longer how to acquire great works of art, but how best to preserve and display them.



This real photo postcard by Thaddeus Wilkerson shows the new Plaza Hotel. The hotel towers above its neighbors offering its guests terrific views of the city and the park. Living in a hotel one does not conjure up visions of a real home. But “Bet A Million” Gates was essentially a part owner of the Plaza through his stock holdings of the United States Realty Company who built the hotel. Therefore, the hotel could transform Gates’ rooms to his and his wife’s taste. From Wendt/Kogan; “he took pride in his pink-and-yellow bathroom with its enormous custom-built bathtub which he used at least twice daily.”

Gates turned his large suite of rooms into a palatial residence overlooking Grand Army Plaza, the William Tecumseh Sherman Memorial statue and Central Park.

The Gates Plaza Penthouse

The following interiors, previously believed to depict the Gates Chicago mansion, are now identified as rooms within John and Dellora Gates' sixteen-room Plaza Hotel residence, photographed for the March 20, 1909 issue of Town & Country. The detailed room descriptions and exterior views described in that article provide compelling evidence for the revised identification. Careful examination continues to reveal previously overlooked works that have never been identified in

inventories or museum records. They remind us that the documented Gates Art Collection almost certainly represents only a portion of what once existed.



Figure 1.1 Reception Room.

The Gates Plaza penthouse reveals how completely paintings, sculpture and decorative arts filled the family's rooms. Above the fireplace hangs a portrait of John W. Gates by Solomon J. Solomon, one of two known copies. The other remains at the Gates Memorial Library in Port Arthur, Texas; this copy was later displayed in the Baker Community Building in St. Charles, where it was removed about 1971 and the subsequent whereabouts are unknown. The candelabras on the mantel may be the French Empire five-light pair later recorded as No. 159 in the 1968 Tarrant appraisal. At lower left, an unidentified bronze group appears to depict a kneeling male figure before a standing woman; no later record of the sculpture has yet been located.



Figure 1.2 “Reception Room – Of the combined periods of Louis XIV and XV. The windows overlook Fifty-ninth Street and Central Park.”

Another view of the Gates Plaza penthouse demonstrates the extraordinary density of the collection. Paintings cover much of the available wall space, while sculpture, porcelain and decorative objects occupy pedestals, cabinets and tables throughout the room. The large porcelain urn at right may be the 38-inch example later recorded as No. 161 in the 1968 Tarrant appraisal, although the identification remains tentative. Several sculptures and paintings visible here have not yet been identified, further demonstrating how much of the original Gates collection remains unaccounted for.

Overhead hangs an elaborate crystal chandelier with six upright electric lights, another indication that the decorative furnishings of the Gates residence extended well beyond paintings and sculpture.



Figure 1.3 *“The Dining Room – Modified Italian Renaissance in style finished in mahogany and golden brown”. The Indian in a Canoe can be seen at the opposite end of the table.*

The dining room displaying paintings, silver, porcelain, and an important bronze sculptural group. The 1968 Norris appraisal later identified some works from the collection, while others visible in this photograph remain unidentified.



Figure 1.4 Dining Room (Alternate View).

Viewed from the opposite direction, this photograph reveals additional paintings, sculpture, and decorative objects not readily visible in other views of the room. Careful examination of these historic interiors continues to reveal works whose identities and subsequent histories remain unknown.

The bronze in the foreground depicts a Native American in a canoe and is later identified as the same work displayed in the home of Dellora Angell Norris. Its rediscovery and identification are discussed later in this book. Magnification of the sculpture in the background appears to reveal an equestrian figure accompanied by four or more hounds. We will approach that identification later.



Figure 1.5 *A Comfortable Sleeping Room finished in old rose and St. Jago Mahogany.*

The bedroom walls were again filled with paintings. Of particular interest is the group above the bed, where a large central portrait is flanked by two smaller portraits. The arrangement suggests a family grouping. The central sitter may be Charles G. Gates, possibly accompanied by portraits of members of the older Gates generation, although positive identification has not yet been established.



Figure 1.6 *A Bedroom in Circassian Walnut – Along the lines of the Louis XV period. The windows overlook The Plaza – The painting above the fireplace is possibly a portrait of Gates*

No comprehensive inventory of the Gates art collection ever existed. As a result, scholars remain largely in the dark as to which specific works were housed in Minneapolis versus New York at any given time.

Compounding this uncertainty, the Port Arthur mansion in Texas continued to function as a primary residence, meaning the collection was likely still divided among multiple estates well after 1911.

Their only son, **Charles Gilbert Gates**, believed he had the answer.

CHAPTER 2

Charles Gilbert Gates and a Vision for the Collection

Growing up as the only son of John Warne and Dellora Baker Gates, Charles Gilbert Gates spent his life surrounded by fine art. Paintings, sculpture, furniture, porcelains, and decorative arts filled the family's residences, and he witnessed his parents' continuing efforts to acquire important works in America and Europe. By the opening years of the twentieth century, their success as collectors had created an unexpected problem: the collection had grown beyond the capacity of any single residence. Works had furnished homes in Chicago and New York and were displayed at other family properties. When John and Dellora established their final New York residence in a sixteen-room suite at the Plaza Hotel, works from earlier homes were joined by newer acquisitions. Even there, additional space on the floor below was needed for storage.

Charles understood both the importance of the collection and the difficulty of properly displaying it. He had watched his father seek trusted artistic advice and his mother personally select important paintings. His solution was the construction of an extraordinary residence overlooking Lake of the Isles in Minneapolis, large enough to accommodate both the family's lifestyle and a substantial collection of art.

The mansion was among the most ambitious private residences of its time, with contemporary estimates of its cost reaching as high as \$4 million. Its principal gallery extended approximately eighty feet, while the upper floor included a ballroom measuring about seventy-six by thirty-seven feet. The second floor contained two master suites and six guest rooms, and Charles apparently intended artwork to be displayed throughout the residence. The house also incorporated one of the country's earliest residential air-conditioning systems. Its enormous machinery required the attention of a full-time employee, providing not only personal comfort but a controlled environment beneficial to the art Charles intended to display.

THE LAKE OF THE ISLES MANSION — A NEW HOME FOR THE COLLECTION

Before following the fate of the collection after Charles' death, it is important to see the home he was creating for it. The Lake of the Isles residence was not simply another family mansion. Charles intended it to provide a permanent setting for a

substantial portion of the Gates Art Collection, with a purpose-built gallery and art displayed throughout the house.



Charles Gates did not live to see the completion of his 55,000-square-foot house on East Lake of the Isles Boulevard at 25th Street.

both a diamond necklace and a rope of pearls. The newlyweds also received 700 pieces of silverware.

Charles had arrived in Uniontown the day before the wedding—in his private rail car with his private secretary and a group of guests. After the wedding, the newlyweds left in the Pullman car for a two-week tour ending in Port Arthur, Texas, where the Gates family had major investments, mostly related to the Texas Company, predecessor to Texaco. By October 15 they were at home on New York City's Fifth Avenue. Charles's mother continued to live in the large apartment she had shared with her late husband in the Plaza Hotel.

The winter found the couple in Palm Beach and other warm places, that is,

when business did not demand Charles's attention in New York. But Florence missed Minneapolis and convinced him they should build a place there, if only to live in it for part of the summer and fall. They spent the first week in May 1912 visiting her family, while Charles searched for land on which to build.

By the time Florence and Charles returned to New York, he had purchased all of the land on East Lake of the Isles Boulevard between the Hopwood home (on the corner of Euclid) and West 26th Street with the exception of the house at 2619, and he was negotiating for that.

The Gateses also bought what Charles called a cottage at 2420 Lake Place, so that they could live in Minneapolis while their home was being built nearby. When

The north-facing front of the Charles G. Gates residence overlooking Lake of the Isles. The upper floor included a loggia adjoining the ballroom. Courtesy of the Minneapolis Historical Society.

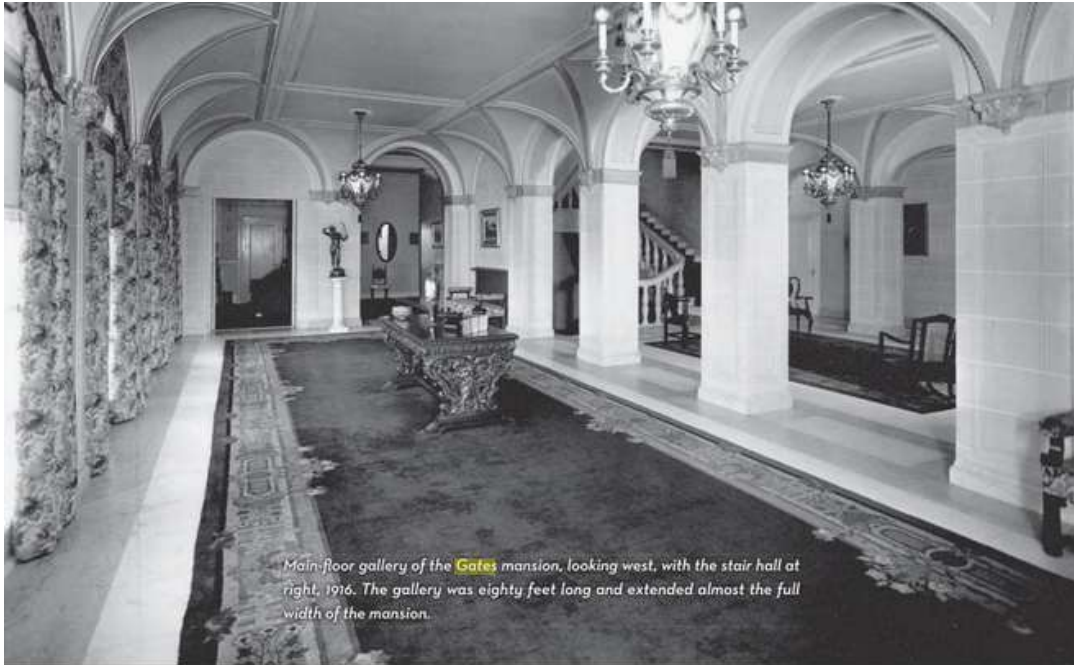


Rear façade of the Lake of the Isles mansion. Its scale reflected Charles Gates' intention to create a residence capable of accommodating both family life and an extraordinary art collection.

Contemporary Minneapolis newspaper coverage confirms that Charles' plan was already being put into motion. Part of the Gates Art Collection had reached Minneapolis and was being stored at Fourth Avenue and Lake Street, while the remainder was still associated with the family's Plaza Hotel residence in New York. Reports specifically noted that the architect's plans for the Lake of the Isles house included a gallery intended to hold the collection.

The surviving interior photographs reproduced here were provided by Bob Glancy. Florence completed the mansion after Charles' death, and because no documentation fixes the exact date of every photograph, they must be used carefully. They nevertheless provide rare visual evidence of how Gates art was installed in the Minneapolis residence.

If you have read the book “Bet-a-Million, The Man History Forgot” these photos are a part of that book. Now I invite you to seek out the art in the rooms.

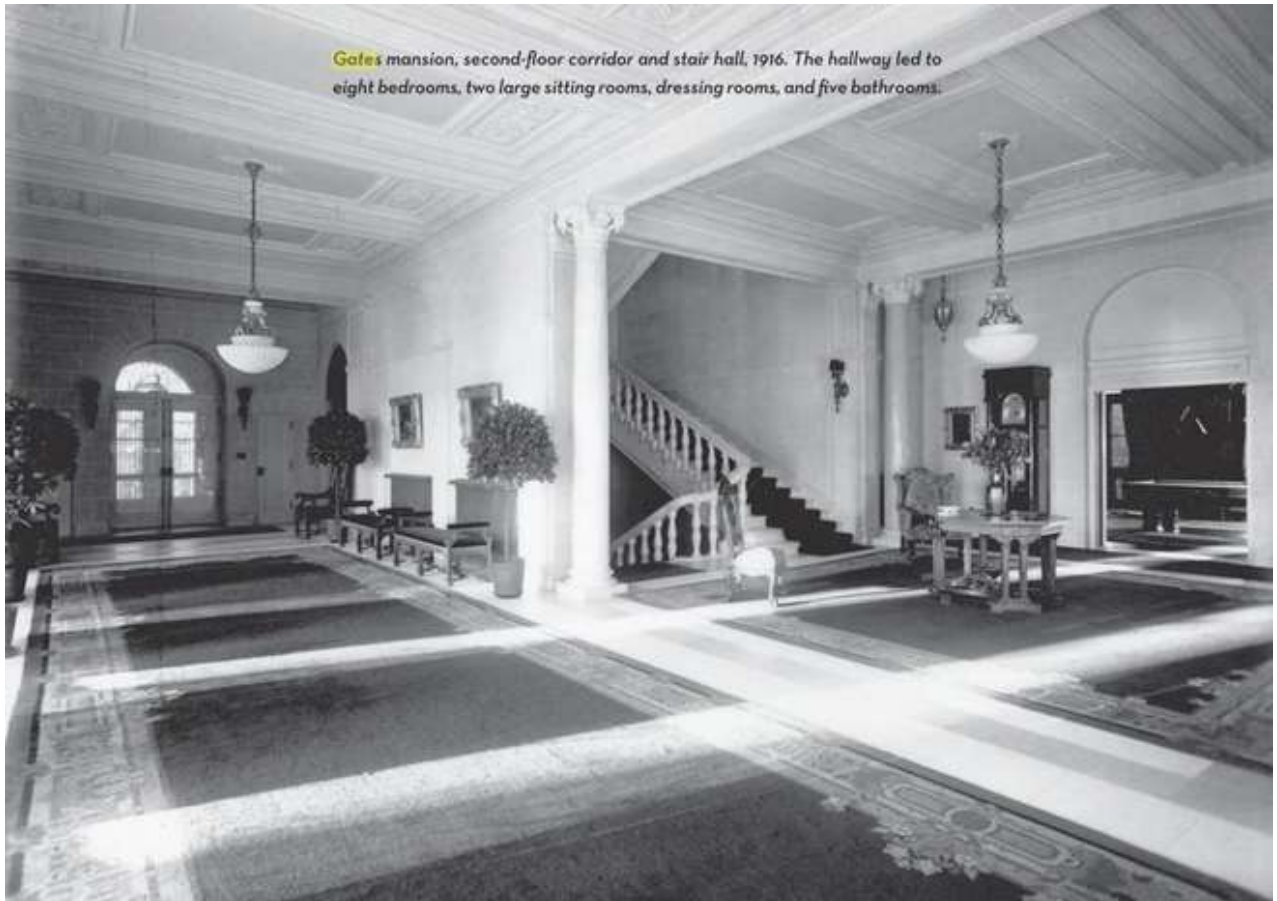


The main-floor gallery looking west. The gallery extended approximately eighty feet and was designed to provide formal display space for the collection.



The main-floor gallery looking east. The red carpet was remembered as extending roughly seventy feet through the room. Paintings and sculptures were incorporated into a setting that functioned much like a private gallery.

The collection was not confined to the gallery. The second floor contained two master bedroom suites and six guest rooms, with teak floors and marble baths, and Charles intended artwork to be displayed throughout the residence. The top-floor ballroom measured approximately seventy-six by thirty-seven feet, with parquet flooring and a domed ceiling.



Another interior view of the Lake of the Isles residence, showing how paintings and furnishings continued beyond the principal gallery on the second floor.



The furnished salon. Paintings, sculpture and decorative arts continued the pattern seen in the Gates residences in New York. The urn previously viewed in the penthouse can be seen on the right side of this room.



The library and living area of the Minneapolis mansion. The photographs demonstrate that the house was conceived not simply as a residence with a single picture gallery, but as a home in which art would remain part of the family's daily surroundings.



A large narrative panel or tapestry mounted above the principal fireplace. Its precise attribution remains unidentified, but its scale and placement demonstrate that the Gates holdings extended beyond conventional framed paintings to include architectural-scale decorative works. Another unidentified bronze to the right.

These interiors should not be read as an inventory of the entire Gates Art Collection. Charles died before the mansion was completed, and the surviving photographs represent only the portion of the family's art that reached or remained in Minneapolis. Dellora Baker Gates retained control of the greater family holdings. Even so, the photographs are invaluable: they document the most ambitious attempt made by the family to provide the collection with a purpose-built home.

There is evidence that Charles' thoughts about the collection extended beyond his own residence. E. J. Carpenter, a director of the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts, recalled a conversation with Charles during the winter of 1912–1913 in which Charles expressed a desire to make the collection a public memorial to his father. Carpenter later consulted Joseph Breck, assistant director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, who regarded the Gates collection as containing works by important masters and considered it far above the average private gallery. This independent opinion is significant because it confirms that knowledgeable figures outside the Gates family recognized the quality of the collection.

Understanding the ownership of the art requires distinguishing John Warne Gates' recorded will from his final wishes. Although the written will placed the estate under Dellora Baker Gates' control, John expressed a deathbed wish that she shares the estate with their only son. Dellora honored that request and transferred substantial assets to Charles. No complete inventory survives to establish precisely which paintings and sculptures were transferred, remained with Dellora, or were purchased independently by Charles. The surviving evidence nevertheless supports the working reconstruction that Charles eventually controlled approximately one-half of the larger family collection. This remains an estimate rather than a documented item-by-item division and is important when interpreting what later appeared in Minneapolis.

Charles died unexpectedly in Cody, Wyoming, on October 28, 1913, at the age of thirty-seven, before the mansion was completed. Florence Hopwood Gates was left to finish the enormous residence that she and Charles had expected to occupy together. Charles' will divide his estate between his widow and his mother. If his holdings represented approximately one-half of the larger collection, Florence would have received roughly one-quarter of the whole, while Dellora again controlled approximately three-quarters. At this point, however, there had been **no dispersal of the Gates Art Collection outside the family**. Ownership had changed, but the principal holdings remained with Dellora and Florence.

Charles' death immediately raised questions in Minneapolis about the future of both the mansion and the collection. Directors of the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts considered approaching Florence and Dellora with two possibilities: retaining the collection in the Lake of the Isles mansion as a memorial or placing it in the planned Minneapolis Art Museum. Carpenter favored the museum proposal. Newspapers also followed developments closely. On October 31, 1913, the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* reported that *St. Paul Seated at a Writing Table and Meditating*, then attributed to Rembrandt and considered one of the important

Gates paintings, might come to Minneapolis. These accounts demonstrate both the reputation of the collection and Minneapolis' desire to secure it, but Florence could not independently determine its future because Dellora retained control of the larger share.

Florence completed the mansion, and surviving photographs show its great gallery, salon, library, and other rooms furnished with paintings, sculpture, and decorative objects. These photographs are important but must not be mistaken for a record of the entire Gates Art Collection. Charles was dead before the house was finished, and Florence possessed only her portion of his estate. Dellora Baker Gates retained the greater family holdings. The Minneapolis photographs therefore document an important portion of the collection, not its entirety.

The enormous house soon presented Florence with a practical dilemma. Her later memoirs recalled that after living there for approximately three years she eventually sought another use for the property. By about 1920 she attempted to persuade the City of Minneapolis to acquire the mansion as an art museum. By that time, she stated that she had already donated thirteen oil paintings and twenty-eight ink drawings inherited from the Gates collection to the Minneapolis Institute of Art. Her proposal is especially interesting in light of Carpenter's recollection that Charles himself had considered making the collection a public memorial to his father. Florence's actions suggest that the idea of a public future for at least her portion of the Gates legacy survived Charles's death.

Minneapolis declined the mansion. Florence later recalled that she believed the city preferred collecting its approximately \$20,000 annual property tax rather than assuming responsibility for the enormous residence. She continued to make some of her art publicly accessible. **Frits Thaulow's *Moonlit Canal***, for example, was exhibited at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 1915 but remained in family ownership and later descended through Florence's family.

There is some further reference about two other **Thaulow** paintings shared by Florence with the museum, but just that with no titles or descriptions of the works.



Moonlit Canal — Frits Thaulow (1847–1906)

An internet search reveals a 2014 auction sale for \$36,270, the provenance statement said it descended in the Hopwood/Gates/Judd family.

Provenance statement: *Frits Thaulow (Norway/France, 1847-1906), oil on canvas moonlight canal scene. Signed lower right. Original large, deep and elaborate giltwood and composition frame with swept edges, carved shells and scrolls at corners and centers interspersed with carved flowers, and an inner shell and scroll border. Old 5th Avenue, New York framer's label en verso and small Minneapolis Institute of Art label, number L8 84. 31-1/2" H x 39" W sight, 46" H x 53" W x 5" D framed. Provenance: Originally owned by gilded age industrialist John Warne Gates, also known as "Bet-A-Million Gates," who made millions selling barbed wire and was a founder of the Texas company that would later become known as Texaco. Upon Gates' death, the painting was inherited by his only son Charles Gilbert Gates. When Charles Gates died at the age of 37 while on a Western big game hunting trip, the painting passed to his young widow, Florence Hopwood Gates Judd, and has descended in her family to the present consignor. The painting*

was exhibited at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 1915 (see The Bulletin of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, May 1915). Biography: (Courtesy Askart: The Artists' Bluebook): Norwegian-born Frits Thaulow (alternate spelling: Fritz Thaulow) was a brother-in-law of Paul Gauguin, cousin to Edvard Munch, and a close friend of Claude Monet.

Florence eventually remarried and became Florence Hopwood Gates Judd. After the Minneapolis mansion stood for a period with only a caretaker and his wife in residence, it was sold in 1923 to Dr. Dwight F. Brooks for \$150,000, only a fraction of its original cost. No surviving record of that sale establishes whether any furnishings or artwork were included, leaving another unanswered question in tracing the collection.

Charles' Minneapolis dream had ended, but the Gates Art Collection had not. His attempt to provide an appropriate home for the art, the interest shown by Minneapolis Museum officials, and Florence's later museum proposal demonstrate that the collection's importance was recognized while it was still largely intact within the family. The more significant turning point came in 1918 with the death of Dellora Baker Gates. The woman who had helped John build the collection and who still controlled its greater portion was gone. Her death would transfer stewardship to another generation and begin a far more complicated journey for the paintings, sculpture, furnishings, and decorative arts she and John had accumulated over a lifetime.

That is where the mystery of the collection's later history truly begins.

The Trail Goes Cold

Reconstructing the portion of the Gates Art Collection that passed through Florence Hopwood Gates Judd has proved far more difficult than tracing the holdings that remained with Dellora Baker Gates and eventually passed to Dellora Angell Norris. Repeated attempts to locate century-old institutional records in Minneapolis and Connecticut have produced little additional information. As records disappeared or provenance was not maintained, the trail of approximately one-quarter of the larger collection gradually went cold.

One important exception is Frits Thaulow's *Moonlit Canal*. Its later auction record preserves an unusually complete provenance from John Warne Gates to Charles Gilbert Gates, then to Florence Hopwood Gates Judd and through her descendants. The painting also retained its Minneapolis Institute of Art loan label, providing

physical evidence of its earlier history. The museum was able to discover two other loaned Thaulow paintings, handwritten notes titled “Village Street” and “Water”?

Another surviving clue is the portrait of Charles Gilbert Gates by **Salomon**, associated with the New Britain Museum of American Art and later deaccessioned. That portrait provides another connection to Florence's Connecticut years, but it has not opened a broader trail to the other works she possessed. The museum's present online collection contains thousands of works, but my web search did not uncover a current public record for the Charles Gates portrait.

The result leaves a significant gap in this history. While individual works may yet surface through auction records, family holdings, photographs, museum files, or identifying labels, the present evidence does not allow Florence's share of the collection to be reconstructed with confidence. **Approximately one-quarter of the Gates Art Collection effectively disappears from the documented trail through the Hopwood-Gates-Judd branch.**

Mysteries continue with the lost portraits of Charles G. Gates



On the left is a widely circulated photograph of Charles Gates, available in many online references today. Surprisingly, an internet search for paintings by Salomon turned up a 2007 auction listing for the untitled original painting shown on the right.

2007 Auction Description *Solomon Salomon (American, 1869-1937), oil on canvas portrait of a gentleman in a suit and tie, signed and dated "1914" lower right, some soiling, cloudy varnish, framed, ss: 26 1/2" h. x 21 1/2" w., handsome foliate scroll gilt frame with some loss. [Deaccessioned from the New Britain Museum of American Art] Jul. 09, 2007 Auction Overview; Solomon Salomon, oil on canvas. Estimated sale price: \$75 - \$125*

The Lost Portraits of Charles G. Gates

The history of the portraits of Charles Gilbert Gates provides another example of how the identity of a work can become separated from its provenance. Following the deaths of John Warne Gates in 1911 and Charles in 1913, Dellora Baker Gates commissioned artist Solomon Salomon to paint portraits of both her husband and son. Surviving correspondence and billing records from 1914–1915 document those commissions. Salomon was known as a portrait painter and reportedly worked from photographs, making it possible to create the portraits after their deaths.

An apparently identical portrait followed a very different path. It eventually entered the collection of the New Britain Museum of American Art in Connecticut, where Florence Hopwood Gates Judd had established her later family connections. When the museum deaccessioned the painting, it appeared at auction on July 9, 2007. By then, the sitter's identity had been lost; the auction catalog described the work simply as a portrait of a “gentleman in a suit and tie.” The painting was signed and dated 1914 and carried an estimated value of only \$75–\$125.

The existence of the identical Norris-family portrait, together with the surviving 1914–1915 documentation of Dellora Gates' commission, provides compelling evidence for identifying the New Britain painting as another portrait of Charles Gilbert Gates. What remains unknown is precisely how that version reached Connecticut and whether it passed there through Florence's share of the collection.

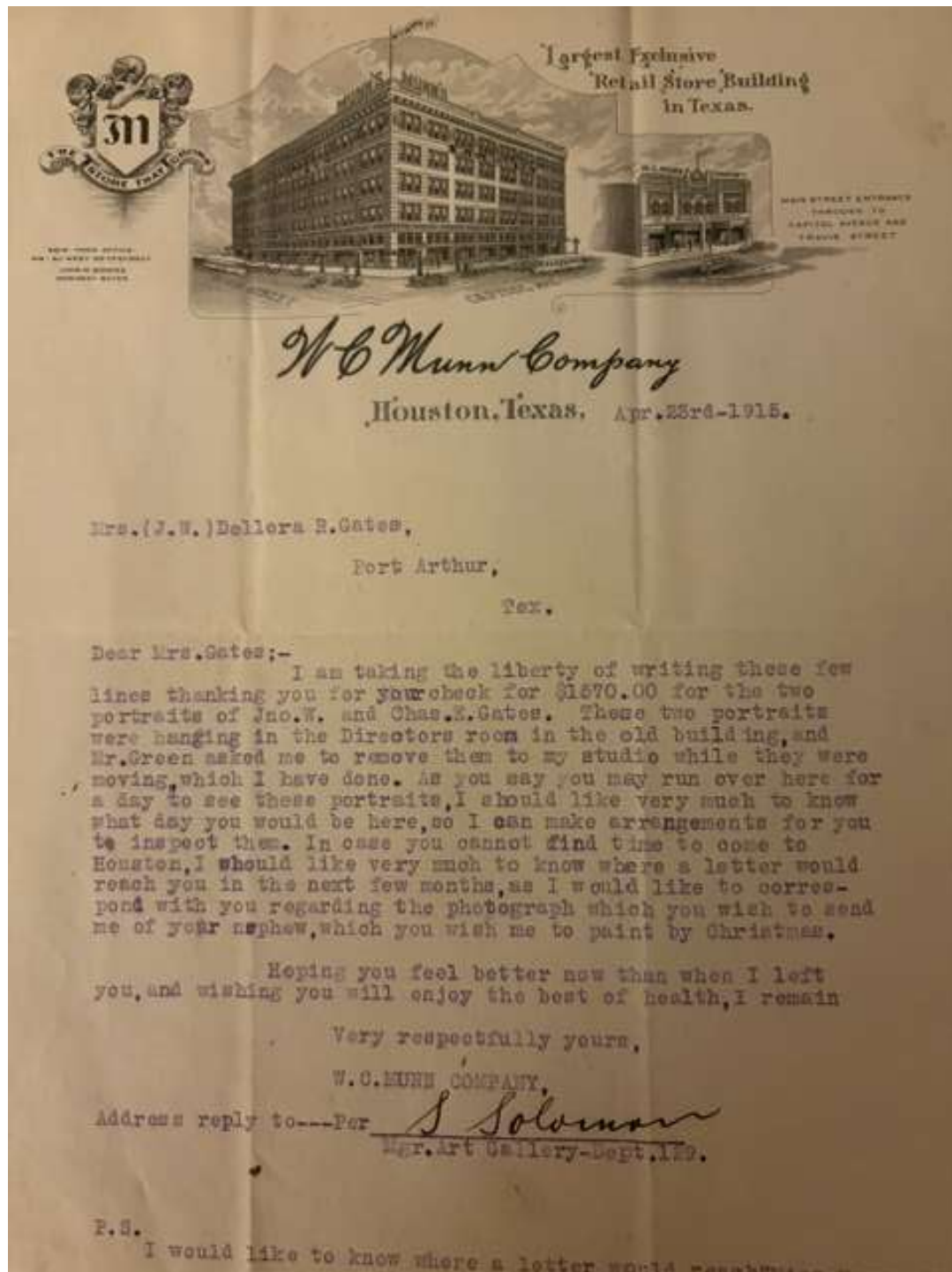
The two portraits followed remarkably different paths. One traveled to Illinois with the Gates inheritance in 1918 and remained with the family, still protected in its original shipping crate. The other apparently traveled east, entered a Connecticut museum, lost the identity of its sitter, and was eventually deaccessioned and sold. Their histories illustrate the central challenge of reconstructing the Gates Art Collection: the artwork could survive for a century while the knowledge of what it was, whom it represented, and where it came from gradually disappeared.

More than a century later, we discovered the portrait of Charles Gilbert Gates in the basement of John R. Collins, still enclosed in the wooden shipping crate associated with the 1918 transfer of the Gates inheritance to Illinois. Rather than remove the portrait and erase part of its history, we chose to preserve it as it was found. Today the portrait is displayed at the St. Charles History Museum **still within its crate**, allowing the container itself to become part of the story.



St. Charles History Museum. Courtesy of John R. Collins.

The artist's continuing relationship with the Gates family is documented in this April 23, 1915 letter from Solomon to Dellora Gates. Solomon thanked her for a \$1,570 payment for the two portraits of John W. and Charles G. Gates. **The portraits had been displayed in the directors' room of the former Texas Company (Texaco) building in Houston, where Solomon was asked to remove them temporarily to his studio while work was being done.**



Solomon's letter to Mrs. Gates

The P.S. reads: "I would like to know where a letter would reach 'Miss Hopwood' as I heard she has married again, and I do not know her name and address. I understand she wishes me to do some work for her."

CHAPTER 3

A New Generation — The Collection Leaves the Gates Family for the Baker Family.

The death of Dellora Baker Gates in 1918 marked the most important change yet in the history of the Gates Art Collection. John Warne Gates had died in 1911 and their only son, Charles Gilbert Gates, followed just two years later. Florence Hopwood Gates, later Florence Gates Judd, retained the portion that had come to her through Charles, but the greater share remained under Dellora's control until her death. For the first time, the principal collection assembled by John and Dellora would pass beyond their immediate family and into another generation.

The three children of Edward Baker, Sr. created the family branches through which the Gates estate and art collection would eventually pass.

The deaths of Charles Gilbert Gates in 1913 and Henry Rockwell Baker in 1914 left Dellora Angell as the surviving member of this generation of three cousins when her great-aunt and namesake, Dellora Baker Gates, died in 1918.

Edward and Martha Baker		
/		
/	/	/
Dellora Baker Gates	LaVerne Baker Angell	Edward J Baker
married	married	married
John Warne Gates	Robert F. Angell	Harriet Rockwell
/	/	/
Charles Gilbert Gates	Dellora Angell (Norris)	Henry R. Baker
d. 1913		d. 1914
/		

Florence Hopwood Gates

Understanding what followed requires some knowledge of the Baker family. Dellora Baker Gates was one of three siblings whose families had remained closely connected in St. Charles. Her sister LaVerne Baker married Robert Angell and became the mother of Dellora Angell, while her brother Edward J. Baker, father of Henry Rockwell Baker, a cousin to Dellora Angell and Charles G. Gates, remained one of St. Charles' most prominent citizens. The younger Dellora had been named for her great-aunt and became a particular favorite of John and Dellora Gates. By 1918, deaths within the family had dramatically narrowed the pool of possible

heirs. Charles Gates had died in 1913, Henry Rockwell Baker in 1914, and LaVerne Baker Angell shortly after John Gates' death. Dellora Angell, only fifteen years old when her great-aunt died, consequently became one of the principal beneficiaries of the Gates fortune.

This family history is important because it explains something that has sometimes been misunderstood about the Gates legacy. The wealth did not deliberately abandon John Gates' birthplace or the communities associated with his early life. John and Dellora had simply outlived most of their immediate family. With no surviving Gates children or siblings to carry the estate forward, the inheritance naturally moved through Dellora's Baker family in St. Charles. Edward J. Baker and the young Dellora Angell emerged as the principal beneficiaries, while Robert Angell and Harriet Baker received lesser inheritances.

For fifteen-year-old Dellora Angell, the inheritance involved far more than money. She inherited properties, furnishings, and a substantial portion of an art collection accumulated over decades by her great-aunt and uncle. A contemporary St. Charles newspaper account provides one of the most revealing indications of its sheer scale: five railroad cars carrying furnishings and art were reported on their way from New York to Illinois. The shipment came from the Gates residence and storage at the Plaza Hotel and represented only part of an estate that had occupied multiple residences.

St. Charles Chronicle, April 17, 1919-*Although the R.F. Angell family has not yet gone to their new home on Sheridan Road in Lake Forest, IL, the furnishings from Mrs. J. W. Gates apartments at the Plaza, New York City, have started west by five carloads, [railroad cars]. The Sheridan Road home has not the same size room for a picture gallery, but they will be taken care of in smaller quarters. The shipment includes automobiles and other personal effects.*

The significance of those five railroad cars is difficult to overstate. Yet no comprehensive inventory accompanied the collection that has been found. There was no master catalog identifying every painting, sculpture, piece of furniture, porcelain, or decorative object, nor any document explaining where each had originally been displayed. A fifteen-year-old girl had inherited an extraordinary fortune accompanied by an artistic legacy whose size and importance would have overwhelmed a far more experienced heir.

Dellora naturally turned to her father, Robert Angell, to help manage what she had inherited. His role would become particularly important in the history of the art.

Works from the Gates collection appeared in the Angell home and later in Dellora's own residences, while others required storage. Some of the more important paintings were entrusted to the Art Institute of Chicago, beginning an institutional relationship that would continue for decades. By 1923, seventeen paintings from the collection were recorded on loan to the Art Institute under Robert F. Angell's name. This group included works then attributed to Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Albrecht Dürer and other European masters.

This is one of the reasons the Gates provenance eventually became so difficult to recognize. A painting originally purchased by John or Dellora Gates might later appear in museum records under the name **Robert F. Angell**, and still later under **Dellora A. Norris**. The object had not necessarily changed families; the name attached to its ownership had changed. Without knowledge of the genealogy, the connection to Gates could easily disappear from the historical record.

Not all of the collection was fortunate enough to reach a museum or family residence. Additional works and furnishings required commercial storage. Angell rented office/storage space above Colson's Department store and a 1933 fire destroyed part of what had survived the transfer from New York. The loss is especially frustrating because no complete inventory of the material stored there has been located. We know that a portion of the Gates legacy disappeared in the fire, but we cannot determine precisely what paintings, sculpture, furniture, or decorative arts were lost. The absence of documentation created one of the first permanent gaps in reconstructing the collection.

What survived continued to move with the family. Dellora Angell had married Lester J. Norris, and the Gates inheritance became increasingly identified with the Norris name. Paintings and sculpture appeared in their homes, while other works found their way into St. Charles institutions and family properties. To later generations, they were simply familiar objects that had always been there. The fact that many had originated in the homes of John and Dellora Gates was gradually obscured.

This is also where personal memory becomes important to the story. John Collins and I have often remarked that, as youngsters in St. Charles, we passed many of these works without understanding what we were seeing. Some were works attributed to or created by recognized masters, including pieces dating back several centuries. More importantly, what appeared to us as the Norris family's art was also the surviving legacy of John and Dellora Baker Gates. The collection had not vanished; its identity had changed with inheritance.

The same pattern extended beyond private homes. Works associated with the family appeared at the Hotel Baker and the Arcada Theatre, where thousands of people could encounter them without knowing their history. Old photographs of these interiors continue to reveal paintings and sculpture that cannot yet be matched with surviving inventories. In one photograph of E. J. Baker's Hotel Baker penthouse, for example, closer examination reveals a **bronze figure caught in a dancing pose**. No record yet discovered identifies the sculpture. Such photographs provide evidence that the known inventories represent only a portion of what survived.



Photo currently on the wall of Hotel Baker

The collection was therefore entering a new phase. It was no longer concentrated principally in the great residences of John and Dellora Gates. It had become part of the daily surroundings of another family and another generation. Paintings might

hang in a Norris residence, appear under the Angell name in an Art Institute loan, decorate the Hotel Baker, or remain unseen in storage. Each move increased the possibility that the Gates connection would eventually be forgotten.

Yet Robert Angell's decision to place important works with the Art Institute of Chicago proved particularly consequential. Unlike paintings hanging privately in family homes, museum loans created records. Names, titles and attributions were documented, providing a paper trail that could be rediscovered many decades later. Those records would eventually become one of the keys to reconstructing the Gates Art Collection. Not all of the inherited Gates art was placed with the Art Institute. Works also decorated the Angell family residences, including Robert F. Angell's country estate, **Alta Vista**, which was later destroyed by fire. The collection was therefore already dispersed among private family settings and the museum, a pattern that would continue as paintings and sculpture later appeared in Norris homes and public buildings throughout St. Charles. The 1923 Art Institute loan provides our first substantial opportunity to examine those works individually and to compare the paintings once attributed to some of Europe's greatest masters with what later scholarship, museum records, appraisals and auction catalogs would reveal.

That is where the collection begins to surrender its secrets.

CHAPTER 4

THE COLLECTION EMERGES AT THE ART INSTITUTE



Photo courtesy of St Charles History Museum

Three families whose histories became intertwined with the Gates Art Collection: John Warne and Dellora Baker Gates; Col. Edward J. and Harriet Rockwell Baker; and Lester J. and Dellora Angell Norris.

The works shown on the following pages represent a more complete record of paintings associated with Dellora A. Norris in the Art Institute of Chicago archives. They should not be confused with the original seventeen paintings loaned in 1923, nor should they be considered a complete accounting of everything the family placed with the Institute. Some works remained in storage, some were returned to the family, some were later formally donated, and others were eventually deaccessioned. The records themselves provide different snapshots of the collection at different times.

St Charles Chronicle, August 9, 1923: *Dellora Norris was left the famous art collection [which had been] amassed over a period of years, by Mr. and Mrs. John W. Gates. Seventeen of this collection of gems of the art world have been loaned to the Art Institute of Chicago and will be known as the R.F. Angell exhibit. The daughter wished her father to have the collection as she is not especially interested in art. The pictures are roughly estimated as worth a million dollars.*

Contemporary newspaper coverage announcing the placement of paintings from the Gates collection with the Art Institute of Chicago. The works were loaned

in the name of Robert F. Angell on behalf of his daughter, Dellora Angell, who retained ownership.

A partial list from 1923 of the works on loan with the **Art Institute of Chicago**:

“Boors Merrymaking” – Jan Steen

“Resurrection of St. Lazaris” – Rembrandt

“Meditation of St. Paul”-Rembrandt

“Hunting Scene”-Isack Van Ostade, (1621-1649)

“Adam & Eve”-Albrecht Durer

“Boy playing a violin” and the other is a **“Little girl singing”**-Franz Hals

“The Laughing Philosopher”-Andrea Vaccaro- (contemporary of Ribera)

“Weeping Philosopher”- Vaccaro

“Lion Hunt”-Thomas Gainsborough Delacroix

And 2 additional paintings by English artists: Sir Thomas Lawrence and Sir Joshua Reynolds

These attributions must be viewed in the context of their time. During the following century, advances in scholarship and examination changed the attribution of many Old Master paintings throughout the art world. A work once accepted as a Rembrandt, Hals, Dürer, or another master might later be classified as the work of a follower, workshop, school, or another artist. For our purposes, both identities matter: the attribution under which the Gates family acquired and displayed the painting and the identification later assigned to it.

The two paintings attributed to Rembrandt demonstrate the value of following individual titles through surviving records. *Meditation of St. Paul* had already attracted attention following Charles Gates' death when Minneapolis interests sought the collection. *Resurrection of St. Lazarus* also appears in later records, allowing its history to be followed through succeeding generations. For the first time, scattered references from newspapers, museum records, and later documents could begin to be connected to specific works.

The Art Institute records also provide something the historic interior photographs cannot. Those photographs demonstrate the richness of the Gates residences but often leave individual works unidentified. Paintings may be partly obscured, sculpture appears in the background, and objects visible in one room may never appear in another surviving photograph. The museum list supplied actual names

and titles that could later be compared with family records, appraisals, auction catalogs, and photographs.

This distinction is important. The seventeen paintings were never the entire Gates Art Collection, nor were they intended to represent it. They were a selected group placed with the Art Institute. Numerous other paintings remained elsewhere, together with sculpture, furniture, porcelains, and decorative objects. The interior photographs shown earlier in this book provide ample evidence that many works visible in the Gates residences have yet to be identified.

The Art Institute relationship continued for decades. Some works remained on loan, while others eventually became formal gifts. In 1970, several paintings with Gates provenance were given to the Art Institute by Dellora Angell Norris. Later still, some were deaccessioned and sold, allowing auction records to extend their histories beyond the museum. What began as a 1923 loan therefore created a documentary trail that would prove invaluable in reconstructing portions of the collection nearly a century later.

The surviving records also reveal the hazards of relying upon artist names alone. Titles changed, attributions changed, and descriptions sometimes varied from one document to another. Provenance became the more dependable guide. A title, dimensions, subject, photograph, family record, museum accession number, label, or auction history could provide the missing connection between a painting once displayed by Gates and the same work appearing decades later under a different attribution.

For many years, however, the seventeen Art Institute paintings remained only a small documented window into a much larger collection. There was still no comprehensive Gates inventory against which they could be compared. Many works remained known only through photographs or family memory, while others disappeared completely from view. The 1968 appraisal also reveals that works placed with the Art Institute did not necessarily remain there. Some were apparently returned to the family or exchanged over the years, as demonstrated by the two paintings attributed to Frans Hals that appeared on the 1923 Art Institute list and were again recorded in St. Charles in 1968.

The photographs that follow represent works currently identified in Art Institute of Chicago records with Dellora A. Norris. This listing should not be confused with the original group of seventeen paintings placed on loan in 1923. During the intervening years, the status of individual works changed. Some remained with the

Institute, some were later donated, while others were returned to the family or otherwise removed from the Institute's holdings. The 1968 St. Charles appraisal confirms that at least some works from the earlier loan, including the paintings attributed to Frans Hals, were again in the family's possession by that time.

The following works are identified in Art Institute of Chicago archival records as associated with Dellora A. Norris. These records should not be interpreted as a complete current inventory of works presently held by the Institute.

2026 ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO



L'Aumone by Meissonier

Gates purchased Meissonier's "L'Aumone," at the Hilton sale in 1900 (NYTimes.com), and research divulged the following provenance at auction. This piece had been on loan to the Art Institute of Chicago since 1923, was formally gifted to the museum in 1970, and later sold at auction in 2007 for approximately \$600,000.

"L'Aumone" Genealogy of ownership:

Brandus Gallery, New York (1898)

John Warne Gates, St. Charles, Illinois (1900 until 1911)

Dellora Baker Gates (wife of the above, until 1918)

Dellora Frances Angell and Lester J. Norris (bequeathed to Angell from the above, her aunt)

Art Institute of Chicago, in 1923 (long term loan until 1970 in the name of Robert Francis Angell, Dellora's father)

Gifted to the Art Institute of Chicago from the above in 1970 (and sold, Sotheby's, New York, October 23, 2007, lot 5, illustrated)



La Bienvenue-Gustave Jean Jacquet

Oil on Canvas, 1892

Provenance: Brandus Gallery, New York (1898); John Warne Gates (1900-1911); Dellora Baker Gates; Dellora Francis Angell Gates (1918-1970); Art Institute of Chicago (gifted in 1970); Sotheby's Sale 2007

This painting exemplifies Gate's taste for European salon works.



Education of Cupid

c. 1859 **Artist:** Narcisse Virgile Diaz de la Peña (French, 1807–1876)

Oil on panel, Inscribed lower right: Diaz

37.8 × 24.6 cm (14 7/8 × 9 11/16 in.); Framed: 62.9 × 51.2 × 10.5 cm (24 3/4 × 20 1/8 × 4 1/8 in.)

Gift of Dellora A. Norris (1970.1002)



Nymphs Leaving the Bath

Date: 1843 **Artist:** Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (French, 1796–1875)

Oil on canvas 82 × 69 cm (32 1/4 × 27 1/8 in.); Framed: 99.1 × 85.8 × 9.3 cm (39 × 33 3/4 × 3 5/8 in.)

Gift of Dellora A. Norris (1970.1000)



The Lamentation

1652 **Artist:** Andrea Vaccaro (Italian, 1604-1670)

Oil on canvas 128 × 156.9 cm (50 3/8 × 61 3/4 in.); Framed: 139.4 × 166.4 × 7.7 cm (54 7/8 × 65 1/2 × 3 in.)

Gift of Dellora A. Norris (1970.1013)



Travelers Halting at an Inn

1643 **Artist:** Style of Isaac van Ostade (Dutch, 1621–1649)
Oil on canvas, 102.1 × 134.3 cm (40 3/16 × 52 7/8 in.)

Gift of Dellora A. Norris (1970.1007)



The Raising of Lazarus – Previously credited to Rembrandt

c. 1630 **Artist:** Follower of Rembrandt, **Van Rijn** (Dutch, 1606–1669)
 Oil on panel 43.5 × 36.8 cm (17 1/8 × 14 1/2 in.)
 Gift of Mrs. Dellora A. Norris (1970.1010)

The original *The Raising of Lazarus* is an oil-on-panel painting by the Dutch artist Rembrandt, from early in his career; it was probably painted between 1630 and 1632. The work depicts the Raising of Lazarus as told in the Gospel of John, Chapter 11. It is in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art



The Fall of Man with Scenes of the Creation

1544 **Artist:** Attributed to Augustus Cordus (German, active 1544–1553)
 Oil on panel, 48.6 × 58.4 cm (19 1/8 × 23 in.)

Inscribed: 1544 (on tree trunk), In tibi que . . . / me descripta . . . / Conscia
 suprem (on paper held by Death)

Gift of Mrs. Dellora A. Norris (1970.1009)



The Lion Hunt

1855 **Artist:** Pierre Andrieu (French, 1821-1892)

Oil on canvas 45.1 × 54 cm (17 3/4 × 21 1/4 in.); Framed: 63.9 × 36.4 × 6.4 cm (25 1/8 × 14 3/8 × 2 1/2 in.)

Gift of Dellora A. Norris (1970.999)

Additional Miss Anne Mead — Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792), reportedly displayed in London, 1786–1792. Art Institute no. 1970.1011.

A Lady — Francis Cotes (1726–1770). Art Institute no. 1970.1001.

A Gentleman — Gainsborough Dupont (1754–1797). Art Institute no. 1970.1003.

Lady with a Dog — George Henry Harlow (1787–1819).

Diana the Huntress — Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640).

Works Attributed to Dellora A. Norris The more complete Art Institute records identify additional works associated with Dellora A. Norris that are not presently on display. These further demonstrate why the works visible in the galleries—or found through a simple search of the museum's public collection—should not be regarded as a complete record of the family's association with the Institute.



The Fountain at Grottaferrata

1832 Ludwig Richter (German, 1803–1884) With its golden light and peaceful figures in a bucolic environment, represents an idealized view of life in the Italian countryside, as seen through a German lens.

Oil on canvas, Signed and dated lower left: L. Richter 1832

Through prior gift of Mrs. Henry C. Woods; through prior gift of Dellora A. Norris; Lacy Armour Fund; through prior gift of Henry Morgen, Ann G. Morgen, Meyer Wasser and Ruth G. Wasser; Louise and Frank Woods Purchase Fund in honor of Mrs. Edward Harris Brewer (2011.123)



Vase in the Form of a Tropical Plant with Bird and Deity

1887–88 **Artist:** Paul Gauguin (French, 1848–1903) In 1886 Paul Gauguin was invited to design artistic pottery with the well-known ceramist Ernest Chaplet. Rather than simply decorating premade vessels, Gauguin chose to model his own unconventional forms by hand, jokingly calling them his “monstrosities.” Here the wide lip and distinctive shoulder of the vase echo the shape of the tall plant on its surface, while the protruding leaves on its sides suggest handles yet have no utilitarian function. Gauguin decorated this vase with a mix of motifs, including a goose drawn from the artist’s paintings of Brittany and a Cambodian deity copied from a photograph of a sculpture near Angkor Wat. Stoneware painted with slip and gold Signed: PGO 60 21.5 × 17 × 12 cm (8 1/2 × 6 1/2 × 4 1/2 in.)

Through prior purchase of the Estate of Suzette Morton Davidson, Major Acquisitions Centennial Endowment, Dellora A. Norris Funds (2011.306)



Classical Landscape with Two Women and a Man on a Path

c. 1660–c. 1670 **Artist:** Attributed to Francisque Millet (French, 1642–1679)

Oil on canvas

29.5 × 44.1 cm (11 5/8 × 17 3/8 in.); Framed: (18 7/8 × 24 3/4 × 3 in.)

Gift of Mrs. Dellora A. Norris (1970.1008)



Mosaic or Honeycomb Quilt

1875/80, **Artist:** United States

Wool, cotton, and silk, plain, twill, and satin weaves; some with supplementary pile warps forming cut solid velvet; some self-patterned; some warp dyed; and some printed; pieced; backed with wool, plain weave; printed; cotton batting

222.2 × 175.3 cm (87 1/2 × 69 in.)

Gift of Mrs. Dellora A. Norris (1953.296)



Saint Paul the Apostle at the Art Institute of Chicago - Previously thought to be Rembrandt

Artist: Attributed to **Govaert Flinck** (Dutch, 1615–1660)
Oil on canvas 118.8 × 97.9 cm (46 3/4 × 38 1/2 in.)
Gift of Dellora A. Norris (1970.1004)

**TRANSCRIBED FROM October 31, 1913 MINNESOTA STAR TRIBUNE:
FAMOUS GATES PICTURE MAY COME HERE**

Among the famous paintings of the Charles G. Gates art collection, which may come to Minneapolis as the result of the death of the young millionaire, is one that has stirred the art world intermittently for 20 years in bitter controversy. Famous to begin with as one of the greatest masterpieces of Rembrandt, it has come through discussion to be one of the best-known paintings of the world.

It is entitled "St. Paul Seated at a Writing Table and Meditating." It has been assailed again and again as fraudulent, but has been so successfully defended that now it has ascendancy among connoisseurs over its nearest rival, a painting of the same subject also reputed as Rembrandt's hanging in the Imperial gallery at Vienna [seen on the next page]. Others too, have been presented as the original but have disappeared before attack, leaving the battle between the Gates picture and the one at Vienna.

The picture was shuffled through many collections before it came into the possession John W. Gates. He bought it from M. C. D. Borden of New York. Previously it was owned in England by the Duke of Somerset, where it first came to notice as a rival of the Vienna picture. Then Agnew & Sons of London owned it in 1890; Sir Charles Robinson, London in 1892; Charles Sedelmeyer, dealer, Paris in 1894, then to Mr. Borden. Mr. Gates bought it very soon after.

The Vienna picture has been in the Imperial collection since 1878 and has been questioned as a copy many times, but never seriously except by the Gates picture. The controversy has never been settled. Experts have lined up on both sides and break into wordy war whenever the famous Rembrandt is mentioned.

Above – Rembrandt's "St. Paul Seated at a Writing Table and Meditating," one of the famous paintings of the Gates collection, which may come to Minneapolis. It has been assailed as a copy, but has authoritative defenders.

Next page – The rival of the Gates picture, which hangs in the Imperial gallery at Vienna since 1878.

Despite the provenance stated in 1913, apparently the debate was settled sometime over the next century, with the Vienna picture recognized as the original and the Gates' picture declared a copy by Govaert Flinck, a Dutch artist of the 17th Century.



"St. Paul Seated at a Writing Table and Meditating." As seen in Vienna



The Lovers

1855, **Artist:** William Powell Frith (English, 1819–1909)

Oil on board, Inscribed lower right: W.P. Frith 1855
 38 × 31 cm (14 11/16 × 12 in.); Framed: 60.1 × 54 × 5.8 cm (23 5/8 × 21 1/4 × 2 1/4 in.)

Purchased with funds provided by Irving Lauf and Irene McNear, Mrs. P. Kelley Armour through The Old Masters Society, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Patterson; through prior acquisition of Mrs. Dellora A. Norris (2003.47)



The Destruction of Pharaoh's Army

1792 **Artist:** Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg (French, 1740–1812)

Oil on canvas, Inscribed lower right, on rock: P.I. de Loutherbourg, R.A. / 1792
 127 × 102.3 cm (50 × 40 1/2 in.) Purchased with funds provided by the Old Masters Society, Mrs. P. Kelley Armour and Mr. and Mrs. William B. Graham through the Old Masters Society; gift of Richard L. Feigen; Alexander A. McKay, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Patterson and Mr. and Mrs. Murray Vale endowments; through prior acquisitions of Max and Leola Epstein, William O. and Erna Sawyer Goodman Fund through Friends of American Art, Mrs. Robert Hall McCormick in memory of Robert Hall McCormick, and Dellora A. Norris (1991.5)



Singing Boy with Violin - Franz Hals 1625-1630

These two Hals paintings were included in the 1968 Appraisal at the Norris Estate and have since passed through family ownership. Keep reading to discover their current location.



Girl Singing-1625-Franz Hals



*On the west wall [at the Art Institute] there is a rare Durer – **Albrecht Durer** – better known to us perhaps through his etchings. It is a painting of “**Adam and Eve**” in the garden of Eden. Eve holds the apple in her hand and the serpent with the head of a human being, is seen whispering in her ear. In the background are many other human figures and many animals, all dwelling peace. The far horizon of the garden is guarded by a massive wall of rock, thrust up from the ground as though through violence. The coloring seven of these forbidding rock formations is delightful.*



A Woman at the Élysée Montmartre (Femme à l'Élysée Montmartre)

1888, **Artist:** Louis Anquetin (French, 1861–1932)

Oil on canvas, 90.5 × 72 cm (35 5/8 × 28 3/8 in.)

Lacy Armour Fund, Dellora A. Norris Fund, through prior gift of Mr. and Mrs. Chauncey B. Borland, Josephine and John Louis Fund, purchased with funds provided by of John and Alexandra Nichols (2014.645)



Lady with a Dog – George Henry Harlow (1787-1819)
A Gift of Mrs. Dellora A. Norris – 1970.1006



Diana the Huntress – Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640)
A Gift of Mrs. Dellora A. Norris – 1970.1012

The Norris family contacted the Art Institute in **June 2026** about arranging a family viewing of the works associated with Dellora A. Norris. Initially the Institute agreed. The family was then told that **all of her contributions had been sold**. Yet I had already located many of those works in the Institute's own archival records. After further checking, the Institute contacted the family again and reported that **most of the works had been found in storage**.

It demonstrates something important: provenance research isn't difficult merely because records are a century old. Even the institution presently holding an object may have difficulty connecting **donor records, archival records, storage locations, and current collection databases**.

The Art Institute experience should not be presented as an isolated recordkeeping problem. Your research encountered the same fundamental obstacle elsewhere: **some institutions simply could not provide century-old records concerning works that had once passed through their collections or care**.

That is particularly important with Minneapolis and Connecticut because those missing records contribute directly to the cold trail surrounding Florence Hopwood Gates Judd's portion of the collection.

CHAPTER 5

THE HOTEL BAKER — ANOTHER MISSING COLLECTION

When Hotel Baker prepared for its formal opening on June 2, 1928, it became an important public showcase for art associated with the Baker-Norris family. A contemporary St. Charles Chronicle announcement reported that ten oil paintings had already been installed in the lobby, lounge and writing room, with approximately fifteen more expected. The newspaper described the pictures as works by “some of the finest artists of the world” and predicted that they would make “a splendid art gallery for St. Charles.”

The display was not limited to paintings. Two bronze statuettes had also been received and placed in the lounge, while “some fine marble busts and other rare pieces” were expected to be added. The article therefore documents ten paintings actually installed and indicates that the display may soon have approached twenty-five paintings, in addition to sculpture and other objects.

The ten paintings identified in the 1928 opening announcement were: “Wayside Prey,” Bohdan von Kleczyński; “Psycho,” Henry O. Walker; “Still Life No. 29,” Henry R. Rittenger; “Gossip at the Fountain,” Alonzo Parag; “Venice,” Henry Pember Smith; “Portrait,” Abbey Attam; “New England Farm House,” Henry Pember Smith; “In the Garden,” Filippo Indoni; “An Arabian Courtyard,” O. Herreros; and “A Cavalier,” Alexis D’Ambrossi.

The distinction between what was installed and what was anticipated is important. The newspaper confirms the first ten paintings, while the additional fifteen were reported as expected. Unless another contemporary source confirms their arrival, they should not be treated as documented installations.

Forty years later, the 1968 Tarrant appraisal recorded only three paintings at Hotel Baker: No. 151, Angelo Asti’s *Study of a Young Woman with Long Tresses*; No. 152, Benjamin Vautier’s *The Artist’s Model*; and No. 153, Rudolph Epp’s *Peace and Plenty*. All three were moved back to the Norris residence in January 1970. No comparable record has yet been found accounting for the much larger body of art described at the hotel’s opening.

This leaves one of the larger unanswered questions in reconstructing the collection. Family recollections indicate that furnishings and other contents were dispersed during later changes in the hotel’s ownership and operation, but no surviving inventory yet establishes whether Gates/Norris paintings or sculpture were included in those transfers or sales. Consequently, some works once displayed at Hotel Baker may still survive today without their Gates/Norris provenance being recognized.



An early photo, date unknown, depicting the Hotel Baker Lobby with early unidentified bronze sculptures.



This current lobby view is representative of the venue to display art. The stairs on the right lead to the former “Trophy Room” where much of the collection was on display while the second-floor Mezzanine level provided another gallery. Current owner, Rowena Salas, had strived to replicate much of the early ambiance and has an interesting story about acquiring the bronze for the lobby.



View from the front desk looking at elevator doors, note art on left wall.

THE ARCADE THEATRE — THE NORRIS COLLECTION ON PUBLIC DISPLAY

Only three years after the Hotel Baker opening, another group from the Norris collection was placed before the St. Charles public. On September 10, 1931, the St. Charles Chronicle reported that seven paintings were hanging in the lobby of the Arcada Theatre. The works had recently been hung by the Doran Company of Chicago, which appraised the group at \$75,000. The Arcada was also preparing a booklet giving the detailed history of the paintings and their artists.

The seven paintings were identified as: “Peace and Plenty,” Rudolph Epp; “Planning the Campaign,” Charlemont; “The Artist’s Model,” Benjamin Vautier; “Self Confidence,” Defregger; “The Hunter’s Tale,” Max Gaiser; “Contentment,” Henri Bürkel; and “Begging Alms,” Meissonier.

The newspaper did more than list the works. It described each as an important example of its artist and emphasized the quality of the collection. Of Meissonier’s “Begging Alms,” the Chronicle wrote that the painting represented the artist in his

greatest period and praised its faultless detail and the pleading expression of the woman depicted. The article similarly singled out Vautier's "The Artist's Model," Epp's "Peace and Plenty," and Gaiser's "The Hunter's Tale."



A more recent partial view of the Arcada Theater spacious lobby which extended about a half-city block to the actual theater.

The 1931 Arcada display provides an important bridge between the public exhibition of family art and the later 1968 appraisal. "Peace and Plenty" and "The Artist's Model" were subsequently recorded at Hotel Baker in the 1968 appraisal, while "The Hunter's Tale" survives with the family in St. Charles. These connections demonstrate that works did not remain permanently assigned to a single building. They moved among family homes and public spaces, complicating any attempt to reconstruct the collection from one inventory or one moment in time.

The Arcada's long and spacious lobby was particularly well suited to such a display. Period and later interior photographs help explain how substantial paintings could be presented as part of the theatre-going experience, allowing thousands of patrons to encounter works from the Norris collection outside a museum setting.

CHAPTER 6

THE 1968 APPRAISAL — A COLLECTION REDISCOVERED

By 1968, nearly half a century had passed since the death of Dellora Baker Gates and the transfer of much of her estate to Illinois. The Gates Art Collection had moved through another generation. Paintings and sculpture were displayed in Norris family homes and throughout St. Charles, while other works had followed the Hopwood/Judd branch of the family to Minneapolis and Connecticut.

Reconstructing the collection is complicated by one fundamental problem: **no comprehensive inventory made during John W. Gates's lifetime has been found.** Historic photographs reveal works that remain unidentified today, while museum records, family documents, appraisals and later auction sales identify others that can be followed across generations. Approximately 25 percent of the collection that passed through Florence Hopwood Gates Judd left no comparable inventory, and much of its provenance has been lost.

The Angell/Norris branch left a much stronger trail. The 1968 appraisal numbers **161 works** and records where they were located at that time. Handwritten notes added during the early 1970s provide further clues to their later distribution. The complete document is reproduced in the appendix, allowing us here to concentrate on the works themselves.

The appraisal does not solve the mystery. Some works visible in early Gates photographs do not appear among those subsequently identified, and the final disposition of others remains unknown. But for the first time, it gives us a substantial body of evidence from which the collection can be reconstructed.

More than 110 years after the Gates era, the collection is beginning to reveal itself again.

“The Second and Third Generations”



The Lester and Dellora Norris family. From left: Lester James Norris; LaVerne Gertrude Norris (Gaynor); JoAnn Dellora Norris (Collins); John Baker Norris; Lester James Norris Jr.; Dellora Frances Angell Norris; and Robert Carroll Norris. The Gates art collection had by then become part of the surroundings in which another generation of the family lived and grew up. Courtesy of the St. Charles History Museum.

There is something else particularly valuable about this photograph: **there is artwork visible behind the family.** I would not attempt to identify it from this photograph alone, but its presence reinforces the point without requiring another paragraph. These children were literally growing up surrounded by paintings inherited or collected by the family.



Another photographic record is from the 1949 wedding reception of JoAnn Norris to James Collins in the Norris home. You could not take a snapshot without art in the background.

THE GATES/NORRIS ART COLLECTION

As Reconstructed in 2026

Rather than rearrange the works by artist, value or perceived importance, they are presented here in the general order in which they appear in the 1968 appraisal. This allows us, more than half a century later, to walk through the collection much as the Norris family, friends and visitors experienced it.

Tarrant cautioned that art values were subject to changing economic conditions, fashion, taste, supply and demand. The 1968 values are therefore retained as historical information rather than as a ranking of the collection.

Titles and artist names have been standardized for consistency. Where later handwritten notations help establish a work's movement or provenance, they are noted separately. Not every painting or sculpture can be illustrated. Only images reasonably confirmed as the actual work are used; substitute examples by the same artist are not.

As Tarrant noted in his cover letter with the appraisal: *“I should remind you that the vagaries of economic situations operate in the field of Art as with other commodities in the open market. Moreover, fashions and taste change over the years and valued fluctuate from one decade to another, if not from year to year. Much depends on the law of supply and demand... What is popular and considered “good” art in one generation or less may be considered otherwise in a succeeding...”*

The complete 1968 Tarrant appraisal, including the handwritten notations added in subsequent years, is reproduced in the **Appendix**. Titles and artist names have been standardized in the following presentation for consistency, while the original document has been preserved as written.

What follows represents the Gates/Norris Art Collection to the best of our knowledge in 2026. It remains a work in progress.

818 NORTH FIFTH AVENUE

The Lester J. and Dellora A. Norris Residence

By 1968, the Norris residence at **818 North Fifth Avenue** contained the largest concentration of works recorded in the appraisal. The summary lists Inventory

Numbers **1–30 and 51–83** at the residence. Rather than seeing these works simply as entries on an inventory, the following pages return them, as nearly as surviving evidence permits, to the rooms in which they were once displayed.

THE BASEMENT—The appraisal begins in the basement with numbers 1–30.

No. 1 — Seignac Guillaumé

The Naughty Child

Oil on wood panel, 18 x 14 ½, signed lower right

1968 insurable value: \$750

Gifted to family

Current location; St. Charles



“The Naughty Child” Guillaume Seignac

No. 2 — Charles Frederick Naegele (1857-1944)

Portrait of Young Lady in Party Dress (Bird Gates)

Oil on wood panel, 30 x 20, signed upper right

1968 insurable value: \$600

Gifted to family member 12/31/1974

Location unknown

No. 3 – Friedrich Johann Voltz

Woman with Dog, Tending Cattle in Marsh

Oil on wood panel, 35 ½ x 15, signed lower right

1968 insurable value: \$500

Gifted to family member 12/31/1973

Location unknown

No. 4 – Yeend King or Yeend-King Henry John (1855-1924)

The Path Through the Cornfield

Oil on wood panel, 20 x 30, signed lower right, Yeend King

1968 insurable value: \$350

Gifted to family member 12/31/1973

Location unknown

No. 5 – Heinrich Buerkel (1802-1869)

Heimkehr von der Barenjagd-Return of the Hunting Party/The Bear Hunt

Oil on canvas, 22 ½ x 31 ½, signed lower right

1968 insurable value: \$750

Gifted to family member 12/31/1973

Location unknown

No. 6 – Maltz 19th Century German

Romantic Couple in Outdoor Setting

Oil on porcelain plaque, 15 x 12, signed lower right

1968 insurable value: \$400

No. 6 & 7 Were gifted to a friend

No.7 – Maltz***Helena de Fourment with Child in Plumed Hat on Lap***

Oil on porcelain plaque 15 x 12, signed lower right

1968 insurable value: \$400

No. 8 – Otto Greiner (1869-1916)

Judith - The episode of Judith beheading Holofernes is from a deuterocanonical book of the Bible. The episode is from the apocryphal Book of Judith in the Old Testament, which recounts the assassination of the Assyrian general Holofernes by the Israelite heroine Judith.

No verifiable results

Oil on porcelain plaque 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$

1968 insurable value: \$250

Location unknown

No. 9 – Maltz***Monks in Tavern***

Oil on porcelain plaque, 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{4}$, signed lower right

1968 insurable value: \$350

Gifted to family member. Dec 1973

Location unknown

No. 10 – Maltz***Diana in Chase after Leda and her Naiads***

Oil on porcelain plaque 11 x 22, signed lower right

1968 insurable value: \$350

Location unknown

No. 11 – Hugo W Kauffmann (1844-1925)***Bavarian Interior with Three Figures***

Oil on wood panel 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 18, signed lower left

1968 insurable value: \$650

Gifted to family member, Sep 1970

Location unknown

No. 12 – Anonymous***Young Lady in Plumed Hat***

Oil over print? on wood panel, 13 x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$

1968 insurable value in questionable: \$50 with good frame

No. 13 – John Hansen Walker (1844-1933)***Portrait of a Young Lady***

Oil on canvas, 22 x 18, signed upper right

1968 insurable value: \$250

Gifted to family member

Location unknown

No. 14 – Anonymous-Untitled oil on porcelain 15 ¼ x 12 ¼

1968 insured value: \$250

Location unknown

**Lots #15, #16, and #17 are all paintings by Gordon Coutts (1868-1937)
Basement Inventory 1968, then all three works were installed at Mrs. Norris'
Office in the Arcada Building, Spring 1970.**

#15 – Gordon Coutts (1868-1937)***A Son of Mohammed-Abdul Kirim, Morocco***

Oil on canvas, 30 x 21, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$600, sold at Sotheby's auction Oct 2008, \$10,625



#16 – Gordon Coutts (1868-1937)***Metal Artisan in His Studio***

Oil on canvas, 29 x 24, signed lower right, Gordon Coutts, Tangier
1968 insured value: \$750, sold in 2005 at Christie's auction \$3,840

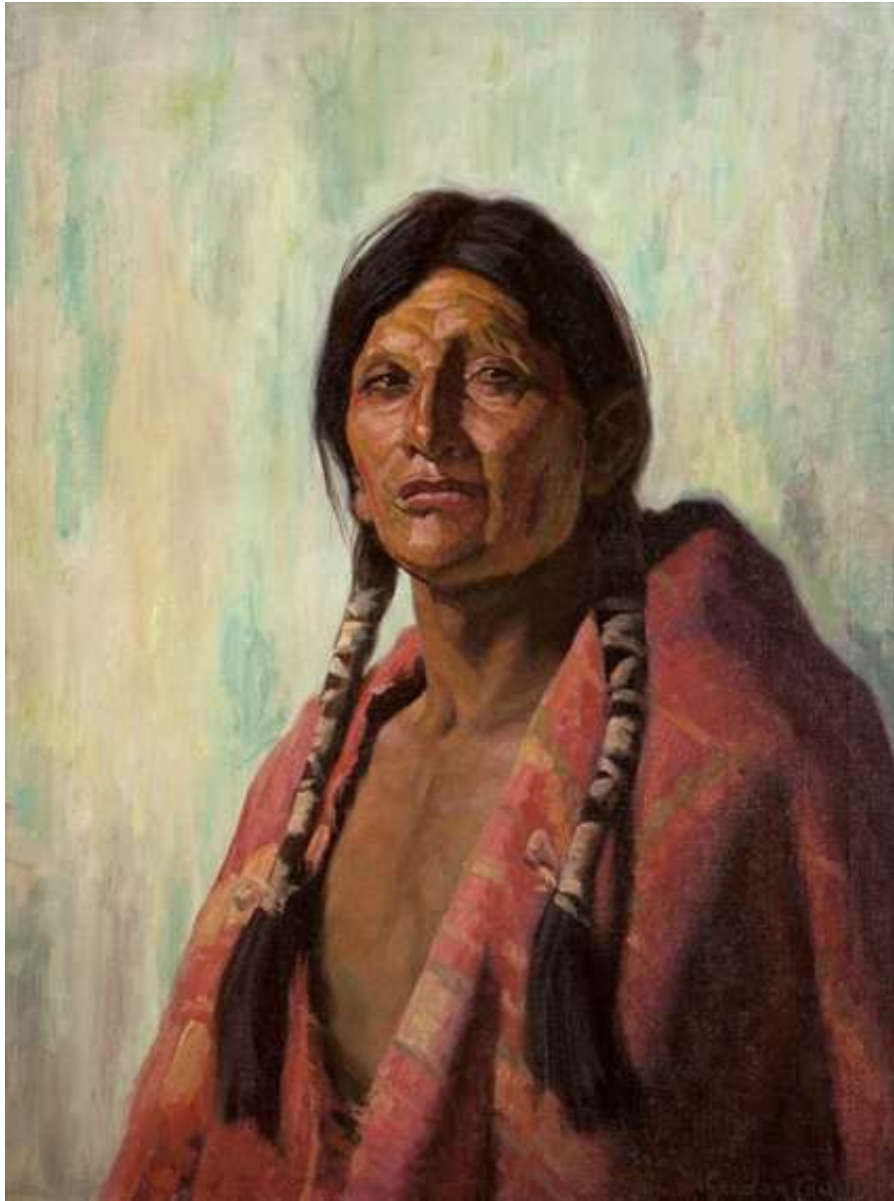


#17 – Gordon Couts (1868-1937)

Pueblo Chief-New Mexico

Oil on canvas, 30 x 22, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$1,200



“TAOS CHIEF JOE ROMERO” Sold at auction Oct. 2015 \$9,760 & 2016 \$7,380

We have no idea of the disposition of these paintings while, internet searches have revealed similar, but unverifiable examples of all three paintings at auctions.

No. 18 – Franz von Defregger (1835-1921)***Bavarian Interior with Adults and Children about a Table***

Oil on canvas, 38 x 42 ¼ , signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$1,000

Location unknown

No. 19 – Luigi Rossi (1853-1923)***Lady in a French Boudoir, with Man Peeking from Behind Curtains at Door***

Watercolor on paper 19 ¾ x 13 5/8, signed lower right

Painting and frame seriously damaged by water, probably not recoverable

1968 insured value: \$25

Location unknown

No. 20 – E. Munter? Found Gabriel Munter (1877-1962)***Mother and Child at Evening Prayer***

Oil on canvas, 35 x 27, signed upper right E. Munter

1968 insured value: \$300

Location unknown

No. 21-C. Meinelt (19th Century), after Peter Paul Rubens original painting 1618

The Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus

Oil on porcelain, 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{8}$, signed upper right, C Meinelt

The original 17th Century painting depicts the mortal Castor and the immortal Pollux abducting Phoebe and Hilaeira, daughters of Leucippus of Messenia.

1968 insured value; \$600

Location of this copy unknown



Peter Paul Rubens, The Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus

Location Alte Pinakothek, Munich

No. 22 – Jean Louis Tocque (1696-1772)

Countess de Beauregard

Oil on canvas, 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 23 $\frac{3}{4}$, no signature apparent

1968 insured value: \$3,000, Location unknown

No. 23 – Anonymous after Giorgione (1477-1810)***The Concert-Le Concert***

Oil on porcelain plaque, 13 x 11, no signature apparent, a copy of original
1968 insured value: \$350, Location unknown

No. 24 – John R. A. Hoppner (1758-1810)***Dr. Abernethy***

Oil on canvas, 30 x 25, no signature apparent
1968 insured value: \$2,500, Location unknown

No. 25 – Robert Ward Van Boskerck, N.A. (1855-1932)***Looking toward the Main Gate Drive, Sandricourt***

Oil on canvas, 22 7/8 x 31 3/8, signed lower right
1968 insured value: \$250

Location unknown. This painting may have been commissioned by J.W. Gates when he leased the French chateau known as Sandricourt



Photograph of the Sandricourt Estate, this is where Gates stayed in France prior to his passing.

No. 26 – Anonymous 17th-18th Century Artist***Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden***

Oil painting on wood panel 13 ½ x 10 1/8, No signature apparent
1968 insured value: \$150

This panel has several vertical cracks...the painting would seem to be of little quality and is apparently the work of a copyist.

No. 27 – Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830)

Portrait of Countess Tankerville

Oil on canvas 37 ¼ x 29 ¾ , No signature apparent

1968 insured value: \$6,000

Location unknown, possibly with family

No. 28 – Gaspard Rigaud (1661-1705)

Countess de Bethune

Oil on canvas, 30 ½ x 24 ¼, No signature apparent

1968 insured value: \$3,500

Location unknown

No. 29 – Franz Richard Unterberger (1732-1797)

Canal St. Bernardo-Venedig

Oil on canvas 45 ¼ x 39 ½ , signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$5,000

Location unknown

No. 30 – Charles G. Gates Portraits***Charles Gates, Esquire***

Oil on canvas, 20” x 30” does not completely match any painting found in the family collections, artist uncertain in the appraisal listing

1968 insured value: \$500



This portrait of Charles Gilbert Gates remained with the Norris family and was discovered still stored in its 1918 shipping crate. Although the 1968 appraisal lists a portrait of Charles as No. 30, differences in recorded dimensions prevent a positive identification of the crated portrait as the work described by Tarrant. We will deal with this complex issue of multiple Charles portraits later.

RECEPTION HALL – 818 North Fifth Avenue

The numbering on the appraisal jumps from 30 to 51 on the same page, we do not believe there are missing evaluations in the appraisal but instead the numbering resumed on a different floor on a different day and the continuity was a simple mistake.

No. 51-Felix Aiem, (1821-1911)

Venice in Early Morning Light

Oil on canvas, 32 ½ x 44 ½ signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$4,000, unclear disposition, but there is evidence an auction where it sold for an undisclosed amount.



No. 52 – Sir Joshua Reynolds, (1723-1792)***Portrait of Miss Wynward***

Oil on canvas, 35 ½ x 27 ½, No signature apparent

1968 insured value: \$20,000

No record of the disposition of this valuable portrait

No. 53 – George Romney (1734-1810)***Portrait of Melesina Chenevix-Mrs. F(T)rench***

Half-length figure, left profile, seated. Oil on canvas, 29 ½ x 24, no signature

1968 insured value: \$12,000

In the possession of a family member.

No. 54 – John R. A. Hoppner (1759-1810)***Mrs. Fraser***

Half-length, frontal, oil on canvas 29 3/8 x 24 3/8 no signature

1968 insured value: \$3,000

No record of the disposition of this valuable portrait

SITTING ROOM-181 NORTH 5TH AVENUE**No. 55 – Marie Dieterle (Marie Dieterle van Marcke de Lummen, 1860-1935)*****Cattle and Sheep in Hilly Landscape, with Woman Herder and Dog***

Oil on canvas, 29 ¾ x 39 ½ signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$3,000

Notes on the appraisal tell us this painting moved to the new home. 808.

For this artist, the theme of cattle, sheep, herder and dogs was very common and difficult to associated any of her works sold at auction with this description. Notes indicate this painting was restored and reframed in 1972 by **Louis Pomerantz**.

Location unknown.

No. 56 – Rosa Bonheur (1822-1899)***Ram and Sheep at Pool, in Open Landscape***

Oil on canvas, 25 ¼ x 31 ½, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$3,500

Gifted to a family member

No. 57 – Marcisse Diaz de la Pena (180/-1876)***Three Ladies and Child, with Bird and Dog, in Wooded Landscape***

Oil on canvas, 27 x 19 7/8, signed and dated lower left

1968 insured value: \$5,000 prior to 1972 restoration

Notes indicate this painting was restored and reframed in 1972 by **Louis Pomerantz**.

This painting moved to the new house, no further information

Louis Pomerantz — Art Conservator

Louis Pomerantz was a highly experienced Chicago art conservator whose career included service as a **conservator at the Art Institute of Chicago**, followed by many years in private practice. His professional work included examination of paintings, condition reports, cleaning, restoration and other conservation treatments for institutions and private collectors.

Pomerantz continued his professional training at institutions including the **Rijksmuseum** and maintained relationships with leading conservators and conservation scientists. His surviving professional papers document decades of conservation work through treatment records, correspondence, photographs, X-rays and other technical material.

Two Norris paintings are documented as having been treated by Pomerantz in 1959, during the period of his Art Institute affiliation. Subsequent Norris conservation work was performed after he had established his own independent conservation business. His involvement provides important evidence that the collection received professional conservation care as paintings were prepared for continued display in the Norris home.

No. 58 – Constant Troyon (1810-1865)

Paysage at Animaux

Oil on canvas, 28 x 32, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$750

Painting in very bad condition, location unknown

No. 59 – Lester J. Norris – American Contemporary

Dutch Interior, with Girl Peeling Apples

Oil on canvas, 35 ½ x 29 ½, signed and dated lower left “Les Norris ‘23”

1968 insured value: \$300

Location unknown, Lester would have taken this to the new home



LIVING ROOM – 818 NORTH 5TH AVENUE

No. 60 – Marcisse Diaz de la Pena (1807-1876)

Two Girls with Dog in Landscape

Oil on canvas, 17 7/8 x 12 5/8 signed and dated lower left “N Diaz, ‘70”

1968 insured value: \$5,500

Hand written note said this painting went to new house, present location St Charles



No. 61 – Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796-1875)*La Cavalier – Figures in landscape with buildings in left background*

Oil on canvas, 14 ½ x 25, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$30,000

We believe this painting and frame were also restored by Louis Pomerantz

Current location unknown

No. 62 – Jules Dupre (1811-1889)*Cattle at Pool with Peasant, in Evening*

Oil on canvas, 28 ¾ x 36 ¾ signed lower right

Restored by Pomerantz in 1959 while he was still with Art Institute of Chicago

1968 insured value: \$6,000

1972 moved to the front hall of residence at 808 North 5th Avenue

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family.



Photograph of Dupre taken in 1968

No. 63 – Charles-Francis Daubigny (1817-1887)*Landscape with Stream and Figure*

Oil on canvas, 21 x 17 ½, signed and dated 1865

1968 insured value: \$6,000

1972 moved to the front hall of residence at 808 North 5th Avenue

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family.

No. 64 – Constant Troyon (1810-1865)***Landscape with Cow at Pool, and Figure, at Evening***

Oil on canvas, 21 x 17 ½, signed lower left “C. Troyon” – mislabeled N.V. Diaz

1968 insured value: 1,250, Restored by Pomerantz in 1972

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family.

No. 65 – Jules Dupre (1811-1889)***Sunrise***

Oil on canvas, 35 ¾ x 28 1/8, signed lower right

Gifted to family member, Dec. 1973

No. 66 – Charles Emile Jacque***Sheep in Woodland Setting***

Oil on canvas, 31 x 25, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$1,500

Painting was said to be in bad condition, current location unknown

No. 67 – Theodore Rousseau (1868-1945)***Road through Trees to Clearing***

Oil on panel (cradled), 10 ¼ x 15, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$5,000

Cleaned by Pomerantz and moved to new home, 1972

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family.

No. 68 – Theodore Rousseau***Woodlands with Dog at Pool, Figure on Shaded Bank***

Oil on panel (cradled), 13 ½ x 20 ¼, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$6,000

Cleaned by Pomerantz and moved to new home, 1972

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family.

No. 69 – Constant Troyon (1810-1865)***Shepard with Sheep***

Oil on canvas, 24 ¾ x 31, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$2,500

Gifted to family member, Dec. 1973

No. 70 – Narcisse Diaz de la Pena (1807-1866)***Forest Interior (dense woods of white birches with figure)***

Oil on wood panel, 22 ¾ x 28 1/8, signed and dated '75 lower left

1968 insured value: \$6,500

Restored by Louis Pomerantz, 1959, gifted to family member July 1973

STAIRCASE TO SECOND FLOOR-818 North 5th Avenue

No. 71 – Ferdinand Victor Leon Roybet (1840-1920)

The Artist's Studio-(artist with Cardinal and Wolfhound, Three Cavaliers)

Oil on canvas, 50 ½ x 35, signed and dated 1880 on lower right

1968 insured value: \$6,000, photograph taken at time of appraisal

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family



Roybet-The Artist's Studio

No. 72 – Charles Emile Jacque (1813-1894)

Shepherdess and Dog with sheep entering Sheepfold

Oil on canvas, 31 ½ x 25, signed lower right

1968 Insured value: \$3,000

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

Jacque had a recurring subject involving shepherds, shepherdess, dogs and sheep to the tune of a few hundred oil paintings. We have included this *unverified* example just to reflect on his style.



LANDING AND UPSTAIRS HALL-818

No. 73 – Phillips Wouwerman (1619-1668)

Battle Scene-Calvary conflict with burning windmill

Oil on canvas, 21 ½ x 31 ½, no signature apparent

1968 insured value: \$2,500 painting in bad condition

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 74 – Ferdinand Victor Leon Roybet (1840-1920)

Cavalier (with white ruff and large hat)

Oil on wood panel, 25 ¾ x 10 7/8, signed upper right

1968 insured value: \$1,500

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 75 – Robert Ward Van Boskerck (1855-1932)

Forest Glade

Oil on coarse canvas, 25 ¾ x 35 ½, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$500

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 76 – Charles Emile Jacque (1813-1894)

Barnyard Scene with Figures, Pig and Chickens

Oil on wood panel: 14 ½ x 17 ¾, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$1,200

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 77 – (A.F.A.) Schenck (1828-1901)

Shepherd and Dog with Sheep on Hillside in Snowstorm

Oil on canvas, 23 ¾ x 17 ¼, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$750

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 78 – Phillip Wouwerman (1619-1668)

“Defile de la Cabalerie” – Battle scene with mounted cavaliers and attendants”

Oil on wood panel, 13 ¼ x 18 ½, an apparent signature

1968 insured value: \$5,000

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 79 – Rosa Bonheur (1822-1899)***Two Deer (against hill)***

Oil on canvas, 17 ¼ x 14, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$2,500, cleaned by Pomerantz 1971

Moved to new house, probably still with family

**No. 80 – Georges Croegaert (1848-1923)*****Portrait of Lady in Spanish Costume***

Oil on wood panel, 12 ½ x 9 ¼, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$3,000

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

NEW RESIDENCE STUDIO-818 North 5th Avenue

No. 81 – Christian Adolphe Schreyer (1828-1899)***Arabian Horsemen***

Oil on wood panel 8 ¼ x 19, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$2,500

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 82 – TODT (19th Century?)***The Smoker – Interior, with seated man smoking long clay pipe***

Oil on wood panel, 7 ¼ x 5 3/8, signature lower right undecipherable

1968 insured value: \$900

Painting was missing in 1973

No. 83 – Lester J Norris – American contemporary

Il Duce – Benito Mussolini – head and shoulders portrait in left profile

Pencil on paper, 13 x 9 1/8, signed on lower left, Mussolini autograph lower right
1968 insured value: \$350, the painting was displayed later in the Les's office in the State Bank. Later given to a Norris daughter.



Photo from Nov. 10, 1927 St Charles Chronicle

This concludes the 818 North 5th Avenue house inventory

PAINTINGS IN THE NORRIS GUEST HOUSE

**All of the guest house paintings were taken Sep. 1970 by Mr. Norris
Disposition Unknown**

No. 84 – Gordon Coutts (1880-1937)

The Flower Girl-Morocco

Oil on canvas, 28-3/4 x 23 3/4, signed lower right
1968 insured value: \$500

No. 85 – Eustace Paul Ziegler (1881-1969)

Eskimo Woman-Lower Kuskoquion

Oil on Masonite, 12 x 10, signed lower left
1968 insured value: \$200

No. 86 – Eustace Paul Ziegler

The Pioneers-Trek in Alaska

Oil on canvas board 16 x 20, signed lower left
1968 insure value: \$150

Again we have a jump in the number sequence from 86 to 101

THE RESIDENCE OF MRS C WNORRIS-1001 North 6th Avenue

No. 101 – Narcisse Diaz de la Pena (1807-1876)

Five Turkish Children at Play, with Birdcage, in Woodlands

Oil on canvas, 16 3/4 x 23, signed and dated '53 lower right
1968 insured value: \$6,000
Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 102 – Christian Adolph Schreyer (1828-1899)

Two Wallachians with Cart and Four Horses Crossing a Stream

Oil on canvas 15 x 28, signed and dated 1882 lower right
1968 insured value: \$6,500
Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 103 – Mihaly de Munkacsy (Michael Lieb) (1849-1909)

The Story Teller (Interior with gentleman and two ladies)

Oil on canvas, 34 1/4 x 44 3/4, signed lower right
1968 insured value: \$3,500
Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

PAINTINGS AT THE RESIDENCE OF MR and MRS H BURTIS JORDON
415 Iroquois Avenue, St Charles

No. 104-John Constable (1776-1837)

Mrs John Constable and Family (Interior with lady in white, seated, with three children about her, and a baby on her lap)

Oil on canvas, 23 ¼ x 19, no signature apparent

1968 insured value: \$12,000

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

No. 105-Constant Troyon (1810-1865)

The Old Farm

Oil on canvas, 10 x 15 ½, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$1,500

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family

Again, we have a jump in the numerical order as we change locations.

PAINTINGS AT HOTEL BAKER, 100 West Main Street

No. 151- Angelo Asti (1847-1903)

Study of a Young Woman with Long Tresses

Oil on canvas, 25 ¼ x 21, signed lower left

1968 insured value: \$1,250

Jan. 1970 moved to residence. This painting is with the family in St. Charles



No. 152-Benjamin Louis Marc Vautier (1829-1898)

The Artist's Model

Oil on canvas, 27 ½ x 39, signed and dated '84 lower left corner

1968 insured value: \$1,000

Jan. 1970 moved to residence, then Sep 20, 1970 gifted to son.

No. 153-Rudolph Epp (1834-1910)

Peace and Plenty

Oil on canvas, 34 x 44, signed lower right

1968 insured value: \$1,500

Jan. 1970 moved to residence. This painting is now with family in St Charles.



Painting at State Bank of St Charles at 1 East Main Street

This excludes the paintings in Lester Norris' office.

No. 154-Jan Havicksz Steen (1626-1679)

The Fair at Warmond

Unsure what the 6-foot-wide painting was on either canvas or wood board

1968 insured value: \$200,000

We remember this painting on the wall behind the tellers at the bank. With the passing of the Norris's the bank was merged with the Harris Bank of Chicago, but on the surface the same staff and officers worked the bank. Lacking the details about the dissolution of the bank, the question remains; What happened to the most valuable painting from the Gates/Norris collection? Was it returned to the family? Was it sold and if so, who had assumed the right to sell a Norris painting? We have no knowledge of any family member accepting the return the painting.

Research shows that, the painting was sold at a Sotheby's London Auction on July 5, 2006 for \$1,347,154 and there is no attached disclosure of provenance and ownership.



The Fair at Warmond – by Jan Havicksz Steen ca.1676, Netherlands (1626-1679)

ST CHARLES MUNICIPAL BUILDING-2 East Main Street

No. 155 – Charles Oliver Penne (1831-1897)

***Hunting Scene: Stag and Hounds** (Open landscape with hunters alongside stream, hounds taking to the water after their quarry, the stag)*

Oil on canvas, 66 ½ x 90, signed lower right.

1968 insured value: \$2,500

Later note on the appraisal indicates the painting was donated to the **Larkin Home**, an orphanage in Elgin, Illinois. Given the exceptionally large size, the venues had to be limited.

We have included another painting from Penne on the same subject just to convey the style of painting , though this is a much smaller more manageable version.



This 29 x 40 Penne sold for \$18,000 in 2014

Bronzes located in New Residence

No. 156-Victor Armand Francois Carrier-Belleuse (1824-1887)

Pair of Sculptured Bronzes and Marble Groups,

“Printemps” (Springtime)

“L’ete” (Summer)

(Partially draped maiden figures, seated on fluted red marble columns, with cherubs) Height: 32 ½ including Chinese carve native wood tabourets, each 18 ½ high.

1968 insured value: \$5,000

These were displayed in the new residence, the front hall and den.

Current location unknown, possibly still with the family, while there are multiple examples available over the years at fine art auctions in the range of \$10,000/pair.



“L’ete” left, “Printemps” right

No. 157-Duchoiselle 19th Century Sculpture

Indian Chief in a Canoe (with paddle, quiver of arrows, dead fox, and dead bird, on “water” base) 42 x 24, signed on 3” high oval carved wood plaque.

1968 insured value: \$1,200

Possibly placed with a family member

Reconstructing the Collection: The Duchoiselle Bronze

One of the most satisfying discoveries made during this research illustrates how family recollections, documentary evidence, historic photographs, and modern auction records can work together to reconstruct the Gates collection.

John R. Collins, a fourth-generation descendant of John Warne Gates, remembered a large bronze sculpture that stood at the head of the staircase in the St. Charles residence of his grandmother, Dellora Norris. Although he recalled the sculpture vividly, neither its title nor its sculptor had survived in family memory, nor was it known which member of the family had inherited it after Dellora's death.

The breakthrough came with the discovery of the **1968 Tarrant appraisal** of the Norris residence at **818 North Fifth Avenue**. Listed among the contents was:

No. 157 — “Indian Chief in a Canoe” (ALEGORÍA DE LA CAZA)

Artist: Duchoiselle (French, nineteenth century)

For the first time, the appraisal supplied the missing piece of information—the artist's name. What had been only a childhood memory could now be investigated through auction records and art historical references.

Searching under the name Duchoiselle led to the discovery of a bronze titled **Native American Hunter**, offered by Altermann Galleries in Santa Fe on August 13, 2016, from the Robert M. Eagle Estate. The bronze measured approximately 24 inches high by 42 inches wide by 11 inches deep. Estimated at \$25,000–35,000, it ultimately realized \$48,000 at auction.



This photo was from the auction and was immediately confirmed by J.R. Collins.

At that point, the evidence strongly suggested that the auction bronze was either the Norris sculpture itself or another casting from the same nineteenth-century model. **Subsequent examination of additional historic photographs of John Warne Gates' Plaza Hotel Penthouse revealed the same bronze prominently displayed in the dining room.**



The investigation did not end there.

The Mystery of the Equestrian Bronze

One unidentified sculpture remains particularly intriguing. In the alternate dining-room photograph shown earlier, magnification reveals what appears to be a mounted figure accompanied by several hounds. The complete 1968 appraisal initially offered a possible candidate: **#160, Max Arthur Waagen's large bronze *The Lion Quarry*, then displayed in the Municipal Building.** The appraisal describes an Arabian or Moor on horseback holding a lion skin, with hounds accompanying the group.

This is a magnification of the rear/left portion beyond the table in the previous photo.



A surviving example of Waagen's composition was subsequently located and compared with the historic photograph.

ARTHUR WAAGEN
(GERMAN, 1833-1898)



No. 160-Max Arthur Waagens (1836-1898)

1869-"Kabyle Au Retour de la Chasse" (Kabyle Return from the Hunt)

Titled in the appraisal: "The Lion Quarry"

(Arabian or Moor on horseback, with sheep on his lap, holding aloft a lion skin, surrounded by three hounds at rocky ground with plants, all on oval base)

"On carved walnut pedestal stand, fluted center plinth and four iconic corner supports, platform base, over-all 33 ¾ x 18 ¼ x 42 high.

1968 insured value: \$900

Sold at Christie's in London, 2009, for \$56,800

Again, no attached provenance of ownership

No 158 – Alfred Dubucand (1828-1890)***Arab Boy Beside Horse***

12” tall, signed on base

1968 insured value: \$450

This piece was gifted to a daughter

1878 (L’Anier du Caire) – from MutualArt:



[SAVE ARTWORK](#)
[FOLLOW ARTIST](#)

Alfred Dubucand

an arab boy beside a donkey

bronze

Sculpture

13.39 in

Estimate	1,500 - 2,000 GBP (2,314 - 3,086 USD)
Realized Price	1,500 GBP*
Exclusive of Buyer's Premium	(2,314 USD)
Sale	Fine Art Sale
Auction Venue	Wilson55
Sale Date	Feb 18, 2015 - Feb 19, 2015
Lot 602	
View at www.peterwilson.co.uk	

No. 159 – Pair of Five-Light Candelabras-Electrified

French Empire bronze and ormolu, figural support of maiden in Grecian costume of Baluster-shaped shaft and square base with relief motifs; four scroll and center branches with candle-style lights; overall height 30”

The Candelabras may match those on the fireplace mantel in the Gates penthouse Figure 1.1 on page 9.

1968 insured value: \$2,000

Gifted to daughter.

No. 161 – One Sevres Porcelain Covered Urn

Painted woodland scenes with figures, gros bleu collar, base, and cover, embellished with gold relief and Classic ormolu mounts. Circa 1810, 38”

1968 insured value: \$2,000

This Urn may be compared to Figure 1.2 on page 11.

Gifted to daughter

A SUMMARY OF THE 1968 APPRAISAL — A COLLECTION REDISCOVERED

By 1968, nearly half a century had passed since the death of Dellora Baker Gates and the transfer of much of her estate to Illinois. The art had not remained together. Paintings and sculpture had decorated family residences, including Robert F. Angell's country estate, Alta Vista, while other works had been loaned to the Art Institute of Chicago or displayed in Norris homes and public buildings throughout St. Charles. Some had moved more than once, and with each move the connection to the original Gates collection became more difficult to recognize.

Reconstructing the Gates Art Collection has always been complicated by one fundamental problem: **no comprehensive inventory of the collection made during John W. Gates's lifetime has been found.** There is no master list telling us precisely what Gates owned, when individual works were acquired, where they were displayed, or how many objects ultimately comprised the collection.

Instead, the collection must be reconstructed from the evidence it left behind. Historic photographs of the Gates residences reveal paintings, bronzes, sculpture and decorative objects, some of which can now be identified while others remain mysteries. Museum and exhibition records document additional works. Family correspondence, appraisals and later auction records provide still more pieces of the puzzle.

The division of the collection following the deaths of John and Charles Gates created another major break in its provenance. Approximately one-quarter of the collection passed into the Hopwood/Judd branch through Charles's widow, Florence Hopwood Gates, while the remaining portion continued through Dellora Gates and eventually into the Angell/Norris family. No comparable inventory has been found for the Hopwood/Judd portion. Despite attempts to trace those works through Minneapolis and Connecticut, institutional records that might document their later movement have not survived or have not been located. Except for the relatively few works that can be followed through surviving labels, photographs, museum records or later auction provenance, the trail of approximately one-quarter of the Gates collection has effectively gone cold.

The Angell/Norris portion presents a very different picture. Here the surviving evidence becomes considerably richer. Art Institute records document the important 1923 loans, family photographs reveal works displayed in successive

homes, and the 1968 appraisal provides the most extensive surviving inventory yet discovered of the Gates works that remained with this branch of the family.

The appraisal was prepared for Mr. and Mrs. Lester J. Norris and numbers the works from **1 through 161**. It includes paintings, bronzes and a large Sèvres porcelain covered urn and, importantly, records the locations where the objects were displayed. The works were spread among the Norris residence and guest house, other family residences, Hotel Baker, the State Bank of St. Charles and the Municipal Building. The collection had become part of the physical and cultural surroundings of St. Charles rather than remaining together as a single private gallery.

The appraisal states a total insurable value of **\$236,975**, but that figure does not include the important Jan Steen painting displayed at the State Bank, which at that time, was separately valued at **\$200,000**. The documented value was therefore at least \$436,975. More important today than those 1968 values, however, are the names, descriptions, locations and inventory numbers that can be compared with earlier photographs, museum records, family documents and later auction histories.

Handwritten annotations added to the appraisal between 1970 and 1974 provide another important layer of evidence. They indicate that a number of works were subsequently distributed among members of the Norris family. These notations help document the continuing dispersal of the collection, although individual family distributions need not be detailed here except where they become necessary to establish the later provenance of a particular work. The complete appraisal, including those handwritten notations, is reproduced in the appendix so that the original evidence remains available to future researchers.

The Second and Third Generations

By the 1930s through current times, the collection had become part of everyday family life. Paintings and sculpture that had once decorated the residences of John and Dellora Gates were now familiar objects in Norris homes and elsewhere around St. Charles. Their Gates origins were not necessarily discussed each time someone walked past them. As generations changed, the art survived while knowledge of its history could gradually fade.

Familiar Works Reappear

Among the strongest documentary connections are the two paintings attributed at the time to **Frans Hals**, *Singing Boy with Violin* and *Singing Girl*. Both had

appeared among the earlier Art Institute loans and were again documented in St. Charles in 1968. Their individual appraisal sheets are particularly important because the provenance specifically includes “**J. W. Gates, Chicago.**” Each carried an insurable value of \$25,000, and the records also refer to their earlier Angell Collection and Art Institute history.

Their presence in St. Charles demonstrates that paintings placed with the Art Institute in 1923 did not necessarily remain there. Works could return to the family or move elsewhere, one reason later museum records cannot be considered a complete inventory of everything once placed there. Conservation photographs preserved with the appraisal provide another unusual visual record of the Hals paintings and their treatment.

Later auction records provide still another chapter in the histories of certain works. Where an auction photograph and provenance can be positively connected to a specific painting in the Gates/Norris collection, the actual image can again be shown and its history carried forward. This is an important distinction. Images of merely similar works by the same artist are not sufficient. From this point forward, photographs are included only when there is reasonable evidence that the image represents the actual work under discussion.

The appraisal also helps solve a mystery hidden in one of the historic interior photographs reproduced earlier in this book. In the foreground is a bronze depicting a Native American in a canoe. Decades later, the same distinctive sculpture can be seen displayed in the Dellora Norris home. The 1968 appraisal identifies it as **#157, Duchoiselle, *Indian Chief in a Canoe***, describing the figure with paddle, quiver of arrows, dead fox and bird upon the water base. Its recommended insurable value was \$1,200.

The Duchoiselle bronze separated by decades. First photographed among the earlier family furnishings and later displayed in the Dellora Norris home, the 1968 appraisal provides another documentary checkpoint in its history.

This is precisely the kind of connection the appraisal makes possible. A sculpture that might otherwise remain merely an interesting object in an old photograph can finally be identified by comparing photographs, descriptions and surviving records.

The Collection Was Larger Than We Knew

The complete appraisal substantially expands the number of identifiable works beyond those previously known from the Art Institute records. Among the

paintings documented in 1968 were Jean-Louis Tocqué's *Countess de Beauregard*; Sir Thomas Lawrence's *Portrait of Countess Tankerville*; Hyacinthe Rigaud's *Countess de Bethune*; Franz Richard Unterberger's *Canal St. Bernardo—Venice*; Félix Ziem's *Venice: In Early Morning Light*; Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Portrait of Miss Wynward*; George Romney's *Portrait of Melesina Chenevix—Mrs. French*; John Hoppner's *Mrs. Trassart*; Marie Dieterle's *Cattle and Sheep in Hilly Landscape*; Rosa Bonheur's *Ram and Sheep at Pool, in Open Landscape*; Narcisse Diaz de la Peña's *Two Girls with Dog in Landscape*; and Corot's *Le Cavalier*. Works by Jules Dupré, Charles-François Daubigny, Théodore Rousseau, Constant Troyon and other European artists further demonstrate the breadth of the collection documented in 1968.

The appraisal also demonstrates that paintings were only part of the collection. In addition to the Duchoiselle canoe bronze, it records a pair of bronze and marble figures, *Printemps* and *L'été*, by Victor Armand François Carrier-Belleuse, valued together at \$5,000, and Alfred Dubucand's *Arab Boy beside Horse*. A pair of French Empire five-light candelabra was also recorded.

The final numbered object, #161, was a large Sèvres porcelain covered urn approximately thirty-eight inches high, decorated with woodland scenes and figures, gros bleu coloring, gold relief and ormolu mounts. The appraisal dated it to about 1810 and assigned an insurable value of \$2,000. Its inclusion is another reminder that paintings alone never represented the full scope of the Gates holdings.

Art Throughout St. Charles

Perhaps the most revealing aspect of the 1968 appraisal is the number of locations in which the collection was displayed. These were not objects locked away in a single private gallery. By then paintings and sculpture had become part of family residences and the public landscape of St. Charles.

At Hotel Baker, the appraisal records Angelo Asti's *Study of Young Woman with Long Tresses*, Benjamin Vautier's *The Artist's Model*, and Rudolph Epp's *Peace and Plenty*. Other works were located in additional family residences. At the Municipal Building was Charles Olivier de Penne's enormous *Hunting Scene: Stag and Hounds*, measuring approximately sixty-six by ninety inches, along with Waagen's large bronze *The Lion Quarry*.

The State Bank of St. Charles displayed one of the most important paintings associated with the collection, Jan Steen's *Boors Merrymaking*. Its separate 1968

valuation of \$200,000 placed it in an entirely different category from most of the other works recorded in the appraisal. Its history also reaches backward into the earlier Gates and Art Institute records, making it another important bridge between the original collection and its later presence in St. Charles.

Additional paintings decorated Dellora Norris's office in the Arcada Building. Together, these locations demonstrate how thoroughly the art had become integrated into everyday family and community surroundings. A painting might have been known to one generation as an important Gates work, while to another it could simply become the familiar painting at the bank, City Hall, Hotel Baker or Mrs. Norris's office.

That familiarity would eventually contribute to another part of the mystery.

When the Trail Disappears

The 1968 appraisal provides an unusually precise historical checkpoint by telling us where individual works were located at that moment. Another appraisal of bronze works in 1980 along with Lester's handwritten notes supplement the first appraisal. What happened to some of them afterward is considerably less clear.

No record has yet been located documenting the eventual return of the works displayed at the State Bank or Municipal Building to the Norris family. John R. Collins has no recollection of those works returning to the family. The paintings once displayed in Dellora Norris's Arcada Building office have been a short-term display and returned home to the family.

Following the deaths of Lester and Dellora Norris, the personal connection between some publicly displayed works and the family may simply have faded from institutional memory. The paintings could have been returned to a family representative without surviving documentation, placed in storage, transferred during remodeling or organizational changes, or moved elsewhere under circumstances no longer remembered. Without evidence, it would be improper to go further. What can presently be established is that works known to have existed at these locations can no longer be accounted for.

This problem is not unique to St. Charles. Attempts to trace other portions of the Gates's collection through institutions in Minneapolis and Connecticut have encountered missing or unavailable century-old records. Even surviving museum records do not always provide an immediate answer. The continuing investigation

has repeatedly demonstrated how easily the physical location of an artwork and the records establishing its identity can become separated.

The distinction between a **lost artwork and lost provenance** is important. A painting does not have to be destroyed to become lost to history. It may remain in a storage room, private home, museum collection or office while the information identifying its former owner disappears. Once the people who knew its history are gone, a significant work can remain physically intact while its connection to the Gates family vanishes.

The 1968 appraisal therefore does much more than establish values. For some objects it provides the last presently known location; for others it reconnects works with photographs taken decades earlier. Still others appear for the first time and open entirely new avenues of investigation. Its 161 numbered entries provide a rare opportunity to compare what survived in 1968 with what had been documented during the Gates era and what can still be located today.

It also changes the nature of this investigation. The question is no longer simply, **“What did John and Dellora Gates collect?”** It becomes, **“Which of these works can be traced back to them, where did those works travel, and where are they now?”**

Some answers have emerged. Others remain hidden in museum archives, family records, old photographs, auction catalogs, storage rooms and perhaps even in plain sight under another name. The 1968 appraisal does not solve the mystery of the Gates Art Collection; it simply whets the appetite to discover more.

By the time of the 1968 appraisal, over eighty years had passed since Gates began assembling his collection, and much of its original identity had already become obscured by inheritance, relocation and changing locations. **Now, more than 110 years after the Gates era, a mystery that has been developing for more than seventy years is being uncovered piece by piece.** Historic photographs are being matched with surviving objects, museum records with family documents, appraisal entries with auction records, and unidentified works with clues that sometimes surface decades later.

What follows is not simply a catalog of paintings and sculpture, but the reconstruction of a remarkable collection whose complete history was never recorded and whose pieces have been scattered for more than a century.

CHAPTER 7

THE COLLECTION BEYOND THE 1968 APPRAISAL

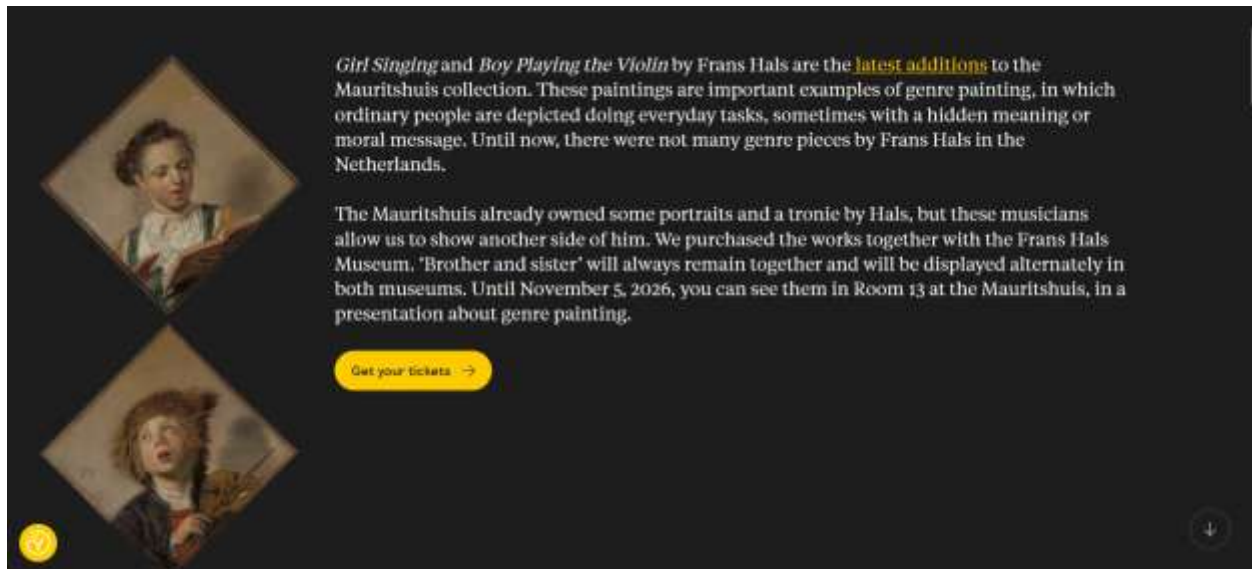
We now turn to additional works that can be documented outside the 1968 appraisal, beginning with those found in St. Charles.

The two Franz Hals paintings, *Singing Boy with Violin* and *Singing Girl* were noted as still on loan to the Art Institute of Chicago but were appraised at an insured value of \$25,000 each. I would venture that Mrs. Norris may have expressed a desire to return these pieces home and needed a valuation. There is a hand-written note stating that the art was cleaned by **Pomerantz** and placed in the new residence in April, 1972. There is an extended provenance history noted in the appraisal copy attached in the appendix.



To this point in history, we know that John Gates obtained these paintings from Charles T. Yerkes sometime around 1895. Then inherited by Mrs. Gates in 1911 and then Dellora Angell Norris in 1918, then loaned to the Art Institute of Chicago in the name of Robert F. Angell in 1923, while his daughter retained ownership. Then after 49 years at the Art Institute, the paintings returned to St. Charles. When Mrs. Norris passed in 1979, those paintings transferred to Lester Norris, who passed in 1981 and that is where the trail of provenance goes cold. We have no record of inheritance after Lester.

Now let's share the power of searching the internet:



*The Mauritshuis in The Hague and the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem have together purchased two portraits of children painted by Frans Hals (1583-1666) at an auction in New York. **The works cost 7.8 million dollars**, or 6.85 million euros. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's National Purchase Fund paid up to 40 percent of that amount, 2.74 million euros.*

*PROVENANCE AS NOTED AT MAURITSHUIS: Possibly identical to the paintings mentioned in the inventory of Sibout Simonsz van Caerdecamp and Sara Henricx Tuijts, Leiden, 1644 (Erfgoed Leiden, inv. 0506, no. 785, deed no. 13: 'twee viercante conterfeytsels van de kinderen van Hals tot Haerlem gedaen door deselve'); Lawrie & Co. Gallery, London, c.1893; Charles Tyson Yerkes Jr, Chicago/New York, c.1893-1910; his sale, New York (American Art Association), 7 April 1910 (Lugt 68496), nos. 121-122 (for 32,200 dollars to Edward Brandus Gallery, New York); **John Warne Gates and his wife, Dellora Baker Gates, New York, c.1910-1911 until 1918; by inheritance to her brother, Edward John Baker, and her sister's daughter, Dellora Frances Angell Norris and her husband, Lester J. Norris, Saint Charles, Illinois; by inheritance in the Angell-Norris collection, Chicago; sale, New York (Christie's), 13 January 1987, no. 141 ('from a private collection', to Hornstein); Renata and Michal Hornstein, Montreal, 1987-1999; Jordan and Thomas A. Saunders III, 1999-2025 (on long term loan to Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond [inv. nos. L2020.6.14 and L2020.6.15]); their sale, New York (Sotheby's), 21 May 2025, no. 14; acquired jointly by the Mauritshuis and the Frans Hals Museum with the support of the Rembrandt Association, the Nationaal Aankoopfonds of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Mondriaan Fund, the VriendenLoterij, the Turing***

Foundation, the Vereniging Vrienden van het Frans Hals Museum, City of Haarlem and private individuals, 2025

Frans Hals is known for his portraits of everyday people. There are few examples of this type of work in Dutch museums, making the acquisition of Singing Girl and Violin-Playing Boy an important addition to the Dutch public art collection, the museums said.



As currently framed and displayed at the Mauritshuis in The Hague

Art in Descendants' Homes

We have identified several paintings that, for reasons unknown, were not included in the 1968 appraisal. The family also retains a number of paintings of E. J. Baker's horses that were removed from the Hotel Baker prior to its transfer to the Lutheran organization in 1968.

Their survival outside the appraisal is important. It demonstrates that the 1968 document, valuable as it is, cannot be regarded as a complete inventory of the Gates, Angell, Norris and Baker collections. By that date, works had already been dispersed among family members and other locations throughout St. Charles.

Paintings No. 66 and No. 72 in the appraisal, both attributed to **Charles-Émile Jacque**, were described respectively as *Sheep in Woodland Setting* and *Shepherdess and Dog with Sheep Entering the Sheepfold*. Neither description appears to correspond with the Jacque painting shown here.

Charles-Émile Jacque



This rural landscape, depicting a barn surrounded by livestock and poultry, is another painting presently preserved in a descendant's home.

*This painting by Charles-Émile Jacque was left to Joanne Norris Collins and remains with the family in St. Charles. Although unquestionably part of the art that descended through the family, it apparently escaped inclusion in the 1968 appraisal. One possible explanation is that it had already been given to a family member before the appraisal was prepared.

This is not an isolated example.

As additional works have been located in descendants' homes, it has become increasingly apparent that some objects simply fell outside the scope of the appraisal. They may already have been gifted; they may have been displayed at locations overlooked by the appraisers; or they may not have been considered sufficiently valuable to warrant individual appraisal for insurance purposes.

Whatever the explanation, their survival helps establish that considerably more Gates/Norris art remained in St. Charles than the appraisal alone would suggest.

John Bond Francisco

Artist: John Bond Francisco (1863–1931)

Signature: *J. Bond Francisco*

Another painting preserved in a descendant's home is this work signed by American artist **John Bond Francisco**. It likewise has not been matched with an entry in the 1968 appraisal.

Its presence in the family collection provides another example of a work whose provenance through the family is more readily demonstrated by its physical survival than by the written inventory.

Woman with Child



Title/description: *Woman with Child*

Signature: *Fry*, lower right

Possible attribution: Roger Fry (1866–1934)

The painting is signed “**Fry**” at the lower right. Its style has suggested the possibility of an attribution to British artist and critic **Roger Fry**, but at present there is insufficient documentary evidence to make that identification definitive.

For purposes of this study, it is therefore recorded as **signed “Fry,” possible attribution to Roger Fry**.



“Self Confidence” is a great example of Defregger’s work, where he displays his great technical skill and the power of giving reality to his subject. One feels the self-confidence of the girl as she stands before her superiors.

This is another piece held in the St Charles family but not inventoried.



The Hunter's Tale by Max Gaiser
Still with the family in St Charles

Previously displayed at the Arcada Theatre, “The Hunter’s Tale” remains with the family in St. Charles. The September 10, 1931 St. Charles Chronicle described it as “an excellent and important example of Max Gaiser,” noting that his characters were especially well depicted and that the painting represented the artist at his best.

That distinction is important. One purpose of this project is not simply to assign names to objects, but to document what can actually be established and to distinguish those findings from possibilities that remain to be researched.

THE BAKER HORSE PAINTINGS

The surviving paintings of **E. J. Baker's horses** provide yet another category of art that remained partially outside the 1968 appraisal.

Baker Biography published in the Harness Racing Museum 1994 book, *The Immortals*:

*Born in St. Charles, Illinois in 1868, **Edward Baker** inherited most of the estate of his wealthy brother-in-law, John W. Gates in 1918. A patron of harness horses who owned more champions than any of his contemporaries, **Baker** became a collector of 2:00 horses headed by the champion Greyhound 1:55 1/4, Winnipeg 1:57 3/4, Her Ladyship, 1:56 3/4, Volo Song, 1:57 3/4, Doctor Spencer, 1:59 1/2, and Algiers 1:58 4/5. **Colonel Baker's** main farm was in St. Charles. When he retired from the sport in 1947, he sold everything except the farm and Greyhound, who was retired there. **Colonel Baker** died in 1959 in St. Charles at the age of ninety. Two other horses not listed here; Cardinal Prince, 2:00 and Hal Dale 2:02 1/4*



Greyhound World Record Holder 1:55 1/4



E.J. Baker Stables Champions
Center Volo Song

Clockwise from Greyhound top right, Algiers, Pearl Harbor, Kings Council



Hal Dale

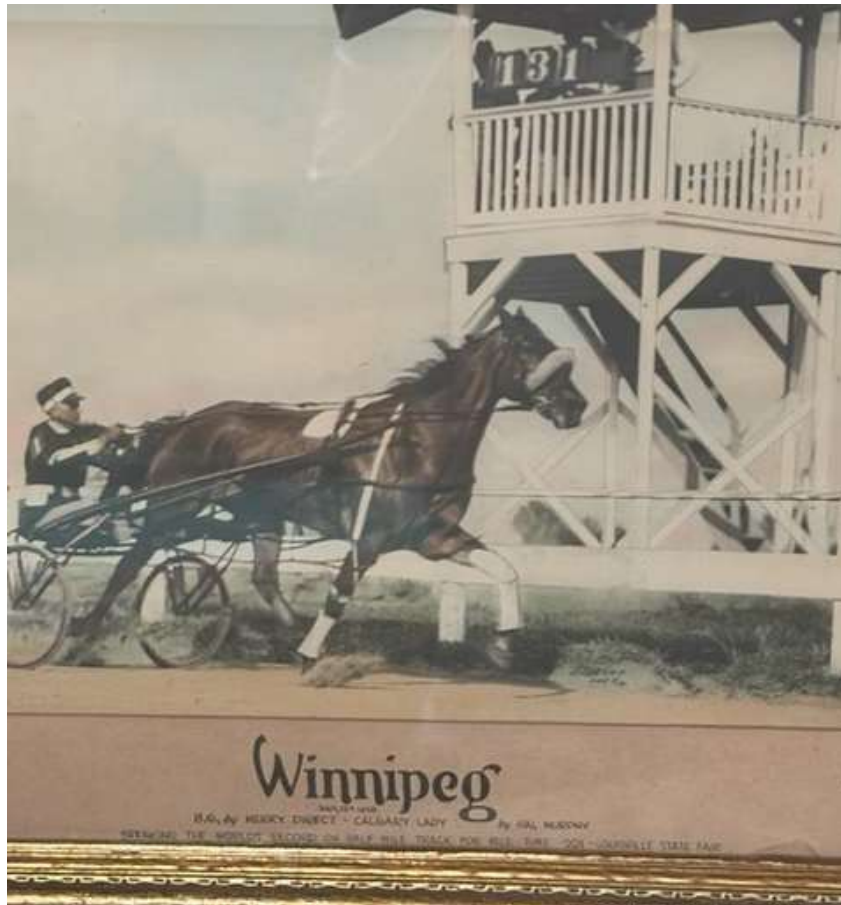


Photo of Winnipeg breaking the world's record half mile at Louisville State Fair

Several paintings of Baker's horses are presently preserved in a descendant's home. These works have an especially interesting history because they connect the family collection with another important St. Charles repository of Gates/Norris/Baker art—the **Hotel Baker**.

The family recalls that these horse paintings were removed from the hotel before ownership passed from the Norris family to the Lutheran organization. Their removal may well account for their survival within the family today.

They also provide an appropriate bridge to a much larger question raised by this research.

The Gates/Norris works known to have been displayed in St. Charles were not confined to private residences. Paintings and sculpture were placed in the Hotel Baker, the public library, the Baker Memorial building and other family-associated locations. Some were subsequently returned to the family. Others remained in

those institutions, were sold, were transferred elsewhere, or simply disappeared from the documentary record.

The 1968 appraisal captures only a moment in that much larger movement of objects.

What survives today—in descendants' homes as well as in St. Charles institutions—allows portions of that history to be reconstructed.



Current photos in the Hotel Baker

THE ST. CHARLES PUBLIC LIBRARY

The largest public repository of Gates/Norris art in St. Charles is the St. Charles Public Library, where two paintings and five sculptures remain today.

We already touched on the bronze shown to be in Bakers' penthouse and we have this photograph which was included with the appraisal paperwork but none of these were included for the insurance values, probably because they were already in the hands of the St Charles Library or elsewhere. There was another appraisal after Mrs. Norris' demise in 1979 specifically for bronze statues, by Frank Nejd1 in February 1980.



#1 Moreau, #4 Hottot, #3 Carpeaux, #7 Raggi, #6 Dumaige, #2 M'Signoret

There are six figures in the photo, but #5 Female Nude by Campagne is missing, we will find this later in the library.

We also have Lester Norris' handwritten notes and these have been verified.

HANZEL GALLERIES • INC

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February 11, 1980

Mr. Frank Nejd1
Continental Illinois Bank & Trust Co.
30 North La Salle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

TRUSTEE SERV.

FEB 13 1980

Re: The Estate of Dellora Norris

Dear Mr. Nejd1:

Listed herewith is our inventory and valuation of the bronze statues in the above Estate located at 7th and Indiana, St. Charles, Illinois.

NOTE: All the following listed bronzes are late XIXth Century.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Bronze Statue by Math Moreau, Winged Male Figure Holding a Female Figure with Twig in Her Hand, Height 34 inches | \$1,500.00 |
| 2. Bronze Female Figure by M'Signoret Ledieu, Inscription on Plaque at Base Reads "Nymphe De Diane", Height 34 inches | 1,500.00 |
| 3. Bronze Figure by Carpeaux, Dancing Girl with Tambourine, a Child at Base, Height 40 inches | 2,000.00 |
| 4. Bronze Figure of an Oriental Dancing Girl by L. Hottot, Height 31 inches | 1,000.00 |
| 5. Bronze Female Nude Figure by Campagno, Height 34 inches | 1,500.00 |
| 6. Bronze Male Figure Holding a Chair and Hat, by H. Dumaige, Height 34 inches | 1,500.00 |
| 7. Bronze Statue of a Statesman by M. Raggi, Height 30 inches | 750.00 |

Very truly yours,

HANZEL GALLERIES, INC.

William E. Hanzel

WEH:d

BRONZES

- 1 MAN & WOMAN
HE HAS WINGS
- 2 FEMALE WITH
BOW
M. SIGNORET
SERTICUON
SCULPTURE
PLAQUE { NYMPHE
DE DIANE
PARI SIGNORET
L'EDICULE
RECOMPENSEE
AU SALON

- 4 BRONZE
DANCING CHILD
WITH TAMBOURIN
ON EBONY STAND
40" HIGH WITH
STAND

- 5 NUDE FIGURE
PHYNE
DRENT SES. -
JUGES.

30" HIGH PER.
CAMPAIGN
(SCULPTURE)

STATE BANK
SOLDIER RETURNING
BY 41" X 51"
DEFERGER

TAVERN SCENE
MAN DRAWING BEER
"PEACE & PLenty"
BY RUDOLPH EFF
3 1/2' X 5'

- 6 BRONZE
MAN HOLD CHAIR
AND HAT.
DEPARTING
H. DUMAIGE
34" HIGH

- 7 BRONZE MAN
POINTING WITH
SCROLL IN HAND
M. ROGGI, S.R.
LONDON

GREEN MARBLE
STAND

NO. COUNTES
28. 130740NR
CASPER RIGAUD
1661-1703

More photographs from the small spiral notebook that accompanied Hanzel's 1980 appraisal:



Here is current inventory of bronzes at the St Charles Public Library:



Mathurin Moreau
French, b.1904 d.2001
Allegorical Figure of Winged Victory Holding Aloft Peace
1875
Bronze, sculpture

Donated by Dellora Norris Estate, 2001

#1 Labeled as *Allegorical Figure of Winged Victory Holding Aloft Peace* by Mathurin Moreau (1904-2001)



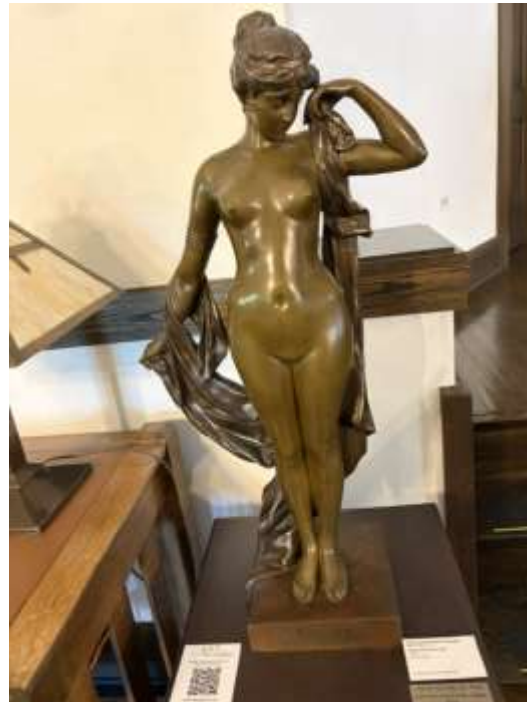
#2 *Nymphe de Diane*
by Lucienne Signoret-Ledieu (1858-1904)



#3 *Le Genie de la Danse (Allegory of Dance)* 1869
Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827-1875)



#4 *Oriental Dancing Girl* by Louis Hottot (1834-1905)
Displayed in the library's 2nd Floor Carnegie Room



#5 "*Phryne Devante Ses Juges*" 1890's
by Pierre Etienne Daniel Campagne (1851-1914)
Displayed in the Carnegie Room, St. Charles Library

Lester gave us the name of the artist for #6 “**Man holding and hat, debating**”, **H. Dumaige in his handwritten notes.**

This led us to Etienne Henri Dumaige and a French sculptor, 1830-1888. The sculpture is titled “*Camille Desmoulins*” a prominent figure of the French Revolution. Sold at 2022 auction for \$30,841.

The last, was identified by locals as a bronze of *Daniel Webster by M. Roggi* and was said to reside in the #303 School District Office and was last seen in the Technology Mobile Unit many years ago with multiple remodels transpiring.

The Unidentified Hotel Baker Sculptures

Two additional sculptures deserve mention here. The first is the bronze figure previously shown in E. J. Baker’s penthouse on page 35. A second appears in the period photograph of the Hotel Baker lobby reproduced on page 65, where a large sculptural figure is displayed prominently in the hotel’s public interior. Neither the subject nor the sculptor of either piece has yet been identified.

Their presence is nevertheless significant. The 1928 *St. Charles Chronicle* account of the hotel’s opening reported that two bronze statuettes had already been placed in the lounge and that “some fine marble busts and other rare pieces” were also expected to be added. The surviving photographs therefore provide visual evidence that sculpture, as well as paintings, formed an important part of the hotel’s display of the Norris collection.

Later in this study we will encounter a fine marble statue in the Norris Mausoleum, a work that appears to have held particular significance for Dellora Norris. Whether it, or any of the unidentified Hotel Baker sculptures, had previously been displayed at the hotel remains an intriguing possibility, but no documentation has yet been found to establish that connection.

For now, these pieces remain part of the continuing reconstruction of the Gates-Norris collection—documented in historic photographs, but still awaiting positive identification.

Dellora Norris also donated an oil painting to be displayed above the fireplace in the old Carnegie portion of the St Charles Public Library;



Arthur John Eisley – *I Sent a Letter to My Love* – 1902

This painting is displayed above an original Carnegie fireplace and flanked by two bronze statues.

A Painting from Hotel Baker?

In conversation with Diana Brown, former director of the St. Charles Public Library, she recalled that the library purchased a painting in late 2013 from an individual who had possibly obtained it from Hotel Baker. Brown remembered the subject as a mother and child and recalled the painting hanging in the children's wing of the library.

The library painting itself has not yet been located, and its acquisition records are no longer available. Its identity therefore remains unresolved.

THE BAKER COMMUNITY CENTER

A second important group of surviving works can be found at the Baker Community Center, originally dedicated by E. J. Baker and his wife, Harriet, in memory of their son as the **Henry Rockwell Baker Memorial Building**.



Two generations of the Baker family are represented in these three portraits by artist Paul Trebilcock. At center is Henry Rockwell Baker, for whom the building was dedicated, portrayed in his football uniform about 1924. His father, Col. Edward J. Baker, was painted about 1938, and his mother, Harriet Baker, in 1941.

Harriet Baker's portrait was installed above the fireplace during a dedication ceremony on November 30, 1941. Col. Baker's life-size portrait depicts him with his white collie, Major, a gift from master horseman Sep Palin, trainer and driver for E. J. Baker's Hotel Baker Stables.

THE GATES PORTRAITS

The Baker Community Center also became home to portraits of the Gates family. As discussed earlier, one of the two known copies of Solomon J. Solomon's

portrait of John W. Gates hung in the building for many years. The other remains at the Gates Memorial Library in Port Arthur, Texas. The Baker copy was removed about 1971 and its present whereabouts remain unknown.

Its disappearance is mentioned again here primarily because the Baker Community Center has now provided a striking contrast to that loss—the **rediscovery of a portrait of Charles Gates**, which has recently returned to public view in the building.



John W. Gates — Solomon J. Solomon's portraits, including the surviving example at Gates Memorial Library in Port Arthur and the other known copy that was displayed in 1929 at the Baker Community Center before being removed about 1971, after which its whereabouts became unknown.

THE GATES FAMILY PORTRAITS

At the Gates Memorial Library in Port Arthur, Texas, the large Solomon portrait of John W. Gates is flanked by portraits of his wife, Dellora, and their son, Charles. The artists responsible for these two paintings have not yet been identified, and research with museum curators is continuing. Dellora's portrait is particularly intriguing, as it may prove to be the only known oil portrait of her. The portrait of Charles adds another image to the growing number of paintings of him that have surfaced during this research.

Identifying the artists may eventually provide another important link within the Gates portrait collection. Other surviving portraits are now associated with Solomon and Henry Franklin Waltman, while additional works remain unattributed. Whether the two Port Arthur portraits connect with either of these artists—or introduce another artist commissioned by the Gates family—remains an open question.



John W. Gates, center, flanked by portraits of his wife, Dellora, and their son, Charles, at the Gates Memorial Library in Port Arthur. Research into the artists responsible for the two smaller portraits is continuing.

John W. Gates and “Blondie” — Henry ‘Harry’ Franklin Waltman (1871-1951)

Another important Gates portrait was rediscovered by Tom Anerson of the St Charles History Museum in Port Arthur in April 2026. Painted by Henry Waltman, it depicts John W. Gates seated with his Boston Bull Terrier, Blondie. The portrait

survives at the historic **Pompeian Villa**, the former Port Arthur residence of Gates's longtime business associate, **Isaac Ellwood**.

The painting's presence there is no longer simply a matter of conjecture. Tom Neal, Director of the Museum of the Gulf Coast, confirmed that furnishings and other objects from the Gates mansion in Port Arthur were moved to and preserved at the Pompeian Villa. Among them are **this portrait and John W. Gates's desk**, both of which remain there today.

The survival of the painting provides another remarkable example of the Gates collection hiding in plain sight. Although the Gates mansion disappeared, at least some of its contents did not. They were preserved nearby, their connection to the original residence awaiting rediscovery more than a century later.



THE REDISCOVERED PORTRAIT OF CHARLES GATES

The search to reconstruct the Gates art collection has increasingly become intertwined with the discovery of additional commissioned portraits and busts of both John W. Gates and his son, Charles.

While conducting research with John Collins at his home, he made a point of showing me the crated Solomon portrait of Charles Gates. Nearby, however, was something entirely unexpected. Leaning against its frame was a life-size oil portrait of Charles that had remained in the family collection.

We both agreed that the painting deserved to be preserved and returned to public view. John later sent me a remarkable photograph showing the portrait—taller than the people carrying it—as it was being loaded for transport to a framing service. It has since been placed on display in the **Baker Community Center**.



Charles Gilbert Gates in the familiar photograph, left, a copy of which is displayed at the Museum of the Gulf Coast in Port Arthur, and the recently rediscovered life-size oil portrait, right. The close correspondence suggests that the photograph served as the artist's source, although the painter substantially expanded the background and composition. Artist presently unknown. Courtesy John R. Collins.

The photograph is a familiar image of Charles Gates and has circulated for years, often with little context. The painting, however, is a remarkable survivor. Preserved within the family for more than a century, its significance has only recently been recognized during this continuing examination of the Gates-Norris art collection.

The discovery might have stood alone as an important addition to the known Gates portraiture. **Instead, it opened another door. Other members of the family began bringing forward additional portraits of Charles—revealing that considerably more of his likeness had survived than our earlier research had suggested.**



Henry “Harry” Franklin Waltman (1871-1951)

Signature in upper right corner appears to be Waltman with 1910 date, which matches his signature style and inclusion of the year. Approximately 40” tall based on height of concrete blocks. **This painting is by the same artist as the JW Gates painting now in the Pompeian Villa.**

This painting is in the possession of a Norris family member.

ANOTHER SURVIVING PORTRAIT OF CHARLES GATES

Still another portrait of Charles Gilbert Gates survives in the possession of a Norris family member. Unlike the 1910 portrait apparently signed by Henry Franklin Waltman, no artist has yet been identified for this work.



Charles Gilbert Gates. Artist and date presently unidentified. Collection of a Norris family member.

A KOPPAY PORTRAIT OF JOHN W. GATES

Another important Gates portrait has surfaced through the auction record. This large oil on canvas by **Jozsef Arpad Koppay (1859–1927)** measures approximately 55 by 35½ inches and is signed by the artist. Gates is presented in an unusually imposing manner, standing in a fur coat and holding a pair of eyeglasses in his right hand.



Jozsef Arpad Koppay, portrait of John W. Gates, oil on canvas, approximately 55 × 35½ inches, signed. Two views of the same portrait show both its substantial original frame and details of Gates's fur coat and the eyeglasses held in his right hand.

The painting's later provenance raises an intriguing, but as yet unanswered, question. When offered at auction in 2021 from the collection of a Foxborough, Massachusetts gentleman, its provenance stated that it had previously been sold at a Winter Associates auction in 2013 “to benefit a New England Museum” or institution.

THE GATES PORTRAITS — A TRAIL OF DUPLICATION AND DISCOVERY

We have followed a zigzag trail of portraits of both John W. Gates and Charles Gilbert Gates, some preserved within the family, others appearing in museums, public buildings, auction records, and even family basements. Gradually, a pattern has emerged.

Several of these portraits appear to have originated with **Dellora Baker Gates**, who commissioned likenesses of her husband and son after their deaths, often working from existing photographs. The surviving 1915 letter from **Solomon J. Solomon** to Mrs. Gates provides particularly valuable documentation. It confirms his work on portraits of both John and Charles and, together with surviving examples, demonstrates that Dellora sometimes commissioned more than one version of a family portrait.

Our search has now expanded beyond Solomon. At least two additional Gates family portraits have been identified with **Henry Franklin Waltman**, a New York-based artist: the portrait of John W. Gates with his Boston Bull Terrier, Blondie, now at the Pompeian Villa in Port Arthur, and the signed 1910 portrait of Charles Gates that remains with a Norris descendant. The appearance of Waltman portraits alongside those by Solomon suggests that Dellora and the Gates family employed more than one artist to preserve family likenesses.

The imposing portrait of John W. Gates in a fur coat by **József Árpád Koppay** presents a different problem. At present, no documentation has been found establishing when or by whom it was commissioned, or even proving that it originally belonged to the Gates family. Its later auction provenance indicates that it had previously been sold to benefit a New England museum or institution. That circumstance is intriguing because Florence Hopwood Gates Judd later established strong ties to New Britain, Connecticut, where she purchased an office building and named it the **Gates Building** in honor of her former father-in-law, whom she continued to admire. It is tempting to wonder whether the Koppay portrait somehow followed the Judd branch of the family to New England, but without additional documentation, that possibility must remain just that—a possibility.

TRACING THE SCULPTURAL LEGACY OF JOHN WARNE GATES

From Port Arthur to Woodlawn, to the McKinley Memorial, back to St. Charles—and ultimately to Port Arthur once again.

The investigation into the sculptural legacy of John Warne Gates began in Port Arthur, Texas, the city whose development became closely intertwined with his later industrial career.

In the plaza of the Gates Memorial Library stand bronze busts honoring two men instrumental in the city's history: John W. Gates and, immediately behind him, Arthur E. Stilwell, founder of Port Arthur. Each bust rests upon its own granite pedestal, creating a paired memorial to two men whose very different roles helped shape the city.



Bronze bust of John W. Gates in the plaza of the Gates Memorial Library, Port Arthur, Texas. Artist; Douglas Clark

This Port Arthur memorial provided the starting point for what became a much broader search. Other sculptural representations of Gates would lead to the family mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery in New York, the McKinley Birthplace Memorial in Ohio, and eventually back to St. Charles. What initially appeared to be a limited group of memorial works would ultimately reveal a considerably broader sculptural legacy—and, unexpectedly, lead the investigation back to Port Arthur once again.

The search for Gates' art then led me to his Mausoleum in Woodlawn Cemetery, New York. He had asked to be interred 'close to the action' and Mrs. Gates started the project shortly after his passing in 1911. Little did she expect her son to pass before the mausoleum was completed. Both father and son were interred there after 1914.



From Mausoleums.com: *“The massive Gates mausoleum is executed in a Classical Revival style with two fluted Ionic columns on the front and sides with a plain entablature and slightly gabled pediment. The mausoleum features a door crafted by **Robert Ingersoll Aitken (1878-1949)** in 1914 depicting a mourning woman draped in cloth.”*



From Gravelyspeaking.com: *The massive bronze door into the mausoleum's interior was created by the famed sculptor, Robert Ingersoll Aitken in 1914. Aitken's most well-known work are the nine sculptures that adorn the pediment on the Supreme Court Building in the U.S. Capital in Washington D.C.*

The mourning figure on the door of the grand mausoleum is described in the book, *Sylvan Cemetery: Architecture Art & Landscape at Woodlawn*, as a “flowing figure of a grieving woman, seen from the rear with drapery slipping down to reveal a long and sinuous form, a play of curved and angular contour lines. Her long fingers speak of the tension between her continuing agony at her loved one's absence, as seen in the clawing motion of her right hand and her need for calm reflection and endurance in the left hand. Her head is bowed and her face hidden from our view signifying the ravages of grief works on the harmony and beauty of the human face.”



*“Inside, the mausoleum features two male portrait busts in marble, a combination altar and sarcophagus, a stone table and two stone chairs. The mausoleum’s interior is crafted largely in pink granite. Centermost is a dark-hued stained-glass window. In a 1932 article in *American Landscape Architect*, the mausoleum is illustrated as the “most impressive in Woodlawn.”*
Text and photo © Douglas Keister”



Close up photos of John Warne Gates and Charles Gilbert Gates provided by Meg Ventrudo, Woodlawn Curator, 2026.

AITKEN, RHIND AND THE McKINLEY CONNECTION

Research into Robert Ingersoll Aitken, sculptor of the monumental bronze entrance door of the Gates family mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery in New York, led to an unexpected discovery. Aitken had also sculpted a bronze bust of John W. Gates displayed at the **National McKinley Birthplace Memorial in Niles, Ohio.**

Gates's presence at the McKinley Memorial was more than recognition of a nationally prominent industrialist. My research revealed direct connections between Gates, the Mahoning Valley and President William McKinley. Gates had been involved in the steel industry in the Niles-Youngstown area and had contributed **\$50,000 to McKinley's 1896 presidential campaign.**

Joseph G. Butler, Jr., Youngstown industrialist and a driving force behind the McKinley Memorial, also knew Gates personally and remembered his involvement with the Republic Iron and Steel Company. Butler recalled Gates seeking his advice about moving the company's offices from Pittsburgh. Butler strongly encouraged the move, believing that the company's officers should live in Youngstown and become part of the community in which its major operations were located.

Butler later wrote of Gates:

"John W. Gates is entitled to recognition as a national character in more ways than one, but particularly as being one of the pioneers in the steel business."

His recollections also preserved a more personal glimpse of Gates. Butler remembered attending the races in Chicago with him when Gates pointed to a rather ordinary-looking horse and advised Butler to bet on it. Butler declined. The horse won, and it was something always remembered by Butler.

"Youngstown is certainly indebted to Mr. Gates for the part he played in building up its industries and the city itself. No one could help liking him, and I am sure he had a kind regard for me."

These industrial, political and personal connections help explain why Gates was among the prominent industrialists and financiers selected for sculptural recognition at McKinley's birthplace.



John W. Gates, bronze bust by Robert Ingersoll Aitken, National McKinley Birthplace Memorial, Niles, Ohio. Gates's connections to the region included his involvement in the Mahoning Valley steel industry and his \$50,000 contribution to William McKinley's 1896 presidential campaign.



The National McKinley Birthplace Memorial itself is monumental in scale, measuring approximately 232 by 136 feet. Two lateral wings house the McKinley Memorial Library and the museum and auditorium, while the central Court of Honor is supported by twenty-eight imposing columns. At its center stands the heroic figure of William McKinley sculpted by **John Massey Rhind**.

BRINGING GATES HOME TO ST. CHARLES

It was around this point in my research that descendants of the Norris family became aware of my work on John W. Gates and invited me to address the family at their annual Norris Family Foundation meeting in June, 2025.

As I brought my presentation to a close, I shared something that had increasingly troubled me during my research. Despite Gates's enormous importance to the history of St. Charles, there was virtually no public recognition of him in the community.

The irony was difficult to overlook. The fortune accumulated by John W. Gates ultimately passed through his family to the Baker and Norris families, whose extraordinary philanthropy has benefited St. Charles for more than a century. Their generosity can be seen throughout the community.



A statue of **Col. Edward J. Baker** stands prominently in front of the Hotel Baker. A statue of **Dellora A. Norris** stands before the St. Charles Municipal Building, itself made possible through family philanthropy. **Yet nowhere in the city was there even a historical marker recognizing John Warne Gates and the fortune that had helped make so much of that philanthropy possible.**

I suggested to the family that perhaps it was time to change that.

What I envisioned initially was a grassroots effort to place a bronze likeness of Gates somewhere in St. Charles—a permanent public acknowledgment of a man whose legacy had touched the community in ways few residents today realized.

The response from the Norris descendants was immediate and enthusiastic. Family members began making contributions to provide the financial foundation for the project.

What began as a suggestion at a family meeting was becoming a reality. There was also a location that seemed particularly appropriate.

The former Texaco service station where I had once operated my business had long since become the **St. Charles History Museum**. Considering Gates's role in the early history of the Texas Company—later Texaco—the connection was almost too appropriate to have planned.

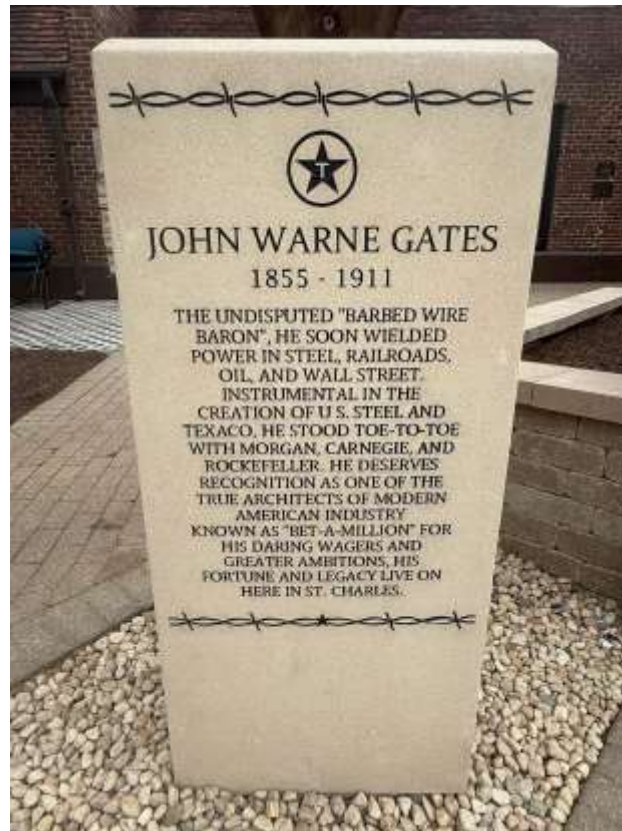
The property where I had once sold Texaco gasoline would become the place where **John W. Gates would finally receive permanent public recognition in his hometown.**



Linda and Archie Bentz posing before what had been their Texaco Service Station



The newly installed pumps that the Tom S. Anderson family donated





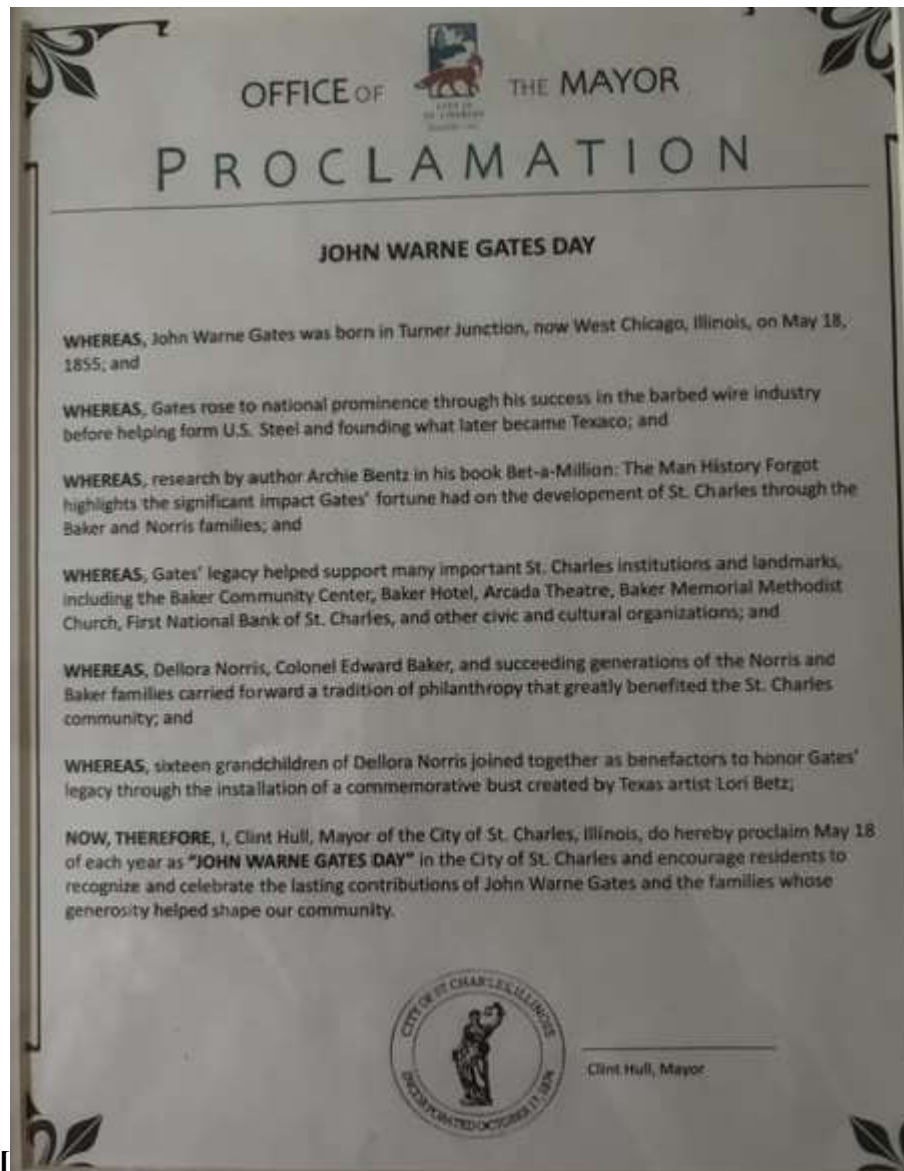
Author Archie Bentz addresses those gathered for the dedication of the John Warne Gates Memorial, May 17, 2026. The restored Fire-Chief gasoline pump behind the speaker recalls the building's former life as a Texaco service station and provides an appropriate link to Gates's role in the creation of the Texas Company.

The occasion brought an unexpected personal honor as well. During the ceremony, museum board member **Tom S. Anderson publicly declared May 17, 2026, “Archie Bentz Day,”** recognizing my efforts to research, preserve and restore public awareness of John W. Gates and his connection to St. Charles.

But the recognition was intended to extend well beyond the dedication itself.

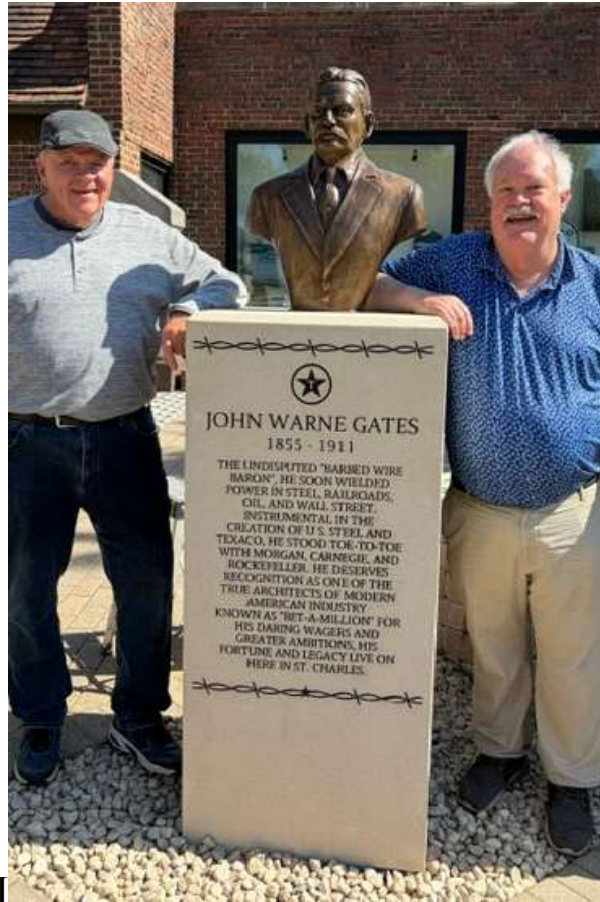
The St. Charles City Council issued a formal proclamation establishing May 18—John Warne Gates's birthday—as “Gates Day,” to be observed annually in St. Charles. The date was particularly meaningful. Gates had been born on May 18, 1855, and Port Arthur, Texas, had once celebrated its own Gates Day in recognition of the man whose industrial and philanthropic legacy had so profoundly affected that community.

More than a century later, the tradition had been renewed—this time in Gates's Illinois hometown.



The City of St. Charles formally proclaimed May 18, the birthday of John Warne Gates, as Gates Day, establishing an annual observance of his life and legacy.

Among those participating in the dedication was **John R. Collins, a fourth-generation Gates heir and Norris family representative**, whose involvement provided a direct connection between the newly dedicated memorial and the family whose history it commemorates.



Author Archie Bentz and fourth-generation Gates heir John R. Collins with the newly installed John Warne Gates Memorial. Artist: Lori Betz

There was a personal circularity to the occasion that I could never have anticipated when I began researching John W. Gates. A property on which I had once operated a Texaco service station had become the community's history museum. The company whose gasoline I had once sold traced its beginnings to an enterprise Gates had helped create. Now his bronze likeness stood on that same property, permanently restoring him to the public history of his hometown.

The dedication accomplished more than the placement of a monument. **Gates had been given a permanent place in the city, while Gates Day ensured that his name and legacy would be recalled each year on his birthday.**

After more than a century, **John Warne Gates had finally come home to St. Charles—and this time, his story was meant to remain.**

ONE MORE GATES BUST — BACK TO PORT ARTHUR

The dedication of the new Gates bronze in St. Charles might have provided a fitting conclusion to my search for sculptural likenesses of John W. Gates. It did not.

My final discovery came almost by accident. After Tom Anderson discovered another portrait of Gates hanging in the historic Pompeian Villa, I contacted **Tom Neal, Director of the Museum of the Gulf Coast**, hoping to learn whether the painting could be traced to the Gates mansion, demolished in 1960.

During our correspondence, Neal surprised me with photographs showing **another bust of John W. Gates in the museum's collection, artist Douglas Clark.**



There was one additional surprise. The museum's Gates display includes the familiar seated photograph of **Charles Gilbert Gates—the same image apparently used as the basis for the large oil portrait recently rediscovered among Norris family possessions.**

The search had begun in Port Arthur, traveled through Woodlawn, Niles and St. Charles—and, quite unexpectedly, **ended back in Port Arthur.**

THE NORRIS MAUSOLEUM: A LEGACY PRESERVED

The final destination in this search for the surviving art of the Gates and Norris families is appropriately one of the most private: the **Norris family mausoleum in St. Charles**.

Unlike the paintings and sculptures that traveled from mansion to mansion, were loaned to museums, displayed in hotels and theaters, sold at auction, or passed quietly through succeeding generations, the works encountered here remain within a place created specifically for permanence.

The Norris Mausoleum and the Preservation of the Gates Legacy

The investigation into the Gates Mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery—its architecture, sculpture, and artistic authorship—ultimately leads to a second, more personal site of commemoration.

In St. Charles, Illinois, the mausoleum of Lester and Dellora Norris presents a continuation of the same artistic language: marble construction, bronze door work, and a carefully composed interior space.

Three artistic elements deserve particular attention. Together they provide an appropriate conclusion to this investigation.

THE PROTECTOR

Before entering the mausoleum story itself, one additional bronze deserves consideration: **The Protector**, a work that survived within the Norris family and provides another tangible connection with the family's sculptural holdings. The history of this piece with the family spans over 130 years.

The sculpture depicts a vigilant dog seated above a sleeping child, symbolizing guardianship and protection. Its continuous presence in St. Charles represents one of the longest-surviving physical links to the Gates estate environment.

Artist: **H. Peyrol** (French) Francios Auguste-Hippolyte Peyrol



This bronze sculpture formerly stood guard at the entrance to the John W. Gates Chicago mansion on South Michigan Avenue. After the sale of the property, the work was relocated to St. Charles, Illinois, where it was protecting the entrance to the North 5th Avenue home. John Collins remembers moving the piece with the help of cemetery workers.

THE NORRIS MAUSOLEUM – Constructed 1972

The Norris Mausoleum presents art in an entirely different context from the residences, museums and public buildings encountered earlier in this study.

The artistic experience begins at the entrance. Dominating the doorway is the remarkable bronze **Tree of Life**, creating an appropriate symbolic threshold between the exterior architecture and the memorial space within.



Norris Mausoleum exterior bronze door
"The Tree of Life"

Seen from inside, the bronze work takes on a different character as it becomes part of a carefully composed interior in which stone, sculpture, bronze and light work together.



The effect is heightened by the mausoleum's **stained-glass**, whose color and transmitted light transform what might otherwise have been a somber enclosure into something considerably more contemplative.

THE STATUE MRS. NORRIS PRESERVED



The sculpture has been identified as the work of **Cesare Lapini** (1848–1893), a recognized Italian sculptor known for his finely executed allegorical and classical figures.

Unlike many works from the Gates collection that passed through institutions, auctions, and private sales, this sculpture appears to have been retained intentionally.

A Deliberate Act of Preservation

The presence of the Lapini sculpture within the Norris mausoleum suggests more than inheritance—it suggests selection.

Dellora A. Norris, as the inheritor and steward of the Gates collection, had access to a wide range of artworks accumulated over decades. The decision to place this particular work within her final resting place reflects a deeply personal act of preservation.

Rather than allowing the entirety of the collection to disperse, she chose to retain at least one work as part of her own memorial.

In doing so, she removed it from the cycles of exhibition, sale, and reattribution that affected so many other works associated with the collection.

The Mausoleum as Museum

In this context, the Norris mausoleum can be understood as a final transformation of the Gates collection.

- The Chicago mansion presented the collection as lived experience
- The Minneapolis mansion approached the concept of a private museum
- The Baker Hotel and Arcada Theater brought the collection into public view
- The Art Institute of Chicago preserved and later dispersed portions of the collection

The Norris mausoleum represents a final stage: It stands not only as a work of art, but as a statement.

When Dellora Angell Norris passed in 1979 and in her will she bequeathed, “To my children, all paintings and pictures owned by me at the time of my death...All such paintings which none of my children may desire to take pursuant to the foregoing provisions I give and bequeath to the Art Institute of Chicago.” A list of certain paintings was left to her husband, Lester.

Notably, some pieces from the impressive Gates collection remain in the possession of the fourth and fifth generations of the Norris family.

