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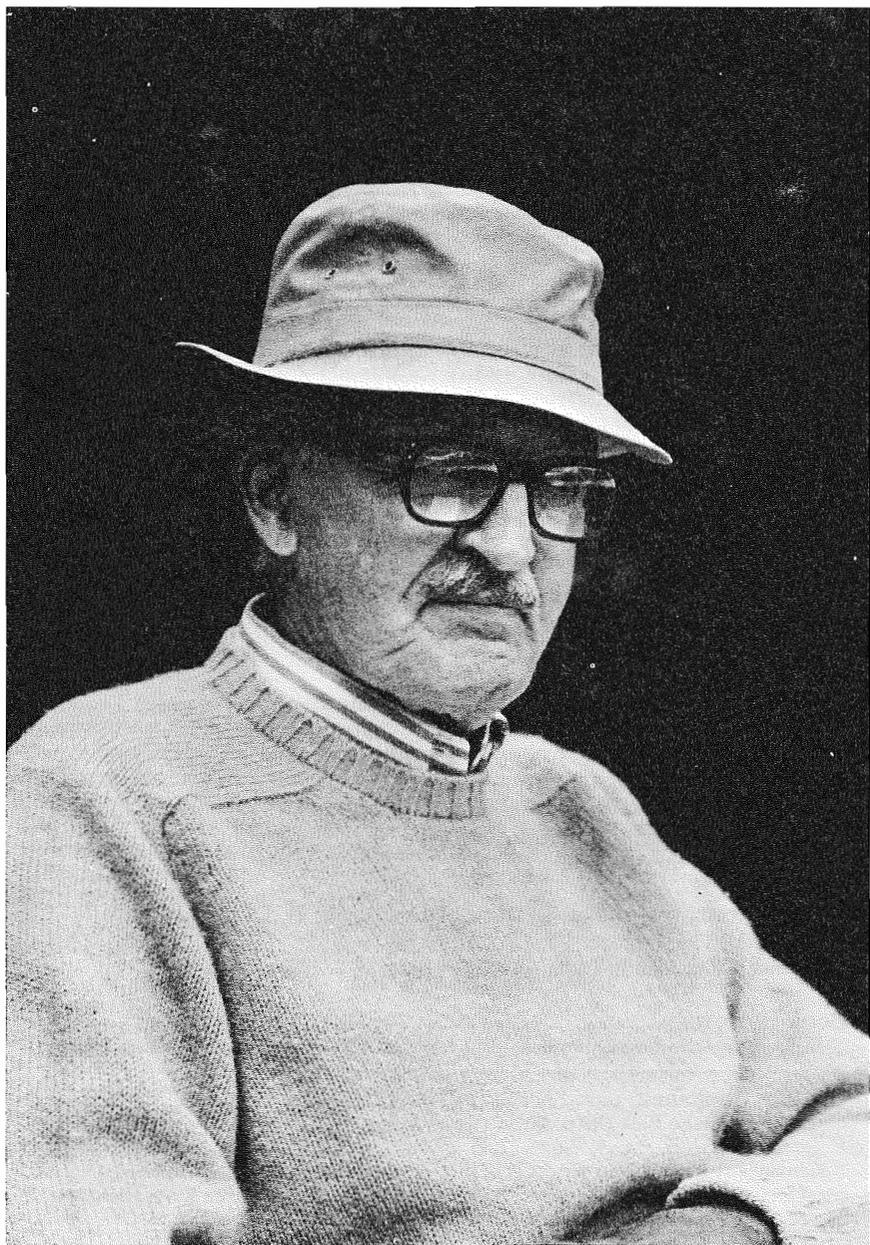
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John Falter

John P. Falter

John Philip Falter was born in Plattsmouth, Nebraska, in 1910. When he was a young boy the family moved to Falls City, where his father established a clothing store. As a high school student, John created a comic strip entitled "Down Thru the Ages," published in the *Falls City Journal*. J.M. ("Ding") Darling, Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist of the *Des Moines Register*, saw some of Falter's cartoons and urged the youth to become a professional illustrator.

After graduating from high school in 1928, he studied at the Kansas City Art Institute and won a scholarship to the Art Students League in New York. Soon afterwards he began illustrating pulp magazines. He received his first commission from *Liberty Magazine* to do three illustrations weekly in 1933. By 1940 he had acquired several advertising clients.

Falter's first *Saturday Evening Post* cover, a portrait of magazine founder Benjamin Franklin, is dated September 1, 1943. However, he considered his first *Post* cover to be *Gramercy Park*, published September 1, 1944. He eventually did over 185 covers. In 1943 he enlisted in the Navy and designed over 300 recruiting posters. During this period he also completed a series depicting twelve famous war heroes for *Esquire* magazine.

John Falter also did illustrations for *Good Housekeeping*, *The Home Magazine*, *The Ladies Home Journal*, *Cosmopolitan*, *McCall's*, *Life*, and *Look*. Although best known for his *Saturday Evening Post* covers, Falter produced a body of work impressive in volume and variety of subject. Reflecting a life-long interest in jazz, he did scenes of Harlem nightclub life in the 1930s and later portraits of famous jazz musicians.

During the 1970s and 1980s he turned to historical and western themes. The 3M Company commissioned him to do a series of six paintings entitled "From Sea to Shining Sea" in celebration of the American Bicentennial. Falter completed over 100 paintings in the field of western art and 190 paintings of the westward migration of 1843-80 from the Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains.

Falter was elected to the Illustrators Hall of Fame in 1976. He was also a member of the National Academy of Western Art.

After his death in April of 1982, his wife, Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Falter Jones, donated to the Nebraska State Historical Society objects and furnishings from the artist's studio, numerous paintings, and his papers. The opening of the State Museum of History on October 8, 1983, featured an exhibit of Falter's works and a recreation of the artist's Philadelphia studio.