Willis Sharpe Kilmer Was Discerning Collector of Art Treasures

Insisted on Accurate Details; Perception of Value Extraordinary

Love for Horses and Good Taste Also Factors in Collection—Had 44 Paintings of Racers—Should Be Valuable From Historical Standpoint

(EDITOR'S NOTE—Because it reflects essential characteristics of Willis Sharpe Kilmer his art collection is indispensable to any adequate appraisal or conception of the man. Yet except to a few connoisseurs and some close friends that art collection was and still is largely unknown to the general public. It represents the tastes of a lifetime in varying degrees of mutability but always with a few definite things uppermost—his love for horses, his good taste, his insistence on accuracy in detail and his extraordinary perception of values not always obvious to the casual person.

No one unacquainted with Mr. Kilmer could adequately tell the story of his pictures, and so The Binghamton Press asked William H. Ogden, one of the few surviving boyhood friends of the Publisher of The Binghamton Press, to undertake this important work. Here are Mr. Ogden's conclusions in the first and only detailed study of the Kilmer art collection ever permitted during Mr. Kilmer's lifetime.)

By William H. Ogden

At a time when all the "isms" of art are running riot through our galleries and museums, and hideous distortions of form and color are flung before our eyes as triumphant examples of modern conceptions, it is a most sincere satisfaction to view a private collection which, in cross section, truly represents the better trend of creative art of a few years ago.

One can but feel the true discernment of the collector who, while selecting his masterpieces, was able to surround them with others which are outstanding—each in its own class.

How it could be that Mr. Willis Sharpe Kilmer, through his many years of intense business activity, was able to find the necessary time for such study and research to make this possible is an unanswered question. It does show that a personal love and discrimination for the best in art dominated him.

There is no time nor style with a masterpiece—it simply survives—ever adding new glories to its age and joys to those who behold.

A lifetime lover of horses, Mr. Kilmer's 44 paintings of racers, with their jockeys and owners, their surroundings of track, field and fair, are indeed most unusual and unique.

Independent of their individual merits from an artist's standpoint, these horse portraits should be most valuable as a historical collection covering a period of 144 years.

There are noted 15 pieces of statuary, bronze, marble and ivory. Wherever the sculptor's name is known it stands high on the roster of accomplishment.

The first of the two portraits is of Jonas M. Kilmer and Willis Sharpe Kilmer, father and son, painted by A. Benzign in 1911. The canvas is about 5x8 feet, and is, without doubt, in this artist's best skill in the portrayal of the vigorous personalities of the two subjects.

Mr. Benzign's composition is quite conventional. His accessories are rather metallic in feeling and a somewhat waxy rendering of flesh tones does not ring true to fact. However it is the truth of good drawing that carries the portraits to a realistic conclusion.

The other portrait is a full length composition of Mrs. Willis Sharpe Kilmer done in 1933 by McClelland Barclay. This canvas is about 4½x8 feet, and shows Mrs. Kilmer in her most gracious mood, happily posed. Mr. Barclay's urge for color and design has permitted the introduction of some vividly painted flowers in the foreground which are bound to detract from the softer and more subtle modeling of the flesh and gown. He has at the same time been able to give the portrait an element of kindly reserve and dignity which is admirable.

Paintings in Oil

William Adolphe Bouguereau, after a great struggle with poverty in his youth, attained success through his religious and pastoral subjects. This large canvas (4x7 feet) with nude figure of a young woman in life size, confirms the artist's reputation for smooth, sentimental compositions with most accurate drawing and excellence of flesh colorings. This canvas was painted when the artist was 43 and must represent him at his best. While the soft delicacy of coloring and technique tend to weaken the vitality of the figure as a living thing, it is the idyllic temper of the whole that lifts the observer to wonderment.

"Troops in Action" is a canvas 4½x1½ feet, by the French military painter, Edouard Detaille. This artist's renown for battlefield subjects followed in line with Meissonier and Raffet, with whom he worked. Detaille attained a greater feeling of forceful activity with a freedom of brush work which was lacking in his contemporaries. He depicted the horrors rather than the glories of war. In this canvas the foreground is strewn with the dead and dying—horses and men—with troops still struggling forward. The somewhat triangular composition draws the eye towards the enemy positions and exploding shells. The coloring is low in tone, mostly grays, blues and browns, entirely fitting the suffering so faithfully depicted. The picture is covered with a glass so that it is impossible to determine whether it is done in flat-tone oils or tempera.

When Jean Leon Gerome, at the age of 35, exhibited his picture of the "Roman Gladiators Saluting Caesar" the art world proclaimed him master of coloring and composition of the human figure, but it is quite evident, from his later picture, "The Pursuit," now in this collection, that his powers were not so limited. On a canvas size of about 2½x2½ feet the sand-strewn rocks and hills stretch through miles of horizon to meet the dull gray-blue sky, and a full-maned lion charges toward a herd of fleeing gazelles, giving action to what would otherwise be one immense silence. The soft dull tans, grays and blues, blending in a vast perspective, are in marked contrast to the brilliant life of his earlier work, without loss of powerful expression. This picture is a tone-poem of desolation and fear with one piercing cry of hunger!

"Unrenseignement," painted by the French artist P. Grolleron, painted in the year 1885, shows the trend from military subjects of a serious nature to those of a more story-telling kind. This large canvas (about 6x8 feet) shows an officer soliciting direction from a peasant in smock and sabots. In the rear is a group of officers with troops arriving in the distance. The composition is entirely pictorial, and the coloring in low tones, grays and blues contrasting the snow-covered landscape and the high plastered wall which backs the figures. Accurate drawing and a certain freedom of brush give the element of life which would otherwise be lacking.

Outstanding in this collection are two paintings by Adolph Schreyer. The larger one is about 6½x4½ feet, and is entitled "A Wallachian Teamster Entangled in the Marshes." Six rearing, plunging horses are held in check by the mighty effort of the teamster, whose heavily laden cart is bogged deep in the mire. The composition is a curious combination of diagonally opposing planes and lines, so disposed that in their confusion a sense of violent action is created in the mind of the observer. This makes one look again and again to see if that motion is not real. The color is well toned in a low key, warm and living, with bright accents flashing from the teamster's jacket, forcing the eye never again to this center of control.

Mr. Schreyer is a master of foreshortened drawing and modeling and his sure-fire brush work makes his broad free handling of light and shade a marvel. He does it so easily that we wonder how it could ever be otherwise.

The other picture, "Battery Going Into Action," is a much smaller canvas and not so forceful. In this there is a composition built of radiating lines and planes leading the eye toward the "objectives" of the advancing men and horses. This painting carries all the master hand and skill of the other but the subject is less convincing.

It is indeed rare that any artist receives both academic recognition and popular acclaim during his lifetime. As painter, sculptor and writer Frederic Remington, in his vivid portrayal of Indians, cowboys and their mustangs, with the wild, wide open spaces of the West when it was young, captured the lively imagination of America. His work was an unique combination of realistic reproduction of action and fact in detail with all the glamour and romance of poetry.

On a canvas 2½x5 feet we see two Indian boys breaking a bucking pony. One boy is clinging to the plunging pony's back, the other pulls on a hackamore looped about the muzzle of the frightened animal. The tepees of a straggling Indian village stretch away to the distance over sage brush and sand. In the composition of this over-long picture the widely separated, opposing diagonal masses of mounted boy and pony on the one side and the tugging boy on the other, are tied together by the taut directional pull of the lariat, with some aid from the receding line of tepees—thus forming the balance of a triangle. The direct accuracy of brush work in the portrayal of intense muscular strain of the figures shows Mr. Remington's complete mastery of form in action. The skillfully blended coppery hues of flesh, earth and sky give the whole picture a soft warm glow like a sunset calm.

"Woods and Hills," a 2½x4½-foot canvas by Bruce Crane, shows this artist as a lover of nature in her moods. His method of interpretation is sincerely impressionistic and he uses his pigments simply as a means or channel for the passing of emotions on to you. You, as an observer, must be receptively in tune in order to appreciate and enjoy this representation of thoughts rather than things. To be sure, one can well discover hills and woods, sky, white birches, stone walls and woodpile, but these are only the strings upon which Bruce Crane has played his symphony of atmosphere and color.

A RARE SCHREYER in the collection of Willis Sharpe Kilmer, is entitled "A Wallachian Teamster Entangled in the Marshes." Executed by Adolph Schreyer, it offers a composition of diagonally opposing planes and lines so disposed that their confusion creates a sense of violent action.

HERE IS A STUDY OF BLACKFEET Indian life called "The Medicine Man." Painted by C. M. Russell, it shows the exact and painstaking work of the artist. It has the feeling of a historical document, statistical and true.

C. M. Russell's (2½x4 feet) "The Medicine Man" is accompanied by a letter giving descriptive details of the Blackfeet Indians on the march. Mr. Russell is as exact and painstaking in his brush work as he is with his pen. This picture has the feeling of an accurate historical document, statistical and true. It is very interesting as such.

"The Storm Breaking Up," a 12x14-inch sketch from the brush of J. Francis Murphy, is full of fine sentiment. In his simple handling of a flash of light through the breaking clouds, as it caresses the rain-washed green of the foreground, he has told his little story of the passing storm.

C. Troven's 18x22-inch canvas of a gray draught horse is well drawn and most carefully modeled. The balance of the picture only serves to stimulate one's interest in the horse. The coloring is modest in tone, the warm gray of the animal relieving the more somber brown-greens of the shadows.

In Roybet's "Girl With Tambourine" we seem to revert to the age of Hals and Rembrandt, so great is the influence of those masters on his work. The 14x16-inch canvas with its deep warm coloring and chiaro-oscuro exquisitely modeled, seems to bridge this gap of time without effort.

Again in Henner's 14x16-inch "Head of a Woman" we find a still further reversion in this artist's love for an old master. Henner was called "the painter of silvery carnations," because of his devotion to the sensual mysticism and coloring of Correggio, and this in an age when Corot and Millet were making history with their innovations.

Eugene Verher Khoven's little 5x7-inch gem miniature of a sheep might, at first glance, be taken for a modern, finely colored photo print did not close scrutiny reveal its intricate brush work and a knowledge that it was painted in the year 1858. It can be better appreciated and enjoyed under a reading glass.

C. Vanleenyputtin painted a long time and with infinite care in the making of his 24x30-inch canvas of "Sheep in a Barn." No detail was too exacting for his sharp eye and fine pointed brush. He worked to such a finish that both color and life became weary and departed, leaving a static monochrome for us to wonder at.

A forcefully painted "Fishing Village," done by F. Mura, reflects the broader French style of the 1890's. The canvas, 3½x5 feet, is a well balanced composition, quiet in color. The well disposed warm-toned planes of the village houses silhouette the cooler moods of sky and sea. The picture has the tang of salt air and adventure.

There are two canvases, about 2x3 feet each, by Edouard Cortes, "La Porte Saint Martin" and "La Madeleine Neige." Both of these are purely pictorial in their early evening flash of street lights, buildings and the moving traffic of Paris. The effect is well sustained and permits a brilliant coloring. They are very satisfying in their realism.

A 20x24-inch canvas by E. L. Garrido, showing a French interior of Louis XIV period, with lady and courtier, is a pure demonstration of flashy costume arrangement and coloring combined with an attempted fiction. We can admire the manual skill and perfection of those textures and colorings while we look in vain for some more noble emotion.

Edward Portialje, Sr., did some very clever work in reflected half tones in his 16x20 painting of a girl and man at a window. While the drawing and composition are most commendable, and the coloring satisfying, one looks for some more definite thought objective in this type of narrative.

L. D'Antonio, in one of his familiar "Priest and Cardinal" compositions has within a 14 x 17-inch dimension worked out with a smooth minuteness a detail with some forceful expression. The features and textures are very realistic.

H. Beaulieu's little 10 x 12-inch "Conversation" harks back to the smooth prettiness and detail of the 1850's. The figures are somewhat stilted in pose and the coloring is less brilliant than usual with masters of that period.

Mazzotta is represented by a 2x2½-foot canvas of great detail. The composition of woman and children is conventional and skillfully painted. It is so regretful that something of an emotional nature could not have been added to so much technical excellence.

F. Miralles' canvas, about 26x32 inches, bears no title or date. It is a well grouped and balanced composition — a style show of ladies promenading in a park costumed as of 1870 or thereabouts. This is another work of great technical skill but entirely pictorial.

On a canvas 2x3 feet Arthur Spear worked out some very realistic flesh and foreshortening on the figures of two nude girls. However the piece is lacking in design and sincere purpose, other than an anatomical study.

The nude girl by G. Seignac on 16x20-inch canvas is well modeled and of pleasing coloring, somewhat ethereal, but passing fair.

A marine, 24x28 inches, by C. Westchiloff presents a pleasing effect of moonlight on the water. A good handling of reflected light gives one the sensation of movement and atmosphere.

George H. McCord's small study of boats (10x12 inches) is distinctly "Turneresque" in its grouping of multicolored sails. The water reflections are very realistic.

Leyendecker's 11x14-inch girl with a parrot tends toward too much prettiness in both color and execution.

G. Mascari's 8x10-inch street scene has some good coloring and is well executed. Such truth is refreshing.

One unidentified 12x15-inch canvas—a flock of chickens—is well painted and very colorful.

There is one head of a girl done in pastel by Emilio Landau. It is about 22x26 inches in size and entirely fanciful in its conception. The crayon work is well done. The hair is quite real and the face, while lacking in color, is unusual in its character for this very sensitive and unstable medium.

Pictures of Field and Track

The French painter Th. Gericault was an innovator in his effort to bring the sensation of movement into his compositions, and about the year 1794, while exhibiting in London, he pictured "The Derby," using for the first time in French or English art the "flying gallop" pose for horses, as a method for representation of speed. This "rocking horse" pose continued in use by other artists until the advent of the instantaneous camera, which proved the error of the pose.

Judging by the costumes and accessories, coloring and composition, the 22x30 canvas, "The Hunt at Melton Mowbray," might have been painted about the same time as "The Derby." The impression stands that the "Melton Mowbray" picture was painted by "H. and C. Shayer." However, the nameplate on the picture would better indicate the "Shayers" as owners rather than artists. It would be interesting if a further investigation could prove this picture to be a "Gericault" or of that school.

Francis Sartorius' 24x30-inch picture of "Herod" and J. N. Sartorius' 18x24 painting of "Eclipse" are of 1790-1800 period. Both the horses and their mounts are carefully drawn and painted as portraiture. Little thought was given at that time to color harmony or composition in this type of work.

L. Marshall's "Albart" with jockey, a 12x15-inch portrait of 1827-31 period and two canvases (24x30) by J. E. Ferneley, bearing date 1830, of "John" and "Emilius," are without doubt sincere likenesses, both in color and modeled form of the horses, as this was the objective.

There are eight canvases by J. F. Herring, Sr., dating from 1829 to 1835, and from 9x12 to 24x30 in size, "Plenipotentiary," "Whalebone," "Don John," "Voltiger and Flying Dutchman," "The Princess," "Colonel," "Flying Dutchman" and "Sir Tatton Sykes Tibthorp." Herring showed great skill in individualizing his subjects, both animal and man. His modeling was accurate and color true, but his work was static and "painty."

There are five small (about 8x12) paintings by H. Alken that, judging entirely by the costumes, belong to about this period. The pictures show various groupings of track, field and fair in an intimate manner, and are very interesting historically, as each object in them is drawn with great precision of form and color, with little attention to cast shadows or reflected lights. The result is rather more fascinating than otherwise.

With F. C. Turner's 17x22 canvas, of "Harkaway," 1834, and T. Bretland's 24x30 portrait of "Little Wonder"—1843—both done with the rigid exactness of that period, we close this age of the "Flying Gallop," as shown in the horse portraits in this collection.

Three canvases, each about 22x28 in size, by Harry Hall (1881-7), being portraits of "Hermit," "Iroquois" and "Silvio," open a period of more freedom in conception. Salient characteristics are stressed and color becomes relative instead of a localized function of the composition.

Isaac Collins' "Cap and Bells" (10x12) of 1898, C. L. Zellinsky's "Commando" (15x20) and "Imp" (22x18) of 1901, also H. F. Lucas-Lucas' "Isinglass" (18x24) of 1888 and "Zinfandel" of 1904, carry forward this trend towards a better understanding of the mechanics of good portraiture. Composition, color-harmony and designs apply to horses as well as human subjects.

With the four canvases by F. B. Voss we come to the present-day ideals in this branch of art. Mr. Voss painted "Sun Briar" in 1917 on a canvas 18x26 inches, two unidentified horses (26x30) in 1931-2, and lastly "Sun Beau" (10x12) in 1932. The firm accuracy and detail of his work—the coloring and atmosphere—place his ambitions with "Troven," but his methods are modern.

F. Griggs' (15x19) canvas of "Blendheim," 1927, and Skirlz' (8x12) portrait of "Limelight," 1932, are somewhat less carefully done, but carry the force of good drawing and color.

George Wright's 15x22 canvas entitled "Autumn" is a hunting scene done in 1932. Very colorful and an attempt is made in the composition to supplement the actions of the horse, rider and three dogs.

Two pictures from the brush of M. Stainforth in 1934 are similar in dimensions—17x24. The one is without name, the other is of the English stake winner, "Gino." It is quite certain that Mr. Stainforth not only knows and loves horses, but can in a simple, direct manner make one feel more of the spirit of the animal and forget the pigments and methods which have produced it. There is a freedom from convention which is truly refreshing.

The artist Kohradt made two portraits of "Sun Briar" in 1929—one 18x22 inches, the other 4x5½ feet. He later on painted a canvas 3½x4 feet of "Sun Beau's" mother with the baby "Sun Beau." Then again in 1932 he made a large canvas (6x8 feet) of "Sun Beau," together with Mr. Kilmer and his dog, "Pal."

The horses in all of these portraits are most carefully drawn and modeled to exact proportions, and Mr. Konrad has shown great skill in the realism of the velvet textures of well groomed flanks. Their alert, intelligent heads and eyes are particularly well done. It is unfortunate that a certain weakness of treatment of the background scenery gives the figures in the foreground a "cut out and pasted on" appearance, which might have been avoided with good effect. There is also a certain lack of vitality in his interpretation of Mr. Kilmer's personality.

There are two colored photographic enlargements by Foster Disinger. One is 3½x3½ feet in size of "Exterminator," with pedigree and trophy cups. The other, 3½x4 feet, done in 1932, of "Sun Beau" and jockey. The backgrounds are painted in an idealistic manner, but the glazings do not give an altogether truthful coloring to the horses.

Sculptures

Dark Bronze, "Ad Unum," by E. Picault, 1900—40 inches high. An heroic figure of warrior, well modeled but lacks unity of design and clarity of intention.

Gold Bronze, no title, by Jules Graux—20 inches high, entirely ornamental, without character.

Gold Bronze, Fawn and Bears, by E. Fremeit—8x16 inches, good grouping and well modeled; very artificial in conception. Fremeit famous for his equestrian statues of Napoleon I and III.

Antique light green bronze, Dancing Satyr—27 inches high, fine modeling, pose and balance; sculptor unknown.

Antique light green bronze, Boy Satyr With Water Skin — 16 inches high; fine modeling, pose and balance; sculptor unknown.

Antique dark green bronze, Narcissus—16 inches high; replica of one found at Herculaneum, supposed to be Greek in origin; some name it "Hermes."

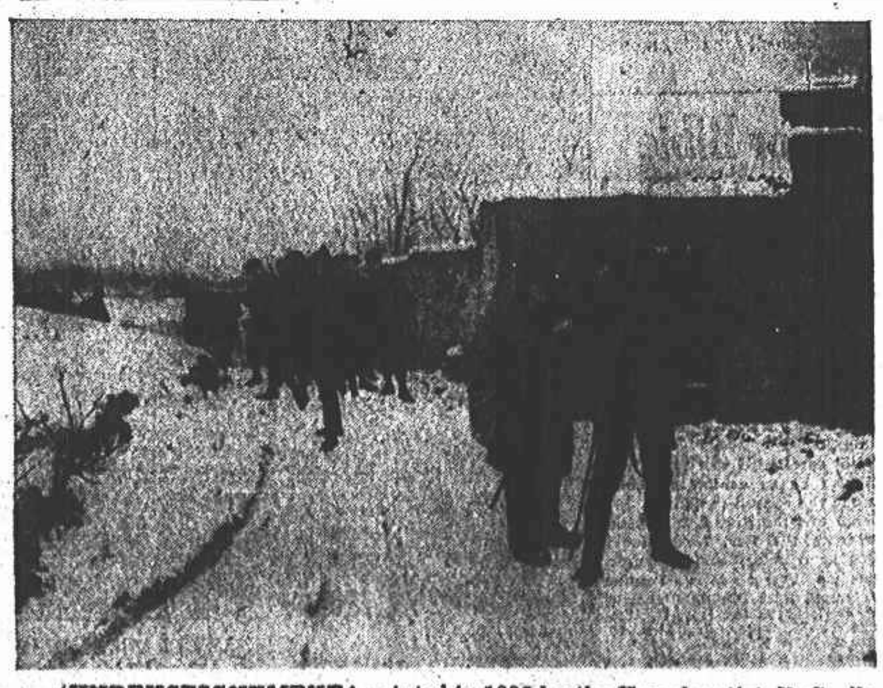
Antique dark green bronze, "Niki" (?)—16 inches high; perchance another conception of Winged Victory or Diana.

Marble, "Eureka" (?), sculptor unknown—6 feet high; nude girl holding a book, "Grandi Nomini"; beautifully modeled, very graceful but over sentimental in its refinements.

Five marble busts—
Hermes (?) ....24 inches high
Minerva (?) ....26 inches high
Primavera .....10 inches high
Laura .....10 inches high
Augustus (?) ...16 inches high
All of which are classical in character.

Ivory and bronze by Walter Schott, 8 inches high—Girl with ball. A dainty conception, very well modeled.

Marble and bronze by A. Carrier Belleuse — 9 inches high; no title; ornamental.



'UNRENSEIGNEMENT,' painted in 1885 by the French artist, P. Grolleron, shows the trend from military subjects of a more serious nature to those of a more story-telling kind. Grays and blues offer a contrast to the snow.

Breeding--

(Continued From Page Seven)

class type-to-get-hunters at Bryn Mawr, Pa.; in November he won Class No. 1 at the National Horse Show in Madison Square Garden, N. Y., and again in December he outclassed all competitors in the thoroughbred class at Madison Square Garden and received the trophy awarded by the Breeding bureau of the Jockey club.

In December, 1915, Mr. Kilmer purchased, at the Clarence H. Mackay sale, the stallion Imported Allumeur, later the sire of Sally's Alley. *Allumeur cost $6,000. It was at this sale Mr. Kilmer also acquired the yearling filly Hathor by Meddler, destined to become a splendid foundation mare. In February, 1916, Mr. Kilmer purchased the mare, Romagne, and three fillies, in England, and the newspapers of the day reported that this indicated the Binghamtonian intended to take a prominent position among owners and breeders. The prediction was well warranted and it is noteworthy that Romagne became a magnificent matron.

Nineteen hundred sixteen saw, at Saratoga, the purchase of the yearling Sunday, for $6,000, a transaction destined to have profound effect on racing and breeding annals, for under the name "Sun Briar" the erstwhile Sunday went on to make thoroughbred history. . . . In September of that same year the English stallion, Magic by Martagon, was acquired, along with a yearling colt and filly by Magic. In September, 1916, Mr. Kilmer shipped, to Binghamton, 11 horses purchased at Saratoga and in England.

Henry McDaniel had been engaged as trainer in the summer of 1916, and in December of that year Mr. Kilmer sent him to England to purchase mares for the growing stud. In England McDaniel acquired Brownie by Gallinule, St. Fey by St. Frusquin, Misty Law by Ayrshire, Marienthal by Isinglass, Lovelight by St. Amant, Sobranje by Polymelus, Irish Lady by Bachelor's Double and Sabretache by Martagon. To breeders those names speak for themselves.

By the time Sun Briar was ready to retire to stud duty at the Kilmer Stud Farm, renamed, in his honor, Sun Briar Court, a respectable little band of matrons, through whom coursed the most fashionable blood in the world, was waiting to aid him in establishing the strain that is indelibly linked with the name of Willis Sharpe Kilmer in this country.

And while Mr. Kilmer was acquiring the foundation stock at home and abroad development of the Kilmer Farm in Binghamton was proceeding apace. For 20 years Sun Briar Court has been a Binghamton landmark but in the '90s the Binghamton driving track occupied the site now occupied by the training track and many a sharp brush on the old track is recalled by veteran residents. The grandstand of those days stood where the big dairy barn stood until fire, a year or two ago, lowered the building to its present dimensions. In the old days the massive oak tree west of the dairy barn (then the grandstand) marked the location of the betting ring; the present club house is the remodeled inn of those early days.

The days of the driving track era having run their course, the property was acquired by Mr. Logan, who conducted a dairy farm. It was he who remodelled the old inn and made it his home, and it was from Mr. Logan that the property was acquired and added to the original Kilmer Farm, first owned by the late Jonas M. Kilmer. The combined properties constitute Sun Briar Court as it is known today.

It was these acres that Willis Sharpe Kilmer prepared for the reception of the now-famous stud. A half-mile training track was constructed where the old driving park track had been, and a half-mile straightaway was built along the Susquehanna river. New stables were erected, the Kilmer-conceived indoor exercising ring was constructed, and the great main stable came quickly into being.

With its completion Sun Briar Court was said to have transcended anything conceived along similar lines, up to that time. In it were incorporated the soundest tenets of both training and breeding. The achievements of Sun Briar-bred horses in the seven years of its breeding history would seem to offer conclusive proof of Mr. Kilmer's logic. Thirty-five of the 50 horses sired by Sun Briar in those years won on the track, and 13 of the number were stake-winners. Among the latter are listed the famous names of Pompey, Sunny Man, Sunspero, Sun Pal, Sun Flag, Sunsard, Sunsini, Sunference, Sun Altos and Sunayr. Sally's Alley, the double Futurity winner, also saw the light of day there, as did Mint Briar, and many an eventually successful matron.

In Sun Briar Court's imposing main stable of vitrified tile was contained the indoor race-track, a sixth of a mile in circumference, and it was on this track that Exterminator was brought into the condition that enabled him to defeat Billy Kelly and the foremost sprinters of his era on the opening of the Havre de Grace race-course in April, 1922.

(After the removal of the stud to Virginia, about 1924, Sun Briar Court continued to be the training quarters for the racing strings until 1935. In the fall of 1932 Mr. Kilmer constructed the magnificent one-mile track at his first Virginia home, Remlik Hall, and his racers have spent their winters there, since. But several times in the course of each year Sun Briar Court houses bands of thoroughbreds stopping over on their way to Saratoga, or on their way to Virginia or the West, and visitors, noting the activity, stop as has been their wont for many years, to accept the invitation extended by the welcoming board standing near the ivy-covered stable entrance.)

Despite the unqualified success of Sun Briar Court as a thoroughbred nursery, Mr. Kilmer, in 1932, conceived the idea of establishing another haras. The growth of beautiful residential Binghamton had surrounded the entire acreage of Sun Briar Court, with the exception, of course, of that portion bounded by the Susquehanna.

Casting his eye about for a site for another court he visited and inspected breeding farms wherever horses were raised east of the Mississippi. After exhaustive investigation, he concluded to establish his new nursery in the Shenandoah Valley near New Market, Rockingham county, Virginia.

Here he purchased a large tract of historical soil known as the Moore plantation, the land having been in the possession of the Moore family since 1765, their title to it resting on a special grant to Thomas Moore, from King George Third. George Harrington, from whom Mr. Kilmer acquired the land had married the great great granddaughter of Thomas Moore, Miss Josephine Moore.

Local legend has it that on the knoll at the southern end of the farm, where barn 21 now stands, grey-clad boys of the South engaged in a lively skirmish with their northern cousins in blue, back in the '60s. A mile or two north, on identical ground, the Virginia Military Institute cadets made history at the Battle of New Market in 1864. Up and down the road which bisects the farm (the Lee highway) passed the harried Yankees looking for but seldom finding the ubiquitous Jackson until he elected to steal down from the mountains and catch them unawares. Directly in back of Court Manor are the celebrated Endless Caverns and, just a few miles away, the northern end of the Blue Ridge Skyline Drive.

Court Manor's natural advantages as a thoroughbred nursery cannot be surpassed. Four desiderata are rolling land with a limestone foundation, an abundance of good grass, a moderate climate and an assured supply of pure water. These Court Manor possesses in perfect proportion.

The Court Manor of today is a realization of the promise it held forth when Mr. Kilmer first surveyed its undulating landscape. In it Mr. Kilmer has builded a monument to the Thoroughbred Horse, nor must it be forgotten that he expended, in its construction, an herculean amount of labor and time and purposeful thought. Barns, embodying all of the improvements which made Sun Briar Court notable, had to be built, roads constructed, trees planted, fences erected, wells dug, lighting planned, and as progress proved itself elsewhere, improved innovations added.

As it stands today, Court Manor embraces about 1,200 acres. Miles of fences divide the property into 17 large fields and about 35 individual paddocks. There are 21 stable barns (with over 200 stalls) and 21 dwelling houses on the place, in addition to the numerous other buildings—tool sheds, mash houses, garages, blacksmith shop, hospital and breeding sheds. There is the large enclosed exercising ring, of steel construction, designed by Mr. Kilmer for the daily exercising of mares when it is impossible to turn them out in the fields. A small but complete laboratory, wherein all routine tests and cultures are made, is maintained, and a sterilizing plant for the destruction of parasites in manure is operated.

Three individual water systems secure an adequate supply of water from wells bored to depths ranging from 200 to 500 feet. The water is pumped, electrically, to large steel tanks located on high towers and pure water is supplied in abundance to every paddock and field on the farm.

In the matter of lighting, fire protection, telephone communication, building and barn construction the most modern developments are progressively utilized.

But the Manor House itself, restored to its ante bellum glory, furnishes a restful respite from the contemplation of modern efficiency. Standing perhaps 150 yards back from the highway and partly obscured, from that point, by stately trees and carefully tended shrubbery, it nestles in its green lawns, a large rambling Colonial building, with entrance inviting and decorous behind the familiar high white Doric columns we have come to revere in Southern mansions.

Court Manor was predestined for success as a thoroughbred nursery, for to it were transferred Sun Briar and those foundation mares which contributed to Mr. Kilmer's initial successes. To the original band Mr. Kilmer kept adding representatives of the finest strains the world had to offer. "He has never pinned his faith to any one strain or cross, but, on the contrary, has carried out his studies, his problems and his experiments with a singular breadth of judgment and selection," says Salvator.

His stallions included the mag-

(Continued on Market Page)