

Hubert Mathieu, South Dakota's Other Outstanding Illustrator

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Is there a native-born South Dakotan so uninformed as not to recognize the name of Harvey Dunn, the state's great artist and magazine illustrator? Born on a homestead near Manchester, Dakota Territory, in 1884, Dunn won considerable acclaim as an illustrator for the *Saturday Evening Post* and as a combat artist during World War I. He is probably best known in South Dakota as a painter of scenes reminiscent of his growing-up years on the prairie.¹ Considerably fewer people are acquainted with one of Dunn's pupils, Hubert Mathieu, a South Dakota artist who followed in Dunn's footsteps and who deserves recognition as the state's "other outstanding illustrator."

The artistic legacy of Hubert Mathieu, a Brookings native thirteen years Dunn's junior, partially mirrors that of his predecessor and stands as a tribute to his South Dakota upbringing. A talented draftsman, Mathieu first devoted himself to magazine illustration, a genre that unfortunately began a downhill course not long after he took it up as a profession. He achieved considerable success as an illustrator in the 1920s and early 1930s but suffered financially during the middle of the Great Depression. He then redirected his career into advertising art, regaining his financial security, and also won recognition for his World War II-era newspaper features, "Spot Your Plane" and "Our

1. For more information on Harvey Dunn, see Robert F. Karolevitz, *Where Your Heart Is: The Story of Harvey Dunn, Artist* (Aberdeen, S.Dak.: North Plains Press, 1970); William H. Holaday III, "Harvey Dunn: Pioneer Painter of the Middle Border" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1970); Ernest W. Watson, "Harvey Dunn: Milestone in the Tradition of American Illustration," *American Artist* 6 (June 1942): 16-20, 31; Mari Sandoz, "Dakota Country," *American Heritage* 12 (June 1961): 42-53; and Edgar M. Howell, "Harvey Dunn: The Searching Artist Who Came Home to His First Horizon," *Montana, the Magazine of Western History* 16 (Winter 1966): 41-56.

Democracy." In 1954, as he was planning to devote more time to portrait painting, he died of a heart attack at the age of fifty-seven.²

While no single event in the background of Hubert Jean Mathews (he adopted his ancestors' original French appellation, Mathieu, in 1921) seemed to destine him for an artistic career, he did enjoy an upbringing that offered cultural and academic opportunities unusual in turn-of-the-century, small-town South Dakota. Born 4 January 1897, he grew up as the son of a professor at South Dakota Agricultural College, known after 1907 as South Dakota State College. His father, Hubert Berton Mathews, was a respected and popular professor of physics and electrical engineering who served variously as vice dean of the faculty, dean of the engineering division, and acting president of the college. His mother, Eva Plocker Mathews, helped to provide a nurturing atmosphere for the family, which included two younger sisters, Hermine Mathews Kelling and Zoa Mathews Dreyer, born in 1901 and 1904, respectively. Eva Mathews, the first pharmacy graduate of the college, also taught art courses there before Ada B. Caldwell arrived in 1899. Mathews was an avid reader who sometimes forgot to prepare meals when absorbed in a good book, a situation her husband and children did not seem to mind. Their modest, two-story home was located on the southwest corner of Ninth Street and Medary Avenue, across from the college campus. There, young Hubert Mathews grew up amidst books, ideas, and, it should be said, many fun and happy times.³

The presence of the college added a leavening of culture and intellectual activity to the town of Brookings, a typical railroad settlement whose basic function was to serve the needs of local farmers. Situated on a small knoll about a mile northeast of downtown Brookings, the campus remained small and intimate during the years young Mathews attended college (1914-1917). The entire faculty numbered only about fifty, and the student body averaged less than four hundred. Throughout the year, faculty-student receptions and interclass parties allowed everyone in the college to become acquainted.⁴

2. Marie-Louise Mathieu O'Connell (daughter of Hubert Mathieu) to the author, 19 Oct. 1992.

3. Ibid.; interview with Alvilda Myre Sorenson, Brookings, S.Dak., 24 Sept. 1988; interview with Dwight Hoy, Brookings, S.Dak., 27 Sept. 1988. Sorenson, a college roommate and close friend of Mathieu's sister Zoa, frequented the Mathews home in the early 1920s. Hoy, a cousin of Hubert Mathieu, saw him several times in the twenties and thirties and knew the family well.

4. Charles L. Sewrey, *A History of South Dakota State College, 1884-1959* (Brookings: South Dakota State College, 1959), p. 68. See also William H. Powers, ed., *A History of South Dakota State College* (Brookings: South Dakota State College, 1931) and John Howard Kramer, *South Dakota State University: A History, 1884 to 1975* (Brookings: South Dakota State University, 1975). Information about campus life during the early 1900s derives partly from the above-mentioned books but mainly from a reading of the weekly student newspaper, *Industrial Collegian*, and the yearbook, *Jackrabbit*. (Because it was produced by the junior class, the *Jackrabbit* was always dated one year ahead; i.e., the book printed in the spring of 1918 carried a date of 1919, and so on.)

Most students joined one of the campus literary societies, which met every Saturday night—the Athenians on the top floor of Old Central and the Miltonians on the top floor of Old North. Young Hubert Mathews became a “Milt” and emerged as one of the club’s star orators, winning intersociety oratory contests on the subject of Booker T. Washington in both 1916 and 1917. Noted in the school newspaper, the *Industrial Collegian*, for his “wonderful voice and an excellent appearance,” Mathews likewise won praise for his performance in the annual Miltonian play.⁵ Mathews, who played by ear, also tooted his trumpet in the college’s military band, under the direction of Carl Christensen, whose portrait he later painted. As a junior he switched to the baritone, an instrument the band was short on. He also taught penmanship to the “aggies” (high school students taking the college’s agricultural course). In addition, Mathews belonged to the Art Club, directed by Ada

5. *Industrial Collegian*, 22 Feb., 25 Apr. 1916, 8 May 1917. The quotation is from 22 Feb. 1916.

In this 1917 photograph of the State College Art Club, Hubert Mathews appears in the back row, third from the right. Ada Caldwell, whose portrait he later painted, is seated in the front at far right.



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Caldwell, a highly talented woman who had instructed Harvey Dunn and encouraged him to move to Chicago for further study.⁶

Although Mathews was well liked, his artistic talent set him apart. His drawings for the student newspaper and the college yearbook were in a class by themselves when compared to those of other students.⁷ The 1918 *Jack-rabbit* yearbook virtually turned into a Hubert Mathews portfolio, as he supplied fourteen full-page illustrations and several smaller ones. The notation next to his yearbook photograph described "Huptie" as "a slow-going, ease-loving sort of a fellow, rather adverse to manual labor. He is an actor, artist, and orator. Just which of these professions he will choose as his life work, we do not know, but we are sure that he is capable of making a name for himself in any of them."⁸

The budding artist should have graduated with the class of 1918, but after his junior year Mathews decided to make a jump that would land him in the art world as soon as possible. Just like Harvey Dunn fifteen years earlier, he went east to obtain the training he would need to make a go of it as a professional artist. In late summer 1917, while his classmates were either preparing to become soldiers or getting ready to return to Brookings, Mathews journeyed to New York City to enroll in the Art Students League. He soon arranged to study with Harvey Dunn, who was well established as one of the country's premier magazine illustrators. At their first meeting, Dunn fondly reminisced about his days as a student in Brookings and mentioned the kindnesses Professor Mathews, Hubert's father, had shown him. The aspiring artist found a place to live near Dunn's studio in Leonia, New Jersey. "This opportunity," the *Brookings Register* reported with enthusiasm, "is one that can only come once in the life of any one, to start the study of a life work under the personal supervision of one of the masters of art in America."⁹

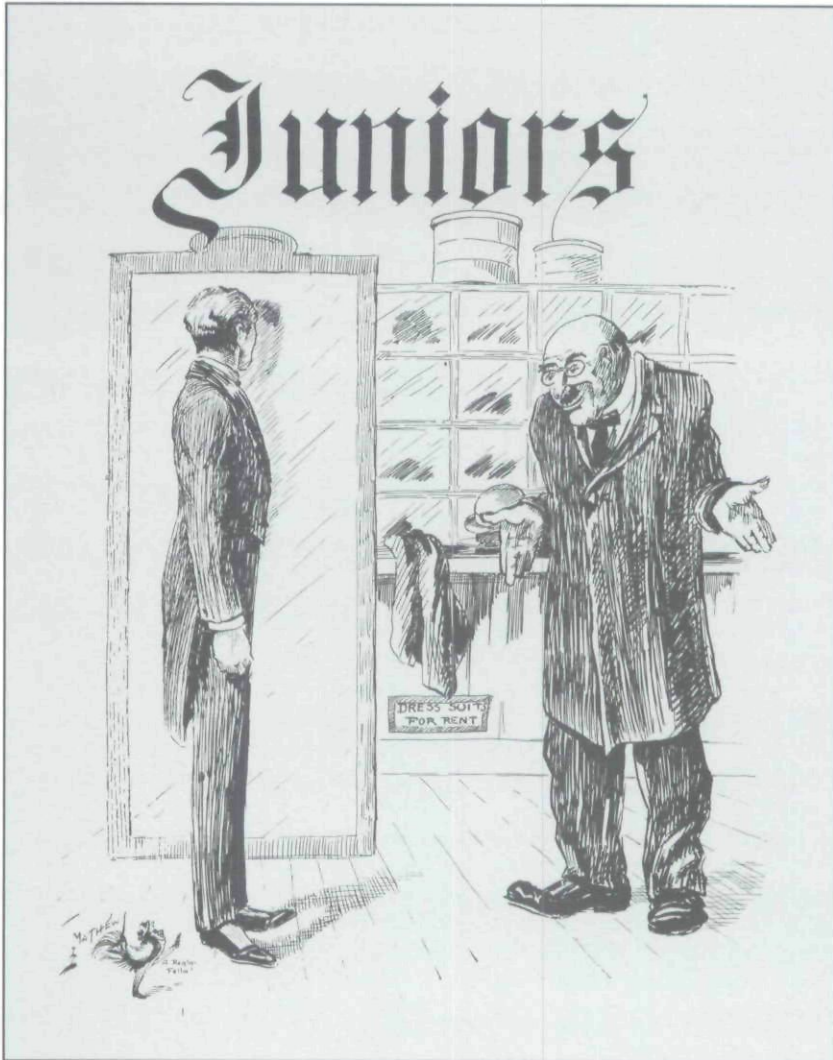
When Dunn sailed for France in March 1918 to work as one of eight federally commissioned combat artists, Mathews studied for a time with Dean Cornwell, who, although just five years older than himself, was already a sought-after illustrator for popular magazines. Cornwell, a native of Kentucky, had spent a year at the Art Institute of Chicago before joining the ranks of other students tutored by Harvey Dunn. Cornwell helped Mathews to refine his techniques, showing him what would and would not work in the

6. Ibid., 28 Sept. 1915, 8 Feb., 3 Oct. 1916. Caldwell received her training at the University of Nebraska, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Pratt Institute, Columbia University, and the Chase School of Art. She headed the art department at South Dakota State College from 1899 to 1937. *Ada B. Caldwell: A Tribute* (Brookings, S.Dak.: N.p., 1940), p. 9; *A Future for Art* (Brookings: South Dakota State College, [1954]), p. 13; South Dakota State College, *Jackrabbit* (1939), pp. 12-13.

7. Mathieu's first cartoon for the *Industrial Collegian* appeared on 14 March 1916.

8. *Jackrabbit* (1918), Junior Section.

9. *Brookings Register*, 23 Aug. 1917.



Mathieu's early illustrations, like this one from the 1918 Jackrabbit yearbook, exhibited a polish that his fellow students could not match.

magazine trade. Speed was of the essence in the business, for magazines generally ran five to eight illustrated short stories in each issue. Sometimes a single artist was responsible for the pictures for two or more stories in a single

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issue. While styles varied, techniques converged as each artist imitated the work of those whom he admired.¹⁰

Mathews visited Brookings in the spring of 1918 and had an exhibit of his work displayed at the college. After the armistice and a brief interlude as an artist for the *Chicago Tribune*, he resumed his studies with Dunn at Leonia. During the spring of 1919, he also worked in the art rooms of the *New York Herald* on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Meanwhile, Mathews had completed the necessary requirements for a bachelor of science degree in general studies, and he went home to Brookings to graduate with the forty-four other students of the class of 1919. That summer, when Dunn took a studio at Westport, Connecticut, on Long Island Sound, Mathews followed in order to associate with the flourishing colony of artists who had moved to the New York City suburb.¹¹

The impact of Dunn's teaching on Mathews's work was apparent in a report Mathews submitted for college credit in which he described various types of newspaper and magazine artwork and his own experiences at the *New York Herald*. His advice to other would-be artists closely resembled the lessons Harvey Dunn drilled into his students. When deciding how to illustrate a story, Mathews suggested that the artist decide, first, whether a given situation would make for an interesting illustration and, second, whether an illustration of the situation would contribute interest to the story. Dunn's tutoring had also honed Mathews's skills in the tonal media of charcoal and oils and reinforced habits of hard work. Later in his apprenticeship period, Mathews would likewise learn a great deal from Henry Raleigh, a talented and well-known illustrator, etcher, and lithographer, who helped him with his draftsmanship. Under Raleigh's tutelage, the young artist shifted from tonal to graphic media such as pen and ink, crayon, etching, and lithography.¹²

Mathews's apprenticeships paid off. In December 1918, *Boy's Life* used two of his illustrations, as did *Green Book* magazine one year later. In 1921, he received his first commission from the *Saturday Evening Post*, the magazine that had done so much to promote Harvey Dunn's career. Over the next several years, Mathews worked for a variety of magazines, including *Saturday Evening Post*, *Pictorial Review*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Collier's*, *Liberty*,

10. Karolevitz, *Where Your Heart Is*, p. 53; *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, s.v. "Cornwell, Dean."

11. *Brookings Register*, 8 Aug. 1918, 9 Jan., 3 Apr., 12 June 1919; *Industrial Collegian*, 23 Apr. 1918, 7, 21 Jan., 27 May 1919; Laurence E. Schmeckebier, *John Steuart Curry's Pageant of America* (New York: American Artists Group, 1943), pp. 13, 19-20; Susan E. Meyer, *America's Great Illustrators* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1978), pp. 31, 287.

12. *Brookings Register*, 10 July 1919; *An Evening in the Classroom* (Tenafly, N.J.: Mario Cooper, 1934), reprinted in Holaday, "Harvey Dunn," pp. 243-85; *Future for Art*, p. 14.

Life (the original), and *Cosmopolitan*.¹³ He developed a style that emphasized the clean lines, dark shading, and spare backgrounds that characterized the work of other popular 1920s artists such as John La Gatta, Will Grefe, J. J. Gould, and Charles D. Mitchell. Mathews's transition from collegiate amateur to magazine professional had taken a remarkably short time.

The Westport area formally became Mathews's new home base on 13 August 1920, when he and Gladys Stone, an aspiring singer of musicals and light opera, were married there at the home of her parents. The newlyweds moved into a colonial salt-box home set on close to an acre of land between Lyons Plains and Weston, about seven miles north of Westport. Fixing up their large barn into a studio with two guest bedrooms and a garage, they made the place their summer home. Mathews also maintained a studio in New York City so that he could stay close to his commissions, and each year when the weather made the roads more difficult to drive, the couple returned to the city for the winter. They lived for a while at 434 West Twenty-third Street, later moving to 144 East Twenty-second Street.¹⁴

With several commissions from *Ladies' Home Journal* in early 1921, Mathews's star was on the rise, and it appeared that his career might be on the same trajectory as that of his mentor, Harvey Dunn. The *Brookings Register* reported in February that Mathews's work was "gaining increased recognition and seems to be heading directly toward a place in the sun along with the work of Flagg, Christy, Brown, Underwood, Gruger" and other well-known illustrators.¹⁵ About this time, the illustrator started signing his work "Hubert Mathieu," returning to the original French family name that had been abandoned generations earlier. He explained that he made the change at the insistence of his grandfather, but it most likely had as much to do with promoting his image as an artist.¹⁶

During the summer of 1921, Mathieu and his wife lived with his parents in Brookings, where he taught art during the summer session at South Dakota State College. During a visit to the local Rotary Club, he regaled members with stories of amusing incidents from his magazine work and finished by dashing off sketches of several Rotarians, including businessman Van D. Fishback, physician Arthur H. Stoll, and newspaper editor Paul Dutcher.

13. *Industrial Collegian*, 17 Dec. 1918; *Brookings Register*, 1 Jan., 1 Apr. 1920; 4 Jan. 1923, 26 Feb., 13 Aug. 1925.

14. *New York Times*, 2 June 1933; *Brookings Register*, 19 Aug. 1920, 23 Feb. 1922, 5 Nov. 1925; O'Connell to the author, 19 Oct. 1992; Pierre Mathieu, "Hubert Jean Mathieu" (typescript), p. 3, attached to Pierre Mathieu to Joseph Stuart, Director, 7 Feb. 1977, South Dakota Art Museum, Brookings, S.Dak.

15. *Brookings Register*, 3 Feb. 1921.

16. *De Smet News*, 4 Mar. 1921; Mathieu, "Hubert Jean Mathieu," pp. 3-4.

Mathieu returned to Brookings for another summer session two years later, leaving his pregnant wife, who was unable to travel, back home in the East.¹⁷

Mathieu continued to subscribe to the *Brookings Register* to keep up with news from home, and his parents visited him when they traveled east on vacations or when his father attended professional meetings, such as the 1923 conference of the National Society of Inventors. When the Eastern Alumni Association of South Dakota State College got started, Mathieu delighted in their annual get-togethers. He was toastmaster in 1925 for the group's second gathering, held in the Blue Room of Hotel McAlpin in New York City. At the following year's meeting, which convened at the Pepper Pot in Greenwich Village, alums were asked to talk for no more than two minutes on the topic, "What I expect to do when I am old." Mathieu joked that he hoped to alternate sitting and standing under a shady oak tree. By 1928, when Mathieu was elected president of the group, his sister Zoa was working for an advertising agency in New York and was able to join in the fun.¹⁸

Mathieu enjoyed another tie to his alma mater through his contributions to the *Jackrabbit* yearbook. In the 1920 edition, he published one small drawing and five full-page drawings, most of them war scenes. His two full-page drawings in the 1921 yearbook, one of a girl at a piano and the other of two young people holding hands, reflected his shift from pen and ink to charcoal and crayon. For the 1926 *Jackrabbit*, Mathieu provided seven illustrations depicting events in South Dakota history from the arrival of the Verendryes and Lewis and Clark to the state's admission to the Union.¹⁹

Mathieu made a splash in the 1925 *Jackrabbit* with a drawing of the winner of a campus beauty contest he had been asked to judge.²⁰ From among a dozen women voted on by students, he chose Constance Austin because of "the linear beauty of her head and a delightful naive charm, all too rare among beautiful girls."²¹ The 1920s had witnessed an increased interest in the female form—as seen in the decade's beauty pageants, movies, magazines, and art—and Mathieu rolled with the tide. In 1923, he had produced a feature for the Wheeler Syndicate entitled "See America First: A Girl Geography of Forty-eight Lovely and Characteristic Types," which included pen-and-ink drawings of "the type of girl representative of each state of the union."²² In 1933, he performed duty for State College once again, choosing six beautiful women to be featured in the 1933 annual.²³

17. *Brookings Register*, 11, 25 Aug. 1921, 7 June 1923; O'Connell to the author, 19 Oct. 1992. Marie-Louise, the Mathieus' first child, was born in September 1923. A son, Pierre, came along in 1930. *Brookings Register*, 13 Sept. 1923, 19 June 1930.

18. *Brookings Register*, 1, 15 Mar. 1923, 19 Feb. 1925, 25 Feb. 1926, 16 Feb. 1928.

19. *Jackrabbit* (1920, 1921, 1926), *passim*.

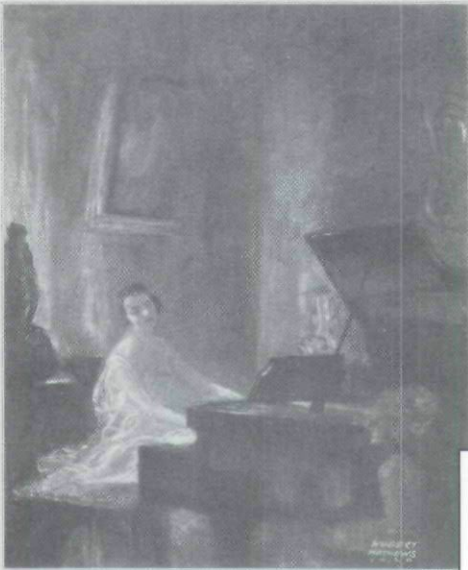
20. *Brookings Register*, 13 Dec. 1923.

21. *Jackrabbit* (1925), p. 246.

22. *Brookings Register*, 4 Jan. 1923.

23. *Jackrabbit* (1933), State Beauties Section.

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*If music be the food of love—play on.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.
Music has charms to soothe a savage beast,
To soften rocks or bend a knotted oak.*

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE

Both of these Mathieu illustrations from Jackrabbit yearbooks of the early 1920s reflect the artist's maturing style.



J U N I O R S



Mathieu's portrait of Constance Austin, whom he selected as the winner of a campus beauty contest, appeared in the 1925 State College yearbook.

By 1927, Mathieu was beginning to reap substantial financial rewards for his work. He had recently signed a new contract with *McCall's* for a salary of fifteen hundred dollars per month, with bonuses for additional work. His decision early that year to leave for Paris to study portrait art under Sir William Orpen, an English painter, and Jo Davidson, an American sculptor, indicated, however, that he was not entirely satisfied with fiction illustration. *McCall's* reportedly paid Mathieu's way, but magazine work appeared to have lost its interest for him. Entering upon his fourth decade, he had tired of "he and she" illustrations and was searching for new modes of expression. He

began to experiment with different techniques, for instance, spraying copper on a plaster-of-paris base to create reliefs and sculptures. One of his first such pieces was a plaque featuring his parents.²⁴

Unfortunately, Mathieu's desire to apply his newly acquired techniques came to little, because his likely subjects preferred movie-star or captain-of-industry likenesses to the realistic portraits he was prepared to offer. As a result, Mathieu reverted to the tried and true—the depiction of cover girls and heroic men in traditional fashion. The thirties were trying years in other ways as well. Mathieu's wife, Gladys, died of tuberculosis in June 1933 at the age of thirty-five. As the Great Depression deepened, his earnings nose-dived, while the care of his two children and the large mortgage on their Connecticut home kept the bills coming in. In order to cope, he resuscitated talents long neglected, sometimes playing trumpet in an orchestra, writing short stories, and acting. Advertising work also helped to keep the family afloat. Despite his problems and his admiration for President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, Mathieu refused to participate in any type of government-sponsored Works Progress Administration (WPA) art project.²⁵

His marriage in August 1935 to Beatrice Christine Bussey returned some happiness to Mathieu's personal life. With the addition of her two sons, the family grew to three boys and a girl. Mathieu's children, Pierre and Marie-Louise, and Bussey's sons, John and Richard (who both took the surname Mathieu), all went through adoption proceedings so that they could be formally integrated as a family.

Considering Weston to be too "arty" and wanting to "get back to the land," the Mathieus sold their residence for about eighty-five hundred dollars and moved to Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where they purchased a 160-acre farm for about sixty-five hundred dollars. While Mathieu frequently spent the week working in New York City, his wife led a rather isolated existence on the farm raising the children. Back home on weekends, Mathieu supervised an assortment of renovation and building projects. Misfortune struck again about a year after the move when the barn burned down, destroying the artist's paintings and mementos accumulated over the years.²⁶

The family's final move was to Onancock, Virginia, on the Eastern Shore. Mathieu added a studio to the house but preferred working near the living-room window so as not to miss any family activities. "We were loved, protected, and encouraged, and there was never any doubt about who was in charge," recalled Mathieu's daughter, Marie-Louise. "We were urged to 'try our wings,' be independent and responsible for our actions, and we knew he was always there to listen and advise, not to condemn. I don't remember ever

24. *Brookings Register*, 9 Dec. 1926, 10 Mar. 1927, 18 Feb. 1932; *Future for Art*, p. 14.

25. Mathieu, "Hubert Jean Mathieu," p. 4; *New York Times*, 2 June 1933, sec. C, p. 18.

26. Interview with Marie-Louise Mathieu O'Connell, Brookings, S.Dak., 21 Aug. 1992.

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being told that he was too busy to talk out a problem, but at the same time we knew (probably by our mother's example) that he should not be interrupted when absorbed in work."²⁷

Mathieu's widely varied interests included sculpting and writing, and he turned out some short stories that remained unpublished. While valuing his privacy and preferring to live in semirural areas, he enjoyed company and often invited people he had just met home for the weekend. Individuals whom he believed had contributed something worthwhile to society stimulated his admiration. He drew the line at businessmen, however, and for him "banker" was a dirty word. Those opinions excepted, bigotry in any form infuriated him.²⁸

Mathieu's advertising work gradually became his mainstay, and he pioneered two new techniques in the field—calligraphy and scratchboard. He also produced a daily newspaper feature, "Spot Your Plane," for the armed forces in the period before the bombing at Pearl Harbor. The feature consisted of airplane silhouettes, mostly enemy ones, so that ordinary citizens might identify possible invaders. Even more successful was a syndicated feature entitled "Our Democracy," which ran in nearly two thousand newspapers and magazines nationwide beginning in 1940. It was done in cartoon format, usually in scratchboard, and the earnings from it contributed nicely to the family's financial security.²⁹

After World War II, Mathieu continued his advertising career, often working from photographs. For him it was a job, and he wasted little time waiting for inspiration. If an idea was not working out, he would walk around a bit and then sit down and finish the task. Mathieu was thinking about cutting back on his advertising commissions and devoting more time to painting portraits when he entered the hospital for a routine thyroid checkup late in 1954. He appeared to be in good health except for a minor thyroid deficiency, but while in the hospital he suffered a heart attack. His death on 15 November 1954 was a shock to his family and friends.³⁰

At the time of his death, Mathieu was involved in the planning of a South Dakota art center, which he hoped would be located on the State College campus. Harvey Dunn's donation of several dozen prairie paintings had initiated the movement, and Mathieu had volunteered to create a series of historical paintings on subjects like those chosen for the 1926 college annual. While Mathieu never completed the series, he did produce about a dozen

27. O'Connell to the author, 19 Oct. 1992.

28. Interview with O'Connell.


29. Mathieu, "Hubert Jean Mathieu," pp. 5-6; *Brookings Register*, 21 Nov. 1954.

30. O'Connell to the author, 19 Oct. 1992.

OUR DEMOCRACY ——— by Mat

"The true test of civilization is not the census, nor the size of cities nor the crops — no, but the kind of man the country turns out."

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON



I am an American. A free American
Free to speak—without fear
Free to worship my own God
Free to stand for what I think right
Free to oppose what I believe wrong
Free to choose those who govern my country
This heritage I pledge to uphold
For myself and all mankind.

—THE FREEDOM PLEDGE

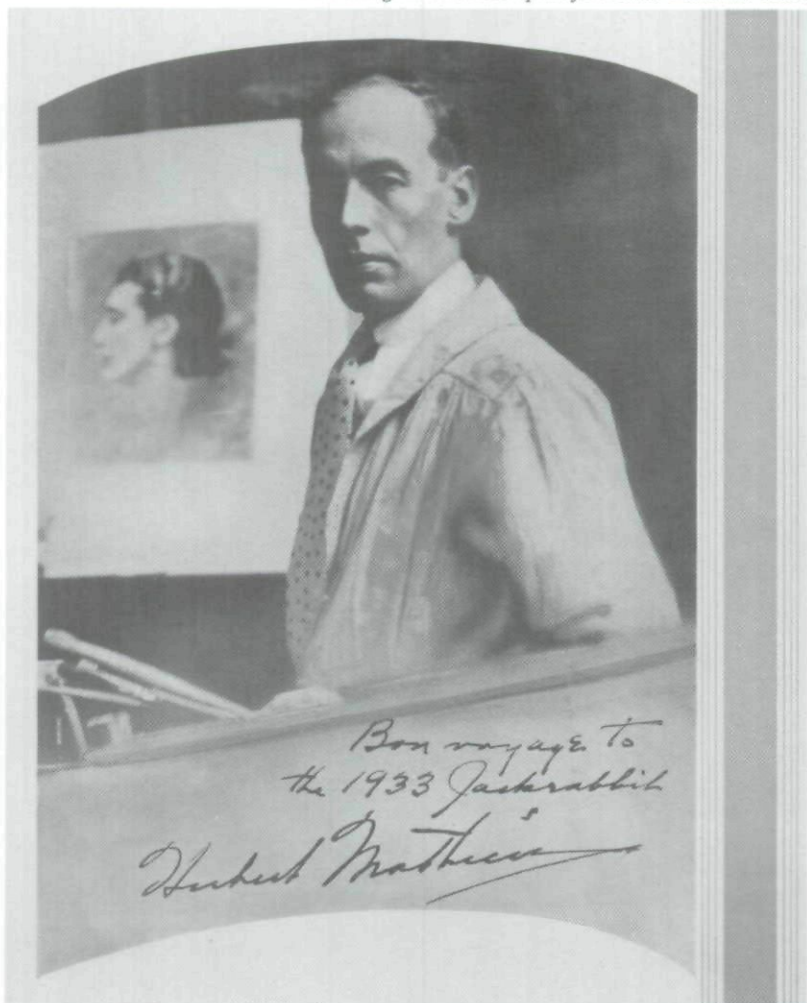
—ROBERT MATHIEU

For more than a decade, Mathieu produced "Our Democracy," a syndicated feature that ran in nearly two thousand newspapers and magazines across the country.

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pen-and-ink drawings of campus scenes that were used for a booklet promoting the new center. Entitled *A Future for Art*, it appeared just two weeks before he died. Five of these drawings were also reproduced in the 1955 college yearbook. South Dakota State College also had a half dozen Mathieu

Even after he gained fame as an illustrator, Mathieu maintained close ties to State College and worked on plans for a South Dakota art center.



paintings in its possession, including portraits of Ada Caldwell, Carl Christensen, and several members of Mathieu's family.³¹

In an interview conducted not long before he died, Mathieu had summed up his mature approach to both art and life. "I'm painting portraits—but no glamour pussies!" he said. "I've finally grown up to some appreciation of the greatness of people and the character and beauty that makes one different from all others. It's exciting to try to express, however faintly, the individual; product of his Creator, his forebears, and his own growth." In describing his ambitions, he remarked: "I hope I never find out what I should have been. I've done so many things that I can, in these later years, daydream about years to come in which I'll be a mighty whopper at something new and exciting. Sure, I've never grown up! What American ever does?"³²

Mathieu, in the end, seems to have had a sure sense of himself. Having experienced both joy and disappointment, he had grown to understand his own limitations and enjoy his accomplishments. His unusual artistic ability had won him a modest amount of fame and financial reward. Few people, however, long remembered his achievements as a magazine illustrator, cartoonist, and portrait painter. Although he had absorbed many of Harvey Dunn's teachings, he lacked the close ties to the land that provided Dunn with his most significant material. Perhaps, had Mathieu taken as his subject the small town with which he was so familiar, he could have created a permanently significant body of work. Instead, he is remembered as a skilled draftsman, productive but without a distinctive niche. His magazine illustrations and cartoon series, however, mark him as one of South Dakota's most accomplished illustrators and artists, for whom recognition is long overdue.

31. *Brookings Register*, 3, 21 Nov. 1954; Pierre Mathieu to Joseph Stuart, 10 Mar. 1976, South Dakota Art Museum; *Jackrabbit* (1955), passim.

32. Quoted in Mathieu, "Hubert Jean Mathieu," pp. 5-6.

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