

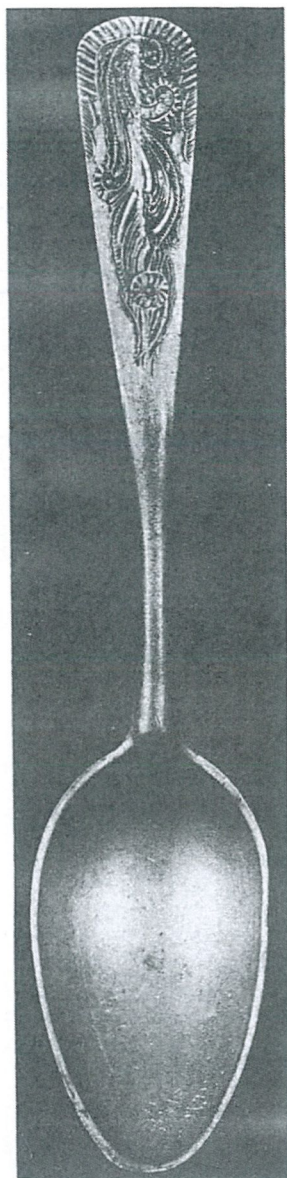
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JULY, 1931

New York, who, in 1856, sold them at auction in New York City. The purchaser, A. B. Douglas of Brooklyn, resold the pair to Abiel A. Low, a wealthy resident of Brooklyn, from whom they descended to an elder son, A. Augustus Low. The latter later disposed of the Madison portrait to Herbert L. Pratt. Shortly before or soon after Mr. Low's death the Monroe likeness passed to a brother, the Honorable Seth Low, from whose estate it was subsequently acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Park, as cited above, prints two different statements concerning these transfers. He is probably correct in the one that corresponds substantially to the outline here presented.

According to Mr. Morgan, various details relating to the negotiations accompanying Abiel A. Low's purchase are recorded among documents more or less deeply buried in the archives of the Long Island Historical Society in Brooklyn. Having been unsuccessful in one or two attempts to secure access to these papers while interest in their possibly valuable contents might still be fresh, the Attic confesses to having lost enthusiasm in that direction. Sufficient be it, therefore, to broadcast tidings as to the whereabouts of these missing links in the chain of Stuart history.

The Madison portrait has been several times published. That of Monroe is less familiar, and is accordingly here reproduced.



### *A Primitive Invasion*

THE ATTIC would add to the list of works eligible for inclusion in the category of American primitive sculpture the Noah's Ark and its contingent of passengers reproduced on the opposite page from a photograph supplied by Miss Lilian W. Boschen of Freehold, New Jersey. The entire work is credited to an anonymous negro bartender in the South, who is said to have accomplished his *chef-d'œuvre* in the hope that it might stimulate the sale of Hunter whiskey. This tale should, perhaps, be taken with a pinch of salt or a drop of rye; yet the craft as originally constructed may have served some such purpose as that suggested. It represents a sailboat of a kind that might possibly be used by hunters along the shores of tidal reaches; and two of its present crew, one of them a man in high boots carrying a fowling piece, the other a seated youth with a box on his knees, may have been its first and only personnel at the time of its launching. Such a group would recall raw and foggy autumnal mornings devoted to duck shooting, and the incidental need of energizing fluids of an appropriate brand.

The rest of the present assemblage, it must be assumed, flew or scrambled aboard subsequent to the adoption of the prohibition amendment. Most striking among the newcomers are the figures of a man and a woman, burdened with three offspring, who seem just to

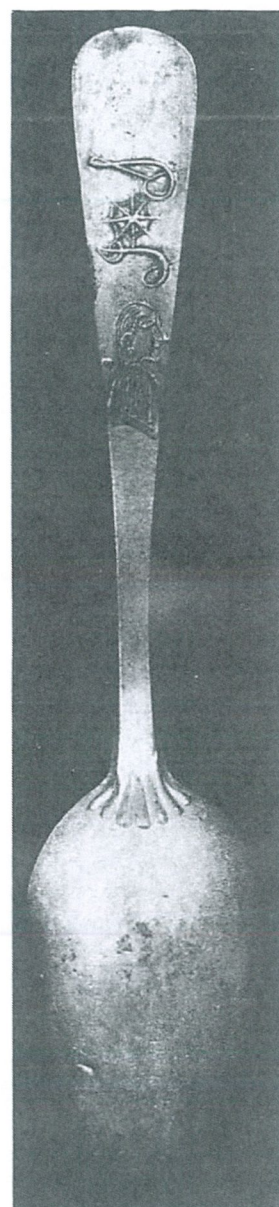
have stepped over the stern. There is some reason to believe that they were carved as effigies of Adam and Eve departing from Eden with certain hitherto unrecorded beginnings of the earth's population. In that case, their descent upon the Ark is not logically to be accounted for; but then, neither is Noah's waiving of his two-and-two rule in favor of the woodpecker tribe. At any rate, the figures of Adam and Eve, if such they be, justify publication of the entire outfit. The Attic would rather own that ingenious sculptural pair than possess a statue by Epstein.

### *A Pewter Spoon*

SURPRISES for collectors may at any time be expected from Pennsylvania. Here, unless the Attic is mistaken, is a fresh one, recently sprung by a correspondent, Merrill M. Kessler of Hanover in the Keystone State.

In this instance the thrill is provided by the most curious pewter serving spoon that ever penetrated the Attic precincts. There is nothing remarkable about the general form of this utensil, which suggests styles in vogue during the late 1770's or early 1780's. The crude shell drop at the joining of bowl and handle calls for no particular comment. But the ornamentation of the upper handle must give us pause. Cast — not engraved — in the metal of the obverse appears an involved *rocaille* scroll. On the reverse we find — similarly cast — the initials *J. S.*, separated by an eight-pointed star, and below them a portrait of a gentleman whose proboscis before is balanced by a curling queue behind. This personage, it may be assumed, is none other than the owner of the initials and, incidentally, of the spoon and its fellows. He may prove to be worth looking up; for, if he was the maker as well as the owner of this spoon, he was an ingenious customer. It will be noted that his decorative design is achieved, throughout, in relief whose fundamental plane is, at all points, one with the surface of the handle. From this circumstance it is safe to conclude that the original mold, as it came into the caster's possession, was, with the exception of the shell drop, entirely devoid of ornament, and that the more fanciful embellishments were incised in its metal as an afterthought, and probably by a hand other than that of the maker of the mold itself. Though these embellishments are essentially Teutonic in character, their *naïveté* of conception and execution suggests rural Pennsylvania workmanship.

The Attic has been assured that other specimens of spoons evidently cast in a recut mold are known; but that such items are seldom encountered.



PEWTER SPOON (last quarter eighteenth century)  
Length: 8 inches.  
From the collection of Merrill M. Kessler