

Supplemental information regarding
Mr. Samuel H. Kress and the Kress
Collection.

Samuel H. Kress was born in Cherryville, Pennsylvania, son of John Franklin Kress and Margaret Dodson (Connor) Kress. His ancestors fought in both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. After starting his career at an early age as a school-teacher, he subsequently founded a stationery store in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania. Three years afterward he purchased a wholesale stationery and toy business at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and ten years later was the owner of a chain of thirteen stores in the South, thus laying the foundation for the great chain of 240 stores now operated by the S. H. Kress & Company from coast to coast.

Mr. Kress is a member of several patriotic organizations, including the Sons of the American Revolution, Sons of the Revolution and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion. In 1936 he was elected a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York of the class of 1943. He is president of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, established by him in 1929.

Mr. Kress has shown his interest in Italy in many ways besides collecting paintings and sculpture. He has generously provided for the restoration of a number of rooms in the famous

Ducal Palace of the Gonzagas at Mantua and, more recently, for the restoration of the renowned Mantegna frescoes in that magnificent edifice. Historic monuments in Ravenna, Spoleto and other places have been restored by funds furnished by him. In recognition of this great service and on account of his wide interest in Italian art, Mr. Kress has been accorded numerous honors. Last year he was elevated to the maximum rank in the Order of the Crown of Italy, that of "Knight of the Grand Cross", having previously held the rank "Grand Officer" in the same Order.

Over the course of the years that Mr. Kress has been collecting art, he has donated more than seventy fine paintings to museums and colleges throughout the United States and is continuing to do so. He also provided for a Loan Exhibition of Italian paintings, sixty in number, from his great collection. This exhibit consisted of characteristic examples of the various schools and it traversed the length of the continent during the years 1932-35, showing in twenty-five different cities in thirteen states for periods of from three to four weeks each. Over 125,000 catalogues with reproductions of the entire loan collection were distributed free of charge, many of which are now being used as text books by art students.

The Samuel H. Kress Collection:

Mr. Kress has brought many great works of art from Europe, such as the celebrated "Adoration of the Shepherds" by Giorgione, which he recently acquired from the late Lord Duveen who bought it from Lord Allendale in England. This is one of the most beautiful and important paintings in America and will take its place in the Gallery as one of the Nation's greatest art treasures. From the same collection came also Mr. Kress' "Meeting of St. Anthony and St. Paul" by Sassetta. Another great masterpiece which he recently acquired from Europe is a well-known "Madonna and Child" by Filippo Lippi which formerly hung in the Kaiser Friederich Museum, Berlin.

In addition, Mr. Kress has succeeded in keeping in this country many important works of art which might otherwise have returned to Europe and become permanently fixed in European galleries. An example of Mr. Kress' foresight in this respect was his acquisition of practically the entire collection of Italian paintings belonging to the late Henry Goldman in New York. When that Collection was placed on the market a few years ago, Mr. Kress acquired at that time such outstanding works as - Titian's "Lady at a Mirror"; Giorgione and Titian's "Portrait of a Man"; Fra Angelico's "Entombment"; Giotto's

majestic "Madonna and Child"; Gentile da Fabriano's "Madonna and Child"; Bartolomeo Veneto's "Portrait of Maximilian Sforza"; and Nardo di Cione's triptych.

Several years ago Mr. Kress acquired from the Mackay Collection the highly important painting, "The Calling of Peter and Andrew" by Duccio di Buoninsegna, which once formed part of the famous "Maestas" - the altarpiece painted by him for the Cathedral of Siena between 1308 and 1311 - and which with the Duccio in the Mellon Collection, gives to the National Gallery two of the finest examples of the work of that great Master of the Sienese School. Other works of art which came from the Mackay Collection and which are also included in this magnificent gift are the following: Desiderio da Settignano's marble "Bust of Isotta da Rimini"; Antonio Rossellino's marble "Madonna and Child"; Baldovinetti's lovely "Madonna and Child"; Giovanni Bellini's "St. Jerome Reading in a Landscape"; Matteo di Giovanni's "Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels"; and Perugino's "Madonna and Child".

The Sienese School is represented in the Kress Collection by practically all of its most famous names. In addition to the Duccio, there are works by Simone Martini, the Lorenzettis, Lippo Memmi, Sassetta, Vecchietta, Giovanni di Paolo,

Matteo di Giovanni, Girolamo di Benvenuto, Neroccio, and others.

There is a particularly beautiful and extremely important Florentine "Madonna" by Domenico Veneziano; also a predellapiece, "The Stigmatization of St. Francis", from the famous altarpiece now in the Uffizzi Gallery, Florence, by the same master; as well as works by the early Florentines, Giotto, Agnolo Gaddi, Bernardo Daddi and Nardo di Cione. There are also paintings by Benozzo Gozzoli, Filippino Lippi, Masolino, Pesellino, Piero di Cosimo, Ghirlandaio and Andrea del Sarto of the Florentine School and by Signorelli, Pintoricchio, Perugino and the rare Gentile da Fabriano of the Umbrian School.

The Collection contains seven paintings by Giovanni Bellini, including some of his best portraits and an important "Madonna and Child". Bellini's brother-in-law, Mantegna, is represented by a beautiful "Madonna"; and, in addition to the Giorgione "Adoration", there are paintings by other famous Venetians, such as Titian, Tintoretto, Bartolommeo and Alvise Vivarini, Carpaccio, Carlo Crivelli, Lorenzo Lotto, and Paolo Veronese. The 18th Century Venetians are well represented by examples by G. B. Tiepolo, Piazzetta, Guardi, Canaletto and Pietro Longhi.

The Kress Collection contains several outstanding paintings of the North Italian Schools, especially the Ferrarese, which is represented by a pair of portraits by Ercole Roberti, of Giovanni II Bentivoglio and Ginevra Bentivoglio, considered one of the finest pairs of portraits in the world; also two Saints by Francesco Cossa, once in the famous Spiridon Collection; as well as by examples by Marco Zoppo, Cosimo Tura, Costa and Dosso Dossi.

In Mr. Kress' gift to the National Gallery are examples from some of the most famous collections of Europe, such as the Collection of Prince Giovanelli of Venice; the Barberini, Sterbini and Stroganoff Collections of Rome; the Gustav Dreyfus and Spiridon Collections of Paris; the Trivulzio, Chiesa, Frizzoni, Crespi and Grandi Collections of Milan; the Fairfax Murray and Strozzi Collections of Florence; the Robert H. and Evelyn Benson Collection of London, and others.

Mr. Stephen S. Pichetto, restorer and technical adviser of paintings of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, stated:

"I consider Mr. Kress's gift to the National Gallery the most important event in the Art World since the founding of the Gallery by Mr. Mellon. As a Collection of Italian Art, it is unequalled in this country. It contains the most effective representation possible of the important Italian Schools, and is the supreme interpretation of Italian Art from its origin up to and including the Eighteenth Century. Some of the greatest paintings in this country are included in this Collection, the most renowned masters of Siena, Florence, Venice, and other schools being well represented. Profound knowledge, as well as instinctive taste, were essential to the assembling of so comprehensive a group of paintings, and their beauty and quality will enhance the regal simplicity of the National Gallery.

"Mr. Kress has been so unobtrusive in the assembling of his Collection that the human element is hidden in the magnitude of this gift. Such generosity is somehow tinged with sadness. Hardly ever has it been known that a gift of such worldwide importance was given during the lifetime of the donor. But, no doubt, the enthusiasm of its reception and the benefits to be derived from it by others will repay Mr. Kress for the sacrifice he makes in relinquishing the joy of ownership."