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NEWS RELEASE

National Gallery of Art
Washington, D. C.

FOR RELEASE: Sunday morning papers,
February 24, 1946.

WASHINGTON, February 23: David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today a gift from Mrs. Barbara Hutton of four magnificent paintings by Canaletto, each representing a scene centering around the Square of Saint Mark's or the Ducal Palace, in Venice. Of the four paintings, two - "A Fete Day, Venice" and "The Courtyard of the Ducal Palace, with the Procession of the Papal Legate" - have been on loan at the National Gallery, while the two others - "Venice, The Quay of the Piazzetta" and "The Square of Saint Mark's" - have never been exhibited here before. Through the generosity of Mrs. Hutton the National Gallery's collection of Canalettos now numbers six.

John Walker, Chief Curator of the National Gallery, stated that the four Venetian scenes were probably all commissioned by English collectors. They show the fascinating spectacle of that pageantry which marked the declining years of the Venetian Republic. Two of the paintings, "A Fete Day, Venice" and "The Courtyard of the Ducal Palace", are among the largest canvases painted by Canaletto.

The two smaller pictures, though less festive in spirit, are more revealing of the everyday life of Venice. "The Quay of the Piazzetta" is a particularly fine example of the artist's work, representing an almost windless day when flags and pennants are drooping and the water of Saint Mark's basin laps along in a stream of ripples, painted with the undulating white strokes that characterize Canaletto.

By a happy coincidence the new Canalettos have rejoined at the National Gallery another famous painting, the portrait by Reynolds of Lady Caroline Howard in the Mellon Collection, which once hung with the four Canalettos on the walls of Lady Caroline's home at Castle Howard, Yorkshire.

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