

Original Artwork of Chevron Scenic Cover Series

Curtis Carroll RMCA #46

This edition's cover sheet shows what I believe to be original "roughs" of several Chevron Scenic Covers along side the actual map.

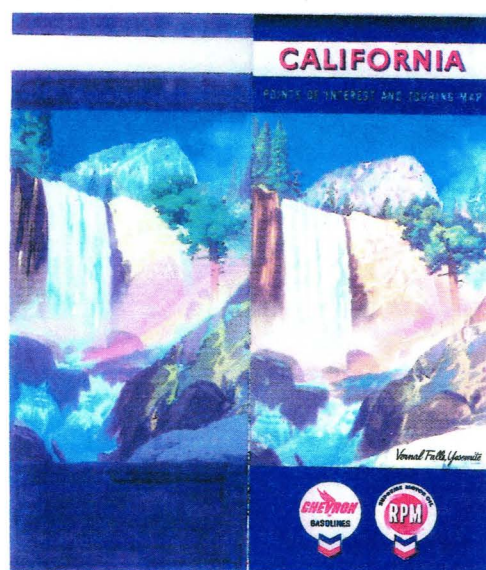
A couple of years ago on eBay, I bid and won a piece of original art for the one of the Chevron Scenic Cover series (San Diego's Balboa Park). While communicating with the seller, Jim Snidle of Chico, California, I learned that he had about a dozen other originals that he'd bought in an exclusive San Francisco estate auction. The family of the estate was not revealed for privacy reasons, but Mr. Snidle said he was obviously an illustrator. He added that some estate items that had been gifts from Maynard Dixon, the highly acclaimed landscape illustrator who evidently had been a close friend. Since I couldn't afford to buy them all (he wanted \$200 each!) I asked him to make color copies of those he had, which he did for a fee.

After receiving the entire batch, I soon noticed they weren't identical to the scenes on the actual maps, lacking intricate detail and having slight variances in composition. I surmised that these were actually preliminary "roughs" probably submitted to Chevron by the artist for comment and approval. This might explain why they existed at all since they were the property of the artist, not Chevron.

I worked for H. M. Gousha for a couple of years before their sale to Rand McNally in 1996. There were still two people on the Gousha San Jose staff who were there towards the end of the Scenic Cover era. I asked them if they knew who the artist was and if they could remember any other details. Neither knew the artist's name and one said that his name was never revealed since Chevron didn't want the artist snatched up by another oil company. Also, that this person did not work for Chevron and was a freelancer, apparently a very busy one. He added that the original artwork used for the cover was actually drawn at 200% and reduced whereas the artwork I have is at one-to-one scale. All original artwork was owned by Chevron and returned to them after Gousha printed the map. This was common practice with all the larger oil companies that supplied their own cover art.

Shortly after I received the artwork, I contacted Mr. Snidle by e-mail and phone. I wanted to alert the club about this opportunity for other collectors. He never returned my e-mails or repeated phone messages. After a month or so, his phone was disconnected. Maybe he sold the rest to another collector and retired!

The identity of this artist remains lost to history at this point and the trail has grown cold. My repeated attempts at finding anyone at Chevron who knows anything about the Scenic Cover series have been fruitless. Many people have suggested that J. Walter Thompson, Chevron's ad agency at the time, may have had a hand in their creation, but I don't think so. Road maps were handled in-house by Chevron, since they were considered direct marketing as opposed to mass marketing. Meanwhile, this artist's work lives on in many of our collections and the wonderful Scenic Cover series continues to attract new admirers and perhaps future collectors.



Chevron Scenic Covers

Roughs and
finished covers

RMCA
Legend

#25

