

Amateur artist works on painting of St. Joseph. The finished painting hangs in St. Joseph's Church, Rosebank, Staten Island. The boy never studied art.

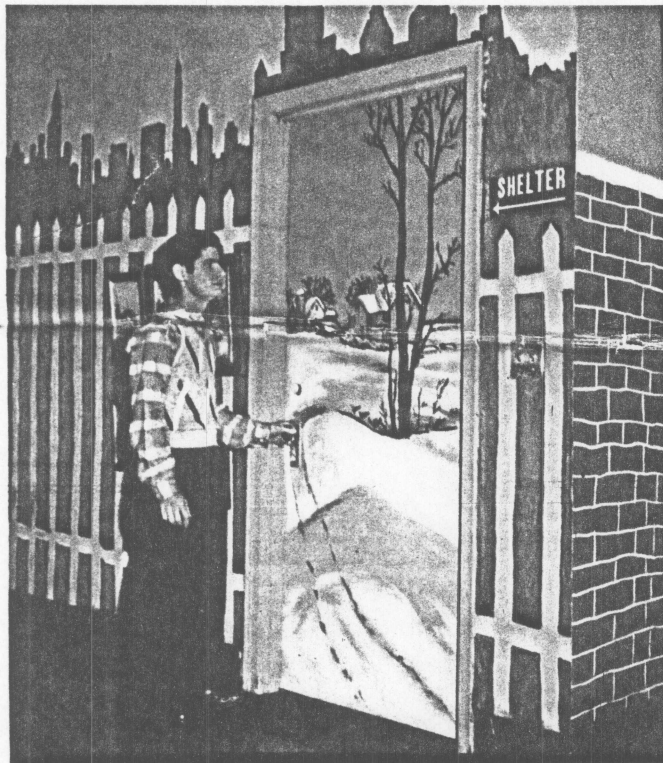


Every nuance of the sky, the town in the distance and the autumn trees has been faithfully captured.

# The amateur

By DICK OWEN

NEWS COLORFOTOS BY WILLIAM KLEIN



Young artist looks over snow scene he painted on a door at Willowbrook State School. This was part of a display he made during the holiday season.

**M**ANY persons believe that it is extremely difficult to become a painter. They feel that it requires a lot of talent as well as years of study. They are wrong.

While it is true that great artists have a skill far beyond being able to draw or mix colors, thousands of persons have made themselves and others happy with their amateur paintings. Winston Churchill and President Eisenhower are both amateur painters.

We might bear in mind, if we feel unsure of our ability, that painters, like musicians, often surround their art with a lot of high-sounding nonsense. But it means nothing to the ordinary person who just wants to paint and it won't add or detract a stroke from your skill.

How do you get started?

You go to an artists' supply store, buy paints—oils or water colors—some brushes and paper and begin. It may aid you at first to sketch lightly with pencil the outline of the scene you have decided to reproduce. Once you have the outlines down, go to work with brushes and paint.

And don't be discouraged if your first efforts look hammy. You'll gradually learn how to mix colors and how to gain proper perspectives. And remember, your work has to improve, because it can't possibly get worse.

Do you still have doubts? Then study the paintings reproduced here. They were all done by an amateur, a mentally retarded boy. He has never had a painting lesson in his life. He hasn't read a single book on art (he can't read or write).

These pictures were chosen for a dual purpose: to show how an amateur can develop a talent, and to encourage readers who would like to take up painting, by this boy's example.

This boy was retarded when born. He has no relatives. He lives at Willowbrook State School on