

PIETER BREUGHEL the Elder, attrib. to  
Flemish school, active by 1551 - died 1569.

The birthdate of this artist, sometimes known as "Peasant Breughel", is unknown. He or his family probably came from one of the two Flemish towns named Bruegël -- perhaps the one in North Brabant, near s'Hertogenbosch, where Hieronymus Bosch had worked, since Bosch-like monsters appear in Breughel's early paintings. According to van Mander, he was a pupil of Pieter Cock van Aelst. In 1551, the year after Cock's death, he entered the painter's guild at Antwerp; and he married Cock's daughter twelve years later. He travelled in 1552-53, visiting Rome and probably Naples, and recording in numerous drawings the Alpine and southern landscapes through which he passed. Back in Antwerp, probably in 1553, he made a business arrangement around this time with Hieronymus Cock the engraver, and continued for a number of years to produce drawings which were engraved and published by Cock and his assistants. In 1563 he moved to Brussels, and though he continued to supply drawings to Cock, particularly now political satires, the last six years of his life seem to have been devoted mainly to painting. He produced in 1563 the Tower of Babel now in Vienna, in 1564 two religious paintings, in 1565 his famous series of Harvest subjects; and there are at least five dated pictures from the year 1568. In his paintings of peasant subjects he recorded viillage and farm life, dances and weddings; and there are other series of paintings illustrating occupations, proverbs and human failings.

Seascape with a High Cliff

oil on copper, 5x4½ ins.

Provenance

Acquired by Dr Clowes from Dawson, 19 .

Acquired with an attribution to Pieter Breughel,  
this painting may perhaps --following a suggestion of J.Held's<sup>2</sup>--  
be by Jan Breughel the Elder<sup>(2)</sup>

Notes.

X 1. Memorandum to Dr Clowes, (Clowes archives). Subsequently  
Held confirmed this attribution orally.

2. A comparable painting of a Coast Scene, attrib. to J.Breughel,  
is in the colln. of Lord Hesketh (ca.  $6\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  ins. ; photo in  
Witt Lib.)