



ABOUT 10 years ago, in the first years of Charles Herbert Woodbury's sketching classes on the Swampscott beach, when the battered, time-stained and moss-covered old

buildings there had not been disturbed by obtrusive Queen Anne intruders, one of his pupils said to him, after watching the facility with which he painted the sand and rocks and boats in the immediate vicinity, "Why don't you paint marines, Mr. Woodbury?" and his answer was characteristic enough, and to the point. It was: "Don't know enough yet." Well, the "yet" time must have passed, to judge from his present wonderful success in painting the sea.

Mr. Woodbury has lived near the water the greater part of his life, and must unconsciously have absorbed his knowledge of its ever-changing immensity, its variations of color and its subtleties of drawing long before he considered himself able to represent it.

A few years ago his first important painting of the sea (somehow the word "marine" is so inexpressive of his work) was shown at the Boston Art Club, and immediately attracted the attention not only of connoisseurs, but of the general public, usually not very quick to know a good thing until they have had it pointed out to them.

His First Sea Picture.

His first idea for this large picture, called "Mid-Ocean," now in the museum at Pittsfield, came to him while on his way home across the ocean from Holland, and he made his preliminary sketches during the long trip of a slow-going vessel. This picture showed simply the deep sea as seen from the stern of the vessel, with the mighty pull and swirl of the waves in the wake.

The depth and strength and absolute power of the water in mid-ocean is so well conveyed to the mind of the on-looker that unconsciously he feels for some strong support, something to "hold on to," for fear of being swept away into those limitless depths so well depicted.

At the time this picture was first shown at the Art Club several marines were shown there, the usual "rock and surf" business, but the far-seeing judges showed a fine disregard for their knowledge of a great picture by awarding a prize to one of the every-day, well-enough marines. "Mid-Ocean" was afterward exhibited in the Paris Salon, and excited most unusual attention.

Another important work of Mr. Woodbury's is the one called "A Rock and the Sea," which received a medal at the recent Paris exhibition and also at Buffalo.

Still another big sea picture (big in every sense of the word) is owned by the great electrician, Prof. Elihu Thomson, and another mid-ocean canvas, shown recently in the Doll & Richards gallery, is owned by a well known woman connoisseur in Boston.

Mr. Woodbury has received a large number of prizes, awards and "mentions" ever since his first exhibition days. He has always, even from a small boy, been the hardest kind of a hard worker, and shown a remarkable personal force in his painting, keeping steadily to his own purpose, and entirely unmoved by fads and fashions, as well as by the opinions and advice of others, feeling within himself a positive power which only steadfastness and time could prove. The pictures he has exhibited in Boston in the past few years show that

he has made no mistake in being unmoved by any outside influence.

His Wife Also an Artist.

At one time Mr. Woodbury had a studio on School street, and in this same building, up many stairs, was another studio containing four young women art students, working together, with Sig. Juguloris coming as a weekly critic.

Miss Marcia Oaks was one of these enthusiastic young workers, and in the most natural way in the world she met Mr. Woodbury. The result of this friendship was their marriage a couple of years later.

Mrs. Woodbury was born in South Berwick, Me., and comes of a family of lawyers and doctors. She studied hard at music, thinking of making that her aim in life, but after instruction in drawing under Sig. Tomaso Juguloris, when he was in this country a few years ago, she was encouraged to abandon music for art. She taught drawing in the Berwick Academy and did some illustrating before her marriage to Mr. Woodbury.

Mrs. Woodbury exhibited first some pen drawings of children in the Boston Art Club in 1888. Some very successful pictures of hers were those of the Dutch peasant children in their grotesque and "paintable" clothes, and these were done during the stay in Holland. Her first work was almost entirely in water colors, a medium she handles with great ability, but more recently her paintings have been in oils, and a portrait of their small son, David, shows an equal facility in handling of oils.

This portrait is a wonderfully good one of a child of the nervous, imaginative, brilliant type of today, whose little brain seems always on the lookout for some new marvel to investigate.

Mrs. Woodbury has received many honors, among them a prize from the Boston Art Club, honorable mention at the Nashville exposition, a medal from the Mechanics' Association of Boston and also one from the international exposition at Atlanta.

She has always, from the time of her first sketches, drawn figures, and as Mr. Woodbury has always turned his attention to landscape or marine painting, these two artists have had rather different points of view and have criticised and helped each other greatly, for, though they agree on fundamentals, they are working for different ideals. Mrs. Woodbury says of her own work that any knowledge she has acquired of painting she has learned through her failures, being made in such a fashion that she can learn in no other way. She wishes to paint not portraits only, but a certain definite, typical beauty that appeals to her, never for merely picturesque qualities—composition or color or hue never arouses her desire to paint, but a certain unrevealed personal—perhaps spiritual—beauty, that is always beneath the surface, a thing that stands not of itself, but as related to all nature, animate or inanimate.

She considers that of all her work the only thing that represents what she is even trying for is the "Mother and Daughter," the picture shown at the recent "Fair Women" exhibition in Copley Hall.

Mr. Woodbury's Early Life.

Mr. Woodbury was born in Lynn 33 years ago. He comes of a well-known old family there, though his artistic talent seems not to have been inherited from any immediate ancestor. As a boy he grew up apparently as any youth might, attending the public school, although while in the high school his facility in drawing first attracted attention, and before he was graduated there he had exhibited at the Boston Art Club, in company with another boy

of his own age, Edward Stuart. This first picture, a study of a hunter's camp in the woods, showed a really remarkable feeling for tone and values. A little later he exhibited a very good picture of the Lynn marshes, and this was purchased at the time by the Art Club.

During the time he studied at the Institute of Technology, besides doing the regular work of the school, he gave lessons in drawing, and partially paid his own way. Ross Turner at that time was the instructor in water color painting for the students in the architectural course. Mr. Woodbury was in the civil engineering department, but Mr. Turner, having seen some of the sketches of the embryo engineer, allowed him to enter the class of the other pupils in aquarelle, a kindness much appreciated by this ambitious youth.

Other than this, Mr. Woodbury has never studied (in the ordinary meaning of the word) with any master or in any school, but has worked out his own salvation, unaided except for the occasional criticism of his older artist friends, and his art is distinctly his own, untrammelled by traditions or foreign influence. He represents what a typical American (but a most gifted one) can do by his own study and work in his native land.

Their Home in Maine.

For a number of years Mr. and Mrs. Woodbury have spent the greater part of each year at Ogunquit, Me., having built there first a studio and later a cottage. This house is high up on a rocky ledge, 200 feet from the sea, while the studio itself is close on the shore, from the windows of which many of Mr. Woodbury's pictures are painted. A miniature river empties into the "cove" in front of the buildings and a fleet of fishing boats rides at anchor there.

Mr. Woodbury has taught ever since he got through college, and, generally speaking, his pupils have been older than himself. He has had a most successful summer class for many years, first at Swampscott and later at Ogunquit, this being the fourth year at the latter place, and there it has assumed larger proportions and the character of a school, his pupils coming from all parts of the country.

His theories of painting (having a scientific quality of mind), combined with his practical demonstration in the great pictures he paints, have given him an authority on the subject which it is safe to say is entirely unparalleled in any other "institution" of its kind.

He does not work by criticisms, but by opening the pupils' eyes to principles. On Saturdays he has a "concours," criticising and enlarging upon the work that the students have done alone during the week. Each time he gives what may be called a problem, the object of which is to train their observation and powers for composition, etc.; in fact for picture making.

This feature is unique. Pupils come back even as far as Boston every week for it, and, as no one is admitted who is not a pupil, outsiders frequently apply to become a member of the class (who do not paint) for the sake of hearing this lecture. He also has a very large special class in the winter for teachers, which proves to be of great benefit to them.

TO FIT THE BILL.

[From the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.]

"And these great rolls of paper, which you say are half a mile long," said the visitor to the print shop, "what are they used for?"

The guide placed a hand upon one of them. "Each and every one you see," said he, impressively, "will come from the press a printed billhead for a plumber."

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