



William and Judith Wilder on their sailboat in Passamaquoddy Bay, St. Andrews-by-the-Sea, New Brunswick

I have been guided by the philosophy that you can't take everything out of life without putting something back in. With the help of my wife, my family, and many friends and business associates, I have been fortunate to accomplish both.

—WILLIAM P. WILDER

HEFFEL IS DEEPLY honored to present a very special selection of artworks from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder this fall. Heffel has many fond memories of William and Judith "Billie"; we were lucky enough to build a lasting relationship that spanned many years. Their passion for Canadian art, their philanthropic impact and their zest for life shone through during memorable visits to our galleries and in their beautiful home.

William, known to many as Bill (or Buck to his grandchildren, a nickname he gained during his time in the Royal Navy), passed away in 2019 at the age of 96. He is memorialized by the incredible legacy he left behind as a Canadian business leader, a staunch philanthropist, a loving father and grandfather, and a passionate art collector.

Following his World War II Royal Navy service, William completed his studies at Montreal's McGill University and began his career selling bonds with Wood Gundy (now CIBC Wood Gundy). He went on to pursue an MBA at Harvard Business School, an experience he often called life-changing, before returning to the securities firm. Several years later, he became chief executive of Wood Gundy and led the prestigious firm to much success, financing large Canadian energy companies and major national

projects. William then moved on to lead the Canadian Arctic Gas consortium, and then to Consumers' Gas as chairman and CEO. William's knowledge and expertise was sought after throughout his life, as he served on many boards, including those of the Royal Bank of Canada, Canada Life Assurance Company, Noranda Mines and Maclean-Hunter, to name only a few.

Like his business acumen, William's philanthropy was also far-reaching, with a focus on education, among other important causes. He became a major donor to Upper Canada College in Toronto, where he went to school, and to Harvard Business School, where the Wilder House building stands in his name.

Highlighting his many accolades, William was awarded the Order of Canada in 2017 and the Legion of Honour from France in 2018. He also received the Alumni Achievement Award from Harvard Business School in 1994 and was inducted into Canada's Investment Industry Hall of Fame.

Judith Wilder (née Bickle) also led an incredible life. Her extensive education began at Toronto's Havergal College, followed by McGill University. It was after McGill when she and William met and got married. She was known to family and friends as William's "chief business advisor" and biggest supporter. Her philanthropic contributions were widespread and focused on the arts, education, health care and social services. She made important donations to the Toronto Rehab Hospital and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, among other deserving organizations.

William and Judith were married for 66 years. They enjoyed time with their family and dogs at their farm near Uxbridge, Ontario, and in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, where they spent many wonderful summers.

The Wilders' passion for collecting Canadian art grew out of their pride for their country. They were enamoured of the Canadian landscape and culture, and over time they amassed one of the finest private collections of works by the Group of Seven and their contemporaries. Masterpieces by Lawren Harris, Arthur Lismer, David Milne, A.J. Casson, J.E.H. MacDonald and others decorated the walls of their home and office, and brought joy to all those who had the pleasure of spending time with the couple.

Additional works from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder will feature in Heffel's online auctions this November, including examples by Emily Carr, A.J. Casson and A.Y. Jackson.



TOP: William Wilder and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, in the library at the Preparatory School at Upper Canada College, Toronto

BOTTOM: William and Judith Wilder at a World Bank meeting in New York



127 **James Edward Hervey (J.E.H.) MacDonald**

ALC CGP G7 OSA RCA 1873 – 1932

Mt. Odaray

oil on board, initialed and on verso signed, titled, inscribed
Sketch for Dark Autumn / Rocky Mt. / #6263 / indistinctly
and variously and embossed with the estate stamp
8 ½ x 10 ½ in, 21.6 x 26.7 cm

PROVENANCE

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

LITERATURE

Paul Duval, *The Tangled Garden: The Art of J.E.H. MacDonald*,
1978, the 1930 canvas of the same view of Odaray
Mountain entitled *Dark Autumn, Rocky Mountains*,
collection of the National Gallery of Canada, reproduced
page 161, listed, unpaginated

Lisa Christensen, *The Lake O'Hara Art of J.E.H. MacDonald
and Hiker's Guide*, 2003, page 108

J.E.H. MACDONALD TOOK his first trip to the Rocky Mountains in 1924, and he returned every summer until 1930. MacDonald was a poet at heart, and the mountains delighted his imagination and gave him peace and joy as he hiked and sketched. An entry in his journal notes this location: "I sketched [the] effect of coloured rocks and snow on Odaray. If enlarging, try for brighter snow and more luminosity in shadows although very dark." MacDonald did enlarge the view into a magnificent canvas, which is in the collection of the National Gallery of Canada.

This dramatic peak is in alpine country with only lichens, low-growing plants and scrubby trees growing in the vicinity, giving the artist an unobstructed view. MacDonald's Rocky Mountain paintings are noted for their flat divisions of spatial design and hard-edged clarity. Here he captures Odaray's sculpted grandeur from a high vantage point, depicting the distinctive square peak and vertical grooves carved by the passage of glaciers. Thunderous cloud formations crowding up behind the mountain add to the drama of the scene. *Mt. Odaray* is a superb sketch that captures the lofty beauty and intensity of this sublime mountain.

ESTIMATE: \$60,000 – 80,000



JAMES EDWARD HERVEY (J.E.H.) MACDONALD
Dark Autumn, Rocky Mountains

oil on canvas, 1930
20 x 26 in, 53.7 x 66.3 cm
Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, accession #4875

Not for sale with this lot



128 Alexander Young (A.Y.) Jackson

ALC CGP G7 OSA RCA RSA 1882 – 1974

St. Lawrence in Winter, Port au Persil

oil on canvas, signed and on verso titled and titled as *Point au Persil* on the McMichael Canadian Art Collection label, circa 1947
22 x 21 in, 55.9 x 53.3 cm

PROVENANCE

G. Blair Laing Limited, Toronto
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

LITERATURE

Arthur Lismer, *A.Y. Jackson: Paintings, 1902 – 1953*, Art Gallery of Toronto and National Gallery of Canada, 1953, page 7
Wayne Larsen, *A.Y. Jackson: The Life of a Landscape Painter*, 2009, page 190

EXHIBITED

McMichael Canadian Art Collection, *The Group of Seven: Masterpieces from Toronto Collections*, May 24 – August 23, 1987

THIS STRIKING STUDIO canvas is based on a sketch produced in 1947, titled *The St. Lawrence River at Port-Au-Persil*, during Jackson's last annual sketching trip to the Lower St. Lawrence region, when he painted at La Malbaie and Port-au-Persil. As Wayne Larsen wrote, "The springtime sketching ritual in rural Quebec was sacred to Jackson. It formed the backbone of his creative life for twenty-six years, providing him with hundreds of sketches." But, although not evident in this fresh and stunning landscape, life was changing in rural Quebec. Jackson did not like the fast-advancing modernization that was taking place in the area, and he would soon switch to the Gatineau region near Ottawa for his regular sketching trips.

St. Lawrence in Winter, Port au Persil is a classic Group of Seven composition with its motifs of blue-shadowed snow and the view of a distant landscape through a screen of trees. Long streaks of blue stretch across the bright snow, while sunlight sparkles on an open section of river water—contributing to the

marvellous atmosphere of a sunny, crisp winter's day. Jackson's palette is exceptional—the delicate pastel tones in the snow and clouds, green streaks of ice in the river, and cobalt far shore and turquoise sky are a *tour de force* of colour beauty. Jackson had his early training in Paris at the time when French Impressionism galvanized the art scene with its innovation of painting *en plein air* and depicting the changing qualities of light with bright hues, and his exposure to the Impressionist movement was the foundation for his development of colour awareness. His many years of on-the-spot observation of light and colour in landscape sharply honed this awareness, whether he was depicting the Arctic or the St. Lawrence area. Jackson perceived the subtle hues not always immediately seen—white snow is never just white, it is many colours, and he made that apparent.

Here, the trees in the foreground are animated; they seem to slightly writhe as though joyously responding to the sunlight raking across them. The clouds in the background project a sail-like form above the bank lying behind the landforms on the other side of the river, adding to the sensation of movement. Jackson imbued his landscapes with rhythm, and here even included a whorl of shadow at the base of the trees at the right. The exceptional *St. Lawrence in Winter, Port au Persil* vibrates with a harmonious tempo, from trees to sky.

A few years after he painted this canvas, in October of 1953, the major retrospective *A.Y. Jackson: Paintings, 1902 – 1953* made clear the depth of Jackson's contribution to Canadian art. As his fellow Group of Seven artist Arthur Lismer eloquently expressed in the catalogue: "His trails cross and recross like the pattern of ski tracks on the fresh snow of a winter hillside. In all of these widely separated places where A.Y. has painted he has revealed their unique identity. . . Jackson has done more than any other writer or artist to bind us to our own environment, to make us vitally aware of the significance, beauty and character of the land."

ESTIMATE: \$100,000 – 150,000



129 David Brown Milne

CGP CSGA CSPWC 1882 – 1953

Rowboat on Shore II, Severn River, Muskoka, Ontario / Campfire at Noon (verso)

double-sided oil on canvas, signed and on verso titled *Canoe in the Bay* on the Laing gallery label, 1933
12 x 16 in, 30.5 x 40.6 cm

PROVENANCE

Sale of the Artist to Vincent Massey, Toronto, 1934
James Wilson and Co., Ottawa, 1935
Elizabeth Smart, Ottawa, 1935
Raffled to unknown owner, 1935
Laing Galleries, Toronto
Acquired from the above by Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto, 1968

LITERATURE

David Milne Jr. and David P. Silcox, *David B. Milne: Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings, Volume 2: 1929 – 1953*, 1998, page 576, *Rowboat on Shore II* reproduced page 571 and *Campfire at Noon* reproduced page 576, catalogue #303.3 and #303.17

EXHIBITED

Mellors Galleries, Toronto, *Exhibition of Paintings by David B. Milne*, November 27 – December 8, 1934, catalogue #23
James Wilson and Co., Ottawa, *Paintings by David B. Milne*, January 29 – February 1935, catalogue #14

IN MAY OF 1933, David Milne left his home in Palgrave, southern Ontario; looking for a new painting place, he set off up the Severn River by canoe, with limited supplies for camping and painting. The location of *Rowboat on Shore II* is likely on the banks of the Severn River, between Severn Falls and the marine railway at Big Chute, where Milne camped over the summer of 1933. During his explorations of the area, he paddled to Six Mile Lake by canoe and was favourably impressed by what he saw. David Silcox commented that “the terrain there seemed open and congenial... The shore and bays were littered with driftwood, pine stumps and logs, mostly, the result of earlier logging of the area and a much earlier (1915) major forest fire.” Milne visited the lake several times to sketch until he decided to commit to the location; he moved there permanently in September and built his cabin over the fall and early winter.

This double-sided canvas is exceptional in that the front and back images are completely finished. Milne’s painting supplies



verso

were limited in the early stages when he was camping, and it is possible that, wanting to continue painting, he flipped the canvas over and continued with the campfire scene. Later, when Milne finished his cabin, he laid in a store of painting supplies for the winter.

This is a marvellous opportunity to acquire a work that depicts different aspects of Milne’s campsites—*Rowboat on Shore II* on the banks of the Severn River and *Campfire at Noon* at Six Mile Lake. These sites were remote, far from towns and people, where Milne could paint in peace. Silcox wrote, “Living virtually in the open, surrounded by nature in the raw and practically out of sight and sound of other humans, Milne found himself submerged in the natural world. It provided inspiration, dramatic excitement, aesthetic stimulation and ready material for his meditations.”

Campfire at Noon is an accomplished modernist work. In a 1934 sale list, Milne expressed how pleased he was with the painting, noting: “‘Camp fire at Noon’, Six Mile Lake, 1933, Rather unusual subject matter, a daytime fire. Quite successful.” The brushwork is fluid, and the single-colour warm grey ground is a colour not chosen for its realism, but to unify the floating forms of rocks, firewood, fire and cooking pots, which hover over the colour-field background. Just a handful of colours—orange, red, white and black—accent the forms, which are defined with black

lines and blocks of black. It is a vibrant and playful painting, full of movement.

In *Rowboat on Shore II*, Milne boldly used areas of roughly brushed black to define mass in the rock forms. Areas of white define the tops of the rocks and bring light into the painting, as do the strip of featureless sky and the wedge of water at the left. Black lines are used throughout to define the elements of the landscape, with Milne’s spare use of purple, orange, red, blue and green illuminating the lines and causing sparks with small, bright chunks of colour. The rowboat, lying among the rocks, almost melds into the landscape, but stands out due to the strips of red and green along its side. *Rowboat on Shore II* is a strong landscape, inventive in its definition of space and form.

This work was among the large group of works sold in 1934 to Vincent and Alice Massey so that Milne could have funds to continue painting. The painting was displayed in a show at Mellors Galleries in late 1934 that comprised works from this group acquired by the Masseys.

ESTIMATE: \$60,000 – 80,000



130 David Brown Milne

CGP CSGA CSPWC 1882 – 1953

Crossroads, Lake Placid

oil on canvas, signed and dated 1928
and on verso inscribed 29 (circled)
12 1/4 x 16 1/4 in, 30.8 x 41 cm

PROVENANCE

Acquired from the Artist by Robert North, Buffalo, New York,
through Mulsby Kimball, 1931
Morris Gallery, Toronto, circa 1969
Laing Galleries, Toronto, 1969
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

LITERATURE

David Milne Jr. and David P. Silcox, *David B. Milne: Catalogue
Raisonné of the Paintings, Volume 1: 1882 – 1928, 1998*,
page 444, reproduced page 444, catalogue #207.112

Snow coming, and the light cut down so that the darker
shapes get little from the sky and in glaring contrast with
the luminous snow. The arrangement—keeping the dark
shapes mainly in one area—gives a simplicity one would
not expect in subjects so strongly [emphasized?].

—DAVID MILNE

FROM 1924 TO 1929, David Milne split his time between
summers at Big Moose Lake, in upstate New York, where he was
involved in building a tea house/cottage, and winters at Lake
Placid, where he and his wife Patsy ran the tea house. This work
schedule cut into his painting time, so much so that in the five
years he spent at Big Moose Lake and Lake Placid, he produced
less work than he had in 10 months in 1920.

Milne's notes on this splendid painting give insight into his
careful consideration of his compositional elements. Against the
luminous snow, Milne's exquisite tones of mauve-blue, brick and
umber are particularly appealing. The electrical pole gives a dom-
inant vertical shape to the landscape and balances the blackness
of the trees at the right. The feeling of impending snow is marvel-
lously atmospheric.

In spring of 1929, Milne came back to Canada after 26 years,
first going to the woods of northern Ontario at Temagami and
Weston, and he would not return to the United States.

ESTIMATE: \$60,000 – 80,000



131 Alfred Joseph (A.J.) Casson

CGP CSPWC G7 OC POSA PRCA 1898 – 1992

Fresh Snow

oil on board, signed and on verso signed,
titled, dated 1983 and inscribed with the
Roberts Gallery inventory #3104J
12 x 15 in, 30.5 x 38.1 cm

PROVENANCE

Roberts Gallery, Toronto
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

WHAT A.J. CASSON modestly referred to as his “Box Period” began with his stylistic experiments in the mid-1950s. Forms were reduced to their angular essences, and planes of light and atmosphere were executed with geometric exactness. Although this post-Cubist stylization is most associated with his works from the 1950s and 1960s, there are many examples from the mid-1970s as well as excellent works from the early 1980s, such as this one, done in the artist’s final years before he retired from painting.

With a nuanced luminosity, this oil sketch highlights Casson’s sensibilities as a subtle dramatist, along with his unfailingly warm view of the human circumstance. Always welcoming, Casson’s depictions of Ontario’s villages and country houses express an affection for an era he felt was being lost to time. Initially, Casson’s relationship to these subjects began out of practicality. As early as the 1920s, he and Franklin Carmichael took sketching trips together to small Ontario towns, as their busy work and home schedules did not allow far-flung trips to remote regions. In these themes, however, Casson would find lifelong resonance.

ESTIMATE: \$25,000 – 35,000

**132 Franklin Carmichael**

CSPWC G7 OSA RCA 1890 – 1945

Autumn Landscapeoil on board, signed
12 x 16 in, 30.5 x 40.6 cm**PROVENANCE**

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

THE SUBJECT MATTER of this Franklin Carmichael oil sketch is likely the La Cloche region of Ontario. Carmichael first visited the area in the mid-1920s, and it would soon become the artist's lifelong landscape muse. Just as with the first visit of fellow Group of Seven members A.Y. Jackson and Lawren Harris to the north shore of Lake Superior, Carmichael's first visit to La Cloche was preceded by a forest fire. This resulted in a stripping away of many of the trees and much of the vegetation, revealing the essence of the area's distinctive massive quartzite hills. Carmichael was so taken with the area that he would build a cabin on the shores of Cranberry Lake, from where, for

two decades, he would set off on sketching trips. This work is rendered in an earthy palette of ochre, amber and burnt sienna, colour choices notably similar to his virtuosic large oil depicting La Cloche, *Autumn* from 1940, in the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. Notable, too, is the support of 12 x 16 inches, the larger and rarer of Carmichael's two main sketch sizes.

ESTIMATE: \$60,000 – 80,000**133 James Edward Hervey (J.E.H.) MacDonald**

ALC CGP G7 OSA RCA 1873 – 1932

Nova Scotia Shoreoil on board, initialed and dated 1922 and on verso signed, titled, dated, inscribed *J.J.V / Not for Sale / Shore Sketch /* indistinctly and variously and embossed with the estate stamp
8 7/8 x 10 3/4 in, 21.3 x 26.4 cm**PROVENANCE**Estate of J.J. Vaughn
Roberts Gallery, Toronto
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto**LITERATURE**Paul Duval, *The Tangled Garden: The Art of J.E.H. MacDonald*,
1978, page 142**EXHIBITED**Dalhousie Art Gallery, Halifax, *J.E.H. MacDonald in Nova Scotia
with Lewis and Edith Smith*, January 12 – 25 February, 1990,
catalogue #22

IN JULY OF 1922, J.E.H. MacDonald took a break after his first year of teaching at the Ontario College of Art, traveling to visit his lifelong friend, the artist Lewis Smith, at Petite Rivière, Nova Scotia. He stayed for a month and revived his love of the sea, experienced in England during his youth. MacDonald wrote to his son, Thoreau:

You remember old Walt Whitman's account of the Long Island Shore? This reminds me of it... The waves have been magnificent the last days, such a thundering crash and roll—the rattle of the pebbles in the backwash of the waves. And the whole place is so solitary, like Crusoe's coast, so that you almost resent a footprint in the sand... I have been attempting to sketch the waves... Their forms are so variable, the light and colour unapproachable, but they surely make me long to be a marine painter.

In this superb example of his seascapes, MacDonald captures the frothy surge of surf against the rocks, contrasted with fluid curves of sand in the foreground, rendered in creamy tones. Of the sketches MacDonald produced at Petite Rivière, four were worked up into canvases, including *Seashore, Nova Scotia*, in the collection of the National Gallery of Canada.

ESTIMATE: \$20,000 – 30,000



134 Albert Henry Robinson

CGP RCA 1881–1956

Murray Bay

oil on board, signed, dated 1926 and inscribed
La Malbaie, P.Q. and on verso signed, titled and dated
11 ¼ x 12 ¾ in, 28.6 x 32.1 cm

PROVENANCE

G. Blair Laing Limited, Toronto
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

LITERATURE

Thomas R. Lee, *Albert H. Robinson: "The Painter's Painter,"*
1956, unpaginated
A.Y. Jackson, *A Painter's Country: The Autobiography of*
A.Y. Jackson, 1958, page 64

IN 1926, ALBERT ROBINSON painted this charming work while on a sketching trip with Group of Seven painter A.Y. Jackson.

In his autobiography, Jackson related, "For several seasons, Robinson, [Edwin] Holgate, [Randolph] Hewton and I worked in the late winter at La Malbaie. It was a charming little town, and Robinson did some of his best work here." Out of trips such as this came the colourful portrayals of Quebec life for which Robinson became renowned.

This is a classic subject for the artist that includes a horse and sleigh wending its way up a snowy path—highly desirable subject matter to collectors. Adding to the allure of the sketch is Robinson's depiction of falling snow, which gives a soft and nostalgic feel to the atmosphere, as if the viewer has traveled back to a simpler time. Robinson used a white-based palette that brightened his paintings even on an overcast day such as this, and his use of pastel tones in the houses is particularly sensitive and harmonious. *Murray Bay* is the perfect embodiment of, as fellow Group artist Arthur Lismer described, "the lyrical environment of the French-Canadian."

ESTIMATE: \$20,000 – 30,000



135 Albert Henry Robinson

CGP RCA 1881–1956

Spring Evening, Cacouna

oil on board, signed and initialed and on verso
titled on the Laing gallery label, circa 1921
10 ½ x 11 ¾ in, 26.7 x 30.2 cm

PROVENANCE

Laing Galleries, Toronto
Private Estate, Montreal
Sold sale of *Fine Canadian Art*, Heffel Fine Art
Auction House, May 23, 2007, lot 15
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

LITERATURE

Thomas R. Lee, *Albert H. Robinson: "The Painter's Painter,"*
1956, unpaginated

ALBERT ROBINSON WAS a friend of Group of Seven member A.Y. Jackson, and accompanied him on numerous painting excursions around Quebec, where they would paint out of doors in and around the rural villages. Cacouna was their first shared destination in 1921, and *Spring Evening, Cacouna* is a fine example of Robinson's reverence for the landscape and people there. Thomas Lee commented on Robinson's Quebec scenes, "Robinson... understands the habitant and his environment. The quaint and characteristic houses and farm buildings, sleds and ships, winter snow and ice-bound rivers are his themes, and he does them so brilliantly." *Spring Evening, Cacouna* is highly prized subject matter for Robinson, with its charming village, exquisite pastel hues and two horse-drawn sleighs on the winding street.

In the 1920s, Robinson's work was gaining recognition abroad as well as in Canada, and his 1923 work entitled *The Open Stream* was one of only three Canadian works acquired by the Musée d'art moderne in Paris.

ESTIMATE: \$20,000 – 30,000



136 Robert Wakeham Pilot

CGP OSA PRCA 1898 – 1967

The Terrace, Quebec

oil on canvas, signed and on verso signed,
titled, dated 1962 and inscribed 4889
30 x 40 in, 76.2 x 101.6 cm

PROVENANCE

Continental Galleries of Fine Art, Montreal
Estate of Holt Dunn, Montreal
Sold sale of *Canadian Art*, Bonhams Canada,
May 25, 2009, lot 25
Private Collection
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

LITERATURE

A.K. Prakash, *Impressionism in Canada: A Journey of Rediscovery*,
2015, page 633

EXHIBITED

Galerie Walter Klinkhoff Inc., Montreal, *Hommage à Robert W.
Pilot*, September 1988, catalogue #23

THIS IS A classic composition by Robert Pilot—a view of Quebec City from Dufferin Terrace, with its series of picturesque gazebos overlooking the St. Lawrence River. In the background is the Citadelle and the Dufferin Terrace Slides, a ramp used annually as a toboggan run during the Quebec Winter Carnival. The painting is animated by the people who walk and ski along the wide boardwalk, enjoying the view. Pilot's sensitive treatment of snow is in full force here—subtle grey and blue tones are used to depict the tracks of people and skis in the slushy snow and to give definition to the banks of piled snow. Pilot was a master at portraying the delicate atmospheres of twilight and overcast late afternoon winter days, and here a cool winter light evenly suffuses the scene. This painting, produced in 1962, looks back to a more gentle, leisurely time. As A.K. Prakash notes, “In his later life Pilot enjoyed reworking some of the sketches from his early years—as he expressed it, ‘letting myself go in an effort to capture the essential poetry of the scene I had worked on in my youth.’”

ESTIMATE: \$50,000 – 70,000



137 Robert Wakeham Pilot

CGP OSA PRCA 1898 – 1967

The Cab Stand, St. Louis Gate, Quebec

oil on canvas, signed and on verso titled
on the gallery label, circa 1924
19 x 24 in, 48.3 x 61 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie Walter Klinkhoff Inc., Montreal
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

LITERATURE

Harold Beament, *Robert W. Pilot Retrospective*, 1968, the
1924 sketch for this canvas entitled *Cabbies, Porte St. Louis*
reproduced page 44

ONE OF THE most important subjects for Canadian Impressionist Robert Pilot was Quebec City. Here the backdrop is the historic architecture of the Saint-Louis Gate at the entrance to Quebec City's upper old town, part of the ramparts encircling the city that date back to the seventeenth century. Another

architectural element is the charming cabstand, with its pointed roof and small spire. The horse-drawn cabs were an important part of life in the city—and a very colourful subject. This gathering as they wait for customers is charming, with the horses' bright blankets, patient stances and tossing heads. As these horse-drawn cabs disappeared due to the advent of cars, scenes like this became exquisitely nostalgic. Pilot's treatment of snow here is masterful, showing caramel-coloured snow trampled into the ground under the horses, the grey of the path leading beyond, and the pure-white snow lying in drifts and across the top of the ramparts and the cabstand, lighting up the scene with its brightness. The softly modulated clouds, delicately tinted with blue and cream, show Pilot's understanding and mastery of the Impressionist approach to light.

ESTIMATE: \$50,000 – 70,000



138 Edwin Headley Holgate

AAM BHG CGP CSGA G7 RCA 1892 – 1977

Sanary, France

oil on board, initialed and on verso signed,
titled *Sanary* and dated February 7, 1922
9 ½ x 7 ¼ in, 24.1 x 18.4 cm

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the Artist
Private Collection, Montreal
Sold sale of *Fine Canadian Art*, Heffel Fine Art
Auction House, November 23, 2007, lot 49
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wilder, Toronto

LITERATURE

Dennis Reid, *Edwin H. Holgate*, National Gallery of Canada,
1976, page 9
Rosalind Pepall and Brian Foss, *Edwin Holgate*, Montreal
Museum of Fine Arts, 2005, pages 16 and 90, reproduced
page 109, listed page 171

EXHIBITED

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, *Edwin Holgate*, May 26 –
October 2, 2005, traveling in 2006 – 2007 to the Glenbow
Museum, Calgary; McMichael Canadian Art Collection,
Kleinburg; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; and
Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, catalogue #29

EDWIN HOLGATE PAINTED this evocative portrait of his wife, Frances, during the time they spent in France. The couple married in 1920 and lived in France from 1920 to 1922. They settled in Paris, where Frances taught piano lessons, while Holgate returned to formal study, this time at the Académie Colarossi under the Russian artist Adolph Milman. Holgate studied with Milman for over a year and later declared him to be “the only man who ever really taught me something”—about scale, the nude as a subject, and the depiction of people with a strong sense of modeling and hard, clear line. He further emphasized that Milman was “the most potent influence I had. I’ll respect him ‘til I die.”

When Holgate arrived in Paris, many Russian émigré artists were living in the city, seeking to escape the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. There Holgate became acquainted with Russian artists of the Mir Iskusstva (World of Art) movement, who were known for their strong drawing and bold nudes. Two artists from this group were especially known for their portraiture—Alexandre Iacovleff and Vasily Shukhayev. Iacovleff was trained at the Academy of

Fine Arts in Saint Petersburg, and his portraits showed great expertise in the use of sanguine and charcoal in the depiction of figures. Holgate met Iacovleff, and his work was influenced by the Russian artist’s methods, particularly in Holgate’s sanguine and charcoal portraits of Breton peasants from 1921.

Milman was also a devotee of Paul Cézanne, who was a guiding light for many artists in the early 1920s. Holgate would have seen Cézanne’s work in Paris, where Cézanne had a show at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune in December of 1920. From Cézanne, Holgate learned to strip away extraneous details to focus on formal considerations such as volume and the geometry of pure form. In Paris, Holgate’s training in draftsmanship, structured composition and the effects of colour formed the foundation of his strength in portraiture.

The Holgates gravitated towards the French countryside in the summers—Concarneau, in Brittany, and the Mediterranean. Sanary-sur-Mer is in the picturesque Côte d’Azur region, a peaceful seaside town centred on fishing. Following the First World War, it became one of the destinations in France for artists and writers such as Aldous Huxley, blossoming into a bohemian community.

Holgate’s wife, Frances, was frequently a sitter for his figurative work. Rosalind Pepall wrote that “in his portraits of female subjects...and especially his wife, the artist was able to express himself most freely and reach beyond form to a more subjective emotion.” Holgate referred to this portrait of Frances as his “Matisse,” and it is a composition reminiscent of numerous paintings by Henri Matisse of women in rooms in front of open windows with views of the Mediterranean Sea. One such example is the 1919 oil *Femme assise sur un balcon*, from Heffel’s spring 2019 sale. Holgate’s use of colour is strong, particularly in the saturated red and yellow of Frances’s clothing. She leans against the iron railing in a languid pose, her eyes turned downward as if in contemplation. The green tree behind her provides a contrasting tone, further emphasizing her form. Holgate echoes the decorative railing with its blue shadow on the floor and frames the composition by the placement of shutters on either side of the work. Then there is the cool, pale expanse of ocean and sky, rendered in beautifully modulated brushwork. The pigments here are reminiscent of Frederick Varley, with their soft variation of colour tones in blues and greens. *Sanary, France* is a superb scene and shows that by 1922, Holgate’s portraiture, which became such an important part of his oeuvre, was masterfully developed.

ESTIMATE: \$70,000 – 90,000