

Sale Name: Fine Canadian Art Auction - September 8th - October 18th 2022

LOT 75 - Thomas McLean - Sunlit Barns



Artist Description Thomas Wesley McLean (1881 – 1951 CAD) C.S.G.A., C.S.P.W.C., M.S.A. Born in Kendal, Ontario, He studied art at the Central Ontario School of Art under Robert Holmes, William Cruikshank, G.A. Reid and F.S. Challener. He Also studied art at the Toronto Central Technical School under Gustav Hahn. At Grip he worked at commercial art alongside of Tom Thomson, Arthur Lismer, Frank Carmichael, Frank Johnston, F.H. Varley, A.H. Robson, William Broadhead, H.B. Jackson, Neil McKechnie and J.E.H. MacDonald. By 1901 McLean was travelling in northern Ontario in his summers as a fire ranger or prospector. Several times he had taken trips with his friend Neil McKechnie whose tragic end came in the rapids of the Metagami River. During one of those summers McLean discovered Algonquin Park and brought back stories and sketches of his experiences to his fellow workers at Grip. Thomson among others decided they needed to see the Park for himself. On the suggestion of McLean he went with H.B. Jackson to the area around Canoe Lake. Several months afterwards Thomson travelled with William Broadhead to the Mississagi County. McLean also introduced Arthur Lismer around at the Arts & Letters Club and invited him to become a member since he himself was a charter member. McLean's association with artists who were later to form important schools of painting in Canada was perhaps a key link. He fired the interest of Thomson in Algonquin and Thomson in turn drew others from Grip to the Park. Out of their activity came the formation of the Canadian Algonquin School and a decade later the Group of Seven whose sketching ground stretched across Canada. In 1912 McLean left the Toronto scene when he was hired by Brigden's as head of the art department for Winnipeg. he continued his interest in fine art and in 1925 became a founding member of the Manitoba Society of Artists and the same year a member of the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour. He returned to Ontario in 1927 and settled for a time in Weston where he taught drawing at the Weston High and Vocational School. He kept up with oil and water colour paintings and in May of 1932 he held an exhibition of his work at the Robert Simpson Galleries, Toronto. In 1934 he contributed five drawings to J.E. Middleton's Toronto's 100 Years, 1834-1934

and all the illustrations for this book were acquired by the Art Gallery of Ontario the same year. McLean also assisted C.W. Jefferys in the publication of The Picture Gallery of Canadian History, the first volume appearing in 1942, the second in 1945 and the third in 1950. McLean had been an active with the art of black and white throughout his career and was charter member of the Graphic Arts Club (1905) in which all his future senior colleagues were to be found: A.H. Robson, F.H. Brigden and C.W. Jefferys. He exhibited his work as well with the Royal Canadian Academy and the Ontario Society of Artists.

Description

Watercolour

No Visible Signature - Titled au verso

Sight - 6 ins x 9 ins (15.24 cm x 22.86 cm)

Provenance:

Private Collection

Quantity: 1



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