

## EMMA LAMPERT COOPER (1855-1920)

Emma E. Lampert was born in 1855 in Nunda, a village in Livingston County, New York. She was the 2<sup>nd</sup> of five children born to Jeanette (Smith) and Henry Lampert, a leather dealer. Lampert received her education at Wells College (formerly, Wells Seminary) in Aurora, New York. She graduated in 1875.<sup>1</sup>

An active member of the Rochester Art Club, Cooper contributed regularly to the club's exhibitions. Her subject matter included Long Island scenery, figurative works, and still lifes.<sup>2</sup> By the spring of 1885, Cooper was elected the club's secretary. In 1887, while residing in Paris, Cooper contributed work to the annual exhibition of the club. A critic for the *Democrat and Chronicle* noted that the work revealed her studious efforts in the French capital.<sup>3</sup> That same year, Cooper exhibited *Pomegranates* at the Inter-State Industrial Exposition in Chicago.<sup>4</sup>

By 1889, Cooper had become president of the Rochester Art Club. She contributed her studies from France to an exhibition at the club.<sup>5</sup> In the autumn of 1889, Cooper began opening her studio to the public once a week for informal studio visits. Located on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of the Powers Building in Rochester, her studio was full of works executed along the Massachusetts coast. The *Democrat and Chronicle* said the work revealed "a very distinct step forward in her artistic career." The critic described, "Coloring so rich, so strong, so pure, so harmonious, so effective and so true as is in some of her new pictures, is something that few artists ever attain to, and any artist may be proud of."

In the spring of 1890, Cooper exhibited at the National Academy of Design and her work was lauded by critics.<sup>7</sup> In 1893, the Rochester Athenaeum and Mechanic's Institute hired Cooper as an instructor of painting and watercolors. The decision to hire Cooper was based on her, "artistic ability, professional standing and success as a teacher of private classes." The same year, Cooper exhibited in the Art building at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. She

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> 1880 U.S. Federal Census for Emma E. Lampert; U.S. Passport Application; and U.S. School Catalogs accessed August 21, 2023 via ancestry.com

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "The Art Exchange," *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, New York), Mon, Dec 15, 1884, 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Local News," *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, New York), Wed, Jun 1, 1887, 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Catalogue of the Paintings Exhibited by the Inter-State Industrial Exposition of Chicago: Fifteenth Annual Exhibition (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co., 1887) 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Beautiful Things in Art," *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, New York), Sun, May 12, 1889, 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "Studio Day," *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, New York), Sun, Nov 10, 1889, 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> "Purely Personal," *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, New York), Sun, Apr 6, 1890, 6.

<sup>8 &</sup>quot;Mechanics' Institute," Democrat and Chronicle (Rochester, New York), Fri, Sep 22, 1893, 8.



received a bronze medal and a diploma for her watercolors *Through the Meadows* and *A Bread Winner*.<sup>9</sup>

Cooper spent the summer of 1896 traveling throughout Europe with artist Nellie B. Wright. The two artists traveled by ship and spent time in Paris, Germany, Holland, and England. A member of the New York Water Color Club, Cooper returned to the U.S. to attend the exhibition of which she was a juror. <sup>10</sup> In 1897, Cooper married American Impressionist Colin Campbell Cooper (1856-1937) at her family home in Rochester. <sup>11</sup>

During her lifetime, Cooper was a member of the New York Watercolor Club, the National Association of Women Sculptors and Painters, the New York Society of Painters, the Woman's Art Association of Canada, the Philadelphia Watercolor Club, and the Eastern Association of Wells College.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> "Successful Rochester Artist," *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, New York), Tue, Jun 9, 1896, 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> "Married," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) Wed, Jun 16, 1897, 10.