



# HAWTHORNE

## Fine Art

### **MARION “MINNIE” ROBERTSON BEERS BRUSH (1853-1945)**

Marion “Minnie” Beers was born in Albany, New York to Julie Hart Beers and George Washington Beers, a printer. Her maternal uncles, William Hart (1823-1894) and James McDougal Hart (1828-1901), were prominent members of the Hudson River School. Born in Scotland, the Hart brothers immigrated to the United States with their parents while still young boys. They began their careers painting panel decorations for a coach-maker in Albany before becoming professional landscape painters, and leaders in the first American art movement. Their younger sister Julie, Brush’s mother, was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. With the encouragement and artistic tutelage of her brothers, Beers became one of the first women to gain recognition as a professional landscape artist.

Like her mother before her, Brush’s natural artistic talent was nurtured by her family members. She lost her father while still a toddler. Her mother, widowed with two daughters to raise, continued to paint, and exhibited regularly with the Brooklyn Art Association. To help make ends meet, she took women on summer sketching trips in New York and New England often with her daughters in tow. In 1875, Beers and Brush spent the summer sketching together in Dorset, Vermont. Brush worked on studies of wildflowers and ferns.<sup>1</sup>

In her early twenties, Brush married Dr. Edward F. Brush. An Irish immigrant, Dr. Brush came to the United States as a teenager. He served in the Union army during the Civil War and later became the first elected Mayor of the City of Mount Vernon, New York, serving four terms.

An oil painter and watercolorist, Brush exhibited with the Brooklyn Art Association and the American Watercolor Society. She exhibited with many prominent artists of the day, including her mother, at the Brooklyn Art Association (1874), at the Cincinnati Industrial Exposition (1875) and the Inter-State Industrial Exposition of Chicago (1877).

Marion “Minnie” Robertson Beers Brush (1853-1945) died in Mount Vernon, New York in 1945.

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<sup>1</sup> “Art and Artists,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Massachusetts), Tue, Nov 2, 1875, 6.