

Chronology - Emma Fordyce MacRae

1887-1910 - Emma Fordyce MacRae was born in Vienna, Austria on April 27, 1887, the daughter of John Addison and Alice Dean Fordyce. Dr Fordyce, a dermatologist and later professor of dermatology and social diseases at Columbia University was studying in Europe at the time. Her brother Addison was born in 1894. The family returned to New York in 1888 and lived with her grandmother at 66 Park Avenue in New York and later at 8 West 77th Street with a house at Larchmont Manor in Mamaroneck outside New York in Westchester County [i] Early schooling was at Brearley School for Girls in New York City, and later at the Ingleside School, New Milford in Connecticut. There are photographs of her aged 10 at Spring Lake, Michigan with a small sailing dingy called the Emma Dean [ii]. The family travelled to Europe annually where Dr Fordyce spoke before medical societies and they visited museums and galleries.

When the decision to become an artist was made is unknown. Emma Fordyce MacRae started to draw early illustrating her letters with flowers [iii] and writing to her mother she had received a request for a still-life with a Rookwood vase and two oranges [iv] and by the time she was thirteen was modeling in clay a small head at Larchmont [v].

1910 - Married Dr Thomas MacRae on January 18 at the residence of her parents and moved to 271 West 73rd Street. By September Thomas MacRae had left and their daughter Alice was born on December 1.

1911 - Attended Art Students' League of New York, 215 West 57th Street, New York in October where she studied with Frank Vincent DuMond, F Luis Mora, Kenneth Hayes Miller, Ernest Blumenschein and Robert Reid. Arthur Dow's book on composition was in her library.

1912 - December 14, exhibited 3 sketches in Exhibition of Work by Former Pupils of The Brearley School at the school.

1914 - December exhibition at Anderson Galleries of 29 paintings including paintings of Bournemouth, England, an Old Lane in Brittany as well as paintings of Gloucester, Massachusetts, West Virginia, landscapes, still lifes and portraits with Dorothea M Litzinger. October Woods survives today. Takes up residence in Massachusetts [vi]

1915 - Exhibition at Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts of paintings with Dorothea M Litzinger in January. Rented studio at 12 West 69th Street, New York. Elmer Livingston MacRae is recorded in 1929 as another tenant and Ivan O'Linsky whose daughter Leonore was to model for her was two blocks away at 27 West 67th Street [vii].

1916 - Attended Art Student's League. Studied with F. Luis Mora and portrait painting with Dimitri Romanovsky. Uncle S W Fordyce from St. Louis, Mo rented cottage at Eastern Point, East Gloucester July – end September. His daughter Jane met with Emma and her brother in Gloucester [viii].

1917 - Attended Art Students' League. Studied with John Sloan and George Bridgeman. Exhibition at Goupil and Co of Paris of 17 paintings, many of Gloucester, Massachusetts with Dorothea M Litzinger in February This exhibition was well reviewed in the newspapers as was the exhibition at Anderson Galleries. In September the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts reproduced Sunlight Wood No 4 in the Goupil show in the Summer Exhibition of Paintings by American Artists in their September Bulletin.

1918 - Exhibited at the National Academy of Design. She was to exhibit annually for most of her life. "Italian Fishing Boats" exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts [ix] Attended Art Students' League and studied with Luis Mora and George Bridgman.

1919 - "Cosmos" painted 1919 and exhibited Pennsylvania Academy, Gallery on the Moors and National Academy.

1920 - Marriage to Thomas MacRae dissolved and annulled 29th March 1920 and both parties restored to the status of single person with liberty to marry after the expiration of twelve months. Traveled to Paris, France and St Moritz, Switzerland.

1922 - Married Dr Homer Fordyce Swift a member of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in Greenwich, Connecticut on 24 April. Lived at 1110 Fifth Avenue with her mother until her death and until moving to 888 Park Avenue. Jane Peterson who had taught at the Art Students' League 1914-1919 lived at 1007 [x] Extended trip to Europe from May to October with Homer and his sister Alice Swift on the Aquitania. Visited St Moritz.

1923 - Solo exhibition at Grace Horne's Galleries in Boston. Solo exhibition at Ainslie Gallery in New York. Visited Atlantic City, New Jersey several times between 1923 to 1930 [xi].

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1924 - John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis. Painting chosen by Director Robert Harshe of the Chicago Art Institute to be exhibited at the 39th Annual Exhibition of American Art by the Art Association of Indianapolis at the John Herron Art Institute in January. Also invited Leon Kroll and Ivan O'Linsky [xii]. Exhibited in April with the Copley Society Exhibition at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in April. Also shown were paintings by Theresa Bernstein, Charles Hopkinson and William Meyerowitz. Traveled by train to visit her mother and father in Gloucester, Massachusetts in February [xiii]. Out of 500 exhibits at the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors annual show the harbor scenes of Emma Fordyce MacRae and Jane Peterson are noted for their color and animation. [xiv] Exhibited "Crescent Beach" and "Daisies with Butter-cups" at the North Shore Arts Association exhibition also exhibited at the Gloucester Society of Artists' Final Show. Exhibited at the Garden Club of American special exhibit of pictures of flowers and gardens at Nashville. Other exhibitors included Elizabeth M Price and Lucile Howard of the Philadelphia Ten Honorable Mention for "Cosmos" at 33rd Annual Exhibition of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors in December with the John Clerici prize of \$50 going to Theresa Bernstein.

1925 - Exhibited through February with others at Dudensing Galleries on West 44th Street in New York. "The White Boat" exhibited North Shore Arts Association. She exhibited almost annually until 1958. John Addison Fordyce died on 15 June at 8 West 77th Street aged 67 leaving her his real estate in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Annual exhibition of National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors at the Fine Arts Building. Ralph Flint writing for the Christian Science Monitor ranks "Dogwood Decoration" and another stunning flower decoration by Emma Fordyce MacRae with Gertrude Fiske and Theresa Bernstein [xv] among the first six behind Jane Peterson's "Zinnias". Donated painted to be offered for sale at Grand Central Palace to be sold for the benefit of the Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association and the Association for the Aid of Crippled Children.

1926 - "St Moritz" exhibited Brooklyn Museum [xvi]. Exhibited at annual Art Alliance of America on east 56th Street. Agrees at the annual meeting of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors to give a painting as a prize at the benefit card party for the building fund together with Jane Peterson, Edith Penman, M Elizabeth Price and Other. Nicholas Roerich of the Roerich Museum in New York is reported missing somewhere in Russia or Central Asia by the New York Times. Exhibited four canvases at the Montclair Art Museum others exhibitors included Walter Farndon and Alphaeus P Cole.

1927 - Honorable Mention for "Easter Lilies at the 36th Annual National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. 3 canvases by Mary Cassatt were hung as a memorial group. Cecilia Beaux single sketch portrait was singled out for attention as were Emma Fordyce MacRae's "Easter Lilies", Gertrude Fiske's "Sister Anne" and Theresa Bernstein's "The Immigrants"

1928 - Exhibited with Florence W Gotthold, Lucile Howard and M Elizabeth Price at Yorke Gallery, Washington, D.C and Palm Beach, Florida. Traveled to Europe. Visits Naples, Pompeii, Ravello, Sorrento, Capri, Rome, Venice, Munich and Paris. Elected to the National Society of Mural Painters. Awarded the Kingdom Gould prize for "Naida Gray" by the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. Moved to 888 Park Avenue where she lived for the rest of her life.

1929 - Attended July concert at North Shore Arts Association [xvii].

1930 - Solo exhibition at the Corona Mundi International Art Center of the Roerich Museum in New York. "Stelka" won the National Arts Club Gold Medal [xviii]. "White Horse" and "Five o'clock" exhibited the Corcoran Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings November 1930 to January 1931. Other exhibitors included Lilian Westcott Hale, M Elizabeth Price, Leon Kroll, Gifford Beal [xix], Jerome Myers, Charles Hopkinson, William Meyerowitz, Ivan G. O'Linsky, John Sloan, Isobel Bishop, Guy Pene du Bois [xx], Kenneth Hayes Miller, and Theresa F Bernstein, Chaired the Annual Jury of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. Exhibited "Lilies" at the October State Fair of Texas Exhibition. Other artists known to her included Leon Kroll, F Luis Mora, Ivan G O'Linsky, Jane Peterson, M. Elizabeth Price.

1931 - Exhibited St Mark's Square at the October State Fair of Texas. Other artists included Gertrude Fiske, Charles Paul Gruppe, Lillian Westcott Hale, Haley Lever, Frederick J Mulhaupt, Jerome Myers, Ivan G. O'Linsky, Jane Peterson and M. Elizabeth Price. Elected Associate Academician at National Academy of Design.

1932 - Receives Honorable Mention for "Foxgloves" at the 19th Annual Allied Artists of America.

1933 - Exhibited "The Virgin" at the American Women's Association. Annual Exhibit Boston Art Club exhibited in the member's group exhibition in the summer.

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1934 - Awarded the Edith Penman Memorial Prize for “Cosmos” at the 43rd Annual Exhibition of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. March “Dogwood/The Blue Nun” shown in the First Municipal Art Exhibition at the Forum Galleries in Rockefeller Center, New York Illustrated in Mid-Week Pictorial published by the New York Times Company.

1935 - Exhibited “The Chinese Vase” at the annual exhibition of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors at the American Fine Art Galleries illustrated in The Christian Science Monitor [xxi]. Solo exhibition March at The Currier Gallery of Art in Manchester, New Hampshire. Solo exhibition Doll and Richards in Boston April through May. “The Three Women”/“Before the Song” hung at the Members’ Exhibition of the Boston Art Club. Exhibited “Beatrice” National Academy of Design.

1936 - Traveled to Europe. Painted in Annecy, France. Solo exhibition Grand Central Galleries November through December. Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts “Winter Outside” exhibited. Exhibited St Mark’s Square in the Non-American Scene – the title for the members of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors under which to display their non-American scenes – at the Argent Gallery.

1937 - Solo exhibition Boston Art Club January through February. Solo exhibition Cosmopolitan Club in New York. Exhibits with Edna L Bernstein and Jane Peterson at the redecorated Lounge Gallery of the American Woman’s Association in New York. First of many exhibitions with The Philadelphia Ten group of women artists. Corcoran Biannual “Italian Girl/Leonora in Red” and “Lilies” [xxii] exhibited. Exhibits Argent Galleries in New York with other members of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors [xxiii]. Attended party for English painter John Wells given by Mrs. William Fahnestock Jr.

1938 - Solo exhibition at the MacDowell Club in New York. “Rockport Beach” 25” x 30” rejected by North Shore Arts Association. Guild Hall, East Hampton, Long Island exhibition of contemporary paintings loaned by Studio Guild including Guy Wiggins and Emma Fordyce MacRae. Reorganized Roerich Museum now the Riverside Museum first exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings including Haley Lever and Emma Fordyce MacRae.

1939 - Travel to Europe stopped by fighting. Visited the George Bellows exhibition at the Century Association [xxiv].

1940 - “Leonora in White” shown at the Virginia Museum in Richmond. New York World’s Fair Contemporary American Art Today included “Sonya”. Participated in Let’s Help Finland blind auction for Finnish Relief at Grand Central Galleries.

1941 - Received the Lucille Douglas Award for “Day’s End, Gloucester” at the Summer. Exhibition of the American Woman’s Association, New York [xxv]. Exhibited “Leonora in White” National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors annual exhibition. Exhibited with the Ten at Newman Galleries, Philadelphia. Exhibited at the New York Society of Painters. Exhibitors included Ivan O’Linsky and Jane Peterson. North Shore Arts Association annual.

1942 - “Small Pictures for Small Rooms” at the Community House and Woman’s Club, Moorestown, New Jersey. Won the Hans Hinrich prize of \$25 for Low Tide at the Allied Artists of America exhibition at the New York Historical Society. Honorable mention in sculpture went to George Reccia husband of her friend Kitty. Exhibited National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. “Magnolia” illustrated. Exhibited Gloucester Society of Artists. One of 20 artists represented at the New York Society of Painters others exhibitors included Jane Peterson with “Zinnias” and Ivan O’Linsky with “Spanish Vase”.

1943 - Paints a series of small pictures of Central Park in New York in April and May. Dayton Art Museum shows “Folly Cove”.

1944 - Solo exhibition Binghamton Museum of Fine Arts in New York State [xxvi]. Solo exhibition The Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts [xxvii].

1945 - “August in New England” in Portrait of America Exhibition sponsored by Pepsi Cola. Painting chosen from 3000 entries as one of the 150 paintings to be shown. In October on the jury judging works in oil at the Allied Artists of America annual exhibition. Gold medal awarded to a watercolorist Charles A Aiken and the two oils which received honorable mention were “Queens Midtown Tunnel” by Rosario Gerbina and “Winter Mood” by James J. Carlin. Traveling exhibition with Anna Hyatt Huntington.

1946 - Awarded 1st prize for “Half Moon Beach” and \$25.00 by the Pen and Brush Club. “White and Token Roses” shown at Whistler House in Lowell, Massachusetts. Chaired jury of award for works in oil at Allied Artists of America. Exhibited with the Gloucester Society of Artists.

1948 - Traveled and painted in Bermuda.

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1949 - Traveled to France and Switzerland. Painted in Annecy and Berne.

1950 - Awarded first prize for Central Park Bridge by the Pen and Brush Club.

1951 - Traveled and painted in Bermuda. Elected to full National Academy membership.

1952-63 - Traveled to Europe and Bermuda. Painted in Annecy, Juan les Pins Berne and St Moritz and Bermuda.

1953 - Homer Swift dies September 24th.

1954 - Exhibited with Anna Hyatt Huntington and Katharine Lane at the National Audubon Society, New York. Attended the Magic of Flowers in Painting exhibition at the Wildenstein gallery on 64th Street in New York [xxviii].

1955 - Awarded prize for “Thunderbird” at the Pen and Brush Club.

1956-1959 - Traveled to Europe. Painted in Switzerland.

1958 - “Interior of living room with view of hall and clock”. Last recorded exhibit at North Shore Arts Association.

1963 - Awarded prize for “Easter Lilies with Alice’s Portrait” by the Pen and Brush Club.

1970 - Visited the November Rediscovered Years of Leon Kroll exhibition at Bernard Danenberg Galleries on Madison Avenue in New York. National Academy of Design exhibited “Anemones in December”.

1972 - Exhibited at the National Academy of Design.

1974 - Dies August 6th leaving her paintings to her grandson.

1983 - Solo exhibition at Richard York Gallery on East 65th Street, New York. “Naida” illustrated in The New York Times.

2008 - Solo Exhibition at Cape Ann Museum, Gloucester, MA.

Footnotes

[i] Indenture Larchmont Manor Company to Millicent Ford January 4, 1887.

[ii] Photograph album 1898 - 1890.

[iii] Letter to her mother in 1896.

[iv] Letter to her mother May 1900.

[v] MacRae papers.

[vi] Letter from Hemenway & Barnes December 12, 1919 with divorce papers.

[vii] American Art Annual Vol. XXV1 1929.

[viii] Letter from S.W. Fordyce St Louis to Dr J A Fordyce July 8 1916.

[ix] EFM biographical material with exhibition catalogue Corona Mundi 1930.

[x] American Art Annual Vol. XXV1 1929.

[xi] Cash book entry page 8.

[xii] Newspaper clipping January 19, 1924.

[xiii] Cash book entry page 33.

[xiv] Unidentified clipping between 1924 and 1925.

[xv] Ralph Flint article New York November 6 1925.

[xvi] Small log.

[xvii] Cash book page 139.

[xviii] EFM biographical material with exhibition catalogue Corona Mundi 1930.

[xix] Letter March 7, 1942.

[xx] Watercolor by him at 888 Park Avenue on her death.

[xxi] Christian Science Monitor, Boston January 8, 1935.

[xxii] Small log.

[xxiii] Clipping New York Times, March 21. George Bellows Loan Exhibition of Paintings catalogue January 15 – February 19 held at The Century Association at 7 West 43rd Street in New York.

[xxv] Letter November 19, 1941.

[xxvi] Newspaper clipping.

[xxvii] “Low Tide” illustrated in The Berkshire Evening Eagle, November 13, 1944.

[xxviii] Copy catalogue with MacRae papers.