



Alice
Amelia
Innes
1883-1970

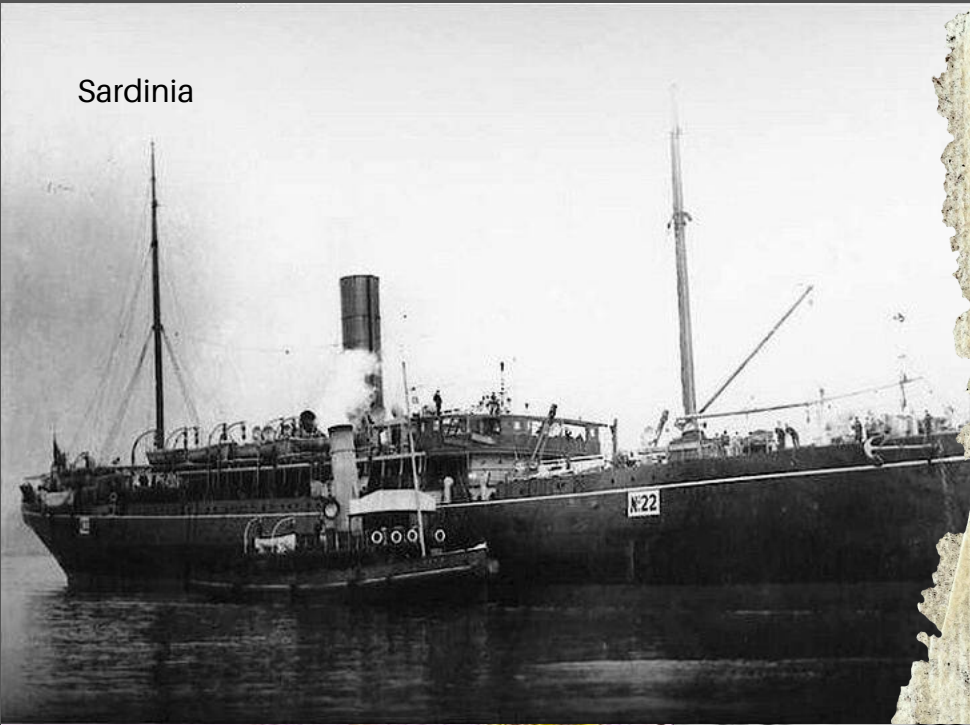
Alice Amelia Innes was an Ontario landscape painter that honed her skills during the beginnings of the Canadian National Art Movement. Alice found herself in Toronto in 1911, just as the artists that became the Group of Seven were developing a philosophy & unique style that depicted & celebrated the rugged Canadian landscape.

Alice Amelia Saunders was born at 72 Marlborough Road, Shoreditch, England to parents: Benjamin Stockwell Saunders (1851-1888) & Parnell Martin Saunders (1853-1887) in 1883. Tragedy struck her young life when her mother died when she was 4 years old; her father went on to die within the same year.

Alice & her sister Elsie were orphaned, their guardianship controlled by a welfare board. The sisters became what was later known as British Home Children. Initially, the girls were sent to a care home in east London, run by a Canadian, Miss Annie MacPherson. This home was but a waypoint on their journey to a new life, as they were slated to travel to Stratford, Ontario with MacPherson & approximately 100 other children.



Sardinia



On 17 May, 1888, Miss MacPherson escorted her charges on board the Sardinia, which was docked at Liverpool, England. The boat arrived in Halifax on 30 May, 1888 - Alice was 6 years of age, her sister, 8.

The Saunders sisters likely spent some time at The Annie Macpherson Home at 51 Avon Street, Stratford, until they were found families with which to live.

The 1891 census is the first documentation of the Saunders girls in their new lives in Canada.

James	George	"	54	M	-	"
"	Isabella	F	50	"	W	Ontario
"	Maggie	"	22	-	S	"
"	Alice A	"	8	-	and	England



51 Avon Street, Stratford

Alice is recorded by the enumerator in 1891 living with her new family in West Zorra. She was given a new home with George Innes (1836-1906) & Isabella McLean Innes (1840-1921) & their 22 year old daughter, Margaret Ellen (1869-1946).



above, 'Autumn'
below, 'Autumn, Parry Sound'



The Innes family lived in Brooksdale, north of Embro & had faced their share of tragedy, having lost one son & two daughters before 1883, all while in childhood. Alice may have brought a welcome new light into the Innes home.



George Innes of Linemoor

1836-1906 •



Isabella McLean

1840-1921 •

Marriage

30 January 1862

Zorra, Oxford, Ontario, Canada

Children



William Innes

1865-1870 •



Margaret Ellen Innes

1869-1946 •



Mary Jane Innes

1871-1883 •



Georgina A Innes

1880-1880 •



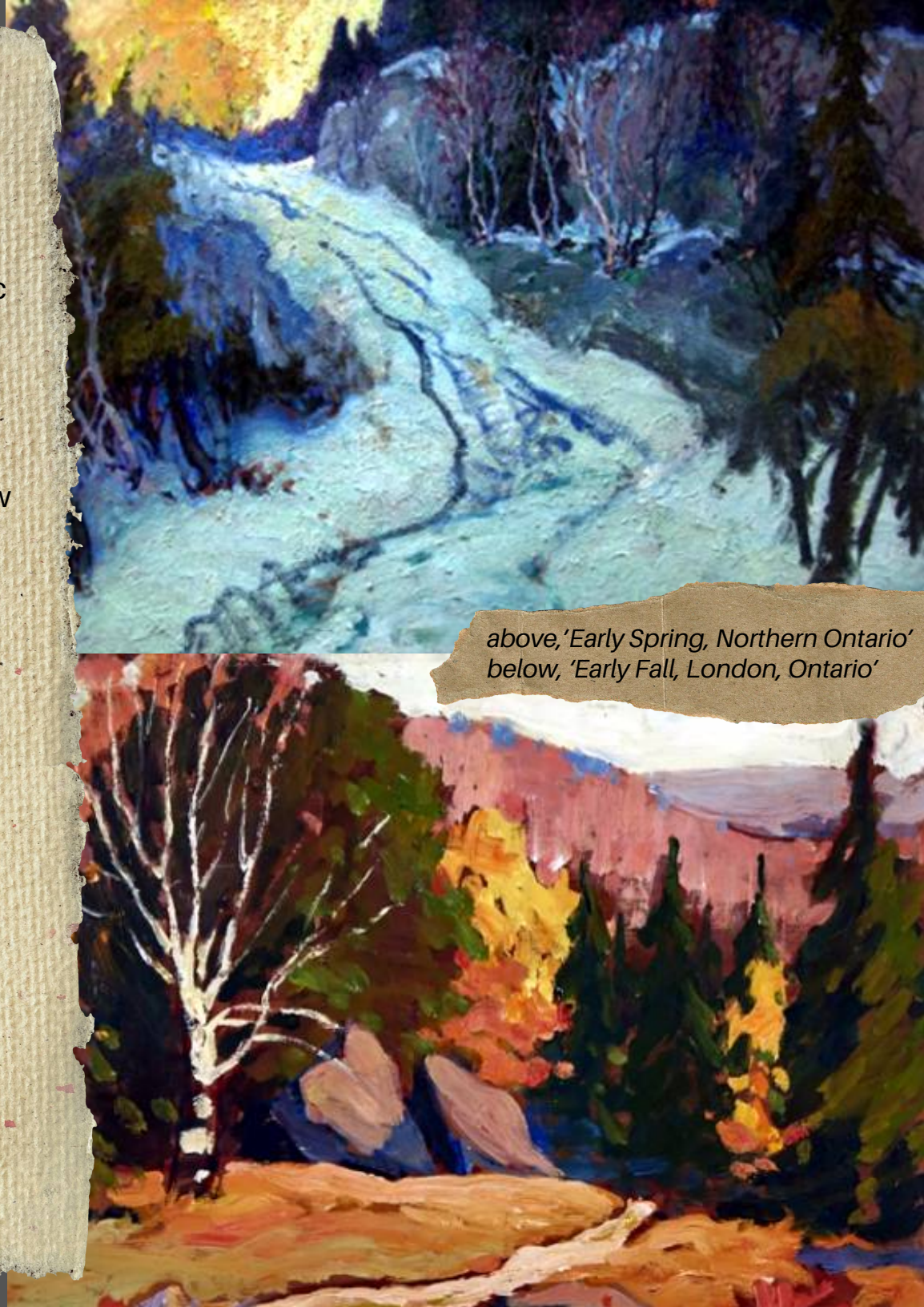
Alice Amelia Innes

1883-1970 •

By 1901, the Innes family had relocated to Woodstock. Alice's relationship to the family is clearly identified on the 1901 census as an 'adopted daughter'. This move may have been in response to Alice's burgeoning musical and artistic talent. Her acceptance into the Innes family seemed to be complete. Certainly, many British Home Children did not find themselves living in such a welcoming & encouraging environment. The Innes family lived at 70 Oxford Street, just a few blocks from Woodstock Collegiate Institute.



70 Oxford Street, Woodstock



*above, 'Early Spring, Northern Ontario'
below, 'Early Fall, London, Ontario'*



above, 'Early Spring'
below, 'Forest Scene, Autumn'



"In Woodstock, Alice attended Woodstock Collegiate Institute. Reportedly, she 'took' painting from Nellie Wilson, while at the same time travelling once a week to Toronto for lessons in piano at the Conservatory."

*-Alice Innes: A Fond Portrait
by Margaret Rand*

DEATH OF GEORGE INNES

George Innes, a well known retired farmer of 70 Oxford St, died last night at the age of sixty-nine years.

The late Mr. Innes was born in Aberdeen, Scotland and was one of the numerous settlers who came from that district to the farming district of Oxford county sixty years ago. For many years he was a successful farmer in the vicinity of Embro, but for the past twelve years he has been a resident of this city, where he lived retired. Nine months ago he was stricken with a seemingly incipient illness which, however, resulted in the final breaking down of his system. A wife and two daughters survive him. The funeral will take place Saturday morning to the Harrington cemetery at half-past eleven. A service will be held at his late home, 70 Oxford St., at 11 o'clock by Rev. Mr. Dickie of Chalmers church.

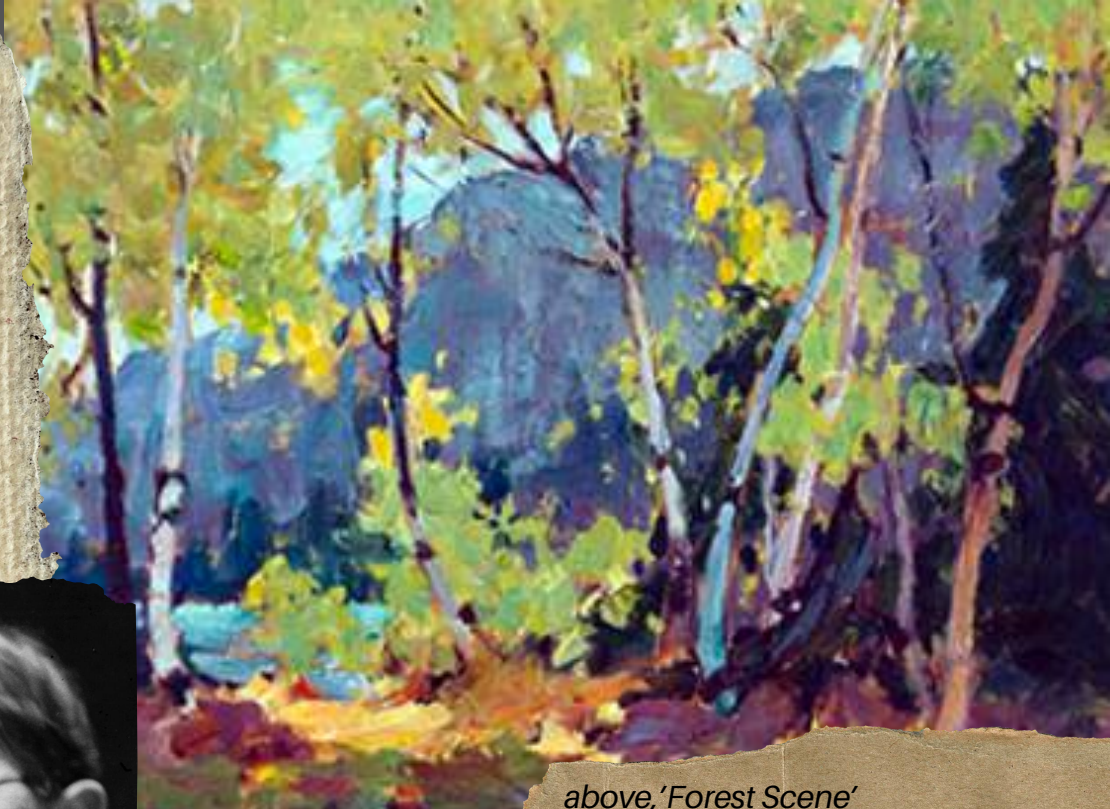
Woodstock Sentinel Review, June 1906

Alice's mother must have recognized the talent her daughter possessed and encouraged her to enroll in the Central Ontario School of Art and Design in Toronto, which, a year later, was renamed the Ontario College of Art. In 1911, Alice found herself at the epicenter of a new spirited art movement that sought to show the raw wilderness & beauty of Canada in a bold new way.

Alice became a student of John William Beatty (1869-1941). Hired to teach drawing & painting, Beatty was purportedly a man of tremendous energy, of explosive temperament and language, who, among the Toronto artists of the day, had pioneered travelling by canoe & painting en plein air in Algonquin Park. Beatty's painting: *'The Evening Cloud of the Northland'*, is considered a masterpiece and is in the collection of the National Gallery of Canada.



John William Beatty (1869-1941)



above, 'Forest Scene'
below, 'Hilly Landscape, Ontario'





above, 'Lake Vista'
below, 'Lake View'



A friend of the Innes family believed that Alice became enthralled by Beatty, eventually "becoming his protegee, his disciple, and finally, his handmaiden and chauffeur". Over the next two years, she also began to work in a similar style to Beatty, capturing the stark, wild beauty of the north as she saw it, with vibrant & fresh colours.

Funded by Lawren Harris, founding member of the Group of Seven, The Studio Building at 25 Severn Street Toronto, Rosedale-Moore Park, opened in 1914. It is the first purpose-built artist studio in Canada and was used by many prominent Canadian artists, including members of the Group of Seven & Tom Thomson.



After Alice completed her formal education at the Ontario College of Art with Beatty, and they painted together as fellow artists in The Studio Building, next door to A. Y. Jackson.

In 1917, Beatty & A. Y Jackson became an Official War Artists for the Canadian Expeditionary Forces, documenting Canadians on the bloody battlefields of France. Their tour of duty concluded in 1919.

After the war ended, the Group of Seven formally organized, and began taking plein air painting trips to Northern Ontario to further develop the style of the Canadian School.

The Group of Seven, also known as the Algonquin School, was a school of landscape painters. It was founded in 1920 as an organization of self-proclaimed modern artists and disbanded in 1933. The group presented the dense, northern boreal forest of the Canadian Shield as a transcendent, spiritual force. Their depictions of Canada's rugged wind-swept forest panoramas were eventually equated with a romanticized notion of Canadian strength and independence. Their works were noted for their bright colours, tactile paint handling, and simple yet dynamic forms.

-The Canadian Encyclopedia



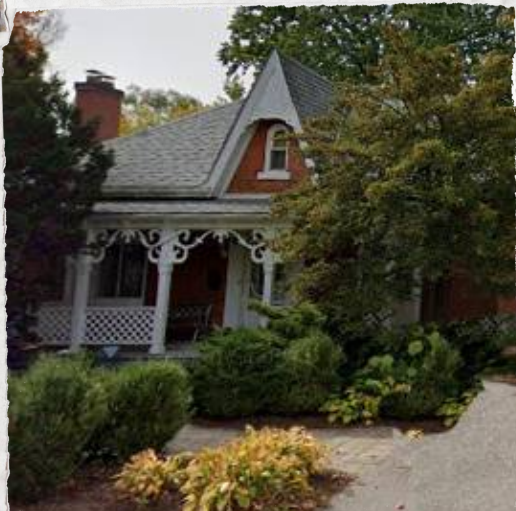
A. Y. Jackson working in the Studio Building

For the duration of World War I, Alice returned to Oxford County. She resumed living with her mother & sister, Margaret, at 85 Delatre Street, Woodstock. Sadly, she was to lose her mother Isabella to cirrhosis of the liver in August of 1921.

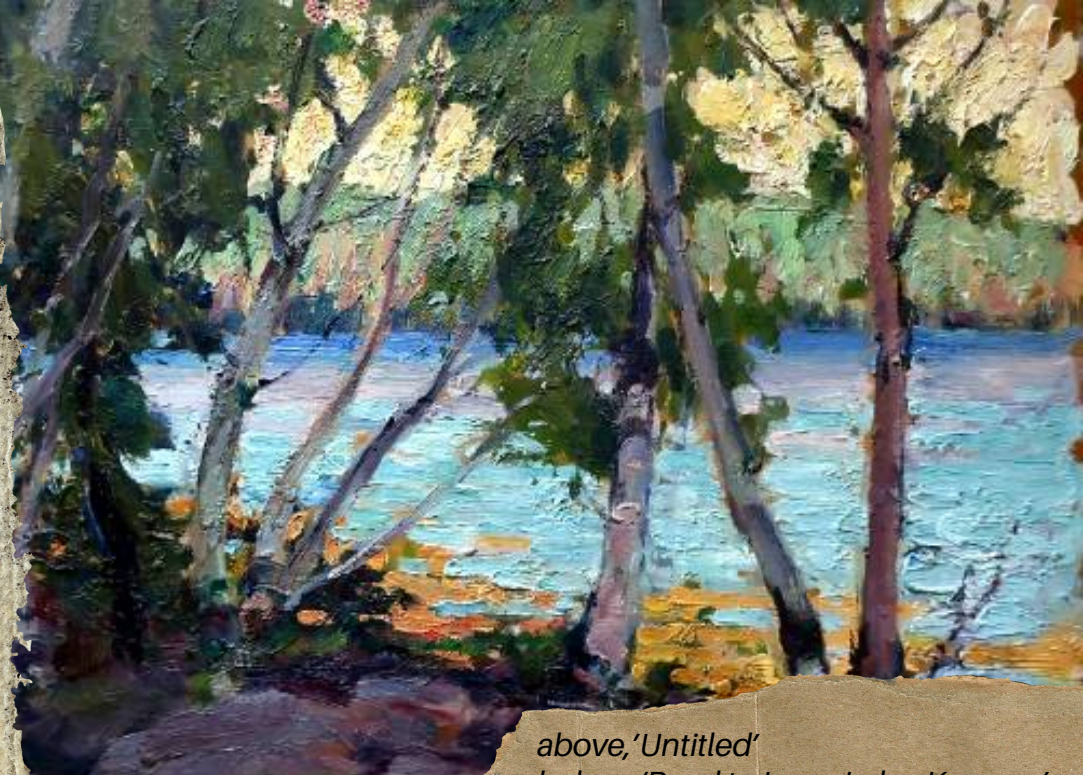
INNES-- At Woodstock on August 23rd, 1921, Isabel Innes, age 81 years. Relict of the late George Innes. The Funeral will take place from her late residence, 85 Delatre Street on Thursday, August 25th, 1921. Services at 2 pm. Interment in the Harrington Cemetery.

Woodstock Sentinel Review

The last will & testament of Isabel Innes bequeathed 85 Delatre Street & its furnishings to Alice & her sister Margaret jointly, as decreed in the terms as a home, as long as either wish to maintain it as such.



85 Delatre Street, Woodstock



above, 'Untitled'
below, 'Road to Loon Lake, Kearney'



The further terms of Isabel Innes' will decreed that both Margaret & Alice would both annually be paid the income from \$10,000. An interesting stipulation was placed on Alice's annuity - that should she marry, her income would be terminated. Alice never did marry and this independent income provided by her adopted mother allowed her develop her artist endeavors to the fullest: travelling & painting the Canadian landscape in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta & British Columbia, without the onerous task of earning a living.

In 1923, Alice purchased a home in Embro at 80 John Street; she & her sister may have lived here for a time, but it was sold just 5 years later.



80 John Street, Embro



'Branch of the Magnetewan'

1921 Will of Isabel McLean Innes

I direct my said Trustees to pay the income of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) thereof, yearly, to my daughter Maggie E. Innes, during her life, and also to pay the income of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) thereof, yearly, to my adopted daughter, Alice Innes, as long as she remains unmarried.



above, 'Village in Winter'
below, 'Mid-Winter'



The next chapter in Alice's life saw her follow J. W. Beatty to Port Hope, Ontario, where the Ontario College of Art established a summer painting school in 1922. Alice assisted Beatty in all aspects of school processes, though there is no record of her receiving payment for her efforts.



Beatty depicted above at far left, with his students, in this photograph of the Ontario College of Art Summer School at Port Hope, 1923. Alice is not identified in this photograph.

The summer art school was held in a converted grist mill on the banks of the Ganarasca River. The location provided ideal scenery for landscape drawing and painting, as well as for outdoor figure study. Alice produced several works at Port Hope.

Ontario College of Art Summer School at Port Hope



A typical day at the summer school consisted of a critique of the previous day's work in the studio. Afterwards, Beatty and the students would venture out in search of a new subject, such as the cedar grove, the mill pond or the Port Hope waterfront. The students would return to their living quarters in the mill — women in the loft above the studio and men in a large tent outside. The school closed in 1935.



*above, 'Winter, Farm Scene'
below, 'Winter Scene'*





'Landscape'

Alice joined the Ontario Society of Artists and went on painting trips to Quebec. There she painted the rolling countryside and its colourful habitant houses in the lyrical manner of her friend A. Y. Jackson. She also painted in northern and southern Ontario and taught a few art students from her cottage on Oxtongue Lake, a favourite haunt of the Group of Seven. In 1936, Jackson put her name forward for Associate Membership in the Royal Canadian Academy. She participated in local shows as well as travelling exhibitions across the U.S. and Canada. Although she professed an unswerving disregard for abstract painting, her best sketches have the broad brush work, the lack of 'wearisome detail' and an interesting visual distortion which mark a departure from her earlier classicism.

-Alice Innes: A Fond Portrait
by Margaret Rand

In 1939, Alice was invited to exhibit a painting in the Canadian Pavilion at the World's Fair in New York by the Royal Canadian Academy. The interior of the pavilion was dominated by the exhibits, which consisted largely of representational sculptures and paintings, photographs, and dioramas depicting Canadian life and landscapes.

The freedom provided by Alice's inheritance allowed her to pursue artistic inspiration wherever she wished. From 1930 to 1945, she was an active member of Toronto's vibrant arts community, continuing to paint in Studio 4 at The Studio Building on Severn Street, until 1942.

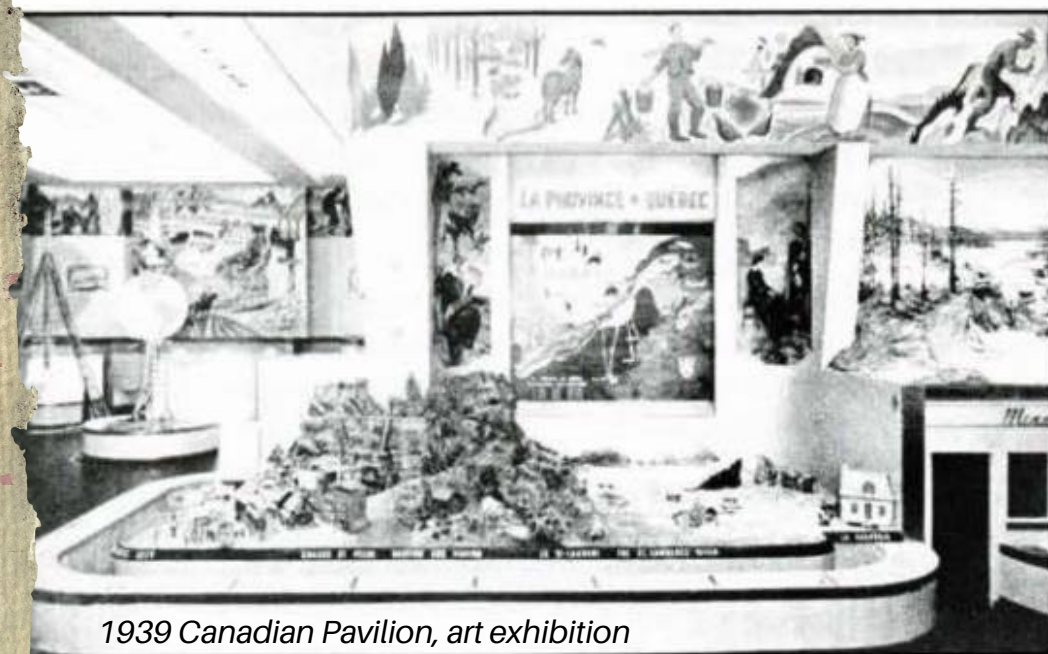
Throughout the 1930s Alice continued to paint the Ontario northland, with such painting locations as Parry Sound, Burk's Falls, Kearney & the LaCloche Mountains area, near Willisville.

◆ Innes see also Ennis

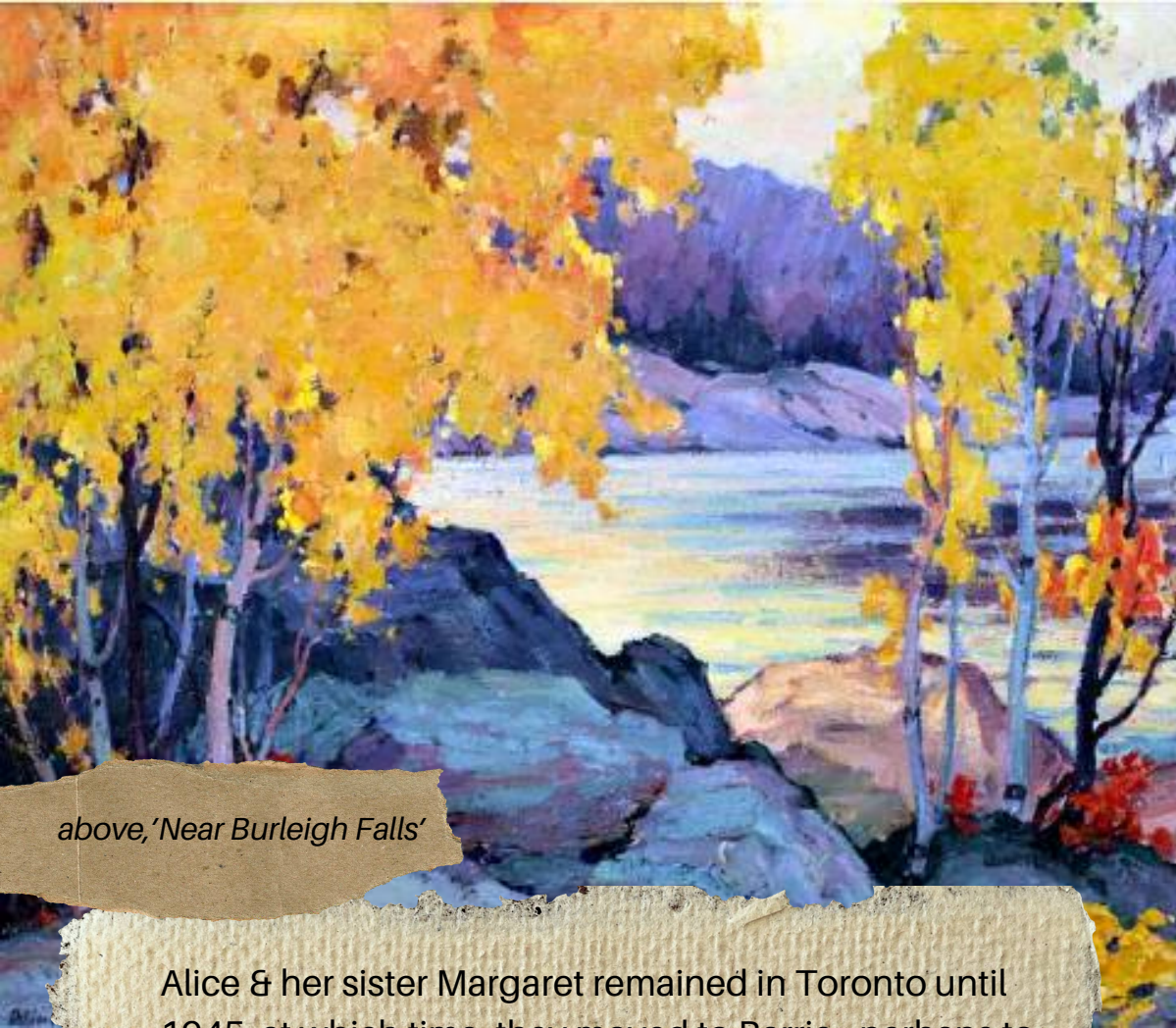
—Alice A artist 4, 25 Severn h 131 Cheltenham av (Nth Y) MA 1249

1942 Toronto City Directory

1939 Canadian Pavilion World's Fair, New York



1939 Canadian Pavilion, art exhibition



above, 'Near Burleigh Falls'

Alice & her sister Margaret remained in Toronto until 1945, at which time, they moved to Barrie - perhaps to be closer to the landscapes that inspired Alice's work. Sadly, Margaret Innes died at Barrie on 18 October 1946. Alice buried her sister in the Harrington Cemetery, Zorra, in the same plot as their parents rest. Innes' exhibition history was as broad as the landscapes she painted. She regularly showcased her works at the Royal Canadian Academy from 1930 to 1947 and made significant appearances at the Art Association of Montreal in 1943 and 1945.

R.C.A. EXHIBITION HAS WARTIME NOTE

Display in Art Association of
Montreal Galleries to In-
clude Collection of Cana-
dian Handicrafts

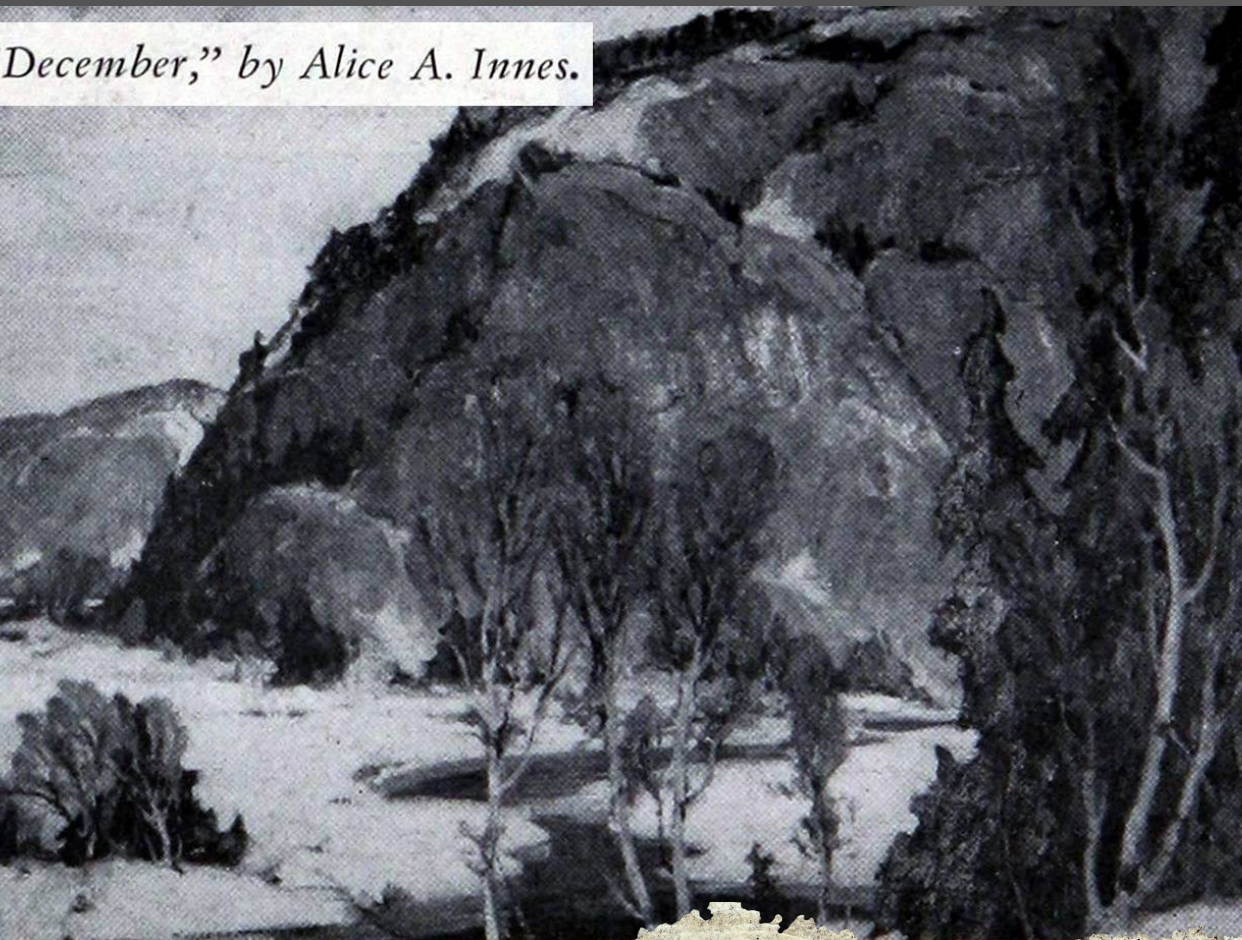
1943

Without the usual formality of a private view, the 64th annual exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts opened yesterday afternoon in the galleries of the Art Association of Montreal, following a successful showing in the Provincial Museum at Quebec where, through the cooperation of the Canadian Handicraft Guild, a collection of handicrafts was assembled. These items are due to be in place here early this week.

Works in the R.C.A. show total just short of 150 but it is a collection of even excellence with the war note evident both in scenes of action and portraiture.

Alice Innes, A.R.C.A., paints a stream in autumn setting called Near Burleigh Falls. Fred S. Haines, R.C.A. has a good subject in Bridge

December," by Alice A. Innes.



Star April 24, 1945

Prizes Awarded To Four Painters

The prizes given annually in connection with the Spring Exhibition of the Art Association of Montreal are this year four in number, two for each section of the current exhibition.

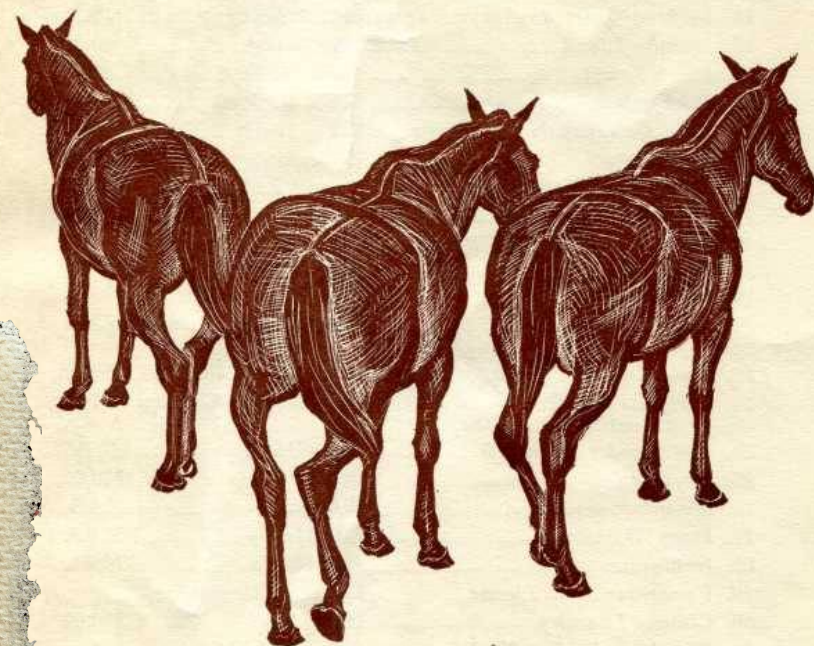
In Section 1 the prizes are the gift of Miss Jessie Dow. The prize of \$150 is awarded to Alice Innes, A.R.C.A., of Toronto for her oil picture "December";

Alice moved to Vancouver in 1947, perhaps seeking fresh challenges for her artistic vision. She is recorded as living in a charming cottage at 2691 West 13th Street in the Kitsilano area, according to a 1949 Vancouver City Directory, shown at right.





BRITISH COLUMBIA
SOCIETY OF FINE ARTS



39th Annual Exhibition
May 3 to May 22, 1949

above, 'Morrison Lake'

Alice exhibited her work with the British Columbia Society of Fine Arts in their 39th Annual Exhibition in 1949 at the Vancouver Art Gallery. Two paintings were featured in the show: Late Winter, Ontario & Morrison Lake, Ontario.



'Lone Cabin, Rockies'

"Alice went west to British Columbia, to Vancouver and Lillooet. There she developed a style of her own. These Western paintings were the closest she ever came to expressing a fourth dimension, to attempting more than her eyes saw. Her colours changed, with deep blues and surprising warm pinks, she expressed her emotional and spiritual response to the mountains.

She did some strong, original painting in those years out West. As late as 1961, she and a friend, Annie Hamilton, went to Banff, where they stayed in the YWCA and painted beside the Bow River."

**-Alice Innes: A Fond Portrait
by Margaret Rand**

Alice returned from the West to Oxford County in 1955 & lived in Woodstock once again.

She developed no real interest in community organizations and had few friends or family ties. She believed her painting would some day be important — after she was gone. But gradually she began to lose confidence, and like the solitary American painter, Albert Ryder, to destroy her paintings. Many of her birch panels show the beginnings of work she could no longer finish. She would call in paintings already sold in order to change them. She lived, with her cat, in increasing untidiness and solitude.

According to a neighbour, "she came back from the West a vegetarian and she didn't eat proper. She just dried all up, poor thing." In the end, the eccentricities of this tiny artist, who cared more about painting than feeding or clothing herself properly, defeated her. She was committed by the authorities to the St Thomas Psychiatric Hospital where she died in 1970."

**-Alice Innes: A Fond Portrait
by Margaret Rand**



*Spring Thaw,
Northern Ontario*



ARTIST CAPTURES COLOR OF NORTHERN ONTARIO

Pictured above at the opening of her week-long art exhibit in the Little Theatre building is Miss Alice Innes of Woodstock, well known locally for her landscape painting and in fact

well known across Canada. Formerly of Embro, Miss Innes has returned to Woodstock to live and paint and the collection of paintings on display this week show her talent in

the field of art. Miss Innes is a graduate of the College of Art in Toronto and for a number of years was assistant instructor at the Port Hope School of Art. Most of her can-

vases on display this week are scenes from Northern Ontario, especially the Burks Falls district, and bring out the vivid coloring so beloved by Canadian people. (Staff Photo).

Woodstock Artist Exhibits Canadian Landscape Paintings

Lovers of art not only in Woodstock but throughout Oxford County and nearby cities thronged the Little Theatre rooms, Hunter street, Saturday afternoon and evening to view an exhibition of landscape painting by Miss Alice A. Innes. A native of West Zorra, Miss Innes lives at 774 Knightsbridge Road, this city and is a member of the Royal Canadian Academy.

The exhibition, which continues afternoons and evenings this week, was formally opened at 3 o'clock by H. W. Hamilton, local industrialist, who paid tribute to Miss Innes as one of Canada's outstanding and best known artists. He commended her fine contribution to the cultural life of the community, and said that Wood-

stock could be proud to claim her as a citizen. These sentiments were also contained in brief addresses by Mayor Charles M. Tatham on behalf of the city of Woodstock, and by Elder E. Barlow president of the Woodstock Little Theatre.

Mr. Barlow reminded the audience that some years ago Miss Innes had made her home in Woodstock, and he was happy to note that she had decided to return here after having travelled extensively in Canada—capturing on canvas, as she went, many of Canada's beauty spots.

Miss Innes feelingly voiced her appreciation.

The Little Theatre rooms, gay with a profusion of blossoms, proved an ideal setting for the occasion. At an attractively appointed table covered with an ecru lace cloth and centred with a silver bowl of spring flowers, flanked by tapers in silver holders, Mrs. G. Holland and Mrs. F. Hyde poured in the afternoon, and Mrs. John Blair (Embroy) and Mrs. C. O. Tatham, in the evening. Assistants were Mrs. E. W. Nesbitt, Mrs. H. W. Hamilton, Mrs. Robert Blair (Embroy), Miss Margaret Blair (London) and Miss E. Belle Bain. Mrs. A. L. Hamilton received with Miss Innes.

Woodstock Artist Donates Painting To Local Penny Sale

Much to the delight of all concerned, Miss Alice A. Innes, ARCA one of Canada's noted artists, has again donated one of her beautiful landscape paintings to the annual penny sale being held next week, auspices Women's Auxiliary to Woodstock General Hospital in the market building. SAND LAKE - 10 miles east of No. 11 highway near Kearney, Ont. - is the subject of this painting which vividly depicts the matchless autumnal coloring of northern Ontario.

Miss Innes, a native of West Zorra and a former resident of Woodstock, is now living at 774 Knightsbridge Road, this city, after many years' absence. She studied at the Toronto College of Art and was assistant instructor at the Port Hope summer school of art for over ten years. Before returning here she maintained a studio in Toronto, and also lived in Oakville and Vancouver.

Miss Innes is most appreciative of the work being done by the Women's Hospital Auxiliary, especially the installation of a non-denominational chapel in the hospital last December. She said she was most happy to give any encouragement whatsoever to the many volunteers who comprise the Auxiliary. She thinks it quite fine that the name of the Auxiliary president is Mrs. Gordon W. Innes—although she can not claim relationship.

Mrs. W. A. Reid and her co-conveners Mrs. C. G. Brewster and Mrs. E. E. Church are pleased with the way penny sale plans are working out, and they are optimistic that this year is really going to be the best yet.

The actual dates are September 16, 17 and 18 (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday) when the Market Building will be open from 10:30 a.m. until 10:00 p.m.



ALICE AMELIA INNES
1886 — 1970

After Alice went into care at St Thomas, her possessions were sold at auction, May 27, 1966 by the Public Trustee. Her sketchbooks, and the eight-foot easel which J. W. Beatty left her, were sold. The large number of small 10" x 14" sketches and a few large canvases found in her home in various stages of completion, fell to auctioneers gavel.

Alice passed away 30 December 1970.

MISS ALICE INNES

Funeral service for Miss Alice Innes, ARCA, formerly of Woodstock, who died at St, (Thomas on Wednesday, will be held on Saturday at 2 p.m. from 1 the F. E. Rowell Funeral Home.

She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Innes and spent her early life at Brooksdale and Woodstock. She studied music at Toronto Conservatory and later began a well known art career. She was a member of Chalmers United Church. She is survived by a number of cousins.

Dr. C. H. Dickinson of Chalmers United Church will officiate and burial will follow in North Embro Cemetery.

Woodstock Sentinel Review,
31 December 1970



From the collection of
the Woodstock Art
Gallery

Innes, Alice Amelia
Title: Early Winter
Date: no date
Medium: oil on panel
Dimensions
Height: 26.7 cm,
Width: 34.9 cm
Purchased with the
assistance of the Art
Acquisition Fund, City
of Woodstock

From the collection
of the Woodstock Art
Gallery

Innes, Alice Amelia

Title: Near Port Hope

Date: no date

Medium: oil on panel

Dimensions

Height: 48.3 cm,

Width: 40.0 cm





From the collection of
the Woodstock Art
Gallery

Innes, Alice Amelia

Title: Untitled
(Mountain Scene)

Date: no date

Medium: oil on panel

Dimensions

Height: 25.5 cm,

Width: 35.0 cm.

'Split Rail', etching



The work of Alice Amelia Innes embodies bold colour, striking compositions & brave brush strokes. These elements of her art allowed her to better capture the raw beauty of Canada's wilderness landscape. She was fortunate throughout most of her life to have had the luxury of living to paint, rather than having to choose a traditional path open to women of the day. Marriage & motherhood or a menial form of employment may not have allowed Alice to explore the depths of her art & talent.

The prolific accomplishments of Alice Innes, artist, stands as a fine example of high art in Canada.

Sources:

Hillis, Scott. *Paint box memories: Art and inspiration at the Port Hope summer school*

Historically Bound: The History of Embro and West Zorra, 1820-2007

Rand, Margaret. "Alice Innes: A Fond Portrait." *Canadian Antiques and Art Review*, April 1980, pp 16-21