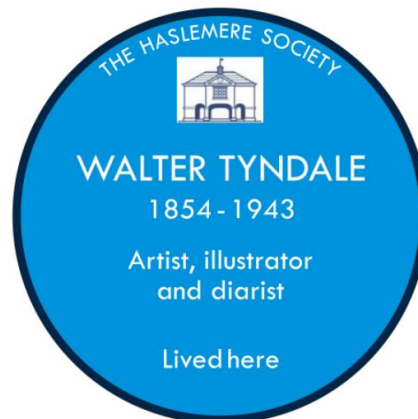


THE
HASLEMERE
SOCIETY



Walter Tyndale

Blue plaque at Broad Dene, Hill Road, Haslemere



Walter Tyndale

The son of a barrister, Walter Frederick Roope Tyndale was born and brought up in the medieval town of Bruges in Belgium, and trained initially at the "Bruges Academy of Art". When he was 16, his family returned to England, settling in Bath in Somerset for several years. At the age of 18, he returned to Belgium, studying art first at the Academy in Antwerp, then moving to Paris where he studied under Léon Bonnat and Jan Van Beers.

In the 1870s, at the age of 21, circumstances obliged him to return to England in order to make a living from his art. He painted portraits and genre works in oils, and first exhibited at The Royal Academy with a portrait of Sarah Bernhardt. Financially aided by a number of commissions to paint deceased people from photographs, - a craft he regarded with some distaste, calling it a funereal form of art-he was able to marry Evelyn Barnard, the daughter of the Rev. Thomas M Bernard and granddaughter of Sir Edmund Carrington.

Until about 1890, he was known mainly as a portrait painter, but then moved to Haslemere, when he started to teach art and switched to watercolour painting.

Tyndale travelled to Holland with friend and fellow artist Claude Hayes, then to Portugal, where he held a successful exhibition in Oporto. Subsequently he painted in England in a sketching group organised by Helen Allingham near Maidstone in Kent, and abroad in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Sicily, Italy and Rothenburg, Bavaria a town he described as "a little paradise for sketchers".

Tyndale painted landscapes and buildings in the west country of England, some of which had inspired Thomas Hardy's "Wessex" novels. Some of these locations were suggested by Hardy himself, who praised the "fidelity, both in form and colour" of Tyndale's work. "The Studio" magazine commented on the "excellent draughtsmanship and the care with which architectural details are rendered".

Illustrated books

Tyndale was one of the first illustrators to benefit from new developments in colour printing in the early 20th century, which led to a surge in demand for illustrations for travel books. He wrote and illustrated several volumes as well as providing pictures for other authors. His first commission was from Methuen for "The New Forest" (1904), and work on subsequent books led to him travelling extensively in England, Italy, the Middle East and Japan, painting landscapes, street scenes and architecture. It is tempting to think that his contact with Methuen may have stemmed from local acquaintance with Sir Algernon Methuen, who lived at Honeyhanger in the Hindhead Road, before building New Place in Farnham Lane in 1903.

Societies, Exhibitions And Legacy

Tyndale was a member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolours (RI), a founding member of the "Haslemere Art Society" and president of the latter between 1930 – 1932. Tyndale exhibited his works at various venues including the Royal Academy, the RI gallery in Piccadilly and Dowdeswell Galleries in London. His main artistic influences were his friend, the watercolourist Claude Hayes and, to a lesser extent, Helen Allingham.

Tyndale left three sizeable diaries, in which he recorded his travels, including correspondence with friends and family, postcards, photographs and some self-portraits. We have been unable to find out what has happened to them.

Military service

During the First World War, Tyndale held a commission as a member of the military censorship staff in Le Havre, later Boulogne.

Tyndale and Haslemere

Tyndale moved to Haslemere in around 1890 and the 1891 census records him as living in East Street (now Petworth Road) with his wife Evelyn (aged 33), Mother Charlotte (aged 75) , two sons Arthur and Geoffrey (aged 5 and 4 respectively), and three servants. Ten years later, and now living at Broad Dene, His Mother was perhaps dead by this time, and Arthur is away, perhaps at school, but the Tyndales have another son, Oliver, aged 8. Two of the servants in 1891 came from Belgium and it is reasonable to assume that they came with the family in the 1870's. The cook, one Marie De Schepper was still with Tyndale ten years later, although she appears to have aged by 28 years in the intervening decade!

In 1894, Tyndale joined a committee under the chairmanship of the Hon. Rollo Russell, son of the Prime Minister to form an exhibition of Arts and Crafts. Among those on the committee were Charles Whymper, Rayner Storr, Axel Haig, and Herbert Hutchinson. The committee produced annual exhibitions from 1894 to 1930 when the name of the Society was changed to the Haslemere Art Society in which name it thrives to this day. Tyndale served as the society's first president.

Tyndale outlived his wife by 10 years, dying in 1943 at the age of 88.

Illustrations by Tyndale

Until the age of 35, Tyndale was known as a portrait painter. After settling in Haslemere, Tyndale started to give painting lessons. One day, visiting a new pupil, he found that he was expected to give a lesson in water colours, rather than oil, the medium with which he had hitherto worked. The young lady in question said to him "I wish you would dash off a landscape, and I am sure I shall learn more by looking at you doing it than by other means. There is a fine view from our drawing-room window, and I have often thought what a pretty picture it would make."

Unimpressed by his efforts, which nevertheless pleased his pupil, Tyndale immediately visited his friend, the water – colourist Claude Hayes, who lived in Milford, in search of advice.

He never touched oil again!

From "Wessex Scenery"



From "An Artist in Italy"



Haven



Sherborne School



Cerne Gateway



Broad Dene and its architect, W. F. Unsworth

Broad Dene was built for Walter Tyndale by architect Mr. W. F. Unsworth, F.R.I.B.A. (of Messrs. Unsworth, Son and Triggs, Petersfield) in 1900. The house is built in the Arts & Craft style, with stone at the ground-floor level, and tile-hung above.

The entrance front is recessed in the centre and is enlivened by a turret projection enclosing the secondary stairs. Access to the main entrance is gained by a flight of steps, the landing of which is covered by a pent roof. The hall forms a small square and is connected by a corridor with the area originally designed as servants' quarters. Leading off the hall and corridor are the three chief rooms on the ground floor the dining-room, the drawing-room, and the studio. On the garden front is a loggia, very pleasantly arranged, with roof supports on a dwarf wall : the whole treatment being very quiet and refined.

The builders were Messrs. F. Milton and Sons, of Witley, Surrey.

Unsworth's partner Inigo Triggs is perhaps better known than Unsworth. Triggs designed many formal gardens and later some country houses, mostly in southern England. He specialised in historical research and in re-creating gardens of the past. His books influenced the Italian mode of the Arts and Crafts style in England. He also designed Cooper's Bridge at Bramshott and the War Memorial in Petersfield High Street in 1922.

W F Unsworth had previously designed the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1879, which was destroyed by fire in 1926 and replaced in 1932 with the present Royal Shakespeare Theatre.



Books written and illustrated by Tyndale:

Hardy country water-colours (A & C Black, 19??).

Below the cataracts (J. B. Lippincott company, 1907).

An artist in Italy (Hodder & Stoughton, 1907).

Japan & the Japanese (MacMillan, 1910).

L'Égypte d'hier et d'aujourd'hui (Paris Hachette, 1910).

An artist in Egypt (Hodder & Stoughton, 1912).

An artist in the Riviera (Hearst's International Library, 1915).

Illustrated by Tyndale:

Hutchinson, H. G. The New Forest (Methuen, 1904)

Holland, Clive. Wessex (A & C Black, 1906).

Charles G. Harper. Wessex (London A. & C. Black, 1911).

Taylor, Harriet Osgood. Japanese gardens (London: Methuen & Co., 1912).



