The Art Of Mildred G. Burrage

University of New England Art Gallery

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The Art of
MILDRED G. BURRAGE

Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
Mildred Burrage working on a map of Cape Ann in her Kennebunkport studio, 1927

Collection of the Maine Historical Society
The Art of
MILDRED G. BURRAGE

Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

MARCH 26 – JUNE 26, 2016
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND ART GALLERY
Mica Abstraction
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
Collection of the Lincoln County Historical Association
INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The depth of Mildred G. Burrage’s intelligence and the wide-ranging reach of her artistic passions have made this exhibition one of the richest undertakings with which I have ever been associated. From her landscapes and portraits and the American impressionism works, to the patriotic World War I posters, then her detailed attention to ancient maps, sailing vessels and mythological sea monsters, to her fascination with the American southwest and mining, as well as Mexico and Guatemala, the World War II interests in shipbuilding, the plight of women and recovering soldiers, and the final long and deep immersion in her original interpretation of abstract expressionism using Maine mica – every single one of her artistic explorations demands our attention and utterly captivates our imagination.

The University of New England is honored to have been associated with the mounting of this exhibition and the celebration of a twentieth century American artist with over 100 exhibitions across the country to her credit, as well as a strong life-long Maine connection and a towering talent unique and original. How fitting that she was a Westbrook College (now UNE) Deborah Morton Society awardee in 1969!

So many people have contributed to this exhibition and accompanying catalogue. First and foremost I wish to thank the co-curators, Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. and Sally W. Rand for their indefatigable attention to each and every detail of Mildred Burrage’s life and artistic contributions over so many years. What a splendid association it has been. It is noteworthy that Earle Shettleworth met Mildred Burrage when he was 19, and remained her friend until the end of her life, and that Sally Rand was her younger cousin as well as good friend.

Many individuals have contributed their time and their memories, as well as loans of their own works of art by Mildred Burrage. In addition, there have been generous financial contributions to make this catalogue possible. I am so grateful to you all: The Burrage Family, Tomlin Coggeshall, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Eichler, Janet Farr Nelson, Katharine K. Farr, Sheila Farr Nielsen, Peter and Teresa Fogg, Barbara Goodbody, Dahlov Ipcar, Eric Johnson, Judy Glickman Lauder, John Matzke, Gael May McKibben, Janice Metcalf Fogg, Peggy Osher, Sally W. Rand, William Rand, Patricia Davidson Reef, Anne Russell, Wilmont & Arlene Palmer Schwind, Alice Spencer, Kathy & Sam Smith, Laura Sprague, Suzanne Stohlman, William Waters, Janet Montgomery Welch, Ian & Florence White, Alden Wilson.

Thank you as well to the many institutions who have generously loaned their Mildred Burrage art works for this exhibition and accompanying catalogue: Brick Store Museum, Colby College Museum of Art, Farnsworth Art Museum, Jesup Memorial Library, Kennebunkport Historical Society, Lincoln County Historical Association, Maine Historical Society, Portland Museum of Art, Smith College Museum of Art, Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead.

I am ever grateful to the University of New England (UNE) for the opportunity to be associated with its Art Gallery on the Portland Campus, and to the Center for Ethics in Action for its fiscal sponsorship of this catalogue. Designer John Kevin O’Brien has brought his creative talents to the elegant look of this publication. I am grateful to Jay York for his professional skill in photographing all these works of art. Finally I am hugely indebted to Kevin Callahan and Ilana Welch for their consummate preparatory talent. Other UNE associates have been most valuable as well: Stephen Halpert, Carolyn Heasly, Cally Gurley, Roberta Gray, Laura Duffy.

— ANNE ZILL, Director
University of New England Art Gallery
The Art of Mildred G. Burrage

This exhibition traces the seventy year career of Mildred Giddings Burrage (1890-1983), one of Maine’s most creative twentieth century artists. Born in Portland, Mildred Burrage spent most of her life between 1909 and 1914 in France learning to paint in the American Impressionist style. Based in Giverny, she received instruction there from the American artist Richard Miller and in Paris art schools. She also painted in Brittany as well as in Rome and Venice. During this period, she met such luminaries as artist Claude Monet, writer Gertrude Stein, poetess Harriet Monroe, and suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst.

At the outbreak of World War I, Mildred Burrage returned to her family’s home in Portland. In 1915 the Burrages moved to Kennebunkport, where Mildred worked for the next twenty-five years. Living in this beautiful coastal Maine village afforded her close friendships with two of its most prominent residents, authors Booth Tarkington and Kenneth Roberts. During the 1920s she specialized in painting portraits and recreating historical maps. In the 1930s she and her sister Madeleine traveled to Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Mexico, and Guatemala, where she painted realistic scenes of Virginia City, the Southwestern desert, and Latin American culture. Mildred also created abstract selenite sculptures, which her friend Dr. Erwin Panofsky, the noted art historian, called “Marvels.” At the same time Madeleine made finely crafted gold and silver jewelry that featured semi-precious stones.

During World War II Mildred Burrage worked as a counselor to women employed at the South Portland Shipyard. She also served as an art instructor and medical artist at the U.S. Army’s Halloran Hospital in New York. Her war experiences resulted in an important body of work, including documentary sketches of women shipbuilders and watercolor studies of recovering soldiers.

The post war period brought major changes for the Burrage sisters. In 1946 they moved to Wiscasset, where Mildred began to paint abstract mica collages. Inspired by Jackson Pollack, these distinctive modern pictures became the focus of her work until she stopped painting in 1980 at the age of 90. In addition to her artistic achievements, Mildred Burrage is remembered as a tireless advocate for advancing the cultural life of Maine through art, history, and historic preservation.

Mildred G. Burrage, 1935
Collection of the Maine Historical Society
On the Maine Coast, circa 1915
Oil on canvas
Private Collection

Grandeman House, Kennebunkport, circa 1930-40
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of Suzanne Stohlman
Mildred G. Burrage’s interest in art was encouraged by her mother, Ernestine Giddings Burrage, who was a gifted artist in her own right. Ernestine was Mildred’s first instructor, followed by a Portland drawing teacher. Between 1902 and 1904 Mildred received instruction from Alice H. Howes, a Portland artist who had studied in Boston, New York, and Europe. Mildred’s art education continued during her high school years in Augusta.

In 1908 Mildred Burrage enrolled in the Wheeler School in Providence, Rhode Island. An accomplished artist, Mary Colton Wheeler offered classes in sketching, painting, and art history. Each summer she invited a few promising students to further their studies at her home in Giverny, France, and Mildred was selected to join her in 1909. Soon after Claude Monet settled there in 1883, Giverny began to attract French and American Impressionist painters. For the summer of 1909, Miss Wheeler arranged for Mildred to work under the direction of Richard Miller, a well-known American Impressionist. Mildred quickly assimilated into the American art colony in Giverny, forming friendships with Miller and his family along with Karl Anderson, Karl Buhr, Theodore Butler, Frederick Frieseke, Arthur Frost, Frederick MacMonnies, Lawton Parker, their wives, and their children.

The summer of 1909 marked the beginning of a five year period in which Mildred Burrage spent four extended periods in France devoted to painting and travel. She continued to work with Richard Miller and attended classes at two art schools in Paris.

During her third visit, she painted with Miller in Brittany in the summer of 1912. Her fourth stay began in Rome in October, 1913, continued in Venice, and ended in Giverny, where she was visiting with the American artist Dr. William B. Johnston and his wife Janet Newlands Johnston when World War I broke out. The beginning of the war in August, 1914 brought an end to Mildred’s European adventures. At the age of twenty-four, she returned home to the safety of Maine to start a new chapter of her life.

An example of Mildred Burrage’s French work is Portrait of a Young Woman. Made between 1909 and 1914, this striking portrait is painted in the palette and style of the Giverny Group, especially in the pose of the young female figure in a domestic interior with the background of an open doorway leading to a garden. This picture reflects the influence of Richard Miller, Frederick Frieseke, and their colleagues.
When World War I began in the summer of 1914, Mildred Burrage’s father, mother, and sister were in England. As a Civil War veteran, the seventy-seven year old Henry Burrage knew firsthand the perils of conflict, and he immediately left his research in London for France to bring Mildred back to England, as recounted in the Kennebec Journal on October 14, 1914:

He managed to get on board a troop train from Paris to Giverny after bribing the railroad agent, who at first refused to sell him a ticket. With his daughter he motored from Giverny to Dieppe, and was held up every few miles by French soldiers. At Boulogne he was obliged to show his passports no less than 10 times before he cleared the city limits.

Reunited in England, the Burrage family lost no time in returning to America. Ernestine, Mildred, and Madeleine arrived in Boston on September 1. Henry Burrage stayed on in London to complete his research, returning in early October to join his family in Portland.

In May, 1915, the Burrages moved to Kennebunkport, where they lived in “Home Port”, the Benjamin Coe House of 1795 on Pearl Street. At that point the United States was neutral in the European war, but many Americans, the Burrage family included, sympathized with the French cause, actively backing it with gifts of money and goods. The Burrages focused their support on a hospital at Vernon for wounded French soldiers established by the American artist Frederick Macmonnies and his wife and administrated by Dr. William B. Johnston. Wartime correspondence between Mildred and Dr. Johnston indicates that the Burrages gave generously to the hospital by sending funds as well as barrels of cigarettes, candy, and clothing.

In 1917 the Burrages acquired “Tory Chimneys”, the three-story Captain Joseph Banks House of 1785 adjacent to “Home Port”. Envisioned as a guest house and summer rental property, this eighteenth century dwelling was pressed into service soon after America entered World War I in April, 1917. The next month a Red Cross auxiliary was formed in Kennebunkport, and Ernestine Burrage was elected its president. Initially Mrs. Burrage hosted meetings and bandage rolling sessions at “Home Port”. However, by summer the auxiliary had grown to one hundred and thirty members, and the Burrages invited the Red Cross to use “Tory Chimneys” as its headquarters for the duration of the war. Joyce Butler describes the scene in her book Kennebunkport, The Evolution of an American Town:

American and Red Cross flags were hung over the front door, Red Cross posters were tacked up in the various rooms, and window curtains were looped back with bands of red, white, and blue. Women came on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 12 noon and 2 to 5 pm – often more than eighty at a time – to make bandages and to knit socks and throws.

Some of the posters on the walls of “Tory Chimneys” were probably distributed nationally by the Red Cross. Hundreds of different posters covering all aspects of the war effort were created by America’s leading artists and illustrators, including Howard Chandler Christy, James Montgomery Flagg, and Joseph Pennell. In this context, Mildred Burrage applied her artistic talents to
make studies of her own World War I posters, two of which survive. One shows the Red Cross flag atop a Christmas tree that stands astride the world. Colorful Allied flags adorn the tree. A second poster, titled *Now It’s Up to You*, presents the stark image of a battle scarred young American who challenges his fellow countrymen to join the fight in Europe. In depicting this soldier with a bandaged head, his arm in a sling, and lacking a leg, Mildred Burrage made a bold statement about the human cost of war that departed from the conventions of the time. The striking quality of both of these posters leaves us wanting to know what other war-related art she may have produced in this period.
Maine

Three years into Henry S. Burrage’s retirement, the Burrage family moved to Kennebunkport, a picturesque Southern Maine town with a seagoing past. Like many coastal Maine communities of the time, Kennebunkport had made the transition from a maritime economy to summer tourism. While a new cottage colony developed on nearby Cape Arundel, the village retained its historic character, a valuable asset in a period imbued with the Colonial Revival. As a late nineteenth century guide book to Kennebunkport observed:

The streets are wide and well kept; the houses large square structures built years ago by wealthy sea captains in the palmy days of the West Indies trade. Everything looks old-fashioned, yet all the time more interesting because of that antique air that pervades everything.

In the spring of 1915, the Burrages acquired one of these “large square structures”, the Coe House, which they named “Home Port.” In 1917 they purchased the three-story Brooks House next door, which they called “Tory Chimneys.”

Using watercolor on gesso, Mildred Burrage made paintings of both of these family homes, employing vertical compositions that purposely distorted the sense of space in their settings. “Home Port” is presented in the lower half of the picture framed by two elm trees so attenuated in height that they fill the upper half of the painting. Their branches cast dark shadows on the snowy foreground. These exaggerated trees and the artistic alteration of space that they create are reminiscent of A November Day, Brittany (1912), one of the artist’s finest works from her early years in France. For “Tory Chimneys” Mildred Burrage reversed the order of her composition, placing the house in the upper half of the painting and filling the lower half with a snow covered lawn.

In 1929, three years after her husband’s death, Ernestine Burrage bought the adjacent Welsh House to enlarge “Tory Chimneys”. As Mildred Burrage recalled in a 1975 interview, “I painted murals in Tory Chimneys when my mother moved the Brooks House against the Welsh House, and we tore the partitions out of the first floor to make one big room.” Rendered in the early nineteenth century style of Rufus Porter, these murals depicted local houses, buildings, and scenes. Above the mantel was Mildred’s painting of the Vigilant, a locally-built vessel that sailed under Captain William Gould.

When Mildred and Madeleine Burrage moved to Wiscasset in 1946, their new home was a Federal Period house on Lee Street. In the left front parlor, Mildred painted a series of murals showing nineteenth century Bangor from her grandfather Moses Giddings’ house on State Street, which overlooked the city. Scenes range from the busy Bangor waterfront to a Gothic Revival gazebo that stood on the grounds.

Mildred Burrage’s Maine paintings combine Colonial Revival nostalgia for the past with her passion for the state’s history and architecture. Instilled in her by her father at an early age, her love of old buildings led her to become a pioneer in Maine’s historic preservation movement. In the process she was instrumental in saving the Tate House in Portland, the Lincoln County Jail and Wiscasset Academy in Wiscasset, and the Pownalborough Court House and the Bowman House in Dresden.
Burrage House, Kennebunkport, circa 1920-40
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Burrage Family

Tory Chimneys, Kennebunkport, circa 1920-40
Watercolor on gesso
Private Collection
Portraits

Portraiture was an important part of Mildred Burrage's work as an artist. During her French years from 1909 to 1914, she painted several fine portraits, including a pencil and watercolor study of her father Henry S. Burrage in his Military Chaplain's uniform and a large oil on canvas of her sister Madeleine. When Mildred Burrage went to Rome in the fall of 1913, she discovered Italian primitives and Renaissance frescos, which inspired her “to give up painting in oil and do beautifully drawn portraits on gesso ground.”

When World War I began in August, 1914, Mildred Burrage was staying in Giverny with Dr. William B. Johnston, his wife Janet Newlands Johnston, and their two children. While Mildred returned to Maine later that summer, the Johnstons remained in France because of the doctor's commitment to providing medical assistance to the French army. Once back at their home in Reno, Nevada, the Johnstons invited Mildred Burrage to paint their children's portraits.

The portraits of Janet and Billie Johnston gave Mildred Burrage the opportunity to practice her technique of watercolor on gesso. The portrait of Janet was particularly successful, showing her against a background of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. When this picture was exhibited in Washington, D. C. some years later, it received the following review in The Washington Post of March 24, 1929:

*The painting has a delightful quality that recalls the work of the Italian primitives and gives one an idea of what they must have been in color and texture when they were just finished. The portrait is flat and decorative, and there is a charm and appeal. It is an unusual portrait with imaginative quality.*
Mildred Burrage created most of her portraits in the nineteen teens and nineteen twenties, and her subjects were primarily family and friends. She produced two sensitive pictures of her father in old age with book in hand, studies for a portrait of her sister Madeleine in the family parlor in Kennebunkport, and a delightful image of her eleven year old nephew Henry D. Burrage in his Boy Scout uniform. Another portrait shows a young boy in fashionable summer attire holding his sailboat while standing in a grove of small fir trees with the ocean in the background.

Of the few portraits that Mildred Burrage painted after 1930, two stand out: her nephew Henry Burrage in his army uniform in 1943 and Florence Bixby at the Bowman House in Dresden in 1968. A descendant of the Bowman and Goodwin families, Miss Bixby is shown seated in the parlor of the Bowman House. The Burrage sisters acquired this beautiful 1762 Georgian house to save it and found sympathetic new owners to restore it. This painting celebrates Florence Bixby’s return of original pieces of eighteenth century furniture to the house, including the Chippendale chair at the right. Mildred Burrage based this portrait on a color photograph. The grid pattern of white lines across the surface marks this painting as a study for a larger picture that was never executed.

Mildred Burrage was a talented portraitist who made engaging and sympathetic paintings of her subjects. Whether in expression, dress, or setting, her sitters were depicted in ways that represented important aspects of their lives. Those for whom she painted portraits appreciated her work, and some of her pictures remain in families as cherished possessions.

In 1920 she received the following tribute from Booth Tarkington for painting his daughter Laurel:

*I am enclosing a cheque for the portraits, which are such a satisfaction as to make any cheque grotesque, except in the light of a symbolic token of gratitude. I wish you had painted all the pictures we have in the house.*

*Henry D. Burrage, 1921*
Oil on board
Collection of the Burrage Family
*Boy with a Sail Boat, circa 1920*
Watercolor on gesso
Private Collection

*Study for a Portrait of Madeleine Burrage, circa 1930-40*
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
Study for a Portrait of Florence Bixby, 1968
Oil on board
Collection of William Waters
As a child, Mildred G. Burrage became aware of sixteenth and seventeenth century exploration and settlement maps of the New World through her father’s interest in early American history. In 1926, the year of her father’s death, Mildred began to recreate historical maps in watercolor on gesso, often in relief that was ornamented in gold or silver leaf. These highly decorative pieces were rich in color and intricate in detail. For a five year period, the artist made these maps for the homes and yachts of wealthy individuals. She used the same technique for painting pictures of yachts. Her patrons included Larz Anderson, Dr. Hugh Auchincloss, Mrs. Guy P. Gannett, and Phineas Sprague. Examples of her work were illustrated in magazines such as Vogue and Yachting.

Mildred Burrage actively marketed her maps through a series of exhibitions between 1926 and 1930. The first two took place at the Casson Galleries in Boston in 1926 and 1927, followed by two at the Jesup Memorial Library in Bar Harbor in 1927 and 1928. Her show at the Dunthorne Gallery in Washington, D.C. received national publicity thanks to the attendance of First Lady Lou Hoover on March 23, 1929. The next day the Associated Press released a story describing Mrs. Hoover’s visit to the gallery that was printed in newspapers across the country.

Mrs. Hoover was not the only figure in high places to appreciate Mildred Burrage’s maps. At her 1927 Casson Galleries exhibit, Frederic A. Delano purchased a map of Cape Cod decorated in gold and silver leaf. The uncle of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Frederic Delano was a railroad president with a passion for urban planning that included his active support for Daniel Burnham’s Plan of Chicago. In 1929 Mrs. Delano commissioned Mildred to paint a large map of the Hudson River for her husband’s library at Algonac, their family home in Newburgh, New York.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933, he appointed his uncle to chair the National Capitol Park and Planning Commission. One of the Commission’s projects was to build the George Washington Parkway between Mount Vernon and Great Falls, Virginia. To help raise funds for the parkway’s construction, the Commission decided to sell paper and linen copies of a map of Washington, D.C., and Frederic Delano asked Mildred Burrage to design it. The map was based on an early plan of the city, which Mildred surrounded with views of major landmarks and a border featuring Daniel’s Burnham’s famous words:

Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men’s blood.
Make big plans. Aim high in hope and work. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty.

The linen version of the map was printed in six colors: red, green, blue, plum, brown, and terra cotta. While advertised as a handkerchief, this map was sold with many suggested uses, including scarves, aprons, table covers, neckerchiefs, or sewed to make bed spreads, quilts, window draperies, or kimonos. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt promoted the sale of the maps at one of her press conferences, and Mildred Burrage sent Mrs. Roosevelt a quilt made from the maps.

The Washington map project was widely publicized, briefly placing the artist from Kennebunkport in the national spotlight. A more lasting result of the map was the friendship that developed between Mildred Burrage and Frederic Delano, as reflected in the
correspondence they conducted until his death in 1953.

Another friendship, with author Kenneth L. Roberts, led to commissions for the endpaper maps and illustrations for the first five of his historical novels published between 1929 and 1937. A native of Kennebunk, Roberts was a journalist when he built his home in Kennebunkport in 1924 and set his sights on becoming a fiction writer with the help of his neighbor, the noted playwright and novelist Booth Tarkington. The Burrage sisters were part of a close circle of friends that included Roberts, Tarkington, and their wives.

For Kenneth Roberts’ books, Mildred Burrage drew intricate pen and ink maps in the spirit of her watercolor on gesso maps. She also provided pen and ink renderings of historical illustrations such as *A Representation of Dartmoor Prison*, which was made for *The Lively Lady* in 1931 based on an 1815 print. Roberts and his publisher Doubleday viewed this art work as an important addition to books that were otherwise text. In preparation for publishing *Captain Caution* in 1934, Roberts wrote to Mildred in a humorous vein:

*Listen, Kid: I got to have an end paper with a ship, a brig, a frigate & a map on it, & everything for Captain Caution. If we can't get it quick, we can't get it in the book! Hey, hey! Look alive, my hearties, etc. K. R.*

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*Sea Serpent and Galleon, 1928*
*Watercolor on gesso*
*Collection of William Waters*

*Sea Serpent Attacking a Galleon, 1928*
*Watercolor on gesso*
*Collection of the Burrage Family*
Map of Cape Ann, 1927
Watercolor, gold and silver leaf on gesso
Collection of the Burrage Family
Jodocus Hondlus's 1608 Map of the Atlantic Coast, 1929
Watercolor and gold leaf on gesso
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
Falmouth Neck, as it appeared when destroyed by Mowett, Oct 18, 1775

Watercolor on gesso

Collection of the Maine Historical Society
A Representation of Dartmoor Prison, 1931
Ink and watercolor on paper
Collection of the Kennebunkport Historical Society
A Map of the District of Columbia and Surrounding Country, 1933
Print on linen
Collection of Janice Metcalf Fogg
The Yachts Advance, Wildfire, and Resolute, 1927
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Burrage Family

The Yacht Lynx, 1927
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg
Mildred G. Burrage first visited the West to paint portraits of the children of William and Janet Newlands Johnston in Reno, Nevada. Of her trip, she wrote: 

Seeing the West is an experience every artist ought to have. Seeing the West for the first time in Nevada brought more changes to my life as an artist. The pale colors of the desert and the mountains are something to hold fast.

More than a decade passed before Mildred Burrage returned to Nevada in 1931. This time she was accompanied by her sister Madeleine, who was in search of gemstones for making jewelry. Mildred focused on documenting the vanishing buildings of the once great silver mining community of Virginia City. During March and April, 1931, she painted a series of twenty-four watercolor on gesso pictures that depicted such landmarks as St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Piper’s Opera House, the Wells Fargo Building, the Crystal Bar, the Miners’ Union Hall, and the Liberty Engine House. In its post-Civil War boom years, Virginia City boasted a population of thirty thousand, which had dwindled to five hundred by the 1930s. From an artist’s perspective, Mildred Burrage wrote that “the town presents one of the most extraordinary spectacles – great mine dumps, old ruins, public buildings, dismantled dwelling houses, all looking as if they would collapse at any moment.”

Mildred Burrage’s Virginia City series was exhibited four times in the year following its completion. The Paul Elder Gallery in San Francisco showed the paintings in May, 1931, followed by the Stanford University Gallery in June, 1931. The pictures also received two East Coast exhibits, the Montclair Art Museum in Montclair, New Jersey in January, 1932 and the Addison Gallery of American Art at Philips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts in March, 1932. The Virginia City series was praised in the press as representing “a vigorous, colorful page of American history.” On May 10, 1931, a critic for the San Francisco Chronicle stated that the public should focus on the art of these pictures as well as their content:

Miss Burrage paints with the zest of a person supremely interested in her subject. It is a case in which the subject threatens to monopolize all the attention, which would be a pity, for Miss Burrage exhibits verve and a highly civilized understanding of color and design in her treatment of her theme.

Early in 1932 the Burrage sisters returned to the West, Mildred to paint and Madeleine to collect gemstones. For this trip, their destinations were Arizona and New Mexico. Mildred Burrage explored the Arizona desert near Tucson to paint watercolor on gesso pictures of cacti and other desert plants. In February, Mildred exhibited her desert paintings at the Arizona Inn in Tucson. At the same time Madeleine showed her handcrafted silver and copper jewelry featuring stones that she had found in Nevada and New Mexico.

The trip included time in New Mexico, where Mildred Burrage painted the Spanish church at Ranchos de Taos. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, this Southwestern landmark was the subject of paintings by Georgia O’Keefe and John Marin and photographs by Paul Strand and Ansel Adams, among others.
View Overlooking Washoe Valley near Virginia City, Nevada, 1931
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Burrage Family

Desert Cactus, Tucson, Arizona, 1932
Watercolor on gesso
Private Collection
San Francisco de Asis Church, Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico, 1932
Gouache and ink on panel
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
Having explored the American West in 1931 and 1932, Mildred and Madeleine Burrage continued their travels in Mexico in 1933-34 and in Guatemala in 1935-36. As in the west, Mildred painted while Madeleine collected stones for making jewelry.

The Burrage sisters’ Mexican adventures began in December, 1933, with a visit to the Darlingtonss, longtime family friends who lived in San Diego, California. Mrs. Darlington and her two children accompanied Mildred and Madeleine to Mexico City, where they spent Christmas together. From there the sisters traveled to Taxco, a mining town southwest of Mexico City, where they stayed during their time in Mexico.

Using her preferred technique of watercolor on gesso, Mildred Burrage painted various aspects of Mexican life, including market places, children, and floral bouquets. The result was a series of colorful pictures that captured the essence of the native culture. As a reviewer for the *New York Tribune* wrote on November 18, 1934, “Miss Burrage is spirited in her studies of street scenes, which are usually picturesque, but her heads of Mexican flower girls and boys have a quiet charm and close sympathy with the intact dignity of her little models.” Clearly, she owed her skill in painting Mexican children to her experience as a portrait artist.

Returning to Maine in 1934, Mildred Burrage lost no time in showing her Mexican paintings. In August, 1934, Gordon Dunthorne gave the Burrage sisters a joint exhibit at his summer gallery in Kennebunkport, Mildred displaying her Mexican watercolors and Madeleine her jewelry. From there the Mexican paintings went to the Etcetera Gallery in New York in November, 1934, where they received favorable reviews in the press. New York was followed by the Sweat Memorial Art Museum in Portland in December, 1934 and the Robert Breckenridge Gallery in Chicago in April, 1935.

Encouraged by the reception of Mildred’s Mexican pictures, the Burrage sisters decided to visit Guatemala. Departing from New York on the Ship *Castilla* on December 13, 1935, they arrived in Barrios, Guatemala eleven days later, just in time to celebrate Christmas in a new country. From December, 1935 through March, 1936, Mildred Burrage devoted herself to painting many...
of the same themes that she had in Mexico: market places, fruits, vegetables, and native women and children. Remarking on “the juxta position of brilliant reds and yellows in a manner which is always exciting,” a critic for the New York Sun stated on October 26, 1936 that “Miss Burrage informs us these are not her setups but actually those of the natives.” As in Mexico, she sought to celebrate the local culture in a spirit of discovery and respect. This is especially apparent in her numerous pencil sketches of Guatemalan women and children.

Back in Kennebunkport in April, 1936, Mildred Burrage made arrangements to display her Guatemalan paintings at the Ferargil Galleries in New York in October and at the Sweat Memorial Art Museum in November. She showed thirty-two paintings in New York and twenty-nine in Portland and was praised by critics in both cities for her work. An article in the October 31, 1936 New York Sun described the characteristically creative manner in which the artist marketed her pictures:

Whenever Miss Burrage is present at the exhibition, she finds that she has to deliver an impromptu lecture on Guatemala and Mayan culture. Visitors to the galleries also stay to see her beautiful collection of Mayan embroideries and costumes, and usually the art gallery is turned into an impromptu Mayan fashion show as the blonde and sprightly artist models the costumes. It humanizes the rigid atmosphere which art exhibitions always seem to engender, and instead of the usual restrained critical comments whereby visitors prove their sophistication, the whole affair is turned into a spontaneous party in which everybody participates.
World War II

As a Civil War veteran, Henry S. Burrage provided a patriotic role model for his daughters. Recalling their family’s commitment to the American Red Cross in World War I, the Burrage sisters resumed their participation in the organization’s Kennebunkport chapter as World War II began. Mildred chaired the group’s volunteer services as well as its salvage drive. She expressed her support for the war effort in a letter to the Portland Press Herald that ended with the statement, “The only way to preserve democracy is to fight for it – as a volunteer.”

Maine served as a major shipbuilding center during World War II. While submarines were constructed in Kittery and destroyers in Bath, the South Portland yard of the New England Shipbuilding Corporation launched two hundred and thirty-six Liberty Ships to carry troops, weapons, and supplies to the battlefronts of Europe. To produce this armada of transport ships, large numbers of women entered the work place to fill the jobs of men serving in the armed forces.

At the age of fifty-two in 1942, Mildred Burrage became one of those new American women by joining the staff of the South Portland yard to provide instruction about the occupational hazards of shipbuilding. Of this experience, she wrote:

My energies were needed elsewhere. I worked as a counselor to women in the South Portland yard. I soon realized that art was needed there, too, and I obtained permission to do protective and helpful posters for the women at work.

Mildred Burrage’s efforts proved a great success. In its October 1, 1943 issue, The Art Digest reported:

Miss Burrage has just completed a series of safety posters showing the proper dress for women workers. The first artist to be employed by a rather cautious maritime commission, Miss Burrage has since been acclaimed by management and workers alike – the women protesting when the posters were taken down to be changed and management satisfied that in her drawings it had found the solution to dangling jewelry and glamorous hairdos.

During her two years in South Portland, Mildred Burrage made several sketches and drawings of women workers. A strong example is her charcoal portrait of Hazel Wildes of Kennebunkport in her work clothes. This sympathetic portrayal of a young female shipbuilder celebrates Hazel’s contributions to the war effort in its accompanying inscription listing her activities. This picture speaks to the dignity and value of labor in the cause of one’s country.

Mildred Burrage also depicted the making of Liberty Ships. Two striking watercolor-on-gesso pictures show the laying of a keel and the building of a vessel. The strength and force of steel construction is evident in both of these paintings, conveyed by simple forms and strong colors. Added to these pictures is a remarkable watercolor-on-gesso painting of the intricate labyrinth of scaffolding required to build a ship. Reminiscent of a Piranesi prison interior, this complex image foreshadows the abstraction of Mildred Burrage’s post World War II mica paintings.

Early in 1944 the Burrage sisters left Kennebunkport for a
new assignment at the U.S. Army’s Halloran Hospital on Staten Island, New York, which treated wounded soldiers requiring reconstructive treatment. There Mildred and Madeleine volunteered their services as instructors in the hospital’s Arts and Skills Unit, which was sponsored by the New York Chapter of the American Red Cross in cooperation with the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This recreational therapy program was designed to help patients to recover through drawing, painting, and a wide range of crafts. In the August, 1944 issue of *Craft Horizons*, Mildred Burrage wrote in an article entitled, “Craftsmen Can Help” that “the success of the program has been so marked, the men enjoy it so much, that the Army and Navy hospitals all over the country want Recreational Therapy.”

While at the Halloran Hospital in 1944-45, Mildred Burrage also served as a medical artist. In this role, she made detailed watercolor studies of soldiers’ faces, documenting eye replacements and skin reconstruction. Twenty-one of these medical portraits are in the Otis Historical Archives’ Medical Illustration Collection at the National Museum of Health & Medicine.

When World War II ended in 1945, the Burrages returned to Kennebunkport, secure in Mildred’s belief that they had “helped put our fighting men back on the path to strength and health.” The sisters themselves were about to embark on a new path that would take them to Wiscasset and would transform Mildred into an abstract artist.
Laying the Keel of a Liberty Ship, South Portland Shipyard, circa 1942-43
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of Alden Wilson

Building a Liberty Ship, South Portland Shipyard, circa 1942-43
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Maine Historical Society

South Portland Shipyard, circa 1942-43
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
Mica Paintings

Working at the U. S. Army’s Halloran Hospital on Staten Island in 1944-45 gave Mildred G. Burrage the opportunity to visit New York City art museums and galleries, including one of the first exhibitions of paintings by Jackson Pollack. Trained in Impressionism, Mildred Burrage had moved to realism in the 1920s and 30s and had begun to experiment with abstract painting in the early 1940s. Pollack’s work was a revelation that caused her to rethink her approach to art. As she wrote in 1974:

I saw immediately that Pollack had found another way. These were not decorative, planned, cooked-up affairs. As soon as the war was over, my sister and I went back to Maine and moved to Wiscasset in 1946 in order to work continuously. It was not easy for me to change. I was frightened, I found. It seemed presumptuous to stop copying nature but I kept on.

In embracing abstractionism in the late 1940s, Mildred Burrage created a distinctive and personal interpretation of modern art in the form of collages of Maine mica, foil, colored paper, and paint. After attaching mica, foil, and paper to a panel, she would paint abstractly on the surface of the collage. She had first encountered mica in the 1930s while accompanying her sister to Western Maine tourmaline deposits in search of semi-precious gems for Madeleine Burrage’s jewelry making. Mildred Burrage first exhibited “Maine Mica Pictures” at the Jesup Memorial Library in Bar Harbor in July, 1933. These paintings were described as “works in a new medium – Maine mica from Oxford County.”

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Her mica theorem paintings of flowers probably date from this period. Of the properties of mica, Mildred Burrage wrote:

I have never used any medium which gave me greater pleasure, but it offers a problem because of its special formation: it reflects light differently from time to time as well as from place to place so that I have no assurance that I have produced anything permanent for day-to-day living. Every mica picture recreates itself, somehow, wherever it may be.

When Mildred Burrage started making her mica colleges in the late 1940s, she saw them as an opportunity to explore the problems of time and space inspired by the theories of Albert Einstein. As the Space Age of the 1960s dawned, she became fascinated with the new photographs of the planets and the universe that appeared in popular magazines, and these images influenced her work as well.

Recognition of Mildred Burrage’s mica paintings came gradually in the art world. In 1955 she was given an exhibition at the Currier Gallery in Manchester, New Hampshire, followed in 1964 by a show at the Davison Art Gallery of Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. In the 1970s, then in her 80s and in her last decade as an active artist, she achieved acclaim through three major exhibits, Rockefeller University and Bowdoin College in 1974 and Colby College in 1978. Curator Dorothy C. Miller of the Museum of Modern Art wrote of Mildred Burrage’s mica paintings at Colby:

These mica paintings, at first glance astounding for their elegance and beauty, are the result not only of her understanding of the meaning and means of contemporary painting, but of endless experimentation, hard work, and intelligence.
Mica Abstraction, 1949
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
Collection of Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead, Hallowell
Mica Abstraction
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
Private Collection
A Gold and Silver Space, circa 1971
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
Collection of Tomlin Coggeshall
Mica Abstraction, 1973
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
Collection of the Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville
Mica Abstraction
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
Collection of Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Eichler
The End of the Bonfire, 1973-74
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
Collection of the Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Massachusetts
# Mildred G. Burrage Timeline (1890 – 1983)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Born in Portland, Maine on May 18, daughter of the Reverend Henry S. Burrage and Ernestine Mae Giddings Burrage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-1904</td>
<td>Resided with her parents and her younger sister Madeleine in Portland until the family moved to Togus at Chelsea, Maine, where her father served as Chaplain of the National Home for Disabled Soldiers from 1905 to 1912.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Graduated from the Smith Grammar School, Augusta.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1905-08</td>
<td>Attended Cony High School, Augusta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908-10</td>
<td>Attended Miss Wheeler’s School in Providence, Rhode Island, majoring in art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Lived with Miss Wheeler in Giverny, France from June to September, 1909. Received instruction in painting from Richard E. Miller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-12</td>
<td>Returned to America in June, 1911. Taught painting at Miss Wheeler’s School from September, 1911 to May, 1912.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Painted in France from June to November, 1912. Accompanied by her sister Madeleine Burrage and her aunt Madeleine Giddings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-14</td>
<td>Lived with her family in Portland from January to September, 1913. Painted in Italy and France from October, 1913 to August, 1914. Returned to America at the outbreak of World War I in August, 1914.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Moved to Kennebunkport with her parents and her sister to live in “Home Port”, the Benjamin Coe House of 1795 on Pearl Street. In 1917 the Burrages acquired an adjacent property, “Tory Chimneys”, the Captain Joseph Brooks House of 1785. The Burrage family became friendly with the novelist and playwright Booth Tarkington and his wife Susannah, who were summer residents of Kennebunkport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Invited by William and Janet Newlands Johnston to visit Reno, Nevada to paint portraits of their children Janet and Billy. Mildred Burrage knew the Johnstons in Giverny prior to World War I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Traveled in England and France with her family from April to October, 1921.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Traveled from San Francisco to Honolulu with her sister and her aunt in February, 1923. Mildred Burrage returned to California in March, 1923, while her sister and her aunt visited Japan and China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923-24</td>
<td>Painted in France from October, 1923 to May, 1924.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1926
Henry S. Burrage died in Kennebunkport on March 9, 1926.

1926-30
Exhibited recreations of historical maps in watercolor and gesso at shows in Bar Harbor, Kennebunkport, Boston, and Washington, D.C. The March, 1929 exhibit at the Dunthorne Gallery in Washington was attended by First Lady Lou Hoover.

1927-28

1929
Drew the endpaper maps for Kenneth L. Roberts' historical novel Arundel. Mildred Burrage illustrated endpapers for five of Roberts’ novels from 1929 to 1937. The Burrage sisters’ friendship with Roberts and his wife Anna began about 1924, when the writer built his first house in Kennebunkport and asked Mildred Burrage to assist with its design.

1931
Began advising on the restoration of the Tate House in Portland as a member of the Colonial Dames.

The Burrage sisters spent March and April, 1931 in Nevada, where Mildred Burrage painted a series of twenty-four views of the famed Western mining town of Virginia City. These pictures were exhibited at the Paul Elder Gallery in San Francisco and at the Stanford University Art Gallery later that year.

Ernestine Giddings Burrage died in Kennebunkport on July 15, 1931.

1932
Painted pictures of the Arizona desert, including landscapes and cacti. Exhibited paintings of cacti at the Arizona Inn in Tucson in February, 1932.

1933
Exhibited “Maine Mica Pictures” at the Jesup Memorial Library in Bar Harbor in July, 1933. These paintings were described as “work in a new medium – Maine mica from Oxford County.” The library also showed “Jewelry with American Stones” by Madeleine Burrage.

Asker by the National Capitol Park and Planning Commission to design a map of Washington, D.C. to be printed on both paper and linen. The Commission’s chairman, Frederic A. Delano, was a patron and friend of the artist.

1933-34
Spent Christmas, 1933 with her sister and the Darlington family in Mexico City, followed by a period in which Mildred Burrage painted Mexican children, flowers, and market scenes. These pictures were exhibited at the Etcetera Gallery in New York in November and December, 1934.

1935-36
The Burrage sisters arrived in Guatemala in December, 1935, where Mildred Burrage painted themes similar to her Mexican pictures for the next four months. Her Guatemalan paintings were exhibited at the Ferargil Galleries in New York in October, 1936.

1938
The Burrage sisters began their friendship with the noted art historian Erwin Panofsky and his wife Dora, who were staying in Kennebunkport during the summer of 1938.

1940-41
Painted two murals for the Park Science Building at Bryn Mawr College, “The Rise of Life” and “The History of Chemistry.”

1942-43
Worked at the South Portland Shipyard of the New England Ship Building Company as a counselor for women employees and to make safety posters that addressed women’s work issues in the shipyard.
1944-45
Worked at the U.S. Army’s Halloran Hospital, Staten Island, New York, as a medical artist and as an art instructor in the Arts and Skills unit to assist in the rehabilitation of patients.
Attended an exhibit of Jackson Pollack’s work in New York, which transformed her art from realism to abstractionism and inspired her to concentrate on creating abstract mica collages.

1946
The Burrage sisters moved from Kennebunkport to a house on Lee Street in Wiscasset. Mildred established her studio in a nearby outbuilding at Castle Tucker.

1947
The Burrage sisters helped to mount the first exhibition of Maine arts and crafts, which was held at the Portland Museum of Art. The exhibit later traveled to the University of Maine.

1954
Co-founded the Lincoln County Cultural and Historical Association to preserve the Lincoln County Jail of 1809-11 and the Jailor’s House of 1839 and to convert them into a museum.
The Lincoln County Cultural and Historical Association acquired the Pownalborough Court House of 1761 in Dresden. Mildred Burrage directed its restoration.

1955
Began a ten year period as the unpaid director of the Lincoln County Cultural and Historical Association.

1957
Listed as a painter of promise in the New Talent Annual of the magazine Art in America.

1957-60
Wrote articles for the Boothbay Register and the Kennebec Journal in Augusta to publicize the work of the Lincoln County Cultural and Historical Association.

1958
Co-founded the Maine Art Gallery in Wiscasset in the Wiscasset Academy of 1807.

1961
The Burrage sisters acquired the Jonathan Bowman House of 1762 in Dresden to preserve a major example of Georgian architecture until they found sympathetic owners to restore it.

1963
The Burrage sisters received honorary degrees from Colby College.

1969
Received the Deborah Morton Award from Westbrook College, now the University of New England.

1974
Exhibition of mica paintings at Rockefeller University in New York City.
Exhibition of mica paintings at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art.

1976
Madeleine Burrage died in Camden on July 26, 1976.

1978
Exhibition of mica paintings at the Colby College Museum of Art.

1980
Stopped painting due to ill health.

1981
Received the Annual State Historic Preservation Award from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.
Gifted a large collection of her work to the Portland Museum of Art.

1983
Mildred G. Burrage died in Yarmouth on March 26, 1983.

Ward, Halloran Hospital, Staten Island, New York, circa 1944-45
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
## Mildred G. Burrage

### Exhibition List (1924 – 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paintings, Harlow and Howland, Interior Decorators, Boston, Spring, 1924.</th>
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<td>Decorations in Gesso Relief, The Casson Galleries, Boston, April 26-May 8, 1926.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maps and Ship Decorations, The Casson Galleries, Boston, February 21-March 5, 1927.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maps and Decorations in Gesso Relief, Jesup Memorial Library, Bar Harbor, June-July 14, 1927.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watercolors of Virginia City, Nevada, Paul Elder Gallery, San Francisco, California, May 4-May 16, 1931.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watercolors of Virginia City, Nevada, Stanford University Gallery, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, June 7-June 28, 1931.</td>
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<td>Watercolors by Mildred Burrage, Burrage Studio, Kennebunkport, August 19, 1931.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watercolors of Virginia City, Nevada, Addison Gallery of American Art, Philips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, March, 1932.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paintings by Mildred Burrage, Burrage Studio, Kennebunkport, August 18, 1932.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mica Paintings, Wanamaker’s Department Store, New York, November, 1933.</td>
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<td>Mexican Watercolors, Mariner’s Mirror, Kennebunkport, August 13-August 18, 1934.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesso Paintings of Mexican Bouquets, Children, Markets, Etcetera Gallery, New York, November 12-December 1, 1934.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia City and Mexican Watercolors, Robert Breckenridge Gallery, Chicago, April, 1935.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesso Paintings of Guatemala, Ferargil Galleries, New York, October 19-November 1, 1936.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesso Paintings of Guatemala, Sweat Memorial Art Museum, Portland, November 10-November 22, 1936.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watercolors, Ogunquit Art Association, Barn Gallery, Ogunquit, August, 1937.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, November 7-December 12, 1937.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marvels of Mica, Shells and Coral, Burrage Studio, Kennebunkport, August 8-August 13, 1938.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watercolors, York County Artists Exhibition, Brick Store Galleries, Kennebunk, August 15- August 31, 1938.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watercolor, 56th Annual Exhibition, Sweat Memorial Art Museum, Portland, March 5-March 26, 1939.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Watercolors, Midsummer show, Currier Gallery of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire, Summer, 1939.

Watercolors of Virginia City, Nevada, Nixon House Gallery, Reno, Nevada, November, 1939.


Paintings, Tenth Annual Exhibition of Creative Work by Museum Members, Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk, August 1-August 26, 1950.

Oils and Watercolors, University of Maine Gallery, Orono, March 1-March 31, 1951.

Paintings, Maine Crafts Exhibit, Maine Publicity Bureau, Kittery, Summer, 1951.


Painting, Sweat Memorial Art Museum, Portland, July 31-September 2, 1951.

Watercolors, Maine Water Color Society, Farnsworth Museum, Rockland, July 31-September 2, 1951.

Marvels, Blue Hill Pavilion, Blue Hill, Summer, 1951.

Marvels, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Maryland, March, 1952.

Painting, Maine Coast Artists, Rockport, Summer, 1952.


Paintings, Sweat Memorial Art Museum, Portland, September 7-September 28, 1952.


Painting, Artists of Maine, University of Maine, Orono, June 1-August 15, 1953.

Painting, Paintings and Sculpture by Contemporary Maine Artists, Consolidated School, Kennebunkport, July 15-August 9, 1953.

Painting, Annual Exhibition of Creative Work by Museum Members, Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk, August 4-August 29, 1953.


Painting, New England Exhibition of Painting, Sculpture, Drawing & Graphic Arts, Boston Arts Festival, June 4-June 19, 1955.


Painting, New England Exhibition of Painting, Sculpture, Drawing & Graphic Arts, Boston Arts Festival, June 9-June 24, 1956.


Mica Paintings, Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, April 1, 1964.


Mica Paintings, Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, April 4-April 28, 1972.


Mica Painting, Fall Exhibit, Maine Art Gallery, September 9-October 8, 1973.

Mica Paintings, Rockefeller University, New York City, May 28-September, 1974.


Mica Paintings, Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, September 26-October 20, 1974.


Mica Painting, Exhibition of Paintings, Sculpture, Prints and Drawings by Maine Artists, Maine Art Gallery, Wiscasset, July 25-September 1, 1975.

Mica Painting, Maine Coast Artists Gallery, Rockport, August 7-September 7, 1975.

Mica Painting, Fifth Bridgton Arts Show, Bridgton Town Hall, October 11-13, 1975.


Early Members Show- The First Five Years, Maine Art Gallery, Wiscasset, August-September, 1994.


The Company House of the Gould and Curray and the Best and Belcher mines, Virginia City, Nevada, 1931
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Burrage Family
Mildred G. Burrage
Works in the Exhibition

French Period

*Portrait of a Young Woman*, circa 1909-14
Oil on canvas
20 x 27"
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg
Painted in France, this early work reflects the influence of Mildred Burrage's teacher Richard Miller and his fellow American Impressionist Frederick Frieseke, who pictured young women in domestic settings.

World War I

*Now It's Up to You*, circa 1917-18
Watercolor
23 ¾" x 13 ¾"
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg
In this study for a World War I poster, a battle scarred young American soldier challenges his fellow countrymen to join the fight in Europe.

*Study for a Red Cross Poster*, circa 1917-18
Watercolor
28 ½" x 21"
Collection of the Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk
The role of the American Red Cross in providing relief to both civilians and soldiers in World War I inspired many artists to create posters in support of the organization. Here Mildred Burrage envisions the Red Cross flag atop a Christmas tree, adorned with Allied flags, that strides the world.

Maine

*On The Maine Coast*, circa 1915
Oil on canvas
32 ½" x 27 ½"
Private Collection
Following her return from France to Maine in 1914, Mildred Burrage painted several mid-coastal landscapes, of which this one is an example.

*Burrage House, Kennebunkport*, circa 1920-40
Watercolor on gesso
23" x 18"
Collection of the Burrage Family
Acquired from the artist Abbott Graves in 1915, the Benjamin Coe House of 1795 on Pearl Street in Kennebunkport became "Home Port" for Henry and Ernestine Burrage and their daughters Mildred and Madeleine. After the deaths of their parents, the Burrage sisters continued to live here until they moved to Wiscasset in 1946.

*Tory Chimneys, Kennebunkport*, circa 1920-40
Watercolor on gesso
30 1/2" x 18 1/2"
Private Collection
In 1917 the Burrages purchased the three-story Captain Joseph Brooks House of 1785 next door to their home in Kennebunkport. Naming the house “Tory Chimneys”, the family hosted the local Red Cross chapter there during World War I and later used the property as a guest house and for summer rentals.

*Ell and Barn, Kennebunkport*, circa 1920-40
Watercolor on gesso
29 1/4 x 23"
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

*Grandeman House, Kennebunkport*, circa 1930-40
Watercolor on gesso
18 1/2" x 12 1/2"
Collection of Suzanne Stohlman
This winter scene was painted from the Burrage House on Pearl Street in Kennebunkport looking down Pleasant Street to the Grandeman House at the corner of Green and Pleasant Streets.
The Art of Mildred G. Burrage

Portraits

**Boy with a Sail Boat, circa 1920**
Watercolor on gesso
31 ½" x 21 ¼"
Private Collection
This well dressed boy holding his toy sail boat may have been a member of Kennebunkport family.

**Portrait of a Girl**
Oil on canvas
20” x 18”
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

**Reverend Henry S. Burrage, circa 1920**
Oil on canvas
35” x 26”
Collection of the Maine Historical Society
This portrait depicts the artist's father Henry S. Burrage (1837-1926) toward the end of his active life as a Civil War soldier, Baptist minister, newspaper editor, military chaplain, and scholar of Maine history. Reverend Burrage served as the first State Historian from 1907 to 1926.

**Henry D. Burrage, 1921**
Oil on board
22 ½” by 20 ¾”
Collection of the Burrage Family
Henry D. Burrage (1910-1999) was a son of the artist's older half-brother, Dr. Thomas J. Burrage of Portland.

**Study for a Portrait of Madeleine Burrage, circa 1930-40**
Watercolor on gesso
26 7/8“ x 24 3/8”
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
The artist's sister Madeleine Burrage (1891-1976) is shown sitting in the living room of the Burrage House in Kennebunkport.

**Study for a Portrait of Florence Bixby, 1968**
Oil on board
20” x 24”
Collection of William Waters
A descendent of Jonathan Bowman, Florence Bixby (1886-1981) is shown seated in the parlor of the Bowman House in Dresden. The Burrage sisters acquired this 1762 Georgian house and found sympathetic owners to restore it. This painting celebrates Miss Bixby's return of eighteenth century furniture to the house, including the chair at the right. The grid pattern of white lines across the canvas marks this painting as a study for a larger picture.

**Study for a Portrait of Madeleine Burrage, circa 1920**
Medium
13 ¾” x 23 ½”
Private Collection
This study of Madeleine Burrage's hands was made by the artist in preparation for a portrait of her sister.

Maps

**Sea Serpent and Galleon, 1928**
Watercolor on gesso
16” x 26”
Collection of William Waters
Mildred Burrage based this pair of panel paintings and their decorative frames on wood engravings from “Historia de Gentibus Septentronalibus,” an account of the Nordic countries by Olaus Magnus printed in Rome in 1555. The artist exhibited these panels at the Jesup Memorial Library in Bar Harbor in July, 1928.

**Sea Serpent Attacking a Galleon, 1928**
Watercolor on gesso
16” x 26”
Collection of the Burrage Family

**Jodocus Hondius's 1608 Map of the Atlantic Coast, 1929**
Watercolor and gold leaf on gesso
20” x 40 1/2”
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
This map was exhibited at the Gordon Dunthorne Gallery in Washington, D.C. in 1929.

**The 1612 Map of New France by Samuel de Champlain, 1928**
Watercolor on gesso
38” x 65”
Collection of the Jesup Memorial Library, Bar Harbor
Samuel de Champlain's 1612 map of New France was published in Paris in 1613 in his book "Les Voyages de Sieur de
Champlain.” Mildred Burrage’s copy of the map was exhibited in the Jesup Library in Bar Harbor in July, 1928, and later became part of the library’s collection.

**Falmouth Neck, as it appeared when destroyed by Mowett, Oct 18, 1775**

Watercolor on gesso
37 ½” x 56 ½”
Collection of the Maine Historical Society

Mildred Burrage based this painted map on a lithographed map that appeared in 1833 in Part Two of William Willis’s *The History of Portland*. Willis included the same map in the 1865 edition of his book.

**A Representation of Dartmoor Prison, 1931**

Ink and watercolor on paper
28 ½” x 34 ½”
Collection of the Kennebunkport Historical Society

This ink and watercolor rendering by Mildred Burrage is a large scale version of the art work that she provided for one of the end papers of Kenneth Roberts’ *The Lively Lady*, a historical novel published in 1931. The artist based her rendering on “View of Dartmoor Prison” by J. I. Taylor, which was published in Philadelphia on 1815. Between 1929 and 1937 Mildred Burrage furnished endpapers for five of Roberts’ books. Kenneth Roberts and his wife Anna were close friends of the Burrage sisters in Kennebunkport.

**Map of Cape Ann, 1927**

Watercolor, gold and silver leaf on gesso
33 ¾” x 25 ½”
Collection of the Burrage Family

This map was exhibited at the Casson Galleries in Boston in February and March, 1927.

**A Map of the District of Columbia and Surrounding Country, 1933**

Print on paper
20” x 20”
Private Collection

The National Capitol Park and Planning Commission asked Mildred Burrage to design this map of Washington, D.C. to be printed on both paper and linen. The map was sold by the Commission to raise funds for the George Washington Parkway to be built between Mount Vernon and Great Falls, Virginia. The Commission’s chairman, Frederic A. Delano, uncle of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, was a patron and friend of the artist. Mildred Burrage surrounded the border of the map with an appropriate quote from the Chicago architect Daniel Burnham (1846-1912): “Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men’s blood. Make big plans. Aim high in hope and work. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty.”

**A Map of the District of Columbia and Surrounding Country, 1933**

Print on linen
20” x 20”
Collection of Janice Metcalf Fogg

The linen version of the map was printed in six colors: red, green, blue, plum, brown, and terra cotta. While advertised as a handkerchief, this map was sold with many suggested uses, including scarfs, aprons, table covers, neckerchiefs, or sewed together to make bags, bed spreads, quilts, window draperies, or kimonos. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt promoted the sale of the maps at one of her press conferences.

**Yachts**

**The Yachts Advance, Wildfire, and Resolute, 1927**

Watercolor on gesso
19 ¾” x 47 ¼”
Collection of the Burrage Family

Titled “A Decorative Panel”, this painting of the Yachts Advance, Wildfire, and Resolute was exhibited at the Casson Galleries in Boston in February and March, 1927.

**The Yacht Lynx, 1927**

Watercolor on gesso
27” x 24”
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

This painting of the Yacht Lynx was exhibited at the Casson Galleries in Boston in February and March, 1927.
Alpine

Alpine Landscape, circa 1920-30
medium
31 ¼" x 22 ¼"
Private Collection
This Alpine scene may have been painted during one of Mildred Burrage’s trips to Europe in the 1920s.

The West

Western Landscape, 1931
Watercolor on gesso
20" x 24"
Collection of the Burrage Family
View overlooking Washoe Valley near Virginia City, Nevada

Female Nude in a Western Landscape, 1931
Watercolor on gesso
35" x 31"
Collection of the Burrage Family
This painting of a female nude reclining in a Western landscape reflects the influence of the Symbolist Movement.

Western Landscape, 1931
Watercolor on paper
9" x 14"
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

Western Landscape, 1931
Watercolor on paper
10 x 14"
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

Wells Fargo Building,
Virginia City, Nevada, 1931
Watercolor on gesso
17 3/8" x 23 7/8"
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
This view of the façade of the Wells Fargo Building in Virginia City, Nevada, is one of twenty-four paintings that Mildred Burrage made of the famed Western mining town in March and April of 1931. Later that year these pictures were exhibited at the Paul Elder Gallery in San Francisco and at the Stanford University Art Gallery.

The Company House of the Gould and Curray and the Best and Belcher Mines,
Virginia City, Nevada, 1931
Watercolor on gesso
23 ¼" x 17 ¼"
Collection of the Burrage Family
This painting is part of Mildred Burrage’s Virginia City, Nevada series.

George Mickel on the 580 Level,
Hale & Norcross Mine, Virginia City, Nevada, 1931
Watercolor and pencil on gesso
17 ½" x 16 ½"
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
This painting is part of the artist’s Virginia City, Nevada series.

San Francisco de Asis Church, Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico, 1932
Gouache and ink on panel
21" x 23"
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
A Southwestern landmark, this Spanish church was the subject of paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe and John Marin and photographs by Paul Strand and Ansel Adams.

Desert Cactus, Tucson, Arizona, 1932
Watercolor on gesso
16" x 13"
Private Collection
Mildred Burrage exhibited paintings of cacti at the Arizona Inn in Tucson in February, 1932.

Desert Cactus, Tucson, Arizona, 1932
Watercolor on gesso
16" x 13"
Collection of the Burrage Family
Mexico/Guatemala

**Mexican Bouquet, 1934**
Watercolor on gesso
19” x 15 ½”
Collection of the Burrage Family
Mildred Burrage’s colorful floral bouquet pictures were painted in Taxco, Mexico, and were exhibited at the Etcetera Gallery in New York and the Portland Museum of Art in 1934.

**Mexican Bouquet, 1934**
Watercolor on paper
11” x 9”
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

**Guatemalan Market Scene, 1936**
Watercolor on paper
14” x 18 ¼”
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
Mildred Burrage exhibited her paintings of Guatemala at the Ferargil Gallery in October and November, 1936 and the Portland Museum of Art in November, 1936.

**Guatemalan Market Sketch, 1936**
Ink and pencil on paper
13” x 15 ½”
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

**Guatemalan Market Still Life, 1936**
Watercolor on gesso
24 1/8” x 27”
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art

**Guatemalan Market Still Life, 1936**
Watercolor on paper
14 ½” x 21 ¼”
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

**Sketch of Guatemalan Women Making Tortillas, 1936**
Pencil on paper
13” x 9 ½”
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

**Portrait Sketch of Guatemalan Woman, 1936**
Pencil on paper
13” x 9 ½”
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art

**Four Guatemalan Portrait Sketches, 1936**
Pencil on paper
12 ½” x 9” each
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

**Colonial Revival Designs**

**Pair of Theorem Paintings**
Mica and paint on board
11 3/4” x 11 ½”
Collection of the Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk
Theorem paintings of baskets of fruit and flowers were a popular form of early nineteenth century American folk art. In this pair of theorems, Mildred Burrage recreated such paintings in an early example of her use of mica.

**Floral Stencil Design**
Paint on paper
16” x 13 ¼”
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
In the Colonial Revival era of the 1920s and 30s, early nineteenth century stencil designs such as this one by Mildred Burrage were popular for decorating walls and household furnishings.

**World War II**

**Laying the Keel of a Liberty Ship, South Portland Shipyard, circa 1942-43**
Watercolor on gesso
23 ½” x 20 ½”
Collection of Alden Wilson
Mildred Burrage made this painting and the accompanying picture while working as a counselor to women employed at the shipyard. Her duties included producing safety posters to educate the female workforce about the occupational hazards of shipbuilding.

**Building a Liberty Ship, South Portland Shipyard, circa 1942-43**
Watercolor on gesso
23 ½” x 20 ½”
Collection of the Maine Historical Society

**Hazel Wildes, circa 1942-43**
Charcoal on paper
23 5/8” x 19 1/8”
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
While working at the South Portland Shipyard, Mildred Burrage made several portraits and sketches of women workers. The artist shows Hazel Wildes in her work clothes and celebrates her multiple roles for the war effort.

**South Portland Shipyard, circa 1942-43**
Watercolor on gesso
23” x 27”
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
Depicting the intricate labyrinth of scaffolding required to construct a ship,
Mildred Burrage created this complex image that foreshadows the abstraction of her post World War II mica paintings.

**Ward, Halloran Hospital, Staten Island, New York, circa 1944-45**
Watercolor on gesso
23 5/8” x 24 1/2”
Collection of the Portland Museum of Art
This view of a ward at the U.S. Army’s Halloran Hospital was painted by Mildred Burrage while she and her sister Madeleine served as instructors in the hospital’s Arts and Skills Unit. This recreational therapy program was designed to help wounded soldiers to recover through painting and crafts.

**Portraits of Two Patients, Halloran Hospital, Staten Island, circa 1944-45**
Watercolor and gouache on board
5” x 10 ¼” each
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg
While at the Halloran Hospital, Mildred Burrage served as a medical artist in addition to her duties as an art instructor. Her sensitively rendered studies of soldiers documented eye replacements and skin reconstruction. Twenty-one of the artist’s medical portraits are in the Otis Historical Archives’ Medical Illustration Collection at the National Museum of Health & Medicine.

**Abstract Works**

**Mermaid**
Mica on painted board
15” x 20”
Private Collection

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
27” x 13 ¼”
Collection of the Burrage Family

**A Gold and Silver Space, circa 1971**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
22 ½” x 30”
Collection of Tomlin Coggeshall
This painting was shown as Number 6 in Mildred Burrage’s 1974 exhibition at Rockefeller University in New York.

**Arrangement in Gray and Silver, circa 1972**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
20 ¼” x 40 ½”
Collection of Tomlin Coggeshall
This painting was shown as Number 4 in Mildred Burrage’s 1974 exhibition at Rockefeller University in New York.

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
15 ½” x 7 ½”
Collection of Tomlin P. Coggeshall

**Mica Abstraction, circa 1955**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and foil
32 ½” x 44”
Collection of the Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville
This painting was shown as shown as Number 2 in Mildred Burrage’s 1974 exhibition at Rockefeller University in New York.

**Mica Abstraction, 1973**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
32 7/8” x 44 ¼”
Collection of the Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville
This painting was shown as Number 8 in Mildred G. Burrage’s 1974 exhibition at Rockefeller University in New York.

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
22 ½” x 28 ¾”
Collection of Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Eichler

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
22 ¾” x 29 1/8”
Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
13 ¾” x 16 1/8”
Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
15” x 11”
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg
**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
9 ½” x 8”
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

**Mica Abstraction, 1949**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
23 ¼” x 27”
Collection of Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead, Hallowell
This painting was shown as Number 1 in Mildred Burrage's 1974 exhibition at Rockefeller University in New York.

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
23 ¼” x 27”
Collection of Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead, Hallowell
This painting was shown as Number 1 in Mildred Burrage's 1974 exhibition at Rockefeller University in New York.

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
23 ¼” x 27”
Collection of Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead, Hallowell
This painting was shown as Number 1 in Mildred Burrage's 1974 exhibition at Rockefeller University in New York.

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
41 ½” x 31 ½”
Collection of the Lincoln County Historical Association, Wiscasset

**Mica Abstraction, 1950s**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
22” x 30”
Collection of John Matzke

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
25 ½” x 32”
Collection of Janet Montgomery Welch

**Mica Abstraction**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
24 ½” x 33”
Private Collection

**Mica Abstraction, circa 1970**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
23” x 27”
Private Collection

**Black and Gold**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
27 ¾” x 35 ¼”
Collection of the University of New England, Portland

**Bonfire 2**
Collage of mica, foil, paper, and paint
19” x 19”
Collection of Susan Lowndes Blagden

**Varnish Tests on Gold Leaf**
Gold leaf and varnish on primed linen
16 ½” 28 ½”
Private Collection

**Marvel**
Selenite
13” x 6”
Private Collection

**Marvel**
Selenite
17” x 8”
Private Collection
Display Cases

**Christmas Card of the Burrage House, Kennebunkport, circa 1930**
Watercolor on paper
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
This colorful holiday card depicts the Benjamin Coe House of 1795 on Pearl Street in Kennebunkport, where the Burrage family lived from 1915 to 1946, when Mildred and Madeleine Burrage moved to Wiscasset.

**Sketch of a Mammoth for “The Rise of Life” mural, Science Library, Bryn Mawr College, 1940**
Pencil on paper
Collection of the Maine Historical Society
Tracing evolution on earth, “The Rise of Life” was one of two murals which Mildred Burrage painted in 1940-41 for the Science Library at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. The second mural depicted the history of chemistry.

**Sketch of a Young Woman, South Portland Shipyards, circa 1942-43**
Pencil on paper
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

**Sketch Aboard Ship at the South Portland Shipyards, circa 1942-43**
Pencil on paper
Collection of Teresa and Peter Fogg

**Sketch for the Launching of the Liberty Ship Silvester Gardiner, South Portland Shipyards, 1943**
Pencil on paper
Collection of the Maine Historical Society
Between 1941 and 1945, 236 Liberty Ships were built in South Portland to transport troops and cargo for World War II. Launched in June, 1943, the Silvester Gardiner served as a troop ship.

**Sketch for a Portrait of Kenneth L. Roberts**
Pencil on paper
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
A native of Kennebunk, Kenneth L. Roberts (1885-1957) started his career as a journalist and became one of America’s most popular historical novelists in the 1930s and 40s. Mildred and Madeleine Burrage were part of a close circle of the writer’s Kennebunkport friends, who included the noted novelist and playwright Booth Tarkington.

**Proofs for Endpapers by Mildred Burrage for Kenneth Roberts’ 1929 historical novel Arundel**
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

**Proof of Endpaper by Mildred Burrage for Kenneth Roberts’ 1931 historical novel The Lively Lady**
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
A large rendering of this endpaper design of Dartmoor Prison is included in the exhibition.

**Endpaper by Mildred Burrage for Kenneth Roberts’ 1933 historical novel Rabble in Arms**
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

**Endpaper by Mildred Burrage for Kenneth Roberts’ 1934 historical novel Captain Caution**
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

**Endpaper by Mildred Burrage for Kenneth Roberts’ 1937 historical novel Northwest Passage**
Collection of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

**Mildred Burrage’s Palettes and Brushes**
Private Collection
Maine artists gather in 1958 to discuss the formation of the Maine Art Gallery in the former Wiscasset Academy building. From left to right: Ruth Lepper Gardner, William Thon, Gustaf Tenggren, Dahlov Zorach Ipcar, Mildred Burrage, and Margaret Conant.
The 1612 Map of New France by Samuel de Champlain, 1928
Watercolor on gesso
Collection of the Jesup Memorial Library, Bar Harbor