

**PICTORIAL
LANDSCAPE
PHOTOGRAPHY**

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Pictorial landscape photography by Frank Roy Fraprie

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FRANK ROY FRAPRIE

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PICTORIAL LANDSCAPE
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BY THE
PHOTO PICTORIALISTS OF BUFFALO

With 53 illustrations by members of the Society



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PREFACE



AS we look back to the year 1905 in the history of pictorial photography in America, it seems very near the beginning. Independent workers here and there had created sensations with their work. Some salons had been held and the Photo Secession had made its name known both here and in England. On the whole, though, outside of limited circles, very little encouragement could be found in photographic clubs and magazines for those who attempted to put anything in their pictures except what could be obtained by the mechanical use of a lens.

Even before this time, however, a number of photographic workers who were affiliated with the Buffalo Camera Club felt an urge in the direction of self-expression and, while still retaining membership in the club, decided to form a little group devoted to more intensive work. Their feeling was that in this way some of the objectionable features of formal society meetings could be eliminated and their time given rather to the study of picture making than to parliamentary proceedings. This group determined to do without any mechanism in the way of organization, rules, or constitution and their sole business function was an occasional voluntary whip-around for such amounts as were absolutely necessary to defray the slight expenses of the meetings. This method of procedure was adhered to as long as the society existed and the single officer originally appointed, a secretary, acted permanently in this position.

The society was originally composed of eight members, G. Edwin Keller, Edward B. Sides, Charles A. Booz, Oscar C. Anthony, Will A. Hatch, John M. Schreck, S. S. Lloyd and W. H. Porterfield, the secretary, all of whom were residents of Buffalo. Two additional members came in later, F. Austin Lidbury and Augustus J. J. Thibaudeau, of Niagara Falls.

These members met regularly at places chosen by the secretary, who endeavored to select such spots as would furnish suitable subjects for study and comment. One of the many beautiful spots in Delaware Park would frequently be chosen for a meeting and there the Photo-Pictorialists of Buffalo, as the group called itself, would bring their prints and cameras, criticise the work previously done and endeavor to repeat it more successfully or make new negatives of greater value. Other meetings took the form of visits to the Albright Art Gallery but, out of deference to the surroundings, prints were not brought on these occasions, though the lessons to be learned from paintings and other forms of graphic art were always studied with the thought of camera expression in mind. The greater number of the meetings, however, were held in the homes of members, especially in the winter months and on these occasions the program varied between intensive study and demonstrations of various processes, the criticism of prints, and social enjoyment, which helped to make the non-photographic members of the families more tolerant of the time consumed in photographic work.

It was not long before this intensive application to pictorial photography won recognition for the Photo-Pictorialists. The photographic magazines began to publish articles, usually written by some member of the society and always accompanied by illustrations. Their pictures were to be seen on the walls of exhibitions in America and abroad. The quality and individuality of the work attracted much favor-

able comment and those familiar with the progress of photography soon discovered that the work of this group had a coherence previously unfamiliar in photography, so that the title "The Buffalo School" was invented and frequently applied to their work.

So the years rolled on. The group remained united and productive, and its work was both sought after and familiar throughout the world wherever good photography was shown. Then came the fateful year, 1914, which wrecked so many things familiar to a world forever passed away, and the group of Photo-Pictorialists also dissolved coincidentally with the downfall of so many greater things. Other tasks, great or small, have claimed the energies of the Photo-Pictorialists during these years of strife and reconstruction and only Porterfield today remains as a strong figure in photography, but the work of the group accomplished more than the instruction and pleasure of its own members. It gave a definite impulse to photography in America, especially to landscape photography, and our salons of 1921 will show on their walls landscape work on the grand scale which the Photo-Pictorialists first produced in this country, and following the paths which they broke out. Their pictures are scattered, they can never be collected again as originals, but they remain in the minds of men and a few have been brought together for the illustrations of this book. Their theories and methods have not perished and must not be forgotten, so they have here been resurrected from the pages of periodicals in which they first appeared and, revised with mature judgment, are here given permanent form. May they give other pictorialists the same stimulation and pleasure that they gave the men who mutually created them.

FRANK ROY FRAPRIE

BOSTON, 1921.