



# THE CRAFTSMAN



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## PICARDY: A QUIET, SIMPLE LAND OF DREAMY BEAUTY, WHERE ARTISTS FIND MUCH TO PAINT: BY JANE QUIGLEY



JUST across the channel from Folkestone lies Picardy, with many delightful spots for the painter. This part of northern France is somewhat flat and monotonous in some districts, but the artist's eye finds beauty in the subtle tones of sand dunes as well as in the more obvious beauty of opalescent sea and shimmering meadows. Most people cross to Picardy by the mail route of Folkestone and Boulogne, but a more novel way is to go by steamer from London Docks to Boulogne, and those who love the sea, and are willing to sacrifice comfort for the sake of novelty, find a great charm in the night passage from London Docks. Even Londoners know but little of this part of the Thames given up to commerce, yet it has a beauty of its own, especially by moonlight, when the sordid quays and factories are obscured from view.

At Boulogne the painter finds delightful marine subjects, and nothing could be more paintable in its way than the harbor and shipping viewed against the mellow background of the old town, the ships and buildings reflected in the water of the harbor. One can work from a boat or steamer, and thus escape the children and loafers who so often spoil the pleasure of outdoor work. Boulogne is too popular in the season for work, and the hotels and pensions put up their prices in summer, but the Hotel Bourgoyne and Hotel Derveaux are fairly reasonable and well managed.

Better suited to the needs of artists are the little towns of Etaples and Montreuil and the villages of that district. The express trains from Boulogne to Paris stop at Etaples, and after about twenty minutes through green fields and past poplar-bordered rivers one arrives at this quaint place so well known to artists. It has a group of resident workers, and others come and go, working independently or under a master. Many well-known men and women have worked at Etaples, including Dudley Hardy, Ludivico, Garrido, Mr. and

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Mrs. C. Eastlake, and others; and it attracts a sprinkling of representative American artists as well as students. The usual plan is to live in rooms or studios, and go for meals to the Hotel des Voyageurs or Hotel Joos—unpretentious hostelrys with fairly good meals, served in an atmosphere of friendliness and stimulating talk. In winter the place is deserted, except by a group of serious workers who make it their home. Artists pay about twenty-five or thirty francs a week for board, and rooms and studios are cheap. Anyone who is lucky enough to find a place at the Villa Riant Séjour, facing the river, will find a Parisian landlady—the embodiment of *joie de vivre* and good sense, who keeps her house in spotless order.

ETAPLES has been called—and not without reason—a dirty little town, but it is healthy for all that, and endears itself to many who work there. The artistic sense finds pleasure in its winding cobbled streets, and mellow old houses, and in the dark-complexioned southern looking people. Models are plentiful, and pose well for a small payment either in the studio, or in the picturesque gardens that lie hidden behind the street doors.

A great source of interest is the fishing fleet that comes up the estuary of the Cauche to the quays where the fisher people and shrimpers live in a colony of their own. There is constant work for the sketch book, especially on Monday, when the boats go off for several days, the whole family helping the men and boys to start. All one can do amid this bewildering movement of boats putting up sail, and people bustling about with provisions, is to make hurried notes and sketches. Near Etaples is the lovely forest of Le Tonquet, where one can work in absolute quiet, with vistas of the river, the sandy coast and the sea beyond.

And this forest at Le Tonquet has a splendid character of its own. Many of the trees being young, the effect is light and fairy-like compared with older forests where giant trees shut out the sky. The soil is sandy and the ground undulating, so high in parts that one can look down upon Etaples and the sea coast as it stretches far away toward the horizon. Great variety characterizes the trees—dark pines are relieved by light poplars and willows and silver birches, so that the general effect is that of tender green, touched with gold and silver. Here and there the carpet of moss and pine needles is overgrown by gorse and brambles, and there are long avenues and open spaces, peculiarly beautiful in spring and autumn.



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Etaples is said to have been discovered as a place for artists by a French engineer, Monsieur Delaporte, who was commissioned to build the first railway bridge across the river Cauche. He was himself a very good amateur artist and found the fishing village of Etaples and its neighborhood full of subjects for artists. He was contemporary with Millet and Corot and intimate with them and others of the Barbizon School, who came at his invitation to work in Picardy. Among the well known men who have worked there are J. C. Cazin, A. Besnard, Fritz Thaulow, Le Sidaner, Alfred East, Dudley Hardy and Rupert Bunny.

The habitués of Etaples during recent years include Mr. W. Lee Hankey, whose delightful work, broad in treatment and full of poetic insight, is too well known to need comment here. Many of his best pictures have been painted in France and he has recently been elected to the Société Internationaliste des Aquarellistes, Paris. Mr. Charles R. Sims, whose picture, "The Land of Nod," attracted much attention at this year's Academy, also works at, or near, Etaples. The colony also includes Mr. Garrido, noted for his individual and brilliant technique, and Mr. Gwilt Jolley, who studied in Paris under Benjamin Constant and J. Lefebvre, and worked at Capri and St. Ives before he discovered Etaples. He exhibits in London, Paris and elsewhere, and has made a special study of sunlight effects. John R. Greig, an Aberdeen painter of promise who formerly worked in Holland, has come to Etaples for subjects, and among many other promising additions to the colony is Adolf C. Linde, an American citizen of Russian parentage. His painting of "A Quaint Bit of Montreuil" was hung on the line at the Salon 1906.

Etaples attracts many women artists, foremost among them being Miss Gertrude Leese, Miss Lily Defries, Miss Molony and Miss W. Chambers, all of whom exhibit at the Royal Academy and other exhibitions. A picture by Miss Leese, "The End of the Day," in the Salon of last year was bought for the Art Gallery at Christiania, and Miss Molony's work has had much success.

**N**EAR Etaples is the village of Trépied, an exclusive nook for painters, where several well-known Americans make their home, Mr. Max Bohm notably. He attracts a following of students by his power as a teacher and the vigorous and sincere personality which exacts good work from all who come under his influence. Mr. Bohm exhibits at the Salon and at Burlington House, and was well hung at the recent St. Louis Exhibition. Mr.

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A. Koopman, an American, is well known in this country and in America by landscape and genre pictures as well as by the many excellent portraits he has executed. The accommodation at Trépié is decidedly limited; the inn is small and there are no apartments, but a furnished cottage may be hired occasionally. Near Etaples, too, is the village of Dame-Camier, where Mr. Austin Brown lives and has painted some of his best landscapes.

Montreuil-sur-Mer—an old walled town—is not far distant, and offers plenty of material to artists. The winding uphill streets and old gateways are picturesque and from the ramparts one gets a panoramic view. Models are plentiful and there is ample inspiration in the neighborhood for the landscape painter. Mr. Van der Weyden, an American, lives at Montreuil and produces delightful work which is better known in France than in England.

The people of Montreuil are accustomed to artists and their erratic ways, and good board and lodging is provided at the Hotel de France. There are some very interesting churches which attract lovers of architecture, so in spite of its deserted look and reputation for not being healthy, Montreuil has a distinct vogue among artists, one of the many who have worked there being Phil May.

Another delightful French town is Abbeville, at its best on a market day, with a typical crowd of country folk shopping at the booths. The town has some quaint houses and a river flowing through its midst, but its crowning feature is the Gothic Church, the joy of artists.

About half an hour by train from Abbeville is the village of Longpré, noted for the charm of its surroundings. It has a fine but badly restored church, and some quaint houses, but artists come there for the landscapes which inspired the great painter, Puvis de Chavannes. The scenery is flat and the land swampy, with beautiful ponds and water-lilies, and numbers of silvery poplars. It is a place suggestive of nymphs and fairies where the great god Pan might discourse sweet music. Steamers go from Longpré up the river Somme to Amiens, the town which all tourists visit on account of its beautiful cathedral.

All this part of northern France, in common with many other parts of that delightful country, is an ideal land for artists. One can get about so easily by train, bicycle or on foot, and live a simple outdoor life of perfect freedom, with nothing except the inevitable small worries to disturb the condition necessary to good work.