

Charles Barker 1873-1953

C.F. Barker was born in London, England in 1873, and came to Vancouver with his family in 1886, finding employment in a succession of clerical and sales positions and becoming very active in the city's bicycle racing scene.

During the late 1920s Barker showed a true interest in painting and took lessons with Vancouver-based artists John Innes and John Radford. He finally settled in Victoria around 1930 and inspired by the natural beauty of Vancouver Island his life as an artist finally took hold.

In 1931, he joined the Island Arts and Crafts Society and contributed to its annual exhibitions from 1931-38 and in 1941, serving as its President in 1936-37. He also exhibited in Vancouver and Toronto, becoming recognized as a noted watercolourist and oil painter. However, though proficient in oils, Barker's favourite medium was watercolour, for which he adopted a delicate, spare technique in the "realistic" tradition of painting. His subject matter consisted mainly of British Columbia seascapes and landscapes.

Art remained essentially as a hobby for Barker, but, following his retirement from regular employment by 1950 - his final job was at Yarrows shipbuilding site - he did identify himself as an "artist" and "art-teacher."

Charles Barker died in Victoria in 1953.



After Linder, Brian Excell Collection



Nanoose Bay, Brian Excell Collection



Goldstream, Brian Excell collection