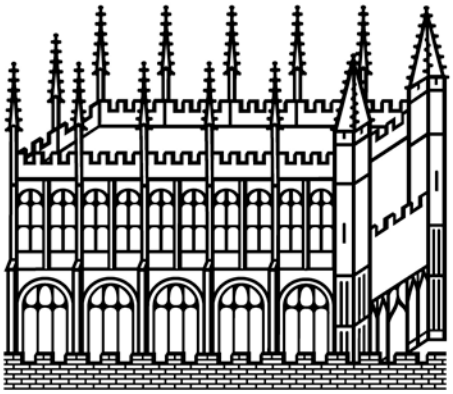


WATER COLOUR PAINTING

LANDSCAPES & SEASCAPES

By Norman Wilkinson, O.B.E., R.I., R.O.I.

THE PRESS ART SCHOOL
TUDOR HALL, FOREST HILL
LONDON, ENGLAND

NORMAN WILKINSON'S record as an artist is unique. As a youth he studied and sketched ships so successfully that he became staff marine-artist to the *Illustrated London News*. He has drawn and painted every kind of sea-going craft, from a barge to a battleship, and almost every sort of marine incident, from a yacht race or naval review to a sea battle.

He has exhibited for many years at the Royal Academy and Royal Institute, he has sketched and painted in many parts of the world—on sea and land, and in the air ! One of his most recent pictures, exhibited at the "R.I.," was a panorama of Bethlehem and Jerusalem, seen from the cabin of an air-liner.

His posters for the London Midland and Scottish Railway are extremely popular, and he organised the campaign which resulted in seventeen Royal Academicians and Associates producing a special series of poster designs for this railway.

But, apart from all this pictorial enterprise, he very definitely helped to win the Great War. Early in the war he was engaged in mine-sweeping and submarine chasing, and he eventually originated a system of naval camouflage which resulted in the use of over 200 different designs, and the "dazzle-painting" of over 4,000 British vessels and 1,100 American craft.

The following very clear explanation of his Water Colour methods will indicate that, if he wishes at any time to add still further to his remarkable versatility, he could emphatically succeed as a teacher. He shows you, in this lesson, how he has tackled several varied types of subject.

P. V. B.

WATER COLOUR PAINTING

LANDSCAPES & SEASCAPES

By Norman Wilkinson, O.B.E., R.I., R.O.I.

I AM sitting in my studio trying to visualise the kind of question you would ask me, if you came along as an ordinary student interested in my kinds of subject and keen on knowing how to produce them.

I suppose you would start right at the beginning, and want to know exactly what materials I use; so let's be practical and sensible, and settle this question first.

MY SKETCHING OUTFIT

I usually work on unbleached Arnold paper (*Not* surface) which your art dealer will be able to identify if you tell him that it is 220 pounds weight to the ream. This sounds mysteriously technical, but it is important, because this particular paper is so stout that it doesn't cockle or buckle, however much you float washes on to it. It is practically a board; you pin it on to your drawing board, or clamp it into a sketching case, and it is a joy to work on.

When I am painting out of doors, I don't use an easel, but a wooden "sketching frame," which is a splendid substitute. It is similar in appearance to the top of a small music-stand, but it has a couple of curved arms at its base, which fasten on to your thighs as you are sitting on your sketching stool. It fits so comfortably that it keeps taut and firm even in the strongest wind.

The drawing paper which I have just mentioned is fastened into the metal rim of a sketching case. This sketching case is also a portfolio, which holds one's extra sheets of paper. It is a most ingenious and simple little contrivance, the metal rim being especially convenient for holding the paper and keeping it firm.

Newmans, the artists' colour people, make both the sketching frame and this case, the practicality of which I have many times appreciated.

COLOURS AND BRUSHES

Once again I use Newman's—in tubes. I squeeze the amount of colour required into a japanned water-colour box of a convenient size, which contains half a dozen indented divisions or trays, a thumb-hole, and the usual little compartments for separate colours. My water I carry in a tin bottle rather like a drinking flask, the lower part of which, being detachable, forms a cup which fastens to the edge of my colour-box. With this outfit, I can sketch, if necessary, in a gale.

MY THREE FAVOURITE COLOURS

My favourite basic colours (and during this talk you will hear about them many times) are Yellow Ochre, Cobalt, and Light Red. A tremendous range of colours can be obtained from these three "primaries", and if you are inexperienced in Water Colour, it would be most valuable to start with these three *only*, and enlarge your range after you have tested their possibilities. As supplementary colours, I use Raw Sienna, Burnt Sienna, Ultramarine, Cadmium, Brown Madder, and (occasionally) Vermilion and Emerald Green.

A good useful range of brushes would be Nos. 6, 8, and 11 (sables) and a square-ended sable of about the latter size. It is also very useful to keep by you a hog-hair brush, with which to remove surface-colour very speedily, and get back to the white of your paper.

Be sure to keep your palette clean, by washing it or wiping it out frequently. You mustn't get dabs of paint all over the place, or each of your divisions occupied with dirty colour. If you want to keep your work fresh and liquid, the colour must be *clean*. However directly you try to use water colour, it will inevitably dry lighter than it looks when mixed on your palette, so you will rarely get, in one direct wash, the result you want. You will find you have to work pretty quickly, at times, to keep the whole thing "moving," to avail yourself of happy accidents—or deal with unhappy ones.

You will, of course, not attempt to tackle a bit of detail in your subject, however much it appeals to you, until the final stages. You must go for broad facts first. If you are tempted to put in detail at an early stage, you will inevitably find that it has to be altered when your entire colour scheme is established on the paper; and fidgeting about to correct that detail, alter its tone-values, reduce or increase its weight, etc., must inevitably rob the passage of its freshness.

TONE VALUES

This is going to be very important. Most beginners fail to observe adequately not only constructional detail, but the relative *values* of tones. A very good illustration of this is provided by the contrast between blue sky and yellow sand. The superficial student or observer will decide that the sand is lighter than the sky, whereas the reverse is the fact in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred—even when the sand is bathed in strong sunlight !

You can test the relative values of tones and colours by a simple experiment. Take a piece of paper or card, and punch three or four holes in it with the sharp end of your pencil or brush handle. If you place the paper between your eye and the object you are sketching, you will see, through these holes, isolated spots of colour, and you will have an opportunity of comparing their relative values. You will, I am sure, be astonished to find how far wrong you were in your first impression as to "weight" of tone or colour.

Carry with you, on your sketching expeditions, a piece of card punched with holes, so that you can test your observation. I regard it as imperative that you should consider tone-values even before you consider colour. That is, try to dismiss, in the first place, the fact that you are considering colours, and only regard them as stages in a "scale" from white to black. Colour is, after all, purely individual in its influence and appeal, and very fleeting and varied in the impression it makes, whereas tones are hard-and-fast facts.

SEA AND SKY

There are one or two main facts to realise in regard to the sea. No part of the sea is ever *lighter* than the sky, except, perhaps foam-crested waves. The reason why it appears to become darker as it approaches the horizon is because of the closing up of the shapes of the waves; in the foreground you are looking down into these shapes more definitely, and getting the light reflected into them from the sky. These shapes are influenced by the laws of perspective as they recede from the eye. Nothing is more influenced by sky than the sea. Don't fall into the error of painting the sea on one day and the sky on another. You will soon realise, when you start to draw and paint the sea, that it is a constantly moving body, and that you will be compelled to *select* certain limited facts for analysis.

You can, with advantage, begin by looking for repetitions of similar shapes and movement in waves. These are relatively frequent, and sufficiently similar in general character to enable you to put down a definite impression as to the shape of a wave. Don't conventionalise the representation of these shapes. You know the child's method of drawing waves—simply a series of short upward curves, meeting at a point—exactly the reverse of the method by which the kiddie will try to draw a bird in flight. Now, waves are really not in the least like that; nor is the sea, in any of its moods. What you have to realise is its *variety* of movement, not its monotony; and even if you are drawing the sea from memory, you must make the shapes of your waves infinitely varied in relation to each other.

As I said just now, you must decide what facts you are going to start observing. You must *select* what you are after. Does a particular effect of a wave breaking on the shore interest you greatly? If so, concentrate on this *one* thing. Watch for the recurrence of similar effects. They do recur, and it will be easier for you to make a record of them if you confine your study and limit yourself to one particular subject.

In theory, the sea is a terrifying problem to the student. Actually, for purposes of simplification, it can be reduced to a question of three tones—dark, light, and an intermediate tone made up of broken water or a network of foam.

A few hours of definite study of waves breaking on a seashore will reveal several surprising facts to you, as well as providing you with some splendid practice at drawing or painting.

You will find, in considering tone values, that the wet sand which reflects the sky is nearly always many tones *darker* than the sea. You would have imagined it to be lighter, wouldn't you?

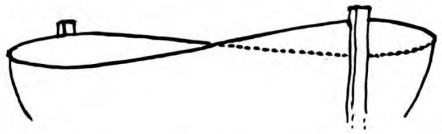
When a fresh breeze is blowing, the sky will change very rapidly, and just as in observing the sea you must watch for recurring shapes, so should you endeavour to settle upon a certain character or arrangement of clouds for your composition. Exact shapes never recur, general characteristics often do. It is most important to draw rapidly the type of cloud-form you decide upon, and stick to it. Having drawn the form you intend to use, the general colour of subsequent masses will give you valuable information for finishing your sketch. Don't make the shadows of your cumulus clouds too dark. Over-emphasis will destroy the feeling of light and buoyancy.

BOATS AND SHIPS

Now for a few words about boats and ships.

I am afraid I can give you no tips which will enable you to dodge studying the "anatomy" and construction of these objects. Of course, you mustn't begin your study by going down to the nearest docks and drawing a giant liner in perspective. A boat on a seashore is a sufficiently ambitious subject to commence with. Remember that a boat is always a piece of symmetry, a design, a piece of craftsmanship with a vitally important and practical purpose; you must try to create that sense of the symmetrical, from whatever angle you draw a boat.

The first thing you should do is to walk round it, and analyse its "lines" and character. It has its anatomy and proportion just as a human being or an animal has. There are greyhounds and race-horses in the boat world just as there are bulldogs; but the top of the average boat *can* generally be suggested by two ellipses, and broadly be enclosed in a diagram very like a flattened figure of 8.



Don't merely draw the portions of the boat you actually *see*. Try to visualise it as a transparent object, and see through to the other side. Imagine the skeleton, the position of the bow and stern post, etc. You can easily eliminate them afterwards, but a realisation of the general construction, and an effort to see through to the other side, cannot fail to give added character and "rightness" to your drawing. When you are representing a boat or a ship at sea, do please remember that the boat isn't really *on* the sea, but *in* the sea, and you must convey that impression.

So many people's ships end suddenly, as flat-bottomed objects floating *on* the surface of the water. That won't do at all. A car travels on a road, a train on a line; but a ship—*in* the sea.

These few preliminary comments seem to have occupied a lot of time, but I felt that they were necessary.

SHIP PERSPECTIVE

The horizon in a seascape is always the eye-level of the observer. The water-line of the ship and the line of the hull must inevitably find their vanishing points on the horizon. I am talking, of course, of a ship in a calm sea, and not of a vessel in rough water or storm, when vanishing lines and angles are altered at almost every moment. If the ship, on a calm day, is foreshortened, vanishing points may be within the area of your sketch; but in the case of a vessel nearly broadside on, these will, of course, vanish to a point considerably on the right or left of your picture.

It is useful, in starting a drawing of a ship, to regard the vessel first as a rectangular,

oblong shape seen in perspective, and then to look very carefully for the point of maximum width of the vessel. Looking from the bow, a ship usually attains her maximum width a little nearer to your eye than the bridge, and, as a rule, continues at the same width to the end of the deck-houses and super-structures, when she begins to taper to the stern.

Observation is necessary when drawing the masts, as in some cases these are not of a similar height, so that it is useless to apply the same perspective rule to the masts as to the hull.

Watch the angle of the funnels. In nearly all the more modern ships, funnels are vertical, but in the older ships their tendency is to tilt slightly towards the stern.

You will, of course, take the precaution of making eye-measurements to establish general proportions, and fix the relative heights of masts, funnels, super-structure, and hull.

From the colour point of view, it is especially important to observe the water-line, and to note that the colour of the hull is greatly influenced by the colour of the sea reflected into it. The water-line of the vessel, being inevitably wet, is much more susceptible to the influence of reflected lights than any other portion of the hull. One can't over-emphasise this point, for, by its observance, you will make your ship appear *in* the water and not *on* it —a matter of importance to which I have already drawn your attention.

Keep your colours clean and your planes simple. *Never* touch a sketch after you have left your sketching ground. Every touch you add will detract from the facts you have put down. Don't choose too elaborate a subject at first. Several suitable ones occur to me—a study of a boat, a simple bit of landscape, a tree silhouetted against the sky, separate sky studies in grey days or in sunshine.

We will now proceed to discuss the subjects selected for reproduction, so that I may tell you how I tackled them, what colours I used, and how the effects were obtained.

I commence, you will notice, with some line-and-colour drawings ; not because I began my artistic career by doing this kind of work, but because I feel that it would be a very sound way to lead you from drawing to colour. You have doubtless had some experience of pencil, and perhaps pen-and-ink work. Here's a chance for you to accustom yourself to colour in a *gradual* way. But, just remember these preliminaries, which I observe in all my work :—

First, settle your composition carefully before starting a drawing. Then draw as correctly and conscientiously as possible in pencil first. An "H.B." is as good as any; but don't be too heavy-fisted. Sketch as lightly as possible, for if you have to lift out heavy pencil lines with india-rubber you will ruin the surface of your paper for the colour stages.

Second, always wash your paper or drawing card over with a preliminary "groundwork" of Yellow Ochre and Chinese White. The amount of Chinese White you use must be very small, but it is valuable because it makes subsequent colour very easy to remove with a wet brush or blotting paper.

Third, always try to get your *full* strength of colour at once.

And now for the subjects to be discussed.

ILLUSTRATION No. 1: "SOUTH COAST"

An obviously simple impression of sea and sand. First, I drew it in pencil, on hot-pressed card, and then inked it in with Indian ink (waterproof) and a fine pen. A preliminary wash of Yellow Ochre and Chinese White started the colour stages, and, when this was dry, the sky was washed in flatly with Cobalt and Light Red, the Ochre coming through and giving it warmth. The sky-wash avoided the sail of the boat.

The hills, you will observe, were not outlined in ink, as I knew that my next colour—a mixture of Brown Madder and Cobalt—would be strong enough to indicate their position, and, in fact, give added atmosphere. The sand was washed in with Yellow Ochre mixed with a very Light Red, and then the water—a flat tone of Ultramarine and Light Red. The houses, figures, and boats were kept free from colour at this stage.

The roofs of the buildings were next touched in with varieties of Light Red and Cobalt, and the shadows of the houses carry the same colours as the hills behind them (Brown Madder and Cobalt). The trees are indicated with Cobalt and Yellow Ochre. The stern of the foreground boat is Burnt Sienna and the shadow side Burnt Sienna and Cobalt.

The shadow side of the sail is Raw Sienna and a little Light Red. The shadows on the water are a deeper tone of Ultramarine and Light Red.

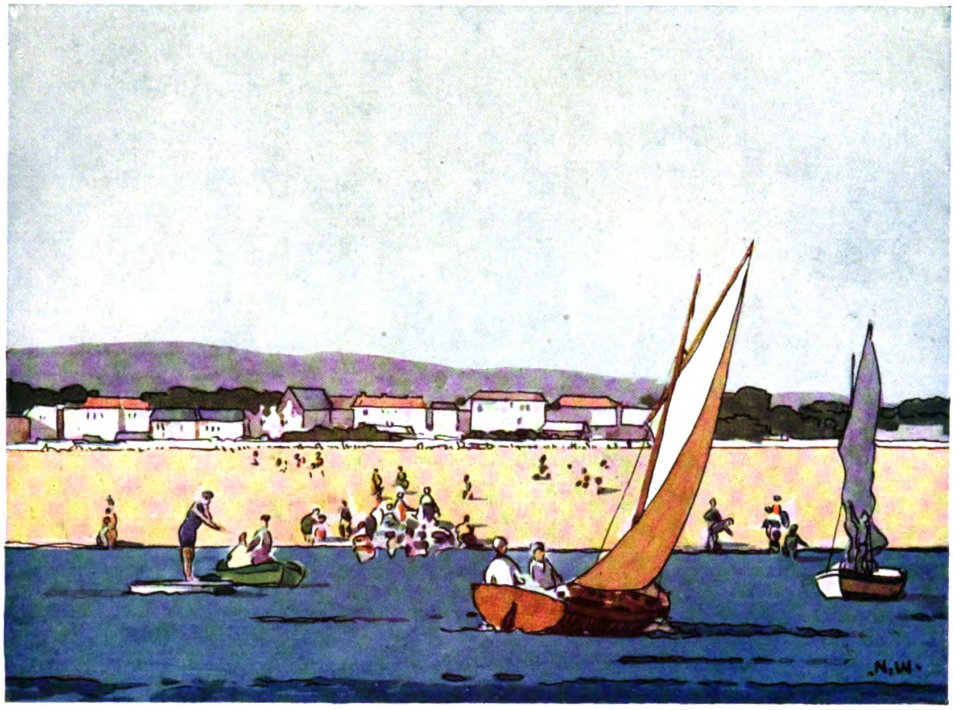
Touches of Vermilion are to be seen in some of the figures, Viridian in the little boat on the left, and on one or two of the other figures. The sail on the right is Ultramarine and Brown Madder—a very light wash.

You will see, before we complete this analysis of my methods, that my three primary colours (Yellow Ochre, Cobalt, and Light Red) are almost constantly used.

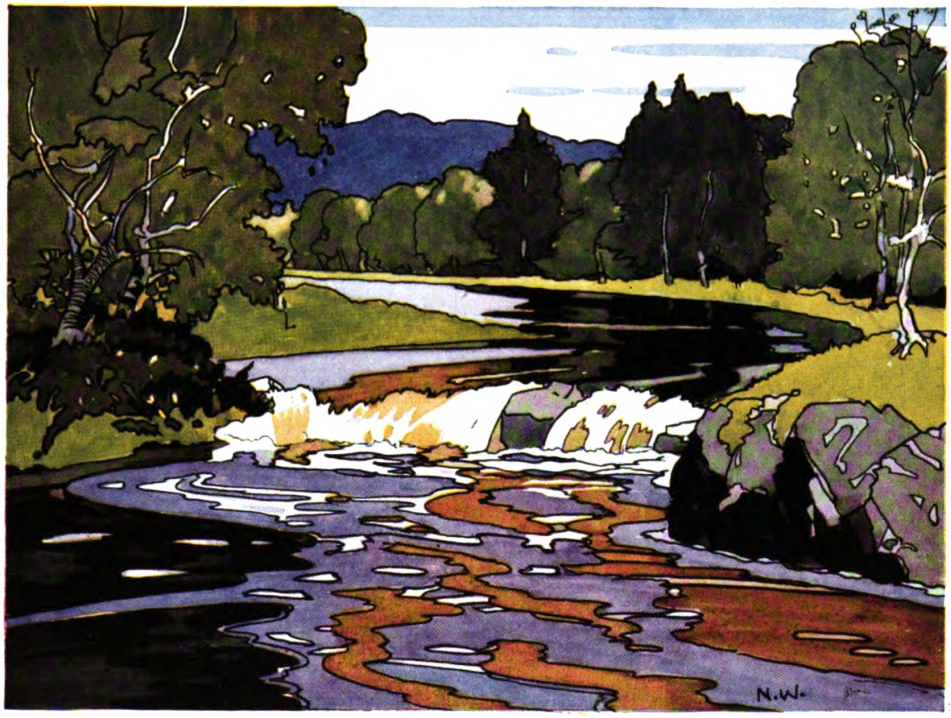
ILLUSTRATION No. 2: "CENTRAL WALES"

Preliminary wash of Ochre and White to remove the "size" from the paper, and warm the whole subject. We start with the distant blue of the hill—Cobalt with a very little Brown Madder. The lighter trees are Cobalt and Yellow Ochre, the touches of sunlight on the distant tree tops being obtained by lifting off the colour and revealing a little of the background of Ochre. The darker trees in the distance are Cobalt and Light Red, and the reflections in the water, which look like dead black, are Cobalt and Burnt Sienna.

The sunlit bank is Yellow Ochre with a slight touch of Cadmium, the opposite bank again being a combination of Cobalt and Ochre—the latter colour dominating. The nearer tree on the left carries stronger washes of the same colour, and is also brought nearer to the foreground by emphasis of strength in the pen line. The blue in the water is Ultramarine, strengthened as it approaches the foreground, and the foreground red ripples are Burnt Sienna touched in with a little Blue. As this subject is purposely simplified, the waterfall and the touches of colour in the water are treated "flatly," as independent shapes, contributing to a general "pattern." The dark shadows of the tree and its reflection are Raw Sienna, Cobalt, and a little Burnt Sienna. The grey in the bank on the right is Cobalt, Light Red, and Ochre. This and the next two subjects were first drawn with pencil and pen.



South Coast



Central Wales

ILLUSTRATION No. 3: "CHESTER"

A pale wash of Cobalt and Light Red over the existing "ground," the light cloud being suggested by the "Ochre" ground of the paper. The lower part of the sky is strengthened by Cobalt, and the water around and beneath the bridge carries the same colours. The almost horizontal line which runs across the sky was, in the original, merely an unimportant strata of grey tone, but the effect has become much too obtrusive in reproduction and printing. The bridge is Yellow Ochre and Light Red in the sunlit portions, the shadows are Cobalt and Brown Madder, strengthened by a little more pen work. The same method is used to suggest the reflections in the water.

The roofs of the houses on the right are varying strengths of Vermilion and Yellow Ochre—much exaggerated in reproduction; on the left a roof is shown with a light wash of Vermilion. The trees are Ochre and Cobalt throughout, while the bank in the immediate foreground is Yellow Ochre, with Cobalt, a little Light Red, and some heavier pen work to give emphasis and weight. The foreground water is a pale wash of Cobalt and Light Red—not carried quite to the edge of the pen lines, so as to suggest added transparency to the water.

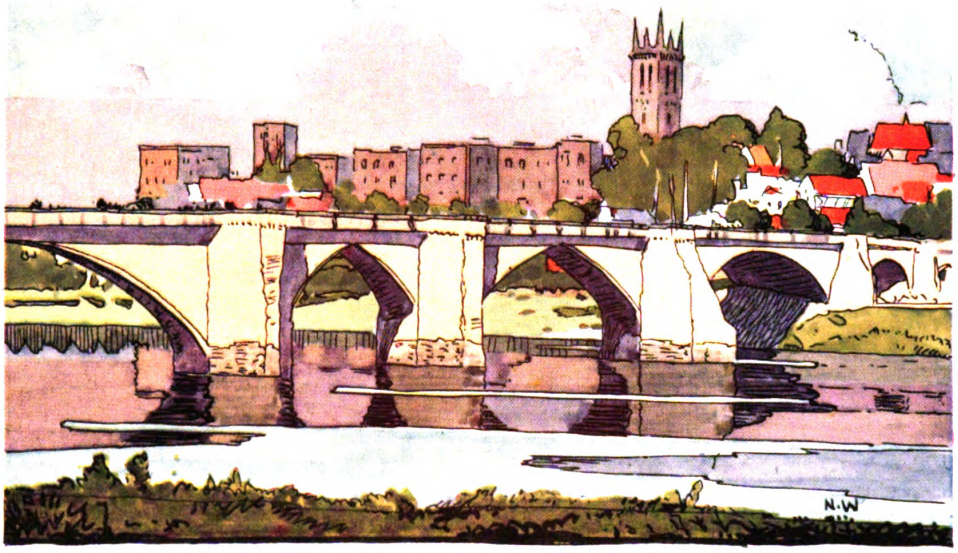
The value of the foreground bank is obvious. It has a strength of texture which adds greatly to the suggestion of transparency and sunlight in the water, and it gives variety to the planes and various details as they recede into the background. The perspective of the bridge and the variation of outline in this foreground bank have broken up the danger of having absolutely parallel lines in the picture.

ILLUSTRATION No. 4: "THE MENAI STRAITS"

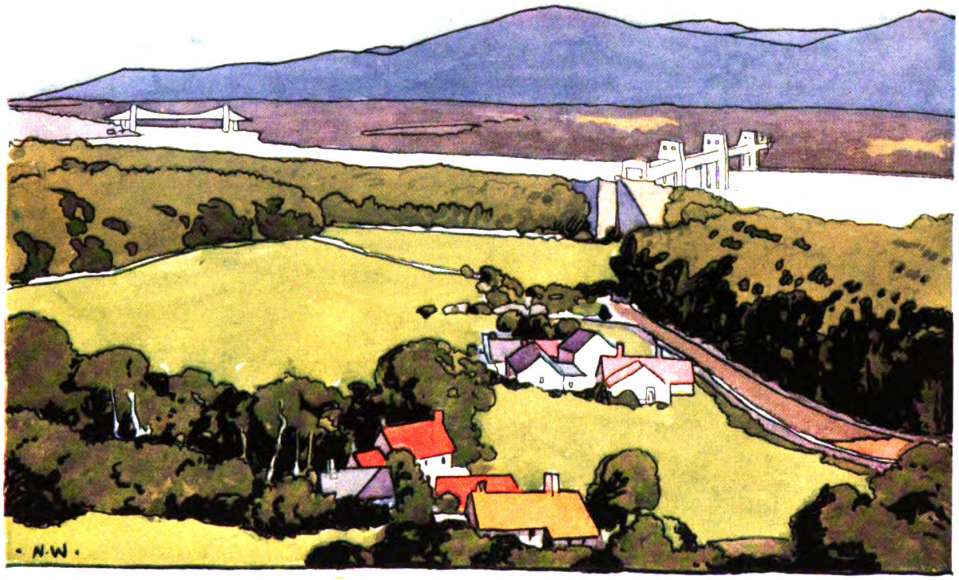
The sky is a wash of Cobalt and Light Red. The hills, as added weight was necessary, were outlined, and a wash of Cobalt with a little Brown Madder introduced. Immediately below the hills is a stretch of country suggested by Brown Madder, Yellow Ochre, and Cobalt. The water and the two bridges are untouched, except for the original wash over the paper. From the water, a complete wash of Raw Sienna was taken right down to the foreground, leaving out the shapes of the houses.

When this was dry, a stronger wash of the same colours was taken over the middle-distance trees, the shading being suggested by still further strengthening of these colours. The foreground trees contain the same colour, the shading being emphasised with pen and ink, and similar strengthening is to be observed in the trees on the right. The roofs of the buildings in the middle distance are Brown Madder and Cobalt, varying strengths of Vermilion, and, in the immediate foreground, Raw Sienna and a little Vermilion.

Note that the main constructional lines all lead to the bridge in the right centre, which is the principal feature of interest. Further, you will realise that, in spite of the simplicity of treatment, a considerable variety of textures, surfaces, planes, and range of colour have been suggested. This little illustration is something in the nature of a poster in miniature—a very useful kind of effect to aim at in your early work, in which you should look for main masses and simplify your colour patterns as much as possible.



Chester



The Menai Straits

ILLUSTRATION No. 5: "THE ELBE"

Here we begin to sacrifice the pen line and approach pure Water Colour methods.

After putting in the ground-wash I tackled the sky, with a wash of Cobalt, the lighter clouds being wiped out with a soft sable while the wash was wet. This Cobalt wash went almost over the entire surface right down to the foreground, except on the white superstructure of the ship.

The smoke from the funnels was also introduced while the sky was still wet, the colour of this smoke being Cobalt and Light Red. The green of the roof and the red of the buildings were run in quickly before the sky was dry, with the object of getting atmosphere. There is Viridian in that green roof and Light Red and a little Yellow Ochre in the tower of the building. The roof at the back is Cobalt with a little Ochre, while the smaller details between the tower and the water are broken touches of pure Cobalt, Viridian, and Vermilion.

Coming to the right, the steamer next to the buildings is Vermilion at the funnel and water-line, with Light Red and Ochre on the hull. In the big vessel, the masts are Light Red with a touch of Burnt Sienna, the funnels Light Red and Yellow Ochre. The bridge and light part of superstructure are the untouched paper—Cobalt and Light Red introducing the shadows. The hull is Cobalt, Ochre, and Brown Madder in varying strengths.

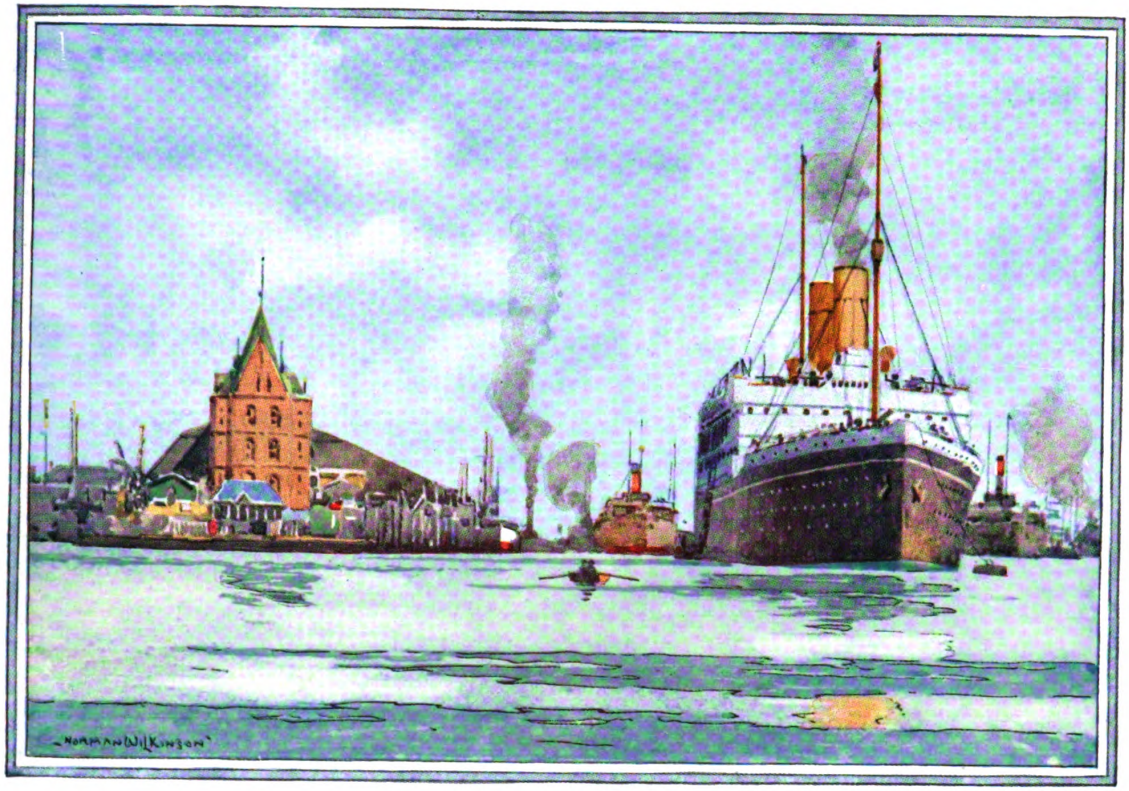
The water is a complete wash of Ochre, Cobalt, and Viridian, approximating to the darkest tones, the lighter portions afterwards being removed when the wash was dry. The reflections of the steamer and foreground "pattern" were emphasised with pen work.

ILLUSTRATION No. 6: "THE EMPRESS OF SCOTLAND"

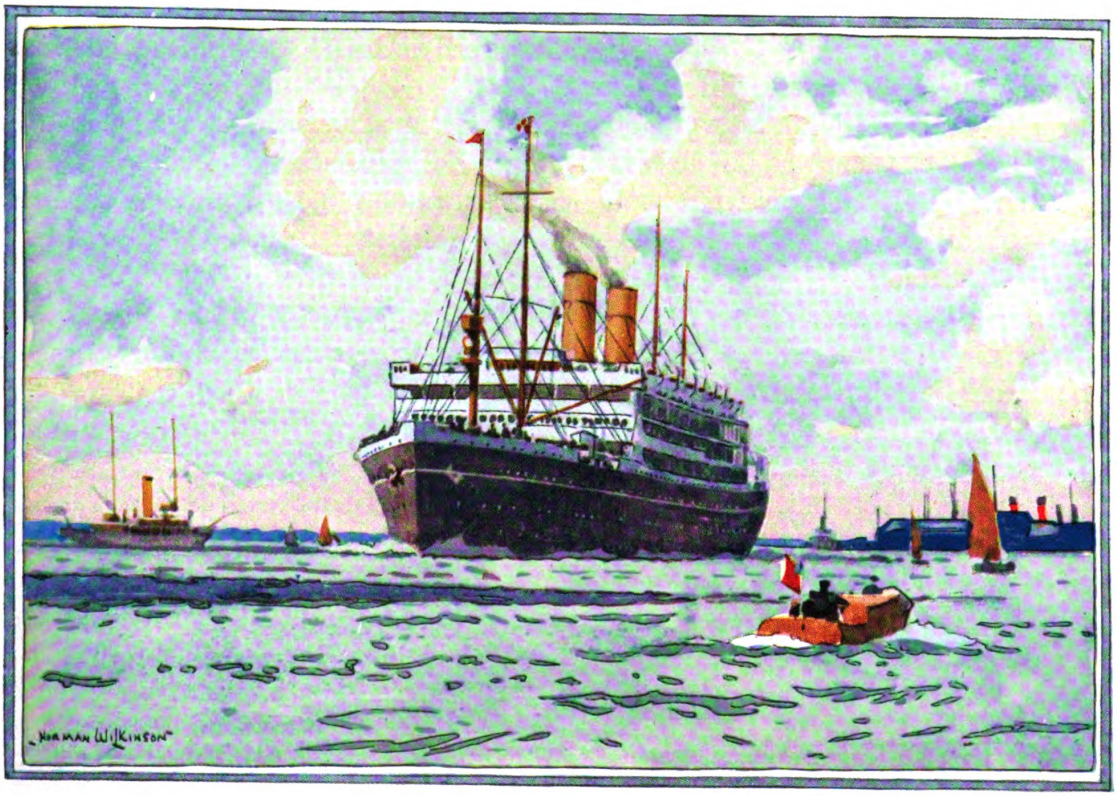
The sky again went "all over" the entire subject. The first stage was a wash of Emerald Green and Cobalt, the lighter portions being left, but the edges softened away where necessary. The warmer tones of the clouds were washes of Yellow Ochre and Rose Madder, floated into the background wash while this was still wet. As the cloud comes down towards the horizon, Rose Madder predominates. The distant docks silhouetted against the sky are Ultramarine and a little Light Red.

Now for the ship. The lighter parts are the original ground, the masts and funnels are varying strengths of Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna and Light Red. The shadow-side of the superstructure is Cobalt and Brown Madder, and the shadows between the decks are emphasised with a little more Cobalt. The hull is Cobalt and Brown Madder in the deeper tones, with a little Light Red introduced for the lighter portions. The sunlit side of the bow is Light Red, Cobalt, and very little Brown Madder.

The water is a complete wash of colour approximating to the shadows of the foreground waves, the lighter tones being washed out, while the dark cloud-shadow in the middle distance is Ultramarine and Emerald Green. The small sailing vessels and motor-boat are Burnt Sienna and Light Red, with Cobalt added to indicate shading. In the foreground a little pen work has been introduced to give emphasis to the water; the little figures in the motor-boat are strong touches of Cobalt and Light Red.



"The Elbe"



"The Empress of Scotland"

ILLUSTRATION No. 7: THE BALLOON SHIP "HECTOR"

This, and the next drawing, were produced under decidedly unique and exciting conditions. At one period of the Great War, I was appointed to the cruiser "Theseus," which was engaged in firing at Turkish gun-positions, during the Dardanelles campaign. The picture represents the "Hector" (in the centre), with her kite-balloon up, busy spotting Turkish gun positions. The vessel on the right is H.M.S. "Edgar."

The original sketch (14 in. by 10 in.) was completed on the spot in three-quarters of an hour. It began with a full, bold wash of Cobalt and Yellow Ochre, from top to the bottom of the paper, Rose Madder being introduced towards the horizon to suggest warmth, atmosphere, and distance. The puffs of smoke were wiped out when the sky was almost dry. The smoke of the balloon ship was introduced while the sky was damp. The ships were started as soon as the paper was dry (which was a very rapid process, owing to the heat). The hull of the centre ship was Ultramarine and Light Red. The water-line is Vermilion.

The cruiser on the right was Cobalt, Light Red, and Ochre, merging at the bow into a strengthened tone of the same colours; the same colours were again used to emphasise detail in the ship. The water was then tackled, with a very strong wash—a full brush of Ultramarine and Light Red, with a little Rose Madder introduced as it comes to the foreground. The darks were Ultramarine with a little Viridian. In this case, where speed was essential, the foam on the crests of the waves was introduced with a little Chinese White.

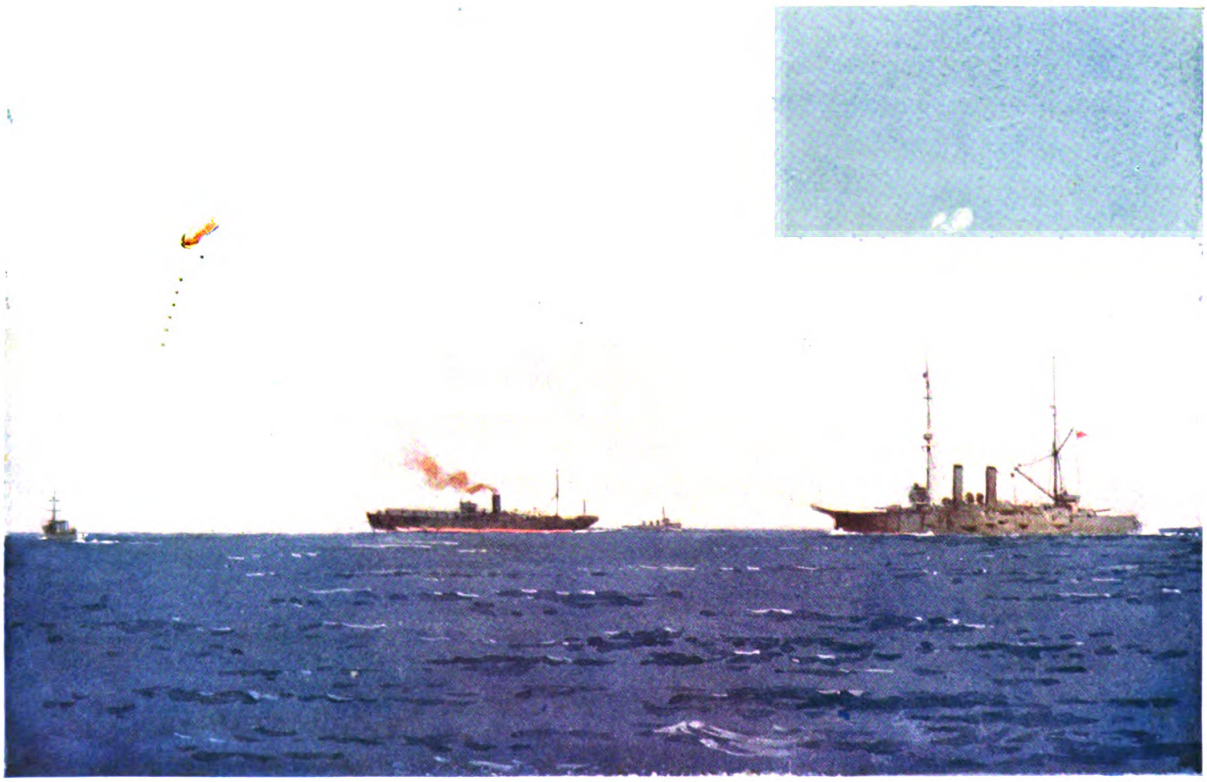
ILLUSTRATION No. 8: H.M.S. "EXMOUTH"

This was a much larger sketch, drawn half-Imperial size (21 in. by 14 in.). The "Exmouth" was lying in Kephalo harbour, with a tramp steamer on either side of her. A French cruiser is seen in the background. The sketch was made from the "Theseus."

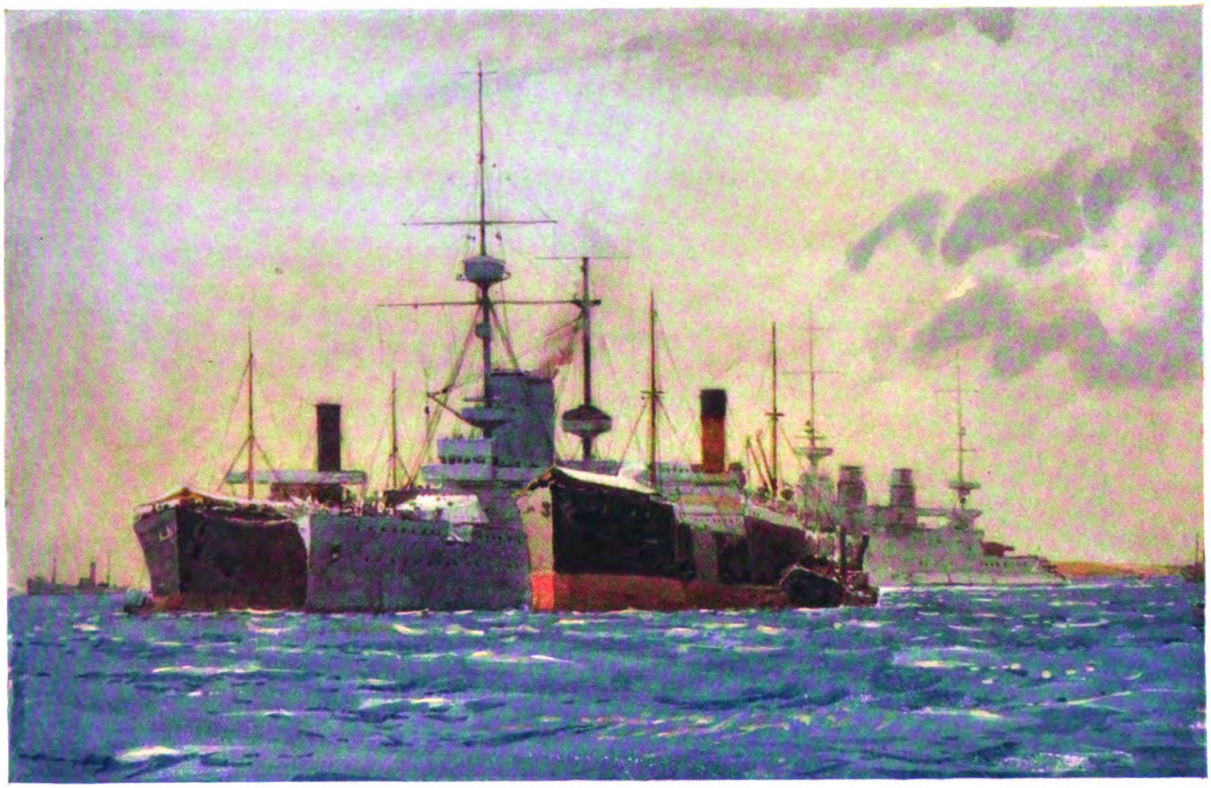
We began with a strong wash of Yellow Ochre and White. On top of this, while still damp, was Cobalt and Light Red, with more Yellow Ochre added towards the horizon. The only "white paper" left was on the awning of the tramp steamer and the gun-turret of the battleship. The clouds were introduced with Cobalt and a little Brown Madder. "The Exmouth" was washed in with Cobalt, Light Red, and Yellow Ochre, the lighter portions, such as the bridge and far side of the bow, being thinner washes of the same colour. The shadows were stronger washes of Cobalt and Light Red. The French cruiser was a wash of Cobalt and Brown Madder, strengthened by the same colours.

The darker portions of the hulls of the two "tramps" are Cobalt, Burnt Sienna, and a little Brown Madder; the red portions are Light Red, Vermilion, and Cobalt. The funnel on the right is Cobalt and Burnt Sienna at the top, Yellow Ochre and Light Red at the base. The left funnel is Cobalt and Burnt Sienna. The water is a broad, full wash of Cobalt and Viridian, darker tones of the same two colours being introduced later. The crests of the waves were finally touched in with Chinese White and Yellow Ochre.

The details were actually painted in this order: the "Exmouth" first, the tramp steamer on the right second, the French war-vessel third, and the boat on the left last. These are illustrations from my book, "The Dardanelles," published by Longmans.



The Balloon Ship "Hector"



H.M.S. "Exmouth"

ILLUSTRATION No. 9: "ON THE SPEY, SCOTLAND"

This subject was produced, of course, under very much more pleasant conditions than those in "The Dardanelles."

We began with the strip of sky (Cobalt and Ochre), then the trees—which were run into the sky with a brushful of Cobalt and Raw Sienna. The fields immediately below the trees are Light Cadmium, with a little Cobalt, the darker streaks across being a strengthening of the Cobalt. The light patch of trees in the centre is obtained also by Cadmium and Cobalt. The bank of red earth is Light Red, a little Brown Madder and Cobalt, the lighter spaces being left out and filled in afterwards with Yellow Ochre and a little Light Red. The green bank on the left is Raw Sienna and Cobalt, with a little Emerald Green added on the bushes at the base.

The water is first of all one *flat* wash of Yellow Ochre, Brown Madder, and Cobalt, the darker marks, showing the movement of the stream, being a strengthening by the same colours. The lights on the water are then taken out with a hog-hair brush.

The rocks in the left foreground are Light Red, Cobalt, and a little Brown Madder for the darks, the lighter tone being left and subsequently washed in with Light Red and Yellow ochre. The little figures are Cobalt and Light Red, the same colours being used in the small jetty on the left.

ILLUSTRATION No. 10: "THE DISPUTED POOL"

This began with a wash of Cobalt, Raw Sienna, and Pale Cadmium. The dark portion of the bank was introduced (before the first wash was dry) with Cobalt, Yellow Ochre, and Brown Madder. The yellow patches in the centre of the dark were left, Cadmium and Raw Sienna being introduced when it was nearly dry. The dark ridge between the bank and the chalky bank was Cobalt and Brown Madder, the light bank being the original ground of the paper with a pale wash of Rose Madder added; light washes of Burnt Sienna have also been introduced into the upper part of the green bank to give it variety.

Now we come to the water. It starts on the left with a very strong wash of Burnt Sienna, Brown Madder, and Cobalt, this representing the reflection of the dark portion of the bank.

I then gradually led into the right side of the pool by a wash of Raw Sienna and Cobalt, a little Cadmium being introduced while the other colours were still wet. Immediately below, where the pool shallows, Raw Sienna and Light Red are used. The foreground rocks are Cobalt and Light Red with a little Rose Madder; their shadows, Cobalt. The green in the left foreground is Yellow Ochre and Cobalt. The two figures are touched in with Cobalt and Brown Madder.

The sky was kept out of these subjects because the water was the chief interest in each case, and had one introduced a considerable area of sky, the foreground would inevitably have been very small.

If you are painting a specific subject, you must concentrate on it, and reject unessentials. This insistence on a main feature of interest and a determination to carry out the plan and intention of your subject are important in all your work. Don't be led away by matters of minor interest.

On the Spey, Scotland

The Disputed Pool

ILLUSTRATION No. 11: "AT ABADAN, PERSIA"

This and the final sketch are two further examples of work done in a comparatively unexplored sketching ground—the Persian Gulf—which I visited recently to paint a series of pictures for the Anglo-Persian Oil Co. You see here one of the company's "Tankers" loading crude oil at Abadan. This was a large subject (21 in. by 14 in.) and it necessitated very careful pencil drawing.

The colour work began with the sky—a pale wash of Cobalt and Light Red taken only as far as the top of the vessel. All the sunlit portions of the steamer are suggested by the original tone of the paper. This can only be done where you have drawn with extreme care, and definitely decided where your whites are to be left.

When the sky wash was dry, the masts, being left white, were very delicately indicated with Cobalt and Light Red. The upper part of the bridge was indicated by Burnt Sienna and a little Light Red in the sunlit portions. The shadow sides of the deck-houses and under the bridge were tones of Cobalt and Light Red. The top of the funnel is Burnt Sienna and Cobalt, the Sienna predominating on the shadow-side. The green band is Emerald Green and Cobalt, and the red band Vermilion—which is also used for the ensign. The shadow on the funnel is a wash of Cobalt and a little Light Red, and these tones are carried over the deck-houses below, to show them in shadow. The painting of the hull starts at the bow, with a strong wash of Cobalt and Burnt Sienna, and merges into a deeper tone at the stern —in which Burnt Sienna predominates. The red portion towards the water-line is Light Red and Vermilion strengthened by Cobalt.

The water is a full wash of Cobalt and Brown Madder, reflections of the vessel being added with Burnt Sienna and Brown Madder.

The darks of the jetty and the detailed drawing around are introduced with Burnt Sienna and Cobalt; the river bank on the left is a wash of these two colours with a little Light Red. The light portions of the figures in the small foreground boat are the white of the paper, the details being touched in with Cobalt and Madder, the same colours being used for the boat. The ropes are suggested by drawing across the boat lines of pure water, which are then blotted out so as to lift the colour from the paper.

It may interest you to know that I only had a fortnight in which to make my Persian sketches. All the pictures were 21 in. by 14 in., and I completed eighteen of them in the time mentioned—and had to do a tremendous lot of travelling to get to my sketching grounds.

In some cases the more elaborate subjects could not be finished at one sitting, and I had to return to the subject later—at a similar time. In other cases, the pencil drawing only was made at the first sitting, and put aside until a suitable atmospheric effect presented itself.

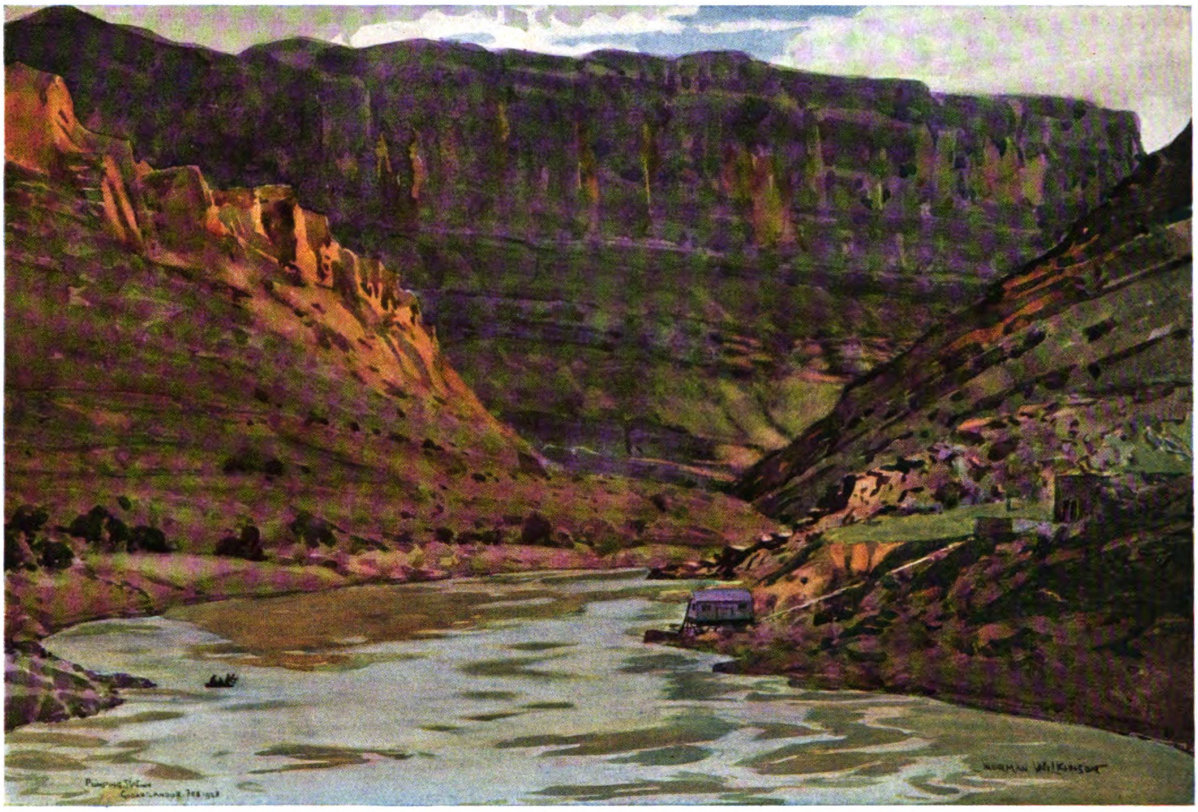
In this way, I found myself with several drawings in pencil which could be taken back to the sketching ground and finished in colour as the occasion presented itself.

The drawing and painting of this tanker loading oil took me exactly three hours, and it wasn't touched subsequently in any way.

One of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's tankers loading crude oil at Abadan, Persia, for the production in Great Britain of "BP" Motor Spirit

You *have* to work quickly in painting shipping. You can hardly ever be sure of getting peace or repose for five minutes on end. A neighbouring tug will thrust itself alongside, putting up a smoke screen which half obliterates the main interest of your picture. Boats will buzz around, there will perhaps be disturbance everywhere, so you have to seize every moment and opportunity. A ship at anchor will swing about and hardly present the same position for two consecutive minutes. That's where one's knowledge of construction is valuable. I was lucky in this particular subject, as the ship was moored fore and aft, and was thus practically motionless. A ship in dock will often present a picture of endless movement—cargo derricks hardly ever still, smoke from other craft obscuring detail, etc. So you will find, when you are drawing ships, that you have to "jump to it."

Make a very definite decision before you start a subject, and spend some time, if necessary, selecting the most suitable composition ; then, to express it in a homely way, "Never swap horses in the middle of the stream."



The rocky gorge of the Karun River, with the water-pumping station which provides the Anglo-Persian Oil Field with its water supply

ILLUSTRATION No. 12: "THE ROCKY GORGE OF THE KARUN RIVER"

This is a sketch of the river and pumping station which provide the Anglo-Persian Oil Company with its water supply. The first stage of this rather elaborate subject (which, by the way, was completed in two hours) was the patch of sky—a blue of Cobalt and Light Red, and the clouds of the same colours, the red predominating. The whole of the distant hill was put in with a strong tone of Brown Madder, Cobalt, and a little Light Cadmium, the lighter tones on the rock face being in some cases left and in other cases washed out afterwards, in order to convey the suggestion of the strata.

The diagonal rock strata were suggested by running in Cobalt and Brown Madder while the under tones were still wet. At this stage we have a much simpler range of tone than we shall eventually produce. But let us leave the background for the present, and proceed with the sunlit bank on the left. Care was taken to leave the original Yellow Ochre wash here, and

we find it a carefully defined light "silhouette" against the background. You can see its sharp edge quite clearly. We start by warming up the entire "bank"—with a wash of Raw Sienna and Light Red in the upper portions, running down to Yellow Ochre, Cobalt, and Cadmium in the middle. The lowest portion down by the river is Cobalt, Light Red, and Brown Madder.

Now we attack the bank in shadow on the right, which commenced with a complete wash of Cobalt, Yellow Ochre, and a little Cadmium, with the exception of the lighter portions of rock and the green plateau, which are at this stage left *untouched*. The immediate foreground bank is Brown Madder and Cobalt, with darker patches of Cobalt and Raw Sienna. The water is a complete wash of Cobalt, Emerald Green, and a little Light Red, the darks being added (when the first wash is dry) by Cobalt and Raw Sienna on the left and Cobalt and Emerald Green on the right foreground.

So far then, in the picture, we have reached a stage where we have four broad areas of tone, and we now have to introduce the detail you see. This is achieved by wiping out the "lights" where necessary and the addition of darks to add detail, power, and definition. The colder shadows and detail of the distant gorge are chiefly Cobalt and Light Red. The main foreground shadows on the left are Raw Sienna and Brown Madder, while the diagonal strata on the right bank are mainly Cobalt and Raw Sienna.

There were a lot of difficulties in getting this subject, as it involved a long motor journey, then a descent in a cable-trolly down the side of a mountain, and a further motor journey of some miles. I was saved the difficult job of selecting a point of view by the manager of the pumping station, who took me at once to what was obviously the best viewpoint.

The fact that this sketch was finished in two hours was due to my getting my drawing completed quickly, and my main tones established fairly accurately in the first broad washes.

The chief interests here were obviously the cliff and river, hence the elimination of the sky.

Note also how the "scale" of the whole thing was established by the tiny silhouette of the men in the boat in the left foreground. Actually, however, this wasn't a boat, but a raft made of goatskins—of precisely the same type as those used in ancient Babylon. The colour of the water was caused by the melting of the snows on the big mountain ranges beyond; and it may interest you to know that these were the first sketches ever made by an English artist in Persia.

CONCLUSION

Now you will note that I have discussed, during this talk with you, my sketching outfit and materials, and some important points to remember in sketching sea and sky, boats and ships; I have also explained as clearly as I can how some representative specimens of my work have been produced. The range of illustrations chosen includes line-and-colour decorative drawings, and work produced by the more traditional Water Colour methods.

I hope you will have found a good deal of useful information in these pages. I feel I can only add very few additional words of advice.

When you sketch out of doors the size of your palette will be restricted. When you are indoors use as large a palette as you want. An ordinary white dish or plate will be most suitable; but you must see that there is not a particle of grease on it.

You will remember that I have emphasised the importance of considering your Composition carefully before starting a subject. One of my earlier experiences showed me the value of this. The favourite Poster method adopted by steamship companies in my younger days was to show a mighty ship occupying a tiny ocean. I had a poster to do, to advertise the sea-route from Holyhead to Dublin. The Holyhead boat was *not* mighty, and it would have been useless to attempt to tell my story in the conventional way. So I decided that, for a change, I would picture a tiny ship on a mighty ocean, and that the poster should tell a pleasant story. My sea should be calm, and splashed with sunshine; the little vessel should be shown steaming smoothly across the Irish Channel; the traveller should be given a happy picture of what can be a gruesome experience.

I enjoyed painting this poster, and my clients liked it; but the public reception of the design astonished me. They bought over 4,000 copies for the decoration of their homes; and this design, which resulted from a little extra care in the selection of my subject and its composition, was an important stepping-stone in my career.

On another occasion, in my youth, I wanted a holiday, and could not afford one. Looking through a shipping company's advertisement, the words Manaos and Para fired my imagination. I was reminded that they were ports of call on the Amazon, served by the Booth Steamship Line. I had "never sailed the Amazon and never reached Brazil," but the names tempted me irresistibly; so I suddenly had the bright thought of offering the Booth Line a poster in exchange for a passage to the Amazon and back. The offer was accepted; and at the end of the voyage, when the Company obtained the poster, they told me they were entirely satisfied with their bargain. I know that I was !

This little story may start a useful train of thought in your minds ! I trust that the advice I have tried to give you will help you to avoid many of the early difficulties which I had to face, and I hope you will begin your work with confidence and sincerity.

N. W.

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