

## Caroline Binyon

(1879 - 24 Dec 1980)

---

**Binyon, Caroline Bean.** On Wednesday, December 24, 1980, of Washington, D.C., beloved wife of the late Algernon H. Binyon. Memorial service will be held in Christ Episcopal Church, 3116 O st. nw., Washington, D.C. Tuesday, December 30, 2 p.m.

*The Washington Post, December 26, 1980, p. B17*

### **Caroline Binyon Dies, Impressionist Painter**

Caroline Van Hook Bean Binyon, 101, an impressionist painter of portraits and city landscapes who also was known locally for her restoration of Georgetown houses, died Wednesday at Georgetown University Hospital after a stroke.



Caroline - 1913

Mrs. Binyon had lived at the Washington Home since 1978, where she had remained active as an artist.

A native Washingtonian and the daughter of Dr. Tarleton H. Bean, an ichthyologist (authority on fish) for the Smithsonian Institution, she used her maiden name professionally. It was at her father's Smithsonian office that she began painting on wrapping paper, at the age of 5.

When she was in her early teens, her father became director of the New York Aquarium and the family moved to New York. A couple of years later, because of her artistic ability, she was taken to Paris by her parents to study painting. She also studied the masters by copying their paintings at the Louvre.

During this time, she wrote and illustrated fashion features, which she sold to American newspapers.

Returning to this country at the turn of the century to attend Smith College, she graduated in 1903 and soon

returned to Europe. In London, she became a student of the American watercolorist, John Singer Sargent, who she later recalled as a "tall, shy man with a very small nose, a beard, and eyes that were slightly popped."

She also studied in Holland and Italy before returning to New York and establishing a studio.

During World War I, she produced her most successful work, a series of drawings of "New York in War Time," which critics called "brilliant and joyous." All of the paintings, which were included in her latest one-man show in New York in 1970, were sold, mostly to bankers such as J.P. Morgan, who bought three.

Mrs. Binyon had a number of one-man shows and exhibits at U.S. galleries and museums, such as the Corcoran Gallery here and the Chicago Institute of Art. She also had a successful career as a portraitist and had received commissions from the DuPonts, Fords, Posts and Kiplingers.

She subsequently settled in Washington and developed a side interest in remodeling homes. In 1934, she won first prize in The Evening Star Better Homes contest for modernizing an old Georgetown

house. She later built two houses from the ground up, serving as architect, obtaining her own city permits, letting her own contracts and hunting for building materials. After remodeling or building a home, she painted it on canvas.

Mrs. Binyon was married to an English aviation-automotive engineer, Algernon H. Binyon, who worked for the Bureau of Standards here. He died in the 1940s.

Her grandfather, John Van Hook, helped lay out the original plans for Anacostia in southeast Washington.

She leaves no immediate survivors.

*McMahan, Virgil E. The Artists of Washington, DC, 1796-1996. The Artists of Washington, Washington, DC, 1995.*

**BINYON, CAROLYN VAN HOOK (nee BEAN) BLOMMERS**

Painter and etcher born in Washington, DC in 1879. She took an interest in art at an early age and her first pictures, painted at age 7 were shown in an exhibition at the Cosmos Club. Her father, Tarleton H. Bean, was a member of the Club and her portrait of him is in the collection of that organization. She graduated from Smith College in 1903 and studied in Paris as well as with William Merritt Chase, John Singer Sargent and Bart A. Blommers, who she later married. She is best known for her portraits and city street scenes of New York and Washington. She lived in New York City during 1905-21 after studies in Europe, then moved back to the District, where she married Capt. Algernon Binyon. She was a resident of Washington the rest of her life and was active in many art organizations, including the Society of Washington Artists, Arts Club of Washington and the Society of Washington Etchers. She also exhibited at the Greater Washington Independent Exhibition in 1935 and with the National League of American Pen Women of the District of Columbia and at the Maryland Institute. Her works are included in many private and public collections, including the Cosmos Club, and she exhibited at numerous museums and galleries, among them the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, and leading New York and Washington commercial galleries. Her later years were spent in a local nursing home, where she died in 1980. REFS: AAA; "American Works on Paper III" (catalog of an exhibition at the Spanierman Gallery, NYC, 1989); BIAPS; CHAPPELLIER; FIELDING; GWIE; MALLETT 1; MARLOR 2 (1917 as Blommers); MLKPL; PETTEYS; SWA (1906-32); TILTON; WES (Apr. 12, 1964, p. D-4); WP (obit.. Dec. 26, 1980); WWAA.", " 80", " 61"