**Arthur James Wetherall Burgess, 1879–1957 [draft]**

Burgess was son of a former Royal Naval lieutenant, James Ogle Burgess, who emigrated to Tasmania and married there to Dinah Evans of Newtown. His father was subsequently a district surveyor in New South Wales and he was born on 6 January 1879 at Bombala, (half way between Sydney and Melbourne). He was brought up in Grafton and Lismore, NSW, and – in his later *Who’s Who* entry – said he was educated at ‘Hutchins, Hobart [Tasmania] and Armidale, NSW’. After leaving school he completed a three-year apprenticeship to an architect called Spence in Sydney but, with an early talent in art and an interest in marine painting, used his leisure time to sketch in Sydney Harbour and enrolled as an evening pupil of the Australian-born seascape painter William Lister Lister (1859–1943). Lister had trained as a marine engineer in England but returned to Sydney as an artist in 1888 and was later President of the Australian Royal Art Society.

Burgess exhibited at the Art Society of Tasmania in 1899 and 1900, from ‘Eaglesfield’, Darlinghurst Road, Sydney, and at the (Royal) Art Society of New South Wales in 1901, the year in which he came to England, aged 21, to pursue a painting career. In November 1901 he first attended the St Ives Art Club as a guest of Julius Olsson, of whom he became a pupil, and was also one of Algernon Talmadge: other early visits to the Club are recorded in 1912 and 1914. He also met his wife Muriel Coldwood, herself a painter who attended the Slade School in 1897, while she was an art student in St Ives. The daughter of an army officer, she was born in Shrewsbury on 6 October 1878, exhibited from there at Birmingham in 1903–05, and married Burgess at Atcham [i.e. in that registry district], just south of Shrewsbury, on 19 January 1911. Burgess later revisited Australia [dates?: at least one entry to Melbourne on Ancestry] but his English marriage probably ended thought of returning there permanently.

He first exhibited at the RA in 1904 and, having begun to make a name for himself in London as a marine painter, he was commissioned in 1913 by the Australian Commonwealth government to paint (in London) the entry of the cruisers *Australia*, *Sydney* and *Melbourne*, and the destroyers of the new Australian Commonwealth fleet, to Sydney Harbour. This canvas (1914) was later hung in Parliament House, Canberra, and is now in the Art Gallery of New South Wales with separate ship portraits of HMAS *Commonwealth* and *Australia* by him, both later additions. In 1917 he became an official Australian war artist, apparently mainly as an illustrator rather than a painter in oils, and as such attended the surrender of the German Fleet at Scapa Flow in 1918. An undated oil of that event is in the Manx Museum.

From at least 1919, though probably earlier, the Burgesses lived at 8 Stanley Gardens, Hampstead. The 1939 register records him there as a ‘Naval Artist’, with the sculptor Alfred Pegram as his neighbour at no. 10. During the Second World War he was also an official Australian war artist but worked from Ludlow after his London studio [? separate or the house] was destroyed in the Blitz: the relocation may have been partly family related, given his wife’s Shropshire origins. Both before and during the war, much of Burgess’s work appears to have been shipping portraiture for owners, for which he travelled extensively to ports round the country to make sketches: of the 39 paintings listed by Art UK only seven are not specific ship portraits (naval and mercantile) and only three coastal beach scenes. An undated ship portrait of the steam frigate *Birkenhead* of 1845, now in the Williamson Art Gallery, is the only ‘historical’ subject among them although he did do others, and some non-marine landscapes. He was also an illustrator for periodicals including the *Illustrated London News*, *The Graphic* and Brassey’s *Naval and Shipping Annuals*, of which he was Art Editor, 1922–30. In both 1928 and 1932 his work featured in the official art competitions related to the summer Olympics in Amsterdam and Los Angeles, respectively. In *Who’s Who* he also listed ‘Australian War Records, Canberra’ [?meaning] as among his publications and gave ‘fishing’ as a recreation.

Burgess’s exhibition record included 57 paintings at the Royal Academy, works shown at the Paris Salon and the St Ives Society of Artists (1932–49), of which he was a member from 1931 to 1949; also of the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolours, the Royal Institute of Oil Painters and the Royal British Colonial Society of Artists. He was a founder member of the (now Royal) Society of Marine Artists in 1939 and later its vice-president, and (at least in later life) a member of the Arts Club and Langham Sketching Club.

In 1954 the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, bought Burgess’s large painting of ‘The Brotherhood of Seamen’, showing an imagined incident of the SS *Glengyle* rescuing lifeboat survivors. E.H.H. Archibald, its curator of oil paintings, recalled him then saying that success had come too late for him to enjoy. His post-war London address was 8 Primrose Gardens, Hampstead and remained so to his death on 16 April 1957, aged 78, leaving estate of £45,440 at probate. His widow Muriel died [when?] in 1960. They left a married daughter (their only child) [?other details] and grandchildren.

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