Heinrich Max Krause (a.k.a. Crause/Crouse and ‘Max Sinclair’)

1861–1931

[Corrected copy]

Heinrich (Henry) Max Krause/ Crouse was born in Biesdorf, Berlin, on 2 March 1861, to Franz Emile Hermann Krause (1836–1900), a landscape artist, and Johanne Henrietta Amelia Stock, daughter of another German painter, J. F. A. Stock. The family appear to have moved to the UK in 1876 (or 1878 at latest) and settled in Manchester, where the 1881 census shows the 20-year-old Max living at 28 Bignor Street, Cheetham, Prestwich, with his parents and five siblings. He and his artist brother, Emil Albert Krause, were both taught by their father. In 1916 anti-German feeling prompted Emil Albert to change his name by deed poll to Emil Albert Stock; he is often also wrongly called Emil Axel owing to confusion with a Danish artist.

Max began exhibiting in 1880 but was then still studying. In 1883 he gained an excellence commendation for ‘Advanced Art Perspective’ at the Manchester Technical School and Mechanics Institution. In 1885, when he married Mary Jane Mansell (1861–1930), he was officially recorded as Frederick (Friedrich) Heinrich M. Krause in the marriage register and appears as Frederick Max Crause in the 1901 census. He is also known to have painted under variants of his name: Max Krause, H. Max Krause, H. M. Krause, H. M. Crouse and M. Crouse. He later, probably in consequence of the First World War, called himself Henry Max Crouse as he appears that way in the 1921 census. A further complication is that he also produced a considerable number of works, notably of marine subjects, using the pseudonym Max Sinclair and signing ‘M. Sinclair’. These were mostly done in the 1880s and at present more of them are generally apparent than others under his variants of Krause.

No official record (i.e. birth/ death/census) has been found for another suitable artist called Sinclair in the late 1800s and although he features as a northern painter in newspaper reports between 1880 and 1889 the information supplied in them is misleading. In November 1881 the Southport-based ‘Marine Artist and Fine Art Expert’ George Wilson, who had formed a collection of nearly a thousand pictures, including by Francis (i.e. Franz) Krause and Sinclair, exhibited them for sale at the Corn Exchange in Cheltenham. A *Cheltenham Chronicle* review (29 November 1881) called the former Sinclair’s ‘accomplished master’ and opined that the latter ‘bids fair to come to the front rank of landscape painters, seeing that he is but 23 years of age.’ (i.e. born in 1858). Another newspaper cutting has been seen reporting that he was the only pupil of Franz Krause, which is ambiguous but either means they were son and father (though Emil Albert was also his father’s pupil) or that Sinclair was the only one except for the two Krause boys. The fact that Sinclair cannot be found in registration records suggests the former. Further compliments to him from the *Belfast Newsletter* and *Aberdeen Free Press* are cited in the advertisement for an ensuing art auction at Cheltenham in 1882 to dispose of the residue (*Cheltenham Chronicle*, 21 November) including all the presumably so-far unsold pictures by Sinclair.

An 1880 claim that he (Sinclair) was an Associate of the Royal Scottish Academy is false and publications on ‘Scenery of the British Isles’ and ‘Our Scottish Scenery’ that he is reported to have illustrated at about that time have not been found. He was also referred to in a press report as being ‘of Manchester’ (as the Krauses were) and in 1889 as ‘a young north of England artist who is making a name for himself’.

At the 1891 census Krause/Crause/ Sinclair seems to have been in the Toxteth Park area of Liverpool and in 1901 at 49 Perth Street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester. In 1911 it was at ‘Ashleigh’, 6 Dane Road, Sale, Cheshire, and he was then listed as a German naturalised as a British subject in 1886. In 1916, however, he was accused of being near a prohibited area in Southport, since not by then a British citizen as other family members were (from 1887). The reason was that he had been too young to be naturalised at that point, as he had previously claimed, with the result that he was obliged to move temporarily to Salford. He and his wife then lived for a period in Staffordshire but moved back to Southport after the war, where two of his brothers were carvers, gilders and frame makers. By 1921 he was at 197 Portland Street, Southport, and in that year’s census stated that he was born in Bucholz, Brandenburg, and had been 45 years’ resident in England (giving the arrival date of 1876). Bucholz, is well north of Biesdorf, Berlin, as his place of birth, but may have been another early German home before the family emigrated.

When his wife died at Portland Street in 1930 her will named him as ‘Henry Max Crouse’, leaving him her assets of £366. He followed her, from cancer, on 11 December 1931. His father, Franz, had also lived in the Southport area before moving to near Conway, where he had died in 1900.

An independent outline of ‘Max Sinclair (Max Krause)’, citing the Art Detective discussion that also concluded they were apparently the same man, appears in the ‘Dictionary of Liverpool Ship Portraitists and Marine Artists’ by Anthony Tibbles (Liverpool University Press, [February] 2023), from which points in this entry have now been updated.