

# Woodrow Wilson House



L'Esperance (1917), Hovsep Pushman



The subject of this painting is the niece of Pushman, named Dora. She wears a traditional Armenian dress and holds a white flower, meant to symbolize hope. The painting was a gift to President Woodrow Wilson from Armenia and Syria, to express gratitude for his help in Armenia.

## Hovsep Pushman (1877-1966)

Hovsep Pushman was born in Armenia on May 9, 1877. From a young age, Pushman showed great artistic potential. He received a scholarship to attend the Constantinople Academy of Art at age 11. He traveled to the United States at age 17, where he began teaching art in Chicago. After his teaching career, Pushman traveled to Paris to study at the Académie Julian under Lefebvre, Robert-Fleury, and Dechenaud. During his time in Paris, Pushman exhibited select works of art at the Salon des Artistes Français. He won a bronze medal in 1914 and a silver medal in 1921. Pushman moved to Riverside, California, in 1918 where he resided until his later years. He established his studio in 1921 and founded the Laguna Beach Art Association with a group of other artists. He dedicated his career to still-life works during his time in California. His paintings were very symbolic and featured idols, pottery, and cloudy lighting. Pushman spent the last part of his life in New York City, where he worked with the Grand Central Art Galleries. He died on February 13, 1966. Today, his works are featured in museums and collections located all over the country.

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# Woodrow Wilson House



*First Lady Painting (Original, 1916; Copy, 1936), Adolph Muller-Ury (Original); C. Gregory Stapko (Copy)*

Set in a detailed oval frame, this painting is of Edith Wilson wearing a purple dress and coat. The painting displayed in the Woodrow Wilson House is a copy of Edith Wilson's official First Lady painting, which now hangs in the White House."

## Adolph Müller-Ury (1862-1947)

Adolph Müller-Ury was born on March 29, 1862, in Airolo, Switzerland, the sixth of nineteen children. He attended the municipal drawing school in Ticino and public schools in Sarnen during his youth. While attending school, Müller-Ury was encouraged by a local sculptor to study under a local painter who specialized in religious paintings. In 1881, Müller-Ury enrolled in the Munich Academy, where he studied under Alexander Strahuber, Alois Gabl, Gyula Benczur, and Karl von Piloty. He traveled between Munich and Paris during the years 1882 through 1884, while also having the opportunity to travel to Rome to further his studies. Müller-Ury visited the United States for the first time in late 1884. He traveled throughout the Midwest and East Coast, painting whatever he found amusing. From 1885 to 1904, Müller-Ury established a studio in New York City that other artists would rent out while he traveled between America and Europe. His artwork during this time primarily consisted of academic realism. In 1907, Müller-Ury received a commission to paint a portrait of Pope Pius X. The commission was a massive success that caught the attention of numerous important public figures including Edith Bolling Wilson and President Woodrow Wilson. Müller-Ury completed the portrait commission of Edith Wilson in 1916 and the portrait of President Woodrow Wilson in 1917. Müller-Ury would continue to complete portrait commissions, even traveling to Rome again in 1930 to paint a second portrait of Pope Pius X. Müller-Ury died of cancer on July 6, 1947, in New York City. To this day, portraits by Adolph Müller-Ury are still sold at auction. Most of his works, however, remain undocumented in private collections and institutions around the world.

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## C. Gregory Stapko (1914-2006)

Casimir Gregory Stapko was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1914 to Polish immigrants. As a child, he had a rough relationship with school. At 13, he received a scholarship to attend school but turned it down. He began to take up apprenticeships with church painters, from whom he learned most of his specialties. At age 18, Stapko started a house-painting business that employed teenage workers from a local reform school. The onset of World War II led to most of his workers being drafted, and Stapko had no choice but to shut down his business. Stapko moved to Washington, DC, after the closing of his business. In Washington, he made numerous contacts who would later commission portraits. When he was not copying or painting, Stapko would teach, restore artwork, and craft furniture. Stapko continued his career in painting, copying, and teaching until 1998, when he started to lose his eyesight and feeling in his fingertips. He died on March 12, 2006.

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# Woodrow Wilson House



L'Esperance (1917), Hovsep Pushman



The scene in the painting is the Valley of Assisi in Umbria, in central Italy. In the background are numerous trees, as well as a house sitting on top of a hill. The right side of the painting shows a girl seated against a tree, while the left side consists primarily of sheep grazing in a field. This painting was purchased by Woodrow and Ellen Wilson to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary. The color scheme and compositional elements caught Ellen's eye, in particular.

## Chauncey Foster Ryder (1868–1949)

Chauncey Foster Ryder was born in 1868 in Danbury, Connecticut. He developed an interest in art at a young age and began instruction at the age of 10. In 1890, Ryder moved to Chicago to study at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Later, Ryder studied at John Francis Smith's Art Academy. He showed great skill at this institution, which led him to begin a career in teaching after his first year. In 1891, Ryder and his wife moved to Paris. He studied at the Academie Julian under Jean-Paul Laurens and Raphael Collin. After two years of studies, he began to display his works at the Paris Salon. In 1907, Ryder won an honorable mention at the Salon for his painting *That Which the Sea Gives Up*. Later in that same year, Ryder was invited to join the gallery of William Macbeth in New York City. Ryder officially moved to New York City in 1907 and opened his studio two years later. The Ryders purchased a home in New Hampshire in 1910 and for the rest of their lives would travel between New York City and New Hampshire. The couple painted and drew as they traveled throughout the East Coast, even meeting Ellen Wilson in an artist's colony in New Hampshire. Ryder took up lithography in the latter part of his life, displaying these works alongside his paintings in the Macbeth Gallery. Ryder died in 1949 in Wilton, New Hampshire. Today, Ryder is mostly known for his oil paintings and his rich color schemes.

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# Woodrow Wilson House



*Mrs. Edith Wilson (1920), Seymour Stone*



A full-length portrait of Edith Wilson wearing a black and white gown while seated in a white chair, this painting was done in the White House and was originally placed in Edith Wilson's bedroom. However, Edith disliked the painting and had it moved to the dining room.

## *Seymour Stone (1877-1975)*

Seymour Stone was born in 1877 in Good Novo Grudock, Russia. Little is known about the artist; it is known, however, that his family immigrated to the United States from Russia when he was a child. He studied art under Jules Joseph Lefebvre and John Singer Sargent. He is best known for his portraits of people and animals. In 1920, Edith Wilson commissioned Stone for a portrait. Today, this painting can be found at the Woodrow Wilson House. Stone died in 1975 in the United States.

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# Woodrow Wilson House



*Sallie Bolling (c. 1865), Unknown*



*Bolling Child (c. 1875), Unknown*

The subject of the painting on the left is Sallie Bolling, the mother of Edith Wilson. She is pictured wearing a pastel gown.

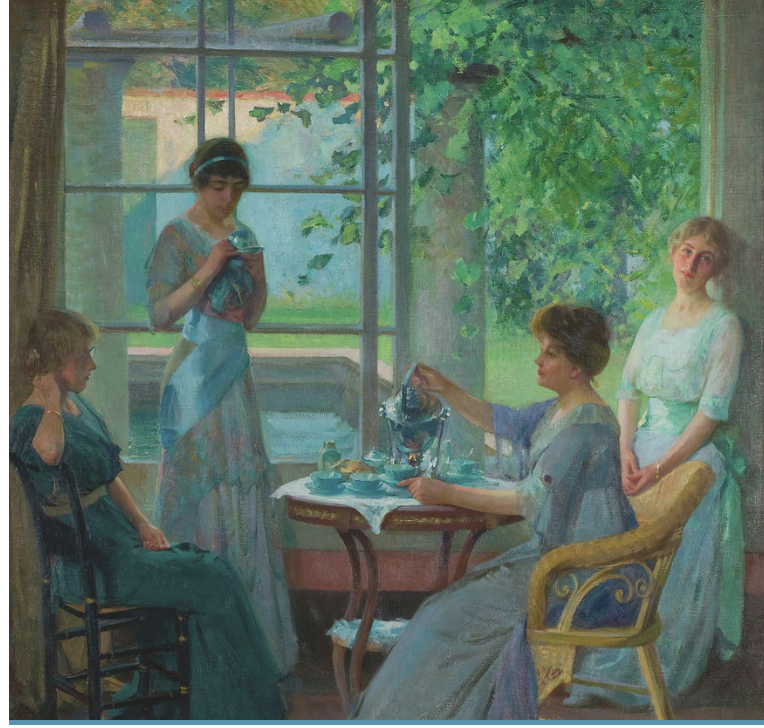
The subject of the painting on the right is a young Bolling child, shown wearing a pastel christening gown with long sleeves. It is important to note that the child could be a boy or girl, as the christening gown depicted was worn by both genders during that time.

## *About the artist(s)*

The artists who painted the Bolling family portraits are unknown. Each portrait may have been the work of an itinerant painter, a common occupation at the time. The contrasting styles of the paintings indicate that the artist who painted the child is different from the artist who painted Edith's mother and, further, that the portraits were likely painted during different time periods, the painting of the woman being completed in the 1860s, and that of the child, in the 1870s.

## *Bibliography*

# Woodrow Wilson House



*Mrs. Wilson and Her Three Daughters (1913), Robert Vonnoh*

The subjects of this painting are Ellen Wilson and her three daughters, Margaret, Eleanor, and Jessie. The four women are depicted having tea while on a summer residency

## *Robert Vonnoh (1858–1933)*

Robert Vonnoh was born in 1858 in Hartford, Connecticut, but raised in Boston. During his teenage years, he apprenticed to many artists and publishers. He enrolled at the Massachusetts Normal Art School in 1875, where his studies focused on becoming an art teacher. In the years following his graduation, he taught at the Boston Art Club and other schools around the Boston area. In 1881, Vonnoh traveled to Paris to continue his art studies at the Academie Julian, where he studied under Gustave Boulanger and Jules Lefebvre. Vonnoh returned to Boston in 1883 to teach at the Cowles Art School and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. It was during this time that Vonnoh was most known for his portraits. He returned to Paris frequently throughout the 1880s, meeting his wife in 1886. While living in Grez-sur-Loing, Vonnoh became known for his impressionist style and was one of the first American artists to make the style well known. The Vonnohs returned to America in 1891, where he began teaching at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. During this time, Vonnoh painted portraits and landscapes that were exhibited throughout the country. In 1906, Vonnoh was elected to membership in the National Academy of Design. Vonnoh and his second wife traveled back to Grez-sur-Loing in 1907. They traveled to France yearly until World War I. After the war, the Vonnohs became permanent residents of France. In the summer of 1913, Vonnoh and Ellen Wilson would meet and Ellen Wilson arranged for Vonnoh to paint a portrait of her and her daughters. Vonnoh died in Nice, France, in 1933. Today, Vonnoh is still recognized as a great artist and teacher. He is credited for being one of the first artists to bring the European impressionist style to the United States. His paintings are still on display around the country and are admired for their diverse colors and beautiful landscaping.

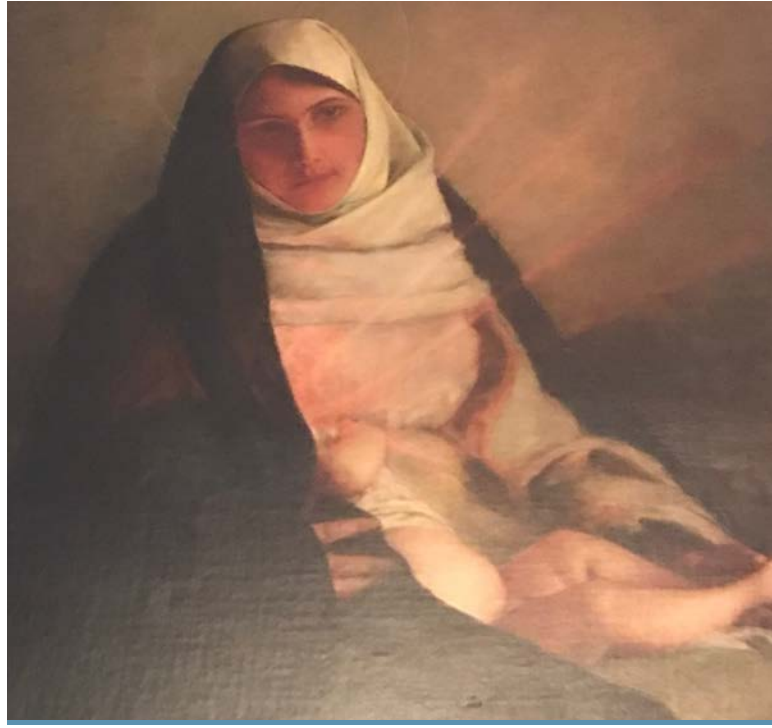
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# Woodrow Wilson House



*Madonna and Child (1896), Ellen Axson Wilson*

This painting was inspired by Pascal Adolphe Dagnan-Bouveret's *Madonna of the Rose*. It is one of only a few paintings completed by Ellen Wilson.

## *Ellen Axson Wilson (1860–1914)*

Ellen Axson Wilson was born on May 15, 1860, in Savannah, Georgia. Her father was a pastor of the Beech Island Presbyterian Church and would later briefly serve as a chaplain in the Confederate army. Ellen and her mother moved frequently during the Civil War, settling in Madison, Georgia, near the end of the war. Ellen attended Rome Female College, where she excelled in her studies. She had a natural talent for art and would later study art and foreign languages in her postgraduate studies. Following her mother's death in 1881, Ellen cared for her younger siblings and father. Despite having duties at home, Wilson still had the opportunity to travel the country to visit friends, family, and to finish her education. In 1883, she was introduced to Woodrow Wilson at her father's church. The two would meet again periodically until Wilson proposed in Asheville, North Carolina. They married in 1885 and moved to Middletown, Connecticut, in 1888 for Woodrow Wilson's faculty job at Wesleyan University. In 1890, the Wilsons moved to Princeton, New Jersey, after Woodrow was named professor of jurisprudence at Princeton University. Ellen put aside her love for art to focus on her duties as a mother and wife. Unfortunately, a death in the family would lead to a severe depression. Ellen found refuge in painting and frequently spent her summers at the art colony in Old Lyme, Connecticut. In 1912, Woodrow won the presidential election, and the family moved into the White House in March 1913. Ellen took on many roles as the First Lady. Her first campaign was to have the alleys and back streets of Washington, DC, cleaned after she noticed their poor condition. She also planned the Rose Garden, which remains to this day at the White House. In 1914, Ellen became ill with Bright's disease and died at the White House on August 6, 1914.

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# Woodrow Wilson House



*Untitled Painting (1939), Frederick Brunner*

This is a portrait of Edith Wilson in which she wears a gray dress set against a gray background. Today the painting hangs in Woodrow Wilson's bedroom at the Woodrow Wilson House.

## *Frederick Brunner (1886-1954)*

Frederick Brunner was born on July 27, 1886, in Pennsylvania. He had a fascination with art at a young age and spent much of his childhood drawing. Brunner dropped out of high school when he was a teenager and worked a factory job to save up for art school. He was admitted to the School of Industrial Art in Philadelphia and graduated in 1909. At the School of Industrial Art, Brunner studied under artist Daniel Garber. He attended the Academy of Fine Arts and the Graphic Sketch Club during his studies. His first postgraduate job was for the Ladies Home Journal, where he worked as an artist, producing ink drawings and cover designs. After spending thirteen years at the magazine, Brunner became a freelance artist and continued to create cover designs. During World War II, he painted portraits and designed posters for the Red Cross. Brunner also had numerous interests outside of art such as fishing, archery, and horseback riding. Brunner died in April 1954 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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# Woodrow Wilson House



*Untitled Painting (Date unknown), Chatain*



*Untitled Painting (Date unknown), Chatain*

The painting on the left depicts a three-quarter view of a woman with blond hair wearing a blue dress and a cloth hat. Her image is set against a white background with blue shading. The painting on the right portrays a young woman with dark hair wearing a gown set against a stippled background. Both paintings are located in the drawing room of the Woodrow Wilson House.

## A. Chatain

Little is known about Chatain, not even his or her first name, origin, and gender. It is speculated that Chatain was a woman who signed her paintings as such in order to avoid gender discrimination. It is also speculated that the artist was born in France due to the last name and the style of the paintings. What is known is that the artist had an active career in New York City during the 1880s and was known for painting human figures

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# Woodrow Wilson House



*Untitled Painting (1921), Joseph Allen Physioc*



*Untitled Painting (1921), Joseph Allen Physioc*

The painting on the left depicts two nymphs bathing, partially draped with birds. The painting on the right depicts two nymphs sitting beside a stream. Both paintings are located in the entrance hall of the Woodrow Wilson House

## *Joseph Allen Physioc (1866–1951)*

Joseph Allen Physioc was born in Richmond, Virginia. When he was four, his family moved to Columbia, South Carolina, where he attended military school and met the young Woodrow Wilson. It was at this school that he developed his talents for aerobic activity and singing. These talents led Physioc to a career in theatre, beginning in his teenage years. Once he became a husband and father, Physioc decided to give up acting and pursue a career in set design. He had massive successes in his hometown and worked his way up to designing sets for the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. As he moved closer to retirement, he had the opportunity to observe and study theater in Japan, China, Burma, Java India, and Egypt. Through his travels, he sketched out and painted his ideas. His works are on display throughout the United States and in the collections of past presidents. They are admired for their color schemes and detailed depictions of form

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# Woodrow Wilson House



*Portrait of Geraldine J. (1900), Mary Bradish Titcomb*

This painting shows a woman seated on a sofa. She wears a hat with flowers, a white blouse, a blue shawl, and a skirt.

## *Mary Bradish Titcomb (1856-1927)*

Mary Bradish Titcomb was born in Windham, New Hampshire in 1858. She moved to Boston when she was 28 and attended the Massachusetts Normal Art School, as well as the Boston Museum School. Titcomb became the Director of Drawing for Brockton Public Schools and was inducted into the Copley Society. She began her career as a drawing teacher until 1888 when she decided to become a full-time artist. In 1888, she decided to leave teaching and become a full-time artist. Titcomb traveled to France, Italy, England, and Spain. She began signing her paintings as Bradish M. Titcomb to avoid gender-based discrimination.... She briefly worked at Fenway Studios until 1920, when she bought a home in Massachusetts. Her status as an artist was elevated in 1915, when President Woodrow Wilson purchased her *Portrait of Geraldine J.* from the Corcoran Gallery of Art. The purchase would lead to Titcomb becoming known as one of the greatest members of the Boston Impressionist Movement. Titcomb was also a member of the New York Water Club, the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, and the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts. Her works were praised for their vibrancy, use of architecture, and impressionistic landscapes. Titcomb died in 1927. The painting purchased by Woodrow Wilson currently remains at the Woodrow Wilson House.

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