



Clockwise starting top left:
 Water colour illustration of the Free Church – completion of works to the West End – painted in one day, 15th July 1938;
 Father in the Garden;
 Lucien Pissarro and Fritz Herrmann, North Square;
 Margaret, 1947;
 The Manse

Art in the Square

ANDREW BOTTERILL

Whilst people are aware of the abundance and enthusiasm of amateur artists in the Suburb, there has also been more than a brush with the world of professional art. There must be at least a score of houses with purpose-built studios included in the original plans. I know of three within a couple of hundred yards of our house.

The world of professional art featured briefly two years ago in an illustrated talk I gave at Fellowship House based on a long correspondence I had had with a lady in Durham. Margaret Levetus had grown up in our house in North Square from the mid 1930s to the mid 50s. Her memory was pin sharp and her recollections fascinating. Her amateur early work was based mostly around the house and garden.

She attended the Central School of Arts & Crafts (now Central St Martins). Prizes were won. After the war in which she was a part-time ambulance driver, she found employment as an illustrator and book jacket

designer. Her studio was a small room at the front of the house, one window looking out onto North Square, the other onto Central Square.

Margaret knew, and was sometimes helped by, Fred Taylor, one of Britain's foremost poster artists in the 1940s and 50s, who lived in a little house ('The Studio') hidden in the woods in the far corner of the Square.

Margaret also experienced the world of professional art through the family and their neighbours. Her aunt had met the artist Lucien Pissarro (son of Camille and a founder member of the Camden Group) at the Café Royal on Mafeking Night in May 1900 and he became a firm family friend often visiting North Square.

The Herrmanns were neighbours. Fritz and his family had arrived from Germany just before the war. They were art collectors and some Square residents today still remember some of his priceless collection casually hanging around the house. A Gauguin in his study and (possibly apocryphal) a Renoir hanging on the back of a lavatory door.



Margaret's Studio, 1 North Square



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