

Restoring Paintings To Their Original Beauty Is An Art

By WALLY TRABING

Restoring beauty, like creating it, is an art.

With the development of the great art museums, specialists in the field of bringing oil paintings, stored sometimes for a hundred years, are in much demand.

They are not all confined to museums.

Mrs. Thomas R. Nordman, 4920 Soquel drive, qualified herself in this field while a 15 year resident of the Hawaiian Islands.

Her latest job was the restoration of an oil painting by the late Frank L. Heath. It was painted in 1892 and had become badly cracked and soiled.

She was commissioned for the job by the Santa Cruz Public library which had been given the painting by Mrs. Heath, of 1025 Third street, many years ago.

The six by eight foot painting depicts a view of Santa Cruz looking out toward the bay from what is now the area around Graham Hill road.

The work, besides its art value, is interesting historically. It shows the old piers in the bay, the former covered bridge that is now the Soquel bridge.

Mrs. Nordman, who with her husband operate "The Studio," an art store, said she completed the job in six weeks, taking her time.

"The first step was to clean the canvas," she said. Rubbed it with a cloth and cleaner?

"Heaven's no," she gasped. She said it was a delicate dabbing operation with special fluids.

The big job is in filling the cracks. They must be filled with the exact color and texture of the tiny areas surrounding the crack.

"The main thing is not to lose the original touch and feeling," she said. She said it took several "paintings" to complete the crack filling.

The painting is now hung in the reading room of the library. This same work, encased in a heavy ornate gold gilded frame, was displayed at the St. Louis Exhibition in 1904.

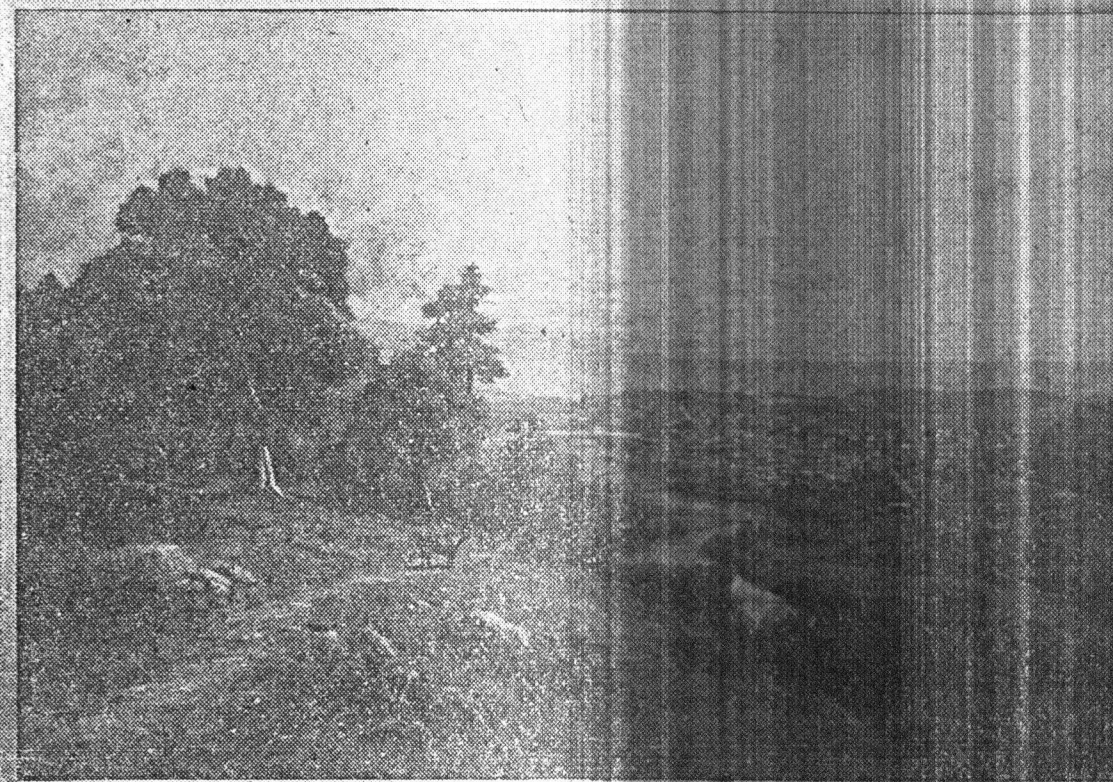
Mrs. Nordman received an art degree from the University of Iowa. She studied with a number of prominent artists.

She learned much of her restoration techniques from Fred Taubes, nationally noted for his work in this field.

Mrs. Nordman paints landscapes, portraits, and still life. Some of her work has been shown in the National Gallery in Washington, D.C.

The Nordmans have lived in Soquel for about four years.

Mrs. Nordman asked Wally Traving to phone me after I mentioned the cracks. I said that the paint flaked off - but he didn't seem to understand that. W.T.



CITY OF SANTA CRUZ
CALIFORNIA

The late Frank L. Heath, painted this six by eight foot oil Santa Cruz in 1892 from what

is now the vicinity of Graham Hill road. Many years ago the painting was donated to the Santa Cruz Public library. Re-

cently the painting, gradually becoming ruined by cracks, was restored by Mrs. Thomas R.

Nordman of Soquel, and it now holds a "wall of honor" in the library's reading room.

Before Mrs. Nordman