



## ATHENS ON THE FRASER The Photographs of H.G. Cox



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In April 1933 the business manager of the Vancouver Art Gallery sent a brief note to a photographer who had recently shown his photographs at the Gallery. He wrote, "I enclose a small account for out-of-pocket payments by the Gallery in respect of your exhibition of pictorial camera studies.....If therefore you can, without inconvenience, let me have a remittance, I shall very much appreciate it." The amounts in question were \$3.18 for printing invitations and \$8.90 for the cost of printing the catalogues. The artist was Horace Gordon Cox, known as H.G., and the exhibition was one of three that Cox had at the Vancouver Art Gallery in the decade of the 1930s. Cox died in 1972 and his photographs were presumed to have been lost by researchers who knew of him at all. The photographs were stored in a relative's basement and 'discovered' two years ago.

H.G. Cox set out to capture beauty, both indoors and out. His earliest photographs, those taken as an 'amateur photographer' rather than as family snapshots, date from 1924. Within a year he was already an active member of the international pictorialist salon movement, showing his pictures in the 1925 to 1940 period at exhibitions on four continents, from New York to Los Angeles, from London to Lucknow, India, and in France, Italy, Spain and Sweden.

Although Cox was definitely a Pictorialist, defining Pictorialism is a bit of a challenge. Writing in the 1920 volume of *Pictorial Photography in*