

Acclaimed for His Oil Paintings

Samuel Noisette, Retired FBI Special

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By Alice Bonner

Washington Post Staff Writer

William Samuel Noisette, a retired special agent and veteran of 40 years with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, died on his 72d birthday Thursday at Providence Hospital, after a long illness.

"Sam" Noisette, because of his many years as a messenger and receptionist for the late FBI director, became known as J. Edgar Hoover's "right-hand man." But he was also acclaimed within the bureau and locally for his oil paintings and the 32 consecutive annual art shows he gave at the Phyllis Wheatley branch of the YWCA.

Mr. Noisette began painting as a child in his native Fayetteville, N.C. Encouraged by his mother and a prominent Fayetteville artist, and later by Hoover after he joined the bureau in 1927, he pursued the hobby, selling many of his paintings over the years.

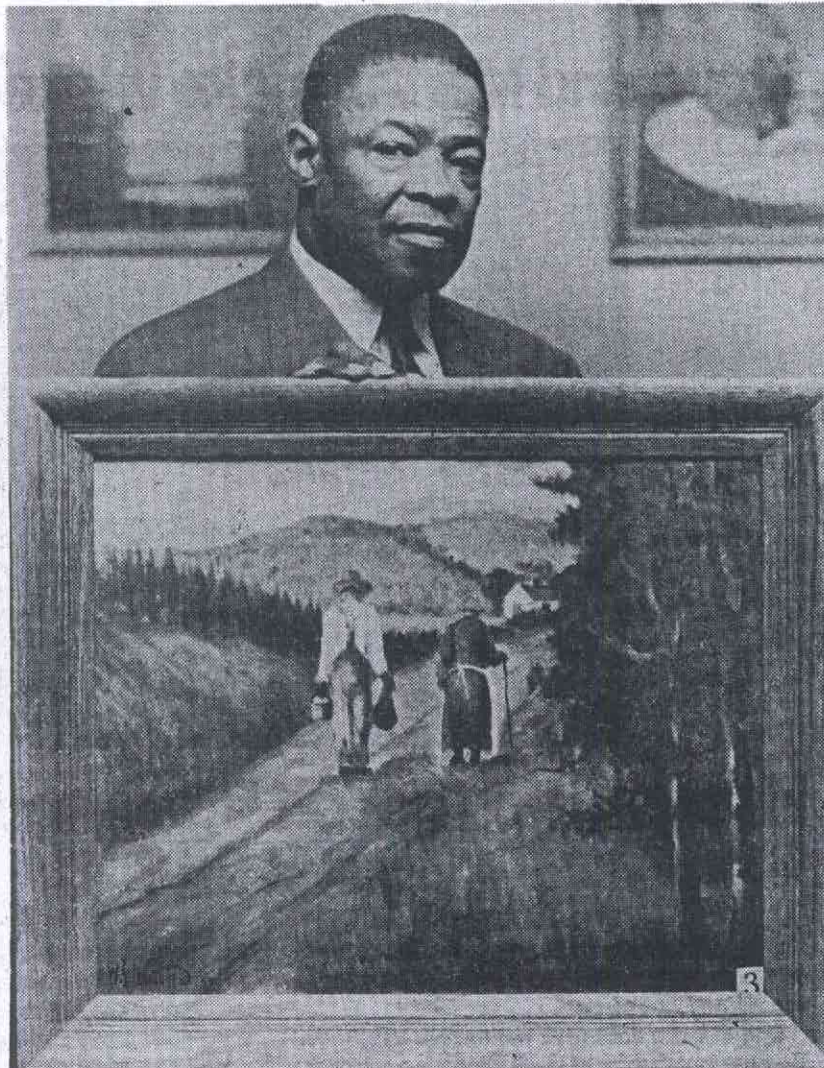
"If I had to decide which I was going to do, paint or eat, I guess I'd paint," he once said.

Although he was a prolific artist, producing numerous oil paintings between the annual shows, he seldom strayed from his favorites, landscapes and still-lives of familiar scenes.

A few paintings that Mr. Noisette called "conversation paintings" depicted mountains and seashores and other scenes he had never seen.

Rarely did the artist include people in his hundreds of full-size canvases and miniatures, but on one occasion he selected a painting of an elderly couple as his favorite among the 400-odd paintings he had done then.

"Going Home," first exhibited at the 1958 annual YWCA show, depicts an elderly



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W. Samuel Noisette, retired special agent for the FBI, is pictured in 1958 at an art show at the Phyllis Wheatley YMCA with his oil painting, "Going Home."

erly couple trudging down a Southern road towards a cottage. The man is stopping to wait for his slower-paced mate. Mr. Noisette said it took him years to compose it.

He once said that he had sold many of his paintings to FBI officials and other prominent persons. "They started buying after I painted the portrait of Mr. Hoover's dog," he said. His

work had also been shown at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and at the Smithsonian Institution.

After his love of painting and his dedication to the FBI, Mr. Noisette's favorite

Agent Dies

activity was working with youngsters. He gave many hours to organizations including the Boys' Clubs of America and the Metropolitan Police Boys Club.

Mr. Noisette said he felt that his paintings were instruments to solving two problems with which he was extremely concerned, racial prejudice and juvenile delinquency.

"I feel that my work is not only a pleasure to me, but is serving as an inspiration to the children of my race," he said. He said that if they used their time pursuing a hobby, "there will be no time on their hands, and they won't get in trouble."

Of racial intolerance, he said, "You find white and Negro looking over my work and I can't help but feel that this is adding to the understanding among people necessary to breaking down the barriers."

Mr. Noisette served at the FBI as messenger and receptionist for 30 years before Hoover appointed him a special agent in 1957. He was honored in 1967 for his 40 years service and retired the following year.

One of his proudest possessions was a gold key awarded him on his 20th anniversary with the FBI. On presenting it to him, Hoover said he was "deeply grateful" to Mr. Noisette for his "invaluable loyalty and devoted service." He said Mr. Noisette could justly claim "a substantial share in the accomplishments of the FBI."

Among his survivors are his wife, Ardell, of the home address, 416 U St., NW; a son, William Jr., of Los Angeles; two sisters, Mattie Jackson, of Washington, and Carrie Robinson-Bey, of New York; one grandson and three stepsons.