

The background of the cover is a detailed 19th-century painting of a storm at sea. The sky is filled with heavy, dark, and turbulent clouds, with some light breaking through near the horizon. The sea is dark and choppy, with white-capped waves crashing against a sandy beach in the foreground. Several large sailing ships with multiple masts and sails are visible on the horizon, some appearing to be struggling against the wind. The overall mood is one of intense natural power and maritime drama.

**NINETEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN PAINTINGS
AT THE STERLING AND FRANCINE CLARK ART INSTITUTE**

VOLUME ONE

Edited by Sarah Lees

With an essay by Richard Rand
and technical reports by Sandra L. Webber

With contributions by Katharine J. Albert, Philippe Bordes, Dan Cohen,
Kathryn Calley Galitz, Alexis Goodin, Marc Gotlieb, John House,
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Kelly Pask, Elizabeth A. Pergam, Kathryn A. Price, Mark A. Roglán,
James Rosenow, Zoë Samels, and Fronia E. Wissman

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PRECEDING PAGE 2: Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Snake Charmer* (cat. 154)

by John Constable, sold to Manton); Sir Edwin A. G. Manton (1949–d. 2005); Diana Morton, his daughter, by descent (2005–7, given to the Clark); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007.

EXHIBITIONS None

REFERENCES Parris 1994, pp. 9, 114, no. 40, ill.; Lillie 2003, p. 222, no. 5, as *Flusslandschaft, Haus m. rotem Dach*, by Constable.

TECHNICAL REPORT The support is a moderate-weave linen, having a thread count of 16 threads/cm. It has been glue-lined to a coarser canvas of 13 threads/cm and has a replaced five-member mortise-and-tenon stretcher. Several of the painting's corners are separating from the lining. A piece of debris caught under the lower stretcher has caused an area of shattered ground and paint. The painting was partially cleaned, showing serious solvent abrasion throughout the lighter passages but extremely thick, discolored, and heavily fissured varnish on the rest of the image. There are numerous broad retouches in the sky, all turned brown and now matte in reflectance. The varnish is foggy in areas and shattered in the lower left corner, revealing the depth of the coating, as well as its serious discoloration.

The ground is composed of one or two off-white layers, probably commercially applied. A deposit of ground along the right edge may suggest that the original stretcher was slightly smaller. Using infrared light, some lines were visible, either as drawn or painted outlines, in the fence rails at the left and the barn roof. Otherwise no complete underdrawing was detected. The paint is applied in a moderate paste consistency with some impasto work in the clouds. Many areas display the blending typical of wet-into-wet strokes. However, the tree line was painted after the sky colors were set.

1. Parris 1994, p. 114.
2. R 19.1.
3. Kende Galleries 1949, p. 55.
4. See "Oscar Bondy, Zuckerfabrikant" in Lillie 2003, pp. 216–45.
5. Between 1938 and 1945 this picture had a very complex history, reflected in a number of labels and marks on the back of the painting. The label "Oscar Bondy Wien No. 538" attached to the canvas probably reflects Bondy's own numbering system. In May 1938, Bondy and his wife fled via Switzerland to the United States, where he died in 1944. The work appears as no. 5, *Flusslandschaft, haus m. rotem Dach* (River Landscape, House with Red Roof) by Constable in a list of items (dated 3 April 1939) seized from Bondy's home. See Lillie 2003, p. 222. The painting next went to Kremsmünster, Austria, where it was labeled on the stretcher with the number K 1687. It therefore appears to have been designated, along with much of the rest of Bondy's collection, as going to

Hitler's planned Führermuseum in Linz, although it was not ultimately chosen for inclusion. It does not appear in the photo albums published in Schwarz 2004 or in the Deutsches Historisches Museum's database of Linz objects (<http://www.dhm.de/datenbank/linzdb/indexe.htm>). Three labels now removed from the painting reflect the property inventory number assigned by the Nazis, 1318 O.B. It appears to have been stored by the Nazis at Alt Aussee, then entered the Munich Central Collecting Point on 17 Oct. 1945 as no. 9883, to be restituted by American forces, and was turned over to Austria (under control of the U.S. Fifth Army) on 25 Apr. 1946. The number 111403, written on the stretcher in the same red pencil as "USFA" (U.S. Fifth Army), has not been identified. For information on the Munich Central Collecting Point, see http://www.dhm.de/datenbank/ccp/dhm_ccp.php?seite=9&lang=en. It was then returned to Mrs. Bondy in New York.

Lionel Bicknell Constable

English, 1828–1887

78 | *Cloud Study* c. 1850

Oil on beige wove paper, mounted on wood-pulp board, mounted on panel, 23.5 x 30 cm (sheet size), 24.5 x 31 cm (panel size)

Gift of the Manton Foundation in memory of Sir Edwin and Lady Manton

2007.8.60

Cloud Study, a work that remained in the possession of the Constable family until it entered the art market at the end of the nineteenth century as the work of the father, epitomizes how John Constable's artistic personality was misconstrued just seventy years after his death. The 1899 exhibition of the works of John Constable held at Leggatt's Gallery in London marked a watershed in the public perception of the work of arguably the most important interpreter of the English landscape of the first half of the nineteenth century. As can be seen from the history of attribution of *Cloud Study*, that perception was slightly misleading, with a number of works bought directly by Leggatt's from the artist's grandson wrongly ascribed to the Royal Academician rather than to his children.

The removal from the accepted oeuvre of the artist of those works that were, in fact, executed by his sons, followers, and imitators is largely attributable



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to the research of two Tate curators, Leslie Parris and Ian Fleming-Williams.¹ The result of their career-long immersion into the work and world of John Constable on twenty-first-century understanding of the artist cannot be underestimated. Sir Edwin Manton acknowledged their expertise and enlisted them in evaluating his own collection. Not surprisingly, Parris reassigned to other hands a number of paintings Sir Edwin had purchased over the decades as the work of the father.²

Cloud Study, although it had a history of being given to John Constable, was, by 1996, accepted as the work of his son, Lionel, when it was purchased as such by Sir Edwin. His acquisition of the work of Lionel, as well as his ready acceptance of what are more usually considered “demotions,” provides insight into the nature of Sir Edwin’s philosophy of collecting. His love and appreciation for the work of art itself and the image depicted were of paramount importance.

Lionel Constable’s *Cloud Study* is compositionally related to the group of works by his father that include a strip of land anchoring his empirical observations of the fast-changing weather conditions above Hampstead Heath. If this sketch were painted by the father, then there would be every reason to associate the location with that of the north London suburb that became the source of the artist’s studies from the 1820s. There are, however, no indications that the

setting is Hampstead once it is accepted as the work of the son, who painted various localities around the United Kingdom.

Comparing this study to the three sketches of clouds by John Constable that Sir Edwin purchased over the course of four decades of collecting (cats. 70–72), it is possible to see that in this sketch, the artist seems primarily interested in using the expanse of the sky to experiment with grays, blues, and whites. In contrast, the sketches by the father more successfully integrate the sometimes competing considerations of color, composition, and empirical evidence. The hard-won skill in the handling of pigment and assurance in the application of brushstrokes to capture a fleeting effect is immediately apparent in the *Study of Clouds over a Landscape* (cat. 72). In the study painted by Lionel, the steady horizon line, punctuated occasionally by distant trees, the vastness of the sky above, and the attempt to capture the coloration of the weather point to a second generation’s effort to glean lessons from remaining visual records and early memories of the father’s practice. EP

PROVENANCE Hugh Golding Constable, the artist’s nephew, by descent, sold to Leggatt’s, 1899; [Leggatt’s, London]; Mr. Waldron; G. B. Homewood; private collection; sale Christie’s, London, 18 Apr. 1986, no. 60, as Attributed to John Constable;

Raymond Needler; sale Sotheby's, London, 13 Nov. 1996, no. 100, as by Lionel Constable, sold to Ackermann & Johnson; [Ackermann & Johnson, London, sold to Manton, 25 Nov. 1996]; Sir Edwin A. G. Manton, New York (1996–d. 2005); Manton Family Art Foundation (2005–7, given to the Clark); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007.

EXHIBITIONS London 1899b, no. 72, as *A Rainy Day*, by John Constable.

REFERENCES Parris 1998, pp. 51–52, no. 60, ill.

TECHNICAL REPORT The original support appears to be a sheet of wove paper attached to very thin acidic pulp cardboard, giving a total thickness of less than 0.1 cm. The top edge is ragged, with the paper layer cut away by a visible knife cut, and the paper and cardboard layers are separating in the upper left corner. The painting has been mounted to a mahogany panel 1 cm thick, with chamfered back edges 2.5 cm wide. The grain runs horizontally, and the wood extends past all four original cardboard edges. The whole package has a very slight convex warp. Some delamination of the cardboard layer from the wood panel is occurring along the right and bottom edges and the center of the upper left corner. The exposed cardboard at the ragged top edge has been toned, and there is gesso fill and flaking repaint along the lower edge. Some graphite marks are visible along the edges. Wrinkling in the upper paper layer, from the initial pasting to the cardboard, can be seen near the left edge and the center right area. Shattered paint and varnish can be seen along the lower right edge. Some impastos are flattened from the mounting process. Old varnish residues were detected in most dark passages, probably indicating a partial cleaning. The matte surface reflectance may be due to the absorbent nature of the raw paper and cardboard supports. In reflected light, the surface is lumpy due to the irregular cardboard layer, with several round bumps in the left half of the image.

The painting is executed on unprepared paper. Under low magnification, the paper fibers can be seen throughout the surface, and the color of the paper seems to be turning rather orange or hot in tone. This may indicate that the paper is of poor quality or that it is being discolored by the cardboard substrate. A few broad strokes and zigzag-shaped underdrawing lines in what may be charcoal were detected in the clouds using infrared reflectography. The darker paint colors were laid in with thin blended washes, and the lighter colors with thicker, distinct strokes. The tree line in the foreground was painted over the edge of the sky.

1. See especially Parris and Fleming-Williams 1978 and London 1982. Charles Rhyne's invaluable contribution to the current state of knowledge of Constable and his family should also be acknowledged.

2. See, for example, cats. 81–82.

79 | Cottage c. 1850

Oil on wood-pulp board, mounted on canvas, 22.5 x 28.3 cm

Gift of the Manton Foundation in memory of Sir Edwin and Lady Manton
2007.8.61

Sir Edwin's purchase of *Cottage* in 1984 as a work by Lionel Constable marks the progress made by Constable scholars in separating paintings executed by the son from his father's oeuvre. The awkwardness in the treatment of the titular cottage confirms that the work is indeed a product of an artist who had not yet fully mastered architectural perspective. The open casement of the dormer window falls precipitously into space; the poorly defined roofline curves upward. The tree that emerges from behind the awkwardly positioned hayrick has a single, ribbon-like branch similar to the calligraphic branches in both *Tree in a Meadow* and *Tree in a Landscape* (cats. 81–82), both works now given to Lionel. Furthermore, the smudgy trees and the unfinished foreground point to a general lack of resolution to the work.

A Leggatt label on the back, dating to about 1959, states that the sketch was in the 1899 exhibition of John Constable's paintings and drawings held at their galleries in London. The work exhibited at that time as number 71 in the catalogue was titled *Cottage on the Stour, Flatford*.¹ But the existence of a similar sketch in the John G. Johnson Collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art complicates the identification of the Clark sketch as the one in the 1899 exhibition. This slightly larger work, which passed through the French dealer Sedelmeyer before being acquired by Johnson by 1911, approaches a cottage with a pitched roof from farther away and from a different angle. Two tall leaning trees, which extend beyond the edge of the paper, dominate the right half of the work with just the top part of the cottage visible in the middle distance.²

Whether or not the Clark *Cottage* was, in fact, the painting exhibited in 1899, its title is once again a case of a location being identified purely on the basis of the sites associated with John Constable. There is no reason to believe that this cottage is, in fact, on the Stour. None of the paintings Lionel exhibited at the Royal Academy or the British Institution between 1849 and 1855 was catalogued as a Suffolk subject. Lionel produced drawings and paintings on his visits