



**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

Nineteenth-Century European Paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute is published with the assistance of the Getty Foundation and support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



The Getty Foundation



Produced by the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute
225 South Street, Williamstown, Massachusetts 01267
www.clarkart.edu

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Production by The Production Department,
Whately, Massachusetts
Printed on 135 gsm Gardapat Kiara
Color separations and printing by Trifolio, Verona

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Distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London
P. O. Box 209040, New Haven, Connecticut 06520-9040
www.yalebooks.com/art

Printed and bound in Italy
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

Nineteenth-century European paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute / 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, Simon Kelly, Richard Kendall, Kathleen M. Morris, Leslie Hill Paisley, Kelly Pask, Elizabeth A. Pergam, Kathryn A. Price, Mark A. Roglán, James Rosenow, Zoë Samels, Fronia E. Wissman.

volumes cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-935998-09-9 (clark hardcover : alk. paper) —

ISBN 978-0-300-17965-1 (yale hardcover : alk. paper)

1. Painting, European—19th century—Catalogs. 2. Painting—Massachusetts—Williamstown—Catalogs. 3. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute—Catalogs. I. Lees, Sarah, editor of compilation. II. Rand, Richard. III. Webber, Sandra L. IV. Title. V. Title: 19th-century European paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

ND457.S74 2012

759.9409'0340747441—dc23

2012030510

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Albert Goodwin

English, 1845–1932

157 | The Bristol Channel from Ilfracombe 1890s

Oil on panel, 31.1 x 40.2 cm

Lower center: The Bristol Channel from Ilfracombe;

lower right: Albert Goodwin

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

2007.8.89

Known primarily as a watercolorist, Albert Goodwin retained the luminosity of that medium when painting in oils, as can be seen in *The Bristol Channel from Ilfracombe*. The steep bird's-eye viewpoint allows Goodwin to capture the force of the water of the Channel as it dashes against the rocky Devonshire coast on a windy day. The picturesque quality of the topaz-inflected water is reinforced by the cheerfully dressed holiday-goers who line the pathways. The artist's own inscription indicates that the location is Ilfracombe in North Devon, and therefore the view is evidently toward Lee Bay.

The northern coast of Devon was a favorite of poets Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Percy Bysshe Shelley, and

the popularity of towns such as Ilfracombe continued to grow over the course of the nineteenth century.¹ Goodwin lived in Ilfracombe between 1876 and 1906, though on the evidence of dated works, he returned to the town throughout his life. Although he first studied with Arthur Hughes (1832–1915) and subsequently with Ford Madox Brown (1821–1893), both Pre-Raphaelites, Goodwin is most closely associated with perhaps the most prominent figure of the Victorian art world, John Ruskin (1819–1900). Ruskin had met the young artist around 1869 and brought him on a semi-annual three-month trip to Italy in the summer of 1872.²

Ruskin's influence on Goodwin was profound, both in theoretical and practical terms. From 1860 on, Goodwin had been a frequent contributor to both the Royal Academy and the Society of Painters in Water Colours. He was elected an associate of the latter institution in 1871 and a full member in 1881. Writing to Goodwin in 1876, Ruskin advised against "taking to oil and to large canvases,"³ advice the young artist largely followed. As is evidenced by *The Bristol Channel*, however, Goodwin did not reject oil painting completely, but rather continued occasionally to paint in that medium—references to his oils in his privately printed diary occur as late as 1918, and there are other oils dated 1921.⁴ Even so, the almost exclusive association of Goodwin with watercolors is pronounced in

the literature, from the London *Times* obituary through the lavishly illustrated monograph published by Chris Beetles in 1986, where of two hundred works only eighteen are oil paintings.

Because of Goodwin's decades-long association with Ilfracombe and the dearth of oil paintings within his oeuvre, it is difficult to date *The Bristol Channel* with certainty. Nevertheless, the coloration and composition are similar to another oil, *Punch and Judy on the Beach at Ilfracombe*, which is signed and dated 1897.⁵ In both, the turquoise water and the gaily colored holiday-goers give a sense of the attractions of the north Devon coast in the late Victorian period. EP

PROVENANCE [Ackermann & Johnson, Ltd., London, sold to Manton 17 Nov. 1994]; Sir Edwin A. G. Manton, New York (1994–d. 2005); Manton Family Art Foundation (2005–7, given to the Clark); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007.

EXHIBITIONS None

REFERENCES None

TECHNICAL REPORT The support is a radially cut light-colored hardwood panel, probably poplar, 0.5 cm thick. The back of the panel is chamfered 1.3 cm on all four edges. There is no finish on the reverse and only a very slight convex warp. The painting looks recently cleaned, possibly in 1994 at the time of sale. The paint is in very good condition, with only a couple of slightly flattened impastos, probably the result of carrying the wet picture in a box or with other panels. There may be a few areas of slight solvent abrasion where glaze strokes pass over impastos. There is very minor inpainting in the upper left sky. The new varnish has an even sheen.

There is no ground layer, and the wood is visible through the paint layer in a few foreground areas. Sanding marks are visible across the wood grain under low magnification. No underdrawing was detected. An area above the top of the flagpole may be painted over as seen in infrared examination. The distant ship in the upper right was begun about 1.3 cm lower on the water and then partially painted out. In general, the paint is quite crisp and clean in handling, with only a few glaze details over thicker paint strokes. The paint stops short of most of the right and left edges. The painting is signed and titled in black ink.

1. See May 1983 and Smiles 1995.

2. Christie's 2007, pp. 8–9.

3. Ruskin 1903–12, pp. 212–13.

4. Quoted in Beetles 1986, no. 195.

5. *Ibid.*, no. 58.

Jules-Adolphe Goupil

French, 1839–1883

158 | **Woman Seated** c. 1875

Oil on panel, 32.5 x 23.4 cm

Upper right: J Goupil

1955-748

159 | **Woman Wearing a Hat with a Blue Ribbon**

c. 1875

Oil on panel, 27.2 x 20.8 cm

Upper right: JG [monogram]

1955-778

Both of these little paintings on panel are characteristic of the work of the relatively little known Jules-Adolphe Goupil, and they could in fact also represent the same sitter. Neither painting is dated, but the fashions each woman wears suggest a date of about 1875 for the two images. In both works, the elaborate ensembles each woman wears are of primary importance, although the strong individuality of the models' features keeps the images from becoming mere decoration. The paintings are typical of the small, pleasing pictures that Sterling and Francine Clark liked to surround themselves with in their various homes.

The family origins of Jules-Adolphe Goupil are still somewhat unclear. He shares his surname with the well-known family of print publishers and art dealers, and is listed as the son of the patriarch of the firm, Adolphe Goupil (1806–1893), in the official French biographical dictionary.¹ When Clark purchased the *Woman Seated*, he wondered if there was indeed a relationship between the painter and the famous Goupil family, but he was unable to ascertain if this was the case from either the firm selling him the picture, or from another art dealer.² While Adolphe Goupil did have family members involved in the art world, including his sons Albert and Léon, as well as the successful painter Jean-Léon Gérôme, who was his son-in-law,³ Jules-Adolphe seems not to have been the child of Adolphe Goupil. It is more likely that the painter under discussion is the son of the artist Frédéric-Auguste-Antoine Goupil (1817–1878), also known as Goupil-Fesquet. This particular Goupil is best known for accompanying the painter Horace Vernet, son of Carle Vernet, to