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MODERN ETCHINGS

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**MODERN ETCHINGS**  
**AND THEIR COLLECTORS**  
**BY THOMAS SIMPSON, M.A.**  
TRIN. HALL, CAMB., BARRISTER-AT-LAW OF THE INNER TEMPLE  
WITH 25 REPRODUCTIONS IN PHOTOGRAVURE

BRITISH MUSEUM  
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## PREFACE

I DESIRE to express my thanks to the following for their kind assistance with the loan of prints:—Mr. Bliss, Mr. Campbell Dodgson, Messrs. Colnaghi and Obach, Mr. Frank Rinder, Mr. Robins, Mr. C. E. Southwell, and Mr. Harold Wright.

Also to M. Zorn, Mr. Muirhead Bone, Mr. D. Y. Cameron, Mr. L. A. Legros, Mr. McBey, M. Lepère, M. Forain, M. Bauer, Sir Frank Short, Mr. Robins, Messrs. Colnaghi and Obach, the Executors of the late Sir Francis Seymour Haden, and Mr. Dunthorne for their kind acquiescence in the matter of copyrights.

Last but not least, to a friend, who at my request has written the Introductory Chapter to this book, who is a lover of fine prints, and who has frequently helped me with advice on matters relating to them.

The photogravure process which has been used for the illustrations was considered the most suitable for the particular etchings which have been reproduced. No mechanical process can approximate original work. It would be lamentable if it did. This process, however, gives some idea of the beauty of the originals without detracting from the skill of the Artists by too closely resembling original work.

T. S.



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MODERN ETCHINGS

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER. MODERN  
ETCHINGS AND THEIR COLLECTORS

THE increasingly widespread demand for original etchings and dry-points is one of the most remarkable features of the present day and calls for some comment. It may be said to have developed in France about 1850, in the time of Meryon, whose etchings, coming to be more and more prized by his contemporaries, together with the etchings of Corot, Jacque, Bracquemond, Millet, and Lalanne, contributed so largely to the success of that movement to which we now refer as the "revival of etching"—a movement which critics of that day, like Philippe Burty and Charles Baudelaire, supported not only by their writings, but also by themselves becoming collectors of the prints they so much admired.

In the wake of the critics followed closely amateurs and connoisseurs, who proceeded to form extensive collections representative of the work of the best Contemporary Etchers. Of these collections some of the best known were those of M. de Salicis, M. Niel, M. Wasset, M. Thibaudeau, and M. Poulet Malassis, proofs from whose cabinets, all of them long since dispersed, now adorn many well-known collections, both public and private, and have amply demonstrated the judgment and foresight shown by their original owners.

From about 1850 to 1870 Paris was naturally the chief centre of publication for original etchings, being as it was the home of the "revival of etching," and possessing as it did not only growingly enthusiastic dealers, publishers, critics, and collectors, but also a notable printer of etchings—Auguste Delatre, whose only rival has been the English master-printer Goulding. Delatre printed a very large proportion of the plates of Jacque,

Corot, Millet, Bracquemond, and Meryon, as well as the early plates of Whistler, Haden, and Legros. The familiar etched inscription "Imp. Delatre, 33 rue St. Jacque, Paris," is seen on many of their prints, whilst a few proofs which he was evidently particularly proud to have pulled, bear his pencil signature in addition. It was he who printed Whistler's "French" set of thirteen plates, published in Paris in 1858, and Seymour Haden's set of twenty-five etchings entitled "Etudes à l'eau forte" which followed in 1865-1866, and is now generally known as the "Burty" set, from the text by that critic, which accompanied it.

By 1865, Seymour Haden, Whistler, and Legros had taken up their residence in London, and were actively etching and painting there, a fact in itself indicative that the "revival of etching" had spread to Great Britain, where the soil, it must be admitted, was not unprepared for it, thanks to the earlier efforts of Crome, Cotman, Daniell, and Turner, and also of Geddes and Wilkie and their contemporaries (*circa* 1800-1840).

The influence and enthusiasm of Seymour Haden, Whistler, and Legros and their friends, and of French collectors, critics, and dealers soon made themselves strongly felt, and London became a rival to Paris as a centre for the publication of etchings, witnessing among other important publications that of Whistler's "Thames" set of sixteen etchings in 1871. Various clubs and societies for the promotion of etching sprang into existence or took a new lease of life—the "Junior Etching Club" and the "Etching Club" being among the best remembered. A similar club entitled the "French Etching Club" was founded in New York in 1866, at the suggestion of Cadart, the Paris publisher, who had specially interested himself in etchings.

Before long there arose in Great Britain the well-known collections of Seymour Haden, Anderson Rose, Rev. J. J. Hey-

wood, T. G. Arthur, C. A. Ionides, Stopford Brooke, B. B. Macgeorge, J. P. Heseltine, and others, not to mention the notable collections of S. P. Avery and Howard Mansfield, of New York. In these collections the etchings of Meryon, Haden, Whistler, and Legros were extensively—in some cases almost exclusively—represented. Nearly all of them have since been dispersed or bequeathed. The singularly beautiful and rare proofs, perfect of their kind, which they contained were originally acquired, either direct from the artists themselves or through the prominent dealers of that day, such as A. W. Thibaudeau, Marseille Holloway, R. Dunthorne, R. Guérault, Ellis, Dowdeswell, and the Fine Art Society, judging by correspondence which we have seen and proofs which we have traced back to these sources. In later years, in America, Frederick Keppel was an equally successful and enthusiastic publisher and importer of etchings.

In 1880 Whistler published his first "Venice" set of twelve plates (Fine Art Society), following it, in 1886, with the second "Venice" set of twenty-six plates (Dowdeswell). These sets, though not exactly scrambled for at the time, were welcomed and treasured by such connoisseurs as had wisely subscribed for them, and coveted later by those who had not.

The same year (1880) witnessed the foundation of the "Society of Painter-Etchers," which eventually became, in 1898, the "Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers." A glance through the file of this Society's catalogues is sufficient to prove the rapidity with which original etchings and dry-points have grown in the public favour. Secessions and deaths have weakened the "Painter-Etchers" greatly, but it still serves a useful purpose.

The *raison d'être* for periodical exhibitions of original etch-

ings having thus been provided, Dealers, Institutions, and Museums began to organise attractive exhibitions either of the etchings of one artist or of those of groups of artists. These exhibitions met with increasing success, and by 1900 it was safe to assume that the demand for original etchings had come to stay. In 1902 a magnificent collection of etchings by Meryon was exhibited in London, followed in 1903 by an equally beautiful and comprehensive exhibition of etchings by Whistler (who died in that year). Both these exhibitions attracted much attention, and opened the eyes of many collectors who were hitherto unfamiliar with the genius of these two great etchers. They also undoubtedly helped to enhance the value, not only of Whistler and Meryon etchings, but of original etchings as a whole.

Then, in 1904 came the foundation of the "Society of Twelve," consisting of twelve members and one honorary member, Alphonse Legros. The avowed aim of this Society, as stated by Mr. Laurence Binyon in the catalogue of its first exhibition (1904), was to encourage the production of original prints and drawings. That aim has certainly been amply attained, and by the eight exhibitions it has held, this Society has perhaps done more than any other Society to advance the public appreciation of original etchings, dry-points, woodcuts, lithographs, and drawings. The war has inevitably reduced it to a state of suspended animation, but when more normal times return and it resumes its exhibitions a warm welcome apparently awaits them, especially if, from time to time, it can absorb the most promising budding talent, or reveal an occasional genius.

It would not be too much to say that original prints and drawings—here in Great Britain at least—came into their own with the recognition and success of this Society. In particular, the



etchings of D. Y. Cameron—who had more or less “arrived”—and the dry-points of Muirhead Bone—hitherto practically unknown save to the very few—found special favour, and were eagerly purchased. The avidity with which the best examples of their work were acquired being only surpassed by the phenomenal prices which later began to be paid for them at auction, by would-be owners who had found themselves unable to obtain proofs at the Society’s annual exhibitions. It has been frequently asserted that these auction prices were manipulated by dealers in an attempt to boom the work of these two men. Nothing is further from the fact. Editions being automatically small, and the demand strong and bona fide, in view of the attractiveness of the subjects, private buyers hastened with their commissions—often excessively generous in the dealers’ opinion—and the battle for possession waxed keen. Prices thus paid naturally, to a certain extent, became precedents, and have continued to govern the market ever since. In justice to the dealers, it should be said that it was frequently only after the commissions of hungry collectors had been successfully fulfilled that they themselves were able to buy for stock.

In the matter of the collecting of etchings, the link with our own day is provided here in Great Britain by such collectors as Sir Frederick Wedmore, Mr. H. S. Theobald, Dr. H. N. Harrington, Dr. D. J. Macaulay, Mr. Campbell Dodgson, Mr. F. E. Bliss, and others. In France by M. Morceau-Nelaton, M. Beurdeley, M. Ragault, M. Atherton-Curtis, and M. Delteil. In America by Mr. Howard Mansfield, Mr. Charles L. Freer, Mr. Charles L. Deering, and Mr. H. H. Benedict, to mention only a few. Each great country has now its specialist collectors, and art collections are in process of formation in the Colonies, notably in Canada, South Africa, and Australia, whilst it seems

likely that the countries of the Far East will soon be rivalling Western Lands in this direction also. In these collections modern etchings are gradually finding a deserved place.

Whilst specialising in certain directions (and that is a point which the young collector would do well to note), the collectors mentioned above yet maintain a fairly catholic taste, and if considered together, their collections form a remarkably comprehensive assemblage of representative modern etchings.

The present-day collector will quickly come to realise that although a wide range of etchings await his inspection and patronage, the gems remain very few. Competition for these is keener than ever, in spite of, or rather on account of, the war, but there are welcome signs that a saner assessment of the comparative value of all lesser work is coming into play. Whereas from about 1906 to 1915 many indifferent etchers—the “ad hoc” etchers, as Mr. Walter Sickert has so aptly designated them—found a considerable market for their “ad hoc” etchings, they are gradually losing their hold upon public favour, in accordance with the law of the survival of the fittest, or that of the transvaluation of values. Knowing this, collectors to-day are compelled to be more eclectic, and whilst readier than ever to accord a hearty welcome to a promising new-comer, they are chary of giving house room to prints which are obviously derivative, and are certain to pall ere long. When asked to purchase an “original” etching, they feel that they have a right to demand that it shall be at least “original” in some way or other, and not the mere depiction of some pleasant character, or view, or object of archæological interest, which some previous etcher, famed for his depiction of such subjects, has through some unfortunate (or fortunate) mischance failed to observe and record.



*A. Legros*

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Assimilation and transformation of another's style and method are permissible, perhaps. Mere imitation can never be.

The young collector, therefore, will be well advised to criticise carefully every print he is tempted to acquire, and to be still more critical of every print he actually does acquire. Before adding it to his collection let him satisfy himself, as far as may be possible, that the print is in the great succession, evincing the same serious and lofty ideas as were espoused by the masters of etching. Let him ask concerning the print, "Does it say something new and worthy in a new and worthy way? Does it say something familiar but worthy in a new and worthy way? Does it say anything at all individual? Does it possess any real distinctive quality?" Because the more satisfactorily these questions can be answered concerning it, the more real and permanent pleasure the print will be likely to afford him, and the greater the kudos he will eventually obtain as the owner of it.

There is one other point. A collection of prints, like a musical instrument, needs tuning occasionally if its tone and quality and pleasure-giving possibilities are to be preserved. Faulty parts sometimes reveal themselves; other parts wear out. With a worn-out or faulty part there is only one thing to be done. It should be replaced by a perfect one at the first opportunity. The best to have is always the best. Otherwise the man next door may have a better. Perish the thought!

## CHAPTER I. GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO COLLECTORS



It was never intended that these notes, in an unexpurgated form at all events, should receive the light of publicity. On more than one occasion friends to whom I have shown the scrap-book in which they were originally written, urged me to publish them, but I have always declined for various reasons, chiefly because I knew, or thought I knew, that they were much too outspoken to please anybody. Moreover, the notes were written for my own amusement, and to enable me to have the gratification of being able to say in years to come: "I told you so," to various sceptical friends and acquaintances, to whom, on the subject of etching collecting, I have often laid down the law in a positive and dogmatic fashion.

Many years ago, when I first became really interested in etchings and dry-points, I made up my mind that before I attempted to acquire any proofs of the plates in which I was interested I would read everything that had been written on the subject of Modern and Contemporary Etchers, and the Early Etchers, in order that I might obtain sufficient useful knowledge, and so avoid many of the pitfalls of the enthusiastic novice.

So far as advice regarding the collecting of modern etchings was concerned, it is sad to relate that from first to last I met with nothing but disappointment. True there are many books and pamphlets on the subject, but I have yet to discover one that can be seriously regarded as really instructive or at all likely to put the young collector on the right track. Here and there where great authorities like Mr. Campbell Dodgson and Mr. Rinder discuss individual artists a great deal of very useful

and instructive information can be obtained, but when you have said that it is all that can be said.

Probably the two best books on this subject are *Etching and Etchers* (3rd edition, 1880), by Hamerton, and *Etchings* (1911), by Wedmore.

It should, however, be remembered that the former book was written before Zorn, Bone, Cameron, Bauer, Forain, McBey, Short, and Lepère had "arrived," and is therefore very incomplete. While Wedmore, in a laudable effort to find something of value in almost every modern etcher, has failed to be really instructive owing to his inclination to be too kind. Once bitten twice shy, I suppose. That inclination is all very nice for the artists concerned, but is of little value to the would-be discriminating collector.

An artist is a public man, and as such must expect severe criticism. Moreover, it is a great mistake to suppose that sharp criticism does anyone who is worth criticising any harm. It is in reality a compliment.

It is a very real misfortune at a time when the public are showing some slight signs of an intelligent interest in art that contemporary critics should fall so lamentably short of what might not unreasonably be expected of them. Such, however, is the case, and is I think for the most part due to lack of courage on the part of writers, and partly also to a desire to tread new paths.

I am not personally acquainted with any of the so-called art critics; I am, however, very well acquainted with their criticism, and all I can say is that if in fact they believe what they write, heaven help them.

I am prompted to write these notes because I feel that the time has come when someone should "butt in" in directions

where others have feared to tread, and also on account of a very real desire to rescue young collectors from the troubled waters in which I found myself engulfed for the many months, if not years, during which I was endeavouring to master this most fascinating subject of etchings. No critic that I have yet come across has boldly come out into the open for the purpose of sifting the wheat from the tares. I propose to attempt this difficult task, and the method I shall adopt is to refer only to the wheat and to allow the tares to look after themselves.

The importance that should be assigned to the cash value aspect of collecting has not been sufficiently emphasised in my opinion. It is nevertheless a most important factor, and, moreover, one from which a great amount of amusement and satisfaction can be obtained, provided one assigns to it its proper place and does not allow it to become an objective or an obsession.

I can picture to myself the true artist and the modern critic holding up their hands in pious indignation at such an outrageous suggestion. That, however, does not worry me in the least, and I maintain that it is due to ourselves and to those who come after us to ensure, as far as it is possible to do so, that the money we invest in works of art shall be invested with the same care as is shown by any sensible person in selecting his securities. I do not for one moment suggest that anyone should purchase works of art for their prospective money value alone, but merely that in acquiring works of art the collector should be always satisfied that he is buying the best, and buying it if possible at a price which leaves a reasonable prospect of such an increase in value and importance as shall justify its acquisition. Every good thing comes into its own sooner or later.





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ALABAMA



The final pages of this book will be devoted to a series of tables showing the prices that have been realised at auction since the year 1906 for some of the more important examples of modern and contemporary etchings. I have selected that year as being approximately the date at which the public commenced to take a lively interest in modern and contemporary etchings.

Should anyone who reads these notes not already be familiar with the difference between etchings, dry-points, soft ground etchings, mezzotint engravings, and line engravings, I would suggest they should read Sir Frank Short's very instructive little book entitled *Etchings and Engravings, What they are and are not*. This book, published by the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers, Pall Mall East, can be read in an hour, and will be found to be most instructive.

As a work on modern etchings the present book is manifestly incomplete, for the simple reason that I only refer to very few artists. But lest such a statement should be seized upon by a reviewer as a text, let me hastily add that as I am convinced that those are the only artists to whom it is at all necessary to refer, I offer no apology on the score of incompleteness.

## CHAPTER II. PRINCIPLES OF COLLECTING



IT may be said without fear of contradiction that original etchings, that is to say the best plates of the Master Etchers, have now come into their own in the estimation of the public, discriminating or otherwise.

The majority of people who purchase examples of one or other of the Graphic Arts, especially at local exhibitions, usually aim at something of a decorative character. Let no one collect etchings from that point of view. It is important to remember that for the most part etchings which have a decorative, or wall-paper value, rarely represent the art of etching at high-water mark.

The majority of young collectors make at least two serious mistakes at the very outset. In the first place, consciously or unconsciously, they do not place much reliance on their own judgment. They are almost invariably attracted to the particular artist, or artists, who happen to be the fashion of the day. Again, the novice is quite naturally inclined to buy subjects which please the eye, being in all probability quite unaware that his eye is not as yet sufficiently trained to differentiate between that which is good, bad, or indifferent.

This was particularly the case in the past, and as a result it not infrequently happened that the work of a great master—take for example the case of Meryon—passed almost unrecognised during his lifetime, so far, at all events, as the general public were concerned.

Meryon lived in such desperate straits, due to his peculiar malady, that he once sold an impression of "L'Abside de Notre Dame," his most famous plate, for 1 fr. 50 c. That very proof would now realise at least £800, possibly £1,000, at auction.

In the year 1906 a friend told me that there was a very fine exhibition of Modern and Contemporary Etchings at Mr. Gutekunst's Gallery in King Street, St. James.' At that time I was particularly interested in old mezzotints, and it was with but little enthusiasm that I went to see that exhibition. However, since that day I have been a convinced lover of etchings. The two plates in particular that were responsible for this transfer of affection—for it amounts to that—were "L'Abside de Notre Dame," by C. Meryon—first state on green paper—and "Mytton Hall," by Seymour Haden—first state. Looking critically at those prints, I realised how much more spontaneous was the medium of etching compared with that of mezzotint. I was persuaded that from the artistic point of view, except so far as tonality was concerned, there could be no comparison whatever between the work of the great mezzotint engravers (for the most part work of reproduction) and the work, original in almost every case, of the great masters, old, modern, and contemporary, in the art of etching.

It may be suitable at this stage to consider how etching may be compared with other graphic arts, and for this purpose I cannot do better than quote Hamerton, who summarised the matter as follows:—

"Etching is superior to oil sketching in form, and to oil painting in freshness. It is inferior to both in truth of tone, unless at the cost of immense labour, aided by uncommon skill.

"It is superior to water colour in decision and directness, because its earliest work remains, being never obliterated by subsequent washes and removals. It is inferior to sepia drawing in accurate rendering of weights of light and dark, but superior to it in indication of form.

"It is superior to lithography in precision of minute form and sharpness of accent, but inferior to it in richness and fulness of touch.

"It is superior to pen drawing in freedom, variety, and power, but inferior to it in not being sensitive to pressure.

"It is superior to the lead pencil in depth and power, but inferior to it in equality of pale graduations.

"It is superior to the typograph in variety of depth, and in delicacy of line, and also greatly superior to it in freedom.

"Etching is superior to wood engraving in freedom and depth, but inferior to it in the kind of amenity which is popular.

"It is inferior to mezzotint in softness, but excels it in firmness and precision.

"It is far superior to line engraving in freedom, but, unless in exceptional instances, inferior to it in the modelling of flesh.

"Etching is also inferior to the best modern point engraving in the representation of skies" (*Etching and Etchers*, p. 14).

With one exception, the conclusion at which Hamerton arrived in 1880 holds good to-day. Zorn has shown, especially in such plates as "Cercles d'Eau," "Wet," "The Precipice," and "Edo," that the medium of etching in the modelling of flesh is in no way inferior to line engraving.

To conclude the case for etchings, another passage from Hamerton may with advantage be quoted: "Etching is not, as some imagine, a fit pastime for small minds, but that, on the contrary, its great glory is to offer the means of powerful and summary expression to the largest. I know not how many roses are needed for one small phial of precious attar, but I know that there rises from every good etching such a perfume of concentrated thought that a million flowers must have

bloomed for it in the garden of some fertile and cultivated mind" (*Etching and Etchers*, p. 32).

In forming a small collection of etchings, I have limited myself to the acquisition of a few perfect examples of those modern and contemporary etchers of whose work I think most highly. These have themselves blackballed unworthy newcomers, and kept the collection within manageable limits. There is but little satisfaction in possessing an etching unless you are satisfied that it is as good an impression as was ever taken from the plate.

Ten years ago I laid down for myself as a collector of etchings six guiding principles, and even with the added experience of those years I see no reason to alter or in any way modify the views therein expressed:—

- (I) Avoid as a general rule large etchings: the medium is unsuitable for large plates.
- (II) The dominating feature of etching should be "pure line," no mezzotint effect, or smudge, or manipulated retrousage, or heavy inking for effects.
- (III) Collect only the work of those etchers who show "individuality" in the artistic sense. Imitators and pupils seldom "arrive."
- (IV) Have patience, and never buy poor impressions: the best, and only the best, are good enough.
- (V) Don't be misled by the fashion of the day or public opinion; both are for the most part unintelligent.
- (VI) Price, so far as recently issued work is concerned, up to £200, at all events, is little or no criterion of merit, but rather of fashion.

It is well to remember that the mere fact that a certain etching fetches more than any other plate by the same artist affords no conclusive evidence that it represents that artist at his best.

For example, "The Five Sisters," by D. Y. Cameron, a proof of which realised for Cameron the record price of £250 in the Wedmore sale, is certainly not his masterpiece, although most people think it is. At the time it was published it seized the popular imagination, and was coveted by a large number of indiscriminating collectors who had no chance of securing a proof at the published price, and who in many cases had possibly never even seen the plate, but had heard that it was desirable, and would not rest until they had acquired a proof. Buying in haste, they are now probably repenting at leisure.

In conclusion, a few words of warning may with advantage once again be given to young collectors.

If one day the easily gulled public should be drawn away from etchings, let the discriminating collector hold his treasures and continue to love them, for, so far as anything is certain, the change of fashion will only be a temporary one.

Let him remember that, for the sake of change and nothing else, the awful mid-Victorian furniture was created, and that during that period, that frightful period, beautiful Chippendale, Adam, and Hepplewhite furniture was counted as nothing, except by the few who really knew.

Remember that even now over 90 per cent of the public who purchase works of art are either quite ignorant, or, at the best, have a superficial knowledge of art. Has it not been truly said by Bernard Shaw:—

"If the author is a good author, the play is a good play!"



View of  
California



round about

70 1911  
1880 1880

Similarly, if the artist is a good artist, the picture is a good picture, so far as the public are concerned.

It should always be remembered that however great the artist, his masterpieces are limited to a very small percentage of his total output, and it is only the masterpieces that really count. The public always forget that, and perhaps for many people it is a good thing that they do. The experience of all collectors of long standing goes to prove that the best and only the best is ever good enough to have and to hold.

No advice need be given to the discriminating lover of prints. Instinctively he knows whether the impression put before him is a really fine one; the only other thing that matters is whether the price is right.

How far, if at all, a readjustment of values will take place in connection with works of art, as a result of this world upheaval, no accurate opinion can be formed or estimate made at the present time.

What, however, is certain is that really fine etchings are so few and far between, and so many of the best have already permanently left this country, there need be no apprehension that values will depreciate so far, at all events, as the best plates are concerned.

On the other hand, so keen is the competition, there is a very real danger that examples of modern artists may command a price in excess of fine examples of the early masters, such as Rembrandt. If such a thing should happen, the wise collector will sell the more modern work, if he cannot afford them both, and acquire fine examples of the earlier work.

### CHAPTER III. SMUDGE



So important do I regard the question of "Smudge" that I have decided to devote a short separate chapter to the subject. It should not be imagined that the term "Smudge" is in any way a term of derision.

I have said that the dominating feature of an etching should be pure line. But there are few good things in this world which cannot be overdone, and this matter of pure line is no exception to the rule. An etching can be so pure as to be cold and steely. The name of one etcher occurs to me as having, perhaps too slavishly worshipped pure line in this manner—I refer to Sir Frank Short. It is, however, a hundred times better that a fault should lie in that direction than in the direction of Smudge. I shall be accused of having a bee in my bonnet on the question of Smudge; all I can say is if I have I revel in the fact. In a previous chapter I have remarked that no one should buy etchings for the purpose of mural decoration, as all good etchings are for the most part quite unsuitable for that purpose. The ignorant public, however, want wall decoration, and I suppose no etcher can altogether be blamed for pandering to the requirements of the public, occasionally at all events. The result of this pandering usually takes the form of Smudge, for Smudge is far more decorative than pure etching.

Some artists have the good sense to strictly limit their excursions into these art slums. Others again rather unexpectedly show an unworthy inclination to wander much too freely in these mischievous bypaths.

Before attempting to explain exactly what I mean by Smudge, let me explain why it is true to say that no really fine etching is suitable for decorative purposes.

Few good etchings have any decorative value or look at all well on a wall unless you are close up to them, and consequently etchings should not be hung in a living-room or in a dining-room. If you hang them at all—personally I hang all my finest plates—they should be hung on the walls of a staircase or small study, where you are compelled from the very nature of the confined space to look at them from very close quarters. In such circumstances, and in such circumstances only, can etchings have any decorative value. In case I am misunderstood let me make it clear that in these notes I am only discussing fine etchings, and in the term fine etchings I do not include very large plates. Of course, large plates will decorate a wall of any room, in the wall-paper sense of the word. I will now explain in more detail what I mean by the word Smudge, and I can the more clearly do that by giving examples of:—

- (a) Pure etching.
- (b) Pure dry-point.
- (c) Etching and dry-point combined.
- (d) Smudge.

As examples of pure etching may be mentioned Whistler's Thames subjects, practically all Zorn's work, such plates as "Breaking up of the Agamemnon," "A Water Meadow," and "Egham Lock," by Seymour Haden, practically all Cameron's plates up to 1897, most of McBey's work, and practically all Frank Short's etchings.

Of pure dry-point, the following will serve as good examples: "Liberty's Clock," "Clare Market," "The Shot Tower," "The Great Gantry," by Muirhead Bone. "Ayr Prison" is, of course, also a dry-point, and a remarkably fine plate, in fact the finest that Muirhead Bone has ever produced, but as that plate relies

partly for its effect on what I call Smudge, I shall not include it under the heading of pure legitimate dry-point. Other true examples of dry-point are such plates as "Promenade du Convalescent," "Le Pré Ensoleillé," by Legros, and "Sunset in Ireland," "Windmill Hill No. 1," and "The Little Boathouse," by Seymour Haden.

We now come to examples of etching and dry-point combined. Under this heading may be mentioned "Robert Lee's Workshop," "North Porch, Harfleur," "Notre Dame, Dinant," and "St. Laumer, Blois," by D. Y. Cameron, and such a plate as "By-Road in Tipperary," by Seymour Haden.

Lastly we come to Smudge, or in other words an exaggerated use of dry-point and retroussage combined. I cannot give two better examples of Smudge than two of Cameron's most popular plates, namely, "The Meuse" and "Ben Ledi." As pictures or as wall decorations they are magnificent, but they are not legitimate etchings or dry-points, or even a combination of the two. For their effect they rely mainly on ink and cunningly manipulated retroussage, and that is not as it should be. From an artistic point of view nothing in black and white, chiefly black, could be more impressive; but why call them etchings? Why not call them mezzotints, which they certainly resemble more than anything else, for to get the effect that is produced it is necessary, as in mezzotint, to rough the copper in such a fashion that it will hold ink in considerable volume, more or less evenly, over a very large portion of the plate. On at least one occasion McBey has permitted himself to wander from pure line—for example, "The Somme Front." It is devoutly to be hoped that he will not repeat such a mistake. "Rainy Night in Rome," by Muirhead Bone, is another example of Smudge.

In this respect it should be remembered that night effects do not lend themselves to the needle except possibly in the hands of a Whistler, and unfortunately artists of his calibre are not often met with. I have only seen one night effect by a Contemporary Artist that in my judgment has been faithfully rendered by the needle. I refer to McBey's etching "Night in Ely Cathedral."

For the guidance of collectors of etchings, the principle once laid down by Sir Frank Short may be quoted, although many critics consider it too dogmatic. "The first essential is to understand the quality of a true etched line as understood by Rembrandt—that is, the free line, instinct with vitality, drawn with an upright point truly sharpened and bitten with the delicacy of a spider's web when necessary, and with the necessary vigour and robustness in other parts, but not a line such as might have been drawn with a pen or lithograph chalk; the line, in fact, which is produced by true etching, and by no other means. The line drawn with an upright point, by the way, is always distinguishable by its clearness, whereas a slanting point gives a line lacking the brilliancy and fulness that should be associated with the true etcher's line."

If Sir Frank Short is right, there can be no justification for Smudge.

I can hear it said that if such things as "Ayr Prison," "Ben Ledi," and "The Meuse" are Smudge, "for goodness' sake give me Smudge; I want nothing better."

I should not quarrel with that view for one moment; all I ask is that plates worked upon in this manner shall not be described as etchings and dry-points, or be judged as such.

## CHAPTER IV. A NOTE OF WARNING



HIS chapter has given rise to much anxious thought, and I have seriously considered the possibility of eliminating it altogether, as what I have to say will, without doubt, be very much resented in certain quarters.

It is always so much more pleasant to leave unsaid what may give offence.

There is, however, so little appreciation on the part of the public in general, and collectors in particular, of the many disadvantages of their position, and of the difficulties with which they are faced, that in their interests I have reluctantly decided to risk incurring this displeasure, and to deal with the general position as I see it.

To collect etchings or any other work of art intelligently, a proper appreciation must be had of—

- (a) "The Artist."
- (b) "The Dealer."
- (c) "The Auction Room."

*The Artist*, and I include the "true amateur," as defined by Hamerton, looks for artistic merit alone. It is the boast of the true artist that he ignores cash values. Perhaps he does, except where examples of his own work are concerned. It would be the height of folly to collect anything from this point of view alone. For myself, I have often wondered whether the great interest I take in all works of art is that of the "amateur" or that of the "connoisseur" (vide Hamerton, *Etching and Etchers*, 3rd edition, pages 20-23).

I consider a combination of the two to be the ideal, and for myself I absolutely decline to rule out the consideration of





By Cameron,

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ANNEX 1A0

“cash values” as being a hopelessly unintelligent way of approaching the subject. Moreover, it is human nature for one’s measure of enjoyment of works of art to be affected by a rise or fall in their value, since these fluctuations to a certain extent reflect the degree of intelligence and foresight one has shown, in spite of the fact that prices often follow the whims and fancies of a foolish, ignorant public, though not always so.

There is one other aspect of the cash value question which should not be overlooked. No one is justified in sinking a large sum of money in works, which Mrs. Malaprop described as “of bigotry and virtue,” to gratify their own artistic sense, without taking every possible precaution to safeguard the interests of those who succeed them.

We should always remember that our sons and daughters may not be in the least interested in what to us are treasures, and in later years may wish to sell them. For that reason alone it is important that the greatest possible care should be exercised when purchasing works of art. No individual can, of course, control fashion, but provided great care is taken to buy only the very best examples, whether it be etchings, water colours, oil paintings, Oriental porcelain, or Period pieces of furniture, one is reasonably safe, provided one thoroughly understands what one is doing, and acquires the article at the right price. On this account it is essential that due regard should be paid to the question of cash values.

It should be remembered that appreciation by the public of the work of a living artist is but little criterion of his skill, as dealers have been known to boom a living artist for trade purposes. Once again, do not forget that over 90 per cent of the purchasing public are still quite unable to detect or differentiate between what is fair, good, and superlatively good when choos-

ing works of art. Fashion therefore is often unintelligent, and consequently ephemeral.

*The Dealer.*—The auction room is one of the chief places on which the dealer relies to acquire the works in which he deals. He usually buys at a price which enables him to resell at a substantial profit, which from experience I should estimate to average 30 per cent.

The wise person will not quarrel with this fact, but rather will he seek out and adopt various means by which he will be able to compete on favourable terms with the dealers in the auction room. The key to this solution is a thorough knowledge of the subject. Dealers, for the most part, are particularly shrewd business men, and do not conduct their businesses for the benefit of their health. For the most part their customers are neither true amateurs nor connoisseurs, and the dealers are well aware of this fact. The better class of dealer will respect his customer's limitations, and seek to advise him to the best of his ability, but the less reliable dealer will trade on his client's ignorance.

Remember that a dealer not infrequently specially supports in the auction room the work of an artist for whom he acts as publisher. For instance: A, who ought to, and does know better, keeps on buying B's work at sales, in a furious endeavour to keep up the price.

Dealers will try and make an ignorant amateur in the auction room pay the price that he, the dealer, would ask in his shop. This is what may be termed giving the "intruder," for such he is regarded, a "leg up."

In self-protection dealers are bound to do this in order to discourage the public from purchasing in their chief market.

In discussing dealers I have endeavoured to be fair, and at

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*By George Hart*

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the same time give a true impression of trade methods, with reference to which the amateur must have some knowledge if he wishes to get in on the ground floor in the auction room.

*The Auction Room.*—So far as I have been able to discover, there is no “ring” among the London dealers at etching sales.

To the uninitiated it may be well to explain the “ring.” Let us take, for instance, the case of bedroom furniture. In every town of importance it will always be found that there is a “ring” of dealers who, by arrangement, do not bid against each other at sales. As a result, the furniture in question is often knocked down at a figure far below its true value. What is the next step in the game? The dealers meet again after the sale, and all the stuff that any member of the ring has bought is put up again to private auction amongst themselves. The highest bidder paying out to the other members of the ring the proportion due to them of the difference between the amount realised at the public auction and the price finally bid at this later “knock-out” as it is called. Therefore, if you are a seller, either place a reserve on your property, or, still better, ask one or two personal friends to attend the sale for the express purpose of helping your things along, in order that they may fetch a reasonable price.

If you are a buyer, and propose to bid yourself, take care to have previous prices and latest values in your mind, so that no one may be successful in running you up too high.

If none of the principal dealers is bidding you may assume that in all probability the print being offered is not a very desirable one to possess, from the commercial point of view, at all events.

Only if you are a thorough master of the subject is it advisable to bid yourself at auction sales, otherwise you would be

well advised to consult and enlist the assistance of the most reliable dealer you know, paying him his proper commission.

Before passing from this subject, reference must be made to certain habits of auctioneers, to which grave exception must be taken. I cannot do better than quote a personal experience.

I was anxious to acquire a quite unimportant etching, and not being able to be present, I gave the auctioneer an outside limit of £3. The etching was not really worth more than £1. At the last moment I was able to attend the sale, and I arrived in time to see the lot in question put up. What happened? The auctioneer said £1, £2, £3 as quickly as he could get the words out of his mouth, and the lot was knocked down to my unfortunate self, not a soul in the room having made a bid. From that day to this I have never given a limit to an auctioneer.

I maintain that in such circumstances it is the duty of an auctioneer to regard himself equally as the agent of the seller and prospective purchaser, and to hold the scales fairly between them.

Auctioneers have another mischievous habit, and that is to ensure that a reserved price is reached.

For example, the seller places a reserve of £200 on an etching. All legitimate bidding stops at £100. Is the lot knocked down at £105 to the owner? No, it is not. The auctioneer goes on taking imaginary bids, and the print is knocked down at £200, the miserable owner being left to pay half commission on £200 instead of on £105.

This again is a mischievous practice, and one to which it is not possible to put a stop.

Taking one thing with another, the atmosphere of an auction



room may be said to be fairly warm, and in order to withstand this it is necessary to have a particularly cool head.

Which is why I remark,  
And my language is plain,  
That for ways that are dark,  
And for tricks that are vain,  
The auction room is peculiar,  
Which the same I am free to maintain.

(With apologies to the author of *The Heathen Chinees*.)

## CHAPTER V. MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ETCHERS



THE last fifty years have produced an astonishing number of etchers whose work is of very high quality, for example: C. Meryon, J. McNeill Whistler, Anders Zorn, Seymour Haden, Muirhead Bone, A. Legros, J. L. Forain, J. McBey, D. Y. Cameron, M. J. Bauer, M. Lalanne, A. Lepère, Frank Short, W. P. Robins, and C. A. Gagnon.

There are a host of other etchers; men and women of limited skill, who, of course, the public some day, for the sake of change, may put on a pedestal for a brief period, but I have no intention of referring to them in the present book, as they have certainly not had any direct influence on the art.

It is never wise to prophesy. It is nevertheless amusing.

So I propose to record the view I take as to the probable final importance of certain modern and contemporary etchers.

I place them in five classes, in order of importance so far as Classes I, II, III, and IV are concerned. Those included in Class V are arranged in alphabetical order, as it is not, in my opinion, necessary to draw distinction between them.

- I. Meryon, Whistler.
- II. Zorn, Haden, Bone.
- III. Legros, Forain.
- IV. McBey, Cameron.
- V. Bauer, Gagnon, Lalanne, Lepère,  
Robins, Short.

In the case of all these artists, with the exception of Whistler, it is true to say that the vast majority of their plates are quite

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W. S. Searcy

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unimportant. A comparatively few in each case stamp the artist as a master.

It may be said that, roughly speaking, 4 per cent of the plates that each has produced represents the artist at high-water mark. In some cases 1 per cent would be nearer the mark.

What a pity Meryon did not produce more plates like "Le Stryge," "La Rue des Mauvais Garçons," and "L'Abside de Notre Dame."

What a pity Frank Short has not produced a few more plates like "Low Tide: The Evening Star." And so the lament goes on in almost every case. But for the present purpose let us rather dwell on their masterpieces.

## CHARLES MERYON

Meryon was born in the year 1821 at Batignolles, and died in 1868 in a madhouse cell at Charenton.

The unique reputation of Meryon rests solely and securely upon certain of the etchings of Paris which he produced between 1850 and 1854. In fact it may be said to rest on three plates, the haunting "Le Stryge," "La Rue des Mauvais Garçons"—topographical, yet pervaded with mystery and glamour—and "L'Abside de Notre Dame," magnificently dignified and peaceful. Were there ever, indeed, three greater etchings by any master? Victor Hugo said of Meryon's etchings of Paris, "They are visions. The breath of the universe is in them, and makes them more than pictures."

The extent to which they have grown in favour with collectors since Meryon's day—that day of unrelievable poverty and wretchedness, alas!—is well indicated by the fact that a proof of the first state of "L'Abside de Notre Dame," which fetched 100 fcs. at the Niel sale in 1873, and may possibly have been bought by Niel originally for a few francs, rose to £640 in the Theobald sale in London 1910, whilst a superb proof of "Le Stryge," first state on green paper, also from the Niel collection, if I remember correctly, changed hands recently in London for about £450. So that even when Meryon's finest etchings are to be had nowadays, it is only the very few who can afford them, and Meryon is one of those etchers whom one does not care to represent—indeed, whom personally I would not represent—except by one or other of the three plates to which I have referred above. There is no collector who has admittedly more right to be fastidious than the collector of Meryon's etchings, for only in clear and early impressions do his

prints possess that peculiarly beautiful lustre and brilliance for which the choicest are so justly renowned.

The fashion in collecting Meryon etchings is to seek proofs printed on green paper. These, however, do not, and certainly should not, necessarily exclude all others. *Ceteris paribus*, proofs on thin Japanese paper, or on thin old paper, have been known occasionally to give even greater pleasure to Meryon connoisseurs of my acquaintance. To demand that all plates, even by a Meryon, shall be printed uniformly upon one special kind of paper, be that paper what it may, is folly. The fact is that to any and every etching there is probably one kind of paper that will prove more eminently suitable to it than any other. It is the artist's or the printer's difficult task to find that particular paper and the collector's to approve it. The number of modern etchings which, fortunately or unfortunately, have lost any artistic value they may have seemed to possess, owing to carelessness in this matter of the selection of suitable printing paper, is amazing.

That is one reason why the collector demands that every artist shall print his own etchings, or personally supervise the printing of them, and not hand his plate over to a publisher, or publisher's printer, for him to arrange the printing of it in his absence. For not every trade printer is a Delatre or a Goulding.

J. MCNEILL WHISTLER

Whistler was born in Massachusetts in the year 1834, and died in 1903.

As etchers, Rembrandt amongst the old masters, and Whistler of the modern school, stand pre-eminent for quality and quantity.

First came the "French set" in 1858, and amongst the more important plates of this series should be mentioned "The Kitchen."

The sixteen etchings of "The Thames Set" come next in order. The most interesting of these are "The Pool," "Black Lion Wharf," "Rotherhithe," and the "Lime Burner."

However great a measure of success Whistler achieved with his early work, including his famous dry-point portraits, there is little room for doubt that his Venice plates are those which have made him so justly famous, and it is by those plates that future generations will judge him. Here and there in certain cases retoussage has been resorted to, but what could be more exquisite than fine impressions of "The Palaces," "The Garden," "The Little Venice," "The Fruit Stall," "The Upright Venice," "The Traghetto," "The Balcony," "Nocturne: Palaces," "The Two Doorways," to mention only a few of his many masterpieces.

Again in later phases, much interesting work was done both in London and in Amsterdam, such, for example, as "Zaandam," "The Embroidered Curtain," and "The Steps."

The collector should remember that impressions printed by Whistler himself and signed to that effect with the word "imp" are always the best. He is so great a master that mere words of praise would almost seem an impertinence. Moreover, so much has been written about him that there remains little more to be said.





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## ANDERS ZORN

Zorn was born in Sweden in 1860. At the age of 15 he attended the Academy in Stockholm, where he devoted his time to wood carving and water-colour drawing in the first instance. He left the Academy in 1881 and came to London, where he remained till 1885. During these four years he exhibited water-colour drawings at the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, the Royal Academy, and the Royal Institute. At the great Paris exhibition of 1887, Zorn exhibited two portraits in oil, and was awarded the first medal and the Legion of Honour. He first learnt etching in London, from his countryman Axel Haig.

It is not enough to say that Zorn is the greatest living etcher. He must be numbered amongst the five greatest etchers of all time.

Among his many fine plates, the following are worthy of special notice:—

“Madame Simon” (1891), “En Omnibus” (1891), “Ernest Renan” (1892), “Au Piano” (1900), “Miss Rassmussen” (1904), “Cercles d’Eau” (1907), “Edo” (1907), “Precipice” (1910), “Wet” (1911), “Mona” (1911), “Portrait of the Artist” (1916), “Vicke” (1918).

Many of his nude studies are particularly successful; others again are crude and really quite impossible.

The best of Zorn’s etchings—certainly all those to which I have referred—will eventually go to a very high premium, and many of them will prove difficult to obtain at any price.

There is a great demand for his plates in Great Britain, in America, and on the Continent. International fame such as

this is enjoyed by very few artists during their lives, and can only be accounted for by sheer merit.

Of the women's portraits, the following are the finest in order of date:—

"Madame Simon," "Effet de Nuit," "Madame Lyunglof," "The Mother," "Au Piano," "Miss Rassmussen," "The Letter," and "Mona," the last named being, perhaps, the greatest of them all.

Of the men subjects, the most successful are:—

"Ernest Renan," "Le Toast," "Henri Marquant," "Auguste Rodin," "M. Berthelot," "Anatole France," "Auguste Strindberg," "Portrait of the Artist" (1916), and "Vicke."

The most attractive of the nude subjects are "Première Séance," "Cercles d'Eau," "Edo," "Precipice," and "Wet."

For the most part the work of the last five years has not been as successful as his earlier work. It has no longer manifested that exuberant joy in life which is so characteristic of many of his early plates. It is necessary, however, to remember that two of Zorn's recent etchings—the "Portrait of the Artist" (1916) and "Vicke" (1918)—are perhaps as fine as anything that he has produced.

Quite recently over £600 was paid at auction in America for one of Zorn's etchings. "Baigneuse de Dos" (or "Evening," as it is sometimes called) was, I think, the subject. Such a price only serves to demonstrate once again the folly of hunting rarities rather than works of art. The wise collector will take advantage of the fact that prices in England do not at present rule as high as they do in America and Paris.

The most notable collection of Zorn etchings is to be found,



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## MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ETCHERS 37

naturally enough, in the National Museum in Stockholm. Another comprehensive collection is that of M. Laurin, a well-known Swedish collector. Amongst other well-known collections may be mentioned that of Mr. Charles Deering, Chicago, and that of Mr. and Mrs. Atherton Curtis, of Paris.

## FRANCIS SEYMOUR HADEN

Francis Seymour Haden, the great surgeon etcher, was born in 1819. He was pre-eminently a landscape etcher. No English artist has seen and depicted the countryside and water as he has in black and white. Impressions vary greatly in quality, and should be very carefully selected. The most desirable impressions are for the most part those printed by Goulding, or presentation copies from the artist, bearing an inscription by him to that effect.

Among his finest plates may be mentioned "Mytton Hall" (1859), "A Water Meadow" (1859), "A By-road in Tipperary" (1861), "Sunset in Ireland" (1863), "Sunset on Thames" (1865), "Agamemnon" (1870), and "Windmill Hill No. 1" (1877).

There are two curious facts about Haden which seem almost irreconcilable. In the first place, it should be remembered that he produced all his plates from the pure love of the art, with no intention whatever of publishing them.

Later in life, when it was pointed out to him what commercial advantage could be gained by the sale of them, there was no man who ever embraced commercial possibilities more earnestly than he did, always excepting his executors, who unwisely flooded the market with poor impressions of the less important plates.

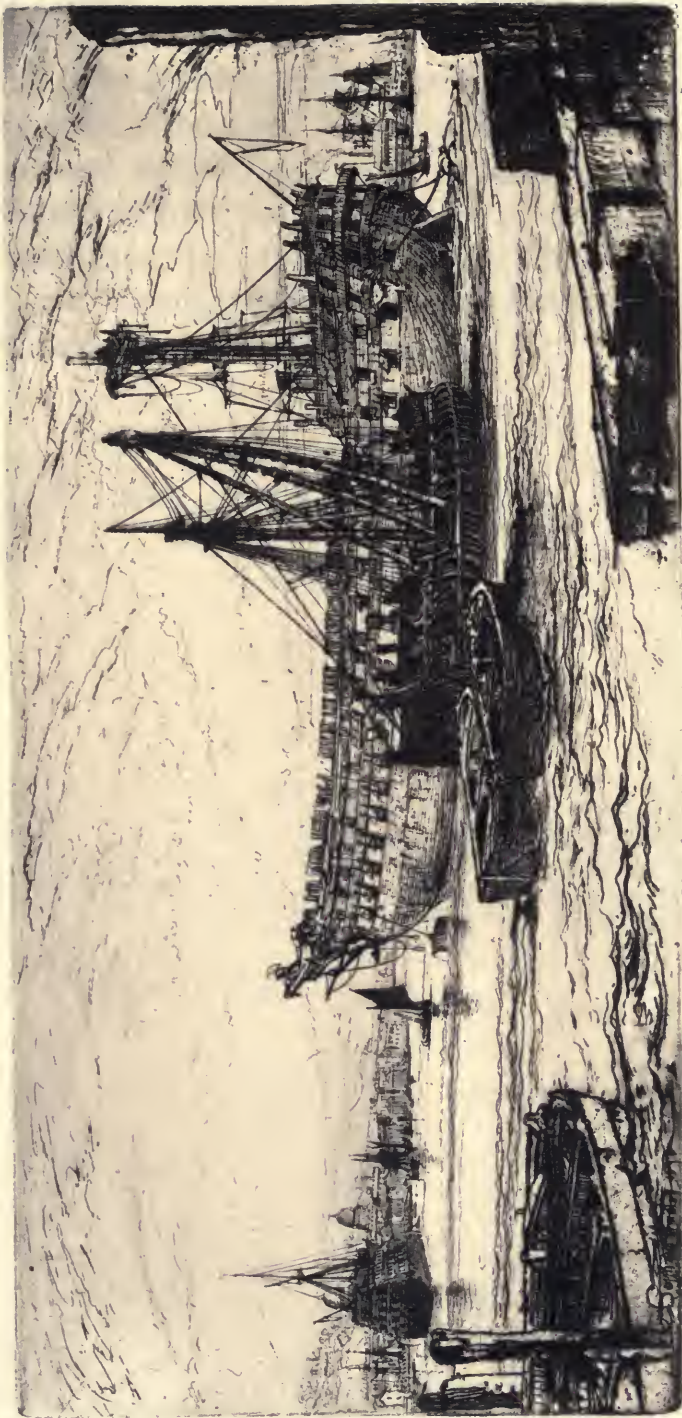
It is for this reason that, with the exception of a few plates, such as "A By-road in Tipperary," "Sunset in Ireland," "Mytton Hall," and "A River in Ireland," Haden's etchings are not likely to go to a big premium, or make any material advance on present prices.

The best contemporary etchers have not made the mistake of publishing unlimited editions.





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"The By-road in Tipperary" usually fetches round about £100, the only reason being that there are so few impressions. Of course, it is a fine plate, but no finer than "The Water Meadow," which only fetches £8 or thereabouts at auction.

Haden was a great artist; yes, he was a master; the quality of his dry-point and etched line is unsurpassed, and I do not like placing Meryon in front of him in order of merit, but it is impossible to deny that "Le Stryge" and "La Rue des Mauvais Garçons" are finer than anything Seymour Haden produced, and on that account Meryon must come first.

## MUIRHEAD BONE

Muirhead Bone was born in Glasgow in 1876, and was brought up as an architect, and there is very little doubt that he owes to that his natural attraction to architectural subjects; buildings in construction and in demolition.

The wonderful detail in many of his dry-points, as for example in the row of houses in the "Clare Market," may be traced to his early training as an architect.

The earliest known etchings and dry-points, I believe, date from 1897. At this period his work was more or less of an experimental nature and somewhat immature. The Glasgow series of etchings were published in 1899. This set included "Title Page King St. Entry," "The Old Jail," "Gorbals," "Tontine Gates," "Shipbuilders, Whiteinch," "Dry Dock."

The finest etchings of the early period were "Pollokshaws" (1899) and "Ayr from Troon" (1901), and the finest dry-points "Mike the Dynamiter" (1900) and "The Black Cap" (1901).

In 1901 Bone came to London, and the first really important exhibition of his work was held at The Carfax Gallery in 1902.

In 1904 he became a member of The Society of Twelve. About this period the series known as "The Ten Dry-Points" were published by Messrs. Obach. Of the landscapes in this series "Southampton from Eling" (1903) stands out by itself.

To review Muirhead Bone's work up to the present day, it may be said that his finest plates are "Mike the Dynamiter" (1900), "Clare Market" (1903), "Southampton from Eling" (1903), "The Shot Tower" (1904), "Building" (1904), "Ayr Prison" (1905), "Liberty's Clock" (1905), "The Great Gantry" (1906), "South Coast No. 1," "Calle Pescheria" (Venice) (1916), and "Guidecca."



My dear Sir

to you  
ANGELIAO.





Marseilles France

1914

70 1980  
ANNUAL



Milano, Rome

1874

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MICHIGAN LIBRARY  
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

It will be seen that for the most part his best work was his earlier work, that is to say the plates produced between 1900 and 1907. Two notable exceptions must be made; I refer to "Calle Pescheria" (Venice) and the "Guidecca," and I am satisfied that if real intrinsic merit is recognised, as distinguished from the artificial recognition of fashion, these plates will in the near future be appraised as among the most masterly dry-points Muirhead Bone has ever produced. The amazing detail in the distance of the "Guidecca" is unequalled in any plate of my acquaintance.

It is essential, however, as usual, to reject any but early impressions of these plates, as the more delicate portions soon began to show signs of wear when the editions were printed.

Nothing that Muirhead Bone has done, I suppose, can quite come up to "Ayr Prison," which in all probability is the finest individual plate that has been produced by any artist since the days of Meryon.

Of his London subjects "The Shot Tower" is quite the finest.

It is certain that so long as interest in the art of dry-point survives, the name of Muirhead Bone will live as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of its masters.

## ALPHONSE LEGROS

Amongst the etchings which have now attained international reputation must be counted those of Alphonse Legros, who was born at Dijon on May 8th, 1837, and died at Watford on December 8th, 1911.

His style, austere and simple, is distinguished by a serenity and dignity which gives to it the truly classic note. To some his work may seem to exhibit a too strong strain of melancholy or mediæval sadness, but others will welcome these features as revealing a tender heart, and a kindly sympathy for mankind. To Legros all broken things—a broken, gnarled tree, or a broken fellow-creature—appealed strongly, inspiring many of his noblest efforts. Few etchers have by their character exerted more influence upon their contemporaries or won by their kindly nature such admiration and respect from their pupils. Of the technique of etching he is a recognised master, whilst in the handling of dry-point his only rivals are Rembrandt, Geddes, Haden, and Bone. Amongst his etchings, the best known are probably certain portraits in the Vandyck style, such as that of "Watts"; and again some of his illustrations, such as those of Edgar Allen Poe's "Tales of Mystery and Imagination," to Champfleury's "Histoire du Bonhomme Misère," and to La Fontaine's fable of "Death and the Woodcutter." His famous plate of "La Mort du Vagabond," and above all his unrivalled series of landscapes, of which "Le Canal," "La Ferme au Grand Arbre," "Le Pré Ensoleillé," "La Vallée des Dunes," "L'Allée des Peupliers," and "La Tour aux Pigeons" are typical examples.

I have invariably found that great care is necessary in selecting proofs to represent Legros, far more so than is, perhaps, the

case with most etchers. His work is only really enjoyable when seen at its very best. Proofs of such uniformly magnificent quality as those in Mr. Frank Bliss's collection—now recognised as by far the finest Legros collection in existence, comprising as it does close upon 2,000 proofs, in various states—would make any collector's mouth water, but there are unfortunately on the market a number of inferior, weak, and uninteresting impressions which have undoubtedly done Legros much injustice, and have hindered a correct appreciation of his genius and importance. Opportunities of obtaining fine examples of Legros etchings and dry-points are noticeably becoming less and less frequent, and in a few years it may be found that his best plates will be as difficult to obtain as those of Meryon, though not necessarily so keenly competed for.

## J. L. FORAIN

The etchings of Jean Louis Forain, who was born at Rheims on October 23rd, 1852, have, with the exception of a few early plates, been published chiefly since 1908. Technically skilful, their vigour and spontaneity, their dramatic intensity, and their direct appeal brought them immediately into fame, and consequently they are now amongst the most difficult to obtain. Owing to the fact that the majority were absorbed by continental collectors and print-rooms (the print-room at Dresden in particular), very few have as yet found their way to Great Britain or America. Nevertheless, Forain enjoys international reputation, his fame resting chiefly upon his brilliant etchings of familiar scenes in the Courts of Justice and at Lourdes, and upon his unrivalled illustrations of New Testament subjects. Those who, like Mr. Campbell Dodgson, have been buying Forain's work from the first, and are still able to obtain examples at moderate prices as a consequence, are to be envied, for prices, as in the case of Zorn's etchings, run high to-day, and make the question of the representation of Forain a difficult one to the collector of limited means. It is, however, a question he should attempt to solve somehow.



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*James*



## JAMES McBEY

James McBey was born at Newburgh, Aberdeenshire, in 1883, and began to study etching at the age of 17. At the age of 15 he entered the North of Scotland Bank at Aberdeen, and in 1910 decided to abandon banking for art. The first exhibition of his etchings was held in London in 1911.

McBey is a young etcher of great skill and of great promise. Individuality is both his strength and his weakness. He is an artist whose future career should be closely watched.

When McBey first came to London, he was at once recognised by those who knew as an extremely clever etcher. Like that of other artists, his work is very unequal, but on the whole contains a much higher percentage of good things than is the case with most of his contemporaries. He is well worthy of a place among the master etchers on account of the following plates alone: "Amsterdam from Runsdorp," "Omval," "A View in Wales," "The Amstel," "The Story Teller," "The Lion Brewery," "The Torpedoed Sussex," and "Night in Ely Cathedral."

Up to the present "Amsterdam from Runsdorp," "The Lion Brewery," and "The Torpedoed Sussex" are his three most important plates.

## D. Y. CAMERON

D. Y. Cameron was born in Glasgow in 1865. Whilst he is an etcher whose work has attracted much notice, there is not, in my opinion, sufficient originality in his work to make it really hold one's attention, and I am confident he will live for future generations as a painter rather than as an etcher.

Cameron, in the various stages of the development of his art, has quite clearly been subject to the influence of Whistler, Meryon, and Rembrandt.

In 1888 he entered the Edinburgh School of Art, and during the same year joined the Scottish Atelier Society.

In 1889 Cameron was elected an associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers, from which, however, he resigned in 1902. In 1911 he was made an Associate Engraver of the Royal Academy, where he has since attained more notice by his paintings.

From the very first, Cameron has used the brush as much as the needle, and in later years more so, which in my opinion is all to the good, and as it should be. There is a certain difference of opinion amongst admirers of Cameron's etchings as to whether preference should be given to his architectural subjects or to his landscape subjects. I do not think it is possible to draw any hard and fast line, but the work he has done since 1907 is for the most part certainly of much higher quality than his earlier work.

Between 1887 and the present year Cameron has produced over 450 plates. "The Clyde Set" was published in 1890, followed by "The North Holland Set" in 1892. Then in 1896 came "The North Italian Set." Among this series should be mentioned "Tintoret's House," and above all "St. Mark's No. 1."

Next in order came "The London Set," the best of which was certainly "Newgate." In 1904 "The Paris Set" was published, and finally in 1907 "The Belgian Set," which included such fine plates as "Notre Dame, Dinant," "The Meuse," "Dinant," and "Damme."

My own very decided opinion about Cameron is that for his effects he has recently relied far too much on heavy inking, and has not infrequently in printing his plates unfortunately made use of too absorbent paper. Also, he has, as a general rule, aimed too much at pictorial effect.

Among his finest plates and those most sought after by the discriminating collector are "St. Mark's No. 1" (1895), "North Porch, Harfleur" (1904), "Robert Lee's Workshop" (1905), "The Meuse" (1907), "Notre Dame, Dinant" (1907), "My Little Lady of Luxor" (1909), "The Chimera" (1910), and "Ben Ledi" (1911). I shall be told that the "Five Sisters" and possibly many others should have been included in the above list. To such criticism I would say—what I have said, I have said.

Should I one day be fortunate enough to possess an impression of "Ben Ledi," I shall frame it between two sheets of plate glass, without a mount of any kind, and hang it in the middle of a window as a transparency, for in that way, and in that way only, do the etched lines become clear, and the true features of the landscape appear.

No collection of modern etchings would be complete unless Cameron were represented, and I cannot imagine a more representative plate than "The Chimera," which is reproduced.

## M. A. J. BAUER

M. A. J. Bauer was born at The Hague in 1867, and produced his first plate when he was 22 years of age.

This artist concerns himself chiefly with representations of Oriental scenes.

As I have already remarked, I do not like large etchings, but those who do should endeavour to acquire the following: "A Festival Day in Cairo," "Benares," "An Oriental Prince."

For myself, I much prefer his smaller plates, such as "A Caravan," "Mecca Pilgrims," "Gwalior," "A Street in Hyderabad." It is these, in my opinion, that should be bought when a favourable opportunity presents itself.

Bauer is not yet appreciated as he should be. He is, nevertheless, an artist who deserves the careful attention of the collector, as much of his work is of fine quality.

Of late there has been somewhat of a slump in the auction room so far as his work is concerned. The wise collector will take advantage of this.

## A. LEPÈRE

Lepère, who was born in Paris in 1849, is probably more famous for his wood-cuts than for his etchings. While his "West Front of the Cathedral of Rouen" is a great masterpiece of wood-cutting, his "West Front of Amiens Cathedral," or, to give it its proper title, "Amiens l'Inventaire," is certainly an equally great masterpiece of etching.

I consider his finest plates are "Amiens l'Inventaire," "L'Arrivée des Légumes," and "Retour du Marché, à la Volaille."

Examples of his work rarely appear in the auction room, and doubtless on that account his plates are not as well known as they deserve.

Impressions in the first state are the best. They rarely if ever exceed ten in number, and particulars of tirage are marked upon them in pencil thus, 1/10 1er état.

In the second state, the plate is worked upon further as a general rule, and bears etched signature. In addition, it is usually more heavily inked.

Most collectors will consider him sufficiently represented by one or two examples, but represented he certainly should be.

## MAXIME LALANNE

Lalanne, a native of Bordeaux, was born in the year 1827, and died in 1886. He was the first artist to receive the honour of knighthood for his qualities as an etcher from the King of Portugal.

It has become a matter of habit to describe his work as graceful, and perhaps it would be difficult to find a better word. Certainly his trees may be so described. What could be more graceful than the trees and vegetation in "Aux Environs de Paris"?

Lalanne was little known or appreciated in this country till Mr. Richard Gutekunst held an exhibition of his etched work in 1905.

The real fault with his work is that he never appreciated how important it is to leave something to the imagination, and how misguided it is to faithfully reproduce on the copper every detail that the eye sees.

Lalanne is rightly described by Hamerton as a true etcher. It is certain that he was never guilty of Smudge.

Among his finest plates should be mentioned "Vue prise du Pont St. Michel," "Rue des Marmousets," "Rade de Bordeaux," "Cusset."



## FRANK SHORT

Short was born in London in 1857, and is President of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers, and was elected a Royal Academician in 1911. He is also Director of the Etching and Engraving School of the Royal College of Arts at South Kensington. He obtained the Paris gold medal for engraving in 1889 and 1900.

Between 1885 and 1888 Frank Short produced two very fine plates, "Low Tide: The Evening Star" and "Wintry Blast on Stourbridge Canal." Since then he has produced a very large number of plates. I do not pretend to have seen them all. Those I have seen do not interest me very much. Short, as has been said in a previous chapter, is a great master of pure line, and on that account alone his name must be mentioned wherever modern etchings are discussed.

"Low Tide" must certainly be bought. It is beautiful. Full of poetry and full of atmosphere, and of every quality that combines to make a really great etching.

Short is certainly the greatest mezzotint engraver of the day.

## W. P. ROBINS

Robins has not as yet been sufficiently long before the public to enable a definite opinion to be formed as to what the future may have in store for him, but he is an etcher who shows distinct promise.

If only he had exercised a greater economy of line it might have been said that already he had "arrived."

Nothing that he has yet produced could perhaps be called a masterpiece of etching or dry-point. The following are quite attractive, and should certainly be bought when opportunity presents itself: "The Old Willow," "The Canal," "The Punt," "Payne's Farm."

CLARENCE A. GAGNON

Gagnon, who was born in Montreal in 1883, is perhaps better known as a painter of Canadian landscapes than as an etcher.

At the age of seventeen he studied at the Montreal Art Gallery, and in 1904 he went to Paris.

Examples of his etched work may be seen at the Petit Palais, Paris, South Kensington Museum, at Dresden, and at Ottawa.

There is a certain atmosphere and mystery about his etchings, qualities which are lacking in ninety-nine etchings out of one hundred, which make one start thinking. For these reasons alone he must be taken into account.

On the other hand, his work is certainly lacking in originality.

Take for example three of his most interesting plates. In "Grand Canal, Venice," is seen the influence of Whistler. "Mont St. Michel," a charming plate, has clearly been inspired by the art of Lepère. Again, in "Canal S. Pietro" we see Appian in his happiest mood.

In "Ripon Cathedral" a more original note is struck, and one is led to think that should Gagnon elect to devote a little more time to etching, the result might well be more than satisfactory.

## CHAPTER VI. THE CARE OF PRINTS



HERE is very little doubt that if it is desired to preserve what is termed the "mint state" of prints, the only possible way is to keep them carefully mounted in a Solander box, and allow no one but yourself to handle them.

Sooner or later, if you are a cosmopolitan collector, it is certain that the majority of your etchings will have to be kept either in a portfolio or in a Solander box. Personally I only keep those prints in a Solander box which I have bought for the purpose of helping some day to pay for the plates I love, the latter always being framed.

I imagine there are few people who have wasted more money than I have in the mounting and framing of original etchings. It is on that account I am writing this chapter, in the hope that I may prevent anyone who reads these notes from making the many mistakes that I made until I discovered the happy solution at which I have finally arrived, and which incidentally is contrary to all conventional ideas and preconceived notions.

It will be said that no two people have the same opinion on the subject of framing; perhaps that is true. If it is true, it is because no one has brought to the notice of the public at large what the best method is. In the first place, it is necessary to make up your mind how you are going to have the impression mounted, and in this respect much will depend on the kind of paper the artist has used, the tone of the ink, and the amount of margin, if any, that may exist.

Examples of Whistler have to be treated quite differently to most on account of the fact that he seldom left any margin. The most satisfactory way to mount Whistler's Venice plates is to hang them on hinges from the top on a slightly creamy-toned

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from the Bay to R. P. K. Lane.

Sketch of the Bay  
looking from the Bay

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paper. The paper should not be too smooth, and should on no account have any gloss. The next step should be to obtain a six-sheet over-mount of the same tone and quality as the paper or board on which you have hung the etching, taking care that the edges of the etching hang quite clear of the opening in the over-mount, which is cut to disclose the print.

The object in using a six-sheet mount is to ensure that the print, when framed, does not come in contact with the glass, as under certain climatic conditions that would be harmful to the impression, the glass sweating on the inner side, and causing moisture to transfer itself eventually to the print.

I will now deal with the more usual type of print—that is to say, the one which has a margin of varying width. Here again, much will depend on the paper that has been used by the artist, and also how far the damping of the paper preparatory to printing has caused the paper to shrink or become wrinkled.

A choice must now be made between leaving the wrinkles, which in my judgment detracts from the merit of an impression, alternatively, to have the print what is termed “strained.” There are many who think this process will eventually destroy the print, but I have not found this ever to have been the case, provided the straining were carried out by a master hand.

If the paper is not wrinkled or shrunk on the plate surface, mounting and framing is a simple matter. No hard and fast rule can be given as to the tone of the mount, for much will depend on the subject. For instance, all Haden’s etchings and dry-points, most of Zorn’s plates, all Muirhead Bone’s early dry-points, and most of McBey’s etchings show up best if the mount is of the slightly creamy tone which I have

referred to as being peculiarly suitable to Whistler's Venice etchings.

The conventional plain white mount absolutely kills fine prints such as "Sunset in Ireland," "Ayr Prison," "Clare Market," "Mona," "Wet," "Precipice," and, of course, many others.

Again, some fine etchings printed in darker ink, such as "Sunset on Thames," "Amsterdam from Runsdorp," "Night in Ely Cathedral," show up better if dead-white mounts are used.

The six-sheet mount should always be used, as it is always desirable to keep the impression from contact with the glass.

There remain two other considerations to which great care should be given. The frame of all etchings should be as narrow and inconspicuous as possible. After many experiments, I now always use a plain walnut frame half-inch wide, not polished or stained, or treated in any way, but just the natural colour.

Lastly, there remains an extremely important consideration, namely, how the etching should be placed in the frame. Few collectors realise the importance of this.

Here again no hard and fast rule can be given, but a useful purpose may be served by giving two examples.

In plate A the etching is an upright subject; the actual size of the plate is 11 in. by 8 in.

To frame a plate of this size to the best advantage, the margin at the top should be  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. wide, at each side 4 in. wide, at the bottom  $5\frac{3}{4}$  in. wide.

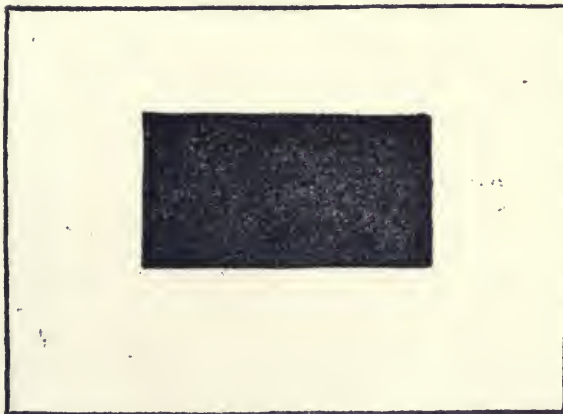
It is fatal, whether the subject be an upright one or a horizontal one, to have the margin at the top and bottom the same width. If you do, the etching always looks to be sitting down in the frame.



A



B



In the case of plate B, the etching measures 10 in. by 7 in. The width of the margin at the top is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in., at the sides  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in., at the bottom 6 in.

It is well to remember that, as a general rule, the larger the etching the smaller is the mount required.

In such circumstances, and in such circumstances only, do prints show to the best advantage.

I never allow the glass to be fitted too tightly into the frame, as I always think it advisable that air should get at the print. It will be imagined that, if it is not airtight, dust will get in. Somehow or other it never seems to do so.

In conclusion, it may be said that the best background for etchings is either a plain gold Japanese wall-paper, or a putty-coloured wash, or stippled paint.



Jas McBev

to view  
ANALOG

## CHAPTER VII. MONEY VALUE OF ETCHINGS



It will be necessary to examine the tables given at the end of the book with certain reservations. It should be remembered that one of six things may happen at an auction.

- (1) The print may be bought in by the auctioneer at an excessive reserve price.
- (2) It may be bought on commission by a dealer at an excessive price.
- (3) It may be bought at an excessive price by an amateur ignorant of its current value.
- (4) It may be bought by a dealer for stock at a price which adequately represents its present value.
- (5) By arrangement between two individuals it may, for boom purposes, be run up far above its current value.
- (6) It may be bought by a ring of dealers at a price far below its current value.

The collector who knows his way about an auction room, and who is familiar with the habits of the regular dealers and collectors, will soon be able to form a very accurate opinion under which of the six conditions referred to above any given print has been knocked down.

If he does not know, the sooner he sets to work to find out the better it will be for him. For my own information, I make very careful notes of each sale, so far as the comparatively few prints are concerned in which I am interested.

I have exercised great care with the figures I have given not to include any instance where the price at which the lot was knocked down was a reserve price, as for statistical purposes such information would be quite valueless.

I have also avoided giving any instances of No. 5, for there again the information would be valueless. Neither have I included the price of any really poor impression.

It will not, I think, be wasting time to examine in detail the six circumstances to which I have referred.

1. *The print may be knocked down at a reserve price.*

Let me illustrate my point by two incidents that happened quite recently. On March 1st a fine impression of X, which two months later in the season fetched £100, its true value, was knocked down at £150. It was not bought by anyone present, and quite obviously, both from the unusual price and from the auctioneer's demeanour, it could be seen that a reserve price had been placed on the print. It was undoubtedly included in order to give tone to the sale, and to secure better prices than usual for the remaining prints offered that day by the same owner.

2. *It may be bought on commission by a dealer.*

No hard and fast rule can be laid down as to how this can be definitely detected. A general all-round knowledge of supply and demand, coupled with a knowledge of previous prices, will afford some clue.

3. *It may be bought at auction by an inadequately informed amateur.*

An amateur may be made to pay from 15 to 20 per cent above the price at which the dealers left off competing against each other. A knowledge of those present and their methods will soon enable you to recognise what happened.

4. *It may be bought by a dealer for stock.*

An accurate knowledge of recent prices, coupled with a knowledge of supply and demand, will enable you to see when a print has been bought for stock.



James McBeck

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5. *Protected etchings.*

This is a most entertaining game, and is not infrequently indulged in by what may be termed over-acute amateurs and dealers.

First as to dealers. Let us imagine that Messrs. XY act as publishers for Mr. Z, and that at the moment they have a considerable stock of his plates.

They cannot afford to let prices drop materially in the auction room, otherwise their stock depreciates proportionately in value. How can this be prevented? It is quite simple, for a time at all events. Messrs. XY ask Messrs. AB to run them up to a certain point, and the simple public continue to believe there is a real demand for Mr. Z's plates, and continue to purchase examples of his work from Messrs. XY. When the stock is approaching exhaustion, the protection gradually ceases, more or less automatically.

The game is sometimes, though not so frequently, played by collectors. As an example, I will repeat a conversation I recently had with a man who once created a fashion for a particular plate; incidentally a very fine plate. He told me he bought his first impression at published price—8 guineas. A year after publication another impression appeared in the auction room; he asked a friend to go to the sale, and to run him up to 15 guineas for it. He purchased it at that price. Eight months later another example appeared for sale; he arranged with another friend to run him up to 24 guineas. Once again he bought it. After that the plate became the rage, and within two years it would sell for £50 or more.

He would then be in a position to unload two out of his three impressions at a very handsome profit.

To do this successfully, you must be quite sure that the particular plate is a masterpiece.

All the prices quoted in the following tables represent sales under normal conditions, and should form a *bona fide* guide of values to the young and inexperienced collector.

Wherever the letter "G" appears, it is an indication that the sale was at Glasgow.

These prices should be taken with reserve, as there must be some definite reason why Glasgow prices are frequently higher than those in London.

It is quite probable that in the majority of cases the plates are bought by amateurs and collectors who frequent the auction rooms to a much greater extent in Scotland than they do in London.

Many people considered that the etching boom had reached its height in 1909. Subsequent events, however, have completely disproved that view. Etchings—that is, important examples by the best artists—are in greater demand to-day than ever, as evidenced by the fact that fine examples rarely appear at auction, and are not even to be found in the portfolios of the dealers.

America has all along been one of the chief buyers, and up to five or six years ago was securing most of the best prints that appeared for sale here.

Now, however, European collectors are competing heavily with America. The number of small collections of fine prints which have been started and maintained in Great Britain alone during the past few years would astonish the world could they be mentioned.

No fine example of Meryon has been sold at auction in this country for years.

So far as Whistler is concerned, it is now very unusual for any of his finest examples to appear in the auction room. In



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THE STATE OF  
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1911 "The Palaces" fetched £200, but a fine impression would now probably realise £300.

The same year "The Traghetto" realised £120, "The Garden" £152, "Nocturne: Dance House" £120, "Amsterdam" £125, "The Embroidered Curtain" £155, "Two Doorways" £120. There is very little doubt that if these plates were to come up for auction to-day, they would be found to have appreciated in value at least 50 per cent; in some cases 100 per cent would be nearer the mark. "The Balcony," one of the most beautiful plates, would in all probability now fetch £200 at least.

The last few years have seen a very marked rise in the value of Zorn's etchings. In a fine impression "Cercles d'Eau" would fetch £70, "Wet" £55 (a proof was bought for £17 in 1914), "Renan" £100, "Mona" £90, "Precipice" £50, "Miss Rassmussen" £80. "The Self Portrait," 1916, can still be bought for £35; "The Letter" would fetch £50 at least.

At the moment there is not a very big demand for Haden's plates, with the exception of "Sunset in Ireland," of which a trial proof would fetch £90, "Mytton Hall" £35, and "The Agamemnon" £40.

The wise collector will take advantage of these comparatively low prices.

Present values of fine examples of Muirhead Bone dry-points may be estimated as follows: "Ayr Prison" £130, "Clare Market" £70, "The Shot Tower" £80, "Liberty Clock" £70, "Calle Pescheria" £40. Indeed, anyone who secured them at those prices would be fortunate.

Similarly with Cameron's most popular plates: "Ben Ledi" would fetch £150, "The Meuse" £80, "The Chimera" £35, Robert Lee's Workshop" £45.

Forain's plates never come up at auction in this country, and it is not therefore possible to refer to prices in his case.

There is comparatively little demand for Bauer's work at the present time. This fact again should be taken advantage of.

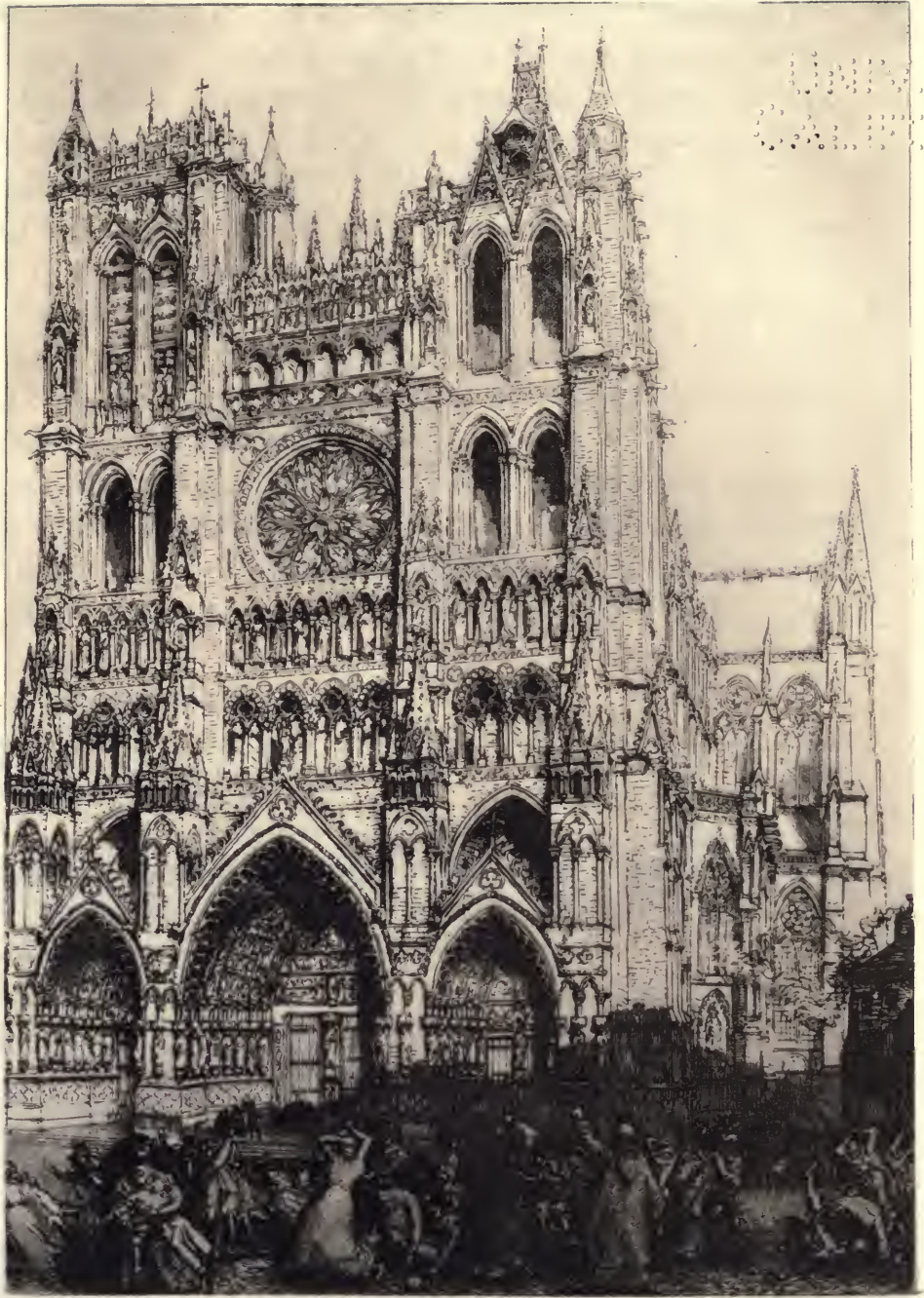
McBey's etchings are attracting much attention, and justly so. They can still be obtained at a reasonable figure: "Lion Brewery" £35, "Night, Ely Cathedral" £20, "The Story Teller" £25, "The Torpedoed Sussex" £30; "Amsterdam from Runsdorp" rarely appears, and would probably fetch £30 at least.

There is every indication that Robins' etchings and dry-points will soon be in keen demand. "An Old Willow" would probably fetch £6, "Payne's Farm" £5, "The Canal" £6, "The Mimram" £5, "Staples' Farm" £5.

None of the finest of Legros' plates have appeared in the auction room of late, but "Le Canal" would probably fetch £50, "La Mort du Vagabond" £15, "L'Allée de Peupliers" £15, "Cardinal Manning" £20, "Promenade du Convalescent" £25.

It will be well once again to impress on all collectors that if they wish to acquire fine examples of the work of the leading Contemporary Etchers, they should lose no time in doing so, not only because the really fine plates are few and far between, but because the chase is becoming a pretty hot one, and the prizes are more and more difficult to secure.

No one should deceive himself into thinking that he will be satisfied with anything but the best when he knows what is the best. It will be time enough to consider the less important plates when the finest ones are no longer obtainable, which may now be said to be already the case with Whistler, Meryon, and Legros, and there are doubtless many people to-day who wish



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they had taken better advantage of the opportunities that presented themselves some ten to fifteen years ago. The same disappointment is in store for those who do not now seize the chances that come their way. In a previous chapter I have indicated the most important plates of Modern and Contemporary Etchers, many of which can still be obtained.

It may be useful at this stage to give a short summary of the prices of important etchings during 1917 and 1918.

*Meryon*—No important examples of this artist's work appeared in the auction room during these years.

*Whistler*—The same remark applies with one notable exception—"San Biagio"—which in 1917 fetched £162.

*Zorn*—There has been a marked rise in value in respect of the more important plates. "Mona," which fetched 51 guineas in 1916, advanced to £65 early in 1917, and to 70 guineas later in the same season. "Wet" was sold for £17 in 1914; in 1917 it fetched £45, and in 1918 51 guineas. "Cercles d'Eau" fetched £36 in 1916, and £47 in 1917. "Djos Mats" £15 in 1916, and £27 in 1917. "Dagmar" £21 in 1916, and 30 guineas in 1917. "The Letter" £22 in 1916, 32 guineas early in 1917, and later in the season 51 guineas. "Valkulla" 19 guineas in 1916, in 1917 30 guineas and later £44, and in 1918 £43. "Precipice" 34 guineas in 1916, and 40 guineas in 1917. "Skarikulla" £27 in 1916, and in 1917 34 guineas, and £44 later in the same season. "The Artist" (1916) realised £27 the first time it came up for auction in 1917, and 33 guineas in 1918.

*Haden*—"The Agamemnon," after remaining steady at £30 for several years, advanced to £39 in 1917. "Sunset in Ireland" (Tr. F.) realised £89 in 1917.

*Bone*—"Ayr Prison," £92 in 1914, fetched after keen competition 127 guineas in 1917. "Liberty's Clock" £46 in 1916,

£60 in 1918. "Ballantrae Road" 30 guineas in 1916, and 51 guineas in 1917. "Somerset House" £50 in 1916, and £81 in 1917. "San Frediano" £30 in 1916, and £48 in 1917.

*McBey*—"The Story Teller" 16 guineas in 1914, £22 in 1918. "The Lion Brewery" £11 in 1915, £14 in 1916, 26 guineas in 1917, later £28, and £32 in 1918. "Night, Ely Cathedral," £10 in 1916, and 18 guineas in 1917. "The Torpedoed Sussex," published in 1916, came up for auction for the first time in 1918, and realised 26½ guineas. "The Morocco Set" fetched £145 in 1918.

*Cameron*—Very few of the really important examples of this artist's work appeared in the auction room during 1917 and 1918. Those that did appear maintained previous prices.

*Frank Short*—"Wintry Blast on Stourbridge Canal" fetched £28 in 1914. In 1918, at a country-house sale, a fine impression of this plate realised 11 guineas. A fine impression of "Low Tide: The Evening Star" realised 11 guineas at the same sale.

Every care has been taken in drawing up the tables which follow this chapter to avoid including a record of any poor impression, or of a plate which was bought in at an excessive reserve price. I have not thought it worth while to mention shillings, but all the same the prices given may be assumed to be correct to within five shillings.

The tables faithfully record as far as ascertainable the prices realised at auction by many of the more important plates during the last ten or twelve years.

It should be remembered that dealers as well as collectors have their favourite plates, and the absence of a particular dealer at an important sale is certain to affect adversely the prices of some of the lots.

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## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VII

### A FEW MODERN ETCHINGS IN THE WEDMORE SALE, 1912

#### J. McNEILL WHISTLER—

The Kitchen . . . . .	£60
Thames Warehouses . . . . .	£10 15 0
Little Venice . . . . .	£69

#### SEYMOUR HADEN—

Windmill Hill, No. I . . . . .	£12 (presentation copy)
The Agamemnon . . . . .	£34 (trial proof)

#### C. MERYON—

La Galerie de Nôtre Dame . . . . .	£47 (1st state)
St. Etienne du Mont . . . . .	£70 (1st state, green paper)
La Petite Pompe . . . . .	£48
La Morgue . . . . .	£48 (2nd state)
L'Abside de Nôtre Dame . . . . .	£330 (2nd state)

#### MUIRHEAD BONE—

The Shot Tower . . . . .	£62
Ayr Prison . . . . .	£100
Leeds Warehouses . . . . .	£48
Rye from Camber . . . . .	£50
Hampstead Heath . . . . .	£40
St. John's Wood . . . . .	£46
Liberty's Clock . . . . .	£69

#### D Y. CAMERON—

Robert Lee's Workshop . . . . .	£50
The Five Sisters . . . . .	£250
Beauvais . . . . .	£42

#### A. LEGROS—

La Vallée des Dunes . . . . .	£6
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#### A. LEPÈRE—

Le Quartier des Gobelins . . . . .	£9 15 0
Amiens l'Inventaire . . . . .	£8 15 0

This sale was held at a time when prices ruled very high, and attracted unusual attention.

## C. MERYON

	1906	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912
Le Stryge	Gs. 19	Gs. 36	Gs. 52	£280 £195 £20	£115 £52	
Le Tour de l'Horloge	Gs. 35	Gs. 58 £21	Gs. 80			
St. Etienne du Mont	Gs. 32	Gs. 30	Gs. 72			
Pompe, Notre Dame	Gs. 40	Gs. 46	Gs. 64	£130		
Pont Neuf	Gs. 32		Gs. 64	£95 £115 £42		
Pont au Change	Gs. 50	Gs. 56	Gs. 120 £24	£200		
L'Abside de Notre Dame		Gs. 56		£640		{ £330 £230
Le Petit Pont	Gs. 23	Gs. 58 Gs. 38	Gs. 58	£145 £50 £6	£44	
La Morgue			Gs. 80	£320 £65		£48

Rue des Mauvais Garçons	Ist state 2nd state			Gs. 30	£200 £36	
Tourelle de la Tixanderie	(early impression) Ist state		Gs. 38 Gs. 50		£210	
Galerie de Notre Dame	Ist state			Gs. 58	£82	£42
L'Arche du Pont, Notre Dame	tr. proof Ist state, green paper				£112 £31	
St. Etienne du Mont	tr. proof				£65	

NOTE.—The rarity of the finest Meryons is evidenced by the paucity of these records, which obviously afford little indication of present values. In the Theobald sale in 1910 the prices ruled high for those days. Early states are notoriously rare.

## J. MCNEILL WHISTLER

	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Putney Bridge. W 145	Gs. 44			Gs. 31 Gs. 24							
The Doorway. W 154]	£63							£82			
Adam and Eve: Old Chelsea. W 144	£6			Gs. 5	Gs. 6½	Gs. 15			£33*		£21†
The Lime Burner. W 44]	£9				£36						£36
The Thames Set (16 Etchings)		£50						£86			
Amsterdam. W 82. 1st state				Gs. 15							
The Balcony. W 177				£34				Gs. 70			
Dance House: Nocturne. W 265				£120							
The Embroidered Curtain. W 356				Gs. 50							
Fruit Stall. W 166				£27							
Furnace: Nocturne. W 183				£37				£37			
The Garden. W 180				£152				£117			

\* Undescribed early state.

† Fine early impression.



	Gs. 30	Gs. 32					
Long Venice. W 182							
The Palaces. W 153	£92						
The Piazzetta. W 155	Gs. 30	Gs. 50					
Quiet Canal. W 184	Gs. 34						
The Rialto. W 181	Gs. 30	£62					
The Riva. No. I, W 157	Gs. 36	£56					
No. II, W 175	Gs. 60 Gs. 50 £41						
San Biagio. W 163	Gs. 36					£162*	
San Giorgio. W 167	Gs. 42						
The Smithy. W 197	Gs. 22	£26					
The Traghetto. W 156	£120						
Turkeys. W 165	£24						
Upright Venice. W 172	£65	Gs. 50	£50				
The Little Venice. W 149	Gs. 40	£69					
The Beggars. W 159	£56						

\* These prices afford a good guide to present-day values.

J. MCNEILL WHISTLER—*continued*

	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
The Kitchen. W 19					£60		£88				
The Little Lagoon					£62						
Palaces, Brussels								£137*			
High Street, Brussels								£65*			
The French Set	£71										
Old Battersea Bridge											£110*

NOTE.—Many of these prices are very misleading, as during the last few years such plates as have come into the market have changed hands privately.

\* These prices afford a good guide to present-day values.

## ANDERS ZORN

	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Frida								Gs. 13 Gs. 16 Gs. 17	
Madame Simon	£19*			£22*					
Ernest Renan	£17		£38				£78		
Au Piano	Gs. 17			£35			Gs. 46		
Miss Rassmussen	Gs. 14					£46†		£50	
A. Rodin	Gs. 9½							Gs. 31	
L'Été	Gs. 11		£15	Gs. 11	Gs. 8½		£16	£17 £18 £22	£21
Cercles d'Eau	Gs. 11						£36†	£47	
Edo	Gs. 10							Gs. 30	
Oxenstierna	Gs. 9								Gs. 19
Deux Modeles près du Lit			Gs. 8						
Wet			Gs. 8½		Gs. 17			£45	Gs. 51 G.

\* Both impressions were unsigned.

† Very fine proof.

## ANDERS ZORN—continued

	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Betty Nansen			Gs. 14		Gs. 18		£31 Gs. 31		Gs. 32
Zorn and his Model				£30					
The Hair Ribbon					Gs. 10			Gs. 13	
Dance at Gopsmor					£10				
A Letter					£16		£22	Gs. 31 Gs. 51	
Valkulla					Gs. 16		Gs. 19	Gs. 30 Gs. 32 £44	£43 G.
The Mother					Gs. 18		Gs. 31		Gs. 51 G.
The Three Graces					Gs. 8		Gs. 10		
Mona							Gs. 51	£65 Gs. 70	
Djos Mats							£15	£27	
Dagmar							£21	Gs. 30	
Precipice							Gs. 34	Gs. 40	







## MUIRHEAD BONE

	1905	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Ayr Prison	Gs. 2½		Gs. 20			£71 £82 £100	£86 £92				Gs. 127	
Demolition St. James' Hall (exterior)		Gs. 8				£61	£50 £64	Gs. 45	£35	£35		
Demolition St. James' Hall (interior)			£21		£31	£65	£68	Gs. 50	Gs. 40	Gs. 40		£55? G.
Liberty's Clock		Gs. 3				£71 £66 £58	£61		Gs. 52 Gs. 52	£46		£60
Leeds Warehouses			Gs. 5			£48	Gs. 36 Gs. 34 £42					Gs. 26 Gs. 34
Ballantrae Road			£5			£36 £38		Gs. 32 Gs. 30 Gs. 30	Gs. 30	Gs. 30	£53 Gs. 48	
Distant Oxford			Gs. 8			Gs. 52	£36	Gs. 28	£30		£35	
The Great Gantry			Gs. 14			£157 £168	£90	Gs. 85 £80				£105 £82



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Somerset House					£65	£71 £67 £90	£68 £68 £62		£50	£81	
Culross Roofs				£26	£57 £59 £43	£44 £42	Gs. 36		Gs. 36		£48 G.
Building					£71 £88	£69 £75	£84	£63			£81 G.
Clare Market					£66	Gs. 50		£56			
Cambridge : Midsummer Fair					£21						£25
Old and New Gaiety Theatres					£68		Gs. 35				£42
Leeds					£40 £44 £40	Gs. 31 £32					£35 G.
The Shot Tower					£68 £62			£50	£62		
South Coast I					£63						Gs. 37 G. £41 G.
Stirling Castle I					Gs. 52						
Stirling Castle II					£42 £41	Gs. 30 £30	Gs. 31	Gs. 30			



## D. Y. CAMERON

	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
A Venetian Palace		Gs. 38		£43			£68	£48			
Robert Lee's Workshop		Gs. 24	£34	£42	£47	£47	£42	£37	£35	£42	
North Porch, Harfleur	Gs. 25	Gs. 34	£44	Gs. 50		£52	Gs. 50			£67	£58
Harfleur		Gs. 31	£33	£50	£75 Gs. 50		Gs. 50			Gs. 50	
The Meuse						£65 £73	Gs. 61 Gs. 75 Gs. 52 £69	£59 Gs. 56			
Notre Dame, Dinant					Gs. 95	£58 £74	£63	£54			
Dinant					£65	£50 £53	£50 £46 £37			£54	
The Five Sisters				£184	£250	£194 £170 £180	£147 £147	£121			
The Doges' Palace		Gs. 34	£34	£82	£105	£96	£73	£42		£95	

## MODERN ETCHINGS

D. Y. CAMERON—continued

	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Ben Ledi					£189 £135 £137		£141 £105 £105				
The Chimera					£35	£42 £38	£27			Gs. 28 Gs. 32	£30 G.
The Wingless Chimera (7th state on green paper)								£25		£26	
Ca d'Oro		Gs. 34			£61	£70			£42		
The Mosque Doorway							£63	Gs. 50		£75	
Craigievar				£46	£84	£71				£67	
Rosslyn		£21								£49	
My Little Lady of Luxor						Gs. 6	Gs. 5			Gs. 4	
Damme					£46	£33	Gs. 30 £26				£32
Robin Hood's Bay							£40 £39				Gs. 41 G.
Elcho on the Tay						£31					Gs. 65 G.



## MODERN ETCHINGS

## JAMES MCBEY

	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Poictiers	£4			Gs. 8 Gs. 9½		Gs. 18
1588	£3 Gs. 4	Gs. 3½		Gs. 5½		£12 G.
The Foveran Burn	Gs. 4 £5		Gs. 6	Gs. 8		Gs. 9
Amsterdam from Runsdorp	£8	Gs. 15 Gs. 15				
Zaandijk	£8	Gs. 8½		Gs. 12	Gs. 13	
Omval	£7			Gs. 13		
Ovation to the Matador	£6					Gs. 16
The Matador	£8	Gs. 13	Gs. 16	Gs. 16		
The Picador Unhorsed	£5			£12		Gs. 18
Burgos	£5 Gs. 5 Gs. 5½				Gs. 7	
Albert Basin, Aberdeen		Gs. 7 Gs. 14		Gs. 11 £11	Gs. 15	

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The Amstel			Gs. 12	£13		£17 G.
April in Kent		Gs. 6½	Gs. 8	Gs. 8 Gs. 11 Gs. 12		
Beggars, Tetuan		Gs. 8	Gs. 5	Gs. 5		
El Soko		Gs. 10				Gs. 12 Gs. 13
The Ford		Gs. 9				Gs. 11
Grimnessilius		£11		£12		Gs. 16 Gs. 16 Gs. 14
Jewish Quarter, Tetuan		Gs. 6½		Gs. 7	Gs. 14	Gs. 11
Richborough Castle		Gs. 9		Gs. 12 £13	Gs. 14 Gs. 18	
The Shower		Gs. 6 £9		Gs. 11 £14	Gs. 16 Gs. 13	Gs. 17 G.
The Skylark		Gs. 6 £14	£11	£14 Gs. 14	Gs. 16 Gs. 15	Gs. 19 G.
The Story-teller		Gs. 16				£22? G.
Tangier		Gs. 14		Gs. 15½	£17 Gs. 18	Gs. 19 G.

JAMES MCBEY—*continued*

	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Thanet from Richborough				£13	Gs. 16	Gs. 17 G.
The Lion Brewery			£11	£14	Gs. 26 £28 G.	£32 G.
The Pool			Gs. 16	Gs. 15		Gs. 28 G.
Towy, Carmarthen		Gs. 14		Gs. 15		
Bridge of San Martin, Toledo				Gs. 14	Gs. 15 G. Gs. 16 G.	Gs. 16 G.
Sunrise at Tarragona				Gs. 16½	Gs. 22 Gs. 28 G.	
A Norfolk Village				£12		
Night, Ely Cathedral				£10	Gs. 18	
Quai Gambetta, Boulogne					Gs. 16	Gs. 23 G.
Buchan					Gs. 18	Gs. 15 G.
The Torpedoed Sussex						Gs. 26½ G.
Boulogne						£23 G.



View in Wales	£15	£8	Gs. 16	£23 G.
Enkhuisen	Gs. 6½		£11	
Old Castile	£10		Gs. 12	
Newburgh		£8	£8	Gs. 13 G.
Français Inconnus				Gs. 14 G. Gs. 13 G.
Spring, 1917				Gs. 14 G.
France at the Furnaces				Gs. 15 G.
Early Morning, Fintry	Gs. 10½		Gs. 11	Gs. 17 G.
Repairing a Barge			£9	Gs. 17 G.

It has not been possible to include in the tables of prices a record of two important sales held at Messrs. Edmestons' Auction Rooms in Glasgow on November 1st and 8th respectively, of the present year.

The result of these two sales has already caused a complete upheaval in the etching market, so far as prices are concerned.

Should prices continue to rise in this fashion, it will soon be no longer possible to say that fine etchings can be bought at a more reasonable figure in the United Kingdom than in America or Paris; and one can only wonder what would have happened if any of the really important early Zorn etchings or Bone dry-points had appeared.

It will be noted that three important McBey etchings were sold, the prices reflecting in a marked degree a true appreciation of this artist's work.

<u>ANDERS ZORN</u>	November 1918	Previous Sale
Skerrickulla	Gs. 68	1917 £44
The Letter	Gs. 58	1917 £53
Seaward, Skerries	Gs. 62	1917 £39
Self Portrait, 1916	Gs. 42	1918 Gs. 33
The Swan	Gs. 35	1918 £22
Shallow	Gs. 36	1916 £16
M. Berthelot	Gs. 26	1916 Gs. 13
De Estournelle de Constant	Gs. 36	1917 £24
Vicke	Gs. 51	No previous sale
Valkulla	Gs. 43	1918 £43
<u>MUIRHEAD BONE</u>		
Rainy Night in Rome	Gs. 66	1918 Gs. 50
Cambridge, Midsummer Fair	Gs. 37	1918 £25
Calle Pescheria	Gs. 36	1918 Gs. 29
<u>JAMES McBEY</u>		
On the Towy	Gs. 31	1916 Gs. 15
Norfolk Village	Gs. 23	1916 £12
The Torpedoed Sussex	Gs. 29	1918 Gs. 26½







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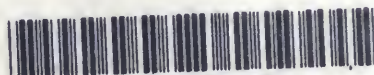
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