

Provenienzbericht zu Jean-François Millet, *Berger se reposant / Shepherd at rest*, 1853¹

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Conté Crayon on paper, 59 x 933 mm ²
stamped lower left: "J. F. M." [Lugt 1460b]³
on verso in pencil: "8977"

Provenance:

Estate of Jean-François Millet

Sale: Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 10-11 May 1875 (Vente Millet, per Lugt 1460b). Lot 132

(...)

Probably acquired by Hildebrand Gurlitt, Dusseldorf in France in the 1940s⁴

By descent to Cornelius Gurlitt, Munich/Salzburg

Estate of Cornelius Gurlitt

- **Introductory remarks:**

The largest collection of existing drawings by Jean-François Millet (nearly six hundred works) is to be found in the Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, part of the Musée d'Orsay's permanent collection. Whereas many other notable collections of his graphic works, American in particular, consist largely of well-executed drawings intended for collectors, the Louvre collection consists of a large number of sketches, studies of nature, quickly jotted down images in a notebook.⁵ It bears great similarity to the eight drawings, which were found in C. Gurlitt's cache. Like the Louvre collection, they portray family themes, images of the humility, hard work, and peace of rural life that reflect the artist's nostalgia for a pre-industrial society living in harmony with nature. He concentrated in capturing the landscape and the humble inhabitants of this region. The drawings in

¹ Catalogue de la vente [...] de Jean-François Millet. Auct. cat. Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 10-11 Mai 1875, lot #132 (?) The catalogue lists *Becheur se reposant*.

² Ibid

³ Lugt, Frits. *Les Marques de Collections de Dessins & d'Estampes*. 1st ed., Amsterdam: Vereenigde Drukkerijen, 1921; supplement, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1956. www.marquesdecollections.fr/detail.cfm/marque (September 2017)

⁴ Per photograph 9.1_F940_Millet_Sechs Bilder_478201-05_478207_R / V. Anpassung der Schreibweise durch Projektleitung, 8.12.2017.

⁵ <http://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/history-of-the-collections/graphic-arts.html#c4545> (September 2017)

the C. Gurlitt cache were part of the estate found in Millet's studio and partly sold at Hôtel Drouot auctions after Millet's death in 1875, and partly after his widow's death in 1894.

The resting shepherd could be viewed as just one added scene depicting everyday life of the farmers to whom Millet has dedicated his art during the years he lived in Barbizon. However, one may read more into this seemingly simple scene. In the 1850s rural France was increasingly owned by absentee landlords more interested in personal gain than in the welfare of the people who worked their fields. Millet who loved and respected the laborers, knowing from firsthand the hardships of farm life, awards the rest its dignified positioning: the one who labors has duly earned his rest. Between the years 1950-53 Millet worked on "Harvesters resting – Ruth and Boaz", a large scale painting now in the collection of the Boston Fine Arts Museum.⁶ The Biblical scene is depicted with peasants of his own time, and the setting is the fertile plain of Chailly, thus awarding the people he loved and respected the honor of Biblical proportions, not as an outcome of his own piousness but rather in respect of theirs.

Primary sources:

- Hildebrand Gurlitt's business ledger⁷:

Book 1: Acquisitions June 1942

Millet	2 Tuschzeichnungen	139	
Millet	3 Tuschzeichnungen	139	41,727.50
Millet	3 Tuschzeichnungen	139	

Lines 825-827 refer to eight ink drawings bought presumably as one lot, as the price appears as a consolidated purchase. No details are provided beyond the medium. The team believes that the listings refer to the 8 works on paper with a variety of media found in the C. Gurlitt cache and listed hastily by H. Gurlitt in the ledger.

Book 1: Acquisitions March 1943

Millet	Bauern Rad.	177	600,-
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Line 1119 registers one Millet engraving *Bauern* (farmers) bought from a private source for 600 RM.

Book 1: Sales January 1943

Paul Römer [Roemer]	Millet	8 Zeichnungen 1607-14	174	1.500,-
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Line 1032 registers the sale of eight drawings by Millet for 1500 RM to Paul Roemer. The fact that H. Gurlitt registered Roemer as the buyer does not contradict the fact that the drawings were found in C. Gurlitt cache. H. Gurlitt served as Roemer's main buyer in Paris for his Berlin gallery⁸ and Gurlitt may have assumed the future acquisition, which did not materialize, consequently the works remained in H. Gurlitt possession.

⁶ <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/harvesters-resting-ruth-and-boaz-31288> (September 2017)

⁷ The sales ledger has proven to be problematic, inconsistent and inaccurate by provenance research conducted pertaining to the C. Gurlitt estate

⁸ Hoffmann, Meike und Nicola Kuhn. *Hitlers Kunsthändler*. Muenchen 2016. p 217

Book 1: Sales March 1943

H. Reemtsma	Millet	Bauern	179	600,-
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Line 1124 registers a sale of Millet *Bauern* (farmers) to H. Reemtsma for 600 RM

Book 2: Acquisition 1942

1607	20.6.	Millet	Tuschzeichng	Z.	Jean Lenthal
1608	20.6.	Millet	Tuschzeichng	Z.	Jean Lenthal
1609	20.6.	Millet	Tuschzeichng	Z.	Jean Lenthal
1610	20.6.	Millet	Tuschzeichng	Z.	Jean Lenthal
1611	20.6.	Millet	Tuschzeichng	Z.	Jean Lenthal
1612	20.6.	Millet	Tuschzeichng	Z.	Jean Lenthal
1613	20.6.	Millet	Tuschzeichng	Z.	Jean Lenthal
1614	20.6.	Millet	Tuschzeichng	Z.	Jean Lenthal

1607	1942	Millet	Tuschzchg	Z.	J. Lenthal
1608	1942	Millet	Tuschzchg	Z.	J. Lenthal
1609	1942	Millet	Tuschzchg	Z.	J. Lenthal
1610	1942	Millet	Tuschzchg	Z.	J. Lenthal
1611	1942	Millet	Tuschzchg	Z.	J. Lenthal
1612	1942	Millet	Tuschzchg	Z.	J. Lenthal
1613	1942	Millet	Tuschzchg	Z.	J. Lenthal
1614	1942	Millet	Tuschzchg	Z.	J. Lenthal

Lines 1147-1154 and 1351-1358 register 8 ink drawings as purchased from Jean Lenthal. Post war letters proved the falsified listing of the purchase from J. Lenthal⁹ and in addition, an affidavit submitted by H. Gurlitt to the allies testifying that J. Lenthal was not the original owner of these items and posed as the seller to abide H. Gurlitt's request.

Book 2: Sales 1943

Millet	Bauern	Rad.	Privat H.G.	600,-	12.3.	600,-	Hermann Reemtsma
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⁹ According to the extant sale ledgers, this was one of about forty works that Gurlitt claimed to have acquired from the art dealer Jean Lenthal in Paris on 20 June 1942. Research by the Taskforce revealed these to be false entries. Post-war correspondence between Gurlitt and Lenthal, which was found in Cornelius Gurlitt's Salzburg residence, proved that Gurlitt coerced Lenthal into issuing fake receipts for works that Lenthal never owned or sold. Gurlitt provided Lenthal with a statement to this effect in 1947.

Jean Lenthal (recte Hans Loewenthal, 1914 Vienna–1983 Paris) was an art dealer in Paris. On account of his Jewish descent, Lenthal was deported in 1943, first to Drancy and thereafter to Auschwitz, Sachsenhausen and Mauthausen concentration camps. After the liberation in 1945, Lenthal returned to live in Paris where he resumed his art dealership

⁹ An etching of this work was created by J. Millet in 1863, a fact known to H. Gurlitt, allowing him to fabricate a sale of lesser value (NGA Washington 1943.3.6262, "The departure for work")

Line 1456 from March 12 registers an engraving by Millet "*Bauern*" (peasants) as having been sold to H. Reemtsma for 600 RM.10

Book 3: Acquisitions and sales 1943

Millet	8 Tuschzeichnungen	Z.	Jean Lenthal, Paris		9.1.	Paul Römer [Roemer]
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Line 258 registers and reiterates the June 20, 1942 acquisitions of 8 ink drawings by Millet from Jean Lenthal and sold to Paul Roemer on September 1 for 1500 RM

Book 4: 1943

Hermann Reemtsma, Hamburg						
1943	März	12.	An Millet	W. 48	600,-	

Line 3214 registers a March 1943 sale of Millet to Herman Reemtsma from Hamburg for 600 RM as per payments by the buyer.

Conclusion:

- The above outline reiterates the challenge of accepting the ledger as reliable, although it reaffirms that the listings do contain partially important facts and dates.
- The 8 Millet drawings in various media found in the C. Gurlitt cache, are most probably the 8 Millet drawings registered in the ledger as being bought from J. Lenthal (falsification) and sold to Paul Roemer (unmaterialized future sale).

Photograph:¹¹

The six drawings found in the C. Gurlitt cache apparently were framed together, and probably sold as such. The frame was not identified in the C. Gurlitt cache and no further evidence as for whom Schoeller has written the expertise for. However, due to the fact that many of the Liste Raphael Gérard bear the same authenticity certificate, one may assume that H. Gurlitt acquired the consolidated frame from this dealer. Another option may attest to the fact that H. Gurlitt approached Schoeller directly for the expertise, for he anticipated the need for it during a future sale.

- **Archival sources:**

ERR database of Art at the Jeu de Paume

The following ERR files with Millet confiscation records were consulted with negative findings:

Owner: Georges Bernheim. Inventory no.: Gal. Bernst. 3; Millet, Saemann

List of ERR confiscated items no. 41 Galerie Bernstein¹²

Owner: Cassel van Doorn. Inventory no.: B-2159; Millet: Eines sackanfuellenden Bauernpaares (sic)

Owner: Salomon Flavian. Inventory no.: Fla 6; Millet: Der Holzhacker¹³

¹⁰ An etching of this work was created by J. Millet in 1863, a fact known to H. Gurlitt, allowing him to fabricate a sale of lesser value (NGA Washington 1943.3.6262, "The departure for work")

¹¹ Photograph 9.1_F940_Millet_Sechs Bilder_478201-05_478207_R / V

¹² <https://www.fold3.com/image/303253897> f (September 2017)

¹³ <https://www.fold3.com/image/306292350> (September 2017)

Owner: Victor Lyon. No inventory no.; Millet: Baigneuses au repos.

MNR Site Rose-Valland - Musée Nationaux Récupération

Five entries record works of art by J.-F. Millet as restituted to France from Germany. Most of these restitutions were handled at the Central Collecting Point Wiesbaden. It is important to point to the fact that two of these entries mention in the provenance the fact that André Schoeller bought the items at the Viau auction on December 11, 1942 for Hildebrandt Gurlitt.¹⁴ An added verification of the business connection between the art expert A. Schoeller and H. Gurlitt, as attested to also in LostArt 532993, are authenticity certificates issued by Schoeller for Gérard or for Gurlitt.¹⁵

As this particular drawing appears on a photograph with an authenticity expertise by Schoeller¹⁶, the hypothesis that it has been written for H. Gurlitt is reaffirmed by this evidence.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) / Fold3

The large collection of documents relating to the confiscation of Jewish collections in Paris supports the assumption that the Millet art represented in the C. Gurlitt cache originated with one of these looted collections. The fact is that the number of collections seized by the ERR numbers 79¹⁷, non with reports on LostArt # 478204.

One needs to bear in mind the Moebel Aktion– Bilder, which do list Millet art confiscations.¹⁸ Beginning in the spring of 1942, art objects were brought to the Jeu de Paume as part of the loot collected by the ERR offshoot, the "Moebel-Aktion" (furniture operation), stripping furnishings from the homes of Jews who had fled or had been deported. The M-Aktion art loot was separated into a number of special type-specific "M-A" collections, and were inventoried without revealing the name and address of the home from which they were seized. The Millet items in C. Gurlitt's cache may have originated with such an operation and ended up in the hands of intermediaries like Wuester who dealt clandestinely with the looted items, selling to Parisian art dealers.

The Getty Provenance Index Database (Sales catalogue)

Forty-seven records of J.F. Millet are recorded in the database. All were checked and none corresponds directly with LostArt 478204.¹⁹ When subject matter and medium did bear similarities, the measurements did not.

It is to be noted that the Theodore Fischer sale of 13-16 May 1936,²⁰ lot 1945, lists three small figure studies in ink with monogram. Two provide measurements, but they do not correspond to LostArt 478204, and neither does the medium. In addition, the Schoeller photograph with expertise attests to the Paris provenance.

¹⁴ <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/mnr/MnR-liens.htm> (September 2017)

¹⁵ e.g. 10_F10163_Millet_Bäume_478390_V

¹⁶ Per photograph 9.1_F940_Millet_Sechs Bilder_478201-05_478207_R / V

¹⁷ <https://www.fold3.com/image/269984171>, 269984187, 269984192, 269984200

¹⁸ <https://www.fold3.com/image/283748345>, 306282909

¹⁹ <http://piprod.getty.edu/starweb/pi/servlet.starweb?path=pi/pi.web> (August 2017)

²⁰ http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/fischer1936_05_13/0126?sid=e9599b40011fd57082a43c9622aa07ea (September 2017)

- **Auction and Exhibition Catalogues with reference to LostArt no. 478203:**

Concurring with the identification of the specific authenticity stamp for the Millet sale of 1875,²¹ the extensive collection of drawings in various media offered in Millet's estate sale poses a challenge, especially due to the fact that the original title of the drawing was unknown to the team, as well as the fact that the catalogue does not provide measurements. The drawing in lot #132 was lists identified a "*Becheur se reposant*" (Digger at rest). The figure in LostArt # 478204 represents clearly a shepherd, however there is no other title in the catalogue which may refer to this drawing. Lot # 131 offers another option; "*Berger et son troupeau*" (Shepherd with his flock), which does not adhere fully to the drawing in question, All other male Shepherds do not offer any closer solution. This identification in the 1975 sales catalogue thus remains problematic.

The team believes the pencil medium identified by the condition report was mistakenly assigned. Nicolas-Jacques Conté invented the Conté Crayon in France in 1795, especially for drawing and sketching. Conté Crayons are made of compressed charcoal or graphite with the addition of wax, or clay mixed in for the base as well as natural pigments for color.²² The one used by Millet in this drawing was in all probability made of compressed graphite, and thus the tendency to identify it as pencil.²³

- **Auction catalogues consulted with negative results:**

Tableaux Pastels Dessins Aquarelles, Collection Roger Marx, Galerie Manzi-Joyant, Paris, May 11-12, 1914

Graphik und Handzeichnungen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts (Auktion 72). Auct. cat., Paul Graupe, Berlin, 5-7 May 1927.

Antiquitäten, Gemälde, modernes Mobiliar (Katalog 2094), auct. cat. Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus, Berlin, 1-2 November 1935

Moderne Graphik der Sammlung Heinrich Stinnes, Gutekunst & Klipstein, Bern, Schweiz, 20. -22. Juni 1938.

Tableaux, pastels, aquarelles, dessins. Drouot, Paris, vente du 17 juin 1942.

Tableaux et dessins modernes. Drouot, Paris, vente du 20 novembre 1942.

Succession Georges Viau. Drouot, Paris, vente du 11 décembre 1942.

Tableaux, pastels, aquarelles, dessins. Drouot, Paris, vente du 21 décembre 1942.

Tableaux modernes, aquarelles, pastels, dessins. Drouot, Paris, vente du 4 mars 1943.

Tableaux modernes, dessins, aquarelles, gouaches, pastels. Drouot, Paris, vente du 2 juin 1943.

Tableaux modernes, aquarelles, dessins, gouaches, sculptures. Drouot, Paris, vente du 10 novembre 1943.

Tableaux modernes, dessins, aquarelles, gouaches, pastels. Drouot, Paris, vente du 21 janvier 1944.

Catalogue des dessins, aquarelles, gouaches, pastels. Drouot, Paris, vente du 20 mars 1944.

Tableaux modernes, dessins, aquarelles, gouaches, pastels. Drouot, Paris, vente du 23 mars 1944.

Objets de bel ameublement, tableaux et dessins. Drouot, Paris, vente du 31 mars 1944.

²¹ Lugt, loc. cit. 1460b

²² <https://keetononline.wordpress.com/2017/01/12/interested-in-conte-crayons-but-dont-know-what-they-are-or-how-to-use-them-heres-your-guide/>

²³ To be noted that medium was assigned by Munich team and not by YV team. The HR photographs do not allow precise medium identification.

Tableaux modernes, dessins, aquarelles, gouaches, pastels. Drouot, Paris, vente du 24 mai 1944.
Catalogue des dessins, aquarelles, gouaches, pastels. Drouot, Paris, vente du 4 juin 1944.
Estampes anciennes et modernes, tableaux, dessins anciens et modernes. Drouot, Paris, vente du 20 décembre 1944.
Dessins, tableaux modernes, sièges et meubles. Drouot, Paris, vente du 25 mai 1945.
Estampes, tableaux, pastels, aquarelles, dessins modernes. Drouot, Paris, vente du 29 juin 1945.
Tableaux modernes, dessins, aquarelles, gouaches, pastels. Drouot, Paris, vente du 8 novembre 1945.
Estampes, tableaux, aquarelles, dessins, miniatures. Drouot, Paris, vente du 13 décembre 1945.
Dessins de Jean-François Millet. Exh. cat., Musée du Louvre, Paris, 1960.
J.-F. Millet. Exh. cat., Wildenstein & Co., London 1969.
Jean François Millet. Exh. cat., Hayward Gallery, London 1976.
Achim Moeller, 5th Anniversary 1972-77, London
Christie's, 19th Century European Paintings, Drawings, Watercolors, 15 February 1995, New York.
Millet, Van Gogh: Paris, Musée d'Orsay: 14 septembre 1998 - 3 janvier 1999.
Christie's, Old masters and 19th Century Drawings, 24 January 2008, New York
Christi's, Old Master and Early British Drawings & Watercolors, January 2013, New York
Stephan Ongpin Fine Art, online catalogue, London (August 2017)
89 various auction catalogues, France, 1942 – 1945: <http://bibliotheque-numerique.inha.fr/collection?search=Millet+dessins&sort=score&perpage=20&fulltext=1&date-start=1942&date-end=1945&page=1> (August 2017)

Books consulted with negative results:

Bacou, R.: Millet. One hundred drawings. London 1975.
Cain, J. and P. Leprieur: Millet. Paris: Librairie Centrale des Beaux-Arts, 1913.
Collection Henry Rouart: Première vente. Galerie Manzi-Joyant, Paris, 1912.
Diez, E.: Jean François Millet. Bielefeld: Velhagen & Klasing, 1912.
Fermigier, F.: Jean-François Millet. Genève 1979.
Gensel, W. : Millet und Rousseau, Bielefeld/Leipzig, 1902.
Gsell, P.: Millet. Paris: Éd. Rieder, 1928.
Herbert, R. L.: Jean-François Millet. Exh. cat., Paris, 1975.
Hiepe, R.: François Millet. Leipzig: Seemann, 1962.
Hoerber, A.: The Barbizon Painters, New York 1915.
Krügel, G.: Jean François Millet: eine Kunstgabe. Mainz: Scholz, 1909.
Loughton, B.: The Drawings of Daumier and Millet. New Haven / London 1991.
Manœuvre, L.: Millet – Les Saisons. Paris 1996.
Marcel, H.: J.-F. Millet. Bibliographie critique. Paris [1903]
Mégret, F.: Millet, l'apôtre des paysans. Connaissance des Arts no. 251, Paris 1973.
Meyer, A.: Zwischen Original und (Ver-)Fälschung; in: Wolff-Thomsen, Geschmacksgeschichte(n). Kiel 2011.

Millet: Sessanta Capolavori dal Museum of Fine Arts de Boston. Treviso 2005.
Millet Mappe. Muenchen: Kunstwart, 1900.
Murphy, A., R.: Drawn into the Light: Jean-François Millet. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
Murphy, A. R.: Jean-François Millet. Boston 1984.
Muther, R.: J. F. Millet. Berlin: Bard, 1903.
Peacock, N.: Millet, London 1905.
Sensier, A.: Jean-François Millet. London: Macmillan, 1881.
Sensier, A.: La vie et l'oeuvre de J. F. Millet. Paris: Quantin, 1881.
Turner, P. M.: Millet. London: Jack, 1910.
Yriarte, C.: J. F. Millet. Paris 1885.

- **Conclusions**

The extensive number of drawings produced by Millet offer a challenge to provenance research, especially in relationship to the small-scale drawings, not intended for sale by Millet during his lifetime, rather serving as preparatory sketches for his larger monumental paintings and pastels. The most extensive source, although lacking in visuals, are the two large Millet estate sales of 1875 and 1894.

The team believes lots #131 or #132 in the 1875 Hotel Drouot estate sale, to correlate with LostArt #478204, after identification of the subject matter, "*Berger se reposant*". The exact title though remains unsolved as both the titles in the lots do not adhere completely with the subject matter of the drawing LostArt 3 478204.

The photograph with the André Schoeller expertise supports the notion that that item was illegally transferred from France to Germany, in all probability by H. Gurlitt for whom the expertise was written. Concurring with other items in the C. Gurlitt cache, the possibility that Galerie Raphael Gérard was involved in the sale cannot be excluded.

Die Provenienz der Zeichnung konnte trotz intensiver Forschung für die Zeit 1933 bis 1945 nicht lückenlos aufgeklärt werden, d.h. das Werk ist weder erwiesenermaßen noch mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit NS-Raubkunst noch frei von NS-Raubkunstverdacht [=Ampelsystem: gelb]²⁴

Disclaimer

The research that goes into establishing the provenance of a work of art usually requires complex work that often lasts many years. Researchers have to reconstruct events that took place many decades ago. Often, the only sources of vital clues stem from third parties who do not always represent and assess the facts in a manner that is beyond all doubt. The above object record is just an interim report that was designed as a basis to facilitate possible further in-depth research. Despite the short period of time in which it was compiled, this interim report is nevertheless the result of utmost care in research, combined with great professional expertise. The following provisions therefore apply:

²⁴ Ergänzung durch Projektleitung, 8.12.2017.

- a) The investigation revolved exclusively around the question of the origin and chronology of ownership of the artwork described in the report. No liability will be accepted for:
- the accuracy of the used sources' presentation of the facts and any analyses, conclusions, and assessments they may contain,
 - the exhaustiveness of our probing into and evaluation of the available source material,
 - the analysis and conclusions drawn from the sources in the course of our research,
 - the findings on the subject of the report and how they were derived,
 - the authenticity of the artwork, as well as the accuracy of its attribution to a particular artist.
- b) The report is based on the sources available at the time it was written. It is an interim report. Further research might be required. It is important to note the possibility that new source material may be found, which may lead to a re-evaluation of the interim findings presented here.
- c) The present report does not purport to make pronouncements on any legal claims and legal positions. No liability will be accepted for any conclusions drawn by the addressee(s) or by third parties based on this report.