

Provenienzbericht zu Jean-François Millet, *Paysans conduisant une vache* / *Peasants leading a cow*
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Chalk on paper laid down on paper, 171 x 242 mm
mounted on paper, stamped lower left: “J.F.M” [Lugt 3728]¹, lower right [printed]: “A Monsieur”
(secondary use of formerly printed sheet)
on verso in pencil: “94 1/2, 41”
recto of the mounting paper: “153”, on verso: “272”

Provenance:

Estate of Jean-François Millet²

Sale: Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 24-25 April 1894 (*Vente Veuve Millet*, per Lugt 3728) lot 195³

Georges Antoine Théodore Millet, acquired at the above sale (?)⁴

(...)

By latest 2012: Cornelius Gurlitt, Munich/Salzburg

From 6 May 2014: Estate of Cornelius Gurlitt

Introductory remarks

The largest current collection of 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 This collection bears great similarity to the eight drawings, which were found in C. Gurlitt's cache. Similar to the Musée du 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. The drawings by Millet found in the Gurlitt trove are typical to his oeuvre after

¹ Anlage 5. 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).

² Ibid.

³ Anlage 6.

⁴ According to the auction protocol held at the Archives de Paris, this work was acquired by Jean François Millet's son Georges Antoine Théodore Millet. (Anlage 7). However, an annotated copy of the catalogue states Félix Bienaimé Feuardent, a lifelong friend of Millet, as the buyer to this lot. See attachment: *Vente Veuve Millet 1894*. It has not proven possible to establish yet, which indication is correct.

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

he left Paris in 1849 for Barbizon, where he joined his new friends and devoted himself to peasant life and rural scenes. He concentrated in capturing the landscape and the humble inhabitants of this region.

In the Musée du Louvre collection, there are few drawings, which partially resemble Lostart 478535. Clearly, this scene describes the end of the day when the peasant couple returns home. The male is carrying a tied bundle. A closer look reveals a fagot, the bundle of sticks and twigs to be used at home for fuel, to heat food and home.⁶ The woman is carrying a basket, and both accompanying the cow after the day's grazing in the fields.⁷

The team did not change the title assigned to the drawing in the Drouot sale to comply with this description, although it could read: "Return of the laborers."⁸

- **Primary sources**

Business records Hildebrand Gurlitt:⁹

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 8 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's cache. H. Gurlitt served as Roemer's main buyer in Paris for his Berlin gallery¹⁰ and Gurlitt may have assumed the future acquisition, which did not materialize, consequently the works remained in H. Gurlitt's possession.

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

⁶ http://www.culture.gouv.fr/public/mistral/joconde_fr ; no. d'inventaire RF 11349; RF 11336

⁷ Ibid., RF 5726

⁸ Ibid., RF 5726

⁹ The sales ledger has proven to be problematic, inconsistent and inaccurate by provenance research conducted pertaining to the C. Gurlitt estate

¹⁰ Hoffmann, Meike und Nicola Kuhn. *Hitlers Kunstaendler*. Muenchen 2016. p 217

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. The falsified listing of the purchase from J. Lenthal was proven by post war letters and 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 by H. Gurlitt’s request.¹¹

Book 2: Sales 1943

Millet	Bauern	Rad.	Privat H.G.	600,-	12.3.	600,-	Hermann Reemtsma
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Line 1456 from March 12 registers an engraving by Millet “Bauern” (peasants) as having been sold to H. Reemtsma for 600 RM.¹²

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

¹¹ Anlage 2. 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 entries false. 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

¹² 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”)

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 team believes that the 8 drawings registered in H. Gurlitt's various ledgers as outlined in the various books, could correlate to 8 of the total of 11 Millet items found in the C. Gurlitt cache. Of these, 6 are to be found in the photograph of an authenticity certificate issued by Andre Schoeller¹³ (Lostart 470201, 478202, 478203, 478204, 478205, 478207) plus additional 2 drawings (Lostart 478206 and 478535) to constitute the total of 8, hastily registered by H. Gurlitt, omitting the particular varying media.
- The additional 3 items: 2 framed landscapes, Lostart 478390 and 478391, appear on the Liste Gerard, and in all probability are not part of this register of 8, as well as the pastel rendering of "Fin de la Journée" (Lostart 532992), the measurements and medium of which would have demanded a separate individual listing.
- This work could be one of the items listed in the Sales Ledgers with the (falsified) acquisition from Jean Lenthal. Due to the varying technique (ink vs. chalk) it remains unclear if the items from the ledger could be identical with the present drawing.

Photograph:¹⁴

Six drawings out of eleven Millet drawings found in the C. Gurlitt cache apparently were framed together, and probably sold as such. The photograph depicts a consolidated matting, and does not include Lostart 478535. This fact augments the separate listing in the 1894 Hotel Drouot sale of Millet's widow under lot 195.

- **Archival sources**

ERR database of Art at the Jeu de Paume

The following ERR files were consulted with negative findings:

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

List of ERR confiscated items no. 41 Galerie Bernstein¹⁵

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

Owner: Salomon Flavian. Inventory no.: Fla 6; Millet: Der Holzhacker¹⁶

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

¹³ Photographs BArch, N 1826 Bild-0953 [=9.1_F940], [6 October 1943].

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ <https://www.fold3.com/image/303253897> f (September 2017)

¹⁶ <https://www.fold3.com/image/306292350> (September 2017)

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. None of the works relate to the present drawing.

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 79 collections were seized by the ERR,¹⁷ but none of them with reports on Lostart 478535.

One needs to bear in mind the Moebel Aktion – Bilder, which does 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 478535.¹⁹ Where subject matter and medium did bear similarities, the measurements did not.

It should 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 #478535, and neither does the medium. In addition, the Schoeller photograph with expertise attests to the Paris provenance.

- **Auction and Exhibition Catalogues with reference to Lostart 478535:**

Concurring with the identification of the specific authenticity stamp for the Millet sale of 1894 (Lugt 3728),²¹ the drawing was evidently on the sale of Millet’s widow’s estate after her death.

Jean-François Millet, Hotel Drouot, Paris, 23 April 1894, lot 195.²² The extensive collection of drawings in various media offered in this sale poses a challenge. Due to the fact that the original title of the drawing was unknown, several options were considered, for the drawing depicting a couple returning home at the end of the day. Considering that the measurements in lot 195 are almost identical to Lostart 478535, the team identified the subject to be “*Paysans conduisant une vache* (Peasants leading a cow). It does reflect the fact that a couple is leading one cow.

According to the auction protocol held at the Archives de Paris, this work was acquired by Jean François Millet’s son Georges Antoine Théodore Millet.²³ However, an annotated copy of the catalogue states

¹⁷ <https://www.fold3.com/image/269984171> , 269984187, 269984192, 269984200 (September 2017)

¹⁸ <https://www.fold3.com/image/283748345> , 306282909 (September 2017)

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)

²¹ Lugt, loc. cit.

²² Anlage 6. Succession de Madame Veuve J. F. Millet. Dessins, Tableaux et Gravures par J. F. Millet. Auct. cat. Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 24-25 April 1894

²³ Anlage 7.

Félix Bienaimé Feuardent, a lifelong friend of Millet²⁴, as the buyer to this lot. It has not proven possible to establish yet, which indication is correct.

A possible estate sale for Millet jun. could not be found.

The art collection that was amassed by the art and coin dealer Feuardent was inherited within the family for several generations. The 1934 sale in Paris of parts of the collection was checked for a reference to the present drawing, without a match.

The team believes the chalk/crayon 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 color²⁵. The one used by Millet in this drawing was in all probability made of compressed charcoal, and thus the tendency to identify it as crayon.²⁶

- **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.

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.

²⁴ Anlage 6. <http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/901/jean-francois-millet-portrait-of-louise-antoinette-feuardent-french-1841/> (October 2017)

²⁵ <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/>

²⁶ To be noted that medium was assigned by Munich team and not by YV team. The HR photographs do not allow precise medium identification..

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.
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Krügel, G.: Jean François Millet: eine Kunstgabe. Mainz: Scholz, 1909.
Laughton, B.: The Drawings of Daumier and Millet. New Haven / London 1991.
Mancœuvre, 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.

Conclusion:

The extensive number of drawings produced by Millet offers 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 sale of 1894 lists one drawing of identical title, with almost identical measurements, which the team believes to be a match with Lostart 478535. Georges Millet seems to have been the buyer of this lot, however the possibility persists that Felix Feuardent acquired the work instead.

Another hypothesis is, that this drawing might be part of the ledger's register of 8 ink drawings by Millet, falsely attributed as having been in the collection of Jean (Hans) Lenthal. However, as the technique differs and since Gurlitt sold several other works to clients it cannot be said with certainty. The attempt to hide the true owner would be a hint to the dubious source H. Gurlitt wished to leave anonymous.

It remains unclear how, when or where Hildebrand Gurlitt acquired the work.

Die Provenienz des Werkes konnte trotz intensiver Forschung nicht lückenlos aufgeklärt werden, d.h. das Kunstwerk ist weder erwiesenermaßen noch mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit NS-Raubkunst noch frei von NS-Raubkunstverdacht. Es wurde nach aktueller Einschätzung allen prioritären Rechercheansätzen nachgegangen. Das Werk muss demnach in die Kategorie „ungeklärt“ [=nach Ampelsystem: gelb] eingestuft werden.²⁷

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:

- 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.

²⁷ Angleichung durch Projektleitung, 30.05.2018.

- 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.