

The Art of Etching Gallery

Muirhead Bone

Scottish, 1876 – 1953

Constantinople, 1934

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1968.461.1

This view of Constantinople, which shows the Süleymaniye Mosque, was completed in November, 1934 after a drawing Bone had executed in 1929. Bone, born in 1876 Glasgow, Scotland, had first trained as an architect before turning to art, specializing in watercolor and printmaking. Bone trained at the Glasgow School of Art before moving to London in 1901. There he continued to study alongside artists such as William Strang and Alphonse Legros, eventually joining the New English Art Club. Bone traveled and exhibited extensively, including in London and New York.

Joseph Pennell

American, 1857 – 1926

Culebra Cut from the *Vista d'Oro*

Panama Canal Series, 1912

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1928.56.1

Joseph Pennell, born in Philadelphia, was best known for his prints of historic landmarks used in books and travel articles. He and his wife, writer Elizabeth Robins Pennell, published numerous books including *The Life of James McNeill Whistler* (1908), who was a close friend of the couple.

Shortly before the completion of the canal in 1914, Pennell created a portfolio in 1912 titled *Building of the Panama Canal*. In it, the artist noted how impressed he was with the colossal scale of the construction, but he was equally impressed by the commitment of the workers who, he observed, “worked as if to work was neither a hardship nor an imposition. I never met anyone who wanted to leave; and I believe that the threat to send the men home broke the only strike on the Canal.”

James McBey

English, 1883 – 1959

The Dead Sea, 1921

drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1928.55.1

McBey's prints, together with those of fellow Scots, David Young Cameron and Muirhead Bone, provide a vital link between the etchings of James McNeill Whistler, the early years of etching revival and the phenomenal flourishing of the etching market during the 1920s—a period when more etchings were made, editioned, published, exhibited, sold, and resold than at any other time in history.

This etching shows a patrol embarking at the northern edge of the Dead Sea on a moonlit night. In the foreground, boats abandoned by the Turks have been holed with bayonet gashes. In the distance are the hills of Moab. Although dated in the image "23 March 1918," this work, like all of James McBey's desert war subjects, was not fine-tuned and completed until some years after the end of WWI.

Sir David Young Cameron

Scottish, 1865 – 1945

Souvenir d'Amsterdam, 1915

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1951.28.1

The Scottish etcher and painter Cameron, inspired by the works of James McNeill Whistler, Charles Meryon, Seymour Haden, and Rembrandt, became a leader of the Scottish etching revival. Cameron's use of light and shade in this print draws the viewer into the more picturesque aspects of the architecture. The typical Amsterdam canal house represented in Cameron's etching was built in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

Otto Henry Bacher

American, 1856 – 1909

Auf Stauffa Bruck (On Stauffa Bridge)

1879

etching

Gift, Levi W. Mengel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1918.19.53.11

This intimate landscape is the third image in Bacher's *Danube Series*, created when the artist was living and working in Germany between 1879 and 1882. Bacher was from Cleveland and spent a few years in Europe where he studied in Munich and worked in Florence. While in Venice, he was one of the "Duveneck boys" and made prints with Whistler in the 1880s.

after **Gustav Schönleber**

German, 1851 – 1917

Josiah Neely, Jr.

American, 1845 – 1902

Untitled, n.d.

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1922.142.1

A Philadelphia-area artist, Neely studied under Thomas Eakins from 1879 to 1884. His expertise in etching is attested to by his appointment as etching instructor at the Sketch Club in 1883. Neely's subjects included landscapes, seaport scenes, and figural studies. He was a member of the Sketch Club from 1880 until his death in 1902.

Mortimer Luddington Menpes

British/Australian, 1855 – 1938

Nagasaki under the Bridge, c. 1896

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1928.50.1

Menpes was born in Adelaide in South Australia and later moved to London with his parents. He shared a studio with Whistler in the 1880s and even shared a flat with him at Cheyne Walk on the Chelsea Embankment in London. "I have educated and trained you ... You are but the medium translating the ideas of the Master," Whistler wrote to Menpes.

Menpes became a major figure in the etching revival, producing more than seven hundred different etchings and drypoints, which he usually printed himself. A visit to Japan in 1887 led to his first one-man exhibition at Dowdeswell's Gallery in London. This panoramic format etching may derive from that trip to the East. It has parallels to Whistler's etching *Westminster Bridge in Progress* (1861), which shows a similar low vantage point.

Menpes moved into a property at 25 Cadogan Gardens, Sloane Square, designed for him by A. H. Mackmurdo in 1888 and decorated it in the Japanese style. Whistler and Menpes quarreled in 1888 over the interior design of the house, which Whistler felt was a shameless copying of his own ideas.

Gerald Leslie Brockhurst

English, 1890 – 1978

James McBey, 1931

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1952.3.1

This work by Brockhurst shows fellow etcher James McBey, among the most distinguished of the Scottish and British etchers whose works are included in this exhibition. Brockhurst was one of the outstanding British artists of the early twentieth century, and was hugely popular in the 1920s and early 30s. Today he is remembered for his poignant images of young women and girls and several portraits of contemporaries, including this portrait of McBey.

Francis Edgar Dodd

English, 1874 – 1949

The Garden Door, 1909

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1952.70.1

This work relates rather closely to Whistler's etching *Finette* from 1859 (below), depicting a contemporary woman dressed in a black gown against a light filled interior. Dodd studied at the Glasgow School of Art alongside Muirhead Bone (also included in this exhibition), who married Dodd's sister. He was awarded a travel scholarship which allowed him to travel to France, Italy, and Spain to study art. He was appointed a war artist in 1916, executing more than thirty portraits of leading military officials. He was elected to the Royal Academy in 1927 and served as a Trustee of the Tate Gallery.



James McNeill Whistler, *Finette*, 1859, etching

Jules Bastien-Lepage

French, 1848 – 1884

Retour des Champs

(Return from the Fields), 1878

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1930.46.1

A painter-etcher who was deeply interested in a naturalistic approach to painting and graphic work, Bastien-Lepage frequently depicted scenes of everyday life in the countryside. He was intimately familiar with such scenes, as he grew up on a farm. In addition to creating naturalistic portraits, the artist recorded rural peasants toiling in the fields in the tradition of Realists Gustave Courbet and Jean-François Millet. This etching is typical of his favored subject matter, showing a solitary heroic peasant, hand-on-hip with a wooden rake resting on her shoulder following a day's hard labor.

James McBey

English, 1883 – 1959

Portrait of Mrs. Albert H. Wiggin

1930

drypoint engraving

Gift, Edwin DeTurk Bechtel in memory of Levi W. Mengel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1949.70.1

Otto Henry Bacher

American, 1856 – 1909

A Wheel of Three Generations in 1884

c. 1884

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1920.154.1

This etching was published in *Selected Etchings by American Artists, Philadelphia*, 1884, and expresses the late-nineteenth century nostalgia for a quickly-fading rural way of life. Bacher joined a colony of American painters established by Frank Duveneck in Polling, Bavaria. In 1880, the “Duveneck boys,” a group which also included John White Alexander, Robert Frederick Blum, Charles Abel Corwin, and George Edward Hopkins, among others, traveled to Venice where they formed friendships with James Whistler and Henry James. Bacher, who collected Rembrandt etchings, was himself a skilled etcher. He became an apprentice and collaborator with Whistler, and the artist described him as “one of his favorite pupils.” Whistler, who was having difficulties with equipment in Venice, made use of Bacher's printer's ink and printing press from June to August 1880. Bacher began to collect Whistler's etchings and Bacher's etchings show the influence of both Whistler and Duveneck.

Francois Bonvin

French, 1817 – 1887

***Les Instruments de L'Eau-Forte* (*Instruments for Etching*), 1861**

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1938.226.278.191

François Bonvin is primarily known as a painter but also worked as an etcher. Among the few known completed etchings is a series of six plates, printed by Auguste Delâtre in 1861 with the title “Six eaux-fortes, dessinées et gravées par F. Bonvin, peintre.” (“Six etchings, designed and engraved by F. Bonvin, painter”). The title page represents the instruments used in the etching process: a sheet of paper, the copper plate, bottles of acid, a funnel, the needle, and a magnifying glass. Bonvin produced this series of etchings at a time when this form of art became extremely popular in France. He allowed his series to be sold by the publisher Alfred Cadart, whose studio was often the meeting place for a number of prominent engravers including Antoine Vollon, Théodule Ribot, Adolphe Appian, and Félix Bracquemond, the latter two of which are included in this exhibition. In 1862, Cadart founded the Société des Aquafortistes (Society of Etchers) to promote the art of etching. However, Bonvin was never a member of this society.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

***The Forge*, 1861**

etching and drypoint, state: vi/vi

Gift, Michael P. Lintz

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

2013.4.54.14

Forges and blacksmiths were a recurring theme in Whistler's work and appear in several of his etchings and lithographs as an opportunity to explore light and shadow. The scene shows the interior of a blacksmith's shop with the glowing furnace on the left. The blacksmith, hands on hips, wears a protective apron and hat as he works a piece of metal in the fire with tongs. He is flanked by apprentices—whose bodies reflect the white hot glow of the fire—and additional figures on the right. This etching and drypoint (a process of incising lines on a copper plate causing a slightly raised, ragged rough edge known as the ‘burr’) was drawn by Whistler in Brittany, in northwest France, where he visited from August through December of 1861. The etching was printed with the ‘Thames Set’ in 1871 and in a later edition in 1890.

François Bonvin

French, 1817 – 1887

La Graveur (The Printmaker), 1861

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1938.226.278.156.2

Published in *Revue L'Art*, this dramatic work emphasizes the contrast between light and dark, with a dense web of lines to suggest deep shadows. The solitary figure of an etcher, slumped over at his table, toils in his studio by lamplight. The print reveals an artist completely absorbed in his work, emphasizing the physical demands of the medium of etching, rather than romantic notions of the act of creativity.

Hallway

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

J. Becquet, Sculptor (The Fiddler), 1859

etching and drypoint with heavy plate tone, state: vi/vi

Gift, Edwin DeTurck Bechtel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1944.147.1

Restored through the Adopt-A-Painting Program by Lebanon Valley College

The original title, *The Fiddler*, is still often used to identify this etching. In fact, the instrument is actually a cello and Becquet was not a professional musician but a sculptor. The sitter is Just Becquet (1829-1907), a friend of Whistler's during his time in Paris. A later impression of this subject was used as part of *The Thames Set: A Series of Sixteen Etchings of Scenes on The Thames and other Subjects*, published by Ellis and Green in London in 1871. This impression is heavily inked and creates a unique toning effect, which softens the lines. Whistler emphasized details of the sitter's face but only loosely sketched in the rest of the body—a practice that he borrowed from Anthony van Dyck, the Flemish painter/etcher from the seventeenth century.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

The Muff, 1874

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

2013.4.54.21

This fashionably dressed young lady was one of several created by Whistler including: *The Velvet Dress* (1873/74), *Tatting* (1874), and *Maude Standing* (1876/78). In 1886, English art critic Frederick Wedmore observed, "A young woman seated, having come to pay a morning call, and meaning to be pleasant ... A scarce little dry-point, of elegant and refined triviality – if, indeed, it is to be trivial to be entirely of our day."

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

***Annie, Seated*, 1859**

etching and drypoint, state: iii/iii

Gift, Edwin DeTurck Bechtel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1951.77.1

The sitter in this work is Annie Haden, who was about nine or ten years old when Whistler recorded her. Whistler spent Christmas in London with Annie's parents Deborah Delano Haden, Whistler's half-sister, and Francis Seymour Haden, the surgeon-turned-etcher. Whistler returned to Paris on January 12, 1859 and in a letter to Deborah he wrote:

I'm working hard and my stay in London with you and Seymour has done me an immense good in "my art" ... My etchings have been very much admired, and I wish Seymour would send me three fine proofs of each in black ink.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

***Bibi Valentin*, 1859**

etching and drypoint, state: ii/ii

Gift, Edwin DeTurck Bechtel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1944.147.1

The sitter was the young doe-eyed child of Valentin, one of Whistler's friends in Paris. The etching was created in 1859, when the artist created a series of portraits including *Bibi Lalouette*, *C. L. Drouet, Sculptor*, and *Fumette Standing*, among others. The scale of the figure is exaggerated by the reclining pose and the perspectival foreshortening the employed by the artist.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

***Model Draping*, 1889**

lithograph

Gift, Edwin DeTurck Bechtel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1946.171.1

This classically-inspired, delicate figure study with drapery was part of a series that Whistler executed in the late 1880s. The figure holds the drapery above her, with her head cast downward. The artist's butterfly monogram prominently appears on the right of the sheet. The artist began using the butterfly monogram as early as 1869. The monogram is composed of his initials (JW). Whistler experimented in the 1880s with lithography—a printing technique where the artist draws the design on a stone with a greasy crayon, which is then inked and pressed to create impressions—under the advice of fellow artist Thomas Way.

England

Lester George Hornby

American, 1882 – 1956

***London Bridge*, 1908**

etching and drypoint (cancelled plate)

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1949.73.2.2

This sheet was printed from the cancelled plate. When an artist did not want any more prints made from the copper plate, it was often incised with crossing cancellation lines to obstruct the image and to assure that no unauthorized restrikes were created.

Lester George Hornby

American, 1882 – 1956

***London Bridge*, 1908**

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1949.73.2.1

Hornby studied at the Rhode Island School of Design and the Art Students League in New York. He then traveled to Paris where he developed his graphic technique. The artist exhibited in Paris in the Salon d'Automne of 1907 and during WWI served as a war correspondent, furnishing illustrations for the war effort.

Hornby's style and technique lie within the tradition of Whistler, Haden, and French leaders of the etching revival. The artist printed all of his own etchings, allowing him to experiment with the subtleties of plate tone as a means of enhancing mood in his images. His most influential etchings were produced during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Hornby enlists zoom perspective in this dramatic view of London Bridge. The bridge is occupied by a swarm of pedestrians on the flanks, near the balusters, and a long line of horse-drawn, double-decker omnibuses in the center, accurately conveying the hustle and bustle of the capital city.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

Maunder's Fish Shop, Chelsea, 1890

lithograph

Gift, Michael P. Lintz

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

2013.4.54.21

After returning to London from Venice, Whistler made a number of prints which recorded the shop fronts of small vendors operating in old buildings. Here, the windows, awnings, and piled counters of Maunder's fish shop on Cheyne Walk, near the artist's home in Chelsea, are used to develop an abstracted pattern of lights and darks. Supported by the architecture, the horizontal arrangement is populated by pedestrians and shop assistants, some standing within shadowed doorways, others on the brightly lit sidewalk.

Francis Seymour Haden

English, 1818 – 1910

Battersea Reach, 1863

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1928.53.1

This work shows a view of the Thames at Battersea with the Battersea Railway Bridge in the distance. The plate was etched from Whistler's home in Chelsea at 7 Lindsay Row in London, where he moved in March 1863. Haden's technique and style recalls the structure of Whistler's *Thames* etchings of a few years earlier.

Haden was one of the first etchers of the time to take his plates outdoors and work directly from nature. He encouraged and influenced his brother-in-law, James Abbott McNeill Whistler, to do the same, so much so that Whistler dedicated his first set of etchings, the 'French Set,' to Haden. When Whistler moved to London in 1859 he was a frequent visitor to Haden's household and produced both etchings and paintings of the family members. Several years later, however, serious rifts became apparent between these two great artists. In Paris in 1867 an argument resulted in Whistler pushing Haden through a plate-glass window. Haden and Whistler never spoke to each other again.

Herbert Menzies Marshall

English, 1841 – 1913

Turle's House, Westminster, 1888

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1938.226.278.139

A member of the Royal Society of Painters and Etchers and the Royal Watercolour Society, Marshall studied architecture at the Royal Academy and excelled as a cricket player.

James Turle was organist and master of the choristers at Westminster Abbey from 1831 to 1882. The house he occupied in the Abbey Cloisters during his long tenure was torn down shortly after his death.

Arthur Severn

English, 1842 – 1931

Old Cheyne Walk, 1882

etching

Gift, Levi W. Mengel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1918.119.53.15

From a well-known artistic family, Severn was closely linked to John Ruskin; he married the famous art critic's niece Joan Ruskin Agnew in 1871.

This work was commissioned by *The Art Journal*, which was an important annual publication dedicated to the publication of etchings by leading artists of the late nineteenth century. It was described by the editors as a place where

boats are moored, some upon the mud-bank, others upon a great wooden raft that lies upon the mud. There are many shadows of sudden sun and cloud and breeze; a barge with a filling sail is traveling quickly towards the shore. The shadows are short, the light is not yet in the west, a thousand crisp little waves are on the river, and a thousand pleasant lights among the boats; a vaguely sketched figure leans against the posts of the embankment, watching some men who are overhauling a rope below.

Joseph Pennell

American, 1857 – 1926

Mond Gas Dudley Port, 1909

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1928.57.1

Pennell, a Philadelphia-born Quaker, spent the first two decades of his career abroad, living primarily in London, where he became a close associate of Whistler. Here, he represents an industrial complex in Staffordshire, northern England, where coal was converted into Mond Gas (inexpensive gas used for industrial and domestic heating), processing at this time more than three million tons of coal a year.

Sir Frank Short

English, 1857 – 1945

St. Magnus Church, Billingsgate, 1884

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1924.939.1

This etching shows the same neighborhood, Thames Street near London Bridge, frequented by Whistler. St. Magnus, with its distinctive steeple, was reconstructed by Christopher Wren after the Great Fire of London in 1666.

As head of the Engraving School at the Royal College of Art, South Kensington, Short had great influence on a younger generation of printmakers. He was elected to the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers in 1885, and took a prominent part in conducting its affairs. In 1910 he succeeded Sir Seymour Haden as president.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

Black Lion Wharf, 1859

etching

Chrysler Museum of Art Collection

2013.17.3

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

Rotherhithe, England, 1860

etching and drypoint

Chrysler Museum of Art Collection

2013.17.4

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

Billingsgate, 1859

etching, state: vii/ix

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

2003.5.1C

This view of the Thames shows Billingsgate Market, England's largest inland fish market on the north bank of the river, at the north end of London Bridge, which can be seen in the background. The rhythm of the rows of masts against the sky with wispy clouds sets up a dramatic contrast of light and dark. The plate may have been etched outdoors—en plain air—perhaps from the steps of the Custom's House. This sheet is a particularly heavily-inked impression, with the ink reaching the deep "bite" of the plate from the acid bath.

Sir Frank Short

English, 1857 – 1945

Polperro Harbour, with Bridge, 1888

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1927.2637.1

Depicting the picturesque south-west Cornwall coast, Short's etching shows low tide; looking toward the head of the harbor, which ends in a dark bridge, with a group of cottages to the left, and a quay to right, with a hill behind. In the left foreground, a fishing boat, 'Rival Fowey', rests in the mud.

Edwin Edwards

English, 1823 – 1879

Untitled, c. 1871

from *Old Inns Etched by Edwin Edwards*,

Third Part

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1919.104.1

Edwards, a lawyer by training, was inspired to become an etcher by the French artist Henri Fantin-Latour, whom he first met in Paris in 1861. Fantin-Latour made a return visit to Edwards at his Sunbury-on-Thames home and legend has it Edwards decided to become an artist that instant. He installed a press at his home and he and his wife, Ruth, became skilled at printing. Edwards' subjects were mainly views in the south of England, especially Devon and Cornwall. He was well connected within European artistic circles, befriending and being encouraged in particular by Alphonse Legros and James McNeill Whistler.

In 1861, Edwards made an etching trip along the Thames with Whistler, Fantin-Latour, and Francis Seymour Haden during which he executed a portrait of Whistler sketching. During the course of his career, Edwards completed over three hundred and fifty etchings and published a three-volume work titled *Etchings of Old Inns*, which were illustrated with 135 of his etchings, some of which are included in this exhibition.



Félix Bracquemond, *Edwin Edwards*, 1872, drypoint

Edwin Edwards

English, 1823 – 1879

Vine Tavern, Mile End Road

Stepney, London, 1871

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1919.105.1



Edwards' etching of this old tavern captures a bit of the atmospheric conditions in London's East End—smokestacks puffing smoke in a scene that could be set at twilight. The Vine Tavern was situated at 31 Mile End Road in East London. This pub, which was thought to have been in existence since the 17th century closed, and was demolished around 1911.

Francis Seymour Haden

English, 1818 – 1910

Sawley Abbey, 1873

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1951.20.1

Seymour Haden was the unlikely combination of a surgeon and an etcher. Although he pursued a very successful medical career, he is mostly remembered for his etched work, as well as for his writings on etching. He was one of a group of artists, including James McNeill Whistler and Alphonse Legros, whose passionate interest in the medium led to the so-called etching revival, a period that lasted well into the twentieth century.

The extolling of etching for its inherent spontaneous qualities reached its pinnacle during the etching revival. While the line of the etching needle, Haden wrote, was “free, expressive, full of vivacity,” that of the burin [a tool used for engraving] was “cold, constrained, uninteresting,” and “without identity.”

James McBey

English, 1883 – 1959

Moray Firth, Scotland, 1914

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1952.71.1

This work shows a scene along the Scottish coast in which McBey depicts a group of children sitting on the top of a cliff overlooking the little town and harbor. The smaller children are just happy in the sunshine, while others watch two boys whose momentary interest is entirely concentrated on keeping the kite aloft. Each holds the line of his

lifting kites, with their wavy tails making a spiral rhythm of movement in the air, adding a subtle suggestion of life to the spacious and delicately conceived design. A cluster of fishing-boats gathers in the harbor, while a procession of others coming in from fishing carries the eye away towards the horizon.

Francis Seymour Haden

English, 1818 – 1910

Thames Ditton-with a sail, 1864

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1928.49.1

Thames Ditton is a small village along the Thames in Surrey County. Haden excelled in the genre of landscape etchings and in this work shows a sailboat beyond two trees with the river and cottages beyond.

Edwin Edwards

English, 1823 – 1879

Outside the Inn, 1871

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1919.1030.1

This work is from the artist's *Etchings of Old Inns* and demonstrates Edwards's interests in light, shadow, and texture in the medium of etching. The third volume of Edwards' comprehensive study of old inns and hotels was published in 1881 by his widow, Ruth, eight years after the initial volume appeared.

Francis Seymour Haden

English, 1818 – 1910

Ye Compleat Angler, 1877

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1968.605.1

Sir Francis Seymour Haden's artistic career is rather remarkable, given the fact that he was an 'amateur.' A leading surgeon of obstetrics, he was educated at Derby School, Christ's Hospital and University College London. He then completed his medical education at the Sorbonne, Paris, and in Grenoble. An avid collector of etchings, Seymour Haden created slightly over 250 original etchings, the majority being landscapes. He achieved an international fame in this area and his landscape compositions are distinguished by his mastery of foliage, water, and atmospheric effects. Haden, who served as president of the Society of Painter-Etchers, was elected a member of the Athenaeum (1891) and was knighted in 1894.

With its bold lines and brilliant tones, this etching is an outstanding example of Seymour Haden's late style. It was first published by Hogarth and Sons, London, in 1878. Two years later P. G. Hamerton requested the plate for publication in *Etching and Etchers*.

James B. Luft

American, c. 1888 – 1934

Ship Haven, 1920s

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1968.610.1C

Luft was a Berks County artist, who took up etching to great success. He was a well-known artist and teacher in the Reading area and exhibited frequently at the Reading Public Museum. Some of his known etchings include *Under the Arbor* and *The Plowman*. This work, a view of Tower Bridge in London, was inspired, no doubt, by Whistler's and Haden's earlier studies of the River Thames.

America

Joseph Pennell

American, 1857 – 1926

Caissons on Vesey Street, 1921

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1944.146.1

Born in Philadelphia, Pennell became best known for his illustrations and etchings, a process he began in the late 1870s. He completed over 1800 etchings and lithographs, executed primarily in Europe before 1917. His style was deeply influenced by Whistler and the etching revival of the nineteenth century.

This view of Lower Manhattan from the early 1920s is typical of Pennell's interest in atmosphere and line. The etching depicts the construction of the New York Telephone building, known at the time as the Barclay-Vesey Building, which was completed in 1926. The Woolworth Building can be seen in the background. This early art deco edifice was heavily damaged on September 11, 2001 and has since been restored.

Joseph Pennell

American, 1857 – 1926

New York from Governor's Island, 1915

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1954.2.1

Pennell captured the spirit of New York City in a series of etchings including this work. The artist noted that:

New York rises a vision, a mirage of the lower bay...on one side the Goddess greets you, with the city beyond... To the right, filmy, delicate and lace-like by day are the bridges, by night a pattern of stars that Hiroshige never knew...The Unbelievable City...the city that inspires me—that I love.

Earl Horter

American, 1881 – 1940

Old Stock Exchange, Philadelphia

c. 1930

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1939.46.1

A superb draughtsman and technician, Horter was born in 1881 and raised in Philadelphia. During the 1920s and 1930s, the etcher produced a tremendous amount of artwork. He also traveled to Europe several times, summered in Rockport, Massachusetts, and worked in New York City. Throughout the 1930s, he taught at the Philadelphia Museum School of Art and at the Tyler School of Art.

Horter's drawings, lithographs, and etchings of large cities—primarily Philadelphia, New Orleans, and New York—are of superior quality. This print depicts the bustling city of Philadelphia in the area around the Old Stock Exchange as a patchwork of old and new, elegant and gritty.

Earl Horter

American, 1881 – 1940

New Orleans (R. Sciacentano Italian Grocery French Quarter), c. 1935

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1939.48.1

With this work, Horter's attention is drawn not to the buildings of the French Quarter, but to the elaborate ironwork of the balconies of the top two floors of the central structure. The medium of etching was ideal for describing such intricate details.

Henry Mortikar Rosenberg

American, 1858 – 1947

Untitled, 1890

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1968.548.1

Having studied in Munich with Frank Duveneck, as one of the "Duveneck boys," and in Venice in the 1880s with Whistler, Rosenberger moved in 1896 to Nova Scotia, where he became the principal of the Victoria School of Art and Design. The artist was known for his oils—which vacillated between impressionist and tonalist in style—etchings, and drawings of rural scenes. He preferred the panoramic format, such as the current example and was skilled at rendering the subtle effects of light and dark in his etched landscapes.

John Taylor Arms

American, 1887 – 1953

The Valley of the Savery, Wyoming, 1934

etching

Bequest, Dr. Levi Mengel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1941.199.1

A rather late work in the context of the etching revival, this work is by Arms, who began his career as an architect. His early work shows a preference for a meticulous, almost obsessively precise etching style, documenting the Gothic cathedrals of Europe. The etching shown here is much more modern and experimental—with an emphasis on abstracted forms. Much of the plate is occupied by the white, negative space of both the foreground and background.

The etching had its origin as a group of sketches, created while vacationing in Wyoming in the summer of 1932. For two days, the artist sketched at the edge of the remote valley, capturing the sweeping, dramatic panorama which he called, “wonderful, remote, [and] monumental.”

Henry Farrer

American (English born), 1844 – 1903

Now Come Still Evening On, 1882 – 1883

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1919.75.1

This remarkably detailed view of the edge of a wood with two small figures flanking a felled tree suggests that the pair has been working all day and that evening is approaching. In his watercolors and etchings, Farrer followed the principles of English art critic John Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites, who aimed for verism (truth) above all in their work. Along with William Trost Richards and others, Farrer was a founding member of the Association for the Advancement of Truth in Art in 1863.

Henry Farrer

American (English born), 1844 – 1903

On New York Bay, 1879

etching

Gift, Levi W. Mengel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1918.119.53.24

This work, originally published in *American Art Review* (1879), is an excellent example of Farrer's marine subjects, combining atmospheric and light effects in one plate. The dark, richly inked undersides of the boats in the foreground contrast sharply with the delicately incised, activated lines of the water and sky.

Farrer immigrated to New York from his native England in the 1860s and began etching views of New York City and seascapes. He was one of the leading advocates for the medium of etching as a creative tool for artists, serving as one of the founders of the New York Etching Club in 1873.

Earl Horter

American, 1881 – 1940

Massachusetts Harbor Scene

c.1920 – 1930

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1939.47.1

Largely self-taught, Horter was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania and spent much of his artistic career in New York. He found work as an illustrator and collaborated with fellow Philadelphian Joseph Pennell (also included in this exhibition). One of Horter's largest and most impressive etchings, this scene was likely inspired by the harbors of Massachusetts, where the artist spent his summers. In the foreground of the busy docks, cargo from one of the ships is being unloaded.

Henry Farrer

American (English born), 1844 – 1903

Evening, New York Harbor, 1884

etching on satin

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1968.231.1C

Typical of Farrer's harbor views from this time period, this etching demonstrates the artist's ability to show the deepening shadows of evening as it approaches. His skills are also evident in his treatment of a variety of textures—water, sky, and land. Uniquely, this crisp impression is made on satin/silk as opposed to traditional paper. This was a novelty, although not an unusual practice, as the tradition of printing on textiles had been around for centuries.

Italy

Herman Armour Webster

American, 1878 – 1970

Monte Caprino, Rome, c. 1925

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1970.61.1

New York-born Webster studied at Yale University and traveled to Paris in 1904 where he studied at the Académie Julian and where he was first exposed to the graphic works of Whistler, Charles Meryon, and other artists of the etching revival. As an expatriate, Webster traveled extensively, and this view of Rome shows the area of the Campidoglio almost as the neighborhood may have looked in the late Renaissance. The streets and open spaces teem with pedestrians making their way through the complex urban fabric of the Eternal City.

Sir David Young Cameron

Scottish, 1865 – 1945

A Venetian Convent, c. 1895

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1957.55.1

Cameron was a leader in the etching revival in Great Britain and was a member of the Royal Society of Painters-Etchers. He traveled widely throughout Europe and created several sets of etchings based on his journeys including the 'Clyde Set' (Scotland) and the 'North Holland Set.' Part of his 'North Italian Set' of etchings, this work is number four of the group of twenty-six and depicts three monks seen from behind, with a view of the canal, including a gondola making its way under a bridge in the middle ground.

Adolphe Appian

French, 1818 – 1898

Le Port de San Remo, 1878

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1919.138.1

The port city of San Remo, on the western edge of Italy, along the Mediterranean, offered artists ample subject matter. This etching shows a group of fishing boats coming ashore, with a dome and fortified structure to the right. The artist regularly documented the scenic ports of the Mediterranean, including those in Italy and France (Collioure).

Frank Duveneck

American, 1848 – 1919

Desdemona's House, 1883

etching

Chrysler Museum of Art Collection

51.17.2

George Edward Hopkins

American, 1855 – 1924

Sotto Portico del Traghetto, 1880

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1918.119.53.32

This Venetian view demonstrates Hopkins' absorption of the older master's approach to etching and relates, compositionally, closely to Whistler's 'Venice Set' (1879-80, published 1880) and his 'Second Venice Set' (1879-80, published in 1886).

Hopkins, who studied at the Cincinnati Art School later attended the Royal Academy in Munich Academy of Fine Arts. In 1880, the year this etching was made, he joined a colony of American painters, which included John H. Twachtman, Otto Bacher, and John White Alexander, established by Frank Duveneck in Munich. In Venice that same year, he formed a friendship with author Henry James and Whistler, whose own etchings influenced the young artist.

Frank Duveneck

American, 1848 – 1919

Riva degli Schiavoni, No. 1, 1880

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1970.52.1

Duveneck etched the same view as Whistler's *Riva*, but from further along, looking towards the Grand Ducal Palace. Duveneck worked at a studio on the Riva degli Schiavoni and he and Whistler must have met around 1879 – 80. Soon, the two artists began experimenting with etching — Duveneck choosing larger compositions with boldly inked lines.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

The Riva No. 1, 1879 – 1880

etching and drypoint, state: iii/iv

Gift, Edwin DeTurck Bechtel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1955.177.1

The artist etched this elevated point of view of the Riva degli Schiavone probably from his room in the Casa Jankowitz in Venice in 1879-80 as part of a commission he received from the Fine Art Society of London. The traditional method of showing detail in the foreground is flouted by Whistler, who instead, presents an open triangular piazza. The composition is populated by fishermen and a group of people engaged in conversation while crossing the arched bridge in the middle ground. The suggestion of paving stones is indicated with a few etched lines and the receding row of buildings at the very top of the composition lead to the distinguishable round domes of San Marco on the extreme right.

France

Maxime Lalanne

French, 1827 – 1886

Cusset, Excursion de Vichy

1864 (reprinted in 1880)

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1968.606.1

Maxime Lalanne's landmark book *A Treatise on Etching* (1880), paved the way for the French etching revival in the mid-nineteenth century and led to a similar movement in America. Lalanne's book deeply influenced the course of American printmaking. Many of Lalanne's etchings are marvels of precise observation and controlled etching to vary the strength of the incised line. This meticulous control allowed Lalanne to achieve a sense of distance and atmosphere using only line, with no inky manipulations.

This work shows The Belot House, where in 1440 Louis XI was pardoned by his father, Charles VII, during the signing of the Cusset peace treaty that ended the Praguerie rebellion (a revolt against the king).

Charles Meryon

French, 1821 – 1868

L'Abside de Notre Dame de Paris (*The Apse of Notre Dame*), 1854

etching, drypoint, and engraving

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1968.604.1C

Meryon was one of the first artists to devote his entire artistic output to the graphic arts. He stands as an important figure in the etching revival of the nineteenth century and is best known for his scenes of Paris that capture the city at the very moment it was experiencing huge changes due to the reorganization plans of Haussmann during the Second Empire (1852-70).

Meryon's prints poetically record the appearance of the medieval sections of town and Gothic structures that were being torn down to accommodate the wide boulevards and new parks and squares of the modern city. Yet, these images are not simply exact renditions of specific structures, but a personal vision of a city that was being forever altered.

Critic Charles Baudelaire praised Meryon in 1859, remarking, "By the vigor, the delicacy, and certainty of his drawings, Meryon recalls what is best in the work of the early etchers. We have rarely seen represented with more poetry the solemnity peculiar to a great capital."

Auguste-Louis Lepère

French, 1849 – 1918

The Watering Place at Marie Bridge, Paris (*L'Abreuvoir au Pont-Marie - deuxième planche*), 1902

etching and drypoint

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1920.29.1

Pont Marie, the second oldest bridge in Paris, connects the Île St. Louis with the right bank of the Seine. In Lepère's time, the area was a convenient place for watering horses and dogs as well as unloading barges. Horse-drawn vehicles were still the major method of transporting goods around the city and the animals needed, and deserved, a cooling-off in the river.

Félix Hilaire Buhot

French, 1847 – 1898

Une Matinée d'Hiver au Quai de l'Hotel-Dieu, (Winter Morning on the Quai de l'Hotel-Dieu), 1876

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1930.60.1

An expert at experimenting with the medium of etching and drypoint (often combining several techniques in the same print), Buhot sought to achieve the maximum number of sheets per plate. The artist is best known for his atmospheric images—which he called "paintings on copper"—of France and England including landscapes, seascapes, and urban street scenes, such as this example, in which Buhot skillfully depicts rain and fog.

Edwin Edwards

English, 1823 – 1879

Parisian Boulevard seen through a Balcony Railing, 1860s

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1918.115.55

This elevated view of a Parisian boulevard from a second floor balcony relates to contemporary works in oil by French impressionists such as Édouard Manet, Claude Monet, and Gustave Caillebotte. The viewer's vantage point is low, and the city's rooftops appear through the screen of the simple iron railing. Unlike Caillebotte's paintings, however, Edwards' view does not include any main figures, just the sketchy suggestion of pedestrians on the street below. Edwards was close friends with Paris etcher-painter Henri Fantin-Latour.

Félix Bracquemond

French, 1833 – 1914

La Terrasse de la Villa Brancas, 1876

etching

Museum Purchase

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1918.115.23

Bracquemond was one of the champions of the etching revival in France, producing more than 800 prints over the course of his career. The artist was a co-founder and leading member of the Société des Aquafortistes (Society of Etchers), teaching several of his contemporaries the art of etching. He exhibited regularly at the Salon in Paris beginning in the 1850s, but also moved in avant-garde circles that included the Impressionists.

In the first Impressionists Exhibition in 1874, Braquemond showed more than thirty of his prints. This work was displayed in the group's fourth official exhibition and depicts his wife, Marie, also an impressionist painter of note, painting a portrait of her sister, Louise Quiverson, on the terrace of their home in Sèvres, France. This work was reprinted in *L'Art* in 1878 and is an exploration in light and shadow. Marie, the artist, is shaded by the tree above her, while Louise, the sitter, is bathed in the full sun of the terrace.

Auguste-Louis Lepère

French, 1849 – 1918

***Souvenir de Saint Denis*, 1913**

etching and drypoint

Gift, Edwin DeTurck Bechtel

in Memory of Dr. Levi W. Mengel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1944.145.1

A French painter and etcher, Lepère was also the undisputed leader of the etching revival in Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century. He began his studies in Paris as a young boy, and by the mid-1870s, he had clearly emerged as one of the most renowned printmakers of his time. In both etching and wood engraving, he became known as the prime graphic artist of scenes from everyday life. He also experimented tirelessly with such innovative techniques as combining etching and wood engraving in the same print. In works such as this, Lepère conveys a clarity of form in the architecture.

Adolphe Appian

French, 1818 – 1898

An Autumn Evening: Near Rossillon

1874

etching

Gift, Levi W. Mengel

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

1918.119.53.10

A painter by training in the Barbizon tradition, Appian studied with the famous painter-etcher, Jean-Baptiste Corot and turned to etching around the 1860s and became one of its most skilled and creative practitioners. His graphic work demonstrates attention to atmospheric effects and an abiding interest in the contrast between light and dark.

Always a master of variations in tone and texture, Appian contrasts the wispy lines of the clouds in the sky, the delicate vertical lines in the foreground, and the strongly inked and contorted lines of the trees and marsh plant.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

Rag Pickers, Quartier Mouffetard, Paris

1858 – 1861

etching and drypoint, state: v/v

Gift, Kathryn M. Klingeman

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

2006.4.28

Although not included in the 'French Set,' this etching must have been made at the same time as the *Old Rag Gatherer*. Originally, the interior scene was void of figures (see state i/i, right) and Whistler called the plate Quartier Mouffetard, after the district in Paris known as the Latin Quarter. It was only after 1861 that he added the figures, reportedly on the advice of Serjeant Thomas, who had bought the plates of the French Set and had them printed at the same time as Whistler's early Thames etchings in 1861.



Whistler's etching in an earlier state
(before the figures were added)

James Abbott McNeill Whistler

American (worked in England), 1834 – 1903

La Vieille aux Loques

(The Old Rag Woman), 1858

etching and drypoint, state: iv/iv

Gift, Kathryn M. Klingeman

Reading Public Museum, Reading, Pennsylvania

2006.4.1

The composition points to the beginning of Whistler's preoccupation throughout his career with façades and doorways and, more specifically, with the motif of a female figure silhouetted in a doorway against a shadowed interior.

It is likely that this work was etched in Paris and was published in *Twelve Etchings from Nature* (the 'French Set') in 1858. A translation of the title is *Old Rag Woman* or *Old Rag Seller*. The woman wears a heavy shawl over her shoulders, a long apron over her skirt, and a white bonnet with ruffled trim. On the floor behind and in front of her are open sacks. She is working by the light from the doorway in which she sits. The small, cramped room behind her is a kitchen, with pans, bowls, and a coffee pot on shelves to left, and bottles, boxes and other containers on shelves at the back. More sacks are piled up at the back on the right. At lower right, on the pavement outside the door, stand two small cylindrical pots, such as might contain milk or water for a cat or dog. This work is related to *Rag Pickers* which is also included in this exhibition.