

## ARTHUR HAYTHORNE STUDD

### THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF A VICTORIAN PAINTER, PATRON AND ART COLLECTOR

#### ***Synopsis***

From the hallowed halls of Eton to the captivating islands of the South Pacific and the elegance of a riverside residence in London's Chelsea, Arthur Haythorne Studd led a fascinating life as a gentleman painter, art collector and patron, living and painting alongside many of the greatest artists of the day including James McNeill Whistler, Claude Monet, Paul Gauguin, Auguste Rodin and many others.

In his day, he was a celebrated figure of the Aesthetic Movement, though his work and patronage are not well recognized today. Born at Hallerton Hall, Leicestershire in 1863, the fourth of eight children, Studd had a privileged start to life. He left Eton college for the University of Cambridge followed by the Slade School of Art and L'Academie Julian in Paris. He became known as Peter during his art student days and this moniker followed him throughout his life. His fellow students and friends, William Rothenstein, Alfred Thornton, Edgar Degas, Eduard Manet, Pierre-Cecile Puvis de Chavannes and Auguste Rodin, all held him in high esteem.

His travels took him from Paris to Brittany where he met Paul Gauguin and would ultimately follow him to Tahiti. But not before he took up residence in Cheyne Walk alongside the most famous of its residents, James McNeill Whistler. Whistler's influence on Studd cannot be overstated however Studd was a significant friend and patron to the 'Master' in return. He purchased three of Whistler's paintings: *Symphony in White, No. 2: The Little White Girl*; *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Cremorne Lights*; and *Nocturne: Black and Gold – The Fire Wheel*. It is thanks to Studd that these paintings are now part of the Tate Gallery.

Studd remains an enigma. He had the money to be a collector and the talent to be an artist. His own work is in the collections of Tate London; Courtauld Institute; Hunterian, Glasgow; York Museums Trust and Hepworth, Wakefield. He built a fine private collection of contemporary paintings and such was his circle of friends that Rodin gave him a bronze cast of *The Thinker*. And yet few today know of his existence and influence.

## **Outline**

### **1. The beginning of a charmed life**

Family history – Father's story; three older brothers and their career as cricketers and missionaries; Studd while an excellent sportsman, chose a different path rather than compete with his famous brothers turned missionaries.

Education at Eton and King's College Cambridge – not a great student and not very adept at the written word – perhaps dyslexic??

1885 Attended Whistler's Ten O'Clock lecture at the Theatre Royal

### **2. The life of an artist calls**

Slade School London

L'Academie Julian, Paris – Men & Memories

### **3. A sojourn to Brittany and Gaugin**

Studd and the Paris-based artists decamp to Le Poldu to explore the impressionist style. He mixes with Edgar Degas, Alfred Stevens, Paul Gaugin and Pierre de Chavannes.

### **4. A studio in Montmarte, meeting Whistler(?) and the first London exhibition**

Studd follows Rothenstein to Montmarte; meets Whistler; 1892 exhibits at the New English Art Club; 1894 purchases *Symphony in White, No 2 – The little white girl* and *Nocturne in Blue and Silver, Cremorne Lights*

### **5. A move back to England cements a friendship with Whistler**

1894 moves to Cheyne Walk next door to Whistler; travels to Lyme Regis; purchases *Nocturne, Black and Gold – The Fire Wheel*

### **6. Tahiti and a year with Gaugin**

1897 departs on an important trip to Tahiti where he develops a new and more intricate use of pastel. Also visits Samoa, Australia and New Zealand  
He returns to exhibit at the International Society of Painters, Sculptors and Gravers in London in the summer of 1899.

### **7. Venice and his most important work**

Between 1899 and 1906 made many trips to Venice and produced paintings that critics regard as his best work; One-man exhibition in London; Mannheim International Art Exhibition 1907 included *A Turning in the Grand Canal*.

### **8. Final years and current reputation**

Whistler's funeral/pall bearer 1903

Critical acclaim: The Tribune April 1907 *An English Artist in Paris*; Illustrated London News Baillie Gallery 1907; Solo show at the Bernheim Gallery, Paris 1907; last major exhibition Alpine Gallery, London 1911.

Died from pneumonia in London nursing home 25<sup>th</sup> January 1919