

Francis Davis Millet Trustee 1910-1912

Source: *Annual Report of the Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, No. 43 (1912), pp. 42-44

Published by: The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40303477>

Accessed: 15-04-2020 21:12 UTC

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His literary gifts and faculties, so often brought into play for the public benefit and entertainment, were best and finally exhibited in his instructive and valuable autobiography, covering in fact more than fifty years of our national history—an important contribution to our annals, and it is hoped that this great work on which he was closely engaged almost to the day of his death may be completed out of the material which he has left.

As a great citizen of spotless character known of all men, his membership in this Board was of immense value to the Museum, the loss of which cannot easily be made good. By his death the Museum and the City have been deprived of a priceless treasure.

FRANCIS DAVIS MILLET

TRUSTEE

1910 — 1912

The Trustees of The Metropolitan Museum of Art desire to express their profound sorrow for the death of their beloved associate Francis Davis Millet and for the irreparable loss which the Museum and American Art have suffered in that tragical calamity.

Among all who came to their death by the fatal disaster to the Titanic, there was no one whose place it will be so difficult to fill—no one whose service to the public was more constant and valuable.

It seems but yesterday that he was among us in the fullness of life and in the rigorous exercise of all his brilliant powers. He left us with the promise on his lips and in his heart of a very speedy return to resume for the public benefit his useful work and now all we have of him is a handful of ashes in the family burial place at Bridgewater, the widely scattered works of his skilful hands, and a very loving place in the hearts of his countrymen.

Among all the artists of high repute in America there was no one of such versatile genius as Millet, and his activities were as varied as his natural gifts, and so it came about that no one Institution and no one Department of Art could claim or monopolize them all.

As a painter he won early distinction and the highly prized examples which he left behind him both in England and America

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where he was equally at home will long be eagerly cherished. As a literary man he held an enviable position and the frequent articles that appeared in the magazines and the press from his ready and graceful pen were valuable and welcome contributions. The lively and well-informed interest which he took in all movements and associations for the promotion of art and of sound and good taste in America identified him with them all as a most important factor.

By the National Government he had long been recognized as a high authority in all matters pertaining to art, which was fully recognized and confirmed by his professional brethren throughout the land. In the recent movement for the better and more artistic development and control of our public buildings his influence as a member of the Board to whom that important subject was committed was very potent, and the growing beauty of the City of Washington owes much to his pure and restraining judgment.

Upon the reorganization of the American Academy of Arts at Rome, in which he had long been a devoted participant, and its consolidation with the Academy of Archaeology, he had been selected as the best man that our country could furnish for the very important post of Director of the whole scheme, and it was his appointment to that notable office and his mission to take charge of it that cost him his life. His service was cut short in a most tragic and untimely way, and it may truly be said that his career there which gave promise of great brilliancy and usefulness had but just begun.

In The Metropolitan Museum of Art he had always taken a most active and lively interest, but his varied activities which demanded his presence elsewhere had unfortunately postponed his becoming a member of our Board of Trustees until February, 1910, although he had been a Fellow for Life upon our rolls since 1891, and a necessary member on such occasional committees as the Special Committee on Casts in January, 1891, and on the St. Gaudens Memorial in October, 1907, and as early as February, 1885, he had been associated with the arrangements for our notable Exhibition of Paintings by Watts.

In his two short years of active service on our Board and on the Executive Committee he had been all the time a most useful

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member of the Standing Committees on Paintings and on Purchases and on Decorative Arts of which he was chairman, and in the recent orderly and artistic reorganization of our rapidly growing collections, a work of the greatest importance and difficulty, his judgment and good taste had rendered most effective aid to the immense undertaking which tasked to its utmost the strength and great ability of our honored Director.

The wonderful characteristic of Millet was the whole-souled and disinterested ardor with which he threw himself into everything he undertook, never sparing himself, or counting any labor or sacrifice too great to accomplish the object in view. He was good-natured and conciliating to the last degree and was a great harmonizer when differences had to be adjusted. His sweetness of temper and his big heart endeared him to all his associates and it was a great delight to work with him.

We bid him farewell with infinite regret. His death is one of the greatest losses the Museum has sustained, and we confidently hope that whatever may be done elsewhere, a suitable memorial of him may in good time be established within its walls.

WHITELAW REID

TRUSTEE

1901 — 1912

The Trustees of The Metropolitan Museum of Art have received with profound sorrow the intelligence of the death of their late associate, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, the distinguished Ambassador of the United States at the Court of St. James. Mr. Reid became a Trustee of the Museum in the year 1901 and from that time to the day of his death he took a deep interest in its work, and contributed generously to its support. Although his important and arduous official duties for the last seven years and a half prevented his frequent attendance at our meetings, we could always rely upon his enthusiastic and conscientious cooperation in all our undertakings and his death at the post of duty is a serious loss to the Museum.

The generous and affectionate tributes which have been universally paid to his high character and valuable public services at