

Horsell Windmill and James Walter Gozzard (1862-1926)



This painting is entitled *The Approach of Night* and is by **James Walter Gozzard**, a painter in oils and water colour of village scenes of the English country side. There are numerous examples of his work on dealers' websites including Christies and also some very good prints.

There appear to be two copies of the painting in the village. Richard Collyer has one bought by his father at a sale of artefacts from Horsell vicarage and which used to hang there during Rev. Norman Pares time as vicar there (1897-1936).

The other copy is at the Lightbox and was donated by a well wisher who acquired it from a neighbour who thought it might be of interest to the museum. This copy is certainly a print and has been labelled roughly on the frame *The Old Mill, Horsell*. Richard Collyer's copy is also likely to be a copy.

Although various dates are given for the artist's birth and death, census research shows that he was born in 1862 at Northchurch, Berkhamstead, Herts in 1862 the son of James Gozzard mill sawyer and turner master. In 1871, the father now a widower, his son **James Walter** (called Walter and working as a clerk to a brass finisher) and his daughter, Elizabeth Kate (listed as Kate) are living at Croxley Green near Rickmansworth. By 1881 the father has married his deceased wife's younger sister, Mary Ann who had been looking after the family since the death of her sister. Father James & step-mother Mary Ann have a new family of 3 boys.

James Walter married Maude Anthony the daughter of John Pakes Anthony, gentleman at St John at Hackney on March 26th 1894 where the artist's address was given as 145 Dalston Square.

The censuses show **James Walter Gozzard** and his wife living at 33 King Street, Luton in 1901 and at Milton Lodge, Harpenden in 1911. There were no children of the marriage. **James W Gozzard** of 17 Colville Square, Notting Hill, Middlesex is recorded as dying on 15th February 1926. Administration (with will) in London was granted on 8th April to his sister Kate Gozzard spinster. The value of the estate was £131.15s. Elizabeth Kate Gozzard died Jan-Mar 1952 aged 88 at Colchester.

I am fairly happy with this biography with one reservation – How did the artist come to die leaving such a small estate given the large number of original works and prints now to be found on the internet. There is evidence to suggest that Gozzard was an artist who supplied paintings direct to printers enabling those printers to produce prints for sale. This would explain why the painter's estate was so small.

I would doubt that Gozzard painted from life and feel it more likely he built up his pictures using a number of sketches from various locations. It follows, therefore, that *The Approach of Night* is probably not an accurate representation of Horsell Birch and that the mill erected by the Steer family has been replaced by the Dutch-type mill shown in Gozzard's painting.

The only evidence to the contrary would seem the presence in the village of two prints of Gozzard's painting. Were these purchased because it was thought that the painting was of Horsell Birch? There is also the reported finding of a 2 ft grindstone and 4 ft millstone by the builder of Mill End near to where the Steers' mill had once stood – now used as paving in the garden of another Horsell house. These might relate to another mill as shown in the painting. Lastly Richard Collyer's mother passed the mill every day on her way to school and was under the impression that the windmill in the picture was a previous mill on the site to the Steers' one.

If it is only the mill which has been replaced, the house near to the mill may be present day Elm Cottage and Ivy Cottage.

Censuses

1851	Seymour Place St Pancras	Samuel Gozzard	head	M	57	carpenter	Essex Halstead
		Susan Gozzard	wife	M	57		Essex Halstead
		Ann Gozzard	d	U	19	artificial florist	Essex Halstead
		Thomas J Gozzard	s	U	18	gilder	Essex Halstead
		James Gozzard	s	U	10	scholar	Middx St Pancras

1861	Rose Cottage Gates Northchurch	James Gozzard	head	M	20	wood turner	Middx St Pancras
		Elizabeth Gozzard	wife	M	17		Herts Northchurch

1871	Rickmansworth	James Gozzard	head	W	30	mill sawyer & turner master	Middx St Pancras
	Croxley Green	James W Gozzard	son		9	scholar	Herts Northchurch
		Elizabeth K Gozzard	daug		7	scholar	Herts Berkhamstead
		Mary A Caldwell	sinl	U	17	housekeeper	Herts Northchurch

1881	403 Old Ford Road Bow	James Gozzard	head	M	40	foreman saw mills	London St Pancras
		Mary Ann Gozzard	wife	M	27		Herts Northchurch

		Walter Gozzard	s	U	19	clerk to brass finisher	Herts Northchurch
		Kate Gozzard	d	U	17		Herts Berkhamstead
		Frederic Gozzard	s		6		Middx Limehouse
		Harry Gozzard	s		3		Middx Limehouse
		Alfred Gozzard	s		3m		Middx Bow

St John at Hackney	March 26 1894	James Walter Gozzard	32	b	artist	145 Dalston Sq	James Gozzard	wood turner
		Maude Anthony	22	sp	-	2 Brook St, Bedford Road, Luton	John Pakes Anthony	gent
						John Pakes Anthony	witness	
						Elizabeth Kate Gozzard	witness	

1901	Romford St Edward	James Gozzard	head	M	60	engineering pattern maker	Middx St Pancras
		Mary Ann Gozzard	wife	M	47		Herts Berkhamstead
		Frederic Gozzard	s		26	railway clerk	London Limehouse
		Jesse Gozzard	s		16		London Bow
		Frank Gozzard	s		10		London Bow
		Florence	d		7		London Hackney

1901	33 King St Luton	James W Gozzard	head	M	37	artworker painter	Herts Berkhamstead
		Maud Gozzard	wife	M	29		Beds Luton

1901	Regency Square Brighton	Kate E Gozzard		S	36	lady's maid	Herts Berkhamstead
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1911	2 Oak Villas Havering Road Romford	James Gozzard	head	W	70	pumping engine man	London St Pancras
		Frank Gozzard	s	S	20	railway clerk	London Bow
		Florence Gozzard	d	S	17		London Hackney

1911	Milton Lodge Harpenden (10 rooms)	James Walter Gozzard	head	49	M	painter(artist)	Herts Berkhamstead
	married 17 years no children	Maud Gozzard	wife	39	M		Beds Luton
		Edith Rose Burgess	serv	19	S	general servant	Herts Harpenden

Death Index

Jan-Mar 1926 James W Gozzard of Kensington aged 64

National Probate Calendar

James Walter Gozzard of 17 Colville Square, Notting Hill, Middlesex died 15th February 1926 Adm (with will) London 8th April to Kate Gozzard spinster. Effects £131.15s.
Elizabeth Kate Gozzard died Jan-Mar 1952 aged 88 at Colchester

Sources

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