



Gabriel Loppé (1825 - 1913)

Ringgenberg on Lake Brienz seen from Interlaken in winter, Bernese Oberland, Switzerland

oil on canvas,

19 x 29½ in. (48 x 75cm)

overall framed dimensions: 30¾ x 41¼ in (78 x 105 cm)

signed

January 1881

with period Second Empire French fluted frame

Loppé first encountered the *haute-montagne* when at a summer painting school in Meiringen in 1846, over thirty years before he painted this wintry scene by the banks of the Aare River where it empties into the nearby Lake Brienz. In January 1877 Leslie Stephen and Loppé met in Bern for their first winter trip to the Bernese Oberland. They headed for the Lauterbrunnen Valley and afterwards to Meiringen where they visited the 'King of the mountain guides' Melchior Anderegg who was not only Leslie Stephen's favourite guide but also one of Loppé's preferred travelling companions too. For over two weeks, with Melchior Anderegg in tow for the harder passages, Loppé and Stephen roamed the secluded valleys, passes and glaciers of the Oberland, getting as far south as Grimsel. Loppé discovered the charms of Interlaken and Meiringen and re-acquainted himself with Grindelwald, a village which became a firm favourite like Zermatt and Chamonix for years to come.

The journey was deemed such a success that for the next twenty-five years, hardly a January or February passed when Loppé did not revisit that part of the Bernese Oberland with his family and friends, often retracing those same itineraries from that initial voyage.

With great skill Loppé captures here the deep and set-in cold amidst the shrubbery and reedy shallows beside the river. Two boats can be made out far off in the middle of the Brienzersee.