

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Gabriel Loppé (1825 - 1913)

**Sunset on the Jungfrau seen from Concordia on the Aletsch Glacier, Bernese Oberland,
Switzerland**

oil on artist's board

40 x 30 cm.

signed and inscribed on verso:

bought by Rev. E. Mallet Young from Gl. Loppe (after his assistance in the Mont Blanc accident 1866) and by Ed. Young's widow given to me on my wedding, 1917, Geoffrey Winthrop Young

This fine Aletsch Glacier picture was illustrated in the 2002 book on Gabriel Loppé written by the late Marie-Nöel Borgeaud and had been passed down through the Young family who were accomplished climbers. Remnants of an exhibition label prove that it was shown in London, but it is uncertain when the Rev. Mallet bought it. The inscription is compelling and not least as it seems likely that Loppé named one of his first ascents in Chamonix (Mont Mallet, first climbed by Loppé and Leslie Stephen in 1873) after Rev. Mallet's deceased younger brother. Letters show that without Loppé and a few others intervening in the 1866 accident they would have all perished. Perhaps more relevant, it was Geoffrey W. Young, the recipient of this picture at his wedding, who got George Mallory into climbing in 1909 and was a mentor to him right up until he disappeared on Mount Everest 1924.

Shown at sunset looking north up the Aletsch Glacier, the south face of the Jungfrau is flanked to its left by the Rottalhorn. Painted near the Concordia Hut this is a wonderful destination for climbers and ski tourers to this day. For Loppé, it remained a most hallowed spot throughout his life as it was near where he first set foot on a glacier in 1846 accompanied by the Liverpudlian, Beresford Walker.

In a letter written to Sir Alfred Wills in 1909, Loppé wrote about that experience *'I had never been onto the ice except for a few steps taken out of curiosity, and it was a revelation to me when two days later I found myself on the Strahleck Pass between the Schreckhorn and Finsteraarhorn. It was one of the most vivid impressions of nature that I ever received in the Alps. That was on September 9, 1846 – 63 years ago. I recollect it as plainly as if it were last month.'*