

LITHOGRAPHY

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Lithography by Joseph Pennell

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BY

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OF THE AUTHORIZED "LIFE OF J. M. W. WHISTLER."



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LITHOGRAPHY

By JOSEPH PENNELL, N.A.

President of the Senefelder Club for Advancement of Artistic Lithography, London; joint author, with E. B. Pennell, of "Lithography and Lithographers," and of the authorized "Life of J. McN. Whistler."



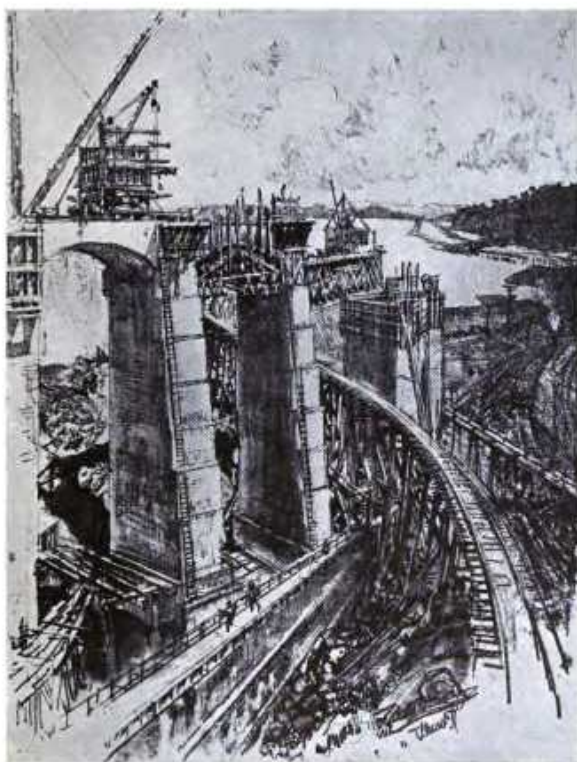
LITHOGRAPH is a print from a stone or a metal plate. But it is far more than this. In etching or engraving the incised or raised lines of the engraved design are filled in or covered over with printer's ink and the print is pressed or lifted off; in lithography the design in ink, on the flat surface of stone or plate, is transferred from it to paper and is an original autographic drawing, solely the work of the artist who made it. It is not only a print, but the multiplication of the original. It is the only genuine form of multiplying autographic art, and this transferring from stone to paper, called printing, may be done repeatedly, as the print from an etching is repeated. But in etching the artist never sees his design till it is printed. In lithography it grows in his hands exactly as it will print and he sees it all the while.

The art of lithography was invented by Aloys Senefelder about one hundred and fifteen years ago; and, save a few details, he discovered all that is known about it, and every method that is practised to-day.

A drawing is made either with lithographic chalk, a greasy, soapy crayon or pencil, or with ink, upon a

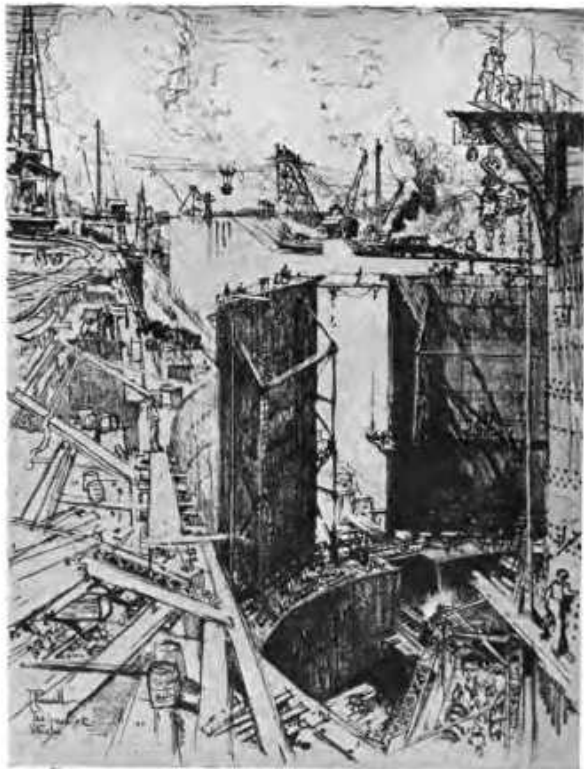
slab of Solenhofen stone—a very uniformly grained stone, easily polished, to which the greasy chalk or ink adheres—on a zinc or aluminium plate, or upon a sheet of paper. Ordinary drawing-paper will answer, but it is preferable to have it coated with a preparation of gum, size, or plaster of Paris, which takes the chalk better than uncoated paper and allows the design made on it to be transferred to the stone with more certainty. Senefelder advocated the use of paper for artists, saying in his “Treatise on Lithography” it was *probably the most important part of his discovery*. The drawing, then, is either made by the artist on a slab of stone—smooth for pen-work, grained by grinding with sand to give it a tooth for chalk—or upon paper—in the latter case, to-day, the method most generally practised by artists in Europe, including the revivers of lithography, Fautin-Latour and Whistler. The paper with the drawing on it is slightly dampened, laid face down upon the lithographic stone, and passed through the press—the fat and grease is extracted from the drawing by the stone and the design is seen upon it when the paper is removed from the stone, while if the artist and printer know how, the original drawing, from which the grease has been squeezed and absorbed (for the stone absorbs the ink and repels the water) by passing through the press, remains on the paper—the greasy drawing adheres to the stone. This must be seen to be believed. Not only this but sufficient grease remains in the design on the paper to repeat the process of transferring to another stone.

To my knowledge, this was first done by Charles Goulding of London. I have shown the method to Mr.



PENNELL. APPROACHES TO GATUN LOCK

Size of the original lithograph, 22 x 16¾ inches



PENNELL. THE GUARD GATE, GATUN LOCK
Size of the original lithograph, 22 x 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches

John Gregor of Messrs. Ketterlinus of Philadelphia, and he has done it perfectly, though it was unknown in the United States. Whistler, unfortunately, never heard of it—or, rather, never practised it.

The drawing is now upon the stone, and it is washed over with weak solutions of acid, simply to fix it—not to etch it into relief or intaglio. The surface of the stone remains perfectly flat. It is then rolled up with ink, the stone being first washed with distilled water. The inky drawing only absorbs more ink; the clean wet stone refuses it. After more washing, gumming, etc., all of which processes are capable of being more or less done away with, the drawing is again washed, ink again rolled over it, a sheet of paper placed on it and run through the press, and the original drawing comes off the stone on to the paper, but the design still remains on the stone, which again only requires to be damped with a sponge, rolled up with more ink, which again only adheres to the drawing on the stone, and another sheet of paper placed on it and run through the press, and another original is made. The only resemblance to the printing of etchings is that lithographs are very sensitive. Some will yield a large number of proofs, like a bitten plate; others very few, like a dry-point. Only instead of getting weaker, the lithograph gets stronger, clogs up, and finally prints solid black. Just before that happens, sometimes, the most wonderful proofs appear. Of course the stone can be tinkered at, corrected, redrawn, but the early good proofs are rarely equaled, any more than in any other form of engraving.

It has been said by critics and experts that a drawing on paper is not so full and rich as a drawing on