

Paul E. Saling (1876 - 1936)

The Mooring, circa 1925

Unsigned

oil on board

16" x 12"

While the peak of the Old Lyme Art colony was arguably the first decade of the twentieth century, there were a select group of artists who continued the tradition through the next thirty years. Paul Saling, among the best of his contemporaries, belonged to this second generation of Old Lyme artists. Born in Madgeburg, Germany in 1876, Saling immigrated to the United States with his family at age twenty-one. He returned to his native country to study art, but by 1900 he joined his parents in Connecticut. Sometime just after the turn of the century, Saling rounded out his artistic education by taking classes in New York and Hartford with the hoary Connecticut art veterans, Charles Noel Flagg (1848-1916) and William Gedney Bunce (1840-1916).

Twenty years passed, during which time Saling leveraged his art training into a career as a muralist and decorator. It was not until 1915, when he was awarded a prize by the Connecticut Academy of Fine Art, that Saling was first publicly recognized for his lush and direct landscapes of the Farmington region. Saling moved from Hartford to Lyme eleven years later. His relocation coincided with a parade of new exhibitions and awards that validated his talent.

As an artist only recently rediscovered and reevaluated, the breadth of Saling's work shows that he did not experiment; his paintings are straight-forward representations of local scenes rendered with a precise eye and tempered hand. *The Mooring*, a scene of Hamburg Cove in Lyme, demonstrates his proficiency as a painter of water scenes equal to his ability as a landscape artist. His paintings have an inviting looseness to them that suggests the artist was after something pleasing to himself rather than his potential critics:

All his subjects show a fine sense of draftsmanship. He paints directly, his pictures are skillfully designed, the scenes are enveloped in atmosphere, and he is keen on the niceties of composition, a pure colorist.¹

Saling exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the National Academy of Design in 1924 and 1926, and at the Lyme Art Association repeatedly from 1925 through 1932.

Provenance: From a private Connecticut collection belonging to the artist's family, to the gallery.