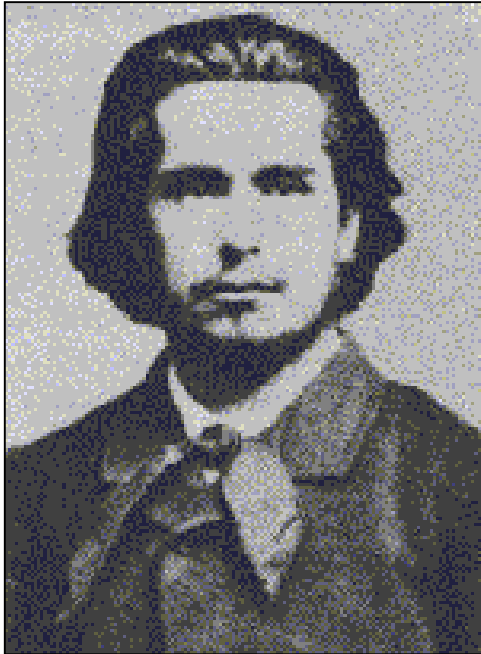


# Claude Monet



His real name was Oscar Claude Monet and he was born in Paris in 1840.

His father worked in the family shipping business and wanted Claude to work there too when he grew up.

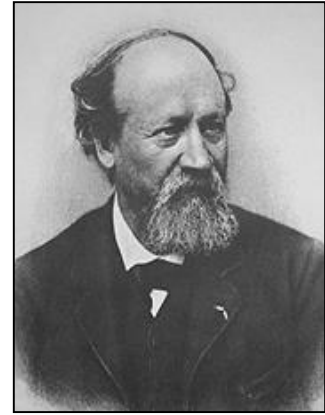
His mother looked after the family at home but she was also a trained singer.

When Claude was 5 the family moved to Le Havre which was a busy French port (a town where many ships arrived and departed).



The young Claude loved to be outside. He had a sketchbook and drew funny pictures (caricatures) of the people he knew. His mother encouraged him to draw but his father thought he was wasting his time.

Claude met a local landscape artist called Eugene Boudin who introduced him to the idea of painting outside (“en plein air” in French). Most artists made pencil sketches outside but painted in a studio.



Eugene Boudin



A painting of Monet by John Singer Sargent

When he was 18 Claude decided to go to art school in Paris against his father’s wishes. He made friends with other artists and together they loved to paint outside.



The young artist was very poor because few people wanted to buy his paintings. They did not like his style. He met a woman called Camille Doncieux and together they had a son called Jean.

This is a painting by Monet of Camille and Jean.

These paintings from around the same time are by other artists and show the popular painting style of the day.



Monet and his artist friends found it hard to get their paintings shown in the big exhibitions in Paris. The art critics did not like this new style.



They decided instead to hold their own exhibition.

When the art critics visited it they mocked the paintings as “mere impressions.”



It was this painting by Monet called Impression Sunrise that gave rise to this insult. But Monet and his friends decided to use the word to their advantage and began to call themselves “The Impressionists.”

