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**Didron and the hand maidens of Iconography
in nineteenth century Britain**

This paper re-visits the seminal iconographic text, "Iconographie Chrétienne" by Adolphe Napoleon Didron (1806-1867), the first part of which was published in France in 1843 but left unfinished at the time of his death in 1867. It was translated into English and completed by two British women between 1851 and 1886. The first part of the paper examines Didron's iconographic aims and methods and how he applied them in the essays on Christian imagery that constitute the main body of his book. The second provides an account of the work of Ellen Millington and Margaret Stokes, in completing and translating Iconographie into English - the only language in which the full work has been available for more than a century - and its legacy in the iconographic studies of Louisa Twining and Eliza Gutch which were influenced by Didron's work. The paper argues that Didron's work and that of his translators and associates in the nineteenth century, anticipated the main assumptions and principles of modern iconography, but have been marginalised in the dominant historiography of iconography which asserts the twentieth century invention of the subject.