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RECENT ACQUISITIONS



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British Art

TEFAF NEW YORK FALL  
October 27 - 31, 2018

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TEFAF MAASTRICHT  
March 16 - 24, 2019

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*The gallery is open by appointment,  
Monday to Friday. The entrance is in  
Old Burlington Street*

INDEX OF ARTISTS

Jacques Laurent Agasse 60

Adam Buck 56

Edward Burch 16

Benjamin Burnell 68

John Constable 74

Richard Dadd 78, 80, 84

Thomas Gainsborough 34, 40

Thomas Jones 36, 52

Angelica Kauffman 8

Dame Laura Knight 86

Bartolomeo Pinelli 58

Sir Joshua Reynolds 20

George Romney 48

Sir David Wilkie 62, 70

Joseph Wright of Derby 26, 44



## PREFACE

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We are excited to be able to present in this latest catalogue of *Recent Acquisitions* a group of works, largely paintings, which include famous and unusually well documented works by Angelica Kauffman, Joseph Wright of Derby, Thomas Jones, Sir David Wilkie and Thomas Gainsborough. This follows on from the success of our ground-breaking exhibition *The Spirit & Force of Art: Drawing in Britain 1600–1750*.

Angelica Kauffman's magnificent *Virgil writing his epitaph at Brindisi*, perhaps her most sophisticated neo-classical historical painting in private hands, is recorded in her studio book and praised in print the same year by her biographer Giovanni Gherardo De Rossi. We are delighted to be offering this exceptional painting not least because it underscores the international influence and reach of so many British artists and patrons.

Documentation is an important theme running through this catalogue. Both the important portraits by Joseph Wright of Derby are carefully recorded in his

surviving account book and in the case of the remarkable double portrait of *Dr Thomas Wilson and his adopted daughter Catherine Macaulay* Wright's own correspondence survives describing the circumstances of the commission. The remarkable portrait, *Old John Tonson, Head Waiter at the King's Head, Derby* (detail shown opposite) numbers amongst the most sympathetic and sophisticated portrait heads of the period. We are able to fully identify the sitter for the first time. David Wilkie's major oil *The Gentle Shepherd* was the subject of a piece of sustained criticism by the great Scottish writer James Hogg.

This catalogue, as always, has been a collaborative work and we are grateful to all our friends and colleagues who have helped in its preparation, particularly Cressida St Aubyn. We look forward to greeting many friends over the coming months at TEFAF New York Fall, The Winter Show, New York and at TEFAF Maastricht as well as at our gallery and on our travels.

LOWELL LIBSON    JONNY YARKER

VIRGIL WRITING HIS EPITAPH AT BRUNDISI

Oil on canvas

39 × 49½ inches; 99.1 × 125.7 cm.

Signed and dated 'Angelica Kauffman pinx. 1785'

COLLECTIONS

Commissioned by George Bowles (d.1817), The Grove, Wanstead;  
 Rebecca Bowles Rushout, his sister, 1818;  
 Anne Rushout, her daughter, Wanstead Grove (inventory of 1826);  
 Harriet Rushout Cockerell, her sister, 1851;  
 Charles Rushout, her son, 1869;  
 Rushout Sale, Phillips & Neale, December 9, 1879, £99.15s to 'Aldis';  
 37 Hill Street, London, c.1890–1974;  
 Christie's, London November 22, 1974, lot.163;  
 Herner Wengraff Gallery, London, 1974;  
 Private collection, USA, to 2005;  
 Private collection, USA, to 2018

LITERATURE

Giovanni Gherardo De Rossi, *Memorie per le belle Arti*, April 1785, pp.LII–LIII;  
 Francis Gerard, *Angelica Kauffman: A Biography*, London, 1893, p.367;  
 Lady Victoria Manners and G.C. Williamson, *Angelica Kauffman RA. Her Life and Works*, London, 1924, pp.67, 148;  
 Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin, *Women Artists: 1550–1950*, Los Angeles, 1976;  
 Ed. Bettina Baumgärtel, *Angelika Kauffmann 1741–1807: Eine Dichterin mit dem Pinsel*, exh. cat., Düsseldorf, 1998, pp.386–387;  
 Ed. Melissa Hyde, *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, Aldershot, 2003, pp.165–167.

EXHIBITED

London, Royal Academy, 1786, no.196;  
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *Women Artists: 1550–1950*, December 21, 1976 – March 13, 1977;  
 Austin, University Art Museum, The University of Texas at Austin, April 12–June 12, 1977;  
 Pittsburgh, Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, July 14 – September 4, 1977;  
 Brooklyn, The Brooklyn Museum, October 8 – November 27, 1977;  
 Düsseldorf, Kunstmuseum, *Angelica Kauffman 1741–1807*, November 15, 1998–January 24, 1999;  
 Munich, Haus der Kunst, February 5, 1999–April 18, 1999;  
 Chur, Bündner Kunstmuseum, May 8 – July 11, 1999.

ENGRAVED

By Thomas Burke, *Virgil Writing his Epitaph*, published 1794.

This large-scale historical canvas by Angelica Kauffman was painted in Naples in 1785, it depicts the Roman poet Virgil writing his epitaph in the presence of his two friends, the poets Varius and Tucca, a scene derived from Suetonius. In terms of its size, subject and composition *Virgil Writing his Epitaph at Brundisi* is not only one of Kauffman's greatest paintings, it is one of the most ambitious neo-classical compositions produced in Italy in the 1780s. The painting featured prominently in the ground-breaking exhibition 'Women Artists: 1550–1950' curated by Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin in 1976.

By 1785 Kauffman was one of the leading painters in Europe, she had achieved considerable success in Britain, exhibiting extensively at the Royal Academy of which she was a founder member. Kauffman had been born in Graubünden, Switzerland, the only child of the Austrian painter Johann Joseph Kauffman. In 1742 Kauffman's father moved his family to Italy where, her early biographers record that she rapidly distinguished herself as a prodigy of both music and art.<sup>1</sup> Kauffman decided to pursue a career as a painter and undertook a formal Grand Tour of Italy in 1759 before settling in Rome in 1763. There she befriended a prominent circle of British neo-classical painters including Gavin Hamilton, Nathaniel Dance and Benjamin West. These contacts undoubtedly influenced her aspiration to create history paintings of classical, mythological and historical subjects, a rare ambition for a female artist. Encouraged by her contacts with Anglo-Saxon painters, Kauffman travelled to London in 1766 where she met and was befriended by Joshua Reynolds who became instrumental in





promoting her career. In London she established a profitable and celebrated portrait practice working for a fashionable clientele and providing decorative panels for neo-classical interiors. But, as Wendy Wassyng Roworth has observed: 'Kauffman was not able to achieve fully her high aspiration to produce large-scale history paintings.'<sup>2</sup>

In 1782 Kauffman returned to Rome after marrying the Italian decorative painter Antonio Zucchi, who yielded his own career to manage his spouse's finances. Economics partly motivated their move, since Meng's recent death and Batoni's slowing career positioned Kauffman as Rome's dominant portraitist, decisively secured by the 1783 commission to paint the Neapolitan royal family. Moreover, the explosion of the Grand Tour among the nobility of northern and eastern Europe opened vast new markets for the multilingual painter. Kauffman and Zucchi occupied grand quarters on via Sistina, formerly the studio of Mengs, at the top of the Spanish Steps. Kauffman therefore cast herself as the prime heir to the classicising tradition of Roman painting. But most importantly the return to Rome situated Kauffman at the creative centre of Europe in close proximity to the greatest collections of antiquities and old master paintings as well as a thriving, international community of painters. Re-established in Rome she could finally execute the ambitious historical compositions that she had been contemplating since the 1760s. With this in mind, Kauffman not only assembled an important collection of antiquities and modern paintings in her studio, but organised her well-known weekly *conversazioni*. These semi-public events brought together the cosmopolitan literary and artistic

figures of late Settecento Rome, something that impacted on the expanding erudition of Kauffman's late work.<sup>3</sup>

Kauffman's return to Italy was celebrated in verse by Ippolito Pindemonte in his epistle *Alla Signora Angelica Kauffmann dipintrice celeberrima a Roma*, which he published under the name Polidete Melpomenio. The poem describes how Minerva led Kauffman back to Rome to be a history painter. The present canvas formed part of a group of three works Kauffman painted in Naples that signalled her new commitment to history painting. Commissioned by her most prolific and consistent patron George Bowles, the three works are universally recognised as Kauffman's most significant historical compositions.<sup>4</sup> In her studio-book, kept by Zucchi, the present painting is described as:

*'Virgil, ill and nearing his death, writing his epitaph in the presence of his two friends, the poets Varius and Tucca, who are sorrowful at the approaching loss of their friend. The muse in sadness guards safely the writings of the Aeneid which the Poet had destined to the flames—the bust of Augustus is on a pedestal as his great protector, 60 guineas.'*<sup>5</sup>

The painting shows Virgil on his deathbed, completing the last word of his self-composed epitaph: 'Mantua me genuit; calabria rapuere; tenet nunc Parthenope; cecini pascua, rura, duces.' (Mantua gave me light; Calabria snatched me away; now Naples holds me; I sang of shepherds, fields, and wars.) The last refers to the subjects of Virgil's three major works: the *Bucolics*, the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*, the titles of which can be read on the rolls in the parchment case on the left of the composition. Suetonius's *Life of Virgil* is one

source for the legend that the poet wished his unfinished manuscript of the *Aeneid* to be burned. Instead, Varius Rufus and Plotius Tucca emended the epic poem after Virgil's death, and operating under the instructions of the poet's long-time patron and benefactor, the Emperor Augustus, had it published. In the painting Kauffman has placed a bust of Augustus on the table to the right of the composition. Kauffman's fascination with the legends of Virgil's death can be traced back to her first visit to Naples, July 1763 to April 1764, at which time she sketched Virgil's tomb, a dilapidated columbarium on the side of Mount Posilippo, long rumoured to be (but no longer recognised as) the poet's last resting place. At the bottom of her page, Kauffman copied an inscription from inside the tomb: a sixteenth-century couplet, ending with the same phrase ('... sang of shepherds, fields, and wars') as in Virgil's epitaph.

The other two paintings commissioned by Bowles and executed by Kauffman as part of the sequence were *Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi*, now in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond and *Pliny the Younger and His Mother at Misceneum* now in the Princeton University Art Gallery. The *Cornelia* is widely regarded as Kauffman's greatest historical work; a composition she returned to on a number of occasions and a picture that influenced works by Benjamin West, Pierre Peyron, Louis Gauffier, and Vincenzo Camuccini. The iconographical links between the three canvases have not yet received adequate explanation.<sup>6</sup>

*Virgil Writing his Epitaph* is arguably Kauffman's most ambitious historical composition pointing to her determination to tackle a subject-matter



Angelica Kauffman, *Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi, Pointing to Her Children as Her Treasures*  
Oil on canvas · 40 × 50 inches · 1016 × 1270 mm  
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond

traditionally beyond the scope of female painters. *Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi* and *Pliny the Younger and His Mother at Misceneum* are both compositions that celebrate female virtue. Cornelia particularly epitomises a view of women as modest and self-abnegating, uniting motherly love, domestic happiness and benevolent virtue.<sup>7</sup> The painting is correspondingly handled in a recognisably feminine register, employing Kauffman's trademark repertory of gracefully drawn figures, tender gestures, and gentle, harmonious colouring. This is in stark contrast to the masculine subject-matter and compositional severity of *Virgil Writing his Epitaph*.

In showing a heroic deathbed scene – a great man expiring surrounded by his mourning friends – Kauffman was consciously engaging with a powerful pictorial tradition. Kauffman would have known Poussin's *Death of Germanicus* in Palazzo Barberini and was probably aware of *The Testament of Eudamidas*, a composition

that was increasingly celebrated during the second half of the century. Diderot saw its stark message and pictorial rigour as an antidote to the excess of the rococo.<sup>8</sup> Compositionally Kauffman's painting develops certain elements of Poussin's *Eudamidas*, the seated friend taking the dying man's testament, is transformed into Virgil himself writing his own epitaph, whilst Eudamidas's mourning family are replaced by the weeping muse.

*Virgil Writing his Epitaph* is one of the artist's most rigorous and precise attempts at archaeological fidelity. The furniture that Kauffman includes – the couch, table, scroll holder, stools, and lyre – are all derived from plates in *Le Antichità di Ercolano*, the publication of artefacts excavated from Herculaneum. The stark geometry of the setting and frieze-like composition simultaneously point to Kauffman's appreciation of antiquity and her sensitivity to the pictorial innovations of her contemporaries. Kauffman must have been aware of

Jacques-Louis David's *Oath of the Horatii* which had been completed and displayed in his Roman studio to great applause shortly before her departure for Naples in the Summer of 1785.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, in a departure from Kauffman's normal technique, *Virgil Writing his Epitaph* is handled in a distinctly Davidian manner, the background walls indicated by a mass of feathery brushstrokes whilst the seated figure of Virgil's friend recalling the seated, mourning figures on the right of David's composition.

The three finished paintings were sent by ship to Bowles in London on 20th October 1785. They were submitted to the Royal Academy exhibition the following year, where they received considerable critical comment. Our painting was also praised extensively by Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi writing in *Memorie per le belle Arti* (see passage below) when it was exhibited in Kauffman's studio in Rome.

The three paintings remained with George Bowles's descendants until the



Angelica Kauffman  
*Pliny the Younger and his Mother at Misenum*  
Oil on canvas · 40 1/16 × 50 3/16 inches · 1030 × 1275 mm · signed and dated 1785  
Princeton University Art Museum  
© Princeton University Art Museum/Art Resource NY/ Scala, Florence

Rushout sale in 1879. Since that point it has been exhibited regularly and frequently published as one of Kauffman's most important historical works. Kauffman never outlined a theoretical position in print. However, the artist's biographer de Rossi, described the artist as 'la Pittrice delle Grazie'. In eighteenth-century terms, grace embodied the reason, erudition, judgment, and balance of her painting, aspects reinforced by her rational, learned, and virtuous personality.<sup>10</sup> What makes *Virgil Writing His Own Epitaph* so remarkable is that it shows Kauffman reaching beyond her standard vocabulary of gracefulness to produce an image of classical stoicism. As one of Kauffman's most ambitious, best preserved and grandest historical compositions, *Virgil Writing His Own Epitaph*, is a remarkable testament to her abilities as a painter. The sophistication of the frieze-like composition and subject matter raise the question of Kauffman's role in the emergence of European neo-classicism.

Extract from Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi writing in *Memorie per le belle Arti*, April 1785, pp.LII–LIII:  
'In una di esse in figure alte circa due palmi ha dipinta la morte di Virgilio. Non ebbe questo

*sublime poeta nella sua navigazione così propizj i numi marini, come li aveva a lui augurate l'amico Orazio nell'ode terza; onde abbattuto dai travagli d'un penoso viaggio fini a Brindisi i suoi giorni, e nelle ultime ore della vita compose quei noti versi, che poi furono scolpiti sulla sua tomba. La nostra Pittrice ha rappresentato il poeta nell'atto, che sollevato sul letto termina de scrivere le ultime parole dell'epitaffio. Tuca, e Vario assistono l'infermo amico, e mentre l'uno sedendo accanto al letto tiene nella mano il calamaio, del quale si serve il poeta, che scrive, l'altro in piedi dietro il letto mostra nel volto una somma affizione. La Musa v'è poeticamente introdotta: giacchè stringendo l'alloro, mentre mira dolente la morte di quel diletto suo siglio, stende la mano verso i volume delle opera del medesimo, quasi voglia sarsi custode di quei parti, che il paterno rigore avea destinati alle siamme. Virgilio moribondo è in un atteggiamento naturalissimo per un uomo, che richiama con istneto tutti i suoi spiriti ad un ultimo sforzo, e nel viso gli si legge la morte vicina, ma una morte però placida, e tranquilla. Il dolore dei due amici è ben espresso, ma quello della Musa mostra un no so che di più nobile, e maestoso; necessaria avvertenza negli Artisti, quando devono porre al confronto le passioni di un uomo, con quelle di una Deità.'*



Engraved head-piece by Filippo de Grado after Niccolò Vanni. From *Le Antichità di Ercolano Esposte*, Naples, 1757, vol.1, p.7, Copper engraving The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

#### NOTES

1. Giovanni Gherardo De Rossi, *Vita di Angelica Kauffmann Pittrice*, Florence, 1810, pp.16–17.
2. Wendy Wassyng Roworth, 'Between 'Old Tiber' and 'Envious Thames': The Angelica Kauffman Connection', in eds. David Marshall, Susan Russell and Karin Wolfe, *Roma Britannica: Art Patronage and Cultural Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Rome*, London, 2011, p.294.
3. 'Wendy Wassyng Roworth, 'The Residence of the Arts': Angelica Kauffman's place in Rome', in eds. Paula Findlen, Wendy Wassyng Roworth and Catherine M. Sama, *Italy's Eighteenth Century*, Stanford, 2009, pp.151–171.
4. Ed. Bettina Baumgärtel, *Angelika Kauffmann 1741–1807: Eine Dichterin mit dem Pinsel*, exh. cat., Düsseldorf, 1998, pp.381–387.
5. Ed. Bettina Baumgärtel, *Angelika Kauffmann 1741–1807: Eine Dichterin mit dem Pinsel*, exh. cat., Düsseldorf, 1998, p.387.
6. See Jon L. Seydl's perceptive catalogue entry of *Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi* in eds. Edgar Peters Bowron and Joseph J. Rishel, *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*, exh. cat., Philadelphia (Philadelphia Museum of Art), 2000, p.385.
7. Ed. Bettina Baumgärtel, *Angelika Kauffmann 1741–1807: Eine Dichterin mit dem Pinsel*, exh. cat., Düsseldorf, 1998, pp.381–382.
8. Richard Verdi, 'Poussin's Eudamidas: Eighteenth-Century Criticism and Copies', *The Burlington Magazine*, vol.113, no.822, September 1971, p.513.
9. Anthony Clark was the first to identify the impact of David's work on Kauffman's historical compositions made in Naples in 1785. See Antony Clark, *Studies in Roman Eighteenth-Century Painting*, Washington, 1981, p.137.
10. Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi writing in *Memorie per le belle Arti*, April 1785, p.LIV.





ÉCORCHÉ FIGURE

Lead with a bronze patination  
9 5/8 inches high, excluding the base  
Cast c.1767

Casts of this statuette became the essential apparatus for artists in the eighteenth century and as Joseph Nollekens noted it was: 'so well known to every draughtsman who assiduously studies his art.'<sup>1</sup> It is a reduced model of the great anatomist William Hunter's first plaster écorché, made for teaching at the Society of Artists, which he cast from the body of a dead criminal in about 1750. This statuette was made from a wax model commissioned by Hunter from the Anglo-Danish sculptor Michael Henry Spang which he exhibited at the Society of Arts in 1761 and was cast by the gem engraver, Edward Burch.

William Hunter was the most significant anatomist in eighteenth-century London. From the 1750s Hunter was associated with the teaching of anatomy to artists and became the Royal Academy's first professor of anatomy in 1768. Hunter's first documented écorché was made for the Society of Arts.<sup>2</sup> William Hunter's brother, John, recalled the circumstances of its production: *About this time he read lectures on Anatomy to the Incorporated Society of Painters at their rooms in St Martin's Lane, upon a subject executed at Tyburn. His brother who had the management of the dissections had eight men at once from Tyburn in the month of April. The Society was acquainted with it and they desired to come and chuse the best subject for such a purpose. When they had fix'd upon one, he was immediately sent to their apartments. As all this was done in a few hours after death, and as they had not become stif, Dr Hunter conceived he might first be put into an attitude and allowed to stiffen it, which was done, and when he became stif we all set to work by the*

*next morning we had the external muscles all well exposed ready for making a mold from him, the cast of which is now in the Royal Academy.*<sup>3</sup>

The plaster cast remained at the Royal Academy for most of the eighteenth century and appears in Zoffany's two paintings of the Academy.<sup>4</sup> Hunter appreciated the importance of producing a reduced replica of the écorché figure for easier use by artists. He commissioned the Danish sculptor, Michael Henry Spang, to make a reduced wax model which was exhibited at the Society of Arts in 1761. The wax model survives in Hunter's collection at Glasgow University. Spang died in 1767 and Hunter turned to other sculptors to cast bronzes from his model. Albert Pars was awarded a premium for a 'Cast of an Anatomy figure, after Spang' in 1767 by the Society of Artists. But the present lead cast seems likely to be by the gem engraver Edward Burch. Martin Kemp suggests that Burch exhibited his bronze version at the Royal Academy in 1775 as two casts: 'from a wax model.'<sup>5</sup> Burch had a long-standing relationship with Hunter. In 1774 Hunter commissioned a medal portrait of himself from Burch. After Hunter's death Burch noted in the introduction to his *Catalogue of one hundred proofs from gems*: 'Gratitude will not permit me to suffer the friendship and benefit I have received from my late worthy friend, Dr Hunter, to pass unnoticed. It is to this gentleman I principally owe my practice of studying all my specimens anatomically.'<sup>6</sup>

The finished models were hugely popular. Hunter was immensely proud of the sculpture and is shown holding a version in his portrait by Mason Chamberlin in the Royal Academy. Thomas Paine the younger recorded that he carried with him on his



Mason Chamberlin, *Dr William Hunter*, 1769  
Oil on canvas · 50 × 40 inches · 1270 × 1016 mm  
Photo: © Royal Academy of Arts, London  
Photographer: Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd



George Romney, *The Anatomy Lesson*, c.1775  
Oil on canvas · 23 5/8 × 24 7/8 inches · 760 × 632 mm  
McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton, Ontario  
Levy Bequest Purchase





journey to Italy in 1768: 'a little Anatomical figure in bronze, by Spang, from a model he made in wax ...', and he reported that it was: 'much admired at Paris, Rome etc. for its excellence, and portability.' George Romney made a number of studies from his bronze écorché and included it in a remarkable double-portrait at McMaster Museum of Art entitled: *The Anatomy Lesson*.<sup>7</sup> Writing in 1811 Abraham Ross praised Dr Hunter's écorché figure for 'every attention' having been paid 'both by him and the artists who assisted in placing the figure in a graceful attitude.' Ross concluded by noting that: 'Mr Spang, made a small model of this figure, the bronze casts of which, for their size are excellent.'<sup>8</sup> A number of examples survive in museum collections including the Hunterian in Glasgow, Victoria & Albert Museum, British Museum and the Yale Center for British Art (formerly with Lowell Libson Ltd).

This statuette was one of the most important and widely celebrated écorché models produced during the eighteenth century. Made under the supervision of Dr William Hunter, it is an important work in the evolution of art teaching in Britain. Our cast is by one of the leading gem-engravers and sculptors of late eighteenth-century, Edward Burch and is a particularly fine example being beautifully patinated and also executed in lead which although not as costly to produce as bronze is capable of taking much finer detail.

George Romney  
*Two studies of an écorché from a sketchbook*  
 Pen on paper · each 6 5/8 × 3 3/8 inches · 167 × 99 mm  
 Lowell Libson and Jonny Yarker Ltd.

#### NOTES

1. J. T. Smith, *Nollekens and His Times*, London, 1828, p.273.
2. Eds. E. Geoffrey Hancock, Nick Pearce and Mungo Campbell, *William Hunter's World: The Art and Science of Eighteenth-Century Collecting*, Ashgate, 2015.
3. Quoted in Martin Postle, 'Flayed for art: écorché figure in the English art academy', *The British Art Journal*, 5, no.1, 2004, p.57.
4. See Ed. Martin Postle, *Johan Zoffany RA: Society Observed*, New Haven and London, 2011, pp.222–223.
5. See Martin Kemp, 'Review: Bicentenary Celebrations of Dr William Hunter (1718–1983)', *The Burlington Magazine*, 125, no.963, 1983, p.383.
6. Edward Burch, *A Catalogue of one hundred proofs from gems*, London, 1795, p.xiii.
7. The painting had traditionally been called Robert, 9th Baron Petre and his son, but Alex Kidson has argued that it is possibly an idealised self-portrait with his younger brother Peter. Alex Kidson, *George Romney: A Complete Catalogue of his Paintings*, New Haven and London, 2015, III, pp.809–9.
8. See Martin Kemp, 'Review: Bicentenary Celebrations of Dr William Hunter (1718–1983)', *The Burlington Magazine*, 125, no.963, 1983, p.383.

## ELIZABETH ROLLESTON WITH HER SON SAMUEL

Oil on canvas  
50 × 40 inches; 1268 × 1009 mm  
Painted 1776

## COLLECTIONS

Commissioned by Samuel Rolleston of Great Pan Manor, Isle of Wight; Samuel Rolleston, son of the above, (1775–1860); George Rolleston, son of the above, (1812–1870); William Vilett Rolleston (1842–1921), son of the above; Major George Reginald Aubrey Rolleston (b.1873); Major George Villet Rolleston (d.1989); George Lancelot St. Leger Rolleston (1939–2005); Natalia Rolleston, daughter of the above, to 2017

## LITERATURE

A. Graves and W.V. Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, London, 1899–1901, vol.ii, p.842 ('Mrs Rollestone'); Malcolm Cormack, 'The Ledgers of Sir Joshua Reynolds', *The Walpole Society*, 1968–1970, vol.42, pp.161–162; David Mannings and Martin Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, New Haven and London, 2000, no.1548, p.398 ('Mrs Rollestone', as untraced).

## EXHIBITED

Birmingham, 1931 (no.60, 'Mrs Rolleston & Child', lent by G. Rolleston Esq.)

## ENGRAVED

In mezzotint as *Maternal Love* by J. Scott, 1865.

## COPIES

[1] Private Collection, oil on canvas, 30½ × 25¼ inches; 768 × 641 mm  
[2] Private Collection, on loan to White's, London, oil on canvas, 40½ × 37 inches; 103 × 94mm

This little known and previously unpublished painting is a fine example of Reynolds's mature portraiture. Preserved in remarkable condition the painting has remained in the family's possession since its completion. Recorded in Reynolds's Account Ledger for 1776, the portrait shows the sophisticated visual language Reynolds had developed to compose his depictions of patrician women, particularly of mothers with their children. The successful grouping of Elizabeth Rolleston caused the present painting to be engraved in the nineteenth century as 'Maternal Love'. Elizabeth Rolleston and her son Samuel, are shown in a complex serpentine pose, almost certainly derived from an old master painting or print, a pose that Reynolds had first trialed in a grand full-length depiction of *Elizabeth, Viscountess Melbourne* which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1773.

The portrait was commissioned by Samuel Rolleston shortly after his marriage to Elizabeth Carr and birth of their first son, Samuel. Rolleston was the son of a successful London merchant and member of the Goldsmiths Company, Matthew Rolleston who had been elected a sheriff of the City of London in 1756. He had considerable property and commercial interests in Southampton and on the Isle of Wight, where Samuel owned a number of mills.<sup>1</sup> In short, the Rollestons belonged to the burgeoning middle class whose wealth was founded on commerce and manufacturing rather than land.

By 1776, when Samuel Rolleston commissioned a portrait of his wife and son, Sir Joshua Reynolds was the most celebrated portraitist in London. The founding President of the Royal Academy, he had been

knighted by George III and ran an enormously successful and productive portrait practice from his house at 47 Leicester Square. During the 1770s Reynolds fully embraced the opportunities presented by the Royal Academy, exhibiting over 100 portraits at the annual exhibitions. As Martin Postle has pointed out, by the 1770s Reynolds had come to rely on a number of assistants to help him work on the deluge of commissions. James Northcote joined Reynolds's studio in 1771, and in a series of letters addressed to his brother, Samuel, he gives glimpses of Reynolds's method. In April 1772 Northcote informed his brother: 'I am now about the drapery of a half length picture by Sir Joshua of an old gentleman one Mr Calthorp which is a very fine head, this is the first I have ever painted from the lay man and I am much afraid how I shall do it I am to paint a blue coat with a glove on one hand and his hat in the other, with a yellow curtain behind I should have painted it a red curtain, but the damask is lost which the curtains used to be painted from, I shall make part of a building appear beyond the curtain and a landscape in the back ground.'<sup>2</sup> This suggests a division of labour that was essential to the completion of Reynolds's portraits. Whilst heads and poses were dictated by Reynolds himself, the execution of the costume and ancillary elements, such as drapery and background landscape were generally but not exclusively completed by assistants. This did not mean unsupervised labour: as Northcote reported to his brother on June 12 1772: 'you desire to know if the drapery that I painted was liked or not, some parts of it did without alteration and some would not as you must suppose.'<sup>3</sup> Even where studio involvement was necessary, Reynolds exercised editorial control.



By 1776 Reynolds had also established a systematic method of determining the attitudes chosen for portraits, keeping a portfolio of engravings after his own and other artists' works from which sitters could choose and adapt poses. The portrait of Elizabeth Rolleston was based upon a successful pose Reynolds had used to depict Elizabeth, Viscountess Melbourne and her son Peniston Lamb in 1770. It is likely that Samuel Rolleston was shown the engraving of Lady Melbourne made by Thomas Watson which had been published on 10 February 1775, selecting it as an appropriate model for the portrait of his own wife and son. Reynolds was, at this date, experimenting with the relationship between mothers and children, producing a sequence of portraits of patrician sitters and their offspring arranged in complex poses. In the mid-1760s Reynolds had painted a portrait of *Mrs Edward Lascelles and her daughter Frances* in a pose derived from an engraving by Battista Franco of the *Virgin and Child in a Landscape*; the somewhat awkward arrangement showed the infant Frances Lascelles reaching athletically up to play with her mother's hair.<sup>4</sup> In a portrait of *The Duchess of Marlborough with her daughter* dated 1765, Reynolds showed Lady Caroline Spencer being held playfully at arms-length in a pose derived from a lunette on the Sistine Chapel. In 1770 Reynolds exhibited a portrait of *Mrs Edward Bouverie*, who is shown seated in profile holding her child, who is shown obliquely playing with his mother's veil. The pose Reynolds adopts in his portrait of Elizabeth Rolleston is not a precise replication of that used in his portrait of *Lady Melbourne*, it is a further elaboration; the infant Samuel Rolleston is



depicted carefully held by his mother, with his right hand raised, playing with the plait of Elizabeth Rolleston's hair. The portrait of *Elizabeth Rolleston and her son* is a hugely sophisticated solution to a compositional problem Reynolds had encountered in attempting to show his female sitters both engaged with their active child and looking at the viewer.

In each of this sequence of grand female portraits, the sitters are shown in loose, classical costume. They can be viewed as a deliberate exercise in what Reynolds referred to in his fifth Discourse of 1772 as the 'Historical Style', which endowed the figure with the 'simplicity of the antique air and attitude'. An effect accentuated by Reynolds's choice of costume; it was a form of dress Reynolds often adopted in his portraits of aristocratic women, especially during the 1760s and 1770s. In doing so, Reynolds aspired ostensibly to transcend the vagaries of contemporary fashion. Reynolds produced a second sequence of portraits of mothers and children in the 1780s, but rather than continuing to depict them in classical costume, he showed them in modern dress culminating in his dynamic depiction of *Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire* exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1786.<sup>5</sup>

Reynolds's Ledgers reveal that Samuel Rolleston senior made two payments for the portrait. The first on July 18, 1775 for 50 guineas.<sup>6</sup> Listed in Reynolds's surviving Ledger as 'First Payment', this follows what we know of Reynolds's custom of taking a sum on deposit and receiving the balance on completion.<sup>7</sup> Reynolds received the second payment from Rolleston on July 1776 for 55 guineas.<sup>8</sup> This raises the

interesting question of precisely how many paintings Rolleston had commissioned. In September 1777 Reynolds wrote to the Liverpool merchant and collector, Daniel Daulby: 'my prizes – for a head is thirty-five Guineas – As far as the Knees seventy – and for a whole-length one hundred and fifty.'<sup>9</sup> We would then expect the present portrait, a conventional 'half-length, to have cost only 70 guineas, rather than the 105 guineas Rolleston paid. The most likely explanation is that Rolleston in fact commissioned two portraits, the present picture and a reduced version, or ¾ size portrait of 35 guineas.<sup>10</sup> This is likely to be a painting that appeared at Sotheby's, New York January 11, 1996 (lot.213) and is listed above as copy 1.

When this reduced version of the portrait appeared at auction in 1996 it was identified as a depiction of *Lady Anne Butler, later Lady Ormonde*. Graves and Cronin recorded a portrait of *Lady Anne Butler* which had been exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1871 from the possession of the collector, Hugh Grosvenor, 1st Duke of Westminster.<sup>11</sup> This is in fact a further copy of the present painting that is now on loan to White's in London and listed above as copy 2. The identification of the sitter as Anne Butler, Countess of Ormonde is problematic. Whilst Reynolds's sitters' books do not survive for 1775 or 1776, his Ledgers are remarkably complete and there is no record of Anne's husband, John Butler, later 17th Earl of Ormonde or her father, John Wandesford, 5th Viscount Castlecomer having made any payments. Whilst in the collection of the distinguished Whig politician and collector, Henry Labouchere, Lord Taunton, the painting was engraved by James Scott and published in 1865 with the title 'Maternal



Thomas Watson, after Joshua Reynolds, *Elizabeth, Lady Melbourne and her son, Peniston Lamb*, 1775  
Mezzotint · 24¾ × 14¾ inches · 620 × 379 mm  
© The Trustees of the British Museum



After Sir Joshua Reynolds  
*Maternal Love*, 1865  
Mezzotint · 9 × 6¾ inches · 228 × 176 mm  
Lettered with title and production detail 'J. Scott'  
© The Trustees of the British Museum

Love'; a title which underlines the ambiguity of the sitter's identification.

The appearance of the drapery in the present portrait does require comment. In 1775 Reynolds seems to have been employing a particularly fugitive red lake pigment which he used to paint the costume of Elizabeth Rolleston.<sup>12</sup> This explains the apparently unfinished quality of the drawing of the drapery, given that over time the red lake has become transparent thus exposing the under painting. A painting of the same date, *Mrs Richard Crofts*, now in the Dixon Art Gallery, Memphis shows the same effect.<sup>13</sup> The bold, somewhat loosely formed figure of Elizabeth Rolleston is close to other three-quarter length portraits Reynolds executed at the same date. In 1777 Reynolds exhibited a portrait of *Lady Elizabeth Herbert and her son* at the Royal Academy, the composition shows the infant Charles Herbert reaching up to stroke his mother's chin, in a pose that echoes that of *Elizabeth Rolleston and her son*. The loose, boldly drawn painting of the figure of Lady Elizabeth Herbert is close to that of Elizabeth Rolleston, equally the high level of finish in their faces and complex, fashionable hairdos, suggests that this was a norm of Reynolds's practice at this date.

The portrait of *Elizabeth Rolleston and her son* passed to Samuel Rolleston, who was to have an eventful career in Britain's burgeoning Empire. Appointed to the East India Company's civil service in Bombay in 1794, en route to India the ship he was travelling on, *The Ganges*, sank off the Cape of Good Hope and he left an account now in the British Library.<sup>14</sup> The portrait remained with his descendants at Great Pan Manor, Whippingham on the Isle of

Wight, unknown to scholars, despite being exhibited in Birmingham in 1931. Boldly painted, beautifully preserved and showing Reynolds's fascination with depictions of mothers and their children, this portrait is an important addition to Reynolds's oeuvre.

We are grateful to Martin Postle for help with cataloguing this picture and for confirming the attribution to Joshua Reynolds.

#### NOTES

- Samuel Rolleston owned Pan Mill, Newport, Isle of Wight. For Samuel Rolleston's will see London, The National Archives, Prob 1/1674.
- London, Royal Academy Archive, Northcote Papers, NOR/9, James Northcote to Samuel Northcote, April 9 1772.
- London, Royal Academy Archive, Northcote Papers, NOR/10, James Northcote to Samuel Northcote, 12 June 1772.
- Ed Nicholas Penny, *Reynolds*, exh. cat., London (Royal Academy of Arts), 1986, p.349.
- See Mark Hallett, *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action*, New Haven and London, 2014, pp.406–416.
- Malcolm Cormack, 'The Ledgers of Sir Joshua Reynolds', *The Walpole Society*, 1968–1970, vol.42, p.161.
- Malcolm Cormack, 'The Ledgers of Sir Joshua Reynolds', *The Walpole Society*, 1968–1970, vol.42, p.105.
- Malcolm Cormack, 'The Ledgers of Sir Joshua Reynolds', *The Walpole Society*, 1968–1970, vol.42, p.162.
- Eds. John Ingamells and John Edgcumbe, *The Letters of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, New Haven and London, 2000, p.69.
- This was a suggestion made by David Mannings, without knowledge of the present portrait. See David Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, New Haven and London, 2000, no.1548, p.398 ('Mrs Rolleston', as untraced).
- A. Graves and W.V. Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, London, 1899–1901, vol.1, p.138.
- Eds. Lucy Davis and Mark Hallett, *Joshua Reynolds: Experiments in Paint*, exh. cat., London (Wallace Collection), 2015, pp.23–24.
- David Mannings and Martin Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, New Haven and London, 2000, cat. no.455. p.155.
- Simon Martin, 'The Loss of an East Indiaman in 1807: account by Samuel Rolleston' in *The Journal of the Families in British India Society*, no.22 Autumn 2009, pp.23–29

JOSEPH WRIGHT OF DERBY 1734–1797

THE REV. DR THOMAS WILSON AND HIS ADOPTED DAUGHTER MISS CATHERINE SOPHIA MACAULAY

*'I am now painting a half length of D.<sup>r</sup> Wilson & his adopted Daughter Miss Macauley, this is for reputation only, but you must not say so. The D.<sup>r</sup> is a very popular Man & is fighting in my Cause stoutly.'*

*Joseph Wright to Richard Wright, Bath, April 15th 1776.*

Oil on canvas  
50 × 40 inches; 1270 × 1016 mm  
Painted 1776

COLLECTIONS

The sitter;  
Mrs Joseph Ackland, by descent, by 1902;  
Phillips, London, 11 December 1984, lot 14;  
Christie's, New York, 12 January 1996, lot 116;  
Chawton House Library, Hampshire to 2018

LITERATURE

Benedict Nicolson, *Joseph Wright of Derby: Painter of Light*, London, 1968, vol.1, p.226;  
Bridget Hill, *The Republican Virago: The Life and Times of Catharine Macaulay, Historian*, Oxford, 1992, pl.10, p.84;  
Susan Legoux Sloman, 'Artists' picture-rooms in eighteenth century Bath', *Bath History* 6, 1996, pp.137–9;  
Susan Sloman, Amina Wright, Trevor Fawcett and Philippa Bishop, *Pickpocketing the Rich: Portrait Painting in Bath 1720–1800*, (exh. cat., Holburne Museum of Art, Bath) Bath, 2002, pp.20–22, 28, 84;  
Michael Levey, *Sir Thomas Lawrence*, New Haven & London, 2005, pp.48, 112;  
James Wyatt Cook and Barbara Collier Cook, *Man-Midwife, Male Feminist: The Life and Times of George Macaulay MD PhD (1716–1766)*, Ann Arbor, 2006, p.223;  
Elizabeth E. Barker, 'Documents Relating to Joseph Wright 'of Derby' (1734–97)', *The Walpole Society*, vol.71, 2009, pp.90–91;  
Amina Wright, *Joseph Wright, Bath and Beyond*, exh. cat. Holburne Museum of Art, Bath, 2014, pp.36–40, repr. p.34;  
Deborah Weiss, *The Female Philosopher and her Afterlives: Mary Wollstonecraft, the British Novel, and the Transformations of Feminism, 1796–1811*, London, 2017, cover illustration.

EXHIBITED

Glasgow, Glasgow Art Gallery, *Loan Collection of Pictures by French and British Artists of the 18th Century*, 1902, cat. no.158;  
Bath, Holburne Museum, and Derby, Derby

Museum & Art Gallery, *Joseph Wright, Bath and Beyond*, 2014, cat.no.7.

ENGRAVED

By John and Charles Sherwin (after an intermediary drawing by Thomas Lawrence), published Nov 5 1782 by R. & C. Crutwell, Bath (of Thomas Wilson only).

Painted, as Joseph Wright of Derby wrote to his brother, 'for reputation', this three-quarter length portrait was the most important commission he undertook whilst living in Bath. Painted for the distinguished clergyman Dr Thomas Wilson, it depicts Wilson and his adopted daughter, Catherine Sophia, the daughter of the radical republican historian Catherine Macaulay. The widowed Macaulay, a celebrated historian and polemicist, was in the midst of writing her unprecedented eight volume *History of England*; whilst she is not included in the portrait, both sitters are shown pointing at a volume of the *History of England*. As such, this portrait stands as a monument to one of the most progressive female historians of the eighteenth century and her unconventional relationship with Wilson. The painting is also a tour de force of Wright's mature work as a portraitist.

By 1776 Joseph Wright of Derby had achieved considerable success with his great candlelight paintings; he was recently returned from a period of study in Italy and had established himself in Bath, hopeful of forging a successful portrait practice. Thomas Gainsborough was demonstrating that the resort town of Bath continued to be a potentially fruitful place to operate as a portraitist.<sup>1</sup> Despite arriving in November 1775, Wright had managed to attract few patrons, he was therefore excited by the commission he received from Thomas Wilson in April 1776.





Writing to his brother, Richard that: 'I am now painting a half length of Dr Wilson & his adopted Daughter Miss Macauley, this is for reputation only, but you must not say so. The D.r is a very popular Man & is fighting in my Cause stoutly.'<sup>2</sup> Thomas Wilson was the rector of St Stephen Walbrook in the City of London. He was the son of the celebrated Bishop of Sodor and Man and was a considerable cultural figure and patron of the arts. The year Wright painted this portrait, Benjamin West had completed his large altarpiece of *Devout Men taking the Body of St. Stephen* (collection, Museum of Fine Art, Boston) commissioned by Wilson for the altar of St Stephen Walbrook. The large painting was shown at the Royal Academy in April where both the painting and Wilson received considerable praise.<sup>3</sup>

Wilson was also rector of St Margaret's Westminster but following the death of his wife in 1772, despite his ecclesiastic duties, he spent much of his time in Bath. Wilson owned 14 Alfred Street, next to the new upper Assembly Rooms, and here the widowed historian, Catherine Macaulay and her daughter came to live with him. The first volume of Macaulay's *History* had been published in 1763, with subsequent volumes following in 1765, 1767, 1768, 1771, 1781 and 1783. Macaulay's writing was initially celebrated as a timely answer to David Hume's Tory interpretation of history. As the *History* proceeded, however, it became increasingly clear that Macaulay was a real radical. It was when she reached her fourth volume in 1768, that dealt with the trial and execution of Charles I, that her extreme views were revealed. It was in this volume that she talked for the first time of 'the rise of the republicans' who 'looked forward to

the reformation of the principles, as well as the executive, of the government.'<sup>4</sup> The Commonwealth she saw as 'the brightest age that ever adorned the page of history.'<sup>5</sup> It was in her sympathies for the Commonwealth, Macaulay expressed her support with the American colonists. In her *History* and her other writings she was a passionate advocate of liberty and democracy, believing that 'it is only the democratical system, rightly balanced, which can secure the virtue, liberty, and happiness of society.'<sup>6</sup> Macaulay was celebrated by other radical writers and was a close friend of John Wilkes and his daughter Polly as well as the republican Thomas Hollis, who left his library to Harvard. Wilson was also described as being 'zealous for liberty', he too was a friend of John Wilkes, who he made a churchwarden of St Margaret's Westminster and it was probably through Wilkes that Wilson first met Macaulay.

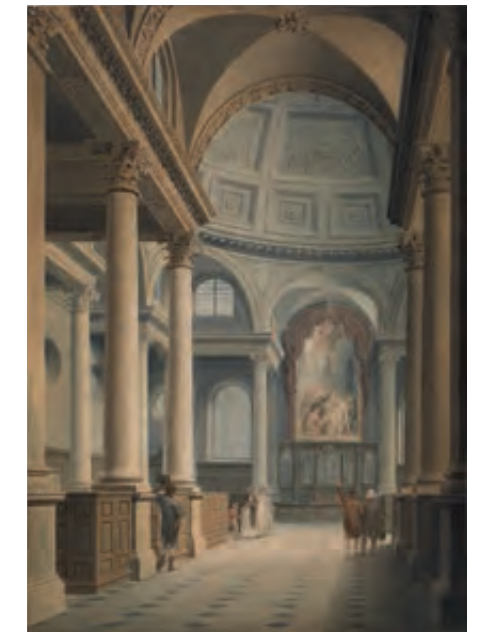
The widowed Macaulay and her daughter, Catherine Sophia, are recorded living with Wilson in Bath in the autumn of 1776. In April 1775 the childless Wilson had adopted the eleven-year-old Catherine Sophia making her his heir, at the same time he assigned the lease of his house in Bath to Catherine Macaulay and promised her an annuity for life. Their house became the centre of intellectual life in the spa town, Thomas Wilson wrote: 'Our little Tusculum ... which is honoured with all the visits of all the Literary persons who frequent this place.'<sup>7</sup>

The double portrait of Wilson and Catherine Sophia was the most ambitious Wright had made since his return from the Continent. Conceived as a depiction of old age instructing youth, the portrait shows



John and Charles Sherwin after Wright of Derby  
*Dr Thomas Wilson*

Engraving published November 5 1782 by R & C Crutwell, Bath British Museum, 1838,0714.190  
An intermediary drawing after the present painting but only showing Dr Wilson was made for the engravers by Thomas Lawrence.



Thomas Malton, *St Stephen Walbrook*  
Watercolour over pencil, heightened with scratching out  
25½ x 17½ inches - 646 x 447 mm  
Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd.





Wilson pointing at an open page from Catherine Macaulay's *History*, Catherine Sophia points to another passage on the same page and looks intently up at Wilson. The gestures of the sitters' hands imply to the viewer, that they are having a conversation about Macaulay's text; as such it is a remarkable depiction of female education in the eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

Wright seems to have drawn upon the rich tradition of portraits of statesmen and their secretaries, most notably Sebastiano del Piombo's portrait of *Ferry Corondelet and his secretaries* which Wright would have known as a print from the *Recueil Crozat*. It was a portrait format adopted by Wright's contemporaries, such as Joshua Reynolds, who used it as the basis for his portrait of *Lord Rockingham and Edmund Burke* begun in 1766. The essential dynamic is one of contrast. Wright places the youthful Catherine Sophia, dressed colourfully in a pink silk dress, wrapped in a blue shawl, fringed with silver, her hair adorned with pink feathers and a rope of pearls, in contrast to the elderly monochromatic Wilson, who is in black, with white clerical bands, wearing a large white powdered wig, enlivened only by the dramatic red of his doctoral gown. Wright's portrait is a technical tour de force. Throughout the composition he revels in texture: from the black velvet of Wilson's gown to the highly reflective surfaces of both the polished table and the studs on Wilson's chair. Painted in a confident, fluid manner, this was Wright's first major essay in portraiture made following his time studying in Italy.

Wright's painting was made at a very specific moment in Wilson's relationship

with, and promotion of, Macaulay. The painting fits into a sequence of images designed to celebrate the historian. In 1775 Wilson was probably responsible for commissioning another portrait of Macaulay from a Bath based painter, Robert Edge Pine, now in the National Portrait Gallery, London.<sup>9</sup> Pine's portrait, which exists in two versions, shows Macaulay in a severely classicising mode; dressed in antique costume, she leans on five volumes of her *History* and holds in her left hand a letter inscribed: 'Rev'd. Dr: Thos Wilson/ Citizen of London/ and/ Rector of Wallbrook.' Pine's portrait served as a model for the sculptor John Francis Moore who was commissioned by Wilson to produce a life-size statue of Macaulay which was placed in a niche within the sanctuary of St Stephen Walbrook. Erected without 'License or Faculty' by an absentee rector, celebrating a radical female author who was not even a parishioner it was, unsurprisingly, rapidly removed. Wilson also contrived an elaborate celebration for Macaulay's birthday in 1777. A 'numerous and brilliant company' assembled, Macaulay was seated in an elevated position (Philip Thicknesse claims she was enthroned), she was regaled with six specially-composed poems read by six gentlemen selected from the company. She was then presented by Wilson with a large gold medal which had originally been given by Queen Anne to one of the ambassadors at the Peace of Utrecht. The entertainment proceeded with wine and a lavish spread of ices, cakes and exotic fruits, lasting until two in the morning.<sup>10</sup> Whilst the birthday celebrations were satirised in the press they go, as Susan Sloman has suggested, a long way to explain the celebrity of Macaulay

and Wilson in Bath at the moment Wright of Derby was producing his portrait.

Wright's statement to his brother that this portrait was painted 'for reputation' has led to the interpretation that it was not a commission, but painted for Wright's exhibition room in Bath.<sup>11</sup> Given the highly personal nature of the portrait, it seems more likely that Wilson retained the picture. It did not have the effect Wright had hoped for, his practice in Bath never took off and he returned to Derby in 1777. Wilson's over the top veneration of Macaulay prompted the publication of a series of caricatures by Matthias and Mary Darly mocking both of them. Wilkes reported to his daughter: 'Darley has just published a new caricatura of her and the Doctor, which she owns has vexed her to the heart. It is worth your buying.'<sup>12</sup> Shortly after Wright's painting was completed Catherine Macaulay married for a second time, a young Scotsman, William Graham, who was mate to a ship's surgeon. Wilson was dismayed. Macaulay refused to return the deeds to Wilson's house or renounce her annuity and Wilson eventually resorted to blackmail to win them back. Wilson complained that 'the NewsPapers have been very free with my character.'<sup>13</sup> Wilson tried to improve his reputation by engaging a young scholar to edit and publish the devotional writings of his father, Bishop Thomas Wilson. Published in 1782, the volume contained Wilson's engraved portrait which was derived from Wright's painting, excising the figure of Sophia Catherine Macaulay. The production of the intermediary drawing for the engraver was one of the very first commissions entrusted to the young Thomas Lawrence on his arrival in Bath.



Matthew Darly, *A speedy and effectual preparation for the next world*  
Etching, published May 1 1777  
Lewis Walpole Library, Yale



Robert Edge Pine  
*Catharine Macaulay (née Sawbridge)*  
Oil on canvas c.1775  
54 x 41¼ inches · 1372 mm x 1048 mm  
© National Portrait Gallery, London

#### NOTES

1. See Susan Sloman, *Gainsborough in Bath*, New Haven and London, 2002.
2. Elizabeth E. Barker, 'Documents Relating to Joseph Wright 'of Derby' (1734–97)', *The Walpole Society*, vol.71, 2009, pp.90–91.
3. See Helmut von Erffa and Allen Staley, *The Paintings of Benjamin West*, New Haven and London, 1986, cat. no.388, pp.380–381. The altarpiece is now in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
4. Catherine Macaulay, *History of England*, London, 1768, vol.4, p.160.
5. Catherine Macaulay, *History of England*, London, 1771, vol.5, p.382.
6. Catherine Macaulay, *Loose Remarks on Certain Positions to be found in Mr Hobbes's Philosophical Rudiments of Government and Society, with a short sketch of a Democratical Form of Government in a letter to Signor Paoli*, London, 1767, p.29.
7. Ed. C.L.S. Linnell, *The Diaries of Thomas Wilson, D.D. 1731–37 and 1750, son of Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man*, London, 1964, p.18.
8. A series of some thirty letters from Catherine Sophia Macaulay to her mother detailing her education survive in the collection of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01795.
9. John Ingamells, *National Portrait Gallery: Mid-Georgian Portraits 1760–1790*, London, 2004, pp.322–325.
10. Bath Chronicle, 10 April, 1777. Quoted in Susan Sloman, *Pickpocketing the Rich: Portrait Painting in Bath 1720–1800*, Exh. Cat., Bath (Holburne Museum of Art), 2002, p.21.
11. Susan Sloman, *Pickpocketing the Rich: Portrait Painting in Bath 1720–1800*, Exh. Cat., Bath (Holburne Museum of Art), 2002, pp.20–21.
12. John Wilkes, *Letters from the Year 1774 tot the Year 1796 of John Wilkes Esq. addressed to his Daughter*, London 1804, letter xLI, April 28 1778, vol.II, p.93.
13. Ed. C.L.S. Linnell, *The Diaries of Thomas Wilson, DD 1731–37 and 1750, son of Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man*, London, 1964, p.19.

STUDY OF TREES

Pencil

7½ × 5½ inches; 190 × 143 mm

Drawn c.1757

COLLECTIONS

The artist's posthumous sale, London, Christie's 11 May 1799, lot 82, 84 or 88 (to Hibbert);

George Hibbert (1757–1837), Munden House, Hertfordshire, by descent;

Hon. A H. Holland Hibbert (1855–1935);

Holland-Hibbert sale, Christie's, 30 June

1913, probably lot 32 – Tree Studies – a pair

7 × 5¼ inches, (bt Leggatt £3.3s);

H.W. Underdown;

John Manning, Manning Galleries,

(as Constable);

A. C. Greg, Acton Bridge, acquired from the

above;

Sotheby's, 24 September 1987, lot 65;

With Richard Ivor;

John Bull;

John Bull sale, Sotheby's, 16 July 1992, lot 110;

Private collection, acquired from the above, to

2018

LITERATURE

John Hayes, *The Drawings of Thomas*

*Gainsborough*, London, 1970, vol.1, pp.3,152, cat.

no.173;

Ian Fleming-Williams, *Constable and his*

*Drawings*, London, 1990, pp.54–55, fig. 50.



Thomas Gainsborough, *Study of Trees*

Pencil · 5½ × 7½ inches · 140 × 190 mm

Private collection, UK, formerly with Lowell Libson Ltd.

This rapidly executed pencil study of a clump of trees was made by Gainsborough whilst he was still in his native Suffolk at the end of the 1750s. Gainsborough's friend and obituarist, the Reverend Sir Henry Bate Dudley wrote in 1788 that: 'Nature was his teacher and the woods of Suffolk his academy; here he would pass in solitude his moments in making a sketch of an antiquated tree, a marshy brook, a few cattle, a sheep herd and his flock, or any other accidental objects that were present.'<sup>1</sup>

This drawing identical in size to a number of comparable sheets of the same period which are also focused *plein air* studies and it was almost certainly part of a now dismembered sketchbook. According to Joseph Farington a group of sketchbooks were sold by the artist's daughter Margaret in 1799 for £140.3s.6d.<sup>2</sup> Of the ten books offered for sale at Christie's, three were acquired by the West India merchant and collector George Hibbert, one by the collector and connoisseur Richard Payne Knight, one bought in half-shares by Hibbert and Sir George Beaumont, one was acquired by the dealers Colnaghi's and 'Mr Pugh', the artist Hugh Pugh, also bought three.<sup>3</sup> The present sheet comes from one of the Hibbert sketchbooks.

The purpose of such studies was clearly to inform Gainsborough's own practice as a landscape painter. The close observation of clumps of tree allowed him to understand the construction of the plant, the massing of lights and shadows and the way the foliage behaved in different weather and seasons. Gainsborough was clearly working out a method of hatching which could suggest the characteristics of the tree without drawing every leaf, a method which was informed at

this date by his interest in Dutch landscape painting of the seventeenth century. In another sheet, of precisely the same format, Gainsborough records a similar contrast in the form between two trees – the nearest shows strong light touching the left hand side of the tree and on the other side Gainsborough uses thick black chalk to show the foliage.<sup>4</sup> These sheets ultimately informed Gainsborough's practice as a landscape painter, but rather than providing templates from which he could quote in his paintings, they acted as exercises, allowing him to work out a method of drawing individual trees back in his studio. Gainsborough articulated the idea that these studies acted as exercises rather than formal drawings in a letter to his patron, Constantine Phipps, who he was teaching to draw:

*You know, Sir, I set you to this [sketch of foliage] merely to free your hand, but you are not to understand that for Drawing – therefore remember that there must be truth of hand, as well as freedom of hand in Drawing.*<sup>5</sup>

NOTES

1. *The Morning Herald*, 8 August, 1788.
2. Ed. Kenneth Garlick and Angus Macintyre, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, New Haven and London, 1979, IV, p.1222.
3. John Hayes, *The Drawings of Thomas Gainsborough*, London, 1970, I, p.96.
4. John Hayes, *The Drawings to Thomas Gainsborough*, London 1970, I, pp.151, cat. nos. 168, 172, pls. 56 and 386.
5. Thomas Gainsborough to the Hon Constantine Phipps, later 2nd Baron Mulgrave, in ed. John Hayes, *The Letters of Thomas Gainsborough*, New Haven and London, 2001, p.92.



## THOMAS JONES 1742–1803

### RIVER SCENE, ON THE WYE

Oil on two sheets of paper (now laid on canvas)  
7½ × 11¾ inches; 188 × 298 mm  
Dated '1776', lower centre

#### COLLECTIONS

Anna Maria Thomas (1780–1807),  
the artist's daughter;  
Thomas Thomas, the artist's son-in-law,  
by descent;  
Clara Thomas, by descent, 1914;  
Commander Charles Lindsay Evan-Thomas RN  
(1891–1950) of Pencerrig;  
Jane Evan-Thomas, widow of the above,  
by descent;  
Judy Egerton, a gift from the above;  
And by descent to 2012;  
Lowell Libson Ltd;  
Private collection, UK, purchased from the  
above 2012, to 2017

#### LITERATURE

Ed., *Thomas Jones (1742–1803)*, exhibition  
catalogue, Greater London Council, 1970, p.18,  
no.16;  
Ann Sumner and Greg Smith ed., *Thomas Jones  
(1742–1803): An Artist Rediscovered*, exhibition  
catalogue, 2003, p.146, no.36, repr.

#### EXHIBITED

London, Marble Hill House, *Thomas Jones  
(1742–1803)*, 1970 (travelling to Cardiff, National  
Museum of Wales), no.16;  
Cardiff, National Museum of Wales, *Thomas  
Jones (1742–1803): An Artist Rediscovered*,  
2003 (travelling to Manchester, Whitworth Art  
Gallery and London, National Gallery) no.36.

In the autumn of 1770 Thomas Jones recorded in his *Memoirs* a trip to Gadbridge, Buckinghamshire, the home of his cousin Rice James: 'made a number of Sketches from the little picturesque Bits round about, as far as St Alban's, and painted in Oil some Studies of Trees &c after nature.'<sup>1</sup> This is the most substantive reference in Jones's own writing to his technique of producing studies from nature on primed paper small enough to fit into the lid of a painting-box. The present work, signed and dated 1776, is precisely such a study made whilst staying at his parent's home, Pencerrig in Radnorshire, on the eve of his departure for Italy. Successful during his own lifetime, but largely forgotten after his death, he has received a great deal of attention in recent years as a result of these powerful *plein air* studies.

Born at Penkerrig to an established family of dissenters, Jones was originally intended for a career in the church, but decided instead to pursue a life of landscape painting. From November 1761 Jones spent a year in William Shipley's London drawing school, where he became a firm friend of John Hamilton Mortimer, his frequent collaborator as well as companion on high-spirited excursions. Convinced that his 'natural bias' was towards landscape painting, in March 1763 he persuaded Richard Wilson to take him as a pupil for two years. His journal includes a glimpse of Wilson rebuking Jones and his fellow pupils William Hodges and Joseph Farington for rowdiness: 'Gentlemen, this is not the way to rival Claude.' Jones was a prolific exhibitor at the Society of Artists, sending some fifty works between 1765 and 1780. Some were specific views in England and Wales;





others are less identifiable, such as the *View, after Nature* singled out by Horace Walpole in 1770 as a 'very fine picture.'

Jones's exhibited landscapes were principally conventional 'exhibition' works; either topographical subjects or historical landscapes, such as his *Bard* of 1774, the subject-matter taken from the poem by Thomas Gray, which was shown at the Society of Artists that year and turned into a mezzotint by John Raphael Smith and published by John Boydell in 1775. Jones's most significant innovation was technical, developing a habit of painting small oil sketches on paper outdoors. These landscape excursions were by no means unique – we know Jones's master, Richard Wilson executed oils *en plein air* in Italy in the 1750s – but no painter had made it such an integral aspect of their working practice.

Jones returned to Pencerrig in September 1775 on the eve of his departure for Italy and made 'a number of Studies in Oil on thick primed paper – after Nature' of which the present is a particularly fine example<sup>2</sup> Jones executed a number of highly personal studies of the environs around Pencerrig, as well as on the nearby river Wye. It is perhaps no coincidence that Jones's native landscape was the landscape made famous by the second generation of writers on the picturesque. The present lively oil tallies with Benjamin Malkin's lyrical description of the river scenery at Aberedw, one of the most spectacular stretches of the Wye. Malkin's assertion that Jones himself had made the 'romantic scenery' at this spot the focus of his 'early studies' is confirmed by his autobiographical poem 'Petraeia' which dedicates a stanza to the pictorial delights of 'Vaga' – the Wye.<sup>3</sup>

*Clear Vaga, whose meand'ring floods  
Embrace fair Lechria's fields and woods,  
Here gently gliding o'er the plain,  
There foaming like the angry main;  
Rushing through rock with horrid sweep,  
Or whirling down the giddy deep.*<sup>4</sup>

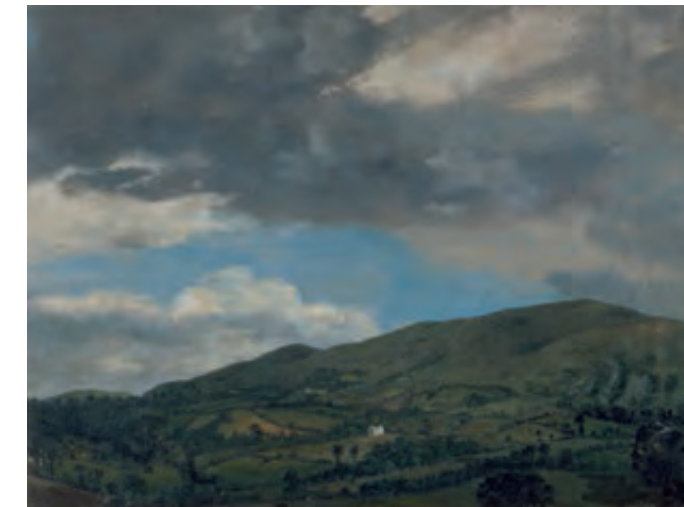
Jones may have generally resisted the attractions of continental sublime scenery – and the mountains of North Wales – but the 'Alpine majesty' of the Wye proved a fruitful exception.

Dated clearly on the rock in the foreground the status of Jones's oil on paper studies remains unclear. The present study was probably painted in one sitting, out of doors, as indicated by the amount of ground which has been allowed to show through. Whether the present painting was designed for sale or as private study is unclear. The fact that he neither lists nor describes them in his *Memoirs*, suggests ultimately that

they were intensely personal works and as has been observed, they would hardly have been deemed 'pictures' by his contemporaries. As is the case with a number of these intense studies of the period, the present work is made on two joined sheets. The present sketch is one of the most successful compositions he executed during his 1765/6 Welsh period and in its compositional structure and technical fluency presages his great Italian landscapes.

#### NOTES

1. Ed. P. Oppé, 'Memoirs of Thomas Jones, Penkerrig, Radnorshire, 1803', *The Walpole Society*, vol.32, 1946–8, p.22.
2. Ed. P. Oppé, 'Memoirs of Thomas Jones, Penkerrig, Radnorshire, 1803', *The Walpole Society*, vol.32, 1946–8, p.38.
3. Benjamin H. Malkin, *The Scenery, Antiquities, and Biography, of South Wales*, London, 1804, p.280.
4. James Baker, *A Picturesque Guide Through Wales and the Marshes*, London, 1895, p.226.



Thomas Jones, *Penkerrig, Wales*  
Oil on paper · 9 × 12 inches · 228 × 305 mm  
© Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery

A COW AND SHEEP IN A CLEARING

Black chalk heightened with white on buff paper  
9½ × 13⅝ inches; 241 × 346 mm  
Drawn in the late 1770s

COLLECTIONS

Sir Arthur Kay, 1930;  
Kay sale, Christie's, 23 May 1930, lot 37 (22 gns. to Meatyard);  
Sir Michael Sadler, d.1943;  
Leicester Galleries;  
Sir Kenneth (later Lord) Clark, d.1983;  
The Hon Mrs Alan Clark (daughter-in-law of the above), by gift;  
The Saltwood Heritage Foundation, sale Christie's, 25 April 1995, lot 4;  
Miss Dorothy Scharf, acquired from the above;  
Lowell Libson Ltd, acquired from the above;  
Private collection, USA, acquired from the above 2009, to 2017

LITERATURE

Mary Woodhall, *Gainsborough's Landscape Drawings*, 1939, p.126, cat no.284;  
John Hayes, *The Drawings of Thomas Gainsborough*, 2 vols, 1970, vol.I, p.313, cat. no.875, reproduced, vol.II, plate 144;  
Hugh Belsey, "Communing with nature: Gainsborough and cows, *British Paintings, Watercolours and Drawings*, exhibition catalogue (Lowell Libson Ltd), 2009, pp.31–32.

EXHIBITED

York, Bristol, Liverpool etc., Arts Council of Great Britain exhibition, *Gainsborough's Drawings*, 1960–61, no.73;  
London, Lowell Libson Ltd, *British Paintings, Watercolours and Drawings*, 2009.

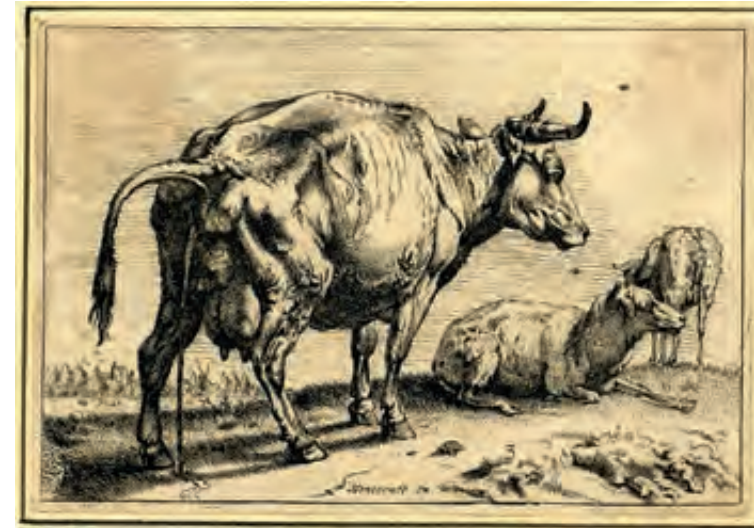
This powerful drawing was made by Gainsborough at the end of the 1770s; unlike most of his mature drawings, the landscape element is minimal and there are no human figures, Gainsborough instead depicts a single cow shown in profile, accompanied by a sheep. Rapidly and boldly handled, this grand drawing is one of Gainsborough's

most impressive animal portraits and points to the complexity and sophistication of his work as a draughtsman.

Amongst Gainsborough's earliest landscape drawings are a number of careful graphite studies of cows. Two varnished sheets in the Oppé Collection at the Tate show seated cows set within landscapes and have traditionally dated to the late 1750s; as Annie Lyles has noted: 'such subjects are generally observed from a close viewpoint, and almost certainly drawn from nature.'<sup>1</sup> Made whilst Gainsborough was living in Suffolk, the meticulous studies have a specificity that confirms that they were made from life. By the 1770s Gainsborough was no longer concerned with drawing directly from nature, instead he had developed a sophisticated vocabulary of natural forms which he used to compose landscapes of the imagination. These famous 'thoughts, for landscapes scenery' were derived from the tabletop models vividly described by the writer and painter William Pyne as consisting of 'cork or coal for his foregrounds, make middle grounds of sand and clay, bushes of mosses and lichens, and set up distant woods of broccoli.'<sup>2</sup> In the present drawing a pollarded willow frames the composition on the left and to the right a rock, perhaps a piece of coal, concludes the right hand side of the drawing. A thicket with an angled branch provides a dark background, a drama of diagonals, which is used to set off the prominent horizontals and verticals of the cow and the concentration of light helps to emphasise the stillness of the scene.

The technique used by Gainsborough in drawings like this was described by Edward Edwards as: 'A process rather capricious, truly deserving the epithet bestowed upon





Pierre Giffart after Paulus Potter, *Cow seen from behind with two sheep*  
Etching · 3 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 5 $\frac{5}{8}$  inches · 99 × 143 mm  
© The Trustees of the British Museum



Thomas Gainsborough, *Study of a Cow in a Landscape*  
Pencil on paper · 6 × 7 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches · 153 × 188 mm  
© Tate, London 2018

them by a witty lady, who called them moppings.<sup>3</sup> Here Gainsborough has used black chalk heightened with white, working in his characteristic rapid and loose manner. Gainsborough was perpetually conscious of media, writing to correspondents about the availability of different types of paper, being particularly disappointed when the printer James Dodsley could not supply a fine wove paper which Gainsborough had been keen to use ‘for making wash’d Drawings upon.’<sup>4</sup> In the present drawing Gainsborough has used buff coloured paper which imparted a mid-tone like the ground of a canvas, on which Gainsborough has used the black chalk to create his forms and white chalk to provide light and colour.

The evidence suggests that the gestation of Gainsborough’s later landscape drawings were more complex and sophisticated than the mere illustration of diorama. Gainsborough must have been armed with his earlier Suffolk studies, such as the Oppé drawings of cows, which provided him with accurate observations from nature. These allowed him to produce countless

spontaneous compositions that were both technically and pictorially innovative. Many of Gainsborough’s surviving drawings from this period all feature a similar group of components, rearranged to form new compositions. To achieve these ‘free sketches’ Gainsborough developed a visual short-hand, particularly in his handling of trees, figures and cattle; the latter often appearing in an almost abstract reduction of shapes and lines. Looking at the large body of Gainsborough’s drawings it is clear that principal amongst the motifs he deployed in these imaginary compositions were cattle: Gainsborough shows cattle watering, grazing, being milked and herded; cattle quietly traverse his landscapes and sit ruminant on outcrops. But this sheet is unusual in showing a cow close-to, in profile. Clearly not drawn from life, Gainsborough’s incisive lines show the memory of a cow rather than an actual animal, whilst the grouping of cow and sheep point to his awareness of existing visual traditions.

Gainsborough had a life-long passion for seventeenth-century Dutch art. Recent

research has shown that he owned a substantial collection of Dutch old master engravings which informed his work; for example in an upright landscape of the 1750s, Gainsborough quoted directly a group of four sheep and goats which came from an etching of 1655 by Carel Dujardin.<sup>5</sup> Gainsborough owned unspecified engravings by Paulus Potter, which may have been one of the series of prints by Marcus de Bye made after Potter’s drawings of cows in the 1660s. The present drawing is close in spirit to Potter’s individualistic cows set in distinct landscapes and may well have formed Gainsborough’s source.

#### NOTES

1. Eds. Anne Lyles and Robin Hamlyn, *British Watercolours from the Oppé Collection*, exh. cat., London (Tate Gallery), 1997, p.82.
2. Ephraim Hardcastle (W. H. Pyne), *Wine and Walnuts*, London, 1824, II, p.197.
3. Edward Edwards, *Anecdotes of Painting*, London, 1808, p.139.
4. John Hayes, *The Drawings of Thomas Gainsborough*, London, 1971, vol.I, p.21.
5. John Hayes, *The Landscape paintings of Thomas Gainsborough*, London, 1982, pp.406–407, cat. no.69.

OLD JOHN TONSON, HEAD WAITER AT THE KING'S HEAD INN, DERBY

'Old John at the King's Head Raffled for & paid 12.12'

Joseph Wright of Derby, entry in his account book<sup>1</sup>

Oil on canvas  
30¼ × 25¼ inches; 770 × 642 mm  
In its original neo-classical frame<sup>2</sup>  
Painted c.1780

COLLECTIONS

Painted to be raffled for the sitter's benefit: listed in the artist's Account Book as 'Old John at the King's Head Raffled for & paid 12.12'; According to Bemrose, raffled at Derby Town Hall;<sup>3</sup> Daniel Parker Coke, MP (1745–1825) acquired at the above raffle; Joseph Strutt (1765–1844), Derby, by 1835; Edward Strutt, 1st Baron Belper (1801–1880), Kingston Hall, Northamptonshire by descent; The Hon. Henry Strutt, 2nd Baron Belper (1840–1914), Kingston Hall, Northamptonshire; Algernon Strutt, 3rd Baron Belper (1883–1956), Kingston Hall, Northamptonshire; The Hon. Peter Algernon Strutt (1924–2007), Kingston Hall, Northamptonshire; Strutt sale, Sotheby's, London, 19 November 1986, lot 54; Zankel-West collection, New York

LITERATURE

J. Strutt, *A Catalogue of the Paintings and Drawings ... in the collection of Joseph Strutt*, Derby, 1835, no.66; William Bemrose, *The Life and Works of Joseph Wright ARA*, London, 1885, pp.10 and 120; Benedict Nicholson, *Joseph Wright of Derby: Painter of Light*, London, 1968, I, p.233, no.182; Ed. Judy Egerton, *Wright of Derby*, exh. cat., London (Tate Gallery), 1990, p.215, no.140; Elizabeth Barker, 'Documents relating to Joseph Wright 'of Derby' (1734–97)', *Walpole Society*, LXXI, 2009, pp.15, 53 and 195; Eds. Giles Waterhouse and Anne French, *Below Stairs, 400 years of servants' portraits*, London, 2004, pp.50 and 78.

EXHIBITED

Derby, Derby Art Gallery, *Midland Counties Exhibition*, May 1870, no.800; Derby, Derby Corporation Art Gallery, *Paintings*

by Joseph Wright ... with some Original Drawings and a complete Collection of Prints, 1883, no.106; Derby, Derby Corporation Art Gallery, *Bi-Centenary Exhibition of the Works of Wright of Derby*, 1934, no.91; London, Tate Gallery; Paris, Grand Palais; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Wright of Derby*, 1990, no.140.

This engaging picture is a rare and important documented example of a servant portrait made by Joseph Wright of Derby in around 1780. The sitter has long been identified, on the basis of an entry in Wright's own account book, as 'Old John at the King's Head' and the circumstance of the commission explained by Wright's further entry: 'Raffled for & paid.' The sitter was the head waiter at Derby's principal Coaching Inn, the King's Head and the portrait was painted to provide a pension for 'Old John' himself. We know the raffle was won by another of Wright's patrons, the MP Daniel Parker Coke. Despite being long regarded as one of Wright's most sensitive and penetrating portraits, it has been the subject of surprisingly little discussion; this note identifies the sitter for the first time and locates this unusual image in the complex context of servant portraiture and artistic charity during the eighteenth century.

By 1780 Joseph Wright was a celebrated figure in Derby, having achieved considerable success in London's exhibiting societies, travelled to Italy and published engravings which had achieved international success.<sup>4</sup> In 1777 he had returned from Bath permanently to live in Derby and service a local, loyal clientele; men growing prosperous as a result of burgeoning industry and commerce. Derby itself was





a rapidly expanding town with almost 10,000 residents by 1788, it was a crucible of manufacturing innovation and the latest scientific thinking.<sup>5</sup> To the east of the town, in the River Derwent was Lombe's Mill, the first successful silk throwing mill in England and on the Nottingham Road William Duesbury's porcelain factory which became Crown Derby following a visit from George III in 1775. The King's Head, Derby's largest Coaching Inn, was situated at the heart of the town in Corn Market off the Market Place.

As in most county towns of the period, the King's Head served as a transport hub and consequently the locus for much local activity. It played host to: auctions; balls; clubs, both political and philosophical; officials in town for the assizes as well as visitors occupied on commerce or fashionable industrial tourism. It was from one of the latter, the American loyalist Samuel Curwen visiting Derby in June 1780 that we get a description of 'Old John' himself:

*'[a]llighting at King's Head Inn ... our attention soon after our arrival was employed on a singular phenomenon in the person of John Tonson, who had been a waiter in this inn for 43 years the 15 years immediately preceding the present service, Porter to Sir Robert Sutton, and the 11 before that to the Earl of Ferrers, in which capacities by his own relation, he seems to have given content; is now in 87 year, and though somewhat decrepid and stooping, carries no mark of age in his face, that still retains a rubicund complexion without a single wrinkle, and a lively, strong memory without the least impairment, indeed all his faculties appear to be in full vigor, which we have surprising proofs of in course of 2 or 3 hours's attendance. The family of Ferrers still keep up a respect to their old servant, and now and then send a carriage for*

*him, especially at Christmas and Holiday time where he is made welcome and generally has the hand of one of the fair ladys at Country dances. So late as last Christmas I dance, said he, from 11 to 4 o'clock there in a country dance with one of the Ladys. On my saying he was too old for that tiresome exercise, he replied a good fiddle inspires me with vigour enough to acquit myself to the Lady's liking, and makes me for a while return to youth, far otherwise it should seem then was Sir Francis Wronghead. Canna hand it. He has been a sprightly fellow in his day, and very probably, for that reason, in the good graces of many a fine lady of quality which indeed he interest with an honest unaffected simplicity.'*<sup>6</sup>

Curwen offers an unusually detailed account of John Tonson and his career as a servant. According to the details he recorded, Tonson was born in 1693 and employed at Staunton Harold by the 1st and 2nd Earls Ferrers followed by the diplomat Sir Robert Sutton before being employed at the King's Head in around 1737.

Curwen's description of Tonson appears to be remarkably close to Wright's portrait. Wright shows the slight stoop, the 'rubicund complexion' and remarkably unlined face, he also offers a penetrating psychological portrait, capturing the intelligence and humour ('the honest unaffected simplicity') that had charmed Curwen. Wright has placed Tonson in a feigned, painted oval, setting the figure slightly off-centre this gives the sense of Tonson in action, the busy waiter at work, rather than the more usual static portrait format.

Wright has evidently delighted in scrutinising the elderly, characterful head with its piercing blue eyes and shaggy eye-brows. Wright, in common with other painters of the period, had already shown

himself particularly interested in depicting characterful heads of old men. As early as 1765 he had employed John Wilson, an occupant of one of Derby's almshouses, as a model in his *Three Persons Viewing the Gladiator by Candlelight*. In the 1770s Wright employed John Staveley as a model, making a series of vivacious life studies which he used to complete notable compositions such as *The Captive now in Derby*.<sup>7</sup> Elderly models of lower social standing than the painter, such as the street-mender George White, who was employed by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Tonson, allowed a painter to produce works of more power and penetration than in commissioned portraiture, where the demands of the sitter, to an extent, took precedence.

The circumstances of the commission are not entirely clear. Wright's Account Book contains the note 'Head Ruffled for & paid 12.12', suggesting that Wright was paid the going rate for the portrait but that it had been initiated as the prize of a raffle. Wright's early biographer William Bemrose stated that: 'amongst the portraits known to have been exhibited at the Town Hall may be mentioned that of 'Old John' head waiter at the King's Head Inn, which was raffled for ten guineas, and won by Danl. Parker Coke, Esq. This picture, which represents 'Old John' with roses in the button-hole of his coat, and a smiling and intelligent face under his wig, is now in the possession of Lord Belper.'<sup>8</sup> Considering Tonson's age in 1780–87 according to Curwen – and his popularity amongst people of 'quality' it seems likely that the painting was raffled to provide a pension, although as Judy Egerton pointed out, 10 guineas seems high for an individual ticket.<sup>9</sup>



Joseph Wright of Derby  
*A study of John Staveley*  
Oil on paper · 18¾ × 14¼ inches · 475 × 362 mm  
Private collection, formerly with Lowell Libson Ltd.



Joseph Wright of Derby, *The Reverend D'Ewes Coke (1747–1811), His Wife Hannah, and Daniel Parker Coke (1745–1825)*  
Oil on canvas · 60 × 70 inches · 1524 × 1778 mm  
© 2018 Derby Museums Trust

The painting was won by Daniel Parker Coke, the independent MP for Derby and a patron of Wright. Coke was to feature in one of Wright's most celebrated conversation pieces *The Rev. D'Ewes Coke, his wife Hannah and Daniel Parker Coke*. The King's Head was certainly a centre for political activity, *The Derby Mercury* recorded that the 'True Blue Club' met 'every fourth Tuesday in the month.' The conservative 'True Blue Club' counted leading members of the county as members, including Richard Arkwright of Sutton Hall, Sir Henry Fitzherbert of Tissington and Robert Holden as Steward; all were patrons of Wright.

Tonson's portrait, 'smiling and intelligent' to quote Bemrose, shows unusual evidence of the forms of entrepreneurial social care that proliferated during the century. In 1791 Sir Joshua Reynolds placed his sizeable

collection of old master paintings on exhibition in the Haymarket; the admission charge for the exhibition was designed to provide a pension for his old servant Ralph Kirkley.

#### NOTES

1. Elizabeth Barker, 'Documents relating to Joseph Wright 'of Derby' (1734–97)', *The Volume of the Walpole Society*, LXXI, 2009, p.15.
2. For an account of Wright's frames see ed. Judy Egerton, *Wright of Derby*, exh. cat., London (Tate Gallery), 1990, pp.281–287.
3. William Bemrose, *The Life and Works of Joseph Wright ARA*, London, 1885, p.10.
4. For Wright of Derby's international success see Tim Clayton, 'The Engraving of Publication of Prints of Joseph Wright's Paintings', in ed. Judy Egerton, *Wright of Derby*, exh. cat., London (Tate Gallery), 1990, pp.25–30.
5. For Derby see Paul A. Elliott, *The Derby Philosophers: Science and Culture in British Urban Society 1700–1850*, Manchester, pp.1–54.

6. Ed. Andrew Oliver, *The Journal of Samuel Curwen, Loyalist*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1972, vol.11, pp.634–635. Curwen's journal had been published during the nineteenth century in a heavily edited form where Tonson is described as 'Tomson'. *The Journal and Letters of Samuel Curwen: An American in England from 1775 to 1788*, Boston, 1864, p.274.
7. For Staveley see ed. Judy Egerton, *Wright of Derby*, exh. cat., London (Tate Gallery), 1990, pp.112–113.
8. William Bemrose, *The Life and Works of Joseph Wright ARA*, London, 1885, p.10.
9. Ed. Judy Egerton, *Wright of Derby*, exh. cat., London (Tate Gallery), 1990, p.215.

CHARLOTTE GUNNING

*‘Walk’d through the Green Park after Breakfast to Miss Gunning at St. James’s found her pretty well ... it was her morning for having ye Royal Coach she carried me as far as Lady Clavering to whom I wish’d to make a visit, she was out – I went on to Romney the Painters wth Miss Gunning she was going to sit for her Picture.’*

*Diary of Elizabeth Hamilton, Saturday 15th May 1784<sup>1</sup>*

Oil on canvas  
30 × 25 inches · 762 × 635 mm  
Painted in 1784

COLLECTIONS

Sir Robert Gunning (1731–1816), 1st Bt., father of the sitter;  
Sir Frederick Digby Gunning (1853–1906), 6th Bt. By descent;  
Thomas Agnew & Sons, London, May 1905;  
Duveen Bros. New York;  
Edward Stotesbury, Whitmarsh Hall, Philadelphia, acquired from the above, to 1941;  
James St. L. O’Toole Galleries, New York, Catalogue of the Paintings ... of the late Edward T. Stotesbury, April 23–May 10 1941, lot 17 (unsold);  
Parke-Bernet, New York, 18 April 1944, lot 2; bt A. Linah;  
Mr and Mrs Kay Kimbell, acquired in 1950;  
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas;  
Kimbell Art Museum sale, Sotheby’s, New York, 20 April 1983, lot 21;  
Leger Galleries, London (purchased at the above);  
Private collection, acquired from the above;  
Christie’s, New York, 19 January 1996, lot 420;  
Chawton House Library, Alton, Hampshire, acquired at the above, to 2018.

LITERATURE

Hilda Gamlin, *George Romney and His Art*, London, 1894, p.191;  
Humphrey Ward and William Roberts, *Romney, A Biographical and Critical Essay with a Catalogue Raisonné of his Works*, London and New York, 1904, vol.II, p.68;  
Arthur Chamberlain, *George Romney*, London, 1910, pp.305–6;  
Marion Spielmann, *British Portrait Painters to the Opening of the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1910, vol.2, p.6;  
H. Marceau, ‘The Stotesbury Collection’, *Pennsylvania Museum Bulletin*, December 1932, vol.28, p.21, repr. opp. p.23;  
Helen Comstock, ‘The Connoisseur in America’, *Connoisseur*, August 1941, vol.CVIII, p.79;  
Art Digest, May 1941, vol.XV, pp.8 & 19;  
Jennifer C. Watson, *George Romney in Canada*, exh. cat., Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Canada, 1985, p.60;  
Alex Kidson, *George Romney, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, vol.I, New Haven and London, 2015, p.268, no.579, repr.

EXHIBITED

London, Agnew’s, *Eleventh Annual Exhibition on behalf of the Artists’ General Benevolent Fund*, 1905, no.20. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Museum of Art, *The Stotesbury Collection*, 1932 (no cat. number);  
San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, *Masterpieces of English Portraiture*, 1941, no.17;  
London, Leger Galleries, *Realism through Informality*, 1983, no.16.

This striking, Romantic portrait of Charlotte Gunning was painted by Romney in 1784 when she was serving as a Maid of Honour to Queen Charlotte. Almost monochrome in palette, the portrait is an usually sombre depiction of a woman in her mid-twenties; Romney was perhaps responding to the remarkably well-educated sitter and her

well-documented sober character. This bust-length portrait forms part of a series Romney completed of members of the Gunning family, beginning with a splendid full-length depiction of her father, the successful diplomat, Sir Robert Gunning in the robes of the Order of the Bath.<sup>2</sup> In 1781 Romney painted a portrait of Charlotte’s younger sister, Barbara and in 1786 her brother, George. The present painting was completed by August 1786 when Sir Robert paid Romney 20 guineas for the picture.<sup>3</sup>

Charlotte Gunning’s life encapsulated the evolving role of women at court in the second half of the eighteenth century. She had been appointed a Maid of Honour to Queen Charlotte in 1779. There were six Maids of Honour at any one time, they were paid £300 a year and provided with servants, but their lives consisted of little more than refined servitude. Gunning would have been compelled to work long hours, to attend her royal mistress through uneventful days and nights and to live a life of dull routine, menial activity, and rigid protocol. It was a life meticulously documented in her diary by the second keeper of the robes, the celebrated novelist Fanny Burney. Charlotte Gunning appears in Burney’s diary – in its published form as ‘Miss Fuzilier’ – in a somewhat unfavourable light, thanks to an episode which underscores the claustrophobic world of royal service.

In 1790 Burney reacts with horror at the news that Queen Charlotte’s Vice Chamberlain, Colonel Stephen Digby, is to marry Charlotte Gunning. Digby, a charming and sympathetic widower, had, she believed been paying court to her, not Charlotte. At first she dismisses the gossip, explaining that Digby’s ‘leading trait is the





most acute sensibility', but it proved to be accurate. Burney was not Digby's social equal and she had tragically mis-read his friendship. Disbelief turns to scorn, Burney raged in her diary: 'he has risked my whole Earthly peace, with a defiance of all mental integrity the most extraordinary to be imagined! He has committed a breach of all moral ties, with every semblance of every virtue.'<sup>5</sup>

Through the diary Burney gives glimpses of Charlotte Gunning. Whilst the court was thick with gossip of a possible romance, she records a conversation with Mrs Ariana Egerton:

*'She asked me a thousand questions of what I thought about Miss Gunning? She dislikes her so very much, she cannot bear to think of her becoming Mrs Digby. She has met with some marks of contempt from her in their official meetings at St James's, that cannot be pardoned.'*



Edward Francisco Burney, *Fanny Burney*, c.1784–5  
Oil on canvas · 30 × 25 inches · 762 × 635 mm  
© National Portrait Gallery, London

*Miss Gunning, indeed, seemed to be formerly, when I used to meet her in company, to have an uncertainty of disposition that made her like two persons; now haughty, silent, and supercilious – and then gentle, composed, and interesting. She is, however, very little liked, the worst being always what most spreads abroad.'*<sup>6</sup>

Shortly after the wedding Burney records the curious circumstances of the service itself, told to her by Dr Fisher, Bishop of Salisbury, who had officiated. It took place in Sir Robert Gunning's house in London, in the drawing room where 'workboxes, netting-cases' 'and everything of that sort was spread about as on any common day.'<sup>7</sup> Shortly afterwards, Burney records an unexpected visit from Charlotte:

*'there appeared – the bride herself! – and alone! She looked quite brilliant in smiles and spirits. I never saw a countenance so enlivened. I really believe she has long cherished a passionate regard for Mr. Fairly, and brightens now from its prosperity ... immediately wishing her joy: she accepted it with a thousand dimples.'*<sup>8</sup>

We know that Charlotte sat for her portrait in Spring 1784 thanks to the diary kept by another Maid of Honour, Elizabeth Hamilton who recorded visiting Romney's studio at 32 Cavendish Square in the royal coach on Saturday May 15th. Romney's sitters' books record a large number of appointments which now show that he completed the portrait of Barbara Gunning first, in 1780 before painting the present portrait in 1784 for Sir Robert Gunning. The portrait itself shows Charlotte with fashionably powdered hair partially covered by a white scarf, in the manner of a classical vestal, perhaps an allusion to her employment?

The portrait remained in the Gunning family until the beginning of the twentieth century, when the fashion for Romney's work resulted in its sale, first to Agnew's and then to Duveen who sold it to the great Philadelphia collector Edward Stotesbury. The portrait hung at Whitemarsh Hall, the Palladian mansion designed for Stotesbury by Horace Trumbauer. The picture was subsequently in the collection of Mr and Mrs Kay Kimbell and was deaccessioned along with a major portion of their British portraits by the Kimbell Art Museum in 1983.

#### NOTES

1. Manchester, University Library, HAM/2/10. ff/47–48.
2. Now in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, see Alex Kidson, *George Romney, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, New Haven and London, 2015, vol.1, p. 267, no.577.
3. Alex Kidson, *George Romney, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, New Haven and London, 2015, vol.1, p.268.
4. Ed. Charlotte Barrett, *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, London, 1854, vol.v, p.127
5. Quoted in Joyce Hemlow, *The History of Fanny Burney*, Oxford, 1958, p.212. The diaries for 1790–1791 which contain the material relating to Charlotte Gunning's marriage to Digby have yet to be published as part of the Clarendon edition.
6. Ed. Lorna J. Clark, *The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, Oxford, 2014, vol.IV, p.441.
7. Ed. Charlotte Barrett, *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, London, 1854, vol.v, p.343.
8. Ed. Charlotte Barrett, *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, London, 1854, vol.v, p.344.

A VIEW ON THE VIA NOMENTANA

Oil and pencil on paper  
8 7/8 × 15 1/8 inches; 226 × 385 mm  
Signed with initials and inscribed 'TJ / without  
the Porta Pia Roma', verso  
Painted June 1778

COLLECTIONS

Elizabeth Dale (1781–1806),  
daughter of the artist;  
Captain John Dale, husband of the above,  
by inheritance;  
and by descent to;  
Mrs Elphinstone Farrier, 42 Pont Street,  
London SW1;  
Farrier sale, Christie's, 2 July 1954, The Property  
of a Lady whose husband was a descendant of  
Thomas Jones, a pupil of Richard Wilson RA,  
probably lot 215 (6 gns. to Colnaghi);  
Colnaghi's, London;  
Sir Francis Watson, KCVO (1907–1992),  
acquired by 1958;  
and by descent to 2014;  
Christie's, London, 9 July 2014, lot 206;  
Private collection, UK, acquired from the above,  
to 2018

EXHIBITED

Norwich, Castle Museum, *Eighteenth Century  
Italy and the Grand Tour*, May – July 1958, no.34;  
Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *Il Settecento a  
Roma*, Rome, March – May 1959, no.310;  
London, Marble Hill House and Cardiff, National  
Museum of Wales, *Thomas Jones (1742–1803)*,  
1970, no.39 (lent by F. J. B. Watson).

Rapidly executed in oil on primed paper,  
showing a non-descript view on the  
outskirts of Rome, this landscape is one  
of the most powerfully moving *plein air*  
studies made by Jones during his Grand  
Tour. It was precisely the anonymity of the  
scene, an area of scrub and the rooflines of  
suburban villas in the Campagna, rather  
than one of the monuments of classical  
Rome, that makes this view so compelling.  
Jones's concentrated, atmospheric oil studies

such as this, have long been recognised as  
transformative in the evolution of European  
*plein air* landscape painting.

In the autumn of 1770 Thomas Jones  
recorded in his *Memoirs* a trip to Gadbridge,  
Buckinghamshire, the home of his cousin  
Rice James: 'made a number of Sketches  
from the little picturesque Bits round about,  
as far as St Alban's, and painted in Oil some  
Studies of Trees &c after nature.'<sup>1</sup> This is  
the most substantive reference in Jones's  
own writing to his technique of producing  
studies from nature on primed paper small  
enough to fit into the lid of a painting-box.  
This innovative technique became an  
important feature of his Continental work.  
Indeed, whilst in Italy, Jones met a number  
of French, German and Scandinavian artists  
who were beginning to make use of the  
on-the-spot oil study, including Pierre-Henri  
de Valenciennes. Peter Galassi has noted  
that it was Jones and Valenciennes in their  
shared interest in painting outdoors which:  
'mark[ed] the beginning of a continuous  
tradition, the importance of which contin-  
ued throughout the nineteenth century.'<sup>2</sup>  
Jones's studies, in particular his unusual  
views of Neapolitan rooftops, display a  
sensibility and immediacy which make  
them stand out. As Anna Ottani Cavina  
pointed out in the recent exhibition in  
the Galeries nationales du Grand Palais,  
Paris: 'C'est l'Angleterre qui expérimente la  
première la réactivité de ces peintres face au  
paysage italien, de Francis Towne à Thomas  
Jones et John Robert Cozens jamais aussi  
audacieux et inventifs qu'en présence de  
lieux quelconques, découverts au hasard de  
leurs voyages.'<sup>3</sup>

This oil was evidently painted out of  
doors in the Summer of 1778: pin holes are

visible in the top corners, suggesting it  
was attached to the lid of Jones's paint box  
or portable easel. The sheet is signed and  
inscribed on the verso 'without the Porta Pia  
Roma' which gives us a rough location of  
the view. In the meticulously written (and  
re-written) journal Jones kept of his time  
in Italy, he left a vivid account of what took  
him outside the Porta Pia:

*'During the last as well as the present and  
succeeding Months, I made many very agreeable  
excursions to a Villa near S'o Agnese without the  
Porta Pia - This Villa was situated upon a gentle  
Ascent which commanded a view of the City of  
Rome on One hand, and the Campagna with the  
Appenine Mountains on the Other'*<sup>4</sup>

Several other oil sketches by Jones  
survive made on these excursions, includ-  
ing two depicting a cavern, one of which  
is inscribed: 'A cavern near Sant' Agnese  
without the Porta Pia' and now in the  
National Museums & Galleries of Wales.  
Jones continued in his *Memoir* giving an  
account of the villa he frequented:  
*'[I]t belonged to Sig're Martinelli, a Roman, of  
good family, but rather reduced in Circumstances  
- He had originally a large extent of Vineyards  
about it, but had been obliged to dispose of the  
greater part to Barazzi the banker who had  
built himself a handsome Country House in the  
Neighbourhood - With this Sig're Martinelli,  
little Couzins the Landscape Painter lodged in  
Rome and as he was not well in health, when the  
Weather was favourable, resided at this Villa for  
the benefit purpose - Here I made some studies in  
Oil of the surrounding Scenery and was accom-  
modated with a nice Poney whenever I pleased  
to take an airing with little Cousins and his  
JackAss.'*<sup>5</sup>

The villa and its surrounding vineyard  
were located along the Via Nomentana, the





Consular road which ran north east out of Porta Pia, near the basilica of Sant'Agnese fuori le mura. Using Jones's description we can work out the precise location. Francesco Barazzi was a significant financier who acted as banker to many significant Grand Tourists, including artists. A plan of his property was made at his death and corresponds to a plot of land delineated in the most detailed early map of the area Giovanni Francesco Falzacappa's *Carta topografica del suburbano di Roma* which was published in 1830. The plan shows the villa complex was situated to the south east of Sant'Agnese, on an area of elevated land, the 'gentle Ascent' mentioned by Jones. It is clear from Falzacappa that even by 1830 few buildings had been constructed to obstruct a view both of Rome itself and across the campagna to the Castelli Romani in the east. Nothing of Vigna Martinelli survives today, the villa itself was located roughly on the site of the circonvallazione, or Roman ring-road, in the modern area of Pietralata.

Jones mentions John Robert Cozens was staying at the villa, to Cozens we can add the names of John 'Warwick' Smith and Francis Towne, both of whom produced drawings at Vigna Martinelli.<sup>6</sup> In the present oil sketch, Jones seems not to show the villa itself, but a view looking due West from the villa towards the via Nomentana. Jones has included a sketched profile of the villa's garden gate, but other than a solitary Cyprus tree and the backs of a number of other houses, the view is anonymous. This was the approach which characterises Jones's most famous oil sketches, the depictions of the tops of buildings seen from the window of his lodgings in Naples. Jones has instead focused on the effects of sunset on the landscape, as such, this *plein air* study prefigures a generation of European Romantic landscape painters.



#### NOTES

1. ed. P. Oppé, 'Memoirs of Thomas Jones, Penkerrig, Radnorshire, 1803', *The Walpole Society*, vol.32, 1946-8, p.22.
2. P. Galassi, *Corot in Italy: Open-Air Painting and the Classical Landscape Tradition*, New Haven and London, 1991, p.18.
3. Ed. A. Ottani Cavina, *Paysages d'Italie; Les peintres du plein air (1780-1830)*, Paris, 2001, p.xxvi.
4. Ed. Paul Oppé, 'Memoirs of Thomas Jones', *The Walpole Society*, vol.xxxii, 1946-48, p.73.
5. Ed. Paul Oppé, 'Memoirs of Thomas Jones', *The Walpole Society*, vol. xxxii, 1946-48, p.73.
6. For the John 'Warwick' Smith see Anne Lyles and Robin Hamlyn, *British Watercolours from the Oppé Collection*, Exh. cat., London (Tate Gallery), 1997, cat. no.51, p.138; the Towne is in the collection of the British Museum (Museum Number: Nn, 02, 10).

Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes  
*Rome at Sunrise, from the Janiculum*  
 Oil on paper laid on board  
 9¼ x 16¾ inches - 233 x 424 mm  
 Painted c.1782-4  
 The Gere Collection, on long-term loan to the National Gallery, © Private collection 2000

THE EXPIATION OF ORESTES

Pencil and watercolour heightened with gouache on board  
 9 7/8 x 9 3/4 inches; 232 x 247 mm  
 Signed and dated 'Adam Buck 1813', lower left, and inscribed 'The Expiation of Orestes/ From a Greek Vase in the possession/ of Mr Zuppi.', verso

LITERATURE

Ian Jenkins, 'Adam Buck and the vogue for Greek Vases', *The Burlington Magazine*, v.103, no.1023, June 1988, p.451;  
 Peter Darvall, *A Regency Buck: Adam Buck 1759–1833*, Oxford, 2015, p.164, no.249.



Adam Buck, *The Artist and his Family*  
 Watercolour, pen and ink, and graphite  
 17 7/16 x 16 1/16 inches · 446 x 424 mm  
 Signed and dated 1813  
 Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

This elegant watercolour offers important evidence of the early nineteenth-century interest in Greek vase painting. Drawn by Adam Buck in 1813 the composition is a transcription of a design from an antique vase and shows Buck's characteristic neo-classical interpretation of an antique source.

Born and trained in Dublin, Adam Buck practiced first as a miniaturist before moving to London in 1795 where he worked for a fashionable clientele, which included George, Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. His elegant and spare portrait drawings were in great demand and he was a prolific exhibitor at the Royal Academy between 1795 and 1833. As well as portraiture, Buck also produced a large number of fashion plates, decorative compositions of loosely allegorical subject-matter, such as Faith, Hope and Charity. His subsequent reputation has largely rested on the proliferation of these prints and their use as designs in fan and on transfer-printed porcelain. But Buck was a committed and intelligent interpreter of ancient Greek forms.

The seriousness with which he engaged with the antique led Anthony Pasquin to observe: 'he appears to study the antique more rigorously than any of our emerging artists and by that means he will imbibe a chastity of thinking, which may eventually lead him to the personification of apparent beauty.'<sup>1</sup> In London he not only studied and collected the newly fashionable Greek vases, in 1811 he published a prospectus for a book on vase painting: *Proposals for publishing by subscription 100 engravings from paintings on Greek vases which have never been published, drawn and etched by Adam Buck from private collections now in England*. The publication was intended as a continuation

of Sir William Hamilton's *Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases* (1791–7). Buck painted an ambitious self-portrait with his family in 1813, which is now in the Yale Center for British Art, including nine of the Greek vases he planned to engrave. One of the vases (seen on the left of the principal niche) is a pelike painted with a scene of the Expiation of Orestes, based, as Jenkins first established, on a vase published in 1802 by A. L. Millin in his *Monuments Antiques*. The vase was recorded by Millin as being in the possession of 'M. Le Chanoine Zuppi' of Naples.

In the present watercolour Buck has taken the scene depicted by Millin and transposed it into a contemporary neo-classical composition. Orestes avenges the death of his father Agamemnon, by killing his mother Clytaemnestra and her lover Aegisthus. According to Aeschylus, Orestes is pursued by the Erinyes for this deed. Driven mad, he takes refuge with the goddess Athena who intervenes to end Orestes' persecution, as a result he dedicates an altar to Athena. In this watercolour, Buck shows Orestes seated before a standing sculpture of Athena.

NOTES

1. Anthony Pasquin, *An Authentic history of the professors of painting, sculpture, and architecture who have practiced in Ireland ... to which are added, Memoirs of the royal academicians*, 1796, p.41.
2. I. Jenkin, 'Adam Buck and the Vogue for Greek Vases', *The Burlington Magazine*, vol.130, no.1023, June, 1988, p.448–457.



PROMETHEUS CREATES THE FIRST MAN

Pen and grey ink and grey and brown wash over traces of black chalk  
 11¾ by 9¼ inches; 297 by 235 mm  
 Signed verso 'B. Pinelli ... Prometheus.'  
 Drawn c.1806

This impressive early drawing was made by Bartolomeo Pinelli at the beginning of his career and shows the influence of his early mentor, Felice Giani. Pinelli produced prints, drawings, oils and terra-cottas; he had been a pupil at the Accademia di San Luca and his earliest works, such as this, demonstrate an awareness of neo-classical ideas that were practiced by an international group of artists in Rome. Pinelli became known for his series of caricature-like engravings called *Costumi romanae*, published in 1809, which illustrated views of the people of

Rome and Naples. Working largely for the tourist market, Pinelli produced a series of publications.

Pinelli depicts the moment Minerva animates the first man, sculpted from clay by the titan Prometheus. It was a subject that was explored by a number of contemporary artists in Rome. At precisely the date Pinelli was working on this drawing, the great Danish sculpture Bertel Thorvaldsen was making designs for a roundel of the same subject, showing the same combination of elements: the seated, naked titan sculpting tool in hand admiring his creation, whilst standing Minerva animates the figure, an act symbolised by a butterfly. Felice Giani also produced a design of this subject, now in the Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, which shows the inherent drama of

the creation myth. Pinelli's design was made at a moment when the Prometheus myth was taking on new meaning. Prometheus increasingly became associated with human striving, particularly the quest for scientific knowledge. As the myths of antiquity became inflected with the emotional turmoil of romanticism, Prometheus began to embody the lone genius whose efforts to improve human existence could result in tragedy, an idea exemplified by Mary Shelley's adoption of *The Modern Prometheus* as the subtitle for her 1818 novel *Frankenstein*. Pinelli's work is more usually associated with watercolour genre scenes of Roman life, this richly inked early drawing shows his ability to capture the potential drama of neo-classicism at the beginning of the nineteenth century.



Felice Giani, *Prometheus Creating the First Man*, c.1810–1815  
 Pen and brown ink with brown wash  
 19¾ x 14¾ inches · 501 x 374 mm  
 National Gallery of Canada



Bertel Thorvaldsen, *Prometheus and Minerva*, c.1805  
 Pencil, pen and ink  
 7½ x 5¼ inches · 190 x 134 mm  
 Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen



STUDY OF A RIDER FOR 'THE DEPARTURE FOR THE HUNT'

Black chalk, heightened in white, on paper with grey ground  
 Inscribed in black pen lower right: 'Agasse, donné par Mlle. Agasse.'  
 7 × 6½ inches; 180 × 158 mm  
 Drawn 1803

COLLECTIONS

Jacques Laurent Agasse;  
 Louise Etienne Agasse (1769–1852), sister of the above;  
 Madeleine Humbert;  
 Elisabeth Senn-Humbert;  
 Valentine Rieder-Senn;  
 Andrée Rieder-Picot;  
 Private collection, Switzerland to 2018

LITERATURE

Eds. Renée Loche and Colston Sanger, *Jean-Laurent Agasse 1767–1849*, exh. cat., London and Geneva (Tate Gallery and Musée d'Art et d'Histoire), 1988, p.2246, cat. no.99.

EXHIBITED

London, Tate Gallery, *Jean-Laurent Agasse 1767–1849*, 1988, cat. no.99;  
 Geneva, *Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Jean-Laurent Agasse 1767–1849*, 1989, cat. no.99.

This is a preparatory drawing for *Departure for the Hunt* made by Jacques Laurent Agasse, the finished painting, now in the collection of the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva was completed in 1803 whilst he was working in Britain. This elegant life study offers important evidence for Agasse's working practice and the use he made of drawings in preparation for his finished works.

Agasse was born in Geneva, where he had his first training at the École du Calabri, the state-run drawing school. In 1786 Agasse moved to Paris where he entered the studio of Jacques-Louis David and anatomy, dissection, and osteology classes at the Musée d'Histoire Naturelle. Following the French

Revolution, Agasse returned to Geneva, where he met George Pitt, later Lord Rivers, who encouraged him to visit Britain where there was a flourishing market for equestrian pictures.

Agasse moved to London in the autumn of 1800 where he intended to take advantage of the opportunities offered to him by the exhibiting societies and the active print market. Six months after his arrival he exhibited two paintings at the Royal Academy; the following year he exhibited a portrait of *Gaylass*, a black mare owned by the Prince of Wales's racing manager, this led to a number of further portraits of thoroughbreds. In 1802 Agasse began a relationship with the engraver Charles Turner; together they published sporting prints, sold through a network of printsellers and by subscription.

The present lively drawing was made in preparation for an ambitious painting now in Geneva celebrating the sporting activities of one of Agasse's patrons. Showing a mounted huntsman and drawn in black

chalk on prepared, blue paper with touches of white chalk. In his *Manuscript Record Book* we know that Agasse was staying at the seat of his patron, Peniston Lamb, 1st Viscount Melbourne at Brocket Hall in Hertfordshire. The wealthy Melbourne was a wide-ranging and unusual collector of British art: he acquired two of Joseph Wright of Derby's most celebrated nocturnal works, including the *Academy by Lamplight* and *The Blacksmith's Shop* now at the Yale Center for British Art. Melbourne also commissioned a celebrated conversation-piece of himself with members of his wife's family from George Stubbs, now in the National Gallery, London. This commission from Melbourne was evidently of some importance to Agasse as, along with the present drawing, another study for the other mounted huntsman survives, as well as an oil study of the hounds in the foreground. This drawing was included in the important Agasse exhibition at held at the Tate Gallery, London and Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva in 1988–1989. It has remained in the Agasse family until our recent acquisition.



Jacques-Laurent Agasse  
*The Departure for the Hunt*  
 Oil on canvas  
 26¾ × 32 inches · 680 × 825 mm  
 Painted 1803  
 © Musée d'art et d'histoire,  
 Ville de Genève





## THE GENTLE SHEPHERD

*'If nature's first impressions are to be in aught believed it is a gem of the first water. I got only one slight look of it but I saw nature so beautifully depicted that in spite of all I could do the tears burst from my eyes and the impression made by it is as powerful at this moment as it was then.'*

James Hogg, 1829

Oil on panel, 11½ × 15½ inches; 295 × 395 mm;  
Signed and dated 1823

## COLLECTIONS

Sir Robert Liston (1742–1836), commissioned from the artist, cost 80 guineas;  
James T. Gibson-Craig (1799–1886), by 1856;  
Gibson-Craig sale, Christie's 23 April 1887, lot 23, 195 gns to Lesser;  
Charles Butler, by 1896;  
Charles Fairfax Murray (1849–1919), acquired from the above by 1902;  
Thomas Agnew & Sons, acquired from the above 16 July 1902;  
A.J.Forbes-Leith, later Baron Leith of Fyvie (1847–1925), acquired from the above 19 January 1903;  
Col. Sir Charles Rosedew Burn Forbes-Leith of Fyvie, 1st bt. (1859–1930), son-in-law of the above;  
Sir Ian Forbes-Leith, 2nd bt. (1902–1973);  
Sir Ian Forbes-Leith, 3rd bt. to 1988;  
Forbes-Leith sale, Sotheby's 15 July 1988, lot 90;  
Richard Feigen, acquired at the above sale, to 2018;  
Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd, acquired from the above

## LITERATURE

Allan Cunningham, *The Life of Sir David Wilkie*, London, 1843, vol.III, p.526;  
G. F. Waagen, *Galleries and Cabinets of Art in*

*Great Britain*, London, 1857, p.433;  
Hamish Miles, *Sir David Wilkie 1785–1841*, exh. cat., London (Richard L. Feigen & Company), 1994, pp.93–95;  
Nicholas Tromans, Harry Mount and Hamish Miles, *David Wilkie 1785–1841: Painter of Everyday Life*, exh. cat., London (Dulwich Picture Gallery), 2002;  
Nicholas Tromans, *David Wilkie: The People's Painter*, Edinburgh, 2007, pp.133, 225, 242, 244 (reproduced pl.7);  
To be included in Hamish Miles's Catalogue raisonné of the works of David Wilkie, to be edited by Alex Kidson and published by the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art.

## EXHIBITION

Edinburgh, Royal Institution, 1824, no.51;  
London, British Institution, 1842, no.33;  
Manchester, Art Treasures Exhibition, 1857, no.287;  
Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Academy, 1880, no.195;  
London, Royal Academy, 1887, no.89;  
Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art, *Sir David Wilkie of Scotland*, 1986, no.25;  
London, Richard L. Feigen & Company, *Sir David Wilkie 1785–1841: Loan Exhibition*, 1994, no.25;  
London, Dulwich Picture Gallery, *David Wilkie 1785–1841: Painter of Everyday Life*, 2002, no.32.

## ENGRAVED

By James Stewart in 1824, published in London in 1828;  
J. A. Wright, 1847;  
P. Lightfoot, 1848–50;  
Lumb Stocks, 1862.

## COPIES

[1] Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland, studio of David Wilkie, oil on panel, 30.5 × 41.3cm;  
[2] Aberdeen, Art Gallery & Museum, studio of David Wilkie, oil on panel, 30.1 × 40.8 cm;  
[3] Location unknown, Thomas Sully (1783–1872), oil on canvas, 1842, 73.5 × 91.5cm.<sup>1</sup>

This panel was painted by David Wilkie when he was at the height of his powers. Commissioned in 1823 by the retired diplomat Sir Robert Liston, the painting depicts a scene from Allan Ramsay's pastoral verse comedy *The Gentle Shepherd*. Immensely popular in Wilkie's own life-time, the painting was exhibited regularly throughout the nineteenth century and engraved on four separate occasions. Preserved in spectacular condition, this intensely worked, tender painting is one of the great achievements of Wilkie's mature career.

Wilkie was born at Cults, in Fife, on 18 November 1785, the third son of the Reverend David Wilkie, the village minister, and his third wife, Isabella Lister. He was educated at local schools in Pitlessie, Kettle and Cupar until the age of fourteen. Ambitious to become a painter, he was sent in 1799 to the Trustees' Academy in Edinburgh, where he studied at the separate Drawing Academy newly founded by the history painter John Graham; among his fellow students were Sir William Allan and John Burnet, later the successful engraver of his works. He sold his first genre scene, *Pitlessie Fair*, a portrait of a village teeming with incident, for twenty-five pounds, and after a few months he moved in 1805 to London, where he entered the Royal Academy Schools and attended Charles Bell's lectures on anatomy. Wilkie achieved an immediate public and critical success in 1806 with his first exhibit at the Royal Academy, *The Village Politicians*. A painting designed to perfectly capture the metropolitan imagination and executed in a style that reflected the contemporary taste for highly finished Dutch cabinet pictures, the painting catapulted Wilkie to prominence.<sup>2</sup>



Wilkie was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1809 and became a full Academician in 1811. He rapidly achieved considerable commercial success, in 1815 his *Distraint for Rent* was acquired by the British Institution for 600 guineas. In 1822 Wilkie exhibited *The Chelsea Pensioners Receiving the Gazette Extraordinary of Thursday June 22nd, 1815, Announcing the Battle of Waterloo!!!* which had been commissioned by the Duke of Wellington for the substantial sum of 1,200 guineas. The painting caused a sensation at the Royal Academy, where a barrier had to be erected to protect it from the crush of people who came to see it. That painting was admired by amongst others Théodore Géricault, who saw the unfinished painting in Wilkie's studio and Eugène

Delacroix who visited the Academy with Richard Parkes Bonington.<sup>3</sup> Géricault wrote of how useful it would be for French artists to see Wilkie's work. He wrote to Horace Vernet about his visit to Wilkie's studio where he saw both the unfinished *Waterloo Dispatch* and the smaller *Newsongers*, noting: 'he has varied all these characters with much feeling. I shall mention to you only the one figure that seemed the most perfect to me, and whose pose and expression bring tears to the eye, however one might resist. It is the wife of a soldier who, thinking only of her husband, scans the list of the dead with an unquiet, haggard eye ... Your imagination will tell you what her distraught face expresses.'<sup>4</sup>

In the wake of the success of *The Waterloo Dispatch*, Wilkie painted this small, intimate

panel depicting an episode from Allan Ramsay's *The Gentle Shepherd*. Wilkie had known Allan Ramsay's poem since his youth; he owned a copy of the 1788 edition which had been illustrated by David Allan and contained the music for *O'er Bogie*. Wilkie executed an early drawing inspired by it and painted another scene from the poem, *The Cottage Toilet*, now in the Wallace Collection, London. In the present panel Wilkie illustrates a scene described in the opening stanzas of Ramsay's poem. Patie, the eponymous Gentle Shepherd, and Roger, another shepherd, are found together. They are respectively in love with the cousins Peggy and Jenny. Roger confesses his dejection at having been spurned by Jenny, and speaks of a meeting between them:



David Wilkie, *The Cottage Toilet*, 1824  
Oil on mahogany panel · 11½ × 14⅝ inches · 292 × 371 mm  
© The Wallace Collection



David Wilkie, *Newsongers*, 1821  
Oil on panel · 17¼ × 14¼ inches · 437 × 361 mm  
© Tate, London 2018



When I begin to tune my stock and horn,  
With a' her face she shaws a cauldrie scorn.  
Last night I play's; ye never heard sic spite;  
O'er Bogie was the spring, and her delyte;  
Yet tauntingly she at her cousin speer'd,  
Gif she could tell what tune I played,  
and sneer'd

Wilkie depicts Roger seated playing O'er Bogie on his stock-and-horn, a traditional Scottish reed instrument. Jenny, Roger's love, is depicted to the left regarding him skeptically, with her arm over the shoulder of her cousin Peggy, who is shown standing in profile. Between Roger and the standing women, Wilkie has placed Roger's dog, a border collie.

By 1820 Wilkie's name was identified with anecdotal rustic genre scenes such as this. The great patron, Sir George Beaumont wrote to Wilkie in 1812 that: 'you can never improve upon the simplicity of your first intentions.'<sup>5</sup> These paintings of 'the peculiarities of familiar life' influenced by Scottish rustic poetry, the popularity of David Allan's genre scenes, and Wilkie's knowledge of Dutch and Flemish art were characterized by an obsessively laborious preparation. Miniature lay figures, large finished drawings, and oil sketches were used to establish groupings and lighting. 'He then walks about,' John Constable told the diarist Joseph Farington in 1807 'looking for a person proper to be a model for completing each character in His picture, & He paints *everything from the life*.'<sup>6</sup> This method is apparent in *The Gentle Shepherd*: the individual characterisation of the three figures, not to mention the exquisitely rendered portrait of Roger's dog, all point to Wilkie's obsessive observation of figures

from life. Wilkie's method produces some unexpectedly beautiful passages, such as the interlocked feet of the standing women. As Géricault observed, Wilkie perfectly captures the quiet emotion of each figure: Roger, with his stock-and-horn playing his beloved's favorite tune, Jenny, by contrast is shown with 'a cauldrie scorn', mocking Roger. Wilkie has animated the simple scene with a series of meticulous domestic details, a pair of scythes hang above a door to the left, a shepherd's crook leans against the cottage wall and the distant landscape suggests a romantic Highland setting. The finished painting demonstrates Wilkie's developing sophistication in the lucidity and focus of his narrative and design, coupled with great emotional range.

The painting was a commission from his kinsman, the successful retired diplomat Sir Robert Liston, at the moment that Wilkie was working on *The Waterloo Dispatch*. Wilkie wrote to Liston's wife on 4 December 1821:

*'The picture Sir Robert has been so obliging as to request me to paint for him I still keep in mind. There are some little subjects by me that might be taken up for this purpose. Of these one from the Gentle Shepherd of Allan Ramsay you might perhaps like, but this we can discuss.'*<sup>7</sup>

He took a further two years to deliver the painting. Wilkie had painted Liston himself a decade earlier in a portrait now in the National Galleries of Scotland. Liston had served as a career diplomat, perhaps most influentially in North America. In February 1796 Liston had been appointed British minister to the United States, only thirteen years after the ending of hostilities. Through his actions, the British government agreed that Britain would not

intervene in west or south-west America. He acted skillfully as an intermediary between the Canadian and American governments in a dispute over the upper Mississippi valley, and did much to encourage the informal system whereby Royal Navy ships convoyed American merchantmen. He remained at Philadelphia until December 1800 when he and his wife sat for portraits by Gilbert Stuart, now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Wilkie's *The Gentle Shepherd* proved enormously popular. It was engraved on a number of occasions, impressions making their way to America where it was copied at least two studio variants of the composition. The present panel was exhibited at the Royal Institution in Edinburgh in 1824 and at the British Institution shortly after Wilkie's death in 1842 and again at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857. The great Scottish novelist, poet and essayist James Hogg wrote an account of the painting in 1829, in which he echoes Géricault's words of 1821. After stating that the picture as probably regarded as a 'trifle' by the artist, he observed:

*'If nature's first impressions are to be in aught believed it is a gem of the first water. I got only one slight look of it but I saw nature so beautifully depicted that in spite of all I could do the tears burst from my eyes and the impression made by it is as powerful at this moment as it was then. It is a scene from Allan Ramsay's gentle shepherd in which the lover is exerting all his power to play his sweetheart's favourite tune with proper effect while she is leaning on her cousin and asking her 'if she has any guess what tune that is which the poor fellow is trying?' I never saw any thing equal to it! There is a cast of disdain in every muscle*



James Stewart, after Wilkie  
*The Gentle Shepherd*  
Engraving  
11¼ x 13¾ inches · 286 x 348 mm  
Published 1828  
National Galleries of Scotland



Gilbert Stuart  
*Robert Liston*, 1800  
Oil on canvas  
29½ x 24 inches · 738 x 610 mm  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington DC

of Jenny's lovely rural form from the toe to the eyebrow which is indescribable. And the best of it all is the looker at the picture perceives at once that it is an affected disdain, but neither the lover, nor Peggy, nor the colley discover aught of this but are all deploring her perversity by looks the most characteristic. The looks of disappointed affection in the dog are exquisite. I have often wondered what became of that little picture, or how it was estimated, for there was never any thing of the kind made such an impression on me.'<sup>8</sup>

#### NOTES

1. See Edward Biddle and Mantle Fielding, *The Life and Works of Thomas Sully*, Charleston, 1969, p.353, no.2257.
2. See David Solkin, *Painting out of the Ordinary: Modernity and the Art of Everyday Life in Early Nineteenth-century Britain*, New Haven and London, 2008, pp.7–35.
3. Patrick Noon, *Crossing the Channel: British and French Painting in the Age of Romanticism*, exh. cat., London (Tate Gallery), 2003, p.110.
4. Charles Clément, Géricault, *Etude Biographique et Critique*, New York, 1974, pp.199–203.
5. Allan Cunningham, *The Life of Sir David Wilkie*, London, 1843, vol.1, p.344.
6. Ed. Kathryn Cave, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, New Haven and London, 1982, vol.8, p.3164.
7. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS:5666/212–3, David Wilkie to Lady Liston, 4 December 1821.
8. Eds. Janette Currie and Gillian Hughes, *James Hogg: Contributions to Annuals and Gift-Books*, Edinburgh, 2006, p.185.

TWO BOYS FROM CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

Pencil with chalk highlights  
14<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches; 375 × 307 mm  
Signed and dated 1802

COLLECTIONS  
Mrs Vernon Delves Broughton (1846–1919);  
The Fine Art Society, November 1980;  
Private collection to 2018

LITERATURE  
'The Blue', April 1961, vol.LXXXVIII, no.2.

This engaging portrait was made by Benjamin Burnell, one of Sir Thomas Lawrence's most accomplished pupils. Drawn in 1802 this highly finished drawing depicts a boy dressed in the distinctive uniform of Christ's Hospital probably with his younger brother. Burnell entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1791 as an architectural student at the comparatively late age of 22 but changed to become a student of painting.<sup>1</sup> The diarist Joseph Farington recorded in 1801 another of Lawrence's pupils, the engraver Richard James Lane, complaining that Lawrence employed him to copy his portraits but failed to sufficiently remunerate him adding: 'He had heard that Mr. L[awrence] served His former pupil Mr. Burnel in the same manner exactly, having employed him a year & a half & never wd. Pay him one farthing (all these were Lanes words) till he was arrested. This was told Lane by Mr Dobson a relation of his.'<sup>2</sup>

Lane, it seems, was being hyperbolic and Burnell was never arrested for debt, but it suggests that Lawrence was a negligent teacher. Despite this, the present drawing shows that Burnell adopted and adapted Lawrence's own approach to drawn portraits. The elegant composition has been carefully worked in black chalk with only the faces and hands being rendered in coloured chalks. Although more densely worked than most of Lawrence's portrait drawings, Burnell's study retains something of the spare elegance for which Lawrence was particularly noted. Other examples by Burnell show him to have been a proficient exponent of this kind of portraiture; an engaging bust-length drawing of the great Regency art collector William Holwell-Carr



William Say, after Benjamin Burnell  
*The children of Lord Dungannon*  
Mezzotint · 19<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 14 inches · 490 × 354 mm  
Published in 1809  
© The Trustees of the British Museum

signed and dated 1798 survives in the National Portrait Gallery, London. Burnell also had a successful and prolific career as a portraitist and history painter and is listed exhibiting regularly at the National Gallery from 1790 until his death in 1828.

NOTES

1. Sidney Hutchison, 'The Royal Academy Schools', *The Walpole Society*, vol.38, 1962, p.153.
2. Eds. Kenneth Garlick and Angus Macintyre, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, New Haven and London, 1979, vol.IV, p.1512.



GEORGE IV AT HOLYROOD HOUSE: A SKETCH

Oil on panel

12¾ × 9 inches; 324 × 229 mm

Falsely signed 'D. Wilkie 1822'

COLLECTIONS

The artist's sale, Christie's, 30 Apr.1842, lot 603, (George IV at Holyrood) £2/18/ to 'TW';

Thomas Wilkie, the artist's brother, acquired at the above sale;

Anonymous sale, Sotheby's, 10 November 1993, lot 186 (withdrawn);

Richard Feigen, 1993, to 2018

LITERATURE

To be included in Hamish Miles's Catalogue raisonné of the works of David Wilkie, to be edited by Alex Kidson and published by the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art.

This fluid oil sketch was made by David Wilkie in preparation for one of his most ambitious works *The Entrance of George IV at Holyrood House* commissioned by the monarch to celebrate his visit to Edinburgh in 1822, the first time a reigning British monarch had visited Scotland since Charles I. The present rapid oil sketch was made to show the King during the gestation of the composition.

George IV's visit to Edinburgh in the summer of August 1822 was seen as an important opportunity to both celebrate burgeoning Scottish national identity and British unity. Lavishly – if rather ridiculously – choreographed by Sir Walter Scott, the royal visit offered a picturesque opportunity for painters to celebrate the new King's reign. David Wilkie was present in Edinburgh and wrote a wry account to his sister:

*'When it was known that the King was on the eve of landing, every body ran to his station, and I hastened to mine, namely, Holyrood House ... I saw the King alight; he had not much colour,*

*but upon the whole was looking well. He was dressed in a field marshal's uniform, with a green ribbon of the order of the Thistle.'*<sup>1</sup>

Wilkie adds that: 'Collins saw the landing to great advantage; and, to our surprise, who should start up upon the occasion to see the same occurrence, but J.M.W. Turner, Esq., R.A. P.P.!!! who is now with us we cannot tell how.' Turner, like Wilkie, hoped to procure a commission from George IV, planning a cycle of nineteen paintings commemorating the event.<sup>2</sup>

In 1823 Wilkie was informed by the home secretary, Sir Robert Peel, that the King had chosen him to succeed Raeburn as the King's Limner in Scotland. At the same moment he began his painting of the royal visit for the King, planning a composition on an epic scale: the final painting was to be over 6 feet long. The scene he chose was a fanciful variation on the episode he had described to his sister: George IV arriving at Holyrood, resplendent in his field marshal's uniform and wearing the Order of the Thistle surrounded by a cast of characters some real but many invented or borrowed from Rubens.

The painting had a complex gestation. On 27 August 1823 Wilkie showed King George IV an unidentified sketch of the composition and wrote the following day: 'The figure of the King in the sketch he did not approve of, but as I had made various in oil to show, one was fixed upon ... as being in attitude and figure very near the mark.' Robert Peel wrote of these alternatives on 29 August that Wilkie: 'has quite failed in his likeness of the King ... He has made three different sketches in different attitudes but his conception of the King's person and manner is not at all a correct one.'<sup>3</sup> Despite





David Wilkie, *The Entrance of George IV at the Palace of Holyroodhouse*, 1828  
Oil on panel · 21 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 36 inches · 556 × 914 mm · National Galleries of Scotland

Peel's disparaging comments, the present panel may, in fact, be one of those sketches 'in oil' that Wilkie presented to George IV.

A central difficulty in the resolution of the composition lay in finding the right posture for the King. In the present sketch Wilkie has given the stout monarch an air of martial authority, the parted legs giving a sense of stately movement. This was the configuration finally settled upon. Where this study differs from the final composition is in the arrangement of the arms; here his left is akimbo, his hand touching his sword-belt; in the final composition the King raises his hat in his outstretched right hand and his left-hand rests by his side. That this sketch was made when the composition was already fairly advanced is suggested by

the inclusion of the rapid swirls of paint at the King's feet, which can be identified as a small dog when read in conjunction with the finished painting. Wilkie has used all his skills as a technician in oil to invest the figure of the king with suitable swagger, the rich glazing of the cloak, careful modelling of the lights and bravura details of the feathered hat, highly polished boots and gilt trim of the uniform all offset the careful and characterful portrait of the King himself. It therefore seems highly likely that this was the flattering oil study Wilkie had approved by George IV before completing the royal commission. The sketch remained with Wilkie being recorded in his posthumous sale, where it was acquired by his brother, Thomas Wilkie.

#### NOTES

1. Allan Cunningham, *The Life of Sir David Wilkie; with his journals, tours and critical remarks on works of art; and a selection from his correspondence*, London, 1843, vol.11, p.84.
2. Turner did paint two sketches for his proposed scheme, interestingly both on mahogany panels, a medium favoured by Wilkie. For Turner's project see Gerald E. Finley, *Turner and George the Fourth in Edinburgh 1822*, London, 1981.
3. Eds. Hamish Miles and David Blayney Brown, *Sir David Wilkie of Scotland (1785–1841)*, exh. cat., New Haven (Yale Center for British Art), 1987, p.222.

A SPORTSMAN: GOLDING CONSTABLE SHOOTING DUCK ON THE RIVER STOUR  
A PAGE FROM THE LARGE 1827 SKETCHBOOK

Pencil on Whatman paper  
8 7/8 × 13 inches; 225 × 332 mm  
Drawn in October 1827

COLLECTIONS

John Constable RA;  
Charles Golding Constable (1821–1878),  
son of the above;  
Charles Fairfax Murray (1849–1919);  
Edward Waldo Forbes (1873–1969), acquired  
from the above, 1904;  
Forbes sale, Christie's 5 June 1973 (25);  
Pawsey and Payne, London, acquired at the  
above sale;  
Private collection to 2018

LITERATURE

Graham Reynolds, *The Later Paintings and Drawings of John Constable*, New Haven and London, 1984, cat. no.27.33, repr. pl. 661; p.186.

This large sheet comes from a sketchbook Constable was using in the autumn of 1827 whilst staying with his siblings by the Stour at Flatford Mill<sup>1</sup>. Constable's brief, twelve-day holiday with his brothers, Abram and Golding Constable, was unusually productive. Graham Reynolds identified twenty-seven drawings, on twenty-six sheets, from this sketch-book the majority of which are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.<sup>2</sup> Constable travelled into Suffolk with his two small children – John Charles and Maria Louisa – leaving his ailing wife at home in Hampstead. From Constable's correspondence it is evident that they spent much of their time outdoors, enjoying the unseasonably warm weather.<sup>3</sup> This drawing is singular in Constable's oeuvre, showing a lone sportsman shooting duck on the Stour. Drawings from the 1827 sketchbook, are notable for Constable's unusual breadth of approach; in the present drawing, Constable composes a grand landscape in miniature carefully filled with narrative: the sportsman in his cover, the dog holding a recently shot bird and in the distance a series of duck on the Stour, all illuminated by the rising sun. Constable probably had in his mind Peter Paul Rubens's landscape of *Het Steen in the Early Morning* now in the National Gallery, which belonged to his great friend and patron, Sir George Beaumont.

Constable's return to Flatford in 1827 was an opportunity, as he explained to his wife, to introduce the fourth generation of Constables to their friends and neighbours in his native Suffolk.<sup>4</sup> Constable's younger brother, Abram, had taken over the family Corn business following their father's death in 1817, running it for the benefit of his

siblings. Constable's elder brother, Golding, had recently acquired a 'little farm house ... situate opposite the Windmill' and was employed by the Countess of Dysart to manage part of her estate at Helmingham. Golding's stewardship included presiding over shooting on the Dysart land and he was himself a noted shot. He is almost certainly Golding who is shown in this drawing.

The Constables were a wealthy, landed rural family and the trip to Flatford undoubtedly presented Constable with an opportunity to introduce his city-born children to country sports. Constable mentions that he and the children spent much time fishing on the Stour: '*John ... is crazy about fishing – he caught 6 yesterday and 10 to day, some of which we are going to have for dinner.*'<sup>5</sup> At least two sheets from the 1827 sketchbook show John Charles and Maria Louisa fishing from Suffolk barges on the Stour.<sup>6</sup> Constable was himself a keen fisherman and it offered him important access to landscape, access that inflected and influenced his own compositions. In a famous letter to his friend and patron John Fisher written in October 1821, Constable writes a richly descriptive passage:

*'[h]ow much I can Imagine myself with you on your fishing excursion in the new forest, what River can it be. But the sound of water escaping from Mill dams, so do Willows, Old rotten Banks, slimy posts, & brickwork. I love such things ... as long as I paint I shall never cease to paint such Places.'*<sup>7</sup>

The present sheet perfectly captures Constable's sensory pleasure of being in the landscape: the rustling reeds as the huntsman positions, the 'slimy posts' in the centre of the sheet which are lovingly described, the alert gun dog and the splendour of the





rising sun over the Stour. It is in studies such as this that Charles Rhyne recognized that Constable was attempting more than just the optical experience the countryside provided; that the chronological development of his technique 'was a response to his desire to convey his full experience' of the localities he knew so intimately, 'that he sought progressively to find equivalents in paint for not only the visual appearance, but also the touch even the sounds and smells of his native landscape, the full sensory experience of place.'<sup>8</sup>

But the present drawing also demonstrates Constable's profound interest in earlier landscape paintings. The scene must have recalled to Constable Rubens's great landscape of *Het Steen*, which had been acquired by Sir George Beaumont in 1802. The general arrangement of the subject, with the hunter crouched in the undergrowth and central axis of the composition dominated by broken posts, with an open landscape stretching to the right bathed

in the early morning sun, is close to Rubens's design.

The 1827 sketchbook seems to have remained intact whilst in Constable's studio before passing to his children Isobel Constable and Charles Golding Constable; at least one sheet is recorded in the sale of his collection at Christie's in 1887.<sup>9</sup> The 11 sheets now in the Victoria and Albert Museum were all bequeathed by Isobel Constable. Four sheets passed to Mrs Edward Fisher, now in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter. The present drawing and a watercolour of Constable's children fishing both belonged to the great late nineteenth-century collector and dealer Charles Fairfax Murray. It was subsequently owned by Edward Waldo Forbes (1873–1969) the inspirational Director of the Fogg Art Museum between 1909 and 1944.



#### NOTES

1. Other sheets from the 1827 sketchbook are watermarked: 'J WHATMAN TURKEY MILLS 1824'. See for example: Graham Reynolds, *The Later Paintings and Drawings of John Constable*, New Haven and London, 1984, cat. no.27.34, which was also in Charles Fairfax Murray's collection.
2. See Graham Reynolds, *The Later Paintings and Drawings of John Constable*, New Haven and London, 1984, cat. nos. 27.12 – 27.39.
3. See Constable's letters to his wife, Maria: ed. R. Beckett, 'John Constable's Correspondence: Early Friends and Maria Bicknell (Mrs Constable)', *Suffolk Record Society*, vol.VI, 1964, pp.438–444.
4. 'it is very interesting to see the 4th generation of our family here – and all heads are out of the doors & windows – and Minna looks so nice in her pelisse – the blew band or what it is called was a picture.' John Constable to Maria Constable, East Bergholt 4 October 1827, ed. R. Beckett, 'John Constable's Correspondence: Early Friends and Maria Bicknell (Mrs Constable)', *Suffolk Record Society*, vol.VI, 1964, p.439.
5. Constable to Maria Constable, East Bergholt 4 October 1827, ed. R. Beckett, 'John Constable's Correspondence: Early Friends and Maria Bicknell (Mrs Constable)', *Suffolk Record Society*, vol.VI, 1964, p.439.
6. Graham Reynolds, *The Later Paintings and Drawings of John Constable*, New Haven and London, 1984, cat. nos.27.31 and 27.34.
7. Ed. R. Beckett, 'John Constable's Correspondence: The Fishers', *Suffolk Record Society*, vol.XII, 1968, p.77.
8. Charles Rhyne, 'Constable's Last Major Oil Sketch: the Chicago Stoke by Nayland', quoted in Ian Fleming-Williams, *Constable and his Drawings*, London, 1990, p.318.
9. Graham Reynolds, *The Later Paintings and Drawings of John Constable*, New Haven and London, 1984, cat.no.17.29.

Peter Paul Rubens  
*A View of Het Steen in the Early Morning*  
Oil on panel  
51 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 90 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches · 1312 × 2292 mm  
© The National Gallery, London



A STORMY HEATH

Oil on panel  
6¼ × 6¾ inches; 160 × 171 mm  
Signed with initials and dated 1837

COLLECTIONS

Presumably, Robert Ross, (1869–1918);  
Presumably, Arthur Clifton (1863–1932);  
Mrs Arthur Clifton, to 1961;  
Thomas Agnew & Sons, acquired from  
the above;  
William Harris QC, acquired from the  
above in 1963;  
And by descent to 2018

LITERATURE

Patricia Allderidge, *The Late Richard Dadd  
1817–1886*, exh. cat., London, Tate Gallery, 1974,  
p.47, no.11, repr.

EXHIBITED

London, Tate Gallery, *The Late Richard Dadd  
1817–1886*, 1974–5, touring Exhibition to Hull,  
Ferens Art Gallery, Wolverhampton, Municipal  
Art Gallery and Bristol, City Art Gallery, no.11;  
Brighton, Museum & Art Gallery, *Bronzino to  
Boy George: Treasures from Sussex Houses*,  
1985.

This intensely worked oil sketch was made by Richard Dadd at the beginning of his career. Dadd appears to have started seriously drawing at the age of thirteen whilst he was a pupil at the King's School, Rochester and was probably first taught by the only local drawing master, William Dadson, who had a drawing academy in Chatham. In 1834 Dadd's family moved to London and settled in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, a few doors away from the headquarters and exhibition rooms of the Society of British Artists. It was from this location that Dadd's father, Robert, pursued his new profession as a carver, gilder, frame maker and artists' supplier. As a result, Robert Dadd became acquainted with the landscape painters David Roberts

and Clarkson Stanfield. Richard seems to have informally studied drawing after the antique at the British Museum before being admitted, in May 1837, as a Probationer to the Royal Academy Schools on the recommendation of Clarkson Stanfield. During his time at the Schools the Visiting Professors included Maclise, Mulready, Etty, Stanfield who all appear to have had some influence on his work. His fellow students also included John Phillip and William Powell Frith and it was about this time that the three formed an informal sketching club, The Clique, which also included Augustus Egg, Alfred Elmore, William Bell Scott and Henry Nelson O'Neil.

This atmospheric landscape was painted in 1837 during Richard Dadd's first year as a student at the Royal Academy Schools. In these early years at the Academy Schools, Dadd began to show the exceptional promise which was to win him awards and plaudits from his contemporaries and fellow students. Frith was to remember that 'Dadd was my superior in all respects; he drew infinitely better than I did'.<sup>1</sup> Dadd began exhibiting at the Society of British Artists in 1837 with a 'head of a man' and in the following year landscapes of Kentish and West Country views.

This brooding painting belongs to a small group of surviving works in both watercolour and oil. These small-scale works appear to record the scenery to be found in the Chatham area which included Cobham Park. A cabinet painting on panel of similar size and similarly signed and dated is in the collection of York City Art Gallery.

NOTE

1. William Powell Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences*, London, 1888, pp.177–95.



SKETCH TO ILLUSTRATE THE PASSIONS – AVARICE

Pen and ink and watercolour  
14¼ x 10 inches; 362 by 254 mm  
signed, inscribed and dated, 'sketch to illustrate  
the Passions – Avarice. by Richard Dadd  
Bethlehem Hospital London May 12th 1854'

COLLECTIONS

H. C. Green, Cranley Lodge, Guildford;  
H. C. Green sale, Sotheby's, London, October 18,  
1961, lot 33;  
K.J. Hewett (1919–1994);  
Christopher Lennox-Boyd (1941–2012);  
Christie's, London, March 19, 1985, lot 70;  
Christie's, London, 14 July 1992, lot 154;  
Jacqueline Fowler, acquired in 1992, to 2018

LITERATURE

David Greysmith, *Richard Dadd: The Rock and  
Castle of Seclusion*, New York, 1973, pp.83, 176,  
repr.;

Patricia Allderidge, *The Late Richard Dadd,  
1817–1886*, exh. cat., Tate Gallery, London, 1974,  
p.96–7, no.129, repr. p.96;

Louise Lippincott, "Murder and the Fine Arts; or,  
a Reassessment of Richard Dadd," *The J. Paul  
Getty Museum Journal*, Malibu, 1988, vol.16,  
p.83.

EXHIBITED

London, Walker's Galleries, 1946, no.17;  
London, Tate Gallery, *The Late Richard Dadd,  
1817–1886*, 1974, no.126 (repr.).

This highly finished and emotionally charged watercolour depicting *Avarice* was one of a series of about thirty Dadd made between 1853 and 1855 of 'Sketches to Illustrate the Passions' made after Dadd had been confined to Bethlem Hospital for murdering his father.<sup>1</sup> Dadd evolved the scheme to show genre-like images and the earliest utilized characters from Shakespeare whilst a number derived from historical prints after old masters. There is considerable circumstantial evidence to suggest that this project was suggested

to Dadd by the pioneering physician Dr Charles Hood as a form of treatment. Given their subject-matter and the location of their execution, Dadd's images are susceptible to multiple interpretations and have been the subject of a great deal of discussion.<sup>2</sup> They represent perhaps the most important documented artistic project undertaken in a psychiatric hospital during the nineteenth century.

Richard Dadd was born in Chatham, Kent the son of a chemist. In 1834, at the age of 17, he moved with his family to London. Following his early artistic promise Dadd entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1837, where he won medals for drawing and painting; he was considered an outstanding student in a group which included a number of future celebrated painters including William Powell Firth, Augustus Egg and John Phillip. In 1842 on the recommendation of David Roberts, Dadd was employed to accompany Sir Thomas Phillips as artist and travelling companion on a tour of Europe and the Near and Middle East. During the latter part of the journey Dadd began to show the first signs of mental disturbance becoming increasingly watchful, suspicious and unpredictable. Dadd began to hear voices and began to believe that the Egyptian god Osiris was the supreme being controlling all his actions, and the source of his 'secret admonitions.' Dadd continued to work as a painter on his return to Britain, producing designs to decorate the new Palace of Westminster and completing several major paintings based on his travels in Syria.

On 28 August 1843 Dadd persuaded his father to accompany him to Cobham Park in Kent, where he stabbed him to death with a

knife purchased specifically for the purpose. Dadd later explained that he had killed the devil in disguise and seems to have retained this belief throughout his life, talking objectively about the murder as an event for which he had no personal responsibility. Dadd was certified insane and committed to the criminal lunatic asylum attached to Bethlem Hospital at St George's Fields in Southwark, south London, where he remained for the remainder of his life.

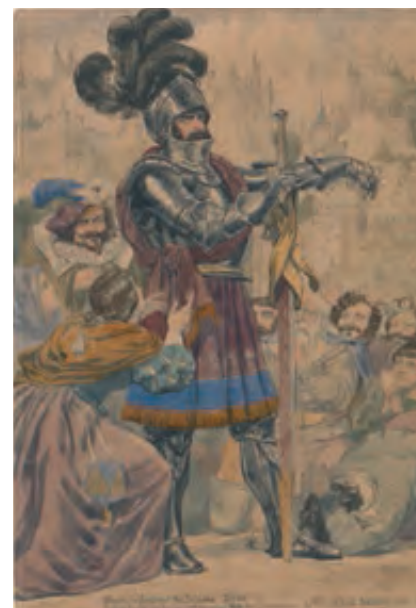
Despite his incarceration, Dadd continued to paint. A visitor in 1845 wrote of some recent drawings that they: 'exhibit all the power, fancy, and judgment for which his works were eminent previous to his insanity. They are absolutely wonderful in delicate finish. They consist principally of landscapes – memories of eastern scenes, or wrought from a small sketchbook in his possession'<sup>3</sup>

Louise Lippincott was the first to associate the series of drawings Dadd made depicting individual passions from 1853 with the work of the medical superintendent of Bethlem, W. Charles Wood, suggesting that Wood urged Dadd to complete a series of depictions of the passions as part of his treatment.<sup>4</sup> Lippincott argued that Wood used the exercises to both assist in the diagnosis of Dadd's mental state and provide a form of cure. According to the conventions of the period the key to understanding monomania was an acute analysis of the passions, the basic emotions, appetites, and needs that, with the intellect and the soul, comprised the psyche. Wood seems to have devised a project that would allow, in the words of the great nineteenth-century psychiatrist Forbes Winslow: 'allow genius to search for an illustration of his own condition.'<sup>5</sup> As Lippincott has pointed all but a few of the passions Dadd drew were





Carrington Bowles, after David Teniers the Younger, *Age and Avarice*  
 Mezzotint  
 13 7/8 x 9 3/4 inches · 352 x 248 mm  
 © The Trustees of the British Museum



Richard Dadd  
 Sketch to Illustrate the Passions: Pride  
 Watercolour, black ink and pencil  
 13 1/2 x 10 1/8 inches · 368 x 257 mm  
 Yale Center for British Art

negative, suggesting that they were exercises in externalising his own understanding of each emotion.

The present drawing, signed and dated 'Bethlehem Hospital London May 12th 1854', is inscribed: 'sketch to illustrate the Passions: Avarice.' Dadd has depicted Avarice in the form of an elderly couple, clearly acting as money lenders. The seated man is shown with fists full of gold coins, a pair of scales, for weighing gold, placed prominently on the desk in front of him. Dadd includes a series of characteristically disquieting details, a black cat arched menacingly, a suit of armour looming in the background and the money lender's leg twisted nervously round his chair. The old man is identifiable as 'Simon Bore Clutch' of 'Clutch All House' from a mortgage that lies across his desk. The mortgage – in a characteristically Hogarthian touch – is in the name of the Earl of Frigfarten and had been witnessed by 'Griffin Goblin' and 'Integer Nonentity'. Dadd includes such details in a number of his depictions of passions to imply an internal narrative. A number of the drawings have a semi-autobiographical element, such as the depiction of *Insignificance or Self Contempt*, which shows an artist returning to his lodgings where a brass plaque announces 'Crayon/Drawing Master.' The drawing captures the disappointment of a painter with ambitions forced to subsist teaching amateurs and, as Dadd notes on the drawing: 'Disgusted with the world – he sinks into himself and Insignificance.'

Here the scene is indebted to seventeenth-century Dutch painted depictions of 'gold weighers'; one painting in particular by David Teniers shows a similar elderly couple and was engraved in London in the eighteenth century by Carrington Bowles with the title:

*Age and Avarice*. Avarice, as a passion, was much discussed in the nineteenth century. In 1850 the popular author F. Somner Merryweather published *Lives and Anecdotes of Misers; or the passion of Avarice Displayed*.

Preserved in exceptional condition, *Avarice* is one of the last of the passion drawings Dadd completed. Viewed within the context of Hood's programme of treatment, it offers remarkable evidence of both Dadd's state of mind and mid-nineteenth-century attitudes towards mental illness. Dadd is now rightly regarded as a painter whose enforced withdrawal from society allowed him to refine a unique talent. His *Sketches to Illustrate the Passions* belong to a long tradition of imagery devoted to human folly, even as its unsettling details, and reliance on memory and imagination anticipate modern sensibilities.

#### NOTES

1. Patricia Allderidge, *The Late Richard Dadd, 1817–1886*, exh. cat., Tate Gallery, London, 1974, p.96–7, no.129, repr. p.96.
2. See for example Karen Stock, 'Richard Dadd's Passions and the Treatment of Insanity' in *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, no.23, 2016.
3. *The Art Union*, vol.7, 1845, p.137.
4. This plausible idea has been questioned by Patricia Alderidge who noted in 2008: 'the fact that the reforming physician superintendent Sir Charles Hood was appointed to Bethlehem Hospital in this year has led to speculation (and sometimes assertion) that Hood suggested the subject as some sort of therapeutic exercise, for which there is no evidence of any sort.' See Patricia Alderidge, *Richard Dadd (1817–1886): Dreams of Fancy*, exh. cat., London (Andrew Clayton-Payne), 2008, p.44.
5. Quoted in Louise Lippincott, 'Murder and the Fine Arts; or, a Reassessment of Richard Dadd,' *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal*, Malibu, 1988, vol.16, p.82.

PORTRAIT OF GEORGE WILLIAM DADD, THE ARTIST'S YOUNGER BROTHER

Oil on millboard  
8 5/8 x 7 inches; 220 x 178 mm  
Painted c.1837

PROVENANCE

John Humby, a friend and patron of the artist;  
W. Humby, River Bank, River, Kent by descent  
to 1921;  
By gift to the housekeeper of the above;  
By descent, to 1978;  
Private collection, 1978–2018

This small, intense portrait of George William Dadd, Richard Dadd's youngest full brother, was made at the outset of Dadd's career as a painter. Dadd entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1837, shortly after the institution had moved to the same building as the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. Dadd's earliest works seem to be portraits of his immediate family, including portraits of Catherine Carter, who was to marry Richard's eldest brother Robert in 1843, his

sister Maria and a sheet of head studies including his father, Robert senior, several siblings and apparently a self-portrait now at the Yale Center for British Art.

The present intensely observed portrait of George Dadd is painted on artists' mill-board and executed with a miniaturist's intensity. Dadd has carefully captured his brother, who was only 14 when this likeness was taken. In common with other portraits Dadd made at this moment, such as the *Young Lady Holding a Rose* of 1841, Dadd has enlarged the right eye giving a somewhat asymmetrical appearance to the face, whilst the features are modelled with remarkable precision.

As was the case with his elder brother, George had a life plagued by mental instability. He had apparently long shown extreme behavioural problems; described even by a family friend as 'a sad reprobate', George seems to have caused such trouble that,

on the death in 1876 of Robert Dadd Jr., the eldest brother, one of their half-brothers (by Robert Sr's second wife) recalled how, when they were all young men, Robert had 'stood up as the champion to protect the rights of others from the selfish desires of a weak and erring brother.'<sup>1</sup> George, who had worked as a carpenter, had become obviously mentally ill from the spring of 1843 (exactly when Richard's symptoms first showed themselves) and he eventually returned to the family home on the day after the discovery of their father's body, destitute and delusional. George was admitted to Bethlem aged twenty on 13 September 1843, one week before Richard arrived at Clermont. Following hospital policy, after a year he was transferred to the incurable wards and died there in 1868.

NOTE

1. Quoted in Nicholas Tromans, *Richard Dadd: The Artist and the Asylum*, London, 2011, p.81.



Richard Dadd  
*Family Portraits*  
Watercolour with gouache  
Signed and dated 1838  
5 3/4 x 8 1/4 inches · 146 x 209 mm  
Yale Center for British Art



A PATIENT AT THE JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL, BALTIMORE

Watercolour with black and sanguine chalks  
13½ × 9¼ inches; 343 × 235 mm  
Signed bottom right: 'Laura Knight'  
Drawn in 1927

COLLECTIONS  
Private collection, USA, to 2012;  
Rupert Maas Ltd.

In 1927 Laura Knight was given access to the 'coloured wards' at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore where she produced a sequence of impressive depictions of the patients she encountered, amongst them this striking portrait. Knight's husband, Harold had travelled to Baltimore to paint staff at the hospital; the generous fee enabled him to bring Laura to America. The Knights stayed with



Laura Knight, *Study of a Young Woman*, 1926  
Watercolour, pastel, and charcoal  
15⅞ × 11¼ inches · 397 × 284 mm  
The Art Institute of Chicago, Meg and Mark Hausberg  
Fund in honor of Martha Tedeschi

Dr William Baer, the orthopaedic surgeon and his wife, and it was through his influence that Laura was able to paint patients at the hospital. Knight described her experiences in Baltimore in her autobiography, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, published in 1936: it is an account that betrays the prejudices of her time and belies the sensitivity of her work. This intelligent and subtle portrait study of a male patient is one of the more powerful from a sequence of depictions of black sitters that Knight produced.

Knight's interest in black patients, as Rosie Broadley has noted, was part of a wider fascination in Britain in the 1920s with what was called 'Negro' culture.<sup>1</sup> Knight wrote in *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*: 'Dr Baer took me to the famous Johns Hopkins Hospital, where I was allowed to wander at will through the darkie wards with a view to making studies ... one young man propped with pillows was a fine type. He did not appear to be very ill, and was most anxious to be drawn. The nurses said it would be kindness to interest him.'<sup>2</sup>

This may be the patient represented in the present frank study. In the drawing Knight has suggested a white hospital gown with a sweep of watercolour under the sitter's head; the head itself is boldly modelled in black and red chalk carefully lit from the left.

Knight's account of her 'wanderings' through the segregated wards is unsettling in its tone. Whilst praising the beauty and strength of her models, she consistently underlines her view of racial superiority.

This problematises our viewing of her Baltimore work. Recent scholarship has sought to present Knight as a liberal figure, whose actions, once stripped of the divisive language of the period, suggest her sensitive

approach to the problems of mid-twentieth century Maryland. In the recent exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery Rosie Broadley praised 'Knight's open-minded outlook and undoubted sympathy with people of different backgrounds to her own' pointing to a 1927 interview she gave to *The New York Times* in which she drew attention to her work stating that: 'to the artist there is a whole world of beauty which ought to be explored in negro life in America.'<sup>3</sup> In her autobiography, Knight describes her friendship with Baer's nurse and secretary, Ireen and Pearl Johnson, her visit with them to a concert and a 'social at the office of a negro newspaper' where she heard a speech of 'amazing eloquence ... exhorting his audience to remember that they were a great race.'<sup>4</sup> Knight's Baltimore drawings are some of her most powerful and this bold head study stands as one of her most forceful. The present drawing demonstrates Knight's interest in the people she encountered, whilst the somewhat wary gaze of the sitter suggests his equivocal response to being drawn.

NOTES

1. See Rosie Broadley, *Laura Knight's Portraits*, exh. cat., London (National Portrait Gallery), 2013, p.46.
2. Laura Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, New York, 1936, pp.288–289.
3. Rosie Broadley, *Laura Knight's Portraits*, exh. cat., London (National Portrait Gallery), 2013, pp.46–47.
4. Laura Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, New York, 1936, p.290.



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ISBN 978 1 9999783 2 7

Designed and typeset in Elena by Dalrymple  
Photography by Rodney Todd-White & Son Ltd  
Colour reproduction by Altimage Ltd  
Printed in Belgium by Albe De Coker

Cover: detail from Thomas Jones 1742–1803  
*A View on the Via Nomentana*, 1778 (see page 52)

Frontispiece: detail from Sir David Wilkie RA 1785–1841  
*The Gentle Shepherd*, 1823 (see page 62)

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