Masters of British painting, 1800-1950 : the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in collaboration with the City Art Museum of St. Louis and the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco

Andrew Carnduff Ritchie [director of the exhibition]

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Museum of Modern Art (New York, N.Y.)

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MASTERS OF BRITISH PAINTING 1800-1950

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

160 pages; 104 plates (16 in color) $5.50

MASTERS OF

BRITISH PAINTING

1800–1950

by Andrew Carnduff Ritchie

In this survey of the last century and a half of British painting, Andrew Ritchie discusses – brilliantly and informally – the amazing range and diversity of a period that bridges two worlds: early nineteenth-century Romanticism and the modern movement in England. The history of British art is made up of contradictions, but certainly no other age is so full of interest or so remarkable for its mixture of revolutionary and reactionary movements and the eccentricities of its individual personalities. Starting with the revolution in landscape painting led by Turner and Constable as a reaction against the English school of portraiture, we are carried through the strongly individual literary fantasies of Blake and Palmer; the short-lived, aberrant Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood; the lusty revolt of the expatriate American, Whistler, against the banalities of late nineteenth-century academic painting; and on to the new century, when the gradual absorption by the conservative English of continental tendencies took the form, first, of a tentative kind of impressionism, followed by the more recent flowering of a vigorous, latter-day English Renaissance in the modern movement, in which abstract, constructivist and surrealist tendencies are encompassed within the larger British tradition.

As the author concludes in his foreword: 'Whatever the future of British art may be, and whatever its heights and depths have been over the past century and a half, it can be said that within the past twenty years its leading artists came of age and once more joined the company of Constable and Turner on an international rather than an insular stage.'

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Andrew Carnduff Ritchie

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The California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco

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The British Council appointed an advisory committee to assist me in the selection of paintings: Sir Philip Hendy, Director of The National Gallery, London; Sir John Rothenstein, Director of The Tate Gallery and Sir Herbert Read. I am very grateful to all three for their wise counsel but it should be emphasized at once that for any errors of commission or omission, I must be held entirely responsible.

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ANDREW CARNDUFF RITCHIE
Director of the Exhibition

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Introduction

The British are a contradictory people. They have produced some of the world's greatest poetry, yet they pride themselves on their practical handling of everyday affairs. They have an almost oriental respect for royalty, but they beheaded a king before any Europeans dared think of such a thing. They are social and political radicals when the occasion suits them, and usually in advance of their continental neighbors; but they have resisted foreign revolutions, such as the French, in a stubborn and conservative spirit. In religious matters they have retained, on the one hand, a medieval connection between crown and church; on the other, they have developed the most determined, non-conformist separation of church and state. They are reticent and given to understatement in social exchange; but they have been, and can be, forthrightly competitive in their business dealings.

The history of British art is full of comparable contradictions. During the Middle Ages Britain was one of the most creative and inventive artistic centers. Following the Reformation, for two hundred years, the art of painting was limited in Britain almost wholly to portraiture, and the most notable artists, Holbein and Van Dyck, were foreigners. The rise of a native school in the eighteenth century is marked by extreme individualism. Hogarth, the century's most original genius, is almost as much a preacher and a pamphleteer as he is a painter. Reynolds may have written better *Discourses* than he painted. And Gainsborough's genius for landscape painting was almost strangled and certainly inhibited by the demand for portraits.

The century and a half to which the present exhibition is devoted is no less eccentric in its artistic personalities and its mixture of revolutionary and reactionary movements. The selection of painters and paintings has been made to stress what seem to be the most progressive and individual tendencies of the period. Eccentricity in itself, of course, has not been a criterion of choice, and many artists, for example John Martin and Benjamin Robert Haydon, of a curious and interesting turn of mind, have been excluded. Had this exhibition concerned itself with taste rather than with painting *per se*, they would have found a place, together with a number of the Victorians like Lord Leighton and Burne-Jones.

Nineteenth-century British painting begins with a revolution in landscape painting, led by Turner and Constable. This revolution is, of course, a main feature of the Romantic movement, but it is surely significant that while French romantics like Gericault and Delacroix derived much of the subject matter of their paintings from literary or topical sources, their British opposites, in their most advanced late paintings, probed the poetic mysteries of form, space, light and atmosphere and gave only incidental attention to documentary considerations of place or incident. In Britain, during this period, "literary" painting was left to academic genre painters, such as Wilkie and Mulready. This early nineteenth-century distinction between imaginative landscape painting and anecdotal or literary painting is of major significance for the history of British art from then until now.

Reynolds preached the necessity of an ideal, poetic art to counteract the dominant portrait interest of his day. For various reasons, the historical and mythological subject

matter with which—following Renaissance theory—he considered serious painting should concern itself, was beyond the capabilities of British artists to produce. Some tried and failed miserably. Perhaps, more important, a new commercial class, untutored and uninterested in the intricacies of antique history and legend preferred painting that dealt with topical incidents or that had a contemporary literary reference. Wilkie, Mulready and many others answered this demand, and this, one might say, was their mundane response to Reynold's teachings. The great landscape revolution, on the other hand, although Reynolds might never have recognized it as such, was in effect an elevation of painting to the poetic heights he had eloquently pleaded for.

Now the point here is that of these two counter-movements to the portrait—landscape and anecdotal painting—the first attracted the most revolutionary talents and the second the most cautious and reactionary. And it is safe to say that, with Blake as a major exception, progressive painters in Britain until today have shown a continuing devotion to landscape. Reactionary, academic artists continued anecdotal or genre painting until, in the later nineteenth century, it became unspeakably sentimental and meretricious.

The Pre-Raphaelite movement, founded in 1848, a year of great social unrest throughout Europe, was a revolt within the genre tradition and was finally defeated by it. There were seven members in the original Brotherhood, but only three proved to be of any lasting importance: Millais, Hunt and D. G. Rossetti (Ford Madox Brown, the elder statesman of the movement, was not an official member of the Brotherhood). Their object was to seek inspiration from art before Raphael, who represented for them the tarnished god of academicism. It was to the Italian and Flemish primitives that they looked for justification of their determined sharp-focus realism and what they considered was their greater truthfulness to natural light and color, in contrast to the dark, tired formulas of the schools.

There is a strong religious cast to this revolt. The evangelical fervor that was seizing the churches of England at the time, in both established and dissenting circles, affected the young Pre-Raphaelites, and it was the strong moral flavor to their paintings that probably attracted Ruskin most and led him to lend his support to their cause. The chief protagonists of the movement were all very young when they came together—between nineteen and twenty-one—and the Brotherhood was short-lived. It began to break up as early as 1853 and by 1857 the members had all gone their separate ways. Pre-Raphaelitism as an aesthetic and, however diluted, as a style remained popular, nevertheless, for the remainder of the century. But it is during the first few years of the movement that the best paintings were done.

The Pre-Raphaelite reaction to the brutal realities of the Industrial Revolution expressed itself in different ways. Rossetti looked to medieval Christianity and to an age of chivalry, to Dante and Mallory's *Morte d'Arthur*, as antidotes to the materialism of the times. Hunt took an early-Christian, puritanical view of the world's sins and the way to salvation. Brown turned to Christian socialism. Millais seems to have been without firm convictions, religious or social, and so was unable to resist the drift to Victorian sentimentalism. This exhibition, not being a survey, does not illustrate this drift nor does it illustrate the Aesthetic Movement of the latter part of the nineteenth century, which was in part an outgrowth of Pre-Raphaelitism. The arts and crafts movement of William Morris, a Rossetti follower, is also outside our province. The fact is, the second half of the nineteenth

century is very lightly represented in the exhibition, since so few painters of the period have been thought to measure up to the title "master," even in a minor sense.

In this period of aesthetic confusion, not to say decay, it was left to an American, Whistler, to provide the shock treatment which British art needed. By his art and his wit he probably did as much, if not more, to undermine the Victorian taste for sentimental anecdotal painting than did Ruskin with all his moral harangues. By directing attention back to the fundamentals of painting as an art for its own sake—even at the risk of encouraging the art for art's sake fallacy which was the weakness of the Aesthetic Movement—he was a one-man revolution. Without his cosmopolitan attack the insular confusion of British painting might have continued longer than it did. As it was, the New English Art Club, founded in 1885 and still in existence, and the Glasgow School which began about the same time with similar objectives, were the first organized revolts—since the Pre-Raphaelites—against the banalities of academic painting. The New English and the Glasgow programs were a return to *plein-air* naturalism and for this direction they were indebted to Whistler as a forerunner and to the impressionist movement across the Channel. The New English artists, one of whom was Wilson Steer, thought first of calling themselves "The Society of Anglo-French Painters," an indication of their respect for Paris as an art center, where most of the early members had been trained. Whistler, of course, had shown the way to Paris long since, by his own training there, and by the connections he continued to maintain with French artists during his long stay in England. (Another factor, to be sure, in this de-insularizing of British painting was the foundation in the 1870s of the Slade School at the University of London, with the Frenchman Legros at its head. Thereafter, the Royal Academy schools were no longer able to monopolize the training of students.)

From the 1880s until the opening of World War I the history of British painting, in its progressive phases, at least, is marked by a slow and rather tentative absorption of impressionist principles of light and color. By the time the next shock was applied to British taste, by Roger Fry and his 1910 and 1912 exhibitions of post-impressionist art (including Van Gogh, Cezanne, Matisse, and Picasso), the New English had developed a mild impressionist academy of its own. Sickert, meanwhile, a pupil of Whistler and later a great admirer of Degas, had developed a more astringent impressionism in contrast to the somewhat anemic New English variety. He became the mentor of a new group of younger English artists, including Spencer Gore, Harold Gilman and Charles Ginner, who founded the Camden Town Group in 1911. Their program, following Sickert, might be described as the practice of a kind of middle-class realism in opposition to the fashionable interiors of academic painting or the mild aestheticism of the average New English painter.

In 1915 Wyndham Lewis launched his short-lived Vorticist movement, an attempted synthesis of cubist and futurist elements. However eccentric the movement may now seem, it was an important sign that, together with Fry's exhibitions and preachments, the British painter was at last being brought into direct contact with the mainstream of continental art. Many only tested the water, so to speak, in the cubist and constructivist torrents abroad. In the '20s only one, Ben Nicholson, immersed himself completely.

Not until the '30s, in fact, and the appearance in England of a new continental movement, surrealism, were the inhibitions of would-be progressive painters in Britain released to an

important degree. And here the explanation may be that surrealism developed at a time when artists like Sutherland and Nash, admirers of the visionary paintings of Blake and Palmer, were conditioned by their own neo-romantic, literary predilections to appreciate the surrealists' exploration of the subconscious world. The sculptor, Henry Moore, the most important British artist of the twentieth century, also combines in some of his work in the '30s a druidical worship of prehistoric stone forms with an appreciation of surrealist imagery.

While the dominant force in British painting during the '30s was a surrealist-infused neo-romanticism, there was a strong counter-movement among certain painters, led by William Coldstream (now director of the Slade School) and Victor Pasmore. In 1937 they established a school in Euston Road, London, with the purpose of teaching students to return to the object, or as they expressed it, "to keep their eyes on what they saw." Coldstream's and particularly Pasmore's paintings have romantic and Whistlerian overtones, but by contrast with the poetic interpretation of nature which Sutherland, Nash and their followers have practiced, the Euston Road School painters were urban realists. Their school, as a school, disbanded in 1939. There are, however, still traces of its influence in post-war British painting and a young group of social realists, led by Jack Smith and Edward Middleditch, which has recently emerged, may be considered a tough child of Euston Road.

During World War II, with all contacts with the Continent severed, there was a notable increase in artistic vitality in Britain, which reflected a community of feeling between artists and public during a period of heroic struggle for survival. "Modern" artists were accepted, as they had never been before, for public commissions to record and interpret the impact of war on country and people. Sutherland, Nash and Moore all did outstanding paintings or drawings, and achieved through their absorption of modern means of expression a dramatic vividness of imagery which rose far above mere documentary illustration. The courage and imagination of the British government which employed such artists is to be praised, and the results are in strong contrast to the timidity of much government-sponsored art in other countries during the same period.

Since the war the development of painting in Britain has been diverse and is therefore difficult of definition. Following the international trend, some British painters have turned to abstraction, not always with too much conviction. Victor Pasmore, however, has become a fanatic convert to constructivism, and younger painters such as William Scott and Alan Davie have worked in the symbolist or, as it is commonly called, expressionist phase of the abstract movement. At the opposite pole are the young social realists already mentioned. In between these two currents, the native neo-romantic tradition, stimulated by continental expressionism and surrealism, is stronger than any other. Its best and most eccentric recent exponent, if he can be catalogued at all, is Francis Bacon. And, while they are outside the province of this exhibition, mention must be made of a vital group of younger sculptors including Armitage, Butler and Chadwick, who are also distinguished by a native, romantic fervor, however much they have absorbed in styles and techniques from abroad.

Whatever the future of British art may be, and whatever its heights and depths have been over the past century and a half, it can be said that within the past twenty years its leading artists came of age and once more joined the company of Constable and Turner on an international rather than an insular stage.

Joseph Mallord William Turner 1775-1851

Between the twelfth and nineteenth centuries Turner and Constable are the first British painters to rank in imaginative power and revolutionary conception with the greatest artists of the Continent. For three centuries following the Reformation the portrait monopolized the attention of painters in Britain, whether native or foreign-born. Hogarth, Wilson and Gainsborough did make some attempts to break the tradition which was, in effect, a Protestant preoccupation with the importance of the individual. Turner and Constable, however, each in his different way, in making landscape the dominant theme of painting and the principal vehicle of poetic emotion for the painter, succeeded in reducing portraiture to a minor role, one which it has occupied from their day to this.

Turner is one of the most complex and contradictory geniuses England has produced. Son of a London barber, he was born within sight and smell of London's great produce market, Covent Garden. He looked with a townsman's surprised and fascinated eye upon all the wonders of sky, country and sea that lay beyond the confines of the crowded alleys and streets of his birthplace. Yet, however far he traveled from London to find subjects for his canvases, he took with him a love of the ripe disorder of his native streets. "Turner," Ruskin says, "looked for litter like Covent Garden Wreck after the Market. His pictures are often full of it from side to side. Their foregrounds differ from all others in the natural way that things have of lying about in them. Even his richest vegetation in ideal work is confused; and he delights in shingle, débris, and heaps of fallen stones." (Bibl. no. 36, vol. v, chap. 9.) This is surely an important characteristic of Turner and one deriving from the popular picturesque tradition to which he was first introduced as a student and for which he produced in his youth so many increasingly expert and fluent renderings of Gothic architecture and ruins.

He entered the Royal Academy schools in 1789, at the age of fourteen, and about the same time studied with Thomas Malton, a topographical artist of some technical skill. By 1799, at the age of twenty-four, he was made an Associate of the Royal Academy and at twenty-seven, in 1802, full Academician. This extraordinarily rapid recognition in official circles is a measure of Turner's cleverness and industry. But that he had done more than conform at an early age to accepted Academy practice is indicated by a review in the London *Times*, May 3, 1797, referring to a seascape, which has since disappeared, and which was in the Academy exhibition of that year: "Mr. Turner . . . has strayed from the direct walk of his profession [the watercolors and drawings of architectural subjects that had brought him recognition] to paint the sickly appearance of the setting sun at sea, preparatory to a storm, as it is described in Falconer's poem of 'The Shipwreck'; and in this he has succeeded in an astonishing degree. We never beheld a piece of the kind possessing more imagination or exciting more awe and sympathy in the spectators." Here, then, is the promise of the great late Turner, the revolutionary discoverer of light as the controlling

Turner: *Norham Castle, Sunrise*. After 1835. Oil on canvas, $35\frac{1}{2} \times 47\frac{1}{2}''$. The Tate Gallery, London

factor in painting, of light as an instrument to excite the imagination and produce "awe and sympathy in the spectators."

From 1802 until his death in 1851 he became one of the most traveled artists in history. He went first to France, Switzerland, and thence to Strasbourg. In 1817 he visited Belgium, Holland and the Rhine, Scotland in 1818 and Italy in 1819. From 1833 to 1845 he spent increasingly longer periods abroad, particularly in Venice, North Italy and Switzerland. The geographical range of Turner's landscape interest seems to have had a dual motivation. First, he was determined to emulate and, if possible, surpass past masters of landscape such as Van de Velde, Cuyp, Hobemma, Ruysdael and, above all, Claude. To do so he was not content to derive pictorial inspiration from their paintings alone but to observe for himself the Dutch and Italian landscapes from which they came. And second, he sought to capitalize on his first success with watercolors of picturesque English scenes by extending enormously his field of reference and consequently his popularity with a public seeking the vicarious enjoyment of travel by pictorial means.

The all-inclusiveness of Turner's approach, both in the emulation of past styles of landscape and in geographical extensiveness signifies, however, a characteristic of competitive showmanship which occasionally resulted in work which is empty of anything but melodramatic gesturing. But, such is the complexity of genius, probably without the drive of showmanship his fundamental discovery that light is the transcendental, unifying key to landscape painting would never have been made. This discovery came to full fruition late in life, almost, as it were, when the passion for public acclaim had spent itself and he could at last devote himself to the demands of the finest impulses of his creative nature.

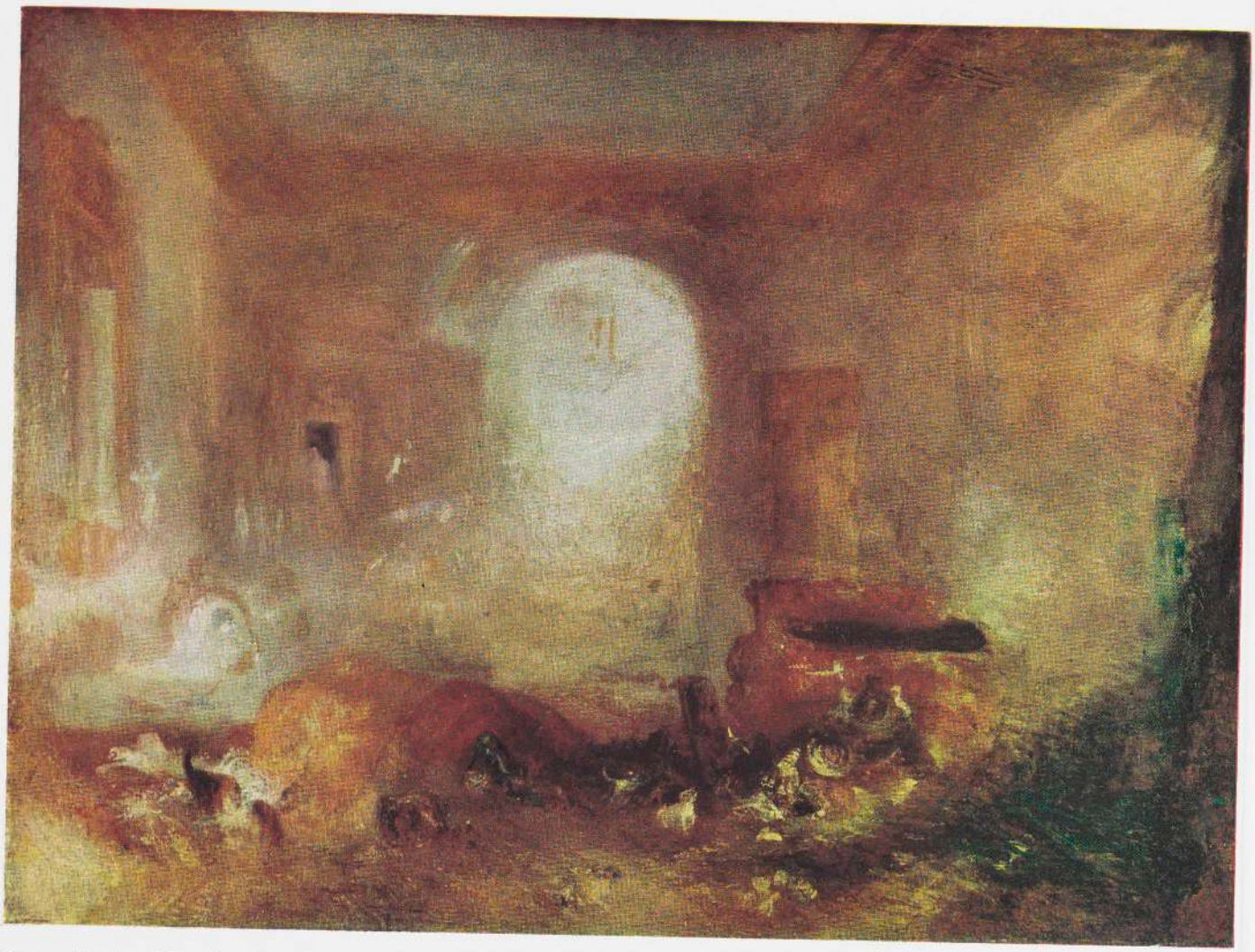
Turner's discovery that light is color and color is light we now see is the foundation on which much of modern art has been based. All the romantic wing of contemporary abstract painting eventually derives from him. And while English artists have only recently come to value Turner at his true worth, Monet and Pissarro on their visit to London in 1870 were impressed and undoubtedly influenced by their first viewing of his canvases and, as a consequence, the impressionist movement is in part indebted to his example.

It has long been recognized that Turner's early mastery of the watercolor medium, with its demands of dexterity of brushwork and control of translucent washes, was a necessary preliminary to his mastery in oil of the fugitive effects of sun and mist and the light-filled atmosphere in which he came to see all nature was bathed. It may well be that without the experimental work of pioneer eighteenth-century English watercolorists, such as Paul Sandby and particularly the two Cozens, father and son, the importance of light and the ability to present it in all its grandeur and subtlety would not have been revealed to Turner; nor without the technical experiments in watercolor, by himself and his immediate forerunners, would he have been able to seek out similar effects in oil.

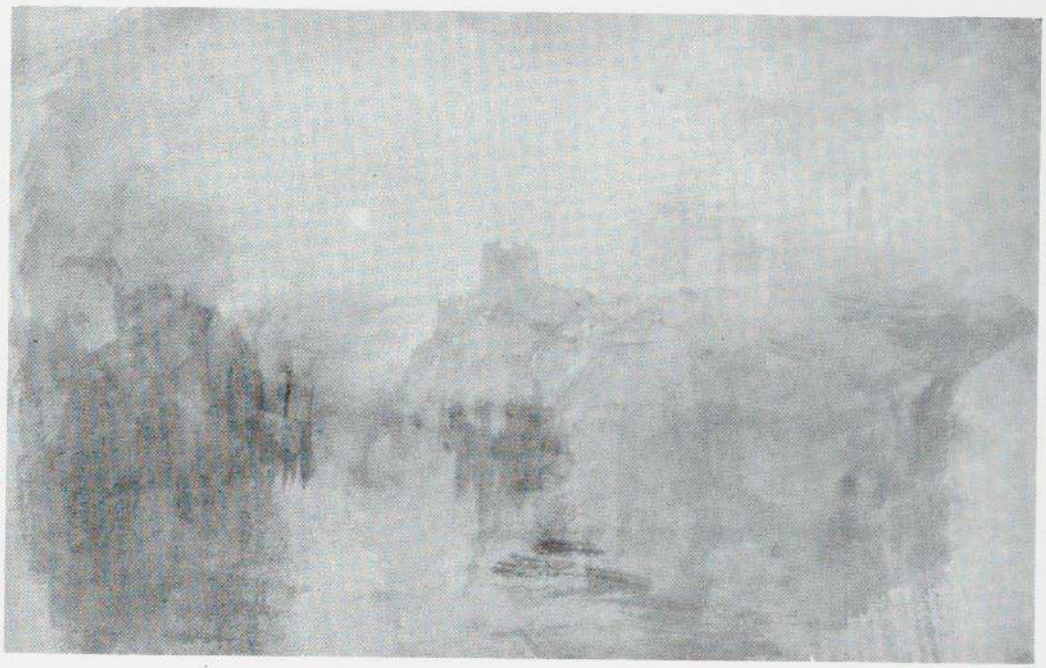
The selection of illustrations has been made intentionally to stress the most revolutionary, light-exploring side of Turner's genius. Even such an early watercolor as *Conway Castle*, *c.*1802, however topographical and picturesque its character, is clearly something more than a skillful report of a place or a building. The tremendous importance given to sky and water, the actual and reflected light against which the castle is silhouetted, are indications

Turner: *The Evening Star. c.*1840? Oil on canvas, $36\frac{1}{4} \times 48\frac{1}{4}$". The National Gallery, London

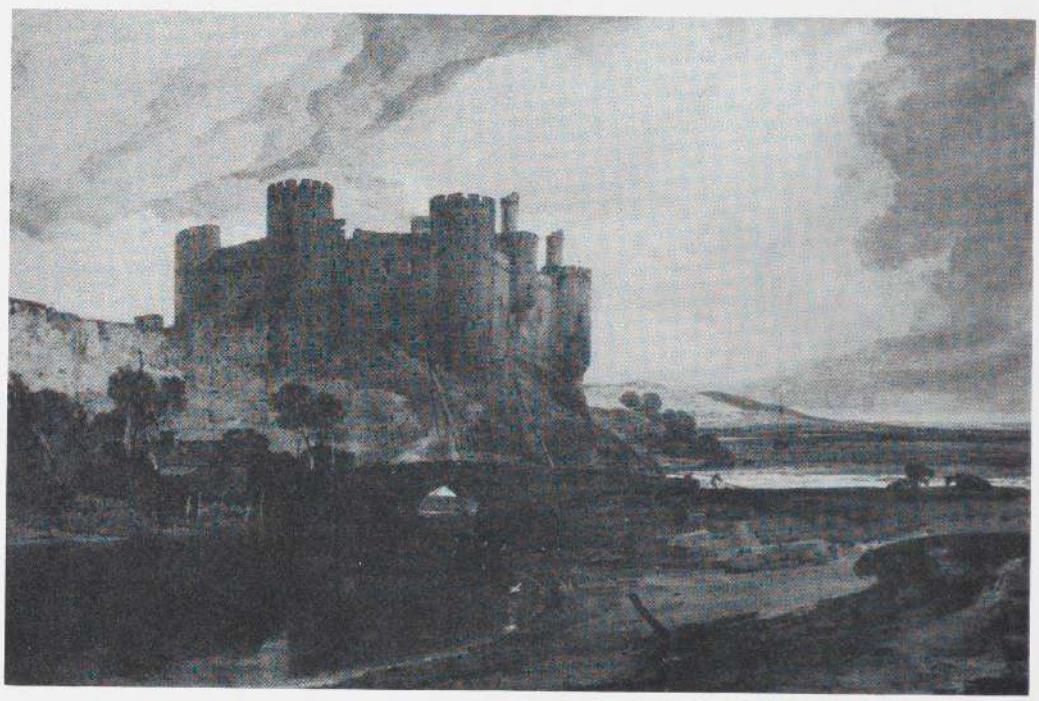
Turner: *Snowstorm*. 1842. Oil on canvas, $35\frac{1}{2} \times 47\frac{1}{2}''$. The National Gallery, London



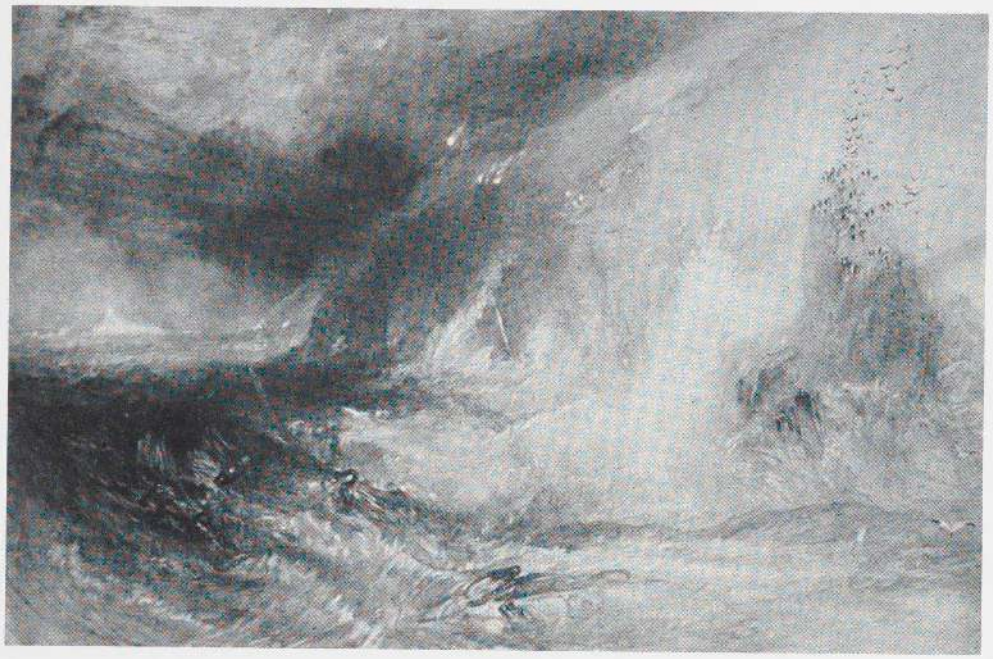
Turner: *Interior at Petworth. c.*1837. Oil on canvas, $35\frac{3}{4} \times 47\frac{3}{4}$". The National Gallery, London



Turner: *Castle on a Hill from a River*. *c.*1820–30. Watercolor, 12 × 19″. The Tate Gallery, London



Turner: *Conway Castle*. *c.*1802. Watercolor, 16½ × 24½″. The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester



Turner: *The Longships Lighthouse, Land's End.* c.1834. Watercolor, $11\frac{1}{8} \times 17\frac{1}{8}''$. Collection Geoffrey Agnew, London

Turner: *A River Scene.* 1845. Watercolor, $9 \times 12\frac{3}{4}''$. The British Museum, London

of Turner's instinctive interest in light and space that later, in watercolor and oil, was to supersede all other interests—antiquarian, geographical or mythological.

Interior at Petworth is a record probably of Turner's last of many visits to Petworth House, the home of Lord Egremont. Sunlight bursts like an explosion into the room and with the mountains of indeterminate undulating forms in the foreground, seen against the light-filled archway in the rear, the result is a kind of interior landscape rather than the painting of a room in any ordinary sense. The foreground, with dogs scampering about, reminds one of Ruskin's previously quoted comment of "litter like Covent Garden Wreck after the Market."

Turner exhibited a watercolor of Norham Castle as early as 1798 and there is an engraving after this watercolor in his *Liber Studiorum*. *Norham Castle, Sunrise*, his last and quite untopographical version of the scene, is a hymn to sunrise rather than to a castle. In its evanescent, vaporous treatment of light and atmosphere it recalls Constable's famous remark that Turner seemed to paint with "tinted steam."

Like *Norham Castle*, *The Evening Star* is a landscape theme which Turner had explored previously in a number of watercolors, and had also had engraved for his compilation of landscape ideas, the *Liber Studiorum*. In the painting here reproduced he achieves a final statement that is one of his greatest expressions of grandiose, melancholy solitude, reflecting the mood of his later years when he had chosen to enter a sort of secret world of the soul.

The *Snowstorm* is perhaps the most revolutionary painting of Turner's career. Its full title contains the legend: "Steamboat off a Harbor's Mouth Making Signals in Shallow Water, and Going by the Lead." Added to the title was a note by the artist when the picture was first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1842: "The author was in this storm on the night the Ariel left Harwich." Turner said further about the storm: "I got the sailors to lash me to the mast to observe it; I was lashed for four hours, and I did not expect to escape, but I felt bound to record it if I did. But no one had any business to like it." This last remark was in answer to the critics, who did not like the picture and said so violently. One wrote that it was merely "a mass of soapsuds and whitewash." Turner's reply to this taunt was: "I wonder what they think the sea's like? I wish they'd been in it." (Bibl. no. 100, p. 390.) The uncomprehending critics are a measure of how far Turner had penetrated into a new world of visual phenomena, comparable to the new world of science that was rapidly unfolding itself through the discoveries of his contemporaries in chemistry, physics and geology. In the awesome fusion of sea and sky and the stupendous vortex of both in which the steamboat wallows, one is reminded of the rhythms and grandeur of Leonardo da Vinci's drawings of mountains, seas and clouds.

John Constable 1776-1837

If the final result of Turner's explorations was to emphasize the abstract appeal of light and space, unrestricted by topical or specific references to place, the country-born Constable did quite the opposite. Like Cézanne, he concentrated on a limited number of landscape scenes. Instead of abstracting or idealizing them, as Turner with his Byronic discursiveness had done, he chose to observe the same tree, the same Hampstead Heath, the same Salisbury Cathedral, the same River Stour, over and over again, seeking to penetrate beneath the skin of appearance to an inner core of reality. His love of nature is as romantic as Turner's but the difference in their approach to her is a striking reminder of how complex the romantic spirit is and how dangerous it is to generalize about it.

The difference in origins of Turner and Constable is of fundamental importance: Turner, city-bred, the son of a barber, with a limited formal education, a precocious and fanatic observer of visual phenomena and verbally almost inarticulate; Constable, country-bred, son of a well-to-do miller in East Bergholt, Suffolk, (one of the most "beautiful" counties of England), tolerably well-educated in a country grammar school, where he acquired some knowledge of Latin and French and learned to express himself with some ease in his own tongue, practically self-taught as a painter and trained first of all as a miller (at his father's insistence). Turner's father was proud to show and sell the first drawings of his young son in his barber shop. Constable's father, with traditional middle-class caution, tried to turn his son from an artist's career to his own. The Turner boy thus found nature, that is, the world beyond city streets, as an escape, so to speak; Constable was early associated with her on a professional basis, and must have learned to observe wind and weather as they directly affected the water-wheel of his father's mill.

Torn between devotion to art and respect for his father's wishes, Constable's career as a painter began slowly and in fits and starts. He learned something in the beginning from Dunthorne, a local painter in East Bergholt, and attended the Royal Academy schools in 1799. He was encouraged by Sir George Beaumont, an amateur painter, connoisseur, and devotee of Claude. He copied landscapes by Claude, Ruysdael and Gaspard Poussin as a form of self-teaching. He greatly admired J. R. Cozens' watercolors and must have learned from him, as did so many English artists of this time, something fresh and exciting in the construction of landscape, as opposed to the clichés of the picturesque tradition.

While his first love was landscape, in order to acquire financial independence he painted some portraits in the early 1800s and carried out two commissions for church altar paintings. A few of these portraits are interesting. The altarpieces are best forgotten.

As Constable progressed along his true course of landscape painting his objective became comparable to Wordsworth's in poetry—to liberate art from accumulated artificial excrescences. In his preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, published in 1798, which Constable as an admirer of the poet had undoubtedly read, Wordsworth said: "The principal object, then, proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them . . . in a selection of language really used by men, and, at

Constable: *View near Dedham. c.*1810–15. Oil on paper on canvas, $9\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{4}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

the same time to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect. . . . Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity." As applied to painting, no better description of Constable's purpose can be imagined. He said himself: "The sound of water escaping from mill-dams, etc., willows, old rotten planks, slimy posts, and brickwork, I love such things. . . . The landscape painter must walk in the fields with an humble mind. No arrogant man was ever permitted to see nature in all her beauty." And further: "My limited and abstracted art is to be found under every hedge and in every land, and therefore nobody thinks it worth picking up."

This last comment may be taken as a somewhat bitter reaction to the lack of enthusiasm in public and official circles with which his work was generally received throughout his life. He tried to appease the Royal Academy authorities by "finishing" his canvases for exhibition—slicking over what appeared to the conventional eye to be the rough surface of his brushwork and the crude directness of his coloring. For example, it was the "finished" version of *The Haywain* which he sent to Paris for exhibition in 1824 and which so impressed Delacroix and is said to have led the latter to repaint his *Massacre of Chios*. How much more impressed Delacroix might have been by the so-called "sketch" for *The Haywain*, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum!

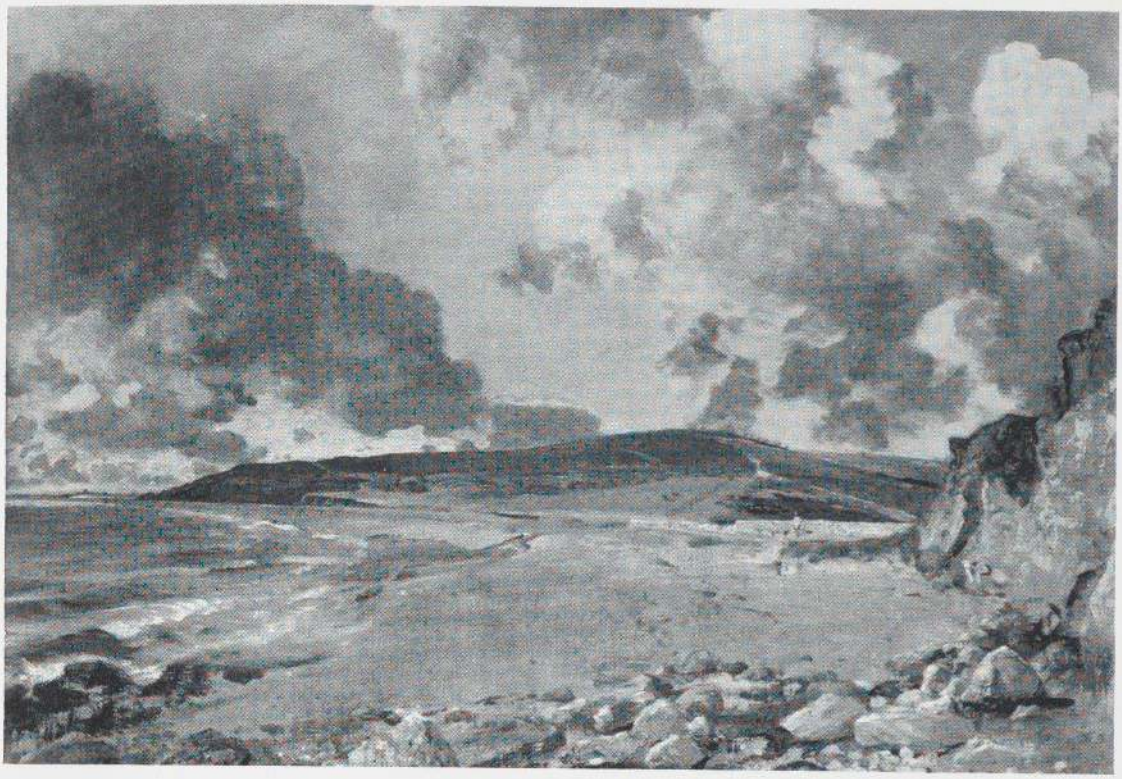
Despite his efforts to please official taste, Constable was not made an Associate of the Royal Academy until 1819, when he was forty-three; and he had to wait until he was fifty-three, eight years before his death, before he was made a full Academician—in contrast to Turner, who became an A.R.A. at twenty-four and an R.A. at twenty-seven. (One recalls Cézanne's pathetic efforts to be admitted to the *Salon* and how less successful, because more uncompromising, he was than Constable.)

Towards the end he became disillusioned by the lack of recognition of his work, and he was lonely and somewhat embittered after the death of his wife, to whom he was extremely devoted. This explains the sharpness of his criticism of reactionary painters and connoisseurs and their lack of sympathy for his own experimental approach to nature. "The attempt," he said, "to revive styles that have existed in former ages may for a time appear to be successful, but experience may now surely teach us its impossibility. I might put on a suit of Claude Lorraine's clothes and walk into the street, and the many who know Claude but slightly would pull off their hats to me, but I should at last meet with someone more intimately acquainted with him, who would expose me to the contempt I merited.

"It is thus in all the fine arts. A new Gothic building, or a new missal, is in reality little less absurd than a *new ruin*. The Gothic architecture, sculpture, and painting, belong to peculiar ages. The feelings that guided their inventors are unknown to us, we contemplate them with associations, many of which, however vague and dim, have a strong hold on our imaginations, and we feel indignant at the attempt to cheat us by any modern mimicry of their peculiarities.

"It is to be lamented that the tendency of taste is at present too much towards this kind of imitation, which, as long as it lasts, can only act as a blight on art, by engaging talents that might have stamped the Age with a character of its own, in the vain endeavour to

Constable: *Salisbury Cathedral from the River* (sketch). 1829? Oil on canvas, $20\frac{3}{4} \times 30\frac{1}{4}''$. The National Gallery, London



ABOVE: Constable: *Weymouth Bay* (sketch). *c.*1816–17. Oil on canvas, 21 × 29½″. The National Gallery, London

Constable: *Barges on the Stour: Dedham Church in the Distance*. *c.*1812. Oil on paper on canvas, 10¼ × 12¼″. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Constable: *Study of Sky and Trees at Hampstead. c.*1821. Oil on paper, $9\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Constable: "*The Grove,*" *Hampstead.* 1820–25. Oil on paper, $10\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{4}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Constable: *Summer Afternoon after a Shower*. 1824–28. Oil on canvas, $13\frac{3}{4} \times 17''$. The Tate Gallery, London

Constable: *Sketch for the Opening of Waterloo Bridge*. *c.*1824. Oil on cardboard, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 19''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

reanimate deceased Art, in which the utmost that can be accomplished will be to reproduce a body without a soul." (Bibl. no. 64, pp. 404–05.)

It is not surprising, after such an outburst, that we find him in the final years of his life more in sympathy with the inquiring mind of the scientists (as Turner had been unconsciously) rather than with the backward-looking minds of his fellow Academicians. It is significant that he gave his lectures on "The History of Landscape Painting" not at the Royal Academy but at the Royal Institution, founded in 1799 for the promotion of science, and that Faraday was in the audience and, according to Constable, was pleased. He also tells us that "When young, I was extremely fond of reading poetry, and also fond of music, and I played myself a little; but as I advanced in life and in art, I soon gave up the latter; and now after thirty years [1835], I must say that the sister arts have less hold on my mind in its occasional ramblings from my one pursuit than the sciences, especially the study of geology, which, more than any other, seems to satisfy my mind." (Bibl. no. 64, pp. 360–61.)

With reference to the Constables here reproduced, the word "sketch" should be explained. Constable made two kinds of sketches. The first are quite small and personal in nature, like Seurat's *croquetons*, and not all were intended for exhibition. Of this kind are *Barges on the Stour*, *View near Dedham*, *Study of Sky and Trees at Hampstead*, *"The Grove," Hampstead*, *Sketch for the Opening of Waterloo Bridge* and *Summer Afternoon after a Shower*. Some of these he used as studies for pictures on a larger scale, such as *The Opening of Waterloo Bridge*; others were never taken beyond the small sketch stage. The second type is from the beginning on a larger scale, free in execution, but while as pictures they were often as final as Constable would wish, they were not, he knew, acceptable as finished works, according to the academic standards of his day. In this category are the *Weymouth Bay*, *Sketch for a View on the Stour* and *Salisbury Cathedral from the River*. "Sketches" such as these Constable would either exhibit as they were or translate them into "finished" canvases. Towards the end of his life he became less concerned with the distinction between sketch and finished picture.

Constable, after a long engagement, finally married in 1816 and spent his honeymoon near Weymouth. The *Weymouth Bay* is one result of this visit. Whether because the occasion of his viewing it was a particularly happy one or simply because the natural grandeur of the scene appealed to him, the picture he eventually painted is a most dramatic composition and passionately expresses the wonder and glory of the elements.

The *Salisbury Cathedral from the River* is the most fluent and lyrical of all Constable's many studies of this, his favorite cathedral. A number of these are quite careful architectural renderings, commissioned portraits, so to speak, of the building and its surroundings (he was actually commissioned to paint the cathedral by Dr. Fisher, the Bishop of Salisbury, his patron). The present picture is painted with an uninhibited excitement and love of the scene which seem to indicate that the artist was painting for his own pleasure rather than to please a patron. So, too, *Fording the River*, a picture on a much grander scale, is truly pictorial rather than topographical in conception.

In *Stoke-by-Nayland*, painted a year before his death, Constable sums up, in what must be considered one of his greatest masterpieces, all those qualities of "light — dews — breezes — bloom — and freshness" which he had been striving for, "not one of which," he added, "has yet been perfected on the canvas of any painter in the world." (Bibl. no. 64, p. 298.)

Constable: *Sketch for a View on the Stour*. *c.*1822. Oil on canvas, 54 × 77″. Royal Holloway College, Englefield Green, Surrey

Constable: *Fording the River*. *c.*1831. Oil on canvas, $53\frac{1}{2} \times 74''$. The Guildhall Art Gallery, London

Constable: *Stoke-by-Nayland.* 1836. Oil on canvas, 49×66″. The Art Institute of Chicago, W. W. Kimball Collection

John Crome 1768-1821

John Crome, known as "Old Crome" to distinguish him from his son, who was also a painter, was born and died in Norwich. Not too much is known about his personal life and even the dating of many of his pictures will probably always remain uncertain. He was apprenticed to a coach and sign painter but otherwise seems to have been self-taught. He is known to have copied landscapes by Richard Wilson, and probably Gainsborough's *Cottage Door*, then in a collection near Norwich which also contained Dutch and Flemish paintings. From these several sources, particularly Wilson and Hobbema, Crome learned the technique of picture-making. For the rest, his provincial honesty of observation, his native, pragmatic talent and the beauty of the Norwich countryside are the mainsprings of his art. "Before the age of railroads," say the Redgraves, "Norfolk and its capital city were outlying districts as it were; rarely visited by the curious—rarely subject to change or improvement. The city itself was picturesque, full of antiquarian interest, and seemed as if it had slept while other cities of the kingdom were up and at work. The lanes in the suburbs, the banks of the river, the heaths, the commons, were wild, untrimmed, and picturesque; the old labourer's cottage with its thatched roof, the farms with their rural homesteads, were scattered close around the city . . . the river as it wound with silvery surface through the fat meadows, or stretched away towards the sea, widened into lakelets called broads, and bore on its way, inland or seaward, the picturesque barges, or wherries as they are locally called, whose tanned sails, ruddy in the sunlight, contrasted so well with the green of the landscape." (Bibl. no. 25, pp. 347–48.)

Crome was a founder, in 1803, of "The Norwich Society, for the purpose of an inquiry into the rise, progress and present state of Painting, Architecture and Sculpture, with a view to point out the best methods of study to attain greater perfection in these arts." The Society held an annual exhibition of paintings beginning in 1805 and from then until his death in 1821 Crome was a steady contributor. He made a living as a drawing master, and two of his pupils, James Stark and George Vincent, made something of a local reputation. Crome and his younger associate J. S. Cotman are, however, the only artists of this provincial school of Norwich now considered worthy of national recognition.

Crome: *View on Mousehold Heath, near Norwich. c.*1815. Oil on canvas, 21½ × 32″. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Crome: *Moonrise on the Yare. c.*1811–16. Oil on canvas, 28 × 43¾″. The National Gallery, London

Richard Parkes Bonington 1802-1828

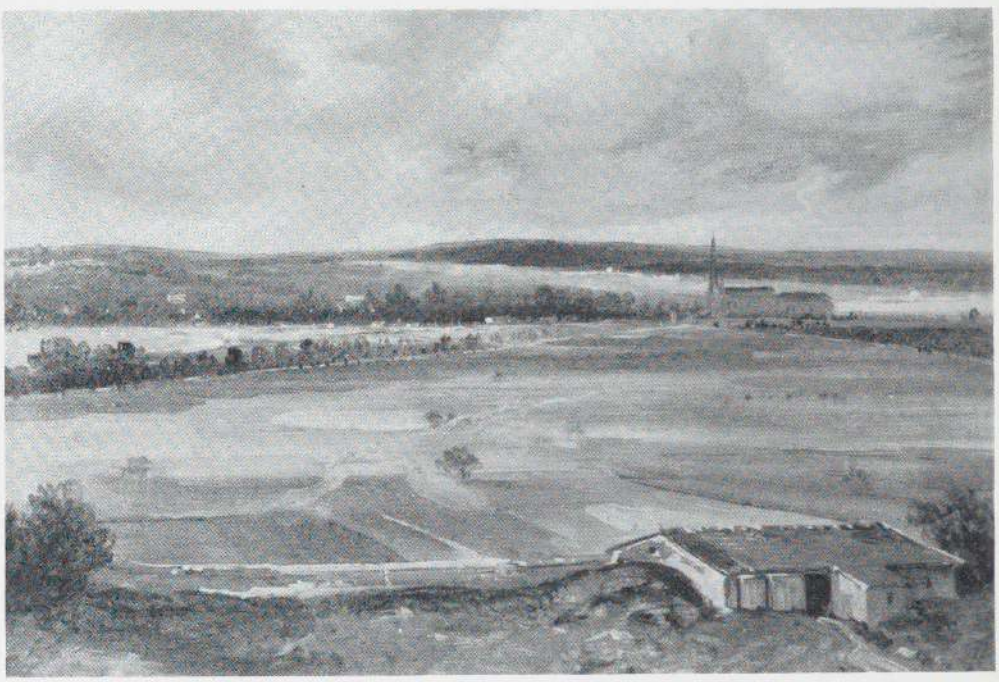
Bonington, the son of a drawing master and portrait painter, was born in Nottingham but was largely trained in France. He went there with his father in 1817 or 1818 and studied in Calais under the French painter, Louis Francia, and later under Baron Gros in Paris. He was an intimate of Delacroix and worked with him. He played an important part in the rise of interest in landscape painting and through his association with Delacroix furthered the latter's interest in British painting.

Bonington did most of his painting in France, but made important visits to England in 1825 and 1827 and to Italy in 1826. He was highly regarded by his French contemporaries and, with Constable, exerted a considerable influence in Paris during his short lifetime. To a French understanding of *matière* he added an English appreciation of landscape in all its poetic breadth and lyricism. He died of tuberculosis at the early age of twenty-six, a proto-genius, who, like Watteau, a fellow consumptive, was extraordinarily prolific. After his death he was much copied and, like Corot, more pictures have been attributed to him than he could ever have executed in so short a lifetime.

He painted in both watercolors and oils. His romantic, neo-Gothic figurative pieces still have considerable appeal, but his largest body of work is in landscapes, seascapes, street scenes and river views. The three oils here reproduced are all of French subjects. All small in scale, as was Bonington's practice, each shows him at a brilliant peak of his accomplishment. The *Rosny-sur-Seine* is a little masterpiece of "handling," deliciously fluent in its brushwork, ample and sure in its definition of space, limpid and clear in its rendering of atmosphere and composed with an authoritative, architectural grasp of the relation of building, field and sky that are astonishing in a painter so young. *Marly from the Terrace of St. Germain-en-Laye*, with its striking tower set off against the vast, receding landscape, the long, sweeping horizon and the magnificent, cloud-swept sky is one of Bonington's most effective pictorial conceptions. The *Scene in Normandy* shows in combination his dramatic landscape sense, his juxtaposition of low-lying fields against an immense sky, and his expert drawing and placing of the two peasant figures in the foreground.

Bonington: *Marly from the Terrace of St. Germain-en-Laye*. 1823. Oil on canvas, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15''$. Collection The Hon. Mrs. David Bowes-Lyon, Hitchin, Herts.

Bonington: *Scene in Normandy*. *c.*1823. Oil on canvas, 13 × 17¼″. The National Gallery, London



Bonington: *Rosny-sur-Seine*. 1823. Oil on paper, 7¼ × 11″. Collection Dr. and Mrs. E. G. Recordon, Cambridge

Thomas Girtin 1775-1802

Turner's famous remark, "If Tom Girtin had lived, I should have starved," is no doubt an exaggeration in honor of a close friendship. The death at twenty-seven, however, of one of the most talented of all English watercolorists was surely a major loss to British art.

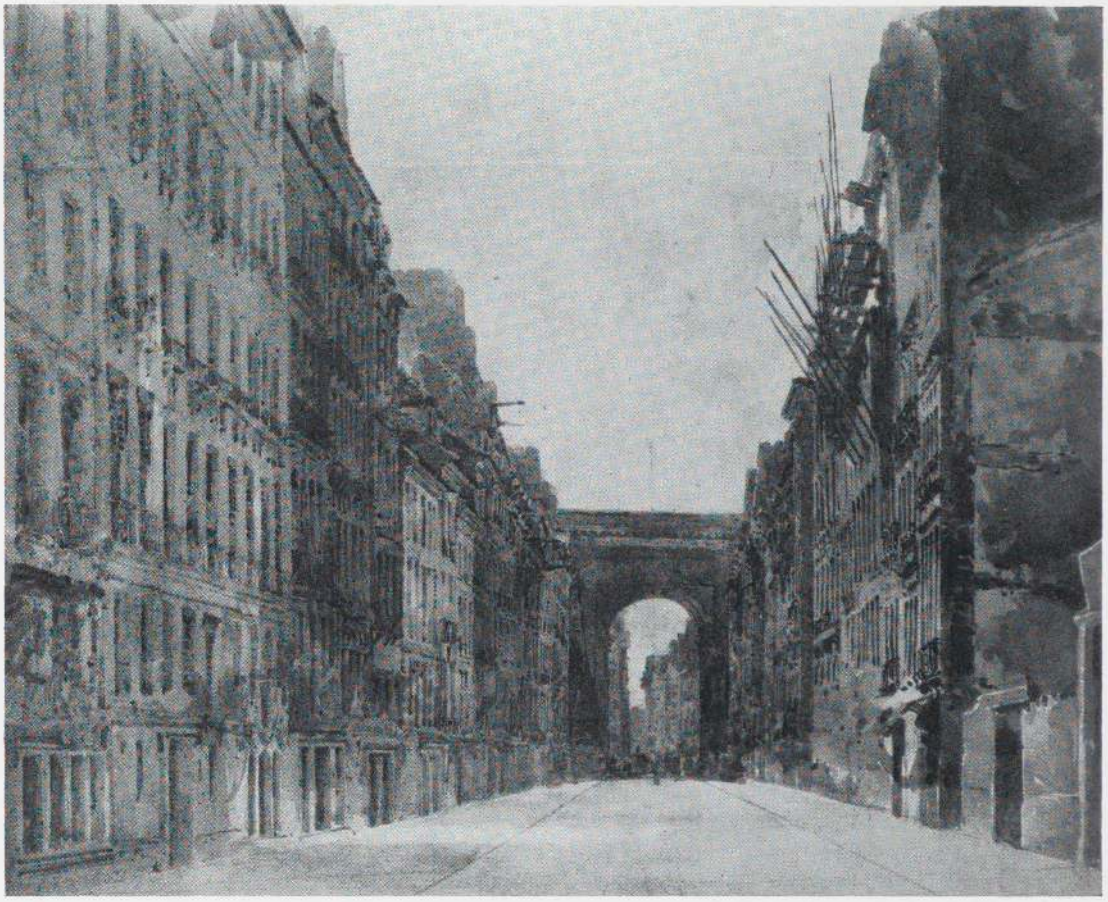
Girtin was first apprenticed to the watercolorist Edmund Dayes and later worked for the printmaker, J. R. Smith. With Turner and Cotman he studied and copied watercolors in the collection of Dr. Monro, the connoisseur and amateur artist who did so much to further the influence of the Cozens' landscape drawings and watercolors. Richard Wilson, too, was a strong influence on Girtin. He absorbed from these sources the classical virtues of architectural composition, breadth with intensity of color and controlled grandeur of mood. He extended the tonal handling of watercolor to describe finely graduated values of aerial space and in this practice was, with Turner, a leader in breaking away from the tinted topographical drawings of his predecessors.

Topographical interest, however, determined the subject matter of most of his watercolors. He traveled through England and Scotland recording the "beauties" of the Lake Country and, like Turner and others, picturesque views of churches and abbeys. In 1802 he visited Paris for his health and while there produced some of his finest watercolors, which on his return to London he translated into etchings, just before his death.

During his lifetime, he was often compared with Turner by critics, but the brilliant, prolific showmanship of his friend must have quickly outshone Girtin's more severe art in the public eye. At any rate, he never achieved election to the Academy and it is only since his death that the full measure of his promise as a great landscape painter has been recognized. "Promise," nevertheless, is the operative word here. His one known oil has been lost and we have no way of judging what his art might have been had it extended beyond the narrower confines of the watercolor paper.

Girtin: *Stepping Stones on the Wharfe.* 1801. Watercolor, $12\frac{3}{4} \times 20\frac{1}{2}''$. Collection Thomas Girtin, London

Girtin: *A View on the Wharfe*. 1801. Watercolor, $12\frac{1}{4} \times 20\frac{3}{4}''$. Collection Sir Edmund Bacon, Norwich



Girtin: *Rue St. Denis, Paris.* 1802. Watercolor, $15\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{1}{4}''$. Collection Sir Edmund Bacon, Norwich

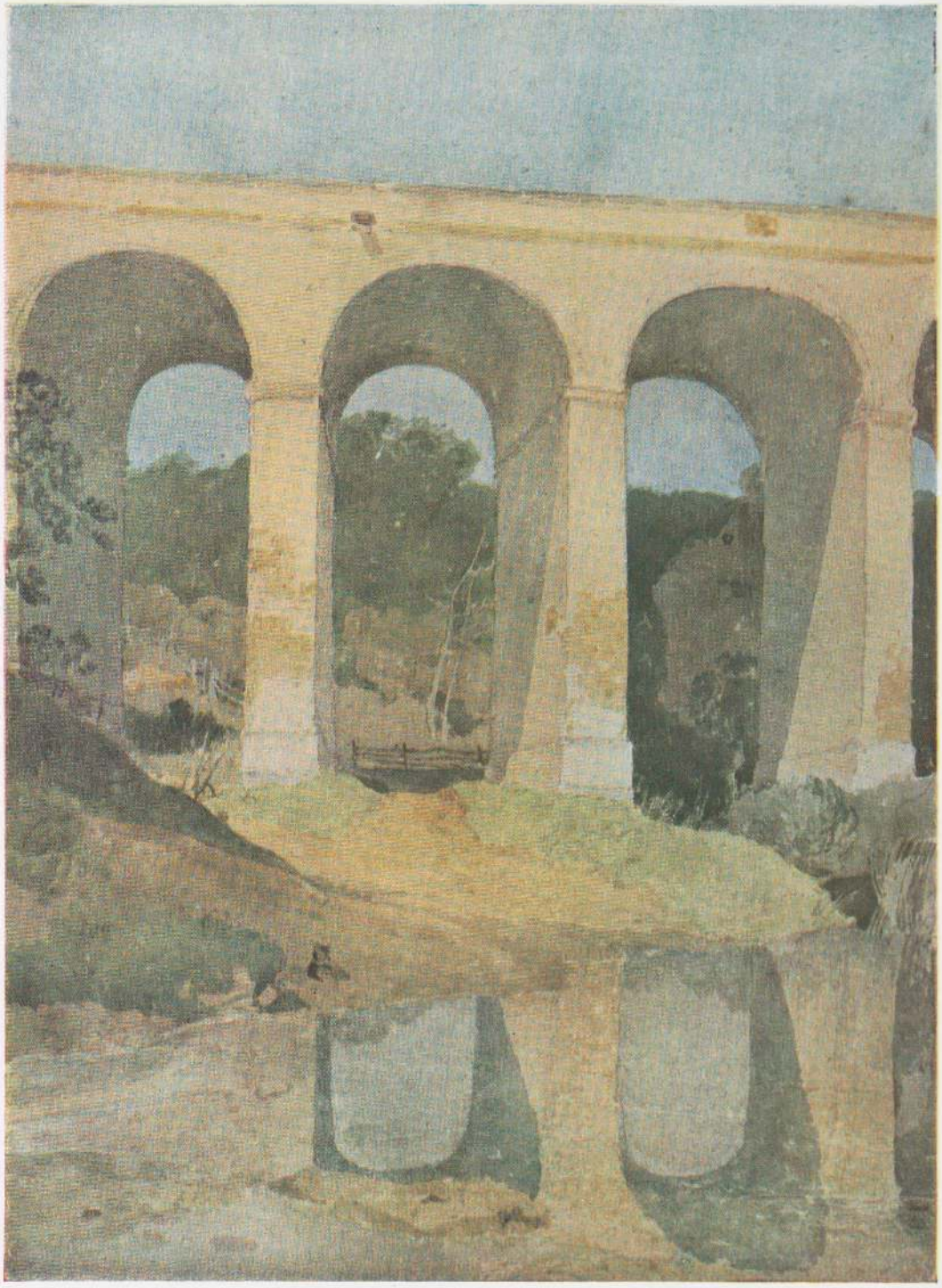
John Sell Cotman 1782-1842

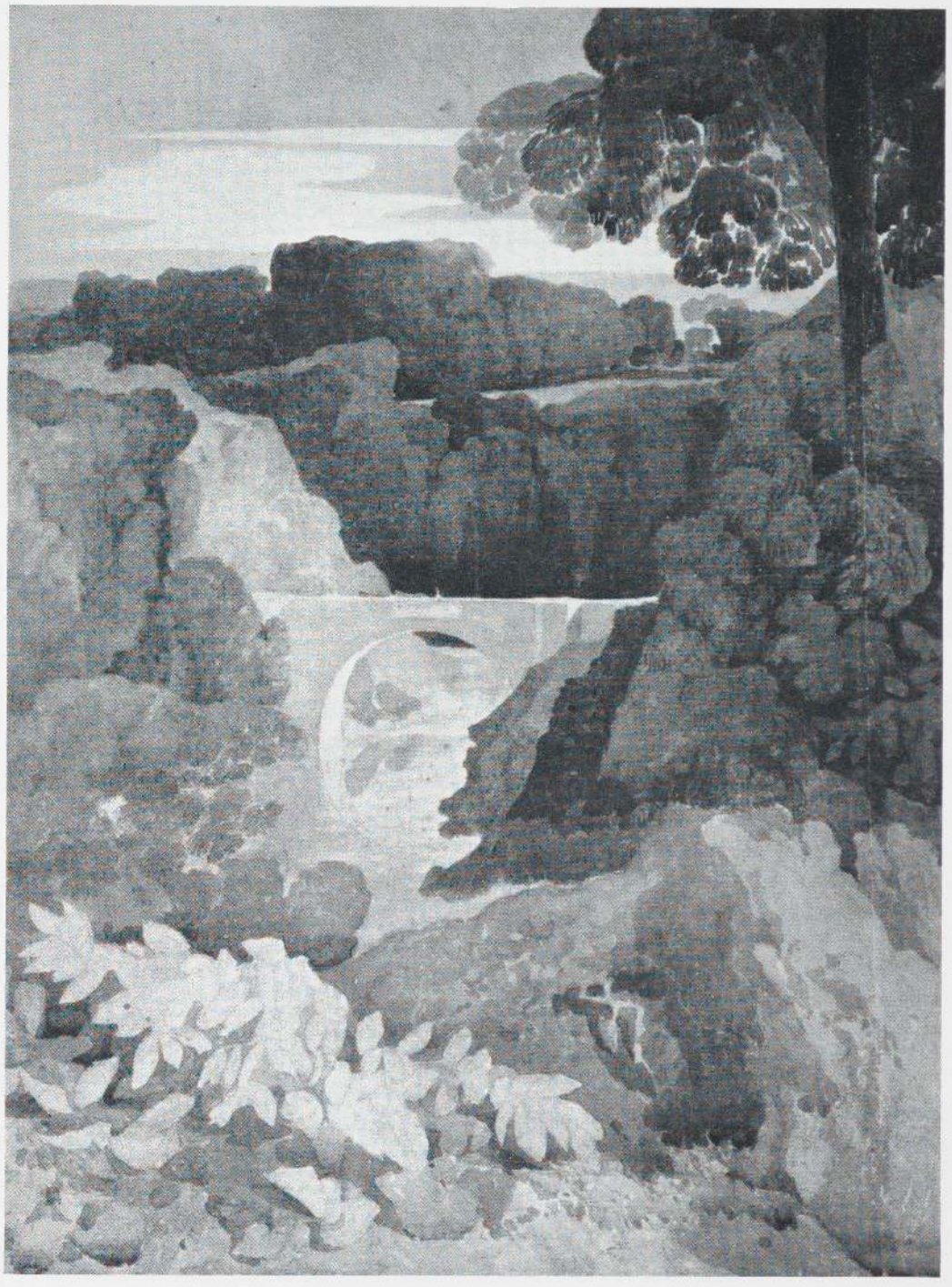
The co-founder, with Crome, of the Norwich school, is now properly best known for his watercolors, although he painted many landscapes in oil. Son of a linen draper, and in better financial circumstances than Crome at the same age, he went early in his career to London and remained there to study until 1806, and shortly after returned to Norwich.

Again, as with Turner and Girtin, Cotman's evenings spent studying Dr. Monro's collection gave him his greatest insight, once more through the Cozens' drawings, into the potentials of landscape painting. From them he developed his own style of strongly massed lights and darks for the production of striking designs. The leaping arches of bridges and the dramatic sweep of waterfalls are favorite motifs in his work. The fluency of his drawing and the technical virtuosity of his washes of color resulted at times in a mannered repetition of contrasting effects of light and shade. Even so, the genuine poetry of his landscape vision is undeniable. Collins Baker has perhaps best described its essential quality. "His magistral drawing of architecture has the soul and spring of the great builders themselves. He is also a great colourist. His earlier palette produced that rare plenitude that only masters of exquisite simplicity and restraint compass: from his palette the brown glebe, the black reflection of massed trees in a still river, the grey and gold of weathered stone and plaster, the glinting gold on foliage and the gilded green of translucent leaves have a special and supernal quality of dream pageants rather than of actuality." (Bibl. no. 1, p. 153.)

Cotman left Norwich in 1812 to live in Yarmouth. Unable to keep a large family on the sale of his paintings, he was forced, as Crome and many of his contemporaries were, to hire himself out as drawing master to the families of the local gentry. In Yarmouth he had the good fortune to be asked to teach the children of Dawson Turner, a gentleman of antiquarian interests. This association resulted in Cotman's publishing a series of etchings illustrating Turner's *The Architectural Antiquities of Norfolk* and *Engravings of the Sepulchral Brasses*. In 1818 and 1820 he visited France with the Dawson Turner family and in 1822 Turner published his *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy* with illustrations by Cotman. In 1834 he was appointed drawing master of King's College, London, and there one of his pupils was Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

OPPOSITE: Cotman: *Chirk Aqueduct. c.*1804. Watercolor, $12\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{8}$". The Victoria and Albert Museum, London





Cotman: *The New Bridge, Durham. c.*1805–06. Watercolor, 17 × 12⅝″. Collection Sir Edmund Bacon, Norwich

David Cox 1783-1859

Son of a blacksmith and born near Birmingham, Cox was first apprenticed to a miniature painter, then for four years painted theatrical scenery for a traveling repertory company and eventually reached London in 1804. There he determined to become a watercolor painter. Aside from a few lessons taken from John Varley, who had studied with Girtin and Turner at Dr. Monro's, he was self-taught.

For most of his life he was burdened by the necessity of having to give drawing lessons to young ladies to make a living, and it was not until he was over fifty that he was free to escape completely from the easy, picturesque clichés of the drawing master and to indulge his own forthright vision of wind and weather. In his later and best works the dewy freshness of his palette, the dramatic honesty of his observation and his innocent enjoyment of field and heath scenes are not unlike Constable's, although at a lower level in scale and emotional intensity. Like Constable, too, he was devoted to certain parts of the countryside, above all to the rugged beauty of the Welsh moors around Bettws-y-coed. He made three visits to the Continent: in 1826 to Belgium and Holland, in 1829 to Paris, and in 1832 to the French coast.

Cox is not a major master, but a substantial one within his limitations. As an aid to students of landscape painting, he published *A Series of Progressive Lessons* and *A Treatise on Landscape Painting and Effect in Watercolours*. Neither book is particularly inspired.

Cox: *On Lancaster Sands, Low Tide.* c.1840. Watercolor, $10\frac{1}{8} \times 14\frac{1}{2}''$. Collection Mrs. Martin Hardie, Tonbridge, Kent

Cox: *Dieppe Pier: Stiff Breeze.* c.1832. Watercolor, $6\frac{5}{8} \times 9''$. Collection L. G. Duke, London

Cox: *Sun, Wind and Rain.* 1845. Watercolor, $18 \times 24''$. The City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

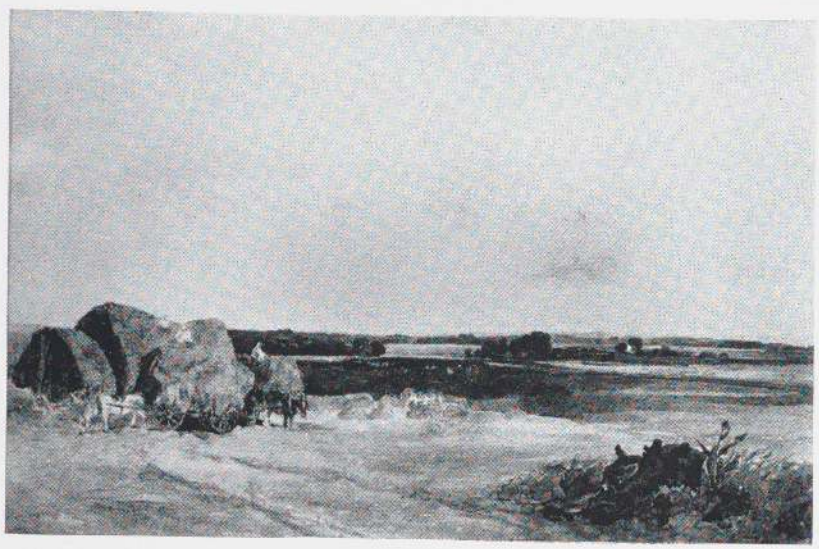
Peter de Wint 1784-1849

Henry de Wint, father of Peter, was born in New York. His well-to-do family was Dutch in origin and sent him to Europe to study medicine. While completing his studies in London he married an English woman and set up practice in Staffordshire, where Peter was born.

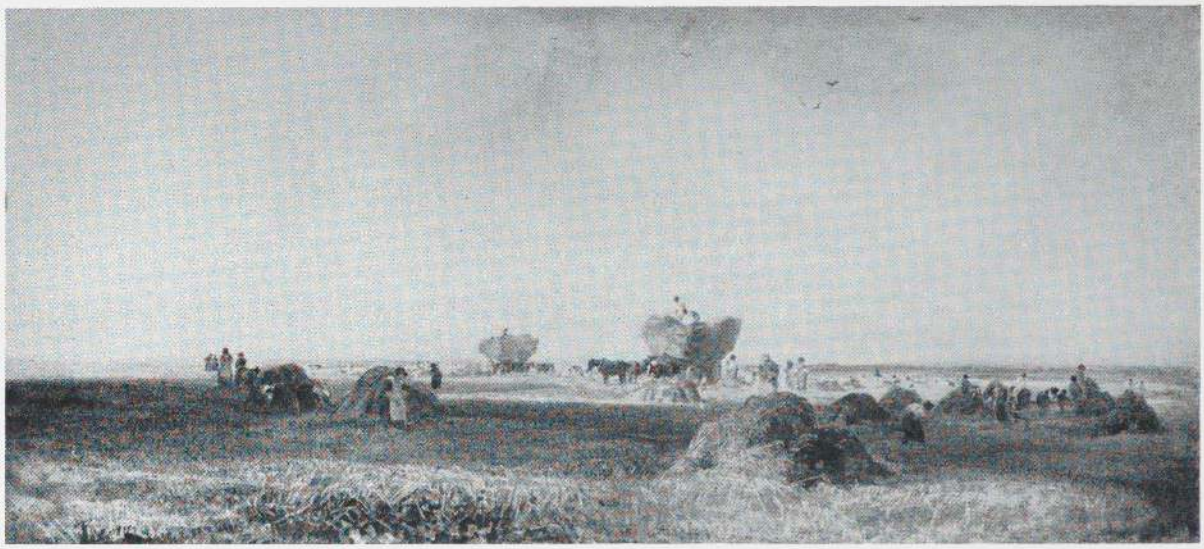
The Dutch origins of the painter are important to remember and help to explain the affinity his long, horizontal watercolors have with similar Dutch landscape paintings of the 17th century. De Wint is even said to have consciously modeled his art on Dutch practice and surely his choice of the fen country around Lincoln for many of his paintings is significant.

There is also, one feels, a Dutch neatness and orderliness to De Wint's sensitive and delicately worked watercolors. Like so many others of the watercolor school, he studied Dr. Monro's collection of drawings and the Girtins there particularly appealed to him, as his *Westminster Palace, Hall and Abbey* bears witness. Again, like so many of his fellows, he was forced to teach for a living and was only free during the summers to paint where he pleased. This explains the frequency of harvesting scenes in his work, and no one surely has excelled him in the spacious rendering of English farming life. His expansive skys, often left blank, his long, low horizons and his skillful grouping of hay cart, horse and harvesters all contribute to a seemingly artless serenity and sense of well-being that are, in summer, the English countryside's most memorable attributes.

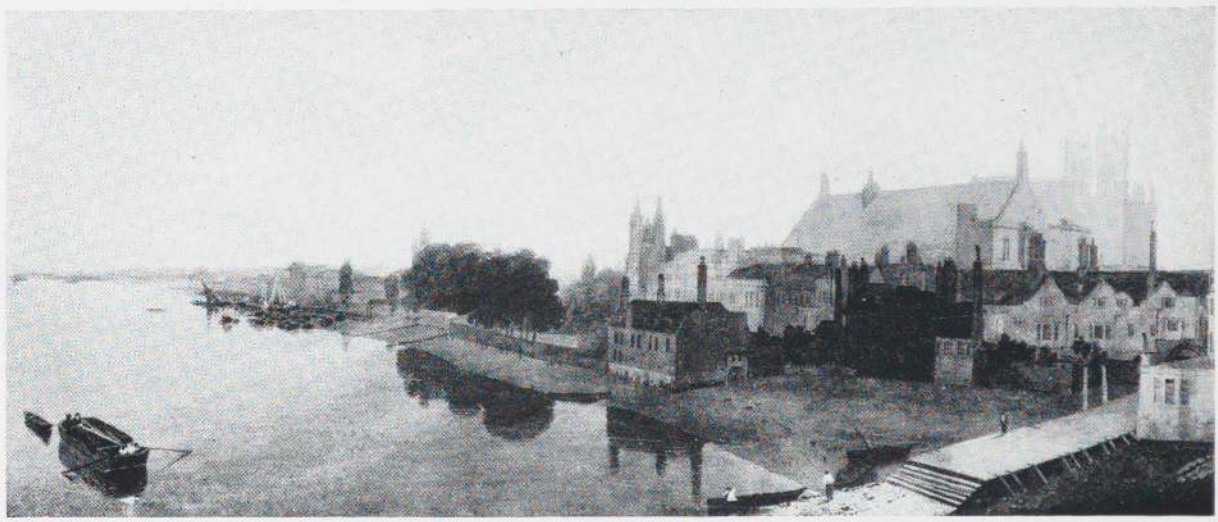
De Wint, as his early *Westminster* more than proves, was also a very accomplished draftsman of architectural subjects and many of his finest watercolors are of Lincoln Cathedral and the city around it.



De Wint: *Carrying Hay*. Watercolor, $14\frac{1}{2} \times 22\frac{1}{4}$". The Laing Art Gallery and Museum, Newcastle-upon-Tyne



De Wint: *Gathering Corn.* Watercolor, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 25\frac{3}{4}''$. The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester



De Wint: *Westminster Palace, Hall and Abbey.* Watercolor, $14 \times 31\frac{5}{8}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

William Blake 1757-1827

Against the more or less even tenor of development of the watercolorists previously discussed, Blake appears as a strange, eccentric phenomenon. Eighteen years older than Turner and nineteen years older than Constable, he was forty-three when the nineteenth century opened. His rebellious individualism is, then, an eighteenth-century characteristic, more akin to the cockney belligerence of Hogarth and pre-Napoleonic Republicanism than to the developing complacency and conformist middle-class morality that accompanied the advance of the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century.

Born in London, he died there at the age of seventy. His father was a hosier of fair means, a dissenter from the Church of England and, of significance for Blake's development, a reader of the mystical writings of Swedenborg. The young Blake early displayed abnormal propensities of imagination. At four he said God "put His head to the window" and made him scream with fright. When he was almost eight he returned from a walk and announced he had seen a tree filled with angels. His father and his school teacher tried to beat ordinary sense into him but finally it was admitted that he was an unusual child and he was brought up at home without formal education. The education he did receive, however, encouraged drawing.

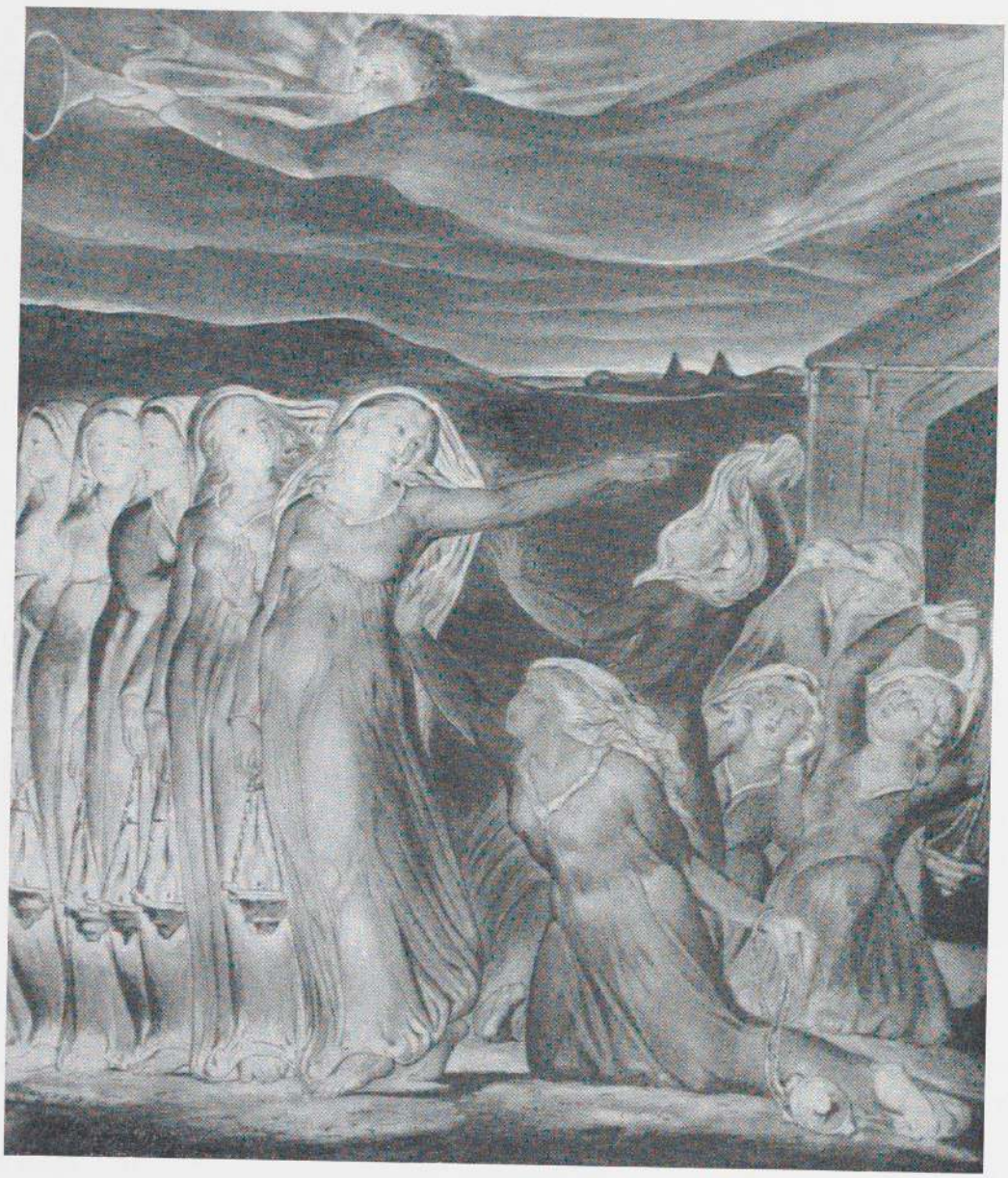
At ten he was sent to a school where he was taught to draw from casts of antique sculpture in the accepted academic practice of the time. He had previously studied prints after such Renaissance masters as Raphael and Michelangelo and it was because of his interest in prints that he was sent to drawing school. Later he was apprenticed to the engraver Basire, who did work for antiquarian societies. As part of this work the young Blake was directed to make drawings of Gothic monuments and spent the greater part of five years in Westminster Abbey on this project.

His youthful predilection for drawing and his training with an engraver, his exposure to High Renaissance art in the form of prints only, and his long association with medieval sculpture in the Abbey are the foundations of his style. The emphasis on drawing which all his training produced remained with him throughout his life, and line became his chief means of expression, to a fanatical degree. He once said: "If losing and obliterating the outline constitutes a Picture, Mr. B[lake] will never be so foolish as to do one." He further said, "The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life is this; That the more distinct, sharp, and wirey the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art . . ." (Bibl. no. 57, p. 805.)

Since transparent watercolor wash did not "obliterate" the outline, Blake, when he was not engraving his own or others' drawings, preferred the watercolor medium all his life. He not only preferred this medium; he evolved an almost mystical defense of it. He also openly despised the rational examination of a universalized nature which the academic taste of his time, as set forth in Reynolds' *Discourses*, considered a basis of all art study.

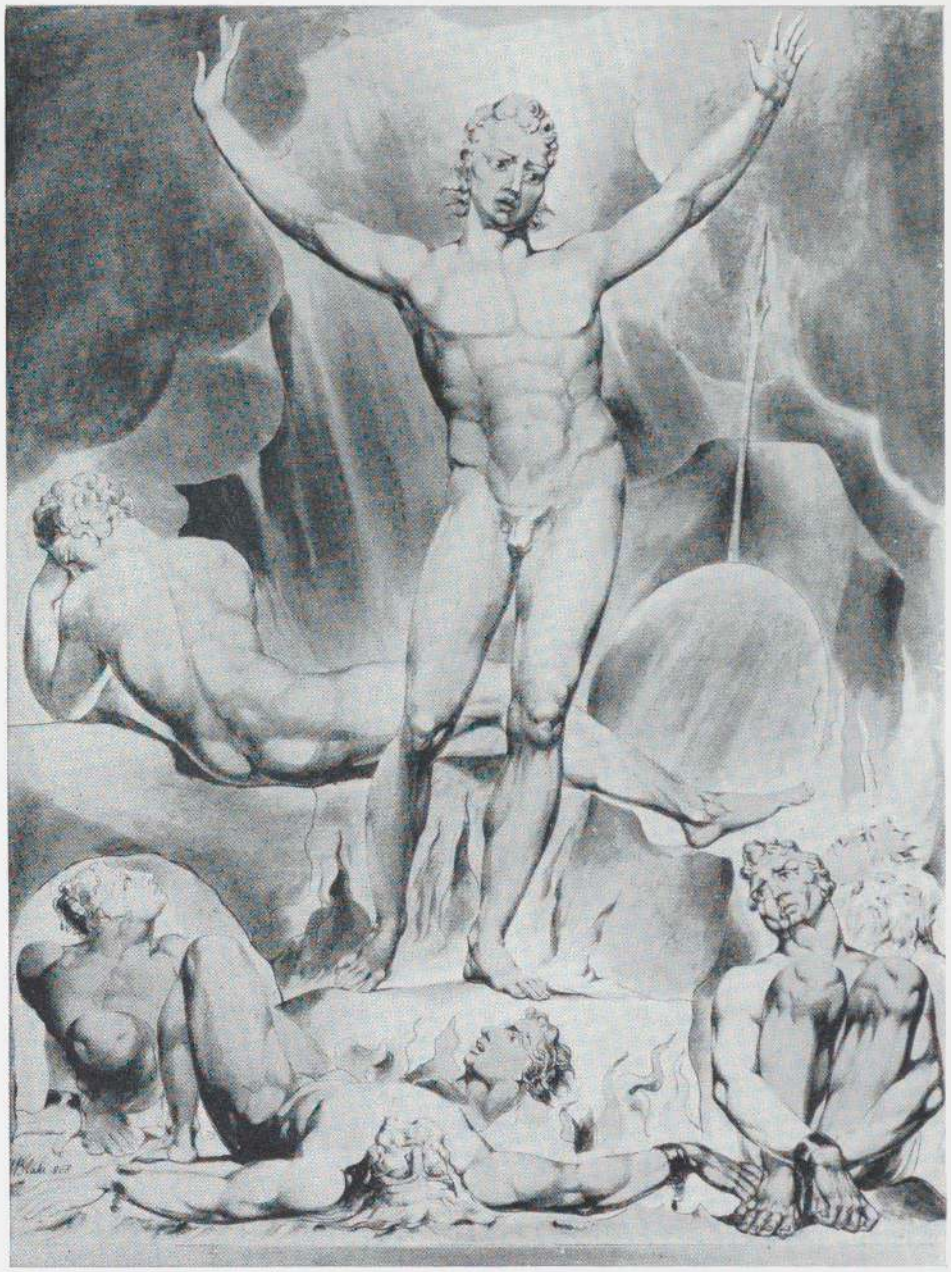
He was frankly an irrationalist and a mystic. In his fusion of High Renaissance art with

Blake: *An Allegorical Composition*, derived from Harvey's "Meditations among the Tombs." Watercolor, $16\frac{7}{8} \times 11\frac{1}{2}''$. The Tate Gallery, London



Blake: *The Wise and Foolish Virgins*, Matthew XXV, 1–3. 1805? Pen and ink and watercolor, $15\frac{3}{4} \times 13''$. The Tate Gallery, London


HELL
Canto 19



Blake: *Satan Arousing the Rebel Angels*, Milton, "Paradise Lost." 1808. Watercolor, $20\frac{1}{4} \times 51\frac{3}{8}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

OPPOSITE: Blake: Illustration to Dante's "Divine Comedy": *The Simoniac Pope*, "Inferno." 1824–27. Watercolor, $20\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{1}{2}''$. The Tate Gallery, London

Gothic linearism—as in the non-functional flow of draperies in the sculpture of Westminster —he recalls Greco's fusion of the apparently disparate elements of Venetian color, Michelangelesque mannerism and Byzantine formalism for the expression of Spanish mysticism.

Blake, like Hogarth and Bunyan, is one of England's great eccentrics, born, as many have been, of non-conformist, lower-middle-class parents during periods of social dislocation or change. He was in many ways what we would call today a "primitive" in that he drew upon his own innocence and willful, independent imagination for his poetry and his paintings. The subject matter of his watercolors and drawings is almost always derived from literature—the Bible, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Dante or his own mystical books, such as *Jerusalem*, and superficially he might be described as an illustrator. But his paintings are so personal, so filled with his own visionary experience, they take on a life that is parallel with rather than subservient to their literary origins. At their best they have an extraordinary emotional power. At their worst, as with all mystics when vision flags, they can be insipid and even ridiculous.

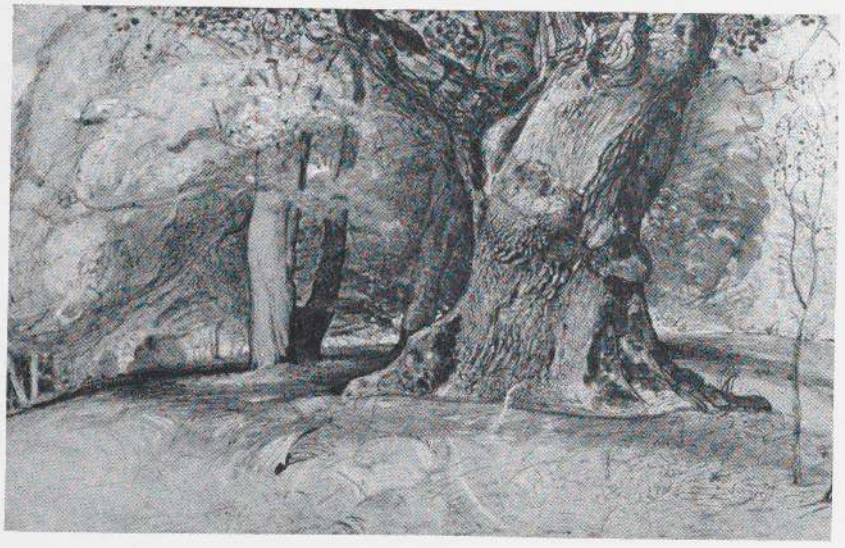
Blake: Illustration to Dante's "Divine Comedy": *The Whirlwind of Lovers*, "Inferno." 1824–27. Watercolor, $14\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{1}{2}''$. The City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

Samuel Palmer 1805-1881

Moon-struck, impractical, unworldly, picturesque, fanatical, hungering after the glory of traditional Catholicism, yet born into a partially non-conformist family, Palmer was a minor martyr produced by the first cruel stages of the Industrial Revolution. His twilight art represents a constant effort to sustain a childlike vision of nature as the footstool of God in the face of the overwhelming materialism of nineteenth-century commerce and industry.

A precocious artist, Palmer submitted work to the Academy in 1819 and it was accepted. Turner was one of his earliest inspirations, but later Blake, whom he did not meet until 1824, became the dominant force in his life and art. Both worshipped imagination and loathed the Academy's subordination of emotion to intellectual formulas of composition and execution. But while Blake may be said to have created a symbolic world largely out of the core of his own being, Palmer was only at his best in close association with nature at her most ecstatic or picturesque moments—an apple tree in full bloom or a tender, intimate landscape under the moon.

Against the Royal Academy tide Blake, Palmer and others of their circle appear as eccentrics who foreshadowed a later group of rebels, the Pre-Raphaelites. From the early 1820s until the '30s Palmer's mystic vision burned with a bright flame to produce some of the purer gems of English pastoral landscape. His finest works, miniature as they are, are to be compared with the lyric flights of Wordsworth and Keats. And to this flame, Nash and Sutherland, among other twentieth-century English artists, turned for poetic inspiration.



Palmer: *Oak Tree and Beech: Lullingstone Park.* 1828. Pen and ink, watercolor and gouache, $11\frac{5}{8} \times 18\frac{1}{2}''$. Collection Miss Hilda Pryor, London

Palmer: *Cornfield by Moonlight with Evening Star*. *c.*1830. Watercolor, gouache and pen, $7\frac{3}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{4}$". Collection Sir Kenneth Clark, Hythe, Kent

Ford Madox Brown 1821-1893

Born in Calais, Brown studied on the Continent between 1837 and 1846, first with Baron Wappers in Antwerp and later in Paris and Rome. In Rome he came in contact with the German Nazarenes, or Pre-Raphaelites, Overbeck and Cornelius. Previous to this meeting he had followed the romantic fashion for neo-Gothic history pictures. The Nazarenes seem to have turned his attention to religious subjects. When he met Rossetti in 1848, at Rossetti's insistence he agreed to take the young man as a pupil. Through this master-pupil association, while it lasted only a few months, Brown must have transmitted some of the Nazarene ideas to Rossetti. In return, although he never joined it, he himself came under the influence of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The amount of give and take, however, between the older painter and the younger group is hard to determine. The Rossetti fire was undoubtedly an important motivating factor in bringing him onto the outskirts of the Pre-Raphaelite circle. His own technical ability, continental training and independent character may well have been responsible, by example, for the serious beginnings of the Brotherhood and their early and best pictures. Again, his own emotional stability and independence saved him from the later sentimental excesses of his associates.

There was more than adolescent rebelliousness in Brown's blood, and a social bent to him that reminds one of his contemporary, Courbet. Brown was too independent to have created a school. However, in certain rare paintings of the time which glorified labor, but which lacked his socialist implications, his influence may be traced. Chief among these is *Iron and Steel*, by the Scottish artist, William Bell Scott—a mural in Wallingford Hall, Northumberland—depicting a group of smiths from Stephenson's locomotive factory; and, in a more idyllic vein, John Brett's *The Stonebreaker*, now in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Work, Brown's masterpiece, represents a street in Hampstead, outside London, with workmen excavating, observed on the right by Thomas Carlyle and the Rev. F. D. Maurice, a leader of the Christian Socialist Movement. Around the navvy excavators are other workmen, one drinking, another carrying his tools. Looking on are a gentleman and a lady on horseback (the idle rich?), and a gentlewoman distributing tracts. A ragged flower-seller passes by in the left foreground and in the far right background a parade of sandwich-men advertises the candidacy of a politician called Bobus, described by Brown as follows: ". . . our old friend, 'the sausage-maker of Houndsditch' from *Past and Present*, having secured a colossal fortune (he boasts of it *now*), by anticipating the French Hippophage Society in the introduction of horse-flesh as a *cheap* article of human food, is at present going in for the county of Middlesex, and true to his old tactics, has hired all the idlers in the neighbourhood to carry his boards. There being one too many for the bearers, an old woman has volunteered to carry the one in excess."

The theme, according to Brown, is "*Work* as it now exists, with the British excavator for a central group, as the outward and visible type of *Work*." Carlyle and Maurice, he

said, "seeming to be idle, work, and are the cause of well-ordained work in others." (Bibl. no. 32, p. 23.)

Carlyle's bitter criticisms of the social system are at the basis of Brown's sermon. Maurice founded the Workingmen's College in 1854, which is advertised on the left side of the picture. For many years Brown taught drawing there.

The strains of the Industrial Revolution drove many to emigrate from Britain to the Colonies and to the United States. In 1852 one of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the sculptor Thomas Woolner, left for Australia to join the gold rush that was then at its height. Brown and others of the group went to the ship to see him off. *The Last of England* is the result. Brown himself, who always suffered from poverty, seriously considered at this time emigrating with his wife and child to India. The painting is an actual portrait of his wife and himself, with their child sheltered under its mother's cloak. Brown later wrote: "This picture is, in the strictest sense, historical. It treats of the great Emigration Movement which attained its culminating point in 1865. . . . I have, in order to present the parting scene in its fullest tragic development, singled out a couple from the middle classes, high enough through education and refinement to appreciate all that they are now giving up. . . . The husband broods bitterly over blighted hopes and severance from all that he has been striving for. . . . To insure the peculiar look of *light all round* which objects have on a dull day at sea, it was painted for the most part in the open air on dull days, and, when the flesh was being painted, on cold days. Absolutely without regard to the art of any period or country, I have tried to render this scene as it would appear. The minuteness of detail which would be visible under such conditions of broad daylight I have thought necessary to imitate as bringing the pathos of the subject home to the beholder." (Bibl. no. 32, p. 24.)

Brown: *Work*. 1852–65. Oil on canvas, 53 × 77⅛″. The City Art Gallery, Manchester

Brown: *The Last of England.* 1855. Oil on panel, 32½ × 29½". The City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

Hunt: *The Awakening Conscience.* 1853. Oil on canvas, 30⅛ × 22″. Collection Sir Colin Anderson, London

William Holman Hunt 1827-1910

Hunt was the plodding wheel-horse of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. The most literal exponent of the Brotherhood's tenet of exact truth to nature, he pursued his laborious way through a long life, continuing after the movement had fallen out of fashion. His history of it, *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, was published in 1905.

He entered the Royal Academy schools in 1844 and there met Millais and Rossetti. He was the most deeply religious of the Brotherhood, in a non-conformist evangelical sense, and this cast of mind and emotion motivates all his best-known paintings. There is a moral in all of them. *The Light of the World* became one of the most popular paintings during the Victorian period. The *Hireling Shepherd* is a commentary, as he said himself, on "muddle-headed pastors who instead of performing their services to their flock . . . discuss vain questions of no value to any human soul." *The Scapegoat* is a symbol of "the Church on Earth, subject to all the hatred of the unconverted world."

The Awakening Conscience was painted as a "material counterpart" to *The Light of the World* and when first exhibited was accompanied by two Bible texts, one from *Ecclesiastes* and one from *Isaiah*: "As of the green leaves on a thick tree, some fall and some grow; so is the generation of flesh and blood," and "Strengthen ye the feeble hands, and confirm ye the tottering knees; say to the faint hearted: be ye strong; fear ye not; behold your God."

The humorless self-righteousness of the evangelical puritan here reaches a height of fascinating absurdity. A kept mistress philandering with her paramour discovers the moral implications of her way of life and starts up, supposedly in horror, from her lover's knees. (Her face originally indicated horror, but the purchaser of the picture persuaded the painter to change her expression to the mysteriously vapid one she now wears.)

Hunt says the subject was inspired by a text in *Proverbs*, "As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart," expressing, he says, "the unintended stirring up of the deeps of pure affection by the idle sing-song of an empty mind [which] led me to see how the companion of the girl's fall might himself be the unconscious utterer of a divine message. . . . the woman recalling the memory of her childish home, and breaking away from the gilded cage with a startled holy resolve, while her shallow companion still sings on, ignorantly intensifying her repentant purpose." (Bibl. no. 32, pp. 28, 31.)

The song that stirred these memories is Thomas Moore's "The Light of Other Days," which begins, "Oft in the stilly night . . ." The scene of the picture is in broad daylight, however, with a sunlit garden reflected in a large tilted mirror in the background.

The frame (not illustrated) was designed by Hunt and is decorated with marigolds and ringing bells, emblems of sorrow and warning.

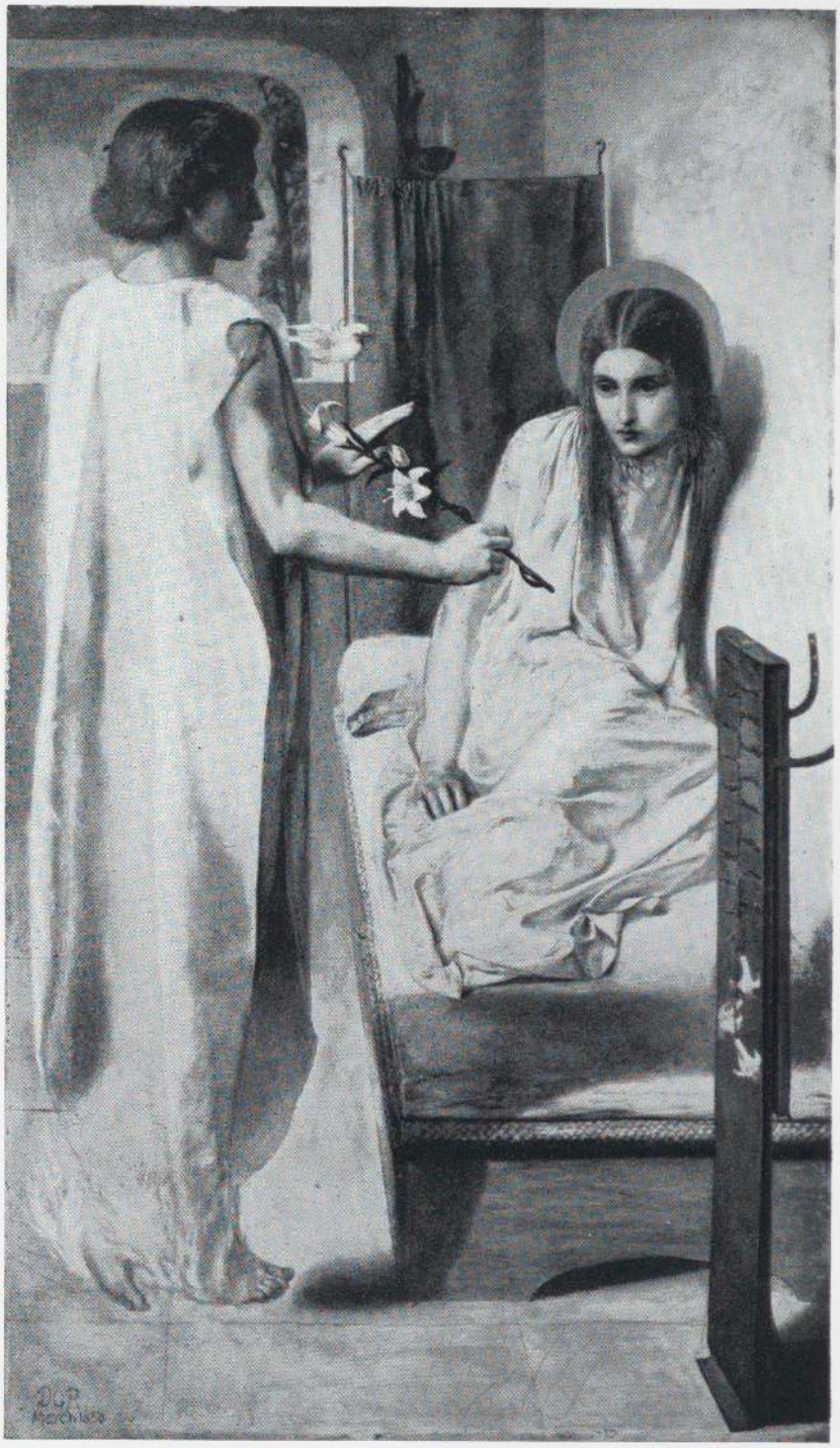
Dante Gabriel Rossetti 1828-1882

Born of Italian parents, Rossetti's father was forced to leave Naples because of his political activities, and was brought secretly to London by an English couple, where he became a teacher of Italian in the newly founded King's College. The revolutionary background of the father influenced his children, and particularly Dante Gabriel, who was to become the emotional driving-force behind the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Rossetti's poetic and religious fervor far exceeded his technical ability as an artist. From 1846 to 1848 he studied in the Royal Academy schools. In the latter year he took instruction from Ford Madox Brown and later shared a studio with Holman Hunt. Rossetti and Hunt met often for long discussions in the studio of their more well-to-do fellow pupil at the Academy schools, Millais, and there it seems they decided to form what was at first intended to be a secret association. The secret was not long kept and probably the voluble Rossetti never intended that it should be.

His most ambitious paintings were done at the beginning of his career: *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* in 1849 and *The Annunciation* (*Ecce Ancilla Domini*, as it was first called) in 1850. For the latter picture his sister, Christina, posed for the Virgin and his brother, William, for the angel. The youthful intensity of Rossetti's religious emotion was probably expressed at its purest pitch in *The Annunciation*. The primitive simplicity of the interior, the meticulous rendering of detail, the protagonists of the drama drawn from non-professional models —all are in the Pre-Raphaelite spirit of truthfulness to reality. But perhaps despite his best intentions to follow the teaching of Brown and the example of Hunt's literalism, Rossetti was unable to avoid investing his Virgin with a pose and expression that suggest sensuousness and neuroticism rather than spirituality. It is undoubtedly a hint of abnormality that appears all too frequently, and to an increasing degree, in Rossetti's later work and that has appealed to many surrealist painters in our own day.

His admiration for a certain type of overripe woman, bounteously blessed in body, long of throat, with an abundant head of hair—a richness of physical attributes denied by a languid, consumptive face—became his ideal for Dante's and his own Beatrice. It is the hothouse, inhibited eroticism of Rossetti's nature that, however much he tried to discipline it, leaves its imprint on *The Annunciation*, and in his later work is frankly undisguised.



Rossetti: *The Annunciation* (*Ecce Ancilla Domini*). 1850. Oil on canvas, mounted on panel, $28\frac{1}{2} \times 16\frac{1}{2}$″
The Tate Gallery, London

Sir John Everett Millais 1829-1896

It is by accident or force of circumstances that Millais became a Pre-Raphaelite. Like Lawrence in his technical facility and precociousness, and like him in his eventually enormous popular success, he was not by nature a rebel. He won prizes for his drawings as a child and was accepted as a pupil in the Royal Academy schools at the early age of eleven. Although a year younger than Rossetti and two years younger than Hunt, as an Academy pupil he was six years ahead of one, and four years ahead of the other. His good middle-class parents, well aware of their infant prodigy, were presumably disturbed when he chose to throw in his lot, at nineteen, with the Bohemian Rossetti and the poverty-stricken Hunt. But the well-trained youth found the fiery young poet Rossetti irresistible, and, converted to the Pre-Raphaelite doctrine, proceeded to paint some of the true masterpieces of the movement, at an executive pace that must have left the technically deficient Rossetti and the plodding Hunt gasping. By 1853 he was made an Associate of the Royal Academy. This mark of recognition from the citadel of conservatism—against which the Pre-Raphaelites had been fighting—and Millais' acceptance of it, was the first strong indication that the rebellion had run its course. Millais' election was undoubtedly one of the factors which led to the breakup of the Brotherhood.

Millais' decline as an artist thereafter was probably inevitable. His extraordinary technical facility and the well-mannered shallowness of his temperament made him the ideal painter of Victorian sentiment. His elevation to the Presidency of the Royal Academy was the final tribute to his surrender to popular taste.

Christ in the House of His Parents is an illustration of the scriptural text (which accompanied the title of the picture): "And one shall say unto him, 'What are these wounds in thine hands.' Then he shall answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'" An actual carpenter posed for the figure of St. Joseph. Millais' father, however, posed for the head of St. Joseph.

The violent critical reaction to this picture by contemporary writers, including Dickens, may be explained on two counts: those of a High Church persuasion, who preferred to have holy subjects idealized, were offended by the humble, every-day presentation of Christ in a carpenter's shop (the picture was derisively referred to as "The Carpenter's Shop"); and Low Churchmen and dissenters, at least those of a strong puritan cast, were traditionally suspicious of religious art, and while they probably sympathized with the detailed realism of an artisan's workshop, the subject must have seemed to them in doubtful taste. After all, another of the Pre-Raphaelites, Rossetti, with his *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* had exposed himself to a charge of Popery!

The Blind Girl, so tender in sentiment, is surely the purest and least sentimental of all Millais' canvases. The debasement of feeling in so much of his later work is made all the more poignant when one realizes from this picture what genuine gifts of observation and pictorial sensibility he had as a young man. The landscape in particular is the finest he

Millais: *Christ in the House of His Parents* (*The Carpenter's Shop*). 1850. Oil on canvas, $33\frac{1}{2} \times 54''$. The Tate Gallery, London

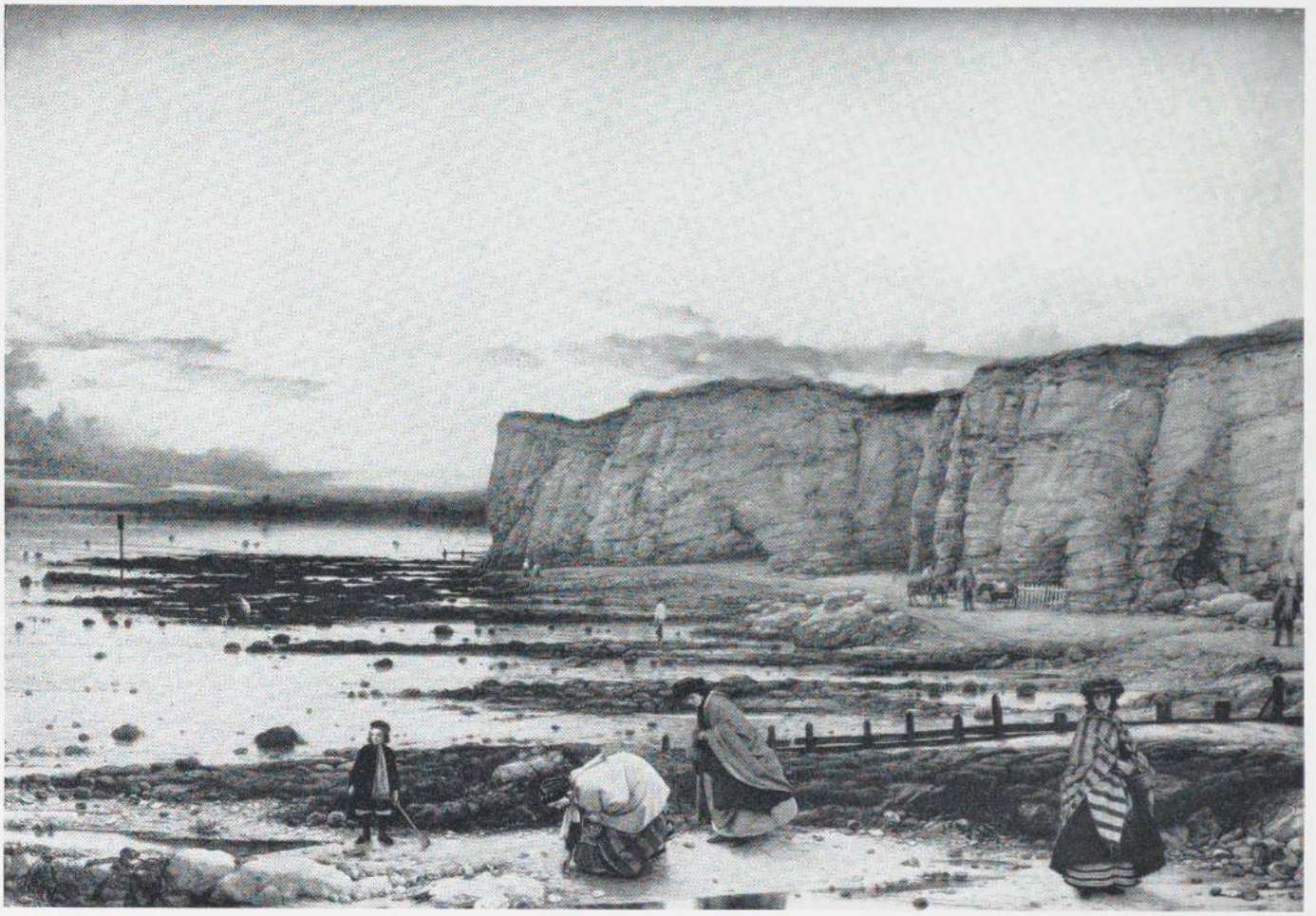
ever painted. Ruskin, in his *Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, has best described it: "The shower has been heavy, and is still so in the distance, where a bright double rainbow is relieved against the departing thundercloud. The freshly wet grass is all radiant through and through with the new sunshine; full moon at its purest, the very donkeys bathed in the raindew, and prismatic with it under their rough breasts as they graze; the weeds at the girl's side as bright as a Byzantine enamel, and inlaid with blue Veronica; her upturned face all aglow with the light that seeks its way through her wet eyelashes; a radiant butterfly has settled on her shoulder and basks there in the warm sun." (Bibl. no. 32, p. 41.)

Millais: *The Blind Girl*. 1856. Oil on canvas, $31\frac{3}{4} \times 21''$. The City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

William Dyce 1806-1864

Born in Aberdeen, Dyce trained first in the Academy schools in Edinburgh and later in London. Dissatisfied with the teaching in both places, he traveled extensively abroad and in the 1820s he was the first known British artist to come in contact with the German Nazarenes in Rome. His study of fresco painting in Italy led him to seek a revival of the art and he secured several government and church commissions on his return to England, first for the decoration of the House of Lords (*The Baptism of King Ethelbert*), and later for the Queen's Robing-room in the Houses of Parliament, the subject assigned to him being the legend of King Arthur. Executive difficulties with the latter commission, and consequent criticism, broke his health and perhaps his spirit and, unable to finish the work, he offered just before his death to return part of the money that had been paid him in advance.

Dyce seems to have known more in theory about fresco painting than he was capable of translating into practice and the resultant frustration embittered his life. The seascape *Pegwell Bay*, painted on the occasion of the appearance of Donati's comet in 1858, was finished in 1860. It shows Dyce strongly under Pre-Raphaelite influence in the minute exquisiteness of its drawing and the sharp, bright luminosity of its coloring. By associating the picture with the appearance of a comet, Dyce, rather artificially perhaps, fulfilled another Pre-Raphaelite requirement—subject interest rather than landscape for its own sake.



Dyce: *Pegwell Bay, Kent – a recollection of October 5th, 1858. c.*1859–60. Oil on canvas, $24\frac{3}{4} \times 35''$. The Tate Gallery, London

James Abbott McNeill Whistler 1834-1903

Whistler and Henry James are the two greatest American expatriates of the nineteenth century. Both were puritans who escaped from the harsh realities of a lusty, provincial, frontier-pushing new country. And both have a curiously effeminate streak in their natures that may help to explain their preference for the sophistication of life in the old world capitals of London and Paris.

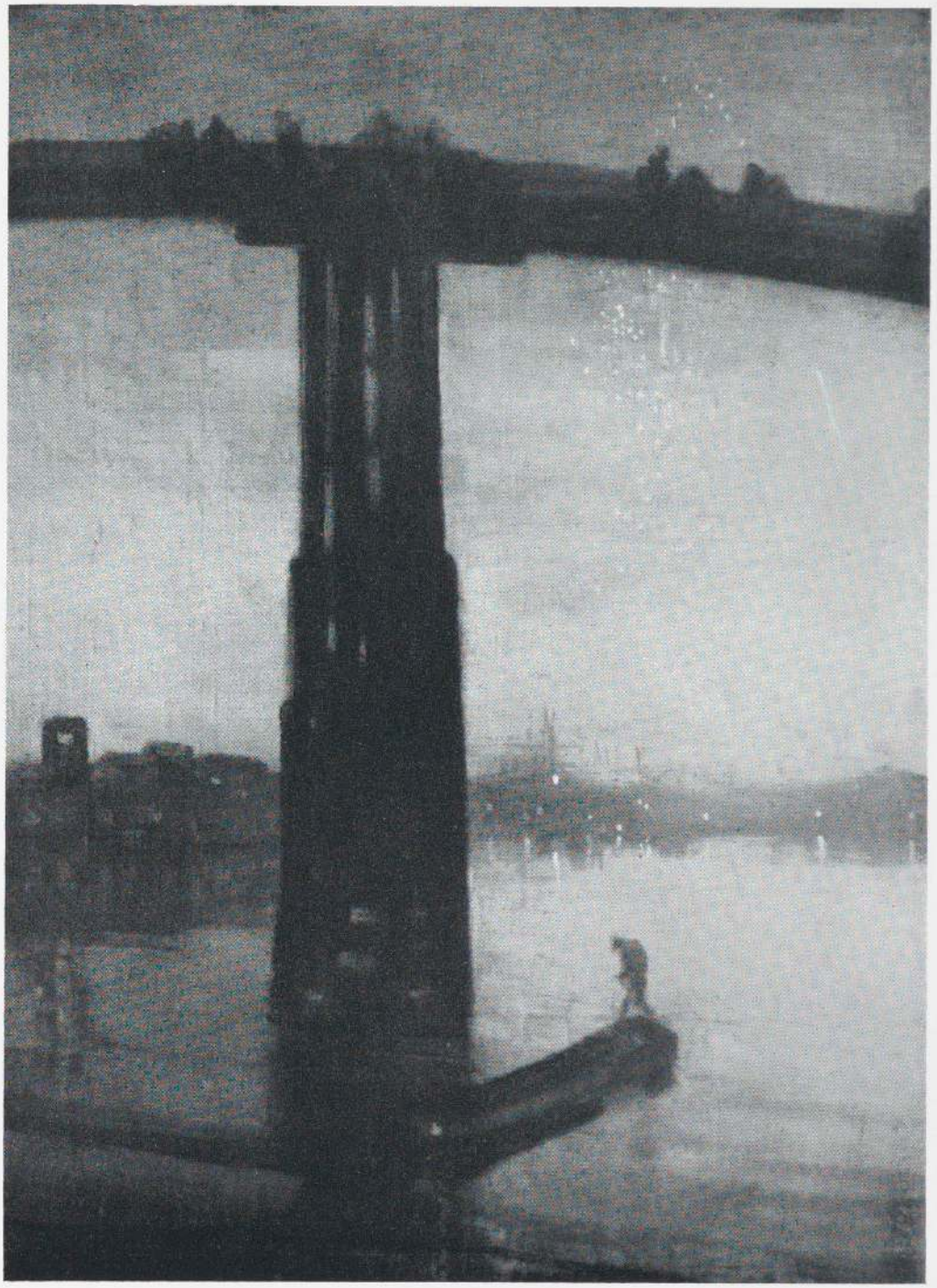
Whistler was taken abroad at an early age, first in 1845, to St. Petersburg, Russia, where he spent two years; then in 1848 to London where he lived for almost a year. In 1849 he was brought back to the United States. In 1851 he entered West Point Academy with the intention of following the career of his father, who was an army engineer. Whistler, a poor student, failed to get a commission.

From childhood he had shown a marked ability to draw, however, and in St. Petersburg had attended drawing classes at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts. He therefore secured a job as draftsman with the U.S. Coastal Survey. There, for the purpose of reproducing charts and maps, he learned the technique of etching, an art which he brought to a high pitch of refinement in later life. However, the monotony of a government office was not for him and in 1855, at the age of twenty-one, with some small financial support from his family, he left for Paris to study art. He never returned to the United States.

As an individual, Whistler's weaknesses were many and obvious. He was a puritan, a Celt and a romantic southerner, all in one. He was early projected into a cosmopolitan world and never really could identify himself with any one country—the United States, Russia, France, or even England, where he spent over forty years of his life and where he died. He was, in effect, a professional expatriate and, lacking any real national identity, he became self-centered to an extraordinary degree.

He came to London in 1859 when Victorian anecdotal painting had begun to sink to ridiculous depths of sentimentality, and he attempted to turn the tide by the sheer force of his wit and example. As a one-man revolution he was more successful than he was ever willing to admit, and dissipated much valuable time and energy in an increasing campaign of self-advertisement and in the cultivation of enemies. "You behave," said Degas to him, "as if you had no talent."

He was at first attracted to Rossetti, as a person and as a rebel and for a short time may have responded to his influence; but only to a minor degree and never did he accept Pre-Raphaelite principles of painting. An admirer of Courbet and Fantin-Latour, who influenced him in his student days in Paris, he had probably some sympathy, in theory, for one tenet of the Pre-Raphaelite faith—truth to nature. But Courbet's and Whistler's ideas of truth were fundamentally different from those of the Brotherhood. The latter saw nature with a magnifying glass, inch by inch. The labored accuracy of their drawing and their determined preoccupation with local color are in direct opposition to the atmospheric realism of the French school of realists, with which Whistler associated himself. With



Whistler: *Old Battersea Bridge: Nocturne in blue and gold.* 1877. Oil on canvas, $26\frac{1}{4} \times 19\frac{3}{4}''$. The Tate Gallery, London

reference to subject matter the two schools were also completely opposed. The English believed in moral uplift; the French in looking at the world as it is, and preferably, given Courbet's socialist sympathies, at the lowly life and environment of peasant and artisan. Ford Madox Brown in England comes closest to Courbet's subject interests but even he, as we have seen, could not resist injecting a moral or a story into his pictures.

Whistler brought one more revolutionary interest to England—Japanese art. He was in Paris when Braquemond, the French artist, discovered the Japanese color print, and together with many others, was fascinated by it. Whistler brought this new enthusiasm to England and was instrumental in starting the craze there for *japonerie*, which was to play an important part in the Aesthetic Movement of the last quarter of the century. At first even Japanese accessories appealed to him strongly, and he collected porcelain and screens and introduced them into his paintings.

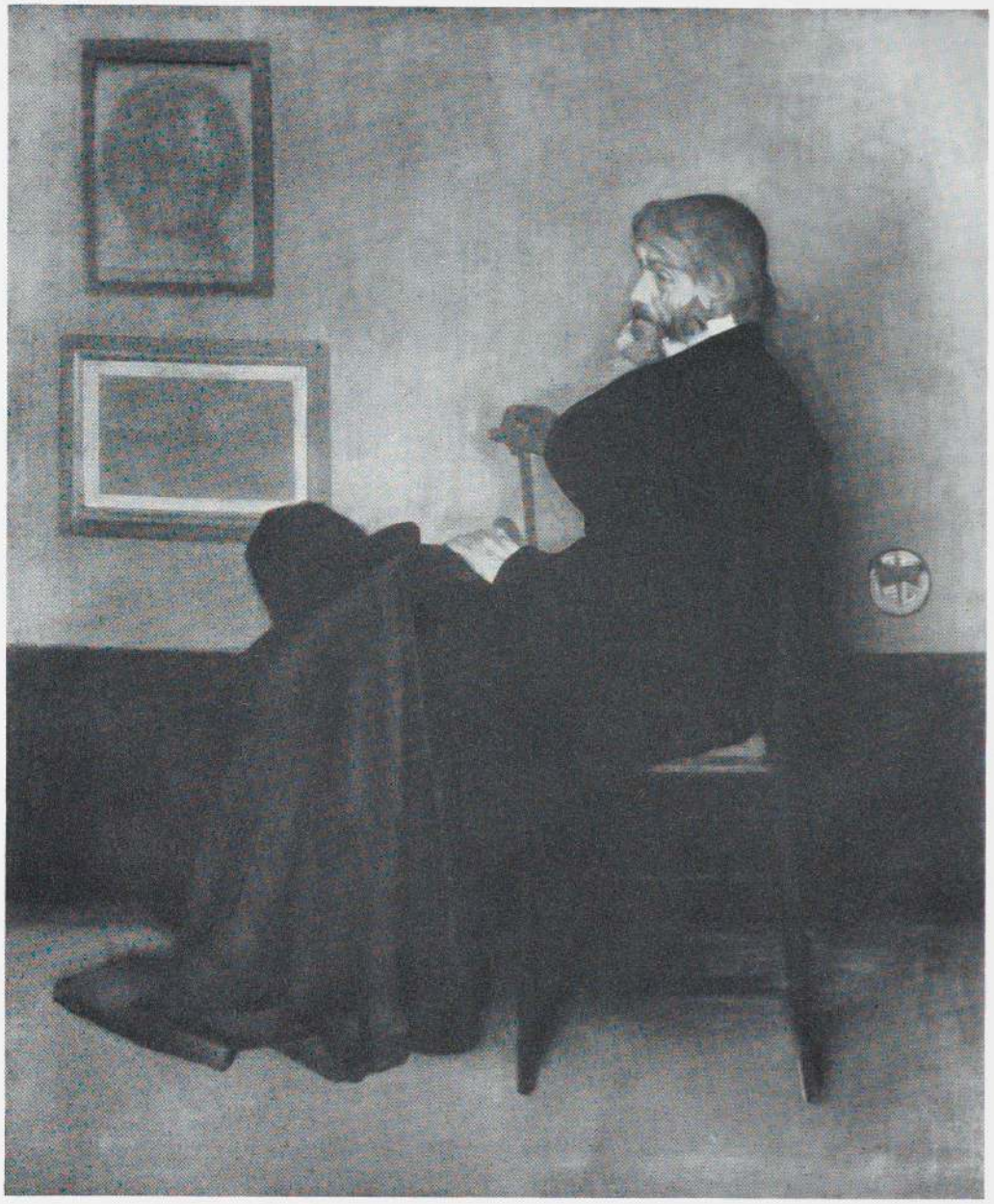
From two sources, then, his "arrangements," "symphonies" and "nocturnes" can be traced. His un-idealized views of the Thames—his choice of stretches of river which previous to him had not been considered picturesque—derive from the naturalism of Courbet; the reduced range of tonal values, their exquisite balance, a limited but subtle palette, the simplification of background, the predominance of the silhouette and the abstraction of detail, are all characteristics of the Japanese color print which Whistler adapted to his own needs.

The drastic exclusion of all literary associations and his insistence that painting was first of all a thing of color, form and design were the most important shocks which Whistler applied to Victorian taste. The great arbiter of this taste, Ruskin, was understandably outraged, and in his charge that Whistler was "flinging a pot of paint in the public's face," joined battle with him and the result was, in 1878, the most famous court case on an artistic issue in modern history. Whistler had sued Ruskin for libel and, technically, won the case, but was given only one farthing damages.

During the course of the trial one of Whistler's pictures which came under discussion was his *Old Battersea Bridge*. The judge questioned whether it was a correct representation of the bridge. Whistler assured him it was not; that it was simply a moonlight scene. He was again asked whether the shapes on top of the bridge were supposed to represent people and he assured the judge that: "They are just what you like." In short, Whistler's contention was that the subject matter of a painting was immaterial, that exact representation of actuality had nothing to do with painting as an art, and, by implication, that the artist alone was the judge of his artistic intentions. Here in essence we have expressed, of course, the main principles of much modern art. That they sounded radical to Victorian ears is hardly surprising. While they are now accepted as truisms by many modern artists, they are still unacceptable, because incomprehensible, to a majority of the public today.

That Whistler carried his pictorial ideas even into portraiture, an art that has always

Whistler: *Nocturne in Blue and Green. c.*1877? Oil on canvas, $19 \times 23\frac{1}{2}''$. Collection the Misses Alexander, London

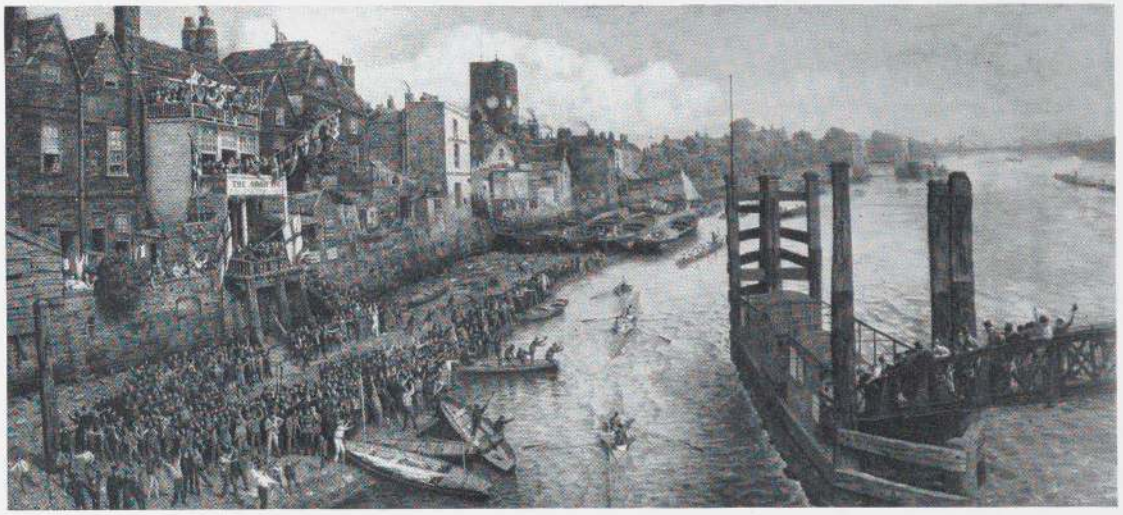


Whistler: *Portrait of Thomas Carlyle: Arrangement in grey and black, II.* 1872. Oil on canvas, 67 × 56″. Glasgow Museums and Art Galleries

had to confine itself in some degree to the representation of an actual sitter, is a measure of his integrity as an artist. Even the famous portrait of his mother is first of all, as he called it, an *Arrangement in Grey and Black*. And the *Carlyle* he called *Arrangement in Grey and Black, II*. Of the first he said: "To me it is interesting as a picture of my mother; but what can the public care about the identity of the portrait." The public probably cared about the identity of Carlyle but Whistler refused to gratify primarily such an interest. He chose to paint the irascible Scot as a gentle old man and as a compositional pendant to his *Mother*. Both are "arrangements" of tones and undulating profiles against a background of severely simplified verticals and horizontals. From Whistler's point of view, it is no doubt ironic that the *Mother* has become one of the most popular and best-known paintings in the Western World, because of its appeal to a sentimental concept of motherhood and to its tender representation of gracious old age. But the fact that the *Carlyle*, a picture as well designed and as well painted as the *Mother*, is not as well-known nor as popular, is significant. Except, for obvious reasons, in Glasgow (whose Town Council was courageous enough to buy it as early as 1888, when Whistler was still a most controversial painter), the *Carlyle* is not a subject for sentimental worship and must be enjoyed as it was intended to be, as a picture. Likeness, dignified old age, or any other suggestive or emotive content the picture may have are of minor significance. Consequently, it may be looked at for itself and is free from that odor of banality which unfortunately the *Mother*, through no pictorial fault, has acquired.

Walter Greaves 1846-1930

The son of a Thames boat-builder, Greaves is perhaps the best primitive painter England has produced. His father had known Turner, having rowed him on the Thames when Turner lived incognito in Chelsea. In Chelsea, too, Walter, in his turn, rowed Whistler as he collected material for his "nocturnes" and "arrangements" of misty or night-enshrouded riverscapes. Greaves and his brother had painted the river before they met Whistler and after meeting him Walter became so devoted to the master he was inevitably influenced by him. For a period his etchings and paintings are perhaps no more than humble echoes of his teacher. But despite his devotion he retained an independence of observation and execution that are at their best in such pictures as the *Hammersmith Bridge* in the Tate Gallery, and the lesser-known *Chelsea Regatta*. Greaves has said: "I lost my head over Whistler when I first met him and saw his painting. Before that my brother and I had painted grey, and filled our pictures with numerous details. But Whistler taught us the use of blue and made us leave out detail. At first I could only try to copy him, but later I felt a longing for my own style, and something more my own did come back." (Bibl. no. 26, p. 127.) *Chelsea Regatta* is in Greaves' own style, a view of the river at once astonishingly detailed, unconventional in perspective, full of the instinctive knowledge that comes only to a professional boatman, and as a picture is completely fresh in concept and feeling.



Greaves: *Chelsea Regatta*. Oil on canvas, $35\frac{3}{8} \times 75''$. The City Art Gallery, Manchester

William McTaggart 1835-1910

McTaggart is the most original painter Scotland produced in the nineteenth century. He was a product of the Trustees' Academy, Edinburgh, whose head at the time was Scott Lauder, the portrait painter—a teacher who inspired a number of painters who later became known as the Scott Lauder Group. It included, among others, Orchardson, Hugh Cameron, and Chalmers. McTaggart, however, is the most inventive, and his impressionist depiction of outdoor light and air, while concurrent with Monet's and the French impressionists', is a discovery that seems to have owed nothing to their example and was completely personal in its development. He began painting in watercolor with a Pre-Raphaelite precision but by 1875 (before he had seen any French impressionist pictures, it is believed) had found his own impressionist technique and thereafter painted the Scottish landscape and coast with a penetrating understanding of local effects of light and atmosphere. He had one weakness, an inheritance from the anecdotal painting of his student days, and that was a rather sentimental penchant for introducing picturesque "wee bairns" into his pictures to give them some popular appeal. *Young Fishers* is an example, although less sentimental than most. *The Storm* is in many ways his most ambitious and best-integrated treatment of the elemental forces of wind and water, with figurative detail taking an unsentimental and uninsistent place in the whole.

The members of the so-called Glasgow School of painters, founded in the 1880s, and with which McTaggart had an unofficial connection, never rose to his original power and breadth of vision.

McTaggart: *The Young Fishers*. 1876. Oil on canvas, 28 × 42½". The National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh

McTaggart: *The Storm*. 1883. Oil on canvas, $34\frac{1}{2} \times 54''$. The Museum and Art Gallery, Kirkcaldy

Sickert: *Cicely Hay*. *c*.1917–18. Oil on canvas, 34 × 39″. The British Council, London

Walter Richard Sickert 1860-1942

If McTaggart's impressionist discoveries were personal, they were made nevertheless at a time when Whistler's emphasis on tonal values and impressionist light and atmosphere were causing a rebellious split between Academy artists and younger painters whose eyes began to turn to Paris for teaching and inspiration. Whistler's part in this revolt should never be underestimated. A few English artists were actually studying in Paris when he was a student—Du Maurier, Poynter and Armstrong were his friends there—but they seem to have preferred to keep to themselves, as an English colony, rather than make contact, as Whistler did, with the advanced painting of the French capital. By 1885, however, when the New English Art Club was founded (in opposition to the restrictive exhibition practices of the Royal Academy), a sufficient number of English and Scottish painters had either studied in Paris, or felt the fair impressionist wind from France to form a sizable group of rebels. Some of these were in Whistler's wake. Sickert became Whistler's devoted pupil for a time, although as with all pupils and friends, there came a day of violent parting when the master found his courtier insufficiently worshipful.

"I am," said Sickert, "a pupil of Whistler—that is to say, at one remove, of Courbet, and, at two removes, of Corot. About six or seven years ago [written in 1910], under the influence in France of Pissarro, himself a pupil of Corot, aided in England by Lucien Pissarro and by Gore (the latter a pupil of Steer, who in turn learned much from Monet), I have tried to recast my painting entirely and to observe colour in the shadows."(Bibl. no. 51, p. 41.)

Sickert went to Paris first in 1883, at the age of twenty-three, to take Whistler's *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* for exhibition in the *Salon*, and later came to know and was strongly influenced by Degas. He was born in Munich and brought to England at the age of eight. His father, a painter, was of Danish descent and his mother was English. He studied briefly at the Slade School in London, became Whistler's pupil and thereafter was self-taught. This self-teaching produced a wide and profound knowledge of the theory and technique of painting and made him probably the most learned and certainly the most accomplished English painter of his generation, if not of the twentieth century.

He was given a good classical education at King's College, London, reading Latin and Greek for pleasure all his life. After graduation he spent three years as an actor on the stage and a love of the theater (*The Old Bedford* and *The New Bedford*) remained with him. Even in his own person he enjoyed changes of "character" and dress with a histrionic gusto that recalled his earlier days on the boards. This feeling for the theater must also have been one of the first things that attracted him to Degas, that master of the drama of artificial light and movement.

From 1900 to 1905 Sickert lived in Dieppe. Thereafter he lived in Camden Town in north London and became a founder of the so-called Camden Town Group* in 1911, the

* *The original Camden Town members included, besides Sickert, Charles Ginner, Augustus John, Wyndham Lewis, Lucien Pissarro, Harold Gilman and Spencer Gore.*

Sickert: *The Old Bedford. c.*1890. Oil on canvas, 29 × 24½″. The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool

RIGHT: Sickert: *The New Bedford. c.*1906–07. Oil on canvas, 36 × 14″. Collection Dr. Robert Emmons, Southampton

Sickert: *Ennui*. *c*.1913. Oil on canvas, 60 × 44″. The Tate Gallery, London

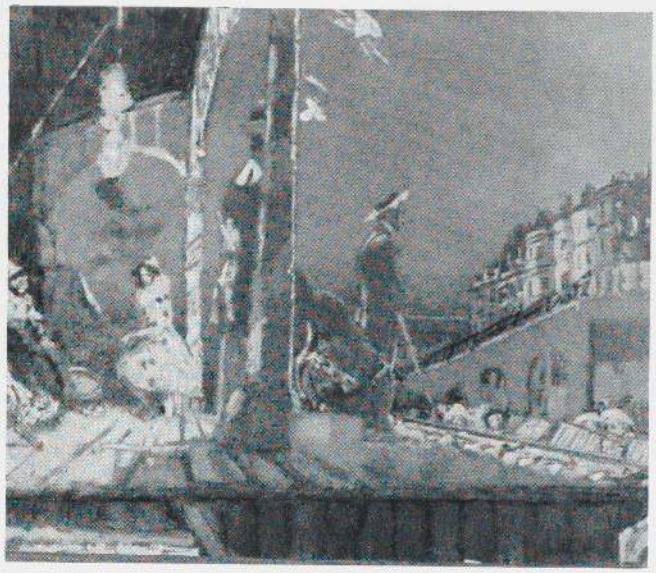
English *avant garde* of the day, which later, during World War I, merged into the London Group. From 1916 to 1919 Sickert lived in Bath and after 1938 spent his declining years there. He visited Venice frequently but, all in all, Camden Town was his favorite residence and there he produced his best work.

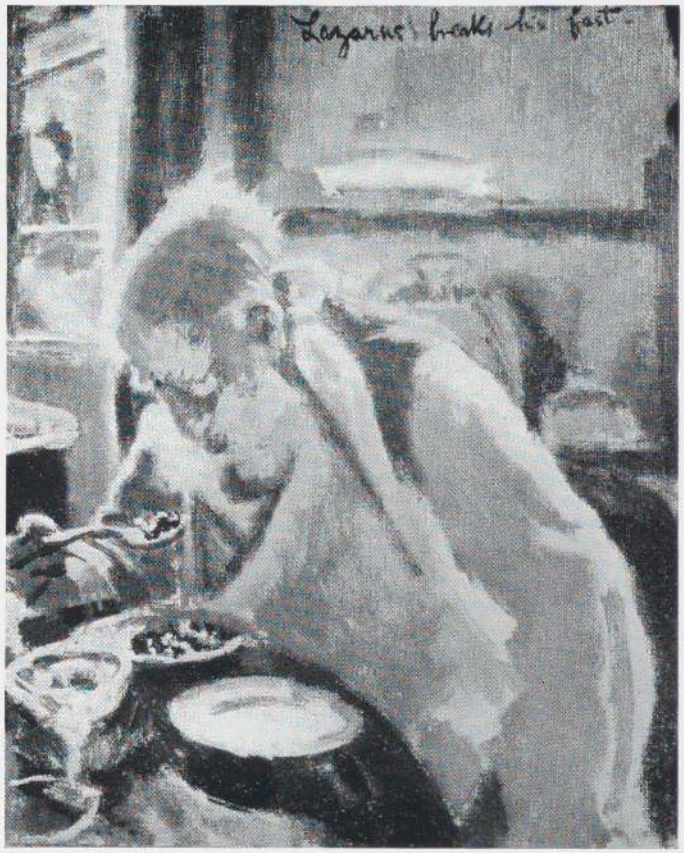
Camden Town is a run-down, shabby district of London and there Sickert found the low-life scenes he preferred to paint, in opposition to the genteel interiors of fashionable Academy pictures. Whistler had painted the unfashionable stretches of the Thames. Sickert and his companions in their revolt against authority chose also to see beauty in working-class homes and rooms such as in *Cicely Hay* and, the best-known of all his Camden Town paintings, *Ennui*. The first, in the close-up, cut-off view of the figure and the iron bedstead, clearly derives from Degas' practice of framing a scene as in a snap-shot camera study. The quality of instantaneous vision thus achieved is arrested and solidified in Sickert's pictures by an intensely ordered manipulation of tonal values in an unusually low and subtle key. In *Ennui* there is added to these Degas-like features a Whistlerian simplicity of background and in the pose of the figures in relation to the stark, picture-decorated wall, one is reminded of Whistler's *Mother* and his *Carlyle*.

While these origins of Sickert's art are obvious, their importance should not be exaggerated. His own contribution is sufficiently distinctive to set him apart as a master in his own right. His command of tonal values is perhaps greater than Whistler's, and much less "tasteful." He has a sense of formal structure that Whistler lacked and while it does not exceed Degas', it has an earthy quality, perhaps one might say a stubborn insular directness, that is quite different from Degas' more refined observation.

After the shock of Roger Fry's 1910 and 1912 Grafton Gallery exhibitions of post-impressionists such as van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne, Matisse and Picasso (which had somewhat the same impact on artists and critics as did the Armory Show of 1913 in New York), there was an inevitable split among English artists. Staid academicians were horrified. Most of the old *avant garde*, the members of the New English Art Club who had originally revolted under the banner of impressionism, were unsympathetic to the new revolution. A few, however, of the Camden Town Group (for example Wyndham Lewis and Spencer Gore) did exhibit in Fry's 1912 exhibition and thus declared their wholehearted or partial loyalty to the new prophets from France. Sickert, like Whistler, preferred to lead the young rather than be led by them. And while at first he associated himself with the new movement, and reacted to it by increasing and heightening the range of his palette and by an application of paint in brick-like patches, *à la Cézanne*, his conversion was anything but complete. He was perhaps now too old to make radical changes of outlook. Eventually he broke with the movement and followed his individual way in increasing isolation from groups or new artistic theories.

In later life he became more and more of a recluse, and in such a picture as *The Raising of Lazarus* (he thought of himself as Lazarus), his independent, eccentric vision expresses itself with a mysterious power. *Sir Thomas Beecham Conducting*, another late picture, is finally one more striking testimony to his love of the stage and his ability to seize and to project the dramatic pose of a great conductor.



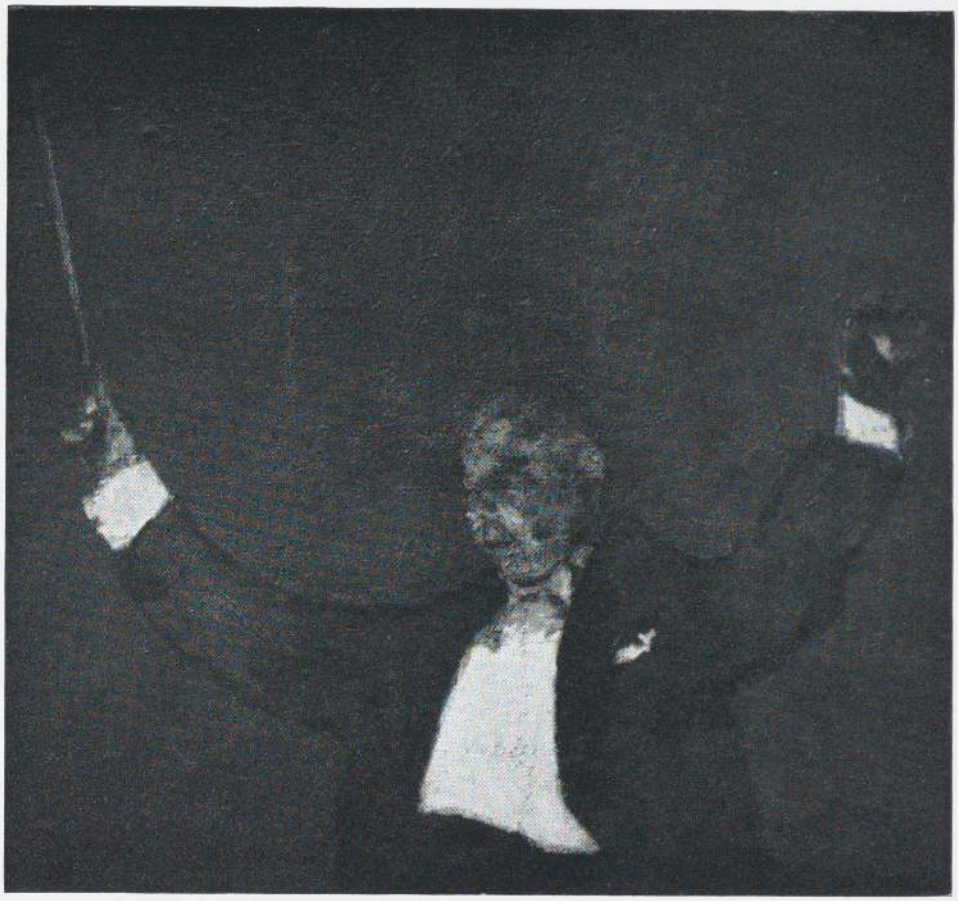


ABOVE: Sickert: *Brighton Pierrots*. 1915. Oil on canvas, $24\frac{1}{2} \times 29\frac{1}{2}''$. Collection Morton Sands, London

Sickert: *Lazarus Breaks his Fast*. *c.*1927. Oil on canvas, $30 \times 25''$. The Adams Gallery, London

Sickert: *Girl on Steps*. *c.*1934–38. Oil on canvas, 22 × 18″. Collection H.E. Sir Roger Makins, Washington, D.C.

LEFT: Sickert: *The Raising of Lazarus*. 1928–29. Oil on canvas, 96 × 36″. The National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Felton Bequest



Sickert: *Sir Thomas Beecham Conducting*. *c.*1935. Oil on canvas, $38\frac{3}{4} \times 41''$. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, A. Conger Goodyear Fund

Philip Wilson Steer 1860-1942

Like Sickert, Steer was at first influenced by Whistler and through him—and by study in Paris at Julian's and the École des Beaux-Arts—by the French impressionists. Latterly he came to admire Gainsborough, Boucher, Turner and, above all, Constable. His first impressionist phase is seen at its best in his vibrant, delightful *Girls Running: Walberswick Pier*, of 1894. His later return to the light-drenched, freely-brushed sketches of Constable is well expressed in the *Landscape* from the Ronald Tree collection.

The diversity of Steer's sources as a painter is both his strength and his weakness, particularly in his later years when the comparison with Constable, which many of his landscapes demand, is not always to their advantage. They leave one too often with a feeling that they are pastiches on a great tradition and not sufficiently dependent upon personal observation of effects of form, light and air to be great landscapes in their own right. Steer's impressionist landscapes of the 1890s, on the other hand, have a youthful freshness and, one feels, a strong element of personal observation behind them. However much it may owe to a current enthusiasm for outdoor light and an impressionist technique to catch and hold it on the canvas, such a picture as the *Girls Running: Walberswick Pier*

Steer: *Landscape*. 1906. Oil on canvas, $20 \times 24\frac{1}{8}''$. Collection Ronald Tree, New York

has a lyrical sparkle combined with a surrealist, dream-like quality in the long shadows and the running girls that gives it distinction above and beyond its impressionist origins.

Steer was a foundation member of the New English Art Club in 1886 and exhibited there all his life. Like Whistler he lived in Chelsea, but unlike him painted various parts of England during the summer, mainly in Yorkshire, the Cotswolds, the West Country and the sea coasts on the south and east. He taught painting at the Slade School from 1893 to 1930.

Steer: *Girls Running: Walberswick Pier*. 1894. Oil on canvas, 24½ × 36½″. The Tate Gallery, London

Augustus Edwin John *born* 1878

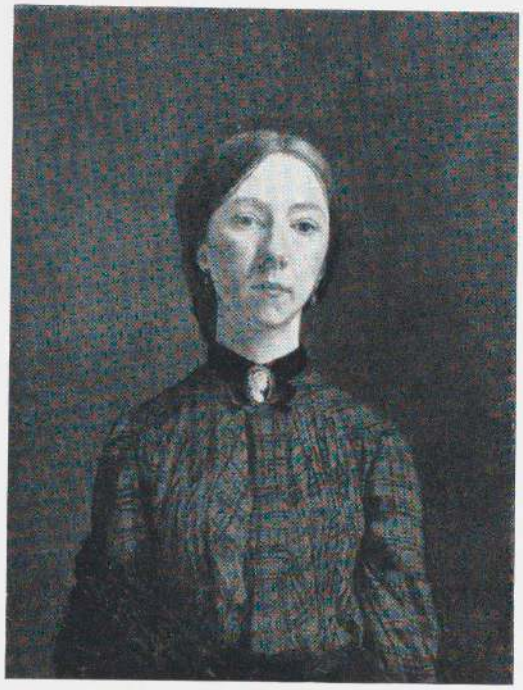
Since the early nineteenth century the commissioned portrait has been in a state of decline. The Romantic movement and all other rebel movements since have resisted the constrictions on artistic freedom which the official or commissioned, as distinct from the personal or intimate, portrait has demanded. The requirements of the commissioned sitter, that he be flattered, idealized or ennobled, and that the artist ignores these requirements at his peril, have been unacceptable to all those of an independent mind.

Augustus John is one of the very few painters of his generation who has occasionally, though not often, succeeded in escaping from the deadening effects of the artist-sitter relationship. Born in Wales and a product of the Slade School, he was a brilliant draftsman as a student, and he has drawn with perhaps too easy facility all his life. He is a Celt with an almost eccentric passion for gypsies, symbols to him of the joys of freedom of movement and independence of character. And he has painted the gypsies and country folk of his native Wales with a romantic, sentimental eye. It is, at first, paradoxical that an escapist of John's flamboyant nature should have bound himself to portraiture and that he became, between the wars, the most fashionable portrait painter of his day. His romantic approach to the sitter, however, and his ability to choose striking or famous subjects for his brush has raised his production, at its best, above the dull level of academic face-painting. But this same romanticism, lacking the disciplinary power of a great master, has too often resulted in bravura performances, where the effort has been to catch a striking effect of pose or expression in the head, while the rest of the body, if painted at all, has shown a falling-off in interest, as if the artist were unable to sustain the full passion of his original attack on the subject. The *Portrait of the German Foreign Minister, Dr. Gustav Stresemann* (winner, despite his belligerent expression, of the Nobel Peace Prize), is one of the best examples in John's work of his strength of characterization in the head, and the summary, enfeebled treatment of the hands and the rest of the figure. In the *Dylan Thomas*, a fellow Welshman, John has caught the full dramatic spirit of the young poet.

Augustus John: *Portrait of Dylan Thomas. c.*1936. Oil on canvas, $16 \times 13\frac{1}{2}''$. The National Museum of Wales, Cardiff

Augustus John: *Portrait of the German Foreign Minister, Dr. Gustav Stresemann. c.*1924. Oil on canvas, $43 \times 31''$. Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo

Gwen John 1876-1939



Gwen John: *Self Portrait. c.*1900. Oil on canvas, $17\frac{5}{8} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$". The Tate Gallery, London

In tenderness and intensity of spirit, Gwen John may be compared with her contemporary in letters, Katherine Mansfield. The sister of Augustus, she was retiring, while he is flamboyant; she painted on a small scale with great deliberation and infinite delicacy, while he exhausts himself quickly in brilliant improvisations.

Her life was spent in self-imposed obscurity, mostly in France. She studied at the Slade School, then went to Whistler's short-lived school in Paris. She was a devoted admirer of Whistler and later formed an intimate friendship with Rodin. She was also a friend of the German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, and of Jacques Maritain. She was deeply religious and in later life joined the Catholic church. In many respects, in fact, she was like a nun all her life, a nun in retreat, with painting her outlet for spiritual contemplation and expression. Her art, with all its delicacy and femininity, has power and conviction and it is surely this mysterious mixture of grace and strength that makes it so arresting. She seldom exhibited during her lifetime and it is only since her death that her work has begun to be fully appreciated.

Gwen John: *Mère Poussepin.* Oil on canvas, 26 × 19″. The Art Gallery, Southampton

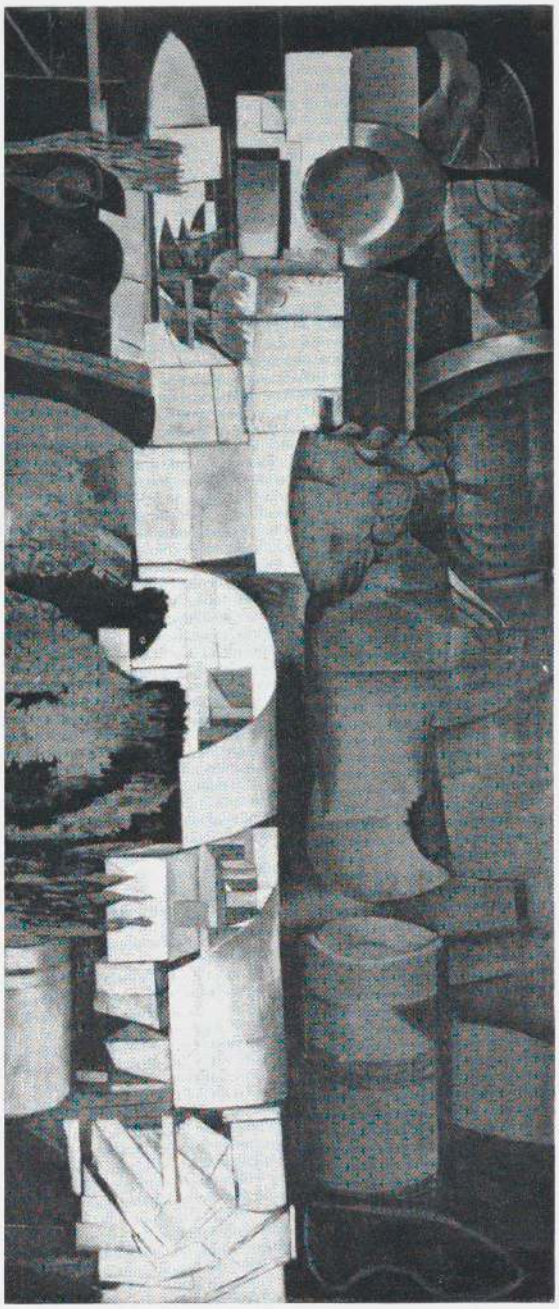
Percy Wyndham Lewis *born c.*1884

Born of British parents in 1884 or 1882 in Nova Scotia or in the U.S.A. (reports differ as to year and country), Lewis was educated in England and studied at the Slade School, 1899–1901. From 1902 to 1908 he traveled extensively on the Continent, had a studio in Paris and attended the Heimann Academy in Munich for six months. No work from this period of travel and foreign study seems to have survived. He returned to England in 1909 and in 1911 became a member of the Camden Town Group. He worked briefly with Roger Fry in 1913 on a decorative-arts project Fry had initiated, called the Omega Workshops. He soon broke violently with Fry. In 1912 he exhibited in the second Grafton Galleries post-impressionist exhibition and in that year made his first Vorticist drawings. In 1914 he launched the Vorticist movement publicly, formed the Rebel Art Centre in opposition to the Omega Workshops and published the magazine *Blast*, intended as the mouthpiece for his art theories. The magazine was discontinued after two issues. In 1915 the first, and only, Vorticist exhibition was held at the Doré Gallery in London, and included work by Gaudier-Brzeska, William Roberts, Edward Wadsworth and, by invitation, Duncan Grant and C. R. W. Nevinson. "By Vorticism," a statement by Lewis in the catalogue announced, "we mean (a) ACTIVITY as opposed to the tasteful Passivity of Picasso; (b) SIGNIFICANCE as opposed to the dull or anecdotal character to which the Naturalist is condemned; (c) ESSENTIAL MOVEMENT and ACTIVITY (such as the energy of a mind) as opposed to the imitative cinematography, the fuss and hysterics of the Futurists."

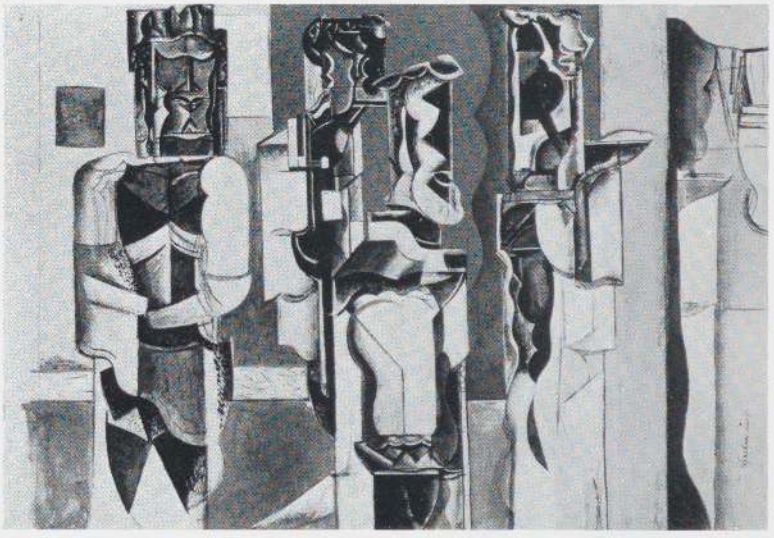
Despite this blast at the Futurists, Lewis's Vorticism certainly owes something to their worship of movement and the machine (Lewis later wrote, " 'Vorticism' accepted the machine-world: that is the point to stress. It sought out machine-forms." (Bibl. no. 76, p. 78.) The term Vorticism derives, of course, from "vortex" which, by dictionary definition, is a "whirlpool; whirlwind; whirling motion or mass; a system that swallows up those who approach it."

As a movement, Vorticism lasted only until 1915. In that year Lewis joined the army as an artilleryman and from 1917–18 was made an official war artist to the Canadian Corps Headquarters. He returned to civilian life in 1919 and held an exhibition of war subjects which he entitled "Guns."

Throughout his life Lewis has probably devoted more time to writing—criticism, pamphleteering, novels—than to painting, but despite his enormous activity as author he has produced a significant number of canvases. Much of his early Vorticist work is in the form of drawings or has been lost or destroyed. His most active period, so far as existing work



LEFT: Lewis: *Bagdad*. 1927. Oil on plywood, 72 × 31″. The Zwemmer Gallery, London



Lewis: *Roman Actors*. 1934. Watercolor, gouache, ink, $15\frac{1}{8} \times 21\frac{1}{4}$″. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Francis E. Brennan Fund

goes, was in the late '20s and the '30s and the three paintings reproduced all date from this time. The *Bagdad*, 1927 and *Roman Actors*, 1934 are typical of his totemic, mechanized treatment of the human figure—hieratic and mysterious in its connotations of a robot-driven civilization. In the '30s he produced a number of portraits of distinguished people, including Edith Sitwell, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. The *Pound* portrait is one of his best and exemplifies the hard, cold power of his draftsmanship and his ability, within the confines of severe stylization of form, to create a biting characterization of the poet.

Lewis lost his sight in 1951. He has continued writing and recently completed his novel-trilogy entitled *The Human Age*.

Lewis: *Ezra Pound*. 1938–39. Oil on canvas, 30 × 40″. The Tate Gallery, London

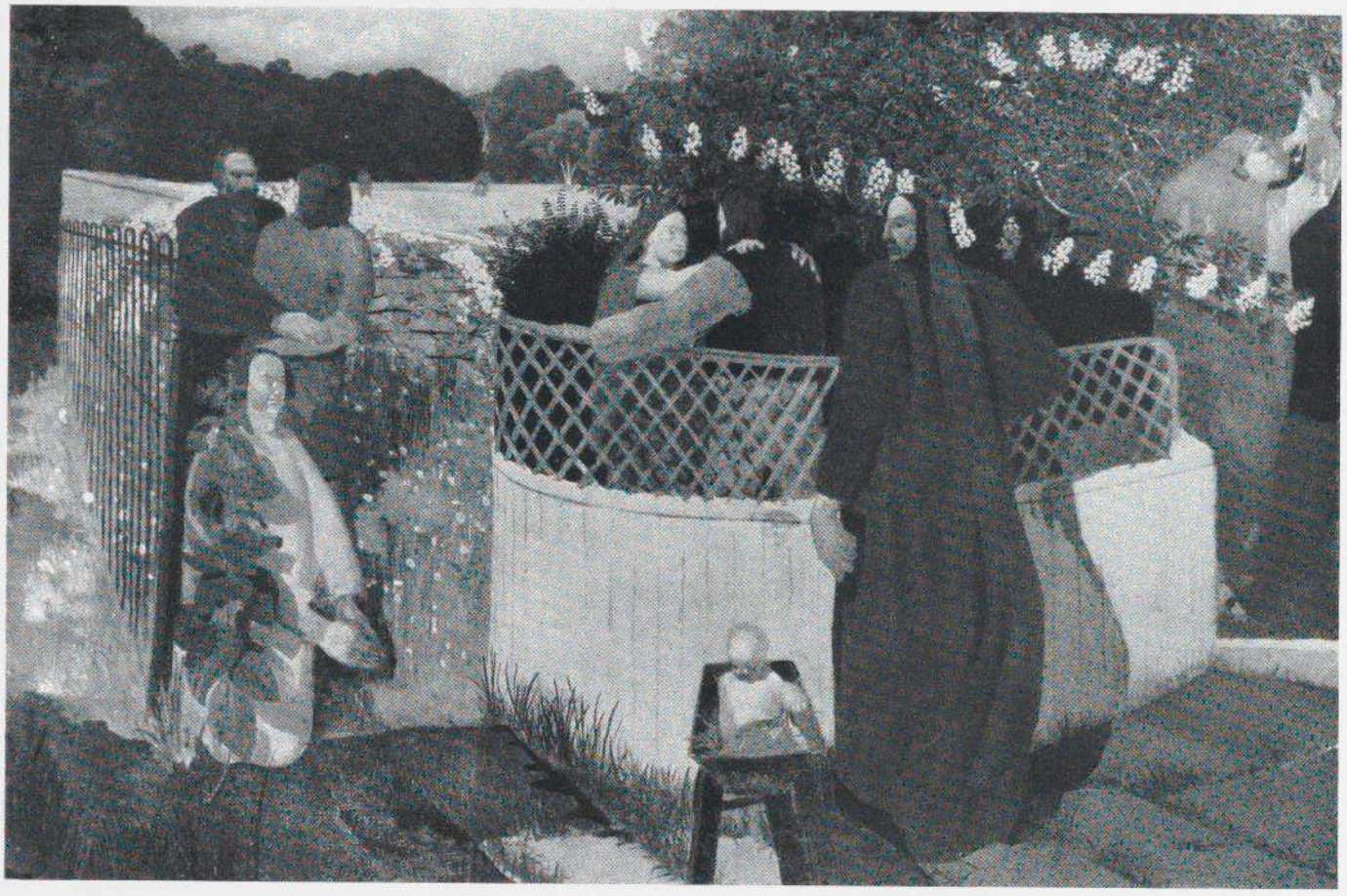
Stanley Spencer *born* 1891

The main thing Spencer and Lewis have in common is their firm adherence to drawing as the basic means of expression. This devotion to line is English and as a tradition it is as old as Anglo-Saxon manuscript illumination. The Slade School, where both were students, has stressed the importance of drawing ever since its founding in 1871, although it should be noted that the first two directors of the school were the Paris-trained Poynter and the Frenchman, Legros.

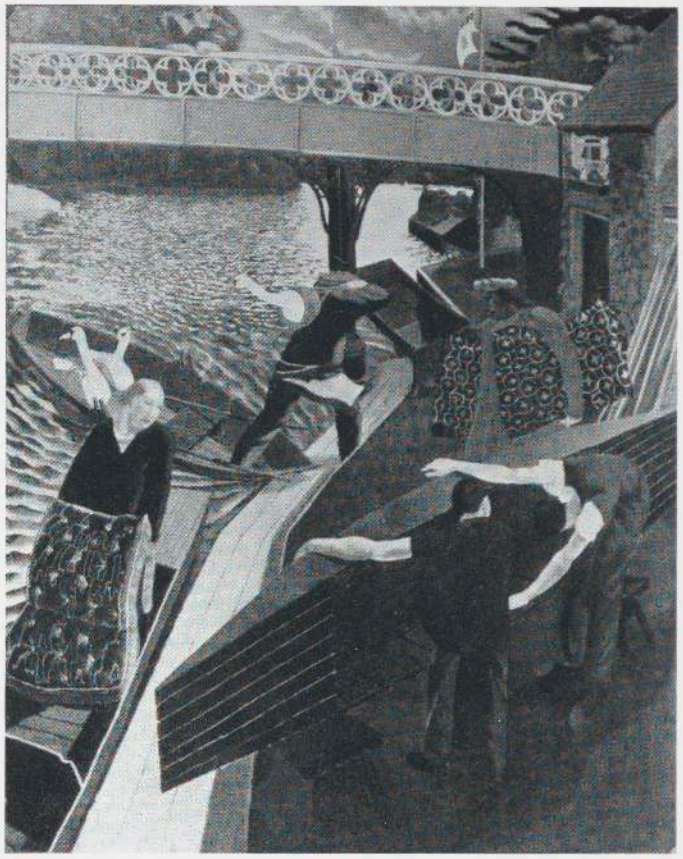
But perhaps Lewis and Spencer are similar only in their eccentricity and there the comparison ends. Lewis is a cosmopolitan figure in touch with all the art movements projecting themselves from the Continent—cubism, futurism, abstractionism, surrealism. Spencer is a provincial, primitive artist, unmoved by foreign ideas, a throw-back to Blake and the Pre-Raphaelites. He has something of Blake's mysticism, but Spencer is more innocent and less profound. His meticulous detail and careful particularization of local color are Pre-Raphaelite but in content his paintings avoid the Brotherhood's passion for evangelical moralizing or neo-medieval story telling. He is an English Rousseau in spirit but without the Frenchman's instinctive sense of color and design. In short, he is a primitive trained in an art school who has sometimes been able to surmount the inhibitions of Slade School discipline and to give more or less free expression to the primitive Christian faith in which he was reared in the village of Cookham, his birthplace.

During World War I he served with the army in Macedonia and was commissioned to paint a picture based on his experiences there, the *Travoys Arriving with Wounded at a Dressing Station*, now in the Imperial War Museum, London. As a further depiction of this Macedonian experience he painted a series of murals as a war memorial in a specially built chapel at Burghclere in Berkshire.

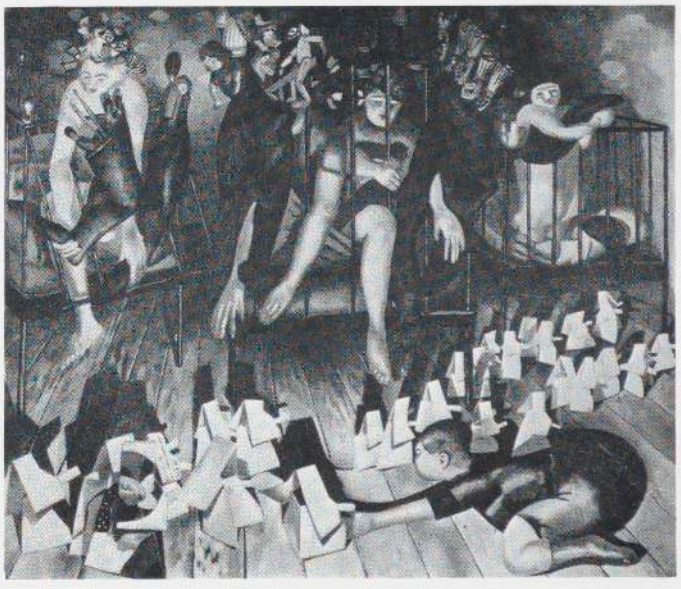
Aside from war, Spencer's paintings have been concerned with religious subjects, personal and unconventional in their interpretation of the Gospel story, or of the simple, homely incidents of life in and around his native village. Like Blake, when the visionary fire is most intense, Spencer's paintings have a singularly moving power. But again, like Blake, when inspiration fails the resulting picture is vapid, if not ridiculous. Unlike Blake, it would seem, he has not been able to sustain the first, fresh innocence of youth, and earlier paintings such as the *Nativity* (his first important canvas), *Swan Upping*, *The Last Supper* and the Burghclere murals are his best. By contrast, *The Nursery* of 1936, while unusual and striking in composition, is somewhat forced and contrived.



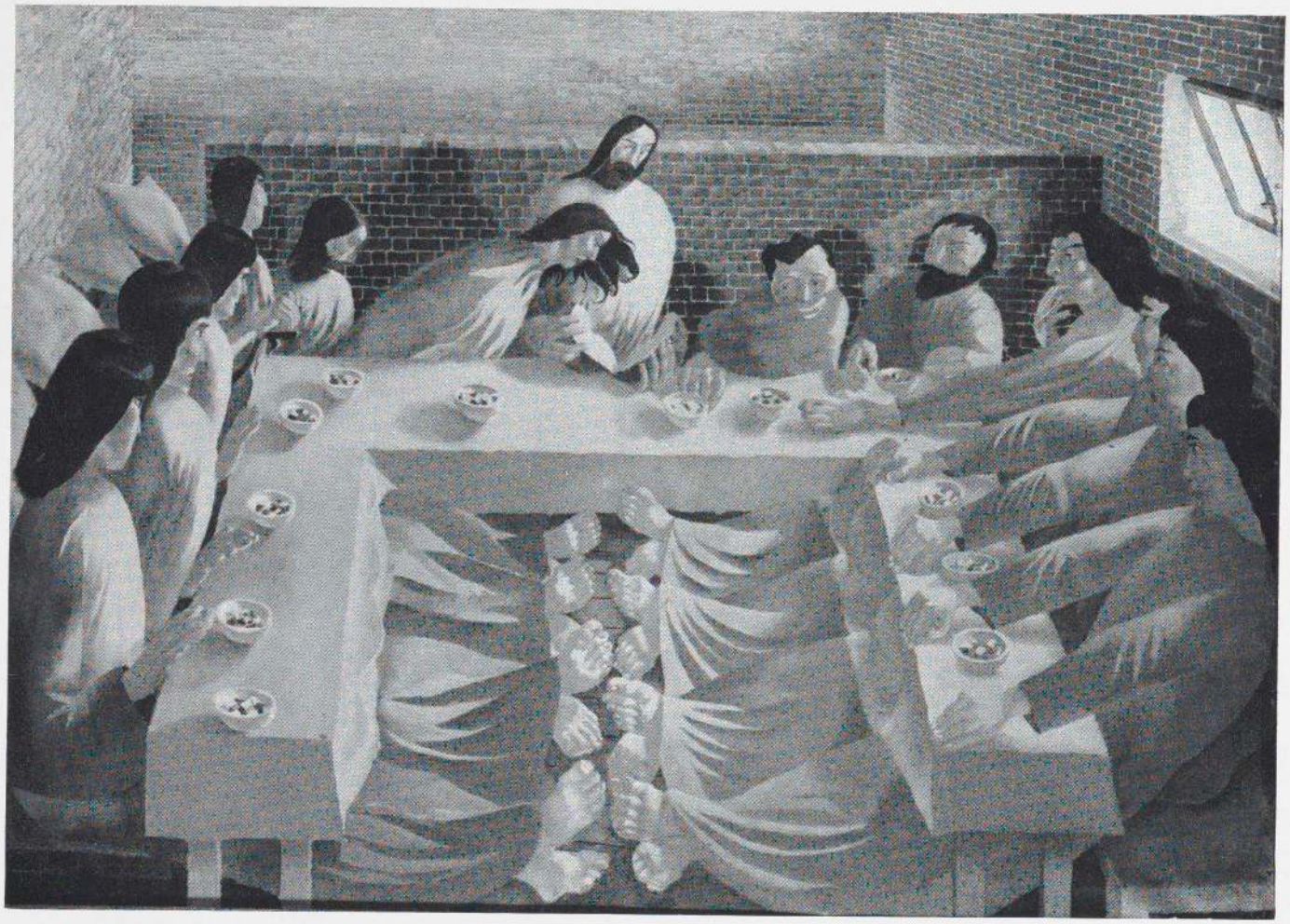
Spencer: *The Nativity*. 1912. Oil on panel, 42 × 60″. The Slade School of Art, University College, London



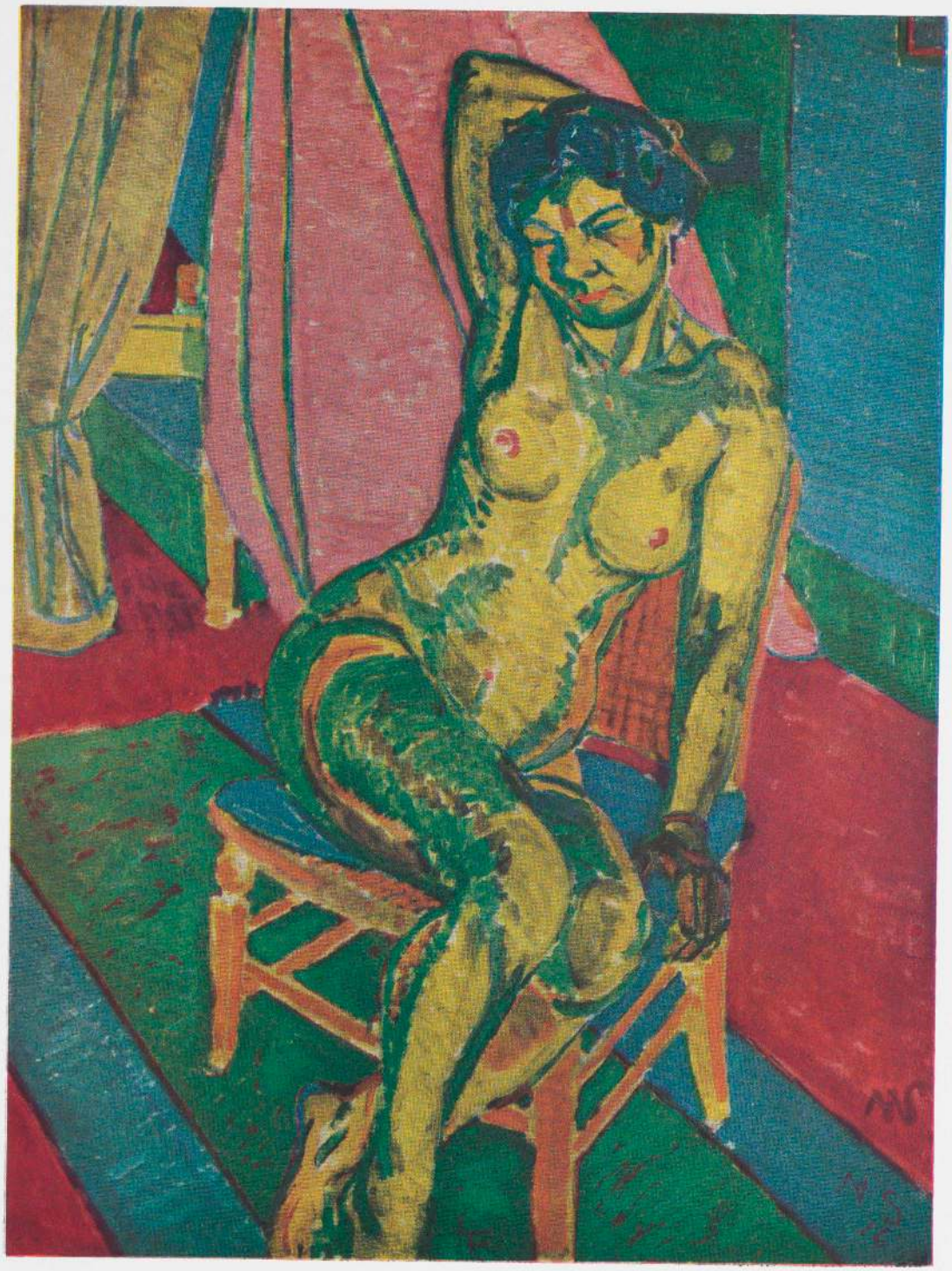
Spencer: *Swan Upping*. 1914–19. Oil on canvas, 58 × 45½″. Collection J. L. Behrend, Llanwrin, Machynlleth, Mont.



Spencer: *The Nursery*. 1936. Oil on canvas, 30¼ × 36⅛″. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of the Contemporary Art Society, London



Spencer: *The Last Supper*. 1920. Oil on canvas, 36 × 49¼″. Collection J. L. Behrend, Llanwrin, Machynlleth, Mont.



Sir Matthew Smith *born* 1879

Born in Halifax, Smith first worked for four years in his father's wire factory. He then studied at the Manchester School of Art and from 1905 to 1907 at the Slade. Thereafter he went abroad, first to Brittany and in 1910 to Paris, where he enrolled in Matisse's school. The association with Matisse and the absorption from him of the principles of fauve color have determined the course of his art until now. Among contemporary British painters he is the strongest, if not the finest colorist of his generation.

Like so many Scottish painters, Smith, a northerner also, seems to have had a predisposition for opulent, resonant color, probably as an antidote to the grim, grey light of his native Yorkshire. In an early picture such as the *Fitzroy St. Nude No. 2* (named after the street in London where he had a studio), there is a stronger, if labored attempt to define form in more than purely coloristic terms, reminiscent of van Gogh—one result undoubtedly of the effect of Fry's Grafton Galleries exhibitions of post-impressionist art. No contemporary English painter, in fact, has reacted so positively to the fauve wing of the post-impressionist revolution as has Smith.

He has restricted himself to single figure studies, many of them voluptuous, reclining nudes; to landscapes of Cornwall and of certain parts of France, which he has visited frequently; and flower and fruit still lifes.

Smith's preoccupation with color as an expressive medium sets him apart from practically all his English contemporaries, with the exception of Hitchens. The Slade tradition of drawing as a basis for all pictorial conception left Smith untouched, despite his early training there. And it is his expressionistic enjoyment of rich, often low-keyed, harmonies of color that on first acquaintance gives to his work an un-English look. Actually as a draftsman, he is often awkward and heavy-handed, almost in a German sense, and it is through his powerful color orchestrations that he is chiefly memorable.

"Among the English painters of his generation," Sir Philip Hendy has written, "the generation which is now in full maturity, it is Matthew Smith alone who seems to me to have a place in the European tradition. It is not a place in the van. He is not great with the warm humanism of a Bonnard or with the clear and varied brilliance of a Matisse; he does not pour out inventions from the overflowing cornucopia of a Picasso. He is, on the contrary, a man with a small repertoire of subjects, in which he propounds what is almost a single, rather narrow theme. Yet the theme is a fundamental one, and his very ability to make a vital art out of limited material shows that its principles are the grand essential principles of the Continental school." (Bibl. no. 93, p. 5.)

OPPOSITE: Smith: *Fitzroy St. Nude No. 2.* 1916. Oil on canvas, 40 × 30". The British Council, London

Smith: *The Little Seamstress*. 1919. Oil on canvas, $36 \times 25\frac{1}{2}''$. Temple Newsam House and City Art Gallery, Leeds

Smith: *Cornish Landscape*. 1920. Oil on canvas, $26\frac{7}{8} \times 31\frac{1}{2}''$. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, extended loan from Mrs. Stanley B. Resor

Smith: *Couleur de Rose*. 1924. Oil on canvas, $21\frac{1}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}''$. The British Council, London

Smith: *Lilies and Delphiniums*. 1929–30. Oil on canvas, $21 \times 25\frac{1}{4}''$. Collection Benn W. Levy, London

Ben Nicholson *born* 1894

Though fifteen years younger than Matthew Smith, Ben Nicholson began his studies at the Slade in 1911, only four years after Smith had left for the Continent. And he, too, soon left to study French at Tours, 1911–12, and Italian at Milan, 1912–13. After a stay in Madeira he returned to Britain at the opening of World War I and between 1914 and 1917 was in London and North Wales. For reasons of health he was sent to Pasadena, California, in 1917 and remained there for a year. In 1922 he had his first one-man exhibition in the Adelphi Gallery, London.

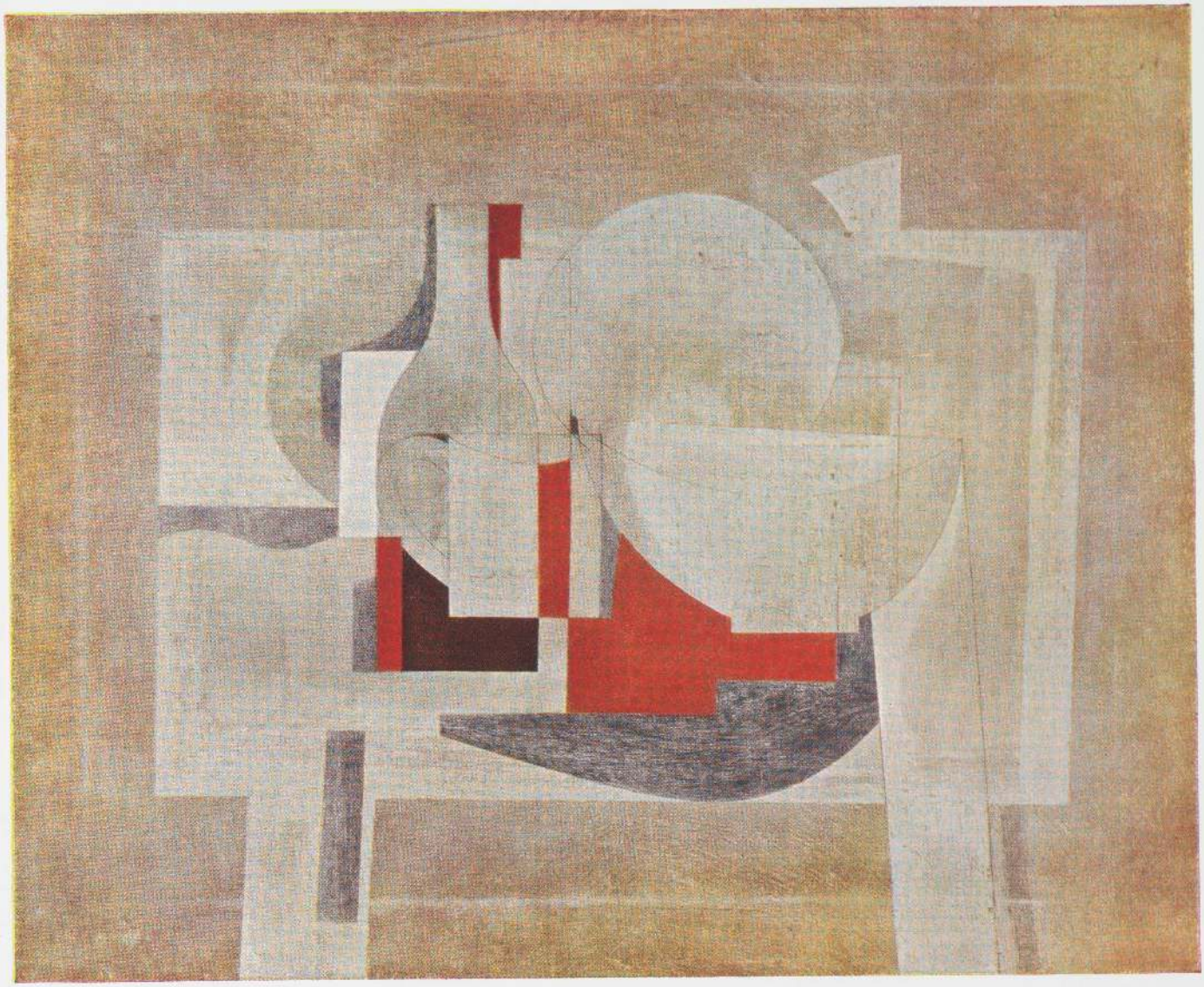
He is the son of a painter-father and a painter-mother—and his own work is, therefore, the result of a certain amount of inbreeding. Undoubtedly because his parents were painters he at first unconsciously resisted any inclination he had to become one too and only by a positive act of revolt was he able, slowly, to develop a style of his own.

His foreign travels brought him in touch with continental art and Wyndham Lewis's Vorticism directed his attention in a near-abstract direction. But it was not until he met Mondrian in Paris in 1934 that his art developed into abstract-geometrical arrangements of circles, squares, and vertical and horizontal shapes totally divorced from representational reality. Meanwhile, during the '20s and early '30s he had studied Picasso and Braque, and his paintings of the time show an absorption of the influence of now one, now the other (*Still Life with Fruit*, 1926, and *Au Chat Botté*, 1932).

After this cubist phase of experiment he saw a Miro in 1932 or 1933. "The first *free* painting that I saw," he says, "and it made a deep impression—as I remember it, a lovely rough circular white cloud on a deep blue background, with an electric black line somewhere." (Bibl. no. 83, p. 12.) Here, in principle, one feels, was the clue he had been searching for—the clue to a pictorial world of color and shape untrammeled by particular associations with mundane objects like bowls of fruit, jugs and all the other paraphernalia of the cubist still life. The meeting in 1934 with Mondrian, the founder of the Dutch constructivist movement known as de Stijl, confirmed him in his search, and more important, presented him with a dialectic of geometrical abstraction of fanatical purity.

But Nicholson has been no abject follower of Mondrian. While he has painted and constructed canvases and reliefs of an absolute geometric abstractness, he has also never entirely forsaken the bottles and bowls of the cubists and in many of his paintings their unsubstantial, linear presences continue to appear. And in some recent paintings Nicholson has painted landscapes of Cornwall, where he now lives, that frankly combine geometrical and representational elements which, by the abstract purist, must be considered heretical; or from another point of view, are indications that the artist's original abstract fervor is weakening or undergoing modification.

Theoretical considerations aside, there are certain distinctive characteristics of Nicholson's painting that set it apart from continental abstract schools of a cubist and constructivist derivation. These characteristics are partly personal, no doubt, and partly

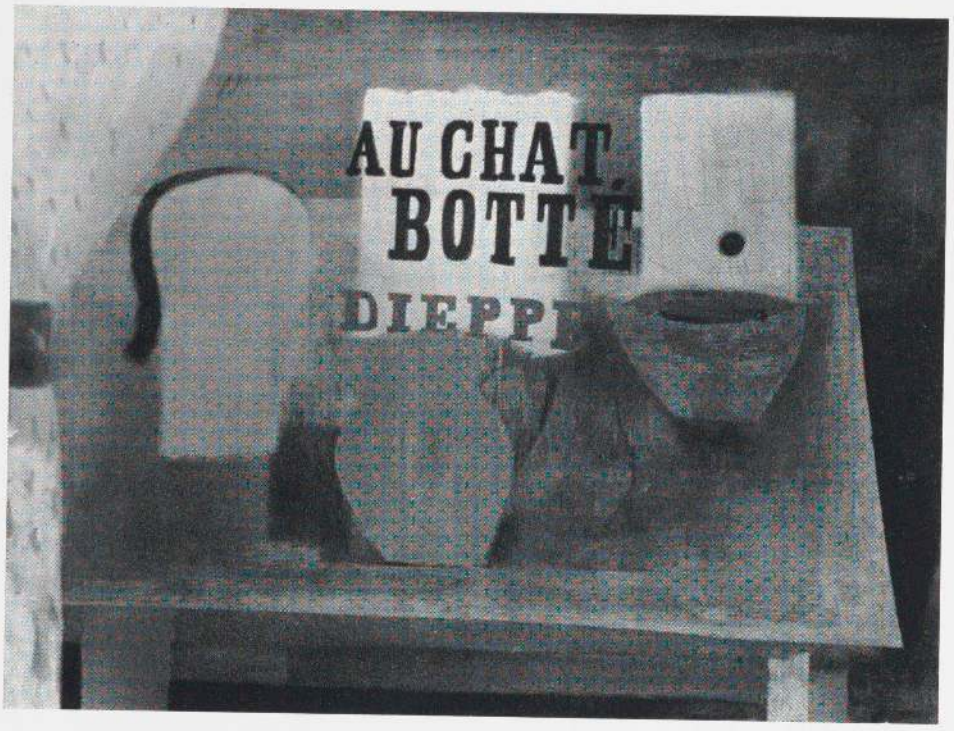


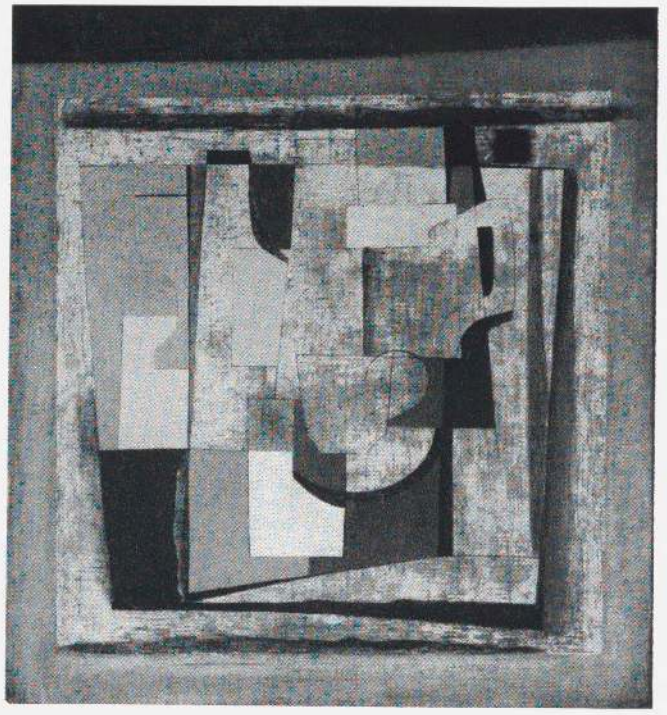
Nicholson: *Still Life*. 1929–35. Oil and pencil on canvas, 26×32″. Collection C. S. Reddihough, Ilkley, Yorks.

English. Nicholson's exquisite sense of balance in the arrangement of his shapes, his linear precision and the delicacy of his palette are, surely, in the long tradition of line and color wash that—starting with Anglo-Saxon drawings and continuing through Elizabethan miniatures and eighteenth and nineteenth-century watercolors—has always been a fundamental one in English art.

Nicholson was a leading member of the so-called "Seven and Five" group, organized shortly after World War I and to which most leading contemporary British painters have belonged. It is now disbanded. The group in its beginnings sought to promote the acceptance among English artists of continental expressionist tendencies in painting. After Nicholson joined in 1925, and as his interest in abstract, constructivist art increased, his powerful influence carried the group in a more abstract direction. Nicholson also belonged, in 1933–34, to the "Abstract-Creation" group of Paris.

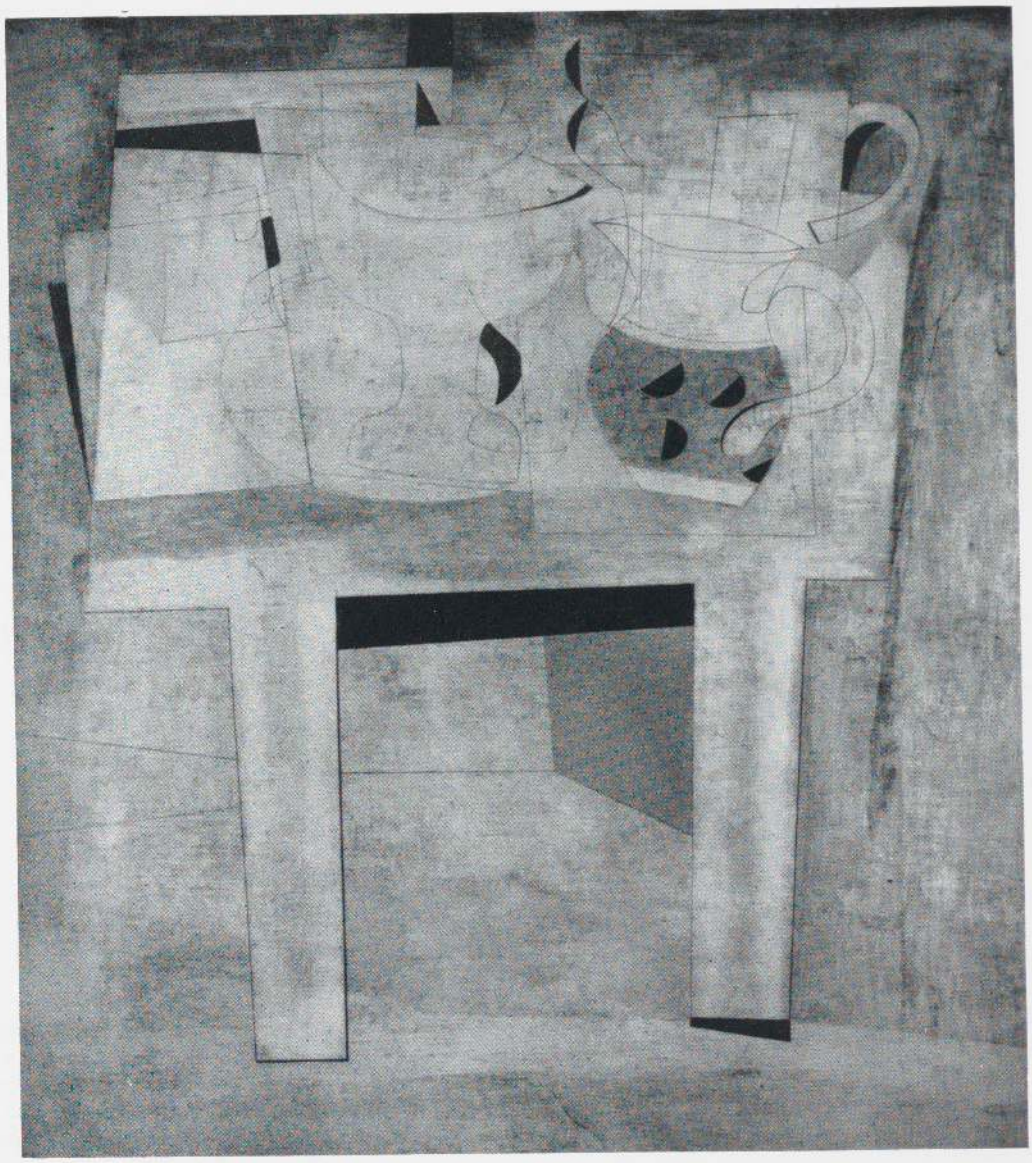
Nicholson: *Still Life with Fruit (Version 2)*. 1926. Oil on canvas, $21\frac{3}{4} \times 24''$. The British Council, London



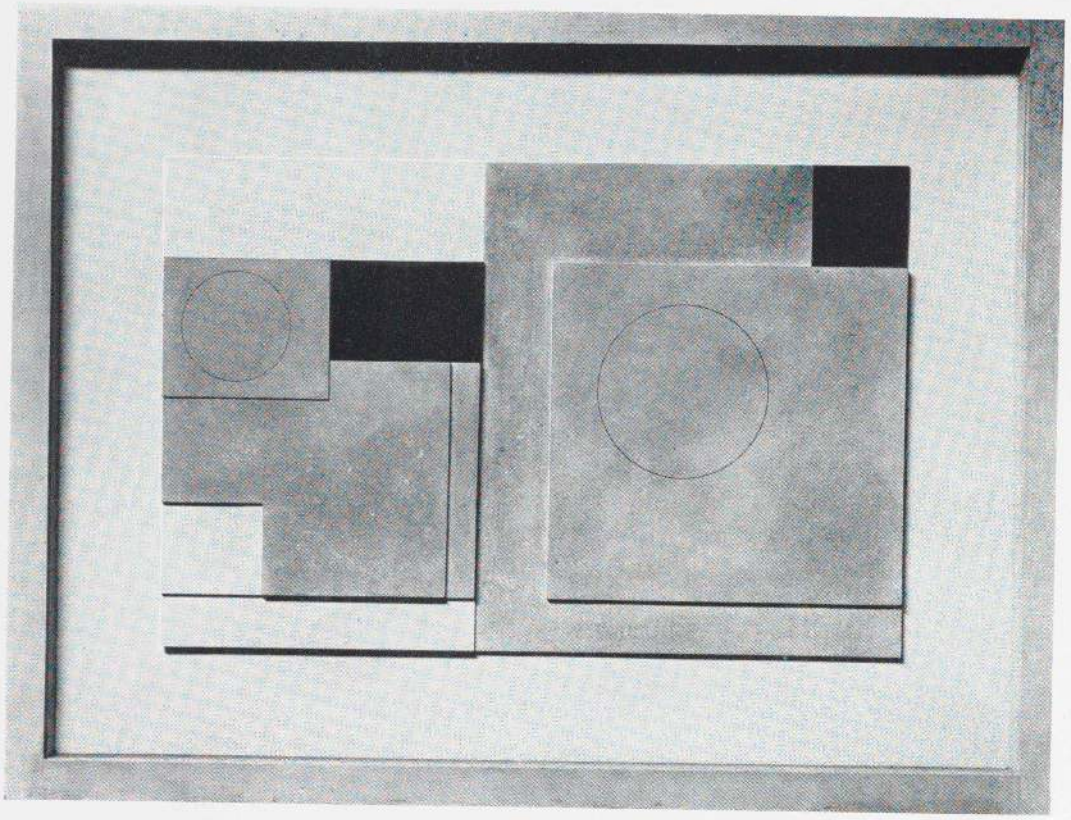


ABOVE: Nicholson: *Au Chat Botté*. 1932. Oil on canvas, $36 \times 47\frac{3}{4}''$. The City Art Gallery, Manchester

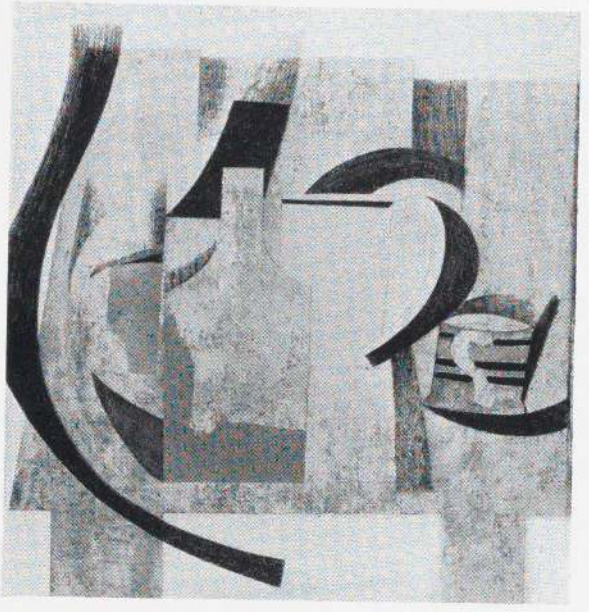
Nicholson: *Still Life (Winter Landscape)*. 1946. Oil on canvas, $22\frac{1}{2} \times 22\frac{3}{4}''$. Collection C. S. Reddihough, Ilkley, Yorks.



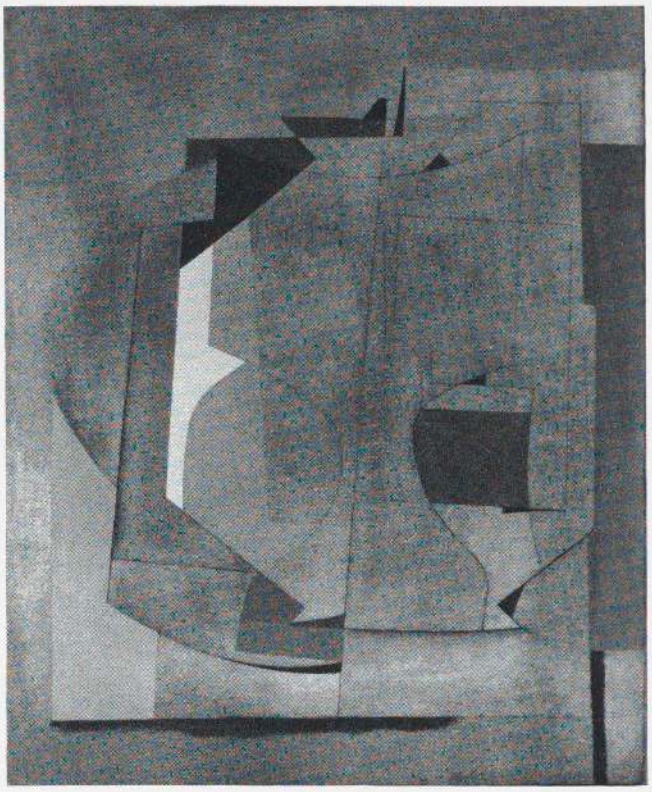
Nicholson: *Still Life*. 1948. Oil and pencil on canvas, $42\frac{3}{4} \times 47\frac{3}{4}''$. Collection Jan de Graaff, Gresham, Oregon



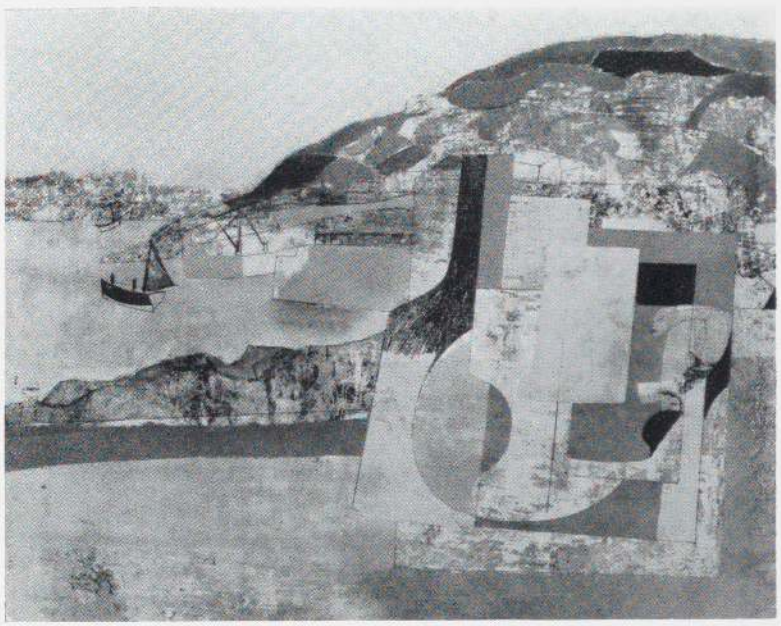
ABOVE: Nicholson: *Relief*. 1939. Wood, painted, $32\frac{7}{8} \times 45''$. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of H. S. Ede and the artist (by exchange)



Nicholson: *Still Life*. 1930–42. Oil and pencil on canvas, $18\frac{1}{2} \times 17\frac{3}{4}''$. Collection Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Martin, Tring, Herts.



Nicholson: *Sept 6—53 (Aztec)*. Oil on canvas, 27 × 22″. Collection Miss Barbara Hepworth, St. Ives, Cornwall



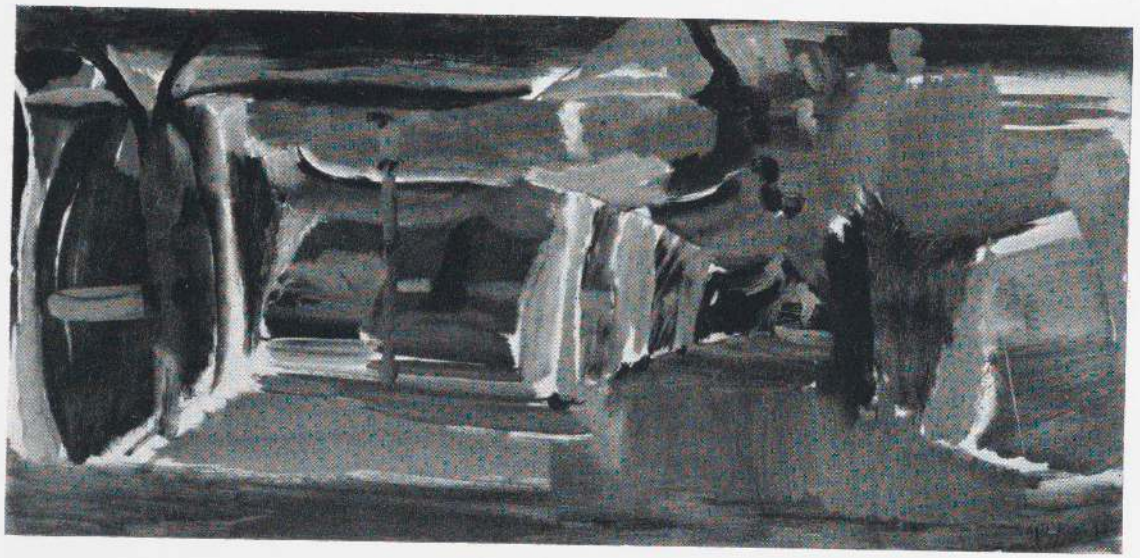
Nicholson: *Mousehole Nov 11—47*. Oil and pencil on canvas, 18¼ × 23″. The British Council, London

Ivon Hitchens *born* 1893

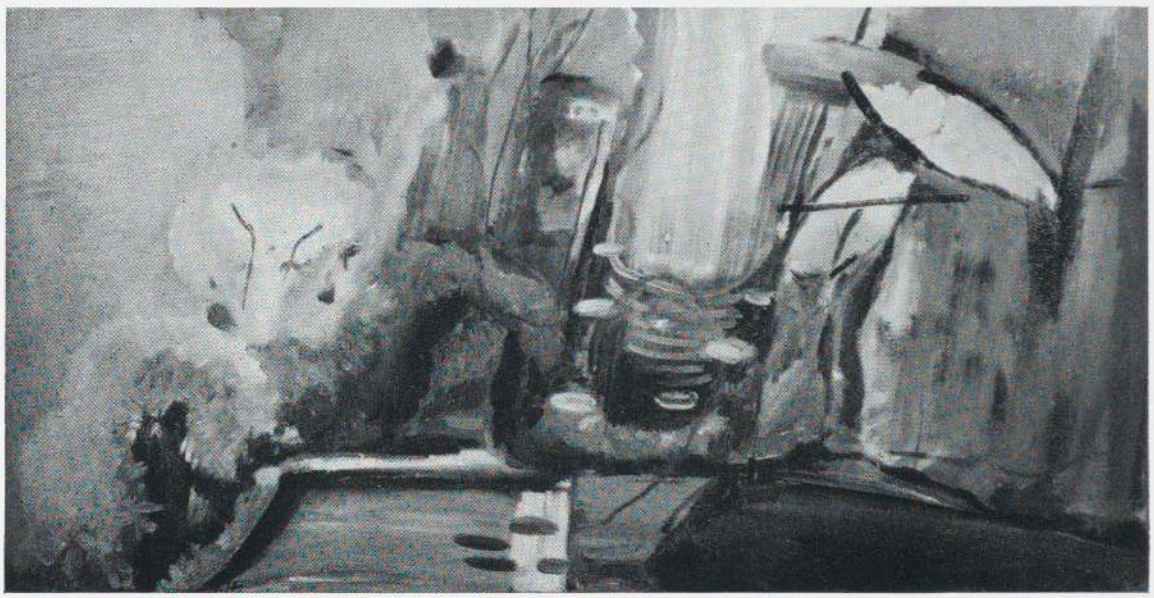
Hitchens was born in London, and studied at the St. John's Wood School of Art there and at the Royal Academy schools. He belonged to the London Group and the now defunct "Seven and Five" group. He is a painter of landscapes and still lifes and a member of the Society of Mural Painters.

The strongest influence upon Hitchens has been Matisse and in this he is allied with Matthew Smith. But where Smith has tried constantly to expand and enrich his fauve color inheritance, Hitchens has developed mainly in a decorative, lyrical direction. In Smith one senses the struggle of creation; the bland, sensuous rhythms of Hitchens' brushwork and the brilliant or autumnal harmonies of his color music are achieved, it would seem, without effort or apparent emotional strain. This is not to say that Hitchens is a superficial artist; rather that he is more subtle than a first impression of his work would lead one to believe.

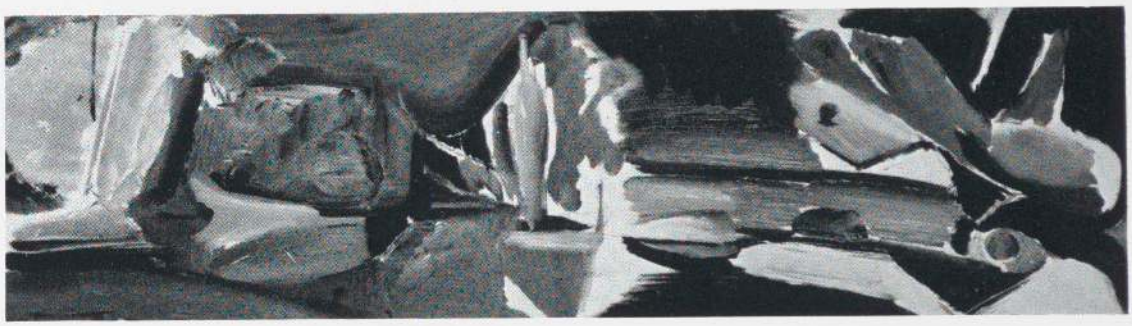
However near-abstract his compositions may be, he never divorces himself completely from natural forms. The suggestions of tree, leaf and flower in *Tree Landscape* are easily recognizable. The crisp clarity of snow-covered forms is immediately felt in *Winter Walk* and the plangent reflections in the *Mill Pool*, *Silent Afternoon* are clearly discoverable. From such simple elements he composes, and with a deft handling of pattern and texture and an interweaving of melodic color, he produces a seductive visual music.



Hitchens: *Winter Walk, No. 1.* 1948. Oil on canvas, $20\frac{1}{4} \times 41''$. The Art Gallery of Toronto, gift from the Women's Committee Fund



Hitchens: *Tree Landscape.* 1948. Oil on canvas, $20 \times 38\frac{3}{4}''$. Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, Room of Contemporary Art Collection

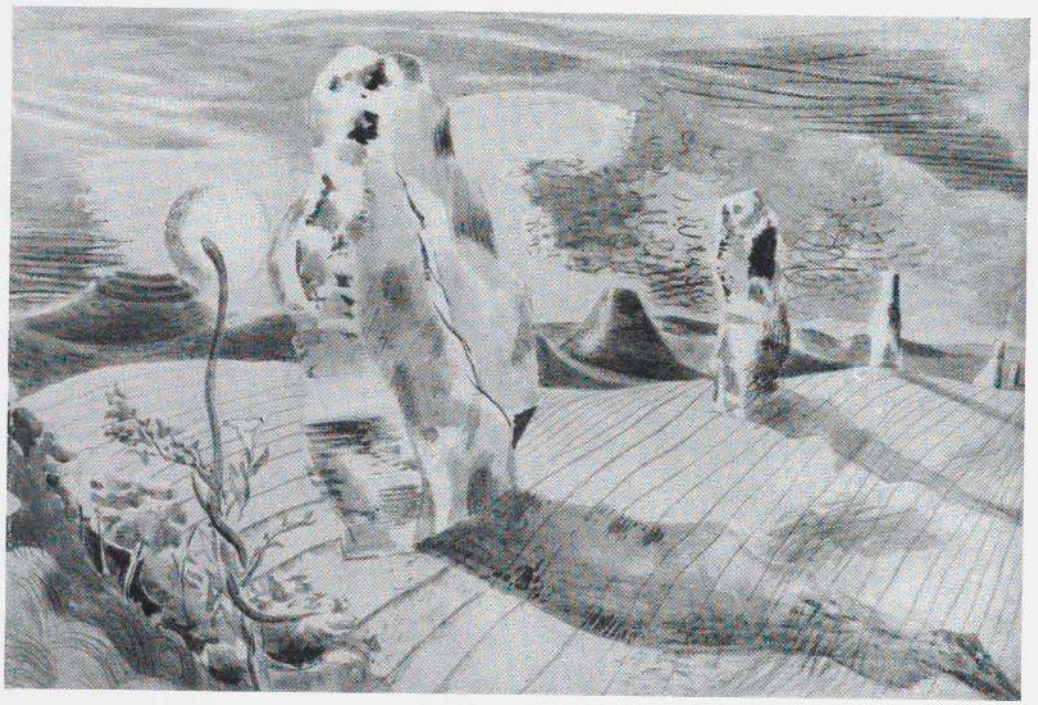


Hitchens: *Mill Pool, Silent Afternoon.* 1951. Oil on canvas, $16\frac{1}{2} \times 58\frac{1}{2}''$. Gimpel Fils, London

Paul Nash 1889-1946

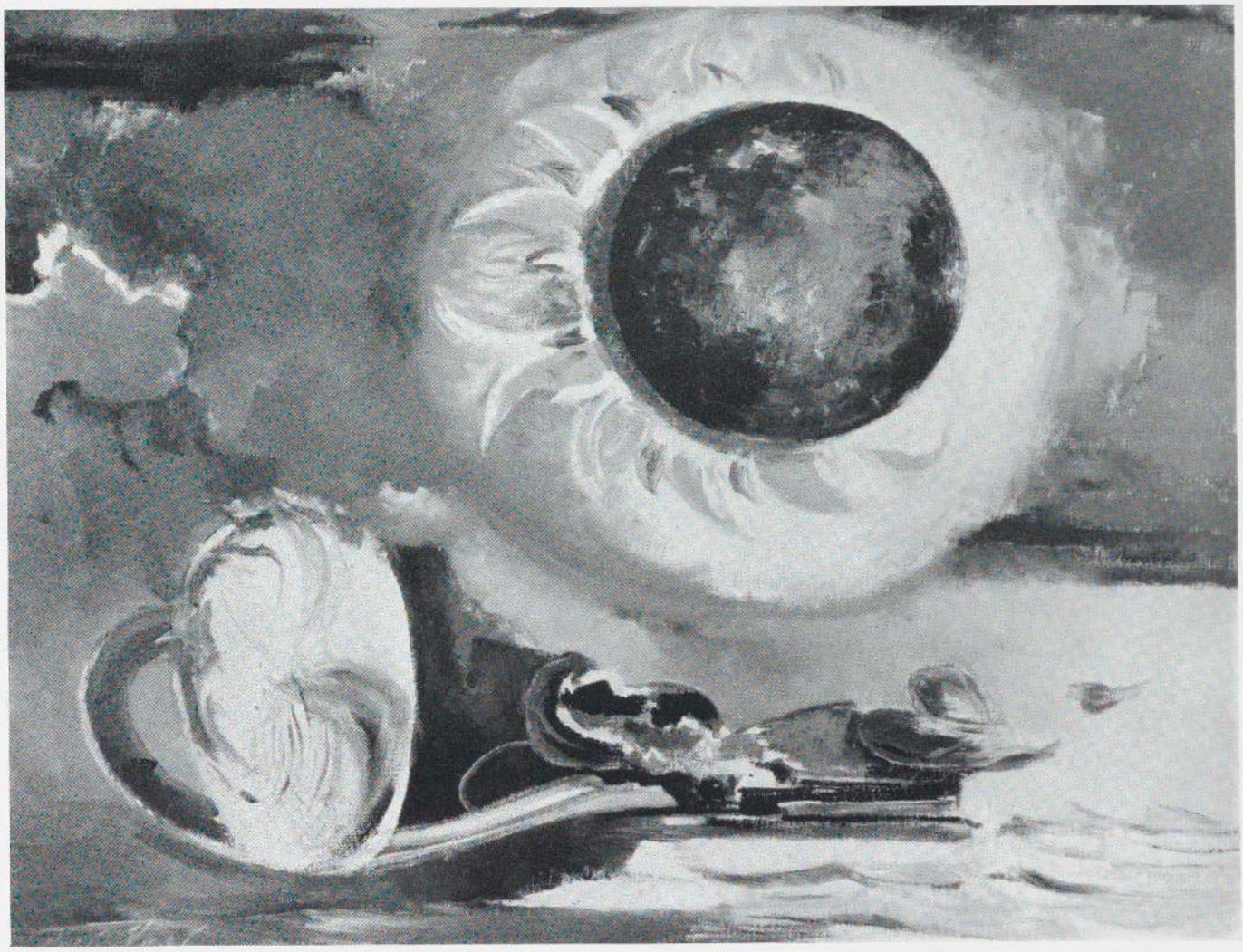
The struggle of the British artist in the twentieth century to establish contact with progressive art movements on the Continent and still retain a national, not to say personal, identity is nowhere better exemplified than in the career of Paul Nash. He decided to become an artist in 1907, studied first at the Chelsea Polytechnic and later at the Slade. In 1912 he held his first one-man exhibition and at this early date his drawings and watercolors indicated that he was unwilling to follow the diluted impressionist pattern inherited by the Slade from Whistler and the New English Art Club. He chose rather, having from the first a distinct literary bent, to return to Blake and the English romantic tradition of imaginative illustration.

World War I, in which he fought, however, diverted his attention from the poetic languors of his beginnings to the horrible reality of the tree-scarred, blasted earth of trench warfare and he returned to London in 1917, invalided, with a record of what he had seen, and entitled his exhibition "Ypres Salient." As a result, he was made an official war artist, and a second exhibition of pictures in 1918 was called "The Void of War." Stylistically

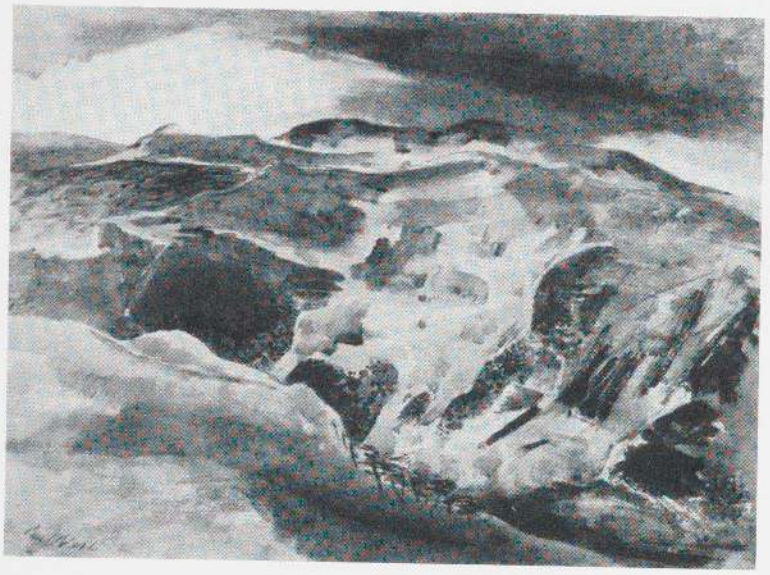


Nash: *Landscape of the Megaliths.* 1937. Watercolor, $19\frac{3}{4} \times 29\frac{3}{4}$". Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, Room of Contemporary Art Collection

Nash: *Winter Sea*. 1925–37. Oil on canvas, 29 × 38″. The City Art Gallery, York.



Nash: *Eclipse of the Sunflower*. 1945. Oil on canvas, 28 × 36″. The British Council, London



Nash: *Image of the Stag*. 1938. Watercolor, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{1}{2}''$. Collection Sir Kenneth Clark, Hythe, Kent.

Nash: *The Sunset Eye: Study 2*. 1945. Watercolor, $11\frac{1}{4} \times 15\frac{1}{4}''$. Collection Lord Croft, Barkway, Herts.

Nash: *Landscape of the Vernal Equinox II.* 1944. Oil on canvas. $21\frac{1}{4} \times 29''$. Collection Lady Lane, Stanwell Moor, Middlesex

these war paintings show a superficial awareness of cubist principles of formal abstraction; essentially they are deeply felt descriptions of the terrible destruction and fragmentation of "no man's land." But, to repeat, any contact they show with continental cubism or constructivism is slight. Perhaps by indirection, through Wyndham Lewis's Vorticist drawings and paintings, Nash absorbed something of the power and urgency of new movements from across the Channel. And surely Fry's post-impressionist exhibitions in 1910 and 1912 shook him out of some of his private, mystical meditations. The war did the rest.

With the return of peace, Nash paid his first visit to Paris in 1922 and his painting thereafter shows an increasing awareness first of cubist-constructivist art and later, in the '30s, of surrealism, a movement with which he seems to have found more in common, related as it was to his own predisposition to an illustrative, mood-enshrouded art. Torn between the conscious architecture of cubism and the dream world of the surrealists, many

of Nash's canvases of the '30s have a cold, compromising quality. One of the best and least compromising is his *Winter Sea*, begun in 1925 and finished in 1937. Here, one feels, his own personal vision has triumphed over mere borrowings from cubist and surrealist formulas.

In 1933, while still under the spell of cubist-constructivist principles of design, he was instrumental in founding a short-lived association of painters, sculptors and architects known as "Unit One." On June 2nd, 1933, he wrote a letter to the London *Times*, and a few excerpts will indicate what he thought was the purpose of the new group.

"Only the most stubborn can dispute that English art has always suffered from the crippling weakness—the lack of structural purpose. . . . Nature we need not deny, but art, we are inclined to feel, should control. . . . The fact that some of them [the group] have come through many phases and arrived at a so-called abstract expression is most important; they have come through and wish to go on. This tends to isolate them from the majority of their contemporaries. . . . they [the group] seem to be lacking in reverence for Nature as such. . . . Their answer is that they are interested in other matters which seem to them more engrossing, more immediate. Design, for instance—considered as a structural pursuit; imagination, explored apart from literature or metaphysics."

By 1936 Nash was exhibiting with the surrealists in Paris and "Unit One" had become a dead issue for him. Constructivist-abstraction was in itself antipathetic to his romantic nature and in his paintings of the Druid stones of Avebury, such as *Landscape of the Megaliths* of 1937, he combines a surrealist dream perspective with a poetic penetration into the mysteries of an English place, with all its ancient religious and national associations, and at last finds his true role as a painter. The process of finding himself as a painter had thus taken a large part of his life and energies, but once found, he proceeded in the few years remaining to him, in watercolor after watercolor (the Englishness of the medium is significant) to pour out all that was personal, all that was deeply perceived in the English scene.

Even the titles of these later watercolors have poetic connotations: *Image of the Stag; Landscape of the Vernal Equinox; Eclipse of the Sunflower; The Sunset Eye*. Here at last, one feels —after many starts, some false to his nature, some serving as an astringent discipline to what might otherwise have been a soft, twilight sentimentalism—he makes contact with and extends an old English tradition: the nature worship of Turner, Constable and the watercolorists of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Graham Sutherland *born* 1903

Sutherland, like Nash, began as a draftsman and a lover of Blake. They have much in common in their romantic search for the essence beneath the skin of English landscape in contrast to the Whistler-inherited impressionism of the New English Art Club, the Camden Town "realists," and the more recent Euston Road group, whose chief exponents have been Coldstream and Pasmore. All are romantics of a peculiarly English kind but the intense, mystical romanticism of Sutherland and Nash, based as it is on Blake and his followers, Palmer and Calvert, has produced the most significant painting in England in the last few decades.

Sutherland, born in London, began work first as an engineer but soon turned to art and studied at the Goldsmiths' School of Art, London. There he learned the technique of etching from a devoted admirer of Palmer, F. L. Griggs, and his first exhibitions in the '20s were of etchings which showed in size, landscape interest and mood the strong influence of Palmer. In the early '30s he turned to painting and designs for posters, textiles and decorative objects. However, it was not until the mid-thirties and, like Nash, under the stimulous of surrealism and the surrealist exhibition of 1936 in London, that he began to form a personal painting style. In an article written for the magazine *Signature* in 1936 he lists his native sources: Blake, Palmer, the later Turner, Paul Nash and the drawings of Henry Moore. Added to these influences and in the long run dominating them has been

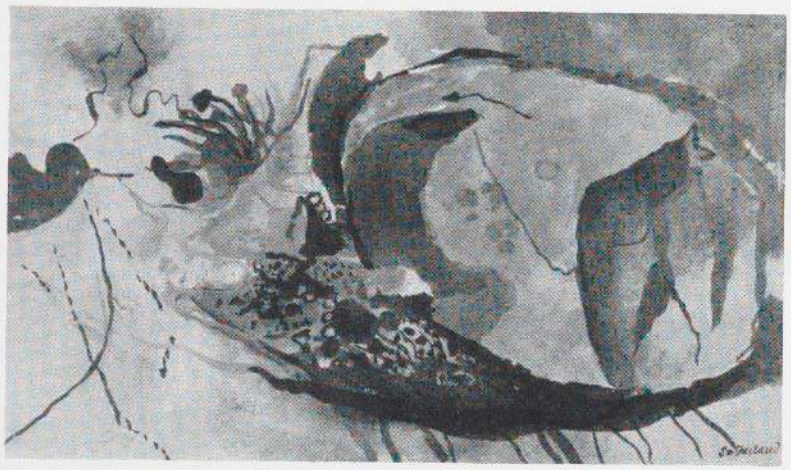
Sutherland: *Sun Setting between Hills.* 1938. Watercolor, $9\frac{7}{8} \times 14''$. Collection Sir Kenneth Clark, Hythe, Kent

the imagery of Picasso and particularly the Picasso of the '30s. But the enumeration of the sources of Sutherland's art must not be permitted to detract in any way from his own originality as a creative artist. Surely, with Moore, he is the outstanding British artist of his generation.

The *Sun Setting Between Hills* may remind one at first sight of some of Blake's illustrations for Dante but Blake never saw landscape in this intensely animated fashion, as if the division between the hills were a mouth, sucking the sun down to devour it. And who but Picasso, and now Sutherland in his own way, could suggest a strange animal force in the *Small Boulder* or the writhing, snake-like terror of *Gorse on Sea Wall*. It is this surprising revelation of animate meaning in inanimate phenomena—rocks, plants, tree roots—this sometimes sinister metaphor-making that distinguishes all of Sutherland's painting and at its unforced best gives it a power and significance for our unquiet lives such as few artists in this century have been able to equal.

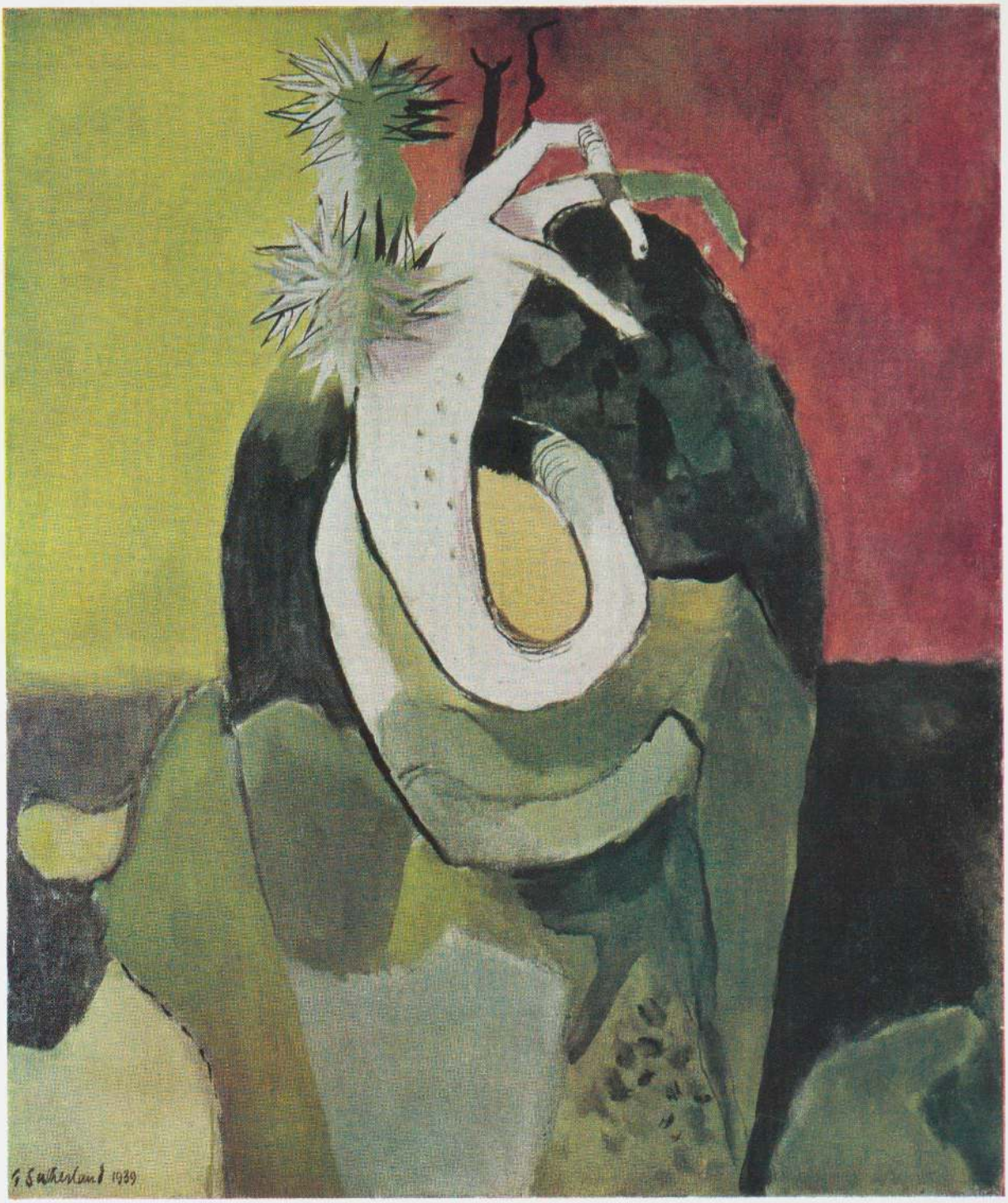
As he has developed, Sutherland has been able to apply his anthropomorphizing insight to a subject of universal importance—the Crucifixion. A devout Catholic, he was given the commission to paint this subject for the transept of the Episcopal Church of St. Matthew in Northampton and completed the large canvas in 1946. In preparation for the *Crucifixion* he did a series of studies of thorn trees and branches of thorns. Outstanding examples are the *Thorn Trees*, 1945 and *Thorn Heads*, 1946.

As Sutherland has freely admitted, his first inspiration for the *Crucifixion* was Grünewald. Perhaps after the horrors of Belsen and Dachau, the cruel agony of Christ's sacrifice, so violently and wonderfully expressed by the great German painter in his Colmar altarpiece,



Sutherland: *Small Boulder*. 1940. Watercolor, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{3}{8}''$. Collection The Hon. Edward Sackville-West, Wimborne, Dorset

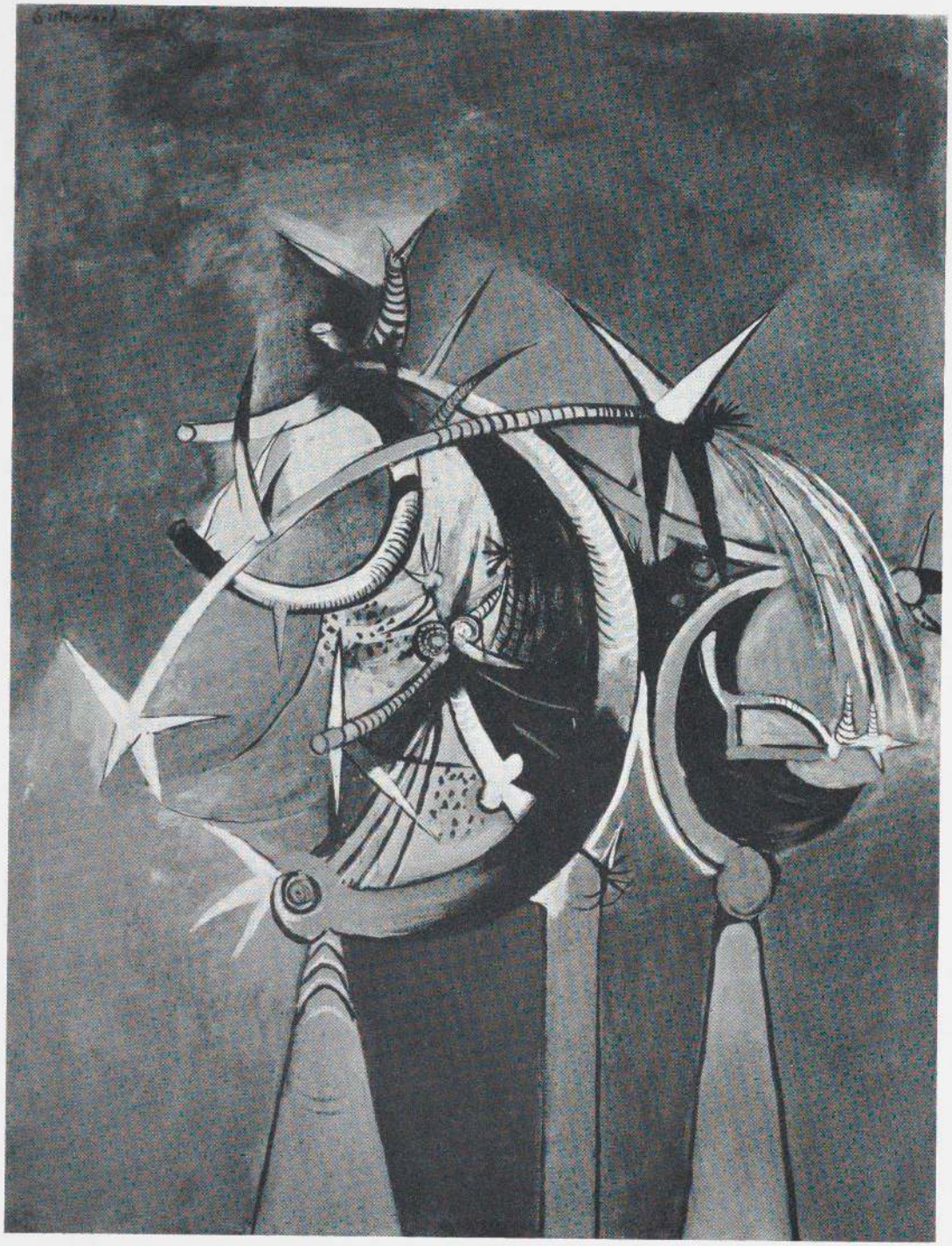
OPPOSITE: Sutherland: *Gorse on Sea Wall*. 1939. Oil on canvas, $24 \times 20\frac{1}{8}''$. Collection Norman Fowler, Virgin Islands


G. Sutherland 1939

Sutherland: *Portrait of Arthur Jeffress*. 1955. Oil on canvas, 57 × 48″. Collection Arthur Jeffress, London

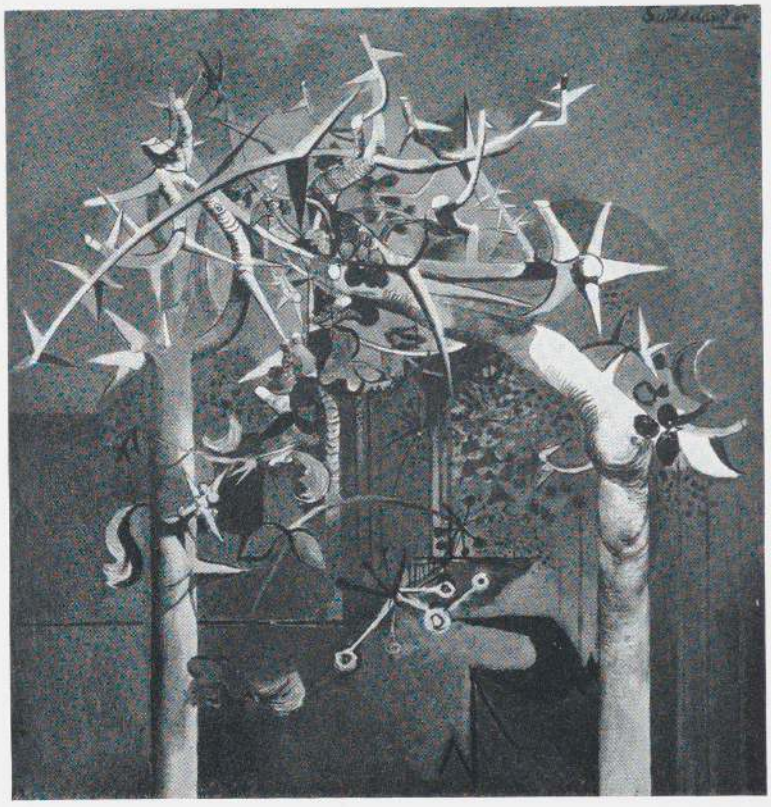
was a peculiarly appropriate model for a post-war Crucifixion in an English church. However that may be, there is a grave difference between Grünewald's Christ and Sutherland's. Sutherland's most perceptive critic, Robert Melville, has best expressed it: "Grünewald's Christ is exceptionally strong, and in one version the great weight of a body still tense and bright with pain drags into a downward curve the billet to which the hands are nailed; but Sutherland's Christ is weak and numbed and fargone into a quietism of misery, for he has been on the Cross not one day but many years, suffering the pangs of emaciation. There are no sympathisers, for this is an image of neglect: but the crumpled face is allowed to rest in the sympathy of its own shadow." (Bibl. no. 98, p. 15.)

In 1949, Sutherland began a series of portraits, all of men, beginning with Somerset Maugham and continuing with Lord Beaverbrook, the newspaper publisher; the writer, Edward Sackville-West; Sir Winston Churchill and, most recently, the art collector Arthur Jeffress. The portrait, despised as a subject by most modern artists, was a courageous form of painting for Sutherland to attempt, and, as the official reaction to the *Churchill* has proved, a most controversial one. It may be, however, that in his portraits Sutherland has reached his most significant heights as a painter. Certainly the *Churchill* as a portrait and as a painting is one of the best of our time.

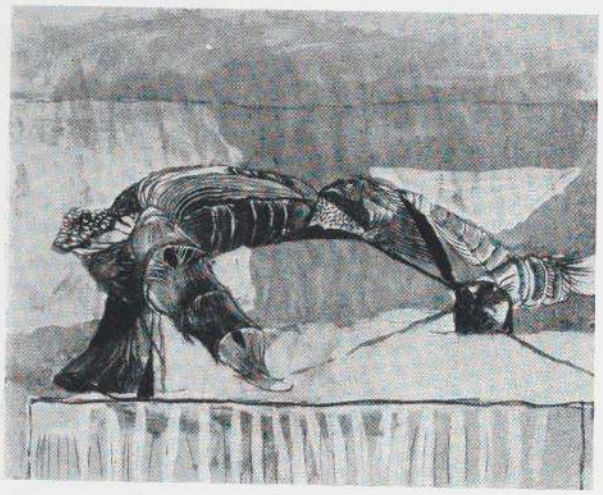


Sutherland: *Thorn Heads.* 1946. Oil on canvas, 48 × 36″. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest

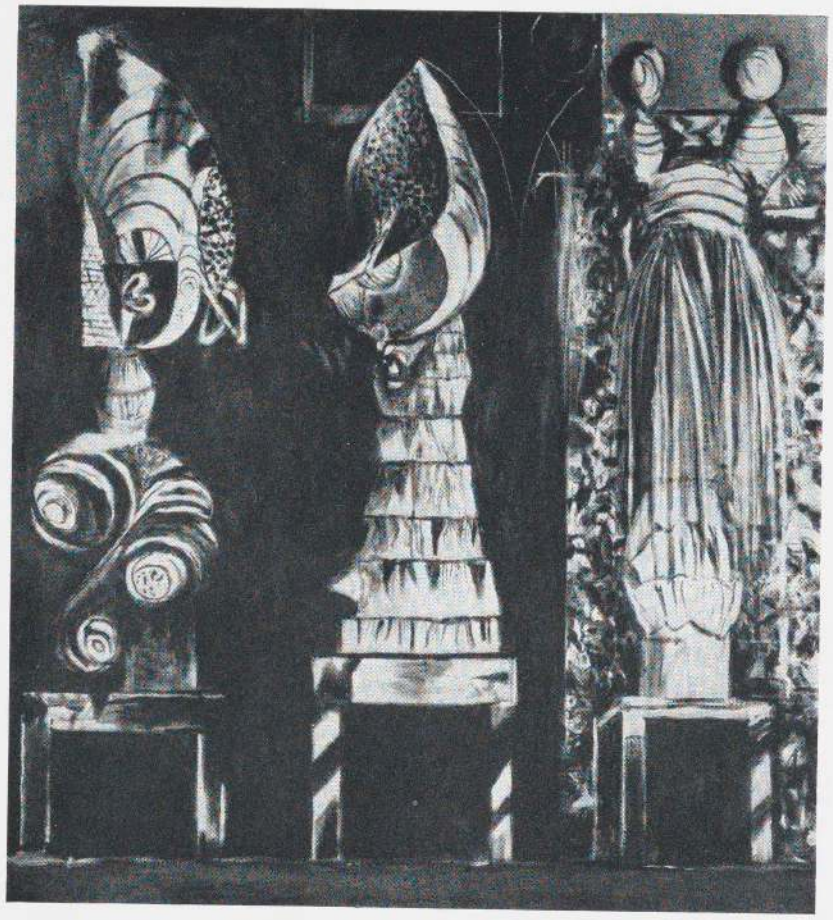
Sutherland: *Study for The Crucifixion.* 1947. Oil on cardboard, 40 × 48″. The British Council, London



Sutherland: *Thorn Trees.* 1945. Oil on cardboard, $42\frac{3}{4} \times 39\frac{3}{4}$″. Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, Room of Contemporary Art Collection



Sutherland: *Turning Form I.* 1948. Gouache on paper, $8\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{5}{8}$". Collection Mr. and Mrs. John Henry Macdonell, Sarasota, Fla.



Sutherland: *Three Standing Forms in a Garden, II.* 1952. Oil on canvas, $52\frac{3}{8} \times 45\frac{5}{8}$". Collection Mrs. Graham Sutherland, Trottiscliffe, Kent

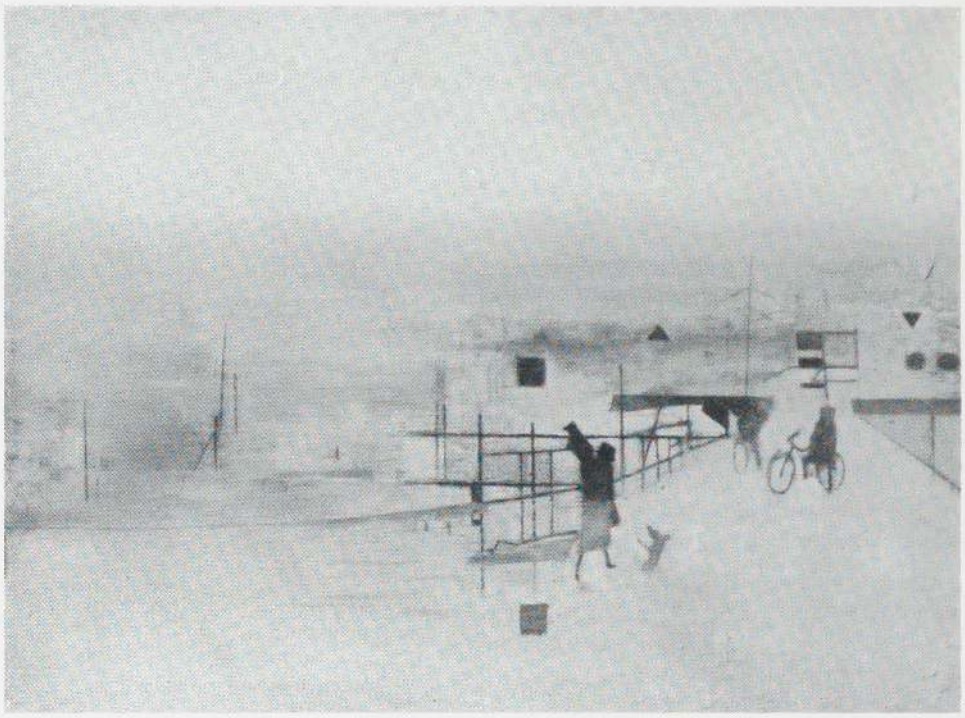
Victor Pasmore *born* 1908

Pasmore was a leading member of the group of painters known as the Euston Road school, which attempted to revive some aspects of impressionism. In Pasmore's earlier work there are suggestions of Sickert, Vuillard and Bonnard, and his *River Scene, Hammersmith* is very reminiscent of Whistler's mist-shrouded views of the Thames. *The Evening Star* on the other hand owes something to Turner's later paintings, where light becomes the dominant, almost abstract motif. It is not surprising, then, that from these last two sources—Whistler and Turner—both tending towards a dissolution of subject in favor of an orchestration of light or tonal values, Pasmore himself should have taken a more determined abstract course. *Spiral motif in black and white—The Wave* is a radical step in this abstract direction. In explosive rhythm and linear pattern it is in violent contrast to the tender, atmospheric landscapes preceding it. Quite recently Pasmore has abandoned figurative suggestion altogether and now practises a neo-de Stijl constructivism of the most unrelenting, geometric severity.

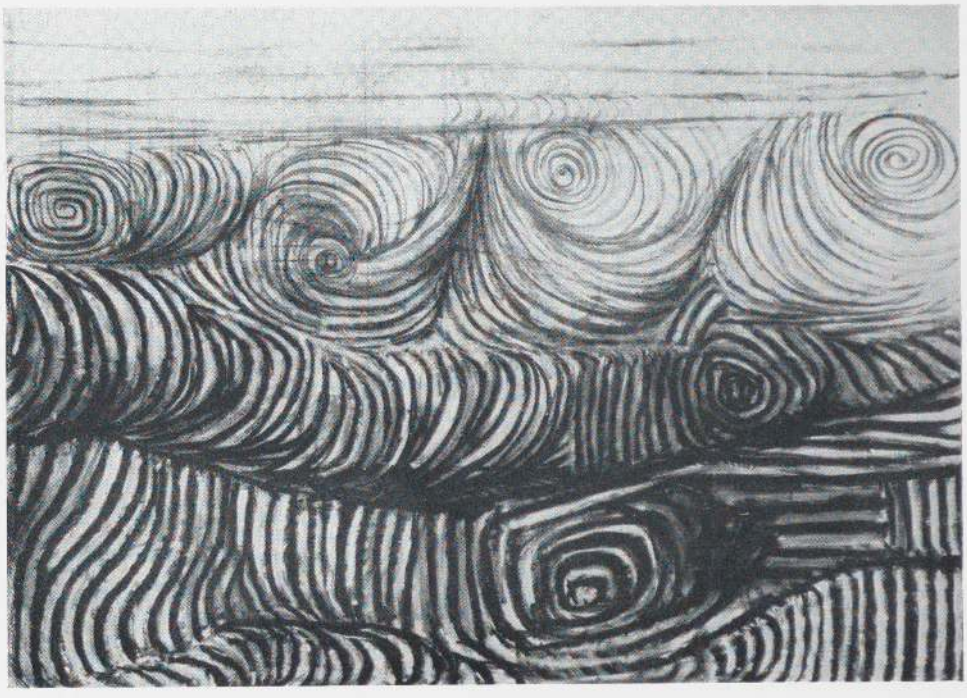
Practically self-taught, Pasmore began life as a civil servant and from 1928 to 1938 worked for the London County Council. During these years he painted in his spare time and not until after 1938 was he able to give full time to his brush. He is now recognized as one of the most sensitive and experimental painters in England today.

Pasmore: *River Scene, Hammersmith.* 1944. Oil on canvas, 24×36″. Collection Hugo Pitman, Odstock, Wilts.

Pasmore: *Evening, Hammersmith (Chiswick Reach)*. 1943. Oil on canvas, $34\frac{1}{4} \times 47\frac{1}{4}$". The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, The Massey Collection of English Painting



Pasmore: *The Evening Star*. 1945. Oil on canvas, 30 × 40″. Collection Sir Kenneth Clark, Hythe, Kent



Pasmore: *Spiral motif in black and white—The Wave*. 1950. Oil on canvas, 32 × 42″. The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

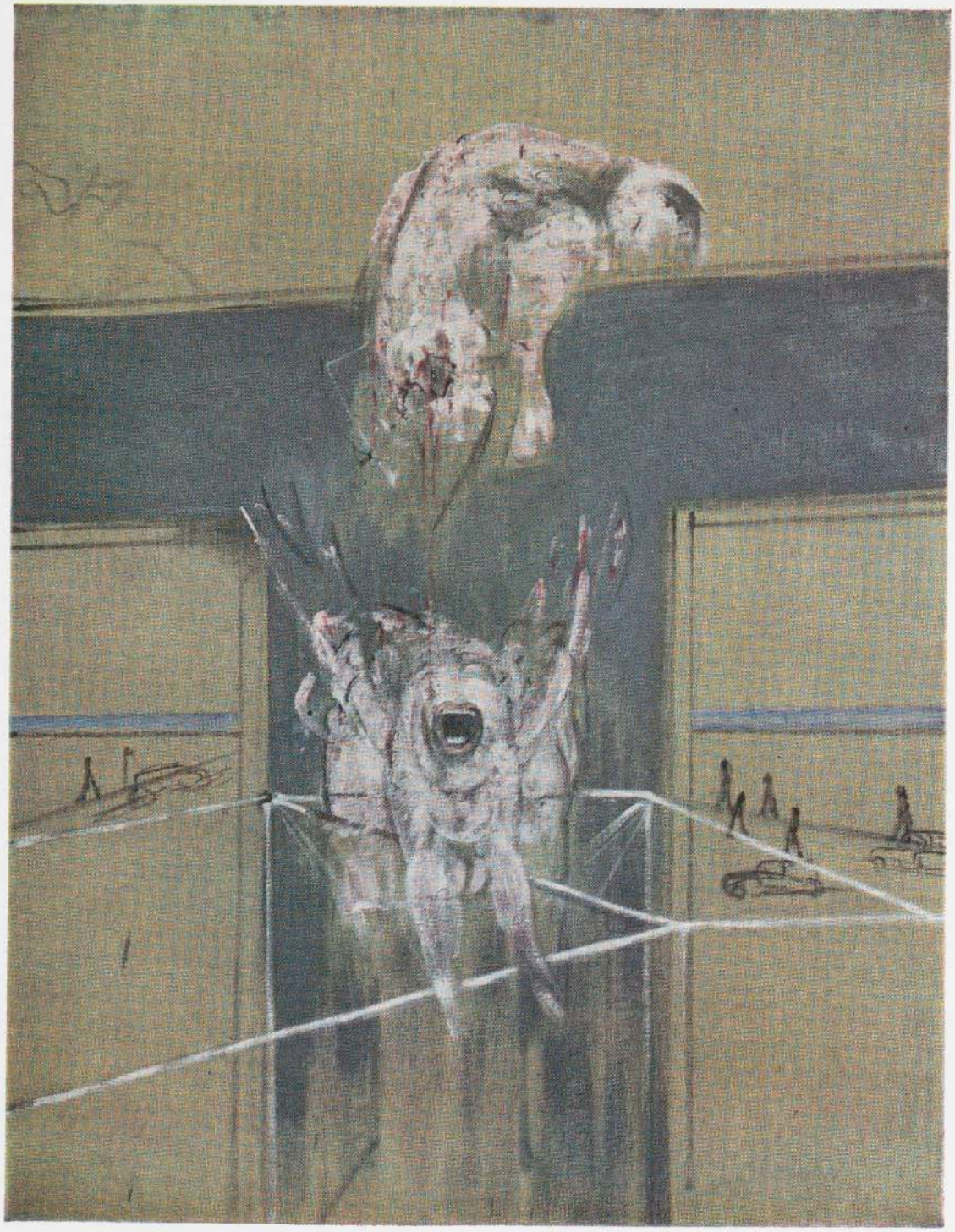
Francis Bacon *born* 1910

Bacon was born in Dublin and spent his youth there. Practically self-taught, he is essentially a post-war phenomenon in British painting, having had his first one-man exhibition in London as recently as 1949. He lives near London and spends part of each year in France.

The pre-war surrealist movement left a definite imprint, as we have seen, on Nash and Sutherland. Since the war a surrealist movement as such no longer exists in any organized sense, although individual painters such as Max Ernst and others continue their independent surrealist way. If a tapping of the subconscious world of imagery and feeling may be taken as the principal mainspring of surrealist art, then surely Bacon is one of the company, although he would undoubtedly deny any such association or label. "Painting today," he has said, "is pure intuition and luck and taking advantage of what happens when you splash the stuff down." (Bibl. no. 50, p. 60.) This admission of the automatist, intuitional basis of art is in itself an acceptance, whether knowingly or not, of one of the chief tenets of the surrealist faith.

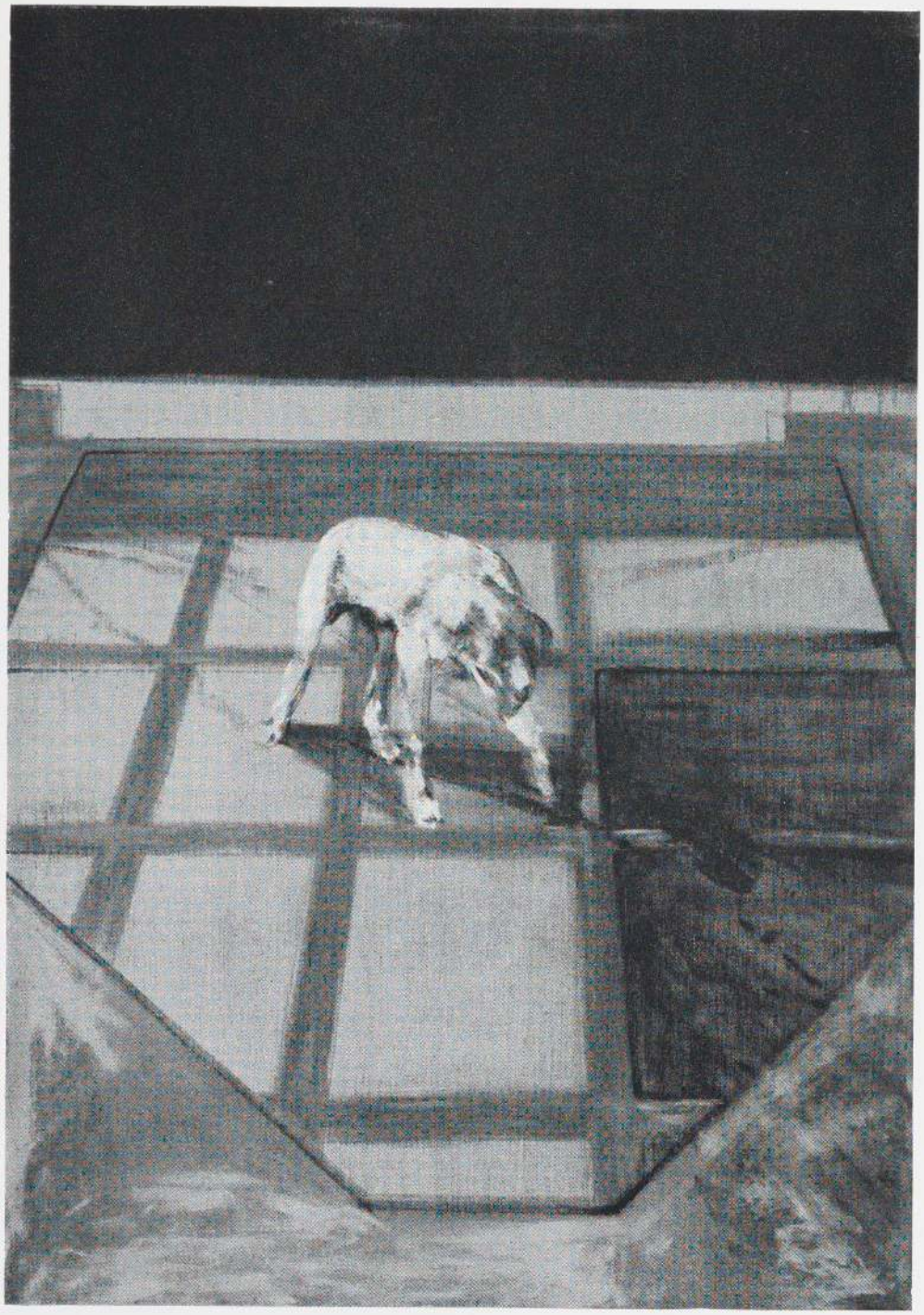
But a label is futile at best to describe the eccentric art of Bacon. The object of his macabre painting is to terrify the beholder into a sense of reality from which he would otherwise choose to hide. Working from newspaper photographs of war subjects, accidents, and screaming political demagogues, where the ink of the press has stained and soaked into the paper until the photograph becomes one with the pulp on which it is printed, Bacon,

Bacon: *Three Studies of the Human Head.* 1953. Oil on canvas, each $23\frac{5}{8} \times 19\frac{3}{4}$". Collection John Hewett, London

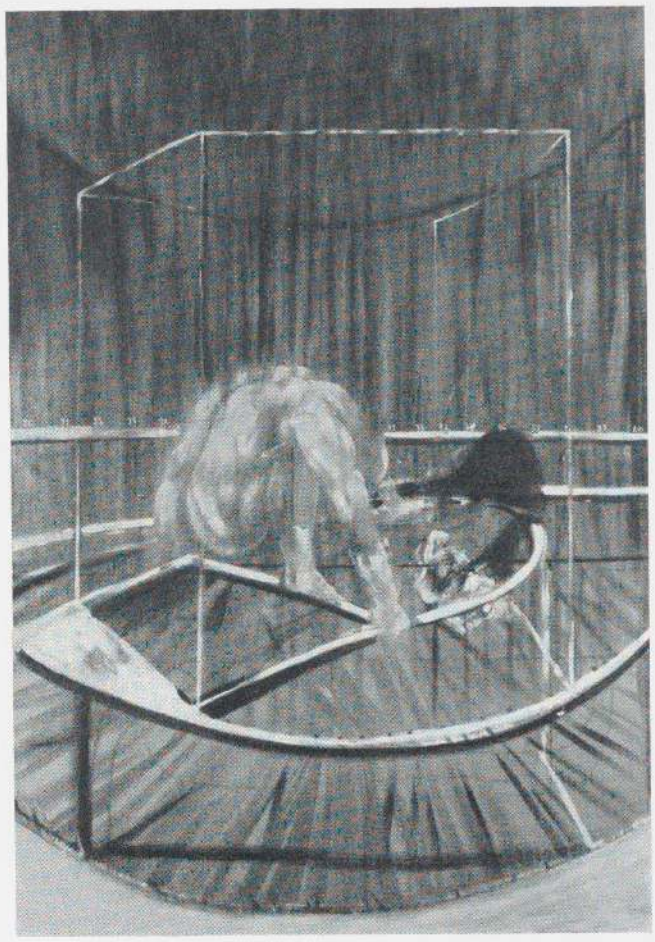


Bacon: *Painting*. 1946. Oil and tempera on canvas, $77\frac{7}{8} \times 52''$. The Museum of Modern Art, New York

OPPOSITE: Bacon: *Fragment of a Crucifixion*. 1950. Oil on canvas, $54 \times 42''$. Collection Mrs. Helen Grigg, Uckfield, Sussex



Bacon: *Dog*. 1952. Oil on canvas, $78\frac{1}{4} \times 54\frac{1}{4}$." The Museum of Modern Art, New York, William A. M. Burden Fund



Bacon: *Study for Nude.* 1952. Oil on canvas, 78 × 54″. The Detroit Institute of Arts

by a comparable soaking and staining of his canvas, has projected an imagery of such excruciatingly painful suggestion that its reality becomes almost unbearable to behold. The *Painting* of 1946 may symbolize the cruelty and horrors of war but its immediate impact is not symbolic. Before its screaming color, its monstrous butcher under an umbrella, seated before a strung-up carcass of beef, one's first impression is of a nightmarish actuality, and this is the artist's intention. "A picture," he has said, "should be a re-creation of an event rather than an illustration of an object." (Bibl. no. 50, p. 60.) His *Dog*, which seems to stand in agony at the moment of having been hit by a car, induces a sympathetic nervous shudder in the observer. The terror of the creature chased by a dog in *Fragment of a Crucifixion* communicates itself to us instantly, almost without our being conscious that the instrument of our terror is a painting. Bacon gives us a hint of what he has tried to achieve, and his method of achieving it in this statement: "I would like my pictures," he says, "to look as

Bacon: *Portrait of Robert Sainsbury*. 1955. Oil on canvas, $44 \times 38\frac{1}{4}''$. Collection Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sainsbury, London

if a human being had passed between them like a snail, leaving a trail of the human presence and memory trace of past events, as the snail leaves its slime. I think the whole process of this sort of elliptical form is dependent on the execution of detail and how shapes are remade or put slightly out of focus to bring in their memory traces." (Bibl. no. 50, p. 63.)

A final word. The *Portrait of Robert Sainsbury* is believed to be Bacon's first commissioned portrait. A comparison of the subject with the picture will show that "likeness" in the ordinary sense has certainly been achieved but over and above likeness, the "presence" of the subject has been trapped, as it were, on the canvas by some extraordinary Baconian alchemy.

Catalog of the Exhibition

In dimensions height precedes width

FRANCIS BACON *born* 1910

1 *Painting*. 1946. Oil and tempera on canvas, $77\frac{7}{8} \times 52''$. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Ill. p. 149

2 *Fragment of a Crucifixion*. 1950. Oil on canvas, $54 \times 42''$. Collection Mrs. Helen Grigg, Uckfield, Sussex. Color plate p. 148

3 *Study for Nude*. 1952. Oil on canvas, $78 \times 54''$. The Detroit Institute of Arts. Ill. p. 151

4 *Dog*. 1952. Oil on canvas, $78\frac{1}{4} \times 54\frac{1}{4}''$. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, William A. M. Burden Fund. Ill. p. 150

5 *Three Studies of the Human Head*. 1953. Oil on canvas, each $23\frac{5}{8} \times 19\frac{3}{4}''$. Collection John Hewett, London. Ill. p. 146.

6 *Portrait of Robert Sainsbury*. 1955. Oil on canvas, $44 \times 38\frac{1}{4}''$. Collection Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sainsbury, London. Ill. p. 152

WILLIAM BLAKE 1757–1827

7 *An Allegorical Composition*, derived from Harvey's "Meditations among the Tombs". Watercolor, $16\frac{7}{8} \times 11\frac{1}{2}''$. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 55

8 *The Wise and Foolish Virgins*, Matthew XXV, 1-3. 1805? Pen and ink and watercolor, $15\frac{3}{4} \times 13''$. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 56

9 *Satan Arousing the Rebel Angels*, Milton, "Paradise Lost". 1808. Watercolor, $20\frac{1}{4} \times 15\frac{3}{8}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Ill. p. 59

10 Illustration to Dante's "Divine Comedy": *The Simoniac Pope*, "Inferno". 1824–27. Watercolor, $20\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{1}{2}''$. The Tate Gallery, London. Color plate p. 58

11 Illustration to Dante's "Divine Comedy": *The Whirlwind of Lovers*, "Inferno". 1824–27. Watercolor, $14\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{1}{2}''$. The City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham. Ill. p. 61

RICHARD PARKES BONINGTON 1802–1828

12 *Rosny-sur-Seine*. 1823. Oil on paper, $7\frac{1}{4} \times 11''$. Collection Dr. and Mrs. E. G. Recordon, Cambridge. Ill. p. 41

13 *Marly from the Terrace of St. Germain-en-Laye*. 1823. Oil on canvas, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 15''$. Collection The Hon. Mrs. David Bowes-Lyon, Hitchin, Herts. Color plate p. 39

14 *Scene in Normandy*. *c.*1823. Oil on canvas, $13 \times 17\frac{1}{4}''$. The National Gallery, London. Ill. p. 41

FORD MADOX BROWN 1821–1893

15 *Work*. 1852–65. Oil on canvas, $53 \times 77\frac{1}{8}''$. The City Art Gallery, Manchester. Color plate p. 67

16 *The Last of England*. 1855. Oil on panel, $32\frac{1}{2} \times 29\frac{1}{2}''$. The City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham. Ill. p. 69

JOHN CONSTABLE 1776–1837

17 *Barges on the Stour: Dedham Church in the Distance*. *c.*1812, Oil on paper on canvas, $10\frac{1}{4} \times 12\frac{1}{4}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Ill. p. 27

18 *View near Dedham*. *c.*1810–15. Oil on paper on canvas, $9\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{4}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Ill. p. 23

19 *Weymouth Bay* (sketch). *c.*1816–17. Oil on canvas, $21 \times 29\frac{1}{2}''$. The National Gallery, London. Ill. p. 27

20 *Study of Sky and Trees at Hampstead*. *c.*1821. Oil on paper, $9\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}''$ The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Ill. p. 28

21 "*The Grove*," *Hampstead*. 1820–25. Oil on paper, $10\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{4}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Ill. p. 28

22 *Sketch for a View on the Stour*. *c.*1822. Oil on canvas, $54 \times 77''$. Royal Holloway College, Englefield Green, Surrey. Ill. p. 31

23 *Sketch for the Opening of Waterloo Bridge*. *c.*1824. Oil on cardboard, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 19''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Ill. p. 29

24 *Summer Afternoon after a Shower*. 1824–28. Oil on canvas, $13\frac{3}{4} \times 17''$. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 29

25 *Salisbury Cathedral from the River* (sketch). 1829? Oil on canvas, $20\frac{3}{4} \times 30\frac{1}{4}''$. The National Gallery, London. Color plate p. 25

26 *Fording the River*. *c.*1831. Oil on canvas, $53\frac{1}{2} \times 74''$. The Guildhall Art Gallery, London. Ill. p. 32

27 *Stoke-by-Nayland*. 1836. Oil on canvas, $49 \times 66''$. The Art Institute of Chicago, W. W. Kimball Collection. Ill. p. 33. Exhibited in New York only.

JOHN SELL COTMAN 1782–1842

28 *Chirk Aqueduct*. *c.*1804. Watercolor, $12\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{8}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Color plate p. 47

29 *The New Bridge, Durham*. *c.*1805–06. Watercolor, $17 \times 12\frac{5}{8}''$. Collection Sir Edmund Bacon, Norwich. Ill. p. 49

DAVID COX 1783–1859

30 *Dieppe Pier: Stiff Breeze.* c.1832. Watercolor, $6\frac{5}{8} \times 9''$. Collection L. G. Duke, London. Ill. p. 51

31 *On Lancaster Sands, Low Tide.* c.1840. Watercolor, $10\frac{1}{8} \times 14\frac{1}{2}''$. Collection Mrs. Martin Hardie, Tonbridge, Kent. Ill. p. 50

32 *Sun, Wind and Rain.* 1845. Watercolor, $18 \times 24''$. The City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham. Ill. p. 51

JOHN CROME 1768–1821

33 *Moonrise on the Yare.* c.1811–16. Oil on canvas, $28 \times 43\frac{3}{4}''$. The National Gallery, London. Ill. p. 37

34 *View on Mousehold Heath, near Norwich.* c.1815. Oil on canvas, $21\frac{1}{2} \times 32''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Color plate p. 35

PETER DE WINT 1784–1849

35 *Gathering Corn.* Watercolor, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 25\frac{3}{4}''$. The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. Ill. p. 53

36 *Westminster Palace, Hall and Abbey.* Watercolor, $14 \times 31\frac{5}{8}''$. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Ill. p. 53

37 *Carrying Hay.* Watercolor, $14\frac{1}{2} \times 22\frac{1}{4}''$. The Laing Art Gallery and Museum, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Ill. p. 52

WILLIAM DYCE 1806–1864

38 *Pegwell Bay, Kent—a recollection of October 5th, 1858.* c.1859–60. Oil on canvas, $24\frac{3}{4} \times 35''$. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 79

THOMAS GIRTIN 1775–1802

39 *A View on the Wharfe.* 1801. Watercolor, $12\frac{1}{4} \times 20\frac{3}{4}''$. Collection Sir Edmund Bacon, Norwich. Ill. p. 44

40 *Stepping Stones on the Wharfe.* 1801. Watercolor, $12\frac{3}{4} \times 20\frac{1}{2}''$. Collection Thomas Girtin, London. Ill. p. 43

41 *Rue St. Denis, Paris.* 1802. Watercolor, $15\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{1}{4}''$. Collection Sir Edmund Bacon, Norwich. Ill. p. 45

WALTER GREAVES 1846–1930

42 *Chelsea Regatta.* Oil on canvas, $35\frac{3}{8} \times 75''$. The City Art Gallery, Manchester. Ill. p. 87

IVON HITCHENS *born* 1893

43 *Winter Walk, No. 1.* 1948. Oil on canvas, $20\frac{1}{4} \times 41''$. The Art Gallery of Toronto, gift from the Women's Committee Fund. Ill. p. 126

44 *Tree Landscape.* 1948. Oil on canvas, $20 \times 38\frac{3}{4}''$. Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, Room of Contemporary Art Collection. Ill. p. 127

45 *Mill Pool, Silent Afternoon.* 1951. Oil on canvas, $16\frac{1}{2} \times 58\frac{1}{2}''$. Gimpel Fils, London. Ill. p. 127

WILLIAM HOLMAN HUNT 1827–1910

46 *The Awakening Conscience.* 1853. Oil on canvas, $30\frac{1}{8} \times 22''$. Collection Sir Colin Anderson, London. Ill. p. 70

AUGUSTUS EDWIN JOHN *born* 1878

47 *Portrait of the German Foreign Minister, Dr. Gustav Stresemann.* c.1924. Oil on canvas, $43 \times 31''$. Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo. Ill. p. 103

48 *Portrait of Dylan Thomas.* c.1936. Oil on canvas, $16 \times 13\frac{1}{2}''$. The National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. Ill. p. 103

GWEN JOHN 1876–1939

49 *Self Portrait.* c.1900. Oil on canvas, $17\frac{5}{8} \times 13\frac{3}{4}''$. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 104

50 *Mère Poussepin.* Oil on canvas, $26 \times 19''$. The Art Gallery, Southampton. Ill. p. 105

PERCY WYNDHAM LEWIS *born* c.1884

51 *Bagdad.* 1927. Oil on plywood, $72 \times 31''$. The Zwemmer Gallery, London. Ill. p. 107

52 *Roman Actors.* 1934. Watercolor, gouache, ink, $15\frac{1}{8} \times 21\frac{1}{4}''$. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Francis E. Brennan Fund. Ill. p. 107

53 *Ezra Pound.* 1938–39. Oil on canvas, $30 \times 40''$. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 108

WILLIAM McTAGGART 1835–1910

54 *The Young Fishers.* 1876. Oil on canvas, $28 \times 42\frac{1}{2}''$. The National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh. Ill. p. 89

55 *The Storm.* 1883. Oil on canvas, $34\frac{1}{2} \times 54''$. The Museum and Art Gallery, Kirkcaldy. Ill. p. 90

SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS 1829–1896

56 *Christ in the House of His Parents (The Carpenter's Shop).* 1850. Oil on canvas, $33\frac{1}{2} \times 54''$. The Tate Gallery, London. Color plate p. 75

57 *The Blind Girl.* 1856. Oil on canvas, 31¾ × 21″. The City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham. Ill. p. 77

PAUL NASH 1889–1946

58 *Winter Sea.* 1925–37. Oil on canvas, 29 × 38″. The City Art Gallery, York. Color plate p. 130

59 *Landscape of the Megaliths.* 1937. Watercolor, 19¾ × 29¾″. Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, Room of Contemporary Art Collection. Ill. p. 128

60 *Image of the Stag.* 1938. Watercolor, 11½ × 15½″. Collection Sir Kenneth Clark, Hythe, Kent. Ill. p. 132

61 *Landscape of the Vernal Equinox II.* 1944. Oil on canvas, 21¼ × 29″. Collection Lady Lane, Stanwell Moor, Middlesex. Ill. p. 133

62 *Eclipse of the Sunflower.* 1945. Oil on canvas, 28 × 36″. The British Council, London. Ill. p. 131

63 *The Sunset Eye: Study 2.* 1945. Watercolor, 11¼ × 15¼″. Collection Lord Croft, Barkway, Herts. Ill. p. 132

BEN NICHOLSON *born* 1894

64 *Still Life with Fruit (Version 2).* 1926. Oil on canvas, 21¾ × 24″. The British Council, London. Ill. p. 121

65 *Still Life.* 1929–35. Oil and pencil on canvas, 26 × 32″. Collection C. S. Reddihough, Ilkley, Yorks. Color plate p. 119

66 *Au Chat Botté.* 1932. Oil on canvas, 36 × 47¾″. The City Art Gallery, Manchester. Ill. p. 122

67 *Relief.* 1939. Wood, painted, 32⅞ × 45″. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of H. S. Ede and the artist (by exchange). Ill. p. 124

68 *Still Life.* 1930–42. Oil and pencil on canvas, 18½ × 17¾″. Collection Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Martin, Tring, Herts. Ill. p. 124

69 *Still Life (Winter Landscape).* 1946. Oil on canvas, 22½ × 22¾″. Collection C. S. Reddihough, Ilkley, Yorks. Ill. p. 122

70 *Mousehole Nov 11—47.* Oil and pencil on canvas, 18¼ × 23″. The British Council, London. Ill. p. 125

71 *Still Life.* 1948. Oil and pencil on canvas, 42¾ × 47¾″. Collection Jan de Graaff, Gresham, Oregon. Ill. p. 123

72 *Sept 6—53 (Aztec).* Oil on canvas, 27 × 22″. Collection Miss Barbara Hepworth, St. Ives, Cornwall. Ill. p. 125

SAMUEL PALMER 1805–1881

73 *Oak Tree and Beech: Lullingstone Park.* 1828. Pen and ink, watercolor and gouache, 11⅝ × 18½″. Collection Miss Hilda Pryor, London. Ill. p. 62

74 *Cornfield by Moonlight with Evening Star.* c.1830. Watercolor, gouache and pen, 7¾ × 11¾″. Collection Sir Kenneth Clark, Hythe, Kent. Color plate p. 63

VICTOR PASMORE *born* 1908

75 *Evening, Hammersmith (Chiswick Reach).* 1943. Oil on canvas, 34¼ × 47¼″. The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, The Massey Collection of English Painting. Ill. p. 144

76 *River Scene, Hammersmith.* 1944. Oil on canvas, 24 × 36″. Collection Hugo Pitman, Odstock, Wilts. Ill. p.143

77 *The Evening Star.* 1945. Oil on canvas, 30 × 40″. Collection Sir Kenneth Clark, Hythe, Kent. Ill. p. 145

78 *Spiral motif in black and white—The Wave.* 1950. Oil on canvas, 32 × 42″. The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Ill. p.145

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI 1828–1882

79 *The Annunciation (Ecce Ancilla Domini).* 1850. Oil on canvas, mounted on panel, 28½ × 16½″. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 73

WALTER RICHARD SICKERT 1860–1942

80 *The Old Bedford.* c.1890. Oil on canvas, 29 × 24½″. The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Ill. p. 94

81 *The New Bedford.* c.1906–07. Oil on canvas, 36 × 14″. Collection Dr. Robert Emmons, Southampton. Ill. p. 94

82 *Ennui.* c.1913. Oil on canvas, 60 × 44″. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 95

83 *Brighton Pierrots.* 1915. Oil on canvas, 24½ × 29½″. Collection Morton Sands, London. Ill. p. 97

84 *Cicely Hay.* c.1917–18. Oil on canvas, 34 × 39″. The British Council, London. Color plate p. 92

85 *Lazarus Breaks His Fast.* c.1927. Oil on canvas, 30 × 25″. The Adams Gallery, London. Ill. p. 97

86 *The Raising of Lazarus.* 1928–29. Oil on canvas, 96 × 36″. The National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Felton Bequest. Ill. p. 98

87 *Sir Thomas Beecham Conducting.* c.1935. Oil on canvas, 38¾ × 41″. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, A. Conger Goodyear Fund. Ill. p. 99

88 *Girl on Steps.* c.1934–38. Oil on canvas, 22 × 18″. Collection H.E. Sir Roger Makins, Washington, D.C. Ill. p. 98

SIR MATTHEW SMITH *born* 1879

89 *Fitzroy St. Nude No. 2.* 1916. Oil on canvas, 40 × 30″. The British Council, London. Color plate p. 114

90 *The Little Seamstress.* 1919. Oil on canvas, 36 × 25½″. Temple Newsam House and City Art Gallery, Leeds. Ill. p. 116

91 *Cornish Landscape.* 1920. Oil on canvas, 26⅞ × 31½″. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, extended loan from Mrs. Stanley B. Resor. Ill. p. 116

92 *Couleur de Rose.* 1924. Oil on canvas, 21¼ × 28¾″. The British Council, London. Ill. p. 117

93 *Lilies and Delphiniums.* 1929–30. Oil on canvas, 21 × 25¼″. Collection Benn W. Levy, London. Ill. p. 117

STANLEY SPENCER *born* 1891

94 *The Nativity.* 1912. Oil on panel, 42 × 60″. The Slade School of Art, University College, London. Ill. p. 110

95 *Swan Upping.* 1914–19. Oil on canvas, 58 × 45½″. Collection J. L. Behrend, Llanwrin, Machynlleth, Mont. Ill. p. 111

96 *The Last Supper.* 1920. Oil on canvas, 36 × 49¼″. Collection J. L. Behrend, Llanwrin, Machynlleth, Mont. Ill. p. 112

97 *The Nursery.* 1936. Oil on canvas, 30¼ × 36⅛″. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of the Contemporary Art Society, London. Ill. p. 111

PHILIP WILSON STEER 1860–1942

98 *Girls Running: Walberswick Pier.* 1894. Oil on canvas, 24½ × 36½″. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 101

99 *Landscape.* 1906. Oil on canvas, 20 × 24⅛″. Collection Ronald Tree, New York. Ill. p. 100

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105 *Study for The Crucifixion.* 1947. Oil on cardboard, 40 × 48″. The British Council, London. Ill. p. 141

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108 *Portrait of Arthur Jeffress.* 1955. Oil on canvas, 57 × 48″. Collection Arthur Jeffress, London. Ill. p. 139

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118 *Nocturne in Blue and Green. c.*1877? Oil on canvas, 19 × 23½″. Collection the Misses Alexander, London. Color plate p. 83

119 *Old Battersea Bridge: Nocturne in blue and gold.* 1877. Oil on canvas, 26¼ × 19¾″. The Tate Gallery, London. Ill. p. 81

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