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Turner's *Bonneville, Savoy* (*c*.1804–6; B & J 148), inspired by the artist's first visit to Switzerland in 1802, is currently with the London dealers Lowell Libson & Johnny Yarker Ltd. Painted in oil on panel and measuring 34.9 by 4.89 cm, this exquisite work was commissioned by Walter Fawkes but was sold by his descendants in 1890. For much of the last decade it has been on loan to the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Cover: *Whalers (Boiling Blubber) Entangled in Flaw Ice, Endeavouring to Extricate Themselves* (1846; B & J 426) (see review on pp. 22–5)

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Abbreviations

B & J	Martin Butlin and Evelyn Joll, *The Paintings of J.M.W. Turner,* 1977, revised edition, 1984
W	Andrew Wilton, *The Life and Work of J.M.W. Turner,* 1979
R	W.G. Rawlinson, *The Engraved Work of J.M.W. Turner, R.A.,* 1908 and 1913
TB	A.J. Finberg, *A Complete Inventory of the Drawings of the Turner Bequest,* 1909
F	A.J. Finberg, *The History of Turner's Liber Studiorum, with a New Catalogue Raisonné,* 1924

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Welcome

Welcome to the latest issue of TSN which I hope will provide a little diversion from the many grim issues that are confronting us all in our daily lives. In times of trouble, both in recent years and over the ages, art in all its guises has been a solace and a source of comfort for many. Turner is a prime example of a painter whose work brings balm to the soul and pleasure to the eye in the worst of times and it is hoped that this issue of TSN can provide some such balm and pleasure as well as interest in the Spring of 2020.

Our first article, by **Jeremy Tambling**, a writer and critic who has held Chairs in Literature in the universities of both Hong Kong and Manchester, marks the 150th anniversary of the death of Charles Dickens in 1870 (pp. 3–8). Tambling's article delves deeply into the cross-currents between Turner, Ruskin and Dickens, providing comparisons and parallels that will linger long in the mind.

This is followed by an article focusing on the present day and the remarkable inspiration that a contemporary artist has derived from Turner's correspondence rather than his paintings. **Sam Smiles**' article on the engaging and inventive work of Tessa Sulston, an artist based in Cornwall, can be found on pp. 9–12.

Turner's visits to Venice, and the works that the city inspired, are subjects of perennial fascination for his admirers. On pp. 13–17 **Ian Warrell** revisits topics that have been exercising his thoughts since the fine exhibition he curated at Tate Britain in 2003 and presents new insights into works both celebrated and less familiar.

Malmesbury Abbey (1827; W 805), recently acquired by the Athelstan Museum, Malmesbury

Two shorter pieces address more specialised subjects. On pp. 18–19 our Chairman **Pieter van der Merwe** considers a Turner watercolour vignette for Sir Walter Scott which is currently known only through its engraving and an early nineteenth-century copy. Our Hon. Secretary **Nick Powell** has been investigating the real-life story of Francis Sherrell, the 'painter's boy' of Andrew Wilton's recent 'historical caprice' (reviewed in TSN 132) and has discovered that his later career was in many ways even more Turnerian than his early years (pp. 20–1).

Our Review section (pp. 22–5) concentrates on the exhibition of Turners from Tate Britain which has recently been enthralling visitors to the Mystic Seaport Museum, Connecticut. **Robert K. Wallace** found much to enjoy in both the exhibits and the venue, not to mention the accompanying book. Our readers will understand his enthusiasm when they see the installation shots showing the interior of the museum. Interestingly, this magnificent travelling exhibition, due to be seen in Paris in 2020, has its antecedents in the 2007 Tate exhibition 'Hockney on Turner Watercolours' which was accompanied by the publication *Turner Watercolours* by David Blayney Brown. That published selection drew on choices made for Hockney's show by Brown himself and a team of Tate colleagues: Ian Warrell, Martin Myrone, Nicola Moorby, Matthew Imms and Philippa Allsopp.

Turner Society news and notices may be found on pp. 12, 17 and 25, Clore Gallery news on p. 17, and some suggestions for your bookshelf on p. 19. Members' attention is particularly drawn to the announcement about email, **Keeping in Touch**, on p. 12.

This issue of TSN concludes with our regular and invaluable **Salerooms Report** kindly compiled by Jan Piggott (pp. 26–7) and the **Gazetteer** (p. 28). The Editor is, as ever, immensely grateful to all her helpers and contributors!

Cecilia Powell

Chairman's Note

After the delight of Turner's early *Walton Bridges* avoiding export and going to East Anglia, reported in our last issue, this one has to register 'dole' on his *Dark Rigi* watercolour of 1842. That was also put under temporary export stop in April 2019, with a price of £10 million to be matched – double what the Tate raised to retain the *Blue Rigi* for the nation some years ago. Regrettably but unsurprisingly, no appropriate UK bidder came forward this time so the 'dark' version has now gone to a private buyer in North America: one can't win them all. There is, nevertheless, a further local cause for congratulation, to the Athelstan Museum at Malmesbury: with Art Fund and Lottery support, it has just acquired Turner's watercolour of Malmesbury Abbey (W 805).

This was informally reported at the first Society event of 2020, when a packed joint audience of our members and Friends of Turner's House enjoyed a presentation at the Bank of England on the new £20 note, which has Turner and the 'Fighting Temeraire' on the back. The release date for the notes being 20.2.2020, you may have a few when you read this. The Society, of course, applauds the Bank for selecting Turner to represent the 'visual arts' this way, out of over 550 alternatives suggested by a public canvass in 2016. That its retiring Governor, Mark Carney, made the choice from a final shortlist also allows us to thank him for a minor but judicious decision in a tenure distinguished for greater ones. Artistic and nautical pedants will also approve that – 175 years after J.T. Willmore's engraving of 'The Old Temeraire' notoriously 'flipped' Turner's technically incorrect order of funnel and mast on the steam-tug – the Bank's engravers have skilfully reverted to what Turner's painting shows. At this event on 31 January – like it or not (but perhaps appropriately) 'Brexit day' – the Bank's Chief Cashier, Sarah John, gave a brief talk on the note's genesis, with a summary of the painting's context by me: should anyone wish to attend a less hurried version of the latter, I am repeating it at the Bank on 21 May, as part of its normal public talks programme (visit https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/museum/whats-on/2020/museum-late).

Two final matters of pleasure and regret: the former is the election of Rebecca Salter as the first female President of the Royal Academy, in succession to Christopher Le Brun (who remains one of our Vice-Presidents). What Turner would have thought, we cannot know but – her other qualifications aside – it is not before time and we have congratulated her. More sadly, we have accepted the resignation of Anthony Bailey as a long-standing Society Vice-President, and are sorry to hear of the health and related issues which lie behind it: he has instead been happy to accept Honorary Membership and we send him all good wishes for 2020 – as also mine to everyone.

Pieter van der Merwe

Additional Autumn Event

TURNER AND THE COUNTY OF KENT

Lecture by Nick Reese

Royal Asiatic Society
14 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2HD
Wednesday, 7 October 2020
6 for 6.30 p.m.
Admission free;
no tickets required

Turner visited Kent throughout his life, from his early schooldays to his latter years in Margate. The county provided him with both subject matter and inspiration and he made depictions of its landscape, coastline, harbours, and monuments throughout his career. Nick Reese, who has embarked on a county-by-county study of Turner's work, will examine all aspects of the artist's relationship with the 'Garden of England'.

A Tale of Three Minds: Turner, Ruskin, and Dickens

Jeremy Tambling

John Ruskin, the bicentenary of whose birth was celebrated in 2019, was soaked in the writings of Charles Dickens, seven years his senior, whose death 150 years ago is being commemorated in 2020. Ruskin, Turner's primary critic, notices a Turneresque Dickens, though he never aligns the two. Dickens knew Turner, though we are tantalisingly short of information here. He knew he had been a 'barber's boy': that appears in a joint letter written to *The Times* on 8 February 1856 (*Letters* 8.729). They had, then, shared a lower middle-class status. Dickens' introduction to Turner was perhaps via Samuel Rogers who took to Dickens early and was the dedicatee of *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840). We know from John Forster, Dickens' first biographer, that Turner was present at a dinner at the Trafalgar Tavern, Greenwich, for Dickens before the latter's Italian journey in 1844; Forster sat next to Turner 'who had enveloped his throat, that sultry summer day, in a huge red belcher-handkerchief which nothing would induce him to remove' (*Letters* 4.147). That Dickens knew Turner's paintings is clear from a letter to the artist Daniel Maclise on Mediterranean colours, alluding casually to the 1842 *War: The Exile and the Rock-Limpet* (B & J 400) (22 July 1844, *Letters* 4.159).[1] A further letter to Forster speaks of the impossibility of capturing Venice in description: 'Canaletti and Stanny [Clarkson Stanfield, 1793–1867], miraculous in their truth. Turner, very noble' (12 November 1844, *Letters* 4.217).

This Stanfield / Turner pairing cannot be accidental, for Stanfield, Dickens' friend since 1837, and the dedicatee of *Little Dorrit* (1857), had exhibited *Venice from the Dogana* at the Royal Academy in 1833. Turner (in Venice in 1819, 1833, and 1840) had shown – same exhibition, different rooms – *Bridge of Sighs, Ducal Palace and Custom-House, Venice*, which includes Canaletto, painting (B & J 349).[2] Canaletto and Stanfield both give a certain 'truth' which may loosely be called photographic in its clarity: Ruskin commented that Stanfield should 'learn how to conceal' (3.585). Turner, whose Venice is equally eighteenth-century – Butlin and Joll note that the *Athenaeum* in 1833 praised it over Canaletto – paints less monumentally. Though it is centred by the St Mark's Campanile, St Mark's is not visible, save for two domes glimpsed behind the Ducal Palace, while the pillar of the Lion of St Mark is almost invisible. Unlike Stanfield, he doubles the buildings seen across the water by reflection, giving them aura contrasting with the unsorted wreckage of wood, sails and detritus in the painting's front left, where Canaletto paints, almost invisible, part of the almost indistinguishable foreground of litter.[3] It is a hint of wreckage, to which I will return.

Another Dickens letter to Forster, after seeing the Niagara Falls in 1868, shows what Turner has taught him:

> All away to the horizon on our right was a wonderful confusion of bright green and white water. As we stood watching it with our faces to the top of the Falls, our backs were towards the sun. The majestic valley below the Falls, so seen through the vast cloud of spray, was made of rainbow. The high banks, the riven rocks, the forests, the bridge, the buildings, the air, the sky, were all made of rainbow. Nothing in Turner's finest water-colour drawings, done in his greatest day, is so ethereal, so imaginative, so gorgeous in colour, as what I then beheld. I seemed to be lifted off the earth and to be looking into Heaven (12.75).

Dickens reaches something of Turner's interest in water (and watercolours), in vortices, and energy. But there is much more we would like to know, biographically, about the relationship between Dickens and Turner: it is not a subject, curiously, which has attracted Dickens scholars, who tend not to think laterally about their author (even Dickens and

Robert Graves ARA after Daniel Maclise RA, *Charles Dickens. Aet. 27*, the frontispiece to John Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. I, 1872

Ruskin is very under-explored).

Perhaps Dickens' landscape interest borrows from Ruskin, whose *Modern Painters* 1 (1843) recalls *American Notes* (1842), noting how Dickens on a barge deck looks upwards, not at, but *through* the sky (3.347). A Ruskin letter of 1863 has this surprising, generous note: 'his powers of description have never been enough esteemed. The storm in which Steerforth is wrecked, in *Copperfield*; the sunset before Tigg is murdered by Jonas Chuzzlewit; and the French road from Dijon in *Dombey and Son*, and numbers of other such bits, are quite unrivalled in their way' (36.432). Ruskin links three Dickens passages which signify death coming on, anticipated and violent. There is, indeed, 'nothing in sea-description, detailed, like Dickens's storm at the death of Ham' (3.570): I shall return to it.[4] The sunset in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844) opens conventionally, as Montague Tigg, about to be murdered, enters a wood; it becomes complex:[5]

> The last rays of the sun were shining in, aslant, making a path of golden light along the stems and branches in its range, which even as he looked began to die away; yielding gently to the twilight that came creeping on. It was so very quiet that the soft and stealthy moss about the trunks of some old trees, seemed to have grown out of the silence, and to be its proper offspring. Those other trees which were subdued by blasts of wind in winter time, had not quite tumbled down, but being caught by others, lay all bare and scathed across their leafy arms, as if unwilling to disturb the general repose by the crash of their fall. Vistas of silence opened everywhere, into the heart and inmost recesses of the wood: beginning with the likeness of an aisle, a cloister, or a ruin open to the sky; then tangling off into a deep green rustling mystery, through which gnarled trunks, and twisted boughs, and ivy-covered stems, and trembling leaves, and bark-stripped bodies of old trees stretched out at length, were faintly seen in beautiful confusion (47.679).

This wood and sunset also presage a 'creeping' or 'stealthy' death, as in the synaesthesia of 'vistas of silence'. 'Vistas', recalling how Dickens looks through the skies in *American Notes*, derives from the language of the picturesque, like 'scathed', for which the *OED* gives a first example from William Gilpin's *Remarks on Forest Scenery* (1791). 'Vistas' parallels Turner paintings where a vortex of light leads away from the immediate foreground.

The 'French road' chapter from *Dombey and Son* (1848) ends with Dickens' version of *Rain, Steam, and Speed* (B & J 409; 1844) when a train kills Carker, escaping from Dijon to Kent. It was a death foretold, since, on those French roads, Carker was attracted towards, possessed by, death, and to the climactic 'fiery devil, thundering along so smoothly, tracked through the distant valley by a glare of light and lurid smoke, and gone!' (55.839).[6] The train is less seen than its 'trace', so that when it comes again, in the night, it is

> a trembling of the ground, and quick vibration in his ears; a distant shriek; a dull light advancing, quickly changed to two red eyes, and a fierce fire, dropping glowing coals; an irresistible bearing on of a great roaring and dilating mass; a high wind, and a rattle – another come and gone ... (55.839).

The object, neither animal nor machine, more indefinable, has indeed gone, but is known by what is in its wake: that, like the red appearing out of gloom, resembles Turner.

Fors Clavigera letter 19 (1872) shows Ruskin's attentive reading of Forster's *Life of Dickens*, noting, though not quoting, Dickens' description of rain in Glencoe in his letter to Forster of 11 July 1841. For example:[7]

> Through the whole glen, which is ten miles long, torrents were boiling and foaming, and sending up in every direction spray like the smoke of great fires. They were rushing down every hill and mountain side, and tearing like devils across the path, and down into the depths of the rocks. Some of the hills looked as if they were full of silver, and had cracked in a hundred places. Others looked as if they were frightened and had broken out into a deadly sweat. In others there was no compromise or division of streams, but one great torrent came roaring down with a deafening noise, and a rushing of water that was quite appalling.

This sense of an explosion of water pairs with the violence of rain in Turner, and suggests, without it being articulated, a connection between the two in Ruskin's mind. And this account of the rain's irresistible force is not different from a sense of the train, as with Dickens comparing the flow of water with devils, the train of *Dombey and Son* being a 'fiery devil'; the comparison of the water gushing to the smoke of great fires industrialises the landscape, as Turner does.

To this Turneresque weather in Dickens may be added fog in *Bleak House* (1853), the 'London Particular', a Dickens coinage Ruskin adopted in 'The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century' (1884) (34.15).[8] Lack of colour in dull skies, which Ruskin calls the contamination of the late nineteenth century, forms the city's 'monotony' (34.270). Here, Dickens' influence is as pervasive as Turner's, in showing 'a loathsome mass of sultry and foul fog, like smoke' (34.37). But one positive London passage in Dickens, when Pip is helping Magwitch to escape down the Thames in *Great Expectations* (1861), seems Turner-derived:[9]

> The winking lights upon the bridges were already pale, the coming sun was like a marsh of fire on the horizon. The river, still dark and mysterious, was spanned by bridges that were turning coldly grey, with here and there at top a warm touch from the burning in the sky. As I looked along the clustered roofs, with church towers and spires shooting into the unusually clear air, the sun rose up, and a veil seemed to be drawn from the river, and millions of sparkles burst out upon its waters. From me, too, a veil seemed to be drawn, and I felt strong and well.

Water and fire are both in this passage, where we move from the loosely patterned to the sharply distinguished separate points of light, with shootings upwards (like shooting-stars) and light going up in the image of the veil, and the sparkles from the water, where light comes from above and below simultaneously, showing itself in colour.

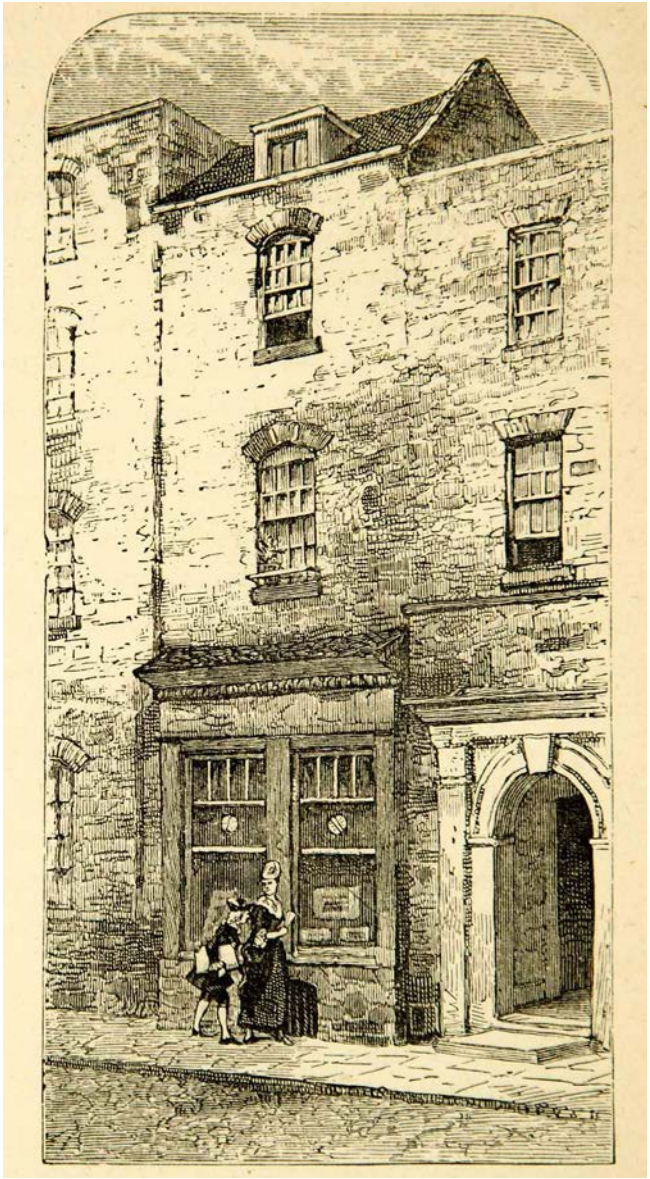
Ruskin implicitly connects Turner and Dickens by writing about Covent Garden. 'The Two Boyhoods' (*Modern Painters* 5, 1860) describes Turner's boyhood, and his studio in Hand Court, adjacent to 26 Maiden Lane:

> [at] the south-west corner of Covent Garden, a square brick pit or well is formed by a close-set block of houses, to the back windows of which it admits a few rays of light. Access to the bottom of it is obtained out of Maiden Lane, through a narrow archway and an iron gate; and if you stand long enough under the archway to accustom your eyes to the darkness you may see on the left hand a narrow door, which formerly gave quiet access to a respectable barber's shop ... (7.375).

Maiden Lane lies north of the Strand, and of the Thames, and was then, prior to the Embankment, a much closer presence. Ruskin says it was 'never certainly a cheerful' area (7.376). Covent Garden's Piazza and St Paul's Church, was commissioned from Inigo Jones. Turner's parents were married there, Turner christened there. Ruskin thinks of 'deep furrowed cabbage-leaves at the greengrocer's; magnificence of oranges in wheelbarrows round the corner; and Thames' shore within three minutes' race'. Turner's foregrounds 'had always … greengrocery at the corners. Enchanted oranges gleam in Covent Gardens of the Hesperides; and great ships go to pieces in order to scatter chests of them on the waves' (7.376).

This recalls Turner's *Entrance of the Meuse: Orange-merchant on the Bar, going to Pieces; Brill Church bearing S.E. by S., Masenluys E. by S.* (B & J 139; 1819). The merchant-ship is Dutch (of the House of Orange); its cargo, oranges, and it goes to pieces on a sandbank where the Meuse reaches the sea at Rotterdam. Turner's painting is topographically exact, with the two towns seen on the horizon; Ruskin stresses the fishermen scavenging for oranges, as if they were boys in Covent Garden. Turner had toured Holland in 1817. Fred Bachrach makes the painting an allegory of Holland's economy shipwrecked; and notes that a schooner was wrecked off Whitehaven (reported in *The Times* on 16 January 1819), carrying oranges, making this 'another illustration of the amazing combination of memory, association of thought, and urge to communicate topical feeling' characterising Turner.[10] And Ruskin, using word-play – including his own fantasies about the Hesperides, discussed in his next chapter, 'The Nereids' Guard' on Turner's *The Goddess of Discord choosing the Apple of Contention in the Garden of the Hesperides* (B & J 57; 1806) – combines the Garden of the Hesperides and the Garden of Eden in Covent Garden.[11] If Eden symbolises England, the ambiguity of what the Hesperides represents – wealth producing discord, since *two* apples imply division – is capped by the dragon guarding the garden; volcanic, industrial power, creating a 'paradise of smoke' (7.408). Yet Covent Garden is also hopeful, since, unlike the Hesperides, it gives oranges, not apples.

So Ruskin associates Turner with London – Dickens' city – and its river, recalling Turner's death by the river, in Chelsea, looking westwards (12.133). London takes precedence over Venice in grotesque ugliness, and Ruskin's description is Dickensian: 'No matter how ugly it is – has it anything about



House in Maiden Lane in which Turner was born,
late nineteenth-century wood engraving

it like Maiden Lane or like Thames' shore? If so, it shall be painted … Turner could endure ugliness …. Dead brick walls, blank square windows, old clothes, market-womanly types of humanity – anything fishy or muddy, like Billingsgate or Hungerford Market, had great attraction for him; black barges, patched sails, and every possible condition of fog.' After saying that the 'noblest' of his endurances was dirt:

> no Venetian ever draws anything foul, but Turner devoted picture after picture to the illustration of effects of dinginess, smoke, soot, dust, and dusty texture; old sides of boats, weedy roadside vegetation, dung-hills, straw-yards, and all the soilings and stains of every common labour.
>
> And more than this, he not only could endure, but enjoyed and looked for litter, like Covent Garden wreck after the market ... and he delights in shingle, debris, and heaps of fallen stones (7.377–8).

Twice in two pages Ruskin evokes wreckage: the sea's and the market's. The word 'foul' is significant, and it should be compared with the 'foul fog' (*Macbeth*'s 'fair is foul …. Hover through the fog and filthy air') of the 'Storm-Cloud'

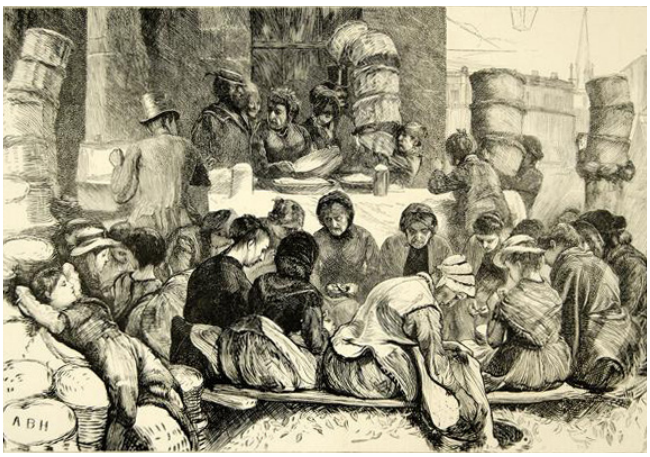
essay. ‘Foul’ makes Ruskin say how much Turner regarded the poor; and ‘the poor in direct relations with the rich’ before he returns to city commerce, focused on Thames warehouses, and ‘that mysterious forest below London Bridge on one side; and, on the other, with these masses of human power and national wealth which weigh upon us, at Covent Garden here, with strange compression, and crush us into narrow Hand Court’ (7.379).

Hand Court, opposite Maiden Lane, housed Turner’s studio in the 1790s. Ruskin takes the forest-image from *The Harbours of England* (1856), which speaks admiringly of fishing-boats, colliers, ships of the line, ‘and the “new Forest” of mast and yard that follows the winding of the Thames’ (12.28).[12] Ruskin considers what Turner saw between Covent Garden and Wapping, and specifically in Maiden Lane: ‘religion maintained … at point of constable’s staff; but, at other times, placed under the custody of the beadle, within certain black and unstately iron railings of St Paul’s, Covent Garden. Among the wheelbarrows and over the vegetables, no perceptible dominance of religion’, only ‘high pews, heavy elocution, and cold grimness of behaviour’. Ruskin notes that only once did Turner draw a clergyman (7.382).[13] Turner saw ‘in the present work of men, meanness, aimlessness, unsightliness; thin-walled, lath-divided, narrow-garreted houses of clay; booths of a darksome Vanity Fair, busily base’ (7.385).

Interest in Turner as socially radical, like Dickens, deepens; ‘Vanity Fair’ makes him an allegorical artist. This Covent Garden the young Dickens also loved, partly through observation and through being lent George Colman’s comic verse, *Broad Grins*, which opens:[14]

> Centrick, in London noise, and London follies,
> Proud Covent Garden blooms, in smoky glory;
> For chairmen, coffee-rooms, piazzas, dollies,
> Cabbages, and comedians, fam’d in story!

According to Forster’s biography (1.14), Colman ‘seized [Dickens’] fancy very much; and he was so impressed by its description of Covent Garden, in the piece called the “Elder Brother” that he stole down to the market by himself to compare it with the book. He remembered, as he said in telling me this, snuffing up the flavor of the faded cabbage leaves as if were the very breath of comic fiction.’ It was at that time that his uncle [Thomas Barrow] was shaved by ‘a very odd old barber out of Dean Street, Soho, who was never tired of reviewing the events of the last war, and especially of detecting



The London of Turner and Dickens:
lower left, ‘A.B.H.’, *Early Morning in Covent Garden Market – Shelling Peas*, wood engraving, 1870
above, George Cruikshank, *The Streets, Morning*, etching, from *Sketches by Boz*, 1839;
below, ‘Phiz’, *Jo, The Crossing Sweeper*, etching, from *Bleak House*, 1853

Napoleon's mistakes, and rearranging his whole life for him on a plan of his own' (Forster, 15). Michael Slater speculates that this may have been Turner's father, who provided then the substance of a lost description by the child Dickens, perhaps like *Tristram Shandy*'s Uncle Toby.[15] Covent Garden was central for Dickens' writing.[16] Bill Sikes wants to know why Fagin is so concerned with corrupting Oliver Twist when 'there are fifty boys snoozing about Common Garden every night'.[17] 'Night Walks' finds 'one of the worst night sights I know in London … in the children who prowl about [Covent Garden], who sleep in the baskets, fight for the offal, dart at any object they think they can lay their thieving hands on, dive under the carts and barrows, dodge the constables, and are perpetually making a blunt pattering on the pavement of the Piazza with the rain of their naked feet'.[18]

'Phiz', *Tom-all-Alone's,* etching from *Bleak House*, 1853

Wreckage, like that which drowns Steerforth and Ham in *David Copperfield* (1850), Ruskin sees pervasive in Turner, as with *Snowstorm: Steamboat off a Harbour's Mouth making Signals in Shallow Water and going by the Lead* (B & J 398; 1842); a presentation of 'sea-motion, mist, and light'. He continues with *The Slave Ship* (*Slavers throwing overboard the dead and dying – Typhon coming on*) (B & J 385; 1840), with its Atlantic sunset.[19] Ruskin describes Turner's sea before reaching

> the mist of night, which gathers cold and low, advancing like the shadow of death upon the guilty ship as it labours amidst the lightning of the sea, its thin masts written upon the sky in lines of blood, girded with condemnation in that fearful hue which signs the sky with horror, and mixes its flaming flood with the sunlight, and, cast far along the desolate heave of the sepulchral waves, incarnadines the multitudinous sea (3.572).

Ruskin annotates the ship's guilt: 'she is a slaver, throwing her slaves overboard. The near sea is encumbered with corpses', and the dying bodies are prey to monsters of the deep (it would be too naturalistic to call them sharks; they partake of the mythical, like the word 'Typhon', the name for the monstrous).[20] Everything shows 'the power, majesty, and deathfulness of the open, deep, illimitable sea' (3.573). *The Harbours of England*, recalling his word 'deathfulness', evokes a 'true' Atlantic sea-wave:

> its green mountainous giddiness of wrath, its overwhelming crest – heavy as iron, fitful as flame, clashing against the sky in long cloven edge, – its furrowed flanks, all ghastly clear, deep in transparent death, but all laced across with lurid nets of spume, and tearing open into meshed interstices their churned veil of silver fury, showing still the calm grey abyss below; that has no fury and no voice, but is as a grave always open, which the green sighing mounds do but hide for an instant as they pass (13.37–8).

Green mountains, burial mounds covering the abyss, recall Ham swimming out to the wreck in *David Copperfield* and facing 'a high, green, vast hill-side of water, moving on shoreward, from beyond the ship', which takes both him and the ship (55.800). Ruskin comments that Turner knew 'that both ships and sea were things that broke to pieces' (13.42).[21] Fascination appears here with the ruin, in which Turner, Ruskin and Dickens invest in different ways. Ruskin adds that Turner, after 1818, in portraying a shipwreck off the coast at Ilfracombe, '*never afterwards painted a ship quite in fair order*', and concludes, from his last marine picture, *The Wreck Buoy*, that after 1818, 'when first he saw a ship rent asunder, he never beheld one at sea, without, in his mind's eye, at the same time, seeing her skeleton' (13.42, 43).[22]

In *Great Expectations* too, Dickens, preparing for the imminent breaking to pieces of Pip's fortunes, connects London and the Thames outgoing eastwards towards the sea and shows the dissolution of all solid forms and structures:

> It was wretched weather; stormy and wet, stormy and wet; and mud, mud, mud, deep in all the streets. Day after day, a vast heavy veil had been driving over London from the East, and it drove still, as if in the East there were an Eternity of cloud and wind. So furious had been the gusts, that high buildings in town had had the lead stripped off their roofs; and in the country, trees had been torn up, and sails of windmills carried away; and gloomy accounts had come in from the coast, of shipwreck and death. Violent blasts of rain had accompanied these rages of wind ... (39.331).

Ruskin on *The Slave Ship* speaks of the '*multitudinous* sea', quoting *Macbeth*, and Aeschylus, who uses a phrase Ruskin translated as '*innumerable* smile'.[23] The sea exists as neither singular, nor plural, nor as an entity, rather, as Hazlitt hints, a negation:[24]

> the artist delights to go back to the first chaos of the world, or to that state of things when the waters were separated from the dry land and light from darkness, but as yet no living thing nor tree was seen upon the face of the earth. All is 'without form and void'. Some one said of his landscapes that they were 'pictures of nothing, and very like'.

Dickens' fog, rain, and mud imply shapeless primeval landscapes. Hazlitt's sense of a negative in Turner praises what is modern in him; the sea as neither formed nor unformed, not one thing, reality as that which cannot be represented because it is not 'there' as a definable presence: these are pictures of nothing, attempting the negative.[25] We start with the primal nothing; we progress to decay within history. What fascinates is the sense of an event which has, or might have happened, all that is left behind being a trace. Turner's watercolour *Dawn after the Wreck* (W 1398; *c*.1841) has only a dog on the sands marking what has happened at sea.[26] Wreckage indicates the catastrophic, and is the image inside *The Fighting Temeraire, tugged to her Last Berth to be broken up* (B & J 377; 1839). The tug's blackness resembles *Peace – Burial at Sea* (B & J 399; 1842), for David Wilkie's funeral off Gibraltar, from the deck of a East Indian vessel: Ruskin criticised its blackness (13.159–60), as though anxious about this negativity, which associates with the black smoke of the steamship, and the central flare which suggests the factory process.

Rain, Steam, and Speed implies the allegorical: this real event has no place in that it comes to go, like the Biblical 'it came to pass'. 'Speed', as an abstract, abstracts something else in the painting; speed is an absolute. All passes with the evanescence of steam which, like Dickens' 'green wave', connotes power; steam and smoke double the force of cloud and mist in Turner's *Staffa, Fingal's Cave* (1832; B & J 347). Turner and Dickens share fascination with disaster: fire, storms; warfare; snowstorms; Vesuvius erupting: Ruskin says 'there is no form of violent death which [Turner] has not painted' (7.437). That is even more true of Dickens: spontaneous combustion, suicide, burning, drowning, freezing, falling down a mineshaft, murder. The comparison implies an apocalyptic note: in Turner, and in Dickens, who begins *Bleak House* with 'the death of the sun'. Wreckage, ruin, entropy: Ruskin intuited connections, and they enhance our sense of artist and novelist.

Notes

This article adapts and develops materials in my chapter 'Wreckage and Ruin: Turner, Dickens, Ruskin' in Leon Litvack and Nathalie Vanfasse, eds, *Reading Dickens Differently* (Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2020).

1 All Ruskin quotations are taken from the Library edition, ed. E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols, 1903–12. See vols 3.285–9 and 13.160–1. Dickens' letters are quoted from the Pilgrim Edition (OUP, 12 vols, 1965–2002).

2 For Canaletto, Stanfield, and Turner in Venice, see David Solkin, ed., *Turner and the Masters* (Tate, 2009), 178–81, 200–1; Ian Warrell, ed., with essays by David Laven, Jan Morris and Cecilia Powell, *Turner and Venice* (Tate, 2003), 18–19, 105–7.

3 See David Trotter, *Cooking with Mud: The Idea of Mess in Nineteenth-Century Art and Fiction* (OUP, 2000), 33–59.

4 Dickens, *David Copperfield*, ed. Jeremy Tambling (Penguin, 2004), ch. 55. Dickens would have been interested in *Turner's Life-Boat and Manby Apparatus going off to a Stranded Vessel* (B & J 336; 1831) and *Rockets and Blue Lights (Close at Hand) to Warn Steam Boats of Shoal Water* (B & J 387; 1840). See Christine Riding and Richard Johns, *Turner & the Sea* (National Maritime Museum, 2013), 256 (cat. no. 130). Manby's apparatus dates from 1807. Ruskin discusses the *David Copperfield* storm (ch. 55) in *Modern Painters* 4 (contrasting it with the writhing of the valley at Chamouni (5.329). See Nanako Konoshima, 'Storm and Sunset: Turnerian Landscapes in *David Copperfield*', *Dickensian* 113 (2017), 150-159.

5 Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, ed. Patricia Ingham (Penguin, 1999).

6 Dickens, *Dombey and Son*, ed. Andrew Sanders (Penguin, 2002).

7 John Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens* [1872-4], ed. A.J. Hoppé, 2 vols (Everyman, 1969), 1.159.

8 Dickens, *Bleak House,* ed. Nicola Bradbury (Penguin, 2003), 3.42.

9 Dickens, *Great Expectations,* ed. Angus Calder (Penguin, 1965), 53.444. I owe this example to Janice Carlisle, *Common Scents: Comparative Encounters in High Victorian Fiction* (OUP, 2004), 66.

10 Fred G.H. Bachrach, *Turner's Holland* (Tate, 1994), 44–5 (cat. no. 10).

11 See Robert Hewison, Ian Warrell and Stephen Wildman, eds, *Ruskin, Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites* (Tate, 2000), 28–9 (cat. no. 49); see Dinah Birch, *Ruskin's Myths* (Clarendon Press, 1988), 45–7.

12 For the Thames estuary, see the comments in *Turner: 1775-1851* (Royal Academy, 1974), 73–4; Joanna Selborne, *Paths to Fame: Turner Watercolours from The Courtauld Gallery* (Courtauld Gallery and Wordsworth Trust, 2008), 132–3.

13 For Turner and human figures, and for Hogarth, and de Loutherbourg, and the theatre (another aspect of Covent Garden) see Eric Shanes, *Turner's Human Landscape* (1990), 295–338.

14 George Colman the Younger, 'The Elder Brother', *Broad Grins, Comprising, with New Additional Tales in Verse, Those Formerly Publish'd Under the Title: My Night-Gown and Slippers'* (Cadell & Davies, 1819), 109. Turner also knew Colman's work: see David Blayney Brown, '*Verses: 'A Reckoning with Time', after George Colman (Inscription by Turner)* 1807 by Joseph Mallord William Turner', catalogue entry, May 2006, in *J.M.W. Turner: Sketchbooks, Drawings and Watercolours*, ed. David Blayney Brown (London: Tate Research Publication, December 2012).

15 Michael Slater, *Charles Dickens* (Yale University Press, 2011), 19.

16 'Broad Grins' appears in 'Where we Stopped Growing', *Household Words* 1 January 1853; see Dickens, *Gone Astray and Other Papers from Household Words*, ed. Michael Slater (Dent, 1998), 110. See also Michael Slater and John Drew, eds, *The Uncommercial Traveller and Other Papers* (Dent, 2000), 28; Walter Dexter, *The London of Dickens* (Dutton, 1924), 81–90; E. Beresford Chancellor, *The Annals of Covent Garden and its Neighbourhood* (Hutchinson, 1930).

17 Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, ed. Philip Horne (Penguin, 2002), 1.19.160.

18 *The Uncommercial Traveller*, 155.122. Job Trotter sleeps there in a vegetable basket: *Pickwick Papers*, ed. Mark Wormald (Penguin, 2003), 46.623.

19 See Hewison, Warrell and Wildman, cat. no. 47; Leo Costello, *J.M.W. Turner and the Subject of History* (Ashgate, 2012), 203–32.

20 On this, see James Hamilton, *Turner: The Late Seascapes* (Yale University Press, 2004), 92–113. Hamilton notes the friendship of Captain Elisha Ely Morgan (?1805–64) with Dickens and Turner (90–2); he appears in Dickens' 'A Message from the Sea' (*Christmas Stories*). See Dickens, *Letters* 2.52, 5.471, 6.832.

21 Turner first travelled by sea in 1802, to Calais: see *Calais Pier, with French Poissards preparing for Sea: An English Packet arriving* (B & J 48). His first *Shipwreck* (B & J 54) was exhibited in 1805; Riding and Johns, 14–16 and 180, note the republication of William Falconer's epic poem, *The Shipwreck* (1804), and the effect of the *Earl of Abergavenny* shipwreck, February 1805, off Weymouth, killing 260 people. They also note de Loutherbourg's *The Shipwreck* (1793) (47, cat. no. 10).

22 See T.S.R. Boase, 'Shipwreck in English Romantic Painting', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 22 (1959): 332–46. For *The Wreck Buoy* (B & J 428), see David Blayney Brown, Amy Concannon and Sam Smiles, *Late Turner: Painting Set Free* (Tate, 2014), 174–5.

23 2.36, quoting *Prometheus Bound*, line 90. My italics.

24 William Hazlitt, 'On Imitation', in *The Round Table and Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (Everyman, 1951), 76.

25 See Riding and Johns, 66–7, and Inés Richter-Musso, 'Fire, Water, Air and Earth: Turner as a Painter of the Elements', in Inés Richter-Musso and Ortrud Westheider, eds, *Turner and the Elements* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2011), 41–51.

26 Selborne, cat. no. 30.

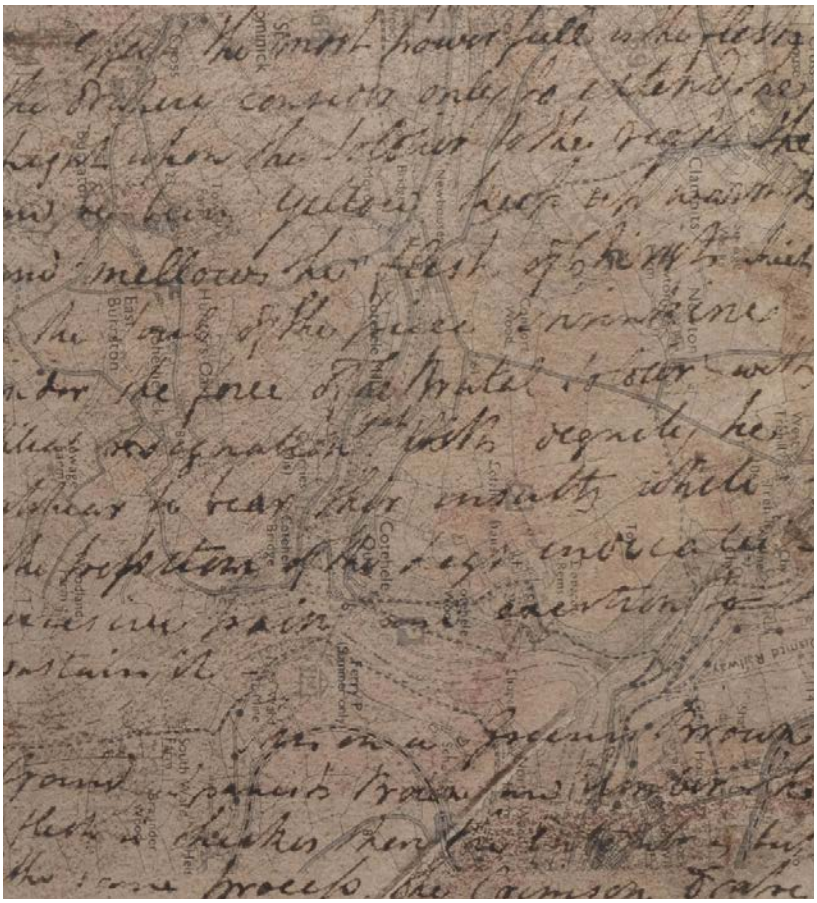
Words and Pictures: Turner's Correspondence and the Art of Tessa Sulston

Sam Smiles

Turner's correspondence is well known to readers of this journal. Thanks largely to John Gage's publication of Turner's letters in 1980 and 1983, it has become an essential element in deepening our understanding of the artist and is regularly drawn on to help clarify aspects of Turner's biography, his artistic practice and his business affairs.[1] In coming to terms with the correspondence we are normally dealing with Gage's and others' transcriptions of it and only a few of Turner's actual letters are reproduced in publications or can be seen online. That is a pity for we lose sight of the physical quality of his missives, the different writing materials he used, the changes in his handwriting over the years, the occasional inclusion of sketches and, above all, the way the script sits on the page as the immediate material trace of his thoughts and, sometimes, his second thoughts, too.[2]

Tessa Sulston is a contemporary artist based in Cornwall who has become fascinated by Turner's letters and has developed a way of engaging with them to make paintings that bring out some of their idiosyncratic qualities. She had already been working with words in a series of works focused on Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath and titled 'Poetic Words' (2009) and another using the shipping forecast (from 2011), in both cases presenting these texts so that they seem to fade in and out of the canvas. In 2015 she met Dorothy Kirk whose research on Turner's work in the Tamar Valley in the 1810s suggested a new possibility for her artistic research, making use of contemporary witnesses of his activity there and maps of the Tamar to represent Turner's visits to the area (fig. 1).[3] Then, in 2016–17 she extended her interest in text by exploring Turner's handwriting in his letters and sketchbooks, using a digital printer to transfer selected examples onto a variety of different supports, from Japanese mulberry paper – similar in quality to some of the sheets Turner used for correspondence – to maps of London, and using colours connected to the gall ink he used and to the mining culture of the Tamar Valley (copper, silver, lead and tin). Some of the colours used in these images refer to the pigments of the sketchbook pages from which an extract was taken.

Fig. 1 *Turner sketchbook notes*



Her original digital printing did not produce clear enough results for transfer to silkscreen, which required high-resolution scans but would allow her to work on a bigger scale (75 x 75 cm). Accordingly, in 2017 she began to work with silkscreen. As before, she used Gage's *Collected Correspondence* to pick out a selection of letters that revealed something of Turner's personal life and/or contained an implicit narrative and secured copyright permissions from the British Library, the Royal Academy, the Ashmolean Museum, the Tate and Sir John Soane's Museum. The correspondence between Turner and Soane about the painting *Forum Romanum, for Mr Soane's Museum* (1826; Tate), which Soane declined because of its size, has proved particularly fruitful, with different colours registering the exchange of letters between the two men as a conversation (fig. 2).[4] Other paintings use Turner's words alone, for example, his letter to James Holworthy, 7 January 1826, relating his journey home from Italy in January 1820 and his letter to J.H. Maw of December 1837 about his suffering from flu or something similar (figs 3 and 4).[5] In either case, the way the correspondence and the background play off each other reminds us how deeply Turner was enmeshed in the social and historical circumstances of his age.

To date the project has produced a quantity of paintings exploring the artist's correspondence. Typically, the extracts from the letters are overlaid on maps of Turner's London, whose network of streets and the course of the Thames provide a background that hovers behind the clearly registered handwriting, or are superimposed on pages from the works of contemporary poets or even sheets of music. To differentiate the layers, they are printed in contrasting colours, either light on dark or dark on light, and often using gold, silver or copper colours which become more or less prominent when the painting is viewed from different angles,

Fig. 2 *'If you like what I have done'*

Fig. 3 *'We had to march or rather flounder up to our knees nothing less in the snow all the way down'*

so allowing different layers of text to be revealed.

It is an on-going project with thematic ideas evolving as she works further into the correspondence. She is currently making up a set of about twenty new screens to work with other letters, including Turner's instructions about the 'Pic-nic-Academical Club' to be held at Sandycombe in August 1821, with his sketch map to show how to get there.[6] Letters to Clara Wells have also been selected: one from 1829 sets out Turner's frustration at not having enough time: 'Time Time Time – so more haste the worse speed' is written above a small drawing of an artist's palette with brushes falling out and a vase toppling over and spilling its contents.[7] Another letter to her, referring to 'Mr Time' as somebody Turner has to manage, will also be in this series of new works.[8]

I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to visit Tessa Sulston's studio recently, where a number of these paintings are on view. The first thing one notices, at least in the examples of the handwriting she has selected, is the distinctiveness of Turner's signature and the elegance of his script. Seen from a distance, individual words cannot be easily deciphered and the overall impression is of superimposed curtains of calligraphic marks on a veiled background, the writing occupying an indeterminate space. On approaching each canvas, however, the words are clear enough to make out and one is tempted to simply enjoy the handwriting's personality or read the text for sense. The letters chosen were clearly selected with sympathy and show Turner at his most forthcoming and engaging. Necessarily, however, because of the layering technique attempting to read these letters simply as correspondence is a slower process than it would be with the original documents, let alone a transcript of them; the viewer's comprehension of

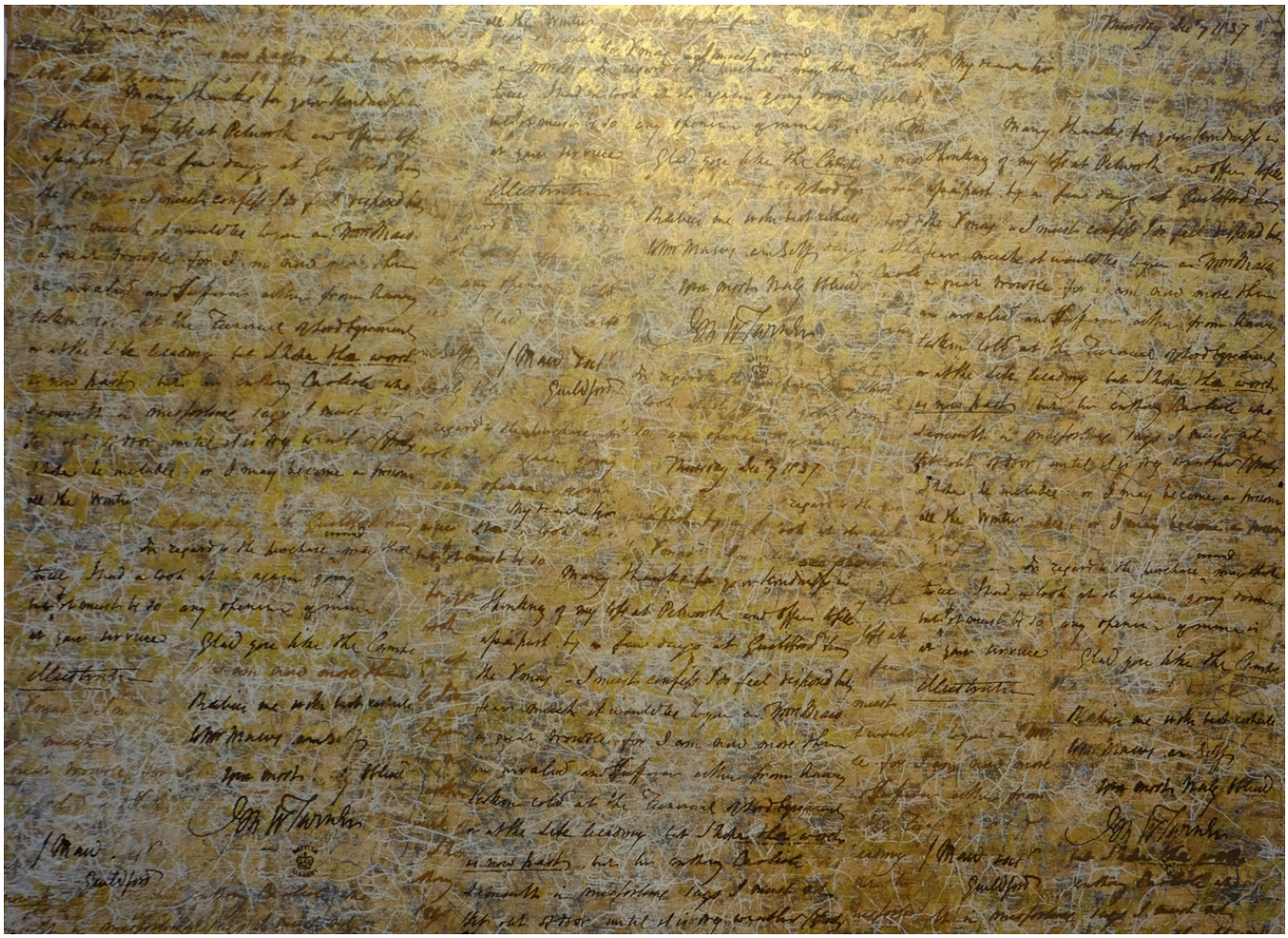


Fig. 4 *'I hope the worst is now past'*

them cannot be a straightforward reading experience and is more a matter of accumulating information across the whole surface of the canvas. Indeed, one never loses the sense that this is a creative response to Turner's correspondence. The original letters are, of course, reminders of Turner's voice but they are presented here as part of an image, with the writing as one compositional unit among others. Turner himself enjoyed adding textual inscriptions to many of his paintings. Tessa Sulston's homage to his correspondence seems an apt extension of that interest.

Tessa Sulston exhibits her work regularly in London and the South West and it can be seen on her website 'Tessa's Gallery'. Members of the Turner Society who would like to contact her can email her at info@callingtonartschool.com

Notes

1 John Gage (ed.), *Collected Correspondence of J.M.W. Turner* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980); 'Further Correspondence of J.M.W. Turner', *Turner Studies*, 6.1, Summer 1983, pp. 2–9.
2 Letters written by Turner were reproduced in articles or reviews in TSN 84, March 2000, pp. 1–2; 119, Spring 2013, pp. 22–3 and 125, Spring 2016, pp. 14–15 while two letters addressed to Turner were reproduced in TSN 124, Autumn 2015, pp. 3 and 15–16.
3 Diana Cook and Dorothy Kirk, *Turner in the Tamar Valley* ([St Dominick]: Tamar Valley ANOB, 2009), reviewed in TSN 114, Summer 2010, p. 16.
4 Gage *Collected Correspondence*, nos 117, 118, pp. 101–2.
5 Ibid., no. 112, pp. 96–7 and no. 214, p. 168.
6 Letter to Abraham Cooper in ibid., no. 96, p. 86.
7 Ibid., no. 148, p. 126.
8 Ibid., no. 265, p. 197.

Keeping in Touch

All our members currently receive TSN twice a year by post, the Autumn number being accompanied by a printed Programme of events for the forthcoming year. Those members who have supplied us with their email addresses also receive seasonal 'Updates' from the Hon. Secretary. These provide reminders of events, exhibitions and other activities, alongside hot-off-the-press news on Turner sales or acquisitions. If you think you have not given your current email address to us, please contact the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible on nrdpowell@gmail.com

Occasionally the Society organises extra events in the course of the year (as in the case of the forthcoming lecture mentioned on p. 2: 'Turner and the County of Kent', to be given on 7 October by Nick Reese). Details of such events are circulated by email and are placed on the Society's website. Unfortunately the Society is not able to guarantee that members will also receive mailed notification of extra events.

From next January members will be supplied with an email address specifically for Society events. This will enable them to make bookings for ticketed events and the current system of booking by post will cease.

The present emergency caused by the coronavirus is making it more desirable than ever that we have electronic communication with our members.

Further Thoughts on Turner and Venice;
or, Something Fishy in Downing Street

Ian Warrell

Later this spring Tate Publishing will be launching a potted version of the book produced to accompany the 'Turner and Venice' exhibition at Tate Britain in 2003.[1] Entitled *Venice with Turner* (inevitably echoing A.J. Finberg's ground-breaking 1930 publication), the new book is a condensed tour of the city through the artist's images, coupling the celebrated oil paintings and watercolours with many previously unpublished pencil sketches. An image-driven book of this kind, aimed at a popular audience, naturally provides only limited space for text, and so there was no opportunity to expand on some revisions to the original book and other thoughts that have been germinating over the years. Consequently I will outline here two of the issues that require a little more consideration.

The first concerns the date of the sequence of watercolours, mostly linked with Turner's final stay in 1840. His tireless productivity that year, both in Venice and on his homeward journey, is exceptional by any standards. However, I don't think I am alone in wondering whether, even at his most Herculean, Turner actually managed to do so much work, of such a high standard, in so few days. The contrast with his previous visit to Venice, in 1833, when he sketched extensively, and seemingly almost exclusively, in pencil, seems very marked, and is both mystifying and possibly incredible.

While a handful of watercolours on grey paper have been tentatively linked with that year,[2] there is another batch of around ten works that various factors suggest might reasonably be dated to 1833.[3] These are all painted on a type of wove paper with an unusual weave, bearing the watermark 'JW', which was identified by Peter Bower as an attempt to imitate the prized Whatman paper that was Turner's preferred choice of support.[4] Bower proposed that the 'JW' paper was

Fig. 1 *Between the Giudecca and the Isola di San Giorgio, with the Bacino di San Marco*, ?1833 (previously dated 1840), pencil, watercolour and bodycolour on pale buff paper, 23 x 30.5 cm, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (W 1362)

Fig. 2 *Turner's Bedroom in the Palazzo Giustinian (the Hotel Europa)*, ?1833 (previously dated 1840), watercolour and bodycolour on pale buff paper, 23 x 30.2 cm, Tate (D32219; TB CCCXVII 34)

most probably produced in Austria, and served as a means of bypassing the import tariffs on a valued British product. In this case, the cheaper substitute proved unreliable, and most of the sheets have since become discoloured, an effect further exaggerated by fading that has isolated the white highlights. These findings were summarised in the Appendix of *Turner and Venice* (pp. 258–9), but the full impact of identifying the group came just too late in 2003 for a thorough assessment of the implications.

As Venice was an outpost of Austria at the time of Turner's visits, it is of course possible that he could have acquired the paper in the city itself. However, in 1833, it is apparent that he stocked up on new sketchbooks while passing through Vienna *en route* for Venice, which makes it likely that he could also have examined and bought some of the curious 'JW' paper at the same time.[5] Furthermore, and reinforcing that deduction, in 1840 he did not pass through Vienna until after he had left Venice, on the homeward leg of his journey; and since the relevant watercolours are generally not dependent on pencil sketches, it is probable that they were actually developed in Venice. For example, in the Fitzwilliam Museum view from near San Giorgio, looking towards the ensemble of landmark buildings surrounding the Doge's Palace (fig. 1), the accumulation of closely observed data, including the emphasis on the monastery's blank façade, implies that it was sketched directly from the motif using only a limited palette range, with perhaps some refining of the details later.

Having begun to unravel the former association of these works with 1840, there are various stylistic features that are not restricted to that date or later, which can be detected during the previous decade. As well as a broad and generalised handling of form that is also found in the 'colour beginnings', there is a use of certain colours and colour pairings similar to those deployed in many of the watercolours produced during the 1836 tour of the Val d'Aosta. Perhaps the most telling comparison is between the well-known study of the *Porta della Carta, Doge's Palace* and the British Museum's view of the *Glacier du Bois, looking up the River Arve from near Chamonix*, where sooty shadows at the heart of each composition are thrown into relief by the surrounding lighter tones, radiating out to diluted blues and pinks.[6]

The most celebrated of the group of watercolours is *Turner's Bedroom in the Palazzo Giustinian (the Hotel Europa)* (fig. 2), a work that palpably captures the artist's excitement at finding himself so grandly accommodated, not least because the glimpse through the windows intimates that this is a room with a view of some considerable merit. Significantly, the incidental detail of the Campanile here provides further support for an earlier date, since it does not feature the scaffolding that is known to have been in place around the top of the tower in 1840, and which Turner diligently transcribed.[7]

Cumulatively these details would seem to indicate that in 1833 Turner complemented the prosaic gathering of facts in his sketchbooks with more leisurely attempts at giving fuller

painterly substance to his experiences, something one would actually expect from his usual practice elsewhere; although it should also be noted that in the 1830s the compulsion to travel ever further and faster seems to have outstripped Turner's ability to do all he wished. Curiously, although we now know much more about his travels during that decade, there is still much to discover about the ways in which his work in watercolour developed, especially as former invaluable reference points have been challenged in recent years.[8] Further research will no doubt help to test the conclusions about the watercolours discussed above, but there are others in the Venetian sequence that should also be examined more rigorously, and which might prove to have more relevance to this second visit.

Moving on, another question I did not resolve to my own satisfaction in the 2003 book concerns the location depicted in the unfinished oil painting known as *Scene in Venice* (fig. 3).[9] Vigilant Turner-spotters will no doubt have seen the picture regularly over the last decade, as it has appeared alongside each Prime Minster – from David Cameron to Boris Johnson – as well as with visiting dignitaries in those awkward photo opportunities in the White Room at No. 10, Downing Street. (e.g., the scene with Boris Johnson and Mike Pence, or https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Secretary_Kerry_Sits_With_British_Prime_Minister_May_in_the_White_Room_No._10_Downing_Street_in_London_(28305052402).jpg). Originally unearthed in Turner's studio as the pair to the magically minimal representation of the church of Santa Maria della Salute (B & J 502), this was one of a group of about seventy canvases that were not given official accession numbers and generic titles until after the Second World War. Photographs in the Tate's conservation files record the canvas as it looked at that date, once some of the accumulated dirt had been cleaned away, but before incidental paint splashes and the traces of impressions from other wet canvases propped against it were removed. The monochrome reproductions flatten Turner's image to define clearly an enclosed canal, indicating more emphatically the sense of a receding bank of palaces from the right to the centre of the image, as well as the framing mass of the building on the left. Thirty years later the canvas was at last properly conserved in preparation for the bicentennial exhibition at the Royal Academy, where it was exhibited for the first time.[10]

Much later, in the 2003 exhibition, I followed Martin Butlin's conclusion that the enclosed nature of the scene suggested that it was likely to depict somewhere on the Grand Canal. After mulling over various options, I decided the structure of the composition seemed most akin to the watercolour view looking across the canal from the Palazzo Grimani towards the Palazzo Pisani-Moretta,[11] while also referencing a page from the 1840 roll sketchbook, showing the full stretch of the Grand Canal down to the Palazzo Foscari from near the Rialto Bridge, in which the palace features as a block of pinkish colour at its centre.[12]

While this interpretation remains plausible, given the inclusion of the masts of the kind of sea-going vessels that were found near the Rialto, the condition of the picture makes it difficult to read certain key passages in order to make a definitive identification. For example, even without the benefit of a raking light photograph, it is possible to see where the resin medium has reconstituted itself to form a brownish area running through the middle of the left side of the image. Where this deposit meets the pinkish area, it

Fig. 3 *Scene in Venice*, *c*.1844, oil on canvas, 62.2 x 92.7 cm, Tate (N05488, B & J 503)

distracts from the underlying image, seeming to resemble the spiked tip of a fence post, or a house gable, though it is not an actual architectural feature.

Looking through the watercolours Turner painted on the Grand Canal, it is clear that he savoured the effect of a brilliantly lit distant palace catching the eye, and deployed it several times as a means of creating recession and depth. It was, of course, the old lesson borrowed from Thomas Girtin's *White House at Chelsea* (1800, Tate), which remained a cherished touchstone throughout his life.[13] But in Venice, Turner noticed that the warm light lent a pinkish glow to marble surfaces, especially when the sun was low in the sky. In this painting the flush of coral pink is clearly intended to highlight something significant – possibly the Palazzo Foscari, if my previous identification is accepted. But there is another setting to which I have returned repeatedly as an alternative option.

During my research for the exhibition I worked through all the sketchbooks Turner used in Venice, supplementing the work of earlier scholars such as Finberg, C.F. Bell, J.P. Heseltine, Lindsay Stainton and Barbara Reise in an attempt to identify every page, and it struck me as peculiar that, other than the inevitable landmarks of the Campanile, San Giorgio Maggiore, the Dogana and the Salute, the subject Turner came back to most often was the stretch of the Grand Canal alongside the Pescheria (or Pescaria), the fish market, near the Rialto Bridge. Here the ostentatious buildings on the north side of the canal are faced by the open campo in which Venetian fishermen met and sold their catch. This public space is closed on its south-eastern side by the three-storey Fabbriche Nuove, which tapers around the curve of the canal towards the (unseen) Palazzo del Camerlenghi and the Rialto Bridge. Dominating the opposite side of the canal just as it bends out of sight is the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, famed for its former fresco decorations by Giorgione and Titian. Rising above the rooftops are three of the city's numerous bell towers: those of San Giovanni Elemosinario, San Bartolomeo and (perhaps surprisingly) the more substantial bulk of San Marco. Turner recorded this ensemble on all three of his visits, as well as three times in the 1833 *Venice* sketchbook (TB CCCXIV), in each case more or less from the same vantage point, and in a way that indicates he detected the scene had distinct possibilities as a subject.[14] The scene had in fact already been depicted by Canaletto (who could not resist indicating the presence of the Rialto bridge), but it is doubtful that Turner knew the version then at Langley Park, Buckinghamshire, to the west of London (now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), or another in Berlin (now in the Gemäldegalerie).

On his last visit Turner also selected the scene as one of the very few Grand Canal subjects he painted to the north of the Rialto Bridge in his 1840 roll sketchbook (fig. 4). Since another sheet in the book can be related to *Venice with the Salute*, the unfinished canvas found in his studio with *Scene in Venice*, it seems worth exploring any visual connections between the sketchbook watercolours and the latter. I have already mentioned the view southwards from the Rialto as one option (see note 12); and while the disposition of colours

Fig. 4 *The Grand Canal looking towards the Pescheria and the Fabbriche Nuove, with the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in the distance*, 1840, from the *Grand Canal and Giudecca* roll sketchbook, pencil and watercolour, 22.1 x 32.1 cm, Tate (D32178; TB CCCXVI 41)

in that work is comparable on the right side, the composition lacks the defining *repoussoir* of the foreshortened palace façades on the left, as well as the vertical mass of pink looming up about a quarter of the way from the right edge, which resembles a campanile. By contrast, both of these features can be found in the colour study of the fish market, in addition to which the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in the distance glows with something of the same warmth that is adumbrated in the oil painting.

In the end the picture was never completed for exhibition or private commission; and so it remains one of Turner's indistinct enigmas, the layers of paint hinting at, but failing to solidify in a way that fully reveals, its true subject. Of course, it is possible that Turner was drawing on the compositions on both pages of the roll sketchbook to produce a composite or an imaginary scene. But over the years I have found the notion of a fish market subject increasingly appealing. Indeed, as I have attempted to highlight in *Venice with Turner*, so many of the paintings Turner exhibited after 1840 drew attention to the ways in which the city's fishermen earned their precarious livelihood, existing in the present yet following practices that were then already centuries old, somehow continuing steadfastly despite the repeated fluctuations in the powers ruling the city. All of this is perhaps an appropriate subject for the painting's current position at Downing Street, where discussions in the coming months will undoubtedly revolve again and again around our own fishermen and their future rights.

Notes

1 Ian Warrell, with David Laven, Jan Morris and Cecilia Powell, *Turner and Venice*, London (Tate Publishing) 2003.
2 Ibid., p. 21.
3 See TB CCCXVI 11, 12, 32; TB CCCXVII 26, 34; TB CCCXVIII 28; and the following works at the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh (W 1369, W 1372) and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (W 1362).
4 See Peter Bower, *Turner's Later Papers*, London (Tate Gallery) 1999, p. 110, no. 63.
5 See Cecilia Powell, *Turner in Germany*, London (Tate Gallery) 1995, pp. 54 and 115, no. 30.
6 Tate, D32247 (TB CCCXVIII 28; Warrell 2003, p. 121, fig. 118) and British Museum 1915-3-13-49 (W 1440; David Hill, *Turner: Le Mont-Blanc et la Vallée d'Aoste*, Aosta 2000, p. 137, no. 22).
7 Tate, D32204 (TB CCCXVII 19; Warrell 2003, p. 122, fig. 119).
8 In addition to David Hill's work on the 1836 tour, mentioned under note 6, there were major reassessments of Turner's work in the 1830s in the 1990s: see Anne Lyles, *Turner: The Fifth Decade* (Tate Gallery 1992) and Cecilia Powell's studies of Turner's travels in Germany and the Meuse-Mosel region (Tate Gallery 1991 and 1995), which also had implications for dating the nocturnal views of Venice painted on brown paper. More recently Matthew Imms has demonstrated that the watercolours long associated with the burning of the Houses of Parliament actually relate to a fire at the Tower of London in 1841.
9 Warrell 2003, p. 162, fig. 168.
10 *Turner 1775–1851*, Royal Academy exhibition catalogue, 1974–5. See Martin Butlin's comments under B & J 537. I am grateful to Rebecca Hellen for making these archival materials available and for discussing the past conservation history of the painting.
11 Tate, D32213 (TB CCCXVII 28; Warrell 2003, p. 161 fig. 167).
12 Tate, D32137 (TB CCCXV 21; Warrell 2003, p. 155, fig. 160).
13 See John Gage, *J.M.W. Turner. 'A Wonderful Range of Mind'*, New Haven and London 1987, pp.124–5.
14 See *'Milan to Venice'* sketchbook (1819), TB CLXXV 76a; *Venice* sketchbook (1833), TB CCCXIV 59, 77v, 82v; *Venice: Passau to Würzburg* sketchbook (1840) TB CCCX 14.

News from the Tate

Many of the members of the Turner Society who attended the Print Room talk on 7 March were surprised to find most of the rooms of the Clore Gallery in the course of redecoration, with the principal galleries already painted in an attractively rich shade between aubergine and beetroot. Notices informed visitors that new displays were in the course of preparation and due to be ready by 6 April. We look forward with much interest to seeing the results.

Although there has been, and is, much on-going activity towards the online catalogue of the Turner Bequest, the catalogue as it stands appears short on recently dated material and still lacks entries for major tranches of Turner's work. It is good that early contributions are being visibly revised but more is needed in this respect. Perhaps a special plea may be voiced here: that the headings 'Sketchbooks from the Tour to Switzerland 1802' and 'Switzerland 1802' be amended to reflect the fact that the tour included Turner's first visit to Paris? The importance of his analytical notes and sketches in the *Studies in the Louvre* sketchbook (TB LXXII) has long been recognised and its catalogue entry should not be buried under headings mentioning only Switzerland.

The Society's Annual General Meeting

The forty-fourth Annual General Meeting of the Society took place at St James's Church Meeting Rooms, Piccadilly, on 30 November 2019 with Pieter van der Merwe in the chair. The chairman described 2018–9 as another successful year. He thanked Cecilia Powell for continuing to produce *Turner Society News* at a high level of scholarship and interest and Margaret O'Neill for arranging the excellent programme of events.

The accounts for the year ending 30 June 2019 were presented by Nick Powell in the absence through illness of the Treasurer, Trevor Brown, who was wished a speedy recovery. Income for the year was some £1,500 higher than in the preceding year, but this was on account of two £600 lump sum subscriptions for life memberships; and a donation of a fee for advice kindly redirected to the Society by Andrew Wilton. Overall expenditure was down by some £1,300 but this was misleading: in the preceding year the whole of the £2,142 expenditure on conservation of the Society's two oil portraits had been written off, so that the true comparison showed a small increase in expenditure. The financial outcome was that the Society's resources had risen from £36,017 to £37,466, which was satisfactory. Given these figures the Committee had concluded that there was no need, at present, to review the level of subscriptions.

All the Officers of the Society had indicated willingness to continue in post and no other members had been nominated for office. The Committee members retiring by rotation were eligible for re-election and willing to continue. The Officers and Committee were duly re-elected.

The next Annual General Meeting of the Society will be on 28 November 2020 at the same venue. Following the business meeting, Andrew Wilton gave a talk on the genesis of his novel, *The Painter's Boy*.

Nick Powell, Hon. Secretary

A *Smailholm Tower* Puzzle

Pieter van der Merwe

One of the Turner prints in *Miniature Lands of Myth and Memory* – the 2019 Sandycombe Lodge display (February to September) of his illustrations for Robert Cadell's edition of Sir Walter Scott's *Poetical Works* and *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte* – was the vignette of Smailholm Tower that prefaces volume 1 of the *Border Minstrelsy* (1834: fig. 1). This fifteenth-century peel tower near Kelso had lifelong resonance for Scott, since it overlooked Sandyknowe Farm, where he was largely brought up by his grandparents. He last visited the site in August 1831 when he, Cadell and Turner went there during the artist's stay at Abbotsford to discuss the illustrations. Turner also did a variant upright 'presentation' version for Scott, showing them all about to leave in the latter's carriage at the end of the day (not in Wilton). The ailing Scott received this gift at Naples in early 1832, returning with it to Abbotsford where he died that September, and since 1973 it has been in the Courtauld Institute collection.[1] Turner's later landscape version, engraved by William Miller for the 1839 *Life* of Scott by his son-in-law J.G. Lockhart, which was also published by Cadell, is at Vassar College, New York (W 1140; R 566).

The drawing for the 1834 vignette (W 1071) is now unlocated. Its last auction appearance was at Christie's on 11 May 1917, where it was bought by Agnew's: it then changed hands four times, at unknown dates, lastly to the Rt Hon. Charles Peter Allen (1861–1930), lawyer, journalist and former Liberal MP for Stroud, 1910–18.[2] There are old photographs of it (fig. 2), though when taken is unclear, including Turner's sketched suggestions for how the intended title page might look. The original will probably re-surface at some point, but for the moment it may be of interest to note the existence of an early watercolour copy or, at the least, a skilled pastiche based on the print and, perhaps, a brief early sight of the drawing (fig. 3).

The artist is the theatrical scene-painter William Grieve (1800–44), one of a well-known family in that business and, in his case, especially noted for moonlight settings – which may explain his attraction to Turner's apparently moonlit treatment of the subject. While Grieve's fame was only in the theatre, he did exhibit landscape and architectural subjects in oils and watercolours at the Royal Academy, 1826–39, but how he might have seen Turner's drawing is unknown.[3] Edward Goodall, who lived in Camden, must have had it for some time to do the engraving and was hospitable to other artists with whom he worked, Turner included: some like Stanfield, who also contributed to the Scott project, were also near neighbours. The Grieves, however, all lived in south London and had no other obvious Goodall connection. Apart from being of Scottish background, neither was there one between Grieve and Cadell (1788–1849), who remained the first owner of Turner's drawing, although how long is unclear: Cadell was also based in Edinburgh, while Grieve mainly worked in London and predeceased him (in Lambeth) by five years. The last family owner of the Grieve copy was his great-nephew, John Walford Grieve (1886–1981) and

Fig. 1 Edward Goodall after Turner, *Smailholm Tower* (R 494), steel engraving, 1833, image size, *c*.10.5 x 8.5 cm

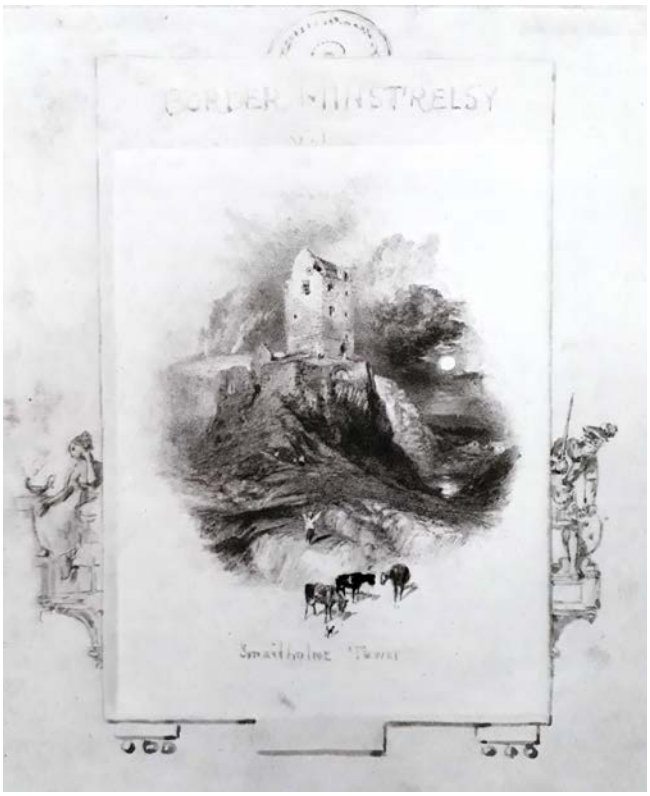


Fig. 2 Turner's original (W 1071), image size unknown; from an old photograph

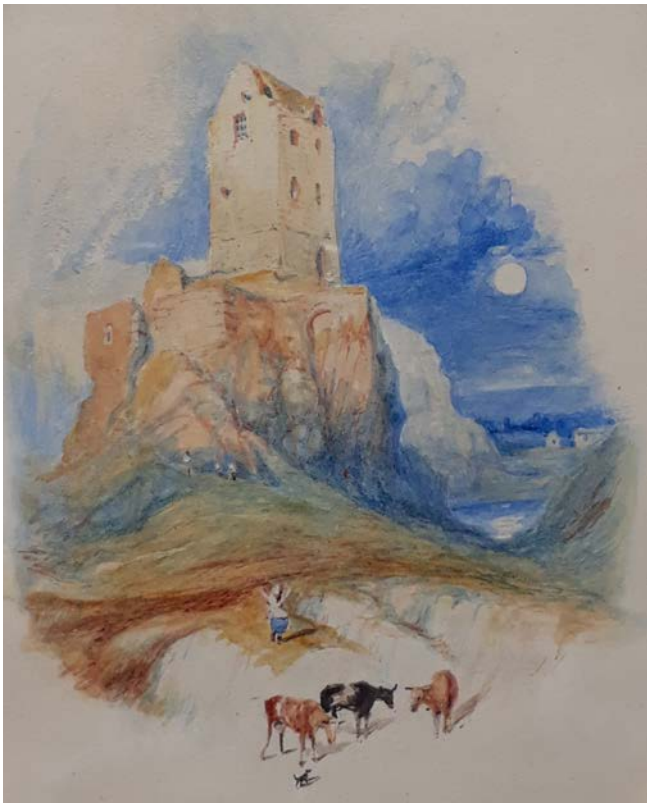


Fig. 3 William Grieve after Turner, watercolour, image size, *c*.11.5 x 9 cm; private collection

better-evidenced suggestions as to how it might have originated would be interesting to hear. If Turner's original is still in the Allen family, or known of elsewhere, a note to TSN would also be useful and treated with discretion.

Notes

1 See Joanna Selborne, *Paths to Fame: Turner Watercolours from the Courtauld Gallery* (2008), no. 24, pp. 124–7.

2 Andrew Wilton, *The Life and Work of J.M.W. Turner* (1979), p. 427, no. 1071, lists the full provenance.

3 See [Pieter van der Merwe] 'Grieve family (per. 1794–1887)' in *ODNB* (https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/76607).

For Your Bookshelf

Ian Warrell, *Venice with Turner*, to be published this year by Tate Publishing, 128 pp., 100 colour plates, h/b, £25
Described by its publisher as 'a beautiful selection' of 'the very finest of Turner's Venetian studies', this volume is clearly going to be a 2020 must-have for all Turner-lovers!

Suzanne Fagence Cooper and **Richard Johns**, eds, *Ruskin, Turner & the Storm Cloud*, York Art Gallery and Abbot Hall Art Gallery in association with Paul Holberton Publishing, 2019, 120 pp., illustrated throughout, p/b, £20
Published to accompany a wide-ranging exhibition with important topical messages, shown at two North of England venues in 2019, this book contains a rich array of stimulating essays. The twenty authors represent a variety of academic disciplines and artistic or scientific interests while the book itself is beautifully designed and illustrated. For those already passionate about Ruskin and/or Turner there is plenty here to study and enjoy and it is hoped that the book will attract many more to join their circles of admirers.

Joyce H. Townsend, with a contribution by **Tony Smibert** and a foreword by **Nicola Moorby**, *How Turner Painted. Materials & Techniques*, Thames & Hudson, 2019, 168 pp., illustrated throughout, p/b, £14.95
Turner's techniques are endlessly intriguing for painters and armchair admirers alike and this is not the first book on the subject (Joyce Townsend has written much on the oil paintings and ten years ago Tate Publishing produced *How to Paint like Turner*, edited by Nicola Moorby and Ian Warrell). This new book, described by its publisher as an 'authoritative guide' that 'provides new understanding' of Turner's art, contains much material in a usefully compact, well-illustrated format that should appeal to a wide public.

Helen Cobby, *The Young Turner: Ambitions in Architecture and the Art of Perspective*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, no date, 30 pp., illustrated throughout, p/b, £6
This booklet accompanied the 2018–20 touring exhibition organised by the Ashmolean following its acquisition of Turner's oil painting *View of the High Street, Oxford* (1809–10). The exhibition was shown in four venues (Bedford, Woodstock, Worcester and Banbury); key works were shown in all four venues and were accompanied by a rotating selection of supporting exhibits (e.g. Turner's work relating to prints in the *Oxford Almanacks*). The booklet provides illustrations and captions for seventeen of the exhibits (pp. 7–25), followed by a complete list of works, carefully distinguishing between the different venues (pp. 26–30). Sensibly sized for exhibition visitors and a pleasing souvenir, it is in many ways a useful publication. However, it is sad that some illustrations are too small for comfortable appreciation by general readers (especially when there was space on the page for them to have been larger); and there are no cross-references between the two sections of the book, which will be frustrating for scholars.

David Blayney Brown, Cees Noteboom, Fanni Fetzer and **Beat Wismer**, *Turner. The Sea and the Alps*, Kunstmuseum Luzern and Hirmer Verlag, Munich, 2019 (the English version of the Swiss catalogue), 180 pp., illustrated throughout, h/b £32
Like many Turner publications these days, this is a heavyweight book to accompany an exhibition rather than a catalogue, though it does contain a summary list of the exhibits in a minuscule type-size. There are several essays and many sequences of large colour plates: some pleasantly full-page, others hideously stretched to cover one-and-a-quarter or one-and-a-half pages (fortunately these are cross-referenced with the exhibits list just mentioned). The display of the essays is equally hard on the eye, cramped narrow columns of text being divided by funereal black lines not experienced by the present writer since *The Times* reported the death of King George VI nearly half a century ago, in 1952. Regrettably, this has to be one of the least attractively designed Turner books in existence, which is especially sad since many of the works enjoyed in the exhibition, both familiar and rarely seen, were of outstanding quality.

Francis Sherrell and his Maritime Mission

Nick Powell

Francis Sherrell, adopted as the hero in Andrew Wilton's recent book *The Painter's Boy. An Historical Caprice*,[1] is a shadowy figure in the Turner literature. His existence was first revealed in Bernard Falk's biography, published in 1938, which recorded the elderly Turner engaging Sherrell as a studio assistant after an introduction by Sherrell's brother who was Turner's barber in Chelsea.[2] Falk's source was a collection of Sherrell's reminiscences published in the *Isle of Thanet Gazette* on 23 September 1916 after Sherrell's death in Margate earlier that year at the age of 89. Subsequent scholars have added little more to these few details. Butlin and Joll offered the 'perhaps unworthy suspicion' that Sherrell might have learned sufficient of Turner's techniques to have played some part in the mysterious late sea-pieces which escaped the Turner Bequest and passed into the market through Mrs Booth's son Daniel Pound.[3] More recently, Franny Moyle has speculated that Turner's influence might account for Sherrell having chosen to end his days at Margate.[4]

It seems worthwhile, then, to record something more of Sherrell's history, now that information is more readily available via the internet. Born at Hatfield, Hertfordshire, Francis was baptised there on 9 September 1827. He had a common bond with Turner as not just his brother but also his father, James Sherrell, was a hairdresser who had himself been born nearby in the small town of Hoddesdon (which lies on what is now the A10). James had married in January 1816 at St Marylebone Church in London and with his wife Ruth had five children, Francis being their third child and second son. Local directories show James carrying on his hairdressing in Fore Street, Hatfield, during the 1830s, although by 1845 he had returned to his home town, for it is recorded that in that year his business was conducted – and the family was living – on the High Street at Hoddesdon. Communications with London were by then made even easier as the town was just a mile or two from the station at Broxbourne on the main railway line to London. Interestingly, it seems that James had a sideline in taxidermy, possibly enabling him to recycle shorn hair – the directories describe him not just as a hairdresser but also as a 'bird stuffer'.

The elder son, James Samuel Sherrell, born in December 1816 and so some ten years older than Francis, was listed in the Post Office Directory as still being in business with his father at Hoddesdon in 1845 but by 1848 he turns up as a hairdresser at 'number 2, Blenheim Terrace, Bond Street, Chelsea'. (This street is now called Cale Street and is less than a mile from the riverside house Turner occupied in his later years.) James junior could hardly have functioned at both addresses, and there is reason to think that he had, indeed, moved and that the 1845 PO Directory was outdated or at least misleading. He had married in 1841 and he and his wife Elizabeth soon started a family, their son Francis George – no doubt named after his uncle – being born on 27 August 1843 in Chelsea. Thus by the time of his son's birth, James junior was probably only nominally, if at all, engaged in the Hertfordshire business and had moved to London and set up on his own (possibly with his brother Francis as an assistant). It is not clear if he, like his father, also indulged in taxidermy, but his Will, made in 1891, is remarkable for specifying a large quantity of stuffed birds, fish and animals.

Whether or nor Francis had joined his elder brother in London in the 1840s, by 1856 when he married, at the age of nearly 30, Francis was to specify Manchester Square, Marylebone, as his place of residence in the marriage certificate. He could have been living there for some years, including those when he was employed by Turner at Queen Anne Street – very close to Manchester Square. Francis's wedding took place at Old St Pancras Church. His bride was Mary Ann Somerford who originated from Kent, having been born at Fordwich, just outside Canterbury. The bride's father is described as a 'Station Master' – it was the era of railways – while not only James Sherrell senior but also Francis himself give their occupations as 'Hair Dresser'. Based on the Sherrell reminiscences, Falk called Francis 'a beginner in art' when he was taken on by Turner, in 1848 it is said, and Butlin described him as a 'young painter'. Nevertheless, there is no evidence of his having continued with his art for long. Perhaps by 1856 he needed a more solid means of providing for a new wife.

Two daughters arrived: Jane in 1858 and Mary Elizabeth in 1860. Both were born in London: Jane in the St Pancras area and her sister in Lambeth. By 1861 the family was residing in the Waterloo Road district. They did not remain in London, however, for by 1871 they had moved to Mary Ann's home county of Kent and were living at Ridley Road, St Margarets's, just outside Rochester. Here they were to remain at least into the 1880s. By 1891, they had settled at Margate. The younger daughter married in 1890 but Jane continued to live with her parents, initially at 16 Eaton Terrace, and later at nearby 39 Eaton Road. (This road leads southwards from the Clock Tower built on the front in 1887 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.) Francis's wife died in 1907 and he himself in the summer of 1916.

If he was not pursuing an artistic career, how was Francis occupied in the five or so decades he lived in Kent? The answer is that he had become an evangelical Christian missionary. In successive census returns he describes himself as 'Scripture Reader' or 'Lay Reader'. From the 1860s onwards, his hairdresser brother, James Samuel, was similarly actively engaged in Christian ministry and the next generation continued the religious tradition, with some members being ordained in the Church of England and others ministering to non-conformist congregations. Francis himself spent many years with the Mission to Seamen ('Mission to Seafarers' today), which had been founded in

1856. While based in Rochester, he acted as secretary to the association of the city's bargemen and preached to and aided seamen on the Medway generally: in local newspaper reports he is described as the 'port and city missionary'. After his move to Margate, there are accounts of his open-air preaching at the harbour and elsewhere. From time to time local newspapers record his giving evidence to inquests and in court cases: a suicide at Rochester; an alleged insurance swindle involving an allegedly staged drowning near Margate; and, inevitably, the loss of mariners at sea. In one 1890 court report Francis, then aged 62, was described as 'a very stout gentleman'.

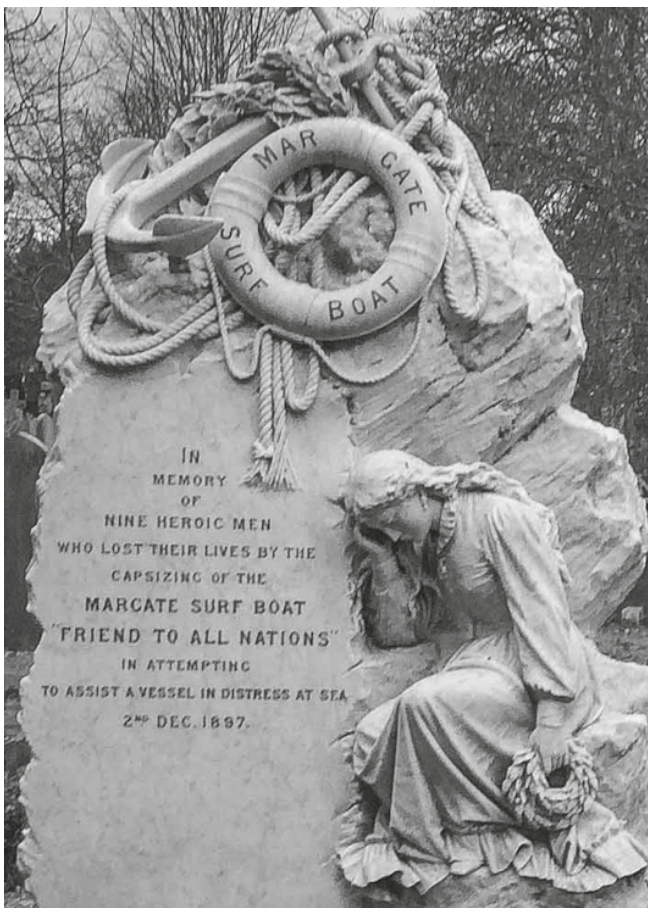
Perhaps the most tragic of the cases with which Francis was directly concerned, and the one with the most Turnerian overtones, was the calamity that struck the Margate surf boat, the *Friend to All Nations*, in 1897. This was a rescue boat owned and run by a voluntary group of Margate sailors, with Francis acting as the committee's secretary, so that he was directly and personally affected by the disaster. Going to the rescue of another vessel in the early hours of 2 December, the *Friend to All Nations* capsized in open sea and was dashed on to the Nayland Rock. Nine of the thirteen on board lost their lives.

Margate was plunged into mourning and the tragedy received notice nationally, with Queen Victoria herself contributing to a fund for the families of the bereaved. It was said that 3,000 people turned out for the funeral. An artist's impression of the disaster appeared as a lithograph by Charles J. de Lacey in the *Illustrated London News*. Through the murk, lights may be seen along the sea front and from the harbour lighthouse, showing how close to the town the catastrophe occurred. It may not be fanciful to surmise that the elderly Francis called to mind at this time Turner's many depictions of maritime disaster.

The subsequent Board of Trade inquiry (at which Francis gave evidence) revealed that the volunteer sailors routinely omitted to wear the life jackets with which they were supplied, finding them 'too encumbering' for rescue work. The inquiry accepted that the jackets were indeed cumbersome but criticised the lack of rope hand-holds around the vessel, which might have saved lives. A replacement surf boat, similar to that lost but with hand-holds, was commissioned the following year and it is just possible that Francis is among the onlookers shown in a photograph of this boat and some of its crew (now all firmly wearing life jackets).[5]

The tragedy is still remembered at Margate, where memorials to the lost sailors stand both in the town cemetery and prominently on the seafront; and a commemoration of the 120th anniversary took place in 2017.

Charles J. de Lacey, 'The Great Gale, the Disaster to the Margate Surf Boat', lithograph, *Illustrated London News*, 11 December 1897



The surf boat memorial, Margate cemetery

Notes

1 Reviewed in TSN 132, Autumn 2019, p. 25.
2 Bernard Falk, *Turner the Painter: His Hidden Life*, 1938, p. 213.
3 See B & J, p. 284, introduction to B & J 453–86 (Late Unfinished Sea Pieces, *c*.1830–45); see also John Gage, *Colour in Turner*, 1969, p. 171.
4 Franny Moyle, *The Extraordinary Life and Momentous Times of J.M.W. Turner*, 2016, p. 426.
5 Photo by G.E. Houghton, Margate; reproduced in the *Illustrated London News*, 10 December 1898. The replacement surf boat named the *Friend of All Nations*, thus subtly distinguishing it from its predecessor, suffered a similar fate exactly one year later, having been wrecked at Margate on 1 December 1898, though on this occasion with no loss of life.

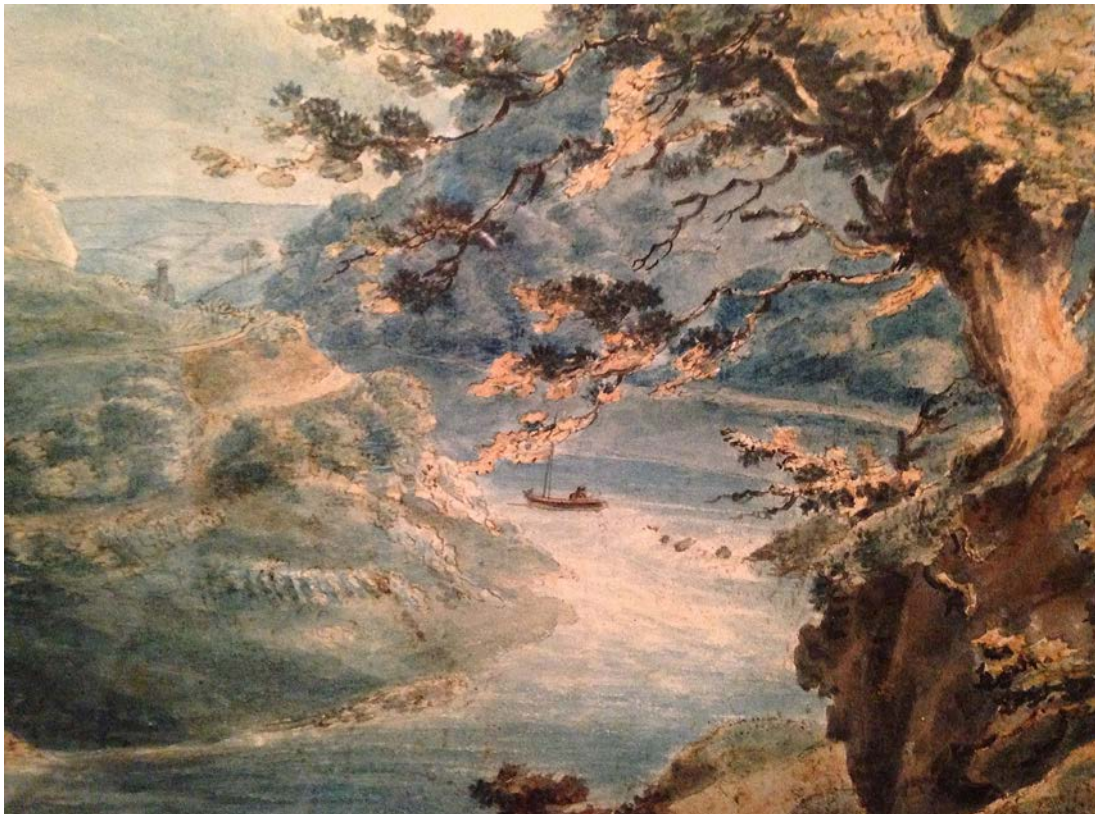
Review

J.M.W. Turner: Watercolors from Tate, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT, USA, 5 October 2019 – 23 February 2020. Accompanying text: *Conversations with Turner: The Watercolors*, ed. Nicholas R. Bell (Turin, Italy: Skira, 2019), h/b, 204 pp., cover price $50

Mystic Seaport Museum has long been known as a museum of living history whose riverside campus allows visitors to see diverse components of nineteenth-century maritime culture and craft brought to life. For many decades its signature attraction has been the *Charles W. Morgan*, the only surviving whale ship from the nineteenth century, moored at the water's edge. In the summer of 2014, living history became life today when the *Charles W. Morgan,* restored to seaworthiness, sailed to a series of New England ports, including New Bedford, from which it had first sailed in 1841. The exhibition of 'J.M.W. Turner: Watercolors from Tate' has similarly launched Mystic Seaport Museum as a destination for viewing visual art. Ninety-two Turner watercolors spanning his entire career, along with four carefully selected oils and one sketchbook, were spaciously displayed in the recently completed Thompson Exhibition Building. The motto for this building as it was being constructed was that it be 'good enough for Turner.' This it has proven to be.

American art lovers not in the habit of traveling to England have had easier access to Turner's oil paintings than to his watercolors. One reason the exhibition of Turner's 'Modern and Ancient Ports' at New York's Frick Collection in 2017 was such a revelation was that the six oil paintings on display from the 1820s and 1830s were accompanied by 24 watercolors from the same period. The exhibition of these two bodies of work in adjacent rooms not only allowed visitors to see more Turner watercolors in one room than is usually possible in an American gallery; it also allowed viewers to sense the degree to which not only the marine subjects but also the luminosity and transparency of his watercolor practice were finding their rich equivalent in oil. The exhibition at Mystic differed from the one at the Frick in displaying 92 rather than 24 watercolors. It differed in covering five, rather than two, decades of Turner's career. It also differed in covering the whole range of Turner's subject matter, not only rivers, harbors, and ports, but also cities, mountains, and castles throughout Britain and the Continent, subjects that evoked deep historical, literary, and geographical associations before departing into realms of almost pure abstraction. The watercolors at Mystic Seaport Museum perhaps differed most from those at the Frick in being mostly personal, private, and in many cases unfinished. The Frick was rich in finished watercolors Turner created for the

The Turner exhibition at Mystic Seaport Museum, with *Goring Mill and Church* (*c*.1806–7; B & J 161) in the centre (photo: Joe-Michael, Mystic Seaport Museum)



View of the Avon Gorge, pen, ink and watercolor, 1791 (detail) (Tate)

purpose of being translated into the engravings of rivers, harbors, ports, and other picturesque views that were essential to his financial security in the 1820s and 1830s. The Mystic exhibition included several finished watercolors on a large scale, such as *Caernarvon Castle, North Wales* (1800) and *The Funeral of Sir Thomas Lawrence* (1830), but most of the watercolors in this show, selected from among the 19,000 works on paper salvaged from Turner's gallery in the 1850s, gave the strong impression of having been, in the words of David Blayney Brown who assembled the works for this exhibition, 'Studies for His Own Eyes.'

My strongest impression while slowly moving chronologically through this exhibition was pure visual pleasure, whatever the subject, whatever the period. I have spent time in print rooms in the Yale Center for British Art and Tate Britain (and even the British Museum before the Tate), examining selected watercolors I had ordered up for a particular purpose, but it was quite a different experience to see one work after another of such diversity, freshness, and expertise depicting subjects entirely new to me. Among the pleasures were Turner's mastery of topography and spatial recession in *View of the Avon Gorge* (1791), painted when he was only seventeen; and the control of light and shade in *A Windmill on a Hill above an Extensive Landscape with Winding River* (1794–5), in which the gleaming light of the winding river in the valley is echoed in the light of the pathways winding forth from the windmill on the hill. There were the color contrasts and spatial gradations of *Blair Atholl, looking towards Killiecrankie* (*c*.1801–2), in which light, mountain, water, and air are bright with promise and dark in mystery; and the precision of the etching and the atmospherics of the watercolor in *Bridge and Goats* (*c*.1806–7), one of the *Liber Studiorum* images in which Turner is making Claude Lorrain's aesthetic his own. There was the surge of the sea and the urgency of the sky in *Eddystone Lighthouse* (*c*.1817), where the presence of the lighthouse is felt only by the sublime strength and the fearsome force of the elements that make one necessary; and the amazing stasis of *Scarborough* (*c*.1825), the local color of its inhabitants and its ships lining the deep indentation of its shadowed shoreline giving way to the high light and sky crowned by the fortress above. The spatial expanse of that stasis was followed a year or two later by the compressed expanse of *A Villa: Moon-Light* for Samuel Rogers's *Italy* (*c*.1826–7), a magical evocation of endless imaginative space floating up from a seamless blend of pen and ink, graphite, and watercolor over only a few inches of paper. This compressed expansiveness directly inspired by a specific poem then gave way to the uncharted world of *A Wreck, possibly related to 'Longships Lighthouse, Land's End'* (*c*.1834), in which the 'wreck' is a shapeless smear of black sinking into, or arising out of, liquid gradations of grayish white touched by a soft fiery orange on the right. As Turner's 'color beginnings' become more abstract in the 1830s, that quality increasingly informed those watercolors whose soft washes are indeed responding to a specific locale, as in *Lake Geneva, with the Dent d'Oche from Lausanne,* from the *Lausanne* sketchbook (1841). Equally prevalent, now, however, are works such as *Sea and Sky* (*c*.1845), placeless in cartography, minimalist in representation, maximalist in perceptual beauty.

Because Mystic Seaport Museum is so intimately associated with the sea, the organisers of the exhibit chose a special body of maritime works to be featured literally in the center of the Thompson Exhibition Building. At the heart of this mini-maritime exhibition, directly facing the viewer, with Turner's signature inscribed high above it, was one of the four oil paintings in the show, *Whalers (Boiling Blubber), Entangled in Flaw Ice, Endeavouring to Extricate Themselves*

(1846). This oil painting depicting two whale ships during the decade in which the *Charles W. Morgan* was itself voyaging into the South Seas tied in nicely with the presence of the *Morgan* moored nearby. The other three oil paintings were *Goring Mill and Church* (*c*.1806–7), *Stormy Sea with Dolphins* (*c*.1835–40), and *Venice Quay, Ducal Palace* (1844). These works were chosen to illustrate and exemplify the interplay between Turner's practice as an oil painter and a watercolorist throughout his career, and the inclusion of *Goring Mill and Church,* was a brilliant stroke, showing that in this early oil painting to whose canvas Turner had applied a white ground he was already treating canvas as he would paper by letting the shape of some of the human and bovine figures be represented by the untouched white spaces surrounded by color.

Whalers (Boiling Blubber), not only as the latest of the oil paintings, but also as the most prismatic, and the one most thoroughly dependent because of its Antarctic setting on a scumbled white ground, showed most cogently, and magically, the degree to which Turner's lifelong career as a painter in oil had been influenced, and eventually infused, by a watercolorist's vision and technique. The magical glow of the never-setting sun pervading the whole, the solidity of the full-bodied ship on the left against the fragility of the one locked in ice at the right, the white-hot fire and soft brown smoke of the burning of the blubber on the left, the massed tension of the men cutting away at the ice on the right – all of this makes for an oil painting that could not have been painted by anyone other than a master of watercolor. *Whalers (Boiling Blubber)* was the last in the sequence of the four oils Turner had exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1845 and 1846. The first three, following Sir Thomas Beale's *Natural History of the Sperm Whale*, had shown, successively, the chase, the capture, and the cutting-in of the sperm whale whose severed head hangs in the spars of the whale ship in this painting's 1846 companion, *Hurrah! for the Whaler! another Fish!* All that is left of the sperm whale that has been chased, captured, and beheaded in the three previous oils is the blubber that is burning and the smoke that is floating away in *Whalers (Boiling Blubber)*. It was therefore surprising to see the text that accompanied the painting at Mystic declare that the men cutting into the ice with huge saws to free the ship on the right side of the painting were instead cutting into the body of a whale. (Readers interested in the 'Antarctic Sources' of this painting and its 1846 *Erebus* companion may consult my essay in the Summer 1988 issue of *Turner Studies*, 8.1, pp. 20–31.)

The Mystic Seaport Museum exhibition was very well attended throughout my visit on the second day of the New Year. I am guessing that a high percentage of those who were visibly enjoying the exhibition were enjoying it without having had the experience of reading its companion publication, *Conversations with Turner.* This volume was a worthy companion indeed. Not strictly presented as a catalog of the show, it nevertheless illustrates nearly every work in the show in a color reproduction. Many of these accompany and illustrate specific essays and 'conversations' within the volume. The others are reproduced without commentary in roughly chronological groupings labeled 'From Architecture to Landscape: Early Work,' 'Nature and the Ideals [sic]: England *c*.1805–15,' 'Home and Abroad: 1815–30,' 'Light and Color,' 'The Annual Tourist: 1830–40,' 'Turner and the Sea,' and 'Master and Magician: Late Work.' What makes this volume unusual, and particularly valuable, are the

A Wreck, possibly related to 'Longships Lighthouse, Land's End',
watercolor, *c*.1834 (Tate)

The Turner exhibition at Mystic Seaport Museum
(photo: Derek Hayn-Centerbrook Architects)

'conversations' distributed among the purely pictorial groupings. After an extremely informative overview by David Blayney Brown of the body of work he has assembled for this exhibition (the aforementioned 'Studies for [Turner's] Own Eyes'), editor Nicholas Bell presents a series of orchestrated conversations among a diverse array of curators, scholars, and visual artists. In the first of these, four curators who have exhibited Turner watercolors in American galleries (Timothy Barringer, Susan Grace Galassi, Olivier Meslay, and Scott Wilcox) share their impressions of his mastery of 'The Force of Water' in this medium. Next is an extremely informative dialogue between an art historian (Sam Smiles) and a humanities professor (Alexander Nemerov) on 'Time and Memory in the Welsh Landscape' inspired by Turner's successive depictions of Caernarvon Castle. 'Fluid Britain' is a three-way conversation among art historians (Glenn Adamson and Elizabeth Helsinger) and an interdisciplinary editor (William S. Rodner) about 'Social and Technological Change in Turner's Watercolors.' Timothy Barringer and Olivier Meslay then return for 'An Aside' on Petworth, after which Nicholas Bell interviews filmmaker John Akomfrah on 'Witnessing Turner's Seas.' This is appropriately followed by a conversation on 'Turnerworld,' broadly defined, among two visual artists (Ellen Harvey and Katie Paterson) and three museum professionals (Amy Concannon, Mariana Marchesi, and Victory Pomery). The concluding conversation is a dialogue between David Blayney Brown and Nicholas Bell on 'Oil and Water,' the two seemingly incompatible elements whose mastery by Turner has, with their help, put Mystic Seaport Museum on the curatorial map.

Robert K. Wallace

Publications

The Society is holding a small stock of publications which are now available to members at the very reasonable price of £5 each, designed to cover the cost of package and posting. Any member who is interested in any of the items should email the Hon. Secretary: nrdpowell@gmail.com

Ian Warrell, *Turner: The Fourth Decade. Watercolours 1820–1830*, Tate Gallery, 1991
This exhibition catalogue by Ian Warrell, a foremost Turner scholar and Vice-President of the Society, presents the artist at the peak of his maturity.

Fred G.H. Bachrach, *Turner's Holland*, Tate Gallery, 1994
An exhibition catalogue in which Professor Bachrach explored Turner's tours through Holland, examining twenty-three of his Dutch-inspired oil paintings.

Ivan Moseley, *Turner and Music,* privately published, 2015
The Society's sometime Honorary Secretary, examines this topic in the light of his knowledge of the range of music available to the artist: from tavern and popular music, through dance, street and pleasure-garden, to club and church, chamber, orchestral and symphonic music and opera.

Natalia Kouznetsova, *The Prince of the Rocks: Symphonic Songs inspired by the Life and Works of J.M.W. Turner*
CD containing seven songs composed and produced by Society member Natalia Kouznetsova and performed by tenor Philip Pritchard, with piano arrangement and performance by Alexander Karpayev.

Salerooms Report

Jan Piggott

Works fully attributed to J.M.W. Turner in sale catalogues. Sale prices include the buyer's premium. Auction houses nowadays must be discreet about buyers and their locations. We note as much as they can tell us; thanks are due to their correspondents.

Sales at Christie's and Sotheby's are now 'archived', accessible on their websites; our Salerooms Report no longer digests all catalogue material. Individual entries can be consulted on the auction house's website under 'past sales/ lots': type 'Joseph Mallord William Turner' into their search engine for excellent images, for full conventional lot descriptions, full details of literature and exhibitions. A short-cut search on the internet also appears to work, such as typing into the Google search 'Sotheby's Turner Kirkby Lonsdale'. This Report transcribes provenance and engraving, notes rudimentary details of pictures 'not in Wilton' or formerly said to be 'lost'. It includes details from lot descriptions that strike your Reporter as new or of special interest. Square brackets enclose corrections or extra information. Salerooms and galleries are located in London, unless otherwise stated.

Ian Warrell has helped to make the lot descriptions of both houses this year notably authoritative and interesting.

2018

Christie's, Old Masters/New Scholars: Works of Art Sold to Benefit Rugby School, 4 December

79 *Lake Como,* mid to late 1790s
Not in W
Pencil, grey and blue wash, 24.1 x 38.1 cm
Inscribed (verso): 'Lago di Como/ J M Turner'
Provenance: possibly, Charles Sackville Bale; Christie's, 14 May 1881 (169/170, both Agnew); given to Rugby School Art Museum by Sir William Agnew, Bt, 1881
A likely copy after Cozens at the Monro 'academy'. Smooth lake waters; hills: to l., distant in two stages, to r., near, craggy, and beyond, wooded and sloping; sky, null or very faded
Estimate: £5,000–8,000. Sold for £17,500

2019

Christie's, New York, Old Master and British Drawings, 31 January

111 *Lake Lucerne, with the Rigi*, *c*.1844
Not in W
Pencil and watercolour, heightened with touches of white, 24.8 x 36.2 cm
Provenance: John Edward Taylor; Mrs Edward Morris; Edward Morris Jr (6 March 1917); anon. sale, Sotheby's, 10 March 1988 (109); anon. sale, Sotheby's, 7 June 2006 (402, Jan Krugier); Christie's, New York, 5 November 2013 (150 [$197,000, 'An Asian private collector'], i.e. the vendor)
See TSN 123, Spring 2015, p. 33
Estimate: $200,000–300,000. Sold for $200,000

Sotheby's, Old Master and British Works on Paper, 3 July

393 *Great Malvern Priory and Gatehouse, Worcestershire, c*.1794
W 50
Watercolour over pencil, 32 x 42.2 cm
Signed (l.c.): 'W. Turner'
Provenance: ?Thomas Greenwood (*c*.1807–76); ?Agnew, Manchester; Thomas Ashton of Hyde, near Manchester, 1890; Mrs P.W. Kessler, London, by 1924; Miss Jean Kessler, by 1950; H.A. Kessler; Sotheby's, 19 November 1970 (107, Agnew); Sotheby's, New York (Property of a West Coast private collector), 28 February 1990 (8) [TSN 55, August 1990, pp. 4–5; estimate: $60,000–80,000, bought for $74,250]
Abbey Gate to right. Possible pendant to W 49, *Porch of Great Malvern Abbey, Worcestershire*, one of five JMWT watercolours at 1794 RA exhibition. JMWT later used this design (*c*.1830) as a basis for the *England and Wales* Malvern Abbey view, W 834 (R 258)
Estimate: £15,000–20,000. Sold for £50,000 to a UK private buyer

396 *Canterbury Gate, Christ Church, Oxford, c*.1796
W 306
Watercolour over pencil, 25.6 x 33.5 cm
Provenance: William, Viscount Stormont, 3rd Earl of Mansfield (1777–1840) of Kenwood House and Scone Palace; Sir Leicester Harmsworth, 1st Bt (1870–1937); Meatyard, London; Cotswold Gallery, London, by 1935; R. Stuard-Lomas [W gives as Stuart-Lomas]; Sotheby's, 22 March 1979 (145, Agnew); Sir Peter Moores of Compton Verney House, philanthropist (d. 2016)
One of four Christ Church views (possibly commissioned) acquired by Lord Stormont, 'nobleman commoner' at Christ Church, 1794–6, who had rooms on Canterbury Quad, just through James Wyatt's magnificent triumphal Gate. The other three are: *Christ Church from near Carfax* (W 165, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa); *Tom Tower from the Canons Gardens* (not in W, private collection); *Christ Church Hall from the Staircase* (W 305, Leeds City Art Galleries)
Estimate: £15,000–20,000. Sold for £28,750 to a UK private buyer

397 *Merton College, Oxford, from the Meadows, c*.1797–8
W 408
Watercolour over pencil on wove paper, watermarked 1794 / J Whatman, 25.3 x 39.9 cm
Inscribed (verso): 'Merlon [sic] *College. Oxford'*
Provenance: John Edward Taylor (1830–1905); Christie's, 8 July 1912 (105, Agnew, for John Edward Taylor Allen, nephew, 1864–1919); family descent to present owner
Originally part of the *Smaller Fonthill* sketchbook TB XLVIII [declared by Finberg to be from 'at least five' of its leaves belonging to J.E. Taylor (*Inventory*, vol. I, p. 123), but W, p. 346, thinks it seems to date from *c*.1801]. Merton Chapel tower, on left, framed by large trees, viewed south-west across water-meadows of Magdalen College; spire of St Mary the Virgin; Radcliffe Camera dome just visible
Estimate: £15,000–20,000. Sold for £25,000 to a UK private buyer

404 *Kirkby Lonsdale Churchyard, Westmorland,* 1818
W 578
Watercolour over pencil, bodycolour and scratching out, 29.2 x 42.2 cm
Engraved by Charles Heath for Whitaker's *History of Richmondshire*, 1821 (R 186).
Provenance: commissioned by Longman & Co., 1818; Cosmo Orme (1780–1859 [of Longman's]); Christie's, 7 March 1884 (43, Agnew); Humphrey Roberts (1819–1907); Christie's, 23 May 1908 (286, Agnew); Sir Donald Currie (1825–1909); by descent; Bonhams, 25 January 2012 (12 [£217,250 to UK private collector, TSN 118, p. 35])
This famous watercolour views from on high the shimmering Lune in early morning light: 'gliding – sometimes at speed, sometimes gently – past green fields and tall trees that appear almost ghostly, shrouded in a fine silvery mist. In the distance, again conceived with a mesmerising combination of sunlight, shadow, mist and cloud, the wooded slopes of Barbon Fell rise up to meet the sky' (lot description). Foreground staffage remarks early morning village life: schoolboys aim a stone at a makeshift target of their books on an altar tomb; one lounges nonchalant against a tree; a woman on the slope below lays out laundry on herbage and rocks
Estimate: £200,000–300,000. Sold for £399,000 to a UK private buyer

405 *Interior of Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire, c*.1816
W 546
Watercolour over pencil, bodycolour, stopping out and scratching out, 28 x 39.6 cm
Provenance: Walter Ramsden Hawksworth Fawkes (1769–1825); Ayscough Fawkes (1831–99); Christie's, 28 June 1890 (40, Agnew); John Edward Taylor (1830–1905), by 1890; Christie's, 5 July 1912 (50, Agnew for John Edward Taylor Allen, nephew, 1864–1919); by family descent
Exhibited at 45 Grosvenor Place in 1819; see Lucy Bailey, 'Turner's Purposeful Patron: Walter Fawkes' 1819 Watercolour Exhibition', TSN 131, Spring 2019, pp. 16–20 (and fig. 4)
The noble ruins glow warmly in late afternoon autumnal sunlight; trees, shrubs and weeds thrive; gardener with rake. Turner visited the Abbey in 1797 and again in 1815 when he made the sketch for this watercolour, '*Devonshire Rivers No. 3 and Wharfedale'* sketchbook, TB CXXXIV 64
Estimate: £40,000–60,000. Sold for £56,250 to a UK private buyer

417 *Sun-Rise. Whiting Fishing at Margate,* 1822
W 507
Watercolour over pencil, bodycolour, scratching out and stopping out, 42.6 x 64.8 cm
Signed and dated (l.l.): 'J.M.W. Turner 1822'
Engraved: mezzotint, Thomas Lupton, 1825 (R 772; his reduced version of 1834, R 774); chromolithograph, *c*.1852–6 (R 853), published by M. & N. Hanhart
Provenance: commissioned by William Bernard Cooke (1778–1855) for *Marine Views*; Benjamin Godfrey Windus (1790–1867); John Edward Fordham (1799–1880) by 1861; his daughter-in-law Mrs John Hampden Fordham (1836–1909); her son Alexander Russell Fordham (1873–1945); Christie's, 20 April 1917 (58, King); Henry Folland (1876–1926); Mrs Henry Folland, CBE (1874–1957); Christie's, 5 October 1945, lot (5, Mitchell); Mitchell Gallery, London; the father of a private collector, 1945
The largest Turner watercolour of Margate. A guardship fires dawn gun; stupendous sunrise over sea; reflected, path of light. Offshore view of town through clustered vessels: cliffs, windmill, pier and harbour, dwellings. Plentiful catch in foreground boats. Bold palate endorses JMWT's determination that watercolours compete with oil paintings
Estimate: £800,000–1,200,000. Sold for £1,095,000 to a UK private buyer

421 *A Rainbow in a Valley, South-East France*, *c*.1838
W 1043 ['A Winding River']
Watercolour and bodycolour, pen and red ink, on buff-coloured paper, 13.5 x 18.7 cm
Provenance: Agnew; John Edward Taylor (1830–1905); Christie's, 8 July 1912 (132, Agnew for John Edward Taylor Allen, nephew, 1864–1919); by family descent
Near Sisteron in the Alpes Maritimes. Probably from the small group of *plein-air* watercolours of 1838
Estimate: £30,000–50,000. Sold for £87,500 to a US private buyer

Sotheby's, Old Master Evening Sale, 3 July
11 *Landscape with Walton Bridges, c*.1840–50
B & J 511
Oil on canvas, 87.5 x 118 cm
Provenance: Sophia Caroline Booth (1798–1875); her son, Daniel John Pound (d. 1894); Christie's, 25 March 1865 (195, Agnew); John Mountjoy Smith (1805–69); Agnew, 1870; John Graham (1797–1886) of Skelmorlie Castle, Ayrshire, 1871; Christie's, 30 April 1887 (90, 1,100 gns, Agnew); Junius Spencer Morgan (1813–90, May 1887); John Pierpont Morgan Sr (1837–1913); John Pierpont Morgan Jr (1867–1943); Henry Sturgis Morgan (1900–82); Sotheby's, New York, 28 October 1982 (1); 'a distinguished Japanese private collection'
A lengthy lot description is devoted to this much discussed painting and its interesting provenance. Nine of JMWT's great last canvases of the 1840s were inspired by the monochrome mezzotint prints of his own *Liber Studiorum*, and could be thought a series (*Late Turner. Painting Set Free*, Tate Britain, 2014, pp. 214–22). For the relationship of *Liber Studiorum* plate 13 of 1808 and *The Bridge in the Middle Distance* of 1808 (F, pp. 50–2) to *Landscape with Walton Bridges,* see B & J, pp. 298–9, 301. Turner earlier depicted the double span of Walton Bridges twice in oils
Estimate: £4,000,000–6,000,000. Sold for £8,171,000 to a private buyer

2020
Christie's, New York, Old Master & British Drawings including Works from the Collection of Jean Bonna, 28 January
126 *Mont Blanc from the Bridge of St. Martin, Sallanches, c*.1807–9
W 379
Pencil and watercolour, bodycolour, gum arabic and scratching out, 28.5 x 40 cm
Signed (l.l.): 'J M W Turner R.A.'
Provenance: Lieutenant General Hawkins; Fine Art Society, 1899; Knoedler & Co, New York; Burton Mansfield, Newhaven, Connecticut, 1911; sale, American Art Association, New York, 7 April 1933 (20, Mrs John D. Rockefeller, Jr); ?Abigail Greene Aldrich; Christie's, 20 November 1984 (114); Sotheby's, London, 14 July 1994 (130 [see TSN 68, December 1994, p. 13; estimate: £50,000–70,000; sold for £46,000 to a 'foreign private collector']); J.E. Safra
From JMWT's tour of the Alps in 1802. This derives from an elaborate, partly coloured page of the '*St Gothard and Mont Blanc*' sketchbook, TB LXXV 11, and was perhaps (lacking evidence) a commissioned pendant to the view of Sallanches documented as requested by Walter Fawkes (W 380; private collection). The group of trees drawing the eye from flock and pastures to snowy peaks resembles a recent Scottish view (TB LVIII 56); both are implicitly indebted to Rembrandt's etching *The Three Trees* (1643), praised by JMWT in an RA lecture
Estimate: $200,000–300,000. Sold for $225,000 to a UK private collector

127 *Launceston, Cornwall*, *c*.1826
W 792
Pencil and watercolour, bodycolour, gum arabic and scratching out, 27.9 x 39.4 cm
Engraved by J.C. Varrall, 1827, for *Picturesque Views in England and Wales* (R 216)
Provenance: Charles Heath; John Hornby Maw, by 1833; Thomas Birchall, by 1857; Mrs Moir; J.F. Schwann; Mrs E.C. Innes; Christie's, 13 December 1935 (53, Polak, 440 gns); Christie's, 5 June 1973 (121, Colnaghi [W, p. 392, adds 'private collection, Iran']); Sotheby's, London, 31 March 1999 (146); J.E. Safra
On the back of this sheet JMWT tested the underlying blocks of blue, yellow and warm colour in his composition, indicating shadows. The dark figure on horseback (compared in the lot entry to a Caspar David Friedrich lonely wanderer) was actually recorded in JMWT's sketch of this view (TB CXXXII 110). Rider in apposition to castle, his hat echoing the shape of the fortification. [For the likely association of George Fox, tried at Launceston in 1656 (for refusing to remove his Quaker hat) and imprisoned in the Castle, see the fuller discussion in E. Shanes, *Turner's England, 1810–38*, 1990, p. 171.]
Estimate: $400,000–600,000. Sold for $471,000 to a UK private collector

128 *Mont-Blanc and the Allée Blanche from near the Col de la Seigne, France*, *c*.1836
Not in W
Watercolour, bodycolour and scratching out, 24.2 x 34.3 cm
Provenance: William Houldsworth; Christie's, 23 May 1891 (33, '*Monte Rosa*', Agnew 95 gns); George Holt, 21 October 1891; Alfred Holt; Arthur Cook; by descent, Mrs Wilfred Janson; Christie's, 24 March 1987 (91, '*An Alpine Valley, Probably Mt Val d'Aosta*'); Christie's, 8 July 1997 (75, '*Scene in the Val d'Aoste*' [see TSN 77, December 1997, p. 3; estimate: £70,000–100,000; sold for £139,000]); J.E. Safra
David Hill, identifying the subject of this watercolour, proposed that JMWT began it in the shelter at the summit of the Col de Seigne (*Le Mont-Blanc et la Vallée d'Aoste,* Aosta, 2000, pp. 276–7)
Estimate: $400,000–600,000. Unsold

129 *The Domleschg Valley looking North, Switzerland, c*.1843
W 1502 ('Valley of St Gothard', ?1841)
Pencil, watercolour and scratching out, 22.9 cm x 28.9 cm
Provenance: ?John Ruskin; ?Charles Eliot Norton; Richard Norton, Boston; Christie's, 26 May 1919 (134, '*The Valley of St Gothard*', 580 gns to Agnew); A.D. Mouradian, 17 November 1920; Agnew; Miss Deakin, 24 March 1927; Agnew; J. Leslie Wright, 14 May 1943; his daughter Mrs Dorian Williamson; by descent; anon. sale, Sotheby's, 24 November 1977 (119, Winifred and Atherton Bean); Sotheby's, 9 June 1998 (21 '*The Valley of St Gothard, Switzerland*' [see TSN 80, December 1998, p. 6; estimate: £80,000–120,000, unsold; 'private sale to Swiss dealer']); J.E. Safra
One of at least three sheets from one of JMWT's 'roll' sketchbooks depicting the central part of the Rhine valley between Sils-in-Domleschg and Schloss Ortenstein bei Tomils, near Rothenbrunnen (cf. W 1495 and 1508). This stretch of the river (now contained in a flood-proof channel) followed a meandering course below various ruined towers, including those of Alt-Süns and Neu-Süns at Paspels. The latter appear in the similar colour sketch at Oldham Art Gallery (not in W; see C. Powell, TSN 58, August 1991, pp. 1–2). Yellow predominates in the Oldham sketch, but Turner here uses a more nuanced range of blue-green shades for depth, and for contour and detail either a fine brush or pen with watercolour
Estimate: $300,000–500,000. Unsold

Gazetteer

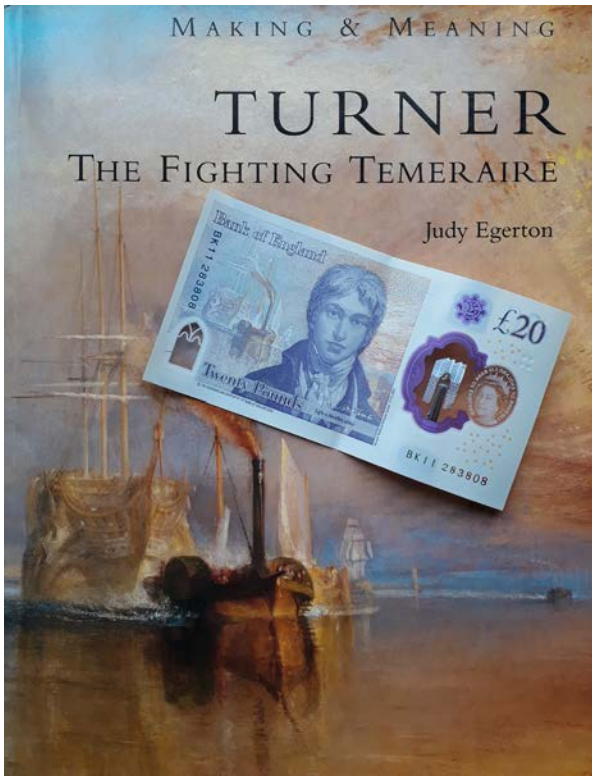
At the time of writing many museums and exhibitions are closed or closing because of the coronavirus. Readers are advised to check in advance the status of any exhibition or gallery they intend to visit.

LUCERNE We offer our hearty congratulations to the Kunstmuseum Luzern on its successful appeal to acquire Turner's ravishing depiction of the Rigi and Lake Lucerne featured on p. 2 of TSN 132. The acquisition was made possible thanks to substantial support from the Bundesamt für Kultur (Federal Office of Culture), the Gottfried Keller Foundation, cultural and charitable institutions in Lucerne itself, and generous donations from individuals. The museum plans to include it from time to time in future exhibitions.

PARIS From now to 20 July the **Musée Jacquemart-André** is scheduled to host the exhibition of Turner watercolours recently shown in Mystic, Connecticut (see the review on pp. 22–5). At the time of writing, however, following restrictions imposed by the French government, access is limited to those who have already booked tickets online.

SANDYCOMBE LODGE The exhibition of five of Turner's Thames oil sketches, on loan from Tate, opened in January and has received much media attention; its run has been extended, due to popular demand, to **30 April**. The presence of Sir David Attenborough at the opening reception was a major *coup* for the house, as was the launch, in February, of the new £20 note featuring Turner's self-portrait and the *Fighting Temeraire*.

WINDERMERE, Cumbria Following the Chairman's piece in TSN 132 (p. 11), the Editor paid a visit to the Windermere Jetty (which describes itself as a Museum of Boats, Steam and Stories). Sadly, the 'ingenious solution' for



preserving fragile works on paper described in TSN 132 was not functioning – and according to attendants has never worked properly (in common with other such interactive devices on our visit). None the less, the museum provides a wealth of insights into the lake and its multifarious activities and history, and it can be thoroughly recommended to visitors to the area.

Eric Extended

It's already four years since the Paul Mellon Centre and Yale University Press published the first volume of what was intended to be Eric Shanes's two-part biography of Turner. Sadly, as TSN readers will know, Eric became ill soon after the launch of the book and died in March 2017.

The first half of his hugely ambitious project covered Turner's formative years and his heady progress towards pre-eminence in the London art world, pausing in 1815, with the spectacle of his boldest alpine watercolours among the exhibits in that year's Royal Academy show, and the rumblings of disquiet to come (on a personal front, as well as the international confrontation at Waterloo).

Eric's approach in preparing the book was forensic, going back to original material to challenge many long-accepted narratives, or unearthing fascinating new details of Turner's life. His vivid and colourful account won extensive praise, and was listed by the *Sunday Times* as one of the best art books of 2016. As published, this first volume was an impressive 458 pages of text, illustrated by 437 illustrations, followed by over 40 pages of dense notes.

All of this might seem exhaustive; the last word on Turner's first forty years. However, the published text was actually boiled down from a much longer version which is now available to consult in the Library of the Paul Mellon Centre in London. Bound as three volumes, kept in the reserved collection (available on request), this version of the life runs to nearly 2,000 pages of double-spaced text. Some sections from this more expansive study were completely lost in the editing process, while others were trimmed to bare outline. For example, many of the annual tours are examined in much greater detail, such as those in Sussex or Devon. Also compressed is the excursion to Knockholt in 1799, which resulted in the well-known group of *plein air* studies.

In other instances the editing process may have lost the richness of detail, but resulted in a rethink by the author, producing a tighter summary of an event. One example of this is the outline of the 'Monro Academy' in the book. And, of course, the book has the upper hand in its unparalleled range of comparative reproductions, which readers of the typescript will need beside them to really engage with Eric's close analyses of celebrated and less familiar paintings and watercolours. Thankfully, because the structure of the unpublished version is chronological and runs in parallel with that of the YUP publication, it is relatively easy to locate the same sections to check for variations between the texts. But it is to be hoped that at some stage the PMC might make Eric's longer version available to search digitally in the Library to aid visiting researchers pressed for time.

For the moment, to ensure the bound copies are available, readers are advised to call at least 48 hours ahead to make a reservation with the Library at the Paul Mellon Centre (020 7580 0311: Tuesday – Friday only. Call 020 7580 0311, or email: collections@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk).

Ian Warrell

Bridgnorth acquired by Houston in honour of its Director

Following Ian Warrell's article 'Turner's *Bridgnorth*' in TSN 132 (Autumn 2019) readers may like to know that the watercolour has been purchased by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, funded by Francita Stuart Koelsch Ulmer, a generous benefactor of the Museum who supported the creation of the Stuart Collection, which fosters acquisitions primarily focused on the development of landscape drawing and watercolour in Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Turner's *Bridgnorth on the River Severn* was acquired for the Stuart Collection in honour of the Museum's distinguished director Gary Tinterow, who became director of the Museum in 2012, following a remarkable thirty-year curatorial career at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

He is one of the most dynamic directors in the museum field and has organised dozens of acclaimed exhibitions around the world and authored significant companion publications, primarily in the area of nineteenth-century European painting.

During his tenure at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Tinterow has expanded the Museum's international initiatives with other institutions including the British Museum, the Royal Academy of Arts, the Prado Museum in Madrid and the Pompidou Centre in Paris. In addition, he has also enhanced the Museum's role in the greater Houston community. Currently, Tinterow is completing a $450 million campus expansion, making it the largest cultural construction project underway in North America.

Gary Tinterow, Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

Tinterow's work has been recognised internationally; he has been made a Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur and an Officier of the Ordre des Arts et Lettres for his services to French culture.

Bridgnorth on the River Severn, 1798, pencil and watercolour with scratching out, 33.5 x 46.5 cm. The Stuart Collection, museum purchase funded by Francita Stuart Koelsch Ulmer, in honour of Gary Tinterow (image © Andrew Clayton-Payne)