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MainStreetCurio@aol.com wrote:

Dear Mr. Bader,

To reiterate (and expound on) some points of my recent discussion with Ann -- in recent weeks, I was retained by a private collector here in North Carolina (U.S.A.) to assist him in selling what he claims to be a late work of Rembrandt's -- which he [my client] purchased in Ireland in 1977. According to him, the painting -- now referred to as (yet another) 'Portrait of an Old Man' -- was originally the property of Lord Carew, and kept in his castle in Castleton, Ireland. It was later acquired by the late Patrick O'Connor, former curator of the Municipal Art Gallery (National Museum) in Dublin, Ireland -- from whom my client then purchased it. (Note: My client also purchased several other paintings from Mr. O'Connor, including Jean Le Clerc's "Adoration of the Shepherds", Caracciolo's "Charity", Francois Boucher's "Cupid with Torch" -- and others -- which he would also consider selling at this time.)

The painting in question measures approximately 12-1/2" x 14-1/2" vertically, and was painted on a wooden panel. According to my client, some investigation has taken place which has led him (and others) to theorize that the subject in the painting is that of 'Rabbi Ben Israel', and that it was painted around 1662. I can find out more on how this was determined.

My client has given me "some" documentation on the piece -- which includes an analysis of the painting in July, 1982, by the late Stephen G. Rees-Jones, Director of the Technology Department at the Courtauld Institute of Art at the University of London -- where it was X-rayed. Among other things, this particular examination evidently proved that, in the area of the necklace, real gold was used instead of paint. Below is Mr. Rees-Jones' conclusion verbatum -- (I have a copy of the original which I will be happy to fax to you):

Portrait of an Old Man, attributed to Rembrandt Reg. No. 0205

The painting was examined using the stereo microscope at mignifications up to x 40. This did not reveal anything inconsistant in the use and range of pigments with Dutch painting in the 17th century, although the range of pigments is almost entirely limited to the Earth colours.

The painting is in good condition, but certain of the thinly painted areas are rather worn.

Another analysis was conducted in June, 1984 by the late John Fletcher of the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art at Oxford University. Below, his conclusion (I can fax a copy of the original to you, also):

Conclusion

With an allowance for 4 rings unmeasurable and 20 rings in the sapwood, the earliest date for the tree being felled is 1642. Experience with Amsterdam paintings of this size with mid 16th century data suggests the likely date for the painting lies in the period 1650-65. the pattern is generally similar to that of other panels on which we have worked that were used at Amsterdam in the mid 17th century.

(The painting has also been seen at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., according to my client.)



Just for the record, Christopher Wright, noted author on the subject of the old masters -- after having seen the painting in 1981 and again in 2002 -- concluded that it is a late work of Rembrandt's and has since stated that the painting will be included in his upcoming catalogue raisonne of Rembrandt's works.

In addition, my client has informed me that the painting was, until recently, insured through Lloyd's of London. He told me, the reason he no longer has it insured is because the painting has been in his possession and under safe-keeping for so many years without incident, he finally felt it unnecessary to continue with the high premiums, which he says were in excess of \$4000.00 per year. I did, of course, tell him that I would need to see some record of this policy before any sale could take place — in addition to having the painting authenticated again. I have requested a copy of the policy and hope to get it any day now.

As I make no claims -- to my client or anyone else -- that I am in any way an authority on the subject of the old masters -- I, in turn, confess to feeling somewhat vulnerable. I like and respect my client very much and would not like to see him taken advantage of, which is why I am seeking the right avenue(s) to take in having this painting authenticated through the proper source or sources. I have made attempts to contact Dr. Ernst van de Wetering, of the Rembrandt Research Project regarding this painting, but have had no luck in reaching him. As it is possible for me to retrieve many more details about this painting, I would greatly appreciate your reply or phone call as soon as possible. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Chris Pustorino, Owner Main Street Curio Fine Art, Antiques & Accessories Phone: (828) - 779 - 3114

E-mail: MainStreetCurio@aol.com

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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

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TELEPHONE: 01-935 9292 5 01-486 5913-4

Portrait of an Old Man, attributed to Rembrandt

Reg. No. 0205

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BYR

Ff'Stephen G Rees-Jones
Director of Technology Dept

30th July 1982



Palm Beach, October 22.1987.

Portrait of an Old Man by Rembrandt van Rijn

I sold this painting to Julius Szakaly in 1977.

It was in my collection in Dublin, Ireland. Years before it was in a noble-house in Wicklow, Ireland.

Fatis of Jamas

Patrick O'Connor

Patrick O'Connor
Former curator of the Municipal
Art Gallery, Dublin, Ireland.
Keeper of the famed Sir Hugh Lane
pictures and former member of the
Association of British Picture Restorers.



RESEARCH LABORATORY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE HISTORY OF ART OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Report on Tree-Ring Analysis

6 KEBLE ROAD OXFORD OX1 30J

Subject

Portrait of an Old Man

Collection

Private. Request via Alan Jacobs Gallery

58126

TEL. 0865 - 55211

Artist & Likely Date Believed to be a late Rembrandt

Dimensions .

x 31.5 cm

Panel

One board, slight taper from pith to sapwood end;

Thickness 7 to 11 mm.

Slight bevel where thicker. Sapwood absent.

Saw marks visible on back of panel.

No tendency to warp, medullary rays straight and parallel to edge.

Measurements

At 8 Duke Street on 12 June 1984

Our Ref. No.

284

Results

185 growth rings exposed on 30.4 cm of the bottom edge of panel.

Mean Width 1.6 mm. Degree of fluctuation, 26.8%.

Sequence of rings compared by computer with five reference chronologies, each covering 15th, 16th and part of 17th century.

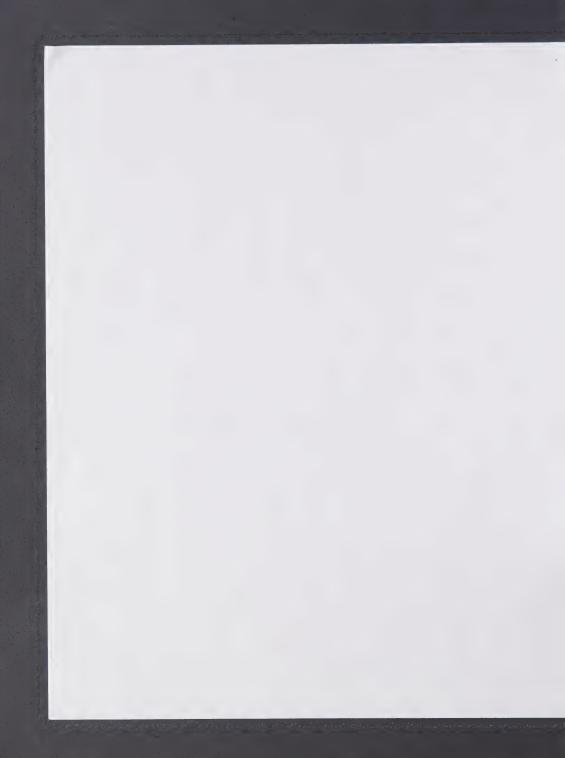
Good and sharp match with our Ref 2/3, with rings of comparable mean width (built from growth rings of 54 panel paintings of origin in S.E. England or Netherlands) for the 185 years spanning 1434-1618 A.D.

Also dated to same years by Hamburg chronology for Netherlands.

Conclusion

With an allowance for 4 rings unmeasurable and 20 rings in the sapwood, the earliest date for the tree being felled is 1642. Experience with Amsterdam paintings of this size with mid 16th century date suggests the likely date for the painting lies in the period 1650-65. The pattern is generally similar to that of other panels on which we have worked that were used at Amsterdam in the mid 17th century.

John Fletcher



Christopher Wright MA FRSA

75 Edinburgh House 155 Maida Vale London W9 1Q1

020 7328 0622

26th December 2002

Dear Julius Szakaly,

This letter is to corkin that I have re-exemined the documenting on the Portrail is an old men. The free ring analysis of the panel, undertaken by the late Ishn Fletches in Oxford in 1984 determined the panel's age and the segment report by the late Stephen Rees I mes at the countailed Institute in 1982 both validate the feriod from which the puttise comes.

On Stylistic grounds I continue to attribute the Kacatory to Reinfrandt's last period in the years around 1660 which backs who my original Statement & Ture 1981.

Since that line my general book on Rembrandt has affected (French, German and Finnish editions 2000-2001 and I am now nowking on a more detailed Catalogue raisonné of Rembrandi; pountais . The Postriil of an old man will affect in my book as an authenti work by Rembrandt.

Shite hoght



Head of an Old Man

Oil on Panel, $14\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ ins.

The picture was X-rayed at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, under the supervision of Mr. Rees Jones. Nothing incompatible with 17th century date was found.

In order to make an attribution for this picture, comparisons with other works of art have to be made.

At the end of his life in the years after 1660 Rembrandt painted a series of <u>Heads of Christ</u> and one <u>Self Portrait</u>, all of them rapidly sketched on panel and all of them small in scale. The most celebrated is the <u>Self Portrait</u> in the Musée Granet at Aix-en-Provence (Bredius No. 58) and one of the best <u>Heads of Christ</u> is that in the Bredius Museum at The Hague (Bredius No. 62). Both these pictures are stylistically close to the <u>Head of an Old Man</u>. The closeness to the Aix <u>Self Portrait</u> is particularly striking as the same red is used in the same way for the cap and the paint is brushed on rapidly for the flesh tones over the transparent ground. The only major difference is the curious fact that the Aix picture is painted across the grain of the wood instead of the more usual vertical treatment. The same treatment of the paint is found in the Bredius <u>Head of Christ</u>, and all three panels are of similar dimensions.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that all three panels are by the same hand. Proof that the hand was Rembrandt's has been accepted by all authorities of the Self Portrait and the Head of Christ.

In order that the <u>Head of an Old Man</u> should be considered an authentic Rembrandt, the Aix <u>Self Portrait</u> must be examined. In November 1980 I had the opportunity to re-examine this picture, having not seen it for ten years. There can be no doubt that it is a 17th century Dutch picture and that the sitter is Rembrandt. The mistake made by most authorities is dating it too early, i.e. around 1660. The cause of this misdating was the misreading of the date of the celebrated <u>Self Portrait</u> in the National Gallery, London (Bredius No. 55) as 1660 instead of 1669, the last year of Rembrandt's life. Therefore all the self portraits resembling one another in facial type must now be placed almost a decade later. Thus the Aix <u>Self Portrait</u> must be one of the last picture Rembrandt painted.



Correct dating of the authentic established pictures is of paramount importance before the new picture can be slotted in.

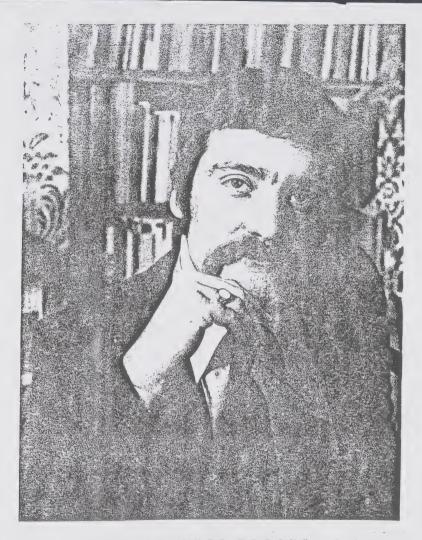
The $\underline{\text{Head of an Old Man}}$ must at the same time be one of Rembrandt's very last pictures.

In turning to an analysis of the picture itself, the spectator is immediately struck by the deep melancholy of the expression - the donward gaze of the old man. The face seems to emerge from the sombre tones of the background. The sombre mood is only releived by the touch of red on the cap and the suggestion of the jewellery on his chest. The total lack of preoccupation with precise form in favour of mood and atmosphere is a strong characteristic of Rembrandt's last pictures. The same donward sweep of the drapery is found in the last Portrait of Titus at Dulwich (Bredius No. 289) even though the treatment of the face is quite different. The picture is thus both psychologically and stylistically typical of Rembrandt in the 1660s and there is no reasonable alternative attribution to put forward for this time. Rembrandt's known imitators in these last uncompromising years much preferred his earlier manner to imitate, as pictures like the Head of an Old Man were virtually unsaleable except for very small sums - they were too freely painted and quite out of keeping with popular demand.

This picture will be published as part of my monograph covering all Rembrandt's work. It will be described as one of Rembrandt's most touching small pictures from his last years.

Shristoffer Whight





C H R I S T O P H E R W R I G H T, a lecturer writer on art is an historian whose special subject is seventeenth - century painting in Northern Europe.

Staff member of the Witt Library at the Cortauld Institute of Art, London University.



Works by Arthistorian Christopher Wright

Books

- 1. Georges de La Tour (with Benedict Nicolson) (Phaidon, London), 1974, Dutch and French editions (Brussels, Arcade), 1976.
- 2. Rembrandt and his Art (Paul Hamlyn, Feltham, Middlesex and New York), 1975, 2nd edition, 1978, 3rd impression, 1981.
- 3. Johannes Vermeer (Cresko Books, London), 1976.
- 4. Old Master Paintings in Britain (Sotheby Parke Bernet, London), 1976.
- 5. Frans Hals (Phaidon, Oxford), 1977.
- 6. Georges de La Tour (Phaidon, Oxford), 1977.
- 7. The Dutch Painters, 100 Seventeenth Century Masters (Orbis, London and Baron's, New York), 1978, Dutch edition (Cantecleer, De Bilt), 1981
- 8. French Painting (Phaidon, Oxford and Mayflower, New York), 1979.
- 9. Paintings in Dutch Museums (Sotheby Parke Bernet, London Meulenhoff, Amsterdam), 1980.
- 10. Italian, French and Spanish Paintings of the 17th Century (Frederick Warne, London), 1981.
- 11. <u>Dutch and Flemish Paintings of the 17th Century</u> (Frederick Warne, London), 1981
- 12. Rembrandt's Self Portraits (Gordon Fraser, London and Bedford and Viking Press, New York), 1982.

Articles

- 1. A suggestion for Etienne de La Tour, The Burlington Magazine, 1969
- 2. Elsheimer: a third piece from the Frankfurt Tabernacle, <u>The Burlington</u> Magazine, 1970 (with Malcolm Waddingham).
- Georges de La Tour a note on his early career, <u>The Burlington</u> <u>Magazine</u>, 1970
- 4. A new painting by Georges de La Tour, The Burlington Magazine, 1971 (with Benedict Nocolson).
- 5. Georges de La Tour et la Grande Bretagne, Le Revue du Louvre, 1972.
- 6. Mattia Preti's Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew, <u>Bulletin of the</u> Currier Gallery of Art, <u>Manchester</u>, <u>New Hampshire</u>, 1972.
- 7. Un opera di Hugh Douglas Hamilton, Arte Illustrata, 1973.
- Granet's Interior of the Capuchin Monastery, Rome, Leeds Arts Calendar, 1974.
- 9. Dipinti neoclassiche nelle collezione Britanniche, Arte Illustrate, 1974.
- 10. A Virgin and Child by Poussin in Brighton, The Burlington Magazine, 1974.



- 11. Claude Vignon's Croesus and Solon, The Burlington Magazine, 1976.
- 12. Philippe de Champaigne's St. Veronica's Veil, The Connoisseur, 1979.
- 13. British Taste in Dutch 17th Century painting, The Connoisseur, 1979.
- 14. Dutch 17th Century paintings from the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, The Connoisseur, 1980.
- 15. Fake, The Connoisseur, 1980. (with Diana de Marly).
- 16. Cheat, The Connoisseur, 1980.
- 17. Rembrandt's Rst on the Flight into Egypt, Pantheon, 1981.

Catalogues

- Old Master Paintings at Bridley Manor, Surrey, in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. J.V. Feather, privately printed, London, 1974.
- 2. Introduction to the <u>Peter Arnold</u> exhibition, Herbert Art Gallery, Coventry, 1976.
- 3. Jan van Goyen, poet of the Dutch landscape, Alan Jacobs Gallery, London, 1977.
- 4. Realism in Painting in the exhibition catalogue, Liverpool, Walker $\overline{\text{Art Gallery, }1977}$.
- 5. Certaines Eaux-fortes de Rembrandt, Galerie Faustus, Geneva, 1978.
- 6. Dutch and Flemish 16th and 17th Century paintings from the Shipley

 Collection, London, Alan Jacobs Gallery; Woverhampton, Art Gallery;
 Barnard Castle, Bowes Museum; Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Laing Art Gallery;
 Leeuwarden, Gemeentelijk Museum Het Princesshof, 1979-1980.
- Introduction to the catalogue <u>Three Centuries of Flower Painting</u>, Marshall Spink, London, 1980.
- 8. A Golden Age of Painting Dutch, Flemish and German painters from the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, Trinity University Press. San Antonio, Texas, 1981.
- 9.Introduction to the exhibition catalogue <u>New Life for Old Masters</u>,
 Bradford Art Gallery, 1981.
- 10. Old Master Paintings: Cranach to Corot, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, 1982.
- 11. <u>Harold Hitchcock</u>, A Retrospective, 1965-1981, The Philadelphia Art Alliance, 1982.
- 12. Dutch 17th Century Painting from Yorkshire Collections, Leeds City Art Gallery, 1982-83.



Reviews

- L'opera completa di Nicolas Poussin, by Jacques Thuillier, Antologia di Belli Arte, 1977
- 2. Aelbert Cuyp en zijn familie, exhibition, Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum, The Connoisseur, 1978.
- 3. The Queen's Pictures, by Sir Oliver Millar, The Art Bulletin, 1979.
- 4. Carel Fabritius, by Christopher Brown, Art and Artists, 1981.

Miscellaneous

Observer Map, Art Britain, George Philip Group, London, 1977.

Introduction to Harold Hitchcock by Dr. Ian' Williamson, New York, 1982.

Journalism

- 3 articles in the <u>Nihon Neizei Shimbun</u>, Tokyo, 1979-1980. Poussin's Nurture of Jupiter at Dulwich; Murillo's Flower Girl at Dulwich; and Murillo's Virgin and Child at Dulwich.
- 11 articles in Art and Artists; Bonington's Abbey of St. Bertin at Nottingham, (October 1981; Hendrick ten Olever's Landscape with figures bathing at Edinburgh, November, 1981; Simone Martini's Christ discovered in the Temple at Liverpool, December 1981; Claude Lorrain, January, 1982; Atkinson Grimshaw's Autumn Regrets at Gateshead, January, 1982; Hugo van der Goe's Adoration of the Kings in the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, February 1982; Georges de La Tour's Dice Players at Stockton-on-Tees, March, 1982; Han van Meegeren, April, 1982; John Cotaable, Hampstead Heath in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, May, 1982; Hobbema's Wooded Landscape with cottages at Doncaster, June, 1982; Rencir's La Parisienne at Cardiff and Tissot's Bridesmaid at Leeds, November, 1982.





FRANCOIS BOUCHER

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25/2 x 21/3 2n

OVAL



The Adoration of the Shyherds
"Oil on CANVAS" 72" x 52"

Jean Le Clerc

Nancy c. 1585/87-Nancy 1633

Because of the lack of securely documented pictures, Le Clerc is difficult to assess, although he was the leading painter at the court of the dukes of Lorraine in the 1620s. He spent the first part of his career in Italy, first in Rome and then in Venice, where he worked in collaboration with Carlo Saraceni. A picture signed by both artists, the Doge Enrico Dandalo Inciting the Crusade, is in the Doge's Palace, Venice.

By 1622 Le Clerc had returned to his native Lorraine, where he was immediately honoured by Duke Henry II. Commissions poured in, both from the court and from the Church, for the adornment of the numerous churches of Nancy. Because all but one of these churches was destroyed during the 1789 Revolution, attributions to Le Clerc have to be cautious. For instance, a St Sebastian, documented as a commission for the church of St Sebastian (rebuilt in the early eighteenth century), was described in the eighteenth century, yet the St Sebastian in the church today is far too small to be the commissioned picture.

Le Clerc was also an engraver, making an etching of Saraceni's most popular composition, the *Death of the Virgin*. Le Clerc also made an etching of his own Munich *Concert*, the only known print of which is in the Albertina, Vienna. Had none of his pictures survived, it would still be reasonable to assume from his engravings that Le Clerc brought Saraceni's style back to Lorraine, where it died with him in 1643.

Collections

Boston, Museum of Fine Arts St Stephen Mourned by Gamaliel and Nicodemus (attribution)

Bouxières-aux-Dames (Meurthe-et-Moselle), Church The Eestay of St Francis (based on a Saraceni composition; attribution)

Chaumont, Église Collégiale The Banquet of Herodias (fig. 17)

Florence, Galleria Corsini The Denial of Peter (attribution) Langres, Musée Saint-Didier

The Adoration of the Shepherds
Nancy, Saint-Nicholas
The Nativity (attribution)
The Preaching of St Francis Xavier

Nancy, Saint-Sébastien
The Martyrdom of St Sebastian
(attribution)

Palm Beach (Florida), private

The Adoration of the Shepherds Piazzola sul Brenta, Villa

Simes
The Shipwreck

Santa Giustina, Church
The Annunciation (by Saraceni,
but completed and inscribed by
Le Clerc)

Schleissheim, Schloss The Concert (attribution based on the etching signed by the artist) (fig. 18)

Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie The Denial of Peter (attribution)

Venice, Doge's Palace Doge Enrico Dandalo Inciting the Crusade (signed; with Saraceni)

Bibliography

The only article devoted to Le Clerc's Lorraine period, and now obsolete, is F.G. Pariset, 'Note sur Jean Le Clerc', Revue des Arts, 1958. A summary of his Italian period appears in Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin, exhibition catalogue, Paris, Grand Palais, Les Caravagesques français, 1974, pp.46-52 and 249. A list of the artist's whole output is given in Benedict Nicolson, The International Caravaggesque Movement, 1979, pp.66-7. A more up-to-date survey of the artist's career is by Jacques Thuillier in the exhibition catalogue, Rome, Villa Medici, and Nancy, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Claude Lorrain e i pittori lorenesi in Italia nel XVII secolo, 1982, pp.71-102.

Claude Lefebvre

Fontainebleau 1637-Paris 1675

An enigmatic portrait painter, Lefebvre was received into the Academy in Paris in 1663. His surviving works are all attributions. The portraits associated with his name have the softness of those of Bourdon combined with the stronger realism of Philippe de Champaigne, and it appears that Lefebvre achieved a considerable reputation in his lifetime. It is in fact unlikely that all the pictures listed here are by the same hand.

Collections

Barnard Castle, Bowes Museum A Gentleman (attribution)

Caen, Musée des Beaux-Arts

Chantilly, Musée Condé Portrait of La Chapelle (attribution) (fig.65) Cheshire, private collection A Man (attribution) Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts Jacques de Saulx-Tavannes (attribution)

Dijon, Musée Magnin Portrait of a Magistrate (attribution)

