Alfred Bader

Alfred Bader Fine Art - Painting file

[Wright of Derby - A view of Gibraltar]

1970-2004

GERT-RUDOLF FLICK

Missing Masterpieces

LOST WORKS OF ART

1450 – 1900

The British Art *Journal*

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

MERRELL

Introduction

THIS BOOK was born out of discussions with my friend Mr. Peter Watson. Originally a compendium of all important missing works of art was envisaged, but it soon became clear that such a book was neither feasible nor maybe desirable. I subsequently decided to focus on only about forty famous missing works that could be defined as masterpieces, which would be analysed in detail. That number was subsequently reduced to the twenty-four discussed here.

As I began to research the subject, it soon became clear that many works of art which were listed as missing had either been destroyed or were in fact extant. For example, a painting of *The siege of Gibraltar* in the Milwaukee Art Museum (U.S.A.) was sold recently as by a 'Follower of Joseph Wright of Derby', but has now been firmly identified as the original by Wright of Derby – the very painting that was always thought to be missing. In this case the difficulty in making the correct identification arose from the ruinous state of preservation of the painting, which made a comparison with preparatory drawings hazardous, although not impossible.

This painting, obviously, would not have been eligible for inclusion in the present book. Equally, I did not wish to trace the fate of works which had definitely been destroyed. I wanted to concentrate on works the fate of which remains uncertain, and which might even, conceivably, survive. Indeed, in the course of preparing the book, four masterpieces that I had been researching re-surfaced: a landscape by Canaletto; a mythological subject by Elsheimer; a Gainsborough landscape; and a life-size sculpture by Canova. Another condition for the inclusion of a masterpiece in this account is that there should be substantial visual evidence of its appearance, whether in the form of a preliminary design or some other record such as a copy or engraving. In one instance, where parts of an altarpiece survive and some are missing, the lost elements can be deduced with some certainty from the evidence of their reflection in other, surviving, works.

Works of art and paintings go missing at all times, as the result of changes in taste or neglect. There are also certain periods of history when wars or revolutions force an exceptional number of works of art on to the market, and it is especially in these circumstances that works of art seem more likely to vanish. One such period was around the middle of the seventeenth century, when the English Civil War and the Thirty Years War in Central Europe helped to break up such fabled collections as those of Charles I, Rudolf II, the Earl of Arundel, the Duke of Buckingham and the Duke of Hamilton. Another key period was that of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, the prolonged after-effects of which continued well into the middle of the nineteenth century. This latter period is especially noticeable for the number of masterpieces that vanish apparently without trace, a phenomenon exacerbated by the marked changes of taste that took place at the time, and which rendered many formerly admired works unfashionable.

As there are many ways in which a work of art can disappear, there are equally many ways in which it can resurface. The unnoticed picture hanging on a landing

in a country-house suddenly identified as an important Old Master has become proverbial. It is increasingly rare, but is by no means extinct. Recently, to take a startling case in point, a Cimabue was discovered in just these circumstances. This was so rare indeed that the discovery (now safely in the National Gallery, London) was the first work by the artist ever to be sold at auction.

The most common form of a 'missing' painting, however, is probably the misattributed or the miscatalogued. One often has the notion that a painting would have to change its location before it could go 'missing' but this is not always the case. A painting of *The supper at Emmaus* that has been in the Contarini Chapel of the Church of S. Salvador in Venice since 1534 was only recently discovered to be by Vittorio Carpaccio. The Soprintendenza in Venice had for decades failed to recognise this masterpiece, even though they were specialists in this type of painting and more familiar than anyone with the churches and monuments in their care. Again, a painting of *The seizing of Christ* which used to hang in plain view in a monastery in Ireland, catalogued as Honthorst, was identified by an art historian as a Caravaggio that had been considered lost.

Next to works of art which are physically present but wrongly attributed there are a great number of items which have not been seen for a very long time. Because no-one has seen a particular work of art for decades or centuries, it is often assumed to have perished, but that is often not the case. Canvas and oil paint can take an astonishing amount of punishment before they disintegrate and, as a rule of thumb, it can be stated that paintings often survive better than the buildings in which they are kept.

Finally, I would like to thank those who have helped me with this book, foremost Mr. Robin Simon, editor of *The British Art Journal*, without whom it would not have seen the light of day.

Gert-Rudolf Flick
London
2002

Alfred: Nicholson
did confirm the attribution, posthumously!
David

Burlington, 1980

BENEDICT NICOLSON

Wright of Derby: addenda and corrigenda*

MORE than ten years have elapsed since the publication of my book on Wright,[1] and enough has since come to light to justify the publication of additions and corrections. It must be admitted there is nothing spectacular to add: about the best portrait of all I am sworn to secrecy; some genre and industrial pictures, which sound so promising from their entries in Wright's Account Book, have failed to put in an appearance; but a larger number of portraits, a few landscapes, and some more information about existing works have turned up, which are worth bringing to the attention of an ever-growing band of enthusiasts for incipient Neo-classicism and Romanticism in British Art. I cannot discuss all that has reached me, because this would involve nearly forty new illustrations, which as an art historian I welcome but as an editor I can ill afford. I shall simply pick out the paintings which add something to our understanding of the artist. Oddly enough, they hardly ever demand modification of my four introductory chapters, only of the catalogue, which now numbers close on four-hundred items (I had 342 catalogue entries), including the seventy pictures not in the book,[2] published since November 1967, when I had to close down.[3]

Several portraits of identifiable sitters dating from before 1762 have come to my notice, as well as several others unidentified. The first is a moving, intimate tribute to a loved elder brother, *Dr Richard Wright* (Fig. 17), belonging to the Wellcome Institute.[4] The difference in age of the sitter between this boy and the elderly man (Cat. 178) in the Yale Center does not help to identify the latter as the Derby doctor. There can be no doubt about the identity

17. *Dr Richard Wright*, by Joseph Wright of Derby. 75 by 63 cm. The Wellcome Trust, London.

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*Owing to the dramatic circumstances of his sudden death in May 1978, Ben Nicolson's papers had to be packed and stored away. Fortunately he had already sent to the Phaidon Press the text and photographs of his book on *The International* [illegible] article on Gentileschi, ready for publication with other Caravaggesque articles, was in his office and was later published in *Artibus et Historiae*. The manuscript and photographs of the present article were on his desk at home and went into storage. They were identified by me in 1987, when I looked through the documentation collected by him on Joseph Wright of Derby in view of the planned exhibition for 1990. I am grateful to THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE for publishing the article and to Judy Egerton for updating the references to literature and the present location of the items.

Luisa Vertova
Benedict Nicolson's literary executor

[Editorial note: In the text changed names of institutions have been silently amended. New footnote information, kindly supplied by Judy Egerton, has been added within diagonal brackets.]

[1] B. NICOLSON: *Joseph Wright of Derby: Painter of Light*, 2 vols, London [1968]; hereafter cited as NICOLSON [1968]. Numbers in brackets preceded by Cat. refer to my catalogue numbers.

[2] These are: the ten portraits I published in 'Addenda to Wright of Derby', *Apollo* [November 1968], including the two *Mundy* [illegible] and the *Staffordshire* [illegible] group; the *Cottage on fire* [illegible] Plate 13; the *Neo*[illegible] landscape in the Exeter Museum, which I reproduced in this Magazine [November 1969], fig.[illegible] and the other late *Neo*[illegible] acquired by the [illegible], which I published in [illegible] *Louvre* [illegible], pp.24[illegible]; the [illegible] in the Milwaukee Art Center, published by [illegible] in this Magazine [May 1974], fig.[illegible] /since this article appeared, I have seen a copy of the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures at Overstone Park* [1877], where the description and dimensions [illegible] more or less tally with those of the Milwaukee picture [illegible]

[illegible] portrait of *John Berkenhout* published by [illegible] HOWELL: 'John Berkenhout – A Portrait of an Eighteenth Century Physician', [illegible] pp.[illegible] [illegible] judgement [illegible] I am happy to [illegible] quoted the portrait in a [illegible] [illegible] 1729, died [illegible] 1791, served in the [illegible] 1756-60. Later he became a physician and was the author of a [illegible] medical books. [illegible] wearing the uniform of a captain in the [illegible] The Regiment spent [illegible] 1756-57 near Derby [illegible] Derbyshire, and [illegible] perhaps when the portrait was painted. [illegible] For a further [illegible] see note 30 below.

[3] The [illegible] on Wright between 1968 and 1978 can be summarised as follows: [illegible] in this Magazine [December 1968], pp.[illegible] threw considerable light on the iconographical [illegible] of Wright's [illegible] Cat.[illegible] [illegible] on the composition of [illegible] Cat.[illegible] [illegible] in the Special [illegible] issue of *La Revue de l'Art* [illegible], pp.[illegible] [illegible] STEVENS in this Magazine [June 1976], pp.[illegible] showed how Wright [illegible] after [illegible] HUGH [illegible] for the [illegible] in the exhibition catalogue *The European* [illegible] Cleveland Park [1975-77], No.154 added a great deal of relevant information to my own catalogue entry [illegible] and to my [illegible] in the text on pages marked under this entry. Possible connections between Wright and Romney in 1761 are discussed by MARY BURKETT in this Magazine [December 1977], p.837. An article by myself on the Markeaton Hall portraits, with special reference to [illegible] Cat.[illegible] appeared in the *Stamford* [illegible] [illegible]. Further references will be given in the course of this article.

[4] Acquired by the Wellcome Trust at Christie's, 3rd March 1916, lot 73. It bears the Derby 1883 exhibition label on the reverse. I am indebted to R.P.A. Burgers for information and a photograph.

[5] This painting was published by [illegible]

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

(414) 962-5169

August 29, 2003

Dr. Gert-Rudolf Flick
Park House
7-11 Onslow Square
London SW7 3NJ
ENGLAND

Dear Dr. Flick,

You will have realized how very much I enjoyed meeting you and reading your wonderful book.

I was sorry that we could not get together last July and do hope that your trip went well.

I have bid on a number of paintings in the major sales but was able to buy only one, that beautiful Drost self-portrait at Christie's.

We plan to be back in London for the next old master sales in December and it would be great if we might get together then.

With all good wishes I remain

Yours sincerely,

Alfred Bader
AB/az

PARK HOUSE
7-11 ONSLOW SQUARE
LONDON SW7 3NJ
020-7225 3147

Dr. Alfred Bader
2A Holmesdale Road
Bexhill-on-Sea
E. Sussex
TN39 3QE

3rd June 2003

Dear Dr. Bader,

Thank you for your letter of 20th May. I did read the chapter of your second autobiography and I thank you very much for mentioning me.

Coming back to the Ehrich Galleries, my feeling is that it would be difficult to get hold of the files. Even if you would be able to obtain them, the result may be inconclusive, as dealers generally do not keep good files. I think for your purpose, you can safely assume that the picture No. 14 in the Overstone catalogue of 1877 is identical to the picture in Milwaukee.

I would very much like to invite you and your wife for dinner when you come to London in early July, either on the 9th or 10th. If this is not possible on your side, why don't we meet for tea on one of those days.

I look forward to seeing you then and remain

with best regards,

Gert-Rudolf Flick

Dr. Gert-Rudolf Flick

PARK HOUSE
7-11 ONSLOW SQUARE
LONDON SW7 3NJ
020-7225 3147

Dr. Alfred Bader CBE
2A Holmesdale Road
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex
TN39 3QE

19th November 2003

Dear Dr. Bader,

Thank you for letting me know about your forthcoming visit to England from 8-12 December. When you have a moment's time, I would very much like to meet with you again.

As far as the sale of 1921 is concerned, I will have to check my files, but as they are currently in storage, this might take a while.

With best regards,

GRFlick

Dr. Gert-Rudolf Flick

DR. ALFRED BADER CBE
2A Holmesdale Road
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex TN39 3QE
England
Phone/Fax: 01424-222223

A Chemist Helping Chemists

Dear Dr. Flick:

Isabel and I are back in England and will be in London for the Old Master sales, December 8 – 12.

The Milwaukee Art Museum has given me its Gibraltar files, including correspondence with you. In your letter of June 10 96 you referred to a 1921 sale. Please tell me where that took place.

Many thanks and
best regards

Alfred Bader

November 10 00.

RT-RUDOLF FLICK

PARK HOUSE
7-11 ONSLOW SQUARE
LONDON SW7 3NJ
TEL: 0171-225-3147
FAX: 0171-225-1875

7581_1911

7225..3147

June trip file

31 July 1996

Dawnmarie Frank,
Assistant to the Registrar,
Milwaukee Art Museum,
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive,
Milwaukee 53202,
Wisconsin

Dear Dawnmarie Frank,

Thank you so much for your letter of 15 July and for providing me with such extensive documentation on the Joseph Wright of Derby painting. The information is extremely useful, and the only gap now remaining, from my point of view, is when, and from whom, the Ehrich Galleries in New York acquired the painting. I will do some more research on this, and will let you know if I uncover anything new.

I would like to take up your offer of organising new colour photography of the painting. As I do not have an account in the USA, I will give you my American Express card number, but if you are unable to charge to this, please let me know, and I will arrange for a Eurocheque to be drawn in the Museum's favour for the total cost. Amex: [redacted].

I look forward to receiving the new photography in due course, and thank you once again for your much appreciated co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Gen-Rudolf Flick

E. Foley, chief curator, MAM.
Frick Library

Judy Egerton @ NACTH
Nat'l Gallery –
did Jos. Wright of Derby
show @ Metropol
(has seen this)

DR. GERT-RUDOLF FLICK

PARK HOUSE
7-11 ONSLOW SQUARE
LONDON SW7 3NJ
TEL: 0171-225-3147
FAX: 0171-225-1875

Judy – Please respond per photo & whatever the files reflect per his ? below.
Judy.

10 June 1996

Judy Kloues,
Milwaukee Art Museum,
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive,
Milwaukee 53202,
Wisconsin

Dear Judy Kloues,

Please excuse me for addressing myself directly to you, but I am involved in some research on Joseph Wright of Derby, specifically a painting in your museum which is attributed to him, and thought you would be the best person to be able to help me. The painting is entitled "The Siege of Gibraltar", and is listed as no. 154 in The Burlington Magazine, May 1974, volume CXVI in an entry by Biruta Erdman.

As you are certainly aware, this painting is now, according to Judy Egerton in the 1990 Wright of Derby Tate Gallery exhibition catalogue under no. 27, "thought not to be by Wright". I believe I have been able to trace this painting to a sale which took place in 1921, and in this context, I would be very interested to know what your current view is on the authorship of this painting, and whether you know anything more of its provenance. ☆

It is difficult to distinguish in the illustration in the Burlington Magazine, whether certain features described by contemporaries are present or not, and I wonder if it would be possible for you to provide me with a colour photograph? I am most grateful to you for your assistance, and will happily reimburse any costs incurred in replying or sending me a photograph. ☆

Yours sincerely,

Gert-Rudolf Flick

David:
I'll talk to him tomorrow
Judy

To Dr David de W.H
1 613 533 6765
5 pages

121 Wright/JE/JOM

Mr James Mundy
Chief Curator
Milwaukee Art Museum
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee
Wisconsin 53202
U.S.A.

14th November 1986

Dear James

Thank you very much for all your help over my recent visit. It was particularly kind of you to make a hotel reservation for me, and to arrange for Lise to give me lunch.

As for The Destruction ..., I was very grateful to be allowed so much time to look at it, and to go through your very full dossier on it. I cannot believe that it is by Joseph Wright of Derby, even though Benedict Nicolson came to think so. There is a lumpishness about the figures, and a failure to extract maximum light and shade effects from the burning ships, that would never have suggested Wright's name to me, though I agree that now we have to find the missing Wright.

I hope you will let me know if there is anything I can do for you here, and that you will look me up on your next visit.

With all good wishes and with thanks,

Yours ~~sincerely~~ ever

Judy

Mrs Judy Egerton
Assistant Keeper
British Collection

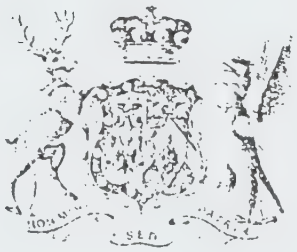
DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE

OF

THE PICTURES

AT

OVERSTONE PARK.



Overstone.

1877.

WRIGHT OF DERBY, A.R.A. JOSEPH WRIGHT.

BORN, 1734, at Derby. DIED, 1797.

14. THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR.

[*Canvas: h.*, 64 *in.*: *w.*, 105 *in.*]

A night effect, with red lurid light from the guns of the fortress, from the floating batteries and guns of the French and Spanish ships, and flames from the burning ships. Clouds of smoke rise over the sea, and in the dark sky rockets are seen flying through the air. On the right the land is to be made out indistinctly in the darkness, lit up in places by the fiery light from the battle going on. In the immediate foreground the shore juts out into the sea, and here are boats with marines and sailors apparently engaged in action.

This is certainly one of the painter's grandest works of the kind. He was fond of effects of firelight, as will be remembered is shown in his "Air Pump" picture in the National Gallery, (British School,) and "The Iron Forge," in Lord Palmerston's collection. His eruptions of Vesuvius, cavern scenes, moonlights and sunsets, were all painted with the same feeling. It is related that Wilson, the great landscape painter, said to Wright, "only give me your firelight and I'll give you my daylight."

This picture represents the celebrated defence of Gibraltar by General Elliot, afterwards Lord Heathfield, when it was besieged for no less than three years by the navies of France and Spain.

For an account of the memorable defence and the attack of Sept. 13th, 1782, *vide* Appendix.

October 24, 2001

Dr. Gert-Rudolf Flick
Park House
7-11 Onslow Square
London SW7 3NJ
ENGLAND

Dear Dr. Flick,

You will have realized how very much I enjoyed talking to you about *The Siege of Gibraltar* yesterday morning. The Curator of the Milwaukee Art Museum has kindly given me copies of all of its correspondence about this painting, and there I found your letter of June 10, 1996, copy enclosed.

Naturally I was curious to know why you were interested and really appreciate your explanation. Your book about some 20 lost masterpieces sounds fascinating and I very much hope that I will be able to study this book when it appears next year.

Now of course I understand why you would have been interested in including Joseph Wright's *Siege of Gibraltar* if that painting were indeed lost. But, as you concluded, I believe correctly, the Milwaukee painting is really by Wright of Derby and so the painting is not lost and cannot be included in your book.

I have seen Mrs. Egerton's comment that the Milwaukee painting "is now widely thought not to be by Wright", but I do not know how she came to that statement. Also, she stated that this painting is untraced since 1857, but in fact it is described in considerable detail in the Overstone catalogue of 1877, and that description tallies with the Milwaukee painting.

Unfortunately for Milwaukee, the Art Museum de-accessioned this painting and sent it to Christie's East, where it was sold as "by a follower of Joseph Wright of Derby", without any reference to Benedict Nicholson's opinion or to the very persuasive paper in the *Burlington Magazine*. To me, the connection between the two drawings in Derby and the painting is so clear, as was the case when Benedict Nicholson saw the original painting and accepted it as the badly damaged original by Joseph Wright.

Some 15 years ago I was able to acquire 7 landscapes by Wright of Derby for my University, Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. I was delighted to be able to acquire *The Siege of Gibraltar* for Queen's, and it is now on its way to Canada.

Thank you for your kind permission to visit you late in November or early in December and then sharing with me your information on this painting.

With best personal regards I remain

Yours sincerely,

Alfred Bader
AB/az
Enc.

FAX FROM

Attrd: Nicholson

did confirm the attrib

Said

Wright of Derby "addenda and corrigenda"

Agnes Etherington Art Centre

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, KINGSTON, ONTARIO, CANADA K7L 3N6

23 September 2003

FAX

To: Dr. Alfred Bader
Alfred Bader Fine Arts
924 East Juneau Avenue
Astor Hotel, suite 622
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Fax number: (414) 277-0709

Dear Alfred,

I confirm receipt of your faxes of 18 and 23 September, concerning the restoration of the *Battle of Gibraltar* and your authorization to use funds from the Bader Conservation Fund for this purpose.

I have asked David to request a revised proposal from Barbara Klempan, which takes into account my concerns regarding the current one. Per your instructions, I will proceed on this project and keep you informed of developments and costs.

I will ask Judith Brown to make sure that you have some time kept free in your schedule during your visit here, so that we can meet briefly to discuss the project. I look forward to seeing you and Isabel and the end of October.

Best regards,

Janet

Janet M. Brooke
Director

c.c.: Dr. David de Witt, Bader Curator of European Art

Tel 613 533-2190 Fax 613 533-6765 Email agnes@post.queensu.ca Website www.queensu.ca/agnes

Alfred Bader Fine Arts
924 East Juneau Avenue
Astor Hotel -Suite 622
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Ph: 277-0730
Fax: 277-0709
e-mail: baderfa@execpc.com

September 17, 2003

TO: Ms. Janet Brooke, Director
Agnes Etherington Art Centre

FAX #: 613/533-6765

Dear Janet,

This is to confirm our conversation of today in which I authorized you to have the cost of the *Gibraltar* restoration taken out of the Alfred and Isabel Art Restoration – Conservation Fund.

It would be good if all of us who are involved could discuss this during our visit at the end of next month.

Of course you know that I very much hope that the conservation of this painting can be completed in my lifetime and that it will be accepted as the "lost" work by Wright of Derby.

With best wishes I remain

Yours sincerely,

Alfred Bader
AB/az

Subject: Fwd: The Siege of Gibraltar
From: David de Witt <3dad5@post.queensu.ca>
Date: Thu, 04 Sep 2003 14:26:55 -0400
To: Alfred Bader <baderfa@execpc.com>

Dear Alfred,

Barb Klempan sent me a revised proposal for her initial study of the Gibraltar, and I have attached it for your perusal. I have asked Prof. Klempan to point out those projects for which she has carried out inpainting, since this will be an important part of the treatment of this painting.

With all best wishes,
David

X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Version 5.2.1
Date: Tue, 02 Sep 2003 15:11:37 -0400
To: 3dad5@post.queensu.ca
From: Barbara Klempan <klempanb@post.queensu.ca>
Subject: The Siege of Gibraltar

Dear David and Dr. Bader,

I have attached a new submission for the examination of The Siege of Gibraltar and I would be pleased if you would review this proposal and forward any suggestions or comments to me. I have made several changes to my initial proposal and these include a section on why undertake such an extensive examination, costs associated with the examination report, more details on the microscope and a section on treatments which I have carried out on similar works.

I am hopeful that this project will go ahead since it would be such a wonderful opportunity to work on a painting within the Art Conservation Program. Should this project go ahead, I would be most pleased if you would both visit to the laboratory to witness the on-going work.

Sincerely,

Barbara Klempan

Assistant Professor
Art Conservation Program
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario
Canada
K7L 3N6
(613) 533-6000 ext. 74339
Fax: (613) 533-6889

David A. de Witt
Bader Curator of European Art
Agnes Etherington Art Centre
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6
t. (613) 533 6000 x75100
f. (613) 533 6765
e. 3dad5@post.queensu.ca

Proposal for the Examination and Conservation Treatment of

The Siege of Gibraltar

Attributed to Joseph Wright of Derby (1734-1797)

Prepared for the Agnes Etherington Art Centre
Kingston, Ontario
Canada

September 2003

Prepared by:

Barbara Klempan
Assistant Professor
(Queen's University, Kingston)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project Description

The Siege of Gibraltar (1784)

The Siege of Gibraltar (1784) has been attributed to Joseph Wright of Derby (1734-1797). The provenance of this painting has been well documented, although there is still a question of attribution. It is now in the collections of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, Canada. This large painting (157.5 x 236.2 cm) is in need of extensive conservation treatment due to severe yellowing of the surface coatings, extensive visible overpainting and numerous old tears that mar the surface. There is some indication that the most recent treatment of this painting may have been in 1972, when it was cleaned, perhaps lined and certainly heavily overpainted [1].

This would be a <u>two-phase project:</u>

1. The **first phase** would be to systematically document the work using the analytical reports provided by the Canadian Conservation Institute and produce an examination report and treatment proposal.

2. The **second phase** would be the actual conservation treatment of *The Siege of Gibraltar*.

Benefits to Teaching at Queen's University:

This would be a unique conservation project at Queen's University, which would give art conservation students the opportunity to witness the examination and conservation treatment of a large and historically significant work. Students would be able to observe a senior conservator at work, participate in the technical analysis of the work through the use of a monitor attached to a stereomicroscope, participate in discussions with curators and other conservators and conservation scientists and use aspects of the project to compliment their own work. Conserving *The Siege of Gibraltar* within the Art Conservation Program would be a remarkable teaching tool. It would offer superb examples of:

- the artist's methods and materials
- eighteenth-century painting techniques
- typical pigments used in the eighteenth century
- previous restoration approaches (such as multiple linings)

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[1] "The Siege of Gibraltar", *Burlington Magazine,* 116, 1974, pp. 270-272.

Benefits to Research at Queen's University:

Treating this painting within the Art Conservation Program offers enormous research potential. It would provide an opportunity to work with the curators of the Agnes Etheringtion Art Centre, Conservators and Conservation Scientists from the Canadian Conservation Institute in Ottawa and other professionals in the field of art historical research and conservation. Apart from the obvious benefits in researching this artist's materials and techniques, having the painting in the conservation laboratory would facilitate a more thorough understanding of the many conservation treatments undertaken on the work over the centuries. The research into this painting would be a shared effort combining the technical expertise of the conservator and the art historical expertise of the curator.

THE RESEARCH WOULD CONCLUDE WITH THE PREPARATION OF A RESEARCH REPORT WITH EVENTUAL PUBLICATION IN A SCHOLARLY JOURNAL.

The Examination Report and Treatment Proposal

PHASE 1

The first phase of this project will be to produce an extensive **examination report** on the current state of the painting and a treatment proposal. The report will interpret and incorporate of the findings of the analytical work undertaken at the Canadian Conservation Institute and will include information on the following:

- current condition of the painting (unframed)
- recommended treatment
- costs associated with the cleaning
- cost of materials to be reimbursed to the Art Conservation Program

The examination will be carried out in the conservation laboratories of the Art Conservation Program, Queen's University.

WHY UNDERTAKE SUCH AN EXTENSIVE EXAMINATION?

It is incumbent on a professional conservator in accordance with our standards for professional practice to thoroughly examine and document a work before providing a treatment proposal. This must be done in writing and forms the basis for the treatment proposal. The owner must then approve the treatment proposal before any work can proceed.

A thorough examination report is important for this work because it has undergone such extensive treatment in the past with detectible difficulties in cleaning. Much of the sky area is overpainted indicating either a lack of original paint beneath the overpaint or problems in paint solubility (ie. the cleaning removed original paint or glazes). There are

large areas of disrupted design (see sky area throughout and citadel) and large areas of paint loss (see sky area in upper right). The extensive and thick overpainting visible throughout this work must be thoroughly examined to identify possible treatment approaches and options. For example, if a particular area is overpainted but there is substantial original paint beneath, the overpaint might be removed. If a particular area is overpainted but there is little to no original paint beneath, the overpaint might be left intact. The only way to discern between the various layers of overpaint is to examine the x-rays, UV and Infrared images produced by the Canadian Conservation Institute and formulate a plan for the cleaning. The use of a stereomicroscope, which must be used in a vertical orientation, is imperative to the examination.

Examination Report: Honorarium

The examination report requires a substantial commitment of time in order to correctly identify the condition of this work. It is anticipated that it will take approximately 64 hours of work, both in the lab and after hours to complete this stage of the project.

Honorarium in Canadian Dollars: $3,000.00

Equipment Required to Undertake Examination:

In order to produce a detailed and accurate examination report there are two vital pieces of equipment that would be necessary to both examine and treat the painting.

1. Floor stand microscope: **I have examined the quotes from both Leica and Zeiss and the cost for the base unit is approximately $40.000.00 CDN.** The Leica microscope without the fibre optic illuminator, or camera would be $40,310.00 (with options 45,221.00 CDN) and the Zeiss, with simple attachments but not of the same quality would be $34,829.00. It would be a great advantage to have the Leica microscope even without the fibre optic illuminator, camera or video system because these items can be easily added at a later date. The Leica microscope sets the standard for professional conservation microscopes and I have had the opportunity to examine such a microscope in the painting conservation laboratory at the Canadian Conservation Institute in Ottawa.

   Approx. $40,310.00

2. Custom made easel to support painting in a vertical position while being examined and conserved. This easel can be made locally, should be on wheels and have a tilt function

   Approx. $1500.00

Total: (approx. in CDN $) $41,810.00

Timeline for Examination

The examination would proceed once the easel has been built and the painting arrives in the laboratory. The progress of the work will depend on teaching demands and other University obligations.

Résumé

BARBARA KLEMPAN
Associate of the Ontario College of Art (A.O.C.A.)
Degree in Conservation (Dipl. Restauratorin)
B.Edu. (Queen's)

ADDRESS: 14 Royal Oak Crt.
Ottawa, Ontario
K1T 3N9

TELEPHONE: Residence : (613) 733-6379
Queen's: (613) 533-6000 ext. 74339
(e-mail) klempanb@sympatico.ca
klempanb@post.queensu.ca

LANGUAGES: English, German (fluent), limited French

Barbara Klempan graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design in 1973 and obtained her M.A. in conservation from the Staatliche Akademie der bildenden Künste, Germany, 1979. She worked as a painting conservator at the Canadian Conservation Institute in Ottawa (1979-83) and was head of painting conservation at the National Archives of Canada from 1983-1994. Barbara Klempan taught painting conservation at Queen's University (1990-91) and at the University of Canberra, Australia (1994-98). Since returning to Canada in 1998, she obtained a B.Edu. (Queen's), taught visual arts and has run a successful private practice in the Ottawa area. Some of her clients include major cultural institutions such as the National Archives of Canada and the Canadian War Museum. Barbara Klempan joined the Art Conservation Program at Queen's in 2002. Her research interests include the study of materials and techniques of early painters in Canada.

Recent Publications

Klempan, B., Book review of *A History of European Picture Frames* by Mitchell and Roberts, Material History Review, no. 47, Spring, 1998.

Klempan, B., Removing an Oil Painting on Paper from an Aluminium Honeycomb Panel, AICCM Painting Speciality Group Symposium Postprints, 1995.

Klempan, B., Review of the Lecture: The Restoration of the Sistine Chapel Ceiling: A Justified Controversy? presented by Dr. Kirby Talley Jr., AICCM, ACT Division Newsletter, March 1995.

Klempan, B., Conservation Enlightens History, The Archivist, May-June issue, Vol. 16, No. 3, Ottawa, 1989.

Klempan, B., Emergency Treatment of Water - Damaged Paintings on Canvas, CCI Notes, No. 10/5, Canadian Conservation Institute, Ottawa, 1989.

Klempan, B., A Humidity Chamber for the Treatment of Paintings, American Institute for Conservation Newsletter, Paintings Speciality Group, Vol. 1, No. 2, Sept. 1984.

List of selected treatments:

Staatlich Akademie der bildenden Künste, Stuttgart (1979):

Der Hochaltar der Stadtkirche zu Esslingen: Extensive technical examination of the High Altar in Esslingen, Germany by Peter Riedlinger (1604). The report, cleaning tests and diagrams formed the basis for the eventual cleaning of the altar and overpaint removal (1972-1982).

Canadian Conservation Institute, Ottawa (1979-1983):
Assistant and Senior Assistant Conservator

Ste. Catherine on the Wheel, anon, c. 1510,
Owner: Winnipeg Art Gallery
This painting on panel was in poor condition due to an extremely bowed support, discoloured varnish and visible overpainting.

Twelfth Night, Jan Miense Molenaer, dated 1654
Owner: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
Painting required extensive treatment including varnish removal. The previous varnish had yellowed and become blanched.

Ste. Anne, Auteur Inconnu, 1755,
Owner: Paroisse de la Visitation, Montreal, Quebec.
This extremely large painting was damaged and required extensive cleaning and lining. Overpaint was not removed because of a lack of original paint beneath the overpaint.

National Archives of Canada (1983-1994):
Head of Painting Conservation

While at the National Archives of Canada from 1983-1994 I treated over 200 works from the collection.

The following are some of the more familiar names of artists whose works were treated while at the National Archives of Canada: Berczy, Dulongpré, Roy-Audy, Cook, Hamel, Sawyer, Krieghoff, Bourassa, Boisseau, Morris, Erskine (The Horseshoe Falls, Niagara Falls, Ontario, late 18th century), Cresswell, Bunnet, Holloway, Wilmot, Hind, Hopkins, Harris, Grier, Reid, Hamilton, Rutherford, Rockwell,
Roper, Perrigard, Taylor, Downman, Brompton, DeMura (two lunette shaped paintings from the early 18th century), Beau and Brownell.

Canadian War Museum: (1998-):
(Private Practice)

Numerous paintings were conserved at the Canadian War Museum including works by Cullen, Lismer, MacDonald, Hughes, Jackson, Comfort, Ogilvie, Casson, McKay and Carmichael.

Notre Dame Basilica, Ottawa, Ontario (1999):
(Site Supervisor)

This project included the cleaning of 30 polychrome wood sculptures by Louis-Philippe Hébert, 19 wood sculptures, 2 wood reliefs, 14 Stations of the Cross (oil on metal supports) and over 100 small plaster statues.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & SCIENCE

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

South Kensington, London, S.W. 7

Telephone: 01-589 6371

Telegrams:
VICALBUM
LONDON S.W.7

Reference:

AIR MAIL

Miss Barbara Lang
Curatorial Assistant
Milwaukee Art Center
750 N Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
U S A

23 April 1970

Dear Miss Lang

In Graham Reynolds's absence on leave, I am replying to your letter of the 14th April.

I have now examined the photographs of your painting. I feel that an attribution of your painting to Loutherbourg is a perfectly possible one. As you doubtless are aware, he did occasionally paint such large battle-scenes. But I have looked through the list of Loutherbourg's exhibits at the Royal Academy, without, I fear, finding a Siege of Gibraltar. There is at least one Loutherbourg sea-battle scene at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, and you might like to make contact with the authorities there.

In the meantime I am returning your photographs with this letter.

Yours sincerely

J H MAYNE
Deputy Keeper
Department of Paintings

ENCS 4

April 14, 1970

Mr. Graham Reynolds
VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM
Cromwell Road
S. W. 7
London, England

Dear Mr. Reynolds:

We are investigating the attribution of a painting now at the Art Center. The painting is entitled "Siege at Gibralter". It has been thought that the artist was Phillipe Jacques de Loutherberg. If possible could you give us some additional information to verify or negate this attribution.

I am enclosing four black and white photographs of the painting. The dimensions are 64 inches by 94½ inches.

Thanking you in advance, I am sincerely,

Barbara Lang (Miss)
Curatorial Assistant

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10028

June 8, 1970

Mr. John Lloyd Taylor
Milwaukee Art Center
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Taylor:

Mr. Rousseau has passed your letter of May 26, 1970 on to me.

I have examined your photographs and have showed them to the other curators of this department but with little positive response. Personally, I think the Wright of Derby attribution is unlikely. The de Loutherbourg suggestion seems possible but the technique is much looser than any other of his works that I have seen. I checked through the June 18, 1812 (London) sale catalogue of de Loutherbourg's work but did not find a reference to any Gibraltar picture.

With regret not to have been more helpful.

Yours truly,

Richard E. Friedman

Richard E. Friedman
Department of Paintings

Enclosure

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM
GREENWICH, LONDON SE10
01-858-4422

Ref: P/D

8th April, 1970.

Miss Barbara Lang,
Curatorial Assistant,
Milwaukee Art Center,
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202.

Dear Miss Lang

RE: DE LOUTHERBOURG

Thank you very much for the photographs of your painting of the repulse of the floating batteries at Gibraltar, which does indeed seem to be the subject. The letter you said on the envelope was enclosed was not, in fact, there, so I would be most interested to know what provenance you have to attribution of the artist. It is a very strange picture, which, though it has affinities with De Loutherbourg, it has also even more features which makes me doubt the attribution. The officer waving a sword is in captain's full dress uniform, 1787-1795.

The picture is too big to be a study or sketch, nearly 8ft. long, and though it may look better in colour, appears to have a rather weak and empty composition. John Copley painted the famous genre painting of the seige of Gibraltar, but it doesn't relate at all to this one, and I can't believe that he could have been involved.

Yours sincerely

Edward Archibald

E.H.H. Archibald
Assistant Keeper
Oil Paintings

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & SCIENCE

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

South Kensington, London, S.W.7 Telephone: 01-589 6371

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S. W. 7
London, England

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I am enclosing four black and white photographs of the painting. The dimensions are 64 inches by 94½ inches.

Thanking you in advance, I am sincerely,

Barbara Lang (Miss)
Curatorial Assistant

b. c. Professor Damie Stilman
Mr. Tracy Atkinson

pth

June 3, 1974.

Mr. Benedict Nicolson,
Editor
Burlington Magazine,
Elm House, 10-16 Elm Street,
London W.C. 1,
England.

Dear Ben:

Thank you so much for your note of May 22.

How interesting that the Overstone Collection has turned up.

It seems to me that size and description fit very well the picture at the Milwaukee Art Center. The rockets are clearly visible in the sky and it appears that in the right foreground where most of the action with the marines and sailors is, the water is very shallow and the shore does indeed appear to be jutting into the sea.

I plan to be in London very briefly early in July and I am wondering whether you could join me for lunch or dinner on Sunday, July 7.

Best personal regards.

Very sincerely,

Alfred Bader

AB/th

1

WEST, BENJAMIN (1738-1810). The Death of General Wolfe. oil on canvas, 59 1/2 x 84 in. 1770. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

West was not only the favorite painter of George III; he was also instrumental in the development of contemporary history painting on the national and international level. Wars, death, shipwrecks and conflagerations were part of contemporary historic events, and inspirational to the artists. The war in North America was an extension of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) in Europe. The conquest of Quebec (1759), under the distinguished leadership of General Wolfe, had inspired a general enthusiasm for the British historical role in the world.

George Romney (1734-1802) was the first artist to paint The Death of Wolfe (1763) in contemporary dress; the second was Edward Penny (1714-1791). Unlike Penny's melodramatic presentation of the event, West's highly praised painting of The Death of Wolfe combined patriotic fervor with the apparent attempt at historical accuracy. The event was amphibious. Considering the contemporary maps and views of Quebec, it appears that West was familiar with the site and the tactics.

The landscape is panoramic, and the participants are placed on a high plateau corresponding to the upper part of Quebec--the Heights of Abraham. On the right, the Basin of Quebec is occupied by the British fleet. Another topographical feature appears on the left in a shape of a church steeple. West's primary concern was with the figures in the foreground, the major point of interest being the dying hero. The most contrasting and contradicting feature is the iconic presence of the Indian. Is West's statement personal, or is the Indian the symbol of romantic irony? Though the event is highly glorified, West was able to achieve a credible balance of fact and imagination. West's statement, "I want to mark the date, the place, and the parties engaged in the event...", reinforces his concern for historicism.

This picture demonstrates West's departure from the rigidity of the rules formulated by Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the leading theorist of the Neo-classical movement. The rectilinear module and the relief-like nature of the composition is abolished. Consequently all the primary shapes are utilized in a rather complex pattern, while the light creates an effect that reinforces the figures in the foreground and dissolves and envelops the background in an atmospheric manner. This painting was engraved by Woollett in 1776, and it became one of the most popular engravings in the art market.

2 COPLEY, JOHN SINGLETON (1737/8-1815). Watson and the Shark. oil on canvas, 71 3/4 x 90 1/2 in. 1778. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

When Copley arrived in London in December 1775, after his Italian tour, West's reputation as a history painter was considerable. Their friendship was already established while Copley was still in Boston, though professionally they were to be rivals.

Watson was Copley's first English history painting. The opportunity to work on a large scale narrative came through a commission from Brook Watson (1735-1807). The event was not of historical importance, but commemorated an incident from Watson's youth when in 1749 he had been attacked while swimming in Havana Harbor. Jules D. Prown's study of Watson reveals Copley's dependence on specific visual sources.

When Copley's Watson is compared with West's Wolfe, it appears that both artists have utilized some visual sources for the general layout and the key topographical features of the composition. The pursuit of realism, reflecting the tradition shared by both artists, is also evident in both paintings. Both compositions are panoramic, but viewed from a different vantage point. Due to the stratifications of Copley's figures and the scattered points of interest and because of the watery groundline, the position of the viewer seems to be suspended. West's spatial organization is more three-dimensional. West's pattern of movement is dynamic, but, unlike Copley's, the transitions and counterforces are unified in West's composition. Of course, the figures are dominant in each composition. It appears that Copley encountered problems in the grouping of figures, whereas West did not. In terms of design Watson seems to be an experimental work. Unlike West, Copley focused on the bizarre and horrible aspects of death. This work is remarkable for imagination and novelty of presentation rather than for design.

From a standpoint of history painting, Copley's painting was a-typical. The impression remains that Copley was trying to create a moment of high intensity in a Burkian manner, whereas West was able to achieve the results in which illusion and reality were inseparably blended. After the initial success of Watson, Copley was prepared to handle great historical events. Acclaimed by the public, this painting marked the beginning of the artistic rivalry between Copley and West. Thematically it was different from Copley's subsequent history paintings, but it was a significant prelude to the Siege of Gibraltar.

3 WEST, BENJAMIN (1738-1810). The Battle of La Hogue. oil on canvas, 60 1/8 x 84 3/8 in. 1778. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

Unlike the amphibious operations at Quebec which exhibited a close co-operation between the British naval and land forces, and unlike Copley's "sea piece," West's La Hogue commemorated a British naval victory at sea. This battle was fought off Cape La Hogue, near Cherbourg in 1692.

As in The Death of Wolfe, West again returns to a panoramic format, but the compositional organization is different. The participants are placed in a bay-like enclosure, and the spectator observes the event from a low vantage point. Landforms appear in the background. Above the escarpment to the right, perhaps corresponding to Fort Lisset or Fort St. Vaast, man-made forms in the nature of fortifications can be observed. The main emphasis is on the figures and activities in the foreground. Equally prominent are the three ships, the one on the left shown in a process of burning. A typical British motif is the gunboat, two of which are placed on the left hand side of the composition.

Judging from West's presentation and his placement of the boats and landmarks, it appears that he was familiar with the British tactics and topography. Admiral Rooke, the largest figure on the left, kept the remainder of the French Fleet in the bay, where their large vessels were unable to perform effectively. Fifteen of the French ships were destroyed, including the centrally placed Soleil Royal.

Having previously painted The Death of Wolfe, West was now able to elaborate on the fiery effects of the battle. This painting was another great achievement in West's career as a history painter. Even in the nineteenth century, La Hogue was considered one of the most successful history paintings of its time. The portrayal of violence, shipwreck and conflageration in La Hogue anticipates the pictorial presentation of the British victory at Gibraltar in 1782. Even though the general tonality of the painting suggests it to be daylight, West's handling of light effects is in the manner of his contemporary, Joseph Wright of Derby. West's La Hogue had a decisive influence, too, on Trumbull's career. Its design set the stage for the pictorial presentation of contemporary naval battles.

4 TRUMBULL, JOHN (1756-1845). The Battle of La Hogue. oil on canvas, 64 1/2 x 96 in. Copy by Trumbull, about 1784-85, after Benjamin West's original of 1778 (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.). Signed, dated, and inscribed (on transom of boat, at the left center): B. West 1778. Retouched by West in 1806. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Trumbull's studies with West began in May 1780. In November 1780 Trumbull was imprisoned on the suspicion of treason or as a retaliation for the arrest of Major André in the colonies. West and Copley posted a bond in June 1781. Trumbull was deported, but in June 1784 he returned to London to continue his studies with West and at the Academy. He had an intimate knowledge of West's work, and he was familiar with Copley's. Trumbull's stylistic connections with West and Copley have long been accepted. Ideologically he differed from West and Copley. Due to the professional acclaim of West and Copley and because of their encouragements, Trumbull also chose to be a history painter.

Although the copy is closely related to the original of 1788, there are some differences. The composition is basically the same, except for the light and color value. The general tonality of the painting, the artificial light effects and the highlights create an impression of night or evening. The paint is thinly and delicately applied in both paintings, though the surface of the copy shows traces of dirt which may explain the dark tonality of the painting. West's original is in a much better state of preservation. West is more precise in his rendering of the figures and details.

In general the figures are stocky, with broad faces and ruddy complexions. Trumbull's treatment of the faces is general and less refined than West's. The highlighting effect on the participants' heads is much stronger and departs from the model. The French officer on the right is bald in West's original, but not in the copy. The inclusion of a number of secondary figures can be observed on the left-hand side of the copy. Minor differences can be observed in the treatment of the escarpment and the fortifications on the right.

More problematic are the details. Certain key motifs such as the coat of arms and other national emblems are less precisely articulated in Trumbull's copy. West's original is more precise. A cleaning of the picture may reveal more on the subject of light.

5

COPLEY, JOHN SINGLETON (1737/8-1815). The Death of Major Peirson. oil on canvas, 97 x 144 in. 1782-84, Tate Gallery, London.

On his return to London, Trumbull witnessed another great success by Copley, whose The Death of Peirson was exhibited that summer. Copley commemorated an event that occured on the night of January 5, 1781, an amphibious attack on the British island of Jersey. The French capture of the town of St. Helier was heroically defended by Major Peirson, who, like Wolfe, was mortally wounded at the moment of victory. Historically this event was closely linked with the siege of Gibraltar. The French were determined to prevent the relief of Gibraltar, but owing to the defeat at St. Helier they were unable to secure the strategic land base and maintain an effective blockade.

As pointed out by Prown, this picture represented the exact view where the battle occurred. The participants are placed in the narrow confines of a city square. In the treatment of topographical motifs, Copley is more realistic than West or Trumbull. A feature that is characteristic of all three artists is the compression of the middle ground. The shift from foreground to background is less gradual in Copley's compositions, and The Death of Peirson shares this characteristic with Watson. The fiery effects of the battle, the drifting smoke-clouds and the fusion of light are conceived in a painterly manner and are reminiscent of West's treatment of light in La Hogue. West's Wolfe and La Hogue cannot be disregarded as inspirational sources.

The smoke-shrouded area serves as a dramatic backdrop for the placement of the figures and flags. Copley's treatment of the smoky mass is less transparent and not as atmospheric as in West's La Hogue. The concept of centralization is reminiscent of West's Wolfe, but, unlike West, Copley experiments with the inversion of figures. As a colorist Copley is more daring than West. Contrasts of light and dark and the intensity of hue emphasize the emotional content of the event. As in Watson, angularity persists, except that in this composition stability is sustained as the result of the fixed groundline, centralization and isocephalic placement of most of the figures. The initial success of Watson and the popularity of the exhibition of The Death of Peirson established Copley's reputation as the painter of contemporary history subjects.

The Map of Gibraltar.

In March 1783, while Copley was still working on The Death of Major Peirson, he signed the contract with the Corporation of the City of London to commemorate the victory of the British over the Spanish and French at Gibraltar in the autumn of 1782. The event was topical, and the subject was extremely popular with the history painters.

The original British capture of Gibraltar occured in 1704, which secured one of the most strategic points in the Mediterranean. The first successful British defense of the Rock in 1705 already had a noticeable effect on British public opinion. The idea of repossessing the Rock had long been entertained by the Spanish. In July 1779 the Spanish and their French allies began the attack of the British-held Rock. To the people on the Continent, Gibraltar was the symbol of British Imperialism. To the British it was the symbol of military and naval power. From 1779 to 1783 Gibraltar was governed by General Eliott, a professional soldier, who had served his country during the Seven Years' War.

The area of the Rock encompassed approximately seven miles. The western part of the area exhibited a slope-like formation; the northern part faced the Continent. The town was built at the foot of the northwest face of the mountain, and it was fortified in an irregular manner. After 1779 more fortifications were erected. A feature that dominated the rocky elevation was a picturesque Moorish castle, a monument of the preceeding culture. Across the bay was the town of Algeciras, which was to serve as the base for the combined forces of Spain and France during the four-year siege of Gibraltar.

The legendary past of the Rock was associated with the travels of Hercules. Considering Burke's theories, the physical grandeur of the Rock could almost be referred to as the symbol of the sublime. The legendary past, the picturesque nature of the site, invasions and sieges all had an appeal to imagination. The siege of 1779 to 1783 was to occupy a prominent position in British history and that of history painting. A series of military and naval operations that occured within a four year period were recorded and commemorated by British and American painters, with the destruction of the floating batteries, which was the culmination of the siege, extremely popular among the history painters.

7 COPLEY, JOHN SINGLETON (1737/8-1815). Sketch for the Siege of Gibraltar. oil on canvas, 36 x 50 1/2 in. 1788. Thomas Coran Foundation for Children, London.

Jules D. Prown provides a fully documented account of Copley's Siege of Gibraltar. In his notes he remarks that Joseph Wright of Derby's lost painting of this subject was exhibited in 1785. The Milwaukee picture is not listed in Copley's oeuvre. West and Copley were both considered for the commission. West's plans were not accepted, and thus, for the second time, West had to abandon a subject in favor of Copley. Prown points out that Copley's original intent was to portray the climax of the event, plus the relief of the fortress under Admiral Howe on October 11, 1782. Copley's plan and price may have been decisive factors in the awarding of the commission.

The sketch of 1788 does not include the relief, but shows the climax of the battle with the group portrait of the British officers. It appears that from 1783 to 1786 Copley was working on a large scale preparatory sketch on canvas, which was inspected by the Committee on January 23, 1787. They found it unsatisfactory due to the distant placement of the officers. The sketch of 1788 appears to be an intermediary step between the original sketch and the final Siege, at the Guidhall, London.

As recounted by Prown, Copley's studio was surrounded by models of the objects that he intended to incorporate in the picture. This dependence on visual sources has been mentioned in relation to earlier paintings. Spatially, the sketch of 1788 is a synthesis of Watson and The Death of Peirson. As in the earlier works, the figurative scale is at odds with the background objects. The participants are placed above the New Mole. The major point of interest is the equestrian figure of General Eliott. The landforms and architectural shapes in the right background are ambiguous and are rendered in a sketchy manner, as is the shape of the King's Bastion in the middle ground. In general the key iconographical motifs tend to assume rather imaginary shapes. One of the motifs that identify the subject is the floating battery. The shapes of the large vessels are generalized, which makes their identification difficult.

When comparing this sketch with the Milwaukee picture, it is seen to differ in compositional arrangement, size of figures, handling of light and treatment of key iconographical features. These differences suggest the Milwaukee painting to be by another hand.

8 CARTER, GEORGE, Sketch for the Siege of Gibraltar. Exhibited in London in 1785.

A connection between the oil sketch of 1788 and Carter's exhibited sketch of 1785 has been suggested by Prown. He believes that after seeing Carter's exhibition, the Committee members were favorably impressed by the placement of the British military heroes and conveyed this to Copley.

The British officers are placed in the right foreground in both compositions. However, Carter's composition differs in the placement of the figures. The participants are placed on an elevated ground, overlooking the King's Bastion. In Copley's sketch of 1788 the figures occupy the space above the New Mole, south of the King's Bastion. Carter's composition is panoramic and includes a view of the bay and the conflagration of the floating batteries. The shapes of the floating batteries are difficult to discern. This also occurs in Copley's sketch. The area behind the figures is equally obscure in both compositions.

Carter is more stylized in his light effects. But contrary to the stylized treatment of the explosion, the figures and the King's Bastion exhibit a realistic treatment. Carter's style is more precise, and most likely he was primarily concerned with reportage. The placement of the scene within a topographically correct setting reinforces this point. Although Copley's sketch is somewhat similar in the grouping of the officers, this is not to say that Copley was indebted to Carter.

The visual impression remains that Copley was not concerned with topographical accuracy. Carter's representation of one of the major topographical motifs, namely the King's Bastion, appears to be true to the fact, while Copley's motifs assume imaginary form. It seems doubtful that Copley, after having worked on large scale narratives, combined with realistic portraiture, would have to look for his compositional arrangement to the work of a minor artist.

9

DRINKWATER, COLONEL JOHN. View of the Spanish Battering Ships the Morning of the 14th Sept. 1782 after their Defeat before Gibraltar taken from ye North Flank of the South Bastion when one had blown uo and four were in flames--with the Combined Fleets & Camps at a distance. watercolor.

The British public was supplied with abundant information about the siege. There was a great output of pictures, engravings, plans and sketches that were widely dispersed and exhibited. The eye-witness accounts were in a form of journals and diaries which have since been published. From these one was and is able to reconstruct the operations between June 1779 and February 1783. Colonel Drinkwater's on-the-spot account gives a vivid description of the battle,

> "The light thrown out on all sides by the flames enabled the artilery to point the guns with the utmost precision, whilst the rock and neighbouring objects were highly illuminated, forming, with the constant flashes of our cannon, a mingled scene of sublimity and terror....and the approaching day now promised us one of the completest defensive victories on record."

The inscription in the upper left-hand side of the watercolor refers to Copley's Guildhall Siege. The rendering of the site and the key motifs is very precise and is typical of reportage. This watercolor is thought to have been in Copley's possession while he was working on the subject. It is possible that it was used as a point of reference for the compositional arrangement, though the way in which Drinkwater renders the floating batteries is different from Copley and Carter. In spite of the minute scale, the box-like shapes and the pitched-roofs are easily discernible in the watercolor. For the identification of the subject, this is the key motif.

The floating batteries were the invention of the French engineer Michaud d'Arçon, who is also credited with the amphibious strategy. This type of attack demanded a new type of ship that would able to withstand the bombardment of the British red-hot shots and would facilitate the landing of the army. In April 1782 there began a reconstruction of ten large old ships of the line for this purpose. Ten were constructed, and nine are pictured in Drinkwater's watercolor.

ENGRAVING BY BERGMILLER. The Preparation of the Floating Batteries.

The siege of Gibraltar was marked by many instances of great inventions. The floating batteries were invented by d'Arçon for the combined forces of Spain and France. The method of construction was unique. Cork, junk, timber and iron fastening devices were utilized to fortify the sides, which were to be six or seven feet thick. Only the fighting side was fortified in this manner. The cork was soaked in water and layers of wet sand were placed within the wall construction. The overhead protection was made of thatch, hemp and raw hides saturated in water. The sloping shape of the roof was to serve as a sliding-off device for the red-hot shots. D'Arçon's primary concern was to make them totally impregnable. Hinged platforms and special mooring devices were also incorporated in the design. The floating batteries were constructed on the site at Algeciras and were intended for use in the bay.

Ten floating batteries and numerous other boats were anchored within 1,000 yards of the sea-wall of the town of Gibraltar. The focal point of the enemy battle ships was the King's Bastion. For some hours the floating batteries lived up to their reputation of invincibility. At first the bombardment of the red-hot shots appeared to have little or no effect on them, but by midnight it was obvious that the Spanish-French tactics had failed. By 2:00 A.M., September 14, 1782, it was certain that the British victory was complete. Why?

Copley's presentation of the floating batteries in the sketch of 1788 does not compare with the ones shown in this engraving or in Drinkwater's watercolor. The wreckage on the left and in the middle distance suggest the presence of the large vessels. In the final version the middle distance provides space, where we find the floating batteries depicted in miniature scale. Judging by the presentation of the key motifs in the sketch of 1788, it appears that Copley at this time was less concerned with a realistic representation of the particulars.

KOEHLER, GEORGE F. General Eliott and his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant G. F. Koehler, in the King's Bastion during the action at Gibraltar. Engraved after a drawing by Lieutenant G. F. Koehler.

On the part of the British, Lieutenant George F. Koehler of the Royal Artillery invented a new type of gun in 1782. He constructed a new carriage which answered the need of long-range bombarding in an accurate manner. The effectiveness of this gun and the use of the red-hot shots were tested against the floating batteries of d'Arçon. Both of these inventions were used for the first time at Gibraltar in September 1782.

Both of these inventions are depicted in Drinkwater's watercolor. Copley also pictures the gun, but it serves as a prop for the grouping of the figures. Koehler documents this occasion by placing himself and his invention in the composition.

Colonel Drinkwater's presentation of the gunboats, floating batteries, the "depress-gun" and the strategic land areas is factual, contrary to his poetic description of the final moments in his book. In many respects the pictorial results of Copley's oil sketch are anallogous to Drinkwater's description of the outcome of the battle.

Visually it is quite apparent that Copley wanted to portray the terrible aspects of the battle. The shattered state of the large ships and the chaotic passing of the figures convey the futility of the event quite successfully. The style is sketchy, and he eliminates the details. In spite of the fact that the sketch of 1788 is extremely generalized, Copley includes the rescue team of Sir Roger Curtis.

From an engraving by J. K. SHERWIN, published on September 14, 1784. Sir Roger Curtis Rescuing Spaniards from the Burning Battering Ships.

When the bombardment began to decrease, Sir Roger Curtis set out with a dozen gunboats from the New Mole. Curtis and his men went alongside the burning floating batteries in order to rescue the Spaniards from the flames. Some of his men were wounded, and a few were killed by the explosions. Three hundred and fifty Spaniards were rescued. Judging by Colonel Drinkwater's eye-witness account, the bay presented a nightmarish scene of chaos, while Curtis' rescue team tried to assist the helpless men struggling in the water.

Sherwin presents a close view of Sir Roger Curtis. He is shown standing, and in his right hand he is holding an object in a shape of a horn. The massing of the figures and the boats in the right foreground convey the activities of the rescue team. The King's Bastion is placed behind the figures in the right distance, while the typical shapes of the floating batteries appear on the left. This engraving illustrates the importance of Curtis' function after the battle. The grouping on the right is more in line with West's arrangement of the figures in La Hogue.

In Copley's composition of 1788, the British gunboat is placed on the left, and it carries many figures, with a precariously placed figure on the cannon. However, this figure does not appear in the final version. Another gunboat is placed in the middle distance, adjacent to the burning ship. Prown identifies the largest standing figure as Sir Roger Curtis. The sinking Spanish longboat, placed in the proximity of the South Bastion, appear in both of Copley's versions. In Copley's presentation of the scene in the sketch of 1788, less emphasis is placed on Sir Roger Curtis. In Sherwin's engraving, however, Curtis is the most prominent figure.

From an aquatint by C. TOMKINS after F. JUKES and J. CLEVELY. The Defeat of the Floating Batteries During the Night of 13-14 September, 1782.

According to Prown this aquatint was published on February 10, 1783. It depicts the activities of Curtis' rescue team. Two gunboats are clearly visible in this composition. The gunboat in the extreme right-hand area contains three standing figures. One assumes that the standing officer holding the sword is Sir Roger Curtis. The sinking boat, placed between the two gunboats, most likely represents the sinking Spanish longboat. The shapes of the floating batteries are obscured by the billowing smoke-clouds. In spite of the smoke-screen, one of the vessels exhibits a partial view of a shape usually associated with the floating batteries. The King's Bastion is placed in the lower right distance, with the view of the Rock topped by architectural shapes above that.

The smoky mass dissolves the forms in the background. This generalization of the background is also obvious in the right-hand area of Copley's sketch of 1788. In Drinkwater's watercolor, Curtis' gunboat is placed in the proximity of the Talla Piedra. The gunboat has one mast and one gun. In Jukes and Clevely's composition, the mast has been eliminated. The use, efficacy and the depiction of the gunboats was mentioned in the discussion of West's La Hogue. However, the gunboats that were utilized at Gibraltar were specially prefabricated in Britain and were reassembled after their arrival at Gibraltar. The first two arrived at the end of February 1782 with Vernon's relief, the other ten reached Gibraltar on March 23, 1782.

As stated earlier, prints and other visual data were available to the artists, as was the information from the returning officers. Yet in Copley's case the direct sources are difficult to prove. Prown cites a number of works that were executed and were publicly shown at the time while Copley was still working on the subject.

The Milwaukee picture also depicts Sir Roger Curtis' rescue of the Spaniards from the burning battering ships. But, in terms of the compositional arrangement and the way in which the light is handled, it is difficult to see a connection with Copley.

COPLEY, JOHN SINGLETON (1737/8-1815). The Siege of Gibraltar (The Defeat of the Floating Batteries on September 13, 1782). oil on canvas, 214 x 297 in. 1783-91. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.

By the time Copley had finished the large Guildhall Siege the popularity of the subject was just a memory. It was exhibited in June 1791. Eight years had passed since the commission, almost nine since the British victory at Gibraltar.

Due to the rearrangement in the left-hand area, more emphasis is placed on Curtis and the rescue activities. The figure of Curtis is more prominently placed in the gunboat to the extreme left. The pointing hands of Curtis and Eliott focus on the sinking longboat in the foreground. The grouping in and around the longboat is reminiscent of Watson. The topography and the key iconographical motifs are again generalized. However, there are significant additions. In this composition a space is provided in the middle distance for the placement of the floating batteries, though they are almost invisible in this photograph. Colonel Drinkwater is not portrayed in Copley's sketch, but he is included among the military personalities in the Guildhall Siege. He is shown in profile and placed in the extreme upper right-hand section.

This is a large scale narrative combined with group portraits. This type of presentation is typical of Copley's history subjects. If the Milwaukee picture was intended to be a companion piece to the Guildhall Siege, Prown's documentation speaks against that. The Milwaukee painting differs considerably in style and iconography. It is obvious that the subject is the aftermath of the battle, which includes the rescue team of Sir Roger Curtis. This type of large open panoramic seascape differs from Copley's compressed version. The left-hand side of the composition may compare more favorably with Copley, yet there are differences in the handling of highlights and shapes.

The two fiery floating batteries are the focal point in the Milwaukee painting, unlike the scattered points of interest in Copley's composition. The shattered state of the large ships and the chaotic massing of the figures stress the human drama in Copley's presentation of the aftermath. The Milwaukee painting is different. The figures play a secondary role to the fireworks. The main differences are in the use and treatment of light and in the distribution of light effects.

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Formerly attributed to JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY (1737/8-1815). The Siege of Gibraltar. oil on canvas, 62 x 93 1/2 in. Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee.

This photograph was taken by P. Richard Eells prior to the cleaning and restoration of the painting by Mrs. Mary D. Randall in London in the spring of 1972. Prior to the sale of the painting to Nathaniel C. Sears, restoration work was done in 1923 at the Ehrich Galleries, New York. The work was very unprofessional, and the painting was relined with sailcloth. Mrs. Randall removed this material, and the painting is now properly relined.

In 1967, when the Sears collection was sold, the painting was again in need of cleaning and restoration. Heavy overpainting ocvered the immediate foreground, the left-hand side and the area around the floating batteries. Prior to the restoration of 1972, the canvas surface was unevenly textured, whereas it now shows an even and a rather thin application of paint. The effectiveness of light and color, the tonal differences and the transparent light effects of the background were less emphatic before the restoration.

This painting was authenticated by Albert Rosenthal of Philadelphia in 1924 as a work by John Singleton Copley. This document is in a form of letter, co-signed by the Ehrich brothers. The authentication is based on a general knowledge of Copley's oeuvre.

In the letter from H. L. Ehrich to Nathaniel C. Sears, August 7, 1923, Ehrich states that the painting is in England in a private collection. He offers it to Sears for $1800, plus the cost of transportation. In the letter from the Elgin Academy, to the Ehrich Galleries, November 7, 1923, a fee of $72.00 for the restoration of Copley's Siege is confirmed. It appears that the painting was purchased prior to this date. This painting was in the collection of the Laura Davidson Sears Academy of Fine Arts, Elgin, Illinois, until the collection was offered for sale in 1967. Part of the collection was purchased by Alfred Bader of Milwaukee and included this painting. In the Sears collection it was listed as number 84, by Copley.

The painting was exhibited at the Lenz Art Gallery, Milwaukee, in 1968. The exhibition catalogue, American Paintings, listed it as number 11, by John Singleton Copley (attributed), Siege of Gibraltar. At this time the attribution was questioned by the organizer of the present exhibition, and the authenticity was contested in a seminar presentation at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in April 1970.

The Map of the Sortie, November 27, 1781.

Judging from the documented works of West and the written material about him, he can be eliminated as the possible author of the Milwaukee painting. We shall now consider Trumbull's treatment of the Gibraltar theme.

While Copley was revising his composition of The Siege, Trumbull had already completed his painting of an earlier event at Gibraltar, The Sortie. The sortie was a British land attack, under the command of Brigadier Ross, on November 27, 1781. General Eliott in spite of the risks involved accompanied the sortie. The Spanish were unprepared for the attack; therefore in a very short time all opposition was overcome and the British were the undisputed victors. This successful attack was one of the few cheerful features of the war, which was not progressing too well at the time. It restored the British confidence and was an important break in the land blockade.

Credit has been given to West and the draughtsman and print publisher Antonio C. di Poggi in Trumbull's choice of the subject. After his conversation with di Poggi, in May 1787, Trumbull states:

> "I was pleased with the subject, as offered, in the gallant conduct and death of the Spanish commander, a scene of deep interest to the feelings, and in the contrast of the darkness of night, with the illumination of an extensive conflageration, great splendor of effect and color."

This statement reflects Trumbull's artistic point of view, while the following comment in the letter to his brother on September 3, 1788 speaks for itself:

> "I am now busy in a picture of the Sortie made by the Garrison at Gibraltar in '81 - adressed to the Vanity and Nationality of John Bull; this is agreed to be engraved here by the best of the English Artists...".

As Theodore Sizer points out, there is a question as to the date this picture was begun, though it may be as early as 1784.

TRUMBULL, JOHN (1756-1845). The Sortie, Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar on the Night of 26/27 November 1781. oil on canvas, 20 x 30 in. 1788. Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio.

After having copied West's La Hogue, Trumbull was able to exploit the possibilities of panoramic design. The following statement in the letter to his brother, dated December 14, 1785, illustrates Trumbull's debt to his master:

> "Mr West, whose friendship isunexhaustible, has propos'd to me a subject of the History of this Country [Gibraltar], at once popular, sublime & in every respect perfect to the pencil..."

Trumbull's imagination was stimulated by the gallant death of a young Spanish officer and by the spectacular night scene and not by the British military candor. The unique juxtaposition of the participants portrays Trumbull's personal attitude toward the British.

The wing-like arrangement of the design is somewhat reminiscent of the compositional layout of La Hogue. The British officers are grouped on the right, with Eliott pointing toward the dying Spaniards in the center of the composition. Brigadier Ross, whose left hand is resting on the hip, is shown in profile. Sir Roger Curtis is bare-headed and presented in profile. The left-hand side of the composition is more dynamic and is enveloped in a smoky haze. The head of the semi-reclining figure of Don José Barbosa is the apex of the pyramidal design. The positions of both Spaniards differ in later replicas.

Prown states that Trumbull's Sortie is closely related to Copley's The Death of Peirson. It is obvious that both artists favor the use of the pyramidal shape and the inversion of figures. Judging from photographs and reproductions, Trumbull's treatment of the background appears to be painterly. The fiery sky and the illusory landforms on the right form the backdrop for the figures on the frontal plane. The light, coming from upper left, has a diagonal thrust toward the centrally placed figures. The use of contrasts, highlights and atmospheric effects is not so different from that of West and Copley. It is ironic that among all history paintings that Trumbull painted, The Sortie was more esteemed than his American history subjects. There are seven replicas of this subject, three of which have not been located.

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TRUMBULL, JOHN (1756-1845). The Sortie (replica). oil on canvas, 72 x 108 in. 1789.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; courtesy Boston Athenaeum.

A replica is a close reproduction of the original by the same artist. Copies are not executed by the original artist, though they may closely imitate or duplicate the original design. This monumental replica was engraved by William Sharp (1746-1824) of London.

Theodore Sizer discusses the design problems Trumbull encountered while working on this subject, but there are still unresolved problems as to which is the original. This large scale replica is a close reproduction of the Cincinnati painting. However, there are some changes. The pose of Don José Barbosa is slightly altered. His head is bent and in profile, and the spotlight effect is absent. The position of the arms and the angle of the head of the inverted figure exhibit minor changes. In this replica the spotlight effect is focused on the inverted figure. The light, still coming from the upper left, is more directioned and forceful in the replica. On the left, the highlights are stronger, but scattered. The use of light is effective, and it stresses the pathos of the event.

Trumbull was a history painter and a portraitist. Like West and Copley, he also combined the narrative with the group portrait. In that respect, The Sortie demonstrates the debt to both artists. With West, he shares the generalization of the individual likeness. This was Trumbull's only history painting with a theme drawn from contemporary British history. As an artist he was diplomatic by giving due honors to the British military leaders, though his letters suggest the opposite.

Sizer's study of Trumbull's oeuvre show there is no evidence of other representation of the Gibraltar theme. Trumbull's only representation was that of an earlier event, which was a land battle; therefore the lost replicas raise no doubts concerning the Milwaukee picture. Also, the sizes of the lost replicas bear no relationship to the Milwaukee painting. Stylistically, differences can be observed in the treatment of light. Compare, for instance, the source of light and the peripheral interrelationship of light in both pictures. Trumbull's purpose was also different. It was didactic.

The Map of Gibraltar.

It has been generally accepted that West was the pace setter of contemporary history painting. Being an expatriate like West, Copley also chose the events from contemporary British history. The British painter Joseph Wright of Derby, however, seems to have been less interested in the political events, except for the most spectacular and memorable of them all--the siege of Gibraltar. Benedict Nicolson provides substantial information on Wright's reaction to the Gibraltar theme. It had a special meaning for Wright, apart from human or moral interest.

Wright's scientifically oriented mind was constantly preoccupied with the pictorial synthesis of natural and artificial systems: the phenomenon of light. For Wright of Derby, light was the most flexible visual art form, and this subject would enable him to explore the sublimity of fire in a grand and poetic manner. Earlier in his career, he had explored the dramatic effects from candles, torches, lava and moonlight. It has been said that for Wright of Derby, Vesuvius and the factories of Birmingham were sublime and science was a beautiful mystery. This subject was to be the culmination of all the fireworks.

Wright's painting View of Gibraltar During the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries, 14th September 1782 was exhibited at Mr. Robins' Rooms in Covent Garden in the middle of April 1785. William Hayley's poem To Mr. Wright of Derby, on his picture of the Attack of Gibraltar (1785) has a visual counterpart in the Milwaukee painting:

"Wright! let thy skill (this radiant pair exclaim)
Give to our view our favorite scene of Fame,
Where Britain's genius, blaz'd in glory's
"brightest flame."
.....
Behold! his flames terrific lustre shed;
His naval blaze mounts from its billowy bed;
And Calpe proudly rears her war-illumin'd Head."

WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). View of Gibraltar During the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries, 14th September 1782 (formerly attributed to Copley).
oil on canvas, 62 x 92 1/2 in. 1783-85.
Milwaukee Art Center Collection
Gift of the Charleston Foundation
In Memory of Miss Paula Uihlein, 1973 M 1973.1

Our knowledge about Wright's apparently lost painting, View of Gibraltar, was greatly increased by the publication of a monograph on Wright in 1968 by Benedict Nicolson. The painting was exhibited in April 1785, with the poet William Hayley providing the written material for the exhibition catalogue. Hayley's poem, part of which was cited previously, was printed in the March 1785 issue of the European Magazine. The painting was first purchased by John Milnes of Wakefield; in June 1806 it was acquired by Vernon, a Liverpool merchant. In 1857 it was in the collection of Lord Overstone. From 1857 to 1923 the whereabouts of the painting is not known. The Sears and Bader purchases were cited earlier. In January, 1973, the painting was purchased by the Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee.

This painting is well documented by letters between Wright and the poet Hayley. Wright was a very methodical artist and it is not surprising that he was especially concerned with the factual data of the event. In his letter to Hayley, January 9, 1783, he stated,

> "...could I be certain', he writes, 'Sr. Roger Curtis, wou'd upon a personal application allow me the use of his drawings & give me those aids he has others..."

It is not certain if he received any help from Curtis. The exact date when he started to work on the painting has not been determined. We do know that he worked on it during 1784. This was established by Nicolson on the basis of Wright's correspondence with Hayley. Wright's letter to Hayley, February 17, 1785, describes the painting:

> "...I am unacquainted wth. naval business have therefore had many difficulties to combat with which if I could have foreseen, wou'd have detered me from the prosecution of the work. After all I fear it is not the picture you expect to see, as the action is not principal & at too great a distance to discriminate particulars, even the men in the Gunboats that lie just off the New Mole (wch. makes a fine dark foreground to the picture) are not more than an inch high, however the floating Batteries in different degrees of burning made a fine blaze, & illuminate in a striking manner the noble Rock of Gib..."

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WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). Sea Battle. pencil, 11 1/2 x 13 1/8 in. ca. 1783-85 (?).
Lent by Derby Museum and Art Gallery, Derby, England.

On the basis of material available to him at the time, Nicolson felt that the two drawings by Wright in the Derby Museum lent for this exhibition had no relation to any known work of his. Both drawings were thus approximately dated in the early '70's, in line with Wright's and Burdett's correspondence of 1772 and Wright's correspondence with his brother of 1776. In the former, allusions are made to perspective studies of boats; in the latter, Wright made references to a "sea engagement." The date and subject matter are thus problematical.

— Colonel Drinkwater's written and pictorial account of the siege was taken as a point of reference for the identification of Wright's subject. This drawing and Drinkwater's watercolor present similar motifs. The pitch-shaped roof design of the floating batteries is clearly defined in Wright's drawing, though Wright's treatment of the mast construction is more elaborate and includes the flag. Nine of the ten floating batteries appear in Drinkwater's composition, whereas Wright's shows only two. In Wright's drawing, the shapes behind the two floating batteries probably represent the rest of the formation.

Wright also utilizes the panoramic view; the viewer appears to be placed below the South Bastion (New Mole) and further to the south, as opposed to Drinkwater's viewer being placed above the South Bastion. In Wright's drawing the distances are more difficult to judge. The focal point in Wright's drawing is off-center to the left. The directional lines are focused toward the floating batteries. There are no figures in Drinkwater's watercolor, and they are minimized in Wright's study.

Wright's representation of the King's Bastion is sketchy. The pyramidal shapes are visible to the right, but they are enveloped in smoke. The view of Gibraltar in Drinkwater's composition includes the sea-wall, but extends no further; therefore it lacks the motif of the Moorish Castle. Wright includes a sketchy view of the landscape on the right. The block-like shapes above the King's Bastion, visible between the two masts on the right, designate the location of the castle. This and the following drawing depict the same type of gunboat. Other types of boats are pictured in the background to the left, beyond which are generalized shapes of either smoke or landforms. Curvilinear, cumulus shapes dominate the background.

22

WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). British Gun-Boat in Action, with a Plan of the Boat. pencil, 12 1/2 x 13 1/8 in. ca. 1783-85 (?). Lent by Derby Museum and Art Gallery, Derby, England.

The two views of the gunboat, particularly the schematically designed view, give the impression of a study from a model. Inscriptions appear in both drawings in the upper right-hand corner. The inscription in the upper right-hand corner of the Sea Battle is in Wright's handwriting and reads, "continued as in your sketch," suggesting that the composition either continued on to another sheet or that part of the sheet has been cut off. It also demonstrates Wright's dependence upon visual sources of which we have no knowledge at the present. The possibility exists that there are other drawings associated with the subject. The identification of the floating batteries, the gunboats and their functions would have been impossible without Drinkwater's written and pictorial account of the event.

In Drinkwater's watercolor, Curtis' gunboat is placed in the vicinity of the Spanish Admiral's ship. The gunboat of Sir Roger Curtis, with a single mast and one gun, has a more detailed counterpart in this drawing. A similar motif appears in the Sea Battle. The plan of the boat shows the platform for the gun, while the lateral arrangement indicates the placement of the figures and the oars. The boat is designed to fit twenty-one persons, which would include the commander, one gunner, eighteen oarsmen and a tiller man. It appears that Wright depicts more than twenty-one persons in the upper boat. Three figures are shown standing at platform level. The first figure is firing the cannon, the second extends a sword with his right hand and the third extends a sword with his left hand. In the Sea Battle, the officer with the sword is standing in the centrally placed boat in the foreground, the stern of which is different from the gunboat.

The representation of the floating batteries and the gunboats in both of Wright's drawings confirm the time and place as 1782 at Gibraltar. From the study of the motifs and the pictorial setting, one can conclude that the drawings are studies for the painting View of Gibraltar. It is obvious that Wright had the knowledge of the new type of the boat design and that of the site. Correspondence between Wright and Hayley establishes the date of the drawings between 1783 and 1785.

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WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). View of Gibraltar During the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries, 14th September 1782 (formerly attributed to Copley). oil on canvas, 62 x 92 1/2 in. 1783-85. Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee.

This photograph was taken by Andrei Lovinescu after the restoration. In order to clarify the status of the Milwaukee painting, the composition and the key iconographical motifs will be compared with Wright's Sea Battle drawing. Both the painting and the drawing present a panoramic view of the bay, and the composition is subdivided in three unequal sections. The area of the smoke-shrouded sky, including the obscured landforms, encompasses the largest section on both compositions. The spectator's point of view appears to be slightly lower in the painting, though both are viewed from below the South Bastion. The figures are minimized in both compositions. The largest figure in the painting is seven inches tall.

The focal point in the Sea Battle is off-center, as it is in the painting. In both pictures the two floating batteries serve as the focal points, though the two in the painting are placed at angles to each other. In the painting the largest floating battery is thirteen inches tall, not including the masts. The number of masts differ in the painting. They appear to be truncated and enveloped in fire. This area is equally sketchy in the drawing. The bowsprit and the pitched roof indentify the ship on the left. Cropping is also evident in both pictures. Another floating battery occupies the space between the lower left-hand side and the burning batteries in the center.

The King's Bastion is more precisely defined in the painting. The castle is represented by block-like shapes in the painting as well as in the drawing. This mountainous area is treated in a painterly manner in the painting and is equally sketchy in the drawing. Prior to the restoration, the British flag surmounted the upper architectural shape. In the painting one of the gunboats is prominently placed on the right. The boats in this area are without masts, and the possibility exists that the masts were eliminated for compositional purposes.

Differences can be observed in the left-hand side of the composition. If Wright did several drawings, as the inscription on the Sea Battle suggests, or if the left side of the drawing was cut off (note the differences in size between the two drawings), this would explain the compositional differences in the left-hand area. This analysis of the interrelated motifs shows that the Sea Battle in its subject, though somewhat different in composition, is the study for the Milwaukee painting.

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WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). View of Gibraltar During the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries, 14th September 1782 (formerly attributed to Copley). Detail, right-hand side.

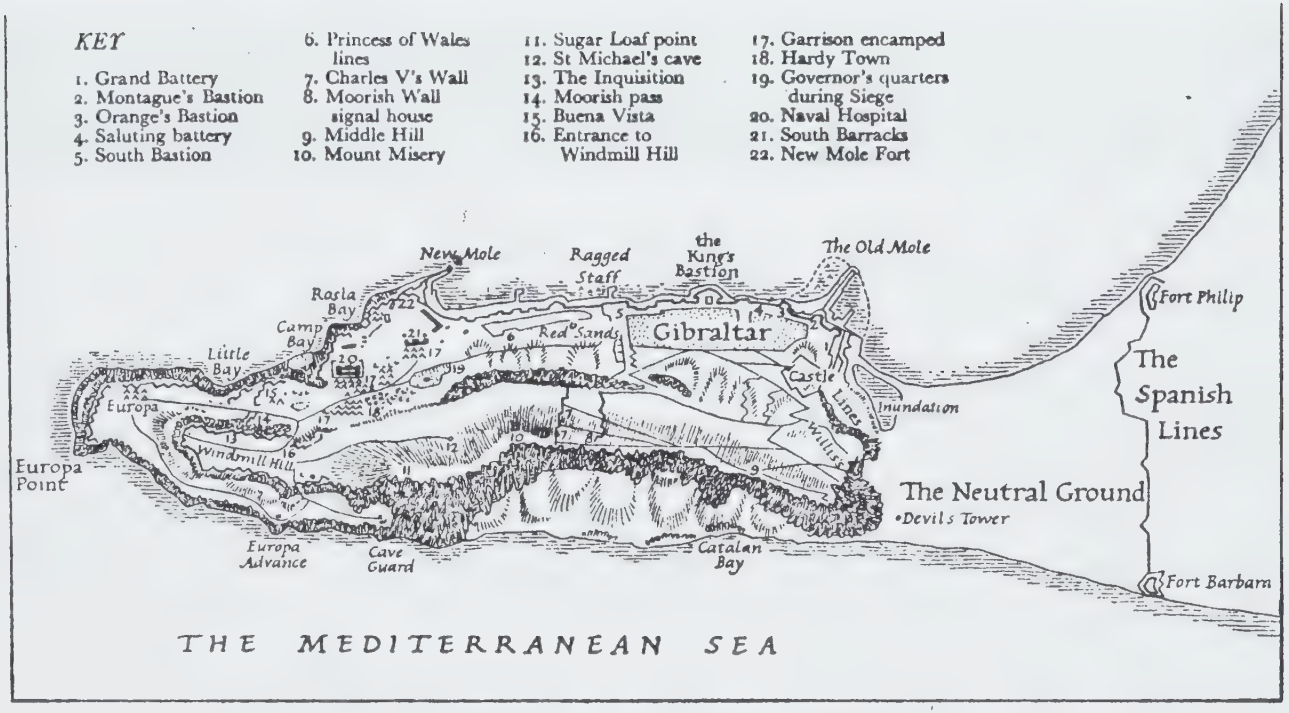
As pointed out by Nicolson, Wright's working methods or compositional methods can be illustrated by the Girandola and Vesuvian series of drawings and the finished paintings. The drawings of the Girandola and Vesuvian themes usually correspond in their placement of the dominant motif with the finished paintings of the same subject. Wright's Sea Battle and the Milwaukee picture share this characteristic. In both compositions the focal point is off-center to the left.

Wright in his letter to Hayley of February 17, 1785, more or less described what we can now visually experience while looking at the painting. As stated by Wright, "...the floating Batteries in different degrees of burning make a fine blaze, & illuminate in a striking manner the noble Rock of Gib..." The fiery floating batteries are the major point of interest in both Wright's Sea Battle and the Milwaukee picture.

In the same letter Wright made references to the small scale of the figures. The figureative scale varies from small to minute in both compositions. The largest standing figure in the Milwaukee picture is seven inches tall. In the Sea Battle the largest standing figure is placed in the boat that occupies the center foreground. Both figures are holding a sword in an extended right hand, though in the painting the position of the sword is raised, as is the left arm of the officer. Judging from other pictorial presentations of the same subject, this has to be Sir Roger Curtis.

Copley's placement of Curtis was in the left-hand side in both compositions. Sherwin's and Tomkin's prints show Curtis in the right-hand side of the composition. The sword appears in Tomkin's aquatint. Curtis is also portrayed in Trumbull's Sortie, though he appears to be much younger in the Milwaukee picture.

From 1783 to 1785 many artists were actively engaged in commemorating this topical event. Even though Wright was not commissioned to do this subject, he was the first major artist to work on it. The proof of this is the correspondence between Wright and Hayley, beginning January 9, 1783. Copley received his commission in March 1783. As for the visual sources in Wright's case, we can only speculate. A general influence for many artists may well have been West's La Hogue.



• - scene of the battle in J.W. of D. painting

"... even the men in the Gunboats that lie just off the New Mole (which makes a fine dark foreground to the picture) are not more than an inch high

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WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump. oil on canvas, 72 x 96 in. ca. 1767-68. Tate Gallery, London.

It is revealing to compare the Milwaukee painting with other paintings by Wright that were executed prior to 1785. Not only are there stylistic affinities, but they are thematically linked. The most characteristic element in Wright's style is the use and treatment of light, both natural and artificial. In evaluating Wright as the painter of light, one is aware of pictorial expansion that culminates in the most spectacular display of fireworks at Gibraltar.

A few paintings have been chosen to support this argument. All are night scenes. This night scene is set in an enclosed space, and the demonstration takes place by candlelight. The secondary light source is the moonlight, coming from the upper right. This juxtaposition of natural and artificial light sources is typical of Wright, as is the concealment of the actual source.

Light illuminates and distorts the space and the participants in an expressive manner. The tension prevails, and this is achieved with light. Sharp contrasts of light and dark intensify the shape, resulting in a dynamic interplay of patterns. The two seated figures in the foreground of the composition show the edgelight effect, a trait that is typical of Wright. Here the figures are large and the treatment quite linear, characteristic of Wright's early work.

The Milwaukee picture is also a night scene, but set in an open space. Central and peripheral light sources are utilized in both compositions. It is also of interest to note the edge-light effect occurs in both compositions. In both compositions, too, the major light sources is artificial light.

When viewing the Milwaukee painting under different light conditions, it achieves the most metamorphic quality. How was the artist able to achieve such flexibility of light and color? One tends to speculate that in order to achieve these effects, this picture was painted in a specially staged studio. Nicolson discusses Wright's familiarity with Schalcken's method (for more details see "Joseph Wright's Early Subject Pictures," The Burlington Magazine, XCVI, March 1954, 72-80) and Wright's procedure for setting the scene for his night-pieces. The Air Pump demonstrates a dynamic use of concealed lighting and looks foreward to future experiments with light.

WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). The Blacksmith's Shop. oil on canvas, 50 1/2 x 41 in. 1771. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon collectors.

More than once Wright was inspired by this seemingly ordinary subject matter. Like the Air Pump, this subject also indicates Wright's connection with the technological world of the English Midlands. Mining and small-scale metal working had been part of Derbyshire even before the Industrial Revolution.

In this composition the use of natural and artificial light sources is more obvious. The hot bar of iron is the primary source, and it illuminates and distorts the centrally placed figures. The space and figures within and beyond the archway are indirectly illuminated and have their own light source, that of the candlelight. On the right, a picturesque archway allows a view to a moonlit sky. The edgelight effect is more dynamic in this composition. The crossbeam, the rear view silhouette of the largest man and the smallest boy exhibit this characteristic. It is this trait that one encounters again in the Milwaukee painting most effectively illustrated by the standing torch-bearer in the right-hand side of the composition.

Contrasts of pose were quite effectively used in the Air Pump. Wright's juxtaposition of figures in terms of size and pose is even more expressive in The Blacksmith's Shop. These contrasts are equally dynamic in the Milwaukee picture, except that the scale is different.

The Blacksmith's Shop illustrates an opening up of space, while the Milwaukee picture breaks all spatial restrictions. One is a night scene, the other a nightscape. Both paintings have a central light source with secondary light sources in the peripheral areas of the composition. Light is the subject of both compositions.

27 WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). Fireworks Display at the Castel Sant'Angelo. oil on canvas, 16 3/4 x 28 in. ca. 1774-75. Birmingham Art Gallery, Birmingham, England.

After his visit to Italy in 1773-75, Wright's most popular subjects were the Girandola, or the fireworks display in Rome, and Vesuvius in eruption. As mentioned earlier, the studies and the finished paintings of these subjects illustrate Wright's working methods. Nicolson states that,

> "He rarely set up an easel in an Italian studio, but preferred to document himself on famous sites, and then on his return home, time and again to play variations on the scenes he had witnessed, almost to the year of his death."

This is one of the fireworks series. It is a night scene, set in a modified panoramic format. The key topographical features are St. Peter's in the left distance and the Castel Sant'Angelo on the right. The spectator is placed this side of the Tiber. This is not to say that Wright was interested in topography. His major concern was the dramatic display of artificial pyrotechnics.

The focal point, off-center to the right, illuminates the area in a spectacular manner. It appears that the façade of St. Peter's incorporates lanterns or lamps that provide additional illumination for the area on the left. Reflections play on the watery surface in the foreground. The statues on the bridge are minute, while the stick-like shapes on the bridge may simulate other figures. Nearly all the landscapes lighted by fireworks eliminate the human element, the figure.

As for similarities with the Milwaukee picture, there are many. First and foremost, the display of the fireworks is similar in both compositions; in fact, they are thematically linked. Both compositions rely on the panoramic format. In both compositions the light source is concealed behind or within a type of architectural shape, from whence it erupts. Wright's technical and imaginative facility as a painter is clearly evident in the treatment of the cumulus cloud and/or smoke effects. The counterpart of the bursting rockets, though in a more painterly manner, can be observed to the left of the floating batteries and in the vicinity of the King's Bastion. In both compositions cropping exists on the left. The artist's purpose in both compositions was to display the monumentality of the fireworks.

28

WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). Vesuvius. oil on canvas, 16 3/4 x 28 in. ca. 1774-75.
L. B. Sanderson Coll.

Wright was a landscape painter, but he was not a topographer. His response toward this particular foreign place was uniquely personal, perhaps second to the valley of the Derwent. This painting was a companion piece to the Fireworks Display. Nicolson believes they were painted in Italy.

Unlike the Girandola series, this presents a spectacular display of natural fireworks. Wright had seen Vesuvius in active state while he was in Italy. Here, again, the half-hidden moon can be considered as the secondary light source, and, again, it is a very romantic motif. It is impossible to avoid the term romantic in relation to Wright's landscapes, particularly those portraying Vesuvius.

It is a panoramic view of the mountain, with the lighthouse on the left. presumably viewed from the outskirts of Naples in the direction of Posillipo. The active volcano is in the center of the composition, though asymmetrically balanced by light and dark contrasts. The foreground is dark, in contrast to the wildly illuminated background. Similar treatment of the foreground appears in the Milwaukee picture. The cumulus shapes frame the volcano in an irregular manner, as they do the floating batteries. The gravitation of the smoky mass is toward the right. Burkian sublimity of the night prevails in both paintings. In both compositions the handling of light produces a dynamic effect that transforms the site into a mysterious realm.

It is fascinating to note that the central motif is pyramidal in both compositions. Disguised architectural shapes are placed in the upper right-hand area in both paintings. The landforms on the right exhibit a wedge-like formation, though they are more distant in the Milwaukee painting. The definition is more precise in the earlier work. In general, the distances are rather difficult to judge in both presentations. There are no participants in the earlier work. The treatment of the watery surfaces contrasts with the explosive effects in the backgrounds. It appears that the View of Gibraltar continues the stylistic characteristics of Vesuvius.

29

WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). Vesuvius in Eruption. oil on canvas, 49 x 71 in. mid to late 1770's. Miss D. M. R. Cade Coll.

Wright's paintings of Vesuvius and Gibraltar were poetized by William Hayley, who apparently was keenly aware of Wright's artistic aims, as well as of Wright's originality. These sentiments are eloquently expressed by Hayley:

"...But see far off the modest Wright retire!
Alone he rules his element of fire:
Like meteors darting thro' the gloom of night,
His sparkles flash upon the dazzled sight;
Our eyes with momentary anguish smart,
And nature trembles at the power of art.
May thy bold colours, claiming endless praise,
For ages shine with undiminish'd blaze,
And when the fierce Vesuvio burns no more,
May his red deluge down thy canvas pour!..."

Similar sentiments are echoed in Hayley's poem, To Mr. Wright of Derby, on his Picture of the Attack of Gibraltar:

"...Tho' many ahand may well pourtray
The rushing war's infuriate shock,
Proud Calpe bids thee, Wright display
The terrors of her blazing rock;
The burning hulks of baffled Spain
From thee she claims, nor claims in vain,
Thou mighty master of the mimic flame,
Whose peerles pencil, with peculiar aim,
Has form'd, of lasting fire, the basis of thy fame."

WRIGHT OF DERBY, JOSEPH (1734-1797). Eruption of Vesuvius. gouache, 12 3/4 x 18 3/8 in. ca. 1774, Derby Museum and Art Gallery, Derby, England.

Wright's speciality was fire, as demonstrated in this brief study of his work executed before 1785. Wright's concept of light as form, in its most immediate and spontaneous sense, is best illustrated with this gouache, a study on the site. It is a close-up view of the flame and a study of light and motion within a space that seems to be suspended. The crescent shapes surrounding the active crater are typical of Wright's style. This gestural quality can also be observed in the treatment of the area surrounding the floating batteries. The complementary color scheme is very intense in the gouache. Strong value contrasts exist, but the intensity is subdued in the Milwaukee painting; the complementaries are varieties of red-orange versus blue-green.

Both compositions are panoramic, with the focal point off-center to the left. The gravitation of smoke is toward the right. This study has an epic counterpart in the Milwaukee painting. For Wright of Derby, light was an integral part of the painting, in fact a subject in itself, whereas for Copley light played a subordinate role. The subject matter and the fact that there are two studies by Wright point toward Wright as the author of the Milwaukee painting. Obviously it is not by Copley. Stylistically it follows the path of the Girandola and Vesuvius fireworks display. Like William Hayley, collector John Milnes of Wakefield had a predilection for landscapes lighted by fireworks. His collection consisted of works that were thematically linked: Girandola, Vesuvius, and Gibraltar.

It seems very likely that the Milwaukee picture was sold as a Copley for commercial reasons, but it is difficult to determine when it became a Copley. It is obvious that Copley was well known to the American public. The public, outside the British Isles, was less familiar with Wright of Derby. Recent studies by Nicolson and Prown have shown that some of Wright's portraits have been known as Copley's. Some of these portraits are in American museums and presently are listed as the work of Copley.

Up to this point, there was no visual evidence of Wright's concept of contemporary political events. In his wish to pay homage to this great political event, Wright saw an opportunity for the most spectacular presentation of a sublime panorama of fire.

The Assault of the battering-ships. A sketch of the action by Lieutenant Koehler of the Garrison

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Date
16 November 2000

Contact
Jane Wallis

Telephone
01332 716653

Curator of the British Collections
Millwarkee Art Centre Collection
Milwarkee
Wiscansin 53211
USA

Dear Curator

The Siege of Gibraltar 1784-5 by Wright of Derby

I recently chanced across a copy of the book British Artists and War: The Face of Battle in Paintings, 1700-1914 by Peter Harrington and noticed that included the above painting that is in your collection. Upon checking the catalogue details, although the publication has incorrectly listed the details under the dates of the 'American', Joseph Wright, the details given are very interesting.

I had always understood that Wright's painting of the Siege of Gibraltar was lost and only copies remained, yet the provenance appears to suggest otherwise. I also noticed that accompanying the illustration in the book the entry has a question mark next to the name of Wright.

Can I ask you for your understanding about these difficulties. Do you, or any expert believe the painting is by Wright's hand, or is it believed to be a copy after his original, you will appreciate that in Derby Museum, the home city of the artists, we get many national and international enquiries from students and scholars, your help in this respect will aid us to provide the correct information in relation to this work.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Jane Wallis
Keeper of Fine Art

31st Oct.-1st Nov. 1914
LONDON SCOTTISH REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION, LONDON
Oil on canvas. Signed and dated: **R. Caton Woodville 1927**. *Exh:* RA 1927 (353)

905. The Piper of Loos
KING'S OWN SCOTTISH BORDERERS REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION
Oil on canvas. Signed: **R. Caton Woodville**

906. The Battle of the Somme
THE GUARDS MUSEUM, LONDON
Oil on canvas 119.4 x 180.2 cm (47 x 71 in). Signed and dated (bl): **R. Caton Woodville 1917**

907. The 2nd Batt. Manchester Regiment taking six German guns at dawn near St. Quentin, 2 April 1917
RHQ THE KING'S REGIMENT, ARDWICK GREEN, MANCHESTER
Oil on canvas 185.4 x 246.3 cm (73 x 97 in). Signed (bl): **R. Caton Woodville**. *Exh:* RA 1918 (320). *Prov:* Presented to the 2nd Bn. The Manchester Regiment Officer's Mess in 1925

908. 'We saw you going, but we knew you would come back.' Entry of the 5th Lancers into Mons, 11th Nov. 1918
THE QUEEN'S ROYAL LANCERS
Oil on canvas 101 x 153 cm (39¾ x 60¼ in) Signed and dated (bl): **R. Caton Woodville 1919**. *Exh:* RA 1919 (338). *Prov:* 5th Lancers; 16th/5th Queen's Royal Lancers

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WOODWARD, Thomas (1801-1852)

909. The battle of Worcester
WORCESTER CITY MUSEUM & ART GALLERY
Oil on canvas 124.4 x 157.4 cm (49 x 62 in). *Exh:* RA 1837 (505)

910. A detachment of Cromwell's cavalry surprised in a mountain pass (Scotland 1650)
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas 112 x 142.5 cm (44 x 56 in) Initialled and dated (br): **TW 1841**. *Exh:* RA 1841 (243). *Prov:* Sotheby's 16 November 1983, lot 98

WOOTTON, John (c. 1686-1765)

911. The Battle of Blenheim
NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM, LONDON
Oil on canvas 147 x 218 cm (58 x 86 in). *Prov:* Hugh Leggatt; purchased from Leggatt Bros. Ltd.

912. The Duke of Marlborough and his staff in Flanders
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas 91.4 x 113 cm (36 x 44½ in). *Prov:* The Rutland Gallery, London (1960?)

913. The Duke of Marlborough and his staff at the battle of Laffelt
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ARGYLL
Oil on canvas

914. Captain John Richmond Webb with a view of the Battle of Wynandael
HIS GRACE THE LORD MOYNE, BIDDESDON HOUSE
Oil on canvas

915. The Siege of Lille
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
Oil on canvas 311.2 x 490.3 cm (121¾ x 193 in). Signed and dated: **J. Wootton Fecit 1742**. *Prov:* Commissioned by Frederick, Prince of Wales

916. Siege of Lille
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas 51 x 74.5 cm (20 x 29½ in). *Prov:* Study for above; artist's sale, 12 March 1761, lot 49; Sotheby's 18 November 1987, lot E16114

917. The Siege of Tournay
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
Oil on canvas 304.8 x 490.2 cm (121 x 192½ in). Signed and dated: **J. Wootton. Fecit 1742**. *Prov:* Commissioned by Frederick, Prince of Wales

918. Siege of Tournay
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas 51 x 74.5 cm (20 x 29½ in). *Prov:* Study for above; artist's sale, 12 March 1761, lot 49; Sotheby's 18 November 1987, lot E1660

919. Battle Scene (War of Spanish Succession ?)
SIR JOHN POLE CAREW, ANTHONY HOUSE, CORNWALL
Oil on canvas 109.2 x 170.1 cm (43 x 67 in). Signed: **J. Wootton**

920. The Battle of Sheriffmuir, Nov. 13, 1715 (attr)
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas 76.2 x 157.4 cm (30 x 62 in). *Prov:* Oscar & Peter Johnson Ltd., London, 1975

921. King George II at the Battle of Dettingen
NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM, LONDON
Oil on canvas 165 x 173 cm (55¾ x 62½ in) Signed and dated: **J. Wooton 1743** and inscr. (bl): **The Battle of Dettingen....** *Prov:* Purchased with aid of donation from the National Art Collection Fund

922. William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, at the Battle of Dettingen
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
Oil on canvas 164.5 x 133.4 cm (64¾ x 52½ in). Signed and dated: **J. Wooton Fecit 1744** and inscr. by him: **The Battle of Dettingen Won by His Majesty June 16/27 1743**. *Prov:* Painted for Frederick, Prince of Wales

923. Lord Stair and his adjutant, Captain Lyttleton, at the Battle of Dettingen
HIS GRACE THE VISCOUNT COBHAM
Oil on canvas

924. Battle Scene
SIR JOHN POLE CAREW, ANTHONY HOUSE, CORNWALL
Oil on canvas 81.3 x 137.1 cm (32 x 54 in)

925. Battle Scene (attr)
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT, BADMINTON HOUSE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE
Oil on canvas 43.2 x 52.7 cm (17 x 20¼ in)

926. Battle Piece
NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON
Oil on canvas 43.2 x 52.7 cm (17 x 20¼ in). *Prov:* Painted by Wootton after Borgognone

927. A Cavalry Skirmish with a fallen horse in the foreground and buildings beyond to the right
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas 73.7 x 107.9 cm (29 x 42½ in). *Prov:* Christie's 22 March 1968, lot 53

WRIGHT, George (fl 1900-1920)

928. Roundhead Troops
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas 35.5 x 46 cm (14 x 18 in) Signed (br): **George Wright**. *Prov:* Sotheby's 17 September 1992, lot 8

929. After the Charge (World War One)
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas. Signed: **G. Wright**. *Exh:* RA 1915. *Prov:* Commissioned by Colonel David Campbell (?); Major Charles E. Bryant

930. Bringing Cavalry Horses to the rear
9th/12th ROYAL LANCERS
Oil on canvas 45.7 x 76.2 cm (18 x 30 in) Signed (br): **G. Wright**. *Exh:* RA 1916. *Prov:* The Parker Gallery, London

931. The Battle of Moy, 28 August 1914
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas. Signed: **G. Wright**. *Prov:* Possibly the painting entitled *Victors* exhibited at the RA in 1917; Major Charles E. Bryant

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WRIGHT, Gilbert S. (fl 1898-1900)

932. Omdurman, 1898. Charge of the 21st Lancers
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas. Signed (bl): **Gilbert Wright**. *Prov:* The Parker Gallery, London

933. Major Douglas Brown winning the V.C. at Geluk, 13th October 1900
PRIVATE COLLECTION
Oil on canvas 50.8 x 40.6 cm (20 x 16 in) Signed: **Gilbert S. Wright**. *Prov:* The Bell of Arms Ltd., Ilkley, 1965

WRIGHT, John Massey (1773-1866)

934. Capture of King Joseph's baggage at Vittoria
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
Oil on canvas

935. Battle of Vittoria
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
Oil on canvas 45.7 x 66 cm (18 x 26 in). *Prov:* Sold by Mrs Turner, London, to Messrs Colnaghi; purchased by the 3rd Duke of Wellington from Martin Colnaghi in 1899

936. Battle of the Pyrenees
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
Oil on canvas 45.7 x 66 cm (18 x 26 in). *Prov:* As above

937. Battle of Kirkee, Bombay 1817
INDIA OFFICE LIBRARY
Oil on canvas 104.1 x 185.4 cm (41 x 73 in). Signed: **J.M. Wright**. *Exh:* Royal Military Exhibition 1890 (833). *Prov:* Painted from a drawing by Major James Sutherland; property of the Secretary of State for India in 1890; on loan to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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WRIGHT, Joseph (1756-1793) 1734-1797

938. The death of General Wolfe (after West)
FORT TICONDEROGA MUSEUM, TICONDEROGA, NEW YORK, USA
Oil on canvas 75 x 90.1 cm (29½ x 35½ in) Signed and inscr. on reverse: **Painted by J. Wright 1790 Exeter**. *Prov:* Purchased from Milch Brothers, New York, 1929 with support from the Archer M. Huntington Fund

939. View of Gibraltar During the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries 14th September 1782

Joseph Wright (?): *View of Gibraltar during the destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries 14 September 1782.* Oil Painting 1784 (Milwaukee Art Museum, USA: gift of Charleston Foundation in memory of Miss Paula Uihlein)

Source: British Artists & War, Peter Harrington

ıgh interest in these views of Gibraltar, the artist could arrange for ɔe engraved, but apparently such interest was not forthcoming. it is worth noting that his *Siege of Gibraltar* was the first to place on land looking out to sea with the naval action in the distant bay. dded a portrait group on a high cliff intended to represent the stion to the right overlooking the South Bastion, consisting of ır portraits of British and Hanoverian officers including General ow the group can be seen the bastion with figures cheering the of the batteries. This grouping was to influence the later pictures and Trumbull.

the next few years, the subject continued to hold the fascination artists particularly Dominic Serres who exhibited four pictures of between 1784 and 1792. Joseph Wright of Derby, an artist known ıent in painting fire and night illumination, tried his hand at the although the picture was not finished until February 1785. It il at Mr Robin's Rooms in Covent Garden. Again, the estruction of the floating batteries viewed from focal point being two floating batteries. A luding Captain Curtis, but these are 1784 the engraving by John

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The picture was e

JACQUES PHILLIPE DE LOUTHERBERG

British Artists: Bartolozzi, Zoffany, and Kauffman
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Ill. no. 122

The National Gallery of Canada Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture
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708.11422 Nah
p. 121

"Art News", May 1968
ill. p. 3

"Connoisseur", April 1962
Masterpieces and the artist by Georges de Batz
pp. 272-274

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM
GREENWICH, LONDON SE10
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Ref: P/D

8th April, 1970.

Miss Barbara Lang,
Curatorial Assistant,
Milwaukee Art Center,
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202.

Dear Miss Lang

RE: DE LOUTHERBOURG

Thank you very much for the photographs of your painting of the repulse of the floating batteries at Gibraltar, which does indeed seem to be the subject. The letter you said on the envelope was enclosed was not, in fact, there, so I would be most interested to know what provenance you have to attribution of the artist. It is a very strange picture, which, though it has affinities with De Loutherbourg, it has also even more features which makes me doubt the attribution. The officer waving a sword is in captain's full dress uniform, 1787-1795.

The picture is too big to be a study or sketch, nearly 8ft. long, and though it may look better in colour, appears to have a rather weak and empty composition. John Copley painted the famous genre painting of the seige of Gibraltar, but it doesn't relate at all to this one, and I can't believe that he could have been involved.

Yours sincerely

Edward Archibald

E.H.H. Archibald
Assistant Keeper
Oil Paintings

Monmouth College
WEST LONG BRANCH, NEW JERSEY

Department of Fine Arts

January 6, 1972

Dr. A. Bader
Aldrich Chemical Company, Inc.
940 West St. Paul Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

Dear Dr. Bader:

Thank you for the copy of your letter to Mr. Nicolson of December 28, 1971. The documentation of Wright's painting was also greatly appreciated.

It was indeed a great pleasure to meet you and to discuss the problematic aspects of the painting. We also enjoyed your magnificent collection of paintings.

After our arrival home I wrote to Mr. Nicolson informing him of our meeting and our discussion of the painting. I also mentioned your recent conversation with him in regard to the publishing of my work. The letter was mailed December 29, 1971. I am looking forward to Mr. Nicolson's answer. Hopefully, it is affirmative.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the brief study of Wright's drawings. Mr. Nicolson has the original of the same, mailed June 30, 1970. I will try to send you a copy of the original presentation as soon as possible.

Presently I am correcting term papers, preparing final exams, and having conferences with my students, thus some of my own work once again is being neglected. There are some chapters that have to be re-typed, because of too many corrections which make it rather difficult for someone else to read.

Hopefully, I will be able to accomplish this during the semester break at the end of January.

Sincerely yours,

Birute Erdmann

THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE PUBLICATIONS LTD

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Telephone: 01-493 2622

31st December 1971

Dr Alfred Bader,
2961 N. Shepard Avenue,
Milwaukee, Wisc. 53211.

Dear Dr Bader,

Many thanks for the colour transparency of the Sweerts. This ought to present the printers with no problem. I have made the change in your manuscript. I am promising publication in June or July. I cannot manage it before then because I am full up with frontispieces to including May.

What I would like to do is to locate the lady who once wrote to me, identifying the 2 drawings of ships as probably studies for the 'lost' Siege of Gibraltar, and ask her to publish her findings when the picture is ready for publication. If I cannot locate her, I will do a note in the Burlington myself. But since she is an historian of sea battles, and since my knowledge of such engagements is as limited as Joseph Wright's, she is undoubtedly the best person to perform this task. Or was this lady the Mrs Biruta Erdmann you mention in your letter? I look forward to receiving a photograph of the picture when cleaned.

The only gallery which would consider exhibiting such a picture is the Guildhall which possess the Copley of the same subject and with premises large enough to accommodate it.

Yours sincerely,

Benedict Nicolson

Benedict Nicolson

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AIR MAIL

Miss Barbara Lang
Curatorial Assistant
Milwaukee Art Center
750 N Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
U S A

23 April 1970

Dear Miss Lang

In Graham Reynolds's absence on leave, I am replying to your letter of the 14th April.

I have now examined the photographs of your painting. I feel that an attribution of your painting to Loutherbourg is a perfectly possible one. As you doubtless are aware, he did occasionally paint such large battle-scenes. But I have looked through the list of Loutherbourg's exhibits at the Royal Academy, without, I fear, finding a Siege of Gibraltar. There is at least one Loutherbourg sea-battle scene at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, and you might like to make contact with the authorities there.

In the meantime I am returning your photographs with this letter.

Yours sincerely

J H MAYNE
Deputy Keeper
Department of Paintings

ENCS 4

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10028

June 8, 1970

Mr. John Lloyd Taylor
Milwaukee Art Center
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Taylor:

Mr. Rousseau has passed your letter of May 26, 1970 on to me.

I have examined your photographs and have showed them to the other curators of this department but with little positive response. Personally, I think the Wright of Derby attribution is unlikely. The de Loutherbourg suggestion seems possible but the technique is much looser than any other of his works that I have seen. I checked through the June 18, 1812 (London) sale catalogue of de Loutherbourg's work but did not find a reference to any Gibraltar picture.

With regret not to have been more helpful.

Yours truly,

Richard E. Friedman

Richard E. Friedman
Department of Paintings

Enclosure

James
+ 4 I

he has no transparency - I shall send him a slide if there is no. Lie -

Rüdiger Joppien

Hermeskeilerstr. 7
5000 Köln - 41
W. Germany

Ms.
Elisabeth Fernandez - Gimenez
Milwaukee Art Museum
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, Wisc. 53202
U.S.A.

22.2. 1987

Dear Ms. Fernandez - Gimenez,

I am very sorry that I have not replied to your kind letter of 12 December, regarding whether your painting of a marine battle is by P.J. de Loutherbourg or not.
I had hoped to do some research on the picture, which unfortunately has not been achieved. Since 1 January I am working in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, Steintorplatz 1, 2000 Hamburg, and I am now presently preparing to move the family from Cologne to Hamburg. I would think that it will last until midsummer until we are settled there and until I can unpack and set up my files again (which because of my present 20th century interest in the decorative arts, have far too long remained closed).

However, as a first sight reaction, I would think, that Judy Egerton's suggestion is entirely convincing. I would accept - notwithstanding the darkness of the picture in the photograph - the painting as a Loutherbourg or at least produced around his circle. The very final judgement I would like to reserve until I have seen the colours of the picture, and until I have gone through my collection of drawings - prepatory studies for his marine battles - to see whether there are any revealing connections.

Yours sincerely

Rüdiger Joppien

Extract from " A short narrative of the taking of the Fortress of Gibraltar"
London, Published John & Josish Boydell. No 90 Cheapside. 1857.
****

" In April, 1781, Admiral Darby, with the men-o-war and transports, arrived with stores and provisions, at the same time the garrison was cannonaded and bombarded from the batteries and lines, as were the shipping from their gun and mortar boats, the town was set on fire and laid in ruins, in this ungenerous and cruel manner the garrison (when the weather permitted) was attacked, and the inhabitants harrassed and distresses by the enemy without the least probability of gaining their end. The enemy, by verious new pperations, began the show their design of beseiging the garrison in form, accordingly in May 1782, battering ships were preparing at Algersires with every other necessary that human invention could suggest, to accomplish their purpose both by land and sea, all which was carried on with the upmost spibit and activity, the pride of the court ~~could not~~ of Spain could not fail of being mortified by her several former miscarriages, in endeavouring to regain Gibralter, and being urged by disgrace, she determined to exercise her utmost power and skill in order once more to add that valuable jewel to her crown, accordingly, in the begining of September, small craft were constantly arriving. The morning on the 12th of September, a large fleet appeared and entered the bay, and proved th be the combined fleets of Spain and France, consisting of seven ships of the three decks, and thrity nine of the two deck of the line, with a large number of frigates, bomb ketches xebeques, hospital ships etc, under the command of Admiral Don Cordova, and nine other flag officers. In the afternoon they anchored in the north west side of the bay. This great increase of force displayed an armament the most powerful that had ever been brought against a fortress, the whole consisting of forty-seven ships of the line of battle, ten battering ships deemed invivcible, carrying 212 guns, innumerable frigates, bomb ketshes, and xebeques, cutters, gun and mortar beats, and verious small craft for disembarkin troops, and on the lands batteries and lines were mounted above 100 pieces of heavy ordanance and as many mortars and howitsers, with an army of 40,000 men commanded by a general of the highest renown accompanied by princes of the royal blood of France and a great number of the Spanish nobility, from hence it was natural to expect the most effectural consequences. The garrison cons-isted of about 7,000 men who hah been inured by degrees to bear the greate hardships and fatigue, commanded, encouraged, and animated by goveror and offic of tried courage, firmness, and humanity, the consideration of the vast streng of the enemy operated the more to excite in these brave veterans the noble desire of obtaining the most exalted fame. All things being prepared for a grand attack by sea and land, induced the garrison to conclude that the important struggle was not far off.

On the 13th of September about 8 o/c in the morning, the ten battering ships, commanded by Rear Admiral Don Moreno, were got under sail and came forward to the stations previously appointed to them, the admiral being placed upon the capital of the Kings Bastion, three others anchored to the southward of the flag ship, extending as far as the south bastion five to the nobhhward, from 1,000 to 1,100 yards from the shore, and one ot

a little to the westward of the admiral. Immediately a heavy connonade and bonbarding from their batteries and lines commenced,as well as from the battering ships as they got into their stations,at the same instant the batteries of the garrison opened with hot and cold shot,and shells from mortars and howitzers,and thereupon ensured the most tremendous fire perhaps ever known,without intermission on both sides,untill about noon when the firing from the enemy ships abated. About 2 o/c in the afternoon the admirals ship began to smoke,as if on fire,as likewise one of the admirals second,tthe firing from the ships gradually decreased so that about 7 o/c it almost ceased,except from two ships the most northward, they having sustained but little damage,the garrison kept up a very spirited fire.

Soon after midnight the flag ship was in flames,as was one other which blew up. In about an hour several others took fire and blew up. as the fire got to their magazines. Confusion was now spread amongst them,signals of distress were made,and answered by the enemys fleet, sending a vast number of boats and other small craft to take out the men. At this time Commodore Curtis with his gun boats advanced and flanked the battering ships with great intrepidity,spirit and effect,insomuch that the enemy boats were obliged to abandon their ships,and leave the men to the ravage of the devouring flames. The scene was now dreadful in t the highest degree,numbers of the men crying from admist the flames, some on pieces of the wreck,others in ships where the fire had not made sob great a progress,all expressing by signes and lamentations,the most deplorable distress,and imploring to be delivered from a scene of horror, not in the power of words to discribe. These misable men being wholly unable to help themselves,where considered no longer foes,for the British seamen,actuated by humanity alone,were now employed in the most perilous undertaking of rescuing them from impending distruction,amidst the continual firing of their cannon as they became heated by the flames, and the terrible explosion of the ships blowing up around them,for by a part of the wreck falling on the boat in which Commodore Curtis commanded,the coxswain was killed,two of the crew were wounded,and a large hole beat in her. One of the English gun boats was sunk,and one other greatly damaged,but providentially the men were saved. This humane conduct was rewarded by the grateful satisfaction of having saved 13 officers and 344 men,with several dreadfully wounded,taken from amongst the slain in the holds of the battering ships,who had all possible relief adminstered to their distress. From every circumstances it appears that th enemy loss must have been very considerable,as great numbers were killed on board their ships,in their boats,and by sinking of several launched and small craft,in one of which were 80 men,most of whom perished. All their battering ships were sel on fire by the hot shot,except one,which was burnt afterwards. The admirals flag was laft flying and consumed wit the ship.During the whole of this tremendous and horrid scene,the governo was present in the Kings' Bastion,commanding,animating,and encouraging th garrison by his noble ,firm and steady behavour. The enemy employed in this action,more than 3000 pieces of heavy ordanances of verious kinds. The garrison opposed them with 80 cannon,and 16 mortars and howitzers. Not with standing the repulse given to the enemy by the distruction of their battering ships,they continued to entertain hopes of sucess, for the firing from the isthmus now became uncommonly rapid,the gun and mor boats,supported by the combined fleets,continued to annoy the garrison

sea,untill the 10th of October,when a storm of wind greatly damaged their fleet,and drove a ship of 70 guns on shore,under its walls,which was captured.

By the officers report,the enemy loss could not be less than 2000.

121 Wright/JE/JOM

Mr James Mundy
Chief Curator
Milwaukee Art Museum
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee
Wisconsin 53202
U.S.A.

14th November 1986

Dear James

Thank you very much for all your help over my recent visit. It was particularly kind of you to make a hotel reservation for me, and to arrange for Lise to give me lunch.

As for The Destruction ..., I was very grateful to be allowed so much time to look at it, and to go through your very full dossier on it. I cannot believe that it is by Joseph Wright of Derby, even though Benedict Nicolson came to think so. There is a lumpishness about the figures, and a failure to extract maximum light and shade effects from the burning ships, that would never have suggested Wright's name to me, though I agree that now we have to find the missing Wright.

I hope you will let me know if there is anything I can do for you here, and that you will look me up on your next visit.

With all good wishes and with thanks,

Yours ~~sincerely~~ ever

Judy

Mrs Judy Egerton
Assistant Keeper
British Collection

APOLLO MAGAZINE

MEMO FROM: M. Devalle Fidanque
Circulation Manager

Date 4-17-70

TO: Miss Barbara Lang

Re your April 14 inquiry about Mr. Oliver . . .

Editorial content + contributors is supervised wholly by Mr. Sutton in London.

Accordingly, I've forwarded your letter to him.

In addition, I sent a copy to the European Paintings Dept. at the Metropolitan Museum — figuring they might help you.

720 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK N Y • 10019 • Area Code 265-3632 (212)

Cordially Ellen Wagner

April 14, 1970

APOLLO MAGAZINE
Advertising and Subscription Office
Apollo Publications Inc.
720 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10019

Dear Sirs:

We are investigating a painting now at the Art Center which has been attributed to Phillipe Jacques de Loutherberg. In your August, 1967 issue, Volume number LXXXVI, number 66, there appeared an article on pages 135-137 by Anthony Oliver.

Could you please give us Mr. Oliver's address or information whereby we can get in touch with hem?

Thanking you in advance, I am sincerely,

Barbara Lang
Curatorial Assistant

in this area are without masts, and the possibility exists that the masts were eliminated for compositional purposes. Differences can be observed in the left-hand side of the composition. If Wright did several drawings, as the inscription in the *Sea Battle* suggests, or if the left side of the drawing was cut off, this may explain the compositional differences on the left.

Wright in his letter to Hayley of 17th February 1785, more or less described what we can now visually experience while looking at the painting. As stated by Wright, ' . . . the floating Batteries in different degrees of burning make a fine blaze, and illuminate in a striking manner the noble Rock of Gib . . .'[11] The fiery floating batteries are the major point of interest in both Wright's *Sea Battle* and the Milwaukee picture. In the same letter Wright made references to the small scale of the figures, and the figurative scale varies from small to minute in both compositions. The largest figure is holding a sword in an extended right hand, though in the painting the position of the sword is raised, as is the left arm of the officer. Judging from other pictorial presentations of the same subject, this has to be Sir Roger Curtis.[12]

It is revealing to compare the Milwaukee painting with other paintings by Wright that were executed prior to 1785. Not only are there stylistic affinities, but they are thematically linked. The most characteristic element in Wright's style is the use and treatment of light, both natural and artificial. In fact, one wonders whether in order to obtain these effects, this picture was painted in a specially staged studio.[13] For Wright of Derby, light was an integral part of the painting, a subject in itself; whereas for Copley, light played a subordinate role.[14] Stylistic-

[10] Prior to the sale of the painting to Nathaniel C. Sears, restoration work was done in 1923 at the Ehrich Galleries, New York. The work was very unprofessional, and the painting was relined with sailcloth. In the spring of 1972, cleaning and restoration were done by Mrs Mary D. Randall in London. Heavy overpainting covered the immediate foreground, the left hand side and the area around the batteries. Prior to the restoration of 1972, the canvas surface was unevenly textured, whereas it now shows an even and a rather thin application of paint. The effectiveness of light and colour, the tonal differences and the transparent light effects of the background were less emphatic before the restoration. The painting is now properly relined.

[11] NICOLSON: *Wright*, I, p.160, n.5.

[12] MCGUFFIE, p.162 (Figs.23 and 24). Curtis is the most prominent figure in both compositions, and he is placed in the right-hand side of the composition. In Copley's composition of 1788, Curtis is standing in a boat that is placed in the middle distance, adjacent to the burning ship. Due to the rearrangement in the left-hand area of the Guildhall *Siege*, Curtis is placed in the gunboat to the extreme left. The pointing hands of Curtis and Eliott focus on the sinking longboat in the foreground. The Milwaukee painting is different. The figures play a secondary role to the fireworks. The two fiery floating batteries are the focal point, unlike the scattered points of interest in Copley's composition.

[13] NICOLSON: 'Joseph Wright's Early Subject Pictures', THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE, XCVI [March, 1954], p.75. The author discusses Wright's familiarity with Schalcken's method and Wright's procedure for setting the scene for his night-pieces.

[14] The shattered state of the large ships and the chaotic massing of the figures stress the human drama in Copley's presentation of the aftermath. Even though the left-hand side of the composition may compare more favourably with Copley, there are differences – *e.g.*, the handling of highlights, the edge-lit shapes, and the source of illumination which is concealed. It is obvious that the subject of the Milwaukee picture is the aftermath of the battle, which includes

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22nd May 1974

Dr Alfred Bader,
Milwaukee Art Center,
Milwaukee (Wisconsin).

Dear Alfred,

The catalogue of the Overstone Collection published in 1877 has now come to light and I am sending you photostats of the title page and the picture by Wright, with a long description. Do you think it fits the one you have? I am a little puzzled by the shore jutting out into the sea in the foreground??? And where are the rockets? Let us keep our fingers crossed. Perhaps Mrs Erdmann and I have made a bloomer. Anyhow, the size seems to be about right.

Yours ever,

Ben

Benedict Nicolson

THE EHRICH GALLERIES

"Old Masters"

HAROLD LOUIS EHRICH
WALTER LOUIS EHRICH

707 FIFTH AVENUE
AT FIFTY-FIFTH STREET
NEW YORK

CABLE ADDRESS:
LOISEHRICH

November 7, 1923

Elgin Academy
Elgin, Ills.

TO THE EHRICH GALLERIES DR.

To restoration of painting, "Siege of Gibraltar"
by John Singleton Copley $72.00

11/22/23 E.L.

UWM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MILWAUKEE / MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53201

DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY

TELEPHONE (414) 963–4330

February 5, 1973

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shephard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

Dear Dr. Bader:

Damie Stillman has probably advised you of the status of our forthcoming exhibition, THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR: An Art Historical Mystery Solved; February 27 through March 27, 1973, in the Art History Gallery in Mitchell Hall.

I am personally most delighted that the Milwaukee Art Center has acquired the Gibraltar painting from you for their collection. It will be a most significant addition.

Our exhibition will include the painting; two Joseph Wright of Derby drawings related to the painting by Mrs. Erdmann and confirmed by Mr. Nicholson, on loan from the Derby Museum and Art Gallery, England; and nearly 40 11 x 14" black and white photographs of related works by Copley, West, Trumbell, and a number of works by Joseph Wright of Derby. Additionally there will be a series of "before and after" restoration detail photographs of the painting itself.

The exhibition will be the first purely pedogacical research of its kind ever done in the Art History Department, and will provide both the academic and Milwaukee community at large with such a fine example of art historical mystery solving research.

Personally, I am most grateful to you that the painting will remain in Milwaukee, and will therefore be available for this important exhibition.

Mrs. Erdmann will deliver a lecture on the problems of her research, probably during the day on March 27th. Either Damie or I will let you know the exact time and place as soon as that has been determined.

Unfortunately we have no outside funding to provide an opening reception for the exhibition, and we are not permitted to use State funding for such functions. Therefore, we will necessarily dispense with the formalities of a preview opening.

Anyway, I thought you would like to be brought up to date on what will be happening with the exhibition.

Best wishes,

John Lloyd Taylor
Director
Art History Galleries

cc: Professor Damie Stillman

[illegible]

[illegible] EXHIBITION

MONDAY,
JANUARY 31st, 192[illegible]
and Three Following Days
at 11 [illegible] Each Day

[illegible] Works
[illegible]RTS & HENSON
[illegible] Street, London, W.1.

"*Overstone Park*," *Northampton*

CATALOGUE.

FOURTH DAY'S SALE,

On Thursday, February 3rd, 1921,

At ELEVEN a.m.

SERVANTS' BED ROOMS OFF BACK CORRIDOR.

LOT

885 A blue ground and figured Brussels carpet (about 10 yds.)

886 A mahogany dressing table fitted 2 drawers (3-ft.), and a mahogany-frame toilet glass

887 A mahogany Pembroke table (3-ft.)

888 A painted washstand, 6 pieces of toilet ware and a towel airer

889 A similar lot

890 A similar lot

891 A similar lot

892 A similar lot

893 A similar lot

894 A prie dieu chair stuffed in cretonne and an Old English japanned open bookcase with drawer (18-in. wide)

HALL CORRIDOR.

EDEN UPTON EDDIS.

979 "The Gipsy Fortune Teller" (43½-in. by 38-in.)

See Wagen Treasures, Vol. IV., page 144.

DAVID ROBERTS, R.A.

980 "**View of Edinburgh**" (48-in. by 84-in.)
The foreground consists of the battlements of the Ca
Arthur's Seat, Calton Hill and the Firth of Forth be
visible. The statue seen in the wide street is that of S
Walter Scott. Signed and dated 1847.

981 A Wooded and Rocky Landscape with figure

982 A large gallery painting, Naval Battle Scene at Night (60-i
by 102-in.

983 "A reclining Female figure with Cherub attendants" (40-in.
by 50-in.)

984 "The dead Christ with the Virgin and 2 Saints" (25-in. by
19-in.)

ITALIAN SCHOOL.

985 "Virgin and Child and St. John," a circular (30-in. diam.), in
finely carved frame

ITALIAN SCHOOL.

986 "The Madonna and Infant Saviour and Saints" (50-in. by
24-in.)

987 "The Pilgrim's Way" (9-in. by 9½-in.)

BILLIARD ROOM.

EDEN UPTON EDDIS.

988 "**The Hiding of Moses**" (90-in. by 72-in.)
Full-length figures, life size. Jochebed kneels in the centre
with the infant Moses in her arms, Miriam kneels beside her.

Painted 1845 for Lord Overstone. Engraved by F. Joubert.
Exhibited Royal Academy, 1845.

Curtis and Hanson
Mount Street

- There was no other person for Overton
[illegible] prior to body identified
death in 1920 (August)

[illegible]
Park.

Subject: Re: Your e-mail of Friday
From: Debrabrehm@aol.com
Date: Mon, 26 Apr 2004 13:37:21 EDT
To: baderfa@execpc.com

Dear Mr. Bader,

Thank you for getting back to me. The article in Milwaukee Magazine would not just be about the collection going to Canada. It would be a general profile of you as a collector of Baroque art. I can't imagine that there are any other such collectors in the area and your stories of acquiring certain works, the reattribution of Rembrandts, and your investigations and growing knowledge of "school of Rembrandt" painters all seem interesting. The fact that Milwaukee is losing this collection would be a part of the story, but certainly not all of it.

Please let me know if you would reconsider sharing your story.

Sincerely,
Debra Brehmer
(And I will definitely set up a time to see the gallery, regardless. Thank you.)

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6th June 1974

Dr Alfred Bader,
Aldrich Chemical Company Inc.,
940 West St Paul Avenue,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233.

Dear Alfred,

I am glad you feel the picture fits the description in the Overstone catalogue. I think it is the final confirmation that the Milwaukee Siege is indeed by Wright.

Unfortunately I am going away for the weekend of the 6th-7th July, so will not be able to meet you on that day. Let us hope you will be free on the Friday or the Monday.

Yours ever,

Ben

Benedict Nicolson

Excerpt From

HISTORY PAINTING

THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR: WEST, COPLEY, TRUMBULL AND WRIGHT OF DERBY.

By

Biruta Erdmann

April 17, 1970

It seems strange that a methodical artist such as Joseph Wright of Derby would not have a number of studies that could be associated with the lost painting of the Gibraltar theme. According to Mr. Benedict Nicolson, the two drawings by Wright in the Derby Museum have no relationship to any known work of his. The drawings are: British Gun-Boat in Action with a Plan of the Boat (Nicolson Plate 116) and, The Sea Battle (Nicolson Plate 117). Both drawings are approximately dated in early 1770's. Mr. Nicolson records Wright's and Burdett's correspondence of 1772, and Wright's correspondence with his brother of 1776. In the former allusions are made to perspective studies and boats: in the latter Wright made references to a "sea engagement". Although Mr. Nicolson suggests an approximate date based on Wright's correspondence, he also questions it. In regard to date, the subject and the purpose of these drawings, Mr. Nicolson poses questions and a challenge.[1]

A comparative study based on Colonel Drinkwater's written and pictorial account of the Siege of Gibraltar, of the boats, their purpose and their historic importance may be helpful in identifying Wright's two questionable drawings. An attempt will be made to illustrate the various types of boat designs, and their particular functions, associated with the final defeat of the Spanish at the Gibraltar, 13/14 September 1782. The motifs considered will be: the floating batteries, the gunboats, and such topographical motifs as the South Bastion, the Kings Bastion, Old Mole and the Moorish Castle.

Mr. Jules D. Prown states that Copley's personal relationship with Colonel Drinkwater made it possible for Copley to utilize Colonel Drinkwater's material for his treatment of the Gibraltar theme[2], although little of it is discernable

[1] Benedict Nicolson, Joseph Wright of Derby Painter of Light (New York, 1968), p. 120, Ch. 2.

[2] Jules David Prown, John Singleton Copley in England 1774-1815. Vol. 2 (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1966), p. 323, fn. 5.

in Copley's finished work. It may have been one of many sources that were available to Copley at that time. The inscription on the upper left hand corner of Colonel Drinkwater's watercolor, A View of the Spanish Battering Ships the Morning of the 14th of September, After Their Defeat Before Gibraltar, View Taken from North Flank of the South Bastion with Combined Fleets and Camps at Distance (From Plate 483), refers to Copley's Guildhall version and his placement of the officer group on the South Bastion.[3]

Colonel Drinkwater depicts nine of the ten battering ships, also referred to as floating batteries. The tenth floating battery appears to be enveloped in smoke. Sir Roger Curtis' gunboat is placed in the vicinity of the Spanish Admiral's ship. Both of these types of boat-desings were especially invented for use at the Gibraltar. The gunboat was one of the inventions used by the British for the defense at Gibraltar. It was also used for the rescue of the Spaniards from the burning floating batteries. The first two gunboats were shipped from Britain in February 1782. The other ten arrived with Vernon's Relief in March, 1782.[4] These gunboats were prefabricated in Britain. They were shipped in pieces and were reassembled on land. Each gunboat was fit to serve twenty one persons.[5]

The floating batteries were the invention of the French engineer d'Arcon serving the Combined Forces of Spain and France under the command of the Duc de Crillon. In April 1782 the reconstruction of the large old ships, previously referred to as the ships of the line began. Cork, junk, green timber and iron bolts were used to fortify and strengthen the sides, which were to be six or seven feet thick. The number of portholes in the larboard sides varied; seven,

[3] Provn, pp. 325-326, fn. 9.

[4] John Drinkwater, A History of the Siege of Gibraltar, 1779-1783 (London, 1844), pp. 106-107.

[5] Ibid., pp. 112-113.

11 and 13.[6] The overhead protection was made of thatch, raw hides, and hemp saturated in water. The pitch-shaped roof design of the overhead protection also enabled the shells to slide off.[7] The primary concern of this elaborate design was to make them totally impregnable.

A similar type of design is illustrated in Colonel Drinkwater's watercolor. Besides the pitch-shaped roof design, the floating batteries exhibit three masts and bowsprit. The number of guns on the larboard sides is difficult to discern. The gunboat of Sir Roger Curtis has one mast and one gun. The topographical motifs are the South Bastion, the Kings Bastion, Old Mole, and S. Roque. The combined fleets are placed closer to the Spanish side of Algeziras. Colonel Drinkwater's treatment of the decale is panoramic. His treatment of the historic event is that of reportage.

Wright's drawing, The Sea Battle, and Colonel Drinkwater's watercolor present similar motifs. The floating batteries, the three masts and bowsprit are clearly defined in Wright's drawing. Wright's treatment of the mast construction is more elaborate and includes the flag. Nine of the ten floating batteries appear in Colonel Drinkwater's composition, whereas Wright shows only two. The placement of the portholes and that of the guns is generalized in both works. Wright also utilizes the panoramic view, but from a different vantage point. Wright's viewer appears to be placed below the South Bastion and further to the South, as opposed to Colonel Drinkwater's viewer being placed above the South Bastion. In Wright's drawing the distances are more difficult to judge. The focal point in Wright's drawing is off-center to the left. The directional lines are focussed toward the floating batteries. The curvilinear rhythm of the smoke-like shapes differs from

[6] Drinkwater, pp. 116-119.

[7] Michael Lewis, The Navy of Britain (London, 1948), pp. 132-134.

the stylized smoke effect in Colonel Drinkwater's rendition. The figures are eliminated in Drinkwater's work and minimized in Wright's.

As to the topographical motifs, the South Bastion has already been considered. In Colonel Drinkwater's composition, the Kings Bastion is placed further to the right and exhibits a pyramidal shape. Wright's presentation of the Kings Bastion is rather vague, although the pyramidal shapes are visible further to the right, but they are surrounded in smoke. This projection extends further into the water and the landforms above it give a more extensive view. This is in contrast to Colonel Drinkwater's sharply cut off shapes on the right. The smoke - cloud forms in Wright's drawing may also indicate that the King's Bastion was the primary target of the Spanish. Colonel Drinkwater's placement of the Old Mole is to the right of the Kings Bastion. It is a circular projection. This differs from Wright's fusion of man-made and natural forms which appear even further to the right. In the more distant background, the area of S. Roque seems to exhibit similar shapes to that of Colonel Drinkwater's cone-like projections. A motif that does not appear in Colonel Drinkwater's composition is that of the Moorish Castle. In Wright's drawing, the block-like shapes above the Kings Bastion, visible between the two masts on the right may designate the castle which occupies a space on the mountain. Various other types of boats are pictured in the background to the left, beyond which are generalized shapes of either smoke or landforms. This contrasts to Colonel Drinkwater's more factual treatment of topography. Other types of boats appear in the background in both compositions. The longboat, which is visible in center foreground in Wright's drawing can be differentiated from the gunboat by a different shape of the stern. Both of these boats are depicted side by side in Wright's drawing, <u>The Sea Battle</u>.

The gunboat of Sir Roger Curtis with a single mast and one gun has a more detailed counterpart in Wright's drawing, <u>British Gun-Boat in Action with a Plan</u>

of the Ford. The plan of the boat shows the platform for the gun from where it could be fired in various directions. The lateral arrangement seems to indicate the placement of the figures and the oars. An exception is that Wright seems to indicate there are twenty one persons in the above drawing. The plan, however, seems to be designed to fit twenty one persons, the number recorded by Colonel Drinkwater. It would include the commander, one gunner, eighteen oarsmen and a tiller man. As a rule had before these gunboats were specially prefabricated in Britain and reconstructed at Gibraltar. These twelve gunboats were under the command of Sir Roger Curtis, whose rescue mission of the Spaniards from their burning floating batteries captured the national and artistic imagination.

Colonel Drinkwater's written and pictorial account contains the unique floating batteries and the gunboats and their specific functions. Their existance in both of Wright's drawings confirms the time and place as 1782 at Gibraltar. From the study of the motifs and the pictorial setting one can conclude that the drawings of Wright are associated with the Gibraltar theme. This is not to say that Wright utilized Colonel Drinkwater's material. But it is obvious that he had a knowledge of the new types of boat designs, their purpose and that of the locale. From the correspondence between Wright and the poet Hayley one can assume that Wright had not begun his work on the Gibraltar theme before January 1783,[8] therefore these two drawings would have to be dated after that time. The subject matter and the fact that notations appear indicate the drawings are studies for Wright's lost painting, View of Gibraltar During the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries, 13th September, 1782.

[8] Nicolson, p. 160, fn. 1.

[illegible] PUBLICATIONS LTD

49 Park Lane, London, W1
Telegrams: Rariora, London W1

Telephone: 01-493 2622

30th June 1970

Mrs Birgit Erdmann,
2441 E. Newberry Blvd.,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

Dear Mrs Erdmann,

Thank you for your letters of June 12th and 19th. I will try and answer all your points to the best of my ability.

(1) I think you must be correct in identifying the 2 drawings of ships and a naval battle as studies for Wright's lost painting. There is no reason from the point of view of style why the drawings should not be 10 years or so later than I supposed. The facts that the boats were prefabricated in Britain supports your view.

(2) We do not know the size of the lost canvas, but since Wright charged Milnes more for it than he charged for any other picture (£400) we can be sure it was enormous. You will have observed that for the 2 scenes from the Winter's Tale (catalogue Nos. 230 and 231 in my book) measuring 70 x 95 inches, and 61 x 85 inches, Wright was charging £136 and £105 only, so the Floating Batteries was definitely larger, even allowing for the fact that he charged more for compositions with more figures. For Ferdinand and Miranda (cat. No. 237; 102 x 144 inches) he charged £315. The Gibraltar picture could have been about this size. I therefore think the picture in Milwaukee is too small.

(3) I am returning the photographs and the slides by the mail. Judging by them, I cannot persuade myself that the style of the Milwaukee picture is that of Wright, and Copley also seems to be the wrong name. The connection between the drawing of the sea battle and the painting is not so close.

(4) The inscription in the upper right corner of the Sea Battle drawing reads (in Wright's handwriting): 'continued as in your sketch', suggesting that the composition continued on to another sheet, so that the scene would be only the left hand side of a composition double the size (rather similar in shape to Lord Scarsdale's Arkwright). The drawings are in pencil, 12¼ x 13⅛ inches

(Stacking of Boats) and 11½ x 13⅛ inches (Sea Battle). In the Sea Battle wavy lines in the sky (not the circular ones which are smoke and cloud) are creases in the paper, so do not be misled by them.

(5) There are definitely more than 21 figures in the boat, so you do not have to say there 'seem' to be more than 21.

You ought to try to persuade Charles Buckley of the City Art Museum, St Louis, to see the picture at Milwaukee and give his opinion. Also, ask him if he agrees that on the evidence you provide, the Wright drawings are studies for the lost Floating Batteries.

Yours sincerely,

Benedict Nicolson

Benedict Nicolson

speedimemo®

376386

TRIP

TO TRACY ATKINSON

AT

SUBJECT SIEGE OF GIBRALTOR

DATE 25 May 70

In response to Barbara's first queries, the V & A in London feels that a Loutherbourg attribution "is a perfectly possible one". The National Maritme Museum however says "It is a very strange picture, which, though it has affinities with De Loutherbourg, it has also even more features which makes me doubt the attribution. The officer waving a sword is in captain's full dress uniform, 1787-1795." SO...where do we go from here?????

PLEASE REPLY TO → SIGNED Jack

Give me copies of the correspondence & I will report to Bader

DATE

SIGNED

SEND PARTS 1 AND 3 WITH CARBONS INTACT.
PART 3 WILL BE RETURNED WITH REPLY.

Rediform®

4S 469

T.1452
Loutherbourg
The Battle of the Nile

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM
GREENWICH, LONDON SE10
TELEPHONE 01-858 4422

Miss Barbara Lang,
Curatorial Assistant,
Milwaukee Art Center,
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202.

23rd April, 1970.
Ref. P/D

Dear Madam,

RE: PHILIP DE LOUTHERBOURG

Thank you for your letter. We have a number of paintings by this artist, including the battles of the Nile, Camperdown, and the First of June. I would be very interested to see a photograph of yours. I didn't know that he had done a Siege of Gibraltar.

Yours faithfully,

Edward Archibald

E.H.H. Archibald
Assistant Keeper
Oil Paintings

April 15, 1970

Mr. Michael S. Robinson
NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM
Romney Road
S. E. 10
London, England

Dear Mr. Robinson:

The Milwaukee Art Center is currently researching a painting which is believed to have been painted by Phillipe Jacques de Loutherberg. This painting, now at the Art Center, is of a naval battle, entitled "Siege at Gibralter". It is known that Loutherberg had executed such battle scenes. Its dimensions are approximately 64 inches by 94½ inches.

If you have in your possession paintings by Loutherberg and/or information which could further our investigation of the painting and its attributed artist, we would be most grateful to hear from you. Photographs of "Siege at Gibralter" could be made available to you.

Thanking you in advance, I am

Sincerely,

Barbara Lang (Miss)
Curatorial Assistant

April 29, 1970

Mr. E.H.H. Archibald
Assistant Keeper
Oil Paintings
NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM
Greenwich, London SE 10

Dear Mr. Archibald:

In response to your letter requesting photographs of our attributed Philip de Loutherbourg, I am sending you a set of photographs. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Barbara Lang (Miss)
Curatorial Assistant

encls.

December 22, 1970

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

Dear Dr. Bader:

I am enclosing copies of the correspondence I have received to date regarding the "Battle of Gibraltar," which I thought you might like to have for your records.

Mr. Wunderlich agrees that the painting should be sent to the conservator at the Courtauld Institute in London. He feels, as do we, that there has been a great deal of over painting, and that once it is cleaned we might find something quite different from what we now see.

I think this would be the best course to pursue. Once it is cleaned we will be in a much better position to seek expertise.

Please advise me of your wishes in regard to this and we will carry them out.

I would also like to have the early photograph of the painting which you have, from which I will have copies made.

Best wishes for the Holidays.

Sincerely,

John Lloyd Taylor
Director of Exhibitions
and Collections

JLT/ajc

bc: Tracy Atkinson

May 26, 1970

Professor Damie Stillman
Department of Art History
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

Dear Damie:

In our first go-'round with the "Siege of Gibraltar", the Victoria & Albert's Deputy Keeper feels that "an attribution of your painting to Loutherbourg is a perfectly possible one".

However, the Assistant Keeper of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich believe that: "It is a very strange picture, which, though it has affinities with De Loutherbourg, it has also even more features which makes me doubt the attribution. The officer waving a sword is in captain's full dress uniform, 1787-1795".

So, we're even up. Anyway, thought I'd let you know the latest results.

By the way, the so-called Copley "Snow Children" has been credited to Henri Pierre Danloux, by Pierre Rosenberg at the Louvre.

Best wishes for a fine and productive time abroad,

John Lloyd Taylor
Assistant Director
Director of Exhibitions

JLT:bh

The University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53201

DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY

AREA CODE 414
TELEPHONE NO. 228-4330

May 19, 1970

Mr. Jack Taylor
Assistant Director
Milwaukee Art Center
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Dr.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Dear Jack:

Here are the photographs on the Siege of Gibraltar that you lent me. Thanks very much. Have you found out anything new about it? I would be very interested in what turns up.

Many thanks, again, for offering my seminar the help that you did.

Sincerely,

Damie

Damie Stillman
Professor

DS:gb

May 26, 1970

Mr. Theodore Rousseau, Curator
Department of European Paintings
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street
New York, New York 10028

Dear Mr. Rousseau:

We are investigating the attribution of a painting which is in our collections, and about which we have absolutely no documentation. We are however interested in two possible attributions which have been suggested: Phillipe Jacques de Loutherbourg, and Joseph Wright of Derby. The latter, which is a recent suggestion, does not seem to me quite as plausible as de Loutherbourg, although there are some similar characteristics.

The Victoria & Albert believes the de Loutherbourg attribution to be a perfectly possible one, whereas the National Maritime Museum feels that although there are some affinities to de Loutherbourg it is not by him.

The only positive information we have is that the subject is of the siege of Gibralter, or as reffered to by the National Maritime Museum, Repulse of the Floating Batteries at Gibralter; and that the officer waving the sword is in captain's full dress uniform of 1787-1795.

The painting, which is 64 x 94 1/2 inches, is very heavily covered with varnish and quite dirty. There are intimations that some rather interesting painting is there however.

The enclosed photographs were taken under extremely high intensity light, bringing out some details not readily visible. I have encircled the area from which the details were taken.

Any information you might afford us regarding either of the above two suggested attributions, or any other that you might prefer would be deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,

John Lloyd Taylor
Assistant Director
Director of Exhibitions

JLT:bh
Enclosure

THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR: AN ART HISTORICAL MYSTERY SOLVED

February 27 - March 27, 1973

ART HISTORY GALLERY
Mitchell 128
The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

In the winter of 1968-69 a large painting of a naval battle scene, darkened by varnish and age and badly in need of cleaning, arrived in Milwaukee as part of the Elgin Academy collection being offered for sale. Its elaborate frame included a panel with the name "Copley" upon it; and it was as a work by John Singleton Copley, the distinguished colonial American artist who had gone to England just before the Revolution and made a name for himself there as a painter of contemporary historical subjects, that the painting had entered the Elgin Academy collection a half-century ago. A graduate student in the Department of Art History at UWM, Mrs. Biruta Erdmann, saw it that winter and became intrigued with it. Realizing that it was not a Copley, she set to work attempting to discover the artist and the subject. Dismissing in turn a variety of possible artists, including Benjamin West and John Trumbull, both of whom, like Copley, had depicted scenes from contemporary history in the late eighteenth century, and inspired by the dramatic light effects which were among the major features of the painting, she became convinced that it was a work by Joseph Wright of Derby, an important English artist of this period who was, indeed, greatly concerned with light. Through further research, especially centering on two drawings by Wright in the Derby Museum in England and on contemporary documents and accounts, she was able to identify the subject as The Siege of Gibraltar and the painting as Wright's noted 1785 version of the subject, which had been lost from view in the 1850's. She presented this material in a seminar at UWM in the spring of 1970, and it has subsequently become the subject of her master's thesis.

In the meantime, the painting was sent to London for cleaning. After this difficult operation was completed, revealing the brilliant light that could only be guessed at previously, Benedict Nicolson, the leading authority on Wright, concurred in Mrs. Erdmann's analysis and asked her to write up the discovery in the Burlington Magazine, one of the major art historical journals, of which he is the editor. The exhibition, in the Art History Gallery in Mitchell Hall (Room 128) at UWM from February 27 to March 27, is the demonstration of her research. The painting itself, which has recently been acquired by the Milwaukee Art Center, is the centerpiece of the exhibition, flanked by the two Joseph Wright drawings, lent by the Derby Museum, which were the most significant evidence in Mrs. Erdmann's research. Mrs. Erdmann, who now teaches art history at Monmouth College in Montclair, N.J., has arranged the rest of the gallery with photographs and captions documenting her analysis. These include works by other artists (Copley, West, and Trumbull, for example) whose authorship of the painting was disproved by Mrs. Erdmann, engravings of the battle and the topographical scene, details of the painting (both before and after cleaning), and other works by Wright of Derby. Altogether, the exhibition is a fascinating example of the methods and results of art historical research, as well as an opportunity to see for the first time this newest acquisition of the Milwaukee Art Center.

Mrs. Erdmann will present an illustrated lecture on The Siege of Gibraltar at 2:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 27th, in Mitchell 117. Her lecture is open to the public.

ART HISTORY GALLERIES
Department of Art History
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

1973 EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

Art History Gallery
Mitchell 128

Gallery Hours
Mon - Fri: 9-4

Jan. 15 - Feb. 15: THE EXPLORING EYE: UWM Photo Services

Photographs covering a vast range of uses from the instructional needs of the campus and copy work to the highly skilled and technical work of photomicroscopy and scientific photography.

Feb. 27 - Mar. 27: THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR: An Art Historical Mystery Solved

Biruta Erdmann, a candidate for the Master's degree in Art History at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, has identified a painting previously thought to be by John Singleton Copley as the 1785 version of The Siege of Gibraltar by the important English artist, Joseph Wright of Derby.

This exhibition, which includes the painting, two Joseph Wright drawings and documentary photographs, is a fascinating example of the methods and results of art historical research.

Mar. 14 - Apr. 10: "THE PRIVATE WORLD OF GEORGE SEGAL" (UWM Union Gallery*)
(organized by the Art History Galleries with the participation of the Indianapolis Museum of Art)

A survey of the full range of work by George Segal, considered by many to be America's most important contemporary sculptor. The exhibition will include three major environmental works, and a wide selection of bas-reliefs, fragments, pastels and drawings.

Apr. 16 - May 11: "THE QUINCY INVENTIONS": James McGarrell
(organized by the Quincy Art Club, Illinois)

An exhibition of six drawings, six paintings and six lithographs by the noted American figurative artist, James McGarrell. In the catalogue for the exhibition, Mark Strand writes, "For all their seeming complexity, their relentless subjugation of objects into a demiworld of symbolic presences, the paintings of James McGarrell are essentially available. They serve as curious and dreamlike illustrations of themselves, continuous and refractory in their self-commentary."

Continuing: THE CHARLES BOLLES BOLLES-ROGERS COLLECTION OF LITURGICAL OBJECTS AND RUSSIAN AND GREEK ICONS

Art History Museum
Greene Hall
N. Downer & 1/2 block N. of
Hartford Avenue

Museum Hours
Tues - Fri: 12-4
Sun: 1-4

LECTURES

Tues., Feb. 27, 2:00 p.m., Mit. 117, Biruta Erdmann: THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR

Wed., Mar. 14, 9:00 p.m., Bol. 150, George Segal: THE ARTIST ON HIS WORK

Tues., May 1, 8:00 p.m., Greene Hall, Prof. Ernst Kitzinger, of Harvard Univ.: THE ICONS AND LITURGICAL OBJECTS COLLECTION

*Union Gallery Hours for THE PRIVATE WORLD OF GEORGE SEGAL: Mon-Fri: 10-4; 7-9 pm
Sat & Sun: 2-5 pm

For further information, contact Mr. J. L. Taylor or Ms. N. Ungar at (414) 963-4060

—Photo Courtesy of Derby Museum

'The Siege of Gibraltar,' a recent acquisition of the Milwaukee Art Center, is on display through March 27 in the Art History Galleries at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

Lost Painting Found Under Old Varnish

A painting "lost" for more than a century, and rediscovered through research performed by a UWM graduate student in art history, has been acquired by the Milwaukee Art Center.

"The Siege of Gibraltar," an oil on canvas measuring 63 5/16 by 82 5/16 inches, was previously attributed to the American colonial artist John Singleton Copley.

Thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Birutta Erdmann, the naval battle scene is now known to have been painted in 1784-'85 by the English artist Joseph Wright of Derby. Mrs. Erdmann, who did her graduate work at UWM, teaches art history at Monmouth College, Montclair, N. J.

The canvas was presented to the Art Center by the Charleston Foundation in memory of Miss Paula Uihlein.

Mrs. Erdmann identified the painting by studying contemporary accounts and documents, as well as two drawings by Wright in the Derby Museum in England. She will tell of her historical detective work in a lecture scheduled for 2 p.m. Tuesday in Mitchell Hall, Room 118, on the UWM campus.

The public lecture signals the opening of an art exhibition of which "The Siege of Gibraltar" is the centerpiece.

Also included in the display, which continues through March 27 in the UWM Art History Galleries in Mitchell Hall, are engravings of the battle and the topographical scene; details of the painting, before and after cleaning; other works by Wright of Derby, and canvases by artists whose authorship of "The Siege of Gibraltar" was disproved by Mrs. Erdmann's research.

Darkened by Age

The Derby painting, darkened by varnish and age and badly in need of cleaning, arrived in Milwaukee during the winter of 1968-'69 as part of the Elgin Academy collection, then being offered for sale.

At that time the painting was attributed to John Singleton Copley (1738-1815), an American artist who emigrated to England on the eve of the Revolution and never returned.

Realizing that the canvas was not a Copley, Mrs. Erdmann set to work to discover the identity of artist and subject. In the course of her research she dismissed a number of possible artists, among them Benjamin West and John Trumbull, both of whom had depicted scenes from contemporary history in the late 18th century.

Light Comes Through

Close scrutiny of the dra-tic light effects that are g the major features of ainting convinced her as the work of Joseph Wright of Derby. She presented this material in a UWM seminar in the spring of 1970, and it later became the subject of her master's thesis.

A subsequent cleaning in London further heightened the effect of brilliant light, and caused Benedict Nicolson, a leading authority on Wright, to concur with Mrs. Erdmann's analysis. At his request she wrote an article about her discovery for the Burlington Magazine, a major art historical journal of which Nicolson is editor.

Wright of Kelly - Galbraith File -

John Trumbull

Helen A. Cooper

with essays by

Patricia Mullan Burnham · Martin Price
Jules David Prown · Oswaldo Rodriguez Roque
Egon Verheyen · Bryan Wolf

Kf p. 62

Yale University Art Gallery · New Haven

Fig. 35. Study for *The Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, c.1789. Collection of Jonathan Trumbull Isham.

dissatisfaction that led him to attempt this third canvas, almost 6 x 9 feet in size.

While the third version (Cat. 12) does not seem noticeably different from the second, there are significant changes. One of these is the alteration of Don José's pose. As Trumbull worked it out in a pen-and-ink compositional sketch (*Fig. 35*), the head now falls downward, so that the entire figure echoes the *Dying Gaul*. The effect is one of poignancy rather than defiance. Trumbull carefully considered the angle of the head and facial expression—he even went so far as to seek out the handsome young painter Thomas Lawrence to pose for the Spaniard's likeness (Cat. 13), producing in the process one of his finest character studies.

Other changes in the final painted work, and perhaps also studied in detail in sketches now lost, are the deeper and less cluttered foreground, the calmer aspect of the sky,[11] the sharply foreshortened prone Redcoat next to the Spaniard (based on a center foreground figure in Copley's *Peirson; Fig. 14*), and the added figure of an officer, already suggested in the Isham sketch, at the extreme right. To convey a sense of monumental grandeur, Trumbull arranged the figures of the English officers in a manner that recalls Roman relief sculpture, as West had done in his *Agrippina Landing at Brundisium with the Ashes of Germanicus*, 1768 (Yale University Art Gallery). The execution itself— more linear, smooth and restrained than in the two preceding versions— also gave the large *Sortie* a strongly classical look.

Trumbull's decision to enlarge the scale enabled him to more clearly represent the various events. More importantly, he takes the viewer into the fray, to confront the emotionally charged death of an enemy hero and to admire the magnanimity of the British commanding officers. In this respect, the final *Sortie* is a more ambitious work than its immediate forerunners in the Anglo-American history painting tradition— West's *Death of Wolfe* (*Fig. 9*), Copley's *Death of Major Peirson* and indeed Trumbull's own *Bunker's Hill* and *Quebec*.

The large *Sortie* was completed in February 1789 and shown at a private exhibition organized by Trumbull at Spring Gardens in April of that year. The public appears to have been moderately receptive, although newspaper critics remained silent. At least one connoisseur, Horace Walpole, praised it highly; Trumbull reports that Walpole painted it worth [illegible] afterward, Trumbull received— and declined— an offer of 1200 guineas for it. The painting remained in his possession, save for a period of about three years between 1824 and 1827, when it was with an unidentified English owner, until he sold it to the Boston Athenaeum in 1828 for 2000 dollars.

After the completion of the *Sortie*, Trumbull refrained from painting contemporary historical subjects on such a scale until 1817, when he began four Revolutionary War paintings for the Rotunda of the Capitol.

1 JT to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., May 24, 1786, YUL-JT.
2 For a history of this protracted belligerence see John Drinkwater, *A History of the Siege of Gibraltar*, London, 1786.
3 On Copley's difficulties with his *Siege of Gibraltar*, see Jules D. Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 2 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1966, II, pp. 324–30.
4 That the rivalry between West and Copley was a major factor in Trumbull's decision to paint the *Sortie* is emphasized in Jaffe 1975, pp. 131–38; see also p. 35, above.
5 This sketch is the most likely candidate for being the one Trumbull described; see Trumbull 1841, p. 148.
6 Ibid.
7 Most of these are illustrated in Jean Lambert Brockway, "Trumbull's Sortie," *The Art Bulletin*, 16 (1934), pp. 5–13.
8 Trumbull 1841, pp. 148–49. For a discussion of the first version of the *Sortie*, see H. W. Williams, *Corcoran Gallery of Art Bulletin*, 16 (November 1967), pp. 15–21. At some point this work was repainted so that the costume of the dying Spaniard met the requirements of history.
9 Trumbull 1841, p. 149.
10 Ibid.
11 In the rendering of the picture as a night scene illuminated by fires, Trumbull undoubtedly saw Joseph Wright of Derby's *View of Gibraltar During the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries*, exhibited at Robin's Rooms, Covent Garden, in April 1785 (Milwaukee Art Museum), in which the effects caused by the nighttime burning of the batteries at sea were very successfully exploited in a work of large size.
12 Trumbull 1841, p. 150.

ALFRED BADER CORPORATION
F I N E A R T S
2961 NORTH SHEPARD AVENUE • MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53211

Delivery By Hand

January 29, 1973

Mr. Tracy Atkinson
Director
Milwaukee Art Center
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Dear Tracy:

I was happy to learn from your telephone conversation on Friday that the Milwaukee Art Center has decided to purchase the Battle of Gibraltar.

This will undoubtedly be one of the Art Center's most important paintings.

My invoice is attached.

Best personal regards,

Sincerely,

Alfred Bader

AB/de

ALFRED BADER CORPORATION
F I N E A R T S
2961 NORTH SHEPARD AVENUE • MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53211

BILL OF SALE

January 29, 1973

Milwaukee Art Center
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

The Battle of Gibraltar
by Joseph Wright of Derby

Oil on canvas, circa 63" x 90"

Provenance: from the Ehrich Galleries (see correspondence attached)

#84 of the Laura Davidson Sears Academy of Fine Arts of the Elgin Academy; there attributed to Copley (see photostat of entry attached)

Literature: #245 in Benedict Nicholson's book on Joseph Wright of Derby

This painting was sold by the artist for £420 on April 12, 1786; this is the largest sum ever received by the artist for any painting.

A photostat of Benedict Nicholson's discussion and the original expertises of the painting, wrongly attributed to Copley by the Ehrich Galleries and Mr. Albert Rosenthal, are attached.

Price: $30,000.00

Alfred Bader

Alfred Bader, Ph. D.

THE EHRICH GALLERIES

"Old Masters"

707 FIFTH AVENUE
AT FIFTY-FIFTH STREET
NEW YORK

August 7, 1923

Dear Judge Sears:

As I believe I have written you, my brother is in Europe and while in England came across the remarkable painting of which I am sending you a photograph herewith. I am also enclosing a full description of the event it depicts.

The picture was painted by John Singleton Copley, and the canvas is 5 ft. 2 in. x 8 ft. wide. It is one of the most important large subject pictures that Copley painted. It is privately owned in England. Because of its size it is, of course, not readily salable and for this reason could be bought for a fraction of its real value.

If you have room for a picture of this kind in the Elgin Academy, I should certainly recommend its purchase on my brother's recommendation. We can get it for you for the very low price of $1800, and the cost of transportation here would not be much.

I think I may safely say that if you purchase this picture you will have one of the most important Copleys in this country. It has occurred to me that it would be particularly interesting from a historical point of view in connection with the school.

If you are not interested, will you please be good enough to return the photograph and description?.

It will no doubt be of interest to you to hear that I had the opportunity of showing the photograph of this painting to Mr. Albert Rosenthal of Philadelphia and he also thought it a most important work. As you have a fine portrait example of Copley's work, it would be of interest to supplement this with one of his subject pictures.

With kindest regards, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

N. L. Ehrich.

Hon. Nathaniel C. Sears
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

63
NIAGARA FALLS
Albert Bierstadt, N. A., 1829-1902

64
INTERIOR OF ST. MARKS
Charles Gifford Dyer, 1846-1911

65
RISING MOON
Joseph Jefferson, 1829-1905

66
MARINE
Edward Moran, 1824-1901

67
GIRL FEEDING SWANS
Frederick S. Church, N. A., 1842-1923

68
A FRIENDLY WARNING
Thomas Hicks, N. A., 1823-1890

69
NIAGARA FALLS
Frederick E. Church, N. A., 1826-1900

70
MARINE
Edward Moran, 1824-1901

71
LANDSCAPE AND CATTLE
James M. Hart, N. A., 1828-1901

72
MOUNTAIN BROOK
Albert Bierstadt, N. A., 1829-1902

73
LANDSCAPE
Edward Gay, A. N. A., 1837-1924

74
SALT MARSH
James Hamilton, N. A., 1819-1878

75
AT THE RICHARDAIS
Frederick A. Bridgman, A. N. A., 1847-1927

76
LANDSCAPE
Thomas Cole, N. A., 1801-1848

77
HUDSON RIVER LANDSCAPE
Thomas Cole, N. A., 1801-1848

78
NIAGARA FALLS IN WINTER
Jasper F. Cropsey, N. A., 1823-1900

79
LANDSCAPE
Thomas Doughty, 1793-1856

80
ON A SPREE
William H. Beard, N. A., 1821-1900

81
AUTUMN MOON
Ben Foster, N. A., 1852-1927

82
LANDSCAPE AND CATTLE
Carlton Wiggins, N. A., 1848-1932

83
LANDSCAPE
John W. Casilear, N. A., 1811-1893

84
THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR
John Singleton Copley, 1737-1815

85
ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES
Benjamin West, 1738-1820

86
BEGGAR AND DAUGHTER
Thomas Sully, 1783-1872

THE EHRICH GALLERIES
"Old Masters"

707 Fifth Avenue
at Fifty-Fifth Street
NEW YORK

June 5th
1 9 2 5

Dear Judge Sears:

I take pleasure in sending you enclosed a photograph of the John Singleton Copley with an endorsement on the painting signed by Albert Rosenthal, my brother, and myself.

I was sorry to hear from Mrs. Sears that you are still somewhat under the weather and hope you will soon be quite yourself again.

I left Chicago just about the time that you were coming North and am sorry that I did not have the pleasure of seeing both Mrs. Sears and yourself this Spring.

With kind regards to you both, in which my brother joins me, I am

Yours very sincerely,

N. L. Ehrich

Hon. Nathaniel C. Sears
Lake Geneva
Wisconsin
HLE/B

63x94

John Singleton Copley
Siege of Gibraltar

We have carefully examined the original painting "Siege of Gibraltar" by John Singleton Copley, R. A. 1737-1815, of which this is a photograph.
In our opinion this is an original painting by John Singleton Copley and is characteristic of his historical paintings. The painting is an important one and in good condition.

Albert Ten Eyck Gardner

H. L. Elvidge

Walter Elvidge

1/10/

63 x 94

The period of Copley in English Art demanded of the artist an Excursion into the Realms of Historical & Biblical Events.
Benj. West's painting of the "Death of Wolfe" set the pace.
Copley & Trumbull both students of West followed his direction. The thought in the minds of the artist and their public that upon these canvases their position would be assured for all time.
The portraits of all three of these artists, however are the Real basis of their present important position in American Art.
This painting and the other painting probably a peasant (In England) brought Copley considerably before the British public.
Any Character of painting by Copley has distinction, good drawing & composition and always interesting painting and good Color arrangement.
This painting has all these qualities, is highly decorative in character - a splendid addition to any Gallery of American art showing the versatility of the artist.
This, as far as I know, the only canvas of this character by Copley in the Country

Albert Rothschild

3/14/1924

V109

Gentlemen
To
do
and
C.

July 17, 1971

Mr. E. H. H. Archibald
Assistant Keeper
Oil Paintings
National Maritime Museum
Greenwich, London, SE 10

Dear Mr. Archibald:

Presently I am doing research on the Gibraltar theme as used in English and American painting, and I do need assistance as far as some of the artists are concerned. The key point of my investigation is the Milwaukee Art Center's unrecorded Copley, titled, The Siege of Gibraltar.

Your correspondence with Miss Barbara Lang, Curatorial Assistant, Milwaukee Art Center (8th April, 1970), was made available to me by Mr. John Lloyd Tayler, Director of Exhibitions and Collections. My opinion is the same as yours, that this particular painting, said to be by Copley, and thought to be by De Loutherbourg, is by neither of the artists. At this point I believe it to be the work of Joseph Wright of Derby. My hypothesis is based on three existing drawings, formerly unidentified by Wright's scholars and other relative data. I have corresponded with Mr. Benedict Nicolson, who has also seen the slides and the photographs of this painting. Mr. Nicolson, however, was doubtful that the style of the Milwaukee painting was that of Wright of Derby. Presently the painting is at the Courtauld Institute for restoration. If you have the time, would you please look at it.

I do intend to clarify the status of this unrecorded Copley (?), but more research is needed as far as Wright's work is concerned. The other artists of the Gibraltar theme were, George Carter, J. Clevely, William Hamilton, John K. Sherwin, James Jeffreys, and Dominic Serres. Photographs and other information on works of these artists would be greatly appreciated. I will be glad to pay for photographs and other data you may send me.

Sincerely yours,

Biruta Erdmann

Biruta Erdmann
Instructor, History of Art

cc: J. L. Taylor

P.S. Thank you very much for your help. Did you write to Benedict Nicolson? If and when you hear about the progress on the painting, please let me know.

Derby Borough Council
Museums and Art Gallery
Strand-Derby, DE1 1BS. Tel: (0332) 31111 ext: 787

Chief Museums Officer Bryan P. Blake, B.A, A.M.A

Our Ref: SP/19/PJW

The Curator
Milwaukee Art Centre
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee
Wisconsin 53202
USA

5th August, 1975.

Dear Sir,

Derby Museum and Art Gallery would very much like to purchase from you a photograph of Joseph Wright of Derby's painting, "View of Gibraltar during the destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries, 14th September 1782", as we have not yet seen what the painting looks like now that it has been traced. Could you please forward a print and invoice.

Yours faithfully,

David Fraser

David Fraser
Asst. Keeper of Art.

UWM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MILWAUKEE / MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53201

DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY

TELEPHONE (414) 963–4330

16 April 1973

Tom,

Here is all the label info on the Gibraltar painting exhibition.

In order, the first five sheets deal with the painting and the next two with the two pencil studies. The rest is Biruta's accumulative research on the comparative studies.

I hope this will be of use to you.

You might notice that the painting has been titled according to Biruta as:

"View of Gibraltar During the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries, 14th September 1782"

Best,

Jack Taylor

BROWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
Providence, Rhode Island 02912
Tel: (401) 863 2414

The Anne S. K. Brown
Military Collection
John Hay Library
Box A

12 June 1990

James Mundy
Chief Curator
Milwaukee Art Museum
At the War Memorial Center
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Mr. Mundy:

Many thanks for replying to my letter concerning the painting originally attributed to Wright of Gibraltar. I was also very interested to learn that you have the painting by Thomas Whitcombe and I would certainly like to obtain a black and white photograph of this picture.

As you have two paintings of Gibraltar, I thought that you would be interested in seeing the part of my chapter which deals with Gibraltar paintings, As you will see I refer to the Whitcombe and have an interesting contemporary criticism of it. Therefore it will be most interesting to see the actual painting in a photograph.

If you ever identify the "Wright" painting let me know, and if I can be of any help please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Harrington
Curator
Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection

enclosure

Extract for WAR IN BRITISH ART TO 1914 by Peter Harrington (Forthcoming)

Chapter Three

Popular Themes in Military Art:
1. Gibraltar and Seringapatam:

The American Revolution was a dismal failure for British arms and there was little to celebrate in terms of paintings. That was not the case with the siege of Gibraltar which commenced on June 21 1779 and ended on 6 February 1783, or the various naval operations such as Rodney's victory over a Franco-Spanish force at the battle of the Saints in April 1782. The Spanish had allied themselves with the French during the American war and it was the British successes against them that brought the most rejoicing in Britain. There had been great interest in the events at Gibraltar. Magazines printed maps and plans of the Rock or pictures of Floating Batteries,[1] and various theatricals and muscial farces were performed depicting the events. Some adventureous persons were even taking bets on whether the Rock would fall. It was not surprising therefore that artists would attempt to exploit the campaign to their own benefit. Gibraltar generated a large amount of good and bad art as well as numerous cheap prints, caricatures, broadsides and souvenir portraits, and represented the first time since the death of Wolfe that a contemporary historical subject had appealed to a number of artists. It also represented the first time that a military incident was dealt with by both historical painters and maritime artists. Furthermore, that it was a popular subject with artists suggests the importance of the commercial print and the potential for financial gain from a popular subject. Even artists who had never painted an historical scene let alone a contemporary one, such as William Hamilton, tried their hand at capturing the event on canvas. Competition among painters was rife therefore as the artist, Joseph Wright suggests in a letter written in January 1783 concerning the possibility of obtaining the help of Sir Roger Curtis who had fought at Gibraltar. "There is no time to be lost, as the Subject [the destruction of the floating batteries on 13 September 1782] is by Sr. Roger's assistance already in the hands of several & will soon be a hackney'd one."[2]

Wright was justifiably concerned over the urgency to produce a scene. As early as October 30, 1782, a print entitled **A North View of the Rock of Gibraltar taken from the Spanish Lines**, from an original drawing taken on the spot by G. Black was published. At the same time one could purchase for 2s. 6d each, a **Plan of the Isthmus of Gibraltar exhibiting the advanced works of the Spanish with the Sortie of the Garrisson under Brigadier-General Ross**, by Lieutenant Drinkwater, who was later to record the events in his history of the siege published in 1786. One of the earlest prints commemorating the destruction of the floating batteries appeared in February 1783.

Advertisments in various newspapers announced the publication of a print costing 8s. based on a design by Dominic Serres representing "a most striking View of the Floating Batteries of the House of Bourbon in Flames, and the dismayed Besiegers of the impregnable Rock saved by the Humanity of Britons."[3] The advertisment went on. "The Artist assisted by Sir Roger Curtis, and other principal officers, who were present on the spot at the awful instant, has exerted the utmost of his abilities to preserve the public esteem; and the Proprietor has spared no pains to gratify the World with the earliest Representation of the great event." This last statement clearly indicated the competition to produce the first and most authentic pictures of the subject.

At least half a dozen pictures relating to Gibraltar were exhibited in 1783, and in March, John Singleton Copley received a commission to paint the event (see below). At the beginning of May, Francis Swaine had exhibited **The destruction of the Floating Batteries before Gibraltar** at the Free Society in the Great Rooms, Haymarket, and at the same show, John Cleveley exhibited his drawing of a view of Gibraltar. At the Royal Academy which opened on Monday, April 28, several paintings were exhibited dealing with the subject, which led one critic to comment, "if our patience was not literally worn out with looking at floating batteries and Gibraltar, we could have bestowed more time in observing and recording the merit of young West's picture in the anti-room."[4] Among the paintings were William Hamilton's **The destruction of the Spanish battery ships before Gibraltar in the night of the 13th of Sept. last**, James Jefferys's **The scene before Gibraltar on the morning of 14th of September 1783**, Thomas Whitcombe's first Academy picture, **Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries at Gibraltar, September 13, 1782, at night**, and Robert Lucius West's **Destruction of the Floating Battery before Gibraltar**, which compared poorly with Jeffery's painting ~~which was~~ hung directly opposite. One reviewer of the Whitcombe picture stated that it gave "a very inadequate idea of that awful and tremendous scene. The lights are not properly broken or diversified; all is glare; and everything seems to be too exact and regular for such a night of carnage and confusion."[5] The writer touched on an important point about many of the Gibraltar pictures. On the night of 13 September 1782, British gunboats commanded by Sir Roger Curtis destroyed the flotilla of batteries launched by the Spaniards. A number of artists saw a challenge in depicting the events of the night with the illumination of the action, but few succeeded in capturing the real effect. Indeed, George Carter who was gathering subscriptions for his picture of the Floating Batteries during March and April went out of his way to clearly distinguish his picture from the rest: "...the Floating Batteries, which is not a Night Scene, but taken at the breaking of the morning, when all action ceased except that of humanity."[6]

Hamilton's picture was actually exhibited and published as an engraving before it appeared at Somerset House, no doubt in an attempt to beat the competition. It was announced in several papers on March 24 that Hamilton had finished his picture which could be viewed at Mr. Robertson's in St. James's Square, where subscriptions could be taken. The scene takes place at night and is viewed from the sea looking towards the Rock. Illuminated by an exploding floating battery can be seen violent action in a gunboat, while Sir Roger Curtis stands in a nearby row-boat, cutlass in hand, directing the rescue of the survivors. The portrait of Curtis was adapted by Hamilton for an engraving published in July 1783 with a view of the floating batteries behind him. Jefferys may have modelled his picture after Benjamin West's **The Battle of La Hogue** exhibited at the Academy in 1780. In the foreground of West's canvas, sailors in rowing boats are attempting to save the men in the water. In Jefferys's painting which was probably based on an account in the *Annual Register* for 1782,[7] which is set on the morning following the night's action, there is a mass of utter confusion in the flotsam and jetsam of the past battle with men in crammed boats trying desperately to save the dying and drowning sailors in the sea. Hands can be seen reaching out of the water to grasp at anything. Broken and sinking boats fill the scene. Apparently the picture was very popular at the Royal Academy and William Woollett set to work engraving it but died and the plate was finished by one of his pupils, John Ewes. It was published in October 1789.

George Carter's picture of the action at Gibraltar was started in early 1783 possibily in the hope of obtaining the commission for the Corporation of London. In the March of that year, Copley had signed an agreement with the City of London Corporation to paint the scene. He had beaten-out other distinguished artists like West, and Copley's companion, Carter. On the day following Copley's acceptance, Carter wrote to the Corporation to apply for the commission, stating that he had been working on such a scene since the event, and that the picture, since finished, was about to be engraved.[8] To support his case he claimed that his picture was authentic because he had used information from state papers and from none other than Sir Roger Curtis himself who had supervised the painting. The Corporation would have none of it possibly as the painting was not in fact completed as Carter had claimed, since in the following year, he traveled to the Rock to take portraits of several Hanoverian officers stationed there. It was during this visit that he also worked on a portrait painting showing General Eliott with his chief engineer, Colonel W. Green. The Gibraltar painting was finally exhibited in 1785. Carter's picture was the first to place the scene on land looking out to sea with the naval action in the distant bay. He also added a portrait group on a high cliff intended to represent the King's Bastion to the right over-looking the South Bastion, consisting of 24 portraits of British and Hanoverian officers

look upon the scene with ~~a look~~ of disdain. Barboza, head down, waves off their compassionate advances. Just behind Mackenzie and Barboza, another British soldier is helping a dying Spaniard. When first painted Barboza was depicted in a scarlet uniform, but upon hearing that the Spanish soldier wore the blue of the artillery, Trumbull presented the painting to Benjamin West and started on a second version. However, it is doubtful that the artist would have started anew because of the colours of a uniform, and a more probable reason is that he felt that the picture was too small for a history painting. The main action on the left of the picture shows a number of soldiers with pickaxes and crowbars demolishing the breastworks, whilst in the distance can be seen figures standing on a other fortifications from which a Spanish flag flies. After two attempts, Trumbull finally exhibited a third canvas at Ansell's Auction House in Spring Gardens between April and July 1789 along with De Poggi's original sketch. The *Times* on May 2 commented that it was one of the finest pictures relating to Gibraltar, and in a full review of the painting on June 5, the work was praised, the critic stating that "national subjects, like the Death of Wolfe...have always received the patronage of the country." Later, Trumbull entered into a business agreement with de Poggi to engrave the picture which appeared in February 1799, although the original subscription only attracted 239 names.

Battle paintings of this era then, clearly focused on the valiant and the heroic. War was still regarded as a glorious event and the artists responded by serving up images subserviant to their patrons desires. Art at this time was the preserve of the aristocracy and the dilettante, schooled in classical idioms, and even though history paintings had begun to use contemporary themes, it was still necessary to create an atmosphere of classical heroism in the pictures. Death for a cause, particularly at the calling of the nation, was celebrated, but only the officer class were privy to such portrayals. The common soldier - and the term common may have been an understatement for most came from the lowest levels of society - was overlooked, his death having little meaning. When common death was depicted by artists, as in many of the Gibraltar siege pictures, it was to serve only as a backdrop to the heroics of some officer or general. One or two artists took exception by depicting anonymous death in a sentimental fashion possibly as a commentry on contemporary attitudes to war and death, and personal tragedy. Joseph Wright exhibited **The Dead Soldier** in 1789 at the Royal Academy, a scene cloaked in pathos. In the foreground beneath a temporary cover, lies a dead soldier whilst in the background the battle rages. His widow clutches his wrist and turns her head away in tears. His baby, unaware of the loss wraps a wrist around its dead father's fingers. Two years later, John Graham exhibited along with his **Funeral of General Fraser**, a picture entitled **A commanding officer contemplating his dead friend after a battle**, a painting unknown today but no doubt ...

including General Eliott. Below the group can be seen the bastion with figures cheering the explosion of the batteries. This grouping was to influence the later pictures of Copley and Trumbull.

Over the next few years, the subject continued to hold the fascination of several artists particularly Dominic Serres who exhibited four pictures of Gibraltar between 1784 and 1792. Joseph Wright of Derby, an artist known for his talent in painting fire and night illumination, tried his hand at the scene in 1784 although the picture was not finished until February 1785. It was exhibited in April at Mr. Robin's Rooms in Covent Garden. Again, the subject chosen was the destruction of the floating batteries viewed from below the South Bastion with the focal point being two floating batteries. A number of small figures can be seen including Captain Curtis, but these are secondary to the fireworks.[9] In September, 1784, appeared the engraving by John Keyse Sherwin after his own picture illustrating Sir Roger Curtis rescuing Spaniards from the burning batteries, which was painted "under the immediate directions of Sir Roger Curtis." It was clearly important for many artists to use this credit as a stamp of authenticity in order to lure subscribers who were looking for true narrative pictures of the event. A picture by Richard Paton was published at the beginning of November 1784 and another scene by him were published in March 1787. The artist also painted **Admiral Howe's relief of Gibraltar, October 1782**. In December 1785, W. Faden of London published an interesting scene of General Eliot standing on the King's Bastion on the 13 September, from a sketch by Lieutenant G. F. Koehler, one of the garrison. Colonel John Drinkwater, the author of *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar* published in 1785 and adviser to Copley on his Gibraltar painting, noted in his own personal copy of the book, "[this picture] gives a totally correct idea of the figure and dress of Lord Heathfield." This testimonial was enough to convince both Copley and John Trumbull to use the picture as a model for their resepctive paintings.

In the Spring of 1791, John Singleton Copley finally exhibited his massive rendition of **The Siege of Gibraltar**. It had been eight long years since he first received the commission from the Corporation of London in February 1783 to paint a scene in honour of General Eliott and Admiral Howe who had commanded the relief of the fortress. Back then he had informed the committee appointed by the Corporation that "he had collected Materials from Generals Elliots aid du camp Sir Roger Curtis and fixed in his own mind upon the Size of a Picture, representing the Rock in the back Ground, bringing the Floating Batteries & Gun Boats forward & giving a View of the Relief of the Fortress by the Fleet under Lord Visct. Howe."[10] As this suggests, Copley's original design placed the scene in the harbour looking back towards the Rock and the King's Bastion with distant figures of

the British officers. However, when this was shown in 1786, there was some disagreement particularly from some of the particpants that the picture did not go far enough in honouring the garrison as originally stipulated in the commission. The artist was persueded to paint a portrait group along the lines of Carter's grand scheme. His new design did away with any idea of the relief fleet which was later appended as a seperate canvas below the main picture. In order to obtain the various portraits, Copley had to make several visits including one to Germany to sketch four principal Hanoverian officers who had assited at the siege. Eliott had singled them out for praise and the king had suggested that their portraits be introduced into the picture.[11] The costs incurred by Copley were covered by the commission which led one critic to comment, "the expense, which will be defrayed by the Corporation of London, amounts to fifteen hundred pounds. Query - How many Subaltern officers, whose finances were deranged by the great and unavoidable expence which they were compelled to incur in that garrison during its defence, are now under confinement for debt in the various prisons of a country whose rights they asserted? Had the sum which the picture in question will cost be applied to their relief, it would have been expended on subjects of *real* merit."[12]

The picture was entirely a money-making venture. For one shilling visitors were invited to enter "a magnificent Oriental tent" 84 feet long which had been pitched in Green Park. After several moves to placate neighbours, the tent was finally opened on June 8, 1791, and according to the artist over sixty thousand people passed through during the entire exhibition. The large painting measuring 18 x 25 feet was flanked by medallion portraits of Admirals Howe and Barrington and below the main canvas was stretched the smaller one depicting the Relief, which was actually painted by Serres who had been subcontracted by Copley. As visitors entered and paid their admission, they were given a proposal for the engraving. This also served as a catalogue describing the scenes and the various participants. Set on the South Bastion, General Eliott, who had since become Lord Heathfield sits astride a horse directing operations. Behind him is a dense cluster of sixteen officers standing shoulder to shoulder. By the horse stands Lieut. General Sir Robert Boyd and Major General De la Motte, commander of the Hanoverian Brigade. The left hand part of the canvas depicts the naval action with Sir Roger Curtis directing the rescue of the Spanish sailors from his gunboat, a scene reminiscent of the earlier pictures by Hamilton and particularly Jefferys. The engraving of this picture did not appear however until March 1810 and two months later came Serres's companion picture. According to Prown, the engraving was a financial failure as many of the original subscribers had lost interest over an event that had occurred twenty-seven years before.

Copley's fellow expatriots, John Trumbull and Mather Brown, also involved themselves with the theme of the events at Gibraltar. Portraits of General Eliott abounded and many of the leading portrait painters received commissions to take Eliott's picture. Mather Brown received such a commission along with another to paint Sir Robert Boyd. Eliott, now Lord Heathfield gave Brown several sittings but the original picture was changed and was exhibited in 1791.[13] The picture consisted of a full-length portrait of the general set against a detailed background of the action with gun crews firing at the distant ships. For his picture, Trumbull chose a different scene to that painted by other artists - the sortie by the British garrison on the night of 26-27 November 1781. During that night, the garrison in a bold surprise attack destroyed the Spanish batteries at La Linea and spiked the guns. One of the casualties, a young Spanish officer named Don Jose Barboza, having been deserted by his men, charged sword in hand at the attackers but fell mortally wounded at the feet of Eliot and his staff. When asked by his opponents whether he wished to be moved to a place of safety, he declined stating that he prefered to die at his post. This event had been described to the artist during a walk in Oxford one May evening in 1786 by the Italian artist, Anthony C. de Poggi, who had visited the Rock in 1783 to take sketches for a portrait of Eliott. He also loaned his own sketch of the sortie, which was itself engraved in 1792. It represented the sortie from an aerial perspective and in the foreground, the Spaniard is carried by three British soldiers to Eliott who gestures with his hand, the scene illuminated by a torch held by a fourth soldier. Trumbull was moved by the account and noted that, "I was pleased with the subject, as offering, in the gallant conduct and death of the Spanish commander, a scene of deep interest to the feelings, and in the contrast of the darkness of night, with the illumination of an extensive conflagration, great splendor of effect and colour."[14] Aware also of his predicament as a patriotic artist of American victories, Trumbull was desirous to please his English surrogates by depicting an English victory. In the same month as his walk with de Poggi, Trumbull wrote to his brother that Benjamin West "has proposed to me a subject of the History of this Country at once popular, sublime & in every respect perfect for the pencil."[15] West had failed in his bid to obtain the City of London commission which went to Copley and it has been suggested that West may have encouraged Trumbull in this endeavour to undermine Copley's ~~painting~~ effort.

*Reynolds' port. of Heath.

The artist clearly made use of other pictures of Gibraltar particularly those by Carter and Koehler, as well as Copley's **Death of Major Peirson**, and Drinkwater's history of the campaign, in composing his scene, of which there are five versions and replicas. His picture touched upon the "heroism of the vanquished and the humanity of the victors,"[16] by placing the dying Spaniard at the feet of Eliott and Captain Alexander Mackenzie who both gestures towards the young man with offers of help, although the officers behind Eliott

procurred some native Indians in London to act as models, including "three Hindoo cavalry soldiers [who] consented to sit to me...in their native dress."[26] While the main scene focused on the discovery of the body, Wilkie ~~does~~ did refer to the actual battle by placing figures in combat in the upper left-hand corner.

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[1] For instance see an "Exact View of the Broadside and Stern of one of the double Floating Batteries blown up ay Gibraltar and invented by M. D'Arcon, Brigadier dans la Genie en France," *The St. James's Chronicle; Or, British Evening Post*, Tues. October 29 to Thursday October 31, 1782.

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2 Letter to William Hayley, 13 January 1783, quoted in Benedict Nicolson. *Joseph Wright of Derby. Painter of Light.* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), page 160.

3 *The Public Advertiser*, Monday, February 24, 1783.

4 Review of the Royal Academy in *The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Friday, May 30, 1783.

5 *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Saturday, May 3, 1783.

6 *The Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser*, Saturday April 26, 1783. This description differs from the existing canvas and sketch which do portray some action. Carter may not have been able to attract enough subscribers and possibly altered the original composition.

7 "Numbers of men were seen in the midst of the flames, crying out for pity and help; others floating upon pieces of timber, exposed to an equal, though less dreadful danger, from the opposite element." The *Annual Register*, 1782, page 238,

8 Jules David Prown. *John Singleton Copley In England 1774-1815* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1966), page 312, footnote 1.

9 Biruta Erdmann, "Wright of Derby's 'The Siege of Gibraltar,'" *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. CXVI, May 1974, No. 854, pp. 270-272; Nicholson, *Wright*, Vol. 1, page 160

10 Prown, *Copley*, page 324.

11 *The Times*, August 28, 1787, page 3.

12 Ibid, April 3, 1788, page 2.

13 Dorinda Evans. *Mather Brown. Early American Artist in England* (Middletown, Wesleyan University Press, 1982), pp. 80-81 and fig. 64.

14 John Trumbull. *Autobiography, Reminiscences and Letters of John Trumbull, from 1756 to 1841* (New York and London, Wiley and Putnam; New Haven, B. L. Hamlen, 1841), page 148. For further details on Trumbull's painting see Jean Lambert Brockway, "Trumbull's Sortie," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, (March 1934), pp. 5- 13, and Hermann Warner Williams, Jr., "The Sortie by the Garrison of Gibraltar, by John Trumbull, 1756-1843," *Corcoran Gallery of Art Bulletin* (November 1967), Vol. XVI, pp. 15-21.

15 Irma B. Jaffe. *John Trumbull. Patriot-Artist of the American Revolution.* (Boston, New York Graphic Society, 1975), page 131.

16 Brockway, ~~ibid~~ Sortie, page 6. For information on the various versions and sketches, see Helen A. Cooper. *John Trumbull. The Hand and Spirit of a Painter* (New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, 1982), pp 56-62

17 Pratapaditya Pal and Vidya Dehejia. *From Merchants to Emperors. British Artists and India 1757-1930.* (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1986), page 52.

18 W. Y. Carman, "The Storming of Bangalore and the Death of Colonel Moorhouse," *The Connoisseur*, Vol. 178, (November 1971), page 162.