

Alfred Boder

Alfred Boder Fine Arts - Painting five

Envyght of Derby - A view of Gibraltar

1969-2001

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	
LOCATOR	<u>2291.16</u>
BOX	<u>5</u>
FILE	<u>3</u>

Wright's engraving after Webster

See Brown for Copley's version (exhibited June 1791)
(~~exhibited 1785~~)

April 1782 beginning of construction of special
flanking batteries for Spanish + French attack
on Gibraltar - Sept.

These are identified in our ptg.

Sir Roger Cant's rescuing Spaniards from
Garrison batteries - man with raised
sword in our picture

(subject - after work of battle with us)

See Theodore Seizer(?) on Turnbull's version

Wright's interest:

pictorial synthesis of natural + artificial systems -
light dramatic

Wright by

William ~~Wright~~'s poem to Wright on edge of ptg April 1785

Spring '72 restoration in London

Which fall NYC restoration

relating with sailcloth

overprinting l. side (foreground), flanking
batteries

Laura Davidson Lewis Proctor of Pine Hill, Virginia

#18 Copley in cat.

exhibited June 1968 #11 by Copley

probably
sold as
work for
commercial
reasons -

used for
1st time
new



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 Ehrlich 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 Elliott 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

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the research and the objectives of the study. It also provides a brief overview of the methodology used in the study.

The second part of the paper presents the results of the study. It includes a detailed description of the data collected and the analysis performed. The results are presented in a clear and concise manner, highlighting the key findings of the study.

The third part of the paper discusses the implications of the findings and provides recommendations for future research. It also includes a conclusion that summarizes the main points of the paper.

The fourth part of the paper provides a detailed discussion of the limitations of the study and the potential for bias. It also includes a list of references and a bibliography.

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Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is too light to transcribe accurately.

Judy Egerton (c) ~~NACTU~~
Nat'l Gallery -
did Jos. Wright of Derby

DR. GERT-RUDOLF FLICK

PARK HOUSE Show
7-11 ONSLOW SQUARE c
LONDON SW7 3NJ Metropolitan
TEL: 0171-225-3147 (has seen this)
FAX: 0171-225-1875

10 June 1996

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

Judy - Please respond
per photo & wherever
the files reflect
per his ? below.

Dear Judy Kloues,

Judy.

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



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



*Judy Egerton @ Nat'l Gallery -
did Jos. Wright of Derby*

DR. GERT-RUDOLF FLICK

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7-11 ONSLOW SQUARE @
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Yours sincerely,

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WRIGHT'S PICTURE FRAMES

INTRODUCTION

Frame-making was a flourishing trade during Wright's lifetime. Artists and their patrons, as well as ornamentalists, decorators and architects, were all to some degree involved in the commissioning, design and purchase of picture frames. Sieving the *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers* reveals one hundred and eighty craftsmen in London who supplied frames between 1750 and 1800. In Derby alone, according to the *Universal British Directory* of 1791, there were thirteen craftsmen listed as specialist "frame smiths".² Many more in both London and the provinces must be unrecorded. Most of them also produced mirror frames, chimney pieces, ornamental mouldings and often other interior furnishings. Creators and owners alike must have been well aware of the decorative impact made by gold frames, especially seen by candlelight.

Until recently general awareness of frames has been slight. Modern art history is only just beginning to accommodate the frame. Virtually all illustrations of paintings in art historical literature, photographic libraries and exhibition catalogues exclude the frame.³ The subject hovers between the fine and decorative arts and few historians of either side have felt keen to tackle it. This is perhaps largely due to the bewildering number of patterns, and to difficulties in dating and attribution, generally so central to connoisseurship. However, even with minimal documentation, much can be learnt from the visual evidence of frames. Particular styles may be analysed, and their duration and overlaps determined. Identification of designers and/or makers is an occasional bonus providing new insights.

Wright's Account Book includes many references to frames. This exhibition devoted to his work presents an opportunity to examine the frame designs prevailing during his career, as well as those with which he was particularly associated.

Prior to their arrival for the exhibition 108 of the 117 picture frames have been assessed.⁴ A further 36 frames on works by Wright not included in this exhibition have been studied. The survey thus comprises 144 frames representing well over a third of all his recorded paintings. These may be classified accordingly. First, those considered original to the picture; second those which are stylistically contemporary but probably not original; third, those of a distinctly earlier or later period than the picture. Results are summarised by style and status in the table opposite.

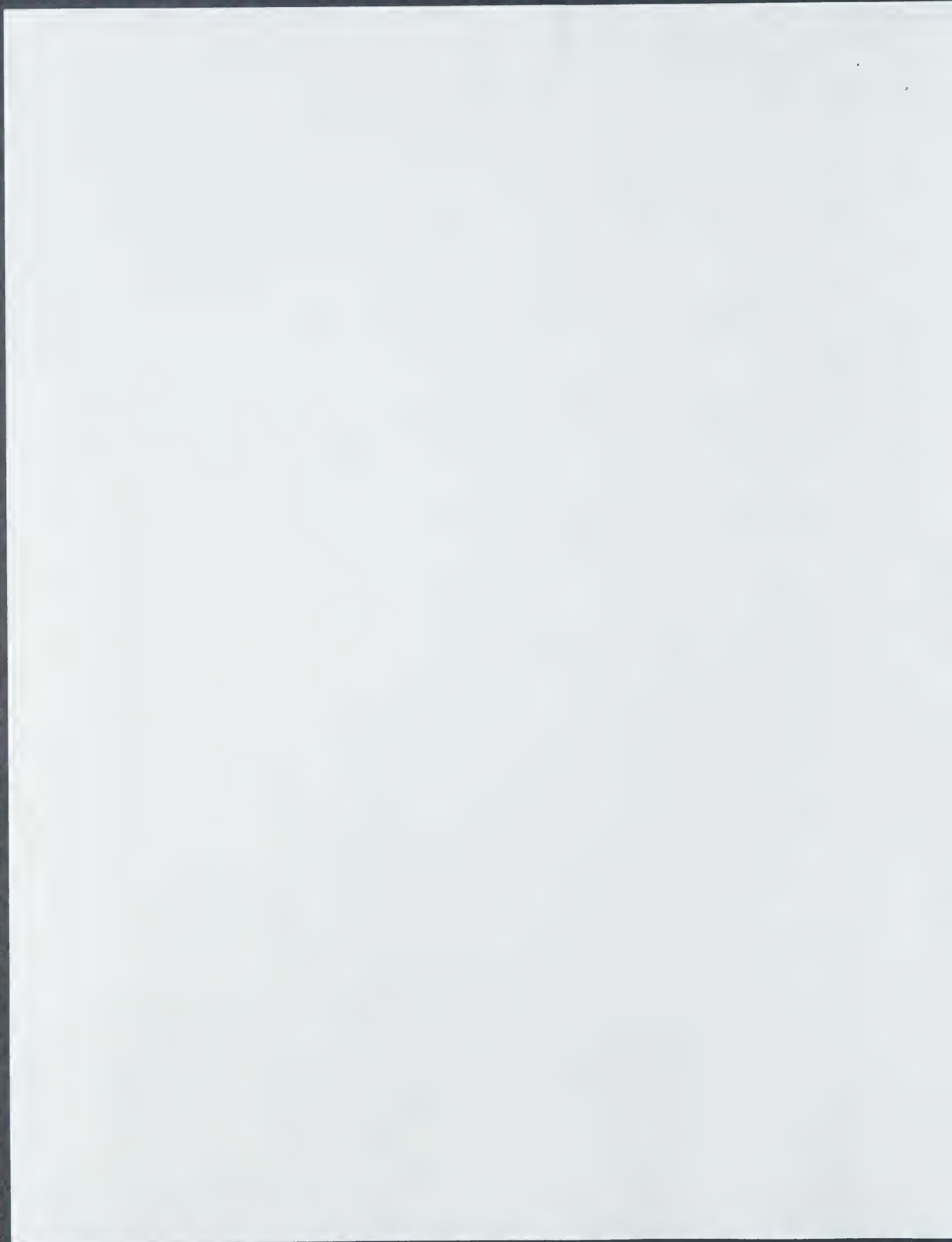
The most significant fact to emerge two centuries later is that just over half of Wright's paintings in this survey still

appear to retain the frames originally made for them. It is perhaps Wright's provincialism which accounts for this relatively high ratio.⁵ Many of his pictures have descended through the families which commissioned them, the frames unchanged. Relatively few of these have appeared on the art market, where pictures are at their most vulnerable to re-framing, and those mainly in recent decades as Wright's art has been re-assessed.⁶

As well as a general appreciation of the subject this study hopefully will encourage the spectator to contemplate the picture *together* with its frame and assess their relative merits.



fig. 1. No. 3



ROCOCO FRAMES

During the Rococo period English frame-makers, learning from the sophisticated skills of Huguenot craftsmen, created a wide variety of patterns, many of which were one-offs. Amidst these certain distinct groups of designs may be distinguished. The exhibition has drawn together three Rococo frames which appear to be the earliest identifiable pattern used by Wright. These are the half-length (50 x 40 inches) on 'William Brooke' of 1760 (fig.1, No. 3) and the pair of three-quarter lengths (30 x 25 inches) on 'Samuel' and 'William Rastall' c.1762-64 (figs.2 & 3, Nos.19 & 20). With their swept pierced outer rails, leafy-scrolled corners and rocaille centres, these frames epitomise the lightness and elegance of the Rococo style. They should be contrasted to the preceding generation of more solid Louis XIV based frames, one of which surrounds 'Cornet Sir George Cooke' (No.33). The contours in Wright's compositions are well set off by the frames' sweeping silhouettes. The outside profile is echoed by a meandering band adjacent to the sight edge. Typical of Rococo concern for surface decoration, the panels are incised with trellis-work (or quadrillage) punctuated by bosses. This has been partially obscured by re-gessoing and oil gilding through which traces of the original burnished water-gilding may be seen. The technique of gesso carving was mainly introduced into England by Huguenot craftsmen, many of whom were picture and mirror frame-makers. It is therefore likely that these frames were by a French hand. Primarily for portraits, this pattern does not occur on Wright's subject pictures to which he mainly applied Carlo Maratta frames, as we shall see later.

Comparing the Rastall pair with 'William Brooke' we see an expected design change for the smaller format. Here the outer rail connects corners and centres in a single sweep, whereas in the larger frame this gap is negotiated by merging two sections to a pierced apex. However, the portrait of 'Thomas Bennet' c.1760 (Derby Art Gallery), which is the same size as the Rastall pair, carries the identical design to the half-length 'William Brooke' - showing the frame-maker offered at least three variations on this theme.⁷

Further contemporary evidence of this pattern which supports the originality of these frames to their pictures occurs on the portraits of Mr and Mrs William Pigot 1760 (Private Collection, Nicolson cat.120 & 121, pls 23 & 24.) We can conclude that, being of a consistent design, they were the product of the same workshop between c.1760-c.1764, supplied by a framer with whom Wright worked closely.

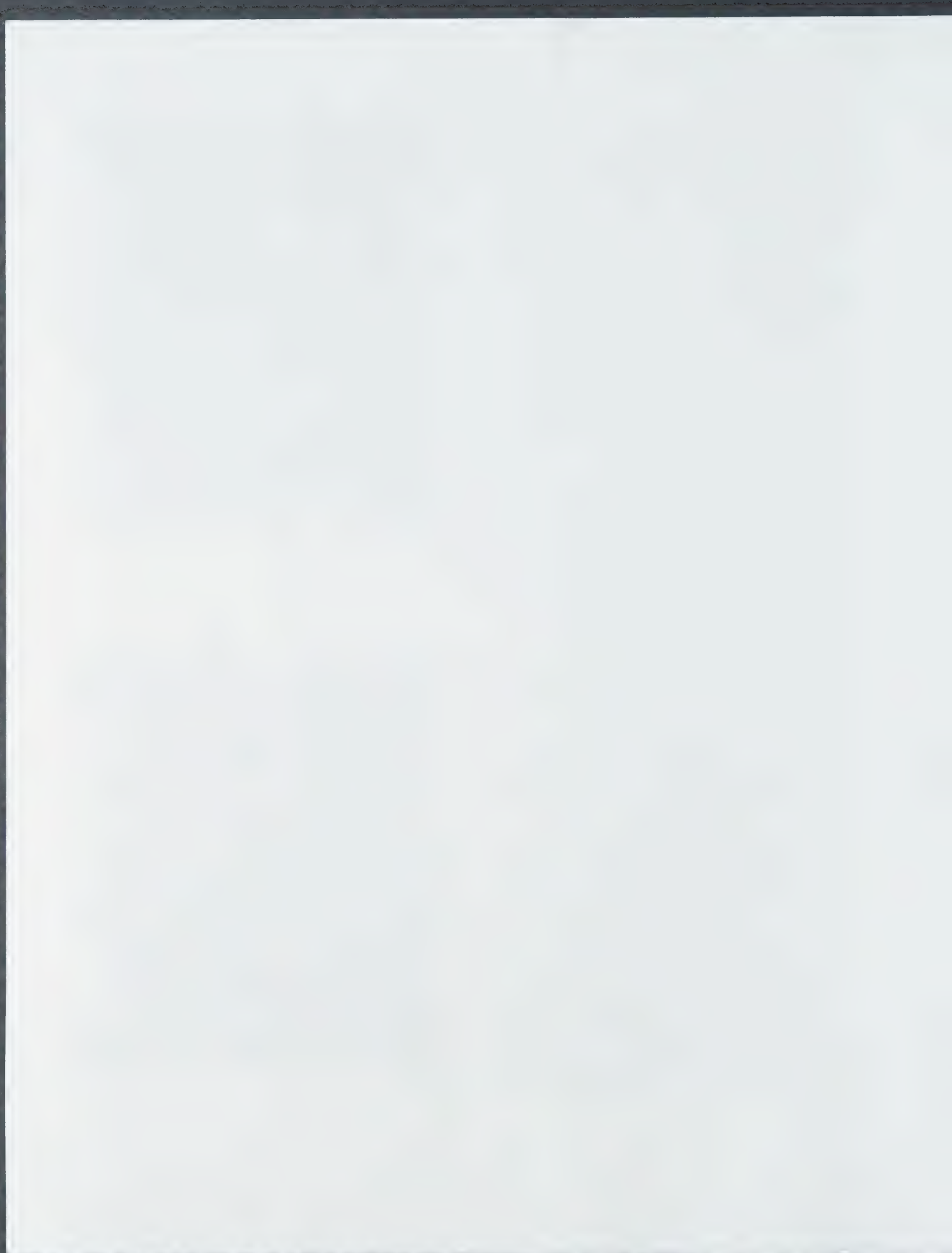
From references in Wright's Account Book it is clear that a Huguenot, John Dubourg, was the artist's main framer at this time.⁸ Dubourg, who had a separate account with the artist (fig.4), supplied carved and gilt half-length frames at £3.3s., three-quarter lengths at £1.11s.6d. and black and gold print frames from 12s to 16s.⁹ Included in these orders is a reference which ties the Pigot frames to Dubourg. It seems one frame was returned to Dubourg and another supplied,



fig.2, No.19



fig.3, No.20



an outstanding sum remaining in 'Pigot's Bill which was due and paid to Dubourg'.

As later evidence shows it seems that Wright was always concerned with the framed appearance of his paintings, and is likely therefore to have proposed these frames to his sitters, most probably having one or two demonstration stock models in his studio – much as artists still do today.

Surviving examples of papier-mâché frames are extremely rare and there can be few finer than those made en suite for Wright's Markeaton Hunt group, probably painted between 1762-63, of which four from the original set of six are exhibited (fig.5, No.5; Nos.6 & 8; No.7, however, is no longer in its original frame).¹⁰ These were commissioned by Francis Noel Clarke Mundy and his five sportsmen friends and relations to be displayed in the Mundy's dining room at Markeaton Hall.

Clearly a commission of this scale and importance demanded an exceptional framing solution. Here the creation of what was probably an individual design avoided the regularity of repeating a standard pattern six times. The design used consists of a narrow bolection moulding surrounded by a medley of Rococo ornament to maximise the decorate effect. Attached to this moulding is a pierced wooden support to which were bonded a complex pattern of interlocking rocaille and leafy C-scrolls and flowers – all in papier-mâché. Although the transition between inner and outer frame is somewhat poorly disguised, the Rococo motifs (decidedly French in form) are skilfully deployed.¹¹

If the hand of Huguenot craftsmen has been established in Wright's Rococo frames of the early 1760s, it is most emphatically present in one of the finest Rococo frames exhibited. Most appropriately this is on Wright's 'Self Portrait' of c.1772-4 (figs.6 & 7, No.94). Like so much Huguenot work in England, this frame resembles French frames in execution, yet is basically English in design. The quality of carving in the pine and overall re-cutting in the gesso is superbly fluent (fig.2), enhanced by the original burnished water gilding. If this were the only example we might assume that it was a replacement for the original. However, a half-length version of the same pattern exists which originally framed 'Mr and Mrs Coltman' (exhibited 1771), and is now retained on a copy of this picture.¹²

Comparison of the centre cartouches of each frame (figs.7 & 8) shows the same flowing scrollwork set off against a zig-zag textured background, known as hazzle. A notable feature is the treatment of the sight edge rails, enriched with shallow gadrooning raking from centres to corners, carved in the gesso. Clearly these two frames of the early 1770s are of a superior quality of craftsmanship and design to the earlier group. The disparity in date and quality suggests either another maker, or Dubourg working in a more sophisticated style. The question of authorship may be resolved as further frames and/or documents come to light.

That both these exceptional and prestigious pictures had magnificent frames endorses Wright's concern (together

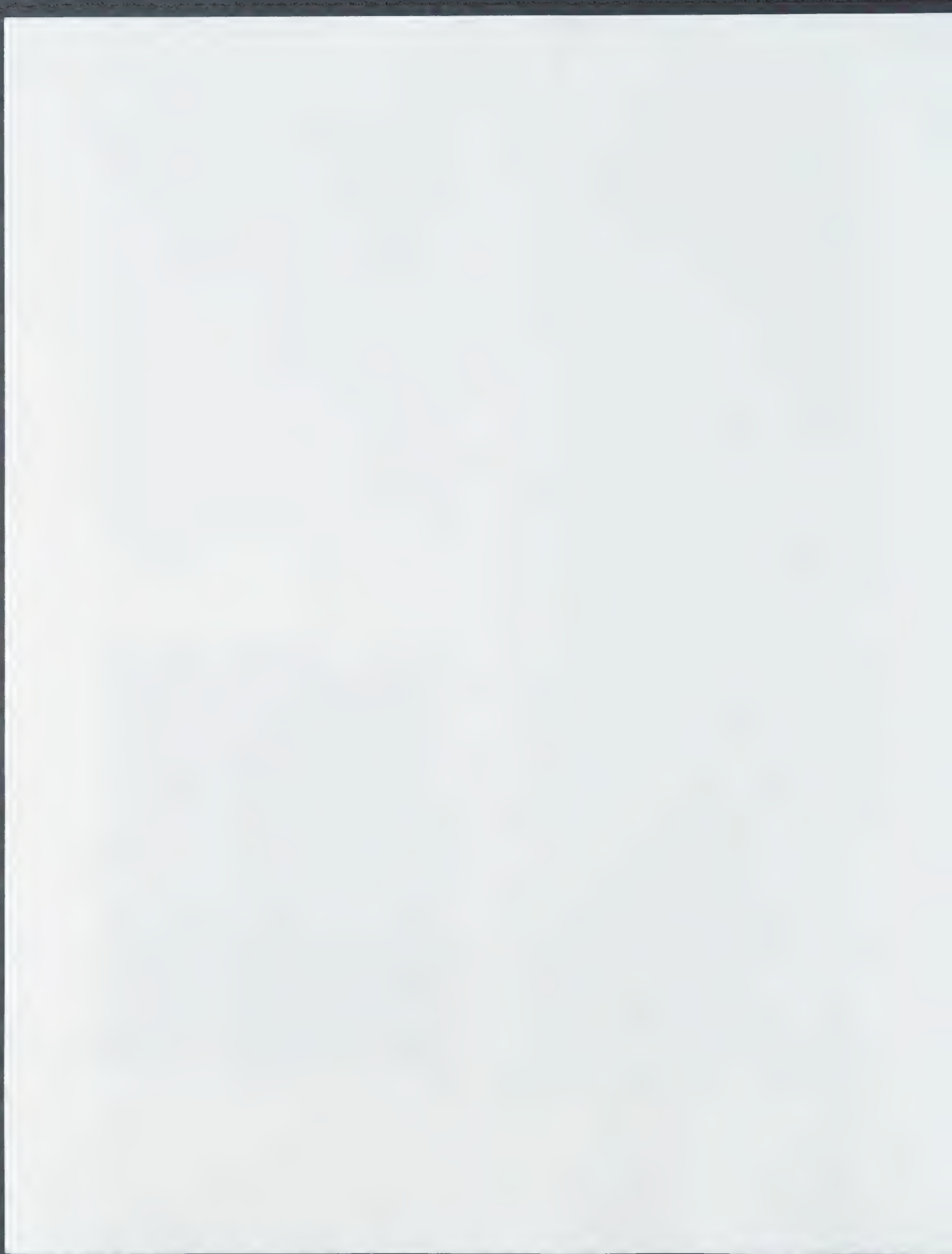
Dubourg's Account

To Pigot's Bill delivered June 25 th 1759	63 10 10
To D ^r July 5 th 1760	15 6 0
Col: 6 1/2 length frames for	} 6 6 0
Mr Ellipter Col: 4	
to 2 3/4 th D ^r for the Col: of that place	3 3 0
Case &c	0 13 0
Due to Dubourg	79 6 10
Paid for by Bill on Mundy	} 21 0 0
ways of 1/2 length frame	
Due	58 6 10
Paid for by Rondenau's Bill	20 0 0
Due	30 6 10
June 25 1761 a 1/2 length frame	} 3 13 6
Col: 4 for Noel	
Case &c	0 10 0
	42 10 4

fig.4



fig.5, No.5



with that of his patrons) over frames which mutually enhanced his pictures and reputation. Similarly the conversation pieces by another highly successful provincial artist, Arthur Devis, were often prominently hung in elaborate frames.

Another important Rococo frame surrounds 'A Conversation of Girls (Two Girls with their Black Servant)' 1770 (fig.10, No.24). The richly carved ornament recalls the 'Self Portrait' frame but the cabled sight edge and straight back are unusual. Certainly its weight and decoration match the composition well and this may be indeed the original, the commission for framing perhaps instigated by Wright.

By contrast to the frames discussed so far, which appear to be more or less supervised by Wright and his regular framer(s), there are at least six examples on view which exemplify mainstream London Rococo patterns. These surround 'James and Mary Shuttleworth with one of their Daughters' (No.10), 'Mrs Wilmot' (fig.11, No.9), 'Mr and Mrs Coltman' (No.29), "'Captain" Robert Shore Milnes' (No.31), 'Richard Cheslyn' (No.136) and 'Mrs Sarah Clayton' (fig.12, No.26). The Shuttleworth frame shows all the signs of being the original. Stylistically it accords with the picture's date of c.1764; the frame is unaltered; the size 56 x 72 inches is irregular, therefore not easily interchangeable with another standard format, and the lower side is darkened by dust and worn by cleaning.

Comparing a centre cartouche (fig.9)¹³ with the preceding Dubourg details (figs.7 & 8) illustrates the differences in design and execution between native English frame patterns and contemporary Huguenot productions. Typically English are the flat rather than rounded rails and scrolls, their apex junction, as in the 'William Brooke' frame (fig.1) and, above all, their oil rather than water-gilt finish.

The frame surrounding 'Mrs Wilmot' (fig.11) of half-length format, although closely related to the Shuttleworth design, is probably a replacement. As it was carved for a Derbyshire sitter around 1763 the original frame is more likely to have followed the earlier Brooke pattern (fig.1). The most notable difference is the presence of a back edge to the frame reflecting light behind the trefoil-shaped openings between the corners and centres. The openings in the Brooke frame which has no back are slightly awkward and distracting as are those in the Rastall pair (figs.2 & 3).

The frame for "'Captain" Robert Shore Milnes' (exhibited 1772, No.31) is a standard variation on the preceding, having a husk rather than gadrooned or leaf sight edge, and more exotic centres with rocaille leaves as opposed to a triple lambrequin fan. It is possible that James Milbourne of the Strand, carver, gilder, picture frame and looking glass maker, supplied this frame to Wright.¹⁴ The artist's Account Book refers to his friend Hurleston (a pupil of Wright who accompanied him to Italy) paying Milbourne's bill for "Milnes frames". "Captain" Milnes was the brother of John Milnes of Wakefield, one of Wright's major patrons, and therefore the account may refer to other paintings bought.¹⁵



fig.6, No.94

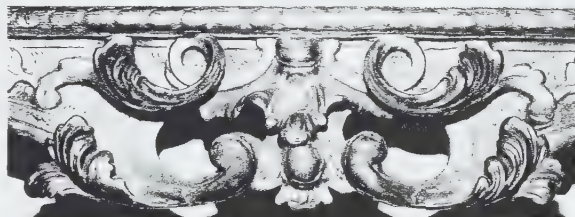


fig.7, No.94

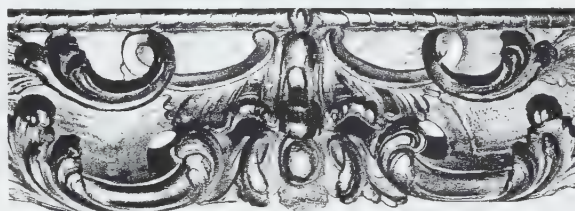


fig.8

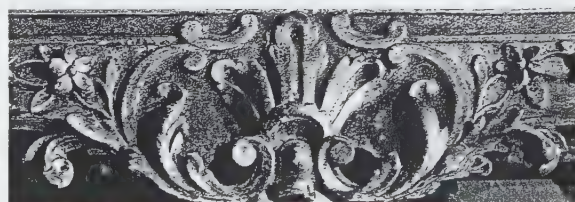


fig.9, No.10

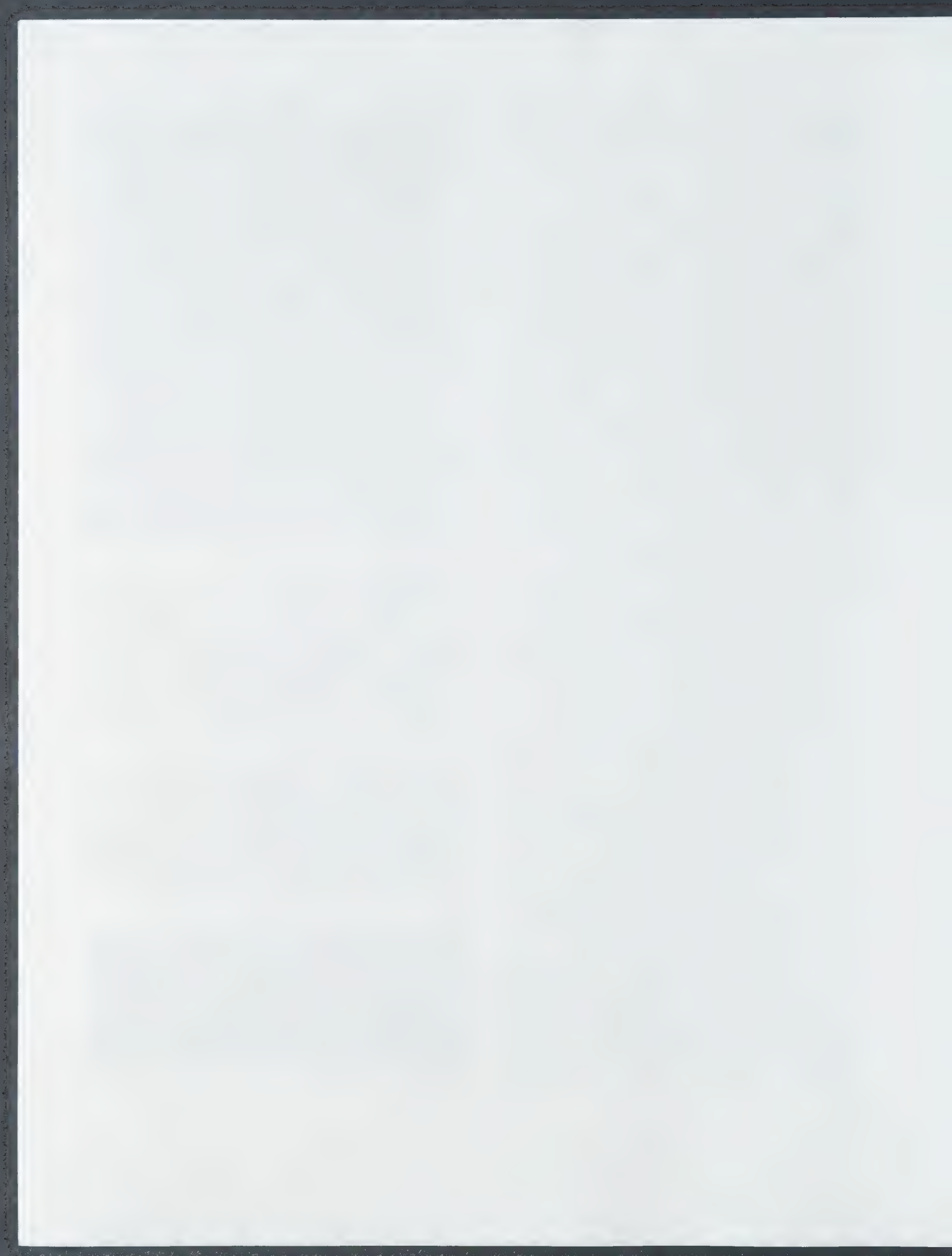




fig. 10, No. 24

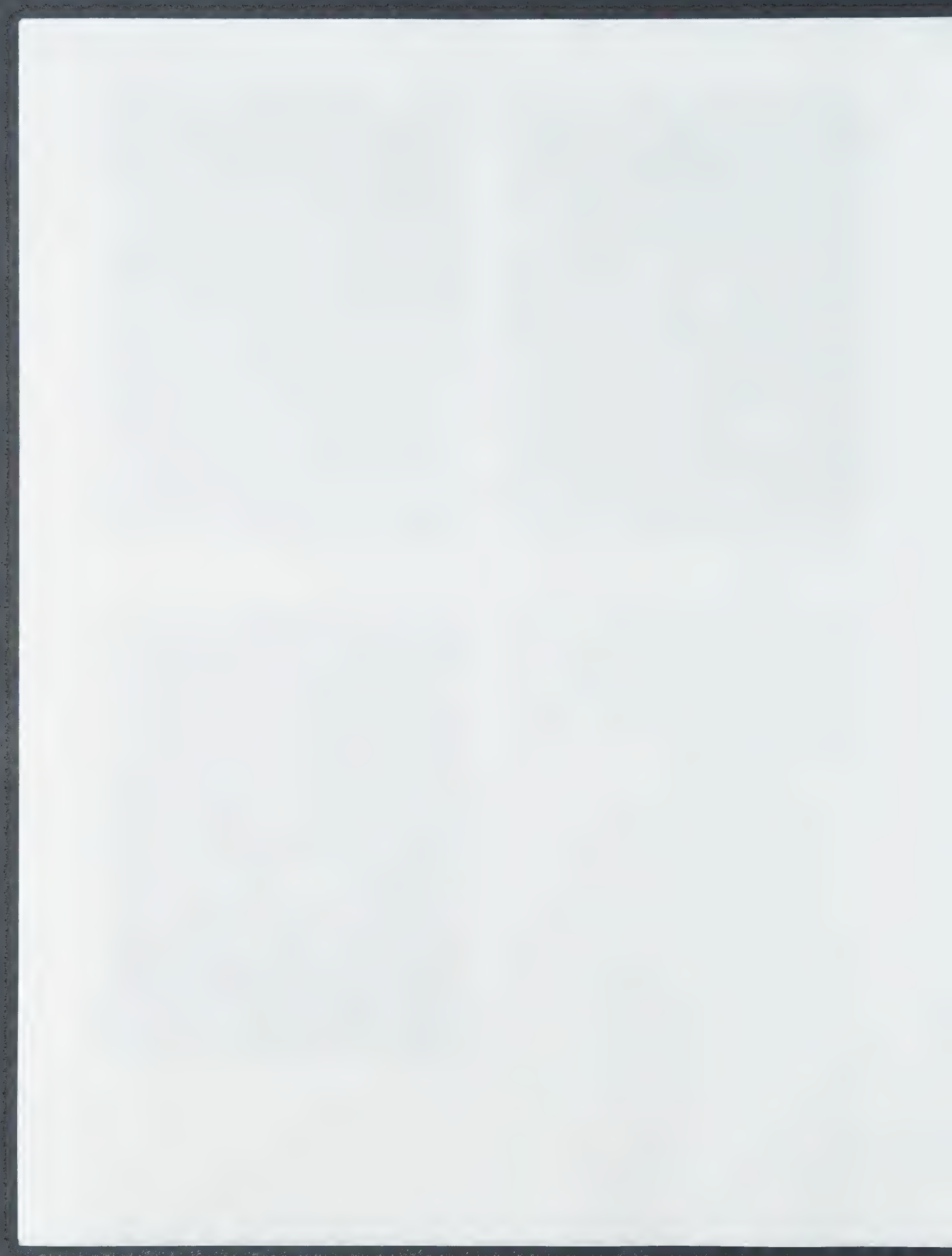


fig. 11, No. 9

'Mrs Sarah Clayton's' frame *c.* 1769 (fig. 12), wonderfully matched, provides the concluding flourish to the Rococo group. Advanced in design, the gadrooned sight and fanned lambrequins are retained, as in 'Mrs Wilmot', but the panels are fully cut away to a rocaille 'skirt' above which the outer rail is suspended. It is quite possible that this highly decorative late Rococo frame, as fully aerated as the sitter's shawl, was the first intended.



fig. 12, No. 26



CARLO MARATTA FRAMES

Fashions, particularly in the decorative arts, often show abrupt changes. Picture frames (together with their cousins, mirror frames) are reliable expressions of changing tastes. As the Neo-classical movement advanced in the late 1750s and 1760s, enthusiasm for the Rococo waned. The older curvilinear patterns were overtaken by an entirely different rectilinear form of frame known as Carlo Maratta. With many variations this was the predominant pattern throughout England in the 1760s and 1770s, still being produced in the 1790s.¹⁶ As the name suggests, we do not have to look far for its source. Developed in Italy in the late seventeenth century, the pattern spread from Rome throughout the country in the eighteenth century, being named after Carlo Maratta and sometimes after Salvator Rosa whose works it so often surrounded. As well as seeing countless examples in the great Roman palaces,¹⁷ the English Grand Tour collectors brought home many such frames around their purchases.¹⁸

Whereas virtually all English frame designs were hitherto derived from French and Netherlandish sources this was the first and historically most appropriate time that an Italian pattern was wholeheartedly adopted. Based on architectural forms, the Carlo Maratta was a precursor of Neo-classical designs. The exhibition displays many fine examples used by Wright, and as in the Rococo frames, the work of Huguenot craftsmen continued to be evident. Depending on effect required and budget, Wright and his patrons would have selected from the range of progressive enrichments shown in figs. 13, 14 & 15.

The profile is essentially the same consisting of a deep hollow (or scotia) running up to a top rail (or knull), between which is a step carrying a ribbon or pearl moulding; the inner and outer edges being variously decorated. Fig. 13 shows the pattern in its simpler form (and almost certainly one of the original pair) surrounding Wright's portraits of Mr and Mrs Thomas Borrow c. 1762-3.¹⁹ Here the sight edge is carved with husks and the back with an egg moulding.²⁰ The frame on 'Two Girls Dressing a Kitten by Candlelight' (No. 17) differs from the usual London patterns with a relatively wide sight cavetto and fuller husk, and is probably provincial. At least four other examples of this open hollow frame are seen here: 'Erasmus Darwin' (No. 144) with corner shells;²¹ Wright's second Darwin portrait (No. 145) and 'Landscape with Rainbow' (No. 124) – each with a single run of beading – 'Anne Bateman' (No. 2), a later frame with ribbon and beads.²²

The characteristic decorative feature of the Carlo Maratta is an ogee profile carved with alternating acanthus leaf and shield (sometimes called tongue), as seen on the portraits of Mr and Mrs Francis Hurt (fig. 14, No. 129 and pendant No. 130). Italian prototypes more often applied the leaf-and-shield to the inner edge rather than in the scotia as in fig. 15. The two variations, (figs. 14 & 15), are distinguished by frame-makers as semi-Carlo and full-Carlo –



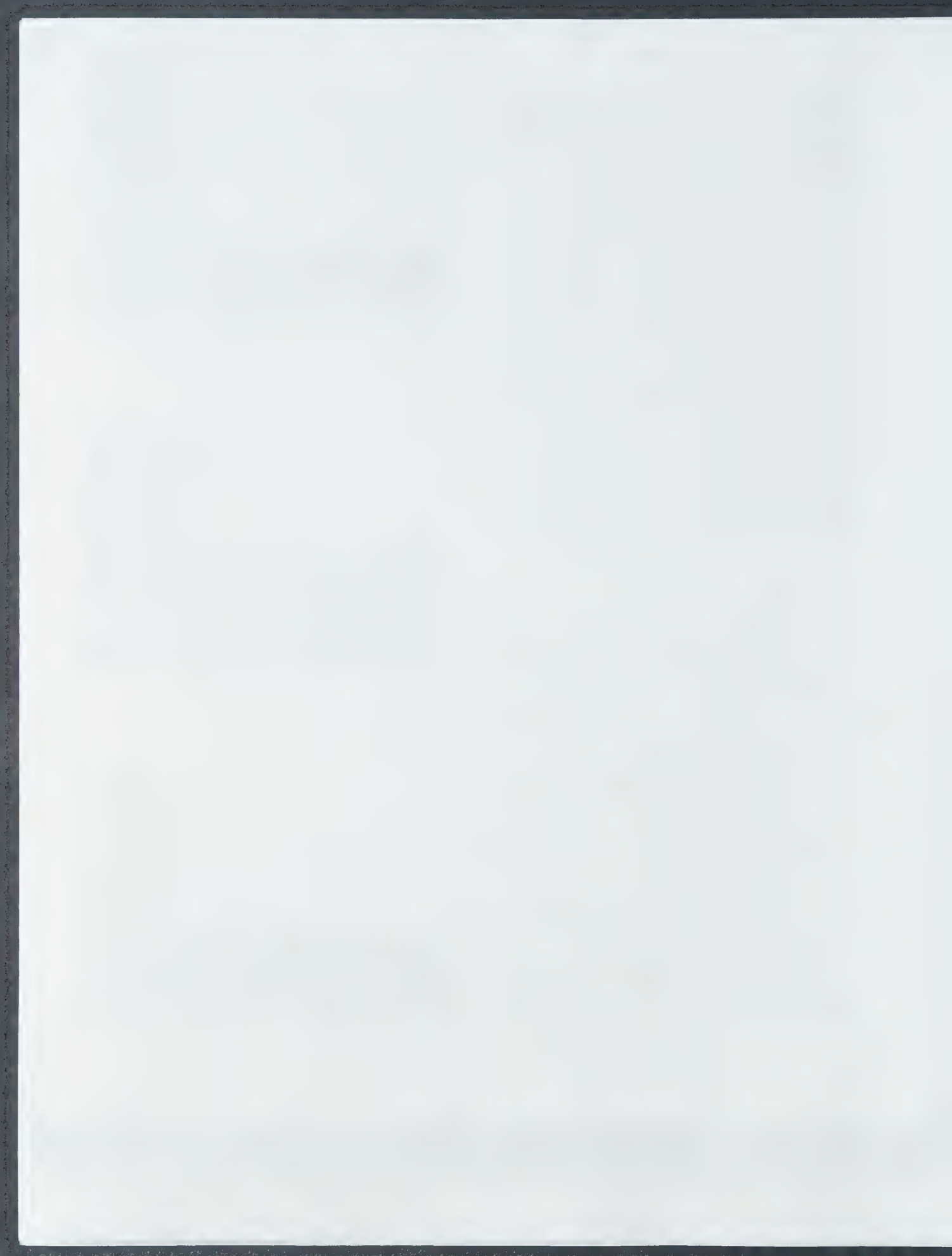
fig. 13



fig. 14, No. 129



fig. 15, No. 15



or simply Carlo. By comparison to London-made frames, the frames of the Hurt portraits (fig. 14) with their broad leaf moulding and pearl back edge, are distinctly regional. The fact that they are unaltered and a pair suggests that they are the originals.

There can be few finer pairs of full Carlo Maratta frames than those so fortunately retained on Wright's fascinating candlelight subjects, 'Girl Reading a Letter, with an Old Man Reading over her Shoulder' c.1767-70 (figs. 15 & 16, No. 15), 'Two Boys fighting over a Bladder', (fig. 17, No. 16). The fact that another candlelight work, 'Girl Reading a Letter by Candlelight with a Young Man Peering over her Shoulder' (No. 14), bears a full Carlo suggests that this was Wright's personal choice for these themes. It would be reasonable to assume that an artist so preoccupied with lighting effects would have been aware of the enhancement potential of this frame. The contrast of richly carved acanthus moulding with the deep shadows it casts either side compliments and reinforces Wright's chiaroscuro effects. The three different mouldings within a plain burnished knull create a complex interplay of trapped light. By candlelight at night the frame would create a flickering ribbon of gold around the canvas, drawing the spectator towards and into the scene. Thus the Carlo frame with its rich linear decoration provides a consistent play of light which a Rococo frame could not achieve. Indeed it is hard to imagine that any other frame design could be as visually satisfying for these paintings. An unusual feature is the shallow interlacing or guilloche carved into the gesso along the sight rail occurring almost identically in the 'Self Portrait' frame (fig. 6) attributed to Dubourg.²³ We must conclude that Wright naturally engaged his most talented framemaker for pictures of a special nature. Interestingly the use of low relief ornament carved in the gesso may be seen in four other Carlo Maratta frames belonging to Wright's Liverpool period c.1768-71: 'Mrs John Ashton' of Liverpool (No. 25), 'Fleetwood Hesketh' (No. 37) and an unexhibited pair recently acquired by the Walker Art Gallery, Mr and Mrs Thomas Parke of Highfield, Liverpool.

A fine large scale full Carlo appears undisturbed on Wright's 'Maria from Sterne' 1781 (No. 58). Fully carved, this was probably made in London where the picture was exhibited at the Royal Academy. Other full Carlo Maratta examples exhibited are on: 'Mrs Lindington' (No. 28), probably later; 'Mrs Swindell' (No. 30), altered; 'Christopher Heath' 1781 (No. 137), a provincial frame; and 'A Philosopher by Lamp Light' (No. 41), a modern plaster replica.²⁴

In the last three decades of the century the Carlo Maratta shape underwent various modifications. Two further patterns developed, the one (fig. 19) being transitional to the other (fig. 21). In the frame for 'The Blacksmith's Shop' 1771 (figs. 18 & 19, No. 48) the scotia is wider and deeper than earlier prototypes. Apart from demonstrating a taste for heavier looking frames, the extra concave surface behind the Carlo moulding would have reflected light across the picture.



fig. 16, No. 15



fig. 17, No. 16





fig. 18, No. 48

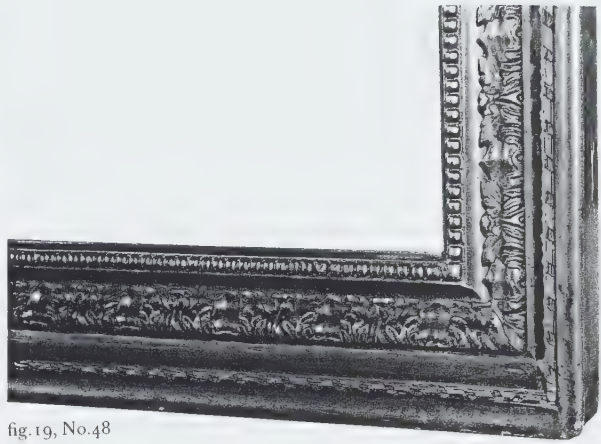


fig. 19, No. 48



fig. 20, No. 138

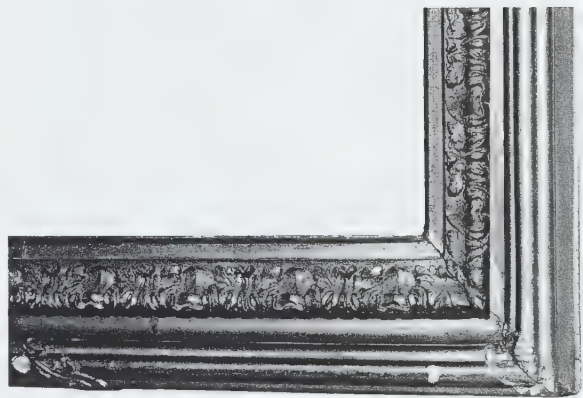
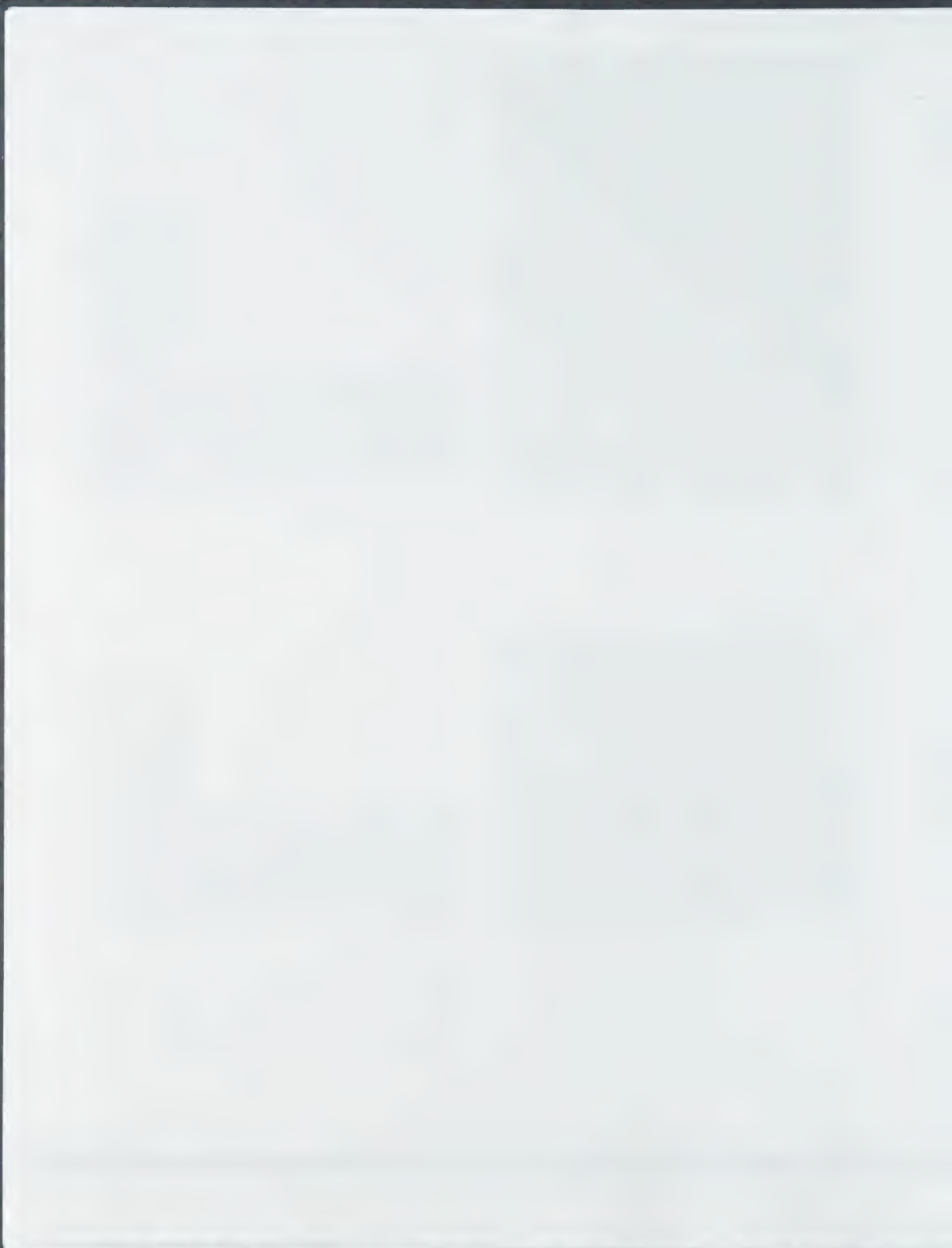


fig. 21, No. 138



Also changed is the means of production. The ornaments here are all cast in composition from boxwood moulds.²⁵ Rarely all hand carved, frames were now being manufactured and indeed mass produced. This pattern was still in evidence at the end of the decade, seen on the 'Portrait of a Girl in a Tawny-Coloured Dress', c.1780 (No.143), here with an ornamented back edge.

In the final phase of the Carlo frame on 'Rydal Waterfall' 1795 (figs.20 & 21, No.138) the scotia is extended still further upwards and inwards, with the overhanging top rail being formed into a classic fascies moulding, the antique bundle of rods bound with leaves. The picture appears as if in a showcase. It would seem to confirm that the crucial design reason for this inward facing scotia is to reflect angled light sources across the picture. This enhancing effect can be confirmed by light meter tests.

Interestingly all five examples of this frame surveyed contain landscapes, the largest of which is 'The Annual Girandola at the Castle of St. Angelo, Rome' (No.104).²⁶ As well as the optical considerations, this deep scotia helps to set up a perspective line, leading the eye through into the picture's illusory distance. Apparently undisturbed, we may assume that these frames were either selected by Wright or approved by him.

NEO-CLASSICAL FRAMES

A fundamental principle underlying Neo-classical interiors was the harmonisation of all the components. The vocabulary of classical decoration was employed in stucco designs on walls and ceilings, as well as fixtures, fittings and furniture. Pictures were sometimes grouped in a fixed display of plaster frames (e.g. Kedleston Hall). Some frames were specifically carved, for example to match mirror frames (e.g. Corsham Court) and regular stock patterns were devised to blend into the novel surroundings. However the acanthus leaf-and-shield motif of the Carlo Maratta frame did not fit comfortably within Neo-classical schemes and was gradually phased out.²⁷ This change may be seen on three pictures here: 'John Milnes' (No.27), A 'Cottage on Fire' (No.111) and the 'Self Portrait' (No.149).²⁸ The sight edges are now decorated with the ubiquitous waterleaf (sometimes called lamb's tongue) together with respectively triple-bead and rope, stick-and-ribbon and pearls.

Before examining the pattern most frequently and exclusively used by Wright, four other excellent Neo-classical frames deserve attention. The frame of 'Maria from Sterne' 1777 (figs.22&23, No.52), with its well worn lower side, appears to have always been on the picture. The scotia profile of the Carlo period is now thickened and decorated with leaves, a ribbed rod and stick-and-ribbon. Carefully terminated with leaves at the mitres these mouldings are finely hand carved being the hallmarks of a costly London-made frame. In the frame made for 'Edwin, from Dr. Beattie's Minstrel', 1777-78 (figs.24 & 25, No.57) we see a different arrangement of motifs. Here a frieze divides stick-and-ribbon from waterleaves, leading through a scotia and pearls to the knull richly carved with feather-like leaves. Again each moulding has specially tailored cornering. It appears that these two subject portraits demanded up-market Neo-classical frames, superior to the patterns normally used.

One of the most striking frames exhibited surrounds 'Matlock Tor by Daylight' (No.113). Distinctly architectural in character the flattish profile resembles a classical entablature and is the basic section of the remaining frames under discussion. Here the frieze is studded with alternating paterae between triple flutes.²⁹ This form, or usually an all-fluted version, matched door and wall panels in many Adam and related interiors.³⁰

The fourth frame which presents 'Thomas and Joseph Pickford as Children' (figs.26 & 27, No.141) is particularly significant since it draws us close to Wright's circle of professional colleagues. At first glance this frame may easily be taken for a later moulded Italian Renaissance style replacement. Closer inspection shows it to be entirely hand carved. No frame like it has yet been recorded. Had it been moulded, many copies would have been produced to justify mould-making costs. Its origin is apparently revealed with the knowledge that Joseph Pickford was a local architect

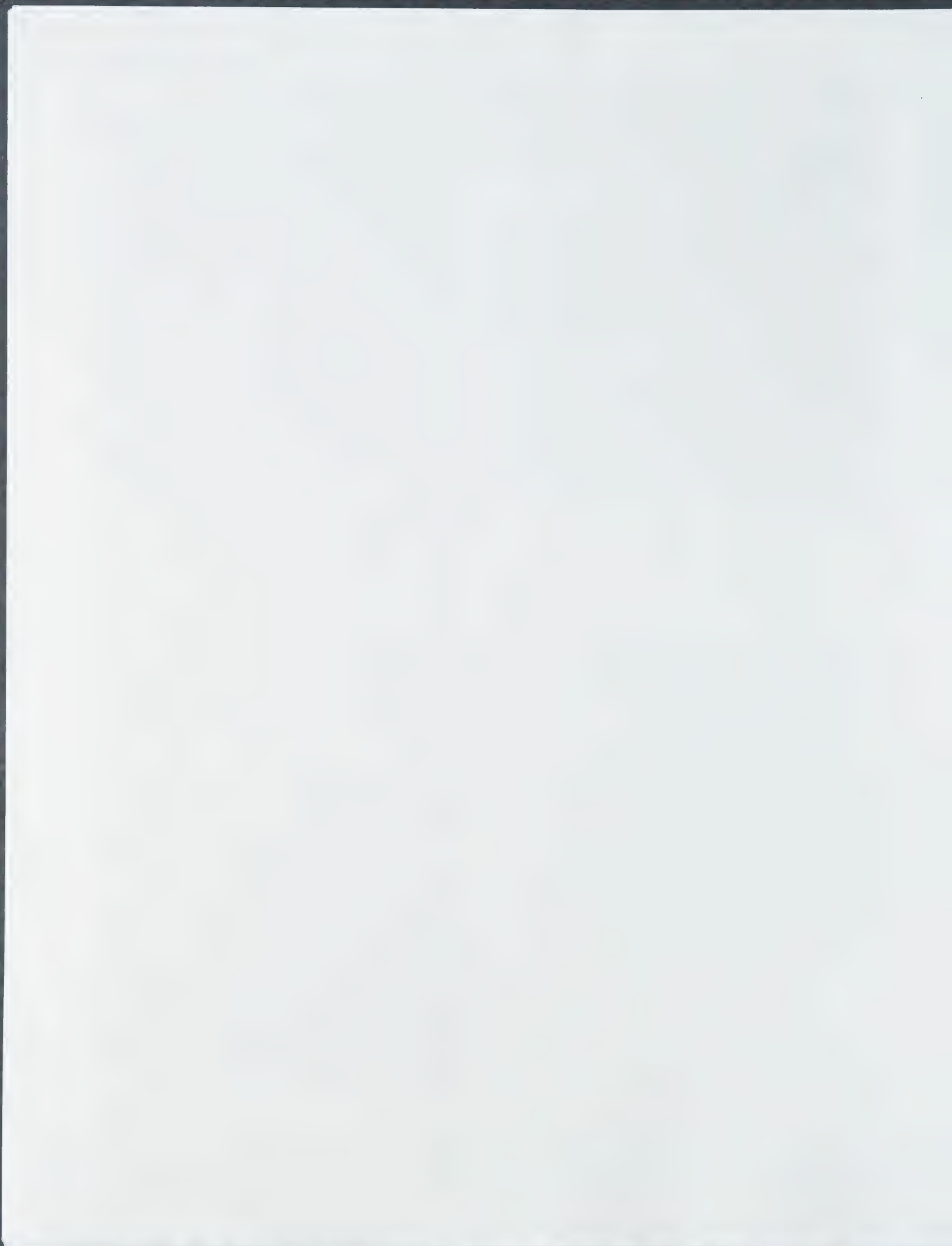




fig. 22, No. 52



fig. 24, No. 57

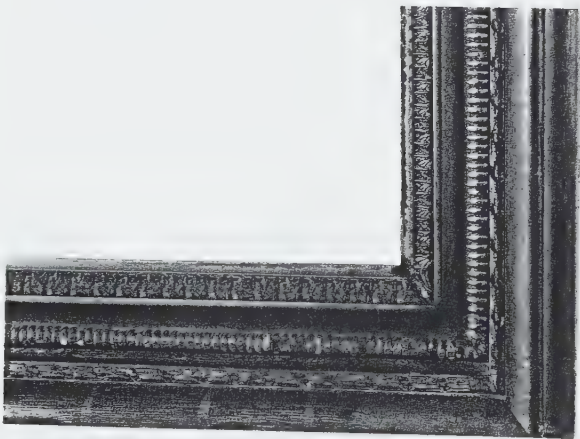


fig. 23, No. 52

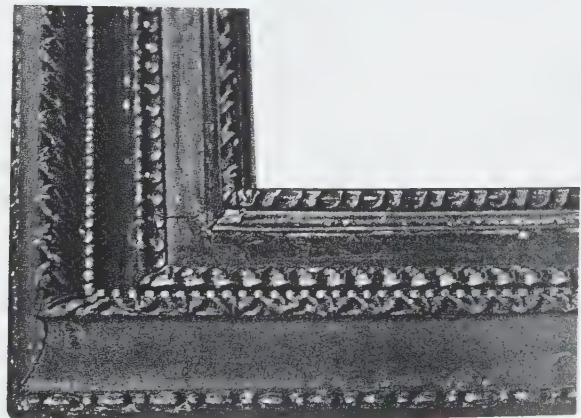


fig. 25, No. 57





fig.26, No.141

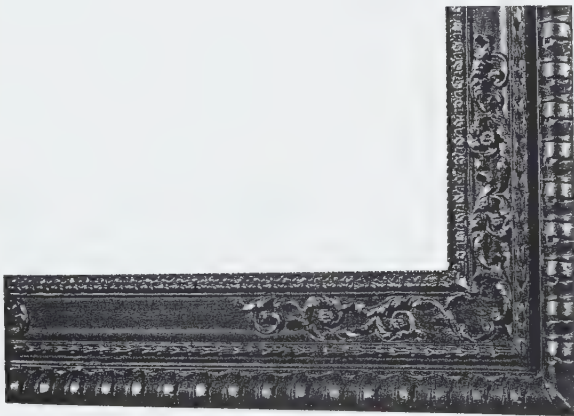


fig.27, No.141

friend of Wright.³¹ Thus we are surely looking at the frame he himself designed to surround his children – themselves unique.³² The looping corner and centre scrollwork and waterleaves wrapped around the upper rail are both unusual and harmonious. For this special task it is likely that Pickford employed a local Derby wood carver and stonemason by the name of George Moneypenny, with whom he had worked at Long Eaton Hall. Moneypenny was also responsible for carving the saloon, north and side doors to Kedleston Hall and for the picture frames in the hall in 1776.³³ Pickford's frame would have been pleasantly conspicuous at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1779.

Wright was later to be unimpressed by the Academy's treatment of his frames. Often leant against the walls, they were inevitably damaged. In a letter to his friend J.L. Philips in 1794 Wright refers to his framer Mr Milbourne: 'The frames of all the pictures which I exhibited [have] been materially damaged at the Academy, Mr Milbourne has orders to put them in good condition'.³⁴ The first reference to Milbourne occurs seven years earlier in a letter by Wright to his surgeon friend Mr Long.³⁵ We thus know that Milbourne was supplying Wright's frames in later years.

Evidently it was not always necessary to make a new frame for a picture sent out on exhibition. Wright for practical and economic reasons occasionally used stock studio frames, at least one of which appeared several times. In a letter of 1774 to the secretary of the Incorporated Society of Artists Wright says:

Sir, I shall be obliged if you will inform Mr. Martin that the picture of *The Earth Stopper* is to be delivered to Lord Hardwicke without the frame. The shabby price his Lordship is to pay for it will leave no room for his Lordship to expect the frame with it; but if he should say anything about it pray inform his Lordship that *The Earth Stopper* was exhibited in an old Italian moulding frame which I have had by me for many years and keep for the use of the exhibition, and on no account let him have it . . .³⁶

The repeated use of old frames for exhibition purposes was practised by Reynolds, and presumably other artists.³⁷

By now the visitor to this exhibition will be aware that among the wide variety of frames on display there is one predominant streamlined Neo-classical pattern with distinct but clearly related variations. There are some 21 here from a total of 37 surveyed dating from 1778 to 1792. Doubtless many other late canvases by Wright bear the same model.

The particular significance of these frames is that they were evidently devised between Wright and his frame-maker exclusively for him.³⁸ Had they been a pattern book design we would have encountered them elsewhere. However, to date only one of these frames has been seen on another artist's work by the author in twenty-five years of looking.³⁹ Romney and Raeburn also used a particular frame very

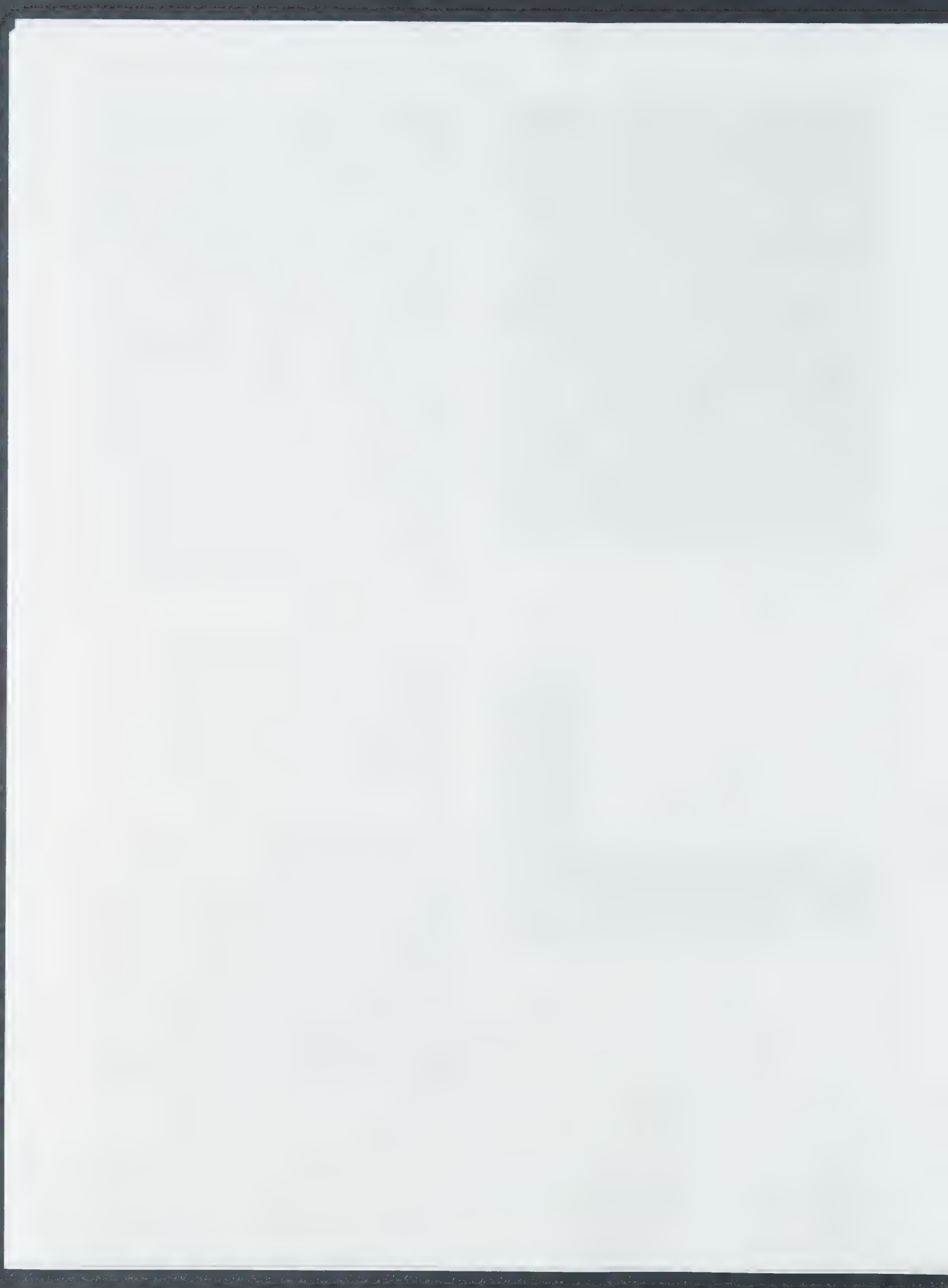




fig.32, No.63



fig.34, No.99



fig.33, No.63

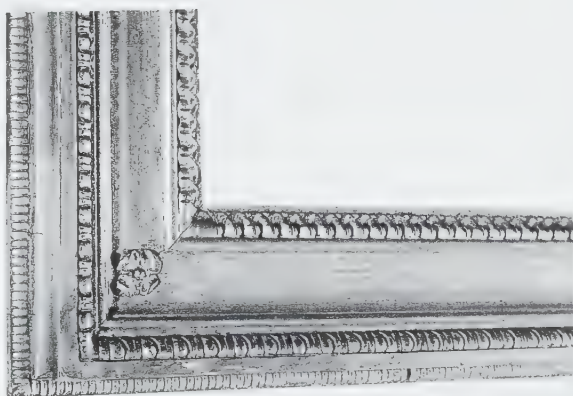


fig.35, No.99

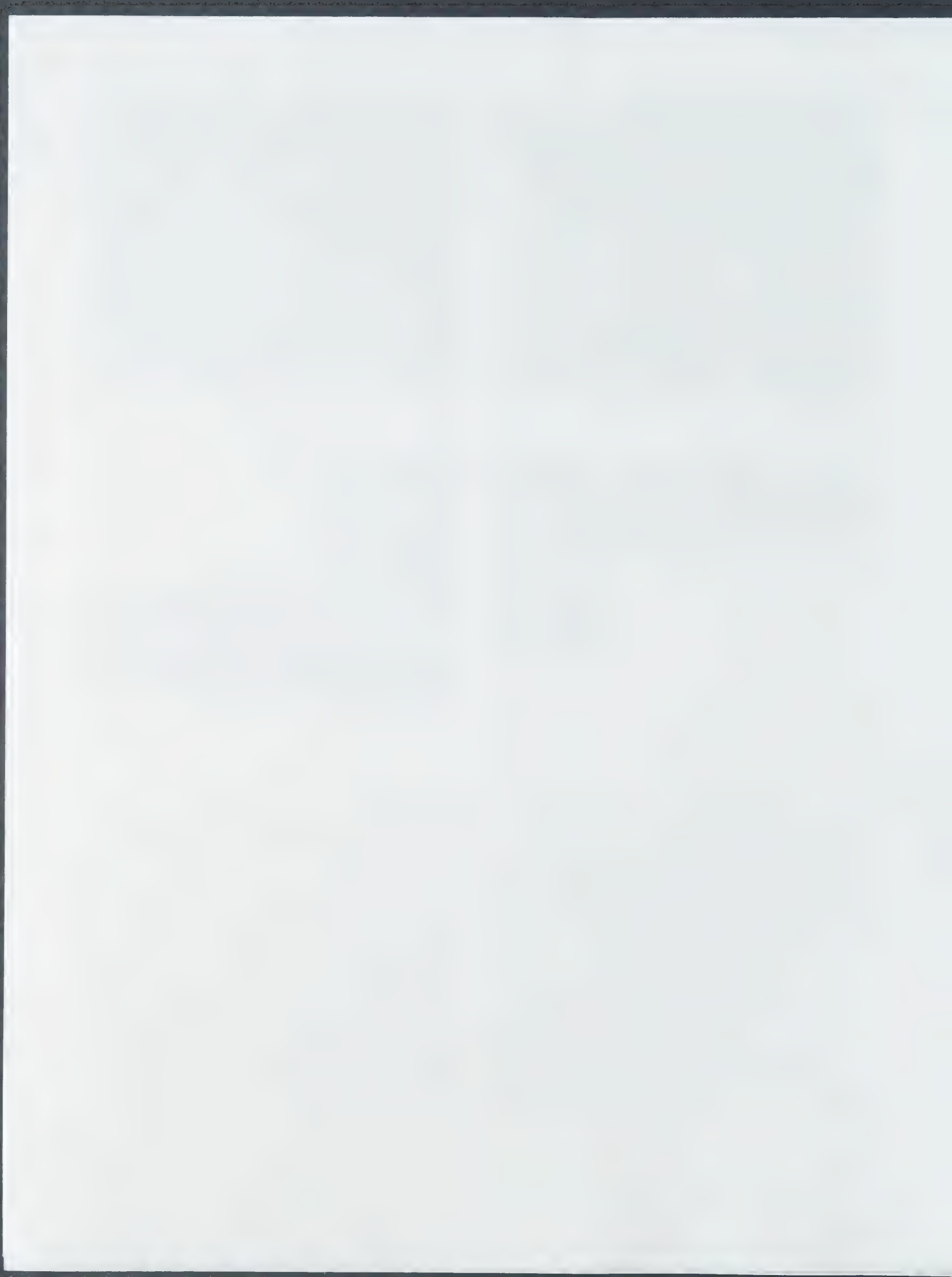
frequently, but these preferred patterns were also applied by other artists.⁴⁰

By using this special frame Wright was advertising the individuality of his pictures. It is not too much to assume that this novel design must have deliberately helped to single out his work among that of other artists on the walls of his patrons' houses as well as in the prestigious Royal Academy and Society of Artists exhibitions. Corner details of the three main variations of Wright's frame are shown in figs.29, 35 & 36, from which we see that they all share the same basic entablature profile decorated with familiar Neo-classical ornaments moulded in composition.⁴¹ The sections' widths range from three to five inches according to canvas size. Examples of the most frequently used pattern are seen on 'John Whetham of Kirklington' (figs.28 & 29, No.32), 'Mr and Mrs Samuel Crompton' (figs.30 & 31, Nos.132 & 133), 'Romeo and Juliet' (figs.32 & 33, No.63), 'Lake Nemi at

Sunset' (No.116), and the portraits of 'Sir Richard Arkwright' (No.126), Charles and Susannah Hurt (Nos.134 & 135), 'The Rev. D'Ewes Coke, his wife Hannah and Daniel Parker Coke M.P.' (No.142),⁴² and 'Erasmus Darwin' (No.145).

In this group the inner edge is formed with beading and the outer with waterleaves.⁴³ Generally the back edge of the larger frames also carried a leaf moulding, and many have moulded circular or oval paterae in the corners. Corners of the largest frames for the Shakespeare subjects 'Romeo and Juliet' (figs.32 & 33) and 'Antigonus in the Storm' received a more substantial moulded acanthus spray.⁴⁴

The second variation with its bold egg-and-dart, water-leaf and ribbed mouldings is the grandest and most evocative of antiquity.⁴⁵ It appears on two pictures which draw on classical literature. 'Virgil's Tomb, with the Figure of Silius Italicus' (No.61), and 'A Grotto in the Gulf of Salernum,



with the Figure of Julia' (No.100), as well as 'Brooke Boothby' (No.59) and 'A Grotto by the Sea-side in the Kingdom of Naples', (figs.34 & 35, No.99). The Brooke Boothby frame is distinguished by having a sanded frieze giving a subtle matt texture contrasting with the burnished water-gilt mouldings.

The final variation is characterised by having an inner band of guilloche and the astragal formed into beads. This model was used intermittently by Wright for all categories of his work between c.1783 c.1786, and can be seen here on 'Arkwright's Cotton Mills by Night' (fig.36, No.127), 'Dovedale by Moonlight' (No.110), 'View of Dovedale' and its pendant, 'Convent of S. Cosimato' (figs.37 & 38, Nos.120 & 121), and with a later aggrandisement on 'The Lady in Milton's "Comus"' (No.66).⁴⁶ Its use on a small format is seen to best effect on the Kedleston Hall pair of landscapes (figs.37 & 38).⁴⁷ These serene, austere and beautifully proportioned Neo-classical frames with plain gold friezes and rhythmical ornament are in perfect harmony with the landscapes. They ensure our contemplation without distraction. There can be few better examples in this period of the unity between frame and picture.



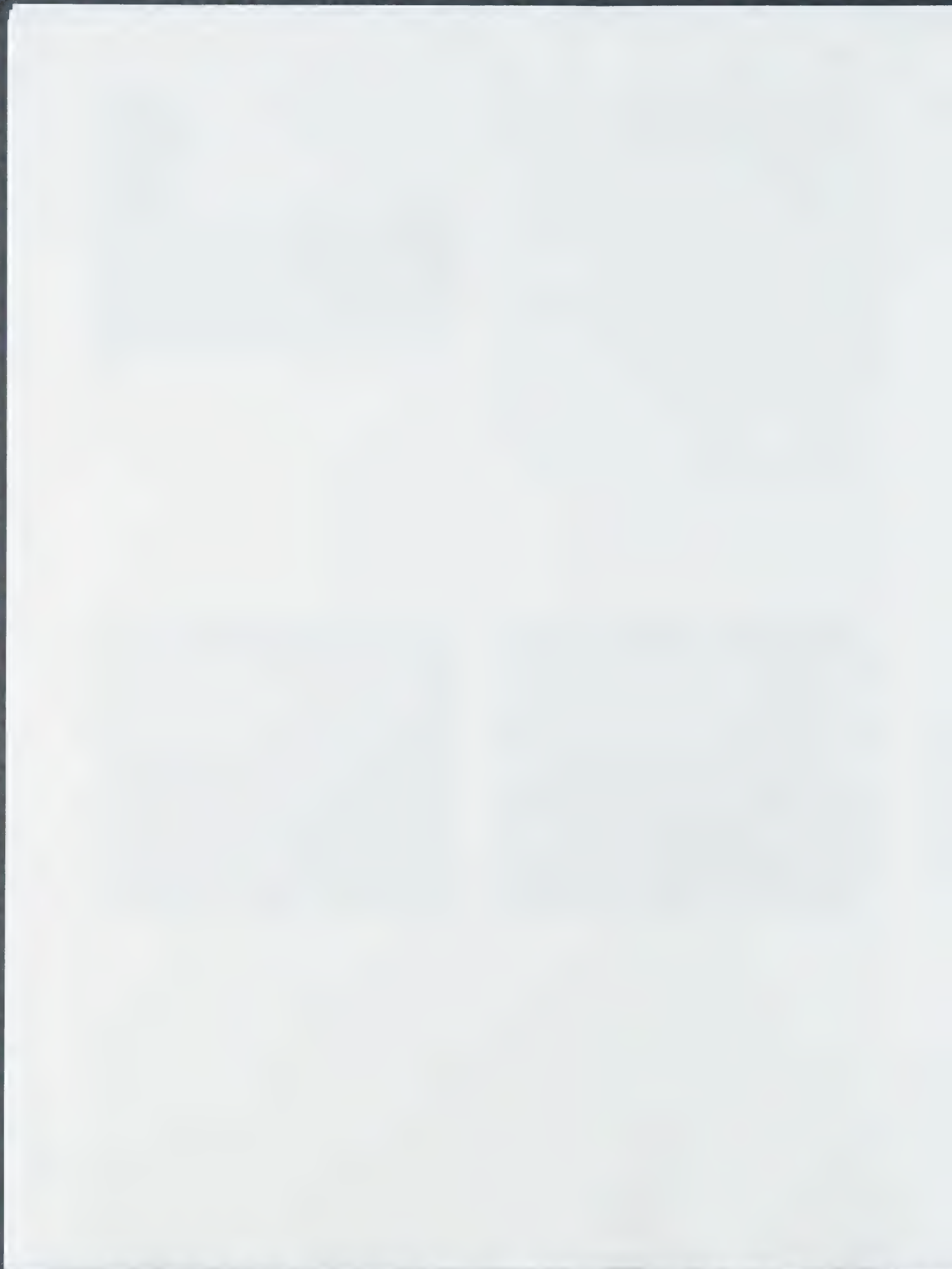
fig.36, No.127



fig.37, No.120



fig.38, No.121



FRAMES OUT OF PERIOD

Pictures and their frames were generally seen as part of a room's furnishings. Consequently, loss of the original frame breaks a vital link with the picture's past, disrupting the intended harmony.

There are a multitude of reasons for a picture's divorce from its first frame. These are usually changing fashions and interiors, new ownership and re-location. This divorce rate is generally in direct proportion to age. Far more Victorian marriages have survived than Old Master ones. Indeed the re-framing necessary for Old Masters entering Victorian collections (purchased abroad and more easily transported without their frames) often extended to native eighteenth century pictures.

Nineteenth century taste preferred heavier and more ornamental frames. From our standpoint we might say they tell us more about the owners and their interiors, rather than

being very well suited to the pictures. The massive frame on 'The Widow of an Indian Chief' (No.67) and the fussy decoration of that on 'Miravan Opening the Tomb of his Ancestors' (No.42) show that frames of novel proportion and ornamental scale can have a somewhat detrimental effect on our perception of the picture. Tinkering with old rules is risky and rarely successful⁴⁸. Wright's pictures re-framed in Victorian times include his two candlelight masterpieces: 'An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump' (No.21) and 'A Philosopher giving that Lecture on the Orrery' (No.18)⁴⁹. It is interesting to speculate how these pictures would have looked in the original frames which Wright would surely have chosen for them himself.

PAUL MITCHELL

NOTES

- ¹ Geoffrey Beard and Christopher Gilbert (Eds), *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660-1840*, Furniture History Society, 1986.
- ² Derby Local Studies Library, ref. BA914. It is the earliest trade directory to survive for Derby.
- ³ The first major exhibition catalogue illustrating a quantity of frames was the Tate Gallery's *Manners and Morals, Hogarth and British Painting 1700-1760*, 1987. See also: Paul Mitchell, *Picture Frames in the Cartwright Collection: Mr. Cartwright's Pictures*, Exhibition at Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1987. A comprehensive bibliography of frame studies is published, with several essays in *Revue de L'Art*, no. 76, 1987, pp.60-62; this includes three important frame exhibitions in the last ten years, which were the first since Berlin, 1929: Alte Pinakothek, Munich, 1976; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1984; Art Institute of Chicago, 1986. The most recent exhibition was *Cadres de Peintres*, Isabelle Cahn, Le Musée d'Orsay, Paris, 1989.
- ⁴ Only frames surrounding works in oil are considered here. It was obviously impractical to see all of Wright's scattered frames, and those omitted are listed in the table on p.272. The author plans to include significant omissions in an article after the exhibition.
- ⁵ The author's photographic archive of European picture frames (undertaken in principal museums, country houses, private collections and pictures viewed at auction), indicates that paintings by the most eminent London-based artists are more likely to have been re-framed than their provincial, less celebrated counterparts.
- ⁶ See: 'Portrait of a Lady with her Lacework' (No.34), for the ultimate in lavish re-framing. This extravaganza is typical of the French Rococo style frames commissioned from Paris by Duveen for his English eighteenth century and Dutch seventeenth century pictures. These regal and dazzling creations

were more than a match for his collectors' French eighteenth century pictures and furnishings.

⁷ Another, slightly more elaborate version appears on Wright's portrait of 'John Day' (early 1760s), Christie's 19.11.82 Lot 88, and another on 'A Young Man' (Private Collection), kindly shown to me by Robert Holden.

⁸ From the evidence of a 1749 poll book (*Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*, p.257) we know that Dubourg was in Long Acre, London. Wright would have become familiar with the London frame-making trade during his apprenticeship with Thomas Hudson between 1751-53, and 1756-7.

⁹ Wright's Account Book, (National Portrait Gallery Archives), refers to the standard frame sizes, "Three quarter length" 30 by 25 inches, "Kit Cat" 36 by 28 inches and "Half length" 50 by 40 inches.

¹⁰ Frame surveys show that pairs and sets of frames have a higher survival rate than individual ones. Due to the expense owners were less likely to embark on re-framing. This point is well demonstrated in the exhibition which includes eight unchanged pairs (Nos.15 & 16, 19 & 20, 35 & 36, 114 & 115, 120 & 121, 129 & 130, 132 & 133, 134 & 135).

¹¹ Regarding the craftsmen associated with papier-mâché at this date Mortimer's *Universal Director* of 1763 mentions the work of Peter Babel, a designer and modeller, Long Acre, (in the same street as Dubourg) who was one of the "first improvers of Papier-Mâché Ornaments for Ceilings, Chimney-Pieces, Picture-frames etc, an invention of modern date, imported by us from France, and now brought to great perfection". The only other papier-mâché specialist that Mortimer mentions as being one of the 'principals' in the trade is René Duffour, at the Golden Head in Berwick Street.

Heal refers to only two other suppliers: Charles Middleton in Tottenham Court Road and James Shruder in Great Marlborough Street. There are no provincial papier-mâché dealers recorded in local trade directories so we can assume that this highly novel and fashionable material was only available in London.

The replacement frame for 'Mr and Mrs Coltman' (No. 29) is referred to p.276.

The whole frame was reproduced in *Wright of Derby: Catalogue of the Bi-centenary Exhibition of Paintings*, Corporation Art Gallery, Derby, 1934 (Cat. 10).

¹² *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*, p.605.

¹³ Benedict Nicolson, *Joseph Wright of Derby Painter of Light*, Paul Mellon Foundation, 1968, vol.1, p.67.

¹⁴ The Carlo Maratta was prominently used by Reynolds and Gainsborough. Dr Nicholas Penny has unravelled many references to Maratta frames from Reynolds's ledgers and pocket books in his excellent study "Reynolds and Picture Frames", *The Burlington Magazine*, November 1986, pp.810-25.

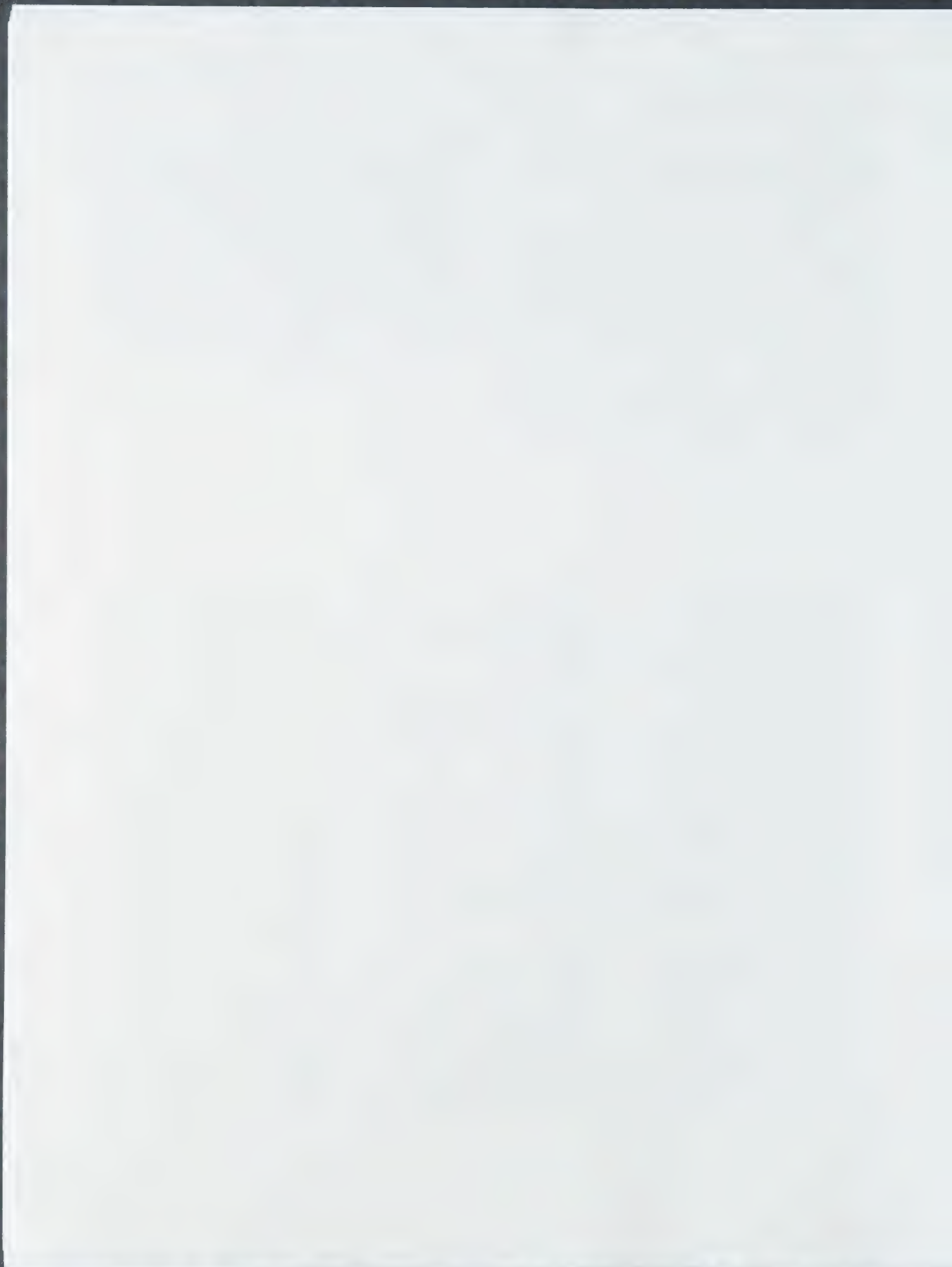
In the first half of the 18th century the pattern became, and remains, virtually a house frame in the Doria-Pamphili, Colonna and Spada palaces; see Paul Mitchell "Italian Picture Frames 1500-1825: A Brief Survey", *Furniture History* 1984, p.24.

¹⁵ An exceptionally fine collection of originals are on Italian pictures at Burghley House bought by the 5th Earl of Exeter.

¹⁶ Derby Art Gallery, Nicolson cat.21, pl.39; cat.22, no pl.

¹⁷ In Italian prototypes the husk is generally pierced beneath.

¹⁸ Also with shells is the frame on 'The Captive from Sterne', (Derby Art Gallery, Nicolson cat.217, pl.162)



An example of the hollow pattern without ornament is on 'Landscape with Ruins, by Moonlight', (Nicolson cat.305, pl.236), with Leger Galleries.

The pair of frames on the Gwilym portraits (Nos 35 & 36) are virtually the same pattern as these, although blurred by re-gilding, and perhaps also by Dubourg.

Other Carlo Maratta frames on works not exhibited include: 'Mrs Beridge' 1777, Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Nicolson cat. 18, pl.192); 'A Study after an Antique Bust in Two Positions', Yale Centre (Nicolson cat.80, pl.124); 'Penelope Margaret Stafford' 1769, Derby Art Gallery; 'Richard Gildart' 1769, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

By 1794, if not before, trade directories listed "composition ornament manufacturers" as one of the increasing number of specialist trades. *The General London Guide or Tradesman's Directory*, 1794.

Three others are in Derby Art Gallery: 'View of Tivoli' c.1783-6 (Nicolson cat.265, pl.260); 'A Cottage on Fire' c.1790 (Nicolson cat.336, pl.303) and 'Bridge through a Cavern' 1791 (Nicolson cat.276, pl.326).

A superb early exception to this, and surely the original surrounds Wright's portrait of 'The Hon. Richard Fitzwilliam' 1764, (Nicolson cat.60, pl.49), Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. Here the semi-Carlo profile is given a full accommodating Neo-classical treatment with fluting in the scotia, a ribbed knull and corner paterae.

Another original is on 'The Convent of S. Cosimato' c.1787-90, (Nicolson cat.264, pl.282), Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Having only one flute in the lower right corner and two matching adjacent paterae on the lower left, the frame has clearly been altered. The darker right side suggests it was originally for a portrait or, quite probably, a mirror.

E.g. Kedleston Hall, Harewood House, Osterley Park. An outstanding ultra Neo-classical fluted frame appeared at Sotheby's 12.7.89, Lot 46 on Wright's Portrait of Sir Robert Burdett Bt of

Foremark, Derbyshire, probably designed and carved by Thomas Chippendale whom he employed.

Pickford built Alderwasley Hall, for the same Francis Hurt that Wright painted. He was also involved with architectural projects at Alfreton Hall, Ashbourne Mansion, and Robert Holdcn's home Darley Abbey. See Maxwell Craven and Michael Stanley, *The Derbyshire Country House*, Derby Museum Service, 1982.

Architects have always, to some degree, been the designers of frames, particularly in the Neo-classical period for the reasons stated. For the principal exponents and surviving drawings see: Pippa Mason with introduction by Gervase Jackson-Stops, *Designs for English Picture Frames*, London, Arnold Wiggins & Sons Ltd, 1987.

Geoffrey Beard, *Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England 1660-1820*, Edinburgh, 1981, p.272.

Derby Local Studies Library, ref.8962.

Ibid, Long acted as the artist's London agent.

My thanks to Judy Egerton for this reference. W.T. Whitley, *Artists and their Friends in England, 1700-1799*, 2 vols. London 1928, vol. 1, p.247. The present frame on 'The Earth Stopper' (No.51) is a cushion moulding pattern in regular use during the seventeenth century. This example (now conspicuously re-gilded and painted, and perhaps partly re-modelled) may conceivably be the 'old Italian moulding frame' referred to by Wright. The frame's design derives from Italian prototypes, via the Netherlands.

N. Penny, *op.cit.*

In the absence of references to any other maker these frames can reasonably be attributed to Mr Milbourne.

This frames the portrait of 'Captain The Hon. John Tollemache' (unattributed), Ham House, Surrey.

Racburn's deep scotia Neo-classical frame may be seen on most of his pictures in The National Gallery of Scotland and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh.

This same profile was apparently run out as a plain moulding for two of Lord Melbourne's pictures, 'An Academy by Lamp Light' (No.23) and 'The Blacksmith's Shop' (No.47).

A bill for this painting included a charge of £6.5s.5d. for the frame, see No.142a.

The astragal above the frieze is independent to the frame's carcass, being attached separately, and thi partially secures the waterleaf moulding.

'Antigonus in the Storm, from 'The Winter's Tale' (Nicolson cat.230, pl.302).

Two narrow versions are recorded: 'Old John' (No.140) and 'John Harrison' (Nicolson cat.74, pl.199), on loan to Derby Art Gallery.

Also 'Stephen Jones' (Nicolson cat.100, pl.243); 'William and Margaret', (Nicolson cat.226, pl.241).

Another small pair of landscapes 'Lake Albano' and 'Lake Nemi' (Nos 114 & 115) bear fine Neo-classical frames of a pattern not seen elsewhere on Wright's work.

Among the earlier frames to have found their way onto Wright's pictures are a late seventeenth century laurel-and-flower pattern related to Louis XIII designs on 'The Alchemist in Search of the Philosopher's Stone' (No.39) and 'Rev. John Pickering' (No.148) carrying a rare example of a later seventeenth/early eighteenth century gadrooned bolection frame finished in silver leaf. An unusual Rococo variation of a standard mid-eighteenth century pattern has been altered to fit 'A Cavern, Evening' (No.98), examples of which have been seen in Ireland. The frame on 'The Sunset on the Coast near Naples' (No.109) with its moulded palmettes is novel and difficult to date.

David Fraser has recently discovered a leaflet dated December 1, 1851 issued by Messrs. Woollat & Co. (Cabinet Makers & Upholsterers, 68 St Peter's Street, Derby) advertising the disposal of this picture 'by lot' for which 100 tickets at 2gns each were offered. The announcement describes the picture being in a "... new and handsome gilt frame.'

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful to Judy Egerton and the exhibition organisers for welcoming the inclusion of this study into their catalogue, and arranging photography of the frames on so many privately owned pictures. This enabled subsequent inspection in situ of as many significant frames as possible for which I thank all their owners.

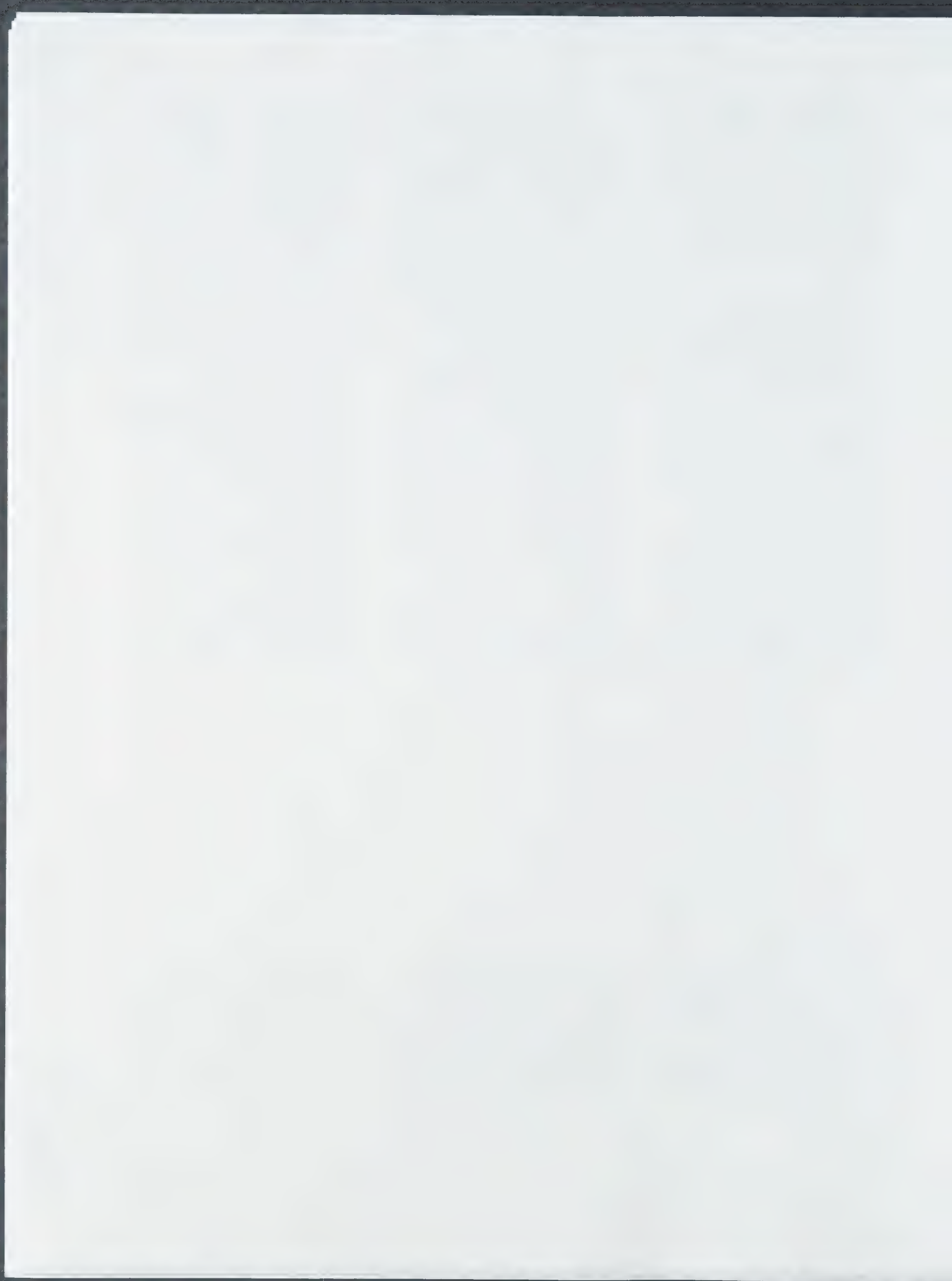
Particular thanks to: Ruth Rattenbury and Helen Sainsbury at the Tate Gallery for their help on many occasions; David Fraser and Sarah Kirby at Derby Art Gallery; Edward Morris, Walker Art Gallery

and Timothy Goodhew, Yale Center for British Art. Thanks are due to staff in the following museums for responding promptly to my request for photographs: Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin; Fitchburg Art Museum, Mass.; The Hermitage; The Louvre; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Minneapolis Institute of Arts; National Gallery, London; National Gallery of Art Washington; National Portrait Gallery, London; Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Saint-Louis Art Museum, Minnesota; Smith College, Mass.; Ulster

Museum, Belfast; Vancouver Art Gallery and The Wadsworth Athenaeum, Connecticut.

I am also grateful to the following for their helpful discussions and allowing inspection and photography: Agnews, Christie's, Bill Drummond, Robert Holden, Leger Galleries, Sothebys

Finally I am immensely indebted to two of my office assistants, Dr Helen Clifford and Mary Ross-Trevor



Dr. Alfred Bader
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October 24, 2001

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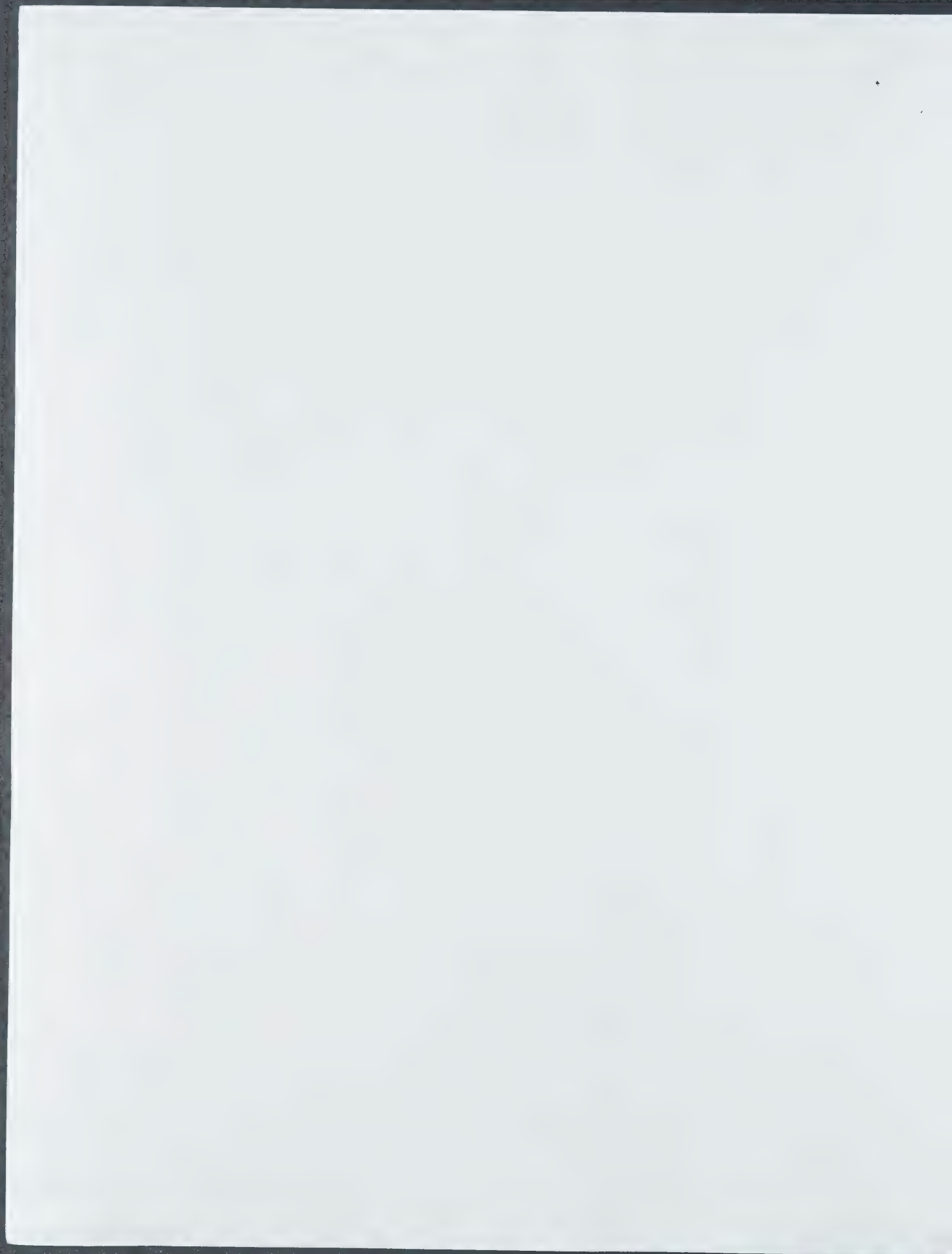
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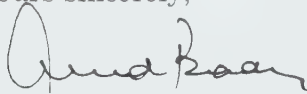
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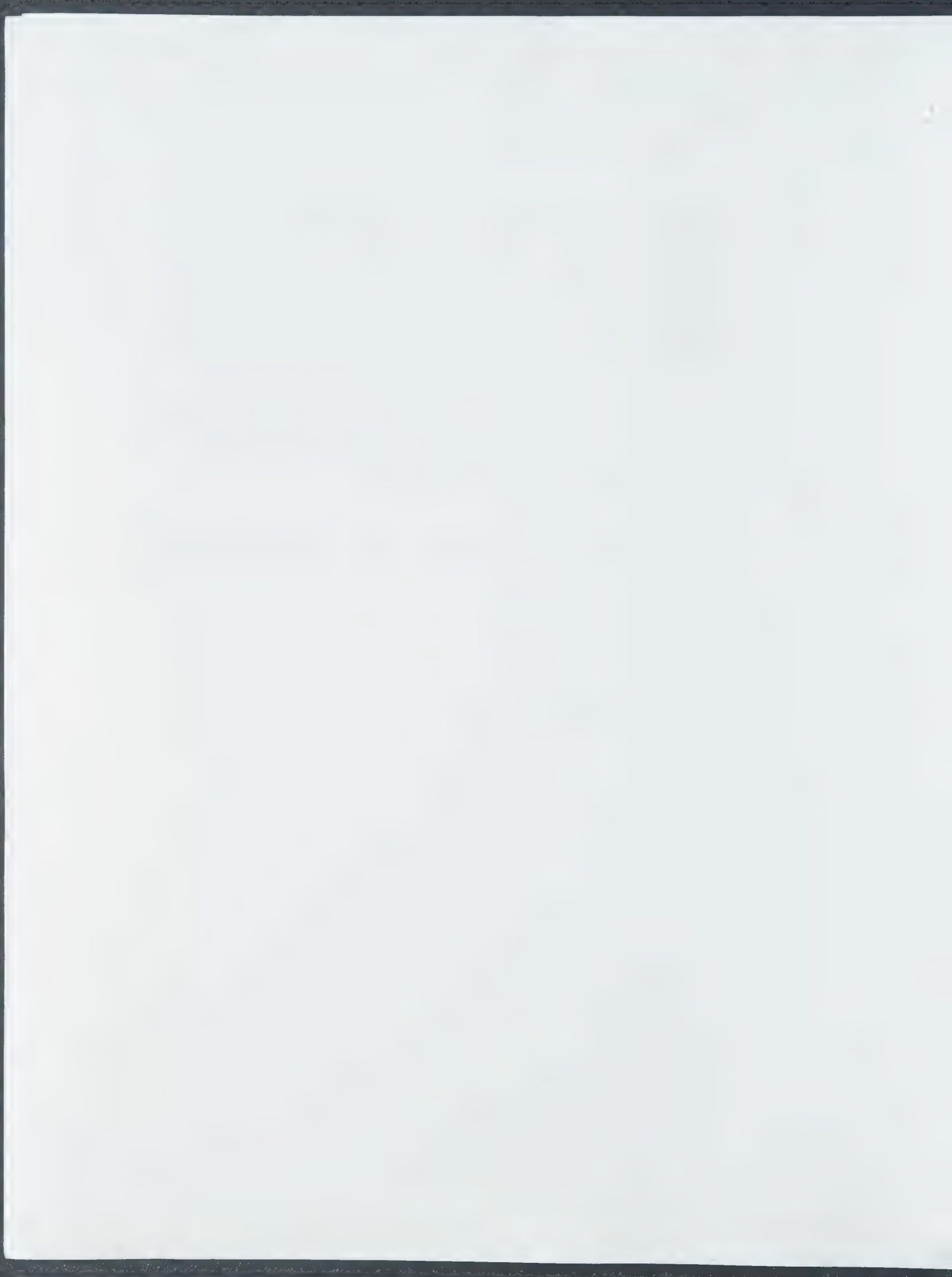
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With best personal regards I remain

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alfred Bader".

Alfred Bader
AB/az
Enc.



Agnes Etherington Art Centre

David de Witt
Bader Curator of European Art

17 December 2001

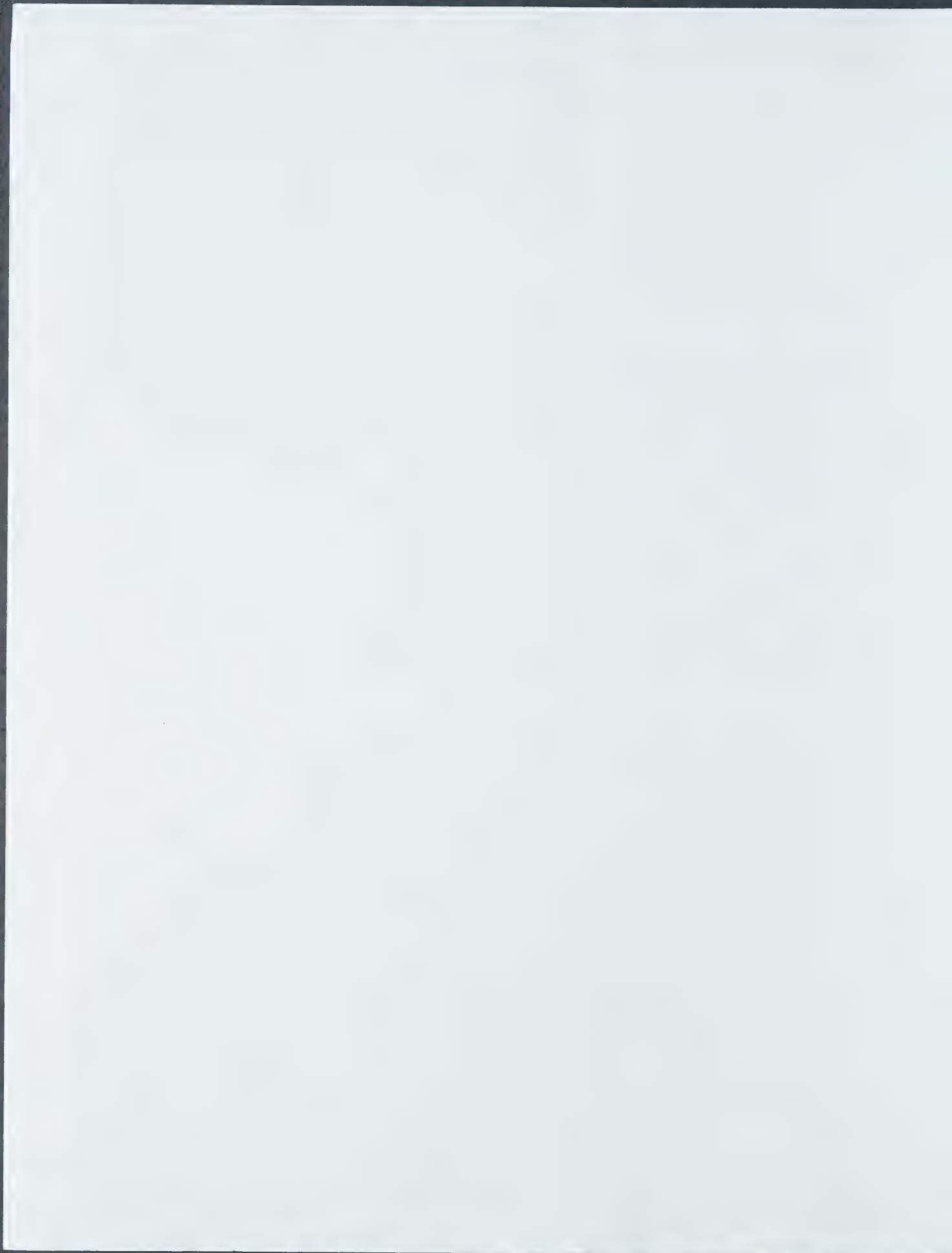
Dear Alfred and Isabel,

We at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre are delighted to accept your recent gifts of paintings. Each of these large works represents a very important addition to the collection here. Foremost is the *Judah and Thamar* by Aert de Gelder, which already elicited much praise from the Acquisitions Committee (none of them specialists in European Art) in October. This very Rembrandtesque work by the master's last, and perhaps most faithful pupil, will take a prominent place among the Rembrandt-school works already with us. The best and most appealing interpretation of this subject by the artist, it is sure to be a great success with our visitors. The painting by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Jacob's Dream*, is similarly a very attractive interpretation of the subject, and it is going to serve as the publicity image for the upcoming exhibition of works from the permanent collection, *The Contemplative Imagination*, which will open on 3 February. With Prof. Dr. Volker Manuth working on a monograph on this artist, in the Department of Art across the street, we are especially happy to have a good example of Van den Eeckhout's artistry on display here. You have parted with some old friends, providing room for some new faces in Milwaukee. Both works will give great introductions to these artists for the Kingston public, as part of the upcoming exhibition, which will remain until September 2003.

An unexpected turn of events brought us the great battle scene by Joseph Wright of Derby, *The Siege of Gibraltar*. You must be especially happy with this coup of art buying. Here at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, it joins a group of Wright of Derby landscapes, whose acquisition you generously supported several years ago. We look forward to a successful restoration of this important work by the artist, and are optimistic that technical and connoisseurial research will confirm the attribution to Wright, which was brought into question by Judy Egerton. Milwaukee's loss is our gain! We are very grateful to both of you for your continued generous support and keen interest in the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, which forms a very significant part of our activities and development.

Dorothy joins me in appreciative thanks for the donations. It is our hope that both of you will continue to enjoy good health and happiness in the coming years. Please accept our best wishes for the Holiday Season and the New Year.





Switzerland

Zurich looks Mercedes heir's gift horse in the mouth
Friedrich Christian Flick's plan to build a Koolhaas contemporary art museum for the city opposed because of his grandfather's role as Nazi supporter

LONDON. Friedrich Christian Flick (Mick), the millionaire grandson of the war-time owner of the Mercedes motor car factories has discovered, as did his brother, Gert Rudolph (Muck) a few years ago when he offered to endow a Chair at Oxford University, that history is not forgotten. On that occasion, opposition among Oxford dons grew to the point that Muck Flick withdrew his offer. Recently, Mick Flick has wanted to build a museum of contempo-

rary art with architect Rem Koolhaas in a formerly industrial zone of Zurich to house the 2,000 or so works of contemporary art in his collection. These include such up-to-the-minute works as Paul McCarthy's "Santa Chocolate Shop" shown last month in New York as part of the artist's retrospective.

But then, an article in the Bavarian Süddeutsche Zeitung reminded the Swiss of Mercedes' role in the arming of Nazi Germany and its use of

work on the house has been the most expensive undertaken in Britain in recent decades, except for that done at Windsor Castle after the fire. Ten years ago Dr Khalili bought the two adjacent houses for £40 million and he has spent a further £40 million on renovations and linking the two buildings. Built in the 1840s, to the designs of Charles Barry's office, they were later both taken over by embassies. No. 19 became the Egyptian embassy and no. 18, once owned by the Rothschilds, formed part of the Russian embassy (its basement has

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Stellar promotion for cosmonaut's daughter

LONDON. Yelena Gagarina, 42, daughter of the famous cosmonaut, has been appointed director of the Kremlin museums by President Putin to replace Irina Rodimtseva, discovered in 1999 by the Audit Chamber to have misused funds. Ms Gagarina has been head of the Print Room at the Pushkin Museum. Putin has ordered the

London

Collector Khalili puts town house on market for £100 million

more than two metres thick). For most of the past six years Dr Khalili has employed 400 craftsmen, and the house's walls and floors are now clad in 9,000 square feet of marble, some of it from the quarry used for the Taj Mahal. One of main reception rooms is lined with inlaid marble panels depicting the twelve months of the year. Much of the decoration throughout the house is inspired by Islamic art, and the basement has a massive Turkish bath. Although unfinished, for Dr Khalili has never lived there, the floors are

covered by Persian carpets.

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Tories support Labour stance on VAT relief for museum

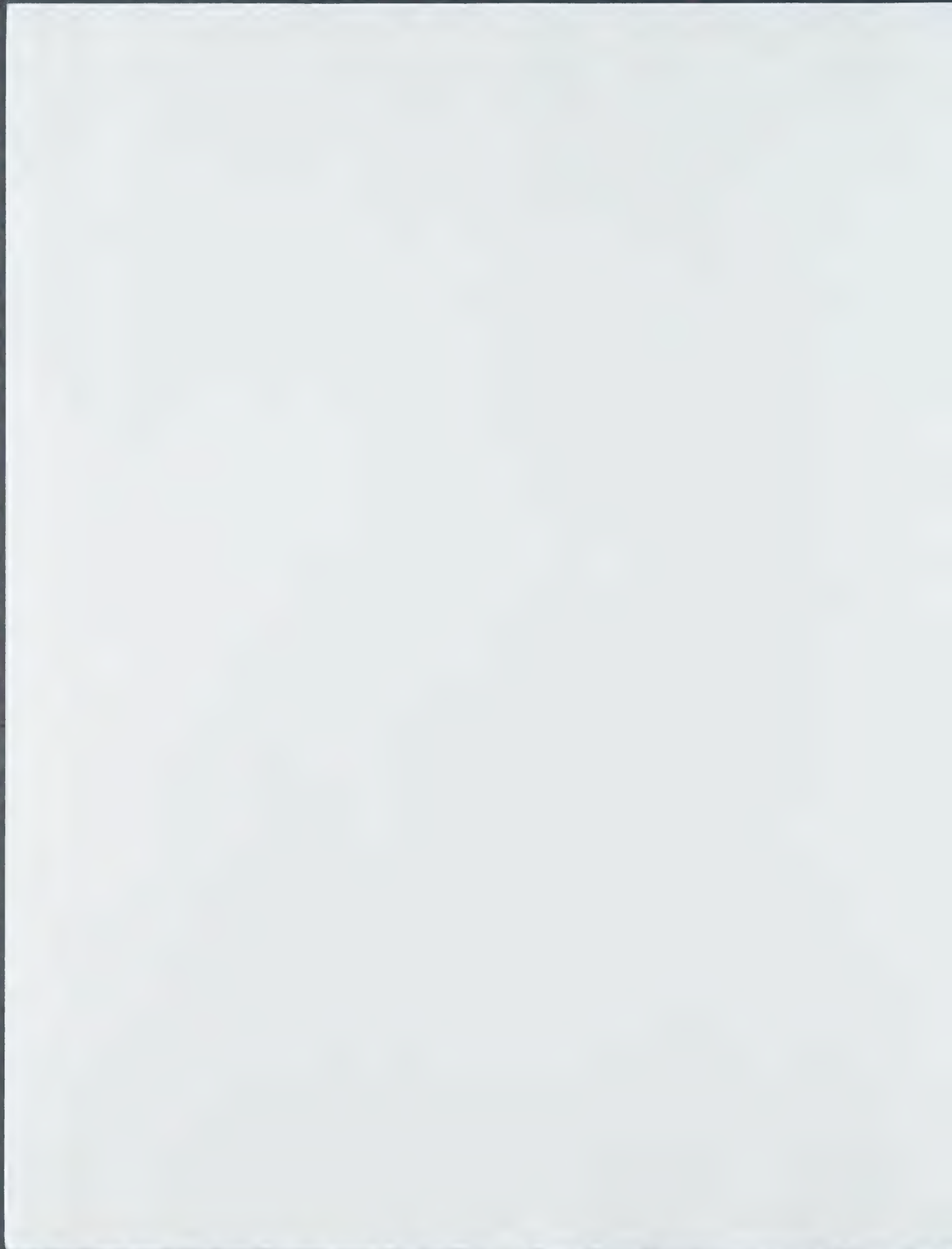
LONDON. The Tory party in opposition support the government's resolution of the Value Added Tax which effectively paves the way for free admission to national museums. In the budget presented by the Exchequer Gordon Brown announced that museums will be able to reclaim Value Added Tax, eliminating which only charging museums were entitled to. The Art Newspaper, No.113, April 2001, p. 10, of the Exchequer Michael Portillo expressed policy in a letter dated 19 March seen by The Art Newspaper, No.113, April 2001, p. 10. The letter was sent to Sir Denis Mahon, the secretary of the Exchequer, and has long campaigned for free admission to museums, including the National Gallery. It had given his collection of Italian baroque paintings to the National Gallery. It had also given his collection of Italian baroque paintings to the National Gallery. It had also given his collection of Italian baroque paintings to the National Gallery. It had also given his collection of Italian baroque paintings to the National Gallery.

Saxe-Coburg-Gothas compensates for confiscated art with woodland

LONDON. One by one the former princely German States are coming to agreement with the British government over compensation for their property, often lost during the Second World War and monuments, confiscated by the Comintern in 1949. The latest is the family of the Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, who has agreed to exchange their claim to the castle of Gottorf in Schleswig for 800 hectares of woodland worth DM15 million. The deal was accepted by the family, because it is appropriate as they are now private citizens. The nine heirs of the house of Saxony received DM15 million and cash as compensation for 15,000 works of art.

Hollow sentencing for ex-mayor

LONDON. Last month the former mayor of Agrigento, Calogero Sodano, was sentenced to 18 months in jail for not having prevented the illegal erection of a tower in the vicinity of the town's famous Greek temple. Sodano was sentenced to 18 months in jail for not having prevented the illegal erection of a tower in the vicinity of the town's famous Greek temple. Sodano was sentenced to 18 months in jail for not having prevented the illegal erection of a tower in the vicinity of the town's famous Greek temple. Sodano was sentenced to 18 months in jail for not having prevented the illegal erection of a tower in the vicinity of the town's famous Greek temple.



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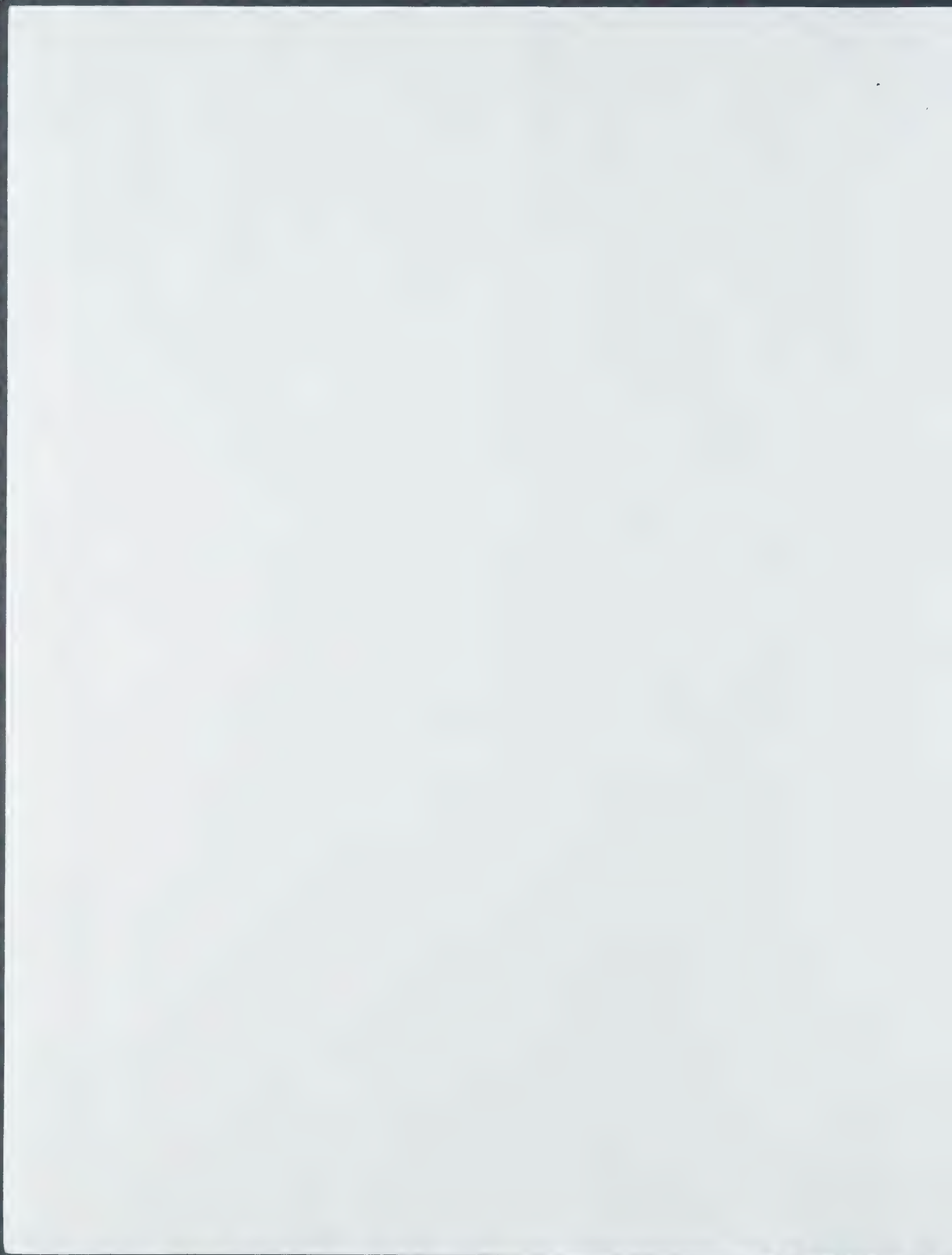
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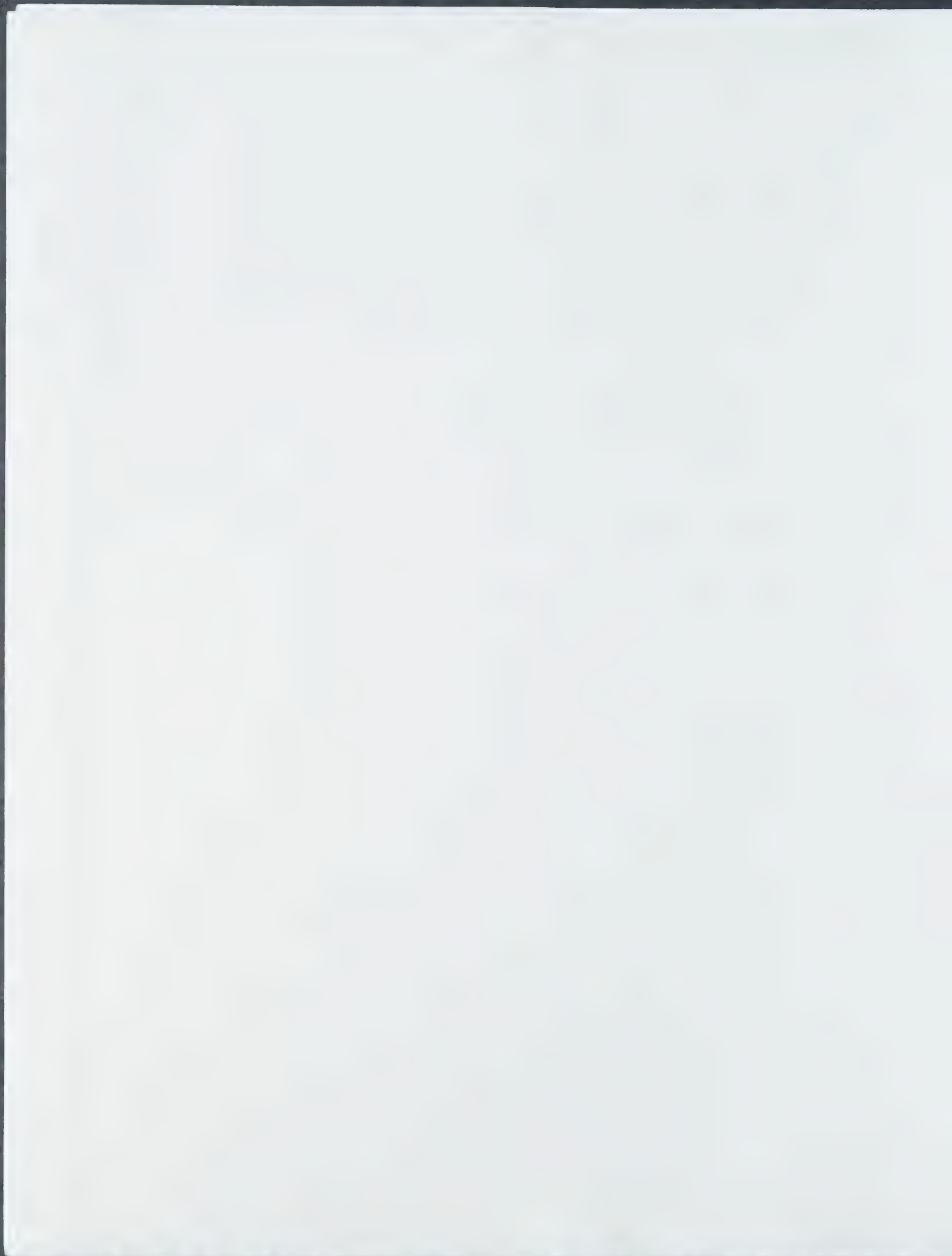
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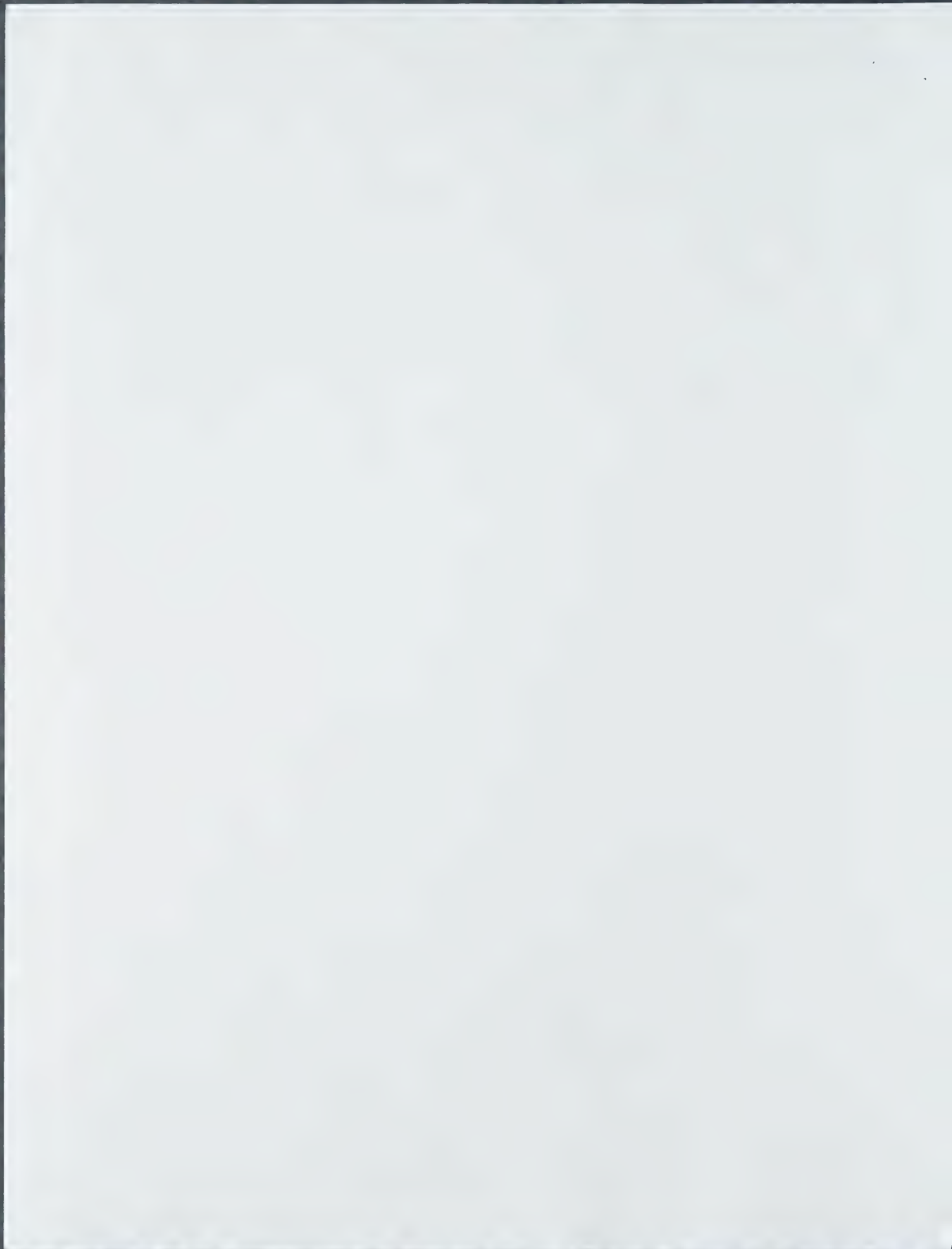
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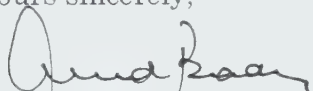
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Alfred Bader

AB/az

Enc.

✓

remained in the Cockshutt family.¹ But about Wright's patron, we have no specific information. The publication of this book may bring something to light about him. What a book leaves out can prove almost as useful as what it puts in, for this reason.

It is easier to understand why John Milnes of Wakefield in Yorkshire should have become interested in a Derby painter, since the Milneses claimed they were by origin small gentry from Derbyshire, moving to Wakefield in the reign of Charles II, and not only owned considerable property in Derbyshire but must still have had connections there, possibly with Milnes of Cromford, and with his daughter *Dorothy Gell of Hopton* [Plate 266].² John Milnes from whom Monckton Milnes, the friend of Swinburne and Florence Nightingale, was descended, was a rich Wakefield cotton manufacturer and had a monopoly of cloth in the district. He had intellectual pretensions, being a Dissenter and Whig, and was of ancient descent, not at all an upstart. We need not therefore be gravely disturbed to find him buying from Wright the same kind of romantic landscapes and subject pieces that took the fancy of men of quite a different stamp like Boothby or Sir Robert Wilmot.

Like Wedgwood he enjoyed possessing pictures *en série*, but not with the same intellectual content as Wedgwood's, where it was necessary to know what the stories were about in order to appreciate the relationship between one subject piece and the next. He preferred more straightforward landscapes where one canvas would form a contrast to its pendant by emphasising different lighting effects. Partly for this reason he bought at the Society of Artists of 1776 two large paintings of *Vesuvius* and the *Girandola*, 'the one', as Wright explains, 'the greatest effect of Nature the other of Art';³ and acquired from the artist four large landscapes illustrating the four stages of the day: two views of the Alps in the morning and at noon, a sunset at Albano, and a moonlight on the coast of Tuscany. Farington's description of this quartet makes us realise how much we miss by its disappearance: 'He [Wright] painted 4 half length pictures [that is, about 40 by 50 inches] for Mr. Mills of Wakefield, Morning, noon (an Italian heated sky), evening and night. On these pictures He has said He shd. sooner choose to rest his reputation...'⁴ Milnes also bought *Edwin* [Plate 179], the only one of his purchases to come down to us in the family, but in this case not its companion, *Maria* [Plate 220]. Perhaps he was not sufficiently drenched in literature to want both. This means that he was acquiring Wrights for at least fifteen years, beginning soon after the mid-'70's and continuing into the early '90's. It is possible that he began collecting Wrights even earlier. The Account Book notes that a 'Mr. Milnes' bought *Miravan* [Plate 107], a picture painted in 1772. That Wright was already associated with the Wakefield Milneses is proved by the appearance at the Society of Artists in that year of a portrait of John Milnes's son, Robert Shore, then an officer in the Royal Horse Guards [Plate 114]. In 1776 when in Bath Wright painted another small full length of another of John Milnes's sons (see Cat No 107). These portraits were probably not commissioned by the father. And as for *Miravan*, it is always possible that the entry in the Account Book refers to another purchaser, such as William Milnes, the father of Dorothy Gell. However this may be, John Milnes of Wakefield amassed one of the largest Wright collections, and acquired his most ambitious picture, the *Siege of Gibraltar*. By 1791 he had spent well over £1000 on the whole collection—more than any other single patron—which occupied more wall-space even than the Wright collections of Benjamin Bates and Arkwright.⁵

We know more about the genesis of the *View of Gibraltar during the destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries* (Cat No 245) than about any other picture except the *Corinthian Maid* and his scene from *The Tempest*, but in its absence it would be depressing to enter into too many details. One is not grateful to, but curses, the guide who points at the blank walls of the Palais des Papes at Avignon and goes into raptures about frescoes that are no longer there. A few facts only need be recorded. On 13th September 1782 the British garrison at Gibraltar decisively defeated the Spanish floating batteries, thereby restoring some of that British prestige which had been shaken by the loss of the American colonies. The news had the same effect on public opinion in England as the Suez operation of 1956 would have had, if it had proved a triumph instead of a dismal failure. The subject was an obvious one for any history painter following in the footsteps of Benjamin West, and most of all for Wright whose speciality was fire, and who could visualise the contribution he alone could make to the events of that memorable day: the firing of red-hot missiles at the

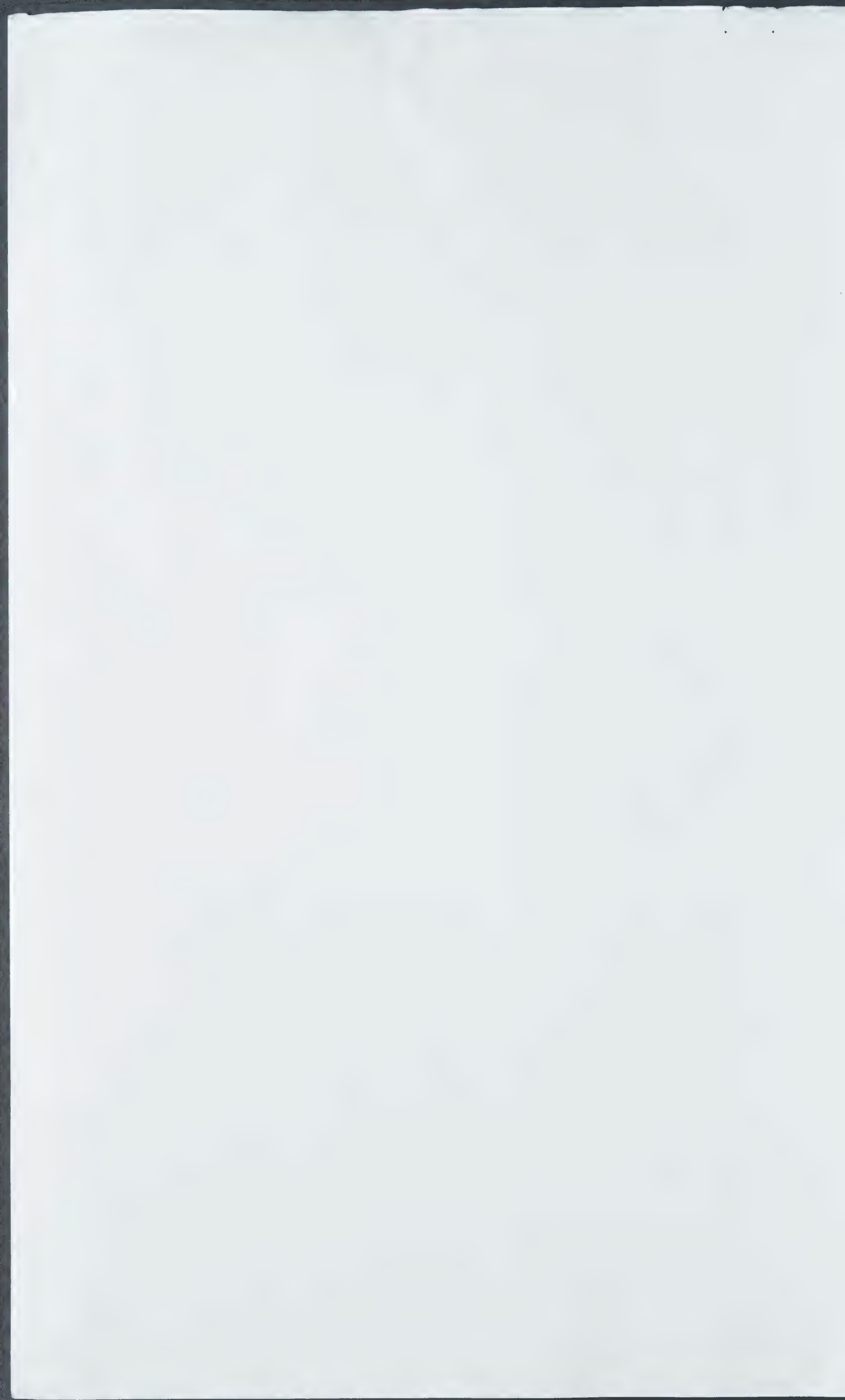
¹ For further details about the Cockshutt family, see Andrews, 1956, pp. 45 ff.

² For the early history of the Milnes family, see T. Wemyss Reid, *The Life, Letters, and Friendships of Richard Monckton Milnes, first Lord Houghton*, London, 1890, I, pp. 1-7. A number of members of the family was painted by Romney (see Ward & Roberts, 1904, II, p. 106).

³ See Appendix B under 'A Pairs of "Vesuvius" and "Girandola"', p. 279.

⁴ Farington Diary, p. 813, entry for 28th October 1796. The pictures must date from about 1789-90, judging from their position in the Account Book. In a postscript to a letter from Wright to Philips, 15th April 1791 (MS. Derby Public Library; passage not quoted by Bemrose, 1885, p. 64) he writes: 'The two landscapes were gone to Wakefield before I got Tate's letter'. They were presumably two of these. To these four he soon afterwards added a *Needwood Forest* of the same size. This cannot have been one of the four: the only one we are not certain Milnes bought—the midday Alpine scene—must in fact have belonged to the set, and not the sunny cottage scene in *Needwood Forest*, because Farington specifically states that the midday picture was an Italian view.

⁵ See letter of Wright to Daulby, 11th January 1780 (MS. Derby Public Library) quoted in Appendix B, under No. 16 where Wright announces: 'Mr. Milnes has been a great friend to me, having laid out wth me 7 or £800'. By 1780 it is not possible to account for more than £300 to £400 laid out by Milnes, but this is an argument in favour of the doubtful pictures having been acquired by him also.



Spanish ships, the ensuing conflagration in the harbour, the dramatic spectacle of the proud garrison standing back to survey the blaze. Hayley and Wright at once saw possibilities for the painter and before the end of that year were urging him to get on with it. But Wright, whose direct knowledge of the topography was limited to a journey through the Straits nearly ten years before, realised he could only do so with the assist of someone like Sir Roger Curtis who had played a heroic part in the defence of the B and—more important for his purposes—had made drawings of the Engagement:

'...could I be *certain*', he writes, 'S^r Roger Curtis, wou'd upon a personal application allow n use of his drawings & give me those aids he has others, I shou'd be tempted to set forwards immedy in spite of wind & weather, but if I shou'd be denied such advantages I shou'd make a more comfortable return home'.¹

1 Wright to Hayley, 9th January 1783; N.P.G. extra-illustrated Bemrose.

2 Wright to Hayley, 13th January 1783; Inglesfield MSS. Copley received the commission for this subject from the Corporation of the City of London in the early months of 1783. George Carter applied to the corporation for the commission, but just too late, after Copley had signed his agreement. Carter claimed he had finished his picture by then (March 1783) but was probably exaggerating. He also claimed that he had obtained information from Sir Roger Curtis, and he no doubt was one of the people Wright had in mind when writing to Hayley (see Jules D. Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, Cambridge, Mass., 1966, II, p. 312, note 1). Copley and Dominic Serres had also obtained information from Curtis for their pictures of the Siege (Prown, *op. cit.* II, p. 324). George Carter's picture is reproduced in T. H. McGuffie, *The Siege of Gibraltar, 1779-1783*, London, 1965, p. 161. For Copley's beautiful sketch of 1788 in the Thomas Coram Foundation for Children, see exh. catalogue 'John Singleton Copley', Washington, New York, Boston, 1965-6, p. 111. His final vast picture in the Guildhall was only completed in 1791.

3 Wright to Hayley, 31st August 1783; quoted Bemrose, 1885, p. 61.

4 Wright to Hayley of that date, N.P.G. extra-illustrated Bemrose.

5 Wright to Hayley, 17th February 1785; N.P.G. extra-illustrated Bemrose.

6 Catalogue entry for No. XXIV, Robins's Rooms, 1785.

7 See letters of 14th November 1785 and 14th January 1786 to Daulby, quoted by Bemrose, 1885, p. 86.

8 Letter to Hayley, 12th April 1786; N.P.G. extra-illustrated Bemrose: 'I have disposed of my picture of Gibraltar for 420 gs to a private Gent^l w^{ch} will spare me many an awkward sensation excited by the Idea of having it raffled for...'

He goes on to ask Hayley to find out whether Curtis would be willing to help, but him to make sharp: 'there is no time to be lost, as the Subject is by S^r Roger's assi already in the hands of several & will soon be a hackney'd one'.² It seems as though he received the help he needed from Curtis, for we find him writing a few months 'Perhaps, had I... been furnished with proper materials for the action off Gibra should have begun my fire; but for want of such instructions, I soon sank into my w torpor again...'³

He worked hard on the picture during 1784, as far as failing health and torpor permit, finishing it on 17th February of the following year.⁴ He was worried ab ignorance of Naval affairs and wondered whether he would come in for criticism o score:

'...I am unacquainted wth naval business have therefore had many difficulties to combat if I could have foreseen, wou'd have deterred me from the prosecution of the work. After a it is not the picture you expect to see, as the action is not principal & at too great a distance criminate particulars, even the men in the Gunboats that lie just off the New Mole (w^{ch} mak dark foreground to the picture) are not more than an inch high. however the floating Bat different degrees of burning make a fine blaze, & illuminate in a striking manner the nob of Gib...'⁵

Wright had the idea of painting two pictures as companions: in the first (the o executed) 'to represent an extensive view of the scenery combined with the action' second 'to make the action his principal object'.⁶ He also thought of raffling the p but was relieved of this necessity by the appearance of Maecenas in the guise o Milnes who carted the vast canvas off to Yorkshire,⁸ paying him a more handsom for it than he had received for any other work.

It would not be correct to treat Cockshutt and Milnes as though they were se men. Behind them both lies a tradition of ease, of some inherited culture, and thou came from families of industrialists, there is no essential difference, as far as patrona arts is concerned, between them and some of the landed gentry whose careers v already outlined. When we turn to Roe, the Hurts, the Oldknows, Strutt a wright, we find ourselves up against quite a new type with no background except and struggle. They had been too busy pushing their way up to find time for the ment of the spirit by art. But once they had sorted themselves out from others v struggled with equal tenacity but through a combination of mismanagement luck had come to grief, had reason to be proud of their achievement, and wished immortalised, not by *banditti* plotting vengeance at the entrance to some sun-d cavern, nor by naval tactics in some distant bay, but in the shape of their own bod example to their descendants. Had Wright painted the portraits of Cockshutt and he would doubtless have detected some traces of refinement which would have his turning a blind eye to what was actually there. With these new sitters, as with t chants on Merseyside, there was no getting away from the facts.

Charles Roe (1715-81) is a copybook example of the self-made man [Plate 201

245 THE SIEGE OF
GIBRALTAR

(untraced, ? destroyed)

The Siege of Gibraltar Sold to M^r. John Milnes, £420. Milnes still owed him 10 guineas for it on 15th September 1787, having bought it before 12th April 1786.

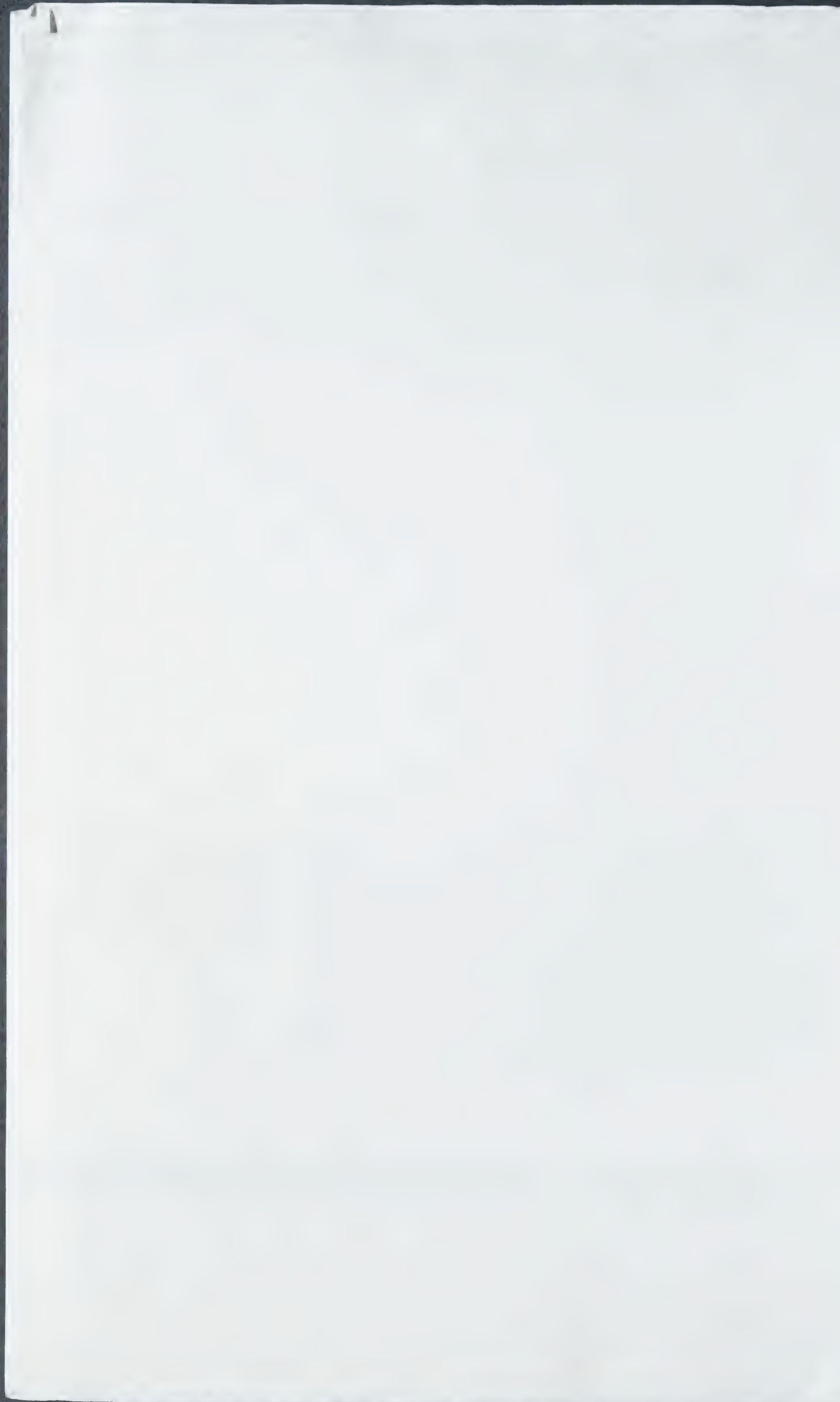
PROVENANCE John Milnes of Wakefield; Milnes Sale, Egremont House, Piccadilly June 1806 (60), bt. Vernon, a Liverpool merchant (according to Farington, Diary, entry 26th June 1806, p. 3337) for £71.18; Lord Overstone (1857).

EXHIBITIONS Robins' Rooms, 1785 (24); Manchester Art Treasures, 1857 (81). Wright already had the idea of doing the picture by the beginning of 1783 but it was not completed until 17th February 1785. pp 16, 131⁷, 154, 1

£1000 on the whole collection—more than any other single patron—which occupied more wall-space even than the Wright collections of Benjamin Bates and Arkwright.⁵

We know more about the genesis of the *View of Gibraltar during the destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries* (Cat No 245) than about any other picture except the *Corinthian Maid* and his scene from *The Tempest*, but in its absence it would be depressing to enter into too many details. One is not grateful to, but curses, the guide who points at the blank walls of the Palais des Papes at Avignon and goes into raptures about frescoes that are no longer there. A few facts only need be recorded. On 13th September 1782 the British garrison at Gibraltar decisively defeated the Spanish floating batteries, thereby restoring some of that British prestige which had been shaken by the loss of the American colonies. The news had the same effect on public opinion in England as the Suez operation of 1956 would have had, if it had proved a triumph instead of a dismal failure. The subject was an obvious one for any history painter following in the footsteps of Benjamin West, and most of all for Wright whose speciality was fire, and who could visualise the contribution he alone could make to the events of that memorable day: the firing of red-hot missiles at the

⁵ See letter of Wright to Daulby, 11th January 1780 (MS. Derby Public Library) quoted in Appendix B, under No. 16 where Wright announces: 'Mr. Milnes has been a great friend to me, having laid out wth me 7 or £800'. By 1780 it is not possible to account for more than £300 to £400 laid out by Milnes, but this is an argument in favour of the doubtful pictures having been acquired by him also.



July 14, 1969

Mrs. Marie Z. Uihlein
1009 North Jackson Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Dear Mrs. Uihlein:

I am exceptionally delighted to acknowledge receipt of the check from the distribution of the Charleston Foundation which you forwarded with your kind letter of the 7th. It was a very nice gesture on Miss Uihlein's part and I am quite sure that we can find an appropriate acquisition in the near future. It is always gratifying to me when the Art Center can play an important part in perpetuating the memory of a good friend.

I am particularly grateful to you for your part in this gift, and the more so since I may have been derelict in following up on our several brief conversations with regard to Miss Uihlein's passing and her interest in Villa Terrace. I was, however, leaving this to your convenience.

Josephine McGeoch has reported to me with great enthusiasm your generosity toward to Antiquarian Society's project for which I also extend my own gratitude. There is a long-range activity which will continue to play an important role in our decorative arts program.

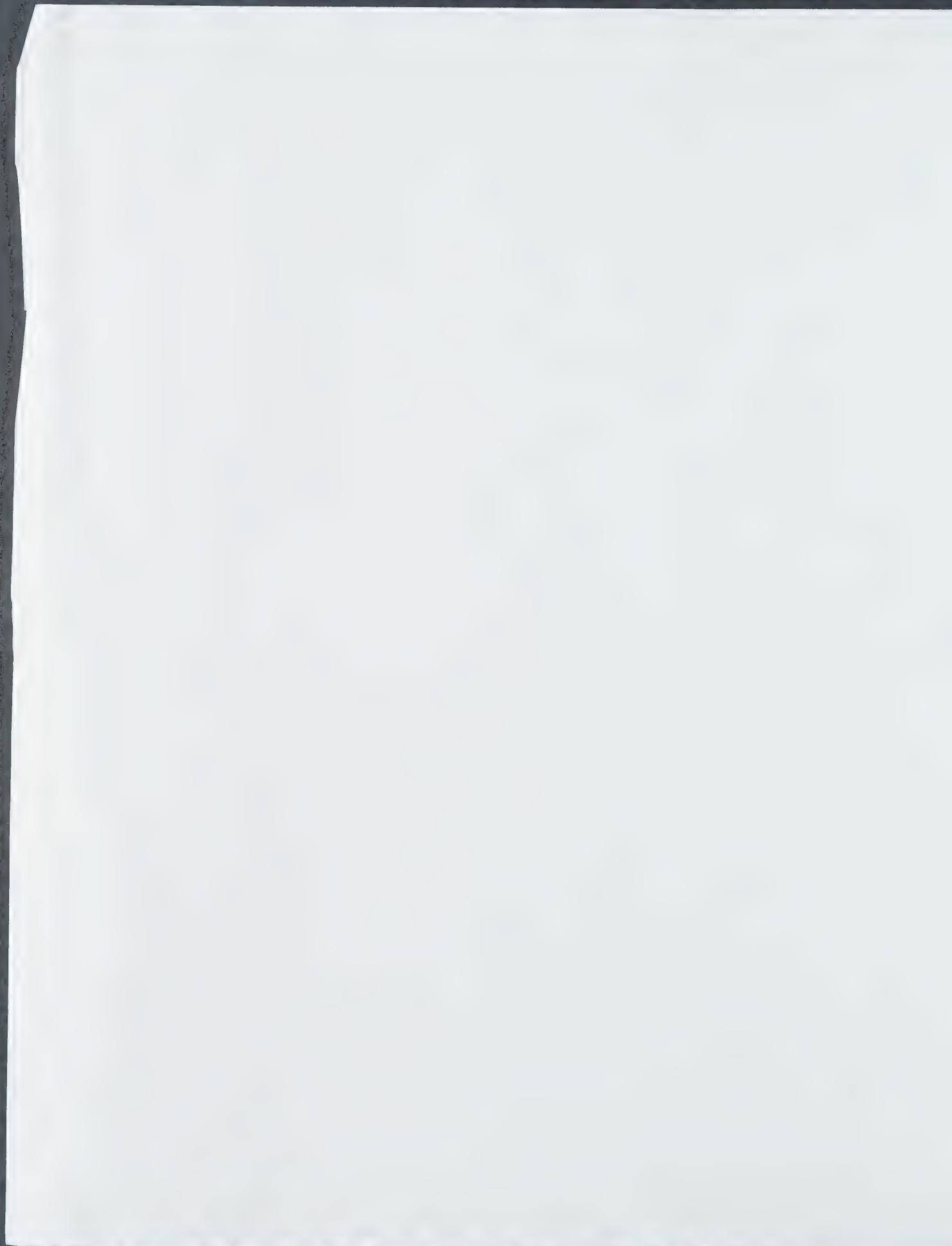
Please be assured that I continue to remain at your convenience, if I can render any service, and once again my very best thanks both personally and on behalf of the Art Center for your great and continued interest.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Tracy Atkinson
Director

TA/bp



MARIE Z. UHLEIN
1009 NORTH JACKSON STREET
MILWAUKEE
WIS. 53202

July 7, 1969

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

Dear Mr. Atkinson:

I am pleased to enclose herewith a Charleston Foundation check in the amount of \$25,000.00. The Charleston Foundation is a charitable foundation created by the late Miss Paula Uihlein.

Prior to her passing she requested that certain institutions and interests be remembered at the time of the liquidation of this foundation. In accordance with her wishes the Milwaukee Art Center is receiving this contribution, and with it go our best wishes for the future development of the Center.

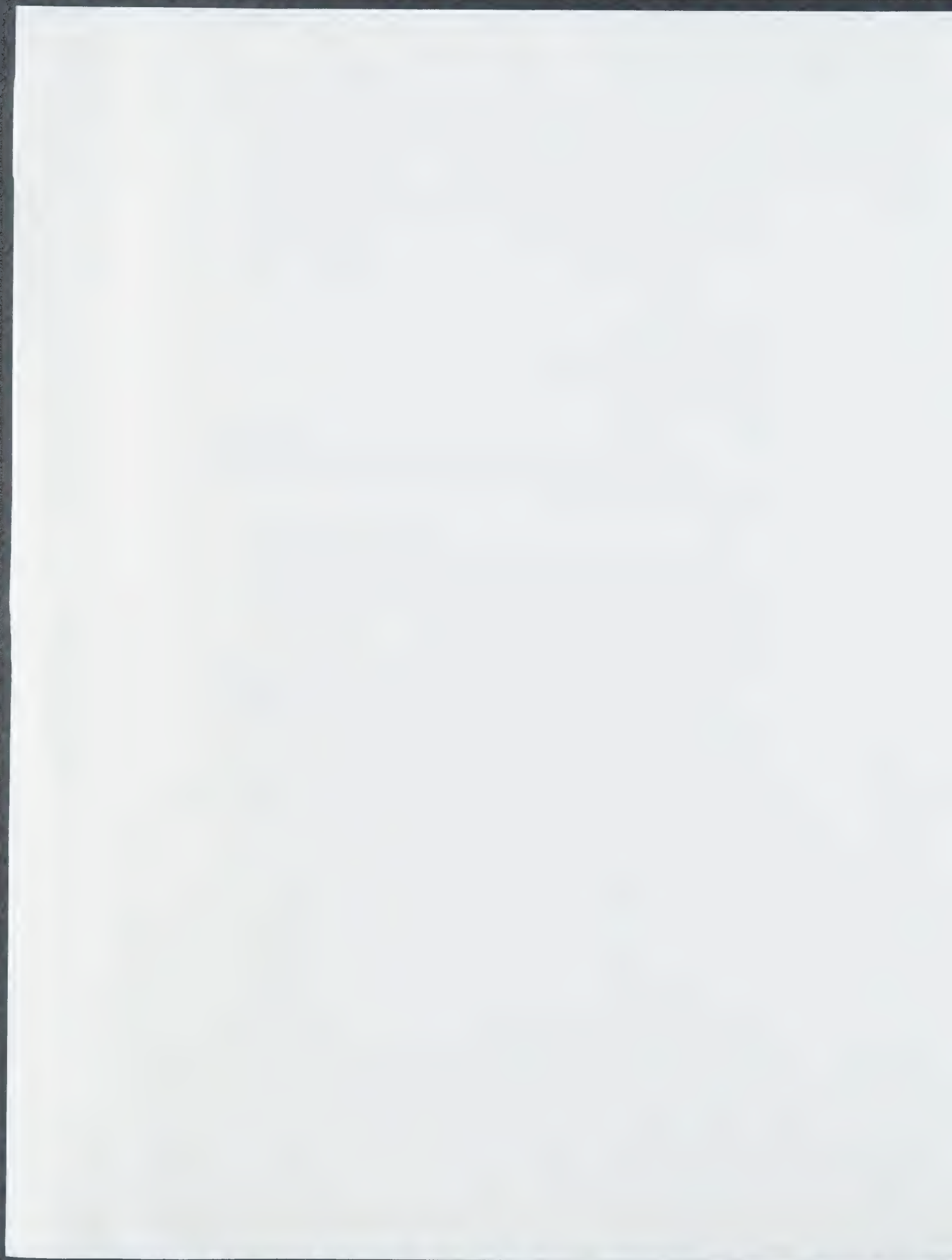
Perhaps consideration might be given to the purchase of an object of art or painting which might serve as a permanent memorial to Miss Uihlein. I would welcome your thoughts.

Sincerely,

Marie Z. Uihlein

MZU:eb
enclosure - check #1255

JUL 8 1969



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 50"

Provenance: from the Ehrlich 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
Ehrlich Galleries and Mr. Albert Rosenthal, are attached.

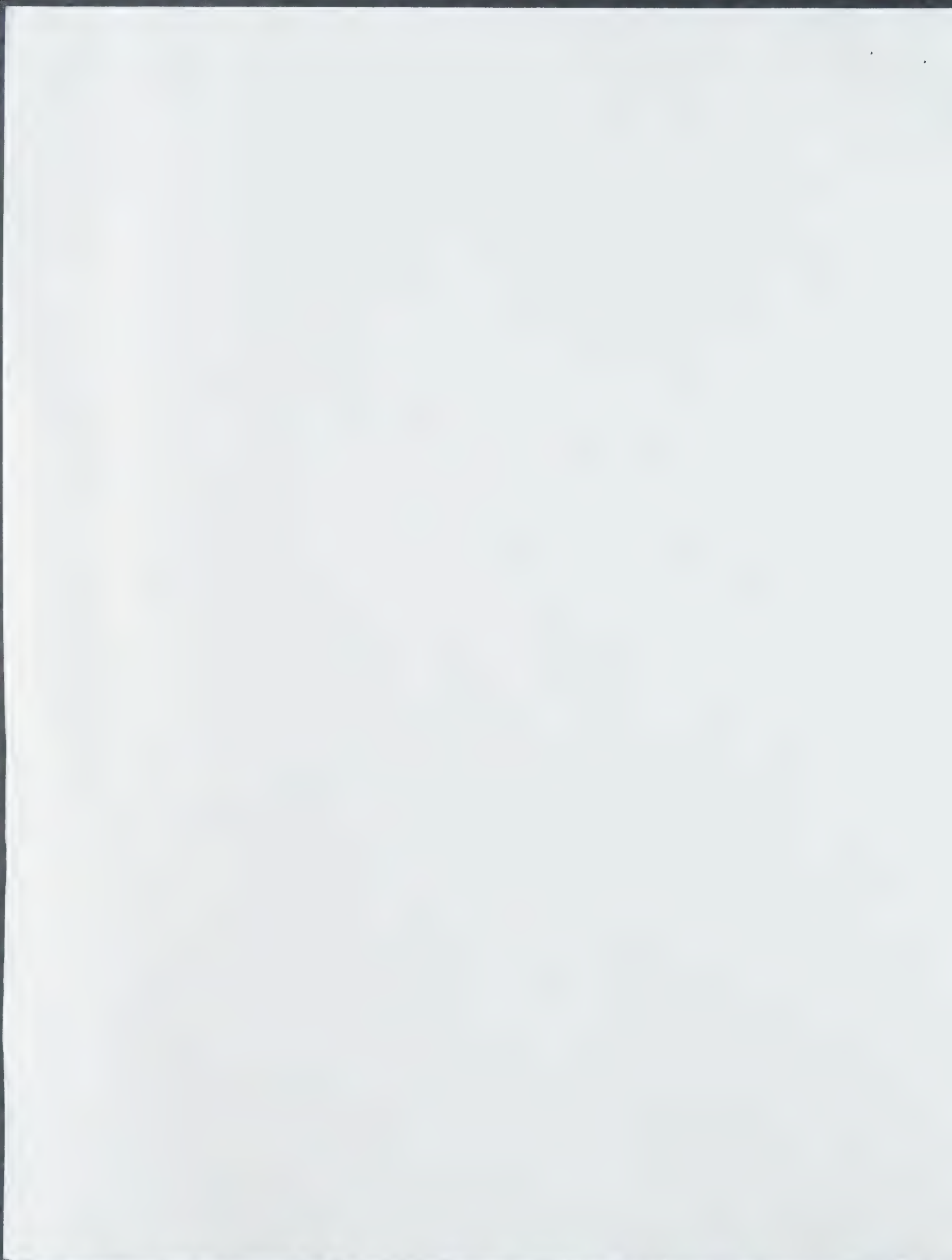
Price: \$30,000.00

Alfred Feder, Esq. D.

OK ju.

cl no 19677

3/26/73





ALFRED BADER CORPORATION

F I N E A R T S

2961 NORTH SHEPARD AVENUE • MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53211

March 15, 1973

Mr. Morgan
Treasurer
Milwaukee Art Center
750 North Lincoln Memorial Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Dear Mr. Morgan:

Please note that this is now long overdue.

Yours sincerely,

Alfred Bader

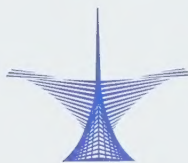
AB/de

*Invoice was delivered by hand
to Mr. Atkinson.*

OK

*3/19/73
Ball*





MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM

Dr. Boder,

Please find enclosed a copy
of our file on Pa Wright of
Dorcy.

Thank you for looking back
and not rushing me to
Dr. Schwackenberg. He was
cheerful and very helpful.

Jennie Wind

