

Alfred Baber Fonds

Chemistry and Art  
More Adventures of a Chemist Collector

Adventures II -  
Pudens

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	
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ALFRED BADER FINE ARTS

ALFRED BADER

[www.alfredbader.com](http://www.alfredbader.com)

ESTABLISHED 1961

July 30, 2004

Mr. George Gordon, Senior Director  
Old Master Paintings  
**Sotheby's London**  
34-35 New Bond Street  
London W1A 2AA  
ENGLAND

Dear George,

Enclosed is a very rough draft of my essay about the Rubens, for my next autobiography.

Am I correct in thinking that Steven Wynn bought the Vermeer?

Surprisingly, I have not heard from the people in Liverpool who now own the painting which I bought in 1952. Could you give me their name and address?

With thanks for all your help and with best wishes I remain

Yours sincerely,

Alfred Bader  
AB/az  
Enc.

*By Appointment Only*

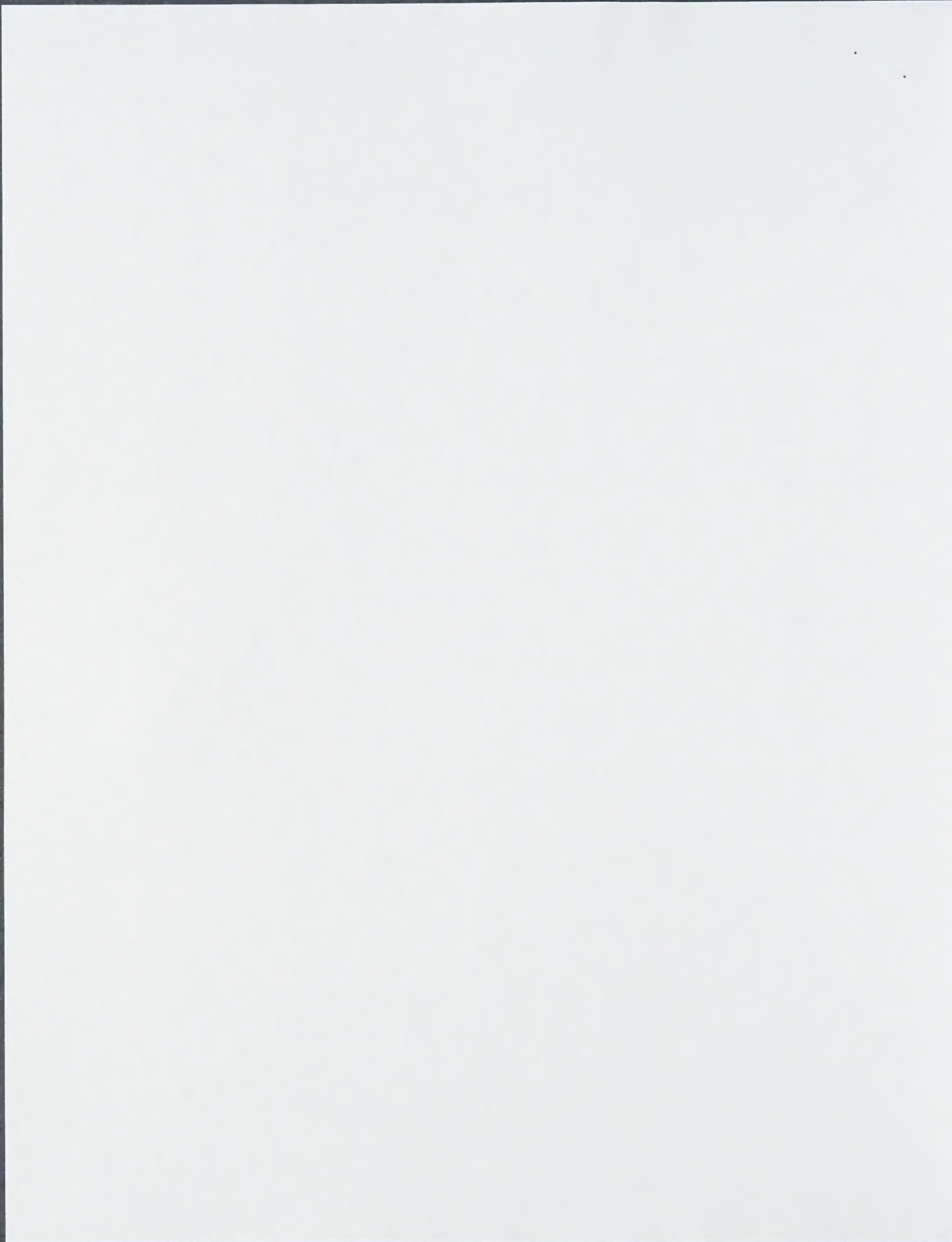
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The first painting I ever bought at auction was an oil on canvas depicting an old woman with a candle, purchased for £27 at Christie's in London during my honeymoon in July 1952. The seller, Lord Mackintosh of Halifax, wrote to me, "I bought this picture in London nearly thirty years ago and always thought it was by Wright of Derby, but of course you know he specialised in candle-light pictures. I sent it with another Wright of Derby to the Bicentenary exhibition in his native town of Derby. The authorities there said it was a Jacob Jordeans and showed it as such in the Exhibition and it has always been accepted as such ever since."

But it wasn't by Wright of Derby or by Jacob Jordaens; it was an old copy after a painting on panel by Rubens which was on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston between 1948 and 1965. Still, I enjoyed looking at my painting, but eventually gave it to a school in Milwaukee which sent it to a local auction where it sold for \$7,000. The school was happy and so was I. In 1952 I could have bought a better painting, an original, for £27, but we all make mistakes, and all is well that ends well.

When I went to London to view the old master sales at Sotheby's in December 2003, George Gordon showed me the Rubens original which he hoped would come up for sale in July. What a difference between this original and my copy. The original <sup>(fig. )</sup> includes a boy lighting a candle from that of the old woman

The following text is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a document page with multiple paragraphs of text, but the content cannot be discerned due to the low contrast and blurriness of the scan. The text is organized into several distinct blocks, likely representing paragraphs or sections of a report or letter.

and shows a clear pentimenti of the old woman's left hand which had originally been painted higher. The painting is on five pieces of wood, a clear indication that Rubens painted this not for sale but for his own enjoyment, and it is included, as no. 125, in the posthumous inventory of pictures found in Rubens' house in 1640.

Rubens painted this around 1616 and etched the subject around 1621. The counterproof of the first date is inscribed in Rubens' own hand, in Latin, which translates to "Light can be taken a thousand times from another light without diminishing it."

Of course I told George Gordon how much I liked this painting and about the first painting I had ever bought at auction. In March 2004 George confirmed that it would be included in Sotheby's London sale on the evening of July 7, 2004 and before that would be exhibited in New York where Otto Naumann was able to examine it carefully.

Sotheby's catalog described the painting, lot 30, in six carefully written pages with three photographs. Among the many copies, mine in Milwaukee in 1953 was included. I simply could not understand the estimate, £2-3 million. Two years earlier, on July 10, 2002, Rubens' Massacre of the Innocents, wonderfully well painted but what a ghastly subject, had sold for a hammer price of £45 million. I would much rather look at this wonderful night scene - one of Rubens' few night scenes - like the Massacre painted entirely by Rubens, without workshop involvement- but for his own enjoyment. Otto thought that he could sell it profitably if we could buy it for £4 million, but I doubted that it would sell that inexpensively.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It covers both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, highlighting the strengths and limitations of each.

The third part of the document focuses on the interpretation and analysis of the collected data. It discusses how to identify patterns, trends, and correlations, and how to draw meaningful conclusions from the results.

The fourth part of the document addresses the practical aspects of data management and storage. It provides guidance on how to organize, store, and retrieve data efficiently, ensuring its integrity and security.

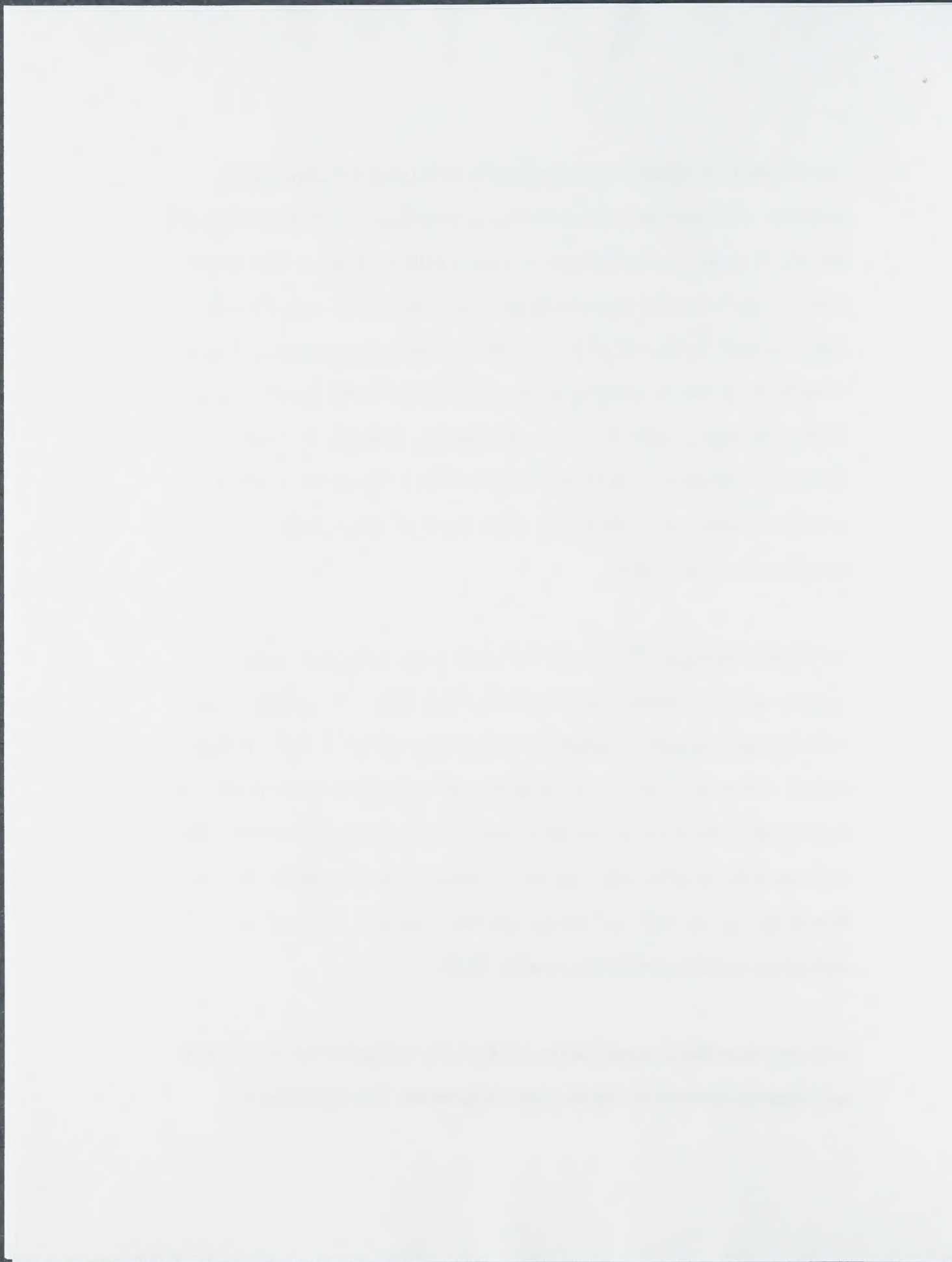
The final part of the document concludes with a summary of the key findings and recommendations. It emphasizes the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of the data management system.



As at the sale of the Massacre of the Innocents in 2002, Henry Wyndham was the auctioneer. Once again the room was packed, not in anticipation of the Rubens this time, but of lot 8, a small painting, said to be by Vermeer and if so, the last Vermeer not in a museum. I did not like the painting at all and thought that, if by Vermeer, it was his weakest, most ill drawn work, yet Rob Noortman told me on the day of the sale that he wanted to buy it. He was indeed the underbidder to a phone bidder talking to Steven Wynn in Las Vegas, who has bought several old masters, including a Rembrandt and a Rubens from Otto and me, and the rather mediocre early Rembrandt self-portrait that came up at Sotheby's in London in 2003. Wynn paid £16.2 million, more for the name than the quality of the Vermeer.

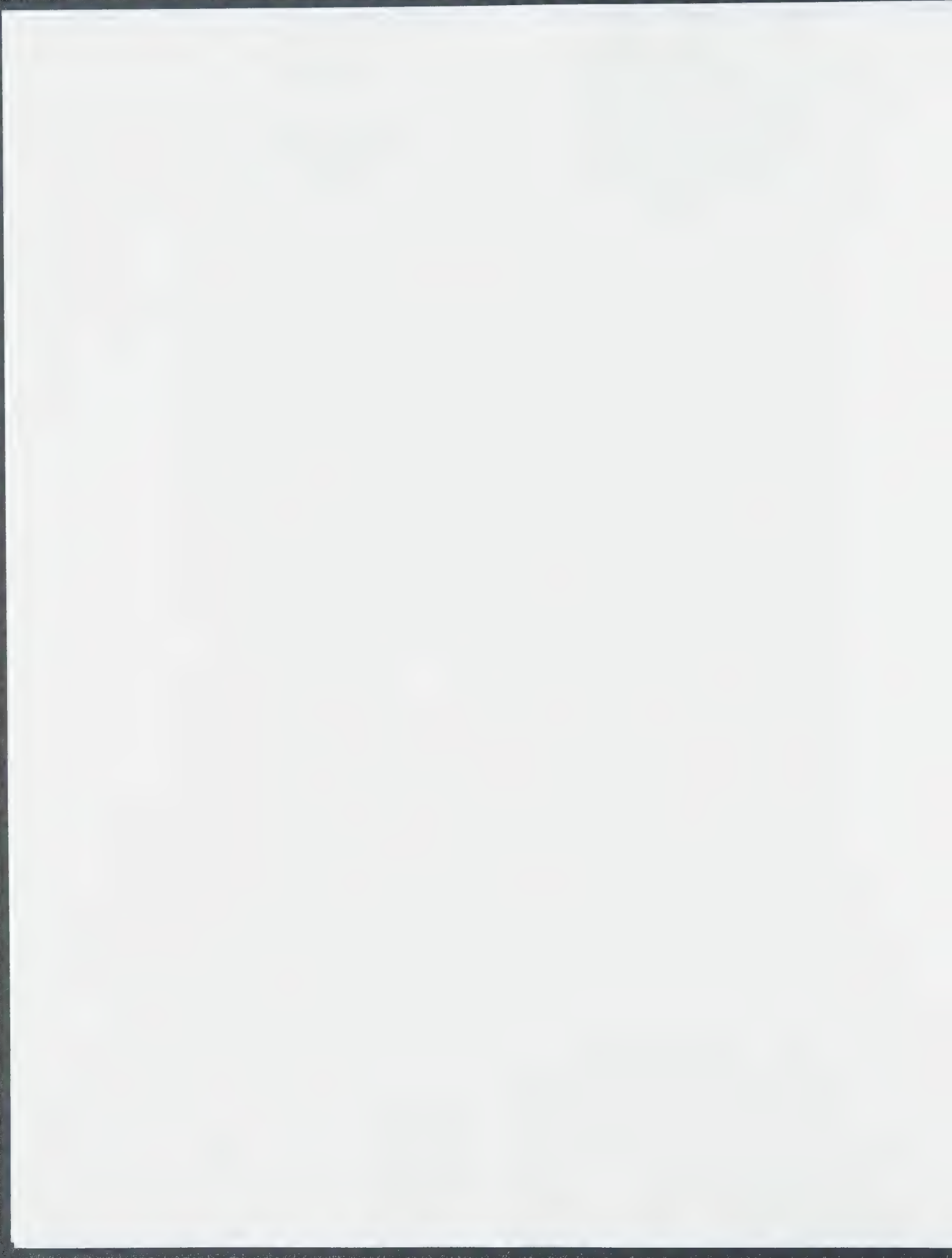
Of the first 29 paintings in the sale, ten were bought back, but that wasn't going to happen to lot 30, the Rubens. There was only one other bidder, on the telephone, and Henry Wyndham knocked the painting down to me at £2.2 million, much to my happy surprise. I was also interested in the lot that followed, a magnificent head of Jesus with the crown of thorns, by Lucas Cramach the Elder, estimated at £100,000-150,000. This is not a painting that either Otto or I could sell, but our friends, the Arnoldi-Livies in Munich, thought they might and I had agreed to bid to £200,000. But many others admired this wonderful head which soared to £600,000.

I also very much liked one other painting, the head of an old man by Jan Lievens, from the collection of the late D.G. van Benuingen in Rotterdam. It was estimated at



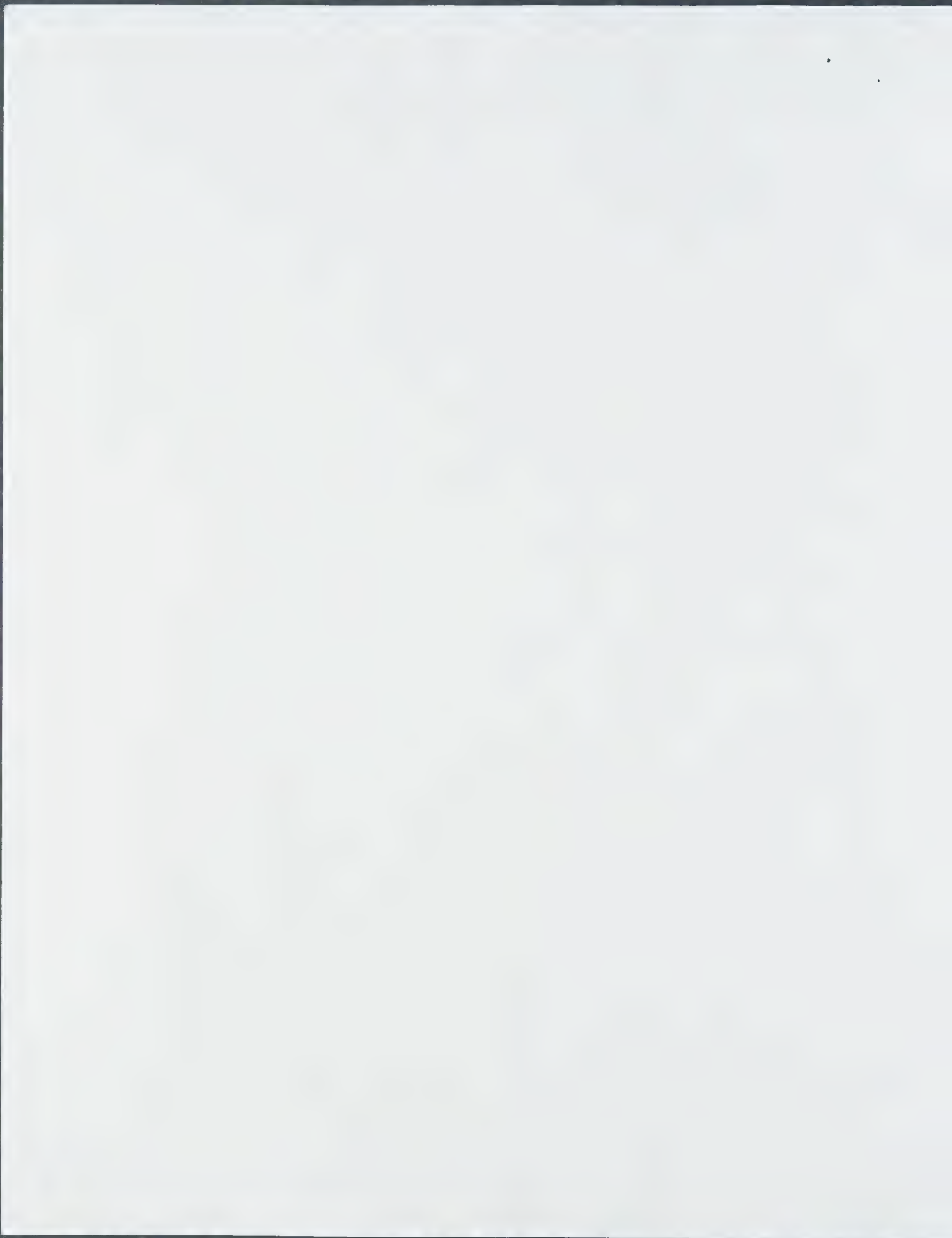
£200,000-300,000, but there were many bidders, two of them particularly determined, with Johnny Van Haeften (bidding with Richard Green) succeeding at £1,650,000, a record price for a Jan Lievens. With commission the price was well over \$3 million.

For years I have been writing (see pp.216-217 of my autobiography) and lecturing about Jan Lievens, called "Ein Maler im Schatten Rembrandts", a painter in the shadow of Rembrandt. Well, I believe the shadow is in our minds. Lievens was a great painter and not just while close to Rembrandt in Leiden. Over the last forty years I have bought ten paintings by Lievens, most for just a few thousand dollars, and three of these ten I have given to Queen's. Some of these ten - one of Rembrandt's mother, for instance, and another of St. Paul, I like even better than the painting of the old man which brought a record price. I am so happy to see Lievens coming out of Rembrandt's shadow and look forward to a "Lievens in America" exhibition which the Milwaukee Art Museum is considering.



The first painting I ever bought at auction was an oil on canvas <sup>(Fig. )</sup>depicting an old woman with a basket, shielding a candle with her hand, purchased for £28 at Sotheby's in London during my honeymoon, on July 23, 1952. This lot 153, was just called Jordaens, not J. Jordaens or Jacob Jordaens, indicating that Sotheby's did not think it to be by Jordaens. The seller, Lord Mackintosh of Halifax, wrote to me, "I bought this picture in London nearly thirty years ago and always thought it was by Wright of Derby, but of course you know he specialised in candle-light pictures. I sent it with another Wright of Derby to the Bi-centenary exhibition in his native town of Derby. The authorities there said it was a Jacob Jordaens and showed it as such in the Exhibition and it has always been accepted as such ever since."

But it wasn't by Wright of Derby or by Jacob Jordaens; nor was it by Rubens as Professor Erik Larsen alleged in an expertise written in 1956. It was an old copy after a painting on panel by Rubens which was on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston between 1948 and 1965. Still, I enjoyed looking at my painting, but eventually gave it to a school in Milwaukee which sent it to a local auction in November 1965 where it sold for \$7,000. The school was happy and so was I. In 1952 I could have bought a better painting, an original, for £28, but we all make mistakes, and all is well that ends well.

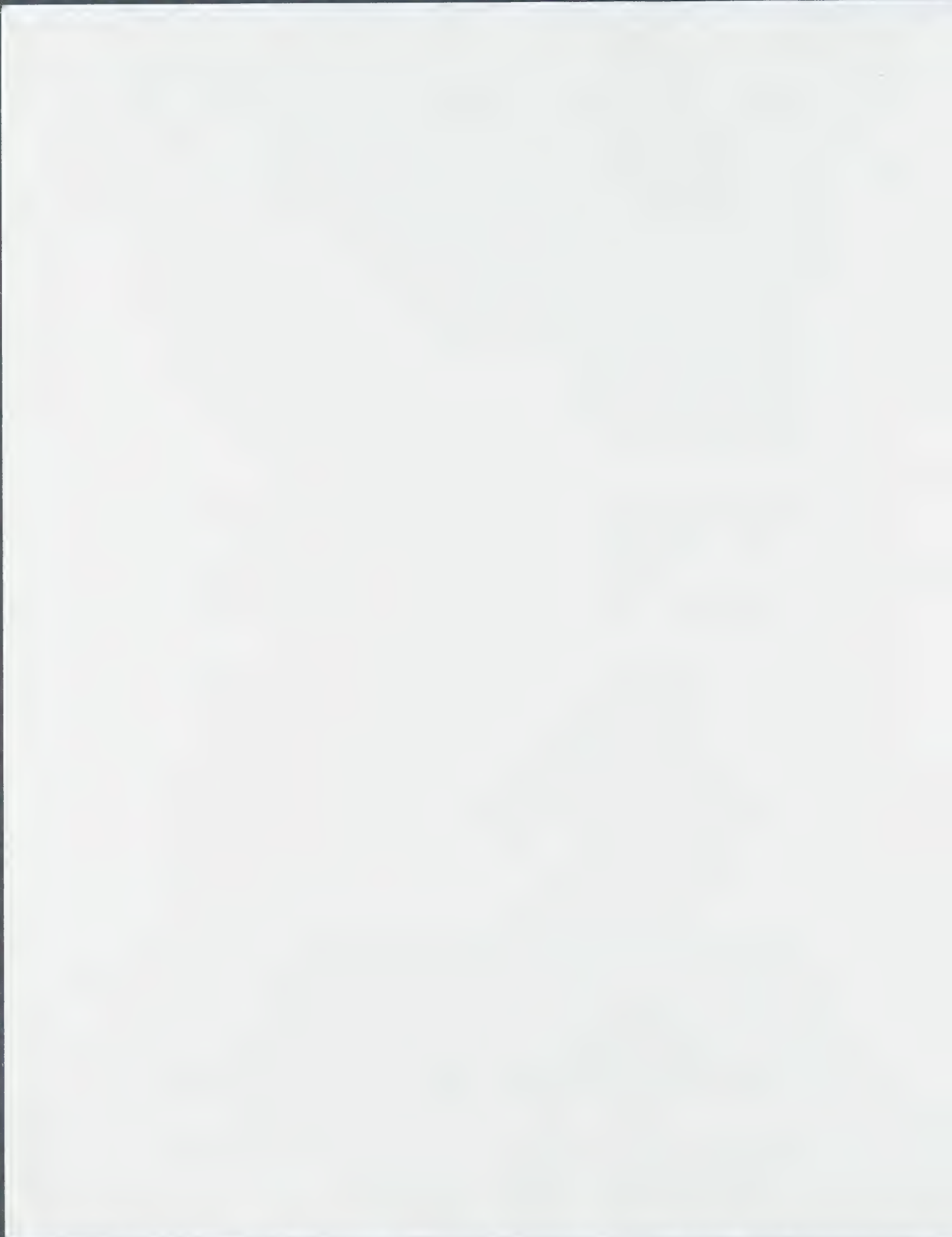


When I went to London to view the old master sales at Sotheby's in December 2003, George Gordon showed me the Rubens original which he hoped would come up for sale in July. What a difference between this original and my copy. The original (fig. ) includes a boy lighting a candle from that of the old woman and shows a clear pentiment of the old woman's left hand which had originally been painted higher. The work is on five pieces of wood, a clear indication that Rubens painted this not for sale but for his own enjoyment, and it is included, as no. 125, in the posthumous inventory of pictures found in his house in 1640.

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Tension in the salesroom eased after this and bidding was rather slow. Ten of the first 29 paintings in the sale were bought back, but that wasn't going to happen to lot 30, the Rubens. There was only one other bidder, on the telephone, and Henry Wyndham knocked the painting down to me at £2.2 million, much to my happy surprise. But I was not so fortunate with the lot that followed, a magnificent head of Jesus with the crown of thorns, by Lucas Cranach the Elder, estimated at £100,000-150,000. This is not a painting that either Otto or I could sell, but our friends, the Arnoldi-Livies in Munich, thought they might and I had agreed to bid to £200,000. But many others admired this wonderful head which soared to £600,000.

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There was one other painting, the head of an old man by Jan Lievens, from the collection of the late D.G. van Beuningen in Rotterdam that I found very beautiful. It was estimated at £200,000-300,000, but there were many bidders, two of them particularly determined. It finally went to Johnny Van Haefen (bidding with Richard Green) for £1,650,000, a record price for a Jan Lievens. With commission the price was well over \$3 million.

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In addition, the document provides a detailed overview of the different types of records that should be maintained, including financial statements, contracts, and correspondence. It also discusses the importance of regularly reviewing and updating these records to ensure that they remain current and relevant. The document further explains how these records can be used to identify trends, make informed decisions, and resolve any disputes that may arise.

Finally, the document offers practical advice on how to implement an effective record-keeping system. It suggests that businesses should invest in the right tools and software to streamline the process and reduce the risk of errors. It also stresses the importance of training staff on the proper use of these tools and ensuring that everyone is aware of the importance of maintaining accurate records. By following these guidelines, businesses can ensure that they are always up-to-date and ready to handle any challenges that may come their way.