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**THE ENGLISH LANDSCAPE, MODERNITY AND
THE RURAL SCENE ~ 1890-1914**

Ysanne Hope Holt

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the
University of Northumbria at Newcastle
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with artists' representations of the English landscape and rural scenery from the last decade of the nineteenth century up to the outbreak of war in 1914. While isolated aspects of the period in relation to landscape painting have been explored in the form of individual monographs and exhibition catalogues, there have been no overall studies. Equally there has been no sustained attempt to examine the close interconnections between depictions of the rural, and experiences of modernity and the urban that characterise these years. As a result there has been no opportunity to explore the different and complex ways in which ideals of Englishness were negotiated over time amongst a diverse group of painters. This thesis is a contribution to a debate which has emerged in other disciplines and in work within other art historical periods, an investigation of the role of paintings, their public reception and critical interpretation, in the context of the contemporary production and reinforcement of ideas about race, national identity and the construction of native traditions. The paintings discussed here of Stott, Clausen, Steer, John, Knight, Tuke, Gore, Spencer and Nash have all been selected because in different ways, they exemplify the diverse strands of the debate about Englishness around turn of the century.

In order to engage properly with the broader effects of these representations, this thesis explores related areas of enquiry about the significance of ruralism and the countryside, as they have emerged in social and rural history, cultural studies, as well as current investigations in the fields of cultural geography and the study of tourism. These areas establish the centrality of ideas about the rural as a focus for unity and order, and as a site upon which imaginative solutions to the problems of modernity could be developed, in ways that have been left out of art historical accounts of the period as a whole. A fundamental aim here is the study of the cumulative effects, by 1914, of a consistent commodification of the countryside and of its populations by and for urban spectators.

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An Introduction for Landscape and Modernity

In 1904, in an unprecedented foray into the field of contemporary painting, *The Connoisseur* published a survey on the current state of 'Landscape in England'. Its author, Adam Palgrave, characterised the range of work currently being produced. Alfred East, for example, 'has a certain voluptuousness of line which is very grand and imposing'. Wilson Steer 'is interesting, but too - self conscious, often amusing in his endeavors to be peculiar. (Ernest) Waterlow is intensely English, dreams of moorland roads, green sheltered pastures, and lonely churches', and so on. Individual painters could now be perceived in terms of specific schools, like 'the Vibrant School' of Mark Fisher which, 'sprang by way of Corot and Diaz, through Monet and the French Impressionists, and had arrived with a good footing into English landscape art'. Then there were those painters, most favoured by Palgrave, like Clausen and La Thangue, who people the landscape with 'the figures of the country'. The 'village painters, by the sea and in the country', like Stanhope Forbes, are regarded as rather too prosaic and journalistic, and Frank Bramley 'has painted one picture and many canvases'. Older artists like the still practising Benjamin Williams Leader, are to be dismissed, 'They are the producers of nature's fashion plates, the high priests of the common place, the chatterers in holy places'. With these exceptions, Palgrave was proud of the national school of landscape, each aspect of rural England now had its 'poet and its painter', and its members were able to 'arrest the winds, stay the sun in its course, halt the growing flower, putting them down in paint for the freshening of our tired eyes and jaded brains. So is England painted, so are we the better for it'.¹

By the turn of the century in England, the sheer abundance of landscape paintings and rural scenes to be viewed in popular exhibitions at the Royal Academy, at alternative venues like the Royal Society of British Artists, the New English Art Club and the Society of Landscape Painters, and at the proliferating provincial galleries, illustrates the extent to which painters, engaged in representing the countryside, were producing images that were essentially fantasies and were

¹ *The Connoisseur*, Vol. IX, 1904, pp.135-143

endlessly appealing.² It is important, therefore, that landscape be viewed not as an absolute given, a thing out there, but as an aesthetic category or discursive object. As one writer has pointed out, landscape in itself does not exist, it can only be perceived, 'no-one ever digs the landscape or, as he falls into a peat-bog, damns the landscape for the dirt and the wet'.³ For another, W J T Mitchell, summing up recent approaches to the subject, 'landscape is a cultural medium - it naturalizes a cultural and social construction, representing an artificial world as if it were simply given and inevitable'.⁴ Mitchell's own aim was to change the word itself from a noun to a verb. We should think of landscape, 'not as an object to be seen or a text to be read, but as a process by which social and subjective tendencies are formed'.⁵

The painters I consider offered framable views of nature, supporting and conditioned by the same sets of values and assumptions as the particular middle class urban markets on which they depended for their livelihood and critical acclaim. Showing regularly at London or provincial exhibitions and illustrated widely in periodicals, their images were responsible not just for reflecting but also for forming knowledge and views of the countryside from within the city. There is, in this respect, a circuitous relationship between the perceptions of painters, purchasers, spectators and tourists, of the countryside. One crucial, common element in this relationship is the ideological refusal of actual rural and agricultural conditions. As Raymond Williams once observed, there is an important distinction between 'a real history of the land and an ideological history

² One typical review of 'A Society of Landscape Painters', stated that the 'steady advance of landscape painting during the last few years has been, and still is, one of the most interesting movements of English art. We now have a brilliant band of comparatively young men producing works which worthily sustain the best traditions of English landscape art', Arthur Fish, *The Magazine of Art*, 1899, pp.218-221. A survey of the pages of *Royal Academy Illustrated* magazines during the period of this study reveal that consistently over a third of the works were of landscape or rustic scenes. At the same time treatises on landscape painting technique, like Alfred East's *Landscape Painting in Oil Colour*, 1906 and surveys like Lewis Hind's *Landscape Painting* were being published.

³ Adam Nicholson, introduction to *Towards a New Landscape*, Bernard Jacobson, Ltd., 1993, pp.9-10

⁴ W J Mitchell, *Landscape and Power*, University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp.1-2

⁵ *Ibid.*

of landscape'.⁶ To extend his remark to its rightful conclusion, the history of landscape painting has been deeply duplicitous.

Landscape paintings functioned in a similar way to that which, by this period, had already developed into a considerable industry, the production of rural guide books, country literature and periodicals, like Edward Hudson's *Country Life*, which first appeared in 1897, and the publishing activities of the Homeland Association.⁷ As a contemporary commentator remarked, there were by this time several thousand volumes being written annually, all to varying degrees of merit, and all 'up to the neck in the country', of verse, novels, natural history, topography, histories in general, books about rural activities, about rural sports, about houses and gardens etc, specifically directed to 'the villa residents and the more numerous others living in London or on London'. Many, like those of W H Hudson or Ralph Hodgson, were 'of profound literary expression', but 'crowds are written to order'.⁸ Literary or artistic expression and subjectivity was essential and readily admitted. As J J Hissey, in his book *Untravelled England* declared, 'To thoroughly enjoy the country one must needs look upon it with an artist's or a poet's eye, (the painter) casts a glamour over all he observes till the reality becomes a romance - the ugly fades away and only an impression of beauty remains'.⁹

⁶ See essay by Williams in Simon Pugh (ed), *Reading Landscape, Country, City, Capital*, Manchester University Press, 1990, p.5. As Peter Howard pointed out, Williams' studies maintained a powerful impact on those rural, cultural and art historians who accepted his assertion that the social relations and the means of production associated with capitalism should be the rationale behind all histories of the city and the country, see 'That Arty Stuff', *Landscape Research*, Vol.18, 1993, pp.55-6. Such thinking has already informed important works like John Barrell's, *The Dark Side of the Landscape*, Cambridge, 1980 and Ann Bermingham's *Landscape and Ideology - The English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860*, Thames and Hudson, 1987, and reflects the development away from the deeply embedded formalist readings of art history to take place in the 1970s.

⁷ The Homeland Association was founded in 1896. Its aim to foster greater knowledge and appreciation of British towns and the countryside. In the 1890s the Association began to publish guide books and practical information for those anxious to move out of inner city areas, an activity that was greatly extended in the inter war period.

⁸ Mary Stratton, ed., *The Country*, Fellowship Books, c.1912, pp.36-39

⁹ Published by MacMillan, 1906, p.93

Artists' relations to contemporary anti-urbanist discourse are fundamental. By 1905, the 'Back to Nature', 'Back to the Land' or 'Simple Life' movements, emanating largely from the Arts and Crafts movement of the 1880s and 90s, had become so widespread and diffuse that they were being regularly satirized in *Punch* cartoons, where they replaced the more usual attacks on urban aesthetes.¹⁰ A large number of city dwellers with virtually no experience of life outside the urban centres, still maintained a loathing for city life, and painters reinforced this widespread and fashionable pastoralism. To an important extent, all of their representations of rural life were mediated through metropolitan ideals and aesthetic codes which were ultimately more or less acceptable to critics of varying cultural and political positions.¹¹

By this date the English countryside was widely perceived to be a national asset. It was already regarded as 'heritage', as the establishment of the National Trust in 1895 indicates.¹² Ten years before this date, one critic, discussing the work of Benjamin Leader, defined the relationship that clearly existed in a large section of the public's mind between land, the countryside and nation:

A long national history and the immemorial laws and traditions that rule over the hamlet, the parish, the fold and field, and the river have had their slow but sure effect upon every part and detail of the landscape. All refers to feudal England, and farther back to that England of families and farms overseas which emptied its conquering people upon the British lands. The whole story, lost in the modern town, is written in the modern fields, in the very growth of the hedges and clustering of the trees.¹³

¹⁰ Much of the impetus of the Back to the Land movement derived from the rural utopia envisaged in William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, of the early 1890s, and this was an influence on many, from the Purleigh Tolstoyans to Rider Haggard. For discussion see Alun Howkins, *Reshaping Rural England: A Social History, 1850 to 1925*, Harper Collins, 1991.

¹¹ For an account of the extent to which ruralism was cross class and appealing to both left and right politically, see Peter Gould *Early Green Politics: Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Britain, 1880 - 1900*, The Harvester Press, 1988.

¹² The Trust was registered with the Board of Trade in 1895 as 'The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty'. For discussion of its founding and subsequent role, see Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*, Methuen, 1987, esp., pp.56-8

¹³ *The Art Journal*, 1885, pp.267-7. Leader's success is here accredited to his ability to please the 'English picture seer, who likes his landscape with an addition of allusions not difficult to catch and allegories not hard to understand'.

The continuing power of beliefs like this accounts for David Lowenthal's interesting but contentious remark that: 'Nowhere else is landscape so freighted with legacy. Nowhere else does the very term suggest not simply scenery and *genres de vie*, but quintessential national virtues'.¹⁴ There remains amongst writers and critics still a deep rooted tendency to define a connection between land, countryside and nation as innately English. This assumption has been discussed, with a particular critical bias, in Martin Wiener's book *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*.¹⁵ For differing purposes and largely by middle class city dwellers, landscapes and the countryside have traditionally been perceived, since the nineteenth century, as encapsulating specifically English qualities. At the end of that century, as Wiener also demonstrated, geographically shifting economic and business interests towards the south and a relative decline in heavy industry in the north, resulted in what emerged as a devaluation of traditional industrial locales and the victory of the 'Southern Metaphor' for the nation. Wiener quoted from Donald Horne's *God is an Englishman*: '--- in the *Southern Metaphor* Britain is romantic, illogical, muddled, divinely lucky, Anglican, aristocratic, traditional, frivolous and believes in order and tradition'.¹⁶ Alun Howkins has shown that, predominantly, the imagined landscape of the South Country was of a unified type, gently rolling and encompassing, according to Edward Thomas, 'the country south of the Thames and Severn and East of Exmoor'.¹⁷ Counties like Surrey and Sussex epitomised the culture of the Home

¹⁴ David Lowenthal, 'British National Identity and the English Landscape', *Rural History*, Vol.2, 1991, p.213. As Andrew Hemingway notes, the belief that the relationship between landscape imagery and national identity is strongest in this country needs close questioning. See Hemingway's review 'National Icons and the Consolations of Imagery', *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol.17, no.2, 1994, p.114

¹⁵ First published, Cambridge University Press, 1981. This edition, Pelican 1987. Wiener effectively blamed the assimilation of the rising bourgeoisie into the cultural mores of the declining aristocracy for the eventual failure to compete with international industrial economies.

¹⁶ Horne's book was published in Sydney, Australia in 1969. Wiener cites him, *ibid*, pp.41-2. In the 'Northern Metaphor', 'Britain is pragmatic, empirical, calculating, Puritan, bourgeois ---'.

¹⁷ Howkins discusses the origins of this metaphor in Hillaire Belloc's poem, *The South Country*, and in Edward Thomas' prose collection, *The South Country*, of 1908. See 'The Discovery of Rural England' in Robert Colls and Philip Dodd, (eds) *Englishness, Politics and Culture*, Croom Helm, 1986.

Counties, where the middle and upper classes socialised, sent their children to school and aspired to the domestic architecture of C F A Voysey and Edwin Lutyens and the English country gardens of Gertrude Jekyll. Rural and suburban villa designs and advice on garden design were a staple ingredient in *The Studio* magazine from its foundation in 1893. The interconnections between these developments and the popularity of specific types of landscape painting, described in the same journal, will be examined at various points throughout the following chapters.¹⁸

Notions of Englishness and national virtues are never singular however. As the paintings discussed in this thesis reveal, various constructions interact and often compete during specific periods. Associations between an assumed spirit of Englishness and the countryside were constantly emphasised during the period of this study, while the conflation of Englishness and Britishness was at a peak.¹⁹ This was also an era of consistent concern over the slow recovery of British agriculture from the depression of the 1870s and 80s which had resulted in interventionist measures like the government Board of Agriculture in 1889.²⁰ Politicians and landowners (and many of course fulfilled both roles), were particularly keen to foster a special interest in rural regeneration. One typical example was provided by the author of *Mother Earth* in 1908, lamenting the effects of rural migration:

¹⁸ Recent research into ideals of Englishness and the countryside around 1900 has been largely general or, where particular, concerned with rural, social and cultural history. Perhaps most influential in recent years have been the essays contained in Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (eds), *ibid*. None of these essays refer to the visual arts, but all, in various ways, expand on the particular discourses in which the paintings I discuss acquired their meaning.

¹⁹ William Vaughan has argued that although the qualities of painters like Hogarth and Constable had, earlier in the nineteenth century, been regarded as innately English (ie in the earlier sense of naturalistic), it was at the close of the century that the term 'Englishness' was used to subsume all other British identities - thereby fostering a greater, though clearly false, sense of national unity. But it is also clear that it was specifically the south of England that was most commonly identified by writers and artists in this respect. See 'The Englishness of British Art', *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol.13, no.2, 1990, pp.11-23. David Lowenthal also discusses the conflation of Englishness and Britishness in 'British National Identity and the English Landscape', *Rural History*, Vol.2, 1991, pp.205-30

²⁰ Depression had a number of causes, all dating from the early 1870s, including such factors as bad harvests, cheaper foreign food and grain imports, continually declining areas of agriculture, wage competition from industries and a series of education acts which reduced available labour forces. The result was the continued exodus of the rural population to the cities, which caused such constant concern throughout the period of the present study.

The problem is perhaps the most serious by which the country has ever been faced. It involves the decay of the manhood of the nation; if this decay is to be arrested we have not only to stem these streams of people from the country, but also to create a strong counter current from the town. For this a great national effort is needed to make country life attractive.²¹

By this point connections between the sound, unsullied virtues of the true Anglo-Saxon and the both morally and racially healthy qualities of the countryside, of evocations of remote 'Golden Ages', were deliberately implied at all levels of political and cultural discourse. Such identifications were clearly not new. Raymond Williams charted the extent to which they might be traced backwards in literature, through Leavis, Sturt, Hardy, Cobbett, Clare and so on, right back to *Piers Plowman*.²² Bound up, however, with nostalgia for an idealised world of childhood, each of these memories of the past meant different things at different times. Emergent trends and tastes in art must be seen as integrally bound up in the specific formation of this relationship in the early 1900s.

The concept of nostalgia is a vital underpinning throughout this period, informing references to pre-industrial, pre-modern Golden Ages as well as the utopian ideals of things to come. There has been considerable useful discussion of this cultural phenomenon in recent years, all beginning with the original definition of the term, as a medical condition signifying extreme homesickness, towards discussion of its special relationship with the concept of modernity, experience of the developments of capitalist economies, industrialism and mass democracy. Christopher Shaw and Malcolm Chase have usefully studied the conditions in which nostalgia is likely to develop; in a modern society with a linear, progressive view of time, especially in a period where social change is rapid enough to be noticeable in one life span, in a period of little moral certainty, in a secular society with no particular religious faith, and in a society with a sense of the deficiency of the present, ie as a result of lost positions of power or loss of freedom. In such circumstances the past is regarded as a site of authenticity, of harmony and

²¹ Montague Fordham, *Mother Earth*, Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and Co, 1908, p.6

²² *Op.cit*, p.248

orderliness, and as a time where we once experienced life more vividly, where our senses were sharper.²³ To Bryan Turner, nostalgia is a fundamental condition of human estrangement in which, and he quotes from Susan Sontag, the past becomes 'an object of tender regard'. For Turner 'the nostalgic mood is of particular importance in contemporary cultures, in association with the (perceived) loss of rural simplicity, traditional stability and cultural integrity'.²⁴

All commentary on the nature of nostalgia relates at some point to the construction of supposedly native traditions. For Chase et.al, tradition is represented as the means by which our lives are connected with the past, tradition is 'the enactment and dramatisation of continuity', a vital substitute for history.²⁵ Traditions are selective, they appear comfortable and unproblematic, whereas history is disquieting and full of conflict. For David Lowenthal, 'The British past is seen as monolithic and uniform --- Britons are felt to share views on most of the national past. And they admire one another for doing so'.²⁶

A nostalgia for a rural past, a belief in specifically national characteristics and the construction of particular, idealised national traditions and virtues, are inextricably bound to the maintenance of national identities, which are both upheld and to varying degrees contested throughout the period of my study. The extent to which perceptions of the English landscape were connected to the articulation of a national identity is fundamental here. Cultural introspection and declarations about the concept of Englishness generally abound at times of insecurity. The same might be argued for any preoccupation with landscape painting itself. As a genre, it has always proved a perfect site for the construction of class and racial identities and for reflections on personal and national histories. This

²³ Shaw and Chase (eds), *The Imagined Past: History and Nostalgia*, Manchester University Press, 1989, pp.2-5

²⁴ Bryan Turner, 'A Note on Nostalgia', *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol.4, 1987, pp.148-152. Peter Fuller argued, prescriptively, that a nostalgic contemplation of nature, or pastoralism, could replace what he termed the lost 'shared symbolic order', once provided by religious faith. Nature was endlessly consoling for Fuller, offering potential for spiritual redemption. See 'Mother Nature', *New Society*, 17 Feb 1983, pp.265-6

²⁵ *Op.cit.*, p.11

²⁶ *Op.cit.*, p.207

understanding has informed important recent research on late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century British landscape painting especially. As Stephen Daniels remarked, landscapes 'whether focusing on single monuments or framing stretches of scenery, provide visible shape; they picture the nation'. Landscapes can stand as examples of both 'moral order and aesthetic harmony', and particular examples can achieve the status of 'national icons'.²⁷

Any debate on the kinds of themes and preoccupations already outlined needs to address the ways in which contemporary perceptions of modernity were negotiated and by and for whom. In the context of ruralism and nostalgia, these perceptions were quite obviously, almost invariably negative. Notions of modernity, and there were several, were inevitably bound to ideas about the city. Traditional commentary centred around two opposing poles, both of which derived from the urban environment. In one, drawn essentially from Baudelaire, modernity is perceived as a state of endless flux, movement and discontinuity. In the other, clearly related to the radical modernism of the immediate pre-war period, modernity involves control of the environment and of institutions, aesthetics derived from modern technology and implicit faith in ideals of progress. In general terms however, it can be stated that one of the distinguishing factors between the Victorian era proper and the period around the turn of the century, was a growing anti-materialism and disillusionment with ideals of scientific and industrial progress.²⁸

²⁷ Stephen Daniels, *Fields of Vision, Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States*, Polity Press, 1993, p.5. This condition clearly does not apply solely to landscape painting in this country. Daniels' own work on nineteenth century American painting demonstrates this. See also, for example, Richard Brettell's chapter 'The Impressionist Landscape and the Image of France', in *A Day in the Country - Impressionism and the French Landscape*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1984, and Richard Thomson's, 1994 exhibition catalogue, *Monet to Matisse, Landscape Painting in France, 1874-1914*, National Gallery of Scotland, 1994, which deals with the extent to which landscape paintings could be interpreted as constructions of Frenchness.

²⁸ For more discussion see Alan Robinson, 'Symbolism, Impressionism and 'Exteriority'', in *Poetry, Painting and Ideas, 1885-1914*, Macmillan, 1985. Robinson ascribes the flamboyant dandyism of the 1890s, the artist's revulsion towards middle class philistinism and contemporary taste, as formed out of growing secularisation of society, p.16

The writings of contemporary emergent sociologists like Ferdinand Tonnies' *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Community and Society), 1887, through to the works of Georg Simmel and Emile Durkheim, all attest to the notion of the rootlessness of modern industrial society, as opposed to the wholeness of pre-industrial ways of life. The result was a growing sense of impersonality and an attenuated sense of self.²⁹ For Simmel in *The Metropolis and Mental Life* of 1911, the struggle to tolerate the complex and contrasting stimulation of modern life resulted in what he termed 'the blasé attitude'.³⁰ For Durkheim, drawing on his researches for *Suicide*, of 1897, the result was the demoralised state which he termed 'anomic', where the individual lacks social integration and no longer has a place in a fixed hierarchy of things.³¹ The English poet and writer Arthur Symons presented his version of the metropolis in 1909, seen on returning from a visit to the countryside:

What a huge futility it all seems, this human ant heap, this crawling and hurrying and sweating and bearing burdens, and never resting all day long and never bringing any labour to an end. After the fields and the sky London seems trivial, a thing artificially made, at which people work at senseless toils, for idle and imaginary ends. Labour in the fields is regular, sane, inevitable as the labour of the earth with its roots ---. In London men work as if in darkness ---. They wither and dwindle ---. They are making things cheaper, more immediate in effect, of the latest modern make. It is all a hurry, a levelling downward, an automobilization of the mind.³²

In this context the countryside is seen repeatedly in its restorative capacity, and popular paintings of rural scenes and landscapes certainly operated on this level,

²⁹ One of the few exceptions to what has become a traditional critique of modernity which appealed to writers across the political spectrum, was Marshall Berman's book, *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, Verso, 1983. See esp., p.60, where he writes about the prolific extent to which in our century we have 'constructed idealised fantasies of life in tradition bound small towns', in defiance of 'the cruelty and brutality of so many of the forms of life that modernization has wiped out'. As Chase and Shaw have pointed out, (*op.cit.*, p.8), for Berman, nostalgia is something like a failing of our collective cultural confidence in the modernising impulse - like it or not, change is the only constant in our lives.

³⁰ Discussed in David Harvey, *The Condition of Post Modernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, Blackwell, 1980, reprinted 1990, p.26

³¹ Discussed in Anthony Giddens, *Durkheim; His Life, Writings and Ideas*, Harvester Press, 1978, p.32

³² Arthur Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects*, 1909, a facsimile edition in 'Degeneration and Regeneration: Texts of a Premodern Era', Ian Fletcher and John Stokes (eds), Garland Publishing, 1984, p.36

like other cultural forms they defined and contained acceptable sentiment.³³ To quote Wiener, the countryside, or perhaps rather its representation, functions as a 'psychic balance and a refuge'.³⁴ Authenticity now stands opposed to civilization. Englishness is opposed to its 'Other', the modern city.³⁵ Patrick Wright's account of the appeal of the countryside in the context of modernity has drawn on the writings of Agnes Heller, and describes the importance of the rural past in opposition to the rationalisation and the bureaucratisation of everyday life.³⁶ The countryside here maintains its appeal in contrast to the two definitions of the impact of modernity outlined above. In Heller's terms a nostalgic yearning is a 'typically bourgeois feeling' felt by the 'problematic individual' for the 'non-problematic individual'.³⁷ Clearly this is also a yearning for the non-problematic class relations and old hierarchies which, from the later nineteenth century, were shifting and transforming in the modern city with the mass circulation of newspapers, popular forms of mass entertainment catering to the growth of a new lower middle class, with the spread of trades unionism and a series of damaging labour struggles, and with the developing militancy amongst women.

Mary Stratton observed the various functions which the country had come to fulfill for the city dweller in 1912; 'For some it was 'hardly more than an alternative to theatres, exhibitions, clubs or pills', for many it was:

a source of rest, relief, stimulation, a kind of religion, poetry, cash: --- a refuge for thinkers, poets, lovers, children, tired workers or players. --- on the hills or in forests they do not feel themselves to be mere spirits fettered to restless but heavy bodies, or mere bodies with starving spirits --- The country gives them more encouragement to moods of ease and a sense of unity with life, more obvious

³³ For interesting general discussion of the function of landscape in this respect, see Fred Inglis, 'Landscape as Popular Culture', *Landscape Research*, Vol.12, no.3, 1987, pp.20-24

³⁴ *Op.cit.*, p.51

³⁵ On the notion of Englishness as being constantly attended by definition of what is 'unenglish and alien', see 'An Open Letter from Philip Dodd: Art, History and Englishness', *Modern Painters*, no.1, Vol.4, 1988-9, p.40

³⁶ Patrick Wright, *On Living in an Old Country, The National Past in Contemporary Britain*, Verso, 1985, p.22

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Quoted from Agnes Heller, *A Theory of Feelings*, Assen, 1979, p.155

opportunities than the town for self reliance and freedom from the confounding paraphernalia of civilization.³⁸

In the writings of certain key cultural critics and social reformers of this period, like Rider Haggard and most particularly the liberal politician and author C F G Masterman, we find appeals to each of the sentiments so far discussed. In a series of works including, most famously, *The Heart of Empire*, 1901, *In Peril of Change*, 1905 and *The Condition of England*, 1909, Masterman made frequent use of the nostalgic pastoral metaphor in the expression of his anxieties.³⁹ His is a perfect example of what has been seen as the attempt amongst English intellectuals 'to provide a collectivist social outlook which would be immune equally from the mechanical vulgarities of statism and the revolutionary demands of socialism'.⁴⁰

As with Montague Fordham, so Masterman's *The Condition of England* was full of concern for racial degeneration, a preoccupation born out of Social Darwinism, in rural areas. 'No-one today', he wrote, 'would seek in the ruined villages and dwindling population of the countryside the spirit of an 'England' four-fifths of whose people have now crowded into the cities'.⁴¹ Much of this concern for national degeneration emanated from the alarming numbers of those found unfit for active service during the Boer War, resulting in the formation of a government Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration in 1902. It also reflected the wider preoccupations of the era with the observational study of the conditions

³⁸ *Op.cit.*, p.37

³⁹ After Cambridge, C F G Masterman had been engaged in social work in South London and as editor of the journal of the Christian Social Union. He was a member of the Liberal government from 1906 and of Asquith's cabinet in 1914. For an account of Masterman's general tone of apprehension and nostalgia as opposed to any positive programme of action, and of the way in which this coincided with Tory perceptions of the time, see Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, Princeton, 1968, pp.57-73

⁴⁰ Brian Doyle, *English and Englishness*, Routledge, 1989, p.19

⁴¹ C F G Masterman, *The Condition of England*, Shenvall Press, 1909, p.12

of the working classes in general, both rural and urban, and the potential effects of decline in terms of middle class urban experience.⁴²

The decline of traditional class structures, particularly the disappearance of a purportedly benign rural gentry in favour of the large farmer, signalled a deep malaise within every region of southern England, despite superficial appearances of prosperity. Masterman believed he could discern 'the passing of a race of men', and as established communities became less self-sufficient he worried, that 'England is bleeding at the arteries, and it is her reddest blood which is flowing away'. Largely responsible for this condition he felt, were the 'glowing patriots who, in their anxiety to build up an Empire have been grabbing at continents and lost their own land'.⁴³ With more than a suggestion of Little Englandism, Masterman's polemic called for an exercise in pure patriotism. Consideration for the condition of the national character and its preservation needed to take precedence over imperialist adventure. The re-evaluation of national traditions in painting is a parallel to social and cultural considerations like these, from the early nineties onwards. A preoccupation with the health of the countryside, the real empire, was more important than unseemly squabbles over foreign territories. His own knowledge of real rural conditions makes Masterman's special exhortations about the importance of the countryside to English cultural life all the more ironic;

Nature still flings the splendour of her dawns and sunsets upon a land of radiant beauty. Here are deep rivers flowing beneath old mills and churches; high-roofed red barns and large thatched houses with still unsullied expanses of cornland and wind swept moor and heather and pine woods looking down stretches of quiet down standing white and clean from the blue surrounding sea. Never, perhaps, in the memorable and spacious story of this island's history has the land beyond the

⁴² In terms of the urban experience, Jack London's *The People of the Abyss*, 1903, is a most classic example. Further instances of this 'Into Unknown England' writing which, as described by Philip Dodd, blended personal exploration with emerging sociological analysis, include Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People in London*, (1889-1903) and Rider Haggard's *Rural England*, (1902). See Philip Dodd, 'Englishness and the National Culture', in Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (eds), *op.cit*, p.8. As Gareth Stedman Jones observed the theory of urban degeneration derived its real significance, not from actual conditions, 'but from the mental landscape within which the middle class could recognize and articulate their own anxieties about urban existence', see *Outcast London*, Oxford, 1971, p.151

⁴³ C F G Masterman, 1909, *op.cit*, pp.148-149

city offered so fair an inheritance to the children of its people, as today, under the visible shadow of its end.⁴⁴

It is in this final sentence that the underlying sense of loss at the passing of time and old traditions, old vistas, is felt. This loss unites the disparate voices and representations of the period.

Beyond these considerations however, this thesis will argue that the images of landscape and rural scenery explored here played a considerably more active role than simply to pander to prevailing sentimentalities about the countryside. Above all else, the painters discussed in the following chapters, in their handling and deployment of at times apparently conflicting ideals of Englishness, all produced works which were powerful negotiations of the urban experience of modernity. Despite a superficial refusal to engage with the issues and anxieties that dominate the period, it will be seen that in different ways their images successfully shaped ongoing developments in the economic and political spheres into cultural expression and that they frequently presented justifications and naturalizations of the new conditions.

II

With the aim of exploring the social and cultural functions of landscape painting throughout this period, this thesis has drawn on significant debates to have emerged within other disciplines and on approaches developed by art historians primarily in relation to other historical periods. All of these would acknowledge the view that art history itself has been subject to many of the same influences and forces that art was (and is). That such an art historical position can conflict with powerful vested interests was proved by the controversy that surrounded David Solkin's 1982 catalogue to the Richard Wilson exhibition at the Tate Gallery. Solkin had set out to discuss Wilson's paintings in terms of the social dimension - the 'needs, expectations and values' of his public. Anything else would lead simply

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.208

to the 'dead end of connoisseurship'.⁴⁵ The author demonstrated the extent to which Wilson's paintings evoked a 'patrician vision of rural life', appealing not simply to a landowning elite, but to aspiring members of the middle classes as well. Apart from the genuine merit of his scholarship, the fascinating issue is the hostility his catalogue provoked at the time of the exhibition, even though his approach was hardly new.⁴⁶ Alex Potts and Neil McWilliam argued that the hysterical reaction, not just in the popular press but in established organs of the art trade like *Apollo*, was underpinned by contemporary attacks on extremism in Leftist culture and 'a desire to restore a celebratory and patriotic valuation of the nation's past'.⁴⁷ Marxist art history, as Solkin's was deemed, might be acceptable within the little read pages of academic journals like *Block*, but was entirely inappropriate to the catalogue of a major museum exhibition. Their article was interesting in a number of ways. Most obviously it indicated how deeply embedded formalist readings of art history still were in the early eighties, despite the number of important publications already cited. More importantly it demonstrated the degree to which landscape paintings in this country continue to intersect with strong notions of class and national identity, which retain levels of meaning well outside their own historical period.

Several of the most important art historical influences for this thesis have already been referred to in the footnotes. These include most notably works like Ann Bermingham's *Landscape and Ideology - The English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860*, Stephen Daniels, *Fields of Vision, Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States*, and Nicholas Green's *The Spectacle of Nature: Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth Century France*.⁴⁸ Each of these works share, fundamentally, the same levels of analyses which extend outwards from the personal circumstances, motivations and biographies etc, of artists and

⁴⁵ David Solkin, *Richard Wilson: The Landscape of Reaction*, The Tate Gallery, 1982, pp.12 & 23

⁴⁶ In that it derives ultimately from the radical tradition of Klingender and Antal.

⁴⁷ The original article in *History Workshop* in 1983 was republished in *The New Art History*, ed., A L Rees and Francis Borzello, Camden Press, 1986, pp.108-10

⁴⁸ Nicholas Green's book was published by Manchester University Press, 1990.

critics, to the much larger scale political, economic and cultural developments which are both the context and the co-determinants of the art, of its reception and of its passage into history. As a result these studies have, to varying extents, drawn on related areas of concern to have emerged in social and rural history, literary studies, the fields of cultural geography and the study of tourism.

The exact period that this thesis encompasses has been largely ignored in relation to such considerations with landscape, or has been studied only in isolated cases.⁴⁹ Art historians with these ambitions have dealt almost exclusively with English landscape paintings of the late 18th to early 19th centuries or, quite exhaustively, with the inter War period of the twenties and thirties.⁵⁰ A number of these studies have been of value here. Another well trodden field has been in mid to late nineteenth century French paintings. In this last case, Nicholas Green's work has proved especially important. His belief that the view of nature in his own period was predicated on bourgeois experience of modernity and the quality of city life is of course fundamental. For Green, the 'material and cultural fabric of the metropolis --- is seen to set the terms for the social production of the countryside'.⁵¹

One reason for the paucity of landscape studies in the years covered here emerges within the period itself, just prior to the First World War, when the genre was being increasingly regarded in progressive circles as peripheral to modernism. The artists most cited in the subsequent histories of modern British art are essentially not landscape painters. From Whistler to Sickert and Camden Town to the

⁴⁹ See for example, sections of Arts Council, catalogue of an exhibition, *Landscape in Britain, 1850-1950*, 1985, and *Towards a New Landscape*, 1993, *op.cit.*

⁵⁰ Examples of useful inter-war studies include Alex Potts, 'Constable Country Between the Wars', in Raphael Samuel (ed), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity*, Vol.3, *National Fictions*, London and New York, 1989, pp.160-86, and David Peters Corbett's *The Absent City: Paul Nash*, in *The Modernity of English Art, 1914-30*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

⁵¹ *Op. cit.*, p.11. Green elaborates on *natura naturans* as 'a structured mode of apprehension, both of the world and of oneself. Communing with nature could occur in an urban garden --- as well as in the wilds; it might involve a metaphorical trip into the heart of a painting as much as a trip out into the countryside'. Furthermore, although experience of nature was ideally private and solitary, this was 'a profoundly social relationship' related to 'the social dynamics of metropolitan class and gender', p.71

Vorticists, the painters commonly discussed were primarily inspired by city life and/or aspired towards abstraction.⁵² The critical language used to describe popular landscape pictures was anathema to the modernist artist and later historians. Adjectives like familiar, consoling and traditional had no place within the discourse of modernism. The continuation of this modernist bias will be discussed in relation to Douglas Cooper's writings on Philip Wilson Steer in the 1940s.

An antagonism towards landscape painting per se issued from the voices of dissent raised amongst the radical modernists of the period.⁵³ In 1914, Wyndham Lewis 'blasted' the Georgians 'for something harder, tougher, more to do with machines than nature'.⁵⁴ Association with nature and the pastoral had no place within the circle of Vorticism, which was opposed to liberal ideals of a consoling organic whole, favouring rupture and fragmentation in its language and in its pictorial ideals. To argue, however, as Lewis and later Cooper did, that a preoccupation with landscape and the rural was merely an amateurish, liberal, typically English 'middle brow' phenomenon is to ignore the much wider international context in which these paintings have a place. The rediscovery of national identity and native traditions was prevalent throughout the western world at this period and in some places precipitated broader political realignments, most obviously, for example, the Celtic revival. The remaking of Ireland's past led to the emergence of Sinn Fein and struggles for independence. The impact of Celtic fringe countries on contemporary ideas of Englishness is not insignificant here, as the study of Augustus John will indicate.

⁵² For example, general surveys like Dennis Farr's, *English Art, 1870-1949*, Oxford, 1978, Charles Harrison's *English Art and Modernism, 1900-1939*, London and Bloomington, Indiana, 1981, Frances Spalding's, *British Art Since 1900*, Thames and Hudson, 1986, Royal Academy of Arts', catalogue of an exhibition, *British Art in the Twentieth Century*, 1987.

⁵³ By radical modernists I mean those artists, like the Vorticists, who perceived as their role not merely an engagement with the superficial forms of modernism, but a critical engagement with the experience of modernity itself. For elaboration on the term in the inter war context, see David Peters Corbett, *op.cit*, pp.25-56

⁵⁴ See *Blast*, Vol.II, 1914, pp 129-31. For Lewis 'Life, not nature, is the important thing'.

III

This introduction has outlined the conceptual principles most relevant to the objectives of the study. Following chapters have been organised in such a way as to highlight the central argument; that throughout the period diverse representations of the rural functioned not simply as an avoidance of the problems of modern city life, but as a crucial site upon which imaginative solutions to those problems could be constructed and on which issues arising from the contemporary preoccupation with national identity and racial type could be explored.

The first chapter is the only one to focus on nostalgic representations of actual rural inhabitants. Informed by the studies of social and rural historians, it explores the ways in which, largely for the benefit of the urban middle classes, the agricultural labourer was misrepresented, and the social and historical changes which rural areas were undergoing were relentlessly ignored in popular paintings. In the process contemporary issues arising from the preoccupation with race and social darwinism have a central place.

Chapter two focuses primarily on the landscapes of Philip Wilson Steer and is unique in its final concentration on primarily 'pure' landscapes. The valuation of native traditions in English painting is especially significant in the context here from the mid 90s, a period of both artistic and cultural retrenchment and insularity. A belief in native traditions and the patriotic reworking of the sites of national, literary and artistic heritage is to be seen also as a denial of historical change. The pure landscape emerges as relatively timeless or, to requote Mitchell, as 'an artificial world, as if it were given and inevitable'.

Chapter three explores the ways in which Augustus John, who regarded himself as outside the norms of urban middle class civilization and adopted a consciously bohemian stance, nevertheless shared in the profoundly bourgeois distaste for modernity, its homogeneity and vulgar inauthenticity. He presents an opposition to the conventional notions of Englishness associated with the stereotypical and secure sites of the Home Counties, asserting a primitivism in common with the

Celtic revivalism of W B Yeats. But in his valuation of gypsies, travellers and of a particular female type, set in remote landscapes, his representations also have their place in the contemporary debates about ideal racial characteristics that focus also around 'peasant' painters like George Clausen.

The chapter on Cornwall engages with the cultural geography of that county and develops on a number of the issues to emerge from the study of John, ie the value of the remote, the pre-industrial, and the authentic, but it provides a wider context, including a study of two disparate artists, Henry Scott Tuke and Laura Knight. This chapter is to a degree concerned with the effects of the culture of tourism on a specific location, and explores developing ways in which this ideal setting provided a context in which not only perfect racial types, but also ideals of harmony and order, unattainable in urban centres, could be safely imagined. Unlike the other chapters, this one explores the entire span of years dealt with in the thesis. The intention is to try and establish viable connections between two artists across two decades in relation to the issues outlined. Differences in method between this chapter and the next reflect their different ambitions.

The fifth chapter concentrates on a location as near to civilisation as Cornwall is remote, the Garden City of Letchworth, a mere thirty miles from the metropolis. But through an examination of the paintings of Spencer Gore, mostly concentrating on those produced in one year, 1912, this chapter refers to similar themes, ie the implicit desire to achieve harmony, order and control, both pictorially and metaphorically. In this way, although Gore's formal approach and his ideals of Englishness were seemingly at odds with those of Augustus John and of those who painted in Cornwall, their underlying motivation, the negative conception of existing modernity and the desire to achieve a utopian alternative, is a shared characteristic. In this case the focus is on the possible links between traditions of Englishness and a modernism seen as a force for conservatism.

The final chapter is a logical summation in the sense that the works of Stanley Spencer and Paul Nash, seen partly in relation to recent literary studies of Georgian poetry, can only properly be understood in the context of the flow of the preceding chapters. These artists presented nostalgic, mystical valuations of ideal,

special locations, with an inclination for the primitive, but more particularly the exotic and enigmatic, and with an emphasis on native traditions, here not of Turner and Constable, but of Blake, Palmer and Rossetti. Alongside what have been seen as their innately English eccentricities, these tastes and tendencies amount in the end to an entirely subjective and visionary apprehension of the rural scene as a wonderful little world, a world which has absolutely nothing at all to do with lived rural circumstances.

The ultimate effect of all of these representations, it will be finally be argued, was that the real issues concerning rural areas, and most crucially the existence of the native rural population itself, were consistently ignored and denied, with striking results. The consequences of this process of denial, displacement and replacement extended not simply into the period of the 1920s, but have a resonance still today and are yet to be properly explored.

The Poetry of the Peasant

It has been established that by the 1890s the inhabitants of the countryside were already well perceived in the urban middle class imagination as embodying the finest qualities of the national character, a - 'healthy, energetic population reared amidst the fresh air and the quieting influence of the life of the fields'.¹ Wretched city dwellers, by contrast, were typically presented by critics and social reformers as those 'reared in the courts and crowded ways of the great metropolis, with cramped physical accessories', they led a 'hot fretful life' with 'long hours of sedentary and unhealthy toil'. Actual conditions amongst rural workers were obviously misrepresented in these accounts, and the countryside functioned as a backdrop upon which genuine anxieties could be played out and, if only temporarily, assuaged. In real terms, years of severe agricultural depression resulted in what contemporary observers viewed worryingly as an exodus to the cities.² With low agricultural wages and poor housing, together with the lure of city life, despite dire warnings, the younger generation simply lacked the incentives to stay on the land.³

¹ C F G Masterman (ed), *The Heart of the Empire, Discussions of Modern City Life in England*, Fisher Unwin, 1902, p.7

² Recent historians have pointed out that in fact rural depopulation was slowing down relatively in the twenty years leading up to the Great War. W A Armstrong makes clear that there was a slight rise in the national number of agricultural labourers between 1901 and 1911. See Armstrong, 'The Workfolk', in G Mingay (ed.), *The Victorian Countryside*, Vol.2, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981, p.132. It is clear though that the economic importance of agriculture was in decline during these years, due mainly to three factors: the decrease in the area of agricultural land, the expansion of other areas of the economy and especially the increased dependence on foreign production. Between 1909 and 1913, 60% of all British food consumption was imported. See P Holderness, 'The Victorian Farmer' in Mingay, p.243

³ Wages were low and, even in the north where they were highest, did not compete with those in industry. Also as Jan Marsh stated, while industrial employment offered more security, just as importantly, it was relatively impersonal, whereas in the village 'quasi-feudal attitudes persisted', see *Back to the Land, The Pastoral Impulse in England from 1880-1914*, Quartet Books, 1982, p.61. Further dissatisfaction was caused by appalling living conditions in tied housing, giving the lie to the 'cottager by the door' genre of painters like Birkett Foster and Helen Allingham. One commentator, cited in 1913, spoke of the 'burning question' of country people living in houses desperately unfit for human habitation, cramped, squalid and without clean water. Cited in Mrs Cobden Unwin, *The Land Hunger, Life under Monopoly, Descriptive Letters and Other Testimonies from Those Who Have Suffered*, Fisher Unwin, 1913, pp.68-71. As Enid Gauldie notes, by the time the importance of building sound homes for the rural labourer was recognised, the fading profitability of the land had reduced the incentive, see 'Country Homes', in Mingay, *op.cit.*, p.540

been in decline and now he sinks before the *Daily Mail* like a savage before pox or whisky. Before it is too late, I hope that the zoological society will receive a few pairs at their Gardens'.⁷ Clausen and La Thangue were engaged in a similar project, the latter was 'to some extent consciously perhaps, producing a series of pictures of the agricultural life of our time which is sure to have some permanent historical value'.⁸

Such a desire can be readily observed in Clausen's renderings of ploughing, a subject he had begun to treat in the mid eighties and revisited in 1897 with *Autumn Morning, Ploughing*, (fig.1.1). By this date the artist's interests had shifted from the more direct treatment and detailed observation of earlier works like *Ploughing*, 1889 (fig.1.2), and there is in this later picture less of a literal description of an activity and instead an increasing sense of the subject as an icon, the ploughman as a sign of a timeless, rural existence.⁹ Flora Thompson's account of rural Oxfordshire at this time demonstrates that, while it was still possible to see ploughing teams at work, new developments were already visible. 'Every autumn appeared a pair of large traction engines, which, posted one on each side of a field, drew a plough across and across by means of a cable. These toured the district under their own steam, for hire on the different farms.'¹⁰ Innovations like these were rarely, if ever, recorded by painters or photographers and were only described by ruralist writers in terms of regret. Paintings by Clausen, La Thangue et.al. obscure the fact that mechanisation was advancing apace. In contrast to the intrusion of modernity and modern machines, the plough itself, according to Edward Thomas, was 'a universal symbol', 'a sovereign beautiful thing which man has made in his time --- the dirge at their downfall passes inevitably into a paean to their majesty'.¹¹

⁷ Edward Thomas, *The Country*, Batsford, 1913, pp. 19-22

⁸ George Thomson, 'Henry Herbert La Thangue and His Work', *The Studio*, Vol. IX, 1896, p.176

⁹ For reference to *Ploughing*, 1889, see Kenneth McConkey, *Sir George Clausen, R.A., 1852-1944*, Bradford and Tyne and Wear Galleries and Museums, 1980, p.50. McConkey states that the artist first began to treat the subject in 1884. This work he cites as 'the summit of his admiration' for Bastien Lepage. The obvious symbolism of the theme of youth and age is here less important than the literal depiction of the task itself.

¹⁰ Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, (1st edition 1939), Oxford University Press, 1969, pp.43-4

¹¹ Thomas's description is contained in his 1906 *The Heart of England*. This passage, from 'The Ship, Chariot and Plough', is cited in Jan Marsh, *Edward Thomas, A Poet for His Country*, Elek Books, 1978, p.51

To a political and cultural elite, such a situation threatened disastrous implications and one practical attempt at reform was the establishment, in 1889, of a government Board of Agriculture, intent on a level of state intervention into the rural economy. Increasingly it was believed that for the nation to survive, not just economically, but also racially, then a return to the land was essential. To this end country life had to be presented as an appealing prospect. Imperialist statesmen like Lord Milner, echoing Montague Fordham, uttered the sentiment which, by 1911, extended widely across class and political persuasions; 'of all forms of productive capacity --- there is none more vital, indispensable and steady than the application of human industry to the cultivation of the soil'.⁴ A substantial shift in ideological representation had been necessary before this view could become more widely acceptable.⁵ This chapter deals with the role of images of the rural worker presented in popular exhibitions from the mid 1890s in that ideological process.

The impulse of painters like George Clausen, Edward Stott and Henry Herbert La Thangue to record passing ways of life in the countryside was shared by numerous writers on the countryside from Hardy to Richard Jefferies and Edward Thomas. Their works were characterised by that nostalgia born out of unease at the rapid pace of change and of modernity. There is still, in the 1890s, a strong sense in which representations of field workers witnessed a desire, as E P Thompson maintained in relation to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, to fix an image of those rural workers at exactly the moment where they were in danger of turning into industrial proletarians.⁶ The results of the artist's or writer's attentions were therefore clearly determined, laden with preconceptions, half-remembered facts mingled with wishful thinking. All of this was conditioned by Edward Thomas's perceptions in 1913 of a 'modern sad passion for nature', and the awareness that 'the countryman is dying out and when we hear his voice, as in George Bourne's 'Bettesworth Book', it is more foreign than French. He had long

⁴ Milner is cited by Alun Howkins, 'The Discovery of Rural England', in Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (eds.), *op.cit.*, 1986, p.68

⁵ In the context of the earlier period and on the ways in which the late paintings of John Linnell from the 1850s and 60s functioned to resolve bourgeois anxieties about change in rural society through the perpetuation of myth about a natural and organic society, see Paul Street, 'Painting deepest England' in C Shaw and M Chase, 1989, *op.cit.*, pp.68-79

⁶ Thompson's comments, from *The Making of the English Working Class*, Victor Gollancz, are also discussed in Ann Bermingham, 1987, *op.cit.*, p.4

In the meantime it appeared as though traditional and specialist rural skills would be lost. By 1902, Rider Haggard's 'rural rides' led him to conclude that before long ploughmen 'will be scarce indeed --- the farm labourer is looked down upon, especially by the women of his own class, and consequently looks down upon himself'.¹² Significantly, on Haggard's own farm the traditions of ploughing continued. He, like Clausen and Edward Thomas along with their reading and viewing public, all revealed the same anxieties, which they attempted to displace in strikingly similar ways.

By the early 1890s the stylistic influence of the French painter, Jules Bastien-Lepage on Clausen was in steady decline, and this had important consequences for the critical reception of his works.¹³ From this date 'Rustic Naturalism' was under attack from the increasingly influential 'new critics' like R A M Stevenson, George Moore and D S MacColl. The latter dismissed the method as 'a manual dexterity inspired by no real sentiment of vision'.¹⁴ In line with his elaboration on the idea of congruous beauty, MacColl saw Naturalism's failing in the extent to which sentiment, subject and technique remained obstinately detached from each other, (whereas) good technique --- is simply a way of seeing and feeling, and follows indistinguishably upon that impulse when the seeing has become clear'. Critics were therefore relieved when Clausen and La Thangue, those 'giants of the period of the peasant child who stuck his boots in our faces, of the black open-air scene, of the square brush, with its halo of French wickedness' abandoned the technique and 'Mr Clausen --- removed his peasants to a safe distance'.¹⁵ By this date Clausen's

¹² H Rider Haggard, *Rural England, Being an Account of Agricultural and Social Researches Carried Out in the Years 1901 & 1902*, Vol. II, Longmans 1902, p.540. For full discussion of Haggard's belief in the importance of rural society as the key to the reversal of racial decline and as a depository of the true essence of Englishness, see Alun Howkins, 'Rider Haggard and Rural England', in C Shaw and M Chase, (eds), *op.cit.*, pp.81-92

¹³ For full discussion of the importance of Bastien Lepage, see Kenneth McConkey, 'The Bouguereau of the Naturalists; Bastien-Lepage and British Art', *Art History*, Vol.1, no.3, 1978, pp.371-382 and on the term 'Rustic Naturalism', see Kenneth McConkey, 'Rustic Naturalism in Britain', in G P Weisberg, (ed), *The European Realist Tradition*, Indiana, 1983.

¹⁴ D S MacColl, 'Professor Brown: Teacher and Painter', *The Magazine of Art*, 1894, pp.407-8. The 'new critics' are substantially discussed in Chapter 2.

¹⁵ *The Saturday Review*, 22 May, 1897, 'Painting at the Academy', p.572. There is constant reference to the British peasant throughout this period although, of course, he no longer really existed. As writers like Christopher Hill and Eric Hobsbawm have established, the process of capitalist agriculture since the 16th century had converted the majority of rural labourers into landless proletarians. Hobsbawm states that 'unlike peasant countries, Britain possessed no great reservoir of land-hungry small cultivators working small holdings with family labour. The farm

allegiance had turned ostensibly to the figure compositions of Millet for, as he wrote; 'No other has seen so clearly or shown so well the beauty and significance of ordinary occupations, the union of man with nature'.¹⁶ Millet's significance lay in the depiction of type and the expression of action or sentiment, while Bastien's interest was in the portrait of a specific individual.

Aside from the obvious debt to Millet, there were signs of a renewed interest in the painters of the 'idyllic school' of the 1870s, of Mason, Pinwell and especially Fred Walker. By the turn of the century, Walker was being described in the approved critical terms of the period, those used in relation to Millet and, increasingly, Clausen as well. According to Claude Phillips in 1905, Fred Walker's art, though it had absorbed foreign influences, was fundamentally national in feeling and character. His romanticism was tempered with realism and imagination, and in this he had drawn from the works of Jules Breton, always popular in England, especially pictures like *La Fin de la Journée*, with its 'serene melancholy' and 'the idyllic grace which he infuses into modern rustic life'. Millet's *Gleaners* and *The Angelus*, later to find echoes in the works of Clausen and La Thangue, had already influenced Walker in terms of 'the increased effort to infuse into the treatment of rustic and open air subjects, a certain rhythmic harmony ---'.¹⁷ In all instances there was an attempt to 'see men and things in a large synthetic way, to express the beauty and harmony of the type, not the individual; to marry the human element to the enviroing landscape so that one cannot be conceived of without the other'. The result was a unity of impression, a simplicity of intention and a truthful atmospheric envelopment. But in spite of the derivations from French painting, for this writer, Walker remained 'one of the most English of the modern English

labourers wanted good wages, not land', see *Industry and Empire, From 1750 to the Present Day*, Pelican, 1981, p.200. (1st ed., Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1968). All of this has interesting implications for the agricultural and political propaganda, as well as for the increased reference in paintings from the 1880s to the ideal vision of 'three acres and a cow'. For George Bourne (Sturt), in 1912, the 'peasant tradition in its vigour amounted to nothing less than a form of civilization - the home made civilization of the rural English', see *Change in the Village*, this edition, New York, 1969, p.76

¹⁶ Clausen, *Six Lectures on Painting*, London, 1904, p.106

¹⁷ Walker had seen Breton's *La Fin de la Journée* on a visit to the Salon in 1863. Breton was also shown in London at the French Gallery in 1870. See H S Marks, *Frederick Walker*, ARA, London, 1896, p.37. Millet's *The Angelus* was shown at Durand-Ruel's in London in 1872. For more discussion, see McConkey, 1980, *op.cit.*

painters', and he spoke of his 'wistful tenderness which goes so far to redeem our time of trouble and misgiving, in art as in life ---'.¹⁸

Bound up with these aesthetic considerations was not only the desire to try and establish a poetic national temperament, but an urge to typify, or to caricature, the countryman to the extent that real individuality is lost. It was therefore possible and acceptable to speak of pictures of rural labourers as 'representations of country life, impersonally considered, rather than as depicting any real human interest in the workers'.¹⁹ Millet and, as we have seen, Fred Walker's appeal lay in the justification of a selective approach to the rural scene. The type sanctioned a more poetic rendering, - as Haldane MacFall stressed in relation to Clausen, 'He takes just those exquisite ordinary scenes (and) these he puts down for us in that broad colour sense in which our memory retains them --- in all essential truths'.²⁰ To deal in essentials allowed for a discriminating vision, by implication, one that could omit nagging detail and fact. As Dewey Bates remarked, 'the poetry of the peasant lies in the eye that sees'.²¹

The purifying aspect of this approach is therefore crucial. Discussing works by Edward Stott, the critic of *The Art Journal* observed that his pictorial vision had 'enabled him to strip actuality of ugliness'.²² As his comment reveals, despite the mythology, the real conditions of rural life were widely understood. The same can be said, not just in the context of rural housing, but of the physical appearance of the worker him, or herself. It was accepted, in spite of national antagonisms, that the peasant in France was more picturesque than in Britain, 'there is less squalor there, and --- the painter is less tempted to over-idealise or conventionalise his subjects in an effort to impart to them what he conceives to be a proper measure of

¹⁸ Claude Philips, *Frederick Walker and his Works*, (Portfolio Monograph), Seeley and Co., 1905. For more recent discussion of Walker see Christiana Payne, *Toil and Plenty, Images of the Agricultural Landscape in England, 1780-1890*, Yale University Press, 1993.

¹⁹ Anon, 'The Royal Academy', *The Magazine of Art*, 1899, p.388

²⁰ Haldane MacFall, 'The Art of Mr Clausen', *The Academy and Literature*, 3 Dec, 1904. p.569

²¹ Dewey Bates, 'About Market Gardens', *The English Illustrated Magazine*, Feb. 1885, pp.551-559

²² 'The Royal Academy', *Art Journal*, 1901, p.166

charm and poetic significance. He can be more naturalistic and at the same time give free rein to his imaginative faculties'. By contrast;

The British peasants have lost the character which made them formerly worthy of the artist's attention; they have got out of relation to nature, their life has become conventionalised, and their costume has degenerated into ugliness. They dress in the cast-off clothes of their superiors, in things inappropriate to their employment and out of keeping with their surroundings, so that they never seem to be properly in the picture.²³

By the nineties the young labourers had cast aside traditional peasant garb of smock and gaiters as a sign of servility. But painters, on occasion, still depicted the old forms of dress, as H H La Thangue chose to in his *Old Peasant*, in the collection of Sharpley Bainbridge by 1898.²⁴ A highly selective, idealistic and poetic sentiment expressed in painting was not only desirable, it was vital, if the rural was to maintain its ideological function in relation to the urban - if the symptoms of modernity, disorder and discontent were to be eradicated for the benefit of the urban exhibition goer. The fact that few people seriously believed the mythologies with which they were presented seems hardly relevant. Reality however was persistent, making La Thangue's images less believable, yet at the same time more affecting. To return to Baldry's remarks then, to get 'out of relation to nature' presupposed a concept of nature which, like Emerson's, was harmonious, poetic and picturesque - that is 'like a picture'. The much repeated qualities of both English art and nature are interchangeable here. Any encroachment of modernity into the rural communities was both culturally and aesthetically disagreeable. It was threatening to traditional order in class terms as well as national art traditions.

²³ A L Baldry, 'William Lee Hankey, RI', *The Studio*, Jan 1906, p.294. Sarah Knights' interesting study on the photographer Emerson has dealt with the importance of late nineteenth century attitudes towards the 'peasant' in relation to ideas about a natural social order. Knights shows how Emerson's writings and his photographs of East Anglian labourers were a criticism of the effects of economic and social change and the gradual spread of urban influences on the traditional rural hierarchy. His counter to this was to present the peasant as a 'type' and a passive individual ruled by the order of the seasons and he instructed his followers to 'choose your models most carefully', for they must 'without fail be picturesque and typical', 'Change and Decay: Emerson's Social Order', in Neil McWilliam and Veronica Sekules, (eds), *Life and Landscape, P H Emerson, Art and Photography in East Anglia, 1885-1900*, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, 1986, pp.12-20

²⁴ See 'The Collection of Sharpley Bainbridge Esq., J P Lincoln', *The Art Journal*, 1898, p.228. Sharpley Bainbridge's collection included also Clausen's *Mowers* as well as works by Samuel Palmer, Pinwell's *The Princess and the Ploughman*, and pictures by Birket Foster, pp.225-9 and 272-4

Edward Stott's works were perhaps the most successful in terms of the distancing of modernity in the critical opinion of the later nineties. Reviewers spoke of his romanticism and poetic discernment, and this was attributable to his immersion, from the late eighties, in 'the dreamy old world village of Amberley' in Sussex.²⁵ From contemporary accounts it emerges that the specific charm of the county was that it was 'so little spoilt by modern notions' and because of its isolation had retained so much of old fashioned English ways. Amberley itself was 'a huge stock yard, smelling of straw and cattle --- It is sheer Sussex - chalky soil, white washed cottages, huge wagons', there 'is nothing more beautiful under the stars than a white washed cottage when the lamp is lit'.²⁶

Amberley's appeal lay in its seclusion in the South Downs and in its picturesque decay, the sense of time having stood still which English painters had associated in the early eighties with the French village of Grez-sur-Loing. Amberley possessed an embattled castle, tumbling to decay, and an Early English church. There in the nineties, visitors were transported into the Middle Ages, 'the changes of four to five centuries have passed over it, touched it lightly, but left it substantially as it was in the days of the Edwards ---. In the gloaming, at least, we are in a village of which it is safe to say the main features were the same three centuries ago'.²⁷ Centuries of historical change have here been glossed over and displaced into a naturalised English identity.²⁸

In his scenes of children wandering along country lanes, eg *Saturday Night*, 1900, (fig.1.3), or gathered around thatched roofed cottages, like *Sunday Night*, 1897, (fig.1.4), of figures in the field with seasonal and atmospheric effects, as in *The Gleaners*, 1903 and *Peaceful Rest*, 1902, Stott was perceived to have drawn out the spiritual essence of place through constant observation and devotion. His pictures

²⁵ J Stanley Little, 'On the Work of Edward Stott', *The Studio*, Vol.6, Nov. 1895, p.78

²⁶ See Lucas, *Highways and By Ways of Sussex*, quoted in P H Ditchfield, *Cottage and Village Life*, illustrated by A R Quinton, (first pub. Dent, 1912). Facsimile edition, Bracken Books, 1993, pp.67-8

²⁷ J Stanley Little *op.cit.*

²⁸ Processes like these have been described in Ann Janowitz, *English Ruins: Poetic Purpose and the National Landscape*, Cambridge, 1990.

were typical of 'every phase of English pastoral life'.²⁹ The painter's specific rendering of village life at Amberley was picturesque and, despite his long association, seen determinedly from a distance. His was the view of an outsider. There is nothing here to confirm the anxieties of contemporary writers concerned, for varying motives, about the exodus from the country villages and expounding on their 'dullness, (their) antiquated, tumble down cottages, ill ventilated and worse drained'.³⁰ Stott's ideal, in tune with the picturesque aesthetic, presented Academy audiences with a delightful dream of an organic, traditional, and an utterly harmonious natural world, in which the worries of the reformists seemed, if only momentarily, quite misplaced.³¹

Such a dream accorded with those of the writer P H Ditchfield who, in 1912, set about recording rural England in his book *Cottage and Village Life* on the premise that it was well to 'catch a glimpse of rural England before the transformation comes and to provide a record of the beauties that for a time remain'.³² This transformation, which for Ditchfield had been developing over the previous twenty years, had already seen many villages degenerate into suburban colonies of villas. Old livelihoods like haymaking, thatching, harvesting, turf-cutting and hop picking were disappearing, farms were being broken up and 'the rustic who remains tends the strips of villa gardens or drives a coal cart and his wife goes out charring'.³³ In an earlier article in *The Spectator*, the author had suggested to the National Trust that they should purchase an 'ideal hamlet', it could well have been Amberley, to preserve as a memorial for future generations for instructive, not just sentimental purposes.³⁴ A precursor of the modern day 'theme park' perhaps. All of this was

²⁹ J Stanley Little, *op.cit.*

³⁰ See, for instance, *To Colonise England, A Plea for a Policy*, C F G Masterman, W B Hodgson and Others, Fisher Unwin, 1907 p.189

³¹ For important discussion of the functions of picturesque and the pastoral see eg Ann Bermingham, *op.cit.*, 1987, and see also Brian Short's essay 'Images and Realities in the Rural Community: An Introduction', in Brian Short, (ed), *The English Rural Community, Image and Analysis*, Cambridge University Press, 1992.

³² Ditchfield states that his book is partly intended for 'our countrymen across the seas'. Those now living in America and Australia, will recall happy memories of 'the Old Country, its rural scenes and associations', *op.cit.* n.p.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.163

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 177

based on the belief, widely shared, that there was nothing so beautiful as an unspoilt English village, 'one untouched by modern innovations, by the production of strange anomalies and the association together of materials which nature has not blended'.³⁵ A country cottage was created via the handing down of traditions over generations and it blended inevitably with the landscape. Delicate harmonies were the result, 'the modulation from man's handiwork to God's enveloping world that binds one to the other without discord or dissonance'³⁶

Stott's handling and technique, his subtle colouristic effects, the warm glow and gently suffused light in his pictures, perfectly coincide with Ditchfield's descriptions of the ideal village. As one admirer remarked, a photographic, 'unfeeling eye', could never have achieved such inspired results. The painter proceeds without ever 'defying the unities', he knows 'what to add, what to leave out', and, echoing Whistler, he 'must know nature as a skilled musician knows his keyboard'.³⁷ Frequently Stott enveloped, or shrouded, his scenes, in the mysterious atmosphere of night, as Millet had done. These atmospheric veilings were also to be seen in the work of another French painter - Le Sidaner, described in 1901, as one 'devoted to solitude and silence --- the mystery and the reveries which dwell in ancient places'.³⁸ Like Stott, Le Sidaner had established himself far from cliques and coteries, protected from the 'ever pernicious influences of artistic centres', in the neighbourhood of Beauvais, 'a little village morte, half village, half town, encircled by big trees and ancient ramparts - a place full of reminiscences of the past'. His soft handling decked reality with an infinite charm', just as in Stott's, *The Penfold*, shown at the Royal Academy in 1898 and regarded as the finest pastoral of the year, nature was 'pleading with tenderness, softness and mellowness'.³⁹

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.3

³⁶ All this the author identifies since the collapse of taste in the 19th century and the trend for classical and gothic architecture. By 1912 he could discern the emergence of a sounder taste, and 'it would be hard to exaggerate the value of these little English cottages from this aspect of beauty alone', 'Cottage building is neither Gothic nor Classic; it is just good, sound, genuine and instructive English work', *ibid*, p.16

³⁷ *Ibid*, p.80

³⁸ Gabriel Mourey, 'The Art of M Le Sidaner', *The Studio*, Vol.24, 1901, p.30. Works by Le Sidaner were included in the Grafton Galleries 'Modern French Art' exhibition at the end of 1899, at the International Society exhibition of 1901, at the Hanover Gallery in 1902 and at the Goupil Gallery in 1905, 1907, 1908 and 1910.

³⁹ 'The Royal Academy', *The Art Journal*, 1898, p.164

Like Samuel Palmer at Shoreham, and later Stanley Spencer at Cookham, Edward Stott pursued a vision of an ideal community, a spiritual world where, at times, biblical scenes, like *The Good Samaritan*, Royal Academy 1910, might feasibly occur. This, by the turn of the century was a shared, middle class, urban dream of the English village, in reality falling down and increasingly deserted or taken over by the development of new villas and weekend cottages, but therefore all the more to be savoured. George Bourne's writings underline the rapid pace of change in rural communities;

The labourer can hardly look from his door without seeing up and down the valley some sign or other telling of the invasion of a new people, unsympathetic to his order. He sees and hears too. As he sweats at his garden, the sounds of piano playing come to him, or of the affected excitement of a tennis party; or the braying of a motor car inform him that the rich who are his masters are on the road --- (the old home of the labouring people), is at the mercy of a new class who would willingly see their departure.⁴⁰

It is against this background that the timeless, peaceful representations of Edward Stott, and on another occasion Clausen, acquired their value. As a result, these painters could be regarded as poets, expressing 'The lyric intensity of it all - and the all just the beautiful thing we call an English village'.⁴¹

On occasion, certain critics of the later 90s did express reservations about the over sentimentalising of the rural worker. For D S MacColl, Clausen was not quite the English Millet, nor did he match up to George Morland's abilities in his dealings with the Essex peasant, 'one watches his efforts with material too brutal, perhaps for his gentle nature with curiosity and sympathy'.⁴² A few months later, MacColl's

⁴⁰ *Op.cit.* pp.121-2

⁴¹ Haldane MacFall was here describing Clausen's *A Village Street*, seen at the Goupil Gallery, in 'The Art of Mr Clausen', *Academy and Literature*, 3 Dec., 1904, p.569. Also see pictures like Lucy Kemp Welch's *The Village Street* at the Royal Academy in 1903 and Yeend King, *A Peaceful Village*, shown at the Academy in 1911. These are just random examples.

⁴² D S MacColl, *The Saturday Review*, 28 Jan 1899, pp.110-10. The previous year Jack Nettleship had published a monograph on Morland, (J T Nettleship, *George Morland*, (The Portfolio, No. 39), Seeley and Co., 1898, making connections between his art and that of Millet and drawing on Clausen's essay 'Bastien-Lepage as Artist', in Andre Theuriet, *Jules Bastien Lepage and his Art*, Fisher Unwin, 1892. In all cases it was asserted that the realism of Lepage had led to an impasse: literal truth was achieved at the expense of beauty. This was Clausen's position in the 1890s, but MacColl clearly felt the latter had gone too far in his pursuit of selection and faithfulness of representation had suffered.

doubts had increased. By this time, as another reviewer in the *Art Journal* had observed, 'Mr Clausen has painted an almost complete gallery of types of workers in the fields, and is succeeding in doing for the agricultural labourer what Millet and his compeers did for the French peasant. Whether the figure be a reaper, a mower or a sower, it is always convincingly chosen'.⁴³ MacColl disagreed, although Clausen as well as La Thangue 'work hard at giving a reading of the English field labourer', their subjects lacked the character appropriate to their size on the canvas. Instead the painter 'darns the trousers, darns the complexion, darns the lighting of Millet's Breton (sic) peasants, and dilutes thereby something that Millet left perfectly expressed. The biblical air that Millet found in his own people overweighs what Mr Clausen with his ability and honesty might draw from the English Hodge'.⁴⁴

Honest perceptions of individual character might be lacking, but for many, and on this occasion for George Moore, the generalisation that Clausen produced in pictures like *The Mowers*, shown at the Academy in 1892 (fig.1.5), mercifully replaced a handful of dry facts with 'a passionate impression of life in its envelope of mystery and suggestion'.⁴⁵ For others Clausen's pictures qualified under the heading of 'Idealistic art', 'The motive is simply that primitive yet at the same time thoroughly modern one, a number of labourers rhythmically mowing in the bright light of a sunny afternoon ---'.⁴⁶ Despite the claim, the motive was hardly modern. Scenes like Clausen's were declining and with the advent of mechanical reapers, the mower was increasingly only to be found confined to the edges of the field, clearing a path for the machinery.⁴⁷ But the mower, like the ploughman, was now equally iconic. A journalist in *The Saturday Review* lamented his displacement by the mowing machine, which now did in one day what had previously taken two

⁴³ 'The Royal Academy of 1899', *The Art Journal*, p.168

⁴⁴ D S MacColl, *The Saturday Review*, 6 May, 1899, pp.556-7. Millet's peasants were not of course 'Breton'.

⁴⁵ See George Moore review in *The Speaker*, 1892, cited in *Modern Painting*, Walter Scott Ltd, 1898, p.122

⁴⁶ Claude Phillips, 'The Royal Academy', *Art Journal*, 1892, p.220

⁴⁷ For more discussion of mechanisation in agriculture and the social and moral debate around gang labour see Alun Howkins, 'The Problems of Consensus: The Contradictions of the System', in *Reshaping Rural England, A Social History, 1850-1925*, Harper Collins, 1991, pp.93-116

good scythe men the better part of a week and spoke of; 'the ancient trade of the old mower --- the glory of the scythe departed, the skilled mower ceased hereabouts some twenty years ago: the great days of Herculean work and commensurate beer are over'.⁴⁸ This writer's description of the mower's movements and the sounds that he makes were in essence the very qualities that Clausen's depictions pursued;

--- an even pulse of sound, both in rhythm and in tone after Nature's pattern, in tune with the sound of winds and waters. --- a thing of art in its own way ---. And for the eye's pleasure there is the balanced swing and turn of the body, the shifting of the light on the sunburnt arms, the easy grace of the man's knack.⁴⁹

Works like *The Mowers* and *Sons of the Soil*, R.A. 1901 (fig.1.6), may well have recalled to mind in contemporary audiences the phenomenon of gang labour. By this period however the large groups of travelling workers were beginning to disappear from the rural scene, having been regulated by parliament since the 1860s, although they still provoked debate and were still required at specific seasons.⁵⁰ As Howkins has written, 'gangs stood outside the paternal structures of regular employment, deference and social order'. In the voice of a contemporary, gang labourers were about the worst specimens of barbarianism we could desire to meet'.⁵¹ Through Clausen's sunlit palette and his selective approach however, a representation emerges in which residual concerns about rough unruliness seem misjudged. Instead those who, despite the moral anxiety they might earlier have created had been a necessary part of the agricultural system, are controlled by a concentrated, unified movement and a rhythmic grouping derived from Millet. The sense that this may be a motley collection of casual, hired labourers is here overtaken by Clausen's representation of what now appears as three generations of one family joined communally and without conflict in a life of toil. As a result, in 1895, the artist could be celebrated as;

⁴⁸ 'The Mower's Scythe', *The Saturday Review*, 9 July, 1904, pp.46-7

⁴⁹ *Ibid*

⁵⁰ For further discussion, see J Patrick, 'Agricultural Gangs', *History Today*, March 1986, pp.21-6. The agricultural gangs act first forbade the employment of children under eight and also of men and women working in the same gang. More reforms were effected through the spread of compulsory education through to the end of the 1890s. But as Patrick points out, the use of casual gangs of labour persisted in certain areas, until at least the post war period in the example of potato harvesting alone.

⁵¹ Howkins, 1991, *op.cit*

'a painter of the English peasant under out of door effects --- he expresses plainly the poetry, the charm, which he himself has discovered in the subtle colour and modelling of a labourer's face ---. In an age somewhat inclined to be dyspeptic, it is a pleasure to look upon his wholesome toilers, ruddy with the glow of health or bronzed with the suns and snows of an outdoor life.'⁵²

The labourer's ruddy glow of health superceded concerns about his moral impropriety and, casual or otherwise, he had become iconic by the end of the century. In 1899, Lord Walsingham was urging Rider Haggard to 'Look at the pure bred Cockney, I mean the little fellow whom you see running in and out of offices in the City ---. And then look at your average young labourer coming home from his day's field work and I think you will admit that the city breeds one stamp of human being and the country breeds another ---'.⁵³ As such he had become the archetype of 'vigorous manhood', and his life, described here in the language of imperialism, was to be preserved with 'something of the same determination with which we set about, say, the destruction of the Transvaal'.⁵⁴

The Royal Academy of that year was notable for two strikingly similar compositions of harvesters by Clausen and La Thangue. In Clausen's *Going to Work* (fig.1.7), a lone figure dominates the composition, striding across the landscape his scythe across his shoulder and his hempen bag in his hand. La Thangue's harvester, returns from his labour at the close of day, his girl at his side in *Love in the Harvest Field*, (fig.1.8).⁵⁵ He carries his scythe in the same way, crossing the canvas, as in the Clausen from right to left. Neither face is visible, their features shaded by the brim of their hats, and individual character is disregarded. In spite of the similarities there appear to be no contemporary reviews linking the two works. By this point such full length, close up compositions of rustic types were so common that, quite conceivably, the coincidence was unremarkable. The theme of the young rustic lovers in the La Thangue was already

⁵² Dewey Bates, 'George Clausen, ARA', *The Studio*, Vol.V, 1895, p.7

⁵³ Cited in Howkins, 1991, *op.cit.*, p.226

⁵⁴ Quoted by H R Mansfield, 'The Rural Exodus', in *To Colonise England*, *op.cit.*, p.186

⁵⁵ La Thangue had already evolved the prototype for his picture in the earlier work *In the Dauphiné*, shown at the first New English Art Club exhibition. The composition is virtually identical but the position of the two figures in relation to the picture frame has been reversed.

so well established, for example with images like Maurice Greiffenhagen's extremely successful *An Idyll*, 1891 (fig.1.9), as to connect his work to a specific tradition.⁵⁶ The popular symbolism of the inevitability of ageing and decay meant that Clausen's picture was perceived instead by the critic of *The Art Journal* rather as 'a natural pendant to Edward Stott's *Harvester's Return* (fig.1.10), shown at the same Academy, where the old reaper with his sickle, --- is replaced by the young and lusty mower in Mr Clausen's'.⁵⁷ In front of the Stott, MacColl was moved to the view that 'This is an art that doth mend nature'.⁵⁸

In La Thangue's picture the epic size of the male figure presented a problem for MacColl. If the work had been painted by Millet, there would have been greater dramatic sense and feeling for movement. In La Thangue those qualities were reduced by the laborious collection of lesser observations, and 'an attempt is made to add movement to them as a detail of the same order, to wind up the figures when they have been painted still'.⁵⁹ The suspicion that La Thangue's work was becoming inflexible and his compositions repetitious was confirmed by Laurence Binyon in 1909, 'his rustic figures shaking down apples are admirably painted, but we always seem to have seen them before'.⁶⁰ The relationship between individual observation and the depiction of a universal type was less easily resolved by La Thangue than by Clausen, and certainly by Stott who, for MacColl was more sure of his intentions, 'He follows a rather special game with real intentness'.⁶¹ But even if La Thangue's work caused unease amongst perceptive writers like Binyon, the very repetition that the critic complained of was a consistent reassurance to urban audiences. The hearty and vigorous rural labourer was still very much in existence and he was instantly recognisable.

⁵⁶ The popularity of Greiffenhagen's picture is referred to by lovers in D H Lawrence's *The White Peacock*, Penguin, 1954, p. 48, (1st ed., 1911)

⁵⁷ 'The Royal Academy', *Art Journal*, 1899, p.166

⁵⁸ *Ibid*

⁵⁹ 'The Academy', *The Saturday Review*, 6 May, 1899, pp.556-7

⁶⁰ Laurence Binyon, 'The Academy Again', *The Saturday Review*, 22 May, 1909, p.655

⁶¹ MacColl, 6 May, 1899, *op.cit.*

From 1898 La Thangue, like Stott, was also working in Sussex, at Bosham, an area where as Thomson recorded 'the soil is fertile, and well farmed by methods still comparatively simple', as a result the spectator is presented;

with striking renderings of many phases of a rustic life which still has many picturesque elements. For the steam plough and the threshing machine have not driven manual labour out of the country. The ploughman has by no means ploughed his last furrow in sleepy Sussex, and the travelling harvester with scythe on his shoulder --- is even now taking form upon the painters canvas.⁶²

The painter deliberately chose a perfect site in which to pursue subjects which were now deeply ingrained on his, and on the gallery goer's consciousness. His choice of subject was now determined by the seasons which governed the lives of the labourers he depicted. In a certain sense his own production had become a part of the natural cycle.

Sussex in this period provided a perfect example for those agriculturalists keen to emphasise the value of dairy and fruit farming. Writers like Rider Haggard believed that the potential profitability of fruit farming would encourage labourers and employers to go back to the land, with more success than the inducements of 'three acres and a cow'.⁶³ Others saw the benefits in the opportunities of fruit growing for women and children in supplementing the family income.⁶⁴ La Thangue's pictures like *Gathering Plums* (fig.1.11), and *Cider Apples*, 1899, (fig.1.12), both shown at the Royal Academy, provided further evidence of the benefits of these trends. His model in *A Sussex Farm*, 1904 (fig.1.13), exemplified Ditchfield's view of the virtues of the rustic woman who passed her days in the open air. According to the writer, 'hysteria and sentimentalism', the afflictions of women confined in the city, could not live in such an atmosphere.⁶⁵

⁶² George Thomson, *op.cit.* La Thangue showed his own version of *Travelling Harvesters*, at the Royal Academy in 1897. Illustrated in McConkey, *A Painter's Harvest, 1859-1929*, Oldham Art Galleries and Museum, 1978, fig. 40

⁶³ Haggard, *op.cit.* Vol.1, p.130. The 'Three Acres and a Cow' campaign, led by Jesse Collings and Joseph Chamberlain was identified in the public mind with the Back to the Land movement and is discussed in Peter C Gould, *op.cit.*, 1988, pp.104-123

⁶⁴ See George Bunyard, *Fruit Farming for Profit*, Royal Nurseries, Maidstone, 1899.

⁶⁵ Ditchfield, *op.cit.* p.84

But the proximity of Sussex and Kent to the capital, at this time being increasingly settled by London commuters, disrupt the conventional notions of an abrupt division between town and country in interesting ways.⁶⁶ In 1906, a review of a guide to the county in *The Studio* commented that;

It has been said of Sussex that it is the most thoroughly Saxon of all the English counties, ---. In spite of the transformation now going on --- especially along the principle arteries of communication, where one regrets to see so many evidences of 'suburbanisation'. --- the general reader will perhaps be more interested in the (study) of the characteristics of the Sussex peasant, the chief of which is his rooted conservatism.⁶⁷

At the very moment that Sussex was becoming dangerously modern, it was determinedly described as embodying characteristics which were innately and even archaically English. Stuart Laing has emphasised the interconnections at this period in relation to the symbolic presence of the London coster monger or fruit seller, a stock character appearing in at least one instance in a popular contemporary music hall act, and regarded as one who 'brings the rural into the heart of the urban'.⁶⁸ Costers constituted specifically English urban types, as seen for example in William Nicholson's *Coster*, a woodcut that formed part of his series *London Types*, of 1898 but, through the nature of their trade - selling the fruits of the countryside, they connect with the rural. Images of fruit sellers and fruit pickers had represented the health of the countryside and the abundance of nature for some time, as for example in Fred Morgan's *An Apple Gathering*, shown at the Royal Academy in 1880, in numerous Sussex studies by La Thangue, in at least one instance by Edward Stott - *Apple Gatherer* in the New Gallery in 1900 and, within a few years, by Stanley Spencer for the Slade sketch club in 1912. In poetry too, the gathering of apples was deeply symbolic of rural life. John Masefield's post Great War lament on the decline of the *Land Workers*, uses apple gathering as a focus for gathering reminiscences;

⁶⁶ P J Waller discusses the intricate links and interwoven economies that continued between town and country dwellers and mentions also the use of West Midlands townfolk in the cider and beer making industries of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, in *Town, City and Nation, 1850 - 1914*, 1983, Oxford University Press, p.193

⁶⁷ Review of *Sussex*, illustrated by Wilfred Ball, in Vol.39, p.89

⁶⁸ Stuart Laing, 'The Rural in Popular Culture', in Brian Short, *op.cit.*, p.141. The coster featured regularly in paintings of the period, as for instance in William Rothenstein's *The Coster Girls*, 1894.

Then, more September memories
Of apples glowing on the trees,
Of men on ladders in the sun
Gathering apples by the ton,
Of heaps of red-fleshed cider-fruit
Wasp-pestered at each apple root
And smell of pommace warm in air
From cider-presses everywhere.⁶⁹

The fruit and more particularly the hop pickers who descended into Kent from the East End of London in September, on what was for them both holiday and a means of earning additional income, were regarded with fascination and contempt to varying degrees by local inhabitants and by urban commentators. Anecdotes of uncleanness and drunken debauchery echoed the anxiety caused by the travelling gang labourers who roamed from district to district. But in both instances the rural economy required their presence. The difficulties inherent in presenting an appropriately reassuring representation of hop pickers, in the face of reports of their conduct, meant they were rarely treated as a subject by painters. The living conditions that the pickers endured while working were well known. One reportedly commented in 1909 that 'a hop garden is a hell'.⁷⁰ Urban reformers, clergy and educationalists all debated the problem, which by 1908, had taken on political implications resulting in demonstrations in London against the importation of foreign hops and the slogan 'England expects every foreign hop to pay its duty'. By September, summer storms in Kent had led to national press reports and to an aid appeal for the 30,000 starving hop pickers stranded there in over crowded work houses. At which point the socialist editor of *The Clarion*, Robert Blatchford, went on a tour of the county in an attempt to stir even greater unrest.

All of the above is worth recounting because the only painting on the subject of hop pickers from the mid nineties onwards to feature in the *Royal Academy Illustrated*, appeared in the following year, 1909. *Life and Laughter in the Kentish Hop Fields*, (fig.1.14), by Robert Fowler. An artist previously known for his rather weak pseudo classical reworkings of Albert Moore et. al, here presented an

⁶⁹ John Masefield, 'The Land Workers', in *Collected Poems*, Heinemann, 1923, p. 12

⁷⁰ Cited in J G W Farley, *Pull No More Poles; An Account of a Venture among Hop Pickers*, Faith Press, 1962, p.11

extraordinary vision of a group of modern day hop pickers in a mix of classically derived and naturalistic poses. Unlike the few examples of paintings from an earlier period, like for instance David Murray's *Nooning in the Hop Garden*, shown at the Academy in 1889, as well as contemporary photographs of hop pickers, all of which tended to take up a safely distanced aerial position, the transformative effects of Fowler's type of representation permits a close to, even a claustrophobic view, looking up at the figures rather than gazing from above.⁷¹ These particular East Enders inhabit the secluded, leafy refuge of the dryad. The only male figure in this idyllic sundappled scene is garlanded with a wreath of hop flowers. The children and women, two in the flat brimmed straw hats worn by town costers rather than country women, are all as healthy and sound as the rural types painted by La Thangue and Clausen.⁷² There can be no fears here about the dangers of urban incomers. All has become a quintessentially English scene, also observed by Masfield, in the lines from the same poem, *The Land Workers*;

Then, like to maypoles set in lines,
 The hopyards of the English vines:
 The cribs, wherein I picked for hours
 The resined, flakey, pungent flowers,
 Whose gummage stained my fingers brown:
 Then --- all those rascallies from town,
 The hoppers, cribbing deep, with hooting
 Newcomers, till they paid their footing,⁷³

In Fowler's painting the urban as well as the rural type is redeemed through the natural surroundings. Rider Haggard had made the same observations in 1902 about the Kent hop grounds and the squalid camps of the hoppers;

⁷¹ Another painting, *Hop Binding* by Edgar Barclay, (untraced, ill. in *Pall Mall Gazette 'Extra'*, 1897, p.92), was shown at the New Gallery in 1897. The real interest here is in the children playing contentedly by the stream rather than in the activity of the solitary hop binder. *A Worcestershire Hop Garden*, (untraced, ill. in *Pall Mall Gazette 'Extra'*, 1890, p.48), by Walter Urwick, hung at the Academy in 1890, shows a distanced view of the activity of the pickers, the regulated composition is framed by a young labourer, his wife with babe in arms, leading our eye into what appears to be carefree picnic atmosphere.

⁷² Fowler's painting was favourably noticed by Laurence Binyon for its 'boldness and sincerity', although he felt the artist had been occupied too much by superficial appearances and should have concentrated rather on the rhythmic relations between the figures and with 'what is elemental in his subject', see 'The Academy: and Mr Fry's Drawings', *The Saturday Review*, 8 May, 1909, p.590

⁷³ Masfield, *op.cit.*, p.11

'It must be remembered that around these crowded insanitary hovels breathes the sweet, fresh air, and above them stretches the blue sky of English summer. In the festering slums of London such blessings are absent, and hop and fruit picking is the annual holiday of thousands of their denizens - to them indeed what the autumn visit to sea or countryside is to other classes of town dwellers'.⁷⁴

What was in effect a cheap, itinerant gang of labourers has now become a noble, timeless collection of workers/holiday makers having what appears to be the time of their lives. The transition from urban to rural, necessary for purely economic reasons has been effortlessly effected through the painting.

If urban reformers cast their eye with disapproval and concern on the itinerant fruit and hop harvester, their real preoccupation was with the potential benefits of allotments and small holdings.⁷⁵ In 1899, Clausen exhibited at the Academy his *Allotment Gardens*, (fig 1.15), viewed from his front garden at Widdington in Essex which, by the turn of the century was something of a marginal zone, in between town and country, although in 1909 Masterman was describing rural Sussex as a vast wilderness, where the houses were tumbling into decay etc. This presumably made the area more interesting in terms of the potential benefits of allotmenting.⁷⁶ By this period the local market gardener there was already perceived as one 'continually mingling the soil of his acres with the mud of London'.⁷⁷ But this seems to have been the lot of the country labourer quite generally at this time. As Mingay made clear, by the end of the nineteenth century, he was poised between two civilisations;

He had moved out of his rural isolation. --- He was no longer a member of the lower orders but of the lower classes.--- The old style of rural life had broken down, but the farm labourer had not yet entered, or was fully equipped to enter, the new semi-urbanized existence which had taken its place. His culture had become town oriented, revolving round town goods, town amusements, town newspapers, town ideas, but his life and work were still rooted in the country ---⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Rider Haggard, Vol. 1, *op.cit.*, p.165

⁷⁵ Allotments were regarded positively by Socialists in the 1890s as well, in both their economic and moral benefits. In northern areas allotments were seen as a healthy open air experience for the industrial workforce. For more discussion, see Peter C Gould, *op.cit.*, p.121

⁷⁶ C F G Masterman, 1909, *op.cit.*, p.149

⁷⁷ Dewey Bates, 'About Market Gardens', *op.cit.*

⁷⁸ Mingay, *op.cit.*, 196-7

Such was the difficulty that faced conservative traditionalists like Ditchfield and Haggard. In the context of these dilemmas, allotment gardening and, even more so, small holdings, were regarded as a potential solution to economic problems in rural areas, and as morally improving at the same time. The Small Holding acts of 1892 and 1908 were based on the premise that they would supply a career to the labourer, stop the drain of the best rural blood, and provide a source of available and reliable casual work to larger farmers.⁷⁹ As Mingay notes, the labourer was to become an independent cultivator, a specialist producer of the small man's products - vegetables, market garden stuff, soft fruit, poultry and eggs, a development that could be supported by the spread of the railways. Allotment schemes then, attracted agriculturalists, worried about rural poverty and depopulation, but also, as P J Waller has noted, because they were believed to 'reduce the number of poaching and other offences, encourage personal thrift and enterprise, and maintain the national character and physique'.⁸⁰ In other words, they were a possible means of social control, and support for them was underpinned by a fundamental distrust of the labouring class, rural as well as urban. In this respect the idealising of the peasant was even less than skin deep. The English Hodge, just like the city-bred type, was also potentially lawless and needed to be kept in check and a popular way to do this was to present him as some noble, but also passive stoic, in rhythmic, elemental compositions, like Clausen's.

Throughout an essay extolling the virtues of small holdings, every utterance of Clausen's friend Dewey Bates reveals middle class distance and bias. Popular national education is dismissed as potentially ruinous, 'the fields would be choked with weeds, the flowers unplucked and field women would 'have colour box and sketch book in hand'. The school room would have even more pernicious effects for a boy, who would become too accustomed to a warm room, too averse to working outside in the cold and rain.⁸¹ That the rustic figure should have emerged as a metaphor for the superior qualities of the English race then is striking, because

⁷⁹ See *To Colonise England, op.cit.*, p.132

⁸⁰ P J Waller, *op.cit.*, p.190

⁸¹ More discussion see W A Armstrong in Mingay, *op.cit.*, p.123

there is much evidence that real attitudes were quite different. For Haggard, 'only the dullards and wastrels stay on the land --- and it is this indifferent remnant who will be the parents of the next generation of rural Englishmen'.⁸² Painters, wrote Bates, presumably including himself, were largely responsible for elevating the position of the labourer in the public's imagination. In reality he was a prosaic individual, and 'fortunately is totally ignorant' of that situation.⁸³

Examples of such condescension abound throughout the period.⁸⁴ In 1899, Laurence Housman described the faces depicted by Edward Stott as rather 'vegetable in form', and as 'imaging for us, almost to excess, the stagnation of dull rustic intelligence'.⁸⁵ Not only were the peasants unintelligent, they were incapable of appreciating the qualities of the countryside and the beauties of the natural world. For Haggard, 'nature (only) appeals to the truly educated'.⁸⁶ If the idea of a popular education in rural areas was as unthinkable to Haggard as it had been to Dewey Bates, then this was a situation likely to continue.

Dim-witted as he was believed to be, nevertheless the rural worker knew his job, and this was one of the respects in which he proved his superiority to the, equally caricatured, urban type. Ditchfield's contemptuous attitude to the working class urban figure was such that he had no time for the ideals of the Back to the Land movement, which he regarded as straightforwardly socialist in intent. As a worthy middle class reformer and having spent much time lecturing and talking to the 'men of the East End', he was dismissive of their wish to be back amongst the green meadows of their native counties, and away from their hard lives amidst the 'wilderness of bricks and mortar'. Such issues were irrelevant, 'we have no use for town folks in our country. They are a useless kind of creature. They may think

⁸² Rider Haggard, *op.cit.*, p.540

⁸³ Dewey Bates, 'About Market Gardens', *op.cit.*, p.555

⁸⁴ George Bourne also comments on 'the jealousy, suspicion, some fear (and) the elements of bitter class war in fact, (which) frequently mark the attitude of middle class people towards the labouring class', *op.cit.*, p.108

⁸⁵ Laurence Housman, 'Edward Stott: Painter of the Field and Twilight', *The Magazine of Art*, 1900, p.531

⁸⁶ Haggard, *op.cit.*

themselves very clever and smart, and they can talk, but what use are they when they try to plough a furrow, or milk cows, or thatch a rick or manage a reaper'.⁸⁷

The rural images presented by the painters discussed here were invariably constructed from the perspective of writers like Ditchfield. Their work embodied deeply ingrained views about class and race, ideologies which, at times, revealed serious contradictions. But the enthusiasm and the critical fervour with which paintings like *Sons of the Soil* were received was enough to conceal much doubt and unease, and this was a substantial part of their function. A review in *The Connoisseur* of 1904 illustrates their success in this perfectly;

Clausen's soil stained sons, his gleaning women, his healthy children are all fine English types: he has pictured in many works the great song of toil in the open from the Sowing to the Reaping, from the Reaping to the Garnering of wheat, the song of the Barn, the stubble field, the song of the beauty of the Corn field, the Dignity of the Plough. It is a great feeling to look at Clausen's pictures and to feel English, part of all this, one with the village folk, the countryside, the quiet field of corn.⁸⁸

By the turn of the century, Clausen's direction was clearly changing. The concern to identify individual groups of labourers was increasingly less relevant and instead, as Dyneley Hussey observed looking back on the artist's career in 1923, a process of transmutation had taken place, the concern was no longer with the figure in a landscape, but rather with the rendering of landscape with figures.⁸⁹ Hand in hand with this had been the brightening and lightening of the palette, the preoccupation with rendering atmosphere, or 'envelopment', which was the result of increased familiarity with Impressionism from the nineties. The process of removing the worker to a safe distance was now complete. In the space of ten years between three works like *In the Bean Field*, RA, 1904 (fig.1.16), *The Boy and The Man*, RA 1908 (fig. 1.17) and *In the Fields in June*, RA, 1914 (fig.1.18), the vast panoramic landscapes and immense skies begin to dissolve the figures into the

⁸⁷ For Ditchfield urban types were quite simply 'feckless folk', and so it was foolish ignorance to speak of taking these people back to the land. This was just the 'noisy talk of agitators and Socialists'. Change for this writer could only be for the worse, 'we love to keep in the old ways and follow in the footsteps of our sires', *op.cit.*, pp.178-9

⁸⁸ *The Connoisseur*, Vol.IX, 1904, p.142

⁸⁹ Dyneley Hussey, *George Clausen*, Contemporary British Artists, Ernest Benn, 1923.

evanescent haze that surrounds them. By the eve of the Great War the labourer was now simply an accessory, an attribute of the English landscape and no longer such an essential icon. All this only increased the sense of the English countryside as a tranquil idyll, a complete contrast to the crowded, grimy city and the confusion of modernity, but it was also, at the same time, an idyll that could only be really appreciated from the position of the modern. Clausen's own writings reflect that position. Lecturing to Royal Academy students in 1904 he insisted that the appeal of landscape was;

to the primitive instincts - not to primitive people, not so much to people who pass their lives in the open air; for they take nature and its changes as a matter of course, and look on the weather as a capricious master whose whims have to be met. But the artist's view is outside this; and a picture of landscape appeals mainly to the primitive instincts of cultivated people who live in the cities, who look from the standpoint of civilisation with a sentimental longing towards a more simple state.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Clausen, 1904, *op.cit.*, p.96

Nature and Nostalgia

The last chapter was concerned with the extent to which artists' engagement with French Naturalism was modified through various stages and rendered more acceptable to English audiences. This chapter explores a similar process in relation to an assimilation in this country of French Impressionism. In particular it focuses on the transformation that occurs in the works of Philip Wilson Steer from around 1890 to the early years of this century. During this period a fundamental change occurred in the once boldly innovative paintings of this artist. The influence of contemporaries like Monet, Seurat and Whistler was supplanted by that of British landscape painters like Turner and Constable. In this Steer, along with more commercially successful painters like David Murray and Alfred East, was regarded by many as returning to the very sources of French Impressionism. To an extent this critical laundering served to make French art more palatable to still hostile British audiences, but its larger significance was its appeal to nationalistic sensibilities. The process whereby the influence of these earlier artists on Steer came to be regarded as an expression of national identity in the years up to 1910 is my most particular concern here.

Looking back over Steer's career in 1952 John Rothenstein, the man responsible for buying the bulk of the Tate Gallery's collection of early Steers, wondered at the radical differences between paintings like *Girls Running, Walberswick Pier*, begun in 1890, (fig.2.1) and works such as *A Classic Landscape*, 1893, (fig.2.2). He was obviously unsure of the merits of these later works, but he managed to discern the legacy of Impressionism in their loose handling and atmospheric qualities. Nevertheless, he wrote with a strange naivety, 'this almost total transformation in Steer's outlook, which appears to me to be the most important event in his life, has remained, so far as I am aware, unnoticed or ignored by all those who have written on his work'.¹ For Rothenstein, here adopting the classic Modernist position on Steer, the 'deterioration' of his creative faculties was

¹ J Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters, Vol.1, Sickert to Smith*, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1952, p.73.

difficult to explain given his sporadic development and famous silences. The writer ended by speculating on the effects of lethargy, debilitating middle age and even the end of his relationship with his young model Rose Pettigrew.

Rothenstein's suggestions obscured the really fascinating issues surrounding this point in Steer's development. Despite his assumptions, the radical difference in style of pictures from around 1893 was much apparent and commented upon at the time. Contemporary accounts of this transition perfectly illustrate the way in which the belief that there were essential qualities which distinguished English painting figured in the construction of national identity in the years around 1900. Rothenstein's understanding of the process of change in art did not allow for such considerations.²

For the Modernist historian, Steer's heroic period was obviously in the late eighties. By that date his experimentation with recent French paintings from Monet to Seurat, was painfully apparent to conservative English critics whose taste continued to be for sentimental anecdote and highly finished canvases. Steer was to find his pictures like *Boulogne Sands*, c.1888-94 (fig 2.3), condemned for sloppy handling, crude ugliness and jarring colour relationships. Sensitive to this critical failure, he ceased to exhibit more adventurous works for some time after they were produced. Fortunately for him, as for many British painters who experimented with modernism, family money meant he was not wholly dependant on sales. Rothenstein's father, William, recalled that Steer's studio in the 1890s was crammed with unsold pictures 'of yachts and the sea, and of girls with long slender legs like Sheraton tables'.³ General opinion had been that those works were inspired by the more extreme examples of French art and were quite simply

² The painter ceased to be original and was therefore judged to have gone off the boil. This was also the view of Douglas Cooper who, writing in 1945, rejected English painting for exactly those qualities that it was valued earlier. By the late forties, Cooper was building up his collection of Picasso, Braque and Léger and was highly critical of those characteristics of Englishness in British art which excluded it from what he regarded as the progression of modernism. Following his death in 1942, Steer had been fêted as the epitome of an English painter and so it was natural that he should become the target of Cooper's invective. In his article, 'The Problem of Wilson Steer', the painter was condemned for his eclecticism, the lack of logical advancement in his art and the absence of any individual formal language. *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol.84, 1944, pp.66-71. So while the reception of Steer's paintings reveals interesting assumptions about the nature of Englishness as a unifying ideal at the turn of the century, it also provokes interesting debate on British modernism.

³ William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories, Recollections of William Rothenstein; 1872-1900*, Vol.1 Faber and Faber, 1932, p.170

a travesty of nature. Critics believed they were unnatural, they were not consoling or reassuring and pleasant, they were difficult and disturbing. In this respect Steer shared the experiences of his friend John Singer Sargent, whose outdoor composition *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose* he had admired at the Academy in 1887. Although there were many more radical instances of Sargent's experimentation with Impressionism around these years, it was this particular picture which, in the words of one critic, established the artist as arch apostle of the 'dab and spot' school. A label which, as William Gerds has pointed out, serves only to emphasise the limited understanding of Impressionism in England in the late eighties.⁴

Not only was Steer's *A Summer's Evening* of 1888, believed to be an assault on firm convictions about art, worse still, it was felt to attack deeply cherished, if half-conscious convictions about nature.⁵ Steer's vivid handling of a time-honoured arcadian theme, of three graces delighting in the sun, sea and sand, clearly departed from the usual pseudo-classical depictions of that subject, of figures and the natural scene joined together in suggestions of tradition and timelessness. By contrast one reviewer of Steer's picture was disturbed by its 'utter unnaturalness and audacity'. It was a piece of 'aggressive affectation' which made her feel uncomfortable.⁶ A few years later a degree of influence from French Impressionism would be acceptable because a brightened palette was understood to heighten the perception of a summer's idyll, of escape from urban unpleasantness. Any more substantial influence however, was still suspect. Steer's paintings certainly overstepped the mark at an early stage, and the hostility they aroused highlights the affront he appeared to have given to received expectations. The clichéd symbolism of 'mother nature' was accepted in its most literal terms in the late Victorian era and any obvious departures were simply offensive,

⁴ *John Singer Sargent*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1986, p.118

⁵ *A Summer's Evening* is in a private collection, but is illustrated in Kenneth McConkey, *British Impressionism*, Phaidon, Oxford, 1989, p.82

⁶ This review was discovered by Laughton in the British Museum cutting book, but with no identification. He was of the opinion that it may have been written by the critic of the *Telegraph*, Bruce Laughton, *Philip Wilson Steer, 1860-1942* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971, p.14

prompting unfeminine descriptive terms such as aggressiveness, awkwardness and unnaturalness.⁷

Linked to the problem that Steer's pictures upset preconceptions about both art and nature, was the obvious but crucial factor that their source of inspiration was French.⁸ In itself this was symptomatic of the exceptional insularity and xenophobia of the late eighties and early nineties.⁹ The influence of French Impressionism at this point was made to seem symbolic of an imminent breakdown in all areas of social and cultural life, one that extended far beyond mere artistic debate. An anti-French feeling mounted throughout the period of colonial disputes in the Far East, which were finally only resolved with the signing of the Anglo-French agreement in 1904. This did little to affect widespread popular dislike for the French and such sentiment certainly had its effect on the originally pro-French New English Art Club, where Steer's most uncompromising works were, initially, to be seen, amongst the generally more acceptable works of Clausen and La Thangue.¹⁰

⁷ The male/female distinctions here are clear and signify the traditional identification between landscape painting and the femaleness of nature. Connections between the passive, nurturing and instinctive female world of nature and the active, shaping and objective world of science and culture have, as Norma Broude describes, been in existence since the writings of Aristotle and Plato. See *Impressionism, A Feminist Reading, The Gendering of Art, Science and Nature in the Nineteenth Century*, Rizzoli, New York, 1991, p.145. Broude provides a fascinating discussion of the way in which painters, typically categorised as male, ie active and shaping, were 'feminised' in the context of French Impressionist landscape painting, partly through choice of subject matter but more specifically through technique, ie the lack of drawing and composition and the concern with movement rather than form, pp.150-1. This contrasted with more masculine techniques in which nature should be shaped and controlled. None of these factors however, appear to have influenced critical judgement on Steer at this stage in the 1880's.

⁸ Like most of his peers, Steer did not become completely familiar with Impressionism until, ironically, he returned from his training in Paris and saw exhibitions in London, like for example in 1889, when 20 Monet's were displayed at the Goupil Gallery.

⁹ The retrenchment that occurred at the Slade School in the early nineties was paralleled by increased social and political introspection. This had reverberations in the stamping out of the last traces of decadent aestheticism as the decade progressed. For further discussion, see Holbrook Jackson, *The 1890's: A Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of The Nineteenth Century*, 1st ed, London, 1913. Jackson cites in support of his view the sobering effect of Oscar Wilde's imprisonment in 1895.

¹⁰ Steer also showed 8 pictures at the 1889 London Impressionists exhibition at the Goupil Gallery which provided further evidence of the influence of Monet. By the time this Sickert led splinter group had formed within the New English, the original Rustic Naturalist contingent were already gravitating towards the Royal Academy.

From 1890 however, a small group of supporters for Steer began to emerge. Of these George Moore and D S MacColl were the most outspoken. Renowned for treating the public 'like a bumpkin', their advocacy of the painter was integral to their general denunciation of the quality of popular art from the Academy, of conformist middle-class taste and crass philistinism. According to Moore, the Academy was 'conducted on as purely commercial principles as any shop in the Tottenham Court Road', and 'the R.A.'s are merely concerned to follow the market'.¹¹ Steer, on the other hand, refused to pander to the 'stockbroker's taste' and, for Moore, was 'never common or vulgar'.¹² Distaste for this spread of the vulgar was ultimately one of the unifying factors between art critics like Moore and cultural critics like Masterman, the latter worrying about 'an England vulgarised by the clamour and vigour of the newer wealthy'.¹³ In 1905, *The Studio* 'Lay Figure' remarked that no serious collector of art bothers with Academy exhibitions, he feels irritated at, 'being wedged into mobs that he despises for their stupidity and hates for their unaestheticism'.¹⁴ Moore and MacColl, as 'new critics' took leading roles in skirmishes with the self-styled 'Philistine' critic Harry Quilter, and the like-minded William Blake Richmond. The ensuing battle between *The Spectator* and *The Westminster Gazette* was clearly also about wider cultural issues to do with social class and education.

MacColl, a Scottish Presbyterian whose father had originally been a minister in a deprived area of Glasgow, was trained for the church, but at the last hour was drawn instead towards art and aesthetics, due partly to his acquaintance with individuals like Walter Pater and Mark Pattison while at Oxford.¹⁵ Subsequent experiences as a peripatetic lecturer on 'English painters', for the Oxford

¹¹ George Moore, *Modern Painting*, Walter Scott, 1898, p.99. First published as 'The Royal Academy', *The Fortnightly Review*, Jan-June, 1892.

¹² *Modern Painting*, *ibid.*, p.243

¹³ *Op.cit.*, p.156

¹⁴ *The Studio*, Vol.33, 1904, p.96

¹⁵ Mark Pattison was Head of Lincoln College and believed that a 'liberal' or 'higher' education would inculcate in the individual a higher sensibility which would transcend mindless routines. See Brian Doyle, 'The Invention of English' in Colls and Dodd, *op.cit.*, p.94. It was Pattison who offered MacColl his scholarship at Oxford in 1881. For accounts of MacColl's association with Oxford, see Maureen Borland, *D S MacColl: Painter, Poet, Art Critic*, Lennard Publishing, 1995.

Extension Movement in the late eighties, encouraged something of a missionary zeal towards the teaching of art history and appears to have confirmed MacColl's particular views about the role of the educator, class and social type.¹⁶ Those attitudes and his own background, the combination of Puritanism and refined aestheticism, informed his art criticism in the following decade. As a result, by 1895, MacColl could state confidently that the number of people with any sincere understanding of art were few. The genuine Philistines, drawn mostly from the upper and lower classes, openly professed their ignorance and were harmless. The problem for this critic and for his associates was rather 'a terrible number of the middle class', for 'instead of being good Philistines, they are Cultured Persons, that is people semi-educated into a pretence to tastes they do not possess'. This semi-education was doubtless derived, in some cases, from lectures by the Oxford Extension Movement. This was the section of society that infuriated MacColl, for their affectation 'vulgarises life; it is only a pretence and transgression you encourage. A nation whose rulers and the bulk of whose people are without this taste, will be happier and more honest if they let painting be'.¹⁷

Using Steer as a focal point for the development of his ideas, MacColl described a method of understanding art that was nothing to do with the propriety of subject. In an ideal world the subject was a simple pretext for laying paint on canvas. In this respect British Modernism, descending from Whistler and from late nineteenth century attitudes towards French Impressionism developed from, in Charles Harrison's definition, a 'concept of 'purity' in art'.¹⁸ A painting was to be assessed primarily via the pictorial qualities of design, colour and organisation.

¹⁶ Brian Doyle (in Colls and Dodd, *op.cit.*, p.99) describes the role of the Oxford Extension Movement in the context of efforts to encourage national character and culture from the late 1880's. In the universities this developed alongside a gradual eclipse of Latin and Greek, in favour of the study of English language and literature. The extension movement itself was an attempt for those universities to take on a national role. According to the Oxford Vice Chancellor in 1887, 'the lecturers whom we send through the country are a kind of missionary --. To a great majority of those persons with whom they come into contact it is the only opportunity afforded of learning what Oxford means and what is meant by the powers of an Oxford education'.

¹⁷ *The Spectator*, 11 May 1895.

¹⁸ Charles Harrison, *English Art and Modernism, 1900-1939* Allen Lane/Indiana University Press, 1981, second edition Yale University Press, 1994, p.17 (in both editions). Harrison's definition aptly describes MacColl's position by the 1890's, 'purity entailed the pursuit of technical autonomy, a manifest if highly mediated interest in recent French art, and the avoidance of subjects which might conceivably be taken as moral exhortations'.

Technique, for MacColl was 'a condition under which one sees things not a mechanical beauty stuck upon the surface of a picture and detachable from it'. The point about his argument was its distinction from commonplace insistence on discussing the sentiment and anecdotal value of a painting. MacColl's formalism might also be seen as an unconscious attempt to preserve a proper appreciation of art for a cultured élite, similar to that of critics like Clive Bell in subsequent years. All of this suggests that there was an element of unease within literary and intellectual circles. Attacks on philistinism were largely expressions of distaste for the usurper, often 'the newer wealthy', and signified anxieties about changing class demarcations.

MacColl's efforts to account for Steer's art evolved, in the early nineties, into a desire to give it a respectable ancestry, to argue that Impressionism in art was not just a phase within modern French painting. It did not simply denote a hastily conceived and executed sketch, nor was it simply a fad. Instead it was an artistic tradition with firm historical antecedents, and this was a seductive argument for a public so devoted to the idea of sound traditions. For MacColl, French Impressionism had two features. One was, 'a keying up of lights as near as might be to their natural pitch', along with a rendering of shadows in colour rather than tone. The second was 'the snatch technique', whereby the artist would produce his studies in the intervals when the light conditions were fairly steady, and 'with the speed of a shorthand reporter'.¹⁹

This did not necessarily imply any conscious process of selectivity or deliberate arrangement. His account of Monet's art played up the view of him as a detached and wholly objective reporter of visual fact, in a manner which equated with contemporary researches into the science of optics and perception. In this way, he disregarded the extent to which Monet's rendering of an 'effect' of nature involved an expressive subjectivity which, as Richard Schiff has argued, brought the movement closer towards symbolism.²⁰ MacColl chose to present instead what

¹⁹ D S MacColl, *Life, Work and Setting of Philip Wilson Steer*, Faber and Faber, 1945, p.31

²⁰ For important discussion of the extent to which Modernist writing has misrepresented the aims of French Impressionism, see Richard Schiff, *Cézanne and the End of Impressionism, A study of the Theory, Technique and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*, University of Chicago, 1984. See also Norma Broude, *op.cit.*, pp. 8-16

became the Modernist version of French Impressionism, in contrast to his exposition of the qualities of an English/British approach. In this country, for example, the idea of eliminating detail in art was, he maintained, established long before the 1870s. Joshua Reynolds had warned that too many details in a painting would 'dissipate the attention'. From Reynolds and Gainsborough, MacColl claimed, we learned that a subject should be seen according to a painter's interest in it. In fact the eye naturally carries out this selective process. As a result, he condemned both aesthetically and scientifically the Pre-Raphaelite painter's depiction of a church, which would include typically, 'all that could be noticed by the architect, by the worshipper, by the dreamer, and by the person looking about the floor for pins'.²¹ The implication was that Impressionism in France proceeded from a logical and scientific point of view, whereas in this country it derived from a poetic and romantic temperament, dating from at least the turn of the nineteenth century but temporarily obscured, in this critic's view at least, by mid-century aberrations like Pre-Raphaelitism.

Steer, in a rare public utterance, presented the same view in his lecture to the Art Worker's Guild that year. Impressionism was depicted as the highest tradition in art: 'Is it a craze' he asked, 'that we should recognise the fact that nature is bathed in atmosphere? Is it a fashion to treat a picture so that unity of vision may be achieved by insisting on certain parts more than others? No! It is not a fashion it is a law.'²² It was this 'unity of vision' that was so sorely lacking in the Academy pictures of the day, for out of 'these tiresome exercises of misguided industry you may make six out of one and each is as finished and as badly composed as the others'. 'Impressionism', declared Steer, 'is of no country and of no period, it has been from the beginning; it bears the same relation to painting that poetry does to journalism. Two men paint the same model; one creates a poem the other is satisfied with recording facts'.

Of the New English Art Club show of that same year, MacColl spoke of a 'refined vision of an object', unlike a French painter's desire to 'render fleeting and

²¹ D S MacColl, 'Theoretical Precedents for Impressionism', *The Spectator*, 12 Dec 1891, p.846

²² Cited in D S MacColl, 1945, *op.cit.*, pp.177-8. See also my discussion in Ysanne Holt, *Philip Wilson Steer*, Seren Books, 1992, pp.50-1

transitory things that will not sit'. This again implied a selective, lyrical, and poetic interpretation of nature in contrast to the more rational approach of French art.²³ In this way two national, artistic and by extension, cultural sets of characteristics were forged. However untenable the proposition in reality, it exercised the minds of a number of writers during this period. In one instance, a critic cited Hazlitt's comments about Reynolds of eighty years earlier;

The English seem generally to suppose that if they only leave out the subordinate parts, they are sure of the general result. The French, on the contrary--- imagine that, by attending successively to each separate part, they must infallibly arrive at a correct whole.²⁴

From 1893 Steer was comfortably installed as Professor of Painting at the Slade under its new principal Fred Brown and his assistant Henry Tonks. These appointments coincided with the now growing respectability of the New English Art Club and the two institutions were closely associated from this date.²⁵ As the nineties continued their once perceived radicalism diminished and their seriousness was contrasted with the standards at the Academy. Academy pictures were criticised by an ever widening group for their conformity, superficial flashiness and clever trickery.²⁶ The Slade was distinguished by its emphasis on sound technique and respect for tradition, and was encouraged in this by its own stable of critics like MacColl and Stevenson. This retrenchment can be seen as part of that more general cultural and political insularity of the mid-nineties, a reaction to both foreign and domestic tensions like the colonial conflicts in the Far East, the outbreak of war in South Africa, increasing concern over German

²³ This attitude persisted with only few exceptions of whom Camille Mauclair was one; he described Monet as a poet-painter, his water-lilies as a 'pantheistic evocation' and his approach one of 'idealism and lyric dreaming', cited in Kate Flint, ed., *Impressionists in England, The Critical Reception*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984, p.322

²⁴ Art Journal, 1905, p.166

²⁵ Popular among all their members was R A M Stevenson's study of *Velazquez*, 1895, London, 1985, ed Denys Sutton. In this the method of 'direct painting' was discussed. In the Spanish painter's work 'all the elements, colour, light and shade' were treated as a unified whole. This contrasted with the techniques of the by then increasingly condemned Academy, as Steer had earlier pointed out.

²⁶ These complaints continued throughout the whole period of this study. A L Baldry, for instance, commented, 'The Academy is contented to plod on year by year in the same path, to hang what are to all appearances the same pictures, and to do things exactly as they were done in that remote period when its ideals were fresh and its principles were first formulated'. *The Studio*, 1905, Vol.35, p.37

military strength and worker unrest at home. Faced with these uncertainties, experimental or advanced values in a painting were not to be encouraged, for it would receive less critical support and was unlikely to sell.

On another level, the transition in Steer's style resulted from, in MacColl terms, a search for 'Congruous Beauty', in which technique was appropriate to the subject. Steer was always drawn to artists possessing a strong and unique style. Impressionism, with its woven brushmarks, summarily drawn figures and prismatic colour, was entirely congruent with his late eighties seaside subjects and the representation of bright noon-day sunlight. It was a method well suited to expressions of childhood innocence and idyllic summer days, such as *Children Paddling, Walberswick*, c.1889-94 (fig. 2.4), where according to George Moore, the mood was one of 'oblivion'. At a more personal level, such works arguably signified a sadness at the loss of youth and the artist's own feelings of isolation.

A melancholy was increasingly more apparent in works from this date. Impressionist handling partially obscured what is an evocative and, at times, almost symbolist element. There are links here with the Symbolist poetry of individuals such as Arthur Symons. Like Steer's paintings of this period, Symbolist poetry relied to a large degree on a quality of suggestiveness. Reality for the Symbolists was to be discovered beneath superficial appearances. By the early-nineties an atmospheric, suggestive quality in Steer's pictures had become so marked that the issue of whether he was a Romantic traditionalist or an Impressionist innovator seemed irrelevant. For his friend Sickert, writing in 1894, it was 'impossible to fit him into any of the labels of chic journalism'.²⁷

The 1894 exhibition on which Sickert based his comments was Steer's first one man show at the Goupil Gallery. On the evidence of this, R A M Stevenson remarked: 'he has wisely omitted his most doubtful and tricky experiments'.²⁸ To MacColl, now increasingly proprietorial over Steer, a picture like a *Procession of Yachts*, c.1892, retained a 'freshness of inspiration' but was nevertheless

²⁷ *The Studio*, Vol.2, 1894, p.223

²⁸ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 27 Feb 1894, cited in Laughton, *op.cit.*, p.56

'composed like music', its masts 'like the phrasing between the intervals of bars'.²⁹ This he perceived as a highly selective, lyrical arrangement, not the impartial observation of a transitory scene. As such, MacColl was clearly perpetuating constructed differences between French and British painting, thereby ignoring the fact that Monet often painted in his studio away from nature and occasionally re-ordered his compositions according to personal, subjective intentions. Musical analogies may be equally appropriate to a discussion of Monet's art, his *Poplars* for example, but MacColl was too set in his pursuit of national distinctions to consider this.

Increasingly Steer was regarded as an instinctive artist. John Rothenstein's opinion on this echoed that of his father who once described the painter's, 'instinctive rightness of judgement peculiar to a certain kind of Englishness'.³⁰ MacColl at another point remarked that 'he works by instinct more than culture'.³¹ This view persisted, although by the mid-1940s it had acquired negative connotations. Thus, for Douglas Cooper, to say a painter was 'intuitive' implied amateurism and lack of discipline, and he applied the term as an accusation, to all those painters so revered at the turn of the century, such as Constable, Turner, Girtin and Cotman.³² But during the nineties the idea of English instinctiveness in art positively supported the identification of a poetic and Romantic national tradition. It was another instance of the deliberate distinction between Englishness and Modernism.

Even an avowed Francophile like Walter Sickert contributed to this belief, however tongue in cheek. In a famous piece of 1910, which could have been describing Steer, he wrote:

²⁹ Review in *The Spectator*, cited in MacColl, 1945, *op.cit.*, p.48. *A Procession of Yachts* is in the Tate Gallery.

³⁰ *Op.cit.*, p.171

³¹ D S MacColl, 1945, *op.cit.*, pp.48-9

³² *Op.cit.* By 1950 Cooper had also crossed swords with Kenneth Clark and given a vitriolic broadcast talk on Clark's *Landscape into Art* which turned 'hard-hitting criticism into an exhibition of savagery', cited in Rothenstein, 1966, *op.cit.*, p. 291. As part of his attempts to assert a national tradition in the context of the thirties realism versus abstraction debate, Clark made great claims for the importance of Constable. This may account for some of Cooper's derision.

A painter is guided and pushed by the atmosphere of English society, acting on a gifted group of painters who had learnt what they knew --- in Paris --- has provided a school with aims and qualities altogether different from those of the Impressionists --- the Impressionists put themselves out more than we do in England. We all live like gentlemen, and keep gentlemen's hours.³³

Sickert's remarks were intentionally ironic, playing on a perception of English life that had less credibility as the years passed. Frank Rutter was well aware of the sense of encroaching modernity, remembering later that by the turn of the century, artists felt something was, 'slipping away, a settled and rather beautiful way of life which was now gone never to return'.³⁴

The romantic view of the countryside which developed out of this sense of a disappearing culture, pervaded the work of Steer as much as the 'peasant' painters of the last chapter. One writer in 1900, was struck by 'how great a hold the spirit of romanticism is gaining upon---the British School'.³⁵ This revealed a 'preference for decorative freedom over pedantic exactness'. The result was an abstract kind of naturalism which was based on a sound study of nature, but which concerned itself with 'larger subtleties of the open air, with problems of illumination rather than obvious facts'. In other words with 'atmosphere'. This was a defining characteristic of a successful work of art for painters at the turn of the century, just as 'rhythm' became a preoccupation a few years later. A crucial quality of the British School's work for this reviewer was that it was 'essentially sound and well-balanced'. This was important, for this was not to be mistaken for Romanticism based on flights of fancy and a decadent imagination. English Romanticism had its feet on the ground, it was not extravagant, but it did possess its 'full measure of imaginative charm'. As a result, 'it has just the right note of pastoral simplicity--- which so many artists are --- wisely striving to make clearly heard'.

³³ Cited in Osbert Sitwell, ed., *A Free House, The Writings of W R Sickert*, Macmillan, 1947, p.57

³⁴ Frank Rutter, *Art in My Time*, Rich and Cowan, 1933, p.65

³⁵ *The Studio*, Vol.20, 1900, pp.213-216. A brief survey of the titles of Academy pictures of this period indicates just how much this sense of a lost world preoccupied painters. Such titles as David Murray's '*Farewell to the Forest*', 1906, C E Johnson's '*The Sunset of his Days*' and Benjamin Leader's '*Evening Glow*', 1906 are typical.

After the turn of the century, Steer's reputation developed primarily as a landscapist and his works were, at times, regarded critically in much the same way as painters like Mark Fisher and Alfred East. He was never, however, drawn to such overtly sentimental scenes as contented cattle winding their way back to pasture, as in Arnesby Brown's *Full Summer*, c.1902, (fig.2.5) The commercial success of works like those continued. A collector's decision to buy such a work must be seen as an investment into a particular view of the countryside, into a concept of nature that appeared to be fixed and unchanging. Some connections might be made here to the market for landscape painting in France in the 1850's and 60's. Anne Wagner has provided a very useful discussion of the appeal of Courbet's landscapes to their bourgeois purchasers who often commissioned exact size, motif and weather effect. The simplicity and predictability of Courbet's works, the ordering of their elements, was a crucial part of their appeal.³⁶ In late Victorian and Edwardian England, studies of 'pastoral simplicity' provided the same reassurance and stability, continuity between past and present and a measure of control over both. This was much more than mere sentimentality, for such representations of nature had a very specific function for the purchaser. They offered a myth of security at a time when the real quality of rural life was in steady decline and they acquired a symbolic value, which manifested itself in the pastiche and hackneyed imagery of pictures like Murray's *In the Country of Constable*, (fig. 2.6).³⁷

The aptly titled *A Classic Landscape*, of 1893, provides the clearest signal of the transition in Steer's work in the early nineties. An atmospheric, thinly painted and very muted depiction of Richmond Bridge, which signalled the influence, in both setting and handling, of painters like Claude and, especially, Turner. The relationship to the latter's Thames series of 1805-12 is important in this context, for Steer's picture bears a particular resemblance to *Walton Bridges* of 1806,

³⁶ Anne M Wagner, 'Courbet's Landscapes and their Market', *Art History*, Vol.4, No.4, Dec. 1981, pp.410-429

³⁷ The case is often cited of a visitor to the Grafton Galleries in 1905 who, on the verge of buying a Monet was firmly advised by an old Academician to buy a David Murray instead. See Frank Rutter, *op.cit*, p.106

which he could have seen at Thomas Agnew's in 1893.³⁸ Andrew Hemingway's discussion of Turner's river paintings points to the significance of representations of the Thames, both in relation to contemporary nature poetry and as symbols of national, political and economic well-being. For Turner, the Thames generally was symbolic of the 'pastoral prosperity and commercial wealth of Britain', but as Hemingway demonstrates, Turner's Thames paintings deliberately exclude any commercial or modern agricultural element. The Claudean effects produced a mistiness which conveniently masked the reality of the scene in front of him, and in so doing the artist achieved 'a blending of nostalgia, poetry and nationalist associations'.³⁹ The less fashionable areas of inner London, conceived in the early nineteenth-century as much as the early twentieth, in terms of their squalor and chaos, are displaced. How appropriate then that Steer should have chosen Turner's Thames pictures as models for his own *Classic Landscape*. At the time of painting however, Steer was interpreted as returning to the very sources of French Impressionism, as repeatedly stressed later in the writings of Wynford Dewhurst and Frederick Wedmore.⁴⁰ Turner, like Constable, it was believed, had worked in the open air, recorded the transitory effects of nature and light and developed a similar handling, such comparisons convinced Dewhurst of the direct influence of both on the French painters.

Wynford Dewhurst made much - indeed too much - of Monet and Pissarro's visit to London in 1870 and the impact of seeing works by Turner and Constable. For Dewhurst the lights and shadows in Turner's handling of colour, his sunrises and sunsets, the dissolving web of light and its reflections on surfaces in his late work along with an apparent lack of drawing, were all assimilated by the French

³⁸ Turner's *Walton Bridges* is now at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Steer would have been able to study the composition of other Thames pictures through Turner's *Liber Studiorum*, 1878, Macmillan and Co. In particular he would have seen there the 1840-5 *Landscape with Walton Bridges*, which is particularly close to *A Classic Landscape*. Steer's friend and Slade colleague Fred Brown also painted views of the Thames at this date. There is a possibility that *The Thames at Richmond*, of 1893, cited in the Barbican *Impressionism in Britain* exhibition, (no.214, *op.cit.*), as Steer's study for *A Classic Landscape*, is actually by Brown.

³⁹ Andrew Hemingway, *Landscape Imagery and Urban Culture in early Nineteenth Britain* Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 216-238

⁴⁰ Frederick Wedmore was one of the first British critics to attend seriously to Impressionism, eg, 'The Impressionists', *Fortnightly Review*, Vol. XXXIII, 1883, pp.75-82. See Flint, *op.cit.*, pp.46-55

painters. This appeal to nationalist sensibilities ignored the fact that Camille Pissarro, for example, denied any substantial debt to British art. For Dewhurst, the Impressionists were simply to be credited with 'the great merit of having perceived the value of the Englishman's discovery'. These French artists had successfully 'grafted on to Constable and others suggestions from Japanese art and from that of their own countryman, Corot'.⁴¹

Steer was familiar with Turner's art from childhood and fascinated by a water-colour which used to hang in his bedroom. His admiration for the painter arose out of the combined effects of personal past experience, the critical encouragement of his friends and a particular moment in British cultural and aesthetic history. His earliest explorations of around 1893-4, in what has been termed the 'classical machinery of landscape composition',⁴² began with scenes around London. But soon after he began to leave the capital at the end of the Slade summer term, and a good many of his painting trips were essentially tours of Turner's sites, efforts to find the exact spot. These visits were in effect a search for an ideal English landscape. MacColl maintained that Steer took a miniature edition of Turner's *Liber Studiorum* on what were in effect pilgrimages to Yorkshire and the Welsh Borders, as an 'Authorised Version of the English Landscape'.

Summer-time retreats from the city in search of an experience that was essentially nostalgic fall into the wider context of anti-urbanism and cultural re-evaluation of the English countryside. It is important to note also that this was not the concern for the condition of the peasantry which had characterised Rustic Naturalism. The figure generally appeared only as an occasional note within these compositions. For MacColl, 'the art of landscape as Steer took it over---occupied the middle earth of England in sunny or troubled weather, ignoring man and his toils even in the field'.⁴³ In other words Steer dealt with the problem of the labourers by

⁴¹ Wynford Dewhurst, 'Impressionist Painting; Its Genesis and Development.-First Article', *The Studio* Vol. 28, 1903, pp160-2. It is interesting that MacColl did not share Dewhurst's views here. He wrote later, 'I do not myself believe that the course of French landscape painting would have been very different if Constable had never existed or never been medalled in Paris: his chief impact was on Delacroix'. Similarly he felt Turner's influence on the French was over estimated., *op.cit.*, 1945, pp.34-35

⁴² Andrew Forge, *Philip Wilson Steer*, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1960, p.7

⁴³ D S MacColl, 1945, *op.cit.*, p.125

ignoring them. In common with many other landscape painters, his conscious or unconscious desire to establish national identity in representations of the countryside required a more general re-working of the sites of literary as well as artistic figures. He was attracted to the areas of the Wye and Severn valley partly because of Turner, partly because it was the landscape of his childhood and maybe, as MacColl stated, because it was a 'holy ground for English poetry, for Milton, Pope, Gray and Gilpin'.⁴⁴ As the century closed the gradual decline of empire heightened the sentimental view of the countryside, and those earlier writers and poets who celebrated its special virtues were particularly valued and acknowledged in terms of a national literary heritage.

The appeal of late 18th and early 19th century painters, such as Wilson, Gainsborough and Girtin, also conformed to class perspectives in the 1890s. For the long established literary and artistic middle class with their antipathy towards business and fondness for a leisurely, gentlemanly existence, an idealized view of the 18th century evoked the perception of an ordered hierarchy of relations between the rural squire and his cottagers. It is worth noting that the buyers of Steer's paintings were not the newly monied, northern industrialists buying from artists like La Thangue and Clausen. They were drawn from the traditional professions: academics, lawyers, etc rather than from trade and, from the gentry itself he sold to the de Walden family at Chirk Castle.⁴⁵

In his search for historical and literary sites however, Steer inevitably came into contact with an ever more mobile lower class public, just as keen as he was to escape the city grime on holiday and weekend visits.⁴⁶ MacColl remembered that 'Steer set up his 'moving tent' in pleasant scenery such as it had become the habit of his countrymen to seek out for an annual holiday.'⁴⁷ As the years passed these

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p.81

⁴⁵ Steer's buyers included typically, a solicitor, Augustus Daniel, a publisher, Geoffrey Blackwell, Judge Evans and Michael Sadler, the Vice Chancellor of Leeds University.

⁴⁶ The turn of the century saw the development of various efforts to both encourage these 'trippers' on the one hand and to preserve rural areas from them on the other. For the more discerning, art magazines were constantly reviewing and recommending new guide books to counties like Sussex and Dorset as well as publishing periodic notes on rural sketching grounds.

⁴⁷ D S MacColl, *op.cit.*, 1945, p. 168

countrymen became more of an irritant, and the distaste felt for them by Steer's circle is painfully apparent in MacColl's words. Steer, as he wrote, eventually began to see his favourite sites like Corfe Castle, engulfed by 'coach loads of over-fed and apathetic tourists (on) the regulation round before their mealtime.'⁴⁸ He preferred to keep to himself what was described as his 'deep, exclusive love for England', for the 'old bones of his country'.⁴⁹ This introspection accounted for his fondness for the picturesque, the atmospheric appeal, the sense of time passed which was visible in decaying structures of *Chepstow Castle* (fig.2.7), which he painted in 1905 from a position identical to one taken up previously by Turner, although Steer's handling is much denser, his palette knife and brushstrokes, more visible.⁵⁰

The romantic nostalgia which informed Steer's work in general contributed to the appeal of Turner. In this he conformed to a wider taste. Dilapidated scenery evoked that sense of loss of the old order, a feeling which appears to have been to some degree relished for its own sake. At times this predilection for the 'old bones' became an annoyance. Laurence Houseman was frustrated by this 'faint-hearted hankering' in 1904:

The taste of the age in which we live finds too much beauty in ruins, preferring the pictorial disorder of decay to symmetry which is still fit and efficient to the purpose for which it was created. And as this is true of the popular taste in architecture, so is it to some extent also true of our appreciation of nature. We like to ache and yearn over it as though it were a doomed and disappearing quantity, a fugitive before the advance of modern civilisation.⁵¹

It is important to note how much fascination for the 'old bones' of the country has extended before and beyond this period. In the inter-war years historical relics and

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.82

⁵⁰ Chepstow Castle was of course painted by both Turner and Girtin, and they in their choice were influenced by the elaboration of the picturesque theory which had resulted from the Reverend Gilpin's travels around the Wye Valley in the late eighteenth century. Gilpin had urged painters to depict the roughness and irregularity of their chosen sites, to look for character, not perfection. Bruce Laughton illustrates Turner's engraving of Chepstow from the *Liber Studiorum*, *op.cit.*, plate 48. For more discussion of Steer at Chepstow, see Ysanne Holt, *Philip Wilson Steer*, *op.cit.*, pp.94-5

⁵¹ 'The Work of Herbert Alexander', *The Studio*, Vol. 31, 1904, p.306. It is this national hankering after the past identified here by Houseman which Wiener blame for the country's failure to ever come to terms either with Modernism in art or modernity in life. See Martin Wiener, *op.cit.*

ancient sites indicated permanence and stability at an uncertain time. But the roots of this tendency were clearly well in place by the Edwardian era. There are two sides to this picturesque taste then, either it provides the reassurance of continuity in periods of turbulence or, as Houseman believed, a sense of loss to be savoured.

In one sense pictures of the unsullied English countryside simply were quite simply a safe territory with a broad appeal, which explains their predominance at the Royal Academy as well as the New English Art Club in the early 1900s. By that time the Academy was clearly engaged in efforts to present a consensus view of English art, one that was characterised by its inoffensiveness. Its procedure was generally to co-opt those painters, many originally from the New English as seen in the last chapter, who were the most moderate in technique. With pictures like *Hill and Dale*, c.1902 (fig.2.8), the American born painter Mark Fisher who showed at both the Academy and at the New English managed, according to George Clausen, to assimilate Impressionism 'within the limits considered to be acceptable by the selection committee of the R.A.'⁵²

Despite Steer's own eclecticism, his persistent experimentation saved his work from clichéd repetition, even if its thematic tenor changed little. Throughout the nineties he developed greater expressive freedom with crude, intense colours and thick brushstrokes, as seen in the dense background of trees in *The Embarkment*, 1900, (fig.2.9). His old theme of young women beside the water was restated here, but given a new painterly eloquence with an impasted surface, drawn partly from Monticelli and partly from Constable. From this point his technique was increasingly influenced by the latter, who was by then being presented as the archetypal British landscape painter.⁵³ With Turner, Constable was given prominence in the expanded South Kensington Museum's new display of British painting. His importance to the national artistic identity was thereby deemed

⁵² George Clausen, intro. to *Mark Fisher*, Leicester Galleries Exhibition, 1924.

⁵³ For excellent discussion of Constable's significance at the end of the nineteenth century see Stephen Daniels, 'John Constable and the making of Constable Country, 1880-1940' in *Landscape Research*, Summer, 1991, Vol.16, no.2. Daniels attends to Holmes's book and deals also with the extent to which the burgeoning market for Constable paintings provoked debate on 'commodity patriotism' from the late eighties. See also, Ian Fleming Williams and Leslie Parris, *The Discovery of Constable Country*, Hamish Hamilton, 1984.

official in 1909, but that process had begun much earlier with, for example, the Cornhill exhibition of 1899. C J Holmes of the National Gallery had begun looking for Constable sites in the Stour Valley by the mid-nineties, and in 1902 published his highly influential book *Constable and his Influence on Landscape Painting*.⁵⁴

For Holmes his subject's importance lay in the balance he struck between tradition and nature. He had stepped beyond mere naturalism towards a greater pictorial unity, with the result that he could depict the shifting moods of nature with more breadth of vision. Constable presented that perfect mixture of poetry and natural observation which rendered him superior to modern French artists. A central aspect of his appeal was the fact that he declined to follow doggedly in the footsteps of French and Italian painters. Peter Fuller echoed this view, citing Kenneth Clark in support and approved the fact that Constable 'eschewed 'internationalism' in favour of an almost belligerent 'provincialism', in which he indulged his 'overweening affection' for the banks of the Stour and the scenes of his childhood'.⁵⁵ Belligerence like this took 'courage and determination' and resulted in a genuinely 'universal' art which can only begin with a 'profound intimacy' with particular places, persons and traditions. Fuller neatly dismissed the substantial part of Constable's 'oeuvre' that was made up of views of Hampstead, Brighton, Salisbury, etc and aimed directly at London exhibition audiences. It was in large part the personal association of Steer's paintings which accounted for his appeal to Charles Holmes, his tendency to paint in areas he had known since childhood, paralleled his growing reputation as a painter in the native romantic tradition.⁵⁶

Art magazines of the early years of the century are full of references to Constable's own works or to those of artists following in his footsteps. In 1906 he

⁵⁴ A new edition of C R Leslie's 1845 biography was edited by G D Leslie in 1896. At the same time there was an increasing trade in Constable pictures, in particular to America. As Daniels points out, (*op.cit.*, p.11) Holmes' book was a systematic attempt to catalogue his work in the face of a flood of Constable pictures being released on to the market, both real and fake.

⁵⁵ Peter Fuller, 'Against Internationalism', *op.cit.*, p.12

⁵⁶ C J Holmes, *The Times*, 22nd April 1909. Holmes was here happy to perpetuate the idea of Steer as Constable's successor.

was judged 'the most English of the triad of the English school'. The reasons are illuminating, for he has - 'not the refined, scholarly approach of Wilson or the subtlety of Turner';

His vigorous treatment of his subjects, his largeness of view and full colour, seems to be typical of the sturdy yeoman of this country of ours --- He loved his England with her rich and glowing colour, and all the signs of her prosperity that surrounded him in his native country.

The writer went on to quote Constable's own words, 'I was born to paint a happier land, my own dear England, and when I cease to love her may I, as Wordsworth says, "Never more hear her green leaves rustle, nor her torrents roar"'.⁵⁷ Such sentiment reverberates throughout literature and criticism from the turn of the century through to the nostalgic pastoralism of the Georgian poets at the eve of the Great War, despite superficial modernizing. Essential to all was that acceptance of the Anglo-Saxon character defined in terms of sturdiness, vigour and wholeness. So Englishness is defined again both culturally and aesthetically. This is pure racial stereotyping, the 'sturdy yeoman' stands here opposed to foreign races as well as to those Masterman called, the city bred 'races of dulled intelligence'.⁵⁸

It was for his idealized view of the English countryside more than his Impressionist method that Constable was so prized by the public. Cook's tours of 'Constable Country' organised with the Great Eastern Railway from 1893 are an indication of this. For Steer, the painter's importance lay in the spontaneity of his sketches. But the autobiographical element and the intimacy with his surroundings corresponded to Steer's own nostalgic perceptions of the English countryside. It was a quality which Roger Fry discerned in 1924 as 'a typically English 'poetical' sentiment for certain moods of nature'.⁵⁹

For a few years after 1895 Steer spent his summers in North Yorkshire. Two years later he began to revisit the landscape of the Welsh borders, earlier explored

⁵⁷ Sir James Linton, 'The Sketches of John Constable, R.A.', *The Magazine of Fine Arts*, 1906, pp.16-21

⁵⁸ Masterman, 1909, *op. cit.*, p.155

⁵⁹ Roger Fry, review of Goupil Gallery exhibition, *The New Statesman*, March 29, 1924.

alongside his father. Those childhood experiences of the 'rolling fertile prospects' of the Wye valley, 'implanted that love of lucent expanses of pastoral and wooded country', in the words of Frank Rutter.⁶⁰ The child, the grown man and the artist were of course the same individual, and Steer partly constructed his broad visions from the confines of term time Gower Street. Nicholas Green's discussion of the restorative immersion in nature by the artist/city dweller being predicated on the notion of 'going back' to the city is also of relevance here.⁶¹ The same claims can be made for landscape painters in this country, as in France. By 1905, A C R Carter could speak of an older school of 'panoramists', by which he referred particularly to works by Benjamin Leader. As such he might have included, *Across the Heath*, 1902 (fig.2.10), as an example of artists' tendencies to, 'continue in their wide expanses of land or sea surveying, which mightily please the free born Englishman --- the man pent up in cities feels grateful to the artist who reminds him of holidays and of an unfettered outlook upon a long stretch of field and water'.⁶²

Steer's works from the later nineties were seen to fall into different categories. Initially, according to J B Manson in 1914, they 'have no dynamic centre', but were 'vaguely comprehensive', possessing a 'quality of large grasp - that power of seeing things, particularly great expanses of country, in their entirety'.⁶³ Gradually a sense of composition became more apparent. By the time of pictures like *The Horseshoe Bend of the Severn*, and *The Severn Valley*, 1909 (fig.2.11), Steer had clearly established his taste for Constable's 'spacious valleys', for wide open vistas and unpeopled 'pure landscapes'. With these 18th century style panoramas, he developed his dense paintwork to such a degree that at times he could supposedly tell by the weight if a picture was finished. All of this reveals his continued experimentation with the properties of the medium itself with the result that he

⁶⁰ Cited in Robin Ironside, *Wilson Steer*, Phaidon Press, 1943, p.6

⁶¹ See *The Spectacle of Nature*, *op.cit.*

⁶² *The Art Journal*, 1905, p.170

⁶³ 'Mr Geoffrey Blackwell's Collection of Modern Pictures', *The Studio*, Vol.61, pp.271-282. Blackwell was an important patron for Steer and also for Lucien Pissarro, Henry Tonks and C J Holmes. According to Manson, 'He responded to the call of nature', as expressed in Steer's pictures. 'He felt in them an intenser quality of light and air than he had previously experienced in any of the ordinary paintings which are commonly to be met with in the social world, decorating the drawing rooms of Mayfair with their empty triviality'.

avoided pastiche by drawing attention to his own act of seeing and transcribing. As the comparison with Leader here shows, Steer in general also tended to avoid the repeated use of conventional landscape devices like the *repoussoir* in his panoramic oil paintings. Nevertheless occasional voices of complaint could be heard. Manson, for instance, found that the colour range in some of these later works became a little conventional. It was as if the artist was setting out to paint old masters, using an adopted scale of effect. 'The first impression received is of -- - an accomplished painting. --- Mr Steer seems definitely to choose a colour scheme, so his pictures have an atmosphere de tableau rather than an atmosphere of nature'.⁶⁴

By this time the artist was endlessly cited as 'the' successor to Constable. For Douglas Cooper this was a meaningless statement, 'since there was only Landseer in between'.⁶⁵ But from 1900, Steer like Constable was seen as expressing the special qualities, the atmosphere of the English countryside. Frank Rutter commented how much the artist had made a certain view of the landscape his own, to the extent that one could be struck, on travelling through certain areas of England, by 'a regular Steer'. Like Constable, he offered a rare appreciation of the nature of his own medium and also of the vagaries of English weather. But this view of him as Constable's successor was perhaps too limiting for Steer's own good. It prescribed expectations of his work which were difficult to overcome and produced a critical and public support that was hard to resist. From 1904, he was the most consistently highly praised artist showing at the New English Art Club and received something like adulation for his one man show in 1909. Opinion on his achievement had become hackneyed by the end of the decade.

Between 1896 and 1906 he produced a small series of pictures from the same vantage point overlooking the River Teme at Ludlow, eg *Ludlow Walks*, 1898-9 (fig.2.12). These are reminiscent of his earlier Walberswick pictures. Once again images of youth and a lost world of innocence seem to refer back to the abrupt end to his own ideal childhood. With this series he brought together the atmosphere of

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Op.cit.*

his Walberswick paintings with the rolling open countryside of his own youth. Through changes in technique he looked for ways to achieve the most direct painterly expression of what he himself described as the sentimental feeling he had towards the landscapes of the Welsh borders.

Such sentimental feeling had a poetic counterpart in A E Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*, of 1896. Housman evoked a specific area of countryside, Steer's own, also in the context of images of loss. Most literally in Housman's words where, 'blue remembered hills - (are) - a land of lost content'. The poet remembered the Shropshire landscapes of his childhood from the distance of London. There is the same blend here of retrospective nostalgia and regret. 'A land of lost content' is an appropriate title for so many of Steer's landscapes, and there is a distinction to be made between these and the more straightforwardly mawkish, Tennysonian 'Haunts of Ancient Peace' to be seen at the Academy. So while imperialist ideologies resulting in calls for a national tradition in British art account for much of the wider praise of Steer's work, the private, solitary reflection, the nostalgia for one's own roots, relate to something of a change of spirit that can be recognised as the Edwardian era progressed. This may account for his appeal to a less jingoistic but culturally elitist and still patriotic type of connoisseur like MacColl.

In 1909, Steer's work began to be acquired by the Tate where MacColl was then keeper. The Goupil Gallery exhibition of that year included *Corfe Castle* (fig. 2.13), the largest work in the show, which was likened by Holmes to Constable six footers such as *Salisbury Castle from the Meadows*, and was later sent to Johannesburg, where it stood as a symbol of Englishness only a few years after the end of the Boer War.⁶⁶ These facts need to be seen in relation to the emergence of radical groupings like the Allied Artist's Association, followed by Fry's Post Impressionist exhibitions, the Omega Workshops and the formation of the Vorticist group. The effect of these was to challenge the established critical ontology of art, everything that a Slade training had implied in terms of respect for

⁶⁶ *Corfe Castle* was painted after a visit to Dorset in 1908. The castle is a minor note, set amidst a sunburst in the centre of a vast overall design of the sweeping landscape of the Purbeck Hills, with their dark shadows and heavy brooding skies above. All detail is subordinate to the total effect created by the thick layers of oil paint rapidly laid down with brush and palette knife.

tradition and artistic precedent.⁶⁷ A threat seemed to be posed, not just to the order of British art but, however unlikely in real terms, to British society. In contrast Steer was taken to represent the standards that appeared to be slipping away. Far from being dangerously anarchic and dependent on foreign styles, he was now something approaching a national icon. As a result his friends became increasingly possessive, tightening their critical grip on his paintings.

To that degree John Rothenstein was right to say that in his later career Steer entered a 'closed world where the air was stuffy with adulation'.⁶⁸ For more recent supporters of a British tradition, like Fuller, Rothenstein's failing would lie in his assumption that a rejection of French Modernism necessarily implied a loss of courage. Fuller in fact echoed many of the sentiments of turn of the century advocates of a national art. One of his criticisms of the 1980's was of the continued 'international' influence on British art education. 'How many students', he asked, 'are encouraged to study Constable as an *English* painter - rather than as the 'precursor' of French Impressionism? --- in how many art schools is *British* art history taught as such?'⁶⁹ Sounding much like the art and cultural critics of the Edwardian era, he firmly believed that one of the roles of art education was to foster a sense of affiliation to a national tradition. For Fuller however, this was a recognition that in such a way some 'imaginative and spiritual reconciliation between man and nature could be achieved'. It was intended as a positive affirmation of the resistance to Modernism, not one that arose out of mawkish nostalgia and sentimentality.⁷⁰ But no matter how well intentioned Fuller's views, like MacColl's and Kenneth Clark's, they were ultimately bound by prescriptive

⁶⁷ For evidence of the critical reaction to the circulation of Post Impressionist and Futurist art in Britain see *Post Impressionists in England*, ed. J B Bullen, Routledge, 1988.

⁶⁸ John Rothenstein, *op.cit.*, p.77

⁶⁹ *Op.cit.*, p.13

⁷⁰ Fuller's arguments have been considered highly contentious. Critics like Toni del Renzio argued that the tradition he defended simply did not exist, we never had one, 'only a kitsch practice that embraced an extraordinary bunch of 'artists', Augustus John, Alfred Munnings, Frank Brangwyn and Dod Proctor and so on'. 'Fuller What? Parish Pump Aesthetics', *Art Monthly*, Dec. 1987, pp.15-16. For more useful criticism see David Batchelor, 'The New Rote', *Oxford Art Journal*, 1986, 12. 1. 89, pp.66-9. Fuller here rejected the idea of the provincialism of English art as necessarily a vice, believing that for British painters, despite any aspirations, Modernism always belonged elsewhere.

and highly selective interpretations of art history. In this sense the assertion of a national tradition is always an ideological one.

Artists, Gypsies and Mothers of a Tribe

Reviewing the New English Art Club summer exhibition of 1908, Laurence Binyon described those qualities which for him characterised the national school, - 'a feeling of out of doors, a pleasure in human grace and human character, enjoyment of pretty things; these struck foreign observers --- a century ago, and these persist in the New English group'. But despite his admiration for the special charms of painters like Philip Wilson Steer and Henry Tonks, Binyon felt the lack of any 'fierce intellectual life' in their art. Their general outlook he felt was 'so sheltered --- so untroubled in its equanimity, that at times a craving comes upon one to see it produce something sad or mad, something passionate or bitter'. For this critic, the art of Augustus John satisfied that craving. Only John, he felt, 'brings a gust of strangeness and disquiet, a breath of outlandish liberty and revolt, into the sunny morning-rooms of his comrades'.¹ Around 1908 this was a general view of John's work, although at first the terms of Binyon's praise were more widely a cause for complaint. To account for the rapid shift in reputation from *enfant terrible* to widespread respectability, this study will explore themes related to his figure in landscape paintings from this date to the eve of the First World War.

The construction of identity is fundamental here, for to be regarded as an outsider was crucial to the self-perceptions of artists from John to Mark Gertler. Dating from the ideals of the late nineteenth century Aesthetic Movement, the artist as outsider perception had, by the early years of this century, lost its effete connotations and been re-formed by a retrenchment and desire for a renewed 'masculine vigour' within British art. Such was the concern to eliminate the exaggerated eccentricity of the decadent nineties, that Slade students were treated to a course of lectures in 1910 from Anthony Ludovici, on the art opinions of

¹ Laurence Binyon, *The Saturday Review*, 6, June, 1908, p.720. For particular discussion of Binyon, see Chapter Six. In his survey of the pioneering years of the Slade School between 1893-1907, D S MacColl had summed up the potential of Augustus John, regarded by him as the most promising young painter of that era in similar terms; 'The temper of Mr John is rebellious against the ordinary and scornful of the pretty, and the anarch young has not yet controlled or concentrated his passion to the creation of great pictures; but he has given us some measure of his powers and indication of their quality', *The Slade, A Collection of Drawings and Some Pictures Done by Past and Present Students of the London Slade School of Art, MDCCCXCIII - MDCCCXCVII*, 1907, p.9

Nietzsche.² For that lecturer, it was 'impossible to overrate the value of his (Nietzsche's) Art doctrine - especially to us, the children of an age so full of perplexity, doubt and confusion as this one is'.

The great turn of the century vogue for the writings of Nietzsche contributed to an ideal of 'man' as the supreme individual, standing 'in no need of public testimony', and this in turn affected the perception of 'artist' amongst a cultured elite. In the philosopher's own words, as quoted by Orage, editor of *The New Age*, powerful and expressive minds were necessarily sceptical of the principles and values of others, 'Convictions are prisons --- A spirit who desires great things, and who also desires the means thereto, is necessarily a sceptic'.³ For Ludovici, speaking '---from a Nietzschean standpoint, the painters and sculptors of the present age are deficient in dignity, in pride, in faith and, above all, in love'. In such a climate of fashionable thought, masculinity and an artistic ideal were conflated, and both reflected in the persona and in the art of individual ex-Slade artists like John himself. In his refusal to be closely identified with any particular group or movement, in his compulsive philandering, and his outrageously repressive attitudes towards women, even by the standards of the day, he typifies the Edwardian male artist's belief in his own individual and creative dominance, a belief that can clearly be traced well into later modernism.⁴ In these respects John's behaviour was motivated by personal desire and historical moment and was well supported by contemporary critical opinion.

A painting such as *A Family Group* c.1908 (fig. 3.1), demonstrates these attributes at a significant stage in John's development, where he had become especially interested in the idealised, decorative style of Puvis de Chavannes. This work presents a classically composed grouping of his extended family set in a remote,

² *Nietzsche and Art*, Anthony M Ludovici, New York, 1911. The author blamed what he saw as the debased condition of contemporary art on the lack of consistent aesthetic canons, and 'when there is no longer anybody strong enough to command or to lead', p.8. Taking a range of artists from Monet to Alfred East, Ludovici questioned their '--- plebeian embarrassment, this democratic desire to please', and 'their democratic disinclination to assume a position of authority' and asked, 'why are their voices so obsequiously servile and faint', p.16. Finding no worthy successor to the 'bright missiles' fired by Whistler, the world now seemed to be one of decomposition and decay, p.17

³ Wallace Martin, (Ed), *Orage as Critic*, London, 1974, p.11

⁴ John's friend Wyndham Lewis commented on what he termed, the 'biblical course of this patriarch'. Cited in Michael Holroyd, *Augustus John, Vol.2, The Years of Experience*, Heinemann, 1975, p.139

unspecific landscape. Its origin appears to date from a previous painting of 1905, *Gypsy Encampment* (fig 3.2), a scene of family life, overlooked by John himself, smoking his pipe on the steps of the caravan.⁵ *A Family Group* dispenses with irrelevant additional detail and concentrates instead on the women and children. Included in the group is his wife Ida Nettleship, the promising ex-Slade student who had abandoned her own painting career in order to nurture John's apparent genius and his children. Completed after her death following childbirth in Paris in 1907, she is presented, perhaps as a memorial, at the centre of the composition, holding her small baby and calmly looking out at the spectator. Dorelia, John's mistress, is absorbed by the children and has her back turned. Her position, with the diagonally sweeping gesture of her arms, contributes a more dynamic but also a unifying force within the work. As a result, the group forms something of a closely knit and self-sufficient unit that would appear to exclude others. They are, as they were described at the time, John's tribe.

The final composition of *A Family Group* was derived from studies of classical compositions transposed into modern rural imagery, and is the result of a series of closely related works. The most immediate being a charcoal and wash drawing of a year earlier, where the structure of the group is essentially the same (fig.3.3). Significant differences include Dorelia's dress and her stance. In the earlier study she, unlike Ida, returns the spectator's gaze with a coquettish expression and with a hand on hip. She wears more dashing and contemporary, if bohemian dress, with a wide brimmed hat and the flourish of a long scarf. Ida in her turn looks to one side with her shawl covering her hair.⁶ In the final work, with the addition of another child, possibly her own Pyramus, Dorelia's appearance is more demure. Hatless and gazing inwardly at the children, she is reconciled to the tribe. The addition of a brooding landscape completes this representation.⁷

⁵ Illustrated in John Rothenstein, *Augustus John*, Phaidon, 1946, 3rd. edition, plate 6.

⁶ The kind of dress worn by Dorelia aroused considerable comment and a number of copyists. One critic remarked, 'and if the woman of Mr John's feminine type is, as we are told, in advance of our present time, it is not enough for everyone to find this out: for though designing most of her own dresses, she has not quite abandoned the Victorian mode'. In this sense the critic pinpointed the ambivalence in John's work in general between work which appeared modern and yet was related to ideals of the previous century. Review of the NEAC Summer Exhibition, *The Studio*, Vol.47, 1909, p.178

⁷ *A Family Group* was much praised when it was reproduced in *The Art Journal* of 1909: '(it) is as far removed as may be from the trivial superficialities to-day produced in such numbers. The

The gently rolling and wooded landscapes of Kent and Surrey are traditionally characterised as the epitome of the English countryside and therefore implicitly of a unique 'Englishness'. The persistence and strength of this association has resulted in a tendency, most recently shown by Tricia Cusack, to generalise about all English landscapes as settled home counties idylls, in her case as contrast to discussion of the unplanned, rugged landscapes of the West of Ireland.⁸ For a time however, just prior to the First War, it is possible to perceive another kind of national identity being constructed in England in alternative scenery of wild, uncultivated moor land or rugged cliff tops where painters placed their vigorous, defiant and, mostly female, figures. John's friend, the Irishman William Orpen, is perhaps an important connection here, for there is a sense in which the 'free spirit' of the Celtic revival and its heroic imagery of the West of Ireland, encouraged painters in this country to attempt similar transfigurations of Wales, Dorset and Cornwall. Apart from John, a number of artists like Henry Lamb and John Currie, travelled to Ireland and produced mythic celebrations of Irish peasants, their customs and folklore.⁹ Lamb, for instance, went to Gola Island in 1913 where the combined influence of Puvis, Gauguin and the Italian Primitives resulted in paintings like *Irish Girls*, of three hardened peasant women dominating their native landscape¹⁰. What however are we to make of these celebrations when set in British contexts, even ones with Celtic origins like Cornwall? These may be read as an attempt, conscious or not, to interpret such robust and sturdy types as unique to an all inclusive ideal of the British people and this accounts to a degree for the consistent emphasis on imagery of strong women and indomitable mothers.

central figure is of monumental dignity, the children-even the Manetesque little being on the right-have the charm of transfigured naturalism, the pattern of the group is original and expressive, and the background of water and hill is a definite showing of the developing poet in Mr John. p.350-1

⁸ See 'The Paintings of Jack B Yeats and Post Colonial Identities', *Art History*, Vol.21, no.2, June 1998

⁹ John first visited Ireland in 1907, just after the death of Ida, and he painted his portrait of W B Yeats at Lady Gregory's house at Coole. He returned in 1912 along with J D Innes and again in 1915, when he rented a studio in Galway and deliberately set out to look for primitive subject matter. The result was the Tate gallery canvas, *Galway*.

¹⁰ *Irish Girls*, Coll., Tate Gallery, London. Lamb had attended John and Orpen's Chelsea School of Art in 1906 and the following year he travelled with John to Paris, where he enrolled for a time at the Jacques-Emile Blanche's Academie de la Palette. Following his return from Brittany his style was much influenced after 1913 by Stanley Spencer - he had been especially impressed by Spencer's *Apple Gatherers*.

There is, significantly, a considerable gulf between, say, the atmospheric plein air studies of figures on the cliffs and rugged hilltops painted by Charles Furse, eg *Diana of the Uplands*, 1903, (fig 3.4) or Laura Knight and those by John, Lamb and their circle. These differences were recognised early on despite a superficial resemblance. As P G Konody wrote in 1916, 'Mrs Knight, while aiming at a certain decorative splendour of vivid colour notes, still remains a realist', whereas 'Mr John's aims are utterly different, and so is his manner of painting'.¹¹ Far from feeling the breeze and the sunlight on their faces, John's figures occupy an often weather-free environment, where the desire to portray visual fact is subordinate to the desire to express a symbolic ideal. Instead of realism, John and his close followers, J D Innes and Derwent Lees, concentrated on creating strong, pared down relationships and on a synthetic and decorative style. Their symbolism was an attempt to capture the quintessence of an ideal and their women and children were to be seen members of a proud race. These are recognisable individuals in modern dress, but the manner of their representation and the landscapes that they inhabit meant they could be, and were, identified as the inheritors of fondly imagined national and racial characteristics. John's women emerge in contemporary writings as archetypes for the nation's mothers and his children as fine, clean-limbed specimens, contrasting with the enfeebled weaklings to be seen on large city streets. This is a plausible interpretation in the context of anxiety over racial degeneracy, which allowed for that emergence of the eugenics movement during this period. In 1905 one critic had written, 'Mr John---now comes forward in paint with the authority of one almost savagely intent on capturing what is vital. He wrestles with motives of full-blooded strenuous life'.¹²

The qualities ascribed to the figures were supported by their outdoor settings. John had an affection for Thomas Hardy and later painted his portrait. Hardy's imaginative transformation of Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native*, 1878, reads in places almost like a *mise en scène* for John's figures, and of course the artist dragged his caravan and family about Dorset in the years before the Great

¹¹ Quoted in Janet Dunbar, *Dame Laura Knight*, Collins, 1975, p.98. This was a review of Knight's 1916 exhibition at the Leicester Galleries.

¹² Review of New English Art Club, *The Art Journal*, 1905, p.32

War. In the writer's untamed heathland, the inhabitants lived in a relationship of constant struggle with nature, in an equilibrium that arose out of dispute. Hardy's character Eustacia, rather like John's mistress Dorelia, 'had pagan eyes, full of nocturnal mysteries'.¹³ She was rarely depicted indoors, she was often a figure seen on a hill top, as for example in *Lily at Tan-y-Grisiau* (fig. 3.5) creating what Hardy saw as the necessary unity, the figure in the landscape. This female type is perfectly synonymous with that view of nature, both primitive and vigorous, elsewhere in time and place.

John's imagery became formulaic, much to the critic James Bone's satisfaction, who observed, 'A bracing wind seem always blowing and the hills are darkling in the distance, --- his people are never in an interior, except sometimes in a tent. They stand firmly on the earth and regard civilization with eyes that have judged it and found it wanting'. For Bone, John's works were securely rooted in the 'distrust of cities, of society in its present organisation, even of civilization, and the desire for a simple life, and the recovery of virtues that lie in a more physical communion with the earth'.¹⁴

Those desolate stretches of countryside which painters of the so-called *école de John* frequently depicted, were also described in the poetry of the time, despite the preponderance of more familiar and secure sites. In *Lollingdon Downs*, the poet John Masefield, who forms a link between the symbolist poetry of the 1890s and the Georgian era, demonstrated the appeal of the lonely moorland and the evocation of an ancient existence that a number of artists tried to create. For here, as he wrote;

On the hills where the wind goes over sheep-bitten turf, where the bent grass beats upon the unploughed poorland, --- Here the Roman lived on the wind-barren lonely ---, Lonely Beauty came here and was here in sadness, Brave as a thought on the frontiers of the mind, In the camp of the wild upon the march of madness.¹⁵

¹³ Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, Book 1, VI, 'The Figure against the Sky', (1st ed., 1878), Penguin, 1978, pp.104-8

¹⁴ James Bone, 'The Tendencies of Modern Art', *Edinburgh Review*, April 1913, reprinted in J B Bullen, (ed), *Post Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception*, Routledge, 1988, p.433-437

¹⁵ *Poems by John Masefield*, 1954, xvii, (first ed. 1923), pp.323-4

The melancholy beauty of those ancient, barren landscapes was admired as much around 1910 as were the 'dear little places', that poets and painters later generally preferred to remember from the context of First World War battle fields. In spite of the accepted notion that the national ideal lay in the south country, in the 'haunts of ancient peace', there is enough evidence in popular regional literature of the period and in the way that certain paintings were received and interpreted, to suggest that that pre-war ideal was much more inclusive and adaptable.

In 1910 John showed the results of recent French travel at his *Provençal Studies* exhibition at the Chenil gallery, including *Dorelia with Three Children at Martigues* (fig. 3.6). Occurring at the same time as Fry's first Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Gallery, the response to John's work was initially couched in the same terms. 'What does it all mean?', asked one reviewer, 'Is there really a widespread demand for these queer, clever, forcible but ugly and uncanny notes of form and dashes of colour'.¹⁶ At this early stage the critic found little merit in John's work, but as with the nearby Grafton show this was to prove a fairly short term reaction. Of more significance for John was his first meeting at the Chenil with J D Innes, resulting in joint painting expeditions to the isolated area of North Wales around the lake of Tryweryn. This was an area which Innes, also Welsh, invested with particular emotional significance. His reluctance to share it at first was likened by John to a man's unwillingness to introduce his friend to the girl he had 'first surmounted'.¹⁷ In his feverish tubercular condition, Innes did indeed regard the mountain of Arenig as not just like a woman but as a specific woman, in particular his sometime girlfriend Euphemia Lamb.

Like John, Innes had also recently returned from the South of France where the effects of the Mediterranean light caused him to brighten his palette and depict the Welsh scenery with the same intensity. John Fothergill summed up the experience, saying that without that French trip his friend Innes would have remained 'just

¹⁶ *The Times*, 5th December, 1910. 'For our part', continued the critic, 'we see neither nature nor art in many of these strangely formed heads, these long and too readily tapering necks and these blobs of heavy paint that sometimes do duty for eyes'.

¹⁷ *Some Miraculous Promised Land, J D Innes, Augustus John and Derwent Lees in North Wales, 1910-13*, essay and catalogue notes by Eric Rowan, Mostyn Art Gallery, 1982, p. 11

another exponent of the veiled charm of a pale English sunshine'. As a result, the earlier influence of Steer's scumbled landscapes was overthrown, 'Steer liked the veil, Turner saw through it, Innes tore it away and got nature with the brilliance of stained glass'. He painted pure landscapes with a fevered vision that drew from the colouring of French painters like Denis and the decorative quality of the Japanese print (see fig 3.8). He keyed up the elements of the scenery around him to correspond with his own internal visions, or as Fothergill put it, 'he played with landscape as if it were a doll's house'.¹⁸ His struggles with life drawing at the Slade were resolved in his romantic Welsh figure-in-landscapes, by that very fusion of the female and nature. His female models dwarf the landscape while seeming to emerge out of the mountain side on which they stand. Conventional perspective and anatomical accuracy were inappropriate to such subjective and poetic representations, they would merely have weakened their impact (see fig 3.7).

Such overtly symbolist representations of women and nature were far from uncommon in the pre-war period. In one sense they continued the tradition of the late Pre-Raphaelite movement, of Burne-Jones and Rossetti, whose work was undergoing a particular revival at this date.¹⁹ With the Pre-Raphaelites this generation shared a romantic taste, an admiration for fourteenth century Florentine painters, and crucially, a conception of women as the ideal, as muse, as instinctive and as 'other', as strong and resourceful, but as essentially unthreatening. This perception was to be conflated in the art of John, Innes and their close imitator Derwent Lees, with a choice of landscape that was in a large degree also 'other', ie, remote from metropolitan life, the hackneyed imagery of the home counties, and from actual experience. There is pure fantasy in these paintings, landscape was a backdrop on to which both personal and wider cultural dispositions could be both expressed and reinforced.

James Bone's *Edinburgh Review* article of 1913, ostensibly on recent French art, gave much space to enthusiastic praise of Augustus John. Speaking of a study of gypsies, he described his 'cold bright configuration of English countryside', his

¹⁸ John Fothergill, *J D Innes*, London, 1946, pp.7-11

¹⁹ Examples of this renewed interest were the new edition of Percy Bate's *The Pre-Raphaelite Painters*, London, 1910, (1st ed., 1899), and an exhibition at the Tate Gallery that year.

'primitive matrons, sealed in knowledge, mysteriously smiling' and his 'strange girl figures with dilated eyes, roaming solitarily in remote places'.²⁰ These women might look proud and heroic however, they may be aware of the ancient secrets, but they will not tell, they are mute and unthreatening. John appears to have been especially concerned that his women remain, on the whole, silent and unopinionated. If Ida and Dorelia possessed a wild, free spirit, it was one that was ultimately controllable by the absent leader of the group, John himself, resulting in such imagery as *Dorelia and David in Dorset* (fig.3.9). If this suggests an element of fear of women, then a particular fantasy reported to William Rothenstein around 1907, possibly the result of visiting Picasso's studio and of his admiration for Gauguin's Polynesian paintings, is especially revealing;

I should like to work for a few years, entirely 'out of my head'. To paint women till their faces become enlarged to an idiotic inanimity, till they stand impassively as, unquestionably, terrifyingly fecund fetishes of brass with Polynesian eyes and dry, imperative teeth and fitful, cracking bowels that surge and smoke for sacrifice-of flesh and flowers.²¹

This extraordinary statement was doubtless intended to shock, nevertheless, it reveals something of John's underlying motivation. Woman could be malign and threatening, not at all the archetypal, maternal figure of his paintings. Conventional idealisation that connected John and Innes to Pre-Raphaelite ideals of women as closer to nature, displaced a fundamental desire for control. The idealising of *A Family Group* served that purpose. Michael Holroyd spoke simply of the artist's 'robust paganism', implying approval. However, the content of this art needs to be seen in the wider context of the great upsurge in feminist debate during the period, and of increasing calls for women's independence. The artist's savage imaginings might be viewed in relation to the contemporary experience of demonstrating suffragettes at a time of increased militancy after 1905. For many of those it was painfully apparent that the idealisation of women was solely dependent on their continued acceptance of prescribed roles. Any departure was to provoke the fury and loathing that John's letter expressed. His anxieties would seem to bear out

²⁰ James Bone, quoted in J B Bullen, *op.cit.*, 1988, p. 439

²¹ Cited in Michael Holroyd, *Augustus John, Vol.1, The Years of Innocence*, Heinemann, 1974, p.258

Andreas Huyssen's view that 'fear of the masses in the age of declining liberalism was also a fear of woman, a fear of nature out of control, a fear of the unconscious of sexuality, of the loss of identity'.²² The Nietzschean philosophy so popular in John's circles, depicted women's role solely in terms of the creation of a superior male type, they embodied idealism, they were the ground and condition of men. There could be no dissent, and the editor of *The New Age*, Alfred Orage, in his 1906 study of Nietzsche recited his words, 'They goest to women? Remember thy whip'.²³

Contemporary writings endlessly play upon constructed notions of difference between the male and female artist, which had practical repercussions for ex-artists like Ida Nettleship, and were supported by the subject matter of John's paintings. Sickert in 1910 declared:

The language of art has a meaning for men and very little for women. This is almost a truism, --- the male mind deals willingly with and is naturally at home in abstract ideas, while the female mind, fortunately for the race, is entirely concentrated on positive and personal and immediate considerations --- Women are interested in landscape that represents scenes where they would like to be alone, or in sympathetic society²⁴.

John was an admirer of D H Lawrence, especially *Sons and Lovers*, (1913) and shared with Lawrence some of the same conflicting and unresolved attitudes towards women. The descriptions of Anna Brangwyn in *The Rainbow*, (1915), for example, suggest John's own apparent perceptions of his wife and mistress. Describing her state of continual pregnancy, like Ida and Dorelia, Lawrence said of Anna, 'she seemed to be in a storm of fecund life, every moment was full and busy with productiveness to her. She felt like the earth, the mother of everything'.²⁵ In his novel, *The White Peacock*, 1911, Lawrence's imagery of the mother and child is strikingly similar to Johns, when he writes, 'A woman who has a child in her arms

²² Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide, Modernism, Mass Culture, Post Modernism*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1986, p.74

²³ Cited in Tom Steele, *Alfred Orage and the Leeds Art Club, 1892-1923*, Scolar Press, 1990, p.57

²⁴ Walter Sickert, 'The Language of Art', *The New Age*, 28th July 1910, reprinted in Osbert Sitwell, *A Free House: or The Artist as Craftsman, Being the Writings of Walter Richard Sickert*, London, 1947, p.98

²⁵ D H Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, 1915, (Penguin ed., 1978), p.208

is a tower of strength, a beautiful, unassailable tower of strength that may in its turn stand quietly dealing death'.²⁶ John appears to have been torn between the archetypal attractions of this ideal of femininity and the notions of an independent, challenging, even threatening female that we also find in Lawrence. The first ideal was the most enduring for the painter, and in spite of their apparent unconventionality and freedom from bourgeois standards of behaviour, the lives of Dorelia and Ida were as heavily circumscribed as those of most other Edwardian women.

Discussing John in 1908, Laurence Binyon remarked how sometimes living women possessed some mysterious pliability whereby they transform themselves into the likeness of an image which was initially created out of an artist's brooding imagination. Binyon then proceeded to praise John's *Seraphita*, in terms not unlike those used forty years earlier to describe Rossetti's representations of Lizzie Siddal;

A lean lank lady with stooping shoulders and hands that drop by her sides, with pallid exhausted features, with colourless draggled hair, standing on a cliff's edge; dressed in black with a vaporous blue world of frozen peaks and chasms behind her. Can she be called prepossessing? Far from it; but she haunts, she fascinates. Doubtless this enigmatical conception and the wonderful background of fjords melting into the sky, owe their first suggestion to Balzac's story, but the picture is essentially a vision of the artist's own.²⁷

Once again a representation of a new ideal of female beauty based on this mysterious romantic 'otherness' and coinciding with depictions of landscapes which are fantastical and remote, developed as a counter to growing assertions of female independence in the modern city.

For many, however, and certainly for John, the urge to escape modernity in mythic constructions of racial purity and far away landscapes was often short lived. He went to London mostly when things were too tough or complicated in the countryside. As Arthur Ransome noted 'London is full of people who keep the

²⁶ D H Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, 1911, Penguin, p.376

²⁷ Laurence Binyon, *The Saturday Review*, 28th March, 1908, p398-399. Review of the exhibition of Fair Women at the New Gallery. *Seraphita*, a portrait of the model Alick Schepeler, was destroyed by fire in the 1930s.

country in their hearts'.²⁸ However, this was a nostalgia which fed upon separation and surfaced at hard times when 'editors refuse your works, and Academies decline to hang your pictures'.²⁹ Moreover, as Leslie Stephen admitted, he 'loved the countryside best in books', and many painters also preferred their ideal visions to the real thing.³⁰ This was a sentiment conferred upon E M Forster's character Leonard Bast in *Howard's End*. Bast tramped across London all night wanting to 'get back to the earth'. He found however that when dawn came it was not wonderful 'it was only grey' and although he was glad that he had seen it, 'it bored me more than I can say'.³¹

The effects of the figure in landscape paintings of John, Innes and Lees ultimately presented a view of rural life that was just as evasive as perennial Royal Academy pictures of a healthy rosy-cheeked peasantry. Despite differences in style and technique, their work had a comparable effect, it offered a false, but nevertheless consoling vision of country life. Preferring to use his own friends and family as models, John in particular, seldom painted the native, working inhabitants of the countryside. Interest in the rural did not include sympathy for the plight of the actual rural labourer; women field workers did not concern him as they had La Thangue and Clausen. However idealised the work of those two became, at least it represented authentic country women engaged in some meaningful activity, whereas John's figures were incomers and poseurs, 'behaving aesthetically' and doing, as Sickert put it 'maistly nowt'.³² His representations were powerfully appealing. Charles Marriott discerned a tendency in John, as in Rossetti, to construct both a type of personality and a world to which they belong, to then

²⁸ Arthur Ransome, *Bohemia in London*, London, 1907, p.85

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.97

³⁰ Sir Leslie Stephen, *Hours in a Library*, 1899, cited in Jan Marsh, 1982, *op.cit.*, p37

³¹ E M Forster, *Howard's End*, Edward Arnold, 1973, (1st. pub., 1910), p.117

³² Walter Sickert, 'The New English Art Club', *The New Age*, 4 June, 1914, Cited in Osbert Sitwell, (ed), *op. cit.*, p. 291. John's women were a more vigorous, healthy and outdoor version but, as T E Hulme observed, had clear references to the Burne Jones type. In 1914 he described what had become a simple recipe for a picture 'throbbing with lyrical beauty', 'the depiction of a human figure (preferably female), with one or both arms uplifted in unusual attitudes'.

impose this type on a generation, 'so that other human beings actually try to live up to it'.³³

John's admirer Bone identified the type as possessing Amazonian qualities of:

brute strength, independence and life on primitive and patriarchal terms. No weak-looking man ever finds place in his pictures, the old men look cunning and tough, the children untamed and fierce, the women deep-breasted, large bodied, steady-eyed like mother's of a tribe.³⁴

Bone's view makes an interesting comparison to those descriptions of actual circumstances in the countryside, typically presented by Masterman. In this instance, the effects of years of rural deprivation and depopulation are made clear, 'Rural England --- is everywhere hastening to decay. No one stays there who can possibly find employment elsewhere. --- The villages are left to old men and to children, to the inert, unenterprising and intellectually feeble'.³⁵

Discussion of the depiction of rural workers has focussed on the aesthetic transformations required in order to present real live country dwellers as the embodiment of some sound and unsullied race. We might assume that John's figures, acting a part and posed in wild heroic landscapes, could be regarded in just those terms. By adopting the decorative, symbolic and monumental qualities of the style of Puvis de Chavannes and Gauguin, several British painters developed an imagery that accorded well with contemporary national ideals. Similarly, in their use of unlocalised landscapes, again drawn largely from Puvis, they avoided the problem of dealing with specific circumstances, and were free to project both personal and national ideals. In this sense we can account for the appeal of pictures like John's *An Hour at Ower* of 1914 (fig 3.10), with its two self-absorbed and reflective women, seated on a rock amidst a background of rough bracken. The heavy impasto and crude colouring contributes to the desired effect, the expression

³³ Charles Marriot, *Masters of Modern Art; Augustus John*, published by *Colour Magazine*, 1918, p.7

³⁴ *Op.cit.*

³⁵ C F Masterman, 1909, *op.cit.*, p.148

of what John Rothenstein termed the 'grace of wild-spirited women in repose', and the 'near monumental dreaminess --- in John's imagined Arcadia'.³⁶

The value of 'the primitive' and primitivism fascinated a cultured elite both nationally and internationally in the early twentieth century, but in the case of artists like Augustus John, John Currie and Henry Lamb, this concern was primarily with ancient Celtic traditions and the culture of gypsies. John in particular developed a profound fascination with the gypsies, a strong desire to understand their language and customs and to be accepted by them.³⁷ In this he was to an extent influenced by the writings of the Celtic scholar Kuno Meyer, whose portrait he painted in 1911. Most fundamentally John needed to be part of their culture, even to the extent of occasionally pretending that his own mother was descended from gypsies.³⁸ The artist and the gypsy were essentially the same individual, an identity that was already well established in France by the 1830's. This conflation of gypsy and bohemian artist was intentionally symbolic of a radical split between the idea of the artist as a subversive outcast and the opposition, the bourgeoisie. The myth of the gypsy is an essentially bourgeois myth. As Marilyn Brown pointed out in her study of artists and the bohemian in nineteenth century France, by choosing the theme of the gypsy, the artist was expressing, 'not his alienation from but rather his sensitivity to society and its urgent forces'.³⁹ Furthermore, the myth of the gypsy belongs in that context of Orientalism, the taste for exotic others, which appropriates and controls. Like the vogue for Celtic 'others', and in this sense the view of the countryside itself, the

³⁶ John Rothenstein *op.cit.*, p.8

³⁷ John's essays for the Gypsy Lore Society can be seen in the context of the national dictionaries and collections of folk tales and songs to appear during these years. As such this was a respectable academic pursuit, 'gypsiology', requiring a degree of the professionalism that he chose to play down in his artistic career. He felt himself possessed of Romany characteristics like pride, suspicion and sensitivity, revealing a degree of both racial stereotyping and aesthetic snobbery. Not all distinct cultures were so attractive to him however, William Rothenstein he once described as 'Le sale juif par excellence', see Holroyd, Vol.1., *op.cit.*, p.186, revealing an anti-Semitism that was typical of the time.

³⁸ The extent to which the Edwardian artists' fascination for gypsy women contrasted to established middle class ideals of femininity has been discussed by Jane Bilton, see 'An Edwardian Gypsy Idyll', *Feminist Art News*, Vol.3, no.1, 1989.

³⁹ Marilyn R Brown, *Gypsies and other Bohemians. The Myth of the Artist in Nineteenth Century France*, UMI Research Press, Studies in the Fine Arts : The Avant-Garde. no.51, 1985, p.6

appeal of the gypsy should be regarded in terms of early twentieth century colonialism.

In his obsession with Romany culture, John shared in concerns about declining knowledge of folklore and disappearing cultural forms. These also preoccupied his friends, such seemingly disparate individuals as William Butler Yeats and Lady Gregory at Coole, John Sampson and Lord Howard de Walden at Chirk Castle. John spent time entertaining Lady Ottoline Morrel in her drawing room with tales of 'gypsies and troubadours'. In this respect, voguish phenomenon such as the cult of the gypsy was, like the flourishing Celtic revival, to be viewed alongside distaste for the developing homogeneity or, for what Yeats himself termed, the 'massed vulgarity of the age'. Anti-urbanism, alongside expressions of nostalgia for past, supposedly, unified cultures, ultimately linked bohemian, non-conformist artists and individuals, with more conventional cultural critics like Masterman.

An artist's prolonged journey around the countryside in England, France, Italy and Ireland, with or without caravan, was symptomatic of a specific desire to be a traveller rather than a tourist. This John himself acknowledged in his autobiography, where he identified the artist with the traveller, 'the artist --- is also a born adventurer. His explorations, unlike those of the tourist, are rewarded by the discovery of beauty spots unmentioned in the guide book'.⁴⁰ John was simply at pains here to preserve the myth of the artist's distance from the concerns of everyday life and common experience. In his terms then, we are to assume that the experience of the traveller is authentic and whole while the tourist's is superficial and inauthentic. Such a preoccupation with authenticity is clearly founded on traditional nostalgia for a more unified and organic culture believed to have once existed.

The desire for a regeneration of middle class spiritual values which pervades amongst painters of this era, was seen as essential if urban moral decay was to be eradicated. Associated with this critique of homogeneous urban society was the

⁴⁰ Augustus John, *Chiaroscuro, Fragments of an Autobiography*, Jonathan Cape, 1962, p.65. This last remark is faintly ironic given that, from the early nineteenth-hundreds, artists quite commonly illustrated guide books for the tourist, which were then frequently reviewed in art magazines like *The Studio*.

belief that it resulted in a loss of personal freedom which, as we know, artists like John and Innes valued highly. In common with all contemporary critics, they would distinguish between two forms of non-middle class culture quite unequally. Modern, urban popular culture was inauthentic and pertained to an unruly, potentially destructive working class, whereas rural and primitive forms were authentic and, importantly, not threatening to class hierarchy, a cultural prejudice that, once more, bound together artists and a wide range of critics and intellectuals in the pre-war period. This idealisation of the primitive accounted in particular for the appeal of specific locations, like for example, the West Country as seen from the distance of the capital, for, as one writer put it 'In spite of the railways, the West Country still seems to the brisk and volatile Cockney the home of slow and simple men'.⁴¹

That pre-war gypsy cult extended far beyond John's immediate circle, the appeal of the open road manifested itself widely, even to Mr Toad.⁴² For that reason gypsy pictures were produced by a wide range of painters, witness the sentimental portraits of gypsy women and children by Elizabeth Forbes, the horse fairs of Alfred Munnings and Laura Knight's childhood and fairground scenes.⁴³ None of these three could have been remotely seen as radical modernists out to upset established opinion. Augustus John however, succeeded in being viewed both ways with works like *The Mumpers*, (fig 3.11) shown at the New English Art Club in 1912. This work was widely discussed at the time and as a result he was held to be the leader of English Post-Impressionism. The critic of *The Studio*, summed up the mixed response to the work:

--- (of) heroic dimensions scarcely justified by the subject - a group of gipsies in various attitudes (which) drew a great many people to the galleries, some to extravagantly praise, others to deplore, for the immense canvas gave evidence alike of the genius and wilfulness of its painter. The source of the great vitality informing its affected incompetence may safely be ascribed to the realistic and not to the decorative elements of the painting ---. It was this which imparted vitality

⁴¹ *The Art Journal* 1909, 'A Corner of Somerset', Alfred Tennyson, illustrated by Alfred Parsons, pp.160-165.

⁴² ie, Kenneth Grahame's toad in *Wind in the Willows*, first published in 1908.

⁴³ eg, Munnings's *Gypsy Caravan*, 1911 and Knight's *Penzance Fair*, 1916.

and stirred the spectator, in spite of the deliberation with which it was cloaked in bizarre colour and extravagance of outline.⁴⁴

John stressed the 'otherness', the exotic nature of those beggars who inhabited the margins of rural society, through their darkened, expressionless faces and in the primitive stylisation of their forms. They huddle together in groups, several gazing out of the picture with mild curiosity or slight suspicion and with what Sickert described as a 'certain processional solemnity'.⁴⁵ This processional quality was the result especially of the influence of Italian Primitives like Piero della Francesca, with his elementary frontal or half turned poses and bold silhouettes.

The Mumpers offer themselves up to our gaze calmly and the artist appears to have functioned like some early anthropologist, uncovering the unknown and exotic for the instruction of the audience at home. The important sense of distance implicit in the work is confirmed by his own remarks about gypsies in his autobiography. He recites the 'exotic' names of the gypsies he has met, and the men he says, 'admitted us into their confidence and disclosed their tribal secrets unreservedly', having been first encouraged with liquor. The girls, one depicted here in John's favourite female pose of the hand-on-hip, were 'provocative and yet aloof' with an 'oblique and derisory intelligence'.⁴⁶ But the effect of *The Mumpers*, is far from challenging or disconcerting, the picture provokes a slight sense of voyeurism, we return their gaze with curiosity but nothing more. This is partly the result of the formal qualities of the work, those simplified and unshadowed figures posing almost as statues, meant that little beyond a calm fatality could be expressed. The inadequacy of this style became more apparent during the Great War when young, mostly Slade trained artists struggled to find a way of communicating the horrors of trench warfare. The handling of form in *The Mumpers*, loosely termed Post-Impressionist, was one very appropriate to a contemplative, a decorative and a symbolic art, but it was incapable of expressing anything further. Far from unsettling the spectator, John plays on stereotypes of an alien culture from the vantage point of his own cultural and class position.

⁴⁴ *The Studio*, Vol.57, 1912-13, review of the 45th NEAC exhibition, p. 57

⁴⁵ *The New Age*, 28th May, 1914, reprinted in Osbert Sitwell, *op.cit.*, p.279.

⁴⁶ *Chiaroscuro*, *op.cit.*, p.59

In a fascinating retrospective review, Wyndham Lewis neatly unscrambled the appeal of John's 'Rembrandtesque drawings of stumpy brown people' and his 'tribes of archaic and romantic Gitanos and Gitanas'. To Lewis these identified the painter as successor to Wilde and Beardsley and revealed his exploitation of 'the inveterate exoticism of the educated Englishman and Englishwoman'. They, in Lewis's words, 'were thrilled to the bone with the doctrine of 'wild life' and 'savage nature'. John therefore succeeded in stamping himself, 'romantic chevelure and all, on what might be termed the Augustan decade'.⁴⁷ As a result he exemplifies the process Brown describes in mid-century France, he was viewed by the bourgeois spectator in exactly the same way that he himself viewed the gypsy.⁴⁸

As the period progressed, John's work was ever more popular with a broadening section of interested public and the artist, once portrayed as subversive, was gradually being co-opted by more conservative circles. He himself noted a decrease in critical hostility as the period progressed, with some disappointment, but all of this illustrates the process whereby art critics and institutions perpetuate themselves by representing an artist's work as both new and challenging and yet also as part of some perceived and usually national tradition. As a result, those elements and characteristics of modern French and early Italian painting which were identifiable in his work came to be regarded rather as symptomatic of a British tendency. In support of a perceived need to affirm the symbolic totality and spiritual character of the national culture, diverse and often even imaginary racial and cultural sensibilities were mobilised, consciously or not.

⁴⁷ Ed. Walter Michel & C J Fox, *Wyndham Lewis on Art: Selected Writings, 1913-56*, 1969, p.91. Several critics identified, like Lewis, a group of younger John devotees often referred to as the *École de John*. Walter Sickert warned of the dangers of imitating what was a make up personal to John himself, an 'intensity and virtuosity (which has) endowed his peculiar world of women, half gypsy, half model, with a life of their own'. And yet, as he continued, 'when it comes to a whole school who imitate his landscape panels, the limit of thinness has been attained. The realist has over the derivative painter this advantage. The realist is incessantly provisioning himself from the inexhaustible and comfortable cupboard of nature. The derivative romantic, on the other hand, can hardly expect such varied and nutritious fare if he restricts himself to the mummies he can find in another man's Blue-Beard closet. Quoted in Osbert Sitwell, (ed.), *op.cit.*, p.280

⁴⁸ In Brown's terms, the gypsy and the artist were both intended to shock the middle classes, but 'the normative order was only superficially flummoxed and ultimately intrigued. The bohemian subject provided the bourgeois with a needed stimulation'.

A critic for *The Times*, reviewing the Salon d'Automne of 1908 argued forcefully against modern French painting, believing that the rebelliousness of Matisse was undermined by his intrinsic 'lack of purpose' and the absence of a subject matter appropriate to such violent handling.⁴⁹ In another instance Laurence Binyon contrasted the Goupil Gallery Salon of 1910, with Fry's exhibition at the Grafton Gallery across Piccadilly. He admired the French desire to be rid of stuffy convention, of 'cosy interiors' and 'picnic landscapes' instead to achieve something more serious and profound. He felt, nevertheless, that in practice they produced so much 'childish rubbish'. For Binyon, William Blake would have produced a more affecting vision of waving corn than Van Gogh, and none of the paintings could 'hold a candle to the *The Smiling Woman* of Augustus John', recently bought 'for the nation' by the Contemporary Art Society.⁵⁰ Presumably had the critic chosen other French artists with whom to compare John, like Henri Martin for example, national distinctions would have seemed less credible.⁵¹ But Binyon's ultimate aim was to present John as a modern day representative of a superior British tradition, and the qualities of his art as peculiar to this country. The reference to William Blake is especially significant in this context, Robert Ross had recently praised the 'rhythmic grouping' of Blake's *Hecate*, more highly than anything one could find in Puvis de Chavannes.⁵² Here was a suitable case of an English Romantic visionary who, as Ross saw it, would appeal only to the cultured mind.

This reinforcement of native precedents for contemporary painting appears time and again in different guises throughout the early years of the century. James Bone, for example, had ended his personal panegyric on John and on 'English' national and artistic traditions, by assuring his readers that 'Our innate charm never altogether fails, and is springing up under the most unlikely hedgerows and in

⁴⁹ *The Times*, Oct.2, 1908, p.8

⁵⁰ *Saturday Review*, 12 Nov., 1910, pp.609-10. *The Art Journal* of 1909 (p.350) acknowledged the vitality of John's portrait of Dorelia, 'though many at first sight at any rate, turned away as from an unpleasant spectacle'.

⁵¹ In Puvis inspired works like *Serenity* of 1899 for example, a mural composition of imaginary figures in idyllic Virgilian setting, Martin achieved in the opinion of Roger Marx, a 'nobility and poetry of feeling---the discovery of pre-existing relationships between spiritual states and the spectacles of nature', 'Les Salons de 1899'-*Revue encyclopedique*, 1899, pp.545-8

⁵² Robert Ross, 'The Place of William Blake in English Art', *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 8-9, 1905-6, p.150

queer company to carry us through seasons when professional crops on the Continent have perished in the drought'.⁵³

John maintained a cool distance from Roger Fry's circle, he refused to pander to cliques. Superficially his own practice would seem far removed from that which the formalist criticism of Clive Bell would presume. But Fry's fundamental aim, to rid art of the morass of anecdotal trappings that seemed inevitable in naturalistic painting, did not mean an absence of expressive content and John, despite a display of coolness, recognised his own ideals in the preface to the first Grafton Gallery exhibition and in much of the art on display. There is for example intended similarity in handling, in the relationship of figure to landscape and in the symbolic overtones of John's painting *Dorelia and the Children at Martigues* and Gauguin's Tahitian works from the 1890's. Although John's figures are more 'modern', they are passive and contemplative and their forms are equally rhythmic, curvilinear and decorative. Fry's own account of the importance of the new art in France was, at root, an appeal for an idealist art which would correspond with our 'higher emotions';

'They do not seek to give what can, after all, be but a pale reflex of actual appearance, but to arouse the conviction of a new and definite reality. They do not seek to imitate form, but to create form, not to imitate life, but to find an equivalent for life. By that I mean that they wish to make images which by the clearness of their logical structure, and by their closely-knit unity of texture, shall appeal to our disinterested and contemplative life ---'.⁵⁴

The monumental, decorative composition *The Lyric Fantasy*, 1911-14 (fig 3.12) a representation of his extended family around the site of old clay pits near Wareham Heath in Dorset, is a complex work which John never managed to resolve.⁵⁵ Puvis's influence is especially apparent in the shallow space, imposing stylised figures and idealised landscape. The apparent timelessness of John's figures explains his

⁵³ Bone, *op.cit.*

⁵⁴ Introduction to catalogue of 2nd Post-Impressionist exhibition, Grafton Galleries, London, 1911-12.

⁵⁵ Unlike *The Mumpers*, which was 'knocked off' for the New English in four and a half days, John spent several years struggling with *The Lyric Fantasy* and readily relinquished the task when Hugh Lane, who commissioned it, died on the Lusitania in 1914. Nevertheless, for John Rothenstein, *The Lyric Fantasy*, was simply one of the 'great British pictures'. Why 'great' and why particularly 'British', he left us to speculate, and instead talked vaguely and to no real purpose about a poetic relationship between figures and the landscape. *op.cit.* p.17

particular taste for Puvis's Pastorals. Claudine Mitchell has elaborated on the significance of those works, like *Summer*, with their ideals beyond time, space, costumes or particular detail'.⁵⁶ His characters who lived, the strong, antique life', functioned in the definition of a universal order in which notions of the past, the essential and the eternal were joined together as the basic form of human relations of any society at any time. Puvis represented patriarchal clans which ultimately stood for a nation. All of which echoes James Bone's descriptions of John's clan or tribe for, as he wrote, John seems to 'dislocalise his figures so that they belong to no class, no place, no time. By all these devices (he aims) at a lean athletic art to run deeper into our consciousness'.⁵⁷ Ludovici's lectures at the Slade on Nietzschean 'ruler art', spoke similarly about an interpretation of nature rather than an imitation, and on the evolution of 'order and simplicity out of natural chaos'.⁵⁸ The chaos could stand for both the struggles in France in the 1860s as in Edwardian England.

The arrangement of figures in *The Lyric Fantasy*, in small intertwined groups is similar to *The Mumpers*, which also emulated Puvis in the relationship of figures to the surrounding landscape.⁵⁹ Through the devices of the wicket fence in the background of *The Mumpers*, and in the stretch of water in *The Lyric Fantasy*, something of a musical analogy is struck, and the placing of the figures corresponds to the position of notes on a stave. This analogy, heightening the symbolism of both works, is especially appropriate here. *A Lyric Fantasy* is a conventional symbolist allegory on the stages of a woman's life ranging from the unknown dancing girls on the right, to Ida on the left, once more re-appeared from the dead. Dorelia plays her guitar, one of the John children bangs his drum and the others argue and wrestle amongst themselves, in obvious reference to Puvis's *Doux*

⁵⁶ Claudine Mitchell, 'Time and the Idea of Patriarchy in the Pastorals of Puvis de Chavannes', *Art History*, Vol.10, no.2, June, 1987, pp.188-202

⁵⁷ *Op.cit*

⁵⁸ *Op.cit*

⁵⁹ Whether John was successful in his emulation of Puvis caused debate from the outset. In a review of the Alpine Club exhibition in *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 Dec. 1917. Sir Claude Phillips, speaking of *The Tinkers*, found it without the loftiness, the vision and the didactic power of Puvis.

Pays.⁶⁰ Once again known models with particular relationships, are rather uneasily arranged in contrived classical poses and used as actors, made to conform to John's vision of a perfect and lyrical life in some remote Eden, where beautiful women at all stages of life, give order to an unruly mob of bonny infants and sturdy young lads.

This ultimately is John's remote Golden Age, his figures are an ideal primitive community belonging to a pagan past of the kind described in Baudelaire's *L'Invitation au Voyage* and *Parfum Exotique*, a moral and aesthetic counter to modern life. To an extent the work derived from John's declared interest in Fourier's utopian ideals of an 'age of harmony, superseding our civilisation where state and church institutions were supplanted by the extended family, the community'. This conformed to the artist's ideal, not of a socialist utopia, but of a life unfettered by institutional constraints, an expression of his own individualism. With his own particular tribe of women - those deep breasted mothers of fine build, the primitive matrons with pagan eyes who kept strangely silent, - far removed from their specific Edwardian context, the artist could dream up his own phalanstery. John combined these sources with his particular interpretation of another Utopian writer, Walt Whitman, whose *Leaves of Grass* was also a vision of a race of 'hardy and well defined women', and as a result the artist was able to declare himself as henceforth 'living for freedom and the open road'. For John in 1913 that open road led to Cornwall, where he painted Dorelia posing languidly against a rock (fig. 3.13). There he found himself momentarily amongst a jolly fraternity of artists at Lamorna Cove, all equally relishing their supposed distance from the repressing norms of conventional society, in a place almost as remote from that society as it was possible to be.

But John was never the cultural outsider he was made out to be. Having been once portrayed as subversive, his pictures of women set in his ideal, mind landscapes were increasingly approved by a cross section of critics. His was to become the acceptable face of English Post Impressionism. Far from being free of contemporary anxieties, his rural images actively contributed to national

⁶⁰ *Doux Pays*, 1882, Coll. Musée Bonnat, Bayonne.

preoccupations which included distaste for the vulgarising effects and the power struggles implicit in the processes of modernity. A Nietzschean super hero and his tribe of strong female types was also a model for conservative imperialists. The artist himself and the images he produced, were open to discussion in terms of native traditions and innate racial characteristics, to the extent that that critic of *The Times* could write, with relief, that in contrast to those Matisse's at the 1908 *Salon d'Automne*, the most extreme works of Mr John are as timid as the opinions of a Fabian Socialist compared with those of a bomb throwing anarchist'.⁶¹

⁶¹ Oct.2 *op.cit.*

A Cornish Pastiche

By the turn of the century the popular appeal of paintings of Cornwall was phenomenal. Reports stated that more pictures were painted there in a year than in any other county and, in 1896, that the old town of Newlyn was represented in every room at the Royal Academy exhibition. From the early to mid-eighties, as is well documented, artists like Stanhope Forbes and Frank Bramley had been drawn to the 'English Concarneau', because they wished to recreate the subjects and adopt the technique of their mentor, Bastien-Lepage.¹ In the years to follow, those earliest artist colonisers had moved from the relative realism of depictions of the working lives of local fisher folk, like *Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach*, 1885, towards brighter, sunnier paintings like *Gala Day at Newlyn*, 1907 (fig 4.1) a carefree vision of a Whit Monday village celebration. This movement towards more picturesque scenery developed at much the same rate as the artist's popularity at London exhibitions increased. By the later nineties then, native Newlyners were to be viewed in paintings as posed charmingly in nature, behaving appropriately inside well-scrubbed cottages, or as here, at colourful and well organised village fêtes.

Themes such as fêtes and primitive Methodist processions were increasingly favoured, reflecting wider shifts in the perception of Cornwall as a site of work, to one of innocent and civilised leisure. These particular types of 'collective recreation ceremonies' and holidays were regarded by Emile Durkheim in 1912 as a 'means of moral remaking ---- in which the life of the nation was re-affirmed' and the indigenous population safely controlled.² My argument here is that from the mid-nineties up to the Great War, Cornwall functions as a perfect site on which to reflect

¹ See especially Caroline Fox and Francis Greenacre, *Painting in Newlyn, 1880-1930*, catalogue of an exhibition, Barbican Art Gallery, 1985, see also Mrs Lionel Birch, *Stanhope A. Forbes ARA and Elizabeth Stanhope Forbes, ARWS*, 1906

² The specific types of leisure activity being emphasised in paintings like Forbes' and Bramley's are important. Highly organised and controlled, they might be assumed by the middle classes to have a civilising effect on the lives of the indigenous population. Such a development needs to be seen in the context of a whole history of incidents in the nineteenth century where working class leisure pursuits resulted in threatening disorder. For discussion of Durkheim see Chris Rojek, *Ways of Escape: Modern Transformation in Leisure and Travel*, Macmillan, 1993, pp.41-4. Rojek cites Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, New York, Free Press, 1912, pp.475-6

and mediate upon specifically modern, urban, middle class fears about the physical and moral health of the nation, concerns about the moral health of English art, recent departures from traditional late Victorian gender stereotypes, and, most fundamentally, anxiety about shifting middle class patterns of behaviour from within the middle class itself. Artists' representations of the figure in the Cornish landscape reflect something of the modern culture of tourism in this process of negotiation. It can be argued that paintings of Cornwall operate in the same way as tourism. For a writer like Dean MacCannell, tourism is, 'an ideological framing of history, nature and tradition; a framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs'.³

From the turn of the century the county developed rapidly as a tourist resort, aided by the Great Western Railway's successful marketing campaign as the route to the 'Cornish Riviera' after 1904.⁴ Thereafter developments in paintings were undoubtedly affected by greater appreciation of what made the area appealing for the tourist and, by extension, the picture buyer. By the close of the nineteenth century, the expansion of the railway into West Cornwall meant that resident painters could have their pictures transported up to London for Academy exhibitions, and tourists could be transported down on its return. As Deborah Cherry's study of the experience of women artists in Newlyn in the earlier period of the eighties has argued, 'It was in these overlaps between social and professional spaces, in the meeting of high art and holiday making, in the visual coincidences between Royal Academy paintings and tourist photography that a specifically metropolitan perception of Newlyn was formed'.⁵ Tourists' expectations of Cornwall were significantly shaped in advance by the paintings they saw in galleries or reproduced in magazines.

³ Dean MacCannell, *Empty Meeting Grounds - The Tourist Papers*, Routledge, 1992, p.1

⁴ For further discussion of the part of the railway in forming the 'imagined geography' of Cornwall, see Chris Thomas, 'See Your Own Country First: the geography of a railway landscape', in Ella Westland (ed), *Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place*, Patten Press, 1997, pp.107-128

⁵ Deborah Cherry, *Painting Women - Victorian Women Artists*, Routledge, 1993, p.168. Cherry has been drawn to Nicholas Green's analysis in *The Spectacle of Nature*, especially to his argument that the artistic invasion into the forests of Barbizon was 'paradigmatic of metropolitan colonialism more generally', *op.cit.*, p.118

There are some interesting correlations between specific representations of Cornwall at this date with variations in the culture of tourism itself. Pictures of bucket and spade holidays, like for example Laura Knight's rosy-cheeked young children in *The Beach*, 1908 (fig 4.2) epitomize Edwardian ideals of healthy family holidays, during the era of declining birth rates and concerns for child welfare in large cities. As a writer in *The Ladies Realm* commented; the aspiration to be near the sea runs throughout the city 'from Whitechapel to West Kensington' each July. Those unable to make the journey, forced to remain 'sweltering in the heat of the great city (together with the) weary children from the slums of Westminster, (can always) wander through the public art galleries and study the waves as they roll across the canvas'.⁶

In the type of seaside imagery depicted here by Knight, children function as idealised images of health and purity and in terms of what Anna Davin has seen as the middle class consensus, from the late nineteenth century, on the universal nature of childhood, on their innocence and natural gaiety, their need for play as much as for shelter, and on their natural habitat - the countryside. Ideals like these strengthened in the worrying context of large urban populations of working class children, overworked and failing to thrive, culminating in the widely debated 1908 'Children's Act'.⁷ Predictably those children were largely absent from popular Edwardian paintings. *The Beach* marks Laura Knight's move away from the depiction of the children of workers to a rhythmically composed impressionist idyll of young, healthy holiday makers with bright faces, clean smock dresses and shady hats, playing barefoot in the sand.⁸ A perfect representation of the type of leisured scene of which an important function, as J K Walton describes it, 'was to display the stability and affluence of the Victorian (and Edwardian) middle class family'.⁹

⁶ Hugh Stokes, 'Sea-Pictures', *The Ladies Realm*, May-Oct 1904, p.442

⁷ Anna Davin, 'Edwardian Childhoods, Children, Image and Diversity' in Jane Beckett and Deborah Cherry, *The Edwardian Era*, catalogue of an exhibition, Barbican Art Gallery and Phaidon, 1987, p.62

⁸ There are some interesting exceptions to the trend I have identified here, for instance Stanhope Forbes in 1885 produced studies of children playing in the sand with buckets and spades - precursors to Knight's picture. But the general development I have outlined remains clear.

⁹ J K Walton, *The English Seaside Resort - A Social History 1750-1914*, Leicester University Press, 1983, p.41

Such imagery might have been produced at any seaside location, even a suburban one, - it takes no account of the specificity of Cornwall. The tourist experience referred to by the image is collective, rather than solitary and romantic, and it was towards the latter that Laura Knight's paintings of Cornwall were to develop.¹⁰

Paintings of children inland from the seaside in Cornwall have similar connections with the discourse of health, with notions of innocence, purity, fresh air and freedom, all attributes located firmly in the country. Cavorting or merrily processing through pastures, wooded valleys and along river banks, the children and young women in pictures by Elizabeth Stanhope Forbes, like *On a Fine Day*, Royal Academy, 1903, carry symbolist associations with the bounty of nature, the cycle of the seasons, the passage of time, often with fanciful allusions to English historical verse and legend. In some cases artists themselves fabricated these legends, like Elizabeth Forbes's 1904 illustrated book *King Arthur's Wood*, produced for and about her own son Alec, set around their home 'Higher Faughan' (Cornish for 'hiding place'), evoking references to Mallory's *Morte d'Arthur* and Spenser's *Fairie Queen*.

Qualities to be regarded most essentially as un-English however, as purely Cornish and identifiable with the specific pre-War construction of Cornwall, emerge particularly in paintings of the rugged coast line and, most interesting from my point of view here, in the depiction of the male and female nude or semi-clothed figure posed on remote rocky shorelines and clifftops. The construction of Cornwall is based almost exclusively, geographically, on its outer edges, its beaches and cliff tops, leaving aside the vast inland areas and certainly any signs of traditional industry, like tin mining and clay pits. The rest of this chapter is concerned with possible readings of these coast line pictures in relation to the larger social and cultural preoccupations already outlined.

The appeal of Cornwall throughout this period lay in perceptions of its remoteness from the confusion, triviality and fragmentary existence of modern life in the

¹⁰ For discussion of the class and cultural distinctions between different types of tourist practices, - of mass 'collective' tourism as opposed to the 'romantic' solitary, semi-spiritual tourism - see especially John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze, Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*, Sage, 1990

burgeoning cities, where all sense of the individual and all possibility for spiritual contemplation appeared to be lost.¹¹ Where, as Masterman was to complain in 1909, 'the middle class' is 'losing its religion', is 'slowly or suddenly --- discovering that it no longer believes in the existence of the God of its fathers, or a life beyond the grave'.¹² All of this made up the negative perception of modernity on which tourism was based. In important ways, the culture of tourism like the paintings to be discussed here by Henry Scott Tuke and Laura Knight, need to be seen not just as simple evasions of the problems of modernity and the urban, but as essential commentary upon them. Rob Shields in his discussion of 'imaginary geographies' speaks of a number of sites, which we might extend to include Cornwall, to be regarded as 'marginal places' to the dominant culture. These are sites that have been left behind in the race for progress, but are essential as symbols and metaphors, expressing states of mind and different value positions from within that dominant culture.¹³ This situation has been further established in terms of an 'enduring relationship between an 'English' centre and a 'Cornish' periphery (which) has perpetuated Cornish 'difference' over time'.¹⁴

Writing in *The Studio* in 1909, the painter Norman Garstin claimed that; 'To those who live in the crowded centres the very thought of capes and headlands which thrust themselves out into the lonely sea comes with a sense of relief from the jostle and jumble of the intricate schemes of city life'.¹⁵ It was the isolation of Cornwall, not just from the crowded centres, but from an England viewed with disaffection,

¹¹ To quote Elizabeth Wilson on the city and the crowd, even at its best 'the crowd is overwhelmingly worldly, drawing the individual away from its highest spiritual self, away from contemplation --- away from the wholeness and vision into the trivial and fragmentary', in Jane Brettle and Sally Rice (eds), *Public Bodies - Private States, New Views on Photography, Representation and Gender*, Manchester University Press, 1994, p.8

¹² C F G Masterman 1909, *op.cit.*, p.140

¹³ See introduction to Rob Shields, *Places on the Margin, Alternative Geographies of Modernity*, Routledge, 1991

¹⁴ Philip Payton, 'Paralysis and Revival: the reconstruction of Celtic-Catholic Cornwall, 1890-1945', in Westland (ed), *op.cit.*, p.25. Payton correlates the de-industrialisation of the county, the decline of the tin mining industry, with the attempt by the Cornish middle class to construct a post-industrial cultural identity in the concept of 'Celtic Cornwall' which co-opted elements of the wider Celtic Revival, see pp.27-8

¹⁵ Norman Garstin, 'West Cornwall as a Sketching Ground', *The Studio*, 1909, pp.109-10

that was significant. Cornwall seemed as far as it was possible to be from an England that was becoming increasingly homogenised through phenomena like mass circulation newspapers, the urban sprawl, the increased blurring of traditional class boundaries and through changing patterns of work and education.

For Laura Knight, Cornwall was like nowhere else, it was 'free of the ordinary', 'neither time nor the vulgar can conquer its indomitable spirit --- you don't know why, but you aren't in England any more'.¹⁶ Likewise for D H Lawrence, who lived at Higher Tregethen, Zennor in 1916-17, 'I like Cornwall very much. It is not England. It is dark and bare and elemental, Tristan's land'. Lawrence lay flat on the cliff gazing down into a cove, a viewpoint adopted by several painters, most notably Knight, 'where the waves come white under a low black headland --- it is old, Celtic, pre-Christian. Tristan and his boat and his horn. All is desolate and forsaken, not linked up, but I like it'.¹⁷ In another place the writer is quoted as finding in Cornwall something still like King Arthur and Tristan. 'It has never taken the Anglo-Saxon civilisation, the Anglo-Saxon sort of Christianity. One can feel free here for that reason - feel the world as it was in that flicker of pre-Christian civilisation when humanity was really young'.¹⁸ Lawrence's tastes for the pre-modern, the pre-industrial, contrast with those archetypes of Englishness and the English countryside associated with the south country, most frequently those sequestered 'picnic' landscapes of the home counties, increasingly regarded as over populated and over visited by weekend trippers from London. As J K Walton has written, Edwardian developments in transport and the endless search for 'novelty and economy' were 'conspiring to send the mainstream middle class visiting public to all corners of the English coast line'.¹⁹ In other words remoteness meant selectness.

Popular sea-side resorts were ever more distasteful to some middle class observers because they had anaesthetized the public from appreciation of the 'real sea'. To one commentator in 1908, it was; 'rare now for an individual to come unprepared upon a first sight of the sea from the edge of a high cliff. --- We have learned to

¹⁶ *The Magic of a Line, The Autobiography of Laura Knight*, William Kimber, 1965, pp.138-9

¹⁷ Cited in A L Rowse, (ed), *A Cornish Anthology*, A Hodge, 1968. p.11

¹⁸ Quoted in Denys Val Baker, *The Timeless Land: The Creative Spirit in Cornwall*, Adams and Dart, 1973, p.43

¹⁹ *op.cit.*, p.40

call the sea that grey-green stripe behind the railings of the Brighton Front'. It was necessary to go as far as Cornwall where 'are still to be found lonely field and furze grown wastes with a brink whose crumbling turf drops into the tide three hundred feet below --- without a sign of man's presence to disturb the spirit of the place'.²⁰ The writer W H Hudson's account of his experience at Land's End, of that same year, evokes the same sentiment;

I was in a sense the last man in that most solitary place, its association, historical and mythical, exercised a strange power over me. Here because of its isolation, or remoteness from Saxon England, because it is the very end of the land --- the ancient wild spirit of the people remained longest unchanged.²¹

All of these narratives connect with those of contemporary guide books which described similar locations in similar terms. In the majority of these the character of the inhabitants of Cornwall was predetermined and frequently misrepresented. In this respect the framing of the county by artists like Tuke and Knight clearly intersect with the desires of middle class tourists for the, apparently, authentic as opposed to the inauthentic, transitory conditions which contemporaries like Simmel and Durkheim identified with that middle class projection urban anomie, arising from life in the modern city.²² Visitors to Cornwall knew what they were seeking on arrival, an experience which was as far from their actual life as possible. That ideal was strikingly remote from the lives of native Cornish people, who would have been hard put to recognise themselves in the terms of this quote from *Cook's Traveller's Gazette*; 'Here in a tempered climate fanned by healthful breezes flourish a hardy, thrifty and hospitable people --- among scenes of wildest beauty and rocky grandeur, tilling the soil once trodden by ancient saints --- by a race savage and mystic'.²³

²⁰ Unsigned article in *The Saturday Review*, 5 Feb, 1908, p.171

²¹ W H Hudson, *The Land's End*, (1st ed. 1908) Wildwood House, 1981, pp. 52-3

²² For discussion of this kind on the desire for authenticity, see John Urry, *op.cit*, Dean MacCannell, *op.cit*, and James Buzard, *The Beaten Track - European Tourism, Literature, And the Ways to 'Culture'*, Oxford, 1993. See also Robert Herbert, *Monet on the Normandy Coast, Tourism and Painting*, Yale, 1994.

²³ *Cooks Traveller's Gazette*, March, 1906, pp.12-13

These idealizations of a racial type were invariably linked to fears about the deterioration of the national physique in the overcrowded cities, and Cornwall in particular emerges as a perfect site for the displacement of those anxieties. Issues concerning health and the proper maintenance of the body were endlessly emphasised in newspapers and journals. Fostering a national interest in the beneficial effects of the outdoors formed an important part of the purity campaign associated with the Physical Culture movement.²⁴ This preoccupation with ideal body types in respect of physical and moral health is viewed here as essential to the appeal of both Knight and Tuke's imagery.

From the early nineties, Henry Tuke's paintings clearly demonstrate the more general shift, already referred to, in representations of Cornwall from a place of work, to one of leisure. His interests in the characteristic subjects of Bastien-Lepage had steadily declined and, following two visits to Italy with Arthur Lemon, he had been drawn to arcadian idylls of the type shown at the Paris Salon by William Stott and the American, Alexander Harrison.²⁵ Scenes of naked young lads messing about in boats on the sunlit waters of Falmouth Harbour, like *August Blue*, 1894 (fig 4.3) the title of a poem by his friend Arthur Symons, replaced 'disaster at sea' pictures like *All Hands to the Pump*, Royal Academy, 1889. The transition, to a contemporary critic, was 'a passage from peril to peace. Many of the best of Mr Tuke's drawings and pictures are in this glad, radiant kind, evocations of sunburnt mirth, with lighted flesh as the most lyric of all the notes'.²⁶ Carefully arranged compositions like *The Bathers*, 1889 (fig 4.4) of three or five figures became increasingly formulaic and spanned the years up to 1902. Their theme, the hedonism of youth in nature, was consistently re-iterated in works like; *Beside Green Waters*, 1897 (fig 4.5) and *An Idyll of the Sea*, 1898. Tuke's continued success with these was confirmed in a review of 1902, 'Impressions --- in whose rendering he excels, are those of the dancing sunlit waters, wherein from a reef of

²⁴ For discussion of the National Social Purity Crusade, a conservative reform group who formed a 'forward movement', in 1908 to raise personal and social purity standards, see Samuel Hynes, *op.cit*, especially chapter 7.

²⁵ In his diary Tuke recorded a visit to the Salon in 1882 which 'beats the RA into bits' and where he was especially impressed by Stott's *Bathers*, which had been medalled, and by *The Ferry*. See Maria Tuke Sainsbury, *Henry Scott Tuke - A Memoir*, London, 1933, p.54

²⁶ *Art Journal*, 1907, pp.358-9

rock or an old boat lads bathe or, in unhastening joy, attend the call of sun and wind and sea. The lads are lithe and natural; they act with the unconcern of youth. Boats, rocks, sea, are the reverse of the unfaithful'.²⁷

Occasionally the artist was moved to overt symbolism in trite, allegorical works like the haloed youth/nature spirit represented in *The Coming of Day* of 1901 (fig 4.6). But there were to be few instances of these and the popularity of pictures like *Ruby, Gold and Malachite*, 1901 (fig 4.7), at Royal Academy exhibitions clearly stirred him on to simpler studies of the male nude in full sunlight. From around 1903 to the First World War, Tuke was less concerned with compositions around fishing boats. His subjects now tended to be groups of two, or more often the single nude in poses reminiscent of the life room, standing or reclining on sandy or rocky shorelines. As models Tuke frequently employed lads from the rat infested 'Foudroyant', a wooden man-of-war anchored in Falmouth harbour and used as a training ship for boys who, according to the Tuke registers, were not local but were, somewhat ironically, 'picked out of the gutter from all over the place'.²⁸

Painted mostly in the open air in secluded coves and beaches only reachable by boat, these boys, despite their dubious backgrounds, emerge as sturdy archetypes for the nation's youth, with a self-possession that renders them unaware of the spectator's gaze. For the critic Marion Hepworth Dixon, Tuke was quite simply a 'painter of summer'. 'In Mr Tuke's hands the gospel of *plein air* is the gospel of joyous well-being. The healthy mind in the healthy body is a motto which is writ large on every canvas'.²⁹ Concerns like these took different forms and levels of implication. In one sense, liberal anxieties for the nation's vigour were only a short step from the overt Aryanism of symbolist works like, for example, the German painter H A Buhler's *To the Unknown God*, illustrated in *The Studio* in 1908.³⁰

²⁷ *Art Journal*, 1902, pp.219

²⁸ Interview with Geoffrey Cobb in 'Tuke Reminiscences', *The Registers of Henry Scott Tuke, 1879-1928*, ed, B D Price, Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, Falmouth, 1983, p.8

²⁹ Marion Hepworth Dixon, *Ladies Realm*, May-Oct, 1905, p 591

³⁰ 'Berlin Studio Talks', *The Studio*, Vol.44, 1908, p.295. Two of Tuke's pictures, *Euchre* and *A Summer's Day* were purchased for collections in Bavaria. Aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy.

Significant since the 1890s, was the growing interest in art historical methods of formal and racial classification and in varying definitions of the classical spirit in art and classical definitions of beauty. Walter Pater, who died in 1894, took on a renewed relevance here, especially his study of *Winckelmann*, first published in 1867, and *Greek Studies*, published a year after his death. Pater's assertions resonate within the circle of Tuke's admirers, for example in the work of Arthur Symons, J Aldington Symonds and individuals like C Kains Jackson.³¹ He had repeated Winckelmann's remark that 'those who are observant of beauty only in women, and are moved little or not at all by the beauty of men, seldom have an impartial, vital, inborn instinct for beauty in art. To such persons the beauty of Greek art will ever seem wanting, because its supreme beauty is rather male than female.'³² For Pater, Winckelmann's affinity to Plato was wholly Greek, alien from the Christian world, 'represented by that group of brilliant youths in the Lysis, still uninfected by any spiritual sickness, finding the end of all endeavour in the aspects of the human form'.³³

Connections between Tuke's imagery and Kains Jackson's cult of the 'New Chivalry' have been explored elsewhere.³⁴ *The Artist and Journal of Home Culture*, which made frequent mention of Tuke's work, catered to a circle of literary homosexuals who were also drawn to the exaltation of the youthful masculine ideal, firmly identified with the outdoors, to 'the joys of palaestra, of the river, of the hunt and of the moor, the evening tent pitching of campers out and the

influential amongst certain English intellectual circles at the turn of the century, are significant in this context.

³¹ Pater's appeal was clearly in evidence by the 1890's. See for instance Arthur Symons' appreciation in *The Savoy*, Dec, 1896, reprinted in *Studies in Two Literatures* the following year.

³² 'Winckelmann', *The Westminster Review*, 1867, included in *Walter Pater, Selected Works*, Richard Aldington, (ed), Heinemann, 1948, p.104

³³ Cited in Aldington, *ibid*, p.99

³⁴ See Marcia Pointon's introduction in David Wainwright and Catherine Dinn, *Henry Scott Tuke, Under Canvas, 1858-1929*, Sarema Press, 1989 and Emmanuel Cooper *The Life and Work of Henry Scott Tuke*, London, Gay Men's Press, 1987

exhilaration of the morning swim'.³⁵ From its first reference to the artist in 1889 Tuke was regarded by the journal as the best painter of boys since the days of Fred Walker.³⁶ Poetry inspired by his paintings was also included. In 1890 Frederick Rolfe (Baron Corvo), known for his photographs of nude Italian boys, published a 'Ballade of Boys Bathing' in *The Art Review*, closely connected to Tuke's imagery, describing 'A flock of boys, slender and debonnaire' who bathe under a sea cliffs shadow, 'fear they know not, nor ever a care'.³⁷ Material of this kind has been considered by Joseph Kestner, who describes in relation to Tuke, 'a constellation of Aryan race, ephebia, nudity, the solar and the Apollonian', which he regards as an 'ideograph of masculine ideology', or in the particular case of Tuke, of an 'alternative', 'marginal masculinity'.³⁸ But Kestner takes no account of the specificity of Cornwall in relation to Tuke's paintings, nor of the way in which representations of the female nude, depicted in similar settings, complicate his argument.

The obvious homo-erotic content of Tuke's work is also underpinned by a specifically contemporary desire for innocence and new beginnings to be found in largely urban, middle class imaginings about the essential purity of nature and rural life. There is a clear trajectory between Tuke's paintings, the Neo-Paganist veneration of the male body, through to eugenics and racism, but this was rendered the more acceptable, to large audiences, through the disguise of what Paul Delany sees as 'an appealing new version of the ubiquitous 'rural myth'.³⁹ In this respect

³⁵ For more discussion see Marcia Pointon, Wainwright & Dinn, *op.cit.*, 1989. For useful discussion of the circle around Kains Jackson and for reference to their response to Tuke see also Brian Reade's anthology, *Sexual Heretics, Male Homosexuality in English Literature from 1850-1900*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970

³⁶ See discussion in Brian Reade, *ibid*, p.45. The author was presumably referring to works like Walker's *Bathers*, 1869

³⁷ *The Art Review*, April, 1890, Vol.1, no.4. More decorous nude photographs by Rolfe were also published in the first volume of *The Studio* in 1893, in a article on open air nude photography, pp.104-108

³⁸ See Joseph Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting*, Scolar Press, 1995, p.266

³⁹ Paul Delany, *The Neo-Pagans, Friendship and Love in the Rupert Brooke Circle*, Macmillan, 1987, p.xiv. He sees Neo-paganism as a reaction against 'a lingering Victorianism, and as signalling a tentative emancipation - expressed in the culture of liberal public schools like Bedales, in the popularity within certain circles of writers like Walt Whitman and in those simple life ideals of Carpenter'.

classical ideals, however interpreted and from whichever location identified, acquired their significance from a much wider range of modern social conditions and experiences.⁴⁰

The number of available readings of Tuke's representations of the male nude was crucial to their wide appeal, explaining the near constant presence of his endlessly repetitive pictures at annual Royal Academy exhibitions, right up to the First World War, and right through the furore created by Roger Fry's two Post-Impressionist exhibitions.⁴¹ They proffered visions of an ideal unity between man and an untroubled nature, of a certain recall to order. To this end the anonymity of his figures was vital. In a very few instances Tuke had attempted legendary, mythological subjects in works like *Perseus and Andromeda*, 1889, and the quite ludicrous *Hermes at the Pool*, 1900 (fig 4.8), which he himself recognised as a failure and later destroyed.⁴²

In support of Tuke, Kains Jackson asserted that; 'imagination does not consist in losing hold of reality; rather may it be said to reside in the perception of whatever there is of reality behind fancy. The god who obliges by wearing his halo does not stimulate the imagination, but dispenses with it'. 'The artist', he went on, 'possesses the glow of insight', is the 'teller of the sacred tale', but knows with 'a deep and intimate conviction that there are more beautiful things in nature than anything ever done from fancy'.⁴³

Just as the allegorical works were unsuccessful, so overtly mythological paintings of the nude male were hard to assimilate by the 1890's. Such works were too closely associated with those of Royal Academicians, like Frederick Leighton and

⁴⁰ Shane Leslie in his nostalgic rant against the changes in modern society in 1916, fondly remembered an Eton before the 'sturdy squierarchy' was swamped by Jews, financial magnates and the 'sons of Orientals', and where a 'love of athletics made boys more Greek than Christian in their ideals', *The End of a Chapter*, London, 1916, pp.42-6

⁴¹ For example in 1911 when Knight showed her *Daughters of the Sun* at the Academy, Tuke exhibited his *The Reef*, another of his formulaic nude and semi-clad groups of three young men in the sand at the water's edge, (see *Royal Academy Illustrated*, 1911).

⁴² See Tuke's Registers, B D Price, *op.cit.* , 1983

⁴³ C Kains Jackson, 'H S Tuke, ARA, *Magazine of Art*, 1902, pp.337-343

Alma Tadema, whose works had been rejected in the later 1880s by New English Art Club artists, like Tuke, who had been drawn instead to French naturalism and impressionism. Because mythological nudes summoned up specific literary associations they were more difficult to interpret, consciously or not, as modern icons in the light of real worries about modern urban conditions.⁴⁴ In 1893 Tuke had received advice from John Aldington Symonds, which he clearly took to heart; 'I should say you ought to develop studies in the nude without pretending to make them 'subject pictures'. --- Your own inspiration is derived from nature's beauty. Classical or Romantic anthologies are not your starting point.'⁴⁵ Classical attributes were to be eliminated, but the pose or body type itself was enough to function as a sign of ideal spiritual health and platonic beauty.⁴⁶ It was important, for Kains Jackson, that the artist's youthful models, 'from fishery or foundry', should emerge as 'part and parcel of their surroundings in the open air, the cliff, the beach, the green and blue waters'.⁴⁷ Tuke's figures tended increasingly to be inactive, languid and contemplative, their main purpose simply 'to be' in their environment.

The ideal Greek body type was, as Sander Gilman has pointed out, being deployed from the late nineteenth century as the normative healthy body in the context of aesthetic physiognomy. Illness resided in the ugly and deformed which contrasted to 'Kant's idealised body, with its pseudo Greek colour, balance and proportion'.⁴⁸ The classically proportioned young lads depicted by Tuke, especially when posed

⁴⁴ Abigail Solomon Godeau's remarks are interesting in this respect. She argues that the reasons for the eclipse of the male nude in art from the late 18th century to the 1840s was because they had been traditionally embedded in narratives, signifying their ideal and heroic status, while the female nude became a genre in and of itself, increasingly detached from narrative. The male nude thus came to symbolize the obsolescence of academic precepts and values'. She goes on to identify the passive and feminised masculinity of post revolutionary painting as symptomatic of a crisis in male representation', 'Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation', *Art History*, No.2, June 1993, pp.286-312

⁴⁵ Letter dated 10 Jan 1893, quoted in Maria Tuke Sainsbury, *op.cit.*, p.107. The writings of Winckelmann appeared to support Kains Jackson's view, 'Beauty' should be a 'Figure belonging neither to this nor to that particular person and not expressing any state of mind or feeling of passion, because these mingle foreign elements with beauty and disturb the intellect. In Winckelmann's terms such beauty derived from the classical Apollonian element, *op.cit.*

⁴⁶ For an interesting discussion of the shift from 'aesthetics to athletics' between the fin de siècle and the nineteen thirties see Paul Lewis, 'Men on Pedestals', *Ten* 8, 7 June, 1985, p.24

⁴⁷ *Magazine of Art*, 1902, *op.cit.*, p.340

⁴⁸ See Sander L Gilman, *Health and Illness - Images of Difference*, Reaktion Books, 1995, p.54

in nature, on remote sun-filled Cornish beaches and on clifftops might function as exemplary of young male beauty and physical health that had as much to do with concerns about declining levels of fitness, amongst middle as well as working class urban types, in the context of imperialist discourses, as with the predilections of Kains Jackson's circle.

The contemporary significance of a classical ideal is relevant here, because it appeared to present an alternative to prevailing conceptions of much contemporary modern painting in Europe. The outrage and hostility provoked by the first Post-Impressionist exhibition had resulted in accusations about the moral degeneracy of those involved. Ebenezer Wake Cook, whose *Anarchism in Art* of 1904 was indebted to Max Nordau's *Degeneration*, 1895, was at the forefront of these attacks.⁴⁹ His review in *The Morning Post* called for a psychological and pathological rather than art critical analysis of the painters exhibited. The 'Modernity movements in art', were 'sickening aberrations', which he equated with language reduced to chaos, beauty subverted and nature libeled and distorted.⁵⁰ In his attack on Nordau's book Bernard Shaw complained about the plethora of native writers - 'now imitating his sham-scientific vivisection in their attacks on artists whose work they happen to dislike'.⁵¹ The Academician Sir William Blake Richmond was one such, and he assigned the 'morbid excrescences' and 'hysterical daubs' on display at the Grafton Galleries to the 'disordered mentality --- common to these times'.⁵² Both reviews were constructed in the terminology of the diseased body and the deranged mind. Modern European painting was deformed, impure and disordered. T B Hyslop echoed Richmond a year later, describing the 'art of the insane', equivalent to that of modern artists, as marked by, 'faulty delineation, erroneous perspective, perverted colouring --- distorted representations of objects,

⁴⁹ Max Nordau's *Degeneration* went into four editions in 1895, the year of its production. Degeneracy was to be discovered amongst those who were in some quarters much revered as the creators of new art.

⁵⁰ Ebenezer Wake Cook, *The Morning Post*, 19 Nov, 1910, p.4

⁵¹ George Bernard Shaw, 'The Sanity of Art', first published in 1895 in the American journal *Liberty*, reprinted in Harrison, Wood and Gaiger (eds), *Art in Theory, 1815 - 1900, An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, Blackwell, 1998, pp.806-12

⁵² Sir William Blake Richmond, 'Post Impressionists', *Morning Post*, 16 Nov, 1910, p.5

or partial displacements of external facts'.⁵³ As Kate Flint has shown, this kind of art criticism was based on a set of polarities, implying moral values, such as health/disease, mental equilibrium/insanity, decorum/unruliness or vulgarity. As a result the finished work of art was 'conceived as a body, possessor of mental and physical attributes and defects'.⁵⁴

The elaboration on the classical ideal derived from the attack on the prevailing philistinism associated with the changing class and social hierarchies, the emergence of the new middle classes, of the nineteenth century. For a whole host of writers, from Tory reformers to early sociologists, the root causes of cultural, racial and physical decay lay in the experience of modernity and urban life. To describe that experience was to use terms similar to those used to attack modern painting. It was to speak of rupture, discontinuity and disorder. All terms which contrast with classical ideals of stillness, discipline and order. Winckelmann's *History of Antique Art* had interpreted the 'classicalness' of Greek art in terms of its 'static, harmonious, lovely features---noble simplicity and tranquil grandeur'.⁵⁵

In a piece that might have been written in the 1900s, Walter Pater had described 'The Hellenic ideal in which man is at unity with himself, with his physical nature, with the outside world'. 'Certainly for us of the modern world', he went on:

with its conflicting claims, its entangled interests, distracted by so many sorrows, so bewildering an experience --- the problem of unity with ourselves is far harder than it was for the Greek within the simple terms of antique life. Yet now, not less than ever, the intellect demands completeness, centrality --- What modern art has to do in the service of culture is so to arrange the details of modern life, so to reflect it, that it may satisfy the spirit.⁵⁶

Much of the critic Laurence Binyon's writing reflects Pater's sensibility. In his article on 'Art and Life' in 1910, he declared; 'we feel intuitively that art exists, not

⁵³ T B Hyslop, 'Post Illusionism and the Art of the Insane', *Nineteenth Century*, Feb. 1911, pp.270-281

⁵⁴ Kate Flint, 'Moral Judgement and the Language of English Art Criticism 1870-1910', *Oxford Art Journal*, 1983, Vol.6, no.2, pp.60-62

⁵⁵ Winckelmann's 1764, 'History of Antique Art', cited in B.Reade, *op.cit.*, p.48

⁵⁶ Pater on Winckelmann in B.Reade, *ibid*, pp.99-103

for a temporary and ever-shifting set of conditions, but for an ideal order. Its relation to life is the ideal life'.⁵⁷ A classical ideal then, was perceived by numerous critics of both the 'new' and the more traditional variety, to define a pure, unsullied and redemptive art which was fundamentally immune to the infections of both modern art and modernity itself.

To allay fears of contagion from the modern art on display at the Post Impressionists exhibition, Blake Richmond reassured his readers that 'the youth of England, being healthy, mind and body, is far too virile to be moved save in resentment against the providers of this unmanly show'.⁵⁸ The very consistency of the appearance of Tuke's paintings was therefore all the more compelling, his mythology all the more alluring. In contrast to the works of Picasso and Matisse, even more so those of the Futurists to be displayed at the Sackville Gallery in 1912, his nudes appeared, to some, as reassuringly wholesome and ideal, based on proportions of harmony and equilibrium.

The critic D S MacColl, however, emerges as one of the few dissenting commentators on Tuke, perceiving in a work like *Beside Green Waters*, 'an awkwardness and a wavering from the original thought'. 'Mr Tuke's sensitiveness is not backed by science of drawing or the necessary instinct of design, and therefore threatens to be of little use to him'.⁵⁹ Tuke's drawing is 'sticky, done in little bits', his 'only thought in composition is to avoid impropriety in presenting his nudes'.⁶⁰ *Hermes*, is described as 'simply a British hobbledohoy rendered in the act of posing'. Tuke's bodies had become too big for his subject, 'the effect of colour on sunlit sea and the bodies of bathers' and the weaknesses of his conception of form were revealed. Instead of that overall impression of vigour and grace, the painter was revealing nothing but 'observations of a trifling order'. The result being that we

⁵⁷ *Saturday Review*, 20 Aug., 1910, pp.229-30

⁵⁸ *Op.cit*

⁵⁹ *Saturday Review*, 22 May, 1897, p.572

⁶⁰ *Saturday Review*, 6 May, 1899, p.557

'the spectators, (become) - if not shocked - at least conscious that we are face to face for no sufficient reason with a nude model'.⁶¹

Fundamentally, Tuke lacked competence as a draughtsman and so was technically unable to express the classical ideals of 'vigour and grace', that a wide circle of the artist's friends and the opponents of much modern art were so determined to perceive. With the best of intentions, to quote H Heathcote Statham, 'You cannot produce a Greek god by merely stripping an ordinary lower middle class youth of his tailorings'.⁶² It may have been possible for Tuke's naturalist imagery to convey notions of health, the outdoors and the goodness of nature, but heroic, classical ideals and proportions were beyond his capabilities.⁶³ Which is why, one imagines, in a frequently cited remark, John Betjeman could have labelled him as 'the Boucher of the boy scouts'.⁶⁴

Whatever the eventual failings of Tuke's art however, the role of Cornwall as the perfect setting for ideal physical bodies continued. By the turn of the century the term degeneracy, as we have seen, had become a general term of abuse, extending from descriptions of the body outwards into modern culture, modern civilization. As William Greenslade describes it in relation to H G Wells's *Time Machine*, of 1896, 'The landscape of the degenerate unfit of the fin de siècle seemed to be a continuous tract of sunlessness; a dark, dank world inhabited by barely visible creatures of stunted physical growth, of bleached or white, colourless skin'.⁶⁵ A perfect contrast to perceptions of the landscape in Cornwall and the figures posed on its sunfilled beaches.

⁶¹ *Saturday Review*, 26 May, 1900, p.647

⁶² *Fortnightly Review*, 1900, p.1032

⁶³ For interesting discussion of this problem in relation to French Salon pictures of bathers see, *Seurat and the Bathers*, John Leighton and Richard Thomson, Yale & National Gallery, 1997, p.105

⁶⁴ For discussion of the significance of the Boy Scouts movement, formed 1906, and the Girl Guides, 1912, see Allen Warren, 'Citizens of the Empire: Baden Powell, Scouts and Guides and an Imperial Ideal, 1900-40, in John MacKenzie, (ed), *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, Manchester University Press, 1906

⁶⁵ William Greenslade, 'Fitness and the Fin de Siècle'. in John Stokes (ed), *Fin de Siècle/Fin de Globe: Fears and Fantasies of the Late Nineteenth Century*, Macmillan, 1992, p.40

If the city is the centre of modernity's degradations, it follows clearly that the more remote from that centre, the more that artistic ideals of health and wholesomeness would flourish. Contemporary descriptions of Cornwall bear this out. Arthur Reddie, for instance, felt that through 'living and working in close communion with nature', artists there were producing works of truth, unaffectedness, freedom from pose and extravagance'.⁶⁶ Similarly in the context of an article on Harold and Laura Knight, Norman Garstin termed 'artistic nihilists', those Futurist and Post Impressionist painters who wanted to destroy all continuity of tradition. 'The Prison House' he said, 'has been opened and small wonder that the prisoners should make first use of their freedom to plunge into unlicensed orgies'. By contrast, the work of the Knights, 'avoids all suspicion of abnormality. Sanity of outlook and lucidity of statement are the dominating factors of their work'.⁶⁷

Like Tuke, Laura Knight's own development had led her away from the lives of the working inhabitants of the fishing community she had depicted at Staithes. According to Garstin, her 'youth and strength demanded a wider horizon than was to be found in the poetic sadness of their low-toned realisations of the grave, serious lives of the poor'. But on arrival at Newlyn she had been disappointed by the appearance of the local women, 'They were not so magnificently upright, they carried no weights on their heads nor did they work among the fishing --- slippers slopped from house to house'.⁶⁸ This unpicturesqueness was a general complaint about Cornish women, as the painter W H Bartlett commented in 1897, 'a fine buxom-looking woman is not a common sight among the fisher class'. The answer, he felt, might lie in 'the large quantities of tea the women take'.⁶⁹

Finding no appropriate material there, Knight turned to carefree scenes of small children playing on the sands, like *The Beach*. For a time she worked on several

⁶⁶ Arthur Reddie, 'Watercolours and Oil Paintings by S J Lamorna Birch', *The Studio*, Vol. 64, 1915, pp.169-178

⁶⁷ Norman Garstin, 'The Art of Harold and Laura Knight', *The Studio*, Vol.57, 1912-13, p.183

⁶⁸ Laura Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, London, 1936, p.162. Interestingly her real experience conflicts with the description of one writer, proclaiming the delights of Newlyn to the readers of *The Magazine of Art* in 1890; 'at the present time the young women are very handsome and both young and old are fresh looking, robust and sprightly', 'Newlyn and the Newlyn School', Vol. 13, p.200

⁶⁹ *Art Journal*, 1897, 'Summer Time at St Ives, Cornwall', p.293

slightly stilted symbolist pictures of girls with their unpinned hair streaming in the breeze, their faces turned to the sun, gazing out across brilliantly lit expanses of sand and sea, as in *Untrodden Sand* (fig 4.9) shown at the Academy in 1912. This theme was taken up again in *Wind and Sun* (fig 4.10) also of around 1912, but at the same time a growing interest in the possibilities of placing the nude in such a setting emerged. With no chance of hiring local girls for these pictures, Knight's imagery was further divorced from the depiction of the real life of the Cornish coast around Newlyn and Lamorna Cove. The reaction of the Londoners she employed to the strangeness of their new environment clearly impressed the painter, 'They had never been in the country before, scarcely knew a sheep from a cow and thought cabbages grew on trees. It was pandemonium'.⁷⁰

The result of Knight's new subjects intersect closely with the culture surrounding the specific type of tourism, in the context of which Cornwall was being compared with the landscapes of the classical south. Kains Jackson, as one might expect, was also complicit in this; 'Cornwall --- remains the painters elect haunt, nor can the wine dark Aegean itself surpass the beauty and colour of the south Cornish sea'.⁷¹ Not only was Cornwall like Italy, it was better. Similarly Arthur Symons, walking along the Cornish coast; 'could have fancied myself in Naples --- And the air was as mild as the air of Naples, and the sea as blue as the sea in the bay of Naples'.⁷²

Much French art of the period was, of course, engaged in a comparable shift. The native fisher folk of Brittany were, to an extent, abandoned as a number of artists turned instead to new grounds in the midi, now regarded, rather like Cornwall, as the last remote and unexplored region. Richard Thomson has described the circumstances in which artists were drawn to landscapes of wild grandeur with rocky coast lines, 'a changeless land, beaten by the sun'. Those of course were the qualities Garstin admired in his own county, those 'capes and headlands which thrust themselves out into the lonely sea'. Just as certain representations of

⁷⁰ 'Newlyn and the Newlyn School', *op.cit.*, p.175

⁷¹ *Magazine of Art*, 1902, *op.cit*

⁷² Arthur Symons, 'Cornish Sketches', *Saturday Review*, Sept 7, 1901, pp.297-8

Cornwall by the early twentieth century were filled with references to classical idylls, so in contemporary French art we find what Thomson terms an 'imaginary elision' of the Midi with Italy.⁷³

In pictures like *Bathing*, 1913 (fig 4.11) and *Daughters of the Sun*, 1911 (fig 4.12) Knight's models are unclothed and, unmoved by breeze and atmosphere, are arranged on the rocks like statues in timeless compositions of two and three, the sea swirling below. If the real women of Newlyn were unsatisfactory as models, then certain London girls, like the ex-Tiller girl Dolly Snell, suited her ideals admirably and they posed day after day as she worked from the life on her six-foot canvas. Her intention was to give as full an impression as possible of brilliant sunlight and this she achieved in the latter work by reversing her usual methods of painting sunlight, making the direct light almost colourless, with intense warmth and colour in the reflections from the rocks.⁷⁴

The painter was able to perceive classical lines in the forms of those she placed on the rocks around Lamorna Cove. One she likened to a 'Tanagra Greek statuette come to life. I could not take my eyes off her'.⁷⁵ As for Tuke, it was important that the model was a conceivably real figure, she should not be presented, as in George Wetherbee's *Circe*, 1911, (fig 4.13) as the mythological demi-goddess luring men to their death on the rocks. Knight's female nudes, often in classicizing postures, simply contemplate the immensity of nature from rocky clifftops which form a repoussoir, leading our own eye out to sea and the horizon. Like Symons, they 'are content to sit on the rocks --- and watch a few feet of sea for an hour altogether --- its recurrent and changing violence and stealthiness of approach --- Form and colour changes at every instant'.⁷⁶ The experience, alternatively, of the long, steady view, of being able to see across vast distances, a watery panorama, contrasts with

⁷³ Richard Thomson, *Monet to Matisse, Landscape Painting in France, 1874-1914*, National Gallery of Scotland, 1994, pp.77-87

⁷⁴ Knight's description of her methods is contained in Janet Dunbar, *op.cit.*, p.85. *Daughters of the Sun* was highly praised at the Academy of 1912, went on a tour of provincial galleries, but the asking price of £600 unforthcoming, and the work was later destroyed by the artist.

⁷⁵ Knight, *The Magic of a Line, op.cit.* p.139

⁷⁶ 'The Cornish Sea, Boscastle', *Saturday Review*, 14 Sept. 1901, pp.330-1

the real experience of the urban spectator whose view in daily life is constantly impeded, whose space is endlessly crowded. In this way the very act of looking at, as much as the actual content of the view in Cornwall, ran counter to modern life.

At the same time Knight's paintings are exactly about the experience of modern life. They belong also in the eventual outcome of the New Woman phenomenon of the 1890s and with the Physical Culture movement's divergence from the residue of Victorian ideals of femininity. As Gail Cunningham writes, by the 1900s; 'the feminist fervour of the nineties appears to have spread sufficiently widely into the popular consciousness to make potted versions of the New Woman's ideas a common part of a girl's youthful rebellion, a cheerful fling at old fashioned convention before she settles down to become a thoroughly modern housewife'.⁷⁷ The New Woman by the turn of the century had been subsumed into the prevailing modern spirit, an 'amused indulgence of modernity'.⁷⁸ Popular magazines for women were beginning to develop a familiar consensus on femininity, in which healthy outdoor activities, fitness, diet and a certain measure of independence played an important part.⁷⁹ Knight's modern woman was quite unlike the ideal of much contemporary portraiture, in many cases still operating on the level of nostalgic 18th century revival notions of femininity, traditional gender stereotypes and long approved sexual relationships, all of which from Freud through to Havelock Ellis were being called into question.⁸⁰ D H Lawrence is interesting again here. One of his reasons, in 1913, when he declared that 'I don't like England very much', was because of the young women, 'they all seem such sensationalists, with half a desire to expose themselves. Good God, where is there a woman for a really

⁷⁷ Gail Cunningham, *New Women and the Victorian Novel*, Macmillan, 1978, p.155

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p.155

⁷⁹ Journals like *The Ladies Realm* began to cover subjects like gardening, golf, swimming etc. Features on diet signify the shift from the rather massive proportions of the late Victorian ideal, to the fitter and more slender proportions that reflected the new models of womanhood, also advocated by contemporary dress reformers.

⁸⁰ Havelock Ellis began his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* in 1897 and the sixth volume appeared in 1910

decent earnest man to marry. They don't want husbands and marriage any more - only sensation'.⁸¹

In the context of all of this, the existence, or not, of a native hardy type of Cornish fisher woman was irrelevant. These paintings were only really meaningful in terms of the perceptions of a modern urban middle class womanhood and this made up a potential audience for Knight's pictures in London galleries. Female spectators could imagine themselves inside the spaces of her paintings. They themselves might be the sturdy heroines posing heroically on the rocks, perilously perched at the point where culture meets nature, literally at the edges of the island. They might take up similar positions themselves on holiday visits to Cornwall and perhaps even find themselves decorating a postcard for sale to, other, local tourists (see fig 4.14).

Nature and fresh air were as morally and physically improving for women as for men. Sunbathing was as much a cult for women as it was for the Neo-Pagans, hence the title of Knight's picture *Daughters of the Sun*, and hence the appearance of her models. Recalling bathing with her models in the deep pools and lying on the rocks in the sun, Knight expressed the same solarism that Joseph Kestner associates with Tuke's circle, 'How holy is the human body when bare of other than the sun'.⁸² The classical postures of some of Knight's figures were at the same time being emulated by followers of Charles Wesley Emerson and his system of 'vital exercises' based on correspondences between inner and outer beauty. Emerson was drawn to Greek beliefs in the co-equal development of mind and body. 'The Greeks knew that God joins beauty and health in an indissoluble union --- a unity - a oneness of expression of all parts of the body'.⁸³ Greek dancing lessons were also being given to young Cornish girls and Isadora Duncan's methods were being eulogized in women's journals. The appearance of contemporary handbooks of

⁸¹ Letter to Ernest Collings, 1913 from 'The Letters of D H Lawrence', (1932), cited in Judy Giles and Tim Middleton, (eds), *Writing Englishness, 1900-1950: An Introductory Sourcebook on National Identity*, Routledge, 1995, p.31

⁸² *The Magic of a Line*, *op.cit.*, p.140.

⁸³ For more discussion see Patricia Cunningham, 'Annie Jenness Miller and Mabel Jenness: Promoters of Physical Culture and Correct Dress', *Dress*, 1990, Vol.16, pp.49-60

health for women at this time is also of interest. Sander Gilman refers to the publications of the German, Anna Fischer Duckelmann in 1911 which, as he points out, invoke the classical image of female beauty taken from late nineteenth century Germany, 'after the reception of the classics through the work of Winckelmann, Greek beauty becomes German beauty. This Graeco-German beauty is defined as a serenity of the spirit'.⁸⁴

The crucial 'outside-ness' of this entire culture accounts, to a considerable extent, for the successful reception of Knight's pictures, described in this instance by Laurence Binyon as 'modern idylls' and as possessing a 'graceful vigour'.⁸⁵ Judith Walkowitz has discussed the degree to which in relation to the city and mass culture, women were represented not simply as inferior, but were described through the language of prostitution, sexual anxiety and, most interesting from my point of view here, the diseased body. They were uncivilised, threatening, hysterical and unclean.⁸⁶ It follows therefore that the natural world was a much more appropriate setting for women's bodies, traditionally perceived as closer to nature.

Knight's healthy young women embodied a prevailing spirit, a measure of youthful independence, a zest for the physically and morally improving aspects of life, the sun, fresh air etc. In these respects they were modern women, but they were also essentially safe and, in the appropriate place, they posed no threat. To quote Cunningham again, they had been 'subsumed into an amused indulgence of modernity'. Beyond that indulgence however, Knight's models played an important role. They represented an acceptable modernity that might just be identified, falsely but reassuringly, with the real inhabitants of this remote corner of the island.

There are connections between the cultural meanings of Laura Knight's imagery and her methods of painting. For the most part she worked on the spot, as in *Daughters of the Sun*, often having struggled across slippery rocks with the six-foot

⁸⁴ *Op.cit.*, p.58

⁸⁵ Laurence Binyon, 'Post Impressionists', *Saturday Review*, 12 Nov.1910, pp.609-10

⁸⁶ See Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight; Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London*, Virago, 1992

canvas on her back. The local landowner cleared areas of the cove for her subjects and had a hut built for her on the cliffs, but she apparently preferred to work outside, whatever the conditions. The potency of her subjects and of her own handling was recorded by S B Mais writing in the twenties, 'Her facility and energy were overpowering, she placed her nude and lovely models in the open air, down on the rocks at Lamorna. She spread upon her enormous canvases white and yellow dollops of creamy sunshine with a palette knife'.⁸⁷ The handling itself and the description of the dollops of paint all signify that health, vibrancy and sunlight.

In spite of the great differences between both of the artists discussed here, in gender, in sexual orientation and, it might well be argued, in skill, this chapter has argued that there is much to unite the two. The works of both artists are firmly situated in a cultural climate characterised by the desire to escape, actually and imaginatively, from the problems and conditions of modern life. Both artists practised amidst that ceaseless preoccupation with racial degeneracy and deteriorating national type, with changing gender and sexual relations. One outcome was the attempted displacement and resolution of these anxieties through the representation of ideal figures of health and fitness. These figures were successfully positioned in a specifically constructed, suitably remote, timeless and healthy locality, recalling a classical paradise which could only, really, have existed in the minds of a beleaguered Edwardian middle class.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Caroline Fox, *Stanhope Forbes and the Newlyn School*, David & Charles, 1993, p.70

An Ideal Modernity, Spencer Gore at Letchworth

In 1912, the newly married Spencer Gore and his wife, Mollie Kerr, temporarily left London for Harold Gilman's house in Wilbury Road, Letchworth, to await the birth of their first child. In the few months he spent there, Gore produced seventeen pictures, a significant body of work in terms of his development. This group engages the wider cultural preoccupation with the city and the country and mediates between the potential conflicts of Englishness and modernity. Gore's representations of the Garden City, predicated on urban middle class fantasies about the natural continuity and essential Englishness of rural life, displaced anxieties about a negative experience of modernity, commonly associated by 1912, with the chaos of the inner city.

William Ratcliffe, Gilman's pupil and fellow member of the Camden Town Group first introduced his colleagues to Letchworth. He had originally studied design at Manchester School of Art under Walter Crane and moved there in 1906, three years after its foundation.¹ Gilman and his own young family followed in 1909. Ratcliffe, Gilman and later Gore embraced Ebenezer Howard's wholesome new environment, set amidst the green countryside near Cambridge and in doing so affirmed that although the spectacle of London had a powerful artistic stimulus, it was now regarded as the unhealthy, disease-ridden, home to an enfeebled rickety race. Statistics of 1912 proved the efficacy of the Garden City and revealed a significantly lower child mortality rate there than in major cities in England. Letchworth was 'the healthiest English city' as Ebenezer Howard had promised and life within it might 'become an abiding joy and delight'.² For resident accountant and historian, C B Purdom writing in 1913, 'the new town, instead of draining the

¹ Ratcliffe stayed at Letchworth until 1912, spending several years afterwards at Hampstead Garden Suburb. His works were generally influenced by Gore, Gilman and Lucien Pissarro at this point. See *William Ratcliffe*, catalogue of an exhibition, Letchworth Museum and Art Gallery, 1982.

² Reprinted in Donald Read, ed. *Documents from Edwardian England, 1901-1915*, Harrap, 1973, pp.27-30

vitality of the race - may maintain it'.³ His view was underpinned by class prejudice and that illusory belief in the sturdy vigour of the country dweller, contrasting with the 'unkempt humanity' the 'massed and unheeded populations' of the labouring classes in their crowded quarters.⁴

Howard's solution to the deteriorating inner-city conditions, to widespread anti-urbanism and endemic rural nostalgia first appeared in 1898.⁵ His proposal, traceable to William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, and to American 'city beautiful' plans, was to resolve the traditional town or country dilemma. The first Garden City, originally to be named 'Rurisville', would combine 'the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country.'⁶ The resources of modern science would facilitate 'the spontaneous movement of the people from our crowded cities to the bosom of our kindly mother earth'. Areas like Camden Town would be transformed. 'Families; now compelled to huddle together in one room, will be able to rent five or six ---'. Wretched slums would be pulled down, their sites occupied by parks, recreation grounds and allotment gardens.

Although Garden Cities were intended to provide good, working class accommodation of a type proposed in endless *Studio* magazine competitions, Letchworth's initial reputation was as a perfect site for wealthy Londoners seeking inexpensive weekend cottages, their attention perhaps drawn by picturesque postcard sets like those of Frank Dean and William Ratcliffe.⁷ More specifically, Letchworth was renowned, in its early days, as a centre for eccentric middle class vegetarians and sandal wearing potters and weavers, hence, perhaps, the low mortality rate. Unlike Port Sunlight, or indeed Robert Owen's New Lanark of the 1830s, Letchworth had no indigenous industrial base. The initial lack of industry,

³ *The Garden City of Tomorrow, A Study in the Development of a Modern Town*, Dent, 1913, pp.166-7. Purdom was quoting from Dr Arthur Newsholm's 'Vital Statistics' on the gains from being born in a healthy district.

⁴ Quoted in C F G Masterman, 1902, *op.cit.*, p.7

⁵ *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*. The book was republished in a revised edition in 1902 under the title *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. The Garden Cities Association was founded in 1899.

⁶ Cited in Donald Read, *ibid*.

⁷ Produced in 1906. Examples of these rather twee postcards can be found in the collection of the First Garden City Heritage Museum, Letchworth.

coupled with the emphasis on cottage crafts, encouraged the view that Letchworth was another Chipping Campden without the guiding spirit of C R Ashbee.⁸ Many early inhabitants, like Gore in fact, were interested in Madame Blavatsky's theosophy, believing it could produce, a utopian society of individuals united by some higher state of consciousness, - 'a body of strong and joyous men - to preach and practice among the masses of the people a wholesome - emancipating - and a saner mode of living'.⁹ While the ideology of social hygiene was implicit, this utopianism was essentially redemptive, conscience-salving and hardly a catalyst for real change.¹⁰ But by this date country life was being presented as, not simply a recourse for the well fed middle classes, it was advocated as an essential state for the wider public.¹¹

By the time he arrived in Letchworth, Gore had abandoned the loose, spontaneous handling of his Slade mentor, Philip Wilson Steer. The style and composition of Steer's late nineties works, like *The Vista, Knaresborough*, a recurring presence ten years later in the early Gore, was overhauled in the years after 1907. Gore moved progressively away from conventional paintings like *The Milldam, Brandsby*, (fig. 5.1) towards a style which equated with the current understanding of Post-Impressionism. Works like *The Mimram, Panshanger Park* of 1908 (fig. 5.2) had revealed the growing importance of Lucien Pissarro in the painter's approach to the intimate, secure gardens and wooded countryside around his mother's home, Garth

⁸ In fact in 1901 Ashbee had considered Letchworth as a potential site for his Guild of Handicraft before moving to Chipping Campden. The Garden City movement, at least at first, shared some of the fundamental aspirations of 'the Simple Life' movement, that had resulted in earlier communities like those at Clousden Hill in Norton, Purleigh in Essex and Eric Gill's at Ditchling. For more discussion, see Fiona MacCarthy, *The Simple Life: C R Ashbee in the Cotswolds*, Lund Humphries, 1981.

⁹ Cited in Jan Marsh, *op.cit.*, 1982, pp.238-9. Marsh describes the early establishment in Letchworth of 'The Cloisters', the community of New Age disciples formed by Blavatsky's followers Annie Lawrence and J Bruce Wallace. Gore's son Frederick remembered that a Blavatsky book, presumably *The Key to Theosophy*, sat on his father's bookshelf. See *Spencer Frederick Gore, 1878-1914*, catalogue of an exhibition by Frederick Gore and Richard Shone, Anthony d'Offay, 1983.

¹⁰ For interesting discussion of the linkage between late Victorian progressive idealists and the appeal of theosophy and eastern mysticism, see chapter one, '1893-1900: Socialism and Mysticism', Tom Steele, *Alfred Orage and the Leeds Art Club, 1893-1923*, Scolar Press, 1990. For an engaged critique of utopianism in this period, see Stefan Szczelkun, *The Conspiracy of Good Taste, William Morris, Cecil Sharp, Clough Williams Ellis and the Repression of Working Class Culture in the Twentieth Century*, Working Press, 1993, p.36

¹¹ Like for instance those who read Robert Blatchford's socialist paper *The Clarion* which extolled the benefits of practical ruralism, walking, cycling etc.

House at Hertingforbury.¹² But both of these examples contrast with the high horizoned panoramas, the broad swathes of mature trees and field patterns, which Gore produced at Applehayes in Devon on three occasions between 1909 and 1913, like for example *Somerset Landscape*, 1913 (fig 5.3).¹³ That was a landscape without personal connotation for Gore but one which, though wide and unpeopled, was nevertheless accessible and on a human scale, neatly hedged.

In *The Garden*, 1909 (fig. 5.4), Gore came close to compositions by Monet, like *Path in Monet's Garden*, 1901-2 and the technique of the Pissarro's, all committed garden painters.¹⁴ Here cultivated flower beds, the intimate natural viewpoint, and brightly coloured shadows create a harmonious and controlled atmosphere and the sun-dappled, well tended, narrow footpath suggests a human presence, without the use of figures. The sense of real distance is suppressed by the rising footpath which flattens the picture plane, further implicating the spectator in the scene. Nature allows for a solitary contemplation, but it is a regulated and structured experience. It was inevitable that the garden should become a favoured subject in the Garden City.

¹² Lucien Pissarro settled in England in 1890, gradually being taken up by Sickert's circle and explaining to them the principles of pointillism. In 1893 he moved to Epping forest, from where he painted the small corners of landscapes and wooded lanes which clearly interested Gore. Both Pissarro and Steer practised opposing types of landscape painting around the turn of the century, as Frank Rutter put it 'Steer excelled in painting the wide open spaces of England. Pissarro gave clear and more intimate views of her copses and her orchards', in *Art in My Time*, Rich and Cowan, 1933, pp.121-2

¹³ Applehayes farm, near Clayhidon in Devon, belonged to Harold Harrison, an ex-Slade student, who invited his friends to visit. Besides Gore, Gilman and Robert Bevan stayed there as, on one occasion, did Stanley Spencer, although none of his paintings of the area are known. There had been no effort to introduce new agricultural methods or to modernise the farm buildings and so Applehayes was, for these artists, the epitome of a remote rural idyll. For more discussion see *Artists at Applehayes: Camden Town Painters at a West Country Farm 1909 - 1924*, Plymouth City Art Galleries, 1986.

¹⁴ Gore was clearly preoccupied with rendering the effects of sunlight filtering through trees onto the garden path - an earlier, more fluid and less centralised version of this work was sold at Christies 12 June 1987. Immediate sources for the Kirkcaldy picture are not clear, but there are close similarities in composition and handling with Monet's 1902, *La Grande Allée, Giverny*, which Gore might well have seen at Bernheim-Jeunes on his trip to Paris in 1905. The more striking comparison however is with Monet's *Une Allée du Jardin de Monet, Giverny*. This was painted that same year but was sold by Durand Ruel in 1904. Both pictures are illustrated in Daniel Wildenstein, *Monet: Catalogue Raisonné*, Vol.4, Wildenstein Institute, 1996, nos. 1627 and 1650 respectively.

It was also a commercially safe subject for painters in this era.¹⁵ As a result Gore's particular paintings could be described by Jack Wood Palmer in the mid 1950's, as 'among the most exquisite evocations of the Edwardian era'.¹⁶ Tensions and insecurities, the reality of that era and of his own family circumstances, have been typically and successfully concealed.¹⁷ In works like *The Garden, Garth House* of 1908 (fig.5.5), Gore had demonstrated his skill at suppressing conflict, a talent which led to his role in so many of the pre-War groups and exhibiting societies. A comparison here with certain pictures by Camille Pissarro, like *Kew Gardens* of 1892, is interesting - the arrangement of the canvas, the repeated lines of the formally laid out gardens suggests an idea of nature as pure, tame and unthreatening.¹⁸ The London park, like Gore's mother's garden, resists modernity. Something of the same repressive quality occurs throughout his practice as a painter. This accounted for his appeal as an individual, his personal history and motivations and for his success as an artist.¹⁹

Gardens have been perceived as sites half way between the unplanned wilderness and the man-made world of the city, as the best of all worlds, they balance human organization and the unexpected delight of nature. As MacCannell puts it, the garden fills a space between the opposites of nature and culture, where conflict and anxiety might be wished away.²⁰ A middle class passion for garden design reached a highpoint during the Edwardian era, and was supported by articles in numerous

¹⁵ As suggested in 'The Garden with especial reference to the paintings of G S Elgood', *The Studio*, Vol.5, 1895, p.51, 'when--a picture gallery is given over to subjects taken entirely from beautiful gardens, its popularity is ensured'.

¹⁶ Jack Wood Palmer, *Spencer Frederick Gore, 1878 -1914*, catalogue of an exhibition, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1955, p.4

¹⁷ After financial difficulties in 1904 Gore's father had deserted his family and died two years later. His mother then moved to Garth House, Hertingfordbury, far from the family home at Holywell in Kent. Frederick Gore and Richard Shone described the house, with its tennis lawn and rose gardens 'as the epitome of modest comfortable country life as --- for example, in the contemporary short stories of Saki', see *Spencer Frederick Gore, 1878-1914*, catalogue of an exhibition, Anthony d'Offay, 1983.

¹⁸ The Pissarro is in a private collection, but is illustrated in *The Impressionists in London*, Hayward Gallery, 1973, no.36.

¹⁹ John Rothenstein later praised Gore's talent for 'the reconciling of differences that could honourably be reconciled', in *Modern Painters, Sickert to Smith*, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1952, pp.198

²⁰ See for instance, Dean MacCannell's discussion in 'Landscaping the Unconscious' in Mark Francis and Randolph T Hester, (eds), *The Meaning of Gardens, Idea, Place, Action*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1991, pp.94-100

journals like *The Studio* where, for instance, it was perceived that 'almost every little suburban villa, in its tiny front plot, shows the desire to bring nature into a pattern'.²¹ The significance of suburban and modest country gardens developed in the context of the complexities of urban life, threatening to the preservation of bourgeois individualism. Although regarded as 'representations of nature-purified and refined- enjoyed passively - without exertion', gardens also demonstrate a need to achieve autonomy and a control less attainable in urban centres.²² This was rather their significance for Garden City planners and also, I would argue, for Gore.

It was, however, the London theatres and gallery interiors which provided the immediate stimulus for pictures which demanded a radical mode of conception, at odds with anything that could seemingly be provided by landscape. The dynamic technique of works such as *The Balcony at the Alhambra*, 1911, or *Gauguin and the Connoisseurs at the Stafford Gallery*, 1911-12, fitted the notion of the city as a place which was transitory and ephemeral. Figures move across the picture plane as mobile blocks of colour or are caught in the incandescent glare of the stage lights. These effects and the palette which they demanded could not be found in what Gore needed to perceive as a stable, self-sufficient, serene and unchanging rural world. His output to this point was clearly determined by such a conflict - atmospheric images of nature contrast with more avowedly metropolitan themes.

Gore was ready for the challenge posed by Madame Strindberg's avant garde night club 'Cave of the Golden Calf' in 1912.²³ As site manager for a series of murals commissioned for the club, he was at the centre of a group of young painters, which included his former Slade contemporary, Percy Wyndham Lewis. Their fervour is reflected in designs which took Gore into uncharted territory bordering on abstraction. On the imaginary theme of a deer hunt, the artist concocted a jungle landscape of intense colours, rhythmic shapes and make-believe figures (fig 5.6). Nothing could be further from the secluded gardens of Hertingfordbury or the

²¹ *The Studio*, 1895, *op.cit.*

²² The quotation is from Nicholas Green, *The Spectacle of Nature, op.cit.*, p.52. Green was referring to French parks, but his remarks here are equally applicable.

²³ The decorative scheme for the Cave of the Golden Calf has been considered by Richard Cork, *Art Beyond the Gallery in Early Twentieth Century England*, Yale University Press, 1985

layered landscapes of Applehayes. These wild savage landscapes for the London night club saw the forces of nature unleashed. Their primitivism removed all reference to personal associations with particular places. They contained none of the comfort and reassurance so frequently implied in the rendering of the English countryside. They were of no recognisable region and no specific country - other than an exotic jungle of the mind.²⁴ In this urban realities were as much displaced as rural ones.

It is difficult to determine in retrospect how Gore thought about this extraordinary sequence other than to observe that the ground rules for a decorative scheme were obviously different from those of easel painting. Within the more restricted frame of reference of the small canvas there were a series of intellectual problems. Gore was increasingly preoccupied at this point with the art of Cezanne which, in contrast to that of Monet, he thought possessed a 'wonderful gravity'.²⁵ Paintings of Letchworth from 1912 therefore concentrated on formal, structural relationships rather than a field of unmodulated colour. They moved on from the atmospheric effects associated with Hertingfordbury and Applehayes. This shift registers the movement in British avant-garde circles from the later nineties away from the perceived dispassionate superficiality of Monet, towards a meditative, empathetic contemplation of the essential spirit of a scene. The sense of this trajectory is already evident in Gore's desire in 1910 to reconcile the decorative and the naturalistic. In response to Fry's First Post Impressionist exhibition he wrote;

Simplification of nature necessitates an exact knowledge of the complications of the forms simplified. This may be done to produce a greater truth to nature as well as for decorative effect. --- Every picture has its origin, in something seen either at first hand in nature or second hand in some other picture - something that has filtered through one brain, through the brains of a generation. --- Gauguin gives his idea of Tahiti just as Goya gives his of Spain. --- If the emotional significance which lies in things can be expressed in painting, the way to it must lie through the outward character of the object painted.²⁶

²⁴ These murals clearly drew on the works of Gauguin and of Henri Rousseau, one of whose exotic jungle scenes *Hungry Lion throwing himself on the antelope*, Gore would have seen on his visit to the 1905 Salon d'Automne, the same time as the Gauguin Retrospective. Kandinsky was also important to Gore here. His *Improvisation 6*, a Blaue Reiter landscape, was shown at the Allied Artists exhibition of 1910.

²⁵ Gore's comment appeared in his article 'Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh &c.', at the Grafton Galleries', *Art News*, 15 Dec, 1910, p.19

²⁶ *Ibid*

All of this restates the points made by Desmond MacCarthy in the introduction to the first Grafton show, that '(the artist must aim at synthesis in design); that is to say that he is prepared to subordinate consciously his power of representing the parts of his picture as plausibly as possible, to the expressiveness of his whole design'.²⁷ Now acutely aware of the potential of modern French painting, Gore would probably have empathised with Matisse who in his *Notes d'un Peintre*, referred to composition as 'the art of arranging in a decorative manner the various elements at the painter's disposal for the expression of his feelings'.²⁸ The idea that the wholeness of a picture was essentially the by-product of design, led Gore to stand back from what he was doing and to attempt to see a given subject in its entirety. Unstable light effects causing movement of tone in local colour were now to be generalised within a heightened consciousness of the marquetry of shapes. This is very clear in transitional works of 1911 like *Outbuildings, Hertingfordbury* (fig.5.7), in which the artist emphasises the picture plane by placing himself parallel to a white garden fence running from left to right across the immediate foreground, a format which frequently recurs in Gore's practice, creating an ordering effect both compositionally and psychologically. Beyond this the farm buildings are treated in a slab-like way and clumps of foliage are left without surface modulation.

However the pace of development quickens at Letchworth in August 1912, by which time Gore had been encouraged towards a greater flattening of planes and non-naturalistic colour by artists like André L'Hote, Derain and Herbin.²⁹ In *Letchworth, The Road*, 1912 (fig.5.8), he demonstrated the effects of these aesthetic theories. Characteristically, the viewpoint is down onto a broad sweep of

²⁷ 'The Post Impressionists', Introduction to the catalogue of the exhibition 'Manet and the Post Impressionists', Grafton Galleries, 8 Nov. 1910 - 14 Jan 1911.

²⁸ First published in Paris in *La Grande Revue* in December 1908.

²⁹ John Woodeson noted the influence of Derain in particular on Gore, see *Spencer F Gore*, MA report, Courtauld Institute, 1968, pp.85-8. He points to the similarities between Gore's *Cinder Path* and Derain's *Landscape at Cassis* and later between Gore's *Ickniel Way* and Derain's 1908, *Landscape at Martigue*. Gore stayed at Letchworth between August and November in 1912 and the second Post Impressionist show was held between that October and January 1913. Gore himself stated in his article in the *Art News*, that he found nothing of great interest in 'Picasso (sic) and Matisse', but 'such painting as Herbin's *Maison au Quai Vert* (108) arouses our curiosity', *op.cit.*, p.20

landscape. Red roofed and tall chimneyed houses nestle behind the hedges to the right of the canvas, counterbalanced by a tall tree on the far left. The diagonal stripe of the footpath recedes into the distance, its direction taken up by the ploughed fields in the background. Land and sky are equally divided. Overall recession on the ground is balanced by the pale pinks and greens of the blocky clouds above; the effect bringing the eye back to the front of the picture plane. Spatial depth is further reduced by implying undulations in the landscape which are not actually there. It is as if the painter's eye levitates above the landscape in order to obtain an aerial viewpoint. Smoother surfaces and a dynamic, rhythmic organisation of forms help to achieve compositional equilibrium. It was important that the basic forms be found in nature, then abstracted or emphasised according to the desired expression, in this case of a harmonious and regulated natural environment.

In this way Gore's paintings, like many contemporary travel posters, 'give, by means of flat colours and outlines, something of the joy of sunny country lanes, red tiled roofs and bright skies, using colour and tone values quite arbitrarily'.³⁰ Many of the designs of individuals like Walter Spradbery and F Gregory Brown were commissioned by London transport, who were keen to 'tantalise passengers deprived of sunlight and fresh air'. While these posters were consciously more explicit than Gore's paintings, both cast in visual terms the new relationship of the middle classes towards the countryside in which the countryside appeared to be what it signally was not, free from conflict and complexity (see fig.5.9). The process of sub-urbanisation, whereby rural areas were effectively colonised, could now, having found pictorial expression, become legitimised within Edwardian bourgeois ideology.

Although he stalked the periphery of Letchworth, Gore was acutely conscious that this was a 'garden' city. He was already a painter of gardens and in this case individual cottage gardens were subject to the idea of Letchworth in its totality as a garden. An early Letchworth planning directive bound tenants to keep their gardens in good condition. 'A garden', it was believed, 'is irresistible to the man of

³⁰ Quoted from 'Recent Poster Art', *The Studio*, Vol.80, 1920, pp.147-8

wholesome mind, (the complete citizen). He cannot suffer it to fall into neglect'.³¹ Such idealism was virtually enforced by the Howard Cottage Society prize of a week rent free for the best garden on each estate. The value of gardens then lay not only in some expression of middle class individualism, but in terms of a wider mechanism of social control. Gardening conflated conventional aspects of Englishness with modern social organisation and collectivism. At this moment, the two were not antagonistic but mutually compatible.

Planned like a traditional village with greens and cul de sacs, Letchworth had little urban character. Such planning says much about contemporary preconceptions about the countryside, which inevitably came into conflict with the very idea of the 'new' at Letchworth. Unwin wanted a design which would retain the 'outward expression of an orderly community of people - which is undoubtedly given in an old English village'.³² This emphasis, also a strong feature of Gore's imagery, contrasted with perceptions of chaos and fragmentation in the city. Like others, Unwin fantasised about earlier times when 'clearly defined classes (were) held together by a common religion or common patriotism'. Similarly, in 1901 C F G Masterman had spoken of an erstwhile 'England of reserved, silent men, dispersed in small towns, villages and country homes'.³³ Implicit once more is that notion of order and Englishness - of organic hierarchies of reserved and silent, ie well behaved men and women. But order is also a defining characteristic of Modernism. To quote again from Purdom,

The idea of a complete and perfect city, despite its irreproachable sanitation, freedom from slums, and splendid regularity, was not altogether attractive to many reflective minds. Its formality, order and completeness, its fearful up to dateness were, however desirable in theory, more than a little repellent in prospect --- men would not consent to live under the perfect conditions --- Would Mr Howard himself enjoy his Garden City, any more than Mr Wells could be expected to be

³¹ Quoted in Purdom, *op.cit.*, p.105. Gardening signalled a positive forward looking mentality for this author, 'A garden makes you think of the future, for you cannot be in it without wondering how this and that will turn out', p.107

³² Raymond Unwin, *Town Planning in Practice*, 1909. Reprinted in Richard T Le Gates & Frederic Stouts, *The City Reader*, Routledge, 1996, p357

³³ 'Realities at Home' in *The Heart of the Empire, Discussions of problems of modern city life in England*, first pub. T Fisher Unwin, 1901. This ed., Harvester Press, Brighton, 1973, p.7

satisfied with his Utopia. The ideal cities are good in books, but none but mad men and dull persons would ever inhabit them.³⁴

The important point here is that order needed to be attained almost surreptitiously, so that modernity and progress could be achieved without sacrificing traditions of Englishness.

Borrowing a term used by Alex Potts, it is possible to regard the pre-war Garden City and Gore's representations as groping towards an 'ideal modernity'. Letchworth as a perfectly ordered new city, set down in nature, in the rolling English countryside, might be a forerunner in Potts's account of the inter-war period's optimistic ruralism, the 'ideal image of what a modern Britain emerging from the unsightly ravages of Victorianism might become'.³⁵ Stephen Daniels has taken up Potts's argument in relation to his own discussion of A L Parkington's inter War 'homes for heroes', with their aesthetic of 'clear order and truth to materials', in the sense that this aesthetic signified what Potts had termed 'ideas of order and health appropriate to a rationally modernised society --- both new and organically related to the past at the same time'.³⁶

If we look at Gore's depiction of Gilman's house in Wilbury Road, we see a building which, while a vernacular cottage type, is also as simply formed and clean-lined, ie modern, as Gore's style of painting (fig 5.10). But a lack of unnecessary detail and even the use of new materials, already defined the building style at Letchworth from around 1905 when one of the cheap cottage designs was of pre-cast concrete. Stephen Daniels reproduces a line drawing of Willy Lotts newly restored cottage in the 1920s.³⁷ It looks remarkably like Gilman's house, painted by Gore in 1912, with tall sunflowers outside, all signifying the new and the old, health and light at the same time. In other words, what is conventionally

³⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp.38-9

³⁵ Alex Potts, 'Constable Country between the Wars', in Raphael Samuel, (ed), *Patriotism*, Vol.111, 'National Fictions', Routledge, London, 1989, p.175

³⁶ Stephen Daniels, 'The Making of Constable Country, 1880-1940', *Landscape Research*, Vol.16, 1991, p.15

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.14. The illustration of 1928 was reproduced in Herbert Cornish, *The Constable Country*, 1932.

interpreted as formal and aesthetic progress is, on another level, almost completely subsumed within quite different social and cultural rhetorics.

Most of Gore's Letchworth pictures are not of the town itself but of its margins on the edge of the countryside, corresponding with Howard's stress that 'the free gifts of nature - fresh air, sunlight (and) breathing room - shall be retained in all needed abundance' (see fig 5.11). For Purdom this was fundamental, 'In all the modern utopias town and country are pictured as being in happy relation'. At this period, Letchworth was spreading rapidly over that surrounding countryside, but the village concept was uppermost in Garden City propaganda, creating an archetype modelled, for instance, on the sentimental perceptions of G M Trevelyan: where 'the darkest lane was never a mile from the orchards around the town'.³⁸ Gore's paintings reveal the same double standards, emphasising a romantic ideal over a planned twentieth century solution to inner city problems. It is notable too that in the huge debate that Garden Cities generated, there was little comment on their effect on existent rural communities, then in serious decline. Just as Gore's landscape paintings ignore the agricultural worker, so Letchworth was developed primarily from the perspective of sections of city populations, largely ignoring rural experience. As P J Waller has noted, although the original plan was that two thirds of the acreage of Letchworth be divided into allotments and small farms, this scheme was soon curtailed.³⁹

The formal elements of *The Beanfield*, 1912 (fig.5.12), are organised into stripes and bands of intense colour, all drawn from the natural scene but separated and reformed in interlocking patterns across the canvas.⁴⁰ None of these Letchworth pictures were completed in front of the motif, though in few cases did Gore significantly alter the physical reality of the landscape. At all times the artist was

³⁸ G M Trevelyan, 'Past and Future', in *The Heart of the Empire: Discussions of the Problems of Modern City Life*, ed. C F G Masterman, cited in B I Coleman, (ed), *The Idea of the City in 19th Century Britain*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973, p.212

³⁹ P J Waller, *op.cit.*, p180

⁴⁰ Wendy Baron cites Gilman's label on the back of the picture, 'The colour found in natural objects (in the field of beans for instance in the foreground), is collected into patterns. This was his own explanation'. For Baron herself, the resultant stylisation of all of Gore's Letchworth pictures 'sprang from intensely concentrated observation of the subject and was never conditioned by mental gymnastics'. See *The Camden Town Group*, Scolar Press, 1979, p.292

preoccupied with striking the balance between realism and abstraction. The object of all the great imaginative painters, he wrote, 'was to reconcile their ideas with the things they saw'.⁴¹ In this respect his approach was not unlike the architects of the new town itself. Unwin remarked that 'we tried to combine a certain amount of formality in the lines of the plan with a great deal of regard for the natural features of the site, which is undulating and wooded'. Gore similarly grouped and composed the elements as they existed out there, and, contrary to the more descriptive panoramic views of Applehayes, allowed a new awareness of what Kandinsky termed the spiritual significance of form and colour to strengthen his powers of expression.

On the horizon of *The Beanfield* we see the tall chimneys of the brickworks at Baldock. They are patently out there in the scene the painter chose to paint. They define the horizon compositionally. They also point to a co-existence between the timeless world of nature, the flourishing bean crop, and a modern world of industry.⁴² Both elements, the brickworks and the landscape, are unified in Gore's rhythmic interplay of brightly coloured forms, underscoring Howard's conviction that Letchworth would produce a 'happy unity of art, science and nature' and reconfirming Purdom's notion of the modern utopia.

Typically for Gore, a number of the Letchworth pictures base their composition on roads and footpaths, often of the path that wound its way from the new town towards nearby Baldock. Roads and pathways were always attractive to Gore because of their ordering effect, in his case they provided both a formal and a psychological stability. For Purdom, footpaths across the common and rural belt were vital to the Garden City. 'The invitation of the open road, of the little path across the fields, is always there for those who live in the new town'. As Letchworth was deliberately designed to preserve natural and historical features,

⁴¹ Letter to his pupil J Doman Turner. Gore is often contradictory however, in another letter he declares, 'I am perfectly incapable of inventing the shape of a stone or how it lies on top of another or how it could be related to anything else'. In general we find him increasingly privileging the imagination and formal innovation. These letters are cited in the catalogue of the Gore exhibition, the *Minorities*, Colchester. Introduction by John Woodeson, 1970

⁴² Similar interpretations of comparable compositions have been made, for example, in relation to Van Gogh's *Summer Evening, Arles* of 1888 and of Pissarro's *Banks of the Oise*, 1873. Richard Thomson argues that the two images produce a 'double conjunction of ancient and modern', see *Monet to Matisse, op.cit.*, 1994, p.125

the central square and roads were planned to allow views like that of the ancient Icknield Way, just north of the railway station. In 1911 Edward Thomas had made a journey of the walkway, which he described in 1913. This pre-Roman route, on which Boadicea and the Iceni rode from battle, was originally a broad green strip following a watershed between rivers. As time passed and villages multiplied, the land which the footpath covered was gradually enclosed - causing much speculation as to the original path. As a subject for a painting Gore was perhaps particularly absorbed by the historical reality of the forms and structures which he knew lay beneath the surface of this pathway on the outskirts of Letchworth. He used the *Icknield Way*, 1912 (fig.5.13), as the site for a picture which was clearly a turning point in his career, when he came closest to the cubo-futurist forms of Lewis and Bomberg. In his treatment and in the very nature of his subject, a correspondence between ancient landscapes and concepts of the modern is emphasised.

It is quite in character that Gore could produce a series of paintings based around a Garden City, which hardly ever included the figure as a focus of interest. The remoteness of those figures in the earlier *Garden at Garth House* is instructive here. These are not real individuals, their distance prevents recognition and crucially maintains the artist's control. Affinity between people and nature can only be achieved through distancing, and integration into a highly structured composition. The sweeping footpath provides both formal and metaphorical stability. Gore's garden-scapes, marked either by the absence of figures or of interaction between them, are concerned above all with people and their problematic relations. At times a solitary individual may be present, wandering alone, or as an unremarkable dog-walker in *Sunset, Letchworth with Man and Dog*, 1912 (fig. 5.14). Here the grey figure, trudging the footpath, is overwhelmed by the vibrant sunset, dominated by natural forces in a manner reminiscent of Van Gogh's *Sower*. But the differences are crucial. Van Gogh's figure is a peasant working the land, caught up in the cycle of fertility and growth; Gore's is suburban man walking his dog on a lead.

Although utopian town planners might have envisaged co-operative, organised societies arising from their schemes, what often resulted was the isolation of

individuals removed from urban communities which were not, necessarily, as alienating as depicted by middle class critics. It has been observed that the social classes at Letchworth simply did not mix; 'social disharmonies would not disappear by offering the working classes scaled down versions of middle class communities'. Somewhat ironically, the effect of Gore's disposition to avoid painting the interactions between people, resulted in representations of exactly those disconnected, lone figures. His are just the 'reserved', 'silent' and 'dispersed' men Masterman had idealised; men unlikely to cause any disturbance.

Letchworth Station 1912 (fig.5.15), which was included in the second Post Impressionist exhibition, is possibly the only Gore Garden City painting to deal with a subject based on the town itself and to involve a crowd of people. Gore's station, a temporary structure replaced the following year, is far from threatening to the green countryside, as one contemporary critic, P G Konody assumed;

It is about the last subject that any artist with the old fashioned sense of the 'picturesque' would have chosen for representation. But this is far more than a representation of uninviting facts. It may or may not be a 'portrait' of Letchworth railway station. What it suggests is the silent protest of a lover of the green countryside against the intrusion of unbending iron and black smoke. An almost cruel stress is laid on all that is hard and stiff and graceless, dingy and unpleasant in around a railway station; everything that is concentrated on that 'spiritual significance' that has entered so largely into the jargon of Post Impressionist criticism.⁴³

Konody's interpretation says more about his own prejudices than it does about Gore's, but also demonstrates the tensions between progress and preservation implicit in all representations of the English countryside.⁴⁴ But Gore's *Letchworth Station* is not conceivably an image of grimy unpleasantness. A contemporary photograph reveals the extent to which the artist made slight compositional changes with the result that the station appears in greater harmony with the surrounding countryside. Set amidst open fields, under clear blue skies, Gore's station and its waiting passengers are a model of tidy respectability. Preliminary drawings show

⁴³ P G Konody, 'Art and Artists: English Impressionists', *The Observer*, 27 Oct 1912, p.10

⁴⁴ Anna Greutzner Robins has considered Gore's *Letchworth Station*, in the context of the painter's 'keen interest in the modern landscape', but she is ultimately in agreement with Konody's interpretation. See *Modern Art in Britain, 1910-14*, Merrell Holberton and Barbican Art Gallery, 1997, pp.104-5

those passengers were a later addition.⁴⁵ When they appear, in the final painting, they are disconnected from each other, ordered rather than vital'. If the railway was a symbol of progress, of the developing unity between large cities and the outlying countryside, then the painter here presents us with an ideal vision of a new, civilised, neatly functioning and untroubled England, that was essentially middle class and of which any corporate designer would have been proud.

Gore's associate Malcolm Drummond's painting of 1912, *In the Park (St James's Park)* (fig. 5.16), can be seen as in some way an English urban response to Seurat's *A Sunday on the Grande Jatte*, 1884-6. To an extent Gore's is a semi-rural version. As Charles Harrison has pointed out in relation to Seurat, the visual unification of a painting style which is both highly figurative and highly coloured, results in the 'petrification' of the figures. Harrison's argument, relevant here, is that the 'technical interests of modernism may be reconciled with the appearances of social life, but only to the extent that one or other is allowed to be inhuman'. As he continues, such a problem is not likely to occur in a pure landscape, 'where the absence of human animation goes unnoticed and where the sense of stillness generated by the assiduous technique appears appropriate and highly expressive'.⁴⁶ In another instance the anonymity and the seeming isolation of Seurat's figures have also been related to the anonymity of life in a modern city or suburb, where 'human beings remain --- without reference, as faceless as the factory and suburban landscapes they have created, and must inhabit'.⁴⁷

It is argued that the English Garden City, in perpetuating Arts and Crafts ideals of vernacular domestic architecture, failed to equal the radical potential of the Bauhaus. Similarly, Gore's own motivations, that celebrated impulse towards diplomacy or, more specifically, the drive to suppress any kind of genuine conflict, significantly influenced his reactions to his subject. These factors, allied with his class position and the effects of shared cultural and political experience; anxieties about inner city unrest and the breakdown of established order, fundamentally helped to shape his representations. Gore's assimilation of forms of modern art ultimately exemplified a kind of cultural conservatism and supported his reluctance

⁴⁵ Reproduced in Mervyn Miller – Letchworth: The First Garden City, Phillimore & Co., 1989

⁴⁶ Charles Harrison, *Modernism*, Tate Gallery Publishing, 1997, p.37

⁴⁷ Erich Franz in E Franz and B Grove, *Seurat Drawings*, Boston, 1984, p.61. Cited in John Leighton and Richard Thomson, *Seurat and the Bathers*, National Gallery Publication, 1997, p21

to address certain social realities. For instance privileging the imagination and/or formal innovation made it possible to avoid nagging details, like for instance the lives of real people. The artist's disingenuous manner of suppressing, avoiding or denying conflict, while successfully forging an 'ideal modernity' resonated strongly with both the broader programmes of Modernism, and at the same time with contemporary social and political anxieties and agendas.

Wonderful Little Worlds

The period from 1910 to the outbreak of War has frequently been described in terms of artistic and cultural synchronicity, a sustained revolt against standards of civilized good taste, conservatism and tradition. With the benefit of hindsight, Robert Ross described an initially 'united front of reaction against the dead hand of Academicism amongst all the arts'.¹ But this revolution was short lived, common ground was soon lost and the movement towards modernism took divergent paths. One, the left, to the radical modernism associated with Lewis and the Vorticists, another, the centre, to what has been associated with a traditional modernism, identifiable with the pre-War work of Stanley Spencer and Paul Nash in particular. Within a relatively short time this traditional, or adaptive modernism was critically assimilated into an idealised national tradition of depicting the landscape or rural subjects, apart from the already familiar one of Turner and Constable. Specific qualities in fine art, as in poetry and the novel, were being purposefully perceived as romantic, with an identifiable ancestry and essentially English attributes. Similar assertions are still being made today, for example Peter Jenkins recently described Stanley Spencer's 'Englishness' in terms of 'eccentricity', 'intensity', 'intransigent insularity' and a 'maverick imagination'.²

The implications of this construction of a national literary and visual tradition, as distinct from the practices of alternative Post-Impressionist groupings of the period, like the Camden Town Group, the Rhythm 'Colourists' and Bloomsbury, are the focus here. We have seen in previous chapters how the image of the English landscape was remade in the Edwardian era, - that the initial search for its elemental forces in Steer led to a dramatic reshaping along modernist lines in Gore. We have seen the English peasant, the landscape's inhabitant, at first invested with mythic qualities in Clausen and Stott, then physically, racially transformed by John and by those painters working along the Cornish coast. In the present chapter, these

¹ Robert Ross, *The Georgian Revolt: The Rise and Fall of a Poetic Ideal. 1910-1922*, Faber and Faber, 1965, pp.41-4

² Peter Jenkins, 'The Englishness of Stanley Spencer', *Modern Painters*, Jan, 1991, pp.6-7

considerations take a new form. The landscape adopts a mystical, spiritual force in which it is contained and intensified, and in which its mythic inhabitants are given meaning derived from ancient, often religious sources.

When Ross spoke of a divergent modernism he referred explicitly to the schism which takes place in literature, but there are interesting parallels to be drawn between painters like Mark Gertler, and Spencer and the poets of the Georgian circle.³ John Masefield, John Drinkwater and W H Davies were first regarded, by supporters and critics alike, as bold, uncompromising experimentalists, reacting against the extravagantly poetic language of the 'Blah Blah School of verse' of Tennyson, and the maudlin nostalgia of the Poet Laureate, Alfred Austin.⁴ By contrast the Georgians were assumed to have abandoned self-indulgent melancholy and were forging a new, direct and modern poetic renaissance. The difference, as Ross had it, was between 'old men dreaming dreams and young men seeing visions'.⁵ There is a positive content, rather than a false sentiment implied here. Edward Thomas, writing on the publication of the first Georgian anthology in 1912 commented, 'It brings out with great cleverness many sides of the modern love of the simple and the primitive, as seen in children, peasants, savages, early man, animals and Nature in general'.⁶ This 'modern love' is clearly a love expressed by those urban sophisticates who saw themselves as definitely not simple, not primitive.

The writings of Laurence Binyon, poet and Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum, have a special importance here.⁷ As an early and consistent

³ There were five anthologies of Georgian poetry published between 1912 and 1922, all edited by Edward Marsh.

⁴ An example of Austin's verse, 'An Autumn Dirge', appeared in *The Magazine of Art* in 1894, p.415, 'Now the last load hath dipped below the brow, And the last sheaf been piled and wheeled away — And Memory sits and sighs, contrasting Then with Now'.

⁵ Ross, *op.cit.*, p28

⁶ Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, London, 1973, p.259.

⁷ Son of an Anglican clergyman, Binyon was born in 1869 and was educated in London, winning a scholarship to Trinity College, Oxford in 1887, where he was companion to and deeply influenced by the Indian poet, Manmohan Ghose. By this date Binyon was developing his own verse, culminating in the *First Book of London Visions* in 1896. Financial security and the opportunity to develop his knowledge and passion for Oriental art was derived from his position at the British Museum from the 1890s and from this point his career took three directions, as poet, as expert on Oriental art, and as commentator for journals like *The Saturday Review* on the contemporary art scene. Having worked first in the British Museum department of Printed

supporter of Augustus John, Binyon had dismissed the 'picnic landscapes' of the New English Art Club, arguing that they were 'too much a covered surface', too engaged in a search for 'sensations of well being' and realistic imitation.⁸ 'How long', he asked, 'have we been sitting down before Nature and letting her impose herself upon us! Our imaginations have been schooled into passivity'. By contrast, in his studies of Chinese and Japanese painting he had discovered a 'refreshing abstinence from our materialism and mental voracity', a rendering of the dynamic forces of life and energy through simplified forms and linear rhythms. Binyon sought in contemporary art the spiritual and emotional qualities which he had discerned in those ink paintings and was ill disposed to Impressionism, a purely scientific and objective practice. The business of the landscape painter was not mimesis of its surfaces or of the fleeting effects of nature, 'purveying correct information', but was rather a meditation on those dynamic forces behind superficial appearances.⁹ 'We crave', he wrote, 'for an art which shall be more profound, more intense, more charged with essential spirit, more direct a communication between mind and mind.'¹⁰

Binyon pinpointed in Western art generally a tendency towards the transcription of mere fact, the 'constant endeavour to realise the material significance of objects'.¹¹ By contrast, in Oriental art the critic found linear outlines, 'so charged with life that they suggest, as no other art has done, rhythms of movement and forms so buoyant and dematerialised as to come close to the utmost limits of what visual art can do to evoke spirit'. As exceptions in the West, Binyon praised the Italian primitives and he emphasised the instinct for line in William Blake. In none of these cases was energy expended on material representation, this would have hampered the original impulse, obliging a filling up of all the spaces in a composition. Space, in his view, had a positive value, it was 'an outlet to infinity'. The artist should aim for a more

Books, he was transferred to Prints and Drawings in 1893. By that stage he was already familiar with Vale Press artists and those of the N.E.A.C. he was editor of the Artists Library in the 1890s and commissioned Roger Fry on Bellini in 1899 and William Rothenstein on Goya in 1900.

⁸ 'E Pur Si Mouve', *Saturday Review*, 31 Dec, 1910, p.840

⁹ 'Art and Life', *Saturday Review*, 20 August, 1910, p.230

¹⁰ 'E Pur Si Mouve', *op.cit*

¹¹ 'Spirituality in Art', *The Saturday Review*, Feb. 1910, pp.169-70

direct expression, '(we should) toil less with our fingers and concentrate more in our minds'.¹² Conscientious, freezing labour, he saw simply as a kind of worldliness. The point was not to mimic the real world, but to establish another one, quite independently, with its own order and unity. As Roger Fry also argued, this was to be a world related not to an actual, but to an imaginative life¹³. To abandon illusionistic space, as was the case in Primitive and Oriental art, was a crucial step in that direction. It could therefore be argued that a by-product of aesthetic theories like these, prioritizing boldness, rhythm and non-illusionistic space, gave an added impetus to representations of the rural which were nothing to do with reality, but which existed entirely in the imaginative lives of their creators. The processes of displacement and replacement with which this thesis has been concerned, reach an apex here.

Assertions of a surviving and innately English visionary tradition linking back through the Pre-Raphaelites, also conscious distorters of space, to Samuel Palmer and to Blake are especially significant.¹⁴ Although not himself concerned to support any native tradition, Roger Fry summed up what he saw as the crucial quality in Blake. All art, he argued, gives an experience freed from actual life, but Blake's art is more concentrated than most, he creates an experience with 'the purity, the intensity, and the abstraction of a dream'.¹⁵ The pastoral idylls of Samuel Palmer are equally important. As Samuel Smiles has shown, Palmer eschewed naturalism in order to express a more visionary experience of an innocent, God-given and 'unblemished' nature that could only be glimpsed once worldly, superficial appearances were abandoned, or at least disrupted. In relation to works like *The*

¹² *Ibid*

¹³ Roger Fry, 'The French Post Impressionists'. Preface to Catalogue of the Second Post Impressionist Exhibition. Reprinted in *Vision and Design*, Oxford University Press, 1981, ed J B Bullen, pp.166-70. For Fry the imaginative life requires no action, it contains a 'different set of values, and a different kind of perception'. In 'An Essay in Aesthetics', pp.13-14, Fry's analogy was that of watching a street scene in a mirror, where there is less of a temptation to 'adjunct ourselves', to its actual existence, 'it is easier to abstract ourselves completely, and look upon the changing scene as a whole. it then at once takes on the visionary quality'.

¹⁴ For Fry, William Blake was indifferent to the actual material world, his was 'an intimate perception of the elemental forces which sway the spirit--'. But the artist never lost touch with the external world completely, '---his wildest inventions are but recombinations and distorted memories of the actual objects of sense', in 'Three Pictures in Tempera by William Blake', first published *Burlington Magazine*, March, 1904, pp.204-6. Reprinted in *Vision and Design*, (1981 ed.), pp.149-153

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.153

Valley Thick with Corn, 1825, Smiles discusses the artist's rejection of conventional space, distortions of scale and the way in which the eye is constantly distracted by discrete areas of intense detail. A unity or coherence is therefore established within the totality of the image itself, a coherence comparable to the subject of the work, - a golden age, a complete idyll.¹⁶ The intense appeal of imagery like this in the early twenties, in the etchings of Sutherland and Griggs, is understandable in this context, but the taste was clearly in place before the Great War.¹⁷

The implications of Laurence Binyon's theories for the early stages of radical modernism have been discussed elsewhere.¹⁸ But their relationship to the traditional modernism of Spencer and Nash has had little attention.¹⁹ As with the Georgian poets, the rhetoric of primitivism pervaded discussion of these painters and they shared Binyon's aversion to Impressionism, renouncing all desire simply to render the fleeting moment. Instead works like Spencer's *Nativity*, 1912, (fig 6.1) and Isaac Rosenberg's *Sacred Love*, 1911-12, revealed the struggle for an intensity of vision deploying the non-naturalistic colour, unconventional handling of space and scale and the decorative quality of Post-Impressionists like Matisse and Gauguin, their predecessor Puvis de Chavannes, early Italian primitives like Piero della Francesca and Giotto, the drawings of Blake and elements of Pre-Raphaelitism.²⁰ This diverse, eclectic range of sources defined the style of the Neo-Primitives, the group which had formed at the Slade by 1911, including Spencer and Rosenberg,

¹⁶ 'Samuel Palmer and the Pastoral Inheritance', *Landscape Research*, Winter 1986, pp.11-15. *The Valley Thick with Corn* is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

¹⁷ eg for reproductions of Sutherland, F L Griggs and Allan Gwynne Jones' 'Palmeresque' etchings see Ian Jeffrey, *The British Landscape, 1920 - 1950*, Thames and Hudson, 1984.

¹⁸ See David Peters Corbett, *The Modernity of English Art*, Manchester University Press, 1997, pp.26-32. See also John Hatcher, *Laurence Binyon, Poet, Scholar of East and West*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995, pp.156-163

¹⁹ But see David Fraser Jenkins in *The Last Romantics, The Romantic Tradition in British Art*, Barbican Art Gallery, 1989, pp.71-6. Jenkins has focussed upon the relations between John and Binyon.

²⁰ Spencer's *Nativity*, was his first large scale composition, a set subject at the Slade, but painted at Cookham and influenced in particular by the outdoor composition of Piero della Francesca's *Nativity*, (to be seen at the National Gallery) as well as by the Gauguin's seen at Roger Fry's 'Manet and the Post Impressionists' exhibition of 1910-11. For more discussion of this work, see *Stanley Spencer RA*, Royal Academy of Arts, Catalogue of an Exhibition by Keith Bell 1980, pp.42-44. Rosenberg's 'Puvis like' *Sacred Love*, a flat, unmodulated depiction of semi-nude couples in a wooded landscape, shares the same crowded, claustrophobic space, the same absence of any real sense of recession. The picture is illustrated in Ian Parsons (ed), *The Collected Works of Isaac Rosenberg*, Oxford University Press, 1979, no.8.

alongside Mark Gertler, Edward Wadsworth, Maxwell Gordon Lightfoot, Adrian Allinson, Rudolph Ihlee, and John Currie.²¹

Like the Neo-Primitives, Binyon was aware of the benefits of Post-Impressionism - its rejection of the limitations of Impressionism and its insistence on the qualities of rhythmic design. It was a 'healthy reaction, a movement in the right direction'.²² But beyond this he was doubtful, finding closer sympathy with the views of an artist whose work he approved, Charles Ricketts.²³ Both were engaged, to varying degrees, in constructing an acceptable hierarchy of influences, which ultimately had the effect of playing down the significance of modern French art on English artists.²⁴ Ricketts was especially antagonistic to Roger Fry's *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* show, believing that, with the exception of Maurice Denis, their fundamental concern was with novelty, a valueless and anarchic preoccupation.²⁵ Like Binyon, Ricketts also preferred the Japanese painting and sculpture to be seen at the Anglo-Japanese Exhibition, where he discovered a far greater rhythmic sense and a conscious will for design than in any of the artists being promoted by Fry and Clive Bell.²⁶

²¹ Maxwell Gordon Lightfoot, who died in 1911, painted flower studies and the occasional bather scene with influences from art nouveau to Puvis de Chavannes. His work is discussed in *M G Lightfoot, 1886-1911*, catalogue of an exhibition, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 1972. Allinson was primarily a landscapist, his works stylized and clearly modelled, see *Adrian Allinson, 1890-1959*, catalogue of an exhibition, Fine Art Society, 1984. After leaving the Slade in 1910, Ihlee had an exhibition at the Carfax Gallery in 1912, also showing at the Leicester, Chenil and Goupil Galleries. He painted landscapes and figure studies and spent the inter war years living at Collioure, see *Catalogue of an Exhibition*, Belgrave Gallery, London, 1978. John Currie was born in Staffordshire, but always keen to emphasise his Irish peasant roots. He trained initially as a decorator of ceramics, but after the Slade produced works which were clearly indebted to Henry Lamb Augustus John and much admired by Marsh, eg *Irish Peasant Woman*, 1913, Coll. Bristol Museum and Art Gallery. See *John Currie, Paintings and Drawings 1905 - 1914* catalogue of an exhibition. Currie committed suicide in 1914.

²² 'Post Impressionists', *The Saturday Review*, 12 Nov. 1910, pp.609-10

²³ Binyon had known Ricketts since c. 1895 when with C.J.Holmes he joined the 'Vale' artists circle. See J G P Delany, *Charles Ricketts; A Biography*, Oxford University Press, 1990, p.54

²⁴ Binyon felt that Ricketts, like Augustus John, shared Blake's native instinct for 'summarizing form and feature and suppressing detail and background, the more to concentrate on images embodying the live breath of passion, pity, rapture and pain', 'E Pur Si Mouve', *The Saturday Review*, *op.cit.*

²⁵ 'Post Impressionism at the Grafton Galleries', *Pages on Art*, London, 1913, pp.151-8. 'Monsieur M Denis alone has brought a decorative or symbolic element to this agony of Impressionism, and with him we are on familiar ground'.

²⁶ See Charles Ricketts, 'Japanese Painting and Sculpture at the Anglo-Japanese Exhibition', in *Pages on Art*, in *ibid* pp.167-186. The Anglo Japanese exhibition was held at The White City, Shepherd's Bush.

Alongside these shared predilections, Binyon and Ricketts were both anxious to distinguish between the character and artistic tendencies of the French and the English. Binyon never satisfactorily explained his difficulties with the art of Matisse, hurriedly resorting to the kinds of racial distinctions that were already well rehearsed by 1910. The English were slower to take up new ideas and yet possessed of a greater imaginative force, 'it is on the imaginative side that English painting ought to excel, if ever our race finds as free pictorial expression as it has found poetic expression for its deepest thoughts and emotions'.²⁷ Although the Post-Impressionists were, he acknowledged, in pursuit of those very same qualities, ultimately they failed, for instead of the 'recovery of profound and strenuous moods', they produced what was little more than childish rubbish and an ideal was 'corrupted into a formula'. None of the artists seemed strong enough to carry out their programme.²⁸ While Gauguin's paintings had sinister, exotic and bizarre qualities, revealed a gift for 'strange and sullen colour', and demonstrated hints of primitive grandeur through simplified forms, fundamentally there was more 'struggle than mastery' and the artist 'couldn't hold a candle to Mr John'.²⁹

Keith Bell has argued that early Italian painting and Pre-Raphaelitism were perceived by conservative critics, to be more respectable influences on English artists than the mostly non-European primitive sources that attracted modern artists in France.³⁰ Beyond this there is undeniably a strong similarity between the critical language and terminology employed by critics as diverse as Binyon and Bell. Above all it seems that for the non-francophile, it was crucial that young English painters should not jeopardise their own native characteristics, their 'Englishness', by emulating the art of another race. Binyon regarded English artists as 'a bucolic crew', sailing a 'drowsy barge on semi-stagnant water, unaware of the grand

²⁷ 'E Pur Si Mouve', *op.cit.*

²⁸ Laurence Binyon, 'Post-Impressionists', *The Saturday Review*, 12 November 1910, pp.609-10. By contrast, Roger Fry approved the similarity between Van Gogh and Blake, 'Like Blake, Van Gogh saw the arrogant spirit that inhabits the sunflower', etc. For Fry, Van Gogh's distortions and exaggerations of things seen are only the measure of his deep submission to their essence. 'The Post Impressionists', *Nation*, 3 Dec., 1910, pp.402-3

²⁹ Laurence Binyon, 12 Nov., 1910, *ibid*

³⁰ Keith Bell, *Stanley Spencer - A Complete Catalogue of the Paintings*, Phaidon, 1992, p.22

commotion on the wide seas of living art', and this was a good thing. Any real engagement with European modernism was unthinkable.³¹ A national tradition was crucial for Binyon but, and here lies his own critical significance, this tradition needed to be constantly reformed in the context of changing times, 'we cannot discard the past; we cannot throw away our heritage, but we must remould it in the force of our necessities, we must make it new and make it our own'.³² Complete abstraction was therefore not an option and innate, racial instincts should be preserved and reinvigorated - not simply rejected. It was this, plus his insistence on the continued importance of subject and emotional appeal in art, that distinguished his criticism from that of Fry and, more particularly, Clive Bell.

It is significant that the Slade students' taste and knowledge of the Italian Primitives should have derived partly through the writings of John Ruskin. Stanley Spencer's reading of Ruskin's *Giotto and His Works at Padua*, (1853-60), has frequently been cited.³³ In places the critic's language would have suited both Fry and Binyon, as for example, in the comment that;

(the early Italians) never show the slightest attempt at imitative realization, (their pictures) are simple suggestions of ideas, claiming no regard except for the inherent value of the thoughts. There is no filling in of the background with variety of scenery --- the whole power of the picture is rested on the three simple essentials of painting, pure Colour, noble Form, noble Thought.³⁴

Ruskin had believed that Italian painting was instructive in England because it could redress the effects of the realist Dutch masters, introducing in its place a symbolical art which made its address to the imagination. Italian painting also reflected the healthy simplicity of its period, in contrast to the 'feverish and feeble' sentiment of his own. The masters of the 14th century produced 'simple scenes filled with prophetic power and mystery'. Most importantly in terms of the creation of traditions, Ruskin had traced a clear trajectory between the art of Giotto and his

³¹ Laurence Binyon, 'E Pur Si Muove', *op.cit.*, 1910, pp.840-1

³² Laurence Binyon, 'The Art of Botticelli, an Essay in Pictorial Criticism', London, 1913.

³³ Spencer was given a copy by the Slade student Gwen Raverat in 1911.

³⁴ In *The Works of John Ruskin*, Vol. XXIV, ed. E T Cook & A Wedderburn, George Allen, 1906, pp.40-1

followers, and the Pre-Raphaelite movement in this country.³⁵ For a critic like Robert Ross in 1910, modern French artists were racially incapable of understanding the true significance of Primitive painting, 'The French are too progressive, too curious for new experiments ever to succeed in the archaistic rehandling of archaic formulas. M Denis---illustrates the impossibility of a Frenchman assimilating the sentiment of the Primitives'.³⁶

Laurence Binyon emphasised the links between Botticelli and the Pre-Raphaelite tradition, praising an artist who was 'never quite one of the modern movement, yet never quite able or willing to turn his back on it'.³⁷ He, like Ricketts, would have dismissed Fry's attempts to prove the French Post-Impressionists' links to tradition, and his claim that in rejecting the pictorial conventions of the Renaissance they were 'the true Pre-Raphaelites'.³⁸ For Binyon, as for Spencer and Nash, the value of the Pre-Raphaelite tradition went far beyond formal considerations and lay in its poetic evocation of subject and in the sense that their works conveyed a complete, controlled and self-contained world. In early paintings by Spencer, like for example, *Zacharias and Elizabeth*, 1914, (fig 6.2), early Italian sources, plus what has been seen as the Pre-Raphaelite tendency to enact religious events in the English countryside, or in what, by the turn of the century, remained of village England, are plainly in evidence. In the nineteen thirties the artist commented that in this picture he had wished to 'absorb and finally to express the atmosphere and meaning the place had for me --- it was to be a painting characterising and exactly expressing the life I was, at that time living and seeing about me'.³⁹ Cookham, for Spencer, was very nearly paradise, it was the new Jerusalem. He declared, 'It struck me that it only needed a very little changing in one's ordinary surroundings to at once reveal the more magnificent and beautiful way of life as is suggested in St

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.27. Such a view was commonplace by the early nineteen hundreds, see for example, E Phythian, *The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, Ballantyne Press, c. 1910.

³⁶ 'The Post Impressionists at the Grafton: The Twilight of the Gods', *Morning Post*, 7 Nov. 1910, p.3

³⁷ For more discussion see David Fraser Jenkins, 'Slade School Symbolism', in *The Last Romantics*, *op.cit.*, 1989, p75

³⁸ 'The Grafton Gallery - 1, *The Nation*, 19th Nov, 1910, p.331

³⁹ Cited in Royal Academy, *Stanley Spencer* exh. catalogue, *ibid.*, p.49 P G Konody later praised the picture's 'sense of awe that makes unquestionably a very powerful and direct sense of appeal', *Observer*, 4 Jan 1920.

once reveal the more magnificent and beautiful way of life as is suggested in St Luke'.⁴⁰ In the same way that the composition of Samuel Palmer's images of Shoreham are constructed so as to prevent any easy assimilation, through crowded detail and cramped spaces that offer no simple passage to the spectator's eye, so Spencer produces an enclosed and claustrophobic space, strangely unlike our own, a world that is distinctly 'other', but which surrounds us and draws us in. The contrast with the birds eye, 'august site' topography of Philip Wilson Steer is extreme. As Smiles says of Palmer's *The Valley Thick with Corn*, so may be said here of Spencer's *Zacharius* and *The Nativity* and equally of Mark Gertler's *The Creation of Eve*, 1914 (fig 6.3) and Paul Nash's *A Sleeping Beauty*, (fig 6.4);

the spectator's relationship to this idealised landscape is not that of a privileged observer gazing over a prospect, but that of a participant within the flux of details that animate the valley --- we are presented with an image of cultural stasis, of a fixed world self-sufficient in its workings, a microcosm that need not participate in anything beyond its own terms of reference --- a place of imaginative refuge in a world of fast-moving change and complexity.⁴¹

A semi-religious apprehension of what is almost invariably a rural location underpins the shaping of this native tradition, one which could accommodate the early Italians, but encompass artists like Blake, Samuel Palmer, Edward Calvert, Rossetti and Burne-Jones. Immediately before the Great War, almost as a counter to the two exhibitions organised by Fry, a series of exhibitions were staged as if to underline the importance of this tradition, like for example the Pre-Raphaelite exhibition at the Tate in the winter of 1911-12, of William Blake in 1913 and, as Bell lists, of shows at the Royal Academy of Botticelli, Mantegna and Giorgione in 1908, 1910 and 1912.⁴² While at the same period elements of Pre-Raphaelitism still continued in evidence in works by respected artists like Charles Gere, Reginald Frampton and J M Strudwick, its wider renaissance could be perceived, as in a review of Percy Bate's study, in 1900 as a possible reaction against the 'extravagances of impressionism', again, by implication, supporting racial

⁴⁰ *Ibid*

⁴¹ Smiles, *op.cit.*, p.13

⁴² Bell, *op.cit.*, p.20

distinctions.⁴³ Isaac Rosenberg, in notes for an article on the Tate Pre-Raphaelite exhibition, praised the artists' 'ingenuity of imagination'. Singling out Rossetti's pen and ink drawings for Tennyson and early Millais paintings like *Mariana at the Moated Grange*, he spoke of their richness, their daringness and the fact, unlike the French Impressionist painters, 'They imagined nature, they designed nature --- we are projected', he wrote, 'into an absolutely new atmosphere that is real in its unreality'.⁴⁴

Paul Nash underlined what was perceived to be a more subjective English approach in a letter to his friend, the poet Gordon Bottomley, 'I turned to landscape, not for the landscape's sake, but for 'the things behind'(',') the dweller in the innermost: whose light shines through sometimes'.⁴⁵ The inclusion of the figure was almost a pre-requisite for his poetic form of representation at this stage. Occasionally he attempted to invest the same enigmatic qualities in his pictures simply through his depiction of trees, eg *Wittenham Clumps* (fig 6.5), with their own special 'treeness', or with suddenly unnerved flights of birds, eg *Under the Hill*, 1912, (fig 6.6), but in works like *Barbara in the Garden*, 1911, (fig 6.7), the Rossetti-type figures were required in order to heighten the mysterious sense of place. C H Collins Baker's review of his exhibition at the Carfax Gallery in the winter of 1912 observed the artist's dilemma;

Mr Nash at present is occupied with the pattern material of Nature; he has not yet got into touch with the life and character of trees. They give him clues and motifs, material for spacing and silhouettes. In time he probably will have converted this very proper preoccupation into instinctive knowledge, and have gone on to the meaning within the shapes and patterns.⁴⁶

⁴³ Anon, 'The English Pre-Raphaelites' *The Magazine of Art*, 1900, p.125. Percy H Bates's book (George Bell and Sons) had been published in the previous year.

⁴⁴ See *The Collected Works of Rosenberg*, *op.cit.*, p.284

⁴⁵ Letter to Gordon Bottomley, 1st August, 1912, included in *Poet and Painter, Letters between Gordon Bottomley and Paul Nash, 1910-46*, (first ed., 1955), Redcliffe, Bristol, 1990, pp.42-43, Bottomley was born in Keighley in 1874, lived most of his life at Silverdale near Grange-over-Sands and suffered continual ill health. He developed friendships from around 1903 with Laurence Binyon, W B Yeats and Edward Thomas. His own literary and artistic tastes were for Rossetti and he stated that he had learnt from him 'that art is a distillation of life and nature, not a recording or a commentary, and only incidentally an interpretation', see intro., p.xiii

⁴⁶ 'Slade Students' Originality and Knowledge', *The Saturday Review*, 23 Nov. 1912, p.640

Similarly, although Spencer painted the occasional pure landscape, like for instance *A View of Cookham*, 1914, most often his images contained the figure.⁴⁷ Insistence on a uniquely human, subjective relationship to the natural world is crucial and forms further connection with the poetry of the Georgians, in which mysterious nature and a 'felt life' are an essential counterbalance to an increasingly regulated and systematized social existence. As Gary Day argues, in order to preserve the sense of an individual 'felt life' in a collectivized modern society, nature needed to be mystified or rendered exotic. This he regards as a sign of the periods 'crisis of subjectivity'.⁴⁸

Writing in later years about *The Apple Gatherers*, 1912-13, (fig 6.8), by then such a popular theme that it had become a set subject at the Slade, Spencer made clear that this expression of spirit was all important, and that he;

felt moved to some utterance, a sense of almost miraculous power, --- arising from the joy of my own circumstances and surroundings. Nothing particularised but all held and living in glory --- *The Apple Gatherers* is an earnest request from whence what is marvellous in themselves (God given) can be revealed and expressed.⁴⁹

The distortions of form, scale and perspective, the massive arms of the fruit pickers and the immense apples themselves, combine to emphasise an ideal, organic relationship between man, woman and a fertile, natural world. Similar expression of a kind of bountiful, Virgilian Golden Age emerges from Mark Gertler's *The Fruit Sorters*, (fig 6.9), shown at the New English Art Club in 1914, where Spencer's composition and pictures like Augustus John's *Way Down to the Sea*, allies with the more geometric, hieratic influences of the Egyptian art to be seen at the British Museum, with the works of Cezanne.⁵⁰ For Walter Sickert, Gertler's

⁴⁷ *A View of Cookham* is in the collection of Tullie House Art Gallery, Carlisle, and is illustrated in the Royal Academy catalogue, op.cit. Even here however, a Pre-Raphaelite influence is clear. This is a plateau landscape, viewed from a high vantage point with a high horizon, of the kind produced by Ford Madox Brown and Holman Hunt.

⁴⁸ Gary Day in Clive Bloom, (ed), *Literature and Culture in Modern Britain, Vol.1, 1900 - 1929*, Longman, 1993. Day cites John Masefield's dilemma and his realisation that, 'When I am buried, all my thoughts and acts, Will be reduced to lists of dates and facts', pp. 36-8

⁴⁹ Cited in Keith Bell, *Stanley Spencer, A Complete Catalogue of the Paintings*, Phaidon, 1992, pp.19-22

⁵⁰ *The Fruit Sorters* was described by *The Pall Mall Gazette* as, 'a mixture of arbitrary simplification with realistic detail'. It was bought for the Contemporary Art Society via Lady Ottoline Morrell. For more discussion of the work see John Woodeson, *Mark Gertler, Biography of a Painter -1891-1939*, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972, p.340

painting was an improvement on those countless, rather languid Ecole de John compositions, the work was 'justified by a sort of intensity and raciness', it was an exemplary piece of painting.⁵¹

As Keith Bell has shown, a work like *The Apple Gatherers*, clearly suggests the influence of Gauguin's religious subjects like *Adam and Eve* and *Christ in the Garden of Olives*, both included in the first Post-Impressionist exhibition. But while connections between Gauguin's Tahitian idylls and Spencer's Cookham paintings have been drawn, the artist himself and numerous supporters favoured links with the symbolic, semi-religious pastorals of Samuel Palmer. John Rothenstein was characteristically eager to dismiss French influence and to place Spencer in 'the tradition in which Milton and, more militantly, Blake, were sharers, according to which the British Isles were the centre of all primitive and patriarchal goodness'.⁵² More recent critics, like Peter Fuller, took a similar line, emphasising his connection with the Pre-Raphaelite tradition above any part in the development of European Modernism. For Fuller, the 'imaginative and spiritual response to the world of nature', was fundamentally an English attribute.⁵³

Similar notions were expressed in letters from Gordon Bottomley to Nash, warning the painter against unsuitable foreign infections. Just after the Great War, the poet was advising the painter;

Think, my Paul: in spite of what all the lying art histories (mostly written on the continent) say, modern (ie 19th Century) art was at root an English impulse --- And all the time our young artists turn humbly to France ---. And now it seems to me that you and your companions are finding again the English secret, the English soul that the Pre-Raphaelites found and lost: so I am sad and sorry when I see you doing

⁵¹ In a review of 'The New English Art Club', *The New Age*, 4 June, 1914, cited in Osbert Sitwell, (ed), *op.cit.*, 1947, p.290. The Contemporary Art Society was founded in 1910 self evidently to encourage patronage of modern artists by committee and save them from dependence solely on the whims of any one individual. Edward Marsh maintained a strong involvement with the society.

⁵² John Rothenstein, 'Stanley Spencer', *Modern English Painters, Vol.2, Innes to Moore*, (first pub. 1956), Arrow Books, 1962 p.143. Stressing the instinctive English romantic tendency, Rothenstein continued, 'Like Constable a little more than a century earlier, Stanley Spencer went to school in London simply to find technique to express a way of seeing already, in its essential character in being', p.147

⁵³ Peter Fuller, 'The Last Romantics', *Modern Painters*, Spring, 1989, p.27

even the most surface service to the artistic internationalism that was springing up before the war.⁵⁴

With some exceptions, the rural idylls which emerged in the art and literature of this period could only be constructed after a period of separation and experience, in the city or abroad. Gordon Bottomley advised Nash that 'every artist especially needs ten years of London life in his youth, before isolation in even the most beautiful country can be fruitful for him'.⁵⁵ Spencer's though, was a fascination with a sense of place which could only be maintained through constant familiarity. Going away from Cookham, that 'holy suburb of heaven', meant that 'when I come back, I feel strange and it takes me some time to recover'.⁵⁶ Too much exposure to the real world diminished its magic. This experience was shared by the central character in D H Lawrence's *The White Peacock*, 1911, who, on his return to Nethermere after a year in the south found, 'no longer a complete wonderful little world that held us charmed inhabitants. It was a small, insignificant valley lost in the spaces of the earth. --- The old symbols were trite and foolish'.⁵⁷ That 'wonderful little world', that both men tried to hang on to was an important fantasy. Lawrence's novel was filled with conventional anxiety over the spread of industrialism and the effects of modernity on the organic community of his own Derbyshire. The threat of war, the experience of the rapidly expanding urban centres and the continued dissolution of rural communities, all heightened the value of safely integrated rural places. Rupert Brooke's poem 'The Old Vicarage, Grantchester' written in Berlin in 1912 is, even in its irony, a perfect example of the way in which the rural is so heavily tinged with a sense of the past, with a mixture of nostalgia and memory:

In Grantchester, in Grantchester
Some, it may be, can get in touch
With nature there, or Earth, or such.
And clever modern men have seen
A Faun a-peeping through the green,
And felt the Classics were not dead,

⁵⁴ Letter dated 12 December 1919, see *Poet and Painter*, *op.cit.*, pp.115-6.

⁵⁵ Letter from Bottomley to Nash, March 1911, *ibid.*, p.31

⁵⁶ Cited in Keith Bell, 1992, *op.cit.*, 1992 p.29

⁵⁷ *Op.cit.*, p.344

Brooke was unaffected by this nature mysticism himself, but he savoured a shared sense of timelessness and continuity of the place;

I only know that you may lie
Day-long and watch the Cambridge sky,
And flower-lulled in sleepy grass,
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,
Until the centuries blend and blur
In Grantchester, in Grantchester ---⁵⁸

Retrospective views of the Georgian poets, Brooke, Edward Thomas, W H Davies and Robert Bridges, reveal that while their work may have been initially portrayed as modern, as part of the so-called revolt of the period, it was in fact of the past, 'Georgian poetry was to be English but not aggressively imperialistic; pantheistic rather than atheistic; and as simple as a child's reading book'.⁵⁹ Although sometimes more ironic and, usually, less sentimental than the work of Newbolt and Tennyson, there is clearly still a preservative and conservative strain in this aspect of the literary culture of the immediate pre-War period. It was this ultimately that would account for its acceptability to liberal patriotic sensibilities. Any radicalism was only skin deep, the ultimate relationship was with Wordsworth who, as Binyon had written, was also the real founder of Post Impressionism in his wish to get back 'to primary things, elemental emotions, and to express these in the very simplest manner'.⁶⁰

A bent towards visionary experience paralleled perceptions of the monotony, the stifling homogeneity of mundane, middle class, urban existence. As Edward Thomas had put it in his book, *The Country*, 'There is nothing left for us to rest upon, nothing great, venerable or mysterious, which can take us out of ourselves'.⁶¹ It was only in relation to a heightened, partly imagined world of nature that the individual could retain subjectivity. The art of these painters and poets was an

⁵⁸ In Geoffrey Keynes, (ed), *The Poetical Works of Rupert Brooke*, Faber and Faber, 1974, p.68

⁵⁹ Robert Graves, *The Common Asphodel: Collected Essays on Poetry 1922-1949*, Hamish Hamilton, 1949, pp.112-3

⁶⁰ 'E Pur Si Mouve', *Saturday Review*, *op.cit*

⁶¹ Edward Thomas, *The Country*, B T Batsford, 1913, p.6

insistence on an individual's connection to a world that might still retain emotional significance. To this end Nash left Chelsea and went purposefully to Iwer Heath in order to seek individualism in his art, find himself in landscape drawings. The symbolic significance of a special locality was crucial, - Spencer spoke of rendering the spiritual atmosphere of Cookham, whereas for Nash, the desire was to capture through imagery the *genius loci*, the spirit of places, tree-lined gardens initially, in which he perceived a sense of both sanctuary and disquiet;

The Country is in a very romantic mood just at this time, something about the trees and the light across shorn fields is always making me wonder. Then the garden is full of birds; the nights are mysteriously lit and rain in the night holds me listening spell-bound. In fact I do nothing but walk around marvelling at the wonder of the world in general.⁶²

From this perspective nature is a dream-like, even an ecstatic place where the unaccountable might easily occur. This sense underpins Nash's illustrations to Bottomley's *The Crier by Night* and, most particularly, his drawings *Our Lady of Inspiration*, 1910 (fig 6.10) and *A Vision at Evening*, 1911 (fig 6.11), where, over a gently rolling landscape of hills and valleys, a young woman's head, with the flowing hair of a Rossetti model, hovers mysteriously in the place of the moon. There is a sense here of the Georgian poets preoccupation with the atmospheric, unknowable enigmas of night time.⁶³ Sexual symbolism is evident too. Raymond Williams stated that there are many cases in the literary culture of these years where 'land and countryside are metaphors for sublimated sexual feeling'.⁶⁴ Similarly Roger Cardinal has argued that the girl's face in Nash's 'anthropomorphic' landscape is metaphorical, and that her absent body is present in the contours of the hills below. These landscapes he sees as 'agile symbolic surfaces across which are inscribed a gamut of human feelings'.⁶⁵ What is absolutely the case, is that these have become mental landscapes, arguably landscapes of the unconscious mind, making the artist's transition through to Surrealism in the 1930s, a logical

⁶² Letter to Gordon Bottomley, July 1911, *Poet and Painter*, *op.cit.*, p.21

⁶³ For more discussion, see Day in C Bloom, ed., *op.cit.*, pp.36-7. Day argues that night scenes, like Robert Nichols, 'The Tower', increased the mystery of nature in contrast to the dreary regularity of urban life.

⁶⁴ Raymond Williams, *op.cit.*, pp.251-2. Williams cites the persistent undercurrent of the rural/sexual metaphor in the writings of Lawrence.

⁶⁵ See Roger Cardinal, *The Landscape View of Paul Nash*, Reaktion Books, 1989, p.31

progression, if such a term can be used in this context. The anthropomorphising of the objects of nature, later a characteristic device for Surrealism, was an early feature of Nash's works. He had described to Bottomley how, 'I love and sincerely worship trees and know that they are people'⁶⁶ In similar vein Isaac Rosenberg described in his 'Uncle's Impressions in the Woods at Night' the silence of the night, when the 'trees around me stood in ghostly array (and) The Lady of the Moon showed me a study in silver and black --- everything was still: a prolonged silence, an unearthly stillness'.⁶⁷

Much of Spencer's and Nash's work at this date witnesses the desire to express a moment of revelation, an epiphany, where nature suddenly reveals the inexplicable with intense clarity. Nash remembered in 1922 that he had at one time thought Spencer's works were 'the real thing with all the right inheritance of the fine qualities of the mighty --- which caught one by a strange enchantment'.⁶⁸ The significance of this imagery to many of its supporters lay in its contrast, as they chose to believe, both to developments within modernism in art, and to modernity in life. For Binyon, in a modern continental spirit there were to be 'no more old romantic sorrows, no more stale subjects from the past! We are to celebrate the sublime geometry of gasworks, the hubbub of arsenals, the intoxicating swiftness of aeroplanes'.⁶⁹ None of this was the true business of art for, to re-quote him, 'we feel intuitively that art exists not for a temporary and ever shifting set of conditions, but for an ideal order. Its relation to life is to the ideal life'.⁷⁰ It was this ideal life, set in an English rural location - Widbrook Common - that Spencer represented in *John Donne Arriving in Heaven*, 1911 (fig 6.12). In such a setting, and through his own interpretation, God was literally all around, the figures, derived from those of the Italian Primitives, 'like clumsy marionettes', are therefore praying in all

⁶⁶ Letter to Bottomley, 1 August 1912, in *Poet and Painter*, *op.cit.*, p.42

⁶⁷ *The Collected Works of Rosenberg*, *op.cit.*, p.286

⁶⁸ Letter to Bottomley, 12 Sept. 1922, *Poet and Painter*, *op.cit.*, p.154. Nash was referring especially here to *The Apple Gatherers*. By the twenties his admiration had faded.

⁶⁹ 'E Pur Si Mouve', *op.cit.*

⁷⁰ 'Art and Life', *op.cit.*, pp.229-30

directions.⁷¹ Rural Berkshire had become the counterpart of Ruskin's fourteenth century Padua.

Like Ruskin before him, Lawrence Binyon found himself 'haunted by a sense of art's irrelevance for the vast majority, when life for so much of our population has been so joylessly dehumanised by modern industrial conditions'.⁷² For the educated liberal wing of the upper middle classes, Spencer's vivid evocations of an ancient paradise, and Nash's natural world of imagined experience, were magical and endlessly consoling. Ironically this audience tended, many of them, to be the very people who were responsible for the new bureaucracies. Edward Marsh, the consolidating force behind the Georgian poets literary renaissance and important patron of all the artists discussed here, was at the time private secretary to Winston Churchill at the Admiralty.⁷³ As Day comments, it was one of 'the very sources of centralisation' and against whose discourses their poetry was opposed, that gave the Georgian poets such a high profile'.⁷⁴

Speaking in 1914 on behalf of Lewis et.al., T E Hulme, not long sent down from Cambridge, railed against what he perceived to be the 'feeble romanticism' of painters of this ilk.⁷⁵ For Hulme this kind of art represented nothing more than a 'new disguise of English aestheticism', appealing primarily to the cultured liberal humanists, presumably like Marsh, he himself despised. Especially irritating to

⁷¹ The quote is from a review in *The Connoisseur*, Nov, 1912, p.192. The critic praised the picture's conviction, its fine sense of colour and composition, but felt the painter needed to shake off 'the artificial convention of Post Impressionism'.

⁷² 'Romance and Reality', *Saturday Review*, 21 December, 1907, p.760

⁷³ Marsh's father had been a Master of Downing College and Marsh was a Cambridge contemporary of Bertrand Russell, taking a first in the Classical Tripos. He first entered the Civil Service as Chamberlain's assistant Private Secretary. He was described positively as a dilettante by Bernard Denvir in 1947, for his literary skills as editor, writer and translator and wide ranging support for all areas of the arts, especially theatre. Denvir outlined Marsh's art collection which began with his purchase of Herbert Horne's collection of drawings by Blake, Cozens, Girtin and Gainsborough. His first contemporary purchase was Duncan Grant's *Parrot Tulips*, acquired in 1911.

⁷⁴ Day, *op.cit.*,

⁷⁵ T E Hulme, 'Modern Art, The Grafton Group', *The New Age*, Jan.1914, pp.341-2. Hulme had been sent down from St John's College. In 1913 he had translated Bergson's *Introduction to Metaphysics*, shortly afterwards becoming influenced by Wilhelm Worringer's *Abstraktion Und Einfühlung* (Abstraction and Empathy). He substituted the term 'geometric' for abstract and 'vital' for empathetic. The former became the basis of his praise for those artists involved in the Vorticist group, most notably Gaudier Brzescka and David Bomberg. Empathetic art he identified negatively with the Bloomsbury Group. Hulme was killed at the Front in 1917.

Hulme was the way in which Duncan Grant's *Adam and Eve* adopted the qualities of an archaic and intense Byzantine art to apparently meaningless ends. He had been much amused by one writer's description of Roger Fry's own landscapes as having 'the fascination of reality seen through a cultured mind'.⁷⁶ Hulme regarded this as the cultured atmosphere of Cambridge and he could identify exactly the kind of dons who were drawn to collect such pictures and the 'dilettante appreciation' they felt towards them. He continued that 'A sophisticated Cambridge sense of humour would relish the clever, paradoxical way in which Grant has his Adam standing on his head and his donkey's ear continuing on into the hills beyond.' Its links to Pre-Raphaelitism soon revealed themselves in its quaint playfulness, a similar if not identical 'queerness', which gave the spectator the same reminiscent pleasure. Just as Pre-Raphaelitism declined into Liberty's so, Hulme felt, this art of Grant's, those fascinating and cultured landscapes of Fry's, would end up in some emporium, providing suitable house decoration for the wives of 'young and advanced dons'.

By 1911 Edward Marsh had tired of his endless round of social engagements and was looking for a more worthwhile activity for his spare time. To this end he began his role as a benevolent patron in the gentlemanly tradition to young painters like Duncan Grant, the three, relatively impoverished Slade painters, Mark Gertler, John Currie and Stanley Spencer and, from 1914, to John and Paul Nash. Marsh gave up his earlier practice of buying pictures by Richard Wilson and Girtin, believing that it smacked too much of 'sheep-like conventionalism' to buy old masters in shops'. Instead he remembered in later years, 'how much more exciting to purchase wet from the brush, the possible masterpieces of the possible masters of the future'.⁷⁷

Like Binyon, Ricketts and Bottomley, Marsh was averse to 'foreign' theorizing and aesthetic doctrines and maintained a cordial distance from Roger Fry. His literary

⁷⁶ It is interesting that Fry's landscapes were perceived to be less 'post-impressionist' than his figure studies and still lifes. One critic writing in 1912 felt they were 'more like extreme examples of impressionism, highly simplified no doubt, but still reproducing the actual facts of a scene modified only to a slight degree, and one could admire them wholeheartedly without accepting the advanced principles of the new cult'. *The Connoisseur*, Vol. XXXII, 1912, p.133

⁷⁷ Edward Marsh in *Art in England*, ed., R S Lambert, London, 1938, p.80

tastes reflected his tastes in contemporary painting. In poetry he looked for three attributes; 1. intelligibility, 2. music - a singing quality, and 3. raciness, by which he meant an intensity of thought and feeling --- to rule out the vapidness which is often to be found.⁷⁸ His artistic preferences were largely for paintings of nature, just as the Georgian's poetry was primarily pastoral. Developing his collection from Wilson's *Summit of Cader Idris*, purchased because 'I like things to have their roots in the past', his overcrowded rooms in Raymond Buildings included Steer's *Poole Harbour*, Duncan Grant's *Lemon Gatherers* and Stanley Spencer's *Apple Gatherers* and *A View of Cookham*, pictures which had aroused in him the all important 'lust of possession'. Abstract pictures Marsh shunned, looking upon them with 'a deep but chilly respect'.

Part of the joy of patronising artists like Spencer and Gertler, was surely the fascinating glimpses allowed into the vastly different lives of the painters themselves, the opportunities for trips down to the Spencer household in Cookham and into the alien world of the Jewish community in Whitechapel. As for Ottoline and Philip Morrell, who made the same visits, these in themselves were journeys into curious, innocent and authentic worlds.⁷⁹ According to Marsh, who had already befriended another Jew from the East End, Isaac Rosenberg, Gertler was a 'beautiful little Jew, like a Lippo Lippi cherub --- an absolute little East End Jew --- his mind is deep and simple, and I think he has got the *feu sacré*'.⁸⁰

Despite this taste for the exotic, it is clear that in both the poems and paintings that Marsh admired, a decorative primitivism and 'raciness' lent a superficial intensity to images of nature which were intrinsically sentimental and picturesque. In this a deeply patriotic sensibility was expressed and it has been argued that in this period, 'the romantic and oppositional literary culture of the early nineteenth century was

⁷⁸ Cited in Robert Ross, *op.cit.*, p.109

⁷⁹ The Morrell's visit to Cookham in a London cab is described in Gilbert Spencer, *Stanley Spencer by His Brother Gilbert*, Victor Gollancz, 1961, p. Ottoline Morrell also arranged for Gertler's *Fruit Sorters* to be shown in Bedford Square to influential people. The effects of the relationship between the 'alien' Gertler and the cultural elite of Bloomsbury has been discussed by Janet Wolff, 'The Failure of a Hard Sponge: Class, Ethnicity and the Art of Mark Gertler', *New Formations*, no.28, Spring, 1996, pp. 44-64

⁸⁰ Cited in *Mark Gertler: Biography of a Painter, 1891-1939*, John Woodeson, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972, p.107

appropriated by a twentieth century nationalism'.⁸¹ Ultimately, the nature of the audience for this art is an important key to its comprehension. Patrons like Michael Sadler and Marsh had, through their classical education and class backgrounds, developed a particular, literary view of rural history which incorporated pagan myths and fantasies about a Golden Age and which made them especially susceptible to imagery like *The Apple Gatherers*. A consequence of this taste for the unusual, the exotic, the mysterious, the pure and the unsullied was that actual rural life and its history was subordinate to artists' and their public's own idealised perceptions of a secure, harmonious order set in some distant past or special place.

The popular appeal of these perceptions, and of Marsh's critical judgements, was made clear by the enormous circulation of the Georgian Poetry anthologies before the Great War and, in his personal collection of pictures, by a writer in *The Studio*, in 1929. T W Earp believed that, 'Nearly every artist whose work has real vitality and whose appearance may in some way, during the present century, have contributed to the development of our national tradition, is represented.' The work of 'Messrs Innes, Spencer, Nash and Currie', which is 'tinged by a strong romanticism', is 'consciously national', they are all 'acknowledged masters in a noble line', and furthermore 'have all gone far beyond the distressing, ephemeral triumphs of sensation with no power of continuity, so characteristic of much modern French production.'⁸²

T E Hulme's criticism, though partisan, in many ways summed up the paintings discussed here and explains the lure of their simplicity, ruralism and subjectivity. It aptly describes the appeal of those illusions of a seemingly far off and contrasting world, constructed in terms of ideal relationships between men, women, nature and a perceived cultural identity, in the face of a contemporary social fragmentation. In this regard the paintings of Nash and Spencer take their place alongside the country based fantasies of Kenneth Grahame and J M Barrie in which, as Raymond Williams described so well, a 'real land and its people were falsified; a traditional

⁸¹ See Brooker and Widdowson in Colls and Dodd, *op.cit.*, 1983, p.117

⁸² *The Studio*, Vol.97, Jan-June, 1929, 'The Edward Marsh Collection', pp.178-186

and surviving rural England was scribbled over and almost hidden from sight ---'.⁸³ In an exchange of identities the rustic is certainly swept aside, but the result here is much more than a mere falsification. In empty pastures and mysterious ancient places, those urban sophisticates who looked and listened hard enough, just might encounter still the 'dweller in the innermost'. To achieve this the distractions of reality had to be disregarded, only then could the visions commence.

⁸³ Raymond Williams, *op.cit.*, p.258

A Conclusion

Preceding chapters have been concerned with the effects of the social and cultural contexts in which painters produced images of landscape and rural scenery in the early years of this century. It has been shown that in some cases the urban experience of modernity is the most powerful determinant, while in others, contemporary concerns about class, race, gender and social mobility predominate. The underlying theme, however is that of nationality. Notions of Englishness, the search for archetypes which express some national essence, whether in the land or its people, runs through all of the diverse strands of painting described here.

Fundamental to the construction of ideals of Englishness was the both real and imagined socio-economic and cultural divide between the city and the country. The concept of the rural as not only 'other' but also as somehow empty, as a potentially vacant site, was crucial. By this token the motivations of imperialism emerge not only as a characteristic feature of the history of the late Victorian and Edwardian era, but also as a valuable characterisation of the very processes and effects of rural representations. Issues to do with racial type and national origins have underpinned all of these representations as we have seen, but they were also, by their very nature, essentially by-products of the discourse of imperialism itself. The vocabulary typically used to describe the activities of imperialist adventurers - to observe, to know, to describe, - all in an anthropological sense, - but then also to mystify, to control, to bring order and finally to obliterate and replace, resounds throughout this thesis. The situation is one of not only an aesthetic but also, virtually, of an ethnic cleansing of the English countryside which, to an influential commentator like Masterman, was the 'real' empire, or certainly the one that mattered most.

Connections between the empire overseas and this 'real' empire at home were not peculiar to Masterman alone. The 1905 account by the young Oxford graduate Elliott Mills, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, set out to make correlations between the contemporary experience of imperial decline and the fall of the Roman Empire, and listed amongst its seven main causes the disastrous

effects on health and faith of the prevalence of town life over country life, the growing English tendency to 'forsake the sea except as a health resort', and the gradual decline of the national physique and health. The outcome was the physical and moral decadence and degeneracy which, for the Tory pamphleteer, compared perfectly to the conditions in Rome.¹

The accessory to imperialism, colonisation, is an entirely apt description of occurrences in the countryside during the period of this investigation. As the flow of the indigenous rural populations from the country to the city was maintained in the years up to the First World War, so in the other direction, the flow of urban, predominantly middle class populations increased, at least in the southern counties. This took the form of those holiday makers and tourists, back to the landers, neo-pagans, artist colonisers, country retreaters, weekday commuters and suburbanites, all of whom, to varying degrees, were attracted by the prospect of an outright rejection of the modern or, by the potential for forging an ideal alternative modernity. The rural was eventually made to accommodate a number of idyllic prelapsarian golden ages or imaginary future utopias.

Edward Said's formulation of the concept of imperialism has been instructive here. In a number of ways his discussion of orientalism relates to an understanding of the implicit functions of ruralism. 'At some very basic level', he maintains;

Imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on by others ---. Colonialism which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory. --- Imperialism --- lingers in a general cultural sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic and social practice.²

In his earlier work Said quotes from Rudyard Kipling's writings about the road the 'white men' take in the colonies, 'when they go to clean a land'.³ Imperialists usually

¹ Mills' pamphlet is discussed in Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, Princeton, 1968, pp.24-5. As Hynes points out Mills in effect posits an English Golden Age here which is 'agrarian, seafaring, frugal and pious'.

² Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage, 1993, pp.5-8

³ Said, *Orientalism; Western Conceptions of the Orient*, Penguin, 1991, p.222, first ed., Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1978. It is of interest in terms of the concerns here, that what was to become the London School of Oriental Studies was set up in 1909, acknowledging a 'necessity to increase familiarity with customs, languages, feelings, traditions and history' etc of the east. See Said, p.214

battle for land and what emerges is a process of purification, an unpeopling of the territory, or at the very least the removal of native stock from positions of power. For Said, 'the geographical space of the Orient was penetrated and worked over ---. The cumulative effect of Western handling turned the Orient from alien to colonial space'.⁴

Ruralism resulted in the same acts of colonisation and finally of commodification.⁵ The final outcome in this case was a representation of rural life which was, largely, labour free. W J T Mitchell quoted Emerson's remark that 'you cannot freely admire a noble landscape, if labourers are digging hard near by', for economic and material considerations invariably intervene in the pure, spiritual enjoyment of the scene.⁶ Throughout this thesis the figure in the landscape, to varying degrees, became timeless, inactive, detached and contemplative and in some cases, disappeared altogether.

The first chapter on paintings of the 'peasant' observed the beginnings of the displacement of the real working class from their own territory. In true imperialist fashion the rural worker was first observed and documented according to the dictates of naturalism, and then idealised as a noble type, distanced and rendered safe, through a poetic, selective interpretation which valued aesthetic ideals of a unity of impression and atmospheric envelopment, as witnessed for example in the soft handling of Edward Stott. As a result all individuality and direct recognition is lost. Handling and technique disallowed real interest in workers, signalling avoidance of the reality of rural conditions. The labourer is now both powerless and picturesque, aesthetically and materially he is in the right place. Being timeless and essentially 'not modern', he is not threatening. Again in terms of an imperialist discourse, this representation is underpinned by fear, distrust and ridicule of the

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.211

⁵ Said maintains that throughout the 19th century, the discourse of Orientalism was 'vulnerable to modish and influential currents of thought in the West', ie to the effects of imperialism, positivism, utopianism, darwinism, racism ---', *ibid.*, p.43. So was the discourse of ruralism in the period of this study.

⁶ W J T Mitchell, 'Imperial Landscape', in Mitchell (ed), *Landscape and Power*, *op.cit.*, 1994, p.15. The quotation is from Emerson's *Nature*, 1836. Mitchell also quotes Williams, 'a working country is hardly ever a landscape', *The Country and the City*, *op.cit.*, p.120

rural poor, and a need to control, socially and pictorially. In a strikingly similar fashion, Said described orientalism as a 'culturally sanctioned habit of deploying large generalizations by which reality is divided into various collectives - language, race, type --- (of us and them), all reinforced by anthropology, linguistics etc and darwinist theses on survival and natural selection'.⁷ Albert Memmi has also argued that colonialism entailed a negative definition of the colonized by the colonizer, in order to justify domination'.⁸ At the turn of the century colonial administrators were commonly describing 'the backward races' of the overseas territories as 'lower', 'less-gifted' and 'less-developed'.⁹ Similar terminology was employed in relation to the English labourer, but in order to justify ideological fantasies that he was exactly the opposite, that he was fundamentally sound and robust, he needed to be removed from scrutiny. He and his decaying villages were therefore transformed into ideal, spiritual communities with which to contrast real urban conditions and urban types. Safe ahistorical ideals of elemental and seasonal existences predominate. Atmospheric envelopment becomes all pervading and the individual worker, now almost an abstraction, vanishes, symbolically, into the ether.

The majority of the paintings discussed in this thesis have been of the figure in the landscape. In the case of the predominantly pure landscapes discussed in the second chapter, widespread critical discrimination against signs of modern French influence resulted in many instances in a re-working of authorized national aesthetic traditions, most notably of the, by then, nationally acclaimed Turner and Constable. Such a transformation resulted, as we have seen in the study of Philip Wilson Steer, in the emergence of a popular series of panoramic vistas, of commanding prospects of the rolling English countryside, where once again a relationship with the expansionist character of imperialism might be discerned. Mitchell has described this situation in relation to landscape in general quite perfectly. 'Landscape', he argues;

⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, *op.cit.*, p.227

⁸ *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, translated edition, H Greenfield, London, 1990, Quoted in Tricia Cusack, 1998, *op.cit.*,

⁹ Sir F Younghusband, 'Inter Racial Relations', *Sociological Review*, III, 1910. cited in Donald Read, *op.cit*, *Documents from Edwardian England, 1901-1915*, Harrap, 1973, pp.173-6

'might be seen more profitably as something like the 'dreamwork' of imperialism, unfolding its own movement in time and space from a central point of origin and folding back on itself to disclose both utopian fantasies of the perfected imperial prospect and fractured images of unresolved ambivalence and unsuppressed resistance'.¹⁰

In this case there was no space, literally, for the working figure, beyond that of being merely a fictional adjunct - an accessory to sites which were important because of their established literary associations, often because they evoked an idealised eighteenth century, often because of the picturesque, ruined castles they contained and the delicious melancholy they induced. Such figures that are present, and the same applies to what remains of the rural worker in Clausen's pictures, are reduced to the function of both being and purveying commodities.

In the chapter dealing with the works of Augustus John and his circle, an assimilation of modernist notions of the artist as bohemian outsider, a supposedly 'free spirit', and an engagement with the decorative primitivist forms of Post Impressionism has been seen ultimately to have supported bourgeois preoccupations with the homogenised vulgarity, ie the inauthenticity of modern urban society. To project his ideal, which was fundamentally in accord with an imperialist ideal of a hardy race, who would the artist choose to depict in his remote, elemental, rugged and unfurnished landscapes, but himself, and the members of his own tribe. In the process he depicted an imaginary race (of middle class urban poseurs) which could assuage the anxieties of all of those concerned with the debates emerging out of social darwinism, women's suffrage, the critiques of mass society etc. The inevitable result was the depiction of one of those timeless golden ages which was utterly and reassuringly devoid of real people.

The material concerned with a specific locality, with Cornwall, reveals the purification process achieving a wider base, in part through the modern culture of tourism itself, shaped by the middle class repudiation of its own conditions. The initial attraction of Cornwall, for painters and visitors, lay in its remoteness and the supposed authenticity of its native inhabitants, its fisherfolk. Arthur Symons' comments are particularly telling in this case; 'You will find, often enough, that

¹⁰ *op.cit*, p.10

very English quality of vulgarity in the peasant who lives in land; only the sea seems to cleanse vulgarity out of the English peasant, and to brace him into a really simple and refined dignity'.¹¹ But in the process of selling the location through urban ideals of physical health, racial and moral purity, inextricably linked to imperialist discourse, Cornwall with its Celtic origins becomes a site of spiritual longings for the pre-modern and the pre-Christian and the real Cornish fisherman, in spite of Symons' projection, is inevitably displaced. The imaginary geography of the county is much more seductive. In relation to the regional novel, Raymond Williams described;

a sustaining flight to the edges of the island - to Cornwall or to Cumberland. --- But --- (in these) carefully and often passionately observed landscapes there is an exclusion of what, to sustain the natural metaphor and the contrast with the cities, has to be seen as alien (ie the deep and active social forces already at work in those places).¹²

Fisherfolk had to be replaced by physically perfect and ideal specimens, inactive, languid and contemplative, gazing out from the cliff tops as far from the vulgar crowd as was possible. To be busily gutting fish would have destroyed the fantasy afforded by Knight and Tuke.

In Spencer Gore's representations of Letchworth, modernist forms of painting present an imaginary solution to existing conflicts in the city, and a cultural expression is given to developments already taking place in political and economic spheres. The garden city programme was essentially a bureaucratic ideal for a planned countryside. A practical and organised approach it also, of necessity, entailed the clearing out of indigenous populations in its programme of tidying up, or of cultivating - to extend the metaphor of gardening - an ideal modernity. Suburbanisation, like Gore's form of modernism, was a force for social and cultural conservatism. If imperialism was an agent for the creation of order and control, then so in this regard are the formulations of Englishness and modernism, hence the docile, unindividuated commuters dotted around the railway station in sunny Letchworth.

¹¹ *London: A Book of Aspects*, p.76

¹² Raymond Williams, *op.cit.*, p.253

The final chapter on those painters I identify with the literary circle around Edward Marsh, is concerned with efforts towards a re-assertion of individualism and subjectivity in the context of the collectivity and centralization described above. From this emerged a taste for simple, mystical, rhythmic forms celebrating an intensity of vision, animism and moments of epiphany. An assimilation of decorative Post-Impressionist forms and Italian primitivism could support religious spiritual apprehensions. Equally the contemporary re-assertion of another native English tradition, here of Blake, Palmer and the Pre-Raphaelites, contributed to the desire to express the enigmatic mysteries of specific, invariably rural, places. Hence Paul Nash's yearning to depict landscape, 'not for the landscape's sake, but for the things behind it'.¹³ The value placed upon this 'felt - life', as characteristic of the Georgian poets as of painters like Spencer and Nash, had an especial appeal to the educated upper middle classes with a taste for the exotic. To quote Williams once more, 'the Georgian version uses rural England as an image for its own internal feelings'.¹⁴ In effect another act of first purification and then colonisation. Edward Thomas had a startling degree of personal insight in this regard seen here in his description of a tract of country rarely visited by outsiders;

The few people whom we see, the mower, the man hoeing his onion bed in a spare half hour at mid-day, the children playing 'Jar-Jar-winkle' against a wall, the women hanging out clothes, - these the very loneliness of the road has prepared us for turning into creatures of a dream; it costs an effort to pass the time of day with them, and they being equally unused to strange faces are not loquacious, and so the moment they are passed, they are no more real than the men and women of pastoral. --- The most credible inhabitants are Mertilla, Florimel, Corin, Amaryllis.¹⁵

In advance of the Great War then, the English landscape had already undergone a consistent process of purification. In this sense painting had played an active role in the wider political and economic processes of reshaping the countryside. Through gradual cleansing, naturalizing and universalizing procedures, rural England had, by 1914, already been safely and effectively emptied out and then resettled and the

¹³ *Op.cit.*

¹⁴ *Op.cit.*, p.259

¹⁵ Cited in *The Heart of England, op.cit.*, pp.108-9

rural poor could now be ignored. It was readily prepared to be that place of intimate, solitary contemplation that it was recognised to be in the earlier part of the 1920s.

The argument here is against those who have under-estimated the wider social, cultural and political developments associated with the pre-war expanding middle class as described in this thesis and have, as a result, over-determined the effects of the War, using it rather as an excuse and therefore accounting for changes in art in predominantly philosophical terms. This therefore is an argument against much of the periodization that has taken place in art history as, for example, in the accounts of writers like Charles Harrison and David Peters Corbett. The latter appears to accept C F G Masterman's words written in 1922 in *England After the War*, that 'the conditions of which I --- wrote (pre-1914) have vanished in the greatest secular catastrophe which has tormented mankind since the fall of Rome,' without pointing out the fact that virtually the whole of the 1909 *Condition of England* was penned with the underlying conviction that civilized standards were already and irredeemably gone for ever.¹⁶ Similarly Corbett unquestioningly cites the comments of a contemporary of Francis Hirst, writing on the consequences of the war;

There have been, I think, two main developments since the war - a sense of instability, and a tendency towards uniformity --- The war shattered that sense of security which brooded over Victorian homes --- The second main tendency seems to be towards uniformity in every sphere. Mass destruction has led to mass production and the loss of individuality --- This tendency --- shows itself also in the breaking down of barriers which formerly existed between class and class and group and group --- both the new rich and the new poor have learnt that the old social orders were not immutable.¹⁷

All of which, of course, is a glaring misrepresentation of pre-war England, perhaps excusable when written in the 1930s, but surely not to be accepted so uncritically years later. As John Lucas, writing most particularly about literature in the twenties, makes clear - 'successive generations' still including it seems sections of our own, have looked back to the world before 1914 as one 'of primal innocence',

¹⁶ David Peters Corbett, 1997, *op.cit.*, p.63

¹⁷ Francis Hirst, *Consequences of War to Great Britain*, Oxford and New Haven, 1934, p.74-5. Cited *ibid.*, p.62

and in a description that resounds with earlier ones of paintings in this thesis, Lucas remarks that;

The gross materialism of Edwardian England, the terrible poverty of millions --- the strikes, the lock outs, the city slums, to say nothing of the conditions which farm labourers had still to endure --- these and other awkward actualities were soon forgotten or misted over in a prolonged soft focus recall of a time before the war.¹⁸

It is argued that the experience of war led to a loss of faith in modernity and the decline of masculinist discourses like that of radical modernism. Charles Harrison has stated that in the immediate post war period, there was a reluctance to take up such themes and instead a re-engagement occurred with uncontroversial genres like still life, portraiture and landscape. For Harrison 'the tendency of an exclusive interest in the technology of painting per se was that all possible subjects came to be interpreted either as still lifes or as landscapes', ie they were relatively 'neutralised as aesthetic categories'.¹⁹ As he and later Corbett have pointed out, an artists' choice of subject in the twenties was typically motivated by its uncontroversiality, where modernity itself was not an explicit theme, or rather was to be evaded. In this regard, as Corbett maintains, subjects were characteristically unproblematic, tranquil, pleasurable, even hedonistic.²⁰ It perhaps needs to be pointed out that an engagement with 'radical modernity' preoccupied the merest fraction of the practising art community in England on either side of the war, and the notion that modernity was a theme to be evaded at all costs, was as we have seen, deeply embedded in the pre-war years. While it is entirely valid to point out the value of rural England from the perspective of those newly returned from the trenches, and even to recite, yet again, Stanley Baldwin's famous 1924 speech to The Royal Society of St George on 'what I mean by England', it should not be ignored that each word could equally well have been uttered twenty years earlier. Corbett believes that in this speech; 'As it does in so much evocation of landscape and nation after the war, nature here comes to stand for a set of authentic, timeless values that modernity and the city deny. Nature functions as the 'other' of the

¹⁸ John Lucas, *The Radical Twenties: Aspects of Writing, Politics and Culture*, Five Leaves Publications, 1997, p12. 'The anguish for a lost Eden', he goes on 'begins earlier --- to understand the 1920s we need to remember the 1890s'.

¹⁹ *English Art and Modernism 1900 - 1939*, *op.cit.*, p.168

²⁰ See Corbett's chapter 'Revisionist Modernism in the Twenties', *op.cit.*

modern and provides the necessary iconography of displacement through which modernity can be understood'.²¹ This had already happened.

More accurate is the fact that the war simply concentrated those attitudes and developments already in place by 1914. The familiar landscapes of the south of England, continued to be valued for their accessibility, their order and cultivation - all the more emphatically because of the disorder and chaos of war added to the more general notions of the disorder of modernity discussed here. Nature in the twenties, as it has for long been argued, was to be appreciated as a solitary and intimate place where the individual went for solace and spiritual recuperation.²² This type of English landscape was and has been ever since regarded as an important symbol during the Great War - it represented, and this was positively encouraged, the bed-rock of nationality that needed to be protected from alien outsiders.²³ The fact that in previous decades rural areas had been both represented and colonised in the way that this thesis demonstrates, rendered that ideological process possible. This point has been acknowledged more readily by cultural and literary rather than art historians. Simon Miller, for example, has remarked that in the inter War period, landscape was 'an icon in which agricultural production was at best incidental and at worst antagonistic', but it is important to note that, 'such imagery was in no way a radical departure from the English tradition, 'but rather built upon an established iconography received from earlier literary traditions such as the Romantics and, more recently, the Georgians'.²⁴

John Taylor maintains that the pre- and post-war perceptions of landscape can be distinguished by the emergence in the twenties of differing sections of the middle classes, all of whom felt that they 'had a stake in the countryside as a national asset,

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.103

²² eg see Ian Jeffrey, *The British Landscape; 1920-1950*, Thames and Hudson, 1984.

²³ Witness the circulation during the war years of popular anthologies of verse about the countryside and ruralist prose. Also the choice of artists like Steer and Clausen as official war artists documenting the war effort at home.

²⁴ 'Urban Dreams and Rural Reality: Land and Landscape in English Culture, 1920-1945', *Rural History*, Vol.6, no.1, 1995, p.93

even though they did not own the land'.²⁵ But by the later nineteenth century the landscape as popularly represented had already ceased to be one associated with the landed estates and country houses - it was already quite clearly a spectacle and a preoccupation for the urban middle classes. Once again the fact of the war has been prioritized over the greater significance of decades of cultural and political encroachment from the city into the country. Taylor, like Alison Light, sees this inter war landscape as a site specifically for weekenders and holiday makers. Modernism, in their view became, in the 1920s, associated with leisure - an argument similar to Corbett's.²⁶ But all of the factors they enlist to support their arguments were prevalent from the 1900s - like for example the emergence of a guide book and poster culture, the growth of different types of tourism, anxieties about the spread of the suburbs. Aspects of all of these have featured throughout this thesis. The post war economy and various social and technological developments simply extended and made more overt the system of commodification.

All of this provokes interesting speculation on the position of landscape and the rural in the context of the present day. What are or have been the effects of a further seventy years of urban colonisation of the rural in the form of post second world war 'new town' developments, building on the organisational success of the original Garden City movement, the emergence of a renewed back to the landism in the form of the sixties and seventies counter cultures and new age travellers from the eighties, the constant expansion of tourism, aided by turn of the century organizations like the National Trust? One obvious answer is that the commodification of the English landscape is now complete. Nature is tamed and controlled. The countryside, as argued by Patrick Wright in the work cited in the introduction, is now heritage. Indigenous inhabitants, when they appear, are cast in the role of 'natives', with little in the way of real industry or tradition left, the figure in the landscape is now engaged in selling his or her own history to urban spectators.

²⁵ John Taylor, *A Dream of England - Landscape, Photography and the Tourist's Imagination*, Manchester University Press, 1994, pp.126

²⁶ See Alison Light, *Forever England, Femininity, Literature and Conservatism between the Wars*, Routledge, 1991.

This has all created its own difficulties for those who still desire an experience of *natura naturans*. As Andrew Wilson has written;

The Outside has largely been charted. In the 'developed' world there are Urban and Suburban places, but there are few places that are truly Exurban. Similarly the 'developing' world has been so at the mercy of the West that there are few dark places left on the map. The notion of the interior died at the turn of the Century ---. Where Marx saw the earth as a given instrument of labour and progress we must now see it as a given arena for a manufactured play.²⁷

²⁷ Catalogue to an Exhibition, *Innocence and Experience*; Installation by Michael Gibbs and Claudia Kölgen, Air, Amsterdam, 1992.

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Fig. 1.1



Fig. 1.2



Fig. 1.3



Fig. 1.4



Fig. 1.5



Fig. 1.6



Fig. 1.7



Fig. 1.8



Fig. 1.9



Fig. 1.10



Fig. 1.11



Fig. 1.12



Fig. 1.13



Fig. 1.14



Fig. 1.15



Fig. 1.16



Fig. 1.17



Fig. 1.18



Fig. 2.1



Fig. 2.2



Fig. 2.3



Fig. 2.4



Fig. 2.5



Fig. 2.6



Fig. 2.7



Fig. 2.8



Fig. 2.9



Fig. 2.10



Fig. 2.11



Fig. 2.12



Fig. 2.13



Fig. 3.1



Fig. 3.2



Fig. 3.3



Fig. 3.4



Fig. 3.5



Fig. 3.6



Fig. 3.7



Fig. 3.8



Fig. 3.9



Fig. 3.10



Fig. 3.11



Fig. 3.12



Fig. 3.13



Fig. 4.1



Fig. 4.2



Fig. 4.3



Fig. 4.4

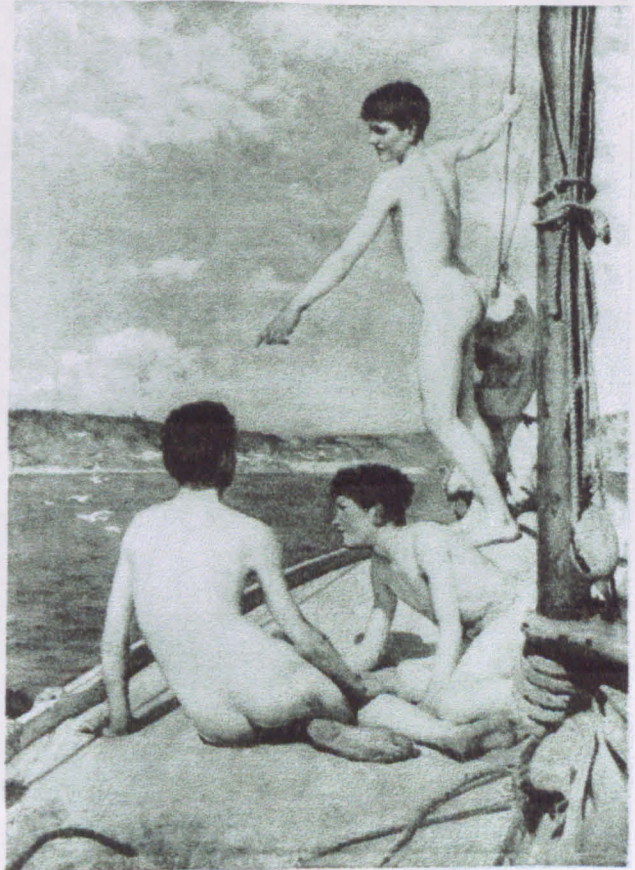


Fig. 4.5



Fig. 4.6



Fig. 4.7



Fig. 4.8



Fig. 4.9



Fig. 4.10



Fig. 4.11



Fig. 4.12



Fig. 4.13



Fig. 4.14



Fig. 5.1



Fig. 5.2



Fig. 5.3



Fig. 5.4



Fig. 5.5



Fig. 5.6



Fig. 5.7



Fig. 5.8



Fig. 5.9



Fig. 5.10



Fig. 5.11



Fig. 5.12



Fig. 5.13



Fig. 5.14



Fig. 5.15



Fig. 5.16



Fig. 5.17



Fig. 6.1



Fig. 6.2



Fig. 6.3



Fig. 6.4



Fig. 6.5

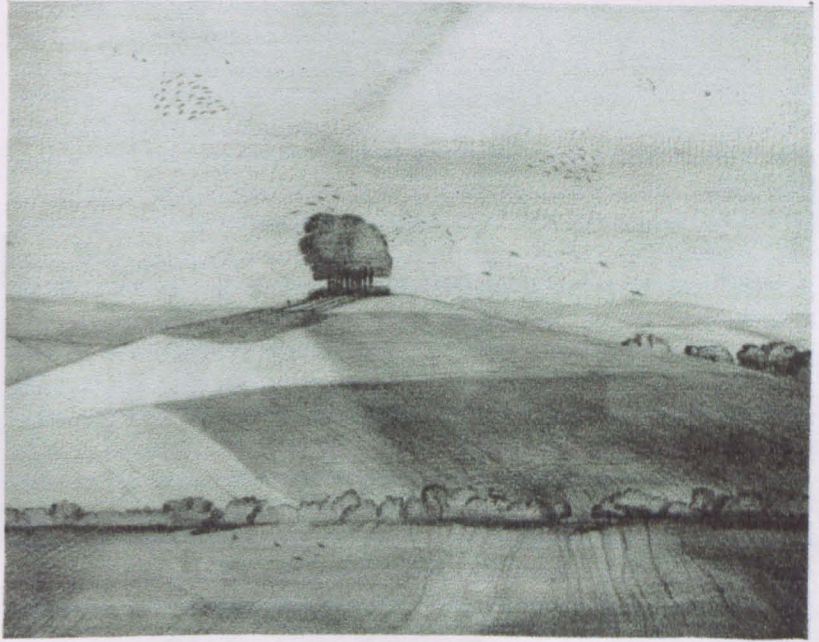


Fig. 6.6



Fig. 6.7



Fig. 6.8



Fig. 6.9

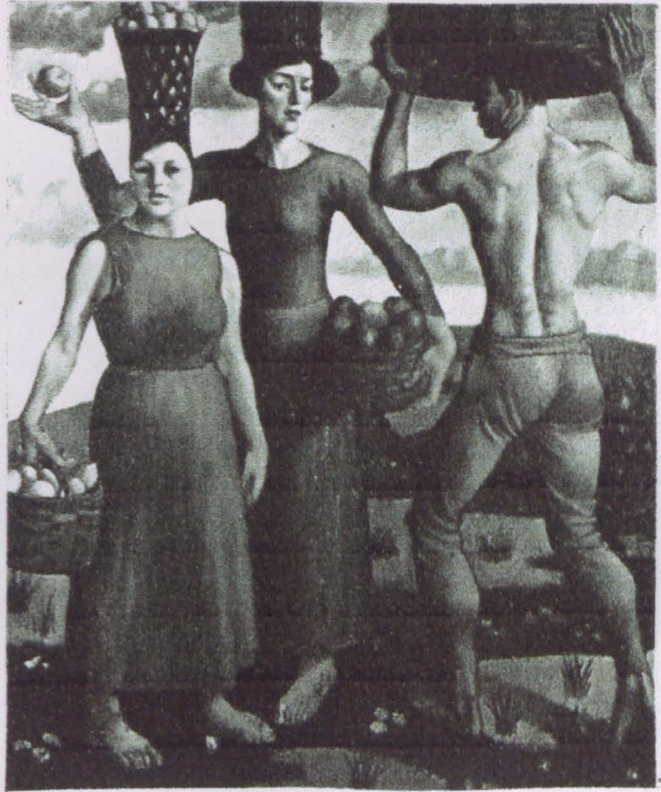


Fig. 6.10



Fig. 6.11



Fig. 6.12



APPENDIX

Appendix A

A chronological survey of key exhibitions, of contemporary reviews, books and articles, of particular artists' works and of some of the parallel developments in society and the broader culture. This survey is a separate ongoing project, but its inclusion at this stage helps to elucidate the interconnections between the social and cultural themes with which the thesis is concerned.

Appendix B

Copies of the two publications to have so far emerged from the preparation of this thesis. Chapter One, 'The Poetry of the Peasant', appeared in the catalogue of the exhibition *British Impressionism*, which was organised by Kenneth McConkey and travelled to three locations in Japan in 1997. The article in the *Oxford Art Journal*, the foundation of Chapter Two, resulted from my interests in Edwardian landscape painting to have developed in the writing of the short monograph on Steer in 1992.

Chapter Three was given as a conference paper at the annual Art Historians Association Conference in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1996.

Chapter Five was a paper for the 1998 University of York conference, 'Rethinking Englishness: English Art 1880-1940', and will appear in 1999 in the Yale University Press collection of papers from that conference - *The Geographies of English Art, Landscape and the National Past in English Art. 1880-1940*, edited by David Peters Corbett, Fiona Russell and myself.

1890 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
JAN, London Imps. continuing at Goupil Gallery	Art Notes, p.XV, review of the London Impressionists at Goupil, (begun Dec) The Art Review, Vol.1, no.1, review of London Impressionists Mag. of Art, Jan., v.13, pp.xiv-xv	David Croal Thompson, 'The Barbizon School of Painters' (serialised in Magazine of Art the previous year)	Sickert, 'The Theatre of Young Artists, Dieppe' Sickert, 'Café Des Tribunaux'	Summer, Camille Pissarro in England with Lucien and Maximilien Luce
FEB-MARCH, Goupil, Daubigny		Pall Mall Gazette, Anon, 'The Gospel of 'Impressionism'. A Conversation Between two Impressionists and a Philistine', 21 July, 1890 The Whirlwind, Journal of London Impressionists between June-Dec. Whistler, 'The Gentle Art of Making Enemies'	Sickert, 'Philip Wilson Steer'	Rudyard Kipling, 'Plain Tales from the Hills'
Paris, Boussod & Valadon, C. Pissarro			Steer, 'Girls Running, Walberswick Pier', 1890-4 Steer, 'Portrait of Mrs Cyprian Williams'	John Davidson, 'Perfervid'
FEB-APRIL, Glasgow Institute, inc. Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, Lavery, Monticelli, Sickert, Starr, W. Stott		Henley, (A.W), 'A Century of Artists: a Memorial of the Glasgow Exhibition'	Steer, 'On the Shore', 1890-4	
MARCH-APRIL, Dowdeswell, inc.: Monticelli, Segantini		Magazine of Art, Vol.13, 'Newlyn and the Newlyn School', W. Christian Symons, pp.199-205 Magazine of Art, Vol.13, 'Personal Reminiscences of Jules Bastien-Lepage', pp.83-88	Steer, 'The Ermine Sea'	
Paris, Independanis, inc., Anguetin, Cross, Van Gogh, Luce, O. Conor, L. Pissarro, Rousseau, Seurat, Signac, Toulouse-Lautrec		Art Journal, 'Landscape Painting in Japan', pp.121-6	Steer, 'The Sprigged Frock'	
MARCH-MAY			James Guthrie, 'The Morning Walk'	
New English, inc., Blanche, Clausen, Guthrie, Lavery, T. Roussel, Sickert, Starr, Steer, E. Stott, W. Stott	The Magazine of Art, Vol.13, p.xxx. short review of NEAC		George Henry and E. A. Hornel, 'The Druids: Bringing in the Mistletoe'	
	The Spectator, D.S. MacColl. First article to praise NEAC and Steer in particular, esp. 'Jonquils'		Charles Conder, 'The Moutin Rouge'	

APRIL-MAY , Goupil, Anton Mauve				William Stott, 'Hollyhocks'	
MAY onwards, R.A. inc.: Fantin-Latour, Forbes, Forbes-Robertson, Osborne, Sargent, E. Stott				Stanhope Forbes, 'By Order of the Court'	
Paris, Salon des Artistes Francais, inc., Brangwyn, Fantin-Latour, Guthrie, Martin, Renoir, W. Stott, Vallotton	Art Weekly , 'The Royal Academy Exhibition', Walter Sickert, 10th May. (Journal ed. Francis Bate and A. Thomson)			Marianne Stokes, 'The Passing Train'	
Paris, Salon du Champ de Mars, inc. Blanche, Boldini, Carriere, Cazin, Cross, Dagnan-Bouveret, Harrison, Puvion de Chavannes, T. Roussel, Sargent.				Bertram Priestman, 'A Hazy Day on the Rochester River'	
MAY , New Gallery, inc. Clausen, la Thangue, Sargent, E. Stott				Paul Maitland, 'Kensington Gardens'	
MAY , Fine Art Society, Alfred East: Pictures of Japan	Magazine of Art , Vol 13, short review of East, p.xxx			Christine Cockerell, 'In the Hayfield'	
MAY-JULY , Grosvenor Gallery, inc., Clausen, Fantin-Latour, Guthrie, Hornel, Lavery, W. Stott (large Glasgow contingent)	Magazine of Art , Vol.13. 'Current Art: The Grosvenor Gallery', Walter Armstrong, 325-328				
	Art Journal , June, review of RA, Grosvenor and New Gallery shows, pp.161-172				
SUMMER , Hanover Gallery, inc.: Cazin, Kilmopff, Raffaelli					
AUTUMN , Liverpool, Walker, inc., Fantin-Latour, Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne, Steer, E. Stott, W. Stott					
	Magazine of Art , Sept. George Moore, 'Degas the Painter of Modern Life', pp.416-425				

<p>OCT, New Gallery, 1st exh. Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, inc. Clausen</p>		
<p>OCT, Grosvenor Gallery, pastel exh., inc. Blanche, Clausen, Forbes-Robertson, Guthrie, Kihnoppff, Raffaelli, Steer, W. Stott, Toorop</p>	<p>Art Journal, Oct., 'George Clausen', RAM Stevenson, pp.289-294.</p>	
<p>DEC-MARCH, 1891, Glasgow Institute, inc., Guthrie, Henry, Lavery, Monticelli, T. Roussel, Steer, W. Stott</p>		
<p>DEC, Paris, G. Petit, Exposition Internationale (1st of new series), inc., Blanche, Sisley, A. Stevens</p>		
<p>DEC-JAN 1891, Paris, Durand-Ruel, <i>Un groupe d'artistes</i>, inc. Besnard, Blanche, Carriere, Fantin-Latour</p>		

1891	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan, Steer at his Glebe Studios	Saturday Review, Jan 17, p.75, unsigned.	D.S. MacColl writing unsigned then signed criticism in <i>The Spectator</i> . April 25, Vol.66, p.594, 'Mr W.B. Richmond on the Portrait'. 12 Dec, lxvii, p.846, 'Theoretical Precedents for Impressionism', notice of the old water colour exhibition.	David Murray, 'A Hampshire Haying' Dawson Dawson Watson, 'Harvest Time'	Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbevilles	
Feb, Fine Art Society, 'Kate Greenaway'		Magazine of Art, 'The Maddocks Collection at Bradford', Butler Wood, 1, pp. 298-305, 2, pp. 337-344	Clausen, 'The Mowers'		
Feb, McLean's Gallery, Barbizon painters inc., Diaz, Corot, Troyon, Daubigny. Also Monticelli		George Moore writing criticism in <i>The Speaker</i>	Conder, 'The Plum Tree'		
March, Fine Art Society, 'Alfred Parsons; Gardens and Orchards', cat. note by Henry James, a eulogy on English gardens.		P.G. Hamerton, 'The Present State of the Fine Arts in France: Impressionism', <i>Portfolio</i> , February n.s.13, 67-74	Hornel, 'The Dance of Spring and Midsummer'		
March, Goupil, Diaz		J. Stanley Little, 'The Future of Landscape Art', <i>Nineteenth Century</i> , August, xxxii, p.205, (Barbizon painters as true 'Impressionists'	Monet, 'Haystacks, Snow Effect'		
March-April, Independants, inc., Anquetin, Bernard, Bonnard, Cross, Denis, Van Gogh, Guillaumin, Luce, L. Pissarro, Rousseau, Van Rysselburghe, Seurat, Signac, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vallotton		Magazine of Art, Walter Armstrong, 'David Murray', pp.397-401			
March, Royal Society of British Artists	Saturday Review, unsigned review, pp.383-4, 'To look around its sleepy chambers who would imagine that so few years ago it was purged by Mr Whistler'.	Magazine of Art, C.L. Burns 'Constable's Country', pp.282-288			
April, Durand-Ruel, Camille Pissarro		The Saturday Review, July 11, pp.43-4, on the new Society of Portrait Painters			
		Hon. John Collier, 'A Manual of Oil Painting', 5th Ed.			

April, Dowdeswell, Mortimer Menpes, works from India, Burma and Kashmir					
April-May, Boussod & Valadon, Carriere					
May onwards. Royal Academy, inc. Clausen,, Fantin-Latour, Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne, Sargent					
May onwards, Salon des Artistes Francais, inc. Brangwyn, Corinthe, Fantin-Latour, Guthrie, Martin, Tuke					
May onwards, Societe Nationale, inc. Berard, Besnard, Blanche, Boldini, Carriere, Cazin, Cross, Dagnan-Bouveret, Harrison, Hodler, Puvis de Chavannes, Sargent, Whistler					
May, Durand-Ruel, Monet, inc. Haystacks series					
May, New Gallery, inc. Khnopff, Osborne, E. Stott, W. Stott					
May-June, NEAC, inc. Blanche, Clausen, Henry, Hornel, O'Conor, T. Roussel, Russell, Sickert, Starr, Steer, E. Stott	(date right?) Saturday Review, review, April 18, pp. 468-9, unsigned,. (its growing respectability, except for Steer)				
June, Goupil and McLean's, Lavery	Saturday Review, June 20, pp.742-3				
June-July, Dowdeswell, Early English Masters, 18th and early 19th.					
Summer, Hanover Gallery, inc., Cazin, Clausen, Courbet, Raffaelli					
Summer, Hanover Gallery, Dutch Watercolours.					
Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, inc., Fantin-Latour, Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne, Steer, E. Stott, W. Stott, Whistler					

<p>November, NEAC, inc. Blanche, Brown, Clausen, Degas, Fry, Furse, Guthrie, Harrison, Henry, Maitland, Monet, Paterson, T. Roussel, Sargent, Sickert, Steer, Starr, Tuke</p>	<p>The Spectator, D.S. MacColl, 'Impressionism and the New English Art Club', 5th Dec, lxvii, p.809 The Saturday Review, unsigned, pp.721-2, 'the Impressionists---grow middle aged and sober in the process of the years'</p>			
<p>December, Societe des Beaux-Arts, Mr Collier's Rooms, Old Bone Street, inc. Degas, Monet, Monticelli, Pissarro, Sisley</p>				
<p>December, Le Barc de Boutteville, 1st Exposition des Peintres Impressionistes et Symbolistes, inc. Anquetin, Bernard, Cross, Denis, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Luce, Manet, Roussel, Serusier, Signac, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vuillard</p>				
<p>Winter, 1891-2, New Gallery, The Victorian Exhibition 1837-1887</p>				

1892 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
February, Paris, Durand-Ruel, C. Pissarro		Art Journal, The Private Art Collections of London: The Late Mr Frederick Leyland in Princes Gate', pp.129-138	Steer, 'A Procession of Yachts, Cowes', 1892-3	Death of Richard Jeffries
February, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Monet, Poupais series		Art Journal, March, Wilfred Meynell, 'Mr Sianhope Forbes', pp.65-69	Henry Tonks, 'The Hat Shop'	Severe agricultural depression up until 1899.
February-April, Glasgow Institute, Degas, Fantin-Latour, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, Lavery, Raffaelli, T. Roussel, Sickert, Steer, Whistler		Andre Theuriot, 'Jules Bastien-Lepage and His Art', with chapters by Clausen and Sickert	James Guthrie, 'Midsummer' George Clausen, 'Evening Song'	
March, Paris, Père Thomas, Conder and Rothenstein		Art Journal, 'Professor Herkomer's School', pp. 289-293	Walter Osborne, 'J.B.S. MacIlwaine'	
March-April, Goupil, Whistler retrospective.		Art Journal, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'Recent Fashions in French Art', pp.326-330 and 358-361	Charles Conder, 'Springtime'	
March-April, Durand-Ruel, 1st Salon de la Rose + Croix		Art Journal, 'Ernest Paron', pp.353-7	Edward Stott, 'On A Summer Afternoon'	
March, Barbizon Gallery, inc., Beraud, Cazin, Monticelli		Art Journal, 'John Linnell's Country', pp.301-5	'Boys Bathing, Amberley Wildbrooks'	
Spring, French Gallery, inc., Bastien-Lepage, Cazin		Fortnightly Review, Jan-June, Walter Sickert, 'Whistler Today', pp.543-547	William Lionel Wyllie, 'The Thames near Charing Cross'	
April, NEAC at the Egyptian Hall, inc., Clausen, Guthrie, Maitland, T. Roussel, Sickert, Starr, Steer, E. Stott	The Saturday Review, pp.446-447, 'It is no longer their theory but their practice which stands in the way of their success', unsigned.	The Magazine of Art, Katharine Tynan, 'Irish Types and Traits', pp.210-13		
April, Le Barc de Boutteville, Van Gogh		The Magazine of Art', Claude Philips, 'Jules Bastien-Lepage', review of Theuriot's book, pp.267-271		
May onwards, Royal Academy, inc., Clausen, Fantin-Latour, Forbes, La Thangue, Lavery, E. Stott	The Art Journal, Claude Philips, pp.220-223 The Fortnightly Review, Vol.57, George Moore, 'The Royal Academy', pp.828-839.	Art Journal, 'Art Critics of Today', pp.194-197 P. G Hamerton, 'The Present State of the Fine Arts in France'		

<p>May, Durand-Ruel, Renoir May, Societe Nationale, inc., Blanche, Bernard, Carriere, Cazin, Conder, Cross, Dagnan-Bouveret, Guthrie, Harrison, Raffaelli, Puvis de Chavannes, Sargent, Whistler.</p>				
<p>May, Salon des Artistes Francais, inc., Brangwyn, Fantin-Latour, Martin,</p>				
<p>June, McLean Gallery. 42 mostly chalk studies by Millet.</p>	<p>The Saturday Review, 'Millet extracts poetry from the simplest and least ornamental elements of life (an Englishman would compare him) to the poet Crabbe. p.652</p>			
<p>July, Barbizon Gallery, inc., Manet July, Society of Portrait Painters, 2nd annual exh., inc., Whistler and Millais. (no Sargent)</p>				
<p>July, Society of British Artists, 70th Anniversary, inc., Burne- Jones, Watts and Leighton</p>	<p>The Saturday Review, unsigned review, pp.75-76</p>			
<p>Summer, Continental Gallery, inc., Guthrie, Harrison, Boldini, Degas Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, inc. Clausen, Fantin-Latour, Forbes, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, Knopff, Osborne, Sickert, Steer, W. Stott, E. Stott</p>				
<p>October, Durand-Ruel, 'Degas', pastel and monotype landscapes.</p>	<p>The Speaker, Nov.26, George Moore, 'The New English Art Club', p.645-6. The Saturday Review, Dec.3, unsigned, p.647</p>			
<p>November, NEAC, inc., Blanche, Degas, Fry, Henry, Nicholson, Sargent, Sickert, Steer.</p>				

<p>November, 3rd exposition of Impressionist and Symbolist painters, inc., Cross, Denis, Gauguin, C. Pissarro, Roussel, Serusier, Toulouse-Lautrec</p>				
<p>December, Dowdeswell, Early British Painters</p>				
<p>December, Goupil Gallery, 64 watercolours by Brabazon</p>	<p>The Saturday Review, p.684</p>			
<p>Winter, 1892-3, New Gallery, Burne - Jones</p>				

1893 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
January, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Utamaro and Hiroshige		George Moore, <i>Modern Painting</i> , art criticism from 'The Speaker'	Walter Sickert, 'Hôtel Royal, Dieppe'	
February, Paris, Boussod & Valadon, Maurin and Toulouse-Lautrec February, Grafton Galleries, Inaugural exhibition, inc. Clausen, Blanche, Carriere, Degas, Gauld, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, Khnopff, Lavery, Liebermann, Roussel, Stott, Whistler.	D.S. MacColl, 'The Inexhaustible Picture' (Degas's L'Absinthe), <i>The Spectator</i> , 25th Feb. p.256 Unsigned review, <i>Sketch</i> , (KF, P.281) Unsigned review, <i>The Artist</i> , (KF, p.282), praises Degas & Whistler <i>Westminster Gazette</i> , 'The New Art Criticism: A Philistine's Remonstrance', (Quilter) (in KF, pp.283-4)	George Moore, 'The New Art Criticism', <i>The Speaker</i> , March, pp.341-2 & 367-8 George Moore, 'The Whistler Album', <i>The Speaker</i> , Dec, pp.581-2 G.B.B. 'Impressionism in France: A Debatable View', <i>Art Journal</i> , p.28 D.S. MacColl, 'Mr Whistler's Paintings in Oil', <i>Art Journal</i> , pp.88-93	Philip Wilson Steer, 'A Classic Landscape, Richmond' Philip Wilson Steer, 'The Thames at Richmond' George Clausen, 'The Little Flowers of the Field'	
February-May, Glasgow Institute, inc., Boldini, Hornel, Lavery, Raffaelli, T. Roussel, Steer, W. Stott March, Durand-Ruel, C. Pissarro		D.S. MacColl, 'The Standard of the Philistine', <i>The Spectator</i> , 18 March, pp.357-8 Walter Pater, review of Moore's <i>Modern Painting</i> in <i>Daily Chronicle</i> 10 June, (KF, p.130) <i>The Spectator</i> , probably MacColl, unsigned review of <i>Modern Painting</i> 18 Nov, (KF, p.131)	James Guthrie, 'Oban' Lucien Pissarro, 'Portrait of Esther'	
March-April, 2nd exh. Rose & Croix.		R.A.M. Stevenson, 'The Growth of Recent Art', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.1, April, pp.7-10,	H.H. La Thangue, 'In the Orchard'	
March-April, Independantis, inc., Bonnard, Cross, Denis, O'Conor, L. Pissarro, Rousseau.			Lucien Pissarro, 'Route de Thierceville'	
April, NEAC, inc., Conder, Degas, Fry, Monet, Sargent, Osborne, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer, E Stott	George Moore, 'The New English Art Club', <i>The Speaker</i> , pp.422-5	'The Nude in Photography', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.1, April, pp.104-108		

	<p>review prob. Charles Whibley, National Observer, 'New or Old', (KF, pp.312-3), esp. on the 3 Monets, 'the very anarchy of painting'</p> <p>review in Spectator, April 15, p. 403</p> <p>Spectator, April 22, (and Meissonier), pp.522-3</p>		
<p>May onwards, Salon des Artistes Francaises, inc., Brangwyn, Fantin-Latour, Martin.</p> <p>May onwards, Royal Academy, inc. Clausen, F. Latour, Forbes, Lavery, La Thangue, Murray, Osborne, W. Stott</p>		<p>George Moore, 'The Royal Academy', The Speaker, pp. 482-3</p> <p>D.S. MacColl, 'The Royal Academy', The Fortnightly Review, Vol.59, pp.881-9</p> <p>The Academy, May 1893, p.421</p> <p>The Athenaeum, 13 May, p.610</p> <p>The Saturday Review, 13 May, p.515</p> <p>The Spectator, D.S.M, April 29, p.573</p> <p>The Times, May 6, p.17</p>	
<p>?May, 4th Exposition des Peintres Impressionistes et Symbolistes.</p>			
<p>May, New Gallery, inc. Khnopff, La Thangue, Sargent, E. Stott</p>			
<p>June - July, Early British Masters</p>			

<p>Summer, Continental Gallery, inc., Besnard, La Touche, Roll</p>				
<p>Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, inc., Besnard, Conder, Hornel, La Thangue, Manet, Monet, Osborne, Segantini, Sickert, E. Stott, W. Stott</p>				
<p>October, La Plume offices, organized by Le Barc de Boutteville, 'Les Portraits du Prochain siecle', inc., Anquetin, Bernard, Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh</p>				
<p>October, Goupil Gallery, Steer</p>			<p>Walter Sickert review of Steer, <i>The Studio</i>, Vol.2, Oct. p.223</p>	
<p>November, New Gallery, Arts and Crafts Exhibition, inc., L. Pissarro</p>				
<p>November, Durand-Ruel, Gauguin, Tahitian paintings</p>				
<p>November-December, NEAC., inc., Blanche, Conder, Fry, Henry, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer</p>				
<p>November-December, G. Petit, Exposition Internationale.</p>				
<p>November-December, Grafton Galleries, l'Art Decoratif Francais, inc., L. Pissarro, (woodcuts)</p>				
<p>November-December, Durand-Ruel, Mary Cassatt</p>				
<p>December, 5th Exposition des Peintres, Impressionistes et Symbolistes, inc., the usual plus Conder</p>				
<p>December-January, 1894, Galerie Laffitte, Peintres Neo-Impressionistes</p>				

1894	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan-March, Grafton Galleries, inc., Blanche, Guthrie, Lavery, Renoir, Roussel, W. Stott, Whistler	Feb, Goupil, Steer	RAM Stevenson, Pall Mall Gazette, 27 Feb. 1894	The Studio, 'Some Paintings by Joseph Crawhall', Vol.3, pp.166-70	William Rothenstein, 'Coster Girls'	Kipling, <i>The Jungle Book</i>
Feb-March, Glasgow Institute, F-L, Guthrie, Henry, La Thangue, Lavery, T. Roussel, Steer	March, Durand-Ruel (Paris), C. Pissarro	The Studio, 'A Chat with Mr Whistler', Vol.4, pp.116-21	RAM Stevenson, 'William Stott of Oldham', The Studio, Vol.4, pp.3-15	Joseph Crawhall, 'The Race Course', (-1900)	Yeats, <i>The Land of Heart's Desire</i>
March, 6th Impressionistes & Symbolistes (Paris), inc. Bonnard, Conder, Denis, Gauguin, O'Conor	April onwards, Societe Nationale (Paris), inc: Blanche, Carriere, Denis, Guthrie, Harrison, Lavery, Puvvis, W. Stott	Gabriel Mourey, 'Puvvis de Chavannes', The Studio, Vol.4, 1894, pp.170-180	The Studio, 'The Paintings and Etchings of Mrs Stanhope Forbes', Vol.4, pp.186- 92	Charles Holloway, 'Tilbury Fort'	Shaw, <i>Arms and the Man</i>
April-May, NEAC, inc: Fry, Henry, Nicholson, Rothenstein, Steer, E. Stott	April-May, Independents (Paris), inc. L. Pissarro, Rousseau, Toulouse- Lautrec	D.S. MacColl, 'The Royal Academy', Fortnightly Review, Vol.71, 1894, pp.711-30	RAM Stevenson, 'Grez', Magazine of Art, pp.27-32	Francis James, 'Italian Scene' & 'Coastal Scene'	George Moore, <i>Esther Waters</i>
April-May, Societe Nationale (P), inc: Blanche, Carriere, Conder, Guthrie, Harrison, Helleu, Lavery, Puvvis, Sargent, W. Stott, Tissot, Whistler	May onwards, Salon (P), inc., Forbes, Martin, Brangwyn	review, George Moore The Speaker, April 14, p.417	D.S. MacColl, 'Professor Brown: Teacher and Painter', Magazine of Art, pp.403-9	Albert Ludovici jun, 'A Busy Street'	Oscar Wilde, <i>Salome</i>
May onwards, RA, Clausen, Forbes, Lavery, La Thangue, Osborne, Sargent, W. Stott	May onwards, The Speaker, May 5, p.499	The Yellow Book first published	The Studio, Vol.3, 'The Poetic in Paint. By a Landscape Painter', pp. 101-6	William Rothenstein, 'Hablant Espagnol'	Grenville A. Cole, <i>The Gipsy Road</i> , reviewed in Studio, Vol.3, p.xv, 'a book of modern tourist travel'
			The Art Journal, Theodore Duret, 'Degas', July, pp.204-8	Charles Conder, 'Scene on the Epte'	
				Walter Sickert, 'L'Hotel Royal, Dieppe'	
				E.A. Hornel, 'Japanese Dancing Girls'	

May New Gallery, inc., Fantin-Latour, Forbes, Lavery, E. Stott					
May, Grafton Galleries, inc., Lavery, T. Rousel, W. Stott					
May, Durand-Ruel (P), Toulouse-Lautrec					
May, Durand-Ruel (P), Manet	review by Camille Maclair, Art Journal , Sept. 1895, pp.274-9 (KF)				
July, 7th exh. Impressionist and Symbolist Painters (P), inc., Conder, O'Conor, Toulouse-Lautrec					
Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, Clausen, Forbes, Fry, La Thangue, Osborne, T. Rousel, Sargent, Steer, E. Stott, W. Stott					
Nov, 8th exh., Imp. & Symbolist painters (P), inc., Bonnard, Denis, O'Conor, Toulouse-Lautrec					
Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Blanche, Conder, Fry, Henry, Rothenstein, Sargent, Sickert, Steer	review, The Studio , Vol.4, pp.71-5, Frederick Wedmore				

1895	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan Dutch Gallery, Walter and Bernhard Sickert		Frank Richards, 'Newlyn as a Sketching Ground', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol. 5, pp.174-181	Francis Bate, 'The Weeping Ash' Steer, 'Easby Abbey'	Founding of 'National Trust for Places of Historical Interest and Natural Beauty'	
Feb-May, Glasgow Institute, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, La Thangue, Lavery, Monet, Monticelli, Roussel, Steer, W. Stott, Whistler		Dewey Bates, 'George Clausen', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.5, pp.3-8	Charles Conder, 'Beach Scene, Dieppe' Steer, 'Girl Reading a Book'	Hardy, 'Jude the Obscure'	
April onwards, Societe Nationale (P), inc., Blanche, Carriere, Cazin, Denis, Guthrie, Harrison, Helleu, Lavery, Puvis, W. Stott		<i>The Studio</i> , 'Afternoons in Studios, Henry Scott Tuke at Falmouth', Vol.5, pp.90-5	Wynford Dewhurst, 'French Landscape'	H.G. Wells, 'The Time Machine'	
April-May, NEAC, inc. Conder, Fry, Rothenstein, Steer, E. Stott		J. Stanley Little, 'The Work of Edward Stott', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.6, pp71-83	Roger Fry, 'Harvest Time, Gathering Storm'	Oscar Wilde, 'The Importance of Being Ernest'	
May onwards, RA, inc. Clausen, Forbes, La Thangue, Lavery, Osborne, Sargent, W. Stott		Walter Armstrong, 'Alfred East, RA', <i>The Studio</i> , pp.81-88	Charles E. Holloway, 'Tilbury Fort'	Salisbury P.M	
May onwards, Salon, (P), Brangwyn, Herkomer, F-L, Martin		RAM Stevenson, <i>Velazquez</i>	Francis James, 'Coastal Scene'	Henry Wood's 1st Prom	
May, New Gallery, Clausen, La Thangue, Sargent, E. Stott		Max Nordau, <i>Degeneration</i> Bernard Shaw, response to Nordau in July 1895, published in 1908 in <i>Sanity in Art</i> , (KF pp.140-3)	William Rothenstein, 'Hablant Espagnol'		
May Durand-Ruel, (P) Monet		<i>Art Journal</i> , June, p.190. unsigned obituary, Berthe Morisot, (KF)	Walter Sickert, 'Nocturne, The Dogana and Santa Maria Della Salute'		

<p>Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, Forbes, La Thangue, Sargent, E. Stott, W. Stott</p>			<p>Edward Stott, 'Noonday'</p>	
<p>Nov-Dec, Vollard, (P) Cezanne</p>			<p>Henry Tonks, 'The Hat Shop'</p>	
<p>Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Conder, Rothenstein, Fry, Sickert, Steer, W. Stott</p>	<p>review Frederick Wedmore, The Studio, Jan 1896, Vol,6, pp213-19, (what is the clientele of the NEAC?)</p>		<p>Arthur Tomson, 'a September Morning'</p>	

1896	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan, Durand-Ruel, (P), Bonnard		Frederick Wedmore, Vol. 7, 'The Art of Alfred East', <i>The Studio</i> , pp.133-42	David Gauld, 'Greze from the River', (-7)	Daily Mail founded National Portrait Gallery founded	
Feb-May, Glasgow Institute, Blanche, F-L, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, Lavery, Roussel, W. Stott, Whistler		Herbert Sharp, <i>The Studio</i> , Vol. 7, 'A Short Account of the Work of Edward John Poynter, RA', pp.3-15 <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.7, Studio talk-Newlyn and St.Ives, N. Garstin , pp.49-50 <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.7, Private Schools of Art, No.II, (on Francis Bate's studio), pp.226-235	Clausen, 'Bird Scaring, March'	Glasgow School of Art A.E Horseman, <i>A Shropshire Lad</i> Max Beerbohm, 'Works of-- Marconi's wireless patent	
March, Durand-Ruel, (P), Berthe Morisot retro.	review <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.7, p.179	Lewis Hine, Vol.8, 'The Work of J. J. Shannon', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.8, pp.65-75	Steer, 'Richmond Castle'	Derby Day filmed	
April-May, Durand-Ruel, (P), C. Pissarro		D.S. MacColl, 'Manet', <i>Saturday Review</i> , 12 Dec, 1896, p.621	La Thangue, 'In a Cottage Garden', (RA)	Alfred Austin, Poet laureate	
April-May, Bing, (P), Carriere		James Stanley Little, 'A.D. Peppercom', <i>Art Journal</i> , 1896, pp.201-5	La Thangue, 'A Little Holding'	Morris prints <i>Kelmscott Chaucer</i>	
April-May, NEAC, inc., Fry, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer, E. Stott	advance notice of <i>The Studio</i> , Vol. 7, p.110 Note on Steer's 'Reading Girl' <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.7, p.239 (not in show)	Richard Muther, 'The History of Modern Painting', Vol.3 <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.8, 'The Work of Solomon J. Solomon ARA', A. L. Baldry, pp.3-10	Walter Sickert, 'The Facade of St Mark's'		
April-May, Goupil, W. Stott		George Thomson, Vol.9, 'H.H. La Thangue and his Work', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.9, pp.163-77			
April onwards, Societe Nationale, (P) Blanche, Cazin, Guthrie, Denis, Harrison, Helleu, Hodler, Lavery, Matisse, W. Stott, Whistler		J. Stanley Little, 'Maurice Grieffenhagen and his Work', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol. 9, pp.235-245			

<p>May, Salon, (P), F-L, Herkomer, Martin, Rouault</p>		<p>Art Journal, Gabriel Mourey, July 1896, 'Contemporary French Art by a Young Critic', p.216 (KF) on 'the fatal influence of the Impressionist School'</p>		
<p>May onwards, RA, Clausen, Forbes, Harrison, Lavery, La Thangue, Osborne, Sargent, E. Stott, W. Stott</p>	<p>review The Studio, Vol.7, pp.175-6, 'by far the best that has been held for years'</p> <p>The Studio, Vol.8, 'Some Pictures at the Royal Academy. Criticised by a French Painter', Aman Jean, pp.109-112</p>			
<p>May, New Gallery, inc. Clausen,</p>				
<p>May-June, Durand-Ruel, (P), Renoir</p>				
<p>June-July, Goupil, 'A Pre-Raphaelite Collection'</p>				
<p>Summer, Dutch Gallery, inc., Manet, Monticelli, Whistler</p>				
<p>Summer, New Gallery, Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, inc., Boldini, Conder, Gauld, Osborne, L. Pissarro</p>				
<p>Sept, Durand-Ruel, (P), Puvis de Chavannes</p>				
<p>Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Conder, Fry, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer</p>	<p>D.S. MacColl, 'The New English Art Club', The Studio, Vol.9, 1896, pp.285-288</p>			
<p>Winter, 1896-7, New Gallery, G.F. Watts</p>				

1897	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Feb-May, Glasgow Institute, inc., Fergusson, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, La Thangue, Lavery, Monet, Monticelli, Rothenstein, Whistler. W. Stott			D. Martin <i>The Glasgow School of Painting</i> Quarterly Review, Jan, W. Sichel, 'Impressionism and Literature', p.173, (KF)	Camille Pissarro, 'Bath Road, London',	Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Conrad, <i>Nigger of the Narcissus</i>
March, Paris, 6th Salon de la Rose & Croix			The Studio, Vol.X, Norman Garstin, 'The Work of T. Millie Dow', pp.145-152	Alfred Sisley, 'La Falaise a Penarth, le soir, marée basse	Havelock Ellis, <i>The Psychology of Sex</i>
April-May, NEAC, inc. Fry. Renoir, Sickert, Steer	The Studio, Vol.X, review of NEAC, p.254, 'nothing--- unreasonably eccentric'. Praises Tonks and Steer	Quarterly Review, April, Julia Cartwright, pp.360-89, reviews of Muther,s <i>History of Modern Painting</i> . Andre Michel's. <i>Notes Sur l'Art Moderne</i> etc (KF)	La Thangue, 'An Autumn Morning'	Tate Gallery founded	
April-May, Paris, Independants, inc. Cross, Luce, Signac			The Studio, J. Stanley Little, review of Julia Cartwright's <i>Jean Francois Millet: His Life and Letters</i> , pp.266-7	Conder, 'Watching the Fireworks, St. Cloud'	Royal Automobile Club founded
April, Paris, Salon, inc., Fantin-Latour, Martin, Tuke				George Thomson, 'St Pauls'	
April, onwards Paris, Societe Nationale, inc., Blanche, Carriere, Denis, Guthrie, Harrison, Helleu, Lavery, Matisse, W. Stott, Whistler				Steer, 'The Vista, Knaresborough'	
May onwards, RA inc: Clausen.				Steer, 'An Oak Avenue'	
Fantin-Latour, Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne, Sargent, E. Stott					
May, New Gallery, inc., Conder, La Thangue, Sargent, E. Stott					
May, Dutch Gallery, The Maris Brothers					

<p>June-July, Paris, Le Barc de Boutteville, 14th Exposition des Peintres Impressionistes et Symbolistes</p>				
<p>Autuma, Liverpool, Walker Gallery, Bastien-Lepage, Forbes, Fantin-Latour, Hornel, Lavery, Sargent, W. Stott</p>		<p>The Studio, Vol. XI, Burnley Bibb, 'The Work of Segantini', pp. 145-156 The Studio, Vol. XI, Norman Garstin, 'Tangier as a Sketching Ground', pp. 177-182</p>		
<p>Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Conder, Fry, Sickert, Steer</p>				
<p>Dec, Paris, 15th and last Exposition des Peintres Impressionistes et Symbolistes, inc. Toulouse Lautrec</p>		<p>The Studio, Vol. XII, 1897-8, J. Stanley Little, 'Frank Brangwyn & his Art', pp. 3-20 The Studio, Vol. XII, Mortimer Menpes, 'A Letter from Japan', p.21</p>		

1898	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
	Jan, South London Art Gallery, inc. Clausen, Manet, Monet		W.J. Laidlay, <i>The Royal Academy: Its Uses and Abuses</i>	P. Maitland, 'Kensington Gardens'	Wilde, <i>The Ballad of Reading Gaol</i>
	Feb-May, Glasgow, Clausen, Guthrie, Horne, Lavery, T. Roussel, W. Stott, Whistler		M.H. Spielmann, <i>Millais and his Works</i>	Steer, Ludlow Castle, Stormy Sky	Burne-Jones dies
	March, Goupil, inc., Cazin, Clausen, Whistler		George Moore, <i>Modern Painting</i> , 2nd ed.	Sargent, 'Asher Wertheimer'	Poe, <i>Turn of the Screw</i>
	April, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Guillaumin		The Studio , Vol. 12, Gleeson White, 'Gerald Moira's Paintings and Bas-Reliefs', p.231	Steer, 'Birdnesting, Ludlow'	Hardy, <i>Wessex Poems</i>
	April - May, NEAC, inc., Conder, Degas, Fry, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer	review, The Studio , vol.14, pp.53-4	Saturday Review , D.S. MacColl, on Degas drawings at the Goupil, 26 March, p.426, (KF)	Henry Tonks, 'Sleepless Night'	Wells, <i>War of the Worlds</i>
	April - June, Paris, Independants, inc. Cross. Luce, Rousseau, Signac		The Studio , Vol. 12, Fred Wedmore, 'Francis James Watercolours', pp.259-266	Edward Stott, 'The Gleaners', (NG)	English Folksong Soc
	Spring, Continental Gallery, inc., Cottet, Martin		The Studio , 'A Record of Art in 1898', eg., Tuke's Fishing', Steer's 'The Vista', Clausen's 'The Harrow'	Steer, 'Ludlow Walks' 'Toilet of Venus'	Ebenezer Howard, <i>Tomorrow: Peaceful Path to Social Reform</i>
	Spring, Dutch Gallery, inc., Fantin-Latour, Monticelli, E. Stott		The Studio , Vol. 13, A.L. Baldry, 'The Work of T.C. Gotch', pp.73-82	Munnings, Daniel Tomkins and his Dog'	Edward Thomas, The Speaker , Oct., 'The Coming of Autumn', pp. 487-8
	May onwards, RA, inc, Clausen, Fantin-Latour, Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne, Sargent, Sickert, E. Stott, W. Stott		The Studio , Vol. 13, D.S. MacColl, 'Paintings on Silk of Charles Conder', pp.232-239	J.B. Knight, 'The Advent of Spring' (NEAC)	
	May, Goupil, Toulouse Lautrec		The Studio , Vol.14, A.L. Baldry, 'The Work of Bertram Priestman', pp.77-86	Lavery, 'A Garden in France'	Laurence Housman, <i>A Book of Devotional Love Poems</i>
	May, Continental Gallery, Carriere		Magazine of Art , 'The Building up of a Picture', the Late Lord Leighton, pp.1-2	A. S. Hartrick, 'Happy Valley' (NEAC)	
	May, New Gallery, inc., Khnopff, Sargent, E. Stott	review, The Studio , Vol.14, pp. 51-3		Fred Hall, 'The Drinking Pool'	
				W.W. Russell, 'The Beach', (NEAC)	

<p>May-June, International Society, 1st ex., Whistler Pres., inc., Blanche, Bonnard, Carriere, Cezanne, Clausen, Conder, Cross, Degas, Denis, Fantin-Latour, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, Klimt, Lavery, Manet, Monet, Puvis de Chavannes, Renoir, Rothenstein, Segantini, Toorop, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vuillard, Whistler</p>	<p>Art Journal, Thomas Dartmouth, 'International Art at Knightsbridge', n.s., xxxvii, pp.249-52</p> <p>Saturday Review, D.S. MacColl, 'The International Exhibition of Fine Art at Knightsbridge', 21st May, 1898, lxxxv, p.681</p> <p>The Nation, unsigned review of Int. Soc, 2nd June, xxxiv, p.420</p> <p>The Studio, Vol. XIV, G. Sauter, 'The International Society', pp.109-120</p> <p>Manchester Courier, 'Manet at the International Exhibition', 16 May, (KF)</p>	<p>Edward Stott, 'The Year's Youth'</p>	
<p>May onwards, Paris, Salon des Artistes Francais</p>		<p>William Rothenstein, 'English Portraits'</p>	
<p>May, onwards, Paris, Societe Nationale, inc., Blanche, Carriere, Cazin, Conder, Denis, Puvis. Sargent</p>		<p>La Thangue, 'The Harvester's Supper'</p>	
<p>June, Paris, Durand-Ruel, C. Pissarro</p>			
<p>June, Guildhall, inc., Bastien-Lepage, Cazin, Degas, Monet, C. Pissarro, Puvis, Renoir, Tissot</p>	<p>Saturday Review, D.S. MacColl, 18th June, lxxxv, p.813, 'French Pictures at the Guildhall'</p> <p>The Studio, Vol. 14, pp. 128-9</p>		
<p>Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, Blanche, Clausen, Forbes, Hornel, La Thangue, Lavery, Osborne, W. Stott</p>			

<p>Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Conder, Fry, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer</p>	<p>Magazine of Art, The Art Movement. The New English Art Club', pp.227-8</p> <p>The Studio. NEAC review, Vol.15, p.191</p>			
<p>Dec, Paris, Gauguin</p> <p>Winter, 1898-9, New Gallery, Burne-Jones</p>				

1899	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
			The Studio , Vol.15, p.298, 'The Lay Figure' on the International Art exh at Knightsbridge	Clausen, 'Allotment Gardens'	
	Jan, Pastel Society, 1st exh., inc: Besnard, Carriere, Clausen, Guthrie, Rothenstein, W. Stott, Whistler		The Studio , Vol.16, 'The Art of 18999'	La Thangue, 'Cutting Bracken'	V&A opens
			Magazine of Art , Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'John S. Sargent as a Portrait-Painter', pp.112-119	Clausen, 'Going to Work', RA*	Boer war (-1902)
	Feb-May, Glasgow Institute, Clausen, Forbes, Guthrie, Hornel, La Thangue, Lavery, Monticelli, T. Roussel, W. Stott, Whistler	Glasgow Institute review, The Studio , Vol.15, p.276-7	Art Journal , Alice Meynell, 'Newlyn', pp.97-102	La Thangue, 'Love in the Harvest Fields', RA*	
			Magazine of Art , 1899, 'The Royal Academy-III', pp.451-7	Mary McCrossan, 'White Herring Boats'	Holst's Symphony, 'The Cotswolds'
	April-May, NEAC, inc., Fry, A. John, Orpen, Osborne, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer	The Studio , Vol.16, p.222 review of NEAC, and pp.265-6	Magazine of Art , Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'Our Rising Artists: Miss Lucy Kemp Welch', pp.481-487	Henry Tuke, 'The Diver'	Elgar, Enigma variations
			Magazine of Art , A.L. Baldry, 'The Work of Mrs Allingham'	Fred Brown, 'Pool'	Monet in London, Thames series
	April, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Monet, C. Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley		Magazine of Art , Arthur Fish, 'A Society of Landscape Painters', pp.218-221, (esp. Leslie Thomson, Waterlow & Peppercorn)	Fred Brown, 'Shropshire Pastoral'	
			Saturday Review , 22nd July, D.S. MacColl, 'Two Painters', (Buxton Knight and Roussel) *, pp.99-100	Steer 'Under the Trees'	National Society for Clean Air.
	May onwards, Paris, Societe Nationale, inc., Blanche, Carriere, Cazin, Denis, Guthrie, La Touche, Le Sidaner, Matisse, Puvvis, W. Stott			Steer, 'Evening'	Town & Country Planning Assoc.
				Alfred Rich, 'Chepstow'	
				D.S. MacColl, 'Marble House, Twickenham'	Laurence Housman, <i>The Field of Clover</i>

<p>French Art, inc., Carriere, Conder, F-L, Puvis, Raffaelli</p>		<p>Work of Alfred Sisley', (died 1899)</p>		
<p>Oct-Nov, Durand-Ruel, Paris, Independants, inc., Cezanne, Cross, Luce, Signac.</p>				
<p>Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Conder, Fry, A. John, Orpen, Osborne, Sickert, Steer</p>	<p>The Speaker, A.M. Daniel, review of NEAC, Nov.25, pp.187-8</p>			

1900 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan, Pastel Society, inc. Clausen		Magazine of Art, Laurence Housman, 'Mr Edward Stott, Painter of the Field and of the Twilight', pp.528-536	Walter Osborne, 'The Birthday Party'	Deaths of Ruskin and Wilde
Jan, Paris, Bernheim Jeune, Renoir		Magazine of Art, 'The English Pre-Raphaelites', pp.125-128	Oppenheimer, 'Bexhill Beach'	Relief of Mafeking
Feb-May, Glasgow, inc. Clausen, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, Monticelli, Sargent, W. Stott		The Studio, A.L. Baldry, 'The Art of J.S. Sargent, RA, Vol. 19, pp.3-20 & 107-119 The Studio, E.T. Cook, Vol.19, 'Ruskin as Artist and Art Critic', pp.77-92	Steer, 'Mrs Cyril Butler and her Children' (NEAC.s)	Elgar, 'Dream of Gerontius'
March, Paris, 1st exh. Societe Nouvelle de Peintres et de Sculpteurs, Pres. Gabriel Mourey	The Studio, announcement and illustrations, Vol.19, pp.93-106	Art Journal, Wilfred Meynell, 'Mr and Mrs Adrian Stokes', pp.193-8 The Studio, Harriet Ford, Vol. 19, 'The Work of Mrs Adrian Stokes', pp.149-156 (ill. of 'The Passing Train') The Studio, Vol. 19, pp. 268-70. Description of Tuke's boys. *	Steer, 'The Embarkment' W. W. Russell, 'Lady in Black' (NEAC.s)	Central London railway (tuppenny tube) 2nd ed. Kenneth Grahame's <i>The Golden Age</i> (1st 1895)
April, Carfax Gallery, Conder		The Studio, Vol.20, pp. 3-37, A.L. Baldry, 'The Art of 1900	Tonks, 'Rosamund and the Purple Jar'	Wallace Collection
April-May, NEAC, inc. Conder, Fry, A. John, G. John, Orpen, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer	Art Journal, Frank Rinder, NEAC review, p.27 Art Journal, NEAC, 'uncontrolled experimentalism', p.189 The Studio, Vol.19, pp.263-4	The Studio, (Sept) Vol.20, 'The Work of Arnesby Brown', pp.213-6 The Studio, Vol.20, Mrs Arthur Bell, 'James Aumonier and his Work', pp.141-148	Arnesby Brown, 'After the Heat of the Day' Arthur Lemon, 'The Day's Work Done'	Daily Express First Zeppelin flight

April, Paris, Bernheim Jeune, Bonnard, Denis, Ranson, Roussel, Vallotton, Vuillard		The Studio, (Nov), Vol.21, RAM Stevenson, 'A.D. Peppercorn, An Appreciation', pp.77-85	Roussel, 'The Old Plumbago Works'	Conrad, Lord Jim
April-May, Goupil, Monticelli		A.L. Baldry, <i>John Everett Millais: His Art and Influence</i>	Conder, 'La Plage'	<i>Oxford Book of English Verse</i>
April onwards, Salon, inc. Lavery, Martin		Laurence Binyon, <i>Thomas Girtin. His Life and Works</i>	Lavery, 'The Bridge at Grez'	
April-Oct, Exposition centennale de l'Art Francais, 1800-1889. And Exposition decennale des Beaux Arts, 1889-1900, inc., Clausen, Forbes, La Thangue, Lavery, Melville, Osborne, E. Stott, Rothenstein		George C. Williamson, <i>George J. Pinwell and his Art</i>	East, 'Golden Autumn' RA	
May onwards, RA, inc. Clausen, F-L Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne		William Nicholson, 'Characters of Romance' William Rothenstein, <i>Goya</i>	Fisher, 'The Bathers' L'Hermitte, 'Entering the Fold' Clausen, 'The Gap in the Hedge' Stanhope Forbes, 'The Drinking Place' RA	
May, New Gallery, inc. East, Lemon, Wetherbee, E. Stott, Sargent, Khnopff	Magazine of Art, review of RA, pp.387-10 (esp. on Forbes) Art Journal, review of RA, Frank Rinder, pp.161-183 Art Journal, New Gallery review & ill. Stott's 'The Little Apple Gatherer'		A Peppercorn, 'Landscape with Cattle, near Wool, Dorset'	
Summer, Grafton Gallery, Romney			Rothenstein, 'The Browning Readers'	
July, Continental Gallery, Living British Artists, inc. Clausen, Forbes, Guthrie. Henry, La Thangue, Lavery, Sargent, Stott			Clausen, 'Setting up Sheaves' RA Edward Stott, 'Saturday Night' RA	
			Frank Bramley, 'Through the	

Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, Clausen, Forbes, Lavery, Osborne, Sargent, E. Stott				Mist of Past Years' (Keats), RA	
November, Forbes-Patterson, Monticelli				David Murray, 'A Fair Land is England' RA	
Nov-Dec, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Monet				Edward Stott, 'The Little Apple Gatherer', (New Gallery)	
Nov, 'The Company of the Butterfly', Manchester Square, Whistler's Company, Nicholson				Steer, 'Nidderdale', (NEAC. w)	
Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc. Conder, Fry, A. John, G. John, Orpen, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer	Saturday Review, 24th Nov, D.S. MacColl on NEAC, esp. on Steer, pp.246-7			Steer, 'The Home Meadow', (NEAC. w)	
Dec, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Sickert	The Studio, Vol.21, 1901 review p.259				
Dec, Carfax, Conder and Rothenstein	The Studio, Vol.21, 1901, review, p.281				

1901 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Dec-Jan. Hanover Gallery, French Impressionists, inc., Monet, Moret, C. Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley	D.S. MacColl, 'Impressionists in London', <i>Saturday Review</i> , 26 Jan., 1901, pp.106-7			
Jan-Feb, Paris, Durand-Ruel, C. Pissarro	note in <i>The Studio</i> , Vol. 22, p. 133	<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.21, Jan, Antonin Proust, 'The Art of Edouard Manet', pp.227-236	Steer, 'Hydrangea', (NEAC.s)	Kipling's <i>Kim</i>
Feb-April, Glasgow Institute, inc., Fergusson, Guthrie, Henry, La Thangue, Lavery, Sargent		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.21, Wynford Dewhurst, 'The Work of Didier-Pouget, Landscape Painter'	Alfred East, 'A Passing Storm', purchased by French gov.	South African Concentration camps
March, Goupil, inc. Clausen, Monet, Monticelli, Whistler		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.22, Percy Bate, 'The Work of Macaulay Stevenson', pp.232-242	W.W. Russell, 'A Holiday', (NEAC.s)	Factory Act-children
March, Paris, Bernheim-Jeune, Van Gogh (70 items)		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.23, June, Gabriel Mourey, 'The Work of Jean-Francois Raffaelli'	Mark Fisher, 'The Pool', (NEAC. s)	Rowntree's survey of York
April-May, NEAC, inc, Conder, Fry, Henry, Orpen, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer	<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.23, pp.51 <i>The Art Journal</i> , pp.190-1	<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.23, July, Norman Garstin, 'The Work of Stanhope Forbes', pp.81-88	E.A. Waterlow, 'The Old Sandpit', (RA)	Thomas Hardy, <i>Poems of Past and Present</i>
April, Paris, Durand-Ruel, inc. Valtat		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.23, August, Amyer Vallance, 'The Revival of Tempera Painting', pp. 155-165	Edward Stott, 'The River Bank', (RA)	Accession of Edward VII
April, Bernheim-Jeune, Carriere		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol. 23, Sept., Mrs Arthur Bell, 'Robert Weir Allan and his Work'	Arnesby Brown, 'Morning', (RA)	Monet visits London
April, Paris, Tissot		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol. 24, Oct., Anthony Tahy, 'A Hungarian Painter: Filip E. Laszlo', pp.3-22	Clausen, 'A Gleaner', (RA)	
April-May, Paris, Independants, inc., Bonnard, Cezanne, Cross, Denis, Matisse, Rousseau, Roussel, Signac,		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.24, Gabriel Mourey, 'The Work of M. Le Sidaner', pp.30-6	La Thangue, 'Gathering Plums', (RA)	

Vuillard				Walter Osborne, 'Summer Time', RA	
April-June, Paris, Societe Nationale, inc. Aman-Jean, Blanche, Carriere, Denis, Lavery			C.A. Windle, <i>The Wessex of Thomas Hardy</i> , review The Studio , Vol. 24, p.216	Alfred East, 'The Nene Valley, Northants', purchased by Italian govt. (Studio , vol.23)	
May, onwards RA inc: Clausen, Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne, Sargent, E. Stott	Saturday Review, Vol.91, D.S. MacColl, 'The Rape of Painting', (attacks Sargent), pp.632-3 The Studio, Vol.23, pp. 114-118 Art Journal, pp.160-182, Frank Rinder Magazine of Art, M.H. Spielmann, pp.499-	Art Journal, 1901, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'Mr Francis James', PP. 249-52 Art Journal, Arthur Thomson, 'Some Less Well Known Pictures by Jean-Francois Millet' Magazine of Art, Camille Mauclair, 'Idealism in Contemporary French Painting-1', (on Imps), pp.382-	T. Millie Dow, 'A Vision of Spring', (Int.Soc) Clausen, 'Mowers', (int.exh.Glasgow) Clausen, 'The Spreading Tree', (RA)		
May onwards, Paris, Salon des Artistes Francaises, inc. Martin				Clausen, 'Sons of the Soil', (RA)	
May, Carfax, Conder				David Murray, 'From Sultry Day to Summer Soil', (RA)	
June, Pastel Society, inc., Clausen, E. Stott				Ernest Parton, 'In a Fairy Woodland', (RA)	
June, Paris, Vollard, Bernard				Fred Hall, 'The Sun's Last Lingering Rays', (RA)	
June-July, Paris, Vollard, exh., inc: Picasso, Vollard, Redon				Byam Shaw, 'Boer War, 1900', (RA)	
June, Guildhall, Spanish Painters, inc:				Benjamin Leader, 'The Weald of Surrey' (RA)	
				Steer, 'The Rainbow', (NEAC. w)	

Goya, Velazquez					
October, Goupil, Bastien-Lepage, Clausen, Henry					
Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, inc., Clausen, Forbes, Hornel, La Thangue, Sargent, E. Stott					
Oct-Dec, International Society, inc., Boldini, Conder, Gauld, Henry, Hornel, Lavery, Monet, Osborne, C. Pissarro, Renoir, Whistler					
Nov. NEAC, inc., Conder, Fry, Henry, Orpen, Osborne, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer				The Studio, Vol.24, Oswald Sickert, 'The 27th exh. of the NEAC', pp. 263-8	
Dec., Carfax Gallery, Conder					
Glasgow International Exhibition, inc., Clausen, F-L, Forbes, Gauld, Lavery, Manet, Monet, Monticelli, Renoir, Rothenstein, T. Roussel, Steer, E. Stott, W. Stott, Whistler					
Winter, 1901-2, Whitechapel Art Gallery, inc., Clausen, Fergusson, Gauld, Guthrie, Lavery, Whistler					

1902 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Feb-May, Glasgow, Institute, inc. Clausen, Fergusson, Henry, Hornel, Lavery, Khnopf, Nicholson, Renoir, Sargent, E. Stott		D. S. MacColl, <i>Nineteenth Century Art</i> Walter Armstrong, <i>Sir Henry Raeburn, RA</i> , intro. RAM Stevenson	Steer, 'Bridgnorth', (NEAC.s) James Charles, 'Gypsies on the Common', (NEAC.s)	Boer War ends Elementary Educ Act Balfour P.M
Feb, Paris, B. Weill, exh. inc. Matisse		Bernard Berenson, <i>Lorenzo Lotto</i> <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.24, Jan, Antonin Proust, 'The Art of Fantin-Latour', pp.231-245	Frank Brangwyn, 'The Cider Press'	W. Graham Robertson, <i>Old English Songs and Dances</i>
March-May, Paris, Independants, inc., Bernard, Bonnard, Cezanne, Cross, Denis, Luce, Marquet, Matisse, Rousseau, Roussel, Toulouse-Lautrec (retro.)		2nd ed. Percy Bate's, <i>The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters</i> Wyke Bayliss, <i>Fine Great Painters of the Victorian Era</i>	Alfred East, 'Morning Sunshine' Armesby Brown, 'Full Summer' (RA)	Kipling, <i>Just So Stories</i> Beatrix Potter, <i>Peter Rabbit</i>
April-May, NEAC, inc. Conder, Fry, Henry, Orpen, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer	<i>The Studio</i> , May, Vol.25. pp.282-3	W. C. Brownell, <i>French Art</i> <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.26, Aug. James Caw, 'A Scottish painter: E. A. Walton, ARSA, pp.161-70	Alfred Parsons, 'Brown Autumn'	Charles Hiatt, <i>The Literary Associations of Shropshire</i>
April, Paris, B. Weill, exh. inc. Picasso		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.27, 'A Cosmopolitan Painter: John Lavery', James Stanley Little, pp.3-13 & 110-120	Charles Sims, 'The Top of the Hill'	2nd ed. Kenneth Graham's <i>Dream Days</i>
April-June, Paris, Societe Nationale, inc; Blanche, Carriere, Harrison, Hodler, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Sargent, Sickert, Whistler	<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.26, Gabriel Mourey, 'Some Paintings and Sculptures at the Paris Salons', pp.191-202	<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.27, Clive Holland, 'Student Life in the Quartier Latin, Paris', pp.33-40 <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.17, Walter Shaw Sparrow, 'The Centenary of Thomas Girtin: His Genius and His Work', pp.81-103	Mark Fisher, 'Hill and Dale' Steer, 'The Valley of the Severn'	
May onwards RA, inc. Clausen, Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne, Sargent, E. Stott	<i>The Studio</i> , June Vol.26, 'Some Paintings and Sculpture at the London Spring exhibitions', pp.25-44 <i>Mag. of Art</i> , pp.497-9 (imagination,	Austin Dobson, <i>William Hogarth</i> A. L. Baldry, <i>Modern Mural Decoration</i> <i>Magazine of Art</i> , 'William Stott of	Clausen, 'Sons of the Soil'	

	not just problem solving)	Oldham', pp.81-4		
May, New Gallery, inc. Henry, Khnopff, Lavery, Sargent, E. Stott	Art Journal, Frank Rinder, (esp. 'Full Summer'), pp.212-20 The Studio, as above Mag. of Art, 'robust romanticism & nature in her gentler moods', p.400	Mag. of Art, Impressionism: 2 Conversations, Pro and Con, Deane & Kennington, pp.35-59 2 parts.	Sickert, 'The Bathers, Dieppe'	
May, onwards, Carfax Gallery, Conder		Mag of Art, A.L. Baldry, Our Rising Artists, 'Armesby Brown' p.400	Sargent, 'Innocents Abroad' (1901-2)	
May, Paris, Salon des Artistes Francaises			Armesby Brown, 'The Riverbank' (RA)	
May, Durand-Ruel, Toulouse-Lautrec retro			Steer, 'The Valley of the Severn', (NEAC.w)	
Spring, Hanover Gallery, inc., Besnard, Cazin, Le Sidaner, Monet, C. Pissarro, Raffaelli			John Birch settled in Lamorna	
June, Pastel Society, inc., Aman-Jean, Clausen, Levy-Dhurmer, E. Stott				
June, Paris, Galerie de l'Art Nouveau, Signac				
June, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Renoir. next Roussel				
June, Goupil, inc., Cazin, Fantin-Latour, Gauld, Henry				
June, Carfax Gallery, Steer	The Studio, Vol.26, p.141 (the 'conviction' of his touch)			
June, Guildhall, French and English Painters of the 18th Century				
Nov. Goupil, Clausen	note, The Studio, Vol. 27, p.207			
Nov, Carfax, Rothenstein pastels				
Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Conder, Fry, Henry, A. John, G. John, Orpen, Rothenstein, Steer	The Studio, Vol.27, pp.209-210			
Nov-Dec, Paris, B. Weill, exh. inc. Picasso				
Dec, Carfax, Conder				

1903 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Feb, Paris, Societe Nouvelle, inc., Blanche, Martin, Sickert	The Studio, Vol.28, pp.220-1	The Studio, Vol.28, Feb., Selwyn Image, 'Mr Frank Brangwyn's Landscapes and Still-Lives', pp.3-17	B.W. Leader, 'Sunset After Rain'	Whistler dies W.S.P.U founded
Feb, Glasgow Institute, inc., Clausen, Forbes, Guthrie, Henry, Le Sidaner,		Camille Maclair, <i>The French Impressionists</i> , trans. P.G. Konody' review of MacColl's <i>Nineteenth Century Art</i> , The Studio, Vol.27, p.71	E. Stott, 'The Team' Clausen, 'Dusk'	G.E. Moore, <i>Principia Ethica</i> National Art Collections Fund
March, Carfax Gallery, Augustus & Gwen John		The Studio, Vol.28, April, pp.159-168, Wynford Dewhurst, <i>Impressionist painting, Its Genesis and Development</i> , pp.159-168 & Vol. 29, pp.94-112	David Murray, 'In the Country of Constable', RA	Letchworth begun Motor Car Act
March, Goupil, inc. Clausen, Degas, F-L, Henry, Le Sidaner, C. Pissarro. Raffaelli		Gustav Geffroy, <i>l'Oeuvre de Eugene Carriere</i> The Studio, Vol.29, June, Leonce Benedite, Alphonse Legros, Painter and Sculptor, pp.3-22	Alexander Jamieson, 'The Construction of the South Kensington Museum'	Irish Land Purchase Act Burlington founded
March, Paris, Vollard, Gauguin		W.E. Henley, <i>Views and Reviews</i> Burlington, vol.3-4, 'Criticism and Common Sense', editorial, pp.3-4	W. Leech, 'A Goose Girl' Leader, 'Southwards from Surrey's Pleasant Hills'	Alfred, Lord Tennyson, <i>In Memorium</i>
March-April, Paris, Independants, inc. Bonnard, Cross, Denis, Dufy, Matisse, O'Conor, Rousseau, Roussel, Sickert, Signac, Vuillard		The Studio, special winter number, <i>The Genius of J.M.W. Turner</i> The Studio, Sept, Vol.29, A.L. Baldry, 'James McNeill Whistler. His Art and Influence', pp.237-245	Arthur Hacker, 'Leaf Drift', RA EA Waterlow, 'From the Banks of the Loing', RA	
April-May, NEAC, inc. Henry, Orpen, Rothenstein, Steer		The Studio, Vol.29, 'Reminiscences of Whistler. By Mortimer Menpes. Recorded by Dorothy Menpes', pp.245- 257	Alfred East, 'Tintern, In the Valley of the Wye', RA	

April, Paris, Bernheim Jeune, Oeuvres de l'ecole impressionniste, inc., Cassatt, Cezanne, Degas, Manet, Monet, C. Pissarro. Sisley		The Studio , Vol.29, 'The Life and Genius of the Late Phil May', pp.280-287	Arnesby Brown, 'The Coming Day', RA
April-June, Paris, Societe Nationale, inc. Bonnard, Denis, Harrison, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Sargent., Sickert		The Studio , Vol.30, 1903, Oswald Sickert. 'The Oil Painting of James McNeill Whistler, pp.3-10	E Stanhope Forbes, 'On a Fine Day', RA
April-May, Carfax Gallery, Roger Fry		The Studio , Vol.30, Nov, W. Scott, 'Reminiscences of Whistler Continued. Some Venice recollections', pp.97-107	Stanhope Forbes, 'Round the Camp Fire', RA
May onwards, RA, inc., Clausen, Forbes, La Thangue, Osborne, Sargent, E. Stott	The Studio , Vol.29, A.L. Baldry, 'the Spring Exhibitions -The Royal Academy', p.42-52	The Studio , Vol.30, Dec, Henri Frantz, 'Jacques Emile Blanche: Portrait Painter', pp.191-200	Edward Stott, 'Echo', RA
May onwards, Paris, Salon des Artiste Francais	M. of A , , p.388, 'ever charming ever new, when will landscape tire the them'	The Studio , Vol.30, Dec, G.H. Boughton, RA, 'A Few of the various Whistler's I Have Known', pp.208-18	Stanhope Forbes, 'The Haycart', RA Stanhope Forbes, 'Nomads'
May, New Gallery, inc., Boldini, Khnopff, Lavery, E. Stott	M of A , p?	Burlington , Vol.3-4, 'The Future of the International Society' (at the New Gallery)	
May-June, Carfax Gallery, Sargent		The Studio , Vol.30, Dec., Clive Holland, 'Lady Art Students in Paris', pp.225-233	Steer, 'Richmond Castle, Yorks', NEAC w & 'The Shower---'
May-July, Grafton Galleries, French Masters, inc., Puvis		Mrs Meynell, <i>The Work of John S. Sargent</i>	
Spring, Dutch Gallery, inc. Conder, F.L, Whistler		W.L. Wyllie, <i>Nature's Laws and the Making of Pictures</i> (also serialised in M of A)	
		T.R. Way & G.R. Dennis, <i>The Art of James McNeill Whistler</i>	
		A.L. Baldry, <i>Joshua Reynolds</i>	
		Ronald Sutherland Gower, <i>Thomas Gainsborough</i>	
		The Fortnightly Review , Arthur Symons, review of MacColl, 'The Painting of the Nineteenth Century', pp.520-534	

June, Stafford Gallery, Nicholson			The Magazine of Art, 'Our Rising Artists-Wilfred Gabriel Van Glehn', p.276		
June, Pastel Society, inc. Clausen, Guthrie, Le Sidaner			Magazine of Art, Val Prinsep, 'James A. McNeill Whistler: 1834-1903 1. Personal Recollections', pp.577-580		
Aug. Grafton Galleries, J.S. Forbes Collection, inc. Bastien-Lepage, F-L, Monet, Monticelli			Bernard Berenson, <i>The Study and Criticism of Italian Art</i>		
Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, inc., Clausen, Cottet, Forbes, La Thangue, Lavery, Sargent, E. Stott			Quarterly Review, July, 'The Royal Academy and Reform', pp.196-210		
Oct., Obach & Co, Whistler etchings					
Oct-Dec, Paris, Salon d'Automne, inc., Besnard, Blanche, Bonnard, Carriere, Gauguin, Harrison, Matisse, O'Conor, Vuillard					
Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Fry, A. John, Henry, Orpen, Rothenstein, Osborne, Steer					
Nov-Dec, Dutch Gallery, Conder					
Nov-Dec, Paris, Druet, inc., Bonnard, Cross, Denis, Roussel, Signac, Vuillard					
Dec, Goupil, Clausen, F-L, Fry, La Touche, Le Sidaner, Rothenstein, Whistler					

1904 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan-March, International Society, inc., Anquetin, Blanche, Carriere, Cottet, F.-L., Guthrie, Hornel, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Monet, Nicholson, L., Pissarro, T. Roussel, Toulouse-Lautrec, Whistler	The Studio, Vol.31, 'The International Exhibition', pp.59-69	Clausen, <i>Six Lectures on Painting</i> The Studio, Vol.31, Feb, Percy Bate, 'The Work of George Henry RSA', pp. 3-12 The Studio, Vol.31, April, C. Lewis Hind, 'Ethical Art and Mr Cayley Robinson', pp.235-241 The Studio, Vol.31, May, Octave Uzanne, 'The Modern French Pastellists-Gaston La Touche, pp.281-7	Steer, Richmond Castle, NEAC Sickert, Gatti's Palace of Varieties, 2nd Turn of K. Lawrence David Murray, The Valley of the Stour, RA Clausen, A Frosty March Morning, RA Steer, The Storm, Horses Running	Russo-Japanese War World Fair, St.Louis Arnold Bax, <i>A Celtic Song Cycle</i> Conrad, <i>Nostramo</i>
Jan, Pastel Society, inc., Degas, Le Sidaner		The Studio, Vol.31, Laurence Housman, 'The Work of Mr Herbert Alexander', pp.301-312 Wynford Dewhurst, <i>Impressionist Painting</i> , review The Studio, Vol.32, pp.79-80	Amesby Brown, The Bridge, RA Stanhope Forbes, 'The Seine Boat'	Ceil Sharp, <i>Folk Songs from Somerset</i> Thomas Hardy, <i>Dynasts</i> Ladies Automobile Club
Jan, Goupil, inc., Besnard, Clausen, Rothenstein Feb-March, Paris, L. Soulie, exh. inc., Van Gogh		The Studio, Vol.32, Clive Holland, 'The Work of Frederick Whitehead, A Painter of Thomas Hardy's 'Wessex', pp.105-119	Alfred East, Golden Autumn	Mary Bateson, <i>Medieval England</i> E.V. Lucas, <i>Highways and Byways in Sussex</i> Hermann Muthesius, <i>Das Englische Haus</i> W.E.A founded
March, Paris, B. Weill, exh.inc; Toulouse-Lautrec		The Studio, Vol.32, Percy Bate, 'Joseph Crawhall, Master Draughtsman', pp.219-225 Mortimer Menpes, <i>Whistler as I Knew Him</i> , review in The Studio, Vol.32, pp.266-7	David Murray, 'Summer Floods, Flatford' Suffolk, RA Clausen, 'Gleaners Coming Home', RA	G.A. Gould, <i>Old Cottages and Farmhouses in Shropshire, Herefordshire</i>
March, Goupil Gallery, Leon Little	The Studio, Vol. 31, p.156			

			The Studio , Vol.33, Oct., 'Modern French Pastellists: Fantin-Latour', pp.39-44	B.W. Leader, 'Evening', RA	& Cheshire
March-May , Glasgow, Clausen, Ferguson, Forbes, Guthrie, Hornel, Le Sidaner, Sargent, Segantini, E. Stolt			James Linton, <i>Constable's Sketches</i> Jules Breton, <i>La Peinture</i>	David Murray, 'The Heat of the Day', Flatford, Suffolk, RA	
April-May , NEAC inc., Blanche, Fry, Gilman, Henry, A. John, Orpen, Rothenstein, Sargent, Steer	The Studio , Vol. 31, p.338		Irene Langridge, <i>William Blake</i> The Connoisseur, Adam Palgrave, 'Landscape in England', pp. 135-143 The Connoisseur, Frederick Wedmore, 'The Art of Conder', pp.218-224	La Thangue, 'A Sussex Farm', RA Clausen, 'In the Bean Field', RA Charles Furse, 'Diana of the Uplands', RA	
April , Goupil Gallery, Bertram Priestman	The Studio , Vol.31, p.346		M.B. Huish, <i>British Watercolour Art</i> Burlington , Vol.5, 1904, Julia Cartwright, 'The Drawings of Jean-Francois Millet in the Collection of the Late Mr James Staats Forbes', p.47 & 118 Burlington , Vol.6, 'The Progress of British Art in 1904', p.263 Burlington , Charles Ricketts, 'Fantin-Latour', p.17	David Murray, 'Flatford: Scene of Constable's Picture 'The Haywain', as a the Present Time', RA La Thangue, 'The Errant Hen' W.W. Russell, 'The Edge of a Wood', NEAC. w	
April , Paris, B. Weill, exh.inc: Canoin, Marquet, Matisse April-Paris , Bernheim Jeune exh.: inc. Bonnard, Denis, Maillol, Roussel, Valloton, Vuillard April , Paris, Durand Ruel, Camille Pissarro retro.			Art Journal , A.C.R. Carter, 'John Lavery', pp.6-11 Art Journal , Frank Rinder, 'The Art of Oliver Hall', pp.80-4	Mark Fisher, 'A Garden Walk', NEAC, w W. Rothenstein, 'A Deserted Quarry', NEAC. w	
April-June , Paris, Societe Nouvelle, inc., Conder, Denis, Harrison, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Sargent, Simon, Whistler April-July , Paris, Pavillon de Marsan, Les Primitifs francais	The Studio , Vol. 32, review pp.191-197		Art Journal , Gladys B. Crozier, 'Elizabeth Stanhope Forbes', pp.382-4	Alfred East, 'Morning at Montreuil', RA	
May , onwards, RA inc., Clausen, Forbes, Henry, la Thangue, Orpen,	The Connoisseur , Vol.10, pp.36-44 The Studio , Vol.32, W.K. West, 'The Exhibition of the Royal		Academy & Literature , 24 Dec, Haldane MacFall, 'The Art of John	G.H. Boughton, 'A Frosty Night', RA	

Sargent, E. Stott	Academy, 1904', pp.26-42	Lavery', pp.645-6	Stanhope Forbes, 'A Rescue at Dawn', RA
May, onwards Paris, Salon des Artistes Francais	Art Journal, pp.78-	Academy & Literature, 3 Dec, Haldane MacFall, 'The Art of Mr Clausen', p.569	
May-June, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Monet, Thames Series	The Studio, Vol.32, pp.166-7	Saturday Review, Vol. 97, MacColl and Binyon debate on 'Titans and Olympians'	
May, Guildhall, Irish Painters, inc., Henry, Lavery, O'Connor, Osborne, Orpen, Yeats		The Ladies Realm, May-Oct, 1904, Hugh Stokes, 'Sea Pictures', pp.442-447	
June, Paris, Bernheim-jeune, Sickert		Julia Cartwright, <i>Sandro Botticelli</i>	
June, Paris, Vollard, Matisse			
Autumn, Liverpool, Clausen, Forbes, Hornel, Lavery, Orpen, Sargent			
Oct, Leicester Galleries, Conder, Rothenstein, C.H. Shannon	The Studio, Vol. 33, p.168		
Oct-Nov, Salond'Automne, inc., Bonnard, Cezanne, Delaunay, Denis, Guillaumein, Kandinsky, Lavery, Matisse, O'Connor, Puvis, Renoir, T-L			
Nov., Leicester Galleries, Lavery	The Studio, Vol.33, pp.256-258		
Nov, Paris, Druet, Denis, (preface by Gide)			
Nov, Dublin, 'Modern French Art', organised by Hugh Lane			
Nov-Dec, Goupil. Clausen	The Studio, Vol. 33, p.353, note		
Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Blanche, Fry, Henry, A. John, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer.	The Academy & Literature, 19 Nov, 'the honours---are with Mr John'		
Dec, Paris, Druet, Signac	The Studio, Vol.33, p.347, 'spoiled by the admission of---misguided efforts'		

1905	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan-Feb, Grafton Galleries exh, by Durand-Ruel, of Boudin, Cezanne, Degas, Manet, Monet, Morisot, C. Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley	The Times, unsigned, 17 Jan, p.6, (KF) Frederick Wedmore, Standard, 20 Jan, p.8. (KF)	The Studio, Vol.34, Frank Newbolt, 'The Etchings of Alfred East', pp.124-137 The Studio, Vol. 34, April, A.L. Baldry, 'Arthur Rackham: A Painter of Fantasies', pp.189-201	Arnesby Brown, 'The Byway', RA La Thangue, 'A Sussex Mill Race' & 'A Ligurian Valley', RA	A A founded Bloody Sunday, St.Petersburg End of Russo-Japanese War	
Jan,-Feb, Paris, Henry Graves, Henri Martin		The Studio, Vol.34, T. Martin Wood, 'A Room Decorated by Charles Conder', pp.201-10	R. Vicat Cole, 'A Brimming River', RA	Einstein's Theory of Relativity Motor Bus in London	
Feb, Paris, Henry Graves, Intimistes, inc., Bonnard, Vuillard, Matisse		The Studio, Vol. 34, 'Reminiscences of the Whistler Academy. By an American Student', pp. 237-241	E. Waterlow, 'The Thames from Richmond Hill', RA	Henry James, English Hours Aliens Act	
Feb-March, Obach, Fantin-Latour,		The Studio, Vol. 35, 'The Watercolour Art of H.B. Brabazon', T. Martin Wood, pp.95-98	Charles Sims, 'The Kite', RA	Percy Grainger starts collecting folk songs	
Feb-May, Glasgow Institute, inc., Le Sidaner, Whistler		The Studio, Vol.36, Walter Bayes, 'The Paintings and Etchings of D. Y. Cameron', pp.3-19	Clausen, 'The Ploughman's Breakfast', RA	Beautiful Wales, desc. Edward Thomas	
Feb-March, Paris, Galerie Serrurier, exh. inc. Picasso		The Studio, Vol.36, E.G. Halton, 'The Staats Forbes Collection-I. The Barbizon Pictures', pp.30-47 & II. 'The Modern Dutch Pictures', pp. 107-118 & III Modern French Collection, pp. 218-231	Frank Bramley, 'Grasmere Rushbearing', RA	The English Lakes, painted by A. Heaton Cooper, text, W.T. Palmer	
March, Baillie Gallery, Bevan		The Studio, Vol.36, A.L. Baldry, 'The Art of W. Lee Hankey', pp. 291-300	Alfred East, 'Autumn in the Valley of the Ouse', RA	Federation of Rambling Clubs	
March-April, Paris, G. Petit, Societe Nouvelle, inc., Blanche, Branwyn, Conder, La Touche, Le Sidaner,		W. Holman Hunt, Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood	Buxton Knight, 'Nature's Cathedral Aisle'	Royal Commission on Poor Law	

				Port Sunlight
March-April, Druet, Matisse		The Ladies Realm. 1904-5, 'The Art of Mrs Stanhope Forbes', Marion Hepworth Dixon, pp. 468-476		
March-April, Paris, Independants, Bonnard, Cross, Delaunay, Denis, Derain, Van Gogh retro., Kollwitz, Marquet, Matisse, Rousseau, Seurat retro, Sickert		Burlington, Vol.7, Bernhard Sickert, 'The Pre-Raphaelite and Impressionist Heresies', pp.97-102		
April, Carfax Gallery, Sargent Watercolours	note in The Connoisseur , p.48	Arsene Alexandre, <i>Puvis de Chavannes</i> Frank Rutter, 'On Obtaining Impressionists for the Nation', Sunday Times , 22 Jan, p.4, (KF)		
April (C), Whitechapel, 'British Art 50 yrs Ago',	note in The Connoisseur , p.48. (national characteristics)	Frank Rutter, 'The French Impressionist Fund', Sunday Times , 29 Jan 1905, p.4, (KF)		
April-May, NEAC inc., Conder, Fry, Henry, A. John, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sargent, Steer		Arthur Nicholson, 'The Luminists', Nineteenth Century , April , lvii, pp.627-31, (KF. pp.220-25)		
April, Paris, Barbazanges, William Nicholson		The Connoisseur, Frederick Wedmore, 'Constable Prints', Vol. II, pp.3-10		
April, Paris, B. Weill, inc., Matisse April onwards, Societe Nationale, inc., Denis, Guthrie, Harrison, Henry, La Touche, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Sargent	The Studio, Henri Frantz review, Vol.35, pp.117-127,	The Ladies Realm, May-Oct, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'The Art of David Murray', pp.273-280		
April ? International Society, Whistler Memorial exh.	Burlington, Vol. 6, 'The Whistler Exhibition', Bernhard Sickert, pp.430-438 The Studio, Vol. 34, 'The International Society's Whistler Exhibition', pp. 224-232 The Connoisseur, review of Int.Soc,	The Ladies Realm, May-Oct, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'A Painter of Summer', (re H.S. Tuke), pp.584-594 The Ladies Realm, May-Oct, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'The Art of John Da Costa', May-Oct, pp.437-444		

May onwards, RA inc., Clausen, Forbes, Henry, La Thangue, Sargent, E.Stott	pp.129-36 The Studio, Vol. 35, A.L.Baldry, 'The Royal Academy Exhibition, 1905', pp.37-51		
May, Graffon Galleries, J.S. Forbes Collection, inc. Bastien-Lepage, F-L, Monet, Monticelli			
May, onwards, Paris, Salon des Artistes Francais			
May, Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, Whistler retro,			
May-June, Baillie Gallery, Fergusson			
June, Pastel Society, inc., Conder, La Touche, Le Sidaner			
June, International Society, inc., Conder, Hornel, La Touche, Lavery, Nicholson, Sickert	review in March (?) Studio, Vol. 34, pp.156-164		
Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, Clausen, Forbes, Henry, La Thangue, Lavery, Monticelli, Rodin, Rothenstein, Sargent, Steer, E.Stott			
Oct-Nov, Paris, Salon d'Automne inc., Bonnard, Cezanne, Derain, Kandinsky, Lavery, Manet retro, Matisse, O'Conor, L. Pissarro, Rousseau, Sickert			
Oct-Nov, NEAC, inc., Blanche, Conder, Fry, Henry, A. John, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sargent, Steer			
Oct-Nov, Paris, B. Weill, exh. inc., Derain, Dufy, Marquet, Matisse, Vlaminck			
Nov, Friday Club, org, Vanessa Bell			

1906	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
<p>Jan-Feb, International Society, inc., Boldini, Carriere, Cezanne, Conder, Degas, Fergusson, Guthrie, Hornel, Lavery, Manet, Monet, Nicholson, C.Pissarro, Renoir, Simon, Vuillard</p>			<p>Clausen, <i>Aims and Ideals in Art</i> East, <i>Landscape Painting in Oils</i> <i>Magazine of Art</i>, Vol.2, Sir James Linton, 'The Sketches of John Constable RA', pp.16-21</p>	<p>Bevan, Ploughing the Hillsides Alexander Mann, Picking up Silver and Gold</p>	<p>Liberal landslide election victory San Francisco earthquake</p>
<p>Feb, Lafayette Gallery, Pictures from the 1905 Salon d'Automne, inc. O'Connor</p>			<p><i>Magazine of Art</i>, A. Lingfield, 'The Work of J. Buxton Knight', pp.159-166* <i>Magazine of Art</i>, Malcolm Bell, 'Landscape Art at the Royal Academy', p.109</p>	<p>Sickert, Gaiete Rochehouart Clausen, Winter Morning</p>	<p>Navy launches Dreadnought, ('John Bull afloat') Martial Law in Russia</p>
<p>Feb-March, Paris, Intimistes inc. Bonnard, Vuillard</p>			<p><i>The Ladies Realm</i>, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'The Portraits of William Llewellyn', Vol.20, May-Oct, pp.419-26</p>	<p>Sickert, Woman Washing her hair</p>	<p>Mounting Suffragette militism</p>
<p>Feb-March, Agnew, Independant Art of Today, inc., Conder, Fry, henry, Lavery, Nicholson, Orpen, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer</p>	<p>The Burlington, Bernhard Sickert, 'Independent Art of Today', Vol.8-9, pp.381-4 Athenaeum, 'Independent Art at Messrs Agnews', Feb., pp.206-7 The Studio, E.G. Halton, 'Independent Art at Messrs Agnews', Vol.37, pp.18-30</p>	<p><i>Burlington</i>, Vol.10-11, pp.204-6, 'The Case for Modern Painting: By a Modern Painter', IV, The Royal Academy and the New English Art Critic' (RA - oligarchy of old men) <i>Fortnightly Review</i>, Frederick Lawton, 'Jacques Emile Blanche', Vol.85, pp.1106-1114 The Studio, Vol.37, Haldane MacFall, 'The Art of Alexander Roche', pp.203-13 The Studio, Vol.39, The Lay Figure, 'On an Insult to Nature', p.190*</p>	<p>Sickert, Noctes Ambrosianae Arthur Rackham, Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens</p>	<p>Rudyard Kipling, <i>Puck of Pook's Hill</i> Holst's <i>Somerset Rhapsody</i>, 1906-7 Everyman's Library Gallsworthy, <i>Man of Property</i></p>	
<p>Feb-May, Glasgow, Institute, Fergusson, Forbes, La Thangue, Le</p>				<p>Steer, The Bend in the Teme, Ludlow</p>	<p>Trade Disputes Act</p>

Sidaner, Monticelli, Sargent, E. Stott				Daily News Sweated Industries exh.
March, Paris, Durand Ruel, Manet from Faure collection			The Studio, Vol.39, T. Martin Wood, 'English Drawing: The Landscape and Figure Sketches of the Older Masters', pp.119-127*	Bakerloo and Piccadilly tubes
March, Paris, Durand Ruel, Monet from Faure collection			Art Journal, Hugh Blaker, 'Mr Wilson Steer', pp.231-6	
March-April, Paris, Independants inc., Bonnard, Braque, Cross, Delaunay, Denis, Derain, Dufy, Marquet, Matisse, O'Conor, Rousseau, Vlaminck, Vuillard				
April-May, Paris, Societe Nationale				
May onwards RA, inc., Blanche, Clausen, Forbes, La Thangue, Sargent, E. Stott				
May onwards, Paris, Salon des Artistes Francais				
June, Pastel Society, inc. Clausen, Conder, Le Sidaner				
June-July, NEAC inc., Blanche, Conder, Fry, Gore, Henry, A. John, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sargent, Sickert, Steer	Athenaeum, review (MacColl - pensioner in this home for art critics), June 30, p.805			
Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, Clausen, Conder, Forbes, Hornel, A. John, La Thangue, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Rodin, Monticelli, Sargent, Whistler				
Oct-Nov., Salon d'Automne, inc., Bonnard, Carriere retro., Cezanne, Derain, Dufy, Gauguin retro., Kandinsky, Lavery, Marquet, Matisse, O'Conor, Rousseau, Sickert,				

<p>Vlaminck, Vuillard Nov. Colnaghi, T. Roussel,</p>				
<p>Nov-Dec, NEAC, inc., Blanche, Conder, Fry, Gore, A. John, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer</p>	<p>Athenaeum, Dec. 15, NEAC, (need for new blood), p.781</p>			

1907 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan-March, International Society, inc., Blanche, Boldini, Conder, A. John, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Nicholson, Orpen, Puvis, Rodin, Whistler	review <i>The Studio</i> Vol.40, pp. 140-150	<p><i>The Studio</i>, Vol.40, T. Martin Wood, 'The Paintings of James Charles', pp.43-49</p> <p><i>The Studio</i>, Vol.40, T. Martin Wood, 'Oliver Hall, Landscape Painter', pp.268-277</p> <p><i>The Studio</i>, Vol.40, Haldane Macfall, 'The Paintings of John D. Ferguson', pp.202-210</p>	<p>Gilman, In Sickert's House, Dieppe</p> <p>Gore, Someone Waits</p> <p>H.H.La Thangue, Sussex Stream, RA</p>	<p>Rise of Sinn Fein</p> <p>Syngé, <i>Playboy of the Western World</i></p> <p>Syngé, <i>The Aran Islands</i></p>
Jan, Paris, Bernheim Jeune, Sickert		<p><i>The Studio</i>, May, Vol.40, Gabriel Von Teréy, 'A Hungarian Portrait Painter: Philip a.Laszlo', pp.255-67</p> <p><i>Art Journal</i>, T. Martin Wood, 'The Watercolours of Alfred Richi', pp.149-52</p> <p><i>Art Journal</i>, Frederick Wedmore, 'Bertram Priestman', pp.179-183</p>	<p>Stanhope Forbes, Gala day at Newlyn, RA</p> <p>Clausen, The Little Brook, RA</p>	<p>Boy Scout Movement</p> <p>Arthur Ransome, <i>Bohemia in London</i></p>
Feb-June, Glasgow, Institute, inc., Forbes, Henry, Hornel	review <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.40, pp.320-325	<p><i>The Studio</i> June, Vol.41, E. Rimbault Dibdin, 'Mr E.A Hornel's Paintings of Children and Flowers', pp.3-9</p> <p><i>Saturday Review</i>, Laurence Binyon, 'Art and Archaism' 20 July, pp.75-6 (esp. on Ricketts)</p>	<p>Sickert, Girl at a Window, Little Rachel</p>	<p>The Nation. The New Age</p> <p>Arthur Symons, <i>William Blake</i></p>
Spring, Whitechapel, inc., Clausen, Conder, Forbes, Henry, Hornel, A.John, La Thangue, Lavery, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Steer, E.Stott, W.Stott		<p><i>The Studio</i>, Vol.41, A.L. Baldry, 'The Paintings of Charles Sims', pp.89-98</p> <p><i>The Studio</i>, Vol.41, 'W.K. West, 'The Landscape Paintings of Mr Grosvenor Thomas', pp.257-262</p>	<p>Sickert, Morington Crescent Nude</p> <p>Clausen, Building the Rick, RA</p>	<p>Hampstead Garden Suburb</p>
March-April, Paris, Independents, inc., Derain, Dufy, Gilman, Gore, Kandinsky, Matisse, O'Conor, Rousseau, Russell, Vuillard			<p>Alfred Munnings, On the Road</p> <p>Lucien Pissarro, The Railway Bridge, Acton</p>	

March, Carfax Gallery, William Rothenstein	note The Studio , Vol.40, p.224	The Studio , Vol.42, 'The 3rd ex. of Society of 25 Painters', (Problems of modern landscape art), pp.130-5	Alfred East, Old Durham	
April, Paris, Bernheim-Jeune, Denis		The Studio , A.G. Folliot Stokes, 'The Landscape Paintings of Mr Algermon Talmage', Vol.42, pp.188-92	Buxton Knight, Portsmouth Harbour	
April-June, Paris, Societe Nationale, inc., Denis, Harrison, Lavery, Le Sidaner	review, The Studio Vol.41, pp.126-135	The Studio Vol.42, T. Martin Wood, 'The Paintings of Ambrose McEvoy', pp.96-102	Algermon Talmage, The Pillars of St Martins	
May onwards RA, inc., Blanche, Clausen, Forbes, Henry, Hornel, La Thangue, Russell, Sargent, E.Stott	review The Studio , Vol.41, June, 'The Royal Academy Exhibition 1907', pp29-50	The Ladies Realm , Vol. XXI, 'French Art of Today' (esp. on Martin), pp.315-22	Edward Stott, The Reaper and the Maid. RA	
May onwards, Salon des Artistes Francais		H.M. Cundall, <i>Birket Foster</i>	Edward Stott, The Cottage Madonna. RA	
May, New Gallery, inc., Blanche, Sargent	review, The Studio , Vol.41, pp.50-60	Max Nordau, <i>On Art and Artists</i>	Alfred East, The Dignity of Autumn, NG	
May-June, NEAC, inc., Fry, Gore, Henry, Innes, A. John, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sargent, Sickert, Steer		W.J. Lofie, <i>The Colour of London: Historical, Personal and Local</i> , intro M.H.Spielmann	Steer, The Grand Place, Montreuil, NEAC, w	
May-June, Paris, E. Blot, C.Pissarro		2nd revised ed. of Richard Muther's <i>The History of Modern Painting</i>	David Muirhead, The Farmyard, NEAC, w	
June, Pastel Society, inc., Le Sidaner, Sargent	review The Studio , Vol.41, pp.144-8	John Fothergill ed. <i>The Slade Mdxcccxciii-Mdcccxcvii</i>	William Orpen, Young Ireland, NEAC, w	
June, Goupil, inc., Degas, Monet, L.Pissarro		W.J.Laidlay, <i>The Origin and First two Years of the New English Art Club</i>		
June, Grafton Galleries, United Arts Club, inc., Grant				
June, Paris, Bernheim Jeune, Cezanne watercolours				
July-August, Alpine Gallery, Roger Fry & Neville Lytton,	note The Studio , Vol.41, p.224, ('an old-world flavour')			

<p>Autumn, NEAC, inc., Henry, Innes, A. John, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Sargent, Sickert, Steer</p>	<p>review, The Studio, Vol.42, p.223</p>			
<p>Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, inc., Clausen, Conder, Forbes, Hornel, La Thangue, Le Sidaner, Sargent, E. Stott</p>				
<p>Oct-Nov, Salon d'Automne, inc. Bonnard, Braque, Cezanne retro., Derain, Dufy, Fergusson, Kandinsky, Lavery, Matisse, Rousseau, Sickert, Viaminck</p>	<p>review Henri Frantz, The Studio, Vol.42, pp.204-210</p>			
<p>Nov, Carfax, A. John drawings</p>	<p>note The Studio, Vol.42, p.312</p>			
<p>Dublin, Irish International exh.</p>				

1908 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan, Paris, Bernheim-Jeune, Van Gogh. Druet, Van Gogh		The Studio , Vol.42, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'The Landscape Paintings of Mr H. Hughes-Stanton', pp.269-279	Clausen, The Boy and the Man Augustus John, The Family Group	Kenneth Graham, <i>Wind in the Willows</i>
Feb, Paris, Bernheim-Jeune, Vuillard		Saturday Review , 8th Feb, D.S. MacColl, 'Lessons from Dublin', (on Hugh Lane's achievement), pp.168-9	Steer, Corfe Castle and the Isle of Purbeck	Elgar's first Symphony Epstein's Strand sculpture
Feb, Walker's Gallery, Yeats		Saturday Review , 11th April, Laurence Binyon, 'In Bond St. and Whitechapel', pp.463-4.	Laura Knight, The Beach	W.H. Davies, <i>Autobiography of a Supertramp</i>
Feb-March, ?, The New Gallery, Exhibition of Fair Women	Saturday Review , Laurence Binyon, 28th March 1908, pp.398-9 The Studio , Vol.43, 'The International Society's Fair Women Exhibition, pp.225-232. T.M.W Burlington , Vol.14-15, Roger Fry, 'The Exhibition of Fair Women', pp.14-18	English translation of Meier-Graefe's <i>Modern Art</i> The Connoisseur , Vol.20, April, P.G. Konody, 'Collections Visited: The New Dublin Gallery of Modern Art', pp.219-225	Laura Knight, Children on the Sands, wc Lamorna Birch, Painting in a Wood near Lamorna	Northcliffe acquires The Times
Jan-Feb, 8th International Society, inc., Anquetin, Blanche, Bonnard, Carriere, Cezanne, Claus, Cross, Degas, Denis, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Matisse, Monet, Nicholson, Orpen, Renoir, K.X. Roussel, Signac, Vuillard	Burlington , Feb, 'The Last Phase of Impressionism', unsigned, xii, 272-3 Response of Roger Fry to above Burlington , march, xii, 374-6 The Studio , Vol.43, Feb, pp.56-61, TMW	The Studio , Vol.43, March, Arsene Alexandre, 'Claude Monet, His Career and Work', pp.89-106 The Studio , Vol.43, A.L.Baldry, 'John Buxton Knight, An Appreciation', pp.278-290	Harold Knight, In the Spring Gore, The Garden, Garth House	Old Age Pensioners Act Virginia Woolf, Room with a View

Feb, Baillie Gallery, Bevan		Art Journal, ACR Carter, 'Recent Work by Mr Lavery', pp.233-236	Gore, View from a Window Gore, The Alhambra	Boy Scouts Assoc. William Barne & A.E. Housman, <i>On Wenlock Edge</i> P.H. Ditchfield, <i>The Charm of the English Village</i>
Feb-May, Glasgow Institute, inc., Guthrie, E. Stott		Burlington, Vol.14-5, C.J. Holmes, 'Whistler and Modern Painting', pp.204-6 Burlington, Vol. 14-15, 'The McCulloch Collection-1, pp.263-5, Burlington, Vol.14-15, Charles Ricketts, 'In Memory of Charles Conder', pp. 8-14 Burlington, Vol.14-15, C.J. Holmes, 'Two Modern Pictures', (John's Smiling Woman)', pp.75-81 The Studio, Vol.43, 'An April Holiday by Elizabeth Stanhope Forbes', pp.191-99 The Studio, Vol.44, Dec, Selwyn Brinton, 'Some Recent Paintings by John Lavery', RSA, pp.171-180	Wynford Dewhurst, The Picnic Clausen, The Old Reaper Clausen, Clavering Church Vanessa Bell, Iceland Poppies Clausen, The Gleaners Returning, RA Tuke, A Midsummer Morning, RA	
March-May, Paris, Indépendants, inc., Braque, Cross, Derain, Finch, Gilman, Gore, Kandinsky, O'Conor, Rousseau, Severini, Sickert	Fortnightly Review, Arthur Ransome, Jan-June, Vol.89, pp.1095-1100			
Spring, NEAC, inc., Gore, A. John, G. John, Nicholson, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sargent, Sickert, Steer	Saturday Review, 6 June, Laurence Binyon, 'Three Exhibitions', pp.720-721, (John, outlandish liberty) The Studio, Vol.44, NEAC review, pp.134-141, TMW The Studio, review Vol.44, pp.62-70, Henri Frantz			
April-June, Paris, Societe Nationale, inc. Anquetin, Blanche, Claus, Denis, Fergusson, Harrison, Lavery, Le Sidaner		E.R. & J Pennell, <i>The Life of James McNeill Whistler</i> . (Sickert's review The Fortnightly Review , Dec.1908, in O.S) G. Baldwin Brown, <i>The Glasgow School of Painters</i>		

<p>May onwards, RA inc., Clausen, Forbes, Hornel, La Thangue, Orpen, Sargent, E. Stott</p>	<p>The Ladies Realm, 'Nature Studies at the Royal Academy', Mary Breakell, pp.292-6</p> <p>The Studio, Vol.44, 'The Royal Academy Exhibition 1908', pp.29-43</p> <p>The Studio, Vol.44, pp.128-134</p>	<p>Hubert Von Hertkomer, <i>My School and My Gospel</i></p> <p>James Caw, <i>Scottish Painting, Past and Present, 1620-1908</i></p>	
<p>May onwards, Paris, Salon des Artistes Francais</p>			
<p>June, Goupil Gallery, Lavery (mostly of Tangier)</p>	<p>review, <i>The Studio</i>, Vol.44, pp.70-5</p>		
<p>Summer, New Gallery, 21st Summer exh. inc., Lavery, Brangwyn, Shannon, Sargent, Hornel, East, Lee Hankey</p>	<p>review <i>The Studio</i>, Vol.44, pp.44-54</p>		
<p>June-July, Baillie Gallery, Friday Club, inc. Albert Rothenstein, Vanessa Bell</p>	<p>note in <i>The Studio</i>, Vol.44, p.22, 'a great deal of immature work'</p>		
<p>June, Pastel Society, inc., Besnard, Le Sidaner</p>			
<p>June, Carfax, Sargent watercolours</p>	<p>review Laurence Binyon, <i>Saturday Review</i>, 6 June, ('one is impressed--but carries little away')</p>		
<p>July, Allied Artists Assoc. 1st exh., inc., bell, Bevan, Fergusson, Gilman, Ginner, Gore, Harrison, Innes, Lamb, O'Conor, L. Pissarro, Raffaelli, T. Rousset, Russell, Sickert, Steer</p>			

<p>July, Franco-British exh., <i>British Section</i>, inc., Clausen, Fergusson, Forbes, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, La Thangue, Lavery, Orpen, Osborne, Rothenstein, Sargent, Steer, E. Stott <i>French Section</i>, inc., Bastien-Lepage, Blanche, Carriere, Denis, F-L, La Touche, Le Sidaner, Manet, Martin, Monet, Moreau, C.Pissarro, Puvis</p>	<p>Isidore Spielman, 'Souvenir of the Fine Art Section, Franco-British Exhibition'</p>		
<p>July-Aug, Carfax, John and Orpen Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, inc., Blanche, Guthrie, Helleu, Hornel, la Thangue, Lavery, le Sidaner, Rodin, Rothenstein, Sargent, Steer, E. Stott</p>	<p>note, The Studio, Vol.44, p. 226</p>		
<p>Oct-Nov, Paris, Salon d'Automne, inc., Bonnard, Denis, Derain, Fergusson, Kandinsky, Lavery, Matisse, Monticelli retro., O'Conor, Rouault, Sickert, Vlaminck</p>	<p>The Times, 2 Oct. 1908, (John v Matisse) KF Bernard Berenson, letter to the Nation (New York), 12 Nov. (defence of criticism of Matisse)</p>		
<p>Oct, Baillie Gallery, inc., Conder, Fergusson, Gilman, Hornel, Monticelli, L. Pissarro, Sickert</p>			
<p>Nov, Paris, Kahnweiler, Braque, L'Estaque landscapes</p>			
<p>Nov, Paris, Bernheim-Jeune, Vuillard</p>			
<p>Nov-Dec, Paris, Druet, Denis</p>			

1909	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Feb, RA, McCulloch Collection, inc., Bastien-Lepage, Clausen, Forbes, Hornel, la Thangue, Lavery, Orpen, Rodin, Sargent, E. Stott, Whistler	note, <i>The Studio</i> , Vol 46, p.57 (his collection as 'a résumé of many Academy years')	Gleeson White, <i>The Master Painters of Britain</i>	W.W. Russell, <i>The Home Farm</i> , NEAC, s Gore, <i>The Alhambra</i> , NEAC, s	Masterman, <i>Condition of England</i> Lloyd George budget, raises income tax. Lords veto. Bleriot flies channel	
Feb-May, Glasgow, Inst, inc., Guthrie, Monticelli, Nicholson		Frederick Wedmore, <i>Some of the Moderns</i>	Orpen, <i>The Dead Parmigan</i>	Labour Exchanges Act	
March, International Society, inc., Anquetin, Blanche, Conder, Cottet, Denis, Forain, Van Gogh, Hornel, A. John, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Maillol, Manet, Nicholson, Orpen, Rodin, Rothenstein, Segantini, Yeats	'The International Society's Ninth Exhibition', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.46, pp.128-133	P.G. Konody, enthusiastic review of Meier-Graefe's <i>Modern Art</i> , <i>The Connoisseur</i> , Vol. 23, Jan-April, pp.119-21	Robert Fowler, <i>Life and Laughter in the Hopfields</i> , RA Henry Lamb, <i>Under the Cliff</i> , NEAC, s	Hungerstriking Suffragettes new edition of Oliver Goldsmith's <i>The Deserted Village</i> , illustrated by Lee Hankey	
April, Carfax Gallery, Fry		Henri Frantz, 'Henry Harpignies: A Review of his Career', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol 45, pp.257-268 C. Lewis Hind, 'Charles Shannon, Artist and Connoisseur', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.46, Feb, pp.119-21	Rex-Vicat Cole, <i>A Haunt of Peace</i> Augustus John, <i>The Way Down to the Sea</i>	National Road Board April, Fry, McColl Holmes and Ottoline Morrell found Modern Art Assoc., becomes contemporary Art Soc. in 1910	
April, Walker Gallery, Bond St., Norman Garstin	note, <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.46, p.227	A.G. Follitt Stokes, 'Mr Algermon Talmage's London Pictures', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.46, pp.23-29 Norman Garstin, 'Alexander Mann, An Appreciation', <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.46, pp.300-305	B.W. Leader, <i>A Fine Autumn Afternoon in Surrey</i> B.W. Leader, <i>A Surrey Sunset</i>	Oct. C.J. Holmes appointed Director of National Portrait Gallery. Fry visits Salon d'Automne in Paris.	
April-May, Grafton Galleries, inc: A. John, Lavery, Nicholson, Orpen					
April-May, Goupil, Steer					

<p>May, Paris, Durand-Ruel, Monet, Nymphs, paysages d'eau</p>		<p>Achille Segard, 'René Menard: Painter of Classical Landscape', The Studio, Vol.46, April, pp.175-184</p>	<p>Sickert, The Camden Town Affair</p>	
<p>May onwards RA inc. Clausen, Forbes, Henry, La Thangue, Sargent, E. Stott</p>	<p>'The Royal Academy Exhibition, 1909', The Studio, Vol.47, pp.29-43</p>	<p>C. H Collins Baker, 'Philip Wilson Steer, president of the New English Art Club', The Studio, Vol.46, May 1909, pp.259-66</p> <p>Frédéric Henri, 'Leon Lhermitte, Painter of French Peasant Life', The Studio, Vol.47, June 1909</p>	<p>Orpen, Homage to Manet</p> <p>G.A. Storey, Pan and Syrinx</p> <p>Steer, Children Playing in a Park, Ludlow</p>	
<p>May-June onwards, Leicester Galleries, Clausen</p>		<p>Alexander Eddington, 'William McTaggart: Painter of Sea and Land', The Studio, Vol.47, June 1909, pp.83-93</p>	<p>Steer, The Horseshoe Bend of the Severn</p>	
<p>June, NEAC, inc., Bell, Gore, A. John, Lamb, Nicholson, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sargent, Sickert, Steer</p>	<p>T. Martin Wood, 'The New English Art Club's Summer Exhibition', The Studio, Vol.47, 1909, pp.177-89</p>	<p>Norman Garstin, 'West Cornwall as a Sketching Ground', The Studio, Vol.47, pp.109-21</p> <p>T.M.W. 'The Problem of Modern Interior Painting', The Studio, Vol.47, pp.251-9</p>	<p>Fred Brown, The Horseshoe Bend of the Severn, (BL)</p> <p>Gore, Applehayes, c. 1909-10</p>	
<p>July, AAA, inc., Bevan, Fergusson, Gilman, Gore, A. John, Kandinsky, Nicholson, Orpen, Rousell, Russell, Sickert, Yeats</p>	<p>review The Studio, Vol. 47, p. 221, (vast and incoherent assemblage)</p>	<p>T. Martin Wood, 'A Picture Collector's Experiment, Judge Evans', The Studio, Vol.48, pp.14-31</p>	<p>Gilman, The Breakfast Table</p> <p>Sargent, Dolce far Niente</p>	

<p>Autumn, Liverpool, Blanche, Clausen, Forbes, Guthrie, Henry, Hornel, Khnopff, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Orpen, Rothenstein, Roussel, Sargent, Sickert, E. Stott</p>	<p>The Art News, official organ of AAA, Oct 1909 until April 1912 ed. Frank Rutter</p>	<p>Walter Bayes, 'The Landscape Paintings of James Aumonier', The Studio, Vol.48, , pp.175 (as RA product)</p> <p>A.G. Folliot Stokes, 'Julius Olsson, Painter of Seascapes', The Studio, Vol.48, pp.274-282, (Cornwall and the Coasts of the Sirens)</p>	<p>W. Nicholson, Whiteways, Rottingdean</p> <p>Death of Conder</p> <p>Gore, Somerset Landscape</p>	
<p>Winter, NEAC, inc., Blanche, Gilman Gore, Grant, A. John, G. John, Lamb, Nicholson, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Sargent, Sickert, Steer</p>		<p>Frederick Wedmore, 'Philip Connard', Art Journal, pp.73-8</p> <p>Alfred Tennyson, 'A Corner of Somerset', Art Journal, pp.161-5 (illus. Alfred Parson)</p>	<p>Bevan, Grooming Horse</p>	
<p>Nov, Paris, Druet, Van Gogh</p>		<p>Frederick Wedmore, 'Theodore Roussel', Art Journal, pp.180-6</p> <p>Frederick Wedmore, 'William Nicholson', Art Journal, pp.193-9</p> <p>Frederick Wedmore, 'Walter Sickert', Art Journal, pp.297-30</p>	<p>G.A. Storey, Pan and Syrinx, RA</p> <p>Arnesby Brown, 'The River: Afterglow' (not cows), RA</p>	
		<p>Laurence Binyon, <i>Painting in the Far East</i></p>		
		<p>Frank Rinder, 'William Orpen', Art Journal, pp.17-24</p> <p>Frederick Wedmore, 'David Muirhead', Art Journal, pp.41-5</p>		
		<p>Adolphe Jullien, <i>Fantini-Latour, sa vie et sa amities</i></p>		

1910 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan, Carfax, Conder Jan, Leicester Galleries, A.D. Peppercorn	review, <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.49, p.139 note, <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.49, Feb, pp.50-1	Maurice Denis, trans. Roger Fry, 'Cezanne-1 and 2', <i>Burlington</i> , January, 1910 T. Duret, <i>Manet and the French Impressionists</i> , Eng. edition. (review by Sickert, <i>the Art News</i> , 17 Feb, ('sane and cogent'. O.S))	Augustus John, Dorelia and the Children at Martigues	Deaths of Edward VII, Holman Hunt and Florence Nightingale
Jan, Arts and Crafts Exh. Soc., inc L. Pissarro at the New Gallery	review <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.49, pp.33-43	Frank Rutter, <i>Revolution in Art</i> (Dec) <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.49, C.H. Collins Baker, 'Some Recent Work of Mr Cayley Robinson', pp.3-10 <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.50, Feb, C.H. Collins Baker, 'The Paintings of Henry Tonks', pp. 3-10	Augustus John, The Blue Pool	Jan & Dec Elections. Liberals stay in power Arnold Bennett, <i>Clayhanger</i>
Feb, Bernheim Jeune, Matisse			La Thangue, A Ligurian Valley	E.M. Forster, <i>Mr Polly</i>
Feb-May, Glasgow, Nicholson, Sargent		<i>The Studio</i> , Vol.50, J.B. Manson, 'The Paintings of William Rothenstein', pp.37-46 <i>The Studio</i> , Vol.50, Alfred East, 'Tintern and the Wye as a Sketching Ground', pp.141-6 <i>The Studio</i> , Vol 51, Art School Notes on Clausen's Crit. of St Martin's Sketch Club, p.86 *	La Thangue, A Mountain Frontier Stanley Spencer, Two Girls and a Beehive Mark Senior, Commercial St., Leeds	Contemporary Art Society Accession of George V Miners Strike April, Marinetti lectures at Lyceum Theatre
April-May, International Society, inc., Blanche, Denis, F-L, Hornel, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Manet, Monet, Nicholson, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Sargent, Vuillard	review, <i>The Studio</i> , June, Vol.50, pp. 22-8 review, Walter Sickert, 'New Wine', <i>The New Age</i> , 21st April. OS	<i>Art Journal</i> , C.Lewis Hind, 'Mark Fisher', pp.15-20 <i>Art Journal</i> , Herbert E. Butler, 'Polperro', ('Cornwall --- the Riviera of England--- now played out for artists'), pp.205-8	Arnesby Brown, Silver Morning, (RA) Gore, Rule Britannia Gore, Innes and Taki	Transatlantic Wireless Service Girl Guides 1st Hollywood film

<p>May, Leicester Galleries, Charles Sims</p>	<p>note, The Studio, June, Vol.50, p.61, ('a happy fluency--aids the gay spirit')</p>	<p>Art News, Sickert, 'Impressionism', 30th June, OS</p>	<p>Bevan, The Cab Yard at Night</p>	<p>Sale of Maddocks modern collection</p>
<p>May onwards, RA, inc., Clausen, Forbes, Henry, La Thangue, Leech, Orpen, Sargent, E. Stott</p>	<p>review A.C.R Carter, The Studio, pp. 3-21</p> <p>review Sickert, 'Goosocracy', New Age, 12th May, OS</p>	<p><i>The Connoisseur</i>, 'The New Turner Room at the Tate' (under MacColl), Vol. XXVII, Sept-Dec, p.63</p> <p><i>The Connoisseur</i>, XXVII, 'Twenty Years of British Art at the Whitechapel', pp.217-8</p> <p><i>Burlington</i>, Nov., R. Mayer Reifstahl, 'Vincent Van Gogh', pp.?</p>	<p>Drummond, Brompton Oratory</p> <p>Paul Nash, The Sleeping Beauty</p>	<p>new ed. M. Arnold's The scholar Gypsy and Trystis, ill. Russell Flint</p>
<p>May-June, Whitechapel Art Gallery, 'Twenty Years of British Art', inc. Clausen, Conder, Forbes, Fry, Gauld, Guthrie, Hornel, A. John, G. John, Lavery, la Thangue, Nicholson, Orpen, T. Roussel, Sargent, Sargent, Steer, E. Stott, plus Johannesburg Collection, inc. C. Pissarro, Puvis de Chavannes</p>	<p>D. S. MacColl, Burlington, 'Twenty years of British Art at the Whitechapel', pp.220-230</p> <p>The Studio, Vol.50, pp.60-1, 'Twenty Years of British Art: 1890-1910'</p> <p>Walter Sickert, 'Culture for the East End', Art News, 26th May</p>	<p>Walter Sickert, 'Fashionable Portraiture', <i>The New Age</i>, 5th May, OS</p> <p>Walter Sickert, 'Wriggle and Chiffon', <i>The New Age</i>, 9th June, OS</p> <p>Walter Sickert, 'The Allied Artist's Association', <i>Art News</i>, 14th July, OS</p> <p>Walter Sickert, 'The Aesthete and the Plain Man', <i>Art News</i>, 5th May, OS</p>	<p>Philip Connard, Abbey Ruins</p> <p>Armesby Brown, The Signal Box</p> <p>W. Leech, Interior of a Barber's Shop</p>	<p>Sir George Sitwell, On the Making of Gardens A. G. Bradley, The Wye, ill. Sutton Palmer</p> <p>Mary Russell Witford, Our Village</p> <p>P.H. Ditchfield, Vanishing England, (Methuen)</p>
<p>June, Alpine Club Gallery, Friday Club, inc., Bell, Grant</p>		<p>Walter Sickert, Sargentolary, <i>The New Age</i>, 9th May, OS</p> <p>Walter Sickert, 'The Contemporary Art Society', <i>The New Age</i> 9th May, OS</p> <p>Walter Sickert, 'All We Like Sheep', <i>Art News</i>, 14 April, (serious effort & probity of Vision) OS</p>	<p>Lee Hankey, On the Dykes</p> <p>J.D. Innes, The Waterfall</p>	<p>Fry visits Matisse at Issy-les-Moulineaux. sees Dance //</p> <p>Gore, Ginner and Bevan begin to visit Applehayes (or '9)</p> <p>Innes to Rhyd-y-Fen</p>
<p>June-July, Chenil Gallery, Nicholson</p>	<p>note, The Studio, Vol. 50, p.223, (ill. Whiteways, Rottingdean) (poetry of the kind in Gray's Elegy)</p>		<p>Duncan Grant, The Dancers</p> <p>Henry Lamb, A Breton Cowherd</p>	

<p>Summer, NEAC, inc., Bell, Bevan, Fry, Gilman, Gore, Innes, G. John, Leech, Nicholson, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Sargent, Steer</p>	<p>review, The Connoisseur, XXVII, p.218, ('NEAC --- passed over its Bohemian days ---now --- so eminently orthodox that --- we may hear of its transformation into a Royal Society')</p> <p>Walter Sickert, 'The New English and After', The New Age, 2nd June. OS</p>	<p><i>Art Journal</i>, C.Lewis Hind, 'The Consolations of an Injured Critic', pp. 293-8, (glancing at the modern movement in art, he becomes much interested and rather giddy)</p> <p>T. Sturge Moore, <i>Art and Life</i></p>	<p>Henry Lamb, Death of a Peasant Laura Knight, Flying a Kite, (RA)</p>	
<p>June-August, Brighton, Modern French Artists, inc., Bastien-Lepage, Bernard, Boldini, Bonnard, Carriere, Cezanne, Cross, Degas, Derain, Denis, Gauguin, Guillaumin, La Touche, Martin, Matisse, Monet, Monticelli, C. Pissarro, Puvis de Chavannes, Redon, Renoir, Vlaminck</p>	<p>The Times, unsigned review, prob. Fry, 11 July 1910</p> <p>The Connoisseur, XXVII, review, p.297</p>	<p>Robert Dell, 'Introduction' to <i>Modern French Artists</i>, Brighton, June 1910</p> <p>M. Emile Michel, <i>Turner through French Spectacles</i></p> <p>C. Lewis Hind, <i>Turner's Golden Visions</i></p> <p>Shirley Fox, <i>An Art Student's Reminiscences of Paris in the Eighties</i></p>	<p>Dermod O'Brien, The Sand Pit Charles Shannon, The Apple Gatherers, (LR) Laura Knight, The Boys Tom Mostyn, Hill Top, RA</p>	
<p>July, AAA, inc: Bevan, Fergusson, Gilman, Ginner, Gore, Kandinsky, Sickert, Yeats</p>	<p>Sickert, 'The Allied Artist's Association', The Art News, 14th July, (in OS as 'The No Jury System')</p>	<p>J.D. Linton, <i>Constable's Sketches in Oils and Watercolours</i></p> <p>Charles Ricketts, <i>Titian</i></p> <p>W. Shaw Sparrow, <i>Frank Brangwyn and his Work</i></p>	<p>Harold Knight, Afternoon Tea Orpen, On the Irish Shore, NEAC</p>	
<p>Autumn, Liverpool, Walker, Blanche, Guthrie, Hornel, La Touche, Lavery, Le Sidaner, Sargent, E. Stott</p>			<p>Sargent, Albanian Olive Gatherers Lavery, A Windy Day', (Int.Soc) Edward Stott, The Good Samaritan, RA George Henry, The Nightingale, RA</p>	<p>September, Fry & MacCarthy to Paris, start selecting for <i>Manet and the Post Impressionists</i></p> <p>Oct. Fry returns to Paris and selects works from the Salon d'Automne</p>

<p>Nov, Chenil Galleries, A. John Winter, NEAC, inc., Bevan, Fry, Gilman, Gore, Grant, Innes, Lamb, Nicholson, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sargent, Sickert, Steer</p>			<p>Steer, <i>The Muslin Dress</i>, NEAC</p>	
<p>Nov-Jan 1911, Grafton Galleries, Manet and the Impressionists</p>	<p>Robert Ross, 'The Post-Impressionists at the Grafton: The Twilight of the Idols', <i>Morning Post</i>, 7 Nov 1910, p.3</p> <p>Daily Express, 'Paint Run Mad: Post Impressionists at Grafton Galleries', 9 Nov, p.8</p> <p>Charles Ricketts, 'Post Impressionism', <i>Morning Post</i>, 9 Nov, p.6</p> <p>Laurence Binyon, 'Post Impressionists', <i>Saturday Review</i>, 12 Nov, pp.609-10</p> <p>Sir William Blake Richmond, 'Post Impressionists', <i>Morning Post</i>, 16 Nov, p.5</p> <p>Ebenezer Wake Cook, 'The Post Impressionists', <i>Morning Post</i>, 19 Nov, p.4</p> <p>Roger Fry, 'The Grafton Gallery - I', <i>Nation</i>, 19 Nov 1910, p.331</p>	<p>Desmond MacCarthy, 'The Post Impressionists', intro. to cat. of exh at Grafton Galls, 8 Nov-14 Jan</p>		<p>15 Dec. Sickert lectures at Grafton Galleries on Post Impressionism. pub. in <i>Fortnightly Review</i> in Jan. 1911</p>

Desmond MacCarthy, 'The Exhibition at the Grafton Galleries: Gauguin and Van Gogh, The Spectator, 26 Nov, pp.902-3

Roger Fry, 'The Post-Impressionists- 2', Nation, 3 Dec, pp.402-3

Spencer Gore, 'Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh etc at the Grafton Galleries' Art News, 15 Dec, pp.19-20

Henry Holiday, 'Post Impressionism', Nation, 24 Dec, p.539

The Connoisseur, 'French Post Impressionists at the Grafton Gallery', pp.315-6

May onwards RA, inc. Clausen, Dagnan Bouveret, Forbes, Henry, Lavery, La Thangue, Orpen, Sargent, E. Stott	review in The Connoisseur , Vol. XXX, May-August, pp.141-5 review Art Journal , RA pictures, pp.164-174	pp.253-262 A.L. Baldry, The Studio , Vol.52, 'The Art of Sir Ernest A. Waterflow', pp.168-179 The Studio , Vol.53, A.L. Baldry, 'Some Recent Portraits By Philip A László', pp.261-8 The Studio , Vol.53, The Paintings of William Nicholson, pp.3-11	Spencer Gore, Mornington Crescent Gore, The Garden of Rowlandson House	
Summer, NEAC,	review, The Connoisseur , Vol. XXX, p.216		Steer, The End of the Chapter, (NEAC)	
June, Stafford Gallery, Sickert			Sickert, Off to the Pub	
June, Carfax, Camden Town Group, 1st exh. inc. Bevan, Gilman, Ginner, Gore, A. John, Lamb, L. Pissarro, Sickert		Review of 'The Letters of Vincent Van Gogh'; The Burlington , F. Melian Stawell.	Gilman, The Model, Reclining Nude	
July, A.A., inc., Bevan, Fergusson, Forbes-Robertson, Gilman, Ginner, Gore, Kandinsky, Lavery, Nevinson, Sickert, Yeats		First Issue of Rhythm , ed. Katherine Mansfield & Middleton Murray, art ed. J.D. Fergusson until Nov. 1912. In first issue, Michael T, Sadleir, 'Fauvism and a Fauve', pp.14-15	Wyndham Lewis (1911-12), Smiling Woman ascending a Stair Clausen, Propping the Rick, A Stormy Day, (RA) Alfred Parsons, The Heart of Somerset (RA)	
July, Goupil, Esperantist Vagabond Club, inc., Bevan, Fergusson, Ginner, Gilman, Gore				
July, Chenil, A. John			Lavery, The Grey Drawing Room, (RA)	
July, Dutch Gallery, William Stott			Steer, The Valley of the Severn, Storm Passing (NEAC)	Bergson gives 4 lectures at U.C.L
August, murals complete for Borough Polytechnics August, Chenil Gallery, 'Augustus John Paintings, Drawings and Etchings'		Art News, manifesto of the Futurist Painters, 15 August	W. Russell, The Fan, (NEAC)	Derain short visit to London in August
Oct. Stafford Gallery, C.Pissarro			Algernon Talmage, The Break	August, 1st performance of

<p>Liverpool, autumn, Walker, inc., Clausen, Forbes, Hornel, La Touche, Lavery, le sidaner, Monticelli, L. Pissarro, Sargent, Steer, E. Stott</p>	<p>Nov., Stafford Gallery, Cezanne and Gauguin</p>	<p>30 Nov., John Middleton Murray, 'The Art of Pablo Picasso, <i>New Age</i>, 30 Nov 1911, p.115</p> <p>Huntley Carter, 'The Plato-Picasso Idea', <i>New Age</i>, 23 Nov 1911, p.88</p>	<p>in the Storm, (NEAC)</p>	<p>Diaghilev's Ballet Russes, Royal Opera House</p> <p>J.B. Manson visits Picasso in Paris</p> <p>Vlaminck in London</p> <p>Bells and Fry visit Salon d'Automne. Also buy Picasso's 'Jars and Lemon' 1907</p>
<p>Manchester, winter, loan exh., inc., Bevan, Clausen, Conder, Etchells, Fergusson, Fry, Gauguin, Gilman, Ginner, Gore, Grant, Hornel, Innes, A. John, G. John, Nicholson, Orpen, Picasso, L. Pissarro, Rodin, Rothenstein, Sargent, Sickert, Steer</p>	<p>Dec. Carfax Gallery, 2nd Camden Town Group, inc. Bevan, Gilman, Ginner, Gore, Grant, Innes, Lamb, L. Pissarro, Sickert</p>	<p>2 Dec. 1911, <i>Outlook</i>, J.B. Manson, 'The paintings of Cezanne and Gauguin', pp.785-6</p> <p>3 Dec, 1911, <i>Observer</i>, 'Cezanne and Gauguin', 3 Dec., 1911, p.10</p>	<p>October 20, Henri Bergson gives 4 lectures at U.C.L</p>	<p>October 20, Henri Bergson gives 4 lectures at U.C.L</p>
<p>Ricketts exh. 'British Art 1811-1911' date and where</p>	<p>Dec. Art News pubs. Fry's preface to the C.A.S exh. at Manchester City Art Gallery</p>	<p>Dec. Art News pubs. Fry's preface to the C.A.S exh. at Manchester City Art Gallery</p>		
<p>Tate Gallery exh. pre-Raphaelites, date</p>				

1912 EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan	Jan, <i>Art News</i> , review of Fry's exh. at Alpine Club Saturday Review, 23 Jan, C.H.C.B. (re Fry's exh), pp. 110-1	English Review, Walter Sickert, 'The Old Ladies of Etching Needle Street', Jan, pp. 311-12	W. Leech, Golden Caves, Concarneau	Michael Sadler - Vice Chancellor, Leeds University
Jan Goupil, inc., Denis, Sérusier	Pall Mall Gazette, unsigned, 15th Jan, (re-p-imp-ism, 'how many of the scoffers have turned into admirers---its principles have renewed the vitality of British art), p.4.	Art News, trans. Signac's D'Eugene Delacroix au Neo-Impressionisme Nineteenth Century, D.S. MacColl, 'A Year of Post Impressionism', Feb, pp.285-302 Outlook, J.B. Manson, 'Four Modern French Painters', 24 Feb, p.281 The Studio, Vol.55, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'Edward Stott; An Appreciation', pp.3-10	Fry, White Road with Farm Gilman, Nude at A Window Augustus John, The Mumpers	Rutter, curator, Leeds City Art Gallery Home Rule Bill First Vol. Georgian Poetry
Jan-April, Leicester Galleries, Peppercorn	The Connoisseur, , review 'too unvaried for a one-man show', p.278		Ginner, Victoria Embankment Gardens	Women's Suffrage Bill rejected National Union Railwaymen
Feb Alpine Club, Friday Club, inc., Bell, Grant, Etchells, Wadsworth Carfax Gallery, Elliott Seabrooke	The Connoisseur, review of Fry (wise mix of Post Impressionism and Art), --pp.133-4 Saturday Review, 10 Feb, C.H.C.B, pp.171-2	The Studio, Vol.55, Henri Frantz, 'Eugene Boudin; A Painter of the Sea', pp? The Connoisseur, Jan-April, review of Sparrow's monograph on Lavery, pp.196-7 Saturday Rev., C.H.C.B, 'Self-Conscious Art', pp.236-7	Gore, Gauguin and the Connoisseurs at the Stafford Gallery Gore, Crofts Lane, Letchworth	19 March, Marinetti lecture, Bechstein Hall

<p>March, Stafford Gallery, Fergusson</p> <p>March, Goupil, Orpen</p> <p>March, Carfax, Ihlee</p>	<p>The Connoisseur, review, p.62</p> <p>Sat Rev, 9 March, C.H.C.B. 'Futurist Academics', re. Ihlee, pp.300-1</p> <p>Pall Mall Gazette, P.G. Konody, 'The Italian Futurists; Nightmare Exhibition at the Sackville Gallery, 1 March, p.5</p> <p>English Review, Walter Sickert, 'The Futurist Devil-among-the-Tailors', April, pp.147-52</p>	<p>Rhythm, Spring, Michael Sadleir, 'After Gauguin', pp.21-9 (Derain & Kandinsky, spiritual---a statement of Pantheism, like Wordsworth)</p> <p>Art News, Michael Sadleir, 'Kandinsky's Book of Art', 9 March</p> <p>The Studio, Vol.56, T. Martin Wood, 'The Paintings of Wilfred G. Von Glehn', pp.3-10</p> <p>The Studio, Vol.56, A.L. Baldry, 'The Paintings of Arthur Hacker', pp.175-82</p> <p>The Studio, Vol.57, Norman Garstin, 'The Art of Harold and Laura Knight', pp.183-200</p> <p>The Studio, Vol.57, Marion Hepworth Dixon, 'The Paintings of Philip Connard', pp.269-280</p> <p>Frank Rutter, 'Modern Movements in Art'</p>	<p>Gore, The Cinder Path</p> <p>Gore, The Beanfield</p> <p>Gore, Cave of the Golden Calf decorations</p> <p>Gore, Letchworth Station</p> <p>Gore, Flying at Hendon</p> <p>Drummond, In St. James's Park</p> <p>Nevinson, The Tow Path, Camden Town by Night</p> <p>Ratcliffe, Landscape with Cow</p> <p>Wyndham Lewis, Sunset Among the Michelangelos</p>	<p>Robert Bridges, Poetical Works</p> <p>26 June, Cabaret Theatre Club, 9 Heddon St. 'The Cave of the Golden Calf'</p> <p>July, Fry and Robert Dell to Paris to select for 2nd Post Imp. exh.</p> <p>August, Sadler buys Gauguin's 'Poèmes Barbares</p> <p>November, Rutter formed the Leeds Art Collections fund</p> <p>Sat. Rev. 14. Sept., pp.323-9, Fintan Young, review of Adrian Folliott Stokes's <i>Guide to Cornwall</i></p>
<p>April, Stafford Gallery, Picasso</p> <p>April-May, Int. Soc., inc., Bonnard, Denis, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Lavery, Manet, Monet, C. Pissarro, Renoir, Sargent, Vuillard</p>	<p>Observer, P.G. Konody, 'The Stafford Gallery', 26 April, p.6</p> <p>The Times, unsigned review (Robert Ross?), 27 April, p.13</p> <p>Nation, Roger Fry, 'The International Society at the Grafton Gallery', 20 April, pp.87-8</p> <p>English Review, Walter Sickert, 'The International Society', May, pp.316-22</p>			

May onwards, RA		Saturday Review, C.H.C.B, 4 May, pp.551-2	'The Letters of a Post Impressionist. Being the Familiar Correspondence of Vincent van Gogh', trans. with intro by Anthony M. Ludovici	Tom Mostyn, The Child	
May, Leech & Wolmark, Goupil Gallery		Saturday Review, 18 May, C.H.C.B 'A Decorative Arrangement, pp.617-8		Laura Knight, The Flower	
May, Carfax, Sickert			The Connoisseur, review of Women's International exhibition (esp. Ethel Walker, Laura Knight), p.62	Laura Knight, Cornwall	
Summer, NEAC, inc., Nicholson, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Sargent, Sickert, Steer			Fortnightly Review, July-Dec., George Moore, 'Un Rencontre au Salon', pp.895-903	Orpen, Sunlight	
Summer, Goupil, inc., Clausen, Conder, A. John, le Sidaner, Nicholson, Orpen, Steer			Huntly Carter, 'The New Spirit in Drama and Art', discussed Boccioni, Derain, Segonzac, Gore	Alfred East, Tranquility Alfred East, Under the Wold	
July, AAA, inc., Bell, Bevan, Dismorr, Fergusson, Fry, Gilman, Ginner, Gore, Kandinsky, Leech, L. Pissarro, Yeats				Alfred Parsons, Breton on the Avon	
July-Oct, Tate Gallery, Whistler				Stanley Spencer, The Apple Gatherers	
Autumn, Grosvenor, Arts & Crafts, inc., L. Pissarro				Arnesby Brown, A Norfolk Landscape	
Liverpool, Autumn, Walker, inc. Lavery, Orpen				George Wetherbee, Butterflies	
Oct., Stafford, inc., Dismorr, Fergusson				Jessie Etchells, Seated Figures	
				Innes, Collioure	
				Vanessa Bell, Studland Beach	

<p>Oct-Nov, Leicester Galleries, Clausen</p>	<p>The Connoisseur, Sept-Dec, review (from ugly realism to Homeric conflict), pp.270</p>		<p>Henry Lamb, Phantasy</p>	
<p>Oct-Jan, 1913. Grafton Galleries, 2nd Post Impressionist Exhibition, inc. Bell, Bonnard, Braque, Cezanne, Derain, Eitchells, Fry, Gore, Grant, Lamb, Matisse, Picasso, Spencer, Vlaminck</p>	<p>The Connoisseur, Sept-Dec, review, pp.188-92</p> <p>Observer, Oct., P.G. Konody, 'Art and Artists: English Post Impressionists', p.10 (esp. Bell, Grant, Gore)</p> <p>Cambridge Magazine, 23 Nov, Rupert Brooke, pp.125-6 & 30 Nov, 1912, pp.18-9 (lyrical attitudes)</p> <p>The Saturday Review, 9 Nov. C.H. Collins Baker, 'Post Impressionist Prefaces', pp.577-8</p> <p>The Connoisseur, review of NEAC and Camden Town Group, (esp. Lewis, Gilman, Ratcliffe, Drummond, John, Holmes, Fisher), pp68-9</p> <p>The Saturday Review, 7 Dec. Norman Shaw and the New English Art Club', C.H.C.B, pp.704-5</p>	<p>The Saturday Review, 23 Nov, C.H. Collins Baker, 'Slade Students Originality and Knowledge', pp.639-40</p>	<p>Spencer, The Nativity</p> <p>Spencer, Zacharius and Elizabeth</p>	
<p>Winter, NEAC, inc., Blanche, Innes, A. John, Orpen, L. Pissarro, Rothenstein, Sickert, Steer</p>				

<p>Dec, Carfax Gallery, Camden Town Group, inc. Bevan, Gilman, Ginner, Gore, Lamb, L. Pissarro, Sickert Dec. Chemil Gallery, John</p>	<p>The Saturday Review, 21 Dec. 'Mr John and the Arts and Crafts', C.H.C.B, pp.766-7</p>			
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1913	EXHIBITIONS	REVIEWS	BOOKS/ARTICLES	PAINTERS/PICTURES	OTHER ARTS/EVENTS
Jan-Feb, Friday Club, Alpine Gallery, inc. Wadsworth		Burlington, Jan, xxii, pp.226-230, Clive Bell, 'Post Impressionism and Aesthetics'	Harold Harvey, 'A Quiet Paddle'	Bridges, Poet Laureate	
Feb, Armory Show, New York		Rhythm, Jan, O. Raymond Drey, pp.363-9, 'Post Impressionism: the Character of the Movement'	Laura Knight, 'Wind and Sun'	Alfred Austin dies	
March, Omega Workshops		Observer, 19 Jan, P.G. Konody, 'Art and Artists: More Post-Impressionists', p.9	Ambrose McEvoy, 'The Seasons'	Lawrence, Sons and Lovers	
March, 1st Grafton Group exh., Alpine Club Gallery, members Bell, Etchells, Fry, Grant and Lewis		The Times, 8 Jan, unsigned review, prob. Robert Ross, 'Cezanne and the Post Impressionists', p.10	Spencer Gore, 'A Corner of Amptthill Square'	Rutier meets Picasso in Paris	
March, Carfax, Studies and Drawings by Walter Sickert,		The Studio, Vol. 58, Frank Gibson, 'David Muirhead, Landscape and Figure Painter', pp.97-104	Gore, 'Cambrian Road, Richmond'	Cat and Mouse Act	
April, Marlborough Gallery, Gino Severini		The Edinburgh Review, April, James Bone, 'The Tendencies of Modern Art', pp.420-34	William Ratcliffe, 'Summer Landscape'	April, Grant visits exh. of Matisse's Moroccan pictures at Bernheim-Jeune	
April, Leicester Galleries, Munnings	The Studio, Vol. 58, review, pp.222	The Studio, May, Vol.58, A. Stodart Walker, The Recent Paintings of E.A. Walton', pp.261-270		Edward Thomas, 'The Icknield Way'	
Spring, NEAC	The Connoisseur, review, esp. John		Gore, 'The West Pier, Brighton'	Grant, 'The Blue Sheep', screen	
June, Leeds Art Club, 'A Loan exh. of Post-Impressionist paintings and Drawings		The Studio, Vol.58, 'The John Balli Collection at the Goupil Gallery, (Barbizon pictures), PP.300-305			
Summer, Goupil,	The Connoisseur, review of John's 'Idyll'				
July, AAA exh. inc. Brancusi,	Nation, 2 August, review of Allied		Bevan, 'Horse Sale at the		

Kandinsky and Zadkine	Artists, pp.676-7	
Oct. Post Impressionists and Futurists (Not Bell, Fry or Grant), Doré Galleries, (foreword - Frank Rutter)		Barbican Gilman, 'The Eating House'
Nov. Group to be named the London Group in 1914 was formed. 1st exh in Brighton, 'English Post Impressionists and Others'		Drummond, 'Interior of a Cinema' Bell, 'Bathers in a Landscape' Orpen, 'The Holy Well' Lamb, 'Fisherfolk, Gola Island' Wadsworth, 'Trees beside a River'

イギリス絵画と印象派
BRITISH IMPRESSIONISM

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The Poetry of the Peasant Lies in the Eye that Sees'

Isabelle Holt

Since the late eighteenth century, the representation of English field workers has always been highly problematic. By the close of the nineteenth century the countryside and its inhabitants were well established in the urban middle class imagination as embodying the finest qualities of the national character. Politicians, cultural critics and moralists had apparently convinced their public that the nation's proper identity was bound up with ideals of 'Englishness' which were only to be discovered in the countryside, far from the overpopulated, politically unstable and racially degenerate cities. Imagery of the countryside has invariably been perceived in contrast to the city, both in England and elsewhere.¹⁾ But specific conditions which gave rise to the decline in the British Empire and increased domestic conflict, meant that this relationship had taken on extra significance by the turn of the century. The writers and critics most often quoted throughout the period, typically presented city dwellers as those who were, reared in the courts and crowded ways of the great metropolis, with cramped physical accessories', they led a 'hot fretful life' with 'long hours of sedentary and unhealthy toil'. These unhappy individuals were seen in sharp contrast to the 'healthy, energetic population reared amidst the fresh air and the quieting influence of the life of the fields'.²⁾

Actual conditions amongst rural workers were misrepresented in these accounts, and the countryside functioned as a backdrop upon which genuine anxieties could be played out and, if only temporarily, assuaged. In real terms, years of severe agricultural depression resulted in what contemporary observers like Rider Haggard viewed worryingly as an exodus to the cities. The peasantry, as he saw it, simply lacked the incentives to stay on the land.³⁾ Wages were low and, especially in the north, did not compete with those in industry. As Jan Marsh stated, industrial employment offered more security, but, just as important, it was relatively impersonal, whereas in the village 'quasi-feudal attitudes persisted'.⁴⁾ Further dissatisfaction was caused by appalling living conditions in tied housing, which gave the worker to the cosy 'cottager by the door' genre of painters like Birkett Foster and Helen Allingham (fig 1). One commentator, cited in 1913, spoke of the 'burning question' of country people living in houses desperately unfit for human habitation, cramped, squalid and without clean water.⁵⁾

To a political and cultural elite, such a situation threatened disastrous implications and one practical attempt at reform was the establishment, in 1889, of a government Board of Agriculture, intent on a level of state intervention into the rural economy. Increasingly it was believed, however, that for the nation to survive, not just economically, but also racially, then a return to the land was essential. At this end country life had to be presented as an appealing prospect. Imperialist statesmen like Lord Milner uttered the sentiment which, in 1911, widely extended across class and political persuasions; 'of all forms of productive capacity — there is none more vital, indispensable and steady than the application of human industry to the cultivation of the soil.'⁶⁾ To reach the point where this view could be held more widely, a substantial shift in ideological representation had become necessary. Developments in the rural imagery presented in popu-

lar exhibitions from the later 1880s were inextricably bound up in this process.

Throughout the decade, the subjects and techniques of painters like George Clausen, Henry Herbert La Thangue and Edward Stott derived, to varying degrees, from British precedents like Fred Walker and John Robertson Reid and from the French examples of first Jules Bastien-Lepage, and later Jean-François Millet.⁷⁾ In the early years Bastien's plein-air depiction of an authentic peasantry was an especially revolutionary practice; 'All his personages are placed before us in the most satisfying completeness, without the appearance of artifice, but as they live; and without comment, as far as it is possible on the author's part'.⁸⁾

Representation without comment is never possible, but Clausen's opinions arose in the context of the moralising genre or pseudo-classical paintings that were standard fare at Royal Academy exhibitions in the early eighties. Bastien's success amongst the younger generation lay in his ability to meld a degree of conventional poetic sentiment with a larger dose of apparent impartiality, which, it was assumed, was achievable only if painters lived amongst their subjects. The reputation of the French artist's followers developed in the eighties in relation to their skill at negotiating that same terrain. In some pictures Clausen transgressed levels of acceptability as, for instance, in his depiction of a time-worn labourer, *A Woman of the Fields* of 1883 (fig 2). To the critic of the *Magazine of Art* the woman was 'excessively ugly', her hands were brutalised with work and she had 'stubby, grubby, grimy nails —'. But it was not simply her age which disqualified her as a subject fit for art;

'under certain appropriate conditions of light and air, placed in a right environment, the centre of interest in a fitting scheme of values, the personality of Mr Clausen's model might have been acceptable as artistic material, and its representation have been shown to be a legitimate representation in art. But here we have none of these essentials'.⁹⁾

As the critic R A M Stevenson explained, Clausen's picture was unusual in England at that time, 'when peasants were represented as unnaturally clean, coquettish and simperingly pretty. In this case the artist endeavoured to give to the figure of the old woman its right relation to the landscape whilst omitting nothing of her natural wrinkles, tan and griminess'.¹⁰⁾

A measure of the discontent provoked by *A Woman of the Fields* was due to contemporary difficulties over the concept of the labouring woman. For women to work out of doors threatened conceptions of natural order and Victorian notions of femininity. While domestic or dairy work might be acceptable within these notions, fieldwork was not, especially when, as here, the physical effects of years of outdoor labour were disconcertingly visible.¹¹⁾ Flora Thompson's memories of rural Oxfordshire in the late eighties reflect something of these attitudes. At that time only a few women still did field work; menial tasks like weeding, hoeing, stone picking or topping and tailing turnips. 'Formerly, it was said, there had been a large gang of field women, lawless, slatternly creatures, some of whom thought nothing of having four or five children out of wedlock. Their day was over: but the reputation they had left behind them had given most country women a distaste for 'goin' afield'.¹²⁾ Nevertheless, the rural economy often depended on them, and the shortage of farm labour meant that all available hands, including those of children and women, were required on the land.

Three years after *A Woman of the Fields* Clausen showed *A Girl's Head* (fig 3) at the 1886 Society of British Artists, a simple study of a girl whose 'youthful face' struck a critic with 'such pathos and such vitality, that criticism is almost disarmed'.¹³⁾ This was one of a series

trait heads produced by the artist at that time.¹⁴ Removed from
hours, perhaps as a stone picker, the wider social implications
of depicting a young peasant girl are lost. There could be no judge-
ment about the propriety of her work and her 'youthful face' is without
any suggestion of a life of hardship. She is simply a vision of innocence set,
against a background of nature, with the effect that all 'criti-
cism is disarmed'. From this reviewer's tone it is apparent that such
art was far more generally acceptable.

At the same time Henry Herbert La Thangue painted *The Har-
vest's Return* (fig 4). The steep setting and composition is strikingly
reminiscent of Clausen's *Stone Pickers* and typical of paintings by
Bastien-Lepage. The result, in all cases, is that the peasants are firmly
rooted in their own surroundings, rooted to the soil.¹⁵ In this
painting a young girl returns from a day's labour in the fields in the late
autumn. Her face, shaded by a straw hat, is reddened by the sun and
her work, though her clean white dress somehow belies the latter.
Behind her, with his long scythe over his shoulder, an older field worker follows
her, like the grim reaper. So the work is, on one level, a sym-
bolist allegory on the passage of time and the girl's transition to adult-
hood. This symbolist content, for an audience well versed in its appreci-
ation, diffused much social criticism and it was ultimately in this
context that rustic naturalism was to develop. Later that year,
however, La Thangue worked up another study of the girl's head, *Por-
trait of a Young Girl* (no. 37), producing what is fundamentally an
almost photographic document of a peasant girl's face seen
in sunlight and in which all connotations, symbolist or social are

of rustic naturalism's impulse to record passing ways of life in the
countryside was shared with a number of popular writers, from
Thomas Hardy to Richard Jeffries and Edward Thomas. Their work
was characterised by a nostalgia born out of unease at the rapid pace
of change and of modernity. There is a strong sense in which represen-
tations of field workers witnessed a desire, as E P Thompson put it,
for an image of those rural workers at exactly the moment where
they were 'in danger of becoming industrial proletarians'.¹⁶ Edward
Walton's fleeting vision of *A Herdboy*, (no. 87), of 1886, is a
case in point. The tendency towards documentation was noted
at the time: 'In going about among the people there are subjects
for painting in plenty, and in depicting these Mr La Thangue is, to
some extent consciously perhaps, producing a series of pictures of
the agricultural life of our time which is sure to have some perma-
nent historical value'.¹⁷

Such a desire can be readily observed in Clausen's renderings of
ploughing at the end of the eighties. Here the painter's apparent objec-
tive relates to contemporary photography, especially that of Peter
Emerson. In works like *The Ploughboy*, of 1888 (no. 9), Clausen
offered a painterly version of a photographic record. The boy looks
unaware of the spectator's presence, and frozen as in a specific
moment in time. This appeal to the authenticity of photography,
points here not to a sentimental longing for the past, but to a com-
ing denial of what was actually beginning to happen in the
countryside.

Again Flora Thompson gives an interesting account of those events.
During this period it was still possible to see ploughing teams at work
and Clausen depicted them, with a boy at the head of the leader and
a ploughman behind at the shafts (see fig 5). In Oxfordshire, however,
elsewhere, new developments were already visible. 'Every autumn
appeared a pair of large traction engines, which, posted one on each
side of a field, drew a plough across and across by means of a cable.
They toured the district under their own steam, for hire on the differ-
ent farms.'¹⁸ Innovations like these were rarely, if ever, recorded by

painters or photographers and were only described by ruralist writers
in terms of regret.

Those who travelled with the machines were regarded as 'nomads
and social outcasts', and this accounts partly for their absence in art.
They were outside the established order of the countryside and
represented a symptom of the modernity that was both culturally and
aesthetically disagreeable. By contrast the plough itself, according to
Edward Thomas, was 'a universal symbol', 'a sovereign beautiful thing
which man has made in his time — the dirge at their downfall passes
inevitably into a paean to their majesty'.¹⁹ Sarah Knights's comments
on Emerson are interesting in this respect. The photographer viewed
the peasantry as part of a disappearing social order, threatened by
the incursion of the new bourgeoisie into rural areas. In the idealised
types that were his photographs, he insisted on a 'traditional rural
order of specialist skills', ignoring the changes taking place in con-
temporary society.²⁰ In 1902, Rider Haggard noted those changes
which had resulted in the farm labourer being looked down upon
by members of his own class. As a consequence 'the labourer now
looks down on himself'.²¹ The writer's own 'rural rides' led him to
the conclusion that before long ploughmen 'will be scarce indeed'.
Significantly, on his own farm, the traditions of ploughing continued.
Clausen, Haggard, Thomas and Emerson, along with their viewing
and reading public, were all, finally, members of the same class and
in the separate art forms that they practised, or purchased, they re-
vealed the same anxieties, which they attempted to displace in strik-
ingly similar ways.

After 1890, the influence of Bastien Lepage was in steady decline.
This was noted by RAM Stevenson writing about *The Ploughboy*.
Although the general composition was still clearly indebted to Bas-
tien, nevertheless, here there was 'more breadth, more freshness, and
more envelopment. — Taking Mr Clausen's work altogether it must
be admitted that he has been true to the character of English sub-
ject'.²² Appeals like this, to the 'Englishness' of a subject, appear
repeatedly after this date. But unlike those landscape painters of the
period like Philip Wilson Steer and David Murray, for whom English
precedents like Constable were crucial, in the case of peasant painters,
the stylistic influences continued to be predominantly French. A bright-
ening and lightening of the palette and a preoccupation with render-
ing atmosphere, or 'envelopment', was the result of increased familiar-
ity with Impressionism for most painters by the nineties. In terms of
the kind of rural imagery discussed here, this only increased the sense
of the English countryside as a tranquil idyll, a complete contrast to
the crowded, grimy city. By this date Clausen's allegiance was turn-
ing to the figure compositions of Millet, for, as he wrote;

'No other has seen so clearly or shown so well the beauty and
significance of ordinary occupations, the union of man with nature
— always the chief interest lay in the expression of the action or
sentiment, and the type, — (for Bastien) the portrait interest
dominates, for Millet — the interest of the type.'²³

Millet's symbolic imagery of the heroic peasants of northern France
combined here with a heightened impressionism, found a more than
receptive audience from those intent on idealising the field worker
in England. The *Sons of the Soil*, 1901 (no. 10), in its portrayal of gang
labour, a phenomenon fast disappearing from the rural scene, shows
the extent of this idealisation which, in 1895, meant that Clausen was
being celebrated as;

'a painter of the English peasant under out of door effects — he
expresses plainly the poetry, the charm, which he himself has dis-
covered in the subtle colour and modelling of a labourer's face
—. In an age somewhat inclined to be dyspeptic, it is a pleasure
to look upon his wholesome toilers, ruddy with the glow of health

or bronzed with the suns and snows of an outdoor life.²⁴⁾

Increasingly, a significant aspect of Millet's appeal, in contrast to Bastien, lay in the justification of a selective approach to the rural scene. This was the important difference between the portrait and the type, the latter sanctioned a more poetic rendering. As Haldane MacCall noted, again of Clausen, 'He takes just those exquisite ordinary scenes (and) these he puts down for us in that broad colour sense which our memory retains them — in all essential truths'.²⁵⁾ To deal in essentials allowed for a discriminating vision, and by implication, one that could omit nagging detail and fact. As Dewey Bates remarked, 'the poetry of the peasant lies in the eye that sees'.²⁶⁾

A selective poetic approach allowed, in *Sons of the Soil*, for the depiction of gang labourers in such a way that concerns about their rough unruliness seemed misjudged. Instead these gangs who, despite the moral anxiety they created, had been a necessary part of the agricultural system, are controlled by a concentrated, unified movement and rhythmic grouping which the painter derived from Millet. In 1899, Clausen had painted his *Allotment Gardens* (fig 6), viewed from his front garden at Widdington in Essex and in so doing touched on a subject already of wide interest at that date. Essex by the turn of the century was something of a marginal zone, in between town and country. Dewey Bates, writing on the subject of market gardens and allotments in 1885, described the local market gardener as one who was 'continually mingling the soil of his acres with the mud of London'. Throughout the essay, while extolling the virtues of small holdings as Haggard was also to do, Bates's every utterance reveals his class distance and bias. Popular national education is dismissed as potentially ruinous, 'the fields would be choked with weeds, the flowers unplucked and field women would 'have colour box and sketch book in hand'. Painters, including himself, were largely responsible for elevating the position of the labourer in the public's imagination. In reality he was a prosaic individual, and 'fortunately is totally ignorant' of that situation.²⁷⁾

As the critic of *The Saturday Review* maintained, 'the biblical air that Millet found in his own people overweighs what Clausen with his ability might draw from the English Hodge'.²⁸⁾ Allotment gardening was regarded as a potential solution to economic problems in rural areas and as morally improving at the same time. Allotment schemes attracted agriculturalists, worried about rural poverty and emigration, but also, as P J Waller has noted, because they were believed to 'reduce the number of poaching and other offences, encourage personal thrift and enterprise, and maintain the national character and physique'.²⁹⁾ In other words, they were a possible means of social control, and support for them was underpinned by a fundamental distrust of the labouring class, rural as well as urban. In this respect the idealising of the peasant was even less than skin deep. The English Hodge, just like the city-bred type, was also potentially lawless and needed to be kept in check and a popular way to do this was to present him as some noble stoic in rhythmic, elemental compositions.

That the rustic figure should have emerged as a metaphor for the superior qualities of the English race then is striking, because there is much evidence that real attitudes were quite different. For Haggard, 'only the dullards and wastrels stay on the land — and it is this different remnant who will be the parents of the next generation of rural Englishmen'.³⁰⁾ Examples of such condescension abound throughout the period. In 1899, Laurence Housman described how the faces depicted by Edward Stott were rather 'vegetable in form', and were 'imaging for us, almost to excess, the stagnation of dull rustic intelligence'.³¹⁾ Not only were the peasants unintelligent, they were incapable of appreciating the qualities of the countryside and the beauties of the natural world. For Haggard, 'nature (only) appeals to the

truly educated'.³²⁾ If the idea of a popular education in rural areas was as unthinkable to Haggard as it had been to Dewey Bates, then this situation was likely to continue.

Clausen's own writings reflect this position. Lecturing to Royal Academy students in 1904 he insisted that the appeal of landscape was; 'to the primitive instincts — not to primitive people, not so much to people who pass their lives in the open air; for they take nature and its changes as a matter of course, and look on the weather as a capricious master whose whims have to be met. But the artist's view is outside this; and a picture of landscape appeals mainly to the primitive instincts of cultivated people who live in the cities, who look from the standpoint of civilisation with a sentimental longing towards a more simple state'.³³⁾

Despite living in the countryside, these painters' rural images and their ideas about rural England were invariably constructed from the perspective of London audiences and exhibition spaces. Their work embodied deeply ingrained views about class and race, ideologies which, at times, revealed serious contradictions. But the enthusiasm and the critical fervour with which paintings like *Sons of the Soil* were received was enough to conceal much doubt and unease, and this was a substantial part of their function. A review in *The Connoisseur* of 1904 illustrates their success in this perfectly;

'Clausen's soil stained sons, his gleanng women, his healthy children are all fine English types: he has pictured in many works the great song of toil in the open from the Sowing to the Reaping, from the Reaping to the Garnering of wheat, the song of the Barn, the stubble field, the song of the beauty of the Corn field, the Dignity of the Plough. It is a great feeling to look at Clausen's pictures and to feel English, part of all this, one with the village folk, the countryside, the quiet field of corn'.³⁴⁾

Notes

- 1) For the best survey of this tendency see Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1973. Williams makes the crucial point that 'there was almost an inverse proportion — between the relative importance of the rural working economy and the cultural importance of rural ideas', p.248
- 2) C F G Masterman (ed), *The Heart of the Empire. Discussions of Modern City Life in England*, Fisher Unwin, 1902, p.7
- 3) H Rider Haggard, *Rural England. Being an Account of Agricultural and Social Researches Carried Out in the Years 1901 & 1902*, Vol. II, Longmans 1902, p.539. Haggard's point raises the often debated issue of whether a peasantry as such still existed in England at this time. For the most part, the English farm labourer was landless at this date. For further discussion see especially, Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire from 1750 to the Present Day*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1981, p.200
- 4) Jan Marsh, *Back to the Land. The Pastoral Impulse in England from 1880-1914*, Quartet Books, 1982, p. 61. Marsh notes that during the last quarter of the nineteenth century 40% of farm labourers either emigrated or drifted into other professions.
- 5) Cited in Mrs Cobden Unwin, *The Land Hunger, Life under Monopoly, Descriptive Letters and Other Testimonies from Those Who Have Suffered*, Fisher Unwin, 1913, pp.68-71
- 6) Quoted in Alun Howkins, 'The Discovery of Rural England' in Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (eds.), *Englishness. Politics and Culture, 1880-1920*, Croom Helm, 1986, p.68
- 7) For Bastien's significance to English painters see Kenneth McConkey, *British Impressionism*, Phaidon Press 1989
- 8) George Clausen, 'Bastien-Lepage and Modern Realism', *Scottish Art Review*, Vol.1, Oct. 1888, p.114
- 9) *Magazine of Art*, 1885, p.134
- 10) R A M Stevenson, 'George Clausen', *Art Journal*, 1890, p.292
- 11) For fuller discussion see Karen Sayer, *Women of the Fields: Representations of Rural Women in the Nineteenth Century*, Manchester University Press, 1995 and Alun Howkins, *Reshaping Rural England. A Social History, 1850-1925*, Harper Collins, 1991

- Thompson, *Lark Rise*. Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 49. (1st edition)
- Romance of Art'. *Magazine of Art*. Vol. 10. 1887, p.113
- greater discussion see Kenneth McConkey, *Sir George Clausen, 1852-1944*, Oldham Art Galleries and Museums, 1980, p.44. The model was not a real field worker, she was a nursemaid employed by the family, but Clausen depicts her the same bodice as the figure in *The Stone Pickers* of 1887, thereby conflating the identity of the two.
- more discussion see Kenneth McConkey, *A Painter's Harvest, H H La Thangue, 1859-1929*, Oldham Art Galleries and Museums 1978
- Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Harmondsworth, 1977
- George Thomson, 'Henry Herbert La Thangue and His Work', *The Studio*, Vol. 1896, p.176
- Thompson, *ibid.*, pp.43-4
- Thomas's description is contained in his 1906 *The Heart of England*. This passage, from 'The Ship, Chariot and Plough', is cited in Jan Marsh, *Edward Thomas, A Poet for His Country*, Elek Books, 1978, p.51
- Knights in Neil McWilliam and Veronica Sekules (eds), *P H Emerson, Art and Photography in East Anglia, 1885-1900*, Sainsbury Centre, 1986, pp.12-20
- Haggard, *op.cit.*, p.540
- M Stevenson, *op.cit.*, p.293
- Clausen, *Six Lectures on Painting*, London, 1904, p.106
- Wey Bates, 'George Clausen, ARA', *The Studio*, Vol.V, 1895, p.7
- Madame MacFall, 'The Art of Mr Clausen', *The Academy and Literature*, 3 Dec, 1894, p.569
- Wey Bates, 'About Market Gardens', *The English Illustrated Magazine*, Feb. 1895, pp.551-559
- Wey Bates, *ibid.*, p.555
- Wey Bates, *Saturday Review*, 6 May, 1899, p.578
- Waller, *Town, City and Nation, England 1850-1914*. Oxford University Press, 1983, p.190
- Haggard, *op.cit.*
- Frederic Houseman, 'Edward Stott: Painter of the Field and Twilight', *Magazine of Art*, 1900, p.531
- op.cit.*
- George Clausen, 1904, *op. cit.* p.96
- Le Connoisseur*, Vol.IX, 1904, p.142

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Nature and Nostalgia: Philip Wilson Steer and Edwardian Landscapes

YSANNE HOLT

After 1893, an extraordinary and fundamental change occurred in the once boldly innovative painting of Philip Wilson Steer. The influence of contemporaries like Monet, Seurat and Whistler was supplanted by that of British landscape painters like Turner and Constable. In this Steer, along with more commercially successful painters like David Murray and Alfred East, was regarded by many as returning to the very sources of French Impressionism. To an extent, this critical laundering served to make French art more palatable to still hostile British audiences, but its larger significance was its appeal to nationalistic sensibilities. My concern here is the process whereby the influence of these earlier artists on Steer came to be regarded as an expression of national identity in the years up to 1910.

Looking back over Steer's career in 1952, John Rothenstein, the man responsible for buying the bulk

of the Tate Gallery's collection of early Steers, wondered at the radical differences between paintings like *Girls Running, Walberswick Pier*, begun in 1890 (Fig. 1), and works such as *A Classic Landscape* (1893) (Fig. 2). He was obviously unsure of the merits of these later works, but he managed to discern the legacy of Impressionism in their loose handling and atmospheric qualities. Nevertheless, he wrote with a strange naivety, 'this almost total transformation in Steer's outlook, which appears to me to be the most important event in his life, has remained, so far as I am aware, unnoticed or ignored by all those who have written on his work'.¹ For Rothenstein, here adopting the classic Modernist position on Steer, the 'deterioration' of his creative faculties was difficult to explain given his sporadic development and famous silences. The writer ended by speculating on the effects of lethargy, debilitating middle age and even



Fig. 1. Philip Wilson Steer: 'Girls Running, Walberswick Square', c.1890-94, oil on canvas, 69.2 × 92.7 cm. Trustees of the Tate Gallery, London. (Photograph: courtesy of Tate Gallery Publications.)



Fig. 2. Philip Wilson Steer: 'A Classic Landscape, Richmond', 1893, oil on canvas, 60.8 × 76 cm. Chris Beetles Ltd., London. (Photograph: courtesy of Chris Beetles Ltd.)

the end of his relationship with his young model Rose Pettigrew.

Rothenstein's suggestions obscured the really fascinating issues surrounding this point in Steer's development. Despite his assumptions, the radical difference in style of pictures from c.1893 was much apparent and commented upon at the time. Contemporary accounts of this transition perfectly illustrate the way in which a belief that there were essential qualities which distinguished English painting figured in the construction of national identity in the years around 1900. Rothenstein's understanding of the process of change in art did not allow for such considerations. The painter ceased to be original and was therefore judged to have gone off the boil. Such was also the view of Douglas Cooper who, writing in 1945, rejected English painting for exactly those qualities for which it was valued earlier. By the late forties, Cooper was building up his collection of Picasso, Braque and Léger and was highly critical of those characteristics of Englishness in British art which excluded it from what he regarded as the progression of Modernism. Following his death in 1942, Steer had been fêted as

the epitome of an English painter and so it was natural that he should become the target of Cooper's invective, resulting in a provocative article entitled 'The Problem of Wilson Steer'.² In this the painter was condemned for his eclecticism, the lack of any logical advancement in his art and the absence of any individual formal language. Modernism and Englishness were then (and often still are) presented as essentially at odds. The very language with which the two are traditionally described signifies this. Modernism is forward thinking, challenging and professional. Englishness is anti-intellectual, Romantic and amateur.

So while the reception of Steer's paintings reveals interesting assumptions about the nature of Englishness as a unifying ideal in the late Victorian and Edwardian era, it also provokes debate on the implications of British Modernism, if this is not a contradiction in terms. Nor do the ramifications of this debate end with a mid-century generation of critics. More recently Peter Fuller sought to re-establish the significance of a quintessentially British Romantic tradition, in contrast to what he saw as the 'failure' of International Modernism post-1945.³ For him this unique

tradition 'has always involved resistance to modernity'. Modernism, in Fuller's view, as for turn of the century reviewers of Steer's work, was defined equally by its foreignness.

Fuller's position may be seen in the context of present-day isolationism and ambivalence about closer cultural and political integration within Europe. The broader circumstances today are perhaps similar to those in which Steer found himself a hundred years ago. Cultural introspection and declarations about Englishness generally abound at times of insecurity. The same might be argued for any preoccupation with landscape painting itself.⁴ As a genre, it has always proved a perfect site for the construction of class and racial identities and for reflections on personal and national histories. This understanding has informed important recent research on late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British landscape painting especially. As Stephen Daniels has remarked, landscapes can stand as examples of both 'moral order and aesthetic harmony', and particular examples can achieve the status of 'national icons'.⁵ This condition clearly does not apply solely to landscape imagery in this country. Daniels's own work on nineteenth-century American painting demonstrates this, and surveys ranging from *A Day in the Country: Impressionism and the French Landscape* to the 1994 exhibition *Monet to Matisse*, have dealt with the extent to which landscape paintings could be interpreted as constructions of Frenchness.⁶ The point is to be able to identify the different ways in which particular meanings could develop at given moments in specific cultures.

I

By the turn of the century in Britain, the sheer abundance of landscape painting in popular exhibitions illustrates the extent to which painters, engaged in aestheticizing the countryside, were producing images that were essentially fantasies and endlessly appealing. The British landscape was widely perceived to be a national asset. It was already regarded as 'heritage', as the establishment of the National Trust in 1895 indicates. Ten years before this date, one critic, discussing the work of Benjamin Williams Leader, defined the relationship that existed in the public's mind between land, the countryside and nation:

A long national history and the immemorial laws and traditions that rule over the hamlet, the parish, the fold and field, and the river have had their slow but sure effect upon every part and detail of the landscape. All refers to feudal England, and farther back to that England of families and farms overseas which emptied its conquering people upon the British lands. The whole story, lost in the modern town, is written in the modern fields, in the very growth of the hedges and clustering of the trees.⁷

The continuing power of beliefs like this accounts for David Lowenthal's interesting but contentious

remark that: 'Nowhere else is landscape so freighted with legacy. Nowhere else does the very term suggest not simply scenery and *genres de vie*, but quintessential national virtues.'⁸

Associations between an assumed spirit of Englishness and the countryside were continually emphasized during the period of this study, while the conflation of Englishness and Britishness was at a peak.⁹ This was also an era of consistent anti-urbanism coupled with concern over the slow recovery of British agriculture from depression. Politicians and landowners (and many of course fulfilled both roles), were particularly keen to foster a special interest in rural regeneration. From this point connections between the sound, unsullied virtues of the true Anglo-Saxon and the both morally and racially healthy qualities of the countryside, were deliberately implied at all levels of political and cultural discourse. Such identifications were clearly not new. Raymond Williams's celebrated study *The Country and the City*, charted the extent to which they might be traced backwards in literature, through Leavis, Sturt, Hardy, Cobbett, Clare and so on, right back to Piers Plowman. Bound up, however, with nostalgia for an idealised world of childhood, each of these memories of the past meant different things at different times. Williams established that since the end of the nineteenth century, there was 'an almost inverse proportion . . . between the relative importance of the rural working economy and the cultural importance of rural ideas'.¹⁰ Emergent trends and tastes in art must be seen as integrally bound up in this relationship in the early 1900s.

The liberal politician and cultural critic C. F. G. Masterman described his anxieties about the city and the countryside in his 1909 study of *The Condition of England*. A concern with actual racial degeneration in rural areas figured largely in this. The decline of traditional class structures, the disappearance of an apparently benign rural gentry in favour of the large farmer, signalled a deep malaise within every region of southern England, despite superficial appearances of prosperity. Masterman believed he could discern 'the passing of a race of men', and as established communities became less self-sufficient he worried, that 'England is bleeding at the arteries, and it is her reddest blood which is flowing away'. Largely responsible for this condition he felt, were the 'glowing patriots who, in their anxiety to build up an Empire have been grabbing at continents and lost their own land'.¹¹ With more than a suggestion of Little Englandism, Masterman's polemic called for an exercise in pure patriotism. Consideration for the condition of the national character and its preservation needed to take precedence over imperialist adventure. A preoccupation with the health of the countryside, the real empire, was more important than unseemly squabbles over foreign territories. A re-evaluation of national traditions in painting is a parallel to social and cultural considerations like these, from the early nineties onwards.

Recent research into the significance of ideas of

Englishness and the countryside in the decades around 1900, has been largely general or, where particular, concerned with literature.¹² Contemporary representations of landscape in art have had comparatively little attention until quite recently.¹³ This general neglect suggests present day art historians are as unwilling to attend seriously to seemingly retrogressive paintings as Rothenstein's generation was. From the various standpoints described here the 'almost total transformation of outlook' in Steer's work from the nineties takes on a very particular relevance, but this can be properly defined only by study of the cultural implications of certain formal languages and types of imagery.

For the Modernist historian, Steer's heroic period was obviously in the late eighties. By that date his experimentation with recent French paintings from Monet to Seurat, was painfully apparent to conservative English critics whose taste continued to be for sentimental anecdote and highly finished canvases. Steer was to find pictures such as *Boulogne Sands* (c.1888-94) (Fig. 3) condemned for sloppy handling, crude ugliness and jarring colour relationships. Sensitive to this critical failure, he ceased to exhibit more adventurous works for some time after they were produced. Fortunately for him, as for many British painters who

experimented with Modernism, family money meant he was not wholly dependent on sales. Rothenstein's father, William, recalled that Steer's studio in the 1890s was crammed with unsold pictures 'of yachts and the sea, and of girls with long slender legs like Sheraton tables'.¹⁴ General opinion had been that those works were inspired by the more extreme examples of French art and were quite simply a travesty of nature. Critics believed they were unnatural, they were not consoling or reassuring and pleasant, they were difficult and disturbing. In this respect Steer shared the experiences of his friend John Singer Sargent, whose outdoor composition *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose* he had admired at the Academy in 1887. Although there were many more radical instances of Sargent's experimentation with Impressionism around these years, it was this particular picture which, in the words of one critic, established the artist as arch apostle of the 'dab and spot' school. A label which, as William Gerds has pointed out, serves only to emphasize the limited understanding of Impressionism in England in the late eighties.¹⁵

Not only was Steer's *A Summer's Evening* (1888) believed to be an assault on firm convictions about art, worse still, it was felt to attack deeply cherished, if half-conscious convictions about nature.¹⁶ Steer's

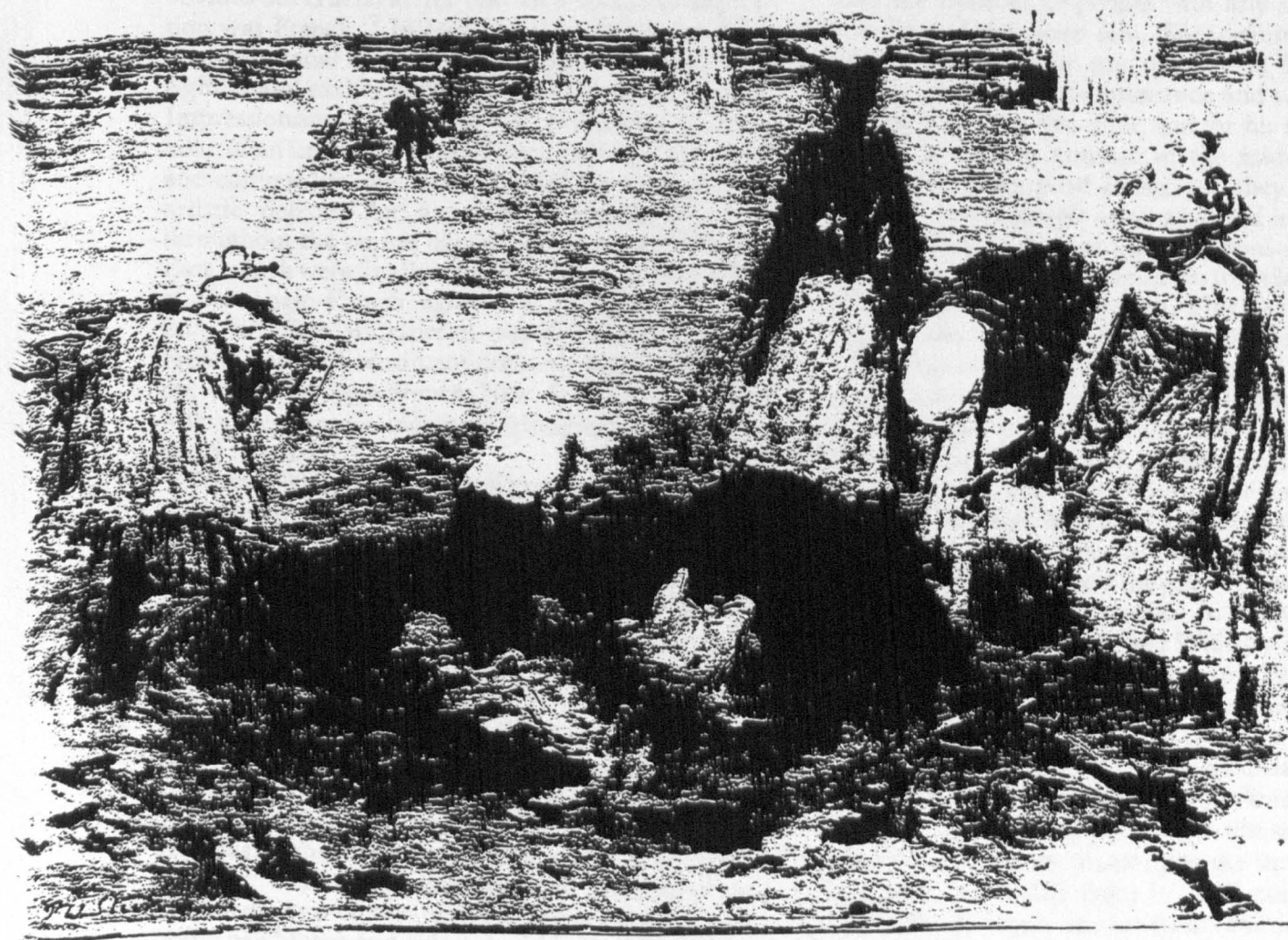


Fig. 3. Philip Wilson Steer: 'Boulogne Sands', c.1888-94, oil on canvas, 62 x 77 cm. Trustees of the Tate Gallery, London. (Photograph: courtesy of Tate Gallery Publications.)

vivid handling of a time-honoured arcadian theme, of three graces delighting in the sun, sea and sand, clearly departed from the usual pseudo-classical depictions of that subject, of figures and the natural scene joined together in suggestions of tradition and timelessness. By contrast one reviewer of Steer's picture was disturbed by its 'utter unnaturalness and audacity'. It was a piece of 'aggressive affectation' which made her feel uncomfortable.¹⁷ A few years later a degree of influence from French Impressionism would be acceptable because a brightened palette was understood to heighten the perception of a summer's idyll, of escape from urban unpleasantness. Any more substantial influence however, was still suspect. Steer's paintings certainly overstepped the mark at an early stage, and the hostility they aroused highlights the affront he appeared to have given to received expectations. The clichéd symbolism of 'mother nature' was accepted in its most literal terms in the late Victorian era and any obvious departures were simply offensive, prompting unfeminine descriptive terms such as aggressiveness, awkwardness and unnaturalness.¹⁸

II

Linked to the problem that Steer's pictures upset preconceptions about both art and nature, was the obvious but crucial factor that their source of inspiration was French.¹⁹ In itself this was symptomatic of the exceptional insularity and xenophobia of the late eighties and early nineties.²⁰ The influence of French Impressionism at this point was made to seem symbolic of an imminent breakdown in all areas of social and cultural life, one that extended far beyond mere artistic debate. An anti-French feeling mounted throughout the period of colonial disputes in the Far East, which were finally only resolved with the signing of the Anglo-French agreement in 1904. This did little to affect widespread popular dislike for the French and such sentiment certainly had its effect on the originally pro-French New English Art Club, where Steer's most uncompromising works were generally to be seen.²¹

From 1890 however, a small group of supporters for Steer began to emerge. Of these George Moore and D. S. MacColl were the most outspoken. Renowned for treating the public 'like a bumpkin', their advocacy of the painter was integral to their general denunciation of the quality of popular art from the Academy, of conformist middle-class taste and crass philistinism. According to Moore, the Academy was 'conducted on as purely commercial principles as any shop in the Tottenham Court Road', and 'the RA's are merely concerned to follow the market'.²² Steer, on the other hand, refused to pander to the 'stockbroker's taste' and, for Moore, was 'never common or vulgar'.²³ Distaste for this spread of the vulgar was ultimately one of the unifying factors between art critics like Moore and cultural critics like Masterman.

The latter worried about 'an England vulgarised by the clamour and vigour of the newer wealthy'.²⁴ In 1905, *The Studio's* 'Lay Figure' remarked that no serious collector of art bothers with Academy exhibitions, he feels irritated at, 'being wedged into mob that he despises for their stupidity and hates for their unaestheticism'.²⁵ Moore and MacColl, as 'new critics' took leading roles in skirmishes with the self-styled 'Philistine' critic Harry Quilter, and the like-minded William Blake Richmond. The ensuing battle between *The Spectator* and *The Westminster Gazette* was clearly also about wider cultural issues to do with social class and education.

MacColl, a Scottish Presbyterian whose father had originally been a minister in a deprived area of Glasgow, was trained for the church, but at the last hour was drawn instead towards art and aesthetics, due partly to his acquaintance with individuals like Walter Pater and Mark Pattison while at Oxford.²⁶ Subsequent experiences as a peripatetic lecturer on 'English painters', for the Oxford Extension Movement in the late eighties, encouraged something of a missionary zeal towards the teaching of art history and appears to have confirmed MacColl's particular views about the role of the educator, class and social type.²⁷ Those attitudes and his own background, the combination of Puritanism and refined aestheticism, informed his art criticism in the following decade. As a result, by 1895, MacColl could state confidently that the number of people with any sincere understanding of art were few. The genuine Philistines, drawn mostly from the upper and lower classes, openly professed their ignorance and were harmless. The problem for this critic and for his associates was rather 'a terrible number of the middle class', for 'instead of being good Philistines, they are Cultured Persons, that is people semi-educated into a pretence of tastes they do not possess'. This semi-education was doubtless derived, in some cases, from lectures by the Oxford Extension Movement. This was the section of society that infuriated MacColl, for their affectation 'vulgarises life; it is only a pretence and transgression you encourage. A nation whose rulers and the bulk of whose people are without this taste, will be happier and more honest if they let painting be.'²⁸

Using Steer as a focal point for the development of his ideas, MacColl described a method of understanding art that has nothing to do with the propriety of subject. In an ideal world the subject was a simple pretext for laying paint on canvas. In this respect British Modernism, descending from Whistler and from late nineteenth-century attitudes towards French Impressionism developed from, in Charles Harrison's definition, a 'concept of "purity" in art'.²⁹ A painting was to be assessed primarily via the pictorial qualities of design, colour and organisation. Technique, for MacColl was 'a condition under which one sees things not a mechanical beauty stuck upon the surface of a picture and detachable from it'. The point about his argument was its distinction from commonplace insistence on discussing the sentiment and anecdotal

value of a painting. MacColl's formalism might also be seen as an unconscious attempt to preserve a proper appreciation of art for a cultured élite, similar to that of critics like Clive Bell in subsequent years. All of this suggests that there was an element of unease within literary and intellectual circles. Attacks on philistinism were largely expressions of distaste for the usurper, often 'the newer wealthy', and signified anxieties about changing class demarcations.

MacColl's efforts to account for Steer's art evolved, in the early nineties, into a desire to give it a respectable ancestry, to argue that Impressionism in art was not just a phase within modern French painting. It did not simply denote a hastily conceived and executed sketch, nor was it simply a fad. Instead it was an artistic tradition with firm historical antecedents, and this was a seductive argument for a public so devoted to the idea of sound traditions. For MacColl, French Impressionism had two features. One was, 'a keying up of lights as near as might be to their natural pitch, along with a rendering of shadows into colour rather than tone. The second was 'the snatch technique', whereby the artist would produce his studies in the intervals when the light conditions were fairly steady, and 'with the speed of a shorthand reporter'.³⁰

This did not necessarily imply any conscious process of selectivity or deliberate arrangement. His account of Monet's art played up the view of him as a detached and wholly objective reporter of visual fact, in a manner which equated with contemporary researches into the science of optics and perception. In this way, he disregarded the extent to which Monet's rendering of an 'effect' of nature involved an expressive subjectivity which, as Richard Schiff has argued, brought the movement closer towards symbolism.³¹ MacColl chose to present instead what became the Modernist version of French Impressionism, in contrast to his exposition of the qualities of an English/British approach. In this country, for example, the idea of eliminating detail in art was, he maintained, established long before the 1870s. Joshua Reynolds had warned that too many details in a painting would 'dissipate the attention'. From Reynolds and Gainsborough, MacColl claimed, we learned that a subject should be seen according to a painter's interest in it. In fact the eye naturally carries out this selective process. As a result, he condemned both aesthetically and scientifically the Pre-Raphaelite painter's depiction of a church, which would include typically, 'all that could be noticed by the architect, by the worshipper, by the dreamer, and by the person looking about the floor for pins'.³² The implication was that Impressionism in France proceeded from a logical and scientific point of view, whereas in this country it derived from a poetic and romantic temperament, dating from at least the turn of the nineteenth century but temporarily obscured by mid-century aberrations like Pre-Raphaelitism.

Steer, in a rare public utterance, presented the same view in his lecture to the Art Workers' Guild that year. Impressionism was depicted as the highest tradi-

tion in art: 'Is it a craze' he asked, 'that we should recognise the fact that nature is bathed in atmosphere? Is it a fashion to treat a picture so that unity of vision may be achieved by insisting on certain parts more than others? No! It is not a fashion it is a law.'³³ It was this 'unity of vision' that was so sorely lacking in the Academy pictures of the day, for out of 'these tiresome exercises of misguided industry you may make six out of one and each is as finished and as badly composed as the others'. 'Impressionism', declared Steer, 'is of no country and of no period, it has been from the beginning; it bears the same relation to painting that poetry does to journalism. Two men paint the same model; one creates a poem the other is satisfied with recording facts'.

Of the New English Art Club show of that same year, MacColl spoke of a 'refined vision of an object', unlike a French painter's desire to 'render fleeting and transitory things that will not sit'. This again implied a selective, lyrical, and poetic interpretation of nature in contrast to the more rational approach of French art.³⁴ In this way two national, artistic, and, by extension, cultural sets of characteristics were forged. However untenable the proposition in reality, it exercised the minds of a number of writers during this period. In one instance, a critic cited Hazlitt's comments about Reynolds of eighty years earlier:

The English seem generally to suppose that if they only leave out the subordinate parts, they are sure of the general result. The French, on the contrary . . . imagine that, by attending successively to each separate part, they must infallibly arrive at a correct whole.³⁵

III

From 1893 Steer was comfortably installed as professor of Painting at the Slade under its new principal Fred Brown and his assistant Henry Tonks. These appointments coincided with the growing respectability of the New English Art Club and the two institutions were closely associated from this date.³⁶ As the nineties continued their once perceived radicalism diminished and their seriousness was contrasted with the standards at the Academy. Academy pictures were criticised by an ever widening group for their conformity, superficial flashiness and clever trickery.³⁷ The Slade was distinguished by its emphasis on sound technique and respect for tradition, and was encouraged in this by its own stable of critics like MacColl and Stevenson. This retrenchment can be seen as part of the more general cultural and political insularity of the mid-nineties, a reaction to both foreign and domestic tensions like the colonial conflicts in the Far East, the outbreak of war in South Africa, increasing concern over German military strength and worker unrest at home. Faced with these uncertainties, experimental or advanced values in a painting were not to be encouraged, for it would receive less critical support and was unlikely to sell.



Fig. 4. Philip Wilson Steer: 'Children Paddling, Walberswick', c.1889–94, oil on canvas, 64.8 × 92.7 cm. Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. (Photograph: courtesy of Fitzwilliam Museum.)

On another level, the transition in Steer's style resulted from, in MacColl terms, a search for 'Congruous Beauty', in which technique was appropriate to the subject. Steer was always drawn to artists possessing a strong and unique style. Impressionism, with its woven brushmarks, summarily drawn figures and prismatic colour, was entirely congruent with his late eighties seaside subjects and the representation of bright noon-day sunlight. It was a method well suited to expressions of childhood innocence and idyllic summer days, such as *Children Paddling, Walberswick* (c.1889–94) (Fig. 4), where according to George Moore, the mood was one of 'oblivion'. At a more personal level, such works arguably signified a sadness at the loss of youth and the artist's own feelings of isolation.

Beyond a dreamy sensation, there was perhaps little more the method could express. For a more restrained atmosphere Steer would turn to Whistler, specifically in interior subjects like the portraits of Rose Pettigrew of 1889–91, and MacColl was especially receptive to these. It is hard to judge the extent to which the critic's preferences affected the development of Steer's art. Steer was obviously glad of his support and tired of his endless bad criticism, but it was becoming difficult anyway to continue to depict

the countryside solely in terms of an idyllic and sensuous pleasure garden.

A melancholy was increasingly more apparent in works from this date, although this, I would say, characterized much of his production, even from the earliest period. Impressionist handling partially obscured what is an evocative and, at times, almost symbolist element in pictures like, for example, *The Bridge* (1887) (Fig. 5). There are links here with the Symbolist poetry of individuals such as Arthur Symons. Like Steer's paintings of this period, Symbolist poetry relied to a large degree on a quality of suggestiveness. Reality for the Symbolists was to be discovered beneath superficial appearances. By the early-nineties an atmospheric, suggestive quality in Steer's pictures had become so marked that the issue of whether he was a Romantic traditionalist or an Impressionist innovator seemed irrelevant. For his friend Sickert, writing in 1894, it was 'impossible to fit him into any of the labels of chic journalism'.³⁸

The 1894 exhibition on which Sickert based his comments was Steer's first one man show at the Goupil Gallery. On the evidence of this, R. A. M. Stevenson remarked: 'he has wisely omitted his most doubtful and tricky experiments.'³⁹ To MacColl, now increasingly proprietorial over Steer, a *Procession of*

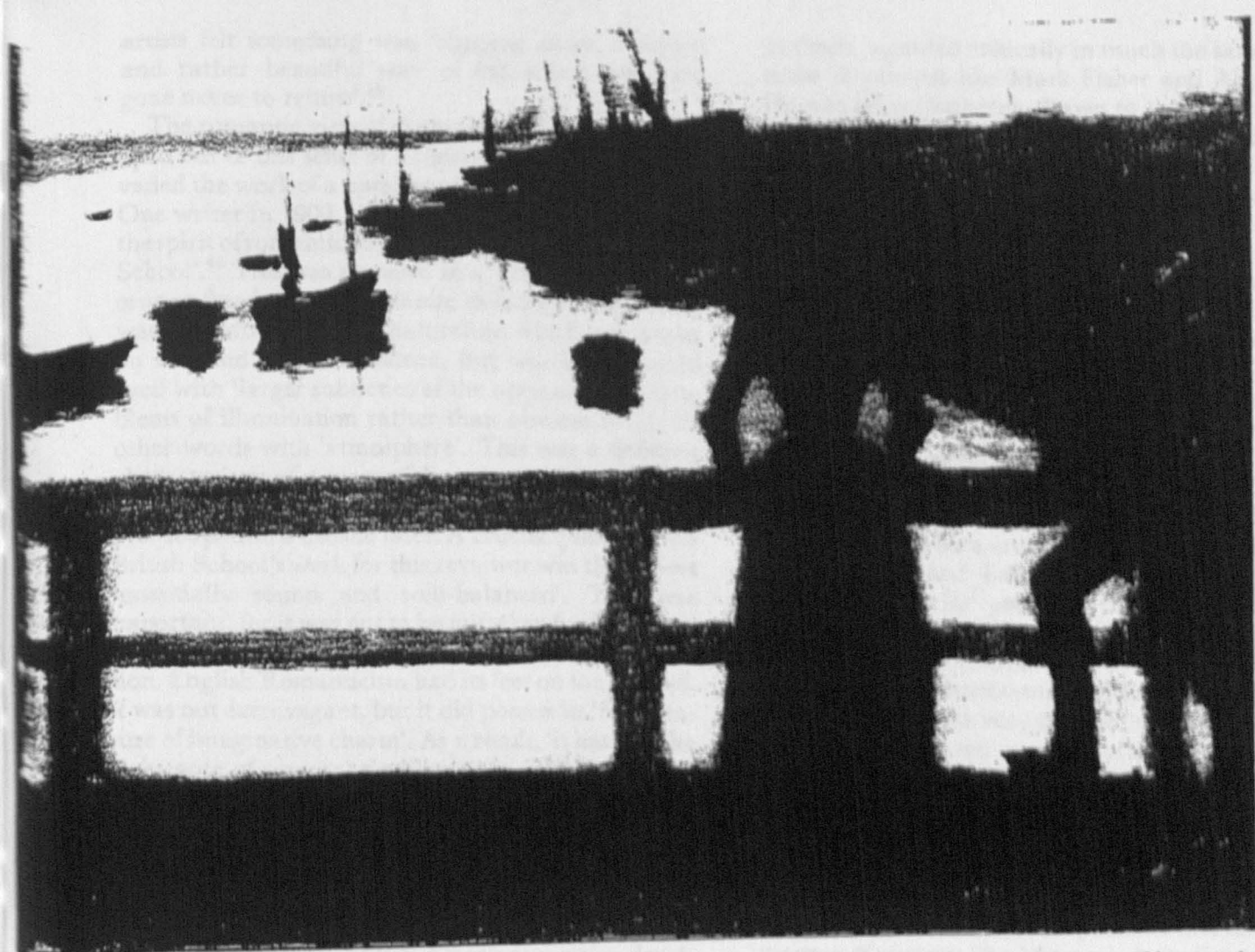


Fig. 5. Philip Wilson Steer, 'The Bridge', 1887, oil on canvas, 49.5 x 65.5 cm. Trustees of the Tate Gallery, London. (Photograph: Courtesy of Tate Gallery Publications.)

Yachts (c.1892) retained a 'freshness of inspiration' but was nevertheless 'composed like music', its masts 'like the phrasing between the intervals of bars'.⁴⁰ This he perceived as a highly selective, lyrical arrangement, not the impartial observation of a transitory scene. As such, MacColl was clearly perpetuating constructed differences between French and British painting, thereby ignoring the fact that Monet often painted in his studio away from nature and occasionally re-ordered his compositions according to personal, subjective intentions. Musical analogies may be equally appropriate to a discussion of Monet's art, his *Poplars* for example, but MacColl was too set in his pursuit of national distinctions to consider this.

Increasingly Steer was regarded as an instinctive artist. John Rothenstein's opinion on this echoed that of his father who once referred to the painter's 'instinctive rightness of judgement peculiar to a certain kind of Englishness'.⁴¹ MacColl at another point remarked that 'he works by instinct more than culture'.⁴² This view persisted, although by the mid-1940s it had acquired negative connotations. Thus, for Douglas Cooper, to say a painter was 'intuitive' implied amateurism and lack of discipline, and he applied the term as an accusation, to all those painters so revered

at the turn of the century, such as Constable, Turner, Girtin and Cotman.⁴³ But during the nineties the idea of English instinctiveness in art positively supported the identification of a poetic and Romantic national tradition. It was another instance of the deliberate distinction between Englishness and Modernism.

Even an avowed Francophile like Walter Sickert contributed to this belief, however tongue in cheek. In a famous piece of 1910, which could have been describing Steer, he wrote:

A painter is guided and pushed by the atmosphere of English society, acting on a gifted group of painters who had learnt what they knew . . . in Paris . . . [It] has provided a school with aims and qualities altogether different from those of the Impressionists . . . the Impressionists put themselves out more than we do in England. We all live like gentlemen, and keep gentlemen's hours.⁴⁴

Sickert's remarks were intentionally ironic, playing on a perception of English life that had less credibility as the years passed. Frank Rutter was well aware of the sense of encroaching modernity, remembering later that by the turn of the century,

artists felt something was, 'slipping away, a settled and rather beautiful way of life which was now gone never to return'.⁴⁵

The romantic view of the countryside which developed out of this sense of a disappearing culture, pervaded the work of a number of painters besides Steer. One writer in 1900, was struck by 'how great a hold the spirit of romanticism is gaining upon . . . the British School'.⁴⁶ This was revealed in a 'preference for decorative freedom over pedantic exactness'. The result was an abstract kind of naturalism which was based on a sound study of nature, but which concerned itself with 'larger subtleties of the open air, with problems of illumination rather than obvious facts'. In other words with 'atmosphere'. This was a defining characteristic of a successful work of art for painters at the turn of the century, just as 'rhythm' became a preoccupation a decade later. A crucial quality of the British School's work for this reviewer was that it was 'essentially sound and well-balanced'. This was important, for it was not to be mistaken for Romanticism based on flights of fancy and a decadent imagination. English Romanticism had its feet on the ground, it was not extravagant, but it did possess its 'full measure of imaginative charm'. As a result, 'it has just the right note of pastoral simplicity . . . which so many artists are . . . wisely striving to make clearly heard'.

IV

After the turn of the century, Steer's reputation developed primarily as a landscapist and his works were,



Fig. 6. Arnesby Brown: 'Full Summer', c.1902, oil on canvas, 115.6 × 111.8 cm. City of Nottingham Museums, Castle Museum and Art Gallery. (Photograph: courtesy of Nottingham Castle Museum.)

at times, regarded critically in much the same way as those of painters like Mark Fisher and Alfred East. He was never, however, drawn to such overtly sentimental scenes as contented cattle winding their way back to pasture, as in Arnesby Brown's *Full Summer* (c.1902) (Fig. 6). The commercial success of works like this continued. A collector's decision to buy an Arnesby Brown or a David Murray must be seen as an investment in a particular view of the countryside, in a concept of nature that appeared to be fixed and unchanging. Some connections might be made here with the market for landscape painting in France in the 1850s and 60s. Anne Wagner has provided a very useful discussion of the appeal of Courbet's landscapes to their bourgeois purchasers who often commissioned exact size, motif and weather effect. The simplicity and predictability of Courbet's works, the ordering of their elements, was a crucial part of their appeal.⁴⁷ In late Victorian and Edwardian England, studies of 'pastoral simplicity' provided the same reassurance and stability, continuity between past and present and a measure of control over both. This was much more than mere sentimentality, for such representations of nature had a very specific function for the purchaser. They offered a myth of security at a time when the real quality of rural life was in steady decline. Fictions like these appealed perhaps primarily to city dwellers, many whom may have seldom experienced and certainly never lived in the countryside. In that sense they acquired a symbolic value, which manifested itself in the pastiche and hackneyed imagery of pictures like Murray's *In the Country of Constable* (Fig. 7).⁴⁸

The aptly titled *A Classic Landscape* (1893) provides the clearest signal of the transition in Steer's work in the early nineties. An atmospheric, thinly painted and very muted depiction of Richmond Bridge, it signalled the influence, in both setting and handling, of painters like Claude and, especially, Turner. The relationship to the latter's Thames series of 1805–12 is important in this context, for Steer's picture bears a particular resemblance to *Walton Bridges* of 1806, which he could have seen at Thomas Agnew's in 1893.⁴⁹ Andrew Hemingway's discussion of Turner's river paintings points to the significance of representations of the Thames, both in relation to contemporary nature poetry and as symbols of national, political and economic well-being. For Turner, the Thames generally was symbolic of the 'pastoral prosperity and commercial wealth of Britain', but as Hemingway demonstrates, Turner's Thames paintings deliberately exclude any commercial or modern agricultural element. The Claudean effects produced a mistiness which conveniently masked the reality of the scene in front of him, and in so doing the artist achieved 'a blending of nostalgia, poetry and nationalist associations'.⁵⁰ The less fashionable areas of inner London, conceived in the early nineteenth century as much as the early twentieth, in terms of their squalor and chaos, are displaced. How appropriate then that Steer should have chosen Turner's Thames pictures

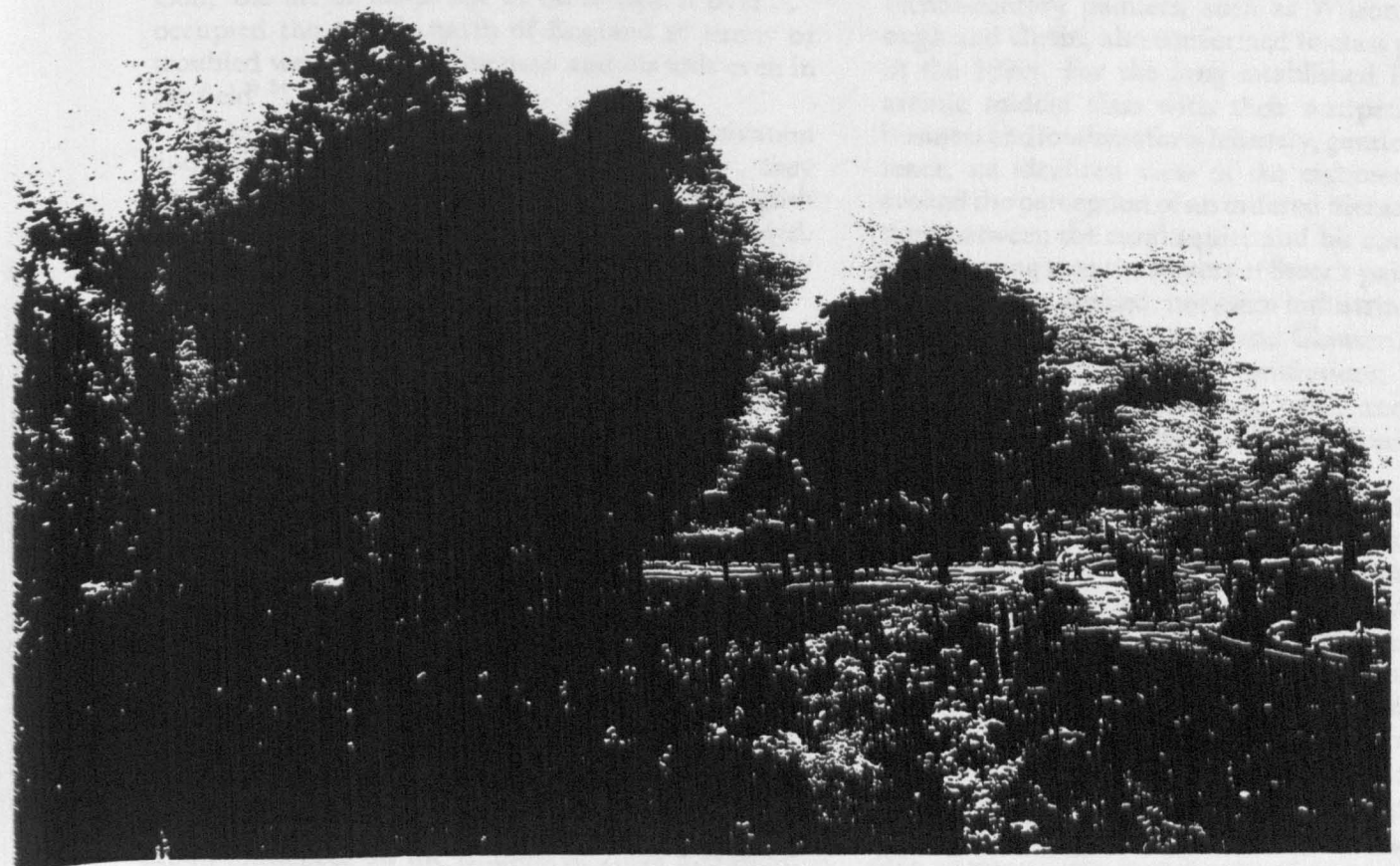


Fig. 7. David Murray: 'In the Country of Constable', 1903, oil on canvas, 122 × 185 cm. Trustees of the Tate Gallery, London. (Photograph: courtesy of Tate Gallery Publications.)

as models for his own *Classic Landscape*. At the time of painting however, Steer was interpreted as returning to the very sources of French Impressionism, as repeatedly stressed later in the writings of Wynford Dewhurst and Frederick Wedmore.⁵¹ Turner, like Constable, it was believed, had worked in the open air, recorded the transitory effects of nature and light and developed a similar handling. Such comparisons convinced Dewhurst of the direct influence of both on the French painters.

Wynford Dewhurst made much — indeed, too much — of Monet and Pissarro's visit to London in 1870 and the impact of seeing works by Turner and Constable. For Dewhurst the lights and shadows in Turner's handling of colour, his sunrises and sunsets, the dissolving web of light and its reflections on surfaces in his late work along with an apparent lack of drawing, were all assimilated by the French painters. This appeal to nationalist sensibilities ignored the fact that Camille Pissarro, for example, denied any substantial debt to British art. For Dewhurst, the Impressionists were to be credited with 'the great merit of having perceived the value of the Englishman's discovery', and he defended his genesis of Impressionism with something like schoolboy terminology at times:

Englishmen, who are taunted with following the methods of the French Impressionists, sneered at for imitating a for-

eign style, are in reality but practising their own, for the French artists simply developed a style which was British in conception.⁵²

Steer was familiar with Turner's art from childhood and fascinated by a water-colour which used to hang in his bedroom. His admiration for the painter arose out of the combined effects of personal past experience, the critical encouragement of his friends and a particular moment in British culture and aesthetic history. His earliest explorations of around 1893–4, in what has been termed the 'classical machinery of landscape composition',⁵³ began with scenes around London. But soon after he began to leave the capital at the end of the Slade summer term, and a good many of his painting trips were essentially tours of Turner's sites, efforts to find the exact spot. These visits were a search for an ideal English landscape. MacColl maintained that Steer took a miniature edition of Turner's *Liber Studiorum* on what were in effect pilgrimages to Yorkshire and the Welsh Borders, as an 'Authorised Version of the English Landscape'.

Summer-time retreats from the city in search of an experience that was essentially nostalgic fall into the wider context of anti-urbanism and cultural re-evaluation of the English countryside. It is important to note also that this was not the concern for the condition of the peasantry which had characterised Rustic Naturalism. The figure generally appeared only as an

occasional note within these compositions. For MacColl, 'the art of landscape as Steer took it over . . . occupied the middle earth of England in sunny or troubled weather, ignoring man and his toils even in the field'.⁵⁴

If, as Masterman recorded, years of deprivation had taken such a toll on the rural worker, they could hardly correspond to the ideal of the English landscape that was currently being encouraged. Masterman's view was upheld in one instance by A. L. Baldry:

The British peasants have lost the character which made them formerly worthy of the artist's attention, they have got out of relation to nature, their life has become conventionalised, and their costume has degenerated into ugliness. They dress in the cast off clothes of their superiors, in things inappropriate to their surroundings, so that they never seem to be properly in the picture.⁵⁵

Studies such as Sarah Knights's on P. H. Emerson have dealt with the importance of late nineteenth-century attitudes towards the 'peasant', in relation to ideas about a natural social order.⁵⁶ Knights shows how Emerson's writings and his photographs of East Anglian labourers were a criticism of the effects of economic and social change and the gradual spread of urban influences on the traditional rural hierarchy. His counter to this was to represent the peasant as a 'type' and as a passive individual ruled by the order of the seasons and he instructed his followers to 'choose your models most carefully', for they must 'without fail be picturesque and typical'. Reality, however, was persistent, making Emerson's images less believable, yet more affecting at the same time. To return to Baldry's remarks then, to get 'out of relation with nature' presupposed a concept of nature which, like Emerson's, was harmonious, poetic and picturesque, that is 'like a picture'. The much repeated qualities of both English art and nature are interchangeable here. Any encroachment of modernity into the rural communities was both culturally and aesthetically disagreeable. It was threatening to traditional order in class terms as well as national art traditions.

Steer, as we have seen, dealt with the problem of the labourers by ignoring them. In common with other landscape painters, his conscious or unconscious desire to establish national identity in representations of the countryside required a more general re-working of the sites of literary as well as artistic figures. Steer was attracted to the areas of the Wye and Severn valley partly because of Turner, partly because it was the landscape of his childhood and maybe, as MacColl stated, because it was a 'holy ground for English poetry, for Milton, Pope, Gray and Gilpin'.⁵⁷ As the century closed the gradual decline of empire heightened the sentimental view of the countryside, and those earlier writers and poets who celebrated its special virtues were particularly valued and acknowledged in terms of a national literary heritage.

The appeal of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century painters, such as Wilson, Gainsborough and Girtin, also conformed to class perspectives in the 1890s. For the long-established literary and artistic middle class with their antipathy towards business and fondness for a leisurely, gentlemanly existence, an idealized view of the eighteenth century evoked the perception of an ordered hierarchy of relations between the rural squire and his cottagers. It is worth noting that the buyers of Steer's paintings were not the newly-moned, northern industrialists buying from artists like La Thangue and Clausen. They were drawn from the traditional professions: academics, lawyers, etc. rather than from trade and, from the gentry itself he sold to the de Walden family at Chirk Castle.⁵⁸

Despite the elitist side to this nostalgia for the past and the countryside, anti-urbanism in fact cut right across upper- and middle-class boundaries. Ruralism was not simply a nostalgic longing for past order and securities. As writers like Alex Potts have pointed out, it was not, by definition, purely a reactionary sentiment, even in the years when Little England jingoism was at a peak.⁵⁹ Throughout the Edwardian era there was an increasingly vast, ever more mobile lower-class public, just as keen to escape the city grime on holiday and weekend visits. As a result the turn of the century saw the development of various efforts to both encourage these 'trippers' on the one hand and to preserve rural areas from them on the other. The Road Board of 1909 and The Society for Promotion of Nature Reserves, 1912, are examples of these. For the more discerning, art magazines like *The Studio* were constantly reviewing and recommending new guide books to counties like Sussex and Dorset in the early years of the century as well as publishing periodic notes on rural sketching grounds. MacColl remembered that 'Steer set up his "moving tent" in pleasant scenery such as it had become the habit of his countrymen to seek out for an annual holiday'.⁶⁰ Inevitably as the years passed these countrymen became more of an irritant, and the distaste felt for them by Steer's circle is painfully apparent in MacColl's words. Steer, as he wrote, eventually began to see his favourite sites like Corfe Castle, engulfed by 'coach loads of over-fed and apathetic tourists [on] the regulation round before their mealtime'.⁶¹

He preferred to keep to himself what was described as his 'deep, exclusive love for England', for the 'old bones of his country'.⁶² This introspection accounted for his fondness for the picturesque, the atmospheric appeal, the sense of time passed which was visible in the decaying structures of the ruins of Knaresborough Castle which he painted in 1900. Their appeal to Steer was on the level of the romantic nostalgia that informed his work in general and which informed his attraction to Turner. In this Steer conformed to a wider taste. Dilapidated scenery evoked the sense of loss of the old order, a feeling which appears to have been to some degree relished for its own sake. At times this predilection for the 'old bones' provoked

annoyance. Laurence Houseman was frustrated by this 'faint-hearted hankering' in 1904:

The taste of the age in which we live finds too much beauty in ruins, preferring the pictorial disorder of decay to symmetry which is still fit and efficient to the purpose for which it was created. And as this is true of the popular taste in architecture, so is it to some extent also true of our appreciation of nature. We like to ache and yearn over it as though it were a doomed and disappearing quantity, a fugitive before the advance of modern civilisation.⁶³

It is important to note how much fascination for the 'old bones' of the country has extended before and beyond this period. In the inter-war years historical relics and ancient sites indicated permanence and stability at an uncertain time. But the roots of this tendency were clearly well in place by the Edwardian era. There are two sides to this picturesque taste then, either it provides the reassurance of continuity in periods of turbulence or, as Houseman believed, a sense of loss to be savoured.

Just as nostalgic ruralism was cross class in its appeal, so it encompassed political and cultural ten-

dencies of the left and the right. It formed a common currency however differently it manifested itself. Concerns about the breakdown of rural communities and the squalor of city life, worried individuals according to their special interests, as Liberals like Masterman, as Tory landowners or as reforming 'Back to the Landers'. In one sense then, pictures of the unsullied English countryside were simply a safe territory with a broad appeal, which explains their predominance at the Royal Academy as well as the New English Art Club in the early 1900s. By that time the Academy was clearly engaged in efforts to present a consensus view of English art, one that was characterised by its inoffensiveness. Its procedure was generally to co-opt those painters, many from the New English, who were the most moderate in technique. Painters like Mark Fisher, according to George Clausen, 'assimilated Impressionism within the limits considered to be acceptable by the selection committee of the R.A.'⁶⁴

Despite Steer's own eclecticism, persistent experimentation saved his work from clichéd repetition, even if its thematic tenor changed little. Throughout the nineties he developed greater expressive freedom



Fig. 8. Philip Wilson Steer: 'The Embarkment', 1900, oil on canvas, 58.8 × 69 cm. Manchester City Art Galleries. (Photograph: Courtesy of Manchester City Art Gallery.)

with crude, intense colours and thick brushstrokes, as seen in the dense background of trees in *The Embarkment* (1900) (Fig. 8). Steer's old theme of young women beside the water was restated here, but given a new painterly eloquence with an impasted surface, drawn partly from Monticelli and partly from Constable. From this point his technique was increasingly influenced by the latter, who was by then being presented as the archetypal British landscape painter.⁶⁵ With Turner, Constable was given prominence in the expanded South Kensington Museum's new display of British painting. His importance to the national artistic identity was thereby deemed official in 1909, but the process of canonization had begun earlier with, for example, the Cornhill exhibition of 1899. C. J. Holmes of the National Gallery had begun looking for Constable sites in the Stour Valley by the mid-nineties, and in 1902 published his highly influential book, *Constable and his Influence on Landscape Painting*.

For Holmes his subject's importance lay in the balance he struck between tradition and nature. He had stepped beyond mere naturalism towards a greater pictorial unity, with the result that he could depict the shifting moods of nature with more breadth of vision. Constable presented that perfect mixture of poetry and natural observation which rendered him superior to modern French artists. A central aspect of his appeal was the fact that he declined to follow doggedly in the footsteps of French and Italian painters. Seventy-five years on, Peter Fuller echoed this view, citing Kenneth Clark in support and approved the fact that Constable 'eschewed "internationalism" in favour of an almost belligerent "provincialism", in which he indulged his "overweening affection" for the banks of the Stour and the scenes of his childhood'.⁶⁶ Belligerence like this took 'courage and determination' and resulted in a genuinely 'universal' art which can only begin with a 'profound intimacy' with particular places, persons and traditions. Fuller neatly dismissed the substantial part of Constable's 'oeuvre' that was made up of views of Hampstead, Brighton, Salisbury, etc. and aimed directly at London exhibition audiences. It was in large part the personal association of Steer's paintings which accounted for his appeal to Charles Holmes, his tendency to paint in areas he had known since childhood, paralleled his growing reputation as a painter in the native romantic tradition.⁶⁷

Art magazines of the early years of the century are full of references to Constable's own works or to those of artists following in his footsteps. In 1906 he was judged 'the most English of the triad of the English school'. The reasons are illuminating, for he has 'not the refined, scholarly approach of Wilson or the subtlety of Turner';

His vigorous treatment of his subjects, his largeness of view and full colour, seems to be typical of the sturdy yeoman of this country of ours . . . He loved his England with her rich and glowing colour, and all the signs of her prosperity that surrounded him in his native country.

The writer went on to quote Constable's own words, 'I was born to paint a happier land, my own dear England, and when I ceased to love her may I, as Wordsworth says, "Never more hear her green leaves rustle, nor her torrents roar"'.⁶⁸ Such sentiment reverberates throughout literature and criticism from the turn of the century through to the nostalgic pastoralism of the Georgian poets at the eve of the Great War, despite superficial modernizing. Essential to all was an acceptance of the Anglo-Saxon character defined in terms of sturdiness, vigour and wholeness. So Englishness is defined again both culturally and aesthetically. This is pure racial stereotyping, the 'sturdy yeoman' stands opposed to both foreign races and to those Masterman called, the city bred 'races of dulled intelligence'.⁶⁹

It was for his idealized view of the English countryside more than his Impressionist methods that Constable was so prized by the public. Cook's tours of 'Constable Country' from 1893 are an indication of this. For Steer, the painter's importance lay in the spontaneity of his sketches. But the autobiographical element and the intimacy with his surroundings corresponded to Steer's own nostalgic perceptions of the English countryside. It was a quality which Roger Fry discerned in 1924 as 'a typically English "poetical" sentiment for certain moods of nature'.⁷⁰

For a few years after 1895 Steer spent his summers in North Yorkshire. Two years later he began to revisit the landscape of the Welsh borders, earlier explored alongside his father. Those childhood experiences of the 'rolling fertile prospects' of the Wye valley, 'implanted that love of lucent expanses of pastoral and wooded country', in the words of Frank Rutter.⁷¹ The child, the grown man and the artist were of course the same individual, and Steer partly constructed his broad visions from the confines of term-time Gower Street. Nicholas Green's discussion of the restorative immersion in nature by the artist/city dweller being predicated on the notion of 'going back' to the city is also of relevance here.⁷² The same claims can be made for landscape painters in this country, as in France. By 1905, A. C. R. Carter could speak of an older school of 'panoramists', by which he referred particularly to works by Benjamin Leader. As such he might have included, *Across the Heath* (1902) (Fig. 9), as an example of artists' tendencies to:

continue in their wide expanses of land or sea surveying, which mightily please the free born Englishman . . . the man pent up in cities feels grateful to the artist who reminds him of holidays and of an unfettered outlook upon a long stretch of field and water.⁷³

By the time of pictures like *The Severn Valley* (1909) (Fig. 10), Steer had clearly established his taste for Constable's 'spacious valleys', for wide open vistas and unpeopled 'pure landscapes'. With these eighteenth-century style panoramas, he developed his dense paintwork to such a degree that at times he could supposedly tell by the weight if a picture was fin-



Fig. 9. Benjamin Williams Leader: 'Across the Heath', 1902, oil on canvas. Untraced illustration in *Royal Academy Pictures* (1902).

ished. All of this reveals his continued experimentation with the properties of the medium itself with the result that he avoided pastiche by drawing attention to his own act of seeing and transcribing. As the comparison with Leader here shows, Steer in general also tended to avoid the repeated use of conventional landscape devices like the *repoussoir* in his panoramic oil paintings.

He was endlessly cited as 'the' successor to Constable. For Douglas Cooper this was a meaningless statement, 'since there was only Landseer in between'.⁷⁴ But from 1900, Steer like Constable was seen as expressing the special qualities, the atmosphere of the English countryside. Frank Rutter commented on how much the artist had made a certain view of the landscape his own, to the extent that one could be struck, on travelling through certain areas of England, by 'a regular Steer'. Like Constable, he offered a rare appreciation of the nature of his own medium and also of the vagaries of English weather. But this view of him as Constable's successor was perhaps too limiting for Steer's own good. It prescribed expectations of his work which were difficult to overcome and produced a critical and public support that was hard to resist. From 1904, he was the most consistently highly-praised artist showing at the New English Art Club and receiving something like adulation for his one man show in 1909. Opinion on his achievement had become hackneyed by the end of the decade.

Between 1896 and 1906 he produced a small series of pictures from the same vantage point overlooking the River Terme at Ludlow, e.g. *Ludlow Walks* (1898-9) (Fig. 11). These are reminiscent of his earlier Walberswick pictures. Once again images of youth and a lost world of innocence seem to refer back to the abrupt end to his own ideal childhood. With this

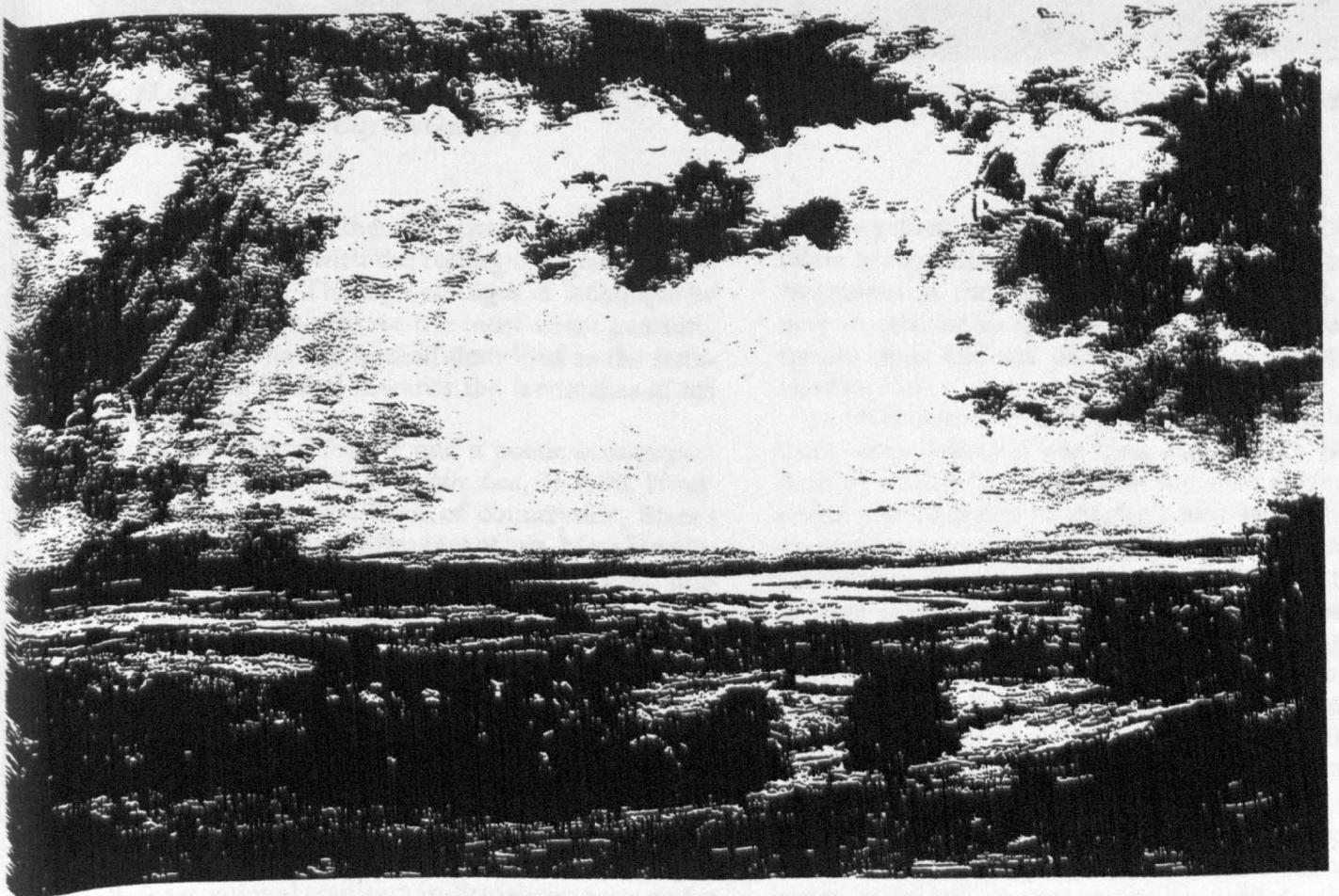


Fig. 10. Philip Wilson Steer: 'The Severn Valley', oil on canvas, 77.4 x 115.5 cm. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin. (Photograph: courtesy of Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery.)

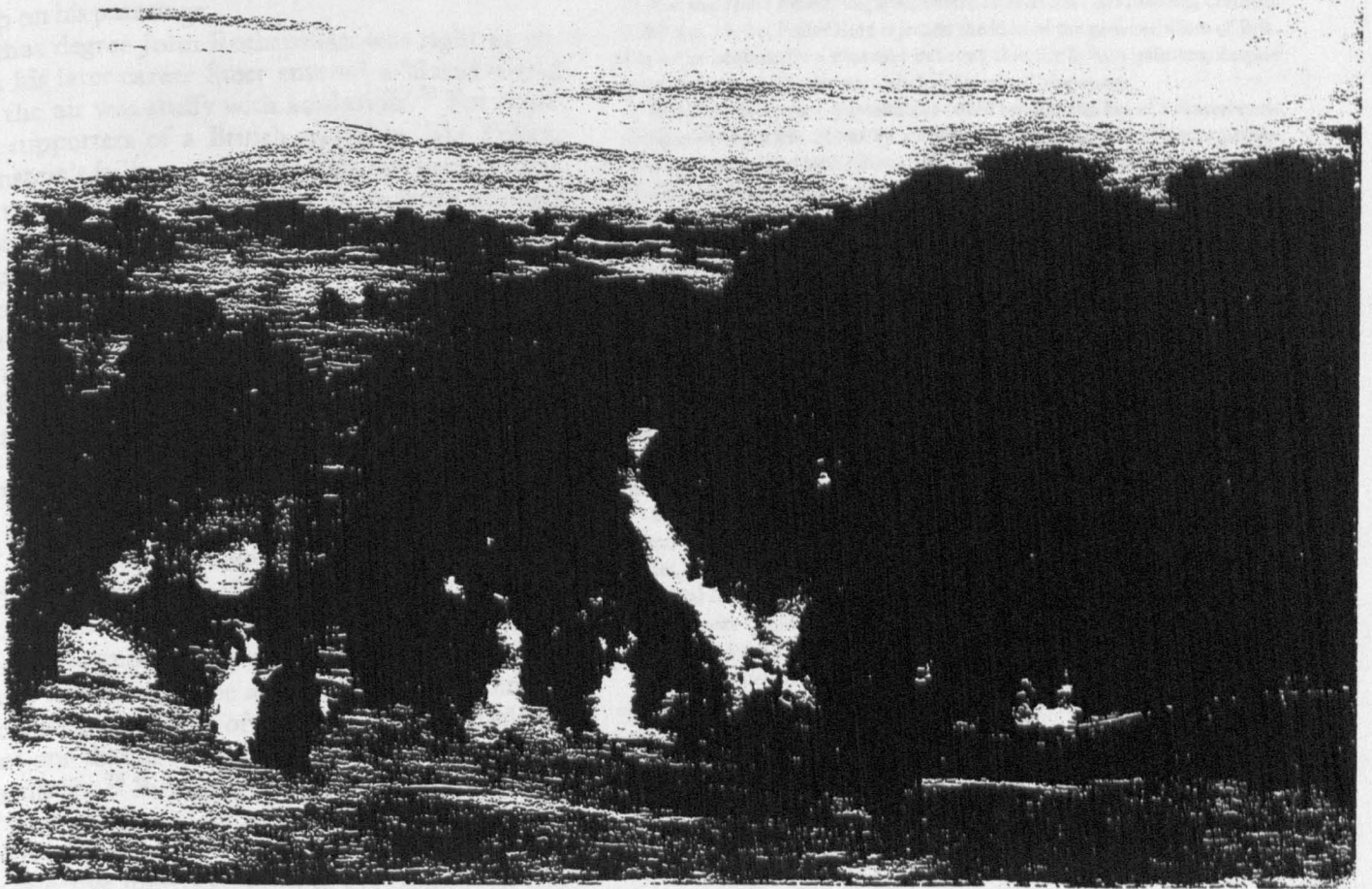


Fig. 11. Philip Wilson Steer: 'Ludlow Walks', 1898, oil on canvas, 53.3 × 66 cm. Southampton City Art Gallery. (Photograph: courtesy of Southampton City Art Gallery.)

series he brought together the atmosphere of his Walberswick paintings with the rolling open countryside of his own youth. Through changes in technique he looked for ways to achieve the most direct painterly expression of what he himself described as the sentimental feeling he had towards the landscapes of the Welsh borders.

Such sentimental feeling had a poetic counterpart in A. E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*, of 1896. Housman evoked a specific area of countryside, Steer's own, also in the context of images of loss. Most literally in Housman's words where, 'blue remembered hills [are] a land of lost content'. The poet remembered the Shropshire landscapes of his childhood from the distance of London. There is the same blend here of retrospective nostalgia and regret. 'A land of lost content' is an appropriate title for so many of Steer's landscapes, and there is a distinction to be made between these and the more straightforwardly mawkish, Tennysonian, 'Haunts of Ancient Peace' to be seen at the Academy. So while imperialist ideologies resulting in calls for a national tradition in British art account for much of the wider praise of Steer's work, the private,

solitary reflection, the nostalgia for one's own roots, relate to something of a change of spirit that can be recognized as the Edwardian era progressed. This may account for his appeal to a less jingoistic but culturally elitist and still patriotic type of connoisseur like MacColl.

In 1909, Steer's work began to be acquired by the Tate where MacColl was then keeper. The Goupil Gallery exhibition of that year included *Corfe Castle* which was likened to Constable's *Salisbury Castle from the Meadows*, and later sent to Johannesburg, where it stood as a symbol of Englishness only a few years after the end of the Boer War. These facts need to be seen in relation to the emergence of radical groupings like the Allied Artist's Association, followed by Fry's Post-Impressionist exhibitions, the Omega Workshops and the formation of the Vorticist group. The effect of these was to challenge the established critical ontology of art, everything that a Slade training had implied in terms of respect for tradition and artistic precedent.⁷⁵ A threat seemed to be posed, not just to the order of British art but, however unlikely in real terms, to British society. In contrast Steer was taken

to represent the standards that appeared to be slipping away. Far from being dangerously anarchic and dependent on foreign styles, he was now something approaching a national icon. As a result his friends became increasingly possessive, tightening their critical grip on his paintings.

To that degree John Rothenstein was right to say that in his later career Steer entered a 'closed world where the air was stuffy with adulation'.⁷⁶ For more recent supporters of a British tradition, like Fuller, Rothenstein's failing would lie in his assumption that a rejection of French Modernism necessarily implied a loss of courage. Fuller in fact echoed many of the sentiments of turn of the century advocates of a national art. One of his criticisms of the 1980s was of the continued 'international' influence on British art education. 'How many students', he asked, 'are encouraged to study Constable as an *English painter* — rather than as the "precursor" of French Impressionism? . . . in how many art schools is *British art history* taught as such?'⁷⁷ Sounding much like the art and cultural critics of the Edwardian era, he firmly believed that one of the roles of art education was to foster a sense of affiliation to a national tradition. For Fuller however, this was a recognition that in such a way some 'imaginative and spiritual reconciliation between man and nature could be achieved'. It was intended as a positive affirmation of the resistance to Modernism, not one that arose out of mawkish nostalgia and sentimentality.⁷⁸ But no matter how well-intentioned Fuller's views, like MacColl's and Kenneth Clark's they were ultimately bound by prescriptive and highly selective interpretations of art history. In this sense their function is an ideological one.

The cultural and political implications of national identity in art continue to stir debate. Steer's art after the mid-nineties is a remarkable example of the way in which landscape painting, involving a range of vested interests and a multiplicity of readings, has focused conflicting values around constructions of 'Britishness' and notions of 'modernity'. In the period of crisis and fin-de-siècle malaise in which we find ourselves, it may be that this debate will resonate again in a way that was not possible in the heyday of Modernist aesthetics. As the case of Fuller illustrates, despite the virtues of Steer's paintings, this may not be a healthy situation.

Notes

1. J. Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters, vol. 1, Sickert to Smith* (Eyre and Spottiswoode: London, 1952), p. 73.
2. Douglas Cooper, 'The Problem of Wilson Steer', *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 84, 1944, pp. 66–71. After the war Cooper was irritated by John Rothenstein's efforts to build up the British collection at the Tate Gallery, at what he saw as the expense of European Modernists. Although initially the two were amicable (Cooper lent to the gallery from his collection of Picasso and Braque), the situation declined, exacerbated when he was turned down for a post at the Tate through lack of academic qualifications. Real hostilities broke out in the early fifties when Cooper attacked Rothenstein for his 'continual disservices to art', threatening to 'hound' him out of Millbank. See John Rothenstein, *Brave Day*

Hideos Night, vol. 2, 1939–65 (Hamish Hamilton: London, 1966), pp. 289–91. Rothenstein's admiration for Steer's earliest works and his last watercolours may have encouraged Cooper's attacks on the painter in the forties.

3. For interesting discussion on Fuller's criticism see David Batchelor's article, 'The New Rote', in *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1989, pp. 66–9. Also see Peter Fuller, 'Against Internationalism', *Art Monthly*, October 1987, pp. 12–14. Fuller here rejected the idea of the provincialism of British art as necessarily a vice and believed that for British painters, despite any aspirations, Modernism always belonged elsewhere.

4. In Fuller's terms, pastoralism could replace the loss of a shared symbolic order brought about by a decline in religious faith. Nature proves endlessly consoling and offers what he referred to as a potential for spiritual redemption. See Peter Fuller, 'Mother Nature', *New Society*, 17 February 1982, p. 265–6.

5. Stephen Daniels, *Fields of Vision, Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States* (Polity Press: Oxford, 1993), p. 5.

6. *A Day in the Country* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1984), see Richard Brettell's chapter 'The Impressionist landscape and the Image of France'. Richard Thomson, *Monet to Matisse, Landscape Painting in France, 1874–1914* (National Gallery of Scotland, 1994).

7. *The Art Journal*, 1885, p. 267. Leader's success is here accredited to his ability to please the 'English picture seer, who likes his landscape with an addition of allusions not difficult to catch and allegories not hard to understand.'

8. David Lowenthal, 'British National Identity and the English Landscape', *Rural History*, vol. 2, 1991, p. 213. As Andrew Hemingway notes, belief that the relationship between landscape imagery and national identity is strongest in this country needs close questioning. See Hemingway's review 'National Icons and the Consolations of Imagery', *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1994, p. 114.

9. Constructions of Englishness implied the subsuming of Wales and Scotland, adding further to the ideal of unity. But it is also clear that it was the south of England that was most commonly identified by writers and artists in this respect. For further discussion on the background to this process of identification in the early to mid-nineteenth century, see William Vaughan, 'The Englishness of British Art', *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 13, no. 2, 1990, pp. 11–23.

10. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Chatto and Windus: London, 1973), p. 248.

11. C. F. G. Masterman, *The Condition of England* (Shenval Press, 1909), pp. 148–9.

12. See, for example, Peter Brooker and Peter Widdowson, 'A Literature for England', in Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (eds), *Englishness, Politics and Culture* (Croom Helm, 1986).

13. Kenneth McConkey's recent Barbican Gallery exhibition, *Impressionism in Britain* (1995), attended to the ways in which French Impressionism was assimilated within the formal language of British art and integrated into existing trends and traditions. See also, Kenneth McConkey, *British Impressionism* (Phaidon: Oxford, 1989). For the most part British landscape historians have preferred to study periods within late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century painting, or in this century, the years between the two wars.

14. William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories, Recollections of William Rothenstein, 1872–1900*, vol. 1 (Faber and Faber: London, 1932), p. 170.

15. *John Singer Sargent* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1986), p. 118.

16. *A Summer's Evening* is in a private collection, but is illustrated in colour in McConkey, *British Impressionism*, p. 82.

17. This review was discovered by Laughton in the British Museum cutting book, but with no identification. He was of the opinion that it may have been written by the critic of *The Telegraph*. See Bruce Laughton, *Philip Wilson Steer, 1860–1942* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1971), p. 14.

18. The male/female distinctions here are clear and signify the traditional identification between landscape painting and the femaleness of nature. Connections between the passive, nurturing and instinctive female world of nature and the active, shaping and objective world of science and culture have, as Norma Broude describes, been in existence since the writing of Aristotle and Plato. See *Impressionism, A Feminist Reading: The Gendering of Art, Science and Nature in the Nineteenth Century* (Rizzoli: New York, 1991), p. 145. Broude provides a fascinating discussion of the way in which painters, typically categorized as male, i.e. active and shaping, were 'feminised' in the context of French Impressionist landscape

painting, partly through choice of subject matter but more specifically through technique, i.e. the lack of drawing and composition and the concern with movement rather than form (pp. 150–1). This contrasted with more masculine techniques in which nature should be shaped and controlled. None of these factors however, appear to have influenced critical judgement on Steer at this stage in the 1880s.

19. Like most of his peers, Steer did not become completely familiar with Impressionism until, ironically, he returned from his training in Paris and saw exhibitions in London, as for example in 1889, when 20 Monets were displayed at the Goupil Gallery.

20. The retrenchment that occurred at the Slade School in the early nineties was paralleled by an increased social and political introspection. This had reverberations in the stamping out of the last traces of decadent aestheticism as the decade progressed. For further discussion, see Holbrook Jackson, *The 1890's: A Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century* (1st edn., London, 1913). Jackson cites in support of his view the sobering effect of Oscar Wilde's imprisonment in 1895.

21. Steer also showed eight pictures at the 1889 London Impressionists exhibition at the Goupil Gallery which provided further evidence of the influence of Monet.

22. George Moore, *Modern Painting* (Walter Scott, 1989), p. 99.

23. Moore, *Modern Painting*, p. 243.

24. Moore, *Modern Painting*, p. 156.

25. *The Studio*, vol. 33, 1904, p. 96.

26. Mark Pattison was Head of Lincoln College and believed that a 'liberal' or 'higher' education would inculcate in the individual a higher sensibility which would transcend mindless routines. See Brian Doyle, 'The Invention of English', in Colls and Dodd, *Englishness*, p. 94. It was Pattison who offered MacColl his scholarship at Oxford in 1881. For accounts of MacColl's association with Oxford, see Maureen Borland, *D. S. MacColl: Painter, Poet, Art Critic* (Lennard Publishing, 1995).

27. Brian Doyle (Colls and Dodd, *Englishness*, p. 99) describes the role of the Oxford Extension Movement in the context of efforts to encourage national character and culture from the late 1880s. In the universities this developed alongside a gradual eclipse of Latin and Greek, in favour of the study of English language and literature. The extension movement itself was an attempt by those universities to take on a national role. According to the Oxford Vice-Chancellor in 1887: 'the lecturers whom we send through the country are a kind of missionary... To a great majority of those persons with whom they come into contact it is the only opportunity afforded of learning what Oxford means and what is meant by the powers of an Oxford education.'

28. *The Spectator*, 11 May 1895.

29. Charles Harrison, *English Art and Modernism, 1900–1939* (Allen Lane/Indiana University Press: London and Bloomington, 1981), p. 17. Harrison's definition aptly describes MacColl's position by the 1890s: 'purity entailed the pursuit of technical autonomy, a manifest if highly mediated interest in recent French art, and the avoidance of subjects which might conceivably be taken as moral exhortations.'

30. D. S. MacColl, *Life, Work and Setting of Philip Wilson Steer* (Faber and Faber: London, 1945), p. 31.

31. For important discussion of the extent to which Modernist writing has misrepresented the aims of French Impressionism, see Richard Schiff, *Cézanne and the End of Impressionism. A Study of the Theory, Technique and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1984). See also Norma Broude, *Impressionism*, pp. 8–16.

32. D. S. MacColl, 'Theoretical Precedents for Impressionism', *The Spectator*, 12 December 1891, p. 846.

33. Cited in D. S. MacColl, *Life*, pp. 177–8. See also my discussion in Ysanne Holt, *Philip Wilson Steer* (Seren Books, 1992), pp. 50–1.

34. This attitude persisted with only few exceptions of whom Camille Mauclair was one; he described Monet as a poet-painter, his water-lilies as a 'pantheistic evocation' and his approach one of 'idealism and lyric dreaming', cited in Kate Flint (ed.), *Impressionists in England, The Critical Reception* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London and New York, 1984), p. 322.

35. *The Art Journal*, 1905, p. 166.

36. Popular among all their members was R. A. M. Stevenson's study of Velazquez (1895), ed., Denys Sutton (London, 1985). In this the method of 'direct painting' was discussed. In the Spanish painter's work 'all the elements, colour, light and shade' were treated as a unified whole. This contrasted with the techniques of the by then increasingly condemned Academy, as Steer had earlier pointed out.

37. These complaints continued throughout the whole period of this study. A. L. Baldry, for instance, commented: 'The Academy is contented to plod on year by year in the same path, to hang what are to all appearances the same pictures, and to do things exactly as they were done in that remote period when its ideals were fresh and its principles were first formulated' (*The Studio*, vol. 35, 1905, p. 37).

38. *The Studio*, vol. 2, 1894, p. 223.

39. *Pall Mall Gazette*, 27 February 1894, cited in Laughton, *Steer*, p. 56.

40. Review in *The Spectator*, cited in MacColl, *Life*, p. 48. *A Procession of Yachts* is in the Tate Gallery collection.

41. Cooper, 'The Problem of Wilson Steer', p. 171.

42. MacColl, *Life*, pp. 48–9.

43. Rothenstein, *Men and Memories*. By 1950 Cooper had also crossed swords with Kenneth Clark and given a vitriolic broadcast talk on Clark's *Landscape into Art* which turned 'hard-hitting criticism into an exhibition of savagery' (cited in Rothenstein, *Brave Day*, p. 291). As part of his attempts to assert a national tradition in the context of the thirties realism versus abstraction debate, Clark made great claims for the importance of Constable. This may account for some of Cooper's derision.

44. Cited in Osbert Sitwell (ed.), *A Free House, The Writings of W. R. Sickert* (Macmillan: London, 1947), p. 57.

45. Frank Rutter, *Art in My Time* (Rich and Cowan, 1933), p. 65.

46. *The Studio*, vol. 20, 1900, pp. 213–16. A brief survey of the titles of Academy pictures of this period indicates just how much this sense of a lost world preoccupied painters. Such titles as David Murray's *Farwell to the Forest* (1906), C. E. Johnson's *The Sunset of his Days* and Benjamin Leader's *Evening Glow* (1906) are typical.

47. Anne M. Wagner, 'Courbet's Landscapes and their Market', *Art History*, vol. 4, December 1981, pp. 410–29.

48. The case is often cited of a visitor to the Grafton Galleries in 1905 who, on the verge of buying a Monet was firmly advised by an old Academician to buy a David Murray instead. See Frank Rutter, *Art*, p. 106.

49. Turner's *Walton Bridges* is now at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Steer would have been able to study the composition of other Thames pictures through Turner's *Liber Studiorum* (1878, Macmillan and Co.). In particular he would have seen there the 1840–5 *Landscape with Walton Bridges*, which is particularly close to *A Classic Landscape*. Steer's friend and Slade colleague Fred Brown also painted views of the Thames at this date. There is a possibility that *The Thames at Richmond* (1893), cited in the Barbican *Impressionism in Britain* exhibition (no. 214, *op. cit.*) as Steer's study for *A Classic Landscape*, is actually by Brown. I am grateful to Professor McConkey for information on the location of the two Turner's in 1893.

50. Andrew Hemingway, *Landscape Imagery and Urban Culture in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1992), pp. 216–38.

51. Frederick Wedmore was one of the first British critics to attend seriously to Impressionism, e.g. 'The Impressionists', *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 33, 1883, pp. 75–82. See Flint, *Impressionists*, pp. 46–55.

52. Wynford Dewhurst, *Impressionist Painting, its Origin and Development* (1904). It is interesting that MacColl did not share Dewhurst's views here. He wrote later, 'I do not myself believe that the course of French landscape painting would have been very different if Constable had never existed or never been medalled in Paris: his chief impact was on Delacroix'. Similarly he felt Turner's influence on the French was overestimated, *Life*, pp. 34–5.

53. Andrew Forge, *Philip Wilson Steer* (Arts Council of Great Britain, 1960), p. 7.

54. MacColl, *Life*, p. 125.

55. 'The Art of William Lee Hankey, R.I.', *The Studio*, vol. 36, 1905, p. 294.

56. Sarah Knights, 'Change and Decay: Emerson's Social Order', in Neil McWilliam and Veronica Sekules (eds), *Life and Landscape: P. H. Emerson, Art and Photography in East Anglia, 1885–1900* (Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts: Norwich, 1986), pp. 12–20. The British peasant to whom Baldry refers was, of course, scarcely in existence in this country by that time. As writers like Christopher Hill and Eric Hobsbawm have established, the process of capitalist agriculture since the sixteenth century had converted the majority of rural labourers into landless proletarians. Hobsbawm states that 'unlike peasant countries, Britain possessed no great reservoir of land-hungry small cultivators working smallholdings with family labour. The farm labourers wanted good wages, not land'

(*Industry and Empire from 1750 to the Present Day* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1981), p. 200.

57. D. S. MacColl, *Life*, p. 81.

58. Steer's buyers included, typically, Augustus Daniel, a solicitor, Judge Evans and Michael Sadler, Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University.

59. Alex Potts, 'Constable Country between the Wars', in R. Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity*, vol. 3, *National Fictions* (Routledge: London and New York, 1989). Potts makes the comment that images of the countryside were capable of accommodating a range of different conceptions and associations for the city-dweller and that these were not necessarily just about upper middle-class longings for the continuance of traditional patterns of social order. However, the more positive and optimistic rural ideal, incorporating suggestions of an 'ideal modernity', he positions more securely in the period between the two wars, although it clearly has important implications for the period of this study; see especially pp. 162-3. Potts's study is extremely useful, although, in common with many writers, he makes scant reference to the landscape painters of Edwardian era which he rather dismisses as 'the Frenchified and impressionist and realist landscapes recently in vogue' (p. 168).

60. MacColl, *Life*, p. 168.

61. MacColl, *Life*, p. 168.

62. MacColl, *Life*, p. 82.

63. 'The Work of Herbert Alexander', *The Studio*, vol. 31, 1904, p. 306. A national hankering after the past which Housman identified has often been blamed for this country's assumed failure to ever come to terms either with Modernism in art or modernity in life. See for example, Martin Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1985).

64. George Clausen, introduction to *Mark Fisher* (Leicester Galleries Exhibition, 1924).

65. For excellent discussion of Constable's significance at the end of the

nineteenth century, see Stephen Daniels, 'John Constable and the making of Constable Country', in *Fields of Vision*, pp. 210-13. Daniels attends to Holmes's book and deals also with the extent to which the burgeoning market for Constable paintings provoked debate on 'commodity patriotism' from the late eighties.

66. Peter Fuller, 'Against Internationalism', p. 12.
67. C. J. Holmes, *The Times*, 22 April 1909. Holmes was here happy to perpetuate the idea of Steer as Constable's successor.
68. Sir James Linton, 'The Sketches of John Constable, R.A.', *The Magazine of Fine Arts*, 1906, pp. 16-21.
69. Masterman, *The Condition of England*, p. 155.
70. Roger Fry, review of Goupil Gallery exhibition, *The New Statesman*, 29 March 1924.
71. Cited in Robin Ironside, *Wilson Steer* (Phaidon Press: Oxford, 1943), p. 6.
72. See Nicholas Green, *The Spectacle of Nature: Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1990).
73. *The Art Journal*, 1905, p. 170.
74. *The Art Journal*, 1905, p. 170.
75. For evidence of the critical reaction to the circulation of Post-Impressionist and Futurist art in Britain see *Post-Impressionists in England*, ed., J. B. Bullen (Routledge, 1988).
76. Rothenstein, *Brave Day*, p. 77.
77. Rothenstein, *Brave Day*, p. 13.
78. Fuller's arguments have been considered highly contentious. Critics like Toni del Renzio argued that the tradition he defended simply did not exist, we never had one, 'only a kitsch practice that embraced an extraordinary bunch of "artists", Augustus John, Alfred Munnings, Frank Brangwyn and Dod Proctor and so on' ('Fuller What? Parish Pump Aesthetics', *Art Monthly*, December 1987, pp. 15-16).