Transient Painters, Traveling Canvases:
Portraiture and Mobility in the British Atlantic, 1750–1780

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Abstract

"Transient Painters, Traveling Canvases: Portraiture and Mobility in the British Atlantic"

In the mid-eighteenth century, colonial American portrait painters' worlds, careers, and works were shaped by the Atlantic Ocean as transatlantic voyages became shorter, safer, and more accurate. While some of these artists used this new mobility primarily to access London's art world from other parts of the British Atlantic Empire, this dissertation finds that another group of artists took to sea, creating works that were shaped by and helped to define this region. The increased mobility in the British Empire influenced the work of a group of artists who used oceanic travel as a medium for the interchange of culture and ideas from about 1750 to 1780. Through John Greenwood's Surinam portraits of sea captains, Philip Wickstead's Jamaican conversation pieces, and John Singleton Copley's Boston portraits in watercolor on ivory and pastel, this dissertation examines the relationship between portraiture and imperial mobility.

By considering the previously unexplored transatlantic dimensions of the work of this group of early American artists, this dissertation argues that increased mobility in the British empire shaped portraits by colonial American artists who used oceanic travel and shipping for the movement of themselves, their materials, and their images. New mobility provided these artists with access to new subjects and new audiences accessed through their physical travel, the travel of their patrons, and the shipping of their portraits. In turn, their work visualized Atlantic mobility at a time when this movement became indispensible to the imperial project, participating in the larger contemporary effort to delimit and apprehend colonial spaces and their connections to the metropole.

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List of Illustrations

Chapter 1

Introduction: The Transatlantic School

At the 1766 Society of Artists exhibition in London, American-born painter Matthew Pratt exhibited a modestly sized group portrait, *The American School*. The canvas depicts the Leicester Fields studio of artist Benjamin West, a former resident of the American colonies. (fig. 1.1) West stands at the left foreground of the composition, framing the group as he discusses a drawing with an unidentified artist while Pratt and two boys listen to the conversation. Pratt pictured himself sitting at an easel in the composition's right foreground, having momentarily turned to join the exchange. The early stages of a portrait's underdrawing and drapery are shaped on the signed canvas before him. With Pratt designated as "of Philadelphia" in the exhibition's catalogue, he claimed the Society's walls an appropriate place for the display of works by American artists.[1] By exhibiting *The American School* at the Society's annual exhibition in London, Pratt publically established West's studio as a center for the education and promotion of American artists in the British Empire, a center that has long been considered *the* center by historians of American art.[2] And Pratt's path—from

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[1] *A Catalogue of the Pictures, Sculptures, Designs Exhibited by the Society of Artists of Great-Britain, at the Great Room, Spring-Garden, Charing-Cross, April the Twenty-first, 1766* (London 1766). For recent considerations of Pratt's *The American School* see: Susan Rather, *The American School: Artists and Status in the Late Colonial and Early National Era* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016); Margaretta Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution: Painters, Artisans, and Patrons in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); and Susan Rather, "A Painter's Progress: Matthew Pratt and *The American School*," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 28 (1993): 169–183.

[2] West's influence on American art is discussed in Dorinda Evans, *Benjamin West and his American Students* (Washington: National Portrait Gallery, 1980).

Philadelphia to London and back—has long typified the place of the Atlantic Ocean in early American art history. Here the Atlantic is an absent interval or, at most, an unexplored obstacle between artists' time working in London and the British American colonies.[3]

This is not a dissertation about American art in London or the British American colonies, however. It is instead a study of American art between the Atlantic colonies and Britain, as it was shaped at sea between moored locations. While other art historians have presented colonial American art as a tension between two endpoints—a spot in America and London—this project instead sees portraits as part of the connective tissue of empire. Portraitists and their canvases both were shaped by and helped to shape the increasing mobility of the mid-eighteenth-century British Atlantic World. This project proposes a transatlantic history of portraiture in the British Atlantic World, examining how artists and canvases moved throughout this space, representing and influencing understandings of empire from about 1750 to about 1780.

In contrast to West's stationary, metropolitan school fixed in Pratt's image, this dissertation, like John Greenwood's drawing of artists working below the deck of a

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[3] I am drawing a distinction between how the concept of "Anglo-American portraiture" has recently been presented and the idea of transatlantic portraiture. An "Anglo-American" perspective is often adopted in scholarship related to the identity of artists between America and Britain, often from the Revolutionary era forward. See: David Peters Corbett and Sarah Monks, eds. "Anglo-American: Artist Exchange Between Britain and the USA," Special issue, *Art History* 34: 4 (September 2011), especially Sarah Monks, "The Wolfe Man: Benjamin West's Anglo-American Accent": 652–673. This was also the framework for a recent exhibition supported by the Terra Foundation traveling between Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Musée du Louvre, and the High Museum of Art, *American Encounters: Anglo-American Portraiture in an Era of Revolution* (2014–2015).

barge, locates artists and images actively moving throughout the Atlantic World.[4] (fig. 1.2) Artists worked on the water and in locations previously considered the "periphery" of empire, employing visual language to define their world.[5] As Pratt did in *The American School*, in this drawing Greenwood represents himself in the company of fellow artists. Instead of working in a metropolitan studio, however, he drew the fluid crosscurrents that connected the eighteenth century, here below the deck of a Dutch *trekschuit* barge. Greenwood and the other artists considered in this dissertation had careers defined by this sort of physical mobility. Greenwood's below deck image visualizes a transatlantic experience—one not rooted in comparative inquiry between two places, but instead defined by the process of change accompanying the crossing of the Atlantic. If we look at colonial American portraits produced in this moment instead as

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[4] Christie's sold this drawing as *The Smoking Party* in their Important American Furniture auction on January 18, 1997. In this project I have referred to it as *Tekenaar Simon Fokke en andere kunstenaars in de Haarlemmer trekschuit: J. Andriessen* (*The Illustrator Simon Fokke and Other Artists in the Haarlemmer Barge J. Andriessen*) after Simon Fokke's 1759 ink and wash drawing of the same name, which is likely a copy after Greenwood's work. Fokke's drawing is in the Gemeente Amsterdam Stadsarchief, Collectie Atlas Splitgerleer.

[5] This project exists as a part of the ongoing destabilization of the center-periphery model of understanding the structure of the British Empire, taking seriously visual culture and its impact on understandings of empire. On the relationship between the metropolitan center and colonial periphery see: Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, 3 vols. (New York: Academic Press 1974); Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607–1788* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986); Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of the Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Jack P. Greene, *Imperatives, Behaviors, and Identities: Essays in Early American Cultural History* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1992). In historical scholarship, the center-periphery model has largely given way to the idea of a "networked" Atlantic World, see: David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1734–1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); David Hancock, *Oceans of Wine: Madeira and the Emergence of American Trade and Taste* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); and Michael J. Jarvais, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680–1783* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

Atlantic portraits, how do interpretations of their forms and contexts shift? It is this transatlantic orientation that becomes the unifying theme among portraits produced by three British portraitists whose work relies on imperial mobility in the late eighteenth century.

The increased mobility in the British Empire around 1750 formed the work of a group of artists moving throughout the Atlantic world that used oceanic travel as a medium for the interchange of culture and ideas. Mobility is not a static influence on artistic practice, however. Each artist considered in this dissertation created a distinct set of transatlantic portraits. John Greenwood (1727–1792) painted portraits of traveling sea captains and tropical insects while living in Surinam, capturing the movement of people and things in his canvases and circulating these works to satisfy the empire-wide desire for knowledge about distant imperial spaces. Philip Wickstead (about 1746–1781; active 1763–1781) created conversation pieces of elite Jamaican sitters to position the island and a civilized imperial center, even as the island's shifting social and political norms—also revealed in Wickstead's canvases—led the artist's sitters to return to Britain. And John Singleton Copley (1738–1792) used the mediums of miniature and pastel to paint Atlantic portraits long before he traveled to London, catering to imperial mobility from his colonial home in Boston. New mobility provided these artists access to new subjects and new audiences—including metropolitan audiences—reached through their corporeal travel and the shipping of their portraits. In turn, their work visually defined Atlantic mobility, participating in the larger contemporary project of delimiting and apprehending empire with the transmission and display of images.

This departs from the narratives most often invoked to explain colonial American portraits, which view these works as either symbols of patrons' and sitters' status or as documents of family lineage. These arguments are framed, respectively, by the scholarship of T. H. Breen and Margaretta Lovell. Breen focuses on what he calls, "a social process known as self-fashioning" in order to explain the visual development of a portrait between artist and sitter within eighteenth-century modes of social construction.[6] Breen's ideas are taken further in Paul Staiti's essays on John Singleton Copley. Staiti works from Breen's argument that colonial portraiture conformed to English taste in order to alleviate provincial anxiety about the loss of "Britishness." By the 1760s and 1770s leading up to his departure for England in 1776, Staiti sees Copley's portraits reflecting and reinforcing the "consumerist values of the late colonial society he served."[7] Breen argues that Copley's portraits served the mimetic culture of colonial Boston as they "fashioned sitters into the personae they wanted to project."[8]

While Breen and Staiti argue that portraits helped construct a public identity within a larger network of goods, Lovell sees portraits as "fundamentally a family matter."[9] She argues that portraits served as documents preserving the family line and

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[6] T. H. Breen, "The Meaning of 'Likeness': Portrait Painting in Eighteenth-Century Consumer Society," in *The Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America*, ed. Ellen G. Miles (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1993), 37.

[7] Paul Staiti, "Accounting for Copley," in *John Singleton Copley in America*, eds. Carrie Rebora and Paul Staiti (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 42.

[8] Paul Staiti, "Character and Class," in *John Singleton Copley in America*, eds. Carrie Rebora and Paul Staiti (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 53.

[9] Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution*, 9.

patriarchal lineage as wealth and property passed through generations through careful consideration of the iconography of the portraits. While Breen and Staiti see portraits as the conscious construction and presentation of a self-identity and a public image on the part of the sitter, Lovell cites the expansive desire for portraits in conjunction with the small return rate of sitters—less than ten percent had multiple portraits painted—as proof that portraits marked the transitional moment in an individual's life when they assumed a leadership role within the family structure. Because portraits marked a singular occasion within the evolution of a family, individuals only needed one portrait in their lifetime.[10]

Art historians have recently initiated a turn toward the Atlantic world in the study of early American portraits, primarily in a small number of recent studies of Copley. Yet the art historians addressing Copley's Atlantic context have written narratives that are firmly planted on Boston's shores. Margaretta Lovell foregrounded situating Copley (as well as John Smibert) within the Atlantic World, but her chapters remain contained by colonial New England. In deliberately situating her narrative "on the periphery of the British Empire," Lovell continues to position Copley as an exceptional American even as she reconfigures understanding of the artist within his New England world.[11] Among Lovell's accomplishments is to connect the work of painters and other artisans, a line of exploration that Susan Rather engages in her work on Copley, Benjamin West, and Gilbert Stuart. Rather also pushes the Atlantic to the fore, but the physical space quickly fades as she examines the "circulation of ideas about artists and the mutability of both

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[10] Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution*, 13.

[11] Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution*, 1.

artistic and American identities."[12] Her investment in circulation is conceptual instead of physical. Although both Lovell and Rather seek to connect Copley to his surroundings by adopting an Atlantic framework, both continue to ignore the broader world shaping the total body of work he produced in colonial Boston.[13]

Reinserting the materiality of physical things into the conversation about the shape of the British Atlantic for artists, Jennifer Roberts argues that Copley's *A Boy with a Flying Squirrel (Henry Pelham)*, his first Society of Artists exhibition picture painted and sent to London in 1765, cannot be understood without accounting for its protracted long-distance journey immediately following its creation. This journey led Copley to paint into the picture the complication of its conveyance. Roberts writes that her work on Copley, "suggests how the view of Copley's work might change if, in essence, we put the Atlantic back into Copley's Atlantic world."[14] In doing so, she firmly acknowledges the place of the ocean in Copley's painting.

Yet even Roberts' Copley is described as torn between two endpoints within the British Empire in the 1760s—Boston and London. This project is the first to argue that Copley's Atlantic World was more diffuse and less a line between Boston and London during this decade. In his letters, Copley espoused a metropolitan perspective, but his work catered to the transatlantic perspective he shared with his patrons, who were often

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[12] Rather, *The American School*, 3.

[13] For more on Copley's body of work—miniatures, pastels, and oil on canvas paintings—see Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

[14] Jennifer Roberts, *Transporting Visions: The Movement of Images in Early America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 15.

connected to or based in Boston but who traveled throughout the empire. Copley was simultaneously living within center-periphery and transatlantic models of empire in the 1760s, just as contemporary historians remain torn between these concepts in their scholarship today. Both models of empire shaped the personal paths and canvases of Copley, Greenwood, and Wickstead. All of these artists, however, occupied a fluid, mobile Atlantic world; it included a center—London—but was not exclusively defined by that center, instead comprised of the people, places, and goods passing through that center. While all three of these artists resided in London and worked in the metropolitan center during their lives, they each had episodes in their careers when movement around vast imperial spaces defined their work. In these chapters, Copley, Greenwood, and Wickstead put their portraits into the swirl of objects circulating between ports, and—in Copley's case—even after choosing a metropolitan life, his work was forever defined by what he learned while working with a transatlantic perspective.

Wickstead's portraits at the National Gallery of Jamaica in Kingston provided the impetus for this project. Painted on the island, their complex, contemporary compositions and refined technique was unlike what I was accustomed to studying in the portraits of colonial British North America when I first encountered them in the summer of 2010. With little scholarship on portraiture in the British Caribbean and South America, I asked how scholars' understanding of colonial American portraits would shift if the context was expanded beyond boundaries of a country not formally defined until

1775.[15] In answering this question, the form and content as well as the geographic scope of colonial American portraits expanded, revealing a group of artists whose work was shaped by the transatlantic exchange of people, materials, and ideas.

Many portraits also provided tangible connections across vast distances for patrons. Portraits by Copley, Greenwood, and Wickstead all came to establish associations, reassert presence, or cultivate intimacy between patrons and sitters when they were separated. In 1764, Thomas Ainslie wrote to Copley, sharing with the artist that one of his portraits had overwhelmed a small child: "the Infant eyed [the] Picture, he sprung to it, roared, and scritched, and attempted gripping the hand, but when he could not catch hold of it, nor get [it] to speak to him, he stamp'd and scolded, and when any of us askt him for Papa, he always turned, and pointed to the Picture."[16] Portraits traveled as stand-ins for people who could not travel, cultivating a sense of closeness even when a portrait's viewer would likely never see the sitter again. They could also preserve the presence of a sitter in a particular place after they had departed either by choice or by necessity, as was necessary for many of Copley's loyalist patrons during the American Revolution. Because increased Atlantic mobility shaped the lives of patrons as well as

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[15] Important exceptions in this lack of scholarship have emerged from the study of art in the British Empire including Agnes Lugo-Ortiz and Angela Rosenthal, eds., *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Kay Dian Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies, 1700–1840* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Tim Barringer, Geoff Quilley, and Douglas Fordham, eds. *Art and the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Geoff Quilley and Kay Dian Kriz, eds., *An economy of colour: Visual culture and the Atlantic world, 1660–1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

[16] Thomas Ainslie to John Singleton Copley, November 12, 1764, in John Singleton Copley, *Letters & Papers of John Singleton Copley and Henry Pelham 1739–1776*, eds. Charles Francis Adams, Guernsey Jones, and Worthington Chauncey Ford (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), 30–31.

portraitists, leaving greater distances between associates and loved ones, patrons valued portraits for their ability to forge personal transatlantic connections.

The prominent position of the physical Atlantic within my project is influenced by recent work in the historical subfield of Atlantic history. Atlantic historians have recently come to consider the ocean as both a means of transportation and also a place where people and goods are transformed.[17] Atlantic historian Alison Games has argued that Atlantic history should be oceanic history, asserting, "the relevant distinction is between a history of places *around* the Atlantic versus a history *of* the Atlantic."[18] For Games, this means restoring the centrality of the Atlantic to histories—particularly colonial and imperial—by foregrounding circulation and transatlantic connections and aligning herself more closely with early conceptions of the Atlantic that emerged in history of the transatlantic slave trade, while encouraging reevaluation of David Armitage's conceptualization of Atlantic history, which privileged the discipline as it emerged in colonial American history and imperial history. Armitage focused comparative perspectives around the Atlantic—what he called "trans-Atlantic" and "cis-Atlantic"

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[17] Alison Games, "Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities," *American Historical Review* 111: 3 (2006), 755. This perspective on the Atlantic World in part emerges from groundbreaking research from the early 1990s on the shape and scope of the Black Atlantic, particularly in Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993). On Atlantic history see also: David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002; Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas, eds., *The Creation of the British Atlantic World* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); Wim Klooster and Alfred Padula, eds., *The Atlantic World: Essays on Slavery, Migration, and Imagination* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Routledge, 2004); Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); and John K. Thornton, *A Cultural History of the Atlantic World, 1250–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[18] Games, "Atlantic History," 745.

history—while Games (as well as historians Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas) promote a transatlantic approach that finds the oceanic space of the Atlantic key to writing Atlantic histories.[19] This project aspires to a transatlantic approach, writing a history created and shaped by the process of crossing the Atlantic. For Mancke and Shammas, as well as Games, mobility is central to conceptualizing the transatlantic experience.[20]

The narrative of this project emerges in a series of temporally overlapping moments of concentrated mobility in the careers of Greenwood, Wickstead, and Copley. Greenwood traveled between 1752 and 1763, when he arrived in London. Copley developed material strategies to facilitate the mobility of his work—in lieu of his person—in colonial Boston starting in the late 1750s, and he relied on these transportable mediums until he departed for Europe in 1774. In the same year, Wickstead made a journey in the opposite direction, traveling to Jamaica planning to paint metropolitan conversation pieces of the colony for a London audience. Greenwood and Copley had an evolving relationship as countrymen, colleagues, and friends. Yet while that relationship is important to consider in order to understand how artists came to rely on networks of peers and other travelers to traverse the British Atlantic World, in this dissertation the

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[19] David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800*, eds. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 11–27. For Armitage, "circum-Atlantic history" looks at the whole of the oceanic region, "trans-Atlantic history" emphasizes comparison between Atlantic places, and "cis-Atlantic history" reorients perspective toward the Atlantic within a particular local history.

[20] Mancke and Shammas, *The Creation of the British Atlantic World*, 323, n. 22; Games, "Atlantic History," 747. For theories of mobility beyond historical scholarship, the new mobilities paradigm is particularly useful. See Mimi Sheller and John Urry, "The new mobilities paradigm," *Environment and Planning* 38: 2 (February 2006), 207–226; Mimi Sheller and John Urry, "Mobilizing the new mobilities paradigm," *Applied Mobilities* 1:1 (March 2016), 10–25.

possible connections between these artists are secondary to the evidence offered about the shape of a transatlantic art. While there are commonalities between the journeys of all three artists, there are also significant differences, suggesting that Atlantic mobility was not a homogenous process. To call this group a network is tenuous—if a network, it is certainly indistinct and in places invisible—but all three artists knew of the work of the others shown at the Society of Artists and Royal Academy exhibitions. And through titles and locations in exhibition pamphlets alone, all could identify the others as visual interpreters of the British Atlantic empire. When considered as a group, they form a counterpoint to Pratt's American school—a transatlantic school visually presenting the Atlantic empire in the metropole while also embracing metropolitan visual culture throughout the Atlantic colonies. This history is told in three subsequent chapters.

The second chapter considers how the portraits John Greenwood painted of New England sea captains and Surinamese insects represented the colony for audiences throughout the Atlantic World. Greenwood's travel enabled him to witness the flow of people, ideas, and objects throughout the Atlantic. By participating in this circulation, he also came to paint it while residing in colonial spaces. Simultaneously, the inter-imperial circulation surrounding the artist while living in Surinam from 1752 to 1758 allowed Greenwood to study a wide array of visual cultures and integrate their conceptual and formal strategies into his portraits. Whether portraying individuals or insects, he looked to the influences of local flora and fauna, native informants, enslaved laborers, Dutch colonizers, and maritime visitors to construct images of Surinam. Through Greenwood's conversation piece *Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam* and his portrait of a rhinoceros

beetle, this chapter argues that the circulation of these representations created new knowledge of South America for viewers in both New England and London.

Chapter three considers Wickstead's Jamaican conversation pieces in the context of elite Jamaicans' project to idealize the colony in the 1770s, which brought the artist to the island. Even as Wickstead relocated as part of this transatlantic project to shape information about the colony, the island's local culture pulled his portraits away from that project's idealized presentation of Jamaican society. Wickstead traveled to Jamaica in 1774 under the patronage of William Beckford, accompanied by the landscape painter George Robertson. Beckford planned to write an account of the colony shaped by the transatlantic ideals governing viewing and representing landscapes. While Beckford wrote about and Robertson painted the colonial landscape within an Italianate ideal that muted anxieties about race, gender, and culture within the colony, this chapter argues that Wickstead struggled with suppressing the realities of the island within his portraits. By incorporating controlled scenes of slavery and thriving white women into his Jamaican conversation pieces, Wickstead represented the presence of a stable, metropolitan culture in the colony. These inclusions also betrayed the anxieties and questions surrounding race and demographic failure in the colony more directly than was tolerable to Beckford, leaving Wickstead's images to present a complex picture of Jamaican society in London at the Society of Artists exhibitions in the late 1770s.

Copley emulated Greenwood's canvases in Boston in the 1750s, but even as he longed for distant shores, he found himself unable to follow the older artist and travel beyond Boston. Nevertheless, chapter four finds that Copley also created Atlantic

portraits. He did so not by traveling, but by creating works of art that could travel. He exploited the physical properties of mediums more portable than oil on canvas—oil on copper, watercolor on ivory, and pastel on paper. Considering Copley's 1760s experiments with medium, this chapter argues that he actively sought transatlantic audiences while living in Boston by developing practices in highly portable mediums. This stands in contrast to scholarship that has primarily viewed Copley as a young artist preoccupied by the prospect of leaving Boston for study in London in the 1760s. Instead, the artist was innovating in miniatures and pastels, two mediums uncommon in the British American colonies, in order to address the particular demands of his patrons. The portability of these works also allowed Copley to expand the market for his portraits by allowing him a broader reach within his transient Atlantic clientele even as he felt compelled to remain in Boston.

By exploring the previously unconsidered transatlantic dimensions of the work of this group of early American artists, this dissertation argues that increased mobility in the British empire shaped the work of colonial artists who used oceanic travel and shipping for the movement of themselves, their materials, and their images. In turn, their work visually defined Atlantic mobility at a time when this movement became indispensible to the imperial project, participating in the larger contemporary effort to delimit and apprehend empire. Through this argument, the project contributes not only to our understanding of early American portraiture, but also to scholarship on mobility and the Atlantic World by pointing out the importance of visual culture within this line of inquiry.

My goal is not to illuminate a network of artists or a seamless set of connections, but to instead expand the focus of art historians concerned with the eighteenth-century British Atlantic Empire, articulating one set of possibilities that emerge when the ocean is repositioned as the connective tissue within transatlantic culture. From this shifted perspective, canvases including Pratt's *The American School* look different. This canvas asserts the Anglo-American identities of Pratt and West, with Pratt sitting at the easel and West standing above an unidentified figure. This figure is most often assumed to be another student of West's, holding a drawing that the American artist critiques. How might our understanding of the scene shift if this seated man—who appears to be the oldest and wealthiest figure in the scene—is Greenwood? Greenwood was living in London from 1763 and was selling antiquities like the bust on the table in the scene to West by 1765, the date when *The American School* was created.[21] It is possible that the figure sitting before West, dressed in a gleaming silk suit with a wide collar beyond that of the other men in the scene, is not West's student but a peer eleven years West's senior.

[21] Greenwood was collecting work on the continent and selling it in London. The scale and breadth of his dealing in painting and sculpture is revealed in advertisements in London newspapers of the 1760s. An example from the *Public Advertiser (London)*, January 31, 1765: "To be SOLD by AUCTION, By Mr. HOBBS, At his great Room in Piccadilly, near the Haymarket, To-morrow and Saturday, THE genuine and curious Collection of Italian, Dutch and Flemish Pictures and antique Bronzes, collected abroad by Mr. JOHN GREENWOOD, many of which are out of that well known Cabinet of Cardinal Valeti; amongst the Pictures there are the undoubted Works of Seb. Conoa, Vandervelde, DeKoning, Lucca d'Reggio, L. Van.Uden, Nagus, Baffan, Mauchernu, Berkehyde, Mich. Reggo, Vendes Neer, Lanjens, D—, Hubbina, Lastmen, Vander Werfe, Decker, Wenix, Paul Potter, Cuyp, DeGelder, Rembrandt, Pynaker, F. Bell, & c. Likewise his fine Landskips, with a Water Fall, by Jacob Roysdell, also Bronzes in Groups, Figures, Busts, Urns, Vases, &c. Geo de Bologni, and other Artists of great Merit. The Whole to be viewed to the Time of Sale, which will begin punctually at Twelve. Catalogues of which may be had gratis at Mr. Hobb's aforesaid." On Greenwood dealing directly to West see Kaylin H. Weber, "A Temple of History Painting: West's Newman Street Studio and Art Collection," in *American Adversaries: West and Copley in a Transatlantic World*, eds. Emily Ballew Neff and Kaylin H. Weber (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2013), 31.

Greenwood may hold an ink and wash seascape of the type in which he became accomplished while living in the Netherlands, discussing a composition on blue paper with West for the benefit of the younger artist's pupils.[22] The prospect of Greenwood at the center of Pratt's canvas repositions *The American School*, suggesting that it may be not only a statement about the identity of Anglo-American artists within the metropole, but also an acknowledgement of the importance of mobility for many artists with ties to the British American colonies. With Greenwood at the center of Pratt's canvas, the transatlantic connections of early American artists become as important as their metropolitan connections, demonstrating the place in London's art world for not only an American school but also a transatlantic school of artists and canvases.

[22] For an example of Greenwood's seascapes see *Various Shipping off the Coast* in graphite, pen, ink, and wash on medium, slightly textured, cream laid paper at the Yale Center for British Art (B1986.29.405).

1.1 Matthew Pratt, *The American School*, oil on canvas, 1765, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

1.2 John Greenwood, *Tekenaar Simon Fokke en andere kunstenaars in de Haarlemmer trekschuit: J. Andriessen*, ink and wash drawing, ca. 1759, unlocated (image as *The Smoking Party* from Christie's Important American Furniture, January 18, 1997, no. 186).

Chapter 2

Surinam Portraits: John Greenwood Documenting Empire

Painted between 1752 and 1758, John Greenwood's *Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam* is the single extant oil painting from his time in Paramaribo, the capital of the Dutch colony on the northeast coast of South America, and the only group picture in small on this scale from colonial America.[1] (fig. 2.1) It is exceptional not only in scale but also in subject—twenty punch-fueled figures play cards, drink, or sleep in a Paramaribo tavern, while four enslaved attendants either serve beverages or sleep in the foreground. In contrast to the stiff decorum pictured in Greenwood's Boston portraits (and most work produced by portraitists the British American colonies), *Sea Captains* takes as its subject the disintegration of the civility of New England sea captains on assignment. At work within a slave society in the tropics, Greenwood captures equally the faltering and utterly debauched. Captain Ambrose Page is pictured having the unlucky experience of simultaneously vomiting in a companion's coat pocket while inadvertently setting fire to his own coattails, while Godfrey Malbone teeters as he tries to teach Nicholas Power the minuet, a complex dance with genteel overtones.[2] Greenwood himself is inebriated,

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[1] The St. Louis Art Museum, where *Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam* is held, simply dates the painting to Greenwood's time in Surinam from 1752 to 1758. Based on Greenwood's account of the pictures he painted in the colony, the accounts of the travels of the mariners portrayed in the canvas, and Surinam's status as a neutral port from 1754 to 1758, I believe the canvas can more narrowly be dated to between 1755 and 1758.

Throughout this chapter I have elected to use the spelling "Surinam" when discussing the Dutch colony that existed from 1667 to 1954 (*Kolonie Suriname* in Dutch). This defers to the commonplace spelling in English language scholarship on the colony in this period.

[2] Jennifer Catherine Van Horn identifies these movements as an attempted minuet, undermined because of the lack of bodily control on the part of the participants. Jennifer Catherine Van Horn, "The

vomiting into the street beyond the tavern in the upper right corner of the composition. Commissioned to create this group portrait by one of the Rhode Island captains in the scene—John Jenckes of North Providence—Greenwood represented himself and his subjects in this circumstance knowing the canvas would make the trip up the east coast of the Americas and hang in Jenckes' home.[3]

Sea Captains is often described as a clear appropriation of London-based painter and printmaker William Hogarth's 1733 engraving, *A Midnight Modern Conversation*. A popular image widely circulated after its creation, the image provided clear inspiration for Greenwood's Surinam scene. Yet this chapter contextualizes *Sea Captains* within Greenwood's Surinam sojourn to argue that his canvas was not a derivative imitation of a London-produced model. When considered within 1750s Surinam, Greenwood's art collection while residing in the colony, and the artist's natural history illustrations of the same moment, *Sea Captains* emerges as a canvas shaped by its transatlantic context, content, and journey. Made with its mobility in mind, *Sea Captains* showcases the flow of people, ideas, and objects that surrounded Greenwood in Surinam and shaped all of the images he produced while residing in the colony.

Traveling to Surinam to paint portraits in December of 1752, Greenwood portrayed 113 planters and captains as well as a number of insects, plants, and animals

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Object of Civility and the Art of Politeness in British America (1740–1780)" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2009), 181–184.

[3] On John Jenckes' commission of *Sea Captains* and its subsequent placement in his home on Smithfield Road, North Providence, from about 1758 to 1819 when it was removed by Mary Janckes Wild to Brookline, Massachusetts, see: Edward A. Wild, "The Old Jenckes Picture," 1878. *Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam* curatorial file, St. Louis Art Museum.

before he departed for Amsterdam in April of 1758.[4] While some of these observations and objects returned to New England, as was the case with *Sea Captains*, others traveled with the artist first to Amsterdam and then to London. Whether they arrived in a colonial port city or a metropolitan capital, Greenwood's images contributed to the project of documenting and visualizing Atlantic empires. From his position just beyond the edge of the British Empire, Greenwood created images intended to convey the foreignness, abundance, and violence of Surinam society to both New England and London audiences. He realized this project by creating *Sea Captains*, a picture destined for Rhode Island walls that implicated North American merchant-captains in the colony's lusty mores. Even as he painted *Sea Captains* for his audience in the British North American colonies, Greenwood exploited natural history networks traversing the colony in order to create portraits that appealed to metropolitan audiences of the 1750s and 1760s—portraits of insects in natural history drawings and specimens. In each of these instances, Greenwood tapped into established transatlantic networks—merchant mariners, natural historians—inserting portraiture into better-established ocean-spanning webs. The artist exploited these connections, and they ultimately enabled him to reach shores across the expanse of the Atlantic with his images of Surinam.

Within the context of a transatlantic history of colonial portraiture, however, the first question that emerges may be how a Boston-born, apprentice-trained portraitist came to live and work at the edge of the British Empire in the 1750s? Greenwood's mobility

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[4] John Greenwood, Memorandum Book No. 2, New-York Historical Society. (Hereafter Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2)

and his ability to insert himself into transatlantic networks werere not innate. He learned the process of imperial travel and the advantages it offered to portrait painters from other artists working in the Boston area early in his career, particularly John Smibert. Greenwood leaned on Smibert's example as he learned his trade, discovering the images to be seen beyond Boston's shores in Italian, French, Dutch, and English mezzotints sold at the elder artist's house on Queen Street.[5] The young artist also paraphrased his mentor's most overt Atlantic canvas, declaring his ambition and preparation for undertaking a transatlantic career.

Modeling Migration: Smibert, Greenwood, and Copley

The Greenwood-Lee Family, painted in about 1747, functions as a point of inception for Greenwood's transatlantic travel and work in Surinam. (fig. 2.2) The canvas glosses John Smibert's *The Bermuda Group*, reinterpreting its composition as well as its conceptual content to represent a personal transatlantic project at mid-century as opposed to an institutionally-based transatlantic project pursued during the 1720s. (fig. 2.3) *The Greenwood-Lee Family* looks forward to Greenwood's advising of John Singleton Copley in the early 1770s, taking in part as its subject Greenwood's mother, whose portrait was later revisited by Copley. This group portrait demonstrates the influence of the ocean—the connective tissue of empire—and oceanic travel on Greenwood's career as a portraitist. It reveals the artist's early inclination toward Atlantic mobility, but also demonstrates where the artist found inspiration for his travel—

[5] *Boston Gazette*, October 21, 1734.

Smibert—and how his own process of relocation spurred the migration of an artist who was his junior—Copley.

Greenwood's mobility had precedent beyond Boston's small community of artists. Born in the port city in 1727, his early life was shaped by profits from the maritime travel of his father, Samuel Greenwood, a successful Boston-based merchant who died when the artist was young. Like his father, most of Greenwood's early patrons from the Boston area amassed their wealth through shipping connections to colonial markets, either by providing supplies, selling imported goods, or working as intermediaries for exports.[6] Maritime transportation was crucial to Atlantic empires, carrying supplies and people as well as news, letters, and information. With improvements to ship building and navigational technologies occuring continuously throughout the century, Greenwood and other artists with careers shaped by the Atlantic embarked at mid-century as ocean voyages were becoming shorter, safer, and more accurate.[7] Through familial connections and his business, Greenwood was situated within an empire-wide culture of mobility.

Other artists working in Boston around 1750 served as his mentors and models for transatlantic travel. From 1713 Peter Pelham worked as a mezzotint engraver in London, publishing twenty-five prints in the early 1720s. He emigrated to Boston in 1727, and

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[6] For a range of examples of Greenwood's colonial American portraits see Alan Burroughs, *John Greenwood in America, 1745–1752* (Andover, MA: Addison Gallery of American Art, 1943) and the works listed in Ellen G. Miles, *American Paintings of the Eighteenth Century: The Collection of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1995), 104.

[7] Michael Jarvis, "On the Material Culture of Ships in the Age of Sail," in *Pirates, Jack Tar, and Memory: New Directions in Early Modern Maritime History*, eds. William Pencak and Paul Gilje (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Press, 2007), 51.

continued to pursue mezzotint engraving.[8] In 1749 Greenwood painted Thomas Prince, the pastor at Old South Church. This portrait was created for engraving, as Pelham's mezzotint after Greenwood's portrait was completed in May of 1750.[9] The production of the mezzotint of Prince brought Greenwood into Pelham's studio. Pelham's Atlantic migration likely came to Greenwood's attention while he worked with the printmaker. Spending time in Pelham's studio would have also placed Greenwood in the company of another London-born, Boston-based portraitist who had an even greater influence on his trajectory—Smibert. Pelham made five prints after paintings by Smibert in the 1730s and 1740s.[10]

Like Pelham, Smibert migrated to the British American colonies from London in 1729.[11] Smibert traveled not as an independent portraitist seeking patrons, but instead as a man "of prudence, spirit, and zeal, as well as competent learning, who [was] led to it by other motives than the necessity of picking up a maintenance," according to George

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[8] Jules David Prown, *John Singleton Copley in America, 1738–1774* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 9–10.

[9] Greenwood's portrait of Prince is in the collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society. For a dated version of this print see Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Print Room, M27873. Additional impressions at the MFA include M16848 and M27874. See also Metropolitan Museum of Art, 24.90.22. Pelham's print went through multiple editions, and other portraitists recognized the success of the image as an opportunity to sell pictures. Joseph Badger, who was nineteen years Greenwood's senior and was painting oil portraits in Boston from 1740, copied Greenwood's *Thomas Prince*, likely from Pelham's mezzotint, around 1750. This copy is now in the American Antiquarian Society.

[10] Ann Gibson and Lucia Palmer, "George Berkeley's Visual Language and the New England Portrait Tradition," *The Centennial Review* 31: 2 (Spring 1987), 133.

[11] Smibert was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1688, and apprenticed to a house painter and plasterer early in his life. He moved to London in 1710, initially decorating coaches before transitioning to copying Old Master paintings for art dealers and ultimately painting portraits at Sir Godfrey Kneller's academy. From 1717 to 1720 he resided in Italy, continuing to copy Old Master paintings and taking a Grand Tour. Smibert and Pelham may have known one another in London. See Richard H. Saunders, *John Smibert: Colonial America's First Portrait Painter* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 64–67.

Berkeley, who recruited the artist to serve as an instructor of painting at his proposed college in Bermuda.[12] With him he brought a small-scale study toward "A Large picture begun for [John] Wainwright," who was to be the secretary for Berkeley's group. (fig. 2.4) The canvas collected the project's faculty in an imagined configuration (Wainwright did not make the trip to America) and an idealized setting, elevating the colonialist program on which the college was founded. Seeking to remedy the social corruption he saw in British society, Berkeley envisioned the Bermuda college as a first American attempt to safeguard against the spread of Catholicism from the French and Spanish colonies by educating colonists' children and training Native Americans to convert their tribes to Anglicanism.[13] Smibert's study for Wainwright was a prospectus for the artist's

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[12] George Berkeley, *A Proposal for the Better Supplying of Churches in our Foreign Plantations, and For Converting the Savage Americans to Christianity* (London: H. Woodfall, 1724). On Smibert's involvement with the Bermuda college see: Saunders, *John Smibert*, 27–28, 138–139. While in Italy taking a Grand Tour he met Berkeley, who was president of the Bermuda college. Only three years Smibert's senior, Berkeley had built a reputation as a philosopher concerned in part with optics, having published *An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision* in 1709. While Berkeley's interest in art may have appealed to Smibert, he was already well into his career as a portrait painter, and it is more likely that Smibert found Berkeley useful as an experienced traveler who had access to information concerning travel conditions, accommodations, collections, and monuments. This type of information about travel was primarily shared peer to peer earlier in the eighteenth century, but as time passed it was increasingly supplemented by literature detailing necessary knowledge for the journey.

Smibert returned to London in 1722, opened a studio, and began taking commissions. The artist painted in London from 1722 to 1727, but he never enjoyed the highest levels of patronage. During this period Smibert maintained his relationship with Berkeley, and in 1726 he assisted the writer as he secured funding for his planned college in Bermuda. [Saunders, *John Smibert*, n. 5, from Henry W. Foote, *John Smibert, Painter* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), 31: George Berkeley to Thomas Prior, August 24, 1726, "I have quitted my old lodging, and desire you to direct you letters to be left for me with Mr. Smibert, painter, next door to the King's Arms tavern, in the little piazza, Covent Garden."] By 1727, Smibert formally accepted a position with Berkeley's college as a fellow, or instructor, of painting, and in 1729 Smibert accompanied Berkeley to Newport, Rhode Island, where the men planned to await their parliamentary funding for the project.

[13] George Berkeley, *Essay Towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain* (London: 1721).

visual treatise on Atlantic mobility, employing popular formal devices for portraiture to picture an American expedition.

Berkeley's faculty never reached Bermuda; instead, Smibert ultimately settled in Boston where he became a mentor to a generation of American portraitists and *The Bermuda Group* emerged as a lodestar for their artwork.[14] The college project stalled in Newport, Rhode Island, and in 1729, Smibert arrived in Boston and completed a full-scale version of his group picture.[15] In his notebook of commissions, Smibert identified the figures as, "John Wainwright Esqr / Revd Dean Berkely, his Lady, and Son, John James Esqr, Ricd Dalton Esqr / Ms Hendcock John Smibert."[16] (fig. 2.3) Dean Berkeley dominates the composition, dressed in clerical robes and standing at the far right of the canvas. Wainwright also occupies a prominent position, distinguished from the remainder of the group through his seated position across the table from Berkeley, looking up at the Dean while recording in a ledger book. Seated at the table are Mrs. Hendcock and Berkeley's wife, Ann Forester, holding their son Henry who was born in Newport in 1729. To their left, Smibert painted his self-portrait, holding a partially rolled sketch. Smibert's canvas relies on classical architecture, framing the group with a

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[14] In addition to Greenwood, Robert Feke and Joseph Badger are most often considered members of this first generation of American-born portrait painters.

[15] Smibert worked briefly in Rhode Island before moving to Boston in 1729. Berkeley returned to Europe in 1731. Saunders argues, "By November 1730 Smibert must have reasoned that their Bermuda plan was doomed, and if the portrait was to be completed before the various members dispersed it had to be done soon." Although the canvas is dated 1729, according to Smibert's daybook, he completed the full-scale version of *The Bermuda Group* in 1731.

[16] John Smibert, *The Notebook of John Smibert*, eds. David Evans, John Kerslake, and Andrew Oliver (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1969), 89–90.

colonnade separating the foreground from the background landscape. The imagined New World landscape, as much Boston as Bermuda, complements the imagined grouping, anchored by the relationship between Berkeley and Wainwright, despite Wainwright remaining in London.[17] The canvas presents the small initial faculty of Berkeley's college in a landscape suggestive of the Bermudian paradise Berkeley had described as the only appropriate locale in all of the Americas for a seminary project in his solicitation for funds:

> …in a good air; in a place where provisions are cheap and plenty; where an intercourse might easily be kept up with all parts of America and the islands; in a place of security, not exposed to the insults of pyrates, savages, or other enemies; where there is no great trade, which might tempt the readers or fellows of the college to become merchants, to the neglect of their proper business; where there are neither riches nor luxury to divert, or lessen their application, or to make them uneasy and dissatisfied with a homely frugal subsistence: lastly, where the inhabitants, if such a place may be found, are noted for innocence and simplicity of manners.[18]

Fulfilling Wainwright's commission, Smibert's group portrait represented a project that had already failed. The portrait reimagined and memorialized the group's journey from London to Newport and their Bermudian prospects.

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[17] Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution*, 180–195. Zara Anishanslin Bernhardt, "Portrait of a Woman in a Silk Dress: The Hidden Histories of Aesthetic Commodities in the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World" (PhD diss, University of Delaware, 2009), 315–333. Bernhardt argues that the "New World" represented in Smibert's *The Bermuda Group* is a "New World Eden," and that this theme persists in the work of Smibert and Robert Feke.

[18] Berkeley, *A Proposal for the Better Supplying of Churches in our Foreign Plantations*, 8. Berkeley continues on to contrast his ideal Bermuda to Barbados, where a college had been projected but "would be defective in many of these particulars; for though it may have its use among inhabitants, yet a place of so high trade, so much wealth and luxury, and such dissolute morals, (not to mention the great price and scarcity of provisions;) must at first sight seem a very improper situation for a general seminary intended for the forming missionaries, and educating youth in religion and sobriety of manners. The same objects lie against the neighbouring islands."

Smibert painted himself into *The Bermuda Group* not only with his self-portrait, but also with the discrete "Jo. Smibert fecit 1729" etched on the edge of a book laying flat on the table beneath the volume into which Wainwright records Berkeley's words. This was the only American canvas Smibert signed. Art historian Richard Saunders has argued that Smibert stopped signing his portraits when he left London as his portraits did not need to be distinguished from dozens of others in Boston as they did in the metropole.[19] An exception to this, *The Bermuda Group* commemorates the date of the event it represents (1729) not that of the canvas's completion (1731) or its reworking (1739). Although Smibert planned to ship the canvas to Wainwright upon its completion, by 1730 the picture was seen as "representing [Wainwright] as a madman and disaffected to the Government." Wainwright no longer wanted to possess a substantial reminder of his involvement in a project contemporaries considered foolish and ill-concieved.[20]

Instead of being shipped to England, both preliminary study and finished canvas remained in Smibert's Boston studio, where he exhibited his recent paintings among English and continental canvases and copies. Displaying the collection of Old Master paintings, plaster casts of ancient sculpture, and prints that he had assembled throught his travels in Italy, France, and Holland, Smibert's studio served as a gathering place for young artists.[21] The studio collection remained known by artists across the British

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[19] Saunders, *John Smibert*, 81.

[20] Henry Newman to Reverend Cutler at Boston, August 24, 1728, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (London), Manuscript Collection, New England Letters, March 16, 1727/28–April 3, 1731, 11; as cited in Richard H. Saunders and Ellen G. Miles, *American Colonial Portraits 1700–1776* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987), 120–121.

[21] Saunders, *John Smibert*, 61–86. Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 10–11.

American colonies even after his death, and it was visited by artists such as Charles Willson Peale and Pierre Eugène Du Simitière. The Swiss-born Du Simitière noted the studio's impressive, "collection of original Drawings of the best masters Prints mostly Italian, Pictures, several of them originals & some done by [Smibert] a good painter chiefly portraits and a good collection of casts in plaister of Paris from the best antiquities, besides basso relives seals and other curiosities."[22] In relocating to Boston with his study collection and there pioneering the colonial creation of large-scale group portraits like *The Bermuda Group*, Smibert served as a bridge between the visual cultures of Europe and the British American colonies.

In his studio, Smibert's conversation piece was seen by artists working in British North America, including Robert Feke and Greenwood. Both artists completed large, ambitious canvases in the 1740s that participated in the "intertextuality of imitation" with *The Bermuda Group*.[23] Closely imitating Smibert's canvas, Feke painted *Isaac Royall and Family* in 1741, representing a Boston family who amassed their wealth through Antiguan plantations. (fig. 2.5) The composition of *Isaac Royall and Family* suggests Feke's familiarity with both Smibert's study for *The Bermuda Group* and his finished canvas. Like Smibert, Feke arranged a group of figures around three sides of a table,

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[22] Saunders, *John Smibert*, 67. Saunders and Miles, *American Colonial Portraits*, 121; quote from Foote, *John Smibert*, 123.

[23] Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution*, 79. On Feke see R. Peter Mooz, "The Art of Robert Feke" (PhD diss, University of Pennsylvania, 1970). Bernhardt cites evidence of Feke being characterized as a "mariner" at various moments in his life, and indicates that the artist died in the Caribbean. Bernhardt, "Portrait of a Woman in a Silk Dress," 309–310. Richard Saunders finds no evidence to support a Caribbean connection for Feke, however. Saunders and Miles, *American Colonial Portraits*, 167.

with the most prominent figure standing at the right of the composition and a central group of two women and a child behind the table. The gestures of the two women at the left of Feke's canvas are inverted quotations from Smibert's *Study for the Bermuda Group*, and the Turkish carpet may have been modeled after a studio prop of Smibert's, although it could also represent the Turkish carpet Royall owned. Because of the visual relationship between *The Bermuda Group* and *Isaac Royall and Family*, art historian Theodore Stebbins has argued that Smibert may have started the painting before recommending Feke step in to take over completion of the canvas as his health failed in 1740.[24] Smibert had painted Isaac Royall, Senior, in 1739, the year of his death, and it was likely through this commission that Feke became acquianted with Royall's son.

Feke's portrait established Isaac Royall, Junior, in Mystick, Massachusetts, where his family had moved in July 1737 from Popeshead, Antigua. A young man of twenty-two, Royall, Junior, presides over a group including his wife, Elizabeth McIntosh Royall (in blue), her sister, Mary McIntosh Palmer (in red), and his sister Penelope Royall. The child was his daughter, Elizabeth, born early in the same year the canvas was executed, 1741. Likely created at its unusually large scale to fill a wall in the house Royall had recently finished renovating, the commanding canvas spoke to the Royall family's

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[24] Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., et. al., *American Paintings at Harvard: Volume 1: Paintings, Watercolors, and Pastels by Artists Born Before 1826* (Cambridge: Harvard Art Museums, 2014), 196, n. 4. Stebbins notes that the depictions of Isaac Royall and his sister are more highly finished than those of Elizabeth Royall and Mary Royall, the two central figures, suggesting that the canvas may have been started by Smibert and finished by Feke on stylistic grounds. In this assertion, Stebbins disagrees with earlier scholars including Wayne Craven, who argued that the rigidity of the figures and additive nature of the composition in Feke's painting indicated a young, relatively inexperienced artist imitating the more practiced example of *The Bermuda Group*. He also identifies stylistic differences—Feke's work is characterized by a linear crispness while Smibert's is characterized by a fluid, painterly technique. Wayne Craven, *Colonial American Portraiture: the economic, religious, social, cultural, philosophical, scientific, and aesthetic foundations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 283.

success, a product of their Atlantic engagements. The group portrait was one component of Royall's larger program of constructing his personal appearance, spending money on not only an opulent house and furnishings, but also the twenty-seven enslaved persons his father had brought from Antigua to the 503-acre Massachusetts farm. Yet the styling afforded by Royall's wealth was also undercut by the provincial style of Feke's canvas. While its scale was ambitious, the portrait represented Royall and his family in the linear, planar, and highly contrasted style of the first generation of early American portrait painters. Feke also painted what he knew, not only by copying Smibert's earlier canvas, but also by inserting a colonial American interior in place of Smibert's idealized landscape.[25] Feke's portrait presents the Royall family in a room with finishes similar to those in the Best Room in their recently completed house, where the portrait initially hung. (fig. 2.6) By painting Royall in the model of Smibert's *The Bermuda Group*, Feke's portrait affirmed Royall's status.[26] Its colonial interior, however, served to ground the family in Massachusetts by locating them within an architectural environment resembling their Mystick home.

While Smibert's *The Bermuda Group* speaks to an idealized mobility and Feke's *Isaac Royall and Family* fixed an Atlantic-spanning family in a single locale, the group portrait painted by Greenwood, *The Greenwood-Lee Family*, asserted the artist's travel narrative. (fig. 2.2) Painted around 1747, Greenwood depicted his personal ambitions in

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[25] Bernhardt does not discuss *Isaac Royall and Family*. When considering her argument it is interesting to note that in *Isaac Royall and Family*, among his most significant portraits, Feke's New Eden is firmly replaced with New England in this work after Smibert's most philosophically pointed canvas.

[26] Craven, *Colonial American Portraits*, 282–283.

his canvas, modeling the composition on Smibert's transatlantic statement but also breaking from the precedent. Instead of recreating Smibert's elaborate, idealized setting, Greenwood crowded his comparatively small canvas with figures surrounded by the trappings of casual gentility central to mid eighteenth-century portraiture.[27] He avoids recreating his family's home as Feke did for Royall in *Isaac Royall and Family*, instead suggesting three-dimensional space and architectural surroundings in the shifting lights and darks of the background without defining clear forms.[28] By unmooring his canvas—an uncommon choice in eighteenth-century group portraiture—Greenwood concentrated attention exclusively on his figural group, which is stabilized and strengthened through its triangular format. At the apex of the group stands Greenwood, not in the diminuitive position Smibert occupies in *The Bermuda Group*, but in the tall place of Berkeley, at the right of the canvas, displaying his palette and a fistful of brushes, demonstrating his facility with his trade.

Greenwood's turban, open shirt, and banyan mark the young artist's gentlemanly ambitions. Executed about five years before his departure for Surinam and created without a commission, Greenwood's first large-scale group portrait represented a physical manifestation of a nascent personal plan. Depicting himself and his family, the canvas promised no renumerative value. Greenwood centered the composition on a prominent self-portrait as a gentleman-artist engaged with contemporary Atlantic culture.

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[27] *The Bermuda Group* measures 69 ½ x 93 inches, while *The Greenwood-Lee Family* measures 55 ½ x 69 1/8 inches.

[28] Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 13. About this canvas Prown argued that the lack of special fixity and environment is an indication of Greenwood's lack of skill as a painter and his inability to move beyond the surface of a canvas into perspective and modeling.

Painted around the time of his engagement to his cousin, Elizabeth Lee, Greenwood commemorated the couple but also related the oceanic chasm that ultimately separated the betrothal.[29] The painting's central figural group can be divided into two overlapping triangular formations: Hannah Greenwood, Elizabeth Lee, and Martha Lee (with Elizabeth Lee at the peak) and Mary Charnock Greenwood, John Greenwood, and Mary or Elizabeth Greenwood (with John Greenwood at the peak). These overlapping compositional devices demonstrate the planned connection between the Greenwood and Lee families, but also foreshadow the oceanic distance that would separate the couple with the artist's departure for Surinam. While Greenwood stands above the group, clothed in the trappings of his professional ambitions, Elizabeth Lee frames the young colonials' families, drawing them together visually as she would have physically while he traveled in the 1750s.[30]

By echoing *The Bermuda Group*—Smibert's visual treatise on an Atlantic-spanning project—Greenwood foreshadowed his aspirations as an artist. The canvas may also allude to his awareness of his need to travel to attain his goals. In choosing to emulate Smibert's large group portrait, a narrative of movement is suggested Greenwood's painting. Yet unlike Feke in *Isaac Royall and Family*, Greenwood avoided copying, instead changing the positions of the figures, arrangement of the group, coloring

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[29] While Elliot Bostwick Davis has argued that Elizabeth Lee sits in front of Greenwood in the painting because her blue bow complements Greenwood's jacket and his hand is intimately juxtaposed with her head, based on both the composition of the picture and a nineteenth-century note attached to the back of the painting, I believe that the figure in the center is Greenwood's fiancée. See: Elliot Bostwick Davis, *American Painting, Museum of Fine Arts Highlights* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2003), 27–33.

[30] Greenwood and Elizabeth Lee ultimately separated while the artist was residing in Surinam. Mentions of her are present in the index for his first Surinam memorandum book, which no longer survives. The index is in Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2.

of the composition, and attributes in the scene. In *The Greenwood-Lee Family*, Greenwood's mother supports her son, then patriarch, while affirming her social status in spite of having recently been widowed. Her posture open and her gaze forward, like all of the figures in *The Greenwood-Lee Family*, Mary Charnock looks to her son's impending depature from Boston.

John Singleton Copley's relationship with Greenwood further extends the model for artists' Atlantic mobility presented by Greenwood in *The Greenwood-Lee Family*. In the 1760s, Copley corresponded with a small network of painters from the British North American colonies, some of whom had relocated to London. Copley was most compelled by his London-based correspondents—Benjamin West and Greenwood—who connected the young artist to venues for exhibition in the city and opportunities for training in Europe. While Copley's relationship with West has received considerable scholarly attention, his relationship with Greenwood has passed largely overlooked.[31] The relationship between the two men suggests yet another reason for Copley's eventual departure from Boston for London and the many prominent models for Atlantic mobility among portraitists present in Boston.[32] It also encourages reconsideration of Copley's

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[31] Copley's relationship with West is explored in depth in Emily Ballew Neff and Kaylin H. Weber, eds., *American Adversaries: West and Copley in a Transatlantic World* (Houston, TX: The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2013).

[32] On Copley's frustration with the lack of appreciation for painting in Boston, see Rather, "Carpenter, Tailor, Shoemaker, Artist: Copley and Portrait Painting around 1770," *The Art Bulletin* 79:2 (June 1997), 269. Copley pointed out the "wanting" taste for painting in Boston in the 1760s and famously griped, "the people generally regard it no more than any other usefull trade, as they sometimes term it, like that of a Carpenter tailor or shew maker, not as one of the most noble Arts in the World. …While the Arts are so disregarded I can hope for nothing, eithr to incourage or assist me in my studies but what I receive from a thousand Leagues Distance, and be my improvements what they will, I shall not be benifitted by them in this country, neither in point of fortune or fame." Copley had trained as an artist, practiced his craft, and succeeded in Boston, but as he saw the limitations of his colonial setting he became dissatisfied. As his

career in the 1760s—prior to his departure—within an Atlantic framework, a topic which is the subject of the final chapter of this dissertation.

Around 1750, Copley and Greenwood worked on portraits of women in the studio of Copley's stepfather, Peter Pelham.[33] These portraits show the artists' interchange of visual solutions. Greenwood painted Boston mariner William Welshman's wife, Elizabeth Fulford Welshman, in about 1749. (fig. 2.7) By 1753, Copley painted one of his earliest oil on canvas portraits, a three-quarter length portrait of Boston-resident Bethia Torrey Mann. (fig. 2.8) Copley's portrait of Mann bears a strong affinity to Greenwood's portrait of Elizabeth Welshman. Bethia Torrey Mann sits alone, resting an elbow, but little of her weight, on a classicized plinth. As in Greenwood's portrait of Welshman—as well as Isaac Beckett's portrait mezzotint of Princess Anne, the precedent for Greenwood's picture—a strand of pearls is suspended between the sitter's hands. (fig. 2.9) A generalized middle ground filled with ambiguous foliage releases onto a distant scene of trees surrounding a river. The landscapes are discordant, with the cave or rocky outcropping surrounding Mann consuming the top and right of the canvas even as two swans meander down the mouth of a river that opens onto a bay at the horizon line. A Bostonian most often characterized by scholars as learning to paint from mezzotints,

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interest in London's art world grew in the 1760s, he looked to England and Europe for his future training and prospects. This included corresponding with Greenwood both while he was in Surinam, noted in Isaac John Greenwood's index of Greenwood's first memorandum book in Memorandum Book No. 2, and in 1770 and 1771, in *Copley-Pelham Letters.*

[33] In 1749, Pelham created a mezzotint of Greenwood's portrait of *Reverend Edward Holyoke*. Additionally, in the year prior Greenwood produced a mezzotint, *Jersey Nanny* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). According to Jules Prown, Pelham was the only person in Boston from whom Greenwood could have learned mezzotint techniques. It is likely that Greenwood was in Pelham's studio on Lindall's Row, at least as an informal student, in 1748 when Copley arrived.

Copley's portrait of Mann reveals another influence in the artist's development and training: the work of artists in the surrounding community including Greenwood. This precedent can be further traced through his companion portrait of Mann's husband, Joseph Mann, which also follows Greenwood's portrait of Patrick Tracy, painted around 1749.[34]

In his portrait of Bethia Torrey Mann, Copley refined Greenwood's composition. A green-studded bank serves as the backdrop for both sitters' portraits, leaves sprouting from the darker passages. Greenwood, however, characterizes this mass as a tree, with a single, exaggerated branch protruding from a field of brown. Copley more closely follows Beckett's mezzotint here, painting unclear shrubbery either growing on a rock or from a tree. The pearls Welshman holds, stiffly suspended, contribute to the portrait's rigidity; Mann's pearls circle delicately behind her hand, lending a naturalistic, momentary sense to the image. In his portrait of Mann, Copley imitates elements of a work produced by the elder artist, Greenwood, for a more prominent Bostonian, Welshman, while showcasing his rapidly developing skill with oil paint.[35]

In addition to the dialoge between Copley's earliest oil portraits and Greenwood's work in colonial New England, Copley continued to correspond with Greenwood long

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[34] Greenwood's portrait of *Patrick Tracy* is in the collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and Copley's portrait of *Joseph Mann* is in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

[35] While Greenwood's patron, Welshman, does not appear to be from Boston's elite, as a merchant-mariner, he was among a new class of increasingly wealthy patrons commissioning portraits in the 1750s. In contrast to Welshman, Joseph Mann was a merchant in Boston (periodically teaming with his brother-in-law William Torrey, Jr.), selling "TEA, Coffee, Allspice, Ginger, Peppers, Snuff and Tobacco, Rice, Loaf and Brown Sugar, Delph and Stone Ware, Dumb-Fish, Florence Oyl, Mustard, Cotton Wool, Allum, Copperas, Raisins, Currants, Figs, Flour, Freesmason Glasses, &c." imported by men like Welshman. See: *Boston News-Letter*, December 31, 1761.

after Greenwood departed from Boston. From London, Greenwood kept Copley informed of recent developments in the art world, supplying knowledge that enabled Copley to remark on events to West, another resource for Americans in Britain and a key node in this transatlantic network of artistic encouragement.[36] Although Greenwood never returned to Boston, his correspondence with Copley demonstrates his continued ties to his place of birth, his contemplation of a return trip, and his serving as a guide and reference for other artists looking to travel for professional improvement.

In March of 1770, Greenwood wrote Copley, soliciting a portrait of his elderly mother. He requested that she be painted "on a small length or a size a little broader than Kitt Katt, sitting in as natural a posture as possible. I leave the pictoresque disposition intirely to your self and I shall only observe that gravity is my choice of Dress." He suggested that this subject, painted in the prescribed manner, would be "very proper for your next years Applause, and our amuseument" at the Society of Artists exhibition.[37] This letter was the inception of a canvas making a voyage across the ocean. Copley sent his finished picture to Greenwood in January of 1771, and it hung at the Society of Artists exhibition in the same year.[38] (fig. 2.10) Greenwood's instructions with regard to the portrait of his mother suggest his painterly authority within the transaction. This authority was established less by Greenwood's artistic abilities, which Copley had far

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[36] On Benjamin West and his students see Evans, *Benjamin West* and Neff and Weber, *American Adversaries*.

[37] John Greenwood to John Singleton Copley, March 23, 1770. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 81–83.

[38] The third picture Copley sent to the Society of Artists' exhibitions, *Mrs. Humphrey Devereaux* followed his relative successes at these exhibitions with *Boy with a Flying Squirrel (Henry Pelham)* in 1766 and *Young Girl with a Bird and Dog* in 1767.

surpassed by the time of this commission, than by Greenwood's travel, experience, and connections beyond colonial Boston. In this exchange, Greenwood occupied not only the position of patron, but also acted as a guide to metropolitan expectations.[39] Copley's portrait of Greenwood's mother demonstrates the younger artist's work within an Atlantic-spanning network of colonial promoters that he first encountered in Boston in the late 1740s and early 1750s.

Considering the long, uncertain intervals that challenged eighteenth-century communication, the Atlantic functioned as a medium in the creation of Copley's canvases.[40] *Mrs. Humphrey Devereaux* was painted about six months prior to its display at the Society of Artists exhibiton and with the delays and the rigors of transit in mind. Although Copley aspired to bridge his geographic and professional distance from London, in this portrait a conflict between contemporary colonial American and metropolitan styles of representation persisted.[41] The mahogany table extending beyond the picture plane can be read as emblematic of this cultural distance. A sumptuous but slow-growing wood, mahogany was increasingly scarce by 1770, shipped from Caribbean forests to Boston and London alike for transformation into luxury

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[39] It is interesting that in the documents we have available, Copley never requests that Greenwood send paintings to him in Boston for study, although Greenwood does sell, in one instance, mummies to Harvard. On August 1, 1769, Greenwood received a letter of thanks from Harvard College for sending them two mummies. Memorandum Book No. 2.

[40] Roberts, *Transporting Visions*, 20–24.

[41] Working primarily form mezzotints, what West called Copley's "lineyness" and Joshua Reynolds described as "overminuteness" remains. While painting Greenwood's mother, Copley was an artist who, while having received advice from previous exhibition pieces and considered these critiques, still painted primarily from mezzotints and in a highly linear style.

furnishings.[42] Carried across the ocean like the portrait of Greenwood's mother, by the time mahogany was transformed into furnishings and arrived in elite homes, its formal properties and cultural contexts were entirely reconcieved. Within this portrait, Copley's polished mahogany table, as well as his technique, reveal fissures between local and imperial visual conventions created by oceanic distance. Here Copley has yet to learn to seamlessly navigate his position between British imperial cultures and construct himself and his painting for a London audience. The portrait satisfied its patron, however, a sympathetic recipient due to his American beginnings and his position as an experienced transatlantic cultural interlocutor.

In being shipped from Boston to London, Copley's painting of Greenwood's mother came to mirror *The Greenwood-Lee Family*. Greenwood's canvas represented a nascent personal plan. Depicting himself and his family, the canvas promised no renumerative value, but instead pointed to his formulating ambitions. His emulation of Smibert's portrait of an ambitious Atlantic journey built a narrative of movement into his composition, foreshadowing his impending travel plans. In Copley's portrait Mary Charnock instead meditates on distance, as it is literally made manifest in the mahogany table. Her two portraits created a transatlantic dialogue, bridging space and time. For Greenwood's mother, her son looked forward but never departed, his presence preserved in *The Greenwood-Lee Family*. Through her two subsequent marriages and over a quarter-century, he remained within her sphere, vivified in their family portrait. For

[42] Jennifer L. Andersen, *Mahogany: The Costs of Luxury in Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012).

Greenwood, his mother was reanimated with the arrival of Copley's picture, no longer exclusively an epistolary presence.

Visual Networks, Merchant Portraits: Surinam in New England

On December 16, 1752, Greenwood arrived in the port city of Paramaribo. Having sailed from Boston at twenty-five years old, the portraitist did not know that he would never again set foot in his hometown. Likely seeking patrons for his portraits, he set about documenting every vessel arriving at the port and its point of origin.[43] Greenwood followed not a patron but an established trade route between New England—particularly Rhode Island—and Surinam that was well-traveled by the captains whose portraits he painted in both locales. While residing in the Dutch colony, the artist increased his reliance on transatlantic shipping networks, using these resources not only to cultivate patrons, but also to explore materials and visual sources. Painted for the artist's Atlantic-travelling New England patrons, *Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam* integrated English, Dutch, and Caribbean visual cultures to create a product that satisfied Greenwood's patrons. Because it was created at a remove from its intended destination, it also allowed Greenwood the opportunity to probe the slave society of the equatorial port city and subtly critique the behavior of its subjects without risking his commission.

[43] Memorandum Book No. 2. Greenwood's second and fourth memoranda books are housed at the New-York Historical Society; the first, also from his time in Surinam, is indexed and referenced in the second but is unlocated.

The patron of *Sea Captains* is known anecdotally to be John Jenckes, and the painting descended in Jenckes' family.[44] While acting as an agent for the sale of the painting, Edward A. Wild described the traditional identifications of the figures in an 1878 letter now in the St. Louis Art Museum's curatorial files, including "Mr. Wanton of Newport, fat, round faced, asleep, and just being baptized" and "Capt. Hopkins, with a broad hat."[45] These men were likely the captains and privateers William Wanton and Esek Hopkins, both painted by Greenwood in quarter-length individual portraits around 1754 in Paramaribo. In his list of portraits painted in Surinam, the artist noted painting "W Wanton" and "K Hopkins" shortly before the *New-York Mercury*'s shipping news ran a notice placing both men in the colony in late June and July.[46] While some captains stopped in Paramaribo for only a few days before continuing on to other West Indian ports, the average layover for a North American ship was ten weeks.[47] This was in part

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[44] Wild, "The Old Jenckes Picture," *Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam* curatorial file, St. Louis Art Museum.

[45] Wild, "The Old Jenckes Picture," *Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam* curatorial file, St. Louis Art Museum.

[46] Paintings 51 and 52 in Greenwood's list of portraits painted while in Surinam are Wanton and Hopkins, listed as "W Wanton" and "K Hopkins". Assuming the artist created roughly 23 pictures per year, they would be painted in about 1755. On August 5, 1754 the *New-York Mercury* ran the notice, "Saturday left captain Vardil arrived here in 28 Days from Surinam, and acquaints us that he sailed from thence in Company with the Capts. Hopkins and Johnston, the former for Rhode-Island, and the latter for New-London: He left the following Vessels at Surinam, viz. Malcome from Halifax, Smith from Boston; Goddard, Hawney, Topham, Nichols, Awl, and Benjamin and William Wanton from Rh-Island, Low from Philadelphia, and a Ship from London, bound for Philadelphia also." In his effort to identify the figures in *Sea Captains* and corroborate their presence in Surinam in about 1757–1758, Robert W. Kenny identifies the sleeping Wanton as Joseph, William Wanton's brother and business partner. Robert W. Kenny, "Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam," *Rhode Island History* 36: 4 (November 1977), 107–118.

[47] Johannes Postma, "Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections, 1667–1795," in *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585–1817*, eds. Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 311. Between 1750 and 1759, 501 British North American and Caribbean ships landed at Paramaribo, or 50.1 percent of the 1,017 total ships arriving at the port. Of the 516 Dutch

due to the difficulty of obtaining a cargo at Paramaribo, where there were no warehouses and sugar or molasses were often directly obtained from planters. Hopkins and Wanton were again in Surinam with a critical mass of New England merchants in 1757, according to a shipping announcement in the *New-York Mercury*.[48] It is possible that Jenckes had encountered one of the portraits Greenwood had painted of either Wanton or Hopkins on an earlier trip to the colony and wished to have a record of his working excursion at the edge of the British empire in a Dutch port city painted during this visit. With at least fifteen captains on layover in Paramaribo from Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut—the three colonies most economically invested in trade to Surinam—by commissioning this canvas Jenckes placed himself within a maritime fraternity.[49]

British North American ships were commonplace in mid-eighteenth century Surinam, as one of the three lines to Atlantic markets on which the colony relied. Supplies, tools, food, settlers, administrators, and soldiers were brought to the colony

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ships, 416 were bilateral trading ships (41.6 percent) and 100 were Dutch slave trading ships (10 percent). Postma, "Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections," Table 11.1.

[48] *New-York Mercury*, November 7, 1757. An ad announced "Wednesday last Captain Augustine Lawrance came in from Surinam, in 29 Days; where he left the Captains Buckmaster, Owens, Morris, Hopkins, James Hopkins, Earl, and two of the Name of Wanton, belonging to Rhode-Island; Frasier, Thompson, Ash, Hoskins, and Ingrham of Boston; with Moore and Chester of New-London."

[49] Postma, "Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections," 302. Only Rhode Island captains are identified in Wild's account of the painting, but Wild only identifies ten of the twenty white figures. Kenny revisited these identifications as follows from left to right: Captain Nicholas Cooke (Newport, RI) in the Quaker hat; Captain Esek Hopkins conversing with Cooke; Daniel Jenckes (father of John) with his back to the viewer; either Stephen or William Hopkins, brothers of Esek; Joseph Wanton (Newport, RI) asleep at the table with punch being poured on his head; Captain Ambrose Page (Providence, RI) vomiting; Godfrey Malbone (Newport, RI) teaching the minuet; Nicholas Power (Providence, RI) learning the minuet; John Jenckes (North Providence, RI) sheltering a candle with his hat by the doorway; and John Greenwood vomiting in the doorway. Kenny additionally relates two identifications of Dutchmen by Wild—the figure in a cap holding a bottle of wine and a glass at center and the figure asleep, holding his ankle at the lower right.

through the bilateral shuttle trade between Surinam and the Dutch Republic. Surinam's tropical products returned to the Dutch Republic in these ships. The colony's second necessary trade route connected it to both the Dutch Republic and Africa, with the triangle trade transporting enslaved labor to the colony to cultivate its plantations. The third circuit included British North American colonials transporting horses, flour, fish, and other meat products to Surinam, primarily from New England. According to historian Johannes Postma, of the 4,478 ships participating in the intra-Caribbean trade that were documented anchoring at Paramaribo in the eighteenth century, about 4,000 of them, or almost ninety percent, were American ships from New England.[50] This trade became particularly lucrative for colonial merchants during the Seven Years' War, when British privateers (including many of the men pictured in *Sea Captains*) illegally traded at neutral Dutch ports after dropping cargo at French ports under flags of truce as privateers.[51]

Paramaribo was not only a bustling port city when Greenwood arrived at the end of 1752, it was also situated in an established and profitable colony. Described by eighteenth-century natural historian Edward Bancroft as "the most ancient and considerable of all the *Dutch* Colonies in *Guiana*," Surinam was established by the English, but was surrendered to the Dutch during the Second Anglo-Dutch War in 1667. Over the course of the eighteenth century, Surinam grew into a prosperous plantation society and colony for Holland, producing sugar, coffee, cotton, and cacao. According to

[50] Postma, "Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections," 294.

[51] Kenny, 109–110.

David Cohen Nassy, a leader of the Jewish settlement who was born in the colony, Surinam plantations provided the greatest revenue for the Dutch empire of any colony and their owners consumed more imported manufactured goods than any other Caribbean colony of any nationality.[52]

Lavish, opulent living accompanied this wealth, described in detail by Englishman John Gabriel Stedman in his 1790 account of his residence in the colony. An artist himself, paintings are among the first features Stedman notes in Surinam's domestic ornament, "The houses in general at Paramaribo are elegantly furnished, with paintings, gilding, crystal chandeliers, jars of china &c. The rooms are never papered or plastered but beautifully wainscoted and stocked with the neatest joinery of cedar, brazil wood, and mahogany."[53] (fig. 2.11) Greenwood also remarked on the diversity of house types and grandeur of some houses in Paramaribo:

> …it contains about 600 houses chiefly built with wood which is found more healthy than stone of Brique as they are more airy – there are some very good houses in the Town, particularly Mynken Pollack, Cellier, Van Son, Mauritius, Staubé &c. There are but 5 Brick houses in the Place, which are The Province houses where resides the Govn: a Very large & Corgiodious ~~spacious~~ house with very large Gardens behind it in this house is hept Several Officer, The Comadore's house is next to it also of Brick Mr Turtons next to that (* of stone such as is form'd on side of the river being a Body shells amassed together by the water so hard as stone it self)…[54]

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[52] David de Ishak Cohen Nassy, *Essai historique sur la colonie de Surinam* (Paramaribo, 1788), 2; 40.

[53] Richard Price and Sally Price, eds., *Stedman's Surinam: Life in an Eighteenth-Century Slave Society* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) ,126; Richard Price and Sally Price, eds., *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam, in Guiana, on the Wild Coast of South America*, 2 vols. (London: J. Johnson and J. Edwards, 1796).

[54] Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2, 106.

The wealth Stedman encountered was further emphasized in his description of the sartorial leanings of the occupants of Paramaribo, both long-term residents and those like the captains in Greenwood's group picture, who were passing through the city:

> …profuseness in dress, which is truly magnificent—silk, embroidery, Genoa velvets, diamonds, gold- and silver-lace being daily wear—not so much as a captain of a trading ship appearing in solid gold buckles to his socks, breeches, &c, nor are they less refined at their tables, where everything that can be called delicate is produced at any price, and served up in the newest fashioned silver plate and Japan china.[55]

Stedman's account of life in Paramaribo not only describes the wealth that Greenwood sought in patrons when traveling to the colony, but also the fascinating, foreign opulence that accompanied this wealth, which the artist encountered upon his arrival.

While Stedman was at times awed by the richness of the occupants of Paramaribo, he also found himself periodically distraught by their manner of living. Both Stedman and Greenwood recount excessive bouts of drinking of the type Greenwood painted in *Sea Captains*. These events were visible in the city's streets as well as in its taverns, buildings that melded public and private realms, serving as inns for travelers in need of a place to rest and coffee houses for information seekers interested in news locally and from abroad. Stedman occasionally participated in drinking bouts, but he was not inured to their excess. The Englishman judged harshly residents of the colony whose "Luxury and dissipation in this country are carried to the extreme and, in my opinion, must send thousands to the grave. The men are generally a set of poor, withered mortals, as dry and sapless as a squeezed lemon, owing to their intemperate way of living—such late hours

[55] Price and Price, *Stedman's Surinam*, 129.

[and] hard drinking."[56] The subjects of *Sea Captains* lack moderation, partaking in the late hours and hard drinking Stedman condemned.

Proprietors of taverns built spaces where patrons could enact their business, communicating through transatlantic networks and receiving news from travelers, friends, and newspapers. Shipping and price lists were often tacked on the walls, as may be the case with the barely visible handwriting on the rear wall in Greenwood's painting. Recent work by historians David Hancock and Michelle Craig McDonald demonstrates that by 1750, these commercial spaces were filled with polite entertainments including painting studios, as well as fencing schools, tracing studios, reading rooms, and wax museums.[57] Taverns periodically served as temporary housing not only for artists but also for their studios, and may have been known to Atlantic travelers as one location where portraits were commissioned and painted. Even if Greenwood was not regularly painting in this tavern, it is likely that he frequented one or more of these establishments to cultivate relationships with potential patrons who were regularly arriving in and departing from the port.

While an unusual commission for a New England merchant in the 1750s, this picture would have served its owner both as an amusement and as an advertisement of his skills as a mariner. Represented in the company of notable Rhode Island traders in

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[56] Price and Price, *Stedman's Surinam*, 18.

[57] Greenwood's choice of setting for this canvas points to his position at the crossroads of empire. In colonial America, only courthouses exceeded taverns in number—these building types surpassed even churches. Around 1750, many tavern keepers expanded their facilities, increasing their inventories while focusing on adding new beverages and meals as well as supplemental services. David Hancock and Michelle Craig McDonald, eds., *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World: Voices in the Tavern, 1500–1800* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2011), xvi–xvii.

Surinam, Jenckes, Wanton, Hopkins, and the other captains participate in an informal gentlemanly club of misbehavior while trading in the West Indies. They are shown at the midpoint of successful and lucrative voyages, exchanging the horses, flour, fish, and meat provided to the colony by New England for the molasses that was distilled into rum in New England.[58] For relatively young merchant-captains like Jenckes, Wanton, and Hopkins, in Newport this image became a document attesting to their seafaring skill and prodigious success at privateering, allowing them to pursue even more lucrative voyages. William Wanton and his brother and business partner Joseph—who together worked Paramaribo with three privateering vessels from 1756 to 1758—aspired to compete for the most moneymaking routes departing Newport. Shortly after *Sea Captains* was created, the brothers began to work as traders in the transatlantic slave trade in the early 1760s.[59] Writing to another Newport firm, Nicholas Brown & Company, in 1764, Joseph Wanton offered to captain a slave trading vessel to the coast of Africa after a competing captain had declined the post citing his seafaring experience: "I am at present out of Business and you have a mind to fit that Voyage I offer my Service to you and Fllatter my self that I can give you satisfaction in the execution of the same being well acquainted and well experienced in the Ginea Trade all Down the Coasts."[60] Ultimately Nicholas Brown & Company gave this voyage on the ship *Sally* not to Wanton, but to Hopkins,

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[58] Johannes Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 296.

[59] Joseph Wanton, Jr. was part owner of three vessels active in privateering during the Seven Years' War—the brig *Defiance*, the snow *Africa*, and the brigantine *Scorpion*. Kenny, 117.

[60] Joseph Wanton to Nicholas Brown & Co., August 4, 1764, John Carter Brown Library. http://dl.lib.brown.edu/catalog/catalog.php?verb=render&id=115764409477769.

who the Wanton brothers insisted was not experienced enough for the post.[61] All three men affirmed their professional identities through their presence in this scene even as they aspired to captain the most profitable voyages departing from Newport, those of the slave trading vessels sailing the coast of western Africa.

Greenwood's services were also endorsed by having a patron like Jenckes display this uncommon image in his home, advantageous because while working in Surinam, Greenwood did not know that he would never return to Boston.[62] Even writing to fellow Boston-based artist Copley fifteen years later in 1770 when commissioning a portrait of his aging mother, Greenwood still appeared to intend a return trip to the city, stating "I have of late enter'd into connections, that may probably keep me longer in London than I coud wish."[63] By painting and signing a novel picture in a fashionable style that would be seen by Rhode Island merchants—wealthy men capable of commissioning pairs or suites of family pictures—Greenwood promoted his ability as a painter and worldliness as an artist, showcasing his personal travel and influences. Creating this canvas helped to position him to reenter a market saturated by both native-born portraitists, including Copley, and transatlantic travelers arriving from London, such as Joseph Blackburn.

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[61] This was Hopkins' first voyage to Africa, and at the time he had no experience on a slave trading vessel. During the fifteen-month trip he lost 109 of 196 enslaved people on board. See: http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/sally/. Accessed March 7, 2017. Joseph and William Wanton to Nicholas Brown & Co., August 13, 1764, John Carter Brown Library. Accessed March 7, 2017. http://dl.lib.brown.edu/catalog/catalog.php?verb=render&id=115764064293220.

[62] Wild indicates that *Sea Captains* was displayed in Jenckes' Smithfield Road home in North Providence from the time of the painting's return to Rhode Island through 1819.

[63] John Greenwood to John Singleton Copley, March 23, 1770. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 81.

Yet *Sea Captains* is not without precedent in British visual culture of the period. The painting's structure closely follows William Hogarth's 1733 engraving, *A Midnight Modern Conversation*, after a painting of the same title he produced from 1729 to 1732. (fig. 2.12) Some art historians have interpreted Hogarth's image as a moralizing critique of an empire-wide culture of overindulgence. Likewise, Greenwood's canvas is most often cited as early criticism of the merchants portrayed and of Surinam's slave system.[64] Art historians David Bindman, Charles Ford, and Helen Weston assert that the work "suggests graphically the louche society of the slave traders, where drunken carousing was the principal form of sociability, while Africans, represented by [four] servants, minister to their needs."[65] This flattens the complexity of Greenwood's experience with his patrons, Surinam's slave society, and his engagement with Hogarth's model. Greenwood stretched his artistic abilities in *Sea Captains*, constructing an aesthetic experiment based on Hogarth's model. Greenwood also embraces Hogarth's satirical approach to representing empire, aspiring to create an image imbued with the excess of Paramaribo as experienced firsthand that could be viewed as entertainment—not offense—not only in the metropole but also in other colonial port cities. His painting critiques but subtly, as its primary ambition is to provide a visual experience of empire.

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[64] David Bindman, Charles Ford, and Helen Weston, "Africa and the Slave Trade," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, Vol. III, Part 3, eds. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011) 207–240, especially 226–228.

[65] Bindman, Ford, and Weston, "Africa and the Slave Trade," 226. American art textbook *American Encounters* also discusses the painting as an expression of the artist's "comedic disdain" for his subjects, contrasting their indecorum with the enslaved figures' bodily comportment. Angela L. Miller, Janet Berlo, Bryan Wolf, and Jennifer Roberts, *American Encounters: Art, History, and Cultural Identity* (New York: Pearson, 2008).

Hogarth's print pictures processes of exchange across empire through material culture in the Chinese form and decoration of the punch bowl; the punch within the bowl made from rum, sugar, and citrus; the tobacco being smoked; and the newspapers providing shipping and trade information.[66] Greenwood's painting amplifies Hogarth's representation of imperial material exchange, with the canvas saturated by trade goods with diverse geographic points of origin collected in a Surinam inn. Amid Greenwood's vast assemblage of spilled and broken items, the central punch bowl of Hogarth's print has multiplied into four vessels of various sizes, painted to resemble Chinese export porcelain. There is no ladle from earlier in the evening to suggest that the bowl functioned as a center bowl would in a London tavern, instead drinking vessels are passed between participants in the more common colonial practice.[67] Wine, candle holders, tobacco, the tall case clock, and the mirror on the rear wall of the room, as well as the enslaved figures framing the scene, were all brought by Dutch, French, Spanish, and English shipping to Paramaribo.[68] Traveling luxury goods are integrated with the

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[66] Karen Harvey, "Ritual Encounters: Punch Parties and Masculinity in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 214: 1 (2012), 181–191; On the visual culture of drinking within the British empire see also: Eric Frederick Gollannek, " 'Empire Follows Art': Exchange and the Sensory Worlds of Empire in Britain and Its Colonies" (PhD diss, University of Delaware, 2008), 159–220.

[67] Harvey, "Ritual Encounters," 191. We can imagine the drinker at the left of the table finding the scene in which he is painted at the bottom of his punch bowl, uncovering Hogarth's scene gulp by gulp.

[68] Dutch ships always monopolized the importation of enslaved people to Surinam and other Dutch West Indian possessions, not only when the WIC had a monopoly but also during the so-called free trade era that began during the 1730s. Only in very unusual circumstances, occasioned by emergency repairs for example, were foreign ships allowed to sell a limited number of enslaved people at Paramaribo—often only to cover the cost of repairs or supplies. The policy of foreign exclusion did not change until 1789, when United States ships were permitted to take enslaved Africans to Surinam. Prior to 1789, American ships had landed only 120 enslaved people at Paramaribo. Aside from the two figures traditionally identified as Dutchmen, the merchants in Greenwood's picture were not trading enslaved

abundant punch, existing in great quantities in Surinam where its ingredients originated and were shipped from to satisfy both English and Dutch appetites for the beverage. The two raw sugar loaves behind the counter, likely locally produced, underscored the purpose of the colony and further point to the agricultural system beyond the port city.

Hogarth's dense, dynamic groups of figures lead the viewer through the narrative of his compositions. Blurring the distinction between portrait and genre scene, the viewer's movement through the scene is paced by the action of the painting's subjects. Not singularly moralizing, *A Midnight Modern Conversation* is rife with ambiguity. For Hogarth, the polite and impolite are intertwined, the impolite and excessive existing within the polite. While conversation was central to polite male society, the "impolite conviviality" of the scene suggests that none of the participants are capable of conversing within this affectionate portrait of men who were Hogarth's friends.[69] Turning the conversation piece on its head, *A Midnight Modern Conversation* takes the conventions of the emerging genre defined by genteel politeness—which Hogarth helped to develop—and twists them into a satiric image. Hogarth repeatedly destabilized the conversation piece, painting the inversion of a society that believed it was "well and balanced," according to art historian Frédéric Ogée. Ogée argues that Hogarth "invites the beholder to a visual experience of limits," painting works like *A Midnight Modern*

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people in Surinam. Postma, "Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections," 307. See also: Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade*.

[69] David Solkin, *Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1993), 79.

Conversation as foil to pictures presenting the polite conversation of gentlemen, such as *Captain Lord George Graham in his Cabin*.[70] (fig. 2.13)

For Greenwood, too, the polite and impolite are intertwined in *Sea Captains*. Greenwood hints at the illegal trading in Paramaribo his sitters often appended to their privateering through his portrayal of their indecorous behavior, a wild celebration of their extreme success during the Seven Years' War. Greenwood closely adhered to the model of *A Midnight Modern Conversation* in his compositional and narrative devices.[71] The tavern setting resembles Hogarth's print, with similar paneling framing both interior scenes and analogous tall case clocks striking late evening hours as a plenitude of drinking equipment surrounds inebriated participants. London scenes set within metropolitan taverns served as models for the structure of Greenwood's picture and positioned *Sea Captains* as a valuable cosmopolitan commodity upon its return to Rhode Island. Created in the wealthy West Indies where current fashions often first surfaced in the colonies, the picture's compositional structure and visual sources also underscored the professional success and personal worldliness of the captains and privateers portrayed.

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[70] Frédéric Ogée, "The Flesh of Theory: The Erotics of Hogarth's Lines," in *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*, eds. Bernadette Fort and Angela Rosenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 71–72. Frédéric Ogée, "From text to image: William Hogarth and the emergence of a visual culture in eighteenth-century England," in *Hogarth: Representing nature's machines*, eds. David Bindman, Frédéric Ogée, and Peter Wagner (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 3–22. A more striking contrast of polite society inverted in Hogarth's work is *The Strode Family* as compared to the first painting of the tragic *Marriage A-la-Mode*, *The Marriage Settlement*. Hogarth's depiction of his subjects' boozy abandon in *A Midnight Modern Conversation* amused the subjects of his print and their companions, as illustrated by the quick use of the image to decorate punchbowls.

[71] Late night drinking scenes were not an uncommon subject for London artists by the 1730s. Artists like Joseph Highmore, influenced by seventeenth-century Dutch images, painted club pictures of professional men at various stages of the evening. See Joseph Highmore's *A Club of Gentlemen*, from about 1730, and Highmore's *Figures in a Tavern or Coffee House*, both at the Yale Center for British Art.

The activities of Jenckes, Wanton, Hopkins, and their peers were events that Greenwood criticized in text while living in Surinam, however. He recounted witnessing the drunken behavior of locals and visitors with some frequency on the streets of Paramaribo. After one encounter in October of 1757, the artist noted with contempt, "Holscher & Vander Gogh [were] up all night Drinking—saw 'em at 1 o'clock as I came from the watch. Dinker was very Drunk & told me that a very holy & Religious Dispute had kept 'em together all night & that was not yet settled—that is they were to Have another drinking match."[72] Greenwood's departures from Hogarth's model in *A Midnight Modern Conversation* allowed him to suggest his questions about the surrounding colonial culture. Hogarth's shallow picture plane forces the viewer of his print into the drunken scene and sullied room, where the urine from the overflowing chamber pot seeps across the foreground. The viewer participates in the excess. In contrast, Greenwood paints a panoramic picture plane, reflecting the excessive realities of life in 1750s Surinam in the mirror centrally hung on the rear wall of the tavern. He provides the viewer with a choice between escaping the composition through exterior door in the background at the right—admittedly made unappealing by the spewing artist—or falling deeper into the debauchery through the continued service at the left of the canvas.

While violence does not erupt between the enslaved laborers and the revelers in *Sea Captains*, its threat pervades the scene. The inescapable presence of the colony's enslaved population is prominent. While traces of slavery are almost entirely obscured in eighteenth-century British North American portraiture of this period, Greenwood

[72] Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2, 47.

includes four enslaved figures in two possible roles in *Sea Captains*. The barman and the server were likely enslaved by the tavern keeper for service labor, while the two additional figures who sleep on the floor may have been enslaved by two of the participants in the evening's events, tasked with accompanying their slaveholders as body men but not participating in the evening's entertainments. Although a more extensive representation of colonial slavery than is present in other canvas, Greenwood still painted an edited representation of slavery in Surinam. Surinam taverns were worked by a larger number of enslaved laborers, and according to contemporary accounts of the colony, the resting figures in the foreground would not have participated in drinking or sleeping in front of white visitors or Surinamers.[73] While the details were still shaped and crafted by Greenwood, it also documents recognizable realities of life in Surinam, a contrast to contemporaneous representations created in Massachusetts or Rhode Island.

Surinam's instability required Greenwood to attend closely to the surrounding slave society on a day-to-day basis. He arrived just as fighting between the colonial government, planters, and Maroons had subsided with a peace treaty signed by the colonial governor and the Maroon leaders in 1749. Although work by anthropologist and historian Richard Price indicates that attacks and conflict persisted throughout the 1750s

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[73] Steadman also indirectly addresses the likelihood that these figures are enslaved by the tavern and have themselves gotten drunk when describing his first interaction with his ultimate wife in "Surinam marriage," Joanna: "She put a bottle of Madeira wine, water, and some very fine fruit on the table, and explained in the best manner she was able, by gesticulation and broken accounts, that her *massera* with all the family were gone to his plantation to stay a few days upon business, and that she was left behind to receive an English captain whom she supposed to be me. I signified that I was Captain Stedman and then filled her a tumbler of wine, which she would not accept without the greatest persuasion, it being almost unprecedented in this country to see a Negro slave, either male or female, eat or drink in the presence of a European." Price and Price, *Steadman's Surinam*, 18.

while Greenwood resided in Surinam, the well-publicized peace treaty would have encouraged the artist's travel to the colony. While residing in Surinam, Greenwood found the violence against the enslaved population ever-present, writing with modulated feeling about places for punishing enslaved persons even as he sketched portraits of enslaved people early in his stay, none of which survive.[74] Greenwood's departure from the colony also coincided with—and was probably influenced by—instability and violence in Surinam's slave society. On February 22, 1757, about 250 enslaved people revolted at La Paix plantation on the Tempati Creek. This major rebellion saw rebels open fire on a military post and continue their insurrection, unchecked, until mid-1758. Many escaped slaves disappeared into Maroon communities, and violence continued intermittently until after Greenwood departed from the colony on April 17, 1758.[75]

Greenwood's aesthetic influences extend beyond Hogarth to the same seventeenth-century Dutch genre paintings of merry companies and tavern scenes that shaped *A Midnight Modern Conversation*. In Greenwood's memorandum book, two sketch studies appear between his technical descriptions of fireworks at Fort Amsterdam and his narrative description of Surinam. These drawings appear to be explorations of the pictorial space of *Sea Captains*, each suggesting one of the two light sources around which the final canvas is constructed. (fig. 2.14) The perspectival drawing at the top of the page fixes one point at the right of the study, possibly where the open door leads to a

[74] Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2, 13, 27, 29, 35, 109 are pages where these drawings are mentioned. As well as page numbers for accounts in the first memorandum book that no longer survives, 122–123.

[75] Wim S. M. Hoogbergen, *The Boni Maroon Wars in Suriname* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 26–29.

landing—and the artist stands vomiting—in the final canvas. From this point lines cascade down to a lower edge bounding the space. A second line stretches from the lower right corner of the top study, reaching into unstructured space, perhaps to the bar window, a second fixed light source for the composition. The study at the bottom of the page suggests the balcony's open door, sweeping into the tavern's interior. This attention to light and the construction of space within *Sea Captains* came from the influence of genre scenes by seventeenth-century Dutch artists that Greenwood familiarized himself with while residing in Surinam.

Greenwood collected works of seventeenth-century Dutch artists while residing in Surinam, amassing a diverse group of prints, drawings, and books on art and architecture. Among these volumes, which he valued at 361 guilders, were a "Potter Folio – No. 1 – Cont[aining] 172 Capital Drawings by Different Masters & Prints of Rembrants, Ostade, &c.," "a Fine Print of Ostade," and "an Addition of 46 prints to [the Potter Folio] – 6 of Ostade."[76] In his collection of twenty-six art and architecture books and over three hundred drawings and prints, Greenwood identifies only two artists by name—Rembrandt van Rijn and Adrian van Ostade. Prints after Rembrandt and Ostade are not surprising to find amid the eighteenth-century imports to Surinam from the Netherlands. Both artists grew popular in the Netherlands over the course of their careers in the seventeenth century. Eighteenth-century collectors regarded Ostade as highly as Rembrandt, eager to possess scenes of contented Dutch peasants who, even while

[76] Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2, 56–57. The "Potter Folio" is likely a "pott" folio, indicating the size of the volume.

drinking excessively and brawling among themselves, did not threaten the civility or stability of their refined neighbors.[77] As evidenced by Greenwood's collection, prints after these artists and other seventeenth-century Dutch painters circulated throughout the Dutch Atlantic, just as Hogarth's prints made their way around the British Empire.

In the 1640s and 1650s, Ostade painted scenes of figures drinking or brawling in packed taverns and inns, including *Carousing Peasants in a Tavern* from about 1635. (fig. 2.15) The humorous physical exchange between the sitters, the characteristics of the tavern, and the slight elevation and remove that the viewer is offered from the scene demonstrate Greenwood's close attention to Ostade's formal choices in creating *Sea Captains*. In his exploration of the play between light and dark, the tilted and elevated perspective of the scene, and the presentation of space, Greenwood embraces formal devices common in Dutch genre scenes. Hogarth's *Midnight Modern Conversation* was popular throughout the British empire by the 1750s—printed on ceramics, listed in British Caribbean inventories as hanging in homes, and advertised in newspapers as available for purchase.[78] In *Sea Captains*, Greenwood took Hogarth's image and integrated its broadly disseminated narrative devices and iconography with Dutch formal precedents available in Surinam through bilateral shipping with Amsterdam. Within

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[77] On the widespread consumption and stabilizing influence of genre scenes within the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic see: Seymour Slive, *Dutch Painting, 1600–1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) and Ronni Baer, et. al., *Class Distinctions: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer* (Boston: MFA Publications, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2015). On the importance of collecting art to display taste see: David Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, 432. Iain Pears, *The Discovery of Painting: The Growth of Interest in the Arts in England, 1680–1768* (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1988), 166–168. On collecting of Dutch art in the Netherlands, see Slive, 295–300.

[78] *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 1, 1755.

these intermixed influences Greenwood represented the culture of the colony, creating a canvas that facilitated an exchange of information about Surinam with Rhode Island.

In *Sea Captains*, Greenwood balanced depicting a commissioned scene of maritime success with a consideration of his colonial context. Building both into the structure and narrative of his canvas, he also pursued this unusual picture as a personal aesthetic experiment. To paint merchant-captains from his New England home, Greenwood interpreted the colonial culture in which he lived for that audience, employing English and Dutch visual influences. Because of the circulation that shaped the place where this canvas was created and its early travel, *Sea Captains* is a portrait of Atlantic mobility. The painting documented one colonial port city for presentation in another, visually informing the economic relationship between these ports.

Naturalist Networks, Insect Portraits: Surinam in London

For a Rhode Island-based audience, *Sea Captains* presented a layered commentary on contemporary relations between two colonies. By about 1757, when Greenwood was painting *Sea Captains*, he had resided in Surinam for four years. His constant close observation positioned him to be able to create a canvas that balanced his knowledge of the colony and his patrons' desires. Such a balance became necessary as Greenwood began painting portraits in the colony after his arrival in 1752. Painting for Dutch and English patrons who were planters, merchants, and privateers, Greenwood became a colonial agent dependent on observation of and engagement with his surroundings. His surviving Surinam memorandum book—about one hundred and fifty

pages of his descriptions of the colony, notes, and drawings—suggests how he positioned himself as a cultural intermediary, as much by applying his representational skills to natural history projects in the colony as to painting portraits.

Both naturalists and portraitists documented the British Empire's Atlantic World. Painter and naturalist Charles Willson Peale embodied the connections between art and science in early America. Peale's scientific pursuits included not only natural history but also prolific work as an inventor, even as he painted hundreds of portraits of important early Americans. These endeavors came together in the Long Gallery of his Philadelphia museum, among the first in the United States.[79] In the museum, portraits of heroes from the American Revolution created a two-tiered frieze around two of the three gallery walls represented in *The Long Room* by Charles Willson Peale and Titian Ramsay Peale. (fig. 2.16) These portraits served Peale's ambition for the museum to demonstrate the connections between human society and the natural world—Peale's "world in miniature"—by crowning the displays of his natural history collection, the largest in the early American republic.[80] As art historian Therese O'Malley has written, "Peale's museum made visible his perception that there was an order of things encompassing not

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[79] Peale operated his museum in the Philadelphia State House from 1802 to 1827.

[80] Robert McCracken Peck, "Illustrating Nature: Institutional Support for Art and Science in Philadelphia, 1770–1830," in *Knowing Nature: Art and Science in Philadelphia, 1740–1840*, ed. Amy R. W. Meyers, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 217–219; Therese O'Malley, "Cultivated Lives, Cultivated Spaces: The Scientific Garden in Philadelphia, 1740–1840," in *Knowing Nature: Art and Science in Philadelphia, 1740–1840*, ed. Amy R. W. Meyers, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 28. Even as an established artist, Peale proposed preserving the bodies of patriots for public display through taxidermy. See "My Design in Forming This Museum," broadside, 1792, quoted in *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, eds. Lillian B. Miller, Sidney Hart, and David C. Ward, vol. 2, pt. 1 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 15.

only the natural world but also the structure of human society."[81] In his self-portrait, *The Artist in His Museum*, Peale positioned himself as a key figure for understanding the order of things. (fig. 2.17) Picturing himself as gatekeeper and showman, he lifts the curtain for the viewer. In painting the revealed museum space, he selectively drew together portraiture and natural history illustration as the two distinct visual forms discernable on the museum's walls.

Fourteen years older than Peale, Greenwood's drawing together of art and science in his simultaneous pursuits of portraiture and natural history representation connected the artist to the network of another mobile group—naturalists. The work of natural historians required moving through space in order to participate in fieldwork and specimen hunting.[82] Arriving in a colony that had long preoccupied naturalists and that was rich with natural treasures, Greenwood exploited the knowledge about picturing empire and circulating ideas cultivated by the discipline. In developing relationships with traveling scientists, it is likely that Greenwood came to see the systemic parallels between his work as a portraitist and the work of naturalists around him. Both portrait painters and *botanistes voyageurs* were motivated by economic and imperial interests, representing, naming, and cataloguing their surroundings in order to extend the reach of empire, allowing nations to stake greater claim over a colony.[83] It was through his

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[81] O'Malley, "Cultivated Lives, Cultivated Spaces," 38.

[82] O'Malley, "Cultivated Lives, Cultivated Spaces," 42.

[83] O'Malley, "Cultivated Lives, Cultivated Spaces," 43. On *botanistes voyageurs* see Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 25–30.

specimen collection and portraits of insects that Greenwood transported information about Surinam to London and conveyed the nature of the colony to metropolitan Britons.

Greenwood reported painting 113 portraits, or about twenty-three per year, during his six-year stay from 1752 to 1758.[84] Greenwood appears to have not only painted portraits but also sold pictures and frames while residing in Paramaribo, but his list of portraits is the only steady source of income he notes in his memorandum book. In total Greenwood earned 8025 Holland guilders.[85] The majority of the canvases he painted were quarter, Kit Kat, half, or whole length representations of merchant-captains or planters living near or passing through the city of Paramaribo.[86] These canvases were not painted in a continuous stream of work or on a single price scale. Greenwood's earliest Surinam portrait, a whole length of "C. Macknich" (possibly Macknies) for two hundred gilders, was among the most expensive canvases commissioned from the artist during his residence. The portraits he painted early in his time in the colony were similarly priced and equally opulent in scale, representing couples and their children primarily in half and whole length formats. A notable drop in his prices occurs at a midpoint in the list, when Greenwood charged "Miss V: Coper" not two hundred gilders for a whole length portrait but 140. Although Greenwood painted almost two thirds of his total Surinam canvases after this picture, these later canvases are rarely on the scale of his earlier portraits or

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[84] "An Acct of the Pictures I painted at Surranam—with the Prices—Holl Gilders," Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2, 174–175.

[85] H. P. R., "Capt. William Baillie, 17th Dragoons and John Greenwood, of Boston," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 41: 244 (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1943), 29.

[86] H. P. R., "Capt. William Baillie," 29.

painted for similar amounts. The precipitous drop in the prices he was charging for portraits never recovered before his departure from the colony for Amsterdam in 1758.

Throughout Greenwood's text, his practice as a portraitist receives no direct attention beyond a list of portraits he painted and their prices. His primary occupation is present only in infrequently scrawled asides like that on the inside cover of the volume, specifying three sizes for six frames the artist supplied to one resident of the colony.[87] Just one among many clues about the scale of Greenwood's business and social connections while in the colony, this note indicates the sale of six frames to Tarton, a Surinam planter holding 600 acres on a tributary off of Para Creek.[88] (fig. 2.18) Tarton's plantation was among the eighty-eight to which Greenwood traveled, but while the artist visited Tarton, sold him frames, and may have even provided the works to fill those frames, his memorandum book never indicates that he painted Tarton's portrait. One visit to Tarton instead yielded a description and drawing of the type of valuable information about the unfamiliar, extreme natural world of the colony which the artist sought in his capacity as naturalist. Of the large cocoa tree in Tarton's gardens, Greenwood documented a trunk, "60 feet high & is at the bottom or root nigh the same; the diameter above the spurs that shoot out is at least 18 feet. …There is a rem'nt of another nigh as large just by it."[89] (fig. 2.19) A crop produced for export in the colony,

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[87] "6 frames – / 4-4 foot g square – / 2-4 do. – 11 – long / 4 – 10 Broad – / Turton"

[88] Tarton's plantation was Tartona on the Para Creek. (See Fig. 2.22)

[89] Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2, 22. This type of sketch is regularly interspersed within his surviving memorandum book, and was even more common in his first book filled in Surinam. In his first memorandum book, which is now lost, Greenwood primarily drew his initial encounters in the colony. These drawings represented "Innoculation of Negroes," "Negro fest and dance," "Negro friendship,"

mature cocoa trees typically grew to a maximum height of twenty-five feet. Greenwood skewed perspective to emphasize the massiveness of Tarton's cocoa tree—the roots emerge above the ground at the same height of what may be a nearby sapling but is drawn as a grown tree. The foregrounded trunk similarly dwarfs the background landscape, but appears proportional to the climbing vines that encircle it and the birds nesting in its jagged top. If these vines and birds were proportionally represented against a sixty-foot trunk, their foot-long leaves and massive wingspans would demand attention within the landscape. Instead attention is fixed on the specimen of the cocoa tree.

Greenwood's endeavors as an amateur naturalist while working as a portraitist reveal the parallels between portrait painting and documenting the natural world in the colonies. It was through his work as an illustrator of natural history—a painter of portraits of insects, animals, and plants—that Greenwood provided new information to Britons about the Dutch colony. The activities of portraitists and naturalists both shaped and were shaped by the British Atlantic, but only the place of natural history within empire has been a sustained focus of scholarly attention. The trade of goods and transfer of specimens between Britain and the American colonies are central within this body of literature.[90] Plants were indispensible to empire—sugar, coffee, indigo, rice, and tobacco, among others—providing a material anchor for Atlantic plantation economies.

"Surinam Indians," "Torpedo, or electric-eel," "Sun bird," "Tuquat," "King of the Wawows or Crows," "Anamcoo Duck," Head of a Negro," "Butterfly, Birds & Beast," "Sinking fish," "Flying fish," "Dolphin," "Caterpillar," "Aelababah," "A Fruit," and "A Sea-Cow."

[90] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire*. Susan Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity: Cultures of Natural History in the Colonial British Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005). Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

Modern systems of classification for the natural world developed simultaneously with these economies, giving rise to global natural history networks. Naturalists collected, processed, packaged, and shipped specimens, relying on a network of global exchange to transport these objects for study, transplant, and display. Furthermore, as art historian Daniela Bleichmar has demonstrated for the Spanish Indies, visual culture was integral to the efforts of naturalists.[91]

Greenwood's interest in natural history positioned the artist to participate in a well-developed network of natural historians working in Surinam. An alliance with natural historians benefited Greenwood by connecting him with a group that relied on Atlantic travel. Their work depended on movement through space, and they would have provided Greenwood with a resource for facilitating the mechanics of travel, both for himself and for his paintings.[92] Greenwood was a practical choice as an ally for eighteenth-century Europeans documenting the natural world. He was already traveling seeking his own commissions while relying on specialized skills his profession required him to develop prior to arriving in the colony. Although not attached to a particular botanist, Greenwood filled the role historian Londa Schiebinger identifies as "voyaging botanical assistant." He "netted fine specimens, drew, recorded, and generally contributed to the massive task of cataloguing nature's bounty," even as he catalogued

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[91] Daniela Bleichmar, *Visible Empire: Botanical Expeditions and Visual Culture in the Hispanic Enlightenment*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 3–16.

[92] Dorinda Outram, "New Spaces of Natural History," in *Cultures of Natural History*, eds. Nicholas Jardine, James Secord, and Emma Spary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 255.

naturalists working in the colony in his portraits, painting Dutch physician Philippe Fermin and his wife.[93]

Documentation was the primary activity for natural historians, and their aspiration to describe the natural world was achieved in part through drawings of living specimens. English artist and naturalist Mark Catesby described these drawings as being among naturalists' most useful tools: "Illuminating Natural History is so particularly Essential to the perfect understanding of it, that I may aver a clearer Idea may be conceived from the figures of Animals and Plants in their proper Colors, than from the most exact Description without them."[94] Shortly after he landed at Paramaribo in 1752, Greenwood began painting specimens even as he concentrated his energies primarily on producing portraits. In both bodies of work he relied on careful observation, representing his subjects by attending to detail while positioning them within local and imperial visual cultures. An untitled portrait of a *Megasoma actaeon* rhinoceros beetle attends closely to the beetle's features. (fig. 2.20) Its variegated exoskeleton is delicately characterized by dark washes complimented by the suggestion of a brown body beneath and legs covered in precisely pictured hair. The beetle lumbers across the page at life size, its massive scale underscored by the shadow extending beneath its body.

The first image in a book of thirty bound portraits of insects, Greenwood's rhinoceros beetle employs conventions of representing insects developed in the sixteenth

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[93] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire*, 46. Greenwood Memorandum Book No. 2, 174–175.

[94] Mark Catesby, *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands*, 2 vols. (London, 1731–1743), I: xi–xii; as quoted in O'Malley, "Cultivated Lives, Cultivated Spaces," 43–44.

and seventeenth centuries, particularly artists' visual scrutiny through images emphasizing minute detail. In its obsessive attention to visual specificity, Greenwood's beetle evokes not the scientific linearity of contemporary Linnaean representations of plants and animals emerging in the work of followers of Swedish botanist, zoologist, and physicist Carl Linnaeus, but Albrecht Dürer's solitary stag beetle from 1505.[95] (fig 2.21) Dürer probably created his precise, jewel-like image from memory, elevating a creature among the lowest in nature to the place of art.[96] His drawing of the rhinoceros beetle also recalls the work of Dutch artist and traveler Maria Sibylla Merian's images of the beetles of Surinam in her 1705 book, *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium*.[97] (fig 2.22) Merian's giant beetles perch delicately on the leaves of a Mexican prickly poppy and participate in an imagined ecosystem. Traveling to Surinam with her daughter Dorothea Maria in 1699, Merian aspired to represent her specimens within assemblages of their contextual settings in the manner of the collections, cabinets, and museums of Amsterdam.[98] Art historian Janice Neri argued that Merian's "ability to collect and preserve nature successfully was dependent on a combination of firsthand observation

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[95] In 1735, Carl Linnaeus published his *Systema Naturae*, which organized the natural world into taxonomies. The style of representation he espoused can be seen in the work of natural historians working slightly after Greenwood, including William Bartram and Benjamin Smith Barton. See Sue Ann Prince, ed., *Stuffing Birds, Pressing Plants, Shaping Knowledge: Natural History in North America, 1730–1860*, (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2003).

[96] Janice Neri, *The Insect and the Image: Visualizing Nature in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1700* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), xi–xiii.

[97] Maria Sibylla Merian, *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium*, ed. Katharina Schmidt-Loske (Cologne, Germany: Taschen, 2009; first published 1705), 116–117. Ella Reitsma, *Maria Sibylla Merian & Daughters: Women of Art and Science* (Zwolle, The Netherlands: Waanders, 2008), 174–175.

[98] Neri, *The Insect and the Image*, 160–161.

and mastering of a set of specialized skills" prior to her departure for the colony.[99] Although Greenwood may have become familiar with Merian's earlier work in the colony while residing in Surinam, he lacked the specialized skills and training in contextualization Merian received as a naturalist in the late seventeenth-century Netherlands. Without these specialized skills, in his work as a naturalist, Greenwood's advantage was firsthand observation—a skill honed while painting portraits. Greenwood's beetles, butterflies, and grasshoppers stand alone on the white paper, their only context being a box that the artist drew on four sides between the specimen and the edges of the page.

Greenwood's representation relies on the conventions employed by Dürer more so than those of Merian, capturing the physical qualities of his subject in precisely applied translucent washes. In this portrait of a South American beetle, Greenwood demonstrates his investment in observation, as opposed to taxonomy, as a method for ordering his world. This meticulous method of representing insects was similar to the process of painting portraits in eighteenth-century Britain. Like sixteenth and seventeenth-century naturalists, eighteenth-century British portraitists precisely painted sitters' faces in order to record their character. These sitters often found themselves in broadly brushed, generic settings, however, just as Greenwood's insects walked through voids of paper or sat on imagined plants. While Linnean images dissected plants and insects in linear diagrams with labeled parts, Greenwood distilled the essence of the rhinocerous beetle, providing a quickly constructed impression of the insect—and colony—that relied on

[99] Neri, *The Insect and the Image*, 166.

conventions of representation from the history of art, just as he had while painting *Sea Captains*.

With his natural history portraits, Greenwood helped construct the metropole's understanding of the British American colonies, and particularly, the West Indies. In 1764, Greenwood exhibited his first painting in London, *A View of Boston in New England*, helping to shape visual awareness of New England through an image of his birthplace.[100] Five years later, on September 30, 1769, Dr. Matthew Maty reported to the Trustees of the British Museum that he believed purchases should be made, "in order to supply the deficiencies in the department of Natural History."[101] Greenwood sold his personal specimen collection amassed in Surinam to the British Museum. Whether through paintings or specimens, Greenwood's work informed metropolitan Britons' comprehension of parts of the world beyond their spheres and the country's shores.

Maty was charged with the department of Natural and Artificial Productions at the museum. He sought to expand the collection of natural history at a moment when artifacts from the far-flung corners of the globe became one material method of cataloguing the scope of empire and comparing the bounty of various territories. Maty purchased specimens from a number of naturalists and auctions, seeking to improve a

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[100] This was only one year after Benjamin West, the prototypical American artist in London, arrived in August of 1763. He first exhibited in the city in the same Society of Artists exhibition, displaying *Cymon and Iphigenia*, which he painted while living in Rome between 1760 and 1763.

[101] December 2, 1769, General Meeting, Vol. III, 30 June 1764–26 Sept 1776, Trustees' Minutes, British Museum. (Hereafter General Meeting, Trustees' Minutes, British Museum) None of Greenwood's physical specimens survive in the collections of the British Museum, but a book of images of insects is still held by the institution. This book of illustrations was not part of the group Maty purchased, but instead came to the museum through the collection of naturalist Sir Joseph Banks.

collection that was, "particularly defective in that part which consists of dried Birds and other land Animals, both from their scantiness & bad preservation."[102] In pursuing this effort, Maty brought Greenwood's work from Surinam into the collection.

Conclusion

In a sketchbook filled in the summer of 1771, Greenwood captured the likeness of a man with a few curved strokes of graphite and firm hatching. (fig. 2.23) In this drawing, the profile of the man grows from the sails of a quickly drawn Dutch sloop. Man and boat become a single form in this sketch, with the man facing the same direction as the boat. Both are poised—the man's lips part as if to begin speaking, while the sloop's sail swings into position, its leeboard stowed. In these quick lines drawn as he himself traveled through Holland and France, Greenwood visually couples portraiture and maritime travel.[103] Created shortly after he sold his collection of specimens from Surinam to the British Museum, the sketch echoed the portraits Greenwood painted early in his career in Boston. While in his portrait of Benjamin Pickman the merchant's occupation was characterized by the imagined harbor scene dominating the painting's

[102] February 24, 1769, General Meeting, Trustees' Minutes, British Museum. The materials that the museum trustees specified not wanting to accession indicate the extent of Greenwood's collection. Maty was to convey to Greenwood his option to, "withdraw that part consisting of the Insects, Serpents, & other Animals in Spirits, which the Museum does not want." Greenwood's dried birds and land animals held greater interest than those in spirits, fitting within the museum's evolving guidelines for preservation methods for natural history specimens.

[103] There is a note on the dating of this sketchbook in Memorandum Book No. 2, 121 in, "Memoranda by John Greenwood, III, of Moteaka, New Zealand." "There is, however, one MS book still extant in the hands of his descendants in New Zealand, consisting of Notes, with numerous artistic sketches, made during a tour, through the summer of 1771, in Holland & France, on behalf of John Stuart, Earl of Bute."

background, by the 1771 sketch, the portrait and its maritime context blurred into a single idea. (fig. 2.24) Greenwood's transatlantic career of the previous two decades emerged in his blended sketch of portrait and ship.

The reach of Greenwood's transatlanticism is visible in a contemporaneous letter he wrote to John Singleton Copley in 1770. The letter requests that Copley send the portrait of his mother, but specifies which captain with whom Copley was to send the picture for its safe transport. Greenwood's Atlantic was a perilous, physical place with which he remained engaged even after he arrived in London. He saw London exhibitions through the lens of Boston, demonstrating his bridging of the oceanic distance between these places: "we have several Exhibitions coming on, of old and new pictures, Prints, Drawings, etc., which form Mr Boydels Collection, so that for six weeks to come, you woud hear of nothing but the Virtu—just as children in Boston for a fortnight before the 'Lection, prate of nothing else."[104] Greenwood's transatlantic perspective continued to shape his experience of empire even after he had settled in London. Through painting portraits, Greenwood contributed to the project of documenting, indexing, and disseminating knowledge about colonial curiosities from the colonial West Indies both throughout empire and in the center. By circulating his objects, Greenwood came to witness the transformation of objects' meanings and contexts as they moved within this space. Through this process he became an alert Atlantic intermediary, attuned to the movement of goods, people, and ideas around the metropolitan center that visually shaped and defined empire.

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[104] John Greenwood to Copley, March 23, 1770, *Copley-Pelham Papers*, 82.

2.1 John Greenwood, *Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam*, oil on bed ticking, ca. 1757, St. Louis Art Museum.

2.2 John Greenwood, *The Greenwood-Lee Family*, oil on canvas, ca. 1747, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

2.3 John Smibert, *The Bermuda Group (Dean Berkeley and his Entourage)*, oil on canvas, 1728, reworked 1739, Yale University Art Gallery.

2.4 John Smibert, *Study for the Bermuda Group*, oil on canvas, ca. 1727, National Gallery of Ireland.

2.5 Robert Feke, *Isaac Royall and Family*, oil on canvas, 1741, Historical & Special Collections, Harvard Law School Library.

2.6 Best Room, renovated 1737–1742, Royall House & Slave Quarters, Medford, Massachusetts.

2.7 John Greenwood, *Elizabeth Fulford Welshman (Mrs. William Welshman)*, oil on canvas, 1749, National Gallery of Art.

2.8 John Singleton Copley, *Bethia Torrey Mann (Mrs. Joseph Mann)*, oil on canvas, 1753, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

2.9 Isaac Beckett after William Wissing, *Her Highness the Princess Ann*, mezzotint, ca. 1683–1702, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library.

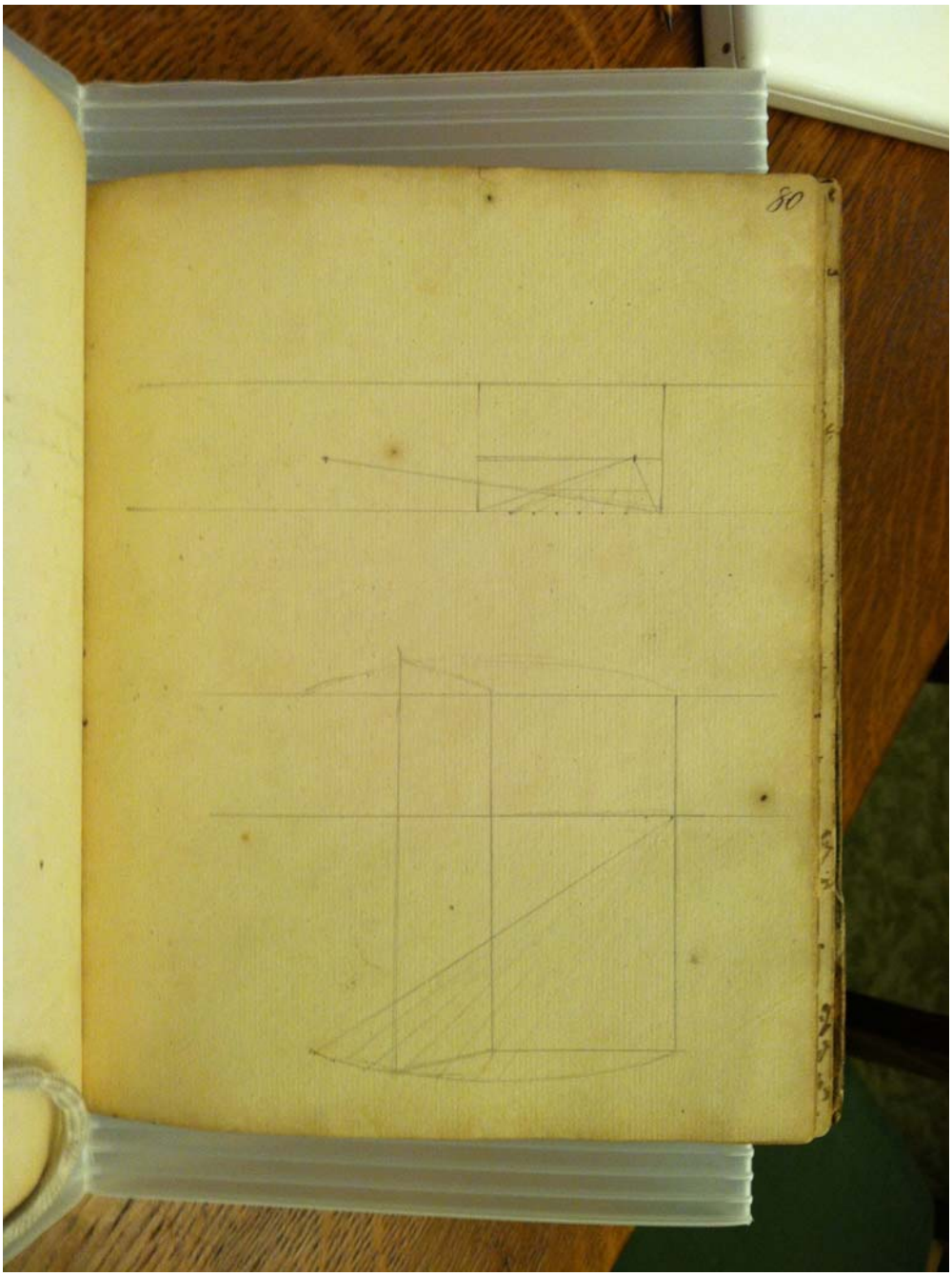
2.10 John Singleton Copley, *Mrs. Humphrey Devereux*, oil on canvas, 1771, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa.

2.11 Engraved by J. H. Hotinger after Johan Antonie Kaldenbach, *Gezigt van Paramaribo in de Colonie van Surinamen, verbeeldende het gedeelte langs de Rivier en het Plein*, engraving, ca. 1770–1818, Rijksmuseum.

2.12 William Hogarth, *A Midnight Modern Conversation*, engraving, 1733, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

2.13 William Hogarth, *Captain Lord George Graham in his Cabin*, oil on canvas, 1742–1744, National Maritime Museum, Caird Collection.

2.14 John Greenwood, Untitled drawing, graphite on paper, undated. As drawn in John Greenwood, Memorandum Book No. 2, page 80, New-York Historical Society.



2.15 Adriaen van Ostade, *Carousing Peasants in a Tavern*, oil on oak panel, ca. 1635, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

2.16 Charles Willson Peale and Titian Ramsay Peale, *The Long Room, Interior of Front Room in Peale's Museum*, watercolor over graphite on paper, 1822, The Detroit Institute of Arts.

2.17 Charles Willson Peale, *The Artist in His Museum*, oil on canvas, 1822, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

2.18 Detail of Henderick de Leth, publisher, *Algemeene Kaart van de Colonie of Provintie van Suriname, met de rivieren, districken, ontdekkingen door Militaire Togten, en de Grootte der gemeeten Plantagien*, 1750, Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library.

Turton's plantation, Tortona, is shown off of the Para Creek. J. Sherping's plantation, Rusten Lust, is off of the Suriname River. Paramaribo is in red, across the Suriname River.

2.19 John Greenwood, Sketch of a large cocoa-tree, ink on paper, 1755. As drawn in John Greenwood, Memorandum Book No. 2, page 22, New-York Historical Society.

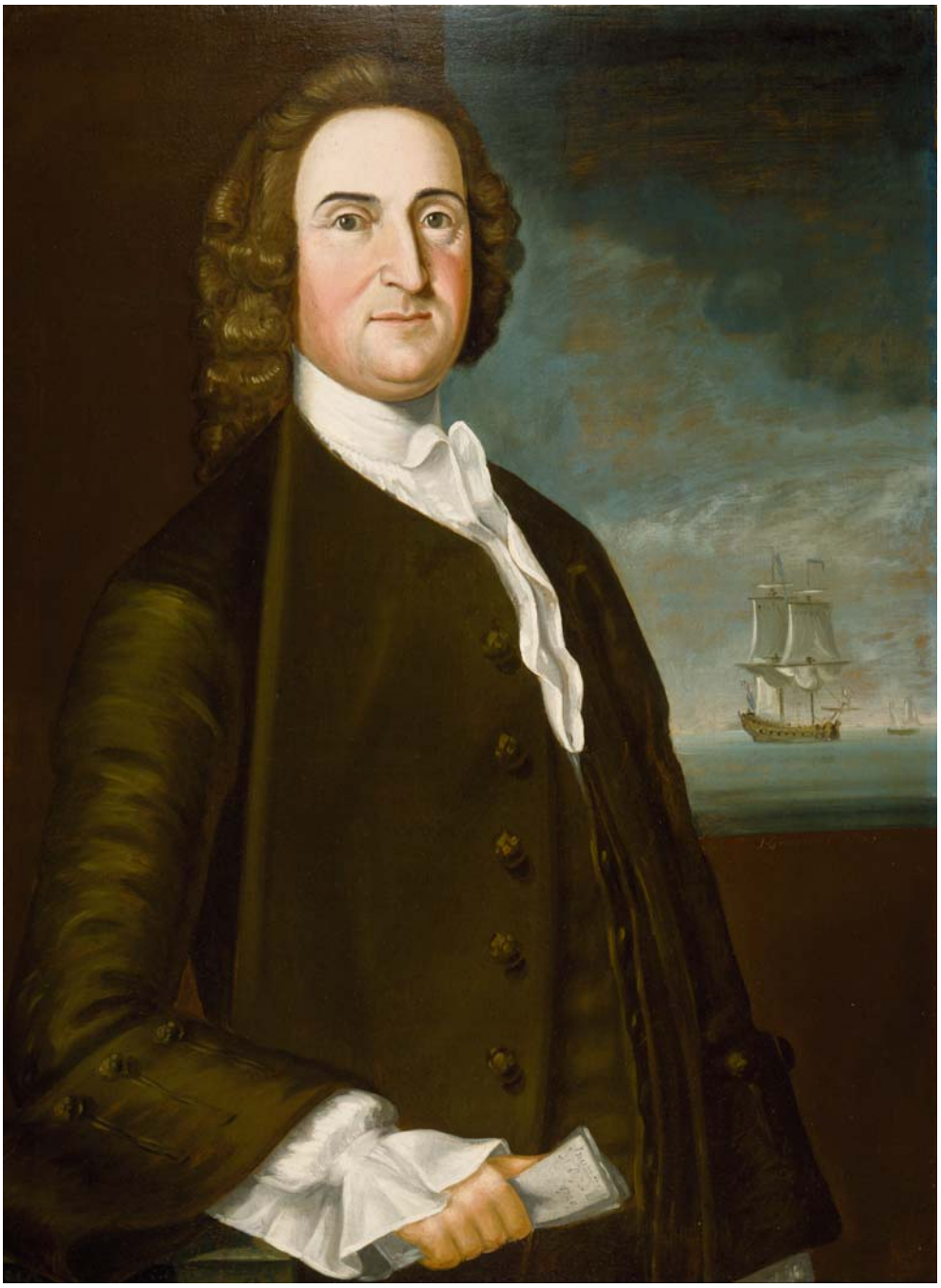
2.20 John Greenwood, Untitled drawing (*Megasoma actaeon* rhinoceros beetle), watercolor and opaque watercolor on paper, ca. 1752–1758, The British Museum.

2.21 Albrecht Dürer, *Stag Beetle*, watercolor and gouache on paper, 1505, The J. Paul Getty Museum.

2.22 Maria Sibylla Merian, Plate 24, as published in *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (Amsterdam, 1705).

2.23 John Greenwood, untitled drawing, page 98, graphite on paper, 1771, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

2.24 John Greenwood, *Benjamin Pickman*, oil on canvas, 1749, Peabody Essex Museum.



Chapter 3

A Jamaican Studio: Philip Wickstead and the Imperial Ideal

In paintings like *Benjamin and Mary Pusey*, from about 1774, Philip Wickstead constructed an image of English domesticity set in a Caribbean colony. (fig. 3.1) While Englishness is communicated by the elements derived from classical architecture that frame the scene, the imperial context of the group portrait is foregrounded by the globe displaying the Atlantic Ocean, West Indies, and Americas. This conversation piece deployed the contemporary metropolitan conventions for the genre—in which Wickstead was trained in London—to affirm the civility and demographic stability of white Jamaican society both on the island and throughout the British Atlantic World. Philip Wickstead produced portraits in the colony of Jamaica during his time on the island from about 1774 to 1781 after having trained and worked in London and Rome. As an artist trained in the metropole and on a Grand Tour, Wickstead arrived in Jamaica a proficient portraitist who was current on British art theory and practice, connected in the London art world, and prepared to create images of the colony that would return to the Mother Country to inform British opinion. Instead of visiting the colony, producing a series of canvases, and quickly returning to the metropole, however, Wickstead settled near his patron's sugar plantations in Westmoreland Parish. There he became a member of the local population even as he continued circulating his images for a transatlantic audience, exhibiting canvases in London at the Society of Artists' annual exhibitions. As a member of both colonial Jamaica's white society and a transatlantic community of artists,

Wickstead produced portraits of Jamaican planters that countered popular empire-wide assumptions about the West Indian colonies while simultaneously affirming white Jamaicans' ambitions for their society.

Jamaica's white population was one of the most insecure in the British Atlantic World because of the demographics of the island's slave society. Wickstead's portraits provided a nervous white Jamaican population the opportunity to represent their ideal island society. Even as wealthy white Jamaicans pursued local luxury and extravagance, they simultaneously sought to develop an increasingly English society through settlement, population growth, and improvement of the landscape. While they worked to establish a civilized English society in the tropics, they constantly fought the creolizing influences of the tropical colonial environment and the dominant population of enslaved Africans.[1] As resident Jamaicans heard conflicting accounts regarding the potential for civility in the face of creolization in the tropical colonies, they published rebuttals in London defending the colony's environment, slave system, and society including Edward Long's *The History of Jamaica* (1774), William Beckford's *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica* (1790), and Bryan Edwards' *History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (1793).[2] Wickstead created his conversation pieces as

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[1] Louis Nelson, *Architecture and Empire in Jamaica* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 133. Nelson defines creolization in Jamaica as black and white cultural practices becoming more similar over time, with the lines between wealthy whites, middling colonists, free blacks, and the enslaved blurring. Nelson locates the commingling of cultural influences in Jamaican residential architecture, and here these cultural shifts are found in the visual arts of the colony.

[2] William Beckford, *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica*, 2 vols. (London: T. and J. Egerton, 1790). Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 3 vols. (London: T. Lowndes, 1774). Bryan Edwards, *The History Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (London: B. Crosby, 1798).

a visual counterpart to these treatises, enabling white Jamaicans to represent their society both to one another on the island and to imperial and metropolitan audiences.

Wickstead's experience in imperial, metropolitan, and colonial contexts equipped him to paint portraits that communicated different messages to each of these audiences. The artist's unexamined body of portraits reveals the idealized society constructed and promoted by the planters commissioning his works. These portraits were commissioned to depict white Jamaicans' idealized constructions of self, existing within their idealized island society. They functioned to reinforce these ideals locally, hanging throughout Westmoreland and the island, but they also served as overt statements about Jamaican planters and society when they were displayed in a London exhibition or returned to Britain with a member of the island's transient elite population.

Wickstead's race and his occupation positioned him to represent planters' desires for a cultured, established, and naturally increasing white Jamaican society. Particularly in an area like Westmoreland, where the proportion of enslaved Africans to free whites was as high as fifteen to one, wealthy and poorer classes of whites were united by their race. This unification afforded Wickstead many opportunities to socialize with prospective wealthy patrons beyond William Beckford, the planter with whom he traveled to the island. This blurring of class boundaries in eighteenth-century white Jamaica was a contrast to eighteenth-century England, where the primary divisions were class based. The softening of boundaries between white people that resulted made Jamaica a profitable place to pursue portrait painting.

In addition to the proportion of white to black residents and the relative egalitarianism among white Jamaicans, establishing a studio in Westmoreland offered Wickstead access to the richest parish on the island in the late eighteenth century. The parish was not open for development until after 1739, and was regarded as a rural frontier.[3] With fertile land that had yet to be exploited, cultivation of the parish and its population boomed between 1739 and 1780, with annual sugar production increasing from 5,450 hogsheads in 1739 to 8,000 hogsheads in 1768 and the population (free and enslaved) increasing by 237 percent. Westmoreland estates were, on average, valued forty-two percent higher than estates on the island as a whole.[4] If portraitists set out to travel in part in search of patrons, Westmoreland was a logical destination as it offered the richest population on the richest island in the late eighteenth-century British Atlantic empire.

Locating Wickstead

Philip Wickstead is an artist about whom little is known. He was likely born in London in about 1746, and first emerges in the record in 1763, when he was awarded fourth prize by the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts for artists under the age of

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[3] Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 6, 17–18, 23–24.

[4] Ibid. 23–24. Despite the prosperity of Westmoreland in the late eighteenth century, primary sources from and secondary sources on the parish are few. Thistlewood's diary remains the authority, and is the subject of Burnard's book as well as David Hall, *In Miserable Slavery: Thomas Thistlewood in Jamaica, 1750–86* (Barbados: The University of the West Indies Press, 1989). The only other primary source pertaining to the island in this period is the Ricketts and Jervis Papers, British Library. Although Wickstead paints George Poyntz Ricketts and his wife, there is no mention of the painter in these papers.

twenty.[5] Perhaps this contest led to his next post as an assistant in Johan Zoffany's painting studio on Portugal Row in London.[6] A founding member of the Royal Academy of the Arts in 1768, Zoffany was the most popular conversation piece painter in London during the 1760s and 1770s. Zoffany made regular payments of ten to twelve guineas to Wickstead and six other men from March 1766 to 1768.[7] Two years after entering Zoffany's studio, Wickstead traveled to Rome and established a successful portrait practice among British travelers with the assistance of antiquarian and Old Master art dealer James Byres. Zoffany knew Byres while he completed his Grand Tour travels, when both painted in Giovanni Battista Piranesi's circle during the 1750s. He may have sent Wickstead to Rome as a method of maintaining his connections in the city.[8] By Wickstead's arrival around 1768, Byres had established a group of artists and antiquarians within which Wickstead circled, socializing and securing clients. [9]

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[5] *A Register of the Premiums and Bounties given by the Society Instituted at London for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce* (London: James Phillips, 1778). Royal Society of the Arts Archive, PR.GE/112/12/225. The prize was for a drawing "of a human figure from models, busts, or basso relievo." He entered this category again in both 1764 and 1765, placing first and third, respectively.

[6] Edward Edwards, *Anecdotes of Painters who have Resided or Been Born in England; With Critical Remarks on their Production* (London: Luke Hanford & Sons, 1808), 177. Because Wickstead won a premium designated for artists under the age of twenty from the Society of the Arts in 1765, he was born during or after 1746.

[7] Penelope Treadwell, *Johan Zoffany: Artist and Adventurer* (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2009), 186. The other studio assistants identified by Treadwell are W. Sipurtine, William Long, J. Wyboro, Francis Wybrow, W. Albert, and John Twigg. See also: Martin Postle, ed., *Johan Zoffany, RA: Society Observed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

[8] Treadwell, 186–187, 219–296. Zoffany returned to Italy from 1772 to 1779 to travel and paint in the country.

[9] Wickstead's only known canvas from his time in Rome is *Baiocco the Dwarf*, painted in about 1772, and now in the collection of Burton Constable.

Wickstead was briefly Zoffany's only protégé working in Rome; in 1773, however, Hugh Barron made his way to the city and challenged Wickstead's dominance within Byres circle. Wickstead and Barron were not strangers. Prior to working in the studios of Joshua Reynolds and then Zoffany, Barron competed in the Society of the Arts drawing contests, beating Wickstead in his final effort in 1765. In Rome the rivalry continued—tourist J. T. Smith recounted for his father:

> Little Wickstead has had most of the portraits to paint last season, owing to the endeavours of Messrs. Norton and Byres to carry ever gentleman they could get hold of to see him; but Barron arriving here at the beginning of the season, and having great merit in the portrait way, and a good correspondence with the gentlemen, got so many portraits to paint, as proved no small mortification to the aforesaid gentleman as well as his helpers.[10]

His clientele split, Wickstead appears to have returned to London by 1774. Either in Rome or after having returned to London, Wickstead formulated a plan to travel and shared it with Henry Fuseli, a friend of his also painting in Byres' circle.

Fuseli then wrote to a supporter of his in London, Scottish banker Thomas Coutts, introducing, "my friend Wicksteed who is going to the East Indies."[11] A slip of the pen uniting the West and East Indies aside, Fuseli's missive to Coutts as well as Byers' support in Rome establishes Wickstead as a node within a network of artists and patrons emanating from London. While endorsing Wickstead as "an excellent painter and a

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[10] John Thomas Smith, *Nollekens and his Times* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928; first published 1829), 122–123.

[11] Fuseli to Thomas Coutts, June 31, 1774. I thank David Weinglass for drawing Fuseli's association with Wickstead and this letter to my attention. Fuseli was supported by both Englishmen traveling as tourists in Rome and figures like Coutts who had commissioned paintings from him in order to support his studies in Rome. Martin Myrone, *Bodybuilding: Reforming Masculinities in British Art, 1750–1810* (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2006), 345 n. 36.

better Man," Fuseli encouraged Coutts to connect his friend to possible patrons in part by sharing that Wickstead had already cultivated supporters: "if it be in Your power to recommend him or serve him with some of Your India acquaintances, *He* goes upon the Encouragement of some of the first People in that department and especially Mr. Sage's who Lately went out as one of the Judges I think."[12] In order to sponsor his transatlantic travel, Wickstead depended on the security of a group of eager patrons, and his association with both artists and collectors he met in Rome enabled his West Indian journey.

The primary patron drawing Wickstead to the West Indies also likely met the portraitist while he worked in Byres' circle. William Beckford of Somerley, the historian of Jamaica, had hired another artist and acquaintance of Wickstead's who had successes in the Society of Arts competitions, landscape painter George Robertson.[13] It is possible that Robertson introduced Wickstead to Beckford when all three were in Italy. The island-born son of wealthy Jamaican planter Richard Beckford and Elizabeth Hay Beckford, William Beckford traveled between Europe and Jamaica during his lifetime. Beckford was among the wealthiest members of Jamaica's plantocracy, descended from Peter Beckford, governor of the island in 1702, who was said to be, "in possession of the

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[12] Fuseli to Thomas Coutts, June 31, 1774. Emphasis in the original.

[13] Robertson was awarded prizes by the Society of Arts in 1760 and 1761. Beckford of Somerley visited St. Peters as part of a group of Grand Tourists that included Fuseli and Byres in September 1770. (Myrone, 345 n. 34) Beckford had returned to London and engaged George Robertson to accompany an expedition to Russia, and gave Robertson an apartment in his house in London. By December of 1771, Byres wrote to William Constable that Beckford, traveling with a Mrs. Buchanan, "proceeded no further on their Russia expedition than Hamburg…." (James Byres to Sir William Constable, December 30, 1771, Brinsley Ford Archive, Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art).

largest property real and personal of any subject of Europe."[14] In 1774 the trio of Wickstead, Robertson, and Beckford traveled to and through the island together, as Beckford took responsibility for three sugar plantations in Westmoreland: Fort William, Roaring River, and Williamsfield.[15] (fig. 3.2) It was on these plantations in the 1770s that Beckford gathered material for his book, *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica*.

While it is unclear whether Beckford intended for Wickstead to contribute images to the *Descriptive Account*, the text's Preface indicates Robertson's planned involvement and laments the lack of engravings of specific views. Robertson returned to England from Jamaica shortly after his arrival in 1774 with the oil on canvas landscape paintings intended to illustrate Beckford's book. In 1778 Robertson published engravings after some of these landscapes independently, as *Six Views in the Island of Jamaica*.[16] Shortly thereafter Beckford returned to England, as well, departing the island for his final transatlantic trip in the mid-1780s after the hurricane of 1780 exacerbated the already-mounting debts on his sugar plantations. Wickstead fared worse in the hurricane, with

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[14] Charles Leslie, *A New and Exact History of Jamaica* (Edinburgh, 1740), 267.

[15] Tim Barringer, "Picturesque Prospects and the Labor of the Enslaved," in *Art and Emancipation in Jamaica: Isaac Mendes Belisario and His Worlds*, eds. Tim Barringer, Gillian Forrester, and Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art in association with Yale University Press, 2007), 43.

[16] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 1: x.

his health and property both suffering. Compromised in the wake of this powerful storm, Wickstead suffered from a "putrid Fever" and died on the island on October 15, 1781.[17]

In contrast to Robertson, Wickstead integrated himself into colonial Jamaican society from 1774 to his death in 1781. He established a studio and a network of patrons and friends in Westmoreland, appearing in the diaries of overseer Thomas Thistlewood beginning in 1778. In February of that year, Thistlewood described traveling about five miles on horseback from his Breadnut Island Pen to visit the house of "the Painter" Philip Wickstead on William Foot's property near Smithfield plantation.[18] (fig. 3.2) Thistlewood recounted an eighteenth-century studio visit: "[Wickstead] shewed me his Portraits, very Curious, especially, Mr & Mrs Beckford & Captn Carling—Mr & Mrs Beckford in another—George Pointz Rickets, & his Lady—Mr George Inglis,—Parson

[17] Diaries of Thomas Thistlewood, October 15, 1781, Box 6, Folder 32 Thistlewood Papers. Wickstead's "putrid Fever" was likely epidemic typhus, contracted in the wake of the hurricane of August 1781.

[18] William Foot was a former overseer who Thistlewood had characterized as "ignorant of planting," when he recorded that Foot was given the attorneyship of Petersfield "said to be worth £300 per annum." Diaries of Thomas Thistlewood, August 12, 1770, as cited in Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, & Desire*, 47. Wickstead lived on Foot's property near Smithfield plantation from at least 1778 to his death in 1781 (see fig. 4.1). While the February 1778 studio visit is the earliest interaction between Thistlewood and Wickstead documented in the former's diaries, a friendship developed between the two men thereafter. Through his socializing with Thistlewood, aspects of Wickstead's life in Westmoreland can be ascertained. On Sunday, July 26, 1778, Wickstead again met with Thistlewood, this time at Thistlewood's home, Breadnut Island Pen and dined with John Hartnole, John Chambers, and Richard Dobson (two of whom were overseers on nearby sugar plantations), men of a similar status to Thistlewood and Wickstead within white Jamaican society. Diaries of Thomas Thistlewood, July 26, 1778, Thistlewood Papers. By 1774, Hartnole and Richard Dobson were working together as overseers at Paul Island, and this property was among the many to which Thistlewood hired out his (as of 1774) twenty-six enslaved laborers. John Chambers lived with his brother, Robert, in Savanna-la-Mar—his occupation is unclear, but he frequently socialized with white men of a similar class to Thistlewood and Wickstead. Hall, *In Miserable Slavery*, 141, 262.

Poole—Jimmy Tomlinson, &c. &c. a holing gang of Negroes, &c."[19] Even if Thistlewood's studio visit was his first encounter with Wickstead, it is likely that, having at that point lived in Jamaica for four years, Wickstead would have welcomed Thistlewood into his studio not only because he was a potential patron, but also because of his race. As one eighteenth-century commentator observed:

> …there is not more Hospitality, nor a more generous freedom shown to Strangers on any Part of the World…[A] man may Travell from one Part of the Country to another and even around the Island with very little if any Expense…. He may with freedom go and dine, or lodge at the next Planters House and Persons of low rank and Condition are as cheerfully received and entertained by their Servants.[20]

By socializing with Thistlewood and other white Jamaicans regardless of class, Wickstead participated in the hybrid English-Caribbean customs that came to characterize late eighteenth-century white Jamaican society. After welcoming Thistlewood to his studio—although Thistlewood never commissioned a portrait from Wickstead and was not of the status of Wickstead's planter and merchant sitters—Thistlewood regularly invited Wickstead to Breadnut Island for conversation, dining, and entertainment.[21] Through Thistlewood's hospitality, Wickstead was able to expand his

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[19] These now-lost portraits are considered in greater depth in the following pages. Diaries of Thomas Thistlewood, February 19, 1778, Box 5, Folder 29, Thomas Thistlewood Papers.

[20] James Knight, "The Natural, Moral and Political History of Jamaica and the Territories thereon depending," Long Papers, Add. MSS 12418-19, British Library. As cited in Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire*, 21.

[21] By 1779, Thistlewood and Wickstead were dining together socially in addition to exchanging medical remedies and botanical specimens. On May 24, 1779, Thistlewood wrote to Wickstead, sending the message by his slave Jimmy along with thirteen "rose-apples," six "Tubross roots (double one)," two "English Elms," and twelve "Cuttings off Cope periwinkle," among other specimens. Diaries of Thomas Thistlewood, May 24, 1779, Thistlewood Papers. "Tubross roots" were likely tuberose. John Cope was a wealthy planter and employer of Thistlewood's until September 1767. Thistlewood and Cope continued their relationship socially after parting as employer and employee. Among their social subjects was botany,

network of patrons beyond the circle of Beckford's friends and associates. These social connections positioned Wickstead to deploy his skills as a metropolitan portraitist to construct a visual identity for white Jamaicans in the 1770s both across the colony and within the transatlantic empire.

"There was no other painter": Early Jamaican Visual Culture

In 1934 the historian of Jamaica Frank Cundall presented an unresolved contradiction in an article for *The Connoissuer*: "There is the difficulty that the persons whom these portraits are said to represent died before Wickstead came to Jamaica, but they are obviously all by Wickstead, as there was no other known painter who could have executed them."[22] Here Cundall was specifically considering five "family portraits" that are not pictured in the article, which tantalizingly concludes by noting about this group: "It may be mentioned that when, some years ago, the paintings were restored, the labels were removed from the backs of the frames and the present names replaced from

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which not only led Thistlewood to share Cope's periwinkle (an Old World plant at times used medicinally) cuttings with Wickstead, but also secured Thistlewood a visit from Governor William Trelawney in 1772 after Thistlewood provided the produce for and attended a dinner with the governor at Cope's plantation. (Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire*, 124)

The men ventured out on social outings together such as that on February 8, 1780, where they, "Rode to Mr Wickstead, near Smithfield, Paradise dined with him of parmesan cheese &c. PM we walked to the sea side, to where old Cayton Smith lived, till within 4 or 5 months past…in the evening rode home, where got about 7 o'clock." Remedies for medical ailments for one another and their respective slaves were also exchanged, as when on August 4, 1780, Thistlewood applied oil of vitriol to Lyon's ear, described as "very raw," with a feather, a remedy and technique recommended by Wickstead. Diaries of Thomas Thistlewood,24 May 1779, Box 6, Folder 30; 8 February 1780,4 August 1780, Box 6, Folder 31, Thistlewood Papers. Oil of vitriol, or distilled sulphuric acid, was explored as a remedy for tropical ailments throughout the eighteenth century, and is described as "good in spotted Fevers and the Plague" by Hans Sloane, *A Voyage to the Islands of Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica; with the Natural History* (London, 1725), 380. Thomas Dancer expanded on the experiments of naturalists like Thistlewood and enthusiasts like Wickstead sixty-five years after Sloane in *A Short Dissertation on the Jamaica Bath Waters* (Kingston, 1784).

[22] Frank Cundall, "Philip Wickstead of Jamaica," *The Connoisseur* 94 (1934), 174–175.

memory."[23] Cundall's conclusion makes plain the difficulty of overcoming knowledge lost through early restoration efforts on eighteenth-century portraits, Jamaica's climate, and the political instability of the colonial and post-colonial island. Although few Wickstead portraits survive, Thistlewood's description of his studio suggests that the artist created many canvases while living on the island. The subsequent destruction or disappearance of these pictures has served to obscure the history of eighteenth-century Jamaican visual culture (and transatlantic portraits in the eighteenth-century British Atlantic World more broadly). Evidence for a vast Jamaican visual culture and an extensive community of traveling portraitists moving through the colony emerges in probate inventories and Wickstead's canvases. When commissioned from Wickstead by elite white Jamaicans who engaged in extensive transatlantic travel in the 1770s, these portraits served as transatlantic evidence of Jamaican society.

A 1753 account of a lightning storm striking one Kingston house suggests how many of these paintings might have fared:

> On Monday last about 3 o'clock in the afternoon a Thunder-cloud burst, over the house of Mr. Joseph Gutterres in Orange-street, which tore off the shingles of that [ ] house…at which time the Lightning entered…. In the first floor it disappeared itself in every part of the rooms, splintering the frames of many pictures that were glazed…."[24]

Subject to hurricanes and other tropical storms, humidity, pests, and human conflict, portraits faced environmental assaults in Jamaica. Wickstead's paintings met with an

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[23] Cundall, "Philip Wickstead of Jamaica," 175. According to Cundall, in 1934 these portraits were in the possession of "Miss Nias," possibly Catherine P. Nias of Breadlands Pen, listed in the 1910 Directory for the Parish of Clarendon. Accessed March 8, 2015, http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Members/1/1910d22.htm.

[24] Pierre Eugéne DuSimitiére Papers. Box 5, Folder 4. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

extreme version of this fate, caught in the hurricane of 1780—the worst hurricane to strike eighteenth-century Jamaica—which caused significant damage in Westmoreland Parish. Residing in the parish at the time, in his *Descriptive Account* Beckford recalled:

> …not a single house was left undamaged in the parish; not a single set of works, trash-house, or other subordinate building, that was not greatly injured, or entirely destroyed. Not a single wharf, store-house, or shed, for the deposit of goods, was left standing: they were all swept away at once by the billows of the sea; and hardly left behind, the traces of their foundations.[25]

Later in the same text, Beckford extensively describes a painting by Wickstead of enslaved laborers planting Indian or Guinea corn, before lamenting, "this performance, as well as many drawings of value, were unfortunately swept away by that tremendous hurricane of which I have ventured, however feebly, to convey a particular and a just account."[26] Even the portraits that survived environmental events were subject to displacement with elite white Jamaicans departures from the island in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, British desires to mask the country's historical connections to slavery for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the island's greater interest in its post-colonial art today.[27]

Further compounding the difficulty of locating and attributing these canvases is the assertion that, "Wickstead must have found, in Jamaica, no works of art,

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[25] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 105–106.

[26] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 315.

[27] Jamaican canvases continue to hide in British and American collections. Pictures attributed to Wickstead have recently come to the auction block from private collections in Britain including *The Family of James Henry* and *Self Portrait with Companion*.

except…topographical drawings."[28] This myth may have originated with Cundall, but persists in the work of British art historians including Geoff Quilley. About George Robertson's Jamaican landscapes, Quilley writes: "Robertson's images are exceptional in several respects…but first and foremost in simply providing visual representations of the West Indies."[29] Yet eighteenth-century Jamaican probate inventories stand in contrast to the assertions of Cundall and Quilley alike, instead revealing both locally produced and imported works decorating the private homes and public buildings of the island in this period.

When Wickstead arrived in Kingston in 1774, as opposed to finding "no works of art," he instead arrived on an island with many walls covered in painted and printed pictures. As in the collection of Benjamin and Mary Pusey—represented in the couple's conversation piece by Wickstead—inventories from Jamaica are littered with prints, drawings, and oil paintings in a wide range of genres and subjects including history paintings, scripture pieces, mythological pictures, philosopher's portraits, family portraits, sporting pictures, still lifes, and sea pieces. Even Thomas Thistlewood, who had few resources and arrived on the island with little baggage, brought on his journey not only thirty-six cases of razors which he hoped to sell for essentials such as a bed, alcohol, kitchen utensils, clothing, and surveying equipment to support his career aspirations, but also four pictures, including "a vary fine print of ye pretender, bought at

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[28] Cundall, 174–175.

[29] Geoff Quilley, "Pastoral plantations: the British slave trade and the representation of colonial landscape in the late eighteenth century," in *An economy of colour: Visual culture and the Atlantic world, 1660–1830*, eds. Geoff Quilley and Kay Dian Kriz (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 107.

Ghent."[30] An ambitious young man, Thistlewood thought a portrait of King James III was relevant cargo for his transatlantic journey. Migrants to Jamaica carried with them not only necessities but also cultural artifacts, maintaining visual connections to their places of origin across the vast Atlantic expanse.

In addition to artworks transported to the island, portraitists and painters were recorded working on the island with some regularity from about 1740. Most were itinerant and described themselves as limners, including in their purview house, carriage, and sign painting as well as figurative works on canvas. While most limners appear to have aspired to primarily work as painters of portraits and miniatures, at times these artists also supported other artists by selling colors. A painter characterized as a limner also likely worked as an itinerant, traveling from place to place—including colony to colony—based on the demand for their services and connections between patrons.

Cultural connections to the Mother Country were strengthened within the colony not only through imports, but also through locally created products as colonists aspired to nurture culture and reason in the material culture of their communities. Painting—and in particular portrait production—expanded in Jamaica as it did throughout the British Atlantic empire beginning in the 1750s as colonial wealth increased, shipping became more efficient, and concerns over the civility of colonial spaces peaked. Yet this history is overlooked because few of the artists painting portraits on Jamaica (or in the colonial Caribbean more broadly) can be traced in the historical record beyond their name and

[30] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire*, 2.

occupation.[31] Three men characterized as limners and one noted portraitist died in Kingston in the 1750s: James Lovelace in June 1754, John Aberry in November 1756, Henry Farr in late 1757 or January 1758, and portraitist Samuel Hone in November 1758.[32] Lovelace and Aberry are known only through the references to their deaths, and Farr through his minimal probate inventory.[33]

In contrast, Samuel Hone trained as an artist prior to traveling to Kingston and establishing a studio in the Caribbean port city. Hone began his career painting in Dublin, and from Dublin he ventured to Italy on a Grand Tour.[34] Hone followed the well-traveled paths of eighteenth-century artistic development on the Grand Tour and

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[31] When a canvas by one of these artists does survive, as may be the case for some that have been attributed to Wickstead, the process of reattribution remain as challenging for the contemporary art historian because of the lack of comparative evidence.

Between 1760 and 1780, newspaper advertisements and burial records also document Wickstead, Philadelphians James Claypoole, Jr. and Matthew Pratt, portrait limner Beeston Coyte, and business partners and brothers John and Hamilton Stevenson working in Jamaica. All of these artists traveled widely prior to their arrival on the island. In a place characterized as "a failed settler society" where migrants were susceptible to infectious tropical diseases and population growth was only achieved through the ongoing importation of both white settlers and African slaves, it is unlikely that any of these men were born on Jamaica. By 1780, a year before Wickstead's death, self-described "portrait limners," John and Hamilton Stevenson advertised in Kingston's *Royal Gazette*, "An Original Painting done by the inimitable Sir Peter Paul Rubens Measuring 5 feet 3 by 4 feet 3, and contain[ing] four half-length portraits, one of which is a likeness of himself, with a large massy Mahogany frame, TO BE SOLD." *Royal Gazette*, microfilm reel 983, 251: April 22, 1780.

[32] Burials (v. 1 0 2), 1722–1825, transcribed by Robert B. Barker. Hone was born on September 8, 1726 in Ireland. Inventory of Henry Farr, January 13, 1758. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3: No. 37/194.

[33] Inventory of Henry Farr, January 13, 1758. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3: No. 37/194. Based in Kingston, Farr painted signs, chariots, coaches, and kittereens, but also produced sea pieces in his small studio. At his death in 1758 his inventory not only contained three of these works (valued at £3/11/3), but also some pieces of painted canvas, two grinding stones, four palettes, and a parcel of colors and brushes.

[34] After his tour, Hone relocated to London, where he briefly appears in Joshua Reynolds' correspondence. Writing from the metropole to English sculptor Joseph Wilton in Florence, Reynolds reports on Samuel's brother Nathaniel's whereabouts with information received from the former: "Mr [Nathaniel] Hone I heard from his brother he's on the road homewards & with Miss Reed." Joshua Reynolds to Wilton in Florence, London, June 5, 1753. 785/28/1, Royal Academy of Arts Archive.

built relationships within London's community of portraitists before taking his profession to Jamaica in the mid-1750s.[35] Hone's inventory suggests the artist established a sophisticated studio in Kingston. At the time of his death on May 3, 1759, he had two paintings valued at £11/17/6 and another three worth £2/7/6, as well as eleven smaller pictures valued at less than one pound.[36] Not only did Hone paint prolifically in Kingston in the 1750s, but he made significant profits doing so, as is indicated by the possessions he held at his death. The nineteen paintings in Hone's inventory hung in a fashionable Kingston household with a number of painting implements and studio attributes. "Sundry paints, Brushes, Colours prints &c." were accompanied by other materials including a parcel of oiled cloths for painting, a canvas frame, an oiled three-quarters length canvas, three long bladders containing oil, and a parcel of copper plates, prints, and sketches. Hone also owned professional tools including five sketching frames for pictures; a "trusselltree for painting," or an easel; and a box containing artificial roses and ribbons to ornament his sitters. His well-appointed studio welcomed wealthy patrons

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[35] *Faulkner's Journal*, October 1754: "Mr. Samuel Hone, painter, has removed from his lodgings in Abbey Street to Mr. Green's on the back of the Blind Quay, near Essex Bridge."

[36] In addition to these paintings of unspecified subjects, in his possession were a painting of an old peddler (£4/15/-), a painting of an unspecified lady (£2/7/6), and a painting intended for Charles Seymore's daughter (£7/2/6). Inventory of Samuel Hone, May 3, 1759. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3: No. 38/189.

In Jamaica after 1758, £140 in Jamaican currency was worth roughly £100 pounds sterling, making £11/17/6 worth about £8/4/- in pounds sterling, or about $1,700 in current money. On eighteenth century currency and conversions see: John J. McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600–1775: A Handbook* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 247.

with mahogany furnishings, and the artist clothed himself in one of his two wigs, silk coats and breeches, shoes with silver buckles, two gold rings, and a walking cane.[37]

The careers of Hone and Wickstead provide rough bookends for the period of time considered by this project, and the similarities in both artists' biographies reveal the frequency with which painters traveled and the transatlantic visual exchange that resulted from this mobility. The travel of Hone and Wickstead—first on the Grand Tour and then on Caribbean-bound vessels for inadvertently permanent voyages to Jamaica—stands in contrast to more commonly discussed artistic itinerancy represented in the Jamaican context by limners like Lovelace and Aberry. Neither Hone nor Wickstead achieved the status of Royal Academician. The award was, however, bestowed on Hone's brother and traveling companion, Nathaniel Hone, and Wickstead's mentor, Zoffany. Hone and Wickstead were both educated artists, having studied in London studios, traveled to see Old Master paintings, and painted in the metropole. While the biographies of both artists are too thin to fully understand their motivations for traveling to Jamaica, in tandem they demonstrate that artists of a range of backgrounds and abilities traveled to the colonial Caribbean.[38]

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[37] Inventory of Samuel Hone, May 3, 1759. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3: No. 38/189.

[38] Further complicating this assessment is the lack of surviving Jamaican works created by Hone, although the extensive documentation of oil on canvas paintings in Jamaican probate inventories further suggests that Hone likely produced many canvases. It also neglects possible attributions for the portrait of Francis Williams, painted circa 1750, at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Among the possible painters of this portrait could be William Williams, a British-born portraitist who traveled through and worked at Kingston briefly before 1747, before to continuing on to Philadelphia.

Works by limners like Lovelace, Aberry, and Farr and portraitists like Hone and Wickstead were joined in Jamaican homes by imported pieces. In inventories from the 1750s alone, hundreds of paintings, prints, and pictures otherwise unspecified are itemized. Robert Brown of Kingston and St. Catherine Parish owned 24 colored "pictures"—likely prints—that were glazed and framed, as well as one "picture" with a gilt frame, and one "thick painted sea piece."[39] Kingston gentleman Thomas Collier's inventory contained fifty pictures in frames with glasses.[40] James Sells, and instrument maker of St. James parish and Kingston owned a landscape and a "fruit piece picture."[41] The Honorable Francis Sadler Hals, Esq., who died at Hals Hall in the parish of Clarendon, had sixteen "pictures" in the estate's hall, thirteen old "pictures" in the library, and thirty-four additional "pictures" throughout his great house, only two of which were under glass.[42] At times oil paintings and prints are more clearly distinguished, as is the case with the inventory of John Williams, a physician from Kingston, who owned "four pictures with glasses and five paintings without" (£5/6/3) as well as "two p[ai]r of painting" (£4/15/-).[43] Large, itemized collections of prints are less

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[39] Inventory of Robert Brown, September 25, 1751. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/31, page numbers unknown (torn).

[40] Thomas Collier Inventory, 1B/11/3/31, folio unknown (torn), between 30 and 39. National Archive of Jamaica.

[41] Inventory of James Sells, November 14, 1751. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/31: No. 39.

[42] Inventory of the Honorable Francis Sadler Hals, Esq., November 20, 1751, Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/31: No. 46.

[43] Inventory of John Williams, December 4, 1751, Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/31: No. 22.

common but also appear in inventories like that of Isaac Smith, a butcher who died in Kingston in possession of twelve glazed mezzotint prints of unspecified subjects, as well as six pictures of horses, four pictures of Alexander's battles, and two pictures of other battle scenes.[44] In the early 1770s, just before Wickstead's arrival on the island, Jamaican inventories show increasing specificity in the descriptions of artwork, but no lessening in the diversity or quantity of what appears on walls across the island.[45]

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[44] Inventory of Isaac Smith, December 10, 1751, Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/31: No. 59. Perhaps most striking is the inventory of Kingston merchant William Peete, who, at the time of his death, was in possession of a number of imported paintings, and whose inventory suggests how many of the paintings in Jamaican probate inventories may have been shipped to the island. Among his stores were groups of objects for various clients. William Ayre had a painting of a peacock and other poultry, another of a hen and chickens, eight prospects, and three flower pieces. In addition to ordering nine pieces of painted wallpaper, the Honorable Edward Manning ordered a painting. James Prevost received paintings of Mary Davis, Jean Shore, Prince George, and Queen Anne, as well as genre scenes of "a Dutch Cooks Shoop" and "a Negroe with a jug on his shoulder." John Gardner Sr. purchased five paintings, a picture of a peacock and other poultry that was sold together with a view of St. Martin in Venice, a winter landscape, and two flower pieces. Also itemized were thirteen mezzotint prints to Robert Dilan, Esq., a picture of two "Dutch Hoys" (a sea piece depicting two small coastal sailing vessels) to David Rieuset, a painting of Mrs. Doyly to Mr. Bostin, eight hunting pieces to Mr. Barker, three old pictures of horses to John Darby, four representations of Samuel Butler's satiric poem *Hudibras* for John Lee, and two landscapes for the Reverend Mr. William May. Hogarth creates prints after twelve oil paintings illustrating scenes from *Hudibras* in 1725. Inventory of William Peete, Esq., March 26, 1752. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/31: No. 119–127.

Some of these paintings can be traced beyond this transaction through other inventories. William May, rector of the parish of Kingston, purchased two landscapes from Peete. Shortly thereafter he died and his estate was inventoried. Among his belongings were twelve small paintings with black frames, nine maps, one sea piece, four glazed pictures, and the two large pieces of painting, presumably the landscapes sold to May by Peete. See: Inventory of William May, August 30, 1753. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/31: No. 83. Kingston merchant David Rieuset's marine scene of two Dutch vessels remained in his collection until it was inventoried in 1771. A prolific collector, Rieuset's purchase from Peete joined a vast assemblage of oil on canvas paintings that, at Rieuset's death, included six small landscapes, three large landscapes, two marine scenes, and six other paintings of unspecified subjects. In Rieuset's Kingston home twelve large prints, sixteen other prints, and four maps, some of which were hung with special "mahogany bracketts for Images," joined his paintings. The collection totaled forty-nine objects. At the time of his death, Rieuset's estate was worth more than £25,422. See: Inventory of David Rieuset, December 10, 1771. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/52: No. 144.

[45] Peter Vattelle Jr. of St. Thomas in the East owned thirty-three prints, nine of them large (£30/10/-). See: Inventory of Peter Vattelle, Jr., Esq., March 30, 1771. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/52: No. 7. As prints become more commonly inventoried as such, differentiation between "pictures" in collections becomes more obvious. Kingston ironmonger Matthew Munt owned "6 Small Prints Glaz'd & 3 Old Maps," as well as an extensive collection of paintings including twelve views and two sea pieces, both of which were framed and under glass; paintings of both the King and Queen; four

Although few of these canvases survive, Wickstead's portrait of Benjamin and Mary Pusey visually documents eighteenth-century Jamaica's expansive visual culture. In the conversation piece, Mary Pusey, a fair-haired woman modeled with almost translucent paint, leans on her right hand and peers across the composition at an oval frame. (fig. 3.1) She gazes intently not at her husband who emphatically gestures with both hands, but at the bust length portrait resting on a side chair and further supported by an enslaved boy. She may be considering where the portrait should hang within the vaguely defined room they occupy, even as her husband speaks of the elegant, older female sitter in the roundel. The modest portrait of the older woman stands as a contrast

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pictures of birds; eight large religious pieces; and six other paintings of unspecified subjects, which were framed and glazed.[45] Increasingly the locations of artworks within buildings was also specified, particularly in the large estates of planters like Zachary Bayly, whose great house at Greenwich Park in St. Andrew Parish was inventoried. In the back room of the great hall, Bayly had fourteen paintings in gilt frames, two of which were specified as being small. In the adjoining portico hung two large pictures, and the space was also furnished with two mahogany card tables, a round tea table, and a small clock. In a bedroom westward of the great hall, a large painting of nymphs and a satyr (valued at £10/-/-) joined extensive bedroom furnishings including a mahogany bedstead with chintz curtains, a mosquito net, feather bed, mattress, bolsters and pillows; a mahogany chest for clothing; a dressing table with dressing glass; a red damask easy chair; a matching arm chair, six additional small chairs, and a carpet. See: Inventory of Zachary Bayly, September 4, 1771. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives, 1B/11/3/52: No. 60.

There is also evidence of Wickstead's paintings in the probate inventories of his sitters. Mary Pusey's inventory, executed in St. Catherine Parish in 1794, contains five oil paintings with burnished frames valued at £12/-/-. See: Inventory of Mary Pusey, March 18, 1794. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives: No. 81, 17. Mary Pusey's inventory alludes to possible confusion about the names of sitters in Wickstead's portraits of the Puseys (and in portraits from the eighteenth-century, more broadly). Without secure provenance or robust curatorial files supporting these pictures, it is difficult to confirm the identity of the sitters in these canvases and determine where they may have hung. It is likely that *Benjamin and Mary Pusey* (fig. 4.2) actually represents William and Mary Pusey, who were married until William Pusey's death in 1783. Mary Pusey also benefitted from legacies left by William Pusey (deceased 1783) and by Graey Lindsay (deceased 1789). Richard Pusey was her administrator.

Mary was not the only Pusey to own a collection of pictures at the time of her death. William Pusey's father, John Pusey, built Pusey Hall in Vere Parish, and in the inventory of the great house at his death were seven large pictures, as well as ten smaller pictures, likely prints, and three old maps. John Pusey's seven large paintings were valued at £20/-/-, and the additional ten pictures and three maps were £3/-/-. His estate was executed by William Pusey. See: Inventory of John Pusey, August 8, 1767. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives: No 47–106.

Another of Wickstead's sitters, Edward East, had a probate inventory taken in St. Andrew Parish in 1786. The inventory recorded eight pictures and drawings in the front hall. See: Inventory of Edward East, March 15, 1786. Inventories, Jamaica National Archives: No. 70/12.

to the scene in which it is included, a casual but constructed performance strewn with possessions and structured by narrative devices emphasizing the interaction between the sitters. Whether displayed on the walls of a Jamaican great house or in London, this contrast between Wickstead's dynamic, sunlit group and the stiff, dark bust-length portrait of the woman demonstrated the progress Jamaican planters had made in their intellectual and material culture in a generation. It suggested that painting on the island was developing in accordance with contemporary styles in the metropole, reinforcing the refinement of elite Jamaicans. This refinement is further displayed through the books and globe, signifying not only opulence but also the education that Jamaican elites like Benjamin Pusey pursued as young men in England.

The narrative conceit of the picture, the sociable exchange, transpires beneath a second canvas within the canvas. A large landscape hangs at the center of the rear wall, half obscured by red drapery. The loosely described painting does not provide the viewer with a clear understanding of the scene, but instead suggests a picture that includes pervasive foliage and a river connecting the foreground shore to the stone viaduct in the background. It evokes the work of a landscape painter equally known for scenes of Jamaica and Britain in the 1770s and 1780s, George Robertson. (fig. 3.3) Robertson likely introduced Wickstead to Beckford, and he traveled throughout the island with both men from 1774 to 1775. In painting a large landscape at the center of this conversation piece, Wickstead alludes to his fellow artist and traveling companion. (fig. 3.4) The painted landscape within the conversation piece also opens onto the connections and

disconnects between metropolis and colony seen in and created through the transatlantic travel of painters, paintings, and prints.

Robertson returned to England with his canvases in 1775, exhibiting groups of these paintings—at least fifteen in total—at the Society of the Artists exhibitions in 1775, 1776, 1777, and 1778.[46] At the same time, he prepared for publication of a group of six of these works in a standalone edition of prints of the island. As Wickstead pictured a canvas by Robertson on the wall of a Jamaican great house, the already-returned artist was displaying the same views in London exhibitions. Hanging a Robertson landscape on the wall of a great house allowed Benajmain Pusey to possess a piece of transatlantic imperial visual culture prior to its display in the metropole. It also demonstrated the planter's financial investment in and endorsement of Robertson's representation of the island's landscape, signaling the transatlantic scope of Pusey's opinions and influence.

Transatlantic Ideals, or a Grand Tour of the West Indies

Whether resident or absentee, elite Jamaicans sought to construct and promote a quintessentially English society. On the island, they increasingly attempted to construct their ideal Anglo-Jamaican colony politically, socially, and culturally through legislation defining slavery and freedom and extensive cultivation and building campaigns shaping the landscape.[47] As white Jamaicans struggled to tame their surroundings, Beckford and

[46] Algernon Graves, *The Society of Artists of Great Britain (1760–1791) The Free Society of Artists (1761–1783)* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1907), 215–216.

[47] Nelson, *Architecture and Empire in Jamaica*, 97–157.

Robertson adopted the popular aesthetic of the classical, Italianate ideal landscape, which had become popular in writing about and paintings of English landscape at midcentury. By producing idealized, constructed accounts of the Jamaican landscape, Beckford and Robertson embraced a transatlantic aesthetic to represent the island. Applying this aesthetic to the colony served to domesticate and assert control over their Jamaican surroundings. Because Wickstead arrived on the island as an agent of this project, understanding its images and aims is crucial context for the artist's Jamaican conversation pieces.

Artist-travelers working in Jamaica throughout the century most often depicted the island's verdant, dangerous landscapes either in topographical drawings or ink and wash landscapes like those created by Pierre Eugène du Simitière. (fig. 3.5) Landscapes became the visual basis for Britons' understanding of the scope of their empire following imperial consolidation in the wake of the Seven Years' War. Broad dissemination of topographical landscapes presented Britons with the possibility of understanding distant but mutually dependent lands.[48] Yet these views were not democratic, instead requiring an educated eye to interpret their scenes. As art historian Jill Casid has argued, landscape views translated terrain into established compositional types that required fluency in various aesthetic modes. The picturesque and the georgic, in particular, transformed

[48] As was the case for Robertson's works, drawings or paintings of the Jamaican landscape were often created on the island and sent to London for reproduction as prints. Landscape views picturing Jamaica both conveyed to viewers the productive nature of colonial land and alluded to the island's position within the British imperial world. A mental geography of the global British landscape emerged in the second half of the eighteenth-century through first-hand artists' accounts of remote parts of the British Empire represented in paintings and prints displayed in London. John E. Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes: Britain's Global Visual Culture, 1745–1820* (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2003), 2–3.

colonial and metropolitan landscapes into continuous, related spheres.[49] These views of the "imperial landscape" were engaged both in the metropole and colonies to comprehend empire, creating a transatlantic visual space.[50] In his view of the house of Augustin Merida in Kingston, Du Simitière leaves an expanse of untouched paper in the foreground, visually distancing the viewer from the scene. A heavy ink line frames the view of Merida's house against the mountains that rise sharply around Kingston, excluding a building lightly sketched in graphite at the left of the page. This building would incorporate the viewer into the scene if it was finished. Instead Du Simitière separated the building from the scene and maintained distance between his document of the Jamaican landscape and its viewer. While the scene's veracity was enforced by its precise dating and titling ("Kingston 7 mars 1760 / A South West View of the house of Augustin Merida, Esq. in Kingston Jamaica Taken from the South Sea house"), its honesty was undercut by its hermetic atmosphere lacking any trace of city life. Beckford and Robertson departed from this topographical, documentary style.

Beckford's *Descriptive Account* situated elite Jamaica's ideal landscape within this transatlantic British ideal. His text avoided the daily realities of the island's slave society, instead turning toward a celebration of its lush environment. White Jamaicans

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[49] Jill H. Casid, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xxi–xxii, 1–44, especially 9–24. Crowley also observes this phenomenon: "…representations of Caribbean landscapes were tendentious in their social and political messages: they accommodated the archly alien character of the society of plantation slavery by presenting its distinctive topographic and social features in familiar picturesque, georgic, and genre styles." Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes*, 116.

[50] Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 8. See also Krista Thompson, *An Eye for the Tropics: Photography, Tourism, and Framing the Caribbean Picturesque* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 39–42.

depended on the labor of enslaved Africans to support the plantation economy and their daily lives. Yet surrounded by a numerically dominant, primarily enslaved black population that brought distinct, non-European languages and cultures to the island, white Jamaicans feared being overwhelmed culturally and physically. While Edward Long claimed that Jamaica was becoming increasingly English by the 1750s in his *History of Jamaica*, he also wrote that white women were overly familiar with African slaves, white men had abandoned these women in pursuit of sexual relationships with enslaved women, and the minds of both white men and women who were native-born or lived for too much time on the island became weak, unpolished, and susceptible to trivial pursuits.[51] In order to shift imperial perceptions from degenerate behavior, creolization, and the ethics of slavery, Beckford promoted an ideal imperial landscape, contained and picturesque, refocusing an empire-wide audience on the island's universal beauty.

For both Beckford and Robertson, the untamed Jamaican landscape was not a lurking provincial threat, but instead an impressive site that fit within British representation of the global picturesque. After storms on the island, Beckford saw in the Jamaican landscape not only the elements "of every image that is obvious, pleasing and sublime," but also the coming together of "the picturesque appearance of Otaheite, the magnificent scenery of the Bay of Kingston, and the tremendous expression of that of Naples."[52] Travel in Jamaica was an extension of the Grand Tour for Beckford, aligning his ideas with those of English botanist Sir Joseph Banks, who thought of his Pacific

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[51] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire*, 17–18, citing Long, *The History of Jamaica*.

[52] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 80.

voyage to Tahiti as an alternative to Tour travel, according to historian John Crowley.[53] Beckford made the connection between the Jamaican landscape and picturesque images of the Pacific from Captain James Cook's first voyage like William Woollett's engraving after Sydney Parkinson's *A View of a Perforated Rock in Tolaga Bay in New Zealand*, which was published prior to Beckford, Robertson, and Wickstead's departure for Jamaica in 1773.[54] (fig. 3.6) Both Jamaica and Tahiti were "imaginary island[s]" brought together in an imperial visual culture that allowed comparisons between these Atlantic and Pacific islands through the dissemination of picturesque landscape prints. When looking at a Jamaican vista, Beckford also saw Tahiti: "In the middle region of the air, I could fancy an exact resemblance, as given us in the prints, of the Island of Otaheite, as magnificently swelling into hills, as sweetly declining into vallies, as imperceptibly lost in plains, and as insensibly melted into oceans." The setting sun and the landscape both "warmed the mind with a variety of images," but for Beckford, only a landscape artist like Robertson could properly situate it within the representational vocabulary of the idealized imperial landscape.[55]

In his text, Beckford emphasized the idealized aesthetic and elided the Jamaican and Italian landscapes:

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[53] Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes*, 85. While on British explorer Captain James Cook's first voyage to the Pacific (1768–1771), Banks also privileged the representation of landscape among documentation for a scientific, exploratory voyage, when upon the death of the ship's landscape artist, Alexander Buchan, Banks ordered scientific illustrator Sydney Parkinson to record Pacific scenes.

[54] John Hawkesworth, *An Account of the Voyages…for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere…by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret, and Captain Cook*, 3 vols. (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1773).

[55] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 84.

> Every passing cloud affords some pleasing variation; and the glowing vapours of the atmosphere, when the sun arises or declines, and when the picturesque and fantastic clouds are reflected in its polished bosom, give an enchanting hue, and such as is only particular to the warmer climates, and which much resemble those saffron skies which so strongly mark the Campania of Rome, and the environs of Naples.[56]

This joining of the Jamaican and Italian landscapes represented the island as a picturesque destination where both classical influences and English culture flourished. Beckford alluded to its appropriateness as a destination for a Caribbean Grand Tour, describing its scenery as surpassing landscapes painted by Claude Lorrain, Nicholas Poussin, and Salvatore Rosa. In his estimation, it was incapable of being improved upon by artists.[57] In his extended opening salvo, Beckford aligned the colony with idealized Italianate landscapes and encouraged artists painting Jamaica to emulate the highly constructed canvases of Claude, Rosa, and Poussin. Here a transatlantic concept of a Caribbean Grand Tour is put forward in the unification of Italian, English, and Jamaican landscapes. Beckford promoted a civilized landscape, while also positioning paintings of the Jamaican landscape to find a place within metropolitan aesthetics.

Robertson's Jamaican landscape paintings represented the idealized island Beckford described. While satisfying the widespread desire for first-hand knowledge of

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[56] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 8.

[57] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 11–12. "The docks and weeds of which the foregrounds in Jamaica are composed, are the most rich and beautiful productions of the kind I have ever seen; and the banks of the rivers are fringed with every growth that a painter would wish to introduce into this agreeable part of the landscape: and those borders which Claude Lorrain, Poussin, and Salvatore Rosa, took apparently so much pleasure and pains to enrich, are there excelled by the hand of Nature alone: nor do I conceive it possible for any artist to invent, by a sedulous collection of the most choice and beautiful parts of her productions, more enchanting scenes than can be observed in the dells and vallies, on the margins of the rivers, in that beautiful and romantic country."

colonial spaces, Robertson carefully constructed his landscapes in a different mode than topographical artists. They are inviting vistas whether in oil or in print, showcasing gently unfolding, cultivated land under skies of tranquil, rolling clouds. Like Beckford, Robertson strips these scenes of overt labor, instead positioning black figures as staffage beneath the tropical forests that frame his scenes. (figs. 3.3, 3.7) In the *Descriptive Account*, the artist—Robertson—is the model observer of Jamaica, best equipped to appreciate the full extent of the picturesque scenes offered by the island, from vapors and fogs to a cane-piece in flames.[58] Beckford described the scope of Robertson's work in Jamaica, and laments that the "numerous and interesting views he took in Jamaica," have disappeared into "dust and oblivion."[59] Although Beckford wished a broader transatlantic audience had access to Robertson's representations of Jamaica, the fifteen Jamaican landscapes he showed at the Society of Artists exhibitions and six engraved views from these paintings show that, in the late 1770s, British audiences had access to the idealized view of Jamaica elite white Jamaicans embraced and promoted. Furthermore, the almost immediate circulation of Robertson's views in the colony shows the transatlantic reach of these images.

Wickstead traveled with Beckford and Robertson from 1774 to 1775, and he arrived poised to contribute to this project of promoting an idealized Jamaica by painting portraits in the visual languages he had learned in London studios and on the Grand Tour. Working in the London studio of peripatetic emigrant artist Johan Zoffany left Wickstead

[58] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 66–67, 73.

[59] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 40.

aware of the genre's potential to span vast oceanic distances.[60] In London and Rome, he developed an understanding of the mechanics of travel and the idealized visual culture central to the work of Beckford and Robertson.[61] In Zoffany's studio he also encountered the wealth of empire through his mentor's patrons with East Indian connections. Wickstead met Beckford when he was painting idealized portraits of cultivated tourists occupying Italianate vistas, such as his *Portrait of John Corbette, Tollemache, Earl Talbot, James Byres, Sir John Rous, John Staples, and William McDouwall*, from about 1773.[62] (fig 3.8) These Grand Tour portraits functioned within an established, empire-

[60] Martin Postle, "An Artist Abroad," in *Johan Zoffany, RA: Society Observed*, ed. Martin Postle (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Royal Academy of Arts, London in association with Yale University Press, 2011), 13–22. Zoffany painted conversation pieces emphasizing landscapes beginning in the 1760s. German-born and well-traveled, Zoffany was a transient who chose to work and live in England, and later within the British imperial periphery, painting portraits in Calcutta and Lucknow from 1783 to 1788. Zoffany built his career through his mobility, and he aspired to the highest degree of success after arriving in England the fall of 1760Prior to his arrival in London, Zoffany took a tour to Italy and upon his return to German had received and shortly after resigned from his first court appointment.

[61] When Zoffany's work from Italy, India, and England are compared, the artist's careful attention to local culture and differing preferences for group portraits created in various locations become evident. As Zoffany traveled, he deliberately shifted his compositional structure and style from place to place. Zoffany's enthusiasm for foreign travel as well as the representational strategies he learned from his journeys likely influenced Wickstead. At the same time, Wickstead was also exposed to the economic advantages of painting lavishly appointed British nabobs while working in Zoffany's studio. During his few years as a studio assistant, Wickstead assisted Zoffany in creating not only portraits of men with significant East Indian interests, such as *William Berry Introduced as Heir to Raith* (1769), but also portraits representing West Indian nabobs benefitting from colonial assets, such as William Young and his family in *The Family of Sir William Young* (1766), or more subtly in *Mrs. Oswald* (1763–1765). (*William Berry Introduced as Heir to Raith* is in a private collection. *The Family of Sir William Young* is in the National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery, and *Mrs. Oswald* is in the National Gallery, London.)

[62] *Portrait of Mr. John Corbet, Tollemache, Earl Chetwynd Talbot, James Byres, Sir John Rous, John Staples, and William McDouwall*, ca. 1773, was sold attributed to Wickstead by Christie's on April 11, 1997. A second version of this painting, attributed to John Brown, is at Ham House and Garden, Surry (London and South East, National Trust). On these attributions, see Brinsley Ford, "James Byres, Principal Antiquarian for the English Visitors to Rome," *Apollo* 1974, 446–461. See also Edgar Peters Bowron and Peter Björn Kerber, *Pompeo Batoni: Prince of Painters in Eighteenth-Century Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2008), 37–88.

wide picturing of personal cultivation and cultural literacy, and we can assume Beckford intended for Wickstead to apply this visual vocabulary to his Jamaican portraits. Wickstead set out with Beckford and Robertson to paint conversation pieces in the wealthy West Indies. His patrons were the elite Jamaicans aligned with Beckford in his quest to establish the island as a civil, thriving English society in the colony. Wickstead's idealized, cultivated Grand Tour portraits would have appealed to a local audience, likely leading to an influx of commissions, beyond even those arranged by Beckford.

Unlike Robertson, however, Wickstead moved away from Beckford's patronage, establishing a studio in Westmoreland Parish. As Wickstead became a white Jamaican, he experienced a rupture with Beckford. It is likely that their falling out transpired because of Beckford's ideals about Jamaican society and his desire to progress toward a tropical replica of English society in the colony. In many ways, even as he painted portraits that affirmed elite Jamaican aspirations for their colony, Wickstead's life on the island countered their desires for Jamaican society: he socialized with overseers as well as planters, engaged in a romantic relationship with a mulatto woman, and at times lived in casual, creole dress, as he represented himself in *A Scene in Jamaica; Portrait of the Artist and his Companion*.[63] (fig. 3.9) Wickstead lived as a colonial Jamaican in the ways that both Beckford and Long decried. There is a tension in Wickstead's canvases

[63] On Wickstead's life and relationships in Westmoreland see accounts in the Diaries of Thomas Thistlewood, December 22, 1780, Box 6, Folder 31; October 16, 1781, Box 6, Folder 32, Thistlewood Papers.

between the social, political, and cultural agenda of a civil, stable, and metropolitan Jamaica and the daily realities of life—his life—in the colony.

While Beckford's idealized descriptions of the Jamaican landscape promoted the colony, supported white Jamaican cultural ambitions, and celebrated Robertson, the author's characterization of Wickstead served to distance the *Descriptive Account* from the portraitist. In his book, Beckford wrote of Wickstead: "His powers of painting were considerably weakened by his natural indolence, and more than all, by a wonderful eccentricity of character." Beckford's description suggests that he was of the opinion that Wickstead embraced the island, and, in doing so, adopted its degenerative habits of weakness, laziness, and ill-health:

> …if you could only be ascertained of the difficulty and consequent fatigue with which the least exertion in that climate is sure to be attended; a climate that is very soon, and perceptibly, in many subjects, relaxes the nervous system, makes indolence succeed to industry, disease to health, and disappointment and vexation undermine the body, and care and despondency overcome, and at last destroy the vigor of the mind.[64]

In his description of Wickstead, Beckford distinguishes elite Jamaicans interested in the island's improvement from the artist's climate-induced laziness, which Edward Long described: "in an elbow-chair, with his feet resting against one of the piazza columns; in this attitude he converses, smoaks his pipe or quaffs his tea, in all the luxury of indolence."[65] For Beckford, Wickstead was an unappealing representation of a Jamaican archetype—the transient visitor who falls prey to the tempting transgressions and

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[64] Beckford, *Descriptive Account*, 44.

[65] Long, *History of Jamaica*, 2: 21.

predatory climate of the colony.[66] He represented the type Britons mocked disapprovingly through Abraham James' *Johnny NEW-COME in the ISLAND of JAMAICA*. (fig. 3.10) Accounts of Wickstead's life parallel that of Johnny New-Come, progressing from arrival on the island through seasoning before finally falling ill after "Johnny creolizes and puffs sickness away" in the tenth frame.

Creole Portraits

Wickstead's creole portraits integrated the island's culture, in contrast to the idealized descriptions and canvases of Beckford and Robertson. While Robertson's landscapes generalized the Jamaican landscape, aesthetically connecting it to a global empire, Wickstead's portraits met white Jamaicans' voracious desire for metropolitan visual culture on the island. He created canvases employing the fashionable generic conventions he had recently absorbed in Zoffany's studio. Because the visual language of the conversation piece emphasized daily life as opposed to idealization, however, Wickstead's portraits were unable to escape the lived experience of the island, which significantly departed from Beckford's ideals. In his Jamaican conversation pieces, Wickstead blurred the boundaries between indoor and outdoor space using a method

[66] Engaging Beckford's description, historians from Edward Edwards to Frank Cundall perpetuated an apparently false biography for Wickstead. Cundall and others unquestioningly accepted Edwards' conflation of Wickstead's "indolence" in Beckford's account and the occupation of planter, when he wrote: "He there [in Jamaica] practiced for a considerable period as a painter, but afterwards became a planter, in which undertaking he was not successful. This disappointment occasioned an uneasiness of mind, for which he sought a temporary but treacherous relief in drinking, which hastened his death." (Edwards, 178) Edwards' *Anecdotes of Painters who have Resided or been Born in England* was intended as an extension of Horace Walpole's multivolume chronicle of eighteenth-century artists, *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (1762). Edwards' volume depended on, as its title suggests, anecdotes, and was posthumously published in 1808, after the author's 1806 death.

found in a group of Zoffany's conversation pieces from the 1760s. Within the compositional spaces defined by open walls and dissolving floors, Wickstead framed portraits of enslaved figures engaged in the daily tasks of household laborers, drawing attention to the island as a slave society even as his portraits functioned as objects of their owners' refinement.

English conversation pieces were typically located either indoors or outdoors, with exterior scenes including identifiable buildings or vistas on the grounds of aristocratic country estates and interior scenes showcasing the possessions of patrons in composed configurations. Zoffany developed another mode for structuring space, shown in *The Reverend Randall Burroughes and his Son Ellis* from 1769. (fig. 3.11) In this portrait, Zoffany breaks with the traditions of conversation piece painting, creating what art historian Kate Retford has called a "liminial space," existing between interior and exterior.[67] Retford has argued that Zoffany's liminal spaces are more characteristic of Joshua Reynolds' loosely classicized, grand manner portraits of the 1760s. Reynolds' grand manner attempted to transcend contemporary fashion through classical robes and ambiguous settings in portraits like *Caroline, Dutchess of Marlborough and her Daughter, Lady Caroline Spencer*, painted from 1764 to 1767.[68] (fig. 3.12) Reynolds'

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[67] Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2006), 119–122; 234–235. Other Zoffany portraits representing liminal spaces include *John, Lord Mountstuart in Masquerade Dress* (1765) and *The Gore Family with George, Third Earl Cowper* (c. 1775), although the later picture more clearly takes on the grand manner liminality of Joshua Reynolds.

[68] Of grand manner portrait painting, Reynolds later wrote: "When a portrait is painted in the Historical Style, as it is neither an exact minute representation of an individual, nor completely ideal, every circumstance ought to correspond to this mixture. The simplicity of the antique air and attitude, however much to be admired, is ridiculous when joined to a figure in a modern dress." Discourse V in Joshua

aesthetic may have suited Beckford's aims for portraits of Jamaica, but Wickstead had trained with Zoffany. Unlike Reynolds, Zoffany adhered to the details of the material world even as his painted rooms unexpectedly and implausibly opened from carpeted interiors to expansive exteriors. Having worked as a studio assistant for Zoffany from at least 1766 to 1768, Wickstead may have worked on *The Reverend Randall Burroughes and his Son Ellis*, and would have helped the artist create similar compositions.

As Wickstead set to work in Jamaica painting portraits of planters and their wives, he called upon Zoffany's model of delineating sitters' possessions and surroundings in liminal spaces, bridging the interior and exterior. The openness represented in these portraits suited the dominant architectural style on the island by the 1770s. Multi-functional front and rear piazzas circled rural houses on Jamaican plantations and pens, serving as additional living space within Jamaican homes. These fashionable, liminal spaces likely resonated with Wickstead and fit the model of the spaces pictured in his mentor's works. In his portrait of Benjamin and Mary Pusey, a large, unglazed opening allows light into the living space, and a column stands just inside of the opening in his paintings *Richard and Jane Pusey* and *Edward East and Family*. (figs. 3.1, 3.13, and 3.14) Wickstead consistently represents his sitters in spaces with open walls.[69] These

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Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, ed. Robert R. Wark (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 1997), 88.

[69] In creole Jamaican houses, piazzas served as spaces for welcoming visitors, socializing, and taking in cooling, healthful breezes either during the day or at night when residents sometimes slept on these porches. Porches were intended to mitigate the extreme Caribbean heat, but they were far from the only feature of plantation architecture intended to do so. Architectural historian Louis Nelson finds that this interest in comfort further extended to the windows of plantation houses, which were often unglazed, even on public buildings. Throughout the Caribbean, commentators asserted that glazing windows was not

open walls were inspired by the architecture of the island, but also provided the artist with stage sets on which he inadvertently documented the cultural and racial struggles transpiring in Jamaican society.[70]

Historian Trevor Burnard has argued that eighteenth-century Jamaica was essentially a war zone, and white Jamaicans felt constant anxiety about the instability of their volatile surroundings.[71] This uneasiness emerged, in part, from earlier fear of attack from surrounding Maroon groups, members of Jamaica's free black population that occupied the island's interior. Conflicts between whites and Maroons ensured that Westmoreland was a "rural western frontier" for the first four decades of the eighteenth century. After the eruption of the First Maroon War in 1731, however, the Jamaican

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sensible for a climate that benefitted from cooling breezes and also suffered somewhat frequently from severe storms. Nelson, *Architecture and Empire in Jamaica*, 178–217.

[70] Representations of slaves in British portraits and conversation pieces evolved from the late seventeenth century, and conventions for representing African slaves were well established by the time Wickstead was painting in the 1770s. Portraiture was a key site of negotiation for Britons' relationship to slavery. In their study of slave portraiture, Angela Rosenthal and Agnes Lugo-Ortiz write, "in Europe a black page remained for the longest time a desired asset and expensive rarity, and the inclusion of such servile figures in portraiture often became conventionalized into a type…." (Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, 2) Black servants in conversation pieces signaled the wealth and status of the sitter, with these portraits representing not stock figures but actual servants of the sitters. In portraits like *Elihu Yale; William Cavendish, the second Duke of Devonshire; Lord James Cavendish; Mr. Tunstal; and an Enslaved Servant* from about 1708, artists employed established European conventions of representing servants and slaves. (fig. 4.21) The boy's metal collar and livery identified him as enslaved, as did his position as the lowest member of the composition's visual hierarchy. Art historian Beth Fowkes Tobin points out that here the black servant is associated with the consumption of tobacco and wine, exotic luxury items produced in the colonies. Yet unlike the disruptive force of servants figured in satirical contexts like Hogarth's *Progresses*, the disruptive potential of the servant in Yale's conversation piece is contained by the structure of the composition. Beth Fowkes Tobin, *Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial Subjects in Eighteenth-Century British Painting* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 38–39. Esther Chadwick, Meredith Gamer, and Cyra Levenson, *Figures of Empire: Slavery and Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Britain* (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 2014), 10–11. See also: Susan Amussen, *Caribbean Exchanges: Slavery and the Transformation of English Society, 1640–1700* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 196.

[71] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire*, 89.

House of Assembly negotiated a peace treaty with the Maroon leader Cudjoe in 1739. This peace was tenuous and tension still led to conflict between Maroons and planters, but the treaty also offered white settlers Maroon assistance in calming revolts by enslaved populations and returning runaways.[72] Even as Maroons eased the settlement of Westmoreland, the relatively remote parish saw constant threat from slave insurrection. Tacky's Rebellion had swept Jamaica from May to June of 1760. The largest slave revolt before the Haitian Revolution, enslaved people of Akan origin planned across the island with the goal, according to Edward Long, of "the entire expiration of white inhabitants; the enslaving of all such Negroes as might refuse to join them; and the partition of the island into small principalities in the African mode; to be distributed among their leaders and head men."[73] Painting in the 1770s in one of the parishes most impacted by this insurrection and with a ratio of almost twenty-five enslaved Africans to each white settler, Wickstead was working for a population that remained alert to the threat posed by the enslaved population. The tense but controlled presentation of Wickstead's two enslaved African figures underscores this delicate balance.

Jamaica's Maroon population posed a threat to the security of elite Jamaicans, as well, warring with whites for the first four decades of the eighteenth century until a peace treaty between the Jamaican House of Assembly and the Maroons was negotiated in 1739. This peace was tenuous, however, and incidents of violence by Maroons against captured slaves continually reminded white Jamaicans of this community occupying the

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[72] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire*, 23.

[73] Long, *History of Jamaica*, 2: 447.

island's interior. Yet while Maroon attack was threatening—and indeed erupted into war again in 1795 and 1796—the greater and more omnipresent threat was that of slave insurrection. Comparison of the frontispiece engraving from the Jamaican Assembly's 1796 *Proceedings of the Governor and Assembly in regard to the Maroon Negroes* to the depictions of Wickstead's two enslaved African figures further illuminates distinctions between the constructed visions of elite Jamaicans.[74] (figs. 3.15, 3.16, 3.17) The masculine black body represented in the frontispiece engraving of Leonard Parkinson, captioned as "taken from the life" is typical for depictions of maroons and contrasts depictions of the enslaved.

The distinction in presentation between the enslaved Africans in Wickstead's pictures and Leonard Parkinson's portrait may be attributable to the tenuous position of enslaved individuals who worked in great houses, and in particular the few people who worked or were for other reasons kept closest to a slaveholder's family. Peter Marsden wrote, "The domestic slaves are very often kept as mistresses; and when confidence is placed in them, are exceedingly faithful and useful in overlooking the others in their master's absence," yet also writes, "The domestic slaves are the most dangerous, having greater opportunities than the field negroes, and not having such a dread of white men."[75] Wickstead affirms Marsden visually by depicting multivalent enslaved figures. Both are positioned at the left edge of the canvas, wearing livery, and are signaled as subservient either by size or gesture; they are motioned to by slaveholders, presented visually as

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[74] Jamaican Assembly, *Proceedings of the Governor and Assembly in regard to the Maroon Negroes* (London: John Stockdale, 1795–1796).

[75] Peter Marsden, *An Account of the Island of Jamaica* (London: S. Hodgson, 1788), 8.

emblems of Jamaica's slave society. Both figures are connected to the landscape, physically located not in the architecturally defined English civil interior of the great house but instead in the open walls that accommodate Jamaica's climate and allow a view of the plantation landscape. In distancing these figures from the pictured slaveholders, Wickstead's conversation pieces can be read as minimizing the notion of creolization in white Jamaican society while also presenting slavery in the West Indies as natural and unthreatening. Yet these figures represent the labor system that generated the sitter's wealth, present and civilized within the polite interior, daily threatening both sitters' politeness through creolizing influence and security through their ability to disseminate information.

The labor of enslaved people is stripped from Wickstead's plantation landscapes, but the viewer cannot ignore its presence in his conversation pieces of Benjamin and Mary Pusey and Richard and Jane Pusey. (figs. 3.1 and 3.13) Enslaved figures stand at the periphery of the figural groups in both paintings. Upon initial encounter, both figures appear to be depicted according to eighteenth-century English conventions of representation for black servants. Each occupies a position not uncommon for black pages, body servants, and grooms, included in portraits painted in London to convey the wealth and worldliness of sitters, as is seen in Reynolds' *Lady Elizabeth Keppel* from 1761. (fig. 3.18) Both figures wear colorful, opulent livery and stand in composed postures, but their positions are diminutive, with Wickstead defying perspective to paint the men at a smaller stature. Enslaved Africans were incorporated into the family sphere within some metropolitan conversation pieces by the middle of the eighteenth century.

Among the most complex examples of this sort of familial intimacy is Zoffany's portrait of *The Family of Sir William Young, First Baronet*.[76] (fig. 3.19) In this outdoor conversation piece, a young black man holds a boy dressed in pale blue satin Van Dyck dress on a horse. This child, John Young, perches precariously on the lap of his brother, Brook Young. Brook holds the reins of the horse, while John makes eye contact with and holds the hand of his brother, Henry Young, preparing to dismount. The young African groom stands between John and Henry. The arms of these three youths intertwine, establishing a relaxed and unrestrained familial dynamic into which the servant was folded. This composition stands in contrast to the organization of Wickstead's conversation pieces. Instead of a generalized representation of servants and slaves found in both eighteenth-century England and the early American Republic, Wickstead paints portraits of individuals. Both the page in *Benjamin and Mary Pusey* and the groom in *Richard and Jane Pusey* perform common tasks—holding an object, presenting a cane—describing for the viewer both servants' positions and roles within their respective households.

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[76] The Walker Art Gallery now believes that this painting was likely made between 1767 and 1770. If that date is accurate, it is likely that Wickstead saw this portrait as it was painted in Zoffany's studio. The gallery argues that the painting signals Young's arrival in England's elite, made shortly after he purchased the manor of Delaford in Iver, Buckinhamshire, in 1767. This was a key status symbol that along with his being made a baronet on 2 May 1769, was a moment demanding commemoration.

There has been some debate about this dating, however. Beth Fowkes Tobin believes that Sir William Young was still in the West Indies at this point, as he petitioned the government in 1773 to return to England. She also found a letter from Sir William Young to the Earl of Liverpool that mentions Brook Young (the second oldest of Young's sons, here on horseback) died at the battle of Bushy Run in 1763. (Tobin, *Picturing Imperial Power*, 40–42, 236).

At the time Kriz was writing *Sugar, Slavery* the Walker dated the painting ca. 1766, but she agreed with Tobin that the painting was probably not commissioned later than the end of 1764, when young departed for the West Indies. She qualifies this timeline, however, stating that the painting may have been completed and delivered after Young left for Dominica. (Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar*, 40–42, 211)

These young black men both actively engage the sitters, holding in one instance a portrait and in the other a hat and gold-headed cane. By holding these objects, both figures occupy positions of servitude but also provide veiled symbolic representations of the threats present for white men and women on the island, which as an occupant of the colony Wickstead could not escape, even in his metropolitan conversation pieces. Although the figures are diminutively positioned, both portraits equally show various threats to the island's white population presented by the institution of slavery. Richard Pusey reaches toward his servant, who stands holding his hat and cane. (fig. 3.13) The young man leans away from Pusey, however, and maintains a tight grasp on the delicately modeled cane. The cane bisects his body, allowing his grip to fix in the lower third of the object with a bent arm. These tensions in his posture generate momentary uncertainty for the viewer—the young man will likely shift his weight and lift his arm, placing the cane in Pusey's open hand. Yet his positioning with the cane also fleetingly doubles as a moment for uncertainty between black and white populations within the unstable colony. Even Wickstead's careful painted hierarchy, created to reassure white residents of the island, could not erase the island's many continuously present threats.

Positioned at the threshold between indoor and outdoor space, the young man in the portrait of Benjamin and Mary Pusey is older than the boy accompanying Richard and Jane Pusey. (figs. 3.1) Perhaps his age was reason enough for Wickstead to sharpen the spatial distinction between his figure and the Puseys, creating additional distance while also exploiting the perspectival space to represent him at a smaller stature. As young domestic servants aged, white plantation owners were forced to trust these individuals, as

it was often necessary to allow them to travel and work off of plantations. This young man almost certainly delivered letters and undertook other errands beyond the confines of the estate for his master.[77] His mobility around the island allowed he and others in his position to establish and maintain connections across island plantations and spread news between enslaved communities otherwise divided by the boundaries of estates. This mobility and the promise of escaping the physical trials of fieldwork made household jobs appealing, although the proximity to slaveholders could also result in unpredictable and dangerous work environments.[78] For some enslaved people these risks were worth the possible opportunities—it was this mobility that enabled the organization behind Tacky's Revolt in 1760.

The young man's skin is also notably darker than that of the figure in the portrait of Richard and Jane Pusey. While it is possible that this figure is an enslaved creole, born on the island, his skin tone does not immediately suggest a Jamaican heritage. Having only known enslavement, enslaved creoles who were born in the Caribbean were viewed as more trustworthy than those transported from Africa. In the darkness of his complexion, this figure inadvertently alluded to Tacky's Rebellion, when insurrection spread quickly throughout the parishes of Clarendon, Westmoreland, St. Elizabeth, and St. James through a network of enslaved Akan people from the Gold Coast between plantations. In the conversation piece, this young man holds a portrait of an older white

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[77] Douglas Hamilton, "Slave Life in the Caribbean," in *Representing Slavery: Art, Artifacts and Archives in the Collection of the National Maritime Museum*, eds. Douglas J. Hamilton and Robert J. Blyth (Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 2007), 50–61.

[78] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire*, 34.

woman—representing a group widely viewed to be the most vulnerable in the face of the island's various threats. By placing a family portrait of an older white woman in the hands of a young, dark-skinned, enslaved man, Wickstead signified the tenuousness of the family's history on the island.[79] Both the figures and their legacy are exposed as vulnerable to being overtaken by the young man or the larger enslaved population even as they depended on individuals and the institution of slavery for daily support and the wealth of the island.

In Wickstead's Jamaican conversation pieces, bodies represent positions within the system of labor that generated the sitters' wealth. White bodies are present within the polite interior, but they are kept at a distance from the black bodies that occupy the same pictorial space, maintaining the distinction between leisure and labor within a volatile society afraid of rapidly creolizing and disintegrating. Yet Wickstead's white figures could not purely represent cultivated leisure on the island within the disease climate of 1770s Jamaica, where due to the island's demographic failure, the challenges to naturally increasing white families were frequently discussed as a barrier to developing and maintaining an Anglicized culture on the island. While Wickstead's enslaved figures foregrounded the island's racial instability, his white female figures foregrounded the island's demographic failure. Wickstead's three located paintings of Jamaican planters were probably painted early in his time on Jamaica. Instead of representing his patrons

[79] Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar*, 171–172. There was little in the way of picturesque ruins, or monumental architecture to memorialize the history of the island's white colonists," John Stewart wrote in 1823, and this led to the import of churchyards and portraits alike in connecting the colony to its past. John Stewart, *A View of the Past and Present State of the Island of Jamaica; with Remarks on the Moral and Physical Condition of the Slave, and on the Abolition of Slavery in the Colonies* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1823), 218, as cited in Kriz.

from Westmoreland, they depict members of the Pusey and East families, both of whom had property near Beckford holdings in the parishes of Vere and St. Andrew, respectively. Even in these early paintings, Wickstead's portraits can be read as both representations of an ideal Jamaican society promoted by white Jamaicans and depictions of the challenges facing the island's elite population, working both toward and inadvertently against Beckford's idealized vision. Without women to reproduce and shepherd society, neither natural increase nor social refinement could exist.

Art historian Kate Retford has argued eighteenth-century family portraits should be viewed as a body of evidence contributing to an understanding of the historical relationships between, "politeness and sensibility, affection and patriarchy, love and lineage."[80] In the 1770s, like Beckford, Wickstead's patrons aspired to a Jamaican society that could be concerned primarily with these relationships. Yet for white Jamaicans, the type of civilized society governed by politeness, sensibility, affection, patriarchy, love, and lineage—by familial relationships—was an ambition as opposed to the demographic reality. While white Jamaicans aspired to settle a civilized society on the island, their ambitions were thwarted by their inability to sustain the island's population through natural increase. Operating in contrast to London-produced representations of the West Indies that suggested an unwelcoming, hostile environment, their texts and images served to promote the developing virtue and refinement found in Jamaica. These efforts were further challenged by the pervasive culture of absenteeism among the island's wealthiest planters—many of these plantation owners lived in Britain,

[80] Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, 5.

leaving the management of their estates to attorneys and overseers. In the service of planters who were resident on the island for a period of years or decades, Wickstead's family portraits encouraged increased white settlement on the island by depicting uncommon scenes like resident families and healthy island-born children. Because of the island's demographic failure and inability to build a self-sustaining population through natural increase, however, Wickstead's canvases of stable families also served as documents speaking to the high mortality rate and rare presence of women and children on the island.

In the 1770s white Jamaicans were campaigning to overturn the notion that the island was a place with little virtue or refinement to celebrate. Within domestic conversation pieces like that of Edward and Mary East, Wickstead visualizes the desire for healthy island-born infants funneled into a healthy childhood: "the method used here in rearing children secures the graceful form of their persons…. They are clad loose and light, go without the incumbrance of stockings, are bathed regularly in water every day, and exposed freely to the air; so that no part of the world can shew more beautiful children."[81] (fig. 3.14) Through the delicately layered translucent glazes building Mary East's luminous, porcelain skin, Wickstead reveals the white West Indian woman to be the fair, civilized Englishwoman, as opposed to the illegitimate children populating the West Indies for Britons:

> The many Mulatto, Quateron, and other illegitimate children sent over to England for education, have probably given rise to the opinion before-mentioned; for, as these children are often sent to the most expensive

[81] Long, *History of Jamaica*, 2: 273.

> schools, where the history of their birth and parentage is entirely unknown, they pass under the general name of West-Indians; and the bronze of their complexion is ignorantly ascribed to the fervor of the sun in the torrid zone. But the genuine English breed, untainted with these heterogeneous mixtures, is observed to be equally pure and delicate in Jamaica as the mother country.[82]

Wickstead provides visual evidence affirming Jamaican planters' project of selling the colony's civil society to the Mother Country, attempting to simultaneously lure additional settlers and counteract negative perceptions of creole West Indians.

In his *History of Jamaica*, Edward Long expressed concern for young white women living in the most remote parishes on the island, of which Westmoreland was one. Unlike young women raised in the island's towns:

> Those, who have been bred up entirely in the sequestered country parts, and had no opportunity of forming themselves either by example or tuition, are truly to be pitied. We may see, in some of these places, a very young woman awkwardly dangling her arms with their of a Negroe-servant, lolling almost the whole day upon beds or settees, her head muffled up with two or three handkerchiefs, her dress loose, and without stays. At noon, she takes her *siesta* as usual; while two of these damsels refresh her face with the gentle breathings of the fan; and a third provokes the drowsy powers of Morpheus by delicious scratchings on the sole of either foot. When she rouzes from slumber, her speech is whining, languid, and childish. When arrived at her mature years, the consciousness of her ignorance makes her abscond from the sight or conversation of every rational creature. Her ideas are narrowed to the ordinary subjects that pass before her, the business of the plantation, the title-tattle of the parish; the tricks, superstitions, diversions, and profligate discourses, of black servants, equally illiterate and unpolished.[83]

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[82] Long, *History of Jamaica,* 2: 274.

[83] Long, *History of Jamaica*, 2: 279.

Blaming a lack of education in addition to white creole women's surroundings, in this passage, one among Long's greatest concerns for white Jamaican society was voiced. Without women to reproduce and shepherd society, neither natural increase nor social refinement could exist. Wickstead's Jamaican family portraits emphatically counter the characterization of creole white Jamaican women. In the Pusey and East portraits, Mary Pusey, Jane Pusey, and Mary East represent three generations of elite white Jamaican women residing in the rural parishes of Vere and St. Catherine. (fig. 3.20)

Mary Pusey wears her powdered hair or wig atop her head and a loose gown over her chemise, with a sheer, draped kerchief at her shoulders and multiple layers of pinned lace ruffles emerging from her loose elbow-length sleeves. Her loose shift conceals whether or not she wears stays, but she maintains a rigid, formal posture. From her lace-ornamented hair to her delicate satin shoe, Wickstead represented Pusey as an elegant, polished white English woman, defying both the surrounding disease climate and slave society. Her civility extends beyond her clothing. On the floor between Benjamin and Mary Pusey are both an open book and a large, loose sheet of paper. Wickstead provides no indication as to whether it was Benjamin or Mary Pusey who was reading these materials. Mary Pusey also actively converses with her husband, who appears to have just moved closer to her and may even perch on the arm of his chair, animated in conversation. Their conversation, as described earlier in this chapter, centers on a roundel portrait of yet another white woman. For his patron Wickstead paints a lineage of white women, suggesting a healthy, thriving family.

Jane Pusey and Mary East appear to be younger than Mary Pusey, and may be contemporaries. Both wear gowns, petticoats, and stays, and both are positioned with erect, formal posture. Neither wears a gown with ornament to rival that of their husbands' suits beyond their sheer petticoats ornamented with floral motifs. Each wears her naturally colored hair upswept, Jane Pusey in a large chignon and Mary East in the lace-ornamented, egg-shaped sweep off of her face and neck. Although each woman's portrait is also filled with the difficulties white Jamaicans faced in surviving the island and expanding their numbers, at a glance both appear to be not the awkward, lolling young creole woman negatively impacted by her proximity to the culture of the enslaved described by Long, but monuments to the prospect for a settled white population on the island. Even as the figure of Amie-Anne East evoked her mother's recent death, for uninitiated viewers both on the island and in London, the portrait represented the successful issuance by a young white creole Jamaican woman. To the imperial eye regarding these Jamaican family portraits, Wickstead's female figures rigidly resisted the kind of debauchery most commonly associated with both genders on the island in written and visual accounts.[84]

Edward East's portrait with his family was likely painted shortly after Wickstead arrived on the island. (fig. 3.14) After East's first wife, Amy Hall East, died in March of 1773, he married Mary Wilkins East on April 9, 1774. The portrait commemorated East's second marriage and integrated his new wife into a representation of his young

[84] See James prints as well as some Brunias paintings, which were engraved and became the most widely distributed images of the West Indies.

family. Either Edward Hyde East, who was born September 9, 1764, or his sister Susanna sit on the floor playing with a small dog. The conversation piece presents an idealized family group of the type Beckford and his peers hoped to foreground within Jamaican society. Yet Mary East holds Amie-Anne East, Amy East's daughter who she gave birth to on March 9, 1773, immediately prior to her death. Here representations of the specter of death and family merge as they did in eighteenth-century Jamaican households. East's second wife, Mary, holds a daughter who his first wife died from complications while birthing just one year prior.

In the arms of her stepmother at less than a year of age, East's naked daughter is exposed to the threat of the highly detailed colonial landscape in the background. Children were rare in eighteenth-century Jamaica, both because there were fewer women than men on the island and because of the high rate of infant and child mortality. A full quarter of children born in St. Andrew, St. Catherine, and Kingston Parishes died within their first year. While this number is slightly lower when only considering St. Andrew—as mortality rates were lower in rural areas than in urban areas—overall children fared no better. Up to four in ten children died between ages one and five, and two additional children would die between the ages of five and ten. Once born onto the island, the lurking threats of diarrheas, dysenteries, and whooping cough emerged. After age ten another set of lethal diseases loomed, the most prominent of which was yellow fever.

Although mortality in Jamaica had peaked at the end of the first Maroon War in 1738, mortality rates remained high through the end of the eighteenth century. In the face of these high mortality rates, white residents of the island were aware of the threat of

death but also desensitized to its realities. Art historian Kay Dian Kriz has argued of the views in Joseph Bartholomew Kidd's *Illustrations of Jamaica in a series of Views Comprising the Principal Towns, Public Buildings, Estates, and Most Picturesque Scenery of the Island* (London, 1838–1840) that the lithographs "repeatedly acknowledge *and* contain or manage threats to its white inhabitants—both male and female."[85] (fig. 3.21) Analyzing Kidd's lithographs of churchyards, Kriz finds that the images balance acknowledging death and containing its threat. This practice developed in late eighteenth-century painting on the island, not only in Wickstead's group portraits, but also in overt memorials such as James Claypoole's *Memorial to E.R.*, dated 1774. (fig. 3.22) Claypoole's classicized portrait documents death on the island. In line with grand manner aesthetics, Claypoole painted a young woman in white approaching her funeral monument, escorted by the Greek goddess Pheme.

The idealized composition memorializes an elite white Jamaican woman who lived on the island in the early 1770s. Elizabeth Reeves, the "E. R." in the epitaph, died on the island in 1772 and was buried on the grounds of the parish church in Kingston.[86] The verses on the funerary monument are legible where the garland does not obscure them:

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[85] Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar*, 171. On representations of death in the nineteenth-century Jamaican landscape see 171–173.

[86] Saunders and Miles, 311–313. Edgar P. Richardson, "James Claypoole, Junior, Re-discovered," *Art Quarterly* 33: 2 (Summer 1970), 158–175. See also: J. H. Lawrence-Archer, *Monumental Inscriptions of the British West Indies from the Earliest Date* (London, 1875), 99. Lawrence-Archer identified a tombstone with the inscription: "ELIZABETH REEVES DIED DECR. 10th 1772, AGED 24 Y 4 M & 25 D." The tombstone is now missing, but his description noted that it presented eight verses.

> E. R. / …1772… / Well / Your…your brighte / Here Fame, her Clarion pendant at her Side, Shall seek Forgiveness of ELIZA's Shade: "Why has such Worth without distinction died? Why, like the Desert's Lilly, bloom'd to fade? / Here Elegance, with coy judicious Hand, Shall cull fresh Flow'rets for ELIZA's Tomb And Beauty chide the Fates' severe Command That chill'd the Op'ning of so fair a Bloom.[87]

The large monument to Reeves and her posthumous portrait both acknowledged her death and the island's demographic failure. Dotting the island's landscape by the 1770s, funerary monuments served as repositories for communal memory and history within the young colony. Like Wickstead's family portraits, Claypoole's memorial portrait functioned as a historical document for elite Jamaicans, constructing their communal memory. Colonists aspiring to an Anglicized Jamaican society erected these monuments and commissioned these portraits in order to construct, affirm, and promote dynastic continuity; establish a shared communal history; and display their gentility.[88]

Conclusion

Wickstead continued to exhibit at the Society of Artists in London even as he lived in Jamaica, sending pictures including *A Mulatto Woman Teaching Needlework to Negro Girls* in 1777, *A Portrait of a Well-known Beggar at Rome* in 1778, and *A Conversation* in 1780.[89] This transatlantic exchange underscores Wickstead's established reputation within the London art world as well as the close connections between the

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[87] Saunders and Miles, 312.

[88] Joan Coutu, *Persuasion and Propaganda: Monuments and the Eighteenth-Century British Empire* (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), 25–79.

[89] Cundall, 175. *A Mulatto Woman Teaching Needlework to Negro Girls* is presently unlocated, but is interesting to note as a potential point of comparison to Brunias' works.

Jamaican colony and Mother Country. Wickstead's conversation pieces presented elite Jamaicans' conception of their society and, inadvertently, the threats that challenged it, to both local and metropolitan audiences. The portraits represented the complex lived realities for elite white Jamaicans and also served to counter the prevailing English critique of the degenerate condition of the inhabitants of the British West Indies through their nuanced complexity.

The colonial Caribbean was critiqued through exaggerated, grotesque prints and caricatures created in London that depicted Jamaica and the West Indies. Caricatures such as "Physical Advice" associated the West Indies—present in the large map behind the central figure—with excess and the degeneration of health reflecting metropolitan perceptions of the West Indian colonies. (fig. 3.23) Another engraving, "The Torrid Zone, or Blessings of Jamaica," indicated the degenerate sensuality the Mother Country feared was endemic on the island. (fig. 3.24) The print directly connects the behavior of well-dressed but lascivious white creoles to disease. Yellow fever supports the scythe on which these figures act, their lives undergirded by an iconography of death and dying. The tropical sun burns brightly over an "opium-wielding angel of death," framed by the opposing astrological symbols for disease (Cancer) and the British Empire (Leo).[90] These prints multiplied in the late eighteenth century, demonstrating the wickedness of Jamaican society.

Existing in London alongside Beckford's *Descriptive Account* and Robertson's landscapes of Jamaica, Wickstead's conversation pieces joined a transatlantic counter

[90] Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar*, 157–194.

narrative of a civil, cultured, established Jamaican society. Beckford and Robertson represented an Atlantic Italy in their written and painted accounts of the colony, spanning the ocean by adopting conventions of representation commonly seen in Grand Tour destinations for the island's landscape. Wickstead created conversation pieces in a current, fashionable metropolitan style, but these images captured not only the aspirational civility and stability of elite Jamaicans, but also some of the acute challenges to their society. Wickstead's portraits became transatlantic documents, representing the colony as part of the broader British colonial project. This happened not only on the walls of the Society of Artists exhibitions but also in the groups of family pictures they joined as Wickstead's mobile Jamaican patrons traveled.

Although they were painted as tools for elite Jamaicans, these canvases entered larger transatlantic narrative about empire written in groups of family pictures. Wickstead's portrait of George Poyntz Ricketts and his wife Sophia Watts Ricketts is unlocated, but it likely returned to England when the family returned in the 1780s.[91] Ricketts owned and operated Midgeham in Westmoreland until he sold the property in 1777.[92] Possessing both Grove Place and Midgeham estates prior to the sale, Ricketts descended from a family with a record of military and civil service in the Caribbean beginning in the seventeenth century. He was also the only son of his parents, Jacob

[91] If the painting did not return to England with the Ricketts family, it likely did not make the voyage because it was destroyed on the island, possibly in the hurricane of 1780.

[92] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny & Desire*, 279. Midgeham was sold to Robert Woolery on April 11, 1777, for £80,000.

Ricketts and Hannah Poyntz Ricketts, and he had inherited all of his father's estates.[93] Even prior to the sale of Midgeham, like Beckford, Ricketts was among the wealthiest planters on the wealthiest island in the British Caribbean. Ricketts and his family returned to England sometime between 1778 and 1786, when their third son, Mordaunt Ricketts, was born. The double portrait of George and Sophia Ricketts was joined by at least two additional portraits while the family lived in England, a portrait of George Ricketts by Gilbert Stuart, an artist born in the British North American colonies and trained in Benjamin West's London studio, and portraits of their third and fifth sons, Mourdant Ricketts and Frederick Ricketts, both painted by English artist William Owen in 1793.[94] (figs. 3.25, 3.26, and 3.27)

This group of portraits brought together a canvas painted in Jamaica by Wickstead, an Englishman who died on the island a white Jamaican; a canvas painted in England by a citizen of the newly formed United States born in colonial Rhode Island; and two canvases painted in England by an artist born in Ludlow, Shropshire. This transatlantic group of portraits was characterized by the mobility of artists and patrons within the late eighteenth-century British Atlantic. This group ventured with Ricketts to Barbados in 1794, when he was appointed governor of that colony. When he died on the island in 1800, they returned to England with Sophia Ricketts and her children.

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[93] Midgeham descended from Joseph Poyntz through his daughter, Hannah Poyntz, mother of Ricketts. Will of Jacob Ricketts, PRO London, PROB 11/826.

[94] Stuart's portrait of George Poyntz Ricketts was painted before 1793, when the artist returned to the United States after sixteen years in England and Ireland.

3.1 Philip Wickstead, *Benjamin and Mary Pusey*, oil on canvas, c. 1775–1781, National Gallery of Jamaica.

3.2 Thomas Craskell, Sir Henry Moore, and James Simpson, *This Map of the County of Cornwall, in the Island of Jamaica* (detail), (London: Daniel Fournier, 1763). Library of Congress.

Thomas Thistlewood's Breadnut Island Pen is not marked on this map, but was located on the eastern side of the Cabaritta River. According to Trevor Burnard, it was bordered "on the north by Goodwin's land and on the east by the Kirkpatrick estate." Thistlewood lived there from 1767 to his death in 1786.

Based on the evidence in Thistlewood's diaries, Wickstead lived on William Foot's property near Smithfield plantation from 1778 through his death in 1781.

3.3 George Robertson, *The Spring Head of Roaring River*, oil on canvas, ca. 1775, Collection of Wallace Campbell.

3.4 Philip Wickstead, *Benjamin and Mary Pusey* (detail)

3.5 Pierre Eugène du Simitière, *A South West view of the house of Augustin Merida Esq. in Kingston Jamaica Taken from the South Sea House*, graphite, ink, and wash on paper, 1760, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

3.6 William Woollett after Sydney Parkinson, *A View of a Perforated Rock in Tolaga Bay in New Zealand*, published in John Hawkesworth, *An Account of the Voyages…for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere…by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret, and Captain Cook*, 1773.

3.7 Thomas Vivares after George Robertson, *A View in the Island of Jamaica, of Roaring River Estate, belonging to William Beckford, Esqr.: near Savannah la Mar*, engraving, published March 25, 1778, John Carter Brown Library, Brown University.

3.8 Philip Wickstead, *Portrait of Mr. John Corbet, Tollemache, Earl Talbot, James Byres, Sir John Rous, John Staples, and William McDouwall*, ca. 1773, Private collection.

3.9 Philip Wickstead, *A Scene in Jamaica; Portrait of the Artist and his Companion*, oil on canvas, c. 1779, Private collection.

3.10 Abraham James, *Johnny NEW-COME in the ISLAND of JAMAICA*, hand-colored etching, ca. 1800, John Carter Brown Library, Brown University.

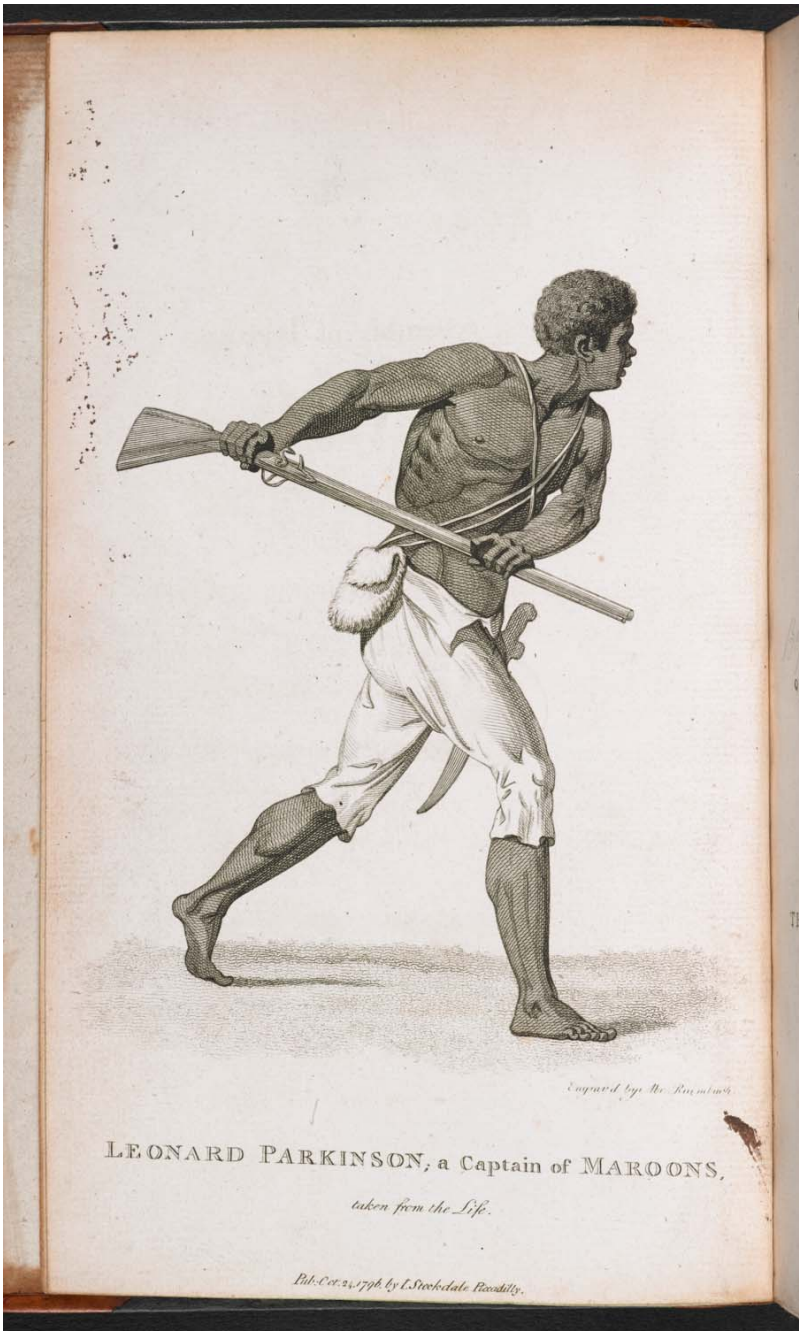
3.11 Johan Zoffany, *The Reverend Randall Burroughes and his Son Ellis*, oil on canvas, 1769, Louvre.

3.12 Joshua Reynolds, *Caroline, Duchess of Marlborough and her Daughter Lady Caroline Spencer*, oil on canvas, 1764–1767, Blenheim Palace.

3.13 Philip Wickstead, *Richard and Jane Pusey*, oil on canvas, c. 1775–1781, National Gallery of Jamaica.

3.14 Philip Wickstead, *Edward East and Family*, oil on canvas, c. 1775–1781, National Gallery of Jamaica.

3.15 "Leonard Parkinson, a Captain of Maroons, taken from the life," Engraving commissioned by Bryan Edwards, from *The Proceedings of the Governor and Assembly in regard to the Maroon Negroes*, London, 1796, Newberry Library.



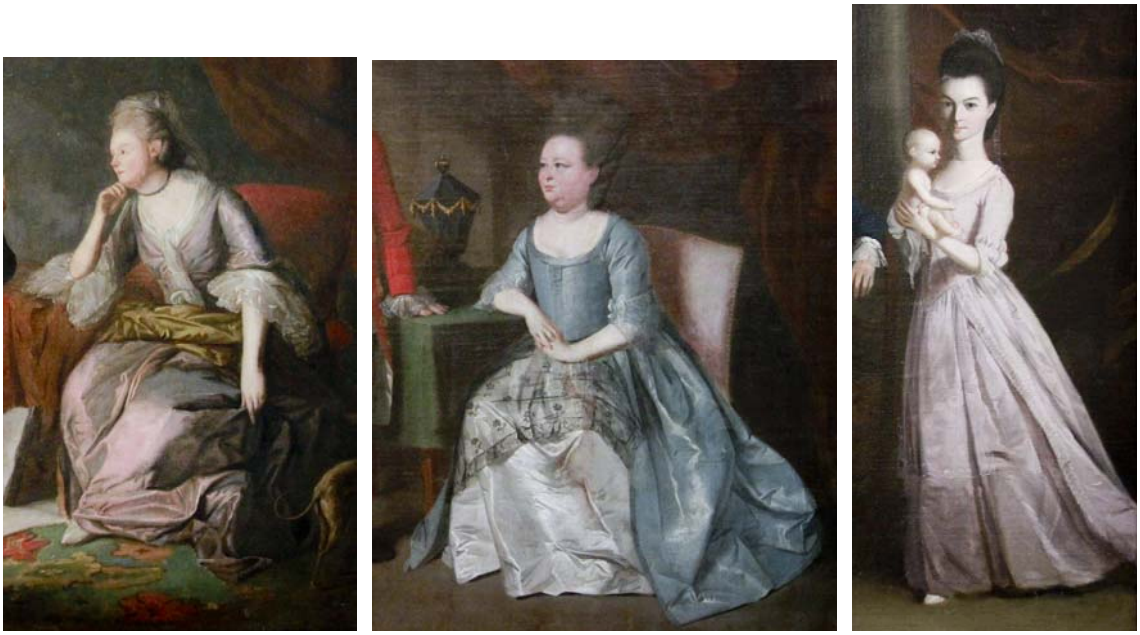
(Left) 3.16 Detail of the servant figure in Wickstead's portrait *Richard and Jane Pusey*.

(Right) 3.17 Detail of the servant figure in Wickstead's portrait *Benjamin and Mary Pusey*.

3.18 Joshua Reynolds, *Lady Elizabeth Keppel*, oil on canvas, 1761, Woburn Abbey, collection of the Duke of Bedford.

3.19 Johan Zoffany, *The Family of Sir William Young, First Baronet*, oil on canvas, c. 1762–1764, National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery.

3.20 Details of Mary Pusey, Jane Pusey, and Mary East in Wickstead's portraits *Benjamin and Mary Pusey* (left), *Richard and Jane Pusey* (center), and *Edward East and Family*.



3.21 Joseph Bartholomew Kidd, *Kingston Church*, lithograph with watercolor, plate 47, from *Illustrations of Jamaica in a Series of Views Comprising the Principal Towns, Public Buildings, Estates, and Most Picquresque Scenery of the Island* (London, 1838–1840). Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

3.22 Joseph Claypoole, Jr., *Memorial to E. R.*, oil on canvas, 1774, New Orleans Museum of Art.

3.23 John Nixon, “Physical Advice,” mezzotint in sepia on laid paper, 1774, The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

3.24 After Abraham James, “The Torrid Zone, or Blessings of Jamaica,” hand-colored etching with aquatint on wove paper, 1803, The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

3.25 Gilbert Stuart, *George Poyntz Ricketts, Governor of Barbados*, oil on canvas, before 1793, as reproduced in Parke-Bernet Galleries sale catalogue number 552, 1944.

3.26 William Owen, *Mourdant Ricketts*, oil on canvas, 1793, The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens.

3.27 William Owen, *Frederick Ricketts*, oil on canvas, 1793, Carnegie Museum of Art.

Chapter 4

Material Mobility: John Singleton Copley's Miniatures and Pastels

In his pastel *Self-portrait* of 1769, John Singleton Copley fixes his gaze on the viewer. (fig. 4.1) His firm stare and erect posture suggest a personal assuredness that is bolstered by the gleaming damask banyan, gold-trimmed waistcoat, and powdered wig he wears. Copley's self-portrait is a painting of his ambition to be a gentleman, effacing his status as an artisan-painter through his clothing. The artist's garb is similar to that which he pictured in his pastel portrait of stylish merchant Jonathan Jackson, also created in the late 1760s. (fig. 4.2) Although Copley's waistcoat is embroidered and his wig is powdered while Jackson's clothes and hair are more relaxed, both men project elegance and worldliness. At the conclusion of the 1760s, however, Copley—while increasingly wealthy—was not particularly worldly. He had yet to paint outside of the British colony of Massachusetts and had spent little time beyond Boston, even as he wrote to Benjamin West, "It would give me inexpressible pleasure to make a trip to Europe, where I should see those fair examples of art that have stood so long the admiration of all the world."[1] Copley was working in a mobile society, portraying patrons whose interests stretched throughout the Atlantic and beyond, just as he was increasingly preoccupied by the prospect of seeing the performances of his Italian predecessors and London-based contemporaries.

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[1] John Singleton Copley to Benjamin West, November 12, 1766. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 50–51. For more on Copley styling himself as a gentleman, see: Rather, "Carpenter, Tailor, Shoemaker, Artist" and Rather, *The American School*, 17–50.

Copley scholars have fixated on the artist's yearning for a world beyond Boston in the 1760s. The artist is characterized as a striving provincial, someone who dreamed of the artistic communities in London, Florence, and Rome, even as he sent pictures to the metropole and anxiously awaited critical responses. In contrast, by considering Copley's 1760s experiments with medium, this chapter argues that Copley actively sought transatlantic audiences while living in Boston by developing practices in the highly portable mediums of oil on copper, watercolor on ivory, and pastel on paper. Copley not only sent oil on canvas paintings to London for exhibition and critique, he also innovated by creating miniatures and pastels. Portraits in oil on copper, watercolor on ivory, and pastel on paper were largely unknown in the British American colonies before Copley devoted his energies to these mediums, beginning in the late 1750s. This chapter finds his miniatures and pastels to be key breakthroughs in his early body of work that allow his portraits to travel in his stead, spreading throughout the Atlantic World. These works expanded the reach of the artist's hand and name. Their portability also allowed Copley to expand the market for his works, enabling a broader reach for him within a transient clientele even as he felt compelled by his family to remain in Boston. By developing his work in miniatures and pastels from the late 1750s until he departed Boston for London in 1774, Copley exploited the inherent properties of these mediums, creating portable portraits that capitalized on clients' mobility and extended the reach of his paintings to many walls between Boston, London, Nova Scotia, and St. Kitts.

To the extent that scholars have considered his miniatures and pastels, they have attributed Copley's interest in these mediums to the fashion for these mediums in the late

1750s and 1760s.[2] However, Copley and his patrons praise the portability of these mediums in their correspondence. Even as oil on canvas portraits were also shipped throughout the British Empire, miniature and pastel portraits were more easily carried aboard vessels and beyond the location where they were created due to their smaller scale and protective glazing.[3] Copley's correspondence with his stepbrother, Henry Pelham, contains repeated references to his attention to and concerns regarding shipping oils, pastels, and miniatures to patrons beyond Boston.[4] As Copley dominated the market for portraits in Boston, he also worked to cultivate patrons in Atlantic colonies both near to and far from Massachusetts. Intracolonial trade and the large number of merchants among his patrons enabled commissions. Yet sending his portraits by way of trusted agents did not eliminate uncertain intervals and unstable conditions in shipping. Pastels and miniatures were surer commodities that could be transported outside of crates and with their owners. Copley's output in these mediums, from the late 1750s to the early 1770s, in conjunction with his constant attention to the demands of shipping his work

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[2] Pioneering scholarship on Copley's work in miniatures and pastels was published in the 1995 exhibition catalogue, *John Singleton Copley in America*. Art historian Erica E. Hirshler and conservator Marjorie Shelley provided the first substantive studies of Copley's work in these mediums, but their essays emphasize technical detail as opposed to contextual analysis. Erica E. Hirshler, "Copley in Miniature" and Marjorie Shelley, "Painting in Crayon: The Pastels of John Singleton Copley," in *John Singleton Copley in America*, eds., Carrie Rebora and Paul Staiti (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 117–126; 127–142.

[3] Prown, *John Singleton Copley,* 135–136. Copley's miniatures and pastels were indeed favored by wealthy sitters according to Prown's statistical analyses in *Copley in America*. Prown found little apparent relationship between sitters' income and medium, except for a tendency for miniatures and pastels to have been favored by wealthier sitters. This was despite the fact that they were less costly than larger portraits. In her work on Copley's miniatures, Erica E. Hirshler briefly hypothesized that the artist considered miniatures and pastels to be related in his American work—often creating both for the same patrons—but she did not expand on this theory. Rebora and Staiti, *John Singleton Copley in America*, 252.

[4] This body of letters, which was first published by the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1914, is relied on by Copley scholars to consider his American body of work in oil on canvas.

during these decades demonstrates his engagement with a wider Atlantic market before he submitted *A Boy with a Flying Squirrel (Henry Pelham)* to the annual Society of Artists exhibition in London in 1766 and well before he departed Boston for Europe in 1774. And unlike his exhibition portraits, miniatures elided the movement of people and the movement of goods. The smaller Copley made his portraits, the more effectively they overcame the uncertainties of Atlantic travel and transport. For objects that were often described in sentimental terms as embodying the sitter, this security provided additional insurance against not only losing an object, but also losing a piece of a loved one for owners of portraits.

By 1769, when he created his *Self-portrait*, Copley's designs on leaving Boston were developing as the colony faced increasing insurrection, violence, and emigration of first patriots and then loyalists. Myles Cooper alluded to both Copley's planned departure from the colony and the increasingly unpredictable colonial environment when he wrote to the artist requesting his portrait be sent to New York City. Although the piece needed another sitting, Cooper felt that both men were limited in their remaining time in the colonies:

> I must also beg of you to send my Portrait, finish'd in the best Manner You can; for, as to my Coming again to Boston (considering what a Situation You are in, and I am afraid Things are not likely to change for the better) the Matter is quite uncertain: and, if ever I *do* see the Place again, it will hardly be before both You and I have seen Europe.[5]

[5] Myles Cooper to Copley, August 21, 1769. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 73–74. Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, owns Copley's oil on canvas portrait of Myles Cooper, painted in about 1768.

The situation to which Cooper gestured was the political instability that ultimately became the American Revolution. In the 1760s, protests against the British government escalated in the colonies following the 1766 repeal of the Stamp Act. By the end of the decade, the violence and political tension in Boston motivated Copley to privilege his personal ambition, which required study in Europe, over his familial obligations, which had kept him in Boston. Within this context, he chose pastel over oil on canvas as the medium for his first self-portrait.

Portraits of Impermanence

Copley chose pastel as the medium for his self-portrait and its pendant of his new wife, Susanna Farnham Clarke, a pair of pictures commemorating their marriage, as he began to plan a transatlantic journey for his newly formed family. While he could not foresee the American Revolution, the ongoing instability certainly incentivized his departure from Boston. The prospect of a departure for study in Italy and a life in England would have made the portability of the pair of portraits commemorating his marriage a key consideration in selecting their medium. Copley opted for the relatively small format of pastel on paper, with the pendant portraits measuring about twenty-three and three-quarters inches by seventeen and one-half inches. In contrast, Copley's smallest efforts in oil on canvas typically measured thirty by twenty-five inches, measurements for bust length paintings within his body of work from the 1760s, which is defined by half, three-quarter, and full length single and double portraits. Made portable by their smaller size, the surface of the delicate pastel medium—colored dust that would

disappear if touched—was also protected by plates of glass.[6] This compact scale and protective layer appealed to Copley, as he contemplated the prospect of his future travel in the late 1760s. An increasingly mobile resident of the Atlantic World, Copley created portable portraits for himself and his new wife.

The portability of these portraits was not simply a convenience for Copley, however. Copley felt deep affection for his bride, Susanna Clarke, which was immediately observed by his associates and friends. In writing to confirm that he had safely received an oil portrait in New York, Captain John Small congratulated Copley, commenting on his obvious fondness for his wife:

> I had the pleasure of hearing you Mention the Lady…and with such warmth of Encomium as Convinc'd me of your serious and well plac'd attachment. Both from what you said *yourself* and the amiable Character I heard of her from others: I make no doubt of your having been happy in your choice and success.[7]

Copley's happiness in married life is affirmed in his reports to his brother, Henry Pelham, from New York during the summer of 1771. They matched the rhythms of their days, worked side by side, and planned the renovations to their Boston house. By 1772, however, Copley was exchanging letters with Jonathan Clarke, his brother-in-law who was residing in London, weighing whether or not it would be best for Susanna and the

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[6] Robert Dossie, *The Handmaid to the Arts* (London: J. Nourse, 1758), 216. See also Marjorie Shelley, "Painting in the Dry Manner: The Flourishing of Pastel in 18th-Century Europe," in *Pastel Portraits: Images of 18th-Century Europe* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 5–56, 34. Glazing on pastels did occasionally break. It was with this in mind that pastel fixitives were sought from the 1750s through the 1780s, when the medium was at its height of fashion, particularly in France.

[7] Captain John Small to Copley, May 15, 1770. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 93–94.

couple's young children to remain in Boston while Copley studied in Rome.[8] It is not known whether Copley brought his pastel portrait of his wife with him when he departed Boston in 1774, but the letters he wrote in preparation for the trip demonstrate his acute awareness of the painful nature of being displaced from a family member. As a painter of portraits, one of his aspirations was to evoke loved ones for patrons, marking success by embodying the sitter to the extent that an infant reached for a hand in a canvas.[9] Copley understood the power of eighteenth-century portraits to function as more than mere pictures, and it is easy to imagine that with this function, his professional ambitions, and Boston's political instability in mind, he turned to a smaller format for his personal wedding portraits.

Being paired with Clarke's portrait also reveals the brilliance of Copley's representation of himself. (fig. 4.3) Where her husband wears carefully illuminated embroidered silk, Clarke wears nondescript drapery and a small floral hairpiece. Of Copley's self-portrait, art historian Paul Staiti has argued that the artist erases any reference to his trade, while art historian Susan Rather has emphatically asserted that in his self-portrait, the artist visually constructed the identity of a gentleman.[10] In the pastel, Copley portrays himself at the status of most of his patrons and in his new station in life

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[8] Jonathan Clarke to Copley, December 20, 1772. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 190–193.

[9] Of his young son's reaction to his portrait by Copley in Glasgow, Thomas Ainslie recounted his father-in-law's description: "the Infant eyed your Picture, he sprung to it, roared, and schriched, and attempted gripping the hand, but when he could not catch hold of it, nor get You to speak to him, he stamp'd and scolded, and when any of us askt him for Papa, he always turned, and pointed to the Picture." Thomas Ainslie to Copley, November 12, 1764. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 30–31.

[10] Staiti, "Accounting for Copley," 37; Rather, *The American School*, 30.

as Susanna's husband.[11] Historian Jane Kamensky has recently described Copley as a marriage-made man.[12] Through his marriage Copley became a gentleman, a slaveholder, and a son-in-law to Richard Clarke, Susanna's father and one of the wealthiest merchants in Boston as the city's agent for the British East India Company. Copley's comfort within and allegiance to this new family is telegraphed by the banyan he wears in his self-portrait, a dressing robe worn by elite Bostonians in informal moments of leisure.

Copley's choice of pastel to create this pair of portraits in 1769 also suggested his loyalty to his new family connections through Susanna. Boston's political environment was in disarray after the Townshend Acts of 1767. Although Copley remained politically neutral to preserve his relationships with both clients dissatisfied with British policies and loyalists, his business, daily life, and family life were hurt as the business of Tory merchants declined and some colonists threatened Britain with armed resistance. With these events in mind and against the backdrop of his ongoing preoccupation with studying in Europe, Copley's sights were turning more seriously to England's shores in 1769.

The artist rendered his pastel self-portrait smaller still by copying it in a watercolor on ivory miniature of the same year, an even more portable and intimate

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[11] Copley could have elected to represent himself as a painter. It was not unprecedented in his body of work for an artisan to be represented plying his craft—Copley's highly finished portrait *Paul Revere* was completed in oil on canvas in 1768, just one year prior to the artist's *Self-portrait*. On Copley's *Paul Revere* see: Ethan W. Lasser, "Selling Silver: The Business of Copley's *Paul Revere*," *American Art* 26: 3 (Fall 2012), 26–43. Copley primarily painted men of business (shipping, merchants, landowners, and gentlemen) and professionals (ministers, lawyers, doctors, teachers, and government officials). Twelve percent of his colonial portraits of men were of craftsmen or small retailers.

[12] Jane Kamensky, "Betsy Copley's Father: A Portrait of the Artist as a Family Man" (lecture, University of Kansas, Lawrence, November 2, 2015). See also Jane Kamensky, *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2016).

object for Susanna. (fig. 4.4) The miniature replicates the opulent garments worn by Copley in his self-portrait, suggesting the embroidery on his waistcoat, the pattern of his damask banyan, and even the spontaneous flip of his left collar in stippled dots of watercolor. Colors shift between the portraits, but that is most likely due the fading of some red pigments, which now highlight the visible blue tones suggested by Claude Boutet to properly color flesh tones for men's faces in watercolor on ivory miniatures.[13] That Copley chose to make his portrait even smaller speaks to its use within a transatlantic context. He likely gave this small portrait to Susanna following their 1769 wedding as a token of affection to be worn.[14] Yet his creation of a replica of his pastel self-portrait also portended the couple's impending separation. After years of consideration, Copley finally traveled to London and then Italy in 1774. Susanna remained in Boston with her family and Copley's, pregnant with their fourth child and managing their household. The miniature of her husband may have helped to collapse the distance between the couple, which both struggled to manage.[15]

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[13] Rebora and Staiti, *John Singleton Copley in America*, 252–253. Claude Boutet, *The Art of Painting in Miniature: Teaching the Speedy and Perfect Acquisition of that Art without a Master* (London, 1739); English translation from French edition, published in 1708. For a comparison of tone in pastel and oil painting, see John Russell, *Elements of Painting with Crayons* (London, 1772), 18.

[14] The intended use of the miniature is supposed due to the orientation of its setting which is original to the piece and thought to be the work of Paul Revere. Dale T. Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures in the Manney Collection* (New York, 1990), 98–100.

[15] Copley to Susanna Clarke Copley, July 9, 1774. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 223–224. Copley's affection for his wife and children is apparent in his letters, and as early as September 1774, he weighs his desire for additional training in Italy against his longing to be reunited with his family: "You are in return to receive the only best and surest testimonies that is in my power how much mine depends on yours, that is, releaving your anciety as much as possible by constantly writing to you, and being as soon as possibly I can, in London again. I am certain as I can be of any thing, that if it pleases God to bless me with Life and health, I shall not exceed the time I menshoned, that is, I shall be in England the next Summer. If you knew how great my desires were to be with you, you would not think it necessary to say one word to hasten

In May of 1775 the miniature made the trip with Susanna, three of her children, and the Clarkes as they traveled to London after the inception of the fighting of the American Revolution.[16] It was not until Copley was reunited with his family and settled in London that he painted his second self-portrait and the first in oil, *The Copley Family*, from 1776 to 1777. (fig. 4.5) *The Copley Family* professed Copley working on a larger, more ambitious scale than he had in Boston, representing himself and his family in a style appealing to the competitive art market of eighteenth-century London, according to art historian Emily Ballew Neff.[17] Having positioned himself in the artistic center of the British Empire and achieving successes at the Royal Academy exhibitions, Copley was no longer required to hold portability central within the transatlantic contexts for his work. Unlike the moment when he created his pair of pastel wedding portraits, when creating *The Copley Family* in his London studio, the movement of people and goods was no longer at the fore of his concerns. Through his relocation to London, Copley shifted how he viewed himself and his patrons. They were fixtures of the city, as opposed to figures physically moving through oceanic spaces. In London, Copley's Atlantic became primarily conceptual—an idea as opposed to a lived reality. He executed *The Copley*

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that happy time; I am sure I shall think that an hour of happiness that brings us together beyond any I shall enjoy till it arrives." Copley to Susanna Clarke Copley, September 15, 1774. *Copley Pelham Letters*, 256–257.

[16] The miniature stayed in Copley's family, descending from the artist's estate to his daughter, Elizabeth Clarke Copley (1770–1866), who brought the piece back to Boston where she resided with her husband, Gardiner Greene.

[17] Emily Ballew Neff, *John Singleton Copley in England* (Houston, TX: The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1995), 94–95.

Family in oil on canvas, showed it to acclaim at the Royal Academy in 1777, and subsequently hung it in his London dining room.[18]

Copley's Atlantic Worlds

Within the large body of scholarship on Copley's work while residing in the British American colonies, few scholars have turned their attention to his miniatures and pastels. Both mediums are most often described as techniques embraced by the artist to satisfy the demands of young, fashion-conscious patrons. Miniatures and pastels became stylish choices around 1750, and from about 1750 forward, residents of the British American colonies used their increasing access to metropolitan trends to copy current British preferences.[19] However, the easily transportable nature of miniatures and pastels provided another little-acknowledged advantage over oil on canvas portraits for both Copley—who was committed to living in Boston—and his Boston-based patrons. The physical properties of these mediums satisfied the demand for transatlantic pictures he encountered while painting in Boston. From the first years of his career in the 1750s, Copley produced not only oil on canvas portraits but also likenesses in miniature and

[18] Martha Babcock Amory, *The Domestic and Artistic Life of John Singleton Copley* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1882), 79–80. Even *The Copley Family* ultimately became the subject of a transatlantic journey, when Susanna Clarke Copley sent the family portrait to her daughter, Elizabeth Clarke Copley Greene, in 1802. It was sent as a work on paper, a sepia sketch created in preparation for a never-realized engraving of the composition. The accompanying letter by Susanna Copley specified: "Should it ever be thought worth while to finish the plate, you must let the sketch cross the Atlantic again; in the mean time, we shall be happy in the pleasure it affords you and the rest of our dear friends in America."

[19] On the fad for metropolitan fashions in the colonies see: T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) and Cary Carson, ed., *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994).

pastel. His work in the latter mediums comprises almost twenty percent of his total output for his two decades of work in Boston, from the late 1750s through the early 1770s.[20] Copley's miniatures and pastels are early innovations in his American body of work. He developed facility in these fashionable mediums in response to his increasing attention to the Atlantic connections of his peers and patrons.

In 1755, three years after John Greenwood departed for Surinam, transatlantic traveler and portraitist Joseph Blackburn arrived in Boston after painting in London, Bermuda, and Newport.[21] Blackburn worked in an ethereal rococo palette, representing his patrons in poses and compositions that were trends in contemporary British portraits. (fig. 4.6) Art historian Jules Prown has argued that Blackburn's arrival spurred Copley to develop his meticulous mature style.[22] It was around the same moment that Copley produced his earliest miniatures, including an oval, bust-length miniature portrait of Joshua Winslow in about 1755 after his three-quarter-length oil on canvas portrait of the

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[20] According to Prown's statistical analysis of Copley's American works, of his 240 portraits, 80% are oil on canvas, 14% are pastel, 4.5% are oil on copper miniatures, and ½ % are watercolor on ivory miniatures. Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 135.

[21] On Joseph Blackburn's career and works see: Lawrence Park, "Joseph Blackburn: A Colonial Portrait Painter, with a Descriptive List of His Works," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 32 (October 1922), 270–329; John Hill Morgan and Henry Wilder Foote, "An Extension of Lawrence Park's Descriptive List of the Works of Joseph Blackburn," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 46 (April 1936), 15–81; C. H. Collins Baker, "notes on Joseph Blackburn and Nathaniel Dance," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 9 (November 1945). 33–42; Craven, *Colonial American Portraiture*, 296–308; and Saunders and Miles, 194–196.

[22] Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 28–29. Jules David Prown, *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 38–39.

same year.[23] (figs. 4.7, 4.8) The artist created additional miniatures around 1755, including two portraits of women, *Mrs. Todd* and *Mrs. Russell*. By the end of the 1750s, he was creating a suite of technically innovative and stylistically proficient miniature portraits in oil on copper—an unusual combination of media—for the Oliver family.[24] Working in miniature allowed Copley the opportunity to impress existing patrons and cultivate new interest by offering a medium otherwise unavailable in Boston—including from Blackburn—which was fashionable in Britain and on the Continent.

Copley continued to experiment with medium and increase his output in the late 1750s and early 1760s, in part because of the increased competition he faced from Blackburn in Boston. From miniature painting he expanded further into another modish medium—pastel. Like miniature painting, pastel was newly popular in the 1750s in Britain and on the Continent. As scientific innovation informed the arts, the materials used to create pastels improved. Softer pastels, supports with better texture to grip the medium, and fixatives that promised not to discolor laid the groundwork for some artists taking up crayon painting to compete with oil painting. Both pastels and miniatures were also suited to display within the constrained quarters of urban homes of the highest classes both in the metropole and throughout the colonies.[25] In his manual for artists, *The*

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[23] Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 29. See also figs. 31–32. Joshua Winslow's miniature is in a private collection, while his oil on canvas portrait is in the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Copley more often moved from painting a portrait miniature to creating an oil on canvas portrait.

[24] Both *Mrs. Todd* and *Mrs. Russell* are in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. These miniatures are discussed in greater depth below. On the Oliver family portraits and Copley's technical innovation with the medium, see: Theresa Fairbanks, "Gold Discovered: John Singleton Copley's Portrait Miniatures on Copper," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* (1999), 75–91.

Handmaiden to the Arts, Robert Dossie observed that pastels and miniatures required glazing, a feature that reflected light in dark interiors.[26] Although undeniably intimate, portraits in miniature and pastel were also public objects in the eighteenth-century British empire, both within homes and beyond. While miniatures were often of a size small enough to fit in a pocket or be mounted as jewelry, they were amassed by collectors and displayed in cabinets, as was the case at Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill, or on walls, side by side with not only oil on canvas paintings but also pastels. (fig. 4.9) From 1769, these objects were also included in Royal Academy exhibitions, displayed prominently in the Great Room at Somerset House, as seen in Edward Francis Burney's 1784 drawing. (fig. 4.10) Miniatures and pastels were inherently fluid in their function, at times acting as oil on canvas portraits but also additionally capable of moving with their owners to further preserve an emotional connection between owner and sitter. These works played an important role in eighteenth-century visual culture in London and throughout the colonial Atlantic, although they have received little scholarly attention.

Scholars have overlooked Copley's miniatures and pastels not only because they are less studied mediums, but also because of the American art historians' tendencies to write about Copley as a divinely inspired youth in a provincial backwater devoid of art. Writing in 1882, Copley's granddaughter, Martha Babcock Amory, recounted her

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[25] On the appealing size of miniatures see Marcia Pointon, "'Surrounded with Brilliants': Miniature Portraits in Eighteenth Century England," *The Art Bulletin* 81: 1 (March 2001), 48–71, 49. See also: Stephen Lloyd and Kim Sloan, *The Intimate Portrait: Drawings, Miniatures and Pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence* (Edinburgh and London: The National Galleries of Scotland and the British Museum, 2008).

[26] Dossie, *Handmaiden*, 216.

grandfather's exceptional beginnings in her biography of the artist, *The Domestic and Artistic Life of John Singleton Copley*:

> A century and a half ago an humble boy, of quiet habits and untiring industry, with a rare love of art, was born in the little town of Boston, Mass. Without instruction or master he drew and painted and 'saw visions' of beautiful forms and faces, which he transferred to his canvases, till his name and portraits began to be known in the staid Puritan society of the place.[27]

In writing of Copley as a self-taught genius, Amory perpetuated an account delivered by Copley's son to William Dunlap for inclusion in Dunlap's 1834 history of art in North America, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States*. Copley's son, John Singleton Copley, Lord Lyndhurst, promoted the myth of Copley as an exceptional American genius that persisted from the early nineteenth century into the twentieth, and can even be found as a current in recent scholarship. Writing Dunlap in 1827, Lyndhurst insisted that Copley "was entirely self-taught, and never saw a decent picture, with the exception of his own, until he was nearly thirty years of age…proof of what natural genius, aided by determined perseverance can, under almost any circumstances, accomplish."[28] While Dunlap himself rejected the notion of Copley as self-taught and visually starved, Lyndhurst's account channeled through Amory's

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[27] Amory, *The Domestic and Artistic Life of John Singleton Copley*, 1. Amory's heavily shaped text, written from the Copley Family Papers held by the Massachusetts Historical Society, treats not only Copley's life but also his son's, with seven chapters treating phases in Lord Lyndhurst's life (1772–1863) from boyhood to his last years.

[28] William Dunlap, *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States*, 2 vols. (New York: George P. Scott and Co., 1834), 1: 104.

biography shaped the scholarship of historians of American art on the country's founding portraitist.[29]

Many historians of American art have turned to Copley as a singular figure in whose work may be found "the roots of an enduring American vision," in the words of Barbara Novak.[30] Too often the meticulous precision of Copley's American works has been confused with a realism that generations of historians of American art were invested in proving was unique to the country's fine arts by finding, "a long limner tradition distilled from national and international sources into a vocabulary relevant to the

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[29] Dunlap's disagreement with Lyndhurst's assertions about Copley's early career and influences in colonial Boston open onto the argument of this chapter. By the time Dunlap reached Copley in his history of art in North America, he had already written about portraitists John Smibert, Joseph Blackburn, William Williams, Robert Feke, Jeremiah Theus, Benjamin West, James Claypoole, Matthew Pratt, and John Wollaston. In this context, Dunlap rejected the notion of Copley as a lone portraitist creating works of genius in isolation: "Smybert and Blackburn painted in Boston; and even if the young man [Copley] did not receive their instruction as a pupil, he saw their pictures, where were more than decent, and received the instruction which is conveyed by studying the works of others. … Copley painted in New York, and saw the portraits executed by West in that city, and, as we have seen, West painted a portrait on his arrival at Rome, which stood a comparison with the works of Mengs." Dunlap did not include John Greenwood in his study, but his assertion that Copley learned his craft within a community of artists in Boston fits within the relationships described in the second chapter of this dissertation. Quote in Dunlap, *Rise and Progress*, 1: 104.

[30] Barbara Novak, *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century: Realism, Idealism and the American Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1. Novak's seminal work was first published in 1968, two years after Jules Prown's two volume study of Copley's careers in America and England.

A decade prior to the publication of Martha Babcock Amory's book, Augustus Thorndike Perkins privately published a biography of Copley. Frank W. Bayley, an early scholar of colonial American portraits, brought this information to a broader audience in *The Life Works of John Singleton Copley*, based on Perkins' work and published in 1915. Along with Bayley, James Thomas Flexner, Waldron Phoenix Belknap, Barbara Neville Parker, and Anne Bolling Wheeler brought the exceptionalist narrative constructed by Lyndhurst and Amory to early twentieth-century scholarship on colonial American portraits. While these scholars—particularly Parker and Wheeler—did important work, it was writing that obscured Copley's engagement with his surrounding community. For early work on Copley, see: Frank W. Bayley, *The Life and Works of John Singleton Copley Founded on the Work of Augustus Thorndike Perkins* (Boston: The Taylor Press, 1915); John Thomas Flexner, *John Singleton Copley* (New York: The Viking Press, 1939); Barbara Neville Parker and Anne Bolling Wheeler, *John Singleton Copley: American Portraits in Oil, Pastel, and Miniature* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 1938).

American experience."[31] Novak's assessment was shaped by Jules Prown's pioneering study of Copley, which heralded the artist as "without peer in the history of American art until the rise of Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins after the Civil War."[32] Prown acknowledged that Copley picked up where the recently departed Feke and Greenwood left off, but he confined this influence to formal concerns, writing that the younger artist initially shared their "linearity, planarity, clarity of parts, bold color, and strong contrasts of light and dark." For Prown this context quickly fades from the foreground, in deference to Copley's canvases.

The context for Copley's American canvases came into view through the 1995 exhibition, *John Singleton Copley in America*, where historian Paul Staiti situated Copley within the social and economic climate of 1750s and 1760s Boston.[33] While Staiti described the power oil on canvas portraits held for patrons who sought to fashion their reputations, he largely neglected the other mediums that played a key role in Copley's American *oeuvre*. This omission has continued even as art historians Susan Rather and Jennifer Roberts have recently turned toward Copley's Atlantic context.[34] Yet like Copley's complete body of work, in the studies of both Rather and Roberts, the artist's

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[31] Novak, *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century*, 1.

[32] Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 11. Even as Prown bridged the divide between Copley's colonial American and English portraits in his study of the artist, he perpetuated the notion of Copley as a rare American genius simply through his methods of assessing each phase of the artist's career and the two-part structure of his study.

[33] Rebora and Staiti, *John Singleton Copley in America*. An exhibition devoted to Copley's career in England was developed parallel to *John Singleton Copley in America*—see Neff, *John Singleton Copley in England*.

[34] Rather, *The American School*; Roberts, *Transporting Visions.*

Atlantic World is not fully acknowledged. For Rather, Copley's position within the British Atlantic is conceptual as opposed to physical, located in questions about the identity of the artist in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For Roberts, Copley's Atlantic is a physical site that shapes his art objects as he negotiates the intervals of time between producing his canvases and their exhibition in London.

While indebted to the work of Stati, Rather, and Roberts, this chapter argues that Copley's transatlantic connections shaped many of the works he created while residing in Boston, beyond those he sent for exhibition in London. As opposed to attributing Copley's stylistic innovations to "his need to secure, in and through his paintings, the illusion of social propriety and proximity despite his peripheral position," this chapter's transatlantic perspective finds Copley's miniatures and pastels be directly created to circulate in the swirling world of goods and objects engulfing the artist and his patrons.[35] Through his miniatures and pastels, Copley catered to audiences across the Atlantic World in the 1760s. These works were a product of his Atlantic surroundings, particularly the transatlantic mobility of artists, works of art, and mediums.

"To Gett it on Board of a proper Vessel": Shipping Portraits

Oil on canvas portraits were sent across the Atlantic in the early eighteenth century, but with the increase in shipping consumer goods at mid-century, the transport

[35] Roberts, *Transporting Visions*, 5.

of pictures between artists' studios and patrons' walls increased.[36] Britain's overseas trade became increasingly invested in commercial connections with North America and the West Indies over the course of the eighteenth century. In 1700, English colonies in the New World accounted for eleven percent of the value of English exports and for twenty percent of imports. By 1772, however, they took thirty-eight percent of exports and were the source of thirty-nine percent of imports.[37] Many exported goods also consisted of transformed colonial commodities. English domestic exports and imports quadrupled in value during this period as the island nation turned toward the expanded transatlantic sector and away from trade with Europe, which experienced a relative decline. Demand for oil on canvas paintings increased in the British American colonies and pictures found places on vessels, forming a small portion of the larger British export statistics. This tide of canvases was not only composed of portraits, but included pictures of every genre being shipped from London to decorate the walls of elite colonial houses, taverns, and even portraitists' studios. Such a vast expansion in the demand for and access to oil on canvas paintings throughout the empire transformed the demand for portraitists' paintings—including those produced by Copley.

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[36] On the transport and consumption of fine art in the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century colonies, see Esmée Quodbach, *Holland's Golden Age in America: Collecting the Art of Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Hals* (Pittsburg: Penn State University Press, 2014), 5–20; Roderic H. Blackburn and Ruth Piwonka, *Remembrance of Patria: Dutch Arts and Culture in Colonial America* (Albany: Albany Institute of History and Culture, 1988). On the market for portraits see Saunders and Miles, *American Colonial Portraits*.

[37] Kenneth Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 7–32.

Copley spent much of his time in Boston concerned with the transmission and receipt of his portraits. The artist's agents and patrons often wrote him to express their relief at a picture's safe arrival, as was the case when Captain James Scott sent a short letter from London in 1766 that assured "This Informs you of my Arrival in London. I have got the portrait safe home. It gives great satisfn."[38] Moments of confusion also appear with some frequency, as when Samuel Fayerweather wrote to Copley in 1763, "After Waiting a Considerable time with much Uneasiness to know whether Judge Leigh's Picture was sent to Carolina or no," for a picture that did ultimately reach its port.[39] The type of ship to trust was also a consideration, as when Thomas Ainslie reported to Copley from Halifax, Nova Scotia, that he was sending his portrait to his mother in London, "and as it goes in a Man of War, I hope She will receive it Safe."[40] At times he also found himself on the receiving end of bad news about his work, as when a vessel "was lost about 30 leagues to the westward of this port [of Halifax], and your drawings, together with several other things, have become the prey of the barbarous Inhabitants."[41] Although Copley's correspondent worked his connections to recover the artist's works, he was only able to track two of the prints taken with the ship.

The presence of these pictures throughout the British North American and Caribbean colonies provides evidence for artists', patrons', and agents' familiarity with

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[38] James Scott to Copley, September 5, 1766. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 46.

[39] Samuel Fayerweather to Copley, January 7, 1763. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 27–28.

[40] Thomas Ainslie to Copley, October 8, 1757. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 23.

[41] Captain Peter Traille to Copley, March 7, 1765. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 34.

the requirements for safely sending artworks on long-range oceanic voyages. While portraitists and their canvases fit economically into the general transport of goods, portraiture is also exceptional because these objects circulated in three directions—colony to metropole, metropole to colony, and colony to colony.[42] Traveling canvases responded to the material requirements of shipping, even as they pictured the shape of trade. In his diary for September 1787, George Romney recorded a series of four sittings with a patron, Eliphalet Fitch.[43] Two months later a studio assistant of Romney's recorded in the artist's book of sitters "Mr. Fitch's Picture [is] to be put in a proper case & packed to go to Jamaica, [with] the lid to be slightly screwed on—and [then] sent to M[r.] Maitland Coleman St."[44] Romney's sitter was a native of Boston, Massachusetts, who had moved to Kingston, Jamaica, in 1761, as a young man. The narrative surrounding Fitch's portrait resonates with the mobility that characterizes portraits in this period.[45] Fitch was intimately familiar with the inner workings of transatlantic travel and trade, having made his fortune working as a partner in the firm of Ludlow and Allwood, ship chandlers and general merchants. From Kingston, Fitch imported North American provisions and timber as well as cordage, cloth, and other manufactured goods from

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[42] This is in contrast to other goods circulating in the Atlantic world along these routes, which rarely traversed each of these three routes in the same form.

[43] Humphrey Ward and W. Roberts, *Romney* (London: C. Scribner's Sons, 1904), 112.

[44] Romney's sitters' book, November 24, 1787. National Portrait Gallery, London. As quoted in Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1993), 196.

[45] Fitch's portrait is now unlocated.

England. It was in this trade that he made his fortune and found himself able to travel to Britain in the 1780s and commission Romney to paint his portrait.

The packing and shipping instructions for Fitch's painting in advance of its almost four month voyage to Jamaica indicate the precarious process of transporting oil on canvas. Romney's studio assistant recorded the picture's ultimate destination of Kingston, Jamaica, in part because oceanic transport required a different case and packing materials than overland transport. Romney specified how to secure the lid of the case—"slightly," or with great care—and with screws, which were specially fabricated for the transportation of art objects. Screws were used in place of nails, as one eighteenth-century agent specified, "to avoid any occasion of beating with a hammer."[46] The vibration of hammer and nail were enough to damage the delicate surface of a painted picture. Antoine Watteau's *L'Enseigne de Gersaint* from 1721 represents the idealized salesroom of a prominent Parisian dealer of paintings and luxury goods. (fig. 4.11) In this painting, Watteau offered details from the life of an art dealer, including a rare representation of the work of packing paintings into crates. While little visual evidence of the process remains, Watteau's scene reminds the viewer that pictures moved daily to and from the studios of portraitists, sent for varnishing, delivery, retouching, conservation, or loan to important clients for decoration or edification. Even when a portrait neared its ultimate destination, it faced risks.

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[46] As quoted in Eleanor Hughes, "Trade and Transport: The *Westmoreland* in Context," in *The English Prize: The Capture of the Westmoreland, an Episode of the Grand Tour*, ed. María Dolores Sánchez-Jáuregui Alpañés and Scott Wilcox (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 36.

In 1767, Copley shipped a pastel portrait to Captain R. G. Bruce, an agent of his in London. Bruce was becoming accustomed to handling Copley's paintings in London, having delivered his *A Boy with a Flying Squirrel (Henry Pelham)* to the Society of the Artists exhibition for display in 1766 after it arrived with Roger Hale, the outgoing Collector of the Port of Boston.[47] As *A Boy with a Flying Squirrel* sat with Bruce—who was "quite at a loss how to dispose of the Picture" due to crossed correspondence—he met with trouble in retrieving the pastel. Of the crayon portrait Bruce wrote, "I have but just got it, as it was detained at the Custom House, and I had some difficulty, as well as Expence, to recover it; which made it unlucky that you did not send it, with the other, to Mr. Hale."[48] Bruce also had to wait to see the pastel, as it had an intermediary destination: "I have not yet seen it, the Box not being opened, as Mr. West has desired it may be sent to him, that he may see your Performance in Crayons."[49] After struggling to have Copley's portrait released from the Customs House, receiving agents deemed it preferable to wait to open its container until it arrived at Benjamin West's studio for examination.

For the transatlantic voyages required to deliver portraits, trusted agents and ship captains were relied on for conveyance because of the dangers portraits faced at sea. This

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[47] Copley to Peter Pelham, September 12, 1766. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 48. Copley recounts to Pelham the path by which his painting made its way to the Society's walls. On Roger Hale see: "Adams' Minutes of the Testimony, Court of Vice Admiralty, Boston, March 1768," *Founding Families: Digital Editions of the Papers of the Winthrops and the Adamses*, ed. C. James Taylor (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 2016), n. 6, accessed July 31, 2016, http://www.masshist.org/apde2/.

[48] Captain R. G. Bruce to Copley, June 11, 1767. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 52–53. The other picture to which Bruce refers is *Young Lady with a Bird and Dog* (Toledo Museum of Art), Copley's exhibition picture in 1767.

[49] Captain R. G. Bruce to Copley, June 11, 1767. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 52–53.

was the case with Fitch's portrait, which Romeny sent to the firm of Maitland Brothers on Coleman Street. The Maitlands were Fitch's correspondents in London, primarily working as sugar factors and export merchants. Even with a trusted agent and a confirmed passage, pictures were sometimes held up at port, as was the case for one portrait Copley attempted to ship to South Carolina in 1763. Samuel Fayerweather wrote to Copley that he had communicated with one of the artist's patrons "the handsomest Apology…in your Behalf, for the long Detention of the Picture…but wrote Him of your Assiduity and Diligence to Gett it on Board of a proper Vessel: And of your being oblig'd to Unshipp it once, by reason of the Ship's altering her Voyage for Another part of the World."[50] Understanding the unpredictability of transporting portraits, Fayerweather himself commissioned Copley to paint his likeness in miniature in the same year he wrote this letter. (fig. 4.12) In addition to unpredictable paths, ships were also susceptible to violent and unexpected weather patterns that could lead to a vessel being damaged or capsizing.

Coupled with external hazards were the internal ecosystems of ships. The natural environment of eighteenth-century vessels contained quiet threats to canvases including saltwater, mildew, microclimates, insects, animals, and even sailors. Copley confronted the challenges of a rough oceanic voyage in 1770 when John Hurd, on behalf of John Wentworth, governor of New Hampshire, asked him to salvage a damaged portrait:

> By orders from Governor Wentworth I have putt on board this Sloop, Capt Miller, a Large Case with a Valuable Picture of one of his favourite

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[50] Samuel Fayerweather to Copley, January 7, 1763. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 27–28.

> Friends which lately arriv'd from England, and by some bad Stowage in the Vessell has taken considerable Damage. The Governor desires you would receive it into your Care and do the Needful to recover and repair the Beauty of the Picture and the Frame, so as to reship it by return of Capt Miller.[51]

In their study of the transport of natural history specimens, historians Christopher Parsons and Kathleen Murphy describe the field methods developed by British and French naturalists to secure and protect delicate seeds, plants, fruits, and preserved animals. Naturalists were engaged in a larger, more formalized networks of colleagues than portraitists, discussing the improvement of shipping conditions for their specimens. This conversation led to the development of increasingly systematic processes for shipping specimens during the second half of the eighteenth century.[52] Many of the solutions naturalists developed for the perils of shipping logically extend to the portraits transported on eighteenth-century vessels. Whenever possible, portraitists—like naturalists—sought to entrust their canvases to genteel passengers, ships' surgeons, or captains, rather than rely on the sailors who constituted the majority of the men on board.[53] When Copley found passage with a trusted acquaintance for his first exhibition picture, *A Boy with a Flying Squirrel*, he wrote of the relief he felt: "I have sent You the

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[51] John Hurd to Copley, April 17, 1770. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 84–85.

[52] Christopher M. Parsons and Kathleen S. Murphy, "Ecosystems under Sail: Specimen Transport in the Eighteenth-Century French and British Atlantics," *Early American Studies* 10: 3 (Fall 2012), 524. The authors elaborate: "When a shipment arrived in either particularly good or particularly poor condition, naturalists made note of the method by which it was packed and where on the ship it was carried. In this iterative fashion, naturalists perfected the practices that best protected delicate seeds and specimens during transport." This methodical recording of conditions and results of transport evokes the many lists John Greenwood kept in his memoranda books from Surinam, discussed in Chapter 2.

[53] Parsons and Murphy, 510.

portrait of my Brother by Mr. Haill, who has been so kind to take the care of it and put it among his own baggage."[54] Even with the proper care of a passenger, Copley worried about the climate his painting would be subjected to on the ship, in particular because the painting traveled shortly after its completion and without the oil paint having fully dried. Because of the climate on board the vessel and incomplete drying of the paint, Copley feared that the picture could discolor and be unfit for exhibition.[55]

In a century marked by military conflict and the competing growth of empires, a portrait sent to Jamaica by Ozias Humphry spurred the questions that could pass between artist and patron about a painting's status. Tom Bourke wrote Humphry from his Jamaican plantation, Spicy Grove, that the artist's painting of his son, Jack, was lost when the *Amity* was taken in July of 1795.[56] Bourke believed that pirates took the *Amity* and the painting, and was so confident in his information that he wrote Humphry asking for the artist to create a second likeness of his son. Bourke's information proved inaccurate, however, and he updated Humphry in August that he had, "received Jacks picture & gazed upon it over & over."[57] The distance and delays common to eighteenth-century shipping shaped Bourke's correspondence, leading him to expand on his fear for the portrait's fate because of the French Revolution's impact on Caribbean shipping.

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[54] Copley to Captain R. G. Bruce, September 10, 1765. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 35–36.

[55] Copley to Captain R. G. Bruce, September 10, 1765. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 35–36.

[56] Tom Bourke to Ozias Humphry, July 23, 1795. Ozias Humphry Correspondence, HU/4/110, Royal Academy of Arts.

[57] Tom Bourke to Ozias Humphry, August 14, 1795. Ozias Humphry Correspondence, HU/4/111, Royal Academy of Arts.

Bourke described what he feared for his son's portrait after hearing its vessel was taken: "Thanks to my good stars the vessel has arrived safely& my boy's phiz instead of being suspended in the pretty Cabbin of a Sans Culotte or the bloody Mansion of a Jacobin, is now keeping Company with [another picture] & decorating one of the handsomest & pleasantest rooms in our Island."[58] Bourke's receipt of his presumed-lost cargo attested to the uncertainties in shipping paintings as well as the distances these canvases could bridge.

This delay in shipping the portrait reiterated the distance between father and son, but the canvas also eased that remove and left Bourke without the words "to describe the comfort it has afforded me."[59] The emotional connections often preserved by portraits emerge in accounts of the objects' transatlantic travels by their often-mobile owners. While scholars have argued that early American portraits served to affirm social status and preserve family lines, a transatlantic perspective on these objects suggests their personal nature as surrogate family members, friends, or colleagues.[60] The concern and tenderness expressed by Bourke over the course of the journey of his son's portrait demonstrates that losing a portrait could represent the loss of a loved one for denizens of the British Atlantic. Copley worked with these stakes at hand as he painted in Boston

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[58] Tom Bourke to Ozias Humphry, August 14, 1795. Ozias Humphry Correspondence, HU/4/111, Royal Academy of Arts.

[59] Tom Bourke to Ozias Humphry, August 14, 1795. Ozias Humphry Correspondence, HU/4/111, Royal Academy of Arts.

[60] On portraits functioning to establish the social status of the sitter see: Staiti, "Accounting for Copley" and "Character and Class" in *John Singleton Copley in America*. For portraits functioning to preserve family lines see: Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution*.

from the late 1750s to the early 1770s, leading him to formats less likely to be at risk as they traversed oceanic distances.

The Portable Miniature

In about 1762, Copley painted Deborah Scollay in miniature, stippling watercolor on ivory. (fig 4.13) The small portrait, set in a simple gold locket with burnished bezel, could be worn as either a pendant or a brooch. Scollay sits stiffly in the portrait with her head positioned at three-quarters, the bottom half of her portrait consumed by the expanse of her neck. The miniature was likely created to celebrate Scollay's marriage to Dr. John Melville, and it represents Copley's earliest surviving watercolor on ivory work and possibly his first effort in the medium.[61] Melville had relocated from Scotland to Boston in 1757 and, by their wedding in 1762, had become a successful merchant in the port city. Within six years Melville would again relocate, returning to Scotland with his wife in 1768.[62] By having commissioned a portrait miniature from Copley as opposed to an oil on canvas portrait, Melville could carry his picture of his bride on his breast or in his pocket as his family moved across the Atlantic.

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[61] Susan E. Strickler, *American Portrait Miniatures: The Worcester Art Museum Collection* (Worcester: Worcester Art Museum, 1989), 48–49. While undoubtedly an early watercolor on ivory miniature by Copley, Erica E. Hirshler argued that this was not likely the artist's first effort in watercolor on ivory because of the masterful, refined handling of the medium. Hirshler, *John Singleton Copley in America*, 122. Jules Prown noted that Paul Revere's Day Books contain many charges to Copley in the 1760s for gold locket cases, gold bracelets, and gold and silver picture frames, all of which would have held miniatures. Prown observed that Revere occasionally noted the person for whom the frame, case, or bracelet was made. Many of these objects are not known today, suggesting that many Copley miniatures are lost. Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 30.

[62] Strickler, *American Portrait Miniatures*, 48.

Most often discussed as tokens of affection that provided the owner with a memento of a close friend or family member, miniatures have come to signify intimacy with a disembodied sitter. Frequently housed in jewelry adorned with woven hair, these works of art are understood as collapsing the space between the body of the owner (and assumed primary viewer) and the body of the sitter. For Copley, miniatures also served to expand the market for his works through their portability, allowing the artist broader reach with a transient clientele even as he elected to remain a Boston resident. The mobility of portrait miniatures reshapes an understanding of these objects as largely personal and intimate for eighteenth-century audiences. While certainly intimate in some instances, in others miniatures become a pinnacle of traveling canvases, easily packaged, transported, and displayed in varied locations. Art historian Marcia Pointon calls miniatures, "ambulant portraits," gesturing to the crucial, inherent mobility of these objects even as they allowed owners to "re-present themselves and their possessions" within the British structures governing eighteenth-century class and constructing concepts of luxury.[63]

Copley's miniatures of Samuel Cary and Sarah Gray Cary served this ambulant function. (fig. 4.14, 4.15) Copley's only known miniature commission from a West Indian planter, the artist painted this pair of portraits in about 1773, when the couple was married. Samuel Cary was born in Chelsea, Massachusetts, to a father who was a sea captain, ship owner, and distiller with strong business connections to the West Indies. Samuel departed for St. Kitts in 1762, there managing plantations before acquiring his

[63] Pointon, "Surrounded with Brilliants," 48.

own sugar estate, Simon.[64] He returned to Boston briefly in 1770 and met Sarah Gray, who he married in November of 1772. The couple was together until August 1773, when Cary returned to the West Indies, not joined by Sarah Gray Cary until late 1773 or early 1774. The fashionable watercolor on ivory likenesses were mounted for wearing as a locket and bracelet, functioning in both the public and intimate fashions described by Pointon. Perhaps commissioned with this separation in mind and likely having been split between the Carys during this period, when the miniatures were worn they evoked for both spouses and advertised to the wider world the couple's newly formed union.

The often-parallel functions of oil on canvas portraits and miniatures as well as the ease of transporting miniatures are illuminated in an exchange between one of Copley's step-brothers by Peter Pelham, Charles Pelham, and his aunt Helena Pelham.[65] Helena Pelham's letter addressed Charles' desire for her portrait, ultimately rejecting his request. Her letter makes clear that Charles has requested a miniature, but that she is not interested in sitting for a portrait of any form in her advanced age. She continues on to write that a miniature would be particularly difficult to obtain, "—but as to a miniature there is not one nearer than London, and it would cost above half a year's income to have

[64] Letterbook for the Simon Plantation, St. Kitts, MS Group 166, Special and Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. Accessed March 7, 2017, http://www.library.ufl.edu/spec/manuscript/guides/stkitts.htm.

[65] Charles Pelham was one of Peter Pelham's two sons with his first wife, Martha. Peter, Martha, and their sons Charles and Peter moved to Boston from London in 1726. Martha was deceased by 1741 (*Copley-Pelham Letters*, 9). In 1748, Pelham married his second wife, Mary Copley, the mother of John Singleton Copley, becoming Copley's step-father. From his second marriage he had a son, Henry Pelham, the subject of Copley's *Boy with a Flying Squirrel*.

it done, were I even there, and most likely I shall never go there again."[66] While she is emphatic in her rejection of Charles's request for her portrait in miniature, her understanding of why Charles is requesting the portrait places it in line with other portraits in the Pelham family, particularly that of her father:

> Now Charles as to my picture, how can you think I would sit for it. Your grandfather sat for his at 80, 't is true, but there never was so handsome, so charming a man at that age as he was—it was with much ado that I got him to have it done. I told him I would not be without it for any thing in the world, nor indeed no more I would, and as there was a tolerable good painter upon the place, I insisted upon it.[67]

In his exchange with his aunt, Charles Pelham requests a miniature that both he and his aunt understand would function similarly to an oil on canvas portrait, while also being created at a scale that lent itself to traversing the intervening oceanic distance. Britons including Pelham and Copley grasped the public function of miniatures, portraits suitable for display in the home or exhibition space that also moved through the world as jewelry. In the mid-1760s miniatures were so prominent in fashion that John Gwynn suggested: "The Ladies of Great Britain have done infinitely more for the professors of miniature painting, than the Society [of Artists of Great Britain] has done for all the branches of painting together, because by wearing bracelets, they have at once promoted the art and rewarded the labor of the artist."[68] Copley's Boston-based patrons purchased miniatures

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[66] Helena Pelham to Charles Pelham, February 15, 1762. *Copley-Pelham Letters* 23–24.

[67] Helena Pelham to Charles Pelham, February 15, 1762. *Copley-Pelham Letters* 23–24.

[68] John Gwynne, *London and Westminster Improved* (London: Dodsley, Bathoe, Davies, and Longman, 1766), 59, as quoted in Pointon, "Surrounded with Brilliants," 54.

because of their increasing visibility in the metropole and because of the security and portability miniature painting offered in the colonial context.

The ambulatory nature of miniatures was a benefit of the medium. In his 1708 treatise, *The Art of Painting in Miniature*, Claude Boutet emphasized the free and easy movement available to the painter of miniatures as well as the highly visible movement of miniatures through the world when he compared miniatures and oil on canvas paintings:

> But *Miniature* likewise has its Advantages; and without repeating such as I have mentioned already, 'tis neater and more commodious. You may easily carry all your Implements in your Pockets, and work when and wherever you please, without such a Number of Preparations. You may quit it and resume it when and as often as you will; which is not done in the other [oil painting]; in which one is rarely, to work *dry*.[69]

As Boutet asserted, creating miniatures was a movable activity because it required fewer harsh materials than oil on canvas painting, and they were applied on a smaller scale. Implements could be carried in the artist's pocket or packed easily, important physical properties in a society where many artists depended on itinerant limning to maintain an income. Copley's position in Boston made him aware of the itinerancy required of many of his portrait-painting colleagues, however, and Copley was frequently implored to mobilize his business.[70] While Copley traveled little to secure business prior to departing

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[69] Boutet, *The Art of Painting in Miniature*, 85. Emphasis in the original.

[70] In 1764, Thomas Ainslie beckoned with the promise of great income and a place to stay: "As I have ever had an Inclination to do You a Service if in my power, and the propagating of this Circumstance, which I have taken Care to do having not a little added to Your fame here, And as I am of Opinion that a Jaunt into this Country would rather add to Your Credite, and fortune, than diminish it; If You will come here for two or three Months in the Summer, so as to be here in June, I have a Room in my house at Your Service, so that your Stay will be no Expence to You, and not only my family, but all those of Credite in

for London from Boston, he did briefly work in New York City at the invitation of Miles Cooper from June to December of 1771. Lured by subscribers commissioning oil on canvas portraits, shortly after he arrived Copley wrote to Henry Pelham requesting his crayons. Although Copley's time was largely occupied with oil on canvas painting, offering pastels appears to have provided other benefits to some patrons and not put the artist at a comparative financial disadvantage.[71] The portability of pastels and their ability to be worked in a patron's home or Copley's studio aligned them with miniatures and provided one advantage.

Boutet also pointed to the flexibility of watercolor, the primary medium used to create miniatures, which could be worked intermittently and dried quickly. Quick drying paints (and pastels, which begin dry) allowed a picture to easily move when needed, even if it was not complete. Quitting work on a painting and resuming it as needed was advantageous for the artist working beyond his studio, but rapidly drying paint also avoided the other issues with color and texture that threatened to damage *A Boy with a Flying Squirrel* on its voyage from Boston to London. Copley deemed sending a partially dried oil painting worth the risks in transit due to its destination—the walls of

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the town would be glad to employ You." Thomas Ainslie to Copley, November 12, 1764. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 30–31.

Copley responded to Ainslie with what had become a common refrain by 1765, "I should have sooner made my acknowledgements for Your proferd kindness, which I do now with all sincerity, and should receive a singular pleasure in excepting, if my Business was anyways slack, but it is so far otherwise that I have a large Room full of Pictures unfinshd, which would ingage me these twelve months, if I did not begin any others; this renders it impossible for me to leave the place I am in: but the obligation I am under I shall ever acknowledge as sincerely as if it was in my power to except it. I assure You I have been as fully imployd these several Years past as I could expect or wish to be." Copley to Thomas Ainslie, February 25, 1765. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 32–33.

[71] For Copley's request that Pelham send his pastels see: Copley to Henry Pelham, June 16, 1771. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 116–117. A list of subscribers sent to Copley prior to his arrival in New York see: Captain Stephen Kemble to Copley, April 17, 1771. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 113–114.

the 1766 Society of Artists of Great Britain exhibition. In the context of Copley's daily studio production, in contrast, the artist stood to lose the respect and payment of his patrons in taking similar risks. Given the expansive Atlantic network through which his works circulated by the mid-1760s, Copley was well served by producing portraits in fast drying mediums when possible.

Copley's first forays into painting in miniature were made in the mid-1750s, when the artist innovatively integrated mediums to create paintings in small, demonstrating his willingness to push the boundaries of medium in order to accommodate his colonial context. From his stepfather's work as an engraver he appropriated copper as a support, including copper plates recycled from mezzotints to create portraits in small of *Mrs. Todd* and *Mrs. Russell*, both painted in about 1755. *Mrs. Todd* conveys the experimental character of Copley's early oil on copper miniatures, painted on a disk cut down from a plate that was textured with a rocker, the tool used to roughen the surface of a plate in preparation for making a mezzotint.[72] (fig. 4.16) The regularity of these diagonal, pocked lines suggest Copley's reuse of plates that were originally used to create a print. This texture also served to enhance his miniatures, however, promoting the bond between oil paint and copper support.[73] In painting in oil on copper of a weight for mezzotint engraving, Copley integrated two formats that lent themselves to easy transport in his early hunt for transatlantic mobility. Relatively small, flat, and standardized in size, prints have long been discussed as the primary method by which early Americans

[72] Fairbanks, "Gold Discovered," 76–77.

[73] Fairbanks, "Gold Discovered," 88, n. 9.

consumed metropolitan visual culture. An aspiring oil on canvas painter, Copley took his oil paint to the plate, producing smaller, flatter, more portable images in his preferred medium.

Artists in the British American colonies routinely relied on print sources as models for their oil on canvas compositions, but they also relied on the description and exchange of works. Small-scale paintings were ideal for this type of exchange, and were requested from Copley both by his stepbrother, Henry Pelham, and his friend and colleague, William Johnston. An aspiring artist who admired Copley, Pelham begged the artist to describe the works he saw during his painting trip to New York in the summer of 1771, and suggested Copley consider sending something small back to Boston.[74] Preoccupied with the many portraits he was painting in New York and the construction of his home in Boston, Copley only provided Pelham with epistolary sketches of the works he encountered. In contrast is a letter Copley received from his colleague William Johnston in May of 1770. The son of heraldic painter, engraver, and japanner Thomas Johnston, William had worked as an itinerant limner between Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire in the 1760s before moving to Barbados in 1770 seeking patrons for his portraits.[75] In his letter to Copley, Johnston requested multiple works: a bust-length portrait of Copley, "Either in Crayons or oil, in miniature or what ever way;" a portrait of his sister, Mrs. Hobby, in miniature; and a copy of a portrait of

[74] Henry Pelham to Copley, July 28, 1771. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 134–135.

[75] Saunders and Miles, *American Colonial Portraits*, 260–261.

Mr. Dipper by Harry Liddle in black and white chalk or pencil.[76] Of these portraits, Johnston most desired a miniature from Copley. He initially left the binding agent up to Copley, but quickly explained his preference for watercolor on ivory:

> I should be very glad to have her picture in miniature, in water colours or oil, which you please tho: I must confess should like to have it in water Colours, for this reason, because there are several pictures in this Island lately arriv'd from England, that are thought much of, so far inferior to some I have seen of my friends, that they never can be nam'd with them, and to convince them it is not mere boast should be glad to have as soon as you can conveniently do.[77]

Johnston's letter not only suggests that the ease of transporting miniatures had led to an influx of these fashionable objects in Barbados around 1770, but also that there were such a number of these objects that it would have been reasonable to stage a comparison between Copley's work and that of artists working in the Mother Country.

The miniatures Copley created in Boston existed in the continuum of mediums differently than many miniatures created in eighteenth-century London, however. Miniaturists working in the metropole often created small-scale copies of oil on canvas portraits. Underscoring the appeal of the portability of miniatures, artists working in the medium often clustered in destinations for British tourists, including Rome, where they copied works by portrait painters serving patrons on Grand Tours.[78] Miniatures provided

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[76] William Johnston to Copley, May 4, 1770. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 88–93.

[77] William Johnston to Copley, May 4, 1770. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 88–93.

[78] John Murdoch, Jim Murrell, Patrick J. Noon, and Roy Strong, *The English Miniature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 164. Murdoch, Murrell, Noon, and Strong suggest that replica painting became a robust industry in the eighteenth century as the demand for copies of large-scale portraits soared. They indicate that most miniaturists split their time between painting portraits from life and creating copies.

an immediacy that oil on canvas portraits often lacked, as they could be carried with patrons on their return trip while larger purchases suffered the delays of oceanic shipping in their journey to Britain. Copley's miniatures also afforded this kind of immediacy through their portability, but they often also served as the genesis for a group of images and existed in dialogue with a pastel prior to serving as a model for an oil on canvas portrait. These relationships between portraits created in different mediums in the 1760s further affirm the different functions of these objects, with miniatures insuring the immediate, emotional bond and oils affirming the social and familial worlds of the sitter from the walls of homes.

A suite of images grew from Copley's oil on copper miniature of Thomas Hancock, painted in about 1758. Hancock was an avid art collector, and had commissioned a pair of oil on canvas portraits from John Smibert in 1730, commemorating his marriage to Lydia Henchman.[79] At the time, Hancock was twenty-eight years old and had just partnered with Lydia's father, Daniel Henchman, to establish the first paper mill in New England.[80] In Smibert's portrait, Hancock strikes an authoritative pose, his chin high and eyes fixed with his right arm projecting slightly as though his hand is on his hip. (fig. 4.17) Smibert presents Hancock as a man flush with life, using red pigment to build up the modeling of his cheeks, nose, and chin. Between the creation of the Smibert and Copley portraits, Hancock's business expanded to rely on international trade. From 1746 to 1758, Hancock supplied the British forces in Nova

[79] Smibert's portrait *Thomas Hancock* is in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and *Lydia Henchman Hancock* is at the Colby College Museum of Art.

[80] The mill was chartered by the Massachusetts legislature in 1728.

Scotia through another business venture with Charles Apthorp. When the Copley miniature was painted, Hancock was a wealthy and established merchant, but he was also in a moment of personal and professional transition.

The year Apthorp died, Hancock made his nephew, John Hancock, his business partner. Hancock also made arrangements to leave his estate to his nephew, with provisions that, in the event of his death, his material assets were to remain with his wife until her demise. Hancock was not physically traveling between the Atlantic ports from which he grew his wealth, but in the year Copley painted his miniature these circumstances made portability paramount in his belongings. In the 1758 miniature, Copley represents Hancock as a self-assured elder with a graying brow, gazing into the distance from the corners of his eyes. (fig. 4.18) Still flush as in Smibert's portrait of his youth, in Copley's portrait Hancock's face is heavy, further suggesting his financial success. This miniature provided a model for Copley's first pastel portrait of his sitter. Hancock's commission of both portraits in short sequence may suggest his preparation for providing images of his likeness to both his wife and his nephew, as neither piece was created as a paired portrait. While little is known about the provenance of the 1758 pastel, Lydia Henchman Hancock held the miniature of her husband until her death.[81]

Hancock died about six years after his commission of the miniature and pastel portraits, in 1764. Within two years of his death, Lydia Hancock returned to Copley and requested that the artist paint her portrait in miniature to pair with the earlier portrait of Hancock. The Hancock miniature was expanded to match the larger dimensions of the

[81] Curatorial files for *Thomas Hancock* (NPG.81.17) and *Lydia Henchman Hancock* (S/NPG.81.4), National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.

portrait of Lydia Hancock that Copley created, and the two portraits were framed together. (fig. 4.19) Copley returned to oil on copper to create Lydia's portrait, which he had abandoned by 1766 in deference to the more common materials for miniature in the mid-eighteenth century, watercolor on ivory. He also copied both miniatures in pastel for her. (figs. 4.20, 4.21) The Hancocks' family portrait miniatures and pastels commissioned from Copley also served as a model for the artist's full length posthumous portrait of Hancock, commissioned by John Hancock for Harvard College. Copley's miniatures and pastels appear to have served a sentimental, personal function between deceased husband and widowed wife, visually affirming their familial relationship as well as Hancock's relationship with his nephew. In contrast, the oil on canvas portrait Copley painted for Harvard commemorated Hancock endowing a professorship at the college while suggesting the school's austere, scholarly ideals—distinct from Hancock's extravagant personal habits during his life.[82]

The separation of Hancock's first portraits by Copley—the miniature to his wife, the pastel to his nephew—serves as a historical prelude to a new function offered by the portability of miniatures and pastels in the decade of political tension that built before the American Revolution. Hancock's business interests benefitted from government contracts in the 1750s, and these contracts suggested his loyalist leanings and allegiance to the British crown. John Hancock adopted his uncle's moderate sentiments until 1765, when he emerged politically just as the disagreements between the colonies and Britain threatened to rupture. His resistance of the Stamp Act and adoption of the patriotic cause

[82] Stebbins, *American Paintings at Harvard*, 132–133.

benefited his burgeoning political career. The miniature and pastel were, then, divided by political sentiment as Boston was divided, even as Lydia Hancock and John Hancock remained close personally.

Although not created specifically to span the tumult and distance generated by the tension, unrest, and ultimate rupture between the American colonies and Britain, miniatures occupied a unique material position during the lead up to and fighting of the American Revolution. From 1764 to 1773, Boston experienced pervasive instability, riots, and attacks as a result of the passage of the Sugar Act, Stamp Act, Townshend Acts, and Tea Acts.[83] After fighting erupted in 1775 at the Battles of Lexington and Concord, patriots abandoned the Boston area for other colonies as the British military made the city a base for their operations. The following year, sixty thousand loyalists rushed to depart Britain's North American colonies. In some cases, patriots and loyalists alike were only able to bring what they could carry, at times abandoning their property or leaving it in the care of family members, hoping to retrieve these objects at the conflict's end.[84] Within this culture—enacted well before the eruption of war—portable objects carried a greater value, preserving sentimental connections between family members and loved ones as

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[83] On attacks on houses in Boston and their material implications see Robert Blair St. George, *Conversing by Signs: Poetics of Implication in Colonial New England Culture* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 206–295.

[84] Katherine Rieder, "'The Remainder of our Effects We Must Leave Behind": American Loyalists and the Meaning of Things, 1765–1800" (PhD diss, Harvard University, 2009), 1–2. Rieder titles her project with an excerpt from a letter that suggests just how little space was available to fleeing loyalists. Thomas Oliver, former lieutenant governor of the colony of Massachusetts, lamented to an official in London: "as our removal is so sudden and the means of transportation rather confined, we are obliged to content ourselves with taking only such necessaries as will barely suffice for the passage. The remainder of our effects we must leave behind." As quoted in Rieder, from Lieutenant General Oliver to Secretary Dartmouth in "Documents Relating to the Last Meetings of the Massachusetts Royal Council, 1774–1776," *Publications of the Royal Society of Massachusetts* 32 (1937), 503.

they traveled with their owners. As British North American colonials lost their homes, possessions, and connections, the possession of miniatures enabled the preservation of a tangible link to their pre-Revolutionary lives.

Loyalist Andrew Oliver was an enthusiastic patron of Copley's miniatures as early as 1758, when he commissioned in short succession three miniatures of varying formats: oil on ivory, oil on copper blank, and oil on copper. Oliver had previously commissioned oil on canvas portraits from John Smibert, including an ambitious group portrait, *Daniel, Peter, and Andrew Oliver*. (fig. 4.22) This large canvas included a posthumous portrait of Oliver's brother, Daniel, painted from a miniature created prior to his 1726 death in England.[85] This group portrait remained with Oliver until his death in 1774, a prominent document of familial bonds enabled by a miniature painting. In turning to Copley's miniatures, however, Oliver commissioned images that ranged in function from as public as Smibert's group portrait to so private as to be concealed.

In about 1758, Copley painted Oliver in oil on ivory, creating a miniature that Oliver—an avid collector of pictures—may have prized for its unusual materials. Oil painting on ivory fails to exploit the luminous properties of the costly support, however, and Copley reverted to painting in oil on copper after creating this miniature. He executed two oil on copper likenesses of Oliver, one that is mounted on the reverse of an oil on copper miniature of his wife, Mary Sanford Oliver, and another that was framed

[85] Saunders, *John Smibert*, 177–178.

for public display on a wall.[86] (fig. 4.23, 4.24) Literary critic Susan Stewart has posited that miniatures have the opposite function to mirrors, which reflect a clear image of the subject only when the subject is present. In contrast, "the miniature projects an eternalized future-past upon the subject; the miniature image consoles in its status as an 'always there.'"[87] Oliver replicated his oil on canvas portraits in a set of portable objects by commissioning miniatures in the late 1750s.

Although there is no way that Oliver could have foreseen his role in the Stamp Act crisis of 1765 and the subsequent violence wrought on his property, his late 1750s commission of a suite of Copley miniatures echoes within these events. Oliver was privately opposed to the Stamp Act but publically supported the law, and he accepted the post of Stamp Master, tasked with implementation. On August 14, 1765, Oliver was burned in effigy, the mob "surrounded Mr Olivers House, Broke his Windows & entred the House & destroyed [a] great part of the Furniture &c."[88] The symbolic violence to which Oliver and his possessions were subjected was a public spectacle against which Copley's miniatures guarded, concealable and removable by virtue of their scale. While Oliver could not protect the entirety of his property against the frustration of working

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[86] The oil on copper miniature that is mounted on the reverse of Mary Sanford Oliver's portrait measures 1 ½ x 1 ¾ inches and is set to be worn on a chain. Oliver's framed oil on copper portrait measures 5 x 4 inches, and is set in an original frame that measures 8 ¼ by 7 ¼ inches.

[87] Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 126.

[88] *Deacon Tudor's Diary, Or Memorandums From 1709, &c. By John Tudor, To 1775 & 1778, 1780 And to '93*, ed. William Tudor (Boston: Wallace Spooner, 1896), 17–18; as quoted in St. George, *Conversing by Signs*, 206.

Bostonians, he had the ability to purchase works that could be absconded, and, in doing so, preserve his presence.

Pastels, Travel, and Cultural Synthesis

Copley experimented with format and medium in his 1764 charcoal and pastel portraits of Deborah Scollay's parents, just as he had in his miniature of Scollay painted in watercolor on ivory two years prior. The paired portraits of John Scollay and Mercy Greenleaf Scollay show the artist vigorously embracing painting in crayons. Alongside his portrait of Elizabeth Byles Brown, discussed below, the Scollay portraits demonstrate Copley's dive into a medium that he had previously dabbled in briefly five years prior, in 1758.[89] Following methods employed and promoted by European pastel painters, Copley worked on paper mounted on canvas. In the Scollay portraits he limited his palette, working not in pure pastel but in a combination of white and black chalk and pastel. Copley painted the Scollays in oil on canvas just prior to creating these pastels. The pastel of John Scollay copied the head and shoulders details of the oil on canvas portrait meticulously, matching the folds of Scollay's right sleeve, the creases of his face, the wig powder dusting his shoulder, and even indicating the hand in his waistcoat at the lower right of the composition. (fig. 4.25, 4.26) In contrast, for his pastel portrait of Mercy Greenleaf Scollay, Copley departed from its oil on canvas predecessor. From the oil on canvas portrait to the pastel, she shifts from a reclined posture to an erect seated position and pearls around her neck and woven through her hair replace the contrasting fabrics

[89] Stebbins, *American Paintings at Harvard*, 131. See also Copley's pastel of *Hugh Hall* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1996.279), likely the artist's first effort in the medium.

represented in the larger piece. Within both portraits, the viewer senses Copley finding success in his attempts to "bend an obdurate medium to his will," as art historian Jules Prown described his earliest work in pastel.[90]

More than his miniatures, Copley's pastels were made in a concentrated moment—three-quarters of these works were created between 1765 and 1770. Like miniatures, however, pastel portraits were widely regarded as more portable than oil on canvas compositions. They required specialized techniques but were easier to create materially. The medium was highly transportable during production, required fewer sittings, and used stable artistic materials that did not have unpleasant odors. An artist like Copley could set up to create a pastel at a sitter's home or in a public setting, before the patron removed the piece to their desired location.[91] Once created, pastels were coated with glass to protect their highly friable surfaces. Now regarded as among the most delicate mediums, the extreme fragility of pastel and its accompanying glazing was only beginning to be attended to by artists in the mid eighteenth century.[92] English painter in crayon Francis Cotes underscored the perceived durability of this medium and its empire-wide reach in his short manuscript, "Crayon Painting," observing, "All the light teints of English Crayons are perfectly safe and durable, and pictures of this description are so to be seen that have been painted more than forty years, and which have been exposed to the climates of the East and West Indies; and are, notwithstanding,

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[90] Prown, *John Singleton Copley*, 1: 37. On Copley's work in pastel and the medium's history in early America see: Theodore Bolton, *Early American Portrait Draughtsmen in Crayons* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), 16–22.

[91] Marjorie Shelley, "Painting in the Dry Manner," 8–11.

[92] Thea Burns, *The Invention of Pastel Painting* (London: Archetype, 2007), 145–152.

in no respect decayed."[93] For Cotes, pastels were not only found throughout the empire, but also were considered suited to withstanding the demands of transport and extreme colonial climates.

The portability and unique effects of pastel portraits, as well as Copley's own pride in his work in the medium, led the artist to create these works until his departure from the American colonies in 1774, despite Benjamin West's advice to, "make it a rule to Paint in that way [oil] as much as Possible, for Oil Painting has the superiority over all other Painting."[94] Even West's explicit words of caution did not initially sway Copley from his preference for pastels—instead of heeding the artist's advice he asked for more information: "I shall be glad when you write next you will be more explicit on the article of crayons, and why You dis-approve the use of them, for I think my best portraits done in that way."[95] Copley viewed pastels as affording practical advantages in a colonial setting and as an opportunity to produce some of his best work. Like his miniatures, Copley's pastel portraits were intimate documents compared to oil on canvas likenesses, representing sitters in intimate pictorial spaces with attributes stripped from their scenes. Pastel was said to be the medium that best captured the vitality of skin in the eighteenth century, pairing layers of translucent medium with the luminous support of white paper. Often paper was roughened to better capture these layers of pastel, further adding to the

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[93] Francis Cotes, "Crayon Painting," *The European Magazine and London Review* 31 (February 1797), 84–85. This short article was prefaced with a note that a copy of the text was found among Cotes' papers. Cotes died in 1770, suggesting the latest possible date for the text.

[94] Benjamin West to Copley, August 4, 1766. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 44–45.

[95] Copley to Benjamin West, November 12, 1766. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 50–51.

composition the suggestion of even the subtle dimensionality of hair on a face, particularly visible in the intimacy of candle light which Cotes suggested as the ideal circumstances for viewing these works. The medium invoked sitters' physical presence, as opposed to simply representing their faces.[96] As with miniatures, the unique properties of pastel served the needs of the transient population operating within the British Atlantic. Pastel served as another medium for creating intimate portraits that bridged the distance between loved ones as patrons and sitters engaged in transatlantic travel.

Copley failed to convince the London artists he most wanted to impress of the medium's validity, however, in part because in the metropole it was considered a lesser, feminized medium favored by amateurs but also because their sphere did not demand its unique functional advantages.[97] In 1768, Copley sent two portraits to Benjamin West by Roger Hale and Captain R. G. Bruce for that year's Society of Artists exhibition. His oil on canvas work, *Daniel Rogers*, was notable as much for the conversation surrounding it in Copley's letters as for the portrait itself. (fig. 4.27) A merchant based in Gloucester, Massachusetts, Rogers' portrait contains the dark suit, direct gaze, and somber dignity—if not the wig—that art historian Margaretta Lovell argues connect Copley's likenesses of merchants.[98] Within this format, Copley exploited shortcuts in taking Rogers' portrait—slipping the sitter's right hand into his waistcoat to avoid painting its articulation and

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[96] Ruth Kenny, "'Apartments that are not too large': pastel portraits and the spaces of femininity in the English country house," in *Playing faces: The portrait and the English country house in the long eighteenth century*, eds. Gill Perry, Kate Retford, and Jordan Vibert (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 151. Kenny notes that the dry surfaces of pastels even mimicked the use of face and hair powder so common in the eighteenth century, a "material interplay" acknowledged by some pastel artists.

[97] Kenny, "'Apartments that are not too large'," 154–156.

[98] Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution*, 109.

hiding his right leg beneath a quickly painted green drape. The drape further cut labor from Copley's composition, hanging so as to allude to a table below but hiding the detail of the piece of furniture. In his letter to Benjamin West discussing the picture, Copley blamed his haste in completing the piece on Rogers, who was himself preparing to travel to London: "I should not have had so many apologies to make for this portrait if Mr. Rogers could have spared time to have sat as I found occation for him, but the preparations for his Voyage to London took up so much of his time as to leave me to the disagreeable necessaty of finishing a great part of it in his absence."[99] The artist blamed the hurriedness of his canvas on his sitter. Yet Rogers' portrait was exhibited at the Society of Artists in 1768 and met with the general approval of both West and Reynolds, who thought it was an improvement from his 1767 exhibition piece, *Young Lady with a Bird and Dog*.

More interesting is the second piece that Copley sent to West for exhibition in 1768—a portrait in crayon. Of his pastel, Copley wrote to West: "if I have not succeeded I must take all the blame to myself it. It is a plain head and the only apology I have to offer is this, that as I never saw any thing done in that way that could possably be esteemd, I am more at a loss to know what will please the Coniseur."[100] The pastel was exhibited as "Portrait of a lady; in crayons," and slipped quietly from the conversation between Copley, West, and Bruce about Copley's future as an artist. Neither West nor Bruce—who himself was the subject of a pastel portrait by Copley—addressed the

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[99] Copley to Benjamin West, January 17, 1768. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 66–68.

[100] Ibid.

portrait specifically.[101] Instead West turned his attention to persuading the artist to relocate to London and make a Grand Tour. Working in 1760s Boston with Europe in mind, Copley struggled to understand West's objections to pastel as he produced work that he believed was inspired by current trends in portraiture in Britain and the continent. His understanding of metropolitan preferences, filtered through the transatlantic lenses of a number of informants, also likely led the artist to find direct connections between his work in miniature and pastel.

Copley's early linear style—which relied on barely visible brushwork and an excess of detail—lent itself to a relationship between his techniques in creating miniatures and pastels.[102] This fusion which naturally grew from Copley's painting habits occurred around 1760 in Europe, as well, as the handling of crayons shifted and pastel paintings came to evoke the precision and smooth finish of miniature painting.[103] This brought together two mediums that were already connected in the work of well-known pastellists Rosalba Carriera and Jean-Étienne Liotard. Liotard influenced Copley

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[101] It was, however, addressed in a review of the exhibition which described as having a coolness and a strong expression but being lesser in drawing than the work of Cotes. Neil Jeffares, "John Singleton Copley," in *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800* (Greensboro, NC: Unicorn Press, 2006), 2.

[102] Prown, *John Singleton Copley in America*, 243–245, 252. Jonathan Jackson commissioned two pastels and a miniature between about 1767 and 1770. While George Green's oil on copper miniature from about 1768 cannot be related to a pastel portrait, Erika Hirshler has observed that its style related to that of Copley's contemporary works in pastels. Copley also represented several members of Green's family in pastels between 1764 and 1770, including his father, Joseph Green (c. 1764–1765); his sister-in-law, Mary Storer Green (1765); his sister, Elizabeth Green Storer (c. 1767–1769); and her husband, Ebenezer Storer II (c. 1767–1769). Copley also extensively drew the Storer family in pastel, which was Mary Storer Green's family of origin and which Elizabeth Green Storer joined when she married *Ebenezer Storer II*. The Storers commissioned five pastels of four sitters, including a posthumous portrait of Ebenezer Storer and two pastels of Mary Edwards Storer.

[103] Shelley, "Painting in the Dry Manner," 44.

as a pastel painter, but Liotard's works in enamel on copper, which were also well known, may have encouraged Copley's production of miniatures. Copley began his career just as the heyday of enamel painting in Britain began to wane. Although miniatures appealed to Copley and his clientele, producing enamel on copper likenesses was complicated and labor-intensive, requiring the individual firing of multiple layers of enamel.[104] Copley had no access to instruction or materials for creating enamel on copper miniatures, but instead may have approximated this form by using materials he could obtain—oil and copper.

Liotard's work shaped Copley's pastels through mezzotints as well as oral and written descriptions. Copley could only fantasize about "beholding any one of those rare pieces" by Liotard's hand when he drafted a letter to the artist in 1762.[105] The pastel portrait he made of Elizabeth Byles Brown one year later embraced both Liotard's preferred medium and the *turquerie* trappings for which he was famous by the 1750s.[106] (fig. 4.28) Closely imitating a mezzotint created after an unknown pastel portrait—possibly by Liotard—Copley represented Brown in an ermine-trimmed garment, stacked strands of pearls, and pearls woven throughout her braided hair. Art historian Isabel

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[104] Cory Korkow, *British Portrait Miniatures: The Cleveland Museum of Art* (London: D. Giles Ltd., 2013), 116.

[105] Copley to Jean Etienne Liotard [sic], September 30, 1762. *Copley-Pelham Papers*, 26.

[106] Isabel Breskin, "'On the Periphery of a Greater World': John Singleton Copley's 'Turquerie' Portraits," *Winterthur Portfolio* 36: 2/3 (Summer–Autumn 2001), 103. Breskin explains that *turquerie* included two primary trends in dress from the 1750s, the first consisting of a loose, light-colored gown fastened with a fringed sash and feathers, scarves, or pearls in the hair. The second style is worn by Elizabeth Byles Brown and consisted of an ermine-trimmed gown worn over a simple, loose dress tied with a sash as well as pearl jewelry and hair ornament. Breskin discusses a number of Copley's *turquerie* portraits in both pastel and oil on canvas.

Breskin has connected the Turkish costume in Copley's oil on canvas and pastel portraits to the political and social tensions in the colonies—arguing that the style of dress held different meanings at different times as the political balance shifted between 1763 and 1774.[107] Copley's production of *turquerie* portraits expanded alongside his production in the mobile mediums of miniature and pastel, and both of these developments can be read as responses to increasingly volatile political circumstances by a man attuned to the success of his business.

Copley's embrace of *turquerie* in the model of Liotard for his pastel portrait of Elizabeth Byles Brown and prominently in his subsequent pastel portraits also related to the artist's desires for himself. As early as 1763, Copley was insecure about Boston's distance from metropolitan centers of artistic production and manifested these feelings in his letter to Liotard:

> You may perhaps be surprised that so remote a corner of the Globe as New England should have any dmand for the necessary eutensils for practicing the fine Arts, but I assure You Sir however feeble our efforts may be, it is not for want of inclination that they are not better, but the want of oppertunity to improve ourselves.[108]

By embracing so overt a metropolitan aesthetic as *turquerie*—channeled through Liotard's example—Copley displayed his ambition to work in of the moment styles as well as his desire to overcome his position on what he perceived to be the periphery of the empire. Because of Liotard's particular biography, Copley's embrace of the artist

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[107] Breskin, "On the Periphery of a Greater World," 109–110. Breskin points out that there is no discernable pattern in the political associations of the women who Copley paints in *turquerie*.

[108] Copley to Jean Etienne Liotard [sic], September 30, 1762. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 26.

should also be considered within his strategies for transatlantic cultivation and seeking opportunities to improve his artwork.

Born in Geneva, Switzerland, Liotard specialized first in enamel painting before he traveled to Paris in 1723 and began working in pastel. The artist traveled extensively and built an international reputation prior to 1753, when he traveled to London from Paris in his Turkish costume and long beard.[109] Liotard began working in London, and by 1754 his pastels were a sensation. In the *Public Advertiser*, he courted repeat visitors to his studio with portrayals of unusual and distant subjects, writing:

> The Eagerness which the Public expresses, to see Mr LIOTARD's Performances, engages him not to neglect any Thing that can give the Curious some farther Satisfaction; consequently he has added to his Works an original Picture of the Czar Peter the Great, done from the Life, while he was in Holland; a Picture of the Empress Queen on Horseback, dressed as she was at her Coronation at Presbury, as Queen of Hungary; an Original Drawing of the last Pope; another Original Drawing of the famous Achmet pacha, Count de Bonneval, and several other Drawings of Turkish Figures, all done from the Life at Constantinople. His Friends are welcome to see the Paintings gratis.[110]

In the American colonies, Liotard was known not only for his likenesses through prints but also through the artist's descriptions of his work in the British and American papers.[111] Copley would have encountered these notices just as he was embarking on his

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[109] From Paris, Liotard traveled widely offering both enamel miniatures and pastel portraits, living in Italy from (Rome, Naples, and Florence), Constantinople, Moldova, Vienna, Venice, Bayreuth, Darmstadt, and Lyon between 1735 and 1746, when he returned to Geneva. Through this extensive travel he built an international reputation that led to royal commissions and a surplus of patrons by the time he returned to Paris, in 1748.

[110] *Public Advertiser*, November 21, 1753, as quoted in Jeffares, "Jean-Étienne Liotard," in *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800* (Greensboro, NC: Unicorn Press, 2006), 2.

[111] Jeffares, "Liotard," 2.

artistic career in the 1750s. Their text foregrounded Liotard's vast travels, as in the advertisement above where pictures created in Holland, Italy, and the Ottoman Empire were enumerated. In her analysis of Liotard's 1744 pastel *Self-portrait as the Turkish Painter*, art historian Mary Sheriff argues that Liotard's self-portrait should be read as a parallel negotiation within the context of his unsettled early career and his inability to achieve success during his initial residence in Paris.[112] (fig. 4.29) His fame was made within the Ottoman Empire and in Eastern Europe, as opposed to Paris—a center for the arts. After achieving success at the edges of Europe, Liotard returned to Paris, continuing to build his reputation in part by synthesizing cultures.[113] The same synthesis of cultures that served Liotard appealed to the young Copley, who it is easy to suspect saw himself as working in analogous circumstances to the Swiss artist, attempting to make a name for himself in the transatlantic world while aspiring to relocate to an artistic center.

Copley's pastel portraits—like his miniatures—met the needs of his mobile colonial American clientele. Pastel portraits were of a portable scale and were considered protected by their glazing. These works also cultivated intimacy between patron and sitter, even when separated, through the physical properties of the medium. On the page, pastels create rich, velvety textures that emulate a sense of fine hair on skin, particularly in the bust-length portraits created by Copley when shown in dim, artificial lighting. The

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[112] Mary Sheriff, "The Dislocations of Jean-Etienne Liotard, Called the Turkish Painter," in *Cultural Contact and the Making of European Art since the Age of Exploration*, ed. Mary D. Sheriff (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 101. For Liotard's experience painting in the Ottoman Empire and its impact on his European identity and painting practice see: Kristel Smentek, "Looking East: Jean-Étienne Liotard, the Turkish Painter," *Arts Orientalis* 39: *Globalizing Cultures: Art and Mobility in the Eighteenth Century*, 2010, 85–112.

[113] Nebahat Avcioğlu, *Turquerie and the Politics of Representation, 1728–1876* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2011), 11.

surface textures of portrait sitters meld with the textures of medium on canvas, enhancing the function of portraits as psychological stand-ins for their subjects by further invoking their physical presence. In these pastel portraits, however, his clients would have found images whose portability was enhanced by their immediacy, evoking a sitter's presence even as they spanned distances in the company of their owners.

Painting in crayons allowed Copley to emulate the work of Liotard, an artist whose biography he would have admired. In his 1769 pastel *Self-portrait*, Copley represented himself as a merchant and a gentleman, positioning himself within an American identity to which he aspired even as he planned to relocate to the center of the British Empire. (fig. 4.1) As Liotard aimed to negotiate his early career and his ultimate success in his *Self-portrait as the Turkish Painter*, Copley began a negotiation of his identity in his pastel self-portrait that would persist throughout the 1770s, as he settled in London and abandoned his transatlantic mediums and identity for the guise of English history painter.

Conclusion

The artist's permanent settlement in London in 1775 positioned him at the center of the British Empire, allowing his Atlantic World to shift from a physical to an increasingly conceptual space. Established in London with Susanna, Copley appears to no longer think of himself or his patrons as people moving about the empire. He maintained a robust correspondence with Boston, writing his stepbrother, Henry Pelham, and his mother, Mary Singleton Pelham. He worried about his stepbrother, who wrote

with despair in 1775, "The Total Stoppage of Business forbids my remaining here, and how to leave the place I dont know," prior to relocating to London in 1776, and his mother, who remained in Boston until her death in 1789.[114] Despite these connections, however, Copley came to regard himself and his patrons as fixtures in London. Professionally he no longer had to attend to the physical Atlantic in the same constant manner that he had while residing in the colonies, and his patrons exerted a different set of aesthetic and material demands.

Miniature and pastel portraits carried different connotations in London's art world, and they were work discouraged by Copley's mentors including Benjamin West and Joshua Reynolds. Copley not only stopped making miniatures and pastels when he arrived in London, he aspired to move away from portraiture altogether, instead pursuing paintings on a grand scale. Copley followed West's example and created history paintings for exhibition. He was never as successful in this vein as West, however, and portraiture continued to provide his primary income in London.

He began his shift away from portrait painting in 1778 with a large-scale history painting representing events that transpired in Havana harbor, *Watson and the Shark*.[115]

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[114] Henry Pelham to Copley, October 10, 1775. *Copley-Pelham Letters*, 360–361.

[115] Margaretta Lovell has drawn parallels between *Watson and the Shark* and one of Copley's first large-scale group portraits painted in London, *Sir William Pepperrell and His Family* (1778); Lovell 175. Wendy Bellion has extended this parallel to include Copley's *The Copley Family*, arguing that the history painting was entangled formally with Copley's simultaneous work on family portraits and recent experimental motifs he had absorbed on his Grand Tour; Wendy Bellion, "Land Shark: Copley's Reiterative Acts of Representation," *American Art* 30:2 (Summer 2016), 5–6. Douglas Fordham also discusses the Anglo-American resonances in another contemporary history painting by Copley, *The Death of Major Peirson* (1783). Douglas Fordham, *British Art and the Seven Years' War: Allegiance and Autonomy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 252–255. While many art historians have asked what led Copley to determine that a dramatic, unconventional history painting of a contemporary subject was appropriate for his first exhibition painting in this genre, other scholars have

(fig. 4.30) The painting captures the rescue of young Brook Watson from the jaws of a shark that attacked him while he swam in the harbor at Havana, Cuba.[116] Watson likely commissioned the picture from Copley with Copley executing Watson's desired theme on his canvas—the event as an allegory for individual salvation achieved by triumph over adversity. The painting is an important transatlantic document, particularly in light of Watson's connections to Susanna Clarke Copley's brother and father's importation of tea to Boston. However, Watson's position as a transatlantic traveler and agent of empire is not foregrounded in the painting.[117]

Watson commissioned a painting of a scene that transpired in one American colony from an artist who taught himself to paint in another American colony. He was connected to the artist through his wife's family's business with the East India Company, and a cargo of tea they were jointly importing into the colony was destroyed in the 1773 Boston Tea Party, an event contributing to inciting the American Revolution. He was born in England but was sent to Boston and the West Indies as a child before working from London as a grown man. Just before commissioning *Watson and the Shark* from Copley, Watson had traveled to Canada with Jonathan Clarke. Yet for Watson the artist

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recently argued that the painting was Copley's meditation on the "breakdown of transatlantic material relations" and thus on the model of painting he had created in his earlier portraits (see Roberts, *Transporting Visions*, 54–67).

[116] On *Watson and the Shark* see Ellen G. Miles, *American Paintings of the Eighteenth Century: The Collection of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue* (Washington, DC: The National Gallery of Art, 1995), 54–71.

[117] Neff, *John Singleton Copley in England*, 102–105. On Watson's work, the similarities between his biography and Copley's, and their mutually shaped identities see: Emily Ballew Neff, "Like Gudgeons to a Worm: John Singleton Copley's *Watson and the Shark* and the Cultures of Natural History," in *American Adversaries: West and Copley in a Transatlantic World*, eds. Emily Ballew Neff and Kailyn H. Weber (Houston, TX: The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2013), 162–197.

painted not a document responding to his Atlantic mobility—as was the function of Copley's miniatures and pastels—but a canvas memorializing Watson's fracturing transatlantic connections. As the American Revolution was waged beyond Britain's shores, Copley addressed its impact at a distance from within the city that he had long admired from a distance. Whereas Copley's miniatures and pastels were transatlantic documents—objects that enhanced the artist's professional position and responded to patrons' needs related to the mobility of the Atlantic World—*Watson and the Shark* confronted the dissolution of that world. As his miniatures and pastels enhanced his reputation in Boston by addressing the world in which the artist and his patrons lived through the particular properties of two mediums uncommon in the colonies, *Watson and the Shark* significantly expanded Copley's reputation in London through its grand, romantic spectacle. Copley made a full-size copy of the painting to hang in his studio, a public symbol of his professional transition from creating transatlantic portraits to academic exhibition pictures.

4.1 John Singleton Copley, *Self-portrait*, pastel on paper mounted on canvas, 1769, Winterthur Museum.

4.2 John Singleton Copley, *Jonathan Jackson*, pastel on paper mounted on canvas, late 1760s, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

4.3 John Singleton Copley, *Susanna Clarke Copley*, pastel on paper mounted on canvas, 1769, Winterthur Museum.

4.4 John Singleton Copley, *Self-portrait*, watercolor on ivory, 1769, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

4.5 John Singleton Copley, *The Copley Family*, oil on canvas, 1776–1777, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

4.6 Joseph Blackburn, *Isaac Winslow and his Family*, oil on canvas, 1755, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

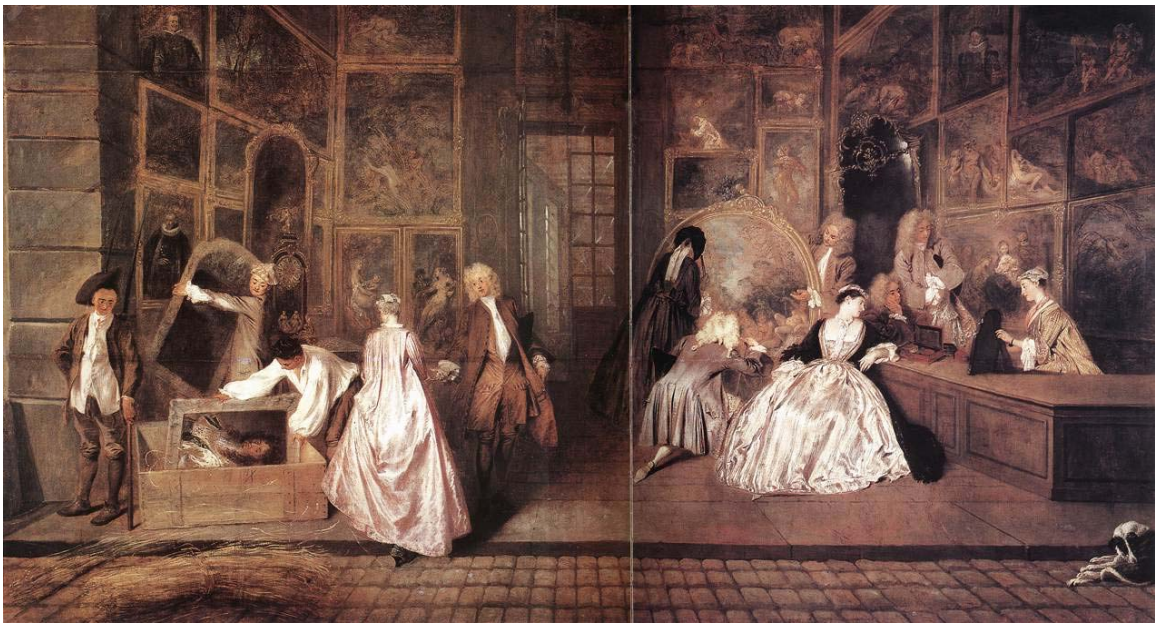
4.7 John Singleton Copley, *Joshua Winslow*, oil on canvas, 1755, Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

4.8 John Singleton Copley, *Joshua Winslow*, oil on copper, c. 1755, Private collection.

4.9 John Carter, *Walpole's Cabinet of Miniatures and Enamels*, c. 1788, from an extra-illustrated copy of *A Description of the Villa of Horace Walpole* (Strawberry Hill Press, 1784), Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

4.10 Edward Francis Burney, *East Wall, The Great Room, Somerset House*, 1784, The British Museum.

4.11 Antoine Watteau, *L'Enseigne de Gersaint*, oil on canvas, 1720–1721, Schloss Charlottenburg.



4.12 John Singleton Copley, *Reverend Samuel Fayerweather (1725–1781), M. A. (Hon.), 1753*, oil on gold-leafed copper, probably 1760/61, Yale University Art Gallery.

4.13 John Singleton Copley, *Deborah Scollay Melville*, watercolor on ivory, ca. 1762, Worcester Art Museum.

(Left) 4.14 John Singleton Copley, *Samuel Cary*, watercolor on ivory, ca. 1773, Private collection.

(Right) 4.15 John Singleton Copley, *Sarah Gray Cary*, watercolor on ivory, ca. 1773, Private collection.

4.16 John Singleton Copley, *Mrs. Todd*, oil on copper, 1755, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

4.17 John Smibert, *Thomas Hancock*, oil on canvas, 1730, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

(Left) 4.18 John Singleton Copley, *Thomas Hancock*, oil on copper, ca. 1758, enlarged 1766, National Portrait Gallery.

(Right) 4.19 John Singleton Copley, *Lydia Henchman Hancock*, oil on copper, 1766, National Portrait Gallery.

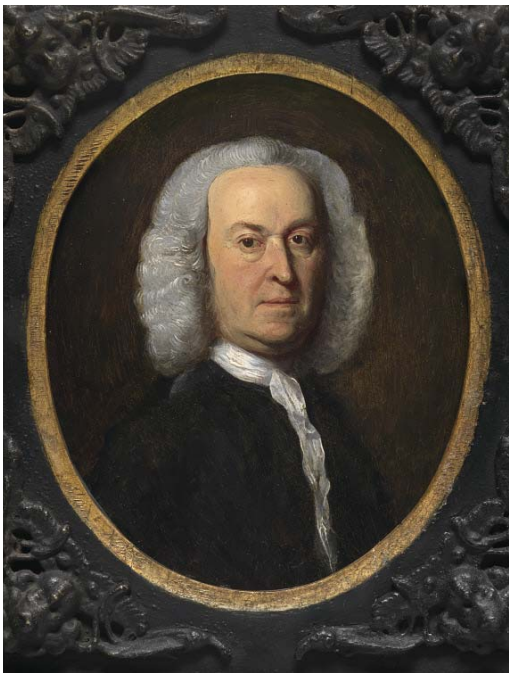
(Left) 4.20 John Singleton Copley, *Thomas Hancock*, pastel on paper, 1766, Private collection.

(Right) 4.21 John Singleton Copley, *Lydia Henchman Hancock*, pastel on paper, 1766, Private collection.

4.22 John Smibert, *Daniel, Peter, and Andrew Oliver*, oil on canvas, 1732, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

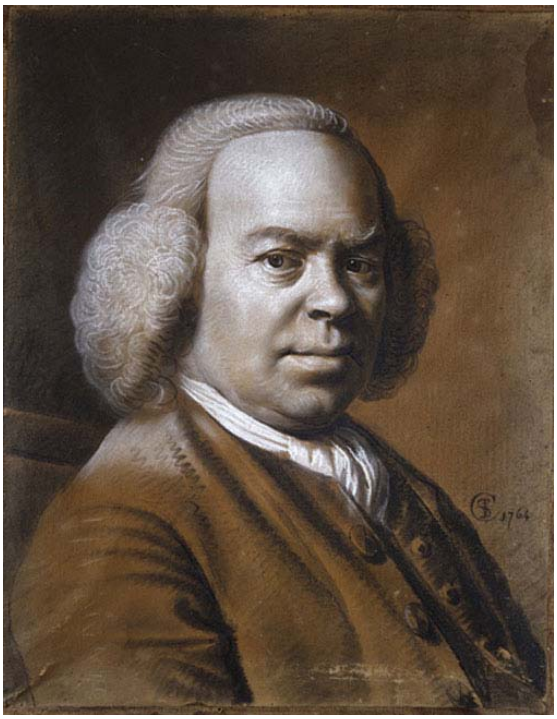
4.23 John Singleton Copley, *Andrew Oliver*, oil on ivory, ca. 1758, Yale University Art Gallery.

4.24 John Singleton Copley, *Andrew Oliver*, oil on copper, ca. 1758, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.



(Left) 4.25 John Singleton Copley, *John Scollay*, charcoal and pastel on cream laid paper, 1764, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

(Right) 4.26 John Singleton Copley, *Mercy Greenleaf Scollay*, black, white, and colored chalks, and brown ink on buff laid paper mounted to board, 1764, Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum.



4.27 John Singleton Copley, *Daniel Rogers*, oil on canvas, 1767, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art.

4.28 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Byles Brown*, pastel on laid paper, mounted on bleached plain-weave linen, 1763, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

4.29 Jean-Étienne Liotard, *Self-portrait as the Turkish Painter*, pastel on paper, 1744, Uffizi.

4.30 John Singleton Copley, *Watson and the Shark*, oil on canvas, 1778, National Gallery of Art.

Conclusion

Even as Copley's attention and canvases shifted from a physical engagement with transatlantic culture to a conceptual attending to the Americas from London in *Watson and the Shark*, Copley remained connected to his country of origin through family, patrons, and the circulation of prints. Copley worked with a central transatlantic perspective for almost twenty years prior to his arrival in London, and it was a perspective he could not abandon and for which he periodically received criticism.[1] While Copley ultimately attained success painting in London, it was Benjamin West who distinguished himself as a center of the London art world, the proto-American painter, and father of the American school. The American Revolution disrupted the transatlantic school, destabilizing and ultimately bringing to a close the Atlantic space of the first British empire. In its place emerged West's studio, helmed by a man who preserved his Anglo-American identity through the Revolution by deftly weathering the politically tense years even as he painted American subjects. West continued to mentor young American artists in the early 1780s as he had from the mid-1760s, with his studio positioned as the only place for serious artistic training for ambitious, early-career American painters. In doing so, the model of Americans traveling to London for training and professional development supplanted the transatlantic school—already unsettled by the American Revolution—where Atlantic mobility defined artistic practice and artists' canvases.

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[1] This criticism was leveled by West, among others. Rather, *The American School*, 211.

This project has argued that a transatlantic visual culture emerged in the British Atlantic World from about 1750 to 1780 due to increased mobility. Portraits produced by transatlantic traveling artists did not exist on a linear path between a colonial port city and London. A fluid, mobile Atlantic World and the travel of portraitists, patrons, and objects themselves shaped canvases. Transatlantic portraits were created between spaces previously considered the periphery of empire by artists whose practices were not exclusively defined by the standards established in London. Although the metropole never fell from sight for artists John Greenwood, Philip Wickstead, and John Singleton Copley, London was one among many port cities participating in the empire-wide flow of goods, people, and ideas shaping their canvases. New mobility provided Greenwood, Wickstead, and Copley with access to new subjects and new audiences, and their portraits contributed to the project of visually delimiting and defining the Atlantic empire. Simultaneously their portraits traveled as stand-ins for people, cultivating a sense of closeness even as they served as vehicles for conveying knowledge about distant colonies.

This dissertation demonstrates that prior to about 1780, the transatlantic connections of early American artists were as important—or more important—than their metropolitan connections. When the connective tissue of the ocean is repositioned at the center of a study on colonial American portraiture, the increased mobility in the British empire that emerged around 1750 can be seen shaping the work of colonial artists who used oceanic travel and shipping for the movement of themselves, their materials, and their images. John Greenwood's Surinam portraits, Philip Wickstead's Jamaican

conversation pieces, and John Singleton Copley's Boston miniatures and pastels all reveal the centrality of mobility to these artists' transatlantic practices. Greenwood, Wickstead, and Copley are not the only artists who created transatlantic portraits, however. Study of a number of other portraitists who worked in colonial America could continue to shape an understanding of the transatlantic school, including Cosmo Alexander, Joseph Blackburn, James Claypoole, Jr., John Wollaston, and William Williams. Individual canvases or groups of objects could further define the transatlantic school. This dissertation only begins to locate a late eighteenth-century transatlantic school, expanding the context within which colonial American portraits are considered into the British Atlantic World.

Transatlantic canvases became less resonant as complex global geographies were again reshaped in the Age of Revolutions. Artists from the United States continued to travel for training and fortune, but Benjamin West's American school and the walls of the Royal Academy became the center for ambitious young American artists. When artist Mather Brown set out for Hispaniola from his home in Boston in 1780, his ambition was clear: "the Reasons for my undertaking this Voyage are obvious, for not withstanding avoiding many Inconveniences I was liable to at Boston, I Have found out that three hard Johannes (which I receive for a Picture) is much better than 100 paper dollars."[2] Yet Brown did not travel exclusively seeking recompense; he instead appears to have created his agenda with his sights set on a second destination. Within two months of arriving in Hispaniola, Brown again wrote to family in Boston, revealing his determination to move

[2] Mather Brown to his Aunts, 18 April 1780, Byles Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

on to London and claiming, "this is not a wild Scheme, as I have hard Johannes enough to support me there 3 years," and requesting introductions to their friends in the city.[3] By 1781 Brown was working as an assistant in West's studio, and by 1782 he was enrolled in the Royal Academy schools.

The British Atlantic did not dissolve in 1776, but for an ambitious artist such as Brown, London appeared to offer the clearest path to professional success. While money could be made in the Caribbean, he avoided the British Caribbean colonies, which decided not to join the revolting British North American colonies with the Revolution. The space that Greenwood, Wickstead, and Copley shaped and represented was no longer imagined as unified. In the history of early American art, Benjamin West became the American artist who served as the official painter for King George III, committed key scenes from early American history to canvas, and served as the second president of the Royal Academy. Greenwood, by comparison, has been largely forgotten, overlooked as a key dealer of Old Master pictures in late eighteenth-century London and instead remembered as a painter who created an unusual scene of a distant colony in the 1750s.

[3] Mather Brown to his Aunts, 19 June 1780, Byles Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. Emphasis in original.

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