

[Begin with the text panel inside of the gallery entrance to your right]

[Text Panel]

The majority of the works in the exhibition were collected between 1895 and 1914 by Sir Hickman Bacon (1855–1945), of Thonock in Lincolnshire. This was a period in which there was renewed interest in the pioneering artists of the British tradition of watercolour painting. The reputations of formerly revered figures, such as Thomas Girtin or John Sell Cotman, were re-established through exhibitions, scholarship, and the sale of unfinished studio works that had not previously been marketable.

In addition to those works, the display includes watercolours from the Towner's own collection. Many of these were painted in the later nineteenth century when

watercolour was valued as an alternative medium for landscape painting, often on an ambitious scale.

Towner Eastbourne and The Holburne Museum would like to thank Ian Warrell for curating the exhibition, as well as the lenders for their generous support.

[Turn to your left]

John Robert Cozens (1752–1797)

In the Tyrol near Brixen, 1790

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

John Robert Cozens (1752–1797)

The British romantic watercolour painter, John Robert Cozens was important and influential for future generations of artists including Turner. In the late 1770s Cozens spent time in Italy, Switzerland and Austria where he produced richly atmospheric drawings of the Italian and Alpine scenery which were very popular in the following years.

However, by 1794 his physical and mental health had deteriorated and he was being attended to by Dr Thomas Monro the Principal Physician of the Bethlem Royal Hospital. Monro, who was also an art collector and patron, employed young artists including Thomas Girtin and J.M.W. Turner to draw at his house in the evenings. Using Cozens' compositions to trace, Girtin

drew outlines and Turner washed in the colour and effects. This exercise instilled in them a profound respect for the poetry of Cozens' art.

[Continue to move along wall leftwards]

Thomas Girtin (1775–1802)

View on the Wharfe, c.1801

Watercolour on paper

The location depicted here has eluded scholars, but as Girtin stayed at Harewood House in 1800, as a guest of his patron Edward Lascelles, it has been linked with the nearby River Wharfe. Typically, Girtin captures no obvious landmarks and strips away all but the essential landscape. The lines from the paper making mould used to make the laid paper create noticeable patterns that

interrupt the smooth application of washes. The effect of the smoke rising upwards to blend with the cloud is striking. Coincidentally, Turner used a receding cloud effect for a painting he exhibited in 1801, and though the two artists were friendly, each spurred the other creatively.

Private Collection

[Turnaround and move towards blue wall on your left.

Starting at the end of the wall, move along wall rightwards]

[Text Panel]

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851)

Early works

Turner's earliest work was architectural in its focus, depicting the 'picturesque' ruined abbeys and castles of England and Wales.

He first went to Bath in 1791 on his way to stay with John Narrawy, a family friend, in Bristol. The work Bath from Kingsdown Hill, 1791-2 is an example from this period. His watercolour drawings of his tour to Bristol and Malmesbury filled the pages of his 1791 sketchbook which was amongst the 1856 Turner Bequest to the Tate gallery.

By the second half of the 1790s his focus was increasingly dedicated to wilder aspects of the countryside, especially the mountainous terrain of

Wales. After exploring Scotland in 1801, he made his first journey to the continent the following year. Visiting the Alps he experienced the sublime peaks and glaciers around Mont Blanc which instilled a new range and energy into his work.

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Malmesbury Abbey, 1791

Pen and brown ink and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Bath from Kingsdown Hill, 1791–2

Watercolour, pencil and ink on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

The majority of the works in the exhibition were collected between 1895 and 1914 by Sir Hickman Bacon (1855–1945), of Thonock in Lincolnshire. This was a period in which there was renewed interest in the pioneering artists of the British tradition of watercolour painting. The reputations of formerly revered figures, such as Thomas Girtin or John Sell Cotman, were re-established through exhibitions, scholarship, and the sale of unfinished studio works that had not previously been marketable.

In addition to those works, the display includes watercolours from the Towner's own collection. Many of these were painted in the later nineteenth century when watercolour was valued as an alternative medium for landscape painting, often on an ambitious scale.

Thomas Girtin (1775–1802)

Windsor Park and Castle, c.1796–8

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

Thomas Girtin (1775–1802)

Warkworth Castle, c.1800

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

Thomas Girtin (1775–1802)

For many of their contemporaries, Girtin was the more original artist than Turner. Turner, apparently, modestly proposed that ‘If Tom had lived, I should have starved’.

Both came from humble backgrounds, but whereas Turner's status was secured by his schooling at the Royal Academy, Girtin pursued a more commercial apprenticeship with topographers like Edward Dayes (1763–1804). Even before Girtin embarked on his immense panoramic surveys of London and Paris, there was an expansive quality to his compositions and a breadth with which he recreated the natural world. Girtin's artful simplicity and telling use of blocks of wash was widely influential.

[At the end of the wall, turnaround and move forwards to the end of the wall in front of you. Starting at the end of the wall, navigate clockwise through the space]

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Glacier des Bossons, Chamonix, 1802

Pencil and watercolour with gouache on white paper prepared with a grey wash

This sheet may have originally been part of a large sketchbook Turner used to record his journey around Mont Blanc and the St Gothard pass in 1802. Unlike the majority of the notes he recorded in his standard sketchbooks, larger sheets like this were often closer to composition studies that could be shown to potential patrons as a means of generating commissions for finished designs of the same subject. Here Turner used a variety of techniques to differentiate between the foreground rocks and the jagged and broken forms of the glacier in the middle distance.

[Text Panel]

John Sell Cotman (1782–1842)

Early works

Cotman moved to London from his home in Norwich in 1798 and was quick to absorb the stylistic advances made in watercolour by Girtin and Turner in his own views of Wales. Like Turner, he rubbed and scratched his paper to create highlights or texture. By 1805, when he was based in Yorkshire as a drawing teacher, he had adopted a more individual approach. The watercolours he made along the banks of the River Greta exemplify the sophisticated way he structured his designs as contrasting fields of colour that build up each image like a rich tapestry. Cotman's precise studies of architecture eventually extended beyond East Anglia to encompass Normandy.

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

Brecknock (now Brecon), c.1801

Watercolour with scratching out on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

***A Waterfall in Wales (perhaps on the River Llugwy),
1803***

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

Bedlam Furnace, c.1802

Watercolour on paper

Cotman undertook tours of Wales in 1800 and 1802, accompanied on the latter by Paul Sandby Munn (1773–1845), an experienced topographer. This work was originally associated with the manufacturing area of the Midlands known as the ‘Black Country’. However, more recently, it has been linked with Coalbrookdale, the iron forging complex on the River Severn in Shropshire.

Munn’s celebrated image of Bedlam Furnace (now at Tate Britain) shows the factory buildings associated with the Industrial Revolution; in contrast, Cotman’s was more concerned with the disruptive impact of the processes on the setting.

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

New Bridge, Durham, undated

Watercolour and graphite on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

Trees near the River Greta, 1805

Pencil, watercolour and touches of blue gouache on paper

This is one of a handful of highly prized watercolours made in the summer of 1805, while Cotman was staying at Rokeby in Yorkshire, as a guest of Sir John Morritt. Cotman was officially there to teach Morritt's wife to draw, but was evidently captivated by the steep, tree-lined banks along the River Greta. He framed his scene

to create a truly immersive sense of being among the trees. The paper left unpainted, representing the dead branch, is given further stark emphasis by the lighter toned hollow to its right. Cotman also added touches of opaque blue watercolour to indicate the flowing river.

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

John Crome (1768–1821)

Often described as the founder of the ‘Norwich School’ of landscape painters, John Crome was a gifted draughtsman, etcher, picture restorer and art dealer, as well as a painter. He excelled at creating modest naturalistic scenes that echo the landscapes of seventeenth-century Dutch artists, such as Salomon van Ruysdael (c.1602–1670), Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–

1669) and Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709). Often focusing on seemingly unremarkable buildings or natural features, like tree stumps, he invested his mark making with close observation and a lively presence. As well as sketching on-the-spot in graphite and watercolour, he made sketches in oils.

John ('Old') Crome (1768–1821)

***The Blasted Oak*, c.1808-10**

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

Tintern Abbey by Moonlight, c.1802

Watercolour with pen and brown ink on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

A Beached Barge near Battersea Bridge, c.1809

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1842)

Reeps Church, 1796

Pencil on paper

Towner Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

A Screen, Norwich Cathedral, c.1807-8

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

Cattle Watering, undated

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

Richmond, Yorkshire, c.1805

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Durham Castle and Cathedral, c.1801

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

[Turnaround and move straight forwards to entrance of next space. Begin with wall on your left, navigating space clockwise]

[Text Panel]

Rev William Gilpin (1724–1804)

Gilpin's name is inextricably linked with the aesthetic theories of the 'picturesque', which pervaded attitudes to the landscape and the ways in which it was represented at the end of the eighteenth century. From 1780

onwards he published accounts of his explorations of different regions in pursuit of the picturesque qualities of each. His judgements typically promoted the kinds of charming rural subjects that fell between the idealism of the 'Beautiful' (derived from Classical painters) and the awe-inducing terror of more 'Sublime' motifs, such as mountains, storms and shipwrecks.

William Gilpin (1724–1804)

***Mountain Landscape*, undated**

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 2024

The Oscar Thompson Bequest

After Turner, attributed to George Jones (1786–1869)

***The Castle above the Meadows*, undated**

Watercolour on paper

The artist George Jones was a close friend of Turner.

This work is a copy of one of the seventy-one mezzotints in Turner's *Liber Studiorum*, 1807–19, a serial publication in which Turner reproduced some of his existing achievements and compositions, showcasing his range of ambitions for landscape painting. As well as utilising the sketches he had made during his travels for architectural, marine, mountainous and pastoral subjects, he created imaginative scenes based on classical myths, often imitating the landscapes of the seventeenth century painter Claude Lorrain.

Towner Collection. Acquired 2024

The Oscar Thompson Bequest

William Gilpin (1724–1804)

Mountain Landscape with Figure, undated

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 2024

The Oscar Thompsett Bequest

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Pevensey Bay from Crowhurst Park, 1816

Etching on paper

This engraving is based on Turner's watercolour (in a private collection) from a group of Sussex subjects painted for John Fuller (1757–1834), who was the Member of Parliament for Sussex from 1801–12. Aside from his local notoriety, rooted in his extravagant construction of follies near his home at Rosehill, Fuller

was - and remains - a controversial figure because of his entrenched opposition to the campaign for the abolition of slavery. From the raised viewpoint of the Pelham family estate, the view recedes past Bexhill and the line of Martello Towers, with the Eastbourne headland in the distance.

Towner Collection

[Text Panel]

Anthony Vandyke Copley Fielding (1787–1855)

Like many of the artists collected by Sir Hickman Bacon, Copley Fielding was a pupil of the influential watercolourist John Varley (1778–1842). He was one of four sons of a portrait painter, who all pursued careers as artists. Before reaching his mid-twenties, he had become a member of the Old Watercolour Society

which, like the Royal Academy, staged annual exhibitions. He was a prolific exhibitor of landscapes and coastal views, including many of Sussex. Among his notable students was the art critic John Ruskin (1819–1900).

The expansive view shown here recalls the watercolours Turner painted for the Sussex squire John Fuller (1757–1834), including views of Ashburnham Place, titled *The Vale of Ashburnham*, 1816 (in the collections of The British Museum and University of Liverpool). The etching *Pevensey Bay from Crowhurst Park*, 1816, featured in this exhibition, originated from Turner's watercolour series that was engraved by William Bernard Cooke and was later published in *Views in Sussex*, 1816–20.

Anthony Vandyke Copley Fielding (1787–1855)

***Seated Figure Overlooking Vast Landscape*, undated**

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 2024

The Oscar Thompsett Bequest

[Text Panel]

George Clarkson Stanfield (1828–1878)

George Clarkson Stanfield was the son of the better-known Clarkson Frederick Stanfield (1793–1867), who was one of Turner's associates. The younger Stanfield worked in both oils and watercolours, producing topographically precise representations of the quaint, picturesque towns that Victorian tourists encountered on their European travels. He travelled to south-west

England, coincidentally visiting places, such as Teignmouth, that Turner had painted for the *Picturesque Views on the Southern Coast*, 1814–26.

George Clarkson Stanfield (1828–1878)

***Teignmouth - Figure and Ships*, 19th C.**

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1992

The Colin Worsley Bequest

[Text Panel]

Louis Thomas Francia (1772–1839)

While in London as an exile from the French Revolution, Francia was drawn into Girtin's circle at the Sketching Society - a group of sociable watercolourists whose

evening meetings revolved around friendly competition to illustrate a chosen mood or an extract from literature.

Francia's style evolved from a neat approximation of Girtin's broader handling of wash, becoming steadily more atmospheric and expansive, particularly once he returned to his hometown Calais, where wide shore scenes were his favoured subject. It was there that he met and tutored Richard Parkes Bonington (1802–1828), acting as an intermediary between Girtin and the younger artist.

François Louis Thomas Francia (1772–1839)

Figure on a Wooden Bridge, c.1810

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

Harold Swanwick (1866–1929)

Now known for his rural scenes, and especially those painted in Sussex, Swanwick was raised in Cheshire where his father had a farm. He trained in Liverpool before moving to London to study at the Slade School of Fine Art and afterwards spent time in Paris at the Academie Julian. His use of watercolours drew on the British tradition but explored the pastoral vein first established by Samuel Palmer (1805–1881), and subsequently by realists like Frederick Walker (1840–1875) and George Clausen (1852–1944). Swanwick admired the work of French artist Jean-François Millet (1814–1875) who produced naturalistic paintings of labourers in agricultural setting.

Despite being highly regarded both nationally and internationally during his lifetime, and with his first Royal Academy exhibition being held in 1899, he failed to retain critical attention when idyllic rural scenes became unfashionable. However, his knowledge of agriculture prevents his work from being overly sentimental as it depicts rural life on the verge of extinction as industrialisation and new technologies came to the fore.

In 1912 Swanwick settled in the village of Wilmington, Sussex, with his wife Lilian, who also painted. They both drew inspiration from the landscape of the South Downs.

Swanwick sketched the farming community in the Wilmington area and drew from photographs of the Downs with cattle and agricultural implements.

Living outside Eastbourne Swanwick was part of the Towner Art Gallery's inaugural governing body and two

early works, Sussex Lane near Alfriston, post 1908 and South Downs near Seaford, c.1910 were acquired by Towner's first curator Arthur Reeve-Fowkes in 1927.

Harold Swanwick (1866–1929)

South Down Farm, near Seaford, c.1910

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1927

[Text Panel]

Charles Knight (1901–1990)

Charles Knight played an active role in Brighton and the nearby village of Ditchling, both as an artist and as an arts teacher and administrator. He taught at Brighton

College of Art from 1925 onwards and designed stained-glass windows for many churches across Sussex.

In 1940 Knight was one of a group of artists commissioned for the Recording Britain scheme, focusing his 40 submissions on the Sussex countryside that he knew so well. The scheme was set up by Sir Kenneth Clark to boost national morale by celebrating the country's natural beauty and architectural heritage.

Knight painted landscapes throughout Britain and abroad, although his passion for Sussex was unrivalled, and he eventually settled in Ditchling where his watercolours were used in the campaign to prevent the suburban expansion in the countryside between Ditchling and Keymer. His style in watercolour was shaped by that of John Sell Cotman (1782–1842), with

the use of bold areas of flat wash building up to a collective design.

Charles Knight (1901–1990)

Pen y Bont, North Wales

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 2024

The Oscar Thompson Bequest

[Text Panel]

Alfred William Rich (1856–1921)

Born in mid-Sussex, near Haywards Heath, Rich worked as a heraldic draughtsman before he moved to London to study at Westminster School of Art and the Slade School of Fine Art. By 1898 he had become a member

of the New English Art Club. He was an accomplished painter in watercolours, approaching landscape with a sensibility informed by the directness of impressionism, but more deeply founded on the examples of John Constable (1776–1837), John Sell Cotman (1782–1842) and Peter De Wint (1784–1849). Like Cotman, and Girtin before him, Rich often worked in blocks of colour to define his images, also using more diluted washes to bring in atmospheric effects.

In 1918 Rich published *Watercolour Paintings* a guide that urged simplicity in design, the creative re-arrangement of landscape elements if required, and careful drawing as the foundation of technique. This 'How to' guide influenced the young artist and designer, Eric Ravilious (1903–1942) and in 1925, around the time he left the Royal College of Art Ravilious expressed a

desire to help revive the eighteenth-century English watercolour tradition that Rich had explored.

Alfred William Rich (1856–1921)

Landscape and Stream, Eventide, pre 1921

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1926

Bequest of Mrs Philippa Holliday, through the National Art Collections Fund 1926

[Text Panel]

Peter De Wint (1784–1849)

De Wint is most closely associated with Lincoln in the East Midlands, which was his wife's home city. Inspired by the painter John Varley (1778–1842), De Wint

recognised the importance of studying nature directly, resulting in countless sketches both in watercolours and oils.

He famously made use of noticeably textured paper, produced by, artist and 'Paper Maker to His Majesty', Thomas Creswick (1811-1869), and allowed the accidents of pooling and uneven washes to play a significant role in his images. He would also rub at painted areas to regain highlights or leave expanses of the sheet blank. Aside from his memorable depictions of the cathedral city of Lincoln, he travelled around Britain, undertaking commissions for patrons, such as the Earl of Lonsdale at Lowther Castle in Penrith, Cumbria.

Peter De Wint (1784–1849)

The Vale of Neath, South Wales, late 1840s

Watercolour on paper

Like Turner, De Wint did not shirk from featuring new industrial Britain in his topographical subjects. He had first visited Neath in the 1820s and had afterwards produced a view including its copper works beside its more picturesque abbey. This much later watercolour offers a prospect over the valley, including the arches of the Neath Canal aqueduct and the ironworks, as well as the private parklands above the town. Working wet-on-wet, De Wint juxtaposed rich, variegated expanses of green with purple shadows, in addition to flecks of localised colour across the sheet.

Private Collection

Peter De Wint (1784–1849)

Glastonbury, early 1840s

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

Peter De Wint (1784–1849)

Bolton Castle, Wensleydale, c.1840

Watercolour on paper

There is an artful economy to the way De Wint created this atmospheric watercolour, which retains his subtle and rich interplay of colours. The composition, with its framing trees, may well draw on seventeenth-century landscapes by Claude or Poussin, as does the deep perspective, created by skilfully applied washes.

Nevertheless, these stock features are abstracted in an

original way that inspired early twentieth-century artists, like Eric Ravilious, who also dragged his brush so that his washes revealed the paper, providing texture and luminosity.

Private Collection

Peter De Wint (1784–1849)

Trees by the River, near Lowther, c.1839-40

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

Peter De Wint (1784–1849)

Landscape with Church Tower, c.1840

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

Henry George Hine (1811–1895)

The Brighton-born artist Henry Hine is admired for his panoramic depictions of the South Downs. As well as capturing the majestic sweep of the contoured turf, Hine provides fascinating insights into the people and agricultural practices shaping the landscape and coast. He appears to have been influenced early in his career by watercolourists such as Copley Fielding, but he was not admitted to the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours until the 1860s by which point he was living in London, in Kentish Town. While there he was drawn toward the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic by his neighbour, the artist, Ford Madox Brown (1821–1893).

Henry George Hine (1811–1895)

Chalk Pit near Eastbourne, 1871

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1948

Henry George Hine (1811–1895)

Wind Against the Tide, 1883

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1930

Henry George Hine (1811–1895)

Colliers Unloading by Moonlight at Eastbourne, 1883

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1929

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

A Boat and a Red Buoy in a Rough Sea, c.1835–40

Watercolour and gouache on blue paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Sunset over the Sea, 1830s or 40s

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

A Squall off a Jetty, c.1813 or early 1820s

Watercolour and pencil on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

David Cox (1783–1859)

Cox moved from Birmingham to London in 1804 where he took lessons from the influential watercolour artist John Varley (1778–1842). By 1812 Cox was a member of the Old Water-Colour Society, and he continued to exhibit there until his death in 1859. Like most of the other artists included here, he was a drawing master, producing his own *Treatise* (a bound volume, comprising 32 pages, featuring 56 illustrations) on techniques for amateurs to follow. One of his later techniques was to study a scene intensely and then turn his back on it while he sketched the details that remained in his memory. He travelled primarily in Britain - and was especially noted for his views of Wales - but also made three visits to France.

David Cox (1783–1859)

A Wooded Landscape at Sunset, undated

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

David Cox (1783–1859)

Low Tide, Possibly 1830s

Watercolour and gouache on laid paper

Private Collection

David Cox (1783–1859)

Study of a Headland, Penmaenmawr, Possibly 1830s

Watercolour and gouache on laid paper

Private Collection

David Cox, (1783–1859)

Woodland Castle Scene, 1844

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 2024

The Oscar Thompsett Bequest

David Cox (1783–1859)

Furness Abbey, 1830s

Pencil, watercolour and gouache on paper

In the 1830s, Cox was commissioned to provide

illustrations to be engraved for topographical

publications, most notably Thomas Roscoe's

Wanderings and Excursions in North Wales (1836). This

view of Furness Abbey was perhaps developed in

connection with a similar project, but the image is not

fully resolved, especially on the right side, where areas remain to be given definition, as if the process of creation was abandoned while still in flux.

Cox would have reached the abbey, at the southern tip of the Lake District, by crossing the treacherous sands of Morecombe Bay, which afterwards became one of his celebrated subjects.

Private Collection

David Cox (1783–1859)

Cattle Watering in a Wooded River (possibly by the Wharfe or the Dee), 1830s

Black chalk and watercolour on two sheets of laid paper

Private Collection

[Move to your right past the end of the wall. Move straight forwards through previous space into final exhibition space. Begin navigating artworks with wall on your left, navigating clockwise]

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Trutzeltz and Burg Eltz with the Eltzbach, c.1841

Watercolour and gouache on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Distant View of Cochem on the Mosel, c.1841

Pencil, watercolour and sepia ink on white paper
prepared with a grey wash

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

A Rough Sea Beating against Margate Jetty, c.1840

Pencil, stopping-out and watercolour with gouache on grey paper

Turner used a variety of different paper types for the studies he made during his visits to Margate. For this and the nearby study of waves, he selected grey paper made by the company Bally, Ellen & Steart of Bath.

Turner's lodgings were close to the end of the jetty, a wooden structure known as Jarvis's Landing Place built to provide steamboat passengers somewhere to disembark at low tide. Instead of affirming the jetty's safety, Turner depicts its vulnerability to the crashing waves from an imagined position some distance from the shore.

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

***Study of Waves*, c.1840**

Watercolour and gouache on grey paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

***Fishmarket on the Sands*, c.1840–5**

Pencil and watercolour with gouache on grey paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

***Genoa from the North-East*, c.1838**

Pencil, watercolour and gouache with pen and red ink
on blue paper

Private Collection

[Turn right at corner. Continue to navigate clockwise]

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

A Figure in a Boat on a River, late 1830s

Watercolour and gouache on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

Draining Mill, c.1830–31

Pencil, pen, brown ink and watercolour on paper

In some of his later works, Cotman revisited subjects or scenes he had painted much earlier in his career. This mill is loosely based on a sketch he made at Croyland,

Lincolnshire, nearly thirty years earlier. In the context of the Broads landscape, draining mills were important for pumping water out of the fields and marshes. There is a strong contrast between the precision of the mill workings, outlined with pen and ink, and the blurred reeds in the foreground, suggesting the drawing may be unfinished. Also visually striking is the opposition of the blue-orange complementary colours.

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

An Open Landscape with a Figure in a Blue Coat,

c.1838–41

Pencil, watercolour mixed with paste, and gouache on paper

There are echoes in this image of a celebrated watercolour that Cotman had painted in the years after his visit to Yorkshire in 1805. Known as *The Ploughed Field* (now at Leeds City Art Gallery), that work is now thought to illustrate Robert Bloomfield's poem *The Farmer's Boy*. This later work returns to the theme of the interaction between humanity and the cultivated landscape, drawing on sketches made on Mousehold Heath near Norwich. Cotman uses bold brushwork as well as scratching with the end of his brush, seemingly hinting at the ways in which the land was worked.

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

***A River Bank with Trees*, c.1840-42**

Pencil, watercolour mixed with paste, and gouache on paper

Private Collection

John Sell Cotman (1782–1841)

***Cader Idris*, c.1835**

Watercolour and gouache on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

John Sell Cotman (1782–1842)

Later works

Although Cotman returned to Norfolk after 1806, his professional ambitions increasingly drew him back to London during the 1820s, and he moved there once more in 1834. These were the years Turner was creating and exhibiting the watercolours of his series of *Picturesque Views in England and Wales*, 1825–38, characterised by lively incident and vibrant colours. Cotman confronted the challenge these works constituted in his later watercolours, many of which feature the striking contrast of honeyed golden tones juxtaposed with deep blues. To give the colours extra force, Cotman mixed his pigments with a thickening agent, most probably flour or rice paste.

[Turn right, moving past doors in corner]

Richard Henry Nibbs (1816–1893)

Newhaven, 19th C.

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection

[Text Panel]

Richard Henry Nibbs (1816–1893)

Nibbs was born in Brighton and, although educated in Worthing, lived in London and kept a studio in the coastal resort before he settled there in 1841 for the rest of his life. Educated initially as musician he became a self-taught artist following a large inheritance.

Primarily a marine artist much of his output focused on Brighton and Sussex, and included battle scenes at sea. One of his most famous works *Queen Victoria Landing*

at Brighton, 1843 (in the collection of Brighton and Hove Museums) records Queen Victoria's arrival at Brighton's Chain Pier.

Albert Goodwin (1845–1932)

***Beachy Head and Lighthouse*, c.1920**

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1994

[Text Panel]

Albert Goodwin (1845–1932)

Turner had no direct followers, but Albert Goodwin is arguably one of his most dedicated students. Aside from the direct copies he made of specific works, the influence of Turner's use of watercolours is readily

apparent in much of Goodwin's output. For example, this study of Beachy Head recalls the moonlit studies Turner made on sheets of brown paper while in Venice in 1840 (in the collection of Tate Britain).

Goodwin was a man of Kent, born in Maidstone, who achieved rapid success in the London art societies, causing John Ruskin (1819–1900) to see him as a potential protégé; they travelled to Switzerland and Italy together in 1872. Goodwin was a fastidious draughtsman, often producing unusual and dynamic compositions. He experimented with methods of sponging and stippling and was one of the first to combine a pen-line with watercolour wash.

Hammond Smith, Goodwin's biographer, believed his subjects admiration for Turner was evident 'in his poetic and atmospheric use of colour, in his delicate and much

more sensitive use of the pen, but most especially perhaps in his ability to combine a feeling for breadth with an eye for detail, which was such a unique feature of Turner's work'.

[Move rightwards past the end of the wall, then move forwards. Turn to your left and begin navigating from the other side of the wall, moving clockwise through rest of space]

[Text Panel]

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851)

Coastal studies

By the 1810s, Turner was painting multiple watercolour designs as part of the same process, setting down abstracted forms, some of which he went on to develop

in more depth. These 'beginnings', as he termed them, were mostly produced in the studio, but during his visits to Margate in the 1830s and '40s, staying in lodgings near the harbour, Turner was able to directly observe from his window the seascapes and weather effects that he captured in his paintings.

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Study of Sky, Sea and Shore, Margate, c.1844-5

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

A Steamboat and Crescent Moon, c.1845

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Study of a Summer Sky at Margate, c.1844–45

Watercolour and red chalk on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

Amy Constance Reeve-Fowkes (1886–1968)

Amy Reeve-Fowkes (nee Quertier) was a keen painter having studied art at Bournemouth Municipal College of Art before she married Arthur Reeve-Fowkes in 1914,

who would later become the Towner Art Gallery's first Curator. She exhibited her paintings, often watercolours of still lifes and flowers, with the Eastbourne Group of Artists. This powerful seascape work of Eastbourne front and pier captures the crashing stormy waves on the beach and shows her skilled use of watercolours outside the studio.

Amy Constance Reeve-Fowkes (1886–1968)

Eastbourne Front in Storm, 1930

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1938

[Text Panel]

William Lionel Wyllie (1851–1931)

Wyllie was one of the foremost British marine painters of the second half of the nineteenth century. He achieved early acclaim, at just eighteen, by winning the Royal Academy's Turner Gold Medal in 1869. After a spell working for the popular illustrated magazine *The Graphic*, he went to sea, travelling extensively before coming back to draw on his experiences for his paintings. He had a sharp eye for detail and was technically gifted in realising a wide range of atmospheric effects in both his oils and watercolours. His admiration for Turner led him to write a biography on the artist in 1905.

William Lionel Wyllie (1851–1931)

***Fishing Smacks*, undated**

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection

William Lionel Wyllie (1851–1931)

***Cape Finisterre*, undated**

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection

[Text Panel]

Thomas Bush Hardy (1842–1897)

The marine painter Thomas Bush Hardy is well represented in Britain's art galleries, especially the

Ashmolean and the Victoria and Albert Museum, despite not exhibiting his work until 1871.

He was born in Sheffield but soon became a dedicated traveller, diffusing his experiences into his works. His subjects focus primarily on port or coastal scenes, especially those of the Netherlands, France or the Venetian Lagoon. He was able to recreate vividly in watercolour the effects of surging waves and scudding storm clouds.

Thomas Bush Hardy (1842–1897)

Wreck at Boulogne, 1877

Watercolour on paper

Towner Collection. Acquired 1923

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Sunset at Sea,

A Shore with a Breakwater,

Waves Breaking Against a Wooden Groyne,

All c.1835–40

Watercolour on buff paper

This group of three studies were originally all part of the same sheet of paper, arranged vertically. The lower edge of *A Shore with a Breakwater* shows how the wash from the design originally below it has been trimmed, leaving some of the wash behind. These unusual works were presumably painted in this compact way as a means of testing ideas away from the studio. Back there, Turner had more room to spread out, working on numerous images simultaneously and going from one to the next as each layer of colour was allowed to dry.

Another batch of three similar studies is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Red and Blue Sunset Sky over the Sea, c.1845

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

‘Fox Lugger’ in a Storm off Margate, c.1845

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

A Cloudy Sky (or Fire at Sea), c.1845

Watercolour and red chalk on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Wreckers on the Shore, c.1845

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Sky Study, c.1845

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Study of Clouds and Wet Sand, c.1845

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Evening: Figures on a Beach, c.1840

Watercolour and bodycolour on buff paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

A Low Sun, c.1840

Watercolour and gouache on buff paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

A Swiss Lake (possibly Lake Thun with the Stockhorn), c.1842–44

Pen and brown ink, watercolour and gouache on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Rainbow over a Swiss Lake (possibly on Lake Lucerne with the Rigi), c.1842–44

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

[Text Panel]

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851)

Swiss landscape studies

Turner travelled extensively throughout his life, but as he entered his late sixties, he focused his annual tours on the lakes and passes of Switzerland and routes across Germany. By this stage, he made simple views in larger sketchbooks as he travelled, recording only the essentials of key landmarks in pencil outlines.

Sometimes he seems to have worked in watercolour as well, but more often the washes were added later, perhaps in his hotel room, as a means of enlivening and unifying the scenes. He was often based in Lake Lucerne, where he could study the peaks of Pilatus and the Rigi. The sketches he made thereafter served as the basis for more intricate realisations of the same subjects, such as *The Blue Rigi*, 1842 (in the collection of Tate Britain).

[Continue to navigate clockwise past double doors,
turning right]

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

***Mount Pilatus, with a Steamboat on Lake Lucerne,*
c.1842–44**

Watercolour on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Burg Rheinfels on the Rhine, c.1841–44

Pencil and watercolour with scratching-out on paper

Private Collection

J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851)

Koblenz and the Fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, 1840s

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Private Collection

[Exhibition finish. Turn to your left to exit through double doors ahead]

[Text Panel]

This exhibition has been made possible as a result of the Government Indemnity Scheme. Towner Eastbourne would like to thank HM Government for providing Government Indemnity and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England for arranging the indemnity.

All works are kindly on loan from a private collection, or
from the Towner Collection.