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**A PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF
COMPREHENSIVE ARCHIVES OF INFORMATION ON
THE WORKING PROCEDURE OF INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS
AND ON THE VISUAL APPEARANCE AND
PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THEIR ART**

A Trial Study: John Constable

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This study was first published by the author in 1984 under the title *The History of Technique: John Constable, A Trial Study*, in conjunction with a seminar at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Copies were distributed to those attending the seminar.

In 1990, the document was revised and published under its present title, again by the author, in spiral book form. Copies were distributed to Constable scholars and leading research libraries. Copies were also sold at cost to those requesting them.

The 1990 version is here posted on the web with minor format changes, December 2005.

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I. THE PROPOSAL

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to propose the creation of comprehensive archives of information on the working procedure of individual artists and on the visual appearance and physical character of their art, and to explore the various types of information desirable in such an archive. For such an archive, it seems desirable to conceive the subject broadly, to include not only technique but also such things as studio practice, display, and the effect the artist hoped to achieve in his/her work.

If such an archive of information were readily available for an artist, standard procedure would call for the information to be consulted by curators and conservators, even in provincial museums, before deciding how any drawing, painting or sculpture by the artist should be treated or displayed; and art historians could be expected, more than is now the case, to consult such information in interpreting works by the artist. A few individual conservators have become nearly encyclopedic experts on one or another artist, thereby approximating, at least in their persons, the type of concentration of information on and experience with the work of a given artist which this proposal seeks to encourage for all major artists and to make available to the entire professional art community.

At present, conservators and curators at major museums and conservation centers do, as standard practice, consult their professional

colleagues at other institutions when studying a painting or sculpture in preparation for treatment; but even in these cases preparation is less than ideal. Because much of the relevant information is stored in museum files, in different countries, and written in various languages, it is impractical, perhaps impossible, to consult all of the relevant information. Even more serious, the most sensitive, interpretive information is often unrecorded and resides only in the minds of the conservators who have worked on works by the artist. Partly for this reason, and partly because formal, written reports sometimes avoid the most sensitive questions, which are by nature difficult to describe in writing, I have for some years been recommending that curators tape interviews with conservators immediately after works have been treated so that the most important information can be recorded while discoveries are fresh in the conservators' minds. Instructive portions of such interviews could then be transcribed to supplement formal, written reports.

Art historians have been equally slow to research and publish information from contemporary documents on the working procedure of individual artists and on the visual appearance and physical character of their art. The type of brief technical note so common in the sciences is hardly known in art history, where traditionally scholars save information and idea until at least a fairly substantial article can be produced. And recently the involvement of more art historians in the social history of art, so essential for the development of art history as a full, humanistic discipline, has drawn many art historians even further from engagement with the physical object of art. Information such as that contained in the fifty-two pages appended to section II of this document has, for most artists, simply not been researched and brought together by art historians.

I should like to draw special attention to one type of information in the outline below which would be of immense value for curators and conservators, who, jointly, must decide how works are to be preserved and treated, and for historians and indeed the general public, who wish to know how reliable the object they are looking at is in judging the painting or sculpture as created by the artist. Beginning in 1978, I have advocated, as yet I fear with no concrete results, the establishment of a directory of prime objects, listing, for each artist, those works of art which could serve, in various ways, as touchstones for the study and conservation of other works by the same artist. For the identification of these prime objects, we must depend on those art historians and conservators who have specialized in the work of individual artists, those who have seen most of the artist's extant work, have examined a significant number out of their frames in conservation studios, have studied the available laboratory reports, have conferred regularly with other experts in the field, have observed works by the artist being treated in a variety of ways in conservation studios or, in the case of conservators, have themselves treated a significant number of objects by the artist. Among other things, art historians and conservators who specialize in the work of individual artists often have privileged access to private collections which sometimes house works of art that have survived in remarkably fine condition. In addition to recording works that have survived with relatively little natural deterioration or human intervention (e.g., paintings that have not been relined, especially where the impasto has not been compressed), it would be useful to have the judgment of experts as to which works by each artist that have been restored most closely approximate the original appearance of the artist's work. Of course, this is an interpretive judgment, which is why this

proposed directory is included in the section on "Interpretations in Art Historical and Critical Studies" in the outline below. Partly for this reason, it would be desirable for such a directory not simply to list prime objects, but to describe the ways in which each is of special value. To avoid the current problem of over-generalizing about the "correct" appearance of a given artist's work, such a directory should differentiate types of paintings (e.g., outdoor oil sketches, compositional sketches done in the studio, finished exhibition pieces, etc.).

This document was produced as preliminary material for discussion at a colloquium held 9th February 1984 at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. An abbreviated version of this document was distributed to some seventy art historians and conservators attending the colloquium and to other interested scholars unable to attend. Since then, the situation has improved dramatically. The increased cooperation between art historians and conservators; the number of significant articles on artists' techniques and working procedures; the now general expectation that catalogues of major exhibitions will include introductory sections on the technique and studio practice of artists, including what has been learned from laboratory examination, written sometimes by conservators, sometimes by art historians; the recent success of exhibitions formulated around the study of painting technique or around the recent cleaning of major paintings; and the number and importance of research projects now underway all attest to the increasing attention to the physical character of works of art and what this can contribute to our understanding of artists' procedures and intentions and ultimately to the meaning of their art. Yet the field of art conservation is still, in many ways, in its infancy. The proposal of this document, for the creation of comprehensive archives of

information on the technique of individual artists and on the visual appearance and physical character of their art, is intended as a contribution to this active and extraordinarily promising field. What we might hope to learn from such material and how the practice of different artists might require different approaches were among the subjects for discussion during the 1984 colloquium and remain active questions today.

Sources of Information

By organizing comprehensive archives of information (on the Working Procedure of Individual Artists and on the Visual Appearance and Physical Character of Their Art) according to the various types of sources from which information has been obtained, it should be possible to store and retrieve such information in a convenient, common-sense manner. The categories suggested below vary considerably in scope, and, of course, the amount and importance of the information available from each of these sources vary greatly from artist to artist.

In order for the information in this type of archive to be updated easily and to be readily available to conservators, curators, and art historians especially those who are not specialists on the individual artists and those who do not live and work in major art centers, such an archive should be readily available, ideally through international computer access, on-line. Only under such conditions can we expect curators and conservators in provincial centers, sometimes perhaps also in the artistic capitals of the world, to consult such information regularly and fully.

I. INFORMATION FROM ORIGINAL PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

A. Normal Viewing

1. Records of direct observation under normal conditions
2. Photographs and slides taken under normal conditions

B. Laboratory Examination

1. Written reports of examination under laboratory conditions, with binocular microscopes, ultraviolet light, analyzing paint samples, etc.
2. X-radiographs, infra-red reflectograms, neutron activated autoradiographs, photographs under raking light, etc.

II. INFORMATION FROM ACCESSORY OBJECTS

A. Equipment used by the artist

B. Representations of the artist at work

III. INFORMATION FROM CONTEMPORARY WRITTEN DOCUMENTS

A. Correspondence, inscriptions, etc. in the artist's hand.

B. Eyewitness accounts, reviews

C. Other contemporary reports

IV. INTERPRETATIONS IN ART HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL STUDIES

A. Directory of prime objects

B. Interpretations of a particular technique, etc.

C. Concepts about the overall meaning of the artist's technique

V. INDEX

Availability of Conservation Records

One issue regarding sources of information, addressed in the 1984 version of this document, is worth raising again here. This is the lack of any generally accepted standards concerning the availability of information in museum conservation files. Even where, as in most cases, everyone concerned has the best intentions, the lack of standards is a serious deterrent to both art history and conservation.

A major body of unpublished information on drawings and paintings resides in the conservation files of museums and independent conservation studios and laboratories. This unpublished information, though often of considerable importance, is generally unknown to all but an occasional specialist and in some cases is unknown outside the conservation studio. Increasingly, curators are working closely with their conservation colleagues, but for most outside scholars this information is not part of the data they would normally consider when studying a drawing or painting.

Of course, the situation varies widely, but the problem is extensive and serious. Most art historians are not aware of the nature and extent of the information available in museum records, especially conservation files. If they are familiar with this type of information, they generally do not know what is reasonable for them to request. Some, not recognizing the problems of confidentiality regarding such things as private

correspondence in the files, feel that museums are unreasonably protective. Others hesitate to ask about information which could be made available, recognizing that the files would have to be sorted through by a curator or conservator who is already extremely busy.

Even when an art historian is given access to selected museum files, s/he often is unfamiliar with museum practices and does not realize that most museums are physically compartmentalized. Information on works by a given artist is often stored in at least six different locations. To check conservation information on works by an artist in the collection, one would often have to consult curatorial records in the Paintings Department and separately in the Print and Drawing Department; also to check the object file and a separate file of x-radiographs, etc. in the Paintings Conservation Laboratory and both again in the Paper Conservation Laboratory.

Likewise, conservators, who generally wish to be as helpful as possible, often do not know which material can be made available and in what form, and in any case generally do not have sufficient time to carry out a thorough search of their files for outside scholars. In some cases, museums wish to withhold the results of their own research until the appearance of a possible forthcoming catalogue of the collection.

In some ways, these problems are similar to those of a private collector or scholar, especially where s/he is the authority on a given artist; but the scale and public responsibility are much larger. As the major possessors of works of art, museums control access to the objects and, quite properly, are the recipients of much unpublished information and ideas from individuals outside the institutions.

Most of us agree that it is mutually beneficial for museums and outside scholars to share ideas and information as much as possible. For this to take place as a normal practice, it would be helpful to have some general understanding of what information should be available, how museums should go about providing it and scholars consulting it.

II. A TRIAL STUDY: JOHN CONSTABLE

Introduction

To see what a comprehensive archive of information on the working procedure of individual artists and on the visual appearance and physical character of their art would be like, it would be desirable to put together one reasonably full example of the information available on one major artist, to index it fully, and to see how important such an archive would be in the work of conservators, curators, and art historians. As far as I know, no such archive yet exists, although the volumes of the Rembrandt Research Project's *Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* provide probably the most comprehensive published model (by J. Bruyn, B. Haak, S.H. Levie, P.J.J. Van Thiel, and E. van de Wetering, with the collaboration of L. Peese Binckhorst-Hoffscholte; translated by D. Cook-Radmore; The Hague, Boston and London: Martinus Nijhof, 1982 ff.).

Although the information for a truly comprehensive archive of this sort is not yet available for Constable, his work provides rich material for such a study. Moreover, the extensive experience in the cleaning and treatment of Constable's paintings carried out by conservators in recent years, the detailed analysis by conservation scientists, and the research of art historians promises to provide something approaching a model for such an archive. The most important of these studies are noted where appropriate in the outline below.

The information on Constable below follows the outline suggested under "Sources of Information" in the preceding section. The purpose here is to note some of the studies already conducted, some published. In one case, the section on "Information from contemporary documents," I have gone beyond annotated references to previous lectures and publications to provide a substantial portion of the information available. This is added as an appendix of quotations, organized chronologically by the date of the original document.

Sources of Information

I. INFORMATION FROM ORIGINAL PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

A. Normal Viewing

1. Records of direct observation under normal conditions
2. Photographs and slides taken under normal conditions

For a discussion of the types of information stored on photographs and slides see Charles S. Rhyne, "A Slide Collection of Constable's Paintings: The Art Historian's Need for Visual Documentation," in *Visual Resources*, Vol. IV (June 1987), pp. 51-70 and color plate ii; where I address the need for photo archives of high quality color slides recording types of information rarely available in present photo archives. Among other things, I claim that "by far the largest and most important collection of

already existent, original color slides, not generally available for study, are the slides taken by museum conservation laboratories to document their work, especially those showing objects cleaned but not yet restored. There are also moderate size teaching collections at a few of the Conservation Institutes. As far as I know, there is no location in the world where scholars can examine a large, representative collection of conservation slides or photographs, and only a very few locations where such a collection is available to the resident curators and conservators. It is hard to imagine a more important project for some major photo archive" (endnote 2).

B. Laboratory Examination

1. Written reports of examination under laboratory conditions, with binocular microscopes, ultraviolet light, analyzing paint samples, etc.
2. X-radiographs, infra-red reflectograms, neutron activated autoradiographs, photographs under raking light, back lighting, etc.

For the earliest, published technical report on a Constable painting, see the exemplary account of *Flatford Mill* by Anna Southall, in *Completing the Picture: Materials and Techniques of Twenty-six Paintings at the Tate Gallery* (London: Tate Gallery, 1982), pp. 34-38.

A report on the thorough technical examination of Constable full-size sketch for *The White Horse* is included in my article "Constable's First Two Six-foot Landscapes" in *Studies in the History of Art*, 24 (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1990), pp.109-29.

Since 1986, Sarah Cove has carried out extensive technical examination of Constable's paintings, as part of an M.Phil/Ph.D degree program at the Courtauld Institute of Art. The detailed corpus of technical information resulting from her study, painting by painting, which presumably will eventually be available in her Courtauld thesis, is exactly the kind of detailed evidence needed as the basis for any secure, in-depth study of Constable's working method and the physical character of his art. To date, two impressive articles have resulted: "An Experimental Painting by John Constable R.A.," in *The Conservator*, Vol 12 (1988), pp 52-56; and "The Constable Project: Current Research into Materials and Techniques," in *Conservation Today*, Papers presented at the UKIC 30th Anniversary Conference 1988, pp. 59-63, which includes a description of "the development of the project, with its general aims, the methods of scientific and technical examination in use and its progress to date" (p.59).

Mention should also be made of the reservoir of experience with Constable's paintings built up over the years by two remarkable conservators, John Brealey and John Bull.

II. INFORMATION FROM ACCESSORY OBJECTS

A. Equipment Used by the Artist

A paint box, which by family tradition was owned and used by John Constable remains in the family collection. This contains a rectangular palette, bottles of pigment, brushes, palette knife, and chalk holder. Two different photographs of this paint box and its contents have been published: one in the catalogue of an exhibition, *John Constable, The*

Natural Painter, by Graham Reynolds (Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand, 1973), no. 65 on page 139; the other in *John Constable*, by Freda Constable (Lavenham, Suffolk: Terence Dalton Ltd., 1975), p. 29, in neither case with additional information. As far as I know, these pigments have never been analysed. When I examined this box at the family home in Kettleburgh, Suffolk, in 1964, there was a note inside: "This paint box belonged first to JC + then to his son Alfred Constable." The inside of the lid, in which Constable often painted his outdoor sketches, measured 21.5 x 28.6 cm.

A second, larger, paint box was described in a second note in the same box: "The big one with all its contents were stolen by [?Sinn Feiners] in Kerry 1916", apparently referring to the Easter Rebellion of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. This larger box has previously been mentioned by Leslie Parris and Conal Shields in *Constable, The Art of Nature* (London: Tate Gallery, 1971), no. 52 on p. 24.

A very thin, long-handled palette, which I saw in the family collection at the same time, was said by Lt-Col. J. H. Constable to have been owned by Constable.

A second rectangular palette, was given by Constable's daughter, Isabel, to the National Gallery, London, in 1887, and transferred to the Tate Gallery in 1953, where it is housed in the Tate Archive (S.I.81). It is illustrated in color in the catalogue of an exhibition, *Paint and Painting* (London: Tate Gallery 1982), pp.65-66, where it is stated that "technical analysis . . . has show, vermilion, emerald green, chrome yellow and madder to be present." This palette is also illustrated in color as the

frontispiece to *The Tate Gallery Constable Collection*, by Leslie Parris (London: Tate Gallery, 1981).

Also in 1964 in Kettleburgh, I was shown a parallel ruler, with the following note taped on: "This Parallel ruler belonged to John Constable R.A. It was given to me in 1940 by Mrs. Ellen Marsh (a 3rd Cousin). She was a Miss Pierce. Her mother was Ellen Appleton. H. G. Constable." Like most of Constable's equipment, this was a fine object.

B. Representations of the Artist at Work

A small pencil drawing by John Harden, in the British Museum (Il.41.A), inscribed "Sept. 1806", shows Constable painting, seemingly indoors at an improvised easel, using a mahlstick and oval palette. The drawing represents Constable at age 30 during his visit to the Lake District (repro. In Daphne Foskett, *John Harden of Brathay Hall, 1772-1847* [Kendal: Abbot Hal Art Gallery, 1974], fig. 23 on pl. vii).

A small pencil drawing by Daniel Maclise, in the National Portrait Gallery, London, shows Constable, seemingly relatively late in life, painting on a medium size canvas, using an oval palette (repro. in Michael Rosenthal, *Constable, The Painter and His Landscape* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983], fig. 265 on p. 237, in Malcolm Cormack, *Constable* [Cambridge University Press, 1986], fig. 201 on p. 213, and elsewhere).

III. INFORMATION FROM CONTEMPORARY WRITTEN DOCUMENTS

- A. Correspondence, Inscription, etc. in Artist's Hand.
- B. Eyewitness Accounts, Reviews
- C. Other Contemporary Reports

As far as I know, there is no publication, other than the earlier version of this document, which gives extensive attention to information from contemporary written documents about Constable's working procedure and the visual appearance and physical character of his art. Numerous statements on these subjects are scattered through Constable's correspondence, Farington's Diary, and other documents, all of which have been published, but very few of the relevant topics are indexed in these publications and it is excessively time-consuming to search for such statements in the sixteen volumes of Farington's diary and the eight volumes of Constable's correspondence and other documents. For a compilation of these quotations, see the appendix to section II of this document, p. xxii following.

IV. INTERPRETATIONS IN ART HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL STUDIES

- A. Directory of Prime Objects
- B. Interpretations of a Particular Technique, etc.
- C. Concepts About the Overall Meaning of the Artist's Technique

It is now reasonably common to find publications that make use of laboratory examination, x-radiographs, paint samples, etc. in interpreting an artist's work. For Constable, the two articles by Sarah Cove, cited

above under the section on Laboratory Examination, are excellent examples of this type of study. My recent publications also make use of laboratory examination, attempting to show how study of the physical character of Constable's paintings can help to reconstruct his decision-making process and, to some extent, his intentions as an artist. For example, see my entry for *A Wooded Bank, With an Open Book and Distant View of Water*, in *John Constable, R.A. (1776-1837)*, the catalogue for an exhibition at the Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, Inc., New York, 1988, pp. 21-23 and color plate 2. See also my articles "Constable's First Two Six-Foot Landscapes," in *Studies in the History of Art*, 24 (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1989), pp. 109-29; and "Changes in the Appearance of Paintings by John Constable," in *Appearance, Opinion, Change: Evaluating the Look of Paintings*, papers given at a conference held jointly by the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation and the Association of Art Historians, June 1990 (London: UKIC, 1990), pp. 72-84.

It is much less usual for scholars to study an artist's visible technique (that which can be seen under normal gallery conditions, not depending on x-radiographs and other types of laboratory examination) as an access to the meaning of her/his paintings. In recent years, I have attempted to read Constable's visible technique in this way. In tracing the chronological development of Constable's technique from the beginning of Constable's career in the 1790's to *The Hay Wain* in 1821, I have concluded that the increased complication, differentiation, and expressiveness of his brushstrokes resulted from his progressive attempt to represent not only the visual appearance of his landscapes (the shape and color of objects), but also their smell, feel, and sound (the smell of newly mown hay, the warmth of sunlight reflected off a wall, the sound of water escaping from

mill dams, and the movement of swallows skimming the surface of the water), the full sensory experience of a given place. Such a concept, based on the study of the physical character of an artist's paintings, helps one to understand not simply his working procedure or development of compositions, but something near the central meaning of his art. In the case of Constable, such a concept leads us past a simple definition of "naturalism" to perceive what it is that constitutes naturalism in the work of one of the recognized exemplars of naturalistic painting. I have presented this reading of Constable's technique, first in a lecture titled "The Substance of Constable's Art," given at the annual meeting of the College Art Association, February 1981 in San Francisco, and, in expanded form as "John Constable: The Technique of Naturalism," at the University of Oregon, Johns Hopkins University, University of Delaware, Oberlin College, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, in 1981, and, in 1982, at The Courtauld Institute of Art.

V. INDEX

Although the information on Constable's working procedure and on the visual appearance and physical characteristics of his art has not yet been indexed, one can project what such an index would look like. The following subjects have been drawn largely from the topics discussed by the artist, as quoted in the section on Constable's correspondence, etc. Additional subjects would need to be added to accommodate information from laboratory examination and other projected sections of a Constable archive.

Equipment

Bladders

Brushes

Canvas

Card

Chalk

Chalk holder

Easel

Flat iron

Frame (picture frame)

Gas lamp

Gold

Ink

Linseed oil

Mahlstick

Medium

Millboard

Needle

Paint box

Palette knife

Panel

Paper

Pencils

Pens

Pigment

Sketches

Stretcher

Thread
Turpentine
Varnish
Viewing frame

Persons

Artists
Assistants
Conservators, recent
Dealers
Patrons
Restorers, earlier
Students

Qualities and Aspects of Works of Art

Additions
Aging
Atmosphere
Chiaroscuro
Conservation
Design
Dew
Drying
Execution
Finish
Freshness

Ghost figures
Ground (priming)
Oiling out
Originality
Outline
Overpainting
Pasting
Pentimento
Polishing
Reflection
Repainting
Restoration
Reworking
Scraping
Sizes
Skies
Sparkle
Squaring
Subtractions
Stitching
Surfaces
Tone
Underdrawing

Studios, Galleries, and Exhibitions

Exhibitions
Display

Galleries

Height

Lighting

Studios

Varnishing Days

Views from windows

Walls

Works of Art

Copies

Drawings

Engravings

Etchings

Exhibition Pieces

Full-size sketches

Mezzotints

Paintings

Prints

Sketchbook drawings

Sketches (oil sketches)

Studies

Watercolors

APPENDIX: QUOTATIONS FROM CONTEMPORARY WRITTEN DOCUMENTS

The following fifty-two page compilation of quotations by Constable, friends and contemporaries, concerning Constable's working procedure and the visual appearance and physical character of his art, was put together as part of a document distributed to participant in a colloquium on the history of Constable's painting technique, held in 1984 at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. It is here reproduced again as an example of the type of compilation of contemporary documents that would be desirable for the study of any artist.

I have conceived the subject of Constable's technique and work procedure broadly, including quotations not only on pigments and varnish but also on the role of Constable's studio assistant, his reaction to critical reviews, and his description of the tonal relationships he hoped to achieve in his paintings.

Quotations on these topics from documents in Constable's own hand are included even if rather minor. Reference to the source is given at the end of each quotation. The great majority of quotations are taken from the eight published volumes of Constable's correspondence and other documents. Constable's correspondence is the most revealing self-portrait of any artist previous to the journals of Delacroix and the letters of Van Gogh, and the intimate information contained therein on technique, working procedure, and studio practice, etc., may be unique at

the time. The volume of correspondence with John Fisher, his friend and confidant from their meeting in 1811 until Fisher's premature death in 1832, is the most revealing of this remarkable collection. Some quotations from volume one of Constable's correspondence, from contemporary reviews in newspapers and magazines, and from inscriptions on his drawings and oil sketches remain to be added.

The quotations are arranged chronologically by date of document, thereby allowing us to follow the development of Constable's ideas and practice and to locate easily those most current at the time of a datable drawing or painting. [The pages of this appendix were numbered separately, pages 1-52, in the printed 1990 version of this study.]

For permission to quote from the published volumes of Constable's correspondence, discourses, and other documents, my thanks to Norman Scarfe and the Suffolk Records Society. For permission to quote from the published volumes of Farington's diary, my thanks to Michael Kitson and The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London.

Works Cited in Abbreviated Form

Farington Joseph Farington. *The Diary of Joseph Farington*. 16 vols: Vols. 1-6, ed. Kenneth Garlick and Angus Macintyre; Vols. 7-16, ed. Kathryn Cave. London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959-84.

JCC I *John Constable's Correspondence: The Family at East Bergholt 1807-1837*. Ed. with intro. and notes R. B. Beckett.

Suffolk Records Society, Vol. IV. Historical Manuscripts Commission Joint Publication No. 3. London: HMSO, 1962. Reprinted with corrections to map, footnotes and index by the Boydell Press, Ipswich,

- JCC II *John Constable's Correspondence II: Early Friends and Maria Bicknell (Mrs. Constable)*. Ed. with intro. and notes R. B. Beckett. Suffolk Records Society, Vol. VI. Ipswich, 1964.
- JCC III *John Constable's Correspondence III: The Correspondence with C. R. Leslie R.A.*. Ed. with intro. and notes R. B. Beckett. Suffolk Records Society, Vol. VIII. Ipswich, 1965.
- JCC IV *John Constable's Correspondence IV: Patrons, Dealers and Fellow Artists*. Ed. with intro. and notes R. B. Beckett. Suffolk Records Society, Vol. X. Ipswich, 1966.
- JCC V *John Constable's Correspondence V: Various Friends, with Charles Boner and the Artist's Children*. Ed. with intro. and notes R. B. Beckett. Suffolk Records Society, Vol. XI. Ipswich, 1967.
- JCC VI *John Constable's Correspondence VI: The Fishers*. Ed. with intro. and notes R. B. Beckett. Suffolk Records Society. Vol. XII. Ipswich, 1968. Revised and enlarged from R. B. Beckett, *John Constable and the Fishers: The Record of a Friendship* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1952).

- JCD *John Constable's Discourses*. Intro. and notes R. B. Beckett. Suffolk Records Society, Vol XIV. Ipswich, 1970.
- JCC: FDC *John Constable: Further Documents and Correspondence*. Ed. with notes Leslie Parris, Conal Shields, and Ian Fleming-Williams. Suffolk Record Society, Vol. XVIII. London: Tate Gallery, and Ipswich, 1975.
- Leslie
-Mayne C. R. Leslie. *Memoirs of the Life of John Constable, Composed Chiefly pf His Letters*. Ed. with intro. and notes by Jonathan Mayne. London: Phaidon Press, 1951 (reprinted in paperback by Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y., 1980).

CHRONOLOGY OF REFERENCES

- 1796 Sept 30 List by John Cranch for J.C.: "Painter's Reading, and hint or two respecting study:
'1. Leonardo da Vinci's treatise on painting:'. . . .
'9. —there are many useful hints and helps of study, and many ingenious things to facilitate practice, in Gerard Lairefses book on painting—4to.'" (JC: FDC, pp. 27, 199-200)
- 1797 Jan 16 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to J.T. Smith: "I have lately copied Tempesta's large Battle, and painted two small pictures in oil, viz: a Chymist and an Alchymist; for which I am chiefly indebted to our immortal Bard. . . . I have a great mind to copy one of Rysdael's etchings. . . . I want to know if it be possible to take proofs off my plates myself." (JCC II, pp. 8-9; see also JC: FDC p. 198)
- 1797 Jan 16 - Letter from J.C. to J.T. Smith: "A favourable opportunity now offers itself of sending the You the Perspective drawing lent to me by Mr Thane who beg'd I would wished me to send it You when done with. . . . I think You Told me that You made Your Aqua Fortis with sp^{ts} of Nitre with two parts Water, I suppose You ment the acid sp.^{ts} I bought some Aqua Fortis at a neighbouring Town and belive have spoilt one plate with it not knowing what strenght it was of." (Charles S. Rhyne, "Constable Drawings and Watercolors in the Collections of Mr.

and Mrs. Paul Mellon and the Yale Center for British Art: Part I. Authentic Works." *Master Drawings*, XIX, No. 2 [Summer 1981], p. 125)

1799 Aug 18 Letter from J.C. in Ipswich, visiting Mrs. Cobbold, to J.T. Smith: "I have been working day and night and last week I did not pass through the gate. I have copied some drawings which I was anxious to get done before I made my intended visit." (JCC II, pp. 16-17)

1800 May Letter, probably written spring 1800, from J.C. in London to before 29 Dunthorne, Sr.: "I have copied a small landscape of A. Caracci, and two Wilsons, and have done some little things of my own. I have likewise begun to copy a very fine picture by Ruysdael. . . . I have finished my copy from Ruysdael, all but the glazing, which cannot be done till the picture is dry. It has been roasting in the sun these two or three days. Tomorrow I hope to go on with my copy from Sir George Beaumont's little Claude. I shall remain in town the chief of this summer. Indeed I find it necessary to fag at copying, some time yet, to acquire execution. The more facility of practice I get, the more pleasure I shall find in my art; without the power of execution I should be continually embarrassed, and it would be a burthen to me." (JCC II, p. 24; see also JC: FDC, p. 144)

1801 Letter (dated 1801 by Leslie and by Beckett as "probably beg. of year written at the beginning of the year") from J.C. in London to Dunthorne, Sr. in East Bergholt: "I have got three rooms in a very comfortable house, No. 50, Rathbone Place. My large

room has three windows in front. I shall make that my shop, having the light from the upper part of the middle window, and by that means I shall get my easel in a good situation." (JCC II, p. 25; see also JCC IV, p. 216 and JC: FDC, pp. 144, 270)

1801
beg. of year

Letter (dated probably 1800 by Leslie but 1801, shortly after last, by Beckett) from J.C. in London to Dunthorne, Sr. in East Bergholt: "I seldom go out as I am so much confined to work at present. I paint by all the daylight we have, and that is little enough, less perhaps than you have by much, I sometimes however see the sky, but imagine to yourself how a purl must look through a burnt glass. All the evening I employ in making drawings, and reading." (JCC II, pp. 26-27)

1802 May 29

Letter from J.C. in London to Dunthorne Sr. in East Bergholt: "just returned from a visit to Sir G. Beaumont's pictures. I am returned with a deep conviction of the truth of Sir Joshua Reynolds's observation that 'there is no *easy* way of becoming a good painter.' It can only be obtained by long contemplation and incessant labour in the executive part.

"And however one's mind may be elevated, and kept us to what is excellent, by the works of the Great Masters—still Nature is the fountain's head, the source from whence all originally must spring—and should an artist continue his practice without referring to nature he must soon from a *manner*, & be reduced to the same deplorable situation as the French painter mentioned by Sir J. Reynolds, who told him that he had long ceased to look at nature for she only put

him out.

"For these two years past I have been running after pictures and seeking the truth at second hand. I have not endeavoured to represent nature with the same elevation of mind—but have neither endeavoured to make my performances look as if really *executed* by other men.

"I am come to a determination to make no idle visits this summer or to give up my time to common place people. I shall shortly return to Bergholt where I shall make some laborious studies from nature—and I shall endeavour to get a pure and unaffected representation of the scenes that may employ me with respect to colour particularly and any thing else—drawing I am pretty well master of.

"There is little or nothing in the exhibition worth looking up to—there is room enough for a natural painture. The great vice of the present day is *bravura*, an attempt at something beyond the truth. In endeavouring to do something better than well they do what in reality is good for nothing. *Fashion* always had, & and will have its day—but *Truth* (in all things) only will last and can have just claims on posterity." (JCC II, pp. 31-32; see also JCC VI, p. 7, JC: FDC, p. 35 and JCD, p. 71)

1803 May 23

Letter from J.C. in London to Dunthorne Sr. in East Bergholt: "Panorama painting seems all the rage. There are four or five now exhibiting, and Mr. Reinagle is coming out with another, a view of Rome, which I have seen. I should think he has taken his view favourably, and it is executed with the greatest care and fidelity. This style of painting suits his ideas of the art

itself, and his defects are not so apparent in it—that is, great principles are neither expected nor looked for in this mode of describing nature. He views Nature minutely and *cunningly*, but with no greatness or breadth. The defects of the picture at present are a profusion of high lights, and too great a number of abrupt patches of shadow. But it is not to be considered as a whole." (JCC II, pp. 33-34; see also JCC IV, p. 217)

1806

Letter from uncle David Pike Watts in London to J.C. in London: "Allow me gently and kindly to give my opinion on the large Picture of Christ receiving the children [Brantham altarpiece]. . . .

"The character of the Picture is so much alter'd that in my sight it is not the same which interested my sentiments. The *mind* of the Picture has fled. It may be a more finished work of Art, but the Spirit, the Devotion, the *Effect* is gone, at least the *Effect* on my eyes, like a portrait in its *free* state perfectly resembling the original and afterwards the Likeness partly lost by *finishing*.

"The Countenances of the Figures are so changed as to improve them as Faces retouched by the hand of the Artist, but to spoil them as religious characters. The soul of that Picture and which attached it to me was *Devotional Sentiment*. I see little of that Sentiment now in the Picture. This is too often the fate of retouching *Portraits*, a single stroke of the Pencil is apt to change the Character of the Countenance." (JCC IV, p. 13)

- 1807 March 13 Farington records: "Constable I called on to see his Kit Kat view of Keswick Lake.—He told me He had seen Calcott's large picture 'Return from the Market.' He said it was a fine picture, but treated in a *pedantick manner*, every part seeming to wish to shew itself; that is had not an air of *nature*; that the trees appeared crumbly—as if they might be rubbed in the hand like bread; not loose & waving, but as if the parts if bent would break; the whole not lucid like Wilson's pictures, in which the objects appear floating in sunshine. I asked Him how Calcott's smaller pictures were, He said much the same with the other." (Farington VIII, p. 2988; see also JCC V, p. 8)
- 1808 July 14 Wilkie records in his journal: "Went to the Royal Academy, where I found the living figure sitting, and Robertson, Constable, and others, painting from her." (Allan Cunningham, *Life of Sir David Wilkie*, 1843)
- 1809 April 3 Farington records: "Constable I called on & saw His pictures intended for Exhibition.—I gave my opinion against His exhibiting His large picture, 5 feet wide, a scene in Borrodaile as being in appearance like a preparation for finishing, wanting variety of colour & effect." (Farington IX, pp. 3431-32; see also JCC IV, pp. 224, 231 and JCC V, p. 8)
- 1810 Oct 23 Letter from John Jackson in London to J.C. at East Bergholt: "I spent ten days in Hants, and was delighted beyond measure with the New Forest. I think it indescribably beautiful; but perhaps you may have seen it. If not, I wish we

might find some sequestered cottage to put our heads in by night, and in the day explore and sketch, for a fortnight or three weeks: but more of this when we meet." (JC: FDC, pp. 223-24; see also JCC IV, p. 225)

1810 Nov 24

Letter from uncle David Pike Watts in East Bergholt to J.C. in London: "I have seen the Altar Piece at Nayland Church and will presume to offer my poor opinions. . . .

"21. The Face, Neck & Hands are left in a unfinish'd state, especially the two former, indeed so crude and smeared as to show real haste and want of care. And altho' there may be some degree of Danger in more finish'd touches of taking off *Effect* (too common a complaint of Portrait Art) yet at the risk of losing *some* Effect, it would be right to add a further *finish* to the Portrait.

"It is scarcely justifiable for any Picture to be shewn so *raw*, unless a Testimony was affixed that the Artist died before he could finish it; no other excuse can reconcile a Picture being affix'd for Public View in so uncultivated a state.

"It is therefore earnestly to be wished that the Artist would next Spring or Summer *complete* the Face & Neck, in justice to his own future name and to gratify the spectators.

"22. This last remark is made because in its present *smear'd* state *grieves* the Writer & altho' he has heard that a distinguish'd Amateur Artist sanctioned it in the *Room* of the Painter, it does not equally pass in its present *local site* under a large luminous Window which greatly prejudices the Picture." (JCC IV, pp. 20-22)

1810 Dec 22 Letter from uncle David Pike Watts in London to J.C. in London: "Have you touched the small 'Flatford Mill'? When you do let it be *worked up* to bear a close eye as a small Cabinet Return. I do not want it for *Effect* as in a place where I will place it I cannot well retreat to a distance for the *Effect*. It must bear close examination." (JCC IV, p. 24)

1811 June
prob. 13 Letter from uncle David Pike Watts in London to J.C. in London: "That dread of being a mannerist, and that desire of being an original, has not, in my imperfect judgment, produced to you the full advantage you promised yourself from it. I had rather see some of the manner of those highly extolled works, which have commanded the applause of the public at large, from the perfect connoisseur down to the simple spectator. . . .

"My opinion is, that cheerfulness is wanted in your landscapes; they are tinctured with a sombre darkness. If I may say so, the trees are not green, but black; the water is not lucid, but overshadowed; an air of melancholy is cast over the scene, instead of hilarity." (JCC IV, pp. 28-29)

1811 Sept 28 Letter from uncle David Pike Watts in London to J.C. in Salisbury: "You must avoid the excess of Anxiety, that extreme solicitude to *finish* which sometimes at a single touch takes away a mark'd trait, it is difficult to retain the strength of Feature and yet the softness of Cabinet perfection, and 'Carlo Dolce' softness and smoothness." (JCC IV, pp. 29-30; see also JCC VI, p. 12)

- 1811 Dec 17 Farington records: "I called upon Constable to see the painted Studies (Landscapes from nature) which He made in the Country during the autumn. I recommended to Him as He had been studying particular appearances, now to think of *Atmosphere* & general effect." (Farington XI, p. 4052)
- 1812 March 21 Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in Spring Grove: "You are now too well acquainted with the pleasures and pains of my profession not to be aware of this anxious time. I am sure you will not only pardon me when I tell you my time and almost my thoughts have been so much occupied with the pictures which I intend for the Exhibition, that untill I had in some degree conquered them I could not write to you with so much satisfaction." (JCC II, pp. 60-61)
- 1812 April 6 Farington records: "Constable called wishing me to look again at His Exhibition pictures which had been painting upon in consequence of my remarks." (Farington XI, p. 4104)
- 1812 April 7 Farington records: "I called on Constable & found that by lightening & clearing His picture, 'A view of Salisbury', He had much improved it." (Farington XI, p. 4105 and JCC VI, p. 14)
- 1812 April 16 Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in Spring Grove: "I have dispatched my pictures to Somerset House—and did I go so far as to say, I was 'pleased and satisfied with them?' These are new sentiments to me, but I have done my best and they are gone to their audit. . . .

"I am copying a picture for Lady Heathcote (her own portrait as Hebe). She will not sit to me though she wants many alterations from the original—but I can have prints, drawings & miniatures, locks of hair, &c &c without end." (JCC II, pp. 63-64; see also JCC IV, p. 54)

- 1812 May 6 Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in Spring Grove: "I have made two hasty visits to the exhibition. . . . Turner has. . . . a scene amongst the Alps with Hannibal and his army—it is so ambiguous as to be scarcely intelligible in many parts (and those the principal), yet as a whole it is novel and affecting. "Mr. Farrington has some beautifull landscapes but they are heavy & crude—I wanted to see them by twilight when they looked much better. My own landscapes have excellent situations." (JCC II, p. 66)
- 1812 June 22 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Spring Grove: "My neighbour Dunthorne is thriving in the world, and his family are growing up delightfully—one of his little boys (my namesake) [Johnny Dunthorne, now fourteen years old] has been grinding colors for me all day—he is a clever little fellow and draws nicely all 'of his own head.'" (JCC II, p. 78; see also JCC IV, p. 234 and JC: FDC, p. 40)
- 1812 July 10 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Spring Grove: "I do not study much abroad in the middle of these very hot bright days. I am become quite *carefull of myself*, last year I almost put my eyes out by that pastime." (JCC II, pp. 79-80; see also JC: FDC, p. 41)

- 1812 July 22 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Spring Grove:
"We have had this charming season.
"I have been living a hermit-like life though always with my pencil in my hand." (JCC II, p. 81)
- 1812 Sept 22 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Bognor: "I was obliged to hasten back immediately to Wivenhoe Park—and all last week I was so much engaged hardly seeing daylight but over the top of a high shutter." (JCC II, p. 85)
- 1812 Sept 28 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Bognor: "I hope I have given a good deal of satisfaction with my picture of the child at Wivenhoe Park—though I could not but regret being so shut up during the fine weather. . . .
"My father is always anxious to see me engaged in Portrait, and his ideas are most rational, but you know Landscape is my mistress—'tis to her I look for fame, and all that the warmth of imagination renders dear to man." (JCC II, p. 87)
- 1812 Nov 13 Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "Coxe the historian who has seen it much was particularly pleased with it [a small landscape by J.C.]. It put him in mind he said of the good old Dutch forest painting school. He looks at it whenever he comes into my room which is most days. What it wants he says is, that what appears *depth* near, should not be *gloom* at a distance.—By the words far & near I mean as the spectator recedes from or approaches the Picture.—This

is I think a just observation. I am now looking at it—It is most pleasing when you are directed to look at it—but you must be *taken* to it. It does not *sollicit attention*—And this I think true of all your pictures & the real cause of your want of popularity. I have heard it remarked of Rubens that one of his Pictures *illuminates* a room. It gives a cheerfulness to everything about it. It pleases before you examine it or even know the subject. How he obtained this, or how it is to be obtained—*hic labor, hoc opus est.*" (JCC VI, pp. 18-19; see also JCC II, p. 101)

1813 June 30

Letter from J.C. in Charlotte St. to Maria: "We are now repairing the house here with a thorough painting, and I shall leave orders about the back drawing room. The paper will be a sort of salmon color and the sofa & chairs crimson (by Lady Heathcote's advise.) I think they will suit pictures but I am indifferent about show—though all insist upon it. I ought to have at least one room in tolerable order. Next winter I mean to sleep in a very large bedroom which I think is healthy.

"I am quite delighted to find myself so well although I paint so many hours—perhaps too many—but my mind is happy when so engaged—not only by being occupied with what I love, but I feel I am performing a moral duty. My front room where I paint shall be done with a sort of purple brown from the floor to the ceiling—not sparing even the doors or doorposts, for white is disagreeable to a painter's eyes, near pictures." (JCC II, p. 108-110; see also JCC I, p. 98, JC: FDC, p. 138 and JCC IV, pp. 54-55)

- 1814 Jan 24 Letter from Maria in London to J.C. in London: "I suppose you are busily engaged painting for the British Gallery, which I understand opens very soon [Beckett: "The British Institution exhibitions of works by living artists"]. I shall be rejoiced to see any work of yours, as I so seldom have an opportunity." (JCC II, p. 114)
- 1814 Feb 19 Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in London: "I have just written to Dunthorne to send me Johnny—he will be very amusing to me, and I intend he should be usefull—he is not at all vulgar and naturally very clever—but had he not these good qualities I should love him for his father's sake." (JCC II, p. 118; see also JCC I, p. 100 and JCC VI, p. 23)
- 1814 end March Letter (probably dated end of March, probably 1814) from J.C. in London to Maria in London: "You once talked to me about a journal. I have a little one that I made last summer that might amuse you could you see it—you will then see how I amused my leisure walks, picking up little scraps of trees, plants, ferns, distances &c &c." (JCC II, p. 120)
- 1814 April 12 Letter from uncle David Pike Watts in London to J.C. in London: "Allow me in this mood to offer that unpleasant thing, *advice*. It is that you will place or paint a little *Starling* on your Easel with the words '*Finish! Finish!*' What is any thing *unfinished*? It is as it were *Nothing* because a Thing does not exist as a Whole, that is incomplete.
- "I really had a great struggle between Inclination & Interest, between the desire to oblige you in the purchase of

your Picture (*Water Gates*) and the Revolt which will check such a desire when the Eye perceived *Unfinished* Traits.

"Will any Person voluntarily prefer an imperfect Object when he can have a more perfect one?

"Allow me, dear John, to offer an opinion on your *Boat Landscape* which according to the measure of my poor judgment is the best from your Easil (except the small copy of Claude formerly painted). I can only appreciate an opinion as such defective talent as I possess in the Art enables me; and in the *Boat Landscape*, where there is much to admire, there is this sad Trait to lament, namely hurry and slight of *Finish*. This is the unfortunate Sign of an hurried Mind and consequently preplex'd Pencil; in short of that fatal habit, *Procrastination*.

"Year after Year rolls on and you candidly allow that you lose time, and find yourself *driven* to a day, to an hour when the Exhibition Room is open'd and the Pictures *must* be sent in or be excluded. *Then* and *not till then* you are flurried, hurried, pursued, actually *chased*, yet cannot gallop fast enough.

"The Picture *must* go in; wet, smear'd, confused, *unfinished*—" (JCC IV, pp. 37-38)

1814 May 4

Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in London: "I took several beautifull walks in search of food for my pencil this summer when I hope to do a great deal in landscape, for I find myself every day less fitted for portraits. I assure you I feel great hope and confidence in myself on that subject. . . .

"I have seen the Exhibition—'tis natural we should look

first for our own children in a crowd. I am much pleased with the look and situation of a small picture there of my own [Beckett:"*Landscape: Ploughing Scene in Suffolk*"].—I understand that many of the members consider it as genuine a peice of study as there is to be found in the room. . . . A large landscape of Turner's seems to attract much attention. . . . My own opinion was decided the moment I saw it, which I find differs from that of Lawrence and many others entirely—but I may tell you (becuase you know that I am not such a vain fool) that I would rather be the author of my landscape with the ploughmen than the picture in question [Beckett: "*Dido and Aeneas*"] (JCC II, p. 121; see also JCC IV, pp. 56, 225)

1814 June 22 Letter from Maria in London to J.C. in East Bergholt: "I went a few nights ago to the British Gallery. I was disappointed in the effect by candle light, I prefer it infinitely by day, it was crowded to excess, certainly a very fine place to see, and be seen." (JCC II, p. 126)

1814 July 3 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in London: "I have filled as usual a little book of hasty memorandums of the places which I saw which you will see. My companion though a more than seventy is a most active and restless creature and I never could get him to stop long at a place, as he could outwalk and outrun me on any occasion—" (JCC II, p. 127; see also JCC I, pp. 104, 105)

1814 July 23 Farington records: "I returned home to breakfast & Constable

called upon me.—We talked abt. filling the vacancies of Associates in November next. I told Him the objection made to His pictures was their being unfinished; that Thomson gave him great credit for the taste of His design in His Larger picture last exhibited, & for the indication shewn in the Colouring, but He had not carried His finishing far enough.—I recommended to Him to look at some of the pictures of *Claude* before He returns to His Country studies, and to attend to the admirable manner in which all the parts of His pictures are completed. He thanked me much for the conversation we had, from which He sd. He shd. derive benefit." (Farington XIII, p. 4564)

1814 July 30 Farington records: "Constable called being to leave London this day for the Season.—He was, by my advice, at Mr. Angerstein's on Wednesday last to study the pictures by Claude, particularly the *finishing* before He commenced His studies from nature in the country." (Farington XIII, pp. 4567-68 and JCC II, p. 128)

1814 Aug 28 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Wimbeldon: "You certainly would have heard of me before now, had I not been called from home to Tattingstone Hall where I was for several days painting an entire new uniform into the large picture of Admiral Western. This I was obliged to do to my great annoyance, for I grudge the fine weather exceedingly and I sincerely hope this will be the last portrait from my pencil—though I have heard you say you like my portraits." (JCC II, p. 130)

- 1814 Sept 18 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt, redirected to London, to Maria in Wimboldon: "This charming season as you will guess occupies me entirely in the fields and I believe I have made some landscapes that are better than is usual with me—at least that is the opinion of all here." (JCC II, pp. 131-132)
- 1814 Oct 2 Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in Brighton: "We have had a most charming season, and I hope I have endeavoured to avail myself of it. It is many years since I have pursued my studies so uninterruptedly and so calmly—or worked with so much steadiness & confidence. I hope you will see me an artist some time or another—but my ideas of excellence are of that nature that I feel myself yet at a frightful distance from perfection." (JCC II, p. 132)
- 1814 Nov 10 Farington records: "Constable called to inform me that His Uncle Mr. D.P. Watts had seen his painted studies,—noticed their being *more finished* than his other works,—and bespoke one of them." (Farington XIII, p. 4606 and JCC IV, p. 40)
- 1815 June 17 Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in Putney: "I have sold myself for the work that I am at present engaged in, which is a large landscape in the background of a picture at Mr. Dawe's. It occupies me at least 12 & sometimes 14 hours a day." (JCC II, pp. 142-43)
- 1815 June 30 Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in Putney: "I am now going to send home Mrs. Fitzhugh's picture of Dedham. I am

quite satisfied with what I secure in practice at Dawe's, & have improved myself exceedingly. I am so much more confident from this experience which is what I most wanted." (JCC II, p. 145)

1815 Sept 9 Letter from Maria in Putney to J.C. in East Bergholt: "How charmed you must be with this long continuance of fine weather. I should suppose for many seasons, you have not painted so much in the open air, nature and you must be greater friends than ever." (JCC II, p. 151)

1815 Oct 2 Letter from uncle David Pike Watts in London to J.C. at East Bergholt: "I met with some information on *Art* from the conversation of a Guest: 'Many of our modern Pictures will feel the Effects of too early varnishing; the Artists lay on varnish before the paint is actually dry, as soon as it feels dry and is only set. It mixes with the paint & eventually cracks and comes off. It should be two years at least before a Picture is varnished.'

"To make a superior Black Colour.

"'Peach or Nectarine Stones broken, or both together— put into a Crucible airtight, the Cover either luted or covered with wet sand, it burns to a black Powder which ground on a Stone and mixed with Sprit and afterwards with proper oil &c makes a superior *black*. If air gets into the Crucible the Contents burn to a white ash, and are lost.'" (JCC IV, p. 43)

1815 Oct 4 Letter from Frederick Henry Barnwell at Bury St. Edwards to J.C. at East Bergholt: "You have a panel, the exact size of my

little landscape, and therefore will not (I presume) have occasion to have the picture sent for the purpose of a frame. It is in my mind to have a rich, handsome, frame, but not so large as is the present fashion. I object to this not on account of price, but on account of the heavy appearance—and should like to have one, the pattern of that which was made for my portrait, of which I will ere long send you a drawing." (JCC IV, pp. 86-87)

1815 Oct 19 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Putney: "I have really been every day intending to write to you but I have been so much out, endeavouring to catch the last of this beautiful year, that I have neglected almost every other duty.

"I have put rather a larger landscape on hand than ever I did before and this it is my wish to secure in a great measure before I leave this place, as I here find many aids, & I am sure that should I come to London to stay first I shall meet with many trifling jobs to interrupt me, which I shall do with pleasure when I have my own pictures under command." (JCC II, p. 156-57)

1815 Nov 3 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Putney: "I am now so much engaged about a large picture that I intend to do all I can to get it in some sort of forwardness before I take it to London . . . you know how I am interrupted in London by Dawe, and Lady Louisa Manners—so much so that it is next to impossible to get on with any plans of my own." (JCC II, p. 159; see also JC: FDC, p. 134 and JCC IV, p. 56)

- 1815 Nov 15 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in London: "It is my intention to continue here till I feel that I have secured such a picture as I mean for the Exhibition. Here everything is calm, comfortable, and good—and I am removed at a distance from you, that effectually removes the anxious desire I always feel when you are in London to meet." (JCC II, p. 160)
- 1815 Dec 3 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in London: "Yesterday was so very mild that I went painting in the feild from a donkey that I wanted to introduce in a little picture." (JCC II, p. 161; see also JCC I, p. 130)
- 1816 Feb 13 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in London: "I never begin to write 'till it is dark and I can no longer see to paint—" (JCC II, pp. 174-75)
- 1816 May 4 Letter from Lady Louisa Manners at Helmingham to J.C. in London: "I am much pleased to hear from you, that Mr Rising approves of your Copy of Sir Joshuas Portrait. I have mention'd to my Brother his wish to have it again;" (JC: FDC, p. 134)
- 1816 Aug 13 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Putney Heath: "I was not able to leave London after I saw you 'till Monday, as I found a picture belonging to a gentleman that was sent to me for some repair— this I stopped to do as it paid my expences going & coming to London this visit." (JCC II, p. 192; see also JC: FDC, p. 31)

- 1816 Aug 27 Letter from John Fisher in Osmington to J.C. in Wivenhoe Park, Essex, forwarded from East Bergholt: "The country here is wonderfully wild & sublime & well worth a painters visit. My house commands a singularly beautiful view: & you may study from my very windows. You shall [have] a plate of meat set by the side of your easel without your sitting down to dinner: we never see company: and I have brushes paints & canvass in abundance." (JCC VI, pp. 28-29; see also JCC II, p. 200)
- 1816 Aug 30 Letter, dated 30 August but postmarked Colchester 29 August, from J.C. in Wivenhoe Park to Maria in Putney Heath: "I am going on very well with my pictures for them—the park is the most forward. . . . I think however I shall make a larger picture from what I am now about. . . .
"I live in the park and Mrs. Rebow says I am very unsociable." (JCC II, pp. 198-99; see also JCC VI, p. 28)
- 1816 Sept 12 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Putney Heath: "I am now in the midst of a large picture here which I had contemplated for the next Exhibition.—it would have made my mind easy had it been forwarder—I cannot help it—we must not expect to have all our wishes complete." (JCC II, pp. 202-03)
- 1816 Sept 16 Letter from Maria in Putney Heath to J.C. in East Bergholt: "Your landscape too gives me some uneasiness, is there a chance of its being sufficiently forward, to do without *your copy*? I hope you will paint very much at Osmington,

something that will do for Somerset House." (JCC II, pp. 205-06; see also JCC VI, p. 30)

1816 Sept 19 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Putney Heath: "I have compleated my view of the Park for General Rebow & am just returned to this place." (JCC II, p. 206)

1816 Sept 22 Letter from J.C. in East Bergholt to Maria in Putney Heath: "I am importuned again for the portrait of the old clergyman who is declining fast—if I could give them one or two days it wants to secure the head, & oblige them very much, & secure the portrait in future." (JCC II, p. 209; see also JCC IV, p. 88)

1818 ca. May 29 Letter from John Fisher in London to J.C. in London: "Send me by bearer a few skins of paint: flake white: blue: naples yellow: vandyke brown; brown pink: brown oker: a phial of boiled oil & another of linseed oil. I will return them in a day or two.—I have got your Osmington sketch book & want to copy one of your views." (JCC VI, p. 36)

[And presumably a few days later] "I return you your colours with many thanks." (JCC VI, p. 36)

1818 ca. July 6 Letter from Dorothea Fisher in London to J.C. in London: "I send you back your Easel & your stick, with many thanks for the loan of them. . . . Papa desires me to send one of my sea pieces, to forward in the same box to Salisbury; if they are both ready & would be the better for varnishing. Papa begs you would have the kindness to do it." (JCC VI, pp. 36-37)

1818 July 13 Letter from Bishop Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "The day I left London I sent to your house two Pictures of my Daughters painting. When they are properly dry I beg you will have the goodness to varnish them—& when they are in a proper state for travelling you will have the goodness to send them to Salisbury." (JCC VI, p. 38)

1819 April 12 Letter from Bishop Fisher in London to J.C. in London: "I must then intreat you for you attention to my Daughter for a few Lessons. She is to have the companion of the Picture of Mr. Douglas's that she has already copied—& she will also copy your Claude.

"I wish you would have the goodness to order two canvas's to be got ready & primed against our return. You know the size of your own picture. The size of Mr. Douglas's is 17-1/2 x 14-1/4." (JCC VI, p. 41)

1819 June 16 Farington records: "I spoke to Constable abt. his picture now in the Exhibition and recommended to him to make his pencil execution more careful." (Farington XV, pp. 5378-79 and JCC II, p. 250)

1819 June 29 Farington records: "Constable . . . brought a small landscape he had painted to shew me that he had profited by my remarks upon the execution of his pictures being too careless." (Farington XV, p. 5382, JCC II, p. 250 and JC: FDC, p. 213)

- 1819 July 2 Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "Will you have the goodness to tell me what price you put on your great picture now in exhibition [*The White Horse*]. . . . Did you not express a wish to have it on your easel again to subdue a few lights and cool your trees? I think you said so. . . . If you do not come & pay me a visit this Autumn I will never forgive you. . . . I have a painting apparatus complete. Brushes clean & pallet set. Colours fresh ground every morning &c &c." (JCC VI, p. 44; see also JCC II, p. 250)
- 1819 July 17 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Salisbury: "The price I have fixed upon my large landscape is 100 Guineas exclusive of the frame. It has served a good apprenticeship in the Academy and I shall avail myself of it by working a good deal upon it before it goes on a second to the British Gallery." (JCC VI, p. 45; see also JCC II, pp. 250-51 and JCC IV, p. 64)
- 1819 July 19 Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "As I have painting materials here of every sort, you have only to put yourself into the Mail any day & come down hither. When your great picture is finished & you can spare it from the exhibitions I wish to become the purchaser." (JCC VI, p. 46; see also JCC II, p. 250)
- 1820 April 27 Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "Constables 'White Horse' has arrive safe. It is hung on a level with the eye, the lower frame resting on the ogee: in a western side light, right for the light of the picture, opposite the fire place. It looks magnificently. My wife says that she

carries her eye from the picture to the garden & back & observes the same sort of look in both." (JCC VI, p. 53)

1821 Feb 1 Letter (mistakenly dated Janry. 1st by Fisher, postmarked 2nd February) from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "Mr Tinney has decided to take the present frame in which your picture stands on my representation of its handsomeness and the expence to which a new one would put him.

"It is *probable* that he may be in town before you send it down. If he is, take the papering off the frame: as the white of the paper gives the lights a brassy look & first impressions are everything.—" (JCC VI, pp. 60-61)

1821 April 1 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "My picture [*The Hay Wain*] goes to the Academy on the tenth. At the same time (as the window on the stairs must be taken out) I shall send Mr Tinny's picture [*Stratford Mill*] to Mr Woodburns—to be packed as the large case is there. The present picture is not so grand as Tinny's owing perhaps to the masses not being so impressive—the power of the Chiaro Oscuro is lessened—but it has rather a more novel look than I expected. I have yet much to do to it—and I calculate for 3 or 4 days there—" (JCC VI, p. 65; see also JCC V, p. 7, JCC II, p. 266, JCD, p. 55 and JCC IV, p. 286)

1821 May 1 Farington records: "Royal Academy I went to, the 3rd Varnishing day. Sir T. Lawrence was finishing his whole length of Lady Louisa Lampton. Howard, Thomson, Constable,

Mulread were also employed on their pictures." (Farington XVI, p. 5656 and JCC II, p. 269)

1821 July
bet. 10-19

Letter from Dorothea Fisher to J.C. in London: "Papa & I called at your House the other day but finding you were out of town, we only left the drawing you were kind enough to lend me.

"We talk of leaving London immediately after the Coronation, & have already began to think of packing up, I have been looking over my painting Box, & should be much obliged if you would replenish for me, the colors I should like to have are as follows

1 bladder of Naples yellow

Do — of light ochre

Do — of Burnt Ochre

Do — of White

Do — of black

Do — of burnt Umber

Do — of Raw Umber

Do — of Burnt brown Sienna

Do — of Blue Black,

if you think they will keep well when the bladders are opened." (JCC VI, p. 69)

1821 July 19

Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in Hampstead: "How does the hay wain look now that it has got into your room again? I want to see it there. For how can one participate in a scene of fresh water & deep noon day shade in the crowded copal atmosphere of the Exhibition: which is

always to me like a great pot of boiling varnish. . . .

"I expect you here any time between 1st September & 1st January. Begin your picture *earlier* this year, & let your mind have time to work. You never allow yourself opportunity for correction & polish.—" (JCC VI, pp. 69-70)

1821 Aug 4

Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to John Fisher in Salisbury: "I have got a room at the glaziers down town as a workshop where is my large picture—and at this little place I have [sundry] small works going on—for which purpose I have cleared a small shed in the garden, which held sand, coals, mops & brooms & that is literally a coal hole, and have made it a workshop, & a place of refuge—when I am down from the house. I have done a good deal of work here.

"I have fitted up my new drawing rooms in Keppel Street & intend keeping them in order, hanging up only decent works. My large picture looks well in them but I shall do more to it —indeed you will be surprized at the good looks of all my concerns. . . .

"There is some hope of getting a landscape, from Mr Angersteins—the large & most magnificent Marine, one of the most perfect pictures in the world—should that be the case, though I can ill afford it, I will make a copy, a facsimile—a 'study' only will be of value but to myself—the other will be real property to my children and a great delight to you and me— the very doing of it will amost bring one in communication with Claude himself & with whose great spirit I may seem to hold commune.

"Lawrence told me that should I really wish it, it would

stimulate him to further exertions to get it of Mr. Angerstein [for loan to the Royal Academy for artists to copy]." (JCC VI, pp. 70-72; see also JCC II, p. 270, JCD, p. 67 and JC: FDC, pp. 108, 145)

1821 Sept 20 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to John Fisher in Salisbury: "I work for excellence—and independent of my *jobs* I have done some studies, carried further than I have yet done any, particularly a natural (but highly elegant) group of trees, ashes, elms & oak &c—which will be of quite as much service as if I had bought the feild and hedge row, which contains them, and perhaps one time or another will fetch as much for my children. It is rather larger than a kit-cat, and upright. . . . The great Claude does not come to the Academy this year. . . . but they expect it another year. It would have been madness for me to have meddled with it this season—as I am so much behind hand with the Bridge [his 6 foot picture for the next R.A. exhibition, here already underway in Sept.], which I have great hindrances in. I cannot do it here—& I must leave my family & work in London." (JCC VI, pp. 74-75; see also JCC II, p. 271, JCD, p. 51, JCC I, p. 202 and JC: FDC, p. 161)

1821 Oct 23 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to John Fisher: "I have not been idle and have made more particular and general study than I have ever done in one summer, but I am most anxious to get into my London painting room for I do not consider myself at work without I am before a six foot canvas. . . .
"I have often been advised to consider my Sky—as a

'*White Sheet drawn behind the Objects*'. Certainly if the Sky is obtrusive—(as mine are) it is bad, but if they are evaded (as mine are not) it is worse, they must and always shall with me make an effectual part of the composition. It will be difficult to name a class of Landscape, in which the sky is not the '*key note*', the *standard of 'Scale*', and the chief '*Organ of sentiment*'. You may conceive then what a '*white sheet*' would do for me, impressed as I am with these notions, and they cannot be Erroneous. The sky is the '*source of light*' in nature—and governs every thing. Even our common observations on the weather of every day, are suggested by them but it does not occur to us. Their difficulty in painting both as to composition and execution is very great, because with all their brilliancy and consequence, they ought not to come forward or be hardly thought about in a picture—any more than extreme distances are.

"But these remarks do not apply to *phenomenon*—or what the painters call accidental *Effects of Sky*—because they always attract particularly.

"I hope you will not think [me (*deleted*)] I am turned critic instead of painter. I say all this *to you* though you do not want to be told—that I know ever well what I am about, & that my skies have not been neglected though they often failed in execution—and often no doubt from over anxiety about them—which alone will destroy that [the ease of not (*deleted*)] Easy appearance which nature always has—in all her movements. . . . My last year's work has got much *together*. This weather has blown & washed the *powder off*." (JCC VI, pp. 76-78; see also JCC II, p. 271, JCC I, p. 10, JC:

FDC, p. 39 and JCD, p. 35)

1822 Feb 16 Letter from John Fisher in Osmington to J.C. in London: "You have often talked of an emerald in a dish of rubbish. Old iron, bits of rag, flints, broken glass or tarnished lace. Such is the appearance of your picture at Salisbury. [Beckett: "That is, *Stratford Mill* in Tinney's drawing-room."] The room which in it's proportions is magnificent is furnished exactly like the best parlour of an opulent pawnbroker. An enormous brass chandelier with twenty branches: a clock stuck round with gilt cupids like the chimney piece ornaments in the breakfast scene of *Marriage a la mode*. And to crown all, the walls covered with pannels of brown varnish yclept 'old masters'.

"The light on your picture is excellent, it receives the South sun standing on the Western wall.—[Sketch of the room, with *Stratford Mill* hanging on a level with the spectator's head below a Venetian picture from Canon Douglas's collection: on one side is 'A Douglas lake peice copied by Miss Benson' and on the other a picture marked 'rubbish'.] However it puts out all the other pictures & attracts general attention & will do you much service." (JCC VI, p. 83)

1822 April 13 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Osmington: "as to painting on gold grounds, some [rumours] are certainly afloat about it—but it is all over with the Alchemy of the art—I hope never to be revived again but dark ages may yet return and there will always be found dark minds in enlightened ones. All that relates to gold is this, if covered by

opaque colors it is of no consequence what the ground is. If used (for Glory &c) and made appear as a thing unconnected with the painting (& so far supernatural) it has always been done down as late as Carlo Dolce—where it sometimes appears very beautiful as blended with transparent color behind the formal saints &c—but still it looks like trick—but a Correggio was above all this. I do not believe he ever resorted to any such nonsense to aid 'his brightness'—which was indeed superhuman—with the exception of himself. I shall leave Correggio with his own words'—*and I too am a painter*'.

"I have sent my large picture [*View on the Stour near Dedham*] to the Academy. I never worked so hard before & now time was so short for me—it wanted much—but still I hope the work in it is better than any I have yet done. . . .

"I have not cleaned my pallet since the last picture. . . .

"My conscience acquits me as to any neglect of [my] last picture—I have dismissed [it] with great calmness and ease of mind."

[And probably from a slightly earlier letter]:

"The composition is almost totally changed from what you saw. I have taken away the sail, and added another barge in the middle of the picture, with a principal figure, altered the group of trees, and made the bridge entire. The picture has now a rich centre, and the right-hand side becomes only an accessory." (JCC VI, pp. 86-89; see also JCC II, pp. 274-75, JCC I, p. 203 and JCC IV pp. 136, 178, 243, 246)

sooner you come to Salisbury the better since in November I shall not be alone: and shall have lefs of your company. I have oil paints & water colours. My Father was at my house in the close a few days ago alone. He said yesterday voluntarily & unexpectedly. 'John that picture of your humming top friend is a very good one. [Beckett: "Presumably *The White Horse*."] I did not think the man could paint so well. It is his best. It has lefs of his meal & white wash.'" (JC: FDC, pp. 117-18; see also JCC VI, p. 95)

1822 Oct 7 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to John Fisher in Salisbury: "I have made about 50 careful studies of *skies* tolerably large, to be carefull. . . .

"This is I hope my last week here—at least this season. It is a ruinous place to me—I lose time here sadly—one of my motives for taking [the] Charlotte St. house was to remain longer in London. In Keppel Street we wanted room—& were like 'bottled wasps upon a southern wall'—but the 5 happiest & most interesting years of my life were passed in Keppel St." (JCC VI, pp. 98-99; see also JCC II, p. 277)

1822 Oct 31 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "We left Hampstead a fortnight ago last Tuesday—and I have not had my pencil in my hand one day yet. I have had an immense trouble to get the house habitable. I am now however quite well & at work again. . . .

"I have got this room (the large painting room) into excellent order. It is light—airy—*sweet* & warm. I at one time despaired of attaining either of these qualities, especially the

latter, but we discovered a real greivance—a hollow wall—which communicated with the floors of my room, opened & was immediately over—the *well* of the *privy*. This would have played the devil with the oxygen of my colours. . . . I have now two six footers in hand, one of which I shall send to the Gallery." (JCC VI, p. 100; see also JCC II, p. 278 and JC: FDC, p. 119)

- 1822 Nov 3 Letter from Joseph Bonomi in Rome, forwarded to London to J.C., with an English postmark of 7 February 1823: "I am exceedingly sorry the drawing of Claude's house is not quite ready to send by Mr. ETTY who leaves this in the evening; however it is more than probable I shall have an opportunity of sending it by some other hand in the course of a week or two and I hope I shall then be able to give you some more information on the subject. It is situated in a most interesting part of the town." (JC: FDC, pp. 183-4)
- 1822 Nov 30 Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "The palace party do nothing but talk of your picture [*Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop's Grounds*] that is coming. Put in some niggles to please the good people." (JCC VI, pp. 102-04)
- 1822 Dec 6 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Salisbury: "Dodsworth may have his picture [a copy by J.C. of a Teniers painting] when I shall find an opportunity of sending it with your two. I have grimed it down with slime & soot—as he is a connoisseur and of course prefers filth & dirt, to freshness &

beauty." (JCC VI, pp. 105-07; see also JCD, p. 60 and JCC II, p. 278)

1823 Jan 7 Letter from Joseph Bonomi in Rome to J.C. in London: "My architectural friend Mr Scoles to whom I am indebted for this drawing is of opinion that the windows in the center [...] were not in the original design from the cornice having been broken away to admit them. I am sorry we cannot now, accompany these sketches with a plan of the interior although I am told it [h...] has suffered much change such as making two rooms out of one &c." (JC: FDC, p. 184)

1823 Feb 21 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "I did not touch my pencil for a month or two, which has thrown me far back in my work. I am making it up now, but I am weak and much emaciated— they took a good deal of blood away from me which I could ill spare. I have fretted for the loss of time & being away from my easel—& for the waste of property in consequence—but most of all for my dear boy. But I will lease my house and go into any painting room. I have put a large upright landscape in hand, and I hope to get it ready for the Academy. I hope likewise to have the Bishops picture ready." (JCC VI, pp. 112-114; see also JCC IV, p. 218, 290 and JCC II, p. 279)

1823 May 9 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "I had many interruptions to my works for the Exhibition as you know from various causes so that I have no large canvas there. My Cathedral looks very well. Indeed I got through that job

uncommonly well considering how much I dreaded it. . . . It was the most difficult subject in landscape I ever had upon my easel. I have not flinched at the work, of the windows, buttresses, &c, &c, but I have as usual made my escape in the evanescence of the chiaro-oscuro." (JCC VI, pp. 115-17; see also JCC II, p. 280, JCD, p. 66 and JCC IV, p. 237)

1823 May 19

Letter from Joseph Bonomi in Rome to J.C. in London: "Allow me to introduce to you my Friend Mr Marsh who has been so Kind as to make the drawing of Claudes house for me. You would do me a favour by allowing him to see your excellent landskips especially as he has studied that branch of art.

"The drawing which Mr Scoles the Architect made with the plan &c was sent to you about 4 months ago, but I am sorry to say Mr Scruton the person to whom they were intrusted was shipwrecked in his passage to England and lost all his Rob[.] "fortunately however I happen to have the first sketch of the plan showing the situation of Claudes house of which I send a tracing. The interior of the house has undergone many changes since Claude's time it is now occupied by an English nobleman and very difficult to get in. The front faces the north and commands a fine view over monte Mario and the other hills to the north of Rome. The West Front looks over Rome, indeed all along the Piazza della Trinita de' Monte you have a magnificent view of the City it being on a hill which you ascend by [an] 135 steps. Mr Marsh can describe all this to you much better than I can." (JC: FDC, p. 184)

1823 July 5 Letter from John Fisher in Gillingham to J.C. in London: "Still life is always dull as there are no associations of ideas with it except to such men as Dr. Browning. But this is so deliciously fresh that I could not resist it. If you have one of your coast Windmills hanging up on your wall framed, I wish you would put it up with the fruit peice. . . .

"Tinney says that his picture is inferior to mine. He cannot find out that mine hangs alone; & that his is hurt (as is always the case) by villianous company." (JCC VI, pp. 122-23)

1823 July 10 Letter (postmarked 10th July) from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Gillingham: "You have made an excellent purchase of a most delightfull work. It is a pearly picture but its tone is so deep & mellow that it plays the very devil with my landscapes. It makes them look speckled & frost bitten, but I shall make my account of it, as I am now working for '*tone*'.

"The painter is G. de Vris [Beckett: "The work is so signed, but little is known of the artist."], an artist cotemporary with Rubens—& de Heem painted his excellent fruit & flowers at that time, but this painters works are more scarce, and old Bigg thinks more excellent. I congratulate you, and I should have done so had you possessed it at almost any price.

"I have stripped it of its barbarous & trumpery border [a gilt molding], which was cemented on the very *surface* of the picture, and hid two inches of background all round, to the great injury of the composition.

"I shall not involve you in much expence for a frame, but

shall consider it more as a highly decorated panel, but I will not sacrifice the picture. It has cost me some trouble to make good the backgrounds at the edge, I speak of, but it is well worth recovering, as the want of an efficient feild crowded the composition. . . .

"Sir G. Beaumont has just left me. He is a capital fellow. He is pleased with a large wood I have just toned." (JCC VI, pp. 124-25; see also JCC IV, pp. 67, 218 and JC: FDC, p. 145)

1823 Aug 24 Letter from J.C. in Gillingham to Maria in Hampstead: "We are sadly off for weather. I can do nothing hardly. The Mills are pretty, and one of them wonderfull old & romantic." (JCC II, pp. 282-83; see also JCC VI, p. 130)

1823 Aug 29 Letter from J.C. in Gillingham to Maria in Hampstead: "We have had such sad weather that I have been able to do but little—but I have made one or two attacks on an old mill. . . . owing to the very bad weather & a day or two lost at Salisbury, I am deficient in sketches, and must make another day or two before I return." (JCC II, pp. 284-85; see also JCC VI, pp. 129-30)

1823 Sept 30 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "My wife and children. . . . wish for a little longer stay at Hampstead—but [it] sadly unsettles me—to be torn from my painting room—and the work I do by littles up there is of no avail. I am now pretty full handed. I have begun putting Tinney's pictures compositions together, and I have several pretty minor things

to do—but my difficulty lies in what I am to do for the world, next year I must work for myself—and must have a large canvas." (JCC VI, pp. 132-33; see also JCC II, p. 289, JCC IV, pp. 218, 245, 290-91 and JCD, p. 60)

1823 Oct 2 Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "Tinney . . . consents to let his picture & frame come to London. I will see them packed. But he does it, he confesses, because he can deny you nothing. He dreads your touching the picture. This of course is not his own thought, for he would not discover any alteration you might make. But it is the suggestion of Lewis the engraver. 'There is a look of nature about the picture,' says Lewis, 'which seems as if it were introduced by magic. This, when Constable gets it on his easel, he may in an unlucky moment destroy: and he will never paint another picture like it, for he has unfortunately taken to copy himself.'" (JCC VI, pp. 134-36; see also JCC IV, p. 219)

1823 Oct 19 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to John Fisher in Salisbury: "At the time you receive this letter I shall be at breakfast with Sir George Beaumont at Colorton Hall, Leicestershire. . . .
"I look to this visit with pleasure and improvement. All his beautiful pictures are there, and if I can find time to copy the little *Grove*, by Claude Lorraine (evidently a study from nature), it will much help me." (JCC VI, pp. 139-41 and JCC II, p. 289; see also JC: FDC, p. 146)

1823 Oct 21 Letter, dated by Leslie 24th October, but postmarked London 22nd October, from J.C. in Leicestershire to Maria in

Hampstead: "O dear this is a lovely place indeed and I only want you with me to make my visit quite compleat—such grounds—such trees—such distances—rock and water—all as it were can be done from the various windows of the house. . . .

"Only think that I am now writing in a room full of Claudes (not Glovers)—real Claudes, and Wilsons & Poussins &c.—almost at the summit of my earthly ambitions. . . .

"I am just returned from a walk—all round and about with Sir G. He is now painting, & I shall take my box, and do a bit of rock or tree covered with moss." (JCC II, pp. 290-1)

1823 Oct 27

Letter from J.C. in Leicestershire to Maria in Hampstead: "We do not quit the table immediately but chat a little about the pictures in the room the breakfast room containing the Claudes. We then go to the painting room, and Sir George most manfully like a real artist sets to work on any thing he may fix upon—and me by his side.

"We then return to dinner. Do not sit long—hear the news paper by Lady Beaumont (the Herald—let us take it in town)—then to the drawing room to meet the tea—then comes a great treat. I am furnished with some beautiful portfolio, of his own drawings or otherwise, and Sir George reads a play, in a manner the most delightfull. . . .

"I shall make a few sketches on the grounds, & I [have] done a little one from the window. Sir G. has kindly allowed me to make a study of a little Claude, a Grove—probably done on the spot." (JCC II, pp. 291-93; see also JC: FDC, p. 147 and JCC IV, p. 67)

1823 Nov 2

Letter from J.C. at Coleorton Hall to John Fisher in Salisbury:
"Sir George and Lady Beaumont. Nothing can be more kind and in every possible way more obliging than they both are to me—I am left entirely to do as I like with full range of the whole house—in which I may saturate myself with art, only on condition of letting them do as they like. I have copied one of the small Claudes—a breezy sunset [Beckett: "Leslie (who gives the word as *sunrise*) says that this was *The Death of Procris*, now in the National Gallery."]—a most pathetic and soothing picture. Sir G. says it is a most beautiful copy. Perhaps a sketch would have answered my purpose, but I wished for a more lasting remembrance of it and a sketch of a picture is only like seeing it in one view. It is only one thing. A sketch (of a picture) will not serve more than one state of mind & will not serve to drink at again & again—in a sketch there is nothing but the one state of mind—that which you were in at the time.

"I have likewise begun the little Grove by Claude [Beckett: "Constable's copy . . . is now in the Art Gallery of New South Wales at Sydney."]—a noon day scene—which '*warms and cheers but which does not inflame or irritate*'—*Mr. Price*. [It] diffuses a life & breezy freshness into the recess of trees which make it enchanting. Through the depths are seen a water-fall & ruined temple—& a solitary shepherd is piping to some animals—

—"In closing shades & where the current strays
"Pipes the lone shepherd to his feeding flock.'

"I draw in the evening & Lady B or Sir G. read aloud. I wish

you could see me painting by Sir George's side. I have free range & work in his painting room. It is delightfull to see him work so hard—painting like religion knows no difference of rank. . . .

"O, when I think of the 'Ancient Masters' I am almost choaked in this breakfast room. Here hang 4 Claudes, a Cousins & a Swanevelt. The low sun in the morning sets them off to great advantage." (JCC VI, pp. 142-43; see also JC: FDC, p. 147)

1823 Nov 2

Letter, dated wrongly by J.C. 2nd October, from J.C. in Leicestershire to Maria in London: "Nothing would amuse you so much as to see Sir G. and myself hard painting by the side of each other. I have finished a beautifull copy of the little Claude—a sunset. They say it is a wonderfull little copy—at any rate by doing it well when I was about it it may be worth something for our children. I have begun another which I hope to complete this week, the little Grove. . . .

"I am now going to breakfast—before the Narcissus of Claude. How enchanting and lovely it is, far very far surpassing any other landscape I ever yet beheld." (JCC II, pp. 293-94; see also JCD, p. 54 and JC: FDC, p. 147)

1823 Nov 5

Letter from J.C. in Leicestershire to Maria in London: "I have a little Claude in hand, a grove scene of great beauty and I wish to make a nice copy from it to be usefull to me as long as I live. It contains almost all that I wish to do in landscape.

"You would laugh to see my bed room, I have dragged so many things into it, books, portfolios, paints, canvases,

pictures &c, and I have slept with one of the Claudes every night. You may well indeed be jealous." (JCC II, pp. 295-96 and JC: FDC, p. 144)

1823 Nov 9

Letter from J.C. in Leicestershire to Maria in London: "I do not wonder at you being jealous of Claude. If any thing could come between our love it is him. But I am fast advancing a beautifull little copy of his study from nature of a little grove scene, which will be of service to me for life, and by being nearly finished will be worth something and a peice of property—it is so well. . . .

"But beleive me I shall be the better for this visit as long as I live. I am sure I shall finish my pictures so much better—and my temper will be so much improved. Sir G. is never angry or pettish or peevish—and though he loves painting so much it does not harrass him." (JCC II, pp. 296-98; see also JCC IV, p. 265)

1823 Nov 18

Letter from J.C. in Leicestershire to Maria in London: "I shall finish my little Claude on Thursday and then I shall have a little job or two to do besides to some of Sir G's pictures, that will take a day or two more and then home—. . . .

"I have worked so hard in the house that I never once went out of the door last week, so that I am getting quite nervous—but I am sure my visit here will be ultimately of the greatest advantage to me and I could not be better employed to the advantage of all of us by its making me so much more of an artist. Indeed what I see and learn here is prodigious—. . . .

"I amuse myself making sketches from Sir G's drawings about Dedham, &c. I could not carry all his sketches book he has filled so many." (JCC II, pp. 300-02)

- 1823 Nov 21 Letter from J.C. in Leicestershire to Maria in London: "my greediness after pictures caused me to cut out for myself much more work that I ought to have taken at this time.
"One of the Claudes would have been all that I wanted but I could not get at that first: & I had been here a fortnight when I began it. To day it will be done with perhaps a little to touch on Saturday morning—I have then an old picture to fill up some holes in." (JCC II, p. 303; see also JCC I, p. 204 and JC: FDC, p. 300)
- 1823 Nov 26 Letter from J.C. in Leicestershire to Maria in London: "My second little copy of Claude is only done this morning & it is beautifull & all wet so that I could hardly bring it with me. . . .
"I shall get a few more walks & rides as I have not been out hardly at all—and only made you one little sketch of the house, which is all I have done from nature." (JCC II, pp. 305-6)
- 1823 Dec 12 Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "The Waterloo depends entirely on the polish & finish given it. If I were the painter of it I would always have it on my easil, & work at it for five years a touch a day." (JCC VI, pp. 144-45; see also JC: FDC, p. 328)
- 1824 Jan 6 Letter from Sir George Beaumont at Coleorton Hall to J.C. in

London "How are your copies approved?" (JC: FDC, pp. 147-148)

1824 May 8 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "My picture [the vertical *A Boat Passing a Lock*, now in R.A. coll.] is liked at the Academy. Indeed it forms a decided feature and its light cannot be put out, because it is the light of nature—the Mother of all that is valuable in poetry, painting or anything else—where an appeal to the soul is required. The language of the heart is the only one that is universal—and Sterne says that he disregards all rules—but makes his way to the heart as he can. My execution annoys most of them and all the scholastic ones—perhaps the sacrifices I make for *lightness* and *brightness* is too much, but these things are the essence of landscape. Any extreem is better than white lead and oil and *dado* painting." (JCC VI, pp. 156-57; see also JCC II, p. 309 and JCC IV, p. 180)

1824 May 24 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Mr. Arrowsmith called, and wrote down his commands respecting the pictures ordered by himself & friend. Put my name on all of them. Johnny & I very busy." (JCC II, p. 316; see also JCC I, p. 210, JC: FDC, p. 136 and JCC IV, p. 181)

1824 May 25 Journal entry to Maria from J.C. in London. J.C. records: "Johnny & I hard at work & began packing the large pictures. Mr. Arrowsmith much disappointed at not finding them done because he was going over to Dover that night and wished they should accompany him." (JCC II, p. 316; see also JCC IV,

p. 182)

- 1824 May 26 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "After dinner washed Tinney's picture & oiled it." (JCC II, p. 317; see also JCC IV, p. 182 and JC: FDC, p. 136)
- 1824 May 27 Letter (probably written 27 May) to John Fisher from J.C. in London: "I have got my friend Johnny with me who is squaring and working hard for me, & the canvas is now coming for the Waterloo." (JCC VI, pp. 160-61; see also JCC II, pp. 313-15 and JCC IV, p. 181)
- 1824 May 31 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Came home & set to work, on Tinney's large picture, which is now ready when ever they want it." (JCC II, p. 320; see also JCC IV, p. 247, where date is given incorrectly as May 30, JCC IV, p. 282 and JCC VI, p. 161)
- 1824 June 2 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Johnny has been squaring on my large picture." (JCC II, p. 323; see also JCC IV, p. 109 and JC: FDC, p. 42)
- 1824 June 3 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Got to my work again, when Sir G. Beaumont called & helped me a good deal in toning & improving Tinney's picture." (JCC II, p. 324; see also JCC VI, p. 163)
- 1824 June 4 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Went to Lady Beaumont. Saw Sir G. & did a good deal to his picture then on

the easil which he could not get on with. It looked very nice, & he was pleased." (JCC II, p. 325)

1824 June 5 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Staid at home all day—and began and worked very hard on the Mill for Mr. Fisher which was promised & he paid me for it when he was last in town. No one person called to day—and Johnny & I have been quite uninterrupted." (JCC II, p. 325)

1824 June 16 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "After dinner a French gentleman & lady called, Monsieur le Vicomte de Thulluson, to beg permission to see 'de Gallery of Mr. Constable'. . . . He ordered a little picture & wished to know if I would accept any commissions from Paris—I said, certainly. . . .

"He was wholly struck & delighted with the picture of Tinney's—which now looks so very beautifull on the easil. It is of service to me to have so good a work to show." (JCC II, pp. 329-30; see also JCC I, p. 210, JCC VI, p. 164 and JCC IV, pp. 68, 183, 226)

1824 June 18 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "At breakfast Mr. Coward called to measure a frame. . . .

"Johnny went up to Sir G. Beaumont's to work for him, in drawing an outline of some subject for him. . . .

"At 3 o'clock Johnny returned from Sir G.B.'s where he had been at work squaring and drawing in some subject for him. Sir George very much pleased. . . .

After dinner Fisher called. I was at work & had been so all

day—on the little Osmington Coast." (JCC II, pp. 334-35; see also JCC IV, p. 184 and JCC VI, p. 164)

1824 June 24 Letter, apparently written 24th June, from J.C. in London to Maria in Brighton, sent with journal installment: "Johnny is getting on with Mr. Lewis's portrait the copy—& so continually usefull to me that he makes me keep at home to my work." (JCC II, pp. 342-43; see also JCC IV, p. 68)

1824 June 25 Journal entry (taken from Leslie's transcript as original is missing) to Maria from J.C. in London: "After breakfast called on the Bishop by his wish. He had to tell me that he thought of my improving the picture of the Cathedral, and mentioned many things.—'He hoped I would not take his observations amiss'. I said, 'quite the contrary, as his lordship had been my kind monitor for twenty-five years.' I am to have it home tomorrow. . . .

"Mr. Neave called this evening about five. He is always the most agreeable person in the world. He was quite astonished at the picture on the easel (Tinney's) and hoped I would always keep to the picturesque, and those scenes in which I am 'so entirely original'." (JCC II, p. 344; see also JCC V, p. 55 and JCC VI, p. 166)

1824 June 27 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Johnny and Holland went to the Bishop's & brought here the Cathedral to be varnished." (JCC II, p. 345; see also JCC I, p. 210)

1824 June 29 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "After breakfast

John went to the Bishop's with the frame & Miss F[isher]'s picture which I had retouched a little." (JCC II, p. 346; see also JCC IV, pp. 154, 265)

1824 June 30 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "After breakfast Johnny went to Sir George's—I beleive he has now done what was wanted and has quite given satisfaction. . .

"I had Sir G.B. with me. He called to know if I would undertake a singular commission for him on behalf of the directors of the British Gallery—it was—there is a lady who has devoted her pursuits to what she calls the Venetian secret of coloring—she has been boring at this these 20 years—and has at length written to the Secretary of State & to the Gallery, to desire that proper tryals may be made of it by some eminent artists." [Beckett: "Miss Cleaver, daughter of William Cleaver, Bishop of Bangor and later of St. Asaph: her claimed discovery, made by accident in 1807, had been published anonymously at Brighton in 1815, then expanded and republished in London in 1821. See *Apollo*, July, 1964."] (JCC II, pp. 347-48; see also JCC IV, p. 68, 184)

1824 July 3 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "John has been very busy to day—in mounting a drawing for Sir G. & tracing a picture for him." (JCC II, pp. 352-54)

1824 July 5 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Found a note from Miss Fisher praying me for the frame which Coward had made for her copy of my Gillingham—. . . .

"Thank God I have done Mr. Lewis's portrait, a nice

copy—and painted a sky this afternoon. Sir G. gave me a nice little sketch this afternoon." (JCC II, pp. 354-55; see also JCC IV, p. 68)

1824 July 7 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Went with John to Sir G.B.'s to overlook such of his pictures as he wished [to] lend me. Brought away another specimen or two and a nice rich upright one like Rembrandt, and he lent me his lovely little Rubens, & the Teniers and another German landscape to take care of. We brought them all home in the coach." (JCC II, p. 356; see also JCC IV, pp. 185, 276)

1824 July 9 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Set off pretty early with Johnny to Sir G.B.'s, for the last time this season as he leaves town on Monday. He had a great many of his pictures, the failures, painted out by John. He gave him a little sketch of a waterfall, pretty enough, and was very much obliged to us for our time & the pains we had taken to oblige him." (JCC II, p. 358; see also JCC I, pp. 213-14)

1824 July 12 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Got on with another of my French pictures. Johnny has done a delightfull outline of my Cathedral same size for me to copy." (JCC II, p. 360; see also JCC I, p. 214, JCC VI, p. 166, JCC IV, p. 285 and JCC V, p. 118, where letter is said incorrectly to be from Maria to J.C.)

1824 July 13 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Got up pretty early. Began to work on Mr. Lewis's portrait which I thought

was done—but I worked on it the whole morning, and made it look beautiful. Kennedy came to pack Mr. Lewis's portrait & all the pictures belonging to Lady Dysart. It took him the whole day—packed three large cases—7 pictures in all. Got home my picture from the Royal Academy—it looks rich & beautiful & has done me a world of credit." (JCC II, pp. 360-61; see also JCC IV, p. 68 and JC: FDC, pp. 289, 332)

1824 July 18

Letter from J.C. in Brighton to Fisher: "I have got the picture of the Cathedral, from the Bishop's—and Johnny has made me a delightful outline of the same size. He is an invaluable companion to me. . . .

"The French critics. . . . they acknowledge the effect to be rich and powerful—and the whole has the look of nature, and color (their *chief excellence*) to be rich and true & harmonious but shall we admire works so unusual for these excellencies alone—what is to become of the great Poussin—&c &c. Is this the only excellence to be looked for in the art of landscape painting—they then caution the younger artists to beware of the 'seduction', those English works cannot fail to produce, when I '*exposed*' &c &c—

"The execution of my pictures I know is singular—but I admire that rule of Sterns—'never mind the dogmas and rules of the schools—but get at the heart as you can'. But it is evident something like the end has been attained in these by the great sensation they seem to have made on most people who have seen them here or abroad. . . .

"I am looking for a months quiet here—and I have brought with me several works to complete. What a blessing it is thus

to be able to carry one profession with me. A medical man cannot take his patients with him or you your flock." (JCC VI, pp. 167-68; see also JCC IV, p. 186, JC: FDC, p. 39 and JCC II, p. 364)

- 1824 Aug 29 Letter (posted 29th, apparently of August) from J.C. in Brighton to John Fisher: "I am however getting on with my French jobs. One of the largest is quite complete, and is my best, in freshness and sparkle—*with repose*—which is my struggle just now." (JCC VI, pp. 170-71; see also JCC II, p. 367, JCC IV, p. 189 and JC: FDC, p. 45)
- 1824 Sept 8 Letter from John Fisher in Gillingham to J.C. in Brighton: "Your 'Lane', in spite of the want of the hat brush & pressing iron, looked very interesting & tranquil & came out remarkably fresh when it got a reflected light on it, which during a portion of the day was the case with it. I requested to be introduced to Collins's friend, Sir T. Heathcote during the Music meeting; & brought him up to see your pictures: but though he spoke civilly, he is evidently one of those who prefer execution to sentiment." (JCC VI, p. 173)
- 1824 Oct 29 Letter from Maria in Brighton to J.C. in London: "Mr. Phillips. . . is quite pleased to think you have time to copy your French pictures." (JCC II, p. 369)
- 1824 Nov 17 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "You are both mistaken as to my motives for desiring it [Tinny's *Stratford Mill*] so soon as I at first requested to have [it]—I wished for

it not to 'whip up any other pictures by'—my Lock which now hangs in my room, being far beyond it in that respect—but my anxiety was to have it in readiness and by me as an inducement for the Wise Men from the Institution, to receive it—

"I am at work again & I have my friend John Dunthorne with me—he cheers & helps me so much that I could wish him always to be with me. He forwards me a great deal in subordinate parts such as tracing, squaring &c &c. . . .

"Reynolds [Beckett: "Samuel William Reynolds, senior, was himself also a landscape artist."] tells me my 'freshness' exceeds the freshness of any painter that ever lived—for to my zest of 'color' I have added 'light': Ruisdael (the freshest of all) and Hobbema, were *black*—should any of this be true, I must go on. . . .

"The sketchbook I am busy with a few days when I will send it—they are all boats—and coast scenes—*subjects* of this kind seem to me more fit for *execution* than sentiment." (JCC VI, pp. 180-83; see also JCC II, p. 370)

1824 Dec ca. 7 Letter from Samuel Reynolds, Sr., in London to J.C. in London: "I have, since the arrival of your picture, [*The Lock*; Morrison] been before it for the last hour, the light of a cheerful day through the clean window falling full upon it. It is, no doubt, the best of your works— true to nature, seen and arranged with a professor's taste and judgment. The execution shows in every part a hand of experience: masterly without rudeness, and complete without littleness. The colouring is sweet, fresh, and healthy; bright not gaudy, but

deep and clear." (JCC IV, p. 266)

1824 Dec. 13 Letter from William Brockedon in London to J.C. in London:
"You will find in the enclosed some remarks upon your pictures at Paris. . . .
"You are accused of carelessness by those who acknowledge the truth of your effect; and the freshness of your pictures has taught them that though your means may not be essential, your end must be to produce an imitation of nature. . . . 'Look at these landscapes by an Englishman—the ground appears to be covered with dew.'" (JCC IV, pp. 264, 192)

1824 Dec 17 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Bath: "Every thing which belongs to me, belongs to you, and I should not have hesitated a moment about sending you my Brighton book—but I will tell you—just at the time you wrote to me my Frenchman was in London. We were settling about work and he has engaged me to make twelve drawings (to be engraved here, and published in Paris), all from this book, size of the plates the same as the drawing, about 10 or 12 inches. I work at these in the evening. This book is larger than my others—and does not contain odds, and ends (I wish it did), but all complete compositions—all of boats or beach scenes—and there may be about 30 of them. If you wish to see them for a few days, tell me how I am to send them to you. . . .
"My Paris affairs go on very well. The pictures in the Louvre did not *keep* the *ground* they first *took*—but though

the director (the Count Forbain) gave them very respectable situations in the first instance—yet on their being exhibited a few weeks, they so greatly advanced in reputation that they were removed from their original situations to a post of honor—the two prime places near the line in the principal room. I am much indebted to the artists for this alarum in my praise—but I will do justice to the Count. He is no artist (I believe) and he thought 'as the colors were rough, they must be seen at a distance'—they found their mistake as they then acknowledged the richness of the texture—and the attention to the surface of objects in these pictures. They call out much about their vivacity and freshness, a thing unknown to their own paintings. A gentleman told me the other day that he visited the Louvre—he heard one say to his friend—"look at these English pictures—the very dew is upon the ground". They wonder where the *brightness* comes from. Only conceive what wretched students they must have been to be so surprized at these qualities—the fact is they study (& they are very laborious students) art only—and think so little of applying it to nature. They are what Northcote said of Sir J.R.—in his landscapes (at first) made wholly up from pictures—and know about as much of *nature* as a "*hackney coach horse does of a pasture*". In fact they do worse. They make painfull studies of individual articles—leaves, rocks, stones, trees, &c &c singly—so that they look cut out [Beckett: "This comment may be derived from Schroth, who uses the term *decoupé* in a later letter."] —without belonging to the whole—and they neglect the *look* of nature altogether, under its various changes. . . .

"My wife is now translating for me some of their criticisms. They are very amusing and acute—but very shallow and feeble. Thus one—after saying, 'it is but justice to admire the *truth*—the *color*—and *general vivacity & richness*'—yet they want the objects more formed & defined, &c, and say that they are like the rich preludes in musick, and the full harmonious warblings of the Aeolian lyre, which *mean* nothing, and they call them orations—and harangues—and highflown conversations affecting a careless ease—&c &c &c—. . . .

"Will you on your return to Salisbury send me your large picture—it will be of service to me and I want to do something to it, to nourish it—not paint upon a touch. . . . I will not molest Mrs. Tinney's room if I can help it, but I think that picture the most showing for exhibition. Yours is superior in sentiment. I can judge better by having yours—. . . .

"I have painted two of my best landscapes for Mr *Scroth* at Paris. They will soon go but I have copied them, so it is immaterial which are sent away. I am putting a 6 foot canvas [Beckett: "*The Leaping Horse*"] in hand ." (JCC VI, pp. 184-87; see also JCC II, p. 371, JCC V, p. 75, JC: FDC, pp. 40, 74, JCD, pp. 60, 77 and JCC IV, pp. 192-93, 238, 266, 315, 316)

1825 Jan 1

Letter from Fisher to J.C.: "I am pleased to find they are engraving your pictures, because it will tend to spread your fame, but I am almost timid about the result. There is in your pictures too much evanescent effect & general tone to be expressed by black & white. Your charm is colour & the cool

tint of English daylight. The burr of mezzotint will not touch that. Your sketch books would I guess engrave well." (JCC VI, p. 188)

1825 Jan 5

Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "I am just returned from conveying to the coach office in Oxford St. a box for your and Mrs. J. Fisher's amusement. I have sent you two books. Pullins the prints from which are from good pictures—I know not what to lay hands upon—I could not spare any Brighton book—and your sisters have borrowed ('for a friend') such of my sketch-books as you have not had. The box will reach you tomorrow morning from Nelson's coach office. I have enclosed in the box a dozen of my Brighton oil sketches—perhaps the sight of the sea may cheer Mrs F—they were done in the lid of my box on my knees as usual.

"Will you be so good as to take care of them. I put them in a book on purpose—as I find dirt destroys them a good deal. Will your repack the box as you find it. Return them to me here at your leisure but the sooner the better.

"I miss the books you have—one a good size—& the other small, a view of Oxford Bridge on the first page—Is it not so?"

"I am writing this hasty scrawl [in the] dark before a six foot canvas—which I have just launched with all my usual anxieties. It is a canal scene—my next shall contain a scratch with my pen of the subject." (JCC VI, pp. 189-90; see also JCC II, p. 372)

1825 Jan 21

Letter, presumably written 21 January, postmarked London

22nd January, from J.C. in Woodmansterne to Maria in London: "The children are to be in a picture by themselves. . .

"It is to consist of the two boys, donkey and the little girl upon it—" (JCC II, pp. 372-74; see also JCC IV, p. 266)

1825 Jan 23

Letter from J.C. in Woodmansterne to John Fisher: "Your picture and the Green Lane are now in my gallery. I was delighted to see your picture [*The White Horse*], it is so careful and so entirely unaffected in arrangement and execution. What some of the other large ones have in power this makes up in sentiment and truth. I shall not object (if you may not) to its going to the 'Gentlemen' at the Gallery, but I shall try for Tinneys [*Stratford Mill*] when the time comes as I think it has more qualities for an exhibition among others pictures. . . .

"I deeply feel the honour of having found an original style & independent of him who would be Lord over all—I mean Turner—I believe it would be difficult to say that there is a bit of landscape that does not emanate from that source. . . .

"As you say, they cannot engrave my color or evanescence, but they can the chiaro oscuro & the details & the taste and with it most of my sentiment. A bad engraver will not injure me to that degree you think—but it is as you say quite impossible to engrave the real essence of my landscape feeling." (JCC VI, pp. 190-92; see also JCC IV, pp. 195, 266 and JCC II, p. 375)

1825 Jan 25

Letter from J.C. in Woodmansterne to Maria in London: "I

have done one of the heads this morning—that of the eldest boy. The little girl was done yesterday—. . . .

"We get on wonderfully with the picture. I shall finish all the likenesses now and I hope [to] bring it with me on Saturday (if not Friday). I am delighting them all and surprizing them that I get on so—I only began it on Saturday, on the real canvas—and I have done the donkey and two of the likenesses, the girl & the elder boy, & have done the other—only that there will be bridal & stirup & several little things that I can do at home to be put in." (JCC II, pp. 375-77)

- 1825 April ca. 8 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "I have worked very hard—and my large picture went last week to the Academy—but I must say that no one picture ever departed from my easil with more anxiety on my part with it. It is a lovely subject, of the canal kind, lively—& soothing—calm and exhilarating, fresh—& blowing, but it should have been on my easil a few weeks longer." (JCC VI, pp. 197-98; see also JCC II, p. 378, JCC IV, p. 199 and JC: FDC, p. 38)
- 1825 April 10 Letter from John Fisher in Bath to J.C. in London: "Your voluntary offer to come down to Osmington. . . . We will wander home from the shore about dusk to the remnants of dinner as heretofore; & spend the evening in filling up sketches." (JCC VI, pp. 198-99; see also JC: FDC, p. 48)
- 1825 April 13 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Bath: "My Lock is now on my easil. It looks most beautifully silvery, windy &

delicious—it is all health—& the absence of every thing stagnant, and is wonderfully got together after only this one year. The print will be fine." (JCC VI, pp. 200-01; see also JCC IV, p. 199)

1825 Sept 7 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Got up early—set to work on my large picture. Took out the old willow stump by my horse, which has improved the picture much—almost finished—made one or two other alterations—& am getting on in arrangements. . . .

"Mr. Feild called with some colors—told me of Mr. Judkin who had some colors of him & would not pay him—or has not." (JCC II, pp. 385-87; see also JCC IV, pp. 100-101, 171, 271)

1825 Sept 9 Letter from J.C. in London to Maria in Brighton: "He will send J. Dunthorne up to me—& when he is here we shall clear off some work & when we are all in town he will have a room at Ambrose's, & come when I want him, & so on. It will be better than having him in the house with the maids &c, &c." (JCC II, pp. 388-89)

1825 Sept 10 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Osmington: "My commissions press in upon my hands. I have sent for Johny who is uncommonly well—doats on me—and wants to be here again. I shall, I hope, turn some work out of hand. I shall find him a home out of my house—he is too good for my maids." (JCC VI, p. 204; see also JCC II, pp. 380, 387 and JC: FDC, p. 41)

- 1825 Sept 15 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "After dinner Mr. Feild called again—so I put off going to Hampstead & got to work—& Mr. Feild had tea with me. Mr. Feild brought me *A Life of Wilson*, which is an amusing book." (JCC II, pp. 393-94; see also JCC IV, p. 171, 292 and JC: FDC, p. 38)
- 1825 Oct 1 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "We do a great deal of painting, not going out. I am getting my dead horses off my hands, as fast as I can. I shall do as you say, not much mind my little jobs, but stick to my large pictures. But I must make my mind easy as to my dead horses, namely
—Salisbury Cathedral.
Mr. Carpenter's picture.
Mr. Ripley's do.—London.
Mr. Arrowsmith—3 do.
Mrs. Mirehouse's picture to be altered.
All of these are paid for—and one more fortnight will clear them off—how very comfortable I shall then be. Then I am making my last Exhibition picture saleable—getting the outline on the Waterloo—&c, &c." (JCC II, pp. 396-97; see also JCC IV, p. 137, 167, 202, 271)
- 1825 Oct 4 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Mr. Allnutt of Clapham called, and was quite in good humor. Brought me some very beautiful ultramarine according to his promise. There was three sorts—I dare say there was 5 guineas worth. He promised me a little more of another kind. He had been to France—" (JCC II, p. 398; see also JCC IV, pp. 203, 243)

1825 Oct 21 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Mr. Feild called—and I had got the money of Mr. Judkin for him of some colors.

. . .

"Wish for me to do a portrait from a miniature of *Mrs. Pulham's* the size of the usual portrait (your Papa's) for 10 guineas. I declined it—I do not know who it was for—I told them John could do it.

"He has been cleaning a View of Harwich, for Mr. P, and has done it beautifully. They will not tell us any thing how to do it—I mean Mr. Bigg & Frank Collins &c, &c, but now I hope he will succeed in that way—I am sure Mr. Bigg could not have done it better." (JCC II, pp. 401-02; see also JCC IV, pp. 93, 171-72)

1825 Oct 22 J.C. records for Maria: "Had Kennedy at work changing the door of the painting room—putting the lock on the other side so that it opens to the right and not to the left, by which my easil is not exposed even if the door is three quarters open, and none of the washhand part of my room seen, as it was before, at first sight. I now do not want a screen. . . .

"I had been busy all day, with a sky. The painting room is so very comfortable that it is quite agreeable—and the shutters, add very much to it in the evening—and I can accommodate my light a great deal better. I did not go out at all to day." (JCC II, pp. 402-04)

1825 Oct 25 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Had to work in the parlor, with John. He had cleaned an old picture

wonderfully. Indeed he can now undertake this work very well and may still earn something by it." (JCC II, pp. 404-05; see also JCC IV, p. 154, where the date is given incorrectly as 1824 October 25)

1825 Oct 31 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Have secured the new picture of the Cathedral, and Mr. Ripley's picture of Hamstead Heath, and the little picture of the Cathedral for Mrs. Mirehouse—and am at work getting in the large picture of the Waterloo, on the real canvas, &c, &c. Of an evening we are busy setting my portfolios in order &c., &c. . . .

"John has been very successfull in cleaning the picture for Mr. Pulham—Mr. Bigg says he may now do anything—he is equal to any work of that kind." (JCC II, p. 407; see also JCC IV, p. 93)

1825 Nov 21 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Passed the whole evening looking over paints and sorting them." (JCC II, p. 410)

1825 Nov 23 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "Mr. Banister called and saw all my goings on. He is so fond of my landscapes he says he must have one—I think he likes the Lock so much that I shall reduce it to a size about like Fisher's old mill—I shall see, but Mr. B. says he must possess one. How I shall please him or *when* I do not know—he says he breathes my pictures, they are more than fresh, they are exhilarating. . . .

"Mr. Feild called, so I have sold him all my stoves & fire

apparatus which has failed in my ante room—so I hope it will not be a great loss, owing to this lucky circumstance. I have now got my painting room stove so compleat that it makes the painting room more warm & comfortable than any room in the house." (JCC II, p. 411; see also JCC IV, pp. 172, 206 and JCC V, p. 81, where the date is given incorrectly as Nov 22)

1825 Nov 26

Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Salisbury: "My new picture of Salisbury is very beautiful and I have repainted entirely that of Mrs. Mirehouse—I am now delighted with it. . .

"I am so engaged that Johny and I cant give up. I am in for a winters campaign. . . .

"I have just had a visit from Mr. Bannister [Beckett: "Jack Bannister, the comedy actor, who had himself been a student at the Royal Academy."] to request a landscape. He has long desired one of me, in which, he says, he can feel the wind blowing on his face. He says my landscape has something in it beyond freshness, it's life, exhilaration &c." (JCC VI, pp. 210-11; see also JCC II, pp. 412-13)

1825 Nov 28

Journal entry, dated by Leslie 28 November but perhaps an account combining events from other days as well, from J.C. in London to Maria: "Mr. Balmanno called, and was so delighted with my Waterloo (though he only saw the sketch and outline) that he says it will be my triumph, and that I shall 'certainly set the Thames on fire, if anybody can.' I am now finishing a copy of my Lock, which rejoices me a good

deal—it is a very lovely subject." (JCC II, p. 415; see also JCC VI, p. 211 and JC: FDC, p. 41)

1825 Dec 6 Two journal entries from J.C. in London to Maria: "Got my picture for Mr. Didot forward. John has done all he can to his large Lock—now we are on the large Thames. I have sent him from the Stour to the Thames." [Apparently he and Dunthorne had been working side by side in front of Mr. Morrison's picture while making their separate copies.] (JCC II, pp. 416-17; see also JCC IV, pp. 133, 206 and JCC IV, p. 167, where the date is given incorrectly as Nov 25)

1825 Dec 12 Journal entry from J.C. in London to Maria: "So dark that we had a candle on the table at 10. In the morning could not paint, but it does not signify as we are on the intricate outline of the Waterloo." (JCC II, p. 421-22)

1826 Jan 14 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "Your picture did me great credit at Lille. I am honorably mentioned in the final discourse of the prefect—and a gold medal was voted to me by the Jury, which I received yesterday. The discourse is curious. He speaks of the raciness and originality of the style—which he says being founded in nature is capable of much beauty—but dangerous to all imitators. . . .

"—I want to copy the picture [Tinny's *Stratford Mill*]. . . .

"J.D. paints portraits in the country." (JCC VI, pp. 212-13; see also JCC II, p. 423, JCC IV, pp. 206, 273 and JC: FDC, pp. 34, 77)

1826 Jan ca. 18 Letter, probably written 18 January, from J.C. in London to Maria in Brighton: "I yesterday had a very pleasing visitor and all went off well—Sir Thomas Lawrence. He called to see what I was about—I showed him all—but he wanted (& I think he came on purpose) to see the large picture. I never saw him admire anything of mine so much—he said it was admirable especially to the left—not but the line of the bridge was grand—&c &c—&c.

"He was struck on looking at the mantel peice at the portrait of papa—he said how very like & how very well. He was quite pleased—all was agreeable & his visit could be no other than friendly. He was here about 4 & was in his carriage—all by chandle light." (JCC II, pp. 423-25; see also JCC I, p. 222, JCC IV, p. 274 and JC: FDC, p. 46)

1826 Feb 1 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "I am greatly distressed for a sketch book or two in your possession—I hope you have a large one & two small ones. The title papers of the small ones are—the Bridge at Oxford—& the shoar opposite Gravesend or Woolwich.

"John Dunthorne has taken my place at the easil while I hasten to write to you—all this morning I have been engaged with a sitter a relation—" (JCC VI, pp. 213-14; see also JCC II, p. 425 and JCC IV, p. 274)

1826 Feb 5 Letter from John Fisher in Osmington to J.C. in London: "You will never procure Tinneys picture in London either to copy or exhibit. You must come & pay me a visit in the summer on purpose to copy it, & bring Dunthorne with you to get in the

outline. We shall be in the Close in June." (JCC VI, pp. 214-216)

1826 April 8 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "I have dispatched a large landscape to the Academy—upright, the size of my Lock—but a subject of a very different nature—inland—cornfields—a close lane, kind of thing—but it is not neglected in any part. The trees are more than usually studied and the extremities well defined—as well as their species—they are shaken by a pleasant and healthfull breeze—"at noon"—"while now a fresher gale, sweeping with *shadowy gust the feilds of corn*" &c, &c. [Beckett: "From Thomson's *Seasons*."] I am not without my anxieties—but they are not such as I have too often really deserved—I have not neglected my work or been sparing of my pains—they are not sins of omission. . . .

"I do hope to sell this present picture—as it has certainly got a little more eye-salve than I usually condescend to give to them." (JCC VI, pp. 216-18; see also JCC V, p. 118 and JCC II, pp. 425-26)

1826 April 26 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "I am now busy at the Academy—& am writing early as after breakfast I must be here—My wife is very good and is at the breakfast table at 8—it is now ready—As as I have much to do I must put this paper in my pocket and finish it at Somerset House. It is quite out of my power to describe the scene of dismay and devastation the rooms now present—I could quote Dante—Milton &c—'Dire was the Tossing'—&c—&c, but it is a

delightfull show. . . .

"Chantry [Beckett: "Sir Francis Leggatt Chantrey, R.A., the sculptor and founder of the Chantrey Collection."] loves painting (better perhaps than stone) & is '*always up stairs*' & he works now & then on my pictures—& shows me about—& yesterday he joined our group & after exhausting his jokes on my landscape—he took up a large dirty palate rag & threw it in my face & was off. [David Lucas, in a marginal note on this letter, gives one of Chantrey's jokes on the occasion to which Constable refers. 'When the picture of the Cornfield was at Somerset House previous to the opening of the exhibition,' he says, 'Chantrey came up and noticing the dark shadows under the tails of the sheep suddenly said "Why Constable all your sheep have got the rot, give me the pallet, I must cure them." His efforts made all worse, when he threw the pallet at Constable and ran off.']*"]" (JCC VI, pp. 219-21; see also JCD, p. 72)

1826 July 1

Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C. in London: "The two pictures arrived safe on Friday, & within an hour were up in their places; the white horse looking very placid & not as if just returned from the continent. It is wonderfully improved by Dunthorne's coat of varnish. The Cathedral looks splendidly over the chimney peice. The picture requires a room full of light. Its internal splendour comes out in all its power, the spire sails away with the thunder-clouds. The only criticism I pass on it, is, that it does not go *out* well with the day. The light is of an unpleasant shape by dusk. I am aware how severe a remark I have made." (JCC VI, pp. 221-22)

- 1826 July 7 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "Have you done anything to your walls? They were of a colour formed to destroy every valuable tint in a picture." (JCC VI, pp. 222-23; see also JCC II, p. 431 and JC: FDC, p. 323)
- 1826 Sept 9 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "John Dunthorne is not returned from Suffolk, He has been very busy—his last job, '*a large sign of the Duke of Marlborough*'. I have written to him to hasten his return. He is wanted here by myself & others." (JCC VI, pp. 223-24; see also JCC II, p. 435, JCC I, p. 225. JCD, p. 1 and JCC IV, p. 138)
- 1826 Letter from J.C. to William Carpenter: "Your see my little picture [*Gillingham Mill*] to a disadvantage, as the day is dark and I have by no means done my *last* to it—" (JCC IV, p. 137-138)
- [And in a letter, also to Carpenter, probably written soon thereafter]: "I have been at the picture ever since I saw you & it is now all over wet—I was at work on it at 7 o'clock this morning—and I should have been at it still." (JCC IV, p. 138)
- 1827 April 11 Letter from John Fisher to Mrs. Fisher: "Constable's great picture is a view of the chain-pier at Brighton. It is most beautifully executed & in a greater state of finish and forwardness, than you can ever before recollect." (JCC VI, p. 230)

1827 June 22 Letter from William Ward in London to J.C. in London: "I am sorry you should suppose that any delay has taken place in printing your Plate of Dr Wingfield but in some respects I was to blame in not apprising you that India Imprefsiions require to be left in boards three or four days to get perfectly dry & hard otherwise they are liable to rise from the paper they are laid upon on being exposed to the air or wetted to mount for framing. I am sorry if it is too late for the Bishop of Calcutta but really no one is to blame & so far from the Printer being dilatory I think he has been very punctual. 23 India Pfs^s will arrive at your House in Charlotte Street with this Note which I hope you will approve of. I have not ordered more than 100 Pfs including 50 India but I do not know whether I have done right. have the goodnefs to let me know what number of Prints you will require & the printing can be completed next Week." (JC: FDC, p. 308; see also JCC IV, pp. 155, 311)

1827 Aug 26 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to John Fisher: "I am at length fixed in our comfortable little house in the 'Well Walk', Hampstead—& we are once more enjoying our own furniture and sleeping on our own beds. My plans in the search of health for my family have been ruinous—but I hope now that my movable camp no longer exists—and that I am settled for life. . . . I let Charlotte Street at 82£, to a very agreable man and his wife—Mr Sykes—he is a teacher in most of the genteel families here in the "dancing line": I have no doubt of their being very permanent. I retain my 2 parlors, large front attic—painting rooms, kitchen &c. . . .

'It is to my wife's heart's content—it is situate on the

eminence at the back of the spot in which you saw us—and our little drawing room commands a view unequalled in Europe—from Westminster Abbey to Gravesend. The *dome* of St Paul's in the air, realizes Michael Angelo's idea on seeing that of the Pantheon—'I will build such a thing in the sky'. We see the woods & lofty grounds of the land of the 'East Saxons' to the N. East. . . .

"John Dunthorne has compleated a very pretty picture of your lawn & prebendal house, with the great alder & cathedral, and he is now in Suffolk, painting the portrait of the Revd Richard Leeds." (JCC VI, pp. 230-32; see also JCC II, p. 438, JC: FDC, pp. 28, 141, JCD, p. 66, JCC III, p. 10 and JCC IV, pp. 18, 117, 155)

1828 June 11 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "Painted a large upright landscape [*Dedham Vale*; Edinburgh] (perhaps my best). It is in the Exhibition, noticed (as a redeemer) by John Bull, & another, [Beckett: "*Hampstead Heath*, now in the Sheepshanks Collection at Victoria and Albert Museum"] less in size but better in quality, *purchased by Chantrey*." (JCC VI, pp. 235-37; see also JCC II, p. 448 and JCC IV, p. 227)

1828 July 23 Letter addressed from J.C in Brighton to John Carpenter, but probably intended for James Carpenter: "I hope you like the 'new edition of your picture' and that you do not think it the worse for the retouch." (JCC IV, p. 139; see also JCC II, p. 448)

1828 Dec 7 Letter from John Fisher in Osmington to J.C.: "I wish if

'Brighton' is not out of your possession that you would put it on an easel by your side, Claude fashion, & so mellow its ferocious beauties. Calm your own mind and your sea at the same time, & let in sunshine & serenity. It will be then the best sea-painting of the day." (JCC VI, pp. 240-41)

1829 April 23 Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher in Osmington: "I have just got a letter from the Academy—the Pandemonium opens to the devils themselves on Saturday—in which they [are] allowed every excess for six days (Sunday excepted)." [Beckett: "Leslie explains that this refers to the varnishing days allowed to the members of the Academy."] (JCC VI, p. 244; see also JCC I, p. 255, JCC IV, pp. 77, 238)

1829 Aug 9 Letter from John Fisher in Dorchester to J.C.: "I hope Dunthorne will bestow a little pains to reconcile the sky & landscape in the right hand corner [Beckett: "Dunthorne was now working as a picture-restorer, and this sentence evidently refers to Fisher's Claude."]. . . .

"The great easel has arrived & waits his office. Pray do not let it be long before you come & begin your work.

"I am quite sure the 'Church under a cloud' is the best subject you can take. It will be an amazing advantage to go every day & look afresh at your material drawn from nature herself. You may come as soon as you will, we expect no more company." (JCC VI, pp. 250-51)

1829 Sept 3 Letter from John Fisher in Salisbury to J.C.: "I yearn to see you tranquilly & collectedly at work on your next great

picture; undisturbed by gossips good and ill natured; at a season of the year, when the glands of the body are unobstructed by cold, & the nerves in a state of quiescence. You choose February & March for composition; when the strongest men get irritable & uncomfortable; during the prevalence of the NE: winds, the great distraction of the frame, & the gradual cause in England of old-age. Then at such a season, can your poetical sensiveness have its free and open play? Sep: Oct: & Nov: are our healthiest months in England. Recollect, Milton had his favourite seasons for composition. The season you select for composition is the chief reason of the unfinished, *abandoned* state of your surface on the first of May. Your pictures look then like fine handsome women given up to recklessness & all abominations.

"I long to see you do, what you are fully capable of, 'touch the top of English Art.' To put forth your power in a *finished polished* picture, which shall be the wonder & the imitation- struggle of this & future ages.—But any freak of imagination or anxiety distracts you. Now come & work, & don't *talk* about it.

"I met Mrs Gen. Michell the other day, a connexion of Lord Westmorelands. She talked of nothing else but the Sir: Josh: Reynolds and the admirable manner in which it had been cleaned. She was very much surprized when she found that I had the advantage of the acquaintance of Mr Dunthorne who had the merit of the performance." (JCC VI, pp. 252-53; see also JCC V, p. 123)

1829

Related by Abraham Cooper to Frith: "When Constable was a member of the Selecting Council a small landscape was brought to judgement; it was not received with favour. The first judge said, 'That's a poor thing;' the next muttered, 'It's very green;' in short, the picture had to stand the fire of animadversion from everybody but Constable, the last remark being, 'It's devilish bad—cross it.' Constable rose, took a couple of steps in front, turned round, and faced the Council.

"'That picture,' said he, 'was painted by me. I had a notion that some of you didn't like my work, and this is a pretty convincing proof. I am very much obliged to you,' making a bow.

"'Dear, dear' said the President to the head-carpenter, 'how came that picture amongst the outsiders? Bring it back; it must be admitted, of course.'

"'No! it must not!' said Constable; 'out it goes!' and, in spite of apology and entreaty, out it went." (W.P. Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences* Vol. I, 1887, pp. 237-38)

1830 Feb
after 10

Letter from J.C. to Leslie: "I think the sketch of the lane and cottage would be all the better for a little of John Dunthorne's varnish & a 'flat'." (JCC III, p. 25; see also JCC IV, p. 259)

1830 May 24

Letter from J.C. in London to John Fisher: "I could give you some amusement about the Academy but I will not molest you. My Wood [Beckett: "*Helmingham Dell*, exhibited at the Academy this year, and now in the William Rockhill Gallery of

Art at Kansas City."] is liked but I suffer for want of that little completion which you always feel the regret of—and you are quite right. I have filled my head with certain notions of *freshness—sparkle—brightness—*till it has influenced my practice in no small degree, & is in fact taking the place of truth so invidious is manner, in all things—it is a species of self worship—which should always be combated—& we have nature (another word for moral feeling) always in our reach to do it with—if we will have the resolution to look at her. . . .

"John Dunthorne is much better—but so entirely busy I seldom see him—he is much beloved by Lord Westmorland who has sent Lord Cadogan to him & the Marquess of Aylesbury, whose collections he is to do. The latter in Wiltshire—Tottenham Park— where is that?—John is much esteemed, for his great integrity & skill—& what avails him more than either, he is not feared by them—his mildness disarms them of dread." (JCC VI, pp. 257-58; see also JCC IV, p. 328)

1830 July
after 6

Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London after Fisher's letter of July 6: "[J. Kenrick] Fisher will call on you this evening. We have been very busy together. He has put two or three things on canvas for me—and a most willing and good tempered fellow he is a sensible fellow. . . .

"We have done a good deal to the little Peter Martyr—but I do not like to keep yours 'till you see them together." (JCC III, p. 30)

1831 Jan 4

Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "[As Visitor in

the R.A. Life Academy] I sett my 'maiden' figure yesterday and it is exceedingly liked—old Etty congratulated me *upon* it. Do come and see it—it is the same girl I had with me when you called. She makes a most delightfull Eve, and I have put her in Paradise (leaving out Adam). I have dressed up a bower, of laurels, and have put in *her hand* the *forbidden fruit*. In my *address* to the students, I said that probably they expected a landscape background from me. . . .

"The chimney to the gas lamps succeeds entirely—" (JCC III, pp. 35-36; see also JCC V, p. 127 and JCC IV, pp. 228, 339)

- 1831 Aug
after 18 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "A request is made to me by a lady (a relation) to make a copy of Well's picture of the 'girl & pigeons' by Greuze." (JCC III, p. 42; see also JCD, p. 55 and JCC IV, p. 78)
- 1831 Aug
prob. after 22 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to Leslie in London: "I find a letter from the lady for whom I am doing the Greuze." (JCC III, p. 44)
- 1831 Sept 9 Watercolor inscribed in J.C.'s hand recto: "14 Nov 182[1]", and verso: "Old Houses on Harnham Bridge. Salisbury Novr. 14 1821. and retouch [? retouched] at Hampstd. the day after the Coronation. of Wm. 4th, at which I was present—being 11 [deleted] eleven hours in the Abbey." (V&A, R. 240)
- 1831 Sept 26 Letter from J.C. to Leslie in London: "This morning I have

seen Eastlake's 'studies'—in Italy & Greece—temples, trees, statues, waterfalls, figures &c &c, excellent of their kind—& done wholly for the *understanding* bald and naked—nature divested of the 'chiaroscuro,' which she never is under any circumstances—for we can see nothing without a medium." (JCC III, p. 47; see also JC: FDC, pp. 208, 299 and JCC V, p. 56, where the date is given incorrectly as Sept 29)

1831 Nov 26 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "What are my new professional occupations—poring over the vapid soft hardness of Greuze—. . . .

"I shall relieve my eyes of the Greuze next week, I hope—" (JCC III, pp. 51-52; see also JCC IV, pp. 259, 359-60 and JC: FDC, p. 229)

1831 after Undated note from Leslie to J.C., with a watermark of 1831: "When we are all well again I will come any day you like & do what I can to your portrait.—It is a pity you have not more space for your background.—Would it not be well to make the figure & face lefs, (&) or begin it on a larger canvafs? but you know best.—" (JC: FDC, p. 237)

1832 Jan 14 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie at Petworth: "I am most interested with the account of the pictures [at Petworth]. I remember most of Turner's early pictures, as they came occasionally to be *rubbed out* at Mr. Biggs; I must say however, some of them came to him in a most miserable state of filth, shined on in haste for the exhibition." (JCC III, pp. 57-59; see also JCC I, p. 268 and JCD, pp. 54, 64)

- 1832 Feb 28 Letter from J.C. in London to David Lucas in London: "Leslie was here today and he has rather encouraged me, with it. He wants a bit more on the right—this will throw me sadly out of form." (JCC IV, pp. 367-68; see also JCC III, p. 62)
- 1832 March 3 Letter from J.C. to Leslie in London: "I have got my new picture [*Waterloo Bridge*] very beautifully strained on a new frame— keeping every "inch of canvas. . . . I went to see the little picture at Johnny's [Dunthorne] yesterday. The varnish was off (without any difficulty) from the [portrait of a] *lady*, & when you saw it it was under the operation of a little linseed—as usual to revarnish." (JCC III, pp. 62-63; see also JCC IV, p. 369 and JCC VI, p. 263)
- 1832 April 24 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "Poor dear old Stothard has been again here on Sunday, full of your picture—more than ever. 'Wonderfull, Sir—Leslie is quite wonderfull'—these are his bona fide words—& he added, 'That's where his genius lays Sir.' As a set off, he says 'Wilkie's picture is not agreable Sir—brown and heavy'—and of myself [*Waterloo Bridge*]; he gives a rather worse account, 'Very unfinished Sir—much to do—figures not made out Sir'—and this being I fear the general opinion, they have put it where it can only be seen to the greatest disadvantage, in the traffic between the doors in the new room—the light of the worst kind for my unfortunate 'manner' & also, coming across mine, had you seen it, I am sure you would not have let me have sent it out of my house in so sad a condition—

there I deserve my punishment. Besides that, to add to all the horrors of our annual show, it is also retributive, & I have my deserts for I played the devil with others.

"I have never had more restlessness about a picture, than with the premature dismissal of this—& it is not my redeeming voice ('the rural')." (JCC III, pp. 67-68; see also JCC IV, pp. 126, 243)

1832 April 27 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "I am in the greatest alarm for the Academy. No notice of varnishing has yet come—therefore we shall not be allowed the five days. This is a sad affair to me—but I am rightly served—I should not have sent my scrambling affair. As to Turner (to whom no doubt the blow is levelled) nothing can reach him, he is in the clouds. . . . I cannot complain. We set the example of cutting off a day last year—& Shee would cut off all but one if he could. His pictures are always 'hard' before they are sent off his easil & will bear *anything being put upon them*." (JCC III, pp. 68-69)

1832 July 17 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to Leslie in Brighton: "Should you prolong your stay—& do if possible—I will take [care] of your picture [Beckett: "Perhaps *Mother dancing to her Child*, exhibited next year"], of which I [am] very proud—tone down the floor—darken one of the children dancing, her on the right—cool her drapery and darken it—darken the upper part of the large column & it will be the perfection of such a *job*—the most perfect picture of its kind. These were my reflections on seeing it the other night, after an absence of

some time." (JCC III, pp. 77-78; see also JCC IV, p. 220)

- 1832 Sept Inscribed by J.C. on stretcher of painting: "'Copied from the Original Picture by Ruisdael in the possession of Sir Rob Peel, Bart by me John Constable R.A. at Hamp^d Sep. 1832. P.S. Color [. . .] Dog added [. . .] only [. . .] Size of the Original [. . .]'" (On loan to the Minorities, Colchester; Trustees of H.G. Howe)
- 1832 Sept 22 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "I came here last evening & saw the pictures. I am delighted with the de Hooge: it is a very true copy—& beautiful to look at. How completely he has overcome the art. . . . The best proof of their perfect excellence, is—can any one alter them? No painter that ever lived could change a single thing in them—either in place, or light, or dark, or color—either warm or cold—they are in those things quite above the art & it is a blessing they are done." (JCC III, p. 81; see also JCD, p. 63)
- 1832 Nov 5 Letter from J.C. in London to David Lucas in London: "Do not *cut* the plate of the New Sarum, yet—I have touched another proof today and it looks so well I think you may like it, & perhaps we may adopt it. I did it in seeing poor J. Dunthorne's rainbow this morning." (JCC IV, pp. 385-86)
- 1832 Nov 14 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to Lucas in London: "Can the plate of 'Old Sarum' (the engraved part) be a little extended so as to allow the 'Stone Henge' to be elongated? (JCC IV, pp. 251, 386-87; see also JCC V, p. 141)

1832 Nov 14 Letter from John James Chalon in London to J.C. in Charlotte St.: "I have just now Splashed a Canvafs and when I have brought it into Some Shape I Shall require one of your Scrutinizing looks, and will take care to have White Chalk ready." (JC: FDC, pp. 29, 190)

1832 Dec 17 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to Leslie in London: "I was sadly disappointed at missing you and Mrs. Leslie here on Tuesday. I am glad however Bonner showed you what I am about with the house, as it produced your very kind note. . . .

"Your note of Wednesday reached me at tea time that day—and before bed time, I had made all the cows in the foreground of the house picture, bigger, and put in another bigger than all the rest put together. This has had all the effect you anticipated and sent the house back and also much enhanced & helped to realize my foreground, which indeed this blank canvas wants to aid it. But I must try at one of the elements—namely air—& if that include light, I ought not to despair.

"What you say generously of my canvas, is too delightfull to venture on the dispute, I ought to be satisfied that you think [so]—. . . Tis true—tis strange—passing strange to say that I have never seen anything in landscape yet with which I was satisfied. All that I have seen of even the greatest names, are either 'picture' or nothing. The most unmannered things and consequently the best are the 2 de Hooghes at Sir Robert Peels of back door scenes—yet so true & so elegant. [Beckett: "One of these is now in the National

Gallery, *Courtyard of a Dutch House.*"] His indoors are likewise so, but they are less difficult—as being less lustrous. What must I feel when I knock my head against the clouds and [waves] of poor Callcott—or breathe the stagnate sulphur of Turner—or smell the—of a publick house skittle ground by Collins—or be smothered in a privy by Linnel or Mulready—but let them alone, is best of all." (JCC III, pp. 84-85; see also JCC IV, p. 110 and JCD, p. 63)

1832 or 1834
March 8 Letter from J.C. at Hampstead to Cross or Crust: "It was with the greatest pleasure I heard of your visit to my painting room. . . .

"It is much to my advantage that several of my pictures should be seen together, as it displays to advantage their varieties of conception and also of execution, and what they gain by the mellowing hand of time, which should never be forced or anticipated. Thus my pictures when first coming forth have a comparative harshness which at the time acts to my disadvantage." (JCC IV, p. 129)

1833 Jan 7 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "I called on the Chalons. Johns landscape is very promising—one of his best—how much would a little more softness enhance his great merits. As to Alfred's Samson, it is just what Paul Veronese would have done if he could—it is full of power, full of splendour. They are both of them adopting the palette knife just as I have laid it down—but which I did not do 'till I had cut my throat with it." (JCC III, p. 86; see also JC: FDC, p. 168)

1833 Jan 11 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "John Chalon has spread a report respecting myself that has reached me from two or three quarters, much to my advantage—namely that he actually saw four small sable pencils in my hand & that I was bona fide using them—in the art of painting." (JCC III, p. 88; see also JCC IV, pp. 103, 278)

1833 Jan 20 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "I have called on poor Lee [Frederick Richard Lee]. I did not think his things were quite so bad—they pretend to nothing but an imitation of nature—but that is of the coldest and meanest kind. He is immersed in white lead & oil & black—all of which he dashes about the canvas without the smallest remorse—*all is utterly heartless*—'thence.'" (JCC III, p. 91; see also JCC V, p. 142)

1833 Feb 13 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "I had, on Friday, a long visit from Mr. Wells alone. He saw hundreds of my things—I sincerely believe nothing amongst them made any impression upon him.

"What a sad thing it is that this lovely art—is so wrested to its own destruction—only used to blind our eyes and senses from seeing the sun shine, the feilds bloom, the trees blossom, & to hear the foliage rustle—and old black rubbed-out dirty bits of canvas, to take the place of God's own works." (JCC III, p. 94)

1833 March poss. Letter from John Sheepshanks in London to J.C.: "The Picture shortly after 4 you will not be sorry to hear grows upon me, since I got it—

and I am already forming excuses, whenever you shall ask for it back, either to touch upon, or varnish—having resolved, that it must neither be the one, or the other—" (JC: FDC, pp. 133-34)

1833 March after 10 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "I have laid by the Cenotaph *for the present*. I am determined not to harrass *my mind* and HEALTH by scrambling over my canvas—as I hitherto have too often done. . . . I may yet make some impression with my 'light'—my 'dews'—my 'breezes'—my *bloom* and my *freshness*—no one of which qualities has yet been perfected on the canvas of any painter in this world." (JCC III, p. 96; see also JCC V, p. 147, where the date is given incorrectly as March 10)

1833 before April Letter from J.C. to Leslie: "My House [*Englefield House*] tires me very much. The windows & window frames & chimneys and chimney pots are endless—but I shall fill the canvas beyond repentance." (JCC III, pp. 96-97)

1833 April 3 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "Mr. Wells looked not at any of my pictures—only by glances of contempt—but on seeing some of my *studies*, he kept saying, *this* would be of use to 'Lee' —& this—& this 'might' be of service to 'Lee'—& so on.

"He has sent Lee since to know what I would take for my studies, as he would buy my studies to *give to Lee*. I told Lee to wait 'till my sale." (JCC III, p. 98; see also JCC IV, p. 229)

1833 April 19 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "They have pulled down my picture [*Englefield House—morning*] again, and put it where it is quite destroyed—and as I have but one anchor out, I am now adrift. It could not *maintain its place* in the house as it was 'an Academy'—& only could look at the higher walks of art. Mine was only a 'gentleman's *house*' and excellence (if it had it) has nothing to do with the higher walks of art. I was told that had mine been a 'drawing,' instead of a picture, it would have been placed in the Architectural Room." (JCC III, p. 101; see also JC: FDC, pp. 28, 37, 237, JCC V, p. 154 and JCC IV, p. 111, where the date is given as 1833 April 18)

1833 April 21 Letter from Ramsey Reinagle to J.C.: "It appears that you have learnt where your picture hangs, and unhappily have been displeased—I think you will form a very different opinion of your situation when admitted on Monday week—we give 4 days for varnishing with Colors—I opened this paragraph by saying you have had experience in hanging, and consequently know what exceeding difficulties always stand in every one's way every year—I assure you that never were men so grievously embarrassed as we have been; greatly owing to the enormous frames in which almost all the pictures are placed—but we have an accompaniment of a different kind, which has been general, that of an immense number of whole & half lengths—Kit cats, and long pictures and large pictures of members that go below the line—To place all in equally favorable situations is quite impossible—and you know as well as I do, that if the whole side of a room can be made to hang

in harmony like a bunch of grapes, it is far the best choice. Frames have been our Sore Enemies—they have acted as exclusives on many occasions to our sorrow—The Evil among the Miniatures is if possible greater—they are very fine, but overframed to a prodigious degree—I am convinced you will applaud my doings when you have scanned the Materials & remember the parties interested—but, take your Measuring rod with the list of R As in your hand and then judge—" (JC: FDC, p. 272)

1833 April
shortly after 20 Note from J.C. in London to David Lucas in London: "I send a few cows for the [mezzotint of] Summer Morning. Put which you please—if you would rather I put them into the 'proof' you can only let Alfred come with it." (JCC IV, p. 396)

1833 April 26 Letter from Ramsey Reinagle in London to J.C. in London:
"Previous to your letter reaching me, I had placed your three small Drawings in a row, seperated by a small half length portrait of a Gent in black, (very tame & modest) and a small drawing in which Falstaff is flourishing—

"The various dimensions of your frames, prevented me placing them in a group, for I should have had Jones & Chalon thrashing me for my pains & partiality—I am prepared to think you will not disapprove my Conduct. The 3 are in a line, at the height that will meet your eye—and in my humble opinion, are rather improved by separation, as the cool skies & cool green hues made too much of a blot when united—

"The previous reasons as to size, will preclude the Mill being on the left—it is on the right, and I afsure you is very

comfortable nearer the wind—O.—

"I have a favour in my turn to ask of you, and you can afford to grant it—. Your larger heath scene, a morning, is put into a 3/4 frame made I should think by Crouzet—it has an additional flat which has caused us great distrefs—Collin's prettiest picture hangs beneath your own—And the extra flat of your frame, positively forces his picture 4 inches lower than it could be placed, were your frame of reasonable proportion

"Now My good fellow, pray order another frame not to exceed 5 inches & 1/2 at the back & 6 inches in front for your picture—We can do more justice to others if you will condescend.

"I have had your picture measured an hour ago, which measure is a follows—.2 feet 6 & 1/2 inches long—(1/4 to go under the frame;) by 1 foot 8 & 1/2 inches in height, allowing the same—Ergo (thats' latin) the sight measure will be 2 ft 6 by 1 foot 8—. The frames, confound them, have tortured us, and have in a very great many instances operated to exclude many pictures from very favorable situations—both those by Members, and those of Exhibitors—We are at this moment dismantling 2 pictures of their external frames, to see if we can hang them—A regulation is now indispensable and all must in future abide by it—The Miniatu[re] painters are all equally in fault—It is a Mania, that [. . .] of overframing pictures; which seems to rage more on our Walls than any where else—We could get in, 2 half lengths and a Kit cat on any side of the great room, more than are hung up, had the frames been temperate in width."

(JC: FDC, pp. 273-74)

1833 April 26 Letter from J.C. in London to Ramsey Reinagle in London: "I sent immediately to Mr Smith in Bond Street who disappointed me in the frame—which was the cause of the present one being sent to know if he had it still by him but he had parted with it. I have now sent for my frame maker and he has suggested cutting from by which You will I hope get the four inches You want—

"With respect to my drawings I hope dear Reinagle You do not misunderstand—I only requested that to be done for them which I had done for Chalon—Jones Wm Westall & others and which was also done in the practice of the arrangement last year." (JC: FDC, pp. 274-75; a draft is given in JCC IV, p. 221, with an incorrect date of April 28)

1833 April 27 Letter from Ramsey Reinagle in London to J.C. in London: "I trust this two penny worth will suffice—I have discovered the means by which your 3 little drawings can be associated without the intervention of Falstaff or any grave black coated Gentleman

"It is a matter of small importance to us, having found the way, to accommodate you—I thank you for your kindness in ordering a fresh frame for your health Scene—you will gain something by a better symmetry of framing, and I shall lift Collins 4 inches—The Picture deserves all we can jointly effect for it—I think it is one of his very best—" (JC: FDC, pp. 275-76)

- 1833 April 27 Note from Ramsey Reinagle in London to J.C. in London: "I find that I must despatch your frame instantly, to be cut 4 inches in the narrow part—which is the upright of your picture—the whole artificial flat is to be removed—I am sure the frame came from Crouzet—I therefore sent it to him—with the order to go to you for instructions—We must have the frame back before 10 on Monday [the first of four varnishing days] as you well know." (JC: FDC, p. 276)
- 1833 Sept 1 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to son John Charles at Folkestone: "The Lock looked beautifully fresh when it was varnished." (JC: FDC, pp. 84-85, 171, 328)
- 1833-35 Letter from Leslie to J.C.: "I trust you are quite wrong about your beautiful picture [*The Cenotaph*, National Gallery, London].—How will something like this do for your inscription [Sketch of cenotaph with "Reynolds" lettered in block capitals] to my mind the name is so much better." (JC: FDC, p. 244)
- 1834 March 21 Letter from Samuel Lane in London to J.C. at Hampstead: "[Richard Benyon-De Beauvoir] pointed out to me several things which displeased him, he liked the house by itself, but his principal objection seemed to be the specky or spotty appearance of your touch, and the quantity of sheep, oxen, &c which are in the foreground, and which he said looked as if he had his farm yard before his Drawing Room windows." (JCC IV, pp. 112-14; see also JC: FDC, p. 131)

- 1834 March 23 Letter from J.C. in Hampstead to Richard Benyon-De Beauvoir: "I beg the favor that you will receive the following proposition: which is, that I now so thoroughly understand your wishes, I may be allowed to make a second trial and paint you another picture, the house itself forming almost entirely it's feature, in which I could display to the full tho' on the same sized canvass, the picturesque beauty of the Elizabethan architecture, and which from the scale I now propose would enable me to enter minutely into its elegant detail." (JCC IV, pp. 114-15)
- 1834 July 16 Letter from J.C. at Arundel in Sussex to Leslie in London: "All here sinks to insignificance in comparison with the woods, and hills. The woods hang from excessive steeps, and precipices, and the trees are beyond everything beautiful: I never saw such beauty in *natural landscape* before. I wish it may influence what I may do in future, for I have too much preferred the *broken ruggedness of my style*." (JCC III, pp. 111-12; see also JCC V, pp. 17-18, 176)
- 1834 Aug 30 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie at Petworth: "Boner was at the Museum on Thursday. He saw the boat from North Stoke quite safe, & not so much disfigured by the Petworth blacksmith as might have been expected—but I do not agree with Mr. Phillips that it stood in need of any thing save linseed oil, for its future preservation. Though Papworth [Beckett: "John Buonarotti Papworth, architect and designer, wrote an *Essay on the Causes of Dry Rot in Timber*. Nothing is now known in the British Museum of the antiquity here mentioned.

Whichever advice they followed, their treatment of it was so unsuccessful that the boat had already disintegrated by 1860, when a full account of it appeared, with dimensions and a quite good woodcut picture, in *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. 12, p. 261."] agrees with me, he says mutton fat is much better, made into a rich broth in which the old wood is immersed, renovated & preserved for the future." (JCC III, pp. 113-15; see also JCC IV, pp. 79, 281, JC: FDC, p. 286 and JCC I, p. 284)

1835
beg. of year

Draft of a letter, probably from J.C. in London to James Morrison of Basildon Park: "I was glad to hear you express a desire to put my picture into a handsome frame—. . . . I availed myself of the opportunity of refreshing my picture [possibly *The Lock*]—which it wanted." (JCC IV, p. 130)

1835
end of March

Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "I hope your picture is to your liking. . . .

"I am making a rich plumb pudding of mine, but it keeps me in a 'death sweat'—I am in the devil of a funk about it—and yet I like it and am confident." (JCC III, pp. 124-25)

1835 March

Letter from J.C. to Leslie in London: "My picture [*Valley Farm*] must go—but it is woefully deficient in paint in places. . . . Mr. Vernon came soon after with the Chalons—he saw it free from the mustiness of old pictures—he saw the daylight purely—and bought it." (JCC III, pp. 123-24; see also JCC V, p. 180 and JCC IV, p. 121)

- 1835 Sept 14 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie at Petworth: "Mr. Vernon has paid me for the picture. Still I must compete with my friends in the collection with my picture in the worst light in the house and without a frame—no gold in the gingerbread, would never do in a fair." (JCC III, pp. 130-32; see also JCC IV, p. 123, JCD, p. 30, JCC V, p. 63, 192, JCC IV, p. 121 and JC: FDC, p. 7)
- 1835 Oct 29 Letter from J.C. in London to John Chalon in London: "I much regret not seeing you last night, but I want most to see you by daylight, as I have been very busy with Mr. Vernon's picture [*Valley Farm*, Tate]. Oiling out, making out, polishing, scraping, &c seem to have agreed with it exceedingly. The 'sleet' and 'snow' have disappeared, leaving in their places, silver, ivory, and a little gold." (JCC IV, p. 278)
- 1835 Nov 7 Note from J.C. in London to Mr. Smith in London: "I have now got the Tone of my last picture [*The Valley Farm*] into better state—if You are pafsing I mean that which I last Exhibited." (JC: FDC, p. 341)
- 1835 Dec 1 Letter to Leslie in London from J.C. in London, unsigned, but Leslie says it was written on the 1st December: "Will you be so kind as to call for me on your way, tomorrow at 11 or 12, so that we go to the R.A. together—and this will give a fair opportunity of begging you to look at Mr. Vernon's picture by daylight [in J.C.'s studio]. I don't wonder at your working so much on the same picture (as you always do when you have the opportunity), now that I see what can be done by it. I

want you of all things to see my picture now, for it has proved to me what my art is capable of when time can be given sufficient to carry it home." (JCC III, p. 132; see also JCC IV, p. 122)

- 1835 Dec 10 Letter from J.C. in London to Robert Vernon: "I beg to apologize for keeping the picture [*Valley Farm*; Tate], but I ventured to do so while Thomas is about the frame—as I work on it every day and much for the better.
- "Perhaps you can do me the favor of looking at it soon again. I cannot but feel obliged, by your allowing it so long to remain with me, as it has enabled me to carry my style as far as it is at least [in] my hands at present. . . .
- "This picture is in all respects my best and will give me the fairest chance of doing so. Certainly the 'Lock' is a striking 'composition' but cannot compete *at all* with your picture, in *color, brightness or richness*, of the chiaroscuro—nor in finish and delicacy of execution." (JCC IV, p. 122)
- 1835 Dec 9-16 Letter from J.C. to William Carpenter: "I have never ceased to work on Mr. Vernon's picture [*Valley Farm*; Tate] since I saw you—it is at present back with him in Pall Mall, but it is coming back by the bearer for 'more last words.'" (JCC IV, pp. 149-50; see also JC: FDC, pp. 25, 32 and JCD, p. 32, where the year is given incorrectly as 1833)
- 1835 Prospectus by J.C. for *English Landscape*: "from the congeniality of the principles of the *Chiar'oscuro* with the Material of Landscape and its Phaenomena it is indispensable

in that Class of Painting;—that the Landscape Painter shall be aware that the *Chiar'oscuro* does really exist in NATURE (as well as Tone)—and, that it is the medium by which the grand and varied aspects of Landscape are displayed, both in the fields and on canvass:" (JCD, pp. 3, 11)

1835-36

C. R. Leslie and Tom Taylor record: "Constable, in one of his Lectures, spoke of this noble portrait [Reynolds' portrait of Lord Heathfield (National Gallery, London)] while censuring the unpardonable liberties that are sometimes taken with fine pictures. He described it as 'almost a history of the defence of Gibraltar. The distant sea, with a glimpse of the opposite coast, expresses the locality, and the cannon pointed downward the height of the rock on which the hero stands, with the chain of the massive key of the fortress twice passed round his hand, as to secure it in his grasp. He seems to say, "I have you, and will keep you!"

"Now, we will imagine that by some chance this picture becomes the property of somebody who does not know that Lord Heathfield had been General Eliott; it will make, he thinks, an admirable companion to a smaller picture in his collection if the lower part is cut off. This is accordingly done, and he applauds himself for the improvement. He tells his friends that when he bought the picture there was a great key in his lordship's hand (perhaps the key of his cellar), which drew attention from the head; he had therefore cut that part of the picture off, much to its advantage, and it now made an excellent companion to his other Sir Joshua." (C.R. Leslie and Tom Taylor, *Life and Times of Sir Joshua*

Reynolds, 1865; Vol. II, p. 517)

- 1836 Feb 15 Transcript of a letter from J.C. in London to David Lucas in London: "The [mezzotint] 'Salisbury' is much admired in its present state, but still it is too heavy, especially when seen between 'The Lock' and 'The Drinking Boy'. Yet we must not break it up, and we must bear in recollection that the sentiment of the picture is that of solemnity, not gaiety—nothing garish, but the contrary—yet it must be bright, clear, alive, fresh, and all the front seen." (JCC IV, p. 427)
- 1836 March 26 Letter from J.C. in London to Leslie in London: "I send you *a few 'skies.'* I have looked for such as we most talked of that might suit your delightful picture—a picture full of elegance & *character.*
- "Perhaps a mountain ash, among the shepherds, would be usefull. I send a rough sketch of one I saw from a bed room where I slept—they are pretty with the berries." (JCC III, pp. 135-36; see also JC: FDC, p. 9 and JCD, p. 33)
- 1836 poss.,
poss. April Undated letter from Marianne Johnson to J.C.: "I return you Cake of Bistre & only Reed pen, which has done me good service." (JC: FDC, p. 157)
- 1836 May 16 Note by J.C. for lectures: "These great works have come down to us embalmed by ages, and I may say, endowed as well, both literally and figuratively, with praises, and colours, which the artists themselves never intended or gave, either with their hands or their own heads." (JCD, p. 86)

1836 Nov Letter from George Jennings in London to J.C.: "Your beautiful picture now hangs in my drawing room to the utter annihilation of my own daubs. When the light is favourable it looks better even than on the easel for there the light was too penetrating." (JCC V, pp. 52-53)

1836 Nov 11 Letter from J.C. in London to David Lucas in London: "I have worked on the proof as little. . . .

"Pray keep this touched proof for me, and I send it carefully, that it may be safe from dirt & rubbing. . . .

"I think, dear Lucas, the proof is now every thing we could wish. What would Charley say to such a 'touched' proof as this—but he may not be alive to see it. I shall frame it as soon as you have done with it—do take care not to dirty it. What an awkward strainer it is upon." (JCC IV, pp. 429, 456-57; see also JCC V, p. 201)

1836 Dec 31 Note from J.C. to Lucas: "Half an inch (which the plate would give) would much improve the sky at the top—& make the plate a nearer match to the two uprights." (JCC IV, p. 432)

1836 Dec 31 Letter from J.C. to Lucas: "Accept my thanks for the proofs. I have not time (so late) to say much, but what I see of it is delightfull—it may want tone, no doubt—or I may mean fullness, which may come in printing—wherein full work. As it is, almost all the fears I entertained are done away with.

"We must get tone, & depth, & force, back again to the large trees in the distance—those on the left of the poplar, at

the bottom of the gardens. The reflection of the white horse is beautiful & true. Some of the spots on the brambles near the post may be toned down—but all these things are the job of an hour, while I am with you, & which we can talk about when we meet." (JCC IV, p. 432-3)

1836

Leslie's notes on J.C.'s first lecture before the Royal Institution: [In Titian's painting *St. Peter Martyr*] "it is striking to observe with what consummate skill the painter, like a great musician, has varied his touch and execution from slow movements to those of extreme rapidity. Thus the quick and vivid sparks of light near and upon the assassin's arm, hand, and sword, give inconceivable energy to his action, and contrast finely with the solemn quiet of the retiring forest.

"Reynolds has censured Count Algarotti for admiring the minute discrimination of the leaves and plants in the foreground, but Sir Joshua was swayed by his own practice, of generalizing to such a degree that we often find in his foregrounds rich masses of colour, of light and shade, which, when examined, mean nothing. In Titian there is equal breadth, equal subordination of the parts to the whole, but the spectator finds, on approaching the picture, that every touch is the representative of a reality; and as this carries on the illusion, it cannot surely detract from the merit of the work." (JCD, p. 48)

1836

Leslie's notes on J.C.'s second lecture before the Royal Institution: "It is rather a mistaken view, of the Bolognese landscape's being founded on the Venetian. It is not wholly

so, for there is a fullness of composition and a greater solemnity of masses, imposing in the greatness which pervades the Bolognese landscape, which is not to be met with in the Venetian—beside that its execution is wholly different, being hard and oily, [Beckett: "Uncertain reading."] in comparison to the crisp and deep-toned brilliancy of the Venetians." (JCD, p. 49)

1836

Notes by J.C. for lecture before the Royal Institution: "When we speak of the perfection of art, we must recollect what the materials are with which a painter contends with nature. For the light of the sun he has but patent yellow and white lead—for the darkest shade, umber or soot.

"Brightness was the characteristic excellent of Claude; brightness, independent on colour, for what colour is there here? [At this point Constable held up a glass of water.]

"The *St. Ursula* in the National Gallery is probably the finest picture of *middle tint* in the world. The sun is rising through a thin mist, which, like the effect of a gauze blind in a room, diffuses the light equally. There are no large dark masses. The darks are in the local colours of the foreground figures, and in small spots; yet as a whole, it is perfect in breadth. There is no evasion in any part of this admirable work, every object is fairly painted in a firm style of execution, yet in no other picture have I seen the evanescent character of light so well expressed." (JCD, p. 53)

1836

Note by J.C. for lecture before the Royal Institution: "Manner is always seductive. It is more or less an imitation of what has

been done already,—therefore always plausible. It promises the short road, the near cut to present fame and emolument, by availing ourselves of the labours of others. It leads to almost immediate reputation, because it is the wonder of the ignorant world. It is always accompanied by certain blandishments, showy and plausible, and which catch the eye. As manner comes by degrees, and is fostered by success in the world, flattery, &c, all painters who would be really great should be perpetually on their guard against it. Nothing but a close and continual observance of nature can protect them from the danger of becoming mannerists." (JCD, p. 58)

1837

Constable probably read or consulted the following books:
BARDWELL, Thomas, *The Practice of Painting Made Easy*, 1782. Family collection. Inscribed 'Rev^d Wm Benson AM.'

BARTOLOZZI, Francesco.

Constable asked J.T. Smith to send him a 'Bartolozzi drawing book' in December 1796: see JCC II pp. 7-9. Beckett (JCD, p. 90) identified this as *Thirty-four lessons for drawing the human figure* but the only copy of that work known to the present editors is the one in the Victoria and Albert Museum Library, which was not published until 1828.

BICKHAM, George, *General Rures [sic] for Painting in Oil and Water-Colours*, G. Bickham 1747.

Family collection: bound in *Tracts on Painting*, q.v.

BOOTH, Joseph, *An Address to the Public, on the Polygraphic*

Art, n.d.

Family collection: bound in *Tracts on Painting*, q.v.

—, *A Treatise Explanatory of the Nature and Properties of Pollaplasiasmos; or, The Original Invention of Multiplying Pictures in Oil Colours*, [1784].

Family collection: bound in *Tracts on Painting*, q.v.

BURNET, John, *Practical Hints on Colour in Painting*, 1827.

Constable obtained this for Fisher in 1827: see JCC VI, p. 231.

— *Practical Hints on Light and Shade in Painting*, 1826.

Obtained for Fisher in 1826. Constable looked through it before passing it on: see JCC VI, p. 229.

COZENS, Alexander, *A New Method of Assisting the Invention in Drawing Original Compositions of Landscape*, [c. 1785].

Constable's pencil copies of the twenty sky compositions illustrated in this work are in the Lee Collection at the Courtauld Institute of Art. John Charles Constable noted in his diary (Family collection) on 21 July 1838: "Mr Pulham called—lent him Couzens's skies." These may have been loose plates from Cozens' treatise or perhaps Constable's copies.

—, *The Various Species of Composition of Landscape, in Nature*. Constable's pen, wash and pencil copies of nos. 1-15 of Cozens' sixteen etchings are in the collection of Denys Oppé. Eight of them show fragments of the watermark "W THOMAS 1822." His copy of no. 16 is in the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University (Acc. No. 1926. 33. 163).

FIELD, George, *Chromatography; or, A Treatise on Colours and Pigments and of their Powers in Painting*, 1835.

Constable's name appears in the list of subscribers.

LAIRESSE, Gerhard van, trans. J.F. Fritsch, *The Art of Painting in all its Branches*, first published 1738.

Recommended by Cranch in 1796: see JC: FDC, p. 200.

LANDSEER, John, *Lectures on the Art of Engraving*, 1807.

Dec. 1838 (part of 16, Jones £1.5s).

LEONARDO da Vinci, *A Treatise of Painting*, first English translation published 1721.

Recommended by Cranch in September 1796: see JC: FDC, p. 199. Constable was reading it the following month: see JCC II, p. 5.

MASSOUL, Constant de, *A Treatise on the Art of Painting, and the Composition of Colours*, The Author 1797.

Family collection. Inscribed "John Constable."

MENGS, Anton Raphael.

"A small tract" by Mengs was recommended by Cranch in 1796 (see JC: FDC, p. 200). This may have been *Sketches on the Art of Painting*, translated by J.T. Dillon and published in 12mo, 1782. Samuel Lane sent Constable a quotation from this work in 1834: see p. 231.

MUNTZ, John Henry, *Encaustic; or Count Caylus's method of*

Painting in the manner of the Ancients, 1760.

Aug. 1939 (part of 303, 10s) "John Constable's copy, with autograph inscription."

NOBLE, Edward, *The Elements of Linear Perspective*, 1771, or *Thomas Noble, Practical Perspective exemplified on Landscapes*, 1805.

Dec. 1838 (part of 16, Jones £1.5s.): "Noble's Perspective."

PEACHAM, Henry, *The Art of Drawing with the Pen, and Limning in Water Colours*, first published 1606, or *Graphice or the most auncient and excellent Art of Drawing and Limning*, first published 1612.

In 1824 Constable asked Carpenter whether he could procure him 'such a book as Peacham on Painting.' (JCC IV, p. 137).

"TRACTS ON PAINTING"

Family collection. A volume of pamphlets on art, 1747-1800. For contents see above. The fly-leaf is inscribed "Nine Tracts on the Arts. Some very scarce—10/6."

UNIDENTIFIED.

Two manuscript copies of an unidentified treatise on perspective. The copies are in different hands, one on paper watermarked 1784 or 1794, the other 1799. Family collection.

WATELET, Ch. Henri, *L'Art de Peindre*, first published Paris, 1760. Dec. 1838 (part of 18, 15s), apparently a translation.

(JC: FDC, pp. 25, 27-30, 32-34, 37)

- 1837 March 25 Leslie's account of J.C.'s last address to students in the R.A.'s schools of design: "He did not admit that the French excel the best of the English masters in drawing, a point generally conceded to them; and in support of his own opinion he quoted that of Mr. Stothard, who said, 'The French are very good *mathematical* draughtsmen, but life and motion are the essence of drawing, and their figures remind us too much of statues. In the slightest pen and ink sketches of Raphael, however irregular the proportions, you have the real principle of good drawing, —his figures live and move.'" (JCD, p. 77)
- 1837 March 31 At his death, the following copies in various media by J.C. after paintings, drawings and prints by other artists were in his possession:
"*Dutch, Flemish, etc.* Artois, Cuyp, Rembrandt, Rubens, Ruisdael (6), Swanevelt, Van de Velde, Wynants.
"*French.* Claude (at least 5), Greuze (on a commission).
"*Italian.* Correggio, Raphael, Salvator Rosa, Tempesta, Titian.
"*British.* Beaumont (3), A. Cozens (2 sets), Gainsborough, J.T. Smith, Wilson (at least 2)." (JCD, pp. 91-92)
- 1837 March after 18 Note from J.C. to Lucas: "Your man has told me there is every reason to know that it will print both fuller & richer. Tone—tone is the most seductive, entrancing & best inviting quality, a picture & a print can possess—it is the first thing seen—and like a flower in full blossom invites to an

examination of the plant itself." (JCC IV, p. 437)

1838 April 14 Son John Charles records in his diary: "Mr Leslie came and varnished the Brighton picture & the small cornfield."
[and the 25th]: "Mr Leslie came and varnished several of the pictures." (JC: FDC, p. 101)

Undated Letter from J.C.: "The drawing you sent me is just what I wanted and answers the same purpose as my seeing the place myself
"I have sent you some vermilion, and some sable pencils, which are the best I can get, &c." (JCD, p. 97)

1840 Arthur Parsey writes: "The late Mr. John Constable, R.A., told me, that when he was studying the art of painting in his native place, unaided by others, that he might not introduce too much foreground, and that he might sketch the view correctly, he had attached to the upper part of his easel a frame with a pane of glass in it; this frame was attached by two screw nuts by the two upper corners; to the four corners he attached four strings, which he brought to his mouth in such a manner as to bring the center of the glass perpendicular *to his eye*. On this glass, thus held and secured from shifting by fixing the screw nuts, he traced with colour the outline of the view he decided on representing. From this sketch he made his painting, and of course his drawing must have been true." (Arthur Parsey, *The Science of Vision or Natural Perspective*, 1840, p. 134.)

1843 Feb 2

Letter from John Allnutt in Clapham Common to Leslie: "Many years ago, I purchased at the British Institution a painting by Mr. Constable. But as I did not quite like the effect of the sky, I was foolish enough to have that obliterated, and a new one put in by another artist; which, though extremely beautiful, did not harmonize with the other parts of the picture.

"Some years after, I got a friend of Mr. Constable to ask him, if he would be kind enough to restore the picture, to its original state, to which he readily assented. Having a very beautiful painting by Mr. (now Sir Augustus) Callcott, which was nearly of the same size, but not quite so high; I sent it to Mr. Constable together with his own, and expressed a wish, that if he could do it without injury to the picture, he would reduce the size of it in height, by lowering the sky, so as to make it nearer the size of Mr. Callcott's, to which I wished to hang it as a companion.

"When I understood from him that it was ready for me, I called at his house to see it. . . . He asked me how I liked it; to which I replied, I was perfectly satisfied. . . .

"He likewise added, that wishing to make the picture as acceptable to me as possible, he had, instead of reducing the height of the old picture, painted an entirely new one of the same subject, exactly of the size of the one by Callcott."

(JCC IV, p. 83)

1843 May 22

Letter from Leslie in London to Francis Darby in Colebrook Dale: "Constable's pictures have so risen in value, that they are now eagerly sought for, and the consequence is there are many forgeries on the market particularly of his small works,

and it /is/ dangerous for any one to buy a picture, profefsing to be his, unlefs they are sufficiently acquainted with his style to be safe from imposition." (JC: FDC, p. 248-9)

1843 - c. 1855 Annotations by David Lucas to a copy of the first edition of Leslie's *Memoirs of the Life of John Constable, Esq. R.A.*, 1843 (Huntington Library; San Marino, California):

"Page 2 (1951 p. 3). 'Golding Constable did not frown on' Constable's friendship with John Dunthorne:

"but he often pafsed ludicrous jokes upon them when returning together he would say here comes Don Quixote and his man Friday.

"Both were very methodical in their practice taking with them into the fields their easels and and painted one view only for a certain time each day when the shadows from objects had changed their position the sketching was postponed untill the same hour, the following day."

"Page 3 (1951 p. 4). The windmill in Lucas' mezzotint 'Spring': from this Mill his earliest observations on atmospheric phoenomena where made and his deep Knowledge acquired that so materially contributed to his succesful practice the accompanying diagrams are curious to shew his anxiety that all should be mechanically correct in the representation of this Mill and where drawn by him that I might correctly understand the mechanical construction of the vanes in order to avoid a common fault to be found in the Wind mills of uninformed artists in making (vanes) Sails as they are commonly called that no about of wind would be

able to turn around."

"Page 7 (1951 p. 14).

"West's advice to Constable: 'Always remember, sir, that light and shadow *never stand still*.'" Lucas adds what was presumably another of West's *dicta*, retailed by Constable: "continuity all is continuity"

"Page 10 (1951 p. 22).

"The 'Dedham Vale' exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1811.

"He has often told me this picture cost him more anxiety than any work of His before or since that period in which it was painted. that he had even said his prayers before it."

"Page 14 (1951 p. 32).

"Constable's excursion with Stothard on 5 June 1812 to Coombe Wood, where they dined by a spring: Whilst drinking at this Spring Mr Constables little mug of water in his hand Stothard who was no stranger to the spot and its requirements drew from his pocket a small flask of spirits a little of which he recommended in addition to the water as a great improvement this unexpected circumstance took Constable quite by surprise and I have often heard him mention it.

"On another occasion during a sultry day whilst seated in the shadow of a tree of rich foliage Stothard looking up through the branches on to the clear blue sky remarked to

his companion 'you see Constable 'its all glazing' 'all glazing.'"

"Page 18 (1951 p. 48). Constable's visit to the Rev. Drifffield at Feering in 1814:

"Here he was drawing late in the evening /Mr Drifffield/ retired early to rest looking out of the casement wishing him good night Constable proceeded with his drawing as long as a ray of light permitted him at the dawn of day (being an early riser) he was again occupied at the same spot when his host rose in the morning early he was astonished to find his visitor. where he had left him the previous night and accosted him thinking he had been on the same place the whole of the night"

"Page 20 (1951 p. 55). Dawe's portrait of Miss O'Neil in the character of Juliet, which Constable worked on in 1815:

"He painted the pafsion flowers and other accefsories in the background and such was his anxiety of mind to complete it that he invariably was on the step of the door in Newman St. as the Church clock struck 6 in the morning"

"Page 43 (1951 p. 121). 'The Lock' sold to Mr. Morrison in 1824:

"The. upright Lock. there are two pictures of this subject one of which was copied in a great degree by Mr Dunthorn and worked on by Mr. C/afterwards/. but it was not comparable with the first painting for. vigeour and richnefs"

"Page 85 (1951 p . 211)

"Constable's copy [Trustees of the Will of H.G. Howe, deceased] of Sir Robert Peel's Ruisdael, *Winter*:

"The loan of this picture was accompanied by a condition that some addition or omission should be made in order that the composition might be some what different he complied by introducing a dog behind the principal figure in all other respects the imitation was so perfect that looking on the surface only few could detect any difference."

"Page 86 (1951 p 216). Constable's dexterity with the palette knife:

"One. evening de Wint and Constable walking home from the [Academy] together the former offered to give him a Knife of silver of the same size in exchange. for his pallet Knife that he had been using during the day which he declined."

"Page 116 (1951 p. 47).

"Against the reference to the artist employed by John Allnutt to alter the sky in his picture by Constable, Lucas adds 'Mr Linnel'." (JC: FDC, p. 54-56, 58, 61-62)

1845 Leslie records comment by J.C.: "'My pictures will never be popular,' he said, 'for they have no *handling*. But I do not see *handling* in nature.'" (Leslie-Mayne 1951, p. 280)

1845 Leslie writes concerning J.C.'s 1832 R.A. exhibition picture, *The Opening of Waterloo Bridge seen from Whitehall Stairs, June 18th 1817* (Private Collection, England): "What would

[Constable] have felt, could he foresee that, in little more than a year after his death, its silvery brightness was doomed to be clouded by a coat of *blacking*, laid on by the hand of a picture dealer' Yet that this was done, by way of giving *tone* to the picture, I know from the best authority, the lips of the operator, who gravely assured me that several noblemen considered it to be greatly improved by the process. The blacking was laid on with water, and secured by a coat of mastic varnish." (Leslie-Mayne 1951, pp. 227-28)

1845

Leslie writes: "The 'Hadleigh Castle,' [Yale Center for British Art] Constable's principal picture in the Exhibition of 1829. . . . I witnessed an amusing scene before this picture at the Academy on one of the varnishing days. Chantrey told Constable its foreground was too cold, and taking his palette from him he passed a strong glazing of asphaltum all over that part of the picture, and while this was going on, Constable, who stood behind him in some degree of alarm, said to me 'there goes all my dew'. He held in great respect Chantrey's judgment in most matters, but this did not prevent his carefully taking from the picture all that the great sculptor had done for it." (Leslie-Mayne 1951, pp. 176-77)

1845

Leslie writes: "Some of Constable's sketches have thus been *finished* into worthlessness, and what is a still greater injury to his reputation, entire forgeries have been made of his works. Multitudes of these I have seen, and with astonishment that their wretchedness should impose upon purchasers." (Leslie-Mayne 1951, p. 279)

- 1846 Sept 23 Recorded by Delacroix: "Constable dit que la supériorité du vert de ses prairies tient à ce qu'il est un composé d'une multitude de verts différents. Ce qui donne le défaut d'intensité et de vie à la verdure du commun des paysagistes, c'est qu'ils la font ordinairement d'une teinte uniforme.
"Ce qu'il dit ici du vert des prairies, peut s'appliquer à tous les autres tons." (*Journal of Eugene Delacroix*, ed. M. Paul Flat [Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie., 1893], Vol. I, p. 234)
- 1850 Jan 11 Letter from David Lucas to Herbert Evans: "I beg to apologise for delaying so long sending you some account of the sketches by the late M. Constable for which I received payment the other day. I can answer for their being the genuine work of his hand as I received them from his son and they have not been in any other persons possession except my own since that period" (JC: FDC, p. 257)
- 1882 Solomon Hart writes: "Calling upon Constable, one day, I found him with a palette-knife, on which was some white, mixed with a viscous vehicle, and with which he touched the surface of a beautiful picture he was painting. Upon expressing my surprise, he said, 'oh! my dear Hart, I'm giving my picture the dewy freshness.' He maintained that the process imparted the dewy freshness of nature, and he contended that the apparent crudeness would readily subside, and that the chemical change which would ensue in a short time would assume the truthful aspect of nature. I cannot acquiesce in his views." (*The Reminiscences of*

Solomon Alex. Hart, R.A., ed. Alexander Brodie [London, 1882], p. 58)

1888 Dec 8 Recorded by Aldred Tidey: "I called on Constable on March 28th 1837. he was then working on his 'Arundel Castle', and seemed well satisfied with the result of his labours,. He said while giving a touch here and there with his palette knife, and retiring to see the effect, 'it is neither too warm, nor too cold, too light nor too dark and this constitutes everything in a Picture.'

"I dined with him, and in the Evening on my asking him about the then new R.A. he took a pen and sketched the above plan, signed and gave it to [sic.] me." (JCC IV, p. 303)

1896 Robert C. Leslie writes: "About sixty years ago I remember seeing nearly all [Constable's] more important works upon the walls of a large studio formed by him out of the drawing-room of 35, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. When he died the greater number of these, after being bought in for the family by my father and other friends at his sale in Foster's Rooms, remained crowded together on the walls of a small house in St. John's Wood, which then became the home of his children; and, with the exception of a portion allotted to his second son, Captain Charles Constable, which have since been sold, all these pictures and studies remained there until, on the death, in 1888, of his last surviving daughter Isabel, they became the property of the nation.

"During the fifty years which elapsed between Constable's death (in 1837) and this bequest of his pictures

to the nation, any work of his that chanced to change hands, at first slowly, but afterwards very rapidly, rose in value; and many imitations of his pictures have during this interval been sold, and even publicly exhibited. One marked feature of all these productions being founded upon the mistake, that in order to manufacture an authentic Constable, it was only needful to load so many square feet of old canvas with unmeaning dabs of paint, clumsily laid on with something like a small trowel. Constable, no doubt, in certain of his later works employed the palette knife freely, but it was never used until he had secured the drawing, tone, and effect of the picture with the brush.

"During the last years of his life he, at times, also touched upon some of his earlier pictures in this way as they hung on the walls of his studio, leaving for a moment a work on his easel to do so. Though I have heard my father say that in his way Constable himself thought he often injured a picture, or as he said once, 'was cutting his own throat with the palette knife. . . .

"(I was with my father the whole time he was engaged in compiling both his first and second editions of Constable's memoirs. . . . During the whole of this period, and especially after the publication of this book, spurious Constables were constantly brought to my father by dealers; at times singly, at others in batches; nearly all being of the extreme palette knife type, or what would now, perhaps, be called 'impressionist' examples. One such batch, I remember, was brought by a wellknown London dealer, who, though too good a judge himself to be deceived, wished my father to see

them because, as he said, 'the source from which he had them should have placed their authenticity beyond doubt.' This was nearly ten years after Constable's death, and yet, on examination, most of the meaningless lumps of paint with which they were loaded proved to be still soft.

"I never saw my father so completely upset as he was by this crop of forgeries, because, from the name given by the dealer, he at once foresaw an unlimited supply of the same kind of rubbish. And judging from the quantity of works sold and exhibited under the name of Constable, I should not be surprised if the number of forgeries now greatly exceeded that of his genuine pictures.

"One of the worst evils of the multiplication of such things is, that the public eye—never too discriminative—is gradually led to look, not at or for Constable, as seen in the more finished work of his best period, but only at those examples which display the mannerism of his later style. A style to which I agree with my brother George, 'both he and Turner were goaded by a desire, natural to such men, of seeing their pictures eclipse, in sparkle and brilliancy, those of others upon the walls of the Academy.' Writing on this subject in his 'Handbook for Young Painters,' my father says, 'The truth is that the pictures in which he most used this instrument, are those of which there are the greatest number of forgeries. A practised eye will, however, generally detect these, as in such imitations one colour is smeared over another, so as to have the muddled and filthy look of the rags with which a painter cleans his palette. . . . While the dashes of colour from Constable's knife have the look of

gems, and the more they are magnified the more beautiful they appear.'

"Any one who examines a few square inches of Constable's 'Cenotaph' in the National Gallery with a lens will, I think, at once acknowledge the truth of this." (Leslie-R.C.Leslie 1896, pp. xii-xv)