

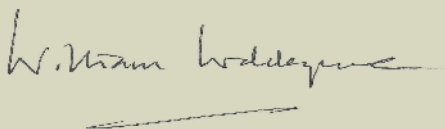
An Etonian Collector

The Richard Amis Bequest



FOREWORD

Richard Amis was an Old Etonian from a family with artistic connections, who held a particular passion for his former school. Amis both inherited and purchased art to form the collection that he bequeathed to Eton College in 2018. The works form an eclectic mix that reveals Amis's family history as well as his personal interests. Many have not been on public display in living memory. This generous bequest has allowed these works to become publicly accessible for the first time.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'William Waldegrave', with a horizontal line drawn underneath it.

Lord Waldegrave of North Hill

Guy Peppiatt Fine Art

Ground Floor
6 Mason's Yard
St James's
London SW1Y 6BU
14 September to 27 September 2023

Verey Gallery

Eton College
Windsor SL4 6DB
16 November 2023 to 24 March 2024

Credits

Design: Donal McMahon
Photography: Simon Punter
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Philippa Martin, Guy Peppiatt, Lynn Sanders,
Kim Sloan, Polina Vekchina, Timothy Wilcox

An Etonian Collector

The Richard Amis Bequest

An Etonian Collector features 28 exceptional examples, selected from more than 50 works of art, that were bequeathed to Eton College by Old Etonian Richard Amis (1932–2018). This wide-ranging collection includes watercolours by J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851), J.R. Cozens (1752–1797), David Cox (Snr) (1783–1859), Peter de Wint (1784–1849) and others, complementing examples by these artists already in the Eton Collections. The bequest also includes oil paintings, drawings and prints by artists previously unrepresented in the Collections. These offer new resources for exploration through teaching and displays. The College art collection has largely developed through gifts and bequests from former Etonians, who have wanted to share their art with current and future pupils, staff and visitors. The creation of the Brewhouse Gallery at Eton in 1969, since replaced by the Verey Gallery, made public exhibitions at Eton possible. Continuing to share the collection at Eton and elsewhere remains a key ambition for the future.



Nora Davison (1855–1950)

School Yard, Eton College

watercolour over pencil on paper

Richard Amis

Richard Amis was born in Hampstead, London. His father was Major Ivan Roll Amis, who served in the London Rifle Brigade and the Home Guard. His mother was Sylvia Emily (née Booth), the granddaughter of Liverpool merchant and shipowner Alfred Booth (1834–1914), who was on the board of directors of Alfred Booth and Co.

Amis attended Eton College between 1945 and 1950. Arriving as a fee-paying pupil, he gained a scholarship in his first term and remained a 'King's Scholar' for the rest of his time at the school. Amis's schoolfriend, Robert Welchman, recalls arriving just as the Second World War ended, but long before wartime shortages were over. Welchman described the 'continuation of austerity – ration books, clothing coupons, heating restrictions' coupled with 'the terrible winter of 1947. When the thaw came at last in mid-March, the melting snow caused the Thames to rise so high that we were all sent home two weeks early.'¹

The extensive damage to the Upper School building and School Yard, caused by the direct hit of an enemy bomb at the north end of Upper School in 1940, remained unrepaired. The gaping cavity left by the bomb was adjacent to Amis's boarding house. The bomb also destroyed most of the stained glass of the College Chapel and the chapel windows were boarded up to allow services to continue.

Despite the hardships, Amis seems to have excelled at the school, winning a prize for an essay on citizenship and taking part in rowing and the Eton Wall Game. He served as Librarian of the Marten (history) Library and his interest in art was kindled by his Eton tutor, history master Charles R.N. Routh. Routh had himself formed a collection of watercolours and would later serve as curator at Charlecote Park in Warwickshire. Amis described his tutor as 'infinitely patient with me'.²

After leaving Eton, Amis completed two years of National Service, serving as a junior officer in the Rifle Brigade. He then began his studies at King's College, Cambridge, but left university after just one term to pursue a career in his maternal family's firm of Alfred Booth and Co. Originally a trading and shipping company, the steamship business had been sold before Amis's involvement and construction and engineering were now the company's focus. From 1974 to 1986, Amis served as chairman of the parent company and many of its subsidiaries. He was awarded a CBE in 1983.



N. Becker.

1946.

Family Connections

Part of Amis's art collection is clearly linked to the history of the Booth family, their business ventures and their Liverpool connections. Thomas and George Booth, sons of a yeoman farmer from Orford in Suffolk, arrived in Liverpool in the 1760s and went into business together as corn merchants. Thomas's children included Henry (born 1789), who became a founder of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Company, and Charles (born 1799), who continued the family business in the grain trade. Two of Charles's sons, Alfred (born in 1834) and Charles (born 1840), became apprenticed to the Liverpool merchant house Lamport and Holt. These apprenticeships would mark the end of the Booth family's involvement in the grain trade. At around this time Lamport and Holt were replacing their sailing ships with small steamships. When the brothers inherited £20,000 each, following their father's death in 1860, they became partners in a business that exported leather and hides to the United States. By 1865 they had started a steamship company in order to trade with northern Brazil. The company would later dominate the Amazon trade route and expand to offer passenger routes to Portuguese ports. Charles was simultaneously engaged in social research and reform. He is best known for his comprehensive social survey of London life, published in several volumes in 1903 as *Life and Labour of the People in London*, and for contributions to the passing of the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908.



Frank Henry Mason (1875–1965), **Le Havre** c.1909, watercolour on paper



Peter de Wint (1784–1849), **The River Dee near Wynnstay, North Wales** c.1835, watercolour over pencil on paper

The Booth family developed a particular interest in art and the work of Liverpool artists. Charles Booth enjoyed sketching and making watercolours and his philanthropic studies brought him into the circle of John Ruskin (1819–1900), of whom he was an admirer. He purchased the life-sized version of the painting *Light of the World* by William Holman Hunt (1827–1910) for 12,000 guineas, which may have been the highest price paid to an English artist for a painting at that time. Charles also arranged its exhibition tour of 1905–07 to cities in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, before presenting the work to St Paul's Cathedral. His portrait was painted by G. F. Watts (1817–1904), c.1901, National Portrait Gallery, and William Rothenstein (1872–1945), c.1909, Victoria Gallery & Museum, Liverpool. In 1908, Charles's brother, Alfred, lent several works by Liverpool landscape artists to the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. The Booths were also responsible for commissioning artists, including William Allistair Macdonald (1861–1948) and Frank Henry Mason (1875–1965), to produce advertising images for Booth Line passages.

The Amis Collection

Works from the Booth family collection passed down to Richard Amis. It is difficult to be certain of the extent of this inheritance but the Booth Line advertising images, painted by Frank H. Mason, were surely inherited. The predominance of work by Liverpool-based artists or artists who frequently exhibited at the Liverpool galleries, and a prevalence of shipping subjects further suggest these family connections. Following the death of his father in 1970, Amis inherited The Georgian House in Ripley, Woking, together with the spectacular portrait of *Sheikh Ali* on his camel by Carl Haag (1820–1915). Amis grew up and spent his school holidays from Eton at The Georgian House, which he later shared with his partner Victor Chang, his collection of art displayed throughout.

Amis was also actively focused on collecting. He purchased a group of impressive watercolours from London dealers during the first decade of the 21st century. These relatively recent purchases are by significant artists and may have been bought with the bequest to Eton College in mind, inspired by the example of other donors of watercolours to the College Collections, such as Old Etonian Alan Pilkington (1879–1973) and former House Master Martin Whiteley (1930–1984).

In the months leading up to the opening of this exhibition a great deal of new information about the Amis collection has been discovered. As the collection was de-framed and thoroughly examined, hidden inscriptions and labels relating to former exhibitions



John Robert Cozens (1752–1797), **Capo di Bove, Morning (Mausoleum of Cecilia Metella)** c.1783, watercolour on paper



David Cox (Snr) (1783–1859), **Waiting for the Ferry** c.1835, watercolour over pencil with touches of bodycolour, on paper

were revealed. This exercise, combined with further research, allowed several titles to be corrected and, with the help of Guy Peppiatt and David Dallas, reattributions were made. An oil sketch by an 'unknown artist' revealed itself to be a *Study* by Liverpool landscapist William Davis when the modern frame was removed to reveal the 1908 Liverpool exhibition label. The label gave the lender's name as 'Alfred Booth Esq', Amis's grandfather. Two vibrant watercolours by Frank H. Mason, showing coastal views, were once titled 'Madeira' and 'Lisbon', but the artist's annotations on the backs indicate that they are views of Vigo in Spain and Le Havre, France, respectively, both destinations of the Booth Line steamships. Artist William Callow's own handwriting on the back of a work that had been called 'Hampstead Heath' revealed the rugged landscape to be a view on the Seine, dating from the time Callow was resident in Paris, early in his career. A view of a 'Winding River' by Belgium landscapist Auguste Donnay was found to have been used as an illustration to a book published during the artist's lifetime, confirming the subject to be the Ourthe Valley, near the village of Méry in the province of Liège. Finally, the 'Bedouin on a Camel' seen in Carl Haag's impressive watercolour portrait was identified through records of its first exhibition at the Society of Painters in Water Colours to have been titled *Sheikh Ali* by the artist. Information on the provenance of the works was compiled as part of an earlier valuation of the collection, but more has been uncovered and this work is ongoing.

Richard Amis first suggested bequeathing his collection of art to the College in a letter to Provost Anderson in 2006, explaining that “then my watercolours would be kept together and well looked after, and perhaps spark an interest in some boys, as my tutor C.R.N.R. and his watercolours did for me.”³ In fact, so eager was Amis to make certain that his collection would come to Eton College that he pre-empted their arrival by lending his Turner drawing of *Beech Trees in a Park* to the 2010 exhibition *Hidden Treasures: Masterpieces from the Watercolour Collection at Eton College*, held in London.

Amis's desire has now been realised. In 2007, while making preparations for the bequest of his collection, he enthused: “Every time I come back, I realise what a strong place “dear Mother Eton” has in my heart. Like General MacArthur in 1942 – I SHALL RETURN!”⁴

We are grateful to the family of Richard Amis and his partner, Victor Chang, for their continued interest and their support of the exhibition.

¹Email from Robert Welchman to Victoria Farmer, Legacy Manager, Eton College, 24 July 2023

²College Annals, Volume V, 1945 (Eton College Archives, SCH HOUS 03 COLL 01 04)

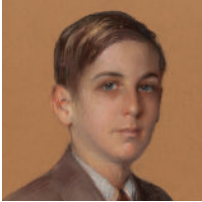
³Letter from Richard Amis to Provost Waldegrave, 16 July 2006. Note: there is a tradition of referring to masters by their initials at the College. (Eton College Archives, COLL P 22 03)

⁴Letter from Richard Amis to Henrietta Ryan, former Keeper of Paintings, Prints and Drawings, Eton College, 7 February 2007



Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851), **Beech Trees in a Park** c.1795, watercolour over pencil on paper

HANDBLIST



Nikolai [Nicolas] Becker (1877–1962)

Richard Amis 1946

pastel on paper

signed and dated lower right: 'N. Becker. / 1946.'

514 x 379mm

FDA-D.1717-2023

Provenance: Probably commissioned by Major Ivan Roll and Sylvia Emily Amis (parents of the sitter)



John Keyse Sherwin (1751–1790)

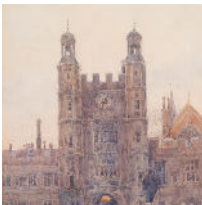
Francesco Bartolozzi (engraver; 1728–1815)

Henricus VI Fundator published 1773

etching, with engraving, on paper

457 x 250mm

FDA-E.3221-2023



Nora Davison (1855–1950)

School Yard, Eton College

watercolour over pencil on paper

272 x 220mm

FDA-D.1714-2023



John Robert Cozens (1752–1797)

Capo di Bove, Morning (Mausoleum of Cecilia Metella) c.1783

inscribed on verso, top left: 'J R Cozens';

centre right: 'Capo di Bova. Morning'

watercolour on paper

260 x 377mm (with historical backing 273 x 385mm)

FDA-D1688-2023

Provenance: Commissioned by William Beckford of Fonthill (1760–1844); *A Capital and Truly Valuable Collection of Original High-Finished Drawings... by that Eminent Artist, The Younger Cozens, During a Tour through Tyrol and Italy, in Company with An Amateur [Beckford]...*, Christie's, London, 10 April 1805, Lot 48, as 'View of the Capo di Bove, Morning Scene'; from which sale purchased by 'Mr Hoare', £5.10.0; Thomas Agnew & Son, London; from whom acquired by Richard Amis in 1956

Literature: C.F. Bell and T. Girtin, 'The Drawings and Sketches of John Robert Cozens', *The Walpole Society*, vol. XXIII, 1935, p.70, Cat. No. 352



Peter de Wint (1784–1849)

Ploughing the Heathland, Lincolnshire c.1820

watercolour on paper

145 x 313mm

FDA-D1689-2023

Provenance: Agnew's, London, 2001; from whom purchased by Richard Amis

Exhibition history: *Watercolours & Drawings; 128th Annual Exhibition*, Agnew's, London, 1–30th March 2001, Cat. No. 52

Literature: John Lord (editor), *Peter DeWint 1784–1849: 'For the common observer of life and nature'*, 2007, p.42, fig.ix

Peter de Wint (1784–1849)
Harvesting in the Lincolnshire Wolds c.1820

watercolour on paper

105 x 372mm

FDA-D:1691-2023

Provenance: *18th & 19th Century British Drawings and Watercolours*, Sotheby's, London, 19 November 1992 (Lot 98), as 'Harvesters in a Landscape'; Agnew's, London 2003; from whom purchased by Richard Amis

Exhibition history: *Watercolours & Drawings; 130th Annual Exhibition*, Agnew's, London, 5–28 March 2003, Cat. No. 42

Literature: John Lord (editor), *Peter DeWint 1784–1849: 'For the common observer of life and nature'*, 2007, p.43, fig.xi



Peter de Wint (1784–1849)
Barges on the Thames c.1830

watercolour over traces of pencil on paper

203 x 286mm

FDA-D:1690-2023

Provenance: Agnew's, London; W/S Fine Art, London 2005

Exhibition history: *Peter de Wint 1784–1849: Colourist and Countryman*, W/S Fine Art, London, 16 November – 9 December 2005, Cat. No. 8





Peter de Wint (1784–1849)

The River Dee near Wynnstay, North Wales c.1835

inscribed on verso by Harriet de Wint: 'on the River Dee nr Wynnstay'
watercolour over pencil on paper

310 x 370mm

FDA-D:1692-2023

Provenance: *The Whole of the Beautiful Works of that Unrivalled and Highly Respected Artist in Water Colours Peter de Wint, Esq. Deceased*, Christie's, London, 24 May 1850, Lot 287; purchased by 'Shirley' £710.0; collection of R.J. Berkeley; Andrew Wyld 1979; collection of R.M.M. Pryor; *Peter de Wint: Pictures from the Pryor Collection*, Sotheby's, London, 4 July 2002, Lot 317

Exhibition history: *Peter de Wint 1784–1849*, Andrew Wyld, London, 25 September – 18 October 1979, Cat. No. 60; *Peter de Wint*, W/S Fine Art, London, 16 November – 9 December 2005, Cat. No. 25

Literature: Hammond Smith, *Peter DeWint 1784–1849*, 1982, p.146



Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851)

Beech Trees in a Park c.1796

signed or inscribed lower right: 'W. Turner, R.A.'

watercolour over pencil on paper

247 x 346mm

FDA-D:1694-2023

Provenance: Collection of Mrs Cecil Keith, 1963; Agnew's, London; *Important British Drawings, Watercolours & Portrait Miniatures*, Sotheby's, London, 30 June 2005, Lot 250, as 'A Beech Copse near Haystacks'; W/S Fine Art, London 2006; from whom purchased by Richard Amis

Exhibition history: *English Watercolour Drawings from the Collection of Mrs. Cecil Keith, Worthing Art Gallery*, Sussex, 2 – 30 March 1963, Cat. No. 53, as 'A beech copse near haystacks'; *The Watercolour Collection formed by Mrs. Cecil Keith, City Museum and Art Gallery*, Birmingham, 1 – 25 May, 1984; *Watercolours and Drawings 1750 – 1950: The Annual Exhibition*, W/S Fine Art, London, 7 June – 7 July 2006, Cat. No. 17; *Hidden Treasures: Masterpieces from the Watercolour Collection at Eton College*, W/S Fine Art, London, 3 – 31 March 2010, p.40, Cat. No. 15

David Cox (Snr) (1783–1859)
Crossing the Sands, Ulverston 1835

watercolour over pencil on paper

220 x 320mm

FDA-D:1696-2023



Provenance: Collection of Joseph Baxendale; collection of I. Totteridge; *Important English Drawings and Watercolours*, Christie's, London, 18 March 1980, Lot 94, as 'Carts and Travellers on Lancaster Sands'; Andrew Wyld, London 1980; collection of Victor Rosen; his posthumous sale; Christie's, London, 21 March 1989, Lot 120; bought by Agnew's; *The Collection of Monsieur et Madame G rald Bauer: British Watercolours from the Golden Age*, Christie's, London, 22 January 2003, Lot 28; Agnew's, London, 2004; from whom purchased by Richard Amis

Exhibition history: *L'Age d'Or d'Aquarelle Anglaise, 1770–1900*, Fondation de l'Hermitage, Lausanne, Switzerland, 22 January – 24 May 1999, Cat. No. 59; *Watercolours & Drawings, 131st Annual Exhibition*, Agnew's, London, 25 February – 19 March 2004

Literature: G. Bauer, *L'Age d'or d'Aquarelle Anglaise, 1770–1900*, 1998, p.98, Pl.122; W. Hauptmann, *L'Age d'Or d'Aquarelle Anglaise*, 2000, p.80, ill.; G rald Bauer, *David Cox 1783–1859: Pr curseur des Impressionnistes?*, 2000, p.80, ill.

David Cox (Snr) (1783–1859)
Waiting for the Ferry c.1835

watercolour over pencil with touches of bodycolour, on paper

200 x 292mm

FDA-D:1695-2023



Provenance: Collection of James Orrock (1829–1913) by 1881; Agnew's, Manchester; W/S Fine Art, London 2010

Exhibition history: Midland Counties Art Museum, Nottingham Castle, 1878, as 'The Ferry' (lender James Orrock); *Works by David Cox*, City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 1890, Cat. No. 336, as 'The Ferry'

Literature: Whitworth Wallis and Arthur Bensley Chamberlain, *Works by David Cox with Descriptive Notes and Illustrations*, 1890, p.53, Cat. No. 336



William Callow (1812–1908)

Château at Amboise on the Loire 1836

signed with monogram lower left, inscribed and dated:

'Chateau d'Amboise J.17.36'

watercolour on paper

133 x 228mm

FDA-D.1701-2023

Provenance: Agnew's, London 2002

Exhibition history: *Watercolours & Drawings; 129th Annual Exhibition*, Agnew's, London, 13 February – 8 March 2002



William Callow (1812–1908)

Meudon on the Seine c.1834

signed lower centre: 'W. Callow'; inscribed on verso: 'Meudon on the Seine'

watercolour on paper

166 x 275mm

FDA-D.1702-2023



William Callow (1812–1908)

Rowing Out – Fishing Boats in the English Channel c.1840

signed lower right: 'W. Callow';

inscribed on verso: 'Bateau pecheur / a l'an[...]'

watercolour on paper

229 x 305mm

FDA-D.1703-2023

Provenance: Collection of Alfred Beurdeley (1847–1919); *Maritime and Naval Battles*, Christie's, South Kensington, 9 November 2000, Lot 432, as 'In the Chanel', bought in; Agnew's, London, 2002; from whom purchased by Richard Amis

Exhibition history: *Watercolours & Drawings; 129th Annual Exhibition*, Agnew's, London, 13 February – 8 March 2002

William Davis (1812–1873)

Study c.1840

oil on board

302 x 454mm

FDA-P.595-2023

Provenance: Collection of Alfred Booth (1834–1914);
by descent to Richard Amis

Exhibition history: *Historical Exhibition of Liverpool Art*,
Walker Art Gallery, 23 May – 4 July 1908, Cat. No. 759



Charles Hoguet (1821–1870)

The Mill at Potsdam 1846

signed and dated lower right: 'C. Hoguet. 18.6'

watercolour on paper

225 x 337mm

FDA-D.1697-2023



Edward Duncan (1803–1882)

Figures Promenading by an Estuary 1865

signed and dated lower right: 'E. Duncan 1865'

watercolour over traces of pencil with scratching out, on paper

218 x 316mm

FDA-D.1698-2023



Carl Haag (1820–1915)

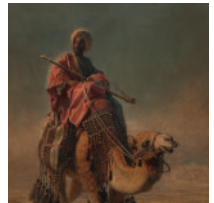
Sheikh Ali 1881

signed and dated lower right: 'Carl Haag, 1881'

watercolour on paper

500 x 357mm

FDA-D.1704-2023



Provenance: Collection of Hilda Summers of Hook Norton;
by whom presented to I.R. Amis in 1941; by descent to Richard Amis

Exhibition history: Society of Painters in Water Colours,
London, 1881, Cat. No. 100

Literature: *London Daily Chronicle*, 12 April 1881, p.5



Auguste Donnay (1862–1921)
La Vallée de l'Ourthe à Méry c.1906

gouache on board
451 x 701mm
FDA-D.1705-2023

Literature: Maurice des Ombiaux, *Quatre Artistes Liégeois: A. Rassenfosse, Fr. Maréchal, A. Donnay, Em. Berchmans*, Brussels, 1907, ill. opp. p.56



Robert Edward Morrison (1851–1924)
Riverbank with Blossom c.1900

signed lower right: 'R.E. Morrison'
oil on board
300 x 407mm
FDA-P.596-2023



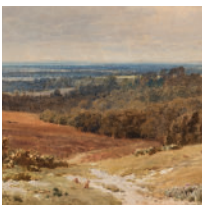
Henry Scott Tuke (1858–1929)
Shipping Scene at Night c.1900

watercolour over pencil
212 x 134mm
FDA-D.1707-2023



Giulio Aristide Sartorio (1860–1932)
Vesuvius 1892

signed and dated upper right: 'G.A. Sartorio 1892'
pastel on paper
251 x 592mm
FDA-D.1708-2023



Harold Sutton Palmer (1854–1933)
View of Hindhead, Surrey c.1910

signed lower left: 'Sutton Palmer'
watercolour on paper
353 x 517mm
FDA-D.1710-2023

Harold Sutton Palmer (1854–1933)

On the Arun c.1910

watercolour on paper

332 x 518mm

FDA-D:1709-2023



Sir Muirhead Bone (1876–1953)

Venta de Baños c.1929

signed lower right: 'Muirhead Bone'; inscribed below image

lower left: 'Venta de Banos'; lower right: 'oldest church in Spain'

watercolour over pencil on paper

213 x 278mm

FDA-D:1718-2023

Provenance: Thomas Agnew & Sons, London



Frank Henry Mason (1875–1965)

Le Havre c.1909

signed lower left: 'Frank H. Mason'; inscribed on verso: 'Havre'

watercolour on paper

158 x 318mm

FDA-D:1719-2023



Frank Henry Mason (1875–1965)

Approach to Vigo c.1909

signed lower right: 'Frank H. Mason'; inscribed lower left: 'Entrance

to Vigo'; inscribed on verso: 'approach to Vigo'

watercolour on paper

158 x 316mm

FDA-D:1720-2023



Lilian Russell Bell (1866–1947)

Fishing Boats c.1890

signed lower right: 'Lilian Russell'

watercolour on paper

426 x 341mm

FDA-D:1712-2023





Lilian Russell Bell (1866–1947), **Fishing Boats** c.1890, watercolour on paper