

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH AND THE
IMAGERY OF PASSAGE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to look closely at the road in Gainsborough's landscape paintings, and to establish what they may tell us about passage beyond their accepted recessional or structural role. The clarity of detail in these early landscapes enables us to speculate the likely forms of passage that are being enacted within the context of Gainsborough's native county of Suffolk; thus isolating them from his later stylistic developments. Understanding the circumstances pertaining to Suffolk's roads and their uses during the first half of the eighteenth century - how they looked and the volume of traffic they sustained - will inform this investigation.

Coming to terms with the actual historical, rural environment, and applying these findings to the fictional plasticity of the painted road, and the landscape through which it passes, will bring us closer to understanding how Gainsborough's landscapes may have contributed to a more local process; a preoccupation that was concerned with movement through, or around a particular location. We will seek to establish how particular spatial areas, created through an illusionistic and fictional depth of field, together with the manner of representation, inform passage in a broader sense.

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DECLARATION

I, Joy Sylvia Bailey, declare that the following work submitted for the MA by Research Degree, University of York, is the result of my own work and does not contain material that has been presented before.

Joy Sylvia Bailey

INTRODUCTION

In Gainsborough's small landscape painting *View outside Sudbury* (Fig.1), a centrally positioned road makes an assertive entry into the bottom edge of the canvas. After winding through a clump of trees and over a hillock, the road disappears from view as it tips over the edge of a rising slope at the horizon; a swinging motion is felt as the route meanders to the right and then to the left. The camber at the horizon and the direction the rider faces suggest the road is about to swing to the right once more. The horse ambles with head down; sheep on either side seem untroubled by its passing (Fig.2). Small and insignificant in dress and posture, the horseman represents the kind of traveller who features repeatedly in Gainsborough's rustic landscapes. Meanwhile, two figures straddle the foreground section of the road (Fig.3). One is seated, feet firmly planted in the road; the other stands, walking stick in hand. Sooner or later, we are invited to imagine, they will continue to destinations along unseen footpaths or waterways; to cottages, farms, or other places of employment. Their static poses and central positioning brings stability to an otherwise mobile terrain. A gap in the bank reveals a sunlit cornfield skirted by another track along which walk another two small figures (Fig.4).

This very early landscape picture is typical of many painted by Thomas Gainsborough while living in Sudbury between about 1747-1751. Furthermore, the centrality of the road in this painting is highly typical of the artist's early landscapes. This encourages us to speculate upon the meanings of the road in his art, and upon the forms of passage and stillness such roads sustain and suggest. Here, as elsewhere, figures and the road are mutually supportive, and the artist seems preoccupied with the forms of movement and stasis that their interaction generates.

I

The role of the road in landscape art has a long history. It is often used as a recessional device, exploited to give scale, depth and direction through a fictive space. At the same time, it often provides a forum for human narrative. A painted road may be

topographical, or function to distinguish between public and private space; it can make a social or political statement or it can simply articulate, separate, or connect parts of a rural terrain. Ultimately, the road will encourage or persuade the viewer to read a painting in a particular way and at a particular speed. Figures and roads combine to suggest a variety of likely situations; these may inform the viewer about activities and rural occupations, and about the nature of relationships between the figures. In landscape paintings roads are a constant presence. They respond to an inherited legacy of such images that alters in line with period, place, style and patronage. How the road is introduced into a painting will satisfy traditional norms while adhering to the artistic demands of a particular point in the history of landscape painting.

To illustrate the constant and central role that the road has played in landscape art - and before we return to Gainsborough's imagery of road-bound passage and pause - it will help to introduce a number of case studies by different artists who have produced work in this genre. In the landscape paintings by Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) for instance, a prominent road inhabited by figures is a recurring theme. We will take as an example *The Funeral of Phocion* of 1648 (Fig.5) in which the road combines horizontal and vertical qualities as it zigzags dramatically across and through the landscape. It is comprised of repeated shallow diagonals that remain at a fairly low level throughout. After making a striking entry from the bottom right, the road snakes behind the dark foreground plane. After this, it is occasionally concealed by other, more shallow landforms; but Poussin has taken particular care to ensure that the road's emphatic visual and directional value is maintained throughout.

The reason for this is that the imagery in *The Funeral of Phocion* captures a moment when the body of Phocion, executed for treason, is removed from Athens in accordance with custom. The road's function in this painting, we can suggest, is to dramatise this form of posthumous exile. It is also, more mundanely, used to provide a visual transition through the landscape; perhaps to compensate for sudden changes in scale.¹ Linear motifs, such as the road in Poussin's landscapes, help one to understand the "continuity of planes" from the front to the back.² Kenneth Clark suggests that Poussin was "particularly fond of a diagonal path which turned back on itself after about two-thirds of its journey".³ It has been argued that landscape images like this derive their "power from the fact that they are 'limited' - the zone where the drama unfolds is

sharply defined, like a stage setting”.⁴ Here, Poussin uses the road as a theatrical space upon which to dramatise an important historic event

We can now move forward to the nineteenth century and look at Camille Pissarro’s *L’Hermitage* (Fig.6). Although painted about two hundred years later than *The Funeral of Phocion*, the road in this French Impressionist work is as explicit as before. Due to the period in which it was painted, however, it will invite a different critical approach. Emile Zola wrote of how Pissarro constructs a “wall of nature” in his pictures.⁵ When painting *L’Hermitage* he is described as having “assembled” the landscape “and the buildings that sit solidly within it” using broad, heavy brushstrokes.⁶ We get the idea from the terminology being used here that we are looking at a series of elevations upon a single plane, one that has been assembled and built in a vertical manner. Pissarro has placed himself before this ‘wall of nature’ before proceeding to rebuild it, “piece by piece, stroke by stroke”.⁷ This is an idea that may discourage the viewer from following the traditional perception of the road as recessional device.

And yet one finds oneself looking at an apparently natural landscape, featuring a quiet rural road receding into the distance, brightly lit by the warm sun and inhabited by figures and bystanders along its visible length. As the road moves down toward the village it pulls the eye downward in a way that is difficult to resist; one could almost nestle in this place, without wanting to go any further. Two women and a child stand on the road passing time in conversation while two children sit in the shade of a tree on the roadside. Further ahead, the road eventually alters course and lifts itself out of the village, where other, more distant figures can be seen standing or walking. Beyond this point the road remains invisible to the eye but this stretch is sufficient to convey a feeling of depth; a real penetration into fictional space.

Pissarro moved to Pontoise in 1866, two years before painting this scene and four years after the railway came to the town, strengthening links between Pontoise and Paris.⁸ The new rail system, as well as rivers, canals, local roads and paths became popular subject matter for the impressionists. But we do not know whether artists intended the depiction of new transport systems to be understood as political statements.⁹ It has been suggested that Pontoise gave Pissarro his preferred human environment, peopled by rural workers.¹⁰ Perhaps Pissarro is referring to the road as a way to reach into the heart of

the village; supporting the community at a more intimate level in ways that other transport systems were not designed to do. But whatever motivation lay behind images of this kind it is clear the road continues to play a pivotal structural and pictorial role.

Lastly, we will look at a twentieth-century depiction of the road. The road we encounter in *Savannah Negro Quarter* by Walker Evans (Fig.7) is once again central to the image. The main section of road thrusts diagonally to the left while another branches vertically to the right side of the image; the vanishing point sinks low on the urban horizon. Overhead telegraph wires, although slightly offset, repeat the straight and dramatic quality portrayed by the road. The road seems an eery place to be; it is deserted by human beings and occupied only by one or two motor vehicles. These are parked up right against the kerb as though to ensure clear passage for other, possibly faster, motorised vehicles. The viewer shares space at street-level with figures who are grouped in pairs on the pavement; they are marginalised by an intimidating expanse of tarmac and associated feeling of speed.

When this photograph was included in the exhibition *American Photographs*, which took place at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1938, Evans insisted on hanging the exhibits himself, taking complete control of how they were arranged on the wall and in the subsequent catalogue.¹¹ Hung on either side of *Savannah Negro Quarter* were two photographs in which buildings almost fill the foreground plane, blocking recession. The three together remind one of a triptych in which side wings support the central image. If the viewer/reader had not noticed the recessionary impact of the road before, then the juxtaposition chosen by Evans in both exhibition and catalogue leaves one in no doubt that the penetrating force of the road is what he wanted to draw our attention to.¹² Evans asked the reader to “keep to the sequence and rhythm of reading indicated by the arrangement of the images”.¹³ This confirms how important it was that the viewer noticed the emphatic thrust of the road in the central photograph. He asked the reader to “think of the general run of the social mill: anonymous people who come and go in the cities and who move on the land. It is on what they look like now; what is in their faces and in the windows and the streets beside and around them”.¹⁴ This photograph was taken at a seminal moment in Savannah’s urban history. In 1935 a political decision allowed engineers to “cut a straight, north-south swathe down the centre Montgomery Street”; demolishing three public squares in the process.¹⁵

A struggle was taking place between a minority car-owning population and local, more pedestrian-based citizens. Conflict revolved around what Evans describes as “machine-oriented, industrial-scale urban design and a long-standing, local dedication to beauty”.¹⁶ The assertive and aggressive quality expressed in the imagery of the road in this photograph can be understood as a response to these developments.

We can see from this brief overview of the imagery of roads in the pictured landscape that this imagery often informs, or responds to, the particular circumstances relating to the period in which such pictures were produced. The dominance of the road in landscape art justifies particular attention. We may initially look at how the road contributes structurally and compositionally to the image; but this same imagery has moved us also to consider issues such as the death of a leader, the impact of the railways, and a dramatic form of town planning.

II

To begin understanding the imagery of the road and of passage in Gainsborough’s landscape painting, I have made a survey of forty of his pictures in the genre, using a selection of samples chosen from all periods of his career (Sudbury, Ipswich, Bath and later London) and including five known to have been commissioned. In doing so, we find that no less than 85% include a clearly visible road or track (Appendix 1). In all but five of the works that contain such a detail, the pictured passageways begin in a prominent position along the bottom edge or lower corner of the canvas, giving visual access with no physical barrier between the viewer and the road. Direction varies; some veer to the left, others to the right; many have repeated strands rising and falling into the distance. Clarity diminishes with recession but fragments of the road remain discernible throughout. Figures feature in 92.5% of the total paintings examined. The manner in which they are positioned in relation to the road is interesting. In the sample used, on-road figures keep moving either on foot, horseback or in a wheeled vehicle. Most are unaccompanied and all move away from the viewer. Off-road figures sit or stand beside the road or on higher ground not far away. More prominent off-road figures are in pairs, but those placed further into the distance tend to be alone. Social intercourse takes place off not on the road. On-road figures nearly always lean forward

in a posture of fatigue, whether walking or on horse-back. More distant off-road figures tend to look across the road gazing into space or at a figure or animal on the opposite bank who generally returns the gaze.

Transferring these details to a chart (Appendix 2) offers a confirmation of the above findings. Roads are indicated in black, figures in red. We could imagine these paintings with figures but no roads, or roads but no figures, but combined they introduce the concept of time and animate movement. They become the embodiment of passage. Accepting the structural and recessional role the road plays, and acknowledging its contribution to an illusion of spatial depth, this small survey reveals that Gainsborough demonstrates a marked reluctance to detract from the predominance of the road and a stringent disregard for introducing a greater variety of types and behaviour into the figures he portrays. Variety resides in the many different landscape settings but it is his tightly controlled manner of approach in all other aspects of his works that will prove especially valuable to this investigation.

III

Gainsborough's paintings have proved highly popular as a subject for research and scholarship among art historians. Those who have engaged with his landscape paintings in some detail include John Hayes, whose *The Landscape Paintings of Thomas Gainsborough*, 1982, as its title indicates, focuses exclusively on Gainsborough's landscape paintings.¹⁷ When writing about eighteenth-century landscapes more generally, Luke Herrmann, in *British Landscape Painting of the Eighteenth Century*, 1973, singled out Gainsborough for particular attention.¹⁸ Others have focused on particular issues, such as John Barrell in *The Dark Side of Landscape*, 1980.¹⁹ Gainsborough's landscapes are here made central to the exploration of idleness and industry. Using two landscapes by Gainsborough, Barrell introduces the idea that the rural figures may either be understood to represent the "arduous" countryman or figures seeming to have "time on their hands".²⁰ Barrell investigates how Gainsborough "understood the relations between" the labouring poor and the idle rich.²¹ Likewise, Ann Bermingham's *Landscape and Ideology*, 1987, explores the rustic tradition, using

Gainsborough as an example. *Gainsborough's Vision* by Amal Asfour and Paul Williamson, 1999, who explore the more abstract spaces in Gainsborough's landscapes. In 2002, Hugh Belsey, as Curator of Gainsborough's House in Sudbury, presented new research relating to Gainsborough's art, his character and his career.²² In the same year Belsey published *Thomas Gainsborough: A Country Life*, paying special attention to his earlier work.²³ In 1979, Marcia Pointon wrote an article about 'Gainsborough and the Landscape of Retirement'.²⁴ Elise Smith, in 2007 singles out the pollarded tree in Gainsborough's paintings in an article titled "*The aged pollard's shade*" in *Gainsborough's Landscape with Woodcutter and Milkmaid*.²⁵ For Gainsborough's Bath period, we have come to rely on Susan Sloman. More recently, in 2011, Sloman published a work examining 'Themes and Variations' in Gainsborough's landscapes.²⁶ Finally, and most relevantly for my purposes, an exhibition review written by Mark Hallett on a Tate Britain display of Gainsborough paintings curated by Michael Rosenthal and Martin Myrone in 2002, noticed the artist's preoccupation with the constantly recurring motif of the road or track, and to the "string of figures, overwhelmingly plebeian" that inhabit them.²⁷ Scholarship has not dealt comprehensively with this subject, however, a neglect that this dissertation seeks to redress.

IV

Emerging as they do from a common need for a convenient means of movement through a landscape, it would be difficult to visualise human passage without roads. They are first and foremost a physical, geographical entity used by people when they need to move regularly from one place to another. Roads may be understood as being a "manifestation of human movement".²⁸ "Constructed" roads are those whose routes have been predetermined by a central authority; whereas "non-constructed" roads emerge from "the cumulative actions of many individuals".²⁹ Put simply, the latter are the roads forged by mankind through constant use over a period of time.

Whether dealing with a painted road or one that is part of a real landscape, the road is always integral to the land traversed; it cannot be otherwise. Archaeologists use terms

such as the “landscape approach” or “landscapes of movement” to overcome the otherwise insurmountable task of examining something that has in effect no beginning or end.³⁰ Because a painted landscape is a flat object, we are tempted to an evaluation purely concerned with structure, recession, perspective and composition. But to envisage passage taking place along these roads asks for more than this. The perpetual, pulsating forward movement of the road in Gainsborough’s Suffolk landscapes encourages the viewer to breach the confines of the canvas in their mind’s eye and to consider where a journey begins and where it might end. In this way the painted landscape also becomes a landscape of human movement and narrative. Gainsborough’s painted roads may be fictional; motifs have been shifted around, reused or rearranged; nevertheless, they are representative of a contemporary landscape which dramatizes contemporary passage and pause.

Roads serve the population; the population live and work in areas offering access to them. Geographical features, together with events taking place in the wider landscape, dictate a road’s eventual course. Over time, due to changing preferences or needs, a road may alter, bringing an altered perspective, a changing scene; the best route is still being worked out. Once established however, a road fixes those views, “framing the experience of the traveller”.³¹ From this point on, the road defines what can be seen from any point along its length, becoming a conduit and capturing the energy of passage within its borders, while enabling movement along its length. Roads are public spaces but they are not usually thought of as places in their own right. This may be because they are not lived in but always moved through. Passage involves people and these figures inform us of local and more extensive interactions, whether private, social or economic in nature. The public road provides a shared public space; there is little pre-determined hierarchy, even allowing for the different modes of transport that make a positive statement about the status of the user. Their strength lays in the way they “foster connectivity” and help “situate people, events, and stories in particular geographical contexts”.³² It has been said that roads “document change and discontinuity”.³³ Painted roads meet these same criteria.

The “quality of place emerges out of the way in which spaces are inhabited by human bodies”.³⁴ Roads and paths connect “spatial impressions with temporally-inscribed memories”.³⁵ If this is the case, understanding passage of a more local kind in these

paintings will involve recognising the particular spatial zones as they occur and how the figures who inhabit them also contribute to the idea of passage. Depending on the disciplinary approach used, the landscape has been described as a “location” a “space” or a “locale”.³⁶ We will find that in Gainsborough’s Suffolk landscapes, these same descriptors - location, space or locale - carry separate but equal weight. The application of each term is balanced; they become mutually compatible. Meanwhile, the pictured environments in Gainsborough’s paintings also introduce the idea of locale; they may alter time values and direct and re-direct reading. If roads are the “connective tissue” for activities reflecting the “practice of everyday life”, then to treat the near and far, local and distant in Gainsborough’s paintings as separate entities risks abandoning this connectivity that otherwise maintains the essential seamless quality of passage as a whole.³⁷ With Gainsborough, the combination of “the country, road and the narratives it generates”, gains strength from the fact that compositionally, as has been noted above, there is hardly an exception to the road’s inclusion and to the central role that it plays.³⁸ The most tangible evidence of passage is provided by small anonymous figures moving along these roads. In terms of understanding passage, the value of a clearly defined road peopled by seemingly insignificant travellers is embedded in these very particulars. The solution to how the near and far interact with more intermediate qualities of passage in Gainsborough’s landscapes will only emerge when specific qualities embedded in the local and more distant imagery of passage are understood.

At different moments and in different ways roads evoke the feeling of interruption and continuation, either seen or suggested. The facility with which a road connects individuals or groups is equally capable of forging a separation between them. Because of their different, individual qualities roads can be used to link or separate people, communities and even counties. They leave in their wake a push and pull effect. We may come closer to understanding why this is so if we recognise how features separating sections of road in a painting also serve to connect them. A road ceases to be visible at certain junctures and we naturally assume that its course continues behind whatever object is in its way. The outcome is that roads, figures and the landscape are compelled to work together in mutual rotation to sustain momentum and ensure seamless passage.

V

For the sake of economy and focus, this dissertation will concentrate upon the landscape paintings completed by Gainsborough between the years c1747-59. During this period he painted roads with unmistakable clarity and detail, drawing attention to the particulars of the countryside in which he lived. The first chapter will concentrate upon the ways in which Gainsborough's imagery of passage responded to and drew upon the iconography and narratives of the road found in seventeenth-century Dutch landscape paintings. Findings will be based on the close analysis of a number of case studies. The second chapter will look at Gainsborough's paintings in relation to other, locally driven initiatives in investigating and depicting space, which took the form of travel writings, county maps and treatises on perspective published by two close acquaintances of the artist in Suffolk, John and Joshua Kirby. Finally, the third chapter will focus on the figures inserted by the artist in his landscapes and discuss how they contribute to their imagery of passage. A study of, and quotations from, contemporary poetry will make a substantial contribution to this final chapter, alerting us to the ways in which the artist's imagery shared concerns with certain kinds of georgic and pastoral verse. A conclusion will briefly focus on the changing imagery of the road and of passage in Gainsborough's later practice.

CHAPTER ONE

GAINSBOROUGH AND THE IMAGERY OF PASSAGE IN DUTCH LANDSCAPE PAINTING

One needs only to take a cursory glance at Gainsborough's early rustic landscape paintings to see that they are not only uncannily similar in appearance to their seventeenth-century Dutch counterparts, but alike in nearly every essential characteristic. This, of course, has been regularly noted but my aim in this chapter will be to focus on the more singular shared motif of the road, and on the ways in which Gainsborough's representation of passage in his landscapes reworked the narratives, meanings and ambitions of this particular Dutch pictorial precedent.³⁹

I

To begin, we can look at two paintings. Viewed side-by-side, Jacob van Ruisdael's (1628/9-1682) *Dunes* (Fig.8) c1650 and Gainsborough's '*Rest on the Way*' (Fig.9) 1747, bear an immediate likeness in appearance. In both paintings attention is drawn to roads moving steadily from the foreground edge of the canvas. In *Dunes*, the road rises and falls dramatically, ending abruptly at the top of a dune in the middle distance. The dominant dune blocks any distant view of the road, disconnecting the viewer from any visual indication of the road's likely destination. A lone figure labours uphill toward the viewer while his dog waits patiently just ahead of him. The sheer volume of the dunes depicted in this painting imbues the work with drama. The ruts are witness to wheeled transport, but due to the severity of incline, navigation seems to have proven difficult. The clarity and exposure the road enjoys in *Dunes* exploits the theatre of passage to the full. In *Rest on the Way*, meanwhile, the road again tips over a rise before dipping steeply downhill. Although obscured at certain points, the viewer is able to follow the course taken toward the horizon. A solitary herdsman, moving away from the viewer, and accompanied by his cow, begins his descent over the brow of the hill. He is watched by a figure resting beside the road while the figure nearest to us focuses

more on the landscape ahead. The emphatic foreground section of road combines with a more distant visual extension; this fosters connectivity and reminds the viewer of the role the road will continue to play.

Roads in Ruisdael's paintings offer a range of possibilities in their representation of movement and passage through the countryside. To reinforce this point, we will look at another of the Dutch painter's works; one that is typical of the kind duplicated by Gainsborough. *Landscape with Footbridge* (Fig.10) was painted during the 1650s.⁴⁰ A deeply rutted track enters the bottom edge of the canvas and then follows a straight course before bending around a sandy road-side bank. A fork in the road veers left before crossing the footbridge, beyond which the road trails toward the top of a wooded bank in the middle-distance. Attention is drawn to the main section of road, which is painted in some detail. A patch of vegetation obscures the road as it disappears around the main bend, leading to the footbridge. This is an important point, in that it serves to isolate the foreground section of road. This temporary, visual separation enables this prominent section of road to become a forum for the main human encounter.

The encounter taking place here is striking. A dismounted rider clad in a long red cloak stands assertively in the centre of the road, where he confronts a rider coming toward him on a dappled grey. This second rider sits bolt upright, hand on hip. His dark hat and sash give him a military bearing. The darker horse stands nervously at right-angles to the direction of the road, while the dappled grey raises a foreleg, as if agitated about being drawn to a sudden halt. The manner of this surprise encounter radiates a cheerful tension and drama. Figures in Dutch landscape paintings are often arranged so that the viewer's eye is led in a particular direction, often towards more distant figures or motifs.⁴¹ Here however, figures appear to revolve upon their own axis, leaving the viewer no firm indication of subsequent movement in any particular direction (Fig.11). Two fishermen on the nearby river bank go almost unnoticed. Once more, searching for signs of onward passage beyond the middle distance proves unfruitful. Ruisdael has made the most of the road's pictorial and narrative value over a shorter distance, using the foreground activity as central motif.⁴²

In order to understand better this earlier, Netherlandish imagery of the road, we can usefully turn to another Dutch artist of the seventeenth century, Jan Wijnants (active

1643; d. 1684). Sand hills, chalky banks and broken ground through which a road navigates a course were Wijnants' preferred subject matter.⁴³ In *Landscape with a High Dune* c1665 (Fig.12) the foreground section of rutted track marks the surface of a sandy terrain. Although contrasting with the adjacent, flatter road surface, this detail vies for attention with nearby burdock leaves, clumps of grass, a sawn off tree-trunk and loose stones. All are given equal attention, resulting in a more decorative effect. One might agree that Wijnants' dune landscapes show a "spontaneity, an economy of means".⁴⁴ In this example the road becomes just one of a series of curved segments sandwiched between the dune and grassy verge, acting as a recessional device to lead the eye through the landscape.

This underlying pictorial economy applies equally to Wijnants' carefully positioned figures. On-road figures are paired in the foreground and read as a group, but Wijnants has taken care to ensure they are set slightly apart, thereby allowing them to function as recessional devices. In all, five figures occupy the main track. A peasant walking away in the distance is about to disappear from sight behind the dune. In the foreground, a woman sits astride a donkey; meanwhile, a man walks alongside as they move toward the viewer. The closest and most distinct figures are male; one is seated at the edge of the road while the other stands facing him; they converse in a casual manner. They may be friends or strangers. Their richly coloured clothing of bright blue, white and gold, together with their wide-brimmed hats, contrast with the surrounding landscape. A second road moves at right-angles away from the main track; a covered wagon pulled by white horses, a solitary figure and dog head toward a nearby town. Almost unnoticed, a tiny figure stands bent double, working among corn-stooks. Two male figures stand away from the road atop the high dune; one of them appears to be balancing a gun on his shoulder; perhaps they are hunting, which would explain their distance from the road. They remind one of Ruisdael's two fishermen in *Landscape with Footbridge* (Fig.10) who likewise introduce the idea of a leisurely pursuit. Their dog looks down toward the road, a gesture linking this group to the figures below. Their elevated position begins a powerful downward diagonal connecting them to the on-road figures; this pictorial linkage defines the countryside as a space for hunting and leisure as well as a place of movement and passage. The main group in Wijnants' *Landscape with a High Dune* seem to comprise of "courtiers and townsmen", who are shown enjoying a leisurely moment in the countryside in which peace and harmony

exist between man and his environment; “there is a sense of order, of well-being”.⁴⁵ Here, as in *Landscape with Footbridge*, figures use the road as a common space. Their encounters project and embody an openness of spirit together with a peaceful communion of minds. While we may anticipate imminent movement in either direction, the figures are shown arrested at a moment in time.

This initial overview of Dutch landscapes brings several points to our notice. Firstly, formal comparisons confirm an overall similarity in content in the Dutch paintings looked at so far. Edges of clearly defined, rutted tracks, seldom blending with adjacent areas, confirm an important structural and recessional role for the road in these pictures. Although figures are positioned on or beside the road there is little sense of urgent movement. Variety nearly always prevails; some figures sit and rest, while others stand and converse or move slowly along. Figures vary considerably in terms of type and visible appearance. Most appear rural; they are painted in shades of brown and grey. Occasionally figures blend so well with their surroundings that they almost go unnoticed. But these are often combined with more colourful types who seem to come from a little higher up the social scale. The road becomes a forum for human encounters; a means for people to get around, yes, but also a place in which they have the opportunity to meet others.

But the combination of figures and roads in Dutch landscapes signify a more purposeful form of narrative. Roads speak of the transportation of goods to distant markets, provinces or ports; and as such they may also serve as a commentary on contemporary society and employment. Figures and the roads that they occupy, also contribute to dialogue about social and economic routines, in terms of the impact that changes in the landscape and employment may have had on the countryside at large. Gainsborough was clearly drawn to the appearance of Dutch landscapes and to the narratives they generated; he demonstrates this by reworking a number of these pictures’ features into his own early landscapes. In their formal characteristics, his rustic paintings correspond with the Dutch model in most respects. In adopting this template, however, Gainsborough also engages with a range of concepts and issues associated with this category of imagery; he was not purely concerned with formal motifs. By continuing to compare examples by Gainsborough and Ruisdael we may be able to clarify some of these issues, and their interest for the later artist. But before we do this, we must try to

get a better sense of the broader meanings and values associated with the Dutch landscape art of the seventeenth century.

II

Ruisdael lived and worked in Haarlem, a place celebrated for its natural beauty.⁴⁶ This may have encouraged him to take an interest in the art, literature and verse alluding to that town. This body of works include a series of etchings produced by Claes Jansz Visscher in about 1622, illustrating pleasant places (*plaisante plaisen*) near Haarlem. *The Road towards Leiden* (Fig.13) is a rendition of the type of landscape image made within the environs of Haarlem. Small figures act out different roles along a wide expanse of road; nominal landmarks such as houses, broken fence and windmills mark out boundaries. Meanwhile, echoing such images, van Mander's poetry celebrated Haarlem's woods as places of relaxation, a place people of all ages could enjoy and "rejoice in the spirit".⁴⁷ Tourists attracted to the area included Peter Mundy, an English traveller abroad who visited Haarlem in 1640 and commented on "some rising ground, many pretty groves and woodes, Faire long rancks of Trees with pleasauntt walkes betweene". He also noticed "beyond the towne are certaine Sandhills called dounes, where breed store of Cunnies [rabbits], off which many are brought to Amsterdam".⁴⁸ Ruisdael's paintings, with their winding roads, sandy dunes and the occasional sportsman out shooting, offer the viewer a route through this remarkable countryside that in some ways echoes these literary descriptions.

Where the figures in Dutch landscapes are concerned – as in the case of those pictured by Gainsborough himself – we should not rule out the possibility of their having religious or spiritual meaning.⁴⁹ There is hesitancy, however, amongst modern scholars about accepting that figures moving along the road may represent "pilgrims on the journey of life" or that static bystanders may symbolise "sloth and lust". It would be misleading to consider every wayfarer an "image of man on the road of life".⁵⁰ But this is a complex area in which one encounters a number of conflicting views. One of these perspectives considers "selective naturalism" to have been an implicit factor within Dutch seventeenth-century painting, and to have encouraged a religious attitude towards "observed reality"; others suggest that those landscapes which were intended to both

“delight the eye and arouse the contemplative mind” were not necessarily emblematic in character.⁵¹ Thus, Seymour Slive considers that nature is a subject in its own right, whereas John Walford supports the idea the visible world was perceived with inherent spiritual significance; he names Ruisdael, above other painters, as articulating the “contemplative mode inspired by religion”.⁵²

Due to these conflicting views, establishing meaning in seventeenth century Dutch landscape art is not an easy task. Dutch art has been described as “mimetic” and “unmediated” and as an “illusion of reality” carried out with “self-conscious artistry”.⁵³ Dutch paintings “delight the eye” and encourage contemplation without necessarily possessing narrative content.⁵⁴ Elizabeth Honig considers Ruisdael’s landscapes “are recognised as imparting a special sense of drama to the natural world”. They are imbued with a “transitory” drama. Ruisdael presents the world as being in “constant flux”, embodying “instability and suspense”.⁵⁵ The idea that a landscape contains a message suggests the importance of the viewers’ role. The viewer may derive pleasure from a work’s purely painterly qualities, but naturalism may not have been the main objective of the artist, and “could blossom only in the service of a very specific programme”.⁵⁶ Thus, to give just one example of the kinds of meaning projected by such images, we can argue that Ruisdael’s and Wijnants’ dune landscapes reflect pride felt in being a part of a place such as Haarlem that clearly enjoyed popularity and commercial success.

What is left out of paintings may at times be as informative as what is included. To understand better what painted roads in seventeenth-century Dutch paintings convey in terms of the actual passage along such roads in the period, it is important to get a better sense of the volume of people and livestock that travelled across the Netherlandish landscape in this period. The paintings give us “anonymous” figures trudging along roads; they stand, sit, lean, lounge and gossip, constituting “one of the most pervasive motifs in Dutch landscape”.⁵⁷ Left out however, are the increasing numbers of “craftsmen, merchants and day-labours” or the “swarms of labourers” moving between villages, employed to remove peat from newly reclaimed land or labourers working in transport, haulage, shipbuilding or canal work.⁵⁸ Migrants from the south “were often paid low wages and travelled from place to place to find employment”.⁵⁹ The majority of the working population in The Netherlands worked in crafts and industries. It is

logical to assume that this working population would, at some point in the day, use the road.

In Holland alone, manual employment such as ship building and brickmaking accounted for about forty per cent of the working population.⁶⁰ By this time agricultural improvement and healthier livestock brought increased demand.⁶¹ As many as 7,500 head of cattle were said to pass through Friesland markets annually.⁶² Imported oxen from Denmark swelled the numbers; by the early seventeenth century “passage was registered of an average of 40,000 head per year”.⁶³ Add to this an extensive growth in local markets requiring better road access for farmers. An increase in the production of dairy products responded to an increase in demand. In Gouda, between 1641 and 1650 receipts were issued for almost 5,000,000 lbs. of cheese; similarly, a wagon count in Hoorn Noordenpoort on market day reached just under one thousand, and this accounted for movement in one direction only.⁶⁴

Figures in Dutch landscapes may represent contemporary urban or rural road users, but they clearly do not express the sheer volume of human, animal and wheeled transport moving between towns, villages and cities to their places of employment.⁶⁵ Paintings reflecting actual conditions would have risked becoming no more than a social comment on a current situation. Fill these roads to capacity with labourers and dyke-diggers, and with an imagery that conjured up the bustle and noise that such figures generated, and the image runs the danger of being overwhelmed and of becoming crowded and vulgar. Keep the number of figures low, and the landscape feels more decorous and full of narrative potential. Paradoxically, to fill roads with people would take something away; to limit numbers gives greater scope for speculation.

III

Gainsborough had access to many examples of Dutch paintings imported from Holland. A marked increase in the number of auction sales in London during the early eighteenth century reflected the high number of paintings arriving in England.⁶⁶ Sale advertisements gave either the country of origin for the artists represented, or listed the artists concerned. Sometimes we see a mixture of both. A sale of original paintings

“by Italian and Other masters” took place at the “Blue-Coat Coffee House in Swithin’s Alley” in 1702.⁶⁷ A year earlier, the “*Golden Triangle in Long Acre*” staged a sale including works by “*Claud Lorane*” and French prints by “*Pousson*” and “*divers other considerable Masters*”.⁶⁸ In 1709 the *English Post* advertised a “collection of Italian and Dutch paintings and Prints”.⁶⁹ Gainsborough’s exposure to Dutch art almost certainly began in London auction houses and private sales. In all probability, when visiting Suffolk he also had the opportunity to visit collections owned by merchants who had Dutch trading connections. In 1747 for example, Mr. Ford, selling on behalf of a “Gentleman from abroad” listed artists as wide-ranging in style as Nicolas and Gaspard Poussin, “Le Suer, Teniers, Rysdale &c”.⁷⁰ In 1750 a sale at Mr. Prestage’s, Saville Row, advertised a collection of “Dutch Flemish, French and Italian pictures belonging to a “Mr. Bragge”.⁷¹ Private collections were sometimes dispersed at auction on behalf of recently deceased persons such as the “Household Furniture and pictures, plate etc. of Charles Boulder, Esq.” which took place in King Street, Covent Garden, on 13th September, 1749.⁷² This practice became commonplace throughout the century. In 1763, by which time Gainsborough had moved to Bath, those “Curious in PICTURES” were invited to view paintings from “Ten to Six, at the Great Rooms”, the Strand, London. The twenty named painters included Titian, Guido, Snyders, Rubens, Vandyke and Claude Lorraine and included a range of works such as histories, landscapes and portraits.⁷³ A sale in Covent Garden advertised “The genuine, well known and Curious collection of Italian, Flemish and Dutch paintings” in 1764.⁷⁴ That more popular Italianate landscape painters were frequently represented in these sales alongside Dutch landscapes, suggests that Gainsborough may well have encountered examples of a variety of landscapes types, but his early landscape paintings do not reflect this. Neither do they show much in the way of engagement with his English near contemporaries such as John Wootton, Richard Wilson or George Lambert who were responding more actively to a patronal preference for Italianate landscape at this time, both in England and abroad.

It would seem that collectors preferred to buy work that had been painted abroad, of the type that agreed with current classical and intellectual taste. But as the century progressed the liking for Dutch landscapes increased to the extent that collectors began to take notice of and show a preference for individual, named artists from the Netherlands and the Low Countries. Two sales advertised on 15th January 1749 named

artists such as “Reubens, Both, Berglam and Hobima”, “Rysdael, Poelemburg and Vandyck”.⁷⁵ Of the wealth of Dutch landscape material to choose from, collectors preferred paintings by Jacob van Ruisdael, Jan Wijnants and Meindert Hobbema. Gainsborough is known to have repaired and added figures to a Wijnants’ painting whilst in London and may have undertaken other work of this kind.⁷⁶ It is interesting to note that Gainsborough discriminated in favour of artists who by the mid-eighteenth century enjoyed the greatest popularity with English collectors generally; a response reflecting the perceived higher quality of their work.⁷⁷

Art treatises published in the second half of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth informed English patrons new to collecting on all matters concerning art. William Salmon’s *Polygraphis*, first published in 1672 with another seven editions to follow, included a chapter headed *of the disposing of pictures and paintings*. This offered guidance on protocol relating to the hanging of works of art. He suggests the porch for hanging “*Rustick* figures and thing[s] rural”; the Great Chamber for *Landskips*, Hunting and Histories, while “on *Chimney-pieces*, put only landskips, for they chiefly adorn”.⁷⁸ This treatise increased an already established taste for landscape art.⁷⁹

IV

Gainsborough spent his formative years sketching his native countryside around Sudbury, a town on the River Stour in Suffolk. His work displays a combination of these acquired skills together with the formal and expressive qualities gained by adapting conventions drawn from Dutch landscape paintings. Of the qualities shared by Dutch and Gainsborough’s landscapes one of the most notable, if easily ignored, is that of technique. In both cases, the highly convincing and animated quality with which the brush has been used to describe the texture and direction of roads helps determine our understanding of the intention of the artists. Technique communicates something other than the road’s more basic structural and recessional role. Interestingly, Ruisdael’s intention in this regard differed in line with the overall composition and character of individual paintings. In *Landscape with Wheatfield* c1660 (Fig.14) for example, the plastic quality of the clay-like texture of the road has an elastic quality mindful of the

flat and expansive landscape traversed. In *Landscape with Footbridge*, 1652 (Fig.10), meanwhile, a more fragmented surface pattern is applied to the foreground section of road, slowing down a sense of forward momentum that might otherwise have disrupted the happy coincidence existing between the road and the main group of figures. He alters the mood once again in *Storm on the Dunes* n.d. (Fig.15) where thickly applied yellow pigment appears to have been dragged through a storm-riven landscape making one feel that passage would ask the same stoic qualities of the traveller. It is interesting how Ruisdael's technique adapts to suit the various qualities or values that may be needed to uphold and direct his imagery of the road and of narratives of passage.

Gainsborough shows a similar level of sensitivity in *River Landscape with a Horse Drinking and Rustic Lovers* (Fig.16) where, within the chaos of rutted track, eroded banks, loose boulders, felled trees, people and livestock we can see how technique contributes to form and movement. This particular terrain describes landforms that have evolved and eroded over a period of time. An area almost devoid of colour contrast relies in part on the manner and direction of brush-strokes to separate motifs that may otherwise remain indistinct. This helps resolve an otherwise seamless transition in colour between the track and surrounding terrain and helps describe the depth to which this track has sunk over time.

In trying to establish the extent to which Gainsborough emulated Dutch landscapes and Ruisdael in particular, it may be helpful to take into account the actual condition of roads in England in about the middle of the eighteenth century. In *River Landscape*, we can see how deep ruts inscribe the edges of the road, cutting the line of the gutter. They describe a track barely wide enough for a wagon and certainly no wider than it needs to be. Perhaps we should also note their resemblance to the type of rut-marks produced before the advent of the broad-wheeled waggon and thus their gesture to the difficulties yet to be overcome in Suffolk and country-wide regarding the poor conditions the roads.⁸⁰ We may also notice how erosion has reshaped the bank to accommodate a widening of the river at this point; a local irregularity marking the point of a ford or ferry crossing perhaps.⁸¹

In the examples of Ruisdael's and Gainsborough's paintings studied here, the road is a recessional device describing a route through the landscape. But if one also asks how

such roads work to inform us about passage, we need to consider the part that colour and tone play in emphasising particular moments and movements. In Ruisdael's *Landscape with Footbridge* (Fig.10) for example, bright sunlight on the section of road occupied by the main figure group signals the dramatic encounter taking place. In *River Landscape* (Fig.16), meanwhile, Gainsborough focuses the sun on the river bank leaving the road in complete shade along its length. This has the effect of encouraging the viewer to look beyond the foreground stretch of road and view the distant countryside at closer quarters; which, despite being indistinct, remains accessible. This is more suggestive of the kind of narrative that the viewer may become a part of. Gainsborough uses light and colour for pictorial effect but he tends not to compromise the underlying reality of the land through which the road travels. In this same *River Landscape*, the figures in Gainsborough's painting are clothed in natural shades of brown and grey similar to that used for the road and the banks along its edge. The girl's white bodice and bonnet however, stand out brightly against a darker, river back-drop. The silhouetted horse and rider standing in the shallow part of the river at this point may well have served as the main focal point, but the river is very still, and otherwise devoid of activity or any suggestion of movement. Gainsborough achieves pictorial harmony while ensuring the road's status as forum for passage. Rustic lovers sit beside the road in the foreground. Ahead of them a solitary herdsman labours uphill and two distant figures face one another astride the road at the crown of the hill. The seated pose of the couple draws attention to the foreground section of road and tempts the eye to dwell within this space for a while. The felled tree just beyond them visually blocks the next section of track, thus separating the decorative rococo fantasy of rustic lovers from the hardier rustic reality of the herdsman. This introduces a physical barrier between figure types, their life-styles and activities without interrupting the steady forward momentum of the herdsman, whose white cow stands sniffing the air ahead of him over the brow of the hill.⁸²

V

Equally important as a carrier of meaning in Ruisdael's and Gainsborough's landscapes is view-point. How this is manipulated encourages a different kind of looking. A high view-point renders the road inaccessible but allows more to be seen, whereas a low

view-point allows easy entrance but reduces visibility. Each influences the expression of passage in different ways. In Ruisdael's panoramic landscape, *View of Haarlem from the Dunes* (Fig.17), for instance, the view-point has been raised so one looks simultaneously down and over the landscape; this is a view-point offering a wider expanse of land and expressing a good degree of visual accessibility. Attention is drawn to the prominence of St. Bavo's Cathedral dominating the city of Haarlem. The city, on which the United Provinces had come to depend, is often represented as a landmark.⁸³ It could also be said that as an administrative and commercial centre, its inclusion signifies the broadest possible form of country-wide passage and networking. The road is the most prominent foreground feature; despite occupying no more than one-sixth of the total height of the canvas. A little way in, the road turns at right-angles to left and right between the foreground and mid-distant planes. Each fork makes straight for the side of the canvas, terminating abruptly with no visible extension in any direction. Figures are positioned strategically along and to one side of the road. One on horseback turns left off the main track toward the village thus drawing attention to a number of lesser tracks. A couple rest in a shaded niche at the base of a dune. A solitary male figure walking toward the viewer is unperturbed by the section of water he is about to wade through. Two other male figures walk in the opposite direction. They provide a main focus but the vertical accent they introduce is overwhelmed by the powerful horizontality provided by the darkly-shaded, dune ridge (Fig.18). While forward movement is understood to be what will happen next, it has been temporarily suspended. These silhouetted figures are momentarily held, thus delaying the momentum of passage.

Compare this with the road and with the view-point found in Gainsborough's *Extensive Landscape with chalky banks, Winding Track, Figures and Animals* (Fig.19) which, although not a panoramic landscape, is slightly larger in size than *View of Haarlem* (Fig.17). A single rutted road enters the foreground plane just to the right of centre between high chalky banks, then moves up a slight gradient until submerged by a substantial brook. On re-emerging, it snakes toward the horizon before tipping over the edge of an incline. A distant church steeple indicates a likely local destination, while the tiny strand of road winding toward the horizon maintains the notion of continuing passage. No figure moves along this road but an individual and his dog stand to the left in the middle distance while a seated figure on the opposite bank faces the road. A

white pony on top of the cliff scrutinises the road below. The road commands immediate attention, becoming a central compositional focus. Quarried banks seem to shrink back while stunted trees lean reverentially forward. This, together with the tiny, still figures, brings an air of expectancy to this image. A less obvious but equally deliberate lateral curve in line with these distant figures could be compared to the dark lateral curving line punctuated by the two figures in *View of Haarlem* (Fig.18); both of which encourage the eye to pause and then move in a more lateral direction perhaps offering an alternative point of view. Ruisdael's alternating bands of light and shade separating horizontal sections is replaced by Gainsborough's quieter colour and tonality. The way light unifies figures and landscape may be due to Gainsborough's "intimate understanding of the Suffolk landscape".⁸⁴ The scene is imbued with a sense of weight and humidity; there is no sense of imminent disturbance. Here, a lower view-point enables the viewer to enter and explore the road, to stop and imagine what is around the next corner. Gainsborough's main concern is centred on the reality of passage *through* the landscape while Ruisdael's interest is to present a more all-encompassing view *over* it.

Ruisdael's road is probably typical of the kind whose form was dictated by the underlying movement of this shifting terrain. Dunes were "insubstantial, fluid yet strong".⁸⁵ Vehicles and travellers navigated passage to best advantage at a particular time; the road or track's previous course no longer matters and is not known. Sand shifts over time, and at some point in the future people will need to tread new and easier paths; the road will be re-shaped in response to people's preferences. No doubt a route has existed in this vicinity for hundreds if not thousands of years, but despite having a settled appearance Ruisdael's track is neither ancient nor new. Significantly, Ruisdael's landscapes are contemporary with the period during which the Netherlands "undertook the most extensive land reclamation project ever attempted in the history of the world". Between 1590 and 1664 more than 425 square miles of land were reclaimed from the sea.⁸⁶ Areas on the landward side of embanked dune barriers were crossed by new canals and accompanying pumps.⁸⁷ Estuaries were canalised and drained.⁸⁸ One project alone was powered by forty-three windmills.⁸⁹ The time when the political identity of the United Provinces was becoming established coincides with dramatic alteration to the landscape.⁹⁰ And yet Ruisdael leaves out contemporary detail in favour of a solitary if highly picturesque windmill. Mills positioned along city walls or those

used for sawing, weaving, and draining were rarely depicted.⁹¹ In 1641 John Evelyn visited Haarlem and found the river “ten miles in length, straight as a line and of competent breadth for ships to sail by one another” and in c.1656 a new waterway or *Treckvaarten* connecting Haarlem and Leiden opened.⁹² We can well imagine these new canal networks accompanied by equally straight roads and tow-paths forging a remarkably straight course across miles of flat land much as they do today. However, we rarely see this type of landscape in Dutch naturalistic landscape paintings. The point has been made that the “highly developed Dutch countryside” is more likely to emerge as border illustrations on contemporary maps.⁹³ Maps resonated with the commercial success so recently achieved.⁹⁴

Land reclamation transformed the economy of North Holland for the better. Increasing acreages meant more food, which in turn supplied a growing population.⁹⁵ The coincidence in time between the production of naturalistic landscape paintings and intensive land reclamation has been remarked upon, leading us to consider how this may have shaped the representation of passage in Dutch landscapes.⁹⁶ To landscape painters these changes represented a visual alteration to a familiar terrain. However helpful to the economy, this must have undermined the confidence of artists whose visual perceptions of the countryside, were being transformed into something entirely different; marking a visual loss; artists compensated for such loss, in part, by continuing to reproduce scenes remembered, or those unaffected by change.

Acts of enclosure brought with them a similar programme of landscape change in England. Enclosure in the south and east of England was largely completed before 1700.⁹⁷ But one did not need to be directly affected in order to experience the impact. The shape of the countryside changed and so did the roads crossing it. Roads previously “unfenced and unfixed”, simply “rites of passage” often bending to left and right or skirting around obstacles were often altered beyond recognition - new roads needed to fit the new field pattern.⁹⁸ They were drawn across old furlongs; cutting a straight line across the country between one village and another.⁹⁹ Rural dwellers who relied on the commons for vital resources became the main casualties. Commoners, who had previously enjoyed access to land, by tradition, if not by law, were now denied access and therefore also denied fuel, food and other essential materials.¹⁰⁰ This coincidence of events in rural Holland and England, both designed to resolve economic

problems were revolutionary in scale. In both places the creation of new, straight roads either replaced, or made redundant older systems, previously the sole means of movement, communication and trade and access.

Gainsborough and Ruisdael must both have been aware of the altered landscape although Gainsborough, while in Suffolk, was not so directly exposed to the changes as Ruisdael. Ann Bermingham seeks to address how Gainsborough's early landscapes may embody a reaction to enclosure. Bermingham refers to examples such as *Cornard Wood* (Fig.44) and *Rest on the Way* (Fig.9) where either a screen, or other compositional motifs "supply a consistent organizing principle in early landscapes". Rather than direct the eye through the landscapes they contain it, delaying or actually frustrating its journey to the horizon.¹⁰¹ Bermingham observes that Gainsborough finds a way to contain the eye in the foreground, to make "intimate landscapes in which everything is, so to speak, kept within arm's reach". Incidental boundaries and broken spaces "relocate the phenomenon of enclosure in the viewer's visual perception itself".¹⁰² We have seen how Ruisdael's earlier naturalistic landscapes deny the radical changes taking place on the land, but we are made aware, through his later panoramas, growing acceptance or recognition of a wider view of an extensive landscape. Perhaps we see an equivalent development in Gainsborough's later landscapes, encompassing a more general, wider and expressive view of the landscape, in a way that he was not able to do earlier.

Ruisdael's panoramic landscape combines a local, physically accessible foreground with a more expansive but less intimate, distant world vision. Philips Koninck (1619-1688) celebrated for his panoramic landscapes (Fig.20) aimed to describe Holland as part of the larger world, to the extent that he introduced a "gentle curve" along the horizon bringing a "world view" to an area of Holland.¹⁰³ Dutch society accepted the combined purposes of art and cartography. An "impulse to record" the land pictorially was understood not only by artists and printers but by the general public.¹⁰⁴ Mapmaking was considered a form of decorative art during the "informed pre-scientific phase of cartography".¹⁰⁵ Books, prints and maps represented on the contents page of Visscher's *Pleasant Places* confirm an interest in "descriptive geography" to "instruct and involve the beholder".¹⁰⁶ In *The Art of Describing* Alpers recognises the "coincidence" between maps and paintings, seeking to lessen the distinction between

the two by investigating the “nature of overlap” between both disciplines; she considers both as offering a descriptive mode of representation.¹⁰⁷ She bases her argument on the progression over time of an altered view-point; one moving from directly overhead, gradually pulling back to include a high, then gradually lowering horizon line; interestingly, one that does not “locate” the viewer.¹⁰⁸ If this is the case, then Ruisdael and other subscribers to the panoramic scheme become participants in this process.

The Dutch were *the* cartographers of the seventeenth century. Maps, paintings and prints belong to the “characteristic manifestation of seventeenth-century Dutch culture”. Maps of the “frontier” regions and the reclaimed interior were in demand and Dutch map-makers became world leaders.¹⁰⁹ They were also considered luxury items; atlases were often printed on parchment and bound with Moroccan leather. Maps engraved with coats of arms and Baroque cartouches were suitable for wealthy merchants who displayed them in their mansions.¹¹⁰ They were “lavishly colored” and “crowded with details”.¹¹¹ In her discussion about the map in Vermeer’s *The Art of Painting*, Alpers comments on the “ship filled sea” and other marks of authority.¹¹² English collectors shared this preoccupation; they too hung maps and landscape paintings side by side.¹¹³ Between the years 1625-1675 Dutch culture “was at a more developed stage than its counterpart in England”, but the decline in The Netherlands, coincided with a cultural revival in England.¹¹⁴ Although appearing to express similar pictorial ideals, Dutch maps were never about individual land ownership as was sometimes the case in England. Because very little land was in private ownership in Holland, painters and cartographers enjoyed greater freedom of movement to map or to paint the land.¹¹⁵

The proximity of England to The Netherlands is significant and to the counties of East Anglia, only a short distance from the shores of Holland, even more so; they had close ties. A commentator observed “Holland being so near us, the trade between us is like our home trade from one town to another;” the Netherlands became an extension of the home market.¹¹⁶ During the seventeenth century livestock were imported from North Holland to Eastern England, eventually resulting in superior quality cattle in this region.¹¹⁷ Trading between the Netherlands and England was prolific, goods ranged from food-stuffs such as dairy produce, to dye-stuffs, peat and clay.¹¹⁸ The trade was two-way, in the early eighteenth century some of England’s grain surplus went to the Netherlands. We must add to this that the countryside of Suffolk bore a strong

resemblance to that of Holland. The rural nature of the terrain, watery, sandy, clayey soils with dunes and rutted tracks could be counted as distinguishing characteristics of both places. In view of this, Gainsborough's paintings are thought to combine the features of the Suffolk countryside with those represented in Dutch landscape painting.¹¹⁹ His early landscapes will to an extent, emulate similar prevailing geographical and social circumstances of seventeenth-century Holland.

In a painted landscape the road draws together and connects all other motifs. Dutch painters responded to the changes taking place in the Dutch landscape in the mid-seventeenth century by continuing to paint the images of an older, quieter landscape in which the road remains an organic part of the rural environment. In reworking these pictorial types, Gainsborough demonstrates an affinity with this kind of vision, and responds to a set of circumstances affecting eighteenth-century England that were not so unlike those taking place in seventeenth-century Holland. There seems to have emerged a common purpose bridging time and place. Taking ownership of this vital component of the road, Gainsborough then reworks motifs so that they represent and express roadways that traverse rural, eighteenth-century Suffolk

However, Gainsborough's experience and exploration of Suffolk's landscape was by no means solitary but shared by friends and associates with similar preoccupations. Mutual interests led to personal and intellectual exchanges that served to enlarge the contemporary understanding of landscape representation. In the next chapter, we will consider Gainsborough's paintings as being one of a number of contemporary initiatives occurring in, and exclusively concerned with, Suffolk at about this time. They include tour publications and cartographic initiatives of which Gainsborough was fully aware, even if not directly involved.

CHAPTER TWO

AN EXPLORATION OF SPACE: GAINSBOROUGH AND THE KIRBYS

So far we have looked at roads, passage and movement through a largely Dutch lens. Although necessary to begin in this way, we now need to return to Suffolk where, at mid-century, a variety of projects were underway that were concerned with devising methods to describe human and visual passage through real and fictional space. These projects were completed in Suffolk between c1730 and c1760. During the middle part of this period Gainsborough painted his early Suffolk landscapes. This chapter will focus on these different initiatives, and how they interact to demonstrate a close, shared interest in the penetration of space in the Suffolk landscape. This is a new approach that may serve to broaden our understanding of the visualisation of passage in Gainsborough's early works. The individuals concerned here are John Kirby (1690-1753) who published *The Suffolk Traveller: or, A Journey through Suffolk* in 1735. This was followed in 1736 by his publication of a one-inch scale road-map of Suffolk, engraved in four quarter-sections (Figs.21-24). One year later, in 1737, Kirby published a smaller, single-sheet ½" scale map of the county (Fig.25).¹²⁰ John Kirby's son, Joshua Kirby (1716-1774) published the first edition of his treatise, *Dr. Brook Taylor's method of Perspective made Easy* in 1754, which, as we shall see, included a print after a landscape design by Gainsborough himself.¹²¹

Gainsborough's enduring friendship with Joshua Kirby is well known and equally well documented.¹²² His association with the wider Kirby family however, is less well known. The friendship between Gainsborough and the Kirby family began during the 1740s and ended only with Joshua Kirby's death in 1774. During this period Gainsborough painted portraits of several Kirby family members. These began with a portrait of John Kirby in 1748, followed soon afterwards by a double portrait of Joshua and Sarah Kirby. Somewhat later, between about 1752 and 1759, Gainsborough completed a portrait of Alice, John Kirby's wife. Then in the early 1760s he painted

Joshua Kirby again.¹²³ That the production of these portraits spanned a number of years suggests a close and enduring friendship with the family as a whole. Joshua Kirby was eleven years older than Gainsborough, and it would seem that their friendship was enriched by Joshua's benevolent spirit. Like Gainsborough, he possessed an "infectious enthusiasm" for nature, which must have strengthened the bond between them.¹²⁴ During the 1750s Gainsborough encouraged Joshua to take up landscape painting, albeit with little success, at about the same time he was asked to teach Joshua's son William. Although neither venture proved wholly successful, they serve to demonstrate the kind of exchanges that took place between the two friends.¹²⁵ In recognition of their close friendship, Joshua Kirby collected a number of Gainsborough's early landscape paintings and over one hundred drawings.¹²⁶ Joshua looked for opportunities to advance Gainsborough's artistic career by introducing him to Suffolk landowners and clerics who commissioned portraits and acted as agent for a pair of chimney pieces for the Duke of Bedford in 1755.¹²⁷

This chapter will explore how the projects undertaken by John and Joshua Kirby find a direct correlation with Gainsborough's early landscape paintings and with their imagery of the road and of passage. Travel-texts, maps, geometry and paintings are all concerned with gaining entry to, or walking through, a real or illusionistic space. The realisation of pictorial perspective or the exploration of real space through the countryside is what these individual efforts were about. While Joshua does not make Suffolk either the subject or object of his treatise, a declared interest in measurement and space demonstrates an insight into calculated spatial values echoing those of his father and of his artistic friend, even though its application is directed at artists and concerns the act of painting. Gainsborough and Joshua Kirby invite us to embark upon a visual journey through a fictional space. John Kirby invites one to navigate real space along actual roads and then represents them pictorially on a map. John Kirby's abbreviated terminology, using 'A' to 'B' type instruction, translates in Joshua's treatise to any number of diagrams limiting language to symbols such as a, b, c, d, in an attempt to instruct of how to penetrate fictional space. These also equate to John Kirby's map, in which numbers representing mileages and linear roads representing distance have a similar objective. Joshua's numbering and linear diagrams resemble his father's mapping convention. They also instruct on perspective. These same elements of

measurement then translate to land-forms and motifs in Gainsborough's landscape paintings.

Although we have selected Joshua Kirby's treatise on perspective for this investigation, it is important to note that he was also involved in other enterprises, equally closely related to artistic production. In 1746 Joshua was introduced by his father to Sir Joseph Ayloffé, a gentleman solicitor who commissioned drawings from Joshua of Suffolk's "outstanding buildings and monuments". Although the book did not materialise, Kirby's drawings of Suffolk castles and abbeys were sold to subscribers as engravings on half sheets.¹²⁸ In 1748 Joshua Kirby published his own historic account of these buildings, illustrated with a selection of his own drawings in perspective.¹²⁹ He reveals his main inducement was to "insert some small sketches of whatever is most remarkable in the buildings"; confessing to having copied "almost verbatim from others" information about the ancient monuments described.¹³⁰ Clearly, he found the act of drawing more attractive than researching famous histories and who better as a source of reference than his father, who had researched this information for *The Traveller* fifteen years earlier and was probably only too pleased to offer familial support.¹³¹ Although rather tentative, we can already feel a close interlacing of interests. Joshua's engagement with his father's prior knowledge about historic buildings, and his own preference for draughtsmanship, offer further evidence of his interest in art and suggest an even closer intellectual alliance between Gainsborough and the Kirbys than we might otherwise have supposed.

I

John Kirby's *The Suffolk Traveller* was the first single county road-book.¹³² The inclusion on the title page of the words 'traveller', 'journey' and 'Suffolk', leave the reader in no doubt as to the purpose of the book. A short abstract stresses that both the text and the map will offer subscribers "the true Distance in the Roads, from Ipswich to every Market Town in Suffolk" with "notes of Direction for Travellers". Kirby addresses a letter of introduction to "The Right Honourable the Nobility, The Worshipful Gentry, and the Reverend Clergy of the County of Suffolk".¹³³ Defending in anticipation any criticism there may be about his accuracy in these matters; readers

are assured that “I know of no Mistakes, in either the Horizontal or Travelling Distances”.¹³⁴

Kirby describes Suffolk as a maritime country, naming the rivers and sea forming its boundaries. He then describes the three main sub-soil types, “Sandlands, Woodland and Fieldings”, informing readers of the type of agriculture or livestock they best support. The judicial system is outlined and the point made, that the “Militia is under the Command of the Lord Lieutenant of the County, the Most Noble Charles Duke of Grafton.” A brief description of his survey method states he will take “the true Horizontal Distances of the Parish Churches, and other remarkable Places, at 250 Stations, from the tops of Steeples”. Only on completion of this task will Kirby undertake the “Actual Survey of the Roads”.¹³⁵ The main body of the work is followed by a brief account of the Suffolk Hundreds; an index of main roads, a table of Parishes and church dedications.¹³⁶

Throughout the surveying period Kirby advertised his project in local newspapers. The first newspaper advertisement, dated 13th November 1731, outlined his plan to describe all Suffolk’s rivers, brooks, bridges and roads, the county’s important market towns, churches and castles.¹³⁷ At the point of publication, in August 1735, Kirby announced “The Books will be delivered to such Gentlemen as have already subscribed to the Map with all speed”, adding “such other Gentlemen as please to become Subscribers may have these Books sending their names and subscription money...”.¹³⁸ We are left in no doubt that Kirby’s project was aimed at Suffolk’s aristocracy. A subscription of five-shillings with a further five-shillings on completion was requested for the 1736, 1” scale map; the book was offered free to those who subscribed to the map.

In the main body of the work, descriptions of towns dovetail with sections of the journey through Suffolk. A structure emerges, built upon the alternating details of a journey and an arrival; forward movement dovetails with the description of a particular place, rural passage with urban destination. See for example, the section describing a return walk from Yarmouth, giving a summary of mileages, and an introduction to three shorter walks from Melton Village near Woodbridge and Ipswich, to “Baudsey, Orford, Aldeburgh” (Fig.26).¹³⁹ Vocabulary is limited to a selection of terms and phrases; “the right goes to”, “passing over a Brook”, or “avoiding divers turnings to the right and left”

are repeated throughout. This is an important element of his style over which he keeps tight control. Had Kirby expanded his vocabulary and embellished his account, his readers may have been distracted from his aim to deliver clear, basic, and accurate instruction of systematic passage through Suffolk. His use of a perambulator discourages any temptation to deviate from the planned route. Although Kirby's interest resides within the Suffolk boundaries, if the most obvious route suggests a temporary crossing into an adjoining county, he is happy to digress.¹⁴⁰ During the walk from Sudbury to Haverhill for instance, he merely turns "left over the Stour; enter Essex", then later, "at 16m 3 3-4 f. re-enter Suffolk at Haverhill Bounds".¹⁴¹ For Kirby, spatial orientation and passage are about getting from A to B; from somewhere close at hand, to somewhere at a distance. The journey he takes becomes a by-product of walking and describing clearly defined passage, along equally clearly defined roads.

To complete this survey of Kirby's book, we will look more closely at the way he structures his walks. This has an important bearing on his awareness of the different types of passage made available by the roads that criss-crossed his native county. *The Traveller* begins with a linear walk from the "Market Cross in Ipswich to Yarmouth Bridge".¹⁴² This uses a simple, there and back structure, in which both directions are narrated. But from this point on, he structures his walks differently. On completing a walk from Sudbury to Haverhill, for instance, he simply says "Return we now to Sudbury to Survey the road leading from thence through Boxford to Hadleigh"; (the "Return" walk is not described).¹⁴³ If one was to draw this on a map, it would reveal that a repeated, spidery pattern emerges in which tendrils filter along roads outwards from a main town. The tendril representing the last walk of a sequence however, continues on to a new market town, from which Kirby will begin a new set of walks (Fig.27). This delicately joined-up crane-fly-like pattern is repeated a number of times; every group of walks can be seen as a separate entity, focusing on the forms of passage that radiate out from a particular town. Eventually however, one set becomes attached to the next, thereby enabling a wider network of travel. Kirby repeatedly introduces the next section using phrases such as, "Having finished the Survey of the Roads issuing from Bury St. Edmunds we will now make Sudbury the next Centre".¹⁴⁴

We may better understand the significance of this, if we compare Kirby's structure with how Daniel Defoe structured his walks in *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great*

Britain, published more than nine years earlier.¹⁴⁵ Defoe introduces his reader at the outset to his choice of “the title of circuits”.¹⁴⁶ He describes a circular diversion from Ipswich, through Sudbury, Bury St. Edmunds and Stow-Market as “a turn into the Country to Hadley, principally to satisfy my curiosity” (Fig.28).¹⁴⁷ To this point, the reader has been guided forward on a linear, northward journey through England. Therefore, this sudden and unexpected announcement is quite disconcerting. It destabilises the tour’s underlying structure. This comparison helps illustrate how road-centred the *Traveller* is. Kirby offers an entirely different experience to Defoe; one in which clarity and order lead the reader forward steadily and systematically on both a local, and more expansive systems of networking.

Before turning to John Kirby’s map, it will be of interest to compare points raised above, and how they can be seen to correspond to related qualities expressed by Gainsborough. Wherever Gainsborough’s viewer stands in relation to the painting, he will see only one, unchanging representation of the landscape, in which areas that are obscured from view will remain so. He gets around this by ensuring the route taken by the road remains intact and visible. But, like Kirby, Gainsborough presumes and expects his viewer to be equally receptive to the idea of moving through, or penetrating the area described. The care and level of detail given to the road by Gainsborough, combined with a view-point just high enough to ensure the viewer does not lose sight of the lay of the land, but low enough to enable the viewer to enter visually therein, offers a means of carrying out this form of imagined passage.

In *Extensive Landscape with Chalky Banks* (Fig.19) the distant view is articulated throughout by the road leading the eye directly to the horizon. But if we consider this road as being representative of a local road in the Sudbury area, even without the inclusion of the river Stour to mark out a county boundary, we are encouraged to consider that Essex may have a share in the distant view. Gainsborough’s Suffolk landscapes frequently leave the viewer with a suggestion of onward, cross-county passage. We sense a shared endeavour on both John Kirby and Gainsborough’s parts to embrace the value of travel in a broader sense. Ironically, in *The Traveller*, we have a reading encounter combined with a physical and visual experience of passage whereas in the painted landscape we have a visual encounter that will never in reality become a physical experience. These conflicting and interlacing qualities may be unintended, but

they suggest a correspondence of concerns between writer and painter, both of which involve and invoke a notion of movement and travel along Suffolk roads at mid-century.

II

The Traveller makes constant reference to aristocratic patronage. On the map produced by Kirby to supplement his text, an impressive array of coats of arms is emblazoned across the entire top section, declaring an immediate, hierarchical, aristocratic presence see (Fig.21). Kirby dedicated the 1736 map to “the most Noble Prince Charles Duke of Grafton” whose coat of arms has prime position (Fig.29). Kirby’s advertisement stated that “they who have their Arms” will have to pay “half a Guinea more towards the Engraving”.¹⁴⁸ To the right of the Duke of Grafton’s arms, and at about half the size, the arms of Earls, Viscounts, Lords, one Bishop and a Baron are displayed. Beneath this, and again reduced in scale but greater in number, gentlemen and esquires are lined up alphabetically. Coats of arms correspond to places of residence that are traceable on the map.

When all four quarters of the 1736 map are laid out as one, they offer open access to roads crossing the county at a single glance (Fig.30). The crane-fly like structure characteristic of the text is lost in translation. Buildings such as churches and mansions are drawn in elevation; market-towns in plan. An even distribution of these tiny symbols across the map’s surface is visually pleasing, while the overall linear pattern of roads and rivers unite them. A pattern of broken lines mark out the Suffolk Hundreds; their names are written in large, upper-case lettering within their allotted space. Small italic script gives the position of towns; larger italic script is used for subscribers’ names.

Kirby uses the strip of “The German Ocean” (North Sea) lying off the east coast for a pictorial image of shipping (Fig.31). Warships depicted include a “three-decker”, mounted with 80 guns, bearing a vice-admiral’s flag, with a number of naval and merchant vessels, some of them ocean-going.¹⁴⁹ The main group of vessels are in line with the Orwell estuary; the closest and largest seems to be disembarking crew

members to smaller boats. The alignment of shipping with Suffolk's estuaries speaks of the importance of the county's role in importing and exporting goods to foreign markets, pointing to an alternative form of passage taking place in the waters adjacent to Suffolk. One is also reminded of the Dutch trade wars, still fresh in the minds of most. For example, the incident occurring in 1667 in which the Dutch surprised the English at Upnor Castle on the River Medway in Kent, setting ships ablaze and seizing the English Admiral's ship *The Royal Charles*.¹⁵⁰ In Kirby's map this gradually narrowing strip of sea, complete with shipping, presents the viewer with a convincing, pictorial representation of an image in perspective. Light falls consistently from the left leaving a cast shadow on the surface of the sea. It has been said that a map combined with an image in perspective, animates appearance.¹⁵¹ This highly pictorial vision is only held in check by the proximity of the predominant flatness of the map itself. Kirby's apparent knowledge of historic events and commercial trading no doubt secured the respect of his patrons, but we can also recognise an interlacing of his interests as a surveyor with those of a graphic artist concerned with the representation of objects in a fictional depth of field.

Looking at the work of an earlier cartographer alongside Kirby's map of Suffolk is revealing in a number of ways. From about 1669, John Ogilby (1600-1676), was employed by King Charles II as "His Majesty's Cosmographer and Geographic Printer". At "the express command of King Charles II", he published an atlas of road maps of England and Wales.¹⁵² This was possibly the most important British cartographical achievement of the seventeenth century; one in which he can claim to have established the 'Statute Mile' of 1,760 yards as a national unit of measurement.¹⁵³ Ogilby was quick to recognise "the Bulk of it rendered it unfit for the use it seems to have been purposely Compiled, I mean the Direction or Travellers" and proceeded to publish an abridged pocket-volume, more popular and affordable.¹⁵⁴ The contents of each page are enclosed within a "Role, Fillet, or Scroll, making several bendings backwards and forwards" (Fig.32).¹⁵⁵

Ogilby leads the traveller systematically through England and Wales by road. Features are "described by the common Characters used for them in Maps".¹⁵⁶ Each county name is written in italic capitals along each strip. Orientation is provided by the four points of the compass, which also feature on every strip.¹⁵⁷ The atlas is very road-

centred; road is the subject and is central to every strip; “little openings on either hand the Road, shew the *going out* of other Roads”. The accompanying text tells you “to what Place it goes” but, due to format, we cannot see the place referred to.¹⁵⁸

Due to the nature of the commission Ogilby’s strips impose no hierarchy with regard to county or location. One cannot see any particular area of the country as a whole; therefore the strips lack context. The single compass orientation given by John Kirby, leaves the viewer in no doubt that Suffolk is the subject and informed travel along its roads are the means by which you negotiate the physical terrain. The confined space occupied by Ogilby’s roads give a more blinkered vision of the landscape, in which lateral exploration is discouraged. Kirby’s map is bounded by a hard line, marking out the circumference of Suffolk. The county boundary demarcates territory and qualifies the map’s contents, thus enabling topographical visualisation of a seamless and navigable passage through Suffolk. Openings to side roads can be traced to a corresponding road-entry, thus expanding the viewers’ understanding of the county, allowing them to plot an alternative course through Suffolk with moderate accuracy and relative ease.

And yet we see a coincidence between John Kirby’s *The Traveller* and Ogilby’s atlas. Both work on the principle of division; each walk has a beginning and an end, a starting point and a destination. Landscape painting and cartography are both concerned with the representation of objects in a physical setting.¹⁵⁹ Drawn upon a flat surface, a map shows little concern for three-dimensional space. Ogilby’s pages follow the same principle, each journey is defined at the top of the page as being from and to a particular town; they should be considered as separate entities. Ogilby’s atlas is pictorially pleasing but the prescribed left-to-right reading produces a kind of hybrid; not quite map, not quite book; cartography combined with book-reading. Movement and passage may also embody more abstract values. As noted, Ogilby’s roads are confined within a scrolled strip. Likewise, roads in painted landscapes exist within the confines of a frame. The viewer focuses on a defined section of the countryside; that is all we have. The frame however, seems not to have the same restrictive quality as the scroll because the eye is taken on an illusionistic journey *inwards*; from front to back, before being guided *onward*, beyond the confines of the frame. In this way, the quality that resides in the fictional illusion of depth in a painting helps liberate and gives volume; the road

plays a key part in this. The same quality is absent from the flat plane on which the map is drawn. A map does not allow penetration *into* depth, but reaches a given destination by means of forward momentum at *surface* level, from above. This does not disrupt movement however; because roads in whatever form, always give scope for movement and passage.

III

The roads in Gainsborough's landscapes reflect John Kirby's interest in understanding the landscape from the perspective of the road. A map is informative and decorative with no visual obstruction, but does not prescribe point of entry or order of reading. *The Traveller*, on the other hand, directs the reader from ground level in a particular direction. To calculate differences between walked and as-the-crow-flies mileages in the book, we must take our own church-tower to church-tower measurement from the 1" scale map. The walk from Sudbury to Stratford Swan Inn measures a little over sixteen miles. A church-tower to church-tower measurement taken from the map however, using these same towns, is eleven and a half miles.¹⁶⁰ The difference of about five miles represents bends, elevations and descents or other irregularities in the landscape encountered as the walk navigates its course through the real landscape. On the map, undulation between one church-tower and the next signifies volume on the ground; however, due to the overhead view-point, this remains an inaccessible, abstract spatial value. The ground level position in the *Traveller* however, compensates for this. The experience of actually walking along these roads enables a gradual unravelling of this abstract space, resulting in a three-dimensional experience.

Although Gainsborough's landscapes resemble rural Suffolk, they may not bear witness to a particular place. We can verify this by referring to the diary of Francois de la Rochefoucauld, who in 1784, at the express invitation of Arthur Young, undertook a five-day journey around Suffolk. Rochefoucauld and those accompanying him were described as "Indefatigable sightseers" of the "useful in preference to the picturesque".¹⁶¹ In the vicinity of Sudbury Rochefoucauld observes that "hills and vales offer agreeable prospects". On the opposite bank of the river Stour, "the road does nothing but rise and dip", at times "shaded by very tall trees". He records, on

leaving Sudbury is a “steep rise from eighty to two-hundred feet above sea-level and a similar fall to the river and rise at Nayland”.¹⁶²

Some of Gainsborough’s early paintings have been linked to actual places; church towers and villages have been speculated about and at times identified.¹⁶³ *Landscape with a View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) for instance, is said to include a section of the Stour near Sudbury with Great Cornard village and church in the distance, but this is pure conjecture and cannot be proved either way.¹⁶⁴ While living in close proximity to the Rivers Stour in Sudbury and Orwell in Ipswich however, Gainsborough captures the fundamental characteristics of the rivers Stour and Orwell which can be largely verified today. Suffolk remains equally undulating today. Open tracts of meadow lie adjacent to scrubby, common land. Livestock still cluster beneath trees in the corners of fields. Brooks still run into the Stour.

We can see how Gainsborough has manipulated a particular stretch of land if we compare an engraving of *Landguard Point and Fort* (Fig.34) with a recent photograph taken in the same area (Fig.35). *Landguard Fort*, originally commissioned by Philip Thicknesse, is an example of one of Gainsborough’s few topographical works.¹⁶⁵ The specification asked for “particulars of the Fort, the adjacent hills and distant view of Harwich, in order to form a landscape of the Yachts passing the garrison under the salute of guns”.¹⁶⁶ Gainsborough met these criteria by including landmarks listed. To achieve necessary height however, Gainsborough foreshortens the landscape, skewing the shape of the peninsula in the process.¹⁶⁷ He captures the essence of a place; a bleak foreshore with prevailing north-easterly winds, that has been shaped over time by long-shore drift. Gainsborough includes a clear stretch of road transcending a bank in the foreground, curling downwards in a rococo manner before moving purposefully toward the shore. The viewer is taken on a journey in which the road offers a means of passage with a visible beginning and end; connecting to sea-going passage beyond. The topographical nature of this work aligns it with Kirby’s walks, one of which describes this same area.

Although this work represents an actual place, we are still looking at an illusionistic penetration of a depth of field that can only be viewed from one position. But there is another way of understanding this view; one that aligns Gainsborough’s early

landscapes more closely with John Kirby's and Ogilby's road maps. Gainsborough constructed the view of *Landguard Point* from a very high and distant point; the upper slopes in Felixstowe in fact, about one mile from the fort. In doing so, the image almost doubles as a mapped area. Gainsborough has, in effect, charted a view. This brings to mind the fact that landscapes painted from a low view-point also embody the same quality at times. *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) and *Extensive Landscape with Chalky Banks* (Fig.19) are two instances in which the artist has presented the viewer with road that remains highly visible; despite being obscured at times, a low view-point still presents a readable expanse of land, a grid of roads across a flattened landscape. Gainsborough's ideas share similar qualities to Kirby's *Traveller* and to his map, while maintaining their value as painterly visualisations of the land.

IV

Joshua Kirby's treatise *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy*, was intended as a source of reference to instruct painters in skills needed to portray objects accurately within a natural but contrived depth of field. He defined perspective as "the Art of drawing upon any Surface the Representation of Objects as they appear to the Eye".¹⁶⁸ Kirby seeks to adapt and simplify Brook Taylor's treatise so that it would appeal to, and be understood by, all English painters. On the title-page he states his intention to "attempt to make the art of perspective easy and familiar"; a term repeated in the Preface, where he expresses a desire to "produce a system of Perspective upon certain simple Principles".¹⁶⁹ Three issues, originating in Brook Taylor's treatise, seem of particular interest to Kirby. These are the status of the horizon line, a re-evaluation of the view-point in relation to the horizon line, and the importance of aerial perspective. These are, of course, issues that are also important to landscape composition and painting. To demonstrate how these work, and how that can be understood as relating to Gainsborough's individual practice, we can usefully look at three engraved images included in Kirby's treatise. The fifty copperplates used to illustrate Joshua Kirby's treatise are, almost without exception, geometric diagrams in support of various theories.¹⁷⁰ In contrast, a group of three pictorial prints, including a small landscape by Gainsborough himself, stand out as a separate grouping of works.¹⁷¹ Kirby uses these figures as "Examples of Perspective" in which an attempt has been

made to “dispose each Object in such a Manner to produce agreeable Shapes, Effects Etc.” (Fig.36).¹⁷² To our eyes the first of these, a building in private parkland situated behind an imposing array of geometrical blocks, appears unusual (Fig.37). According to Kirby, we see “a variety of Figures tending to various vanishing Points in the horizontal Line, below the horizontal Line and above it”. Kirby says of this image, “the whole together, contains all the Rules and Principles of Perspective”. Brook Taylor made the point that the “Horizontal Plane” will not be confined to the horizon line. He does not differentiate between “the Plain of the Horizon, and any other Plane whatsoever”.¹⁷³ Kirby comments that “the Horizontal Line is of the same Nature with any other vanishing Lines, and differs from them only in being more useful”.¹⁷⁴

The second image is of Framlingham Castle (Fig.38). The village of Framlingham is situated in the Loes Hundred quite near Wickham Market in Suffolk, where the Kirby family lived. In the *Traveller*, John Kirby describes the castle “built, as is supposed, by some of the Kings of the East Angles”; it is a “large, beautiful, and strong Building”.¹⁷⁵ Joshua later abbreviated this account, describing it purely as “a Place of great Antiquity”. As author of the original drawing he uses the Framlingham Castle image as an example “of a Building that tends to several vanishing Points upon the horizontal Line only”. Kirby considers the vanishing point to be “the grand Principle upon which Perspective depends”. At first he acknowledges objects “which lye flat” or are parallel to the ground are likely to vanish into the horizon, with the inevitable outcome that all vanishing points will also be at the horizon.¹⁷⁶ He does concede however, that more objects are either perpendicular or parallel to the picture plane and will therefore use the horizon line as vanishing point.¹⁷⁷

Of Gainsborough’s print, which was etched by Joseph Wood, (Fig.39) Kirby remarks, it is an example “by a very great Genius in that way”.¹⁷⁸ In general, Gainsborough’s early landscapes are without significant architectural content but this example does include a selection of motifs to which Kirby’s treatise may be applied. The church in the foreground offers an opportunity to apply linear perspective to an architectural form. The landscape also comprises fairly solid shapes arranged within an essentially rural woodland setting. Fully rounded cumulous clouds rise from the horizon. The pale and delicate tonality with which Gainsborough has drawn the cloud introduces volume and demonstrates competence in modifying tone to suit the distance of the motif from the

viewer. Kirby comments on the disposal of objects into agreeable shapes and effects; we need only to look at the central section of the composition to see how Gainsborough meets these criteria. This little image includes the essential qualities we see in his early landscapes; natural undulating forms arranged to lead the eye around the landscape. But it is the centrally positioned road that controls overall reading, ensuring onward passage and demonstrating a shared concern on both Joshua Kirby and Gainsborough's part with creating a realistic illusion of depth. In these earlier landscapes, land-forms remain distinct, one from the other; they may therefore be seen as translating the "solids" in Kirby's treatise. These are not necessarily new compositional innovations on behalf of the artist. We cannot be certain Gainsborough's small drawing was produced specifically for the treatise, but its inclusion shows that Kirby and Gainsborough shared a deep interest in exploring visual passage through an illusionary depth of space, and in working out how this may best be achieved in pictorial representations of the landscape.

In *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) we can see how Gainsborough applies the rules outlined by Kirby. The ground rises naturally to the horizon, ending only a little less than half-way up the picture, enough to allow a clear reading of more distant landscape features. This slight rise in the ground's profile agrees with Joshua Kirby's theory that the line separating earth and sky will appear "raised as far above the Ground upon which the Spectator stands, as his Eye is remov'd from the same place" (Figs.40, 41 and 42).¹⁷⁹ The relationship forged between road and terrain gives that potential for vanishing points to become more complex and varied in character. The variety of shapes included, encourages the eye to travel in a particular way through the landscape. We have come to expect such features to be in the right place and pleasing to the eye, but Gainsborough demonstrates the same preoccupation as Joshua Kirby; that is, to achieve an accurate representation of objects in illusionistic space. Used strategically, these more elusive vanishing points encourage the eye to experience a more 'natural' penetration through fictional space.

V

John and Joshua Kirby and Gainsborough shared a common interest in penetrating a defined space. Yet none deny the viewer or reader the experience of continuing the

forward journey, beyond what is immediately visible. Indeed, Gainsborough goes to some lengths to ensure that passage is continually evoked for the viewer throughout his landscapes. Thus, in *Landscape with a view of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) the lateral dynamic captured by the horizontal format and shallow left to right diagonal is immediately challenged by the road's entry at an oblique angle in the left corner of the foreground plane. This first section of road draws an emphatically straight line until interrupted by livestock, which temporarily restores a lateral reading. Beyond this point the road lightens in tone, enjoying the full strength of the sun before mounting a sand-bank and dropping away out of sight. Re-emerging, it narrows and becomes more distant whilst remaining distinct. The point at which the road navigates a more distant slope is strongly lit along its top edge before descending once more, becoming obscured by distant land-forms. The course seems obvious; it is destined to pass through the village bathed in a pool of sunlight. The river bends to the right, remaining below the village. There is a happy coincidence forged by the road curling forward just above river level and the river seeming to follow the same pattern of curves but in reverse. Close scrutiny reveals that within the margin of land between the village and horizon is an unfenced continuation of the road. A chalky and rutted C-shaped section, minute in scale, affirms the presence of the road even at this distance (Fig.43). Gainsborough has taken care to ensure the course of the road remains visible. Similarly, the distant section of river, traceable to within a tiny margin of the horizon line snakes to the left of a tiny windmill, beyond which a sun-lit chalky ridge and distant church towers are visible. It is difficult to understand Gainsborough's reasoning in including such minute and troublesome detail only detectable at close quarters, when stratum of lighter and darker greens provide sufficient pictorial interest. It is little wonder that roads in these landscapes become subject in their own right. Although obscured at certain moments, Gainsborough - deploying the detailed rendering of the road characteristic of *The Suffolk Traveller* and the sophisticated exploration of perspectival space found in *Dr. Brook Taylor's method of Perspective made Easy* - deliberately ensures that the road remains accessible to the viewer and to the fictional traveller.

VI

This discussion has sought to recover the extraordinary entanglement of projects and shared preoccupations occurring in Suffolk between 1731, the date of John Kirby's first advertisement for his *Traveller* and 1754 when Joshua Kirby published the first edition of his treatise. Kirby, using tools of the surveyor's trade, calculated distances and explored Suffolk on foot. It is probable his son Joshua had his first lessons in measuring and recording during this process. Kirby's subsequent map dramatised a means of passage through Suffolk's roads. Less than ten years later, Joshua Kirby drew Suffolk's historic buildings to satisfy a growing interest in perspective. Two years afterwards, Joshua wrote and illustrated a sequel. At about the same time Gainsborough painted a succession of landscapes in Suffolk; he and Joshua Kirby exchanged ideas about painting and perspective. From this time and until about 1759, Gainsborough continued to paint in Suffolk, his ever-present roads dramatising passage just as John Kirby's had done not long before him. Joshua Kirby then published his treatise on perspective. These locally driven initiatives became in essence a collective project in which all participants were interested in the accurate organisation, positioning and description of objects in space, enabling a real or imagined visual penetration through an actual or fictional depth of field. This is not a straightforward form of collaboration, however, more a complex interlacing of the qualities, priorities, values and interests of the three individuals and practices explored in this chapter, including, most crucially for our concerns, Thomas Gainsborough himself.

CHAPTER THREE

PASSAGE AND PAUSE: THE ROLE OF THE FIGURE IN GAINSBOROUGH'S LANDSCAPES

“Roads and tracks are important in that they have allowed virtually every other feature of the landscape to develop, and have themselves developed because of these features”.¹⁸⁰ They will only develop when “sufficient people wish to travel between two points”.¹⁸¹ In other words, it is people using roads who introduce the idea of movement along them. Roads are unique in that they are a public space shared by everybody, of whatever social class. In Gainsborough’s landscapes however, where the rural countryside is the subject, distant villages, churches or cottages the only architectural detail, and rustic figures the only inhabitants, the narratives of passage and pause supported by the road are circumscribed by the relatively narrow range and small numbers of his human protagonists.¹⁸² Gainsborough’s representation of rural figures, variously positioned along or beside county roads, is of a distilled, concentrated kind, encouraging the viewer to unravel intriguing and sometimes puzzling incidents of motion, pause, watchfulness and conversation.

A painting encompassing all of these qualities is *Cornard Wood* (Fig.44) which in both subject and compositional content embodies features that we encounter elsewhere in Gainsborough’s early landscape practice. Dark pigment used on foreground sand-banks and foliage throws into focus the main section of rutted track as it emerges from a forested area behind a sand-bank and turns toward a distant village. Although obscured by the undulating lie of the land, the track remains distinct. The closest and most prominent figure is the woodman positioned in the left foreground (Fig.45). He attempts to steady a large bundle of wood with his left foot as he binds it for transportation; his dog sleeps beside him. Just opposite, a young man leans on his spade while conversing with a young woman seated nearby (Fig.46). A white, horned cow looks down from a higher level. Further back, a brown grazing cow almost goes unnoticed. An on-road traveller, a bundle over his shoulder, his dog trailing behind, has recently passed by. He labours along, knees bent with the effort. Moments before,

this traveller had himself been overtaken by the dark coated and be-hatted rider on a dappled grey who has progressed to a downhill slope just ahead. Before the horseman reaches the village he will overtake a walking couple who are still some way ahead. We are already in a position to extract incidents relating to passage and pause along and beside the pictured road. The prominence of the road and the attention to detail is clear. We have an image of rural labour, of a resting couple and of travellers on a journey. Activities not involving forward movement take place away from, but in close proximity to, the road; even the foraging livestock remain within reach, and face in that direction. Of the figures represented here, travellers, cottagers and local labourers predominate.¹⁸³ Figures and animals are depicted at a particular moment in time; the image fixes them temporally. It is for the viewer to imagine the brief encounters taking place, to anticipate future action and to develop associated drama and narrative.

The imagery of the road is itself mediated by a composition that splits the painting into two halves. The right hand deeply shaded area extends inward to a point marginally to the left of the standing donkeys. Mallards take flight above the surface of a deep pond around which spindly oaks give height. The large tree just right of centre completes this compact landscape tableau. The left half of the composition, meanwhile terminates just to the right of this same tree; it is this half in which the main action takes place. We may already sense conflict between the two halves. To the left we have light, movement, industry, conversation, passage, momentum and energy, all taking place in an enlivened present. The deep, stagnant and disused pit to the right, in contrast, is in shade; a watery monument to labours past. Before probing its penetrating depth, the mind dwells fleetingly on what may have startled the wild ducks. The mood lifts as we move across to the lighter, more active side of the picture, in which a solid and more mobile terrain invites the eye to skim the surface and to take notice of the road, the figures and the activities engaging them. This compositional contrast introduces a push-pull effect between left and right, between horizontal surface movement as opposed to depth and stillness; warmth is combined with coolness, noise juxtaposed with quietness. In one way or another, these factors affect the way the viewer is invited to consider the imagery found within what is a fictional and illusionary depth of field. The manner in which the figures are painted, whether moving or at rest, have a way of communicating what may happen next and what went before. To realise these incidents in a broader sense we will continue to look at this and other paintings alongside contemporary

poetry.¹⁸⁴ Verse animates and gives life to passage. Although none of the figures depicted by Gainsborough are known to us as individuals, contemporary verse may allow us to understand them in a richer fashion.

Gainsborough's preoccupation with the road is shared by those who inhabit his paintings. Their proximity to the road is a constant and unchanging factor. Describing figures separately, and in order of type, does not mean that their prescribed roles are unrelated to each other, or that these figures act out their daily lives in isolation from one another. Proximity to the road demonstrates a shared dependency. Despite differences in appearance and occupation we may expect to find a mutual interdependence, one that itself turns the imagery of passage and pause into a continuous pictorial narrative invoking both local and more distant places. We will begin by considering figure groups separately, commencing with an example of one figure – the woodsman - that is shown actively at work. In the majority of cases, however, off-road figures pause to rest or converse; we shall move on to consider these. Lastly, we will explore the activities of on-road figures, which in contrast to pausing figures repeatedly move along and away from the viewer.

I

The woodman in *Cornard Wood* is a figure whose activity is unmistakable. Surrounded by previously prepared logs, he works in what appears to be a depression between two banks, well below the level of the road (Fig.45).¹⁸⁵ Despite being dwarfed by his surroundings, he anchors the foreground section, which contrasts with the more fluid movement taking place on the road above. There is a feeling of purpose about him, a physical muscularity. His face is largely hidden by cast shadow from his wide-brimmed hat as he turns toward the viewer revealing an expression of resigned stoicism. There is an everydayness to his manner; he seems at ease in his surroundings. In many respects his garments are of the type worn by woodmen in the early part of the eighteenth century. His felt hat, long-sleeved white linen shirt, leather waistcoat and woollen breeches are those worn by other woodcutters in England in the first half of the century (Fig.47).¹⁸⁶ The bold, coarse brush-stroke used to depict the woodman's dress is in accord with the rough textures of his garments. The stiff folds and ragged edges of

his ochre waistcoat equate to the tough nature of his task. An exposed lower leg and over-large hands are painted in the same way; strong tonal contrasts draw attention to these features.

Although the woodman is not represented in a way that contributes directly to *Cornard Wood's* on-road narrative, we are aware that at start of day he will travel to work and at end of day he will take to the road to return home. His daily routine combines off-road activity with on-road travel; industry, rest and passage. William Cowper captures the moment when,

Forth goes the woodman, leaving unconcerned
The cheerful haunts of man, to wield the axe
And drive the wedge in yonder forest drear,
From morn to eve his solitary task.¹⁸⁷

The last line reminds us of the solitary nature of his task, but the verse also serves to inform us of the nature of local passage, and of the woodman's ritualistic leave-taking of his family so as to walk a local network of footpaths and tracks leading to his place of work.

Gainsborough's woodman is depicted in his day-time working environment; industrious yet absorbed. His is not a quiet occupation, but one that is noisy and percussive, and the sounds of which carry vast distances. This is captured by George Crabbe, who writes that:

Sounds too delight us,---- each discordant tone
Thus mingled please, that fail to please alone;
This hollow wind, this rustling of the brook,
The farm-yard noise, the woodman at yon oak----
See, the axe falls! --- now listen to the stroke!¹⁸⁸

Painted image and written verse combine to conjure in the mind a particular working environment. The woodman may expect to work alone but advertises his presence to any within hearing. His lunch break may also be one of solitude, as William Broome suggests:

When the tir'd Woodman in the shady Vale
 Spreads his penurious Meal, when high the Sun
 Flames in the Zenith, and his sinewy Arms
 Scarce wield the pond'rous Ax, while Hunger keen
 Admonishes, and Nature spent with Toil
 Craves Due Repast --- ¹⁸⁹

The sound of axe on wood is a recurring theme in eighteenth-century verse, welcome and comforting in its familiarity. George Crabbe's reference to the forest sounds that, "Thus mingled please, that fail to please alone", and to the noise of a "hollow wind" and a "rustling brook" echoes a view shared by Robert Anderson:

How chang'd the forest, and what various hues
 Arrest the wond'ring eye; whilst to the ear
 The song of cheerful Labour and the stroke
 Of woodman distant sound along the dell. ¹⁹⁰

Rosenthal says of *Cornard Wood* that the figures depicted, whether working or passing through, seem to have a kind of "symbiotic relationship with their habitats".¹⁹¹ He considers that figures in Gainsborough's landscapes are always "integral to their content".¹⁹² And it is surely the case that, despite his solitary occupation, the woodman knows the other off-road figures depicted in *Cornard Wood*; an insight assuming them to be, like him, local to the area.

These other off-road protagonists represent figures who are exercising common rights to gather wood, keep a cow, graze donkeys and tend geese and pigs.¹⁹³ Harvesting from woodland and waste provided the basic necessities for survival, a "privilege offered to local poor".¹⁹⁴ An account given by an inspector writing for the *London Daily Advertiser* in 1751 describes a life-style and an environment that Gainsborough's woodman may have been part of. When walking through a rural area he comes across a hamlet and notices the "unexpressive Dawbing of a Board" inviting travellers to "taste the Pleasures of Rest". At midday the "Sun had sent in also the neighbouring Woodmen to eat the cheerful Bread of Industry". He describes the:

"rude Civilities, and unornamented Compliments of the Rustics to one another; a perfect Harmony reigned among them: Each was happy in the Society of his Fellow-labourer, and some of the severest Things that have been said on the Subject of Solitude, dropped from the homely Mouth of one of them, who had been engaged for the whole Month before to toil without a Companion."¹⁹⁵

In Gainsborough's painting, too, we have a momentary glimpse into a life-style uniting the local inhabitants of a particular place. Passage is enacted along familiar footpaths and roads, along which they will encounter others. Travellers like the writer of the above article were just passing through, but were welcomed to this lunch-time retreat nevertheless.

Ironically, although he does not inhabit the road, we have in the woodman a simple and fully rounded example of passage and pause. Thomas Warton captures the moment, at the end of the working day, when:

The woodman, speeding home, awhile
Rests him at a shady stile.¹⁹⁶

His brother Joseph Warton is of similar mind; he writes:

As homeward bent to kiss his prattling babes,
He jocund whistles thro' the twilight groves.¹⁹⁷

Few of Gainsborough's figures are represented in the act of working. The woodman is an exception, and we may well ask why Gainsborough chose not to represent individuals at work more often. As in the case of his Dutch forbears, artistic convention ruled against the depiction of large groups of figures or livestock; such inclusions would be considered to be indecorous and vulgar; the same would have been true if he had focussed too much on the sweaty, exploitative realities of plebeian labour in the landscape.

II

Off-road figures are usually - unlike the exceptional figure of the woodman - depicted at rest. For some, attributes such as a spade, an axe, or the odd cow signify a likely occupation. The young man resting on a spade in *Cornard Wood* (Fig.46) gives us an instance of this; at other times we cannot verify a figure's occupation so easily. Such figures are typically shown meeting socially, engaging in flirtation, courtship or conversation. Generally they are given a colourful, idealised identity, and a poetic, almost pastoral appeal. They tend not to sit at the edge of the road itself, but to occupy a

carefully defined space just to its side. *Cornard Wood* (Fig.44) and *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) are both examples of this kind of setting. The image of freshly excavated soil in *Cornard Wood* exposes a recently cleared area, now doubling as a meeting place. Similar spaces are depicted in *View of a Distant Village*; the result perhaps, of less recent digging activities. Here, they have a more weathered appearance and appear more natural. Meeting places in rural areas were usually located beside the road because this is how local people reached them. For travellers, they were a convenient stopping place. They were tiny pockets of public space, shared by locals and strangers alike.

Although meeting places in Gainsborough's paintings have a pictorial role to play they are also common features in reality. As semi-secluded areas, sometimes closed to access on three sides, they embody an intimate quality. As such, they give a degree of privacy, an opportunity to meet and converse largely unseen and unheard. Offering a break from every-day labour, they become pleasant social spaces to meet and converse either casually or by pre-arranged appointment. In this way we may view them as spaces that suggest a particular point in the narrative has been reached; there is more to come when they move away. At other times, we perceive that the image that we see is central to the narrative and speaks of an unfolding drama.

We can take as an example the couple temporarily at rest in such a space in *Cornard Wood*. However tempting, we should not see them as just another generic pair of rustic lovers; neither should we see the youth as an opportunist traveller. Their demeanour suggests they may be local people, who no doubt share the same meeting place on this and other days. Their garments match in consistency of colour and tone; neither is more prominent than the other. Their rural attire appears cleaner and brighter than may have normally been the case. The girl merely passes the time in conversation as she exercises her right to graze animals in woodland.¹⁹⁸ The boy has ceased digging and appears to be the one doing the talking. Robert Bloomfield remarks upon

...him whose drudgery unheeded goes,
His joys unreckon'd as his cares or woes;
Though joys and cares in every path are sown,
And youthful minds have feelings of their own,¹⁹⁹

A more flirtatious encounter lies at the heart of Robert Dodsley's verses:

Thy beauties comparing, my dearest, said he,
There's nothing in Nature so lovely as thee.

Now, now I behold thee, sweet-smiling and pretty,
O gods! you've made nothing so fair as my KITTY!²⁰⁰

Although there is a hint of the pastoral in her posture the young lady pictured by Gainsborough remains within a more light-hearted and earthy atmosphere. The style in which both figures have been painted may invoke flirtatious verse but Gainsborough ensures that the rustic reality of these individuals percolates through.

We may be tempted to view the two couples in *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) in a similar light. They seem well acquainted but there is less indication of how they might otherwise be employed. Each pair comprises one seated and one standing figure, who face each other. Both couples are some distance apart; each seems unaware of the other's presence. Although the nearest couple exchange glances, their gaze is somehow unfocused; the young man seems to look as much in the direction of the road as toward the young woman (Fig.48). With the second couple positions are reversed: the standing male looks intently at the seated female who looks at the ground; a coy response to a bold remark, perhaps (Fig.49). The nearest couple convey a feeling of courtship. An autumnal feeling encourages thoughts of harvest, of a job well done, of partying, love-making and celebration. This important moment in the rural calendar becomes the subject of verse such as these lines by Thomas Brerewood:

Tho' the seasons must alter, ah! yet let me find,
What all must confess to be rare,
A female still cheerful, and faithful and kind,
The blessings of Autumn to share.²⁰¹

The second couple seem less well acquainted. Nearby livestock suggest imminent onward movement for the young herdsman; but he pauses, enjoying a moment's diversion. In these paintings there is almost always the feeling that the male speaks while the female listens, as Mark Akenside observes:

..... Ye smiling band,
Of youths and virgins, who through all the maze

Of young desire with rival-steps pursue
 This charm of beauty; if the pleasing toil
 Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
 Your favourable ear, and trust my words.²⁰²

Unlike *Cornard Wood*, the figures at rest are here unhindered by nearby travellers. Distant travellers must have passed this spot quite recently but have since moved on. If they were still there, they would intrude on the sense of prevailing intimacy. The feeling of repose would be disturbed; seemingly anonymous strangers would intrude on the private space of local inhabitants. This separateness is reinforced by a visual and physical barrier constituted by the livestock, who block the road ahead. The area is engulfed in shade, but far from undermining their presence, enriched colour strengthens the separation between off-road figures and more distant travellers. The touch of sun-lit sienna on the girl's skirt, repeated on the sand bank behind, reinforces the feeling that they are local inhabitants who belong to, and in a way meld with their environment.²⁰³ John Dyer's imparted knowledge about dying wool reminds us of Gainsborough's use of natural pigment.

Few are the primal colours of the art;
 Five only; black, and yellow, blue, brown, red;
 Yet hence innumerable hues arise.²⁰⁴

Gainsborough encourages the viewer to focus on this particular area, not to the exclusion of any other but to isolate the near from the far. This surely invites the viewer to explore the more parochial spirit of the scene; to consider movement in and around an entirely local realm. But if we are to consider the two girls as local inhabitants and locally employed we need to properly assess the nature of their employment.

Wool and cheese were Suffolk's chief commercial, inland products. Daniel Defoe reported cheese to be "a species of provision so considerable that nothing, except the movement of live cattle, can exceed it".²⁰⁵ The production of cheese was clearly an important provider of employment in rural Suffolk, and verse gives voice to the processes of production and transportation:

And now the Dairy claims her choicest care,
 And half her household find employment there:
 Slow rolls the churn, its load of clogging cream²⁰⁶

High-Suffolk was the main area for dairy produce. Of Woodbridge, a town lying to the north-east of Ipswich, Defoe observed the “considerable market for butter, and corn to be exported to London;” they are famous for the “best butter and perhaps the worst cheese, in England.”²⁰⁷ But if *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) represents the countryside near Sudbury we may take the liberty of assuming the two girls to be employed in the woollen industry as weavers, spinners or carders. In 1772, Arthur Young described Sudbury as a “great manufacturing town” having a “great number of hands that earn their livelihood by working up the wool to the weaving into says”.²⁰⁸ In Suffolk, the estimated number of people employed to produce yarn for Norwich alone included over five hundred working as combers, and well over sixteen thousand as spinners who between them produced over three thousand packs of wool annually.²⁰⁹ James Oaks Esquire from Bury St. Edmunds, a town not far north of Sudbury, calculated over thirty-seven thousand were employed as combers, spinners, journeymen, apprentices, riders and sorters in 1784.²¹⁰ More than half a century earlier, In Colchester, just a little to the south of Sudbury, “the whole town” says Celia Fiennes “is employ’d in spinning weaveing washing drying and dressing their Bayes”.²¹¹ In Colchester Rochefoucauld calculated five-hundred looms and goes on to describe eventual transportation. “These are first sent to London, in 4 waggons that leave regularly three times a week: each carries 250 pieces of cloth”²¹²

Sudbury would certainly have been a part of this manufacturing and transportation network, as the road running from north to south from Bury St. Edmunds and crossing the Stour at Sudbury leads directly to Colchester and then on to London.

When it beholds the labours of the loom;
How widely round the globe they are dispers’d,
From little tenements by wood or croft,
Through many a slender path, how sedulous,
As rills to rivers broad, they speed their way
To public roads, to Fosse, or Watling-street,²¹³

Such verse dramatises the interconnectivity between the villagers weaving in their houses and the broader spectrum of passage. The product of their toil is carried along local footpaths to main road and river systems. Listen to George Crabbe:

Yon is our Quay! those smaller hoys from town,
 Its various ware, for country-use, bring down;
 Those laden wagons, in return, impart
 The country-produce to the city mart;
 Hark! to the clamour in that miry road,
 Bounded and narrow'd by yon vessel's load;²¹⁴

The unhurried appearances of Gainsborough's couples in *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) seem remote from the rather frantic activity evoked by these lines. What he gives us are well-attired figures occupying a meeting place beside a road, possibly in the vicinity of the river Stour. We cannot see the local footpaths along which local forms of passage are enacted; they do not feature in the painted environment. But we do know of their existence, and the fact that they existed in considerable numbers. When moving from road to village or cottage, these young women will take one of the "many diverse turnings to left and right" - smaller tracks and footpaths that John Kirby constantly asked us to avoid.²¹⁵

Gainsborough does not deny the contemporary context but these figures' prosaic and pastoral appearance introduces a feeling of timelessness, and this has a bearing on how the viewer is expected to imagine their passage across the depicted environment. We come closer to realising the type of passage in which the young women partook if we note contemporary comment. Fiennes noticed when travelling in Suffolk "we went mostly through lanes where you meete the ordinary people knitting 4 or 5 in a company under the hedges".²¹⁶ She writes that it is common knowledge the "ordinary people both in Suffolk and Norfolk knitt much and spin".²¹⁷ Robert Bloomfield captures a moment in Suffolk when:

Thou Queen of knitters! for a ball
 Of worsted was thy pride;
 With dangling stockings great and small,
 And world of clack beside!²¹⁸

Comments such as these give context and insight into what the young women depicted by Gainsborough may encounter when returning home to resume work. In his paintings, the associations of rustic leisure and tranquillity conjured up by the artist's stilled, pastoral figures images, are overlaid with the associations of work and industry - imagined taking place off-stage, as it were - that contemporaries associated with such figures.

The figures in Gainsborough's paintings are, in most cases, easily recognised as rustic types. In such cases, they align quite well with eighteenth-century georgic verse, even though they may not be engaging directly with the practical aspects of agriculture at the time.²¹⁹ Sometimes, however, the figures are presented in a more decorative way; suggesting a more romanticised or idealised image of country life. The same seems true of the poetry consulted here, where we may encounter a similar duality. John Dyer's *The Fleece* for example, interlaces instruction of sheep rearing and associated trades with emotive and sensual responses to every aspect of rural society. His verse can be imagined addressing the painted image of Gainsborough's figures in *View of a Distant Village*, and making the following light-hearted command:

Come, village nymphs, ye matrons, and ye maids,
 Receive the soft material: with light step
 Whether ye turn around the spacious wheel,
 Or, patient sitting, that revolve, which forms
 A narrower circle.....²²⁰

And we can imagine these same women occupying the roles described in the following lines by Dyer:

..... and many yet adhere
 To th' ancient distaff, at the bosom fix'd,
 Casting the whirling spindle as they walk:
 At home, or in the sheepfold, or the mart,
 Alike the work proceeds.....²²¹

III

Gainsborough may have referred lightly to the role of the figures in his landscapes as being that of creating "a little business for the Eye"; however, it is becoming clear that the placement of figures in his early landscapes embody various kinds of spatial and social significance.²²² We have looked at those who share a more fleeting and spontaneous relationship. An exception can be found in those off-road couples whose sole purpose seem to be shown together and alone, and in whose depiction the narratives of passage seem to play no part. One can see an example of pause in its

purest form in *River Landscape with a Horse Drinking and Rustic Lovers* (Fig.16) where an expression of tenderness resides in the attitude of the couple depicted (Fig.50). The girl may at other times be employed as dairy-maid; fitting for the countryside adjacent to Ipswich where Gainsborough was living by this time. Bloomfield gives an irresistible account of: “The clatt’ring Dairy-Maid immers’d in steam”, who, “Singing and scrubbing midst her milk and cream, / Bawls out, “Go fetch the Cows!”²²³. But this rather breaks the spell cast by the young man who sits with head turned and tilted upwards in a vain attempt to gain eye-contact with his lover, who continues to look shyly away. These figures speak of the fragility of love and express a natural alliance while seeking an opportunity for courtship. We notice they have found a quiet stretch of road, avoiding the more public meeting places, and reducing the risk of interruption.

Look shyly curious; rip’ning into love;
For love’s their errand: hence the tints that glow
On either cheek, a heighten’d lustre know:
When, conscious of their charms, e’en Age looks sly,
And rapture beams from Youth’s observant eye.

The pride of such a party, Nature’s pride,
Was lovely Ann, who innocently try’d
With hat of airy shape and ribbons gay,
Love to inspire, and stand in Hymen’s way.²²⁴

Indeed, love is their errand, even the felled tree disassociates them from others and encourages the forms of privacy such an encounter would require.

A quite different set of issues are suggested by *Landscape in Suffolk* (Fig.51) in which the road slices the picture in half vertically, ensuring contact with every other part of the painted landscape. The absence of travellers on the road requires one to take more notice of the local environment. Strong tonal contrasts serve to fragment the various features of the landscape. The inclusion of gnarled trees, standing water, cottages, animals, figures and their activities keep the viewer fully occupied. Visualise this image through the eyes of a contemporary writer, who wrote of the Stour Valley that “the crests of the slopes which enfold the valley are covered with clumps of trees which form the backgrounds to several houses scattered over the hills in this way”.²²⁵ The neighbouring cottage at the top of the rise invites one to consider local relationships and interactions. The positioning of this cottage punctuates the normally seamless feeling of

onward passage. One has the opportunity to imagine a repeated pattern of local industry usually denied in these early landscapes, and to visualise a type of passage defined by local interaction.

The familiarity of the reclining man suggests courtship, but that he is part of a couple who are known to each other is less clear. In the first instance, the bright, clean colours of the girl's bodice and skirt, illuminated by strong sunlight, draw attention to her red skirt, completely enveloping her lower limbs and thus showing a degree of propriety (Fig.52). She looks away, but is clearly preoccupied by what the reclining male has to say. They are noticeably separated by a small but distinct run-off ditch, which forms a cleft in the ground leading down to the road. A line of stones, sun-lit along their top edge, follows the same course, underlining the significance of separation between them. Although positioned nearer to the road than to the cottage, the young woman is part of the cottage group, while her companion temporarily pauses for rest, refreshment or idle flirtation. His drab attire, made more so by being in the shade suggests we should consider him a traveller, possibly a companion to the man seated by the road further on who may be idly waiting for him. The moment when the traveller needs to ponder more distant passage is delayed. Gainsborough's scene echoes that found in a verse by William Crowe:

By soft gradations of ascent to lead

The labouring and way-worn feet along,
 And make their toil less toilsome. Half way up,
 Or nearer to the top, behold a cot,
 O'er which the branchy trees, those sycamores,
 Wave gently: at their roots a rustic bench
 Invites to short refreshment, and to taste
 What grateful beverage the house may yield.²²⁶

An older child and perhaps the slim figure of an elderly person stand close to the cottage. A spinning wheel in front of the cottage is temporarily unattended; we are provided with a picture of domesticity and rustic contentment. We can see by this more ambiguous coupling how Gainsborough has introduced a link between the ornate, pausing figure and an on-road form of passage. The eye moves from the female figure up to the cottage group, then returns to the reposing male and moves onward to the

seated figure along the road; this invites conjecture upon these men's onward journey.

James Thomson's lines hit a similar note:

There you may stretch yourself upon the grass,
and lull'd with music, to kind slumbers pass:
No meagre cares your fancy will distract,
And on that scene no tragic fears will act;
Save the dear image of a charming she,
Nought will the object of your vision be.²²⁷

Even though the painting seems to be about the picturesque figure of the woman in red, the use of colour and striking tonality in the remaining landscape would continue to hold the viewers' attention even if she were removed. The vividness of the red dress endorses the difference between the home group and those on the move. This painting is about relationships and life-style in a particular habitat. Travellers are at rest, temporarily removed from the linearity of distant passage. If the road were removed we would be left with an intimate and local enclave. The inclusion of the road is important however, because it gives the viewer a choice; helping them to realise that on this occasion, the image of a local habitat informs narrative about passage and pause to which the road, for the time being, becomes subordinate.

Off-road figures in this group of paintings invite the viewer to speculate upon a variety of possibilities. The couple in *Cornard Wood* (Fig.46) come closest to suggesting a casual encounter during the course of daily toil. Circumstances in *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) insist that we consider employment in a locality that we cannot see but know about. The unique nature of the couple in *River Landscape* (Fig.50) becomes the painting's main subject. Their very stillness so close to the edge of the road requires space, away from travellers who are yet to be considered. Details of a village scene denied to us in *View of a Distant Village* are revealed to us in *View of Suffolk* in which we perceive a less mobile timelessness. The support of contemporary, georgic verse enlivens local narrative. The mode of dress is contemporary but with an historic charm; the figures are rural, but contrasting in appearance.²²⁸ In summary, they represent a pastoral ideal while maintaining a particular regional and class identity.

IV

Through every town, round every passing load,
 And dairy produce throngs the eastern road:
 Delicious veal, and butter, every hour,
 From Essex lowlands, and the banks of Stour;
 And further far, where numerous herds repose,
 From Orwell's brink, from Waveny, or Ouse.
 Hence Suffolk dairy-wives run mad for cream,²²⁹

In these lines Bloomfield gives his readers an idea of the volume of traffic in Suffolk. But Gainsborough chose not to represent the reality of passage in the way described by this poet. Before looking at on-road figures more closely, we should acknowledge this form of pictorial omission. In Gainsborough's paintings, we find only subtle traces of the residual conditions and risks generated by large-scale road-borne passage, as described by such poets as William Crowe:

Of many indenting wheels, heavy and light,
 That in their different courses as they pass,
 Rush violently down precipitate,
 Or slowly turn, oft resting, up the steep.²³⁰

These lines equate to an incident in *View Near the Coast* (Fig.53) where at the lowest point to the left of the sand bank a section of road turns into a steeply angled descent. A standing figure in a tumbrel-like wagon brings all his skills to bear as he concentrates on reining in his horse while attempting to navigate a seemingly impossible gradient. This motif is repeated in the engraving of *Landguard Point* (Fig.34). What is telling here is the standing driver handling his vehicle with an air of ease and relaxation, unlike the former waggoner whose posture gives expression to one of the dangers associated with the drama of passage.

The volume of traffic on English roads throughout the eighteenth century invited considerable comment.²³¹ Gainsborough's tracks, with their signs of regular and frequent use reflect this, but any tangible sign of the fact that these roads carried heavy loads is omitted. Sudbury's position in Suffolk, and the fact that it featured a main road that connected it, north to south, with Newmarket, Bury and Colchester, and that ran west to east along the length of the river Stour, suggests that the roads depicted by Gainsborough were often through roads. Young confirms that during August, on the

road between Sudbury and Bures “they bring large quantities of oxen of a great size and turn them into the meadows”.²³² Imagine up to thirty thousand Scots cattle entering East Anglia via the Great North Road annually.²³³ Black Highlanders were driven from Scotland, and in smaller but still significant numbers, Fifes from Wales and Galloways from Ireland.²³⁴ Added to this, Suffolk and Norfolk bred more turkeys than anywhere in England. A native of Suffolk informed Defoe of three hundred droves of turkeys passing in one season on the road from Ipswich to London, each containing three hundred to one thousand turkeys. And those coming via Newmarket Heath, through Sudbury and Clare, just west of Sudbury, numbered many more.²³⁵

Drovers usually kept to high ground, avoiding turnpikes and their accompanying toll charges.²³⁶ But there was very little high ground of the kind drovers could divert to in Suffolk, and these paintings pre-date the most active period for turnpikes in East Anglia. This leads one to speculate whether the roads in the Sudbury area, on which we believe Gainsborough’s landscapes are modelled, witnessed a significant volume of livestock movement.²³⁷ Ancient tracks were no doubt maintained by habitual use but newer roads, such as the one from Bury through Sudbury to Colchester, were in frequent use.²³⁸

Drovers’ places of rest and refreshment did not correspond to the more intimate meeting places depicted by the artist, which would have been entirely inadequate for their purposes. Overnight grazing grounds for cattle were about six to twelve miles apart and wherever possible close to an inn. The “tyes” as they were known in Suffolk, were simply broadenings of verges along drove roads, often triangular in shape as they were situated at a three-road junction.²³⁹ We can imagine inns along drove roads, somewhat removed from towns and villages. An inn frequented by Drovers may resemble

A pretty little tippling Hovel,
Where Pedlars call at as they travel,
And where the *Kentish* Drovers stop
To light their Pipes and take a Cup:²⁴⁰

A picture builds in which we visualise drove roads as wide, trodden expanses of ground, with verges wide enough to accommodate livestock in large numbers. Gainsborough’s more picturesque roads would not survive this kind of treatment. We see small groups

of fairly large cattle prominently positioned as in *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) or singly and at a greater distance as in *River Landscape with Horse Drinking* (Fig.16). More often than not cattle are un-polled and brown, black or white in colour. Gainsborough's cattle and roads give value in terms of pictorial interest. But one may ask whether they represent a contemporary situation, or are a retrospective vision of a previous age. Perhaps they are a combination of both; Gainsborough has negotiated an interesting balance between nostalgia and modernity. Cattle are not being driven in large numbers; the accompanying noise and disruption is quite absent from his pictures. We are informed that Suffolk fields "were full of cattle - an immense number of sheep as well as of bullocks they have no horns [polled] and are much preferred to other cattle as being tenderer and more easily fatted up".²⁴¹ By all accounts the black bullocks were "smaller and grow fatter than those of English stock, which are not common".²⁴² There seemed little incentive to give poetic value to the harsher realities of passage and life-style, but one is sometimes offered a glimpse of accompanying sights and sounds in contemporary poetry:

Young Harry was a lusty drover,
And who so stout of limb as he?
His cheeks were red as ruddy clover;
His voice was like the voice of three.²⁴³

Likewise:

By this time we began to think
Of Breakfast, and a little Drink,
Resolving to refresh and ease
Our hungry Maws with Bread and Cheese,
And moisten well our dusty Clay,
At the next Alehouse in our Way:
Accordingly, we found a Place
Which suited well our present Case,²⁴⁴

The omission of such activity is largely due to its unsuitability as subject matter; they would not be seen as appropriate subjects for a painting. It may also be the case that as neither the drovers nor their charges were local to the area they did not attract Gainsborough's interest. Drovers were seasonal visitors, strangers just moving through. In a sense they would be looked on as somewhat noisy outsiders and certainly this is how Robert Bloomfield's home-sick drover felt:

Now fare-thee-well, England; no further I'll roam;
 But follow my shadow that points the way home:
 Your gay southern Shores shall not tempt me to stay;
 For my Maggy's at Home, and my Children at play!²⁴⁵

Where Gainsborough's paintings are concerned, the term drover has been used generically to describe individuals who happen to be attending cattle.²⁴⁶ But Gainsborough did not depict drovers and cattle in ways that reflected the contemporary situation; if he had, the type of passage described would have been less to do with Suffolk and more to do with a journey beginning in another place, sometimes a different country hundreds of miles distant. Instead, Gainsborough preserved a rustic and rural quality; by reducing drovers to mere cowmen or local farm-hands, we are prompted to consider passage differently. These figures do not ask us to note how busy the roads are, but do invite us to contemplate how the passage taking place along these roads can be understood at different levels: local, intermediate and distant.

V

Ascending, ere he takes his sultry way
 Along th'interminable road, stretch'd out
 Over th'unshelter'd down; or when at last
 He has that hard and solitary path
 Measured by painful steps.²⁴⁷

Crowe's verse provides an apt description of Gainsborough's on-road figures, whose expression of passage leaves a feeling of isolation and loneliness in its wake. These figures cannot be discussed in the same way as the more prominent off-road figures, simply because we do not have the same level of pictorial information about them; they have not been attributed an identity; we view them collectively. They harmonise as a group simply because they happen to be insignificant, distant and small. We can see this most clearly in *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) where, after enjoying the more undulating terrain, we are drawn magnetically toward an unobstructed distance. At first, small figures on the road lead the eye onward. A man and dog walk up the first hill while two horsemen and one walking figure move down the next slope, partly obscured by the preceding slope. Further along, a tiny figure is seated beside the road to the right; an adult and child can be seen approaching a cottage just ahead. Another

horseman and traveller are crossing the bridge in the vicinity of the village. Anonymity is augmented by sombre clothing, by partial shade and by the fact that these figures' backs are turned to the viewer. Individualism is denied as they walk or ride "in a state of stoic isolation".²⁴⁸ But while scale and lack of colour prevent them from distracting the attention of the viewer, neither does it detract from their intended purpose.

For, through embodying constant and uninterrupted pedestrian movement, these figures succeed in drawing attention to the very fabric and nature of the road. Their dramatization of passage through an illusionistic depth of field, begins before entry to the canvas in the foreground plane and continues beyond the horizon; beyond the painted imagery; they do not operate solely within the confines of the canvas; they just happen to have reached the point allotted them in the painted stretch of road given us by the artist. Again one is reminded of John Kirby's ability to extend the feeling of passage beyond the immediate point of interest. In removing the notion of closure Gainsborough has removed limiting parameters, thereby expanding the visualisation of linear space.

Another striking factor about Gainsborough's road-bound figures is the apparent lack of social intercourse between them. Figures appear to focus on their own thoughts within an allotted space as they either pause or move forward. When discussing a landscape by George Lambert, Barrell looks at the relationships between the "more leisured positions of the gentlemen and the industrious attitudes of the reaper and miner". He is of the view that "because the two sorts of opposed relationship with nature, a gentle pastoral idleness or a rustic georgic industry, can each be represented as a mode of peaceful harmony with nature, each must be in harmony also with the other".²⁴⁹ Being in harmony with nature and therefore with one another does not work in quite the same way in Gainsborough's Suffolk landscapes, because the attitude of travellers is quite different from those at rest. Put simply, we have two apparently different types of figures who, although from the same social group, appear not to express the same awareness of one another; appear more socially separated. Paradoxically, we are left with the task of recognising or imagining co-existence between people who appear to want nothing to do with each other. Perhaps if the figure imagery expressed greater sociability, we may lose the fragile nature of the connections that bind Gainsborough's protagonists together.

But in terms of passage, we will find ways in which these apparently different types of figure manage to communicate a seamless quality in terms of passage and pause; each can be seen to rely or link to the other. How this works may best be seen if we begin by looking at off-road figures. We may assume for instance, the young man standing against a donkey in *View of a Distant Village* (Fig.33) to be in charge of nearby cattle. His liaison gives him a brief local identity, but any pretence of longer-term courtship is a deliberate deceit serving only to encourage the viewer to pause at this point for longer. We get the idea that he is not about to leave the road and wend his way inland through local footpaths but will eventually move his stock somewhere a few miles distant along the nearby road. Although not as parochially defined as others in the group, his static role tells us something about the individual. The need to move on will eventually release him from a state of pause to one of forward passage, thus providing a seamless transition between these two states. As he moves into the distance he will, by default, become another distant traveller, thereby bridging what might seem a social as well as a physical gap between the figures that the artist variously shows resting and travelling.

At other moments, small anonymous figures shown standing or seated near the road may at times introduce a visual diversion giving the viewer access to places otherwise denied them. The two small figures in *Extensive Landscape with Chalky Banks* (Fig.54) who stand and sit on either side of the track may “plot the distance” marking a mid-way point along the road.²⁵⁰ They also place in visual parenthesis that small sunlit section of road; introducing a particular lateral spatial value. The sun on the edge of the left bank continues to outline the edge of the green bank opposite, drawing a downward-curving line at this point. Neither figure is on the road; if they were, they would be caught up in a perpetual forward movement. It is as though they have stopped breathing for an instant; are virtually pinioned to the spot becoming landmarks in their own right. Gainsborough has pegged the tiny figures in this location as surely as a coloured pin locates a place on a map. Without them, after navigating the standing water, the eye would follow the course of the road seamlessly and at a regular pace to the horizon. But the road passes junctures at which smaller tracks exit the main track. Enticingly hidden spaces lurk behind chalky prominences inviting the traveller to stop, pause, and look to left or right. The presence of the small figures encourages us to imagine and visualise how passage filters laterally from the main track at a particular moment, bringing into focus a new view-point, inviting the viewer to visualise the

landscape from a different position. Positioning the figures in this way introduces a dimension linking time as well as space. They introduce potential for a different kind of spatial volume, one that does not rely entirely upon a measured perspective but in the push-pull effect brought about by its juxtaposition to the road on which traffic will move in one direction only. Pause and passage become mutually complementary.

VI

It has been declared that the best landscape painters are those able to “reduce concrete particulars to abstract categories,”...²⁵¹ Perhaps this idea correlates with these more abstract spatial qualities that, in Gainsborough’s work, seem often to challenge the normal flow of linear passage. In *Cornard Wood* for example, the fact that the nearby traveller occupies the same plane as off-road figures is unusual (Fig.55). As such, he becomes one of a row of figures strung across the road between the two trees at left and right; cow and donkeys mark out the parameters. Between them they form a downward curved shape to which the lateral section of road contributes. Viewers are released from the temporary hold this device places on them by the changing direction of the road, helped by the way the traveller stands marginally forward of the other figures; progress is only temporarily interrupted, but is interrupted nevertheless.

Road passage has been likened metaphorically to a journey through life. We have not looked at passage in this light, but the ways in which figures behave on and off the road have helped us to understand the connectivity of it all. A feeling of conveyor-belt type movement may suggest that, for Gainsborough’s protagonists, even “to stop at a place is still to be in a state of potential motion”.²⁵² But to stop at a place seems to indicate movement of a more circular kind, creating a separate spatial environment. What Gainsborough has done is to give us scope to capture a moment in which time stops. It is for the viewer to recognise how passage has been arrested in a more abstract form. In *River Landscape with Horse Drinking* (Fig.16) we can see how the foremost section to the right of the couple invites particular attention, but the elliptical thread connecting the large foreground tree at the left to the white cow over the brow of the hill connects time with space as each address the other. Meanwhile, the red dress in *Landscape in Suffolk* (Figs.51 and 52) together with the expanse of water broadens the foreground area. But

follow the line created by the seated traveller and string of animals facing him from the opposite bank, reinforced by the convergence of shade and sun at this point. One is offered an altered view-point from which we may visualise a footpath, another cottage perhaps, or people sitting under a hedge knitting. We have another incident of arrested time, of figures and animals pegged to the spot introducing a quality of stillness and breathlessness that we feel exists in this place, and that offers a poignant alternative to the imagery of forward movement so typical of Gainsborough's early landscapes.

VII

In the period during which this group of early landscapes was painted, Gainsborough had only recently returned from artistic training in London. He came to Sudbury to put into practice newly acquired artistic skills. He was well versed in the application of rococo embellishment and was recognised as having a natural talent for painting landscapes.²⁵³ Essentially, he was fresh from training and ready to pursue his career as a painter with renewed confidence. But although keen to sell his landscapes, Gainsborough did not moderate the way he painted landscapes to satisfy patronal whim. Perhaps it was due to Gainsborough's resilience to temptation; to convince, and demonstrate to the viewer an attachment to a particular terrain, that has enabled an exploration into a particular social episode in Suffolk's history.

CONCLUSION

For the sake of economy it has been necessary to confine my research for this thesis to Gainsborough's Suffolk period; in doing so, of course, I have effectively isolated his early landscapes from those painted later in his career, primarily in Bath and London. To conclude therefore, it will be suggestive to look briefly at how Gainsborough's imagery of passage changed following his move to Bath in c1760. In Bath, he was confronted with an entirely different type of terrain to that he had encountered in Suffolk; we also see his painting change in content, form and style.²⁵⁴ In Gainsborough's output, over time, the small intimate micro-landscapes we have been studying in this thesis, built around sandy hollows, exposed tree roots and winding roads, were supplanted by more expansive motifs. Technique altered in line with the grander scene; his handling of paint became more "vigorous".²⁵⁵ His early landscapes have been described as "faithful representations of English nature", while it is thought that his mature work "aimed at something more elevated".²⁵⁶ The experience of exploring a new place, may account in part for the emerging difference in his landscape representation, but there is clearly more.

The way Gainsborough described the road in his landscapes did not change immediately; there was no sudden change; more a gradual transition. We can see this if we look at an early Bath work, *Wooded Landscape with a Woodcutter* (Fig.56) in which the rutted track and journeying figure remind us, compositionally at least, of Gainsborough's earlier, Suffolk paintings. The road is as emphatic as before, following a course through the landscape with clear indication of forward passage. A description of how a 'picturesque' lane should be treated equates to the road in this painting; "The ground itself, in these lanes, is as much varied in form, tint, and light and shade, as the plants that grow upon it".²⁵⁷ Gainsborough's road also correlates to William Gilpin's comment that rough ground may "break the edges of a walk: give it the rudeness of a road: mark it with wheel tracks".²⁵⁸

But although we may consider Gainsborough an "important precursor of picturesque and natural painting", paintings containing recognisably picturesque imagery, predate

published literature on the subject by at least two decades.²⁵⁹ Publication of picturesque theories by Uvedale Price (1747-1829) and William Gilpin (1724-1805) for example, post-date Gainsborough's later periods.²⁶⁰ But the overlapping phases that contributed to the picturesque aesthetic began in c1710 with the broader concepts of the idea. This was followed by the high picturesque in design and tourism, from about 1770.²⁶¹ But we may recognise qualities in William Gilpin's essay on picturesque travel, that bring to mind the imagery of roads and passage in Gainsborough's earlier, Suffolk paintings. Gilpin speaks of the "traveller" of "pursuit of his object" - "expectations of new scenes continually opening and arising to his view".²⁶² Although Gilpin finds tracts of barren country "a little peevish", he concedes a "winding road itself is an object of beauty".²⁶³ In contrast, Uvedale Price considers a picturesque eye "discovers a thousand interesting objects where a common eye seen nothing but ruts and rubbish".²⁶⁴

There are, however, some puzzling differences in Uvedale Price's descriptions of the picturesque road. In one instance he recommends that "a thousand circumstances of detail, promote the natural intricacy of the ground; the turns are sudden and unprepared; the banks sometime broken and abrupt".²⁶⁵ In another, that roads have "no cut edges, no distinct lines of separation; all is mixed and blended together, and the border of the road itself, shaped by the mere tread of passengers and animals, is as unconstrained as the footsteps that formed it: even the tracks of the wheels".²⁶⁶ This description is more in keeping with a much later landscape by Gainsborough, *Gypsy Encampment, Sunset* (Fig.57) in which the road is indeed "blended together". We still have a road that progresses through the landscape, but is hardly discernible, apart from the soft ruts, barely cutting the surface of an expansive area of grass.

A typical variant of Gainsborough's Bath landscapes is *Sunset, Carthorses drinking at a stream* (Fig.56). Here, we are given a wide expanse of brown track, rising out of a stream at the bottom edge of the canvas. The road's course turns abruptly to the left in the mid-distance. We know this, because of the bent figure labouring uphill away from the viewer at this point. This at least, is reminiscent of the anonymous travellers of his Suffolk paintings. A damaged oak to the right, provides the strongest vertical accent; it curves inwards as it rises, protectively encircling the main motif of bystander, carthorses and wagon. The bottom edge of the curving line created by the tree is taken-up, without interruption, by a thin, lateral, strip of bright sunlight. Combined, they form

a cup-shaped curve that partially envelopes the far distant prospect.²⁶⁷ The entire front section of the composition is contained beneath the fore-mentioned curved line; foreshortening and expanding the area of main human interest. Compositionally, Gainsborough seems now to build into his design, an interdependence between the main motifs. All major elements work together to present the viewer with an overall landscape vision. It therefore becomes more challenging to single-out a particular motif such as the road. Not only does the road peter out in the middle-distance of this work, but the main subject – carthorses and wagon – are positioned in the fore-most plane; occupying almost the total width of the road. The *pull* of this forward movement, toward the viewer, competes with any onward *push* that the road may otherwise exert; in effect they cancel one another out; something that tended not to happen before.

Earlier figures moved *along* the road into the distance, or they paused *away* from the road. In Bath landscapes, figures are larger; they often dominate the foreground section of the painted landscape. Unlike before, on-road figures are inclined to face toward the viewer. Moments of pause happen both on, and off the road. Figures still appear rural, or even rustic in type, but we have more visual information about them; they have been given a personality, an identity almost. These larger, better described figures attract attention; they become subject. As Sloman has suggested, the earlier small figures inhabiting “Dutch-inspired” depictions of the countryside, were replaced by “larger-scale fanciful figures”.²⁶⁸

To try to establish more about these differences in representation, we will return to *Wooded landscape with a Woodcutter* (Fig.56) which, it has been said “possesses all the qualities Uvedale Price most admired in landscape painting,with the spotlight of the composition being on a ragged peasant wending his way home after a hard day’s work”.²⁶⁹ We may perceive the woodman, as a figure moving towards us in a jaunty fashion. He engages with the view around him and appears to enjoy the day. An alternative view, equally valid, sees “the humble head-scratching gesture of the tired peasant, clearly designed to evoke the sympathy of the viewer”.²⁷⁰ The viewer may choose between such readings. But it is of interest that, in both case, it is the figure that becomes the central attraction; effectively diverting our attention from the broader, interconnected narratives of figural passage and winding roadways that dominated the Suffolk landscapes.

Interestingly, in her book *Map of a Nation: A Biography of the Ordnance Survey*, Rachel Hewitt, when discussing the picturesque tourist, sees “these tourists of the late eighteenth century” whose enthusiasm for “the observations and experience of the natural world” as being similar to the objectives of some professional map-making figures.²⁷¹ However, Hewitt makes the point that, “whereas the Ordnance Surveyors created an image of the landscape through empirical measurement, [William] Gilpin, emphasised that picturesque tourists should eschew reason in favour of spontaneous emotion”.²⁷² To achieve an expression of “spontaneous emotion” in a landscape painting would require the artist to play down the minute, empirically garnered particulars that might otherwise distract the viewer’s attention. In Bath, Gainsborough may have felt obliged to experiment with new ideas. Thus, his use of models to construct miniature landscapes in a candle-lit studio helped him to achieve fresh pictorial outcomes that freed his landscapes from the taint of that “particularity of topography” that was now becoming unfashionable.²⁷³

The highly detailed depiction of the road of early work has been supplanted by a more fluid rendering in which light and tone play a greater part. As in *Gypsy Encampment, Sunset* (Fig.58), roads become indistinct, edges undefined and wide grassy swathes of track blend with their surroundings. But of greater significance, is the way in which Gainsborough’s later landscapes introduce a gentle sweeping lateral movement and a different rhetoric of movement. In his later paintings, there is a weakening of the momentum of passage; energy is no longer held within the confines of the road. The sweeping, lateral curve in later paintings reminds us for a moment of the tangible, but far less flamboyant lateral moments in Gainsborough’s Suffolk landscapes, such as that created by the tiny, distant figures in *Extensive Landscape with Chalky Banks* (Fig.54) in which lateral curves of a simpler kind, underpinned by the placement of small, distant figures, offer an alternative point of view for the traveller or viewer and one that relentlessly returns us to the imagery and associations of the road.

APPENDIX 1.

List of paintings used to carry out the survey

1. *Wooded Landscape with Shepherd Resting by a Sunlit Track and Scattered Sheep*, 1745-46, Oil on Canvas, London, Richard Green, 10½” x 8¼”.
2. *Extensive Landscape with Chalky Banks, Winding Track, Figures and Animals*, 1746-47, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland, Oil on canvas, 18” x 24”.
3. *Wooded Landscape with Peasant Resting*, 1747, London, Tate Britain, Oil on canvas, 24½” x 30½”.
4. *Wooded Landscape with Cattle and Watering Place (Drinkstone Park)* 1747, São Paulo Museum of Art, Brazil, Oil on canvas, 57½” x 61”.
5. *Wooded Landscape with Peasant resting beside a Winding Track*, 1747, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Oil on Canvas, 40” x 58”.
6. *Cornard Wood*, 1748, London, National Gallery, Oil on Canvas, 48” x 61”.
7. *View of a Distant Village*, 1750, Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland, Oil on Canvas, 29½” x 59½”.
8. *Landscape in Suffolk*, 1748, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Oil on Canvas, 26” x 37¾”.
9. *The Charterhouse*, 1748, London, Thomas Coram Foundation for Children, Roundel, Oil on Canvas, 22” diameter.
10. *Wooded Landscape with Herdsman Seated on a Bank near a Pool*, 1748, Gainsborough’s House, Sudbury, Oil on Canvas, 18½” x 25½”.

11. *Pathway through a wooded landscape with a farm in the distance*, 1748, Sudbury, Gainsborough's House, Pencil on paper, 10⁵/₈" x 13⁵/₈".
12. *Holywells Park, Ipswich*, 1748-50, Ipswich, Christchurch Museum, Oil on Canvas, 19¹/₈" x 25⁵/₈".
13. 1748-50, *View of St. Mary's Church, Hadleigh, the Old Rectory and the Deanery Tower, with Figures and Donkeys in the Churchyard*, 1748-50, Private Collection, on loan to Gainsborough's House, Sudbury, Oil on Canvas, 36" x 75".
14. *Wooded Landscape with Mounted Peasant on a Country Track*, 1750, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Oil on Canvas, 24³/₄" x 29³/₄".
15. *Wooded Landscape with Cottage and Donkey's*, early 1750s, Ownership unknown, Dimensions unknown.
16. *View of Landguard Point and Fort and the River Orwell*, original oil painting 1753, engraved by Thomas Major, published 1754. Christchurch Museum, Ipswich, Engraving, 33¹/₂" x 58".
17. *Wooded Landscape with Herdsmen and Cows and Distant Village*, 1750-53, Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Oil on Canvas, 40" x 36¹/₈".
18. *View near the Coast*, 1753-54, Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich, Oil on Canvas, 32" x 42¹/₂".
19. *River Landscape with Horse Drinking and Rustic Lovers*, 1754-56, St Louis Art Museum, Missouri, Oil on Canvas, 37" x 49¹/₂".
20. *Landscape with Peasant and Horses*, 1755, Marquess of Tavistock, Bedford Estate, Woburn Abbey, Oil on Canvas, 36¹/₄" x 40¹/₄".

21. *Wooded Landscape with Woodcutter courting a Milkmaid*, 1755, Marquess of Tavistock, Bedford Estate, Woburn Abbey, Oil on Canvas, 42" x 50½".
22. *Farmyard Scene*, 1757-59, Castle Museum, Norwich, Oil on Canvas, 36½" x 48½".
23. *Sunset, Carthorses drinking at a Stream*, 1759-62, Tate Britain, London, Oil on Canvas, 56" x 59¾".
24. *Mountainous Wooded Landscape with Horse Drinking, Flock of Sheep and Milkmaid*, 1763, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts, Oil on Canvas, 57½" x 62".
25. *Wooded Landscape with a Woodcutter, Donkeys and Distant Church*, 1762-63, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, Oil on Canvas, 39½" x 50".
26. *Wooded Landscape with Country Waggon, Milkmaid and Drover*, 1762-63, Private Collection, England, Oil on Canvas, 57" x 47".
27. *The Harvest Wagon*, 1767, Barber Institute, University of Birmingham, Oil on Canvas, 47½" x 57".
28. *View near King's Bromley-on-Trent, Staffordshire*, 1768-71, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Oil on Canvas, 46¼" x 66¼".
29. *Going to Market*, 1770, Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood, London, Oil on Canvas, 47" x 57½".
30. *Landscape with Cattle*, 1772-74, Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven, Oil on Canvas, 47¼ x 57¼".
31. *Rocky Wooded Landscape with Rustic Lovers*, 1773-74, Cardiff, National Museum of Wales, Oil on Canvas, 47" x 58".

32. *Wooded landscape with Peasants and Donkey around a Camp Fire*, 1778-80, London, Tate Britain, Oil on Canvas, 47½" x 59".
33. *The Watering Place*, 1777, London, National Gallery, Oil on Canvas, 58" x 71".
34. *Peasant Family at a Cottage Door*, 1780, Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California, Oil on Canvas, 58" x 47".
35. *Coastal Scene with Rocky Cliffs, Sailing Boats and Fishermen*, 1781-82, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Oil on Canvas, 40⅛" x 50¼".
36. *Wooded Landscape with Cattle by a Pool*, 1782, Gainsborough's House, Sudbury, Oil on Canvas, 47⅜" x 58⅛".
37. *Rocky Wooded Landscape with Dell and Weir*, 1782-83, City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, Oil on Canvas, 27¼" x 36½".
38. *Wooded Upland Landscape*, 1783, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Oil on Canvas, 47½" x 58".
39. *Mountain Landscape with Bridge*, 1783-84, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., Oil on Canvas, 44½" x 52½".
40. *Rocky Wooded Upland Landscape with Shepherd and Scattered Sheep*, 1784, Neue Pinakothek, Munich, Oil on Canvas, 47¼" x 58½".

APPENDIX 2





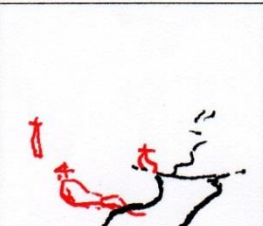



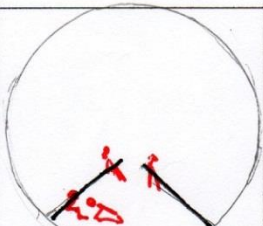
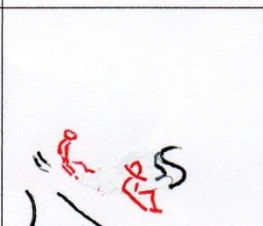
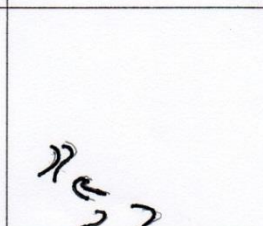



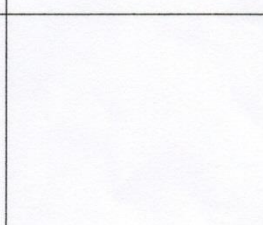
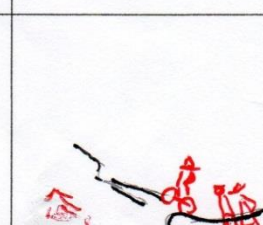
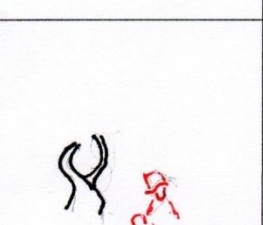


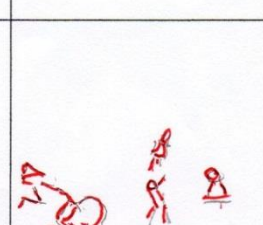
			
1.	2.	3.	4.
			
5.	6.	7.	8.
			
9.	10.	11.	12.
			
13.	14.	15.	16.
			
17.	18.	19.	20.

Chart using the first twenty examples as listed on appendix 1.

LIST OF REFERENCES – ENDNOTES

- ¹ Clark, T.J. 2006: 68. Clark discusses *Landscape with Man Washing his Feet*, 1648, (London, National Gallery) a painting where the road is characterised by a similar pattern of zig-zags.
- ² Mérot, 2008: 70.
- ³ Clark, K. 1949: 67.
- ⁴ Clark, T.J. 2006: 110-111. Clark cites Mahon, D. ‘Reflexions sur les paysages de Poussin’, *Art de France*, (1961). 130.
- ⁵ DeLue, 1998: 721. Zola references are sourced in, Zola, E. *Salons*, eds. F.W.J. Hemmings and R.J. Niess (Paris, Minard, 1959), no pagination.
- ⁶ DeLue, 1998: 721.
- ⁷ DeLue, 1998: 721
- ⁸ Brettell, 1984b:176-177.
- ⁹ Schaefer, 1984b: 137 and 140.
- ¹⁰ Brettell, 1984b:179 and 181.
- ¹¹ Mora and Hill, 1993: 160-161.
- ¹² The two photographs concerned, both taken in 1936, were *Frame houses in Virginia*, number 17 and *Alabama Square*, number 16. p.171 of the catalogue.
- ¹³ Mora and Hill, 1993: 161.
- ¹⁴ Tagg, 2003: 37.
- ¹⁵ Walker, 2011: 2.
- ¹⁶ Walker, 2011: 1-2.
- ¹⁷ Hayes, 1982.
- ¹⁸ Herrmann, 1973: Chapter IV, *The Tradition of the Netherlands, and the Rise of the Picturesque*: 91
- ¹⁹ Barrell, 2001: Thomas Gainsborough, 35-88.
- ²⁰ Barrell, 2001: 35. Paintings discussed here are *Peasant with Two Horses*, 1755 and *Landscape with a Woodcutter Courting a Milkmaid*, 1755, commissioned for The Duke of Bedford; Woburn.
- ²¹ Barrell, 2001:36.
- ²² Belsey, 2002a.
- ²³ Belsey, 2002b.
- ²⁴ Pointon, 1979.
- ²⁵ Smith, 2007.
- ²⁶ Sloman, 2002 and 2011.
- ²⁷ Hallett, 2003: 567.
- ²⁸ Snead, Erickson and Darling, 2009: xv.
- ²⁹ Ur, 2009: 181; Snead, 2009: 43.
- ³⁰ Snead, Erickson and Darling, 2009: 3.
- ³¹ Snead, 2009: 47.
- ³² Zedeño, Hollenback and Grinnell, 2009: 108.
- ³³ Erickson and Walker, 2009: 232.
- ³⁴ Snead, Erickson and Darling, 2009: 14. Snead et. al. refer here to Thomas, J. ‘The politics of vision and the archaeologies of landscape’ in B. Bender (ed.) *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*, (Oxford, Berg Publishers, 1993), 19-48.
- ³⁵ Snead, Erickson and Darling, 2009: 14. Quoting Tilley, C. *A Phenomenology of Landscape, Places, Paths and Monuments*, (Oxford, Berg Publishing, 1994).

³⁶ Agnew and Duncan, 1989: 2. Although recognised as related, Agnew points out that the three are not considered to be “complimentary *dimensions* of place. Rather they have been viewed as mutually incompatible or competing definitions of place.”

³⁷ Erickson, 2009: 230.

³⁸ Hallett, 2003: 567.

CHAPTER ONE

³⁹ Most art historians writing about Gainsborough’s early years make reference to the artist’s dependence on Dutch naturalistic landscape paintings. Woodall, 1949: 23-24. considers Gainsborough “unconsciously flouted the fashions of the day and found his inspiration in the work of the Dutch realistic painters”; Belsey, 2002b: 18. considers Gainsborough’s early landscapes an “Anglicization of the work of Jan Wijnants and Nichoolas Bercham”. Hayes, 1982: 44: notes that it was the “Dutch naturalists to whom he turned for instruction in invention and composition who literally shaped his early style in landscape”.

⁴⁰ Stechow, 1966: 29. Stechow notes that at this time Ruisdael broke with “traditional patterns” and that his work became more closely related to the “forest scene”.

⁴¹ Goedde, 1997: 133.

⁴² Slive, 1995: 199.

⁴³ Pott, 1782: 44.

⁴⁴ Stechow, 1966: 31.

⁴⁵ Gibson, 2000: 121-122; Walford, 1991: 20.

⁴⁶ Gibson, 2000: 93. Gibson considers Haarlem had long been famous for the beauty of its environs.

⁴⁷ Sutton, 1987: 12; Gibson, 2000: 94. Gibson cites Mander from van der Loeff, R. *Drie lofdichten op Haarlem* (Haarlem, De Erven F. Bohn, 1911), 22, verse 9.

⁴⁸ Mundy, 1924: 65.

⁴⁹ Asfour and Williamson, 1999, 42-51.

⁵⁰ Gibson, 2000: 118; see also Slive, 2005: 8.

⁵¹ Walford, 1991: 18 and 28.

⁵² Walford, 1991: 29 and 45.

⁵³ Goedde, 1997: 143.

⁵⁴ Walford, 1991: 28.

⁵⁵ Honig, 2005: 711.

⁵⁶ Bruyn, 1987: 85.

⁵⁷ Gibson, 2000: 117 and 133.

⁵⁸ De Vries, 1978: 127, 131 and 224-225.

⁵⁹ Knaap, 1996: 32. See also North, 1997: 21. North comments on southern migration and how it contributed to the modernisation of the Haarlem School of Painting.

⁶⁰ North, 1997: 29-30. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, 200 million bricks were produced annually. North, 1997: 27, cites van Zanden, J.L. ‘De economie van Holland in de periode 1650-1805: groei of achteruitgang? Een overzicht van bronnen, problemen en resultaten’, *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 102 (1987), 603.

⁶¹ De Vries, 1978: 138-140. Except in areas of predominantly arable farming where the size of herds grew, they relied on pasture grasses for their feed.

⁶² De Vries, 1978: 161-162. citing Spahr van der Hoek and Postma, *Friese Landbouw*, 1, 387.

⁶³ De Vries, 1978: 168. De Vries cites Wiese, H. and Bölts, J. *Rinderhanden und Rinderhaltung im nord-west Europäischen Küstengebiet vom 15 bis zum 19 Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1966)

⁶⁴ De Vries, 1978 : 155-156 and 160-161.

⁶⁵ Knaap, 1996: 31. Knaap notes that the population in Haarlem had doubled between 1590-1660 while North, 1997: 20, states that the population in the Netherlands as a whole grew from 1.4 – 1.6 million in 1600 to 1.85-1.95 million in 1650.

⁶⁶ Simpson, 1953: 39-40. Simpson describes the activities of an English dealer, Peter Anthony Motteux, who travelled Europe collecting paintings to be sold privately or by auction on his return. Following his death, his remaining stock was disposed of by his wife between the years 1714 and 1724; it included works by Berchem, Dou, Rembrandt, Ruisdael and Wouwermans.

⁶⁷ *Daily Courant*, 1702: Issue 170.

⁶⁸ *Post Man and the Historical Account*, 1701: Issue 819.

⁶⁹ *English Post*, 1709: Issue 1336.

⁷⁰ *General Advertiser*, 1747: Issue 3842.

⁷¹ *General Advertiser*, 1750, Issue 5117.

⁷² *General Advertiser*, September 13, 1749, Issue 4647.

⁷³ *Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*, 1763: Issue 10770.

⁷⁴ *Public Advertiser*, 1761: Issue 8263

⁷⁵ *General Advertiser*, January 15, 1749, Issue 4753.

⁷⁶ Woodall, 1949: 26; Belsey, 2002b: 17, note 11.

⁷⁷ John Hayes published a comprehensive survey on the subject of taste, patronage and collecting; see Hayes, 1962b: 667-672; 1965: 38-45; 1966a: 188-197; 1966b, 444-451; 1967: 254-259.

⁷⁸ Salmon, 1701: 2.177.

⁷⁹ Ogden and Ogden, 1955: 77-79.

⁸⁰ A.B. 1765, persuasively argued for the broad-wheel and went into some detail about the placement of wheels and ruts before and after its introduction; Accidents were frequent; the *British Journal*, 1728, reported a wagon accident in Suffolk where, to avoid another vehicle, the driver “drove up the side of a Bank, when the Chaise overturning, threw Mr. Hunter under the Hind-Wheel of the Waggon ... he died in a few Hours after;” In 1781, following the introduction of the broad-wheel, the *Public Advertiser*, June 15, reported “The bye Roads in Suffolk are all better than the Turnpikes of other Counties”. Interesting details of day-to-day maintenance survive in records such as *The Compleat Surveyor’s Account-Book for Highways*, 1790: 3. Examples include items such as widening a “cartwaste to 20’ ”, scouring ditches, cutting hedges etc.

⁸¹ It is also worth noting that the Stour Navigation Commission, who were responsible for ensuring that the river remained navigable between Manningtree and Sudbury between the years 1706-1782: 160, recorded a variety of incidents relating to minor damage along the banks. For instance, on 1st July 1752, at about the time of this painting, “Mr. Constable owner of Flatford Mill came over to the proprietors on this Day in order to answer to some complaints that were made as to his cutting away the Bank on the South Side of Flatford Lock and likewise claiming a piece of ground on the North Side”.

⁸² Barrell, 2001: 35 and 52. When discussing the commissioned painting *Landscape with a Woodcutter Courting a Milkmaid* Barrell describes the “combination of images of the rural life as relaxed, as idle even, and of that life as industrious, laborious”. Using the same example Barrell also draws our attention to the relationship between the colour of the ploughman’s clothing and the “soil he works, with the plane of the landscape in which he moves” making him a part of his surroundings. Solkin, 1982: 28-29, applies a similar argument to Richard Wilson’s *Caernarvon Castle*, pl.2. cat.7. Figures occupy separate planes which divide the ‘cultured gentlemen’ from ‘distant humanity’. Reflection on the water serves to unite them as “equal sharers in the happiness of rural life”.

⁸³ Alpers, 1983: 145.

⁸⁴ Belsey, 2002b: 14.

⁸⁵ Walford, 1991: 62-63.

⁸⁶ Adams, 2002: 40. Adams cites Blink, H. *Geschiedenis van den boerenstand en den landbouw in Nederland*, 2 vols (Groningen, 1902), 2, 112-113; Adams, 2002: 51-52; North, 1997: 24. North identifies Holland, Zeeland and Friesland as the areas affected.

⁸⁷ Adams, 2002: 51-52.

⁸⁸ Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, 1953: 16.

⁸⁹ North, 1997: 23.

⁹⁰ Schama, 1991: 34.

⁹¹ Walford, 1991 : 57; Goedde, 1997: 131.

⁹² Gibson, 2000: 96. Gibson cites Russell, G. (ed.) *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 2 vols (London, Dent, 1907) 1.27; Adams, 2002: 54 and 52.

⁹³ Knaap, 1996: 35.

⁹⁴ Alpers, 1983: 128.

⁹⁵ Schama, 1991: 38.

⁹⁶ Adams, 2002: 54-55. Adams cites De Vries, J. *Barges and Capitalism: Passenger Transportation in the Dutch Economy* (Utrecht, 1981), 26-34.

⁹⁷ Williamson, 2003, 11.

⁹⁸ Sharp, 1950: 53-54.

⁹⁹ Hoskins, 1969: 154 and 156.

¹⁰⁰ Neeson, 1993: 171-172.

¹⁰¹ Bermingham, 1987, 35-37. Chapter 1. part 3, *Gainsborough’s Rustic Landscapes*, 33-56.

¹⁰² Bermingham, 1987: 39 and 40. Also Robinson, 1989, 431.

¹⁰³ Alpers, 1983: 145.

¹⁰⁴ Alpers, 1983: 126 and 147.

¹⁰⁵ Rees, 1980: 62. Rees cites Skelton, R. *Decorated Printed Maps of the 15th to 18th Centuries* (1952; London, Spring Books, 1965), no pagination.

¹⁰⁶ Levesque, 1994: 36.

¹⁰⁷ Alpers, 1983: 126.

¹⁰⁸ Alpers, 1983: 145 and 141.

¹⁰⁹ Koeman, 1967: v-vi.

¹¹⁰ Koeman, 1967: v-vi.

¹¹¹ Rees, 1980: 64.

¹¹² Alpers, 1983: 121.

¹¹³ Rees, 1980: 61-62.

- ¹¹⁴ Huizinga, 1968: 57 and 100.
¹¹⁵ Alpers, 1983: 149.
¹¹⁶ Omrod, 2003: 336. Omrod cites Pollexfen, J. *A Discourse of Trade, Coyn, and Paper Credit* (1697), 87.
¹¹⁷ De Vries, 1978: 143. De Vries cites Trow-Smith, R. *A History of British Livestock Husbandry, 1700-1900* (London, Routledge, 1959).
¹¹⁸ De Vries, 1978: 165-168.
¹¹⁹ Herrmann, 1973: 91.

CHAPTER TWO

- ¹²⁰ Kirby, 1735b. See also Blatchly and James, 2004. This edition includes a boxed set containing book, maps, brief biography and other relevant statistics.
¹²¹ Kirby, 1754.
¹²² Owen, 1980; Owen, 1995/1996; Sloman, 2011: 14.
¹²³ For portraits of the Kirby family see Owen, 1995/96: 65; Woodall, 1949: 36-38; Hayes, 1980: 86 and Cat.70. John and Alice Kirby's portraits are both at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The later portrait of Joshua Kirby is owned by The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
¹²⁴ Sloman, 2011: 14-15. Sloman refers to Trimmer, S. *Some Account of the life and Writings of Mrs Trimmer, with original Letters, and Meditations and Prayers, selected from her Journal*, 2 vols., (London, 1814), 1,39.
¹²⁵ Woodall, 1949: 38; Owen, 1995/96: 65.
¹²⁶ A number of paintings that began in the ownership of Joshua Kirby are reproduced in John Hayes, 1982: Catalogue. Entries, 2, 327; 4, 330; 6, 333; 9, 334; 27, 355.
¹²⁷ Owen, 1980: 6.
¹²⁸ Owen, 1995/96: 61. Owen cites Bensusan-Butt, 1989: 50-51.
¹²⁹ Kirby, 1748: Preface.
¹³⁰ Kirby, 1748: Preface.
¹³¹ E.g. compare descriptions of Sudbury Priory, Kirby, 1735b: 86; Kirby, 1748: 5. and of Christ's Hospital, Ipswich, Kirby, 1735b:12; Kirby, 1748:7.
¹³² Blatchly and James, 2004: ix.
¹³³ Kirby, 1735b: Title page.
¹³⁴ Kirby, 1735b: 4.
¹³⁵ Kirby, 1735b: 1-4.
¹³⁶ Kirby, 1735b: 169.
¹³⁷ Blatchly and James, 2004: xiii. Blatchly quotes from the *Ipswich Journal* (November 13, 1731), no. 587.
¹³⁸ Kirby, 1735a.
¹³⁹ Kirby, 1735b: 32-33.
¹⁴⁰ Kirby, 1735b: 1.1980.
¹⁴¹ Kirby, 1735b: 91-92.
¹⁴² Kirby, 1735b: 15-17.
¹⁴³ Kirby, 1735b: 92.
¹⁴⁴ Kirby, 1735b: 90.
¹⁴⁵ Defoe, 1986.
¹⁴⁶ Defoe, 1986: 47.
¹⁴⁷ Defoe, 1986: 72.
¹⁴⁸ Kirby, 1734: Advertisement.
¹⁴⁹ Blatchly and James, 2004: 243.

¹⁵⁰ Tissink and Tissink, 2000: 233-235. A fragment of the British warship *The Royal Charles* taken during this battle is now part of the collections of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, as is a gold and enamel goblet (1668) by Nicolaas Loockemans picturing burning ships in the Medway at the height of the battle.

¹⁵¹ Rees, 1980: 61. Rees is also of the view that looking at history and cartography together would “broaden an interesting facet of the history of cartography and would serve as a reminder that important branches of geography and art are rooted in common ground”.

¹⁵² Ogilby, 1712, Preface.

¹⁵³ Booth, 1979: 64; Lynham, 1953: 20.

¹⁵⁴ Ogilby, 1719, Preface.

¹⁵⁵ Ogilby, 1719: vol 1, Explanation.

¹⁵⁶ Ogilby, 1719: vol 1, Explanation.

¹⁵⁷ Ogilby, 1719: vol 1, Explanation.

¹⁵⁸ Ogilby, 1719: vol 1, Explanation.

¹⁵⁹ Rees, 1980: 61-63.

¹⁶⁰ Kirby, 1735b: 94-95.

¹⁶¹ De La Rochefoucauld, 1988: xvii-xx.

¹⁶² De La Rochefoucauld, 1988: 112.

¹⁶³ Egerton, 1998: 72. Egerton states that analysis of Cornard Wood by Hugh Belsey establishes a topographical view-point. The church spire of Little Henny, Essex, is identified.

¹⁶⁴ Cormack, 1991: 42; Diane Perkins in Rosenthal and Myrone, 2003: 52; Hayes, 1982, 358-359.

¹⁶⁵ Thicknesse, 1788: 12; Armstrong, 1898: 67. Armstrong is of the view that the original must have been one of the first done by Gainsborough in this style.

¹⁶⁶ Thicknesse, 1788: 12.

¹⁶⁷ From Gainsborough’s estimated view-point the coast runs in a straight line only turning inwards near the fort, which is barely visible. See, Suffolk County Record Office, Ipswich, ref. HA49/E2/2/1, North and Cobbold family archives. This map shows considerable dishing on this section of coast. This and other maps suggest that the coast has straightened gradually over time.

¹⁶⁸ Kirby, 1754: 20; Taylor, 1715; see also Asfour and Wiliamson, 1999 : 106-110.

¹⁶⁹ Kirby, 1754, title-page and preface.

¹⁷⁰ For these and details of a general nature about the Kirby’s treatise see, Cormack, 1991: 13; Clayton, 1990/91: 39; Owen, 1980: 7; Owen, 1995/96: 62-64.

¹⁷¹ Kirby, 1754: figs. 70 - 72. N.B. in the first edition a fig. number has been missed out.

¹⁷² Kirby, 1754: 58.

¹⁷³ Taylor, 1715: v.

¹⁷⁴ Kirby, 1754: 24.

¹⁷⁵ Kirby, 1735b, 44-45 and 162-164.

¹⁷⁶ Kirby, 1754: 23.

¹⁷⁷ Kirby, 1754: 24.

¹⁷⁸ Kirby, 1754: 58, Fig.72.

¹⁷⁹ Kirby, 1754: 22-23 and Fig.44.

CHAPTER THREE

¹⁸⁰ Hindle, 1993:11. Muir makes a similar point. See Muir, 2000: 93.

¹⁸¹ Muir, 2000: 93.

¹⁸² Muir, 2000: 111. Muir considers that “the nature of a road was likely to be strongly influenced by nature of the cultural landscape that it traversed”.

¹⁸³ Hallett, 2003: 576. Hallett describes Gainsborough’s roads as “populated by a string of figures, overwhelmingly plebeian, or pausing by the roadside”.

¹⁸⁴ I will focus on poetry that speaks of rural people; their likely encounters and relationships. I will also consult verse describing rural occupations, especially those relying on movement along roads. Particularly pleasing is to be able to refer to lines written by Suffolk poets, such as Robert Bloomfield.

¹⁸⁵ Paulson, 1975: 221, note 45. Paulson describes these hollows as “two steep declivities” that people have “descended into”.

¹⁸⁶ Buck, 1979: 135-137.

¹⁸⁷ Cowper, 1835/37: 196, 41-44.

¹⁸⁸ Crabbe, 1838a: 72, 71-75.

¹⁸⁹ Broome, 1739: 181, 77-82.

¹⁹⁰ Anderson, 1798: 41,184-187.

¹⁹¹ Rosenthal and Myrone, 2002: 15.

¹⁹² Rosenthal and Myrone, 2002: 214.

¹⁹³ Hasbach, 1908: 80.

¹⁹⁴ Neeson, 1993: 162.

¹⁹⁵ The Inspector, No. 31, 1751.

¹⁹⁶ Warton, Thomas, 1802: 12,101-102.

¹⁹⁷ Warton, Joseph, 1747: 30, 3-4.

¹⁹⁸ Martin and Satchel, 2008: 16. Who point out that an important right was “common of pasture”, the right to graze animals, usually attached to particular land holdings.

Cattle, sheep or geese could be grazed. In Suffolk the rights were called “beast-goings”.

¹⁹⁹ Bloomfield, 1827b: 4, 21-24.

²⁰⁰ Dodsley, 1732: 30, 3-4 and 7-8.

²⁰¹ Brerewood, 1796/99: 5, 1-4.

²⁰² Akenside, 1772: 24, 335-340.

²⁰³ Barrell, 2001: 52. See Chapter I of this dissertation, note 82.

²⁰⁴ Dyer, 1855: 82, 200-202.

²⁰⁵ Defoe, 1986: 443.

²⁰⁶ Bloomfield, 1827b: 15, 211-213.

²⁰⁷ Defoe, 1986: 77-78 and 87.

²⁰⁸ Young, 1772: 387-388.

²⁰⁹ Young, 1804: 233.

²¹⁰ Young, 1804: 232.

²¹¹ Fiennes, 1949: 142.

²¹² De La Rochefoucauld, 1988: 114.

²¹³ Dyer, 1855: 91, 558-563.

²¹⁴ Crabbe, 1838b: 20, 69-74.

²¹⁵ Kirby, 1735b.

²¹⁶ Fiennes, 1949: 150.

²¹⁷ Fiennes, 1949: 146.

²¹⁸ Bloomfield, 1827c: 164, 9-12.

- ²¹⁹ John Barrell's *The Dark side of Landscape*, 2001. Barrell finds correspondence between different genres of poetry and landscape painting, within the context of society and of taste.
- ²²⁰ Dyer, 1855: 79, 51-55.
- ²²¹ Dyer, 1855: 79, 67-71.
- ²²² Hayes, 2001: 40. Letter to William Jackson dated 23rd August, 1767.
- ²²³ Bloomfield, 1827b: 12, 165-167.
- ²²⁴ Bloomfield, 1827a: 59, 862-870.
- ²²⁵ De La Rochefoucauld, 1988: 112. Rochefoucauld quotes from notes taken by Maximilien de Lazowski who accompanied them on the tour around Suffolk.
- ²²⁶ Crowe, 1827: 236-243.
- ²²⁷ Thomson, 1830: 285, 99-104.
- ²²⁸ Barrell, 2001: 35-36.
- ²²⁹ Bloomfield, 1827b: 17, 245-251.
- ²³⁰ Crowe, 1827: 18, 223-226.
- ²³¹ Defoe, 1986: 433. Defoe reported that "The great road from London, through this whole county towards Ipswich and Harwich, is the most worn with waggons, carts, and carriages"; De La Rochefoucauld, 1988: 96. Writes: "You cannot imagine the quantity of travellers who are always on the road in England".
- ²³² Young, 1772: 392; Young, 1804: 199. Young describes the dairy breeds in high-Suffolk as also being "polled", without horns, and small in size; and Young, 1784: 151. "Entering now the region of the true Suffolk polled cows, which are unexceptionably the finest in England for milking". The road from Sudbury to Bures is the one running north of the Stour as far as the Orwell/Stour estuary.
- ²³³ Hindle, 1993: 78-79. Hindle states that 2,000 entered daily in the season. Dymond noted that in 1750 alone 20,000 Scots cattle entered Norfolk. Dymond, 1985: 232-233.
- ²³⁴ Young, 1804: 209.
- ²³⁵ Defoe, 1986: 83; Hindle, 1993: 79.
- ²³⁶ Hindle, 2001: 68; Muir, 2000:107. Muir states that drovers used tracks across high ground. Herds numbering about two hundred would be divided into four, each of which had one drover and his dogs.
- ²³⁷ Albert, 1972: 45. Chart 2. Turnpike Acts 1663-1839, a total of six acts were considered.
- ²³⁸ Hindle, 1993: 79; Hindle 2001: 69. Routes depended on numerous factors including the drovers' personal preference, tradition, increasing congestion, deteriorating accommodation for man or beast, the weather, the creation of new enclosures or turnpikes or the erection of new tollgates.
- ²³⁹ Hindle, 1993: 72; Martin, 1998: Type 4.0. Common Pasture, Sub-type, 4.1; Muir, 2000: 107.
- ²⁴⁰ Ward, 1724: 35, 740-743.
- ²⁴¹ De La Rochefoucauld, 1988: 126.
- ²⁴² De La Rochefoucauld, 1988: 154.
- ²⁴³ Wordsworth, 1849/50: 34, 17-20.
- ²⁴⁴ Ward, 1724: 35, 732-739.
- ²⁴⁵ Bloomfield, 1827d: 101-102, 1-4.

- ²⁴⁶ Hallett, 2003: 567. Hallett writes: “In some paintings, the motif of the road dramatizes the countryside as a space of continuous touristic or agricultural flow (picture after picture, for instance, features drovers driving their cattle forward)”.
- ²⁴⁷ Crowe, 1827: 19-20, 247-251.
- ²⁴⁸ Hallett, 2003: 567.
- ²⁴⁹ Barrell, 2001: 46. George Lambert, *Extensive Landscape with Four Gentlemen on a Hillside*, 1733.
- ²⁵⁰ Hayes, 1980: 88-89; Hayes, 1982: I, 48.
- ²⁵¹ Barrell, 1990: 37.
- ²⁵² Barrell, 2010: 89.
- ²⁵³ Hayes, 1982: VI. 34-36. Gainsborough is said to have painted two landscapes for Francis Hayman and participated in one of Gravelot’s designs for Vauxhall Gardens.

CONCLUSION

- ²⁵⁴ Sloman, 2002: 117-118 and 134.
- ²⁵⁵ Sloman, 2002: 122.
- ²⁵⁶ Pott, 1782: 71-74.
- ²⁵⁷ Price, 1794: 24.
- ²⁵⁸ Gilpin, 1792: 8.
- ²⁵⁹ Bermingham, 1987: 57; Sloman, 2002: 145.
- ²⁶⁰ Gilpin, 1792; Price, 1794.
- ²⁶¹ Copley and Garside, 1994: 3. Copley and Garside cite Alan Liu, *Wordsworth: The Sense of History*, (Stanford University Press, 1989) 533-534
- ²⁶² Gilpin, 1792: 47-48.
- ²⁶³ Gilpin, 1792: 55.
- ²⁶⁴ Price, 1794: Ch.II, 19.
- ²⁶⁵ Price, 1794: Ch.II, 20.
- ²⁶⁶ Price, 1794: Ch.II, 21.
- ²⁶⁷ Asfour and Williamson, 1999: 164. In visualising an ellipse in this area of the painting, these authors take this idea further.
- ²⁶⁸ Sloman, 2002: 117.
- ²⁶⁹ Sloman, 2002: 172.
- ²⁷⁰ Sloman, 2002: 173.
- ²⁷¹ Hewitt, 2011: 185.
- ²⁷² Hewitt, 2011: 185.
- ²⁷³ Sloman, 2002: 136.

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Fig.1. Thomas Gainsborough, *View outside Sudbury*, c1746, Philip Mould, Dover Street, London, Oil on Canvas, 15½" x 19¼", 39.4 x 48.9cm.



Fig.2. Thomas Gainsborough, *View outside Sudbury*, c1746, Detail, Philip Mould, Dover Street, London, Oil on Canvas, 15½" x 19¼", 39.4 x 48.9cm.



Fig.3. Thomas Gainsborough, *View outside Sudbury*, c1746, Detail, Philip Mould, Dover Street, London, Oil on Canvas, 15½" x 19¼", 39.4 x 48.9cm.

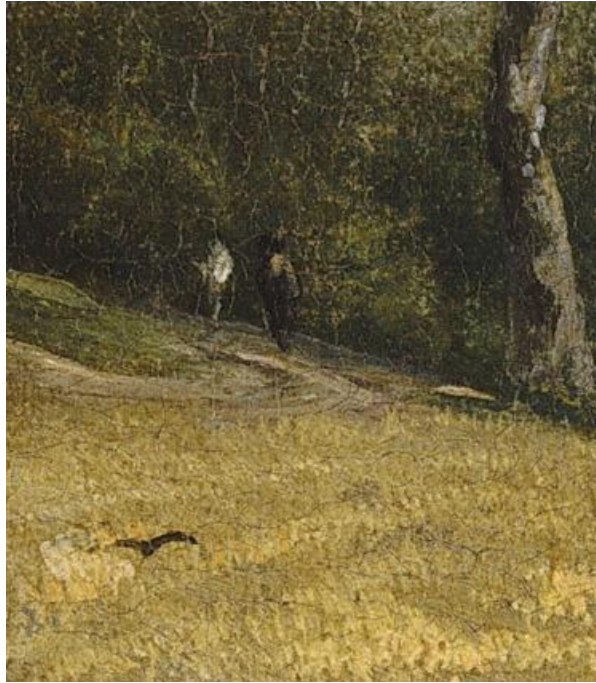


Fig.4. Thomas Gainsborough, *View outside Sudbury*, c1746, Detail, Philip Mould, Dover Street, London, Oil on Canvas, 15½" x 19¼", 39.4 x 48.9cm.



Fig.5. Nicolas Poussin, *Landscape with the Body of Phocion carried out of Athens*, 1648, The National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, Oil on Canvas, 144 x 175cm.



Fig.6. Camille Pissaro, *L'Hermitage*, c1868, Soloman R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Oil on Canvas, 59^{5/8}" x 79", 151.4 x 200.6cm.



Fig.7. Walker Evans, *Savannah Negro Quarter*, 1935, Photograph, Published in *American Photographs, Exh.Cat.* (New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1938), 36.



Fig.8. Jacob van Ruisdael, *Dunes*, 1650s, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Oil on Canvas, 33.5 x 49.2cm.

Fig.9. Thomas Gainsborough, *Rest on the Way*, 1747, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Oil on Canvas, 101.9 x 147.3cm.



Fig.10. Jacob van Ruisdael, *Landscape with Footbridge*, 1652, The Frick Collection, New York, USA, Oil on Canvas, 38³/₄" x 62⁵/₈", 98.4 x 159.1cm.



Fig.11. Jacob van Ruisdael, *Landscape with Footbridge*, 1652, Detail, New York, The Frick Collection, Oil on Canvas, 38³/₄" x 62⁵/₈", 98.4 x 159.1cm.



Fig.12. Jan Wijnants, *Landscape with a High Dune and Peasants on a Road*, c1665, National Gallery, London, Oil on Canvas, 40.9 x 53.7cms.

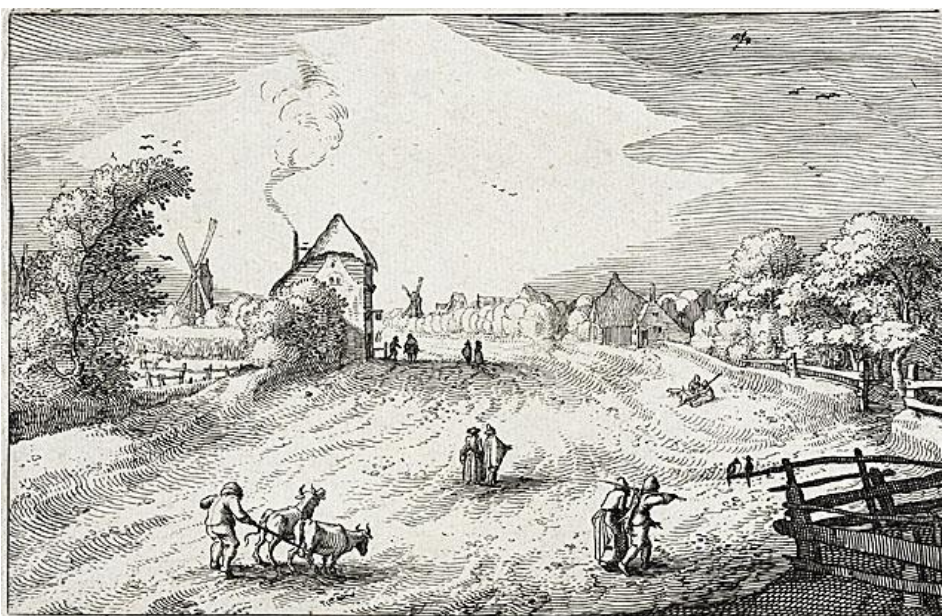


Fig.13. Claes Jansz Visscher, *On the Road Towards Leiden*, c1611-1612, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Engraving, 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ ".



Fig.14. Jacob van Ruisdael, *Landscape with Wheatfield*, c1660, Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, USA, Oil on Canvas, 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 18", 40 x 45.7cm.



Fig.15. Jacob van Ruisdael, *Storm on the Dunes*, n.d. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Oil on Canvas, 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 32 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", 69.5 x 81.9cm.



Fig.16. Thomas Gainsborough, *River Landscape with a Horse Drinking and Rustic Lovers*, 1754-56, St. Louis Art Museum, Missouri, Oil on Canvas, 37" x 49½", 94 x 125.7cm.



Fig.17. Jacob van Ruisdael, *View of Haarlem from the Dunes*, 1670-75, Museum of Fine Art, Boston, Oil on Canvas, 17½" x 17⅛", 44.5 x 43.5cm.



Fig.18. Jacob van Ruisdael, *View of Haarlem from the Dunes*, 1670-75, Detail, Museum of Fine Art, Boston, Oil on Canvas, 17½" x 17⅛", 44.5 x 43.5cm.



Fig.19. Thomas Gainsborough, *Extensive Landscape with Chalky Banks, Winding Track, Figures and Animals*, 1746-47, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, Oil on Canvas, 18" x 24", 47 x 61cm.



Fig.20. Philips Koninck, *Extensive Landscape with a Road by the River*, 1655, National Gallery, London, Oil on Canvas, 137.4 x 167.7cm.



Fig.21. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1736, Detail, north-west quarter (Blatchly and James, 2004).

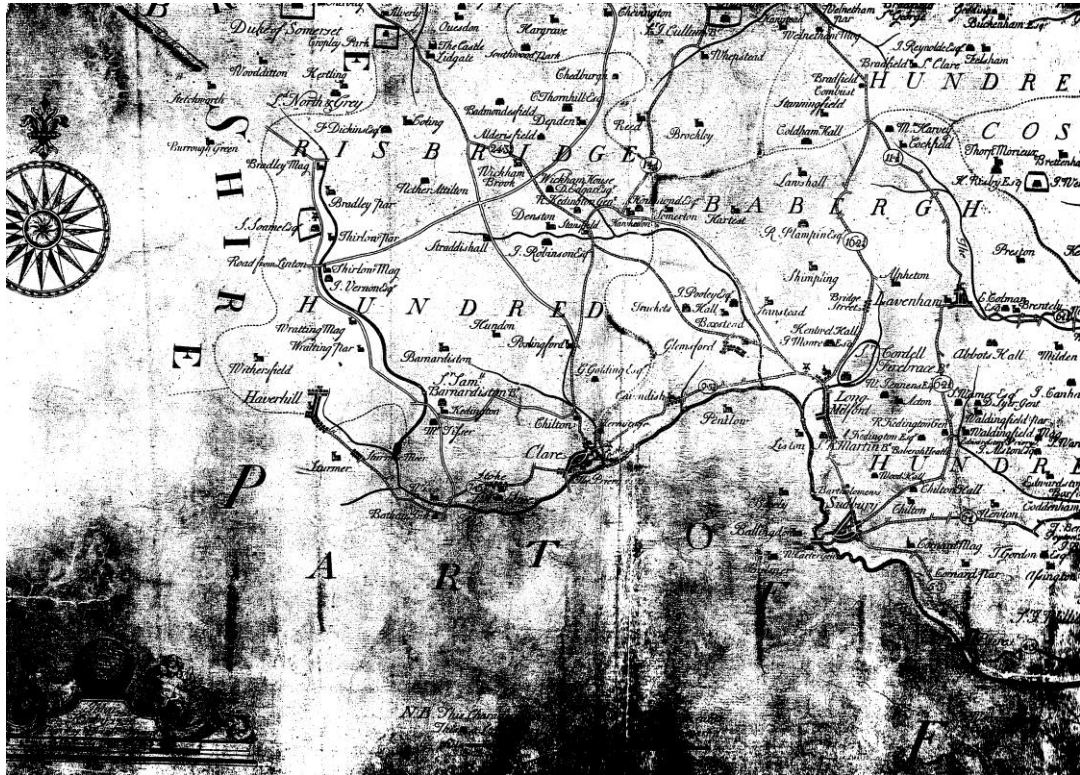


Fig.22. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1736, Detail, south-west quarter (Blatchly and James, 2004).

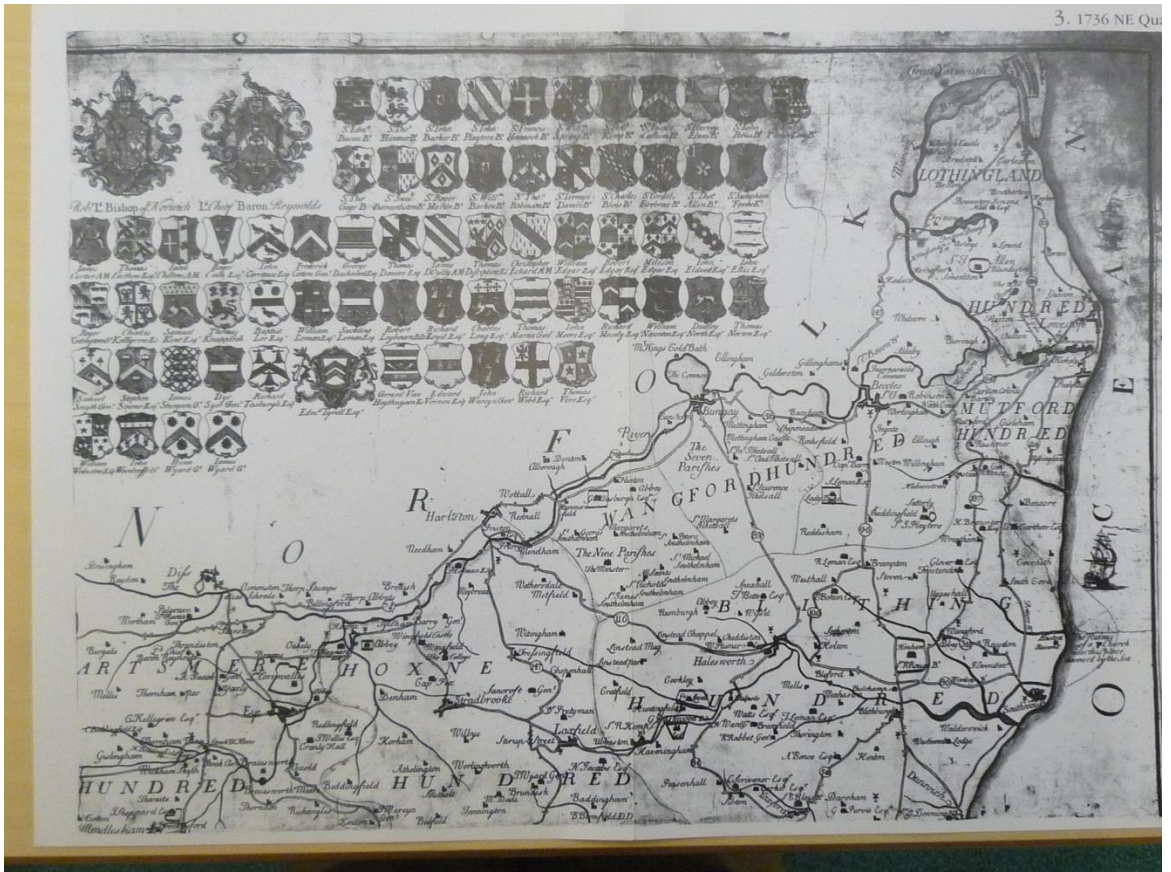


Fig.23. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1736, Detail, north-east quarter (Blatchly and James, 2004).



Fig.24. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1736, Detail, south-east quarter (Blatchly and James, 2004).



Fig.25. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1737, 1/2" scale (Blatchly and James, 2004).

helmus King of the East-Angles was Baptized by Bishop Cædæa.

Thus much for Rendlesham. Pursuing our Journey, at 9 m. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ f. the right goes to Wickham-Market, the left to Hollesly; a little further the right goes to Rendlesham-Green; passing by Rendlesham-Church on the right, at 10 m. 1 f. the right turns backward to Campsey-Ash, avoiding divers turnings to the right and left, at 10 m. 5 f. is Eyke-Castle Inn. Pass by the Church on the left, where the right leads to Ufford, the left to Orford. At 11 m. 1 f. are two Gates, the right goes to Ufford, the left to Sutton, leaving Bromelwell Church about 2 f. on the right, at 11 m. 7 f. come to a Sand-Pit on the right; here the Road turns backward from Woodbridge to Orford, of which hereafter; passing over a Brook, at 12 m. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ f. the Road turns backward to Baudsey; of which anon. At 12 m. 6 f. is Wilford-Bridge. At 13 m. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ f. is Melton Village.

FROM Blithburgh White-Hart Inn to	} 21 m. 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ f.
Melton Village by Way of Snape is —	
From Blithburgh White-Hart Inn, to	} 20 m. 4 f.
Melton Village, by Way of Saxmundham is —	
So that it is the nearest Way by Sax-	} 00 m. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ f.
mundham, by the Distance of —	

Thus having finished the Road from Ipswich to Yarmouth, and its return to Melton Village, come we now to treat of three other Branches issuing out of the Yarmouth Road at Melton Village, to Baudsey, Orford, and Aldeburgh.

AND first of the Road to Baudsey-Ferry.

RETURNING back in the last described Road over Wilford-Bridge, at 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ f. take the right hand Way up Wilford Hills; at 1 m. 3 f. leave the right which goes to Sutton Church, passing over Heathy Land, leaving the one Bough Oak about half a Mile on the left, and Sutton Holly Bush a little on the right. At 2 m. 4 f. the right goes to Sutton Church

(it

(it being on the right 4 f.) the left goes to Eyke; now avoiding divers turnings to the right and left, leave Shottisham Church a little on the right. At 4 m. 6 f. is Shottisham Cross, the right goes to Shottisham, the left to Hollesly. At 6 m. 6 f. the right turns to Ramsholt, here turn on the left, leaving Alderton Church a little on the right. At 6 m. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ f. is Alderton Village; here turn on the right, leaving the left hand Way leading to Hollesly. At 7 m. 7 f. is Baudsey Church close on the right; at 9 m. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ f. is Baudsey-Ferry, the Ferry-House on the Colnes side of the Water.

From Woodbridge to Melton Village is 1 m. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ f.
From Melton Village to Baudsey-Ferry is 9 m. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ f.

From Woodbridge to Baudsey-Ferry is 11 m. 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ f.

BAUDSEY, Written in ancient Records BAWDRESEY, was anciently a Market Town (but is not at present so) for we find that Robert de Ufford, after he had been twice Justice of Ireland, obtained a Licence of King Edward I, in the 11th Year of his Reign, to hold a Market weekly on Fridays, and a Fair yearly upon the Eve Day and Morrow of the Nativity of our Blessed Virgin, September 8, at his Manour of Bawdressey. How long this Market and Fair has been disused we know not.

RETURN we now to Melton Village, and from thence to Orford.

RETURNING from Melton Village in the Blithburgh Road, at 5 m. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ f. coming at the Sand-Pit before mentioned, avoid the left forward leading to Eyke, and the right leading to Sutton, take the middle Way, avoiding divers turnings to the right and left. At 3 m. the right leads to Hollesly, the left to Eyke, enter in at a Gate, passing through Sprats-Street. At 4 m. 3 f. Stavender-Park on the left. At 5 m. 2 f. leave it. At 5 m. 5 f. is Butley-Oyster on the right, the right on this side the Oyster goes to Capell, the right on the other side to Butley-Abby.

F BUTLEY,

Fig.26. John Kirby, *The Suffolk Traveller*, 1735, 32-33, (Blatchly and James, 2004).

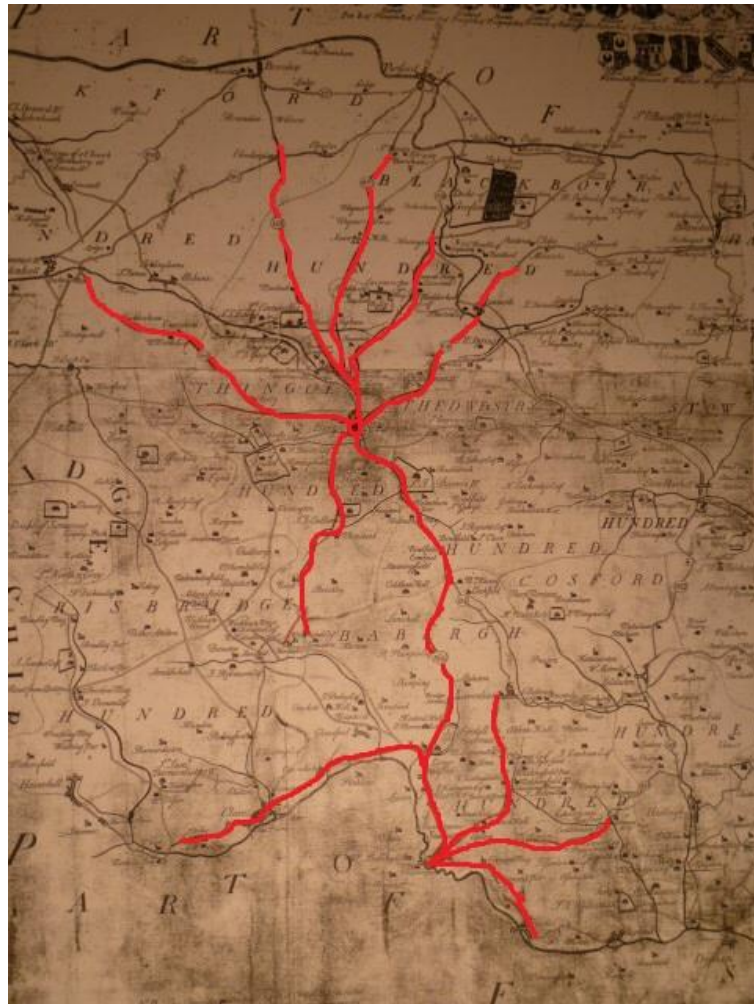


Fig.27. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1736, Detail, red lines added, represent the crane-fly-like pattern of walks issuing from Bury St. Edmunds and from Sudbury.

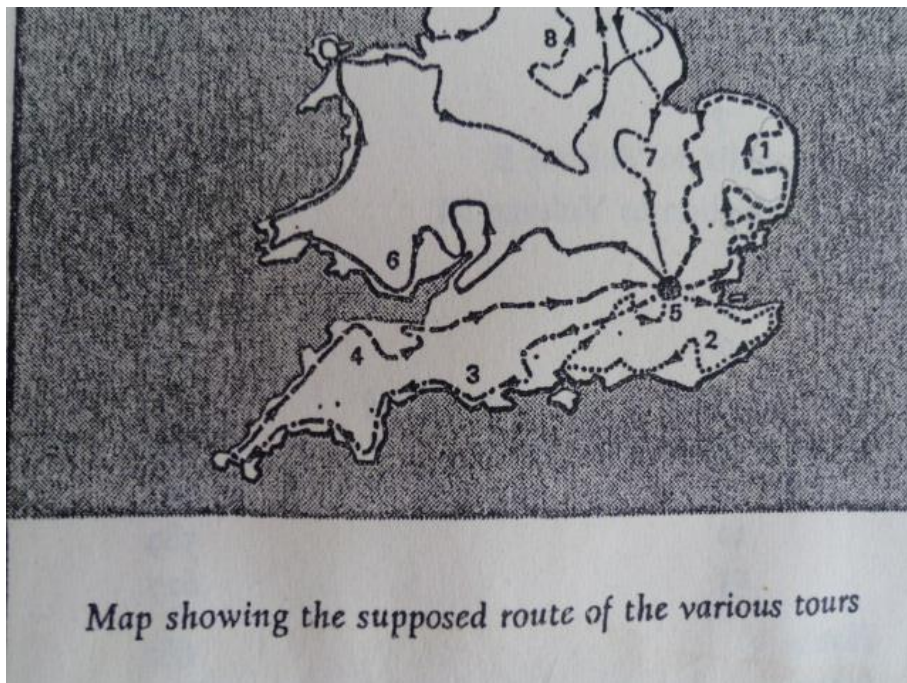


Fig.28. Daniel Defoe, *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, 1724-26, Section of map showing the first, East-Anglian diversion (Rogers 1986, Frontispiece).

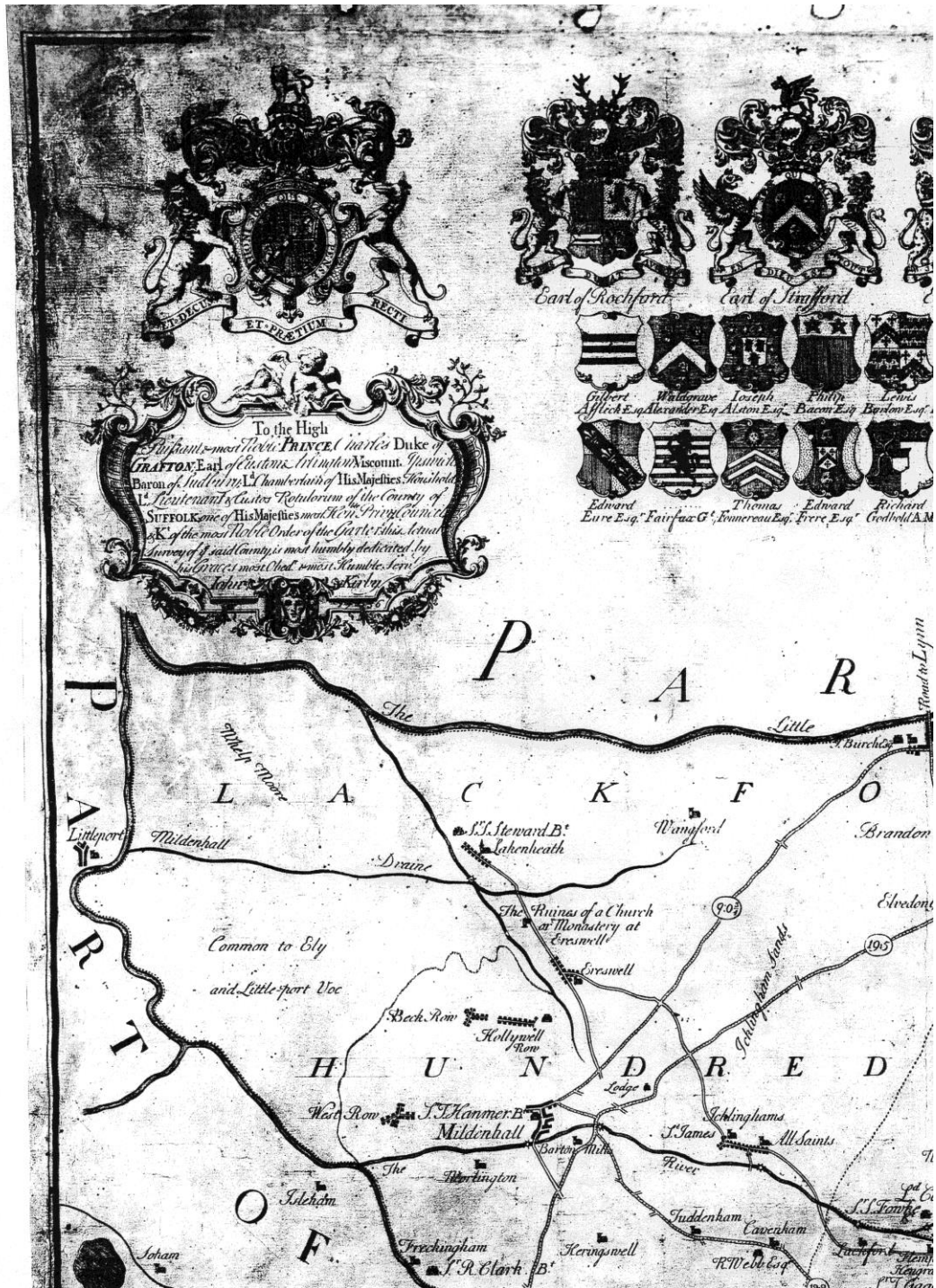


Fig.29. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1736, Detail, The Duke of Grafton's coat of arms. (Blatchly and James, 2004).



Fig.30. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1736. (Blatchly and James, 2004).



Fig.31. John Kirby, *Map of Suffolk*, 1736, Detail, The North Sea, Shipping. (Blatchly and James, 2004).

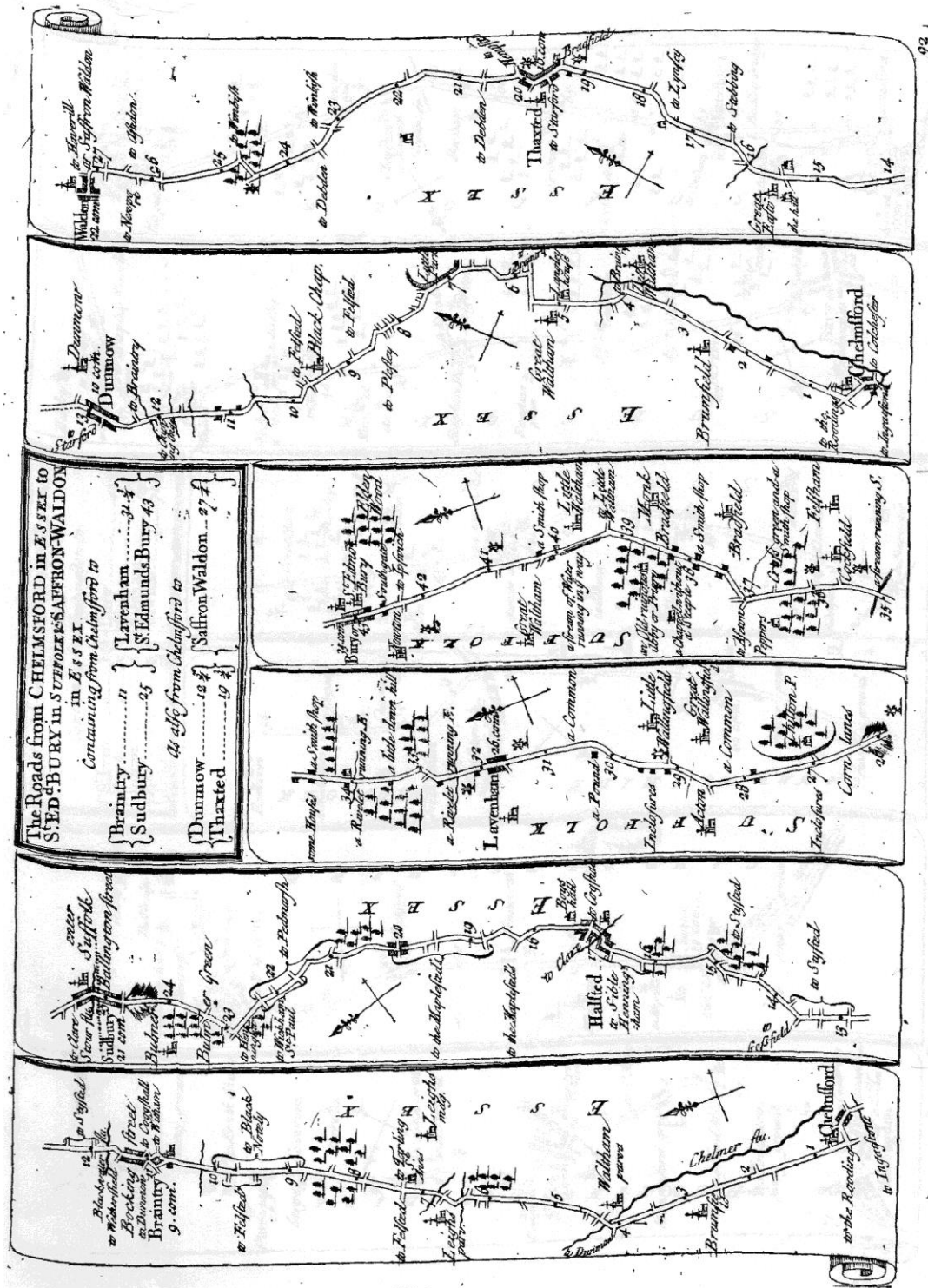


Fig.32. John Ogilby, 1719, An Actual Survey of all the Principle Roads of England and Wales; Detail, Chelmsford to Bury St Edmunds, London.



Fig.33. Thomas Gainsborough, *Landscape with a view of a Distant Village*, 1750, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, Oil on Canvas, 29½" x 59½", 75 x 151cm.

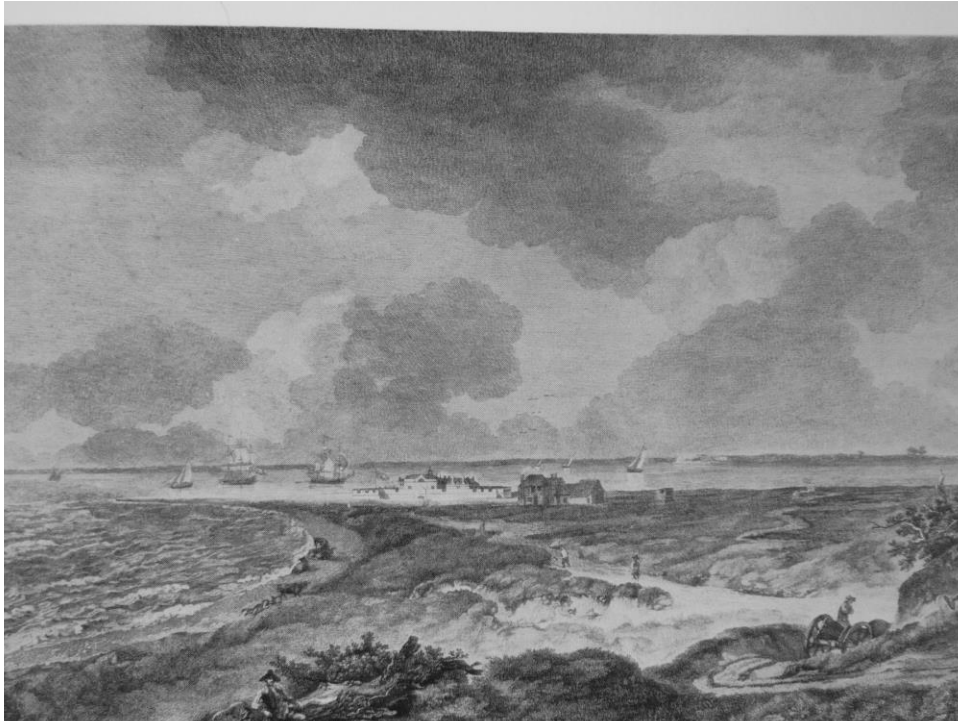


Fig.34. Thomas Gainsborough, *Landguard Point and Fort*; British Museum, London, Thomas Major, Engraving, 1754, 33½" x 58", 85.1 x 147.3cm.



Fig.35. *Landguard Point, Suffolk*, 2011, photographed by the author, the flat roof of the fort is just visible at the sky-line.

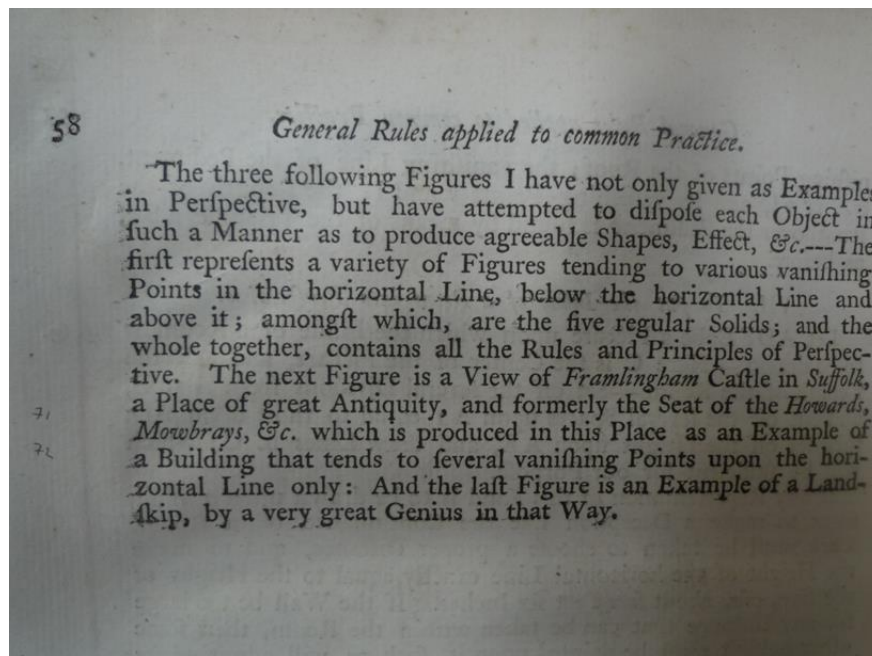


Fig.36. Joshua Kirby, *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy*, Book 2, 58.

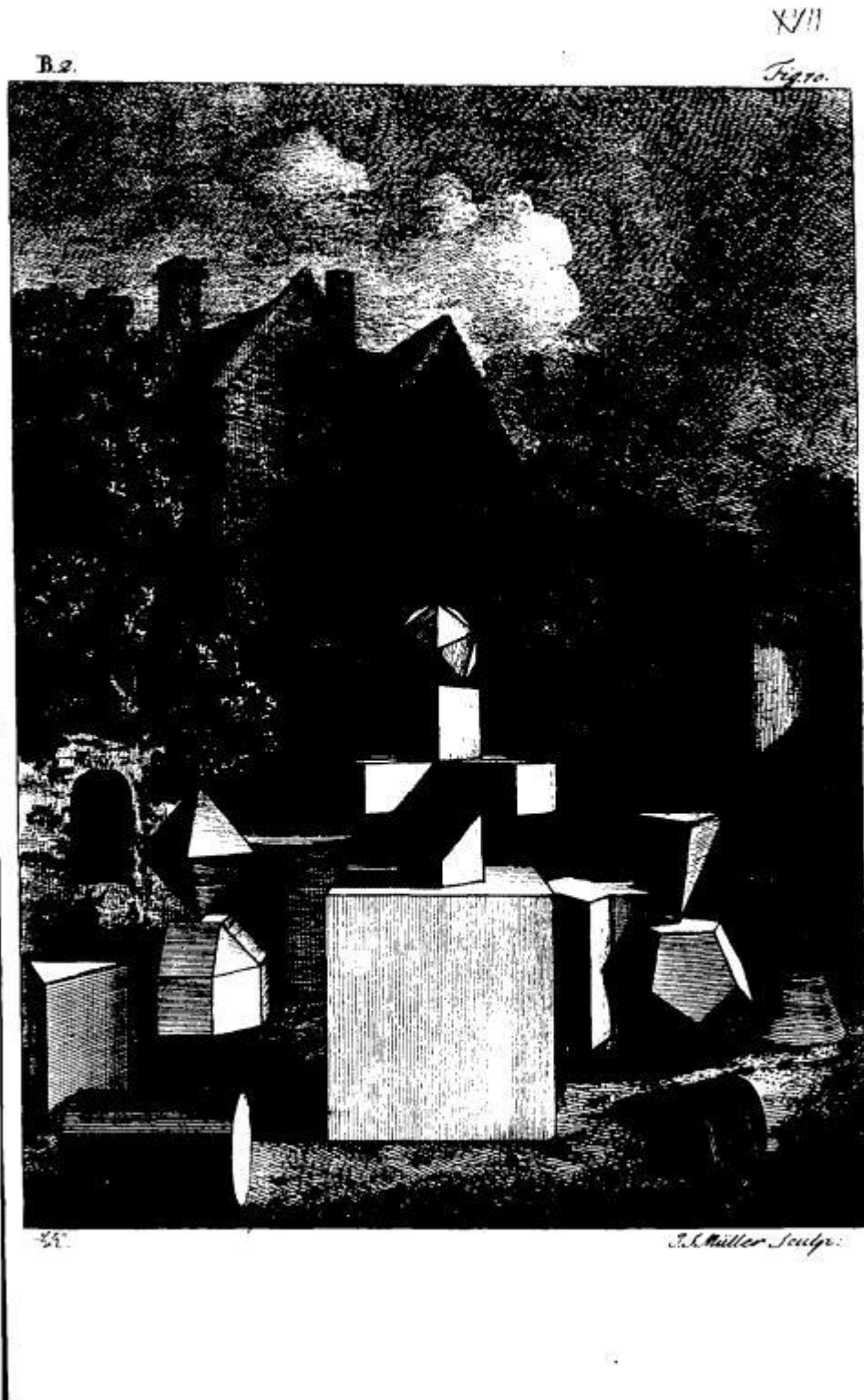


Fig. 37. Joshua Kirby, *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy*, 1754, Fig. 70. "The five regular solids".



Fig.38. Joshua Kirby, *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy*, 1754, View of Framlingham Castle in Suffolk, Fig.71.

Fig.39. Joshua Kirby, *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy*, 1754, An example of a Landskip, Fig.72.

tinued at an infinite Distance, and the Line cd to represent a Part of the real Horizon, and then imagine a Picture $GLPP$, to be placed between the Eye E , and the Horizon cd ; then its Section HL , with the horizontal Plane $abcd$, will be the indefinite Representation of the Horizon cd , upon the Picture; and this Representation is called the Horizontal Line. Now since all Objects which lye flat upon the Ground, or are parallel to it, seem to vanish into the real Horizon, therefore the Representation of all such Objects upon the Picture, must vanish into this Horizontal Line; because, it is the perspective Representation of the real Horizon: And for the same Reason, the Ground, or whole Extent between the Eye, and the real Horizon, will not appear to lye flat, but to rise upwards. For let E be the Eye, $ABCD$ the Ground, and HI the utmost Extent which the Eye can distinguish; now, I say, the Ground will not appear to lie flat, as $ABCD$, but to rise upwards, like $ABcd$, 'till it cuts the Plane $abcd$, which is drawn through the Eye E , parallel to the original Plane $ABCD$; and the Section cd , which the Planes $ABcd$ and $abcd$ make with each other, will represent the real Horizon. And, as before, if we suppose a Picture, $GLPP$, to be fixed between the Eye and the said Horizon; then the Section HL , which the Picture makes with the parallel Plane $abcd$, will be the indefinite Representation of the Horizontal Line upon the Picture; because the Rays of Light, in their Passage from the Section cd , or real Horizon, would cut the Picture in the Line HL .

From hence, then, we may see the grand Principle upon which Perspective depends; namely, upon finding those Lines and Points into which Objects seem to vanish upon the Picture. And whoever will give himself the Trouble to understand the following short Theory, will have mastered all the Difficulty in Perspective: For it only requires to have a clear Idea of the Nature and Property of vanishing Lines and vanishing Points, and a few other Requisites as previous thereto; which he may partly conceive by what has been said already, and by considering, that as the Horizontal Line HL , is produced by means of the Plane $abcd$, which passes through the Eye parallel to the Ground, or original Plane; so, in the very same Manner, all other vanishing Lines are determined; namely, by imagining a Plane to pass through the Eye, parallel to those Planes whose Representations are required upon the Picture. ---Again, in regard to vanishing Points; they are determined by drawing Lines from the Eye, parallel to the original Lines, 'till they

Fig.40. Joshua Kirby, *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy*, 1754, page 23 of treatise.

they cut the Picture; in order to which, we must always suppose these Lines to lie in some Plane, and then, having found the vanishing Line of that Plane, the vanishing Point of any Line, in that Plane, may be found also. And from hence we may observe, that the Horizontal Line is of the same Nature with any other vanishing Lines, and differs from them only in being more useful; because, many more Objects are perpendicular and parallel to the Picture, than oblique with it: And therefore, the great Strefs which hath been laid upon this Line by most Writers, is not so very significant as they apprehended; for, in some Cases, it is of no use at all in a Picture. For let us consider a little. If vanishing Lines upon the Picture, are always to be produced by Planes passing through the Eye, parallel to original Figures, then no original Plane can have its vanishing Line in the Horizontal Line, unless it is parallel to the Ground; but, if any Object be obliquely situated with regard to the Ground, then, the Plane which is to pass through the Eye, parallel to the Original, in order to determine its vanishing Line, will be oblique with the Ground also; and therefore it cannot pass through the Horizontal Line, but will be either above, below, perpendicular to it, or cross it in an oblique manner: All which may be conceived by inspecting the following Figures. In Fig. 45, the original Object, TOSX, lies upon the Ground; therefore, the Plane, a b c d, which passes through the Eye E, parallel to the Ground, cuts the Picture in the Horizontal Line HL. In Fig. 46, the Original, TOSX, is supposed perpendicular to the Ground, and to be perpendicular to the Picture also; therefore, the Plane ABPD, which passes through the Eye E, parallel to the said Plane, will be perpendicular to the Ground and perpendicular to the Picture; and therefore will pass through the Center C, of the Picture, and produce the vanishing Line PD, which will be perpendicular to the Horizontal Line HC. But, if the original Object is perpendicular to the Ground, and oblique with the Picture, as in Fig. 47; then its vanishing Line PD, will be perpendicular to the Horizontal Line HL, but, will not pass through the Center or Middle of the Picture, but will be on one Side of it. Again, if the square Object ABTS, Fig. 48, (which is inclined to the Ground, at the Angle ATO, but reclined to the Picture) have two Sides AB, TS, parallel to the Picture; then the Plane OPVL, which passes through the Eye E, parallel to the original ABTS, will produce a vanishing Line VL, above the Horizontal Line HC, and exactly parallel to it. But if the same Object,

Fig.41. Joshua Kirby, *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy*, 1754, page 24 of treatise.

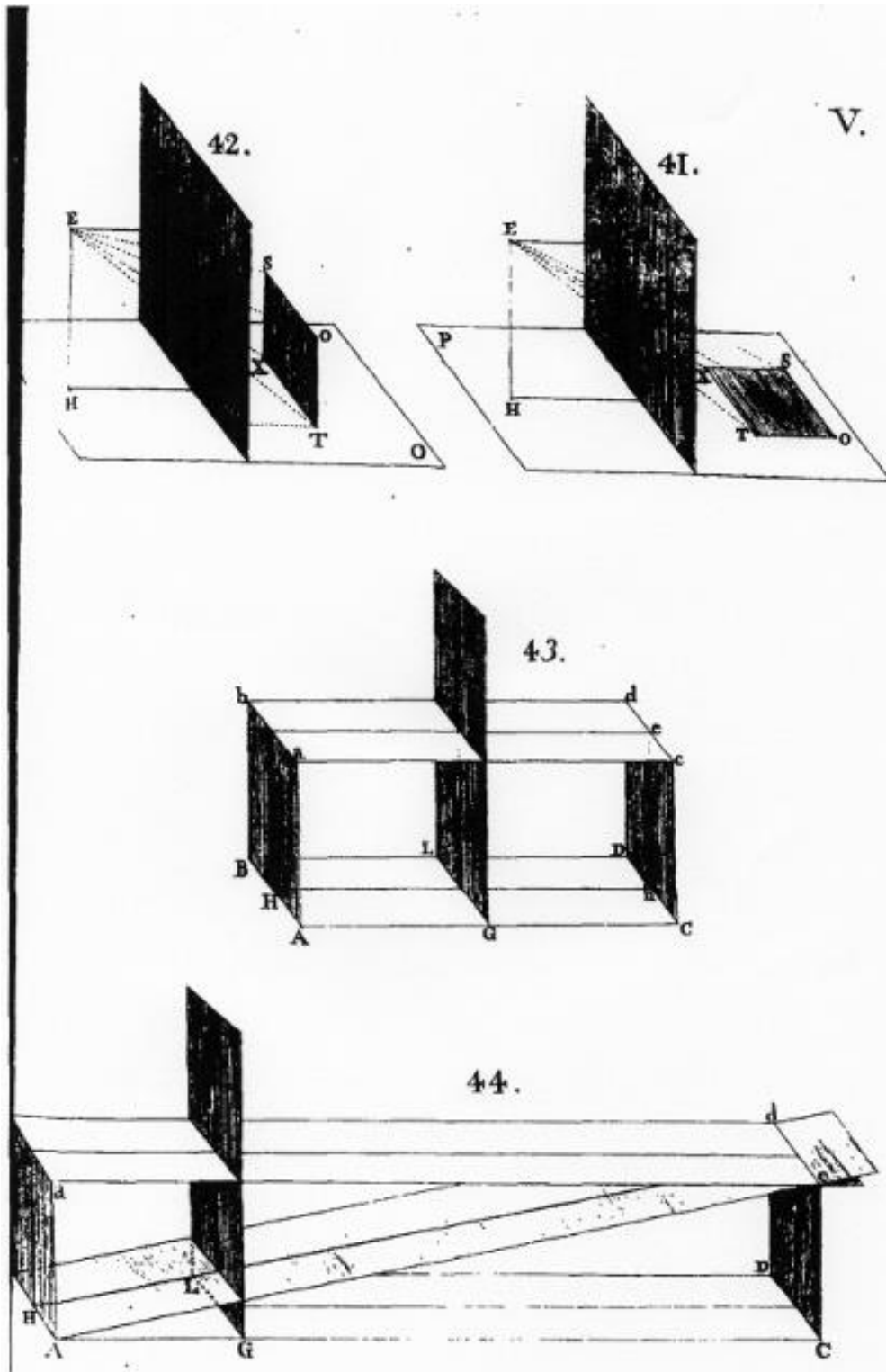


Fig.42. Joshua Kirby, *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy*, 1754, Fig.44. (Figs.40. and 41. explain)



Fig.43. Thomas Gainsborough, *Landscape with a View of a Distant Village*, 1750, Detail, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, Oil, 29½" x 59½", 75 x 151cm.



Fig.44. Thomas Gainsborough, *Cornard Wood (Gainsborough's Forest)*, 1748, National Gallery, London, Oil on Canvas, 48" x 61", 121.9 x 154.9cms.



Fig.45. Thomas Gainsborough, *Cornard Wood* (*Gainsborough's Forest*), 1748, Detail, National Gallery, London, Oil on Canvas, 48" x 61", 121.9 x 154.9cms.



Fig.46. Thomas Gainsborough, *Cornard Wood* (*Gainsborough's Forest*) 1748, Detail, National Gallery, London, Oil on Canvas, 48" x 61", 121.9 x 154.9cms.



Fig.47. *William Millward, woodcutter to the Duke of Kent, early eighteenth century, Buck, A. Dress in Eighteenth-Century England (1979), 136.*



Fig.48. Thomas Gainsborough, *Landscape with a View of a Distant Village*, 1750, Detail, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, Oil on Canvas, 29½" x 59½", 75 x 151cm.

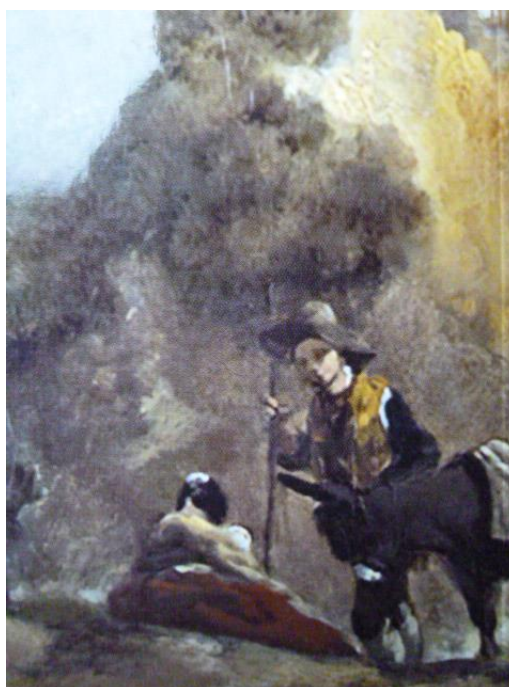


Fig.49. Thomas Gainsborough, *Landscape with a View of a Distant Village*, 1750, Detail, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, Oil on Canvas, 29½" x 59½", 75 x 151cm.



Fig.50. Thomas Gainsborough, *River Landscape with a Horse Drinking and Rustic Lovers, (View of Suffolk)*, 1754-56, Detail, St. Louis Art Museum, Missouri, Oil on Canvas, 37" x 49½", 95.9 x 125.4 cm.



Fig.51. Thomas Gainsborough, *Landscape in Suffolk*, 1748,
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Oil on Canvas, 26" x 37³/₈", 66 x 95cm.



Fig.52. Thomas Gainsborough, *Landscape in Suffolk*, 1748, Detail, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Oil on Canvas, 26" x 37³/₈", 66 x 95cm.



Fig.53. Thomas Gainsborough, *View near the Coast*, c1750-1755, Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich, Oil on Canvas, 32" x 42½", 81.3 x 108cm.



Fig.54. Thomas Gainsborough, *Extensive Landscape with Chalky Banks, Winding Track, Figures and Animals*, 1746-47, Detail, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, Oil on Canvas, 18" x 24", 47 x 61cm.



Fig.55. Thomas Gainsborough, *Cornard Wood (Gainsborough's Forest)*, 1748, Detail, National Gallery, London, Oil on Canvas, 48" x 61", 121.9 x 154.9cm.



Fig.56. Thomas Gainsborough, *Wooded Landscape with a Woodcutter*, 1762-3, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, Oil on Canvas, 39½" x 50", 100.3 x 127cm.



Fig.57. Thomas Gainsborough, *Gypsy Encampment, Sunset*, c1778-80, Tate Britain, London, Oil on Canvas, 120.5 x 150.5cm.



Fig.58. Thomas Gainsborough, *Sunset, Carthorses drinking at a Stream*, 1759-62, Tate Britain, London, Oil on Canvas, 56" x 59³/₄".