

EDWARD HAWKE LOCKER AND THE FOUNDATION OF  
THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF NAVAL ART

(c. 1795-1845)

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## ABSTRACT

The National Gallery of Naval Art was situated within the Painted Hall at Greenwich Hospital from 1824 until 1936. This collection of British naval paintings, sculptures and nautical curiosities was one of the first ‘national’ collections to be acquired and exhibited for the general public, preceding the foundation of the National Gallery by a matter of months. Installed in the wake of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, the Naval Gallery, as it was more commonly known, was primarily founded to commemorate ‘the distinguished exploits of the British Navy’.<sup>1</sup> This thesis examines how the Gallery presented a unique type of national naval history to the early nineteenth-century public, contributing to the development of contemporary commemorative culture as a result. In addition, the Naval Gallery also functioned as a forum for the exhibition of British art. This study examines how the Gallery was actively involved in the contemporary art world, liaising with the Royal Academy of Arts and the British Institution, providing patronage for contemporary artists and actively contributing toward the development of a national patriotic aesthetic.

In 1936 the Naval Gallery was dismantled and the collection was given, on permanent loan, to the newly founded National Maritime Museum. As a result of this closure the Gallery ceased to be the subject of contemporary commentary and knowledge of its existence gradually declined. This thesis conducts a dedicated institutional study of the Naval Gallery in an attempt to re-establish its status as the first ‘national’ naval art collection, as a major site for the public commemoration of Nelson and as an active participant in the early nineteenth-century British art world.

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<sup>1</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Edward Hawke Locker’s Memorandum, 20 September 1823, 19.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## VOLUME I

ABSTRACT		2
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS		5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		24
DECLARATION		25
INTRODUCTION		26
CHAPTER ONE	Locker's Letters: documenting the foundation, acquisition and display	51
CHAPTER TWO	The Vestibule: Recent British triumph & the reinterpretation of contemporary commemorative projects	104
CHAPTER THREE	The Main Hall I: Constructing a Narrative of National Naval History	144

CHAPTER FOUR	The Main Hall II: The formation and display of a national naval art collection	197
CHAPTER FIVE	The Upper Hall: Constructing a site of National Nelsonic Memory	256
CONCLUSION	The Naval Gallery in a post-Locker era.	285
ABBREVIATIONS		300
BIBLIOGRAPHY		301
VOLUME II		
ILLUSTRATIONS		

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Canaletto, *Greenwich Hospital from the North Bank of the Thames*, c.1752-3, NMM BHC 1827, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 68.6 x 108.6 cm.
2. The Painted Hall, Greenwich Hospital.
3. John Scarlett Davis, *The Painted Hall, Greenwich*, 1830, NMM, Greenwich. Pencil and grey-blue wash, 14¾ x 16¾ in. (37.5 x 42.5 cm).
4. James Thornhill, *The Main Hall Ceiling of the Painted Hall: King William and Queen Mary attended by Kingly Virtues*.
5. James Thornhill, Detail of the main hall ceiling: *King William and Queen Mary*.
6. James Thornhill, Detail of the upper hall ceiling: *Queen Anne and George, Prince of Denmark*.
7. James Thornhill, Detail of the south wall of the upper hall: *The Arrival of William III at Torbay*.
8. James Thornhill, Detail of the north wall of the upper hall: *The Arrival of George I at Greenwich*.
9. James Thornhill, West Wall of the Upper Hall: *George I receiving the sceptre, with Prince Frederick leaning on his knee, and the three young princesses*.
10. James Thornhill, Detail of the west wall of the Upper Hall: *Personification of Naval Victory*.

11. James Thornhill, Detail of the main hall ceiling: *British man-of-war, flying the ensign, at the bottom and a captured Spanish galleon at top.*
12. 'The Painted Hall' published in William Shoberl's *A Summer's Day at Greenwich*, (London, 1840)
13. 'The Naval Gallery' published in the *Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, front cover.
14. Gilbert Stuart, *Portrait of Captain William Locker, (1731-1800) Lieutenant-Governor of Greenwich Hospital*, c.1785, NMM BHC2846, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 76.2 x 63.5 cm.
15. Henry Wyndham Phillips, *Portrait of Edward Hawke Locker (1777-1849), Secretary of Greenwich Hospital*, c. 1840, NMM BHC3165, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 76 x 63.5 cm.
16. Artist Unknown, *The Painted Hall Greenwich, from the Upper Hall, showing Nelson's funeral car*, c.1810, NMM PAD3934, Greenwich. Watercolour, 19 x 27 cm.
17. Joshua Reynolds, *Augustus, First Viscount, Keppel*, 1785-6, the Royal Collection, London. Oil on canvas, 239.3 x 147.5 cm.
18. After Joshua Reynolds, *Admiral Edward Boscawen*, c. 1824-5 (Original painted 1755-6), NMM BHC2565, Greenwich. Oil on Canvas, 233.5 x 152.5 cm.
19. Matthew Shepperson after Daniel Mytens the Elder, *Robert Rich (1587-1658) 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Warwick*, c. 1825 (original painted c. 1632), NMM BHC 3080, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 221 x 139.5cm.

20. John Wood after Thomas Gainsborough, *Viscount Samuel Hood*, 1827, NMM BHC2777, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 241.3 x 147.3 cm.
21. After 17th century British school, *Sir John Hawkins (1532-95) Sir Francis Drake (1540-96) and Thomas Cavendish (1560-92)*, c. 1829, NMM BHC2603, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 139.5 x 155 cm.
22. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 201: Sketch of the illustrative engraved portrait of Thomas Cavendish taken from Henry Holland, *Heroologia Anglica* (1620).
23. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 201: Sketch of the illustrative engraved portrait of John Hawkins taken from Henry Holland, *Heroologia Anglica* (1620).
24. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 202. Sketch of the illustrative engraved portrait of Humphrey Gilbert, taken from Henry Holland, *Heroologia Anglica* (1620).
25. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 205. Sketch of the illustrative engraved portrait Sir Francis Drake taken from Henry Holland, *Heroologia Anglica* (1620).
26. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 199: *Sketch of Hawkins, Drake and Cavendish*.
27. Peter Lely, *Prince Rupert*, 1666-68, the Royal Collection, London. Oil on canvas, 123 x 100.8 cm.
28. After Peter Lely, *Prince Rupert, 1st Duke of Cumberland*, 1835, NMM BHC 2990, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 239.5 x 148.3 cm.
29. Nathaniel Dance, *Captain James Cook*, 1775-6, NMM BHC 2628, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.6 cm.
30. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 256: *Pen Illustration of the Death of Cook*.

31. Johann Zoffany, *The Death of Captain James Cook, 14 February 1779*, c. 1795, NMM BHC 0424, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 137.2 x 182.9 cm.
32. TNA PRO 30/26/27: An early design by Locker for the main hall of the Naval Gallery, the Painted Hall, c. 1823.
33. TNA PRO 30/26/26, 44: Plan of the vestibule.
34. TNA PRO 30/26/26, 55: Plan of the vestibule.
35. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 45: Plan for the main hall of the Naval Gallery.
36. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 56: Plan for the main hall of the Naval Gallery.
37. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 63: Plan for the main hall of the Naval Gallery.
38. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 52: Plan for Upper Hall of the Naval Gallery.
39. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 60: Combined plan for the main hall and vestibule of the Naval Gallery.
40. Edward Hawke Locker, *Dining Room Hand Screen*, Huntington Library, LR 217. [First published by C. Roach in 'Domestic Display and Imperial Identity'].
41. Edward Hawke Locker, *Drawing Room Hand Screen*, Huntington Library, LR 217. [First published by C. Roach in 'Domestic Display and Imperial Identity'].
42. TNA PRO 30/26/27, loose sheet: Combined plan for the main hall and vestibule of the Naval Gallery, undated.
43. TNA PRO 30/26/27, loose sheet: Combined plan for the main hall and vestibule of the Naval Gallery, dated on reverse, 1839.



44a. Reconstruction of the Naval Gallery based on Locker's 1839 plan: The Vestibule.

44b. Detail of the entrance wall.

44c. Detail of the south wall.

44d. Detail of the east wall (vestibule steps).

44e. Detail of the north wall.

45a. Reconstruction of the Naval Gallery based on Locker's 1839 plan: The Main Hall.

45b. Detail of the east wall (entrance from vestibule).

45c. Detail of the south wall.

45d. Detail of the west wall (steps to upper hall).

45e. Detail of the north wall.

46. John Scarlett Davis, *Interior of the Painted Hall, Greenwich Hospital*, c. 1831, The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA. Oil on canvas, 44 3/8" x 56 1/2" (112.7 x 143.5cm).

47. Detail of 44: south & north walls of the vestibule with details of *The Glorious First of June* by de Louthembourg (48) & *The Battle of Trafalgar* by Turner (49).

48. Philippe-Jacques De Louthembourg, *Howe's Victory, or the Glorious First of June 1794*, 1795, NMM BHC0470, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 266.5 x 373.5 cm.

49. J.M.W. Turner, *The Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805*, 1824, NMM BHC0565, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 261.5 x 368.5 cm.
50. Detail of 43: the centre of the vestibule in Locker's 1839 gallery plan.
51. Detail of 43: the south wall of the vestibule in Locker's 1839 gallery plan.
52. Detail of 43: the north wall of the vestibule in Locker's 1839 gallery plan.
53. John Hoppner, *Lord Hugh Seymour (1759-1801)*, 1799, NMM BHC3020, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 76.3 x 63.3 cm.
54. Joshua Reynolds, *Admiral Samuel Barrington (1729-1800)*, 1779, NMM BHC 2534, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 76 x 63.5 cm.
55. Henry Raeburn, *Captain George Duff (1764-1805)*, c. 1800, NMM BHC 2666, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 71 cm.
56. Captain Mark Oates, *Captain John Borlase Warren (1753-1822)*, c. 1799, NMM BHC3078, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 76 x 63.5 cm.
57. Ozias Humphrey, *Captain Constantine John Phipps, 1744-92, 2nd Baron Mulgrave*, c. 1799, NMM BHC2872, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 76 x 63.5 cm.
58. Unknown Artist, *Portrait of George Legge, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Dartmouth (1648-91)*, 17<sup>th</sup> century, NMM BHC 2644, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 68.5 x 54.5 cm.
59. Dominic Serres, *The Capture of the Duc de Chartres, 18 April 1747*, 1770, NMM BHC0370, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 63.5 x 101.6 cm.

60. Dominic Serres, *The Capture of the Comte de St Florentine by HMS Achilles, 4 April 1759*, mid-late 18<sup>th</sup> century, NMM BHC0390, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 63.5 x 101.6 cm.
61. Richard Paton, *The Moonlight Battle off Cape St Vincent, 16 January 1780*, 1780-82, NMM BHC0429, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 101.6 x 147.3 cm.
62. Richard Paton, *The Battle of the Saints, 12 April 1782*, mid-late 18<sup>th</sup> century, NMM BHC 0443, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 101.5 x 143.5 cm.
63. Copy by unknown artist after Girolamo Mazzola Parmigiano, *Christopher Columbus (1451-1506)*, 1838, NMM BHC 2627, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 109.2 x 85 cm.
64. Antonio Manuel da Fonseca, *Vasco da Gama (c. 1460-1524)*, 1838, NMM BHC 2702, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 121.9 x 96.5 cm.
65. Unknown artist after an original by Jan Lievensz, *Admiral Maarten Harpertszoon Tromp (1597-1633)*, c. 1830s, NMM BHC3062, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.6 cm.
66. Alexander Joseph von Steuben after a seventeenth century original, *Marquis Abraham Duquesne (1610-88)*, 1838, NMM BHC 2673, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 122 x 71 cm.
67. Detail of 44: south, west and north walls of the vestibule.
68. Detail of 33: TNA PRO 30/26/27, 44: Undated vestibule plan [The four statues are identified by the squares positioned on an angle in the corners of the vestibule].

69. John Flaxman, *Monument to Admiral Earl Howe*, 1803, St Paul's Cathedral, London. (Photograph: Conway Library, Courtauld Institute, London).

70. John Flaxman, *Monument to Horatio, Viscount Nelson*, 1808-18, St Paul's Cathedral, London. (Photograph: Conway Picture Library, Courtauld Institute, London).

71. Richard Westmacott, *Admiral Duncan*, 1826, St Paul's Cathedral, London. (Photograph: Conway Picture Library Courtauld Institute, London).

72. Edward Hodges Baily, *Statue of John, Earl of St Vincent*, 1826, St Paul's Cathedral, London. (Photograph: Conway Picture Library, Courtauld Institute).

73. *Statue of Nelson in the Vestibule of the Naval Gallery* from William Shoberl, *A Summer's Day in Greenwich* (London, 1840).

74. George Jones, *The Battle of Vittoria*, 1822, Royal Collection, London. Oil on canvas, 238.5 x 318.9 cm.

75. George Jones, *The Battle of Waterloo*, 1822, Royal Collection, London. Oil on canvas, 237.7. x 319.6 cm.

76. John Nash, *The Waterloo Gallery, Windsor*, 1844, Royal Collection, London. Watercolour and bodycolour over pencil, 28.2 x 36.8 cm.

77. Detail of 49: Turner, *The Battle of Trafalgar*.

78. John Singleton Copley, *The Defeat of the Spanish Batteries at Gibraltar, 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September 1782*, 1783-91, Guildhall Art Gallery, London. Oil on canvas, 302 x 762 cm.

79. Detail of 78: Copley, *The Defeat of the Spanish Batteries*.
80. John Burnet, *Sketch for 'A Tale of Trafalgar' showing a Greenwich pensioner, a Chelsea pensioner and other visitors in the Painted Hall*, c. 1829, NMM PAH3983, Greenwich. Watercolour, 44.5 x 59.5 cm.
81. James Thornhill, *John Worley, 1624-1721, a Greenwich Hospital Pensioner*, 1720, NMM BHC 3102, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 73.5 x 61 cm.
82. Joseph Thomson after Philippe Jacques de Loucherbourg, *Illustration to Bowyer's edition of Hume's 'History of England': The Battle of Bosworth Field*, 1802, British Museum, London. Engraving, 33.2 x 46.8 cm.
83. Joseph Collyer after Thomas Stothard, *Illustration to Bowyer's edition of Hume's 'History of England': Oliver Cromwell Dissolving the Long Parliament*, 1806, British Museum, London. Engraving, 32 x 22 cm.
84. William Henry Worthington after Philippe Jacques de Loucherbourg, *Illustration to Bowyer's edition of Hume's 'History of England': Defeat of the Spanish Armada, 8 August 1588*, 1805, British Museum, London. Engraving, 24.1 x 30.1 cm.
85. Detail of 60: Dominic Serres, *The Capture of the Comte de St Florentine by HMS Achilles, 4 April 1759*.
86. Edward Hawke Locker, *Catalogue of the Portraits of Distinguished Naval Commanders, and Representations of their Warlike Achievements, exhibited in the Naval Gallery*, (London: Printed by William Clowes, Duke Street, Lambeth, 1833), Front Cover.

87. Edward Hawke Locker, *The Naval Gallery of Greenwich Hospital; comprising a series of Portraits and Memoirs of celebrated Naval Commanders*, (London: Harding and Lepard, 1831), Front Cover.

88. Edward Hawke Locker. *Memoirs of celebrated Naval Commanders, illustrated by engravings from original pictures in the Naval Gallery of Greenwich Hospital*. (London: Harding and Lepard, 1832), Extract Chapter, 'George Monk, Duke of Albemarle, K.G., Lord General of the Forces by Land and Sea'.

89. Detail of 45b & c: South east corner of main hall (section of the west and south walls).

90. *The Harry Grace À Dieu, 1520* in E. H. Locker, *The Naval Gallery of Greenwich Hospital; comprising a series of Portraits and Memoirs of celebrated Naval Commanders*. (London: Harding and Lepard, 1831). Engraving.

91. Detail of 21: Triple portrait of *Cavendish, Drake and Sir John Hawkins*.

92. James Thornhill, *Details of the West Wall of the Upper Hall: Personification of Naval Victory with scroll detailing a chronology of naval victories in lower right*.

93. Daniel the Elder Mytens, *Charles Howard, 1536-1624, 1st Earl of Nottingham*, c. 1618, NMM BHC2786, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 208.5 x 139.5 cm.

94. Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada, 8 August 1588*, 1796, NMM BHC0264, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 214.6 x 278.1 cm.

95. Detail of 94: de Loutherbourg, *Defeat of the Spanish Armada*.

96. Detail of 45: the south wall.

97. Detail of 45. Full-length portraits from left to right: Copy of Daniel Mytens, *Robert Rich, 1587-1658, 2nd Earl of Warwick*; Copy of Peter Lely, *Prince Rupert (28)*; H.P. Briggs, *Robert Blake, General at Sea (98)*; Copy after Peter Lely, *James II, Duke of York* (now lost).

98. Henry Perronet Briggs, *Robert Blake, General at Sea, 1599-1657, 1829*, NMM BHC2558, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 237.5 x 146 cm.

99. Detail of 45 (the south wall): Peter Lely, *The Flagmen of Lowestoft* (mid-1660s).

100. Attr. Willem van de Velde the Elder, *The Burning of HMS Royal James at the Battle of Solebay, 28 May 1672*, seventeenth century (after 1672), NMM BHC 0300, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 106.5 x 126.5 cm.

101. Peter Lely, *Flagmen of Lowestoft, Edward Montagu, 1st Earl of Sandwich, 1666*, NMM BHC 3007, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.5 cm.

102. Detail of 45 (the south wall): Richard Paton, *The Battle of Barfleur, 19 May 1692* (103); George Chambers after Benjamin West, *The Battle of La Hogue* (104).

103. Richard Paton, *The Battle of Barfleur, 19 May 1692*, 18<sup>th</sup> century, NMM BHC 0332, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 129.5 x 203.2 cm.

104. George Chambers, after Benjamin West, *The Battle of La Hogue, 23 May 1692*, 1836, NMM BHC0339, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 152.5 x 214.5 cm.

105. Detail of 45 (north wall): Johann Zoffany, *Death of Captain Cook* (31); Nathaniel Dance, *Captain Cook* (29).

106. Detail of 31: Zoffany, *Death of Captain Cook*.

107. Detail of 45 (north wall): H. P. Briggs, *The Visit of George III to Howe's Flagship, the 'Queen Charlotte', on 26 June 1794* (108); George Jones, *Nelson Boarding the 'San Josef' at the Battle of Cape St Vincent, 14 February 1797* (109); Samuel Drummond, *Admiral Duncan Receiving the Sword of the Dutch Admiral de Winter at the Battle of Camperdown, 11 October 1797* (110); George Arnald, *The Destruction of 'L'Orient' at the Battle of the Nile, 1 August 1798* (111); Arthur William Devis, *The Death of Nelson, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1805* (112).

108. Henry Perronet Briggs, *The Visit of George III to Howe's Flagship, the 'Queen Charlotte', on 26 June 1794*, 1827-9, NMM BHC0476, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 162.5 x 255.5 cm.

109. George Jones, *Nelson Boarding the 'San Josef' at the Battle of Cape St Vincent, 14 February 1797*, NMM BHC 0492, 1827-29, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 162.5 x 223.5.

110. Samuel Drummond, *Admiral Duncan Receiving the Sword of the Dutch Admiral de Winter at the Battle of Camperdown, 11 October 1797*, 1825-27, NMM BHC0506, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 215 x 279 cm.

111. George Arnald, *The Destruction of 'L'Orient' at the Battle of the Nile, 1 August 1798*, 1825-27, NMM BHC0509, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 185.5 x 269 cm.

112. Arthur William Devis, *The Death of Nelson, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1805*, 1807, NMM BHC2894, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 195.6 x 261.6 cm.



113. George Chambers, *The Bombardment of Algiers, 27 August 1816*, 1836, NMM BHC0617, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 176.5 x 251.5 cm.
114. Detail of 39. TNA PRO 30/26/27, 60: plan of the Naval Gallery.
115. Detail of 42. TNA PRO 30/26/27, loose sheet: plan of the Naval Gallery.
116. Detail of 43. TNA PRO 30/26/27, loose sheet: 1839 plan of the Naval Gallery.
117. Andrew Morton, *The United Service*, 1845, NMM BHC 1159, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 116.8 x 147.3.
118. John Hill after Thomas Rowlandson and Augustus Pugin, *Exhibition Room, Somerset House, Hand coloured aquatint from The Microcosm of London*, 1808, British Museum, London. Aquatint, 23.5 x 28.3 cm.
119. 'The Naval Gallery', *The Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838. Engraving.
120. Francis Wheatley, *The Opening of the Shakespeare Gallery in 1790*, 1790, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Watercolour on paper, 45 x 61.7 cm.
121. John Scarlet Davis, *The Interior of the British Institution Gallery*, 1829, Yale Centre for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, New Haven. Oil on canvas, 44 1/2 x 56 inches (113 x 142.2 cm).
122. Detail of 119: 'The Naval Gallery', *The Penny Magazine*.
123. Attributed to Henry Stone after Anthony Van Dyck, *Algernon Percy, 10th Earl of Northumberland (1602-68)*, after 1636-8, NMM BHC 2914, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 117 x 94 cm.

124. Peter Lely, *Flagmen of Lowestoft, George Monck, 1st Duke of Albemarle*, 1665-6, NMM BHC 2508, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.5 cm.
125. Peter Lely, *Flagmen of Lowestoft, Admiral Sir Thomas Allin*, 1665, NMM BHC 2512 Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.5 cm.
126. Peter Lely, *Flagmen of Lowestoft, Admiral Sir John Lawson*, c. 1660s, NMM BHC2833, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 123 x 101 cm.
127. Peter Lely, *Flagmen of Lowestoft, Admiral Sir George Ayscue*, 1665-6, NMM BHC2522, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.5 cm.
128. Michael Dahl, *Admiral Sir George Rooke (1650-1709)*, c.1705, NMM BHC2978, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 124.5 x 101.6 cm.
129. Godfrey Kneller, *Admiral George Churchill (1654-1710)*, 1704, NMM BHC2611, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 127 x 102 cm.
130. Matthew Shepperson after Joshua Reynolds, *Admiral Lord George Brydges Rodney (1719-1792), 1st Baron Rodney*, 1824 after original from 1788, NMM BHC2971, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 238.7 x 146 cm.
131. Detail of 45 (the south wall): Attr. Willem van de Velde the Elder, *The Burning of HMS Royal James at the Battle of Solebay, 28 May 1672* (100).
132. Dominic Serres, *The Battle of Negapatam, 6 July 1782*, 1786, NMM BHC 0448, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 111.7 x 182.8 cm.
133. Nicholas Pocock, *The Battle of Frigate Bay, 26 January 1782*, 1784, NMM BHC 0436, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 120.5 x 215.9 cm.

134. Detail of 45 (the south wall): Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada, 8 August 1588* (94); Attr. Willem Van de Velde the Elder, *Battle of Solebay, 28 May 1672* (100).
135. George Chambers, *Sketch of Algiers, 6 August 1816*, c. 1835, NMM PAF5974, Greenwich. Grey wash on paper, 23.5 x 31.3 cm.
136. George Chambers, *Study for The Bombardment of Algiers, 27 August 1816*, c. 1836, NMM BHC0615, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 47 x 72.4 cm.
137. Benjamin West, *The Battle of La Hogue*, c.1778, The National Gallery of Art, Washington, USA. Oil on canvas, 152.7 x 214 cm.
138. Detail of 45c (the south wall): George Chambers after Benjamin West, *The Battle of La Hogue* (104).
139. George Chambers, *The Capture of Puerto Bello, 21 November 1739*, 1838, NMM BHC0355, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 66 x 101.6 cm.
140. Augustus Charles Pugin, *Depiction of Lord Nelson lying in state in the painted chamber at Greenwich Hospital*. 1806, NMM PAH7322, Greenwich. Coloured aquatint, 43.6 x 54.2 cm.
141. Rudolph Ackerman, *Lord Nelson's Coffin with a description of the ornaments thereon*, 1806, NMM PAG6716, Greenwich. Coloured aquatint, 31.2 x 41.1 cm.

142. H. Merke, J.M.W. Turner & J. Clarke, *Lord Nelson's Funeral Procession by Water from Greenwich Hospital to White-Hall, Jan. 8 1806*, 1806), NMM PAH7326, Greenwich. Hand coloured aquatint, 35.1 x 49.8 cm.

143. Thomas Hosmer Sheperd, *Nelson's Tomb, Crypt of St Paul's*, c. 1830, NMM PAD3922, Greenwich. Etching, 23.7 x 19 cm.

144. Catherine Andras, *Lord Horatio Nelson*, 1806, Westminster Abbey, London. Wax, wood, fabric.

145. Augustus Pugin, C. Rowlandson, T. Bluck, *The Painted Hall, Greenwich Hospital, from the upper hall, showing Nelson's Funeral Car*, 1810, NMM PAD3934, Greenwich. Watercolour with brown-grey wash on paper, 19.9 x 27 cm.

146. William Holland, *The Sailor's Monument to the Memory of Lord Nelson*, NMM PAG8562, Greenwich. Coloured etching, 36.4 x 25.2 cm.

147. Detail of 38: A design for an arrangement of paintings in the upper hall dedicated to Nelson.

148. Firmin & Westall, *Rear admiral's undress uniform worn by Nelson at the Battle of the Nile*, 1798, NMM UNI0022, Greenwich. Brass, gold alloy, linen & wool, 148 x 59 x 30 cm.

149. The Hon. Mrs Anne Seymour Damer, *Bust of Nelson*, 1798-1801, Guildhall Art Gallery, London. Marble.

150. Maker unknown, *Vice admiral's undress coat worn by Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar*, before 1805, NMM UNI0024, Greenwich. Brass, gold alloy, metal thread, silk & wool.

151. M. Jackson, *Relics of Nelson (The Trafalgar Coat on show in a case in the Upper Hall of the Naval Gallery, Greenwich Hospital)*, 1865, NMM PAI8788, Greenwich. Wood engraving, 16 x 12 cm.

152. Detail of 46: John Scarlett Davis, *Interior of the Painted Hall*.

153. Detail of 45 (the north wall): Jones, *Nelson Boarding the San Josef* (109); Shepperson aft. Hoppner, *Portrait of Nelson* (155); Devis, *The Death of Nelson* (112).

154. Detail of 109: Jones, *Nelson Boarding the San Josef*.

155. Matthew Shepperson after John Hoppner, *Portrait of Rear Admiral, Sir Horatio Nelson, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Nelson*, 1823-4 (original painted 1801), NMM BHC 2898, Greenwich. Oil on canvas, 239 x 147.5 cm.

156. Detail of 112: Devis, *The Death of Nelson*.

157. William Bromley, *Key to the engraving of A. W. Devis's Death of Nelson*, 1812, NMM PAI7637, Greenwich. Etching, 48 x 33.3 cm.

158. Detail of 112: Devis, *The Death of Nelson*.

159. 'The Ball which mortally wounded the Lamented Nelson' in William Beatty, *Authentic Narrative of the Death of Lord Nelson*, (London, printed by T. Davison, White Friars; for T. Cadell and W. Davies, in the Strand, 1807).

160. Floor plans for Greenwich Hospital: the Chapel in the Queen Mary Building (left) and the Painted Hall in the King William Building (right) from John Bold,

*Greenwich: An Architectural History of the Royal Hospital for Seamen and the Queen's House*, 140-141.

161. 'Illustrations of Greenwich Hospital' in *Illustrated London News* (London, England), 22 April 1865, 375.

162. *Nelson's Pigtail*, taken from his head after his death in 1805, NMM REL0116, Greenwich. Hair, 2.5 x 19 x 11.4 cm.

163. L. H. Michael, *View of the Naval Gallery in the Painted Hall, Greenwich Hospital*, 1865, NMM PAH4034, Greenwich. Brown-grey wash on paper, 34.2 x 50.5 cm.

164. Provisional Reconstruction of the Stanfield's arrangement of the south wall c. 1845.

165. Provisional Reconstruction of Stanfield's arrangement of the north wall c. 1845.

166. Thomas Mclean after an original oil by Albert Holden, '*One Hundred Years Ago 1805-1905*' (*Depiction of the Nelson Room in the Naval Gallery*), 1905, NMM PAI7610, Greenwich. Photogravure, aquatint on board, 51 x 40 cm.

167. *The Painted Hall viewed from the upper hall*, c. late-nineteenth century, National Monuments Record, English Heritage. Photograph.

168. 'Greenwich Picture Gallery', *Penny Illustrated Paper* (London), 26 August 1871, 113.

169. Edward Walford, *Old and New*, (London, 1878), vol. vi, 181.

170. A and F. Pears Ltd. after Albert Holden, *Saluting the Admiral (Pears Poster: Greenwich Hospital Pensioner Saluting the bust of Nelson)*, Pears' Annual, 1905, NMM PAI7615, Greenwich. Chromolithograph, 76.7 x 50.6 cm.

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis titled ‘Edward Hawke Locker and the foundation of the National Gallery of Naval Art, 1795-1845’ and the work presented in it are my own and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. The material presented within this thesis has not been published or previously submitted for another degree.

## INTRODUCTION

Situated on the south bank of the Thames, and set within 86 acres of rolling parkland, the monumental Baroque complex that makes up Greenwich Hospital is a striking architectural statement of monarchical, naval and national prosperity.<sup>1</sup> Founded by William III (1650-1702) and Mary II (1662-1694) in 1694, the Royal Hospital for Seamen was created to provide support and shelter for disabled and retired naval servicemen. It also offered support, pensions and allowances for the widows and orphans of seamen.<sup>2</sup> Built upon the site of an old royal palace, this location was permeated with monarchical affiliations having housed a succession of monarchs from the early fifteenth century through to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642.<sup>3</sup> Canaletto's celebrated depiction of *Greenwich Hospital from the North Bank of the Thames*, painted shortly after the Hospital was completed in 1742, captures the monumental spectacle that this site has conveyed to visitors ever since (1). The Painted Hall, housed in the King William building designed by Christopher Wren (1632-1723), was of particular interest to visitors. So called because of the elaborate paintings that decorate the walls and ceilings, the Hall was painted by the artist Sir James Thornhill (1675-1734) between 1708 and 1727 (2).<sup>4</sup> Although the Hall was originally intended as a dining hall for the naval veterans this function was abandoned soon, reportedly because the number of pensioners grew rapidly and the

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<sup>1</sup> See John Bold, *Greenwich: An Architectural History of the Royal Hospital for Seamen and the Queen's House*, (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), esp. chapter 4, 'The Royal Hospital for Seamen: A Benevolent Foundation', 95-136.

<sup>2</sup> Bold, *Greenwich*, 95-182; Philip Newell, *Greenwich Hospital: A Royal Foundation 1692-1983*, (Greenwich: Holbrook, 1984), 8. Newell quotes the Charter that was issued in the names of both William and Mary, dated 25 October 1694.

<sup>3</sup> Bold, *Greenwich*, esp. chapter 1, 'Greenwich Park: Landscape and Buildings', 3-34.

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed examination of Thornhill's decoration of the Painted Hall see Richard Johns, 'Sir James Thornhill and Decorative History Painting in England', University of York, unpublished PhD thesis, 2 vols., (2004), chapter 4, 156-201.

Hall became too small for the purpose.<sup>5</sup> For nearly a century the Painted Hall remained empty, functioning purely as a tourist attraction.<sup>6</sup> However, in the early nineteenth century Thornhill's decorative Painted Hall underwent a transformation. As a drawing of the Painted Hall by the artist John Scarlett Davis (1804-1845) reveals, this site of established monarchical and maritime prestige was transformed into the venue for the country's first National Gallery of Naval Art (3).

The first suggestion that the Painted Hall should be converted into a gallery for marine paintings was made in 1795. In the midst of war with Revolutionary France, the Lieutenant-Governor at Greenwich Hospital, William Locker, proposed that a gallery of marine pictures and admiralty portraits would 'perpetuate the memory of gallant actions and the names of the brave officers, who have contributed [...] to the defence and aggrandisement of their Country'.<sup>7</sup> However, for reasons that remained unrecorded, his ambitious plan was 'postponed'.<sup>8</sup> Nearly thirty years later, in 1823, it was William Locker's son, Edward Hawke Locker, the Secretary at Greenwich Hospital, who submitted a revised version of this proposal, suggesting the creation of a 'national Gallery of Pictures and Sculptures'.<sup>9</sup> By this time, the country was victorious and Locker's revised proposal to commemorate 'the distinguished exploits of the British Navy' was successful.<sup>10</sup> Opening in the spring of 1824, the National Gallery of Naval Art, better known as the Naval Gallery, was one

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<sup>5</sup> Edward Hawke Locker, *Catalogue of the portraits of distinguished naval commanders and representations of their warlike achievements* (William Clowes, Duke Street, London, 1833), 4.

<sup>6</sup> As Bold observes, a charge, allowing the public access to the Painted Hall, had been in place since 1720: Bold, *Greenwich*, 148. Locker, *Catalogue*, 4.

<sup>7</sup> The National Archives, Kew (TNA) ADM 67/44, Greenwich Hospital Board Minutes, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>8</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>9</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18; TNA PRO 30/26/27, 'Memorandum' written by Edward Hawke Locker, 20 September 1823, 19.

<sup>10</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19.

of the first ‘national’ collections of art to open in Britain, preceding the foundation of the National Gallery by a matter of weeks.<sup>11</sup>

Davis’s drawing, made in 1830, provides us with the earliest known representation of the Painted Hall as the Naval Gallery. Depicted from the entrance to the Gallery, all three of the rooms that make up Wren’s design are visible at once. In the vestibule, immediately in front of the entrance, Thornhill decorated the columns and pilasters with elaborate gilding which lead the eye up towards the domed ceiling and ornate lantern which are just out of sight in the drawing.<sup>12</sup> In addition to the architectural detail, Davis depicts the arrangement of paintings within this first room. The two large paintings positioned to the left and right of the viewer in the vestibule are the *Glorious First of June* by Philippe de Loutherbourg (1740-1812) and the *Battle of Trafalgar* by J.M.W Turner (1775-1851), both of which had been donated to the Naval Gallery in 1829 by King George IV (1762-1830) (figs. 48 and 49).<sup>13</sup> In addition, a number of smaller paintings are lightly sketched suggesting the inclusion of naval battle paintings and admiralty portraits. A man descends the stairs that lead up to the main hall. Hunched over and holding tightly to the rail, he is most likely one of a number of Greenwich Hospital Pensioners housed by the institution who offered tours of the Gallery to the public. Moving through the

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<sup>11</sup> In April 1824 the House of Commons agreed to purchase John Julius Angerstein’s picture collection for £57,000. These 38 pictures formed the core collection of the new National Gallery, which was initially installed in Angerstein’s own town house at 100 Pall Mall. The decision was made to relocate the National Gallery to its current location in Trafalgar Square in 1831. For a history of the National Gallery see Jonathan Conlin, *The nation’s mantelpiece: a history of the National Gallery*, (London: Pallas Athene, 2006); Christopher Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Development of the National Gallery*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Charles Holmes and C.H. Collins Baker, *The making of the National Gallery, 1824-1924. An historical sketch*, (London: The National Gallery, 1924). Although one of the first projects to title itself as a ‘national’ venture, the Naval Gallery was preceded by a number of national projects: the British Museum was founded in 1753; a state funded project for commemorative sculpture was underway in St Paul’s Cathedral between 1791 and 1823; and the Dulwich Picture Gallery opened in 1817. For a survey of these projects see Edward Miller, *That Noble Cabinet: A history of the British Museum*, (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973); Giles Waterfield, *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain 1790-1990*, (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> Johns, ‘Sir James Thornhill’, 156.

<sup>13</sup> TNA ADM 67/80, 8 August 1829.

archway and into the main hall, Davis's depiction of the ceiling is only lightly sketched, providing a basic outline of Thornhill's elaborate allegorical design. In the centre of the ceiling, Thornhill posthumously glorified the founders of the institution, depicting William and Mary enthroned in heaven and surrounded by an array of kingly virtues (4 and 5).<sup>14</sup> The published description of the ceiling, written by Richard Steele and Thornhill, outlines these allegorical figures in greater detail:

In the Middle of the great Oval, under a Canopy of State, and attended by the four *Cardinal VIRTUES*, are *King William* and *Queen Mary*, *Concord* fitting between, *Cupid* holding the scepter, while *King William* presents *PEACE* and *LIBERTY* to *Europe*, and tramples on *Tyranny* and *Arbitrary Power*.<sup>15</sup>

In Davis's sketch, rather than the ceiling, it is the arrangement of paintings that receives his detailed attention. The position of canvases along the walls of the main hall has been carefully delineated. The three tiers of the display are clearly marked, with full-length portraits along the top, half-length portraits across the middle, and naval battle paintings at the bottom. The array of paintings on display in the main hall included a number of works which were already in the possession of Greenwich Hospital prior to the foundation of the Gallery. This included a number of full-length portraits including *Charles Howard (1536-1624)* by Daniel Mytens (c.1618) (93), *George Byng, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Torrington (1663-1733)* by Jeremiah Davison (1734) and *Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Hughes (1720-94)* by Joshua Reynolds (1786-87).<sup>16</sup> The

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<sup>14</sup> Johns, 'Sir James Thornhill', 156.

<sup>15</sup> Sir James Thornhill, *An Explanation of the Painting in the Royal Hospital at Greenwich*, (London, 1730).

<sup>16</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Pictures in Greenwich Hospital, undated, 41.

Hospital also possessed a number of naval battle paintings including the *Burning of the Royal James at the Battle of Solebay, 28 May 1672* which at the time of the Gallery was described as a work by ‘Vandervelde’ (100).<sup>17</sup> Once the Gallery was installed, it relied entirely upon private patronage. George IV initiated this tradition, donating 39 paintings from the Royal Collection during the early years of the Gallery’s existence.<sup>18</sup> The middle tier of half-length portraits, depicted in Davis’s drawing, included Peter Lely’s *Flagmen of Lowestoft* portrait series, originally commissioned by James Duke of York (later James II), and the later *Admirals* set painted by Godfrey Kneller and Michael Dahl which was commissioned during the reign of Queen Anne. Both sets of admiralty portraits were donated by George IV in 1824. Many private donors followed this royal precedent and, by 1839, the Naval Gallery had amassed 116 paintings: a combination of admiralty portraits, marine paintings and naval history paintings.<sup>19</sup> At the time of Davis’s sketch of the Gallery, around 85 of these works were on display in the main hall.<sup>20</sup>

In the distance in Davis’s drawing, a proscenium arch frames the entrance into the third and final room, the upper hall. On the ceiling in this third room, a double portrait depicts Queen Anne and Prince George of Denmark within an ornate gilt frame, surrounded by allegorical representations of the ‘four quarters of the globe’ (6).<sup>21</sup> Underneath the ceiling, to the left and right of the steps are two arrival narratives. On the south wall, William III is depicted landing at Torbay in 1688, and, on the right, George I is depicted arriving at Greenwich to claim the throne in 1714 (7 and 8). The ceiling and the two side walls are out of sight from the vestibule entrance and are absent from Davis’s drawing as a result. However, the west wall of

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<sup>17</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 7.

<sup>18</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Pictures in Greenwich Hospital, 41.

<sup>19</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, folded plan for the arrangement of the Naval Gallery, unbound, dated 1839.

<sup>20</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 6-15.

<sup>21</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 3.

the upper hall, which faces the entrance, is directly visible from the entrance to the Painted Hall. In his drawing of the Naval Gallery, Davis provides a rough sketch of Thornhill's design. On the west wall, Thornhill glorifies the succession of the Hanoverian princes, depicting George I seated in the centre with the Prince of Wales (later George II) and Prince Frederick to his left (9). Across the walls of the Painted Hall, Thornhill's decorative scheme presents a harmonious narrative of royal succession, from the reign of William and Mary, enthroned in the centre of the main hall ceiling, to Queen Anne positioned in the ceiling of the upper hall, through to George I who is seated in the west wall of the upper hall. In total, five successive monarchs are included in Thornhill's scheme.<sup>22</sup> The paired depictions of William III and George I arriving in England on either side of the upper hall offered a deliberate attempt to align George I with William III's reign and further legitimise his claim to the throne. The depiction of two generations of his family alongside him on the West Wall was an overt assertion of the successional security of the newly established Hanoverian monarchy. With the installation of the Gallery, the upper hall was not used as an exhibition space for paintings. Rather than cover over Thornhill's paintings, this third room was instead employed as a display space for a growing collection of 'naval trophies and various articles of curiosity'.<sup>23</sup> In addition to a selection of ship models, nautical instruments and naval memorabilia, the upper hall also exhibited an extensive array of Nelson's personal artefacts including his uniforms from the battles of the Nile and Trafalgar. Although a full consideration of such items lies beyond the parameters of the period covered in this study, it is worth

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<sup>22</sup> Johns, 'Sir James Thornhill', 158.

<sup>23</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19-20.

noting that Nelson's cocked hat, his blood-covered stockings and even his hair were eventually placed on display within the upper hall of the Naval Gallery.<sup>24</sup>

Thornhill's decorative scheme employed repeated pictorial motifs and numerous allegorical virtues which, as Richard Johns has convincingly demonstrated, provide a means of uniting the decorative scheme: 'these characters supply the recurring motifs – the cornucopias and laurel crowns, the scales and swords – that forge a continuous allegory of good government from one monarch to the next'.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the consistent use of architectural trompe-l'oeil across the hall aesthetically unites the scheme, forging the illusion of a single shared space. As Johns argues, it is in this way that 'the scheme progresses without interruption from one painted surface to another – from a glorification of William and Mary on the lower hall ceiling to Queen Anne on the upper hall ceiling and finally to the Hanoverian princes on the far wall'.<sup>26</sup> Symbols of maritime prowess are employed throughout the Painted Hall as another means to support the narrative of monarchical succession. A winged personification of Naval Victory stands to the right of George I. She unveils a scroll which lists British naval victories dating back to the Spanish Armada in 1588 (10).<sup>27</sup> The main hall contains a narrative of naval conquest. A British man-of-war is depicted at the west end of the main ceiling, while at the opposite end a Spanish galleon, packed to the gunwales with treasure, has been captured (11). With this emphasis on the relationship between the state and the navy, it is not surprising that when the Naval Gallery was proposed a century later, it was

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<sup>24</sup> *Descriptive Catalogue of the Portraits of Naval Commanders and of the Representations of Naval Actions Exhibited in the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital* (London: Printed by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1887), 51-52.

<sup>25</sup> Johns, 'Sir James Thornhill', 158-9.

<sup>26</sup> Johns, 'Sir James Thornhill', 159.

<sup>27</sup> Johns, 'Sir James Thornhill', 158.



suggested that there could not be ‘a more proper Repository for such a Collection’.<sup>28</sup> Once converted into the Naval Gallery, a description of the Painted Hall, based on the original text written by Steele and Thornhill, provided the basis for the introduction to the Gallery’s catalogue.<sup>29</sup> For visitors entering the Naval Gallery, roughly a hundred years after the completion of Thornhill’s paintings, the initial focus remained upon the decorative scheme. However, as Davis’s drawing conveys in such detail, the installation of paintings upon the walls of the Painted Hall was a significant addition to the spectacle. In the course of this study, I will explore how the Naval Gallery directly engaged with and further contributed to Thornhill’s existing narrative of monarchical stability, fair governance and maritime spectacle. However, like Davis, this study aims to direct attention down from Thornhill’s ceiling, resting instead upon the display of paintings upon its walls. Davis’s drawing is the preparatory sketch for a larger oil painting which was exhibited at the British Institution in 1831 (46).<sup>30</sup> It was one of a number of paintings that he executed throughout his career depicting the interiors of galleries and other sites of cultural significance both in Britain and on the Continent. In addition to the Naval Gallery, Davis recorded the arrangement of an old master exhibition at the British Institution; he made numerous sketches of the galleries in the Louvre; when in Italy during the 1830s he depicted the interior of the Uffizi in Florence as well as painting numerous church interiors including St Peter’s in Rome; and, in the 1840s, he was commissioned to depict the arrangement of paintings in the Royal Palaces.<sup>31</sup> The fact

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<sup>28</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>29</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 1-4.

<sup>30</sup> Algernon Graves, *The British Institution, 1806-1867. A complete dictionary of contributors and their work from the foundation of the Institution*, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1908), 142.

<sup>31</sup> For further detail about Davis’s career see G. Watkin Williams, *Life and Works of John Scarlett Davis*, (Old Water-Colour Society's Club, 1970); Tony Hobbs, *John Scarlett Davis: A Biography*, (Herefordshire: Logaston Press, 2004). For a select example of his work see: *The Interior of the British Institution*, 1829, Yale Centre for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, USA; *Interior of St*

that Davis depicted the Naval Gallery alongside this collection of internationally renowned sites signifies the cultural and artistic status that the Gallery had at this time. Furthermore, the fact that this drawing was turned into a finished oil painting and exhibited in the contemporary art exhibition at the British Institution further invites us to consider the ways in which the Naval Gallery featured within the British art world in the early nineteenth century.

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The existence of the Naval Gallery was widely recorded and reported on throughout the nineteenth century. Greenwich Hospital maintained extensive records of its Board meetings which detail the development of the Gallery.<sup>32</sup> A number of catalogues were also produced, providing details of the way in which this expanding collection was ordered and displayed. Furthermore, as Greenwich was already an established tourist attraction by the turn of the nineteenth century, the Naval Gallery was frequently included in tour guides of London and the surrounding area. Thus, William Shoberl's *A Summer's Day at Greenwich*, published in 1840, records that 'the Painted Hall, it is supposed, is now visited annually by nearly 100,000 persons'.<sup>33</sup> This publication included a description of Thornhill's paintings, based upon the original account written by Richard Steele and the artist. It also provided visitors to Greenwich with a detailed catalogue and a small engraved image of the Gallery (12). The 1850 series *The Royal Companion to the "Sights of London" and*

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*Peter's, Rome*, mid nineteenth century, National Museum Wales; *Main Gallery of the Louvre*, 1831, the Government Art Collection; *Hampton Court Palace Interior*, Hereford Museum and Art Gallery.

<sup>32</sup> Initially Greenwich Hospital was managed by a Board of Directors who acted under a General Court but in 1829 this was replaced by the Commissioners, who reported to the Admiralty. See Pieter van der Merwe, 'A proud moment of the glory of England'. The Greenwich Hospital Collection' in Geoff Quilley, ed., *Art for the Nation: The Oil Paintings Collections of the National Maritime Museum*, (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 2006), 19. The minutes for both committees are now held, along with the rest of the Greenwich Hospital documents, at the National Archives, Kew. See TNA: ADM 6713; ADM 67/17; ADM 67/44; ADM 67/72-113.

<sup>33</sup> William Shoberl, *A Summer's Day at Greenwich, Being a Guide to the Hospital and Park; with a select catalogue of the pictures in the Painted Hall; to which is added a history of the ancient place its foundation*. (London: Henry Colburn, 1840), 55.

*within twenty-five miles of St Paul's* dedicated an entire volume to the Naval Gallery, detailing the display of paintings, sculptures and naval artefacts within the Painted Hall.<sup>34</sup> Throughout the Naval Gallery's existence, newspapers provided another record of its progress. Most notably, on 6 January 1838, the *Penny Magazine* published a three-page guided tour of the Gallery, accompanied by an illustrative engraving of the display published on the front cover (13). In 1840, the *Standard* published a report of the Royal visit to Greenwich, which had included a tour for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert around the Painted Hall and Chapel.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, when new acquisitions were made, they were often widely reported. For example, in 1845, numerous newspapers reported the discovery of Nelson's Coat from the Battle of Trafalgar and subsequently traced Prince Albert's purchase and donation of the uniform to the Naval Gallery.<sup>36</sup>

In 1936, the Naval Gallery was dismantled and the collection passed on 'permanent loan' to the newly founded National Maritime Museum.<sup>37</sup> As a result of this closure, the Naval Gallery ceased to be the subject of contemporary commentary and knowledge of its existence gradually declined. In recent years, a small body of scholarship has reclaimed some of this lost history. Pieter van der Merwe, General Editor at the National Maritime Museum, has conducted research into the history of the Greenwich Hospital Collection, a significant portion of the NMM's fine art collection. In the Museum's 2006 publication, *Art for the Nation*, van der Merwe

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<sup>34</sup> 'The Royal Companion to the Naval Gallery of Pictures (The Painted Hall), The Nelson Room, The Chapel etc., at Greenwich Hospital', vol. XVII in *The Royal Companion to the "Sights of London" and within twenty-five miles of St Paul's; containing a mass of valuable information – useful, entertaining, and instructive: especially to visitors to "The Great Metropolis"*, (London: Joseph Clayton and son, 265 Strand, 1850). For a description of the Naval Gallery see 6-22.

<sup>35</sup> *The Standard*, 29 June 1840, issue 5000, 1.

<sup>36</sup> 'Nelson's Relics', *The Standard*, 8 July 1845, issue 6534, 4; 'Nelson's Belongings', *The Examiner*, 26 July 1845, issue 1956. For details of Nelson's relics and an engraving of the gallery see 'Illustrations of Greenwich Hospital', *Illustrated London News*, 22 April 1865, issue 1311, 375.

<sup>37</sup> For details of the transfer of the collection to the National Maritime Museum see TNA ADM 169/704.

published a chapter entitled ‘A proud moment of the glory of England’. The Greenwich Hospital Collection’.<sup>38</sup> This study provides a history of the Greenwich Hospital Collection from the establishment of the charity in 1694.<sup>39</sup> As van der Merwe identifies, ‘amassing and displaying naval art and artefacts was not one of the Hospital’s original aims’. However, ‘as the greatest British building ever designed for naval or military use, it always drew many curious and admiring visitors’.<sup>40</sup> The Painted Hall was open to visitors from the early eighteenth century and, as van der Merwe observes, ‘the Hospital gained substantially from their donations’.<sup>41</sup> While the focus of van der Merwe’s chapter is the development of the Greenwich Hospital Collection as a whole, it necessarily engages with the foundation and development of the Naval Gallery. After all, it was the formation of this naval art gallery that necessitated Greenwich Hospital becoming a ‘proactive collector’ of works of art.<sup>42</sup> The *Art for the Nation* project, which consisted of a book and a substantial redisplay of the Museum’s permanent collection within the Queen’s House at Greenwich, has raised an awareness of the role that the Greenwich Hospital Collection, and specifically the Naval Gallery, played as a historic precursor to the NMM.

While van de Merwe’s study has positioned the Naval Gallery within a broad historical context, aligning the Gallery with the institutional development of Greenwich Hospital and the wider history of the NMM’s collections, two other recent studies have positioned the Gallery within a wider cultural context. The Naval Gallery featured in Sarah Monks’s doctoral thesis on marine painting, entitled

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<sup>38</sup> Van der Merwe, ‘Greenwich Hospital Collection’, 19-37.

<sup>39</sup> Van der Merwe’s chapter in *Art for the Nation* developed on an earlier booklet, published 1994, which accompanied an exhibition in the Queen’s House to mark the Hospital’s 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary, entitled *A Refuge for All: Greenwich Hospital, 1694-1994* (published by Shell on behalf of Greenwich Hospital, 1994). He originally researched the involvement of the Naval Gallery’s subsequent curator, Clarkson Stanfield, as part of his PhD: see Pieter van der Merwe, ‘The Life and Theatrical Career of Clarkson Stanfield 1793-1867’, University of Bristol, unpublished PhD thesis, (1979).

<sup>40</sup> Van der Merwe, ‘Greenwich Hospital Collection’, 20.

<sup>41</sup> Van der Merwe, ‘Greenwich Hospital Collection’, 20.

<sup>42</sup> Van der Merwe, ‘Greenwich Hospital Collection’, 24.

*Marine Art and the Public Sphere in Britain 1739-1795*.<sup>43</sup> This study examines the appearance of marine art within a variety of public spaces during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, including the print market, art exhibitions and a number of state institutions. Monks traces this developing display culture from Vauxhall Gardens in the 1740s, where naval battle paintings were incorporated into dining booths, through to the Royal Academy which, from 1769, frequently included marine paintings at its Annual Exhibition. This examination into the increasingly public display of marine art in Britain concludes with a consideration of the Naval Gallery, touching on the initial proposal for its foundation in 1795, and the eventual successful installation of the gallery at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In relation to the acquisition of the collection, Monks observes that ‘within six years of the Gallery’s opening, private donors – naval officers’ relatives and descendants, aware perhaps that this was an opportunity to offload marine paintings (as well as portraits) of styles and subjects not largely of historical interest only while also being publicly noted as patriotic benefactors – came forth with thirty paintings’.<sup>44</sup> While Monks is right to emphasise the intrinsic role that private patronage played in the formation of the collection, the assertion that patrons saw the foundation of the Gallery as a means to ‘offload’ unfavourable paintings does not take into account the fact that this site aimed to exhibit prestigious works of art. It disregards the role that the Gallery played in the continued promotion of the British art world. However, in culminating this analysis of maritime art and the developing public sphere with the foundation of the Naval Gallery, Monks successfully asserts the unique cultural status of the nation’s first naval art gallery in the early nineteenth century.

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<sup>43</sup> Sarah Monks, ‘Marine Art and the Public Sphere in Britain, 1739-1795’, Courtauld Institute, unpublished PhD thesis, 2 vols., (2002).

<sup>44</sup> Monks, ‘Marine Art and the Public Sphere’, 170-71.

More recently, Geoff Quilley has incorporated the Naval Gallery into an extensive examination of British maritime visual culture in *Empire to Nation: Art, History and the Visualization of Maritime Britain, 1768-1829*, published in 2011.<sup>45</sup> Throughout this investigation into naval and national cultural history Quilley refers to a number of the paintings which hung in the Naval Gallery. For example, Quilley considers the *Glorious First of June, 1794* (1795) by de Louthembourg, which was donated to the Naval Gallery in 1829, within the wider context of the development of a ‘cult of the maritime’ in the 1790s.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, Quilley aligns William Locker’s initial 1795 proposal to form a gallery of marine pictures with this developing culture. He argues that although the plan was unsuccessful it may have influenced John Opie’s proposal for a naval pantheon.<sup>47</sup> After situating William Locker’s proposal within a burgeoning maritime culture, Quilley turns to the subsequent successful creation of the Naval Gallery in the 1820s.<sup>48</sup> Within *Empire to Nation*, Quilley views the foundation of the Naval Gallery in relation to a growing interest in visualising maritime Britain: ‘the ideological underpinning of the visual history of maritime Britain was given fullest articulation by Edward Hawke Locker in the context of his proposal of 1823 for the Naval Gallery at Greenwich Hospital’.<sup>49</sup> The Naval Gallery certainly did develop out of an emerging maritime culture at the end of the eighteenth century. However, the foundation of the Gallery

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<sup>45</sup> Geoff Quilley, *Empire to Nation: Art, History and the Visualization of Maritime Britain 1768-1829*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), 209-217.

<sup>46</sup> Quilley, *Empire to Nation*, 196-8.

<sup>47</sup> Quilley, *Empire to Nation*, 198-209. John Opie, *Lectures on Painting delivered at the Royal Academy of Arts: with a Letter on the proposal for a Public Memorial of the Naval Glory of Great Britain*, (London, 1809), p. 174. Opie’s original proposal was published in *True Briton*, 3 March 1800. For further examination of Opie’s proposal for a Naval Pantheon see also Geoffrey Quilley, ‘The Battle of the Pictures: Painting the History of Trafalgar’ in David Cannadine, ed., *Trafalgar in History. A Battle and its Afterlife*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 124-5; Alison Yarrington, *The Commemoration of the Hero 1800-1864. Monuments to the British Victors of the Napoleonic Wars*, (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1988), esp. ‘Appendix A: Proposals for a National Monument to Naval Victory 1799-1800’, 338-345.

<sup>48</sup> Quilley, *Empire to Nation*, 209-17.

<sup>49</sup> Quilley, *Empire to Nation*, 209.

in the 1820s did not reflect the end of this tradition. What Quilley does not consider, because it is beyond the designated period of his study, is how the Naval Gallery, which was in existence throughout the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, continued to play an active role in the development of a 'cult of the maritime' well beyond its creation in the early nineteenth century.

All these publications have helped to revive an awareness of the Naval Gallery's existence. However, in each of these studies, the Gallery has only featured as a small part of a much broader examination of British cultural history. As one of the country's first national art galleries, the Naval Gallery demands an independent investigation into its foundation and development. It is this type of dedicated institutional study that is conducted here, and that will, it is hoped, help restore the Gallery to an appropriately prominent position within accounts of British art and culture in the period. This is especially necessary given the forms of scholarly amnesia that have shrouded the Naval Gallery and its histories since the early decades of the twentieth century. For, following the dismantling of the Naval Gallery from the Painted Hall in 1936, it was not long before the Gallery's presence, let alone its significance, faded from memory. The transferal of the collection to the NMM has ensured that the majority of the works have remained together within the Greenwich Hospital collection at the Museum. A large majority have inevitably spent much of their time in storage and, over the past 75 years, the museum has played a vital role in the continued preservation of the collection. However, although many of the works have since been displayed in various ways, the context of the collection as a whole has been out of view. The history of the Naval Gallery has been subsumed by that of a new national institution, the primary agenda of which has focused upon the study and display of British maritime history as a whole with

the previous dominance of the Royal Naval element being reduced since the early 1970s. In this long process, an awareness of the cultural and artistic narratives associated with the Naval Gallery has thus been marginalised. This study submits the Naval Gallery to a detailed institutional investigation which examines the development of the Gallery from its proposal and foundation through to the retirement of its founder and *de facto* 'curator', Edward Hawke Locker, in 1844.

This investigation of the cultural and institutional significance of the Naval Gallery has been shaped by a number of recent examinations of public display culture in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain. David Solkin's edited collection of essays, *Art on the Line*, provides a thorough and insightful investigation into the formation and execution of the Royal Academy's Annual Exhibitions from 1780 until 1837.<sup>50</sup> Coinciding with an exhibition which recreated the eighteenth-century exhibition rooms at Somerset House, held in 2002, this publication contains a broad collection of essays which collectively highlight the central role of the Royal Academy at the heart of the London art scene. 'Staging the Spectacle', an essay co-authored by John Sunderland and Solkin, provides a detailed account of the physical aspects involved in the installation of a display. Not only does this consider the practical aspects involved in putting up the display but it also explores the complications and disagreements that often arose in response to an arrangement. As they state in the introduction to this chapter: 'putting on the Annual Royal Academy exhibitions in Somerset House proved more often than not to be a highly complicated business, dogged by practical difficulties, poor organization, and more than the occasional personal crisis'.<sup>51</sup> A number of other essays consider the

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<sup>50</sup> David Solkin, ed., *Art on the Line: The Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House, 1780-1836*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and the Courtauld Institute Gallery, 2001).

<sup>51</sup> John Sunderland and David Solkin, 'Staging the Spectacle', in Solkin, ed., *Art on the Line*, 23.



ways in which specific genres of painting were exhibited at the Annual Exhibition. Marcia Pointon's 'Portrait! Portrait!! Portrait!!!' is particularly relevant to this study in its examination of contemporary British portraiture upon the walls of the Great Room.<sup>52</sup> Pointon examines the prevalence of portraiture at the Annual Exhibition, considering how the preponderance of this genre impacted upon the contemporary art world. Portraiture was seen to thrive in the late eighteenth century partly because of the extensive availability of private patronage. As she observes, 'Britain was a commercial society: portrait painters could be hired by aristocrats and merchants alike, and images of these men and their families mingled promiscuously on the walls of the Academy'.<sup>53</sup> The arrangement of the portraits within the Great Room had the potential to construct visual dialogues which often engaged with a wider social or political world outside of the Academy. As Pointon observes, 'visitors to the exhibitions in the period 1780 to 1840 would have viewed images of public and private figures interactively, matching existing knowledge and hearsay to what they saw on view, speculating about personal histories, and sharing anecdotes'.<sup>54</sup> The ways in which the portraits exhibited at the Royal Academy engaged with biographical narratives and participated in dialogues has direct bearing upon the way in which admiralty portraits were exhibited and viewed within the Naval Gallery.

The role of the spectator within the spectacle of display at the Annual Exhibition is addressed by C.S. Matheson in 'A Shilling Well Laid Out': the Royal Academy's Early Public'.<sup>55</sup> In an examination of exhibition catalogues and graphic representations of the display, Matheson considers how the creation of the Annual

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<sup>52</sup> Marcia Pointon, 'Portrait! Portrait!! Portrait!!!' in Solkin, ed., *Art on the Line*, 93-110.

<sup>53</sup> Pointon, 'Portrait! Portrait!! Portrait!!!', 93.

<sup>54</sup> Pointon, 'Portrait! Portrait!! Portrait!!!', 96. For further discussion of the construction of social and political dialogues across the walls of the Great Room see Mark Hallett, 'Reading the Walls: Pictorial Dialogue at the British Royal Academy', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 37, no. 4, (2004), 581-604.

<sup>55</sup> C.S. Matheson, 'A Shilling Well Laid Out': The Royal Academy's Early Public', in Solkin, ed., *Art on the Line*, 39-54.

Exhibition impacted upon the development of the viewing public. Her essay examines not just how engravings depicting the exhibition provide a record for the display, but also how they depict the audience participating in the resulting spectacle. As Matheson observes, ‘both the catalogue and what we might term the retrospective exhibition print constitute highly regulated modes of disseminating information about the physical arrangement of the gallery space, the art works which collectively form its display and, more obliquely, about the character, social location and deportment of spectators’.<sup>56</sup> The way in which Matheson submits prints of the Exhibition to close reading is directly relevant to this study, as numerous representations of the Naval Gallery also exist. Matheson also identifies the exhibition catalogue as a significant means of curatorial direction. She highlights the way in which they organised the movement of visitors: ‘the prints suggest how catalogues directed the physical movement of spectators within the Gallery, modified their gazes (especially in the case of female viewers) and shaped sociable interactions’.<sup>57</sup> The way in which a catalogue was employed within the Naval Gallery, as a means to reinforce the structure of the visual display, is assessed in similar ways in this thesis.

It will have become clear that *Art on the Line* has been a seminal influence upon the way in which this investigation into the Naval Gallery has taken shape. It provides the example for a major investigation of an art institution. However, this examination of the Naval Gallery is fundamentally different in character to the collection of essays edited by Solkin. Written by one author as a unified text, this study presents a cohesive investigation of the foundation of the Gallery which encompasses a detailed examination of relevant primary material, close readings of a

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<sup>56</sup> Matheson, ‘The Royal Academy’s Early Public’, 39.

<sup>57</sup> Matheson, ‘The Royal Academy’s Early Public’, 39.

reconstruction of the display, and a thorough study of how social and artistic agendas were executed within the gallery space.

In her recent publication *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, Rosie Dias examines the development of a 'discernibly 'English' aesthetic' which developed in Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, located in Pall Mall in the late eighteenth century. Dias examines the patriotic nature of Boydell's private gallery. Liberated from the restrictions of the Royal Academy and a dependency upon its President, Joshua Reynolds, Dias explores how artists exhibiting within Boydell's Gallery were more freely able to move toward a new type of English aesthetic independent of the stylistic precedents established on the Continent.<sup>58</sup> As Dias argues, Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery was one of a number of independent and private projects that were under way in the years leading up to the foundation of the Naval Gallery. Following the Shakespeare Gallery, the foundation of Robert Bowyer's Historic Gallery and the British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts provided patronage for British artists, promoting a new and highly patriotic national school.<sup>59</sup> This growing dedication to the support and development of a British School of art, established by a number of private ventures, can be seen to lay the foundation for the Naval Gallery. As this study examines, the Naval Gallery was a proactive participant

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<sup>58</sup> Rosie Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*, (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2013), see chapter 2, 'Reynolds, Boydell and Northcote: Negotiating the Ideology of an English Aesthetic', 65-125.

<sup>59</sup> For further information about the British Institution see Thomas Smith of Mary-le-bone, *Recollections of the British Institution for Promoting the fine arts in the United Kingdom: with [...] biographical notices of the Artists who have received premiums, etc. 1805-1859*, (London, 1860). For details on the day-to-day running of the British Institution see the committee minutes: National Art Library, London, MSL/1941/677-683, *British Institution Minutes*, vols. I-VII (1805-1870). For details of the works exhibited in Bowyer's Historic Gallery see Robert Bowyer, *Exhibition of Pictures, painted for Bowyer's Magnificent Edition of the History of England, dedicated, by permission, to His Majesty*, (London, 1793); see also Cynthia E. Roman, 'Robert Bowyer's Historic Gallery and the feminization of the "nation"' in Dana Arnold, ed., *Cultural Identities and the Aesthetics of Britishness*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 15-34.

in the early nineteenth-century art world, interacting with the Royal Academy and British Institution. Through the foundation of the Naval Gallery, Edward Hawke Locker not only created a forum for the exhibition of British naval art. With the intention of encouraging and further contributing to the development of the British school of art, he actively commissioned and exhibited the works by contemporary native artists.

In recent years, research has also been conducted into the establishment of a number of national commemorative projects in this period, all of which contributed to the development of a school of British art in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The construction of a sculptural pantheon in St Paul's Cathedral has been the subject of a number of recent studies. Holger Hock has conducted extensive research into the development of this state-funded commemorative scheme, which was initiated in 1791, only a few years prior to the first suggestion to form a gallery of naval paintings at Greenwich.<sup>60</sup> In total, 36 commemorative statues depicting military leaders were commissioned for St Paul's. As Hock observes, 'the British authorities for the first time sponsored a national programme of commemoration carried out by native artists'.<sup>61</sup> The use of British artists aided the patriotic tone of the commemorative project and simultaneously contributed to the development of a national school of sculpture. The last statues were commissioned in 1823, in the same year that a second proposal to form a gallery at Greenwich was accepted. Furthermore, copies of four naval statues from St Paul's were acquired for the Naval Gallery. This directly invites an examination of how these two

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<sup>60</sup> Holger Hock, *The King's Artists: The Royal Academy of Arts and the Politics of British Culture, 1760-1840*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), see chapter 9, 'Monumental Miracles', 253-298. Holger Hock, 'The British Military pantheon in St Paul's Cathedral: the State, cultural patriotism, and the politics of national monuments, c. 1790-1820' in Richard Wrigley and Matthew Craske, eds., *Pantheons: Transformations of a Monumental Idea*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2004), 81-106.

<sup>61</sup> Hock, 'The British Military Pantheon', 96.

commemorative martial projects were aligned both in terms of a shared commemorative agenda and a patriotic dedication to British cultural development. Alison Yarrington's *The Commemoration of the Hero 1800-1864*, offers an earlier study of the St Paul's Pantheon which provides detailed examinations of the monuments that were later copied for the Naval Gallery.<sup>62</sup> In addition, Yarrington's study offers a broad historical investigation into the progress and development of commemorative culture over an extended period in the wake of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. This culminates with the construction of Nelson's column and the creation of Trafalgar square in the 1840s.<sup>63</sup> In addition to these studies on specific commemorative projects, the *Nationalisation of Culture* by Janet Minihan provides us with an examination of the introduction of state patronage and governmental subsidies which necessarily developed partly in response to this demand for national commemorative monuments.<sup>64</sup> Minihan argues that 'throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, the debate over the nationalization of culture was inseparable from questions of national values, the future of industrialized society, and even democracy itself'.<sup>65</sup> While Minihan's study goes well beyond the period examined in this thesis, it helps to place the Naval Gallery within a broader political and cultural context. The Naval Gallery was the first 'national' gallery in name alone; from its foundation it received no government funding, and relied purely on private patronage, for the acquisition of works. As Minihan observes, 'the transition from a select, largely aristocratic patronage to a middle-class, and finally a mass audience was the prerequisite for official interest in

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<sup>62</sup> Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, chapter 2, 'St Paul's as a British Hall of Fame', 61-78.

<sup>63</sup> Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, chapter 9, 'The Nelson Monument, Trafalgar Square', 277-325.

<sup>64</sup> Janet Minihan, *The Nationalization of Culture: the development of state subsidies to the arts in Great Britain*, (London: Hamilton, 1977).

<sup>65</sup> Minihan, *The Nationalization of Culture*, x.

the arts'.<sup>66</sup> The chapters that follow show how the foundation of the Naval Gallery was integral to the success of this transition at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

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The first chapter of this study examines the foundation of the Naval Gallery. It looks at both William Locker's initial unsuccessful proposal made in 1795 and Edward Hawke Locker's subsequently successful adaptation of the scheme in 1823. Following an examination of these proposals, it traces the installation and acquisition of a collection. A bound volume of Edward Hawke Locker's correspondence in the National Archives, which has never before been examined, contains over three hundred letters which relate to the foundation and development of the Naval Gallery. The existence of such an extensive body of primary material has made it possible to conduct a thorough examination of the Naval Gallery's existence under Locker's governance. In addition to letters, this volume contains a number of draft plans for the arrangement which collectively map the development of the display. From this remarkable archive it has been possible to reconstruct a painting-by-painting hang of the Naval Gallery from 1839 (44 and 45). In positioning the paintings within a single shared layout it is once again possible to examine the collection as a whole. Furthermore, the reconstruction of the Gallery brings the architectural context of the Painted Hall to the fore. The following chapters use this reconstruction as a basis upon which the original historical and artistic significance of the Naval Gallery can begin to be reclaimed.

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<sup>66</sup> Minihan, *The Nationalization of Culture*, xi.

The following chapters are arranged in a way which deliberately adheres to the architectural format of the actual gallery space. Chapter Two examines the display of works in the vestibule. Rather than a liminal entrance to the rest of the Gallery, this chapter establishes how the vestibule functioned as an intrinsic part of the display. As the site where de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* and Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar* were exhibited from 1829, the vestibule presented a display dedicated to the commemoration of recent British victory in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. This was extended by the plaster-cast copies of the memorial statues from St Paul's, which were positioned in the four corners of the room. This chapter examines how the vestibule both engaged with and actively contributed to the development of an established culture of public commemorative patronage in Britain. Furthermore, the controversial donation of Turner's *Trafalgar* to Greenwich Hospital is readdressed within this chapter. New research into the way this work was acquired and exhibited within the Naval Gallery has made it possible, for the first time, to directly challenge the established idea that, as Gerald Finley has suggested, the donation of Turner's *Trafalgar* was 'a final and most devastating humiliation' for Turner.<sup>67</sup>

Moving out of the vestibule, Chapter Three considers the ways in which the display of paintings in the main room of the Gallery projected a chronological naval history, covering British naval victory from the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 through to the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. This pictorial history is explored within the context of naval and national history writing in the years preceding the foundation of the Gallery. In addition to the Naval Gallery, Edward Hawke Locker was directly engaged with this developing tradition of national historiography and he

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<sup>67</sup> Gerald Finley, 'J.M.W Turner's Proposal for a "Royal Progress"', *Burlington Magazine*, cxvii, (1975), 31.

produced a number of historical works in the 1820s and 1830s in a bid to encourage the dispersal of ‘national information’.<sup>68</sup> This chapter explores how the construction of a pictorial naval history within the Gallery directly related to the aims and agendas of his corresponding literary projects. It considers how the construction of an account of national progression and providential naval victory was employed as a means to both educate the public and reassert an anti-radical discourse at a time of social unrest in the early nineteenth century.<sup>69</sup>

While Chapter Three considers how a narrative of naval history was articulated upon the walls of the main hall, Chapter Four re-examines the same space in order to consider how it simultaneously functioned as an art gallery. From the foundation of the Gallery in 1823 it was intended to serve as a venue for the public exhibition of naval art. This chapter explores how through the exhibition of several hundred admiralty portraits, marine paintings and naval history paintings, the Gallery presented a national history of British naval art. From its foundation, the Naval Gallery interacted with a number of contemporary art institutions, including the Royal Academy and the British Institution. The ways in which the Gallery engaged with and participated in the contemporary art world is subject to investigation throughout this chapter. Chapter Four examines how, through the execution of original commissions, the Naval Gallery functioned as an active participant in the continued support of the contemporary art world and the future development of a British school of naval art.

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<sup>68</sup> Between 1820 and 1823, Locker was the joint editor of a serial publication (in collaboration with the publisher Charles Knight) entitled, *The Plain Englishman*, which was published in three volumes. In 1824, a compilation of extracts from this serial were brought together in a publication entitled *The Englishman's Library, A Series of Historical, Biographical and National Information*. In 1831, Locker published a volume of biographies, entitled *The Naval Gallery of Greenwich Hospital; comprising a series of Portraits and Memoirs of celebrated Naval Commanders*, which directly corresponded to a number of the paintings on display in the Naval Gallery.

<sup>69</sup> H. T. Dickinson, *British Radicalism and the French Revolution, 1789-1815*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985); Robert Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country: The English Loyalists and the French Revolution*, (Lexington: University press of Kentucky, 1983).



Finally, Chapter Five moves into the third and final room in the Naval Gallery, the upper hall. While the previous chapters have considered the exhibition of fine art, this chapter examines how the upper hall was employed as a distinctly separate space for the display of naval memorabilia and Nelsonic relics.<sup>70</sup> In 1806, the upper hall had provided the location for Nelson's body to be laid in state. This chapter explores how, with the installation of the Naval Gallery, the display of Nelson's belongings within the upper hall responded to this previous history, rekindling the memory of the event. The acquisition of Nelson memorabilia continued throughout the Gallery's existence. This chapter focuses upon a number of specific objects within the collection, such as Nelson's uniforms from the battles of the Nile and Trafalgar, exploring how their exhibition within the Naval Gallery can be seen to have contributed toward the development of the 'Nelson Legend'.<sup>71</sup> Through the acquisition and exhibition of Nelson's personal artefacts the upper hall functioned as a secular reliquary, providing a site for the continued patriotic worship of Nelson as a national hero. This chapter examines the role that the upper hall of the Gallery played in the formation and continued development of a national Nelsonic mythology.

The structure of this study, in which the reader moves from room to room, replicates the experience of early visitors. However, it does not just reflect the spatial organisation of Gallery; it also actively responds to the way in which the Gallery was

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<sup>70</sup> Nelson's belongings were commonly referred to as relics during the early nineteenth century: 'Nelson's Relics', W. & R. Chambers, ed., *The Book of Days. A Miscellany of Popular Antiquities*, (London, 1833), vol. II, 479-80. Within the Naval Gallery, they were initially referred to as articles of public or national interest: Locker, *Catalogue*, 3; H. Clarke, *Greenwich Hospital, its Painted Hall, and Chapel. A Hand-book Guide for Visitors*, (London, 1842). Following the arrival of the Trafalgar uniform in 1845, they begin to be referred to as relics: 'Nelson's Relics', *The Standard*, 8 July 8 1845, issue 6534, 4; 'Illustrations of Greenwich Hospital', *Illustrated London News*, 22 April 1865, issue 1311, 375; *Descriptive Catalogue of the Portraits of Naval Commanders and of the Representations of Naval Actions Exhibited in the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital*. (London: Printed for Her Majesty's Stationary Office, by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1887), 51.

<sup>71</sup> Now a well-known phrase, 'the Nelson Legend' was first termed in the 1995 collection of essays *The Nelson Companion*, edited by Colin White.

recorded and reported on during its existence, reflecting the way in which it was reviewed and written about in newspapers.<sup>72</sup> Structuring this study in this way allows us to consider the thematic, architectural and aesthetic transitions that occurred between the three rooms. Adapting this established structural format enables us to engage with issues relating to the display, the exhibition space and the role of the spectator within that space. Fundamentally, it also helps to reaffirm the original architectural framework of the display, reinstating the spatial context that has otherwise been lost and forgotten since the Gallery was taken down in 1936.

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<sup>72</sup> *The Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 1-3.

## CHAPTER I

## Locker's Letters: documenting the foundation, acquisition and display

A bound volume entitled *Locker's Letters*, held in the box file PRO 30/26/27 at the National Archives, contains over three hundred letters which relate to the foundation and development of the Naval Gallery. This volume of material, which has never been subject to scholarly investigation before, includes the initial proposal for the formation of a gallery of marine paintings in the Painted Hall, which was made by William Locker in 1795. Furthermore, a number of letters detail the subsequent revival and revision of this scheme in 1823 by William Locker's son, Edward Hawke Locker.<sup>1</sup> The main body of this correspondence is compiled from letters received by Locker from private donors, regarding the acquisition of works once the plan for the Gallery's formation had been approved. Further correspondence relates to the commission of contemporary artists, either to execute copies or paint original works. Some of these letters include sketches and artistic impressions for suggested commissions. In addition to the written documentation, the bound volume also contains a number of illustrative plans, all drawn by Locker, which map the development of an arrangement for the display. This first chapter closely examines the material within this varied and extensive volume in order to establish a thorough understanding of how the successful establishment of the Naval Gallery was finally achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> As Edward Hawke Locker is the focus of this study he will be referred to as Locker. Any instances referring to his father will use William Locker's full name.

1795: Captain William Locker's proposal for a 'gallery of marine paintings'

On 11 February 1795, Captain William Locker (1731-1800), the Lieutenant-Governor of Greenwich Hospital, submitted a plan to the Board of Directors which proposed a scheme to form a gallery of marine paintings in the Painted Hall (14).<sup>2</sup> A record of this proposal is found in the Board Minutes for Greenwich Hospital and a copy is bound within the volume of his son's correspondence.<sup>3</sup> In this initial plan, William Locker suggested that a gallery should be formed at Greenwich in order to 'perpetuate the memory of gallant actions and the names of the brave officers, who have contributed thereby in different wars to the defence and aggrandisement of their Country'.<sup>4</sup> He suggested that the proposed gallery should exhibit a collection of maritime paintings including both 'Portraits of distinguished Admirals and other Sea Officers' and depictions of 'remarkable Sea Engagements'.<sup>5</sup>

Prior to his appointment as the Lieutenant-Governor of Greenwich Hospital in 1793, William Locker had pursued an active and extensive naval career. He first joined the Royal Navy in 1746 as a captain's servant to Charles Wyndam aboard the *Kent*. Following several years in the East India Company, he returned to the Navy in 1755 as a master's mate aboard the *St George*, the flagship of Admiral Sir Edward Hawke. In 1756, William Locker was appointed lieutenant when he again served under Admiral Hawke, this time aboard the *Antelope* during the Seven Years War. He was promoted to captain in 1768 commanding the *Thames* from 1770-73 and the *Lowestoffe* from 1777. At this time, a nineteen-year-old Horatio Nelson (1758-1805) served as a lieutenant under William Locker's command. In 1793, at the beginning

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<sup>2</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>3</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 32-33. Transcript of William Locker's proposal taken from the GH Board Minutes (TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18).

<sup>4</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>5</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

of the French Revolutionary War, William Locker was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Greenwich Hospital, a position which he held until his death in 1800.<sup>6</sup>

In his 1795 proposal to form a gallery of marine paintings, William Locker recommended that the rooms ‘commonly called the Painted Hall’ could be employed as ‘a Repository for the reception and proper arrangement of Paintings’.<sup>7</sup> He was adamant that ‘there cannot be a more proper Repository for such a Collection than Greenwich Hospital’.<sup>8</sup> However, this was not just because the Hall provided ‘ample room’.<sup>9</sup> Following the completion of the Painted Hall in 1812 it became an established tourist attraction.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Thornhill’s monarchical narrative is supported throughout by symbols of maritime prowess which confirmed the essential role of the navy in the protection and status of the nation.<sup>11</sup> In addition to the maritime symbolism already present within the Hall, Greenwich Hospital was an institution dedicated to the support and shelter of disabled and destitute servicemen. The formation of a gallery committed to perpetuating the ‘memory of gallant actions’ would have been entirely appropriate to the naval interests of the institution as a whole.<sup>12</sup>

William Locker suggested that the necessary art collection could easily be acquired from private donations. He assumed that the descendants of ‘distinguished Admirals’ would ‘offer them for the sake of perpetuating the memory of their ancestors’.<sup>13</sup> William Locker was confident that a gallery installed within the Painted Hall would ‘draw a great number of persons to see the Hall’ which would in turn

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<sup>6</sup> See Edward Hawke Locker’s biography of his father published in Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘William Locker Lieut. Governor of Greenwich Hospital’, 1-44.

<sup>7</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>8</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>9</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>10</sup> Bold, *Greenwich*, 148.

<sup>11</sup> Johns, ‘Sir James Thornhill’, 157-8.

<sup>12</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>13</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

increase ‘the fund for the maintenance and education of the Charity Boys’. The Royal Hospital undertook to care for a limited number of the orphaned sons of naval seamen until they were old enough to join the Royal Navy.<sup>14</sup> However, it was not just the donation of paintings or the funds raised from visitors that William Locker thought would be a ‘benefit for the Hospital’. He hoped that patrons would also be encouraged to ‘bestow benefaction of another kind’.<sup>15</sup> Presumably, it was assumed that these monetary donations would have been fuelled by a similar desire for ancestral commemoration. Thornhill’s decoration of the Painted Hall provided a precedent for commemorating this type of monetary patronage, inscribing both the names of patrons and the value of their donations upon the walls of the vestibule.<sup>16</sup> William Locker’s proposal for a gallery at Greenwich was driven, or justified, by a desire to further contribute to the Hospital’s primary charitable aims.

In February 1795, the Board of Directors resolved to forward William Locker’s proposal on for the consideration of the General Court at Greenwich Hospital.<sup>17</sup> When this committee met on the 23 June 1795, the plan to convert the Painted Hall into a gallery was ‘postponed’.<sup>18</sup> Neither the committee minutes for the Board of Directors nor those of the General Court show any further discussion of William Locker’s proposal during his time as Lieutenant-Governor. There is no evidence within the minutes of either Board as to how or why this postponement was reached. However, to postpone rather than reject the scheme suggests that the issue lay not with the proposal itself, but with its timing. In 1795, the country was in the early stages of the Revolutionary War with France. At this point in the conflict, victory was not yet assured. Aside from this immediate conflict, the recent memory

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<sup>14</sup> Bold, *Greenwich*, 93-137.

<sup>15</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 18.

<sup>16</sup> Johns, ‘Sir James Thornhill’, 156.

<sup>17</sup> TNA ADM 67/13, General Court of the Commissioners and Governors Minutes, 23 June 1795, 11.

<sup>18</sup> TNA ADM 67/13, 23 June 1795, 15.

of British defeat in the War of American Independence still resonated across the nation.<sup>19</sup> Aspiring to ‘preserve from oblivion and perpetuate the memory of gallant actions and the names of the brave officers’, this proposed gallery would have emphasised both individual and national naval heroism. At a time of national crisis, when the ability of the Royal Navy was under pressure, the foundation of a maritime gallery to aggrandise previous victories could have been seen as entirely appropriate to the situation. However, as a result of the conflict with France, Greenwich Hospital would have been inundated with sailors returning wounded from battle. The number of pensioners at Greenwich Hospital reached its peak in the early nineteenth century, housing 2710 pensioners in the year after Waterloo.<sup>20</sup> With such a demand upon the hospital’s primary charitable aims, to care for and support the injured sailors, perhaps the funds needed to convert the Painted Hall could not reasonably be made available at this time.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the formation of a gallery dedicated to exhibiting ‘portraits of distinguished Admirals and other Sea Officers’ had the potential to highlight the hierarchical nature of the admiralty, emphasising its close association with the patrician elite. The formation of a gallery dedicated to commemorating ‘distinguished Admirals and other Sea Officers’ would arguably have been an inflammatory act at this time of potential social unrest.<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, in addition to the issues that surrounded the contemporary conflict, there is another possible explanation for the postponement of William

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<sup>19</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982), 150-1.

<sup>20</sup> See Newell, *Greenwich Hospital*, (1983), 124.

<sup>21</sup> Monks similarly observes that the Directors’ reasons were ‘probably based on the problematic concept of a charitable institution, intended for the relief of those who had served and suffered for their country, establishing an art gallery at the height of a major war’. Monks, ‘Marine Art and the Public Sphere’, 168.

<sup>22</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18. See Emma Vincent Macleod, *A War of Ideas. British Attitudes to the Wars Against Revolutionary France, 1792-1802*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), esp. chapter 1, ‘Edmund Burke and the War Against the French Revolution’ 9-29, chapter 3, ‘Loyalists and War Crusaders’ 65-89 and chapter 8, ‘The voice of the people?’ 179-200.

Locker's scheme. In 1795, another major commemorative project was already underway in St Paul's Cathedral. The construction of a series of commemorative sculptural monuments, dedicated to the nation's military heroes, had been developing in St Paul's since 1791. The project was initiated by the House of Commons, with the support of George IV and, crucially, it was funded by the state.<sup>23</sup> Funds for the first sculptural monuments dedicated to Napoleonic naval and military commanders were allocated by Parliament just prior to William Locker's proposal, in 1794-95.<sup>24</sup> The existence of this major cultural project, funded by Government and situated in the centre of the capital, would certainly have undermined the perceived need for a gallery solely dedicated to honouring naval officers located on the outskirts of the metropolis, at Greenwich Hospital. Most likely, it was the combination of influences that would have contributed towards the postponement of William Locker's 'gallery of marine painting'. The 1795 proposal was never returned to during his lifetime.

#### 1823: Edward Hawke Locker and the proposal for a 'National Gallery of Naval Art'

In the autumn of 1823, Edward Hawke Locker, William Locker's youngest son, submitted another proposal for the creation of a gallery in the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital. However, rather than creating a mere 'gallery of marine painting', Locker had higher ambitions. He desired to create a 'National Gallery of Naval Art' (15).<sup>25</sup> Named after his father's naval patron, Admiral Edward Hawke, Locker was the Secretary at Greenwich Hospital from 1819. In 1829 he became the most senior resident Commissioner. In contrast to his father's active naval career, he had pursued a civil path within naval administration, working first as a clerk in the

<sup>23</sup> Hoock, 'The British Military Pantheon', 83.

<sup>24</sup> Hoock, *The King's Artists*, 258.

<sup>25</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19-22.



Navy Pay Office from 1795, and then in the India Department from 1799. Locker became the civil secretary for Edward Pellew during his command in the East Indies, the North Sea and the Mediterranean from 1804 to 1814. Subsequently during the Peninsular War, Locker worked in Spain transferring dispatches to Wellington. In 1819, he was appointed the Secretary at Greenwich Hospital where he remained until his retirement in 1844.<sup>26</sup> In addition to his professional role, Locker was also an amateur artist.

Despite the fact that Locker's 1823 proposal makes no direct reference to the 1795 scheme, as William Locker's youngest son, it was obviously shaped by the earlier attempt made by his father. When examining the two schemes consecutively, a number of common aims become apparent. However, due to the availability of considerable documentation relating to the progression of the 1823 proposal, bound in the volume of Locker's letters, it is also possible to ascertain the ways in which Locker's proposal developed far beyond the aims of his father's earlier initiative. Locker's 'Memorandum' proposing the foundation of a 'National Gallery of Naval Art' was submitted to the Board of Directors on 20 September 1823. He reiterated his father's sentiment that the 'splendid' Painted Hall 'could form an admirable Gallery'.<sup>27</sup> Locker suggested that this gallery should contain a broad collection of art and artefacts including naval paintings and sculpture as well as 'naval trophies and various articles of curiosity'.<sup>28</sup> While Greenwich Hospital already possessed a small collection of paintings, Locker was adamant that the gallery was still 'wanting' representations of a number of specific individuals 'whose portraits would do great

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<sup>26</sup> Roger Quarm, 'Locker, Edward Hawke (1777–1849), hospital administrator and watercolour painter', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: OUP, 2004) [accessed September 2013: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16893>]. See also Edward Hawke Locker's obituary: *Morning Post*, 22 October, 1849, issue 23673, 5; *The Gentleman's Magazine*, July-December 1849, 654.

<sup>27</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19-22.

<sup>28</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19-20.

honour to the Collection'.<sup>29</sup> He named a number of naval servicemen that he believed should be included within the collection: Sir George Legge, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Dartmouth (1648-1691) who had distinguished himself in the Third Dutch War (1672-74); Captain James Cook (1728-1779), the famed British explorer and circumnavigator; and Admiral George Bridges Rodney (1718-1792) who was recognised for his command during the War of American Independence.

Reiterating his father's expectations, Locker anticipated that private donors would 'not hesitate to transfer to a National Collection'.<sup>30</sup> He echoed his father's assumption that private donations would be offered to the collection out of a willingness to perform an ancestral duty and the temptation to preserve familial heritage for both personal and national posterity. It was specifically the 'relatives of many brave Officers' that he suggested would 'cheerfully resign to a National Gallery, pictures of great interest'.<sup>31</sup> Locker considered these paintings to be 'concealed in the obscurity of private apartments', referring to individual sitters as if they belonged to a national, rather than ancestral, history which was otherwise threatened by the isolation of paintings within private collections.<sup>32</sup> In donating works to this national naval art gallery, patrons were performing both an ancestral and a national duty. This anxiety that sitters were 'concealed' within private collections recalls William Locker's concern that they had a duty to 'preserve from oblivion ... the memory of gallant actions'.<sup>33</sup> It also aligns with a wider cultural reconstruction of the aristocracy which was taking place in the early nineteenth century whereby aristocratic ancestral homes, and the art collections held within

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<sup>29</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, Printed Proposal for the foundation of the Naval Gallery written by Edward Hawke Locker, unbound, 2.

<sup>30</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 20.

<sup>31</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>32</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>33</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

them, were increasingly rebranded as part of a national cultural heritage. In allowing public access to country estates, if only to a limited and selective audience, the British aristocracy presented their private property, as Linda Colley argues, ‘in some magical and intangible way the people’s property also’.<sup>34</sup> However, as Christopher Rovee observes, ‘this phantasmatic merger between the aristocracy and the people was [also] nurtured in the gallery’s public space’.<sup>35</sup> Through the donation of familial portraits to a national gallery, aristocratic donors were able to situate their familial lineage within a developing national narrative. Furthermore, donating works to this national institution provided a means to publicly exhibit their patriotic cultural philanthropy. However, from the outset, the Naval Gallery’s collection was formed as a gift for the nation and ownership of the works had to be handed over. As a result, many patrons donated copies. This allowed the original works to remain in private hands while maintaining the illusion of aristocratic generosity to the nation.

In order to ensure the necessary private donations, Locker actively sought to establish a Royal precedent, predicting that ‘the King will, with his accustomed liberality give his patronage to the scheme’.<sup>36</sup> By October 1823, Locker informed the Board how he had proceeded in this venture: ‘As the first step towards success, I ventured to make application to the King, with the hope of obtaining twelve Portraits of celebrated Naval Officers of the Reign of Charles the II. which are now in the collection at Windsor Castle’.<sup>37</sup> Locker had received notice that ‘His Majesty has been graciously pleased to signify, through a Member of your Honourable Board, eminently distinguished for his taste and knowledge in the Fine Arts, the most

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<sup>34</sup> For the wider argument on how the cultural image of the British aristocracy was reconstructed in the early nineteenth century see Colley, *Britons*, 177.

<sup>35</sup> Christopher Rovee, *Imagining the Gallery. The Social Body of British Romanticism*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 5-10.

<sup>36</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 20.

<sup>37</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

cordial approbation of the general plan, and has not only consented to transfer these Pictures to Greenwich Hospital, but has directed lists to be prepared of the Naval Pictures in the Royal Palaces at Hampton Court and Kensington, with an intention of further extending this munificent present'.<sup>38</sup> Following this initial patronage, Locker openly proclaimed 'his Majesty as the Founder of our Gallery'.<sup>39</sup> The King's immediate support for the scheme and the wider commitment to donate a considerable number of paintings to the Naval Gallery provided the influential and prestigious royal example that Locker was after. He was adamant that 'the Royal example will stimulate our principle Collectors, and others who possess valuable Works of Art illustrative of the triumphs of the British Navy, to make similar offers to the Hospital'.<sup>40</sup> George IV's royal approval of the scheme certainly impacted upon the General Court. On receiving an initial donation of works from the Royal Collection in February 1824, the General Court expressed their 'grateful acceptance', requesting that Lord Melville convey to His Majesty 'the high sense which the Court entertains of this mark of the Royal Favour'.<sup>41</sup> The subsequent examination of Locker's early acquisition letters exposes the extent to which this monarchical model of patronage was employed as a means to solicit paintings from private donors.

Locker was deliberately elevating the status of this proposed gallery. He did not just suggest that Greenwich Hospital should form 'a repository for the reception and proper arrangement of paintings' like his father, but strove to instigate a 'National Gallery of Pictures and Sculptures'.<sup>42</sup> In 1795, William Locker originally proposed that any works accepted into the collection would be painted 'by esteemed

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<sup>38</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>39</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>40</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>41</sup> TNA ADM 67/17, General Court of the Commissioners and Governors, 4 February 1824, 56.

<sup>42</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18; TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19.

Masters'.<sup>43</sup> When the idea of a gallery was revived in 1823, Locker placed similar emphasis upon the artistic standard of the collection. The gallery was not just intended to perform a fundamentally patriotic role. It was simultaneously meant to provide a forum for the exhibition of naval art. In order to ensure that both artistic merit and naval excellence were equally considered, Locker suggested that the Board of Directors 'establish a rule, that no work of inferior merit be received unless the subject be of great importance, nor any unimportant subject admitted, unless the work be of the first excellence'.<sup>44</sup> From this early stage in the foundation of the collection, Locker was dedicated to the display and development of a British school of art. He expressed an ambition that this institution would 'encourage the Members of the Royal Academy to cultivate a branch of History Painting, which has been hitherto much neglected in this country'. In addition, Locker drew attention to the contemporary state of marine art: 'notwithstanding the long and brilliant career of Victory which this Nation has enjoyed at Sea, it is remarkable how little patronage has been given to Marine Painting'.<sup>45</sup> However, Locker was 'unwilling to doubt that the walls of the Painted Hall will hereafter shew, that the English School may rival the best works of Vanderveldt, and Cuyp, and other Foreign Masters, many of whom though not exclusively Marine Painters, have excelled in this department of art'.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, in order to persuade the Board that this was a realistic aim, Locker informed the committee that 'several valuable works illustrative of the exploits of the late war are now to be purchased at a cheap rate owing to their large dimensions which are well calculated for a Gallery, (especially those of Louthembourg), and the British School of Painting now daily rising in estimation will thus acquire additional

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<sup>43</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>44</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

<sup>45</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

<sup>46</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

motives for the exercise of genius in adorning this National Depository'.<sup>47</sup> Preceding the foundation of the National Gallery by a matter of months, this 'National Gallery of Naval Art' was intended as a forum for the exhibition of a British school of naval art from the outset.<sup>48</sup>

Locker echoed William Locker's belief that the formation of a gallery would be advantageous for Greenwich Hospital. William Locker had suggested that the formation of a gallery would be a 'benefit for the Hospital', focusing upon how it would support the wider charitable aims of the institution.<sup>49</sup> In contrast, Locker's 1823 proposal identified a wider public benefit in the accumulation and exhibition of a 'national gallery of Pictures and Sculptures'.<sup>50</sup> He hoped that this 'National Collection' would serve a multitude of functions, being 'interesting to the visitor, honourable to our gallant countrymen, and encouraging to those who are entering the profession'.<sup>51</sup> In October 1823, he expanded upon this desire to inspire 'the youthful sailor'. Locker hoped that young sailors would be 'animated to enterprise at the view of these battles'. By observing the portraits of 'distinguished Men', it was hoped that the youthful sailor would 'cherish a secret hope that at a future time, perhaps his own might be associated with theirs'.<sup>52</sup> In order to make it as widely accessible as possible, Locker suggested that the Board review the established 'practice of receiving money from Strangers who visit the Painted Hall and Chapel'. Locker argued that 'when Admiral AYLMER nearly a century ago, first proposed to apply this Money to the Education of Twenty distressed Children of the Pensioners, it was of little importance, - but now that the accumulated wealth of the Institution has

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<sup>47</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 20.

<sup>48</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

<sup>49</sup> TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

<sup>50</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>51</sup> TNA, PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 20.

<sup>52</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

provided an adequate Income to maintain the Naval Asylum (containing One Thousand Children), in addition to the Establishment of Greenwich Hospital, the sum received for shewing these Apartments, bears so trifling a proportion to the General Expenditure, that it may be very properly dispensed with'.<sup>53</sup> As the 'Revenues of the Foundation are amply sufficient', Locker proposed that this newly formed national gallery should be free-of-charge. He assured the committee that 'no mischief to the Pictures need be apprehended from throwing open our doors to the Public'. The British Museum, which had been established by an act of Parliament in 1753, had been freely available to the public since it opened in 1759. As Jonathan Conlin observes, 'such openness was without equal in Europe'.<sup>54</sup> With the foundation of the Naval Gallery, Locker wanted to follow this example, proposing that 'the system of security established at the British Museum, may be adopted with equal facility in shewing the Painted Hall, and the Pensioners who have been hitherto re-warded with part of the Receipts, may be paid by Salary – and when stationed there in their proper uniforms, will appear as very characteristic guardians of our Naval Gallery'.<sup>55</sup> Although the Gallery did not become freely opened to the public until the 1840s, the proposal demonstrates that, from the outset, Locker had intended that the Naval Gallery be a thoroughly public space.

#### Consultation and conversion: Royal Academicians & the review of the Painted Hall

Between September and December 1823, while the Board of Directors were considering Locker's application to form a gallery, the committee conducted an

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<sup>53</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 3. The Royal Naval Asylum, another naval orphanage school for boys and girls, established in Paddington in the 1790s, was granted the Queen's House in 1806. From the early 1820s it was taken over by Greenwich Hospital and combined with the existing and smaller Greenwich Hospital school which became the 'Upper School' and the Asylum the 'Lower School'. See Newell, *Greenwich*, 109, 111, 133, 204.

<sup>54</sup> Conlin, *The Nation's Mantelpiece*, 10

<sup>55</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 3.

initial review of the Painted Hall. They requested that the ‘Clerk of the Works lay before the Board a complete list of the Pictures now belonging to the Institution, and an estimate of the expence which will be incurred in making the necessary alterations in the Painted Hall’.<sup>56</sup> At a meeting on 11 October 1823, the Board ‘directed that the Upper Windows on the north side be reopened, the space below them filled in, and covered with crimson cloth, and that the best pictures be hung thereon between the pilasters’.<sup>57</sup> They also concluded that the lower windows on the south side ‘be closed with a temporary covering, to ascertain if a sufficient light will be admitted into the hall from the upper windows on each side’.<sup>58</sup> At the subsequent meeting on 1 November 1823, it was concluded that the upper windows were sufficient, so the permanent closure of the lower windows on both sides was approved. Furthermore, the Board ‘directed that a small tablet be added to the frames to denote the subject of each picture, and ordered crimson cloth to be carried to the Entablature between the pilasters on both sides’.<sup>59</sup>

After reaching these decisions relating to the conversion of the Painted Hall, on 12 November 1823 the Board decided that rather than continue further with these proposed alterations it was first ‘desirable to obtain the assistance of three professional men of distinguished Reputation’ to assist with the conversion of the Hall.<sup>60</sup> Three leading figures in the Royal Academy were approached for the purpose. Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830) was contacted, both as the President of the Royal Academy and as a leading painter in the British art world. In addition, the Board requested the assistance of the sculptor Sir Francis Chantrey RA (1781-1841) and the architect Robert Smirke RA (1780-1867). Together, the three Academicians

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<sup>56</sup> TNA ADM 67/72, GH Board Minutes, 1 October 1823, 226.

<sup>57</sup> TNA ADM 67/72, 1 October 1823, 233.

<sup>58</sup> TNA ADM 67/72, 1 October 1823, 233.

<sup>59</sup> TNA ADM 67/72, 1 November 1823, 247.

<sup>60</sup> TNA ADM 67/72, 1 October 1823, 226; TNA ADM 67/72, 12 November 1823, 253.



could offer specialist advice on the three fields of painting, sculpture and architecture. They were asked to offer their opinions as to the ‘expediency of converting the great hall of Greenwich into a gallery for works of art connected with the history of the British Navy’.<sup>61</sup> By the 1820s the Royal Academy was well established as an arbiter of public cultural taste. It was a familiar practice to recruit the services of the Academy when forging new public cultural projects. Thus, a small committee of Royal Academicians became heavily involved in the foundation of the sculptural pantheon in St Paul’s during the 1790s.<sup>62</sup> The fact that this small committee of Academicians was brought in to consult on the conversion of the Painted Hall demonstrates the perceived status that this project had in both the eyes of Greenwich Hospital and the Royal Academy. Comparisons can be drawn with the St Paul’s scheme which was drawing to a close by the early 1820s. The formation of a gallery within the Painted Hall was perhaps seen as the successor to St Paul’s, providing the next major commemorative and artistic cultural project.

After conducting an inspection of the hall, the Academicians submitted a *Letter of Advised Alterations* to the Board on 22 November 1823.<sup>63</sup> A copy of this letter is transcribed into the Directors’ committee minutes and another is bound within Locker’s volume of letters.<sup>64</sup> Within this letter, the Academicians confirmed that the Painted Hall was in their opinion ‘eminently adapted to the reception of Paintings and Sculptures’.<sup>65</sup> However, in order to best prepare these rooms for the reception of art works, they made several suggestions regarding the building itself. It was proposed that the glass from the lower windows in the main hall should be

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<sup>61</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Francis Chantrey to Greenwich Hospital, 17 November 1823, 66.

<sup>62</sup> See Hooch, *The King’s Artists*, 257-76.

<sup>63</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, ‘Letter of Advised Alterations’ from Thomas Lawrence, Robert Smirke and Francis Chantrey to the Board of Directors, Greenwich Hospital, 22 November 1823, unbound.

<sup>64</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823; TNA ADM 67/72, GH Board Minutes, 22 November 1823, 263-68.

<sup>65</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 26.

removed and that these windows be blocked up in order to provide sufficient wall space. It was feared that the amount of light admitted through the east window would be ‘disadvantageous to the ceiling as well as to the pictures and sculptures, which will be placed beneath it’.<sup>66</sup> It was therefore thought necessary that it too was permanently closed. They further advised that all the other windows be made ‘perfectly air tight’ and the three rooms be both warmed and ventilated. It was considered ‘very important to the preservation of the pictures’ that the correct conditions could be sustained within the Hall.<sup>67</sup>

At the time of this inspection, Nelson’s funeral car was situated within the Painted Hall (16). Following the state funeral in January 1806, the carriage had been sent to Greenwich and it had remained on display in the Painted Hall ever since. The Academicians suggested that the carriage should be removed. This was thought necessary in order to provide adequate space for a picture gallery. However, Lawrence, Smirke and Chantrey also expressed an additional concern that the funeral car was ‘inappropriate to these splendid rooms and injurious to the architectural effect’.<sup>68</sup> Following this advice, Nelson’s funeral carriage was removed from the Hall and subsequently destroyed. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the attention of these three Academicians was clearly directed toward the reception and exhibition of works of art rather than the preservation of naval artefacts and curiosities. However, as Chapter Five demonstrates, this attitude was completely contradictory to the Gallery’s later dedication to the acquisition and exhibition of Nelsonic memorabilia in the upper hall.

In order to convert the Painted Hall into an appropriate gallery space, Locker had initially proposed that ‘the side walls be fitted with timber framing, on a line

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<sup>66</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 28.

<sup>67</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 29.

<sup>68</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 28.

with the pilasters, and that the whole side from the entablature to the dado be covered with crimson cloth'.<sup>69</sup> He suggested that this preparation would prevent the walls from being damaged or disturbed. This proposal to construct a wooden frame was probably shaped by the example of the Royal Academy, which employed a similar wooden armature in its Great Room during the institution's annual exhibitions.<sup>70</sup> However, after their inspection, Lawrence, Smirke and Chantrey contradicted Locker's early suggestion and concluded that it would be better if the walls were painted. Painting the walls would provide a consistent and uniform background for the display. Lawrence suggested that they should use a colour 'best suited to give effect to the pictures, and the general harmony of the sculptures and architecture'.<sup>71</sup> Rather than a wooden frame, they proposed a system of iron rods to hang these works, which would 'prevent the necessity of covering the walls with panelling' and further avoid damage to the surface of the walls with 'driving nails'.<sup>72</sup> To support a top tier of paintings, they proposed that an iron rod, painted the same colour as the wall, should be fixed under the entablature. Similar rods could be attached to the underneath of the frames and the lower tiers could be hung from this 'in like manner'.<sup>73</sup>

In addition, the Academicians proposed that 'all pictures in the gallery shall be framed with Gold', a suggestion which would further contribute toward the aesthetic unification of the display, giving the impression of a single and cohesive collection.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, they advised that the cornice, pilasters and any other ornamental parts within the hall should also be gilded: an elaborate detail which

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<sup>69</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

<sup>70</sup> See Sunderland and Solkin, 'Staging the Spectacle', 23-4.

<sup>71</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 26.

<sup>72</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 27.

<sup>73</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 27.

<sup>74</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 28-9.

would have considerably contributed to the production of an ornate and elaborate spectacle. As the collection increased over time, the Academicians proposed that further paintings could be placed ‘in commodious lights on the other walls of that apartment, and in the Vestibule’. They suggested that ‘some of the larger and more splendid paintings be reserved for the West Side of the Upper Hall’.<sup>75</sup> This suggestion would have involved covering up those of Thornhill’s paintings which decorated the walls of the upper hall and it was one suggestion that was never adopted. The display of sculpture did not escape their consideration and they proposed that this naval art collection should include the ‘most approved Statues of Sea Officers now in St Paul’s Cathedral or elsewhere, and of other Works of art connected with the Royal Navy’.<sup>76</sup> Until marble copies could be acquired they proposed that plaster casts should be used in the meantime. They suggested that these statues could be positioned to ‘greatest advantage on Pedestals beneath the East and West Walls, and at the foot of the Pilasters on the sides of the Great Hall’. As the collection expanded over time, the Academicians advised that later acquisitions of sculpture could be arranged on the floor of both the Vestibule and the Upper Hall.<sup>77</sup>

The *Letter of Advised Alterations* illustrates the comprehensive and strategic attitude which was employed toward the preparation of the Naval Gallery. The paintings were not just hung, but carefully arranged at certain heights and in specific positions. Conscious effort and consideration was clearly invested into the construction and design of a unified display and the production of a cohesive visual experience. When the Board met on 22 November 1823, ‘having now duly considered the subject assisted by the advice and information of the Professional Gentlemen’ they resolved that this plan ‘for forming a gallery [...] be adopted’. They

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<sup>75</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 27.

<sup>76</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 28.

<sup>77</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 27-8.

concluded that ‘the several arrangements proposed [...] be carried into effect without delay’.<sup>78</sup> In a following meeting on 3 December 1823, the Board decided that ‘on filling in the Lower Windows with masonry, the glass be retained, in order to preserve uniformity in the external appearance’.<sup>79</sup> Other than this change, the works were reportedly carried out as advised. The Board informed the Academicians that ‘from time to time’ they wished to ‘receive the benefit of their judgement in the formation and future arrangement of the Naval Gallery’.<sup>80</sup> The decision to seek the advice of professional artists, including the President of the Royal Academy, demonstrates that from its foundation the Naval Gallery was approached as a major cultural project.

#### Locker’s Letters: tracing the development of an acquisition strategy

In order to initiate the Gallery, Locker stated that ‘as a Commencement of the collection I propose that the pictures lately taken down from the Council Room should be arranged between the pilasters’.<sup>81</sup> At this time, the Hospital reportedly possessed ‘upwards of Fifty Pictures’ most of which were ‘commemorative of Persons who have been Members of its Establishment’.<sup>82</sup> As van der Merwe observes, almost all of the works in the early Greenwich Hospital collection had been acquired as gifts and bequests from donors who were associated either with the Hospital or the Royal Navy.<sup>83</sup> In addition to this small collection of paintings, Locker set out to acquire further works by encouraging donations from private patrons. The bound volume of Locker’s correspondence contains scores of letters

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<sup>78</sup> ADM 67/72, 22 November 1823, 267-8.

<sup>79</sup> ADM 67/72, 3 December 1823, 269.

<sup>80</sup> ADM 67/72, 22 November 1823, 268.

<sup>81</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 20.

<sup>82</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

<sup>83</sup> Van der Merwe, ‘Greenwich Hospital Collection’, 22.

relating to the acquisition of works.<sup>84</sup> Most of these documents are replies sent to Locker by prospective patrons, although a number of draft copies of Locker's own letters are also included. It also contains a considerable amount of correspondence between Locker and a number of contemporary artists, regarding the commission of new works or the production of copies. This extensive primary resource offers us a unique insight into how this collection was acquired, providing an impression of the speed at which the process was conducted. However, in the subsequent examination of these letters we must appreciate that they do not always provide a complete picture of this process, often recording only one side of a correspondence. On occasion, considerable extrapolation is required in order to make sense of events.

Locker wrote a list entitled 'Portraits Wanted' which records all the works that he was set on acquiring for this collection. Paintings are arranged by the name of the sitter or the event and against each picture title Locker listed the location and owner. It is clear that he had specific paintings and not just sitters in mind. As works were successfully acquired they were methodically crossed off the list. For example, once the portrait of 'John Jervis, Lord St Vincent', which was recorded as in the King's collection at 'Carlton House', was successfully acquired it was struck off the list.<sup>85</sup> Significantly, Locker does not make any additional record when the eventual acquisition of Hoppner's portrait was a copy, commissioned specifically for the Naval Gallery, rather than the original.<sup>86</sup> As we will subsequently explore in further detail, the tacit acceptance of a copy as a substitute when an original work was unavailable became an established practice during the early years of the Gallery's foundation. The 'Portraits Wanted' list also includes a number of works which were

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<sup>84</sup> See TNA PRO 30/26/27.

<sup>85</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 'Portraits Wanted' List, undated, 42. Locker was referring to John Hoppner, *Admiral John Jervis, Earl of St Vincent*, 1809, Royal Collection, London. The Gallery eventually acquired a copy which is now in the NMM (BHC3002).

<sup>86</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 25 October 1824, 114.

never successfully acquired for the Naval Gallery. A portrait of *Captain Augustus Keppel*, for example, made it on to Locker's list but was never attained. It is identified as being in the King's collection at Carlton House.<sup>87</sup> Most likely, Locker was after one of the versions painted by Joshua Reynolds (17). A full-length portrait of *Keppel* by Reynolds, painted between 1785-6, had been hanging in Carlton House since 1792.<sup>88</sup> The portrait was reportedly given to George IV, when Prince of Wales, in the summer of 1786.<sup>89</sup> The portrait, which still resides in the Royal Collection today, depicts Keppel dressed in full-dress uniform, holding a paper in his right hand.

In order to acquire a sufficient collection of naval art, Locker needed to ensure extensive patronage from the nation's private collections. As we have seen, when proposing the Gallery, he predicted that a 'Royal example' would 'stimulate our principal Collectors, and others [...] to make similar offers to the Hospital'.<sup>90</sup> In order to secure this royal patronage, Locker sustained close correspondence with Charles Long, Lord Farnborough (1760-1838), throughout the preliminary months of the Gallery's foundation. As a Director at Greenwich Hospital and the Paymaster General, Long was an enthusiastic patron of the arts. He had served on the committee for the Government's commission of commemorative sculpture in St Paul's Cathedral during the 1790s.<sup>91</sup> In 1805 he was a founding member of the British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts.<sup>92</sup> Long was also a trustee for both the British Museum and the National Gallery. George IV, both as the Prince Regent and

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<sup>87</sup> PRO 30/26/27, 'Portraits Wanted' List, undated, 42-3.

<sup>88</sup> David Mannings and Martin Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds, A Complete Catalogue of his Paintings*, 2 vols., (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), I, 290, (catalogue no. 1049); image in II, 547 (figure no. 1460); Whitney Davis, 'Serial Portraiture and the death of man', in Dana Arnold and David Peters Corbett, (eds.), *A Companion to British Art 1600 to the Present*, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 525-6.

<sup>89</sup> Mannings and Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 291.

<sup>90</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>91</sup> Hoock, 'The British Military Pantheon', 83.

<sup>92</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 4 June 1805, 5-6.

then as King, frequently sought Long's artistic opinion.<sup>93</sup> In a letter written to Locker on 5 October 1823, Long described how His Majesty 'instantly approved' of their project for a gallery. When Long presented George IV with Locker's proposal for a gallery at Greenwich, as he later explains in a letter to Locker, he had suggested that the King donate 'the Portraits of the Admirals (there are 12) which were in the Castle'.<sup>94</sup> Long reported that the King also requested that he make up a list 'of similar Portraits at Hampton Court and Kensington'.<sup>95</sup> Early in 1824, the Naval Gallery received twelve three-quarter-length portraits from Peter Lely's *Flagmen of Lowestoft* series, which were in the Royal Collection at Windsor. A further nineteen portraits were donated from Hampton Court. This included a second series of three-quarter-length portraits depicting British admirals painted by Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723) and Michael Dahl (1659-1743). In total George IV donated a total of 39 paintings from the Royal Collection.<sup>96</sup> This large donation of works formed the main body of the Naval Gallery's early collection: an act of royal patronage that firmly established George IV as the 'Founder of our Gallery'.<sup>97</sup>

This extensive royal donation established a precedent for patronage which was subsequently employed as a means to encourage, or rather solicit, private donations. For example, in a letter to Lord Falmouth on 21 October 1827, Locker stated that George IV had 'graciously afforded His patronage to the formation of a gallery' presenting 'original portraits of distinguished commanders'.<sup>98</sup> Locker emphasised that this model of donation had already 'been followed by naval

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<sup>93</sup> Hoock, *The King's Artists*, 232, 262-3, 270, 290

<sup>94</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Letter from Charles Long to Locker, 5 October 1823, 69.

<sup>95</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 5 October 1823, 69.

<sup>96</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 'Pictures in Greenwich Hospital', 41.

<sup>97</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>98</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Copy of a letter sent from Locker to Lord Falmouth, 21 October 1827, 157.



individuals of rank and fortune'.<sup>99</sup> It was not just monarchical influence but the obligation of familial duty that was played upon as a means to successfully achieve the donation. Locker suggested that the late Admiral Boscawen, Lord Falmouth's grandfather, 'should be recorded in such a collection' stating that he was sure that Falmouth would feel 'disposed to do this honour in memory of your illustrious relation'.<sup>100</sup> Locker did not leave the exact portrait up to chance, specifically requesting the 'full whole length portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds'. Despite emphasising that the King had donated 'original portraits', a misleading statement considering that a number of copies had been offered in place of originals, Locker did suggest to Falmouth that the Directors of Greenwich Hospital would accept a 'good copy' if he could not be persuaded to part with the original.<sup>101</sup> Rather than risk complete rejection, suggesting the donation of a copy as a compromise ensured that a version of the subject would at least end up in the collection in some form. This correspondence expands upon Locker's approach to the acquisition of copies. In this instance it was perhaps more important to gain a replica of an acclaimed likeness, such as a portrait by Reynolds, than exhibit another original portrait of the same sitter painted by a less established artist. This example begins to expose the fluid and rather ambiguous approach that Locker maintained towards the inclusion of replicas within this national gallery. Falmouth's response to Locker's request is also bound within the volume of correspondence. On 14 November 1827, Falmouth wrote to Greenwich confirming that he was glad that 'the King has patronised the formation of a Gallery [...] which has long been a great desideratum'.<sup>102</sup> The dual pressures of a

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<sup>99</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 21 October 1827, 157.

<sup>100</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 21 October 1827, 157.

<sup>101</sup> In addition to the portrait of *Jervis* by Hoppner, the Naval Gallery also received copies of Reynolds's portrait of *Howe* and another portrait by Hoppner depicting *Nelson*. See TNA PRO 30/26/27, 25 October 1824, 114.

<sup>102</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Letter from Lord Falmouth to Locker, 14 November 1827, 156.

royal precedent and the demands of ancestral obligation successfully persuaded Falmouth, who confirmed that he would ‘readily offer a copy’ unless he could ‘spare an original from one of my houses’.<sup>103</sup> In October 1828, the Naval Gallery received a copy of Reynolds’s full-length portrait of Admiral Boscawen (18).<sup>104</sup>

The Academicians’ suggestion to position paintings between the pilasters in the main hall required a specific number of full-length portraits in order to fill the eight bays along either side of the room. As Long observed, in a letter to Locker dated 8 December 1824, the Naval Gallery ‘must have sixteen whole lengths or we shall not do – twenty would be better – and they ought to be of our finest rate naval heroes’.<sup>105</sup> Sixteen full-lengths would at least fill the eight bays along the north and south walls of the main hall and twenty would allow for two additional full-length portraits to be hung at either end as well. The acquisition of twenty full-length portraits was not as immediate or straightforward as Locker had first assumed. Private donors were often unwilling to donate the original version of their ancestral portraits and in the absence of originals many replica copies were commissioned during the early years of the acquisition process. The practice for donating full-length copies was actually an accidental consequence of the example set by the King. The Naval Gallery had attempted to acquire a number of full-length portraits from the Royal Collection including the portrait of *Admiral George Bridges Rodney (1719-1792), 1st Baron Rodney*, painted by Joshua Reynolds in 1788-9, and two portraits by John Hoppner depicting *Horatio, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Nelson* and *John Jervis, Baron Jervis and Earl of St Vincent*. The King could not permit these works to leave the Royal Collection but he was willing to permit copies to be made for donation to

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<sup>103</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 14 November 1827, 156.

<sup>104</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 18 October 1828, 158.

<sup>105</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Charles Long to Locker, 8 December 1824, 115.

the Naval Gallery.<sup>106</sup> In April 1825, the Board minutes record the ‘arrival from Carlton House of three whole length portraits of Admirals, Lord Rodney, Lord Viscount Nelson, and the Earl of St Vincent’.<sup>107</sup> The copies are thought to have been carried out by the British artist Matthew Shepperson (1785-1874).<sup>108</sup> While the committee minutes do not identify these works as replicas, the first gallery catalogue, published in 1833, clearly acknowledges that these works are ‘after’ the original artists.<sup>109</sup> Although Locker’s attitude to the inclusion of copies within the collection was clearly somewhat relaxed, the catalogue demonstrates how these works were publicly differentiated from the original works within the collection. Private patrons were keen to capitalise upon this royal precedent for donating replicas. In 1825, when Thomas Pelham, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Chichester was asked to donate a portrait of Robert Rich 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Warwick, he stated that he wished to follow the King’s ‘illustrious example’ (19).<sup>110</sup> As Pelham had learnt ‘from Sir Charles Long that the King will give you copies of some portraits’ he agreed to ‘make a compromise’ concluding that ‘the person who is employ’d to copy those belonging to the King shall copy mine’.<sup>111</sup> In November 1825, Long informed Locker that Shepperson would be sent to visit Pelham.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Charles Long to Locker, 25 October 1824, 114. Reynolds’s portrait of *Rodney* was exhibited at the RA in 1789, Hoppner’s portrait of *Nelson* was exhibited at the British Institution in 1819: Mannings and Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, I, 397; William McKay, *John Hoppner, RA*, (Catalogue Raisonné), (London: P&D Colnaghi & Sons., 1909), 182.

<sup>107</sup> ADM 67/74, GH Board Minutes, 30 April 1825, 74.

<sup>108</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Charles Long to Locker, 1 November 1825, 140.

<sup>109</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 14.

<sup>110</sup> Locker was referring to the portrait of Robert Rich (1587-1658) 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Warwick which was painted by Daniel Mytens the Elder in c. 1632.

<sup>111</sup> Locker approached the Board of Directors requesting permission to approach Chichester: ADM 67/74, 2 July 1825, 120; TNA PRO 30/36/37, Chichester to Locker, 30 June 1825, 129.

<sup>112</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 1 November 1825, 140. Thomas Pelham, Earl of Chichester, died on 4 July 1826 and was succeeded by his eldest son Henry (1804–86). On 16 August 1827, Locker wrote to the latter regarding the copy of Warwick, saying he had already been informed it was finished but that it was yet to be received by the Naval Gallery (TNA PRO 30/26/27, 149). Following the second earl’s death there had been some confusion regarding the payment of Matthew Shepperson’s expenses for it and in a letter to Locker of 24 August 1827, the second Earl’s widow, Mary Henrietta, dowager Countess of Chichester, rehearsed how Henry Pelham had initially questioned whether the copy was

The acquisition process, whereby Locker initially requested the donation of an original but accepted a replica as a ‘compromise’ became the established practice.<sup>113</sup> At the outset of the Gallery in 1823, Long had advised Locker that the Naval Gallery should ‘not accept copies unless of very great persons and where originals were out of the question’.<sup>114</sup> Long warned Locker that the Naval Gallery should ‘wait a little before we accept of any more copies’ suggesting that ‘a little time will I trust give us originals enough’.<sup>115</sup> However, Long’s connoisseurial concern for the inclusion of copies in place of originals was set aside; outweighed by the pressure to acquire a complete set of full-length portraits. During the early years of the Gallery’s existence, Locker’s evident desire to complete his didactic naval narrative led to the acceptance of a considerable number of duplicates in place of original versions. Despite Long’s warnings, the way in which Locker approached the rapid acquisition of the collection demonstrates a clear privileging of instructive history over aesthetic quality.

That is not to say that an interest in aesthetic quality was completely disregarded as this acquisition of two royal portraits by Lawrence indicates. Following the early involvement of the three Academicians, Locker remained in close contact with Lawrence. In the spring of 1824, the Academy President was commissioned to produce two portraits for the Naval Gallery, depicting King George III and Queen Charlotte, as part of the initial royal donation.<sup>116</sup> Over the next two

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‘promised as a gift by his late Father to the Hospital or whether he had only consented to lend the original to be copied at the request of the Governors’. However, Locker was quick to confirm that the copy was intended as a gift and promised to receive the painting personally at Greenwich and have it ‘properly placed’ on its arrival (ibid., 151). The Naval Gallery finally received the copy later in 1827.

<sup>113</sup> TNA PRO 30/36/37, 30 June 1825, 129.

<sup>114</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Charles Long to Locker, 31 July 1823, 91.

<sup>115</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 31 July 1823, 91.

<sup>116</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Thomas Lawrence to Locker, 21 January 1824, 105; 10 February 1824, 104; 3 April 1824, 103; 7 August 1826, 142. These two portraits are described as portraits by ‘Lawrence’ donated by ‘George Fourth’ on one of Locker’s lists of pictures. See TNA PRO 30/26/27, ‘Pictures in Greenwich Hospital’, 48. They are listed as ‘whole-lengths’ in Locker, *Catalogue*, 16. The portraits of

years, Locker maintained close correspondence with Lawrence while he slowly completed the commission. In April 1824, Lawrence wrote to Locker to explain the numerous demands upon his time, bemoaning ‘the hurry and urgency of this period, when I am not merely completing pictures for the exhibition to be sent in on Tuesday next, but, two large ones of His present Majesty and the late king for the new state rooms at St James’ to be opened on the 29<sup>th</sup>.<sup>117</sup> As a result, Lawrence exclaimed that he ‘must hope and pray that the Governor of Greenwich Hospital and its officers will excuse my not completing my honourable task by sending them the other portrait which I will certainly unremittingly proceed upon when those other labours are finished’.<sup>118</sup> Finally in August 1826, Lawrence wrote to Locker informing him that he would finally receive the portrait of Queen Charlotte. Within this letter Lawrence outlined at length which parts of the portrait had been completed by his own hand: ‘the head, neck and arms of which, are entirely of my painting. [...] If you look at the face in its best light (viz: that which comes from the left of the spectator) you will see that it is of my best painting’.<sup>119</sup> It was unusual for the artist to provide the patron with this type of detail, outlining exactly which parts of the portrait were completed by the artist’s own hand rather than by his assistants in the studio. This suggests that the relationship between Lawrence and Locker differed from that of the usual artist-patron. When the commission was completed, Lawrence requested that the following passage be inscribed onto the reverse of the picture frame:

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the King and Queen were never transferred to the NMM when the Naval Gallery’s collection was transferred in the 1820s. They are some of the ‘non-NMM’ items that the Museum has worked to discover but it is yet to discover any trace of what happened to them.

<sup>117</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 3 April 1824, 103.

<sup>118</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 3 April 1824, 103. Lawrence had recently carried out repair work on a portrait of Admiral Barrington for the Naval Gallery.

<sup>119</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 10 August 1826, 144.

The Composition, Dress, Colour, size of this picture, as likewise those of its companion, the portrait of his late majesty, are copied from the official pictures by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The head, neck and arms of this portrait (painted in this month) are entirely by my own hand; and other parts of the picture are touched upon by me, glaz'd, ton'd *for*. The resemblance has been copied by me from an original portrait of the Queen painted by me at Windsor, and exhibited in the same year at the Royal Academy.<sup>120</sup>

Although this inscription would be out of sight of the viewer, Lawrence wished it to be included in order to provide a 'private record, and to prove to your friends [the Greenwich Hospital Committee] that though my obedience to their wish has been tardy, it finally has not been slighted'.<sup>121</sup> Lawrence was clearly very keen to emphasise to both Locker and the Greenwich Hospital committee that although this commission was late, it was still an example of his 'best painting'.<sup>122</sup> The fact that the President of the Royal Academy wished to produce his best work for the Gallery, and was keen for people to know this, suggests that the Naval Gallery did possess some status as a forum for artistic acclaim as well as historic instruction.<sup>123</sup>

Locker's determination to acquire a complete set of full-length portraits faced an even greater challenge when likenesses of specific individuals could not be located, and did not seem to even exist. Early in 1824, Locker began to search for a

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<sup>120</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 10 August 1826, 143.

<sup>121</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 10 August 1826, 143.

<sup>122</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 10 August 1826, 144.

<sup>123</sup> The portrait of Queen Charlotte was the only female one specifically done for the Naval Gallery. However, the Hospital did already have a portrait of Queen Mary by Godfrey Kneller which was donated by Sir John Van Hattem in the 1770s (NMM BHC 2853). However, neither was ever exhibited within the Naval Gallery itself, but hung in the Council Room along with most of the other royal portraits.

portrait of Sir Francis Drake, preferably in full-length so that this famed Elizabethan explorer could be placed alongside the high admirals in the top tier of the display. The only depiction of Drake that Locker could locate was within a half-length triple portrait depicting Sir John Hawkins (1532-95), Francis Drake (1540-96) and Thomas Cavendish (1560-92), attributed to Daniel Mytens. This seventeenth-century portrait of the three Elizabethan explorers was in the possession of Lord Lothian on his Scottish estate, Newbattle Abbey. On receiving Locker's request to donate the original to the Naval Gallery, Lothian made it clear that he had 'no thoughts of parting with it'.<sup>124</sup> However, he was subsequently persuaded to permit a copy to be made (21). As the work was in Scotland, Locker sought to appoint a regional artist in Edinburgh. In 1829, he contacted the Scottish artist, David Wilkie (1785-1841), to ask for his advice on whom to appoint to carry out the copy. Wilkie directed Locker to approach another Scottish portrait painter, John Watson-Gordon RA (1788-1864), who reportedly had a 'leading practice in the painting of portraits' in Edinburgh.<sup>125</sup> Wilkie advised Locker that even if Watson-Gordon did not have the time to complete the copy himself he would oversee the commission and be able to advise on 'alterations or enlargements in the copy'.<sup>126</sup>

The exact identity of the sitters in this triple portrait was under some consideration. The three men were thought to be Hawkins, Drake and Cavendish. However, Lothian suggested that although the figure in the centre 'is certainly Drake [...] there is some doubt as to the other figures in the painting'. Lothian suggested that the outer two figures were 'generally called Cavendish and Hawkins'. However, it had 'lately been suggested that they are Raleigh and Gilbert' but the 'only evidence in favour of the latter idea is that the three were Cornishmen and

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<sup>124</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Lord Lothian to Locker, 6 February 1825, 193.

<sup>125</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, David Wilkie to Locker, 17 August 1829, 194.

<sup>126</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 17 August 1829, 194.

friends'.<sup>127</sup> In order to further clarify and strengthen the case for the sitters' identities, Locker sent Watson-Gordon sketches of the three men, which were made from their engraved images within Henry Holland's *Heroologia Anglica* (published in 1620) (22, 23, 24, 25 & 26). In comparing these sketches with the original portrait, the sitters were satisfactorily identified as Cavendish, Drake and Hawkins at which point Watson-Gordon was able to execute the copy. This unusual practice of authenticating the portraits by comparing them with Locker's sketches after engraved portraits went unchallenged. Within the Naval Gallery, clearly the identity of the sitter was of crucial significance to the acceptance and exhibition of a portrait. However, the way in which identities were confirmed was, on occasion, clearly subject to rather creative interpretation, especially when a specific painting was sufficiently desirable.

Locker was certain that the triple portrait would 'make a very interesting addition to a series of our most distinguished admirals'. However, in order to 'hang with the other whole lengths in the collection', Locker proposed that the copy of Lothian's triple portrait should be extended to full-length.<sup>128</sup> Locker was convinced that 'an expert artist' would 'find no difficulty in extending the copy to the same dimensions by adding the lower part of the figures'. In a letter sent to Locker on 22 December 1829, Watson-Gordon confirmed that the measurements for the stretching frame were '7 feet 11 inches high by 5 feet 1 ½ inches wide', the size of a full length canvas.<sup>129</sup> In addition to the invention of a lower section of canvas, Watson-Gordon further suggested that there was 'some bad drawing' in the original and that he would 'take a little liberty in this respect with the copy'.<sup>130</sup> Little to no concern was

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<sup>127</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Lord Lothian to Locker, 27 November 1829, 192.

<sup>128</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to John Watson-Gordon, 17 August 1829, 195.

<sup>129</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, John Watson-Gordon to Locker, 22 December 1829, 191.

<sup>130</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 December 1829, 191.



taken for the aesthetic integrity of the original in the production of this replica. In the earliest catalogue, Locker optimistically listed the painting as ‘whole length portraits, on one canvas, enlarged from the original of Mytens at Newbattle Abbey’.<sup>131</sup> However, Locker’s ambition to extend the triple portrait was never successfully realised. It is not clear within Locker’s correspondence when this change was agreed upon but when the final copy was received by the Naval Gallery in 1830 it was a replica of the half-length original.<sup>132</sup>

This was not the end of Locker’s attempts to extend portraits to full-length in order to meet with the demands of his display.<sup>133</sup> When George IV donated the majority of Lely’s *Flagmen of Lowestoft* series in 1824, the portrait of *Prince Rupert (1619-82)* had been retained at Windsor (27). The King would not permit the original to leave the Royal Collection but he would allow a copy to be made.<sup>134</sup> Locker stated that ‘it was our wish long ago to have Prince Rupert in whole length to hang with our Lord High Admirals’. Therefore, as a duplicate was going to be made, Locker saw an opportunity to capitalise on the situation. Despite the fact that the ‘original picture of Prince Rupert is only half length’, he proposed that ‘the copy may be extended to whole length’.<sup>135</sup> This extended copy of Prince Rupert, which was completed in 1835, was presented to the Naval Gallery by King William IV (28). In this full-length portrait, the artist extended Prince Rupert’s figure, constructing a stance based upon his side-on position in the half-length. They replicated Rupert’s costume and extended the sword across the canvas. The damask drapery behind Rupert in Lely’s original is continued down to the floor in the whole-length. The majority of the

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<sup>131</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 8, no. 31.

<sup>132</sup> Joseph Allen, *Catalogue of the portraits of distinguished naval commanders and representations of their warlike achievements*, (1846), entry no. 9.

<sup>133</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 17 August 1829, 195.

<sup>134</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Sir Herbert, 9 March 1835, 247.

<sup>135</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 9 March 1835, 247.

surrounding compositional space in the lower section of the canvas is left empty. The artist has not gone as far as introducing additional objects or inventing a lower composition. The extended copy only developed upon details evident in the half-length original. This acquisition illustrates the importance of hierarchy with Locker's display. In this instance, it was preferable to fabricate the lower half of a portrait in order to meet the demands of Locker's curatorial scheme rather than adhere to the artistic autonomy of the original.

In the Spring of 1825, Locker attempted to obtain the full-length portrait of Samuel, Viscount Hood by Thomas Gainsborough which was in the possession of the Ironmongers' Company. However, as the portrait had been 'presented to the Ironmongers Company by His Lordship in his life time they could not part with it'.<sup>136</sup> Once the Naval Gallery was refused the original, the Board requested that the Ironmongers permit a copy and in August 1827, the artist John Wood was commissioned to carry out the reproduction. Wood assured Locker that he would 'perform your commission in a style which I hope will ensure general satisfaction and credit to myself'.<sup>137</sup> The copy was completed in October 1827 and presented to the Naval Gallery shortly afterwards (20).<sup>138</sup> The current condition of this work reveals how far attitudes toward the value of a copy have changed since the early nineteenth century. Wood's copy of Gainsborough's portrait of *Hood* now resides in storage at the NMM. It is no longer in a suitable condition for display and is hidden from public view, covered in protective paper as a means to secure the surface of the paint. Thus obscured, the copied painting is no longer seen to hold the same level of historic importance that it once enjoyed. In the early nineteenth century, at a time when highly acclaimed works of art were hidden away in the oblivion of private

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<sup>136</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, W. Pellatt of the Ironmongers Company to Locker, 9 February 1825, 116.

<sup>137</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, John Wood to Locker, 16 October 1827, 117.

<sup>138</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 16 October 1827, 117.

collections, the production and exhibition of copies within the Naval Gallery provided a means for the public to gain a degree of access, if only through the presentation of a replica. There are of course no instances where a copy was selected over an original portrait. Replica portraits were only admitted into the collection when original works were unavailable and they therefore offered the ‘next best thing’.<sup>139</sup> The deliberate use of copies within the Naval Gallery was a vital way in which Locker was redefining British naval art within a national rather than ancestral cultural heritage. However, as Barbara Lasic has observed in relation to the inclusion of copies within the South Kensington Museum, ‘this harmonious and balanced spatial coexistence of replicas and originals was nevertheless to be short-lived’.<sup>140</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, copies were increasingly marginalised, a change that Lasic attributes to ‘the general demise of copies as instructional tools’. As a result, ‘no longer “the next best thing”, copies became increasingly regarded as second-rate, inferior objects that had no place in a world-class museum of decorative arts’.<sup>141</sup> This change in function during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whereby the copy no longer served an instructive historical or artistic purpose helps to explain why the copy of Gainsborough’s portrait of *Samuel, Viscount Hood* resides in storage, along with a considerable portion of the Naval Gallery’s collection. Despite the fact that at one time this copy had provided the only means to publicly liberate an image which was otherwise concealed in the ‘obscurity of private apartments’, it is now rather ironically the same work that is resigned to the oblivion of museum storage.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Barbara Lasic, ‘Acquiring and Displaying Replicas at the South Kensington Museum: ‘The Next Best Thing’’, in Megan Aldrich and Jos Hackforth-Jones, eds., *Art and Authenticity*, (London and New York: Lund Humphries in association with Sotheby’s Institute of Art, 2012), 72.

<sup>140</sup> Lasic, ‘Acquiring and Displaying Replicas’, 86.

<sup>141</sup> Lasic, ‘Acquiring and Displaying Replicas’, 86.

<sup>142</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1. TNA ADM 67/44, 11 February 1795, 18.

### The acquisition of naval battle paintings

During the early years of the Naval Gallery's existence, in addition to the extensive acquisition of naval portraiture, Locker strove to acquire naval battle paintings, with the aim of exhibiting all the significant British naval victories throughout history.<sup>143</sup> Greenwich Hospital already possessed a small collection of marine paintings prior to the foundation of the Gallery and Locker recorded a total of twenty-three paintings which were appropriate for exhibition.<sup>144</sup> This included two seventeenth-century battlescapes painted by Daniel Schellinks which depicted the actions of Captain Harman in the *Tiger* during the Third Dutch War.<sup>145</sup> Locker also recorded three depictions of ships painted by 'Vandervelde' as well as a pair of works painted by Dominic Serres the Elder depicting *French Fireships Attacking the English Fleet off Quebec, 28 June 1759*. In addition, Greenwich Hospital possessed a series of seven large battlescapes, also by Serres, depicting the actions of Sir Edward Hughes (1720-94) off the east coast of America at the end of the War of American Independence. All seven works in this series had been presented to Greenwich Hospital by Sir Edward Hughes' widow following his death in 1794.<sup>146</sup>

In 1829, George IV presented the Gallery with two naval battle paintings from St James's Palace: de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* and Turner's

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<sup>143</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Charles Long, 2 May 1829, 217.

<sup>144</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Pictures in Greenwich Hospital, 41.

<sup>145</sup> *HMS Tiger attacked by eight Dutch privateers, 26 August 1672* (after 1672) NMM BHC0304 and *HMS 'Tiger' Taking the 'Schakerloo' in the Harbour of Cadiz, 23 February 1674*, (1675) NMM BHC0320 both by Daniel Schellinks.

<sup>146</sup> In 1835, Vice Admiral Page wrote to Greenwich Hospital requesting that 'one of the portraits, and a portion of the pictures representing the actions of his patron Admiral Sir Edward Hughes, may be transferred to the Town Hall of Ipswich, his native place'. Page offered 'an historical painting of the value of one hundred guineas' in exchange. The Board initially directed that 'the smaller portrait, and four of Serres' pictures of Sir Edward Hughes' actions with the French Fleet under M. Suffrein be forwarded to Admiral Page [...] as a testimony of respect to the memory of Sir Edward Hughes'. Page went on to request another picture in addition. Although they consented, the Board concluded that 'regretting now that Admiral Page's proposition was ever entertained, they take this opportunity to record their opinion that they have no power to sanction the removal of any pictures or other articles presented to the Hospital, after they have been accepted and become the property of the Institution'. TNA ADM 67/86, GH Board Minutes, 9 April 1835, 122-3; 18 June 1835, 189. See also Van der Merwe, *Art for the Nation*, 33.

*Battle of Trafalgar*. This donation of two naval battle paintings was significant in incorporating marine painting into the established royal precedent for patronage. However, despite this example, private patrons remained less willing to donate naval battle paintings, preferring to offer versions of their ancestral portraiture instead. Many donors, keen to align themselves with the heroic achievements of their forbearers, openly offered portraits of their naval ancestors. By contrast, marine paintings did not offer the same degree of direct and identifiable commemorative potential for private donors. In a letter written to the Governor of Greenwich Hospital, Admiral Sir Richard Keats, on 11 April 1831, Locker stated that the Naval Gallery was ‘still very deficient in the scenes of Naval Battles which we ought to possess, though these are not often or easy to be procured’.<sup>147</sup> The acquisition of marine paintings proved a challenge and to some extent it appears to have been less of a priority in the initial stages of forming the collection. There is no equivalent list of ‘Naval Battles’ to counter the ‘Portraits Wanted’ list. However, some patrons did present original battlescapes from their private collections. In 1826, Admiral James Gambier wrote to Locker offering to bequeath battlescapes painted by Nicholas Pocock. He initially offered to donate two works, painted as a pair, depicting the Battle of St Kitts on two consecutive days, the 25 and 26 January 1782. Although not a ‘decisive victory’ Gambier described the conflict as a ‘valiant action’.<sup>148</sup> Gambier felt that as the works were a gift to him from a friend he was not ‘at liberty to part with them’ during his lifetime, but he was happy to bequeath them to the Hospital ‘for the embellishment of the Painted Hall’.<sup>149</sup> Subsequently in October 1827, Gambier decided to ‘revoke the bequest of one’ because the works were ‘so nearly

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<sup>147</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Admiral Sir Richard Keats, Governor of Greenwich Hospital, 11 April 1831, 230.

<sup>148</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Lord Gambier to Locker, 10 October 1827, 155.

<sup>149</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Lord Gambier to Locker, 24 October 1826, 145.

alike'. He concluded that within the Painted Hall, one version of the battle would be 'sufficient to commemorate that valiant action' and he therefore decided to divide the pair.<sup>150</sup>

There were a number of specific historic events which Locker was determined to represent within the Naval Gallery, most notably the death of Captain Cook who was killed in Hawaii in 1779. This famed eighteenth-century explorer, cartographer and 'Great Circumnavigator' featured on Locker's 'Portraits Wanted' list.<sup>151</sup> A portrait of Cook painted by Nathaniel Dance RA was presented to the Naval Gallery by Sir Edward Knatchbull in 1829 (29).<sup>152</sup> With the portrait already in the Naval Gallery, Locker was determined to acquire a depiction of his death as a means to further 'commemorate the services of Captain Cook'.<sup>153</sup> In 1835 Locker declared that the 'recent decease of the venerable widow of Captain Cook has revived my desire' to obtain for the Naval Gallery 'a picture to commemorate the eminent services of this remarkable man who perished in the service of this country, nay of all countries, but was never honoured by any public monument'.<sup>154</sup> In a letter dated 14 May 1835, Locker stated that '50,000 strangers annually visit this institution by the benefit of which the gallery is exhibited'. He declared that in 'no other place could this memorial of him [Cook] be seen by so many persons of every class and Nation'.<sup>155</sup> In his determination to acquire a depiction of Cook's death, Locker ascertained that an engraving of *The Death of Captain Cook* had been executed by the Italian engraver, Francesco Bartolozzi (1727-1815) from an original

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<sup>150</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 10 October 1827, 155.

<sup>151</sup> See Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, chapter entitled 'Captain Cook'.

<sup>152</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Everard Knatchbull, 20 May 1829, 189; TNA PRO 30/26/27: E. Knatchbull to Locker, 9 February 1824, 214; C. Knatchbull to Locker, 12 February 1829, 215; Admiral Sir Richard Keats, Governor of Greenwich Hospital, to Locker, 15 July 1829, 216; TNA ADM 67/80, Meeting of the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital, 23 July 1829, 132.

<sup>153</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261; 14 May 1835, 265.

<sup>154</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 14 May 1835, 265.

<sup>155</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 14 May 1835, 265.

drawing of the event made in Hawaii by John Webber (1751-93), the artist who had accompanied Cook as a draughtsman on his fatal voyage.<sup>156</sup> Locker made an unsuccessful attempt to locate Webber's original drawing.<sup>157</sup> Although it had at some point been in the possession of a Mr Hemmings, when he went bankrupt, the work was sold by 'Hodgson' in Fleet Street and the whereabouts of the drawing was subsequently unknown.<sup>158</sup> In response to the apparent loss of the original drawing, Locker proposed that 'an able artist should be encouraged to paint a large picture from the print'.<sup>159</sup> However, 'in the midst of these enquiries' Locker discovered that the artist Johann Zoffany (1733-1810) had initiated 'an original painting' of this narrative which, Locker assumed, was 'executed soon after the event' but left unfinished.<sup>160</sup> In assuming that this 'original painting' was executed soon after Cook's death, Locker was perhaps implying that it carried a degree of historic integrity. However, rather than its ability to provide an accurate rendition of the tragic event, it was arguably the way in which Zoffany glorified Cook in an established death-of-the-hero narrative that appealed greatly to Locker's desire to commemorate 'the services of Captain Cook'.<sup>161</sup>

At this time, the painting was in the possession of a Mr Peacock, a Picture Dealer at Marylebone Street, Piccadilly.<sup>162</sup> As Zoffany's painting was 'so able a work' and with 'so much already done', Locker proposed that 'a clever artist might complete it at a moderate cost'.<sup>163</sup> Locker contacted Henry Perronet Briggs (1793-1844), 'a member of the Academy, himself a historical painter', for advice and

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<sup>156</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261.

<sup>157</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261; 22 May 1835, 266.

<sup>158</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 May 1835, 266.

<sup>159</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261.

<sup>160</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261.

<sup>161</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261; 14 May 1835, 265.

<sup>162</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261.

<sup>163</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261.

support in this proposal to complete Zoffany's work.<sup>164</sup> There is no record of Locker questioning why the work was unfinished or considering whether or not Zoffany had deliberately discarded the canvas. Neither did Locker show any concern for the artistic impact of completing the composition. He was determined to exhibit a complete depiction of this event within the Naval Gallery. In this instance, Locker's desire to create a didactic and commemorative display clearly outweighed any connoisseurial concerns for preserving the integrity of 'the original painting' (30).<sup>165</sup> Several artists were approached regarding this commission to complete Zoffany's *Death of Cook*. While one artist, Robert Bone, offered to carry out the work for sixty guineas, Shepperson agreed to do it for forty.<sup>166</sup> Peacock, the picture dealer, offered the opinion that although Bone was a 'much abler artist' Shepperson was 'in the constant habit of copying pictures'.<sup>167</sup> In this instance the ability to copy was clearly preferable to, and interestingly differentiated from, artistic ability. Exhibiting a concern for the preservation of Zoffany's original work, Peacock observed that Shepperson was 'more likely to do his work in the manner of Zoffany, and less likely to overlay his work'.<sup>168</sup> In correspondence with Locker, Shepperson expressed 'great difficulty in naming a specific sum for finishing the picture' as this figure 'very much depends upon the degree of finishing required'.<sup>169</sup> In order to fund this creative project, which Peacock estimated would cost £67 in total (including the painting, the frame and Shepperson's labours), Locker gained the agreement of Bennet, Lady Bank's executor, to cover the entire cost of the enterprise.<sup>170</sup> On 2 July 1835, Peacock wrote to Locker informing him that he had 'received Mr Bennet's

<sup>164</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261.

<sup>165</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 27 May 1835, 261.

<sup>166</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Robert Bone to Locker, 4 June 1835, 264.

<sup>167</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 5 June 1835, 263.

<sup>168</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 5 June 1835, 263.

<sup>169</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Shepperson to Locker, undated memo, 260.

<sup>170</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, undated, 259.



cheque'.<sup>171</sup> The completed painting was installed in the Gallery the following year.<sup>172</sup>

At the NMM today, Zoffany's *Death of Cook* has now been restored to its original unfinished condition. However, as Charles Mitchell observes, prior to a major conservation project conducted by the NMM in the 1930s the painting still had 'the appearance of a finished picture, though somewhat touched up with bituminous paint, and the colouring had apparently once been variegated and bright'.<sup>173</sup> As Mitchell outlines, 'when the picture was cleaned for exhibition in the National Maritime Museum, it was found that the original picture was overlaid by two strata of overpainting, which were not by Zoffany's hand'.<sup>174</sup> A version of the painting, in its over-painted nineteenth-century state was reproduced in the 1922 publication, *John Zoffany, R.A. His Life and Works, 1735-1810*, by Victoria Manners and G. C. Williamson.<sup>175</sup> This small black-and-white reproduction gives us an impression of the degree of over-painting and finish that the work was subject to: any empty patches of canvas were covered over, plants in the landscape were more fully articulated and numerous figures were dressed in intricately detailed and exotic costume. In 1836, when the *finished* version of Zoffany's *Death of Captain Cook* was finally installed within the Naval Gallery it was described in the catalogue as a work 'by John Zoffany, R.A.'. <sup>176</sup> Unlike the other works that were reproduced and copied for the Gallery, which were clearly acknowledged as 'after' the original artist,

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<sup>171</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Mr Peacock to Locker, 2 July 1835, 303.

<sup>172</sup> Allen, *Catalogue*, no. 45.

<sup>173</sup> Charles Mitchell, 'Zoffany's Death of Captain Cook', *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, vol. 84, no. 492 (Mar., 1944), 56.

<sup>174</sup> Mitchell, 'Zoffany's Death of Captain Cook', 56; see also Mary Webster, *Johann Zoffany 1733-1810*, (New Haven and London: Published by the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2011), 587.

<sup>175</sup> Victoria Manners and G. C. Williamson, *John Zoffany, R.A. His Life and Works, 1735-1810*, (London and New York: John Lane, 1920), facing 100.

<sup>176</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Cost of Mr Peacock's Work for the Death of Cook, undated, 259; Allen, *Catalogue*, no. 45.

for some reason the amalgamation of original and secondary work in this instance did not need to be differentiated. Perhaps because Shepperson was understood to be completing rather than replicating Zoffany's work, it would have been wrong to define this work as a copy. However, no attempt is made to openly acknowledge the role of the secondary artist. This acquisition highlights the complex, ambivalent and oscillating attitudes that Locker adopted toward the inclusion and alteration of copies within the Gallery. It demonstrates that, when it suited his didactic and historic agenda for the display, any conflicting connoisseurial concerns, specifically the degree to which it was appropriate to tamper with original works, could be put to one side.

The accumulation of 'sculptures and other objects'<sup>177</sup>

The Naval Gallery was not purely intended as an exhibition space for oil paintings. From the outset, sculpture was intended to occupy a prominent position within the display. In 1823, Locker made references to the commemorative naval statues which had been commissioned by Parliament for St Paul's Cathedral. He stated that at the time of the commissions, it was 'debated whether statues of the Naval Commanders should not be placed in Greenwich Hospital rather than in St Paul's Cathedral'. Locker observed that the result of this discussion 'properly determined in favour of the latter', but despite this, he proposed that 'colossal figures of the most celebrated Admirals would find a very appropriate place on the floor of the Painted Hall'.<sup>178</sup> The significance of sculpture had not escaped the professional considerations of Lawrence, Chantrey and Smirke when they conducted their review of the Painted Hall, in which they suggested that the Gallery should obtain the 'most

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<sup>177</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19.

<sup>178</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

approved Statues of Sea Officers now in St Paul's Cathedral or elsewhere, and of other Works of art connected with the Royal Navy'.<sup>179</sup> During the 1820s plaster-cast copies of *Admiral Earl Howe* and *Vice-Admiral Viscount Nelson*, both originally by John Flaxman RA, *Admiral John Jervis, Earl of St Vincent* by Edward Hodges Baily and *Admiral Viscount Duncan* by Richard Westmacott RA were acquired for the Naval Gallery (69, 70, 71, 72).<sup>180</sup> Once they had arrived at Greenwich, they were arranged in the four corners of the vestibule. Notably it was not just painting that was subject to the complex issues of reproduction within the Naval Gallery. When these sculptural memorials were reproduced for the Naval Gallery they were considerably altered in order to suit the new space. The way in which these sculptural monuments were replicated, and transformed, for exhibition within the Gallery is examined in greater detail in Chapter Two. At this point, it is worth noting that the first gallery catalogue clearly acknowledged that the plaster-cast copies were replicas, listing them as 'casts from the statues in St Paul's'.<sup>181</sup> In clearly identifying the location of the originals, the catalogue helped to forge a closer association between these two commemorative projects.

In addition to the fine art collection, Locker acquired an extensive decorative collection compiled from ship models, flags, medals, uniforms, weaponry and more obscure naval memorabilia. Again the intention to amass this type of collection was outlined in the 1823 proposal when, in addition to paintings and sculpture, Locker suggested that the Gallery should exhibit 'naval trophies and various articles of curiosity'.<sup>182</sup> However, this collection of naval curiosities was similarly formed from an amalgamation of original and replica objects. For example, in 1833 William

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<sup>179</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 27-8.

<sup>180</sup> TNA ADM 67/74, 15 January 1825, 9; ADM 67/75, GH Board Minutes, 24 May 1826, 95.

<sup>181</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 15.

<sup>182</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19.

Browell (1759-1831), the Lieutenant-Governor of Greenwich Hospital from 1809, presented the Naval Gallery with a model of the *Centurion*, the vessel in which he began his career as a midshipman.<sup>183</sup> This was one of a number of ship models to be included in the Naval Gallery collection.<sup>184</sup> In contrast to these replica ships, a number of original historic objects were acquired for the collection. In 1831, William IV presented an ‘astrolabe’ which reportedly belonged to Sir Francis Drake.<sup>185</sup> The minutes record the great detail that the Board went to in order to outline the provenance of this instrument. However, despite this conscientious attempt to establish authenticity, it is now understood to be an astronomical compendium from 1565 by Humfrey Cole and was quite wrongly linked to Drake in the early nineteenth century.<sup>186</sup> William also presented the Naval Gallery with the undress coat worn by Nelson at the Battle of the Nile in 1798 (148). In 1845, Prince Albert followed William’s example and presented the Naval Gallery with Nelson’s undress coat from the Battle of Trafalgar (150). In contrast to the ship replicas, these original uniforms possessed greater historic authenticity which, as Chapter Five examines, is perhaps why so much emphasis was placed upon the provenance of these objects. In amassing a collection of naval artefacts and ‘curiosities’, the Naval Gallery was stretching beyond the bounds of a traditional fine art collection. Rather than purely functioning as a national gallery for naval paintings and sculpture, the Naval Gallery was developing into a multifaceted and all-encompassing cultural memorial to the victorious Royal Navy and the British nation.

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<sup>183</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 2-3, see ‘Notice’ dated 23 April 1833. The model was reportedly ‘made out of one of the Davits of the ship, after her return voyage in 1748’ (TNA ADM 67/82, GH Board Minutes, 20 August 1831, 333).

<sup>184</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 2-3.

<sup>185</sup> TNA ADM 67/82, 7 May 1831, 207.

<sup>186</sup> The so-called ‘Drake’s Dial’ (NMM AST 0172) is in fact an astronomical compendium of 1565 by Humfrey Cole and was quite wrongly linked to Drake. See Hester Higton, *Sundials at Greenwich. A Catalogue of the Sundials, Nocturnals and Horary Quadrants in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press and the National Maritime Museum, 2002), 301-5.

Within seven years of making the initial proposal for the Gallery, Locker had succeeded in forming this wide-ranging collection of naval portraiture, marine painting, commemorative sculpture, naval memorabilia and Nelsonic artefacts. In 1830, the Commissioners were already expressing a concern that the Naval Gallery was ‘already as full, as to be incapable of receiving more than a very few additional pictures’.<sup>187</sup> On 16 October 1830, the Board concluded that the ‘few additional pictures’ needed to be ‘limited to portraits of the most celebrated Naval Commanders and representations of their Battles, such pictures being of the finest merit in point of execution’.<sup>188</sup> Perhaps this statement reflects a move away from the fluid and liberal amalgamation of original and replica works which, as we have seen, impacted upon the acquisition of all genres during the early years of the Gallery’s formation. This suggestion that any further works should be of the ‘finest merit in point of execution’ certainly reiterates the type of connoisseurial concerns for finish and artistic merit that Long had presented to Locker several years earlier.<sup>189</sup> Once the initial body of work necessary to fulfil Locker’s didactic and instructive naval narrative had been secured, it was perhaps once again possible to reassert the artistic and aesthetic significance of original works by highly acclaimed artists. This ongoing need for compromise between historic and artistic agendas highlights a major tension that remained in constant flux as the Naval Gallery developed.

#### Mapping the display: Locker’s Gallery Plans

Alongside the mass of acquisition documentation bound in the volume of Locker’s letters, a number of lists, sketches and plans illustrate the development of the display. The series begins with a sketch of the main hall which offers an early

<sup>187</sup> TNA ADM 67/81, GH Board Minutes, 16 October 1830, 485.

<sup>188</sup> TNA ADM 67/81, 16 October 1830, 485.

<sup>189</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 31 July 1823, 91.

creative impression of the Naval Gallery (32). Locker was clearly influenced by the Royal Academy's approach to hanging paintings in the Great Room at the Annual Exhibition.<sup>190</sup> Paintings are sandwiched together from floor to ceiling in an arrangement that merges the different genres of naval painting. In this provisional design for the hang, paintings have even encroached upon Thornhill's west wall. This fantasy jigsaw illustrates Locker's early desire to construct a new type of art gallery: one which would celebrate and monumentalise national naval art. In addition to this fictional design, seven gallery plans are collectively bound within the volume of letters documenting numerous variations of a display (33-39).<sup>191</sup> None of these sketches are dated. They have been positioned in an order and given page numbers as part of the binding process for the volume but this does not necessarily indicate a chronology for their creation. The earliest sketches were presumably initiated while the proposal and formation of the Gallery was underway. All of the plans are written in Locker's own hand which implies, first and foremost, that he was the one to determine the position of the paintings. However, the early involvement of Long and Lawrence in the acquisition of the collection and the preparation of the hall, invites a consideration of the surrounding artistic and curatorial influences that may have impacted upon the display.

Out of this collection of seven plans, two are dedicated to the arrangement of a display in the vestibule (33 & 34).<sup>192</sup> The first of the three rooms that make up the Painted Hall, the vestibule was where visitors first entered the Naval Gallery. On the two plans, a number of objects are clearly marked within neatly drawn boxes. On

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<sup>190</sup> Sunderland and Solkin, 'Staging the Spectacle', 23-38.

<sup>191</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker's plans for the arrangement of the Naval Gallery (bound in volume), undated, 44, 45, 52, 55, 56, 60, 63.

<sup>192</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Plans for vestibule, 44 & 55.

one of the plans, four squares are positioned in the corners of the vestibule (33).<sup>193</sup> These blocks mark the position of the four plaster-cast copies of statues from St Paul's. While some paintings are marked as neatly drawn boxes, others are simply signified by the written name of the subject or sitter. Both plans of the vestibule suggest that this first room was always intended to be dedicated to the recent British naval victories in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. In both versions, de Louthembourg's *The Glorious the First of June* and Turner's *The Battle of Trafalgar* are positioned directly opposite each other, at either side of the room.<sup>194</sup> As these two paintings were donated in 1829, their inclusion in the draft plans would suggest that these designs were created no earlier than this year. However, it is possible that the plans were under way once discussions for the donation of the St James's Palace paintings were initiated which may have been considerably earlier.<sup>195</sup>

Three plans within the volume of letters are solely dedicated to plotting different versions of an arrangement in the main hall (35, 36 & 37).<sup>196</sup> In each of these plans, the walls are divided into boxes which represent the eight bays along the north and south walls of the Hall, which are neatly separated by the pencil-drawn pilasters. As all three drafts illustrate, Locker designed a three-tiered arrangement in each bay with a full-length portrait at the top, along the highest tier, followed by two half-length portraits across the middle row with a naval battle painting positioned on the lowest tier, closest to the viewer's eye line. A single bay is also created to either side of the vestibule steps. At the opposite end of the hall, the early plans similarly

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<sup>193</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 44.

<sup>194</sup> As mentioned in the previous chapter, these paintings were donated by George IV from the Royal Collection in 1829.

<sup>195</sup> Discussions regarding the donation of Turner's *Trafalgar* were already underway between Charles Long and Thomas Lawrence by 1826 if not before: RA LAW/5/31, Letter from Charles Long to Thomas Lawrence, dated April 25<sup>th</sup> 1826; RA LAW/5/139, Letter from Charles Long to Sir Thomas Lawrence, dated 19<sup>th</sup> May 1827.

<sup>196</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Plans for the main hall, 45, 56, 63.

position a single bay to either side of the entrance to the upper hall.<sup>197</sup> However, eventually two bays were created to either side of the upper hall steps, presumably in an attempt to accommodate the ever-expanding collection.<sup>198</sup> Neat boxes, drawn to a relative scale that clearly differentiates the upper tier of full-length portraits from the half-lengths and battle pictures, are used to mark the position of each painting. Each box contains the name of the sitter or the event depicted. However, all three drafts are covered in annotations, alterations and corrections which clearly illustrate that the display was constantly developing as works were rapidly acquired.

Only one plan within this bound series of seven provides us with any detail of an arrangement in the upper hall (38). The single page plots two different versions of a design which was intended to hang on the west wall of the upper hall.<sup>199</sup> Presumably this was a continuation of Locker's initial design for the display, where paintings are hung through the archway (32). The proposed design would have covered Thornhill's depiction of the family of George I situated on the west wall. This is presumably a primary reason why the exhibition of paintings in the upper hall was never seriously considered. The fact that only one plan relates to an arrangement in the upper hall suggests that it was either a low priority or, more likely, that it was dismissed early on.

Within this series of seven bound plans, one draft collectively plots the arrangement of both the main hall and the vestibule within a single design (39).<sup>200</sup> An arrangement for the main hall runs around the outer edge of the page and a separate design for the vestibule is framed within the centre. Once again, the walls of the main hall are divided to illustrate the bays and pilasters. However, rather than

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<sup>197</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 45, 56, 63.

<sup>198</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 60. In 1830, the committee was beginning to consider the Gallery as 'already full': See TNA ADM 67/81, 16 October 1830, 485.

<sup>199</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Plan for the upper hall, 52.

<sup>200</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Combined plan for the main hall and vestibule, 60.



individual boxes for each painting, the works are just listed in descending order within each bay, beginning at the outer edge with the name of each full-length portrait and concluding with the naval battle positioned closest to the centre of the page. Names of sitters are repeatedly crossed through and relocated. However, the inclusion of dates illustrates an underlying chronological structure. Locker was clearly trying to align the position of the naval battles with the order of the portraits. A plan for the vestibule is positioned in the centre of the page. It is equally rough with scrawled handwriting marking the proposed position of each work. In situating the arrangement of the vestibule and the main hall on a single page, we can begin to see evidence of how Locker was beginning to address the design of the Gallery as a whole.

Locker's plans for the arrangement of the Naval Gallery reflect, to an extent, an established practice employed in private collections in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As Giles Waterfield has examined, plans were often drawn up to record the display of paintings within aristocratic collections, private galleries and the royal palaces.<sup>201</sup> As Catherine Roach's recent research has shown, Locker was actively using a similar process to record the arrangement of his own personal collection, on display in his private quarters at Greenwich Hospital. For this private display, he created two handheld screens, now in the Huntingdon Library, which depict the arrangement of paintings in the dining room and drawing room (40 & 41). These objects functioned as a visual catalogue of his domestic collection.<sup>202</sup> As Roach has identified, they were produced at some point between 1830 and 1843. Although their precise date remains unknown, it is probable that Locker was working on these domestic plans at the same time that he was constructing the drafts

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<sup>201</sup> See Waterfield, ed., *Palaces of Art*, 67–82, 135–44.

<sup>202</sup> Catherine Roach, 'Domestic Display and Imperial Identity: A Visual Record of the Art Collections of Edward Hawke Locker', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, vol. 75, No. 3, (Autumn, 2012), 411–428.

for the arrangement of the Naval Gallery. A number of features are common to both his domestic and public plans. The paintings are generally marked as squares, inscribed with the subject and sometimes the date.<sup>203</sup> While the design and construction of the Naval Gallery was under way, the ancestral and patriotic ideologies which Locker was encouraging on a national scale within the Naval Gallery seem to have permeated into, or perhaps developed out of, his private collection. For example, the display in the dining room of his personal quarters was dedicated to honouring his father. As Roach observes, ‘this space was largely devoted to the memory of William Locker, his ancestors, his naval achievements, and his naval associates’.<sup>204</sup> With this display of naval portraits and battle paintings in his home, Locker was directly aligning his family with an established naval lineage which ultimately confirmed his own patriotic and naval heritage. To an extent, the privacy of his personal apartment provided an environment in which Locker could experiment with national naval themes upon a domestic level before establishing them in a much larger national forum in the Painted Hall. However, in contrast to the handheld screens, the plans for the Naval Gallery which are bound within the volume of letters are not the same type of record. Covered in pencil annotations, Locker’s plans for the Gallery provide an unusual record of the transitions and on-going developments that the arrangement of the Naval Gallery was subject to.

In addition to the seven plans bound within the volume of letters, PRO 30/26/27, the archive box in which they are contained also includes two loose plans for the Gallery arrangement, which brings the total up to nine (42 & 43). The smaller of these designs is drawn in a similar style to one of the previously examined plans

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<sup>203</sup> Roach, ‘Domestic Display and Imperial Identity’, 414.

<sup>204</sup> Roach, ‘Domestic Display and Imperial Identity’, 414.

(39). Again, the design for the main hall runs around the outer edge of the page, with a separate plan for the vestibule framed in the centre. To highlight this spatial division, this plan clearly incorporates the points of the compass as a means to illustrate the difference in orientation between these two spaces. In comparison to the earlier example, this version is not covered in complex and multi-layered annotations. Rather than a work in progress, it records a more finalised design. The second loose plan, the larger of the two, is by far the most developed design for the Gallery. The basic construction is very much the same with the main hall on the outside and the vestibule in a central framed space. However, the paper is attached to a fabric mount and the walls of the main hall have been drawn on individual leaves that fold out. In this more developed record each work is represented as an individual box, containing the name of the sitter and a date. An annotation written in the centre of the page outlines how the arrangement of works was fundamentally dictated by date:

The dates on the portraits shew the year they became Flag Officers.

The Battles; when they were fought. Each line in the Great Hall is arranged according to the chronological order commencing – with

[Charles Howard, Earl of] Nottingham.<sup>205</sup>

Furthermore, a degree of architectural detail is introduced. The columns at either end of the hall are drawn in, the capitals outlined and the archway through to the upper hall clearly defined. This detail gives a greater impression of the actual structure of the Hall, emphasising that this is three-dimensional display. In comparison to the

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<sup>205</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, folded plan for the arrangement of the Naval Gallery, unbound, dated 1839.

rough plans, which are covered in alterations and annotations, the inclusion of architectural detail suggests that this version was different. Perhaps, like the handheld screens made for Locker's personal collection, this version was created as a visual catalogue for a finalised design. However, some light pencil markings demonstrate that even this developed arrangement was subject to change.

Locker's gallery plans are rare visual artefacts. Collectively, and in conjunction with the rest of Locker's correspondence, they offer a unique perspective on the formation of the display with the Painted Hall. As a visual catalogue for the arrangement, they create a sense of structure and completeness. This imposes an artificial sense of order which would not necessarily have transferred to the three-dimensional space. The uniform boxes give an impression of unity across the display, which perhaps disassociates us from the aesthetic reality of an art collection: especially one formed from previously unrelated paintings, including different genres and spanning several centuries of British naval art.<sup>206</sup> They have a tendency to miniaturise the exhibition space, removing any concept of the Gallery as a three-dimensional structure. However, the most developed plan, produced in 1839, challenges this tendency with the introduction of architectural detail, reaffirming the association between the two-dimensional plan and the three-dimensional display. Furthermore, in positioning the plan for the main hall upon independent leaves, the two-dimensional drawing can be folded into a three-dimensional model, blurring the boundary between design and installed actuality.

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<sup>206</sup> As Stoichita has argued, 'Catalogues are like mirrors: intellectually speaking, the catalogue is superior to the collection itself and possesses a degree of cohesion and coherence that the collection can never achieve except in the collection's dream'. For further examination of the paradoxical role of the catalogue, as both record and idealised fantasy, see Victor I. Stoichita, trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen, *The Self-Aware Image: An insight into early modern Meta-Painting*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 104-5.

It is most likely that the process of hanging the display was under way in the spring of 1824. Although it is unclear when an initial hang was completely installed, Locker produced the first catalogue in 1833, which may suggest that this was the first instance when a comprehensive display was in place and in need of description. It is not clear exactly which versions, if any, were ever installed in the Naval Gallery in the exact arrangement as drawn out on paper. However, numerous engravings of the gallery space confirm that this type of rectilinear arrangement, based upon the three-tiered display, was used in the Naval Gallery throughout Locker's time at Greenwich Hospital, until 1844. The most developed plan, dated 1839, provides us with a tangible example of the display at a specific point in the collection's history. Because the 1839 plan is by far the most developed of the designs, and is one that can be cross-referenced with a descriptive article published in the *Penny Magazine* in January 1838, it has been used as the basis for a digital reconstruction of the display (44 & 45).<sup>207</sup> In order to recreate the Naval Gallery in the context of Painted Hall, the paintings from the NMM's collection have been digitally imposed onto recent architectural drawings of the Painted Hall. The paintings are positioned in an arrangement based on Locker's 1839 plan. Rather than the empty white boxes, this digital reconstruction helps to bridge the division between drawing and display, allowing an examination of both the individual paintings and the gallery as a whole to take place within an architectural and spatial framework. The following chapters will submit this reconstruction to a close visual investigation. While considering how the display came together, the following chapters will also consider how the three-dimensional gallery space broke away from and deconstructed Locker's highly organised two-dimensional structure.

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<sup>207</sup> The Gallery Reconstruction is produced using architectural plans made on behalf of the Greenwich Foundation by Martin Ashley Architects, London (2011).

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The creation of the Naval Gallery was to an extent a family affair. It was initially and unsuccessfully proposed by William Locker in 1795. To a degree, Locker's revised revival of the scheme in 1823 was shaped by a familial duty to complete his father's work.<sup>208</sup> While the Greenwich Hospital committee minutes provide us with a factual record of the development of the Naval Gallery, the examination of Locker's letters highlights that this national gallery was not created by a committee. What is certainly clear after an examination of this rich primary resource is the central role that Locker played in the foundation, acquisition and assembly of this gallery. He was the one to liaise with patrons and secure donations. Locker also communicated with artists and kept himself informed of their progress throughout the duration of a commission. Furthermore, he frequently liaised with senior members of contemporary art institutions, including Lawrence at the Royal Academy and Long at the British Institution. These letters provide us with an insight into Locker's personal opinions and repeatedly illustrate the extent to which this project was primarily driven by his personal ideas and desires. This is most implicitly illustrated by the formation of his 'Portraits Wanted' list.<sup>209</sup> Furthermore, in a list of 'Pictures in Greenwich Hospital', Locker separated the paintings already in the collection 'before the gallery was projected' from the subsequent acquisitions 'obtained since by me'.<sup>210</sup> Within this second category, Locker lists the thirty-nine paintings that he acquired from the King as well as another thirty-three paintings which he solicited from private donors. In addition, a further four paintings are

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<sup>208</sup> See Locker's biography of his father entitled 'William Locker Lieut. Governor of Greenwich Hospital' in Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*.

<sup>209</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 'Portraits Wanted', 42.

<sup>210</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 'Pictures in Greenwich Hospital', 41.

isolated as works which he personally donated to the Gallery. This demonstrates Locker's desire to record of his achievements and involvement in the project. What this volume of letters succinctly highlights is the extent to which Locker was personally involved in this national naval project both as the founder and first curator of the Naval Gallery.

## CHAPTER II

The Vestibule: Recent British triumph & the reinterpretation of contemporary  
commemorative projects

Visitors to the Naval Gallery would begin their tour by entering the vestibule, the first of the three rooms which made up the Painted Hall, and from which the majority of Thornhill's decorative scheme was already visible (46). Locker's first catalogue, published in 1833, opened with a description of the hall, focusing both upon Wren's architectural design and Thornhill's paintings. This description encouraged visitors to first look at the vista through the hall before turning to the display of paintings hung in the vestibule itself. Locker emphasised Thornhill's 'elaborate undertaking'.<sup>1</sup> From the vestibule entrance, visitors could see William and Mary enthroned in the centre of the main hall ceiling. They could also see the British man-of-war at the far end. Laden with treasure from the captured Spanish galleon painted at the opposite end of the hall, the prominent position of this vessel emphasised the intrinsic relationship between the British state and the navy. From the vestibule, visitors were able to see part of the upper hall where, as the preface to the catalogue informed them, 'the central wall, facing the entrance, presents a group of portraits of King George I. and two generations of his family'.<sup>2</sup> For visitors entering the Gallery, the catalogue introduced them to the themes of monarchical succession and maritime pre-eminence which were central to Thornhill's decorative scheme.

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<sup>1</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 3.



After admiring this panoramic view of Thornhill's imagery, visitors would turn to the paintings and sculpture which were on display immediately in front of them in the vestibule. As it was described by the *Penny Magazine* on 6 January 1838, this first room provided 'a noble introduction to the hall', containing 'twenty-eight pictures, large and small, arranged with considerable taste'.<sup>3</sup> The 1839 plan for the vestibule, in line with earlier arrangements, positioned de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June 1794* on the end wall, to the left of the entrance, with Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar* (1822-4) hung directly opposite, at the other end of the room (47). Positioned at either end of the vestibule, these two paintings framed the display space with the first and last major British naval victories of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic conflicts. These two battlescapes are central in conveying the commemorative aims of the Gallery to visitors. They immediately identified the Gallery as a site for the celebration of national naval victory.

De Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* depicts the British victory at the Third Battle of Ushant, the first major British naval battle of the Revolutionary Wars (48).<sup>4</sup> Under the command of Admiral Howe, the British fleet engaged the French off the coast of Ushant, Brittany. It was on 1 June 1794, after several days of severe fog had hindered the attack, that Howe and the British fleet finally encountered the French.<sup>5</sup> In de Louthembourg's battlescape, the two fleets meet in the middle distance with an explosion of unrelenting cannon fire. Lord Howe's flagship, the *Queen Charlotte*, is positioned in the centre of the action with the union flag flying from her topmast. Under Howe's command, the British flagship closely engages the

<sup>3</sup> *The Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Duffy and Roger Morriss, eds., *The Glorious First of June 1794: a naval battle and its aftermath*, (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2001); Sam Willis, *The Glorious First of June: fleet battle in the reign of terror*, (London: Quercus, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> For an account of the Glorious First of June see Brian Tunstall, ed. by Nicholas Tracy, *Naval Warfare in the Age of Sail, The Evolution of Fighting Tactics 1650-1815*, (London: Conway Maritime Press Ltd., 1990), 204-10.

*Montagne*, the French flagship under the command of Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse. Both vessels have sustained extensive damage from the onslaught of cannon fire. At the bow of the *Montagne*, a man plunges head-first into the sea. He joins the array of figures strewn across the foreground that are shown desperately clinging to the wreckage of damaged ships. At the far right of the foreground, British sailors in a longboat grapple against the swell of the waves in an attempt to rescue their drowning adversaries. The inclusion of drowning figures and the image of their rescuers humanises this narrative of naval action and victory. British naval triumph is underpinned by an expression of martial magnanimity.

Positioned directly opposite across the vestibule, Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar*, which was commissioned as a pendant painting in 1822, directly responded to de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* in both subject and composition (49).<sup>6</sup> Rather than a representation of a specific moment in the narrative, Turner presents a complex tableau of the unfolding action.<sup>7</sup> The *Victory* dominates the canvas. Viewed side-on and lifted high out of the water, the vessel is monumentalised against the backdrop of the on-going battle. The *Victory* suffers from the consequences of the combat with her sails similarly punctured by cannon fire. While Nelson is absent from the composition, the code flags flying from the main mast of the *Victory* spell 'd-u-t-y', recalling the last word of his signal to the British fleet, 'England expects that every man will do his duty'.<sup>8</sup> The foremast of the *Victory* is falling: a pictorial allusion to the fatal collapse of Nelson upon the deck. The ships in the distance are partially concealed by the clouds of smoke which further fragment the compositional space. Positioned on the far right, British sailors

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<sup>6</sup> David Cannadine, ed., *Trafalgar in History: a battle and its afterlife*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Cicely Robinson, 'Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar* at the National Gallery of Naval Art', in Christine Riding and Richard Johns, eds., *Turner and the Sea*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 2013), 124-129.

<sup>8</sup> Tunstall, *Naval Warfare*, 247-251.

are shown hoisting their ensign at the stern of the French 74-gun *Redoutable*, signalling her capture. As this ship begins to sink, the French crew jump from the vessel in an attempt to escape. In the centre foreground, members of the *Victory* stand in a longboat. Some of these figures raise their hats to cheer the capture of the *Redoutable*. Others gesture toward their comrades signalling the imminent danger of falling masts. Further figures gesture toward the French sailors plunging off the *Redoutable*, as they continue with their rescue attempt. This collection of gestures unites the disparate elements of the composition while, at the same time, heightening the overall sense of confusion and chaos.<sup>9</sup> Together, the exhibition of these highly theatrical depictions of recent naval combat would have immediately engaged visitors to the Gallery in a narrative of naval victory and innate national humanity.

From the late 1820s onwards four plaster-cast statues, copied from St Paul's, were positioned in the four corners of the vestibule, to either side of the two large-scale battlescapes. These statues depicted four commanding officers from the recent Revolutionary and Napoleonic conflicts: Admiral of the Fleet, Richard Howe, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Howe, KG (1726-1799); Admiral of the Fleet, John Jervis, Earl of St Vincent, GCB, PC (1735-1823); Admiral Adam Duncan, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Duncan (1731-1804); and Admiral Horatio Nelson, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Nelson, KB (1758-1805). On the 1839 plan for the display, the position of these four statues is marked from A to D around the room (50). The statues of *Howe* and *St Vincent*, originally by Flaxman and Baily, stood to either side of de Loutherboug's *Glorious First of June* and statues of *Nelson* and *Duncan*, originally by Flaxman and Westmacott, framed Turner's *Trafalgar*. The commanding admirals were commemorated here through the monumentality of sculpture; their larger-than-life size conveyed the significance of their individual

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<sup>9</sup> See Quilley, 'The Battle of the Pictures', esp. 126-131.

roles in the attainment of national victory. The placement of these statues, to either side of the two major battlescapes, directly attributed national victory to the commanding admirals, making the relationship between national triumph and their individual leadership inextricable. As an additional act of commemorative recognition, a number of captured enemy flags from the recent conflicts were hung high above these statues in the vestibule cupola as a symbolic reminder of British victory.

When the two large battlescapes were first hung in the vestibule, they were displayed at eyelevel, evident in John Scarlett Davis's painting of the Naval Gallery in c. 1831 (46). However, as the 1839 plan of the vestibule illustrates, they were subsequently raised up in order to create space for two further tiers of smaller portraits and battle paintings to be hung underneath (51 & 52). As the *Penny Magazine* described in 1838:

Between the statues of Nelson and Duncan, on the right of the entrance, is hung Turner's large picture of the battle of Trafalgar; beneath it four portraits of naval commanders, Lord Dartmouth, Lord Mulgrave, Sir John Warren, and Captain Franklyn; and beneath these, near the ground, are the relief of Gibraltar, and the defeat of the French fleet under the command of the Comte de Grasse, both actions achieved under gallant Rodney. On the opposite side, between the statues of St Vincent and Howe, is hung a large picture painted by Louthembourg, of Howe's victory over the French fleet off Ushant, on the

1<sup>st</sup> of June 1794; and beneath it portraits of naval commanders, and pictures, arranged similarly to those on the right side.<sup>10</sup>

A middle tier of half-length portraits, consisting of naval officers who had directly participated in the recent battles, was positioned underneath each of the St James's Palace battlescapes. The portrait of *Lord Hugh Seymour* by John Hoppner, hung on the far left below de Louthembourg's battlescape, depicts Seymour wearing a gold medal (53). He received this award for his service in the Third Battle of Ushant on the 1 June 1794, where he commanded the *Leviathan*, and was subsequently honoured for his role in bringing about the victory. Within the vestibule display, Seymour's participation in the battle, evidenced by the medal in Hoppner's portrait, is further commemorated by the display of naval action and victory positioned overhead. Several of the other sitters have more tenuous associations with recent conflicts. Reynolds' portrait of *Admiral Samuel Barrington* was hung beside *Seymour* (54). Although Barrington had not served in the Revolutionary campaigns, he had been second-in-command, under Admiral Howe, at Gibraltar during the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783). The location of his portrait under the *Glorious First of June* is therefore explained by his association with the commanding officer who had presided over both victories. In this position, the inclusion of Barrington's portrait helps to indirectly broaden the representation of Howe's naval career.

On the opposite side of the vestibule, below Turner's *Trafalgar*, three of the half-length portraits depict men who directly served in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Captain George Duff, whose portrait by Henry Raeburn hung on

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<sup>10</sup> *The Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 2.

the far right, had served in the American and French wars before he was fatally wounded by a cannonball at Trafalgar (55). In the 1839 plan, portraits of *Captain John Borlase Warren*, painted by Captain Mark Oates, and *Captain Constantine John Phipps, 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron Mulgrave*, painted by Ozias Humphrey, were hung to the left of *Duff* (56 & 57). Both Warren and Phipps had served in the American and French wars. A portrait of *George Legge, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Dartmouth (1648-91)* is incongruously positioned on the far left of this row, below Turner's *Trafalgar* (58). Painted by an unknown artist, this half-length portrait was donated by a descendent, Henry Legge, in 1829. Legge had served in the Stuart navy under the command of Charles II and James II. This seventeenth-century portrait depicts Legge, who fought in the Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-74), dressed in armour and wearing a lace cravat and full powdered wig.<sup>11</sup> The inclusion of this portrait within the vestibule arrangement extends the chronological structure and challenges the thematic commemoration of the recent victories. Perhaps *Legge* was positioned here because of a lack of space in the main gallery. This may in part have been caused by the large number of half-length portraits in Peter Lely's *Flagmen of Lowestoft* series, donated to the Gallery by George IV in 1824. The pre-eminence of both the artist and the donor would explain why these works received precedence over the anonymously painted portrait of *Legge*. The Greenwich Hospital committee minutes record that the portrait of *George Legge* was not considered to be a 'fine picture'. When it was donated, Locker had to be assured that 'the merit of the officer will atone for the mediocrity of this portrait painter'.<sup>12</sup> The obscure location of *George Legge* may have been a

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<sup>11</sup> For a survey of the Anglo-Dutch wars see Charles Wilson, *Profit and Power. A Study of England and the Dutch Wars*, (London and New York: Longmans, Green & co., 1957); C.R. Boxer, *The Anglo-Dutch wars of the 17th century, 1652-1674* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1974); J. R. Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the seventeenth century*, (London and New York: Longman, 1996).

<sup>12</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Henry Legge, 19 March 1829, 185.

deliberate attempt to marginalise this work. However, this would suggest that the vestibule was subordinate to the main hall and the inclusion of a number of prestigious works by renowned artist like Reynolds and Turner would suggest this was not the case. Instead, it is worth suggesting that this apparent inconsistency actually played a significant part in broadening the presentation of British maritime history within the vestibule. Legge had served in the Third Anglo-Dutch war (1672-74), a conflict which had ended in defeat.<sup>13</sup> The inclusion of Legge's portrait within the vestibule introduced a historic narrative of conflict with the Dutch; a conflict which was finally concluded by the British triumph, specifically against the Dutch forces at the Battle of Camperdown on 11 October 1797 and more broadly with the total victory of Britain in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars.

Exhibited underneath this middle tier of half-length portraits, on either side of the room, were two pairs of small but not insignificant battlescapes. Two marine paintings by Dominic Serres were hung below de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* (59 & 60). These two paintings commemorated the individual victories achieved by Admiral Barrington. In both works Serres isolates an engagement between two enemy ships, a compositional feature which aligns with de Louthembourg's presentation of the two enemy flagships in the *Glorious First of June* above. However, Serres's ships sail upon calm water, amid an empty seascape; dramatic action is kept to a minimum and there is a complete absence of human figures. Instead, the naval action is presented through the strategic positioning of the ships themselves. Painted as a private commission for the Barrington family, these small scale paintings were intended to function on a more intimate level, commemorating the individual naval successes of the patron. Within the vestibule,

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<sup>13</sup> Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars*, 179-216.

the juxtaposition of de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* and Serres's small scale actions collectively presents naval conquest and victory at a fleet and an individual level. At the opposite end of the vestibule, another pair of paintings hung below Turner's *Trafalgar*. Both works were painted by Richard Paton and donated by Richard Tennant in 1829. On the left hung the *Moonlight Battle off Cape St Vincent, 16 January 1780* with the *Battle of the Saints, 12 April 1782* on the right (61 & 62). As the *Penny Magazine* observed, both battles were 'actions achieved under gallant Rodney'.<sup>14</sup> In comparison to Turner's *Trafalgar*, Paton locates the action in the middle distance, set back from the picture plane. This perspective allows the viewer to observe the unfolding strategy of the British fleet. A distant explosion confirms the dominance of British naval action while the viewer remains detached from any evidence of human casualties. The arrangement of several different types of marine battlescapes within the vestibule offered visitors a multitude of maritime perspectives which collectively constructed a wide-ranging view of British naval triumph in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In addition to the commemoration of recent naval victory in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, the vestibule contained a secondary theme, exhibiting four portraits of historic European naval figures. In 1835, Locker suggested that the inclusion of significant European figures would 'shew foreigners who visit our Gallery that liberal spirit which does not limit these memorials to our worthies'.<sup>15</sup> Over the next few years Locker sought to acquire relevant portraits of this type. On 22 March 1838, the Board minutes record that Locker donated 'an authentic portrait of Christopher Columbus which he had lately obtained from

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<sup>14</sup> *The Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 2.

<sup>15</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker - draft letter, 18 May 1835, 269.



Naples'.<sup>16</sup> On 21 June, in the same year, Locker had 'procured from Lisbon an authentic portrait of the celebrated Portuguese Admiral Vasco da Gama'.<sup>17</sup> In personally presenting portraits of these European explorers to the Naval Gallery, Locker was actively fashioning the thematic agenda of the display. He was clearly enhancing his curatorial resources with personal funds in the absence of sufficient relevant patronage. However, not all of the European portraits had to be acquired at Locker's expense. On 15 August 1839, Locker informed the Board that having previously 'made a request to His Majesty Louis Phillippe, King of the French to present to the naval gallery of Greenwich Hospital an authentic portrait of the Marquis Duquesne, Admiral of France; the picture had now safely arrived'.<sup>18</sup> By 1839, as Locker's plan for the gallery records, a half-length portrait of a European naval figure was mounted to the base of each of the four main columns around the vestibule.

In line with Locker's chronological approach to the display as a whole, these four portraits were hung in date order. This was initiated to the left of the entrance with a portrait of Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) which was a copy, made in 1838 after an original portrait by Girolama Mazzola Parmigiano (63).<sup>19</sup> Crossing the vestibule, a portrait of Vasco da Gama (circa 1460-1524) was hung directly opposite beside the vestibule steps (64).<sup>20</sup> This Portuguese explorer was the first man to round the Cape of Good Hope in 1497. He was the first European to reach India by sea, forging a route which established trade routes with Asia. The portrait is a nineteenth-

<sup>16</sup> TNA ADM 67/89, GH Board Minutes, 22 March 1838, 63.

<sup>17</sup> TNA ADM 67/89, 21 June 1838, 138.

<sup>18</sup> TNA ADM 67/90, GH Board Minutes, 15 August 1839, 180-181.

<sup>19</sup> Locker commissioned the copy of Parmigiano's portrait of *Columbus* and presented it to the Naval Gallery in 1838. TNA ADM 67/89, 22 March 1838, 63. For details of Columbus's life and voyages see Charles Kendall Adams, *Christopher Columbus: His Life and His Work*, (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1892)

<sup>20</sup> See Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Career and Legend of Vasco Da Gama*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); K. G. Jayne, *Vasco Da Gama and His Successors: 1460-1580*, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1910), esp. chapters v-x, 33-70.

century idealised invention of the sitter, painted by the Portuguese artist Antonio Manuel da Fonseca in 1838. It depicts Da Gama, wearing ornate robes and an armoured breastplate. A portrait of the Dutch admiral, Maarten Harpertszoon Tromp (1597-1633), originally painted by Jan Lievensz, hung on the other side of the vestibule steps (65).<sup>21</sup> During the First Dutch War (1652-54), Tromp had commanded the Dutch fleet against the English. In relation to this portrait, referring to his victory at Dungeness in 1652, the *Penny Magazine* recounted an established myth, describing Tromp as the man ‘who swept *our* channel with a broom at his mast head, and defied old Blake, one of the bravest sailors that ever trod an English deck’.<sup>22</sup> The *Penny Magazine* observed that ‘there should be more such portraits of the brave men whose defeats make up the fame of our naval commanders; in contrasting Van Tromp with Blake, we can understand something of – “That stern joy which warriors feel in foemen worthy of their steel”’.<sup>23</sup> This portrait is another nineteenth-century copy, probably made from the engraving of the seventeenth-century original. Returning to the entrance wall, visitors were able to admire a portrait of the Marquis Abraham Duquesne (1610-88) painted by Alexander Joseph von Steuben (66). Thought to be a nineteenth-century copy of an original, this portrait depicts the French naval officer who was famed for his part in the French victory over Spain and Holland at Catania in 1676, where he defeated Admiral de Ruyter.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> See C. R. Boxer, [trans & ed.], *The Journal of Maarten Harpertszoon Tromp, Anno 1639*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930); Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars*, esp. 119-21, 125-7, 132.

<sup>22</sup> *Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 2. For details on the Battle of Dungeness see Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars*, 39-40, 119-22.

<sup>23</sup> *Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 2.

<sup>24</sup> For a brief biography see Meade Minnigerode, *Some Mariners of France*, (London & New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1930), 185-190.

While Locker suggested that the inclusion of these European sitters would ‘shew foreigners [...] that liberal spirit which does not limit these memorials to our worthies’ their presence within the vestibule simultaneously served another purpose.<sup>25</sup> The inclusion of ‘authentic’ portraits of four European figures helped to position British maritime history within a wider European narrative. Portraits of Columbus and Da Gama demonstrated the competition for exploration and discovery which took place across Europe. As leading European naval commanders, Tromp and Duquesne represented the challenge faced by the British navy. Within the vestibule, a British naval narrative is presented within the historic context of European competition for trade, economic development and international discovery. However, their role within the gallery was not to diminish British achievement but rather to enhance the path to maritime predominance which, as the vestibule presented in its commemoration of recent British victory, had finally been achieved in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.

The way in which the vestibule commemorated and monumentalised British victory in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic campaigns was all-encompassing. As this examination of the vestibule layout illustrates, all available hanging space was deliberately arranged and employed for a definitive curatorial purpose (67). However, when Wren designed the Painted Hall at the end of the seventeenth century, it was not with the subsequent installation of an art gallery in mind. The vestibule is an exceptionally vertiginous architectural space which presented a number of challenges as a venue for displaying paintings. With the foundation of the Naval Gallery, two separate schemes were necessarily pulled together. As the digital reconstruction of the Gallery illustrates, the overlay of oil

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<sup>25</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 18 May 1835, 269.

paintings upon this architectural structure provided a potentially awkward addition to the Painted Hall. The monumentality of the architecture is in extreme contrast to the paintings, which seem relatively minute by comparison. The formation of a three tiered arrangement of paintings at either end of the vestibule occupied less than a third of each wall. This was despite the inclusion of the two battlescapes by Turner and de Louthembourg, the largest paintings in the entire collection, which measure over ten feet tall when framed. The extreme vertical axis of the vestibule certainly had the potential to overwhelm a display of paintings. However, once the two large battlescapes were raised up to the top tier, with a middle tier of half-length portraits and a bottom tier of smaller marine paintings underneath, the display of paintings at either end of the vestibule was well over fifteen feet high. In this position the paintings began to reflect the physical monumentality of the architectural space.

With the installation of a Naval Gallery, the vestibule was transformed. It was no longer just an entrance or an ante-chamber in which to gain an overall view of the architectural space. With the installation of paintings, the vestibule became an independent room within the Gallery. As both the entrance and exit for visitors, this room was a prime location for the exhibition of some of the Gallery's most significant pieces. The works exhibited here formed visitors' first impressions and cemented their concluding memories. The symmetry of the arrangement provided the necessary stability for an audience experiencing these transitions in and out of the Gallery. This regularity also provided a means to unite the different mediums within a cohesive curatorial structure. As an independent room within the Gallery, the vestibule obtained a specific artistic and political agenda. On a fundamental level, it was dedicated to the commemoration of recent British naval victory. However, as the subsequent part of this chapter explores, the celebration of recent

naval victory engaged with an established culture of commemoration that had begun to develop in Britain even before the nation had triumphed over Napoleon.

Re-appropriating State Patronage: copying the naval monuments in St Paul's.

Locker had aspired to acquire copies of the memorial monuments from St Paul's since the very foundation of the Gallery.<sup>26</sup> When Lawrence, Chantrey and Smirke conducted their inspection of the Painted Hall, they approved of this plan and suggested that 'until Marbles may be obtained we recommend the Proposal for placing there, Casts of the most approved Statues of Sea Officers now in St Paul's Cathedral'.<sup>27</sup> Initially, the Greenwich Hospital Committee only agreed to have casts made of the statues of Nelson and Howe, suggesting that these copies 'should be procured and erected on the pedestals at the East End but that no others be purchased until the effect of these is seen'.<sup>28</sup> Once installed within the Naval Gallery, the 'effect' was clearly approved of, because in 1825 it was agreed that copies of the newly finished statues of Duncan and St Vincent should also be acquired.<sup>29</sup> The two latter casts were made while the statues were still in the workshops, before the originals had even reached St Paul's.<sup>30</sup> Collectively, these four statues were exhibited together in the four corners of the vestibule (68). As Shoberl's *Summer's Day at Greenwich* records, 'in the right hand angles stand colossal statues of England's great naval heroes, Nelson and Duncan, and in the left those of Howe and St. Vincent'.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

<sup>27</sup> TNA ADM 67/72, 22 November 1823, 265-6.

<sup>28</sup> TNA ADM 67/72, 1 November 1823, 247-8.

<sup>29</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 15; TNA ADM 67/74, 15 January 1825, 9.

<sup>30</sup> TNA ADM 67/74, 15 January 1825, 9; ADM 67/75, 24 May 1826, 95.

<sup>31</sup> Shoberl, *A Summer's Day at Greenwich*, 56.

In St Paul's Cathedral, these statues had featured within a memorial pantheon dedicated to the commemoration of British military heroes. The scheme, which had been developing since 1791, was initiated by the House of Commons, with the support of George IV; crucially, it was funded by the state.<sup>32</sup> The House of Commons inscribed its name upon a number of the monuments, shifting attention away from the monarchy and promoting a constitutional coalition.<sup>33</sup> As Holger Hoock observes, with the formation of this sculptural pantheon, dedicated to recent war heroes, 'the hope was that public sculpture commemorating military achievements and highlighting patriotic values such as national service and sacrifice would inspire patriotism'.<sup>34</sup> Funds for the first monuments dedicated to the Napoleonic naval and military commanders were allocated by Parliament in 1794-5.<sup>35</sup> From its foundation, the scheme was compared with Ste G n vieve in Paris, which was converted into the Panth on by the Constitutional Assembly in 1791.<sup>36</sup> As Nigel Aston has observed, 'just as revolutionary France was turning the church Sainte-G n vieve into a dechristianized and deconsecrated Pantheon, so St Paul's became the British alternative, a cultural as well as Christian shrine'.<sup>37</sup> Later, comparisons were also made with Napoleon's *Les Invalides*, a military hospital built by Louis XIV which was later used as a temple to military glory and as a burial site

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<sup>32</sup> Hoock, 'The British Military Pantheon', 83.

<sup>33</sup> Hoock, 'The British Military Pantheon', 97. For an overview of this commemorative project see Marie Busco, *Sir Richard Westmacott: Sculptor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 33-42.

<sup>34</sup> Hoock, *The King's Artists*, 258. See also William Attfield, 'Funeral and sepulchral honours', in *The Oxford English Prize Essays*, 4 vols., Oxford, 1830, iii, 1-27, esp. 16-19.

<sup>35</sup> Hoock, *The King's Artists*, 258.

<sup>36</sup> James A. Leith, *Space and Revolution: Projects for Monuments, Squares and Public Buildings in France: 1789-1799* (Montreal: McGill-Queen University Press, 1991) 109-112, 139, 266-8.

<sup>37</sup> Nigel Aston, 'St Paul's and the public culture of eighteenth-century Britain', in Derek Keene, Arthur Burns, and Andrew Saint, *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London, 604-2004*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 371.

for French heroes.<sup>38</sup> However, unlike its Continental counterparts, the St Paul's Pantheon was forged within a Christian cathedral. Furthermore, unlike the Paris Panthéon, it was supposedly an apolitical site. In total, 36 national monuments were voted into St Paul's by Parliament between 1794 and 1823. These statues were arranged within a largely hierarchical layout, where the prominence of location suggested military rank. The Royal Academy was involved from the foundation of the scheme, supposedly ensuring that the selected artists would meet with the highest artistic standards. However, from March 1802, a 'Committee of Taste' was appointed, chaired by Charles Long, in order to supervise the competitions, select the designs and the commissions, and generally supervise the completion and erection of the monuments.<sup>39</sup> The use of sculpture as the desired medium, rather than painting, better conveyed the desired permanency of this memorial to individual heroes and national victory. Flaxman's statue of *Admiral Earl Howe* was commissioned by Parliament in 1803, awarded primarily for Howe's victory on 1 June 1794. Flaxman's *Monument of Vice-Admiral Nelson* was commissioned by Parliament in 1807. In 1818, it was finally installed in the prominent location as the figurehead of the scheme. The contracts for Westmacott's statue of *Admiral Duncan* and Baily's *Admiral Earl St Vincent*, awarded in 1823, were the last to be voted on by Parliament.<sup>40</sup> As Hoock observes, 'though an existing site was adapted, rather than a purpose-built structure erected, the commemorative space was from the start developed coherently and at very substantial cost'.<sup>41</sup> The St Paul's Pantheon was a

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<sup>38</sup> Avner Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics, and Memory in Modern France, 1789-1996*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), esp. 54, 173, 312-3.

<sup>39</sup> Frederick A. Whiting, 'The Committee of Taste', *Apollo* 82 (October 1965), 326-330. Hoock suggests that the title of 'Committee of Taste' was probably coined by the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 62 (1802), 967; Hoock, *The King's Artists*, 263.

<sup>40</sup> Hoock, *The King's Artists*, 260-61: Table of National monuments in St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, London, voted by Parliament 1794-1823, sourced from Parliamentary Papers 1837-8.

<sup>41</sup> Hoock, *The King's Artists*, 271.

rare example of sustained state support for a patriotic project of national commemoration.

When executing the statues of Howe and Nelson, Flaxman employed his established classicising approach, using elaborate allegorical symbolism in order to elevate and idealise the subject. For the statue of *Howe*, created between 1803 and 1811, Flaxman depicted Howe wearing a boat cloak, dressed in uniform which is decorated with his medals and the order of the Garter (69). He holds a telescope and leans against a small rostral column which is carved with the prow of his own ship, *The Queen*. A British lion is seated as his guard. Britannia is seated above the admiral holding a trident in her right hand. On the left of Howe, two female personifications represent Victory and History. Victory, dressed in classical drapery, holds a laurel wreath while History is in the act of inscribing a plaque with the story of Howe's relief of Gibraltar and his success on the 1 June 1794 onto the pedestal.<sup>42</sup> For the statue of Nelson, commissioned in 1807 and completed in 1818, Flaxman exaggerated the physical proportions of the man in order to better align his image with the valiant ideals of the hero (70).<sup>43</sup> Nelson is dressed in the pelisse which he had received from the Turkish Sultan following the Battle of the Nile. His amputated right arm is framed by this swathe of drapery, and when looking up from the viewer's perspective, the severed sleeve of his jacket is unavoidably apparent. Rather than restore the body to a state of completeness Flaxman incorporated Nelson's famed 'fin' as an identifiable and naturalistic attribute.<sup>44</sup> Flaxman expressed an interest in producing a lifelike representation of the hero while working on the statue

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<sup>42</sup> Roger Bowdler and Ann Saunders, 'The Post-Reformation Monuments' in Keene, Burns and Saint, *St Paul's Cathedral*, 277-8; Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, 73.

<sup>43</sup> For an examination of the selection process see Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, 79-92.

<sup>44</sup> Nelson gave his amputated right arm the nautical nickname of his 'fin'. See Colin White, 'Nelson Apotheosised: The Creation of the Nelson Legend', in David Cannadine, ed., *Admiral Lord Nelson: Context and Legacy*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 95.



of Nelson in 1814: ‘Surely no monument of a particular man can be so gratifying as the correct portrait of his face and figure [...] Divine attributes, moral virtues or national characteristics, represented by allegory, are addressed to the speculation of the philosopher, or the imagination of the poet – but [...] general feelings are most gratified by the likeness of the man’.<sup>45</sup> However, beyond an interest in the naturalistic depiction of the man, Flaxman’s monument was otherwise dedicated to an established classical approach to commemorative sculpture. Nelson stands upon an elaborate allegorical pedestal. Britannia directs the gaze of two young sea cadets, who gaze reverentially up toward Nelson as their hero and role model. On the other side, a British lion stands guard. On the pedestal, allegorical figures represent the North Sea, the Nile, and the Mediterranean while Nelson’s greatest victories at Copenhagen, the Nile and Trafalgar, are inscribed on the pedestal cornice.<sup>46</sup>

The other two statues copied for the Naval Gallery were produced at the end of the project in St Paul’s. By the 1820s, the type of classical allegory employed by Flaxman was increasingly out of favour. As George Lewis Smyth stated in 1826, ‘Earl Howe’s statue is imposing in attitude, and striking in feature; there are also some other neat traces of merit to be distinguished upon the work; but our praise of the whole cannot go very far; there is a heaviness about them all, and the design is made up of the cold and uninteresting materials of allegory’.<sup>47</sup> In contrast to Flaxman’s monuments, the two later naval sculptures by Westmacott and Baily have replaced the large and elaborate allegorical pedestals with more modest bases (71 & 72). The absence of additional allegorical figures is notable in the statues of *St*

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<sup>45</sup> Busco, *Westmacott*, 45, [see reference 48: John Flaxman to the Revd. William Gunn, September 1814, Add. MSS. 397 90 ff. 28-29, British Library, London].

<sup>46</sup> Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster, Southwark and parts adjacent*, 4 vols., (London: G. Virtue, 1827-37). III, 329.

<sup>47</sup> George Lewis Smyth, *The Monuments and Genii of St Paul’s Cathedral and of Westminster Abbey, with historical sketches and descriptions of both Churches*. 2 vols., (London: John Williams, 1826), II, 604.

*Vincent* and *Duncan* who both stand upon plain bases. In part, the reduction in scale and complexity may have been to some extent dictated by the available funding. As Yarrington has documented, ‘by the early 1820s the scheme had faded into obscurity, with the monuments being on a smaller scale and the original carefully planned arrangement of the works becoming increasingly haphazard’.<sup>48</sup> However, this stylistic change also reflects the changing attitude toward the use of allegory within commemorative sculpture. As J. H. Markland commented in 1847, ‘a monument ought to be a book, open for the multitude [...] In walking though St Paul’s and Westminster Abbey, how forcibly are we reminded that this self-evident principle has been unheeded’.<sup>49</sup> The lack of allegory in these later statues reflects a stylistic shift toward increasingly naturalistic monuments, without complex or challenging classical allegories, which could be more easily comprehended by a broader public audience.

In addition to changing attitudes regarding allegory, Westmacott and Baily’s monuments can be seen to engage with another major issue that was under debate at the time: whether to include classical or contemporary dress. The debate regarding whether or not contemporary dress was suitable for commemorative statuary had been underway since the early 1790s. Farington records the discussions that took place between the members of the Royal Academy who initially consulted on the St Paul’s statues. In July 1795, specifically in relation to the statue of *Cornwallis*, John Bacon and Thomas Banks expressed a preference toward the use of antique drapery because ‘there was an ideal grandeur from association [...] of the ancient dress’ and that ‘within twenty years when fashion varied [modern dress] would appear

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<sup>48</sup> Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, 66.

<sup>49</sup> J. H. Markland, *Remarks on English Churches & on the expediency of rendering sepulchral memorials subservient to pious & Christian uses*, (London: G. Bell, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 1847 [1843]), 80.

disgusting'.<sup>50</sup> In contrast, Benjamin West was inclined to favour contemporary dress, arguing that these memorial statues should primarily provide a 'historical record'.<sup>51</sup> West's opinion was reflected in his *Death of General Wolfe* (1770) which depicted Wolfe dressed in contemporary uniform rather than classical dress. By the 1820s the argument regarding classical or contemporary dress was still not resolved. Westmacott depicts *Duncan* dressed in a heavy cloak which obscures his naval uniform. The cloak recalls antique style drapery. As Busco has argued, the drapery imbues the statue with 'timeless dignity and grandeur'.<sup>52</sup> In Baily's depiction of *St Vincent*, the admiral's uniform is more visible. However, the way in which his cape falls certainly makes a stylistic reference to the classicising drapery found in other monuments within the St Paul's scheme. In both cases, the treatment of dress and the incorporation of uniform, particularly the representation of boat cloaks with classicising drapery folds, demonstrate the artists' attempts to navigate the ever changing differences in opinion and solve this long-standing tension.

The original plaster copies that were commissioned for the Naval Gallery are now thought to be lost or destroyed. However, the painting of the Naval Gallery by Davis includes two of the four statues, positioned to either side of the vestibule steps (*Howe* is positioned on the left and *Nelson* is on the right) (46). In addition an engraving published in Sholberl's 1840 publication *A Summer's Day at Greenwich* depicts the Gallery's copy of Flaxman's statue of *Nelson* (73). In comparison to Flaxman's original monuments in St Paul's, the Naval Gallery's copies differed in one crucial respect. As Davis's painting illustrates, the plaster-casts for the Naval

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<sup>50</sup> Joseph Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*. 16 vols: 1-6 ed. Kenneth Garlick and Angus Macintyre; 7-16 ed. Kathryn Cave. (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959-84), II, 369-70.

<sup>51</sup> Farington, *Diary of Joseph Farington*, II, 369-70. See Edgar Wind, 'The Revolution of History Painting', *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, vol. 2 no. 2, (Oct., 1938), 116-127.

<sup>52</sup> Busco, *Westmacott*, 40.

Gallery were made without the elaborate pedestals. All the allegorical detail and additional narrative, including the figures of Victory and History or Britannia and the sea cadets, is absent from the Naval Gallery's copies. Even the coil of rope at Nelson's feet has been removed. Instead, the statues stand upon plain bases, inscribed only with the surname of the sitters and none of their titles. The exclusion of the allegorical detail can be simply understood as a means to reduce the expense. However, it is more likely to have been a stylistic decision to create greater uniformity between the four statues. After all, the two later St Paul's statues depicting *St Vincent* and *Duncan* were designed with plain bases. It seems likely that the exclusion of allegorical detail from the copies of Flaxman statues was a deliberate artistic decision, in line with changing attitudes toward contemporary sculpture, illustrated by the plain bases used by Westmacott and Baily in the 1820s monuments.<sup>53</sup> Where the allegorical detail employed in some of the earlier St Paul's statues could have challenged those who had not received a formal classical education, the less ornate copies of these statues made for the vestibule of the Naval Gallery would have been arguably more accessible to an increasingly diverse public audience. Furthermore, the absence of the base would also have repositioned the statues of the admirals lower, and closer, to the viewer. As a result, within the Naval Gallery, visitors' attention would have been redirected toward the commemoration of the men themselves. Rather than a memorialisation of the admirals as classicised god-like warriors, they are commemorated for their real-life participation in naval action: an association made more implicit by the juxtaposition of their sculpted likenesses with the St James's Palace battlescapes.

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<sup>53</sup> Busco, *Westmacott*, 33-4.

The inclusion of the St Paul's plaster-cast copies did more than introduce a reverential overtone into the vestibule space. For visitors entering the Naval Gallery, the inclusion of the statues would have engaged with an established national commemorative narrative. As at St Paul's Cathedral, the inclusion of these works within the vestibule was intended to create patriotic feeling in visitors as they entered the Naval Gallery. This sentiment was further enhanced by the inclusion of the captured flags, hung up in the cupola above. William Shoberl recorded that these standards were also 'until lately in St Paul's Cathedral'.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, in 1827 when the Royal Marines received new colours, the Duke of Clarence, later William IV, ordered their old flags to be donated to the Naval Gallery. Shoberl describes that these colours were hung at the base of the windows within the vestibule.<sup>55</sup> The inclusion of the enemy standards from St Paul's helped to strengthen the association between these two patriotic projects. Within St Paul's, enemy standards served a symbolic and patriotic function during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. In 1797, the Foreign Secretary Lord Grenville, who had identified the significance, and propagandist potential, of Duncan's victory at the Battle of Camperdown, proposed that 'the [Dutch Commander in Chief's] flag should be paraded through the streets with a proper detachment of sailors, and lodged in St Paul's'.<sup>56</sup> On 19 December 1797, flags were ceremonially laid in St Paul's Cathedral as part of the Naval Thanksgiving Service, which was attended by George III and the royal princes. The captured French, Spanish and Dutch flags, including those taken at Cape St Vincent, were carried through the streets of London and into the Cathedral by a detachment of

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<sup>54</sup> Shoberl, *A Summer's Day at Greenwich*, 56.

<sup>55</sup> Shoberl, *A Summer's Day at Greenwich*, 55.

<sup>56</sup> Lord Grenville to Spencer, 13 October 1797 in J. S. Corbett and H. W. Richmond, ed., *The Private Papers of George, Second Earl Spencer*, First Lord of the Admiralty 1794-1801. 4 vols, (London: Navy Records Society, 1913-24), II, 195-6.

marines and ratings led by officers and captains.<sup>57</sup> This act of laying down the foreign colours was in direct imitation of David, King of Israel, who laid down the spoils in the temple at Jerusalem.<sup>58</sup> As Macleod has argued, the identification of Britain with Old Testament Israel was widely acknowledged, at least as a tool of propaganda, by the highest secular and religious authorities.<sup>59</sup> The ceremony also recalled the Elizabethan pageant at St Paul's after victory against the Spanish Armada.<sup>60</sup> In 1797, the inclusion of enemy standards within the ceremony at St Paul's reasserted the providential myth of Britain as the elect nation. The subsequent transfer of flags from St Paul's to the Naval Gallery would have introduced the highly providential overtones of the ceremony into the secular environment of the vestibule, further cementing the established association between these two commemorative cultural projects.

The St Paul's project exemplified artistic employment for a patriotic cause. These statues exemplified the highest standards of contemporary British sculpture, and testified to the emergence of a national school of practitioners in this medium, who could proudly hold their own against Continental sculptors.<sup>61</sup> When relocated to the vestibule, the best of contemporary British sculpture was introduced into the country's first national naval art gallery. The inclusion of these plaster-cast copies forged a direct link between the Naval Gallery and the state-funded commemorative

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<sup>57</sup> Keene, Burns and Saint, *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London*, 369.

<sup>58</sup> See Hock, 'British Military Pantheons', 91. Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, 143-4, esp. fn 26: This was spelled out in the *Form of Prayer to be used in all Churches and Chapels [...] upon [...] the nineteenth of December next, being the Day appointed by Proclamation for a general Thanksgiving to Almighty Lord*, (London, 1797), 6; Keene, Burns and Saint, *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London*, 369-70.

<sup>59</sup> Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, 143-4.

<sup>60</sup> Andrew Lambert, *Nelson: Britannia's God of War*, (London: Faber and Faber, 2004), 104.

<sup>61</sup> Holger Hock, *Empires of the Imagination: Politics, War and the Arts in the British World, 1750-1850*, (London: Profile Books, 2010), 162-187; Martin Myrone, *Bodybuilding: reforming masculinities in British Art 1750-1810*, (New Haven and London: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre by Yale University Press, 2005), esp. 'The State of the Arts 1775-85', 191-200 and 'Three Young Sculptors' of the 1790s', 275-294.

project in St Paul's. Locker's 1833 catalogue clearly informed visitors that the sculptures in the vestibule were 'Cast from the Statues in St Paul's Cathedral'.<sup>62</sup> To some degree, the inclusion of replicas from this major and extended Parliamentary commission paid homage to the patriotic patronage of the state. However, the alterations that were made to the copies of Flaxman statues demonstrate that the Naval Gallery did not just repeat or reissue the commemorative efforts made in St Paul's but actively refined them in order to better suit the needs of an increasingly diverse and public commemorative culture.<sup>63</sup>

#### Relocating Royal Patronage: The Donation of the St James's Palace Battlescapes

Locker's decision to locate de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* and Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar* in the prominent position to either side of the vestibule demonstrates the major and prestigious role that these works occupied within the Naval Gallery's collection. The sheer scale of these works, measuring over 10ft high and 13ft wide, surpassed every other painting on display. Donated by George IV, the two canvases had previously hung together in St James's Palace where they featured within an extensive renovation of the state rooms, initiated in 1822.<sup>64</sup> The donation of these two paintings to the Naval Gallery has been the subject of extended

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<sup>62</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 15.

<sup>63</sup> This relationship between the Naval Gallery and Parliament was strengthened in the 1842 when the latter commissioned three full-length statues of naval admirals for the Naval Gallery. At a cost of £1500 each, the three statues depicted *Admiral Edward Pellew, first Viscount Exmouth* by Patrick MacDowell (NMM SCU0041), *Admiral Sir William Sidney Smith* (NMM SCU00448) by Thomas Kirk, and *Admiral Lord de Saumarez* by Sir John Steell (SCU0051), an Englishman, Irishman and Scotsman respectively. See GH Board Minutes: TNA ADM 67/93, 1 October 1842, 269-70; ADM 67/94, 9 February 1843, 155 & 25 May 1843, 155; ADM 67/96, 24 July 1845, 317; ADM 67/97, 11 June 1846, 211 & 19 June 1846, 223-4; ADM 67/10, 14 February 1850, 58-9; ADM 67/104, 22 December 1853, 560.

<sup>64</sup> William James, *Naval History of Great Britain from the Declaration of war by France, in February 1793, to the Accession of George IV in January 1820*, 6 vols., (London: Harding, Lepard & Co., 1826), IV, 149-50; Martin Butlin and Evelyn Joll, *The Paintings of J.M.W. Turner*, Revised Edition, (New Haven and London: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre and the Tate Gallery by Yale University Press, 1984), 155.

criticism, particularly among Turner scholars.<sup>65</sup> It has generally been understood that the removal of these two works from St James's Palace to Greenwich was an act of royal expulsion, primarily driven by the criticism that Turner's *Trafalgar* had initially received.<sup>66</sup> The prominent location of de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* and Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar* within the vestibule requires us to explore the donation of these works in greater detail and question the legitimacy of such arguments.

De Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* was not a royal commission but had been purchased for the renovation of St James's Palace.<sup>67</sup> It was painted in 1795, shortly after the actual event, as a commission for the publishers Valentine and Rupert Green. They intended the work to be made into an engraving, along with a pendant painting, also by de Louthembourg, depicting *The Siege of Valenciennes, May-July 1793* (Private Collection). Both works were initially exhibited at the Historic Gallery, Pall Mall from 2 March 1795, primarily as a means to raise subscriptions for the engravings.<sup>68</sup> When the *Glorious First of June* was first exhibited in the Historic Gallery it received a considerable amount of attention. As the *Times* remarked on 30 March 1795:

We think it a very essential service to the public, in recommending to their particular attention, Louthembourg's celebrated picture of Earl Howe's Victory, now exhibiting at the Historic Gallery, Pall-Mall.

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<sup>65</sup> Finley, 'J.M.W Turner's Proposal', 31; Ian Warrell, ed., *J.M.W. Turner*, (London & New York: National Gallery of Art, Washington in association with Tate Publishing: 2007), 96; Quilley, *Empire to Nation*, 246.

<sup>66</sup> George Walter Thornbury, *The life of J.M.W. Turner, R.A.*, (London: Hurst and Blackett Publishers, 1862), II, 133.

<sup>67</sup> James, *Naval History of Great Britain*, IV, 149-50.

<sup>68</sup> The engraving of the *Glorious First of June* was published in January 1799 and the *Siege of Valenciennes* was completed in 1801. See Nicholas Tracy, *Britannia's Palette: The Arts of Naval Victory*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 48-9.



The numerous visitors of the first Nobility and of all ranks, which daily attend that Exhibition, sufficiently prove the uncommon merit of that picture, universally acknowledged the most complete representation of a Naval Engagement ever produced.<sup>69</sup>

While the *Times* remarked that the attention the work received proved the ‘uncommon merit of that picture’, the painting was viewed with some criticism for its treatment of the historic narrative.<sup>70</sup> As Nicholas Tracy observes, ‘in one important respect de Louthembourg had taken a dramatic license that caused his composition to depart from accurate representation of tactical dispositions’.<sup>71</sup> This allegedly major compositional departure was described in disparaging detail by William James in his 1826 edition of the *Naval History of Great Britain*:

Soon after the battle of the 1<sup>st</sup> of June the justly celebrated marine painter, P.J. de Louthembourg, was employed by some enterprising individual to represent the *Queen Charlotte* engaging the *Montagne* [...] the grand mistake in it was that the *Queen Charlotte* was placed where Lord Howe wanted to get, but never could get, a little before the lee beam of his antagonist. Amongst others, the officer, whose duty it was (and who would have succeeded, but for the hasty flight of the *Montagne* and the loss of the *Charlotte*’s fore topmast) to place the British ship in the desired position, went to see the picture. At the first glance the gallant seaman pronounced the picture a libel upon the *Queen Charlotte*; inasmuch as, had she been in the position

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<sup>69</sup> *The Times*, 30 March 1795 cited by Tracy, *Britannia’s Palette*, 58, reference 47.

<sup>70</sup> *The Times*, 30 March 1795.

<sup>71</sup> Tracy, *Britannia’s Palette*, 59

represented, it would have been her fault for letting the Montagne escape. Whether it was owing to this capital blemish, or to the half a dozen minor offences against truth in different parts of it, we cannot say, but the picture gradually sank into disrepute, and eventually became, we believe, lodged with an eminent printseller for some debt amounting to less than a third of its prime cost. After lying rolled up in a corner of one of his rooms, encased in dust, for a number of years, the printseller was fortunate enough, as we have understood, to find a purchaser in his present majesty's [King George IV's] surveyor-general of the Board of Works.<sup>72</sup>

This type of criticism, although written considerably after the painting's initial exhibition, illustrates the repeated tension that occurs between a demand for naval accuracy and the artistic process of creating an engaging battle painting. Here, we recover a stubborn resistance to the notion of separating the genre of marine painting from the documentary approach employed in naval reports. De Louthembourg placed compositional emphasis upon the representation of human struggle and devastation in the foreground. Despite this, critical attention can be seen to revert to the presentation of tactics and strategy.

There is another explanation for the fall in favour that this work, and de Louthembourg himself, experienced over the next decade. In the 1790s, as conflict with France developed, de Louthembourg was increasingly ostracised as a French 'foreigner'.<sup>73</sup> Despite the patriotic nature of most of his subjects, he was increasingly

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<sup>72</sup> James, *Naval History of Great Britain*, IV, 149-50.

<sup>73</sup> Kay Dian Kriz, 'French Glitter or English Nature? Representing Englishness in Landscape Painting, c. 1790-1820', in Andrew Hemingway and William Vaughan, eds., *Art in Bourgeois*

criticised for his approach to landscape. Characterised by an exact draftmanship, rich palette and a painterly finish or ‘French glitter’, de Louthembourg’s landscapes were increasingly dismissed as un-British.<sup>74</sup> Already challenged by the war with France, de Louthembourg faced further difficulty as a landscape artist. In the 1770s, he was one of the preeminent artists working in this genre. However, by the 1790s, an English school was developing and the genre was increasingly considered as an embodiment of national identity which necessarily ostracised foreign artists as a result.<sup>75</sup> In 1823, de Louthembourg’s *Glorious First of June* was unrolled and placed on display in St James’s Palace. When re-exhibited within the state rooms it was received with renewed appreciation. The *Literary Gazette* published an account of the State Apartments praising de Louthembourg’s painting as ‘one of the Artist’s best works’.<sup>76</sup> By 1823, attitudes and insecurities toward Continental artists were arguably subdued by British victory, and an acknowledgement of de Louthembourg’s artistic status was no longer embroiled with the same patriotic controversy.

With the renovation of St James’s Palace, there was a need to create a new pendant painting for de Louthembourg’s *Glorious First of June*. In 1822, following the advice of Lawrence, Turner was commissioned to paint the *Battle of Trafalgar*.<sup>77</sup> In 1824, when Turner’s painting was hung in St James’s Palace it was immediately criticised. However, this negative response came from a limited portion of the audience. The artist’s early biographer Walter Thornbury records that while making the final adjustments to his work, as George Jones observed, Turner was ‘criticised

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*Society: 1790-1850*, 63-83; Anne Puetz, ‘Foreign Exhibitors and the British School at the Royal Academy, 1768-1823’ in Solkin, ed., *Art on the Line*, 229-41.

<sup>74</sup> Hoock, *The King’s Artists*, 114.

<sup>75</sup> Hoock, *The King’s Artists*, 114.

<sup>76</sup> *The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belle Lettres, Arts, Sciences, &c.*, 5 June 1824, 331-32.

<sup>77</sup> Martin Butlin and Evelyn Joll, *The Paintings of J.M.W. Turner*, Revised Edition, (New Haven and London: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre and the Tate Gallery by Yale University Press, 1984), 155.

and instructed daily by the naval men about the Court, and during eleven days he altered the rigging to suit the fancy of each seaman, and did it with the greatest good humour'.<sup>78</sup> A review of St James's Palace published in the *Literary Gazette* described Turner's *Trafalgar* as being 'nearly all fire'. The critic described the *Victory* as standing 'high and bravely on her element, as if proud of Nelson's flag; but I do not think the human accidents in the water, on spars, &c., &c. so well managed as in the older Master'.<sup>79</sup> In responding compositionally to de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June*, Turner arguably adopted a greater theatricality in his response to the action, prioritising the construction of an overall dramatic effect over the presentation of structural accuracy. Perhaps responding to de Louthembourg in this way made the painting more problematic, for it saw Turner employing a stylistic grand manner approach that would not have been expected from a contemporary artist in the 1820s. Within a vast proportion of the Turner scholarship, attention has been directed to the negative responses that this work received. In an extended review of Turner's *Trafalgar* published in the *Naval History of Great Britain*, James concluded that it was 'full of glaring falsehoods and palpable inconsistencies'.<sup>80</sup> This type of criticism needs to be considered within the context of naval painting as a genre. In many cases, when artists depicting a naval subject broke away from the strict *pro forma* of the genre they were heavily criticised by a naval section within the audience for a lack of marine precision. This type of response should not be taken as necessarily illustrative of a wider artistic reaction to the painting.

Within the renovated state rooms of St James's Palace, these two naval battlescapes were hung alongside a full-length portrait of George III in the Ante-

<sup>78</sup> Thornbury, *The life of J.M.W. Turner*, II, 133.

<sup>79</sup> *The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belle Lettres*, 331-32.

<sup>80</sup> James, *Naval History*, III, 473. See also Quilley, 'The Battle of the Pictures', 128-9.

Room.<sup>81</sup> In addition to the two naval battlescapes, a further two battle paintings were also commissioned as part of the redecoration of St James's Palace. In 1822, Jones was commissioned to paint the land battles of Vittoria and Waterloo (74 & 75).<sup>82</sup> As a military artist, Jones had the perceived advantage of direct military experience, having served as an officer in the Peninsular War. In 1817, he had published an account of Waterloo that resulted in the nickname 'Waterloo Jones'. As an artist, he specialised in battle paintings and panoramic battle scenes. Within both of his paintings for St James's Palace, Jones conforms to a more conventional model for heroic panoramic painting. In the *Battle of Vittoria*, which took place on 21 June 1813, Jones depicts the final advance of the allied British, Portuguese and Spanish forces as they march against the French. As the commanding officer, Wellington is positioned in the left foreground. He is clearly identifiable within the group of officers, dressed in a light coloured cape and mounted upon a white charger. Collectively this group of officers observe the progress of the battle which continues in the middle distance. Jones conveys the strategic order of the allied forces attack. In contrast, the French army appears to be in chaos as it advances. The outline of the city dominates the horizon and beams of early evening light catch upon the clouded sky and rising smoke. In the *Battle of Waterloo*, Jones compositionally responds to and complements the *Battle of Vittoria*. Wellington is again positioned in the foreground of the painting, this time to the right, mounted upon his horse, Copenhagen. The dark coloured coat distinguishes Wellington from the surrounding redcoats of his officers. They gesture toward the on-going battle, which rages on in the middle distance. The British cavalry charge from the left and, in the far distance,

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<sup>81</sup> See *The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belle Lettres*, 331-32.

<sup>82</sup> George Jones painted *The Battle of Vittoria* and *The Battle of Waterloo*, both signed and dated 1822, which remain in the Royal Collection today. See Joan Hichberger, *Images of the Army: The Military in British Art, 1815-1914*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 32.

Napoleon is depicted urging on his Imperial Guard. In the foreground, fragments of the wreckage of war can be made out. A broken wheel and a fallen horse convey the devastation left in the wake of the combat. Jones's land battles of *Vittoria* and *Waterloo* were hung in the Throne Room at St James's Palace, positioned to either side of the coronation portrait of *George IV* by Lawrence.<sup>83</sup> Within St James's Palace, the exhibition of these four British victories within a royal residence directly aligned the nation's military prowess with the strength, continuation and security of the Hanoverian lineage. The exhibition of royal portraits directly in between these representations of British warfare heightened the monarchical association with the victory. In commissioning contemporary British artists to commemorate these scenes of national victory, this royal project can also be seen to patriotically support the development of a British school of art.

The St James's Palace scheme, which remained in place until 1829, is illustrative of George IV's wider involvement in commemorative cultural patronage in the wake of the Napoleonic conflicts. In 1814, a decade prior to the foundation of the Naval Gallery, the Prince Regent initiated a scheme to develop the Waterloo Chamber at Windsor (76). George commissioned Lawrence to paint a series of portraits depicting all the key figures involved in the defeat of Napoleon.<sup>84</sup> This portrait gallery, which was stylistically derived from the Long Gallery of a country house, positioned royal portraits alongside a variety of the leading military commanders, diplomats and Heads of State.<sup>85</sup> As the watercolour by John Nash illustrates, these portraits were painted in a variety of sizes depending on the perceived significance of the sitter, with full-length royal portraits positioned at the

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<sup>83</sup> Christopher Lloyd, *The Paintings in the Royal Collection: A Thematic Exploration*, (London: Royal Collection Enterprises Ltd., 1999), 198-99.

<sup>84</sup> Lloyd, *The Paintings in the Royal Collection*, 166-7.

<sup>85</sup> See Rosalys Coope, 'The 'Long Gallery': Its origins, Development, Use and Decoration', *Architectural History*, vol. 29, (1986), esp. 62-66.

centre of the display. This scheme forged an inextricable link between the British monarchy and the men directly involved in the defeat of Napoleon. With the subsequent foundation of the Naval Gallery, the display of admiralty portraiture in the main hall could be considered in a similar light, exhibiting all the commanding figures involved in the continued defence and development of Britain as a naval nation.

In the years following 1815, the battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo became the definitive representations of British military victory. Together, these events presented a statement of complete British martial dominance, victorious on both land and sea. In 1822, while the redecoration of St James's Palace was underway, George IV turned his attention to the Palace of Westminster, where he commissioned John Soane to create a new Royal Entrance. As Sean Sawyer observes, this was an attempt to reassert the status of the monarchy through increased pageantry and the public display of constitutional legitimacy.<sup>86</sup> Located at the centre of this redevelopment, battlescapes of Trafalgar and Waterloo were intended to hang to either side of the Royal Gallery.<sup>87</sup> The redevelopment of Westminster provides another example of how representations of recent military victories were employed in the wake of the conflict as a means to strengthen and reiterate this association between the state, the monarchy and British triumph.

In the absence of government-funded war memorials in the years immediately following the conflict, George IV adeptly situated himself at the centre of a series of commemorative projects designed to raise his royal profile through

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<sup>86</sup> John Soane reconstructed the entire Royal Entrance between 1822 and 1824. See Sean Sawyer, 'Sir John Soane and the Late Georgian Origins of the Royal Entrance', in Christine Riding and Jacqueline Riding, eds., *The Houses of Parliament: History, Art, Architecture*, (London: Merrell Publishers Ltd., 2000), 137-148

<sup>87</sup> Commissions were not forthcoming and in 1831 Soane offered to commission them himself: See Sean Sawyer, 'Soane at Westminster: Civic Architecture and National Identity, 1789-1834', Columbia University, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, (1996), 75.

quasi-public patronage. Through his involvement in a number of art institutions, including the Royal Academy and the British Institution, as well as the appointment of Denis Dighton in 1814 as the official military artist, George IV constructed an identity for himself as *the* patron of British commemorative military painting. The British Institution ran two competitions for the best finished sketches of the battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo while George IV was involved as Royal Patron.<sup>88</sup> In 1815, they offered a thousand guineas for the best finished sketch ‘illustrative of, or connected with the successes of the British army in Spain, Portugal and France’.<sup>89</sup> At the exhibition, held in January 1816, George Jones won second prize. He was subsequently commissioned by the British Institution in 1820 to paint an oil painting based upon this sketch of the Battle of Waterloo which they donated to Chelsea Hospital.<sup>90</sup> The fact that Chelsea already possessed a version of Waterloo by Jones explains why, when Turner’s *Trafalgar* was donated from St James’s Palace to Greenwich Hospital in 1829, the other version of *Waterloo* by Jones which hung in the Throne Room at St James’s was not offered to Chelsea, and remained in the Royal Collection.

In 1825, the British Institution ran another competition requesting finished sketches of the naval battles of the Nile and Trafalgar intending this time to donate finished paintings to Greenwich Hospital. Samuel Drummond won the commission for the Battle of Trafalgar. However, he was then instructed to paint ‘Lord Duncan’s Victory off Camperdown’ for donation to Greenwich.<sup>91</sup> The British Institution

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<sup>88</sup> As Regent, the Prince was Vice Patron, becoming Royal Patron of the BI on his accession to the throne.

<sup>89</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, III, 20 February 1815.

<sup>90</sup> RA AND/24/92, British Institution Statement of Premiums, 94. James Ward won the competition receiving the thousand guinea premium. George Jones won second prize and in 1816 further premiums were awarded to A. Cooper for his sketch of *The Battle of Ligny* and to L. Clennell for his sketch of *The Overthrow of the French Army at the Battle of Waterloo*.

<sup>91</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, V, 6 July 1825, 40.



minutes record that this was because Lord Bexley had just presented Arthur William Devis's *Death of Nelson* to Greenwich. However, if there was also any existing expectation that Turner's *Trafalgar* would eventually be sent there, this too would have necessitated the alteration of Drummond's commission.<sup>92</sup> The donation of battlescapes to Greenwich and Chelsea emphasises the prestigious status of these locations in the wake of the recent conflicts. As royal charities, both institutions exemplified monarchical support for the veterans of national victory. The donation of works from the British Institution to these military hospitals yet again illustrates the extent of the King's strategic and very public involvement in the charitable, commemorative and cultural redevelopment of the nation in the wake of war.

Many scholars have assumed that the removal of Turner's *Trafalgar* from St James's Palace to Greenwich, along with de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June*, was an act of royal rejection and dismissal primarily driven by the criticisms attracted by the *Battle of Trafalgar*. In a rather exaggerated conclusion, Finley even suggested that this was 'a final and most devastating humiliation' for Turner.<sup>93</sup> More recently, it has been acknowledged that this may not have been strictly the case. Ian Warrell suggests that this move might be 'perhaps as much due to the king's fondness for redecoration as to the criticism it received'.<sup>94</sup> Most recently, Geoff Quilley has acknowledged that the relocation of Turner's *Trafalgar* from the royal palace to Greenwich may have 'distorted the perception of failure'.<sup>95</sup> We must remind ourselves that when George IV first received a proposal for the formation of the Naval Gallery at Greenwich Hospital, he 'instantly approved'. From its

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<sup>92</sup> Discussions regarding the donation of Turner's *Trafalgar* were already underway between Charles Long and Thomas Lawrence by 1826 if not before: RA LAW/5/31, Letter from Charles Long to Thomas Lawrence, 25 April 1826; RA LAW/5/139, Letter from Charles Long to Sir Thomas Lawrence, 19 May 1827.

<sup>93</sup> Finley, 'J.M.W Turner's Proposal', 31.

<sup>94</sup> Warrell, *J.M.W. Turner*, 96.

<sup>95</sup> Quilley, *Empire to Nation*, 246.

foundation, the King stood as Royal Patron and was referred to as the ‘Founder of our Gallery’.<sup>96</sup> As it was discussed in the Introduction, the Painted Hall at Greenwich Hospital already expressed strong monarchical associations through Thornhill’s decorative scheme. When the Naval Gallery first opened to the public in 1824, the same year that the redecoration of St James’s Palace was completed, George IV, as the institution’s Royal Patron, began to donate paintings to the Naval Gallery from the Royal Collection. In total, he presented 39 paintings, all of which were received as prestigious gifts to the nation. In donating works to the Gallery, George IV can be seen to have actively associated himself with the statement of monarchical endurance and naval prowess already firmly established both within the Painted Hall and the Royal Hospital as a whole. In August 1829, Turner’s *Trafalgar* and de Louthembourg’s *Glorious First of June* were moved from St James’s Palace to the Naval Gallery. The committee minutes record that Greenwich Hospital wished to ‘convey to His Majesty their grateful acknowledgments for these further marks of his Royal favour to the Institution’.<sup>97</sup> The donation of the St James’s Palace battlescapes concluded George IV’s patronage of the Naval Gallery, bringing yet another of his extensive projects of royal patronage and military commemoration to a close.

In the years after British victory at Waterloo, George IV had shown repeated interest in visually commemorating the nation’s triumph and supporting the development of the contemporary British art world. With the foundation of the Naval Gallery there was an opportunity to relocate these works to the centre of a national naval commemorative project. The fact that this project of royal patronage culminated with the donation of de Louthembourg’s *Glorious First of June* and Turner’s *Battle of Trafalgar* further illustrates the prominent standing that these

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<sup>96</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>97</sup> TNA ADM 67/80, 8 August 1829.

works held both within the royal collection and the public eye. In locating these two large scale battlescapes to either side of the vestibule, viewers were immediately engaged in a narrative of national victory and innate British magnanimity. As a result, it would have been immediately clear that the Naval Gallery was a commemorative pantheon to the victories won and the individuals lost throughout British naval history. Furthermore, the prominent location of these prestigious donations from George IV would have provided an inescapable proclamation of the Gallery's loyalist, royalist position.

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The prominent inclusion of both George IV's St James's Palace battlescapes and the plaster copies of the state-funded St Paul's monuments within the vestibule engaged with the established cultural commemorative interests of both the King and Parliament. In this respect, the mutual acknowledgement of parliamentary and monarchical patronage within the vestibule display reinforced a uniquely British narrative of balanced governance and national prosperity, fundamentally supported by naval prowess and national victory. This type of narrative would have directly related to Thornhill's decorative scheme which, in glorifying the reign of William and Mary in the centre of the main hall ceiling, commemorated the successful formation of a newly balanced and constitutional British monarchy after 1688.<sup>98</sup> Within the vestibule, recent British naval victory was presented to the public as a triumph for the British constitutional stability over Revolutionary and anarchic Europe. The change in location impacted upon the context of the projects in a number of ways.

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<sup>98</sup> See Johns, 'Sir James Thornhill', 179-80.

Within St Paul's Cathedral, the four memorial statues had featured within a strongly hierarchical scheme which glorified a cult of the officer. The ordinary soldier/sailor is only included in a small number of the monuments and he is always a subordinate figure.<sup>99</sup> It was not until after 1815 that there were moves toward a public monument or a general service medal available for all ranks. When the first official campaign medal was finally issued, it was only for the veterans of Waterloo.<sup>100</sup> Within the vestibule of the Naval Gallery, the copies of these colossal sculptural monuments provided a commemoration of the individual commanding admirals, reasserting the British hierarchical system and the Royal Navy's structure of command. Simultaneously, the enormous towering presence of the flagships in St James's Palace battlescapes glorified the dominance and sheer monumental magnificence of the British fleet. However, the way in which the works were collectively exhibited realigned these schemes with an increasingly democratic demand for the commemoration of the ordinary veteran. When Turner's *Trafalgar* was first installed in St James's Palace, as Quilley observes, 'the sacrifice of the dead sailor in the foreground, provocatively juxtaposed next to Nelson's motto, who would have been nearly at eye level'.<sup>101</sup> In 1829, when the St James's Palace battlescapes were transferred to the Naval Gallery, as Davis depicts, they were positioned in a similar fashion (46). Located at the bottom of the end walls, the

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<sup>99</sup> Hoock, 'British military pantheon', 89. Also see Minihan, *The Nationalisation of Culture*, esp. chapter two, 'The 1830s', 29-63.

<sup>100</sup> The ordinary sailor occupied an increasingly prominent position in national commemorative culture. At Nelson's funeral in 1806, members of the crew from the *Victory* and a collection of Greenwich Hospital pensioners were included in the spectacle. See Jenks, *Contesting the Hero*, 422-453. In the years following British victory in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, military success was increasingly commemorated through the erection of public monuments and triumphal columns which, when positioned in exterior locations where no fee could be charged, were an increasingly accessible model for national commemoration. See Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, esp. chapter four, 'Local Responses to Nelson's Death', 102-134 and chapter five, 'Triumphal Columns as Monuments to Local and National Heroes', 135-166. For more on the broad democratization of the art world in nineteenth-century Britain see Amy Woodson-Boulton, *Transformative Beauty: Art Museums in Industrial Britain*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012), esp. 10-11.

<sup>101</sup> Quilley, 'The Battle of the Pictures', 130.

anonymous men in the foreground of both battlescapes were exhibited in the most prominent location, at visitors' eye level. When Turner's *Trafalgar* was initially hung at the bottom of the wall visitors would have directly faced the upturned drowning sailor in the centre foreground of the composition (77). His petrified wide-open eyes would have been positioned at the viewer's eye level, and his stare would have met their gaze directly. Within the foreground of Turner's *Trafalgar*, men within the longboats gesture toward this upturned drowning figure. They draw the viewer's attention to a hand beside him which belongs to an invisible submerged figure. This pairing is a compositional quotation from John Singleton Copley's *Defeat of the Spanish Batteries at Gibraltar*, which was on display in the Common Council Chamber at the Guildhall from the 1790s (78 & 79).<sup>102</sup> Whereas Copley depicted an upturned man clinging on to the hand of a submerged figure in the face of imminent rescue, Turner creates a more desolate narrative. In Turner's *Trafalgar*, the hand of a submerged figure reaches out toward the rescue crew in a final gesture of expiry, left with no support on which to cling. Viewers, left in suspense as to the fate of this unseen body, are drawn into a narrative of anonymous perpetual sacrifice. A fragment of Nelson's motto, 'Palmas qui meruit ferat' (Let he who has earned it bear the palm), drifts just below the surface of the blood-red water. As Quilley has convincingly argued, the palm alluded to is not just that of victory, but also of martyrdom.<sup>103</sup> In St James's Palace, this anonymous sailor confirmed the dedicated sacrifice of the King's loyal subjects. However, within the vestibule of this naval

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<sup>102</sup> See John Bonehill, 'Exhibiting war: John Singleton Copley's The Siege of Gibraltar and the staging of history' in John Bonehill and Geoff Quilley, eds., *Conflicting Visions: War and Visual Culture in Britain and France c. 1700-1830*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005). It has also been suggested that Gericault's *Raft of the Medusa*, which was on exhibition in London in 1821, was a compositional influence on the foreground group in Turner's *Trafalgar*: see Quilley, 'The Battle of the Pictures', 130; Quilley, *Empire to Nation*, 235-236; Lee Johnson, 'The "Raft of the Medusa" in Great Britain', *Burlington Magazine*, 96, (1954), 249-54.

<sup>103</sup> Quilley, 'The Battle of the Pictures', 130.

pantheon the anonymous sailor is presented to the public as a national martyr. The union flag, which unfurls upon the waves beside him, directly associates his personal and anonymous sacrifice with the national cause.

By the late 1830s, the two battlescapes from St James's Palace were raised up in the vestibule and positioned at the top of the three-tiered arrangement examined earlier in this chapter. In this raised position, six feet or so above the floor, the two battle paintings obtained a greater monumentality, looming over the vestibule and the visitors within it. In this new location, the anonymous upturned man in the foreground of Turner's *Trafalgar* was no longer positioned on the viewer's eyelevel. Instead he had ascended into a raised position overhead. Positioned at the edge of the picture plane in an upturned crucifix position, this central anonymous figure would have been suspended over visitors in a deposition-like arrangement that, in a quasi-religious manner, would have further memorialized the bodily sacrifice of this anonymous naval martyr. As Chapter Five investigates, the veneration of naval service within the Gallery reached its culmination in the upper hall, where a collection of Nelson's relics, including the bloodied coat from Trafalgar, were placed on display. For visitors entering the vestibule, this would have been their first and, later, their last experience of the Naval Gallery. The display provided an all-encompassing commemoration of recent naval action and national victory in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. This is achieved through a trinity of interconnected naval narratives. The St Paul's statues provide sculptural memorials of the leading admirals who were commemorated for their commanding roles in the attainment of victory. Complementing their imagery and associations further, the battlescapes commemorated the monumentality of the British navy, highlighting its achievement in defeating the enemy. Finally, the emphasis on anonymous figures in

the foreground wreckage of the St James's Palace battle paintings introduced the sacrifice of ordinary sailors into this wider commemorative narrative. It is this recognition of a wider national sacrifice which differentiates the commemoration of recent action constructed in the vestibule from the earlier attempts at such commemoration organised by the state or the crown.

The increasingly inclusive commemoration of national involvement in victory was further acknowledged by the presence of the Greenwich Hospital pensioners. The physical presence of these injured and ailing naval veterans, who frequently offered tours of the Gallery to the public, would have further assisted in making the vestibule's display of recent Revolutionary and Napoleonic triumph a tangible narrative of national duty. In John Burnet's *Sketch for 'A Tale of Trafalgar'* a Greenwich pensioner is shown standing before Turner's *Trafalgar*, recounting his personal 'tale' of events to an audience of visiting Chelsea pensioners and members of the public (80). The intrinsic role of the naval veterans was reiterated to visitors as they climbed the steps into the main hall, where a portrait of *John Worley*, a Greenwich Hospital pensioner, was hung on the right side of the stairs (81). This portrait, painted by James Thornhill, depicts one of the first pensioners to be admitted into the Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich in 1705. The inclusion of Worley's portrait at the top of the vestibule steps would have reminded visitors, both as they entered the main hall and again as they re-entered the vestibule on the way out, of the role played by the ordinary men who gave their lives, either in battle or through a lifetime of service, for the sake of their nation. At Greenwich patriotism was encouraged through the commemoration of national participation and the memorialisation of shared loss which had been experienced across the population at large.

## CHAPTER III

## The Main Hall I: Constructing a Narrative of National Naval History

After ascending the vestibule steps, visitors to the Naval Gallery entered into the main hall. Measuring 106ft in length, this was the largest of the three rooms within the Painted Hall complex. In 1838, the *Penny Magazine* described how ‘the pictures in this spacious apartment are arranged somewhat chronologically; beginning at the left-hand corner with the Armada and the naval heroes of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, and continued from the left to the right hand side of the room, ending on the right-hand side of the entrance with the bombardment of Algiers by Lord Exmouth’.<sup>1</sup> As the reconstruction of Locker’s 1839 plan illustrates, this naval chronology was constructed as a three tiered arrangement which ran around the entirety of the room (45). Full-length portraits of high admirals were hung along the highest tier, directly below the windows. A middle tier of half-length portraits was positioned underneath, generally depicting lesser rear and vice admirals. Finally, hung along the bottom tier, closest to the viewer’s eyeline, was a series of naval battlescapes depicting conflicts from the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 through to the successful bombardment of Algiers in 1816. This chapter explores how Locker utilised the main hall of the Naval Gallery as an arena for the display of national naval history. It examines how this constructed chronology engaged with a tradition of naval biography, perpetuating an established mythology of national naval supremacy. However, before this examination can be carried out, Locker’s desire to

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<sup>1</sup> *Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 2.



construct a naval history needs to be situated within a wider context of writing and visualising national histories in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain.

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David Cannadine has observed that one of the greatest challenges when discussing the historiography of national history is in knowing where to begin.<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this study, an examination of the tradition of national history writing within Britain will begin with David Hume's *History of England*. Published in six volumes between 1754 and 1761, it offered a history of the nation from the arrival of Julius Caesar through to the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Despite the fact that a plethora of national histories existed prior to this text, Hume's *History* provided the standard account of British national history for nearly a century after its first publication.<sup>3</sup> As W. Smyth acknowledged in his *Lectures on Modern History* in 1840, 'it is Hume who is read by everybody, Hume is the historian, whose views and opinions insensibly become our own'.<sup>4</sup> It prevailed as the established text until Thomas Macaulay published *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second* nearly a century later, in 1848. Hume's *History* remained popular in the early nineteenth century partly because no subsequent text covered such an extended period of history. Furthermore, Hume's account of the civil conflicts in the seventeenth century held particular resonance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, particularly for conservatives who were alarmed by the

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<sup>2</sup> David Cannadine, 'British History as a 'new subject': Politics, perspectives and prospects' in *Uniting the Kingdom? The Making of British History*, ed. Alexander Grant and Keith J. Stringer (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 13.

<sup>3</sup> Hugh Trevor-Roper, *History and the Enlightenment*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 120-128; Mark Salber Phillips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing Britain, 1740-1820*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 33-59; Mark Salber Phillips, *On Historical Distance*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 61-78; Nicholas Phillipson, *Hume*, (London: Weidendeld and Nicholson, 1989).

<sup>4</sup> W. Smyth, *Lectures on Modern History from the irruption of the Northern nations to the close of the American Revolution*. Two volumes (Cambridge: 1840) I, 126.

progression of the French Revolution.<sup>5</sup> Hume's warning of the fanatic extremism of Cromwell and the Puritans was easily aligned with the events occurring on the Continent. As Timothy Lang has argued, 'alarmed at the breakdown of order in France and fearing the same in England, the lesson of Hume's *History* was unmistakable: the preservation of the Anglican Establishment and the proscription of Dissent were the necessary preconditions for maintaining social order at home'.<sup>6</sup> Both in the *History* and in his political writings, Hume maintained a strong preference toward stable, established regimes.<sup>7</sup>

In the century after its initial publication, Hume's original text was subject to repeated alterations and additions. The *History* continued to impress not just a literary but a visual precedent upon the developing tradition of national history writing. It was one of the few multi-volume histories to be almost always illustrated.<sup>8</sup> As Rosemary Mitchell explains, this is partly due to the large body of illustrations already available to publishers by the nineteenth century. George Vertue's *Portraits of Monarchs*, which were initially produced as illustrations for Paul de Rapin-Thoyras's *History of England* (1726-31), were repeatedly used.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, in the 1790s the print publisher John Bowyer commissioned a series of paintings to illustrate a new edition of Hume's *History*.<sup>10</sup> These works were initially exhibited at

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<sup>5</sup> Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*. 37.

<sup>6</sup> Timothy Lang, *The Victorians and the Stuart Heritage. Interpretations of a discordant past*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 13; Trevor-Roper, *History and Enlightenment*, 176-191.

<sup>7</sup> David Hume, 'Of passive Obedience' and 'Of the Protestant Succession', *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*, eds., T.H. Green and T.H. Grose, new edition (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1882) I: 463, 475-6, 479.

<sup>8</sup> Rosemary Mitchell, *Picturing the Past: English History in Text and Image 1830-1870*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 34.

<sup>9</sup> Mitchell, *Picturing the Past*, 34.

<sup>10</sup> For a survey of John Boydell's Historic Gallery see Cynthia E. Roman, 'Pictures for private purses: Robert Bowyer's Historic Gallery and illustrated edition of David Hume's *History of England*', Brown University, Providence, unpublished PhD thesis, 1997; Roman, 'Robert Bowyer's Historic Gallery' and the feminization of the "nation"', 15-34.

the Historic Gallery in 1793.<sup>11</sup> In total, it is thought that 191 illustrative engravings were produced.<sup>12</sup> As the catalogue for the 1793 exhibition outlined, alongside a collection of engraved portraits, Bowyer commissioned contemporary artists to paint a large number of illustrative history paintings (82, 83 & 84).<sup>13</sup> The advertisement for this show publicised that ‘neither expense nor pains have been spared to unite in this great design the collective talents of the country’.<sup>14</sup> The collection included a depiction of *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada* by de Louthembourg which was later donated to the Naval Gallery. Hanging in the main hall, as the *Penny Magazine* remarked, the *Armada* initiated Locker’s naval chronology.<sup>15</sup> The inclusion of images in these national histories was illustrative of the diverse audience at which they were aimed. Hume’s *History* was considered to be as much an instructive textbook for an increasingly educated youthful readership as it was an adult publication.

Before moving on to an examination of Locker’s construction of a naval history within the Gallery, it is essential first to acknowledge the development of an important strand of writing, dealing specifically with British naval history. Within this literary tradition of national history writing, British maritime history played a significant role. Partly as a result, naval history developed as an adjunct to national history writing. The production of historical texts specifically recounting the history of the British navy was a well-established tradition by the foundation of the Naval Gallery in 1824. A number of naval histories were published in the eighteenth

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<sup>11</sup> *Morning Post*, 22 April 1793.

<sup>12</sup> R. Bowyer, *A Series of One Hundred and Ninety-One Engravings (in the Line Manner) by the Fine Artists in the Country illustrative of ‘The History of England’*, (1812) cited by Mitchell, *Picturing the Past*, 36.

<sup>13</sup> *Exhibition of Pictures Painted for Bowyer’s Magnificent Edition of the History of England, dedicated by permission to His Majesty*, (London, 1793).

<sup>14</sup> *Morning Chronicle*, 24 April 1793.

<sup>15</sup> Charles Long donated de Louthembourg’s *Defeat of the Spanish Armada* to the Naval Gallery in 1824. See Locker, *Catalogue*, 7.

century. Josiah Burchett's *A Complete History of the Most Remarkable Transactions at Sea* (1720) was the first general naval history to be published in English. Subsequently, Thomas Lediard published *The Naval History of England in all its branches, from the Norman Conquest, 1066, to the conclusion of 1734* in 1735. John Campbell's *The Lives of the British Admirals: Containing an Accurate Naval History from the Earliest Periods* was first published between 1742 and 1744. A number of revised and extended additions were reissued after his death in 1775. Subsequently John Entick's *New Naval History* was written in 1757. This account, dedicated to Admiral Edward Vernon, similarly included lives of significant admirals which were illustrated with engraved portraits. This biographical structure became the established format for naval histories. As Edward Harding outlined in the introduction to his *Naval Biography; Or, The History and Lives of Distinguished Characters in the British Navy, etc.* (1805), 'the history of the British navy is best learned in the lives of the British naval heroes'.<sup>16</sup> A plethora of publications followed in the latter part of the eighteenth century, collectively recapitulating a mythology of national superiority through naval dominance. Almost all of the naval histories produced presented a teleological history of the navy, culminating in the year of publication. For example, in 1758, James Rivington published *The Naval History of Great Britain; with the lives of the most illustrious Admirals and Commanders ...to the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty eight*. This approach to naval history impacted upon the arrangement of Naval Gallery where, as the *Penny Magazine* identified, the display spanned from the Armada through to the most recent naval action at Algiers in 1816. The identification of the nation with the achievements of the royal navy continued to develop into the nineteenth century, particularly in

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<sup>16</sup> Edward Harding, *Naval Biography; Or, The History and Lives of Distinguished Characters in the British Navy from the earliest period in history to the present time*, 2 vols., (London: John Scott, 1805), I, 1.

response to British victory in the Napoleonic wars. James's *Naval History of Great Britain, 1793 – 1827*, published in five volumes between 1822-1824, was written primarily in reaction to the American interpretation of the War of 1812.<sup>17</sup> The variation between the history of England or Britain exhibited in the aforementioned titles carries little to no significant basis for differentiation. As Cannadine observes, at this time 'almost without exception, they indiscriminately interchanged the words England and Britain, as if they were no more than different names for the same country, to be used in the interests of stylistic variation'.<sup>18</sup> Irrespective of the term being used at any given time, these national and naval histories were overwhelmingly Anglo-centric in their perspectives. The mythology of the British maritime was repeatedly employed as a means to reassert a national narrative. As Campbell stated in the preface to his *Lives of the British Admirals*, 'the general utility and great importance of naval history to the inhabitants of Britain is obvious from our being seated in an island; whence it is evident, that to navigation we owe our very being as a people'.<sup>19</sup> Many of these publications were produced in response to conflict, either with an external enemy or an internal Jacobin or radical threat. These historical works collectively reinforced a version of maritime history which asserted the national standing and manufactured a narrative of unrelenting territorial expansion and enduring national defence. As this survey of the literature illustrates, when, in 1824, Locker began to construct his own version of a national naval history, within the main hall of the Naval Gallery, he was able to rely upon an established literary and visual tradition.

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<sup>17</sup> James, *Naval History*, I, i-ii.

<sup>18</sup> Cannadine, 'British History as a 'new subject'', 16.

<sup>19</sup> John Campbell, *The Lives of the admirals and other eminent British seamen. Containing their personal histories, and a detail of all their public services. Including a new and accurate naval history from the earliest account of time, etc.*, 4 vols. (London: J. & H. Pemberton and T. Waller, 1742-4), I, iii.

The early nineteenth century experienced a growing interest in the diversification and dissemination of national history. This was partly in response to the French Revolution. National histories, which reinforced the notion of nationhood, constructed the impression of greater separation from France and necessarily isolated Britain from its neighbour's radical political agendas. Locker himself was directly involved in a textual project which was aimed at the diverse dispersal of national historic information. In collaboration with the publisher Charles Knight, Locker was the joint editor of a serial publication, *The Plain Englishman*, which was published in three volumes between 1820 and 1823.<sup>20</sup> The use of a serial as a means of dissemination made the material more easily obtainable to a broader readership, providing an affordable alternative to costly bound books. In 1824, the same year that the Naval Gallery opened to the public, a compilation of extracts from this serial were brought together in a publication entitled *The Englishman's Library*, comprising of *A Series of Historical, Biographical and National Information*. This publication not only records Locker's personal approach to mapping a national history, it also clearly outlines his views on the perceived historic and social significance of this type of discourse. This book offered a broad and multifaceted overview of national history. It provided an outline of the nation's history, beginning with Alfred the Great and continuing through to the most recent actions in the Napoleonic campaigns. However, it was not purely a military history and included entries on the Magna Carta, the Gunpowder Plot and an overview of George III's reign. Alongside a summary of 'English History, and Lives of Eminent Statesmen', the *Englishman's Library* included chapters on contemporary political and social

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<sup>20</sup> See Valerie Grey, *Charles Knight: Educator, Publisher, Writer*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2006).

concerns including national education, the poor laws and taxation. In addition, it included a series of philosophers' biographies and a final section on patriotic poetry.

Locker wrote a number of entries in the *Englishman's Library*, including biographies for Lord Burleigh (1521-1598), Major Andre (1750-80) and Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821). He provided accounts of the conflicts at Quebec during the Seven Years War (1754-63), Gibraltar during the American Revolutionary War (1775-83) and the Battle of Trafalgar (21 October 1805). Locker also wrote the preface to the publication. Within this opening chapter he outlined that the *Englishman's Library* was aimed at informing ordinary people. It was designed to 'diffuse, in a cheap and popular form, that intelligence which Englishmen, of every degree, ought to possess, on the laws, the History, and the civil Institutions of this great country'.<sup>21</sup> Locker's reasoning for the dissemination of information to a socially broad audience was to satisfy the nation's ever enquiring minds. The inquisitive nature of the British people was, in Locker's opinion, the result of Protestant post-Reformation freedom, in which the nation broke away from the indoctrination of the Catholic Church: 'The People of England are distinguished by a zeal for knowledge, for which they are mainly indebted to that happy Constitution in Church and State, which not only permits but encourages a generous spirit of inquiry, essential to the attainment of enlightened views and sound principles'.<sup>22</sup> This publication was not designed with a purely benevolent incentive to educate the masses. It was intended to placate a growing desire for information and advancement before, as it was feared, the people had an opportunity to seek out more radical influences.<sup>23</sup> As Locker outlined in the *Preface*, it was 'designed to supply them

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<sup>21</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, vii.

<sup>22</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, iii.

<sup>23</sup> See Richard Altick, *The English Common Reader: A social history of the mass reading public, 1800-1900*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1957); Stephen Colcough,

with useful information, in place of those infidel and disloyal publications which were circulated through all parts of the kingdom'.<sup>24</sup> Locker was clearly responding to the continued growth of radical culture that had been developing since the 1790s as a response to the Revolutionary War.<sup>25</sup> This staunchly anti-radical approach to public education, through a constructed and idealised history of the nation, has a direct bearing on Locker's reasoning and approach to the formation of the Naval Gallery and to the construction of a chronological visual history upon the walls of the main hall.

### Word and Image: Reinforcing a Naval Narrative

The construction of a chronological arrangement within the Gallery engaged with this emerging historical and visual tradition. However, the paintings projected a primarily visual, rather than textual, account of a national naval narrative. As Locker himself described, the walls of the main hall were 'covered with portraits of most of the distinguished Naval Commanders, and representations of their actions'.<sup>26</sup> Within the Gallery, the portraits provided a likeness of an 'eminent serviceman' much in the

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*Consuming Texts. Readers and Reading Communities, 1695-1860*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Harvey J. Graff, *The Literacy Myth: Literacy and social structure in the nineteenth-century city*, (New York and London: Academic Press, 1979).

<sup>24</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, vii.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas Paine published *The Rights of Man* in 1791 as a counter to Burke's anti-revolutionary *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). Furthermore, a number of radical societies, like the 'London Corresponding Society' which was founded in 1792, formed as a response to war with France. The British Government passed the Seditious Meetings Act in 1795 in an attempt to curtail the progress of radicalism. After the Napoleonic Wars, radical writers like William Hone and Thomas Wooler, continued to publish texts which spread Dissent across Britain. See Michael T. Davis, ed., *London Corresponding Society, 1792-1799*, 6 vols., (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2002); see also Albert Goodwin, *The Friends of Liberty: The English Democratic Movement in the Age of the French Revolution* (London: Hutchinson, 1979). Locker's aims should be understood as part of a wider counter-revolutionary culture that had developed in response to radicalism. Other loyalist publications were in print prior to Locker's literary endeavours: see John Bowles, *Reflections on the Political and Moral State of Society, at the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (London: F. & C. Rivington, 1800), 123, 128, 149-50; See Michael Duffy, 'William Pitt and the Origins of the Loyalist Association Movement of 1792', *Historical Journal*, 39, (1996), 943-62; Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country*.

<sup>26</sup>Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Advertisement'.



same way as the engraved portrait had been used to illustrate the biographical naval histories. The way in which the battlescapes dramatized the achievements of the admirals, confirming their participation in these national victories, replicated the narrative descriptions found in the historical texts. In this respect, the arrangement of hierarchically positioned portraits and illustrative naval battles upon the walls of the Gallery can be interpreted as a pictorial reinterpretation of the established mode of textual biographical history.

In addition to the installation of the paintings, Locker employed a number of textual embellishments within the gallery space in order to assist with the construction of a historical naval narrative. Descriptive plaques were mounted to the top or bottom of the picture frames, providing visitors with a basic level of information about the title and date of a work. Serres's *The Capture of the Comte de St Florentine by HMS Achilles, 4 April 1759* is one of a number of works in the Greenwich Hospital Collection that still has the original plaques mounted to the top and bottom of the frame from when it was exhibited in the Naval Gallery (85). The bottom inscription identifies the battle and the commanding officer: 'Capt. Hon. St Barrington, Achilles and St Florentine, 1759'. The top tablet identifies the donor: 'Presented by the Hon. Shute Barrington, Bishop of Durham'. The plaques provided an essential textual reinforcement of the pictorial chronology. This text helped to associated the naval battles with the portraits of the leading protagonists that were often situated nearby, in effect pre-empting the modern gallery label. The plaques provided visitors, irrespective of their prior knowledge of naval history, with the necessary means to identify the subjects on display. Visitors could identify the action or admiral and, even if they did not know any more about them, they were able to follow the constructed chronology of naval history around the gallery space as a

result. Meanwhile, the inclusion of the donor's name on the picture frame emphasised the role of patronage in the formation of the Gallery, publicising the philanthropic way in which the collection was acquired. This would have provided a necessary incentive for future benefactors seeking personal representation within this national display. It is worth noting that the name of the artist is generally absent from the picture frames. Instead, the authorial presence of the artist is limited to that expressed by the physical execution of the work.

In addition to the plaques upon the picture frames, Locker produced a catalogue as a means of further solidifying his naval narrative. Guidebooks and 'Books of Description' for the Painted Hall already existed prior to the creation of the Naval Gallery. As soon as the Painted Hall was opened up as a tourist attraction visitors were able to purchase a copy of Thornhill's original description of the paintings, available in either English or French.<sup>27</sup> However, in 1830, Locker persuaded the Greenwich Hospital Commissioners that a specific Naval Gallery catalogue was required. At a meeting on 4 September 1830, it was decided that the previous 'Books of Description of the Hospital, sold at the Painted Hall and Chapel, were to be disposed of, and that it appeared desirable to have them reprinted'.<sup>28</sup> The Board concluded that 'a new Edition of two thousand copies be printed and that they be sold, on account of the Hospital, at one shilling each'.<sup>29</sup> Having opened to the public in 1824, it is not clear why six years went by before Locker requested permission to produce a catalogue. Perhaps the rapid acquisition of paintings during these initial years, and the frequent alteration of the display that necessarily occurred as a result, explains why a catalogue was not possible, or even necessary, before

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<sup>27</sup> 1000 copies of Thornhill's *An Explanation of the Painting in the Royal-Hospital at Greenwich* (undated) were published in English and French around 1726/7 with a further 1000 copies printed in 1730. TNA ADM 67/6 and TNA ADM 67/8 cited by Bold, *Greenwich*, 145.

<sup>28</sup> TNA ADM 67/81, 4 September 1830, 426.

<sup>29</sup> TNA ADM 67/81, 4 September 1830, 426.

1830. This first edition of Locker's *Catalogue of the Portraits of Distinguished Naval Commanders, and Representations of their Warlike Achievements, exhibited in the Naval Gallery* was finally printed in 1833: 1700 copies were printed in this first batch followed by a second print run of 2000 copies in 1834 (86).<sup>30</sup> In 1836 Locker issued a revised edition, reportedly only offering the net profits to the Hospital's funds.<sup>31</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, Locker incorporated Thornhill's original description of the Painted Hall into the catalogue forging an immediate and essential relationship between the Gallery and its elaborate setting. Thornhill's aggrandising display of monarchical succession and providential naval triumph would have remained relevant to Locker's construction of naval history as visitors continued on the prescribed tour around the main hall. The formation of naval history around the figures of successive monarchs was also an established feature of the written national histories already mentioned, which begin with, and are organised by, the reigns of successive monarchs.

Locker's 1833 catalogue lists every battlescape by its title and the date of the event. The portraits are recorded with the name of the sitter and the date of their death. The inclusion of dates of death counters the actual arrangement of the paintings which were ordered by the date that the sitter became a flag officer. Arguably, the use of dates of death helped to perpetuate the teleological nature of the naval history being told on the Gallery's walls. From the Armada through to the most recent Napoleonic conflicts, the Naval Gallery exhibited men that had given their life for their country, either directly in battle or through a lifetime of naval service.<sup>32</sup> The catalogue functioned as a useful logistical tool, encouraging the

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<sup>30</sup> TNA ADM 67/84, 23 November 1833, 334; ADM 67/85, 9 June 1834, 141. Locker's 1833 catalogue provided the prototype for all subsequent editions of the catalogue.

<sup>31</sup> TNA ADM 67/87, 16 June 1836, 199.

<sup>32</sup> See TNA PRO 30/26/27, Gallery plan, 1839.

clockwise movement of visitors around the main hall. It also offered a textual reinforcement of the pictorial structure of the display. The 1833 catalogue provides a record of the broadly chronological arrangement that was in place by this time. However, some of the paintings are out of place suggesting that Locker's pictorial naval history was still under construction. By 1839, as Locker's most developed gallery plan illustrates, the chronological structure of the main hall was considerably more established.

Within the Gallery, the paintings constructed the principal message while the small plaques mounted to the picture frames and the sparsely worded catalogue entries offered a brief textual reinforcement of the chronological arrangement. In addition to the incorporation of text within the Gallery, Locker extended his constructed naval history beyond the physical restraints of the gallery space with the publication of a collection of biographical naval memoirs in 1831, entitled *The Naval Gallery of Greenwich Hospital; comprising a series of Portraits and Memoirs of celebrated Naval Commanders*. Locker's initial plan was to produce a series of naval biographies which would extend to 'at least four volumes'.<sup>33</sup> Each portrait within the Naval Gallery would have had a biographical entry within the *Memoirs*, and an engraved version of the painting was to be included as an illustration to each of the entries. Furthermore, each battlescape would similarly be used, accompanied by an entry outlining the conflict. Eventually, due to illness, Locker's plan for a four volume series had to be reduced to the publication of a single book. Locker noted that, if the biographical series had been completed, 'these Memoirs when chronologically arranged, and illustrated by the whole series of Pictures in the Gallery of Greenwich Hospital, would have presented a connected history of the

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<sup>33</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Advertisement'.

Royal Navy of England, in a biographical form'.<sup>34</sup> The production of a single volume, a 'selection of detached memoirs', still provides us with sufficient evidence of Locker's approach to biographical naval history writing.<sup>35</sup> The chapters demonstrate Locker's narrative approach to biography, which was stylistically consistent with contemporary amateur history writing. The way in which Locker writes about individuals within the *Memoirs* engages with the Romantic historicism of the period. As the subsequent examination of the text demonstrates, Locker placed greater emphasis upon the construction of a sentimental, engaging and informative narrative rather than the accumulation and communication of absolute fact.<sup>36</sup> In the introduction to a biography of Admiral Rooke, Locker demonstrates an awareness of authorial bias and acknowledges the difficulty in constructing an unbiased history:

If the hue of the chameleon is said to vary according to the ground on which it stands, not less variable is the view of distinguished men, when contemplated through the medium of party prejudice or favour [...] Nay, we must not conceal it from ourselves, that even time and distance do not remove prejudice. It is constitutional, - it is hereditary. The distinctions of Cavalier and Roundhead, - of Whig and Tory, - of Papist and Protestant, - of Churchman and Dissenter, operate almost insensibly upon the most virtuous and enlightened minds, and thus prejudice continually intercepts the truth in its descent to us, by refracting its rays and exhibiting it to our minds under our own favourite colours.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Advertisement'.

<sup>35</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Advertisement'.

<sup>36</sup> See Goode, *Sentimental Masculinity*, 1-26, esp. 3-4.

<sup>37</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Admiral Sir George Rooke', 1.

Locker recognised the ‘infinite trouble of sifting truth from falsehood’ when examining the available historical resources. Furthermore, he describes ‘feeling the necessity of making a large deduction at the end for the peculiar bias of the author’s political creed’.<sup>38</sup> Within this passage, as Locker engages with the difficulties of authorial detachment he demonstrates a degree of self-awareness as a historical author.<sup>39</sup> Despite this self-conscious declaration, Locker’s construction of a naval history, both within the Gallery and his historical productions, must be aligned with his previous forays into national history writing. In much the same respect as the *Plain Englishman* and the *Englishman’s Library*, Locker’s construction of a naval history within the Naval Gallery, and his evident commitment to a particular idea of ‘truth’, should be considered as a response to the French Revolutionary Wars, and the anxieties toward the influence of the Dissent and radicalism which were generated in its wake.

Locker remarked that the result of publishing a single unfinished volume was a ‘selection of detached Memoirs’; an incomplete series of biographical accounts and a number of descriptions outlining specific naval battles.<sup>40</sup> However, the publication of a single volume of *Memoirs* provides an example of the intended layout for Locker’s textual project overall. Each biography is illustrated by an engraved version of a portrait from the Naval Gallery, positioned at the beginning of each chapter (88). The result for the reader is a direct and seamless transition from image to text. Furthermore, the engravings depict all the portraits in half-length, irrespective of whether the original portrait is in full- or half-length. The artificial uniformity of the

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<sup>38</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Rooke’, 1.

<sup>39</sup> For discussion of an author’s relationship with historical distance Mike Goode, *Sentimental Masculinity and the Rise of History, 1790-1890*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), esp. 1-25; Phillips, *On Historical Distance*.

<sup>40</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Advertisement’.

engravings in Locker's *Memoirs* reflects the traditional use of engraving sets within historical texts which were often commissioned collectively for the purpose. However, unlike many biographical histories, what is unusual in the production of Locker's *Memoirs* is that the engravings were not a later addition. The text was actually written with specific paintings in mind. As a result, Locker's *Memoirs* directly relate to the version of naval history which was on display within the Naval Gallery itself. On one level, the *Memoirs* functioned as an extended catalogue for the Naval Gallery. However, visitors would not have carried this large bound book as they moved around the main hall. Instead, by creating this additional publication, Locker was providing a means for his naval narrative to be disseminated beyond the physical constraints of the Gallery. The inclusion of engraved versions of the paintings allowed readers to experience Locker's specific historical construction without ever visiting the Gallery itself. As a result, Locker's *Memoirs* had the potential to be both physically separated from the actual display within the Painted Hall yet intrinsically tied to the national naval narrative constructed within it.

#### Constructing a Foundational Myth: The Tudor Example

Within the main hall, the naval chronology was initiated in the south east corner with the Tudor court (89). Even in the earliest of Locker's plans for the display, the portrait of *Charles Howard, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Nottingham (1536-1624)* initiated the maritime history. Painted by Daniel Mytens the Elder, it was hung to the left of the entrance from the vestibule, along the east wall (45b).<sup>41</sup> The triple portrait of three of Howard's contemporaries, *Thomas Cavendish, Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins*, was hung directly underneath. A marine painting depicting *King*

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<sup>41</sup> The 1833 catalogue refers to this work as a 'Whole-length by Mytens' (Locker, *Catalogue*, 7). All subsequent editions of the catalogue wrongly attribute this work to Zuccherro. See the Naval Gallery catalogues from 1842, 1846, 1851, 1865, 1887, 1912 and 1922.

*Henry VIII sailing for Calais in the Harry Grace À Dieu, 30 May 1520* hung at the bottom of this first bay. As Locker describes, ‘the picture from which our engraving is made was taken from a very curious old painting at Windsor Castle, with the permission of His Majesty King George the Third, and was presented to the Hospital by the Honourable Shute Barrington, late Bishop of Durham, in the year 1826’.<sup>42</sup> As the 1833 catalogue records, the picture exhibited in the Naval Gallery was ‘Painted by Dominic Serres, R.A., from an ancient picture at Windsor Castle’.<sup>43</sup> Although the painting is now lost, destroyed in the Admiral’s House fire of 1935, an engraving after it is included in the *Memoirs* (90). In the chapter dedicated to this depiction of *King Henry VIII sailing for Calais* Locker wished to draw ‘the attention of our readers to the progress of naval architecture in this country’. He stated that ‘the building of the Harry Grace à Dieu may be considered as the commencement of the æra for constructing ships for the Royal Navy of England’.<sup>44</sup> Built at the command of Henry VII, the *Harry Grace à Dieu* was finally launched in 1515 during Henry VIII’s reign. As Locker explains, this was the first ship to be built with two decks and incorporate artillery through port-holes, as designed by Descharges, a French builder at Brest, in 1500. In the *Memoirs*, the passage describing the *Harry Grace à Dieu* emphasised the role that the Tudors played in the advancement of the nation’s shipbuilding:

Henry the eighth took much interest in naval affairs. He caused many ships to be built expressly for his royal service; for which purpose he

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<sup>42</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘King Henry VIII Sailing for Calais in the Harry Grace À Dieu. May 30 1520’, 8.

<sup>43</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 8.

<sup>44</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Henry VIII’, 1-2.



founded a dockyard at Woolwich, - soon after a second at Deptford, and lastly, a third at Portsmouth.<sup>45</sup>

Initiating this naval narrative with the Tudor dynasty reflected a widely accepted approach to national history. It was under the reign of Henry VIII that England became truly separated from Europe and the Roman Catholic Church. As Edwin Jones has argued, ‘the Reformation was depicted as freeing the English nation from the slavery inflicted upon it by the Papacy in medieval times, and restoring it to its original imperial state in which the English king had reigned supreme over all aspects of national life’.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, as Stephen Parissien observes, in the nineteenth century ‘Tudor England was an increasingly popular concept in the confident Britain that emerged victorious and wealthy from twenty-one years of coruscating warfare in 1815’.<sup>47</sup> In the wake of the recent conflict, ‘Tudorist imagery offered a reassuringly nostalgic evocation of social stability’.<sup>48</sup> In particular, the Reformation provided the first example of England as a liberated, crucially Protestant, nation-state. However, in the *Memoirs*, rather than focus upon these constitutional developments, Locker emphasised the influential contributions that the Tudors made to the national development of ‘naval architecture’.<sup>49</sup> Within the Gallery, the depiction of the *Grace à Dieu* provided a point of pictorial reference for a developing narrative of British maritime industry.

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<sup>45</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Henry VIII’, 2.

<sup>46</sup> Edwin Jones, *The English Nation. The Great Myth*, (Sutton Publishing Ltd., Bodmin, first pub. 1998, second edition 2000), 19.

<sup>47</sup> Steven Parissien, ‘The Tudors Reinvented: The Regency and the Sixteenth Century’ in Tatiana C. String and Marcus Bull, eds., *Tudorism. Historical Imagination and the Appropriation of the Sixteenth Century*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2011), 115.

<sup>48</sup> Parissien, ‘The Tudors Reinvented’, 115.

<sup>49</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Henry VIII’, 1. Locker’s perception of the development of marine architecture reflected a wider discourse on the subject in the early nineteenth century: see John Charnock, *A History of Marine Architecture*, (London, 1800).

Following Henry VIII's example, as Locker informed readers, 'Queen Elizabeth abated nothing of her royal father's zeal for the naval defence of her realm'.<sup>50</sup> This attention to 'learning and science' aligns with a narrative of national progression. The newly improved fleet of ships, established under Henry VIII, provided the Elizabethan world with the means to conduct its extensive explorations. The triple portrait of *Cavendish, Drake and Hawkins*, hung directly above the *Grace à Dieu*, introduced the theme of Elizabethan exploration into this pictorial narrative (21 & 91). John Hawkins, positioned on the left, is depicted dressed in black, wearing a hat and gold chains. As Treasurer and Controller of the Navy in 1573, Hawkins conducted extensive improvements to the development of the English fleet. At the Armada, Hawkins served as Rear-Admiral, commanding the flagship *Victory*. For his actions he received a knighthood. Aside from his military endeavours, Hawkins also conducted a number of expeditions to the New World and the Spanish colonies.<sup>51</sup> Drake, who is positioned in the centre wearing a leather doublet, had served as Vice-Admiral in the Elizabethan navy and was second-in-command at the Armada. Alongside his military achievements, between 1577 and 1580, Drake successfully circumnavigated the world. He was the second man and first Englishman to achieve this feat.<sup>52</sup> Thomas Cavendish, positioned on the right of the triple portrait wearing a red doublet embroidered with pearls, had an extensive career colonising territory in America. In 1585, he travelled alongside Grenville on a colonising mission to Virginia. In the following year he set off on an expedition to circumnavigate the globe. Cavendish returned successfully in 1588 having beaten the

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<sup>50</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Henry VIII', 2.

<sup>51</sup> David Childs, *Tudor sea power: the foundation of greatness*, (Barnsley: Seaforth, 2009), 256-264.

<sup>52</sup> Emma Fischel, *Francis Drake*, (London: Watts, 2001); Sandra Woodcock, *Francis Drake*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999).

time of Drake's journey by nine months.<sup>53</sup> The globe in the foreground of the triple portrait emphasises the worldly accomplishments of the three sitters. Within the Gallery this attribute would have clearly tied these individuals to a narrative of exploration. This period of naval history was remarkable for its dedication to discovery and the achievements of these few represent a much wider Elizabethan enterprise driven by a desire to expand the nation's trade and territory.<sup>54</sup> Within the Naval Gallery, the global expeditions of the Elizabethan navy mark the dawn of empire, providing a foundational basis for the subsequent growth of a national narrative of Imperial expansion.

In Locker's opinion, 'the most heroic achievement in the reign of Elizabeth was the destruction of the Spanish Armada'.<sup>55</sup> The triumph of the Elizabethan navy over the Spanish Armada was often employed as a foundation for a chronology of British naval history, and by the opening of the Gallery in 1824 this was a well-established and accepted ideology.<sup>56</sup> It was not unusual for a history of England to retrospectively reclaim early historical events as a foundation for a subsequent national narrative.<sup>57</sup> Thornhill had reinforced this conceit in the painting of the west wall: a personification of Naval Victory stands to the right of George I unveiling a scroll which lists all British naval victories dating back to the Spanish Armada (92). Within the Naval Gallery, Queen Elizabeth I and the maritime achievements of her

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<sup>53</sup> Childs, *Tudor Sea Power*, 156, 178, 203; Corbett, *Drake and the Tudor Navy*, I, 273; II, 369; Kenneth R. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480-1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge Paperback Library, 1985), esp. 166, 256.

<sup>54</sup> For a wider discussion of nineteenth-century attitudes toward the achievements of the Tudor dynasty: see Parissien, 'The Tudors Reinvented', 115-128; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 1-40; David Loades, *The Tudor Navy. An Administrative, political and military history*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1992).

<sup>55</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'The Defeat of the Spanish Armada', 1.

<sup>56</sup> For example, James Rivington's *Naval History of Great Britain*, published in 1758, began with the reign of Elizabeth.

<sup>57</sup> These foundational dates vary depending on author: Hume's *History of England* began with the arrival of Julius Caesar; Locker's *Englishman's Library* began with the reign of Alfred the Great; Thomas Macaulay used the accession of James II as a considerably later starting point for his *History of England*, published in 1848.

reign provided the foundation for a subsequent mythology of national naval triumph. However, as Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore have argued, this approach to writing national histories was part of a wider Continental methodology which relied on significant ‘foundational dates’ in order to produce continuous narratives of progression and development.<sup>58</sup>

Charles Howard, whose full-length portrait hung above the triple portrait on the east wall, commanded the fleet as Lord High Admiral in the conflict against the Spanish Armada (93). As Locker suggests in Howard’s biography, the role of Lord High Admiral, to which he was appointed in 1585, was ‘almost hereditary in his family’.<sup>59</sup> Charles came from an extensive maritime dynasty: ‘the name of Howard stands high, both in date and in renown, on the annals of the English Navy’.<sup>60</sup> His great-uncles, Sir Edward and Sir Henry Howard, and his father, William, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Howard of Effingham, had all served as Lord High Admiral under Henry VIII. As Locker observed, ‘in training to service at sea, Charles Howard, while yet a boy, accompanied his father in many of his expeditions’.<sup>61</sup> Charles was the product of a familial chain of maritime succession, having learnt a model of naval command from his family’s example. In much the same way, within the Naval Gallery, the portrait of Howard would be used as an exemplar to shape future generations for naval service. There is a degree of incoherence between the constructed image of Howard in Locker’s *Memoir* and the likeness presented in the full-length portrait by Mytens. In the portrait by Mytens, which was painted in 1618, after Howard had retired from service, naval triumph and successful national defence are inextricably linked to

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<sup>58</sup> Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore, (eds.), *Writing national histories: Western Europe since 1800*, (London: Routledge, 1999), 11.

<sup>59</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, K.G. Lord High Admiral of England’, 3.

<sup>60</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Charles Howard’, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Charles Howard’, 2.

Howard's commanding role as High Admiral. He stands against a distant seascape in which the victorious battle against the Armada is re-enacted. Dressed in garter robes and wearing a golden skull cap, he is surrounded by the trappings of his acquired wealth and status. In comparison, Locker's biography presents Howard, not as the high ranking admiral in a detached position of command, but as the hands-on serviceman, doing everything he can to defend his country. Locker uses an unidentified quotation to convey how in the moment of combat, Howard was "labouring with his own hands" to encourage the crew'.<sup>62</sup> This inclusion of unreferenced quotations is a recurrent practice within the *Memoirs*. Locker repeatedly incorporated well-established hearsay or naval myths into his narrative, using fictional quotations to create the illusion of factual accuracy.

Within the main hall, the defeat of the Spanish Armada was illustrated, not by an original sixteenth-century painting, but with an eighteenth-century work which was painted by de Louthembourg (94). This posthumous reinvention of the conflict was painted in 1796, over two hundred years after the action. The human spectacle of naval warfare is positioned at the edge of the picture plane. The low perspective positions the viewer on a level with the men in the foreground. Men are fighting at close combat, some dressed in armour and armed with swords and other weaponry while others wield oars in a desperate struggle to defend themselves. In the middle distance on the far right of the composition Howard's flagship, the 'Ark Royal', approaches toward the conflict. Locker remarked that although this painting 'has not the merit of being executed at the period it commemorates, the fertile imagination

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<sup>62</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Charles Howard', 3.

and glowing pencil of Mr. de Louthembourg have produced a striking representation of the conflict'.<sup>63</sup>

The defeat of the Spanish Armada provides an early example of national unity. The country did not have a regular naval force at that time and, in the face of Spanish attack, many merchant ships were sent to fight. As Locker recounts, 'the City of London, and other great mercantile towns, freely contributed their ships, while large sums were gratuitously raised to equip vessels upon private adventure, all classes thirsting to have a share in the glory, and some, perhaps, of the spoil of the invaders'.<sup>64</sup> Locker's account of the attack placed great emphasis upon the unification of the people, describing how 'the unanimous exertions which were made by the whole nation to meet this crisis of their liberties, did great honour to the English people'.<sup>65</sup> The defeat of the Spanish Armada provided an early foundational myth for the narrative of a unified nation, triumphing over an aggressive Continental enemy. Furthermore, this victory over a Catholic 'other' provided an early example of Britain as a providential Protestant nation. As Locker stated:

[...] England had a far mightier Protector whose arm has so often since been stretched over this nation. Heaven seemed visibly to fight for the cause of Elizabeth, which was in truth the cause of the Reformation.<sup>66</sup>

Protestantism was essential in the foundation and continuation of a mythology of national difference in England. As a result, victory over Catholic Continental Europe

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<sup>63</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Defeat of the Spanish Armada', 2.

<sup>64</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Charles Howard', 4-5.

<sup>65</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Charles Howard', 4.

<sup>66</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Defeat of the Spanish Armada', 1.

was repeatedly understood and legitimised as evidence of providential favour. For visitors to the Naval Gallery, this narrative of Britain as the ‘elect nation’ was conveyed within de Louthembourg’s battlescape by the inclusion of a Catholic priest (95). Positioned in the foreground, he is depicted with his arms raised to heaven, praying in vain as the boat in which he stands symbolically begins to sink beneath him.

For visitors entering the main hall, the presentation of the Tudor dynasty laid a number of foundational examples. The depiction of ships demonstrated the results of a new dedication to ship building and ‘naval architecture’. This in turn had facilitated a new interest exploration, discovery and global enterprise. Furthermore, naval warfare and victory against the Armada established a model for national unity. It also asserted a divine and providential myth of the newly Protestant country as the elect nation. As the naval chronology continued to unfold around the walls of the main hall, it can be seen to have consciously related back to these precedents and significantly built upon them in order to convey a narrative of naval and national progress.

#### The Seventeenth Century: narratives of conflict at home and abroad.

The south wall, on the left as visitors entered from the vestibule, followed the Elizabethan court with a selection of admirals and naval actions from the seventeenth century (96). For most of this century, the country was at war with the Dutch, in a series of naval conflicts over the possession of trade routes.<sup>67</sup> This was also a period of prolonged internal civil unrest between the monarchy, the aristocracy and

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<sup>67</sup> See Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars*, esp. chapters 6, 7, & 8 for an overview of the three conflicts.

parliament.<sup>68</sup> As a period of enduring struggle, on both foreign and domestic fronts, this century posed a direct challenge to the established Elizabethan mythology of developing national unity and providential triumph. The upper tier of full-length portraits displayed a varied lineage of command which reflects an oscillation in allegiances between the loyalist and parliamentary causes. For example a portrait of Prince Rupert (1619-1682), the nephew of Charles I, is juxtaposed beside a portrait of Robert Blake (1598-1657). They act as oppositional representatives for the Loyalists and Parliamentarians respectively (97).<sup>69</sup>

Blake was one of the first to join the Parliamentary cause and take up arms against Charles I at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642. Subsequently, he served in the Commonwealth navy, supporting the defence of Lyme, Dorset in 1644 and Taunton, Somerset in 1644-45. In 1649 he was appointed General-at-Sea leading the English fleet against the Dutch in 1652-54 and the Spanish in 1656.<sup>70</sup> The *Memoirs* provide an account of Blake's life which begins with his early education. Locker suggests that Blake's 'republican spirit was probably fostered, when at home, by his witnessing the severity with which Laud, then Bishop of Bath and Wells, pursued Non-Conformists'.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, Blake studied at Wadham College, Oxford where, as Locker observes, many of his fellow members became noted Puritans.<sup>72</sup> As a

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<sup>68</sup> Ann Hughes, *The Causes of the English Civil War*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1991).

<sup>69</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Blake', 1-13. See also Charles Spencer, *Prince Rupert: The Last Cavalier*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007); Frank Kitson, *Prince Rupert: Admiral and General-at-Sea*, (London: Constable, 1998); Bernard Capp, *Cromwell's Navy: the Fleet and the English Revolution 1648-1660*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

<sup>70</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Blake', 1-13.

<sup>71</sup> William Laud, (1573-1645), Archbishop of Canterbury from 1633 to 1645, was opposed to radical reforms and Puritanism. See E. C. E. Bourne, *The Anglicanism of William Laud* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1947); William Edward Collins, ed., *Archbishop Laud Commemoration, 1895: Lectures on Archbishop Laud together with a Bibliography of Laudian Literature and the Laudian Exhibition Catalogue*, (London: A. Southey & Co., 1895), esp. chapters I-V, 1-164.

<sup>72</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Blake', 1.



result of these early influences, Locker argues that Blake was inevitably inclined to side with the Parliamentary cause:

When the time came that he must chuse his party, upon the overthrow of the constitution, he, as a staunch republican, sided with the Parliament; but when Charles, deprived of his crown, became the object of their malignant persecution, he openly condemned their heartless conduct, and warmly avowed his willingness to save the life of the royal victim. When that bloody sacrifice was made to appease the clamours of the worst of the people, and Cromwell's subsequent usurpation freed the nation from the tyranny of a band of demagogues (of all modes of despotism the most hateful) Blake wisely consented to the Protector's rule, recurring to a maxim ever on his lips, saying "it is our duty to fight for our country into whatever hands the government may fall".<sup>73</sup>

In this passage, Locker clearly argues that Blake had not just turned on the monarchy out of impulse, in reaction to mob rule at the height of the chaos. Instead, he emphasises the longstanding and rational basis for Blake's republican views. Despite the fact that he supported an anti-loyalist cause, Locker fundamentally portrays Blake as a Patriot rather than a Parliamentarian. This idealising of Blake allowed Locker to explore the progression of the Civil War without showing any favour toward Cromwellian extremism. For nineteenth-century historians, the English Civil War had many parallels with recent unrest on the Continent. As Lang observes, 'for

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<sup>73</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Blake', 12-13.

the generation that had witnessed the French Revolution the memory of Cromwell and the Puritans served as both a reminder and a warning: an assault on the nation's traditional institutions comparable to the destruction of the *ancien régime* in France had happened once before in England, and it could happen again if radicalism and Dissent were allowed to triumph'.<sup>74</sup> While a positive account of Cromwell and the Puritans would still have presented too much of a challenge to a nineteenth-century historiography, this favourable narrative of the Commonwealth navy fundamentally sustained a patriotic mythology of national defence. Within the Gallery space, Blake's fundamental heroic patriotism is conveyed in the portrait by Briggs (98). Positioned on the quarterdeck of a ship, Blake stands with his sword drawn toward the enemy, ready to defend the nation.

To signify the transition from Commonwealth to Restoration navy, Brigg's portrait of *Blake* was followed by a full-length portrait of *James, Duke of York* (later James II) which was copied from an original by Lely in the Royal Collection.<sup>75</sup> Following the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, James had served as Lord High Admiral commanding the newly appointed 'Royal Navy'. As a confirmation of renewed naval loyalty to the crown, the middle tier of the south wall was predominately occupied by the *Flagmen of Lowestoft*; a series of half-length portraits also painted by Lely (99). James commissioned the set following the Battle of Lowestoft (13 June 1665) in order to commemorate the men who had served under his command in this opening battle in the Second Dutch War.<sup>76</sup> The series was

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<sup>74</sup> Lang, *Victorians and the Stuart Heritage*, 2.

<sup>75</sup> The copy of Lely's portrait of *James, Duke of York* is now lost, presumed destroyed.

<sup>76</sup> George IV donated eleven original half-length portraits in 1824. Copies of Lely's portraits of *Admiral Sir John Lawson* and *James, Duke of York* from the Royal Collection were also presented at this time. In 1835, William IV donated a copy of Lely's *Prince Rupert* from the *Lowestoft* series, extended to full-length, in 1835. See *Concise Catalogue of Oil Paintings in the National Maritime Museum* (London: Antique Collectors' Club, 1988), 248-52.

commissioned to hang in the Duke's chamber. As Hunt records, Pepys documented seeing these works while on a visit to Lely's studio on 18 April 1666.

I to Mr. Lilly's [Sir Peter Lely], the painter's; and there saw the heads, some finished and all begun, of the Flaggmen [the Admirals] in the late great fight with the Duke of Yorke against the Dutch. The Duke of Yorke hath them done to hang in his chamber, and very finely they are done indeed.<sup>77</sup>

Along the south wall of the Naval Gallery, Lely's set of portraits was displayed as a complete unit and we should not overlook the aesthetic value that their shared size and compositional format would have offered in unifying the south side of the display. However, the *Flagmen* series was compiled from a selection of men who, prior to the Restoration, had supported both Loyalist and Parliamentary causes. Within Locker's *Memoirs*, a number of the *Flagmen* are the subject of individual biographies, illustrated by engraved versions of Lely's portraits.<sup>78</sup> These written entries highlight the complex relationships and allegiances that these men maintained during the period of civil conflict. Despite the fact that the series includes men who fought on either side of the Civil War, as the *Flagmen of Lowestoft*, the series was intended as a statement of shared experience, naval fraternity and ultimately a pictorial proclamation of renewed loyalty to the Restoration navy.

A depiction of the Battle of Lowestoft was not included in the Gallery display. Its absence highlights the extent to which the Gallery had to adapt to the

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<sup>77</sup> Percival Hunt, *Samuel Pepys in the Diary*, (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1958), 80.

<sup>78</sup> Several chapters in Locker's *Memoirs* refer to a number of the sitters in Lely's *Flagmen* including 'George Monk, Duke of Albemarle', 'Edward Montague, First Earl of Sandwich', 'Sir George Rooke' and 'Vice Admiral John Benbow'.

works that were available. However, a number of other confrontations with the Dutch are depicted along the lowest tier of battlescapes. A depiction of *The Burning of the 'Royal James' at the Battle of Solebay* was hung in the third bay (100). In the 1833 catalogue, Locker describes this painting, which was presented by the Admiral John Forbes, as 'probably by the elder Vandewelde'.<sup>79</sup> It depicts an engagement with the Dutch in Southwold Bay (Solebay) on the north Suffolk coast which took place on 28 May 1672. The Battle of Solebay was the opening action in the Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-74).<sup>80</sup> In Locker's 1839 plan the painting is listed as 'Sandwich Solebay 1672'; an annotation that clearly ties this action to the commanding officer Admiral Edward Montagu, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Sandwich, whose portrait was hung along the middle tier of the south wall (99 & 101). In the *Memoirs*, a description of the battle recounts Sandwich's actions when his ship was set alight: 'in the crisis of his fate the brave Earl desired his captain (Sir Richard Haddock) and all his followers to provide for their own safety by lowering a boat'. However, 'several of the seamen refused to quit their heroic Chief, and by his encouragement renewed their efforts to subdue the flames, which had now gotten the mastery; but presently after the ship blew up, with the Admiral and the faithful remnant of his crew'.<sup>81</sup> In the painting, fire is about to engulf Sandwich's flagship, the *Royal James*, which is positioned in the centre of the composition. Members of the crew are depicted jumping overboard in an attempt to escape the imminent collision with a Dutch fireship. In this instance, both text and image convey the danger and destructive spectacle of seventeenth-century naval conflict. This extract from Locker's *Memoirs* reflects how the biographical text directly responded to the depiction of events that were on display in the Gallery.

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<sup>79</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 7.

<sup>80</sup> Tunstall, *Naval Warfare*, 31-34.

<sup>81</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Edward Montague, Earl of Sandwich, K.G.', 11.

The final major constitutional development of the seventeenth century was the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Within the Gallery, the arrival of William and Mary was glorified in the centre of the main hall ceiling, where the monarchs are depicted enthroned in heaven. The reign of William and Mary restored England to a state of constitutional, monarchical and religious stability. As Johns observes, ‘the triumph of ‘Protestant liberty’ over the perceived twin evils of popery and arbitrary government had been a principal trope of English political discourse for the past thirty years or more, and the cap of Liberty and the assorted trappings of Catholic worship scattered beneath the King’s feet had become familiar polar symbols of Protestant freedom and Catholic oppression’.<sup>82</sup> The Glorious Revolution of 1688 had resulted in the successful formation of a constitutional monarchy. The secured reign of William and Mary following this date marked a turning point not just in the constitution and governance of the country, but also in its religion.<sup>83</sup> The ‘happy Constitution in Church and State’, initiated by the Reformation and secured in Britain after 1688, was particularly significant to Locke’s view of national history.<sup>84</sup> As he emphasised in the *Englishman’s Library*, it ‘not only permits but encourages a generous spirit of inquiry, essential to the attainment of enlightened views and sound principles’.<sup>85</sup> While the ceiling of the main hall commemorated the ascension of William and Mary to the English throne, the walls of the Gallery traced the subsequent battle for monarchical security. In the years immediately following 1688,

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<sup>82</sup> Johns, ‘Sir James Thornhill’, 178.

<sup>83</sup> For a survey of the Glorious Revolution and William and Mary’s reign following their arrival in 1688 see John Miller, *The Glorious Revolution*, (London & New York: Longman Ltd., 1983); Jonathan I. Israel, ed., *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and its world impact*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Lois G. Schworer, ed., *The Revolution of 1688-1689: Changing Perspectives*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Gary S. De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain: a political history of the era of Charles II and the Glorious Revolution*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

<sup>84</sup> Locke, *Englishman’s Library*, iii.

<sup>85</sup> Locke, *Englishman’s Library*, iii.

the country experienced a period of unrest resulting from a persistent threat of a Counter-Revolution.

The exiled James II had fled to France where, in allegiance with Louis XIV, he planned to invade England and regain the throne. In 1692, this threat reached its apogee in a series of naval actions between the combined Anglo-Dutch forces and the French, who were in support of James II. Within the Gallery, two consecutive battle paintings depict the beginning and end of this conflict (102). The depiction of the *Battle of the Barfleur* by Richard Paton marks the opening of this battle which took place off Cape Barfleur on 19 May 1692 (103). Under the command of the Comte de Tourville, the French fleet engaged the Anglo-Dutch forces, under Admiral Russell's command. In this work, the viewer is set back from the action, looking directly down the channel between the two lines of the French and Anglo-Dutch fleets as the action unfolds. Clouds of smoke demonstrate the relentless exchange of cannon fire. This inconclusive encounter was the beginning of a prolonged conflict with the French that persisted for several days.<sup>86</sup> Within the Gallery, the *Battle of the Barfleur* is followed by a copy of Benjamin West's *Battle of La Hogue*, painted for the Naval Gallery by George Chambers in 1835, which depicts the conclusive defeat of the French which took place six days later (104). The Anglo-Dutch allies took to rowing boats in order to reach the French vessels which were sheltering in the shallow waters of the Bay of La Hogue, under the protection of the French fortress.<sup>87</sup> Although this battle was not the final stage in securing the reign of William III, it was a significant step toward the eventual elimination of any hopes of reinstating James II to the throne.

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<sup>86</sup> See Tunstall, *Naval Warfare*, 55-6.

<sup>87</sup> Locker, *Memoirs*, 'Admiral Rooke'.

In the centre of the painting the commanding officer, Vice Admiral George Rooke, participates in the thick of the battle. With his sword drawn and his hand pointing across the painting, he visibly commands his men, urging them to attack. Standing at his side, a sailor sounds out a battle cry with a trumpet. Rooke's orders are carried out over on the right hand side of the canvas. The Anglo-Dutch sailors leap aboard a French rowing boat, which is identified by the fleur-de-lis imprinted around the gunwhale. The violence of this encounter is emphasised by the sheer amount of weaponry on display; the allies charge forward with their swords drawn and guns ready. On the far right a dishevelled Frenchman, who has lost his wig, is grabbed by the coattails as he tries to escape. His wide-open eyes show his sheer terror at this attack. Two Anglo-Dutch sailors have successfully boarded the French warship of the right; they wave down toward their comrades encouraging them to follow. The huge difference in size between the rowing boats and the warships emphasises the vulnerability of the men and it also displays the extent of their achievements in defeating this larger enemy. In the far distance, James II is reportedly standing on the shoreline watching as this attempt to regain the English throne is crushed. Within the main hall of the Naval Gallery, the naval victories which contributed so extensively to this continued monarchical security were displayed quite literally under the reign of William and Mary, enthroned in the centre of Thornhill's ceiling. It is from this platform of political and religious stability that the Naval Gallery's chronological naval history progressed into the eighteenth century: a period of imperial expansion, scientific development and naval supremacy.

### Enlightenment and empire: the eighteenth-century navy

The eighteenth century was a period of almost constant naval conflict with the War of Spanish Succession (1702-13), the War of Jenkins' Ear and Austrian Succession (1739-48), the Seven Years War (1756-63), and the American Revolutionary War (1775-83). These conflicts were part of an enduring struggle between Britain and its Continental enemies, predominantly France, to obtain global supremacy. As Colley has argued, the act of waging war during the eighteenth century was a primary tool in the development of a growing sense of nationhood. War provided an arena for 'manly' character traits to be played out against a Catholic, and often an effeminated, Continental enemy.<sup>88</sup> It was essential in shaping the national patriotic identity of Britain. Furthermore, as Evans has observed, the experience of regular warfare against Catholic France helped to forge a Protestant British nation from its diverse, and often mutually antagonistic, constituent elements.<sup>89</sup> Within the main hall of the Naval Gallery, the exploits of the eighteenth-century navy were traced around a majority of the display from the south wall, over the west wall to either side of the archway, and along the north wall of the Gallery. Throughout the eighteenth century, the nation was primarily in competition with France and the battle paintings depict numerous encounters between Britain and its primary competitor, providing countless examples of British victory against the Catholic absolutist monarchy on the opposite side of the channel. Collectively these battlescapes can be seen to have pictorially mapped out Britain's ever-expanding control over the seas.

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<sup>88</sup> See Colley, *Britons*, 87-90; Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740-1830*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1987), 74-7, 189-91; Stephen Conway, 'Christians, Catholics, Protestants: The religious links of Britain and Ireland with Continental Europe, c. 1689-1800', *English Historical Review* (2009).

<sup>89</sup> Eric Evans, 'Englishness and Britishness: National Identities c. 1790-1870', in *Uniting the Kingdom? The Making of British History*, ed. Alexander Grant and Keith J. Stringer (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 223.



The eighteenth century was also a period of rapid scientific development which pushed the boundaries of maritime discovery. Within the Gallery, this narrative of exploration is most overtly represented by Captain Cook. A three-quarter-length portrait by Nathaniel Dance, hung on the north wall, depicts Cook seated at a desk (29 & 105). He is gesturing toward a nautical chart; his own map of the Southern Ocean. His right hand points to the east coast of Australia where, on his first voyage, he had made contact with this coastline for the first time in European record. The book placed beside him on the table, resting on top of the chart, may be the journal in which Cook recorded his observations on these voyages.<sup>90</sup> As Locker emphasised in the *Memoirs*, Cook's discoveries were essential in correcting earlier scientific assumptions.<sup>91</sup> In gesturing toward a nautical chart, the portrait of *Cook* recalls the triple portrait of *Cavendish, Drake and Hawkins*, where the globe symbolised the collective enterprises of the three Elizabethan explorers. This pictorial association forges a narrative of discovery across the gallery space. Within Dance's portrait, rather than a globe, Cook gestures toward one of his own charts. Within the Gallery, the inclusion of Cook's actual charts and journal demonstrated how, by the eighteenth century, British exploration had become an increasingly scientific venture.<sup>92</sup>

In addition to the portrait of Cook, as Chapter One has examined, the Gallery also exhibited Zoffany's depiction of the *Death of Cook* (31, 105 & 106). Depicting

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<sup>90</sup> James Cook, *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his voyages of Discovery*, ed. J.C. Beaglehole, (Cambridge: Hackluyt Society, 1955).

<sup>91</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Captain James Cook', 1-16.

<sup>92</sup> John Ledyard, *An Authentic Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean: Performed by Captain Cook, and Captain Clarke, in His Britannic Majesty's Ships, the Resolution, and Discovery, in the years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779 and 1780*, (Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1783); John Elliott and Richard Pickersgill, *Captain Cook's Second Voyage: The Journals of Lieutenants Elliott and Pickersgill*, ed. Christine Holmes (London: Caliban Books, 1984); George Forster, *A Voyage round the World, [1777]* ed. Nicholas Thomas and Oliver Berghof, 2 vols. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000); Rüdiger Joppien and Bernard Smith, *The art of Captain Cook's Voyages*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988).

an event that took place on land rather than at sea, this work is uncharacteristic of the tier of marine paintings. Although the action takes place on the shoreline, what appears to be a shark's fin looms out of the shallow water in the foreground. In the *Memoirs*, Locker provided an account of Cook's fatal encounter, which took place in Hawaii in 1779. On his third and final attempt to discover the Northwest Passage Cook, who had already carried out two successful trips to the island, was forced to make an unplanned stop in a storm. With the ships moored so close to the shore, Locker explains that 'the uncontrollable propensity to thieving became a source of very serious mischief'.<sup>93</sup> After the *Discovery's* launch was taken, 'vigorous measures were required to put a stop to the plunder'. As Locker describes, 'Captain Cook, as had been the practice elsewhere, resolved to secure the person of the King as a hostage for its restitution'.<sup>94</sup> However, in the confusion Cook reportedly shot a man and in retaliation he and four marines were killed. Cook's death had the potential to be interpreted as an embarrassment, the product of a disaster in communication and of a general failing in the overall management of the British in a foreign and unfamiliar situation.<sup>95</sup> However, Locker's narrative displays a determination to heroicise the moment of Cook's death. In the *Memoirs*, he presents Cook as a peaceful explorer who remained in defence of the islanders up until the moment of his killing:

Towards these poor ignorant islanders indeed his spirit of forbearance  
was shewn in a manner peculiarly affecting, by the very last act of his

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<sup>93</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Captain Cook', 13.

<sup>94</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Captain Cook', 14.

<sup>95</sup> For a survey of the responses to Cook's death see Glyn Williams, *The Death of Captain Cook: A Hero Made and Unmade*, (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2008), especially chapter 1, 'A Distant Death', 5-60, and chapter 2, 'An Enlightenment Hero', 61-129; Smith, 'Cooks Posthumous Reputation', 159-186; Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, esp. 109-130.

life; for at the moment when he fell a victim to their mistaken fury, he was in the act of forbidding his own people from firing on them. It was this eminent quality of our intrepid seaman's heart which animated and ennobled the other attributes of his character. Which tempered the bold and enterprising spirit that specially fitted him for the performance of those great services to his countrymen, who with one voice have pronounced him the most able and enlightened navigator that England ever produced.<sup>96</sup>

The decision to include Zoffany's painting within the Gallery demonstrates how Cook's reputation, specifically the moment of his death, was the subject of considerable heroic idealisation. In order to negate the potentially troublesome anti-heroic connotations of this narrative, in which Cook tragically died as the result of a general misunderstanding with the inhabitants, Zoffany aligned the depicted the dying Cook with an established death-of-the-hero model. However, Cook does not fit with the traditional military hero paradigm, as established by West in his 1770 *Death of Wolfe* (1770, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario).<sup>97</sup> Rather than dying in the moment of victory, Cook lies upon the floor awaiting the final onslaught of the tribesman. However, Zoffany presented the narrative in a way that positioned contemporary history upon a timeless and idealised plan. While Cook is positioned in the stance of the *Dying Gladiator*, his disproportionately large antagonist is presented as a Rousseauian 'Noble Savage' as he replicates the stance of the

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<sup>96</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Captain Cook', 16. See Frank McLynn, *Captain Cook. Master of the Seas*, (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 387-410.

<sup>97</sup> Webster, *Johann Zoffany*, 587-9.

*Discobolos*.<sup>98</sup> In the face of his imminent demise, Cook's face expresses his suffering in a way that, as Smith observes, characterises the antique tragic mask thus elevating Cook's death to the heights of classical tragedy.<sup>99</sup> The way in which Cook is presented within Zoffany's *Death of Cook* aligns with a developing idealisation of the man as a national hero. As Frank McLynn observes, 'in the Victorian era he [Cook] was the classic Boy's Own hero, saint and martyr, bringing light to benighted savages, perceived as a larger-than-life figure from the long eighteenth century who died, like Nelson, while fighting for empire'.<sup>100</sup> Within the Gallery, the inclusion of Zoffany's painting allowed Locker to engage with and further develop upon the memorialisation of Cook.<sup>101</sup> As Bernard Smith has argued, 'Cook became the first and the most enduring hero of European expansion in the Pacific; or to put it bluntly, the prototypical hero of European imperialism'.<sup>102</sup> Cook exemplified a zeal for exploration which defined the increasingly scientific pursuits of the eighteenth-century navy. Within the Naval Gallery, he was commemorated as a national, naval and Enlightenment hero, who sacrificed himself for the sake of naval discovery and imperial expansion.

### The French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815)

Across and around the main hall, time does not progress at regulated intervals. As we have seen, the south wall of the display covered naval events from the Defeat of the Armada in 1588 through to the Battle of Quiberon Bay in 1759.

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<sup>98</sup> Mitchell, 'The Death of Captain Cook', 56-61; Smith, 'Cook's Posthumous Reputation', 174; Webster, *Johann Zoffany*, 588-9; Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 8-158, 317-32.

<sup>99</sup> Smith, 'Cook's Posthumous Reputation', 174.

<sup>100</sup> McLynn, *Captain Cook*, 416. McLynn observes that Cook's reputation was subject to further fluctuations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (416-7).

<sup>101</sup> Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, esp. 120-130; Bernard Smith, 'Cook's Posthumous Reputation' in Robin Fisher and Hugh Johnston, *Captain James Cook and his times*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979), 159-186.

<sup>102</sup> Bernard Smith, 'Cook's Posthumous Reputation', 160.

While one side of the Gallery swiftly recounted roughly two hundred years of naval history, the majority of the north wall was subject to a telescoping of time. The centre of the north wall was disproportionately dedicated to exhibiting British victory over the short number of years, covering as it did events in the recent Revolutionary and Napoleonic conflicts. This section of the display commemorated the admirals and actions involved in the eradication of French revolutionary principles. The *Englishman's Library* decried war against Revolutionary France as 'the most important event that ever happened in the world'.<sup>103</sup> The subsequent history of the French Revolution that follows describes how, after the murder of Louis XVI, 'the power of the British nation was put forth, to oppose those horrible principles, and restrain those savage excesses, which, under the pretence of Liberty, threatened to make a charnel-house and a desert of the whole earth'.<sup>104</sup> Within the Gallery, the previous two hundred years of naval victory provided an historical backdrop against which recent triumphs over France could be played out and monumentalised. The country was no longer fighting against the Catholic, absolutist French monarchy which they had been competing against for centuries. Instead, they were now fighting in an ideological war against a new and radical threat. Following the declaration of war made by the French National Convention on Great Britain on 1 February 1793, as the *Englishman's Library* observed, 'a series of triumphs were achieved, which had the final effects of rescuing mankind from the sway of a knot of ferocious and profligate adventurers, and of enabling us in particular to sit down in the secure possession of our property, and under the protection of our just and equal laws'.<sup>105</sup> The *Englishman's Library* identified five naval victories which led towards the defeat of France, and the downfall of its Revolutionary ideology. Along the north

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<sup>103</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 116.

<sup>104</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 117.

<sup>105</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 117.

wall of the Gallery, five battle paintings directly corresponded to this series of battles: the Glorious First of June 1794, the Battle of Cape St Vincent (14 February 1797), the Battle of Camperdown (11 October 1797), the Battle of the Nile (1-3 August 1798) and the Battle of Trafalgar (21 October 1805) (107). Collectively, these battle paintings produced a panorama of naval drama which charted the extent of the British naval retaliation.

Lord Howe's Victory on the 1 June 1794 was already commemorated in the vestibule of the Naval Gallery by de Louthembourg's large scale depiction of the action. In this work, as Locker remarked, de Louthembourg had 'judiciously chosen the time when the expected contest between the rival Chiefs was suddenly interrupted by the loss of the Queen Charlotte's top masts, and her consequent separation from the Montagne'.<sup>106</sup> The *Englishman's Library* proclaimed that in this 'first trial of strength between the fleets of Old England and new revolutionary France', the British 'taught these wild democrats a lesson which they did not soon forget'.<sup>107</sup> As Locker recorded in the *Memoirs*, in the wake of this first victory a number of awards were bestowed:

The thanks of both Houses of Parliament were voted to Earl Howe and his victorious followers; and when the King soon after visited Portsmouth, His Majesty presented to him a splendid sword, on the quarter-deck of the Queen Charlotte. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, 1797, the Order of the Garter was also conferred on him by his Sovereign. Admirals Sir Alexander Hood and Graves were raised to the Irish peerage; Rear-Admirals Bowyer, Gardner and Pasley, were preferred

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<sup>106</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Lord Howe's Victory off Ushant, 1 June 1794', 14.

<sup>107</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 150.

to the rank of Baronet; and medals were presented to those Admirals and Captains whose services in the late battle were considered most distinguished: public monuments being raised to Captains Montagu, Harvey and Hutt, who fell in the engagement.<sup>108</sup>

Within the main hall, a painting by Briggs depicts this ceremony taking place (108). The depiction of *George III visiting Howe's Flagship, the Queen Charlotte, 26 June 1794* provided a pictorial continuation of the narrative initiated by de Louthembourg in the vestibule. This produced a reciprocal discourse of naval victory and national recognition across the Gallery. George III stands upon the quarter deck presenting the diamond sword to Lord Howe. Queen Charlotte, dressed in yellow, stands at his side. Hood, Gardner and Curtis, who were all awarded a gold chain for their part in the victory, are positioned standing behind Howe. The prime minister, William Pitt the Younger, is positioned on the far left standing underneath the royal coat of arms. Briggs's depiction of the ceremony conveys the desired symbolism of the actual event in which the presence of both king and prime minister deliberately placed emphasis upon the significance of the British constitutional system. When radicalism threatened from the Continent, balanced British governance was necessarily asserted. Furthermore, the continued practice of awarding titles in the wake of victory was an overt reassertion of the ordered and hierarchical military system, where loyal service and achievement rather than anarchy and rebellion were subject to praise. The central position of George III in Briggs's painting highlights the significant part that he King played in securing national identity during this period of conflict. As the *Englishman's Library* stated, 'George III was perhaps, in this period of terror, the

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<sup>108</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Lord Howe's Victory Off Ushant', 13.

saviour of his country'.<sup>109</sup> An entire chapter within the *Englishman's Library* is dedicated to outlining the character of the King:

George III saw the danger by which the throne was surrounded. He did not compromise with his enemies. He did not betray alarm in the hour of peril. Even when his own life was assailed by a desperate multitude, he shewed no fear; those who rushed forward to insult the kingly office, returned awed and abashed at the personal intrepidity of the King.<sup>110</sup>

As the *Englishman's Library* reported, 'the period of the French Revolution was one in which the religion of society was as much menaced as its political condition'.<sup>111</sup> Both during and after the Revolutionary War the King, as a devout Christian, was a symbol of Christian morality, order and stability.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, the inclusion of Queen Charlotte within this representation was particularly significant within the Gallery. In addition to a number of female figures within the crowd, the Queen was one of the only women to be included within the entirety of the Naval Gallery display. Depicting an event that took place upon a ship moored in an English port, it was also the only battlescape to depict an event occurring at home rather than at sea. The inclusion of women clearly engaged with the common representation of the domestic feminised home as an opposition to the all-male battlefield abroad. While

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<sup>109</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 200.

<sup>110</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 200.

<sup>111</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 200.

<sup>112</sup> Evans, 'Englishness and Britishness', 223; Linda Colley, 'The Apotheosis of George III: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation 1760-1820', *Past and Present*, (1984) 102 (1): 94-129.



George III was idealised as the Father of the Nation, Queen Charlotte reinforced the patriotic iconography of Britannia.<sup>113</sup>

Howe's victory on 1 June 1794 provided a triumphant victory over the French. However, in the wake of this battle, the *Englishman's Library* argued that 'the lesson France had received was still to be taught to those neighbouring states who had degraded themselves to fight under her banner'.<sup>114</sup> The *Englishman's Library* reports that Spain initially 'offered a feeble and ill-combined resistance to the revolutionary armies; but she was awed by their first success into submission, and that high Castilian pride, which for centuries had so nobly maintained itself, stooped to an alliance with the base progeny of the Revolution'.<sup>115</sup> Within the main hall, George Jones introduced naval action against the Spanish in his representation of *Nelson boarding the 'San Josef' at the Battle of St Vincent in 1797* (109). At the Battle of St Vincent, Nelson was a commodore in command of the *Captain*, in a fleet under the command of Admiral John Jervis. During the battle, the *Captain* deliberately fell out of line, repositioning itself in the path of an escaping Spanish squadron. Under Nelson's command, the *Captain* directly engaged the Spanish *San Nicolas* which accidentally ran into the *San Josef* in the process. Nelson, with a boarding party, moved from the one ship to the other, taking both as prizes.<sup>116</sup> Jones depicts the climax of this event as Nelson and his boarding party reach the quarterdeck of the second ship, the *San Josef*. Nelson leaps upon the deck leading his men into direct combat. He lunges forward with his sword drawn toward the enemy. As Locker remarked, 'it was on this occasion the gallantry of Nelson became so

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<sup>113</sup> Colley, 'The Apotheosis of George III', 94.

<sup>114</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 150-151.

<sup>115</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 150-151.

<sup>116</sup> Nicholas Harris Nicolas, *The Dispatches and Letters of Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson*, (London: Henry Colburn Publisher, 1845), II, 335-40.

conspicuous'.<sup>117</sup> On the right, a British sailor echoes Nelson's stance as he follows his commanding officer's example. Standing on the edge of the poop deck, the Spanish officer holds out his sword in his left hand, hilt first, as a symbol of surrender.

The account of this action published in the *Englishman's Library* drew a direct comparison between this victory over Spain and an earlier example of British dominance over this Catholic enemy, at the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

Spain has always been remarkable for possessing the largest and worst appointed ships in Europe: those ponderous vessels which formed the boast of her Invincible Armada were scarcely more unwieldy than the huge three and four deckers which they have recently constructed. Our Drakes and our Frobishers then showed how unavailing these floating castles were against British courage and enterprise: and the Jervises and Nelsons of our own day have told over again the same story.<sup>118</sup>

Jones was commissioned by the British Institution to paint *Nelson Boarding the San Josef* for the Naval Gallery. As a result, this direct association between the Battle of St Vincent and the defeat of the Spanish Armada was deliberately forged across the gallery space. The depiction of Nelson lunging forward with his sword drawn toward the enemy echoes the display of man-to-man combat exhibited in the foreground of de Louthembourg's *Armada*. In this respect, both text and pictorial content were manipulated in order to reinforce an artificial historic connection. Collectively, they

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<sup>117</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 152.

<sup>118</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 152.

strengthen the overall mythology of the inevitable and providential dominance of Britain.

Following Jones' depiction of British victory of the Spanish, the Gallery demonstrated British triumph over the Dutch with a depiction of *Admiral Duncan, receiving the Sword from his Adversary, Admiral De Winter, at the Battle of Camperdown, October 1797* (110). Rather than the actual conflict, this painting by Samuel Drummond exhibits the civility of both sides, as the Dutch admiral hands over his sword in defeat. With his hat in his left hand, Duncan stands on the quarter deck of the *Venerable* with his right arm out ready to receive the surrendered sword from his adversary. This was the first battle against the Dutch since they sided with Revolutionary France: 'the Revolutionists promised themselves that it was reserved for them to restore the balance of maritime power, and that the highly-excited zeal of their commanders would now bring back to them such days as those of De Ruyter and Van Tromp'.<sup>119</sup> Again, the *Englishman's Library* related this Revolutionary battle back to previous conflict in the seventeenth-century Dutch Wars. However, unlike the earlier period of struggle, at the Battle of Camperdown the British defeated the Dutch forces and 'by this great and eminently providential event, were the hopes of domestic traitors finally crushed; and our implacable foreign foe was at once quelled in his pride and crippled in his means of aggression'.<sup>120</sup> Already discussed in Chapter Two, the Battle of Camperdown was a particularly significant victory in which the public's awareness of national victory was reasserted. The nation was provided with a declaration of British triumph which reminded the public that this conflict against the Dutch was no longer just over trade, but also the defence of Britain, its principles, and its freedom. Furthermore, the battle occurred in the

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<sup>119</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 156.

<sup>120</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 156.

same year as the Spithead and Nore mutinies. As the *Englishman's Library* outlined, by the autumn of 1797, 'the discontents of the mutineers had indeed been laid, and they had been induced to return to their professional duties; but no one could be free from anxiety who looked to the circumstances under which their allegiance was resumed'.<sup>121</sup> Victory over the Dutch was seen to resolve any remaining unrest following the naval mutinies. Drummond's representation of the Dutch admiral surrendering can also be seen to reflect the submission of any outstanding mutineers within the fleet, demonstrating the revived unity of the British navy.

The fourth battle to be recounted, both in the *Englishman's Library* and in the pictorial panorama within the Gallery, was the Battle of the Nile on 1-3 August 1798. The *Englishman's Library* published an abridged account of the action taken from Southey's *Life of Nelson*.<sup>122</sup> Within the Gallery, a painting by George Arnald depicted *The Destruction of 'L'Orient' at the Battle of the Nile, 1 August 1798* (111). This was one of the few battlescapes to have a descriptive account written about it within Locker's unfinished *Memoirs*. This text emphasises the significance of the Battle of the Nile as a decisive British victory which radically impacted upon Napoleon's plans for expansion. Locker argues that this victory 'was of the highest importance to the British interests at that juncture'. A monumental defeat of Napoleon's forces in Aboukir bay cut off his means of retreat from Egypt. Furthermore, as Locker remarked, 'the dreams of plunder with which Bonaparte had deluded his followers were thus dispelled'.<sup>123</sup> Arnald's painting depicts the moment the French ship *L'Orient* exploded. As the *Memoirs* recount, 'soon after ten o'clock,

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<sup>121</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 153-4.

<sup>122</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 156-165. Account taken from Robert Southey, *Life of Nelson*, (London: John Murray, 1813).

<sup>123</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'The Battle of the Nile, August 1 1798', 11.

that noble ship blew up with a tremendous concussion'.<sup>124</sup> This explosion had a devastating effect on the surrounding vessels: 'all firing ceased throughout the fleet at the moment of this awful explosion, - a deathlike silence ensued, which was interrupted, after an interval of several seconds, by the crash of the falling masts and other wreck of this devoted ship'.<sup>125</sup> Arnald conveys the force of the explosion as it sweeps across the canvas. The swell of the water pushes across toward the foreground sweeping the *Swiftsure* forward, her sails full from the power of the blast. Shrapnel from the explosion, including spars and parts of cannon, fly across the canvas. Nelson, who had already received a severe head injury, reportedly climbed back up on to the deck of the *Vanguard* to instruct his men to conduct an immediate rescue attempt.<sup>126</sup> Despite their efforts only seventy of her crew were saved.<sup>127</sup> The rescue attempt positioned in the foreground of the painting displays the chaos and human devastation. Within the Gallery, it commemorated the magnanimity of the British forces in the face of victory.

Finally, British naval action against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France is brought to a conclusion with the Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805. Within the Naval Gallery, Turner's depiction of the battle, which hung in the vestibule, provided a monumental commemoration of the fleet victory. Trafalgar was an overwhelming achievement for the British navy, disabling the French fleet to such an extent that any threat of future naval conflict or invasion was destroyed.<sup>128</sup> However, within Britain, the victory was received with mixed emotions. The celebration of the victory was tainted by the death of Nelson. The *Englishman's Library* included an abridged account of Southey's narrative which recalls how 'the death of Nelson was

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<sup>124</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'The Battle of the Nile', 7.

<sup>125</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'The Battle of the Nile', 8.

<sup>126</sup> Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, III, 48-56, esp. 51-2.

<sup>127</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'The Battle of the Nile', 7.

<sup>128</sup> Nicholas Tracy, *Nelson's Battles: the triumph of British seapower*, (Barnsley: Seaforth, 2008).

felt in England as something more than a public calamity: men started at the intelligence and turned pale, as if they had heard of the loss of a dear friend'.<sup>129</sup> The depiction of the *Death of Nelson* (112) by Devis, which hung at the end of the north wall, engaged with this counter-narrative of national grief. The depiction of Nelson dying below the deck of the *Victory*, redirected a narrative of national victory against France toward an acknowledgment of the actual physical sacrifice by which it was achieved. We should note that in Locker's 1839 plan, Devis's *Death of Nelson* was positioned out of chronological order. Rather than directly following the panorama of Revolutionary and Napoleonic actions, the painting was deliberately positioned in the final bay along the north wall. A depiction of the *Bombardment of Algiers by Viscount Exmouth, 27 August 1816* (113) was sandwiched in between the *Battle of the Nile* and the *Death of Nelson*. Painted by Chambers, this work depicts a naval expedition, under the command of Admiral Edward Pellew, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Exmouth, in which the British engaged the corsairs who had been attacking British shipping off the Barbary Coast.<sup>130</sup> In a number of Locker's earlier draft plans for the main hall, the series of five battles were positioned consecutively in a row along the north wall. This arrangement meant that the north wall was brought to a close by Chambers's depiction of *Algiers* (114 & 115). However, in the 1839 arrangement Locker swapped the order of the two last battle paintings (116). By 1839, the desire to conclude the north wall with the *Death of Nelson* overwhelmed Locker's established chronological structure. Positioned at the end of the north wall, Devis's painting faced de Louthembourg's *Defeat of the Spanish Armada*. In this position, the parameters of Locker's British naval history were clearly defined. As Chapter Five will examine, it became crucial to conclude the north wall with the *Death of Nelson*

<sup>129</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 170.

<sup>130</sup> Alan Russett, *George Chambers 1803-1840 – His Life and Work – The Sailor's Eye and the Artist's Hand* (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors Club, 1996), 127.

because from this point in the Gallery, visitors were directed toward the third and final room, the upper hall, where a growing collection of Nelson relics were placed on display. Devis's painting provided a fluid link between these two spaces where the death, and subsequent memorialisation, of Nelson provided an appropriate culmination to Locker's chronology.

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Locker's pictorial history was a potentially fragile and fundamentally artificial construct. The three-dimensionality of the gallery space challenged this linear account of national development. The pictorial chronology could be deconstructed in an instant as visitors' attention jumped around the narrative in a way that countered the ordered chronological layout. There was nothing to stop the visitor from looking across the Gallery or from following a different route around the room. Locker's accompanying literary productions bolstered the specific linear order of the display, helping to secure the chronology of the narrative. However, the Gallery was not necessarily intended to convey a single story of the navy. This is evident in the *Memoirs*, where individual biographies repeatedly overlap, highlighting the multi-faceted complexity of historical discourse. Within the Gallery, a variety of personal histories were introduced by the presence of the Greenwich Hospital pensioners (117). The Greenwich pensioners provided another dimension to this constructed history, incorporating personal accounts into the narrative of recent historical events. The inclusion of their personal tales of recent naval battles was beyond Locker's controlling remit and there was the obvious potential for these personal narratives of naval warfare to counter Locker's idealised account of patriotic service and heroism. However, the inclusion of this verbal narrative within the display space contributed to the network of historic naval discourses.

Furthermore, the physical inclusion of the pensioners within the gallery space contributed to the pictorial spectacle, further enriching both the verbal and visual dialogues by which naval narratives were presented.

Locker's pictorial history conveyed a narrative of naval victory and national progress to the nineteenth-century public. Both within the Gallery itself and within the variety of written texts circulating inside and outside the Gallery, Locker presented the nation's and the navy's journey, concluding with the triumph and success of the nation in defeating recent Continental aggressors across Europe and quashing the spread of radicalism. Locker's narrative of national progression is allied with a widespread improvement in knowledge distribution; science, seamanship, navigation, and engineering were all increasingly significant facets in the education of the ideal naval seaman. From the commission of the *Ark Royal* under Elizabeth through to the construction of the *Victory* in the late eighteenth century, the Gallery pictorially traced the development of 'Naval Architecture'.<sup>131</sup> A narrative of exploration from Drake through to Cook reflected developments in mapping and navigation. Furthermore, the developments of technical systems of communication, such as the introduction of a flag signal system which was made famous by Nelson, demonstrated the progression of naval warfare and strategy. A linear history within the main hall forged an inextricable link between knowledge, education and a narrative of national triumph. However, national success was simultaneously allied with the established notion of Protestant liberty where naval victory was employed as tangible evidence of providential favour.

Locker's decision to construct a pictorial naval history within the Gallery can be closely tied to his interests in popular education. The production of the *Plain*

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<sup>131</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Henry VIII', 1.



*Englishman* and the *Englishman's Library* illustrate Locker's dedication to the dispersal of historical information within Britain. Whilst reading national histories predominantly remained the pastime of an elite section of society, in part because of the sheer expense of bound publications, the distribution of brief informative pamphlets provided a means to make the information more widely available. With the foundation of the Naval Gallery, the creation of a pictorial history had even greater potential for accessibility. This dramatisation of the nation's naval history was at one level intended to inform and educate visitors. It was also intended to serve a patriotic purpose, encouraging the next generation to fight for the continued defence of the nation. When founding the Gallery, Locker had expressed the hope that, while observing the portraits of 'distinguished men', the 'youthful sailor' would 'cherish a secret hope that at a future time, perhaps his own might be associated with theirs'. Furthermore, he expressed the desire that the same youthful sailor, 'would be animated to enterprise at the view of these battles'.<sup>132</sup> Although Locker intended this narrative to reach the masses, the social impact of Locker's pictorial naval history would have been considerably limited by the entry fee, which was in place until the early 1840s. Despite Locker's early intentions that the Gallery should be free, it was not until 1842 that, in line with Parliamentary demands on all national museums, the Naval Gallery was opened to the general public free of charge on two days a week.<sup>133</sup>

Locker's desire to facilitate the education of the masses, and contribute to the distribution of knowledge across the entirety of the nation, was not conducted out of

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<sup>132</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>133</sup> Locker initially proposed that the fee be abolished but this was rejected by the Board (TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 3). The exact fee in place remains unclear. However, in 1842, Parliament required all national museums to offer limited access to the public free of charge (ADM 67/93, Thursday 14 July 1842, 192-4). At the Naval Gallery this was carried out on Mondays and Fridays, 10am-4pm. On the other paying days, entrance to the Gallery would cost four pence. See Clarke, *Greenwich Hospital Catalogue*, (1842).

purely benevolent sentiment. He certainly believed in the influential potential of knowledge and education, dedicating an entire chapter in the *Englishman's Library* to the discussion of a national education system.<sup>134</sup> However, Locker was acutely aware, and in fear, of the impact of distributing the wrong sort of information which, in his opinion, had the potential to corrupt the working classes. In 1821, Locker described the *Plain Englishman* as a periodical publication which he had undertaken 'with a view to counteract the effect of those mischievous productions which were circulated by the emissaries of blasphemy and sedition among the humbler orders of their fellow countrymen'.<sup>135</sup> At a time of distinct social unrest, in the wake of riots and the Peterloo Massacre of 1819, Locker's textual and visual projects can collectively be seen as an attempt to combat social unrest through the reassertion of a counter anti-radical narrative.<sup>136</sup> In the main hall of the Naval Gallery, Locker constructed a naval history as a means to reassert the national benefits of an ordered and stable political and social establishment. In the face of unrest and dissent, the Naval Gallery reinforced a narrative of national unity against a common Continental enemy. Locker's counter-radical publications stressed the necessary links between Protestantism, patriotism and respect for the class system.<sup>137</sup> He wanted to improve the general education of the nation as a whole. However, as he made clear in the *Englishman's Library*, Locker was insistent that this kind of public instruction must be conducted within a strictly Christian framework:

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<sup>134</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 'National Education', 257-264.

<sup>135</sup> Edward Hawke Locker, *Popular Lectures on the Bible and Liturgy*, (London: Printed for Messrs Hatchard and son, Piccadilly; Messrs Rivington, St Paul's Churchyard and Waterloo-Place; and Messrs Knight and Dredge, Windsor, 1821), v.

<sup>136</sup> Locker's anti-radical aims reflect a wider counter-revolutionary culture that had developed in response to radicalism. A number of loyalist publications were in print prior to Locker's literary endeavours: John Bowles, *Reflections on the Political and Moral State of Society, at the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (London: F. & C. Rivington, 1800), 123, 128, 149-50. See Duffy, 'William Pitt and the Origins of the Loyalist Association Movement of 1792'; Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country*.

<sup>137</sup> Locker, *Popular Lectures on the Bible and Liturgy*. Monks observes the association between religion, patriotism and class hierarchy in Locker's publications: Monks, *Marine Art*, 172.

We acknowledge no principles of instruction, public or private, but those of the bible. Education, without regard to these, is indeed a dangerous and fatal experiment. To furnish those who occupy the humbler stations of life with the means of acquiring unlimited knowledge, without the control of religion, is to render them dissatisfied with the condition in which they are born; to delude them with hopes of raising themselves to stations beyond their reach, and to suggest to them schemes of advantage which are utterly impracticable.<sup>138</sup>

Locker's written publications present Protestantism as a means of separation for Britain, defining it in opposition to the Catholic or atheistic anarchy of Continental Europe. Religion provided the essential tool to distinguish British progress from the anarchic and crucially atheistic behaviour of radicalism at the turn of the century. Furthermore, it offered a means to reassert an ideology of social stability. Within the Naval Gallery, the successes of the navy communicate a narrative in which obedience, governance and hierarchical command are asserted as the established means to national success. The exhibition of naval portraiture was to an extent a demonstration of aristocratic supremacy. However, Locker's textual and curatorial projects were part of a much wider national debate, reflecting the wider establishment response to social change. Industrialisation and the increasing migration of people from the countryside to the city were leading to the breakdown of long-founded rural communities which, in turn, undermined the hierarchy and

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<sup>138</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, 262.

authority of the squirearchy.<sup>139</sup> The British establishment was threatened and in an effort to resist, sought to influence the attitudinal changes of the populace through the reassertion of traditional values.<sup>140</sup> This is evident upon the walls of the Gallery. At a time of heightened social tension, the Naval Gallery employed a chronological naval history as a means to demonstrate the success of an ordered, disciplined and hierarchal social structure. Furthermore, in emphasising the historic inevitability of external threats, the Gallery presented the continued necessity for social unity in the patriotic defence of the nation. As a result, the Naval Gallery was an attempt to influence public opinion and ultimately shape, and moderate, the outcome of social change.

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<sup>139</sup> Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 27. See also Stephen Albert Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress. Social mobility in a nineteenth century city*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964).

<sup>140</sup> For a survey of this social development see Alice Chandler, *A Dream of Order: The Medieval Ideal in Nineteenth-Century English Literature*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), 1-20; Clare Simmons, *Popular Medievalism in romantic-era Britain*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Patrick Geary and Gabor Klaniczay, eds. *Manufacturing Middle Ages: entangled history of medievalism in nineteenth century Europe*, (Boston: Brill, 2013). See also Barrie Trinder, *Britain's Industrial Revolution. The making of a manufacturing people 1700-1870*, (Lancaster: Carnegie Publishing, 2013) esp. 483-602; Emma Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn. A People's History of the Industrial Revolution*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), esp. 1-20.

## CHAPTER IV

## The Main Hall II: The formation and display of a national naval art collection

The Naval Gallery's exhibition of portraits, marine paintings and naval history paintings engaged with contemporary display culture and the early nineteenth-century art world. The Gallery formed associations with contemporary art institutions, provided opportunities for artists, and made itself available for the display of British art. When the Gallery was first proposed, Locker advised the Greenwich Hospital Board of Directors to 'establish a rule, that no work of inferior merit be received unless the subject be of great importance, nor any unimportant subject admitted, unless the work be of the first excellence'.<sup>1</sup> When forming the fine and decorative art collection, Locker clearly intended that it should meet with high artistic, as well as historic, standards. In addition to the acquisition of a collection of fine art, the Naval Gallery - as this chapter will explore - actively participated in the contemporary art world, contributing to the progress and development of a British School of naval art.

When the Painted Hall was converted into the Gallery, the Greenwich Hospital Board of Directors was 'desirable to obtain the assistance of three professional men of distinguished Reputation'.<sup>2</sup> As was discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, the Directors sought the advice of Lawrence, Chantrey and Smirke as experts in the fields of painting, sculpture and architecture, to advise them on the conversion of the Hall into a display space for art. The early involvement of these three Academicians invites a comparison between the Naval Gallery and the Royal

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<sup>1</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>2</sup> TNA ADM 67/72, 1 October 1823, 226; ADM 67/72, 12 November 1823, 253.

Academy. The inclusion of the Academicians, as professional artistic consultants, was a deliberate attempt to associate the newly formed Naval Gallery with this established royal art institution and its exhibitions. As was seen earlier, the *Letter of Advised Alterations* that these three Academicians provided had a direct influence on the arrangement of the Naval Gallery. It outlined how the Painted Hall should be prepared in order to provide the best light conditions.<sup>3</sup> They proposed a system to install the display, hanging the paintings from iron rods and chains.<sup>4</sup> The Academicians suggested that the walls be painted and the paintings hung between the pilasters.<sup>5</sup> The pilasters provided a strict and repeated vertical division around the room, separating the paintings into bays, resulting in a highly ordered and geometric display.

The influential role of the Academicians in the conversion of the Painted Hall invites a comparison between the ways in which paintings were exhibited at both locations. The Great Room of the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition at Somerset House was depicted by numerous artists but for the purpose of this comparison we will consider a depiction of the Exhibition in 1808 by John Hill, after Thomas Rowlandson and Augustus Pugin (118). Similarly, numerous engravings exist depicting the main hall of the Naval Gallery during the period we are considering; for the purpose of this comparison we will consider an engraving of the Naval Gallery, published on the front page of the *Penny Magazine* on 6 January 1838 (119). At first instance, the rectilinear arrangement of the main hall in the Naval Gallery seems far removed from the cramped display of paintings in the Great Room of the Royal Academy. In the latter environment, paintings are packed into the available space, hung frame to frame, primarily in order to fit as many works into the

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<sup>3</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 29.

<sup>4</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 27.

<sup>5</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 26-27.

exhibition as possible.<sup>6</sup> Paintings are hung from the bottom of the floor all the way up to the ceiling, resulting in some works being placed almost out of sight of the spectators.<sup>7</sup> As Pointon has demonstrated portraiture occupied the majority of the available wall space.<sup>8</sup> Marine paintings do feature within the display although they tend to be positioned in a less central location.<sup>9</sup> However, the marine paintings were still an important feature within the display where, as Eleanor Hughes observes, ‘the number of battles and actions generally followed the course of national events’.<sup>10</sup> By comparison, the arrangement of paintings in the main hall of the Naval Gallery was considerably less cramped. The pilasters along the north and south walls created a total of eight vertical bays. Within each bay, the paintings were further divided up into three tiers, with a full-length portrait at the top, two half-length portraits in the middle and a naval battle painting at the bottom. This tiered arrangement created three horizontal registers around the main hall. With the full-length portraits at the top and the marine paintings at the bottom, on one level this arrangement can be seen to adhere to the hierarchy of genres promoted by the Royal Academy, which tended to position grand forms of portraiture above marine and landscape painting.<sup>11</sup> Despite the fact that the full-length portraits were hung on the highest tier in the gallery, they were not ‘skied’ like paintings at the summit of the Great Room. Instead, the full-length portraits in the Naval Gallery were large enough to have been

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<sup>6</sup> See David Solkin, ‘“The Great Mart of Genius”: The Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House’ in Solkin, ed., *Art on the line*, esp. 1-2; and Sunderland and Solkin, ‘Staging the Spectacle’, 23-37, esp. 24-25.

<sup>7</sup> Sunderland and Solkin, ‘Staging the Spectacle’, 23-37.

<sup>8</sup> Pointon, ‘Portrait! Portrait!! Portrait!!!’, 93.

<sup>9</sup> Hughes, ‘Ships of the “line”’, 142-3.

<sup>10</sup> Eleanor Hughes, ‘Ships of the “line”: marine paintings at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1784’ in Tim Barringer, Geoff Quilley and Douglas Fordham, *Art and the British Empire*, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 139-152.

<sup>11</sup> Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, ed. Robert R. Wark (Yale and London: By Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1981), 52, 59-60.

adequately visible at this height.<sup>12</sup> Unlike the display of pictures in the Great Room, which exhibited paintings practically down to the floor, the lowest tier of works in the Naval Gallery was actually hung on, or slightly above, the viewer's eye-line. As a result, and in contrast to the Royal Academy, the naval battle paintings were actually positioned in the most prominent and prestigious section of the display.

Despite these immediate distinctions, the way in which works were exhibited at the Royal Academy was clearly influential upon the initial design of the Naval Gallery. Locker's early sketch of the main hall demonstrates the influence of the Great Room in the way that he envisaged the paintings being sandwiched together from the floor to the ceiling (32). Rather than being structured around the division between bays, the paintings in this early design are hung together across a shared display space where the different genres of naval painting intermingle. Locker was not only responding to the way that works were displayed at the Royal Academy. In the 1820s this was an established model of display, employed in both Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and at the British Institution, to name just two examples (120 & 121). John Scarlett Davis's oil painting of the *Interior of the British Institution* records the arrangement of paintings at the annual Old Master exhibition in 1829. Two men are depicted admiring a *Self-Portrait* by Reynolds while his *Holy Trinity* hangs on the wall alongside works by Canaletto and Cuyp.<sup>13</sup> As Davis's painting demonstrates, in the early years of the Naval Gallery's foundation, this type of arrangement was well established not just at the Royal Academy but across the London art world, in both public and private galleries.

The actual arrangement of paintings in the Naval Gallery was far more geometric than any contemporary equivalents, and far removed from Locker's early

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<sup>12</sup> Sunderland and Solkin, 'Staging the Spectacle', 24.

<sup>13</sup> See Conlin, *Nation's Mantelpiece*, 41.



design. Although this display differed greatly from the Royal Academy exhibitions we should not discount the role of the Academicians in creating this new type of design. The way in which works were eventually hung within the main hall of the Naval Gallery was actually determined by the three consulting artists. The Board of Directors at Greenwich Hospital had initially proposed that a wooden frame, covered in ‘crimson cloth’, should be installed in the main hall in order to hang the paintings.<sup>14</sup> This early suggestion was fundamentally influenced by the established practise at the RA where a wooden armature was constructed in order to hang paintings in the Great Room.<sup>15</sup> With the foundation of the Naval Gallery, the three Academicians challenged this established approach. They suggested that the walls be painted instead of covered in cloth and they also proposed a system of hanging the works from the entablature rather than off a wooden frame.<sup>16</sup> Through these suggestions, the Academicians played a fundamental part in the creation of a new type of permanent display for a new national gallery.

The *Penny Magazine*'s engraving of the Naval Gallery depicts not just the arrangement of paintings but also the position of visitors within the gallery space (122). Several groups of people around the main hall can be seen to interact with both the display and each other, and in a number of ways. In the foreground, a smartly dressed couple are in conversation with a third figure whose wooden leg makes him easily identifiable as a Greenwich Hospital pensioner. He is presumably in the process of taking them on one of the guided tours of the Gallery. From their central position at the entrance to the main hall, these three figures would have been able to view Thornhill's decorative painting. In addition, standing in the centre of the main hall, they would have had a good view of the top tier of full-length portraits.

<sup>14</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

<sup>15</sup> See Sunderland and Solkin, ‘Staging the Spectacle’, 23-4.

<sup>16</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 26-27.

Around the rest of the main hall, a number of other groups of figures stand closer to the display, enjoying a close reading of the lower tiers of half-length portraits and marine paintings which are raked at an angle toward them. As this engraving of the Naval Gallery illustrates, while Locker had created a chronological display which ran clockwise around the hall, the way in which visitors moved around the Gallery in order to see the display was anything but linear. At any point within the hall visitors could break away from the chronology and glance across the room or physically relocate themselves in order to view works in other bays, on different tiers or at opposite ends of the hall. Certain paintings would have appeared more visually compelling and these pictorial highlights would have further encouraged viewers to break away from the structure of the display.

While the arrangement of works within the Naval Gallery was influenced by the actions of the contemporary art world, in one crucial respect the Gallery differed from the exhibitions at the Royal Academy or the British Institution. Rather than a transient temporary exhibition, the Naval Gallery was intended as a permanent public display. This aspiration for permanency is communicated by the linear structure of the display which recalls the arrangement of the long gallery found in aristocratic country houses.<sup>17</sup> As Rosalys Coope observes, the long gallery in Hardwick Hall provides ‘a fine example of the long gallery used for a display of dynastic pride and social success’.<sup>18</sup> Measuring 162 feet in length, 26 feet high and between 22 and 40 feet in width, the Hardwick long gallery is the largest (although not the longest) of surviving Elizabethan long galleries.<sup>19</sup> It is also the only one to retain both its original tapestries and many of its original paintings. It was common

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<sup>17</sup> See Rosalys Coope, ‘The Gallery in England: Names and Meanings’, *Architectural History*, vol. 27 (1984), 446-455; Rosalys Coope, ‘The ‘Long Gallery’: Its Origins, Development, Use and Decoration’, *Architectural History*, vol. 29, (1986), esp. 62-66.

<sup>18</sup> Coope, ‘The “Long Gallery”’, 62.

<sup>19</sup> Mark Girouard, *Hardwick Hall*, (London: National Trust, 1989), 58.

for these long galleries to be used for the display of a variety of portraiture depicting dynastic, royal and famous personages. In addition to the numerous family portraits that lined the walls of Hardwick's long gallery, a number of other works depicted important figures including a portrait of Queen Elizabeth I, which hung there during her lifetime.<sup>20</sup> Within the Naval Gallery, rather than the display of familial lineage and dynastic pride, the linear arrangement of naval portraits along the walls of the main hall constructed a narrative of hierarchical stability and naval supremacy. As Christopher Rovee has argued, in the nineteenth century 'in lieu of the ancestral gallery, the public art exhibition represented the 'family' of the nation'.<sup>21</sup> This is certainly true of the Naval Gallery where the chronological display of naval portraits traced a continuous chain of command which ultimately confirmed national, rather than dynastic, success. Furthermore, the sequential display of paintings within the main hall offered a visual history which charted not just the development of the Royal Navy, but also the history of British naval art. In line with the rectilinear structure of the display, which isolated each genre of painting, this chapter similarly considers the presentation of portraiture, marine painting and naval history painting individually, before returning to a consideration of how the Naval Gallery functioned as a forum for national art as well as naval history.

### Naval Portraiture

Within the main hall, naval portraiture occupied a majority of the display space. As we have seen, in the years immediately after the foundation of the Naval Gallery, Locker was dedicated to the acquisition of 'naval portraits'. He even

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<sup>20</sup> Lindsay Boynton, *The Hardwick Hall Inventories of 1601*, (London: The Furniture History Society, 1971); Girouard, *Hardwick Hall*, 58-68.

<sup>21</sup> Rovee, *Imagining the Gallery*, 4.

produced a list of 'Portraits Wanted' in order to keep track of his progress.<sup>22</sup> The practical demands of the exhibition space partially explain why the acquisition of naval portraiture was such an immediate and extended concern. The eight bays along the north and south walls of the main hall required a minimum number of paintings. As Chapter One examined, Long informed Locker that the Naval Gallery 'must have sixteen whole lengths or we shall not do – twenty would be better – and they ought to be of our finest rate naval heroes'.<sup>23</sup> The demand for half-length portraiture is less evident in Locker's correspondence. However, George IV's donation of 28 half-length portraits from the Royal Collection in 1824 would have satisfied the demand to a certain extent.<sup>24</sup> In total, the three tiered arrangement in the main hall required 16-20 full-length portraits and, in order for them to be hung as pairs underneath, 32-40 half-length portraits. In addition to the practical demands of the exhibition space, the prominent display of naval portraiture invites us to consider how the Naval Gallery was deliberately presenting itself as a forum for naval art. The promotion and development of portraiture within Britain was an established occupation in the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century art world. At the Royal Academy, as Pointon has observed, portraiture occupied a majority of the display space at the Annual Exhibitions.<sup>25</sup> The exhibition of naval portraiture in the Naval Gallery illustrates both the influence of this contemporary display culture and the Gallery's deliberate desire to engage with it. However, a crucial difference remains between the type of portraiture exhibited at the Royal Academy and the Naval Gallery. While the RA exhibited the latest artistic productions at the Annual Exhibition, the Naval Gallery presented an historic collection exhibiting works from the Elizabethan court

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<sup>22</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 'Portraits Wanted', 42.

<sup>23</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, December 1824, 115.

<sup>24</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 'Pictures in Greenwich Hospital', 41; 'Pictures in the Naval Gallery', 48.

<sup>25</sup> Pointon, 'Portrait! Portrait!! Portrait!!!', 93. See reference no. 1. See also, Rovee, *Imagining the Gallery*, 5-10.

through to the early nineteenth century. Presenting several hundred years of British art, this chronological display traced the development of a particular sub-genre, the naval portrait.

The earliest original portrait in the Naval Gallery's collection was the depiction of *Charles Howard* by the Dutch artist Daniel Mytens (93).<sup>26</sup> Painted in 1618, Howard is depicted dressed in garter robes, with ornate puffed sleeves, an elaborate lace ruff and a golden skull cap. He is surrounded by the trappings of his acquired wealth and status. The elaborate fold of carpet under his foot is a demonstration of early modern artistic excellence. With the inclusion of this Holbein-like detail Mytens, responding to an established tradition of English court portraiture, constructs an impression of depth and naturalism.<sup>27</sup> Within this interior scene, naval action is confined to a small seascape visible through the window where a number of small ships re-enact the British defeat of the Spanish Armada. Apart from this marginal battlescape, there is a striking absence of any nautical attributes across the composition. As the *Penny Magazine* described, Howard is 'dressed now, not for the quarter-deck, but the court, and looks grand in his robes, ruff and staff.'<sup>28</sup> Both the ornate interior and the elaborate garter robes visually separated from the quarter-deck presenting an ideal image of him as the high-ranking courtier rather than the commanding high admiral.

Following Mytens's portrait of Howard, the Naval Gallery exhibited the work of, or rather a copy after, the leading court painter in Caroline England,

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<sup>26</sup> Rev. Matthew Pilkington, *Dictionary of Painters from the Revival of the Art to the Present Period. A new edition with considerable alterations, additions, an appendix and an index by Henry Fuseli, RA* (London: John Crowder, 1805), 358-8.

<sup>27</sup> The fold of carpet recalls Holbein's *Whitehall Mural* (now destroyed). See Simon Thurley, *Whitehall Palace, An Architectural History of the Royal Apartments, 1240-1698*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 21-2; Tatiana String, *Art and Communication in the Reign of Henry VIII*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 49-54; Roy Strong, *Holbein and Henry VIII*, (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1967); Ellis Waterhouse, *Painting in Britain, 1530-1790*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), chapter one, 'Henry and the Generation of Holbein', 1-10.

<sup>28</sup> *The Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 2.

Anthony van Dyck.<sup>29</sup> A half-length portrait of Algernon Percy, 10th Earl of Northumberland (1602-68) hung at the beginning of the south wall, was a copy after an original full-length still held at the Percy family's estate, Alnwick Castle (123).<sup>30</sup> Van Dyck reportedly painted several portraits of Percy, who had served as Lord High Admiral under Charles I.<sup>31</sup> The copy exhibited in the Naval Gallery was acquired in 1835, when Captain Lord Prudhoe, a descendant of Percy, donated the funds for it to be purchased from a picture dealer.<sup>32</sup> In the catalogue it is described as being painted by 'the elder Stone, after Vandyck'. This presumably refers to the portraitist Henry Stone (1616-53), an artist who was famed as a copyist of Van Dyck. Despite the fact that this work was a copy, its inclusion within the main hall confirmed Van Dyck's acknowledged status as the leading portraitist of the period. Percy is depicted standing side-on to the canvas, with his head turned toward the viewer where his eyes meet their gaze. Percy's neatly quaffed mid-length hair, the dropped collar and the silk sleeves reflect the fashions of the Stuart court, demonstrating the sitter's wealth and status.<sup>33</sup> However, unlike the portrait of *Howard*, this portrait more overtly identified the naval occupation of the sitter. With his elbow resting on an anchor, Percy holds the baton of a Lord High Admiral in his

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<sup>29</sup> James Lawson, *Van Dyck: Paintings and Drawings*, (London: Prestel Publishing, 1999), esp. Chapter Three, 'Movement and Destiny, Van Dyck as a Portraitist', 55-76; Christopher Brown, *Van Dyck*, (Oxford: Phaidon, 1982), esp. 201-2. For biographical detail on Percy see Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 260; Jeremy Wood, 'The Architectural Patronage of Algernon Percy, 10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Northumberland', in John Bold and Edward Chaney, eds., *English Architecture, Public and Private: Essays for Kerry Downes*, (London: Hambledon Press, 1993), 55-80.

<sup>30</sup> Brown, *Van Dyck*, 201-2 (fig. 202).

<sup>31</sup> Brown, *Van Dyck*, 201-2 (fig. 202). There is also an original oblong shaped half-length portrait of Percy by Van Dyck at Alnwick which depicts him resting his left hand on an anchor rather than the hilt of his sword. See Brown, *Van Dyck*, 202, fig. 204.

<sup>32</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 10 February 1835, 301; 11 July 1836, 306.

<sup>33</sup> See Aileen Ribeiro, *Fashion and Fiction: Dress in Art and Literature in Stuart England*, (New Haven and London: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2005); Peck, *Consuming Splendor*, 1, 28-9; Emilie E. S. Gordenker, *Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641) and the Representation of Dress in Seventeenth-Century Portraiture*, (Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2001), 21-2, 33-5.

right hand and grasps the hilt of his sword with his left.<sup>34</sup> Clouds of smoke rise up in the distance signifying the progression of a naval battle, a conflict that is more clearly articulated in the original full-length version of this portrait. Although Percy's occupation as Lord High Admiral is clearly identifiable within this portrait, he is presented in an idealised way that simultaneously conforms to the established representation of an aristocratic courtly gentleman.

Following the stylistic precedents of the early Stuart court, the *Flagmen of Lowestoft* series, painted by Lely between 1666 and 1667, introduced a different mode of maritime portrait into the Naval Gallery (124-7).<sup>35</sup> The stylistic precedents set by Van Dyck are still evident in the composition of this portrait series, with the sitters generally positioned side-on to the canvas, with their heads turned toward to viewer. However, Lely's representation of the *Flagmen* also reflects the influences of his Dutch background. The stance adopted by many of the figures recalls the Dutch portrait tradition.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, the representation of the seascape and the attention that Lely invested into the depiction of the warships reflects the influences of the Dutch marine tradition.<sup>37</sup> Rather than elaborate courtly robes, the majority of the *Flagmen* are clothed in more practical military costume; wearing breastplates, holding swords and leaning on an array of nautical attributes. Despite the fact that this series was painted after the Restoration, Lely maintains some of the influences

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<sup>34</sup> Brown, *Van Dyck*, 201.

<sup>35</sup> Lely's *Flagmen of Lowestoft* series was initially hung in the Duke of York's Great Chamber at his hunting box at Culford. See Richard Charlton-Jones, 'Lely to Kneller 1650-1723', in Roy Strong, ed., *The British Portrait, 1660-1960*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club, 1991), 85. When the series was donated to the Naval Gallery in 1824, it was recorded as being at Windsor Castle. TNA PRO 30/26/27, Pictures in the Naval Gallery, 48.

<sup>36</sup> Joaneath Spicer, 'The Renaissance Elbow', in Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg, *A Cultural History of Gesture*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 84-128. See also Charlton-Jones, 'Lely to Kneller', 86.

<sup>37</sup> See *The Art of the Van de Veldes: Paintings and drawings by the great Dutch marine artists and their English followers*, (London: The National Maritime Museum, 1982).

of what Laura Knoppers has termed the Cromwellian ‘Plain Style’.<sup>38</sup> In contrast to the idealising portraits of the early Stuart court, Lely depicts the *Flagmen* with greater visual realism. The sitters are depicted with their hair out of place and, rather than an idealised complexion, they have ruddy, weather-beaten cheeks. Rather than the replication of a singular format, the introduction of naturalistic difference gives variety to the set. Each sitter is positioned in a unique stance, holding a nautical attribute making their occupation implicitly clear. Viewers would not fail to identify the maritime occupation of *George Monck* who rests an arm upon an anchor while grasping a military baton (124). In contrast to the marginalised naval battle in the corner of *Howard’s* interior portrait, as the ornate gilt stern that occupies the middle-ground in Lely’s portrait of *Thomas Allin* demonstrates, the seascape had become a dominant and integral feature in Lely’s naval portraits (125). The series presented a new mode of maritime portraiture; one that moved toward the clear association of the sitter with his maritime profession. Painted in the years immediately after Charles II’s creation of the Royal Navy, following the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660, Lely’s *Flagmen* records the development of an increasingly professionalised naval fraternity.

Lely’s *Flagmen of Lowestoft* were followed by another series of naval portraits; a set of *Admirals* that were commissioned for the Crown during the reign of Queen Anne.<sup>39</sup> Fourteen portraits were commissioned in total: seven by Kneller

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<sup>38</sup> Laura Lunger Knoppers, ‘The Politics of Portraiture: Oliver Cromwell and the Plain Style’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 51, no. 4, (Winter, 1998): 1282-1319, esp. 1289.

<sup>39</sup> See J. Douglas Stewart, *Sir Godfrey Kneller and the Baroque Portrait*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 57-77 and ‘Paintings Catalogue’, 87-141. Stewart observes that this series of fourteen admiralty portraits was recorded in ‘A List of Her Majesties Pictures in Kensington, Hampton Court and Windsor Castle’ (MSS in the Surveyor’s Office, St. James’s Palace): ‘In the Waiting Room [Kensington Palace] These 14 Adm<sup>ls</sup> ar 1/2 lengths done by S<sup>r</sup> G Kneller and M<sup>r</sup> Dahle’. See Stewart, *Sir Godfrey Kneller*, 87.



and seven by Dahl.<sup>40</sup> This later series of *Admirals* quite consciously responded to Lely's *Flagmen*. Both Kneller and Dahl re-appropriate the stances found in Lely's earlier series. The composition of Dahl's portrait of *Admiral Rooke* recalls Lely's portrait of *Lawson* (128 & 126) and Kneller's *Admiral George Churchill* replicates Lely's *Sir George Ayescue* (129 & 127). Across the series of fourteen portraits, the depiction of individual likenesses, stance and gesture gives the series variety and dynamism. In contrast to Lely's series, a number of the sitters possess a greater degree of martial vigour, being depicted with their swords drawn toward the viewer.<sup>41</sup> The aforementioned portraits reflect the dominant role that a small number of foreign artists occupied within the visual culture of the seventeenth-century English court. The examples that these artists set remained influential upon the subsequent development of portraiture in Britain. As Richard Charlton-Jones observes, the studio practices that Lely and Kneller established 'were to be among their most important legacies to the great age of English painting that lay ahead'.<sup>42</sup> The success that they had experienced was to a degree achieved at the expense of their native contemporaries. However, as Charlton-Jones has argued, it is important to recognise that it was 'with Lely and Kneller that an era of foreign domination of painting came to end'.<sup>43</sup>

This rise in the participation of native artists was reflected on the walls of the Gallery where both original and replica works by an array of eighteenth-century British artists, including George Knapton, Thomas Gainsborough, George Romney, John Hoppner and Nathaniel Dance, were exhibited across the remaining part of the

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<sup>40</sup> Sir Oliver Millar, *The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen*, 2 vols., (London: Phaidon Press, 1963), catalogue nos. 386-94; Charlton-Jones, 'Lely to Kneller', 107-8, 121-2.

<sup>41</sup> See Kneller, *Vice-Admiral Benbow* (NMM BHC 2546) and Dahl, *Sir James Wishart* (NMM BHC 3101).

<sup>42</sup> Charlton-Jones, 'Lely to Kneller', 75.

<sup>43</sup> Charlton-Jones, 'Lely to Kneller', 75.

main hall.<sup>44</sup> Collectively these portraits traced the shift that occurred during the eighteenth century toward the development of a British school of portraiture. Among this array of artists, a total of five portraits hung in the main hall were either original works by, or copies after, Joshua Reynolds.<sup>45</sup> The predominance of his works upon the walls of the Gallery reinforced Reynolds's established status as the country's leading portraitist.<sup>46</sup> Following his death in 1792, Reynolds's popularity had only continued to rise. In response to the sale of Lady Thomond's collection of Reynolds's paintings, which took place in 1821, the *Examiner* highlighted the perceived status of the artist at this time: 'In RAPHAEL, the mind displayed buries the mode of displaying it; - in REYNOLDS, the mode of doing distracts from the expression done, not from its dexterous truth, like RUBENS, but its seductive singularity'.<sup>47</sup> This comparison with Raphael and Rubens emphasises how, in the years immediately preceding the foundation of the Naval Gallery, Reynolds was widely acclaimed, not just as a leading British contemporary artist but, as one of the great masters of European art.

The inclusion of several portraits by, or after, Reynolds within the Naval Gallery allowed visitors to recognise the ways in which his approach to naval

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<sup>44</sup> For example, the following portraits are included in Locker's 1839 plan: George Knapton, *Admiral Sir John Norris, circa 1660-1749* (NMM BHC2912); a copy of Gainsborough's *Viscount Samuel Hood (1724-1816)* made for the Naval Gallery by John Wood (NMM BHC 2777); George Romney, *Admiral Sir Charles Hardy, (c. 1716-80)* (NMM BHC 2744); Matthew Shepperson after John Hoppner, *Rear-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson, 1st Viscount Nelson* (NMM BHC 2898); Nathaniel Dance, *Captain James Cook, 1728-79* (NMM BHC2628).

<sup>45</sup> In the 1839 plan a total of five portraits by Reynolds are positioned in the main hall. However, this includes the two copies that were produced for the Naval Gallery: copy after Reynolds, *Admiral Edward Boscawen (1711-1761)* (BHC2565); Matthew Shepperson after Reynolds, *Admiral George Bridges Rodney (1719-1792), 1st Baron Rodney*, (BHC2971); Reynolds, *Captain Alexander Hood, 1726-1814, 1st Viscount Bridport*, (BHC2573); Reynolds, *Captain John Gell, 1740-1805*, (BHC2708); Reynolds, *Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Hughes, circa 1720-94*, (BHC2792).

<sup>46</sup> For an examination of Reynolds's career see James Northcote, *The Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 2 volumes, (London: Henry Colburn, Conduit Street, 1818); Nicholas Penny, ed., *Reynolds*, exhibition catalogue, (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1986); Ellis Waterhouse, *Reynolds*, (London: Phaidon Press, 1973), esp. 'Introduction', 9-38, and 'Biographical Summary', 43-45. For a complete catalogue of Reynolds's works see Mannings and Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*.

<sup>47</sup> 'Sir Joshua Reynolds', *The Examiner*, 3 June 1821.

portraiture was influenced by the established pictorial traditions; but it also helped to confirm the extent to which his works were stylistically innovative. Reynolds's portrait of *Admiral George Bridges Rodney* introduced a new type of martial valour into the Naval Gallery (130). The painting exhibited in the main hall was actually a copy carried out by Shepperson after the original in the Royal Collection. Even as a copy, this portrait conveys the evolution of heroism that took place in Reynolds's naval portraiture. Rodney is depicted with his right arm outstretched, resting on an anchor. Within the Naval Gallery alone, this arm-resting-on-an-anchor gesture was first employed in Van Dyck's portrait of *Percy*, and it was subsequently reiterated across the Gallery in Lely's portrait of *George Monck* and in Kneller's full-length portrait of *Prince George of Denmark*. While referencing an established language of maritime portraiture, Reynolds was reinvigorating the gesture. Rather than depicting the sitter leaning upon the anchor at rest, Rodney is depicted striding across the canvas, momentarily touching the nautical attribute as he passes. He is dressed in an admiral's full-dress uniform, based on a pattern introduced in 1787.<sup>48</sup> Following the introduction of naval uniforms in 1748, eighteenth-century portraitists were provided with a means to convey naval status in a newly explicit way.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, the Battle of the Saints is pictured raging away in the background.<sup>50</sup> The smoke-filled sky provides a dark and muted palette against which Rodney's heroic silhouette is boldly defined. With his left arm clenched tightly to his chest, Rodney is depicted as the confident, composed and patriotic naval hero.

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<sup>48</sup> Mannings and Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, I, 397, cat. no. 1545 & II, 574, plate no. 1555; Amy Miller, *Dressed to Kill: British Naval Uniform, Masculinity and Contemporary Fashions, 1748-1857* (London: National Maritime Museum, 2007), 107.

<sup>49</sup> Miller, *Dressed to Kill*, 8, 98.

<sup>50</sup> Stephen Conway, "'A Joy Unknown for Years Past': The American War, brutishness and the Celebration of Rodney's Victory at the Saints", *History*, 86:282 (2001), 180-99; Peter Padfield, *Maritime Supremacy and the Opening of the Western Mind: Naval Campaigns that Shaped the Modern World 1588-1782* (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 200), 277.

In positioning five portraits by, or after, Reynolds on permanent display the Gallery represented several decades of Reynolds's artistic career; the earliest being the portrait of Boscawen, painted in 1755-56, and the latest being that of Rodney painted in 1788.<sup>51</sup> Due to the popular demand for works by Reynolds in the early nineteenth century, it was not always possible to obtain the original versions and a number of copies were included in their place. The exhibition of replica portraits still allowed a broad audience to have a degree of access to Reynolds's productions at a time when such a selection of original works were not easily available to them. It was widely acknowledged that Reynolds had been influential upon his contemporaries.<sup>52</sup> As the *Morning Post* recognised in 1813 Reynolds's portraits were 'splendid and instructive examples for the imitation of his successors'.<sup>53</sup> Through the exhibition of a number of works by, or after, Reynolds, the Naval Gallery was able to provide an arena for contemporary artists to study a selection of works by this influential British old master.

The active involvement of the Gallery in the continued development of naval portraiture reached its apogee in 1829, when the Naval Gallery commissioned Briggs to paint an original portrait for exhibition in the Gallery. However, rather than a depiction of a contemporary admiral, Briggs was commissioned to paint a portrait of the Commonwealth military commander and General at Sea, Robert Blake (1598-1657) (98). Briggs reportedly worked from a known engraving of Blake in order to

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<sup>51</sup> While the portraits of *Gell*, *Hughes* and *Bridport* were original, as Chapter 1 examined, the Gallery went to great lengths to acquire copies of *Rodney* and *Boscawen*, when the originals were unavailable. See Mannings and Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, for Admiral Gell see I, 213, cat. no. 712 & II, plate no. 1482; for Bridport (see 'Hood') I, 261, cat. no. 925 & II, plate no. 71]. A portrait of Barrington, also by Reynolds, was on display in the vestibule (NMM BHC2534).

<sup>52</sup> For a more detailed assessment of how Reynolds influenced his contemporaries see Stephen Gwynn, *Memorials of an Eighteenth Century Painter (James Northcote)*, London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898), 55-109; Postle, 'The Golden Age', 200, 224-5.

<sup>53</sup> 'Commemoration of Sir J. Reynolds', *The Morning Post*, 18 May 1813.

create a likeness.<sup>54</sup> This portrait offers an interesting example of a nineteenth-century artist directly responding to the tradition of naval portraiture, as it was displayed in the Naval Gallery. Briggs clearly made an attempt to assimilate with the stylistic approaches employed by the seventeenth-century portraiture alongside which his picture was to be exhibited. The compositional structure and costume is particularly reminiscent of Lely's *Flagmen of Lowestoft* series. Even the dominantly yellow palette replicates the effects of aged and darkened varnish on an original. Although equally weighty in physique, Blake is not depicted with the same degree of ruddy pictorial realism. Briggs has perfected his hair and replaced the reddened weather beaten cheeks of Lely's *Flagmen* with those of a rosier glow. Briggs has also deliberately exaggerated a number of aspects within the portrait in ways that expose its nineteenth-century origins. Rather than positioning the sitter on a shoreline overlooking the naval action, Blake has been theatrically relocated to the centre of the action, where he stands on the quarterdeck of a ship in the midst of battle. Where the early modern portraits adopt a broad and open stance to convey dominance and command, Blake stands *en garde* with his sword drawn toward the enemy, in a pronounced exaggeration of the Dutch tradition.<sup>55</sup> The theatricality of this nineteenth-century invention quite deliberately causes it to stand out from the surrounding early modern works, clearly identifying it as an early nineteenth-century original. In relocating Blake to the centre of the action, Briggs has merged aspects of portraiture with history painting. This overtly dramatic representation of the sitter demonstrates the influence of another sub-genre of portraiture prevalent in the late-

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<sup>54</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, 'Blake', 13.

<sup>55</sup> See Spicer's discussion of the 'renaissance elbow' as a developing feature in Dutch male portraiture. Spicer, 'The Renaissance Elbow', 84-128. See also Joanna Woodall 'Sovereign bodies: the reality of status in seventeenth-century Dutch portraiture in Joanna Woodall, ed., *Portraiture, Facing the Subject*, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 75-100.

eighteenth century – that of the theatre portrait.<sup>56</sup> In responding in a creative way to the forms and conventions of the historic portraiture on display within the Naval Gallery, Briggs reinvented the established model of naval portraiture.

### Marine Painting

Underneath the upper two tiers of naval portraits, a third horizontal register made up predominately of marine paintings underpinned the entire display. From the foundation of the Gallery, as the 1823 proposal illustrates, Locker was dedicated to the promotion of a British school of marine painting:

Notwithstanding the long and brilliant career of Victory which this Nation has enjoyed at Sea, it is remarkable how little patronage has been given to Marine Painting. The splendid Pictures of the late Mr Loutherboung, prove that such subjects are capable of being treated with great interest, in the hands of a man of genius, and I am unwilling to doubt that the walls of the Painted Hall will hereafter shew, that the English School may rival the best works of Vanderveldt, and Cuyp, and other Foreign Masters, many of whom though not exclusively Marine Painters, have excelled in this department of art.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Martin Postle, ed., *Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity*, (London: Tate Britain, 2005), see ‘The Theatre of Life’, 199.

<sup>57</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

Hung along this lowest register, the marine paintings were positioned in a way that invited close observation of nautical detail. In this position, the achievements of a developing school of British marine painting were positioned at the fore.<sup>58</sup>

When the Gallery was founded, it was widely recognised that the Dutch school of marine painting, particularly the work of the Van de Veldes who had settled in England in 1673, had provided an influential basis for the subsequent development of marine painting in Britain.<sup>59</sup> As George Keyes examines, the seventeenth-century Dutch marine painters were characterised by a precision and accuracy in the representation of nautical detail. Furthermore, a bright palette and an expressive tonal range were equally characteristic of the genre. However, it was the presentation of the natural world, particularly the effect of light and the changing appearance of the sea or sky in different conditions, which distinguished seventeenth-century Dutch marine painting.<sup>60</sup> Within the Naval Gallery, a depiction of the *Burning of HMS Royal James at the Battle of Solebay*, which hung in the second bay along the south wall, provided a foundational example of the stylistic influences of the Dutch school (100 & 131). In Locker's 1833 catalogue, the painting is described as 'probably by the elder Vandevelde', an attribution which is now under question due to the layers of dark varnish and extensive over-painting.<sup>61</sup> In the centre of the canvas, Sandwich's flagship has burst into flames and many men are depicted leaping overboard into the sea. Underneath some crude over-painting, intricately detailed figureheads and ornate sterns can be made out from behind the clouds of smoke. The depiction of this acute detail was, as Keyes argues,

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<sup>58</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

<sup>59</sup> David Cordingly, 'Introduction' in *The Art of the Van de Veldes*, 11-20; E. H. H. Archibald, *Dictionary of Sea Painters*, (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1980), 190-192; George S. Keyes, *Mirror of Empire. Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth Century*, (Cambridge: The Minneapolis Institute of Arts in association with Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1-36, esp 22-32.

<sup>60</sup> Keyes, *Mirror of Empire*, 1-36.

<sup>61</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 7, no. 18.

characteristic of the Dutch approach.<sup>62</sup> Set back in the middle ground of this canvas, the ships overlap, constructing an impression of perspectival regression into the distance. A small rowing boat positioned in the foreground provides a point of reference, emphasising the scale and monumentality of the warships. Whether this work is an original by one of the Van de Veldes or not, its inclusion within the main hall certainly introduced some of the essential Dutch traits to this display of British maritime painting. Positioned toward the beginning of the display, it would have provided visitors with a pictorial point of comparison, allowing them to see both how British artists were influenced by these established seventeenth-century Dutch traditions and, crucially, how they moved beyond this example.

The subsequent exhibition of works by a number of influential British marine painters traced the development of a British school of marine painting. A number of Dutch influences are evident in Richard Paton's depiction of the *Battle of the Barfleur, 19 May 1692* which hung along the south wall (103).<sup>63</sup> The central action is similarly situated in the middle distance, with a shadow cast across the foreground to draw the spectator into the middle ground. Although Paton demonstrated the influence of Dutch marine painting in the representation of atmospheric effects he adds a greater sense of theatrical action. The low horizon is almost completely concealed behind a mass of smoke and ships. Although this precludes a clear sense of compositional depth, the fleet sail directly away from the picture plane creating a compensatory illusion of perspectival recession. The viewer is drawn into the centre of the action, situated between the vast opposing French and Anglo-Dutch fleets. Although Paton was clearly engaging with a number of the stylistic features found in

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<sup>62</sup> Keyes, *Mirror of Empire*, 1-36.

<sup>63</sup> Archibald, *Dictionary of Sea Painters*, 155.



seventeenth-century Dutch marine painting, he was developing upon them in a way that demonstrates the growth of an independent British school.

Hung on the opposite wall of the Gallery, *The Battle of Negapatam, 6 July 1782* exemplified a more documentary approach to marine painting that was characteristic of Dominic Serres's later works (132).<sup>64</sup> This work depicts the third of five fleet actions between the English and French at the end of the War of American Independence, fought off Ceylon and the east coast of India.<sup>65</sup> Serres's painting represents the beginning of the battle: both fleets remain in line with the British on the left. This is one of seven paintings commissioned for Sir Edward Hughes which were left to the Naval Gallery in 1824 and the only one remaining in the collection today.<sup>66</sup> Serres presents a highly structured view of the fleet, offering the viewer a sight straight down the centre, between the two lines of ships. As a result he captures the highly organised and strategic nature of maritime warfare. This is characteristic of his work from the period. As Sarah Monks observes, 'Serres's paintings of the 1780s often depict lesser-known actions – yet they do so in a manner which is rigorous, tight and desiccated, betraying the impositions placed upon the artist by his naval patrons'.<sup>67</sup> The presentation of atmospheric effects, such as the detailed display of smoke rising from the cannons, relates to the established interest in natural effects

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<sup>64</sup> Serres joined the Incorporated Society of Artists in 1765 and became a founding member of the Royal Academy in 1768. For further discussion of Serres's position within the art world see Sarah Monks, "'Un Peu Gascon': Dominic Serres and the Spectre of Alienation", in Sarah Monks, John Barrell and Mark Hallett (eds.), *Living with the Royal Academy: artistic ideals and experiences in England, 1768-1848*, (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2013), 53-74; Alan Russett, *Dominic Serres RA 1719-1793: War Artist to the Navy*, (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 2001), esp. 10-12; Archibald, *Dictionary of Sea Painters*, 175-6; Cordingly, *Marine Painting*, 83.

<sup>65</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 134-148; Russett, *Dominic Serres*, 167-8; Monks, 'Un Peu Gascon', 63.

<sup>66</sup> In 1835, Vice-Admiral Benjamin Page observed that most of the works were hung 'disrespectfully' in corridors rather than in the main hall. As a result he requested that they be transferred to the Town Hall at Ipswich, Hughes' home town. The Board agreed to an initial donation of four works but when Page requested a fifth the process became increasingly complicated. Eventually, the Board agreed to Page's request, but resolved never to comply with such demands in the future. For correspondence and reports of these proceedings see TNA PRO 30/26/27: 2 June 1835, 274; 9 April 1835, 276; 11 June 1835, 288; 19 June 1835, 294. TNA ADM 67/86, 9 April 1835, 122-23; 18 June 1835, 189; 6 August 1835, 258. Also see van der Merwe, 'Greenwich Hospital Collection', 33.

<sup>67</sup> Monks, 'Un Peu Gascon'. 63.

seen in the Dutch school.<sup>68</sup> However, the way in which Serres employed a highly documentary style to carefully delineate the display of naval conflict demonstrates his development beyond these early influences. It also reveals the extent to which Serres was bound to meet with the nautical demands of his naval patrons who would have wished to document the successes of an increasingly scientific and technically advanced British fleet.<sup>69</sup>

In a similar fashion, the depiction of the *Battle of Frigate Bay, 26 January 1782* by Nicholas Pocock, hung in the second bay of the north wall, exemplified the documentary approach adopted by late-eighteenth century marine artists (133). After a career in the navy, he was famed for his ability to record naval actions with nautical precision, a skill which ensured his success as a marine painter.<sup>70</sup> Pocock depicts an action that occurred between the French and British fleets during the American Revolutionary War.<sup>71</sup> The British, under the command of Rear-Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, made a failed attempt to defend the island of St Kitts from French attack, under the Comte de Grasse. Cordingly observes that it is likely Pocock received most of his information regarding this battle from Admiral Hood while carrying out a joint commission of five paintings for him and his naval brother, Lord Bridport, during the 1780s.<sup>72</sup> However, Pocock also had personal experience of this location having served in the Royal Navy before and commanding a voyage to St Kitts in 1776.<sup>73</sup> Pocock depicts the British fleet having taken possession of the bay,

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<sup>68</sup> Cordingly, *Marine Painting*, 16-71. In his early career Serres was influenced by the early British interpretations of Dutch marine painting, as exhibited by Peter Monamy (c. 1686-1749) and Charles Brooking (1723-1759). See Cordingly, *Marine Painting*, 74-76, 80-81; Thorsten Sjölin and Rosemary Brooking Sjölin, *Charles Brooking, 1723?-1759: A fresh look at the marine painter, his father and other Brooking relatives*, (Exmouth: The Brooking Society, 2009), esp. 20. For brief biographies of Brooking and Monamy see Archibald, *Dictionary of Sea Painters*, 73 & 145-6 respectively.

<sup>69</sup> Monks, 'Un Peu Gascon', 63.

<sup>70</sup> Cordingly, *Marine painting*, 87-89.

<sup>71</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27: 24 October 1826, 145; 10 October 1827, 155.

<sup>72</sup> David Cordingly, *Nicholas Pocock, 1740-1821*, (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1986), 64.

<sup>73</sup> Cordingly, *Marine painting*, 88.

anchored in a strategic dog's leg or 'L' formation. The French are attempting to break through and both sides exchange cannon fire. A French two-decker is positioned side-on, in the centre foreground: it has turned away and begins to flee from the British line having failed to breach their barrier. Positioned broadside to the picture plane, this retreating French warship, with cannon holes punctured across the sails, provides a small example of British victory in what was ultimately an overwhelming defeat. The way in which light is depicted catching on both the bow and the sails of the French two-decker in the foreground recalls the well-established fascination with atmospheric effects employed by both Dutch and British marine painters. However, the way in which Pocock delineates a number of ships in different points of sail not only demonstrates his capabilities as an accomplished artist, but provides the viewer with a comprehensive perspective of the scale and structural monumentality of the fleet.

In December 1824, E. Haywood, an 'old captain in the Navy', wrote to Charles Long regarding the display of marine painting in the Naval Gallery. He was writing in response to the British Institution's recent announcement that they were offering premiums for sketches of the battles of the Nile and Trafalgar which ultimately would result in the donation of four oil paintings to the Naval Gallery. In this letter, Haywood outlined a number of his issues with contemporary marine painting:

In almost all the Marine Paintings by modern artists the perspective drawing of ships is erroneous. The masts, yards and rigging are generally misplaced and out of proportion.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> TNA PRO30/26/27, E. Haywood to Charles Long, 23 December 1824, 106.

Haywood's letter illustrates a type of criticism which marine painting, and the marine artist, was subject to in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In this letter to Long, Haywood's comments reflect the established expectations that were placed upon marine artists:

To paint a British man of war properly in its endless changes and foreshortenings, in battle and the various weather to which that fabric is subject requires that an artist should possess, not only a thorough knowledge of the maritime itself, but a competent practice in marine evolution by actual observation at sea; a painter's eye capable of appreciating the contending elements by which those bodies are put in motion; but also a determination, to devote himself to that particular study. It was this combination that produced a Vandervelde - with these advantages even, perhaps we may not see another, but without them, it is impossible.<sup>75</sup>

In the *Liber Nauticus*, an instruction manual for marine painting published in 1805, Dominic and John Thomas Serres provided a summary that similarly outlines these demands: 'many are the obstacles to the attainment of a proficiency in drawing Marine subjects, particularly as it is not only requisite that a person desirous of excelling in this Art should possess a knowledge of the construction of a ship, or of what is denominated "Naval Architecture" together with the proportion of masts & yards, the width, depth & cut of the sails, &c; but he should likewise be acquainted

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<sup>75</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 December 1824, 106.

with Seamanship'.<sup>76</sup> A marine artist was expected to have an accurate knowledge of ships and seamanship. They needed to be able to accurately depict different rigs and ship hulls, demanding knowledge of a variety of ships from a first-rate man-of-war down to a small cutter. Often this nautical accuracy was achieved through the use of ship models, an essential feature in most marine artists' studios in the eighteenth century.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, the marine artist needed to be able to identify and represent the crucial differences between the British, Dutch, French and Spanish fleets.<sup>78</sup> As Cordingly has thoroughly examined, this included a knowledge of flags and pendants, points of sail and the behaviour of ships in different weather conditions.<sup>79</sup> In addition, they were required to have an extensive knowledge of the sea, tidal systems, the effects of different weather conditions upon the surface of water and an understanding of how this could vary based on depth. This knowledge, it was believed, could only be attained through the extensive observation, acquired by a duration spent at sea. We should note that Serres, Pocock and Chambers all served in the Royal Navy or merchant service at some point in their careers.<sup>80</sup> However, the late eighteenth century saw a number of landscape artists moving across to sea subjects, and transforming the genre. The heightened critical response to early nineteenth-century marine painting, exemplified by Haywood, was partly in opposition to the unprecedented developments of the genre at the hands of a number of such interlopers.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Dominic and John Thomas Serres, *Liber Nauticus, and Instructor in the Art of Marine Drawing*, (Published and sold by Edward Orme, His Majesty's printseller, No. 59, New Bond Street, London, 1805), preface.

<sup>77</sup> Cordingly, *Marine Painting*, 13-14.

<sup>78</sup> Cordingly, *Marine Painting*, 11.

<sup>79</sup> Cordingly, *Marine Painting*, 11.

<sup>80</sup> Russett, *Dominic Serres RA*, esp. 10-12; Cordingly, *Marine painting*, 88; John Watkins, *The Life and Career of George Chambers*, (London: Printed for the Author and sold by him at no 9 Bell Yard Fleet St, 1841).

<sup>81</sup> Cordingly, *Marine Painting*, 96-134.

Within the Gallery, this tangential branch of Romantic marine painting was represented by de Louthembourg, who was most likely one of the ‘modern artists’ that Haywood took issue with.<sup>82</sup> Locker was overtly complimentary of de Louthembourg’s impact upon the development of the marine genre:

This accomplished artist indulged even to a fault his striking talent for effect; but in depicting naval battles he has excelled all his predecessors in this country, in giving spirit and life to subjects confessedly difficult to render interesting except by the hand of a man of genius. The appearance of this and some other works from his pencil, creates an æra in Marine Painting highly important to this department of Art.<sup>83</sup>

This late eighteenth-century artist was less preoccupied with the representation of ‘masts, yards and rigging’ and more interested in the creation of atmospheric effects and dramatic action.<sup>84</sup> In de Louthembourg’s *Defeat of the Spanish Armada* attention rests upon the human spectacle which takes place up against the picture plane (94). De Louthembourg’s naval action is positioned in the throes of a storm. The dark green sea swirls underneath the rowing boats while smoke from the burning fires merges with the dark clouds overhead. In the foreground, men desperately attempt not to fall overboard clinging on to the small rowing boats. This narrative captures a fear not

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<sup>82</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 December 1824, 106. For a survey of how Romanticism shaped and responded to depictions of conflict at the end of the eighteenth century see Philip Shaw, ed., *Romantic Wars: Studies in Culture and Conflict, 1793-1822*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2000), esp. ‘Introduction’, 1-12; Mary A. Favret, *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime*, (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010).

<sup>83</sup> Locker, *Portraits and Memoirs*, ‘Defeat of the Spanish Armada’, 3.

<sup>84</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 December 1824, 106.

just of human combat and warfare, but of drowning; engaging with the Romantic interest in the sublime and the destructive potential of nature.<sup>85</sup>

De Louthembourg's posthumous reinterpretation of the *Defeat of the Armada*, painted over two hundred years after the event, was positioned on the south wall, right at the beginning of Locker's naval chronology where it preceded the seventeenth-century Dutch depiction of the *Burning of the Royal James* (134). In this position, the two paintings responded to each other in a multitude of ways. The contrast in size and scale is the most obvious and immediate difference between the two paintings: the Dutch *Solebay* measures 3ft 4ins x 4ft 4ins while de Louthembourg's *Armada* is 7ft 9ins x 9ft 9ins. In *Solebay* the ships are positioned in the middle distance and the figures that are depicted jumping overboard are minute in comparison to the almost life-sized figures at the forefront of de Louthembourg's narrative. However, when hung beside each other, visitors were visually invited to consider the extent to which British marine painting had developed beyond early in stylistic influences of the Dutch marine tradition. Such comparison, we can suggest, offered visitors yet another patriotic and triumphalist narrative, this time one that focused on the flourishing state of maritime painting itself.

In addition to the acquisition of marine paintings for the Gallery, Locker also commissioned a number of pictures directly from contemporary artists. George Chambers was commissioned to execute two marine paintings depicting *The Bombardment of Algiers by Viscount Exmouth* and the *Capture of Puerto Bello, 21 November 1739* (113 & 139). In the *Bombardment of Algiers*, the first of the two works, Chambers depicts a naval expedition under the command of Admiral Pellew, in which the British engaged the corsairs who had been attacking British shipping off

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<sup>85</sup> Quilley, *Empire to Nation*, 209-10.

the Barbary Coast. While completing the commission, Chambers travelled to the south coast with the 'express purpose of sketching men-of-war for this picture'.<sup>86</sup> A number of these sketches are in the possession of the National Maritime Museum, along with a more developed oil study. They collectively record Chambers's refined and methodical artistic process. The grey-wash study indicates the ways in which Chambers worked out both compositional and structural details, as he noted the rigs on each warship and outlined the details of the sterns and bow (135). The oil study records a more painterly experiment with light and colour, with particular attention being invested into the effects of fire in the distance (136). In his biography of Chambers, John Watkins described the finished work as 'one of the best pictures that now adorn the Naval Gallery'.<sup>87</sup> In the finished version of the *Bombardment of Algiers* Chambers created an unusual composition where the viewer is positioned very low, as if in a rowing boat just outside of the pictorial parameters. From this location the warships loom into view. They are so monumental in scale that they cannot be contained by the pictorial space. Instead Chambers presents a fragmented view of a two-decker's bow to the right while, on the left, the stern of another ship is just visible as it exits the composition extending the action beyond the boundary of the picture frame. A warship sails directly into the distance, a compositional feature that has occurred in a number of the previous works and in the same way, it here leads the viewer into the middle ground.

Chambers received some criticism for his execution of the work. Watkins recounted that 'he has fallen into the defect with regard to the colour and form of the smoke that was pointed out to him by Admiral Mundy' remarking that 'gunpowder smoke is of a dead white colour, and burst from the gun into a cloud at once – it is

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<sup>86</sup> Watkins, *Life and Career of George Chambers*, 111.

<sup>87</sup> Watkins, *Life and Career of George Chambers*, 111.



not poured from the cannon's mouth'.<sup>88</sup> The criticism yet again illustrates the scrupulous demands for nautical accuracy that were still placed upon the marine genre. Furthermore, Locker stated that he himself 'frequently and carefully examined it, to ascertain why the general effect, at a distance, diminished the satisfaction received when looking at it in detail when close'.<sup>89</sup> He suggested that it 'certainly wants that broad and striking effect so necessary to a Gallery picture, and especially as it is placed near the Death of Nelson'.<sup>90</sup> This is a particularly telling example of Locker directly considering the aesthetic of the display. Locker criticised the degree to which Chambers's marine painting possessed a 'striking effect', but he compared it against a history painting. These criticisms reflect a continued tension in which the marine genre was required to present a nautically accurate representation and yet provide the viewer with visually engaging representations of dramatic human action. In 1837, the *Bombardment of Algiers* was loaned to the British Institution where it was exhibited in the annual contemporary exhibition.<sup>91</sup> In loaning paintings to other British art institutions, the Naval Gallery was able to solidify its position as an active participant within the contemporary art world. In a review of the exhibition, the *Literary Gazette* made the following observation about Chambers's *Bombardment of Algiers* which to some extent summarises that development of British marine painting promoted more widely within the main hall of the Gallery:

Battles by water, as well as by land, have undergone a great change  
in the manner of their representation since the times of Serres, Paton

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<sup>88</sup> Watkins, *Life and Career of George Chambers*, 111-12.

<sup>89</sup> Letter from Locker to Chambers, 17 December 1836, printed in Watkins, *Life and Career of George Chambers*, 112.

<sup>90</sup> Letter from Locker to Chambers, printed in Watkins, *Life and Career of George Chambers*, 113.

<sup>91</sup> Exhibit no. 261 at the British Institution Contemporary exhibition. See Russett, *George Chambers*, 134.

&c. They have now less of the geometrical, and more of the picturesque. As a work of art, this does great credit to the talents of Mr Chambers.<sup>92</sup>

Chambers heightens the atmospheric effects of his picture and demonstrates an interest in the representation of a stormy sky. Furthermore, as the oil study illustrates, Chambers invested great attention into the representation of the fires burning in the middle distance, capturing not just the smoke and flames, but the reflection of the brilliant white-hot light upon the sea. The composition is not purely restricted by a documentary demand to capture the entirety of the event. Instead, naval action spills out beyond the parameters of the canvas and breaches the viewer's own space. Commissioned specifically for the Naval Gallery, in this work Chambers was clearly making a direct attempt to distinguish his painting from the earlier, more formal and empirically exact English works that hung as part of the Gallery's historic display.

Throughout the eighteenth century, British marine painting and the environment in which it was displayed and review, was subject to considerable expansion. As both Monks and Quilley have extensively explored, the development and growth of this 'cult of the maritime' progressed toward an increasingly public sphere of display and reception by the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>93</sup> The prominent exhibition of marine painting within the main hall of the Naval Gallery presents a continuation of this developing tradition into the nineteenth century. The presentation of marine painting within the Gallery was a clear visual testament to Locker's confirmed interest in promoting the merits and ambitions of this pictorial

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<sup>92</sup> *Literary Gazette*, 4 March 1837 cited by Russett, *George Chambers*, 134

<sup>93</sup> Monks, 'Marine Art and the Public Sphere in Britain'; Quilley, *Empire to Nation*.

genre. The commission of the *Bombardment of Algiers* from Chambers is just one example of the Naval Gallery actively participating in the promotion of a school of British marine painting through the development, patronage and display of a contemporary artist. It was this dedication to the patronage of British artists that led to a collaborative project with the British Institution resulting in the donation of four naval battle paintings. However, only one of the four paintings, the *Destruction of 'L'Orient' at the Battle of the Nile, 1 August 1798* by George Arnald, could be considered as a marine painting (111). The other three present figurative narratives and as such they can be considered separately, as works that herald the emergence of a newly crafted genre of naval history painting (108-110).

#### Naval history painting

Along the lowest tier of the display, interspersed between the marine paintings, a number of large scale and highly figurative compositions are best identified and differentiated as naval history paintings. When Locker first proposed the formation of the Naval Gallery in 1823, he expressed an ambition that this Gallery would ‘encourage the Members of the Royal Academy to cultivate a branch of History Painting, which has been hitherto much neglected in this country’.<sup>94</sup> Concerns regarding the ‘much neglected’ genre of history painting were already apparent within the contemporary British art world prior to the foundation of the Naval Gallery. Martin Archer Shee conveyed these apprehensions in a lecture, entitled *Outlines of a Plan for the National Encouragement of Historical Painting in the United Kingdom*, which he presented at the British Institution on 2 October

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<sup>94</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 2.

1809.<sup>95</sup> Shee identified a number of concerns regarding the progress of history painting within Britain, suggesting that ‘there is perhaps, no similar instance of a great nation, in which, civil culture has been attended with so little of this species of refinement: in which the Arts have excited so little public interest and obtained so little public estimation’.<sup>96</sup> He observed that ‘the subjects and occasions upon which it is commonly exercised’ were not ‘of a nature sufficiently elevating and impressive, to excite all the enthusiasm of the Artist, and call forth all the powers of his art’.<sup>97</sup> During the eighteenth century, portraiture had flourished as a result of the extensive patronage of private patrons.<sup>98</sup> In comparison, large-scale history paintings were less favourable, or conveniently sized, for exhibition within private houses. Shee identified this lack of private patronage as a primary reason why the genre had suffered: ‘patronage, liberal, enlightened patronage, is the spring that is wanting to set in motion the powers of genius in this country’.<sup>99</sup> In the absence of private funding, Shee concluded that state support was necessary: ‘as one great fountain of encouragement, therefore, has totally failed us, it is natural to look to the other; and having no hope of effectual patronage from the public, to solicit that of the State’.<sup>100</sup> State and institutional patronage was urgently required in order to support and encourage the aspects of the British arts which were beyond the capabilities, and interests, of private patrons.

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<sup>95</sup> Martin Archer Shee, *Outlines of a plan for the National Encouragement of Historical Painting in the United Kingdom, Originally addressed in 1809 to the Directors of the British Institution and now respectfully submitted to the Consideration of Lord John Russell*, (London: James Ridgway and Sons, Piccadilly, 1837).

<sup>96</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 7.

<sup>97</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 17.

<sup>98</sup> Pointon, ‘Portrait! Portrait!! Portrait!!!’, 93-110.

<sup>99</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 22.

<sup>100</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 17.

Shee proposed four methods which he believed would solve the contemporary decline of the genre and encourage the development of a British School:

1<sup>st</sup> The creation of establishments for their regular cultivation. 2<sup>d</sup> The application of a certain sum annually, for the purpose of purchasing, and placing in public galleries, the best productions of the day. 3<sup>d</sup>. The employment of selected individuals, for the execution of great works of public ornament and patriotic celebration. 4<sup>th</sup>. The Institution of prizes and public honors, to excite competition and reward excellence.<sup>101</sup>

In relation to the first suggestion, the prior existence of institutions like the Royal Academy and the British Institution meant that, for Shee, the formation of any new establishments was ‘quite unnecessary, since those, which we possess at present, are fully adequate to administer whatever aids the policy of government may destine to the Arts’.<sup>102</sup> In relation to the acquisition of paintings for public galleries, Shee acknowledged that this kind of patronage ‘exercised with judgement and liberality’ would do much ‘for the advancement of the Arts’. However, he lamented that ‘We have alas! Few public edifices or galleries in which these works could be placed with any proper effect’.<sup>103</sup> The subsequent foundation of the Naval Gallery in 1823 would meet Shee’s demand for display space.

Shee described the third proposal to commission select artists to execute ‘great works of public ornament and patriotic commemoration’ as the ‘most worthy

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<sup>101</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 26-7.

<sup>102</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 29.

<sup>103</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 31.

of a great and enlightened people' and as the 'most splendid and permanent' of all.<sup>104</sup> Shee argued that it was this type of patronage which 'principally contributed to the raise of the Arts to excellence in Greece, and to revive them to eminence in Italy; which, while it rouses the genius, reward the virtues of great men, and gives at once refinement to the people and dignity to the State'.<sup>105</sup> However, this type of large scale commission was deemed to be 'too precarious' for contemporary artists:

In times of pressure like these, few Artists of established reputation, who have families to maintain, could prudently undertake the execution of a great work, upon a dependence so uncertain: when, besides the risk of failure, through their own defects, they might, perhaps have to fear the influence of intrigue, servility, or bad taste.<sup>106</sup>

As a result of such potential uncertainty and personal risk, Shee concluded that 'this mode of encouragement will not be here advocated'.<sup>107</sup>

The fourth and final suggestion was for the 'institution of prizes and public honours to promote competition and reward excellence'.<sup>108</sup> Shee proposed that the British Institution run a triennial competition in which prizes would be divided into three categories, offering varying degrees of monetary reward. The first prize, offering the largest premiums, should be for scenes from either the Bible or British history. As Shee explained, 'the interests of religion, morality and patriotism, should

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<sup>104</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 34-5.

<sup>105</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 34-5.

<sup>106</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 33-4.

<sup>107</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 34.

<sup>108</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 38.

be the primary objects in all national institutions of this kind'.<sup>109</sup> He argued that, in the allocation of prizes, preference should be shown toward 'subjects more directly sacred and patriotic, and more strikingly impressive upon our concerns, as Christians and as Britons'.<sup>110</sup> The Naval Gallery, as we can now go on to explore, directly responded to Shee's concerns, and prided itself for supporting contemporary British artists through the commission, acquisition and public exhibition of naval history paintings.

Such pictures had a powerful pictorial model to base themselves upon – that of Benjamin West's *Battle of La Hogue, 23 May 1692*, which was exhibited at the Royal Academy's Annual Exhibition in 1780 (137).<sup>111</sup> West's *La Hogue* was the first major British history painting to use a naval action as its subject. When the *La Hogue* was first exhibited it was well received by the critics. The *Public Advertiser* described the work as 'one of the best pictures he has ever painted' and the *London Chronicle* suggested that 'the Destruction of the French Fleet off la Hogue, exceeds all that ever came from Mr West's pencil'.<sup>112</sup> West directly challenged the conventions of marine painting and naval battle representation. Rather than a depiction of the opposing fleets, West positioned man-to-man combat at the edge of the picture plane; within this work naval conflict is redefined in terms of direct human experience. Abrams has described both West's *La Hogue* and its companion, the *Battle of the Boyne*, as 'epic battle panoramas'.<sup>113</sup> Abrams argues that *La Hogue* lacks a 'star performer' and illustrates 'a significant moment in history instead of a

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<sup>109</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 53.

<sup>110</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 53.

<sup>111</sup> Helmut von Erffa and Allen Staley, *The Paintings of Benjamin West*, (Barra Foundation, Yale Uni. Press: New Haven, London, 1986), no. 90.

<sup>112</sup> *Public Advertiser*, 2 May 1780; *London Chronicle*, 2 May 1780.

<sup>113</sup> Ann Uhry Abrams, *The Valiant Hero: Benjamin West and Grand-Style History Painting*, (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985), 195.

hero's dramatic death'.<sup>114</sup> As such, Abrams has concluded that without this central, Wolfe-like, focus upon the death of the hero, the classical concepts of victory and national pride seem hollow.<sup>115</sup> However, this dismissal of *La Hogue* as a battle panorama is one-dimensional and needs to be reconsidered. Reynolds outlined the remit of history painting in his fourth *Discourse*:

‘INVENTION in Painting does not imply the invention of the subject; for that is commonly supplied by the Poet or Historian. With respect to the choice, no subject can be proper that is not generally interesting. It ought to be either some eminent instance of heroic action, or heroick suffering. There must be something either in the action, or in the object, in which men are universally concerned, and which powerfully strikes upon the publick sympathy.’<sup>116</sup>

West's *La Hogue* set an enduring pictorial precedent for the presentation and aggrandisement of naval battle narratives. The observation that there is no Wolfe-like ‘star performer’ overlooks the role of Admiral Rooke within this ‘heroic action’.<sup>117</sup> Standing upon the prow of a small rowing boat, Rooke exemplifies courageous leadership. With his sword drawn and his hand pointing across the painting he urges his men to attack. In response, a sailor standing just behind Rooke sounds a battle cry on a trumpet while on the right side of the painting, these orders are carried out. The allied Anglo-Dutch sailors leap aboard a French rowing boat, which is identified by the fleur-de-lis imprinted around the gunwhale. The violence of this encounter is

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<sup>114</sup> Abrams, *Valiant Hero*, 195.

<sup>115</sup> Abrams, *Valiant Hero*, 196.

<sup>116</sup> Reynolds, *Discourses*, 57.

<sup>117</sup> Reynolds, *Discourses*, 57.



emphasised by the sheer amount of weaponry on display. The allies charge forward with their swords drawn and guns ready. On the far right a dishevelled Frenchman, who has already lost his wig in the commotion, is grabbed by the coattails as he tries to escape. His wide open eyes show his sheer terror at this attack. It is the inclusion of identifiable figures within West's painting that differentiates this type of battle representation from Romantic naval battle paintings. While paintings like de Louthembourg's *Armada* also present figurative representations of naval conflict, the inclusion of identifiable figures within *La Hogue* directly engages with the type of narrative 'commonly supplied by the [...] Historian'.<sup>118</sup>

To balance the display of violence, men in the centre foreground reach overboard to rescue their drowning French adversaries. This secondary narrative demonstrates that even at the height of the battle, the sailors have not lost their humanity. The inclusion of this rescue attempt at the edge of the picture plane provides a counter narrative confirming British martial magnanimity. This idealising model for naval combat and martial behaviour, in which acts of aggression and salvation are employed in equal measure, is recapitulated in copious numbers of military history paintings throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.<sup>119</sup> As Reynolds argued in his *Discourses*, 'the value and rank of every art is in proportion to the mental labour employed in it, or the mental pleasure produced by it'.<sup>120</sup> West's *La Hogue* provides the first example of an artistic attempt to raise naval subjects from the marginalised position of marine painting, constantly subject to the

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<sup>118</sup> Reynolds, *Discourses*, 57.

<sup>119</sup> Scenes of martial magnanimity are incorporated into John Trumbull's *The Sortie of the Garrison at Gibraltar*, 26-27 November 1781 (1789, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Oil on canvas, 180.3 x 271.8cm) and John Singleton Copley's *The Defeat of the Spanish Batteries at Gibraltar* (1783-91, Guildhall Art Gallery, London. Oil on canvas, 302 x 762cm).

<sup>120</sup> Reynolds, *Discourses*, 57.

critique and restrictions of maritime accuracy, to the artistic and intellectual heights of history painting.

With the foundation of the Naval Gallery, Locker was ‘very desirous’ to obtain West’s depiction of *La Hogue*.<sup>121</sup> He initially sought to purchase a copy of the work at a sale of West’s paintings in 1829.<sup>122</sup> In a letter to Long, Locker described West’s *La Hogue* as ‘one of his best works, which certainly ought to find its way to our Gallery’. They resolved to purchase the work for the Gallery concluding that it would be ‘a very valuable aid to our series of naval victories’.<sup>123</sup> However, at the sale of West’s paintings, Locker was out-bid by a Mr G. Monckton. The version of *La Hogue*, and the *Death of Wolfe* which was also bought by Monckton, were ‘repetitions of the originals painted for Lord Grosvenor’.<sup>124</sup> As reproductions Locker stated his surprise ‘at the high price they obtained at the sale’. He expressed his regret that *La Hogue*, ‘which is so desirable a subject for our collection’ had not already found ‘its way to Greenwich’.<sup>125</sup> In a letter to Monckton regarding the acquisition of West’s *La Hogue*, Locker requested that, while he did not want to ‘deprive him of it’ during his lifetime, the painting could be given as a bequest to the Naval Gallery.<sup>126</sup> Despite this appeal, Locker failed to acquire the copy of *La Hogue* at this time.

Striving for a representation of the battle of the La Hogue, Locker wrote to Admiral Sir Richard Keats (1757-1834), Governor of Greenwich Hospital, informing him that a depiction of the ‘Great Victory of La Hogue in 1692’ was currently available for purchase and could be presented by him for a sum of twenty-two

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<sup>121</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Charles Long, 2 May 1829, 217.

<sup>122</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 2 May 1829, 217.

<sup>123</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 2 May 1829, 217.

<sup>124</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Mr G. Monckton, 4 June 1829, 211.

<sup>125</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 4 June 1829, 211.

<sup>126</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Monckton, 9 June 1829, 210.

guineas.<sup>127</sup> Although Locker initially described this painting as a work by Samuel Scott in the 1833 catalogue it is identified as a work by Richard Paton.<sup>128</sup> In a letter dated 12 April 1831, Keats conveyed his thanks to Locker for this ‘excellent opportunity’ and sent a cheque for the amount.<sup>129</sup> This depiction of *The Battle off La Hogue, fought by the English and French Fleets, under Admiral Russell and Comte Tourville*, by Paton, was promptly installed within the Gallery.<sup>130</sup> However the acquisition of Paton’s depiction of the battle, as a traditional marine painting, did not put Locker’s desire for West’s *La Hogue* to rest. In 1835, despite having already obtained Paton’s representation of the action, Locker made another request to the Monckton family explaining that although ‘time has reconciled me to the loss of the original’ he remained ‘desirous to obtain a copy’.<sup>131</sup> Locker referred to the original painting, which was still in the possession of Lord Grosvenor, Duke of Westminster, as ‘not accessible’ to them.<sup>132</sup> However, by this time Monckton had removed his copy of West’s *La Hogue* to Northamptonshire and was ‘unwilling to let it come back to town’ to be copied.<sup>133</sup> By this stage Locker was requesting permission from the Monckton family to have a copy made from their reproduction of West’s original. The correspondence does not suggest any concern for the artistic impact of this repeated process of reproduction but this may be out of sheer desperation to obtain the work. Finally, in the same year as this rejection from Monckton, Lord Grosvenor was at last persuaded to permit a copy to be made from the original painting which remained in his personal collection.<sup>134</sup> The lengths that Locker went

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<sup>127</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Admiral Sir Richard Keats, 11 April 1831, 230.

<sup>128</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 4 June 1829, 211; Locker, *Catalogue*, 10, no. 50.

<sup>129</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Admiral Sir Richard Keats to Locker, 12 April 1831, 231.

<sup>130</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 10, no. 50.

<sup>131</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to General Monckton, 16 June 1835, 296.

<sup>132</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 16 June 1835, 296.

<sup>133</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, H. Monckton to Locker, 23 June 1835, 297.

<sup>134</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Long to Locker, 21 June 1835, 298.

to in an attempt to acquire West's *La Hogue* illustrate the significance of this addition to the Naval Gallery's collection. The acquisition of Paton's version of the battle in the interim period illustrates that West's *La Hogue* was valued for more than the naval subject that it depicted. It was also valued for the artistic acclaim of the painting and the recognised status of the artist. As the founding example of naval history painting, West's *La Hogue* provided an artistic precedent for the subsequent development of the genre.

Long suggested that Locker should commission Chambers to undertake the copy of *La Hogue*, suggesting that Chambers currently had 'a good picture' on exhibition at the British Institution should Locker want to inspect his work.<sup>135</sup> The nomination of Chambers was agreed upon and after the copy was complete it was installed in the sixth bay along the south wall (104 & 138). In his biography of Chambers, Watkins remarked that the quality of the copy was 'in some respects, superior to the original'.<sup>136</sup> Although this statement is somewhat biased and surely exaggerated, Chambers's copy was certainly considered a success and he was paid one hundred guineas. The act of copying this highly regarded naval history painting marked an essential stage in Chambers's artistic development. As Watkins remarked, 'the service which it did him in improving his hand for painting figures, and the subsequent commissions which it brought him, were more valuable to him than the money'.<sup>137</sup> Where the Royal Academy encouraged a tradition of studying old European masters as an essential part of artistic training, in carrying out this copy of West's *La Hogue* Chambers had the opportunity to learn and develop from the study of an established British master. This forged a way for the British school to continue to develop, but using a self-sufficient model that would allow it to become

<sup>135</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Long to Locker, 19 April 1835, 300.

<sup>136</sup> Watkins, *Life and Career of George Chambers*, 104.

<sup>137</sup> Watkins, *Life and Career of George Chambers*, 104.

increasingly independent from Europe. As Locker had intended at the foundation of the gallery, West's *La Hogue* was successfully liberated from the 'obscurity of private apartments'.<sup>138</sup> The installation of a copy of West's *La Hogue* within the main hall was not just an exercise in exhibiting a version of this prestigious work to the general public. It also provided a means for artists to gain access to this influential founding example of naval history painting. As a result, like Chambers, other contemporary British artists would be able to benefit from the study of this established British master. In this respect the Naval Gallery was not just acting as a gallery; it was also functioning as an institution for the education of contemporary artists and the encouragement of the nation's arts.

Following the completion of the copy of *La Hogue*, Chambers received two further commissions to produce his own depictions of naval encounters: the previously discussed *Bombardment of Algiers by Viscount Exmouth, 27 August 1816* (113) was commissioned in 1835 and the *The Capture of Puerto Bello, 21 November 1739* was commissioned in 1838 (139).<sup>139</sup> Through this repeated patronage of Chambers, the Gallery was engaging with Shee's demand for consistent institutional patronage as a necessity for the future development of the British arts. In Locker's 1839 plan, the copy of *La Hogue* was hung toward the right of the south wall, *The Capture of Puerto Bello* was hung on the west wall, and the *Bombardment of Algiers* was positioned perpendicularly opposite *La Hogue*, toward the right end of the north wall. Collectively these paintings provided a pictorial realisation of Locker's artistic manifesto. In copying West's *La Hogue* Chambers studied the example of a crucially British, rather than Continental, master and subsequently through the sustained patronage of a national institution he was able to develop and exhibit his own works.

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<sup>138</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

<sup>139</sup> Russett, *George Chambers*, 134.

In commissioning both copies and original paintings, and facilitating the exhibition of these works upon completion, the Naval Gallery provided a sustained means of patronage for the support and future encouragement of the contemporary arts. Crucially, Locker was forging a way for the arts to develop within a specifically patriotic and self-sufficient framework.

### The British Institution Competitions

Between 1825 and 1829, the genre of naval history painting associated with West's great work was going to thrive anew thanks to an innovative collaboration between the Naval Gallery and the British Institution. This project provides a striking example of the ways in which the Naval Gallery directly engaged with the contemporary art world. It was one that saw Locker and his colleagues engaging with an especially powerful and ambitious modern artistic institution. From its foundation in 1805, the British Institution for the Promoting the Fine Arts was intended to 'encourage and reward the talents of Artists of the United Kingdom'.<sup>140</sup> This support was specifically aimed at the development of history painting, a decision which is evident even in the choice of location.<sup>141</sup> After considering several proposed sites the British Institution eventually secured a building on Pall Mall which had been 'lately occupied as the Shakespeare Gallery', built by Alderman Boydell, the successful print publisher, in 1789.<sup>142</sup> In Thomas Smith's *Recollection of the British Institution*, published in 1860, he describes the Shakespeare Gallery as

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<sup>140</sup> The Institution was first proposed on 30 May 1805 and the 'British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom' was formally established the following week on the 4 June 1805, the King's birthday. NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 30 May 1805, 2-4; I, 4 June 1805, 5-7.

<sup>141</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 4 June 1805, 6: In order to select a suitable location, a select committee were appointed which included Charles Long.

<sup>142</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 8 June 1805, 8-9; 11 June 1805, 18-19; 3 July, 32. The BI agreed the purchase of this gallery to be 'held for a Term of Sixty years ... at a Ground Rent of £125 per ann. For the sum of £4,500, upon which he had paid a Deposit of ten per cent'.

founded ‘for the reception of pictures to illustrate scenes from the works of our immortal poet’.<sup>143</sup> These paintings, as Smith describes, ‘were afterwards engraved to adorn the beautiful edition known as Boydell’s Shakespeare’. When the Gallery opened in 1789, there were 34 paintings depicting scenes from Shakespeare’s plays and, as Friedman observes, more were added to the collection periodically. By 1802 there were around 170 works on display.<sup>144</sup> Smith remarked that ‘the great object of the promoter was to establish an English School of Historical Painting’ observing that the success of the enterprise ‘must have convinced the world that Englishmen want nothing but the fostering hand of encouragement to bring forth their genius in this line of art’.<sup>145</sup> As Dias has examined, ‘the public interest and patriotism prompted by Shakespeare made the playwright the obvious choice for the basis of a national school of painting’.<sup>146</sup> The subsequent installation of the British Institution within these premises was entirely appropriate, following Boydell’s example in the pursuit of encouraging a highly acclaimed British school and the development of patriotic history painting. However, rather than Shakespeare, the British Institution explored the patriotic potential of recent military victories as a narrative basis for a new national school of art.

In the absence of any state or national funded scheme for the support of the British arts in the early nineteenth century, the British Institution was founded by a collection of private members to supplement a need for financial support and patronage. Much like the Naval Gallery, this institution relied primarily upon benefactors, although annual subscriptions and small commissions on the sale of the

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<sup>143</sup> Smith, *Recollections of the British Institution*, 12.

<sup>144</sup> Winifred H. Friedman, *Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery*, (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976)

<sup>145</sup> Smith, *Recollections of the British Institution*, 12; See Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness*; Friedman, *Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery*.

<sup>146</sup> Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness*, 7; see also Friedman, *Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery*, 19-28.

paintings assisted in its financial support.<sup>147</sup> Through the combined efforts of these patrons, the British Institution intended to gain sufficient collective funds to support large projects. The *By-Laws for the British Institution* clearly stated that the Institution was ‘intended to extend and increase the beneficial effects of the Royal Academy, which has been founded by His Majesty, and by no means to interfere with it in any respect’. In order to achieve this, they proposed that they would ‘shut up during their annual exhibition’ and also promised to show ‘a favourable attention’ to works submitted by Academicians.<sup>148</sup> While this manifesto proclaimed that the British Institution was deliberately not in competition with the Royal Academy, in actuality this private institution was run by connoisseurs and was thus in direct opposition to the organisation of the Royal Academy, run by a body of artists. The potentially conflicting positions of the RA and the BI engaged with a contemporary debate over who should be responsible for the future of the British arts.<sup>149</sup> It was undecided whether artists or connoisseurs should be in charge of the development of the arts and the foundation of the British Institution reflects the instigation of a counter argument to the monopoly of the Royal Academy. However, the involvement that both institutions played in the foundation and development of the Naval Gallery suggests that, by the 1820s, this debate over the organisation of the arts in Britain was settling upon a middle ground.

The commercial nature of the British Institution, which relied upon annual competitions, awarded commissions and sold paintings as a means to support contemporary artists, was presented as an essential means to legitimise the future development of the arts. The *By-Laws* record that ‘the primary object of the British

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<sup>147</sup> *Outline of Proposals for the British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom*, 9 May 1805, (London: printed by W. Bulmer and co., Cleveland Row, St James’s, 1805).

<sup>148</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, I, ‘By-Laws of the British Institution’, 8 June 1805, 11.

<sup>149</sup> Hoock, *The King’s Artists*, 255–6, 270, 288–90.



Institution, under His Majesty's patronage, is to encourage and reward the talents of the Artists of the United Kingdom; so as to improve and extend our manufacturers, by that degree of taste and elegance of design which are to be exclusively derived from the cultivation of the Fine Arts; and thereby to increase the general prosperity and resources of the Empire'.<sup>150</sup> Here the development of a British School of Arts is legitimised as part of the nation's artistic, creative and commercial output. The Institution propagated the belief that the promotion of the fine arts would 'essentially and abundantly contribute to the national prosperity and resources'.<sup>151</sup> In aligning the visual arts with the nation's other manufactures, the British Institution was carving a new, and crucially functional, role for the arts within an increasingly industrial Britain.

From the outset, the British Institution was dedicated to the development of young British artists. The annual Contemporary Exhibition was 'exclusively confined to the productions of Artists of, or resident in, the United Kingdom'.<sup>152</sup> Several methods of encouraging the British arts were also proposed: 'it is intended to open a Public exhibition for the sale of the productions of British Artists; - to excite the emulation and exertions of the younger Artists by PREMIUMS; - and to endeavour to form a PUBLIC GALLERY of the works of British Artists, with a few select specimens of each of the great schools'.<sup>153</sup> The institution also made it clear that the 'preferable subjects of premiums, and of purchases for the Gallery' would be 'the higher branches of Painting, Sculpture, and Modelling' although other works would be 'admissible, if deemed worthy'.<sup>154</sup> However, in order to provide these services the Institution required immediate and sustained financial support. A draft

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<sup>150</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 8 June 1805, 11.

<sup>151</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 18 June 1805, 25-26.

<sup>152</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 8 June 1805, 11.

<sup>153</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 8 June 1805, 11.

<sup>154</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 8 June 1805, 11.

copy of a circular letter, sent out to prospective subscribers of the Institution, outlined the perceived need for the immediate patronage of the Fine Arts.

Convinced that the pre-eminence, which the imitative arts attained in certain distinguished periods of ancient Greece and modern Italy, was produced, not by fortuitous circumstances, but by great and splendid patronage, and persuaded that our own countrymen are capable of the same excellence in the arts, as they have attained in every branch of science and literature, we solicit that they may be encouraged to consider those excellent and immortal examples of the Grecian and Italian schools, as the objects, not merely of imitation, but of competition. In a country where native energy is most abundant we ask that professional taste and talent, and national patronage, be no longer confined to inferior objects; but that our artists may be encouraged to direct their attention to higher and nobler attainments; - to paint the mind and passions of man, to depict his sympathies and affections, and to illustrate the great events which have been recorded in the history of the world.<sup>155</sup>

The British Institution thus aimed to break away from the Royal Academy's reliance upon the Italian example. In contrast, it was dedicated to the construction of an entirely self-sufficient British model that would rival and eventually succeed the best productions from the Continent.

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<sup>155</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, I, 18 June 1805, 25-26.

In 1824, once the formation of the Naval Gallery was underway, the British Institution ran a competition, requesting ‘the best sketches of Representations of the Battle of Trafalgar’. The artist of the best sketch would be commissioned to complete a finished painting, which would be donated ‘to the Governors of Greenwich Hospital to be placed in the Painted Hall of that Hospital’.<sup>156</sup> Following the foundation of the Naval Gallery, Locker was in communication with Long who was on the Board of Directors for the British Institution at the time. Together they discussed the format of this competition. On 2 June 1824, Long informed Locker that the final painting may be ‘of any size which shall be thought most decorative to the hall’.<sup>157</sup> Long expressed his desire for the British Institution to commission a companion piece for Trafalgar, proposing the Battle of the Nile as an appropriate subject.<sup>158</sup> In a letter dated 8 June 1824, Long expressed his concern that ‘these are both Lord Nelson’s Victories’. However, he concluded that as a companion piece, the Battle of the Nile ‘would honour in paint his comrades and afford some variety which is not easily obtained in Naval Actions’.<sup>159</sup> As a result, the British Institution broadened the competition proposal to include the Battle of the Nile.<sup>160</sup> On the 22 June 1824, the British Institution sent the following *Notice* to members of the Royal Academy, and to artists who had already exhibited at the Institution:

The Directors have resolved to offer premiums for finished sketches of the Battles of the Nile & Trafalgar, with a view of ordering two pictures to be painted of those subjects, if the sketches are sufficiently approved of; which picture, they propose to offer to the Governors of

<sup>156</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, V, 1 June 1824, 14.

<sup>157</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Charles Long to Locker, 2 June 1824, 112.

<sup>158</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Charles Long to Locker, 8 June 1824, 113.

<sup>159</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 8 June 1824, 113.

<sup>160</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677-683, *BI Minutes*, V, 22 June 1824, 22-3.

Greenwich Hospital, to be placed in the Painted Hall of that Hospital, lately appropriated to the purpose of a picture gallery. Such sketches are to be painted in oil, & to be between two feet & two feet six inches high, & between three feet, & three feet six inches wide exclusive of the frames. The sketches are to be sent to the British Gallery in the course of the month of January 1825. The premiums proposed to be given for each subject are as follows: for the best sketch 200; for the next best 100.<sup>161</sup>

In hosting a competition, the British Institution was following the advice offered by Shee in his 1809 lecture. He had warned that although the production of ‘great works’ would be ‘most splendid and permanent’ it was ‘too precarious’ for contemporary artists to dedicate their time to it without the security of patronage.<sup>162</sup> In running a competition for oil sketches, rather than completed full size paintings, the British Institution made it possible for artists to apply without consuming a disproportionate amount of their time or resources. In requesting depictions of the battles of the Nile and Trafalgar, the British Institution was encouraging the use of recent historical subjects as a means to develop the genre of history painting within a patriotic framework. This was not the first time that the British Institution had run a competition of this nature to commission a patriotic martial history painting. In 1815, they sent out a similar proposal offering ‘premiums for finished sketches illustrative of, or connected with the successes of the British army in Spain, Portugal and France’.<sup>163</sup> Jones, who was the only artist to submit two sketches to the competition, won second prize and in 1820 he was commissioned to paint a finished

<sup>161</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, V, 22 June 1824, 22-3.

<sup>162</sup> Shee, *Historical Painting*, 34-35.

<sup>163</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, III, 20 February 1815.

painting based upon his sketch for Waterloo which was donated by the British Institution to Chelsea Hospital.<sup>164</sup> It is clear that the British Institution was dedicated to the encouragement and development of patriotic history painting. The donation of these paintings to public charitable institutions like Chelsea and Greenwich allowed the institution to legitimise the application of funds to these patriotic commissions while at the same time it elevated the level of public reception which these works received.

On 31 January 1825, the *Morning Chronicle* published a review of the British Institution's contemporary exhibition in which these Nile and Trafalgar sketches were displayed. The review suggested that 'the Directors of the Institution have this year given rather an undue preference to marine painting'. Reiterating the general criticism of the British Institution as a commercial enterprise, the review remarked that 'the rooms are in consequence literally inundated with attempts to gain only the pecuniary reward'.<sup>165</sup> The *Morning Chronicle* criticised many of the sketches on display, proposing that the 'ignorance of maritime affairs, and the misconception of the language of naval historians which most of the candidates have displayed are deplorable'. The newspaper suggested that 'none ought to attempt to approach our naval victories, who have not previously qualified themselves by the distinct education which this branch of Art requires'. These comments simply reiterate the established criticism that marine painting was subject to, illustrating the restraints which were evidently still placed upon the genre in the 1820s. The newspaper asked 'how inadequate would his preparation for historical painting be, who had never studied the human figure from life', concluding that it was therefore 'no less

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<sup>164</sup> In 1820, Jones was awarded 105 guineas by the British Institution 'in approbation beyond the price of the picture' and a further 200 guineas 'in compliment of merit'. RA AND/24/92, Statement of Premiums, 94.

<sup>165</sup> *The Morning Chronicle*, 31 January 1825.

ridiculous for those to attempt sea-pieces, who have only copied ships from prints'.<sup>166</sup> This review failed to engage with the variety of works and irrespectively critiqued the sketches as marine paintings despite that fact that, as the catalogue description for Mather Brown's submission demonstrates, this was not necessarily the case:

The subject is treated as an historical composition, rather than a marine view. The incident selected is, when the main-mast of the French ship *Le Spartiate* broke with a tremendous force, carrying with it the sailors who were in the rigging. The British seamen are seen rescuing their defeated enemies from destruction; thus presenting the triumph of courage and humanity.<sup>167</sup>

The fact that the catalogue needed to differentiate this work as 'an historical composition, rather than a marine view' demonstrates the challenges that faced the development of naval history painting which, despite its best efforts, continued to be critiqued as traditional marine painting.

In total, seventeen sketches were submitted for both the Nile and Trafalgar categories in the 1825 exhibition. At the Annual Meeting on 8 June 1825, the Directors of the British Institution resolved that 'they have fixed upon the sketches produced by Mr Arnold and Mr Drummond as the best of those offered to their notice'.<sup>168</sup> Once Arnold and Drummond were chosen as the winners of the competition, the artists were commissioned to paint the finished oil paintings. They

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<sup>166</sup> *The Morning Chronicle*, 31 January 1825.

<sup>167</sup> RAA, Catalogues of the British Institution.: *A Catalogue of the works of British Artists placed in the Gallery of the British Institution Pall Mall for Exhibition and Sale*, (London, printed by William Nicol, successor to W. Bulmer and co. Cleveland Row, St James's, 1825), no. 164.

<sup>168</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, V, 8 June 1825, 30.

were instructed that ‘these pictures are to be of large dimensions; and each of these Artists is to receive £500 for his work including the premiums offered for the sketches’.<sup>169</sup> In July 1825 it became necessary to alter Drummond’s commission to paint a depiction of Trafalgar. Lord Bexley had ‘presented Greenwich Hospital with a picture painted by Mr Devis of the “Death of Lord Nelson”’ and, as a result, it was deemed necessary to alter the subject of Drummond’s commission. The Directors instructed that ‘Mr Drummond be directed to paint a picture of Lord Duncan’s Victory off Camperdown, instead of the Death of Lord Nelson’.<sup>170</sup> Both works were exhibited in the British Institution’s annual contemporary exhibition in January 1827 before they were installed in the Naval Gallery later the same year (110 & 111).

While Arnald’s *Battle of the Nile* can best be described as a marine painting, the work which Drummond produced to commemorate ‘Lord Duncan’s Victory off Camperdown’ adopted a more figurative approach.<sup>171</sup> Rather than a representation of the battle itself, Drummond depicted the defeat and surrender of the Dutch Admiral de Winter. The two admirals are positioned in the middle of the composition standing upon the deck. Admiral Duncan is positioned with his arm outstretched toward the Dutch admiral in order to receive the enemy sword as a symbolic act of surrender. Figures crowd around this central encounter. The inclusion of such a large number of people is a deliberate display of artistry resulting in a frieze-like layering of figures in the crowd. In the foreground, an ensign from the Dutch flagship, ‘Vrijheid’ has been thrown over a gun carriage. Along with some ropes and maritime accessories, the ensign forms part of a still-life at the base of the canvas. Two partially clothed sailors, positioned to the left and right, are displayed in mid-action; their muscles are contorted as they twist, haul and winch. With the inclusion of these

<sup>169</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, V, 8 June 1825, 33.

<sup>170</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, V, 6 July 1825, 40.

<sup>171</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, V, 6 July 1825, 40.

undressed sailors Drummond directly engaged with the classical conventions of the ideal nude. These twisting torsos loosely recall the stance of the *Discobolus*, which was acquired for the British Museum in 1805 along with the rest of Charles Townley's Marbles.<sup>172</sup> As a pictorial quotation, the *Discobolus* was not just a reference to idealising Greek statuary. Once in the possession of the British Museum, this statue was incorporated into a narrative of national cultural achievement. Much like the *Elgin Marbles*, which were placed on display in the British Museum in 1816, the *Discobolus* was incorporated into an institutional narrative of national artistic progression, providing a pictorial exemplum to contemporary British artists upon British soil.

Drummond's depiction of the surrender of the enemy aligned the contemporary naval battle with an established artistic tradition of 'surrender' narratives. In doing so, Drummond was engaging with the established demand that history paintings should engage with moralising narratives. As Reynolds outlined:

Strictly speaking, indeed, no subject can be of universal, hardly can it be of general, concern; but there are events and characters so popularly known in those countries where our Art is in request, that they may be considered as sufficiently general for all our purposes. Such are the great events of Greek and Roman fable and history, which early education, and the usual course of reading, have made familiar and interesting to all Europe, without being degraded by the vulgarity of ordinary life in any country.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> B.F. Cook, *The Townley Marbles* (London: British Museum Publications, 1985), esp. 59-63; Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penney, *Taste and the Antique: Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), 199- 202.

<sup>173</sup> Reynolds, *Discourses*, 57-8.



In Drummond's painting the decision to depict the moment of surrender engages with an established classical moral tale of a compassionate victor. The association with an established and 'universal' narrative of a magnanimous victory and stoic surrender, Drummond was elevating the moral significance of the contemporary naval victory at Camperdown.

When Drummond's painting was exhibited at the British Institution it received mixed reviews. On 24 January 1827 the *Morning Chronicle* stated that 'Mr Drummond, we understand, led a nautical course of life for many years, and this gave him an advantage in depicting naval subjects with an accuracy beyond that which the merely professional pursuits of others enabled them to possess'.<sup>174</sup> While Drummond was praised for his naval experience and presumed knowledge, he was heavily criticised for his artistic failings. Drummond's 'knowledge of his subject' has not been successfully united with 'a more extensive knowledge of art'. The review criticised 'a chalkiness in his colours – an incompleteness in his execution, and, altogether, a dimness of shade and gloominess cast over the whole performance'.<sup>175</sup> This criticism reiterates the established tension between the demands for artistry and naval accuracy which plagued the genre.

Before the first two paintings were received by the Naval Gallery, discussions were already underway to discuss the potential for two more paintings to be donated by the British Institution. In December 1825, after receiving confirmation of the first competition, Locker and Long began to discuss the 'probability of other Naval Actions being presented by the British Institution'.<sup>176</sup> In May 1827, Long wrote to inform Locker that he had proposed to the Directors of the British

<sup>174</sup> *The Morning Chronicle*, 24 January 1827.

<sup>175</sup> *The Morning Chronicle*, 24 January 1827.

<sup>176</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Charles Long to Locker, 25 December 1825, 147.

Institution that they should ‘present two more pictures to the Directors of Greenwich Hospital to be placed in the Hall’. Long proposed two subjects: ‘the late King presenting to Lord Howe the sword after the Victory of the 1<sup>st</sup> of June - and Lord Nelson boarding one ship after possessing over another in the Victory of Lord St Vincent’.<sup>177</sup> Rather than run a second competition, on this occasion the British Institution directly selected Briggs and Jones, as ‘artists whose works have so often contributed to the interest of the Exhibitions of the British Gallery’, to complete the commissions.<sup>178</sup> On 11 June 1827 the Directors reported that they had ‘ordered two pictures to be painted’.<sup>179</sup> Once completed the two paintings were exhibited in the Institution’s annual contemporary exhibition in 1829 before being transferred to the Naval Gallery later that year.<sup>180</sup>

In Briggs’s depiction of *The Visit of George III to Lord Howe’s Flagship, the ‘Queen Charlotte’* a central exchange between Howe and George III takes place in the centre of the canvas, upon the quarter deck of the flagship (108). They are surrounded by a large crowd of onlookers. Some figures surround them on the quarter deck while others overlook from the poop deck. A couple of men have climbed into the rigging where they raise their hats and cheer. Once again, the crowd create a frieze-like backdrop against which the central encounter takes place. This layering of figures in the crowd recalls Drummond’s depiction of *Camperdown* which was already installed in the Naval Gallery when this commission was initiated. As this painting was purposefully created for the Naval Gallery, perhaps

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<sup>177</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Charles Long to Locker, 18 May 1827, 148. The decision to commission a depiction of George III visiting Portsmouth in the aftermath of Howe’s victory at the Third Battle of Ushant in 1794 was most likely related to the potential donation of de Louthembourg’s depiction of the battle, which was already under discussion by 1827.

<sup>178</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, V, 11 June 1827, 67-8.

<sup>179</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, V, 11 June 1827, 67.

<sup>180</sup> RAA British Institution Catalogues: *A Catalogue of the Works of British Artists placed in the gallery of the British Institution, Pall Mall, for exhibition and sale (1829): Battle of St Vincent*, 15, no. 62; *His Late Majesty George III and Earl Howe*, 18, no. 156.

this depiction of the crowd was a deliberate attempt to relate to visitors within the gallery space. The viewer is positioned on an eye-level with the quarter deck. As the crowd spills beyond the confines of the picture space, visitors within the Gallery would have been integrated into the composition, participating in the narrative and witnessing the ceremony as part of the crowd.

When Briggs's *Visit of George III* was exhibited at the British Institution it similarly received heavy criticism. The *Morning Post* suggested that it was 'highly finished, but poorly drawn in general', and the representation of Howe was described as 'stiff and unnecessarily constrained'.<sup>181</sup> The *Examiner* criticised Briggs's representation of Howe, describing him receiving the sword in 'an attitude by no means pleasing'. It suggested that he appears to be 'suddenly struck with a pain in his side' which has been 'caused by the awkward way in which he is made to hold his chapeau'.<sup>182</sup> In relation to Briggs's painting, both the *Morning Post* and the *Examiner* acknowledged the challenges presented by the subject. The former identified that the subject was 'one of great difficulty' while the latter suggested that the work was an 'example of a bad choice of subject rather than of the artist, for Mr Briggs *can* paint history'.<sup>183</sup> In a letter from Briggs to the Secretary of the British Institution, he complained that in a review published in the *Gazette* most of the content had 'nothing to do with the subject of the picture'. Briggs lamented that 'more is said about the chains which I have not introduced & which I do not know how I could introduce'.<sup>184</sup> Briggs stated that Long had 'objected even to my giving him [George III] gloves because he said the king's hands were too full already'. The interference of Long in the execution of this work gives us further insight into the

<sup>181</sup> *The Morning Post*, 23 February 1829.

<sup>182</sup> *The Examiner*, 8 February 1829.

<sup>183</sup> *The Morning Post*, 23 February 1829; *The Examiner*, 8 February 1829.

<sup>184</sup> RA vol. XX AND/20/228: Letter from H.P. Briggs to the Secretary of the BI (1829), 228.

level of his involvement in the commission and donation of these works for the Naval Gallery.

The fourth and final painting was Jones's depiction of the *Battle of St Vincent, 14 February 1797* (109).<sup>185</sup> In Jones's painting, visitors are again offered an on-deck perspective which on this occasion directly engages them in close action. Nelson leaps aboard the *San Josef*, leading his men directly into the combat. As the previous chapter examined, this episode was a significant characterisation of Nelson's early reputation. When this work was exhibited at the British Institution, in a review published on 23 February 1829, the *Morning Post* described the presentation of Nelson and Berry boarding the *San Josef* as 'the most conspicuous' suggesting that 'Jones has been very successful in the countenance as well as a more striking likeness of that distinguished individual'. However, for the rest of the picture, the reviewer was 'sorry to see so very sketchy and unfinished, the left of the picture particularly so'.<sup>186</sup> The work was particularly criticised because 'the sails and rigging are almost destitute of form'.<sup>187</sup> Once again, critics could not escape the artistic demands of marine painting, and continued to submit a figurative historic narrative to the obsessive call for nautical accuracy. On 8 February 1829 the *Examiner* described Jones's painting as a 'common-place representation of a cut-and-thrust naval combat'.<sup>188</sup> Locker similarly took issue with the way Jones had presented Nelson, criticising the lack of historic accuracy.<sup>189</sup> Locker requested that Jones make alterations to the depiction of Nelson so that his behaviour better aligned with the hero rather than the combatant.

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<sup>185</sup> NAL, MSL/1941/677–683, *BI Minutes*, V, 11 June 1827, 67.

<sup>186</sup> *The Morning Post*, 23 February 1829.

<sup>187</sup> *The Morning Post*, 23 February 1829.

<sup>188</sup> *The Examiner*, 8 February 1829.

<sup>189</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Locker to Jones, 12 July 1828, 168.

I think therefore the English Commodore cannot properly be represented in personal conflict, but standing erect and calm – sword in hand – not raised to strike – Giving orders and cheering his men, who, (still partially engaged with the Spaniards) may be exhibited intercepting some blows levelled at Nelson himself. The Spanish Captain might be shewn waiving to his people to cease firing – and advancing to surrender his sword. Thus while there is ample display of all the activity of a personal combat, the chief will be distinguished by that dignity of gesture which becomes a Hero, rather than by the attitude of a mere combatant.<sup>190</sup>

Jones refused to agree with this criticism and instead justified his approach arguing that he had ‘heated the exploit with the licence allowed to illustrative art’.<sup>191</sup> While Locker took issue with the presentation of Nelson, the painting received praise from Lawrence. A draft copy of letter from Lawrence to Charles Eastlake describes how their ‘mutual friend Mr Jones [...] has very successfully got through his Picture of Nelson for Greenwich Hospital’.<sup>192</sup> This acknowledgement from the President of the Royal Academy illustrates the recognised artistic acclaim of the work.

This project of patronage and donation exemplifies how the Naval Gallery was directly involved in the contemporary British art world, occupying a significant and active role in the encouragement and development of a specific type of naval history painting. Through this collaborative project with the British Institution, the Gallery provided a means of patronising contemporary artists. Furthermore,

<sup>190</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 12 July 1828, 168.

<sup>191</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, Jones to Locker, 13 July 1828, 171.

<sup>192</sup> RA LAW/5/293: Letter from Lawrence to Charles Eastlake, 29 December 1828.

positioning these paintings in a prime location in the main hall demonstrates how the Naval Gallery provided a forum for the continued exhibition of contemporary artists after temporary exhibitions, like the annual contemporary exhibition at the British Institution, had closed. Painted specifically for the Naval Gallery, these three figurative paintings can be seen to specifically meet the demands of this national naval display in a number of ways. Within these works the admirals and their actions, separated in portraits and marine paintings around the rest of the Gallery, are united within a single compositional space. The on-deck perspective offered visitors an unusual view of the wider maritime world which they were otherwise separated from; both within the Gallery where the marine paintings presented distant naval actions and in reality through the physical separation of the nation from the actuality of ships and naval warfare at sea. In the context of encouraging the ‘much neglected genre’ of history painting, this collaborative project exemplifies how the Naval Gallery provided a means for its encouragement. Within these works naval history was elevated from the marginalised obscurity of marine painting to the grand spectacle of history painting. Furthermore, employing national events as patriotic subject matter, the exhibition of naval history paintings within the Naval Gallery further contributed to the Gallery’s wider interest in manufacturing widespread patriotism.

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This examination of the ways in which portraiture, marine painting and naval history painting was acquired and exhibited collectively has demonstrated how the Naval Gallery functioned as a forum for the promotion of British naval art. While the National Gallery was busy acquiring a collection of Continental Old Masters, the Naval Gallery was dedicated to the display of historical and contemporary British

naval painting.<sup>193</sup> Locker's dedication to the support and development of British artists was influenced by an established patriotic agenda which had been developing in art institutions like the Royal Academy, the British Institution and numerous private galleries in the years prior to the Gallery's foundation. The Naval Gallery was participating in a wider collective promotion of a British school of art which was taking place in such institutions. It did so through an ambitious form of patronage, directed at contemporary artists, and through creating a new public forum for the display and appreciation of modern British naval painting, including that new category of naval history painting which Locker – right from the start of the project – was so keen to promote.

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<sup>193</sup> See Conlin, *The Nation's Mantelpiece*, 'Origins', 3-46.

## CHAPTER V

## The Upper Hall: Constructing a site of National Nelsonic Memory

After viewing the display of paintings in the main hall, visitors would finally approach the upper hall, the third and final room in the Naval Gallery. Rather than offering another gallery of paintings, the upper hall presented a unique and distinct display which, as the catalogue informed visitors, consisted of ‘various articles of public interest connected with the Royal Navy’.<sup>1</sup> In addition to a number of ship models and nautical instruments, this included a growing collection of Nelson’s personal belongings, or ‘relics’ as they were more commonly referred to.<sup>2</sup> Prior to the foundation of the Naval Gallery, the upper hall had been used as the site for Nelson’s body to be laid in state. This chapter examines the way in which the Naval Gallery consciously responded to this previous history through the deliberate exhibition of Nelson’s relics upon the same spot where the coffin had once been displayed.<sup>3</sup> The exhibition of Nelson’s belongings transformed the upper hall into a site for national naval commemoration which, as this analysis will demonstrate, bordered on quasi-religious veneration. Through investigating the exhibition of Nelson’s relics, including his famed blood-stained uniform from the battle of Trafalgar, this chapter considers how the upper hall played an essential role in the apotheosis of Nelson as a national naval hero. It exposes how the Naval Gallery

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<sup>1</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Standard*, 8 July 1845, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Nelson’s belongings were commonly referred to as relics during the early nineteenth century: ‘Nelson’s Relics’, W. & R. Chambers, ed., *The Book of Days. A Miscellany of Popular Antiquities*, (London, 1833), vol. II, 479-80. Within the Naval Gallery, they were initially referred to as articles of public or national interest: Locker, *Catalogue*, 3; Clarke, *Greenwich Hospital*). Following the arrival of the Trafalgar uniform in 1845, they begin to be referred to as relics: ‘Nelson’s Relics’, *The Standard*, 8 July 8 1845, issue 6534, 4; ‘Illustrations of Greenwich Hospital’, *Illustrated London News*, 22 April 1865, issue 1311, 375; *Descriptive Catalogue* (1887), 51.



established a unique commemorative prototype upon which a wider national Nelsonic mythology can be seen to have developed.

Between 5 and 7 January 1806, the upper hall was transformed into a site for national mourning.<sup>4</sup> As the *Naval Chronicle* observed, ‘the painted chamber had been fitted up for this melancholy spectacle with peculiar taste and elegance’.<sup>5</sup> An aquatint by Augustus Pugin depicts this national naval spectacle, showing Nelson’s coffin positioned in the middle of the room and a mass of people packed together, pressed up against a division between the upper and main hall (140). The *Times* reported that on the first day, when ‘the gate was thrown open, above ten thousand persons pressed forward for admittance’.<sup>6</sup> It was reportedly so crowded that spectators found themselves ‘pushed onward with such rapidity, as to afford none of them the opportunity of having more than a short and transient glance of the solemn object of curiosity’.<sup>7</sup> As Timothy Jenks observes, the overwhelming popularity of this naval spectacle ‘mitigated its intended ritual effect’.<sup>8</sup> The chaotic overcrowding and disorder continued on the second day with people crushed by the ‘rushing torrent of the multitude’.<sup>9</sup> On the third and final day the King’s Life Guards were called out to restore order and gain control of the crowds. As a result, instead of rapidly moving past the coffin, visitors were now able to experience a designated moment of mourning. As the *Times* remarked, this made the encounter ‘much more solemn and

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<sup>4</sup> For an account of the full proceedings for Nelson’s state funeral, which in addition to being laid in state included processions along the river and across the streets of London as well as a ceremony within St Paul’s Cathedral see the *Naval Chronicle, for 1806: containing a general and biographical history of the Royal Navy of the United Kingdom; with a variety of original papers on nautical subjects: under the guidance of several literary and professional men*, vol. 15, January-June 1806, (London: Printed and published by Joyce Gold, Shoe-Lane, 1806), 45-230.

<sup>5</sup> *Naval Chronicle*, 49.

<sup>6</sup> *The Times*, 6 January 1806.

<sup>7</sup> *The Times*, 6 January 1806.

<sup>8</sup> Timothy Jenks, ‘Contesting the Hero: the funeral of Admiral Lord Nelson’, *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 39, no. 4, (Oct. 2000), 434.

<sup>9</sup> *The Times*, 7 January 1806.

impressive'.<sup>10</sup> The upper hall had been elaborately decorated in order to appropriately host this spectacle of national Nelsonic mourning. As Pugin's aquatint depicts, the walls were draped with black cloth which covered Thornhill's decorative painting. The windows were also concealed and, rather than natural light, several hundred candles were used to light the spectacle. Positioned in the centre of the room underneath a black canopy, Nelson's coffin was exhibited with his coat of arms displayed at the head of the coffin and the colours of the defeated French and Spanish forces positioned to either side.<sup>11</sup> The coffin was made from a series of caskets. Nelson's body was directly placed in a coffin made from the fragments of *L'Orient*, the French flagship which had exploded at the Nile, which had been presented to him during his lifetime by Captain Hallowell.<sup>12</sup> This was then further encased in outer coffins made of lead and wood.<sup>13</sup> The outside of the coffin was covered with black velvet and decorated with an elaborate and patriotic design which alluded to Nelson's many victories (141).<sup>14</sup> Amongst an array of maritime symbolism, which included symbols of grief and fame, a crocodile and a sphinx alluded to Nelson's victory at the Nile while the figures of Britannia and Neptune confirmed the extent of British maritime prowess that had been achieved under his command.

Following the three days that Nelson's body lay in state, on the 8 January 1806, the coffin was transported from Greenwich to the Admiralty in Whitehall as part of a grand river procession (142). Sailors from the *Victory* carried the coffin

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<sup>10</sup> *The Times*, 8 January 1806.

<sup>11</sup> *The Morning Chronicle*, 7 January 1806.

<sup>12</sup> William Beatty, *Authentic Narrative of the Death of Lord Nelson: with the circumstances preceding, attending and subsequent to, that event; the professional report on His Lordship's wound; and several interesting anecdotes*, (London, printed by T. Davison, White Friars; for T. Cadell and W. Davies, in the Strand, 1807), 72-3.

<sup>13</sup> Beatty, *Death of Lord Nelson*, 74.

<sup>14</sup> See Ackerman's *Lord Nelson's Coffin with a description of the ornaments thereon* (fig. 141) for further detail on the decoration.

from the Painted Hall down to the Thames where it was placed in a royal barge, originally made for Charles II. The barge had been shrouded in black velvet for the funeral and a large canopy crowned by black feathers had been constructed over the stern of the vessel.<sup>15</sup> The barge, rowed by sailors from the *Victory*, was accompanied along the Thames by a flotilla of ships, including sixteen principal barges and numerous smaller vessels. The river had been closed for the purpose and people crowded the shoreline in order to watch the spectacle.<sup>16</sup> As the procession advanced up the river, gun shots were fired along the route. Once the barge reached the Whitehall steps, the coffin was taken to the Admiralty.<sup>17</sup> On the following day, Nelson's coffin was placed upon a horse drawn carriage, modelled on the *Victory*, and transported from the Admiralty to St Paul's Cathedral where the state funeral was carried out.<sup>18</sup> The coffin was escorted by a procession of soldiers, a contingent of Greenwich Hospital pensioners and members of the crew from the *Victory*.<sup>19</sup> Nelson's crew carried the *Victory's* ensign from the battle of Trafalgar, displaying the damage and shot holes to the public.<sup>20</sup> Once again, thousands of people lined the streets to witness the procession. While the more affluent paid for secluded views in the houses that lined the route, many of the general public found places along 'the pavement and such other part of the streets'.<sup>21</sup> The elaborately decorated coffin was raised up upon the carriage and the funeral pall was removed in order to make it as

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<sup>15</sup> *Naval Chronicle*, 139-144; Colin White, 'His dirge our groans – his monument our praise': Official and Popular Commemoration of Nelson in 1805-6', in Holger Hooek, ed., *History, Commemoration and National Preoccupation: Trafalgar 1805-2005*, (Oxford & New York: Published for the British Academy by Oxford Uni. Press, 2007), 33.

<sup>16</sup> White, 'Official and Popular Commemoration of Nelson', 33.

<sup>17</sup> White, 'Official and Popular Commemoration of Nelson', 33-35.

<sup>18</sup> Jenks, *Contesting the Hero*, 438.

<sup>19</sup> *Naval Chronicle*, 145-152.

<sup>20</sup> *Naval Chronicle*, 145-152.

<sup>21</sup> *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, 12 January 1806; White, 'Official and Popular Commemoration of Nelson', 35.

visible as possible as it was paraded through London.<sup>22</sup> At St Paul's the funeral service commenced at one o'clock. Stalls were installed around the crossing inside the Cathedral in order to accommodate a congregation of 7,000.<sup>23</sup> Details of the funeral ceremony have been recounted in numerous reports and biographies, the most extensive being the version published in the *Naval Chronicle*.<sup>24</sup> Early versions of the event recount the official narrative, giving the impression of an impressive and flawless spectacle.<sup>25</sup> However, more recent research has allowed subsequent authors to present a less idealised version of the occasion, highlighting the controversies that arose regarding which royals were in attendance, where people were seated and a number of last minutes changes that had to be made.<sup>26</sup> Within the context of this chapter, it is worth highlighting a specific alteration in the programme which occurred at the end of the ceremony, when the coffin was lowered into the crypt. The sailors from the *Victory* were supposed to fold up the colours and lay the flag upon the coffin. However, they broke from the itinerary and tore a section into small pieces which they divided up and kept as personal mementos.<sup>27</sup> As Colin White has observed, in breaking from the programme, the sailors displayed the same 'maverick spirit of their great commander'.<sup>28</sup> This act of rebellion set an early example for the posthumous acquisition and veneration of Nelson's personal belongings.

In the years following Nelson's death, the ways in which he was memorialised can be seen to have embraced a multifarious ecology of commemorative mediums. At St Paul's, the tomb in which his body lay was an

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<sup>22</sup> Jenks, 'Contesting the Hero', 440.

<sup>23</sup> White, 'Official and Popular Commemoration of Nelson', 35.

<sup>24</sup> *Naval Chronicle*, 222-232.

<sup>25</sup> *Naval Chronicle*, 45-220.

<sup>26</sup> See White, 'Official and Popular Commemoration of Nelson', 23-48.

<sup>27</sup> *The Times*, 10 January 1806. See David Howarth and Stephen Howarth, *Nelson: The Immortal Memory* (New York: Viking, 1989), 360; Gillian Russell, *Theatres of War: Performance, Politics and Society, 1793-1815*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 87.

<sup>28</sup> White, 'Official and Popular Commemoration of Nelson', 36.

immediate site for national Nelsonic interest. As Hooch observes, vergers in St Paul's were exhibiting the location of the tomb even before the funeral.<sup>29</sup> Following the ceremony, the crypt and Nelson's tomb immediately became the heart of the cathedral tour. For a fee, the public could visit Nelson's coffin, which was interred within the elaborate sixteenth-century black marble sarcophagus, originally designed for Cardinal Wolsey.<sup>30</sup> An engraving by Thomas Shepherd depicts a number of visitors in the crypt of St Paul's admiring Nelson's tomb by lantern light (143). Nelson's Viscount's coronet was placed on top of the sarcophagus, in place of Wolsey's Cardinal's hat. The title of Shepherd's engraving is repeated in both French and German illustrating the international attention that this sepulchral spectacle received. In addition to the tomb, as Chapter Two has discussed, Government commissioned Flaxman to create a memorial monument to Nelson, which was completed and installed in the nave of St Paul's in 1818. Discussed in detail in the second chapter of this thesis, this larger-than-life-size statue contributed to the way in which Nelson was commemorated within the Cathedral. Flaxman's *Monument of Nelson* restored the body of the hero through the permanency of sculpture. Visitors were able to once again look upon the idealised posthumous-likeness of the otherwise absent hero. Like the boys on the pedestal, members of the general public were able to look up at Flaxman's reincarnation of the hero in patriotic adoration. Meanwhile, in response to the public attraction of Nelson's tomb and in an attempt to attract crowds from St Paul's, Westminster Abbey commissioned a life-sized wax effigy of Nelson which was made by Catherine

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<sup>29</sup> Hooch, *Empires of the Imagination*, 186.

<sup>30</sup> After Wolsey fell from Henry VIII's favour the tomb remained unused at Windsor until George III presented it for Nelson's funeral. See Edward Chaney, *The Evolution of the Grand Tour: Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations since the Renaissance*, (London & Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998), see 'Early Tudor Tombs and the rise and fall of Anglo-Italian relations', 41-57, esp. 50-51. For a survey of Wolsey's turbulent career in Henry VIII's court see Peter Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The rise and fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1990).

Andras in 1806 (144). The body of the effigy is made of wood and the head and left-hand modelled in wax. Dressed in - what was said to be - Nelson's own vice-admirals full-dress uniform, this wax statue was positioned in a stance that recalled the state portrait by John Hoppner (1801-2, Royal Collection, London). Andras's Nelson effigy was exhibited beside the Abbey's collection of early modern funeral effigies of kings and queens, and can still be seen in the Abbey Museum. His cocked hat and the green eyeshade he wore toward the end of his life were both exhibited in a nearby case.<sup>31</sup> On 22 March 1806, the *Times* remarked that 'the Wax Figure now put up in Westminster Abbey is a very striking resemblance of the late Lord Nelson, in full uniform, and decorated with all his orders'.<sup>32</sup> This reportedly lifelike figure was employed as an artificial substitute, in the absence of the actual body which was laid in St Paul's, as a site for national pilgrimage.

In addition to these various types of sculpture, Greenwich Hospital contributed further to the material diversification of Nelsonic commemoration. Immediately after Nelson's funeral, the upper hall of the Painted Hall continued to be used as a site to record and honour the public experience of Nelsonic mourning. The carriage which had transported Nelson's body through the streets of London was sent to Greenwich where it was placed on display in the upper hall.<sup>33</sup> Visitors to the Painted Hall could return to the site where Nelson's body had been laid in state and though the coffin was now absent the elaborately carved carriage which had transferred Nelson to his final resting place stood in its place. As Pugin's aquatint illustrates, visitors were able to view the carriage in detail (145). When on display in the upper hall visitors were able to inspect the representations of the bow and stern

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<sup>31</sup> Richard Walker, *The Nelson Portraits*, (Portsmouth: Royal Naval Museum, 1998), 170-75 and 266, cat. no. 214.

<sup>32</sup> *The Times*, 22 March 1806.

<sup>33</sup> Hoock, *Empires of the Imagination*, 441; *Naval Chronicle*, 233-234.

of the *Victory*. They could read Nelson's personal motto, 'PALMAM QUI MERUIT FERAT' (Let he who has earned it bear the palm), which was engraved along the top of the carriage. The car was designed by the Reverend Mr M'Quin as an imitation of the *Victory*.<sup>34</sup> Alongside the expected funereal trappings, such as the black ostrich feathers and black decorative fringe, a union flag was hung at half-mast from the stern. During the funeral procession, the coffin had been symbolically placed upon the quarterdeck of the carriage, recalling the site where Nelson had fallen on the *Victory* at Trafalgar.<sup>35</sup> In relocating the carriage to the upper hall in the wake of the funeral, its presence continued to identify the site as a memorial space sustaining the memory of Nelson's funereal spectacle and the public experience of shared participation in national mourning. This funerary relic remained on display in the upper hall of the Painted Hall until the foundation of the Gallery.

The commemorative examples mentioned here featured within a distinct and wide-spread material culture that had developed after Nelson's death, engaging with a diverse collection of memorabilia in a multitude of media. This assorted memorial culture was not limited to institutional attempts at commemoration. In William Holland's caricature of *The Sailor's Monument to the Memory of Lord Nelson*, Jack Tar has fashioned a monument to Nelson from a sea chest, two 'cags of grog, in memory of his noble spirit', two swords and Nelson's cocked hat, topped off with the 'figure of an Englishman's Heart' (146). Jack has fashioned this monument because the public memorials proved too expensive. The inscription states that 'I'll be no Towpenny Customer at St Paul's! this shall be poor Jack's monument, in his little garden, to his noble companion'. As W. and R. Chambers remarked in 1833, 'one of the most observable characteristics of English society at the present day, and

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<sup>34</sup> Jenks, *Contesting the Hero*, 438.

<sup>35</sup> Beatty, *Death of Lord Nelson*, 33-4.

perhaps of society in general, is the desire of obtaining some memorials of those who have achieved greatness [...] Lord Nelson's relics have been especially sought'.<sup>36</sup> This widespread public engagement in the memorialisation of Nelson led to the inclusion of numerous personal artefacts and obscure mementos which in turn further diversified a unique material culture.<sup>37</sup> The exhibition of Nelson's personal belongings within the upper hall of the Gallery played a major role in the continued development of this material memorialisation. As the site where the public had encountered Nelson's coffin, the upper hall of the Painted Hall already occupied a central role in the national experience of Nelson's funereal spectacle. With the subsequent installation of a memorial display in the Naval Gallery, positioned in the same location as the coffin, the Gallery deliberately played upon this previous national experience. Through a detailed examination of the display of Nelson's relics within the upper hall, we can begin to comprehend the role that this room played in the construction and continued development of the 'Nelson Legend'.<sup>38</sup>

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In 1823, while the conversion of the Painted Hall was underway, the role that the upper hall would play within this new gallery was still uncertain. Under the guidance of Lawrence, Smirke and Chantrey, the decision was made that, after at least 17 years on display, Nelson's funeral car should be removed.<sup>39</sup> Although the precise date is unclear, soon after this suggestion the carriage was dismantled. The

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<sup>36</sup> W. & R. Chambers, *The Book of Days*, 479.

<sup>37</sup> For a broader discussion of how people collected and engaged with military relics in the wake of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars see Stuart Semmel, 'Reading the Tangible Past: British Tourism, Collecting and Memory after Waterloo', *Representations*, no. 69, Special Issue: Grounds for Remembering (Winter, 2000), 9-37.

<sup>38</sup> 'The Nelson Legend' was first termed in the 1995 collection of essays *The Nelson Companion*, edited by Colin White.

<sup>39</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 28.



three Academicians described the car as ‘inappropriate to these splendid rooms and injurious to the architectural effect’.<sup>40</sup> They were clearly approaching the conversion of the upper hall from the perspective of installing an art gallery, suggesting that ‘some of the larger and more splendid paintings be reserved for the West Side of the Upper Hall’.<sup>41</sup> In the correspondence between Greenwich Hospital and the Academicians, no attempt is made to acknowledge the previous history of the site. However, while the Academicians did not acknowledge the potentially prestigious impact of Nelson’s former presence, the suggestion that the upper hall should provide the location for the ‘more splendid paintings’ demonstrates that they did acknowledge the prestige of this third and final room within the architectural complex. Locker did consider the Academicians’ initial suggestion to install paintings in the upper hall. Within his drafts for the Gallery, one roughly drawn page plots two different arrangements for the upper hall (38 & 147). In the lower half of the page, Locker designed an arrangement of royal portraits, exhibiting likenesses of all the successive monarchs from Charles II through to George IV, whose portrait was positioned at the very centre of the scheme. This arrangement would have glorified the post-restoration monarchy, giving an illusion of stability to the subsequent royal succession that would have reiterated and extended Thornhill’s succession narrative.<sup>42</sup> The arrangement sketched at the top of Locker’s draft page offered an alternative scheme, which would have conveyed a narrative of British naval triumph from the Armada through to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic campaigns, to an extent summarising the naval narrative forged across the walls of

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<sup>40</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 28.

<sup>41</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 22 November 1823, 27.

<sup>42</sup> Apart from the full length portraits of James II and William IV, both of whom were Lord High Admirals, the other royal portraits were not exhibited in the Naval Gallery and instead were placed in the Council Room in the Admiralty Building. This display was still incorporated in to the Gallery catalogue, and included as part of a visit to Greenwich, but it was not an integral part of the Naval Gallery itself.

the main hall. In this design, it is not George IV but Nelson who is located at the very centre of the scheme with depictions of his most praised victories at the Nile and Trafalgar positioned to either side. Neither of these schemes ever continued beyond the early planning stages and paintings were never actually exhibited in the upper hall of the Naval Gallery. They would have concealed the depiction of George I and his descendants on the west wall and it is clear from the number of illustrations and engravings of the Naval Gallery that Thornhill's paintings in the upper hall remained uncovered throughout the Gallery's existence.<sup>43</sup> Although paintings were never installed, Locker's draft design demonstrates the early identification of the upper hall as a site for the commemoration of Nelson.

In the early years of the Naval Gallery's existence, it was decided that, rather than housing a display of oil paintings, the upper hall should be used as a site for the exhibition of naval artefacts. The introduction to the 1833 catalogue informed visitors that the upper hall was 'reserved as a repository for various articles of public interest connected with the Royal Navy'.<sup>44</sup> By this time the upper hall contained a variety of naval objects including several ship models which had been donated by William IV.<sup>45</sup> In addition, an astrolabe which had reportedly been owned by Sir Francis Drake was also on display.<sup>46</sup> The donation of naval artefacts rather than paintings helped to separate the Duke of Clarence's patronage from those of his elder brother, George IV, who had contributed so extensively to the Gallery's picture

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<sup>43</sup> This is evident in numerous depictions of the Gallery. For examples see the illustrations (nos. 3, 12, 13, 168 & 169).

<sup>44</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 3-4.

<sup>45</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 3-4.

<sup>46</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 3-4; TNA ADM 67/82, 7 May 1831, 207. Previously mentioned in Chapter I, the so-called 'Drake's Dial' (NMM AST 0172) is in fact an astronomical compendium of 1565 by Humfrey Cole. See Higton, *Sundials at Greenwich*, 301-5.

collection.<sup>47</sup> It allowed William to assert his role not just as a royal prince but as the Lord High Admiral.

In 1828, William donated an artefact to the Naval Gallery which single-handedly initiated the development of the upper hall as a site for exhibiting specifically Nelsonic memorabilia. The undress Vice-Admiral's coat worn by Nelson at the Battle of the Nile in 1798 was presented to the Gallery, enclosed in a box with an engraved silver tablet that outlined the provenance of the artefact (148).<sup>48</sup> The inscription stated that the jacket had been acquired 'as a legacy from the late the Hon. Mrs Damer'.<sup>49</sup> It is thought that Anne Damer, a sculptor who was staying in Naples in 1798, had persuaded Nelson to sit for a portrait bust once he had arrived there following the Battle of the Nile.<sup>50</sup> She depicted him wearing the uniform from the battle in a bust which was sent to the City of London, and now resides in the Guildhall Art Gallery (149). Richard Walker has observed that, although there is no definite confirmation of this encounter occurring at this time in Naples, it is certain that Nelson personally gave her the Nile coat at some point before his death.<sup>51</sup> A rather theatrical version of this proposed encounter between Nelson and Damer, which is potentially hearsay, was recorded by her cousin Alexander Johnston:

The last time he sat to her, he good humouredly asked her what he could give her for the high honour which she had conferred on him,

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<sup>47</sup> William first established himself as a patron of the Naval Gallery in 1827 when, having received new colours for the Royal Marines, he instructed the old colours to be donated to the Naval Gallery where they were hung in the vestibule. *The Morning Chronicle*, 3 September 1828; William Sholberl, *A Summer's Day At Greenwich*, 56: 'At the base of the windows, in the interior [of the vestibule], are suspended the colours of the Royal Marines, placed there, in 1827, by command of His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, on the occasion of that distinguished corps being presented with new colours'.

<sup>48</sup> Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, VII, 347-8, note 8.

<sup>49</sup> Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, VII, 347-8, note 8.

<sup>50</sup> Walker, *The Nelson Portraits*, 73.

<sup>51</sup> Walker, *The Nelson Portraits*, 73.

and for all the trouble she had taken on the occasion. She answered, 'one of your old coats', on which he replied, 'you shall immediately have one, and it shall be the one I value most highly, - the one which I wore the whole day of the Battle of the Nile, and which I have never worn, nor even allowed to be brushed since, in order that my Naval as well as other friends may know, from the streaks of perspiration and hair-powder which are still to be seen on it, the exertions which I made, and the anxiety which I felt, on that day to deserve the approbation of my King and Country.'<sup>52</sup>

In this account, either Nelson, or at least Johnston, identified the significance of these preserved bodily traces upon the garment, as a timeless record of Nelson's actual physical involvement in achieving the victory. Whether or not Johnston's account is accurate, Nelson must have recognised the value of the coat in order to offer it as a gift to Damer. In doing so, he can be seen to have initiated an elevation in the importance of his personal artefacts well in advance of his death at Trafalgar. The first Gallery catalogue locates the Nile coat in the upper hall and it is most likely that the coat was exhibited in this location from the moment it entered the collection.<sup>53</sup> There is no record in any of the draft arrangements of it being located in either of the other two rooms. William's gift of Nelson's Nile coat was fundamental in shaping the development of the upper hall. It initiated a tradition for the donation, accumulation, and presentation of Nelson's artefacts. The exhibition of Nelson's possessions in the upper hall re-engaged with the previous history of the space, recalling the memory of Nelson's body laid in state. The upper hall was once again

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<sup>52</sup> Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, VII, 347-8 quoted in Walker, *The Nelson Portraits*, 73.

<sup>53</sup> Locker, *Catalogue*, 3-4.

identified as a site of Nelsonic commemoration. The presence of the Nile coat, like the funeral carriage before it, provided a material means through which to emphasise the now absent body.

In 1845, Prince Albert followed William's example and presented the Naval Gallery with the jacket and waistcoat worn by Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar (150). The objects had been located by the writer Nicholas Harris Nicolas, while he was researching for his publication of *The Dispatches and Letters of Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson* (1844-46). The coat and waistcoat had originally been given to Emma Hamilton by Thomas Hardy, as instructed by Nelson before his death. As Beatty recorded, one of Nelson's last requests to Hardy was 'Pray let my dear Lady HAMILTON have my hair, and all other things belonging to me'.<sup>54</sup> Subsequently, the Trafalgar coat was reportedly given to her neighbour, the Alderman Joshua Smith, in order to settle a debt.<sup>55</sup> In 1845, Nicolas discovered that it was available to be purchased from Smith's widow.<sup>56</sup> Nicolas was determined to raise the £150 fee by subscription in order to acquire them for the nation, with the intention that they 'might be deposited, like the coat which Nelson wore at the battle of the Nile, in Greenwich Hospital'.<sup>57</sup> However, before this subscription was carried out Nicolas informed Prince Albert of his discovery and, as the *Spectator* reported, Albert 'immediately desired that the purchase might be made for himself, as he should feel "pride and pleasure" in presenting the precious memorials to Greenwich Hospital'.<sup>58</sup> His donation was a highly public gift for the nation. As the *Spectator* remarked, 'there is a kind and generous wisdom in this act; for nothing could so help to identify

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<sup>54</sup> Beatty, *Death of Nelson*, 42.

<sup>55</sup> *The Standard*, 8 July 1845, 4.

<sup>56</sup> *The Examiner*, 26 July 1845.

<sup>57</sup> *The Standard*, 8 July 1845, 4. An account described as originally published in the *Spectator*. The sale of the coat is recorded as £150 in the *Examiner*, 26 July 1845.

<sup>58</sup> *The Standard*, 8 July 1845, 4.

the Queen's husband with the British people as such little tributes to the maritime pride'.<sup>59</sup> The Trafalgar uniform was placed on immediate display in the upper hall. Both Nile and Trafalgar uniforms were exhibited in glass cabinets positioned to either side of the room (151).<sup>60</sup> In donating the Trafalgar coat to the Naval Gallery, Albert was following the example of both George IV and William IV. He successfully aligned himself with the patriotic patronage of the British monarchy.

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Before considering the ramification of exhibiting these relics both within the Gallery and specifically upon the site where Nelson's actual body had been laid in state, it is worth re-examining how Nelson was presented to visitors before they reached this point in the Gallery. When visitors first entered the Naval Gallery, they were met by the larger-than-life-size statue of Nelson, copied from Flaxman's memorial statue in St Paul's (152). The pelisse which is draped over Nelson's shoulder creates a swath of drapery that frames the severed sleeve of the jacket, outlining Nelson's amputated right arm. As noted earlier in this thesis, the absence of allegorical detail in the Naval Gallery's copy placed greater emphasis upon the representation of the man himself. Positioned in the corner of the vestibule, beside Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar*, Nelson was commemorated for his commanding role in national victory. The plaster-cast copy of this posthumous statue commemorated the mutilated reality of the war hero, following the amputation of his arm in 1797. Nelson's famed 'fin' is presented as an essential heroic attribute: the absent lower

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<sup>59</sup> *The Standard*, 8 July 1845, 4.

<sup>60</sup> TNA ADM 67/96, 10 July 1845, 300. See also description in the *Royal Companion to the 'Sights of London'*, vol. 17, 20: 'Under a glass case, on the right, on entering the Upper Hall, are "The coat and waistcoat worn by Admiral Lord Nelson when he received his mortal wound at the Battle of Trafalgar, presented to Greenwich Hospital by his Royal Highness Prince Albert, 1845." In a glass case, on the opposite side, is The NAVAL HERO'S UNIFORM; which is thus described by an inscription on a silver plate inside the lid'.

arm crucially aligned Nelson's victorious command with personal involvement in conflict and experience of actual physical loss.<sup>61</sup>

Following the vestibule, Nelson was depicted in a number of the paintings that hung along the walls of the main hall (153). Collectively, these works plotted the progression of his career. The pictorial biography began in the middle of the north wall with Jones's depiction of *Nelson Boarding the San Josef at the Battle of St Vincent in 1797* (154). Nelson is depicted as the young commodore lunging forward toward the enemy, fearlessly leading his men into battle. Jones exhibits Nelson's unparalleled command as he leaps upon the deck of the *San Josef* with his sword crucially held in his right hand, drawn toward the enemy. This subject offers a rare opportunity to display Nelson in action. This victory at the Battle of St Vincent, in February 1797, pre-empted the subsequent loss of his right arm in an action at Santa Cruz, in July later that year. From the *San Josef*, visitors would move along to look at the copy of Hoppner's full-length portrait of Nelson, which was hung at the far end of the north wall (155). The original portrait was commissioned by the Prince of Wales, later George IV, as the official state portrait of Nelson (painted 1800-1801). The version exhibited in the Naval Gallery was copied by Shepperson in 1824.<sup>62</sup> In this formal portrait, Nelson is depicted as the composed and rational rear-admiral, victorious after the Battle of the Nile. He is dressed in a rear-admiral's full-dress uniform which is covered with his orders: the ribands of the Bath and St Ferdinand are worn across his chest; the stars of the Bath, St Ferdinand and the Crescent are upon his left breast; the badge of St Ferdinand is beside his sword hilt; and the two Naval flag officer's gold medals, awarded for St Vincent and the Nile, hang around

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<sup>61</sup> Nelson referred to his amputated arm as his 'fin'. See White, 'Nelson Apotheosised', 95.

<sup>62</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 25 October 1824, 114; 9 March 1825, 127.

his neck.<sup>63</sup> In addition to the elaborately gold-laced uniform, these emblems of his ascending naval status and success exposed viewers to Nelson's rapid ascension through the naval system. Behind him, the Battle of Copenhagen, fought in April 1801, is shown raging on in the distance. Crucially, the right arm of his jacket is now pinned up. The empty sleeve pictorially materialises the absent arm. This formal portrait not only commemorates Nelson's newly acquired status, but directly associates this with an act of heroism evidenced by physical injury. In reality the action at Santa Cruz was dreadfully unsuccessful, but through the exclusion of this battle from the walls of the Gallery, physical injury can be realigned with a broader narrative of national triumph.<sup>64</sup> Following the amputation of the right arm, the pinned-up sleeve provided an effective means to single out Nelson, differentiating him from the general mass of naval officers. Within the main hall, for visitors moving from the depiction of Nelson boarding the San Josef to Hoppner's full-length portrait, the appearance of the pinned-up sleeve would have provided them with the first example of Nelson's physical injuries and actual bodily loss.

Finally, Devis's *Death of Nelson* depicts the fatally wounded Nelson in the location where his death actually took place, below deck in the cockpit of the *Victory* (112 & 156). Benjamin West directly criticised this type of representation, arguing that Nelson should not be depicted 'dying in the gloomy hold of a ship, like a sick man in a Prison Hole'.<sup>65</sup> In conversation with Farington, West argued that:

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<sup>63</sup> Nelson was also awarded the Chelengk by the Sultan, or 'Grand Signior' as he was known at the time, as an honour for his victory. This Plume of Triumph was subsequently worn by Nelson on his cocked hat, which is absent from the Hoppner portrait. Walker, *The Nelson Portraits*, no. 146, 244: In 1798, following his success at the Battle of the Nile, Nelson was awarded the Order of the Bath, the Ottoman Order of the Crescent and the Sicilian Order of St Ferdinand and Merit.

<sup>64</sup> For an account of proceedings of the action at Santa Cruz see Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, II, 423-428.

<sup>65</sup> Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, VIII, 3064, 10 June 1807.



[...] there was no other way of representing the death of a Hero but by an Epic representation of it. It must exhibit the event in a way to excite awe & veneration & that which may be required to give superior interest to the representation must be introduced, all that can shew the importance of the Hero.<sup>66</sup>

In the *Death of Nelson*, Devis was moving away from the established grand-manner representation of the dying hero, most famously established by West in his *Death of Wolfe* and reinvented for West's *Death of Nelson* (1806, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool). Clearly West felt that Devis's painting lacked the aggrandising effects of the idealising and established genre of history painting. However, Devis adopts a quasi-religious iconography in order to elevate the moment of the hero's apotheosis. Wrapped in a shroud of fabric, Nelson is Christ-like, lying in a Deposition stance. The two lanterns that light the scene create a divine focus upon his wounded body, which is placed in stark contrast to the surrounding darkness of the ship. Within this work it is not an individual limb, but his entire body that is offered up as a physical sacrifice. His deathly green pallor confirms that he rests at the very edge of expiry. The light upon his forehead forms a halo and below the crossed crucifix-shaped beams of the ship's hull, Nelson is glorified as a naval martyr.

To either side, the crew convey a variety of emotions. In the far right foreground a royal marine, dressed in a red jacket, has collapsed with his head in hands as he is overwhelmed with emotion. The display of masculine sentiment was central to the way in which Nelson's death was received and reported upon. When a select number of the crew from the *Victory* visited Nelson's body laid in state, the

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<sup>66</sup> Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, VIII, 3064, 10 June 1807.

newspapers reported that this ‘brave band’ paid their respects to ‘the remains of their beloved Commander’ with a display of collective masculine emotion. As the *Times* remarked, these sailors reportedly ‘eyed the coffin with melancholy admiration and respect, while the manly tears glistened in their eyes, and stole reluctant down their weather-beaten cheeks’.<sup>67</sup> In Devis’s *Death of Nelson*, the grieving Royal Marine holds his head in his hands, making it impossible for him to be identified. This deliberate anonymity is confirmed by his absence from the key to Bromley’s engraving (157). This unidentifiable figure provides an anonymous example of the grief experienced by both the ordinary members of Nelson’s crew, and the general population at large, in the wake of this tragic victory.

In the foreground of the painting, Nelson’s coat is thrown toward the edge of the picture plane (158). His cloth orders remain very directly on display to the viewer as a permanent mark of his achievements and status. On Nelson’s cloth undergarments, also stripped from his body and thrown toward the viewer, deep red blood-stains stand out against the brightly lit white cloth. A lantern on the floor shines directly upon these physical relics, catching on the gold thread of the cloth medals and further highlighting them for the viewer’s attention. Here the body of the hero is significantly separated from his earthly ties: he has abandoned the material reality of his uniform and embraced his total physical annihilation. Within Devis’s painting, the Trafalgar uniform is central to this visualisation of the moment of apotheosis, where Nelson transitions from naval hero to national martyr. The clothes have been cast off and are crucially left behind as physical remnants of his mortal existence. After viewing Devis’s *Death of Nelson* in the main hall of the Gallery, visitors would have moved on to the upper hall. It was in the third and final room

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<sup>67</sup> *The Times*, 8 January 1806; *The Morning Chronicle*, 10 January 1806; *The Star*, 9 December 1805.

that they could view Nelson's actual blood-stained uniform from the battle of Trafalgar.

Where the main hall commemorated Nelson's life, up until his final moments aboard the *Victory*, the upper hall can be seen to have developed into a space that venerated the subsequent moment of his death, when Nelson transitioned from naval hero to national martyr. The upper hall would have been obviously distinctive from the rest of the Gallery partly because of the different types of objects on display. As we have already examined, while the vestibule and the main hall predominately exhibited naval sculpture and oil paintings, the upper hall presented an assemblage of naval artefacts which increasingly centred on a collection of Nelson's personal objects. Across the main hall, the depiction of Nelson's uniforms was central to the display of rank and the trappings of status but as we have seen, they also provided a means to map his increasing physical injuries. Where the paintings in the main hall commemorated events from Nelson's life, up until his final breath in the cockpit of the *Victory*, the display in the upper hall was dedicated to the preservation of his mortal belongings. The upper hall played a central role in the subsequent national memorialisation, or 'heroification', of Nelson after his death.<sup>68</sup>

The Trafalgar coat, in particular, was essential in shaping the way in which Nelson was posthumously remembered. In 1845, the *Standard* reprinted the following description of the Trafalgar coat, which was first published in the *Spectator*, outlining how it was displayed in the upper hall:

The coat is the undress uniform of a vice admiral, lined with white silk, with lace on the cuffs, and epaulettes. Four stars – or the Orders

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<sup>68</sup> 'Heroification' is coined by Colin White in 'Official and Popular Commemoration of Nelson', 38.

of the Bath, St Ferdinand and Merit, the Crescent, and St Joachim – are seen in the left breast, as Nelson habitually wore them: which disproves the story, that he purposely adorned himself with his decorations on going into battle! The course of the fatal ball is shown by a hole over the left shoulder, and part of the epaulette is torn away: which agrees with Dr. Sir William Beattie’s account of Lord Nelson’s death, and with the fact, that pieces of the bullion and pad of the epaulette adhered to the ball, which is now in her Majesty’s possession. The coat and waistcoat are stained in several places with the hero’s blood.<sup>69</sup>

This description of the Trafalgar coat illustrates the historic significance of placing Nelson’s actual undress uniform on display to the public. Following Nelson’s death, rumours circulated that Nelson had worn his full-dress uniform, covered in his orders and extensive gold braid, into battle at Trafalgar.<sup>70</sup> Placing the actual uniform on display challenged the incorrect assumption that in a vain, if not suicidal, act Nelson went into battle in full regalia and was shot as a result of deliberately making himself so visible. The exhibition of the Trafalgar coat in the upper hall of the Naval Gallery secured Nelson’s posthumous reputation, providing the necessary evidence that he had worn his ordinary undress uniform with fabric representations of his orders on the left breast. As Susan Pearce observes, historical objects and relics were often ‘used as material witness to the truth of historical narratives’.<sup>71</sup> The bullet hole in the left shoulder of the jacket provided the essential means to authenticate the object,

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<sup>69</sup> *The Standard*, 8 July 1845, 4.

<sup>70</sup> *The Standard*, 8 July 1845, 4.

<sup>71</sup> Susan Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition*. (London: Routledge, 1999), 116.

confirming that it was, irrefutably, the jacket worn by Nelson at the moment of his death. After the autopsy, Beatty had reported that ‘a very considerable portion of the gold-lace, pad, and lining of the epaulette, with a piece of the coat, was found attached to the ball: the lace of the epaulette was as firmly so, as if it had been inserted into the metal while in a state of fusion’ (159).<sup>72</sup> As the newspaper reported, the fragments of the epaulette were visibly missing from *this* coat. In displaying the dishevelled reality of the Trafalgar uniform, the Naval Gallery played an essential part in protecting the specific version of events needed to perpetuate the narratives of Nelson’s heroism.

The exhibition of the Trafalgar coat in the upper hall of the Gallery did more than just correct unwanted hearsay. As the *Illustrated London News* remarked in 1865 ‘the visitor will find Nelson’s coat and waistcoat, pierced with the fatal bullet at Trafalgar, laid up for reverent admiration of those who come to look at these memorials of the hero’s glorious death’.<sup>73</sup> The bullet hole through the left shoulder of the Trafalgar coat was essential to the memorialisation of Nelson within the upper hall. It crucially records the path of that fatal shot and quite literally preserves the moment and means by which Nelson committed the patriotic act of physical sacrifice. Rather than reconstructing or repairing the body of the hero, like the numerous posthumous statues and effigies, the exhibition of the uniform commemorated the moment of its destruction. Viewing the blood-stained uniform forced visitors to dwell on the actual bodily sacrifice of this naval hero. As the location where Nelson’s body had been laid in state, the upper hall had been the site where the public had view Nelson’s coffin and encountered the physical reality of his death. With the installation of the Naval Gallery, the subsequent exhibition of

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<sup>72</sup> Beatty, *Death of Nelson*, 68.

<sup>73</sup> *Illustrated London News*, 22 April 1865, issue 1311, 375.

Nelson's relics in the upper hall, specifically the Trafalgar Coat, re-engaged with this transitional experience. The upper hall was once again the site where Nelson moved from subject to object through the public realisation of his death.

The exhibition of Nelson's physical relics offered material fragments of the hero's life: they marked his mortal achievements and constructed a specific biographical history which actively shaped the posthumous memorialisation of Nelson as a national naval martyr. A number of the objects on display had previously sustained a direct physical connection with the now absent body of the hero. The Nile coat, as we have seen, was reportedly stained with sweat following Nelson's exertions in battle. Similarly, the Trafalgar coat was reportedly stained with the 'hero's blood', although it is now generally thought that this was actually the blood of John Scott, Nelson's secretary, who was killed earlier in the action.<sup>74</sup> This emphasis upon actual bodily traces upon these garments recalls an established Catholic relic culture where, as Karmen Mackendrick has observed, objects are ranked in terms of their connection with the deceased. Because the two uniforms were actually worn by Nelson during his lifetime they are secondary, or second-class, relics. However, because they are stained with sweat or blood, they also act as a vessel for a primary, or first class, relic, and have a closer, or stronger, connection with the deceased as a result.<sup>75</sup> The way in which Nelson's artefacts were exhibited in the upper hall embraced a quasi-religious form of remembrance which was fundamentally enhanced by the architecture of the site. At Greenwich Hospital the Painted Hall, located in the King William building, was paired with the chapel,

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<sup>74</sup> *The Standard*, 8 July 1845, 4. Beatty recorded that Nelson 'had fallen on the same spot on which, a little before, his Secretary had breathed his last, with whose blood his LORDSHIP'S clothes were much soiled'; Beatty, *Death of Nelson*, 34.

<sup>75</sup> See Karmen Mackendrick, *Fragmentation and Memory: Meditations on Christian Doctrine* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), esp. chapter five, 'Dismembered Divinity – Saints' Relics', 106-131. For a discussion of the hierarchy of relics see 109-10.

situated opposite in the Queen Mary building. In the chapel, the corresponding space to the upper hall is the altar (160). The display of Nelson's belongings within the upper hall of the Naval Gallery can be seen to have functioned as a Nelsonic reliquary. In this respect, the collection of Nelson's relics performed an essential patriotic role. The presentation of Nelson's relics within the Naval Gallery engaged with a complex and assorted nexus of Catholic and Anglican cultures. The division between these different ideologies was blurred and the way in which they were amalgamated contributed toward the veneration of Nelson as a national naval saint. Within a church, saints' relics acted as an intercessor between the worshipper and God. As Mackendrick observes, 'technically, relics are not objects of *worship*, though they may be *venerated*': 'Sacrifice may be offered at the martyrs tomb [...] but not to them; the sacrifices are made to the God worshipped alike by the martyrs and those offering sacrifice'.<sup>76</sup> Within the upper hall, Nelson's belongings were similarly placed on display for public reverence. As the *Illustrated London News* remarked in 1865, the Trafalgar coat was 'laid up for reverent admiration'.<sup>77</sup> As a secular rather than a spiritual site, Nelson's relics provided the public with a unique type of patriotic, rather than strictly religious, intercession. As a national naval martyr, Nelson offered the public an intercessional relationship both with God, sustaining the myth of Britain as the elect nation, and, arguably, Britannia.

The significance of the uniforms, as vessels retaining a physical trace of the absent hero, can also be comprehended in the context of the nineteenth-century resurgence in secular relic culture. Nineteenth-century secular relics, predominantly in the form of hair jewellery, were often shared between friends and loved ones, both

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<sup>76</sup> Mackendrick, *Fragmentation and Memory*, 110

<sup>77</sup> *Illustrated London News*, 22 April 1865, 375.

in life and in death, as an intimate and personal token of affection.<sup>78</sup> If we recall the provenance of many of the Nelson relics on display in the upper hall, it is clear that, rather than objects of celebrity, the majority were initially given as gifts from Nelson to his family and close personal friends. The Nile coat is one example, given to Damer in thanks for completing the portrait bust. A stocking, worn by Nelson at Tenerife in 1797, was initially presented to Nelson's steward after the conflict. It was subsequently gifted to the Gallery by his nephew in 1833.<sup>79</sup> There are many instances of Nelson offering personal belongings as gifts. In this respect, these objects engaged more with the narratives of personal sentiment than a culture of either celebrity or sacred relics. We cannot entirely dismiss the possibility that Nelson had intended the objects to be preserved for greater, more public, posterity from the beginning; however, in subsequently being placed on public display in the upper hall, their status had the potential to shift. These private gifts were redefined in front of a new public audience and as a result, a personal memento could be transformed into an article of public commemoration and secular worship. The exhibition of Nelson's relics provided the general public with exclusive access to Nelson's personal artefacts and in doing so facilitated a unique connection within the hero, allowing the public to share in the intimacy of personal association. It is in this respect that the upper hall of the Naval Gallery memorialised Nelson as the people's hero.

Throughout the Gallery's existence, the upper hall remained distinct from the rest of the display space, and continued to be defined by the exhibition of Nelson's relics. The way in which these objects were presented to visitors played an essential

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<sup>78</sup> Pamela A. Miller, 'Hair Jewellery as Fetish' in Ray B. Browne, ed., *Objects of Special Devotion: Fetishism in Popular Culture*, (Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1982), 89-106.

<sup>79</sup> The stocking was resented by Mr Brettell, nephew of Lord Nelson's steward, in 1833. See *Descriptive Catalogue*, (1887), 61.



part in sustaining the collective memory of Nelson's death and preserving the transition from hero to martyr through a form of perpetual apotheosis. As the century progressed, the acquisition and exhibition of Nelson's artefacts continued. Although a detailed examination is beyond the limits of this study it is worth identifying just a few of the objects which were acquired over the years. An engraving published in the *Illustrated London News* in 1865 depicts the contents of a glass case on display in the upper hall: on the left is Nelson's snuffbox, reportedly made out of a piece of the timber of the French ship L'Orient, which was donated to the gallery by H.T. Woodburn in 1847; in the centre is Nelson's cocked hat, which was probably acquired along with the Trafalgar coat in 1845; and the stocking was donated by Mr Brettell in 1833 (161).<sup>80</sup> Paper notes are used to identify each of the objects in the case. In 1846, Lord Saye and Sele presented the Naval Gallery with what was thought to be Nelson's Dress Sword, 'being the identical one that was placed on his coffin whilst he lay in state'.<sup>81</sup> This artefact became embroiled in a dispute over its authenticity. The antiquities dealer who sold Saye and Sele the sword, Thomas Evans, claimed to have purchased the object in 1845 from Mrs Smith, the widow of Alderman Smith and the owner of the Trafalgar coat. In 1847, Evans attempted to sue the *Times* for accusing him of 'being a manufacturer of curiosities and palming off a spurious article'.<sup>82</sup> The case was found in favour of the *Times* and it was concluded that the sword could not be certified as Nelson's. As a result of this verdict, the Greenwich Hospital Commissioners concluded that 'it was not deemed

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<sup>80</sup> 'Illustrations of Greenwich Hospital' in *Illustrated London News*, 22 April 1865, 375; *Descriptive Catalogue* (1887), 61. The *Examiner* included both the Trafalgar coat and his cocked hat in the list of objects up for sale. See *Examiner*, 26 July 1845, issue 1956.

<sup>81</sup> TNA ADM 67/100, 3 May 1849, 153-4.

<sup>82</sup> For more details of this event see Mark Westgarth, *A Biographical Dictionary of Nineteenth Century Antique and Curiosity Dealers*. Regional Furniture, XXIII. (Glasgow: Regional Furniture Society, 2009), 96. A summary report was published in the *Times*, 30 June 1847.

advisable to place it before the public as a genuine relic of Lord Nelson'.<sup>83</sup> The decision not to exhibit the sword, when its authenticity was up for debate, illustrates the importance of provenance and the significance of a genuine relic.<sup>84</sup> Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the Turkish gun, sabre and canteen, presented to Nelson by the Sultan after the Battle of the Nile, were given to the Gallery by Sir William Davison.<sup>85</sup> In the late nineteenth century, the Treasury authorised that the Nelson Relics should be purchased by Government and handed over to Greenwich Hospital for exhibition in the Naval Gallery; a decision which clearly solidified the role of the Naval Gallery as the official site for this type of material commemoration of Nelson.<sup>86</sup>

One object in particular marks the apogee of this type of material memorialisation of Nelson. In 1881, Nelson's pigtail was added to this display in the upper hall (162). It had been cut off posthumously after the battle of Trafalgar, before his body was placed in the cask of brandy.<sup>87</sup> This object in particular is significant both for the role it played in the continued veneration of Nelson's personal possessions and in demonstrating the diversification of the material culture by which this was achieved. While the naval uniforms had retained a trace of Nelson's physical existence, his hair was a primary relic taken from the body just after the moment of death. The exhibition of Nelson's pigtail directly engaged with an established secular hair culture which thrived during the nineteenth century. It was common for people to keep locks of hair, both of the living and the dead.

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<sup>83</sup> TNA ADM 67/100, 3 May 1849, 152-55.

<sup>84</sup> By 1887 the sword is listed as on display in the upper hall, described as the 'Dress sword, said to have belonged to Lord Nelson, and to have been placed on his coffin when he lay in state in the Painted Hall, at Greenwich', *Descriptive Catalogue*, (1887), 51.

<sup>85</sup> The gun, sabre and canteen were donated in 1873. *Descriptive Catalogue*, (1887), 51.

<sup>86</sup> *Descriptive Catalogue* (1887), 51-2. In 1895, the Treasury authorised the Nelson Relics purchased by the Government to be handed over to Greenwich Hospital for exhibition in the Painted Hall: ADM 169/189. In 1909, Lord Nelson's Visiting Card by H.M.S. NILE was loaned to the Painted Hall: ADM 169/379. In 1930, the gallery received Nelson's Tea Caddy: ADM 169/590.

<sup>87</sup> Beatty, *Death of Nelson*, 61-2.

However, to wear hair jewellery was fundamentally a personal and sentimental act. As Beatty recorded, on his deathbed Nelson wished the Trafalgar uniform and his hair to be given to Emma Hamilton.<sup>88</sup> To possess a primary relic, such as a lock of hair, was to have an intimate connection with the deceased. Lutz suggests that ‘to possess a piece of the beloved might provide a link to that body lost; it might comfort with its talisman-like ability to contain, and prove the existence of, an eternity, much as sacred relics did in the past for larger communities of believers’.<sup>89</sup> Placing the hair on public display within the Gallery allowed the entire nation to share in this personal connection with the hero.

The exhibition of Nelson’s pigtail in the upper hall marks the apogee of a unique type of Nelsonic commemoration which was established and cultivated within the Naval Gallery. The way in which Nelson was commemorated embraced an idealised, and increasingly monumental, model. As we have discussed, in St Paul’s Cathedral visitors could visit Nelson’s tomb where the body was encased in a series of coffins which culminated with the marble monumentality of Wolsey’s tomb. Flaxman restored the deceased body of the hero with an idealised larger-than-life-sized posthumous statue. Commemorative projects dedicated to Nelson became increasingly monumental and remote as the nineteenth century progressed; a trajectory that culminated with the construction of Trafalgar Square in the 1840s.<sup>90</sup> In 1843, at the heart of this redevelopment, a 17 ft. high statue of Nelson by Baily was situated on the top of a column isolated by 170 ft. from the people below.<sup>91</sup> While the public commemoration of Nelson was becoming increasingly colossal and

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<sup>88</sup> Beatty, *Death of Nelson*, 42.

<sup>89</sup> Deborah Lutz, ‘The Dead Still Among Us: Victorian Secular Relics, Hair Jewelry, and Death Culture’, *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 39, (2011), 130.

<sup>90</sup> Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, 277-325: Baily’s statue of Nelson was completed in 1843 and Charles Barry completed laying out of the square in 1845 (286, 315). However, the lions positioned around the base of the column were not completed until 1867(308, 317).

<sup>91</sup> Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, 310.

remote, the upper hall of the Naval Gallery continued to offer the public a uniquely personal experience, allowing them to share in the intimacy of national mourning and Nelsonic loss. The way in which Nelson's relics were exhibited in the upper hall played an essential role in the mythologizing of Nelson as the nation's hero, preserving the moment of death and emphasising the physical fragility of the man as he transitioned from naval hero to national martyr. This spectacle projected a collective patriotic ideology of national naval martyrdom. Through the exhibition of the relics in the upper hall, the Naval Gallery promoted a unique material memorialisation of Nelson that has been sustained ever since. Even at the NMM today, the Trafalgar Coat and the pigtail remain central to the way in which Nelson is presented and mythologised as a national naval hero.

## CONCLUSION

### The Naval Gallery in a post-Locker era

Together, the five preceding chapters have collectively built up an overview of the Naval Gallery as it was under the governance of its founder and first curator, Edward Hawke Locker. In Chapter One, the close examination of a volume of Locker's correspondence relating to the foundation of the Gallery made it possible to better comprehend how the formation of the Gallery was achieved. These documents convey the commemorative, patriotic and artistic aims that were set out at the Gallery's foundation. Following the successful adaptation of the scheme in 1823, the volume of Locker's correspondence extensively documents the subsequent acquisition of a collection of British naval art. The available literature has allowed us to expand upon Locker's attitude toward the inclusion of both original and replica works within the gallery space, exposing an evident tension between his didactic and connoisseurial agendas for the display. From this remarkable archive it has been possible to digitally reconstruct a painting-by-painting hang of the Naval Gallery from 1839 (44 and 45). In reinstating the architectural context of the Painted Hall, it has been possible to consider the exhibition of the collection as a whole. Most significantly, what this unusual body of primary material reveals is the extent to which Locker was personally involved in the foundation and subsequent formation of this national naval project.

Following this initial examination of the acquisition of the collection, the following four chapters examined different aspects of the Gallery. Adhering to the architectural structure of the actual gallery space, Chapter Two examined the display

of works within the vestibule, the first of three rooms that make up the Painted Hall. Rather than a liminal entrance space, this chapter explored how the vestibule functioned as an intrinsic part of the display with an independent curatorial agenda. As the site where de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* and Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar* were exhibited from 1829, the vestibule would have made it immediately clear to visitors as they entered the Painted Hall, that this Gallery was a commemorative pantheon to the victories won and the individuals lost in the recent conflicts. This commemorative narrative was further extended by the plaster-cast copies of the memorial statues from St Paul's, which were positioned in the four corners of the room. Through an examination of how works from the projects at St Paul's and St James's were adapted for exhibition within the vestibule, this chapter exposed the ways in which the Naval Gallery both engaged with and actively contributed to the development of an established culture of public commemorative patronage in Britain.

Moving out of the vestibule, Chapter Three considered the ways in which paintings were exhibited within the main hall. It examined how Locker constructed a chronological naval history both upon the walls of the Gallery and through a number of additional textual means. Through the presentation of British maritime history from the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 through to the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, Locker's scheme is seen to engage with an established naval and national historiography. This specifically relates to the other ways in which Locker was actively engaged with this developing tradition of national history writing, producing a number of historical works in the 1820s and 1830s in a bid to encourage the dispersal of 'national information'.<sup>1</sup> Through a close reading of Locker's didactic

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<sup>1</sup> Locker, *Englishman's Library*, cover page.

naval narrative and an examination of how this was underpinned throughout by an account of national progression and providential naval victory, this Chapter has assessed how he employed these visual and textual accounts as a means to both educate the public and reassert an anti-radical discourse at a time of social unrest in the early nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

While Chapter Three examined how a narrative of naval history was articulated upon the walls of the main hall, Chapter Four re-examined the same space in order to consider how it simultaneously functioned as a forum for the exhibition of British naval art. Displaying several hundred naval portraits, marine paintings and naval history paintings, the Gallery can be seen to have traced the national history of British naval art. This chapter examined how the Naval Gallery interacted with and was influenced by a number of contemporary art institutions, including the Royal Academy and the British Institution. Through this close examination of these wider relationships across the contemporary art world, it has been possible to assess the extent to which the Gallery deliberately engaged with and participated in the contemporary art world. Through the commission and exhibition of original works, most apparent in the patronage of naval history painting, the Gallery was able to actively participate in the contemporary British art scene. It was through this patronage of contemporary British artists and the commission of patriotic maritime subjects that the Naval Gallery sought to encourage the continued development of a British school of naval art.

Finally, Chapter Five examined the third and final room in the Naval Gallery, the upper hall. While the previous chapters considered the exhibition of fine art, this chapter examine how the upper hall was employed as a distinctly separate space for

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<sup>2</sup> Dickinson, *British Radicalism and the French Revolution*; Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country*.

the display of naval artefacts and Nelsonic relics. In 1806, the upper hall had provided the location for Nelson's body to be laid in state. This chapter explored how, with the installation of the Naval Gallery, the display of Nelson's belongings within the upper hall responded to this previous history, rekindling the patriotic memory of the event. The acquisition and exhibition of Nelson's memorabilia within the Upper Hall continued throughout the Gallery's existence, well beyond Locker's retirement. This chapter explored the development of this room across this wider period in order to fully understand how this Nelsonic narrative, which was initially established by Locker, continued to develop throughout the rest of the Gallery's existence. Through this examination of how Nelson's belongings were exhibited within the upper hall we gain a greater understanding of how the Naval Gallery contributed toward the continued mythologizing of Nelson as a national hero, actually shaping the way in which a 'Nelson Legend' developed in the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

The way in which this thesis is structured, in which the reader moved from room to room, deliberately replicates the experience of early nineteenth-century visitors. Fundamentally, this structure reaffirms the original architectural framework of the display, reinstating the spatial context that has otherwise been lost and forgotten since the Gallery was taken down in 1936. However, it goes beyond merely reflecting the spatial organisation of the Naval Gallery within the Painted Hall. As the Introduction outlined, this structure actively reflects the way in which the Gallery was reviewed and written about in newspapers during its existence.<sup>4</sup> Structuring this study in this way has allowed us to consider the thematic and aesthetic transitions that occurred between the three rooms. As these five chapters

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<sup>3</sup> Now a well-known phrase, 'the Nelson Legend' was first termed in the 1995 collection of essays *The Nelson Companion*, edited by Colin White.

<sup>4</sup> *The Penny Magazine*, 6 January 1838, 1-3.



collectively demonstrate, the spatial format of this thesis has made it possible to assess how, through the creation, acquisition and display of naval art within the Naval Gallery, Locker was able to project a number of historic, commemorative, educational and artistic agendas simultaneously.

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In 1844 Locker retired from Greenwich Hospital. Although the subsequent history of the Naval Gallery is largely beyond the remit of this study, an understanding of how the Gallery developed in the post-Locker years makes us more aware of what was so distinctive about it during the period examined in the main body of the thesis. It is important to appreciate that the Gallery continued to prosper throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In 1844, following the guidance of Charles Eastlake, the Secretary to the Commission on the fine arts, the Greenwich Hospital Commissioners appointed the marine artist Clarkson Stanfield to ‘undertake the Curatorship of the Gallery’.<sup>5</sup> In 1845, under Stanfield’s guidance, the Painted Hall underwent extensive renovation: new granite steps were installed in the vestibule, the dome and paintings were restored, the cornice was gilded, the ventilation system was improved and the pictures were cleaned.<sup>6</sup> In a letter to the Commissioners, Stanfield informed the committee that ‘he felt assured when the Hall is again opened, that from the enrichment of the ornaments and the thorough repair and restoration of the painting it would be both satisfactory and attractive to the public’.<sup>7</sup>

The most obvious alteration that Stanfield made as part of this renovation was a total rehang of the Naval Gallery. A watercolour by L. H. Michael

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<sup>5</sup> TNA ADM 67/95, 17 October 1844, 382; 5 December 1844, 459-60.

<sup>6</sup> TNA ADM 67/96, 13 March 1845, 240; 26 June 1845, 279-81; 1 July 1845, 287-9; 10 July 1845, 302; 14 August 1845, 335; 22 September 1845, 354; 30 October 1845, 413-15; 20 November 1845, 450-51; 11 December 1845, 475-77.

<sup>7</sup> TNA 67/96, 30 October 1845, 413.

depicting the Gallery in 1865 offers a useful record of Stanfield's new display within the main hall (163). The top tier of the display is still occupied by the full-length naval portraits. However, in the space underneath, the individual bays have been covered over, producing a continuous display space around the room. So far no plans for Stanfield's arrangement have been found, but by using Michael's watercolour in conjunction with the Gallery catalogues, it has been possible to create a reconstruction of the display after 1845 (164 & 165). However, unlike the reconstruction of Locker's 1839 design, this is more of a provisional outline. In some instances, the precise position and order of the paintings is not always clear and has had to be inferred based upon the primary material available. However, this provisional reconstruction of Stanfield's display provides a useful comparison to Locker's earlier arrangement in the main hall. In contrast to Locker's rectilinear arrangement, in which pairs of half-length portraits were hung above naval battle paintings, Stanfield introduced an arrangement which combined all the different genres within a single continuous section of the display. Stanfield was an established marine artist, being made a full Academician in 1835, and he would certainly have been influenced by the design of the Royal Academy's Annual Exhibitions when producing this reconfiguration of the Naval Gallery. Stanfield's decision to alter the display may have been as much a practical decision as an artistic one. In closely fitting the works together, frame to frame, he was able to find room for the Gallery's ever-expanding collection. Despite the fact that Stanfield's arrangement seems removed from Locker's original display, perhaps their intentions were not so disparate. Here we can look again at one of Locker's early designs for the Naval Gallery in which the walls are similarly covered in paintings, from the floor all the way up to the upper windows (32).

Stanfield abandoned Locker's chronological arrangement of the main hall and instead replaced it with an arrangement that commemorated the artistic achievements and maritime victories of modern Britain. This restructuring may in part have been in response to changing attitudes toward the writing and construction of national history. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, demands were made for a general professionalisation of the literary tradition resulting in the use of increasingly academic critical methods which were employed by a new generation of historians including Edward A. Freeman and Samuel R. Gardiner.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, after 1815, Britain experienced a prolonged period of peace and perhaps as a result the overt commemoration of a martial maritime Britain was no longer necessary or appropriate. However, within the main hall, Stanfield's display demonstrated a preference toward the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century naval history and battle paintings. The two large-scale St James's Palace battlescapes were relocated from the vestibule to the very centre of the main hall. On the south wall de Louthembourg's *Glorious First of June* hung in the centre, framed to either side by two of the British Institution history paintings with Briggs's *Visit of George III to Howe's Flagship* on the left and Drummond's depiction of *Admiral Duncan Receiving the Sword from Admiral de Winter* on the right (164). This arrangement is reflected on the north wall where Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar* hung in the centre of the display, framed by Devis's *Death of Nelson* on the left and Arnald's *Explosion of L'Orient at the Battle of the Nile* on the right (165). Stanfield was relocating the

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<sup>8</sup> The debate between George Macaulay Trevelyan and John Bagnell Bury about the 'Science of History' is documented in J. B. Bury, 'History as a Science' in Fritz Stern, ed., *Varieties of History From Voltaire to the Present*, (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1970 [1956]), 209-45. Edward Augustus Freeman produced an extensive body of historical works including fifteen volumes on the *Norman Conquest*, several others on the early Middle Ages, and biographies of William the Conqueror, Thomas of Canterbury and Frederick II. Samuel Rawson Gardiner wrote the series *History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-1642* (10 vols. 1883-4); *The History of the Great Civil War, 1642-1649* (4 vols., 1893); and *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649-1660*, 4 vols., (1903).

Gallery's finest examples of contemporary British naval painting to the centre of this national naval art gallery. The design for the main hall may on one level appear to destroy Locker's original design. However, this reconfiguration of the Naval Gallery directly engages with one of Locker's major ambitions for the site, providing a forum for the exhibition of contemporary British naval art. The revised arrangement positioned the most recent examples of naval art to the forefront, constructing a display which exemplified the patriotic productions of a contemporary school of British naval painting. The four British Institution paintings were located at the heart of this arrangement, demonstrating the Naval Gallery's significant role as a patron of the arts.

Despite the absence of a chronological naval narrative in the main hall, Stanfield did not wholly abandon Locker's major aim for the Naval Gallery, that is, that it should commemorate 'the distinguished exploits of the British Navy'.<sup>9</sup> The central position of de Louthembourg's *First of June* and Turner's *Battle of Trafalgar* provided a monumental dedication to British naval victory in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Originally, Locker had positioned the St Paul's statues to either side of these works, directly associating victory with the commanding admirals. Stanfield's reconfigured arrangement made this association more loosely, through the position of the naval history paintings to either side. Rather than heroic commemorative sculpture the admirals were acknowledged within a wider pictorial framework of conflict, sacrifice and in the case of Nelson, death. As Chapter Five has examined, the collection of Nelsonian memorabilia expanded considerably in the years after Locker's retirement in 1844. In 1846, under Stanfield's instruction, a 'Nelson Room' was created in the adjoining room to the side of the upper hall,

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<sup>9</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 20 September 1823, 19.

previously used as a record room for the Hospital.<sup>10</sup> This additional room provided further display space for an ever-expanding collection of paintings. Between 1847 and 1849 a collection of eight paintings depicting the life of Nelson were acquired by subscription, Mr Jasper de Croix being the principal subscriber.<sup>11</sup> All eight works were specifically acquired for exhibition in the Nelson Room. Seven paintings, two by Benjamin West and five by Richard Westall, depict scenes from Nelson's life. These works had been commissioned as illustrations for James Stanier Clarke and John McArthur's *The Life of Admiral Lord Nelson, KB*, first published in 1809.<sup>12</sup> The eighth painting was a portrait of *Nelson* by Lemuel Francis Abbot.<sup>13</sup> In an aquatint, after an original oil painting by Albert Holden, a sailor is depicted leaning upon the guard rail in the Nelson Room, observing the Abbott portrait, hung in the centre of the wall with a number of works from the *Life of Nelson* series hung in the surrounding space (166). The acquisition of these works was clearly a prominent addition to the Gallery. The Nelson Room provided a more dedicated commemoration of the life of Nelson, providing a pictorial adjunct to the upper hall which remained a site to memorialise his death. However, it is worth noting that this extension of the commemorative agenda of the Naval Gallery was achieved through the installation of an additional gallery room. Designed primarily for the exhibition of oil paintings rather than artefacts or relics, the construction of the Nelson Room

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<sup>10</sup> TNA ADM 67/97, 21 May 1846, 193. This decision to create the Nelson Room was made by Clarkson Stanfield as part of his renovation of the gallery after being appointed as curator in 1844.

<sup>11</sup> The purchase was initiated in 1847: see TNA ADM 67/98, 28 May 1847, 193-4. The eight paintings were finally installed in 1849. See *Illustrated London News*, 10 November 1849, 316.

<sup>12</sup> See 'The Naval Gallery, Greenwich Hospital', *Illustrated London News*, 10 November 1849, 316. All these works are held by the NMM. For works by Richard Westall see BHC 2907, BHC 2909, BHC 2908 and BHC 0498; for Benjamin West see BHC 0421, BHC 0566 and BHC 2905.

<sup>13</sup> *Illustrated London News*, 10 November 1849, 316. For Abbot's portrait of *Nelson* see BHC2887.

demonstrates Stanfield's prominent aesthetic agenda for the Gallery as a forum for naval art rather than history.<sup>14</sup>

Stanfield was last listed as the curator of the Naval Gallery in 1866.<sup>15</sup> He died the following year. Despite the fact that the Royal Naval Hospital gradually closed during the 1860s the Naval Gallery remained open during this period.<sup>16</sup> Stanfield was followed by a series of curators. The artist Solomon Hart RA (1806-1881) was appointed as curator in 1873. Subsequently, another marine artist, Sir Oswald Brierly (1817-1894), was appointed as his successor in 1882. Van der Merwe has observed that by 1886, Brierly rearranged and renovated the paintings in the Gallery and 'rebuilt' the Nelson Room.<sup>17</sup> Brierly was briefly succeeded by the watercolourist Captain Walter William May (1831-1896) between 1895-6, who himself was followed in 1897 by another Academician, William Frederick Yeames RA (1835-1918).<sup>18</sup> During his time in this post, Yeames oversaw a major restoration of the Painted Hall before retiring as curator in 1911. It is interesting to observe that after the appointment of Stanfield in 1845, all subsequent curators of the Naval Gallery were artists, of a professional standard, and a number of whom were members of the Royal Academy.

The Naval Gallery continued to actively participate in a wider network of galleries and exhibitions. In 1891 the Gallery lent over seventy paintings and other

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<sup>14</sup> The Nelson Room was used as an exhibition space for naval relics, as discussed in Chapter Five. However, the acquisition of the eight paintings by West and Westall in their *Life of Nelson* series was arguably the primary reason for its creation.

<sup>15</sup> Van der Merwe, 'Greenwich Hospital Collection', 35. See reference 58: as van der Merwe cites, these dates are drawn from the *British Imperial Calendar* and *The Navy List*, which are not precise.

<sup>16</sup> The Royal Naval Hospital closed in 1869, becoming the Royal Naval College from 1873. See Bold, *Greenwich*, 1.

<sup>17</sup> Van der Merwe, 'Greenwich Hospital Collection', 35.

<sup>18</sup> See M. H. Stephen Smith, *Art and Anecdote: Recollections of Frederick Yeames RA* (London: Hutchinson, 1927), 248, 250.

objects to the Royal Naval Exhibition at Chelsea.<sup>19</sup> Following the success of the Royal Naval Exhibition, as van der Merwe has observed, the president of the Royal Naval College, Admiral Sir Richard Vesey Hamilton, suggested that the Admiralty needed ‘to remind the public that the Admiralty, as trustees for Greenwich Hospital, are prepared to receive pictures and relics relating to the history of the navy for permanent exhibition in the national collection at Greenwich’. He observed that ‘the present seems a favourable moment to bring before the public these facts, in the hope that amongst the beneficial results of that exhibition may be an enlargement of the naval collection at Greenwich by the presentation of fresh pictures and other objects of interest illustrative of the past history and feats of the Royal Navy’.<sup>20</sup> Despite the fact that as early as 1830 the Board was already expressing concerns that the Gallery was nearly at capacity and was ‘incapable of receiving more than a very few additional pictures’, even at the end of the nineteenth century the Naval Gallery was still actively acquiring new works.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the fact that the Painted Hall was renovated on a number of occasions during these latter years, the fundamental structure of Stanfield’s 1845 arrangement remained much the same. As a late-nineteenth-century photograph of the Gallery illustrates, while some paintings were reordered and relocated across the gallery space by the succeeding curators, partly in an attempt to accommodate the acquisition of new works, the early nineteenth-century naval history paintings remained at the centre of the display (167). It is important to emphasise that this later

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<sup>19</sup> *Royal Naval Exhibition: Official Catalogue and Guide*, (London: W. P. Griffith & Sons, 1891); Roger Parkinson, *The Late Victorian Navy: the pre-dreadnought era and the origins of the First World War*, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), 163.

<sup>20</sup> Major L. Edye, ‘the Arts Section of the Royal Naval Exhibition’, *Royal United Service Institution Journal*, 36, 1892, 555-577 cited in W. Mark Hamilton, *The Nation and the Navy: Methods and Organization of British Navalist Propaganda, 1889-1914*, (New York: Garland Publishing Ltd., 1986), 97.

<sup>21</sup> TNA ADM 67/81: 16 October 1830, 485.

period in the Gallery's history is no less significant. Considerable research still needs to be completed on this latter period in order to gain a more complete understanding of the acquisition and development of the collection. The acquisition of works certainly continued throughout the rest of the Gallery's existence. The 1922 catalogue records over 30 works of art and numerous relics that were added to the collection after Locker's retirement with donations continuing well into the early twentieth century.<sup>22</sup> The fact that new editions of the catalogue were produced in 1900, 1910-12 and 1922 demonstrates that the Gallery continued to evolve in these latter years.<sup>23</sup> The continued reprinting of the catalogue also suggests that the Gallery continued to attract high levels of visitor attendance. Furthermore, the Naval Gallery continued to feature in newspaper articles and other printed publications, including tour guides to London. For example, a depiction of the Naval Gallery was published as an engraving in the *Penny Illustrated Paper* on 26 August 1871 and another version could be found in Edward Walford's *Old and New London*, published in 1878 (168 & 169).<sup>24</sup> Artists continued to produce illustrations and paintings depicting parts of the Gallery. However, what is particularly unusual is the inclusion of Greenwich Hospital pensioners in representations of the Naval Gallery, long after the Royal Naval Hospital had closed. For example in the 1905 'Pears' Annual' publication, a print was included, after an oil painting by Albert Holden, depicting a Greenwich Hospital pensioner, dressed in his Royal Naval Hospital uniform,

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<sup>22</sup> *Descriptive Catalogue of the Portraits of Naval Commanders, Representations of Naval Actions, Relics, &c. Exhibited in the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital, and the Royal Naval Museum, Greenwich*, (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Ltd., 1922), 46 & 50: A half-length portrait of Admiral Sir Charles Bullen was presented by Lieutenant Richard Bullen in 1861 and a half-length portrait of Captain Thomas Baillie by Nathaniel Hone was presented by Colonel Baillie in 1906.

<sup>23</sup> Editions of the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Portraits of Naval Commanders, Representations of naval actions and of the Relics, &c. exhibited in the Painted Hall and Royal Naval Museum at Greenwich Hospital*, (London: Printed for Her Majesty's Stationery Office by Eyre and Spottiswoode) were published in 1900, 1912 & 1922. See ADM 169/266; ADM 169/399.

<sup>24</sup> *Penny Illustrated Paper*, 26 August 1871, 113; Edward Walford, *Old and New London*, (London, 1878), VI, 181.



saluting a bust of Nelson (170). The bust stands on a column which has been swathed in a union flag and a laurel wreath. Published in 1905, in the centenary year of Nelson's death, this print paid homage to the nation's hero with this fictional representation of the ever patriotic, but now disbanded, Greenwich Hospital pensioners. It seems that the image of the patriotic pensioner was such an iconic and intrinsic part of the overall spectacle of the Naval Gallery that it continued to be perpetuated throughout the Gallery's existence, even after the closure of Royal Naval Hospital in the 1860s.

In 1936, the Naval Gallery closed and the collection was officially placed on permanent loan to the NMM.<sup>25</sup> In subsequent years, the museum has played a vital role in the preservation of the collection. As a result of this loan the majority of the collection has stayed together, although most of the pictures have been consigned to storage. However, while the paintings themselves remain, the earlier context of their acquisition and display by the Naval Gallery, has been lost. Under the initial direction of Locker, the Naval Gallery set an example for the display of both British maritime history and a national school of naval art. However, since the collection moved to the NMM in 1936 this specific agenda has been subsumed within the alternative, overarching agendas of an institution dedicated to the preservation and presentation of maritime history. As van der Merwe has noted, the founding Chairman of the Trustees for the museum, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl Stanhope and First Lord of the Admiralty (1938-40), succinctly summarised a prevailing attitude that a naval museum was 'not a gallery for pretty pictures'.<sup>26</sup> The Naval Gallery's dedication to

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<sup>25</sup> ADM 169/704: Transfer of pictures from the Painted Hall to the National Maritime Museum, 1935-6; ADM 169/726: Inventory of Greenwich Hospital pictures, relics, etc. to be transferred on permanent loan to the National Maritime Museum, 1936.

<sup>26</sup> Stanhope's 'pretty pictures' remark is recorded in unpublished notes by E. H. Archibald, the NMM's former Curator of Oil Paintings. Cited in Kevin Littlewood and Beverly Butler, *Of Ships and Stars: Maritime Heritage and the Founding of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich*,

exhibition, patronage and the active development of British art dropped away. The artistic status that was once associated with numerous works within this collection has to an extent been diminished by the change in usage; when exhibited, such works tend to be deployed as visual illustrations to accompany a prevailing historical naval narrative.

Under Locker's direction, the Naval Gallery projected a chronological national naval narrative which, to a degree, laid the foundational example for subsequent maritime museums in the twentieth century. Furthermore, the Naval Gallery actively engaged with a commemorative culture which had developed in response to conflict in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As we have seen, the upper hall was used as a site for national Nelsonic memory and in a number of ways it established a precedent for the mythologizing of Nelson which can still be considered influential today. However, the Naval Gallery was also an active participant within the nineteenth-century art world. The extensive quantity of correspondence between Locker and established members of major art institutions, including Thomas Lawrence at the Royal Academy and Charles Long at the British Institution, demonstrates that the Naval Gallery was closely connected to the centre of the London art scene. The Naval Gallery was actively producing copies as a means to 'liberate' paintings which were otherwise hidden away, 'concealed in the obscurity of private apartments'.<sup>27</sup> As a result of exhibiting both originals and copies, Locker allowed a new public to have access to a national collection of British art. Furthermore, the Gallery provided a public forum for the exhibition of contemporary art, one which was positioned outside of the boundaries of the Academy and which offered artists greater stylistic freedom as a result. Furthermore,

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(Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd., 1998), 91 and van der Merwe, 'Greenwich Hospital Collection', 35.

<sup>27</sup> TNA PRO 30/26/27, 23 October 1823, 1.

the Gallery actively commissioned contemporary artists, offering a direct financial means of encouragement and support to the developing British school of art.

Over the last century, the Naval Gallery has not just ceased to exist; it has even ceased to be remembered. The vital role that the Naval Gallery actively played in the accumulation, exhibition, encouragement and development of British naval art has been set aside, in the name of maritime history. Partly as a result of the closure of the Gallery, and the total eradication of its artistic ideology, modern attitudes toward the status and prestige of naval and marine art have arguably returned to the marginalised position that they were in before the instigation of Locker's scheme. In this study, a dedicated and thorough examination of the Gallery's early history has attempted to regain an understanding of the role that it played within the wider context of early nineteenth-century cultural and commemorative public projects. The Naval Gallery, it is now possible to argue, was not only the first 'national' collection of British naval art and a major site for the public commemoration of Nelson; it was a major player in the British art world of the late Georgian and Victorian periods.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BI	The British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts
GH	Greenwich Hospital
NMM	The National Maritime Museum
RA	The Royal Academy of Arts
RAA	The Royal Academy of Arts Archive
TNA	The National Archives, Kew

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