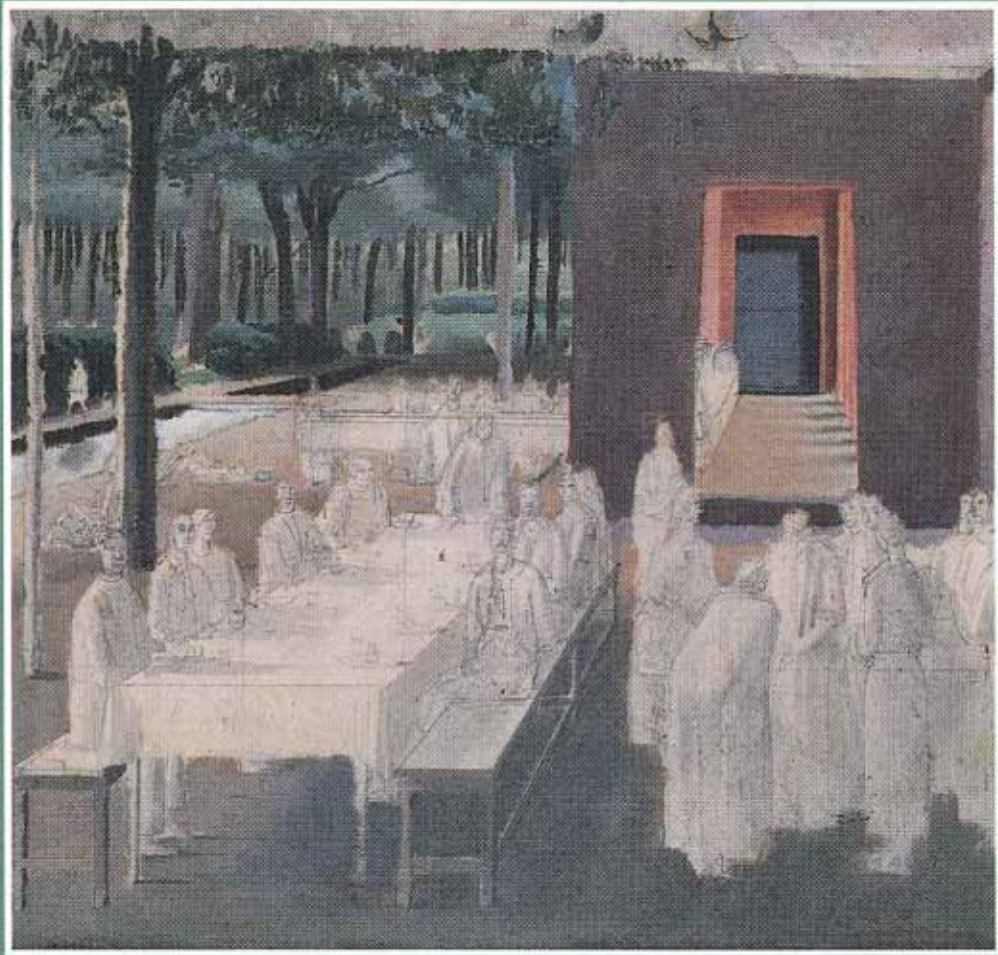


WINIFRED KNIGHTS



WINIFRED KNIGHTS 1899-1947



Self portrait, circa 1920 - catalogue 15c

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Winifred Knights 1899–1947

JUDITH COLLINS



Winifred Knights outside Arnold Mason's studio, The Old Mill, Ludlow, Shropshire, September 1920 (Catalogue.4f–h)

Winifred Knights exhibited her work with reluctance, and a retrospective exhibition of her major paintings would total seven in number. She worked inordinately slowly, with consummate care: nothing in her work was left to chance, everything was prepared and thought out. Her reluctance to exhibit was not related to strong self-criticism, indeed the opposite would be true: her son John remembers her total confidence in her work.

She was born in Streatham, London on 5 June 1899, the eldest daughter of Walter Henry and Mabel Gertrude Knights. The family home was at 22 Madeira Road, Streatham, SW16; her father was the director of a sugar company with its headquarters in Mincing Lane in the City. She had two sisters, Joyce (1901–77) and Eileen (b.1906). From 1912–15 Winifred attended the James Allen's Girls School in Dulwich where she showed artistic talent, winning both the Silver and Gold medals of the Royal Drawing Society. Joyce also showed talent for drawing while Eileen became a gifted musician. In 1912 her parents took Winifred to see Professor Brown at the Slade School and he recommended that she might find professional work as a book illustrator. She attended the Slade School of Art, London, from October 1915 to July 1917, when she won the Second Prize for Figure Drawing (£2.0.0.). She began to be recognised as an outstanding draughtswoman. She spent one year, from October 1917 to October 1918, staying with relatives on a farm at Lineholt, Worcestershire. Her absence from the Slade for this year

was allowed because of the state of her nerves. She witnessed the Silvertown explosion from the top of a tram car and became concerned about air raids.

Winifred returned to the Slade School for the period October 1918 to July 1920. In 1918 she won the Figure Composition Prize of £16 and in 1919 she was made a Slade Scholar. She won First Prize of £16 for the Summer Composition in 1919 with a work titled 'Village Street – Millhands Conversing' (tempera on canvas on board, 36 x 48 in, Slade Coll. 5524). In August and September 1919 the Knights family took a holiday at Roydon in Essex. Winifred must have spent time on that holiday making sketches of the local architecture and the inhabitants because the painting she submitted for the 1919 Summer Composition Prize was based on the Mill at Roydon. At the Slade in 1919–20



The Knights Family: Walter, Winifred, Eileen, Joyce and Mabel, in November 1920. This photograph was taken just before Winifred left for Italy, to take up her scholarship to study at the British School at Rome.

Winifred was close to four artists: Mary Attenborough, George Charlton, Allan Gwynne-Jones and Arnold Mason. There are letters extant from the three male artists which indicate how much they admired her as a person and equally how much they admired her work. Allan Gwynne-Jones continued to write to her when she went to work in Rome, while Arnold Mason travelled to work alongside her in Italy.

In January 1920 the Slade entered paintings and drawings by Winifred for the Prix de Rome scholarship in Decorative Painting along with sixteen other artists. Works were put on display at the Grafton Galleries in Grafton Street. In February she learnt that she was selected to go forward to the final round, along with three other painters, Leon Underwood, J. Wilkie, and A. Outlaw. On 5 July, four weeks after her twenty-first birthday, Winifred began to work specifically on a large painting to be submitted for consideration for the award of the Prix de Rome. The time allotted was eight weeks and the subject specified was 'The Deluge'. Winifred suffered from a bad bout of tonsillitis and eye trouble during the allotted time, and submitted her painting 'The Deluge' somewhat unfinished. Early ideas for the painting show that Winifred planned a composition based on wide horizontal bands of landscape and water, with the ark placed in the foreground at the right and a frieze of calm figures in front, depicting Noah and his family overseeing the animals entering the ark. This changed to the one executed, where all is panic and the landscape is a mixture of sharp diagonals. Noah, his family and the animals are all obviously safely within the ark, which floats almost unnoticed in the gloomy background. The men, women and children in the foreground who display terror are those who will perish in the rising waters.

A few years previously, Winifred had seen the effects of terror and destruction first-hand: her sister Eileen records

that she suffered greatly from witnessing the Silvertown explosion in 1917. A TNT chemical plant was established at Silvertown, East Ham, on the Thames, in 1915. On 19 January 1917 at 6.45pm there was a massive explosion at the plant, which flattened all buildings, including 600 homes, within a 500 yard radius, and killed seventy-three people. It was the largest explosion in Britain during the First World War, and Winifred suspended her studies at the Slade to recover from the trauma in the country with relatives for a whole year. One could speculate that the change of format from the early idea of calm and control for 'The Deluge' to the one executed shows Winifred exchanging acceptance of fate and obedience for a situation in which humans are at the mercy of huge forces beyond their control. This could well have some connection with her memories of that great human disaster.

On 21 September 1920, when Winifred was staying in Ludlow at Arnold Mason's studio along with her father and fellow Slade student Mary Attenborough, she learnt that she had become the winner of the Prix de Rome, the first woman to be so honoured. Ten distinguished artists made up the Faculty of the Painting department of the British School at Rome, and these would have been the committee that decided the prize winner. Among the names, which included Clausen, Sargent and Steer, were two that were particularly significant for Winifred, Sir William Blake Richmond and D. Y. Cameron. Winifred's friend and supporter Arnold Mason had been a pupil of Richmond from 1906-08 and in November 1919 he took Winifred with some work to see Richmond to seek advice about her career. D. Y. Cameron was to be of support to Winifred during the 1920s. *The Daily Sketch* ran a regular page entitled 'We Take Off our Hat To ...' and on 6 October 1920 this page included a photograph of Winifred, incorrectly called Gertrude Knights, with the caption 'For Looking the Part

as Winner of the Rome Scholarship in Decorative Painting', continuing with her 'appearance accords in every particular with the decorative canons laid down by the most up-to-date art circles.' When the exhibition of competition work for the Prix de Rome was shown at the Royal Academy in February 1921, a black and white illustration of Winifred's painting 'The Deluge' made the front page of *The Daily Graphic* on 8 February along with a photograph of Winifred. The caption stated 'Girl Artist Remodels the Flood' and 'The ark suggests the modern concrete buildings, and the figures are those of present-day men and women. Critics declare the painter a genius.'

She went by train to take up her three-year scholarship at The British School at Rome with her aunt Millicent Murby. They travelled in the first week of November through terrible floods in Europe. At The British School Winifred was given bedroom 205 with green shutters, and a large painting studio with a gallery, grey walls and floor, but no heating. Fellow art students already there in November 1920 were Colin Gill, who had won the Prize for Decorative Painting in 1913 but was prevented by the War in taking up his scholarship, Job Nixon, who had won the 1920 Engraving Scholarship, and Jack M. Benson. Painting scholars were made less welcome than archaeologists because the two senior officials at the school at that time, the Director Thomas Ashby and his Deputy, Eugénie Strong, were both archaeologists. Winifred was joined shortly afterwards by Alfred Hardiman, the 1920 Rome Scholar in Sculpture. Because of the hot, dry conditions in Rome during the summer, painting students usually left for the country. In the summer of 1920 Gill and Nixon had found rooms and a studio in the stunning hill village of Anticoli Corrado in Lazio. They persuaded Winifred to join them and she worked there with them from 1 April to late July 1921. Arnold Mason came out to Italy to join her. She had

quite a productive time in Anticoli, producing many drawings and two oil paintings, 'Jairus's Daughter' and 'Paradise', now only known from sketches in her letters.

In a letter to her mother from Anticoli, dated 24 July 1921, she gives details of these paintings as well as small sketches of them. Winifred had learnt at the Slade to make a large number of preparatory drawings for a large oil painting, sketching the figures, the architecture and the landscape and then composing the painting from the most satisfactory of the sketches. Nothing in Winifred's work was from the imagination: everything was transcribed from the world around her. One of her great artistic strengths was her capacity to transcribe the natural world



Pen and ink sketch of 'Jairus's Daughter' and 'Paradise', from a letter to the artist's mother, Anticoli, 24th July 1921.

with consummate ease. After her death Tom Monnington wrote a short memoir on her in which he stated that 'Miss Knights was a draughtsman of exceptional refinement and clarity of expression, without any trace of mannerism. She had an intense love of nature and natural forms, and her drawings and design seemed to be the natural expression of this rare appreciation.'

In Anticoli she required models for the figures in the Jairus painting and she wrote to her mother that she was getting a model for the daughter the following day, while Maria, with whom she was staying, was posing for the mother. In addition there was 'Arnold for Jesus Christ, Nixon for Peter, Cardall for John and I have got to find models for James & Jairus.' Her painting of 'Paradise' was not a biblical subject, but a subject of her own making, probably reflecting the idyllic time she was having living and working in Anticoli. She described this painting: 'it is going to be gorgeous, late evening time, dark purple brown hills with lilac grey rocks poking out like currants; in front, some people having a very good time, some bathing, some eating and some playing musical instruments.' The accompanying sketch in the letter shows a frieze of figures in the foreground centred on a female nude, with a lake and hills in the far distance and a field of Winifred's favourite device of haystacks in the middle ground. Her letter stated how her friends posed for the central characters in her paintings. She often used herself as a model as many self-portrait drawings in her sketchbooks prove. Winifred had a marvellous oval face and luxuriant hair and was the subject of portraits by many artists, including Colin Gill, Arnold Mason, Arnold Hardiman, and her future husband, Tom Monnington. In September 1921 Winifred returned home to her family in London, weak and thin after intestinal problems, and holidayed in Cromer and Seaton with her family and Arnold Mason.

Her second year in Rome lasted from November 1921 to October 1922 and her third from December 1922 to September 1923 when her scholarship ended. She began two paintings in her second year at Rome; these were 'Abigail' a canvas as large as 'The Deluge', begun in December 1921, and another large canvas of her model Pompelia nude in her studio, begun in January 1922. A third large painting which she began in Rome in 1922-3 was 'The Marriage at Cana'. The background and setting for this work was inspired by the Borghese Gardens in Rome, a place she loved and which she sketched on many occasions. In July 1922 while she was in Rome, one of her small oil paintings of an Italian landscape was purchased by the Trustees of the Tate Gallery. D. Y. Cameron was at this time one of the Trustees and he could well have drawn their attention to her current work.

Although her Rome scholarship came to an end in 1923 Winifred continued to live and work at the British School at Rome during 1924-5. The reason was another fellow painting student, Thomas Monnington, who was awarded a scholarship in 1923. They married in Rome on 23 April 1924 in the presence of Mrs Monnington, but without the full support of her own family. Winifred finally returned to London in December 1925, with Tom following her in January 1926. They settled into a small house and studio at 33a Oxford Road, East Putney and Winifred continued to work there on a large canvas which she had begun in Rome, 'The Santissima Trinita'. It depicts Italian peasants sleeping on the ground, resting among the mountains near to the village of Vallepiera in the Abruzzi. The peasants were on a pilgrimage to the Festival of the Santissima Trinita at Vallepiera, a pilgrimage which Winifred herself undertook on two occasions. She exhibited this painting at the Imperial Gallery of Art, South Kensington in April 1927 to great critical acclaim. Two letters of praise from distin-

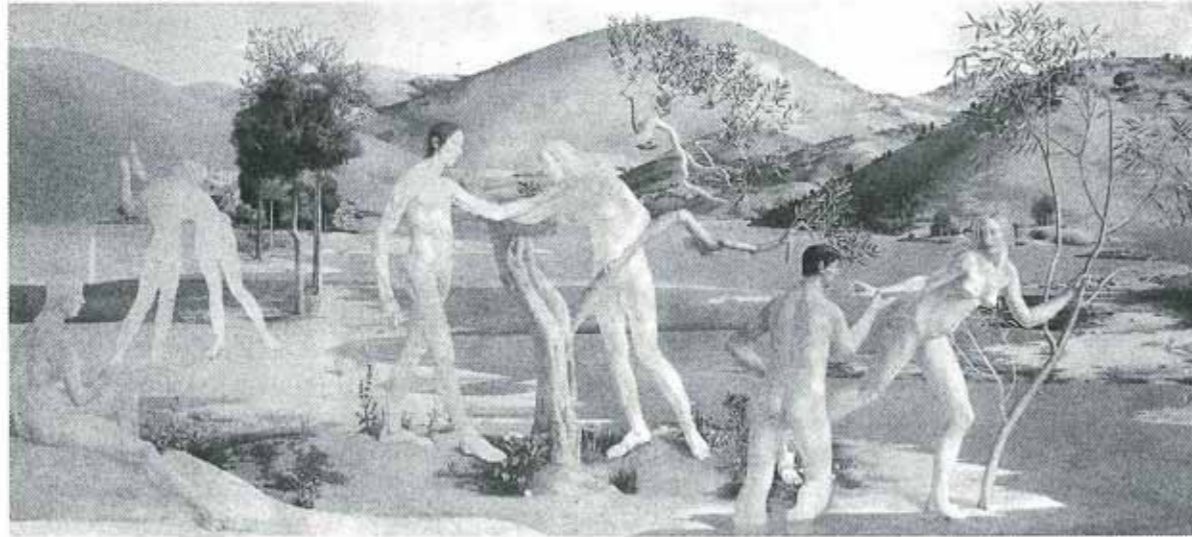
guished artists are still extant, one from D. Y. Cameron and the other from William Rothenstein, both of whom were deeply impressed by the picture. D. Y. Cameron wished to buy it but it was already promised to a Mr Adinsell before it was exhibited. It seems surprising, given Winifred's very high standing in the world of Decorative Painting, that she was not one of the eight young British artists commissioned to paint murals on aspects of British history for St Stephen's Hall in the Palace of Westminster. Her husband, Tom Monnington, was one of the all male artists chosen during 1925 by the Master Painter in charge, D. Y. Cameron, and all eight artists bar one had been Rome scholars or members of the Rome faculty. The private view of the murals was held in the presence of the King and Queen at Westminster on 26 June 1927. Perhaps Winifred's deep involvement with her large painting 'The Santissima Trinita' prevented her inclusion. It would be unpleasant to imagine that it was her gender that kept her out of this major commission. However, by September 1927 she had a mural commission of her own. She wrote to her mother on 29 September, after spending some of the month on holiday with her family in St. Ives, that she was looking forward to working on 'the really lovely & enormous decoration I am going to do about Demeter in Worcestershire' (see catalogue 12). The letter continued with the news that D. Y. Cameron wanted a religious picture from her and the Earl of Crawford & Balcarres 'wants anything I like to do, so I am happy as far as work is concerned if only I weren't so horribly slow.' When she wrote this letter she was pregnant with her first child and her workload was likely to be further curtailed. Sadly her first child, a son, was stillborn on 3rd January 1928. In March 1928 Winifred and Tom left Putney for larger living and working space on the ground floor of Henry Tonks' house at 1, The Vale, Chelsea.

In 1929 Winifred was elected a member of the New English Art Club, but she never exhibited with them. She was obviously not interested in exhibiting on an annual or regular basis with any artistic society and would only show her work at irregular intervals when she was satisfied with it. She did exhibit in 1927, 1928, 1929 and 1931 at the Imperial Gallery at South Kensington, but this could have had something to do with Cameron being a member of the exhibition committee. Her 'The Marriage at Cana' was shown at the Duveen Gallery in April 1929 and as usual it received highly complimentary press notices. In 1928 Winifred received a commission to paint a reredos for the Milner Memorial Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral which the architect Sir Herbert Baker was overseeing. The subject chosen was 'St Martin dividing his cloak for a beggar' and Winifred completed the commission towards the end of 1933.

During the years 1934-9 Winifred made numerous pencil drawings of her son John and began to plan another large painting of figures in a landscape, intending it to be a Flight into Egypt. She had actually started work on the canvas before the outbreak of the Second World War, but with the return of hostilities her concentration was destroyed. In 1937 Winifred and Tom were living at Groombridge in Sussex and when Tom joined the design team of the Ministry of Camouflage in 1939 Winifred was often left alone with John in the country. During the war years she therefore stayed for long periods with her sister Joyce in Worcestershire, friends in Salisbury, and members of the Courtauld family at Taynult, near Loch Etive in Scotland. She made detailed landscape studies, particularly of foliage and riverbanks, in the summers of 1945 and '46 when staying with the Courtaulds. She died on 7 February 1947 in Stephen's Hospital, London, after being admitted two days earlier as the result of a sudden collapse.

Decorative Painting in the early Twentieth Century – a Context for Winifred Knights

ALAN POWERS



W. T. Monnington 'Allegory' 1924-6

Tempera on canvas, 125.7 x 276.8 cm, 49½ x 109 in, The Tate Gallery, London

Not a mural, but a typical product of the training in 'Decorative painting' associated with the British School at Rome. On returning to England, Monnington painted many major murals.

'The Deluge', the only work through which Winifred Knights has become widely known, belongs to a genre of painting which has been little discussed in relation to early twentieth century British art. Stanley Spencer is the only painter of biblical subjects whose work has been consistently seen and remembered since the 1920s, and his example, as a student at the Slade School of Art at University College, London from 1908 to 1912, is relevant to understanding the paintings of Winifred Knights who, like Spencer in 1912, won the Summer Composition prize at the Slade in 1920 with 'Mill Hands Resting', her major work immediately preceding 'The Deluge'.

The history of the Summer Composition Prize goes back to the the 1870s under Alphonse Legros. In 1907 Hubert Wellington wrote that 'the painting of a figure composition on a given subject is the final test of accomplishment in nearly every school of art'. Yet this surviving pinnacle of the academic pyramid occupied an ambiguous position. There was no teaching directed at this synthesis of the separate studies, life drawing above all, which constituted the student's daily routine. Neither was there a public recognition of the academic 'history painting' as a higher form of art through state patronage or privilege in public exhibitions such as the Royal Academy, despite the attempts of Lord Leighton during the 1870s.

The summer composition prize paintings in the Slade collection reveal what a random process it was. There was no consistency of subject, size or treatment from the 1890s

onwards, and the paintings vary between the single G. F. Watts-like figure of 'The Prodigal Son' by Wilfred Thompson (1891) and the highly populated baroque 'Rape of the Sabine Women' by Maxwell Balfour (1897). This prefigures the first well-known summer composition painting, 'The Brazen Serpent' by Augustus John (1898), another loose example of bravura painting. The succeeding years brought a bewildering variety of subjects and approaches. William Orpen sidestepped the conventions by placing 'Hamlet' in an eighteenth-century theatre (1899) and Albert Rutherston painted 'The Confessions of Claude' (1901) as the sort of modern bohemian life subject that Orpen had popularised with 'A Mere Fracture' (1900).

The recurrent themes among these paintings are not biblical or heroic. Farm buildings appear frequently as a setting (Ada Wilson 'Musicians', 1902; Harold Oakley 'Workers', 1904; Maxwell Lightfoot 'Interior of a barn' 1909). The year 1907 produced the strange subject of 'Children polishing armour'. Mixed among these, however, are stronger subjects and treatments, such as 'Suffer little children' (1905) interpreted without sentimentality by Randolph Schwabe and William Strang and the 1910 'Figures in a landscape' by Elsie McNaught. The latter is the most telling precursor of Stanley Spencer's 'The Nativity' (1912), the first and perhaps the only summer composition painting of mature quality, recognised as such by his contemporaries and a landmark in creating a modern genre of English 'Decorative painting'.

The term 'Decorative painting' was never clearly defined at the time, although it was given wide currency. It denoted subject matter removed from everyday life and given a classical or primitive treatment. In *The Study of Modern Painting*, 1914, the American writer Margaret Steele Anderson identified it as a French trait, but discovered that 'the decorative, combined with the idyllic, is a leading and definite purpose in the English art of today'.¹ When the painter Walter Bayes came to write *The Art of Decorative Painting* in 1927, he lacked a more precise definition. The 'Decorative' quality was considered important for mural painting, but was not exclusively defined by being site-specific. Bayes took as a wider meaning a kind of painting that engaged with the real world through a body of scientific and objective knowledge (perspective, colour theory, design theory) originating in the renaissance.

The inspiration of this renewal, on both sides of the Channel, was Puvis de Chavannes, followed by Gauguin and Maurice Denis whose work was seen in England in the first Post-Impressionist Exhibition in the winter of 1910-11 and influenced Augustus John, Stanley Spencer and their contemporaries. It is hard to determine whether these English followers were reactionary or progressive, given that Denis was a Catholic, inspired by Puvis de Chavannes to a renewal of classicism. Roger Fry published his essay on Cézanne in the *Burlington Magazine* in 1910, in which the classicising tendency of Cézanne is emphasised.

The definition of progressive painting established by Fry on the basis of Cézanne and the 'Post-Impressionists' was different in that it made the absence of literary subject matter its defining quality. This has shaped the history of the period so that while Spencer's 'John Donne entering Heaven' was shown at the Second Post-Impressionist exhibition in 1912 and he has been admitted as an eccentric outsider to the canon of modern English painting, most of

his contemporaries have been omitted. Remarking that Denis' interest in subject-matter 'seems to run counter to his famous dictum that a picture is essentially a flat surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order', Peter and Linda Murray concluded that 'the contradiction is more apparent than real'² and this could serve as a motto for reassessing the place of 'Decorative painting', with its acceptance of narrative and content, in the age of Roger Fry and Clive Bell.

Denis related Cézanne to the early development of Symbolism in France, which he explained 'was not in its origin a mystic or idealist movement'. It was concerned more with reasserting the importance of painting as a vehicle for ideas. The objection to subject-matter was that it had been allowed to diminish the intellectual content of painting. Both what Denis called 'the anecdotes and fatuities' of contemporary painting and the evasion of content by the Impressionists were contrary to Cézanne's ambition to 'make something solid and durable like the art of museums.'³

The French and English painters held in common a deep love of the quattrocento masters and it was this, rather than a direct inspiration from English Pre-Raphaelitism, that Gilbert Spencer believed had guided his brother Stanley's early work. In 1913, Laurence Binyon published *The Art of Botticelli. An essay in pictorial criticism* which sought to discover 'what the art of a Florentine of the Quattrocento means for us today.'⁴

Binyon called for an alternative post-impersonism based on the public art of mural painting, in continuity with 'the efforts of William Morris, the achievements of Puvis de Chavannes, of Alfred Stevens, of Watts'.⁵ The key to success in this endeavour, Binyon predicted, would be a renewed attention to line (in support of which William Blake is called as a witness) to unlock deeper feelings: 'The time is not come yet, but it will come, when decoration will

cease to be a kind of geometry, a filling of space for the sake of filling space, but will be an overflow of our own thoughts and susceptibilities, no longer external to ourselves'⁶ Binyon argued against the pejorative use of 'literary' asserting that 'there is no such thing as abstract painting or abstract poetry' and that 'to separate ... the interests of painting from the interests of literature is to cut it off from a great part of life'.⁷

Such a historically-validated renewal appealed to conservative English critics and their public while enlarging the sphere of the painter's operations. Henry Tonks deplored the revolutionary message of post-impersonism projected by Fry in 1912, but his pupil Stanley Spencer showed how the new discoveries from France could reinvigorate tradition. As so often in England, a revolution was disguised as a return to a pre-existing order which helped to raise the status of painting when it was under attack from Modernist critics, conservative critics and photography alike. There was a parallel renewal of interest in painting technique, including fresco and tempera which were seen as both archaising and progressive. They gave the painter control of a specialised professional expertise which itself justified the existence of art schools. The state of the London art world around 1912 was therefore more complex than the polarised positions of the propagandist critics of the time would suggest. This was the year when the Rome Scholarship in Painting was established and its definition as an award for decorative painting institutionalised the process evolving out of Slade Summer Competitions.

The British School at Rome was founded in 1901 as an archaeological research institute, but following the International Exhibition in 1911 and the offer from the city of Rome to donate the site of the British Pavilion by Sir Edwin Lutyens in the Valle Giulia for a permanent building, some

vigorous lobbying in London achieved a broadening of its aims and the establishment of scholarships in Architecture, Sculpture and Painting in emulation of the French Grand Prix and their more recent American imitators. The scheme seems to have been stimulated by architects rather than painters who saw it as an important component in accelerating the systematisation of training. It also reflected a second generation Arts and Crafts feeling for the unity of the arts and a belief in the virtue of applied rather than pure art. The appeal to classical tradition had an unarguable attraction for non-artists, although Lionel Cust, seeing the opportunism involved, asked in an article in the *Burlington Magazine* whether it was 'absolutely agreed among British artists, even in the Royal Academy, that modern Rome is a suitable art-centre for the environment and mental development of a young British student?'⁸

It was a period when the Liberal Government was being pressed to achieve more for art as a representation of national pride and prosperity, but had no precedent for putting funds to this purpose, apart from its support of the Royal College of Art. The scholarships were funded by the Commissioners of the 1851 Exhibition, inheritors of the profits of the Crystal Palace and the educational mission of Prince Albert. The Commission's Board of Management recorded in 1912 its intention that the art scholarships 'should be in Monumental Art'. The actual title was 'The Rome Scholarship in Decorative Painting.' The scholarships were worth £200 per year and were tenable for three years. They were open to British subjects under 30.

The assumption was that Rome Scholars in all the arts would form a body of semi-official artists for public commissions, and this was achieved to a limited extent in the 1920s with schemes such as St. Stephen's Hall, Westminster and the Bank of England. The title of the scholarship was changed by 1929 to 'Mural Painting'. The Rome Scholar-

ship was only one manifestation of the revival of interest in mural painting around 1912. There was a competition for murals in Chelsea Town Hall and, in 1913, a large exhibition of mural panels and designs at Crosby Hall, Chelsea. The idea of large scale, site-specific painting was equally important for the small British avant-garde of the same period.⁹

The Slade School was strongly represented on the Faculty of Painting that managed the scholarship. Tonks had been consulted by Evelyn Shaw, the Secretary of the 1851 Commissioners and served as Honorary Secretary, alongside his friends and colleagues John Singer Sargent and Philip Wilson Steer. Sargent was another advocate of the higher calling of mural painting. The conditions established for the Scholarship were such that a Slade student could easily meet, requiring for the open qualifying exam life drawings, a painting of a head, figure compositions 'suitable for wall-decoration' and 'sketches of designs for decorative purposes'. The final competition was close in character to a Slade Summer competition, with a set subject and an eight week time limit. When offered first in 1913, the competition subject was related to a specific space in Chelsea Town Hall, but in later years this was not a requirement, although the dimensions of the painting were set. At a Faculty meeting on 13th November 1913, Colin

Gill, a Slade student, was chosen as the first Scholar.

The Slade connection with the Rome Scholarship continued. The scholar selected in 1914, J. M. B. Benson, was another Slade student and Winifred Knights's successor Tom Monnington was also from the Slade. With the selection of A. K. Lawrence in 1923 the Slade monopoly was over. The programme of work for the scholars was only determined after Gill's selection, at a meeting on 29 January 1914, when it was decided that 'the Rome scholar be required to submit yearly a decorative painting of a size not less than 50 inches in one direction, which shall be a composition of figures, together with the studies made for such decoration and any other work which the scholar may have done during the year.' There were further recommendations to continue studying from the antique and the life and to make free copies of mural decoration and architecture in Italy. In 1922, the copy became a mandatory piece of work. These conditions remained constant until the Second World War, resulting in a series of 'envoi' paintings including Colin Gill's 'L'Allegro', Winifred Knights's 'Marriage at Cana' and Monnington's 'Allegory'.

The artists for the final competition for 1920 were selected in February, and all four were Slade students. Apart from Winifred Knights, there were James Wilkie, Leon Underwood and Arthur Outlaw. The subject of 'The

Deluge' was given and competitors were asked 'to produce a painting in oil or tempera and a cartoon, though not necessarily of the same size, the cartoon to be executed first and generally though not strictly adhered to in the painting. The size of the painting shall be 6ft x 5ft.' The selection of the winners took place at a meeting on 21 September.

Winifred Knights's 'The Deluge' is the outstanding competition painting for the Rome Scholarship throughout its duration. The three other entries illustrate the absence of any standard procedure in making compositions. Wilkie was joint first prize winner with Winifred Knights in 1919 and his work 'Reconstruction - horse and cart' has the same farmyard approach to the subject as his Ark interior. Outlaw's painting seems more illustrational than heroic, with the deluge itself subservient to the massive hill-top ark. Underwood shares with Outlaw a difficulty about clothing his nude figures. His frieze-like arrangement along the foreground plane is closer to Winifred Knights's first studies for the subject, but the identity of the figures and their place in the narrative is confusing. Underwood was awarded £100 and, having been given leave to study in Paris rather than Rome, spent the bulk of his scholarship on a trip to Iceland in 1923 with the loan of Evelyn Shaw's salmon rods.¹⁰

It is not difficult to see why the Faculty awarded the Scholarship to Winifred Knights for the clarity of her narrative was allied to its emotional content and avoided the absurdity that threatened the work of the other competitors. Her painting with its clothed figures and sharply defined shadows did not conform to academic standards, but set a standard of quality that was evidently hard to follow, for the scholarship was not awarded in 1921 and in 1922 the award to Monnington was initially only probationary. During her time in Rome, Winifred Knights produced work that justified the establishment of the scholarship

and the Slade ideology that lay behind it more, perhaps, than any other scholar's output.

'The Deluge' filled its role as public art by being exhibited in London and Paris. Even Winifred Knights's softer works from 'The Marriage at Cana' onwards are more compelling than the elegant but empty paintings by Colin Gill, Tom Monnington and A. K. Lawrence in St. Stephen's Hall, Westminster. Her obsessive calculation of each painting, documented in studies and cartoons, brought the completed works following 'The Deluge' dangerously close to a finality that excluded life. Binyon's 'overflow of our own thoughts and susceptibilities, no longer external to ourselves' was a hard prescription for public art in an age of scepticism and irony. We may find in the methodology of sketch, line drawing and colour study by which Winifred Knights so meticulously fulfilled the Rome Faculty's conditions a Cartesian separation of thought and feeling that formed a barrier between the 1920s and the Quattrocento but she, as much as any follower of Cézanne, produced 'something solid and durable like the art of museums'.



Competition paintings of 'The Deluge' by (from left to right) Outlaw, Wilkie and Underwood from *The Illustrated London News*, vol.158, p.194, February 1921

- 1 Margaret Steele Anderson *The Study of Modern Painting* New York 1914
- 2 Peter and Linda Murray *The Penguin Dictionary of Art and Artists* Harmondsworth 1980, p.127
- 3 Maurice Denis 'Cézanne' trans. Roger Fry, *Burlington Magazine* Jan 1910, reprinted in J. B. Bullen ed. *Post-Impressionists in England, the Critical Reception* London 1988, pp.60-76 passim
- 4 Laurence Binyon *The Art of Botticelli. An essay in pictorial criticism* London 1913, p.vii
- 5 *ibid* p.31
- 6 *ibid* p.36
- 7 *ibid* p.47 & p.45
- 8 Lionel Cust 'The British School at Rome' *Burlington Magazine* XXI June 1912, p.148
- 9 See Richard Cork *Art beyond the Gallery in early twentieth century England*. London 1986
- 10 See Christopher Neve *Leon Underwood* London 1974, pp.44-45 (reproducing 'The Deluge' unfinished pl.13)

The American Academy masked ball in 1921. Winifred Knights is third from the left; Colin Gill is second from the right. (Photograph in the archive of the Strang Print Room, the Slade, University College, London.)



British School scholars circa 1925: (from left to right) Tom Monnington, John Skeaping, Barbara Hepworth and Winifred Knights. (Photograph in the archive of the Strang Print Room, the Slade, University College, London.)



Three photographs of Winifred Knights in the courtyard of the British School at Rome, with friends circa 1922.



Anticoli Corrado. Photograph by Wesley Dougill [*Rome Scholar in Architecture 1921-24*]

A Scholar Abroad: The British School at Rome in Winifred Knights' letters home

EMILY ROTHSCHILD

Winifred Knights' letters to her mother and father are signed 'Winks'. Each gives a vivid picture of a young woman pitched into a world of academics and Italians, sometimes echoing one of those heroines of a D. H. Lawrence novel. Winifred Knights was twenty-one when she became the first woman Rome scholar. She set out for Rome in the autumn of 1920 to take up a Scholarship which lasted three years. The adventure in Rome is all too apparent in her early letters. No less an adventure was her adoption of Anticoli Corrado, the hill village in Latium some 60kms east of Rome, where her fellow scholar, Colin Gill, found her a studio. Then again she provides vivid illustrations of life at the School – quite as exact as her painting of the Marriage at Cana (1922) where she depicts the scholars dining in the Borghese Gardens. In other letters she describes the meals, her studio, meeting distinguished visitors, the lectures by Dr Thomas Ashby,¹ and above all the School dances.

Of course, with time, the letters take on a more mature, matter-of-fact tone. Anticoli provided the studio space that suited her; and as the years passed, the School became increasingly less tolerable. Yet, throughout, like so many scholars in the School's history, she found the mixture of academics and artists to be invariably a source of fun and mutual discovery. Above all, she found a firm friend in Colin Gill, and eventually a husband, in Tom Monnington (like her, both painters were alumni of the Slade), all of whom developed their art to serve the needs of the School's broadly changing mission.²

The extracts on the following pages from the earlier of her eighty letters home provide an impression of Winifred Knights' changing attitude to the British School at Rome. The letters are now in the archive of the Strang Print Room of the Slade, University College, London.

- 1 A. H. Smith, Thomas Ashby (1874–1931), *Proceedings of the British Academy* XVII (1931), pp. 515–41.
- 2 T. P. Wiseman, *A Short History of the British School at Rome* (1990).
- 3 Mrs Eugénie Strong was the assistant director of the British School at Rome between 1909–25: see Gladys S. Thomson, *Mrs Arthur Strong. A Memoir*, London, 1949.
- 4 Bernard Ashmole, Director of the British School between 1925–1928, makes much the same point in Bernard Ashmole, 1894–1988. *An Autobiography* (ed. Donna Kurtz), Oxford 1994, p. 28.
- 5 Colin Gill's sister, later Lady Allen of Hurtwood. For an account of her stay in Rome and her friendship with Knights see Lady Allen of Hurtwood, *Memoirs of an Uneducated Lady*, Thames and Hudson, 1975, pp. 61–66.
- 6 See Richard Hodges, Thomas Ashby's paradise: walking in the Campagna Romana, in *Il Lazio di Thomas Ashby 1891–1930*, Rome 1994, pp. 33–34.
- 7 Keatings powder is a flea repellent.

LIFE IN THE SCHOOL

5th November 1920: letter to her mother

I have such heaps to tell you I don't know where to begin, we arrived at 3am this morning pitch dark, and no one up and the wild dogs barking after ringing for 20 minutes at last we were let in and very soon made our way to a bedroom and found a delicious bath, never have I loved the sight of a bathroom so much. We have had an awful time Mummy but thank God we are safely here now but our trunks have not turned up yet.

November 1920: letter to her mother

I can't tell you how lovely Rome is Mother. The gardens are so beautiful and all the plants and trees are different. We went to the Coliseum this morning.

The school is a beautiful building also and so comforting to come back to English people after all the shrieking foreigners, they are a noisy lot.

The people are all very nice – about 8/9 (?) men and 3 women and me. The women are just the type I expected (you know). I am not very keen on Miss Howard, the secretary of Dr. Ashby as they are a casual lot. You have to find out things by yourself and as for learning Italian it seems an impossibility here. Gill is very nice and seems very pleased to see me as his wife is in England and Benson isn't a very interesting companion.

I'm afraid the painters are rather in the background. It is all archaeology that is the pity of both Mrs Strong³ and Dr. Ashby being archaeologists. Never mind perhaps it is all the better. We shall be able to do what we like. It is very free here especially while Mrs Strong is away.

13th November 1920: letter to her mother.

Living in the School is very comfortable, meals quite good. I will give you a list of the usual, they don't vary much:

Breakfast: coffee, roll, butter, egg, marmalade (we pay for our own) and an apple

Lunch: macaroni, fried up meat mixtures, sometimes, plain, recognisable stuff, fried potatoes or mashed and most peculiar vegetable some like celery cooked, and some like small cauliflower hearts but quite different in taste. Then apples. Coffee afterwards.

Tea: Tea and rolls and marmalade or jam

Dinner: Soup, meat and vegetables, chestnuts in different forms or apples then coffee in the Common Room, I am quite happy here when with people like Gill or Mason or the architects but the archaeologists get my goat, they are all so damned superior, and clever, they always talk shop.⁴ I never never play unless it is college songs on the piano. They are not alive, they are walking with their heads turned the wrong way and as for Miss Howard the housekeeper, she is a silly ass. I could manage the house better. She leaves it all to the servants and tries to flirt with the men.

January 1921: letter to her father

It is a tremendous studio with grey walls and grey cement floor and a sink and plenty of beds and models' thrones and pillows, heaven knows why, oh and a great trestle table near the windows, I am on the ground floor and have french windows, or rather doors with windows in them, two windows either side and three great windows in the ceiling.

3rd March 1921: letter to her mother

Yesterday Nixon and I went out sketching, but we didn't do much it is so difficult starting work in such a bewildering place. I feel quite miserable sometimes because I can't start work, but it will come I hope.

February 1921: letter to her younger sister (Joyce/Jinks)

We had a splendid time at the American Academy it was a gorgeous affair. I went in my black skirt, silver bodice, white stockings and sandals, Nixon's black hat and my black mask and a magenta hankie knotted round my neck. Apparently it was a great success as I was the only one masked and didn't unmask all the time. I have never created quite such a stir in all my blessed life.

I enjoyed myself very much, I didn't unmask at all. We had a long walk back through Rome this morning at 3 o'clock. It was magnificent, wonderful moonlight as bright as day and tall orange houses and festoons of white washing hanging across the roadways all glistening like snow in the moonlight. It is wonderful in Rome at night with the sounds of the fountains splashing and nothing else!

February 1921: letter to her mother

We have been having a gay time since Mrs Strong came back. I am dutifully learning to become a social success. We entertained Lady Ottoline Morrell, her husband and daughter, a week ago and a day or so ago Lord Beauchamp and his daughter to lunch. I was placed on his Lordship's right, so had quite a strenuous time, he is a nice old thing and they are coming to dance tomorrow. At both lunches I had to go with the guests up into Mrs Strong's room for coffee. I am her pet exhibit at present, I can tell you it is a bit terrifying, she is such a flatterer.

28th February 1921: letter to her younger sister (Joyce/Jinks)

Then after dinner we all scampered into the library, it is a lovely big place with a ripping floor for dancing, and we danced 'til one o'clock. I only missed one dance because I went to the dubs and spent about half an hour trying to

manipulate a pair of trousers and braces. I had the best time I have ever had as far as partners were concerned, it was just like a person in a novel, you know the belle of the ball sort of thing. I had about five men around me after each dance begging for the next and as we didn't have programmes I got in an awful muddle giving two men the same dance and then not knowing which one to dance with, I don't know what came over them last night. I think it must have been the dress that fetched them, it was something like this: three long plaits of red wool, one at the back, and one each side a truly gigantic hat, a straw peasant's one that I bought in Florence, my purple hankie tied around my head first, and blue flimsy bodice and Nixon's black corduroy trousers pulled in at the ankles and cream silk stockings and black sandals. The hat was the best part though. It was ripping to dance in the hat but it was a bit of a job to manage, I couldn't get through the door front ways in it.

30th May 1921: letter to her mother

Thank you – mother dearest you are a perfect dear. I was very worried at the thought of your not wanting Arnold to come out.

Honestly, I feel that apart from wanting him because I love him, he would be very useful to me just this summer; I shall be able to do more work & go further afield, and there are so many men up here, all willing to fall in love if I let them. I am not boasting it is a fact & there are more coming, that Arnold being here would save a lot of bother. An engagement ring is no protection from Artists.

Don't be alarmed at my words so far. I have been quite capable of taking care of myself, but it is a nuisance to keep on having to stop people from getting silly. That's the worst of being young.'

LIFE IN ITALY

7th January 1921: letter to her Father

... as far as friends go I have found a very pleasant one in Miss Gill⁵ who has just come out. She is going to be in Italy for 3 months & is a landscape architect and gardener. We are going about Rome a good deal together and shall get into a lot of the old villa gardens for her benefit so while she measures & takes notes I can do sketches'

10th January 1921: letter to her mother

I have had such a busy time since Friday last that I haven't had time to go on with this letter, I am much better now and have been having quite a lot of open air, Saturday was a great success. We took our lunch and started away at 8am, caught the train to Frascati and arrived there at 9.30. Frascati is a jolly sort of place it reminds me of a seaside place on the Riviera because the houses are all built on the side of a hill and are all light in colour and there are heaps of date palms and cypresses about. Amongst the P.P.C.S I have enclosed 3 of Frascati, there are some large villas there with wonderful old gardens, Ashby secured a permesso, and we spent a lovely morning wandering through them. ... After lunch we went still further on into some hills which were once the crater of a high volcano, and we came to the remains of the Roman town, Tusculum, Ashby was quite, quite, happy then, and took off his funny little coat and began running down holes and Roman drains like a terrier. Toward tea time, we came down the hills and stopped at the Jesuit monastery and found some boy

priests playing football so immediately our men began playing and then Ashby joined in, playing goal and they had a fine game.

22nd January 1921: letter to her mother

Did I tell you about our trip to Anticoli? ... I have never imagined a more beautiful place, it hardly seems real.

January 1921: letter to her Auntie Millicent

Ashby⁶ has given some good lectures on Roman Roads, and the history of Rome, with the lantern. Mrs Strong has started on the Mosaics and Baroque ... In April Nixon, Miss Southby, Benson and I go up to Anticoli ... Anticoli is a fine place, the town is a pigsty, you meet herds of swine running quite loose in every street.

March 1921: letter to her mother

I have just had a strenuous morning loading a cart drawn by two mules, with all my things for Anticoli, it takes twelve hours to get up there, thirty miles and all uphill. Poor mules they have got a load; tables, donkeys, easels, trunks, and a big tin bath to wash in, a bed, primus stove, and now, I have got to go down into Rome to buy millions of pots of jam and pounds of tea, and a big umbrella, and some bathing shoes and some Keatings powder⁷ etc etc etc.

Heaps and heaps of love to you Mum darling and to Dad and Joy and Eileen
from your loving Winks xxxxxx

A Childhood Memory

JOHN MONNINGTON

It is now nearly fifty years since my mother died, so I propose to limit my contribution to a brief attempt at describing her as a person seen through the eyes of a ten or eleven year old boy.

Rather in the same way as Sir Alec Guinness needed to find the shoes of a character to enter into the part, I think my mother's clothes and way of dressing a very good key to her character. As is apparent in the many photographs and paintings of her, her dress was always a stylish version of Italian peasant costume of the late 19th century: a loose ankle-length cotton skirt, usually of a fine check in either brown and white or grey and white. The skirt would come high up on her waist – almost under her bosom – and would be topped with a plain buttoned blouse with a round neck, and this would be worn beneath a short open jacket or cardigan. On her head when she went out she would wear a wide-brimmed black hat – like a Sandeman's Port advertisement – coral earrings and necklace.

In wartime, when most other women wore short skirts and jackets, this dress made her stand out. I don't think this was unintentional and I am sure that she meant to create a *frisson*. She had that sort of self-assurance that is engendered only when one knows that one can perform exceptionally well at something, and you want everyone to know it!

The clarity of vision apparent in her work was also apparent in her inter-relationships with other people – she had a very clear minded way of dealing with humbug and

cant. I suppose that if she were French she would have been described as an intellectual; I think she found difficulty in dealing with the sort of mercenary landlady and hotelier that we constantly seemed to be coming into contact with during our pilgrimage through the length and breadth of England during the early part of the war. She read a great deal – usually Russian or modern experimental novels – Turganyev was her favourite. During the war it was difficult to get books of this sort, but she was very successful in borrowing from friends, and making use of libraries wherever we happened to be.

Her kindness and overwhelming attention to me throughout my life with her made a very close bond, and I think that during my illness – I had peritonitis – she became almost obsessively determined never to let me out of her sight. At the time I found this very comforting, but latterly, and I think in part due to her oncoming brain tumor, this attention became slightly cloying.

I never once saw her do a painting. I think she needed complete peace of mind to paint, and she could not achieve that in time of war – she had a quite obsessive fear of bombing, which caused us to embark on our pilgrimage around England. However, she would always carry a sketch-book and pencils in her holdall, and sometimes watercolours as well. Usually on our daily walk or on a journey she would stop to draw something. Her knowledge and interest in wildflowers and fauna was very deep and she loved to draw them. One of my happiest recollections is of her sitting in

the window in any one of the many lodgings that we inhabited, drawing for me a flower or stone or egg that we had found during our walk.

I used to watch her draw and it would give me a quite exquisite sense of pleasure to see the way she would look and then reproduce what she saw with such sublime accuracy. Moreover, she seemed to have no hesitancy about her

line, or any need of construction lines or rough outlining. She would draw with the finest and longest point to her pencils, which she kept in tubes with cotton wool.

I am afraid these disjointed jottings will not properly convey her character, but to me she was a very beautiful, confident and essentially 'serious' person for whom I will always have a great love.



Landscape with tennis court
Catalogue 9p



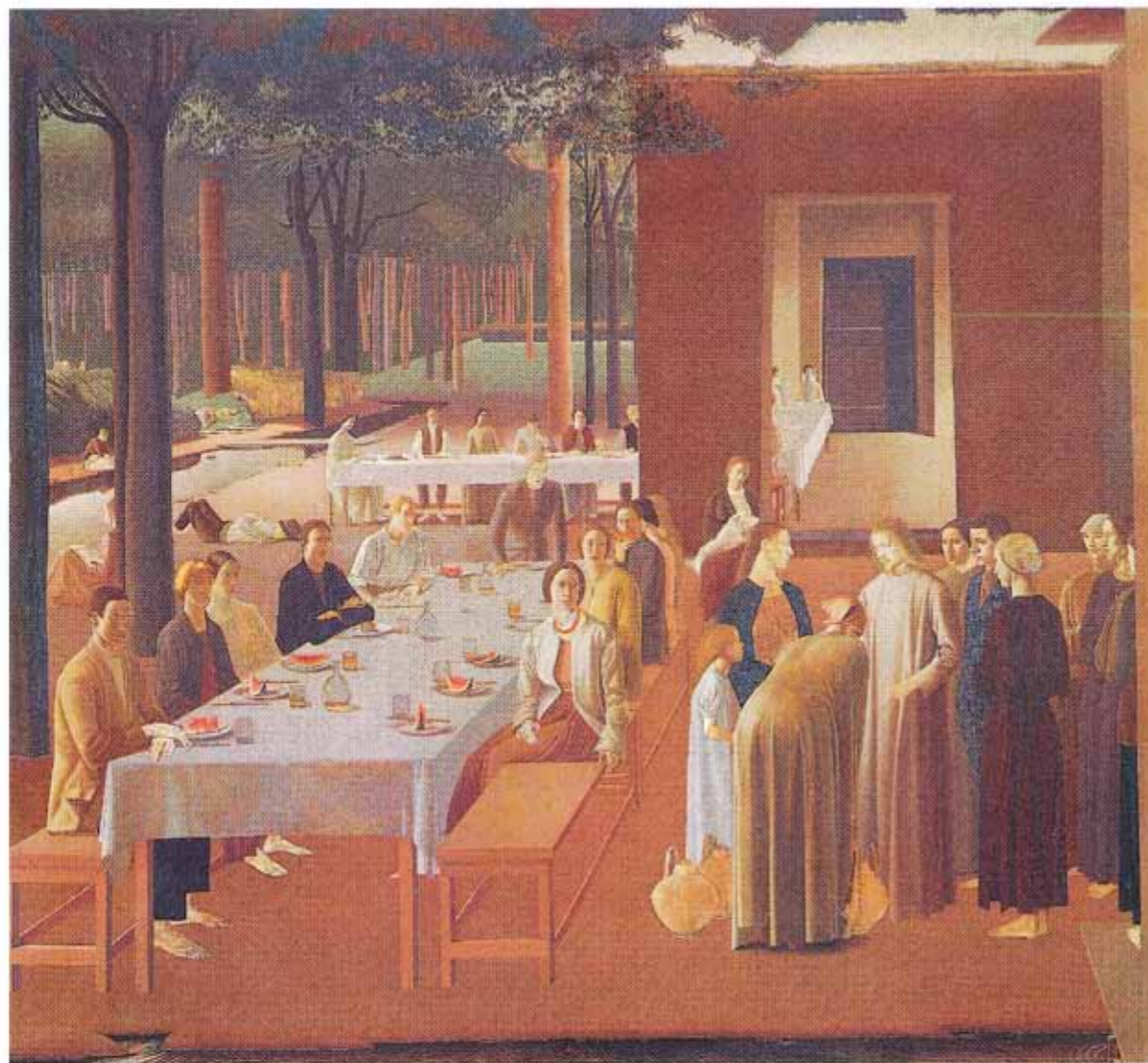
Village Street, Mill Hands Conversing, 1919
College Art Collections, University of London
Catalogue 3

(26)



The Deluge, 1920
The Tate Gallery, London
Catalogue 5

(27)

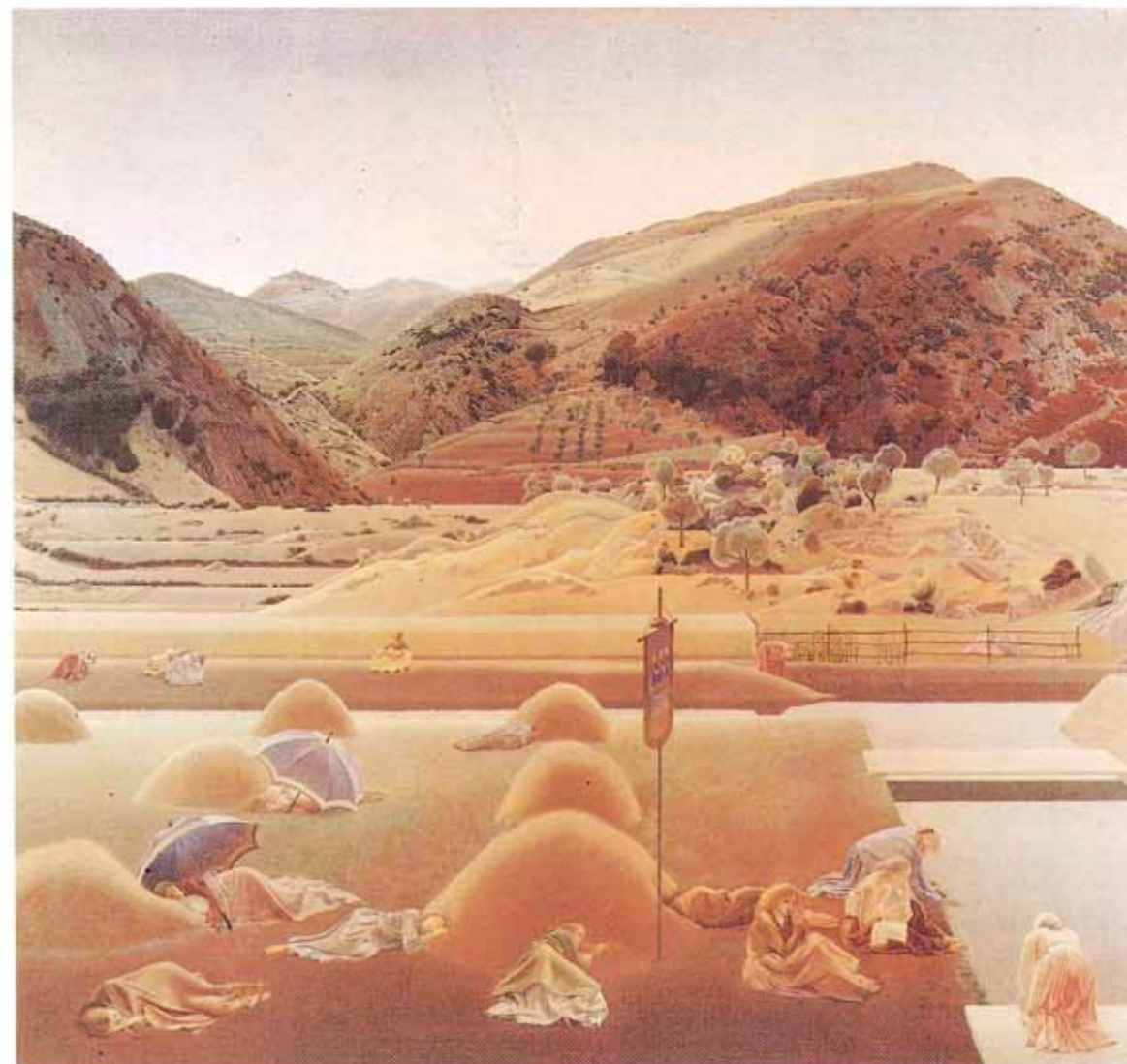


The Marriage at Cana, 1923

Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Gift of the British School at Rome, 1957

Catalogue 10

(28)



Santissima Trinita, circa 1924-30

Private Collection, Italy

Catalogue 11

(29)



Scenes From *The Life of St. Martin of Tours*, 1928-1933
 Milner Memorial Chapel, Canterbury Cathedral
 By kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral
 Catalogue 13



Design for Wall Decoration, circa 1918
 See Catalogue 2a & 2d



Figures at a Garden Party, circa 1918
 Catalogue 2b



Self Portrait, circa 1918
Catalogue 2c



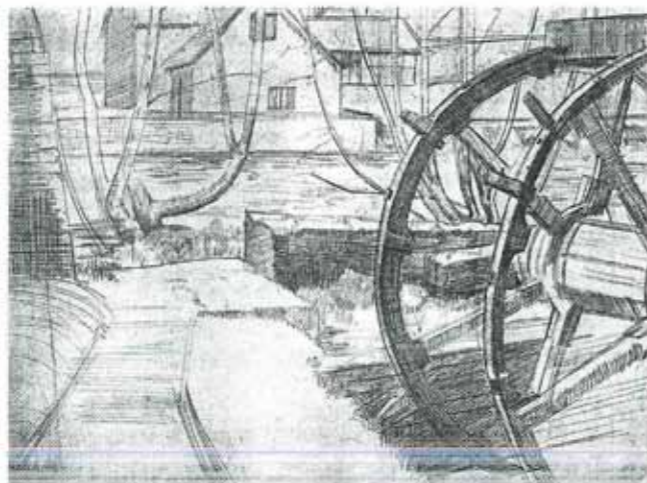
West Hoathly, Sussex, 1918
Catalogue 2i



Figures harvesting potatoes
Catalogue 2j



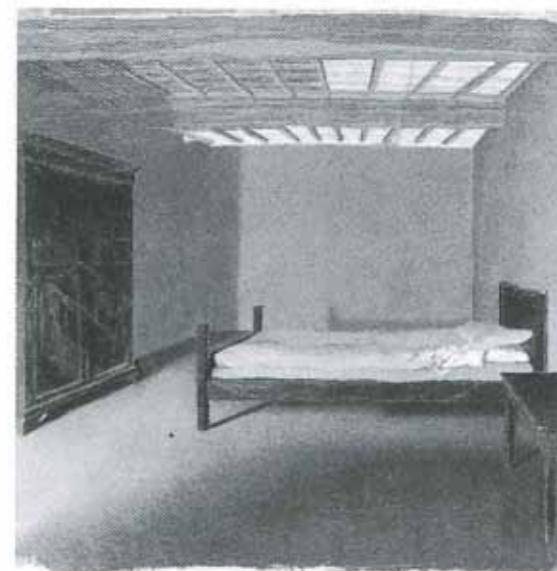
Landscape with river bank
Catalogue 4a



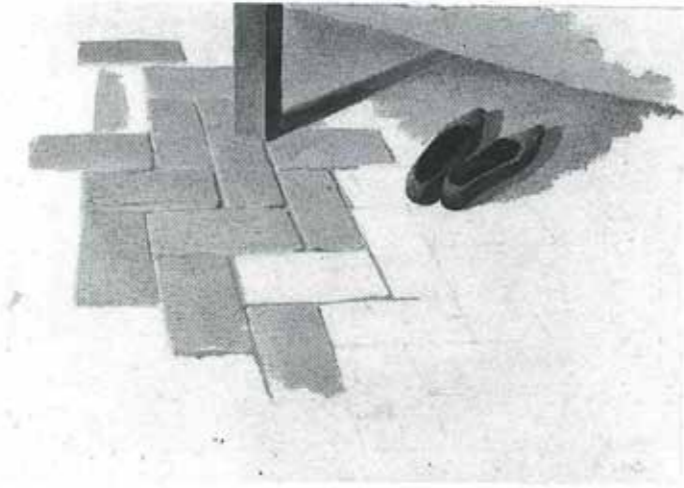
The Mill Wheel, The Old Mill, Ludlow, 1920
Catalogue 4h



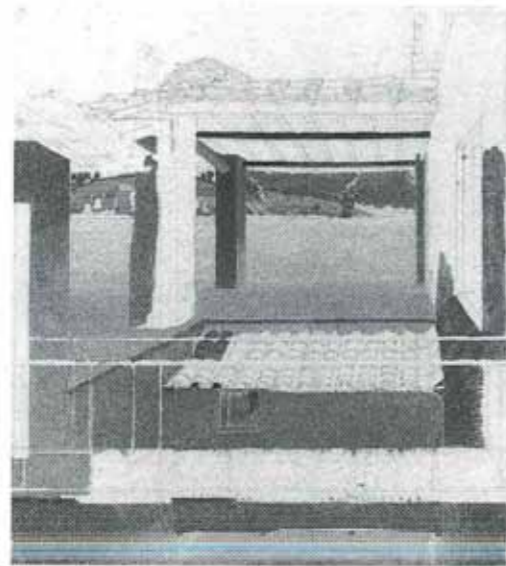
'The Deluge' – Compositional Study, 1920
Catalogue 5c



Study for 'Jairus's Daughter' – the artist's bedroom, Anticoli Corrado, 1921
Catalogue 6b

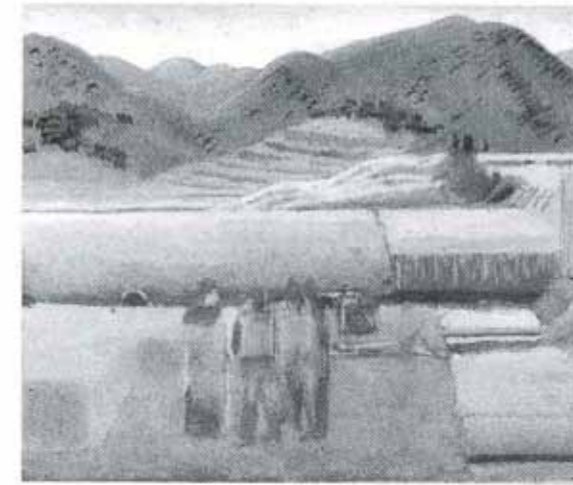


Study for 'Jairus's Daughter' – slippers on flagstone floor, 1921
Catalogue 6e

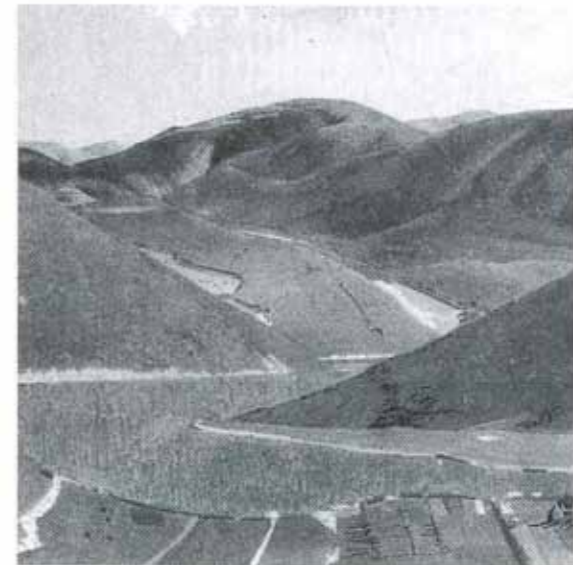


'Jairus's Daughter' – compositional study with lake beyond, 1921
Catalogue 6j

(36)



'Paradise' – landscape study with standing, seated and reclining figures, 1921
Catalogue 7e

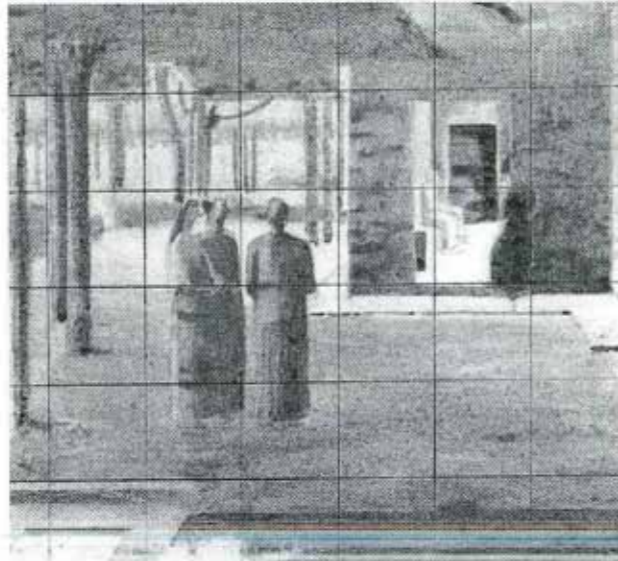


Landscape, Piediluco, 1924
Catalogue 9c

(37)



'Nocera Umbra', Umbria, 1923
Catalogue 9h



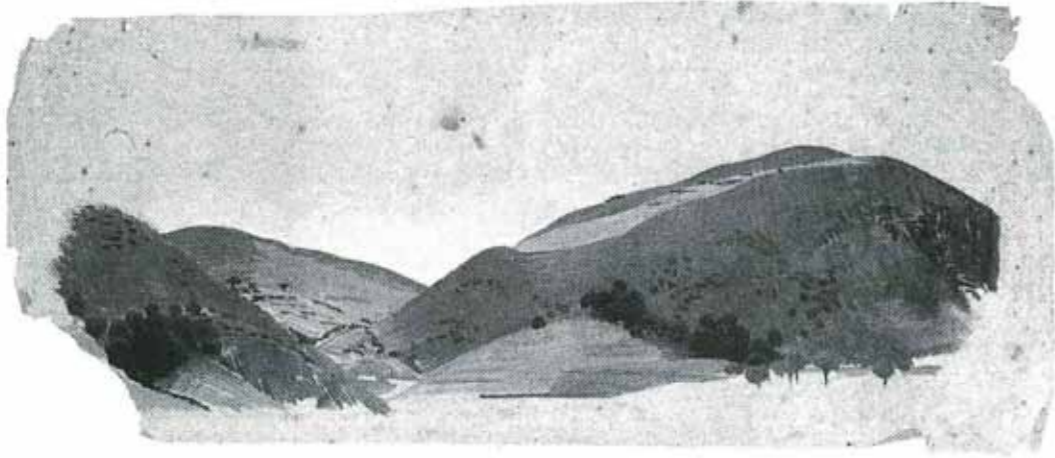
'The Marriage at Cana' – compositional study of three figures, circa 1922
Catalogue 10d



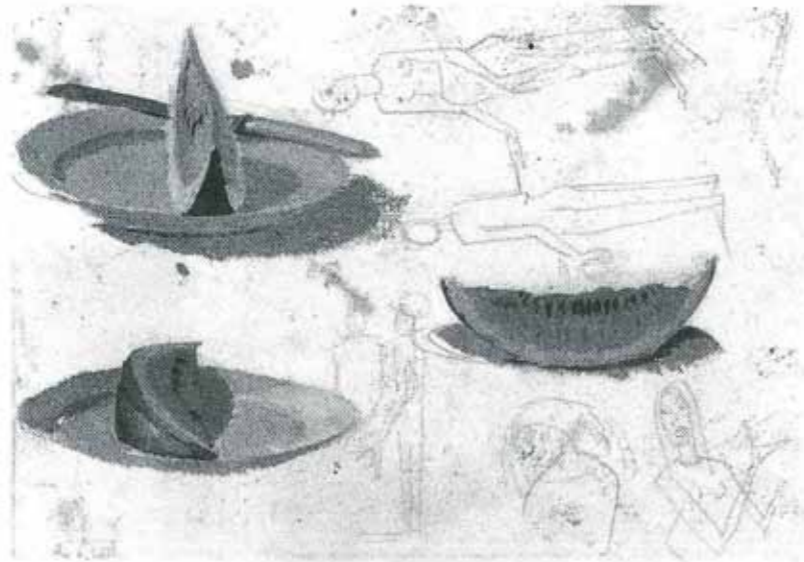
Portrait head of Thomas Ashby, circa 1922
Catalogue 10c



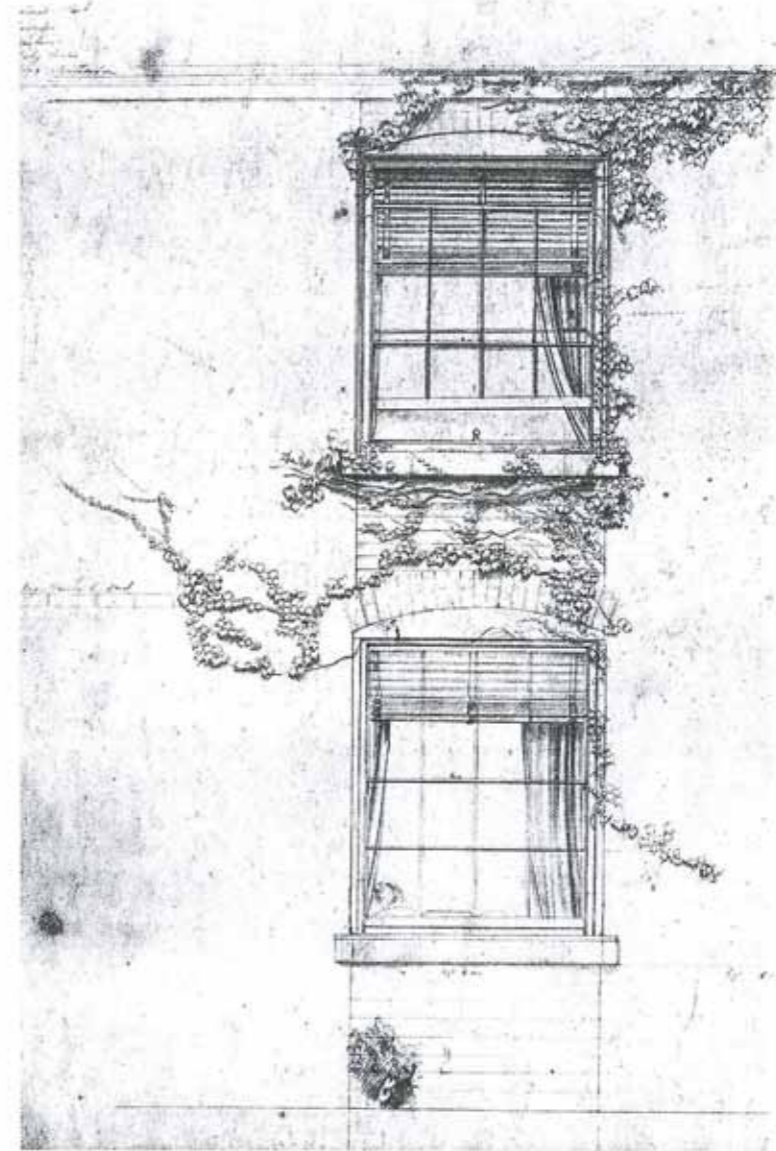
'The Marriage at Cana' –
portrait study of Arnold Mason, circa 1922
Catalogue 10f



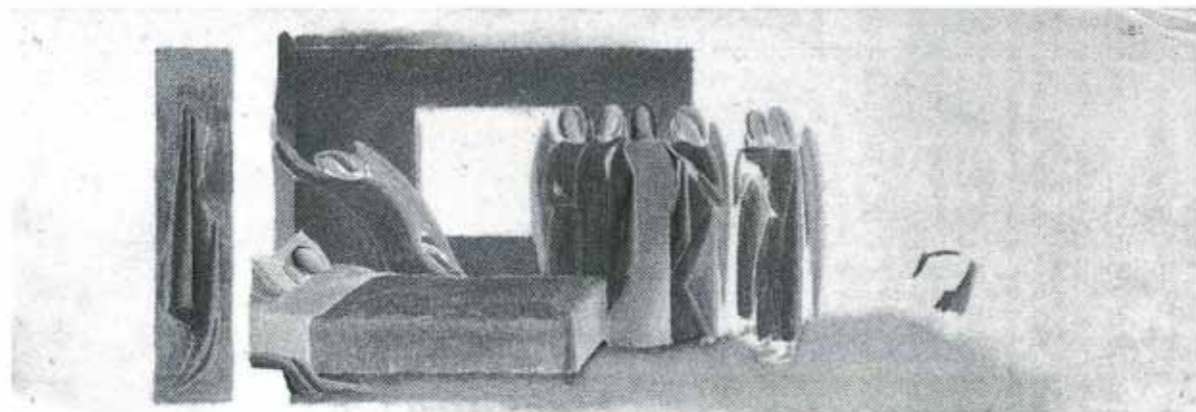
'Santissima Trinita' – study of hills, circa 1924
Catalogue 11b



'The Marriage at Cana' – study of melon slices, circa 1923
Catalogue 10n



Study of Lincholt Farmhouse, circa 1932
Catalogue 12a (detail)



'Scenes from the life of St. Martin of Tours', circa 1928–1933 – compositional study
Catalogue 13c



'Scenes from the life of St. Martin of Tours', circa 1928–33 – compositional study
Catalogue 13e



'Scenes from the life of St. Martin of Tours' – study of standing male, circa 1933
Catalogue 13n



'Scenes from the life of St. Martin of Tours' – study of bundle, circa 1933
Catalogue 13q



'Scenes from the life of St. Martin of Tours' - study of beggar, 1933
Catalogue 13t



Bluebell, 1940
Catalogue 14i



Portrait of Colin Gill, 1921
Catalogue 15d



Colin Gill NEAC (1892–1940)
Winifred Knights, 1921
Catalogue 16b

Unless otherwise stated, all works are from the collection of John Monnington, and are for sale through The Fine Art Society in association with Paul Liss.

Measurements are given in centimetres and inches. In the case of drawings sheet sizes only are indicated.

* denotes the work is illustrated in the plate section.

The majority of works in this exhibition have been selected from Winifred Knights' studio. The studio collection consists of approximately three hundred works on paper and twenty-one sketch books, which constitute the majority of the drawings for her life's work. The drawings were originally arranged by the artist into eight folders, inscribed: 'Marriage of Cana'; 'Heads'; 'Italian Landscapes'; 'The Pilgrimage'; 'Canterbury, St. Martin's Chapel'; 'Flowers'; 'Flight' and 'Other People's Drawings'.

Catalogue

PAUL LISS

1 LIFE STUDIES

Winifred Knights attended the Slade School of Art, London, from October 1915 to July 1917 and from October 1918 to July 1920. She returned to the Slade in 1926–7. In 1916–17 Knights was awarded 2nd Prize for Figure Drawing (£2) and a Certificate for Figure Drawing. In 1918–19 she was awarded a Slade Scholarship for 1 year (£35) and the Prize for Figure Composition (£16). In 1919–20 she was awarded 2nd Prize for Head Painting, (£1.10.0)

- 1a *Female nude, standing, rear view*
Pencil, 50.9 × 32 cm, 20 × 12⁵/₈ in
- 1b *Male figure, seated, in ecclesiastical costume*
Pencil, 50.9 × 32 cm, 20 × 12⁵/₈ ins
This drawing is on a folded folio size sheet of paper, with figure studies on the three remaining sides.
- 1c *Female head in profile, Spring 1917*
Signed and dated
Pencil, 50.9 × 32 cm, 20 × 12⁵/₈ in
This drawing is on a folded folio size sheet of paper, with figure studies on the three remaining sides.
- 1d *Female nude, seated, 1917*
Pencil, 39 × 31.3 cm, 15³/₈ × 12³/₈ in
College Art Collections, University College London (6055)
Winifred Knights was awarded Second Prize in Figure Drawing for this work in 1917.

2 SLADE STUDIES

A large number of Knights' early compositions relate to subjects set for Slade Sketch Club Competitions. Six subjects were set annually within four different categories: Special Figure, Figure, Animal and Landscape. Works were submitted anonymously.

- 2a Study for 'Design for Wall Decoration' - Three women bearing baskets of apples, circa 1918
Pencil, squared, 62.5 x 45.7 cm, 24 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 18 in
The verso shows an enlarged detail of the same study. The Slade Sketch Club Special Figure Subject for January 1918, to which this work probably relates, was 'Design for Decoration'. A version of the same design in oil is inscribed by Knights 'Design for Wall Decoration' (see page 31). This is the earliest of Knights' Decorative Paintings. Further studies indicate that the intended size of the Wall Decoration was to be 5 x 6 ft (catalogue 2d). The studies for the composition were probably executed whilst staying at Lineholt Farm in Worcestershire, between October 1917 and October 1918.
- 2b* Figures at a Garden Party, circa 1918
Watercolour over pencil, 38.5 x 56 cm, 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 22 in
The Slade Sketch Club Special Figure Subject for December 1918, to which this work possibly relates, was 'the Party'.
- 2c* Self Portrait, circa 1918
Watercolour over pencil, 38 x 24 cm, 15 x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in
- 2d Two Studies for Design for Wall Decoration, circa 1918
Pencil over watercolour, squared
27.4 x 21.5 cm, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in
There is a faint compositional study for Village Street, Mill Hands Conversing, on the reverse.
- 2e Interior of a Cow Shed, probably at Hook Farm, West Hoathly, Sussex, circa 1918
Watercolour over pencil, 38 x 28 cm, 15 x 11 in
Family holidays were frequently spent at Hook Farm, West Hoathly, Sussex, (see also 2i). Other drawings executed at Hook Farm are in the College Art Collections, University College London.
- 2f The Fair - Hayling Island, 1919
Watercolour, 26.5 x 31.5 cm, 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ in
College Art Collections, University College London, Palmer Gift no. 19
Hayling Island, situated between Chichester Harbour and Langston Harbour, was a popular holiday resort. The Knights family stayed there between April 1st and 25th, 1919.
- 2g Landscape with tree in silhouette
Watercolour, pen and ink, 28 x 35.8 cm, 11 x 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ in
- 2h Street scene with figures, circa 1918
Pencil, pen and ink, 38 x 56 cm, 15 x 22 in
The Slade Sketch Club Special Figure Subject for April 1918, to which this work possibly relates, was 'Bank Holiday'.
- 2i* West Hoathly, Sussex, 1918
Watercolour and pen and ink, 38 x 52 cm, 15 x 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in
Signed with monogram, inscribed with title and dated 13th August 1918.
The artist signed her work with a monogram of an interlocking W.M.K. until circa 1919.
- 2j* Figures harvesting potatoes
Watercolour and pen and ink,
29.7 x 38.5 cm, 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ in
- 2k The Goose Girl, 1918
Signed, inscribed with title and dated, May 1918
Pencil and watercolour on prepared paper,
29.5 x 19.5 cm, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in
A study of Hansel and Gretel is on the reverse of this drawing. From her early to her late teens, Knights produced a vast number of illustrative drawings, especially inspired by fairy tales such as the Brothers Grimm.

- 3 VILLAGE STREET, MILL HANDS CONVERSING, 1919
Tempera on canvas, re-lined on board
91.5 x 122 cm; 36 x 48 in
EXHIBITED: (?) The British School at Rome, Grafton Galleries, February 1920 (22); The Slade, 1871-1971, Royal Academy of Arts, November/December 1971 (33, plate 9)
College Art Collections, University College, London
The painting, for which Knights was awarded joint first prize (with James Wilkie) for the Slade Summer Composition, 1919, depicts the village and Mill at Roydon, near Harlow, Essex. The studies for the painting were made whilst on holiday at Roydon from 9 August - 20 September 1919.
- 3a Old Lady seated, 1919
Pencil, 25.5 x 31.8 cm, 10 x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in
The model for this study was Frances Williams, the artist's great aunt who lived at Lineholt Farm.
- 3b Compositional study, 1919
Pencil and watercolour, 22.5 x 29 cm, 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ in
College Art Collections, University College London, Palmer Gift no. 21
- 3c Compositional study, 1919
Watercolour over pencil, 27 x 21.5 cm, 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in
- 3d Landscape study possibly for Village Street, Mill Hands Conversing.
Oil over pencil on prepared paper, 24.9 x 27 cm, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ in
- 4 ENGLISH LANDSCAPE STUDIES
- 4a* Landscape with river bank
Oil on paper, 17.8 x 22.9 cm, 7 x 9 in
- 4b Landscape with fence
Oil over pencil on prepared paper, 25 x 27 cm, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ in
- 4c Landscape with farm buildings
Oil over pencil on paper, 17.8 x 18.1 cm, 7 x 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ in
- 4d Landscape with canal
Oil on paper, 17.8 x 25.4 cm, 7 x 10 in

- 4e* Canal bridge
Oil on paper, 17.8 x 25.4 cm, 7 x 10 in
(Illustrated on back cover)
- 4f Study of the artist's bedroom, The Old Mill, Ludlow, 1920
Silverpoint, 22.9 x 27.9 cm, 9 x 11 in
Arnold Mason (1885-1963) rented the Old Mill at Ludlow as a studio (see catalogue 16a) Winifred Knights and her father stayed at the Mill in September 1920.
- 4g The River Teme, The Old Mill, Ludlow, 1920
Signed with monogram, silverpoint
22.9 x 27.9 cm, 9 x 11 in
- 4h* The Mill Wheel, The Old Mill, Ludlow, 1920
Signed with monogram, silverpoint
22.9 x 27.9 cm, 9 x 11 in
- 5 THE DELUGE 1920
Oil on canvas, 152.4 x 183 cm.; (60 x 72)
PROVENANCE: The British School at Rome, Lowther Gardens, London, Christie's, London, 10th June 1988, lot 265
Jonathon Clark Ltd. (1988)
EXHIBITED: The British School at Rome, Royal Academy, February 1921 (51); International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Art, Paris, April-October 1925, British Section, Grand Palais (271), awarded silver medal.; Arts Club, London, 1965; British Artists in Italy, Canterbury College of Art, September-October 1985 (3), ill p. 18; The Last Romantics, Barbican Art Gallery February-April 1989 (466), plate p.195; Writing on the Wall, October 1993-April 1994, Tate Gallery, London, no. 18.
LITERATURE: 'Girl Artist Remodels Flood', Daily Graphic, 8 February 1921, Front Cover; Illustrated London News, 12 February, Vol. 158, p.194; Arts Review, v.40, 20 May 88, inside back cover, illustrated; Writing on the Wall, Women Writers on Women Artists, Edited by Judith Collins and Elsbeth Lindner, London 1993, pp.94-8, ill p.95
The Tate Gallery, London, Accession no. T05532

'The Deluge' was the prescribed subject for the 1920 British School at Rome Scholarship in Decorative Painting. The Scholarship rules required that the painting was produced in oil or tempera, together with a cartoon, both of which were to be executed in eight weeks. Winifred Knights commenced work on July 5th 1920 and despite losing time through illness was judged the winner, news of which she received on 21st September 1920.

Knights presented Evelyn Shaw, (Secretary of the British School at Rome), with a sketch book inscribed *My Book of Studies, for the Rome Scholarship, 1920* (collection Catherine Meeson), which contains numerous studies for the painting. The artist's mother modelled for the central figure carrying the baby and Arnold Mason for the male figure beside her and the man shinning up the hill. The artist portrayed herself as the figure to the centre right of the foreground. According to Eileen Palmer the Flood water was modelled on Clapham Common.

A squared watercolour for 'The Deluge' is in the College Art Collections, University College London (Palmer Gift no. 73), together with two early compositional studies on tracing paper (Palmer Gift no. 76/77). The Cartoon for the picture was sold at Christie's, 14 October 1987, (lot 129) and is now in the collection of the Mitchell Wolfson Jr. Museum of Decorative and Propaganda Art, Miami, Florida.

- 5a Study of feet, 1920
Pencil, 25.5 x 19 cm, 7½ x 10 in
Private Collection
- 5b Compositional Study, 1920
Watercolour over pencil, 25.5 x 19 cm, 7½ x 10 in
Private Collection
- 5c* Compositional Study, 1920
Watercolour over pencil, 25.5 x 19 cm, 7½ x 10 in
- 5d Compositional Study, 1920
Oil over pencil on paper, 24.5 x 29.5 cm,
College Art Collections, University College London, Palmer
Gift no. 133

6 JAIRUS'S DAUGHTER 1921

Oil on canvas
Whereabouts unknown (possibly not completed)

'Jairus's Daughter' was painted whilst the artist was staying at Anticoli Corrado, Lazio between April and July 1921.

The story of the raising of Jairus's daughter is related in Mark 5: 21-24: 'When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, 'Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.'

Knights used the bedroom in which she was lodging in Anticoli Corrado as the setting for the painting. 'I have been doing studies all the week ... the room is a lovely one to do, old bed and love[ly] old beams across the ceiling. I have been doing careful perspective drawings and a little painting of it and tomorrow I have got a model coming for the daughter.' (Letter to her mother from Anticoli, 24th July 1921)

- 6a Study of the artist's bedroom, Anticoli Corrado, 1921
Inscribed with colour notes
Pencil, 34.4 x 53 cm, 13¾ x 20½ in
- 6b* Study of the artist's bedroom, Anticoli Corrado, 1921
Oil on tracing paper, 31 x 31 cm, 12¼ x 12¼ in
- 6c Compositional study with lake beyond, 1921
Pencil and watercolour, 22 x 27.6 cm, 8⅝ x 10⅞ in
The miracle took place immediately after Christ had crossed and calmed the stormy waters of the Sea of Galilee.
- 6d Compositional study with hill town beyond, 1921
Pencil and watercolour, 30 x 21 cm, 11¼ x 8¼ in
- 6e* Study of slippers on flagstone floor, 1921
Oil over pencil, 12.5 x 18 cm, 4⅞ x 7⅞ in
- 6f Jairus's daughter asleep, 1921
Pencil, 15.2 x 41.7 cm, 6 x 16⅞ in
- 6g Study of a bed, 1921
Pencil, 18.7 x 25.2 cm, 7⅞ x 9⅞ in
- 6h Jesus with Peter, James, John, and Jairus's parents at their daughter's bedside, 1921
Watercolour over pencil, 26.6 x 29.9 cm, 10½ x 11¾ in

- 6i Study of a bedroom, 1921
Oil over pencil on board
19.5 x 22.7 cm, 7⅞ x 8⅞ in
- 6j* Compositional study with lake beyond, 1921
Pencil and oil on tracing paper, 26 x 24.4 cm, 10¼ x 9⅝ in
- 6k Compositional study with lake beyond, 1921
Pencil, 23.8 x 21 cm, 9⅞ x 8¼ in

7 PARADISE 1921

Writing to her mother about this painting, Knights stated, 'I haven't thought out the figures properly, but I have all the landscape and all the colour ... I do the Jairus one all day & the hill one [Paradise] in the evening, partly because it is an evening effect, partly because it is too hot to struggle up the hill to it in the day,' (24th July 1921, from Anticoli Corrado).

The painting is untraced and may never have been completed. The size however (identical to the Deluge) suggests that the artist intended to submit this as her first major Rome painting, the faculty at the British School specifying that scholars annually submit a decorative painting of not less than 50 inches in one direction.

Knights' letters indicate that as the painting evolved it underwent several changes:

'I keep on at my composition, rubbing out, rubbing out. I'll get it right soon. Its changed to the Annunciation now.'

(Letter to her mother, 19th August 1921)

'I have been working hard at comp.. & the canvas arrived 2 days ago. It nearly fills the studio, same size as the Deluge. I have got another subject now, 'Abigail', same background.'

(Letter to mother, 25th January 1922)

The following studies relate to the composition in its various states.

- 7a Landscape study with five figures by water, 1921
Watercolour & ink on blue paper, 24.4 x 31 cm, 9⅝ x 12¼ in
- 7b Landscape study with three women, 1921
Pencil, wash and gouache on buff paper, squared
26.6 x 31.5 cm, 10½ x 11⅞ in
- 7c Three compositional studies, figures in landscape, 1921
Pen and ink, 19 x 25 cm, 7½ x 9⅞ in

- 7d Landscape study with tree, 1921
Watercolour and pencil, squared
23.2 x 26.3 cm, 9⅞ x 10⅞ in
- 7e* Landscape study with standing, seated and reclining figures, 1921
Oil on tracing paper, 10.2 x 11.5 cm, 4 x 4½ in
- 7f Two compositional studies of figures, possibly Dante and Beatrice, in landscape, 1921
Pencil, pen and ink and wash
20.8 x 30.2 cm, 8¼ x 11⅞ in
- 7g Five crowned figures in landscape, 1921
Watercolour over pencil on buff paper
27 x 36.2 cm, 10⅝ x 14¼ in
- 7h Three figures in a landscape, 1921
Pencil, watercolour and wash
21 x 26.7 cm, 8¼ x 10½ in
- 7i Seated and standing figures in landscape, 1921
Oil over pencil, on tracing paper, 23 x 26.5 cm, 9 ⅞ x 10⅞ in
- 7j Two compositional studies of figures, possibly Dante and Beatrice, in landscape, 1921
Wash over pencil on tracing paper, 22.5 x 28 cm, 8⅞ x 11 in

8 BATHSHEBA circa 1922

The story of Bathsheba is related in 2: Samuel 11: 'It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, "This is Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.'

This painting appears to be related in subject to 'Abigail' in so far as both Bathsheba and Abigail became wives of David.

- 8a Bathsheba, circa 1922
Pencil & oil on panel, inscribed with title
39.8 x 27 cm, 15⅞ x 10⅞ in
The setting for this painting is Porta Rocca in Orvieto.

9 ITALIAN LANDSCAPES

Knights made extensive landscape studies whilst in Italy, chiefly in Lazio, Umbria and the Abruzzi. She frequently produced each study in triplicate, creating a drawing, then an outline on tracing paper and lastly a colour study.

I am going out sketching this afternoon. I like the country around Orvieto best of all, up by Florence it is rather tamer and parklike, with tiny rounded hills

Letter to Father, 23 March 1921

9a Landscape, Piediluco, 1924

Signed Winifred Monnington, and dated

Pencil on paper laid on board
33.7 x 35.8 cm, 13¼ x 14 ½ in

Private Collection

This drawing is one of very few works to bear the artist's married name (she soon reverted to Knights). Knights married Thomas Monnington on 23rd April 1924 and the drawing was probably executed shortly afterwards, near Piediluco, whilst Monnington was making landscape studies for his painting 'Allegory' (see page 12).

9b Landscape, Piediluco, 1924

Brown ink on tracing paper laid on paper
32 x 43.9 cm, 12¾ x 17¼ in

Private Collection

A related drawing is in the collection of the British Museum, (1978-6-24-21).

9c* Landscape, Piediluco, 1924

Oil on tracing paper, laid on paper
31.8 x 35.9 cm, 12½ x 14 in

Private Collection

9d Landscape, Piediluco, 1924

Signed Winifred Monnington, dated and extensively inscribed with colour notes

Pencil on paper laid on board
35.5 x 44.5 cm, 14 x 17½ in

9e Landscape, Piediluco, 1924

Brown ink on tracing paper, squared, laid on paper,
22.3 x 27 cm, 8¾ x 10¾ in

9f Landscape, Piediluco, 1924

Oil and brown ink on tracing paper, laid on paper, extensively inscribed with colour notes in pencil,
27 x 29 cm, 10¾ x 11¾ in

9g* 'Nocera Umbra', Umbria, 1923

Signed, inscribed with title and dated
Pencil, 24.3 x 31.5 cm, 9½ x 12¾ in

EXHIBITED: Exhibition of paintings, drawings engraving and small sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, Imperial Gallery, London, April - June 1927, [21]

9h Nocera Umbra, Umbria, 1923

Black ink on tracing paper laid on paper,
29.2 x 34 cm, 11½ x 13¾ in

9i Nocera Umbra, Umbria, 1923

Pencil and oil on tracing paper laid on paper,
24.8 x 33.7 cm, 9¾ x 13¼ in

9j Landscape

Oil over pencil on paper, 17.8 x 25.4 cm, 7 x 10 in

9k Landscape

Oil over pencil on canvas, 17.8 x 20.5 cm, 7 x 8¼ in

9l Landscape

Oil over pencil on canvas, 15.2 x 17.7 cm, 6 x 7 in

9m Landscape

Oil over pencil on canvas, 16.8 x 20.5 cm, 6⅞ x 8¼ in

9n Landscape

Oil over pencil on canvas, 15.6 x 21 cm, 6⅞ x 8¼ in

9o Landscape

Oil over pencil on panel, 33.3 x 49.5 cm, 13¾ x 19½ in

9p* Landscape with tennis court

Oil on board, 23.8 x 26 cm, 9¼ x 10¼

PROVENANCE: Given by the artist to Lady Allen of Hurtwood (Colin Gill's sister).

Collection Polly Allen

10 THE MARRIAGE AT CANA 1923

Oil on canvas, 1840 x 1980 cm, 72¼ x 77¼ in

PROVENANCE: Tate Gallery, (in storage); The British School at Rome, Lowther Gardens, London, until 1957

EXHIBITED: International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Art, Paris, April-October 1925, British Section, Grand Palais (259), awarded silver medal; Duveen Gallery, April 1927; Exhibition of paintings, drawings engraving and small sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, Imperial Gallery, London, April-June 1929 (158); Twee Eeuwen Englesche Kunst, Tentoonstelling in Het Stedelijk Museum Te Amsterdam, July-October 1936 (88); International Exhibition of Paintings, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1937 (109); British Council, 1939 (48) (according to label on verso); British Contemporary Painting, Tate Gallery, 1958, LITERATURE: British Artists in Italy, Canterbury College of Art, September-October 1985, p. 18.

Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Gift of the British School at Rome, 1957, (1957/23/1)

'My picture will be very beautiful. I have drawn 11 plates of melon, pink melon; 9 glasses of wine some empty, because they have run out, & 38 people'. Letter to Mother, 24th August 1922.

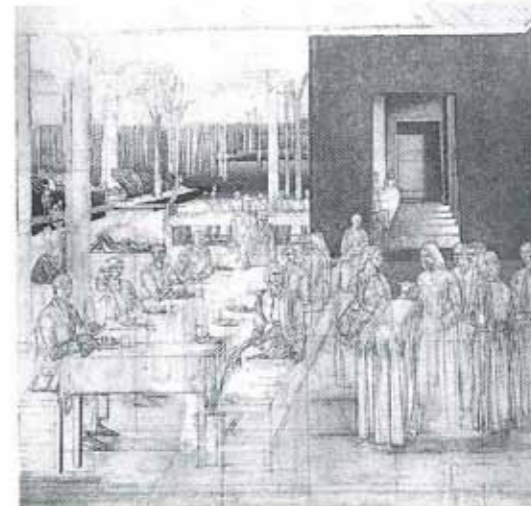
The 'Marriage at Cana', started in 1922, is the principal painting produced by Knights during her time at the British School at Rome. It depicts the miracle of the water turned into wine, (related in John 2:1-12). The setting for the painting is the Borghese Gardens adjoining the British School at Rome. The setting is also reminiscent of the background devised by Piero della Francesca for the fresco of 'The Adoration of the True Cross' in the Church of S. Francesco in Arezzo, visited by Knights prior to starting work on her own composition.

The artist includes herself amongst the guests, along side, in the earliest studies, Arnold Mason. Tom Monnington, who did not arrive at the British School at Rome until 1923, is included in later studies at the far end of the table, in effect next to Mason. As known rivals over Knights they clearly made an ill-suited pair for a marriage feast and Mason is subsequently omitted from the final composition.



Winifred Knights in her studio at the British School at Rome, circa 1923. The painting on the large easel is the (unfinished) 'Marriage at Cana'.

'I told you I had Gill's studio, didn't I? They have made it nice for me, & Arnold & I have made it look nicer ... Now I am ten times more comfy, especially as I have most of Gill's furniture. I have put some of my prints on the wall this morning & I hope to put some of Anticoli up before long'. Letter to Mother, 19th August 1921



'The Marriage at Cana', circa 1923. Cartoon drawing on canvas, prior to painting. Reproduced from a photograph courtesy of the College Art Collections, University College London.

- 10a* *Study for Marriage at Cana, circa 1923*
Oil, pencil and wash on paper, 31.1 x 35 cm, 12¼ x 13 3/5 in
Private Collection
Illustrated on front cover.
- 10b *Study of male figure, seated, at far end of table, circa 1923*
Pencil, 16.5 x 15 cm, 6½ x 5¾ in
The model for this figure in the final painting is Tom Monnington
- 10c *Study of male figure, standing, leaning on the table, circa 1923*
Pencil, 17.8 x 19.5 cm, 7 x 7¾ in
- 10d* *Compositional study of three figures, circa 1922*
Wash, squared, 15 x 16.5 cm, 5¾ x 6½ in
The figures in this composition do not appear in the final version of the painting. For an individual study of one of the figures, see 10w.
- 10e* *Portrait head of Thomas Ashby, circa 1922*
Pencil, 24.5 x 34.2 cm, 9¾ x 13 7/16 in
- 10f* *Portrait study of Arnold Mason for figure seated fourth from left, circa 1922*
Pencil, 47.6 x 33½ cm, 18¾ x 13 3/16 in
Collection Antony and Tessa Cox
For the inclusion of this portrait in the final cartoon for the painting see lower illustration on page 53.
- 10g *Compositional study, circa 1923*
Wash, squared, 15 x 16.5 cm, 5¾ x 6½ in
- 10h *Figure studies, circa 1923*
Pencil, 35 x 24.5 cm, 13¾ x 9¾ in
- 10i *Compositional Study, circa 1922*
Pencil, watercolour and gouache, 19 x 25 cm, 7½ x 9 13/16 in
- 10j *Studies of folded arms, circa 1922*
Pencil, 22.6 x 22 cm, 8¾ x 8 in
- 10k *Compositional study with figures, circa 1922*
Pencil and wash, squared, 31 x 22 cm, 12¼ x 8¾ in
- 10l *Study of man eating melon, seated, third from right, circa 1923*
Pencil, 29 x 22.8 cm, 11 7/16 x 8 15/16 in

- 10m *Study of feet, circa 1923*
Pencil 26.4 x 19 cm, 10 3/8 x 7½ in
- 10n* *Study of melon slices, circa 1923*
Oil over pencil on paper, 12.6 x 18 cm, 4 13/16 x 7 1/8 in
- 100 *Study of seated female, circa 1923*
Pencil, 20.5 x 18.2; 8¾ x 7 3/16 in
- 10p *Study of servant girl filling stone jars with water, circa 1923*
Pencil, 41.8 x 26.4; 16 7/16 x 10¼ in
On the reverse is a study of a man in Italian regional costume.
- 10q *Two studies of a head scarf, for the figure of the servant girl filling jars with water, circa 1923*
Pencil, 25 x 19 cm, 9 7/8 x 7 3/8 in
- 10r *Study of Christ, circa 1923*
Pencil, 49 x 35 cm, 19 3/16 x 13 3/4 in
There is a similar study on the reverse.
- 10s *Seated female figure, circa 1923*
Signed and inscribed *Study for Marriage of Cana*
Pencil and wash, 31.8 x 21.2 cm, 12½ x 8¾ in
Knights only rarely signed or inscribed her studies. This drawing, originally placed in a contemporary mount, was possibly selected by the artist for presentation to the school faculty which required that scholars annually submit studies alongside their major years work. A similar drawing is in the collection of the British Museum, (1978-6-24-22).
- 10t *Portrait study of female figure behind Christ, possibly Mary, circa 1923*
Oil over pencil on board, 30.7 x 24 cm, 12 1/8 x 9 7/16 in
- 10u *Study of seated male, rear view, circa 1923*
Pencil, 34.5 x 24.5 cm, 13 5/8 x 9 5/8 in
- 10v *Study of feet, seated male figure, foreground, left hand side, circa 1923*
Pencil, 17 x 24.1 cm, 6¾ x 9½ in
- 10w *Study of standing female, rear view, circa 1922*
Pencil, 33.9 x 19.7 cm, 13 3/16 x 7¾ in
- 10x *Study for female feet, circa 1923*
Pencil, 22.4 x 28.7 cm, 8 13/16 x 11 3/8 in

11 SANTISSIMA TRINITA circa 1924-30

Signed and dated 1930

Oil on canvas, 103 x 113 cm.; 40½ x 44½ in

PROVENANCE: John Addinsell, London, 1930-1988;

Christie's, London, 3rd March 1988, lot 60; Fine Art Society, London, 1988

EXHIBITED: Exhibition of paintings, drawings engraving and small sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, Imperial Gallery, London, April - June 1927, (145). Exhibited unfinished.

Private Collection, Italy

In an account of the artist's life sent to the British School at Rome, Thomas Monnington wrote:

On her return to England she completed, after months of work, a picture for which she had made many studies in Italy. She gave it the title of 'The Santissima Trinita', and it depicted peasants resting among the mountains on a pilgrimage to the Festival of the Santissima Trinita at Vallepietra in the Abruzzi. She made the pilgrimage herself on two occasions, and was greatly moved by this Christian survival of a pagan ceremony.

This picture was exhibited at the Imperial Gallery of Art in London, in its great refinement of design and execution receiving most favourable comment from the critics. She refused an offer [of] £1000 for the picture because she considered she had promised it to a previous patron for a very much smaller sum, long before it was exhibited. This action was typical of her unvarying loyalty and honesty.

The painting draws on various works from the artist's time as a Rome Scholar, especially the compositional ideas for 'Paradise'. The setting for the painting, is based on studies made near Piediluco, executed during 1924 whilst Monnington was working on his painting 'Allegory'. The figures asleep in the fields relate to an incident Knights witnessed near to Leonessa in 1924: 'we learnt there had been an earthquake shock the night before and [the peasants] were all fearing some more so everyone had gone into the fields to sleep.' (Letter to mother, August 1924). Four studies for this painting, three of which are inscribed Santa Trinita, and the fourth of which is dated 1924, are in the collection of the British Museum (1990-10-6-79; 1978-10-6-79; 1978-6-24-23/25/27).

Tomorrow morning I am going right up into the mountains with a mule and a very beautiful cover & some Anticoli peasants to see a miracle which happens every year, at Valle Pietra, in the Abruzzi. High up on a precipice there is a little chapel and all the peasants of the Abruzzi as far down as Naples make a pilgrimage to wash their sins away ... we have to travel all night and arrive at the top of the mountain at daybreak & the peasants build big fires all the way & sing the whole time, it ought to be very beautiful.

Letter to Millicent Murby, 23rd May 1923

- 11a *Cartoon for hillside, rear left section, circa 1924*
Pencil and oil on tracing paper, 35 x 44 cm, 13¾ x 17 3/16 in
- 11b* *Study of hills, circa 1924*
Oil and gouache on tracing paper, 20 x 47.4 cm, 7¾ x 18¾ in
- 11c *Study for seated female figure, circa 1925*
Pencil and brown ink, 29.5 x 23 cm, 11 5/8 x 9 1/16 in
- 11d *Cartoon for crouching female, rear view, circa 1924*
Pencil on tracing paper laid on board
24.9 x 10.8 cm, 5¾ x 4¼ in
- 11e *Study of an umbrella, circa 1924*
Pencil, 21.6 x 27.6 cm, 8½ x 10 13/16 in
- 11f *Cartoon for sleeping female, circa 1924*
Pencil on tracing paper laid on board,
10.5 x 21 cm, 4 1/8 x 8 1/4 in
- 11g *Cartoon for sleeping female, circa 1924*
Pencil on tracing paper laid on board
7.5 x 20 cm, 2 13/16 x 7 7/8 in
- 11h *Study for three background figures, circa 1924*
Pencil on tracing paper laid on board
6.7 x 13.6 cm, 2 3/8 x 5 3/16 in
- 11i *Study for two background figures, circa 1924*
Pencil on tracing paper laid on board
9.5 x 13.7 cm, 3 3/4 x 5 3/8 in

12 LINEHOLT

Lineholt Farm, near Stourport, Worcestershire, was the home of the artist's great aunts Frances Williams and Marianne Pardoe. Three sketch books with numerous studies of Lineholt, one of which is dated 1932, indicate that around this time the artist was working on a major composition. This may have related to the painting of 'Demeter in Worcestershire', referred to in a letter from the artist to her mother (29th September 1927). Lineholt Farm would have provided a suitable setting around which to create a painting of Demeter, the Greek goddess of agriculture.

- 12a* *Study of Lineholt Farmhouse, circa 1932*
Inscribed mid-summer's day, 24th June, with additional colour notes and measurements.
Pencil, 29 × 45.7 cm, 11½ × 18 in
- 12b *Study of Lineholt Farmhouse, circa 1932*
Extensively inscribed with colour notes
Pencil, 29 × 45.7 cm, 11½ × 18 in
- 12c *Study of a weeping willow with Lineholt Farmhouse beyond, circa 1932*
Extensively inscribed with colour notes
Pencil on two sheets of paper, 21.3 × 16.7 cm, 8½ × 6½ in and 16.7 × 21.3 cm, 6½ × 8½ in
- 12d *Colour study of front door, Lineholt Farmhouse, circa 1932*
Oil over pencil on tracing paper, 26 × 21.3 cm, 10¼ × 8½ in

13 SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF ST. MARTIN OF TOURS circa 1928-33

Oil on canvas, 76.5 × 189.5 cm, 30¼ × 74¾ in
LITERATURE: G. K. A. Bell, 'The Church and the Artist', *The Studio*, September, 1942, vol. 124, no. 594, pp.81-86 (illustrated) R. C. D. Jasper, *George Bell, Bishop of Chichester*, London 1967, p.129

Milner Memorial Chapel, Canterbury Cathedral

The painting was commissioned for the Milner Memorial Chapel by the Dean Dr. George Bell, later Bishop of Chichester, in conjunction with the architect Sir Herbert Baker, who had been appointed to refurbish the Chapel. Ironically the painting replaced the work of the 1926 Rome Scholar Glyn Jones.

A letter from Herbert Baker to Knights, indicates that by 1929 the painting was underway, although, characteristically, progress was slow: 'the last thing any of us want to do is to spoil your picture by hurrying,' (10th April 1929). The Chapter Act Books from Canterbury Cathedral record that the painting was finished by December 1933, referring to it having been commissioned six years earlier. The numerous compositional studies that have survived for the painting demonstrate that Knights considered several interpretations of the subject. The final composition incorporates three events from the life of St. Martin: on the left St. Martin divides his cloak with his sword and gives half to a beggar; on the right Christ appears in a vision wearing the cloak. The central scene depicts The Miracle of the Resurrected Child: St. Martin is approached by a woman, whose baby is dead, and begs for his intervention; St. Martin prays and the baby is resurrected.

Simone Martini produced a cycle of frescoes on the theme of St. Martin of Tours in the Chapel of San Martino, Assisi, and it is to these images that Knights naturally turned for inspiration. Like Simone Martini Knights situates the various Miracles within an Italian rather than French landscape; (the division of the cloak traditionally occurred in Amiens; The Miracle of The Resurrection at Chartres). Knights depicts the hill town of Labro; (Simone Martini depicted Siena). There are also close compositional similarities between the artists' respective depictions of 'The Dream'. The format and scale of Knights' work can also be

compared to Monnington's 'The Supper at Emmaus', (1931), an altarpiece for the Ormrod Chapel of St. Peters, Bolton, Lancashire.

The artists' nephew, Richard Palmer, (b. 1st May 1933), served as the model for the baby and the artists mother for the old lady witnessing The Miracle of the Resurrection. Bishop Bell, who was involved with commissions for religious paintings from numerous artists, including Venessa Bell, Duncan Grant, Augustus Lunn and Hans Feibusch, described Knights' work as 'one of the most lovely, delicate and deeply felt modern religious paintings that I know,' (G. K. A. Bell, 'The Church and the Artist', *The Studio*, September, 1942, vol. 124, no. 594, p.81).

- 13a Full size cartoon
Pencil, 76.5 × 189.5 cm, 30¼ × 74¾ in
- 13b Compositional study
Oil on tracing paper, 18.5 × 41 cm, 7¼ × 16¼ in
- 13c* Compositional study
Oil on tracing paper, 13.3 × 39 cm, 5¼ × 15 ⅜ in
- 13d Compositional study
Oil over pencil on tracing paper, 18 × 46 cm, 7¼ × 18½ in
- 13e* Compositional study
Oil over pencil on tracing paper, 16.9 × 18.1 cm, 6⅞ × 15 in
- 13f Compositional study
Watercolour and gouache on tracing paper
15 × 36.9 cm, 5⅞ × 14½ in
- 13g Compositional study
Watercolour and gouache on tracing paper
15.5 × 50.5 cm, 6⅞ × 19⅞ in
- 13h Compositional study
Pastel on tracing paper, 15 × 17.3 cm, 5⅞ × 6⅞ ins
Collection Catherine Meeson
- 13i Compositional study
Pastel on tracing paper, 12.8 × 17.2 cm, 5¼ × 6¾ in
- 13j Compositional study
Oil over pencil on tracing paper, 24.1 × 38 cm, 9½ × 15 ins

- 13k *Head of Christ, circa 1933*
Signed and inscribed, *Study for St. Martin*
Pencil, 16.5 × 16.3 cm, 16½ × 6⅞ in
- 13l *Compositional study*
Pencil, 24.5 × 38.2 cm, 9⅞ × 15 in
- 13m *Study of female head, 1933*
Signed and dated
Pencil, 28 × 25.6 cm, 11 × 8⅞ in
This is a posthumous portrait study of the artist's mother and can be compared with a similar drawing in the collection of the British Museum, (1992-10-3-126)
- 13n* *Study of standing male, circa 1933*
Pencil, 45.7 × 29.2 cm, 18 × 11½ in
- 13o *Study of female head, 1933*
Signed and dated
Pencil, 45.7 × 29.2 cm, 18 × 11½ in
- 13p *Study of mother, kneeling, circa 1933*
Pencil, 45.7 × 29.2 cm, 18 × 11½ in
- 13q* *Study of the beggar's bundle, circa 1933*
Signed and inscribed *Study for St. Martins*
21 × 25.2 cm, 8¼ × 9⅞ in
- 13r *Study of tree, 1933*
Signed and dated
Pencil, 24.5 × 39.5 cm, 10 × 15½ in
- 13s *Study of female head, circa 1933*
Signed and inscribed *Study for St. Martin*
Pencil, 27.5 × 20.6 cm, 10¾ × 8⅞ in
- 13t* *Study of beggar, circa 1933*
Pencil, 45.7 × 29.2 cm, 18 × 11½ in
- 13u *Study of St. Martin, kneeling, 1933*
Signed and dated
Pencil, 45.7 × 29.2 cm, 18 × 11½ in

14 FLOWER STUDIES

Winifred Knights made numerous flower studies throughout her career (one of her sketch pads is entitled *Flower Book, Rome 1925*). A number of the later studies relate to her last major composition, 'The Flight into Egypt'.

We found masses of lovely blooms, you can't imagine how luxurious it felt ... big blue, white and pink anemones and fields of great tall daffodils ... Oh I forgot the most important of all the violets were there in millions ... I have been doing studies of them all in oils today, I think they will be useful to put in pictures, and it is wiser to paint them now they come into season.' Letter to mother 19th February 1921

- 14a Study for the Flight into Egypt – Wood anemones
Pencil, 24.5 x 39.4 cm, 9⁵/₈ x 15¹/₂ in (mount opening)

Collection Catherine Meeson

According to Eileen Palmer, the 'Flight into Egypt' was commissioned by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres as a mural for Balcarres Castle. The project was commenced after the artist moved to Leyswood in 1936, and was worked on during the years leading up to the war. After the artist's sudden death in February 1947 the squared up canvas for the Flight, which measured in excess of 5 x 10ft, remained in her studio. The artist's son, John Monnington, recalls that a few areas depicting grass and wood anemones along the bank of a stream, to which Mary, Joseph and Jesus were descending, were drawn in pencil in minute detail. The vast expanse of the canvas, however, was mostly unworked and after the artist's death was eventually destroyed.

- 14b Four flower studies: Cowslip; bluebell; speedwell; primrose
Watercolour over pencil
11.5 x 8 cm, 4¹/₂ x 3¹/₈ (mount opening); 19.5 x 13.7 cm, 7⁷/₈ x 5³/₈ in (mount opening); 11.5 x 8 cm, 4¹/₂ x 3¹/₈ (mount opening); 4.8 x 4.8 cm, 1⁷/₈ x 1⁷/₈ (mount opening)
Collection Catherine Meeson

- 14c Convolvulus
Inscribed with colour notes
Watercolour over pencil and pen and ink,
30.5 x 28.5 cm, 12 x 11¹/₄ in
Collection Catherine Meeson

- 14d Orchids
Inscribed with colour notes
Pencil and watercolour, 25 x 19 cm, 9¹/₂ x 7¹/₂ in

- 14e Arum Lily
Pencil, 21.6 x 16.8 cm, 8¹/₂ x 6⁵/₈ in

- 14f Studies
Oil over pencil, 24.3 x 12.5 cm.; 9⁵/₈ x 4⁷/₈ in

- 14g Snowdrops
Extensively inscribed with colour notes
Pencil, 28 x 2.6 cm, 11 x 8¹/₈ in

- 14h Studies
Pencil and watercolour, 36.3 x 22.4 cms. 14³/₁₆ x 8¹³/₁₆

- 14i* Bluebell, 1940
Signed and dated, 25 x 21.6 cm, 9⁷/₈ x 8¹/₂ in

- 14j Tree study
Pencil, 28.3 x 22.2 cm, 11¹/₈ x 8³/₄ in

15 PORTRAITS

- 15a John Monnington, (b.1934), the artist's son
Pencil, 27.9 x 21.6 cm, 11 x 8¹/₈ in

- 15b Mabel Gertrude Knights (1875–1931), the artist's mother, 1918
Pencil, 12.6 x 8 cm, 4¹⁵/₁₆ x 3¹/₈ in

- 15c* Self portrait, circa 1920
Pencil, 20.8 x 20.8 cm, 8¹/₄ x 8¹/₄ in
PROVENANCE: Given to Lady Allen of Hurtwood by the artist.
Collection Polly Allen
This drawing is comparable to a drawing in the collection of the British Museum, (1992–10–3–1250)

- 15d* Portrait of Colin Gill, circa 1921
Signed, pencil, 26 x 22.2 cm, 10¹/₄ x 8³/₄ in
PROVENANCE: Given by the artist to Lady Allen of Hurtwood (Colin Gill's sister).

Collection Polly Allen

I couldn't get [the newspaper] away from Gill; he had his nose glued to it for a whole morning, so I drew him – not at all a bad drawing
Letter to Mother, 19th May 1921

- 15e Portrait of Arnold Mason (1885–1963), sketching, circa 1918
Pencil, 12.6 x 8 cm, 4¹⁵/₁₆ x 3¹/₈ in
Two portrait drawings of Arnold Mason are in the collection of the British Museum (1991–12–14–49/50)

- 15f Eileen Knights, (b. 1906), the artist's sister, 1917
Inscribed Eileen and dated April 4th 1917
Pencil, 19.4 x 15 cm, 7⁷/₈ x 5⁷/₈ in
Collection Martin Palmer
A large portrait drawing of Eileen Knights, dated November 1918, is in the collection of the British Museum (1993–2–27 4)

- 15g Millicent Murby, the artist's aunt, 1917
Signed with monogram and dated Sep. 1917
16.5 x 10.3 cm, 6¹/₂ x 4¹/₄ in
Collection Eileen Palmer
Millicent Murby accompanied the artist to the British School at Rome at the start of her three year scholarship in November 1920.

- 15h Joyce Knights, (1906–1977), the artist's sister, 1918
Inscribed May 22 1918. During Thunder Storm
Pencil, 38 x 27.9 cm, 15 x 11 in
Collection Eileen Palmer

16 PORTRAITS OF WINIFRED KNIGHTS

- 16a Arnold Mason RA RP (1885–1963)
Winifred Knights, 1918
Pencil, 38.1 x 28 cm, 15 x 11 in

Collection Antony and Tessa Cox

From 1906 to 1908 Arnold Mason worked as a pupil with Sir William Blake Richmond. After serving in the Artists' Rifles during the First World War he enrolled at the Slade (from October 1918 to July 1919) where he became a good friend of Knights, and her family, whom he frequently joined on holidays. Prior to leaving for Rome Mason and Knights became engaged. Her early letters from Rome continually refer to him affectionately as Muffin and express distress at being apart. Mason joined Knights in Rome in July 1921, making a second visit the following year; by May 1922 however, apparently on account of Monnington's arrival, Knights had broken off the engagement, writing to her Aunt Millicent that she was 'free once more, thank heaven.' The acquaintance was re established a number of years later and Knights was in Mason's studio at 38 Cheyne Walk when she collapsed in February 1947.

This drawing is closely related to the Mason portrait of Knights in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, (Royal Library Windsor, 23047) at Windsor. Knights is wearing her hair in a similar fashion for her photograph for her War Painters Permit. Mason, who exhibited numerous times at the Royal Academy from 1908 onwards, exhibited portraits of Knights in 1920, 1921 and 1947.

- 16b* Colin Gill NEAC (1892–1940)
Winifred Knights, 1921
Signed and inscribed Jane on the original backboard
Pencil, 43.8 x 32.4 cm, 17¹/₄ x 12³/₄ in
PROVENANCE: Una Long, the artist's third wife, thence by descent.
Private Collection

Gill is doing a very good drawing of me. I had to let him he asked so nicely. He is leaving for home in a month & hates the idea of leaving Italy
Letter to Mother, 3rd April 1921

Colin Gill studied at the Slade and was the first Rome Scholar in Decorative Painting (1913). When Knights arrived

at the British School in November 1920 he was working on his major Rome painting 'Allegory'. Painting over a crucifix on the left hand side of the canvas, Gill incorporated a full length portrait of Knights, wearing her characteristic wide brimmed black hat. In an (undated) letter to Knights, referring to this painting, Gill wrote, 'I have been finishing your painting and made it quite like you. It's not dry enough to kiss yet, though!' Knights clearly regarded Gill with equal affection. After his departure from Italy in May 1921 she confided to her Aunt Millicent, 'I miss Gill very much now. We have become very good friends. We are very much alike and have had some very good times together.' (31st May 1921)

16c Sir Thomas Monnington PRA (1902-1976)

Winifred Knights, 1934

Signed and dated, pencil, 24.1 x 30.5 cm, 9½ x 12 in

EXHIBITED: Drawings and Paintings by Sir Thomas Monnington PRA (1902-1976), no. 29, plate 5a

Collection Catherine Meeson

Monnington entered the Slade in January 1918, two months after his 15th birthday. In 1922 he was awarded the Rome Scholarship in Decorative Painting, with the stipulation

that it was tenable for one year, subject to review. He married Winifred Knights in Rome on 23rd April 1924. 'We tried to work on our wedding day but had to give up. I think the nervousness before the ceremony put us out rather for that day ... We have a honeymoon every Sunday (the weekdays we work from 8-7.30, which means getting up at 6.30 a.m - very good for me!!!!)' Letter to Millicent Murby 19th May 1924.

Knights served as the model in each of the successive episodes in Monnington's major Rome painting 'Allegory', commenced in May 1924. Monnington described the painting as 'the story of the Garden of Eden, but rather a personal interpretation of it,' (letter to the Tate, 17th May 1953), conventionally interpreted as a celebration of his love both for his wife and Italy. (See illustration p.12)

The portrait drawing dates to 1934, the year the artist's son was born.

16d Alfred Hardiman RA FRBS (1891-1949)

Winifred Knights, circa 1921

Bronze, 45.7 cm, 18 in high (including base)

Collection Catherine Meeson

Hardiman was the 1920 Rome Scholar in Sculpture.



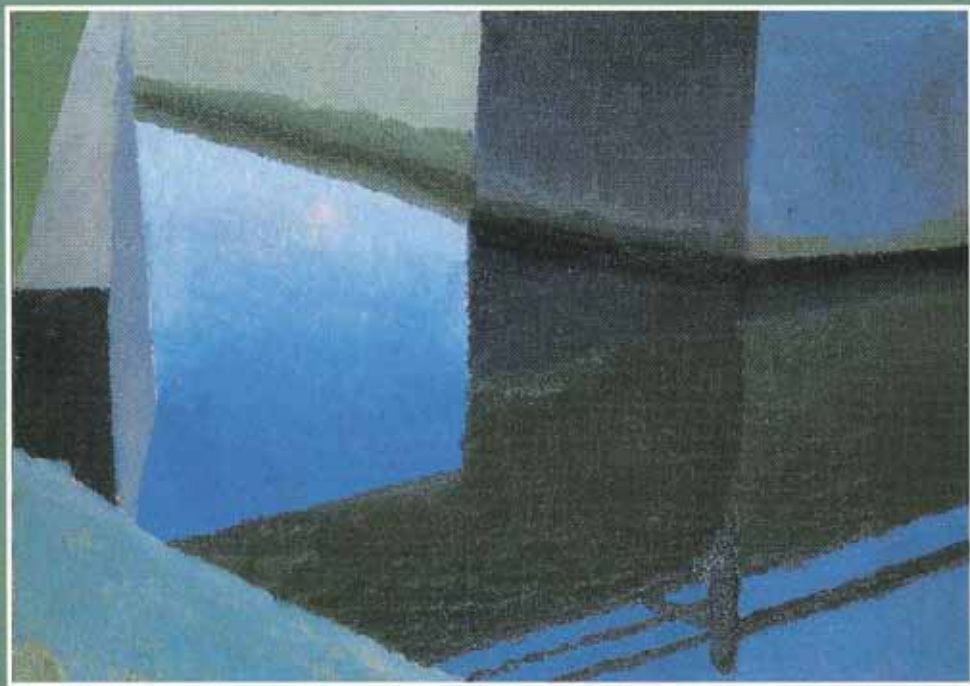
Colin Gill 'Allegory' 1920-21

Oil on canvas, 117 x 228 cm, 46 x 90 in, Collection Paul Liss

'Gill left for England last Thursday week; he spent a week here before leaving. His picture is finished now and looks very well.

He put me in with a green bird cage ... He is a nice man and has been a very good friend all the time.'

Letter to Millicent Murby, Anticoli Corrado, 31st May 1921



front cover illustration: catalogue 102
Study for 'The Marriage at Cana', circa 1923

illustrated above: catalogue 4c
Canal bridge