

<H1>Francis Place (1647-1728) and his collection of works on paper

<running header> Francis Place and his collection of works on paper

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Within the modest archive of materials relating to the artist Francis Place at Hospitalfield House in Arbroath, is an eighteenth-century notebook listing a selection of drawings by Place and others, which were inherited by his daughter Frances Wyndham. Although Place's original and significant collection of prints, drawings and paintings is now widely dispersed, the drawings notebook at Hospitalfield, and a corresponding notebook listing intaglio prints, go some way to reconstructing the contents of his studio or 'painting room' at York and aid our understanding of the influences which informed this largely self-taught artist. The details in the drawings notebook, of sketches now lost or in private hands, also greatly develop Place's known oeuvre in this medium; evidence is provided for a far broader range of subjects, including nude figure studies and Biblical subjects, than has previously been acknowledged.

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Designs drawn by the Pens of ingenious Gentlemen ought to be particularly valued.¹

So wrote the antiquary Ralph Thoresby as he assembled a catalogue of his significant collection of coins, medals, papers, works of art and miscellaneous curiosities. The particulars of the 'Musaeum Thoresbyanum' were published in 1715 as part of its owner's detailed study of his home town of Leeds, the *Ducatus Leodiensis*. This assemblage had its origins in artefacts inherited by Thoresby from his father John, who had himself acquired a collection of books, coins, prints and medals from the heirs of Sir Thomas Fairfax.² The nucleus of objects assembled by Fairfax, and subsequently purchased by John Thoresby, was then developed and enhanced by Ralph Thoresby both by means of his own acquisitions and through donations from friends and relatives.

Thoresby was well-placed to cultivate his cabinet of curiosities. He was a member of the York Virtuosi, a set of largely independently wealthy gentlemen active in York and the

north of England during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, with shared interests encompassing natural philosophy, antiquarianism and the visual arts. Among this loosely-defined group, described by George Vertue as ‘a set of most Ingenious Virtuoso’s’, were several professional and amateur artists, including the glass-painter Henry Gyles, and the printmakers William Lodge and Francis Place.³ Their number was supplemented by Thoresby, his fellow-antiquary Thomas Kirke, and the physician Martin Lister, elected Fellows of the Royal Society in 1697, 1693 and 1671 respectively. These were individuals bound together through the connections of friendship and sociability, intellectual discussion, and general curiosity about the world and how it worked.

<H1>Francis Place: artist and collector

Among the items in the *Musaeum Thoresbyanum* connected to the *Virtuosi*, Thoresby noted in his visitors’ album that he had both a drawing of ‘Stoneheng in red chalk done by Mr H: Gyles himself’ and by Thoresby’s distant relation, William Lodge, ‘The Original Prospect of Leedes as my Cosn Lodge (the Ingenious Artist) drew it from whence he did the Printed Copper plate.’⁴ Thoresby also acquired topographical pen and ink sketches which had been made by Lodge during the time he spent in Italy in the early 1670s, and of London-based subjects; these included a detailed study of Old Somerset House taken from the south side of the Thames, and a view of Lincoln’s Inn Fields, where Lodge had briefly studied law.⁵ The contribution of Lodge’s close friend Francis Place to Thoresby’s collection was comparatively eclectic: a drawing in pen and ink by Place of the lighthouse, priory and castle at Tynemouth represented his artistic pursuits and regular sketching tours, while the donation of objects including ‘an antique ladle for a punch bowl’, ‘a piece of Indian armour’ constructed from whale bone and leather, and an assortment of fossilized shells, reflected his own *virtuosi* sensibilities.⁶

Place’s activities and interests ensured that he was well-qualified in his role as one of York’s ‘most Ingenious Virtuoso’s’. Born in 1647 in Dinsdale, Country Dunham, as a younger son within an established local family, Place was sent to London as a teenager with the intention that he pursue a career in law at Gray’s Inn. His tastes quickly turned to art rather than administration and a friendship was established with the etcher Wenceslaus Hollar; later in life, Place confided to George Vertue that Hollar had been ‘a person I was intimately acquainted withal, but never his disciple, nor anybodys else, which was my misfortune.’⁷ The

outbreak of plague in the capital in 1665 encouraged Place to return north. In addition to his developing understanding of etching, prior to his departure from London he had been able to access, perhaps also through his connections with Hollar, the secrets of the new printmaking technique of mezzotint which had been introduced to members of the Royal Society by Prince Rupert. Around 1667, Place was one of the earliest English artists to have a print of this type published, a tavern scene after Adriaen Brouwer.⁸ By the mid-1670s he had forged friendships and intellectual connections with his peers in York, as he moved between the family seat at Dinsdale, lodging with Henry Gyles and his family in the city, and embarking on sketching tours which would eventually range across England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and parts of northern Europe. He worked for London print publishers including Arthur Tooker and, most regularly, the Yorkshire-born Pierce Tempest, etching after his own designs and those of contemporaries such as Francis Barlow; Place also provided illustrations for use in scientific and natural history publications by members of the Virtuosi, one notable example being Martin Lister's English translation of Johannes Godartius's *Of Insects*.⁹ Following their marriage in 1693, Place and his wife Anna lived in an apartment at the King's Manor in York, and with the city as his base, he continued his activities in printmaking, sketching, painting, and experimenting with new techniques in the field of ceramics. Another of Place's donations to the Musaeum Thoresbyanum was 'One of the curious Transparent mugs of his own Invention, with one of the larger pots purposely made to preserve them from the contact of the flames in baking.'¹⁰

The bulk of Place's own substantial collection of prints and drawings, the latter dominated by his own works, was never intended to supplement Thoresby's growing museum. When he died in York in 1728, Place's will instructed that 'as to the pictures in my house, pictures prints drawings & other things belonging to my painting room I give them to my said wife . . .'¹¹ According to Horace Walpole, upon Place's death his widow swiftly 'disposed of his paintings', yet this statement is not wholly accurate.¹² The directions in Place's will were followed, and upon Anna Place's own death in 1732 the greater part of her husband's collection of visual materials on paper, panel and canvas, including a small self-portrait in oils, and a three-quarter length painting of William Lodge by Alexander Comer, was divided between their two adult daughters, Ann Parrott and Frances Wyndham. It was soon brought back together as a whole, following the Wyndhams' childless marriage. Their pictorial inheritance passed in the second half of the eighteenth century to Ann Parrott's son Francis who, together with his elder brother Richard, took an active interest in the work and

career of their artist grandfather, with Richard preparing a short manuscript memoir detailing, to some degree of accuracy, Place's life and career.¹³

The collection remained largely intact as it passed through several generations of Francis Place's descendants. His great-grandson Francis Parrott, junior, died without issue in 1843, with the works of art passing to Parrott's elder sister Elizabeth, now the widow of Captain John Fraser of Hospitalfield in Arbroath, in north-east Scotland. Here, the Frasers' only daughter Elizabeth, and her second husband Patrick Allan-Fraser, were instrumental in laying foundations for the Allan-Fraser Art College. With no heirs, and pre-deceased by his wife, the death of Patrick Allan-Fraser in 1890 left Hospitalfield House, and its collections, including the Place inheritance, to a group of trustees made responsible for the establishment of an institution to support the development of contemporary Scottish art.¹⁴ These trustees went on to authorize several sales, in June 1931 at Sotheby's in London, of 'an interesting series of topographical drawings of London and other places, of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, many by Francis Place, and others by or attributed to Wenceslaus Hollar', together with a modest selection of Old Master engravings.¹⁵ In addition to the significant body of pen-and-wash (or 'tinted') drawings by Place, and a selection of drawings by Hollar, the Sotheby's sale also released a series of sketches of ruinous Italian landscapes, the only known works on paper by the seventeenth-century English artist Thomas Manby, as well as drawings by the Dutch painter-printmakers Thomas Wijck and Nicolaes Berchem.¹⁶ An Anglo-Dutch taste also permeated Place's choice in etchings and engravings, with prints by Rembrandt and Adrian Van Ostade also featuring in the 1931 sales.¹⁷

Those works on paper which had first been brought together by Place were now dispersed to a range of buyers. Bruce Ingram's successful bids for a number of drawings from the 1931 sales were subsequently acquired by institutions including the Huntington Library and York Art Gallery, as well as by private collectors; an album dominated by French and Dutch etchings, bought by A. P. Oppé, now belongs to the Tate Gallery; records of Place's Hibernian sketching tour of 1698-99, purchased by the antiquary John Maher, are now largely in the collections of the National Gallery of Ireland; and the Agnes and Norman Lupton bequest brought a selection of drawings by Place and others originally from Hospitalfield to their current home at Leeds Art Gallery. The Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Museum of Wales also made successful bids at the 1931 sales for sketchbooks and loose pages of landscape prospects attesting to Place's keen interest in leisurely travel around the British Isles. In 1954, a further nine landscape drawings by Place

were sold privately through Agnew's, having been 'discovered' at Hospitalfield in the drawer of a disused sideboard.¹⁸

A small number of works on paper, together with Place's and Lodge's portraits in oils, and a later painting of the former by Thomas Murray, remain today at Hospitalfield, although any physical sense of that significant, discrete assemblage of artworks by Place and selected contemporaries has been lost. There is, however, also an important, and at present uncatalogued archive of personal papers relating to the Wyndhams and the Parrotts, including two manuscript notebooks which enable some reconstruction of Place's original collection. Written by Wadham Wyndham, husband to Place's younger daughter Frances, one notebook presents what the cover's inscription details as a 'Catalogue of ~~my~~ Prints which were given [by Wad]ham Wyndham Esquire [to] F Parrott his Nephew'; the other, its cover inscription largely faded, although the name 'Wadham Wyndham' and 'given to F Parrott' are faintly legible, consists of a similar list of drawings.

<H1>The Hospitalfield notebooks

These notebooks were first brought to public attention in 1990 with the exhibition Francis Place, 1647-1728: A Changing Vision of Nature, held at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow, and curated by the then director of Hospitalfield, William Payne. The accompanying exhibition leaflet announced 'the recent discovery of the two catalogues of prints and drawings which were recovered from a box of old family papers at Hospitalfield [and which] add a great deal to our knowledge and study of Place and his collection.'¹⁹ However, despite Martin Hopkinson's assertion in his review of the Kelvingrove exhibition that 'Further study of these manuscript catalogues will undoubtedly lead to revision of [Henry] Hake's catalogue of Place's prints and will build on Richard Tyler's research published in the 1971 York City Art Gallery exhibition', the notebooks have since remained quietly at Hospitalfield.²⁰ The survival of these two manuscript sources, cataloguing the works on paper which had been allocated to Frances and Wadham Wyndham following Anna Place's death, fulfils several purposes. They provide a valuable, if selective window into the contents of Francis Place's 'painting room', and attest to the range of both Place's oeuvre, and the influences of earlier and contemporary artists upon its development. They also tell us something about the collection itself, and its significance to the Wyndhams, the Parrotts, and their descendants. Like Ralph Thoresby, Place's immediate relations appear to have

‘particularly valued’ this collection of works on paper, and, in terms of his drawings in particular, were eager to keep intact the physical evidence of that artistic legacy.

Although it is impossible to confirm whether Place’s works on paper were divided equally between his two daughters, there is evidence to suggest that Ann Parrott and Frances Wyndham both received prints and drawings as part of their inheritances, which would be brought back together under Ann’s son, Francis Parrott. Following the death without issue of his elder brother Richard in 1774, Francis had received the Parrott family’s share of Francis Place’s art collection, some of which is briefly described in Richard Parrott’s memoir of his grandfather:

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Mr Place understood Mezzotinto well ~~which was then~~ when it was yet a new art. The pieces I have of his doing are Mr Rd Thompson, Sr Mark Milbank, Bishop Crewe, K. William 3d, Giles Price and a ~~Conversation~~ Dutch pastime.

Etching was a favourite amusement with him He Etched [Francis] Barlows Birds & Beasts in Large, and ~~a Small~~ a number of Small ones after Barlow. I have some of the Drawings of Barlow wch have been etched after. Mr Wyndham has more with the Drawing opposite ye Etching through an whole Sett or two. He employed [Richard] Gaywood of whom I have some fine Etching found in my Grandfathers Study . . .²¹

The notebook detailing prints given by Wadham Wyndham to Francis Parrott also lists mezzotints by Place and others, together with a number of etchings by Place after designs by Francis Barlow, adding weight to Richard Parrott’s observations in the memoir. The contents of the prints notebook begin to reconstruct a once-substantial range of intaglio works: etchings, engravings and mezzotints encompassing portraiture, landscape, genre and history, together with architectural elevations from the second volume of *Vitruvius Britannicus*. Place’s taste for prints encompassed Dutch, Flemish, French and Italian artists of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as well as work by his English predecessors and contemporaries, including William Faithorne, Richard Gaywood, John Smith and George Vertue, alongside etchings by his ‘mentor’ Wenceslaus Hollar. By the time of the 1931 sales, however, a hierarchy had formed within the Place collection of works on paper. Drawings significantly outnumber prints in the auction catalogues, the former addressing a notable chronological gap then in the market for collectors of English watercolours, whose previous focus had been firmly upon more readily available, later Georgian examples. As Richard

Stephens and Jonny Yarker have noted, ‘The timing of the 1931 Patrick Allan Fraser sale, comprising a large collection of drawings and prints by and owned by Francis Place, was very opportune in this respect, in revealing an English late seventeenth-century landscape sketcher using a pen and wash technique, which could be seen as a forerunner of the later school of landscapists.’²² Although today divided between individual museums, galleries, and private collectors, their nature as unique objects (unlike prints), combined with the information provided in Wadham Wyndham’s drawings notebook, makes the reconstruction of this share of works from Place’s collection a rewarding and achievable task.

In what follows, this article will focus on the contents of the drawings notebook at Hospitalfield House. An annotated transcription of the notebook accompanies this overview as an online appendix, identifying and providing the present locations, where known, of individual works by Francis Place and those artists who formed a sphere of influence around him, and building a more complete picture of Place’s drawn oeuvre than that traced more generally in Richard Tyler’s important 1971 exhibition catalogue.²³ The notebook also reveals much, particularly in the case of untraced drawings, about the broader range of subjects which were of interest to Place, beyond the landscape prospects for which he is best known today.

<H1>The drawings notebook and its author

The detailed information contained in the drawings notebook was compiled by Wadham Wyndham (1700-1783), who had married Francis Place’s younger daughter Frances in 1733. Both of Frances’s parents were deceased by this date, her father in 1728 and her mother four years later, making it likely that Wyndham was given immediate access to a cache of his late father-in-law’s works at the point of his marriage. The identification of Wyndham as the individual who set about cataloguing both the prints and the drawings in this collection is suggested by the inscriptions on the covers of both notebooks, and is confirmed through a comparison of the hand used within both manuscripts, with Wyndham’s signature as it appears on a number of official documents relating to his marriage settlement, and the resettlement in 1773 of his late wife’s property to her Parrott nephews and niece.²⁴ The same hand is also identified as the author of a series of short biographical vignettes of historical and contemporary artists and architects, in an uncatalogued manuscript which also survives at Hospitalfield, giving details of the Italian, French, Dutch and English Schools; beginning

with references to the early Gothic of Cimabue and Andrea Tafi, it ranges to the death of Grinling Gibbons in 1721, this detail providing a useful *terminus post quem* for the document. This interest in a biographical history of art dovetails neatly with Wyndham's decision to catalogue the prints and drawings which had been inherited by his wife.

A desire for organization appears to have been a catalyst for this project. Within the drawings notebook, Wyndham sought to arrange these materials using the limited information available to him. The majority of drawings listed are by Francis Place himself, with the artist indicated by the inclusion of a small letter 'P' following the relevant title; this identification appears to have been dependent on the presence of written annotations to the drawing in Place's own hand. 'H' is the corresponding identifier for Wenceslaus Hollar. Where less certainty could be applied by Wyndham, he added a question mark, or 'qu?', to the artist's initial. Wyndham did not employ his imagination in respect of titles, relying instead on the descriptive annotations where available. In the same manner, a list of contents in Wyndham's hand, written on a blank page of the small sketchbook which Place used on his tour of Wales in 1678, now in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, takes Place's handwritten comments as the starting point for the titles of individual drawings, their organization and recording.²⁵ This practice suggests that Wadham Wyndham was looking primarily to record (rather than interpret) in the drawings notebook what he possessed, an approach mirrored in his setting down of lists of concise artists' biographies.

<H1>Place's views of many places

The range of Place's oeuvre as identified by Wyndham is dominated by landscapes; some of these sketches acted as the basis for subsequent prints, such as the drawing of Rochester Castle (now at Leeds Art Gallery), which was published by Arthur Tooker in London during the mid-1670s, as part of a series of three etched castle views.²⁶ Other drawings by Place appear to represent the beginnings of projects that remained incomplete. A detailed panoramic study of Windsor Castle, listed in the drawings notebook as 'Windsor Castle the Kings Apartment' includes written directions above the Round Tower to 'set the keep hier by ¼ of a inch' (Fig. 1); however, this drawing is not known to have formed the basis for an etching. Many of Place's landscapes in pen, ink and wash seem to have simply represented his personal observations as he took in the world around him, both in the north of England, and on his frequent sketching tours further afield.

Place rightly earned a reputation as a keen and curious tourist; as Vertue noted, he ‘travell’d thro many parts of England and Wales into Ireland drew views of many places very well.’²⁷ In addition to his fishing-and-sketching activities with fellow-York Virtuoso William Lodge, Place undertook independent visits to Scotland and Ireland between 1698 and 1701 and journeyed to France on several occasions. While aspects of these tours are documented in the contents of the drawings notebook, potential voyages further afield are also indicated therein. The entry ‘Zaffia in Barbary’ references the coastal town of Safi in present-day Morocco. Its corresponding drawing certainly represents an anomaly in Place’s British, Irish and northern European landscape oeuvre and, if produced *in situ*, would expand Place’s travels far further than has previously been acknowledged. Today in private hands, it has been accepted as a work by Place since the 1964 sale of English drawings in the collection of the late Bruce Ingram.²⁸ Wyndham did not assign this drawing to his father-in-law in the notebook, although he was not always consistent or correct in attributing individual works to Place. At the 1931 sale, it was included in the ambiguously-described lot: ‘A series of drawings, by F. Place, of the fortifications at Tangiers, and various Views of the Strait of Gibraltar; also Views of Joppa, 1615, Zaffia in Bavaria [*sic*], etc.’, conflating the work of Hollar and Place.²⁹ The presently-untraced drawing of Joppa, listed and illustrated in the Ingram sale catalogue with the more reasonable date of 1675, and described as ‘a view from off the coast with various craft in the harbour’, presumably depicts the city of Jaffa, then in Palestine, again a location Place is not known to have visited.³⁰ One plausible explanation for Place producing these drawings is that he was consulting existing works on paper in his collection by other artists, and translating these more exotic prospects into his own compositions.

<H1>Inspiration and friendship

One artist whose work acted as an influence on Place, certainly stylistically and potentially as a motivation for travel, was Thomas Manby (c.1633-1695). In his ‘Essay towards an English School of Painting’, first published in 1706, Bainbrigg Buckeridge briefly categorizes Manby as ‘a good *English* Landskip-Painter who had been several times in Italy . . .’³¹ Following Manby’s death in 1695, and that of the sculptor Edward Pierce the same year, a sale was held in London of ‘their curious Collection of Books, Drawings, Prints, Models and Plaster Figures’, and it is perhaps from this auction that Place acquired what are now understood to

be the only extant works on paper by this elusive artist.³² ‘13 Roman Views by Manby’, wrote Wyndham in the notebook, with a separately-listed drawing of ‘The Ruins of Adrians villa’ also forming part of Manby’s oeuvre. From these fourteen drawings recorded in the notebook, eleven made up Lot 149 of the 1931 Sotheby’s sale, described as ‘Various views in Italy, including two views of the Ponte Lucano, near Tivoli, etc.’³³ Their subject-matter recalls the Italian sketching tour undertaken by Place’s good friend William Lodge during the early 1670s, following his tenure as a member of the entourage of the Yorkshire-based nobleman Thomas Belasyse, Lord Fauconberg, who had been appointed as ambassador-extraordinary to Venice. Lodge’s visual records of his journey along the Via Appia between Rome and Naples, which would subsequently find their way to Thoresby’s museum, are tightly detailed depictions in pen and ink, subsequently published as etchings following his return to England, with the lines of the pen easily replicated by the etching needle.³⁴ In contrast, Manby’s sketches, not known to have been reproduced in printed form, incorporate elements of grey wash to suggest the tonal effects of Mediterranean light on ruinous buildings, vegetation and water. Kim Sloan has suggested that the Manby drawings ‘give the impression of having been sketched on the spot’, and this technique of drawing landscape prospects *in situ* using pen and wash was taken up keenly by Francis Place across his topographical oeuvre; in September 1712, Ralph Thoresby recorded in his diary that he had ‘walked with the ingenious artist, Mr. Place, to Cavalier Hill, to take a prospect of the town [of Leeds] and navigable river, which took up most of the day.’³⁵

Manby’s prospect of the Ponte Lucano (Fig. 2), now at the Victoria and Albert Museum, appears to have been employed by Place as a template for his own sketch of the subject (Fig. 3). Similarly, a drawing by Place of a ruinous building in the Large Sketchbook at the Victoria and Albert Museum shares strong similarities in its treatment of a tall tree with delicate branches, with a study of trees by Manby, now at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester. These examples demonstrate, as would be expected of a largely self-taught sketcher, that the works on paper in Place’s collection by other artists were being used by him both as direct sources and, more broadly, as stylistic exemplars.

Following their sale in 1931, the Manby drawings were divided between Iolo Williams and Leonard Duke. They are today dispersed across a number of public collections, with the majority annotated with Manby’s name in the same distinctive hand. Williams, the first modern scholar to write on the artist, drew attention to this practice, and hypothesized as

to whether the annotation had been made on each drawing by Manby himself, or by another individual:

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I feel that I ought to draw attention to the possibility that the 'Manby' written on them does not mean that he made these drawings, but that he once owned them, or that they were bought from him. This, however, appears highly improbable³⁶

A comparison between the annotations to these drawings, as seen in Fig. 2 (above) and to the frequent notes added by Francis Place to his own sketches, such as the undated *Lambeth from York House* (Fig. 4) suggests that it was Place who was annotating and attributing these works, and that Williams's final suggestion regarding ownership, rather than authorship, was the correct one.³⁷

The presence of works by Wenceslaus Hollar in the drawings notebook is not unexpected. Place regarded Hollar as a friend, and Vertue records that Place possessed 'a book or two of sketches drawn by Hollar the remains of what he bought when Hollar died.'³⁸ In a letter of 1716 written by Place to Vertue, further detail is provided which connects to the contents of the notebook, stating that Hollar 'was sent over by K. Charles ye 2d to Tanger to make designs of the town & mole, I have I believe 15 or 16 drawings he made of that place'³⁹ Wyndham lists fourteen such drawings in the notebook, produced during Hollar's stay in Tangier in 1669, together with a variety of further landscape sketches with English and northern European subjects. Place's close connections to Hollar are also likely to explain the presence in the notebook of a single drawing by the English artist Thomas Johnson (*fl.* 1634-1676), described by Wyndham simply as 'Canterbury'. This work was used by Hollar as a source for his panoramic etching of *The North Prospect of CANTERBURY*; presently unlocated, the drawing was purchased by Iolo Williams at the 1931 sale.⁴⁰ The drawings detailed in the notebook as '11 Pieces done 1635 in Pemsey in Sussex' and other views in southern England, also appear to have entered Place's collection via Hollar, who used this set of anonymous sketches, seven of which are now at Leeds Art Gallery, as the basis for a series of etched views of castles, ruins and prospects. Since Hollar arrived for the first time in England only in December 1636, they are unlikely to be his work.⁴¹

<H1>Widening Place's oeuvre

The drawings notebook also reveals a set of subjects of interest to Place beyond the expected theme of topography. Figure studies deal with the human form in both clothed and nude scenarios; the untraced ‘3 Drawing on Brown Paper. A maimed figure, half naked’ and ‘Woman back part toward you & a naked figure’ recall the drawings in chalk by William Lodge of a nude, male life model, possibly undertaken during Lodge’s time in Italy between 1669 and 1671.⁴² The further unlocated sketches of ‘A Man sitting in a Chair’, and ‘A Man sitting & leaning on a stick’, together with a sheet depicting a woman in labourer’s dress in four different poses, are just some examples of Place’s drawing practice which seem to reflect his interest in genre scenes of everyday life, as popularized by the Dutch artists whose prints he collected.⁴³

Writing to his uncle in 1711, Barwick Fairfax announced that he had ‘another acquaintance in York viz Mr Francis Place, a very great Master too in his way; for Painting Fish, Fowle, & Flower pieces: several very charming I saw the last week (to be sold) at his House: I beleive [*sic*] they may vye with any in England’⁴⁴ Place etched a number of plates for Pierce Tempest’s editions of Francis Barlow’s *Multae et Diversae Avium Species* (1694) and *Diversae Avium Species* (1696) and had within his collection certain of Barlow’s original drawings from these projects, yet he was more than a mere copyist of Barlow, the artist lauded by John Evelyn as ‘the famous painter of fowls, beasts and birds.’⁴⁵ Further entries in the drawings notebook support Fairfax’s claim to Place’s proficiency in painting subjects from nature, detailing sketches of dogs, cats, horses and birds by his own hand; the untraced ‘Dog’s head in Oyl on Paper’ sees the artist experimenting with different media beyond the pen-and-ink and watercolour washes usual to his drawings.

These subjects taken from nature to some extent act as a thematic mirror to aspects of Place’s upbringing, interests and leisure activities. The gentlemanly pursuit of angling, for example, recurs frequently in his works on paper, whether as an active compositional element within views and prospects, such as his river studies of the Thames in central London, and the Ouse at York, or the more focused drawings of a ‘night fishing piece’, ‘another fishing piece’ and the ‘Sturgeon taken at Dinsdale’ listed in the notebook. Following Place’s death, Vertue commented that he had ‘in his younger days been a noted Sportsman, particularly for fishing’.⁴⁶ His father Rowland Place was an early breeder of racehorses in England, and Richard Parrott’s memoir includes an anecdote suggestive of the role of equestrianism in the young artist’s upbringing: ‘The first indication of his Genius was in draw[ing] an Horse wch was to be perfect but his Father finding fault with it Mr Place said God almighty never made

an Horse to please you and how do you Expect I should?’⁴⁷ The untraced sketches of a ‘Man on Horse back’ and ‘Horse & Groom’ both tentatively assigned in the notebook to Place, further gesture towards this interest, as does the intriguing inclusion of a drawing described as ‘Horses Bones’. In its subject matter, this latter, unlocated work is also a reminder of Place’s status as a member of the York Virtuosi, a group of enquiring individuals with interests in both art and science. At Hospitalfield, within the fragments of Place’s original collection of works on paper are several carefully-observed studies from nature, in pen and ink with wash: a thistle, three delicate representations of peonies, and the body of a dead swan (Fig. 5). With their empirical approach, these drawings emphasise the curiosity which was at the heart of the Virtuosi’s activities; ‘the wing bones of an Elk or wild Swan’ and ‘the bones of ye head of a duck or mallard’ were further items donated by Place to Ralph Thoresby’s museum, potentially linking both to the drawing of the swan at Hospitalfield, and the untraced ‘head of a Bird an Elk’ and ‘Pieces, Ducks & their heads & other wilde Fowle’ which feature in the notebook.⁴⁸

In contrast to these works of empirical observation, Place also explored approaches to narrative, through his drawings of religious subjects. Within the collection of Place’s prints documented by Wyndham are a number of engravings on this theme by Melchior Küsel after Johann Wilhelm Baur, including Christ entering Jerusalem, the Ascension of the Virgin, and a series of five images from Christ’s Passion. Tobias and the Angel, Adam and Eve, the good Samaritan, St John preaching in the wilderness and likenesses of five of the apostles are all mentioned in the drawings notebook, assigned either firmly or tentatively to Place by Wyndham; the Tobias theme may have appealed to Place through his love of fishing, and is known in two extant drawings, one in a private collection, the other at the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁴⁹ An etching of this subject by Jean Le Pautre, which shares some compositional similarities with the latter drawing, was also owned by Place.⁵⁰ His interest in depicting narrative went unrecognized by contemporaries such as Vertue and by later commentators, but the presence of examples of both figure studies from the life, and Bible stories, in the drawings notebook and in Place’s extant oeuvre, indicate that this was an important element of his artistic self-training and development.

Although many drawings in the notebook have been traced to their present locations in public and private collections, some remain unlocated, and in their absence raise tantalizing questions. Could the mysteriously-labelled ‘Titcheano 18 by 10’ connect to the similarly untraced print by Place of ‘Titian the first he wrought in Mezatinto’, which found its

way into Thoresby's museum?⁵¹ Where might 'Highlands Scotland' more specifically depict, and what further could it tell us about Place's travels north of the border in 1701, which are currently documented through extant sketches of Glasgow, Stirling, Dumbarton and Dunbar? This reference in the notebook to 'Highlands' suggests that Place potentially progressed further on his Scottish tour than has yet been acknowledged. Place's connections with London are well-established, yet there are similar questions raised by the notebook to be asked about his visits to the capital; did he sketch, for example, the entertainments at one of the frost fairs on the Thames, as Wyndham speculates with the entry for 'Booth & on Thames the great Frost'?

<H1>Modifying the collection

The majority of works listed in the drawings notebook which have been identified and located in this study have landscape as their subject matter, and their 'survival' appears to intimate a hierarchy of taste on the part of both the Hospitalfield trustees and the auctioneers at Sotheby's on the eve of the 1931 sales; indeed, although the catalogue descriptions of individual lots for the drawings sale include references to 'subjects from bird life' and a 'Study of two cats, pen and ink with wash', the emphasis upon topographical studies and the potential of their appeal at the auction is clear.⁵² The earlier separation of certain landscape drawings from the original collection also underlines a commercial interest in this genre over others.

The will of Richard Parrott, which was proved in 1774, directed that his younger brother Francis should receive 'all Books of Drawings by my Grandfather and all Pictures of his doing'⁵³ These were supplemented by Wadham Wyndham, passing to Francis his portion of Place's works on paper at some point following Frances Wyndham's death in 1773. However, subsequent generations were not so diligent in keeping this collection together. Prior to the 1931 sales, a selection of thirty-seven landscape drawings, with a focus on subjects in Yorkshire and the north east of England, had already left the Parrott family; they were acquired in 1850 by the British Museum, from the stock of the retiring printseller brothers William and George Smith, and they remain in the museum today. Before coming into the possession of the Smiths, these works, described as 'pen drawings tinted in colours by Francis Place', appeared in an 1833 catalogue detailing the contents of the library of John Broadley (1784-1833), which were sold in London at the Pall Mall auction house of Robert

Harding Evans.⁵⁴ Broadley, of South Ella, near Hull, was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, served as president of the Hull Institution for the Promotion of Fine Arts, and was a noted collector of works of art and artefacts connected to the Yorkshire area. According to one contemporary, ‘His library was rich in books, &c. relating to this county.’⁵⁵ A sensible presumption is that this selection of Yorkshire-focused drawings was presented, or sold, to Broadley during the early nineteenth century, by which point Place’s original collection was in the possession of his great-grandson Francis Parrot, junior. Although financial motivations may have been behind the separation of these particular works, further drawings appear to have been presented as marks of friendship and esteem. Two sketches of North Walian [??] landmarks, of the castles at Hawarden and Flint, are today preserved in the National Library of Wales, pasted into Thomas Pennant’s personal, extra-illustrated copy of his *Tour in Wales*, published between 1778 and 1781. Beneath the drawing of Flint Castle, Pennant’s own hand has written: ‘Drawn by F. Place and presented by D Perrot’. It is likely that ‘D Perrot’ has mistakenly assumed the identity of Place’s grandson, Francis Parrott, yet despite this misnomer, the indication is that Parrott personally donated these drawings to the writer and traveller Pennant, in an echo of the earlier gifting of items to Ralph Thoresby’s museum by his circle of friends and acquaintances.

A further example of the use of drawings from the Place collection as gifts, underlines initial familial priorities in keeping together, rather than dispersing, these works. On the verso of a sketch by Place of Dunstanburgh Castle in Northumberland, today at the British Museum, is the following inscription: ‘Bath. Jan: 11, 1762. Given me that Ev. by Wadham Wyndham, Esq at his own House; his Lady was Daughter to Mr: Place, who made this Drawing.’⁵⁶ The hand that wrote this inscription appears to be that of Richard Parrott, author of the manuscript memoir of Francis Place’s life which is preserved at Hospitalfield, and Frances Wyndham’s eldest nephew. The inscription suggests that by the early 1760s, Wadham and Frances Wyndham, now both in their sixties and childless, were giving serious consideration as to what would happen to their share of Francis Place’s collection. No references to Dunstanburgh Castle appear in the drawings notebook, although Place’s hand has annotated and identified the subject in this sketch clearly on the recto, as ‘The Ruines of Dunstenbrough Castle in Northumberland in A° 1678’. This makes it likely that the drawings notebook was compiled by Wadham Wyndham at a point between 1762, after the presentation of the Dunstanburgh Castle sketch to Richard Parrott, and Wadham Wyndham’s death in 1783. Immediately following Frances Wyndham’s own death in April 1773, her

widower took steps to revert lands that had been left to his late wife by her parents, to his Parrott nephews and niece; the Place prints and drawings are not mentioned in Wadham Wyndham's will, making it plausible that these works on paper also reverted to the Parrott family soon after Frances Wyndham's death, which would give the creation of both notebooks a narrower date of between 1762 and 1773.⁵⁷

<H1>Conclusion

The transcription of the drawings notebook which supplements this article should not be understood as a *catalogue raisonné* of Place's work in this medium, bolstered with drawings by artists who were influential upon him. Just as a tantalizing number of works listed in this notebook cannot be identified and remain unlocated, many extant drawings known to be by Place do not appear in the notebook, including a range of views of York and the surrounding area now at York Art Gallery. These are likely to have been inherited by Ann and her husband Stonier Parrott, who are not known to have catalogued their allocation of prints and drawings like the Wyndhams, meaning it is impossible to account for now-unlocated works by Place from their portion. Similarly, the number of works on paper given away or sold by Anna Place following her husband's death must remain conjectural. As Richard Tyler has noted, Francis Drake began writing his history of York, *Eboracum*, in 1729, the year after Place's death; *Eboracum* contains a number of illustrations either etched by Place, or after his original designs, and it is likely that Drake acquired both etched plates and drawings of city landmarks from Place himself, or more plausibly from his widow, as the project developed.⁵⁸ Caution also needs to be exercised when considering the drawings notebook, in terms of additions made by Wadham Wyndham himself. The inclusion, towards the end of the notebook, of 'Pope's head by R. Parrott', is one clear example of drawings produced after Place's death entering the collection, an entry which also underlines his grandson Richard Parrott's personal interest in creating, as well as assembling, visual art.

Yet despite its limitations, the transcription of this notebook serves to develop and extend our insight into the broad range of subjects that were of interest to Place, and through the works on paper he himself collected, can tell us much about influences on the artist across his long career. In Vertue's words, Francis Place had 'a knack of drawing & a genius [*sic*] that way', and it is thanks to the drawings notebook at Hospitalfield that his oeuvre in this medium can be more fully understood.⁵⁹

Supplementary information

An online appendix at *Journal of the History of Collections* online offers a transcription of the drawings notebook at Hospitalfield House, Arbroath, together with the present-day whereabouts of works, where known.

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Notes and references

¹ R. Thoresby, *Ducatus Leodiensis: or, the topography of the ancient and populous town and Parish of Leedes* (London, 1715), p. 496.

² P.D.C. Brears, 'Ralph Thoresby, a museum visitor in Stuart England', *Journal of the History of Collections* 1 (1989), p. 213.

³ G. Vertue, 'The notebooks of George Vertue I', *Walpole Society* 18 (1929), p. 120.

⁴ 'Mr Henry Gyles of York the famous Glass Painter', Brotherton Library, University of Leeds (hereafter BL, UL), YAS/MS 27, unfoliated. Gyles's drawing of Stonehenge drawing is now in the Tate collections, reference T08901. Lodge's drawing of Leeds is now in Leeds City Library.

⁵ Both drawings can be found today in the British Museum, inv. nos. 1866,1114.676 and 1866,1114.678.

⁶ Thoresby, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 497, 486, 472. Place's drawing of Tynemouth lighthouse is now in the British Museum, inv. no. 1866,1114.679.

⁷ Vertue, op. cit. (note 3), p. 34.

⁸ See for example, British Museum, inv. no. 1982,1002.19. The address of the mezzotint's publisher, John Overton, 'at the white horse in little Brittain' indicates its date.

⁹ M. Lister, *Johannes Godartius Of Insects: Done into English, and methodized, with the addition of notes. The figures etched upon copper, by Mr. F. P.* (York, 1682).

¹⁰ 'Mr Francis Place of the City of Yorke', BL, UL, YAS/MS 27.

¹¹ Will of Francis Place, Borthwick Institute for Archives, University of York, PROB 80/214.

¹² H. Walpole, *A Catalogue of Engravers, Who Have Been Born or Resided in England . . . the Second Edition* (Strawberry Hill, 1765), p. 57.

¹³ R. Parrott, 'Mem[oir] Relating to Mr Fr. Place', uncatalogued manuscript at Hospitalfield House, Arbroath, unfoliated.

¹⁴ See P. Beardmore, *Students of Hospitalfield: Education and inspiration in 20th-century Scottish art* (Bristol, 2018).

¹⁵ *A Collection of Drawings Removed from Hospitalfield, Arbroath, and sold by order of the trustees of the late Patrick Allan Fraser, Esq.* (London, 1931), p. 22.

¹⁶ On Manby see I. Williams, 'Thomas Manby: a 17th-century landscape painter', *Apollo* 23 (1936), pp. 276-77. L. Stainton and C. White, *Drawing in England from Hilliard to Hogarth* (London, 1987), pp. 163-4.

¹⁷ *Catalogue of Old Master Engravings, removed from Hospitalfield and sold by order of the trustees of the late Patrick Allan Fraser, Esq.* (London, 1931), p. 6.

¹⁸ T. Moorman, 'Some newly discovered drawings by Francis Place', *Burlington Magazine* 94 (1952), pp. 159-61.

¹⁹ W. Payne, *Francis Place, 1657-1728: A changing vision of nature* (Glasgow, 1990), p. 3.

²⁰ M. Hopkinson, 'Francis Place: the Hospitalfield collection', *Print Quarterly* 8 (1991), p. 63.

²¹ Parrott, op. cit. (note 13).

²² R. Stephens and J. Yarker, 'A lost art? Collecting early British drawings and their critical fate' in *The Spirit & Force of Art: Drawing in Britain 1600-1750*, exh. cat., Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Gallery (London, 2018), p. 37.

²³ R. Tyler, *Francis Place 1647-1728: An exhibition representing all aspects of his work*, exh. cat., York City Art Gallery and Kenwood House (York and London, 1971).

²⁴ 'Marriage settlement of Frances Place of York, spinster and Wadham Wyndham of Salisbury, Esq., 2 November 1733' and 'Settlement by Wadham Wyndham of Worcester, Esq. of the Yorkshire estates, amongst the children of Ann Parrott, deceased, 12 June 1773', Somerset Heritage Centre, Taunton, inv. no. DD/WY/5/12/1.

²⁵ Victoria and Albert Museum, London, inv. no. E.1506-1931.

²⁶ Leeds Art Gallery, LEEAG.1952.0005.0163. For the etching see 'A Catalogue of Plates . . . Sold by Arthur Tooker, Stationer at the Globe over against Salisbury House in the Strand', bound into Alexander Browne, *Ars Pictoria, or an Academy treating of Drawing, Painting, Limning, Etching*, 2nd edn (London, 1675).

²⁷ G. Vertue, 'The notebooks of George Vertue II', *Walpole Society* 20 (1931), p. 35.

²⁸ Most recently sold at auction by Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury, 6 March 2019, lot 171. See also the *Catalogue of the Collection of English Drawings Formed by the Late Sir Bruce Ingram, O.B.E., M.C., F.S.A., Part I* (London, 1964), p. 30.

²⁹ *Collection of Drawings removed from Hospitalfield*, op. cit. (note 15), p. 23.

³⁰ *Catalogue of the Collection of English Drawings*, op. cit. (note 28), p. 30.

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- ³¹ B. Buckeridge, 'An essay towards an English School of painting', in R. de Piles, *The Art of Painting, and the Lives of the Painters* (London, 1706), p. 449.
- ³² *London Gazette*, 30 January – 3 February 1696.
- ³³ *Collection of Drawings Removed from Hospitalfield*, op. cit. (note 15), p. 24.
- ³⁴ On Lodge's time in Italy see H. Pierce, "This Ingenious young Gent and excellent artist': William Lodge (1649-1689) and the York Virtuosi', in *Court, Country, City: Studies in British Art 24*, ed. M. Hallett, N. Llewelyn and M. Myrone (New Haven and London, 2016), pp. 313-34.
- ³⁵ K. Sloan, 'A Noble Art': *Amateur artists and drawing masters c.1600-1800* (London, 2000), p. 25. J. Hunter (ed.), *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.* (London, 1830), vol. II, 170.
- ³⁶ Williams, op. cit. (note 16), p. 277.
- ³⁷ Further comparisons can be made between the 'Manby' annotations, and Francis Place's hand in his correspondence, examples of which can be consulted at the British Library and the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds.
- ³⁸ G. Vertue, 'The notebooks of George Vertue VI', *Walpole Society*, 29 (1940), p. 71.
- ³⁹ Vertue, op. cit. (note 3), p. 34.
- ⁴⁰ R. Pennington, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Etched Work of Wenceslaus Hollar* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 158.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 153-4.
- ⁴² Pierce, op. cit. (note 34), p. 321.
- ⁴³ The sheet depicting a woman in four poses was most recently sold at auction by Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury, 6 March 2019, lot 170.
- ⁴⁴ British Library, London, Additional MS 78698 J, fol. 38v.
- ⁴⁵ W. Bray (ed.), *Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn, F.R.S* (London, 1862-3), vol. IV, p. 328.
- ⁴⁶ Vertue, op. cit. (note 27), p. 54.
- ⁴⁷ Parrott, op. cit. (note 13).
- ⁴⁸ Place may have taken the word 'elk' for a large swan, from Francis Willoughby's *Ornithologiae Libri Tres* (London, 1676), or its English translation by John Ray, *The Ornithology of Francis Willughby . . . in Three Books* (London, 1678); Place mentions Willoughby's text in an annotation to a drawing of waterfowl of c.1709, British Museum, inv. no. 1857,0110.27.
- ⁴⁹ The former was sold at Bonhams London on 6 February 2007, the latter is pasted into Victoria and Albert Museum, London, inv. no. E.1506-1931.
- ⁵⁰ Tate Britain, inv. no. T11612, catalogued as 'Unknown artist, Britain'. This engraving is part of the album of prints from Hospitalfield purchased by A. P. Oppé at the 1931 Sotheby's sale and acquired by Tate in 1996.
- ⁵¹ 'Mr Francis Place', op. cit. (note 10).
- ⁵² *A Collection of Drawings Removed from Hospitalfield*, op. cit. (note 15), pp. 23, 24.
- ⁵³ Will of Richard Parrott of Hawkesbury Hall, National Archives, Kew, PROB 11/999/16.
- ⁵⁴ *Catalogue of a Choice Portion of the Valuable Library of John Broadley Esq . . . which will be sold by auction by Mr Evans, at his house, no. 93, Pall-Mall, on Thursday, July 12, and two following days* (London, 1833), p. 58; individual lots of Place drawings are also listed on pp. 59, 60 and 62.
- ⁵⁵ T. Moule, *The English Counties Delineated: or, a topographical description of England* (London, 1837), vol. II, p. 416.
- ⁵⁶ British Museum, inv. no. 1850,0223.813.

⁵⁷ Will of Wadham Wyndham of Salisbury, National Archives, Kew, PROB 11/1109/318.

⁵⁸ Tyler, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 86.

⁵⁹ Vertue, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 34.

List of Illustrations

Fig. 1. Francis Place, *Windsor Castle, The King's Apartment*, undated. Pen and wash on paper. 22.5 × 71.4 cm. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.



Fig. 2. Thomas Manby, *The Ponte Lucano and the Tomb of the Plauzi on the Via Tibertina*, c.1685. Pen and wash on paper. 31.8 × 46 cm. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
IMAGE NOT AVAILABLE

Fig. 3. Francis Place, *The Antient Sepulchres of ye Kings of Tivoli*, from the Large Sketchbook, c.1699-1717. Pen and wash on paper. 16.2 × 20.3 cm. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
IMAGE NOT AVAILABLE

Fig. 4. Francis, Place, *Lambeth from York House*, undated. Watercolour with pen and brown ink. 9.4 × 24.6 cm. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.



Fig. 5. Francis Place, *Swan*, undated. Pen and wash on paper. 48.4 × 69 cm. The Hospitalfield Trust, Hospitalfield House, Arbroath.
IMAGE NOT AVAILABLE