

**A HISTORY OF WATER-  
COLOUR PAINTING IN  
ENGLAND**

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A History of Water-Colour Painting in England by Gilbert R. Redgrave

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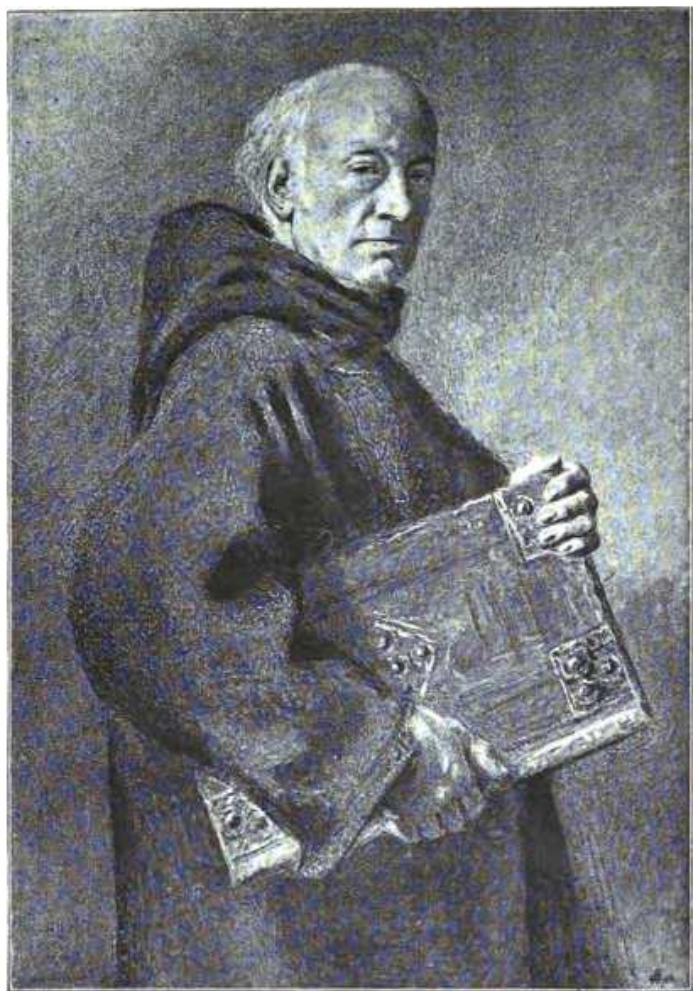
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**GILBERT R. REDGRAVE**

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THE MONK, BY WILLIAM H. HUNT.  
*In the South Kensington Museum.*

©

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WATER-COLOUR PAINTING  
IN ENGLAND

BY GILBERT *Richard* REDGRAVE  
*Author of "Lives of David Cox and Peter De Wint"*



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## PREFACE.

PERHAPS the earliest attempt to write the history of the English Water-Colour school will be found in the pages of the *Somerset House Gazette*, a weekly journal conducted by W. H. Pyne. The editor contributed a series of articles during the year 1822, which furnish authentic details concerning the lives of Barret, Nicholson, Glover and certain of the most eminent painters of that day, and the notices of the Exhibitions of the Old Water-Colour Society, doubtless penned by the same hand, are a storehouse of information for subsequent writers. When the author's father undertook, in 1857, to form an historical series of water-colour drawings and to prepare a catalogue of the artists' works, he was painfully surprised to find how slight were the materials extant, and how little was known concerning the painters of this country in the past. In his preface to the South Kensington Catalogue, he says of water-colour painting:—"Already the names of some of its first professors are being lost for want of record, and their works dispersed in folios and forgotten; yet these men are the founders of the art; out of their practices, however imperfect, arose the excellence and richness of the succeeding school; and

while at the present time such efforts are making and such expense is very properly incurred, to trace step by step the history of the revival of art in Italy, it is surely right to illustrate the labours of our own countrymen who have founded a new art, and to treasure up the incontestable proofs of its origin and progress." The appreciation of this our native art, has grown amazingly since the second decade of the present century, when the Old Water-Colour Society secured their new gallery in Pall Mall, and much has been written in recent times about the masters of the English school. It may seem to some, therefore, that but little need existed for a handbook, giving a few scant details of the history of water-colour painting in this country: the author has, however, deemed it advisable to bring together the facts already extant into a small compass, and to furnish the student with a concise account of the origin and progress of the art. The present work differs in some respects from others of the same character in that it is illustrated with reproductions from the drawings by eminent painters, selected from the National Collections at South Kensington, and in the Print Room of the British Museum. For permission to copy these works the author tenders his sincere thanks to the Lord President of the Council on Education and to the Trustees of the British Museum. It is always an important advantage in a work of this kind when the student can consult for himself the examples selected as illustrations, and every lover of water-colour painting can himself examine the admirable drawings in our public galleries.

For the general arrangement and subdivisions he has adopted,



the author is indebted to the "Introductory Notice" prefixed to the Catalogue of Water-Colour Paintings in the South Kensington Museum, prepared by his uncle, the late Mr. Samuel Redgrave; and from his *Dictionary of Artists of the English School* he has culled most of the details of the lives of the painters.

Since this work was in the press the author has had the advantage of consulting the admirable *History of the "Old Water-Colour" Society*, by Mr. J. I. Roget, to whom he is indebted for many important details respecting the founders of the English Water-Colour school. He has attempted in what follows to give a brief account of the art of water colour painting as practised in this country, to show how the different methods of working were gradually evolved, and to ascribe to those artists to whom we chiefly owe these altered and improved modes of working their due share of credit. He desires to lay no claim to originality, and his work will effect all that he anticipates for it if it saves the student the time and trouble involved in seeking from a number of sources the information here brought together into a form adapted for easy reference.

G. R. R.

MUSWELL HILL,  
October, 1891.

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