

**OPIE AND HIS WORKS: BEING A
CATALOGUE OF 760 PICTURES
BY JOHN OPIE, R.A. PRECEDED
BY A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

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Opie and His Works: Being a Catalogue of 760 Pictures by John Opie, R.A. Preceded by a Biographical Sketch by John Jope Rogers

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JOHN JOPE ROGERS

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A Biographical Sketch.

BY

JOHN JOPE ROGERS, M.A.

Sometime Hon. Sec. and Treas. of the Arundel Society.

— Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperi; si non, his utere mecum.

Horace.

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1878.

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CONTENTS.



	PAGE.
PREFACE	vii
TABLE OF AUTHORITIES	x
SKETCH OF LIFE	i
CATALOGUE OF PICTURES	65
LISTS OF EXHIBITED PICTURES	231
SUPPLEMENT	235
ADDENDA	244

PREFACE.

THIS attempt at registering the works of the Cornish painter, John Opie, originated in a lecture which I was invited to deliver at the Polytechnic Hall at Falmouth in 1854, in order to illustrate a collection of some of his more important works in Cornwall, which were exhibited there in September of that year.

The object being rather to register than to criticize, no pains have been spared to attain accuracy in the details, by inviting owners of his pictures to furnish exact descriptions; and I beg most gratefully to acknowledge the ready kindness with which my enquiries have been met, and information has been offered to me by many persons unknown to me previously, whilst I cannot too warmly thank those personal friends who have more actively encouraged my efforts.

One serious disappointment has, however, occurred. It is well known among the living relations of the Painter, that he was in the habit of entering in a private ledger every picture which he painted after his arrival in London in the autumn of 1781. This ledger was used many years ago as evidence in a suit at law in which Opie's representatives were interested. It would have been invaluable for the purpose of this Catalogue, but I regret to say that I have exhausted every source of information which has been

suggested to me in a fruitless search for it; nor can I find that any list exists of the pictures which it contained.

The result is that many pictures, which the ledger would have disclosed, are absent from this catalogue, from the mere want of a clue to their discovery.

To Mr. Edward Opie, the great nephew of the Painter, I am indebted for much valuable information about his life and works; and to Mr. G. C. Boase, and Mr. W. P. Courtney, for generously placing at my disposal the notes which they have made on the subject in the course of their larger work, the *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis*; whilst among my more intimate friends, I have chiefly to thank Mr. John Davies Enys, and Mr. George Scharf, the keeper of the National Portrait Gallery. Mr. Solomon Hart, R.A., the librarian of the Royal Academy, has given me the benefit of his guidance in using the treasures of their Library. Mr. Algernon Graves, of Pall Mall, has verified several portraits which are unnamed in the Academy Catalogues. Mr. W. H. Woods has given me access to the long series of Sale Catalogues at Messrs. Christies'. The Print-room at the British Museum, and the Portfolios of Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi and Co. have been carefully examined, as well as the voluminous sale catalogues of pictures in the libraries of the British Museum and South Kensington Museum; and, last not least, am I indebted to two sources of unpublished information, viz: Mr. J. H. Anderdon's illustrated collection of catalogues of the Royal Academy, presented by him to the Print Room of the British Museum, and the late Mr. William Smith's manuscript catalogues of British Portraits, bequeathed by him in 1876 to the Museum at South Kensington.

It cannot, however, be expected that, even with these advantages, the list of Opie's works has been exhausted; and I venture to plead for the indulgence which is always generously accorded to an unprofessional attempt to supply a deficiency in any department of knowledge, however humble it may be.

The Biographical Sketch is little more than a summarized arrangement of existing notices, corrected by the light of some original documents hitherto unpublished.

The Pictures are classified thus :—

Portraits (counting each head in family groups) ...	508
Sacred subjects	22
Historical	17
Shakspeare	11
Poetical and Fancy... ..	134
Landscape	5
Supplement (mixed)	63
(besides Addenda).	<u>760</u>

Two only of the Portraits are miniatures on ivory, (*Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Thomas*); two are crayon drawings (*Lawrance and Wolcot*); the rest of the pictures are believed to be painted in oil.

I need only add that corrections of errors, and information of pictures not recorded here, will be always gratefully accepted.

JOHN JOPE ROGERS.

Penrose,
Helston, Sept., 1878.