

**DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE  
OF THE PORTRAITS  
IN THE POSSESSION  
OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY**

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Descriptive catalogue of the portraits in the possession of the Royal society by Charles Richard Weld

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**CHARLES RICHARD WELD**

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*Gough Addas London  
80264.*

BY

CHARLES RICHARD WELD,

ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND LIBRARIAN.



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FRANCIS ASTON, F.R.S.

*Painted by F. Kerseboom.*

Died 1715.

MR. ASTON filled the office of Secretary to the Royal Society from 1681 to 1685. In 1712 he was added to the celebrated Committee appointed by the Society to report upon the dispute between Newton and Leibnitz in reference to the invention of Fluxions, now called the Differential Calculus. He bequeathed a small estate in Lincolnshire to the Society, which is still in their possession, and personal property amounting to about £500.

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## LORD CHANCELLOR BACON.

*Painted by Paul Van Somer.*

**Presented by Martin Ffolkes, P.R.S.**

Born in London, 22nd January, 1561.

Died at Highgate, 9th April, 1626.

FRANCIS BACON was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge; entered Gray's Inn as a law student in 1576, and on being called to the bar went in the suite of the British ambassador to the court of France. On his return to England he advanced rapidly in his profession. In 1613 he was appointed Attorney General; in 1617 Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and in 1618 Lord Chancellor with the title of Baron Verulam. After enjoying for some years the honours of his high position and the renown due to his great learning, he fell from his high estate, was deprived of his various offices, imprisoned for a short time, and heavily fined. He devoted the remaining years of his life chiefly to scientific pursuits. His various works, and particularly that on the Instauration of the Sciences, have caused him to be regarded as the creator of the school of experimental philosophy, in some measure realized by the founding of the Royal Society; for it was whilst the memory of Bacon was recent, and the spirit of his philosophy newly spread, that the establishment of our great scientific Society was accomplished. His life fell a sacrifice to a philosophical experiment: a retort, which he had been using, burst; some of the fragments struck his face; and the wounds induced fever, of which he died.

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**SIR JOSEPH BANKS, Bart., P.R.S.***Painted by Thomas Phillips, R.A.***Presented by Don Jose de Mendoza Rios.**

Born in London, 2nd February, 1743.

Died at Spring Grove, near London, 19th June, 1820.

SIR JOSEPH BANKS passed through Harrow, Eton, and Oxford with considerable credit. At the University he cultivated natural history, and acquired so strong a love for this science that he followed it throughout life. On the death of his father in 1761, he became possessor of a very large fortune, and was enabled to follow his scientific inclinations. In 1766 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and in the same year accompanied Captain Phipps to Newfoundland and Labrador, where he made collections in natural history. In 1768 he joined Captain Cook in his first voyage of discovery, which occupied nearly three years, and was greatly disappointed that he was not permitted to accompany that celebrated navigator on his second expedition.

Having made extensive preparations for this voyage, he was unwilling that they should not be turned to account; and accordingly he fitted out a scientific expedition to Iceland, in which he was accompanied by Dr. Solander and Dr. Von Troil. Besides making large natural-history collections, he purchased numerous Icelandic books and manuscripts, all of which he presented to the British Museum. On the outward voyage Staffa was visited, and the columnar stratification of the rocks discovered. An account of this phenomenon, from Banks's Journal, was published in Pennant's Tour in Scotland, and Dr. Von Troil wrote an interesting narrative of the Expedition.

On his return to England, Banks settled in London, and

devoted his time and fortune to the promotion of science. In 1778 he was elected President of the Royal Society, and occupied the Chair forty-one years. In 1781 he was created a baronet, in 1797 made a Privy Councillor; and in 1802 the French Institute elected him a Foreign Member of their body.

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**SIR JOHN BARROW, Bart., F.R.S.**

*Copy from a portrait by J. Jackson, R.A.  
(in the possession of John Murray, Esq.).*

Presented by John Barrow, Esq.

Born at Dragleybeck, near Ulverstone, 19th June, 1764.

Died in London, 23rd November, 1848.

AFTER a school education at Ulverstone, Sir John Barrow visited Spitzbergen in a whale-ship. In 1792 he accompanied Earl Macartney on his embassy to China, and on his return home he wrote an account of that mission, and subsequently a *Life of the Earl*.

He was next employed as an auditor of the public accounts at the Cape of Good Hope, and penetrated further into Caffraria, on the occasion of an expedition into the interior, than any previous traveller. He published two separate works in 1801 and 1806, giving an account of his African travels.

On his return to England in 1803, he was appointed Secretary to the Admiralty, and held the office for forty years. During this period, assisted by the Royal Society, he originated and organized almost all the Arctic voyages of discovery, and published chronological narratives of the various expeditions. He also established the Geographical Society. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1805, and served frequently on the Council. In 1835, on the recommendation of Sir Robert Peel, William IV. created him a baronet. Besides performing his official duties, Sir John Barrow wrote numerous articles for the *Quarterly Review* and others for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

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