

John

and

Bone

Drawings

EXHIBITION OF DRAWINGS

by

AUGUSTUS JOHN

and

SIR MUIRHEAD BONE

Arranged by the

Empire Art Loan Exhibitions Society

in conjunction with the

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FOREWORD

In considering a joint exhibition of the drawings of two such masters as Muirhead Bone and Augustus John, whose work is so dissimilar in many respects, it is inevitable that there should be comparisons; and comparisons are apt to be unfavourable to one side or the other. In this case, however, they yield nothing but interest and increased appreciation and there are even points to be discovered where the student may find a slight similarity of outlook and treatment in the work of the two artists. In Muirhead Bone we have a consummate draughtsman whose scope embraces every variety of method and handling. John's drawings, on the other hand, are confined almost entirely to one style that is unmistakably his own, in which he records some momentary pose of the figure, some passing effect or, it may be, some fleeting impression of grouped figures. One cannot imagine him sitting down to produce such a deliberate piece of faithful representation as has been achieved by Bone in his portrayal, for instance, of the *EXETER AND AJAX PARADE*, in which it is almost possible to recognize individual men in the ranks. Indeed, Sir Muirhead once remarked, half humorously, to the writer of these notes that he was extremely proud of having produced the "smallest recognizable portrait" of Sir Winston Churchill, for the great leader can be readily identified, silk-hatted, standing with other notables near the table in the foreground of this picture. This almost miraculous display of skill, in which no detail has escaped the intensely keen eye of Muirhead Bone, is also well exemplified in the drawing of Whitehall which he made at the age of seventy-one; and their treatment certainly bears no resemblance to the methods of Augustus John.

If we turn to some of Bone's more summary sketches where he has taken a delight in noting down a glimpse of a passing scene in a crowded street or has made a swift record of some changing aspect of the countryside, we cannot fail to be astonished that the same hand has been able to produce such diverse results: the two approaches are so much at variance that it is worth while seeking for an explanation, and we perhaps find it in the words of his brother, Mr. James Bone, who has pointed out in his foreword to the 1955 Bone exhibition at Manchester that the artist "had the singular endowment of one eye being long-sighted like a seaman's and the other short-sighted so that he could work to a needlespoint like a lapidary."

It is in his more direct and spontaneous treatment then that we are able to trace a similarity to the work of Augustus John. And this is not surprising as they were both nurtured in their earlier days in the atmosphere of the New English Art Club, of which they became members over fifty years ago—John as the already distinguished student, recently from the Slade School, and Bone from Glasgow, where he had obtained some recognition as a draughtsman and etcher. Where their work diverged is in the fact that Bone's more "complete" productions, if one may so describe them, lie in his elaborate drawings, whereas John's extend to paintings and portraits in oils. The present writer has seen only two oils from the hand of Bone; it is a medium, it seems, in which he was not altogether at ease. He was happiest with almost any other means—with pencil, chalk, pen, wash, pastel and, of course, with the etching and drypoint needle. At one extreme of his style are such drawings as the *ST. BRIDE'S* and the *MULBERRY HARBOUR—ST. BRIDE'S* having the additional interest of being executed on several sheets of paper used in succession and afterwards assembled, giving rather the impression that he was so interested in his subject that he did not know when to stop—and, at the other extreme, his fresh and sparkling sketches done on crowded beaches or of busy streets in Spanish towns.

The drawings of Augustus John—and it is only his drawings that we are considering—have quite another kind of appeal. The slightest of them show an extraordinary knowledge of form and structure conveyed by means of a most expressive and economical line, as in the note of A STOOPING WOMAN, to take an example at random. The complete certainty with which the artist expresses himself is amazing and the work appears to be—and IS, in fact—so easily done that the amount of knowledge that it embodies is apt to be overlooked. About his grouped figures as also with many of his single figures, there is a curious air of mystery and other-worldliness—another point of contrast and a quality entirely absent from the work of Muirhead Bone. John's fisher-women and female figures have something eerie about them. His portrait drawings, too, have a kind of intensity of characterization that is not invariably present in the work of fashionable portrait draughtsmen: he does not strive to flatter and is, indeed, completely indifferent to his sitter's reactions; and in this lies his strength. A notable example of this side of his work is shown here in his drawing of JAMES JOYCE, and in his paintings and drawings of T. E. LAWRENCE, one of which is here included.

Bone is first and foremost a realist: John is at the other extreme. Bone is of his own time: John is of no period. But the work of the two artists, displayed side by side in one gallery, forms an excellent subject for study and discussion, proving once again that art may be pursued by many different roads; and one may say that in such an exhibition there is likely to be something to appeal to the most varied tastes of all lovers of pictures.

ERNEST BLAIKLEY, M.B.E., F.R.S.A.
(Formerly Imperial War Museum)

AUGUSTUS JOHN, O.M., R.A.

1. GALWAY GROUP (or LE PARADOU). Pen and ink.
Lent by The Aberdeen Art Gallery.
2. SOLITUDE. Pen and ink and sepia wash.
Lent by The Aberdeen Art Gallery.
3. STUDY OF A WHIPPET. Pencil.
Lent by The Cooper Art Gallery, Barnsley.
4. FISHER-GIRL OF EQUIHEN. Pencil.
Lent by The Birmingham City Art Gallery.
5. CANADIAN SOLDIER. Pencil.
Lent by The Birmingham City Art Gallery.
6. SELF-PORTRAIT. Lithograph.
Lent by Maurice Bradshaw, Esq.
7. STUDIES OF A CHILD. Pencil.
Lent by The National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.
8. HEAD OF A CHILD. Black chalk.
Lent by Mrs. T. Cazelet-Keir, C.B.E.
9. HEAD OF A BOY. Pencil.
Lent by Brinsley Ford, Esq.
10. AN IRISH FISHING TOWN. Pen and ink wash.
Lent by Brinsley Ford, Esq.
11. STUDY OF A STANDING FIGURE WEARING A BROAD HAT,
A CLOAK, AND WITH LEFT ARM OUTSTRETCHED. Pencil.
Lent by Brinsley Ford, Esq.
12. DORELIA, LOOKING DOWNWARDS, BOTH ARMS UPLIFTED.
Pencil.
Lent by Brinsley Ford, Esq.
13. FISHER-GIRLS ON BEACH AT EQUIHEN. Pen.
Lent by Brinsley Ford, Esq.
14. STUDY OF A WOMAN IN BLACK WITH FEATHERED HAT.
Pen and wash.
Lent by Brinsley Ford, Esq.
15. WOMAN STRIKING AN ATTITUDE. Pencil and blue wash.
Lent by Brinsley Ford, Esq.
16. STUDY OF A GIRL. Pencil and water-colour.
Lent by Major B. N. Gibbs, M.B.E.

17. TINKERS IN ALTERCATION. Chalk and sepia wash.
Lent by Dr. F. H. K. Green, C.B.E.
18. ROMILLY JOHN. Sanguine and black chalk.
Lent by Mrs. V. I. Hamilton.
19. JAMES JOYCE. Pencil.
Lent by Mrs. V. I. Hamilton.
20. THE DAWN. Lithograph.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
21. RUINS AT LIEVIN. Chalk.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
22. STUDY FOR A COMPOSITION. Pen and ink.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
23. STUDY OF A CANADIAN. Pencil.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
24. STUDY OF A CANADIAN SOLDIER. Pen and ink.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
25. A CANADIAN SOLDIER. Chalk.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
26. THE NIXIE. Water-colour.
Lent by Temple Newsam House, Leeds.
27. AN IDYLL. Pen and sepia.
Lent by Temple Newsam House, Leeds.
28. A STOOPING WOMAN. Crayon and wash.
Lent by The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.
29. T. E. LAWRENCE. Black chalk on brown paper.
Lent by The National Portrait Gallery, London.
30. SEATED NUDE. Pen and blue ink.
Lent by The Sheffield City Art Galleries.
31. BATHER. Sepia: gouache.
Lent by The Sheffield City Art Galleries.
32. CHARLES SLADE (with hat). Pencil.
Lent by C. F. Slade, Esq.
33. STANDING NUDE. Pencil and wash.
Lent by C. F. Slade, Esq.
34. LOBEN SLADE. Charcoal.
Lent by C. F. Slade, Esq.
35. SITTING NUDE. Pencil.
Lent by C. F. Slade, Esq.
36. TWO BOY'S HEADS (Studies of Edwin). Pencil.
Lent by C. F. Slade, Esq.

SIR MUIRHEAD BONE, LL.D., D.LITT.

1. MASS IN SANTIAGO, SPAIN. Pen and wash.
Lent by The Art Gallery and Industrial Museum, Aberdeen.
2. SAND COMPETITION, CROMER. Pen and water-colour.
Lent by The Art Gallery and Industrial Museum, Aberdeen.
3. ESTUARY. Water-colour.
Lent by The Cooper Art Gallery, Barnsley.
4. THE END OF THE CIRCUS. Black chalk heightened with red
chalk.
Lent by The Birmingham City Art Gallery.
5. A ROMAN PIAZZA. Pen and water-colour.
Lent by The Birmingham City Art Gallery.
6. MONTE CIMONE. Pen and water-colour.
Lent by The Birmingham City Art Gallery.
7. LISTENING TO THE WIRELESS IN THE WARDROOM. Chalk.
Lent by The Birmingham City Art Gallery.
8. THE BATHING HOUR, WEST BAY, CROMER. Pen and ink
and water-colour.
Lent by The Birmingham City Art Gallery.
9. SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON. Pencil.
Lent by James Bone, Esq., C.H.
10. EDINBURGH; HIGH STREET. Pencil.
Lent by James Bone, Esq., C.H.
11. EDINBURGH, FROM CALTON HILL. Pencil.
Lent by James Bone, Esq., C.H.
12. STIRLING. Pen and wash.
Lent by James Bone, Esq., C.H.
13. THE DUKE AND THE CAVENDISH, EASTBOURNE. Pencil.
Lent by Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi & Co., Ltd., London.
14. ON THE RIVER, CAMBRIDGE, No. 1. Water-colour.
Lent by Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi & Co., Ltd., London.
15. ENTRANCE TO THE OLD BODLEIAN, OXFORD. Pencil.
Lent by Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi & Co., Ltd., London.

16. MOONLIGHT, GRANADA. Pen and ink wash.
Lent by Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi & Co., Ltd., London.
17. A STREET IN CUENCA, SPAIN. Black crayon.
Lent by Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi & Co., Ltd., London.
18. OLD HOVE, SUSSEX. Water-colour.
Lent by Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi & Co., Ltd., London.
19. QUEEN STREET STATION. Pencil.
Lent by The Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow.
20. DUKE STREET PRISON WALL. Pencil.
Lent by The Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow.
21. STOCKWELL STREET. Pencil and wash.
Lent by The Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow.
22. EASTER MONDAY, SERPENTINE, HYDE PARK. Black chalk.
Lent by The Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow.
23. WHITEHALL FROM A ROOM IN THE ADMIRALTY. Black chalk and pastel.
Lent by The Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow.
24. OXFORD IN SNOW. Pastel.
Lent by The Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow.
25. BUILDING A LINER AT GREENOCK. Lithograph.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
26. YPRES. Charcoal, pen and wash.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
27. YPRES. Charcoal, pen and wash.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
28. ERECTING AEROPLANES. Chalk and water-colour.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
29. THE RETURN FROM DUNKIRK: ARRIVAL AT DOVER.
Chalk, pen and wash.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
30. THE EXETER AND AJAX PARADE, 1940: ON THE HORSE-GUARDS' PARADE, WHITEHALL. Chalk and wash.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
31. S.S. HIGHLANDER. Chalk.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
32. ST. BRIDE'S AND THE CITY OF LONDON AFTER THE FIRE, 29th Dec., 1940. Chalk and pen with slight colour washes.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.

33. BUILDING A CAISSON FOR MULBERRY HARBOUR. Chalk and wash.
Lent by The Imperial War Museum, London.
34. DISTANT MADRID. Water-colour.
Lent by The City Art Gallery, Manchester.
35. DUNLOP BARRAGE BALLOON FACTORY. Pastel.
Lent by The City Art Gallery, Manchester.
36. IN THE HOSPITAL SHIP *WESTERN AUSTRALIA* AT NIGHT: THE ORDERLY. Charcoal.
Lent by The City Art Gallery, Manchester.
37. SPANISH STREET SCENE. Water-colour.
Lent by The City Art Gallery, Manchester.
38. OVIEDO. Water-colour heightened with pen outlines.
Lent by The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester.
39. THE CAREENING BASIN, MARSEILLES. Pencil and fine black chalk.
Lent by The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester.
40. APSE OF SAN TIRZO, SAHAGUN. Charcoal.
Lent by Dorothy, Lady Young.
41. POSADA AT THE GATE, AVILA, SPAIN. Pencil and monochrome wash.
Lent by Dorothy, Lady Young.
42. THE MARKET, OVIEDO. Pen and wash.
Lent by Dorothy, Lady Young.
43. THE VEGA OF GRANADA FROM THE CARMEN DE LA CANADA. Water and body-colour.
Lent by Dorothy, Lady Young.

