

Homage to J. M. W. Turner

Charles Warren and Peter Bicknell

Plates 68–78

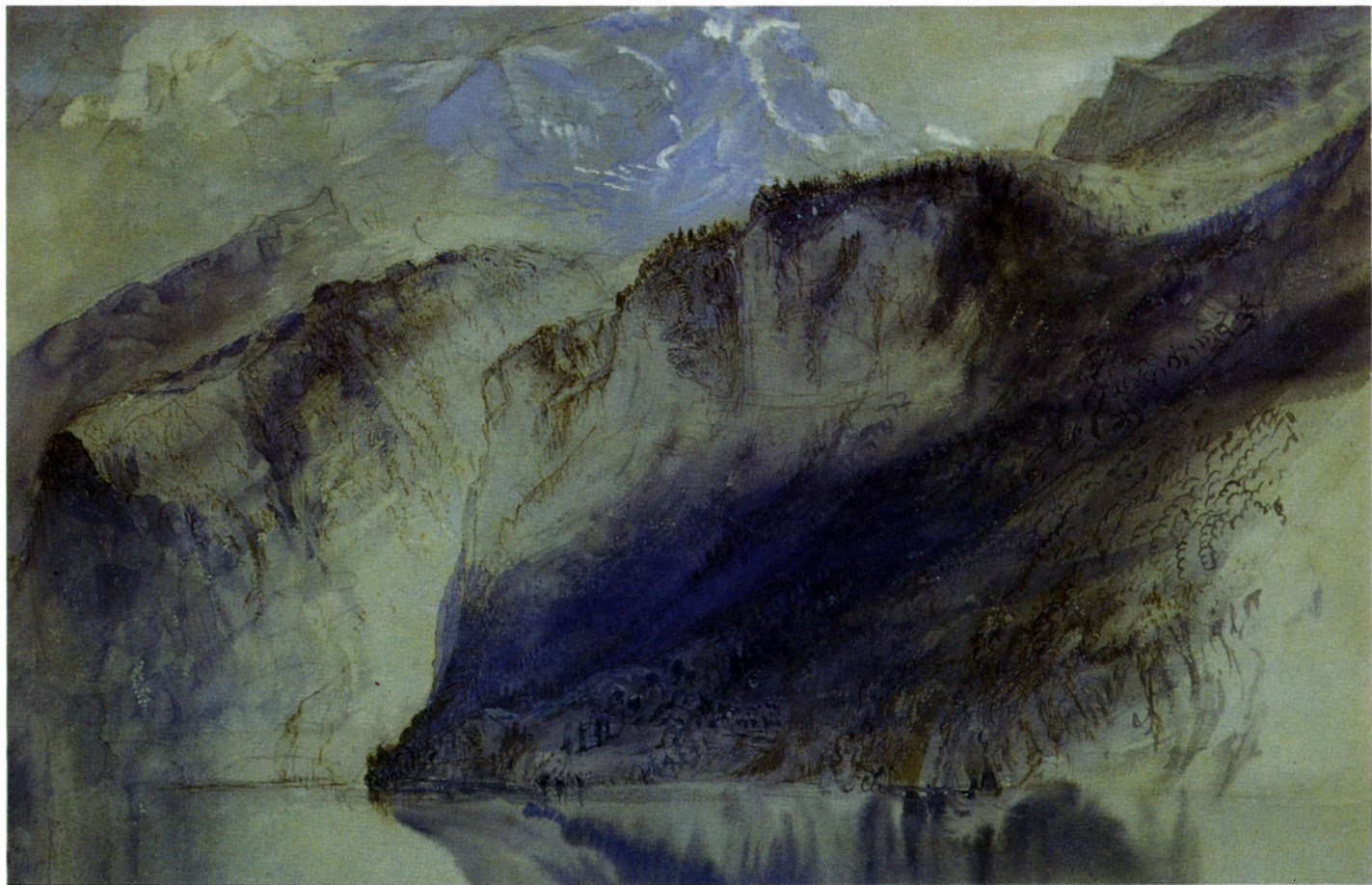
Read before a joint meeting of the Alpine Club and the Turner Society at the Alpine Club on 29 October 1985.

Introduction Charles Warren

It is, perhaps, not inappropriate that a meeting of the Turner Society and the Alpine Club should be held in our club rooms here because, after all, Turner's famous champion John Ruskin was a member of the AC from 1869 until 1882 when, alas, illness then overcame him and shut him away from the outer world.

There are two ways of qualifying for membership of the Alpine Club: a mountaineering one; and an artistic, literary and scientific one. John Ruskin was elected to membership in 1869 in recognition of his literary, artistic and scientific contributions towards our greater appreciation of the alpine scene on the publication of Volume 4 of *Modern Painters* (sub-titled: 'Of Mountain Beauty'). But as has been pointed out by A L Mumm, his pedestrian activities in the Alps with his guide Joseph Marie Coutet at that date would almost have given him a mountaineering qualification too. Although no very serious rock climber, Ruskin tells us about his 'ridgework'. And he did, after all, climb the Riffelhorn above Zermatt. And he mastered the use of the alpenstock, he assures us, and advises other tourists to do so too. We know that he made some notable minor ascents around Chamonix, including a traverse of the Buet. Chamonix remained, throughout his active life, his favourite venue. He was there in 1851 when that flamboyant entrepreneur, but amusing character, Albert Smith climbed Mont Blanc and returned to the village and its tourists in triumph to the firing of cannon; and to Ruskin's righteous disgust. It was probably this episode which occasioned his famous diatribe against the mountaineers in *Sesame and Lilies*; but let me quote:

'You have despised nature; that is to say, all the deep and sacred sensations of natural scenery. The French revolutionists made stables of the cathedrals of France; you have made racecourses of the cathedrals of the earth. Your *one* conception of pleasure is to drive in railroad carriages round their aisles, and eat off their altars. You have put a railroad bridge over the falls of Schaffhausen. You have tunnelled the cliffs of Lucerne by Tell's chapel; you have destroyed the Clarens shore of the Lake of Geneva; there is not a quiet valley in England that you have not filled with bellowing fire; there is no particle left of English land which you have not trampled coal ashes into — nor any foreign city in which the spread of your presence is not marked among its fair old streets and happy gardens by a consuming white leprosy of new hotels and perfumers' shops: the Alps themselves, which your own poets used to love so reverently, you look upon as soaped poles in a bear-garden, which you set yourselves to



68 'Grüti' (Rüti, Lucerne) — John Ruskin (*Private Collection*).

climb, and slide down again, with "shrieks of delight". When you are past shrieking, having no human articulate voice to say you are glad with, you fill the quietude of their valleys with gunpowder blasts, and rush home, red with cutaneous eruption of conceit, and voluble with convulsive hiccup of self-satisfaction. I think nearly the two sorrowfullest spectacles I have ever seen in humanity, taking the deep inner significance of them, are the English mobs in the valley of Chamouni, amusing themselves with firing rusty howitzers; and the Swiss vintagers of Zurich expressing their Christian thanks for the gift of the vine, by assembling in knots in the "towers of the vineyards", and slowly loading and firing horse-pistols from morning till evening. It is pitiful, to have dim conceptions of duty; more pitiful, it seems to me, to have conceptions like these, of mirth.'

Despite all this, which was fair comment at the time, and a warning to us to get back to a proper appreciation of the alpine scene, he remained in the club and enjoyed the company of some of his friends there.

Others have lectured us here on our Philistinism, but not in quite the same way as in that rather marvellous Ruskinian diatribe *Sesame and Lilies*.

Look at this picture inscribed Grütli (Rütli on the map) (*Plate 68*) and you can see what he was getting at. We are to have a reverence for certain places of historical interest as well as an appreciation of natural beauty. Sir Walter Scott, in his only novel with an Alpine setting, *Anne of Geierstein*, refers to the 'immortal field of Rütli . . . where our illustrious ancestors, the Fathers of Swiss independence met' (William Tell and the leaders of the three Forest Cantons). And here it is, as seen by Ruskin. The 'immortal field', beneath the Seelisberg, on Lake Lucerne.

But now, had the Alpine Club been founded in Turner's day, he too would undoubtedly have been elected to membership not only because, as an artist, he was by far and away the greatest who had ever depicted the alpine scene, but also on his qualifications as an intrepid traveller for many years throughout the Alps.

Just look at this picture (*Plate 69*), which once belonged to our member R W Lloyd and is now in the British Museum, and hear what he had to say about it. In a letter to Eastlake, Turner describes the events upon which this watercolour is based ' . . . the snow began to fall at Foligno, tho' more of ice than snow, so that the coach from its weight slid about in all directions . . . till the diligence zized into a ditch, and required six oxen to drag it out . . . bivouacks in the snow with fires lighted for three hours on Mount Tarate while diligence was righted and dug out.'

Another episode like this, *The passage of the Mont Cenis, 15th Jany. 1820*, was painted, after his return that year, for Mr Fawkes of Farnely Hall.

Turner once had himself lashed to the mast of a ship during a storm so that he could see and record the grand spectacle. About his picture *Snow Storm* he said: 'I got the sailors to lash me to the mast'.

What a man! Had the Alpine Club been founded in his day, he would certainly have been elected, probably to Honorary Membership, not only as an Alpine traveller but as the greatest watercolour artist of Switzerland there has ever been.



Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

69 'Messieurs les voyageurs on their return from Italy (par la diligence) in a snow drift upon Mount Tarate — 22nd January 1829' — J. M. W. Turner, 1775–1851; watercolour (British Museum).

What a marvellous time it was when our artists and poets suddenly 'discovered' the romance of Switzerland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Think of Turner; and then of Byron and Shelley on the shores of Lac Lemán in that wonderful year of 1816, the turning point in Byron's career as a poet. And then, later on, think of Ruskin who, above all others, taught us how to appreciate the alpine scene in the right kind of way. The alpinists not on their 'soaped poles'; the scientists not on their 'dead rocks'. But the aesthetes who simply loved the glories of the Alps like he did.

Turner and his Predecessors in the Mountains Peter Bicknell

When in 1802 Turner, at the age of 27 first went to the Alps, some aspects of the mountain scene were familiar to British artists. The 'discovery' of the mountainous districts of these islands, which had been begun by a select band of artists and writers in the 1780s, had by the end of the century become so complete that tours of the mountains and lakes in search of the Picturesque were the height of fashion. Sketchers, both amateur and professional, flocked to Loch Lomond, Llanberis and Lodore. The cult of mountain scenery had become a subject for satire. Rowlandson and Combe, parodying the late Doctor Gilpin, sent Doctor Syntax on a *Tour in Search of the Picturesque*, the climax of which was when the doctor reached Keswick and was able to sketch the lake. Doctor Plumptre, himself a confirmed 'Laker', wrote a comic opera, *The Lakers*, making fun of the affectations of the picturesque tourists. And when it was proposed that Jane Austen's heroine Elizabeth Bennet should make a tour of the Lakes, she cried ecstatically, 'What are men to rocks and mountains?'

The 'discovery' which preceded Turner's response to mountains has in recent years been amply recorded in a series of exhibitions with well illustrated catalogues¹; and was summarized in a talk which I gave to the Alpine Club in May 1980².

Richard Wilson's painting *Llyn-y-Cau, Cader Idris* (Plate 72) is a landmark in mountain art. When Wilson returned from Italy in 1757, he painted his native Wales in the manner of the landscape artists working in Italy in the seventeenth century. His well-known view of *Snowdon from Llyn Nanille*³ is arranged like a vision of Arcadia by Claude Lorrain. There are the conventional three planes — framing trees and figures in classical poses in the foreground, a well lit castle-like rock placed centrally in the middle distance, and azure mountains closing the distant view. *Llyn-y-Cau*, probably painted about 1766/7, a year or two after *Snowdon*, breaks with this tradition. Though the mellow glow of the golden age is still there, the picture seems to convey the direct impact of the mountain and its surroundings on a sensitive artist who had actually climbed to this lofty viewpoint. It was pictures like this that led Ruskin to say, 'with the name of Richard Wilson the history of sincere landscape art founded on the meditative love of nature begins in England.'

It is interesting to compare Wilson's view of Snowdon with exactly the same view by Philip James de Loutherbourg (plate 73). Here the elements are the same; there are the three receding planes, the framing trees, the figures and the feature of interest in the middle distance. But the tranquillity of Arcadia has been blown away by a wild gust of the Sublime. The clouds and the trees are



70 'Glacier of Montanvert' — John 'Warwick' Smith, 1749–1831; watercolour, 1802 (British Museum).
Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.



71 'Mer de Glace, Chamonix' — J. M. W. Turner, 1775–1851; watercolour, 1802 (British Museum).
Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

racked by a wind that threatens to blow the hats from the rugged peasants and scatters the far from pastoral goats. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the artists who visited the mountains viewed them either as a prospect of Arcadia seen through the eyes of Claude Lorrain, or as a glimpse of the Sublime seen through the eyes of Salvator Rosa. The poet, Thomas Gray, visiting the Lakes in 1769, spent five days at Keswick 'lap'd in Elysium' and found Grasmere 'a little unsuspected paradise' — a paradise which is beautifully illustrated by Julius Caesar Ibbetson's painting of *Grasmere* (Plate 74). Though topographically accurate, it shows the scene as one of pastoral serenity, more suited to paradise than to Cumbria. De Louthembourg, on the other hand squeezed all the sublimity he could out of the Lake District scene. He was closely associated with the theatre in London, and painted in a style which has aptly been called 'Drury Lane Picturesque'. A highly theatrical and essentially Salvatorian scene of a shipwreck is somewhat surprisingly of Windermere⁴. It records an actual event which had occurred in the previous century. It is one of two splendid pictures painted for the Curwens, and still to be seen in their highly Arcadian circular temple-like house on Belle Isle in Windermere.

Towards the end of the century visits to the mountain districts had become almost obligatory for landscape painters. Even Gainsborough, who is not usually associated with mountains, paid one visit to the Lakes, in 1783. The sketches he made on his visit with the exception of one drawing he made of the Langdale Pikes⁵, are not topographical but are ideal arrangements made of elements which he found in the landscape. However, for the rest of his life rugged mountains appeared in his pictures, which owe more to Salvator than to Claude. Gainsborough was in the Lakes at the same time as his friend, de Louthembourg; they may have been together. Certainly in Gainsborough's mountainous scenes there is a strong whiff of 'Drury Lane Picturesque'. Unlike Gainsborough most of the men that visited the mountains were primarily topographical draughtsmen. Men such as Paul Sandby, Thomas Hearne, Joseph Farington and Edward Dayes, working generally in line and wash, recorded the Highlands, North Wales and the Lakes in conventional views, arranged according to picturesque principles suitable for reproduction as prints. Turner along with his exact contemporary Tom Girtin learnt much from Edward Dayes. Their early topographical work in blue-grey monochrome is often very like the work of Dayes. His watercolour of Lodore and the head of Derwentwater⁶ (like several other drawings of Dayes) was at one time attributed to Turner.

Before Turner first went to the Alps he had made three visits to Wales, one to the Lake District and one to Scotland. So mountain scenery had already played an important part as a source of inspiration. As well as having absorbed the topographical tradition of Dayes and Farington, Turner was profoundly influenced by both the Arcadian and the Sublime. He first visited the Lakes in 1797, as part of an extensive tour through the NE counties to Berwick, up the Tweed to Melrose, across the borders to Carlisle, through the Lakes from north to south, out over the sands and back by York, Beverley and Lincolnshire. The sketchbook which he carried with him is full of hasty and simple pencil records,



72 'The Summit of Cader-Idris Mountain (Llyn-y-Cau)' — Engraving by E. & M. Rooker after the painting by Richard Wilson, 1714–1782.



73 'Snowdon (from Llyn Nanlly)' — Aquatint by W. Pickett after P. J. de Loutherbourg, 1740–1812; 1805.

mostly of castles, churches and abbeys. But in the Lake District, where antiquities are few and far between, they are of the lakes and the mountains, often partially or fully tinted with watercolour. Perhaps the finest of these is a completed watercolour drawing of Crummock and the head of Buttermere⁷. It is a true portrait of the view, but is suffused with a luminosity of atmosphere which transcends normal topography. Turner used this subject for an ambitious oil painting⁸ which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1798. Although the outline of the hills remains the same and it is still a fairly accurate record of the natural scene, a rainbow has been added which transfers us from a world of natural appearances to the romantic world of 'my heart leaps up when I behold'. 1798 was the first year when poems could be appended to the descriptions of pictures in the catalogue of the Academy exhibition. Turner took the opportunity to quote five lines from Thomson's *Seasons*:

'Till in the western sky the downward sun
Looks out effulgent — the rapid radiance instantaneous strikes
The illumined mountains — in a yellow mist
Bestriding earth — the grand ethereal bow
Shoots up immense, and every hue unfolds.'

In the same exhibition he showed another Lake District painting, *Morning amongst the Coniston Fells, Cumberland*⁹. This was based on a pencil outline drawing in the sketchbook and a subsequent watercolour¹⁰, and again its romanticism was enforced by a poetical quotation from *The Morning Hymn of Adam and Eve* in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Turner altered 'steaming' to 'streaming'):

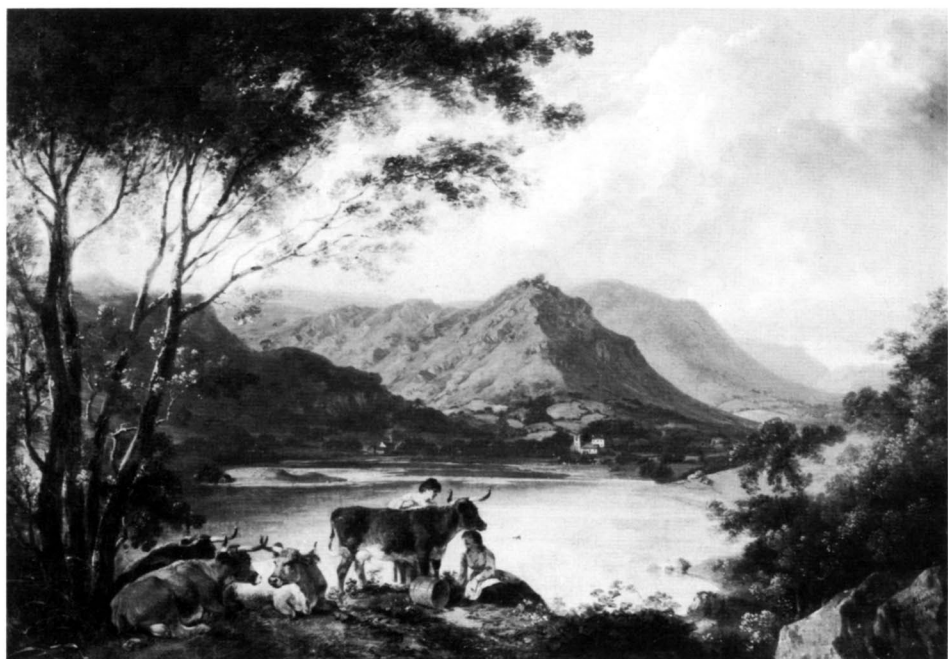
'Ye mists and exhalations that now rise
From hill or streaming lake dusky or grey,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold
In honour to the world's great author rise.'

Wordsworth at just the same time, working on the drafts for *The Prelude*, was struggling with the same passage from Milton.

On 12 February 1802 (the year in which he was to go to the Alps), Turner was admitted to the Royal Academy as a full academician. He deposited as his Diploma Work *Dolbadarn Castle*¹¹, and it is significant that this picture which Turner must have considered important was a mountainous scene, deriving from sketches made on the spot. It had been exhibited already at the Academy in 1800, with a poem by Turner himself emphasizing the historical romanticism of the subject:

'How awful is the silence of the waste,
Where nature lifts her mountains to the sky.
Majestic solitude, behold the tower
Where hopeless OWEN, long imprison'd, pin'd,
And wrung his hands for liberty, in vain.'

Owen Glendower the captive champion of liberty, is closely related to Thomas Gray's *Bard*¹², another symbol of freedom and victim of a tyrant English king. Turner's many and varied images of Dolbadarn Castle tell us much about the versatility of his art. We can, for instance, see Dolbadarn as an element in the view of Llyn Peris and the mountains of Snowdonia, faithfully



74 'View of Grasmere' — Julius Caesar Ibbetson 1759–1817; oil, 1802 (Private Collection)



75 'Mer de Glace, Chamonix' — William Pars 1742–1782; watercolour, 1770 (British Museum).

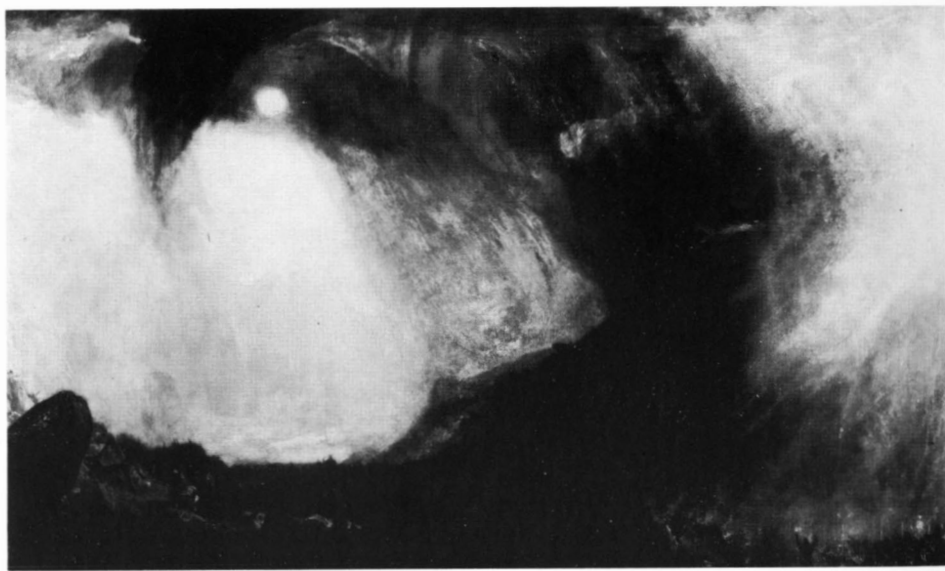
portrayed in the controlled watercolour of the topographer; Dolbadarn engulfed in a shimmering flood of light in inspired impressionistic washes; and Dolbadarn as a bastion of mediaeval romance in solemn and dramatic oils. Thus Turner went to Switzerland as an established academician, equipped with dazzling versatility and virtuosity.

He had been preceded in the Alps by four important English landscape painters, Pars, Smith, Towne and Cozens, each of whom had made his own personal discovery of the alpine scene. At the same time a flourishing school of Swiss topographers were revealing the beauties of their own mountains to a receptive public. Foremost amongst these was Caspar Wolff (1735–1798). He prepared a series of 150 paintings and watercolours for the illustration of a book, the first part of which appeared in 1776 as *Vues Remarquables des Montagnes de la Suisse avec leur Description*¹³, containing 15 splendid coloured etchings of the Bernese Oberland. Wolff did not make ascents of the peaks, but he penetrated deep into them on the glaciers, and had a keen eye for the remarkable. In 1785 *Vues Remarquables* was republished with coloured aquatints after Wolff and others. The frontispiece was inscribed with the subtitle of the book *Theatre des Alpes et Glaciers. Dédié aux Amateurs des Merveilles de la Nature*. The marvels of nature are presented as a theatre for amateurs, at least three of whom are using the scene arranged for them by Wolff as a subject for their art. A pupil of Wolff was Gabriel Ludwig Lorry (1763–1840) who, with his son Gabriel Mathias Lorry (1784–1846), carried on the tradition of the *Vues Remarquables* with wonderful coloured plates of the Alps — a tradition which was continued by others well into the nineteenth century. These Swiss prints are familiar to many members of the Alpine Club through the collection of R W Lloyd which, along with his remarkable collection of works by Turner, is now enshrined in the British Museum.

When in 1770 William Pars (1742–1782), toured the Alps with the young Lord Palmerston, he had already travelled in Greece and Turkey, making drawings of antiquities for the Dilettanti Society. Pars and Palmerston were for much of their time in Switzerland in the experienced hands of the Mont Blanc pioneer, Horace Benedict de Saussure. From Geneva they went to Chamonix, already a Mecca for tourists; they crossed the Col des Montets to Trient and Martigny; up the Rhône valley and over the Grimsel to Meiringen; then over the Grosse Scheidegg to Grindelwald and down by the Staubach to Interlaken. Fortunately there are several of Pars' best watercolours in the British Museum and excellent reproductions are available in John Russel and Andrew Wilton's *William Pars in the Alps, 1770*. They are large freshly coloured watercolour drawings. He shows a particular interest in the glaciers, at a time when they came down much further into the valleys than they do today. His views of the glaciers of Chamonix, the Rhône and Grindelwald convey the same feeling of wonder that is conveyed by his companion, Lord Palmerston, who described 'the immense Waves, Pyramids and Clefts, which compose the Surface of the Frozen Sea'. The most remarkable of the views is one looking down the Mer de Glace (*Plate 75*) where the sea of ice seems entirely to fill the Chamonix valley. His mountains are usually carefully observed and shown without picturesque distortion, but here fantasy seems to have taken over from observation and the



76 'Glaciere taken from Montanvert looking towards Mont Blanc, Sept' 16th 1781' — Francis Towne 1740–1816; pen, ink and watercolour (Private Collection).



77 'Snowstorm: Hannibal and his army crossing the Alps' — J. M. W. Turner; oil, RA 1812 (Tate Gallery).
Reproduced by courtesy of the Tate Gallery.

Aiguilles are presented as repetitive piles of surrealist pinnacles. Eight of Pars' Alpine views were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1771, and seem to have caused considerable interest. Five of them were engraved by the fashionable Woollett and published by Pars as prints in 1773 and 1774. They sold well enough to be taken over by the great impresario of prints, John Boydell, who republished them in 1783. So Pars' views of the Alps must have been known to a fairly large circle of cognoscenti in the metropolis.

In 1776 John Robert Cozens (1752–1797), six years after Pars, travelled through Switzerland on his way to Italy, returning in 1779. There is little precise information about his itinerary other than the evidence of dated sketches. In 1776 he was travelling with Richard Payne Knight, the notable connoisseur, collector and writer on the Picturesque. They were in Chamonix for a few days in August, and about a month later visited Lauterbrunnen, Grindelwald and the Reichenbach falls. From his sketches Cozens produced a large number of watercolours of the Alps, often repeating the same subject several times. At least eight patrons ordered copies of a view of the Rhône valley, *Pays de Valais*. His Alpine views were far better known than those of Pars from which they differ completely. Cozens is never recording the actual scene, but in muted blue-grey tones is creating a dream world of his own imagination, where the Aiguille de Dru and the Aiguille Verte are translated into strange pinnacles of rock perched unnaturally on mounds of snow. One can understand why Constable said that Cozens was 'all poetry'. The drawing of Cozens which most nearly shows us mountains as we know them is a view in Elba; and it is ironic that this most evocative image is of a scene which Cozens never actually saw, as he never went to Elba. Turner became familiar with many of these drawings, when as a young man he, with Girtin, was copying them in the studio of Dr Monro. In the words of Girtin's descendant, another Tom Girtin, the drawings 'contributed greatly towards opening the minds of English artists to the impressiveness of mountain scenery'¹⁴.

Cozens was followed in 1781 by Smith and Towne, who accompanied each other on their way back from Rome. John 'Warwick' Smith (1749–1831), born at Irthington, close to the Lakes, became a prolific topographical draughtsman who was to tour North Wales and the Lake District and record mountain scenery on many occasions. His Alpine watercolours are similar to those of Pars. He attempted nothing poetic and made no extravagant concessions to picturesque arrangement of the subject. However, his view of the Mer de Glace, that most painted of subjects *The Source of the Arveiron*, (Plate 78) vividly recalls the days when the glacier like an open mouthed dragon had crept deep into the valley. Smith was responsible for the aquatint plates in the illustrated edition of William Coxe's *Travels in Switzerland*¹⁵, though he did not accompany the author on his tour. These prints must have brought the Alps to a wider public than the drawings alone.

Francis Towne (1740–1816), neglected for over a hundred years, is now greatly admired and his works are well represented in most British public galleries. In his watercolour drawings of North Wales, which he visited in 1777 before he went to Rome, and of the Lake District, where he was in 1786, five years after his alpine experience, he shows no variation in technique. He draws



a



b



c



d



e



f

78 Six mezzotints from Turner's *Liber Studiorum*.

a: Mt St Gothard — Engraved by Charles Turner, 20 February 1808. b: 'Lake of Thun' — Engraved by Charles Turner, 10 June 1808. c: 'Little Devil's Bridge over the Russ above Altdorf' — Engraved by Charles Turner, 29 March 1809. d: 'Mer de Glace' — Engraved by J. M. W. Turner, 23 May 1812. e: 'The Source of the Arveron' — Engraved by J. M. W. Turner, 1 January 1816. f: 'Ben Arthur, Scotland' — Engraved by T. Lupton, 1 January 1819.

the mountains in delicate brown ink line, sensitively observing and responding to their anatomy; the masses are then washed in with cool translucent water-colour, producing subtle patterns of contrasting light and shade. Most of his Alpine views are in this individual and consistent manner, often finished in monochrome. His panoramic version of the classical view up the Mer de Glace from the Montanvers (*Plate 76*) is an outstanding example of alpine topography, by an artist who appreciates and understands the form of the mountains. But occasionally their grandeur overpowered him. In his two versions of *The Source of the Arveiron*¹⁶ he abandoned his habitual manner to produce, with broad sombre washes, patterns of contrasting areas almost abstract in character, and unique in eighteenth century art.

Turner we know had studied and copied the mountain views of Cozens. He was probably acquainted with those of Pars and Smith but, until 13 of Towne's Swiss views were shown in a one-man-show in London in 1805, he would not have seen any of these. Fortunately for those interested in Turner in the Alps, the subject has been magnificently covered by the publication of *Turner in Switzerland*, produced by a team of Turner experts. John Russel contributed an informative introduction; comprehensive survey notes and a check-list of finished watercolours are written by Andrew Wilton; it is generously illustrated with plenty of colour; and under the skilled editorship of our Honorary Member, the distinguished mountaineer, Walter Amstutz. I have little to add to what can be found in this book. The excellent maps of Turner's six Swiss tours show us that the first in 1802 was for mountaineers the most interesting, and for Turner it was the most formative. As part of an extensive European tour, made possible by the Peace of Amiens, he made his way to Geneva. Hence he went, like all the others, to Chamonix and Argentière, where he probably got as high as the Couvercle. He then did the western half of the Tour of Mont Blanc crossing the Col du Bonhomme and Col de la Seigne. From Aosta he crossed the Saint Bernard to Martigny; then from Vevey over the passes to Thun, Interlaken and Grindelwald, and by the Grosse Scheidegg and the Reichenbach falls to Meiringen and Lucerne. From Andermatt he crossed the Saint Gotthard to Faido and returned by the same route to Schwyz, then on to Zürich and the north. The conditions of travel were severe, the distances great, the physical achievement remarkable, he was constantly tired out, but never too exhausted to fill his sketchbooks with more than 400 drawings. These are mostly rapid pencil sketches, similar to those he had made in the Lake District. Like them they are often strengthened with watercolour, and sometimes they are finished watercolours. They furnished him with a fruitful source of subjects for the rest of his life. Subjects which seem particularly to have fascinated him were the dramatically sublime scenery of the Saint Gotthard and the Devil's Bridge, the Reichenbach falls, and the frozen chaos of the glaciers. A series of watercolour sketches of the Mer de Glace¹⁷ are wonderfully evocative to those of us who have climbed the Aiguilles that flank the glacier. One of these, looking down the Mer de Glace to the Aiguilles Rouges, shows, high on the left, Blair's Hut, the predecessor of the Montanvers Hotel, which was built by the Englishman, Charles Blair, in 1779.

Turner's *Liber Studiorum* which was to have been a series of original

engravings to demonstrate the artist's powers of invention and design, was divided into categories one of which was 'Mountainous'. Of the 13 plates in this category eight derive from sketches made in the Alps in 1802, which include a view of the source of the Arveiron and a particularly dramatic one, looking up the Mer de Glace, showing the Petit Dru and the Flammes de Pierre des Drus on the left, the Aiguille des Grands Charmoz and the Aiguille de la République on the right, and the Grandes Jorasses in the distance (*Plate 78*).

In these brief notes on Turner in the Alps in 1802, I have been looking at his work from a very limited topographical point of view, seeing how far he visited places dear to mountaineers and how far his visions evoke our own experience. But if we look at one of Turner's masterpieces, inspired by the Alps in 1802, we can see that his experience invoked something much more profound than topographical images, *Snow Storm: Hannibal and his Army crossing the Alps* (*Plate 77*) is not only a remarkable vortex-like composition of tonal areas created in light and shadow, but, like the *Diploma Dolbadarn Castle* moving from topography to romantic history, it also shows a serious preoccupation with philosophical problems. The artist draws us into the misery of the army's struggle with the elements. The picture was painted in 1812, the year of the retreat from Moscow, and Turner saw parallels between Hannibal and Napoleon. The theme of the picture is 'The Fallacy of Hope', and it was accompanied in the Academy catalogue by eleven lines from Turner's poem of that name — Despite 'craft, treachery and fraud' still the chief advanced . . . with hope. 'In vain . . . each pass ensanguined deep with dead or rocky fragments, wide destruction roll'd'.

Notes

The talk which accompanied the 70 slides shown at the meeting has been adapted for this article for which the illustrations are strictly limited. The notes, as far as possible, indicate where the pictures mentioned can be seen.

1. See: *The View Finders*, Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal, 1980; *Beauty, Horror and Immensity — Picturesque Landscape in Britain — 1750–1850*, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 1981; *The Discovery of the Lake District 1750–1810*, Grasmere and Wordsworth Museum, 1982; *The Discovery of the Lake District*, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1984.
2. A785 pp33–43.
3. *Snowdon from Llyn Nantlle*, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, and *Llyn-y-Cau*, Tate Gallery, both oil paintings, have frequently been reproduced. There is more than one version of each picture.
4. There is no published reproduction of this picture, but it can be seen in the house on Belle Isle which is open to the public.
5. *The Langdale Pikes from Elterwater*, 1783, pencil and wash, Private Collection, frequently exhibited and reproduced, previously exhibited at the Alpine Club. See: catalogues (note 1) 1981, 1982, 1984.
6. *Keswick Lake and entrance to Borrowdale c.1791*. Watercolour, Private Collection, exhibited Grasmere 1982 and AC 1981, 1982, not reproduced.

7. *Buttermere Lake*, 1797, watercolour, Tweed and Lakes sketchbook, British Museum, illustrated in colour, Gerald Wilkinson, *Turner's Early Sketchbooks*, 1972, p48/9.
8. *Buttermere Lake, with part of Cromack-water, Cumberland, a Shower*, 1798, Oil, Tate Gallery, illustrated in colour cat, V & A 1984, p51; Butlin & Joll, *the Paintings of J M W Turner*, 1984, no. 7.
9. *Morning amongst the Coniston Fells*, 1798, oil, Tate Gallery, illustrated in colour cat V & A 1984, p56, Butlin & Joll, no. 8.
10. *A Mountain Stream, Coniston*, 1797, watercolour, Private Collection, illustrated cat. Grasmere 1982.
11. *Dolbadarn Castle, North Wales*, 1800, oil, Royal Academy of Arts, illustrated Butlin & Joll, no. 8.
12. The Welsh Bard, the central figure in Thomas Gray's *Ode, The Bard*, was a popular subject for romantic painters such as Martin and De Loutherbourg.
13. *Vues Remarquables* included a preface by Albrecht von Haller, the author of the influential poem *Die Alpen*, and *Description d'un Voyage fait en 1776 dans une Partie du Canton du Berne* by J S Wytttenbach. There are fine copies of these books in the AC Library. See cat. *Treasures of the Alpine Club*, 1982, c31–33.
14. C F Bell and Thomas Girtin, 'The drawings and sketches of John Robert Cozens', *Walpole Society*, 1934–35. The drawings referred to are illustrated: nos. 8, 12, 433, plates 1, 2, 33.
15. William Coxe, *Travels in Switzerland, and in the Country of the Grisons: in a series of letters to William Melmoth Esq.* Third edition, 1794.
16. Towne's two watercolours of the source of the Arveiron have both been widely exhibited and reproduced. See Adrian Bury *Francis Towne — Lone Star of Water-colour Painting*. That in the V & A, see A785, p39; the other in a private collection reproduced in colour, Bury, *ibid*, p97.
17. Two of the views of the Mer de Glace, referred to here were reproduced in colour in an article by Walter Amstutz, 'Turner — Promethean of Alpine Painting', A784, pp31–35.