CHAPTER 9

Etchings by Ladies, 'Not Artists'

Cynthia E. Roman

A manuscript list of 'Works of Genius at Strawberryhill [sic] by Persons of rank and Gentlemen, not Artists' was compiled by the famous collector Horace Walpole (1717–1797), Lord Orford, and inserted into his own heavily annotated copy of *A Description of the Villa at Strawberry Hill* (1774).[1] Among the fourteen items created by these non-professional artists Walpole lists an album of prints by both women and men that he described as 'A Volume of Engravings by various persons of quality'.[2] Later, the volume was officially included in the *Description* as part of an Appendix to subsequent printings (1781). In this category of 'non-professional' makers, Walpole especially singled out works of 'female genius' by close friends and family including Lady Diana Beauclerk, Anne Damer, and Mary Berry, among others.[3] The collecting activities and writings of Horace Walpole provide one of the most enthusiastic voices for the appreciation of non-professional artists – women in particular – framed at once in distinction and in complement to professionals. As such, Walpole's 'A Volume of Engravings by various persons of quality' will be a principal source for the present account of women etchers.

I am deeply grateful to Kim Sloan for her suggestions for improvements to this chapter. Sloan's extensive work has contributed enormously to reassessments about amateur artists and has opened the discourse of eighteenth-century art to include them. Her publications are cited throughout this chapter. My thanks also go to Laura Engel for her comments.

[1] The list inserted in a copy now at the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University includes copious notes to be incorporated into the revised edition of 1784 (49 2523).

[2] The album is now at the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University (49 3588). W. S. Lewis acquired two volumes from Sotheby's through Maggs Bros in 1942. The first volume with Walpole's letterpress title page was likely compiled by him in 1774 and is of greater interest. The second volume, also composed from his collection was likely mounted and bound later but before 1851. The title, 'Amateur Etchers', on its cover, is likely not Walpole's. See A. Hazen, *A Catalogue of Horace Walpole's Library*, 3 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969), vol. 3, no. 3588, 150.

[3] C. Roman, 'The Art of Lady Diana Beauclerk. Horace Walpole and Female Genius', in M. Snodin with C. Roman, eds., *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 154–169.

Bifurcations of art and commerce framed both opportunities and constraints for all who practiced the arts in eighteenth-century England. Makers – women as well as men – were commonly divided by social and economic dictates between those who were professional artists and those who were 'not artists'. As non-professional artists later came to be known as 'amateurs' and their work accordingly associated with lesser quality, learning, and ambition, they have been largely excluded from serious inquiry in the discipline of art history and their legacies have suffered. While many scholars, including myself, continue to use the term 'amateur', this chapter prioritises the designation 'not artist' or 'non-professional' in recognition of the powerful cultural currency it connoted about essential matters of class identity and social prescriptions: ladies and gentlemen of rank and quality should not engage in labour, especially for remuneration, as professionals did. While questions of quality for these practitioners resided as much in the person as in the prints they produced, the status 'not artist' also substantially determined how these women could and could not engage as printmakers.

As many chapters in this volume demonstrate, women who sought their livelihood in the thriving commercial market for prints as printmakers, printsellers, or print publishers, either independently or as part of a family business, did so against disadvantages of the legal and social constraints imposed on their gender. Conversely, when women of high social status and wealth engaged in printmaking, they did so within non-professional arenas but with the advantages of leisure and access provided by their privilege.[4] While class-based mandates compelled them to operate in spaces apart from the rules of trade and profession, women etchers shared greater parity with their male counterparts who were equally compelled to distance themselves from commerce.[5] Because they operated outside the mechanisms of business and trade, little trace of etchings by non-

[4] Serious collectors could admire works by amateurs, which may appear unskilled, based on social rather than aesthetic values. See K. Sloan, 'Mnemonics of Muses and Sibyls' Leaves', in *'A Noble Art': Amateur Artists and Drawing Masters, c. 1600–1800* (London: British Museum Press, 2000), 216–217.

[5] Under pressure to distance themselves from trade even when compelled to work for money, nobles commonly feigned lack of interest, emphasised their leisure and minimised their labour. See Roman, 'The Art of Lady Diana Beauclerk', 158–159; and K. Sloan, 'Industry from Idleness? The Rise of the Amateur in the Eighteenth Century', in Michael Rosenthal, Christiana Payne, and Scott Wilcox, eds., *Prospect for the Nation: Recent Essays in British Landscape, 1750-1800. Studies in British Art 4* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 285–307. Further nuance is introduced by Laura Engel who argues that Beauclerk's illustrations for *The Faerie Queen* can be understood as cleverly staged 'advertisements' for her art. See L. Engel, 'Fashioning the Female Artist: Allegory and Celebrity in Lady Diana Beauclerk's Watercolours of *The Faerie Queen*', in M. McCue and S.

professionals exists in contemporary trade catalogues, newspaper advertisements, or legal records where documentation of professional printmaking activity can often be found. Nevertheless, surviving etchings by these women, 'not artists', provide a key source of evidence for their printmaking.

An even fuller story is preserved in contemporary albums that were created by family and friends from their own social circles. When in 1930 the British Museum acquired two volumes of approximately 150 etchings by 'amateurs' compiled by the collector and prolific extra-illustrator Richard Bull (1721–1805), Clare Stuart Wortley described the collection in an essay titled 'Amateur Etchers':[6]

> A love of art, genuine though ineffectual, found vent in a delightful hobby, easily to be classed among 'the polite arts'. Their little prints suggested a life of happy leisure, in a green wooded England still undreaming of industrial darkness.[7]

Under the putative affection of idyllic nostalgia, this description largely casts a pejorative, early twentieth century judgement on the merit of this non-professional printmaking practice as amateur.

The ambition and skill of Lady Louisa Augusta Greville's landscape etching after a painting by Salvator Rosa, however, belie the belittling assessment (Figure 9.1). Large in scale (36.4 × 47.5 mm, trimmed), her ambitious print exhibits a sophisticated knowledge of the seventeenth-century old master artist who was much in vogue among British aristocrat collectors and academic painters. In addition to affirming Lady Greville's taste and her privileged access to canonical old masters, her work displays a skilful line and a technique that is adeptly executed. Her print demonstrates a clear understanding of aerial perspective, with a varied technique used to create a darker, perhaps more deeply bitten, line in the repoussoir of decayed trees so characteristic of Rosa's work against a fainter more delicately etched line that effectively renders distance.

Thomas, eds. *The Edinburgh Companion to Romanticism and the Arts* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2022), 374–390.

[6] My access to these albums during the Covid pandemic has been through the British Museum Collections Online. Bull's collection is there described as 'the two albums compiled by Richard Bull in c. 1786–1805, of prints by amateurs and members of the British nobility and gentry' (British Museum (hereafter BM) 1931,0413.1-517). The albums are bound in brown leather, gold-tooled, the spines lettered, 'Honorary Engravers/Vol. I/Men' and 'Honorary Engravers/Vol. II/Women', and with marbled end papers. Identification of the artists is based on manuscript notes in the albums and indexes made in the 1930s by A. W. Aspital and amplified in D. Alexander, *Amateurs and Printmaking in England 1750–1830*, exhibition catalogue (Oxford: Wolfson College, 1983).

[7] C. S. Wortley, 'Amateur Etchers', *The Print Collector's Quarterly*, 19 (1932), 189–211.

How do we reconcile historically dismissive judgements against evidence of considerable productivity and accomplishment and then reintegrate the work of non-professional women etchers into the larger history of women and printmaking? This chapter will explore this question through an account of the printmaking practices of Isabella Byron, Lady Carlisle; Lady Louisa Augusta Greville; and the cousins Miss Amabel Yorke, later Lady Polwarth, and her younger cousin Miss Caroline Yorke, alongside the circulation and reception of their etchings among noble collectors.

'Not Artists'

In 1983, David Alexander's exhibition *Amateurs and Printmaking in England 1750–1850* introduced a corrective, more nuanced approach to these artists, explaining that:

> This exhibition is of prints made by, or based on designs, by those who did not earn their living as artists – people whom we have to call, faute de mieux, 'amateur'. This word is, alas, one which now often has pejorative overtones. It can be used to suggest an incomplete mastery of an activity and summon visions of work which is unimportant. There was, indeed, plenty of poor stuff produced by amateurs – as may be obvious here despite the screening process in choosing presentable material for an exhibition – but there is a great deal which is sufficiently 'professional' to have been produced by those who earned their bread by art. Moreover even some incompetently executed or glaringly derivative work – whose only interest might seem to be what it says about contemporary taste – had more influence on British art than might be expected.[8]

While Alexander does not distance himself entirely from the connoisseur's inclination to judge the quality of the etchings in question in terms of professional measures, his astute redefinition of 'amateurs' is a useful starting point.

First, the term 'amateur' must be qualified as a convenient anachronism and its usage historically contextualised. Two groundbreaking books by Kim Sloan and Ann Bermingham, both published in 2000, largely dedicated to drawing, firmly reinstated the subject of non-professional art as worthy of serious scholarly enquiry.[9] Sloan acknowledges the problematic

[8] D. Alexander, *Amateurs and Printmaking*, 1. Alexander's reference on over 3,000 copperplate engravers includes women but not non-professional artists. See D. Alexander, *A Biographical Dictionary of British and Irish Engravers, 1714–1820* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2021).

[9] K. Sloan, *'A Noble Art'* and A. Bermingham, *Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* (New Haven, CT: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale

nature of 'amateur' to describe drawing by non-professional artists during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the category was then still evolving. 'Amateurs', she explains, 'were [first] lovers of the arts, the word taken from the French where the root was the Latin word *amare*, to love'. In England, it was not until around 1780 that amateur 'came to mean not only someone who loved and understood, but who also practiced the arts, without regard for pecuniary advantage'.[10] In her essay on amateurs and etching in eighteenth century France, Charlotte Guillard argues that 'the figure of the amateur should not be reduced to that of a dilettante or collector, a confusion too often perpetuated in art history' and which has led to the artists and their creations to be accorded little value even as they occupied a central place in artistic spheres.[11]

As a shift in terminology can facilitate fresh perspectives, the label 'amateur' with its anachronistic pejorative bias will thus be eschewed in the present study with a view to more fully considering the contributions of women to print culture that this volume undertakes. Building on important work begun in the 1980s by prominent scholars of British printmaking, among them David Alexander, Ellen D'Oench, Richard Godfrey, and Christopher White, and leaning on the later magisterial work of Sloan, the following pages unfold a history of etchings by ladies 'not artists' and begin to reintegrate their activities into the wider cultural economy of printmaking and circulation in eighteenth-century England.[12]

'The Albums'

In her discussion of Richard Bull's albums, Wortley observed that a contemporary set of etchings provides a fortunate opportunity to assess collective activity because 'bringing them together forms something of a guide to the subject and enables us to review it as a whole'.[13] Indeed, Walpole's *Collection of Engravings by Various Persons of Rank and Quality*

University Press, 2000). See also N. Riley, 'Introduction', in *Accomplished Lady: A History of Genteel Pursuits, c. 1600–1860* (Leeds: Oblong, 2017), 1–4.

[10] Sloan, *'A Noble Art'* (2000), 7.

[11] C. Guichard, 'Amateurs and the Culture of Etching', in P. Stein, ed., *Artists and Amateurs in 18th-Century France* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 137.

[12] See C. White, D. Alexander, and E. D'Oench, *Rembrandt in 18th Century England* (New Haven, CT: Yale Center for British Art, 1983) and D. Alexander and R. Godfrey, *Painters and Engraving: The Reproduction Prints from Hogarth to Wilkie* (New Haven, CT: Yale Center for British Art, 1980).

[13] Based on work by R. Schneiderman and R. Godfrey, Alexander assigns the album to the famous extra-illustrator Richard Bull correcting Wortley's misattribution to William Bull (1738–1814). See Wortley, '*Amateur Etchers*'; Alexander, *Amateur Printmakers*, 5 and index and appendix, 28–33.

together with Richard Bull's *Etching and Engravings, by the Nobility and Gentry of England; or by Persons not Exercising the Art as a Trade* provide evidence for the production, circulation, and collecting history of prints by non-professional women. This is especially true because Walpole and Bull knew each other well. They exchanged prints in a friendly, cooperative manner, if sometimes also competitively. Both albums together allow us to consider intersections of social commerce between the two like-minded collectors. Ancillary evidence in correspondence between Bull and Walpole and with the etchers, and manuscript notes in the albums enhance our understanding of the pursuits of ladies who etched and the connections of their activities to printmaking and collecting more generally.

With all due posture of leisure and negligence befitting a noble gentleman, Horace Walpole wrote to his friend William Mason describing a collection of prints he was himself assembling:

> I have invented a new and very harmless way of *making books*, which diverts me as well, and brings me no disgrace. I have just made a *new book*, which costs me only money, which I don't value, and time which I love to employ. It is a volume of etchings by *noble* authors. They are bound in robes of crimson and gold; the titles are printed at my own press, and the pasting is *by my own hand*.[14]

This short passage is a pithy credo of Walpole's engagement in political debate about the contested social and class spaces of art making, collecting, and virtuosity with nothing less at stake than defining the proper character of the nation's art and patronage.[15] As British artists worked to establish professional status with the establishment of an academy, British aristocrats, uncomfortable with the encroachment of commerce into aesthetics, pushed back with a counter economy of image production, circulation, and collecting that insulated itself from trade. In this debate, Walpole's characterisation of his bookmaking as 'harmless' and without 'disgrace' asserts his own gentlemanly status unencumbered by work. He loves to employ time – but not to labour.

[14] Original emphasis. Letter from Horace Walpole to William Mason, 7 May 1775, in W. S. Lewis et al., eds., *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 48 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1955), vol. 28, 195. On Walpole's contrived negligence see Judith Hawley's '"The Beautiful Negligence of a Gentleman": Horace Walpole and Amateur Theatricals', in C. Roman, J. Campbell, and J. Kramnick, eds., *Staging 'The Mysterious Mother'* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2024).

[15] See J. Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt: 'The Body of the Public'* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986).

Walpole's insistence that he does not value money underscores that he finds value outside of monied concerns, as did the makers of the etchings within the album. The bespoke title page for *A Collection of Prints, Engraved by Various Persons of Quality*, printed at his own private press at Strawberry Hill, makes a forthright declaration. A small view of Strawberry Hill beneath, situates the collection in a private domestic space. The full title page of Richard Bull's album even more explicitly rejects commerce: 'ETCHINGS and ENGRAVINGS, by the Nobility and Gentry of ENGLAND: or, By PERSONS not exercising the Art as a TRADE'.[16] Notably, 'persons of rank' or 'nobility and gentry' encompass women as well as men. In this shared space, women and their male counterparts participated with parity in a common project of production and circulation based in their status. One even wonders if Walpole's interchangeable use of the term 'engraving' for his album title while he uses 'etching' in his epistolary description simply evokes engraving in its broadest usage for all intaglio processes, or whether he more strategically blurred hierarchies of printing techniques to claim greater stature for this collection of etchings by non-professionals. Line engraving more narrowly a technique for cutting copperplates with a burin following a highly stylised linear system requires the considerable skill and training of professional printmakers. As such it is associated with the highest form of printmaking including reproductions of important academic painting.[17] On the other hand, etching, which uses a needle essentially as a drawing instrument, is more in keeping with the non-professional practice which is the focus of Walpole's collection of prints by persons of rank and quality.

Isabella Byron, Later Lady Carlisle (1721–1795)

Whether by intention or accident, prints by women hold primacy of place appearing at the front of Walpole's first album. In Bull's album they are gathered in the second volume. In addition to the main title page for his collection, Walpole printed section title pages for the first three individual printmakers among the many in his collection. Two of these were women: Isabella Byron Lady Carlisle and Lady Louisa Augusta Greville. The third was Simon Harcourt, Viscount Nuneham the only male printmaker with a separate title page. It is unclear whether Walpole deemed these artists particularly worthy of a bespoke title page, or if he simply abandoned the

[16] The title page of Bull's Album is in the British Museum Collection online (1931,0413.2).
[17] See J. Landseer, *Lectures on the Art of Engraving* (London: John Tyler, 1807).

effort thereafter. In any case, the etchings of these three are among the most striking. Each title page asserts the maker's bona fides of familial lineage – patrimony and marriage – to affirm their status as a person of quality.

The first section title page reads: 'Etchings by Isabella Byron, Daughter of William Lord Byron, and Second Wife of Henry Howard, Fourth Earl of Howard'. In 1759, Isabella Byron married Richard Musgrave, Bt of Hayton Castle, Co Cumberland, a noted print collector. On the rectos of the following seven album leaves are pasted thirteen etchings by Byron after or in the style of old masters. Despite her focus on drawing, Sloan has nevertheless given a brief account of Isabella Byron's printmaking, if only in entries about the work of her younger brother The Hon. Revd Richard Byron (1724–1811) who was also a prolific etcher.[18] With her focus on prints, D'Oench duly recognises The Hon. Isabella Byron's achievement independent of her male family members, with a separate entry as one of only two women printmakers who worked as Rembrandt copyists and imitators.[19] Benefiting from her father's position at court, Isabella Byron likely learned to paint and etch, as did her brother, from the drawing master Joseph Goupy (1689–1769) who had several royal pupils. She would have copied a range of old master prints and learned to compose herself. Lady Carlisle probably produced most of her etchings in the mid-1750s, after her first marriage to Henry Howard, fourth earl of Carlisle in 1743 and before her second marriage to Musgrave in 1759. The latest dated print is 1760.[20] She signed her prints in the plate as either Isabella Carlisle or Isabella Carlisle – aqua fortis, or simply IC. Among her several etchings in the Walpole volume after Rembrandt are her copy in reverse of *Cottage beside a Canal*, c. 1645 (Hind 212; B228) which is signed 'Isabela [sic] Carlisle Fecit' and her copy of Rembrandt's *Man in a Fur Cap* (B151). Both prints can also be found in Richard Bull's Album along with others of her prints owned by both collectors.[21]

[18] See Sloan, *'A Noble Art'*, cat. nos. 158, 159.

[19] E. D'Oench, 'Appendix D. Eighteenth Century English Printmakers Working as Rembrandt Copyists and Imitators', in White, Alexander, and D'Oench, *Rembrandt in Eighteenth Century England*, 150–153. The other woman listed is Catherine Maria Fanshawe (1765–1834), described therein as a talented author and poet whose two prints after Rembrandt, *Man in a Soft Fur Cap* and *Man in a Feathered Cap*, are preserved in Richard Bull's Album, vol. II, nos. 110 and 115, at the British Museum. Lady Carlisle's brother Richard Byron also copied Rembrandt. Ten of his etched copies are also in Walpole's album.

[20] D'Oench, 'Appendix D', 150.

[21] On the bottom of pages 6 and 5 respectively. The British Museum has an impression of *Man in a Fur Cap* as a separate sheet. See 1867,0309.441.

By mid-century, drawings and prints by Rembrandt were avidly collected in 'a madness to have his prints', thus it is not surprising that his prints were among the most widely imitated images for professional and noble printmakers alike.[22] In a letter to W. S. Lewis identifying sources for the etching copies in Walpole's album, A. Hyatt Mayer, Curator at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, observed that the list of etchings after old master paintings 'makes a kind of index of well-informed taste in the eighteenth century'.[23] By making such copies noble printmakers actively engaged in this 'madness' and certainly benefited from privileged access to Rembrandt's art in the collections of family and friends or through the mediation of printed copies or drawings by others or by drawing masters. Walpole's albums not surprisingly include etchings after Rembrandt by others, both men and women. The etchings copied after, or inspired by, Rembrandt include many prints by several others among Walpole's noble engravers: a detail in reverse of *Rembrandt and his Wife Saskia, Man in a Fur Hat, The Rat Catcher, The Hog*, as well as several landscape, peasant and beggar subjects.

Byron made copies too after or in the style of other collectable European old masters. Both Walpole's and Bull's albums and single sheet prints include prints after Simone Cantarini and Wenceslaus Hollar. Impressions of her copy of *St. Thais of Egypt after Parmegiano*, signed and dated in the plate 1758 in Walpole's album and as a single sheet in the British Museum share virtually the same annotation in the same hand: 'This figure from Parmegiano much unfinished In the Original'.[24] Was this hand that of Lady Carlisle herself or of another individual in the circulation of these prints? Did she annotate these and distribute them as gifts?

We know from his correspondence with Horace Mann, that Walpole and Carlisle were acquaintances. Walpole was quite aware of the reception of her works and her knowledge of the arts. Writing to Walpole about her arrival in Florence, Mann refers to her as 'your very ingenious friend Lady Carlisle' and reports further that 'she speaks with great friendship for

[22] D'Oench, 'A Madness to Have his Prints: Rembrandt and Georgian Taste 1720–1808', in C. White, D. Alexander, and E. D'Oench, *Rembrandt in Eighteenth Century England* (1983), 63–81. On the widespread appreciation for Rembrandt in amateur circles in France, see Chapter 7 by Rena M. Hoisington in this volume and Stein, *Artists and Amateurs*.

[23] An annotated list of sources for the etchings in Walpole's album compiled by Miss Karpinsky, assistant to Hyatt Mayer, was sent to W. S. Lewis at his request. This list largely identifies Rembrandt prints. Letter from Mayer to Lewis, dated 16 September 1958, Lewis Walpole Library, object file 49 3588.

[24] This fuller transcription is from the BM print. That on Walpole's print at the Lewis Walpole Library varies slightly and does not include the last three words 'in the original'.

you'.[25] Mann reports on another occasion that Lady Carlisle 'spoke so much of you and showed us so many of her own works and much practice in pictures, that she was thought very clever in those points here, and gained at the Gallery the reputation of a *connaisseuse*'.[26] In his 1759 manuscript 'Book of Materials', Walpole notes among comments on other noble artists that 'Isabella, sister of lord Byron, and widow of the Earl of Carlisle, and remarried to Sr William Musgrave, paints flowers in water-colours very neatly, and etches after drawings'.[27]

Lady Louisa Augusta Greville (1743–1779)

The second section of Walpole's album is given to the prints of Lady Greville. The bespoke title page again gives her bona fides: 'Etchings by Lady Louisa Greville, Eldest Daughter of Francis Earl of Brooke and Warwick.' Like Isabella Byron, Lady Greville's family had contacts with the court, and she likely had lessons from landscape artists Paul Sandby and Alexander Cozens. As with Lady Carlisle, Lady Greville's prints are closely connected with her male relatives, and details of her training and work are noted by Sloan in her entry on a drawing by her brother George Greville, 2nd Earl of Warwick.[28] After providing her lineage, Walpole wrote of Lady Louisa Greville that she 'draws landscape finely, & was presented with a medal by the Society of arts and sciences'. He notes further that 'she etches in very great style & taste'.[29]

Walpole's album includes four of her prints, all relatively large and ambitious plates after canonical seventeenth-century European old masters. The first three are after drawings: a landscape with holy family and cowherds after a drawing by Carracci (signed in the plate 'A. Carracci. del / A.G. fecit. 1760'); a landscape with a sedan chair carried by donkeys

[25] Horace Mann to Horace Walpole, 24 November 1772, in W. S. Lewis et al., *Horace Walpole's Miscellaneous Correspondence*, vol. 23, 447.

[26] Horace Mann to Horace Walpole, 30 January 1773. W. S. Lewis et al., *Horace Walpole's Miscellaneous Correspondence*, vol. 23, 457. The unnamed lady in the letter is identified by the editors in note 2 as Lady Carlisle.

[27] H. Walpole, 'Book of Materials', 1759, 152; Lewis Walpole Library (49 2615 I). I am grateful to Susan Walker for her assistance in locating this and other passages from this manuscript. Walpole's notes in the 'Book of Materials' on non-professional artists, unpublished in his lifetime, were 'digested and published' in 1937 by Frederick W. Hilles and Philip B. Daghlian as a part of a 'fifth' volume of the *Anecdotes of Painting*. See 'Ladies and Gentlemen Distinguished by Their Artistic Talents', in F. W. Hilles and P. B. Daghlian, eds., *Anecdotes of Painting in England [1760–1795] collected by Horace Walpole*. vol. 5 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937), ch. 8, 228–240.

[28] K. Sloan, *'A Noble Art'*, cat. 140.

[29] Walpole, 'Book of Materials', 152 (49 2615 I).

Figure 9.1 Lady Louisa Augusta Greville, *Landscape after a Painting by Salvator Rosa*. Etching, 36.4 × 47.5 cm (trimmed to the plate) in Horace Walpole's *A Collection of Prints Engraved by Various Persons of Quality*. Courtesy of Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

after Salvator Rosa (signed in the plate 'Salvator Rosa delin. / AG sculpt. 1759'); a scene with five figures (signed 'Guercino delint / AG fecit 1760'). The fourth is after the landscape painting by Rosa that is mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (signed in the plate 'Rosa pinxt / AG delint' 1761 et sculpt 1762') (Figure 9.1). Presumably, she had access to the original painting by Rosa as well as works by other old masters she also copied. Greville's etchings are also present in Bull's album and in a set of prints and drawings by George Earl of Warwick, who produced classicising landscapes in watercolours, and by Lady Louisa Greville.[30] The models for Greville's etchings are all artists at the top of the academic canon. In his lectures as President of the Royal Academy, Sir Joshua

[30] In addition to a whole album of drawings by George Greville (2016.7040.1.1-27), a single drawing of a classical landscape by him also in the British Museum (1998,0425.7) is recorded in acquisition notes in the Collection online as from a set of prints and drawings described as 'Seven old Volumes containing Sketches by George Earl of Warwick, Etchings by Lady Louisa Greville, etc.' sold at Sotheby's Warwick sale in 1936. These drawings apparently remained with the family until 1936.

Reynolds points to Rosa, Guercino, and Carracci among other old masters as models to be emulated for an aspiring painter. Walpole himself, in contest with Academy doctrine, asserts in hyperbolic praise that the drawings for his play *The Mysterious Mother* by Lady Diana Beauclerk, whom he counted as a 'female genius', were such 'that Salvator Rosa and Guido could not surpass their expression and beauty'.[31] With her etched copies, Lady Greville likewise engaged with canonical art.

The proximity of old masters esteemed by the academy with works by non-professional persons of quality likewise coexisted in broader economy of collecting practices. For both Walpole and Bull, the collecting of non-professional etchers overlapped with other shared collecting pursuits. Bull and Walpole were both committed to collecting British portrait prints and tracked each other's progress.[32] Each pursued a comprehensive collection of prints catalogued in James Granger's *A Biographical History of England, from Egbert the Great to the Revolution; Consisting of Characters Disposed in Different Classes, and Adapted to a Methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads* (London, 1769). In a lengthy footnote to the entry on John Evelyn in 'Class X. Artists, etc.', Granger enumerates 'several persons of rank and eminence, now living, who amuse themselves with etching and engraving'. Pointedly, Granger begins this passage with Lady Louisa Greville, commenting that she has 'etched several landscapes that well deserve a place in any collection'.[33] Both Walpole and Bull also engaged in the common practice of extra-illustrated folios including that of Horace Walpole's own *A Description of a Villa at Strawberry Hill* using common watercolour and print images.[34]

[31] C. Roman, 'The Art of Lady Diana Beauclerk', 154–169, 158.

[32] Walpole kept a list of prints that 'Mr Bull has that I want' which remains with his working copy of Granger. He crossed out portraits as he acquired them. See Walpole's copy of J. Granger, *A Biographical History of England, from Egbert the Great to the Revolution; Consisting of Characters Disposed in Different Classes, and Adapted to a Methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads*, vol. 3 (London, 1769). Lewis Walpole Library (49 541).

[33] J. Granger, *A Biographical History*, vol. 4, 409. Note also that listed first among many men are the countess of Carlisle's several prints from Rembrandt, Salvator Rosa, Guido, and other celebrated masters. The footnote is fully transcribed in Alexander, *Amateurs and Printmaking*, 1983 but the citation is given there incorrectly as vol. 2.

[34] On extra-illustration, see L. Peltz, *Facing the Text: Extra-illustration, Print Culture, and Society in Britain, 1769–1840* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 2017). See especially part II 'From Domestic Retirement to a Commercial Marketplace: Amateurs, Antiquaries, and Entrepreneurs'; ch. 2, 'Charting the Craze: Anthony Storer and Richard Bull', 155–177; and ch. 3, 'The Strawberry Hill Press and the Rituals of Bibliographic Exchange', 179–209.

Lady Caroline Yorke (1765–1818) and Amabel Yorke, Lady Polwarth (1751–1833)

Etchings by Caroline Yorke and her older cousin Amabel Yorke, later Lady Polwarth, were as collectable as prints by Carlisle and Greville. Though Walpole gave neither a bespoke letterpress title page, etchings by both were included in his and in Bull's collections. Both qualified with an appropriate quality lineage. Amabel Yorke succeeded her mother as Baroness Lucas of Crudwell, 1797. In 1772 she married Alexander Hume-Campbell, styled Viscount Polwarth. She was created Countess De Grey of Wrest in 1816.[35] Lady Caroline Yorke married in 1790 to John Eliot, 2nd Baron Eliot. Unlike the practices of Lady Carlisle and Lady Greville that relied on the old masters for their copies, the practices of Caroline and Amabel Yorke divergently found imagery in contemporary models, including their own designs or those of their family.[36]

Caroline Yorke's small-scale etchings are relatively modest. Four oval scenes in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight are pasted on one page of Walpole's album where the prints are described in his hand as 'by Miss Yorke, daughter of Charles Yorke, 2d Son of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, & of Miss Johnson, Mr. Yorke's second Wife who drew the Views'. Signed in the plate with initials 'A.Y. del' and 'C.Y. sculpt.', these compositions were copied after drawings by her mother Agneta Yorke. Two are numbered and dated 1787–1788.[37] Based on insider knowledge, Walpole annotated locations for some of these views. Additional prints by her appear two pages later: *View on Beaulieu River* with title in the plate, also after Agneta Yorke, and a wooded landscape after W. Gilpin.

Historical evidence about how and where non-professionals learned to etch or where they had their prints etched and printed is limited. Alexander, however, points to manuals such as those by John Evelyn or William Gilpin that gave written instruction on etching and speculates

[35] See W. S. Lewis et al., *Horace Walpole's Miscellaneous Correspondence*, vol. 42, 237, n.8.

[36] For an extensive account and analysis of Amabel's work, see ch. 5 'Creating Compositions', in Sloan, *'A Noble Art'*, 147–152 and ch. 7 'Private Pupils of Drawing Masters, of Alexander Cozens in Particular', in K. M. Sloan, 'The Teaching of Non-Professional Artists in Eighteenth-Century England', PhD dissertation, 2 vols., University of London (1986).

[37] On print No. 1 the initial P. appears for the etcher's initials, perhaps a curious version of 'C'. Impressions of these etchings are also in the British Museum and are attributed to Lady Caroline Yorke after Amabel Hume-Campbell, Countess De Grey in contradiction to Walpole's annotation. For an account of the etchings by the Yorke women in Bull's album, see Sloan, *'A Noble Art'*, 158. See BM 1917,1208.2722-2725. See also impressions from Richard Bull's album, 1931.0413.350-352 and 1931,0413.348.

that many were likely inspired to try their hand.[38] Sloan more thoroughly outlines the influence of both William Gilpin and Alexander Cozens on the landscape drawings by various women in the extended Yorke family.[39] Agneta Yorke had some acquaintance with William Gilpin, and Caroline Yorke's etching of a wooded scene after a drawing by W. Gilpin confirms her study of his work. More, her etchings after Agneta Yorke generally recall the oval vignette illustrations in Gilpin's book.

Amabel Yorke also made etchings variously after her own drawings or those by drawing masters or family members. Based on the drawings themselves and on epistolary testimony in various archives of family correspondence, Sloan records that Lady Polwarth, her mother the Marchioness Grey and her sister, Lady Mary Grantham all closely followed the methods of Alexander Cozens for composing landscapes, including sketching out of doors. After her marriage in 1772, Amabel made etchings after drawings by Cozens.[40] Lady Polwarth's etchings in Walpole's album of scenes near Aranjuez after drawings by her sister's husband Lord Grantham (Thomas Robinson, 2nd Baron Grantham) are scattered in Walpole's album. Her oval landscape *View in Studley Park* is after her own drawing and is signed 'Ldy A. P del. Et sc'.[41] The landscapes are nicely composed, and the etching techniques are well executed, even if the delineation of figures can be awkward. Amabel's larger, more ambitious etchings perhaps reflect her association with James Bretherton (fl. 1750–1799) from whom she took lessons. Bretherton was a drawing master and printer who made prints after old masters, and who also etched and published prints for gentleman artists, most notably Henry William Bunbury whose work however did circulate in the trade.[42] Amabel Yorke's

[38] Alexander, *Amateurs and Printmaking*, 3.

[39] Sloan, *'A Noble Art'*, 149–151. On William Gilpin as a drawing master, see also C. P. Barbier, *William Gilpin. His Drawings, Teaching, and Theory of the Picturesque* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 148–171. On Alexander Cozens as a drawing master, see K. Sloan, *Alexander and John Robert Cozens. The Poetry of Landscape* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), ch. III, 'Christ's Hospital and Private Pupils 1749–59', 21–35, and K. Sloan, 'Alexander Cozens and Amateurs Drawn to Etch', *Print Quarterly*, 28:4 (2011): 405–409. Sloan gives some account of Amabel's engagement as Cozens's pupil based on unpublished family correspondence in the County Record Office Bedfordshire, Lucas Collections. See K. Sloan, 'A New Chronology for Alexander Cozens. Part II: 1759–86', *The Burlington Magazine*, 127(1985): 354–361, 363. For a succinct account of printsellers who taught amateurs to draw and etch, see T. Clayton, *The English Print, 1688–1802* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 214–215.

[40] Sloan, 'Alexander Cozens and Amateurs Drawn to Etch', 406. Early etchings by Amabel Yorke after Cozens are in the British Museum (1917-12-8-2601-2645).

[41] BM 1917.1208.2630. [42] On James Bretherton see T. Clayton, *The English Print*, 215.

diary records repeated visits to Bretherton's shop and her work with him drawing and etching.[43]

Even though her plates were likely printed on the press of a professional printmaker/publisher, they were private printings. None of Yorke's etchings, nor those by Lady Carlisle and Lady Greville, include any publication imprint in keeping with their circulation outside of trade.[44] In fact we know that the etchings by both Amabel and Caroline Yorke were instead exchanged as gifts of friendship and social currency among elites.[45] One instance of such gifting is documented by a letter from Walpole sent in thanks to Bull for 'the last prints you was [sic] so kind as to send me, and for those I found today on my return from Strawberry Hill'. These prints which Walpole describes as 'truly very meritorious' are four views of scenery in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight now in Walpole's *A Collection of Prints, Engraved by Various Persons of Quality*. Although her diaries mention repeated visits to Strawberry Hill, it is unclear how close her acquaintance to Walpole really was. Certainly, his knowledge of her was sufficient for him to register disapproval of her behaviour.[46] Nevertheless, closing the circle of politeness, Walpole inquires with Bull about where she lives so that he may leave his name and grateful thanks at her door.[47] Bull's involvement with Amabel Yorke's printmaking and collecting apparently extended to loaning her his 'Volumes of Honorary Etchings'. With her letter of appreciation, she also presented him with some etchings by other Ladies.[48]

[43] The diaries are now at West Yorkshire Archive Service Leeds. The diaries are digitised and available online but indexing is still in process. My only access was remote. I am grateful to D'arcy Darilmaz, Archive Assistant, for her help with access during the Covid pandemic shutdown.

[44] Amabel's work did find its way into commercial projects if not remuneratively. Her views of the family seats at Wimpole and Wrest served as models for twelve scenes of the Green Frog Service produced by Josiah Wedgwood and Thomas Bentley for Catherine the Great. See D. Adshead, 'Wedgwood, Wimpole and Wrest. The Landscape Drawings of Lady Amabel Polwarth', *Apollo* (April 1996), 31–36.

[45] For a more extensive list of gifts to friends and collectors, see Sloan, '*A Noble Art*', 150. For an account of exchange between William Gilpin and Caroline Yorke as well as others, see Barbier, *William Gilpin*, 154–156.

[46] In comments about Lady Grantham, Walpole noted that she 'behaved like a human creature, and not like her sister' (Amabel Yorke). Letter from H. Walpole to Lady Ossory, 26 November 1780, in W. S. Lewis et al., *Horace Walpole's Miscellaneous Correspondence*, vol. 33, 242, n.8. See n.44 on her diaries.

[47] Letter from Horace Walpole to Richard Bull, 30 March 1789, in W. S. Lewis et al., *Horace Walpole's Miscellaneous Correspondence*, vol. 42, 237, n.1.

[48] Amabel Yorke's letter is pasted in Richard Bull's album at the British Museum. For a transcription, see Sloan, '*A Noble Art*', 158.

Conclusion

Often considered separate from canonical work produced by professional artists, the etchings by Lady Carlisle, Lady Greville and Lady Caroline Yorke and Lady Polwarth together with their reception by two prominent contemporary collectors demonstrate that the practice of etching by ladies, 'not artists' was, in fact, at once both distinct and connected to the print trade. Self-consciously produced and circulated privately these prints were, however, disseminated, if only among fashionable circles as gifts of friendship, acts of connoisseurship, and as artifacts prized by collectors. If the creation of these etchings was ideologically antithetical to the professional practice of most of the other women included in this volume, the work of these non-professional printmakers, its cultural and social currency, and its reception among contemporaries nonetheless represent a vital component of the story of women printmakers in eighteenth century Britain.

Indeed, prints, especially those copied from or inspired by master artists by women (equally with men) who were 'not artists', herald a privileged access to canonical works while also affirming their aesthetic judgement and status as the proper audience and patrons for the arts in England. As such, Walpole fittingly shelved *A Collection of Prints, Engraved by Various Persons of Quality* in the Round Drawing Room together with portfolios of prints and drawings by European artists like Rembrandt, Annibale Carraci, Guido Reni, Salvator Rosa, as well as Paul Sandby, and many others.[49] The title of Edward Millinton's auction catalogue *A Curious collection of Prints and Drawings, by the best engravers and Greatest Masters in the World. Fit only for Persons of Quality and Gentlemen, which are the Virtuosos of the Age* (1690) attests to a long-standing notion that persons of quality were best fit as arbiters of art. It is in this cultural milieu that women, 'not artists', made etchings that engaged so fully with collecting and old master works. In this way, their activities as printmakers in eighteenth-century Britain were integral to the wider world of print culture, and the art world more broadly. As such we can rightly reinsert their significant legacy individually and collectively on the imprint of women in graphic media.

[49] For a full list of the albums of prints Walpole kept in the Round Tower, see Hazen, *A Catalogue of Horace Walpole's Library*, vol. 3, 113–265, especially Press E.