

Review



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Editor: Stella Beddoe

Angelica Kauffman's Portrait of a Woman; oriental or occidental otherness?

MA student, Alexandra Loske, examines evidence for the authenticity and explores the identity of a large-scale painting, presented to Hove Museum in 1937. She would like to acknowledge suggestions and related publications by Professor Lou Taylor of the University of Brighton and by Alistair Laing, Adviser on Paintings and Sculpture for the National Trust.

Portrait of a Woman, a relatively unknown painting by Angelica Kauffman (1741–1807) in the Brighton & Hove collections, was recently put on display as part of the 2006 exhibition, *Fashion and Fancy Dress – The Messel Family Dress Collection 1865–2005*. (fig.1) Currently labelled as a woman in a Turkish fancy dress, investigation shows that it has long been in the collection under the title *Neapolitan Woman*. The uncertainty about the costume raises two questions: is this a portrait or a costume study, and how can fashionable Turkish and traditional Italian costumes be identified?

The painting is cautiously dated 1775 and little is known of its provenance or the circumstances of its creation. Nothing is known about the identity of the sitter. There is more evidence for a nearly identical painting by Kauffman in the collection of Saltram House in Devon, which has been known as *Woman in Neapolitan Dress*, since Saltram's first catalogue was compiled in 1819. Saltram was the home of John Parker, later 1st Lord Boringdon, during Kauffman's lifetime and is now a National Trust property. Many of the paint-

Fig.1 Angelica Kauffman *Portrait of a Woman*, oil on canvas, Brighton & Hove City Museums.



ings in the Saltram Collection date from the 1760s and it seems likely that John Parker acquired it on his first wedding trip to Italy in 1764, which would tie in with Kauffman's early travels in Italy.

Kauffman's almost life-size painting shows a young woman of fair complexion with dark brown hair, wearing a floor-length, red costume, sitting in a relaxed manner on a rock or plinth, with her right arm resting on a fabric-covered ledge. The vibrant green, red and golden tones of her costume are in stark contrast to the muddy-coloured background, in which a bay and mountains and some large-leafed bushes are just visible. The costume appears to be the focus of the painting. The woman wears a deep red dress or skirt with a black striped pattern, possibly made of linen. Its front is covered with a green embroidered or brocaded apron, in the same pattern as the upper part of the outfit. This V-shaped bodice could be a stomacher (a detachable stiff front), or part of a one-piece dress. A long-sleeved white muslin undergarment or blouse is visible, with delicate lace edges showing at the wrists and a low neckline. The woman's headdress is of similar fabric and leaves about three centimetres of hairline visible. Over the undergarment and dress she wears what appears to be a waist-length, long-sleeved jacket of a heavy red fabric, possibly velvet, its edges elaborately decorated with gold thread. It is open at the front, revealing the bodice, but is loosely held together above the waist with a broad red ribbon or girdle. The tip of a pointed, gold-embroidered slipper and grey stockings are just about visible under the voluminous skirt. The woman wears some jewellery but no rings or bracelets. The spectator can see one of her gold drop-earrings, of star-shaped design with an oval pearl hanging from it. She also wears a long, thick, three-stranded gold necklace, the strands being held together at the lowest point by a large faceted red gemstone, possibly a garnet, set in gold. A pendant hanging from the gemstone setting appears to blend in with the embroidery on the bodice. Closer inspection reveals that it is actually incomplete, which could indicate either paint loss or that the painting is actually unfinished.

Since the donation of the painting to Hove Museum in 1937 by a Mrs Burges Watson, its storage and display seem to have been a problem. A short article in the *West Sussex Gazette* from 16 September 1937 suggests that it might have been shown at Hove Town Hall shortly after the donation. Museum records show that it was on loan to the Diocese of Chichester's Church House in Hove from 1975 until 1982, alongside the other



Fig.2 Angelica Kauffman *Penelope at her Loom*, Brighton & Hove City Museums.

large Kauffman painting in the collection, *Penelope at her Loom* (fig.2). Since returning from Church House, the *Portrait of a Woman* was in storage, until the display mounted in conjunction with the Messel exhibition opened in 2005. In 1984 a condition survey was carried out, recommending cleaning and restoration. This survey also suggests that the painting might have suffered from over-cleaning in the past. The restoration work was never carried out; Penelope on the other hand was treated thoroughly in 1989/90.

The only record in Brighton & Hove Museums' archive regarding the acquisition of the painting is the newspaper cutting from the *West Sussex Gazette*, which provides only rudimentary information on its previous owner, Mrs Burges Watson. She also donated *Penelope*, which has enjoyed considerably more scholarly attention than its companion. No other records were kept about the donor or the circumstances of the donation, which is surprising, given the importance and size of these paintings. It is possible that some documentation was lost during evacuation precautions in Sussex during World War II.

Research online and at the National Archives reveals the most likely link to this obscure donor to be Rear Admiral Fischer Burges Watson (1884–1960). He lived in Sussex in the 1930s and was married twice, firstly in 1909 to Sybil Mona Caroline (who died in 1926), and then to Mabel Harford, daughter of Captain P. C. Underwood in 1931. Mabel could therefore be the donor of the two paintings. An Admiral would have had the

financial means to acquire valuable oil paintings. He might have moved to a new, possibly smaller, house with his second wife and they decided to donate the two paintings to their local museum. This is pure speculation, however, and further investigation of the Burges Watson family would be necessary to find out more about the painting's provenance.

Kauffman became interested in oriental symbolism and particularly oriental costume in the mid-1770s, influenced to a large extent by market forces and fashion. She was a clever, hard working painter, whose instinct for business fed into her artistic activity as her incredible productivity, meticulous book-keeping and business correspondence testify. Since no sitters' or sittings accounts survive, it is unknown to what extent the oriental attire in the portrait commissions was the artist's or the sitter's choice.

Like many other European travellers and artists, Kauffman's interpretations of Turkish costume were fantasy versions of authentic Turkish dress, or combinations of elements from Neo-classical, Greek and English dress styles, often worn at masquerades. Among the recurring elements of dress *à la turque* in 18th-century painting are the *shalwar* – loose, baggy trousers, along with the kaftan, low-cut bodices or waistcoats and ermine-trimmed brocade robes (the *curdee*). The emphasis is on the loose fit rather than specific colours. Examples of Turkish dress illustrated in A. Racinet's *Le Costume Historique*, (1888) while dating from the 19th century still clearly show the *curdee*, the *shalwar* and rich decorations (fig.4).

Fig.3 F. A. Vincent, *A Woman from Santa Lucia, Naples, 1770–79* courtesy Sothebys, New York.



None of these elements is apparent in Kauffman's *Portrait of a Woman*. The skirt is billowing but does not resemble a trouser dress, the bodice is stiff and corset-like, unlike the comfortable, loose-fitting Turkish dress. There is no sign of a loose, long coat or dressing gown. Instead the woman appears to be wearing a waist-length, tailored jacket. Although colours vary greatly in Turkish costume, the combination of deep red, green and gold seldom occurs. Much more likely colour combinations, especially in Kauffman's interpretations, are transparent whites, contrasted with warm shades of yellow and deep blue. Reds, however, are a recurring feature in Italian costume through the centuries.

Alistair Laing, Adviser on Paintings and Sculpture at the National Trust, believes the costume is indeed Neapolitan rather than Turkish, comparing it to other 18th century depictions of Italian women, for example *Woman from Santa Lucia, Naples*, (1774) by the French painter François-André Vincent. (fig.3) The choice of subject illustrates the increasing interest of travellers in the popular art and folklore of Italy, and reflects Kauffman's own interests during her early career, when she first travelled to Italy with her father in the 1760s.

Compared with the highly fashionably *turquerie*, very few examples or images of Neapolitan dress are available. The interest of Italy for the 18th century visitor lay in the idealisation of classical antiquity, rather than contemporary or rural art and design. Kauffman herself was a quintessential Neo-classical painter and the majority of figures in her history paintings wear long, floating, Graeco-Roman dresses made of gauzy fabrics, often inspired by paintings from the Italian Renaissance. She also adapted this style for many of her self-portraits. Laing also rightly points out that there is "no one Neapolitan style, but a mass of regional and local variations."

Kauffman visited Naples twice, once with her father in 1763–64, before she settled in England, and once in 1783–4 with her husband Antonio Zucchi (whom she married in 1781), just before leaving England. During her first stay in Naples Kauffman spent much of her time copying old masters in the royal galleries of Capodimonte. She also produced some highly accomplished portraits, mainly of rich and influential men in the diplomatic service or on the Grand Tour, such as Johann Winckelmann, David Garrick, John Byng, and John Parker. These portraits share some stylistic features with the painting in Brighton Museum, for example the recurring red colour scheme an underdeveloped, monotone background.



Fig.4 Detail from *The Costumes of European Turkey*, from A. Racinet, *Le Costume Historique*, 1888¹.

As for the subject matter, Kauffman clearly had an interest in traditional local costume from early in her career until at least the mid-1770s, which is most obvious in several self-portraits in which she wears authentic local Swiss-German costume. Since the *Portrait of a Woman* is unlikely to be an individual portrait, it is probably a costume painting, illustrating her interest in the dress of local Italians during her stay in Naples. As Lou Taylor points out, with regards to dress history, there was a notion of a romantic idyll of the occidental, rather than the oriental, 'other'.

The fact that a twin painting exists might give reason to worry about the authenticity of the Brighton copy, especially since it is not signed, appears unfinished or flawed and was ignored by curators of recent exhibitions of Kauffman's work. Comparing the two paintings at Brighton and Saltram is inconclusive. The Saltram's picture appears to have suffered discoloration and is in need of surface cleaning and possibly repair. The attention to the costume detail in both paintings is remarkably similar. The most charming and poignant difference, however is the fact that, whereas the Saltram lady's gaze is introspective, looking down and avoiding the spectator's eyes, the sitter in Brighton's painting looks out of the painting at the spectator.

1. Reproduced in: L. Taylor, 2004, *Establishing Dress History*, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, p.23

A Spectacular Royal Loan: King George IV's state bed from Windsor Castle

John Hardy, furniture consultant at Christie's, London, describes the evolution of the design for this sumptuous bed, in the light of a newly discovered drawing.

The original bed made for the King's Bedroom at the Royal Pavilion by Bailey and Sanders, no longer survives. Therefore Her Majesty the Queen has generously lent a magnificent golden, palm-wreathed bed, which provided the focus of George IV's Apartment at Windsor Castle.¹ The Apartment was created c1826-28 by the court architect Sir Jeffry Wyattville (1766-1840) and furnished with French magnificence under the King's direction. The bed, being recessed in a curtained alcove, reflected seventeenth-century French court fashion from the reign of Louis XIV, when state bedrooms were presented as reception rooms. This idea reflected George's admiration for pre-Revolutionary France.

The bed curtains were incorporated with the room's silk hangings. Their 'antique' fashion of folded drapes evoked Imperial Roman splendour, being looped on all sides and suspended in hollowed 'flutes' from 'paterae' (circular ornaments carved with acanthus leaves). While their blue colour, bordered in buff and orange brocade, recalled classical 'Etruscan' taste, they were flowered with palms and laurels to evoke 'lyric poetry' triumphs. The silk pattern recalled the 'antique' manner promoted by the engraved works of

C. Percier and P.F.L. Fontaine, who served as court architects to Emperor Napoleon.² It was named 'Waterloo' to commemorate the role of the Prince Regent as Europe's 'Peace Bearer', when his armies defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815.

The bed, bearing the Royal Arms of the United Kingdom of Britain, was designed 'à l'antique' harmonising with other decoration of the room. Its hearth, which celebrated Peace with a trophy of Roman weapons sculpted on its overmantel mirror, evoked the 'laying aside of arms', while also serving to recall Love's triumph in the 'History of Mars and Venus' as recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. This theme is repeated in the bed's medallion, where the Royal Arms are displayed on a round shield, originally intended to be hung from the pillars by buckled belts that crossed like swords. An earlier proposal showed these armorials filling the footboard's entire panel (see fig.1).

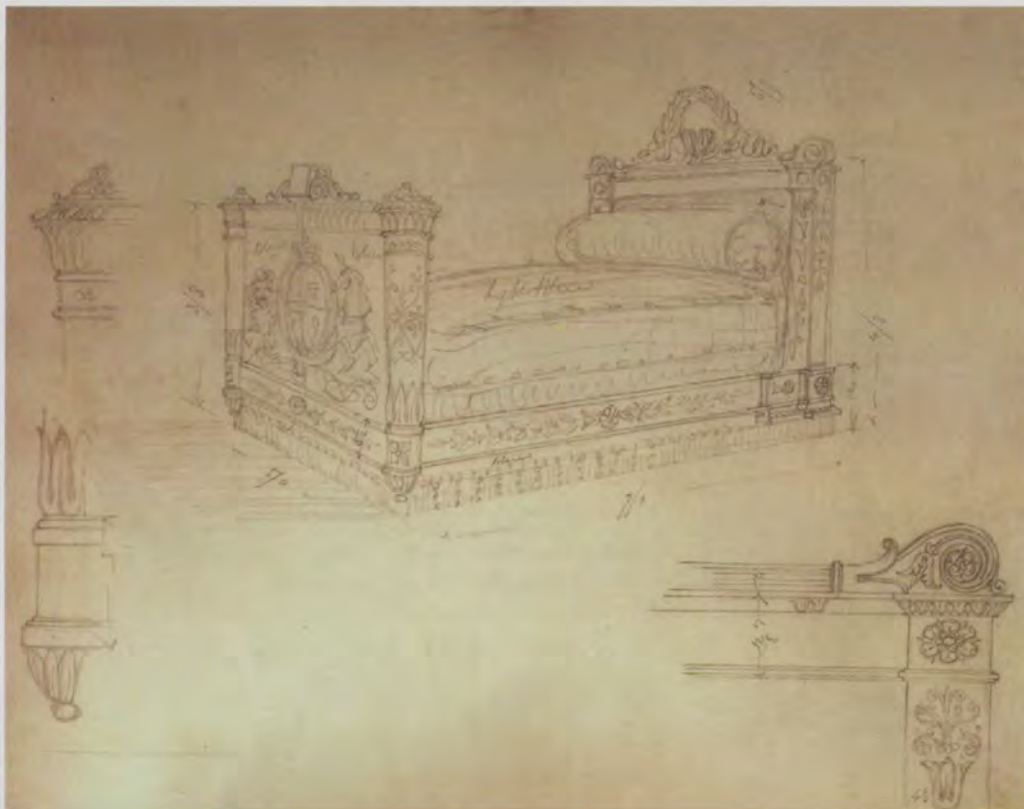
The present truncated pillars, shaped like arrow-quivers, evolved from an earlier scheme for Egyptian 'torch' pillars. Like the rest of the bedstead, these pillars are wreathed with palms and laurels in harmony with the 'Waterloo' hangings. More laurels crown the bed's Grecian altar cresting and are tied to a pole, whose clustered rods, like the Roman *fascies*, (the emblem of good government), terminate in flowered volutes. This beribboned crown was to encircle the King's 'GR IV' cipher, which was intended to be embroidered

on white 'gros de Naples', the corded satin of the bed's head-cloth. This was shown with yet more laurels festooning its scalloped flutes, which radiated from the cipher to form a triumphal arched shell. It was also planned that the footboard's raised and buttressed plinth should display a clock, symbolising the ability of great princes to make time pass well.

This 'French bedstead' design, executed by Nicholas Morel, recalls that of couch frames supplied by the Parisian court ébéniste François-Honoré-Georges Jacob-Desmaller (d. 1841) for Empress Josephine's Salon at the Château de Fontainebleau. The bed itself was executed at the Aldersgate Street works of George Seddon, with whom Morel formed a partnership in 1827. It was in that year that his scheme for furnishing 'His Majesty's Bedroom' with sumptuous elegance, was approved by the King and, no doubt, praised as 'Eblouissant!' (dazzling! – one of George IV's favourite exclamations).

1. The furnishing of 'His Majesty's Bed Room' at Windsor Castle is detailed in Hugh Roberts, *For the King's Pleasure; The Furnishing and Decoration of George IV's Apartments at Windsor Castle*, London, 2001 (pp.148-163).

2. In particular C.Percier and P.F.L. Fontaine's, *Recueil de Decorations Interieures, comprenant tout ce qui a rapport à l'Ameublement*, 1801 (reprinted 1812).



*The Morel & Seddon
Commun (they were
active 1827-1831)
from a set of 56
pieces made for
George IV's apartment
at Windsor. Much
was designed by FHG
Jacob-Desmaller the
Parisian cabinet maker
employed by M&S to
help with the Commun.
Motifs from antique Roman
sources*

Fig.1 The office of Morel and Seddon, pencil designs for George IV's State bed for Windsor Castle's Room '202', c1826. Its rich fringe conceals strong brass wheel casters. Private collection.

Queensbury Mews, (Part 2) 1888



Fig.1 detail from Webb & Earl, *Brighton from the West Pier*, c.1870.

In the second of her imaginative and illuminating tours, Suzanne Hinton explores one of Brighton's smaller thoroughfares at different periods through its history.

Find lamp-post 69 on King's Road and look back over your left shoulder. You will be surprised to see that monstrous construction, the West Pier. (fig.1) Goodness knows why anyone thinks the town needs another pier, since the Chain Pier is only a mile and a half away and looks a lot safer, held up on stout suspension chains. But the West Pier looks a lot flimsier with its low decking skimming over the water for nearly 300 yards. You have to pay at the tollbooths and then there's nothing but a few kiosks along the whole length. It's 25 years old already and I understand it's quite popular, but goodness knows how long it will last. Let us continue with our walk.

The little row of houses between Nos 122 and 128 definitely seems more run down since we visited in 1851. This is hardly surprising considering the number of people who live here. They have all become lodging or boarding houses and every house is packed to the rafters. There is worse to come. Look straight ahead and

you will see almost the whole row of houses you noted 37 years ago is being reduced to rubble. Mr Black, in his guide book to Brighton is still quoting The 'abundantly furnished shops ... of a purely metropolitan character', described by the late Mr Sala in the Brighton guide book, are rapidly disappearing.¹ Now only Nos 106 to 109 on the corner of Cannon Place are still standing. See, there's Pott's Music shop on the corner and next to it, Mr Gibson's chemist's shop; both have lodging houses on the upper floors. These houses are going because Gordon Hotels Ltd. has bought all the freeholds in order to build their new Hôtel Métropole. The former Westfield Gardens will soon be filled with the five-storey, red brick building of the hotel and its elegant private gardens of the hotel.

If you had been here a few months ago you could have attended the January auction sale held by Mr Rawlinson in No 113 King's Road where the contents of all the houses Nos 111-121 were being sold off.² On Tuesday, 24 January this included 'the FIXTURES AND FITTINGS of the skating rink.' The London architect Mr T. Searancke Archer, wrote recently of Westfield Gardens to a client:

The land as you are now aware is well known in the town being the King's Road Skating Rink where between six and seven thousand fashionable visitors have attended per day during the season.³

A further advertisement, (from the *Sussex Gazette*, 8 January 1888) confirms that the skating rink had been a well equipped venue for these fashionable people:

Also on TUESDAY January 24 the FIXTURES AND FITTINGS of the SKATING RINK, comprising about 50 outside standard and branch gas lamps, ornamental railings, corrugated iron and zinc roofing, match boarding, lavatory tip basins, china urinals and pans, valve closets, mahogany fittings, two large size Glover's dry gas meters, gun barrel piping and connections, about 1,000 variegated lamps and other effects.

More important are the people who have been displaced by this tremendous upheaval. The number of inhabitants in that particular row of houses had fallen over the years; from 133

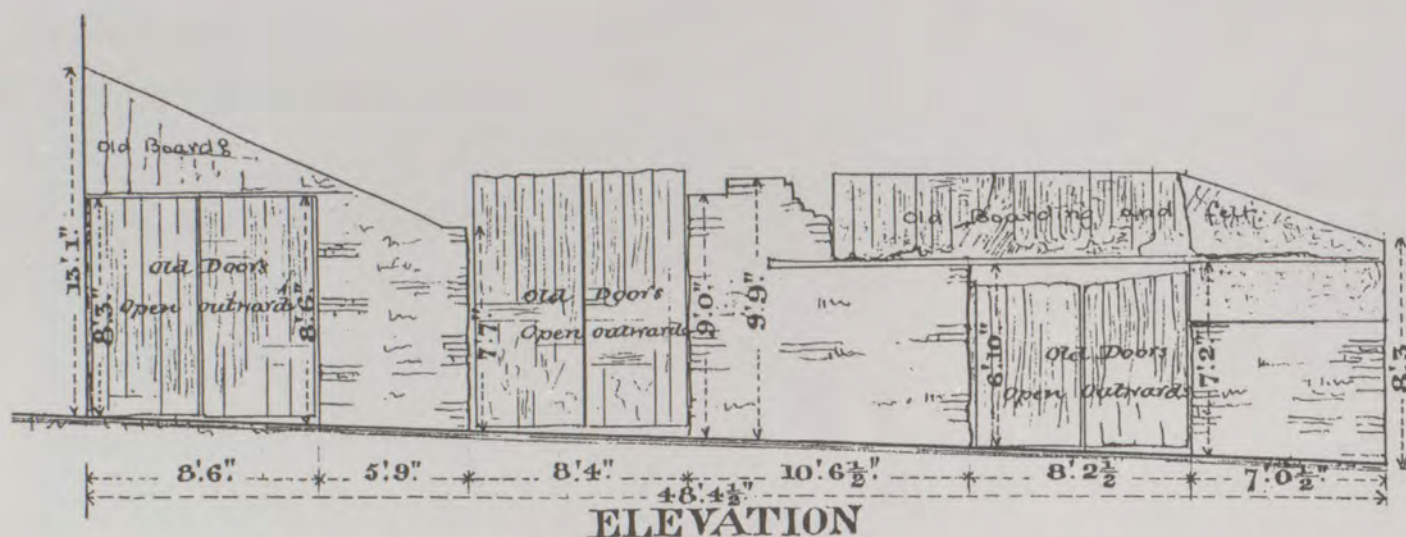


Fig.2 "Mr Beck's premises", Queensbury Mews, elevation 1879.

people living between Nos 110 and 121 in 1861 to fewer than one hundred by the beginning of this year. Yet even up to six years ago, (according to the 1881 census) this row of houses was a bustling community.

No 121, for instance, had been the family home of Joseph F. Bartholomew, the Chief Collector of Coal Duties to the Corporation of Brighton, an important but poorly paid post. The expense of keeping three female servants and, more importantly, three unmarried daughters in their early twenties, led Mr and Mrs Bartholomew to let part of their home as lodgings. Their lodgers are young Mr and Mrs Brown and their five children under ten. The Browns cannot have been hard up since Mr Brown owned another property and the couple employed a governess, a lady's nurse, a nurse and a maid. No 121 would seem to be fairly full but we also find the Mockett family, Mathias, a retired farmer, his wife Emma, and Emma's sister. That made twenty-two people in one house. Not surprisingly the sale of the contents of No 121 took two days to complete, 19 and 20 January 1888.

But enough destruction. Let us cross the road and see what is new in Queensbury Mews. The bustle caused by the attractions of the West Pier has made King's Road rather difficult to cross. Black's Guide Book warns us:

In the season, between 3 and 5 pm, the front from Hove, through the King's Road to Kemp Town ... is crowded with barouches, landaus, broughams, mail-phaeatons, and dog carts, and it must be a very inclement October or November at Brighton if the great majority of the landau and barouches are not open.⁴

If you look up the Mews between the pile of rubble and No 122 King's Road you may spot a

tiny spire a-top a steep pitched roof. Walk past the front door of No 122, turn sharp left and you will see a quite magnificent new building. But more of that in a moment. By 1879 this corner property had become little more than a ramshackle hovel⁵. (fig.2) Mr Beck, the publican, had let it briefly to the elderly fly (coach) proprietor Henry Morley and his even older wife but when approached he was keen to sell the property.

Already the Council of Managers of the Church have a problem. The construction works of the Hôtel Métropole, virtually on their doorstep, are causing problems and at their next meeting, on 9 February 1889 they will ask M. van Berkelaer, one of their Managers, to enquire who should repair the pavement damaged by construction carts⁶. The Rev. Alfred Pearson intends to approach the construction workers, but in a more spiritual way, as he said in his first annual letter to the congregation of St Margaret's Church on 6 January 1889:

An attempt is being made to reach and influence the work-men engaged in the building of the Hotel Metropole, situated in the District. The Company's representative here has expressed himself favourable to any efforts for their good, and it is hoped that as the number of men employed increace (sic), many may be led to join our Mission club, and attend the services. Gifts of Tracts for distribution amongst them will be thankfully received by our Reader and his workers.⁷

On the other side of the road, a Mr Beck still runs his little pub, the Queensbury Arms, but this is now William James Beck, aged 52, son of William the alehouse keeper and Mrs Beck, the lodging-house keeper at No 123 King's Road.⁸ William James prefers to call himself a wine mer-

chant, but he maintains the Beck family tradition of diverse business interests. He is agent for the "Atlas Insurance Company" and he and his wife Emma have a lodger in the house. William James will, no doubt welcome the thirsty workmen from the Métropole building site who come to his establishment at the end of a long day's work.

Moving up the Mews, No 11 still stands hard up against the north wall of the French Church. It is a stable once again for the coachmen's families, who lived "over the shop" during the previous decade, have gone. There was the Evans family in No 12 with their five tiny infants, Louisa Martin and her four teenagers (luckily George was already a solicitor's Clerk aged 14 and his sister Esther a pupil teacher at 13, as they all had to live on their father's wages as a coachman.) The Sayers in No 10 and John and Anne Smith at No 6 each had three children. No 6 must have been very full, since Mary and Isaac Webster (cook and coachman respectively) and Sarah Townsend (a domestic nurse) also lived there.

It seems that these families have been driven away by the restrictions imposed by Gordon Hotels Ltd, as they develop the Métropole site. In the 1890s, when the Group leases out Nos 9 and 8 to Edward Broadbridge of 32 Sillwood Street, you will see how keen the Group is to protect its guests. Mr Broadbridge will be under strict injunctions to ensure that he neither competes with the hotel nor upsets the guests:

the Lessee shall not nor will use or occupy or permit to be used or occupied the said premises or any part thereof or any future erections or building on the said piece of land as or for a Chapel or Public place of Worship Hotel or Restaurant Lunatic Asylum or Establishment or carry on or suffer to be carried on in or upon the said premises the trades of a butcher

tobacconist soap boiler victualler (sic) alehouse keeper refreshment house keeper tallow chandler smith brazier human or any other open "scouring" or offensive trade business or manufactory which shall or may be become or grow to be a public or private nuisance or a damage or disturbance or annoyance or grievance to the Company or any of their Tenants or the guests in the Hotel Metropole or to any occupier of the land or buildings for the time being in the neighbourhood of the said premises.⁹

As you walk up the Mews you have already seen an alehouse and a Chapel and there is probably some smithing going on in other nearly stables causing a fair amount of nuisance and disturbance. No wonder the Gordon Hotels Ltd were eager to try to get as many restrictions as possible into one contract. But it does not stop there. You have already seen the little jewel of the French Church at one end. (fig.3) The Gordon Hotels Ltd will certainly want their tenant to keep the stables as smart as possible and we cannot but admire the lawyers' ability to include so many injunctions without a single comma:

And also that the Lessee shall and will from time to time and at all times during the said term at his own costs well and sufficiently repair uphold support sustain ... pave purge slate glaze paint externally every third year at the least and internally every seventh year at the least of the said term and in each case with two coats at least of good and proper oil paint and in appropriate colours / paper grain vanish whitewash colour cleaned empty amend drain fence and keep in good and sufficient ... and all party or boundary walls fences chains sewers cesspools privies watercourses casements rights members and appurtenances to the same premises belonging when where and as often as occasion shall require.¹⁰

For today Queensbury Mews has pretensions to grandeur. At the far end of the Mews Nos 3 and 4 have become very splendid. A little further and you are looking at the imposing façade of St Margaret's Schools. (fig.4)

Stand with your back to the back wall of No 55 Regency Square. The school building rises up in front of you with its three wide ground floor windows and its three much higher first-floor windows surmounted by its turret". To your right you will see the two entrances to the school.

The Rev. Pearson, Vicar of St Margaret's who earlier showed his concern for the Metropole



Fig.3 The French Church, 2001.



Fig.4 St Margaret's Schools, elevation, 1873.

workmen, also has financial worries. In the same annual letter to his congregation, he expresses his delight at the work of the headmistresses, Miss Moore of the Girls' School and Miss Melliush of the Mixed Infants' department and their staff. However, as the Schools have no endowment, their only income is from donations, subscriptions, grants from the local authority and "the children's pennies". Indeed, the Schools' Accounts, published by the Rev. Pearson show some surprising details, not least the disparity between the salary of the Headmistress of the Mixed

Infants and that of her Assistant Mistress. This year, for the Girls' School, subscriptions amounted to £43/14/6d and collections have raised £35/13/1d. That only just equals the £72/18/10d brought in by the 161 girls with their "pennies". No wonder a £122/16/8d grant was needed to cover the running of the Girls' School.

The Rev. Pearson is concerned because he is not satisfied that his congregation is contributing enough toward the upkeep of the school, the premises are uncomfortably cramped and there is no Boys' School:

It will be a satisfaction to our Treasurer, Mr Samuel Hannington, who takes the greatest interest and pride in our Schools, as well as to myself, if more systematic support can be given by the congregation at large. Seventy subscribers ought not to represent the congregational interest in their work. (fig.5)

The Sunday schools are rapidly increasing in numbers, and it is becoming a grave questions with us, how we shall be able to accommodate the scholars without more room. A plan was drawn out some time ago to enlarge one of the classrooms. But is it an unreasonable hope to express that some member or members of our congregation to whom God has given wealth, will someday come forward and build us a third schoolroom? Our educational appliance will never be complete until we possess a Boy's Day School. At present we lose touch with all our boys on leaving the Infants' School.¹²

Miss Moore will continue to serve the school until 1924. At present she looks after 161 girls aged from seven to 14 with the help of Miss A.



Fig.5 Interior of the French Church, 2001.

Stevens and Miss C Adams. There are also the two pupil teachers, Cecelia Matthews and Edith Brown. Miss Melliush, who will retire in 1890 "owing to impaired health", is looking after the 150 or so Mixed Infants helped out by Miss E. Matthews and pupil teachers Mary Proctor and Annie Cooke.¹³ Unfortunately the over-crowded conditions will have barely changed by 1928, the date of our next visit.

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GIRLS' SCHOOL

| | £ | s | d | | £ | s | d |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----|----|--------------------------------------|-----|----|----|
| Balance in hand | 18 | 8 | 3 | Mistress' salary | 117 | 12 | 2 |
| Subscriptions | 42 | 13 | 6 | Assist. Mistress' salary | 75 | 0 | 0 |
| Collections | 35 | 13 | 1 | Pupil Teacher's salary | 33 | 14 | 1 |
| Grant | 112 | 16 | 8 | Books | 17 | 4 | 3 |
| Pence | 72 | 18 | 10 | Fuel, light, cleaning | 36 | 0 | 2 |
| Books sold | 5 | 9 | 4 | Replacement of furniture and repairs | 12 | 17 | 7 |
| Hire of rooms | 1 | 2 | 3 | Rates, tax, insurance | 2 | 7 | 10 |
| Grant from Offertory to the Poor | 15 | 0 | 0 | Prizes | 5 | 12 | 6 |
| Grant from Church Sunday School Fund | 4 | 3 | 4 | Materials | 16 | 10 | 0 |
| | 316 | 18 | 7 | Due to Treasurer | 7 | 1 | |
| | | | | | 316 | 18 | 7 |

MIXED INFANTS' SCHOOL

| | £ | s | d | | £ | s | d |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----|---|--------------------------------------|-----|----|----|
| Balance in hand | 1 | 1 | 4 | Mistress' salary | 125 | 0 | 0 |
| Subscriptions | 48 | 18 | 6 | Assist. Mistress' salary | 37 | 10 | 0 |
| Collections | 35 | 13 | 5 | Pupil Teacher's salary | 33 | 0 | 0 |
| Grant | 98 | 4 | 0 | Monitors' | 2 | 14 | 6 |
| Pence | 43 | 18 | 0 | Books | 9 | 4 | 9 |
| Books sold | 2 | 7 | 4 | Fuel, light, cleaning | 36 | 0 | 3 |
| Hire of rooms | 1 | 2 | 3 | Replacement of furniture and repairs | 11 | 10 | 4 |
| Grant from Offertory to the Poor | 15 | 0 | 0 | Rates, tax, insurance | 2 | 7 | 8 |
| Grant from Church Sunday School Fund | 4 | 3 | 4 | Prizes | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| Grant from Lawton Charity Fund | 25 | 0 | 0 | Materials | 7 | 19 | 11 |
| | 276 | 6 | 8 | Due to Treasurer | 6 | 6 | 10 |
| | | | | Balance in hand | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| | | | | | 276 | 6 | 8 |

1. "By the late George Auguste Sala", Brighton and its Environs (Blacks Guide Books), 1892

2. see also: Sussex Daily News 9 January 1888, Brighton Gazette 7 January 1888

3. Report on the proposed new "Palais Royale" and "Winter Palace", King's Road, Brighton by T Searancke Archer, A.R.I.B.A c1887 (ACC 2409/332)

4. Sala, op.cit. 1892

5. Mr Beck's Premises Plan and Elevation of West front shewing Doors as they are: June 19, 1879) DB/D46/198

6. Minutes of the "Conseil de l'Eglise Réformée de Brighton" 24 February 1889

7. First annual letter to the congregation by the Vicar of St Margaret's Church 6 January 1889 (PAR 269/7/2)

8. Pike's Trades Directory, 1888

9. Indenture between the Gordon Hotels Limited and Mr Edward Broadbridge. 24 October 1898 (ACC 2912)

10. Ibid.

11. St Margaret's School. Managers' Rough Draft Minute Book 19 June 1936

12. First annual letter to the congregation by the Vicar of St Margaret's Church 6 January 1889 (PAR 269/7/2)

13. Ibid.

New Research on Brighton and Hove's Collection of European Art

Bryony Bartlett-Rawlings, who is working with the Brighton & Hove Fine Art Collections, introduces the exciting new NIRP research project.

Brighton & Hove is a fortunate city to have such a vast and varied art collection housed in the local museums, art galleries and at Preston Manor. This collection has been formed in numerous ways, from bequests by local collectors to acquisitions funded by organizations including The Art Fund and the Purchase Grant Fund, administered from the Victoria & Albert Museum.

Although the museums at Brighton & Hove have a wealth of information on the works in the collection there is always more to be discovered through research. In November 2006 Brighton & Hove Museums joined a national research initiative in hosting a researcher from the National Inventory Research Project (NIRP) to investigate part of their collection. The National Gallery in London initiated the NIRP in 2001, in liaison with other national museums. The aim of the NIRP is to research oil paintings from continental Europe in regional collections throughout the UK to create a database that will be accessible on the web. This will become available through the Arts and Humanities Data Service in late 2007.

The NIRP was established to address two specific issues in museums. It aims to check the decline in research within museums and to create better awareness of public collections across the nation. Research is vital to museums as it broadens our perceptions of collections and the role played by individual works of art in their historic context. The more people are aware of the variety of museum collections within the UK the more visitor numbers will increase. At the same time, an easily accessible Internet database, containing detailed information about collections will greatly assist future research.

While the primary purpose of the NIRP is functional, to create a database, it is also helping to expand existing knowledge of the Brighton & Hove collection. One example of this is *St. Veronica's Veil* by the Flemish artist, Philippe de Champaigne, which hangs on the ground floor of Brighton Museum. The subject of this

iconic work is taken from apocryphal legends and concerns the image of Christ's features miraculously imprinted on a piece of cloth offered by St Veronica, a holy woman, to wipe His face on the road to Calvary. (The name Veronica comes from the phrase 'vera icon' or 'true image'). It was painted while Champaigne was working in France around 1640 and can be seen as a demonstration of the artist's personal religious devotion. The close attention to detail in this image has been used to inspire meditation on Christ's suffering. By placing the veil of Veronica behind



Philippe de Champaigne: *St Veronica's Veil*, Brighton & Hove City Museums.

a green curtain, drawn back to the left, Champaigne focuses attention on the image of Christ's calm, pensive face. The calm expression contrasts with the pain he endured, represented by a few dashes of red for his blood. This in turn encourages the viewer to meditate on the story of the Passion and Christ's suffering for humanity.

Research on the painting carried out by the NIRP has revealed that it was perhaps more significant to the artist than was previously thought. In an article published in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (Vol.80), 1970, B. Dorvial observed that the artist painted at least four versions of the subject. The painting at Brighton is one of only two to

survive, the other being at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen. Dorvial established that Champaigne had painted four versions of *St. Veronica's Veil* by identifying prints after two other paintings of Veronica's Veil that are now lost. While these prints demonstrate the importance of the subject to Champaigne, they also enable us to see the painting within its broader social context. The practice of printing images began in 15th century Germany. By the 17th century, when Champaigne was working, many printmakers were producing images after popular works by artists. These multiple impressions offered a cheap item for the public to collect. Therefore it is no surprise that a number of prints survive after Champaigne's various paintings of *St. Veronica's Veil*.

The existence of prints after the four known paintings proves the importance and popularity of the subject in French society during the 17th century. Not only were all four of the paintings known to engravers but there was also high demand for engraved versions of the paintings to be produced. The demand for prints of this particular subject is probably explained by its use as an aid to meditation. At the same time the availability of images would have made a wide audience aware of the work of Philippe de Champaigne. Collecting prints to use as models for his work, Champaigne would have known of the important role played by the circulation of prints in publicising an artist's works. It appears that more prints were made after Champaigne than after work by any other 17th century artist. Therefore prints after the *St. Veronica's Veil* in

Brighton could also be seen as a promotional tool as well as cheap way to collect art.

The NIRP research at Brighton and Hove only began in late 2006. Further discoveries will certainly be made. The project's findings so far confirm how rich the art collection at Brighton & Hove is and that research is vital to allow us a deeper knowledge of the works, their significance in the past and their importance to the present.

The Costume of Sake Dean Mahomet (1759-1851)

Martin Pel, who works as a volunteer with the Costume and Textiles Collections, describes the life and unique outfit of an unusual Brighton businessman of the Regency period.

One of the most significant items in Brighton & Hove Museums' Costume and Textiles collection cannot be exhibited at present since it urgently needs extensive conservation work to stabilise it for display. (fig.3) The complete outfit worn by Sake Dean Mahomet, was an important part of the displays at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery for many years. It was removed from the galleries in 1997 until funding could be found to undertake the necessary work. Zenzie Tinker, a freelance costume conservator for both Brighton and the Victoria & Albert Museum, said; 'It is a wonderful costume and it seems very important to get it conserved and on display'. Generous donations from The National Portrait Gallery, The Drapers' Company, The Mercers' Company and the Leche Trust have already been received but a further £6,600 is needed to complete the conservation work.

The outfit was first exhibited in 1958 in the *Regency* exhibition organised by Doris Langley Moore, one of the most significant collectors and authorities on costume history of the twentieth century. (fig.1) It was then displayed in its own case from 1980 to 1997 in the Local History Gallery when it was shown in the temporary exhibition, *India in Brighton*. Since then it has been in store. A few parts of the costume are scheduled to make a brief but spectacular appearance, along with a painted portrait of Sake Dean from Brighton & Hove's Fine Art collection, at the National Portrait Gallery's forthcoming exhibition *Between Worlds: Voyages to Britain 1700-1850* (7 March - 3 June).

Sake Dean Mahomet's story is one of self-determination and motivation. He was born a minor Muslim nobleman in Patna, India, in 1759. He joined the 27th Regiment of Native Infantry of the East India Company and gradually moved up the ranks. After a successful military career

he followed his patron, Captain Godfrey Baker, back to Ireland in 1784 where he received a further literary education and subsequently wrote a travel memoir *The Travels of Dean Mahomet*. He subsequently added Sake (or Sheikh) as an

rupt after just a few years. Sometime after 1813 the couple decided to move to Brighton where they set up a far more successful business, shampooing steam baths. The term shampooing refers not to the washing of hair but comes from

chhampo, the Hindi word for pressing or massaging, applied to a client while sitting in a steam bath. This palliative treatment was successful in alleviating numerous ailments such as gout, lumbago and general torpor. The Prince Regent, addicted to excess and riddled with ailments, became a regular client and had a steam bath (now demolished), built in the Royal Pavilion. The business was so successful that Sake Dean wrote two books, *Cases Cured by Sake Dean Mahomed, Shampooing surgeon and Inventor of the Indian medicated Vapour and Sea-Water Baths Written by the Patients Themselves* (1820), and *Shampooing, or, Benefits Resulting from the use of the Indian Medicated Vapour Baths*, which became best sellers. He was later created 'Shampooing Surgeon to the Royal Family' and treated both George IV and William IV. Unfortunately this success did not last either and Sake Dean died in 1851 penniless and chased by his creditors. He is buried at St Nicholas's Church, Brighton.

The costume in the Brighton collection dates from the 1820s and consists of seven individual parts: a jacket, coat, breeches, sash, cap, shoes and additional pieces of fabric. Oriental influences appeared in western dress from the late 16th century onwards. The adoption by Charles II of the Persian style for Court dress in October 1666 heralded a turn away from the dominant French mode of dressing.

It established the quintessential mode for men's clothing, the three-piece suit. Sake Dean's surviving outfit marks another development in East-West sartorial style, a reversal of influence when he adapted elements of western fashion into eastern dress. This exceptional outfit, to be worn at Court, uses only the best silks, decoration and workmanship. The thigh-length, long-sleeved 'coat' is similar to traditional Indian Court dress, but the long breeches are cut in the style of fashionable contemporary Western menswear,



Fig.1 Costumed figure of Sake Dean Mahomet in the Music Room of the Royal Pavilion.

honorary title. This book, the first to be written in English by an Indian, was published in 1794. By this date he had already met and eloped with a fellow student, Jane Daly, whom he later married, and returned with her to Cork, in southern Ireland in 1788.

They moved to London in 1807 and opened the Hindustanee Coffee House, actually a restaurant, which served authentic Indian food, another first in Britain. Unfortunately this venture was unable to sustain its early success and went bank-

benefiting from the relatively new skill of tailoring. The high and stiffly starched white collar and hussar boots worn with the outfit were an essential part of a Regency gentleman's wardrobe, yet the sash, shoes and cap are all Eastern in style. A turban was also worn, complementing the Eastern style of the costume.

While the costume is significant in the development of costume history it is the outfit's social significance that is of considerably wider interest, symbolising the life of one of the first Indians to establish himself in Britain. A lithograph by Thomas M. Baynes, one of numerous images of Sake Dean, depicts him standing in an imagined garden with a dome and minarets in the background, wearing the court costume now in Brighton's collection. (fig.2) The image is intended to conjure exotic India for a Western audience. What the image represents (with the lithograph's capacity for limitless reproduction and therefore availability), is a testament to Regency society's admiration for the man and his culture. This culture was to have a significant impact on Brighton society and, in the architectural form of the Royal Pavilion, would come to symbolise Brighton itself.

Yet the influence of Sake Dean extends further than the borders of Brighton. As one writer stated, 'Short of opening the first Gujarati corner-shop, he thus pretty well pre-empted the entire Indian immigration experience of the late 20th century' (*The Spectator*, 3 January 1998, p.23). In September 2005 the City of Westminster erected a blue plaque at 102 George Street, the address of Britain's first curry house, in memory of Sake Dean Mahomet, its founder. It would be fitting if Brighton could also commemorate him with the renewed display of his court costume. He was a man whose originality and invention not only had an impact on Brighton society but his legacy permanently influenced the eating and bathing habits of a nation.



Fig.2 T. M. Baynes, *Sake Dean Mahomet in Court Dress* lithograph.

Fig.3 Sake Dean's breeches in a fragile state.



Titus Oates and the Popish Plot

Stella Beddoe, Keeper of Decorative Art, introduces a rum character from Brighton & Hove's print collections. He appears in Rogues' Gallery; Images of Crime and Punishment, the new exhibition in the Brighton Museum Prints and Drawings Gallery.

Titus Oates (1649-1705), the informer and fantasist, is shown here in a print of 1810, after an unknown artist, locked in the pillory after his conviction for perjury in 1685. He was later described as 'a dull, unlovable child who suffered from convulsions, a runny nose and a tendency to dribble'. His father, a Hastings clergyman and former radical preacher, bullied him and Titus was expelled from the Merchant Taylors' School in London. He later failed to graduate from two Cambridge colleges where he had, however, become skilled in lying but was ordained as a priest in 1670. In 1675 he escaped charges of perjury for making false accusations against a Hastings schoolmaster, by signing on as naval chaplain on the ship *Adventure*, bound for Tangier. He was expelled from the navy for homosexuality and shortly after converted to Catholicism. He remained poverty stricken and unemployed until he was sent to Spain and later to France for further religious instruction as a Jesuit.

On his return he renewed his acquaintance with Dr Israel Tonge, a fervent anti-Catholic to whom he confided, in 43 depositions, evidence for a complex Popish Plot. He claimed to have overheard plans to murder King Charles II, of potential rebellions in England, Scotland and Ireland, to have read damning letters and to have attended a secret meeting of Jesuits at the White Horse Tavern, London on 24 April 1678. Tonge presented the evidence to the King and his ministers and Oates was questioned. Although many doubted his sincerity, he had selected his Catholic targets shrewdly and his accusations became increasingly bold. Sir Henry Coventry noted that Oates might be '... the greatest [liar] I ever saw, and yet it is a stupendous thing to think what vast concerns are like to depend upon the evidence of one young man who hath twice changed his religion'. Oates was so persuasive that he was given lodgings in Whitehall, an initial pension of £40 a month and almost unlimited powers to arrest and question suspects.

Over time the courts became less tolerant of the contradictions and perjuries in his evidence and by 1681 he lost several libel trials. He was himself tried and convicted in May 1685. Before serving a life sentence he was stripped of his clerical garb and brought to Westminster Hall with a paper on his head inscribed, 'Titus Oates



convicted upon full evidence of two horrid perjuries'. He was placed in the pillory in Palace Yard, Westminster on 19 May, the setting for this print. The scroll above his head, which reads 'Testis Ovate' (the witness rejoices), is also an anagram for his name. After being pelted with eggs Oates was whipped from Aldgate to Tyburn and remained three years in the King's Bench prison in Southwark. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 brought about a brief revival in his fortunes when he was released from gaol and from 1689-92

William III reinstated his pension. In 1693 he married Rebecca, the daughter of a wealthy London draper (who bore him a child in 1700) but spent her fortune in six months. He returned, once more, to the Baptist church of his father, was expelled in 1701, and spent the rest of his career in obscurity.

1. See Alan Marshall, Titus Oates, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004, www.oxforddnb.com