Portrait Drawing in Three Generations of the Bacon Family

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Abstract

This thesis takes as its subject the substantial group of portrait drawings made by members of three generations of the Bacon family from the last decades of the eighteenth century through until *c*. 1859. Although this shared practice was initiated by the prominent sculptor John Bacon RA (1740-99), and was continued by his son and fellow sculptor John Bacon Junior (1777-1859), the drawings appear to have been separate from their professional concerns. As such, the Bacons' portraits are valuable evidence of amateur drawing during the period, and this analysis points to the continued vitality of both the practice itself and the portrait genre specifically.

The Bacons' close links to evangelicalism in England, particularly in the first two generations, bring their drawings into dialogue with the history of the spiritual revival, particularly as it intersects with historiographies of domesticity and associational activity. The drawings are examined for what they reveal about the emotional and spiritual lives of individuals within the family, with a particular emphasis on Bacon Junior. Read alongside diverse texts, including diaries and wills, the family's collection of portraits in other media and the architectural settings in which these were deployed, the family's portrait drawings are identified as records of affective relations as well as vehicles for narratives of gentility and faith. As a register of sociability that extended beyond his kinship network, Bacon Junior's drawings also point to the scope of his engagement with spiritual, charitable and political causes. Whether analysed in formal terms, or as objects circulating within a kinship network, the Bacons' portrait drawings offer valuable insights into the ways in which amateur drawing in this period bridged the gap between the public and the private, functioning not only as records of intimacy, but also as a means of fashioning memory and identity within one family over several generations.

Portrait Drawing in Three Generations of the Bacon Family

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Contents

List of Illustrations

For details of each illustration identified with an 'N' catalogue number, please refer to Appendix Three. Full details are provided here for all other illustrations.

Abbreviations

ACAD	A Cambridge Alumni Database, https://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk/
ARA	Associate of the Royal Academy of Arts (cf. RA)
BDSB	Roscoe, Ingrid, Emma Hardy and M. G. Sullivan, *A Biographical Dictionary of Sculptors in Britain, 1660-1851* (New Haven, CT and London, 2009).
BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
BL	British Library
CCED	Clergy of the Church of England Database, https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/
CMS	Church Missionary Society
DEB	Lewis, Donald M. (ed.), *The Blackwell Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1730-1860* (2 vols., Oxford, 1995).
fl.	floruit (indicates when a subject is known to have been active)
GMO	Grove Music Online, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com
LBS	Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery, University College London, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, https://www-oxforddnb-com
PANB	Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Fredericton
RA	Royal Academy of Arts / Royal Academician (cf. ARA)
RN	Roman Numerals (series)
SPCK	Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
V&A	Victoria & Albert Museum, London

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Introduction

Whether by purchase or gift, between 1821 and 1827 the British sculptor and amateur portrait draftsman, John Bacon Junior (hereafter 'Bacon'; 1777-1859) acquired a blank album from Mrs Fielder's Emporium of Fancy in London's Soho.[1] A luxurious object, the volume's sheets of smooth wove paper are three-quarter bound in red leather, embossed and partly tooled in gold. The grey-green marbled board of the front cover bears a matching leather label reading 'ALBUM.'

Bacon inscribed the front pastedown with an appeal for the album—if lost—to be returned to him at either of two addresses in London and Sidmouth on the south coast of Devon, suggesting that it may have travelled with him to these and other locations. Additional inscriptions in his and other hands give a number of other addresses and name four of the album's subsequent owners, all of them evidently the artist's descendants. Taken together, the inscriptions indicate the value that the artist and his family placed on the album. If the latter cherished the volume as an heirloom, its significance for Bacon is suggested by the inscription that he made on the adjacent flyleaf:

> Whoever obliges me by allowing me to sketch their profiles in this book, must do it as a gratuitous favour.
>
> I am necessitated to stipulate that no copies from them be requested either by themselves or their friends, as my labour would either be endless, or by obliging one friend I ^should offend the rest, whom I cannot in like manner oblige; and thus

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For the sake of clarity, in the following footnotes citations from texts written by members of the Bacon family include the authors' full names.

[1] John Bacon Junior, Album of portrait drawings ('Album One'), *c*. 1827-43, private collection. Although it is not dated, Bacon's inscription is probably contemporary with the earliest drawings made in the album, of which the sixth in the original sequence was dated October 1827. The sheets of the album are watermarked 'J. Whatman | 1821.' Fielder's label is pasted to the front flyleaf. For Bacon, see Jason Edwards, 'Bacon, John (1777–1859), sculptor', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/996, accessed 21 December 2021.

> convert this record of friendship into a possible means of hurting the feelings of some friend.

Seemingly as wary of the burden of making copies as the alleged threat of discord, Bacon struck a rather one-sided bargain with his sitters. The inscription reveals that his portraits were not commissions; instead, they were initiated by the artist himself and, having sat for him as a 'gratuitous favour', his sitters could ask nothing in return.

Explaining why he insisted on these conditions, Bacon described the drawings as a 'record of friendship.' It is a striking phrase, suggestive of the personal significance that he attached to his drawings and the relationships that he shared with the people whom he drew. If it raises the question of what precisely 'friendship' meant to the artist and those who sat for him, it may also explain why Bacon's sitters agreed to sit at all: if they could enjoy the fruits of his labours only fleetingly, they might reflect at length on the honour that he paid them in taking their likeness, permanently situating them within this visualisation of his network of valued relationships.

Ending in August 1843, Bacon filled the album with eighty-nine portrait drawings, of which seventy-seven remain in the volume at the time of writing.[2] The album was both the repository for the portraits and the mechanism by which he and others engaged with them. The size of a coffee-table book, the volume might be held in a viewer's lap or consulted at a table, either alone or, perhaps, with one or two others. Unlike incidental encounters with portraits framed for display, engaging with Bacon's portrait drawings was likely both a deliberate and deliberative act. The marbled boards of the album physically protect the drawings and also conceal them from view. Together with entry to Bacon's home and, presumably, his permission, the album was itself one of several thresholds that a viewer had first to cross in order to examine the artist's 'record of friendship'.

With one likeness drawn on the recto of each page, Bacon's drawings must be examined individually. In the absence of identifying inscriptions on the sheets, the viewer must consult the artist's numbered index at the rear of the album in order to put a name to each face. The index is notable for its formality and, with few exceptions, even close relatives are referred to by their titles and other indications of status. However, some

[2] Of the eighty-nine drawings that Bacon made in the album, twelve were subsequently removed, some apparently by the artist himself. Three of the twelve drawings have been identified in this research. A fourth, the portrait of Sir John Kennaway, Bt. (N27) was removed, cut down to an oval—possibly for framing—and subsequently returned to its original position in Bacon's sequence by a later owner, who attached it to the verso of the preceding drawing.

entries do elucidate familial relationships between sitters, particularly those to whom Bacon was closely related, and annotations of a similar kind were made in at least one later hand.[3] Black marks against the names of fifty-four sitters, the artist explained, 'denotes that they are since deceased.' The album and its contents were an evolving record of the artist's affective relationships as well as a deposit of genealogical and biographical information that remained active long after his death.

Of the drawings themselves, even a cursory examination reveals a high degree of formal consistency. All but three of the surviving drawings in the album show Bacon's sitters bust-length in strict profile against a blank background. Those that deviate from this model do so only through the use of the three-quarter profile. Focusing on his sitter's features, the artist incorporated details of their costume only as far as the chosen format permitted, although this was generally a secondary consideration to details of dressed hair and the headdresses that enliven many of his portraits, and those of his female sitters in particular. All of the drawings were made primarily in graphite pencil. Lips and cheeks were frequently tinted pink with either chalk or coloured pencil. A number of sheets show the artist's sparing use of watercolour, normally added to articles of clothing but occasionally found in the sitters' eyes and, in a very few cases, hair.

The foregoing points to only the most obvious features of the drawings in Bacon's album. But how might the album and its contents be interrogated for what they reveal about the circumstances under which they were created and the meanings that they contain? Three key themes suggest themselves. First, by its very nature the portrait genre turns on the artist's connection with his sitters. What does Bacon's choice of sitters reveal about the artist? Given the evident mix of family and others from outside his kinship network, what can this tell us about the nature of kinship and friendship in the late Georgian period? Second, as Bacon was one of several members of his family to make likenesses in this vein, the place of portrait drawing across generations must be considered. In what ways, if at all, was portrait drawing a shared practice within the family? To what extent might this album and its contents cast light on contemporary drawing practice more generally? Finally, closely aligned with the evangelical revival, the place of faith within the Bacon family requires careful examination. What were the implications of regenerate faith for drawing practice? How, and in what ways, do the artists' spiritual convictions register in

[3] A comparison with inscriptions on the front pastedown indicates that many of the later annotations were made by Bacon's great-grandson, John Maunsell Bacon (1866-1948), presumably in the years after he inherited the album in 1924.

the portraits? As points of entry into the Bacon family's portrait drawings, it is to these three key themes that we now turn.

Family and friends

The album of drawings described above is one of four that Bacon is known to have created. Significantly, it is also part of a portrait practice that stretches across three generations of the Bacon family, beginning with his father, the sculptor and Royal Academician John Bacon (hereafter 'Bacon Senior'; 1740-99) and continued by several of his own children.[4] Although no comparable inscription appears in Bacon's other albums, or in surviving texts by other members of his family, I suggest that the sentiment that he expressed in *c*. 1827 may be usefully extended to the entire body of portraits that members of the family made over the course of approximately eight decades, a group of approximately three hundred and sixty drawings. That Bacon gathered his diverse sitters under the single heading of 'friends' speaks to the capacious quality of the term in the period. Naomi Tadmor has shown how, in the eighteenth century, 'friendship' accommodated both kin and non-kin in a network of diverse and often overlapping relationships, ranging from the affective to the instrumental.[5] That this remained true into the nineteenth century, as Leonore Davidoff has stated,[6] is supported by Bacon's example, in which men, women and children with whom the artist was connected in various ways were embraced within the conceptual framework of 'friendship.' That it extended to include two servants underlines this point.

Many of Bacon's sitters were his relations, and 'family' as a category forms a key component of his portrait practice. Not limited to his immediate family, it included extended relations, ranging from the artist's siblings and their children to cousins and in-laws, and, in some cases, close relations of those in-laws. While many extended relations were portrayed only once, Bacon's wife and children, in particular, were each depicted

[4] John Bacon RA does not appear to have been known as 'Senior' during his lifetime, but the term is used here to avoid confusion between the first and second generations of the family. For Bacon Senior, see Mary Ann Steggles, 'Bacon, John (1740–1799), sculptor', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/994, accessed 21 December 2021.

[5] Naomi Tadmor, 'The Concept of the Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England', *Past & Present*, 151 (May 1996), pp. 111-140; and Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage* (Cambridge, 2001), esp. chapters 4 and 5.

[6] Leonore Davidoff, 'The Family in Britain', in ed. F. M. L. Thompson, *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750–1950*, vol. 2, People and their Environment (Cambridge, 1990), p. 72.

multiple times across the course of their lives, resulting in a group of likenesses analogous to what Richard Brilliant has described as a form of 'biographical portraiture', registering their physical and psychological evolution.[7] Unfortunately, few of the likenesses that Bacon took before the mid-1820s are dated and the artist remained inconsistent when recording this information, making it difficult to connect his portraits to specific events, such as birthdays, confirmations or significant anniversaries.

Bacon's faith is addressed elsewhere in this introduction, but it is necessary here to observe that his affective relationships were enacted within the context of the evangelical Christianity that he and others in his kinship network had embraced. Given the primacy of the home for evangelicals as a site of privacy and retreat from the world, it is crucial to consider the significance of the domestic environment for the artist and his family. In *Family Fortunes* (1987), their influential study of Britain's middle classes in the period under review, Davidoff and Catherine Hall emphasised the distinctive nature of evangelical domesticity.[8] This included reshaping the home as a site of seclusion from both the world and work,[9] and ideals of a newly middle-class Christian masculinity, one that militated against the worldliness of traditional elites, favouring instead 'piety, domesticity, [and] a proper sense of responsibility about business'.[10] However, their claims concerning a specifically evangelical masculinity have been challenged by William Van Reyk, who points to greater continuity in Christian ideals of manliness that were also shared across Protestant confessions in the period.[11] Similarly, rather than a decisive shift from older models of masculinity and family life within an exclusively evangelical milieu, Joanne Bailey believes that the 'ideal father' was the point at which the existing culture of sensibility and longstanding Christian ideals of domesticity converged.[12]

I suggest that the Bacons' drawings of family and friends can be read as evidence of their relationships both within the domestic setting and around its margins. Such a strategy is not without its complications. Criticism of both Philippe Ariès' *Centuries of Childhood: A*

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[7] Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London, 1991), pp. 132, 134.
[8] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (London, 1987), chapter 2.
[9] Ibid, esp. chapters 1 and 8.
[10] Ibid, p. 113.
[11] William Van Reyk, 'Christian Ideals of Manliness in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries', *Historical Journal*, 52:4 (December 2009), pp. 1053-1073. Van Reyk also rejects John Tosh's secular narrative of masculinity in the period; ibid, p. 1056.
[12] Joanne Bailey, ''A Very Sensible Man': Imagining Fatherhood in England *c*. 1750-1830', *History*, 95:3 (July 2010), p. 286. Bailey subsequently developed her argument in *Parenting in England, 1760-1830: emotion, identity, and generation* (Oxford, 2012).

social history of family life (1960; first published in English in 1962), and Lawrence Stone's *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (1977), reveals the risks of treating visual sources as unmediated evidence of changing patterns in affective relationships.[13] Considering their examples, in her own study of eighteenth-century English portraiture, Kate Retford has advocated a reading of visual sources that is informed by an understanding of the historical context in which they were produced.[14] It is an approach that I wish to emulate. However, in the absence of the kinds of evidence of literary and philosophical influences that Retford has charted within the genre, the significance of the Bacons' more modest—and, largely, formally homogeneous—portraits must be teased out from the spaces between the drawings. If the 'core of the genre' of portraiture 'involves the representation of the structuring of human relationships', as Brilliant has remarked,[15] then it is to the total body of portrait drawings, of each generation, viewed both individually and together, that we must look in order to grasp the full meaning of the works examined here.

Drawing as an intergenerational practice

The significance of Bacon's *oeuvre* is amplified by the place it occupies within his family's shared practice. In the latter decades of the eighteenth century, Bacon Senior made drawings of several members of his immediate and extended family and some intimate friends. Although only a small number have been identified in this research, his drawings established the key features of the portraits made by the following two generations, including a preference for graphite pencil and the bust-length, profile format, and point the way, I suggest, to their subsequent choice of sitters. With one possible exception among Bacon's works,[16] the drawings do not appear to be connected to either his or his father's sculptural work, itself the only facet of their artistic output that has received any scholarly attention, although their work in both sculpture and drawing explored the commemorative role of portraiture as a genre. Later, principally in the work of Bacon's elder son, the Revd John Bacon (hereafter 'the Revd John'; 1809-71), we observe

[13] For a summary of the critical reaction to both Ariès and Stone, see Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-century England* (New Haven, CT and London, 2006), pp. 4-5.
[14] For Retford's approach, see ibid, introduction.
[15] Brilliant, *Portraiture*, p. 9.
[16] For the drawing in question, a portrait of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn (N213), see Chapter Two.

innovations that elaborate the model explored by his father and grandfather, including, I suggest, a response to the challenge presented by the advent of photographic technology.

Despite the abundance of examples found in both public and private collections, portrait drawings remain a little-studied aspect of British art history. The first substantive exploration of the subject came in 1979 with Patrick J. Noon's catalogue to the exhibition *English Portrait Drawings & Miniatures* at the Yale Center for British Art.[17] In the accompanying catalogue, Noon surveyed the tradition of portrait drawing—including portrait miniatures—from the reign of Elizabeth I through into the second half of the nineteenth century. He divided his examples into three general categories, namely the finished portrait drawing, which functioned as a work of art in its own right, the study, made for the purpose of creating another work, often in oils, and the copy, which served multiple purposes, including artistic training and educational needs.[18] Noon's treatment of portrait drawings as vital components of the history of portraiture in England was the precedent for Stephen Lloyd and Kim Sloan's study of British and Irish portrait drawings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the catalogue of their 2008-09 exhibition, *The Intimate Portrait: Drawings, Miniatures and Pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence*.[19] Ranging from rapidly executed sketches to highly finished 'presentation' drawings, their choice of works included portraits that were created outside the conventional systems of patronage that dominated the art market in the period. Although concerned primarily with portrait miniatures, Lloyd explored the spaces in which small portraits might be encountered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, pointing to varied strategies of display that emphasised the diverse purposes these might serve, ranging from the personal and intimate to the historical and commemorative.[20] The creation of such images was addressed by Sloan who highlighted the extent to which family, friends and contemporary worthies were depicted on a small scale by British artists in both private and professional capacities around this time.[21]

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[17] Patrick J. Noon, *English Portrait Drawings & Miniatures*, exhibition catalogue, Yale Center for British Art, Yale University, New Haven, 5 December 1979-17 February 1980 (New Haven, CT, 1979).
[18] For his three categories, see ibid, introduction.
[19] Stephen Lloyd and Kim Sloan, *The Intimate Portrait: Drawings, Miniatures and Pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence*, exhibition catalogue, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, and elsewhere, 25 October 2008-1 February 2009 (Edinburgh and London, 2008).
[20] Stephen Lloyd, 'Intimate Viewing: The Private Face and Public Display of Portraits in Miniature and on Paper', in ibid, pp. 13-23.
[21] Sloan, 'Drawing for Business or Drawing for Pleasure? The Place of Portraits on Paper', in ibid, pp. 25-37.

An important feature of Sloan's study is her interest in portrait series, some of which were initiated with public ends in mind.[22] These included that created by the architect George Dance RA (1741-1825), whose portraits of his fellow academicians—including Bacon Senior—quickly expanded to feature other notable figures, of which seventy-two were later published as soft-ground etchings.[23] Begun in 1793, Dance's project postdates the earliest of the Bacons' works, but it highlights the currency of drawing as a technology for commemorative projects within their milieu. Similarly, in the mid-1790s Thomas Lawrence RA (1769-1830) began a 'collection' of portraits in his own hand of noteworthy contemporaries, beginning with the collector Horace Walpole, fourth earl of Orford (1717-97), some of which appear to have been engraved at a later date under his supervision.[24] The enthusiasm for portrait series to which these projects attest was prompted, at least in part, by the Revd James Granger's (1723-76) influential book, *A Biographical History of England* (1769) in which biography and national history were conflated in the portrait prints that he catalogued according to his own classificatory system, and from which the fashion for extra-illustrated or 'grangerized' volumes stemmed.[25]

If the Bacons' drawings point to their participation in the cultural phenomenon that Granger's publication prompted, the largely private purposes to which their portraits were put may be usefully compared with non-commercial practices in two artistic families with which they were intimate, those of John Russell RA (1745-1806) and John Francis Rigaud RA (1742-1810). In both families, portraiture was practiced professionally across two generations; but there is also evidence of drawn portraits made in a private capacity and exchanged among friends. One such example is John Russell's rapidly-executed graphite portrait of Bacon's half-brother, Charles Bacon (1774-1818) as a toddler (N178) (see Fig. 16)**.** Both for its evident spontaneity and the choice of subject, this drawing appears to be an expression of intimate friendship between the two families. It contrasts strikingly with the highly-finished pastels for which Russell was famed, including a number of members of the Bacon family, several of which appear to have been exhibited at the Royal Academy.[26]

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[22] Ibid, pp. 31-35; also Lloyd, 'Intimate Viewing', p. 20.
[23] See Sloan, 'Drawing for Business', pp. 32-33, and cat. nos. 96, 97, 168, 169. See also Noon, *English Portrait Drawings*, p. 11, and cat. nos. 86, 87.
[24] Sloan, 'Drawing for Business', pp. 34-35.
[25] For Granger, see Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, CT and London, 1993), chapter 2.
[26] For Russell's contributions to the annual exhibitions, including portraits of Bacon and Bacon Senior, see Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts: A Complete Dictionary of its Contributors and their work from its foundation in 1769 to 1904*, vol. VI (London, 1906), pp. 392, 394.

Closer to Russell's portrait of Charles were the sociable efforts encouraged by Rigaud, who advised his son Stephen Francis Dutilh Rigaud (1777-1861) to take likenesses in order to be 'useful and entertaining' in company during the evenings, and indicated that these also made for pleasing gifts.[27] Rigaud Senior's advice was echoed in the practice of Lawrence, who also produced small, spontaneous portrait drawings as gifts. A. Cassandra Albinson has observed that he distributed these among friends and patrons as a 'convenient honorific act … [that] recorded and codified the relationship of affection and respect between Lawrence and his sitter'.[28] That the Bacons appear to have preferred to retain many of their drawings—particularly in the years after *c*. 1827, as Bacon's inscription reveals—does not exclude their work from the social and performative quality of the examples cited here. Rather, it positions their portraits between the public and commemorative role of the portrait series of Dance, et al., and the dispersed records of sociability and affection of Rigaud and Lawrence.

Together with the specifics of portraiture as a genre, the Bacons' work must also be considered in terms of the history of drawing as a practice. This is a field dominated by Ann Bermingham's *Learning to Draw* (2000), a valuable account of the history of drawing as an amateur practice in Britain from the Tudor period until the last third of the nineteenth century, during much of which it figured as a courtly, masculine attainment.[29] Key to her thesis is the shift that she has identified in the latter decades of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in which drawing was marginalised within the exhibitions mounted by the Royal Academy and, she claims, increasingly feminised as an amateur activity. Despite the central place that drawing held in its schools,[30] it is true that drawing came under attack within the Royal Academy: from 1772, other than architects, those who

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[27] For Rigaud, see Stephen Francis Dutilh Rigaud, 'Facts and Recollections of the XVIIIth Century in a Memoir of John Francis Rigaud Esq., R.A.', ed. William L. Pressly, *Volume of the Walpole Society*, 50 (1984), p. 88.

[28] My ellipses. A. Cassandra Albinson, 'Delineating a Life: Lawrence as Draughtsman', in eds. A. Cassandra Albinson, Peter Funnell and Lucy Peltz, *Thomas Lawrence: Regency Power and Brilliance* (New Haven, CT and London, 2010), p. 130. Albinson has also suggested that some of Lawrence's drawings may have been intended to repay part of the artist's debts; see Albinson, 'Debt and Drawing: Thomas Lawrence's Family Portraits at the Cantor Art Center', *Cantor Art Center Journal*, 7 (2013), pp. 50-63.

[29] Ann Bermingham, *Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* (New Haven, CT and London, 2000), esp. chapters 3-5. Also Bermingham, ''An Exquisite Practice': The Institution of Drawing as Polite Art in Britain', in ed. Brian Allen, *Towards a Modern Art World* (New Haven, CT and London, 1995), pp. 47-66. For the marginalisation of drawing in the Royal Academy, see also Sloan, 'Drawing for Business', pp. 25-26.

[30] For education in the Royal Academy Schools, see Annette Wickham, 'The Schools and the Practice of Art', in ed. Robin Simon with Maryanne Stevens, *The Royal Academy of Arts: History and Collections* (New Haven, CT and London, 2018), pp. 432-451.

exhibited drawings exclusively were ineligible for associate status (ARA).[31] However, the link that Bermingham draws between the commercialisation of amateur art products and the feminisation of amateur drawing in the first two decades of the nineteenth century seems less certain. Pointing to the marketing strategies of the prominent London art-supplies retailer and publisher, Rudolf Ackermann (1764-1834), and his principal competitors, and the emphasis placed on copying in contemporary drawing manuals, Bermingham argues that this both gendered amateur creativity and stigmatised the work of female amateurs as imitative rather than creative.[32] Heavily reliant on prescriptive literature from the period, Bermingham's study of the discourse surrounding drawing in the period should, I suggest, be distinguished from the practice itself. Bermingham's model of developments within drawing practice is located within narratives of economic and social change in the eighteenth century, including the rise of the middle classes and growing consumerism. Further, predominantly secular, it offers little scope for a study of drawing that must engage with questions of spiritual meaning within the evangelical milieu in which the Bacons were located.[33]

Faith

The history of the Bacons and their intergenerational drawing practice is entwined with the evangelical Christianity that is a marked feature of the family, particularly in the first two generations examined here. Significantly, drawing was an activity that found favour among the family's fellow evangelicals.[34] Prominent regenerate Christians are known to have drawn as a pastime, including Henry Thornton (1760-1815), a leading figure of the influential Clapham Sect, for whom it was a recreation to be enjoyed alongside other

[31] For the exclusion of draftsmen, see Sloan, 'Drawing for Business', pp. 25-26. For the RA's equivocal attitude toward amateurs, see Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, pp. 130-131.
[32] Ibid, pp. 145-181.
[33] For the commodification of drawing practice and its related feminisation, see ibid, chapter 4.
[34] For a definition of evangelicalism in the period, including his widely-accepted 'quadrilateral' of the revival's essential characteristics—conversionism, activism, biblicism and crucicentrism—see David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 1989), chapters 1-3. See also Gareth Atkins, *Converting Britannia: Evangelicals and British Public Life 1770-1840* (Woodbridge, 2019); Ian Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (London, 1976); Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865* (Oxford, 1988); D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism: True Religion in a Modern World* (Oxford, 2018); Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Leicester, 2004); and Peter Toon, *Evangelical Theology 1833-1856: A Response to Tractarianism* (London, 1979).

domestic pleasures.[35] If this suggests that the Bacons' practice was not exceptional, the significance of pastimes must not be understated. As Dominic Erdozain has shown, recreations were among the preeminent concerns of many evangelical authors who inveighed against the traditional pastimes of their countrymen, particularly those that occurred in company beyond the confines of the home.[36]

Drawing was only one of the ways in which regenerate Christians engaged with the visual arts. In response to charges of philistinism levelled against the revival from its inception, in *Evangelicals and Culture* (1984) Doreen Rosman offered a reappraisal of the relationships between evangelicalism and culture over the forty years following the death of the prominent evangelical leader, the Revd John Wesley (1703-91).[37] Coinciding with much of the period covered in this thesis, Rosman's book features both Bacon Senior and John Russell, as well as their sons, Bacon and the Revd William Russell (1784-1870).[38] Rosman argued that the relationship between evangelicals and visual art turned on 'the exclusion of the latter from churches but its ready acceptance often on its own terms in non-ecclesiastical contexts'.[39] However, the generational change within evangelicalism charted by Michael Hennell, in which attitudes hardened towards amusements as diverse as dancing and novels,[40] may have challenged this strategy of compartmentalisation. In her study of the art of John Russell, Antje Matthews has argued that an evolving orthodoxy within the revival rejected the combination of artistic and spiritual interests that his career exemplifies. Further, she claims, this growing split was the deciding factor in both Bacon's and William Russell's respective decisions to relinquish artistic pursuits.[41]

Although both men appear to have privileged their spiritual commitments, I do not believe that either Bacon or William Russell is the example of orthodox reaction that Matthews suggests. While they each effectively retired from their *professional* artistic concerns, the circumstances under which they did so differed significantly, with Russell taking holy orders and Bacon seeking a genteel retirement in the South-West of England.

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[35] Standish Meacham, *Henry Thornton of Clapham 1760-1815* (Cambridge, MA, 1964), p. 50.
[36] Dominic Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure: Sport, Recreation and the Crisis of Victorian Religion* (Woodbridge, 2010), chapter 1; and Doreen M. Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture* (London and Canberra, 1984), p. 123. Also, Robert W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society 1700-1850* (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 100-105.
[37] For her survey of the literature, see Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp. 1-8.
[38] Ibid, chapter 7, esp. pp. 156-160.
[39] Ibid, p. 152.
[40] Cited in ibid, p. 9. See also Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure*, pp. 73-75.
[41] Antje Matthews, 'John Russell (1745-1806) and the Impact of Evangelicalism and Natural Theology on Artistic Practice' (PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 2005), pp. 161-163.

Moreover, Russell's decision to swear-off painting, vowing 'never to touch pencil or brush again, for fear that his love for art might interfere with or displace his spiritual duties', as his father's biographer later claimed,[42] did not preclude him from drawing a portrait of Bacon during a family visit in January 1823 (N363; see Chapter Two). This suggests that the break identified by Matthews was not as sharp as she has claimed as it clearly did not extend to *amateur* artistic activities. Meanwhile, Bacon retained a controlling interest in the workshop at Newman Street that he had inherited from his father; and although he ceased to exhibit as a sculptor at the Royal Academy in 1824,[43] both the studio and his portrait practice remained active for many years to come. In both cases, it seems clear that art created in a non-professional capacity was compatible with the men's spiritual convictions and the generational shift proposed by Matthews must be treated with caution as a result.

Bruce Hindmarsh has observed that the keen interest in portraiture among early evangelicals is evidence of the 'traffic between the world of art and the world of evangelical religion in the eighteenth century, even though today these fields are studied in isolation.'[44] In a similar vein, I want to suggest that, rather than merely a social practice, the Bacons' portrait drawings functioned as an expression of their faith as represented through their choice of sitters. In her study of the work of the evangelical artist Maria Spilsbury (later Taylor; 1777-1820), who specialised in portraits and genre scenes, Charlotte Yeldham has argued that the spiritual content of her pictures is 'a subtext perceptible only in the light of certain biographical and historical facts, the significance of which, in relation to her work, has not [previously] been recognized.'[45] Like Yeldham, I read the Bacons' drawings in light of what is known of their own spiritual convictions, as well as the place of their sitters within the evangelical milieu of which they were a part.

In order to do so, I examine the family's engagement with the culture of voluntary activity that sprang from the revival and that was, as Gareth Atkins and Mark Noll have observed, expressions of a faith that was otherwise chiefly personal in nature.[46] Active in the evangelical Eclectic Society and the Church Missionary Society, Bacon Senior set an

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[42] Williamson, *John Russell*, p. 99. Also cited in Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, p. 161.
[43] For Bacon's submissions to the RA, see Graves, *The Royal Academy*, vol. 1, pp. 88-89.
[44] Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism*, pp. 246-247.
[45] Charlotte Yeldham, *Maria Spilsbury (1776-1820). Artist and Evangelical* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 2-3.
[46] Atkins, *Converting Britannia*, p. 2; and Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, pp. 233-234. For associational activity in the period, see Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (New York, NY, 2000).

early example of the broad scope of extra-professional activities that Bacon would later dramatically expand. It was in this milieu that Bacon expended much of his energy in the years after his effective retirement from the studio, aligning himself with causes that revealed not merely the political aspirations of the middle-classes, as R. J. Morris has argued,[47] but also, as Frank Prochaska has suggested, the 'philanthropic *disposition*' of his Christian faith.[48] Overlapping with his kinship network at multiple points, voluntary activity appears to have been the engine for much of Bacon's activity as a portrait artist: approximately fifty of his sitters were clerics with similar allegiances, while many others can be identified in the published accounts of the organisations to which Bacon belonged. In addition to revealing the extent to which the associational world provided a setting in which to enact his spiritual, civic and political commitments, it seems likely that the individuals whom Bacon portrayed validated his own sense of self.

Approach

Of the drawings by the Bacons considered in this thesis, a small number are found in public collections, while the majority are divided among the artist's descendants in private collections in Britain, France and New Zealand. Little known, this body of work first came to public attention when a large group was offered for sale in 1982.[49] Much later, two drawings by Bacon from the collection of the British Museum, London (N322 and N323), featured in Lloyd and Sloan's exhibition, *The Intimate Portrait*.[50] In their catalogue, the two authors expressed their intention to 'open up the discourse on portraits to include finished portrait drawings as well as pastels and miniatures alongside those in oil, and to address

[47] R. J. Morris, 'Clubs, societies and associations', in ed. F. M. L. Thompson, *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950*, vol. 3, Social Agencies and Institutions (Cambridge 1990), chapter 9; and R. J. Morris, 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites, 1780-1850: An Analysis', *Historical Journal*, 26:1 (March 1983), pp. 98-118.

[48] His italics. F. K. Prochaska, 'Philanthropy', in Thompson, *The Cambridge Social History of Britain,* vol. 3, chapter 7, at p. 377. See also Ralph Brown, 'Evangelical Social Thought', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 69:1 (January 2009), pp. 126-136; and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, 'Democracy and Associations in the Long Nineteenth Century: Toward a Transnational Perspective', *Journal of Modern History*, 75:2 (June 2003), pp. 269-299.

[49] Christie, Manson & Woods, 'English Drawings and Watercolours,' auction catalogue, London, 27 July 1982 (London, 1982), lot 50.

[50] Lloyd and Sloan, *The Intimate Portrait*, cat. nos. 68, 105. In my 2017 article I questioned the identification of the drawing of the male sitter as a self-portrait; I also pointed out that the portrait of the female sitter shows Bacon's mother rather than his wife, although I now believe that this is a copy in Bacon's hand after Bacon Senior's original (N314). See Mathew Norman, 'The Portrait Drawings of John Bacon the Younger (1777-1859)', *British Art Journal*, 17:3 (2017), pp. 77-78.

similar social, cultural and historical concerns, as well as art historical ones.'[51] Partly in response to this, my initial analysis of Bacon's drawings focused on the connection between the artist's practice and the tradition of drawing as a genteel, amateur activity in England.[52] While useful, this has proved to be merely one facet of his practice, and I offer here a fuller interrogation of the links between the artist's work and the religious, social and political forces that were reshaping British society in the period.

In order to locate the portrait practices of Bacon and other members of his family within a much broader framework, I have made extensive use of the surviving textual sources. Three, in particular, deserve mention here. First, Bacon's spiritual diary for the years 1815 to 1824 is an example of what Tom Webster has described as a 'technology of the self', 'a mechanism for turning the ephemerality of action and speech into an artefact'.[53] Although the diary reveals almost nothing about his portrait practice, it does show the extent to which Bacon viewed and reviewed his life and activities through the lens of his faith. Not only does his spiritual diary inform our understanding of his portrait practice, and vice versa, but they each functioned as means of reflecting on his spiritual state, both internally and in the world. As with Carol Gibson-Wood's analysis of the portrait drawings and connected poetry of the artist Jonathan Richardson Senior (1667-1745), the evidence here is of drawing in the service of the artist's moral or spiritual life.[54] Second, in the absence of probate inventories, wills from across the family's kin and friendship networks have proved invaluable sources for recovering evidence of objects in projecting status and reinforcing dynastic and affective bonds. These documents point to the extent of the family's collection of portraits in several media and the value placed on these as they passed between individuals and across the generations, assuming talismanic properties as records of individuals and a shared dynastic memory.[55] Finally, considerable use has been made of published accounts of the voluntary organisations to which Bacon belonged. The

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[51] Lloyd and Sloan, *The Intimate Portrait*, p. 9.
[52] Norman, 'The Portrait Drawings of John Bacon the Younger', pp. 76, 78.
[53] Tom Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy: Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', *Historical Journal*, 39:1 (March 1996), p. 40.
[54] Carol Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson: Art Theorist of the English Enlightenment* (New Haven, CT and London, 2000), pp. 38-43 and chapter 3; and Gibson-Wood, 'Jonathan Richardson as a Draftsman', *Master Drawings*, 32:3 (Autumn 1994), pp. 203-229.
[55] For the use of diaries and wills in reconstructing consumption, see Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760* (London, 1996), introduction. For wills in particular, see Nigel Goose and Nesta Evans, 'Wills as an Historical Source', in eds. Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans and Tom Goose, *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 38-71. For the talismanic quality of objects, see Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven, CT and London, 1998), chapter 5, esp. pp. 185-88.

sources include annual reports, in which his membership, participation and financial contributions are recorded, as well as newspaper reports of meetings that he attended and addressed. In addition to revealing in considerable detail the artist's spiritual, philosophical and political views over several decades, these sources are firm ground for at least one facet of the relationships that register in Bacon's portraits of non-kin. But they are not without their limits, and many of the Bacon's sitters remain two-dimensional, known only through the reports of their voluntary activities.

Structure

Beginning with the visual evidence from which this research stems, in Chapter One I survey the drawings made by the first two generations of the Bacon family. Opening with the portrait drawings of Bacon Senior, I argue that his modest surviving *oeuvre* shows that he established many of the characteristics of the family's intergenerational practice. His drawings are considered alongside those of John Russell, whose portraits of members of the Bacon family and their circle suggest how the genre functioned within an evangelical setting. Having established the immediate context for Bacon's work, I make a detailed study of his portrait drawings in their several forms, differentiating these from those of his father, and charting developments in his style, technique and composition. The broad categories of Bacon's sitters are probed for what this reveals about the artist's priorities. Finally, pointing ahead to the work of the third generation, I detail how Bacon's drawings have been successfully disentangled from those of his eldest son, the Revd John.

In Chapter Two I examine the surviving textual sources, building a fuller picture of the relationship between the drawings and the evangelical faith shared by both Bacon Senior and Bacon, and in which the latter's own children were raised. Traversing several genres, the majority of this material was generated by Bacon. It includes two diaries written by him, one of which is a record of the artist's spiritual state. Together with those of other members of the family, Bacon's last will and testament has proved a compelling record of the ways in which the family privileged portraits in the formulation and, subsequently, preservation of a family legacy. Related to this are Bacon's biographical studies, of which spiritual biography forms an important element, revealing how his efforts at memorialisation were imbued with religious significance.

Having established the scope of the primary evidence, in Chapter Three I explore the domestic geography of the family across the course of Bacon's life. Taking in eight dwellings across the south of England, this chapter connects the family's home life to contemporary discourse concerning domesticity and sociability, particularly as this was refashioned by the imperatives of evangelical Christianity. In addition to the location and architecture of their homes, I consider what is known of the contents of these, paying particular attention to the family's collection of portraits in various media, itself the only category of possession of which any significant details survive.

Having mapped the family's domestic geography, in Chapter Four I examine the relationships that played out in those settings, of which the drawings are a valuable record. Beginning with Bacon Senior, and continuing through to the years after Bacon's own death in 1859, I explore parent-child and sibling relationships, drawing on both visual and textual sources, including diaries, letters and wills, in order to reconstruct elements of the emotional dynamics that may be recorded in the family's portraits. Although Bacon acts as the pivot in most cases, valuable evidence of the varied tone of domestic life within the extended family comes from the unpublished diaries of the artist's half-brother, Charles Bacon who, significantly, may not have shared Bacon's regenerate faith.

Moving beyond the domestic environment, in Chapter Five I discuss how associational activity was instrumental in forging many of the non-kin relationships that are recorded in the drawings. Beginning with Bacon Senior, I show how this provided an outlet for both professional aspirations and religious imperatives and the extent to which this was embraced by his son. The range of his commitments locates Bacon within multiple, often overlapping circles in which he fraternised with men who shared his spiritual outlook and, from the mid-1830s at least, political concerns that were linked to perceived threats to the Protestant settlement with which he increasingly, and vocally, identified.

Finally, in Chapter Six I turn to the available evidence of drawing in the third generation of the family. Beginning with what is known of the artistic education of several of Bacon's children, particularly his daughters, I then explore the life and work of both of Bacon's sons, the Revds John and Thomas Bacon (hereafter 'the Revd Thomas'; 1813-92). Finally, it is the Revd John's portrait practice, and what I believe is evidence of his response to the challenge to drawing posed by photography, that makes his modest *oeuvre* a striking addition to the history of portrait drawing as well as a fitting conclusion to the intergenerational practice examined in this thesis.

Conclusion

In their studies of British portrait drawings, Noon, Lloyd and Sloan sought to correct the relative neglect of this facet of the portrait genre. Pointing to the variety of media and formats which this rather nebulous category comprises, they also stressed the several purposes that objects of this kind might serve. In addition to its place in studio practice, particularly as preparatory studies for oil paintings, the portrait drawing could answer the emotional and social needs of artists and their sitters, commissioners and consumers, distinctions that collapsed in many of the examples cited by the latter two scholars. Both texts reveal the richness of the subject, with likenesses stemming from the Tudor period through into the latter half of the nineteenth century and beyond. In spite of this, the paucity of secondary literature reveals the extent to which portrait drawing has been relegated to the margins of the study of portraiture as a genre. Even where drawing practice has been examined on its own terms, as in Bermingham's *Learning to Draw*, the narrative of drawing, and as an amateur practice in particular, is presented as largely one of marginalisation and decline, particularly in the face of encroaching technological change.

In addition to contributing to the work initiated by Noon, Lloyd and Sloan, I believe that the material examined in this thesis challenges several aspects of Bermingham's model, including its periodisation and gender dynamics. As a detailed study of drawing practice in one family over three generations, we find significant evidence that drawing was deployed throughout the period to articulate affective relationships within kinship networks and among circles of friends, even as its role was challenged by the advent of photographic technology with which Bermingham concludes her study. I suggest that drawing was key to family memory among the Bacons. It was a means of both formulating and transmitting identity in tandem with the portraits in other media that filled the family's homes, doing so alongside, and in conjunction with, the textual accounts of both individuals and the family that its members generated.

Further, it is clear that drawing practices were capable of accommodating relationships that stemmed from shared spiritual and civic convictions of the kind that both Bacon Senior and Bacon embraced through their evangelical faith and voluntary activities. That these circles of connection, ranging from the intimate to the associational, overlapped only confirms the considerable crossover between the various roles assigned to portrait drawings that were identified by Lloyd and Sloan. By its nature, the unstable boundaries between family and friendship, particularly as it manifested itself in shared evangelical

faith, is borne out in Bacon's albums, where sitters with whom he shared a host of different kinds of connections sit comfortably together. As objects to be examined within the home, the albums, and portrait practice more generally, drew the associational or 'public' into the domestic, eliding differences between these nominally separate realms just as it broke down barriers between the types of relationships that each portrait records.

Chapter One

Drawing in the First Two Generations

The drawings that form the subject of this thesis are many. Across the course of eight decades or more, at least seven members of the Bacon family are known to have taken likenesses, of which approximately three hundred and sixty have been identified and examined in the course of my research. Of the several portrait artists in the family, four in particular assume a central place in this thesis by virtue of the scale of their respective *oeuvres* and, more importantly, what this reveals about amateur drawing both within the family and during the period under review.

This chapter surveys the evidence of the portrait practices of the first two generations of the Bacon family.[1] Beginning with the small group of surviving drawings by, or tentatively attributed to, Bacon Senior, I consider how his work served as the point of origin for his family's shared practice. This is followed by an examination of pastels and other drawings of members of the Bacon family and their circle by John Russell that, together with the portraits by Bacon Senior, form the context for the work of Bacon. Much of the chapter is given over to an analysis of the latter's large *oeuvre*. I highlight the range of his sitters and consider the evolution of his technique over the course of his career, identifying key developments and pointing to both representative examples and the occasional outlier that suggest the variety and vigour of his practice over the course of almost seventy years. The chapter concludes with a short section in which I disentangle the work of the Revd John from that of his father, ahead of a fuller discussion of drawing in the third generation of the family in Chapter Six.

[1] This chapter revises and, in a number of instances, corrects observations made in my initial survey of the Bacon drawings; see Norman, 'The portrait drawings of John Bacon the Younger', pp. 74-79.

Before proceeding, it is necessary to clarify the distinction between the categories of 'professional' and 'amateur' artist as they are used in this thesis. Having trained in the Royal Academy Schools, both Bacon Senior and Bacon went on to become professional sculptors and each man enjoyed a successful career, winning commissions for important national monuments and many private works besides.[2] Although portraiture formed a significant component of many of their sculptural works, with the exception of three sheets considered here, two of which are by John Russell, the portrait drawings were not connected to their professional activities. Instead, these were a private or amateur exercise. While 'amateur' had long meant a lover of the arts, and was used in this sense by Bacon himself in 1814,[3] Kim Sloan has observed that around 1780 the term also came to refer to someone who both loved and practiced one or more of the arts. Crucially, this only applied to those who did so 'without regard for pecuniary advantage', and the term did not share the pejorative implications with which it is now often associated.[4] While their sculptures functioned within the professional artistic sphere, I wish to suggest that the portrait drawings of both Bacon Senior and Bacon and, later, for the most part, members of the third generation of the family, were invested with the positive notions of amateurism current in the last decades of the eighteenth century when the family's shared practice began.

Given the large number of works considered here and the several artists responsible, it will be helpful to outline the distribution of the objects. A full list of the drawings examined in this thesis, limited to those works that are principally portraits, is found in Appendix Three. This excludes other drawings by Bacon that are occasionally referred to in the text, including identified figures shown in landscapes, but that do not appear to have formed part of his portrait practice. This distinction is supported by the presence of these depictions in albums in which the primary focus was the landscape and studies of architecture. Most of the drawings catalogued in Appendix Three are arranged by album or collection, as relevant, and have been allocated a catalogue number (e.g., 'N123') with which the drawings are identified throughout this thesis. The catalogue

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[2] For summaries of their respective careers, and that of Bacon Senior's elder son, Thomas (1771-1832), see Ingrid Roscoe, Emma Hardy and M. G. Sullivan, *A Biographical Dictionary of Sculptors in Britain, 1660-1851* (New Haven, CT and London, 2009), pp. 35-54.

[3] 'National Monuments', *Times*, 19 December 1814, p. 3.

[4] Kim Sloan, *'A Noble Art': Amateur Artists and Drawing Masters c. 1600-1800* (London, 2000), p. 7. As Sloan notes, the later, pejorative connotations attached to the term amateur effectively invert the meaning in the latter period of her study. For a history of genteel amateurism, particularly as it relates to drawing, see Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, chapters 1 and 2.

includes entries for portrait drawings by other artists that feature in the albums as well as a small number of drawings that Bacon is known to have executed but that have not been traced.[5]

The bulk of the Bacon family drawings identified in this research are found in six albums, all but one of which remain in private collections. Albums One (N1-N89) and Two (N90-N127) are both exclusively the work of Bacon, with the portraits drawn on the leaves of the albums.[6] Based on the dates found inscribed on many of the sheets of those two volumes, it appears that the drawings were added in chronological sequence, with Album One containing works from *c*. 1827-43 and Album Two from *c*. 1847-55, respectively. Album Three (N128-N164), by contrast, comprises drawings by the Revd John only, a conclusion reached in the course of my research and discussed towards the end of this chapter.[7] A small number of drawings in that album are pasted or stitched to the pages, while the majority are found loose between the leaves, allowing for movement within the album and the dispersal of sheets. Evidence of the latter comes from a discrete group of works identified here as the Roman Numeral series ('RN series') for the ordinal numbers found inscribed at the upper right of each sheet, and from which at least nine works are currently untraced.

Predominantly the work of Bacon, Album Four (N165-N256) is notable for the incorporation of portraits by seven other hands, including Bacon Senior, John Russell, Bacon's youngest daughter, Augusta Maria Fowler (1824-49), his sister, Elizabeth Thornton (1774-after 1857), and the portrait artist Sir William Beechey (1753-1839).[8] As with Album Three, Album Four contains drawings that are either fixed to the leaves or loose, and likewise suggests considerable movement of sheets within the album, as evidenced by traces of glue and fragments of sheets adhered to the leaves and losses to the corners of some sheets. Album Five (N257-294) likewise comprises mostly work by Bacon, but also

[5] The missing drawings include those that have been removed from Albums One and Two, but are still recorded in the indexes to those volumes, or for which other textual evidence survives. The sitters in these drawings are included in Appendix Two, while the drawings themselves are recorded in Appendix Three.

[6] See introduction, n. 1; and John Bacon Junior, Album of portrait drawings ('Album Two'), *c*. 1847-55, private collection.

[7] Revd John Bacon, Album of portrait drawings ('Album Three'), 1841-44, private collection. I have chosen to retain the numbering applied to the first four albums by Bacon's descendants rather than alter these to reflect the attribution of Album Three to the Revd John. Albums Five and Six were numbered as I encountered them.

[8] John Bacon Junior and others, Album of portrait drawings ('Album Four'), *c*. 1780-1854, private collection.

features at least one sheet by Augusta Maria, and another here attributed to her.[9] While most of the sheets are stitched to the leaves, three drawings by the Revd John are found loose in the album and are evidently later additions, including one from the RN series encountered in Album Three. Album Six (N295-N315), previously owned by the Bacons' Thornton relations, and now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, contains drawings by Bacon Senior and early works by Bacon, in addition to several sheets in other hands, not all of which have been identified.[10] A sketch made directly on one leaf, showing the monument that Bacon carved for his daughter Christiana Medley (1806-41), 1842, in St Thomas' Church, Exeter, and which is found roughly in the middle of the sequence of portraits that are pasted to the pages of that album, suggests that the arrangement of the drawings in Album Six may date to the 1840s.

In addition to the drawings housed in the six albums, a small number of sheets by Bacon Senior, Bacon and the Revd John are found loose or, in a very few cases, framed, in public and private collections. Six drawings by Bacon, including one of four self-portraits, are held by the Mackelvie Trust at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Auckland (N316-N321).[11] A further two drawings by Bacon are in found in the Department of Prints and Drawings of the British Museum, London (N322 and N323).[12] Additionally, three portrait drawings by Thomas Bacon (1771-1832), the eldest of Bacon Senior's sons, are found in sketchbooks that contain miscellaneous figure studies, writing and drawings that appear to have been linked to his time at the Royal Academy Schools.[13] Although Thomas Bacon plays little part in the following discussion, this limited evidence of his interest in portrait drawing, together with the one identified portrait by his sister Elizabeth Thornton (N252), suggests that taking likenesses was common within the family circle.

The sitters in the drawings are identified from inscriptions found either on the sheet—whether recto or verso—or a secondary support, or, in the case of both Albums One and Two, Bacon's manuscript index found at the back of each volume.[14] The index to

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[9] John Bacon Junior and others, Album of portrait drawings ('Album Five'), *c*. 1802-after 1842, private collection.
[10] John Bacon Senior and others, Album of portrait drawings ('Album Six'), *c*. 1780-after 1842, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, inv. E.393-1943-E.413-1943.
[11] Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Auckland, inv. M2006/4/1-6.
[12] British Museum, London, inv. 1943,1102.2-3.
[13] Three of Thomas Bacon's sketchbooks survive in private collections, including two dating to 1783 and 1784, respectively, and a third that was identified as Thomas' in an inscription made by Bacon in 1850 as 'his sketches [from] 65 years ago'.
[14] A 'secondary support' is any support to which a drawing is fixed, whether paper or card, and can itself be loose or framed in addition to being a page in an album.

Album One was an afterthought, added after 1836 at the earliest.[15] The delay in identifying his sitters may explain the artist's failure—perhaps inability—to recall the given names of the Revds Thomas Spencer (1769-1853) (N20) and Crow (fl. 1827-28) (N22), the entries for which were supplied with an expectant '____' instead. It seems that the index to Album Two was not a similarly belated addition.[16] Some sitters are identified by inscriptions in later hands made either on the sheet or, where relevant, a secondary support, such as the page of the album to which it is fixed. While these identifications are generally accepted here, the inscriptions occasionally reveal a lack of certainty that has only increased with the passage of time. Despite being named, some sitters have evaded identification in the historical record, while a very few were simply left unnamed by the artists. Appendix Two contains an alphabetical list of the identified sitters with biographical summaries and is cross-referenced with the catalogue of works in Appendix Three.

Although Bacon Senior does not appear to have inscribed his drawings with either names or dates, Bacon later added inscriptions to a number of these, identifying the sitter and, importantly, attributing the work to his father. This was part of a larger effort on his part to attribute the drawings by several hands grouped together in Album Four, including those by himself, along with inscriptions identifying most of the sitters. This practice was consistent with his annotations of letters and other documents in the family archive, pointing to his awareness of the historical value of the diverse material in his possession. Although I have made it my policy here to accept the attributions that Bacon has left us, some doubts remain as to the veracity of a small number of these.[17]

With some consistency from the 1820s onward, Bacon dated his own drawings on the sheet, sometimes with the year, at other times with the month and year and, elsewhere, the precise date on which the drawing was made. For those works that were not dated, whether by Bacon, his father or any other artist considered here, I have

[15] This is inferred from the entries in the index, such as that for the Revd Robert Bentley Buckle (1802-93) (previously N26, now N328), drawn in September 1828 and described in the index as archdeacon of Dorset, a role to which he was appointed only in 1836.
[16] The amended inscription in the index for Bacon's 1849 portrait of the Revd Thomas Bacon (N99), recording his 1852 move from Marylebone, London, to Kingsworthy, Hampshire, suggests that the entries in the index to Album Two were made contemporaneously with the portrait drawings.
[17] For instance, the portrait of Mrs Swann (N224), identified as the wet nurse to Bacon's younger half-brother Joshua (1791-?1881), shows a fluid line that finds no comparison anywhere in his own work or that of his father.

provided approximate dates based on the available evidence.[18] In addition to stylistic analysis, this includes a combination of biographical details and costume; while for Bacon, the changes charted in the chronological sequences of Albums One and Two have proved helpful in clarifying the evolution of his style over the last three decades in which he worked. While I am confident that the dates suggested here are supported by the evidence, these must remain tentative and subject to change as further information becomes available. Of Bacon's children, the Revd John proved a reliable source of such information, often inscribing his drawings with his own initials, the precise date on which the drawing was made and the address at which this occurred. Furthermore, in the RN series, the Revd John also had his sitters autograph their own likenesses. These and other aspects of his *oeuvre*, along with the works of his sister, Augusta Maria, and their brother, the Revd Thomas, are discussed in Chapter Six.

John Bacon Senior

Having revealed an interest in drawing when 'very young',[19] Bacon Senior later turned this skill to use in his work as a sculptor, as surviving preparatory studies attest.[20] That he also chose to draw a number of his family and friends suggests how the practice could bridge the divide between professional activity and private pleasure. Sixteen portraits by, or tentatively attributed to, Bacon Senior have been identified in this research. The uncertainty surrounding the attribution of several of these is due to similarities of technique in the work of Bacon Senior and early portraits by Bacon. However, as indicated, four sheets were identified by Bacon as his father's work with the inscription 'by JB. RA.',[21] providing some evidence of the elder artist's technique against which to judge the attributions of those drawings that are given to him in old inscriptions in Album Six. Inscriptions on the leaves of that album generally repeat those found on the versos of the sheets, recording both attributions and the identities of the sitters. The original inscriptions were probably made by a member of the Thornton family to whom the album once

[18] Throughout this thesis, each work referred to is provided with either a specific date, as inscribed on the sheet, an approximate date preceded by 'circa,' e.g., '*c*. 1786', or, in the case of greater uncertainty, a date-range, e.g., 1780-90.
[19] Richard Cecil, 'Biographical Memoirs of the late John Bacon, Esq. R. A.', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, September 1799**,** p. 808.
[20] See, for instance, John Bacon Senior, Design for part of the monument to Lord Chatham, Guildhall, *c*. 1782, pen and grey ink with wash over graphite, 450 x 324 mm, British Museum, London, inv. 1886,0111.33.
[21] See, for instance, John Bacon Senior, *Charles Bacon*, *c*. 1795 (N231) (see Fig. 9).

belonged, and for whom the identification of several sitters as 'aunt' or 'uncle' would have been meaningful. This may have been Bacon Senior's daughter, Elizabeth, or one of her children with Edward Norton Thornton (1776-1848), whom she married in 1797. The two families were joined again in the third generation considered here, when Bacon's daughter Mary Ann (1804-44) married her first cousin, Edward Thornton Junior (1799-1859) in 1823. The enduring links between the two families are highlighted in Album Six by a portrait of Bacon's daughter Augusta Maria, in an unidentified hand, dated 1842 (N315), and the sketch of Christiana's tomb, previously mentioned.

The majority of Bacon Senior's portraits show family members. In addition to his first wife, Elizabeth (née Wade; 1740-82), from the period 1767-82 (N314; Fig. 1) and several of his children, his sitters also included at least one of his sisters-in-law, Mrs Raybould (d. before 1804), made before 1799 (N311; Fig. 2), the sister of his first wife, and her husband Thomas Raybould (d. 1804), from before 1799 (N307; Fig. 3), who was also a close friend. The intimate relationships that he shared with his sitters suggest the pleasure that Bacon Senior probably took in making likenesses of those close to him. Certainly, in his memoir of him, his friend and fellow evangelical, the Revd Richard Cecil (1748-1810) suggested that if Bacon Senior had 'been more independent and unencumbered', he would have spent his time in various pursuits, including 'increasing the portraits of his friends'.[22] Comparing this activity with 'placing an organ, a painted window, or a monument' in his church, 'adding a few select pieces to his collection' or 'in turning his garden walk', Cecil's remark suggests not only the genteel nature of the activity, but also identifies it as a habit that the artist enjoyed and for which he was known and esteemed among his circle.

The only surviving portraits of sitters from beyond Bacon Senior's kinship network are those of the prominent evangelical cleric, the Revd John Newton (1725-1807) (N347; Fig. 4) and his wife Mary (née Catlett; 1729-90) (N346; Fig. 5).[23] As these drawings appear to have been made as pendants, they presumably date to the period 1782-90, beginning with the first evidence of the men's acquaintance following Newton's appointment as rector of St Mary Woolnoth in the City of London in 1780, and ending with Mary's death

[22] Richard Cecil, *Memoirs of John Bacon, Esq. R.A. with reflections drawn from a review of his moral and religious character* (London, 1801), p. 109.

[23] A portrait of the popular Royal Academy model, George White (dates unknown), found in one of Bacon Senior's sketchbooks, was perhaps connected with the artist's role as visitor of the Royal Academy's Life Academy and does not appear to form part of his portrait practice. For Bacon Senior as visitor in the Royal Academy Schools, see Rigaud, *Facts and Recollections*, p. 90.

ten years later.[24] The two men became close: the artist was one of the few lay members of the cleric's evangelical discussion group, the Eclectic Society;[25] and Newton may have officiated at Bacon Senior's second marriage before baptising at least five of his children by that relationship.[26] The likeness of Newton itself points to the intimacy of their friendship, with the cleric shown wearing a large, soft cap of a kind worn in private and in the absence of his wig; while the drawing of Mary shows her in a similarly domestic mob cap. The modest likeness of Newton foreshadows the many portraits of clerics that form such a significant element of Bacon's later drawings, and announces the family's early links to a leading member of the evangelical revival.

Although small, this group of works reveals key features of Bacon Senior's portrait practice. While two of the sheets show a bust-length female figure in three-quarter profile, Aunt Jenkins (fl. *c*. 1790), before 1799 (N309; Fig. 6) and an unidentified seated youth, 1780-99 (N348; Fig. 7), respectively, most of the artist's sitters are shown in strict profile, several with the outline of their features strongly delineated, as in the portraits of his son Thomas, *c*. 1785 (N305; Fig. 8), and his first wife, Elizabeth (see Fig. 1). The strength of the outline reflects Bacon Senior's habit of constructing this with multiple strokes of graphite, that, together with some smudging as he worked, suggests a tentative approach. This recalls Cecil's observation that, despite his 'inclination for drawing', he 'never made any great proficiency in that art',[27] although we may wonder at the justice of his friend's judgment. Working exclusively in graphite pencil, Bacon Senior achieved tonal variation either with delicately applied strokes, as in his portrait of his eldest son, already seen, or stumping, in which the lines were blended with either a fingertip or a stump of paper or leather, as in the hair in the drawing of his son Charles, *c*. 1795 (N231; Fig. 9). With his focus on their features, Bacon Senior's account of dress tends toward the rapid and summary, giving little more than a suggestion of the details of his sitters' costumes.

Bacon Senior's preference for the profile format in his drawings has parallels in his sculptural practice. Timothy Clifford has pointed to the artist's bas reliefs of King George III

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[24] A number of Newton's letters to Bacon Senior are preserved in MS copies made by Bacon; see Revd John Newton to John Bacon Senior, 18 September 1782, 20 letters to John Bacon and 1 to Mrs. Bacon; Olney and other places, 1782-1788, Beinecke Library, Yale University, Osborn c274.
[25] For the Eclectic Society, see John H. Pratt, ed., *Eclectic Notes, or, Notes of discussions on religious topics at the meetings of the Eclectic Society, London, during the years 1798-1814* (2nd ed., London, 1865).
[26] For his 'pleasure of joining your hands', see Revd John Newton to Martha Bacon, 15 July 1783, Osborn c274. For the baptisms, see John M. Bacon, typescript 'The Bacon Family', 2007, pp. 81-82.
[27] Cecil, 'Biographical Memoirs', p. 808.

(1738-1820) and Queen Charlotte (née Princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz; 1761-1818), *c*. 1777, executed for Josiah Wedgwood (1730-95). He has also compared his marble bas-relief of fellow Royal Academician Mason Chamberlain (1727-87), 1785, with significant numismatic projects in which he was involved, including the Royal Academy committee commissioned to redesign the currency, on which he served in 1798.[28] Redolent of antiquity, the profile format also points to contemporary interest in physiognomy, the 'science' of divining character from facial features promoted by the Swiss theologian, Johann Casper Lavater (1741-1801).[29] While Dror Wahrman has connected Lavater's system to a Romantic reaction against the psychology of the *tabula rasa* promoted by the English philosopher, John Locke (1632-1704),[30] Leah Hochman has highlighted its spiritual component, noting that 'facial features and expressions are morally infused idioms that expose what lays secret within the soul'.[31] Together with Lavater's preference for the profile format, including the silhouette, the latter assumptions are, I suggest, consonant with both the formal concerns and moral imperatives of the portrait practice and evangelical faith of both Bacon Senior and his son.[32]

Although few in number, in Bacon Senior's portrait drawings we find the origin of the intergenerational practice considered in this thesis. His work cast a long shadow, and sixty years after his death, his grandson, the Revd John, continued to draw likenesses that evoked the essence of his practice. Further, in addition to the formal and technical qualities that would remain central to the portrait drawings made by the following two generations, Bacon Senior's work appears to have established the focus on family and like-minded members of the evangelical community to which they belonged.

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[28] For Bacon Senior's links to industry, see Timothy Clifford, 'Bacon and the Manufacturers', *Apollo*, 122 (October 1985), esp. pp. 294, 298-300. For the portrait of Chamberlain, see John Bacon the Elder, *Mason Chamberlain*, 1785, marble relief, dimensions unknown, National Portrait Gallery, London, inv. 2653.

[29] For an early English translation, see Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*, trans. Henry Hunter (3 vols., London, 1789-98).

[30] For links between Romanticism, physiognomy and his 'new regime of identity,' see Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, CT and London, 2004), pp. 290-302.

[31] Leah Hochman, *The Ugliness of Moses Mendelssohn: Aesthetics, Religion, and Morality in the Eighteenth Century* (Abingdon, 2014), p. 105.

[32] For links between Lavater's physiognomy and evangelicalism in Britain, see Marjorie Morgan, *Manners, Morals and Class in England, 1774-1858* (New York, NY, 1994), pp. 70-71; and Yeldham, *Maria Spilsbury*, pp. 167-168.

John Russell

A near neighbour of the Bacons in Newman Street since 1789, John Russell's friendship with the family presumably turned on both artistic and religious sympathies.[33] In addition to being a fellow artist and evangelical, Russell may have been something of a spiritual mentor for Bacon, who later recalled that he 'found his conversation so edifying that I often availed myself of the privilege of sitting with him in his painting room while smoking his pipe in the evening after the studies of the day were over; and when religious subjects generally occupied our attention.'[34] Russell was responsible for a number of portraits of members of the Bacon family and its kinship network. While his highly-finished pastels may have been commissions, a small number of sketches in Album Four point to the informal exchange of likenesses, perhaps functioning as tokens of friendship.

Russell made two pastel portraits of Bacon Senior, one of which shows the sculptor formally attired in wig, waistcoat and blue jacket, equipped with mallet and chisel, and resting his crossed wrists on a sculpted head (Fig. 10).[35] This portrait is signed and dated both 1792 and 1800, suggesting that it may have been reworked in the aftermath of the sculptor's unexpected death in 1799, or was a second version of another portrait that perhaps dates to 1792. In the latter, the artist is shown wigless, in a red jacket and open-necked shirt, and at work on a different head.[36] Together with a portrait of Bacon Senior's second wife, Martha (née Holland; 1756-1802), also by Russell, this is now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.[37] One of Russell's two portraits of Bacon Senior was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1792.[38] Perhaps aware of Bacon Senior's earlier bas-relief of Chamberlain, and conscious of the fragile nature of pastel, one reviewer was moved to

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[33] For Russell, see George C. Williamson, *John Russell, R.A.* (London, 1894); and Matthews, 'John Russell'. For Russell's pastels, including the catalogue numbers by which they are referred to here, see 'Russell, John', in Jeffares, *Dictionary of Pastellists Before 1800*, http://pastellists.com/Articles/Russell.pdf.

[34] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, typescript of MS 'Reminiscences of the late John Bacon Esquire R.A. and other persons of his time; so far as an old treacherous Memory may be relied on', 1847 and later, private collection, part 2, pp. 38-39. The 'Reminiscences' survive in a typescript copy of the manuscript original, with some annotations, probably by Gertrude Bacon. Reflecting Bacon's arrangement, it is divided into three sections, each of which is paginated separately.

[35] John Russell, *John Bacon Senior*, 1792 and 1800, pastel, 610 x 460 mm, private collection; see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64.1072. The sculptural head depicted has not been identified.

[36] John Russell, *John Bacon*, 1792[?], pastel on paper laid onto canvas, 597 x 445 mm, Victoria & Albert Museum, P.5-1957; see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64.1072. For other versions of the portrait, see ibid, J.64.1076 and J.64.1079. The sculptural head of a bearded male figure in that portrait remains unidentified.

[37] John Russell, *Martha, Mrs Bacon*, 1782-1806, pastel, 597 x 445 mm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, inv. P.6-1957; see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64.1082.

[38] Graves, *The Royal Academy*, vol. 6, p. 392.

suggest that 'the *Sculptor* should return the compliment, by employing the more durable labours of his *chisel*, in tracing the features of his brother artist.'[39] However, no portrait of Russell by Bacon Senior—or Bacon, for that matter—has been identified in this research.

Bacon Senior also acquired two portraits by Russell of his friends, the clerics John Newton and Richard Cecil.[40] Notwithstanding the small portrait of Newton made by Bacon Senior, discussed above, a note on the back of Russell's portrait of Newton claims that this was the only portrait the cleric sat for in the course of his life, and then only out of friendship for Bacon Senior.[41] That Newton overcame his reluctance to sit emphasises both the importance of this portrait for both the sitter and its intended owner, and the friendship on which it was predicated. Unlike Bacon Senior's intimate likeness of his friend, however, Russell's portrait shows the bewigged Newton in his role as a cleric.[42] The artist's pastel of Cecil is likewise testimony to an intimate friendship, highlighted by the cleric's biographical memoir of Bacon Senior, first published in 1801.[43] That project grew out of a much shorter article that Cecil published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in September 1799, the year of the artist's death.[44] The latter undertaking was made at the request of the Bacon family and placed great emphasis on Bacon Senior's faith, a subject with which Cecil was doubtless familiar, and was perhaps partially motivated by criticism that the artist's piety was merely a shield for unscrupulous business practices.[45]

Other pastels of members of the Bacon family by Russell include those of Bacon Senior's daughters, Ann (1768-1809) and Mary (1769-after 1851), both of which date to 1785 and show the sitters fashionably attired (Figs. 11 and 12),[46] and Elizabeth, from 1798,

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[39] Cited in Jeffares, 'Russell, John', p. 5.

[40] John Russell, *Revd John Newton*, 1788, pastel, 610 x 460 mm, private collection; and *Revd Richard Cecil*, 1798[?], pastel, 610 x 460 mm, private collection; see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64.2179 and J.64.1284. Another autograph version of the portrait of Newton belongs to the Church Missionary Society, Oxford; see ibid, J.64.2176.

[41] Williamson, *John Russell*, p. 54.

[42] For the role of wigs in establishing a specifically Anglican clerical identity in the eighteenth century, see William Gibson, ''Pious Decorum': Clerical Wigs in the Eighteenth-Century Church of England', *Anglican and Episcopal History*, 65:2 (June 1996), esp. pp. 158-160.

[43] See this chapter, n. 22.

[44] See this chapter, n. 19.

[45] For antagonism toward Bacon Senior among his colleagues at the Royal Academy, see Ann Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon R.A. 1740-1799* (London, 1963), pp. 19-21, 44-45.

[46] John Russell, *Ann Bacon*, 1785, pastel, dimensions unknown; and *Mary Bacon*, 1785, pastel, dimensions unknown; both private collections. Jeffares catalogued both portraits as showing Ann Bacon, and dates the first of these to 1786. He also reproduces a third portrait, also catalogued as Ann, which was a second version of the first of these, minus the book, and a fourth (not illustrated) of Mary Bacon; see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64-1094, J.64-1096 and J.64-1098, J.64-1101.

the year following her marriage to Edward Norton Thornton.[47] Russell also made undated portraits of Elizabeth's parents-in-law, the merchant and undertaker John Thornton (1741-1804) of Clapham, and his wife Anne (née Ford; 1749-99).[48] While the Thorntons presumably commissioned Russell, it seems likely that their portraits, together with an undated likeness of Bacon Senior's niece, Ann Buxton (née Field; *c*. 1752-1830),[49] stemmed from the artist's association with the Bacon family. A number of miniatures after Russell's Bacon portraits also survive; and while Jeffares doubts that the artist was responsible for the large number of miniatures after his works, this group of small and portable copies testifies to the significance with which his portraits were invested by the Bacon family.[50]

Three more works by Russell date from after Bacon Senior's death, indicating that the links between these two evangelical families remained strong. These include a portrait of Bacon from 1800 that, with a modelling tool in his hand, identifies him as a sculptor, recognising his succession to his father's Newman Street studio and emergence as an artist in his own right (Fig. 13).[51] Shown in the background is a fictive sculpture of a mourning female figure of a type not uncommon in the work of both Bacon and his father, and that presumably refers to the death of Bacon Senior the year before.[52] A second portrait of Bacon, dated 1802 (Fig. 14), forms a pendant with another of his wife, Susannah Sophia (née Taylor; 1782-1853), also 1802 (Fig. 15), whom he had married the year before, showing her *en face* with her body gently turned in three-quarter profile.[53] But while Russell's portrait of the passive Susannah Sophia conforms to contemporary notions of gender roles,[54] his likeness of Bacon, formally attired, half-length and in profile facing left, shows him prominently clutching a rolled and seemingly blank document in his right hand.

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[47] John Russell, *Elizabeth Thornton*, 1798, pastel, 600 x 450 mm, location unknown; see ibid, J.64.2795.
[48] John Russell, *John Thornton*, undated, pastel, 610 x 460 mm, location unknown; see ibid, J.64.2797; and *Anne Thornton*, *c*. 1798, pastel, 610 x 460 mm, UK Government Art Collection; see ibid, J.64.2799; and https://artcollection.culture.gov.uk/artwork/2297/, accessed 25 January 2020.
[49] John Russell, *Mrs Thomas Buxton*, after 1772, pastel, 600 x 440 mm (oval), private collection; see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64.1241.
[50] Private collection. See Jeffares, 'Russell, John', p. 2.
[51] John Russell, *John Bacon the Younger*, 1800, pastel, 610 x 460 mm, location unknown; see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64.1086.
[52] See, for instance, John Bacon Senior, Monument to Anne Williamson, 1798, St James' Cathedral, Spanish Town, Jamaica; and John Bacon Junior, Monument to Osmond de Beauvoir, *c*. 1810, Town Church, St Peter Port, Guernsey.
[53] John Russell, *John Bacon Junior*, 1802, pastel, dimensions unknown, private collection; and *Mrs John Bacon*, 1802, pastel, 610 x 460 mm, private collection; see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64.109 and J.64.1091.
[54] Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, pp. 35-36.

Reproduced in an article on Bacon in the *European Magazine* in 1813,[55] and so, presumably, a favoured likeness, Kim Sloan has suggested that the rolled document may refer to Bacon's admission to the Society of Antiquaries,[56] although that only occurred in 1803.[57] Instead, the document might have alluded to the artist's marriage in 1801, drawing on an antique motif with which Bacon may have been familiar. Margaret Whinney has identified a plate in Giovanni Pietro Bellori's (1613-96) *Admiranda Romanarum Antiquitatum* (1693) that shows a sculpture of 'Roman Marriage' from the Palazzo Sacchetti, Rome, in which the male figure clutches a rolled document, as the source for John Michael Rysbrack's (1694-1770) bas relief in the Cupola Room at Kensington Palace, dated 1723.[58] A copy of Bellori's volume featured in the first day of a sale of Bacon family effects in 1865.[59]

Quite unlike his pastels are the four graphite sketches by Russell that feature in Album Four. Of these, his delicate sketch of Bacon Senior's son Charles as a small child, seen in profile (N178**;** Fig. 16), echoes the formal qualities of his friend's own portrait practice. The three other drawings are quite different: rapidly worked with pronounced diagonal hatching and multiple pentimenti (marks revealing changes made by the artist), all three sheets were later inscribed by Bacon to record that they were made from memory. Two of these depict the noted evangelical preacher, the Revd William Romaine (1714-95), *c*. 1795 (N172, N226), attired in wig and ecclesiastical robes, and whom Russell had portrayed previously.[60] The second of these (Fig. 17), showing Romaine with his head tilted forward and hand raised, is similar to the forward-leaning bust of the cleric that topped Bacon Senior's monument to him, previously in the church of St Andrew by the Wardrobe, London (destroyed 1940).[61] Given the posthumous nature of that monument, and the fact

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[55] Stipple engraving by Thomas Blood (1777-1850), 'Memoir of John Bacon, ESQ. F.S.A.', *European Magazine and London Review*, vol. 67 (January 1815), pp. 3-4, plate opposite p. 3.
[56] Lloyd and Sloan, *The Intimate Portrait*, cat. no. 68.
[57] For Bacon's election, see Minute Book, vol. XXIX, 19 November 1801-16 June 1803, Society of Antiquaries, London, pp. 474-475, 506, 514, 520.
[58] For Rysbrack's *Roman Marriage*, 1723, and its sources, see Margaret Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain 1530-1830* (Harmondsworth, 1964), p. 84, pls. 58A and 58B.
[59] Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, *Catalogue of the Valuable Illustrated Works, Engravings Water-Colour Drawings, and other articles, chiefly collected by the late John Bacon, R.A., Sculptor; also the collection of Framed Engravings and Pictures formed by F.M.A. Venua, Esq.*, London, 21-22 June 1865 (London, 1865), lot 55. While individual lots are not identified as either Bacon's or Venua's property, the first day's sale was described in the catalogue as 'Books of Prints, Engravings, Etchings, Drawings, and other Articles, chiefly collected by the Late John Bacon, R.A., Sculptor.'
[60] For a 1775 mezzotint by Richard Houston after Russell's portrait of Romaine, see Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.64.2424.
[61] For images of that monument, see London Picture Archive, cat. nos. m0010493cl and m0010495cl, https://www.londonpicturearchive.org.uk/, accessed 18 August 2021.

that Russell's sketches were made from memory rather than *ad vivum*, these drawings could have been created to assist the sculptor, whose concern over the likeness of his bust registers in an undated letter to Bacon written prior to the monument's completion.[62] The third sketch depicts another evangelical cleric, the Revd Rowland Hill (1744-1833), 1783-1806 (N200). While this last work has not been linked to a monument, it does emphasise the evangelical circles in which Russell, Bacon Senior and their respective families mixed.

Taken together, the portraits by Russell that were acquired by the Bacons point to both the role of portraiture in commemorating both individuals and the place that they occupied within their kinship network and connected spiritual community. As with the portrait drawings of Bacon Senior, I suggest that Russell's portraits formed an important example for the youthful Bacon, one that was borne out in his own work.

John Bacon Junior

If Russell's influence is primarily felt in Bacon's occasional work in pastel and their shared interest in the memorial capacity of drawing, it was the work of his father, Bacon Senior, that proved central to the formal concerns of the artist's practice over the course of almost seven decades. Indeed, such was the impact of his father's example, that the task of identifying Bacon's first efforts in the genre would prove difficult without his own textual interventions, described above.

A portrait of the Royal Academician Agostino Carlini RA (*c*. 1718-1790), *c*. 1790 (N215**;** Fig. 18), reveals the extent to which Bacon's early work was informed by his father's example. A founding member of the Royal Academy and, like the Bacons, a sculptor, Carlini was keeper of the RA Schools from 1783 until his death in August 1790. Bacon was admitted to the schools on 29 March 1790, from which time he presumably encountered Carlini in his official capacity,[63] later identifying him as one of the 'earlier members of the Royal Academy' of whom his memory did 'not go beyond their persons, or that of exchanging a word of courtesy'.[64] Shown in profile to the left, bewigged and wearing a small tricorn hat, Bacon's portrait of Carlini shows the crisply delineated profile and light

[62] John Bacon Senior to John Bacon Junior, *c*. 1795, private collection.
[63] Register of Admission of Students (1769-1829), Royal Academy Archive, London, RAA/KEE/1/1/1. Bacon's age was given incorrectly as fourteen-and-a-half at the time of his admission to the schools, but he could have been no more than thirteen years old.
[64] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 2, p. 13.

marks suggestive of the sitter's costume that are found in his father's work. However, while the silhouette is not as severe, the tightly-controlled representation of both the sitter's wig and hat betray the juvenile nature of this drawing. It should also be noted that Bacon inscribed his portrait of Carlini to record that it was made from memory, one of six works by him so identified,[65] and this may have had an impact on the handling. As an aspect of his practice, drawing from memory may have been inspired by Russell's portraits of Romaine and Hill. However, it may also point to contemporary pedagogy, recording the influence of Sir Joshua Reynolds PRA (1723-92), who, as early as 1769, had recommended that students draw again from memory that which they had studied in the RA Schools.[66]

The profile format both privileges and necessitates particular attention to the outline of each sitter's features. As with his father, Bacon's early work is characterised by an emphasised external line, stressing the silhouette of the forehead, nose, mouth and chin, as in his early portrait of Carlini. In time the prominence of the profile line was tempered, and in some instances disappeared completely through Bacon's use of a field of hatching against which the pale features of his sitters might be set off, a feature of the early years of his practice. An example of the transition between these alternative approaches appears to be Bacon's early portrait of Aunt Raybould, before 1799 (N229; Fig. 19), in which both elements feature. Later, in a portrait of his younger half-brother, Charles, *c*. 1805 (N186; Fig. 20), and with the exception of the chin and lips, the external line of the features dissolved almost entirely into the flanking cross hatching. Around the turn of the century, Bacon experimented with an increasingly pure linear structure that, eschewing cross-hatching, when set against a blank background—his preference for the majority of his career—takes on the quality of bas-relief rather than a figure in the round and is suggestive of the prevailing Neo-classical aesthetic. Particularly fine examples of this development include his portrait of Mrs Oldham (fl. *c*. 1805) (N212; Fig. 21) *c*. 1805, together with the stark simplicity of the depiction of his nephew, Edward Thornton Junior, *c*. 1802 (N295; Fig. 22).

Bacon's technique changed throughout his career as he explored a variety of ways with which to render his sitters features and costumes, perhaps reflecting the influence on his work of other artists with whom he was familiar. Various techniques were deployed to

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[65] The five other works are: *Revd Rowland Hill*, *c*. 1800 (N207); *Revd Burnside*, *c*. 1800 (N179); *Revd William Bull*, *c*. 1800 (N195); *George Eugene Griffin*, *c*. 1800 (N197); and *Revd Watts Wilkinson*, *c*. 1820 (N208).

[66] Cited in Deanna Petherbridge, *The Primacy of Drawing: Histories and Theories of Practice* (New Haven, CT and London, 2010), p. 216.

achieve the range of effects that he sought and a useful indication of this is found in his use of stumping, which is first observed in a portrait of his infant daughter Susannah Sophia (1802-35) as an angel, *c*. 1804 (N268; Fig. 23). Stumping remained a regular feature of Bacon's work, recurring at intervals across his career. In marked contrast to the smoky, almost painterly effects to be attained through stumping, in the second half of the 1820s, strokes of graphite and pink pencil were applied with little or no attempt to mask the presence of each distinctive mark on the sheet, as in the portrait of his mother-in-law, Susannah Taylor (née Alban; 1755-1835), *c*. 1827 (N3; Fig. 24). Often content to reveal his working through clearly defined strokes, with the exception of stumping and the use of watercolour, Bacon appears to have emphasised the process of mark-making that necessarily constitutes a drawing. In some instances, the same is true also of costumes and hair, in which spare, lightly-applied lines suggest the fall of drapery, while a mass of marks carefully represent individual hairs. Increasingly his work became a combination of a variety of techniques between which he freely moved. Clearly not dogmatic about either style or technique, the variety of Bacon's drawing hints at the vitality of his practice well into old age.

The majority of Bacon's portrait drawings are of single individuals shown bust-length and in profile. The drawings appear to be original, finished works in their own right, with no known connection to either paintings or prints and none appear to have been published in the artist's lifetime.[67] Exceptions to these observations are seven sketches of jurists and court officers, apparently made *ad vivum*, and probably all dating from 1826 (N216-N222; Fig. 25). Two of these served as the models for the more finished portraits of Judge Sir Stephen Gaselee (1762-1839) (N326) and Sir John Copley (1772-1863) (N327; Fig. 26). Both sheets were later cut down to ovals, inscribed with the name of the sitter and dated 1826. This was done in the hand of the Revd Thomas, who probably transcribed his father's now missing inscriptions. Bacon's late portrait of Mrs Ford (fl. 1849), 1849 (N100), is a further anomaly, showing partial piercings in the card support that may be signs of a method of transfer, although some of these correspond with *pentimenti* rather than the drawing as finished. There is nothing else to suggest that Bacon used a *camera obscura* or another device when taking likenesses, and the portrait of Mrs Ford is the only sheet that shows these unusual marks. Otherwise, and unless the portraits of jurists are rare survivors

[67] Nearly four decades after his death, Bacon's portrait of the Revd John Keble (N102) appeared as the frontispiece to a biography of the cleric; see Charlotte M. Yonge, *John Keble's Parishes: A History of Hursley and Otterborne* (London, 1898).

of an intermediary step in his process, the absence of *pentimenti* elsewhere in his work indicates the confidence with which Bacon captured the unique outline of each of his sitter's features. How long each drawing took to create is unknown, but the dated drawings indicate that Bacon generally created no more than one drawing on any given day.

Of the two hundred and sixty-eight portraits by Bacon of individual sitters, all but a handful are depicted in strict profile, of which the majority is shown in profile to the left. Bacon's preference for left-facing profiles is unexplained, but appears to be more than incidental. In addition to the profile format, there are sixteen works showing sitters *en face*, the majority of which come from the period *c*. 1800-26, such as the portrait of his cousin, Isaac Buxton (1775-1863), *c*. 1800 (N189; Fig. 27), and include several of small children, including that of his son John from February 1814 (N276; Fig. 28). There are also twenty clear examples of sitters in three-quarter profile, of which one of the earliest is the portrait of Basil Owen Woodd (1787-1811), *c*. 1810 (N255), the son of Bacon's friend and spiritual mentor, the Revd Basil Woodd (1760-1831) (N199; see Fig. 93). However, the majority of the works in this format date to the 1820s, including the portraits of Major-General Edward Baynes (1768-1829) (N244; Fig. 29), and his daughter Agnes (b. 1806) (N36), both depicted in October 1825.

Of Bacon's female sitters, approximately sixty-nine appear to have belonged to from the artist's kinship network. Naturally, these include his wife, daughters and granddaughters, but also extended relations, including his daughters-in-law and female relatives of these, notably members of the Lousada family, into which his eldest son had married. A number of sitters, particularly from Bacon's immediate family, were depicted more than once, including his wife, Susannah Sophia, of whom six portraits by the artist survive, in addition to a further drawing by the otherwise unidentified Mrs Stewart from *c*. 1800 (N225). Of the other sitters whose connection to the Bacon family has been clearly established, two were servants: Elizabeth Farrant (fl. 1824-34), *c*. 1834 (N228; Fig. 30), a valued retainer who tended his daughter Harriet (1810-34) as she lay dying; and Mrs Swann (fl. *c*. 1792) , *c*. 1792 (N224), the wet nurse to his younger half-brother Joshua (1791-?1881). Other female sitters can be identified as friends of the family, such as Jane De Courcy Jowett (née Russell; 1779-1810), *c*. 1805 (N180), daughter of John Russell and herself a portrait artist.[68]

[68] See Jeffares, *Pastels & Pastellists*, J.6356.101

The range of extended family identified among Bacon's female sitters is true also of the artist's male relatives. However, the much larger number of male subjects—outnumbering females by more than one third—is largely explained by the many clerics who feature among Bacon's sitters. This points to the artist's interest in taking the likenesses of men with whom he was connected through his faith and voluntary activities. In addition to the portraits of those members of his family who took holy orders, including his two sons, his half-brother, the Revd Samuel Bacon (1789-1869), and his son-in-law, the Revd John Medley (1804-92), a further fifty-one portraits of clerics feature, showing forty-three men, four of whom were each depicted twice. This group constitutes almost one fifth of Bacon's total *oeuvre*. Although the majority of these were clergymen of the Church of England, Bacon's sitters also included Dissenting or Independent ministers, pointing to the Protestant ecumenicism that was a feature of the early revival and was practiced by the artist over the course of his life.

In contrast to the large number of clergymen, notably few artists figure among Bacon's sitters. Of these, his portraits of the painter and miniaturist Stephen Rigaud, 1833 (N46; Fig. 31), and his two early portraits of the engraver and miniaturist Pierre Condé (1767/68-1840), *c*. 1795 and *c*. 1805 (N214, N188; Fig. 32), recall long-standing friendships that were forged in the artist's youth. With the exception of his drawing of Carlini, the only other portrait of an artist qua artist is Bacon's likeness of the Italian sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822), 1815 (N235), the exceptional circumstances of the creation of which are discussed in Chapter Two.

Although portraits of single individuals predominate in the family's work, Bacon's *oeuvre* includes three surviving group portraits. These reveal how he adapted the profile format to accommodate more than one sitter by turning to an arrangement similar to, and possibly derived from, the jugate busts found in numismatics. This was a technical solution to the challenge of integrating group portraits into the formal concerns of the family's established portrait practice. In the jugate format, two or more heads are seen in profile and partly overlapping, the rear of the head of one sitter being obscured by the face of another. Common in antiquity, the jugate format was employed on a popular medal showing the heads of four of the Allied sovereigns that was issued publicly in Britain to

mark victory at Waterloo in 1814,[69] giving this compositional device contemporary currency.

Bacon's group portraits include two apparently autograph versions of a composition that features a self-portrait alongside the heads of his wife and eight of their ten children from *c*. 1826 (N331, N334; Fig. 33). In the example that I have examined, the artist's features are almost life size, making this the largest drawing by Bacon encountered in my research. Located at the far left, Bacon's self-portrait is followed to the right first by the likeness of his wife and then their children, arranged by descending age. As Richard Brilliant has observed, '[g]roup portraits are not random collections of persons but deliberate constructions of the significant relations among them'.[70] Certainly, as the literal 'head' of his family, Bacon's preeminent position with the composition underlines the patriarchal framework on which the contemporary Christian family was modelled. But I would also note that Bacon's record of the hierarchy of birth stands in marked contrast to the allusions to primogeniture that had been such a significant feature of elite portraiture.[71] Instead, the sequence of overlapping heads identifies the children as physical extensions of their parents, perhaps also pointing to the animating Christian spirit in which the family shared.

Two decades later, Bacon returned to the jugate format in his group portrait of five of the children of his late daughter, Christiana Medley (N332). This was executed in 1848 during a visit by the Medley family to Britain from Canada where the children's father had been the inaugural bishop of the diocese of Fredericton, New Brunswick since 1845.[72] While children of the Medley family were portrayed individually by the artist during later visits, the group portrait of his surviving grandchildren, seen for the first time since their departure for Canada three years earlier, underlines their identity as a discrete group, and perhaps alludes to their physical isolation from the rest of their kin.

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[69] See Thomas Halliday after Edward Thomason, Medal, 1814, bronze, 48 mm, British Museum, London, inv. M.5448.

[70] Brilliant, *Portraiture*, pp. 92-93.

[71] For strategies by which both patriarchy and primogeniture were incorporated into the language of sentiment found in group portraits in the latter half of the eighteenth century, see Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, pp. 126-138; and Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, chapter 6.

[72] Together with his children, Medley spent much of mid-1848 in Britain, raising funds for the construction of Christ Church Cathedral in Fredericton; see William Quintard Ketchum, *The Life and Work of the Most Reverend John Medley, D.D., First Bishop of Fredericton and Metropolitan of Canada* (Saint John, NB, 1893), p. 109.

A number of sketches by Bacon which also show multiple figures, usually in schematic form and often in landscape settings, are qualitatively different to the portrait practice considered here, to which, I suggest, they do not belong. Nonetheless, I believe that these reveal the extent to which Bacon celebrated his family's sociability through drawing, and not without humour. These sketches are found in albums of landscapes that Bacon drew in graphite and, occasionally, watercolour at various points in his life. For example, in one album of views in Devon from 1819-20, a drawing shows a 'Gipsey – or pic nic [*sic*] party' made up of six female figures.[73] The artist recorded the identities of the figures, perhaps out of necessity given that, in two cases, his subjects' features are either hidden beneath large bonnets, or are so schematic as not to be likenesses. For similar reasons, an undated drawing of ten figures on another outing is labelled with a numerical key with which to identify the figures represented.[74] Still more abstracted representations of identified individuals are found in another sketchbook of views in Devon, dated to approximately 1828-30. This includes a view of the churchyard of St Gregory's at Seaton, Devon, that features three figures whom Bacon's inscriptions identify as one of his two sons, his wife and his sister (Fig. 34). Despite being little more than stick figures, the artist described these representations as 'true portraits'.[75] Perhaps meant ironically, a similar suggestion of humour might be detected in Bacon's inscription relating to his *View on Haldon Hill*, 15 August 1843, in which he referred to 'portraits of Fanny and Bissey', the two donkeys in the picture that, like three of the four female figures depicted, are seen from behind.[76]

As already noted, despite his marked preference for graphite pencil, Bacon occasionally worked in pastel. Although the results differ from the effects sought in his work in graphite, I believe that the clear memorial purpose of these works aligns them with his larger portrait practice in a way that the above sketches do not. Bacon's work in pastel is seen in three securely attributed portraits, beginning with a tondo of his wife, Susannah Sophia depicted as an angel, *c*. 1804 (N335; Fig. 35). This repeats the motif seen in his pencil portrait of their eldest daughter of the same name and from approximately the same

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[73] John Bacon Junior, *Gipsey – or pic nic party*, 1819-20, pencil, 140 x 229 mm, private collection.
[74] John Bacon Junior, *Group of ten figures*, *c.* 1825, pencil, 171 x 254 mm, private collection. This drawing follows a number of views of Southampton from the water and the arrangement of the figures suggests that they may have been depicted at the stern of a boat. It has not been possible to identify all of the sitters from their initials.
[75] John Bacon Junior, *The churchyard of St Gregory's at Seaton*, 1828-30, pencil, 178 x 267 mm, private collection.
[76] John Bacon Junior, *View on Haldon Hill*, 15 August 1843, pencil and watercolour, 254 x 203 mm, private collection.

time (N268; see Fig. 23). Despite surface damage suggesting that Bacon may not have applied a fixative to the fragile medium, the portrait of Susannah Sophia is an accomplished work, indicating that it was unlikely to have been his first attempt in pastel. The artist returned to the medium much later in more conventional pendant portraits of his wife and himself. That of Susannah Sophia, 1839 (N340; Fig. 36), is both technically and conceptually more sophisticated than the earlier tondo and shows the artist's wife bust-length in three quarter profile. By contrast, Bacon's self-portrait from the same year, in which the artist depicted himself *en face*, points to the practicalities of drawing oneself from a reflection in a mirror (N339; Fig. 37). Both portraits are discussed more fully in Chapter Three.

If Bacon's efforts in pastel were inspired by the example of John Russell, as I have suggested, then his influence may have been felt early. In his will, Bacon refers to 'the bad but tolerably like portrait of that good man Uncle Raybould in Crayons [i.e., pastel] painted by myself when a young lad'.[77] This frank appraisal of the untraced portrait of Raybould could be applied also to the naïve handling in the pastel portrait of an unidentified female sitter in middle age (N344; Fig. 38) that might be tentatively attributed to Bacon on this basis. This figure was copied from a much smaller graphite portrait in an unknown hand that has been trimmed to an oval, perhaps for framing (N349; Fig. 39). The latter drawing is currently paired with another oval sheet of similar size that is an offset of a chalk drawing showing a middle-aged man, also in an unknown hand (N357).[78] The two drawings have been tentatively identified among Bacon's descendants as portraits of Bacon Senior's parents, the weaver Thomas Bacon (d. 1767) and his wife Ann (née Greenhead or Greenwood; d. 1771), respectively. The possibility that the female sitter was a member of the family or its circle is supported by the larger pastel copy; while the drawing of the upward-gazing male is reminiscent of genre figures from the second half of the eighteenth century and, I suggest, may have been copied from a painting or a print.

If pastel was an occasional feature of his portrait practice, Bacon had introduced pigment into his practice in a more limited sense early on. If the historic attribution to Bacon of a sitter identified as Patty Bacon, 1793? (N308), with its extensive use of pink and

[77] Will of John Bacon Junior, of Bathwick Hill, Bath, Principal Probate Registry, proved 13 April 1860. For its similarity to effects achieved in oils, pastel was referred to as 'painting' in the period.
[78] An offset is created by pressing a damp sheet of paper against a chalk drawing, transferring a fainter impression of the original drawing onto the second sheet – in this case with significantly blurred lines.

black chalk, remains uncertain,[79] a representative example is the closely dated portrait of Joshua Bacon, *c*. 1793 (N202; Fig. 40), in which aspects of his mature style are evident, including his use of chalk or coloured pencil to tint the lips and cheeks. The ambiguity over the precise medium—coloured pencil or chalk—is unresolved here. An examination of the drawings in Auckland, each of which dates to the 1830s, indicated coloured pencil rather than chalk. Although these sheets date from relatively late in the artist's career, 'coloured pencil' is used here and in Appendix Three to refer to the medium employed to indicate flesh tones in the drawings, with an implicit acknowledgement of the possible use of chalk, particularly among Bacon's early works. A common feature of the artist's *oeuvre*, his application of pink pencil ranged from the delicate hint of colour, as seen in the portrait of Joshua, to the prominent strokes used to suggest ruddy complexions, as in his portrait of John Crampton (1769-1834), 1829 (N29; Fig. 41).

While watercolour features in some of Bacon's childhood drawings of buildings, plants and animals from the early 1790s,[80] it appears to have been first incorporated into his portrait practice around the turn of the century. Early evidence of this development is found in the damaged portrait of his wife, Susannah Sophia, *c*. 1802 (N259; Fig. 42), in which coloured washes were used in the headdress.[81] Thereafter, watercolour was often used to tint the irises of sitters' eyes. This was often the only colour other than the tinting of the cheeks and lips, as seen in his portrait of the artist's daughter Emma (1812-22), *c*. 1815 (N278; Fig. 43).[82] In rare cases, watercolour was also added to sitters' hair, as in the portraits of his daughter Mary Ann, *c*. 1806 (N269), in which it has faded to almost nothing, and his granddaughter Alice Fowler (1849-1917), 1855 (N127), at opposite ends of his career. As with the portrait of his wife, coloured washes were occasionally used to highlight aspects of his sitter's costume, as in the early portrait of his sister-in-law, Charlotte Bacon (née Carter; born *c*. 1780), *c*. 1800 (N181; Fig. 44). However, with the exception of tinting his sitters' eyes, the artist's use of watercolour in this way was concentrated in the 1840s and 1850s.

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[79] The drawing is inscribed in pen and ink at lower right, 'J Bacon Junr 1793'. The hatching against which the sitter's features are set parallels early work by Bacon, but the use of colour is at odds with other work of that date. If 'Patty' was Bacon's younger half-sister Martha (1786-93), it is possible that the date may refer to her death in that year, rather than the year in which the portrait was drawn.

[80] John Bacon Junior, Sketchbook, 1791 and later, private collection.

[81] In addition to significant foxing, the sheet is discoloured and the watercolour faded as a result of prolonged exposure to light.

[82] A small number of Bacon's portraits of children have eyes that are a particularly vivid blue, which may be the result of subsequent discolouration of the pigment.

These observations on the generally sparing use of colour in Bacon's drawings are, however, upended by two relatively late drawings. The first, a portrait of Asaad Yakoub Kayat (1811-after 1847), *c*. 1839 (N247; Fig. 45), reveals the application of coloured washes that is more extensive than any other example by Bacon, extending to the entire bust-length figure, including the face and each aspect of the costume. Kayat was a Syrian Christian from Beirut who made three visits to Britain, and Bacon's portrait may date to his second visit to the country in 1838-40, during which he spoke at a meeting of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews, held at Exeter Hall, London in May 1838.[83] The striking similarity of this work to those by the Revd John from the period 1841-43 suggests that Bacon's use of watercolour either inspired his eldest son's work in the same vein, or that Bacon emulated his eldest son's liberal use of the medium in his drawings. Similarly, Bacon's portrait of the Revd Eli Worthington Stokes (d. 1867), an African-American cleric who toured Britain in 1848 (N94; Fig. 46), features a yellow-brown wash, perhaps discoloured with age, to represent the colour of his sitter's skin.[84] In addition to recording the likenesses of exotic co-religionists, both drawings reveal a creative response to the demands of depicting non-white sitters relatively late in Bacon's career, emphasising the vitality of drawing practice for the artist throughout his life.

The third generation

As indicated, the example of Bacon and Bacon Senior inspired similar efforts on the part of several members of the third generation of the family. While the Revd Thomas appears to have worked predominantly in landscape, his elder brother, the Revd John, and their youngest sister, Augusta Maria, both embraced portraiture, reinforcing the sense that the taking of likenesses was a meaningful activity within the family circle. However, and perhaps by virtue of the scale of his *oeuvre*, Bacon's work in the genre dominated, even distorted the history of that tradition. In the case of the Revd John, his activities as a portrait artist came to be confused with those of his father, into whose body of work his

[83] For Kayat, see John Alonzo Clark, *Glimpses of the Old World: Or, Excursions on the Continent, and in Great Britain* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1840), vol. 1, pp. 37-42. Kayat's autobiography makes no reference to an encounter with Bacon; see Assaad Y. Kayat, *A Voice from Lebanon with the Life and Travels of Assaad Y. Kayat* (London, 1847), pp. 116-117, 298 et seq.

[84] For Stokes, see Harold T. Lewis, *Yet With a Steady Beat: The African American Struggle for Recognition in the Episcopal Church* (Valley Forge, PA, 1996), pp. 32-33, 118-120; and George F. Bragg, *History of the Afro-American Group of the Episcopal Church* (Baltimore, MA, 1922), pp. 98, 103-104, 106, 190-191. For a gathering in Exeter attended by both Stokes and Bishop Medley, see 'The Diocese of Fredericton', *Western Times*, 10 June 1848, p. 5.

own drawings were eventually absorbed.[85] To an extent, the task of distinguishing between the Revd John's work and that of Bacon mirrored the difficulties found in differentiating the latter's earliest works from those of Bacon Senior. But just as Bacon's portraits came to exhibit distinctive qualities, the Revd John's drawings are marked by technical innovations and that are entirely his own.

In his last will and testament, the Revd John left to his second son, Harry Vivian Bacon (1844-1904), a 'book of profiles by myself'.[86] In the course of my research, that volume has been identified as Album Three, the contents of which were long believed to be Bacon's work.[87] Album Three contains thirty-seven drawings dating from 1841-43, including all but one of the surviving drawings from the RN series. The remaining eleven drawings all appear to postdate that series and show a remarkably different graphic sensibility, particularly in the artist's treatment of skin and hair. While his style and technique are discussed in Chapter Six, it is sufficient to note here that, both in his handling of the pencil and use of colour, the Revd John's drawings build on the tradition of portraiture in the preceding two generations of the Bacon family.

The reattribution of the contents of Album Three to the Revd John has proved possible through a combination of internal evidence and stylistic analysis. The former includes the brass clasp of the leather slipcase in which the album is housed, and that is engraved with 'REV. J BACON'. It must be assumed that this came to be interpreted as a sign of the Revd John's ownership of the album, rather than a statement of the authorship of its contents. Further, while many of the RN series' works are signed with the monogram 'JB', often within the design itself, as in the portrait of his father (N161; see Fig. 129), the repeated use of the name 'John Bacon' across all three generations may have contributed to confusion over whose monogram this was. A number of the later sheets in Album Three are signed with variations of 'John Bacon Junior'. But neither the version of the 'JB' signature found in the RN series' works, nor any variation of the 'John Bacon Junior' signature, appears on portrait drawings by Bacon elsewhere. Indeed, with the exception of some sheets from the 1820s,[88] Bacon only took to signing his work consistently on the

[85] I previously believed that the contents of Album Three were Bacon's work, and published them as such; see Norman, 'The Portrait Drawings of John Bacon the Younger', pp. 77, 79.
[86] Will of the Revd John Bacon, of Wymondham Rectory, Oakham, Rutland, Principal Probate Registry, proved 14 April 1871.
[87] A typescript catalogue of the contents of Album Three, in which the drawings are given to Bacon, is taped to the front pastedown and flyleaf of the album.
[88] See, for example, *Daniel Taylor Senior*, November 1821 (N257).

drawings assembled in Album Four, although he made no use of the term 'Junior' that is found in Album Three. Certainly, in his youth Bacon had been referred to as 'junior' in order to distinguish him from his father (the practice adopted in this thesis), and he signed a number of his sculptural works in this way.[89] But by the first half of the 1840s, and with a grown son of the same name, use of this term by Bacon himself would have been anachronistic. Instead, it appears that at this time, the Revd John was known as 'junior' in his turn, and this is how his name appears on his marriage license from 1832.[90]

Disentangling the work of the Revd John from that of his father has clarified the extent to which the portrait genre remained a vital expression of affective relations and sociability into the third generation of the Bacon family. Together with drawings by his sister Augusta Maria, and with the contrasting example of the landscape drawings of their brother, the Revd Thomas, the evidence of the ways in which Bacon's children perpetuated the family's practice, and expanded upon this through an exploration of the potential of drawing, including in other genres, forms the subject of Chapter Six.

Conclusion

This chapter has charted the history of portrait drawing in the first two generations of the Bacon family, and pointed the way toward that of the third generation, to be considered in Chapter Six. In the work of Bacon Senior, we find the origin of the family's shared practice, particularly the preference for graphite pencil and the profile format, but also, it seems, the focus on sitters from within the artist's kinship network and those who shared their spiritual convictions. John Russell's work, including his several portraits of members of the Bacon family, with whom he was close, suggests the extent to which portraiture was favoured within their circle, and may have functioned as a means of recognising and reinforcing bonds of friendship and faith. I have suggested how his example may have inspired Bacon's own occasional work in pastel, culminating in his self-portrait and its pendant, made late in life.

[89] See, for example, the monument to Captain Edward Cooke, 1806, in Westminster Abbey, London, that is signed 'John Bacon junior | Sculptor'.
[90] Marriage of John Bacon the Younger of Salcombe in Devon, gentleman, bachelor and Mary Baruh Lousada of Sidmouth in Devon, spinster, 29th March 1834, Devon Heritage Centre, DEX/7/b/1/1834/138.

Spanning almost seven decades, Bacon's large *oeuvre* reveals how he moved from imitating the distinctive qualities of his father's work to explore a wider range of formal, technical and stylistic possibilities. Despite this, he remained largely true to the model that Bacon Senior had established, favouring the profile format above all others, into which he incorporated colour, sometimes quite boldly, and even borrowing from antiquity in order to create group portraits that were in keeping with the formal concerns that dominated both men's work. Similarly, in his choice of sitters, and in keeping with the evangelical faith that both men had embraced, Bacon cleaved to his father's example. Indeed, the imbalance between the sexes among his sitters is evidence of Bacon's turn to associational activity of the kind that his father had pioneered, and in which he himself became particularly active from 1812 onwards, as discussed in Chapter Five. Useful context for this shift in the artist's priorities is found in a number of texts that he authored, including one volume of his spiritual diary, in which the extent of his spiritual struggle is strikingly clear. It is to this evidence that we now turn.

Chapter Two

Textual Evidence

In late November 1839 Bacon wrote to his son, the Revd John, to note that 'I am at length yielding to your and Tom's urgent request to attempt a further memoir of your grandfather'.[1] Linked to the genealogical investigations that the Revd John and his cousin Edward Thornton Junior were then pursuing, and in which Bacon played a significant part (see Chapter Four), the memoir remained unfinished until, in May 1847, he began work on his 'Reminiscences of the late John Bacon Esquire R.A. and other persons of his time'.[2] But rather than the 'complete life' of his father that his sons had sought, Bacon described his manuscript as an accumulation of 'such incidents as may occur to my mind when I take up my pen, without the necessity of stringing them in methodical order'.[3]

Divided into three parts, the 'Reminiscences' open with Bacon's memoir of his father. That section begins, however, with a brief summary of the genteel ancestry claimed by the Bacon family, based on an alleged connection to the Bacons formerly of Maunsel House near North Petherton in Somerset.[4] Joanne Bailey has observed that claims to a distinguished ancestry were a trope of life-writing in the period, one that reflected favourably on the author.[5] It is a measure of the significance attached to their claim to genteel origins that the 'Reminiscences' record two visits that Bacon made out of 'antiquarian interest' to what he believed had been another family seat at Harpford, Devon, the first of which must have occurred *c*. 1800. The second visit, made at an unknown date, saw Bacon accompanied by his eldest son, drawing the younger man—the future head of the Bacon family—into the pursuit of their ancestral origins.[6]

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[1] John Bacon Junior to the Revd John Bacon, 25 November 1839, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 29.
[2] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 1, p. 1.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Cecil, *Memoirs*, p. 1; and 'Memoir of John Bacon, ESQ. F.S.A.', pp. 3-4.
[5] Bailey, *Parenting in England*, pp. 129-134.
[6] When writing the 'Reminiscences', Bacon noted that the visit occurred 'fifty years ago'. John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 1, pp. 13b-14.

Bacon's memoir of his father is followed in the 'Reminiscences' by character sketches of early Royal Academicians. In several cases, his remarks include observations on the spiritual convictions of his subjects. These include Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose habit of painting on the Sabbath Bacon linked to his failing eyesight in 'a moral lesson of importance'.[7] No such flaws feature in Bacon's recollections of the life and character George III, which occupy much of the final section of the 'Reminiscences'. If the change of focus seems curious, it is clear that Bacon harboured a lingering affection for the late king, whose faith and intelligence he admired, as well as relishing Bacon Senior's links to him. Similarly, the third part of the 'Reminiscences' also affords evidence of Bacon's personal connection to the king's granddaughter, Princess Charlotte (1796-1817), whom the artist briefly taught to model in clay.[8] Her death in 1817 was the cause of national and, presumably, personal mourning, and Bacon appears to have retained a bust of her that, together with another of her uncle, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn (1767-1820), was recorded in his daughter Elizabeth's will.[9] Joined with their own claims to elite origins, these accounts of academicians and royalty entangle the artist and his family in histories of national significance, reflecting glory on the first two generations of the Bacon dynasty for the edification of the artist's descendants.

The miscellaneous character of the 'Reminiscences' hints at the variety of voices and iterations of the self that are encountered in the other ego documents that Bacon authored. In this chapter, we move from a close analysis of the visual evidence to this array of textual sources. Ranging from occasional diaries to spiritual biographies, and including the end-of-life documents with which he sought to secure his legacy, the regularity with which the artist moved back and forth between different representations of self runs counter to the new 'regime of identity' that Dror Wahrman has argued emerged in Britain in the late eighteenth century, replacing an earlier mutability with a stable, essential self.[10] Critically, Wahrman's model is largely secular, leaving little room for the searching and

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[7] Ibid, part 2, pp. 2-3.
[8] Ibid, part 3, pp. 13-15.
[9] For the princess as his pupil, see John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 3, pp. 13-15. For the two busts, see Elizabeth Bacon, Last will and testament. For his bust of Princess Charlotte, exhibited at the RA in 1808, and his bust of the Duke of Kent, exhibited in 1813 (in plaster) and 1814, see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 1, p. 87. For the bust of the duke, see John Bacon the Younger, *Edward, Duke of Kent (1767-1820)*, 1813, marble, 690 x 530 x 285 mm, Royal Collection Trust, inv. RCIN 35404. For the public reaction to the princess' death, see Tamara L. Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 260-261; for the less sympathetic reactions of Lord Holland and the Duke of Wellington, see ibid, p. 389, n. 85.
[10] Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self*, esp. preface and chapter 7.

doubt that evangelical self-scrutiny appears to have engendered, and that registers so strongly in Bacon's reflections on his spiritual identity. Largely concealed from his audiences by the internal coherence of each document, the tensions between these different representations are discovered when reading across the several genres in which he wrote. Together these form a picture of an identity that is less coherent and immutable than that posited by Wahrman, revealing the extent to which Bacon's exploration of self was both contingent—according to different moments and potential audiences—and judiciously constructed. In this chapter, I suggest that it is only when his intimate, spiritual reflections are placed alongside the end-of-life documents in which he connected specific objects with selected individuals in his kinship network that the diverse ways in which his personality found expression becomes truly apparent.

The most striking example of the way in which Bacon tailored his identity to the genres in which he wrote is found in the contrast between his spiritual diary for the years 1815 to 1824 and the journal of a brief visit to Rotterdam from July 1823.[11] Although Bacon anticipated that his children would one day read his spiritual diary, and appears to have exercised caution as a result, the travel journal was written for the benefit of family and friends and shows little evidence of the doubt and anxiety that dominates the artist's more private reflections. Both documents speak to the artist's spiritual convictions, but the tone of Bacon's observations in the travel journal suggests how, at points, that document was crafted to encourage his readers in their faith. Similarly, the spiritual biographies that he wrote presented the lives and deaths of several members of his own family as instructive and edifying.[12] Not merely the conduit through which such narratives might circulate, these texts position Bacon within a family network that was closely aligned with evangelical faith, echoing the structure and purpose, I suggest, of his portrait practice. The importance of his family—across several generations—to his own sense of identity is reiterated in his last will and testament and the related instructions that he left for his executors. Here a sense of dynastic continuity, in which Bacon was the pivot between generations, was established through the distribution of family heirlooms, and portraits in particular. If faith plays little direct part in these two documents, it seems clear that the identity that Bacon had

[11] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 26 August 1815-26 October 1824, private collection; and John Bacon Junior, Rotterdam journal, 26-31 July 1823, private collection.

[12] John Bacon Junior, *Memoir of Miss Ann Bacon, Who Died Decr. 24, 1809: In a Letter from her Brother To Mrs. B—, One of her intimate friends* (London, 1813); *Memoir of Mrs. Edward Vivian, (formerly Harriet Bacon) who died August 23, 1834 at the age of 24: In a letter from her father* (Sidmouth, 1835); and *Some Account of Emma Bacon, who died near London, July 19, 1822, aged ten years and five months: in A Letter from her father to a friend in Devonshire* (Sidmouth, 1835).

fashioned for himself personally, and his family more broadly, and which centred on regenerate Christianity, remained an active concern until the end of his life. The differences between the documents considered here only superficially mask the extent to which the artist sought to project his example forward onto succeeding generations of the Bacon clan.

Bacon's spiritual diary

Of the several volumes that he is known to have written, only Bacon's spiritual diary for the years 1815-24 has been traced in this research.[13] A document of approximately 30,000 words, comprising mostly weekly entries (with some substantial gaps), the purpose of the diary was outlined in the artist's first entry.

> I used formerly to keep a kind of diary, which I found advantageous in enabling me to compare present self with former self, and thereby the sooner detect decline or inconsistency.
>
> It is however unwise to attempt too much. The keeping a daily register by a man in business is an attempt of this nature; it cannot be kept up; and if so, the chain or thread of the diary being presently broken, the mind is disheartened in the continuance of it – you are proceeding with an incomplete thing – you have omitted many important items &c &c and thus the useful practice is suspended and perhaps at length given up because, as we say, it did not answer.[14]

Rather than an account of his activities across the course of the preceding week, Bacon's 'useful habit of looking at himself' charted his successes and failures as a Christian. Not an end in itself, the task of keeping the diary was identified as a process in which iterations of the textualized self might be compared in order to identify spiritual decline. It was also a means of policing his behaviour through a search for irregularities, and many entries record his fear that he was less pious than what others supposed: 'O! my Master and Saviour – never let me seem to any fellow Creature fancy see more than I am. What I appear may I actually be. May inward and closet experience always keep pace with external

[13] Bacon, Spiritual diary. An inscription on the front pastedown in Bacon's hand, 'Diary JB. | Third book' points to earlier volumes; while Gertrude Bacon transcribed the last two entries from Bacon's final spiritual diary; see John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 121.
[14] Emphasis in the original. John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 26 August 1815.

appearance.'[15] In her biography of Bacon Senior, Ann Cox-Johnson observed that, unlike his father, Bacon's faith manifested itself as 'a terrible depression and a constant sense of guilt and shame.'[16] Certainly, his spiritual diary features repeated lamentations at his moral failings coupled with an urgent sense of danger: 'Sad backsliding this week. O what sights have I of the wretched depravity of my own heart. If growth in experiences implies more strength to resist temptation than formerly, then I am no Xtian.'[17] Evidence from an entry of mid-1858, transcribed from the artist's last, untraced diary suggests that he continued in this vein: 'Despondency – Despondency – How dreadful; O! run to my relief. It seems quite impossible that "my spirit should ever again rejoice in God my Saviour".'[18]

Bacon's distress at the differences he discerned between his social and spiritual selves connects him to what Elizabeth Fay has observed about the ways in which contemporary Romantic writers used autobiography as 'a reflexive practice that attempts to explain the conjunctions and disjunctions between inner and outer.'[19] Although Bacon's literary interests are not known to us, it appears that the parallels seen here represent a convergence of two distinct traditions. The evangelical spiritual diary is heir to an older tradition of self-examination current among English Puritans by the last quarter of the sixteenth century, but which was only explicitly associated with diary-keeping in the middle of the following century.[20] Tom Webster has linked Elizabethan self-examination with the 'practical divinity' of experimental Calvinism, including the search for signs of election.[21] Pat Jalland has identified Jeremy Taylor's *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying* (first published 1651), with his encouragement of 'a daily examination of our actions … that we may see our evil and amend it', as an influence on prominent evangelicals clerics John Wesley and the Revd Henry Venn (1725-97) and the social reformer and politician William Wilberforce (1759-1833).[22] Likewise, Bruce Hindmarsh has charted the trajectory of this tradition into the eighteenth century, when it was widespread among English Nonconformists, connecting it to the conversion narratives that, he contends, translated the private diary,

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[15] Ibid, 3 February 1820.
[16] Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, p. 28.
[17] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 4 November 1815.
[18] Ibid, 20 July 1858, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 121. The quoted passage is a corruption of the second line of the Magnificat, itself taken from Luke 1:46-55.
[19] Elizabeth A. Fay, *Fashioning Faces: The Portraitive Mode in British Romanticism* (Durham, NH, 2010), p. 9.
[20] Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy', pp. 36-39, 45; and D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 92-93.
[21] Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy', p. 36
[22] Pat Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford, 1996), p. 10.

via the example of the more public record of the 'journal', into published accounts.[23] Just such a distinction between the private and the quasi-public appears to apply to Bacon's spiritual diary and the journal of his trip to Rotterdam in 1823, mentioned above.

As a matter of course, Bacon's spiritual diary largely eschews worldly matters, but his spiritual state did not remain unaffected by these. Despite his considerable wealth, Bacon fretted over his finances:

> Yesterday evening I got into my old discontented distrustful frame, and it is hanging about me this morning. It is true I have suffered great and extensive loss and should have been a man of ease and opulence now if I had not mistaken the leadings of Providence. but this would perhaps have left me at "ease in Zion" and made me forget my dependence on my Maker for all things.[24]

The cause for his discontent on this occasion remains unknown, but the allusion to Amos 6:1 ('Woe to them *who are* at ease in Zion') points to the dangers of complacency into which his misapprehension of providence appears to have led him. This entry also betrays the envy which features elsewhere in the journal:

> "Who can stand before Envy". O this dreadful disposition. Has it not the Essence of murder, and also dissatisfaction with God in its composition. Alas! I have had to fight against its assaults of late, as I have seen how God in His Providence has in an extraordinary degree favoured three or four of my neighbours in adding immensely to their worldly wealth, While I have had to struggle against trying vicissitudes, and instead of having helpers in my fortune, have had to contend with [one illegible word] hangers on
>
> Lord subdue this wretched and wicked disposition of heart. I would not give place to it, no not for one hour – O let me not for an instant be discontented with Thee my best benefactor. Couldest Thou not give me the same wealth if it would be best for me. Rather could I pray for these my successful fellow Creatures than be

[23] Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative*, chapter 3. Hindmarsh notes that by the 1730s 'journal' referred to a more public record of events, while 'diary' referred to private observations; ibid, p. 92. For the 'polite diary' of the eighteenth century, and how this differed from its seventeenth-century Puritan predecessor, see John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1997), pp. 107-111.
[24] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 29 July 1818.

> envious of them – while, may I rather prefer Thy blessing as the inheritance of all my children than ever so much of this worlds [*sic*] goods without it.[25]

As this passage suggests, Bacon occasionally bristled at the mysteries of God's providence, observing that 'it is very difficult to serve God with alacrity under such depression or to continue the strife to exercise confidence and repose trust in Providence when such repeated checks and rebuffs are experienced. I am under a very great and dark and distressing cloud.'[26] Indeed, providence could only be wondered at: 'And as to Thy Providence and what I ought to do and what Thou requires; O! that I could but know for I am bewildered almost to distraction at times.'[27] Aware of his truculence, Bacon compared himself to Jonah, who 'was a sour, ill tempered, impudent, daring, disobedient, refractory, rebellious, selfwilled [*sic*], cowardly rascal; and so am I; the very sink of sin, weakness, folly and all that he was: Hell is my fit place – if I ever get to heaven – the people there will say whenever they meet me – here is a fellow that has no right to come among us.'[28] Akin to the 'dramatic misery' identified by Patricia Meyer Spacks in the 1767 memoir of the melancholic evangelical poet William Cowper (1731-1800),[29] Bacon's self-loathing spills over into hubris as he identifies himself with a biblical exemplar who, it might be remembered, prefigures Christ himself.

Despite the often overwhelming sense of despair, Bacon's spiritual diary does record occasional moments of satisfaction, particularly in the company of upright Christians and the opportunities he was afforded to do good. A visit to Broadway, Worcestershire in September 1815 saw the gift of tracts to the local Sunday School along with an unspecified sum of money; while at Hindon, Wiltshire the following month, tracts and £1 for charity were provided to the incumbent cleric, who received £2 'for himself' the following day, when 'providence commanded us to stop and give a little encouragement to a poor despised servant of his, who was the only taper that seemed to be burning in this poor village-looking town.'[30] Similarly, the diary records Bacon in his role as the head of an evangelical household, in which he functioned as 'a priest in my own house'.[31] As John Tosh has noted, the 'spiritualization of the household' was one of the defining features of the

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[25] Ibid, 7 July 1824. For the opening quotation, see Proverbs 27:4.
[26] See, for instance, ibid, 31 July 1818.
[27] Ibid, 13 July 1817; see also entry for 9 May 1822.
[28] Ibid, 15 February 1823.
[29] For Cowper's memoir, see Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, MA and London, 2013), p. 49.
[30] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 16 September 1815 and 14 October 1815.
[31] Ibid, 19 January 1820.

Protestant Reformation. While he argues that this waned from the 1660s onward, by the mid-Victorian period the revival of family prayers led by the male head of the household reflected not only the widespread influence of evangelical domestic values but also the renewed spiritual authority of the husband and father.[32]

In February 1820, Bacon noted that 'On returning home [from a social call] my tongue was not tired, I entered a Cottage and talked more truly and satisfactorily than usual.'[33] Incidents of this kind were impromptu extensions of the artist's work with voluntary associations, particularly the British and Foreign Bible Society, for which he undertook tours in the South-West. During one such tour through Devon and Cornwall in late 1819 in the company of his sister Elizabeth Thornton's brother-in-law, the Lutheran minister, Revd Charles Steinkopff (1773-1859) (N292; Fig. 47), Bacon spoke at each of the eight locations that they visited.[34] Despite his ostensible enthusiasm for such voluntary work, public engagements of this kind were the cause of great anxiety. Ahead of a public meeting in Teignmouth, Devon in July 1820, at which he was scheduled to speak, Bacon noted that he was 'Most painful in my reluctance. I could almost wish anything could prevent me. Surely I am not called to this work – it disconcerts, and unsettles me for everything else. I have serious thoughts of giving it up altogether.'[35]

Such candid admissions notwithstanding, Bacon worried whether his reflections could ever amount to an accurate record of himself. The first entry in the diary records his concerns to this effect. While a 'secret register' is 'presumed to be written solely for one's own profit and not intended to be seen by others', it may nonetheless be an inaccurate or dishonest record. Noting that 'I suspect that my register might be a very different thing from what it probably will be, if I intended that no one should ever see it',[36] Bacon was hesitant to accept that a diary, however private, was an unmediated record.[37] Further, as

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[32] John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven, CT and London, 1999), pp. 34-37. For the evangelical movement in particular, it is worth noting that Gregory, citing the 'laicization' of the eighteenth century identified by Norman Sykes in *Church and State in England in the Eighteenth Century* (1934), believes that this is a useful lens through which to view the increased spiritual authority of laymen; see Jeremy Gregory, 'Homo Religiosus: Masculinity and Religion in the Long Eighteenth Century', in eds. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen, *English Masculinities 1660-1800* (Harlow, 1999), p. 91.

[33] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 3 February 1820.

[34] Having already attended fourteen Bible meetings in September, his journey with Steinkopff took in Callington, Liskeard, Truro, Penryn, Redruth St. Austell, Plymouth and Kingsbridge. Ibid, 4 December 1819.

[35] Ibid, 26 July 1820.

[36] Ibid, 26 August 1815.

[37] Ibid, 30 November 1819.

this passage reveals, his account was written with a future reader in mind. References to potential readers, notably his children, for whom it may prove 'profitable', appear at various points in the dairy. Working in knowledge of this, Bacon combined self-analysis and didactic purpose, extending his role as moral tutor to his children into the years after his death.[38] Seemingly for this reason, and despite the frequent transgressions to which he alluded, Bacon was reluctant to enter details of his 'sin or sinful inclinations', finding biblical precedent to avoid doing so:

> In short if we fall into actual sin we cannot well, if it be gross and shameful, describe or tell what it is. Even David himself so generalizes in his confession of sin that we should not have found out what his crime was even in the 51st. psalm if another historian had not given us the particulars.[39]

For one year, Bacon even resorted to the use of a cypher with which to encode parts of his entries. Deployed to (doubly) conceal that which was too sensitive for his children to learn after his death, this device suggests that some matters were more private than even his struggle for salvation.[40]

Conscious of the mediated nature of the record he was creating, Bacon chose the telling metaphor of self-portraiture in order to illustrate his point:

> man is such a vain fool that tho' he may not formally intend to deceive, his portrait of his internal self ought no more to be implicitly relied on as faithful, than a portrait of Queen Elizabeth drawn by herself and found in her cabinet after her death supposing her to have the talent of making it beautiful or at least comely. There is a strange contrast between the effect produced by what a man says of himself to others while he be living, and what it is found he has written of himself after death. … after he is dead all the records of good deeds and praise-worthy

[38] Ibid, 30 November 1819, 2 August 1820 and 24 August 1820. As Cynthia Alders has observed in her study of Jane Attwater's journal for the years 1766-1834, to which Attwater's daughter Ann had access, the individual and 'private' purposes of religious diaries could coexist with pedagogical purposes; see Cynthia Alders, 'Faith, Family, and Memory in the Diaries of Jane Attwater, 1766–1834', *Angelaki*, 22:1 (2017), pp. 155-156.

[39] Psalm 51 concerns King David's adultery with Bathsheba, revealed by the Prophet Nathan, who was presumably the 'historian' to whom Bacon refers. John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 26 August 1815.

[40] It has not proved possible to decode the cypher, but from the use of figures it may been used to conceal financial details. Bacon wrote in cypher in entries made between 7 December 1816 and 16 August 1817; the practice had lapsed by the time of the next entry, almost a full year later, on 8 July 1818. For Attwater's comparable use of a cypher to conceal parts of her diary, see Alders, 'Faith, Family, and Memory', p. 156.

> feeling which his diary might display are received as genuine tests of striking character, while all his confessions of the evils of his nature are put down to the account of his humility and honesty.[41]

Bacon here conflates portraiture, and self-portraits in particular, with statements of an autobiographical nature. Importantly, and in spite of the first-hand account of the self that each genre ostensibly represents, the artist recognises the potential for abuse and manipulation.

The tension between internal truths and external appearances is central to Bacon's account of himself. It is a theme to which he returned often in the diary, particularly in reference to his own claimed hypocrisy.[42] Returning to his home in Bromley, Kent from a family trip in Devon in October 1822, he confided that,

> All has been merciful preservation as it regards outwards things – I cannot say so in reference to the hidden man of the heart. My external conduct I believe has been unimpeachable since I left, but Oh! the sad disorder, rebellion and daring wickedness which has existed within[.][43]

These are tantalising hints of an unresolved conflict, pitting the character so prized by evangelicals against the older notion of a reputation forged in the world, that the movement had rejected.[44] That this concern repeats throughout the diary suggests a deep-seated unease on the part of the artist. Often this was linked to his appearances at public meetings at which he spoke. He noted in April 1817,

> how little are these public appearances a criterion of the state of the heart. At the times when I have made my most commended speeches, and which have been by other speakers alluded to for their piety, my own heart has been in a wretched state. Tis easy to put on an appearance. Tis easy to repeat principles one has sucked in with ones [*sic*] mothers [*sic*] milk.[45]

The fear expressed here is not merely that of hypocrisy and the related risk of public exposure, but of a mechanical, artificial manifestation of faith at odds with the 'lived' nature of evangelical spirituality. This would represent a failure to attain what the Revd

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[41] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 26 August 1815.
[42] See, for instance, ibid, 29 August 1818, 13 September 1818 and 18 August 1820.
[43] Ibid, 5 October 1822.
[44] Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p. 112; also Morgan, *Manners, Morals and Class*, p. 64.
[45] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 26 April 1817.

Henry Venn (1796-1873) described as 'the vital operation of Christian Doctrines upon the heart and conduct'.[46] Similarly, in his defence of the spiritual convictions of Bacon Senior, Richard Cecil observed that,

> Religion with him was not the Sunday coat of the formalist, much less was it the vile cloak of the hypocrite. It was neither a system of mere opinions, nor the cant of a part, but a *change of heart*, and a *hope full of immortality*, grounded alone on the work of a Redeemer.[47]

Given this, it is clear that Bacon's private struggle provoked such agonies precisely because it struck at the very foundations of his faith.

Despite the focus of the diary, a small number of worldly events did penetrate Bacon's spiritual meditations, particularly those germane to questions of faith. The most notable of these came in January 1820, during the artist's first period at Sidmouth, and took the form of the sudden death of the Duke of Kent (N213; Fig. 48).[48] Having arrived in the town in late December 1819 in a bid to economise, the duke, his wife Victoria (née Princess of Saxe-Gotha-Saalfeld; 1786-1861) and their infant daughter, Alexandrina Victoria (later Queen Victoria; 1819-1901), occupied a property in the town belonging to Major-General Baynes. While the arrival of senior members of the Royal Family in the small town elicited no comment in his spiritual diary, the duke's death on 23 January 1820 resulted in one of the longest entries found in that volume.[49] Not presuming to know the duke's 'final state' (that is, whether he had attained salvation or not), Bacon nevertheless took stock of the spiritual shortcomings that he had exhibited during his short time in Sidmouth. Although acknowledging that he was an 'amiable benevolent and noble character' with whom he was personally acquainted, Bacon was quick to recall his impious behaviour. In particular, he deplored the duke's failure to honour the Sabbath, railing against his Sunday entertainments and his reluctance to exploit the services of his household chaplain.[50] While the duke showed 'kindness, [one illegible word] regularity, temperance, domestic virtue

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[46] Cited in Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, p. 2.
[47] Emphasis in the original. Cecil, 'Biographical Memoirs', pp. 808-810.
[48] E. Longford, 'Edward, Prince, duke of Kent and Strathearn (1767–1820)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/8526, accessed 23 December 2021.
[49] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 23 January 1820.
[50] The chaplain to whom Bacon referred was perhaps the Revd Legh Richmond (1772-1827), a writer of evangelical tracts, who was appointed chaplain to the duke on 24 February 1814. See 'Richmond, Legh 1797-1827', https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayAppointment.jsp?CDBAppRedID=299718, accessed 22 November 2019.

and good will towards man', Bacon cautioned that his fulfilment of the second Great Commandment—'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'—did not excuse him his failure to fulfil the first: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind'.[51] Foreshadowing his interpretation of Sir Joshua Reynolds' failing eyesight, found in the 'Reminiscences', Bacon saw divine justice in the duke's demise: 'I cannot but consider this melancholly [*sic*] event as more or less connected with this disregard of Him "by whom princes reign", and "who turneth princes to destruction".'[52] The meaning of the event was sharpened by its occurrence in provincial Sidmouth rather than metropolitan London, for 'God will generally bring the lesson forth when it shall be marked and observed and when the cause of the visitation shall be more peculiarly apparent'.[53]

Just six days later, George III died (N211; Fig. 49). To this news Bacon responded only briefly, reflecting his confidence in the piety of the late king, evident later in the encomium found in the 'Reminiscences'.[54] Although not himself an evangelical, the king was associated with the movement's programme of social reform, beginning with his Proclamation for the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue in 1787 which had been promoted to him by William Wilberforce.[55] Bacon's comparison of father and son emphasised his doubts about the late duke. 'In many points, person taste, habits & c the Prince resembled his Royal Father. O! that he had resembled him in his piety. Our hearts say to this good old King – "Peace be to Thy remains as we doubt not there is peace to his Soul.'[56]

Significantly, then, portraits of both the king and the duke feature in Album Four, in which Bacon assembled the likenesses of family and friends made on loose sheets that he had accumulated over his lifetime. But whereas Beechey's sketch of George III records the turn of head seen in his monumental painting, *King George III Reviewing the Third Dragoon Guards and the Tenth Light Dragoons*, 1798 (destroyed 1992), Bacon's portrait of the duke is closer to his other drawings. Showing his sitter's head both in profile (recto) and *en face* (verso), the artist inscribed the sheet to note that the likeness was made 'from the life', an unusual intervention that highlights his personal encounter with a member of the Royal

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[51] Rather than the Ten Commandments, the 'Great Commandments' are those two cited by Jesus in response to a question posed by a lawyer. For the differing accounts, see Matthew 22:35-40, Mark 12:28-34 and Luke 10:27.
[52] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 23 January 1820. For the first quotation, see Proverbs 8:15.
[53] Ibid, 23 January 1820.
[54] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 3, pp. 1-20.
[55] For Wilberforce's involvement in promoting the proclamation and the relevant context, see M. J. D. Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 17-58.
[56] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 3 February 1820.

Family. However, unlike his other drawings, and given the focus on the outline of the sitter's head and the schematic treatment of his features, I suggest that this sheet may be connected to the portrait bust of the duke that Bacon executed in 1813-14.[57] The only portrait in his albums that can be tentatively linked to one of the artist's sculptural projects, the presence of this drawing reinforces the impression identified in the 'Reminiscences' that, despite his mixed feelings about the late duke's character, Bacon prized his family's links to the reigning dynasty.

While welcome, this circumstantial link between the visual and textual aspects of Bacon's efforts at memorialisation should not obscure the fact that the artist's spiritual diary contains no direct references to his portrait practice. However, in two instances his remarks bring us close to the circumstances under which two drawings appear to have been made. The first example is Bacon's likeness of the Revd John Simons (1755-1836), rector of St Paul's Cray, Kent, dated August 1822 (N242; Fig. 50). It seems likely that this portrait was made during the two days that the artist spent in the company of the elderly cleric and his wife during the week of 18-24 August that year.[58] That encounter came the month after Simons' unexpected visit to Bacon's home in nearby Bromley, on the day that the artist's daughter Emma left to stay with his sister, Mary at Kennington Common in South London. In his spiritual biography of Emma written in 1835, and discussed in the last section of this chapter, Bacon described Simons' visit as 'remarkable'. He placed particular emphasis on the cleric's invocation of a blessing on each of his children and his recitation of Luke 12:32: '"Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."' The significance of these events was magnified by Emma's sudden illness and subsequent death at her aunt's home just eleven days later.[59]

The second example is connected to Bacon's undated portrait of his friend, the Revd William Russell (N239; Fig. 51), son of the portrait artist John Russell, stylistic analysis of which places it in the period 1820-30. On 25 January 1823, Bacon recorded in his spiritual diary a sociable encounter between his family and that of Russell at the latter's

[57] Comparable schematic drawings of sitters made with a *camera lucida* by Bacon's professional rival, the sculptor Sir Francis Leggatt Chantrey (1781-1841), are held by the National Portrait Gallery, London. For an example showing a sitter both *en face* and in profile, see, for instance, *Henry Cowper*, 1823, pencil, 411 x 632 mm, inv. NPG 316a(23).
[58] For his two days with Simons and his wife, see John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 25 August 1822.
[59] For Simons' visit, see ibid, 10 July 1822. For his later interpretation of those events, see Bacon, *Some Account of Emma Bacon*, pp. 8-9.

rectory in Shepperton, Surrey. The artist's entry makes it clear that the visit brought together likeminded evangelicals:

> How blessed is the sanity of real Xtians. I hope and trust we were all better for meeting. Our communication was frequently entertaining and productive of cheerful visibility, but the tone and character of every day was that of piety, and regard for religion as the one thing needful – and most interesting occupation of the day. If beginning the day with acts of devotion – if afterwards calling on and talking to & praying by the sick – if devoting the evenings in company to an unrestrained discussion of religious subjects – if before the company separated joining in reading and speaking on the scriptures, singing psalms and praying be a dull and senseless way of spending time, then our visit was a dull one indeed. But if all were well pleased, and my children could say on returning home – O! what nice delightful evenings we spent at Shepperton, then I think there is evidence that the religious world is as happy as the gay world.[60]

Perhaps amplified by their short time together, the daily round of activities recounted here is probably indicative of that practiced in Bacon's own home. As such, it is significant that drawing featured among them.

For even if it cannot be established whether Bacon's portrait of Russell was made during this visit, Russell's portrait of Bacon certainly was. Dated 21 January 1823 (N363; Fig. 52), and now rather damaged, this sheet confirms that drawing, and the portrait genre specifically, was compatible with the spiritually elevating pursuits that evangelicals embraced in the place of more worldly forms of sociability. This is all the more striking given what Matthews has concluded on the basis of Russell's reputed decision to abandon art on his ordination in 1809, discussed in the Introduction. It seems evident that Russell's portrait of Bacon, together with the artist's portrait of him, whether made then or at some other time, served as tokens of their friendship and mutual esteem. Resting on a shared past, their relationship was nonetheless galvanised by their common commitment to regenerate Christianity, to which their portraits, I suggest, were testimony.

[60] Abbreviation in the original. John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 25 January 1823.

Bacon's Rotterdam journal

In marked contrast to his spiritual diary, Bacon's journal of his visit to Rotterdam in July 1823 is predominantly a record of worldly matters.[61] Contained in a single volume, this account was written in tandem with his spiritual diary, which Bacon also took with him on his trip, emphasising the distinct purpose that each document served.[62] Departing from London in the company of an unnamed friend, Bacon travelled aboard a packet steamer for what he cryptically described as 'important and anxious business' that, while 'crowned with complete success', is nowhere explained. Bacon's reluctance to add details of his business affairs may have been due to the quasi-public nature of the document; references to his 'reader' indicate that his account was written, at least in part, for the entertainment and edification of others. As a result, the tenor of the journal differs from that of his spiritual diary, and the account is generally light-hearted, with observations of manners, local customs and the physical environment. Indeed, the travel journal reveals Bacon's irony, self-deprecating humour and keen sense of the absurd, traits that are only hinted at elsewhere. Further, the text points to the artist's antiquarian interests and intellectual predilections, with references to Samuel Johnson (1709-84), the fables of Aesop and Greek history, period costumes in the works of William Hogarth (1697-1764), and *The coronation of Napoleon*, 1805-08, by the French painter Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825). In these ways, and unlike the anxious probing of his spiritual diary, the travel journal brings us closer to the man as his family and friends might have perceived him.

The only evidence of foreign travel by the artist, the Rotterdam journal records Bacon's palpable sense of wonder, as well as occasional bafflement. He marvelled at the architecture and monuments of the city, paying close attention to St Laurenskerk, the 'Great Church', then undergoing renovations, the English church on the Haringvliet, where he had hoped to attend a service, the birthplace of Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) and the bronze statue of him by Hendrick de Keyser (1565-1621), 1621. Among various illustrations in his hand, drawings of the last three monuments are found in the diary, which may have been separate to the 'sketch book' referred to in his account, but that has not been traced. If the journal and its drawings reflect Bacon's artistic interests, permitting him to comment on the quality of de Keyser's monument, his comments on Erasmus'

[61] John Bacon Junior, Rotterdam journal. This unpaginated account was rendered as a continuous narrative, despite having been written over the course of his journey. The journal terminates abruptly on his return to London on 31 July 1823 with the confiscation by British customs officers of silk reticules acquired in Rotterdam, presumably intended as gifts for his wife and daughters.
[62] See John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 30 July 1823.

birthplace reveal his views on the importance of preserving historic monuments 'inviolate in their original state' from the depredations of the 'Gothlike insensibility' of ignorant or unsympathetic private owners.[63] The latter observations foreshadow remarks that Bacon made on church monuments in a paper presented to the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society almost two decades later,[64] affirming his interest in memorialization that unites his portrait and sculptural practices and the several genres in which he wrote.

Although the journal largely avoids the anxious tone of his spiritual diary, the novelties of foreign travel did not obscure the evangelical lens through which he viewed the world. Opening his account with reflections on the perils of travelling by sea and the necessity of placing his faith in God's providence, he went on to evince his piety to his readers, particularly through evidence of his Sabbatarian convictions.[65] Indeed, Bacon was at pains to assure his readers of his careful observance of the Sabbath, even under disruptive circumstances. A drawing of a village first encountered on Sunday 27 July 1823, when Bacon was still making his way toward Rotterdam, was annotated to record that it was only made during his return trip the following Wednesday, inserted in a space in the diary left blank for that purpose.[66] Even more remarkable is the strident language of his response on learning that the city's annual fair was to

> commence "next Sunday week."! What then, the Devil will show that fairs are his own institution and delight; or why should Man daringly and impiously select the Sabbath in preference to every other day on which to begin his merchandise, his wantonness and his wickedness in the face of heaven and earth. – Man says "tusk, the Lord doth not regard" – God says "the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations which forget God".[67]

In addition to the strict Sabbatarianism typical of his fellow evangelicals, the passage points to their hostility to fairs in general, with which the movement sought to compete with public preaching, sober recreations and Sunday Schools.[68] Inveighing against the impiety of

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[63] John Bacon Junior, Rotterdam journal.
[64] John Bacon Junior, 'Remarks on Monumental Architecture', *Transactions of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society*, vol. 1 (1843), pp. 117-126.
[65] For Sabbatarianism, see John Wigley, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Sunday* (Manchester, 1980), chapter 2, esp. pp. 26-30.
[66] John Bacon Junior, Rotterdam journal.
[67] Ibid. The second passage quoted is from Psalm 9:17.
[68] For evangelicals competing with fairs and race meetings, see Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure*, pp. 57, 72. For their general concern about the risk of spiritual contamination in crowds, see Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations*, p. 103.

the Rotterdam fair, Bacon's anticipation of divine vengeance on the wayward citizens of Rotterdam recalls his observations elsewhere on the moral failings of Sir Joshua Reynolds and the Duke of Kent.

While it reveals nothing about his activities as a portrait artist, Bacon's Rotterdam diary does underline his interest in memorialization. Further, the irony and humour that animate his narrative suggest the sociable aspect of his character that presumably smoothed the path to taking a likeness. As one instance of the autobiographical genre, Schamma Schahadat has described the diary as a 'site for the writer's self-fashioning' that is 'free in form and transgressive concerning the norms and forms of literary genres'.[69] Schahadat's observations on the mutable nature of the diary's form speak to Bacon's use of different registers across two discrete documents with which to both fracture and refine his authorial persona.

Antonio Canova

The quasi-public role that I believe Bacon's Rotterdam journal served appears to be supported by a single entry surviving from another, untraced document that Bacon's great-granddaughter Gertrude Bacon (1874-1949) described as a 'note book' and that may have been written in a similar vein.[70] Not unlike the worldly concerns of his travel journal, and together with an untraced account of a trip to Somerset made with his son, the Revd John,[71] the text transcribed by Gertrude records the visit to Bacon's Newman Street studio by the famous Italian sculptor Antonio Canova on 6 November 1815. This event occurred between the entries of 4 and 11 November that Bacon made in his spiritual diary, of which the latter is notable for its silence on the subject of the visit, recording only 'a little

[69] Schamma Schahadat, 'Diary', in ed. Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf, *Handbook of Autobiography / Autofiction* (Berlin and Boston, MA, 2019), pp. 549, 550, https://www-degruyter-com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/document/doi/10.1515/9783110279818-070/html, accessed 26 August 2021.
[70] Gertrude Bacon noted that her transcription was taken from a notebook that was one of 'a very large number of Diaries, letters, etc' which were then dispersed among Bacon's descendants. For her transcription of Bacon's account of the visit, see John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'A Visit from Canova', 6 November 1815 and later, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', pp. 106-108. For his transcription of the same text, which differs in minor details, see Timothy Clifford, 'Canova in Context: The Sculptor, his Reputation, his British Patrons and his Visit to England', in Timothy Clifford, Aidan Weston Lewis, et al., *The Three Graces: Antonio Canova*, exhibition catalogue, National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, 9 August-8 October 1995 (Edinburgh, 1995), p. 16.
[71] For his reference to 'the manuscript books of our tour in Somersetshire', see John Bacon Junior to the Revd John Bacon, 31 October 1839, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 23.

struggling to regain my footing again'.[72] Meanwhile, in the untraced 'note book', Canova's visit was recorded in a detailed account that is enlivened by the artist's evident pleasure.

This records the Italian sculptor's remarks on some of Bacon's own work, as well as his reaction to those monuments he had encountered in St Paul's Cathedral the day before. But having engaged Canova and his party in conversation of a professional nature, Bacon was soon interrupted:

> Most unfortunately at this moment the name of a Nobleman was announced, but 'who is the man that shall come after the King?'. I felt that I had at that time the greatest of all Kings with me, namely the King of the sculptors

With a pointed allusion to scripture,[73] Bacon's text reveals the esteem in which he held his visitor, whose genius he compared favourably to the hereditary status of the visiting nobleman. Crucially, in one of only two direct references to his drawing practice uncovered during this research, the text also records Bacon's decision to take Canova's likeness during the visit (N235; Fig. 53):

> The time was now drawing near at which I was to lose him as he was in haste; but Dido herself did not beset the Trojan here with more excuses for detention that I did Canova; among the rest I insisted upon him letting me sketch his profile.
>
> He said he would, with pleasure, call again for that purpose; but feeling that all the world must be as ready to pull him to pieces as I was, I made up my mind that if I let him go he was gone for ever. I tried what flattery would do; and I flattered him by telling him the truth; namely that I had hoped to have the Emperor of Russia, King of Prussia etc. in my study; but that there was one man greater to me than them all, and whose presence made up for the loss of all the rest, and that was himself.[74]

Undeterred by his guest's demurral, and without evident embarrassment, Bacon cajoled Canova into sitting for him. Indeed, the reference to his own flattery and allusion to Virgil's *Aeneid* suggest the intensity of his admiration for the Italian, bordering on hero worship. It

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[72] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 11 November 1815.
[73] Compare Ecclesiastes 2:12. The text Bacon quoted differs from that found in the King James Bible, but is the same as that used by Benjamin Holloway in *Letter and Spirit, or Annotations upon the Holy Scriptures According to Both* (Oxford, 1753), p. 306.
[74] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'A Visit from Canova', p. 108. The Russian and Prussian monarchs had visited London in June 1814 in the aftermath of the defeat of Napoleon.

is an inference supported by Bacon's later acquisition of a death mask of his erstwhile sitter,[75] against which his own likeness might have been favourably read.

Bacon's last will and testament

A different form of evidence of Bacon's construction of his own identity comes in the form of his last will and testament, written in early 1857.[76] To a considerable extent, this belongs to a genre of formal documents that, drafted in the repetitive language of the law, has been critiqued for the diminution or even absence of the 'voice' of the testator.[77] Significantly, the document is marked by the absence of any allusion to Bacon's religious convictions. While statements of faith had been common in wills until the late seventeenth century,[78] evidence from the wills of those in Bacon's circle suggest that it was still widely practiced. That of Bacon's friend and sitter, Sir John Theophilus Lee (1787-1843) (N73), in which the artist was named as an executor, referred to 'the property with which it has pleased God to bless me'.[79] Elsewhere, Bacon's brother-in-law and fellow evangelical, Edward Norton Thornton, was rather more effusive:

> with a deep sense of my utter unworthiness in the sight of my Creator and Judge but with humble confidence in his Mercy through the merits of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ I commit my soul into his hands beseeching him to pardon my many and great transgressions and to receive me into his favor [*sic*] for the sake of him who shed his precious blood upon the Cross to procure pardon and happiness for Sinners like myself[.][80]

[75] In the 1865 auction catalogue, the death mask was described as 'by John Bacon, Jun. Nov. 1822'. It may be that Bacon took a cast from another death mask. See Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, *Catalogue of the Valuable Illustrated Works*, lot 191.
[76] John Bacon Junior, Last will and testament.
[77] For 'voice' in testamentary documents, see Karen J. Sneddon, 'Speaking for the Dead: Voice in last wills and testaments', *St John's Law Review*, 85:2 (March 2011), pp. 683-754.
[78] Nigel Goose and Nesta Evans, 'Wills as an Historical Source', p. 48. Also Margaret Spufford, 'Religious Preambles and the Scribes of Villagers' Wills in Cambridgeshire, 1570-1700', in Arkell, Evans and Goose, *When Death Do Us Part*, pp. 144-145.
[79] Will of Sir John Theophilus Lee of Park House Mount Radford near Exeter, Devon, 19 December 1843, TNA, PROB 11/1990/88.
[80] Will of Edward Norton Thornton, Undertaker of No 174 High Street Southwark, Surrey, 27 December 1848, TNA, PROB 11/2085/222.

That Bacon did not include a passage in this vein suggests the business-like manner in which he conducted his worldly affairs, recalling his several roles as artist, businessman and rentier.

However, Bacon's testamentary bequests, particularly those accounting for the dispersal of works of art, provide valuable evidence of the extent to which these objects were invested with meaning. The allocation of these objects among his heirs suggests the artist's concern for the visual legacy of the family in which portraits occupy a central place. Following the essential formalities of appointing executors, disposal of his remains, payment of his debts and funeral expenses, the distribution of objects of artistic and dynastic value precedes the allocation of real estate among his heirs, the sale of the remainder and the distribution or investment of the resulting funds.[81] Two substantial groups of objects were allocated to his trustees, the Revds John and Thomas and their sister Elizabeth, acting together, and to the Revd Thomas, respectively. As neither the Revd Thomas nor Elizabeth had children of their own, those works of art left to the trustees appear to constitute a discrete group ultimately intended as a legacy for the Revd John as the head of the family in the next generation. A smaller number of works were designated for various members of Bacon's extended family; while the residue of his personal effects, that are only loosely described, but that included prints and drawings, was left to Elizabeth.[82]

Of those works of art left to his trustees, it is notable that the first—and the first object of any kind listed in the will—was the life-size oil portrait of Bacon Senior by Mason Chamberlin that had been exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1785 (Fig. 54).[83] The significance accorded that object points to Bacon Senior's role as patriarch of the family and establishes dynastic continuity across the three generations of the Bacon family implicitly acknowledged in Bacon's will. In addition to Chamberlin's portrait, the trustees also received what appear to have been other key items from the collection. Among others, this included two paintings attributed to Sir Peter Lely (1618-80) and Sir Anthony Van Dyck

[81] On the basis of title deeds preserved in the London Metropolitan Archives, Cox-Johnson counted seventy-two properties in and around London; see Ann Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', *Burlington Magazine*, 101:675 (June 1959), p. 239. However, that number may have been inflated by the complicated property deals arranged by Josiah Iles Wathen (1805-81), of which Bacon does not seem to have been aware until 1848 (see p. 93). A much smaller number of properties are listed in Bacon's will.

[82] Elizabeth's own will provides some indication of the material she received from her father; see Will of Elizabeth Bacon, of Sidmouth, Exeter Probate Registry, proved 28 March 1867.

[83] Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 2, p. 35.

(1599-1641), respectively, the pendant portraits of Bacon and his wife by John Russell, a marble bust of Bacon himself by a member of the Manning family, and a *Saint Peter* by John Francis Rigaud.[84] Confirming that this group of works was intended for his eldest son, the trustees also received Bacon's portrait of the Revd John 'in his Highland dress', and another of him by a painter identified only as 'Carter'. This was one of at least four small oil portraits of the artist's children by 'Carter' that feature in Bacon's will, including that of the Revd Thomas, bequeathed to him, and those of Harriet Vivien and Augusta Maria Fowler, left to their respective widowers.

Bacon's trustees also received Album Four, containing the compilation of sheets from across the artist's lifetime, including his portrait of Canova, the sketches by Russell and Beechey's likeness of George III. Given what we know of how the latter sheets were freighted with meaning for the artist, it is significant that these drawings share Album Four with all three of his own portraits of his father, Bacon Senior, together with several drawn by the older man. In this way, Bacon Senior was entangled with his son's 'record of friendship', both as a subject and as a source of the likenesses that expressed the spectrum of intimacy that characterises the sitters arrayed in that volume. Given this, it seems that the contents of Album Four were significant in the artist's decision to pass it to his eldest son. As with Chamberlin's portrait, to which it is linked by Bacon's three portraits of Bacon Senior, I believe that the social and dynastic significance of the contents of this particular volume was the reason why the artist chose to bequeath Album Four to his eldest son, in recognition of his role as the next head of the Bacon family.

Like his brother, the Revd Thomas was also bequeathed one album of portrait drawings. For him, Bacon selected the album containing portraits of the Revds John Irvine (?1805-51), 1849 (N97), and William Jackson (fl. 1847-53), *c*. 1849 (N98), whom the artist identified as his son's friends. It seems likely that the Revd Thomas may have been acquainted with the two men through the church, perhaps during his time based in the Mediterranean, as Irvine was the British consular chaplain at Genoa.[85] Further, the Revd Thomas inherited Bacon's portrait of his wife as an angel, Russell's portrait of Newton and the portrait of himself as a young man by Carter. He also received items connected to his

[84] No values were given for these objects. The paintings attributed to Lely were described as being of 'Sir Thomas Bacon and his two daughters'; while that attributed to Van Dyck is described as 'The Greyhound'. The bust of Bacon may be either that shown at the RA by Charles Manning in 1812 or that by Samuel Manning in 1846; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 5. pp. 177-178. The *St Peter* may have been that shown by Rigaud at the RA in 1792; ibid, vol. 6, p. 299.
[85] For the Revd Thomas in Italy, see Chapter Six.

father's profession as a sculptor. These included five sculptures, notably Bacon's 'alto relief Model of Adam and Eve from Milton's fifth Book of Paradise Lost[,] also the small sketch in Plaister [*sic*] of Cain murdering Abel[,] for which two models I gained the Gold Medal of the Royal Academy by the unanimous votes of the Academicians when I was a Student there'. The Revd Thomas also received the gold medal itself.[86] It is worth observing that Bacon's second son was himself an accomplished artist. Unlike his elder brother, who perpetuated the family's portrait practice, the Revd Thomas favoured landscape, and drawings and watercolours recording his travels in India and Europe survive in several private collections; while a number of his Indian scenes were reproduced as illustrations to publications by himself and others, as discussed in Chapter Six. Landscapes by him, perhaps watercolours, featured in his father's collection, some of which were gifts, and others commissions, suggesting that their shared artistic interests were viewed favourably by the older man.[87] His interest in landscape may explain why the Revd Thomas was bequeathed a seascape, *Aboukir*, by a member of the Serres dynasty, and a number of landscapes, including a pair by James Leakey (1775-1866) and two others attributed to 'Rysdoll' (presumably Jacob van Ruisdael, 1628-82) and 'Berghem' (Nicolaes Berchem, 1620-83), respectively.[88] It would appear, then, that while the Revd John was bequeathed objects that were consistent with his role as head of the family, and that connected with his own portrait practice, the Revd Thomas was heir to their father's interest in art more generally.

While Bacon sought to protect the visual legacy of, and provide for the needs of his family through his testamentary bequests, few others entered into his calculations. Although a former wet nurse and two servants received modest cash bequests, Bacon left nothing to charity. In keeping with the prevailing *laissez-faire* economics of the period, evangelicals placed greater emphasis on moral reform rather than meeting material want, promoting the 'frugal self-reliance' that Ralph Brown has indicated they believed would

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[86] John Bacon Junior, Last will and testament. The gold medal is now believed to be with the Goldsmiths Company, London; Bacon's silver medal is in a private collection.

[87] 'I bequeath unto my said Son Thomas Bacon absolutely the Landscapes painted by him whether by my order or given to me by him'. Ibid.

[88] In his *c*. 1872 inventory of the contents of his home, the Revd Thomas identified the painting by Serres as *Aboukir*, and noted that it was acquired by 'my father', i.e., Bacon. However, in the related auction catalogue it is stated to have been acquired by Bacon the Elder and as having been exhibited at the RA in 1798. However, no work by that title by any one of the Serres family appears in Graves and it has not proved possible to identify the picture in question. See Revd Thomas Bacon, MS 'Inventory of Furniture, Library, Pictures, Fixtures & Other Effects at Kingsworthy Rectory: with cost price & estimated value. Also Estimate Cost of Improvements', *c*. 1872, private collection; and Gadsden, Ellis & Co., *A Catalogue of the Valuable Decorative Furniture and General Contents of the Mansion, Kingsworthy Rectory near Winchester, for sale by auction, on Tuesday, October 29th, 1872, and three following days* (London, 1872), p. 20.

obviate the need for state intervention.[89] That Bacon was aligned with this philosophy is suggested by his longstanding commitment to voluntary activity, discussed in Chapter Five. However, a sample of the wills of those in his circle suggest that there was no uniform approach to the question of charitable bequests. While neither Bacon's father nor his stepmother left anything to charity,[90] Bacon Senior's friend and brother-in-law, Thomas Raybould, for whom Bacon and his sisters Ann and Mary acted as executors, left multiple bequests to charities for the poor and disabled, charity schools and relief funds for both Anglican and Baptist clergy.[91] If Raybould's status as a well-to-do and childless widower enabled such generosity, his charitable bequests were nonetheless in addition to financial provision made for various relations and friends. Closer to the end of his own life, Bacon's friend and sitter, the Revd John Simons left small cash bequests to his servants but nothing to charity, despite a considerable estate.[92] In contrast, and just eight years after his own death, Bacon's daughter Elizabeth left from her own more modest estate £50.00 each to three clerics, including her two brothers and the incumbent of the parishes of Salcombe Regis and Sidbury near Sidmouth, to be distributed 'among the poor of their respective parishes'.[93]

'To my Executors'

If the significance of Bacon's testamentary bequests can be inferred from what is known of particular objects and the artist's relationships with those to whom they were bequeathed, a notebook of instructions to his executors is remarkable for its clarity.[94] In this document, Bacon's instructions are accompanied by explanations for his allocation of funds and real estate among his children and the heirs of those of his daughters who had predeceased him. This includes his justifications for the manner in which he divided his estate, apportioning this among his children as equally as possible. But it also includes a 'memorandum' that Bacon instructed each of his children to take a copy of, in which he

[89] Brown, 'Evangelical Social Thought', pp. 133, 135. For the connection between evangelicalism and the prevailing *laissez-faire* economics of the period, see Hilton, *The Age of Atonement*, chapter 1; and Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, chapter 6.
[90] Will of John Bacon of Newman Street Oxford Road, Middlesex, 19 August 1799, TNA, PROB 11/1328/204; and Will of Martha Bacon, Widow of Newman Street, City of London, 5 June 1802, TNA, PROB 11/1375/285.
[91] Will of Thomas Raybould, Gentleman of Newington, Surrey, 6 April 1804, TNA, PROB 11/1408/6.
[92] Will of Reverend John Simons, Rector, Clerk of Saint Paul's Cray, Kent, 13 December 1836, TNA, PROB 11/1870/377.
[93] Elizabeth Bacon, Last will and testament.
[94] John Bacon Junior, MS 'To my Executors', October 1835 and later, private collection.

implored them—'as you shall have any love or respect for my Memory and command'—to support one another financially should any one of them sustain a loss as a result of a property inherited from him. Limited to those for which they were not personally responsible, and defects in title in particular, Bacon specifically excluded losses by other causes that, he was careful to note, 'might lead to the ruin of all through the improvidence or misfortune of one.' Signed on 9 October 1835, Bacon's memorandum was written just eight days after his bankrupt half-brother, Joshua Bacon had appeared before the Court for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors.[95] Loaded with moral significance, bankruptcy carried considerable social stigma, and it seems likely that Bacon was deeply affected by Joshua's fall from grace.[96] Perhaps in light of this, the artist sought to protect his children, and the family at large, from the scandal of financial embarrassment.

But having sought to preserve his children from both hardship and humiliation, Bacon eventually found himself at the centre of a financial scandal. The notebook of instruction is now much damaged, having been 'mutilated'—to use Bacon's expression—by the artist following the discovery of the 'fraud' committed by his agent, the solicitor Josiah Iles Wathen (1805-81).[97] In early 1848 Bacon learnt that Wathen's 'lying, deceiving, [and] plundering' had entangled him in the ownership of several public houses and even a theatre, a bête noire of evangelicals, described by the artist as 'that house of Belial'.[98] It was doubtless a complication that Wathen was married to Bacon's niece, Caroline Thornton (1806-77). Further, serving on the committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society from 1831-48, Wathen may also have been a fellow evangelical. Together with ties of family, such spiritual credentials may explain how this individual came to exercise so much control over Bacon's finances. On learning of the true state of his affairs, Bacon slashed pages from the notebook, adding an inscription to the front pastedown in an agitated hand to note that 'much of the following is now negatory [*sic*], through the robbery which has been committed on me by J.I.W[athen].'[99] On this basis, I suggest that

[95] For the scheduled date of Joshua Bacon's appearance, see 'The Court for Relief of Insolvent Debtors', *London Gazette*, 8 September 1835, p. 1709.
[96] For bankruptcy conceived as the product of immoral behaviour, including speculation, and the attendant loss of honour, see Richard Bellon, *A Sincere and Teachable Heart: Self-Denying Virtue in British Intellectual Life, 1736-1859* (Leiden and Boston, MA, 2015), p. 24.
[97] A letter to Bacon from his friend, Stephen Rigaud, indicates that Wathen's fraud had been discovered in the first half of that year; see Stephen Rigaud to John Bacon Junior, 9 June 1848, private collection. The resulting lawsuit is referred to in a subsequent letter; see Stephen Rigaud to John Bacon Junior, 27 November 1848, private collection.
[98] Quoted in Gertrude Bacon, 'Epilogue', *c*. 1923, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 117.
[99] Emphasis in the original. Ibid.

the scandal also led to the mutilation of Album One, from which a number of drawings are now missing, including the first two portraits made in the sequence. Turning to the index at the back of that volume, we find that the first two names recorded there were struck out in black ink: 'Josiah Wathen Esq.', and 'Mrs. Josiah Wathen'.[100] If Bacon's portrait drawings, and portraiture as a genre, were instrumental in recognising and memorializing friendship, as I suggest, then the removal of the portraits of his niece and her offending husband was a powerfully symbolic gesture.

The spiritual biographies

If Bacon's end-of-life documents reveal the concerns of a successful businessman joined to those of a loving father, his work as a biographer returns us to spiritual concerns similar to those encountered in his diary of 1815-24. In 1813 Bacon printed a memoir of his late sister, Ann Bacon, which he had written the year before.[101] This was the first of four such biographies, three of which have been examined in this research, and each of which concerned a female relation.[102] The biography of Ann was followed by memoirs of two of Bacon's daughters, Emma and Harriet, both of whom died young.[103] Perhaps as a pretext for his efforts, Bacon framed his accounts as letters to friends that, written at their request, summarised the life concerned, with particular emphasis on their spiritual struggles and final days. Bacon's accounts form part of the contemporary genre of spiritual or religious biographies of which he was an enthusiastic reader.[104] Such texts shared similar narrative concerns to the conversion literature popular in the eighteenth century, which went on to influence autobiography in the Victorian period,[105] and were characterised by Henry D. Rack as 'formal and stereotyped conventions … which tended to reduce individuality,'

[100] An adjacent inscription in blue ink in a later hand states that these were 'deleted by J.B. (artist).' Caroline Thornton and Josiah Iles Wathen married in 1831, several years after the portraits were made in Album One, *c.* 1827. The identification of Caroline Thornton by her married name in the index to the album is due to the post hoc nature of Bacon's index, as discussed in Chapter Two.
[101] See Chapter Two, n. 12.
[102] In the last year of his life, Bacon wrote a memoir of his sister Mary Bacon, now untraced; see Gertrude Bacon, 'Epilogue', p. 119
[103] See Chapter 2, n. 12.
[104] 'I am now 45 years old, and have been all my life more or less thoughtful about religion – I have read much religious biography, and have read much about depth of religious experience, clear views of the plan of salvation'. John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 26 May 1822.
[105] R. Gibson and T. Larsen, 'Nineteenth-century spiritual autobiography: Carlyle, Newman, Mill', in ed. A. Smyth, *A History of English Autobiography* (Cambridge, 2016), p. 200.

despite which 'the tension between convention and reality shows though.'[106] The latter tension relates particularly to death-bed scenes that were deployed as lessons to others, including children, whose spiritual welfare might be bolstered by edifying accounts of the holy deaths of even the very young.[107] Indeed, Bacon was explicit on the purpose of his biography of his daughter Harriet Vivian, including on the title page a quote from 'Night III' ('Narcissa') of *The Complaint* by Edward Young (1681-1765):

> … "smitten friends
> Are angels sent on errands full of love;
> For us they languish, and for us they die:
> And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain?
> * * * * *
> Shall we disdain their silent, soft address;
> Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer?" [108]

Apparently printed at his own expense, each text was distributed privately among family and friends, although that of Emma appears to have circulated in manuscript for thirteen years before being sent to press in 1835.[109] However, anticipating interest beyond his own kin-network and the circles of his subjects, Bacon was careful to note the private intentions of each project; and, in the biographies of Ann and Harriet, he specifically acknowledges the unknown reader with a few brief remarks.[110]

Bacon was not the only member of his family to seek meaning in the early deaths of his relations. His sister Ann wrote a similar, albeit much briefer, account in her diary of the character and early death of their younger half-sister, Martha (1786-93). Despite her youth, Martha figures as a model to be emulated, living in fear of her own indwelling sinfulness, suffering through her final illness with faith in God, and dying in a state of

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[106] My ellipses. Henry D. Rack, 'Evangelical endings: death-beds in evangelical biography', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 74:1 (1992), p. 42.
[107] Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, p. 98. For the importance of 'holy deaths' for evangelicals, and Anglican evangelicals in particular, see Rack, 'Evangelical Endings', pp. 42-44.
[108] Edward Young, *The Complaint; or, Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (London, 1795), p. 55.
[109] John Bacon Junior, *Some Account of Emma Bacon*, note facing p. 1. Bacon's decision to print his memoir of Emma in 1835 may have been prompted by his decision to circulate the memoir of Harriet, written the year before.
[110] John Bacon Junior, *Memoir of Miss Ann Bacon*, pp. 6-7; John Bacon Junior, *Memoir of Mrs. Edward Vivian*, p. 2.

repose.[111] As Pat Jalland has noted, 'Thousands of didactic deathbed scenes in nineteenth-century Evangelical tracts and journals attested to the zeal to save souls by showing people how to die.'[112] That the manner of death was invested with such importance rested upon the assumption that death itself was a trial to be borne in pursuit of salvation. This is one of several key tropes identified by Jalland in her analysis of the notion of the 'good death', including the physical and mental fitness necessary 'for the completion of temporal and spiritual business'.[113] Jalland contends that the genre itself stems from the medieval Catholic tradition of the *ars morendi* (art of dying), and that eighteenth-century evangelicals, including John Wesley, were influenced by seventeenth-century English Puritan literature in this vein.[114]

While Bacon's three memoirs are not limited to deathbed scenes, the sketched accounts of the character and spiritual lives of each of his subjects appear largely preliminary to that end, inverting the emphasis found in the conversion narratives popular in the eighteenth century and referred to earlier. In the case of his daughter Emma (N278; see Fig. 43), who died aged ten, the account of her short life and character fill only eight pages, while the account of the sudden onset of illness and her subsequent death required a further ten. The second half of that document was devoted to Bacon's reflections on attaining grace and salvation, in part prompted by the example of a life cut so tragically short.[115] Unlike Emma, both Ann and Harriet suffered prolonged ill health, providing scope for the interrogation of their spiritual state in the course of their trials. Bacon devoted two thirds of his memoir of Ann to her final illness. In that of Harriet (N264; Fig. 55), a third of the biography is given over to her failing health and death, taken mostly from the account written by her widower for her grieving father's benefit. The latter practice does not appear to have been uncommon. When his wife died in 1834, Robert Wilberforce (1802-57), son of the abolitionist and evangelical William Wilberforce, wrote a detailed account of her last days which his brother, the Revd Samuel Wilberforce (1805-73) then copied for circulation within the family.[116]

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[111] John Bacon Junior, *Memoir of Miss Ann Bacon*, pp. 43-45.
[112] Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, p. 21.
[113] Ibid, p. 26.
[114] Ibid, pp. 17-18, 20.
[115] John Bacon Junior, *Some Account of Emma Bacon*, pp. 20-35.
[116] David Newsome, *The Parting of Friends: The Wilberforces and Henry Manning* (2nd ed., Grand Rapids, MI, 1993), pp. 160-161; see also Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, p. 30.

With evangelical purposes in mind, such accounts were prone to subtle manipulation. As Jalland notes, deathbed scenes 'were highly selective and much depended on presentation and editing.'[117] Indeed, such was the imperative to obtain evidence of the spiritual state of the dying that family members might prompt them with questions in a 'catechetical exchange'.[118] Not everyone approved of such late expressions of faith, and Bacon's sitter, the Revd Rowland Hill was reported to be 'better pleased with living evidences of an interest in Christ than a few dying expressions however pleasing they might be to survivors'.[119] Bacon's three surviving accounts suggest that he may have disagreed and sought to maximise the didactic value of both instructive lives and holy deaths within his own family, both for himself and for others.

Conclusion

Striking expressions of a fractured self, the shifts in style that are observed as Bacon moved between the several genres in which he wrote reveal the variety of personas that he adopted. Ranging from the harrowed expressions of self-doubt that constitute so much of his spiritual diary, to the humorous and, occasionally, triumphant tone of his Rotterdam journal, Bacon's reflections on himself and the world reveal an experience of, and approach to, identity that is at odds with Wahrman's assertion of a new and essentialised regime of selfhood in the period. The posthumous fragmentation of the artist's archive would come to mirror the disconcerting range of voices in which he addresses us, requiring careful reading across his several texts in order to reveal the remorseless probing of his own motivations, and expose the distance between the inner and outer man.

A more self-assured articulation of identity is located in his spiritual biographies. Here, as with his portrait practice, Bacon placed himself at the heart of a strictly evangelical milieu, acting as the conduit for accounts of his sister and daughters with which to edify family, friends and, ultimately, those strangers into whose hands his texts inevitably fell. Such undertakings left little room for doubt, as Bacon assumed the mantle of guide through the moral lessons found in the lives that he recounted. It was a legacy of godliness which reflected positively on both the author, whose presence in each narrative is essential to the

[117] Ibid, p. 23.
[118] Ibid, p. 34.
[119] Cited in Rack, 'Evangelical endings', p. 50.

telling, and the family of which he was a part. In this way, family proved a vehicle for a coherent sense of self that evidence elsewhere reveals was less assured. Bacon's identity, it seems, was realised within the network of relationships that he shared with his family and friends, and that he endeavoured to represent through a combination of text and image.

It is significant, then, that in his end-of-life documents, Bacon revealed his concern for the preservation of his own and his family's legacy, albeit of a more secular kind. Not limited to the godly family that is articulated in his spiritual biographies, the evidence of his concern for the dynastic narrative of the Bacon family is also tied to the assertion of genteel origins that he had promoted in the 'Reminiscences' and elsewhere. Recalling the intergenerational pursuit of evidence in support of this, and Bacon's role in gathering material connected with it, it is worth observing how this claim to gentility ran parallel to the narrative of faith within the family, connecting at points, but otherwise proceeding independently of it. Bacon's identity, then, was located in several places simultaneously, the subject of narratives both public and private over which he exercised considerable control. To the metaphorical spaces in which his identity was located we might add the range of physical spaces that he occupied and in which he advanced narratives of personal and familial identity, both secular and religious, and to which we turn in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

Domestic Geography

Among the defining features of evangelical Christianity in the period under review was a marked emphasis on the importance of domestic life, particularly as a retreat from the polluting influences of the world.[1] As Dominic Erdozain has explained, the latter included popular recreations that had the power to distract the faithful from the pleasure and rewards to be found in faith.[2] Although Bacon exhibited a keen interest in music, to be discussed in Chapter Five, like many of his spiritual brethren he rejected typical Georgian establishments, such as theatres and assembly rooms, themselves regular sites of entertainment for contemporary society. As such, Bacon's homes were among the principal settings for his sociability. In order to understand how these spaces expressed his spiritual commitments, and the influence of the latter on his domestic arrangements, this chapter charts Bacon's domestic geography over five decades. After leaving Newman Street in 1807, the artist went on to reside at a further eight locations. In each case, his choice of address points to Bacon's affluence, borne of his own profitable career, itself built on his father's commercial success.[3] In exploring his movements, the addresses that he occupied and, wherever possible, the spaces within and the contents of these residences, we gain a fuller picture of Bacon's homes as places of middle-class spiritual retreat, in which forms of sociability inflected by evangelical mores were enacted. Further, it is possible to discern the

[1] See, for instance, Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, chapter 1.
[2] For an outline of the increasing restrictions on evangelical sociability and recreation, see Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure*, pp. 68-75.
[3] For an indication of the profitable nature of Bacon's sculptural practice at the time he formed a partnership with Charles Manning, see Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', pp. 239-240. For jealousy among other sculptors resulting from Bacon Senior's repeated successes in obtaining national commissions, and the suggestion that he was worth £60,000 in 1798, see Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, pp. 19, 43. The rumour of Bacon Senior's wealth was recorded in the diary of the artist and writer Joseph Farington RA (1747-1821), but is not borne out by the £17,000 and leasehold property recorded in the sculptor's will; see Will of John Bacon Senior, TNA, PROB 11/1328/204.

ways in which the family's homes functioned as repositories for, and the display of, likenesses of relations and select friends, by both Bacon and others.

In order to do so, I have looked to a variety of sources for evidence of the ways in which objects were deployed among the family and throughout their homes. In the absence of probate inventories of the kind explored by Lorna Weatherill in her study of consumption in England in the period 1660-1760, I have turned to those other sources with which she augmented her primary evidence, including diaries and letters.[4] Most significant for my research, however, have been the wills of members of the Bacon family. Beginning with those of Bacon Senior and his widow Martha, these documents have enabled me to trace the movement of specific objects through time and across the spaces that the family inhabited over the course of the three generations considered here. Indeed, the testamentary bequests that these documents record strongly support the inference that portraits, above all other types of material possessions, were central to formulating the shared identity of the Bacon family in the period under review. This approach brings my study of the Bacons into contact with scholarship on the connections between domestic interiors and identity, largely focused on the gentry and aristocratic elite, for which greater evidence survives.[5] In addition to offering a middle-class perspective, in which we can identify analogues for elite practices, the predominantly masculine interest in memory and the manifestation of family legacy that is exhibited in the evidence of the Bacon family offers an alternative to studies of domestic consumption and display from the female perspective.[6]

Of Newman Street in London, and Sidcliff in Devon, sufficient evidence exists to enable a relatively detailed analysis of the two houses in which Bacon was himself raised and worked, and to which he chose to retire and raise his own family, respectively. The difference between the two is marked and highlights the significance of Bacon's decision to withdraw both from his studio and metropolitan life more generally. Further, it reveals the extent to which his relative affluence enabled him to realise a model of family life in

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[4] Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, introduction, esp. pp. 2, 4.

[5] See, for instance, Gill Perry, et al., eds., *Placing faces: The portrait and the English country house in the long eighteenth century* (Manchester and New York, NY, 2013); and Stephen G. Hague and Karen Lipsedge, eds., *At Home in the Eighteenth Century: Interrogating Domestic Space* (New York, NY, 2021).

[6] See, for instance, Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven, CT and London, 1998). More recently, Vickery has pointed to the involvement of men in the furnishing and decoration of middle-class homes in the period; see Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven, CT and London, 2009).

keeping with rapidly converging religious precepts and secular notions of middle-class propriety. If his homes after leaving Sidmouth in 1836 were primarily suburban, they nonetheless signalled Bacon's monied status and aspirations to gentility that were first marked by his move to Paddington in 1807. Only in Winchester, in old age, do we find him living again in a genuinely urban setting; but even here the impact of faith appears to register, with his home situated opposite St Thomas' Church and only a short distance from the cathedral.

Newman Street, London

The property at 17 Newman Street in London formed a permanent backdrop to Bacon's life. The place of his birth and childhood home, it was also the site of both his father's and his own studio. Running north-west from Oxford Street, one of London's main commercial thoroughfares, Newman Street was a popular artists' haunt. The families of John Francis Rigaud and John Russell, with whom the Bacons were intimate, lived close by; while other prominent artists resided in the vicinity, including Benjamin West (1738-1820), Reynolds' successor as president of the Royal Academy, James Barry (1741-1806), Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), John Flaxman (1755-1826), Joseph Nollekens (1737-1823) and Richard (1742-1821) and Maria Cosway (1760-1838).[7] Bacon Senior had acquired a long-term lease on the property in 1774,[8] which Bacon inherited along with the studio under the right of refusal granted him in his father's will,[9] and the property remained in his possession until his death. Following his father's decease in 1799, his widowed stepmother, Martha continued to live at the property until her death in 1802, presumably sharing the residence with Bacon and perhaps some of his younger half-siblings and, from September 1801, Bacon's wife, Susannah Sophia.

After Bacon moved his family from Newman Street to Paddington Green in 1807, rooms in his former home appear to have been let to the miniature painter and portrait

[7] Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, p. 18; see also Kit Wedd with Lucy Peltz and Cathy Ross, *Creative Quarters: the art world in London 1700-2000*, exhibition catalogue, Museum of London, 30 March-15 July 2001 (London, 2001), chapter 4, esp. pp. 73-74.
[8] Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, p. 17.
[9] In his will, Bacon Senior noted that 'if my Son John Bacon shall prefer my House and Shops in Newman Street No. 17 … he shall be at liberty to do so'; see Will of John Bacon Senior, TNA, PROB 11/1328/204. Also Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', pp. 236, 239; and Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, p. 43.

draughtsman Joseph Slater (1782-1837).[10] Despite this, the house continued to function as the artist's office. Bacon's account of Canova's visit in 1815 reveals that he was at work in the back parlour of the residence while awaiting a visit from George Kenyon, second baron Kenyon (1776-1855), and clearly expected to receive him there rather than in his 'study', as his studio was known.[11] Significantly, in a letter of *c*. 1814, the musician Charles Wesley (1757-1834) referred to a document that he had deposited at Bacon's 'Town residence' — almost certainly Newman Street, distinguishing it from the artist's suburban home at Paddington.[12] The studio continued to operate from the premises and the residence was only let to his business associate, Samuel Manning (1786-1842) from either 1818 or 1819, coinciding with Bacon's departure for Sidmouth, suggesting that his use of the house continued until that time.[13] In addition to being the site of his studio, the property was a valuable asset and in 1842 Manning's rent was £210 annually.[14]

A surveyor's plan of 17 Newman Street from 1841 showing the ground floor of the residence and the studio, reveals a long and narrow property running north-east from Newman Street toward Rathbone Place, to which it was connected by an alley for the delivery of material and the removal of finished works.[15] Despite the relatively late date of the survey it seems likely that the internal structure remained largely unchanged from the time of Bacon's occupation. Approximately five-and-a-half metres wide and nine metres deep, the ground floor of the dwelling featured a broad passage running the length of the south side of the building. The passage was articulated on its southern side with eight deep niches that Cox-Johnson stated were used to display pieces of sculpture, suggesting how this liminal zone, connecting street, dwelling, garden and studio, might have doubled as an

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[10] Between 1811 and 1818, Joseph (or Josiah) Slater gave his address as 17 Newman Street when exhibiting at the Royal Academy; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 7, pp. 151-153. For the different forms of occupation of dwellings in London in the period, see Amanda Vickery, 'An Englishman's Home Is His Castle? Thresholds, Boundaries and Privacies in the Eighteenth-Century London House', *Past & Present*, 199 (May 2008), pp. 147-173.

[11] For the studio as his 'study', see 'To the Editor of The Times', *Times*, 24 December 1814, p. 3. For Kenyon, see John Wolffe, 'Kenyon, George, second Baron Kenyon (1776–1855), activist against Catholic emancipation', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/38921, accessed 3 September 2020.

[12] Charles Wesley to John Bacon Junior, 16 August [1814?], Box 5, Folder 40, MSS 159: Charles Wesley family papers, Pitts Theological Library, Emory University, Atlanta.

[13] Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', pp. 240-241. Cox-Johnson probably derived this date from Manning's address given in Royal Academy catalogues, which shows as 17 Newman Street from 1819; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 5, p. 177.

[14] Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', p. 241, n. 10.

[15] Reproduced in Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, plate III, and discussed pp. 17-18; and Wedd, Peltz and Ross, *Creative Quarters*, p. 73, fig. 69. My comments are based on that plan and Cox-Johnson's analysis of the property, for which her reasons are not always clear.

exhibition space, announcing the owner's profession and showcasing examples of his work for the benefit of visiting clients. The latter had to walk half the length of the corridor in order to reach the front parlour that Cox-Johnson believed was reserved for business purposes, and the entire length to gain access to the garden and the studio beyond. This was certainly the case for visitors to the studio, including those attending Bacon's free exhibitions and those members of the Royal Family who visited in *c*. 1813 in order to view his statue of George III, destined for the Bank of Ireland in Dublin.[16] The studio itself dwarfed the residence, with the double-height octagonal 'modelling room'—larger than either of the parlours in the residence—being just one of several large workshop spaces, pointing to the scale of the Bacons' operation and the extent to which this must have impacted on life in the home itself.[17] Also overlooking the garden, the rear parlour served the needs of the family, according to Cox-Johnson, while the kitchen and bedrooms evidently occupied the basement and the upper floors.

In addition to sharing the street-facing entrance to the property and perhaps two of the ground-floor spaces with visiting clients, the family had also to contend with the noise and dust generated by the work occurring at the end of their garden. If not exactly living 'above the shop', domestic life at Newman Street was carried on in close proximity to the business. Tensions may have arisen as a result, particularly as evangelicals hardened in their belief that the home should function as a place of retreat from both the world and the worldly, a development linked to a more general separation of work and home that features as one of the key aspects of the development of 'separate spheres', a historical shift posited by Davidoff and Hall, particularly as it affected women.[18] Certainly, Cecil observed that Bacon Senior had 'employed every method to preserve his family from mixing with a dissipated and dangerous world, [and] he strove by every means to render their home delightful and spared no expence [*sic*] that could make it so.'[19] If the family's later departure for Paddington corresponds with the general model proposed by Davidoff and Hall**,** it was perhaps made pressing with the birth of Bacon's first three children between 1802 and 1806.

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[16] For the public exhibitions, held in 1806, 1808 and 1814-15, see, for instance, 'Monument of Lord Henniker', *Times*, 12 May 1806, p. 1; 'Equestrian Statue of King William III', *Times*, 25 May 1808, p. 3; and 'National Monuments', *Times*, 19 December 1814, p. 3. For the visit by members of the Royal Family, *c*. 1813, see John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 3, pp. 13-14.
[17] The studio eventually engulfed parts of the rear gardens of both nos. 18 and 19 Newman Street; see Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, pp. 17-18, and plate III.
[18] For the middle-class home in their discussion, see Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 357-396.
[19] Cecil, *Memoirs of John Bacon*, pp. 39-40.

Compromised privacy and religious sensibilities notwithstanding, until 1807 Newman Street was home to an upwardly-mobile middle-class family. With the exception of Cox-Johnson's analysis based on the 1841 survey, we know almost nothing of the interiors. The only—circumstantial—evidence of the furniture used in the house is a drawing by Bacon Senior of what seems likely to be one of his sons reclining in a Louis XV-style *fauteuil* (N348; see Fig. 7). However, an 1872 inventory and related auction catalogue of the contents of Kingsworthy Rectory, the home of Bacon's younger son, the Revd Thomas, records a number of pictures that supposedly belonged to Bacon Senior.[20] These included works by or attributed to Joseph Wright of Derby (1734-97), Adriaen van Ostade (1610-85) or a pupil, Ruisdael, Charles Reuben Ryley (1752?-98), and a *Head of Judas* attributed to van Dyck. A 'picture of Saint Peter' by his friend John Francis Rigaud may have been acquired by him also.[21] Along with spiritual sentiment, the two pictures with religious themes might indicate interest in the work of a renowned Old Master and a close friend, respectively. Some of the collection could have been displayed in the front parlour, advertising the artist's taste and discernment to his clients.[22] Further, as suggested by John Brewer, such objects likely functioned as props of gentility, masking Bacon Senior's dependence upon, and active involvement in, the art market.[23] Whatever their precise role—and given that the above is only a partial account of the collection accumulated at Newman Street—it seems unlikely that pictures were limited to one room in the house. If there is no evidence of the plate, china and soft furnishings that the house likely contained, the few hints of Bacon Senior's collection of pictures appear to challenge Deborah Cohen's assertion that evangelical homes were marked by austerity, even given the allowances she made for 'moderate' evangelicals, such as the wealthy members of the Clapham Sect.[24]

Of particular relevance to this study are the portraits known to have been found at Newman Street. Comprising a range of sizes and media, these objects were likely to have been freighted with meaning for both the residents and perceptive visitors. Foremost

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[20] Revd Thomas Bacon, MS 'Inventory of Furniture', pp. 47-49; and Gadsden, Ellis, & Co., *A Catalogue of the Valuable Decorative Furniture*, pp. 20-22.

[21] This latter work was inherited by the Revd John Bacon; see John Bacon Junior, Last will and testament.

[22] For the utility of domestic spaces for professional artists, see, for instance, Donato Esposito, 'Artist in Residence', in eds. Kate Retford and Susanna Avery-Quash, *The Georgian London Town House: Building, Collecting and Display* (New York, NY, 2019), p. 197.

[23] John Brewer, 'Cultural Production, Consumption, and the Place of the Artist in Eighteenth-Century England', in ed. Brian Allen, *Towards a Modern Art World* (New Haven, CT and London, 1995), pp. 18-20.

[24] Deborah Cohen, *Household Gods: The British and Their Possessions* (New Haven, CT and London, 2006), pp. x, 6-10.

among these was probably Chamberlin's oil of Bacon Senior (see Fig. 54). This shows the artist gazing to upper right, while holding in his left hand a drawing for his monument to William Pitt the Elder, first earl of Chatham (1708-78), erected in Westminster Abbey the year before Chamberlin's painting was exhibited at the RA. Soberly attired in powdered wig, cravat and a dark green frock-coat, the sculptor is seated at a table, to the left of which stands a plinth on which his tools are arranged about the socle of a bust of *Sickness*—the anguished male figure that served as his diploma piece on being elected a full Royal Academician in 1778 and that derived from the figure of Lazar found in his monument to Thomas Guy (1644-1724) at Guy's Hospital, London (1779).[25] With its pointed references, the painting highlights Bacon Senior's professional success, itself striking testimony to the artist's rise to the rank of gentleman through the combined intellectual and manual talents to which Chamberlin alluded.

Quite different in scale was the untraced miniature portrait of the same sitter by Pierre Condé. Set in gold, the miniature may have been worn by Bacon Senior's second wife, Martha. Her bequest of it to her 'dear friend' and step-daughter, Elizabeth Thornton, suggests that this portrait had significant sentimental value.[26] Condé appears to have executed two untraced pictures of three of Bacon's own daughters,[27] while Bacon himself drew two portraits of Condé, dated to *c*. 1795 (N214) and *c*. 1805 (N188; see Fig. 32), respectively. The back-and-forth between the two artists registers their friendship, which Bacon Senior encouraged,[28] and that appears to have lasted until Condé's death.[29]

The pastel portraits of members of the Bacon family by their friend and fellow evangelical, John Russell may have functioned in a similar way. As recounted in Chapter One, in addition to the two portraits of Bacon Senior, these included likenesses of his second wife, Martha, and several of his daughters. With Russell's characteristic interest in

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[25] John Bacon Senior, *Sickness*, 1783, marble, 584 mm (height), Royal Academy of Arts, London, inv. 03/1672. For his adaptation of the figure of Lazar in his memorial to Thomas Guy for the figure of *Sickness*, see Sarah Burnage, 'The Works of John Bacon RA (1769-1799)' (PhD thesis, University of York, 2007), chapter 2, esp. pp. 89-90.

[26] Will of Martha Bacon, TNA, PROB 11/1375/285.

[27] At the RA in 1809 Condé exhibited a miniature of 'Miss Bacon and Miss M. A. Bacon', perhaps showing Bacon's two eldest daughters, Susannah Sophia and Mary Ann; while in 1813 he exhibited a watercolour of 'Eliza Bacon', perhaps Bacon's first daughter Elizabeth, who died that year; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 1, p. 121.

[28] 'Remember me kindly to Mr Conde [*sic*], he is a Stranger there [in Ramsgate] and claims some attention Yet I mean not to confine you to any thing disagreable [*sic*]'. John Bacon Senior to John Bacon Junior, *c*. 1795, private collection.

[29] Pierre Condé to John Bacon Junior, 20 April 1835, cited in Ann Saunders, typescript of an unfinished and untitled life of John Bacon Junior, undated, private collection, p. 40.

costume we find detailed evidence of the elegant dress of the women of the Bacon family; while the depiction of Bacon Senior in formal attire alerts us to contemporary sartorial expressions of masculine gentility, such as the outfit that Bacon reported he reluctantly wore at court, featuring a 'blue satin waistcoat edged with gold lace, ruffles, stone-set knee-buckles, a sword by his side and powdered [bag] wig'.[30] Even allowing for artistic license on Russell's part, the portraits represent a family of dignity, good taste and relative affluence. Moreover, while the elite exhibited ever-growing collections of family portraits in their country houses, where they served to emphasise historical and political connections with the land,[31] the Bacons did as many other middle-class families must have done, decorating their urban residence with a similarly expanding catalogue of likenesses of family and select friends.

If a casual acquaintance might mistake the details of Russell's portraits as evidence of a worldly family, the interiors at Newman Street also featured the two portraits by him of the prominent evangelical clerics Richard Cecil, 1798, and John Newton, *c*. 1788. While both men were members of the Eclectic Society, alongside Bacon Senior, it is evident that they were also close to the Bacon family, with the warm tone of surviving letters from Newton to both Bacon Senior and Martha revealing considerable affection.[32] Locks of hair of both men were also incorporated into jewels that later featured in the last will and testament of Bacon's elder sister, Mary.[33] It is noteworthy that Russell's likeness of Newton was among the few objects that Martha disposed of in her own will, bequeathing it to her stepson and 'dear friend' Bacon.[34] Not mentioned among her husband's bequests, Martha's possession of the portrait probably reflects the close connection that she and her husband had enjoyed with the sitter, emphasising both their friendship and shared religious convictions. Russell's portrait of Cecil recalls a similarly close relationship with Bacon Senior, resulting in his two memoirs of the artist, the second, book-length version

[30] If Bacon Senior was ambivalent about fine clothes, his son nonetheless prized the silk rosette of the elder artist's wig bag that George III had tied when it came undone at court; see John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 3, p. 18.
[31] For a study of the ways in which family portraits were deployed in country houses, including how elite women might use these in order to record their own lineage, see Kate Retford, 'Patrilineal Portraiture? Gender and Genealogy in the Eighteenth-Century English Country House', in eds. John Styles and Amanda Vickery, *Gender, Taste and Material Culture in Britain and North America 1700-1830* (New Haven, CT and London, 2006), pp. 315-344.
[32] See, for instance, the Revd John Newton to Martha Bacon, 15 July 1783; and the Revd John Newton to John Bacon Senior, 12 August 1783, Osborn Shelves c274, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.
[33] Will of Mary Bacon, of Bedford Row, Clapham Rise, proved 23 December 1859, Principal Probate Registry.
[34] Will of Martha Bacon, TNA, PROB 11/1375/285.

was illustrated with a frontispiece engraved by Joseph Collyer (1748-1827) after the less formal of Russell's two portraits of the subject.

Prior to leaving Newman Street for Paddington, Bacon himself added several pictures to the collection in the house. Like his father, Bacon commissioned or otherwise acquired portraits from John Russell, continuing the close relationship that existed between the two families. These included the portrait of himself as a sculptor from 1800 (see Fig. 13), and the marriage pendants of Bacon and his wife, Susannah Sophia from 1802. The latter two portraits show the couple as the new master and mistress of Newman Street, and presumably functioned much like the grander oil portraits that were displayed to great effect in the country houses of the elite.[35] Evidence of contemporary practice in such homes suggests that pastels were conventionally hung in smaller, more intimate rooms, and ladies' dressing rooms in particular.[36] However, the relatively large scale of Russell's Bacon portraits and the compact nature of middle-class homes—in which only simplified versions of the hierarchically arranged spaces of elite dwellings could exist—may have encouraged greater flexibility in the display of such portraits, perhaps including more prominent sites of display. It is significant, then, that Bacon himself recorded that small pastels by Russell of his own siblings, together with a self-portrait, were found hanging in the drawing room of his parents' home in Guildford.[37]

A further variation of elite conventions may be reflected in the medium in which these portraits were executed. Despite their relative affluence and the significance of portraits in their homes, there is no evidence that Bacon or his wife ever sat for portraits in oils. Given the couple's friendship with Russell, this may have been a question of tact; although Russell also worked in oils, and any sense of obligation to him could have held only until his death in 1806. Of course, Bacon's own work as a portrait draftsman, including his occasional forays into pastel, may have rendered expensive oil paintings unnecessary; but, as we have seen, he did commission small oil portraits of several of his children from Carter. It is possible that oil paintings were considered an extravagance or—still worse—a vanity. As Marcia Pointon has observed, sitting for a portrait in the period could be

[35] For an outline of the conceptual work done by portraits in the context of the British stately home, see Kate Retford, Gill Perry and Jordan Vibert, 'Introduction: placing faces in the country house', in eds. Gill Perry, et al., *Placing faces: The portrait and the English country house in the long eighteenth century* (Manchester and New York, NY, 2013), pp. 1-36.

[36] For a study of pastels in elite interiors, see Ruth Kenny, ''Apartments that are not too large': pastel portraits and the spaces of femininity in the English country house', in Perry et al., *Placing faces*, pp. 143-160.

[37] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 2, p. 37.

construed as 'overtly narcissistic' and the lengthy sittings might take place in the presence of unwanted company, such was the attraction and sociable nature of painters' studios.[38] Drawing, by comparison, was relatively fleet and, as Russell's career confirms,[39] the artist might travel to his sitters rather than they to him, reducing the risk of exposure to the worldly.

Finally, two works by Bacon that were added to the collection at Newman Street stand out for his adaptation of a pictorial motif with religious connotations. Continuing his experiments in pastel that were likely inspired by Russell's example, in *c*. 1804 Bacon portrayed his wife as an angel (N335; see Fig. 35). Explaining what lay behind the artist's choice of this unusual compositional device, Gertrude Bacon recorded a label in Bacon's hand on the back of the frame:

> Mrs John Bacon, painted by her husband who felt it but a just tribute to what he has ever found her to be, to paint her as an angel. It was painted about the year 1804, but he still thinks the angel's form quite appropriate. He is sorry he cannot paint the mind, or it would be found entirely to correspond. Sidcliff 1832[40]

In addition to confirming his editorial approach to the family's archive of images and documents, Bacon's inscription illuminates the richly sentimental nature of this image, the significance of which was amplified by his like treatment of his eldest child, also named Susannah Sophia, whom he portrayed as an angel at about the same time (N268; see Fig. 23). In that portrait, the child's head is seen in profile to the left, resting on two feathered wings. Executed in pencil and red chalk, this sheet is much closer to Bacon's conventional manner, although the portrait is uncharacteristically large, perhaps in anticipation of framing the drawing for display, as evidenced by acid stains about the edges of the sheet and some minor sun damage. Indeed, given the directions in which they each face, the two portraits might have faced each other on the wall, forming mother-child pendants with which to commemorate the first evidence of the success of the married couple's union. The precise origin of the angel motif in contemporary portraiture is unclear, but a precedent exists in Sir Joshua Reynolds' canvas of Miss Gordon's head from five different angles,

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[38] Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, pp. 41-43.
[39] Williamson, *John Russell*, pp. 12-14, 58, 77.
[40] Gertrude Bacon, 'Prologue', *c*. 1923, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 97.

1786-87.[41] As we shall see, it was a motif to which Bacon would return toward the very end of his life in another, final commemoration of his wife and daughters.

Paddington, London

On leaving Newman Street in 1807, Bacon and his family settled in a property at Paddington in the north-west of London, little more than two miles from Charing Cross. A small village located on the fringes of the city, it is likely that the open spaces and rural hinterland of Paddington appealed to the artist at a time when his family was growing, and between 1807 and 1815 six further children were born to Bacon and his wife.[42] Bacon's will reveals that his house was on Manor Place on the leafy north side of the green, and was part of a leasehold estate he purchased that comprised a number of dwellings. Neither Manor Place nor the house survive, but it could have been one of the large detached building set in grounds east of the manor house seen in a map of 1824.[43] If so, it may have counted among the suburban villas that had traditionally served the elite as a convenient mid-point between city life and rural retirement—sufficiently far to admit of greater privacy, including from unwanted visitors, but close enough to permit regular visits to London, important for those with business interests there.[44] Indeed, by the mid-1820s, 'commuter' transport from Paddington into the city was common,[45] and the proximity of Bacon's new home to Newman Street meant that he could attend the studio without difficulty. In contrast, it was to Paddington that Bacon invited the composer Samuel Wesley (1766-1837) and their mutual friend, the musician Benjamin Jacob (also 'Jacobs'; 1778-

[41] Sir Joshua Reynolds, *A Child's Portrait in Different Views: 'Angel's Heads'*, 1786-87, oil on canvas, 749 x 629 mm, Tate, London, inv. N00182. For her discussion about that painting and other similarly symbolic portraits of children by Reynolds, see Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, pp. 180-182, 184.
[42] Peter Thorold, *The London Rich: The Creation of a Great City from 1666 to the Present* (London, 1999), pp. 200-204, esp. p. 203.
[43] J. Butler Junior, 'Plan of the Parish of PADDINGTON in the County of Middlesex', 1824, http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/crace/p/007zzz000000014u00004000.html, accessed 4 November 2021.
[44] For an attempt at a definition of the contemporary villa, see Dorian Gerhold, 'London's Suburban Villas and Mansions, 1660-1830', *London Journal*, 34:3 (November 2009), pp. 233-235. For a response to Gerhold, arguing for a more complex interaction between the city and the suburban retreat, see Jon Stobart, ''So agreeable and suitable a place': The Character, Use and Provisioning of a Late Eighteenth-Century Suburban Villa', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 39:1 (March 2016), pp. 89-90, 93, 98.
[45] Gerhold, 'London's Suburban Villas', p. 239.

1829) to dinner in December 1808,[46] and where he later took the likeness of the former, suggesting the division of professional and domestic-cum-social activities enacted at the residences at Newman Street and Paddington, respectively.

Bacon's move to Paddington formed part of a broader middle-class movement toward suburban life, itself arguably a product of the evangelical revival's emphasis on privacy, discipline and cleanliness.[47] At Paddington he might enjoy something approximating the idyll promoted in *The Task* (1785) by the poet William Cowper,[48] with whom his father was acquainted.[49] Further, moving in evangelical circles, and with his sister's family, the Thorntons, living at Clapham in South London, Bacon would have been aware of the suburban retreat established there by members of the Clapham Sect. From 1792, prominent upper-middle-class and gentry families, including those of the Revd John Venn (1759-1813), a member of John Newton's Eclectic Society, Henry Thornton, Charles Grant (1746-1823) and William Wilberforce, had gathered at Clapham where they formed a small community of evangelical Christians.[50] Characterised by Robert Fishman as 'the first suburb',[51] Clapham Common was an influential model for Christians seeking to retreat from the polluting influences of crowded urban life, but one which retained an emphasis on engagement with the world, particularly through religiously-inspired political campaigns, most notably against the slave trade.[52] So influential was this example, and so pervasive the emphasis on home as the favoured site of the personal religion favoured by regenerate

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[46] Benjamin Jacob to John Bacon Junior, 12 December 1808, Box 6, Folder 27, MSS 159: Charles Wesley family papers, Pitts Theological Library, Emory University, Atlanta; and Samuel Wesley to Benjamin Jacob, 8 December 1808, in Olleson, *The Letters of Samuel Wesley*, p. 93.

[47] The outward movement toward the suburbs by the middle classes was certainly underway by the 1820s. For the impact of evangelical values, see Richard Rodger, *Housing in urban Britain 1780-1914* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 1995), pp. 3, 38, 40-41; also Dana Arnold, 'Introduction', in ed. Dana Arnold, *The Georgian Villa* (Stroud, 1996), p. x; also Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 359, 361-362, 368-369.

[48] Ibid, pp. 90-91, 158, 162-164.

[49] Three letters from Cowper to Bacon Senior from the years 1783-91 are recorded; see Peter Damian-Grint, 'John Bacon (born 1740–died 1799), English sculptor', Robert McNamee et al., eds., *Electronic Enlightenment Biographical Dictionary*, Vers. 3.0. University of Oxford, 2018, https://doi.org/10.13051/ee:bio/baconjohn0017207, accessed 30 August 2020.

[50] Anne Stott, *Wilberforce: Family and Friends* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 51-53. Jeffares has connected the Bacons' Thornton relations with their more famous namesakes, but this appears doubtful; see Jeffares, 'Thornton', http://www.pastellists.com/Genealogies/Thornton.pdf, accessed 4 September 2020.

[51] Cited by Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p. 38.

[52] For his discussion about the origins and development of Clapham Common as an evangelical suburban retreat, see Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York, NY, 1987), pp. 51-62.

Christians,[53] and of masculine identity in particular,[54] that Bacon's move to Paddington should be seen in this context.

Although it remained largely rural well into the nineteenth century,[55] given its proximity to London Paddington was inevitably caught in the city's spread westwards. The construction of the Paddington branch of the Grand Junction Canal, which opened 1801, and related commercial developments, meant that the Green was separated from Tyburnia, a fashionable district developing to the south-east of the parish, bordering Hyde Park. By 1811 the population of the parish had grown to 4,609, many of whom lived in insanitary conditions in shacks built on small tenements.[56] Rapidly encroaching development and undesirable demographic change evidently impinged on the seclusion that the family had sought at Paddington, probably contributing to their decision to leave in 1818.

Sidmouth, Devon

From London, Bacon moved his family to Sidmouth, a town on the southern coast of Devon in England's South West. Although small, Sidmouth enjoyed the amenities that linked fashionable seaside resorts of this kind to the cultivated modes of living found in larger urban centres, and to which the family would have been accustomed.[57] Both Emanuel Baruh Lousada (1783-1854), scion of a Jewish merchant family with interests in the West Indies, who had acquired land in Sidmouth in 1793,[58] and Peter Burrell, first baron Gwydyr (1754-1820), with his 'discovery' of the place in 1806, helped to establish it as a

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[53] Tosh, *A Man's Place*, pp. 38-39.
[54] Bailey, 'A Very Sensible Man', p. 271.
[55] A map from 1836 reveals mostly open country to the north and north-west of the village; see George Gutch, *Plan of the Parish of Paddington in the County of Middlesex*, 1836, Crace Collection of Maps of London, British Library, http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/crace/p/007zzz000000014u00007000.html, accessed 28 December 2021.
[56] T. F. T. Baker, Diane K. Bolton and Patricia E. C. Croot, 'Paddington: Introduction', in ed. C. R. Elrington, *A History of the County of Middlesex*, vol. 9, Hampstead, Paddington (London, 1989), pp. 173-174, British History Online, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol9/pp173-174, accessed 5 August 2020. For census returns and additional details from Bacon's time in the parish, see William Robins, *Paddington: Past & Present* (London, 1853), pp. vii, 192-193.
[57] Peter Borsay, 'Health and leisure resorts 1700-1840', in ed. Peter Clark, *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, vol. 2, 1540-1840 (Cambridge, 2000), p. 786.
[58] For Lousada and the family's links to the West Indies, see 'Emanuel Lousada', Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery, University College London, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/12241, accessed 10 December 2021.

resort frequented by the gentry and nobility.[59] Coinciding with Bacon's arrival in 1818, Elizabeth Cecil, dowager marchioness of Exeter (1757-1837), could be found holidaying at the evocatively-named Spring Gardens.[60] The death of the Duke of Kent at Woolbrooke Cottage two years later does not appear to have dented the town's reputation and in 1831 Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna of Russia (née Princess Charlotte of Württemberg; 1807-73), sister-in-law of Nicholas I of Russia, revived royal patronage when she spent two months convalescing there, albeit somewhat reluctantly.[61] More modest figures were likewise drawn to the town, and it was to Sidmouth that the family of the young writer Elizabeth Moulton Barrett (later Barrett-Browning; 1806-61) retreated in 1832-35 amid financial embarrassment.[62] Some elite figures, such as Gwydyr and Thomas Stapleton, second baron le Despencer (1766-1831), bought or constructed fashionable 'marine cottages' in which they might holiday. Others, such as Bacon's acquaintances Sir John Kennaway, Bt. (1758-1836) (N27; Fig. 56) and Major-General Baynes, appear to have been permanent residents who, with their 'seats of domestic happiness and dignified retirement',[63] likely compensated for the morally dubious company brought to the town by fashion alone.

Among the first accounts to promote the town was *Devonshire. The beauties of Sidmouth displayed* (1810) by the Revd Edmund Butcher (1757-1822), himself a resident, which included short descriptions of notable houses, including Bacon's future home, 'the secluded and truly romantic' Sidcliff (also 'Sid-cliff' and 'Sidcliffe'), which was duly noted in successive guide books.[64] Butcher's guide was published at Sidmouth by John Wallis (fl.

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[59] Julia Creeke, *Life and Times in Sidmouth: A Guide to the Blue* Plaques (Sidmouth, 2012), p. 15. Also Julia Creeke, *Sidmouth's Long Print. "A Picture in Time" From the Regency to the early years of Victoria's Reign* (Sidmouth, 2013), pp. 11-13, 28. For a history of the phenomenon of the resort town in the South West, including Sidmouth, see John F. Travis, *The Rise of the Devon Seaside Resorts 1750-1900* (Exeter, 1993), chapters 3 and 5.

[60] John Marsh, *The Sidmouth Guide: or, An Accurate Description of the situation, picturesque beauties, salubrious climate, & c. of that much-admired watering place, and the circumajacent* [*sic*] *country within fifteen miles* (Sidmouth, 1818), p. 29.

[61] Marina Soroka and Charles A. Ruud, *Becoming a Romanov: Grand Duchess Elena of Russia and her World (1807–1873)* (Farnham, 2015), pp. 101-105. Bacon's untraced group portrait of the grand duchess and several of her daughters (N358) was recorded in his will; see Bacon, Last will and testament.

[62] Marjorie Stone, 'Browning [née Moulton Barrett], Elizabeth Barrett (1806–1861), poet and writer', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 4 October 2008, https://www-oxforddnb-com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-3711, accessed 1 September 2020.

[63] Marsh, *The Sidmouth Guide*, p. 7.

[64] Edmund Butcher, *Devonshire. The beauties of Sidmouth displayed; Being a Descriptive Sketch of its situation, salubrity, and picturesque scenery. Also an account of the environs, within fifteen miles round* (Sidmouth, 1810), p. 64. See also Marsh, *The Sidmouth Guide*, pp. 27-28; and Theodore H. Mogridge, *A descriptive sketch of Sidmouth* (Sidmouth, 1836), p. 54.

1783-1814), a London bookseller who had established his evolving library-cum-subscription rooms in the town in 1803,[65] and who was also responsible for the so-called 'Long Print' first published in 1815—a panorama of the town as seen from the shore, that, like Butcher's text, was also available from prominent retailers in London.[66] The 'Long Print' was dedicated to Lousada, recognising his contribution to the development of the town and highlighting the local importance of this prominent family, into which Bacon's elder son would marry in 1834.[67] Guidebooks promoted the healthy climate and the beneficial effects of sea-bathing, although the medical benefit of the latter was somewhat in question, and water cures were satirized by Jane Austen (1775-1817) in her fragments of a novel now known as *Sanditon*, set in a nascent coastal resort, and written in the last year of her life.[68] But in light of the weak constitutions of several of his children, and a history of seaside cures in the family, access to seawater, fresh air and country walks doubtless appealed to the artist and his wife.[69]

Through such promotional material, with which Bacon may have been familiar, Wallis and others enhanced Sidmouth's reputation and capitalised on the combination of wealthy residents and the growing number of well-heeled seasonal visitors seeking out picturesque landscapes and the striking local geology—evidence of both features in Bacon's own landscape studies from the period.[70] Guidebooks pointed to a range of inns and houses of worship, talented physicians and two suites of assembly rooms where cards and dancing were among the attractions for the *beau monde*.[71] A theatre prospered from

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[65] Creek, *Life and Times in Sidmouth*, pp. 6-7; also Creek, *Sidmouth's Long Print*, p. 9

[66] The print was after a design by Hubert Cornish (*c*. 1770-1832) and was available from Rudolf Ackermann's Repository of the Arts on The Strand, whose address appears in the plate. For an impression, see King George III Topographical Collection, British Library, Shelfmark K Top, Vol 11, 93-b-1 to 93-b-3.

[67] For a transcription of the dedication, see Creek, *Sidmouth's Long Print*, pp. 16-17.

[68] For a history of medical sea-bathing and Austen's treatment of this in her work, see Jane Darcy, 'Jane Austen's *Sanditon*, Doctors, and the Rise of Seabathing', *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-Line*, 38:2 (Spring 2018), unpaginated, http://ezphost.dur.ac.uk/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/docview/2309515762?accountid=14533, accessed 30 August 2020.

[69] All but one of Bacon's daughters died young, perhaps of tuberculosis; see Gertrude Bacon, 'In Explanation', November 1927, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 102. When ill in 1783, Bacon's stepmother spent time at Ramsgate, a seaside resort in Kent; see the Revd John Newton to Martha Bacon, 15 July 1783; and the Revd John Newton to John Bacon Senior, 12 August 1783, Osborn Shelves c274, Yale University.

[70] A number of surviving sketchbooks feature Bacon's drawings and watercolours of local geographical features, notably Sidmouth's Chit Rock, a stack destroyed in the devastating storm of 1824; private collection.

[71] See Butcher, *Devonshire*, pp. 32-54; and Marsh, *The Sidmouth Guide*, pp. 11-25.

1814.[72] These latter amusements were off limits for regenerate Christians and, together with the advertised benefits of the climate and bathing, such worldly diversions highlight a tension between fashionable holiday-makers and others who, like Bacon, sought refuge from the polluting influences of society. Indeed, writing in 1818, one author sought to assure his readers that the 'votaries of intemperance', whose 'ill choice of life and society' required such remedies, were only a fraction of those attending such resorts.[73]

Given this, Sidmouth might appear an unlikely destination for an evangelical family in retreat from worldly distractions. However, their choice of a small, relatively isolated town locates Bacon and his family within contemporary discourse about the best way and situation in which to lead a sound religious life. Identified as a particularly Georgian model of masculine sensibility,[74] the pursuit of an idealised domesticity in a rural setting was part of the evangelical framework promoted by Cowper, whose influence on the imaginative lives of regenerate Christians of Bacon's generation has been noted by Davidoff and Hall.[75] This model was commensurate with both the political dimension of the evangelical faith, particularly the preservation of older models of rural patriarchy, as well as the imperative to avoid the worldly temptations of the city while communing with evidence of God's creation.[76] Likewise, Sidmouth provided for the family's spiritual needs, if imperfectly. While Sidcliff stood within the neighbouring parish of Salcombe Regis, a large hill separated it from the church there. Perhaps as a result, Bacon attended the Sidmouth church, St Giles with St Nicholas, for the 'beautiful scriptural services of the [Anglican] church'. However, despairing at the preaching of the incumbent, in whose family the role had been a sinecure for three generations,[77] and whose likeness does not appear among Bacon's portraits, the artist attended evening services in the nearby dissenting chapel. There he was able to 'hear preaching in harmony with these prayers, which I am sorry to say I can't always hear in the church itself—on the contrary, I am frequently doomed to listen, whilst the pulpit and the desk are wrangling with each other.'[78]

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[72] Rising Bray, *I Give You Sidmouth* (Sidmouth, 1939), p. 52.
[73] Marsh, *The Sidmouth Guide*, pp. 5-6.
[74] Bailey, 'A Very Sensible Man', p. 291.
[75] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 157, 162-164.
[76] Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp. 127-129.
[77] The Jenkins family appear to have exercised the right of advowson following their acquisition of the manor in 1787, with members of the family occupying the cure through until 1856; see Brian Golding, *Sidmouth Parish Church: The Medieval Church, 1433-1860* (Sidmouth, 2014), unpaginated.
[78] 'Wesleyan Missionary Association', *Western Times*, 25 April 1846, p. 6.

Bacon minimised his family's exposure to the worst excesses of fashionable life in Sidmouth through the choice of a home at some distance from the temporary lodgings and terrace houses gathered about the centre of town. The latter were associated with the development of such resorts and Peter Borsay has linked such architecture to the highly regimented sociability of fashionable Georgian watering places.[79] In contrast, and only fifteen minutes' walk from the town itself, Sidcliff was a large property comprised of sixteen acres (6.47 hectares), including six acres of 'pleasure ground' and orchard set about the residence. A further ten acres of meadow was located across the River Sid and reached by an 'ornamental bridge' with '[t]he whole forming a highly beautiful and picturesque property, calculated for a family residence of respectability'.[80] The enduring significance of this is evident in advertisements dating to Bacon's sale of the house in 1836.[81] An undated lithograph published at Sidmouth, apparently the work of Bacon's son-in-law Edward Vivian (1808-93), captures the dramatic effect of the house on steeply rising ground, framed by mature trees in a view from the meadow across the rustic bridge (Fig. 57).[82] Likewise, an 1834 drawing of the house from another angle by Bacon's friend, Stephen Rigaud, shows the house amidst the shrubberies for which the property was well known (Fig. 58).[83] These and other images of Sidcliff from Bacon's time reveal a 'cottage' of generous proportions and irregular plan, incorporating Gothic arches, a quaintly thatched roof and extensive trellising that embedded the house within the landscape through walls of seasonal foliage.

Significantly, these were the defining features of a cottage, as opposed to a mere 'house', as revealed in Austen's barbed description of Barton cottage in *Sense and Sensibility* (1811): 'As a house, Barton cottage, though small, was comfortable and compact; but as a cottage it was defective, for the building was regular, the roof tiled, the window shutters were not painted green, nor were the walls covered with honeysuckles.'[84] Specifically, this combination of motifs, and the allusions to vernacular architecture in particular, mark Sidcliff as a *cottage ornée*, a style of building fashionable in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As Nicole Reynolds has observed, during the last decades of the eighteenth century the labourer's cottage grew in appeal through its

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[79] Although Borsay indicates that seaside resorts may have offered a more relaxed environment; see Borsay, 'Health and leisure resorts', pp. 788, 793.
[80] 'Public Sales', *The Standard*, 17 May 1836, p. 1.
[81] 'SIDCLIFF', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 3 September 1836, p. 1.
[82] E.V. Esq.^{r} [attributed here to Edward Vivian], *SIDCLIFF COTTAGE SIDMOUTH.* | *J. Bacon Esq.^{r}*, *c.* 1832, lithograph, 240 x 340 mm, British Museum, London, inv. 1955,0425.43.
[83] Stephen Rigaud, 'Sidcliff near Sidmouth Augst. 1st. 1834', 1834, pencil, 159 x 236 mm, South West Heritage Trust, Exeter, inv. P&D44594.
[84] Cited in Philippa Tristram, 'Jane Austen's Aversion to Villas', in Arnold, *The Georgian Villa*, p. 29.

recently formulated 'value both as aesthetic object and as talismanic embodiment of rural virtues', linking vernacular architecture to national identity, moral probity and domestic felicity.[85] The style was popular among the Sidmouth elite including Lord Gwydyr, who transformed his house, Old Hayes, with a thatched roof, and Lord le Despencer whose property, Knowle Cottage, similarly thatched, was of such magnitude that 'cottage' was deemed disingenuous even at the time.[86]

As with many pattern-book designs for *cottages ornées* aimed at the middle and upper classes, in which a rustic shell concealed material comforts unavailable to the labouring poor,[87] Sidcliff's picturesque simplicity was deceiving: 'the house, though possessing the exterior of a cottage, has a very large and handsome drawing and dining rooms, with an amplitude of convenient apartments and offices'.[88] The shift in scale and emphasis between Newman Street and Sidmouth is striking. At approximately thirteen metres long and six metres wide, the dining room at Sidcliff was larger than the entire ground floor of the residence at Newman Street, revealing the extent to which domestic life had supplanted the pre-eminence afforded the studio spaces at their former home.[89] In addition to a generously proportioned dining room, the house featured a breakfast room and a conservatory where Bacon conducted family prayers, morning and evening.[90] The library presumably accommodated Bacon's substantial collection of books and folios of prints and drawings, to which we find references in his last will and testament, and of which evidence is found in the 1865 auction catalogue.[91] There were five main bedrooms for members of the family and a further four for servants who, in 1832, included two maids, a cook and a manservant, all of whom probably lived in.[92] A coach house and stables

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[85] Nicole Reynolds, 'Cottage Industry: The Ladies of Llangollen and the Symbolic Capital of the "Cottage Ornée"', *The Eighteenth Century*, 51:1/2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 214-216. For a general survey of the phenomenon, see Sutherland Lyall, *Dream Cottages: From Cottage Ornée to Stockbroker Tudor* (Clerkenwell, 1988), chapter 3, esp. pp. 73-79.

[86] For scepticism at the use of the term, see Butcher, *Devonshire*, pp. 57-59. Knowle Cottage was reputed to contain forty rooms; see Lindsay Boynton, 'The Marine Villa', in Arnold, *The Georgian Villa*, p. 129.

[87] Reynolds, 'Cottage Industry', p. 216.

[88] Marsh, *The Sidmouth Guide*, pp. 27-28.

[89] The details of the house are taken from a notice advertising the property; see 'SIDCLIFF', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 3 September 1836, p. 1.

[90] For the family's twice-daily prayers in the conservatory, perhaps only in summer, see 'Devon Assizes', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 18 August 1827, p. 2.

[91] John Bacon Junior, Last will and testament. For the auction, see Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, *Catalogue of the Valuable Illustrated Works*, 1865.

[92] Details taken from Augusta Maria Bacon, 'My Journal', January 1832, cited in Gertrude Bacon, 'Epilogue', pp. 114-115.

were located in the grounds. In an advertisement at the time that he sold the property, Bacon was reputed to have spent £10,000 on the property during his time at Sidcliff.[93]

The family returned to Sidcliff after an interlude of two-and-a-half years spent at Bromley in Kent in 1820-23, where Susannah Sophia's parents, and perhaps members of the Thornton family, appear to have also lived. Following this, it was at Sidcliff that the last of Bacon's children, Augusta Maria, was born in 1824, fully nine years after her closest sibling and when the artist and his wife were aged forty-seven and forty-two, respectively. Bacon appears to have been a warm and indulgent father whose interest and evident pride in his children registers in his drawings. And while those drawings and the social aspects of their home life will be discussed in the next chapter, it is worth noting that his portrait of his elder son in Highland dress likely dates from the family's time at Sidmouth.[94] As with the portraits of his wife and eldest child as angels, discussed earlier, this was one of only a small number of Bacon's own drawings that are known to have been framed for display, a privilege that may have reflected the boy's status as his father's heir. Even more unusually, the reference to the sitter's costume suggests that he was depicted full-length. With no known links to Scotland, the choice of costume may reflect the widespread enthusiasm promoted by the novels of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), lavishly realised during the 1822 visit to Edinburgh by George IV (1762-1830), in which the author played a leading role. A curiosity though it may have been, John's Scottish-themed portrait was one of several of the artist's children that adorned their homes. As noted in Chapter Two, Bacon appears to have commissioned a group of small oil portraits from an artist known only as Carter, for whom both his sons and his daughters Christiana and Augusta Maria sat, probably before the Revd Thomas departed for India in March 1831. A portrait believed to be of Christiana, apparently unsigned but showing a strong resemblance to the work of Noel Norton Carter (1789-1847), depicts the young woman seated on a rustic bench against a landscape backdrop, evocative of the rustic charms of Sidcliff.[95]

Significant additions to the family's collection at Sidmouth were the three 'ancestral' portraits attributed to Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723) and Sir Peter Lely that

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[93] The figure appeared in an advertisement placed in a London newspaper, but did not feature in advertisements placed locally; the same London advertisement indicated that the desired price was approximately £5,000; see 'Public Sales', *Standard*, 17 May 1836, p. 1.
[94] John Bacon Junior, Last will and testament.
[95] For Carter, see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 2, p. 5. For two examples of his work, see Noel Norton Carter, 1799-1847, https://artuk.org/discover/artists/carter-noel-norton-17991847, accessed 29 December 2021. Bacon's choice of the artist may be wondered at; but Carter's middle name, 'Norton', perhaps indicates a familial link to Bacon's brother-in-law, Edward Norton Thornton.

Bacon was given in *c*. 1827 by Sir John Slade (1762-1859), then owner of Maunsel House. While Bacon was visiting the house in the company of some of his family, Sir John apparently remarked on the likeness between several of the company and the figures depicted, namely Dr Thomas Bacon (d. 1722) and two of his sisters, Elizabeth (b. 1659) and Mary (dates unknown), prompting him to gift these portraits of non-kin to his visitors. The details of the encounter were recorded in a letter from the parish priest to the Revd John Bacon during the latter's efforts in the late 1830s to discern the truth of his family's claim to be descended from the Bacon family that had owned Maunsel House in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[96] The energy that was expended on this matter by Bacon, his eldest son, his nephew Edward Thornton Junior and, earlier still, his half-brother Charles, speaks to the importance the men attached to establishing a genteel ancestry.[97] And even though the genealogical link appears to have remained unconfirmed, in the absence of an ancestral pile and the broad acres to go with it, the three portraits were a welcome endorsement, adding a veneer of legitimacy to the family's claim and, it seems likely, a certain cachet to the interiors of the family's homes.

The accumulation of ancestors notwithstanding, by the time the Bacons left Sidcliff for Exeter in 1836, the family was much reduced, with only the two youngest daughters remaining at home with their parents. The deaths of two daughters, Susannah Sophia and Harriet in 1834 and 1835, respectively, may have cast a pall over life in Sidmouth. Both women were interred at the Church of St Mary and St Peter, Salcombe Regis. But as the study of Bacon's associational life in Chapter Five will suggest, this was likely to have been only one of several reasons for their departure.[98]

Mount Radford, Exeter

In 1837 the family settled into a substantial late-Georgian villa on a large corner plot in the recently-developed suburb of Mount Radford, Exeter. The tithe map of 1840 for

[96] The details of the visit are recounted in a letter: Revd T. J. Toogood to the Revd John Bacon, 6 November 1839, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', pp. 24-25.
[97] For the joint efforts of the Revd John and his cousin Edward Thornton Junior, working together with Bacon and other elderly relations during the late 1830s, see John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', pp. 17-57. For Charles' earlier interest in the family's claim, see John Bacon Junior to the Revd John Bacon, 17 October 1839, in ibid, p. 19. For Charles' request that the 'family arms'—presumably those of the Bacons of Maunsel House—feature on his tombstone, see Will of Charles Bacon, Clerk of His Majesty's Works of Marylebone, Middlesex, 18 June 1818, TNA, PROB 11/1605/277.
[98] Gertrude Bacon supposed that the 'emptying of the nest' may have been a cause for the family's departure from Sidmouth; see Gertrude Bacon, 'Prologue', p. 97.

the parish of St Leonard's, in which Mount Radford is located, reveals that the footprint of Bacon's home was significantly larger than most of the other houses in the street and included a garden, likewise larger than most, featuring several outbuildings.[99] The tithe apportionment of 1839 reveals that Bacon possessed six additional properties in Mount Radford, including two that were let to one Dr Elliott, presumably the same Exeter surgeon who features among his sitters (N74; Fig. 59).[100] The language used to advertise another property for sale in the suburb in 1837—'singularly desirable to a retiring gentleman or a MOST DELIGHTFUL RUS IN URBE'—suggests the attractions of Mt Radford, particularly for a family accustomed to the privacy of a large garden.[101]

If there is little else to be said of the house at Mt Radford, it is worth nothing that, while there, Bacon created two significant additions to the array of family portraits that ornamented the family's homes: the pendant portraits of his wife and himself, dated August and June 1839, respectively. The latter work shows the artist bust-length, *en face*, soberly attired in a dark blue, high-collared jacket, prominently adorned with gilt or brass buttons, and a high-collared white shirt gathered at the throat with a dark cravat tied in a bow (N339; see Fig. 37). Together with his grey hair and prominent whiskers, Bacon is a picture of Victorian respectability.

Bacon's portrait of Susannah Sophia (N340; see Fig. 36) is likewise bust-length, but shows her in three-quarter profile, her gaze directed to her proper right where, as convention dictates, the portrait of her husband would have been located.[102] Unlike her husband, Susannah Sophia's hair is yet dark and is worn beneath a gauzy bonnet fastened at the chin with a ribbon. A lace *fichu* is worn about her shoulders and fastened in place at her décolletage by a small jewel featuring blue gemstones. Prominently situated in the lower register of the composition, her right hand is shown toying with a gold chain from which is suspended a depiction of a single blue eye set in an oval gold mount. I suggest that

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[99] The property is now 1 St Leonard's Road. For the 1840 tithe map of the parish of St Leonard's by George W. Cumming, see Exeter, St Leonard Tithe Map, 1840, Devon Heritage Centre, DEX/4/a/TM/Exeter(St Leonard).

[100] For the details of the tithe apportionment of 1839, including Bacon's seven properties in Mount Radford, see Tithe Maps and Apportionments, Exeter, St Leonard, South West Heritage Trust, https://www.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/tithe-map/exeter-st-leonard/, accessed 4 November 2021.

[101] 'CITY OF EXETER', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 17 June 1837, p. 1.

[102] For pendant portraits in the period, and their representation of normative gender roles, see Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, chapter 1. For the left-right (dexter-sinister) conventions of male-female pendant portraits, see Guy Tal, 'Switching Place: Salvator Rosa's Pendants of "A Witch and a soldier", and the Principle of Dextrality', *Notes in the History of Art*, 30:2 (Winter 2011), pp. 20-25.

this records what was likely a portrait of Bacon's own right eye. The depicted jewel was perhaps given by the artist to his wife early in their relationship and in keeping with a fashion which reached its height around the turn of the century after first coming to prominence in the mid-1780s.[103] In her study of the genre, in which she argues that it did not grow out of older iconographic traditions, Hanneke Grootenboer has argued that the eye miniature is not solely a representation of the beloved's eye or even a synecdoche for the unrepresented body as a whole. Rather, she posits such miniatures as representations of the sitter's gaze, entangling both viewer and the represented eye in a 'network of gazing games'.[104] But when describing the jewel, probably in the mid-1920s, Gertrude Bacon inferred a religious meaning, describing it as "the Allseeing [*sic*] Eye".[105] Her religious interpretation reveals that the short-lived fashion for eye miniatures, and the secular, intimate meanings of such jewels, were unknown to her and, presumably, others in the family on whom her research relied.

As revealing as Gertrude's confusion is, the gaze that confronts the viewer is an arresting feature of this portrait, suggestive of its significance to both the artist and his sitter. In contrast to Susannah Sophia's modestly averted gaze, cast toward her husband, Bacon's single, clear blue eye rests squarely against the picture plane, assuming a proprietorial or perhaps monitory function. The appearance of this motif means that the artist's 'presence' in the picture is not limited to the traces of his hand or the manifestation of his style. Rather it is marked through the possessive, perhaps even defensive gaze of the man who was simultaneously artist and object, now staring back at us as we look on from the same privileged location that he once enjoyed. These are the 'gazing games' described by Grootenboer, locking the artist-sitter in a state of perpetual vigilance in the face of unwelcome attention from the same worldly threats that he had sought to shelter his wife and children from in life.

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[103] Hanneke Grootenboer, *Treasuring the Gaze: intimate vision in late eighteenth-century eye miniatures* (Chicago, IL and London, 2012), pp. 46-47. Also Lloyd, 'Intimate Viewing', p. 17.
[104] Grootenboer, *Treasuring the Gaze*, pp. 38, 62-70, 74-75, 80-81.
[105] Gertrude Bacon, 'Prologue', pp. 97, 101.

The final years: Winchester and Bath

In 1850 Bacon sold his property at Mount Radford.[106] Of his subsequent homes at Taplow in Buckinghamshire, Winchester and Bath, little can be said. The first of these, a house known as The Elms, may have been leased for a period after leaving Exeter. The family was resident there at the time of the national census of 30 March 1851, which records that Bacon, 'a retired sculptor', was living with his wife, their unmarried daughter Elizabeth and three female servants.[107] By that time, Bacon could travel from Taplow via the Great Western Railway to Swindon, near the Revd John Bacon's home at Lambourn Woodlands in Berkshire, as well as to London, where it is tempting to speculate that he may have visited the Great Exhibition of 1851, which members of the family are known to have attended.[108] By 1852 the household was resident at Chernocke Place in Winchester, a terrace only a short walk from the cathedral and directly opposite the church of St Thomas on Southgate Street. Bacon appears to have attended the latter, as suggested by his portraits of two of the clergy of that church, the Revd John Miller (1818-96), 1852 (N107), and the Revd George James Cubitt (*c*. 1803-55), 1852 (N106). From *c*. 1855 Bacon, now widowed, was resident at Bath, near his son the Revd Thomas' parish at Kingsworthy, occupying a substantial detached home on Bathwick Hill, where he lived with his unmarried daughter, Elizabeth, until his death.

It was at Winchester that Bacon's wife, Susannah Sophia died in June 1853. Her remains were interred in the public cemetery in that city and, in October the following year, Bacon erected over her tomb a large monument in Caen stone that he had carved himself (Fig. 60).[109] Now much weathered, a notable feature of the monument is the group of seven 'Cherubs' with which it is ornamented. Writing to his half-brother, the Revd Samuel Bacon in New Brunswick while the work was in progress, Bacon explained that these figures alluded to 'the seven happy spirits of her [Susannah Sophia's] 7 daughters

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[106] In an unpublished account of the life of Bacon, Ann Saunders (as Ann Cox-Johnson was later known) speculated that the Mount Radford property was sold because of the financial losses incurred by Wathen's fraud, resulting in the family taking lodgings at Worthing, Sussex. While the author Peter Cunningham had encountered Bacon at Worthing in 1844, this was before the fraud was discovered in 1848. See Saunders, typescript life of John Bacon Junior, pp. 42-43; and Peter Cunningham, 'New Material for the Life of John Bacon, R.A.', *Builder*, 7 March 1863, pp. 167-168.

[107] For details from the Bacons' 1851 census return, see Marc Whitaker, 'John Bacon Jr Esq FSA (1777 - 1859)', https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Bacon-2299, accessed 26 August 2020.

[108] John Cattell and Keith Falconer, *Swindon: The Legacy of a Railway Town* (London, 1995), esp. chapter 3. For members of the family at the Great Exhibition of 1851, see Gertrude Bacon, *The Record of an Aeronaut: Being the Life of John M. Bacon* (London, 1907), p. 27.

[109] 'The Cemetery', *Southampton Herald*, 28 October 1854, p. 7.

who departed this life before her.'[110] Although not portraits *per se*, these figures hark back to Bacon's earlier depictions of both his wife and eldest daughter in the guise of angels from *c*. 1804 (see Figs. 35 and 23). The artist's choice of motif appears to draw a link with that highly sentimental facet of his early portrait practice, here translated into a very public expression of faith in his daughters'—and, by extension, his wife's— salvation, as his letter suggests.

A similarly late example of Bacon's work as a sculptor is the reredos that he carved for the newly constructed church of St Mary at Lambourn Woodlands, Berkshire (Fig. 61), of which the Revd John was the incumbent. Designed by Pugin's collaborator, Thomas Talbot Bury (1809-77), this Gothic Revival structure was completed in October 1852, although Bacon's reredos is believed to be later.[111] As with his wife's tomb, Bacon found inspiration in an earlier work, in this case one by his father, Bacon Senior, showing a female supplicant touching the hem of Christ's robe, as recounted in the biblical story of the woman 'with an issue of blood' (Matthew 9:20-25).[112] Gertrude Bacon recalled her grandmother, Mary Baruh Bacon (née Lousada; 1811-1913), explaining 'how her own arm, for weary hours, served him [Bacon] as the model for the outstretched hand of the woman stooping at the Saviour's feet who "touched the hem of his garment"'.[113] Bacon's choice of Mary as his model appears pointed. As a Jewish convert to Christianity, his daughter-in-law's 'presence' within the panel speaks to the artist's history of support for evangelising among the Jews, and asserts the life-giving power of Christ that she had embraced. It is a bold statement of faith reinforced by an illuminated text painted on carved scrolls located either side of the central panel, evoking the fundamental tenet of evangelical belief—salvation through Christ's atonement:

> By thy precious Death and Burial
>
> By thy glorious Resu[rrectio]n and Ascension
>
> GOOD LORD DELIVER US

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[110] John Bacon Junior to the Revd Samuel Bacon, 8 January 1854, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', pp. 117-118.

[111] For St Mary's Woodlands, including a description of the reredos and a memorial window to Bacon and his wife, presumably raised by the Revd John Bacon, see Geoff Brandwood, 'St. Mary's Church, Woodlands, Berkshire', *The Churches Conservation Trust*, 4:10 (February 1995), pp. 1-3, https://www.visitchurches.org.uk/visit/church-listing/st-mary-lambourn-woodlands.html, accessed 26 August 2020.

[112] For Bacon Senior's original design, see Clifford, 'John Bacon and the Manufacturers', pp. 300, 303, fig. 46.

[113] For Mary Bacon as the artist's model, see Gertrude Bacon, 'Epilogue', pp. 118-119.

By thine Agony and bloody Sweat

By thy Cross and Passion

GOOD LORD DELIVER US[114]

Conclusion

This chapter has surveyed Bacon's homes as evidence of the domestic and spiritual priorities that governed the artist's decisions at different points in his life. It seems clear that the ideals of Bacon's evangelical faith were difficult to realise amid the bustle of urban London and at close quarters to the clients and workmen who frequented the property at Newman Street. Despite the short but remarkable lineage to which that home was testimony, and that Chamberlin's portrait of Bacon Senior advertised within, the residence was incompatible with Bacon's aspirations for his family, resulting in the move to Paddington Green in 1807. There the distinction between home and work was more clearly delineated. But while his family enjoyed the relative seclusion of the suburban hinterland, emulating the model of their fellow evangelicals at Clapham Common, it is clear that their home was a site of sociability that turned on the artist's voluntary associations, both formal and informal, as the dinner held for Jacob and Wesley in 1808 reveals. That seclusion was sought again at Sidmouth just a decade later suggests not only alarm at the impact of rapid growth in and around Paddington, but perhaps also Bacon's determination to cast off many of the remaining burdens of his profession and pursue a life dedicated to his family and his faith. Certainly, the move to Exeter in 1836-37 brought Bacon closer to the centre of his associational activities, in which he continued to be a potent force locally. Subsequent moves to Winchester and Bath appear connected to the artist's gradual withdrawal from his voluntary work, as well as changes in family circumstances.

In addition to charting the artist's movements and the locations and types of dwellings that he and his family occupied, I have sought to cast light on the contents of their homes. As wills and other documents have revealed, these were repositories for an ever-growing array of pictures, of which portraits were particularly significant as vehicles for memory and family identity. A number of likenesses formed a permanent backdrop to

[114] The text is from the Litany and Suffrages found in the *King's Primer* (1545). The last section, 'by the coming of the Holy Ghost', is missing from the text; see, for instance, William Keatinge Clay, ed., *Private Prayers: put forth by authority during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The Primer of 1559. The Orarium of 1560. The Preces privatæ of 1564. The book of Christian prayers of 1578. With an appendix containing the Litany of 1544* (Cambridge, 1851), pp. 51-53, 549.

the changing settings of their family life, particularly Chamberlin's portrait of Bacon Senior, but also Russell's pastels of Bacon, his wife and other members of the family and their circle. A number of these works attest to the family's social elevation, turning on the professional success of both Bacon and his father. But taken as a group, there is also a clear sense of the way in which these records of family and friendship spoke to the shared spiritual convictions of those depicted. In this way, portraits might bridge the divide between the private world of faith and the public discourse surrounding social and moral reform, as Bacon's choice of sitters suggest. Similarly, the two late sculptural projects considered here speak to the ways in which the domestic might become public, as the artist's intimate relationships were translated into tangible expressions of the same faith that underpinned his associational activities, the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Four

The Family Circle

In the memoir of his sister Ann that he wrote in 1813, Bacon quoted a passage from her diary in which she recalled spiritual conversation that she had enjoyed during a visit to an uncle and aunt in rural Worcestershire, remarking on 'the blessedness which is to be enjoyed in the "communion of the saints."' Anxious that his reader should not mistake Ann's meaning, Bacon glossed that she 'did not apply the title *saint* either to her uncle, her aunt, or herself.'[1] Two decades later, however, the artist showed few such scruples when the term featured in another of the spiritual biographies that he authored. In the memoir of his daughter Harriet written in 1835, he quoted without demure a letter that his daughter had written to a friend in November 1830. In this, Harriet remarked that being '"[s]ituated in a family generally denominated '*the Saints*', I was branded, if I may so speak, with that epithet long before I thought seriously on the subject; and I am now only desirous to deserve the name given to the family, and to prove myself *indeed* a member of it … ."'[2] Harriet's letter reveals how the term was then applied to the Bacon family, defining their public reputation, and establishing a standard of spiritual rectitude that at least some of its members felt impelled to achieve.

A remark in the diary of the Revd John Rashdall (1809-69) (see Fig. 88) sheds light on the shift that occurred between these two documents, written seventeen years apart. On first meeting Bacon in December 1835, the Exeter cleric noted that that the artist was 'a Sidmouth saint'.[3] This appears to confirm that the epithet was common currency, at least in

[1] Bacon, *Memoir of Miss Ann Bacon*, pp. 35-37.
[2] Emphasis in the original; Bacon's ellipsis. Bacon, *Memoir of Mrs. Edward Vivian*, p. 41.
[3] Entry for 23 December 1835, Typed transcript of parts of a diary kept by the Rev. John Rashdall (b. 1809, d. 1869), 1958, Devon Heritage Centre, Exeter, 444Z/Z/1-5.

certain circles, and perhaps even shorthand for evangelicals in general.[4] Even so, and particularly in light of his earlier reservations, there is some suggestion of hubris in Bacon's inclusion of the term in his memoir of Harriet, even if in quotation. Indeed, it recalls his earlier prayer, found in his spiritual diary, that he and his family should 'be very eminent and distinguished – that is for genuine piety.'[5] Assuming that Rashdall's remark was not ironic, and given that the epithet does not appear to have been applied to Bacon alone, but rather to his entire family, the whole household must have been expected to evince exemplary piety. Bacon's accounts of the deaths of his daughters Emma and Harriet broadcast their example to sympathetic family and friends in the first instance, and, ultimately, to perfect strangers. Their forbearance in the face of such suffering was evidence of the Bacons' trust in the will of God, for in this they emulated Christ's resignation to his fate in the Garden of Gethsemane, the example of sacrifice and forbearance promoted by the influential theologian the Revd William Paley (1743-1805), an author with whom members of the family were familiar.[6]

The godly family that Bacon sought to fashion was, however, only part of the larger kinship network within which the artist was enmeshed. It was a diverse group that begins with Bacon Senior, from whose two marriages sprang Bacon's many siblings, with lives separated as much by the generational gap that existed between the eldest and the youngest as the experience of childhood without either one or both of their parents. If the memoir of Ann records Bacon's high regard for his sister's spiritual convictions, it is clear that members of the Bacon clan were not all of one mind in their faith. If some within the family strove to live up to their reputation as 'Saints', a close analysis of the textual evidence reveals that not all were willing to submit to the strictures of Bacon's regenerate faith. From the physical manifestations of status and piety that can be discerned in the Bacons' homes, in this chapter we turn to consider the evidence of the emotional bonds that I have identified in the family's portrait practice. In this chapter I explore a number of the artist's different kinship relationships, examining the portraits for evidence of the degrees of intimacy that, as with Tadmor's models of family and friendship,[7] Bacon's 'record of friendship' could successfully accommodate. This analysis of the drawings and

[4] For a contemporary reference to evangelicals as 'Saints' that supports this assumption, see Peter Searby, *A History of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 3, 1750-1870 (Cambridge, 1997), p. 474.
[5] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 7 August 1820.
[6] Cited in Bellon, *A Sincere and Teachable Heart*, p. 68. For Paley's work among the Revd Thomas' reading material on his outward voyage to India, see Chapter Six, n. 59.
[7] For Tadmor, see Introduction, n. 5.

other relevant likenesses is informed by further close readings of texts by both Bacon and other members of the family, including memoirs, diaries and wills. Whereas Bacon's 'Reminiscences' reveal aspects of Bacon Senior's temperament and character through the artist's memorialisation of him, the diary of his half-brother, Charles, provides valuable evidence of interactions between family members in the period 1813 to 1817. In the testamentary bequest recounted in wills, meanwhile, we find objects deployed as expressions of sentiment, shedding light on the relationships between members of the family over several generations as they fanned out from their first home in Newman Street.

Father and son

Until his death in 1799, Bacon's father was the central figure in his life, fostering his son's talents, sanctioning his attendance at the Royal Academy Schools and instilling in him the evangelical faith that came to dominate his life.[8] It is therefore essential to consider Bacon's own reflections on his father, his character and legacy. That process started before Bacon Senior's death, with Bacon's portrait bust of his father exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1798.[9] Additionally, Bacon executed three portrait drawings of his father that likely date to about the same time. All three drawings are found in Album Four in which the artist gathered a large number of loose portraits made over many years. Two drawings show Bacon Senior in profile to the right and in identical dress. One of these is a rather frank depiction of Bacon Senior in middle age, with broad strokes of chalk on the cheek and collar suggestive of a drawing made from life, perhaps worked up in some detail later, including in the wig and background hatching in which a fictive shadow appears—a unique instance in Bacon's *oeuvre* (N196; Fig. 62). The other version of this portrait (N166) is apparently a copy of the latter, the artist modelling the features with greater care, while deploying similarly bold strokes in the collar and rear portion of the sitter's wig. The latter portrait appears to be an idealised depiction of Bacon Senior, and the same is true of the artist's third portrait drawing of his father which shows the sitter *en face* (N167; Fig. 63). The careful modelling of the features found in the previous example takes on an ethereal quality in this drawing, the strokes largely dissolving in a *sfumato* effect that tends toward the general rather than particular. Suggestive of a likeness made from memory rather than

[8] For his relationship with his father, see Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, pp. 27, 28, 37-38, 43.
[9] Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 1, p. 88. A plaster cast of a bust of Bacon Senior may record that otherwise untraced sculpture; private collection.

life, it may be that this was a posthumous portrait, created with a strongly memorial purpose and emphasising the artist's reverence for the memory of his late father.

In his 'Reminiscences', Bacon included brief remarks on his father's work as an artist, although, as with his other sketches of academicians, his observations were principally concerned with the private man. Featuring recollections of tales of his childhood and youth, together with Bacon's memories of his father from his own childhood, his account permits a closer understanding of Bacon Senior's temperament and behaviour in his own home, away from public and performative arenas, including gatherings of the Royal Academy. Highlighting the privileged access that he had to his subject, Bacon argued that,

> It may well be considered that no one is so capable of giving a full and correct description of a man's character as his Son, who has known him perpetually when in the bosom of his family, without restraint, removed from the observation of the world, and when daily occurrences give rise to the development of both the more favourable and infavourable [*sic*] dispositions of the mind and heart.[10]

Unlike the risk of a disconnection between external appearances and internal sentiments that the culture of politeness embodied, highlighted by the controversy following publication of letters of advice to his son written by Philip Stanhope, fourth earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773), as discussed by Philip Carter,[11] Bacon identifies the domestic environment as that in which a man is most true to his own character and can be observed at his most candid. But he also revealed a keen awareness of the pliable quality of biography as a genre, particularly where the subject coincides with the author's affection. Noting that the reader might well doubt the objectivity of an author so invested, with whom 'the good qualities and dispositions are depicted too favourably, and those which might be less favourable softened down, if not omitted altogether', Bacon made an appeal to filial sentiment, insisting that the 'affectionate veneration' of a son for his father meant that such an account 'must not be regarded as unfaithful in his description if he fails to relate everything.' As if to illustrate the point Bacon named several of his father's flaws—loquaciousness, irritability and severity—only to observe that 'I find that my heart smites me' for doing so.[12] But, motivated by love and filial duty, and perhaps rhetorical tropes

[10] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 1, p. 12.
[11] Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800* (Harlow, 2001), pp. 76-80.
[12] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 1, pp. 12-13(a).

associated with these, Bacon discovered that sentiment moderated his desire to supply an unvarnished account of his late father.

As the foregoing makes clear, and as his great-granddaughter Gertrude Bacon later observed, Bacon venerated his father's memory. 'Every relic, every saying, was treasured as something almost sacred and inspired,' to the extent that he filled a notebook with fables that Bacon Senior had composed for his children, and set aside another for the 'Wise Sayings of my honoured and revered Father', which was, however, left entirely blank.[13] The latter omission may have been a source of regret, as Bacon agreed with one of his sisters on the justice of their father's observations on 'human life and human character', finding that 'every important occasion in life arising from the mistakes of judgment on the part of persons whose conduct we have had occasion to lament, has been such as to remind us of the wisdom and correctness of his remarks.'[14]

Of his father's anecdotes and sayings that do survive, one pertains to Bacon Senior's childhood and was used as a moral lesson 'when he was conversing with me on the proof which childhood often afforded of the innate pride and depravity of human nature.' That the human in question was his own father as a child—'being some-times a very naughty child, and refusing to beg his mother's pardon'—doubtless added weight to the assertion.[15] But if Bacon Senior's thoughts on childhood were coloured by his belief in the indwelling sin common among evangelicals,[16] this did not prevent him being 'playfully amusing among his children, especially when young – singing and dancing us on his knee or carrying us on his shoulder.'[17] The latter fond recollection was followed in the 'Reminiscences' with four verses of a song that Bacon Senior himself composed 'while dancing his little son on his shoulder while walking to and fro in the Parlour at 17 Newman St. London.'[18]

There was a jolly Sculptor, and he'd a jolly Son
He was as happy when he'd eight as when he had but one
And a nursing we will go – etc.
We have no cause to grumble, at least in Newman Street

[13] Gertrude Bacon, 'Prologue', p. 98.
[14] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 1, pp. 13(a)-13(b).
[15] Ibid, part 1, p. 3.
[16] Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p. 41.
[17] John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 1, p. 13(a).
[18] This detail is found in a manuscript version of the song in Bacon's hand; John Bacon Junior, MS 'Song made by John Bacon Esq.re R.A.', undated, private collection.

> For I ne'er know when there were mouths, but there was always meat.
>
> And a nursing etc.
>
> The humpy grumpy batchelors [*sic*] a wretched life prefer
>
> For they, poor brothers, won't believe "The more the merrier"
>
> And a nursing etc.
>
> If ever I should think of changing my condition,
>
> Perhaps I then may make a nurse of an Academician.
>
> And a nursing we will go, we'll go,
>
> And a nursing we will go.[19]

This celebration of fatherhood is in pointed contrast to that of bachelors, whose mode of living is presented as fundamentally unhappy. Fulfilment is to be found within the family circle, pointing toward Bacon's own priorities in old age when he depicted many of his own grandchildren. It is a revealing insight into Georgian family life and, in particular, the affective life of fathers, an area of research that, as Joanne Bailey has observed, remains but little studied.[20]

If Bacon's memories of his father were largely positive, he nonetheless continued somewhat in his shadow. Unable to match the professional accolades that Bacon Senior had received, and seemingly unwilling to persevere in a career that was closely wedded to worldly concerns, Bacon sought instead to elevate his family spiritually. Writing in his spiritual diary in August 1820, he recalled that,

> at this hour in the morning on this day 21 years back died my honoured and good Father. and left me his representative in the professional and in the religious world. O! what a wretched frustrating useless idle creature I have been. O Thou in whom are all our times, come down now and be with me all the remainder – of my time below, and may I and my beloved family be very eminent and distinguished – that is for genuine piety.[21]

Having claimed both his father's professional *and* religious mantles, the artist was quick to chastise himself for his perceived inadequacy. Written almost two years after Bacon had settled in Sidmouth, the passage illustrates his rejection of worldly concerns in general,

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[19] Apparently sung to the tune of the nursery rhyme 'The farmer wants a wife', the MS of the song in Bacon's hand differs in some particulars from that recorded in the 'Reminiscences'. See John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 1, p. 13(a).
[20] Bailey, 'A Very Sensible Man', pp. 268-271.
[21] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 7 August 1820.

and his profession in particular, in favour of the pressing spiritual needs of himself and his family.

Maternal figures

The profound influence of Bacon's father was amplified by the absence of his mother, Elizabeth, who died when he was only five years old, and of whom Bacon could have remembered but little. Nonetheless, and presumably relying on the testimony of others, Bacon furnished a short and glowing account of her character in his memoir of his sister Ann that he wrote in 1813.[22] Complementing Richard Cecil's account of his father, to which he referred, and in which Bacon Senior's 'character of a decided and consistent Christian is fully and justly displayed', Bacon described his mother as 'an example of all that is lovely in the Christian character.' Comparing her to divine wisdom, Bacon stated '"that this woman was full of mercy and good fruits" [James 3:17]. She wore, with peculiar grace, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. She was one of whom we might say, with more propriety than of many others, that she "sat at the feet of Christ to hear his words," having made her choice of the "one thing needful"' (Luke 10:39 and 10:42).

The second-hand accounts of their mother that he relayed in the memoir of Ann were embellished with biblical allusions in order to sharpen the picture of Elizabeth, the memory of whom had inevitably faded with time. That process of textual memorialisation is paralleled in the three existing portraits of her, two of which appear to be copies by Bacon after an original by his father that was evidently made from life (N314; see Fig. 1). The latter drawing is found in Album Six at the Victoria & Albert Museum, which has a Thornton provenance, the contents presumably having belonged to his sister Elizabeth. The second drawing of Bacon's mother, in the British Museum, is a direct copy of the sheet in Album Six (N322; Fig. 64). When compared with Bacon Senior's original, the notably more linear treatment of this sheet suggests that it is Bacon's work. Not retained for inclusion in Album Four, this drawing may have been given by the artist to another member of his family. The third drawing of Bacon's mother is unquestionably in his hand and, in contrast to the orphaned second version, is found among the likenesses of many other significant sitters in Album Four (N187; Fig. 65). In this, Bacon transformed his father's intimate depiction of his wife into a mourning figure in the manner of a Roman matron. The

[22] John Bacon Junior, *Memoir of Miss Ann Bacon*, pp. 7-9.

domestic mob cap worn in Bacon Senior's original is here replaced with a shawl draped over Elizabeth's hair and shoulders, its folds crisply delineated and suggestive of sculpture. Chastely attired and with her modesty emphasised, Elizabeth represents an ideal of Christian femininity. An effort to preserve and ennoble his late mother's memory, Bacon's drawing is a remarkable example of the extent to which posthumous portraiture might be adapted to meet the emotional needs of the artist-son and his select audience.

Within nine months of his first wife's death, Bacon Senior married Martha Holland, who became Bacon's stepmother and mother to his six half-siblings, of whom only Charles, Samuel and Joshua survived childhood. Cox-Johnson stated that the children of Bacon Senior's first marriage shared a warm relationship with their stepmother, including holidaying with her outside of London.[23] At her husband's death Martha was the sole beneficiary for the duration of her life of the interest accruing from £17,000 invested in three per-cent consolidated annuities.[24] Despite the ambiguous position that widowhood left many women in,[25] no other provision was made for Martha who, although afforded financial security, appears to have gone on living at Newman Street, where she wrote her will in April 1801.[26] That she continued to reside with her stepson perhaps supports Cox-Johnson's assertion that their relationship was a fond one. So too does Martha's decision to name Bacon, together with his sister's father-in-law, John Thornton, as executor and trustee of her estate, referring to each man as a 'dear friend', a term she likewise used to describe her two elder step-daughters, Ann and Elizabeth. Curiously, Martha's will made no provision for the care of her three surviving children, who each appear to have been minors at the time of her death in March 1802. She appears to have trusted in the goodwill of her stepson, in whose house they perhaps still lived and on whose good offices they must have relied.

No portrait drawings by members of the family are recorded in Martha's will, in which only a small number of objects are described in specific bequests. Her other possessions may have been disbursed informally, or formed a part of her late husband's

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[23] Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, pp. 26-27.
[24] Will of John Bacon Senior, TNA, PROB 11/1328/204. For consolidated annuities ('consols'), see David R. Green and Alastair Owens, 'Gentlewomanly Capitalism? Spinsters, Widows, and Wealth Holding in England and Wales, *c*. 1800-1860', *Economic History Review*, 56:3 (August 2003), pp. 529-530.
[25] Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2009), pp. 218-219.
[26] Will of Martha Bacon, TNA, PROB 11/1375/285.

estate and were disposed of accordingly.[27] What her few bequests do reveal, I suggest, is that Martha was keenly aware of the value of portraiture and its role in establishing genealogical claims. With her will written less than one year before her death, Martha may have been aware that she was dying; and as her sons were still minors, she appears to have been keen to secure their legacy. The careful provision that she made for the inheritance of Russell's portraits of herself and Bacon Senior, passing to each of her three sons in turn under specific circumstances, appears to indicate Martha's concern to assert her sons' claims as heirs to the name of one of the country's foremost artists.[28]

Siblings

Valuable evidence about Bacon's family circle, his domestic life and, significantly, interactions with those in his kinship network who do not appear to have shared his evangelical convictions, is found in three volumes of the diary kept by his younger half-brother Charles (N231; see Fig. 9).[29] The eldest of the children of Martha and Bacon Senior, Charles trained as an architect and was employed in the Office of Works by 1812.[30] That office was responsible for the construction and maintenance of a variety of royal and public buildings and provided Charles with regular access to such elite spaces as Carlton House, the London residence of the Prince Regent (later George IV), and the Houses of Parliament. There he became acquainted with prominent individuals, including Charles Abbot (1757-1829), Speaker of the House of Commons, and Lord Gwydyr, the acting Lord Great Chamberlain of the Royal Household, whose activities at Sidmouth Charles may have related back to his half-brother John.

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[27] For various permutations of widowhood, see Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, pp. 223-224. For widows as 'intermediaries in a system of 'delayed' intergenerational estate transfer', as Martha was, see Alastair Owens, 'Property, gender and the life course: inheritance and family welfare provision in early nineteenth-century England', *Social History*, 26:3 (October 2001), p. 310.

[28] For portraiture as testimony of dynastic continuity, see Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, pp. 106-107.

[29] The three volumes examined in this research are: Charles Bacon, MS Diary. 11 July 1813-28 February 1815, BL, RP 3717; Charles Bacon, MS Diary, 1 March 1815-26 June 1816, BL, Add MS 74764; and Notebook of [Chas. Bacon], architect, c.1784-1818, 22 June 1816-31 October 1817, Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, D/DQ 14/42. Of the two volumes not consulted in this research, one is in the Huntington Library, San Marino, CA., 'Diary, Charles Bacon', 11 July 1813-28 February 1815, contact ref. 870658; while the other, for the years 1817-18, was recorded in a private collection; see Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840* (3rd ed., New Haven, CT and London, 1995), p. 90.

[30] In the years 1800-12, Charles Bacon exhibited nine drawings at the Royal Academy, five of which were of buildings of an ecclesiastical nature; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 1, p. 87.

In addition to a detailed account of his professional activities, Charles' diaries highlight the ways in which Tadmor's categories of family and friendship, the affective and the instrumental, might overlap. This is evident in the intersection of the 'familial' bond between the brothers with the professional activities of both men, becoming 'instrumental' in the process. Charles' contacts were evidently exploited by the artist, with Bacon apparently using his brother to press his case for a commission from the Royal Household for a bust of John Henry Manners, fifth duke of Rutland (1778-1857),[31] and among prominent individuals with whom he was acquainted, including the diarist Harriet Arbuthnot (née Fane; 1793-1834), for whose husband he also worked.[32] Charles may have aided Bacon in professional rivalries. In an entry from May 1816, Charles records his brother's 'wish for me not to call on [the sculptor Francis] Chantry [*sic*]' (1781-1841).[33] Chantrey was perhaps also the subject of Bacon's earlier remarks to his brother 'about Sculpture & his lacking Business in favor [*sic*] of some one.'[34] If so, Chantrey's continued success and advancement within the Royal Academy may have proved galling for Bacon who, in his later 'Reminiscences', judged his rival a sculptor of mere 'imitations of natural life'.[35]

Although Charles' diary served a different purpose to his brother's spiritual reflections, the three volumes examined in this research do feature evidence of the author's religious life. With few exceptions Sundays featured 'Prayers with Servants', indicating that Charles took seriously his responsibility for the spiritual lives of those under his roof, including the domestic staff who appear to have figured as part of the 'household family' described by Tadmor.[36] Sundays entailed attendance at church, both morning and evening. Despite living in the parish of Marylebone,[37] morning service was normally taken

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[31] Charles Bacon, Diary 1813-15, 10 February 1814.
[32] Charles appears to have acted as an intermediary when he 'called on Mrs Arbuthnot [and] told her [that] John should do her Bust'; see Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 2 March 1815. Charles saw the bust (presumably in plaster) at Newman Street the following month; ibid, 10 April 1815. It was exhibited at the RA in 1816; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 1, p. 89. Charles was also Charles Arbuthnot's (1767-1850) architect for Woodford Hall, Northamptonshire; see Nikolaus Pevsner and Bridget Cherry, *The Buildings of England: Northamptonshire* (2nd ed., Harmondsworth, 1973), p. 467.
[33] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 28 May 1816.
[34] Ibid, 26 May 1815.
[35] Chantrey was elected ARA later in 1816. For Bacon's judgment of Chantrey and a (perhaps apocryphal) account of the limits of the latter's creative powers, see John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 3, pp. 24-25.
[36] On one of the rare occasions when Sunday prayers did not occur, Charles recorded that he 'did not have prayers with the Family'; see Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 12 March 1815.
[37] At the time of writing his last will and testament, Charles gave his address as Upper Berkley Street, Mary-le-bone; see Will of Charles Bacon, Clerk of His Majesty's Works of Marylebone, Middlesex, 18 June 1818, TNA, PROB 11/1605/277.

at 'Whitehall Chapel' then occupying Inigo Jones' (1573-1652) Banqueting House, some distance from the family home. At one time the 'Chapel Royal',[38] the chapel at Whitehall continued to enjoy links to the Royal Household and government, and Charles' diaries record his frustration at being prevented from occupying pews set aside for staff of the Office of Works, suggesting that his choice of morning service turned on professional considerations.[39] Evening service was often at St Margaret's Church alongside Westminster Abbey and, like it, a part of the 'royal peculiar' which, given its special connection to the monarch, was likely to have been insulated from evangelical fervour at that time.[40]

This is not to suggest that Charles' faith was merely transactional, or that he was immune to the attractions of inspired evangelical clerics. His diary records that he completed reading the New Testament in November 1815.[41] He was partial to fine preaching, remarking on 'a most excellent Sermon' that he heard in October of the same year.[42] Despite the regularity of his Sunday observances, occasionally he attended services elsewhere in London and its environs. In February 1814 he attended the chapel of the noted evangelical, the Revd Rowland Hill (N233; Fig. 66), whom Bacon portrayed twice, indicating their common regard for this famous preacher.[43] On at least one occasion Charles walked from his second home in Ealing to the neighbouring suburb of Perivale to attend a service, afterwards speaking with the rector on the 'Sacraments & [the] Church', itself evidence of a serious interest in his faith.[44] Bacon himself appears to have been a sounding board for metaphysical matters, with a postprandial conversation with the artist and his wife at Paddington in April 1815 touching on 'Spirits'.[45] Although relatively rare in Charles' diaries, compelling circumstances did prompt reflections on his own spiritual

[38] Following its destruction in the fire at the Palace of Whitehall in 1698, the Chapel Royal was temporarily established in the Banqueting House until 1702, when it was transferred to St James' Palace; the Banqueting House continued to function as a chapel until 1890; see David Baldwin, *The Chapel Royal: ancient & modern* (London, 1990), pp. 325, 368.
[39] See, for instance, Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 8 October 1815.
[40] For St Margaret's as a 'royal peculiar', under the monarch's jurisdiction and not that of the local bishop, see 'Our History', Westminster Abbey, https://www.westminster-abbey.org/st-margarets-church/our-history, accessed 10 November 2020. For George IV's engagement with evangelicalism and his willingness to promote 'moderately evangelical bishops', beginning with Henry Ryder, appointed bishop of Gloucester in 1815, see Nicholas Dixon, 'George IV and William IV in their Relations with the Church of England', *English Historical Review*, 134:571 (December 2019), pp. 1446-1447, 1453-1455.
[41] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 12 November 1815.
[42] Emphasis in the original; see ibid, 22 October 1815.
[43] Charles Bacon, Diary 1813-15, 20 February 1814.
[44] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 21 May 1815. It is not clear if he walked from his home in Marylebone or from the house in Ealing that is also recorded in his will; see Will of Charles Bacon, TNA, PROB 11/1605/277.
[45] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 21 April 1815.

condition and relationship with God. His thirty-first birthday in 1815 gave him pause for thought: 'This day thanks be to God I have lived thirty one years. How much have I to blush for the little good I have done in that time.'[46] While his daughter's illness in December 1813 was cause for a statement of faith in Christ's atonement that affirmed evangelical soteriology: 'Let it be remembered that we are all in the hands of God he who delivered us when at the X'.[47] A similar note was struck with John Newton's 1785 account of the death of his wife's niece—and adopted daughter—Eliza Cuningham (1771-85), which Charles read to his wife Henrietta (née Crocker; d. 1861) one Sunday in April 1815.[48] But given Newton's close relationship with the Bacon family, including baptising Charles himself as an infant, it is not clear whether this is evidence of personal sentiment or the evangelical preoccupation with deathbed narratives, although the two could well coincide.

On balance, it seems that Charles' faith was more conventional that Bacon's own. This conclusion is supported by what the diaries reveal of his 'worldly' activities, a veritable check-list of those recreations condemned by contemporary evangelicals. A little more than a fortnight after reflecting on the life of Eliza Cunningham, Charles and Henrietta were to be found at the annual fair at Brook Green in West London, the subject of an undated watercolour by Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827) that shows a lively crowd amid a multitude of stalls.[49] An anonymous account of the fair from 1822 records the Green 'gemmed with "hotels and taverns," flinging their sweet and tempting odours upon the air', quacks and conjurers, a travelling theatre and even temporary 'assembly rooms' where young couples could be seen dancing.[50] Along with other forms of popular recreation, fairs were among the alleged catalysts for vice that evangelicals abhorred and sought to suppress.[51] Rowland Hill, whose preaching was compared to stirring performances by

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[46] Ibid, 22 March 1815.
[47] Charles Bacon, Diary 1813-15, 12 December 1813.
[48] Henrietta is referred to throughout the diaries as 'Harriet', probably the author's pet name for his wife, but perhaps also to distinguish her from their eldest child, also called Henrietta. Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 16 April 1815. Newton's account appears to have first been published in the year of Eliza's death; see John Newton, *A monument to the praise of the Lord's goodness, and to the memory of dear Eliza Cuningham. Published for the benefit of a charitable institution* (3rd ed., London, 1785).
[49] Thomas Rowlandson, *Brook Green Fair*, *c*. 1775-1825, watercolour, 355 x 492 mm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, inv. 1747-1871.
[50] [Anonymous], 'Brook-Green Fair', *New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal*, vol. 4, Original Papers (1822), pp. 558-561.
[51] The Brook Green fair ceased in 1823 at the order of the magistrate, the result of complaints from local residents appealing to the Bishop of London as lord of the manor about 'the disorders arising from it,' although there is no indication that this was driven by evangelical sentiment the aims certainly aligned; see 'Brook Green Fair', *Cottager's Monthly Visitor*, April 1823, p. 190. For evangelical hostility to many traditional forms of recreation of a public nature, including fairs, see

contemporary actors, and whose chapel Charles had attended the year before, was among those who endeavoured to compete with fairs for public attention, posing the question, not without humour, 'Why should the devil have all the good tunes?'[52] If it is surprising that the theatre formed a part of Charles' sociability, it seems that he was not to be outdone by his younger brother, Samuel (N53; Fig. 67), then training for the cloth, who went to the theatre just days after leaving Cambridge in 1815.[53] Despite being condemned by Newton as 'properly and eminently' sinful, and abhorred by prominent evangelicals including William Wilberforce (1759-1833),[54] the theatre occurs frequently in Charles' diary from September 1815.[55] The titles of the plays that he recorded—'The Jealous Wife', 'The Country Girl', and 'Brother & Sister – a very fair Musical'—suggest that these were not monuments to spiritual edification.[56]

Even when Charles' sociability was enacted in domestic settings, he frequently engaged in activities that may have challenged his elder brother's evangelical mores. Two days after the Brook Green fair, Charles' diary records a private party at which he danced with four unmarried young women before returning home at about three o'clock in the morning.[57] This was not the only such party and late nights were not uncommon. Indeed, only rarely does the diary record an evening spent at home alone with his wife, with most seemingly occupied with guests in their home, including colleagues completing work, friends and members of his extended family, many of whom appear to have been casual callers. Domestic entertainments included card games, which were played for stakes on at least one occasion, with Charles winning the considerable sum of £5 in a game of whist.[58] After supping with the Crook family on Christmas day 1816, Charles recorded cards, dancing and singing.[59] Not all the singing was profane, and an entry from March 1816

Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations*, pp. 100-103. Also, for organisations including The Society for the Suppression of Vice, but without drawing any connection between that organisation and the evangelical movement, see Emma Griffin, *England's Revelry: A History of Popular Sports and Pastimes 1660-1830* (Oxford, 2005), p. 90.

[52] Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure*, pp. 56-57.

[53] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 14 July 1815.

[54] Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure*, p. 70.

[55] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 24 November 1815. An earlier reference to tickets for a 'Play' may indicate that this shift in his behaviour was a return to old habits; see Charles Bacon, Diary 1813-15, 1 December 1813.

[56] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 2 September 1815 and 15 December 1815.

[57] Ibid, 5 May 1815.

[58] Ibid, 16 March 1816. Card games in themselves may not have been wholly problematic at the time, and Erdozain pinpoints their fall to the 1830s; see Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure*, p. 73.

[59] Charles Bacon, Diary 1816-17, 25 December 1816.

records 'sacred songs' following tea with friends.[60] In addition to this evidence of an unregenerate lifestyle, his diaries suggest that Charles' home was not the place of refuge that historians of domesticity have observed was then coming into being; rather, it was a mixed zone, accommodating both Charles' domestic arrangements as well as aspects of his public-facing role as a civil servant.

In November 1813 Charles made his maiden speech at a meeting of the local branch meeting of the 'Bible Association', presumably the British & Foreign Bible Society.[61] He attended a second meeting later that same month, into the serious proceedings of which he aimed to inject a measure of levity with a 'witty Speech'.[62] That he walked to the second meeting via Newman Street, suggests that he may have attended in the company of his brother, from whom the impetus for his membership may well have stemmed.[63] References to the 'Bible Association' do not recur in the diaries until 1816,[64] leaving it unclear whether his membership continued in the interim.

It appears significant, however, that the early evidence of Charles' membership of that organisation coincided with a demonstration of trust on the part of his elder half-brother and his wife. Arriving at Bacon's Paddington home on 2 December 1813, Charles found the artist recovering from two operations of a serious but undescribed nature that were apparently performed by his friend, the surgeon and fellow evangelical William Blair (*c*. 1765-1822) (N240; Fig. 68). Two of Bacon's elder daughters, Mary Ann and Christiana, appear to have accompanied their uncle to his home that day as they were present there during a visit of their maternal uncle and aunt, Daniel Taylor Junior (*c*. 1781-1853) (N190) and his sister Harriet Taylor (1784-after 1827) (N17), to Charles' house the following afternoon. Both girls were with Charles still on 13 December when his own daughter fell ill, and joined their anxious uncle and his wife in prayers for their ailing cousin.[65] The confidence that Bacon and Susannah Sophia—or perhaps the latter alone, given Bacon's indisposition—showed in placing two of their children with Charles and his family should not be underestimated. Having removed their own family to Paddington, Bacon and his wife would have been loath to expose their young daughters to polluting influences. As the diaries provide no further evidence of Charles caring for his elder half-brother's children

[60] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 3 March 1816.
[61] Charles Bacon, Diary 1813-15, 8 November 1813.
[62] Ibid, 21 November 1813.
[63] Ibid, 24 November 1813.
[64] Charles Bacon, Diary 1816-17, 25 October 1816.
[65] Charles Bacon, Diary 1813-15, 12 December 1813.

after this time, it may be that this was not considered suitable given his enjoyment of forms of sociability that evangelicals such as Bacon abhorred. And yet, throughout the period surveyed by the three diaries, Charles continued a not-infrequent guest in his brother's home, dining alongside extended family and other known evangelicals, including Blair.[66] It is clear that hospitality in Bacon's home featured a strong spiritual element, and Charles records 'Supper & Prayers' during one such visit in April 1816,[67] in all of which it must be assumed he participated without demur. Crucially the traffic did not flow in one direction only; Bacon is recorded as visiting Charles' home several times, and on at least one occasion with his wife, her sister and three of their children, when they dined and took tea, only leaving at 11.30 that evening after the two men had been to the House of Commons to witness a debate.[68]

Complicating further this picture of fraternal relations is evidence of professional cooperation between the two men. In addition to advancing Bacon's career through his own contacts, it seems that Charles collaborated with his brother on a number of projects stemming from the studio. The diaries record one clear example from June 1815 when Charles called on his brother at Newman Street and 'Made Sketches for [the] Architecture to Lady Kenyon's Monument' then underway, even discussing the project with her widower, Lord Kenyon when he arrived during the same visit.[69] The Kenyon family had previously commissioned two monuments from Bacon and the artist was doubtless eager to retain their custom, so it is significant that he chose to engage his brother on this project.[70] The success of this ad hoc arrangement may have encouraged Bacon to consider Charles for a partnership akin to that he had first formed with Charles Manning (?1776-1812) in 1808, but which ceased with the latter's death.[71] The first indication that Bacon approached his brother on the topic comes in an entry from March 1816, when Charles records that 'John took me to his Study & explained to me his opinion respecting Sculptor [*sic*] – made an offer for my Consideration.'[72] Less than two weeks later, following tea with

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[66] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 13 December 1815.
[67] Ibid, 6 April 1816. Less clear is an entry in which Charles refers to 'Drawing for John'; see Charles Bacon, Diary 1813-15, 12 July 1813.
[68] Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 10 May 1816.
[69] Ibid, 13 June 1815.
[70] The 'architecture' for the monument was presumably the plinth on which the sculptural group was intended to stand. Bacon had previously executed monuments to the first Lord Kenyon and his widow. For the latter, see 'Fine Arts. Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *Literary Panorama*, June 1809, column 546.
[71] For the details of Bacon's agreement with Manning, see Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', pp. 236, 239-242.
[72] 'Sculptor' appears to be a corruption of 'sculpture'. Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 24 March 1816.

Bacon and his wife, the two men again retreated to the privacy of Bacon's study for a 'private Conversation respecting Sculpture arrangements', giving details of the substantial sums involved, including 'Stock worth – £2000 good will £5000 Marble abt [*sic*] [£]700.'[73] In July 1816 the two men agreed to a trial business partnership of twelve months, the precise details of which remain obscure,[74] although Howard Colvin records that Bacon's monument to Sir John Lombe, Bt. (d. 1817) in Bylaugh Church, Norfolk, a restrained exercise in Gothic revival style, was executed after a design by Charles.[75]

It is useful to consider what this episode reveals about Bacon and his relationship with his younger half-brother. On the question of evangelicals' friendships with unregenerate Christians, William Van Reyk has pointed to the mixed messages found in John Wesley's sermon 'On friendship' (published in 1786), which, while admitting of friendship with the worldly, from which spiritual benefits may accrue, highlighted the risks of pollution stemming from such associations. However, while husbands and wives must show forbearance, familial relationships that were not governed by sacramental contracts incurred fewer obligations: 'as for all other relations, even brothers or sisters, if they are of the world, you are under no obligation to be intimate with them: You may be civil and friendly at a distance.'[76] Certainly, Bacon was no Methodist, but the same concerns over polluting worldliness that actuated Wesley's remarkable challenge to traditional ties of kinship were shared by evangelicals of all stripes. That Bacon appears to have kept his unregenerate sibling close may suggest his sense of his responsibility as the de facto head of the Bacon family. Further, seeking to engage Charles in the family business at a time when Bacon was himself already withdrawing from it suggests that the artist's concern may have been tempered with self-interest. Nonetheless, the evidence of their social interactions points to an enduring affective relationship within a kinship network that was not determined exclusively by religious considerations.

Charles died in June 1818, the month before Bacon decamped to Sidmouth. Probably too late to influence the artist's decision to quit London, his death may have underlined the importance of prioritising spiritual rather than worldly concerns. The artist, together with his younger half-brother Joshua Bacon (N325; Fig. 69), acted as the executor

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[73] Ibid, 6 April 1816.
[74] Charles Bacon, Diary 1816-17, 10 July 1816.
[75] Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects*, p. 90.
[76] Cited in Van Reyk, 'Christian Ideals of Manliness', p. 1071. For Wesley's concern at the risks posed, and for the final part of the passage quoted by Van Reyk, see Albert C. Outler, ed., *The Works of Wesley*, vol. 3, Sermons 71-114 (Nashville, TN, 1984), pp. 138-139.

of Charles' estate, finding that the latter's affairs at his death were not as favourable as he had hoped when drafting his will in 1812. Exploiting Charles' connections with senior figures in public life, the two men wrote a letter to the prime minister, Robert Jenkinson, second earl of Liverpool (1770-1828), in support of his widow Henrietta's petition to the Lords of the Treasury for financial assistance in the wake of her husband's death—an appeal that appears to have resulted in a pension.[77] Whatever he may have thought of Charles' recreations and the life that he led, it seems evident that Bacon retained a great deal of affection for his half-brother, placing his own drawing of him as a young man from *c*. 1805 (N186; see Fig. 20) in Album Four, alongside important family portraits, including those of their revered father.

In addition to his own affairs, Charles' diaries also cast light on the lives of several of his siblings, particularly his younger brother, the Revd Samuel Bacon, who appears with some frequency. In the period covered by the three volumes of Charles' diary, the young bachelor divided his time between Clare College, Cambridge, from where he graduated BA in 1816, and the London homes of both Charles and their younger brother Joshua. Samuel was the first member of the Bacon family to take holy orders, being ordained deacon in 1818 and priest the following year.[78] Members of the family appear to have supported him through his studies, with Charles' diaries indicating that he and Joshua, rather than Bacon or their eldest half-brother, Thomas, tended to their brother's affairs in London, perhaps providing financial support.[79] The business of securing a living for Samuel was also a family concern and Charles' diaries record two discussions with one Mr Jones regarding a tentative offer of a curacy in Sussex with £150 per annum and a residence.[80] Nothing appears to have come of that and, with no record of a placement, it is unclear how Samuel occupied his time following graduation, although he appears to have been based in London from July 1815, and entries in Charles' diary suggest that his finances were in disarray.[81] Certainly, the only substantive biography of Samuel states that his inheritance was spent

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[77] Charles Bacon, late Clerk of the Works: Application for his widow to the 2nd Earl of Liverpool: 1818, BL, Add MS 38272 : The Liverpool Papers, Vol. LXXXIII 23 May 1818-Jul 1818. F. 168. For evidence that a pension was granted and was still being received by Charles' widow three decades later, see Emma Bacon to the Revd Samuel Bacon, 18 January 1849, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Fredericton, MC4045-MS11-D-8.

[78] See 'Bacon, Samuel (1818-1819), person ID 6510, Clergy of the Church of England Database, https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/, accessed 23 November 2020.

[79] In May 1815 Charles sent £130 to his brother in Cambridge; see Charles Bacon, Diary 1815-16, 13 April 1815 and 26 May 1815.

[80] Ibid, 28 May 1815 and 11 June 1815.

[81] Charles Bacon, Diary 1816-17, see, for instance, 22 February 1817, 29 April 1817 and 19-21 May 1817.

and that he was deeply in debt when, in 1821, he agreed to become a missionary in New Brunswick on behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, remitting part of his salary to his creditors, arriving there by early the following year.[82]

Although Samuel settled permanently in New Brunswick, he spent time with Bacon during a visit to Britain in 1836, probably at the latter's home in Sidmouth or Exeter. The reunion was the occasion for a portrait drawing that Bacon executed in August of that year—the only drawing of his half-brother that has been identified (N53; see Fig. 67). That work shows Samuel as a middle-aged man dressed in clerical garb, including cravat, bands and a high-collared cassock. Intentionally or not, Bacon's portrayal of his half-brother in the attire of his profession locates Samuel within the circle of clerics with whom the artist associated through his voluntary activities. During the same visit Bacon executed a bust of Samuel that travelled to New Brunswick alongside another of the artist himself.[83] Whether in marble or clay, this would have been a messy and time-consuming undertaking in the midst of Bacon's busy schedule of voluntary activities. Importantly, the bust of himself that Bacon despatched to New Brunswick was later 'defaced and delapidated [*sic*] by a little visitor', suggesting that it was not made of a durable material and may have been a plaster cast of an existing sculpture, perhaps one of the two known to have been executed by members of the Manning family.[84] Certainly, 'bronzed busts' of both Bacon and Bacon Senior were among the effects of the Revd Thomas,[85] and instructions for 'Painting a plaster cast in imitation of Bronze' feature in what appears to have been Bacon's commonplace book.[86]

Such casts, including 'bronzed' plaster, had been manufactured in London on a commercial basis from the mid-eighteenth century, catering to the popularity of

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[82] Willis D. Hamilton, 'Bacon, Samuel (1789-1869)', in Willis D. Hamilton, *The Dictionary of Miramichi Biography*, https://archives.gnb.ca/Search/Hamilton/DMB/SearchResults.aspx?culture=en-CA&action=0&page=45, accessed 23 November 2020.

[83] The bust was one of the family heirlooms in the home of Charles' daughter, recorded by a descendant but not located in the course of this research; see William Wilkinson, 'Bushville', *Acadiensis*, 3:2 (April 1903), p. 88.

[84] It may be that the bust of Bacon was a plaster copy of that by Charles Manning from earlier in the century, although Wilkinson states that the two busts of Charles and Bacon were taken 'at the same time'; ibid. Two portrait busts of Bacon by members of the Manning family were exhibited at the Royal Academy: the first by Charles Manning in 1812; the second by Samuel Manning in 1846; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 6, pp. 177-178. What is likely to be the latter bust survives in a private collection.

[85] Revd Thomas Bacon, Last will and testament.

[86] Bacon [and others?], 'Miscellanies of all kinds | foolish & Wise | 1808', 1808 and later, private collection.

representations of 'worthies' as ornaments for private homes, and libraries in particular.[87] The capacity to accurately reproduce existing sculptures that the casting process enabled meant that, as with portraits of scholars and soldiers, plaster casts of the busts of the artist and his father could function as surrogates for the valuable originals that were collected together with other significant heirlooms, including the original busts of Bacon himself by members of the Manning family, one of which passed to his eldest son.[88] Further, as Samuel had established a family of his own in New Brunswick, the two busts would have symbolically connected the two branches of the Bacon clan, testifying to the enduring affection of the two brothers, as well as giving Bacon a 'presence' in a part of the British Empire in which he had evinced an interest through his voluntary activity since the early 1820s.[89]

Samuel appears to have possessed one other significant family heirloom: a portrait of his mother, Martha, with a child identified as Charles seated in her lap and believed by Samuel's family to be the work of Sir Joshua Reynolds.[90] Nothing more is known of that portrait, which does not feature in any other document examined in this research.[91] Assuming that the subjects were correctly identified, it is significant that this portrait, nominally by a major artist, and showing Bacon Senior's second wife and one of his children by her, did not pass to Bacon. With this in mind, I suggest that the descendants of Bacon Senior's second marriage constituted not merely additions to the existing family, but a second lineage of which Bacon was not himself a part.

There is some evidence that Martha may herself have thought in these terms, deploying two further portraits to assert her sons' heritage. As already indicated, Martha made careful provision in her will for the pastel portraits of herself and Bacon Senior by Russell.[92] The two portraits were to be inherited by each of her three 'dear sons' in turn, passing to her 'dear friend' Bacon only in the event that each of her sons should die before

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[87] For the commercial production of plaster casts and their use in both private and public settings, see Malcolm Baker, 'Public Images for Private Spaces? The Place of Sculpture in the Georgian Domestic Interior', *Journal of Design History*, 20:4 (Winter 2007), pp. 318-319.
[88] John Bacon Junior, Last will and testament.
[89] Bacon was a member of the founding committee of the Society for the Education of the Poor of Newfoundland in 1823; see *The First Annual Report of the Committee of the Society for Educating the Poor of Newfoundland* (London, 1824), p. 3.
[90] Wilkinson, 'Bushville', p. 88.
[91] No such work is recorded in the catalogue raisonné of Reynolds' paintings; see David Mannings and Martin Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: a complete catalogue of his paintings* (New Haven, CT and London, 2000).
[92] Will of Martha Bacon, TNA, PROB 11/1375/285.

attaining the age of twenty-one.[93] While Martha bequeathed items of sentimental significance to Bacon and his sisters Ann and Elizabeth, the language used—'friends' rather than 'sons' or 'daughters'—suggests how specific objects might have transmitted finely calibrated signals of identity and connection. Importantly, the portraits that Martha reserved for *her* offspring could only merge with the visual legacy of Bacon Senior's first family in the event that her own should become extinct. Following Charles' death in 1818 the fate of Russell's two pastels becomes speculative: if Samuel inherited the portraits as his mother's will stipulated, both pictures may have passed to the youngest brother, Joshua when the former left for New Brunswick. Although all three brothers left descendants, when the two portraits were bequeathed to the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1957, the testator was one of Bacon's descendants rather than Martha's.[94] Joshua's bankruptcy in 1834-35 may have resulted in a sale of his effects, at which time the two portraits could have been acquired by Bacon himself, acting to prevent the loss of significant heirlooms.

However, dissipated recreations and the scandal of bankruptcy aside, circumstantial evidence appears to indicate that it was Thomas, the eldest son of Bacon Senior, whose relationship with the family may have been strained. Like Bacon, Thomas trained as a sculptor in their father's studio and entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1788 at the age of seventeen years. In addition to being significantly older than his precocious younger brother when he entered the schools, Thomas never enjoyed the success or institutional recognition that marked Bacon's student days.[95] Nonetheless, and despite the six years between them, the two men appear to have been close during that period, with the satirical 'Original Academy' (discussed in Chapter Five) testifying to their bond, albeit with Bacon rather than his older brother holding the office of 'president'. In the three years 1793-95, Thomas exhibited three works at the Royal Academy's annual exhibitions. As with several of Bacon's own submissions during the period 1792-96, the subject of each work was derived from the New Testament, suggesting that the men had

[93] Curiously, Martha's will made no provision for any offspring of her sons, perhaps assuming that they would not wed before attaining their majority; ibid.
[94] See Chapter One, ns. 36 and 37.
[95] Thomas Bacon was admitted to the RA Schools on 10 October 1788, aged 17; see Sidney C. Hutchinson, 'The Royal Academy Schools, 1768-1830', *Volume of the Walpole Society*, 38 (1960), p. 150.

shared spiritual interests.[96] But while Bacon continued to exhibit at the RA, Thomas did not do so after 1795.

Thomas' lack of ambition—or, perhaps, interest—in his profession that these details may suggest appears to be borne out by Bacon Senior's will: written as he lay dying in early August 1799, and in which he left to Bacon the right of refusal of the 'House and Shops in Newman Street No. 17 [together] with all my Models Books Drawings and Prints Marble and the remaining Money not yet paid upon the several works he shall be at liberty to do so'.[97] In addition to succeeding to his father's business, Bacon's substantial inheritance seems to have been in addition to an eighth share of the £17,000 in investments that Bacon Senior left to Martha for her lifetime.[98] And while his own share of that inheritance would have been sufficient to establish Thomas in some comfort, it seems evident that their father's mantle effectively passed to his younger brother.[99] This impression is reinforced by Bacon Senior's failure to name Thomas among the three executors of his estate, a responsibility that instead fell to Bacon, his sister Ann and Thomas Raybould.

Although the middle classes in the period do not appear to have been as wedded to primogeniture as the elite in their inheritance practices,[100] the apparent inversion of the roles of elder and younger brothers may have been the cause of rancour between the two men. Might this explain Thomas' presence on the margins of family life that Charles' diaries suggest? With so little known of Thomas after 1799, it is difficult to interpret the evidence that survives. Yet it is worth observing that, unlike his father, stepmother, sister Ann and half-brother Charles, among others in Bacon's circle, Thomas did not name Bacon an executor or trustee of his estate when he wrote his will in 1819, instead naming his wife Charlotte (see Fig. 44) as his sole executrix.[101] Of course, simple practicality may have been at work; Thomas was then residing at Claines on the outskirts of Worcester,[102] while Bacon

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[96] The three subjects were 'The Prodigal Son' (1793, in terra cotta), 'Christ and the Woman of Samaria' (1794) and 'Christ in the Garden' (1795); see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 1, p. 90. For Bacon's submissions, see ibid, pp. 88-89.
[97] Will of John Bacon Senior, TNA, PROB 11/1328/204.
[98] Following Martha's death, that investment would have been divided among the eight surviving children; ibid.
[99] For her reflections on Bacon as the 'leading spirit' in the family and Thomas' fate, see Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', p. 239 and n. 3; and Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, p. 43.
[100] Owens, 'Property, gender and the life course', p. 313.
[101] Will of Thomas Bacon of Claines, Worcestershire, 26 November 1832, TNA, PROB 11/1807/243.
[102] For reference to an aunt and uncle living in Worcestershire, see Bacon, *Memoir of Miss Ann Bacon*, pp. 31-37.

had relocated to Sidmouth the year before. But Thomas' decision remained unaltered at his death in 1832, by which time he appears to have been residing in London.[103] Suspicion of lingering resentment is reinforced by Charlotte's decision in 1841 to also exclude Bacon from any position of responsibility for her own estate, instead naming her late husband's brother-in-law, Edward Norton Thornton and the latter's son-in-law, Josiah Iles Wathen as the executors of her will.[104]

If relations between the brothers had cooled following their father's death, tensions may have been eased by Thomas' decision to settle at Claines. His presence there may have been the cause of an extended visit to the city by Bacon, his wife and their three eldest children between 10-29 September 1815.[105] Certainly, Charles, his wife and children visited Thomas and his family at Worcester a little over two years later.[106] Although Thomas, his wife, Charlotte and their daughter, Matilda (b. 1803) (N285) are not mentioned in the relevant entries in Bacon's spiritual diary, the specificity of that document may explain this omission. More remarkable, perhaps, is the fact that no drawings—either portraits or landscapes—have been connected with either that visit to Worcester, or the lengthy journey which followed, taking the family into Somerset and Devon in October, with a confirmed stay in Wellington in the latter county, close to Maunsel House, the alleged ancestral seat.[107]

The artist's elder brother appears in two pictures dated 1827 and 1832, respectively. Of these, the former (N9; Fig. 70) is one of three portraits of Bacon's siblings, including Mary and Joshua, that date to October 1827, perhaps recalling an occasion when some of the family came together. The second, later portrait of Thomas shows him on his deathbed. The artist inscribed the sheet to record the circumstances of its creation. 'My dear brother Thomas, three days before his death which took place June 19th 1832. He opened his eyes and discerned what I was doing and gave a gentle nod of assent' (N42; Fig. 71). Together with the stylised rays of light depicted in the upper right corner of the sheet and the sentiment expressed in the inscription, this portrait seems comparable to the records of 'good deaths' found in the spiritual biographies with which Bacon was familiar

[103] In her will, Charlotte gives her address as Shawfield Street, Kings Road, Chelsea, and notes that she was the widow of 'Thomas Bacon late of the same place Gentleman'; see Will of Charlotte Bacon, Widow of Chelsea, Middlesex, 30 April 1850, TNA, PROB 11/2111/445.
[104] For her decision to remove Wathen from that role, see the codicil to that document, dated 5 September 1848; ibid.
[105] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 9, 16, 23 and 30 September 1815.
[106] Charles Bacon, diary 1816-17, 14-25 October 1817.
[107] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 7, 14 October 1815.

and himself an author. A likeness of Matilda was drawn in the same month and shows Bacon's niece as a young woman with her hair arranged atop her head, a long pendant earring and a dress featuring the low neckline and, seemingly, the voluminous 'leg o' mutton' sleeves then fashionable (N43; Fig. 72). Although it immediately follows that of her father in the sequence of Album One, there are no obvious signs of mourning in this picture, and it may have been executed shortly before Thomas' death.

The evidence considered here suggests that Bacon's relationships with his siblings varied considerably. It seems clear that not all of Bacon Senior's children had embraced regenerate faith, although this does not appear to have precluded them from access to Bacon's home. Although the artist presumably did not share in his brother Charles' interest in plays and dancing, the latter nonetheless cared for two of Bacon's daughters during his recovery from surgery and even joined him in the business at Newman Street. The personal and the professional overlap in this account of Charles' life, the most important source in the history of the family's interactions, in which Bacon figures frequently, if largely on the periphery. The few references to Thomas and the almost total absence of other figures, most notably Bacon Senior's daughters Mary and Elizabeth, may point to differences within the family that can only be guessed at. If Bacon's spiritual biography of Ann reveals an admiration that turned on their shared piety, his portrait drawings record his contact with several of his father's children later in life, regardless of their spiritual convictions, and presumably indicate positive relationships. Similarly, his portrait of Thomas on his deathbed suggests that whatever may have passed between the brothers was set to one side in the final days of the older man's life. Evincing the artist's faith in Thomas' salvation, this touching record of fraternal affection is perhaps the most striking evidence of the way in which Bacon's portrait practice combined affect with faith.

Husband and wife

In September 1801 Bacon married Susannah Sophia Taylor, the nineteen-year-old daughter of the Southwark wine-merchant Daniel Taylor (*c*. 1747-1827) and his wife Susannah. Of his bride's childhood, education and religious convictions, the connection between their families and the origin of their relationship, nothing has been discovered. Indeed, like both his mother and stepmother, Bacon's wife is almost entirely absent from the historical record: no documents in her hand have been identified in this research and

the evidence for her life and character that survives features in the visual and textual records created by Bacon and other members of their family.

Bacon's marriage came two years after the death of his father, whom he succeeded as owner of the leasehold property at 17 Newman Street that he continued to share with his widowed stepmother, Martha and, in all probability, her two youngest sons. Although not rendered homeless, and insulated by considerable wealth, Martha would have been keenly aware of her change of status within the family home. Bacon's new bride thus became mistress of a multi-generational home with several—possibly competing—sources of authority and it presumably required considerable tact on her part to navigate the sensitivities of the displaced matriarch and her fatherless sons.[108] It was a role for which she may have been well suited. In a short autobiographical document written in 1832, Susannah Sophia's youngest daughter, Augusta Maria, stated that 'My Mama is very good tempered, she is never out of temper'.[109] Such equanimity would have enabled Susannah Sophia to manage challenging situations, not least her husband's repeated absences from their home. Whether in London in connection with the studio, or travelling the country in the course of his voluntary activities, Susannah Sophia was often required to play the leading role in the household. Not only did the servants require directing and the house provisioning, but the education and spiritual needs of her children must have fallen to her care also—prayers still had to be said, even in the absence of her husband, who enjoyed the role of 'priest in my own house.'[110]

Whether dealing with a marginalised stepmother-in-law or other testing situations, few marriages continue long without difficulty, a truth of which Bacon seems to have been well aware. On one of his earliest portrait drawings of his wife, showing her as a young woman wearing a lacey bonnet, *c*. 1802, the word 'Foochoofoo!' is inscribed at upper right in an unknown hand, possibly Susannah Sophia's own (N174; Fig. 73).[111] Perhaps a pet name, this may also have been a humorously dismissive response to Bacon's inscription at lower right, in which he described himself as 'her troublesome husband'. Amusingly self-

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[108] Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, pp. 218-220.
[109] Augusta Maria Bacon, 'My Journal', January 1832, cited in Gertrude Bacon, 'Epilogue', p. 115.
[110] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 19 January 1819.
[111] Perhaps coincidentally, 'Foochoofoo' was one of the variant spellings of the contemporary romanization of Fuzhou, the city in China where Bacon's niece Henrietta (daughter of his half-brother Charles) lived in 1845-46 with her husband, the resident British Consul. See, for instance, Benjamin Clayton after Piqua, *Foo Choo Foo - One of the five ports opened by the late treaty to British Commerce*, 1847, lithograph, 153 x 233 mm, Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney, inv. 00003057.

deprecating, the latter remark may have served to acknowledge and diffuse tension within the couple's relationship. Indeed, there is evidence that, as he aged, Bacon was conscious of the difficulties that his temperament caused. In a letter to his daughter Harriet in 1829 Bacon would describe himself as,

> a man peculiar for providing against future contingencies—possible events of only common interest which I do not anticipate will necessarily take place: how much more then, to be consistent, ought I to be solicitous respecting things of supreme importance to myself or my children, which it is more than possible may occur?[112]

The depressive and anxious tone of his spiritual diary suggests that the artist was ravaged by an often overwhelming sense of guilt and inadequacy. To an unknown extent his concerns inevitably spilled over into the lives of those around him. In August 1818, the month after the family had settled at Sidmouth, Susannah Sophia was forced to intervene: 'My dear Wife told me a short time back that [my] anxious solicitude for the welfare of my family was carried too far. I acknowledge it – I ought to leave it more cheerfully to my gracious heavenly parent'.[113] The good temper noticed by her youngest daughter may have enabled Susannah Sophia to play a steadying role in her dealings with her husband.

Despite the difficulties that Bacon's temperament appears to have caused, the couple's relationship appears to have been quite tender. In the diary of his trip to Rotterdam, Bacon recorded the moving scene of his departure from London aboard *King of the Netherlands*:

> Four little figures on the customhouse wharf hold a sympathy with the fibres of my heart on parting; all the crowd besides I seem to care little for, my Nephew excepted*. Those little specks are my beloved Wife and daughters[.]
>
> I wave my hand repeatedly. I never do so, but it is instantly returned by my dear Wife, which shows she has her eye on no object but myself. O Woman what a faithful invaluable gift art thou to man. One of his cares hereafter will be that he has not duly appreciated this – "Heaven[']s last best gift" much more than he should ever that so blessed a gift with blight & unkindness. I am thankful that I have learned to value the gift. Adieu, beloved friend and partner – may you be preserved and blessed – adieu my beloved family – may we all be preserved to

[112] John Bacon Junior, *Memoir of Mrs. Edward Vivian*, p. 25.
[113] Emphasis in the original. Bacon, Spiritual diary, 4 August 1818.

> meet and embrace each other again, with the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace; and may Abraham[']s Servant[']s Chief Master prosper my way, and that of my friend who is with me.
>
> *My brother in law [*sic*] and other friends had come on board to take leave[.][114]

Symptomatic of the visceral quality of feeling in the age of sensibility, in which the body physically registers emotion,[115] Bacon's account reveals the intensity of his sentiments on departure, perhaps inspired by the risks associated with his journey by sea, for which he sought the aid of God, the 'Chief Master' of Abraham's servant sent abroad on a perilous mission (Genesis 24). The emotional and spiritual anxiety that this provoked in him was coupled with a sense of regret at failure to fully appreciate his wife earlier in their relationship, for not only is she the artist's 'beloved friend and partner', but his divinely mandated helpmeet, 'Heav'ns last best gift' of John Milton's (1608-74) *Paradise Lost* (1667).[116]

Significantly, there is some indication that Susannah Sophia was not herself a regenerate Christian in the early decades of their marriage. In August 1822 Bacon acknowledged the birthday shared by his wife and his sister Mary with an entry in his spiritual diary:

> My dear Wife[']s birth day. May the Lord bless and preserve her, and carry on that good work which I rejoice in assuring myself has taken place in her heart. Also my dear Sister Mary[']s birth day. I thank Thee, O Lord, on her account also; that she has chosen Thee for her portion in the Land of the living.[117]

The comparison that Bacon made between the two women is revealing: Mary had chosen God 'for her portion', suggesting that was already a regenerate Christian; but Bacon's appeal to God to 'carry on that good work' in his wife's heart suggests that Susannah Sophia had not yet converted or had only recently done so. A key aspect of evangelical faith, conversion was the moment at which the sinner found salvation in Christ. This might be experienced as a sudden transformation, such as that favoured by Methodists, and

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[114] The nephew referred to was probably Edward Thornton Junior, who had married Bacon's daughter Mary Ann the year before. John Bacon Junior, Rotterdam journal.
[115] Bailey 'A Very Sensible Man', pp. 276-277. For a discussion of the history of nerves as the mechanism for the internal transmission of emotions in the early-modern period, see G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago, IL and London, 1992), chapter 1.
[116] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Barbara K. Lewalski (Malden, MA and Oxford, 2007), p. 123.
[117] Bacon, Spiritual diary, 25 August 1822.

claimed by both John Wesley, who had felt his 'heart strangely warmed' in 1738, and family friend, John Newton, whose conversion occurred as a storm buffeted his slaver's vessel in 1747. Alternatively, it could occur as an evolving awareness of the necessity of reliance on God, such as that experienced by Bacon's sister Ann, whose 'spiritual birth-day' and its aftermath he recounted in his biography of her.[118]

Unlike four other women in his life,[119] Bacon does not appear to have written a spiritual biography of his wife, and so we lack a detailed record of her faith, whether in her own words, as with the diaries and letters of Ann and Harriet, from which Bacon quoted liberally, or as seen through the eyes of Bacon himself. But in the inscription on Susannah Sophia's tomb (discussed in Chapter Three), that Bacon almost certainly devised, we find some suggestion that her conversion could have occurred in the years after Bacon made his remarks in 1822:

> THOUGH NOT DISTINGUISHED BY ATTAINMENTS WHICH EXCITED
> GENERAL ADMIRATION SHE POSSESSED QUALITIES WHICH
> SECURED TO HER THE LOVE & ESTEEM OF ALL WHO KNEW HER
> ABOVE ALL SHE WAS A HUMBLE FOLLOWER OF HER LORD
> AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST WHOSE ATONEMENT & MERITS
> WERE THE JOYFUL THEME OF HER DAILY CONTEMPLATION
> ON THESE ALONE SHE RELIED FOR THAT SALVATION WHICH
> IT IS CONFIDENTLY TRUSTED SHE NOW INHERITS
> WITH SEVEN OF HER DAUGHTERS
> WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE BEFORE HER
> HER HUSBAND HAS SCULPTURED THIS TOMB
> WITH HIS OWN HANDS AS A FAINT TRIBUTE
> TO HER BELOVED MEMORY[120]

If 'good work' in her heart had still been required in 1822, the prominent reference here to Susannah Sophia's 'daily contemplation' of Christ's atonement—the central tenet of evangelicalism—suggests that she may have converted long before she died. Certainly,

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[118] Bacon, *Memoir of Miss Ann Bacon*, p. 16 et seq. For conversion, see Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure*, pp. 43-45; and Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, p. 11.

[119] While the fashion for such texts may have waned by mid-century, Gertrude Bacon records that Bacon wrote a 'little memoir' of his sister Mary Bacon (untraced), who died in 1858, and which may have been similar to his earlier efforts; see Gertrude Bacon, 'Epilogue', pp. 112-119.

[120] Revd Edward S. Medley, transcription of inscriptions on the tomb of Susannah Sophia Bacon and John Bacon Junior at Winchester, 19 June 1907, private collection.

Bacon 'confidently trusted' that she enjoyed the salvation that Christ's sacrifice promised all those who truly followed him. The great bulk of Bacon's own 'modest tribute' to his late wife, Susannah Sophia's tomb is the last and fitting honour that the artist could pay the woman whom, in 1824, he had regretted not appreciating more fully.

Finally, we must turn to Susannah Sophia's absence from the historical record. This absence seems particularly revealing within a family that acted to elaborate and preserve its material heritage over many generations, but clearly weighted toward the Bacons' patrilineal legacy. As with the untraced portrait of Martha with the infant Charles in her lap, this bias seems relevant to the fate of the only significant artefact of Susannah Sophia's own family, the Taylors, that has been identified in this research. In the will of her last surviving daughter, Elizabeth, we find a unique reference to a portrait of Susannah Sophia's father, the wine merchant Daniel Taylor by Sir William Beechey, with whom Bacon was associated. It seems that the portrait was purchased either by or for Susannah Sophia when her father's effects were sold following the death of his widow, Susannah. That task fell to Bacon and his two fellow executors, one of whom was his brother-in-law, Edward Norton Thornton, revealing the close-knit nature of the broader kinship network.[121] Beechey's portrait of Taylor was not recorded in Bacon's will, perhaps reflecting its status as his late wife's property, the fate of which may have been decided separately, as with her other possessions, notably her jewellery. This record of the family's matrilineal heritage, the work of an artist known to and admired by Bacon himself, evidently passed to Elizabeth, who chose to bequeath the portrait of her grandfather to her cousin, another Daniel Taylor.[122] In so doing, Elizabeth restored the portrait to its original context, seemingly affirming the primacy of patrilineal heritage for both families.

Parents and children

The concerns that Susannah Sophia expressed in 1818 at her husband's 'anxious solicitude' were later echoed in the artist's own words. In a letter to their daughter Harriet in October 1829, subsequently quoted in his memoir of her, Bacon noted that 'I frequently regret that I should myself be so grave and solemn an old man; as I fear my children may

[121] Will of Daniel Taylor, Wine Merchant of High Street Southwark, Surrey, 11 May 1827. TNA, PROB 11/1726/115.
[122] Elizabeth Bacon, Last will and testament. Which of her several cousins named Daniel Taylor remains unclear.

take up an idea that religion has made me so. No, my dear child, religion alone it is that makes me happy amidst all the vicissitudes and disappointments of this life.'[123] Connecting his melancholic disposition and the faith in which he found solace, Bacon revealed his concern for the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of his children, the two being intimately connected in his mind.

His anxiety aside, Bacon appears to have been an engaged and loving father to his ten children, peppering his private reflections and more public utterances with the language of sentiment. Like his half-brother Charles, Bacon was particularly alarmed by signs of illness among his offspring. A day after his daughter Christiana had appeared on the cusp of illness in February 1820 (N262; Fig. 74), Bacon implored the 'God of mercy [to] accept my heartfelt adoration and bless the dear Child with thy grace and love O! hear a tender parent[']s earnest prayer in this respect. Be Thou her portion, O! blessed Redeemer, this will be a better [gift] than ever I can give her.'[124] Deployed by Bacon, Joanne Bailey has noted the significance of the term 'tender' which, in the latter half of the eighteenth century was freighted with especial intensity for the relationship of parents with their children, investing such affective relationships with transformative power both within the home and society at large.[125] Even as the moment of crisis passed, Bacon implored God's aid, reminding us that the artist's affection for his children, and concern for their physical wellbeing, were inextricably linked with his concern for their spiritual salvation.

The great tragedy of the Bacons' life together was the poor health of their eight daughters, all but one of whom predeceased them. Both Elizabeth (the first of two daughters by that name, known as 'Eliza'; 1807-13) (N272; Fig. 75) and Emma (see Fig. 43) died very young. Of Elizabeth's death we have only her uncle Charles' account of finding Bacon, Susannah Sophia and 'the surviving Children as well as could be expected' two days before his niece's remains were interred in the vault beneath the Church of St Mary at Paddington Green.[126] If Charles' remarks only hint at the pain that Eliza's death wrought on his half-brother's family, Bacon's reflections on the illness and death of Emma nine years later highlight the complex nexus of affect and faith that afflicted an evangelical parent's

[123] John Bacon Junior, *Memoir of Mrs. Edward Vivian*, p. 26.
[124] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 10 February 1820.
[125] Bailey, 'A Very Sensible Man', pp. 274-76. See also Bailey, *Parenting in England*, chapter 1.
[126] Eliza died on 2 November 1813; Charles saw the family on 7 November before returning to Paddington for the funeral on 9 November; see Charles Bacon, Diary 1813-15, 2, 7 and 9 November 1813.

heart. From Kennington Green, looking toward the home of his sister Mary, where Emma lay dying, Bacon reflected on his 'beloved Child':

> I have come here to pray for her, and, to urge my insensible ^heart the more forcibly, I seek a view of the room where she lays. I do pray; I do supplicate – but am I not a Xtian parent – am I not one of them who believe in the irrevocable condition of the departed – am I not one who talkes [*sic*] about the overwhelming, transcending importance of Eternity over time! – where then are my agonies on account of the child – where is the perspiration rolling from my face while wrestling with the Angel of the covenant on her behalf! – O! "[one illegible word] it art in faith" I am obliged to <u>strive</u> to raise my heart – my sighs are alternately for her, and for my own insensibility. Not so with Thee, adorable Redeemer – let then my Sweet Child have an interest in that intercession which was offered with such agonies as caused Thy sacred blood to fall from Thy [one illegible word] ~~blessed~~ body[127]

The turmoil into which Bacon was thrown, the conflict between his faith and his natural affections, is evident in this passage and its emendations. Following Emma's death the following day, Bacon was thankful that God 'in [His] mercy to her affectionate parents hath suffered her to have [left] some little testimony behind her of (as I trust) the work of the Holy & blessed Spirit upon her heart'.[128] Evidence of that 'little testimony' was recorded in the memoir of Emma that was circulated in print thirteen years later, in particular her awareness of her own sinfulness, fear of hell, desire for spiritual conversation and her faith in Christ's atonement; in a moment alone she was 'overheard talking [to herself] of being "washed in his blood"'.[129] Stating that he believed 'with the Church of England, that all infants brought into this fallen world are, by nature, "born in sin, and the children of wrath"', Bacon candidly revealed that he 'desire[d] to see in my children, if they are old enough to possess ideas of any kind, and to express them, something which shall answer (in however slight a degree) to what the word of God reveals as a requisite work of divine grace in the heart.'[130]

As with other evangelicals, among whom spiritual responsibilities to their children were paramount,[131] education was central to Bacon's efforts to prepare his children for

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[127] Emphasis in the original; John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 18 July 1822.
[128] Ibid, 19 July 1822.
[129] John Bacon Junior, *Some Account of Emma Bacon*, pp. 28-29.
[130] Ibid, p. 27.
[131] Rosman stresses the importance of spiritual education in evangelical households; see Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp. 97-98.

their personal spiritual struggles and those challenges posed by the world. To this end, tutors and governesses were engaged at various times, but access to education beyond the confines of the family home came with its own risk. When Bacon's elder son, John (N170; Fig. 76) departed for school in early 1817, the artist reflected on his own reliance on God's 'heavenly hopes and affections,' without which he would not 'stand one moment alone':

> O may all my dear Family share in this blessing. My dear John is gone to School this day. "O that Ishmael may live before thee" and that we may all live to thee and thy service: that "to live may be Christ" and nothing but Christ in life and in death, and to all Eternity[132]

Like Ishmael, who would soon be turned out of his father Abraham's house, John stood in need of God's blessing that he might live his life in Christ and, presumably, not succumb to the temptations of the world. As Christopher Tolley has observed, in order to shield their school-age children from temptation evangelicals preferred to send them to small, private schools that mirrored as closely as possible the spiritual environment of their family home.[133] During their time living at Bromley, Kent, in the period 1821-23, both of Bacon's sons were despatched to one such school at Boxford in Suffolk run by the Revd William Plume (*c.* 1782-1847). In 1817 Plume had advertised his school as hosting a maximum of eight pupils to be educated in an environment in which they 'play by themselves, and are treated as a private Family.'[134] The latter claim to relative seclusion and domesticity was sure to inspire trust among anxious evangelical parents who would surely have been gratified to learn of Plume's membership of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, an organisation to which Bacon himself subscribed.[135] A formal letter to their parents anticipating a coming holiday, signed by both John and Thomas in May 1822, and suggestive of their schoolmaster hovering nearby, would have assured Bacon and wife that their sons were in safe hands.[136]

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[132] For the Biblical quotes, see Genesis 17:18, and compare Philippians 1:21. John Bacon Junior, Spiritual Diary, 1 February 1817.
[133] Tolley, *Domestic Biography*, p. 43; also, Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, p. 181.
[134] The curriculum of Plume's school included the standard fare of 'Writing, Arithmetic, the Latin and Greek Languages, &c.', presumably with suitable religious instruction also. See 'Royal Free Grammar School', *Bury and Norwich Post*, 8 January 1817, p. 1.
[135] See 'Associations out of London', 'Horkesley Little', in *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East. Nineteenth Year. 1818-1819* (London, 1819), unpaginated.
[136] John Bacon and Thomas Bacon to John Bacon Junior and Susannah Sophia Bacon, 30 May 1822, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 111.

Bacon's daughters appear to have enjoyed intermittent access to tutors and governesses, with references to lessons in French appearing in the short autobiographical text written by Augusta Maria (N267; Fig. 77).[137] In a similar text written in *c*. 1816, her eldest sister, Susannah Sophia (N260; Fig. 78) recalled attending a day school from about the age of three, and having lessons in French before the family's move to Paddington where she was 'entirely under the tuition of my dear Mamma' whose attention was divided between household duties and 'the education of two children besides myself'.[138] The young Susannah Sophia appears to have been something of an autodidact, learning scripture by heart, teaching herself to write from the servants' copy-books and—mimicking her father's interest in astronomy—'placing crabs eye beads in the form of the constellations I saw in the skye [*sic*].' Her youthful memoir reveals that order did not always reign in the family home, with one elderly governess baited until she left her post, leaving the children's mother responsible for their education until '[a]t length my Papa was more master of his own time & gave up his evenings to us[,] one evening he taught us geometry and the other geography.' Naturally, religion was not neglected, and for her sixth birthday, Susannah Sophia requested a Prayer Book from her father, while the following year she received both a Bible and a Hymn Book. In 1815 she 'wrote the sermon on the resrection [*sic*] of christ [*sic*]. An Essay on the duties of Husbands and On the duties of heads of families and several other things of little importance', indicating the extent to which her informal education turned on questions of the correct integration of religion and family life, and her own anticipated duties as a wife and mother.

Eventually a more formal system of education was required and, at about the time that she was writing essays on patriarchal authority, Susannah Sophia and an unnamed sibling (or siblings) were enrolled at Mrs North's school at Lisson Street, close to Paddington Green, where the girls received lessons in Latin and French, with the possibility of Italian also. Later, at least two of Bacon's daughters were sent to boarding school in Bedford. In his memoir of Harriet, Bacon records that in 1820 she, together with her sister Emma, were enrolled at the Moravian Ladies' School in that city. It was an establishment, her father later observed, 'where every thing was favourable to the advancement of religion in her mind', despite which 'it did not appear that her [Harriet's] religious impressions kept pace with her advantages at this time'.[139] This was an implicit

[137] Augusta Maria Bacon, 'My Journal', 1832, cited in Gertrude Bacon, 'Epilogue', p. 114.
[138] Susannah Sophia Bacon, MS 'Life of S. S. Bacon', *c*. 1816, private collection.
[139] John Bacon Junior, *Memoir of Mrs. Edward Vivian*, pp. 7-8.

acknowledgement of the personal nature of one's relationship with God, for which the anxious parent might provide the necessary framework, but of which no guarantee could be given, and hints at the frustrations that Bacon experienced in fashioning his godly family. The choice of school was hardly incidental and must reflect a favourable opinion of Moravian spirituality, as well as the Protestant ecumenicism evident in Bacon's voluntary activity in the same period (see Chapter Five). The latter was common to the late eighteenth-century evangelical movement generally, and was true of several figures close to Bacon in his formative years: John Newton included the Moravian Benjamin La Trobe (1728-86) in the deliberations of the Eclectic Society;[140] while Rowland Hill and Basil Woodd each supported the Moravians' Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel among the Heathen.[141]

The artist's concern for the spiritual edification of his family did not preclude enjoyments of the more innocent kind. Bacon led his family on walks and pleasure trips, taking in historic sites and natural marvels that both he and his children would, at least on occasion, recorded in sketches. While Bacon's children's artistic pursuits will be examined in Chapter Six, it will suffice here to note the example of a sketching trip in a valley near Teignmouth, Devon, that Bacon took with his daughters Elizabeth and Augusta Maria in 1843. Depicted from behind, and enveloped in longs dresses, cloaks and bonnets, the features of the two women are entirely invisible (Fig. 79).[142] Not so their sketchbooks, at which they each work recording a house on the roadside before them. Bacon's inscription on the drawing is revealing, noting that of the two women, 'the latter of them has preserved her sketch – the former tore hers out of the book, and threw it over the hedges – so that I never got sight of it.' Elizabeth, it seems, was a spirited personality, challenging any assumption that the Bacon women were merely simpering domestics. Two other drawings from August of the same year show women of the family, including Bacon's wife and a female friend, Mrs Mantell, mounted on donkeys as they admire the Devon landscape.[143] Although these drawings do not depict activities undertaken when his children were young, it seems likely that they are indicative of the outdoor pursuits that

[140] D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *John Newton and the English Evangelical Tradition: Between the Conversions of Wesley and Wilberforce* (2nd ed., Grand Rapids, MA and Cambridge, 2001), p. 313.
[141] Yeldham, *Maria Spilsbury*, p. 34.
[142] John Bacon Junior, *Brindley Vale*, 12 July 1843, pencil, 254 x 203 mm, private collection.
[143] John Bacon Junior, *View on Halden Hill*, 15 August 1843, pencil and watercolour, 254 x 203 mm; and *Mamma and Mrs Mantell*, *c*. August 1843, pencil and watercolour, 254 x 203 mm; both private collection.

they would have enjoyed throughout their time in the South West, and that were promoted by evangelical writers in the period.[144]

In 1823, during the family's time at Bromley, Bacon's second daughter, Mary Ann married her first cousin, Edward Thornton Junior, son of her paternal aunt Elizabeth. Three years later Christiana wed the Revd John Medley (N16; Fig. 80), whose early evangelism gave way to High Church practices associated with Tractarianism.[145] In 1832 Harriet married Edward Vivian (N48; Fig. 81), a banker in Cornwall, their marriage ending with her early death less than two years later. Finally, Bacon's youngest daughter, Augusta Maria married the magistrate John Coke Fowler (1815-99) in 1844. With the exception of Fowler, of whom a portrait by the Revd John survives (N138; Fig. 82), portraits by Bacon of each of his sons-in-law are found in his *oeuvre*. Portraits of the children of these marriages—Bacon's grandchildren—are numerous, and surviving correspondence suggests that these reflect the artist's keen interest in the next generation of his growing family.[146] Of his daughters who had reached adulthood, only Susannah Sophia and the second Elizabeth died unmarried. While, as the only one of the Bacons' daughters to outlive them, and perhaps from a sense of obligation, Elizabeth dwelt with her parents until their deaths, leaving Bacon's final home in Bath to settle again in Sidmouth (N80; Fig. 83).

Bacon's eldest son, the Revd John, was admitted to Corpus Christi College at Cambridge in 1826, before graduated MA in 1834 (N263; Fig. 84).[147] Two autograph versions of Bacon's portrait of John in academic dress survive (N330), a rare occurrence in his *oeuvre*. With his son, Bacon explored questions of a spiritual nature. In correspondence concerning the younger man's genealogical research, it is evident that the question of the dissenting status of Bacon Senior and his father Thomas, was an issue of some importance for the artist. Although Bacon sought to defend his father and grandfather from the charge of schism perhaps levelled against them by his son, arguing that 'in their days the Churches were like the dead vaults beneath them', it is clear that his forefathers' spiritual state was a point of concern.[148] Perhaps the more so as he was himself baptized by Samuel Brewer

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[144] Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp. 127-129; and Tolley, *Domestic Biography*, p. 39.
[145] 'A Pusey Priest', *Western Times*, 25 December 1841, p. 2.
[146] John Bacon Junior to the Revd John Bacon, 25 November 1839, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 30.
[147] John Venn and John Archibald Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses: A Biographical List of All Known Students, Graduates and Holders of Office at the University of Cambridge, from the Earliest Times to 1900* (Cambridge, 1940), part 2, vol. 1, p. 110.
[148] John Bacon Junior to the Revd John Bacon, 25 November 1839, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', pp. 29-30.

(1724-96), a friend of the prominent early Methodist, the Revd George Whitefield (1714-70) and, as Bacon Senior had duly recorded, 'a dissenting minister from Stepney.'[149] While defending Brewer's memory, and highlighting the sainted examples of his sister Ann and daughter Harriet, baptised by dissenting and Lutheran ministers, respectively, Bacon nonetheless quizzed his son whether the established Church recognized baptisms such as his own. If not, he wondered, would the 'Church consider me a fit subject for baptism? I should be rather an old baby, but, were I sure I were not doing wrong in coming to the font under such circumstances I should have pleasure in doing so.'[150] It has not been established whether Bacon underwent a second baptism at the hands of his son or another clergyman of the Church of England, but the episode is evidence of the artist's enduring struggle to attain salvation.

Bacon's second son, the Revd Thomas, appears to have been a rather less conventional character, perhaps even chafing at the restrictions of his evangelical upbringing. Following his time at the Revd Plume's school in Suffolk, Thomas enrolled in the Honourable East India Company's Military Seminary at Addiscombe, Surrey, a technical training facility for the Company's army in India, where the curriculum included "the art of Civil, Military, and Lithographic Drawing and Surveying".[151] The boy's education complete, in March 1831, Bacon accompanied his seventeen-year-old son to Portsmouth from where he sailed to the subcontinent aboard *Lady Nugent* to serve with the Company's Bengal Horse Artillery. Echoing Sir John Kennaway's desire for a portrait of his son Lawrence under almost identical circumstances eleven years earlier,[152] and perhaps conscious of that young man's demise in Bengal only two years later, at Plymouth Bacon took Thomas' likeness (N265; Fig. 85).

The year following his return from India in 1836, Thomas began studying law, and was admitted to the Bar in 1841.[153] Bacon's portrait of him from mid-1842 shows Thomas bald, bearded and soberly attired (N78; Fig. 86).[154] But by 1846 he had joined his brother in

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[149] Brewer baptised five of Bacon Senior's six children by his first wife; the eldest, Ann, was baptised by Mr Hindman, 'a Dissenting Minister at Plymouth.' See John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 81.
[150] Ibid, p. 30.
[151] J. M. Bourne, 'The East India Company's Military Seminary, Addiscombe, 1809–1858', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 57:232 (Winter 1979), pp. 206, 208.
[152] Sir John Kennaway to John Bacon Junior, 15 July 1820, private collection.
[153] H. A. C. Sturgess, *Register of Admissions to the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, from the fifteenth century to the year 1944* (London, 1949), p. 489.
[154] Thomas' 'upper story' [*sic*] was 'unthatched' following an illness contracted in India; see Thomas Bacon, *First Impressions and Studies from Nature in Hindostan: Embracing an Outline of the Voyage to Calcutta, and Five Years Residence in Bengal and the Doáb, from MDCCCXXXI to MDCCCXXXVI* (2

the church, serving in both Gibraltar and Malta prior to posts in Britain. Judging by surviving correspondence, this development came as a relief to at least some in his extended family. In a letter that year from Shanghai to her uncle, the Revd Samuel Bacon in New Brunswick, Thomas' cousin Emma Bacon (b. 1817) expressed relief at his turn to 'so sacred a profession' and expressed the hope that 'nothing may divert him from the real interest and zeal' that this seemed to reveal.[155] In 1848, Bacon depicted his son in his clerical robes (N99), noting in the index to Album Two that he was then senior curate of All Souls in the family's old parish, Marylebone in London.

Following Bacon's death in 1859, it was at Sidmouth that Elizabeth, together with her two brothers, the artist's last surviving children, chose to erect a stained-glass window as a monument to their parents. The large and vividly-coloured window in the south transept of the Anglican church, St Giles with St Nicholas, features a central panel showing Christ preaching to the Apostles, beneath which a coat of arms is prominently displayed. Shown quartered with an unidentified shield—a white lion statant on a red field—are the arms of the Bacons of Maunsel Hall, a final assertion of the family's claim to genteel origins. That monument keeps company with the window donated by Queen Victoria in honour of her father, the Duke of Kent, Bacon's sometime patron, on whose death he had commented at length in his spiritual diary. Following her death in 1867, Elizabeth's nieces and nephews erected a further window in her honour in the same church, further cementing the family's link to the seaside resort to which they had first retired in 1818.

Conclusion

In the spiritual biography of his sister Ann, with which this chapter opened, Bacon celebrated the example of a regenerate Christian from within the ranks of his own family. The similar accounts of his daughters Emma and Harriet—and perhaps the untraced memoir of his sister Mary, also—were testimony not only to the significance of their examples for other Christians, but also to the artist's efforts to shape the narrative of a godly family. Bacon's lamentation at the fate of Emma in his spiritual diary makes it clear that this was no cynical ploy. Rather, it expressed his search for evidence of the salvation of

vols., London, 1837), vol. 1, p. 266. This detail makes it clear that the Revd John is the sitter in N320, rather than the Revd Thomas, as previously identified by me; see Norman, 'The Portrait Drawings of John Bacon the Younger', p. 76.

[155] Emma Bacon to the Revd Samuel Bacon, 2 April 1847, PANB, MC4045-MS11-D-7.

his loved ones that, in the case of his children, was a reflection of the success of his own efforts to raise them in a carefully structured evangelical environment. As the testimony of his half-brother Charles' diary suggests, however, regenerate faith was not uniform within the Bacon clan. If the latter's lifestyle did not exclude him from his brother's table, or preclude him from a tentative business partnership with the artist, it is nonetheless indicative of the significant differences that differing spiritual convictions stimulated in the lifestyles of members of the kinship network. Unfortunately, such differences could be extreme and several examples were realised in galling public embarrassments, including Joshua's bankruptcy, the financial scandal caused by Wathen's duplicity and, perhaps, Thomas' decision to embrace—and publicise—his unregenerate ways during his time in the armed forces (see Chapter Six). If Wathen's absence from the artist's 'record of friendship' is arresting evidence of the way in which the portraits expressed the artist's emotional priorities, the wide range of relationships that *are* recorded suggests the generally accommodating nature of the friendship that Bacon sought to capture. The wealth of detail that emerges from a close study of the transmission of sentimentally-charged objects through testamentary bequests brings us closer to understanding the complexity of these relationships and the overlapping narratives of faith and gentility within the kinship network. Equally, it reveals some of the ways in which objects, and portraits in particular, functioned to perpetuate these intimate connections.

If it is the close reading of the portraits and surviving texts together that illuminates the spaces between the drawings, revealing the interaction between the likenesses and the emotional lives of the artist and his sitters, then a similar process might inform our understanding of his portraits of those from beyond the kinship network. A large number of Bacon's portraits record individuals with whom he appears to have been connected via associational activity. While aspects of that work were recorded in the annual reports of each organisation, the extent to which the portraits speak to the nature and scope of the artist's commitments, whether spiritual, charitable or political, is the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter Five

Associational Life

A relic of Bacon's time at the Royal Academy Schools is the 'diploma' of the 'Original Academy' presented to Bacon's friend and fellow student, Stephen Rigaud in January 1794 (Fig. 87). Signed by Rigaud, Thomas Bacon and Bacon (as 'president'), the document records that 'We The President & Council, Of The Privy Original Academy, Do Give You.— Mr. Stephen, Francis, Rigaud; This Diploma, As A Certificate of your Reception, To The Office of Academician; Hereby Granting Unto You, All the Privileges Thereof'.[1] The combination of language, engraving and the wafer seal mimics aspects of the diplomas presented to members of the Royal Academy, to which all three men may be supposed to have then aspired. Significantly, the document was created in the same year that Bacon and Rigaud were awarded gold and silver medals, respectively, for their efforts in the Royal Academy Schools.[2]

A gentle satire, the 'Original Academy' may reveal a degree of ambiguity in the men's relationships with, and dependence upon, the RA. But if they chafed at the academy's regulations, Bacon, at least, developed an awareness of the benefits to be derived from membership of such exclusive organisations. In 1803 he successfully sought election to the Society of Antiquaries,[3] and made use of the identifying postnominals

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[1] "Diploma" issued to Stephen Francis Rigaud, 4 January 1794, Royal Academy of Arts, London, RAA/SEC/1/121. The document consists of an engraved border that is laid down on the primary support, framing the inscribed text. Inscriptions in red ink in Bacon's hand are found at upper left, 'Original Academy', and upper right, 'Jany 4th 1794'. Bacon also signed at the foot of the document, again in red ink: 'J[oh]n Bacon Jun. Pres[iden]^{t} O[riginal]A[cademy]. S.[?]M.[?]S.[]R[oyal].A[cademy]'. Beneath this, in brown ink, are the signatures of Rigaud, 'S F Rigaud. P[rivy]C[ouncillor].O[riginal] A[cademy]. S[tudent?]L[icentiate?]: R[oyal]A[cademy]', and Thomas Bacon, also 'PC.OA.SLRA.'. A wafer seal of a female head in profile is affixed at lower left. I am grateful to Dr Robin Simon for his thoughts on the postnominals.

[2] List of winners of prizes, 1769-1880, Royal Academy of Arts, London, RAA/KEE/3/1.

[3] Minute Book, vol. XXIX, 19 November 1801-16 June 1803, Society of Antiquaries of London, London, pp. 474, 506, 514, 520. A review of the minute books through until Bacon's death in 1859 reveals that he never gave a lecture, presented a paper or nominated a prospective member. I am

('FSA') throughout the rest of his life. In the same year, Bacon campaigned for election as an association member of the RA ('ARA') for the first time. In this, he was disappointed, and each of his six further attempts to gain the approbation of his peers met in failure, the last in 1811.[4]

In the year following his final attempt, Bacon appears to have pivoted towards associations of a different kind, ones in which his spiritual concerns and social aspirations were entwined. Between 1812 and the early 1850s, Bacon can be identified as a supporter, subscriber to, or committee member of at least fifteen different voluntary associations, many simultaneously. These ranged from local charitable institutions to influential national organisations, with his activities registered at both levels. His involvement in at least eleven other charities or causes is documented, including philanthropic efforts to solicit funds for hospitals and victims of fires. Finally, from 1835, when he publicly aligned himself with the Conservative party in Devon, his associational activity took on an increasingly political dimension, one that was predicated on perceived threats to Britain's Protestant settlement. Not only does Bacon's career illustrate the diverse nature of voluntary activity in the period, but it is possible to identify this as a spiritually-inflected substitute for his earlier, more worldly aspirations. In this he may have found a compelling substitute for the camaraderie and opportunities for social and professional advancement afforded by the RA and the accolades that he never received.

Drawing extensively on reports in local newspapers, this chapter is concerned with Bacon's associational activities, and the ways in which these registered in his portrait drawings. In contrast to portraits of family and close friends, these might be characterised as evidence of his 'public' life. As Amanda Vickery has observed, the meaning of 'public' is ambiguous, ranging from employment and political activities, through the company one keeps to 'the world outside the front door'.[5] While this might suggest that 'public' is simply an inversion of 'private' or 'domestic', a notion challenged by Davidoff and Hall,[6] the precise meaning of the term depends on the analytical framework in which it is deployed, and Vickery cautions that its use must be consistent with that of the historical subject.[7] In

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grateful to Barbara Canepa, then of the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London, for this information. None of the seven fellows who supported his candidacy are among the sitters identified in this research.

[4] For Bacon's successive attempts, see General Assembly Minute Books, Royal Academy of Arts, London, RAA/GA/II, pp. 11, 53; and RAA/GA/III, pp. 250, 286, 333, 376, 397.

[5] Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *Historical Journal*, 36:2 (June 1993), p. 412.

[6] See Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 13-35.

[7] Vickery, 'Golden Age', p. 412.

Bacon's case, we might first recall the self-imposed limits among evangelicals, for whom traditional forms of sociability were either secular pleasures at odds with serious religion or actual threats to one's spiritual wellbeing.[8] In marked contrast were those activities associated with voluntary societies, in the sober meetings of which 'respectable' elements of the community forged new bonds in the pursuit of common religious and social goals. In his retreat from the studio, this was the arena to which Bacon increasingly turned, recording in his spiritual diary his 'public speeches' and appearances before 'publick [*sic*] assemblies'.[9] However, the artist contrasted his contributions to those events with his innermost self as part of the spiritual self-examination in which he sought evidence of his own salvation.

> Last Tuesday I made a loudly applauded speech in a crowded audience at Blackfriars Church. O how little are these public appearances a criterion of the state of the heart. At the times when I have made my most commended speeches, and which have been by other speakers alluded to for their piety, my own heart has been in a wretched state. Tis easy to put on an appearance. Tis easy to repeat principles one has sucked in with one[']s mother[']s milk.

This evidence of Bacon's inner turmoil highlights a tension between his role as an advocate of evangelicalism and his personal relationship with God. The former was his 'duty', despite the anxiety that it caused him and his own stated preference to 'discontinue this publicity, and live [as] a more retired Xtian'.[10]

But if Bacon's retreat into suburban seclusion aligns him with accounts of middle-class withdrawal found in histories of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British urbanism, in which Evangelicalism plays a role,[11] his decision to embed himself in the world of committees and auxiliaries highlights a crucial tension. Even as he sought refuge in the quasi-rural idylls of Paddington and Sidmouth, Bacon engaged with an ever-widening circle of individuals who sought to confront the problems that they believed afflicted their society and, wider still, Britain's imperial possessions. In doing so, he retained a stake in the

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[8] Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations*, pp. 100-103; also Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure*, pp. 42, 68, 70, 72.

[9] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 8 February 1817 and 29 August 1818.

[10] Ibid, 4 December 1818 and 26 July 1820.

[11] Borsay identifies urban segregation and the suburban drift of the middle classes as early as the first half of the eighteenth century; see Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town 1660-1770* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 296-297. Elsewhere, Rodger argues that the first 'conscious suburbanisation', creating new 'socially intact areas', in which Evangelicalism was instrumental, only occurred in the years 1815-50; see Rodger, *Housing in urban Britain*, pp. 38-40.

world, one that demanded of him both time and money, but also, crucially, contact with the unregenerate whose ways he sought to mend.

Despite finding such activity taxing, as we have seen, Bacon persevered with his commitments, taking on multiple roles in a range of organisations. This was not unusual, and within his own circle, men such as John Rashdall (N61; Fig. 88) and the sometime mayor of Exeter, Dr Edward Macgowan (1795-1860) (N60; Fig. 89), can be found leading or supporting causes as diverse as the West of England Institution for the Instruction and Employment of the Blind and the Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews, as well as the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS).[12] The tendency to pursue membership of multiple associations simultaneously has been highlighted by Peter Clark, who has also stressed the need to distinguish between those who simply paid their annual subscriptions, and those who devoted themselves to administration and activism.[13] Like Rashdall and Macgowan, Bacon varied his degree of commitment to different organisations. Of his many commitments, those to the BFBS and the Church Missionary Society (CMS) proved the most lasting, as well as receiving the bulk of his attention. While the pattern of his activity will be outlined in greater detail below, it is first worth considering the nature of associational activity in the period and how this has been interpreted.

Associations and voluntary activity of all kinds have been identified as mechanisms that facilitated new identities within a society in the throes of industrial and demographic change. In a Marxist analysis of associational history in Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, R. J. Morris has argued that associations played a role in the formation of class, forging a common identity for the middling sort in their pursuit of greater agency, despite being otherwise divided by politics and religion. While religion is not wholly excluded from his assessment, it features largely as a device utilized in the programme of middle-class assertiveness that Morris claims was in in response to competition for power with the gentry and aristocracy above, and in the face of the growing social and political challenges from the working class below.[14] Despite doubting the role of associations in creating the 'middle-class consciousness' suggested by Morris,

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[12] For Macgowan, see W. T. Gidney, *The History of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews* (London, 1908), pp. 181, 209, 239.
[13] Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, p. 218.
[14] Morris, 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites', pp. 96, 99, 101, 109; Morris, 'Clubs, societies and associations', p. 407; and Morris, 'Civil Society and the nature of urbanism: Britain, 1750-1850', *Urban History*, 25:3 (December 1998), p. 292; also Morris' position as characterised by Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, p. 444.

Peter Clark contends that the new type of subscription organisation that typifies voluntary associations in the period led to both larger and more widely distributed memberships. This facilitated shared activity in pursuit of goals at home and abroad, drawing together diverse members from across society while reducing the risk of 'social confusion' by limiting direct contact between them.[15] The model of branch societies, or 'auxiliaries', that accommodated the extent of these operations, was embraced by many organisations, including the BFBS, of which Bacon became a prominent member and representative of the parent society at branch meetings throughout the South West of England. By 1800, Clark argues, the 'thickening web' of associations had become a powerful force within British society, displacing older forms of 'public sociability' to exercise the moral and philanthropic role so indicative of later Victorian culture.[16]

In contrast with the relative neglect of religion in Morris' analysis, Bacon's example suggests the need to reconsider the spiritual imperative that motivated many evangelical Christians. Frank Prochaska has argued for 'a philanthropic *disposition*, Christian in character, geared to the giver as well as the recipient' that, he argues, underpinned evangelical voluntary activity and fitted neatly with prevailing concerns about state intervention.[17] Whatever else the social and political agendas of men like Bacon may have been—and that these overlapped need not be doubted[18]—it seems impossible to exclude religion from the historical situation in which associational activity manifested itself.

Family tradition

Bacon's interest in voluntary associations may have had its origin in the related activities of his father. Both as an ARA (1770) and then full academician, Bacon Senior participated in the administration and social events of the RA Academy. Presumably this included the exclusive social events that accompanied the annual exhibition, of the kind that has been identified by Peter Clark as central to the sense of community that associations in the period to 1800 could foster.[19] In its feasting and associated drinking and

[15] Ibid, p. 216.
[16] Ibid, pp. 135, 139, 233.
[17] Prochaska, 'Philanthropy', pp. 377-378.
[18] While advocating analysis of the religious motivations of benefactors, Cavalho warns against a monocausal model of charitable activity; see Sandra Cavalho, 'The Motivations of Benefactors: An overview of approaches to the study of charity', in eds. Jonathan Barry and Colin Jones, *Medicine and Charity Before the Welfare State* (London, 1991), pp. 50-51.
[19] Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp. 225-227.

toasting, the Royal Academy appears to have conformed with contemporary modes of masculine sociability, which could present difficulties for evangelicals. Objecting to the toasts and songs at the banquets of the historic Muscovy or Russian Company, the influential first-generation evangelical John Thornton (1720-90) refused to become a governor of that organisation.[20] Similarly, John Russell struggled with the society of his fellow artists and their profane language, fleeing academy dinners early for fear of their unregenerate ways.[21]

More salubrious company was to be found elsewhere. From its inception in 1783, Bacon Senior was one of the few lay members of the Eclectic Society, a small evangelical discussion group established by John Newton.[22] For the influence that it exerted, Bruce Hindmarsh has characterised the group as 'an important focus for extra-ecclesiastical evangelical leadership'.[23] Several initiatives grew out of its membership, of which Bacon Senior was closely linked to the Sunday School movement, as well as being a member of the founding committee of the CMS.[24] The latter was a Church of England organisation founded in 1799, in which Bacon Senior served alongside Newton, and two members of the influential Clapham Sect, an informal, but nevertheless effective alliance of evangelicals, including the Revd John Venn (1759-1813) and the banker Henry Thornton, son of the aforementioned John.[25]

Voluntary associations and visual precedents

Other than his portrait of Newton, with whom he was close, there is no evidence that Bacon Senior's associational activity resulted in a specifically visual record. However, his own features appear in a painting of assembled Royal Academicians by Johann Zoffany

[20] Meacham, *Henry Thornton*, p. 2.
[21] Williamson, *John Russell*, pp. 20, 28, 33-34.
[22] When Pratt's account of the Eclectic Society's meetings begins in 1798, Bacon was the only layman among the members; see Pratt, *Eclectic Notes*, p. 1.
[23] Hindmarsh, *John Newton and the English Evangelical Tradition*, pp. 310, 313.
[24] For his involvement in the Sunday School movement, see Cecil, *Memoirs of John Bacon*, p. 54. For Bacon Senior as one of many subscribing 'governors' of the Sunday School Society, see *Plan of a Society Established in London, For the Support and Encouragement of Sunday-Schools In the different Counties of England* (London, 1788), p. 18.
[25] For the foundation of the CMS, its original committee and officers, see Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, Its Men, And Its Work* (3 vols., London, 1899), vol. 1, pp. 68-70.

(1733-1810)[26] and, importantly, in the series of individual portraits drawn by his fellow academician, the architect George Dance (Fig. 90).[27] In early 1793 Dance began a portrait project that, at least initially, appears to have been limited to the likenesses of Royal Academicians, showing each sitter bust-length and in profile, echoing the formal concerns found in Bacon Senior's own portraits. While the parameters of his series rapidly expanded to include individuals who were not affiliated with the academy, the initial outcome of the undertaking was a portfolio of fifty-three portrait drawings that Dance either presented or sold to the RA in 1797. Initial attempts at reproductive etchings after Dance's drawings date from 1802, and were finally realised in 1808 as *A Collection of Seventy-two Portraits of Eminent Characters Sketched from Life since the Year 1793 by George Dance, Esq. R.A. and engraved in imitation of the Original Drawings by William Daniell, A.R.A.*[28] But in addition to the high-profile figures found in these two series, Dance also drew individuals who might be described as 'private'. These included the wife and mother of the artist and diarist Joseph Farington RA (1747-1821), thus revealing the social aspect of this nominally leisure-time activity, which Dance practiced only on Saturdays and Sundays.[29]

Dance's portrait practice is connected to a tradition with its origins in antiquity, and which had been realised in the spread of portraiture in civic spaces in early modern Britain, such as livery halls.[30] By the early seventeenth century groups of portraits were common decorative and iconographic elements in British libraries, often taking the form of portrait busts.[31] Sculpture also features in the so-called Temple of British Worthies in the park at Stowe (*c*. 1736), designed by William Kent (*c*. 1685-1748) as a tribute to English liberty and which incorporates portrait busts of military, political and cultural figures, both historic and contemporary.[32] Elsewhere, an important series of portraits of members of the Kit-Cat Club (fl. 1696-1720) by Sir Godfrey Kneller reveals how pictorial strategies could be used to promote a common identity among diverse sitters. Painted for the home of one of the club's members, the publisher Jacob Tonson (1655-1736), where the group met, Kneller's

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[26] Johan Zoffany, *The Academicians of the Royal Academy*, 1771-72, oil on canvas, 1011 x 1475 mm, The Royal Collection, inv. RCIN 400747.
[27] George Dance, *Portrait of John Bacon, R.A.*, 13 April 1793, pencil with pink chalk, 248 x 185 mm, Royal Academy of Arts, London, inv. 03/2665.
[28] For an outline of Dance's portrait series, see Sloan, 'Drawing for Business', pp. 31, 32-33.
[29] Ibid, p. 32.
[30] Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *The Culture of Giving: Informal Support and Gift Exchange in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 238-239.
[31] Malcolm Baker, 'The Portrait Sculpture', in ed. David McKitterick, *The Making of the Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 114-115.
[32] Ibid, p. 114.

modestly-scaled portraits eschewed the posturing of earlier court portraiture. Instead the group commemorated both the cultural patronage and predominantly Whig politics of the influential members through a close physical engagement with the viewer enabled by the relatively small size of the uniform canvases and a corporate identity that reflected the club's nominally egalitarian structure.[33] Similarly, from the early 1770s, Sir Joshua Reynolds painted twelve members of his Literary Club (established 1764) for the Streatham home of the members' mutual friends, Henry (1724/30-1781) and Hester Thrale (later Piozzi; 1741-1821). Nadia Tscherny has remarked on the unusual frankness of Reynolds' Streatham series, in which the physical defects of the sitters, including Reynolds' own deafness and the short-sightedness of the literary critic Giuseppe Marc Antonio Baretti (1719-89), were deployed as representative characteristics. While Tscherny has linked this evidence of the sitters' individuality to growing literary interest in detailed or 'intimate' biography—a genre in part credited to the writer Samuel Johnson, who also featured in the series[34]—this aspect of the portraits also communicates the intimacy of the setting and the familiarity of both the artist, the Thrales, and all of those depicted.

But, as Marcia Pointon has observed, the interest in historical and cultural luminaries revealed in portrait groups like the 'Streatham Worthies'—so dubbed by the writer and diarist Fanny Burney (1752-1840), whose father, the composer and historian Dr Charles Burney (1726-1814), was among the sitters[35]—is also connected to the role that portraits played in formulating national history during the eighteenth century.[36] In her discussion of the Revd James Granger's (1723-76) *A Biographical History of England* (1769), Pointon has considered the way in which portrait heads, together with the taxonomic system that Granger devised, were instrumental in creating a historical narrative focused on personalities, particularly evident in the fashion for the extra-illustration ('grangerizing') of historical texts that developed as a result. This was also translated into periodical literature and applied to eminent figures from contemporary life. From its foundation in

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[33] Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, pp. 40-43. For Kneller's portraits of members of the club, see 'The Kit-cat Club portraits: paintings by Sir Godfrey Kneller, circa 1697-1721', National Portrait Gallery, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/set/347/The+Kit-cat+Club+portraits%3A+by+Sir+Godfrey+Kneller, accessed 28 December 2021.

[34] Nadia Tscherny, 'Reynolds's Streatham Portraits and the Art of Intimate Biography', *Burlington Magazine*, 128:994 (January 1986), pp. 7-9. For Tscherny's observations, see also Martin Postle, ''The Modern Apelles': Joshua Reynolds and the Creation of Celebrity', in ed. Martin Postle, *Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity*, exhibition catalogue, Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara, 13 February-1 May 2005, and elsewhere (London, 2005), p. 20.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, p. 60.

1782, *The European Magazine and London Review* included a portrait of a distinguished individual at the beginning of every issue. Each portrait was followed by biographical notes, in keeping with the journal's policy that it was 'their first object to give an account of those persons who distinguish themselves in the service of their country, or who are made remarkable by other means'.[37] As those portrayed ranged from royalty and aristocrats, through figures from politics, the military and the arts and sciences, the choice of subject was either topical or, in the case of some, simply fashionable.

We can be confident that both Bacon and Bacon Senior were familiar with literature of this kind. In August 1790 Bacon Senior's likeness featured in the *European Magazine*. Although it went unacknowledged at the time, the engraved portrait of the artist derived from that by Mason Chamberlin of 1785, then in the sitter's own collection.[38] The narrow border that frames Bacon Senior's oval portrait stands in marked contrast to the elaborate arrangement surrounding the portrait of King Gustavus III of Sweden (1746-92) in the same issue, that, with its palms of victory and fictive architecture, nods to traditional expressions of hierarchy.[39] The question of who was represented and how is relevant when considering the second example of a published gallery of portraits with which Bacon would have been familiar, if only through John Russell, whose involvement has been documented by his biographers.[40] From its founding in 1793 the *Evangelical Magazine* prefaced almost every issue with an engraved portrait of a clergyman. An editorial in the first edition made clear the purpose of the accompanying biographical notes which would 'arrest the mind of the reader, and make a deep impression',[41] and the editors sought out accounts of the 'life and labours' of suitable subjects to enjoy 'everlasting remembrance.'[42] As with the engraving of Bacon Senior in the *European Magazine*, between 1793 and 1803, to consider only the first decade of its publication, each portrait was presented in oval format and simply framed with a single line tracing the outer edge of the image. Unlike the *European Magazine*, which continued to publish portraits ornamented with diverse frames well into the late 1790s, Maria Ines Aliverti has argued that the use of uniform borders, as seen in the *Evangelical Magazine*, which also included its own title in letterpress directly above each portrait, were a means of identifying the

[37] 'Introduction', *European Magazine and London Review*, January 1782, p. iii.
[38] 'An Account of John Bacon, Esq. F.S.A.', *European Magazine and London Review*, August 1790, pp. 83-84, plate facing p. 83.
[39] 'Gustavus the Third, King of Sweden', ibid, pp. 145-146, plate opposite p. 145.
[40] Williamson, *John Russell*, p. 95.
[41] 'The Preface', *Evangelical Magazine*, January 1793, p. 4.
[42] 'The Preface', *Evangelical Magazine*, January 1794, p. 1.

components of a distinct series.[43] The resulting visual consistency, devoid of hierarchy and ostentation, is suggestive of that sense of shared identity stemming from 'the experience of conversion' that John Walsh and Stephen Taylor have argued distinguished the evangelical community.[44]

Music

Unlike his father's spiritually-inflected activities, Bacon's musical interests reveal the circumstances under which the artist engaged with those from outside his family and professional circles before he began associational activity in earnest. Importantly, in the years immediately after his father's death in 1799, when Bacon was consolidating his reputation as a sculptor, there is evidence of a web of connections that brought together his musical interests, relationships with other evangelicals and even his professional aspirations.

The artist's lifelong interest in music is revealed in the bequest of his 'musical instruments [and] music books' to his daughter Elizabeth.[45] However, the first confirmed evidence of Bacon's links to musical circles, if not musical interests *per se*, comes in a letter of 1802 from Samuel Wesley (1766-1837) to his fellow composer Dr Samuel Arnold (1740-1802), in which he enclosed a letter from his 'young friend' John Bacon. While perhaps a courtesy, the term of affection suggests an existing relationship between the two men, the origin of which was perhaps founded on the shared evangelical sympathies of their respective families. Introduction may have come via John Russell, whose family was close to the Wesleys. Russell's parents had hosted the young Samuel on a holiday in Guildford in 1776, when the artist painted an oil portrait of the child prodigy against the backdrop of a pipe-organ, the instrument with which he was commonly associated.[46]

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[43] Maria Ines Aliverti, 'Major Portraits and Minor Series in Eighteenth-Century Theatrical Portraiture', *Theatre Research International*, 22:3 (Autumn 1997), p. 235.
[44] John Walsh and Stephen Taylor, 'Introduction: the Church and Anglicanism in the 'long' eighteenth century', in eds. John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor, *The Church of England, c.1689-c.1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 49-50.
[45] John Bacon Junior, Last will and testament.
[46] John Russell, *Samuel Wesley as a child, composing*, 1777, oil on canvas, 1580 x 995 mm, Royal Academy of Music, London, inv. 2003.1046. For the connection between the Russells and the Wesleys, see Philip Olleson, *Samuel Wesley: The Man and His Music* (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 17. In 1773, Russell had portrayed the Revd John Wesley; see Williamson, *John Russell*, pp. 22, 41-42.

At the time of Wesley's letter, Arnold led a committee that proposed to raise a monument in St Paul's Cathedral to the composer Thomas Arne (1710-78), which had been announced in *The Times* just days earlier.[47] While Bacon's letter has not been located, it seems likely that it concerned the Arne monument. This is noteworthy for two reasons. First, Bacon drew on a personal connection within the evangelical network to advance his professional interests. Second, if Bacon was aware that Arne was a Roman Catholic,[48] then his interest in the commission for the proposed monument might indicate a lack of sectarian rancour that could have enabled his relationship with the composer Samuel Wesley also. The son of the hymnist Charles Wesley (1707-88), and nephew of the Methodist leader John Wesley, Samuel scandalised his family and the Methodist movement when he converted to Roman Catholicism in 1784—something he later denied—and through his irregular relationship with Charlotte Martin (1761-1845). Their stormy marriage finally collapsed in light of Wesley's affair with a young servant, Sarah Suter (1793?-1863?), resulting in the birth of a son, the celebrated organist Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-76).[49]

Despite his controversial history, in 1808-09 Wesley sat to Bacon for a portrait that is now untraced (N361). The drawing was executed at the request of their mutual acquaintance, the organist Benjamin Jacob, indicating that Bacon's skill as a portrait artist was known to his friends and acquaintances at that time. The portrait appears to have marked the friendship of Jacob and Wesley, who were united in their enthusiasm for the work of the German composer Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), in which Bacon shared. Together with Charles Frederick Horn (1762-1830), Wesley and Jacob were among the leading exponents of Bach's music, forming, as Wesley called it, a 'Junto', even suggesting the formation of a '*regular society* in Defence of the Truth'.[50] The language is suggestive of

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[47] Jeremy Barlow and Todd Gilman, 'A monumental mistake. Newly discovered letters to Handel editor Samuel Arnold', *Händel-Jahrbuch*, 2014, p. 374. The same project had been initially advertised two days earlier under the name of François-Hippolyte Barthélemon (1741-1808), who was related to Arne by marriage, but which made no mention of either Arnold or a committee; ibid, p. 373.

[48] As Barlow and Gilman have remarked, there appears to have been no objection to Arne being commemorated in a Protestant church, pointing also to the former Royal Academician James Barry (1741-1806), likewise a Roman Catholic, who was buried in the cathedral alongside Sir Joshua Reynolds; ibid, pp. 373-374, n. 76.

[49] Philip Olleson, 'Wesley, Samuel (1766–1837), composer and organist', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/29072. For Wesley's conversion to Roman Catholicism, see Olleson, *Samuel Wesley*, pp. 25-30. For an obituary in which his conversion was denied see 'Death of Mr. Samuel Wesley', *Times*, 12 October 1837, p. 4.

[50] Quoted in S. S. Wesley and F. G. E., 'Bach's Music in England (Continued)', *Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 37:644 (1 October 1896), pp. 652-653. For the connection between Wesley

an almost spiritual enthusiasm and although their intention was to promote Bach's work through accurate editions, Samuel Rogal has observed that Wesley's 'deification of J.S. Bach carried with it few restraints'.[51]

From 1794 until 1825 Jacob was the organist at the Surrey Chapel in London, which, on 15 March 1808, was the scene of one of Wesley's earliest promotional performances of Bach's music.[52] Unlike those evangelicals who were suspicious of the potentially worldly nature of music, or who worried that it was an unhelpful distraction from spiritual pursuits, the founder and incumbent of the Surrey Chapel, Rowland Hill (see Fig. 66), considered sacred music a suitable recreation.[53] He introduced an organ to the Surrey Chapel in 1793, promoted the use of music in services and the performance of oratorios.[54] It can be supposed that Jacob and Bacon were acquainted through the Surrey Chapel in a network that combined musical and spiritual interests, and were evidently close enough for Jacob to prevail upon the artist to portray Wesley. A letter from the latter to Jacob, acceding to his request for a sitting, also alludes to his earlier acquaintance with the artist, and has been tentatively dated to 17 November 1808.[55] The portrait was itself delivered only in November 1809 when Jacob wrote to Bacon to note that 'A thousand praises are due to you for so excellent a portrait'.[56] While there is no evidence to suggest that he portrayed Jacob, their fellow Bach-enthusiast, the organist and composer George Eugene Griffin (1781-1863) was drawn by Bacon in *c*. 1800 (N197; Fig. 91).[57]

Although it is not known whether Jacob paid Bacon for the portrait of Wesley, the sociable nature of the commission appears to be confirmed in a letter from Wesley to Jacob indicating that he looked forward to 'the Pleasure of joining your Party' at Bacon's

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and Jacob, see Philip Olleson, 'Samuel Wesley and the English Bach Awakening', in ed. Michael Kassler, *The English Bach Awakening: Knowledge of J. S. Bach and his Music in England, 1750-1830* (Aldershot, 2004), p. 265.

[51] Samuel J. Rogal, 'For the Love of Bach: The Charles Burney – Samuel Wesley Correspondence', *Bach*, 23:1 (Spring-Summer, 1992), p. 32.

[52] Olleson, *Samuel Wesley*, p. xx.

[53] Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp. 134-135, 139.

[54] For the performance and popularity of music at the Surrey Chapel, see Edwin Sidney, *The Life of the Rev. Rowland Hill, A.M.* (4th ed., London, 1844), pp. 158-159, 263-264.

[55] See Philip Olleson, *The Letters of Samuel Wesley: Professional and Social Correspondence, 1797-1837* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 84-85, n. 2.

[56] Benjamin Jacob to John Bacon Junior, 18 November 1809; see Michael Kassler and Philip Olleson, *Samuel Wesley (1766-1837): A Source Book* (Aldershot, 2001), p. 270.

[57] For Griffin's interest in Bach, see Olleson, *The Letters of Samuel Wesley*, p. 65 and n. 2.

Paddington home on 21 December 1808, where both men would join Bacon and his wife for a meal.[58] Several days later, Jacob recorded Bacon's own interest in Bach:

> It delights me to hear that your children are Bachists! What a convincing proof it is that the subjects are natural and beautiful for otherwise babes would not be able to reach them, and there are several families within my circle, where the divine strains are to be heard from the lisping voices of infants.[59]

Their singing would likely have been accompanied by Bacon himself on the harpsichord.[60] The artist's enthusiasm for Bach's music is confirmed by his subscription to the important publication by Wesley and Horn of a group of preludes and fugues by Bach, known collectively as the '48' and the *Well-Tempered Clavier* (1810).[61] Similar projects were supported in later years. Bacon was among the subscribers to a *Volume of Sacred Music* by Henry John Haycraft (fl. 1836), published in 1836; and in 1840 he subscribed to a volume of six anthems composed by Wesley's illegitimate son, Samuel Sebastian, named for his father's musical hero. The latter publication dates from Samuel Sebastian's time in Devon where he served as organist of Exeter Cathedral in the period 1835-42. During the years 1849 to 1865, he was the organist at Winchester Cathedral, where Bacon evidently encountered him once more, making him the subject of one of his late portraits (N123; Fig. 92).

Paddington

Bacon's move to Paddington coincides with the beginning of his business partnership with Charles Manning. Dated 24 June 1808, the terms of their partnership, in which Bacon 'shall not be obliged to attend there further or otherwise than as he shall think fit and proper', reveal that the artist's retreat from Newman Street was not merely

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[58] Samuel Wesley to Benjamin Jacob, 8 December 1808; see Olleson, *The Letters of Samuel Wesley*, p. 93.
[59] Benjamin Jacob to John Bacon Junior, 12 December 1808, ibid, p. 85, n. 12.
[60] Gertrude Bacon refers to Bacon's harpsichord, which is believed to now be in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; see Gertrude Bacon, 'Prologue', p. 97.
[61] Bacon's name appears among the lists of subscribers in the first two issues of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. For his evidence of the evolution of that publication, see Yo Tomita, 'Surviving copies of the *Wesley/Horn* "48"', http://www.mu.qub.ac.uk/tomita/wh/list-wh.htm , accessed 12 May 2020; also Yo Tomita, 'Pursuit of Perfection: Stages of Revision of the Wesley/Horn '48', in Kassler, *The English Bach Awakening*, pp. 341-377.

the relocation of his family and household.[62] Although Bacon did not entirely cease to contribute to the work of the studio, which continued to operate in his name alone, the business was to be 'carried on and managed' by Manning, whom Ann Cox-Johnson described as Bacon's 'ghost'.[63] The partnership hints at a split between Bacon's social and professional networks. But it is worth noting that the artist's choice of business partner may have been influenced by religious considerations. Although Cox-Johnson speculated that their association predated the terms of their partnership,[64] the precise origin of the men's connection is not yet known. However, a combination of requisite talent and, importantly, his family's evangelical credentials may have recommended Manning to Bacon.[65] Manning was the grandson of the Revd Charles Manning (1715-99), vicar of St Mary the Virgin at Hayes, Middlesex, a supporter of Methodism and an associate of John Wesley, who preached at his church and, reputedly, stood godfather to his son John (1753-1841), himself later a cleric.[66] It was the Revd John Manning's sons, Charles and, following his death in 1812, Samuel, to whom Bacon entrusted his studio. It is striking that the artist was willing to translate that trust from one brother to another, suggesting that both men enjoyed not only a measure of artistic talent, but also the character necessary to gain his confidence.

Relieved of at least some of his professional commitments, Bacon appears to have frequented the Bentinck Chapel, Marylebone, an Anglican establishment of which the incumbent—and, since 1793, the owner—was the Revd Basil Woodd (N199; Fig. 93). Woodd was an associate of Bacon Senior, having been a member of the Eclectic Society as well as serving on the founding committee of the CMS. Significantly, it was while in Woodd's orbit that Bacon appears in the records of voluntary associations for the first time**.** In 1814 he was recorded as a member of the Bentinck Chapel branch of the Society

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[62] For the quote, from the partnership between Bacon and Manning, see Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', p. 239.
[63] Bacon's use of Manning as his 'ghost' was Cox-Johnson's principal criticism of the terms of their partnership; ibid, pp. 239, 241.
[64] Ibid, p. 240. Charles Manning's father, John appears to have been acquainted with Bacon Senior; see Edward Thornton Junior to Revd John Bacon, 15 February 1840 and later, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 39.
[65] Both Charles Manning and his brother Samuel, who succeeded him in Bacon's studio, exhibited at the Royal Academy prior to the partnership formed in 1808; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 5, pp. 177-178. Cox-Johnson described Samuel as Charles' son; see Cox-Johnson, 'Gentlemen's Agreement', p. 239.
[66] For details of the Manning family, see Donald H. Ryan, 'Manning Family', *A Dictionary of Methodism in Britain and Ireland*, https://dmbi.online/index.php?do=app.entry&id=1806, accessed 13 May 2020.

for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK).[67] The latter group may have been formed in 1813 when Woodd also founded a branch of the CMS, of which Bacon was recorded as the secretary in October of that year.[68] Both auxiliaries were established in the aftermath of Woodd's innovative 'deputation' to Yorkshire for the CMS in July-September 1813, when he raised £1060 for the CMS and established twenty-eight new local associations.[69] In the same year, Bacon was recorded as a member of the national committee of the CMS, a rapid ascent that may suggest his links to the organisation may have predated Woodd's intervention at Paddington.[70] Inspired by the example of the BFBS, with its growing network of contributing auxiliaries, branch associations like that at the Bentinck Chapel were designed to facilitate a greater and more regular income for the CMS.[71] But they also provided a platform for supporters who, like Bacon, had both the inclination and time necessary to make a contribution to the work of the organisation.

It was in the BFBS that Bacon began to play a particularly active role, giving support to an organisation that, founded on a model of Protestant ecumenicism, sought to distribute Bibles in Britain and abroad, and in multiple languages. In 1812 he was appointed one of a number of vice-presidents of the newly established North London and Islington Auxiliary Bible Society.[72] In 1815 he was both a member of the national committee and a secretary, together with Woodd, of the North-West London association of the society.[73] Following a break in 1816, Bacon returned to the national committee 1817,[74] after which his residence outside of the capital appears to have precluded his participation. The role

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[67] Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, p. 146. For his membership in 1814, see *A General Account of the A General Account of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (London, 1816), p. 56. For his membership in 1826, at which time he used the address of his Newman Street studio rather than his home address at Sidmouth, see *Report of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (London, 1826), unpaginated list of the subscribing members. For Woodd's membership of the SPCK, see *Report of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (London, 1826), unpaginated list of the subscribing members.

[68] For Bacon as secretary of the newly formed Bentinck Chapel Association, see *The Missionary Register for the Year 1813* (London, 1816), p. 364.

[69] Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, pp. 132-133. The decision to found local associations, in imitation of the model developed by the BFBS, followed a resolution of the London Church Missionary Association recorded in its annual report; see *Summary View of the Designs and Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East* (London, 1813), p. 53.

[70] For Bacon as a member of the national committee of the CMS, see *Summary View of the Designs and Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East* (London, 1813), p. 4.

[71] Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, pp. 129-130.

[72] 'North London and Islington', *Christian Observer*, December 1812, p. 861.

[73] *Reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society, with Extracts of Correspondence &c., Volume the Third, for the years 1814 and 1815* (London, 1815), pp. 230, 529.

[74] *The Thirteenth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society; M.DCCC.XVII. With an Appendix, Containing Extracts of Correspondence, &c.* (London, 1817), p. xii.

that Bacon enjoyed in the BFBS by 1815 suggests that he was sufficiently well-regarded among fellow evangelicals to serve in a leadership position. Certainly, given his father's earlier efforts, his name would have been well known in evangelical circles; while in his own right he could lay claim to professional success and the financial independence necessary to devote much time to such endeavours. An indication that Bacon was rapidly becoming a prominent figure is found in a short report of the inaugural annual meeting of a local Sunday School and Village Teaching Society in 1818. Despite his 'well known' commitment to the Church of England, Bacon had happily agreed to chair the meeting of this new and principally dissenting organisation, demonstrating a commitment to Protestant ecumenism which would be evident throughout his associational career.[75]

While it is striking that this shift in Bacon's behaviour occurred following the start of his business partnership with Manning and his new proximity to Woodd's Bentinck Chapel, it is worth noting that it also coincided with the death of his daughter Eliza in early November 1813 – the first of his eight daughters to predecease him. While coming too late to explain his earliest foray into associational activity, personal tragedy may have focused Bacon's attention on his spiritual duties. In any event, through his enthusiastic patronage of new associations and the success of his 'deputations', Woodd appears to have been a central figure in Bacon's transition. Consistent with works of *c*. 1820, Bacon's portrait of Woodd records his relationship with the man whom he described in 1817 as his 'beloved pastor'.[76]

Bromley, Kent

Before turning to Bacon's three decades of activity in the South-West of England, it is necessary to survey his short time at Bromley in Kent. While enjoying relative seclusion, Bromley's proximity to London enabled Bacon to involve himself in associational activities in the metropolis. In 1823, he was a member of the founding committee of the Society for Educating the Poor of Newfoundland, an interest perhaps prompted by the Canadian missionary work of his younger half-brother, the Revd Samuel.[77] He also took the

[75] 'Sunday School and Village Teaching Society, for part of the West of Middlesex', *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle*, March 1818, p. 131.
[76] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 13 July 1817.
[77] *The First Annual Report of the Committee of the Society for Educating the Poor of Newfoundland* (London, 1824), p. 3. The organisation was founded on 30 June 1823, and by the next year Bacon had been honoured as an 'Honorary Member for Life, Having rendered essential Services to the Society', suggesting that he was among the its leading figures; ibid, p. 4.

opportunity to cultivate regenerate Christians closer to home. In February 1822, Bacon was instrumental in establishing an association of the Church Missionary Society for Bromley and Beckenham followed by another for the county of Kent as a whole at a meeting at Maidstone in July.[78] Not everyone welcomed these developments. Both the methods of the CMS, including the penny-a-week subscriptions sought from the labouring poor, and Bacon's defence of these, together with his intemperate criticism of opponents of the Society, were the subject of two critical pamphlets by the Revd George Gleig (1796-1888), rector of Ivychurch, Kent.[79] Bacon's contribution was recognised in the *Missionary Register* later that year, where it was noted that he was 'a Member of the Society from its commencement and one of its warmest friends', and recorded his cooperation with the Revd Andrew Brandram (1790-1850), rector of St George's Church, Beckenham, and long-time secretary of the CMS (N237; Fig. 94), and 'other Gentlemen', including John Cator (1781-1858), a prominent member of the local gentry (N24; Fig. 95). Both men, together with one John Wells, and in addition to Bacon himself, feature in press accounts of the origins of both branch societies, suggesting that they were among the moving forces in both instances. Perhaps for that reason, portraits of both Brandram and Cator feature in Bacon's *oeuvre*, albeit not until much later in the decade—Cator in either August or September 1828 (N24) and Brandram (N35) in 1830—suggesting the enduring nature of at least some of the relationships that Bacon forged in associational settings.

Sidmouth and Exeter

If it was at Paddington that Bacon first revealed a commitment to evangelical associational causes, borne out by his activities at Bromley, then it was at Sidmouth, and in the South-West of England more generally, that this became a defining feature of his life. In the years after 1818, Bacon appears as a contributor to a range of charities with either a local focus, such as fundraising for the victims of a devastating fire at nearby Sidbury,[80] or as a member of associations with designs that were regional, national and even imperial in

[78] 'Formation of the Bromley and Beckenham Association' and 'Formation of the Kent Association', *Missionary Register for MDCCCXXII* (London, 1822), pp. 125, 271.
[79] See George Robert Gleig, *A Letter to Sir Edward Knatchbull, Bart. One of the Members of Parliament for the County of Kent, On His Accepting the Office of President, At a Meeting of an Auxiliary Church Missionary Association, Held in the Town-Hall at Maidstone, on the 14th of August Last* (London, 1823), pp. 68, 73. The same criticism is found in a revised version of Gleig's pamphlet, *Some Observations on the Constituency and Tendency of the Church Missionary Society* (London, 1824), pp. 6, 36, 66, 71-72.
[80] 'Fire at Sidbury, Devon', *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post*, 27 July 1820, unpaginated.

scope. His early commitments to both the CMS and the BFBS continued, his name featuring in the published records of both societies until 1847 and 1852, respectively. In the service of the latter he was tireless, representing the parent society at the annual meetings of auxiliary branches throughout the South West. In his diary he recorded that, in September 1819 he attended fourteen meetings of the BFBS at Sidmouth, Axminster and Lyme (now Lyme Regis), followed by a tour of Devon and Cornwall in the company of the Revd Steinkopff, speaking at least once at each of the seven different locations that they visited.[81] Steinkopff was a leading member of BFBS, of which he was one of three founding secretaries, and the subject of two portraits by Bacon, dating to 1812 (N292; see Fig. 47) and 1831 (N40), respectively.[82] Significantly, Bacon's involvement with the auxiliary at Axminster, north-east of Sidmouth, endured even in his absence: in 1822, when he was living at Bromley, Kent, he was still listed as the president of that branch, a role in which he continued until at least 1828.[83]

From the early 1830s, Bacon began to deputise at provincial meetings in earnest and, between 1832 and 1852, press reports reveal his presence at forty-seven such meetings, nine of which were in 1836 alone. Impressive though this may be, it appears to be only a fraction of his actual deputations as, in an 1848 speech, Bacon claimed to regularly attend between twenty and thirty such meetings annually.[84] The frequency with which the same refrain was recorded in the local press suggests Bacon stressed that he travelled at his own expense and that his services to each society were provided gratis.[85] Rather than a mere functionary of the organisations he served, his identification as a gentleman of independent means promoted his reputation as a Christian and a generous supporter of good causes. His efforts did not go unrecognised and in 1836 Bacon was appointed an Honorary Governor for Life of the BFBS for 'Having rendered very essential Services to the Society'.[86]

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[81] John Bacon Junior, Spiritual diary, 4 December 1819.
[82] For Steinkopff as a founding secretary of the BFBS, see *Reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, vol. 1, 1805-1810 (London, *c*. 1810), p. 8.
[83] Bacon appears to have been president of the Axminster auxiliary for the period 1822-28; see *Reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, vol. 7, 1822-24 (London, *c*. 1824), pp. 69, 4, 4 (each annual report paginated separately); and *The Twenty-Fourth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society* (London, 1828), p. 4.
[84] 'Wesleyan Missionary Society', *Western Times*, 22 April 1848, p. 7.
[85] See, for instance, 'Redditch', *Worcestershire Chronicle*, 19 August 1840, p. 3.
[86] For Bacon's appointment, see William Canton, *A History of the British and Foreign Bible Society* (5 vols., London, 1904), vol. 2, p. 189.

The ecumenical approach to associational activity for which Bacon had been noted as early as 1818 remained evident in his co-operation with organisations affiliated to other denominations. In May 1823, while living at Bromley, Bacon gave a lengthy speech at the annual meeting of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in London.[87] This may have initiated a long association with that movement as, from 1824 until 1850, when he left Exeter, he was called on to chair the annual meetings of the Exeter auxiliary of that society no less than twenty-six times. In 1836 it was observed that it was Bacon's 'high talent and fine spirits [that] endears him to all, and renders his presence of great value to the Wesleyan Missionary Society in Exeter'.[88] In the same year, at a meeting of the auxiliary of the BFBS at Romsey in Hampshire, Bacon called for interdenominational cooperation, exhorting his audience to 'support every good institution they could, and not confine their assistance to any one as a test of their orthodoxy.'[89] But the spirit of ecumenicism that had animated evangelical activity in the earliest years of Bacon's career had been on the wane for some time.[90] In 1846 Bacon's remarks to the Wesleyan meeting at Exeter included a defence of his continued support for both their cause and of his habit, while living at Sidmouth, of attending a service of the Church of England in the morning and a dissenting chapel in the evening.[91] While such pragmatism apparently answered Bacon's spiritual needs, it evidently invoked the disapprobation of those who, like Bishop Beilby Porteus (1731-1809) somewhat earlier, regarded it as an intolerable blurring of loyalties.[92]

Although Sidmouth's proximity to Exeter enabled Bacon to involve himself in organisations either represented or headquartered there, his activity in the city increased once he settled there in 1836. In addition to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, in 1844 Bacon was the founding treasurer of the Exeter Scientific and Literary Institution, an organisation 'based on Christian principles'.[93] He appeared at, addressed and chaired meetings of a range of voluntary associations, including the Society for the Promotion of a

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[87] For the full text of Bacon's speech, see 'The Missionary Cause', *Missionary Herald*, January 1824, pp. 16-18.
[88] 'Wesleyan Missions', *Western Times*, 21 May 1836, p. 3.
[89] 'Romsey Auxiliary Bible Society', *Southampton Herald*, 8 October 1836, unpaginated.
[90] Rosman notes that the 1790s were 'characterised by a proliferation of undenominational [*sic*] activity, [but] they saw too a new hardening of denominational divisions.' See Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, p. 20; also Arthur Burns and Joanna Innes, 'Introduction', in eds. Burns and Innes, *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain 1780-1850* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 23-24.
[91] 'Wesleyan Missionary Association', *Western Times*, 25 April 1846, p. 6.
[92] Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (London, 1989), p. 270.
[93] 'Exeter Scientific and Literary Institution Based on Christian Principles', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 7 December 1844, p. 2. For its origins in the rejection of 'Christian principles' by the existing Exeter Literary Society, see 'Exeter Scientific and Literary Society founded on Christian Principles', *English Journal of Education*, December 1844, p. 384.

Better Observance of the Lord's Day,[94] reflecting his own strict Sabbatarianism. From 1838, his presence is recorded at several meetings of the Exeter auxiliary of the Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews,[95] perhaps connected to his family links with the prominent Anglo-Jewish Lousada family. In addition to being founded in 1820 with the support of Bacon's Sidmouth associate, Sir John Kennaway (see Fig. 56),[96] the latter auxiliary enjoyed the support of a host of Bacon's ecclesiastical sitters, including the Revds Matthew Vicars (d. 1853) (N70; Fig. 96), John Rashdall (see Fig. 88), Joseph Bradney (1796-1868) (N52; Fig. 97) and William Scoresby (1789-1857) (N59; Fig. 98), alongside prominent local evangelicals such as Samuel Sloman (fl. 1836-1850?) (N63; Fig. 99), Captain John Bingham (1785-1863) (N62; Fig. 100) and the former banker Edmund Henning (b. c. 1761) (N95; Fig. 101), a Quaker whose earlier familiarity with—and favourable opinion of—George III likely found favour with the artist.[97] Several of these men were also active in their support of the Exeter Diocesan Church Building Association, which promoted the construction of new places of worship for the established church.[98] But, in keeping with his ecumenical attitude, Bacon was as willing to support the rebuilding of the Anglican All-Hallows-on-the-walls at Exeter[99] as the construction of a new dissenting chapel at Sidmouth.[100] Similarly, Bacon provided support for the anti-establishment Free Church of Scotland when its representatives sought funds for new churches in 1844.[101]

Among all of this, the relief of the poor was not neglected. Bacon chaired at least two annual meetings of the Exeter City Mission, stressing the ecumenical nature of the Mission's work among the poor of the city.[102] While there is no evidence to show that he was a member, in 1844 Bacon was present at a meeting of the Devon and Exeter Infant School Society, at which Captain Thomas Locke Lewis (1794-1852) (N84; Fig. 102) presided.[103] Together with a number of the men already named, and still other of his sitters besides, from 1841 Bacon was a prominent supporter of the West of England Institution for

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[94] 'Society for the Promotion of a Better Observance of the Lord's Day', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 4 March 1837, p. 4.
[95] See, for instance, 'Promotion of Christianity Among the Jews', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 3 November 1838, p. 3.
[96] 'Conversion of the Jews', *Trewman's Flying Exeter Post*, 2 November 1820, unpaginated.
[97] For Bacon's recollections of Henning, whom he appears to have known well, see John Bacon Junior and Gertrude Bacon, 'Reminiscences', part 3, pp. 9-13.
[98] 'Exeter Diocesan Church Building Association', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 20 January 1838, p. 4.
[99] 'Allhallows-on-the-walls New Church', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 20 April 1844, p. 1.
[100] 'Devon and Cornwall', *Sherborne Mercury*, 15 February 1836, p. 4.
[101] For Bacon's donation to clerics seeking support for their breakaway church, see 'Free Church of Scotland', *Trewman's Flying Exeter Post*, 8 February 1844, unpaginated.
[102] See, for instance, [untitled], *Western Times*, 29 November 1845, p. 4.
[103] 'Devon and Exeter Infant School Society', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 17 May 1845, p. 2.

the Instruction and Employment of the Blind, remarking that, for their suffering, the blind had 'a double claim' upon the community, both as 'an appeal to their common benevolence, and to their higher principles as Christians.'[104] On three occasions—the last in 1856, long after he had left Exeter—pupils of the institution performed songs written for them by Bacon, at least one of which was set to music by the Revd George Maximilian Slatter (*c*. 1785-1868) (N56).[105] Continuing his interest in the welfare of the poor of Newfoundland, first seen at Bromley in 1823, in 1838 Bacon chaired a meeting of the Newfoundland and North American School Society at which both Bingham and Rashdall also spoke.[106] A seemingly related meeting of the friends of the Church of England Schools for Newfoundland and the Colonies followed in 1850.[107]

In 1837, together with Vicars, Rashdall and Macgowan, Bacon was a member of a committee formed in Exeter to lobby for an end to the system of 'apprenticeship' that served as an intermediate measure in the abolition of slavery in the West Indies. In addition to a contribution in 1807 to the missionary African Institution, founded to coincide with the British prohibition of the slave trade that year,[108] Bacon was associated with anti-slavery activists, including the Revds John Angel James (1785-1859) (N251; Fig. 103) and Daniel Wilson (1778-1858) (N5; Fig. 104). Somewhat surprisingly, then, in 1842 Bacon portrayed Edmund Haynes (1781-1846) (N77; Fig. 105), a former slave-owner from Barbados who had received compensation from the British government in 1836 following the emancipation of his slaves.[109] While it is possible that Bacon was unaware of Haynes' history, it may be that the difficulty of his past was made more palatable by his sitter's history of support for missionary activity in the West Indies.[110]

From this mass of detail, three key points emerge. First, it seems likely that Bacon's associational turn was connected with his failure to attain professional recognition from

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[104] 'West of England Institution for the Blind', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 10 October 1846, p. 3.
[105] See, for instance, 'Exeter Institution for the Instruction and Employment of the Blind', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 12 October 1844, p. 2.
[106] 'Newfoundland and North American School Society', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 26 May 1838, p. 2.
[107] 'Church of England Schools for Newfoundland and the Colonies', *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post*, 18 April 1850, unpaginated.
[108] For his single donation of £2.12.0, rather than an annual subscription, made sometime between 1807 and 1811, see *Report of the Committee of the African Institution* (London, 1811), p. 124.
[109] For Haynes, his history in Barbados and the compensation that he received, see 'Edmund Haynes', Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery, University College London, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/4411, accessed 22 May 2020.
[110] For example, Haynes' gift of Bibles to the Brethren mission at Barbados; see *Periodical Accounts Relating to the Missions of the Church of the United Brethren, Established Among The Heathen*, vol. 16 (London, 1841), p. 53.

the Royal Academy. Crucially, however, as he turned his back on the studio, voluntarism served a dual purpose by catering to the demands of his faith as well as his social and, later, political aspirations. In this there are echoes of R. J. Morris' account of voluntary societies in the period, which were, he argues, instrumental in the consolidation of the identity and power of the middle classes in urban settings.[111] Whatever his professional disappointments, voluntary activity located Bacon within a vocal and increasingly influential milieu, in which his wealth and status permitted him a leading role. Second, Bacon is notable for his enduring commitment to ecumenicalism, supporting causes from across the spectrum of Protestant confessions and championing shared endeavours in his public utterances. Although this did not extend to Roman Catholics, as we shall see, it does point to the influence of his father and other evangelicals of the first and second generations, whose example of interdenominational collaboration he continued to emulate even as sectarian rivalries came to the fore. Third, while Bacon had already withdrawn to the relative seclusion of Paddington in 1808, his voluntary activities grew steadily, particularly after the family's initial move to Sidmouth in 1818. This brought him into contact with a wide circle of individuals who shared his commitment to spiritual and social causes. Of these, a number were inscribed in his 'record of friendship', their likenesses revealing the geographical scope of his activities and the strength of those bonds forged in voluntary activity. Where the surviving documentary record consists largely of newspaper reports and lacks the first-person accounts that letters might afford, Bacon's portraits reveal the feeling that common cause might elicit, the portraits of his associational colleagues sitting comfortably within a corpus anchored in the affections of family and home.

No Popery

Bacon's last documented public engagement records him in the chair of a political meeting in May 1855, pointing to an important shift in the nature of his associational activities that occurred in the mid-1830s.[112] From that time it is clear that Bacon's politics were strictly conservative and linked to a strident Protestant nationalism that reveals the limits of his ecumenical spirit. This change hinged on developments in Britain following the end of the Napoleonic wars, in particular the legal and political concessions to Roman

[111] Morris, 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites', p. 96.
[112] 'The Maynooth Commission', *Southampton Herald*, 26 May 1855, p. 6.

Catholics made in the late 1820s that challenged historic assumptions about England as a Protestant confessional state. Indeed, with the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, and the passage of the Catholic Relief Act in the following year, most of the restrictions limiting Catholic participation in civil society ended, terminating the 'confident hegemony of the established Church',[113] to which Bacon was linked from at least 1817.[114]

In May 1835, Bacon appeared at a dinner in Sidmouth celebrating the success of a Tory candidate in the recent election against the sitting Liberal MP Lord John Russell (1792-1878), who retreated to the safe borough of Stroud in Gloucestershire. The artist's comments that evening were noted at some length in the *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*,[115] and were the subject of a critical letter to the editor of the liberal *Western Times*, which expressed surprise at the tenor of Bacon's remarks.[116] Evidently the significance of Bacon's public alliance with the Tories was lost on no-one. Indeed, in the first clear demonstration of his political affiliations, Bacon launched an attack on both Russell and Liberal policy before reflecting on the criticism that would likely follow his foray into politics. 'I suppose it will be said of me, as it frequently has of others – "where is the consistency of that man in meddling with politics, and attending political meetings?"' But so long as 'politics, or any other secular solicitude' did not wholly occupy one's energy, Bacon argued that it was consistent, indeed imperative, to join their cause:

> I feel myself bound, not merely as an Englishman, but as a *Christian*, to come forward and join with you in that arduous political struggle which agitates our country in those [*sic*] unlooked-for times. … when all that is dear to us, not only civil but religious, is intimately interwoven with the course which political affairs are taking, is it the duty, I ask, of any Christian whatever, if he claim the name of Protestant, to hold himself excused from exertion, and to stand by merely as a looker-on? As a Christian, then, and as a *Protestant*, I am impelled to join with you, Gentlemen, in entering my protest against the men and the measures, which, if Divine Providence do not interpose, will assuredly hurry on our country to certain, if not to irremediable ruin.

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[113] Walsh and Taylor, 'Introduction: the Church and Anglicanism in the 'long' eighteenth century', pp. 61-62.
[114] An affectionate and humorous letter from the Revd J. Bull was annotated by the artist to record that it came in response to Bacon's invitation to 'attend a meeting on the Catholic question.' Revd J. Bull to John Bacon Junior, 3 May 1817, private collection.
[115] 'Grand Conservative Festival at Sidmouth', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 30 May 1835, p. 3.
[116] 'Sidmouth', *Western Times*, 6 June 1835, p. 2.

If his audience was in any doubt as to the threat with which they were confronted, Bacon left them with a warning concerning,

> what is meditated against the sacred, the venerable institutions of our country – of the havoc which is to be committed among those institutions by the hands of men who do not blush to avow their intentions of handing over the resources of our Protestant Establishment to the education of Popish children by Popish teachers! In other words, to the nourishment and consequent elevation of Popery in this great Protestant empire[.]

Bacon's remarks conflate Tory politics and a specifically Protestant religious identity, revealing that his intervention was motivated by perceived threats to both the Protestant settlement and the Church of England. His delay in identifying himself with the Tories may reflect the split in the party over the question of emancipation in 1829; but anti-Catholicism became a conservative rallying cry again after April 1835 when, following Sir Robert Peel's (1788-1850) first, brief premiership, the Whigs returned to government with a policy of 'justice to Ireland'.[117] Bacon's political turn coincides with this development, suggesting that it was his perception of a renewed threat to Protestantism and, more specifically, of a resurgent Popery, that drew him into party politics.

To what extent did Bacon's politics impact on his choice of sitters? One notable absence from his *oeuvre* might suggest Bacon's hostility to political reform, and Catholic emancipation in particular. Throughout his time in Devon, Bacon was associated with Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Bt. (1787-1871), a distinguished member of the local gentry and, significantly, Tory MP for Devon (1820-31). Acland was closely associated with the BFBS from at least 1814,[118] serving in 1825 as either patron or president of auxiliaries at both Barnstaple and Exmouth, as well as heading the county society,[119] and the CMS, through which the two men may have been acquainted from as early as 1818.[120] Such shared associational interests appear to explain a host of men whose portraits feature in Bacon's *oeuvre*, from which Acland is noticeably absent. The explanation may lie in his support for

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[117] Gilbert A. Cahill, 'Irish Catholicism and English Toryism', *Review of Politics*, 19:1 (January 1957), p. 64; also Jay R. Roszman, ''Ireland as a Weapon of Warfare': Whigs, Tories, and the Problem of Irish Outrages, 1835 to 1839', *Historical Journal*, 60:4 (December 2017), pp. 971-980.
[118] 'Devon and Exeter Auxiliary Bible Society', *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post*, 9 June 1814, unpaginated.
[119] *The Twenty-First Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society* (London, 1825), p. 4.
[120] 'Devon and Exeter Church Missionary Association', *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post*, 22 October 1818, unpaginated.

Catholic emancipation in 1828. At a disorderly public meeting held in the courtyard of Exeter Castle, Acland, despite his conservative allegiances, had sat alongside Lord John Russell and local liberal notables in support of Catholic relief.[121] If is not known whether or not Bacon attended the meeting, but given the subject and the interest that the Exeter meeting attracted in the national press, it seems likely that he would have been aware of Acland's stance.

Although Bacon continued to work alongside Acland in their shared associational causes, the obloquy directed at those responsible for the legislative changes of the late 1820s and early 1830s remained potent. As a result of his reversal on the question of Catholic emancipation in 1829, the Bishop of Exeter, Henry Phillpotts (1778-1869), remained an object of suspicion among conservatives.[122] Having courted controversy throughout his career, in late 1844 Phillpotts outraged parishioners throughout his diocese with a pastoral letter ordering his clerics to wear a surplice while preaching. The bishop was suspected of sympathising with the High Church Tractarian or Oxford Movement, of which one of the leaders was the Revd Edward Pusey (1800-82),[123] whom Phillpotts had permitted to preach in the diocese in 1843, and which Bacon would later refer to as 'the wolf in sheep's clothing'.[124] Among various public meetings prompted by the bishop's letter, on 6 December Bacon chaired a gathering of the parishioners of St Leonard's to oppose Phillpotts' innovation.[125] And although the bishop withdrew his order on 23 December, Bacon continued as one of the principal agitators in the affair, chairing a further gathering on 26 December to demand a public meeting and delivering a petition in support of the same to the mayor of Exeter the following day.[126] Bacon's language, together with the resolutions passed at both that meeting and another called by the mayor on 2 January 1845, stressed loyalty to the throne and opposed threats to the established church through 'the attempted revival […] of obsolete ritual observances and usages'.[127] It was a 'Church-

[121] A summary of comments from the London papers featured in the Exeter press; see, for instance, 'Devon County Meeting', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 24 January 1829, p. 1.
[122] Arthur Burns, 'Phillpotts, Henry (1778–1869), bishop of Exeter', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/22180, accessed 18 May 2020.
[123] Early in the controversy, two letters to the editor of the *North Devon Journal* connected Phillpotts with Pusey, despite the former's objections to Tract 90; see untitled letter to the editor and 'Bishop Phillpotts and Dr. Pusey', *North Devon Journal*, 12 December 1844, p. 3.
[124] 'The Reformation Society', *Western Times*, 6 March 1847, p. 7.
[125] 'Meetings of the Laity in Exeter', *North Devon Journal*, 12 December 1844, p. 3.
[126] For excerpts from the bishop's original pastoral letter, his subsequent retraction and Bacon's delegation to the mayor, see 'The Bishop of Exeter', *Sussex Advertiser*, 31 December 1844, p. 1.
[127] For Bacon's lengthy and wandering speech, terminated by the impatience of the crowd, see 'The Bishop of Exeter and the Rubric', *Standard*, 3 January 1845, unpaginated.

and-King' response provoked by the merest whiff of popery, and highlighting existing tensions within the established church that the Oxford Movement exacerbated and which would eventually result in prominent defections to Rome, most famously by the Revd John Henry Newman (1801-90) in 1845, and the Revd Henry Wilberforce (1807-73), son of the prominent activist, William Wilberforce, five years later. Yet, in 1851, Bacon drew the portrait of the Revd John Keble (1792-1866) (N102; Fig. 106), whose leading role in the Oxford Movement, and close association with both men, makes him an unlikely bedfellow for the evangelicals and Protestant loyalists whose likenesses Bacon generally sought. A friend of his son-in-law, the Revd Medley,[128] Keble was then rector of Hursley, close to Winchester, and the combination of proximity to Bacon's home and, perhaps, a grudging respect for his sitter's leading role in a church revival, however misplaced his energies may have seemed, could have been sufficient reason for Bacon to take his likeness.

Within months of Phillpotts' defeat in the surplice controversy, Bacon chaired a meeting at Exeter of those who opposed the government's plan to increase funding for Maynooth College, a Catholic seminary near Dublin.[129] The college had received parliamentary funds since 1808 with little opposition, but Sir Robert Peel's proposal to both increase its annual funding and make this permanent provoked the ire of those who had unsuccessfully opposed Catholic emancipation in 1829.[130] Two months later, at a meeting chaired by Captain Bingham, Bacon was elected a delegate to the Anti-Maynooth Conference held at Exeter Hall in London from 30 April until 3 May 1845, where he lamented the condescension with which the representations and petitions of the 'quiet, decent, and respectable people' opposed to religious reform had been routinely ignored by the political class.[131] The conservative-liberal split that characterised debate on the reforms of the late 1820s, and that still pervaded questions of Catholic relief in the mid-1840s, is highlighted in a report concerning the original meeting which is found in the liberal *Western Times*, in which it was observed that while objections had been raised to expending public funds on the 'blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits' of Catholic

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[128] For evidence of their connection, see Ketchum, *The Life and Work of the Most Reverend John Medley*, pp. 50, 302.
[129] 'Increased Grant to Maynooth College', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 29 March 1845, p. 3.
[130] For the origins of the Maynooth controversy, see Joseph Coohill, 'Irish Religion in British Politics: The Maynooth Difficulties for Liberal Party MPs', *Parliamentary History*, 30:2 (October 2011), pp. 155-156.
[131] For Bacon's election as a delegate, see 'Meeting to Oppose the Maynooth Grant', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 3 May 1845, p. 3. For Bacon's remarks to the London conference, see A. S. Thelwall, comp. and ed., *Proceedings of the Anti-Maynooth Conference of 1845* (London, 1845), pp. 82-84.

belief,[132] 'none of the speakers [at the meeting] denounced the practice of taking papist money to support Protestantism.'[133] Comments from later the same year reveal Bacon's deep-seated antipathy for Roman Catholics, seeing danger in even the good works of the Catholic Sisters of Charity, which, he stated, 'may indeed be charity to the body, but [which] was error and poison to the soul'.[134]

It seems that Bacon had been politicised by perceived threats to the Protestant constitution and, having occupied a place within evangelical circles since the first decade of the century, found an agreeable second home amid the ultras of conservative politics. It is worth noting that at a meeting of a faction of the Tory party in July 1845, charged with selecting a candidate for Exeter who would oppose any future Maynooth bills, Bacon was offered the chair, 'a position which … was due to him for the part he had taken in the recent Anti-Maynooth demonstration in this city'.[135] Two years later Bacon, together with two of his sitters, John Blatch (fl. 1836-47) (N21; Fig. 107) and Edmund Henning (see Fig. 101), was a founding member of the West of England Protestant Alliance, an association opposing further concessions to the Roman Catholic church which, as Bacon claimed in his remarks to the inaugural meeting, would, like a frozen snake, 'sting the hand by which it had been nurtured and restored to life.'[136]

Conclusion

This chapter has surveyed three periods of activity identified in the artist's career as an associational figure, revealing important shifts in the focus of his activities. The first points to his linked cultural and professional interests, including his election to the Society of Antiquaries in 1803 and his ultimately unsuccessful efforts to secure election to the Royal Academy. In a different vein, we have seen how Bacon's interest in music crossed the threshold of his domestic life, bringing him into contact with an enthusiastic if informal movement to promote the work of Johann Sebastian Bach. As has been shown, Bacon's musical circle was enmeshed in a network of evangelical relationships, including personalities whom Bacon already knew and locations that he is known to have frequented. In the case of his untraced portrait of Samuel Wesley, there is clear evidence of

[132] 'Increased Grant to Maynooth College', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 29 March 1845, p. 3.
[133] 'Maynooth Grant', *Western Times*, 29 March 1845, p. 3.
[134] Untitled, *Western Times*, 29 November 1845, p. 4.
[135] 'Public Meetings. Deliberations of the Protestants', *Western Times*, 5 July 1845, p. 1.
[136] 'Protestant Alliance', *Trewman's Flying Exeter Post*, 14 January 1847, unpaginated.

an early connection between sociability and his portrait practice. Indeed, Wesley's irregular private life suggests that the early portraits were not necessarily evidence of the artist's moral approbation, particularly those that were created at the request of others.

Beginning in *c*. 1812, we find evidence of a second phase as Bacon became deeply involved in the business of voluntary associations in London and, later, in each of the locations where he lived between 1818 and 1856. The textual evidence for this activity may represent only a fraction of his labour on behalf of the several organisations that he either joined or advocated for, to which his portrait drawings add an additional dimension. I suggest that the portraits that he made of his associational colleagues may be read as recognition—perhaps even celebration—of their shared affinity for the social and moral reform to which they were committed, and may have served to cement these ties. Bacon's tireless efforts on behalf of the BFBS in particular, and the emphasis placed on his status as a gentleman of means, locate him within the milieu of reformers from the middle classes who so marked the late-Georgian and Victorian periods. The albums that Bacon created in this period, from *c*. 1827, in which relatives, intimate friends and his associational colleagues were brought together reminds us that the artist's domestic life and his public activities occurred on a spectrum and could comfortably co-exist.

The third phase outlined above points to the increasingly politicised nature of Bacon's sociability. While his work with the BFBS and other voluntary bodies appears to have continued unaltered, from mid-1835 Bacon can be found at the forefront of provincial responses to challenges to the Protestant settlement occurring at both local and national levels. Although his interest in the 'Catholic question' was longstanding, his disaffection with contemporary politics appears to have stemmed from Catholic emancipation in 1829, coming to prominence after the failure of the short-lived Tory administration under Sir Robert Peel and the renewed threat of Catholic advancement through the policy of 'justice to Ireland' promoted by the Whigs who followed him in office. The ecumenism for which he is notable in the first two phases of his associational career did not stretch to accommodate Roman Catholics, and the social and political aspirations of members of that denomination antagonised the 'Church-and-King' conservatives among whom Bacon must be counted.

What then does Bacon's career as an associational figure reveal? While Morris described associational behaviour in instrumentalist terms, as a tool with which the middle class fashioned its sense of both self and worth, Bacon's example suggests that voluntary

work was also be driven by a Christian imperative, as has been argued by Prochaska. Crucial evidence for this is found in Bacon's spiritual diary for the years 1815-24, coinciding with the rapid expansion of his voluntary commitments in London and elsewhere. Read together with the record of his activities in the service of diverse organisations, that document suggests the extent to which the associational activities of evangelical Christians were motivated by faith, by the pursuit of salvation for themselves through the salvation of others.[137] These were imperatives that compelled Bacon to overcome his stated reluctance to court publicity, and remained in tension with his efforts to remove himself and his family from the polluting influences of society. Despite the anxiety that his activities caused him, and the considerable time and funds that he invested, like other evangelicals Bacon recognised that associational activities formed a central pillar of contemporary Christian service. As such, Morris' claims for the instrumentalist value of such activity cannot be separated from the personal spiritual significance that Bacon and others clearly found in them. Even his late shift into conservative politics was predicated on faith and the perceived necessity to preserve Britain's Protestant confessional state from encroachment by the Roman Catholic church. Ultimately, Bacon's associational activity permits a clearer understanding of the relationships that he enjoyed with many of his sitters, the values that they shared and the causes that welded them together in the spirit of regenerate Christianity.

[137] Prochaska, 'Philanthropy', p. 379.

Chapter Six

Drawing in the Third Generation

In a letter to the Revd John written in late 1839, Bacon noted that 'I have found a young [*sic*] drawing book of yours, which I send'.[1] Although that volume has not been identified in this research, it is evidence of the transmission of drawing practice into the third generation of the Bacon family. Preserved in the family home, alongside his own albums of portrait drawings and landscape sketches, Bacon's decision to despatch the volume to his son hints at the sentimental value of the object. As a record of his youthful endeavours, it located the Revd John within the tradition initiated by Bacon Senior and embraced by Bacon himself. Further, and in addition to the example of his own portrait practice, it is possible that Bacon gave the youth drawing lessons, just as he taught his children geometry and geography.[2]

The Revd John was not alone among his siblings in turning to drawing, and in this chapter I examine the evidence of drawing as it was practiced by Bacon's children. His two sons are relatively well represented with a number of mature works, or prints after these, revealing the interest in portraiture and landscape of the Revds John and Thomas, respectively. Bacon's daughters are seen mainly through the lens of their juvenile exercises, particularly copies made from drawing manuals, from which all the children may have studied, although a small number of portraits by Augusta Maria point to her mature efforts in that genre. The relative paucity of works by Bacon's daughters identified in this research may be the result of the dispersal of their artistic legacies in the course of their marriages and, in all but one case, early deaths. Nonetheless, the evidence suggests that either all or most of the children learned to draw, regardless of sex, perhaps initially as part of their education, and continued the practice as a recreation and, in the case of the Revd Thomas,

[1] John Bacon Junior to the Revd John Bacon, 17 October 1839, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 22.
[2] Susannah Sophia Bacon, 'Life of S. S. Bacon'.

a semi-professional occupation, at least for a short time. Although the specific circumstances of the family are key to understanding the place of drawing in the third generation, the practice must also be examined in the context of contemporary discourse about drawing practice.

Beginnings

The fullest account of such discourse can be found in *Learning to Draw*, in which Ann Bermingham charts changes in drawing practice in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as it shifted from the courtly, masculine practice first promoted by Renaissance courtier and theorist Count Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) in *Il libro del Cortegiano* (1528).[3] Turning on the marginalization of drawing within the exhibition spaces of the Royal Academy and, she argues, its related feminisation via commercialisation of amateur artistic practice, drawing was increasingly identified as one of several popular feminine 'accomplishments', the merits of which were the subject of debate among educationalists in the period, including the feminist Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97) and the evangelical Hannah More (1745-1833).[4] While Wollstonecraft objected to the trivial nature of accomplishments, More linked these to the commodification of women within the marriage market and the threats these posed to well-ordered domestic life.[5] A study of drawing as it intersected with contemporary discourse concerning art practice, education and gender, among other topics, Bermingham's study relies heavily on the prescriptive literature surrounding drawing practice rather than a close study of how drawings were executed in the period.

Although the Revd John's sketchbook remains untraced, three others belonging to Bacon's children have been examined. Two are identified with old labels in an unknown hand as the work of Bacon's daughters Elizabeth, with drawings signed and dated in the years 1823 to 1828, and Harriet, with drawings that are neither signed nor dated, but dated

[3] For the historical background to her study of drawing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, chapters 1 and 2. Already popular in England, Castiglione's text was first made available in English in an adaptation by Sir Thomas Hoby (1530-66), first published in 1561; see ibid, p. 14.
[4] Ibid, pp. 183-196.
[5] For Wollstonecraft and More, see ibid, pp. 191-192.

on the label to 1825.[6] The identity of the author of the third sketchbook has not been preserved, although the label states that it contains work undertaken between 1820 and 1830, suggesting that it may have been the work of one of Bacon's younger daughters. Importantly, the three sketchbooks cast light on the types of sources to which Bacon's children had access. In each instance, the drawings appear to be copies after prints found in drawing manuals rather than studies from nature, as was common in the period.[7] As there is no evidence to suggest that any of Bacon's children was expected to succeed him in the studio at Newman Street, it seems that they learned to draw as a part of their education. Even if the short autobiographies written by Susannah Sophia and her sister Augusta Maria do not mention drawing among their activities at home or at school,[8] and although drawing did not feature on the advertised curriculum of the Revd Plume's school at Boxford, the evidence of the sketchbooks strongly suggests that the children received informal lessons in the home, where they certainly had access to commercially produced drawing manuals.

Although the manuals to which Bacon's children turned were largely intended for an amateur market, such publications had a long history in the education of professional artists.[9] One of the earliest such publications was the *Scuola perfetta* (*c*. 1602), long attributed to Agostino Carracci (1557-1602), a set that included studies of discrete parts of the human body, such as hands, feet and eyes, and of which pirated editions continued to be published into the early nineteenth century.[10] The example of the Carracci and the emphasis that they placed on the study of the human body thereafter formed a key component of academic artistic education in Italy and France. Emulating Continental models, the newly founded Royal Academy established schools that included its 'antique academy', where students studied from plaster casts before graduating to the 'life

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[6] Unknown artist [child of John Bacon Junior], Sketchbook, 1820-30; Harriet Bacon, Sketchbook, 1825; Elizabeth Bacon, Sketchbook, 1823-28; all private collection. It is possible that the anonymous sketchbook was the Revd John's, but this cannot be established at the present time.

[7] For drawing manuals in the period, see Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, chapter 3; and Sloan, *'A Noble Art'*, esp. chapter 5.

[8] Susannah Sophia Bacon, 'Life of S. S. Bacon'.

[9] For the role of early drawing books in the education of professional artists, see Chittima Amornpichetkul, 'Seventeenth-century Italian Drawing Books: Their Origin and Development', in ed. Jeffrey Muller, *Children of Mercury: The Education of Artists in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, exhibition catalogue, Bell Gallery, Brown University, Providence, 2-30 March 1984, (Providence, RI, 1984), pp. 109-118.

[10] For the *Scuola perfetta*, see Adam von Bartsch, *Le Peintre graveur* (21 vols., Vienna, 1801-21), vol. 18, pp. 158-170, nos. 1-81. For one such late copy of prints from the *Scuola perfetta*, see *The Principles of Drawing Made Easy by A.C. Taken from Curious Originals in the Collection of Dr. Mead* (London, 1805).

academy', where they drew from the nude.[11] This was the tradition in which Bacon, and his father before him, had been educated and which privileged drawing as the basis of a sound artistic education. A trace of that academic tradition is found in the anonymous sketchbook, which includes a sheet of studies of the human eye, seen from various angles and in different states of finish. This drawing was copied from a print by Francesco Bartolozzi RA (1728-1815) after a design by Giovanni Battista Cipriani RA (1727-85), recalling the latter's role as an influential teacher in the Royal Academy Schools.[12] First published in 1786, Bartolozzi's print featured in Cipriani's *Rudiments of Drawing* (1793), and may have been among the sources that Bacon had studied in his youth.

A number of the children's drawings were made after prints in the series *Landscape Animals from a Series of Progressive Studies* (London, 1811) by William Marshall Craig (died 1827). Bermingham has identified Craig as one of the central figures in the pursuit of pictorial realism that rejected the classicizing generalizations of the mid-eighteenth century picturesque promoted by the likes of the Revd William Gilpin (1724-1804).[13] Certainly, Craig's drawing manuals enjoyed a strong following among Bacon's children, and Harriet's sketchbook reveals a particular interest in Craig's studies of animals (Fig. 108), including heads and limbs of goats, sheep and cattle, fragments that nod to the Italian tradition initiated by the Carracci.[14] Elizabeth's sketchbook features a number of copies after Craig's rustic vignettes (Fig. 109).[15] But he was not the only source for such motifs, and Elizabeth's sketchbook features similar images of rustic woodmen and fishermen that, sharing a distinctive quivering line that she carefully imitated, appear to have a common, but as yet unidentified origin.

Architecture also features prominently among the children's drawings, and the anonymous sketchbook is dominated by simple structures, including peasant hovels, cottages and still others of a generally rural or vaguely historical nature for which sources have not yet been identified. Elizabeth's sketchbook also features several drawings of

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[11] Wickham, 'The Schools and the Practice of Art', pp. 432-435.
[12] John Ingamells, 'Cipriani, Giovanni Battista (1727–1785), decorative painter and draughtsman', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/5421, accessed 19 April 2021.
[13] For Gilpin and Craig, see Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, pp. 93-96, 98-105, 106-111.
[14] Ibid, p. 110. Harriet Bacon after William Marshall Craig, *Studies of the head of a cow*, *c*. 1823, pencil, 154 x 343 mm, private collection.
[15] Elizabeth Bacon after William Marshall Craig, *Peasants loading a hay wain*, 1825, pencil, 154 x 343 mm, private collection.

rudimentary architecture (Fig. 110),[16] and two of the same motifs feature in an orphaned sheet by another member of the family, perhaps taken from a sketchbook by Christiana, among whose descendants it later circulated.[17] However, there is also evidence of a lingering interest in the picturesque aesthetic promoted by Gilpin. Elizabeth's sketchbook includes a drawing of ruins and small boats on a body of water, copied from a print by John Whessell (c.1760-after 1820) after a design by Richard Wilson RA (1713-82) that featured in *Studies and Designs, by Richard Wilson, Done at Rome in the Year 1752* (1811), a copy of which featured in the sale of Bacon family effects in 1865.[18]

Finally, there are three drawings in the hand of Bacon's youngest daughter, Augusta Maria. Two are portraits of relatives, including her widowed brother-in-law, the Revd John Medley, *c*. 1845 (N238; Fig. 111), and the eldest son of her brother, the Revd John, Maunsell John Bacon (1839-1924), *c*. 1842 (N280; Fig. 112). An inscription identifies the latter as a copy of a drawing by her brother (N337). The third drawing depicts an evangelical cleric, the Revd Charles Bradley (1789-1871), 1848 (N246; Fig. 113). Signed by Augusta Maria with the initials of her married name, 'A.M.F.' ('Augusta Maria Fowler'), the drawing was inscribed with a note indicating that it was likewise copied from a portrait of Bradley by Bacon in the possession of Bradley's wife. One further drawing may also be Augusta Maria's work. A portrait, possibly of her nephew Francis Bacon (1841-1930), *c*. 1845 (N281; Fig. 114), appears to be a copy after a drawing by the boy's father, the Revd John (N294; Fig. 115), and is close to the handling of Augusta Maria's copy of the Revd John's portrait of Francis' elder brother, Maunsell John. The full extent of Augusta Maria's *oeuvre* can only be guessed at, but the presence of several copies in this small group may speak to the place of copying in female artistic practice identified by Bermingham in her analysis of prescriptive literature in the period.[19]

Although Bermingham does not assume that her model of change in drawing practice applied evenly across amateurs in the period, the example of the third generation of the Bacon family suggests that greater scrutiny of the evidence of drawing as practiced is

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[16] Elizabeth Bacon after an unknown artist, *Drawings of architecture*, 1826, pencil, 154 x 343 mm, private collection.
[17] For the orphaned sketch, which is in a different hand to the version found in Elizabeth's sketchbook, see Drawings of buildings with various designs and types of architecture, in Medley, Edward Shuttleworth, 1838-1910, Drawing book. 1854 [to 1860], Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, inv. E-406-q-015.
[18] Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, *Catalogue of the Valuable Illustrated Works*, cat. no. 14, p. 2.
[19] For imitation as a necessary element of female education, see Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, p. 191.

required to ascertain the strength of her thesis. It is evident that Bacon's children learnt to draw regardless of their sex, and had access to a range of drawing manuals and pictorial sources, suggesting that no single aesthetic model prevailed within their milieu. The matter of the strict gendering of genres is also questionable. While the general trend identified by Bermingham in the prescriptive literature evidently has merit, and the example of Christiana's interest in flower painting may support at least one aspect of this,[20] Augusta Maria's exercises in portraiture suggest that there remained considerable scope for individual choice in amateur artistic pursuits.

In the landscape: The Revd Thomas

In the short account of her life and family written in January 1832, Bacon's youngest daughter, Augusta Maria, briefly described her two brothers, noting that 'John is very good natured indeed and Tom very brave.'[21] Although it went unremarked, the men's differing temperaments were evident in their contrasting professions. For while John was then a student at Cambridge, Thomas was serving in the army of the East India Company in Bengal. It was the first of three distinct phases in Thomas' career. After resigning his military commission early in late 1838,[22] Thomas trained for the law in London, being called to the Bar in 1841.[23] His legal career was brief, however, and he soon followed his brother into the Anglican church. Ordained by the bishop of Gibraltar as deacon in 1846 and priest in 1847, the Revd Thomas' early years in the Church were spent in Malta (1846-48) and Gibraltar (1847-48), perhaps revealing a yearning for travel that his time in India had not sated. His return to Exeter the following year, where he served as curate of Bedford Chapel during 1847-48, prompted his cousin Emma to hope that 'he will not wander anymore'.[24] Following time as senior curate of All Souls St Marylebone (1849-52), Thomas was

[20] Bacon bequeathed an untraced watercolour of flowers by Christiana to her widower, Bishop Medley in Canada; see John Bacon Junior, Last will and testament. For an example of her work in this genre, see Medley, C (Mrs), fl. 1827 :[Card with floral motif] C. M. Decr 19th 1827], in Medley, Edward Shuttleworth, 1838-1910, Drawing book. 1854 [to 1860], Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, inv. E-406-q-028.
[21] Augusta Maria Bacon, 'My Journal', 1832, cited in Gertrude Bacon, 'Epilogue', p. 114.
[22] In 1831 Thomas had committed to ten years in the Company's service; see Thomas Bacon, *First Impressions*, vol. 1, p. 69. For the resignation of his commission, see 'By the President in Council', *Calcutta Monthly Journal*, XLIX (January 1839), p. 203.
[23] For his admission to the Bar, see 'Devonshire, &c.', *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 May 1841, unpaginated.
[24] Emma Bacon to the Revd Samuel Bacon, 18 January 1849, PANB, MC4045/MS11D-8.

appointed rector of Kingsworthy, near Winchester, where he remained until his retirement twenty years later.[25]

If Thomas' decision to ultimately take holy orders stemmed from his religious upbringing, what was it that piqued his interest in the army, and India in particular? Other than Bacon the Elder patriotically drilling his sons and workmen during the crisis years of the 1790s,[26] no family history of military service has been identified in this research. Born too late to recall the decades of war with France, Thomas likely knew the monuments to British military heroes that his father had executed for Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral,[27] and perhaps heard of those despatched from Newman Street to the Subcontinent.[28] Similarly, he probably knew the vast allegorical sculpture then adorning the pediment of East India House in Leadenhall Street, designed by his grandfather and completed by his father.[29] More compelling, perhaps, were the careers of men in the family's evangelical circle at Sidmouth, including Sir John Kennaway (see Fig. 56), who had enjoyed a lucrative career in India, principally as British Resident at the court of the nizam of Hyderabad.[30] Roughly a decade older than Thomas, Kennaway's sons Lawrence (1802-22) and William (1804-42) both joined the East India Company's civil service.[31] Likewise, Major-General Edward Baynes had seen service in India with regular British forces,[32] and his son, Edward (b. 1809) attended the Company's Military Seminary at Addiscombe in Surrey in 1826-28.[33] There is reason to suppose that the example of several of Bacon's

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[25] For a summary of Thomas' varied career, see Frederic Boase, *Modern English Biography: containing many thousand concise memoirs of persons who have died between the years 1851-1900, with an index of the most interesting matter*, vol. 4, supplement to vol. 1 (reprint, London, 1965), column 219.

[26] Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, pp. 17, 21.

[27] For example, Bacon's joint memorial to Captains John Harvey and John Hutt, 1804, in Westminster Abbey; and his monument to General Sir John Moore, 1815, in St Paul's Cathedral.

[28] Bacon's Indian monuments included that for Lord Cornwallis at Calcutta, *c*. 1803, now at the Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, and that was initially commissioned from his father; see Sarah Burnage, 'Commemorating Cornwallis: Sculpture in India 1792-1813', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 11:2 (July 2010), pp. 182-188.

[29] Designed and begun by Bacon the Elder, the pediment was completed by Bacon following his father's death in 1799; see Cox-Johnson, *John Bacon*, p. 42, n. 9. For a description of the design, see William Foster, *The East India House: Its History and Associations* (London, 1924), pp. 139-140.

[30] Brendan Carnduff, 'Kennaway, Sir John, first baronet (1758–1836), army officer in the East India Company and diplomatist', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/15359, accessed 10 February 2021.

[31] For Lawrence Kennaway and William Richard Kennaway, see British Library, India Office Family History Search, http://indiafamily.bl.uk/ui/Home.aspx.

[32] John R. Grodzinski, 'Edward Baynes', in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 16 December 2013, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/edward-baynes, accessed 10 February 2021.

[33] For Edward Baynes, see British Library, India Office Family History Search, http://indiafamily.bl.uk/ui/Home.aspx; and Henry Meredith Vibart, *Addiscombe, Its Heroes and Men of Note* (London, 1894), p. 670.

sitters may have influenced Thomas' career, and portraits of men who correspond to the three discrete phases of his life are found inscribed in his hand: Kennaway; the judge Sir Stephen Gaselee (N326; Fig. 116) and the barrister and attorney-general Sir John Copley (see Fig. 26); and the Revd Robert Bentley Buckle (1802-93) (N328; Fig. 117). Of these, the portraits of Kennaway, Gaselee and Copley were cut down to ovals and appear to have been framed. The only other drawings with inscriptions in Thomas' hand identified in this research are Bacon's portraits of Captain Wimble (fl. 1831) (N253; Fig. 118) of *Lady Nugent*, on which he had sailed to Bengal, found in Album Four, and that of his uncle Joshua Bacon (see Fig. 69), which was likewise cut down to an oval, apparently for framing.

Addiscombe

If he was known to Thomas, young Edward Baynes may have inspired the sixteen-year-old's decision to enrol in the two-year course of study at Addiscombe in 1829-30. The East India Company's answer to the British government's military training colleges at Sandhurst and Woolwich, Addiscombe was established in 1809 to educate officers and technical specialists for service in the Company's army. If less prestigious than that of the British state, the Company's army featured an officer class with a much higher percentage of middle-class men, and was perhaps more accommodating for a youth of Thomas' background as a result.**[34]** Entrance to Addiscombe was largely a matter of patronage,[35] and Thomas may have been admitted via the spreading evangelical network. This possibility is suggested by Bacon's undated portrait of Robert Grant (1780-1838) (N236; Fig. 119), 1820-30, with whom he had been acquainted from at least 1815 when he received an invitation from Grant to dine with his brother and parents at the latter's home in Russell Square.[36] Together with his brother, the politician Charles (1778-1866), from 1835 Lord Glenelg, Grant was the son of Charles Grant (1746-1823), a member of the Clapham Sect, director and sometime chairman of the East India Company which—unusually—erected a monument to him that celebrated his religious principles and that was, moreover, carved by Bacon's business-partner, Samuel Manning. Gareth Atkins has identified this monument

[34] Nick Mansfield, *Soldiers as Workers: Class, Employment, Conflict and the Nineteenth-Century Military* (Liverpool, 2016), pp. 13-14, 27, 40-41, 60. For analysis of the social origins of the officer class in both armies, see P. E. Razzell, 'Social Origins of Officers in the Indian and British Home Army: 1758-1962', *British Journal of Sociology*, 14:3 (September 1963), pp. 248-260.
[35] J. M. Bourne, 'The East India Company's Military Seminary, Addiscombe, 1809-1858', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 57:232 (Winter 1979), p. 211.
[36] Robert Grant to John Bacon Junior, 4 April 1815, private collection.

as evidence of the spread of, and influence exerted by, evangelicals within the Company.[37] At the same time, evangelicalism enjoyed increasing influence in India itself through an expanding church establishment there, particularly under the auspices of another of Bacon's sitters, the Revd Daniel Wilson (see Fig. 104), bishop of Calcutta from 1832 and, later, Anglican metropolitan of India.[38]

Despite its links to the evangelical movement, accounts of the Addiscombe seminary written by alumni suggest a culture of spirited misbehaviour that was unlikely to have met with Bacon's approval.[39] Additionally, in his account of the seminary, Atkins describes an inadequately funded and poorly managed institution which placed too great an emphasis on mathematics while failing to promote more appropriate subjects, particularly indigenous languages.[40] However, as previously mentioned, emulating the government's military academies, the curriculum at Addiscombe also featured drawing. The value placed on the practice is evident in the earliest admission criteria for the seminary, which identified drawing as a skill desired of candidates,[41] who went on to learn 'Civil, Military, and Lithographic Drawing and Surveying'.[42] 'Military drawing' was almost certainly cartography,[43] while 'civil drawing' included landscape drawing, probably of a topographical nature.[44] From 1811 the seminary's leaders favoured drawing with annual prizes,[45] and during his time as a cadet Thomas received a 'silver sketching box given to me as a prize for drawing at Addiscombe', which he later bequeathed to his nephew Francis Bacon, an architect and fellow soldier, suggesting the value that he placed on it.[46]

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[37] Manning's monument to Grant is in St George's Church, Bloomsbury; see Atkins*, Converting Britannia*, chapter 6, esp. pp. 207-208.
[38] Ibid, esp. pp. 232-243. The company had earlier commissioned from John Bacon Junior a monument to a German missionary, the Revd Christian Friedrich Schwartz (1726-98), for St Mary's Church in Fort St George, Madras, despatched in 1806; see Charles Hole, *The Early History of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East to the end of A. D. 1814* (London, 1896), p. 215.
[39] For first-hand accounts of life as a cadet, see Vibart, *Addiscombe*, esp. chapters 2 and 3; and Octavius Sturges, *In the Company's Service: A Reminiscence* (London, 1883), chapters 1-4.
[40] For a more critical analysis of the institution, see Bourne 'The East India Company's Military Seminary', pp. 208-214. For criticism of the curriculum, presumably around 1850-52, see Sturges, *In the Company's Service*, pp. 18-19.
[41] Citing undated 'first regulations' for admission, presumably *c*. 1809; see Vibart, *Addiscombe*, p. 15.
[42] Bourne does not indicate what differentiated the first two categories, and does not give the date of the regulations that he cited; see Bourne, 'The East India Company's Military Seminary', p. 208.
[43] Sturges, *In the Company's Service*, pp. 6, 18.
[44] Vibart *Addiscombe*, p. 51; Sturges, *In the Company's Service*, pp. 32, 223.
[45] Vibart, *Addiscombe*, pp. 42-43; W. Broadfoot, 'Addiscombe: The East India Company's Military College', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, May 1893, p. 648.
[46] Revd Thomas Bacon, Last will and testament.

Drawing and the military

The importance of drawing in the military stemmed from its utility to troops in the field and Bermingham has stated that the introduction of cartography and topographical drawing at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich in 1741 was linked to the professionalization of the British military over the course of the eighteenth century. Galvanised by the Jacobite Rebellion (1745-46), the British government commissioned the Board of Ordnance to complete a survey of the recently subdued Scotland. That project launched the career of the landscape artist Paul Sandby (1731-1809), whose role it was to compile the 'fair copy' of the cartographers' efforts, alongside which he pursued his own interest in topographical studies of the Scottish landscape from which he later launched a successful commercial career.[47] The promotion of drawing, and its newly forged links to masculine culture beyond the aristocratic circles first promoted in the sixteenth century saw the practice adopted as a subject in civilian schools during the second half of the eighteenth century. As a result, Bermingham has argued that two traditions emerged: in the military tradition, drawing was a technology of conquest, expressed through the evolving language of cartography and topographical drawing; while in civilian education, what sense of utility it retained was of 'civic and moral self-improvement.'[48]

Although he probably learned from drawing manuals, as several of his sisters are known to have done, like them Thomas may have also received some early instruction in drawing landscapes from his father, who also worked in the genre. But the relative naivety of Bacon's topographical drawings and the contrasting sophistication of Thomas' work suggests the influence of his drawing masters at Addiscombe, the landscape artist William Frederick Wells (bap. 1764-1836; master of civil drawing, 1813-36) and his assistant Theodore Henry Adolphus Fielding (1781-1851). A friend and supporter of J. M. W. Turner (1775-1851) and a founding member of the 'Old' Society of Painters in Water-Colours (now the Royal Watercolour Society), Wells' views of British and Scandinavian landscapes may have encouraged Thomas' interest in an aestheticized rather than strictly utilitarian approach to his subject.[49] Similarly, Fielding, the author of *A Picturesque Tour of the English*

[47] Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, pp. 81-85. Also, John Bonehill, Stephen Daniels and Nicholas Alfrey, 'Paul Sandby: Picturing Britain', in eds. John Bonehill and Stephen Daniels, *Paul Sandby: Picturing Britain*, exhibition catalogue, Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery, 25 July-18 October 2009, and elsewhere, (London, 2009), pp. 13-18 and cat. nos. 1-11.
[48] Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, pp. 80-91.
[49] Vibart, *Addiscombe*, pp. 44, 51, 64, 66. For Wells, see Simon Fenwick, 'Wells, William Frederick (bap. 1764, d. 1836), watercolour painter', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/29021, accessed 14 February 2021.

Lakes (with James Walton, 1821), may have served as an example of how the landscape could be turned to pecuniary advantage.

India

Examples of Thomas' work first appeared as illustrations in his memoir, *First Impressions and Studies from Nature in Hindostan* (1837). With only sparing use of dates, and without imitating the format of a journal, the memoir is composed of events and characters from the author's journey to and time in India. The narrative is littered with lengthy dialogues and observations that Thomas' introduction insists were true to life.[50] Indeed, he insisted that the growing connections between Britain and India called for accounts such as his,

> not artificial and highly coloured ones, calculated, like a fairy tale, merely to recreate an idle hour; but genuine portraitures, possessing, indeed, the attractions which must be always inherent even in the most servile description of a country, where the scenery, objects, and people are so different from those in Europe … India, British India at least, must no longer be depicted in the shadowy colours of the Arabian Nights.[51]

Deploying 'portrait' here in its capacious historical sense, highlighted by Pointon,[52] and which was evidently still current in the period, Thomas claimed a degree of accuracy that would distinguish his own account from those of his contemporaries and predecessors. But the critics were not convinced, and several excoriated Thomas' prose.[53] The reviewer in the *Athenaeum* declared that '[i]n his dislike of what he is pleased to call "servile description," he has thrown aside the requisites of faithful portraiture', dismissing the greater part of the memoir as 'the mere gossip of the mess-table, having no more relation to Hindústan that to any other country where officers have very little to do.'[54] In addition to discovering little of value in his two volumes, the reviewer in the *Spectator* wondered whether readers had encountered young men of Thomas' kind, with 'the taint of the camp and mess-room',

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[50] Thomas Bacon, *First Impressions*, vol. 1, pp. viii-ix.
[51] My ellipses. Ibid, vol. 1, pp. vi-vii.
[52] Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, p. 7.
[53] Although advertisements promoting the book featured glowing one-line reviews, based on those examined in both the *Spectator* and the *Athenaeum*, it seems that these were judiciously edited; see, for instance, 'This day is Published', *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 3 June 1837, p. 1.
[54] Book review, *Athenaeum*, 15 April 1837, pp. 259-260.

exhibiting behaviour 'distinctive of the professors of arms, especially of half-caste services, or of such of his Majesty's regiments as are eschewed by the "gentlemen?"'[55] It was a damning assessment, one that called into question Thomas' character and struck at the heart of Bacon's genteel aspirations for his family.

If *First Impressions* cast less light on the Subcontinent that its author intended, the character revealed upends any assumptions about the evangelical mores of the eighteen-year-old Thomas based on what is known of his upbringing. It is striking that one of Thomas' chief occupations on first taking leave of his own father was to join a fellow cadet in mercilessly baiting the head of a family with which they shared their outward voyage, enraging the man with unwelcome and deliberately provocative attention to his unmarried daughter.[56] The text reveals that Thomas was an insolent, chauvinistic and occasionally violent young man who threw himself into hunting and revelled in the worldly society of his fellows, including the balls, banquets and theatricals that enlivened regimental life, perhaps even appearing on stage.[57] The unregenerate nature of Thomas' lifestyle was certainly at odds with that modelled by his parents. However, if the contents of the two volumes shocked them (and on this the record is silent), they may have taken comfort in the expressions of faith that occasionally punctuate his narrative. These include his attempt to convert an atheist among those on the outward voyage,[58] criticism of the 'sporting parsons' to be found in India,[59] and his ethical objection to the revenue raised by the Company through a tax levied on Hindu pilgrims.[60] If there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Thomas' religious beliefs, as expressed in his memoir, it seems clear that it was not the consuming and depressive faith revealed in his father's spiritual diary.

Unlike Thomas' prose, the illustrations to *First Impressions* were commended. The critic at the *Spectator* described him as 'a draughtsman with a natural eye for the beauties of landscape, which his studies have sharpened and improved.'[61] The latter remark points to an aspect of the picturesque idiom in which Thomas worked. In this the landscape was treated as mutable, its elements subject to amendment in order to achieve a balanced and

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[55] 'Lieutenant Bacon's First Impressions in Hindostan', *Spectator*, 15 April 1837, pp. 353-354.
[56] Thomas Bacon, *First Impressions*, vol. 1, pp. 21-24, 33-40.
[57] His description of the euphoria from a successful performance appears to be a scarcely-concealed record of personal experience; see Thomas Bacon, *First Impressions*, vol. 1, pp. 371-374.
[58] He failed to bring the man—who attempted suicide—to religion through the Bible and William Paley's *Natural Theology* (first published 1802) and *A View of the Evidences of Christianity* (first published 1794), copies of which Thomas appears to have had with him; ibid, pp. 12-17.
[59] Ibid, pp. 153-156.
[60] Ibid, p. 177.
[61] 'Lieutenant Bacon's First Impressions in Hindostan', *Spectator*, 15 April 1837, pp. 353-354.

carefully framed composition, staged depth of field and a range of textures, tones and human interest (Fig. 120).[62] With its origins in the classical landscapes of the seventeenth century, the genre was promoted by Gilpin, whose publications of his 'picturesque tours' were influential in the aestheticization of the British landscape.[63] The impact of this development was felt in India following the arrival there in 1780 of William Hodges (1744-97), who enjoyed the patronage of the governor-general, Warren Hastings (1732-1818).[64] As the first professional European landscape artist to travel widely in India, the success of Hodges' paintings and prints set the tone for representations of the Subcontinent for the British public and those artists who followed him, notably Thomas Daniell (1749-1840) and his nephew William Daniell (1769-1837), whose sets of prints were particularly influential.[65] However, despite artists' repeated claims to accuracy, there was an inevitable tension between aesthetic demands and the informational value of the resulting images.[66] In part this reflects the politicized nature of the Indian landscape during a period of territorial aggrandizement by the Company,[67] although Giles Tillotson has cautioned that the 'inescapable artistic vision' of the picturesque was as much an 'aesthetic habit' among British artists in India as a tool of imperial discourse.[68]

The tension between aesthetic imperatives and the documentary purposes of drawing was likely amplified in the process of bringing Thomas' images to the reading public. As inscriptions on the plates reveal, Thomas' drawings were passed to an artist

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[62] For the origins of the picturesque, see Malcolm Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Stanford, CA, 1989), esp. chapters 2 and 3. For descriptions of the application of the picturesque to Indian views, see G. H. R. Tillotson, 'The Indian Picturesque: Images of India in British Landscape Painting, 1780-1880', in ed. Christopher Alan Bayly, *The Raj: India and the British 1600-1947*, exhibition catalogue, National Portrait Gallery, London, 19 Oct 1990-17 March 1991 (London, 1990), p. 142; also Romita Ray, *Under the Banyan Tree: Relocating the Picturesque in British India* (New Haven, CT and London, 2013).

[63] For picturesque touring in Britain, see Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque*, chapters 5-8.

[64] John E. Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes: Britain's Global Visual Culture, 1745-1820* (New Haven, CT and London, 2011), pp. 176-177.

[65] For the Daniells, see John McAleer, *Picturing India: People, Places and the World of the East India Company* (London, 2017), pp. 13-19. Archer and Lightbown argued that in India the picturesque aesthetic was followed *c.* 1825 by a 'Romantic Orientalism' informed by the antipathy of both Evangelicalism and Utilitarianism, including James Mill's influential *History of British India* (1817). See Archer, 'Exotic and Romantic India 1825-60', in Mildred Archer and Ronald Lightbown, *India Observed: India as viewed by British Artists 1760-1860*, exhibition catalogue, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 26 April-5 July 1982 (London, 1982), pp. 104-111; and Lightbown, 'India Viewed', in ibid, pp. 113-114.

[66] Tillotson, *The Indian Picturesque*, pp. 146-147.

[67] McAleer, *Picturing India*, pp. 21-24. For Hodges and the social, political and ethical potential of landscape in India, see Beth Fowkes Tobin, *Colonizing Nature: The Tropics in British Arts and Letters, 1760-1820* (Philadelphia, PA, 2005), chapter 4.

[68] Tillotson, 'The Indian Picturesque', p. 151.

responsible for transcribing these onto—in most instances—the lithographic stone, although a further artist might also interpret Thomas' original sketches before passing these to the lithographer.[69] Ronald Lightbown claimed that this mediating process transformed Thomas' originals 'into splendid designs of true 1830s orientalism, with towering domes and pavilions and archways and figures in exotic costume posed or grouped picturesquely and enlivened by touches of anecdote.'[70] However, in the absence of Thomas' original sketches for the plates, which have not been traced in this research, it is not possible to know how far the prints differ from his initial designs.[71]

If the informational value of prints after Thomas' sketches must be treated with caution, his memoir suggests the pleasure that he took in the act of drawing. Each sketch was a record of Thomas' peregrinations to places that combined antiquarian, aesthetic and spiritual significance, including temples and other important religious sites, often while on leave. Excursions to significant monuments were sometimes prompted by his desire to witness the religious festivals celebrated at these, such as his journey to Poori (modern-day Puri) to witness the Ratha yatra (chariot festival) at the Jagannath Temple ('Juggurnaut'). The latter visit occasioned an explicitly political commentary, as Thomas articulated the benefits of British intervention in India, assuring his readers that alleged human sacrifices at Jagannath had been 'suppressed by the humane exertions of our government and the zealous missionaries'.[72] Thomas also travelled to Hurdwar (Haridwar) on the Ganges to attend the Kumbh Mela, a major religious festival in which attendees bathe in the river.[73] But rather than emphasising spiritual meaning, Thomas' accounts focus on the religious architecture and peripheral incident, including tart observations on pilgrims and holy men, and the associated noise and smells. His interest lay squarely in the material culture of Indian religion—a point emphasised by his decision to casually pocket a small idol during a chance visit to the ruins of a Hindu temple towards the end of his time in the country.[74] The prints after drawings made at both Poori and Hurdwar, together with Thomas' accounts of

[69] The majority of the illustrations are lithographs. For an example of an additional mediating artist in the generation of Thomas' images for the *Oriental Portfolio*, see Archer and Lightbown, *India Observed*, cat. no. 184, p. 150.
[70] Lightbown, 'India Viewed', p. 123.
[71] Lightbown's analysis appears to have been based on prints after Thomas' drawings which feature in various publications, including the *Oriental Portfolio* and the *Oriental Annual*; see ibid, pp. 121-123, 149-150.
[72] Thomas insisted that reports in the British press of human sacrifice and *suttee* (the ritual immolation of widows) were much exaggerated; see Thomas Bacon, *First Impressions*, vol. 1, pp. 173-182.
[73] Ibid, vol. 2, pp. 152-187.
[74] Ibid, vol. 2, pp. 418-419.

sketching in other locations during his leisure time, suggest that his drawings were not executed in connection with military objectives; indeed, there is no reference in the memoir to drawing in an official capacity. And while Thomas' status as an agent of the colonising power means that his drawings remain entangled with the imperial project, the primarily personal quality of these records recalls Tillotson's note of caution, reminding us of the multivalent nature of drawing practice among even military-men throughout the period.[75]

If the origin of Thomas' drawings lay in his private pleasures, his works soon entered the public realm. In addition to those plates illustrating his *First Impressions*, prints after Thomas' sketches later featured in the last two issues of the *Oriental Annual*, of which Thomas published the final two editions in 1839-40.[76] Further prints were published elsewhere and Lightbown suggested that Thomas may have financed his legal studies by commercialising his Indian views,[77] having 'adroitly advertised his album of views as a 'large collection' of 'elaborate and highly-finished drawings' in the preface to his travel book.'[78] This was one element of Thomas' semi-professional trajectory. Reversing his father's rejection of the metropolitan art world, Thomas exhibited at least one watercolour landscape with the Society for the Encouragement the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, for which he received a silver medal in the category of amateur (1837-38),[79] and an Italian view at the Royal Academy in 1844.[80] The last was evidence of Thomas' continued interest in landscape throughout his adult life, filling sketchbooks with drawings while touring Europe into the mid-1870s, including views in Britain, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Italy (Fig. 121).[81] The longest-lived of all Bacon's children, he carried the family's tradition of drawing practice late into the second half of the nineteenth century.

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[75] See Ray, *Under the Banyan Tree*, pp. 6-7.
[76] For the *Oriental Annual* and Thomas' involvement, see Lightbown, 'India Viewed', pp. 120-123.
[77] Archer and Lightbown, *India Observed*, p. 149.
[78] Lightbown, 'India Viewed', p. 122.
[79] *Transactions of the Society Instituted at London for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce*, vol. 52 (London, 1839), p. xvi.
[80] At the time, Thomas gave his address as both Florence and 47 Bedford Square, London; see Graves, *Royal Academy*, vol. 1, p. 90.
[81] Five sketchbooks of the Revd Thomas' drawings from the 1860s and 1870s exist in a private collection.

Tradition and innovation: The Revd John

If Thomas was a man of action, his elder brother John followed in the footsteps of their uncle, the Revd Samuel, being ordained deacon in April 1834, and priest in October the following year.[82] In the same month that he was ordained deacon, the Revd John married Mary Baruh Lousada. Within weeks the couple relocated to Calstock in Cornwall, on the border with Devon, where the Revd John had been appointed curate with an annual stipend of £70, increasing to £80 on taking priests' orders the following year. This modest beginning appears to have been subsidised by the marriage settlement that Bacon made upon his eldest son.[83]

The couple remained at Calstock until 1837 when the Revd John was appointed the first incumbent of the newly-built St Mary's Church at Woodlands, Berkshire, where he would remain until 1863. In the biography of her father, John Mackenzie Bacon (1846-1904), Gertrude Bacon evoked missionary conditions when describing her grandparents' situation at Woodlands. Her grandfather was 'buried in his remote Berkshire parish',[84] itself located on a 'high and windswept, bleak upland common' of considerable 'wildness and remoteness', where the 'neglected natives' were 'utterly uncouth and uncivilized', 'totally without education, without knowledge, without manners, without law or order'.[85] Built in 1837, the church at Woodlands was constructed at the expense of the three Misses Seymour of nearby Speen, who retained the right of advowson,[86] and one of whom was portrayed by Bacon in July 1855 (N125; Fig. 122), perhaps in recognition of their piety and generosity. After that structure began to fail, in 1852 the Revd John replaced it with a Neogothic church designed by Thomas Talbot Bury, an associate of Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860) and A. W. N. Pugin (1812-52), with both of whom he had worked on designs for the new Palace of Westminster.[87] The design of the church was informed by the tenets of the Cambridge Camden Society, the leaders of which courted controversy among evangelicals

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[82] For the details of the Revd John's clerical career, including his appointment to Calstock, see 'Bacon, John (1834-1835)', person ID 41800, Clergy of the Church of England Database, https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/, accessed 23 February 2021.
[83] John Bacon Junior, 'To my Executors'. Although the value of that settlement is not known, the same document records that Bacon's daughters received £1000 on marriage.
[84] Gertrude Bacon, *The Record of an Aeronaut*, p. 84.
[85] Ibid, pp. 23-25.
[86] For the church, see Geoff Brandwood, *St. Mary's Church, Woodlands, Berkshire*, The Churches Conservation Trust, 4:10 (February 1995); and Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (4 vols., London, 1842), vol. 3, p. 6.
[87] For Bury, see W. H. Tregellas and Annette Peach, 'Bury, Thomas Talbot (bap. 1809, d. 1877), architect and engraver', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/4156, accessed 9 March 2021.

through their appeals to the aesthetic of medieval church architecture, redolent of English Catholicism.[88] And yet it was in this setting that Bacon obliged his son with a reredos carved with a scene from the biblical story of the 'Woman with the issue of blood' after a design by Bacon Senior, discussed in Chapter Three (see Fig. 61). The Revd John's ecclesiological turn may be interpreted as evidence of waning puritanism, when compared to the evangelicals of his father's generation, a conclusion that appears to be supported by his choice of sitters.

The Revd John's sitters

The identities of the Revd John's sitters also suggest a significant change from the spiritually exclusive society represented in his father's work. As might be expected, portraits of family members form a significant part. Of the thirty-seven portraits in Album Three, sixteen are of members of the Revd John's immediate and extended family, including three members of his wife's family. This includes two portraits of his father, Bacon, and his sister Elizabeth. Begun late in the year of his sister Christiana's death (30 April 1841), and perhaps prompted by that event, the Roman Numerals series includes a portrait of each of the surviving members of the Revd John's immediate family, with the exception of his brother Thomas, although a portrait of the latter may have figured among those drawings now missing from the series. In addition to portraits of his parents and three surviving sisters, the series also includes a self-portrait from the following year that was also executed in his standard profile format (N293; Fig. 123).

Unlike his father, the Revd John did not leave an extensive record of associational activities, although he appears to have been active in promoting the public understanding of science, including hydrostatics and microscopy.[89] Instead, the album casts light on the nature of his relationships with many of his sitters through his habit of inscribing many of the portraits from the RN series with the dates and locations at which these likenesses were made. Three addresses in particular are linked to the family network: Bacon's home

[88] For the Cambridge Camden Society, see Peter Searby, *A History of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 3, 1750-1870 (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 339-343. The altar of St Mary's Woodlands is made of stone, illegal under canon law at the time of construction, but further research is required to ascertain whether this formed part of the Revd John's original plans.

[89] The Revd John appear to have supported the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; see 'Hungerford, Saturday, Aug. 31', *Reading Mercury*, 31 August 1839, p. 2. For his scientific interests, see 'Hungerford Church of England Young Men's Society', *Reading Mercury*, 2 February 1856, p. 4; and 'Literary and Scientific Institution', *Berkshire Chronicle*, 17 April 1858, p. 8.

at Mt Radford, Exeter, where the Revd John drew his mother (N157; Fig. 124) and sisters Elizabeth (N158; Fig. 125) and Mary Ann (N154; Fig. 126) in 1842; 47 Bedford Square, London, the home of Bacon's niece Caroline Wathen (N152; Fig. 127) and her husband, Josiah Iles Wathen;[90] and 46 Lincoln's Inn Field, London, home of his brother Thomas from 1837 or 1838 until at least December 1841.[91]

Given what is known of the trust Bacon placed in Wathen, and the outrage caused by the discovery of his fraud, it is significant that the Wathens' home in upmarket Bedford Square appears to have been something of a hub for the extended Bacon family during their visits to London in 1841-42. It was there that the Revd John drew likenesses of his cousin, Wathen's wife Caroline, her niece Elizabeth Thompson (1824-after 1901) (N140; Fig. 128), his father (N161; Fig. 129), his paternal aunt Mary Bacon (N147; Fig. 130), and his own sister, Augusta Maria (N151; Fig. 131). Of the two non-family sitters who were sketched there, the Revd William Spencer Harris Braham (later Meadows; b. 1802-after 1874) (N144) was affiliated with the BFBS in 1842, on the committee of which Wathen then served;[92] while Major Joseph Scott Phillips (*c.* 1813-84) (N153) had studied alongside the Revd Thomas at the East India Company's Military Seminary at Addiscombe (1830-31) (N153; Fig. 132).[93] Phillips' may also have been a family friend, as his father, Thomas Phillips RA (1770–1845), had studied alongside Bacon at the Royal Academy Schools from 1791.[94]

Phillips' presence in the series and his connection with the Revd Thomas suggests that the latter may have played a role in his brother's social interactions in London, where he had not lived since childhood. Significantly, it was at the Revd Thomas' residence at 46 Lincoln's Inn Fields that the Revd John drew at least three sitters. One, P. G. Denniss (fl. 1841) (N136), has not been positively identified, but given the sitter's military uniform it seems possible that he was among the Revd Thomas' acquaintances from Addiscombe or his time in India. On 7 December 1841 the Revd John portrayed John Coke Fowler (see Fig. 82), who, three years later, would marry his sister Augusta Maria.[95] Called to the Bar the

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[90] George Vertue, *The Royal Court Guide, and Fashionable Directory* (London, 1842), p. 61.
[91] See 'A List of Contributing Members to the Society', in *Transactions of the Society, Instituted at London, for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce*, vol. 41, part II (1837-38), p. ii.
[92] For Braham as a secretary of the Canterbury auxiliary of the BFBS, see *The Thirty-Eighth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society* (London, 1842), p. 11.
[93] For Phillips, see Vibart, *Addiscombe*, p. 674.
[94] For Thomas Phillips RA, see Annette Peach, 'Phillips, Thomas (1770–1845), portrait painter', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/22174, accessed 8 March 2021.
[95] For Fowler, see Edward Walford, *The County Families of the United Kingdom; or, Royal Manual of the Titled & Untitled Aristocracy of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1860), p. 237.

year before, Fowler is depicted in legal robes and barrister's wig, and the Revd Thomas may have made his acquaintance while studying for the law. It might be inferred that Fowler's acquaintance with Augusta Maria stemmed from this connection, highlighting how aspects of the family's history might be reconstructed through the drawings. Further, the drawings may have served to cement friendships, locating sitters within a network from which, as the absence of the Wathens' portraits from Album One reveals, delinquency could be punished through symbolic ejection. The portrait of a fourth sitter, William Henry White (1777-1866) (N139; Fig. 133) is inscribed only 'Lincoln's Inn Fields', leaving it unclear whether this was made at Thomas' rooms. Shown in his Masonic regalia, White's connection with the Revd John probably stems from Thomas' membership of the Freemasons, of which White was Grand Secretary at that time.[96] The Revd Thomas had joined the order in September 1834 while in India,[97] and he appears to have been initiated into the Grand Master's Lodge the month after White's portrait was drawn.[98]

The extent to which the two brothers' circles may have overlapped and tended toward Whig politics also registers in the portraits. The Revd John's drawing of the lawyer and former East India Company civil servant Thomas Teed (1797-1843) (N141) was made at the Revd Thomas' home on 21 December 1841, a month after a portrait of Teed's wife, Julia Jane Teed (1800-66) (N142; Fig. 134). Following her husband's death, in 1844 Julia Teed married the reformer Charles Lushington (1785-1866) (N143), Whig MP for Ashburton (1835-41), whom the Revd John drew on 18 December 1841 at his home in Chapel Place, Westminster.[99] The portrait of Julia Teed was made at 63 Portland Place, London, the home of her son-in-law, Robert Hollond (1808-77), who was himself drawn there on 18 December 1841 (N134; Fig. 135). The two men may have been acquainted from their time together at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.[100] Also a Whig, Hollond was then a reforming Member of Parliament for Hastings, although he was less active in British politics than he and his

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[96] For White, see Henry Sadler, 'History of the Lodge of Emulation, No. 21', *The Masonic Illustrated*, 6:68 (May 1906), pp. 413-415, https://masonicperiodicals.org/static/media/periodicals/119-MIL-1906-05-01-001-SINGLE.pdf, accessed 8 March 2021.
[97] Freemasonry Membership Registers: Register of Admissions: Country and Foreign 'G', #745-865, fols 1-276, Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London.
[98] Freemasonry Membership Registers: Register of Admissions: London 'A', GSL-113, fol. 8, Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London.
[99] For Lushington, see S. M. Waddams, 'Lushington, Stephen (1782–1873), judge East India Company servant', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/17213, accessed 8 March 2021.
[100] For Hollond, see John Olliver, *Ollivier's Parliamentary and Political Director, for the Session 1841* (London, 1841), p. 23.

wife, Ellen Julia Teed (1822-84) were in philanthropic causes.[101] Robert and Ellen enjoyed a mutual friendship with the two brothers, borne out by the Revd Thomas's intended bequest to her of his copy of Raphael's *Conestabile Madonna* (original *c*. 1504).[102] If not evidence of exclusively Whig society, it seems evident that those associated with the Whig party and the reform movement formed an important element of the brothers' shared circle of acquaintance. While not an exhaustive account of the Revd John's sitters in the RN series, the group was certainly both more liberal and cosmopolitan than Bacon's own, and may point to a reaction among the well-educated children of some of the foremost evangelical families against an increasingly unsophisticated and dogmatic leadership.[103]

The Revd John's style

From his choice of sitters, we must now turn to the Revd John's style, making a close reading of his evolving technique in order to elucidate the particular contribution that he made to his family's shared portrait practice. While it is clear that the Revd John learned to draw as a child, the earliest drawings that can be attributed to him are the thirty-seven portraits found in Album Three, all seemingly dating to the period 1841-44. A further five drawings are also attributed to him here, while a photograph of an untraced portrait appears to show a further example of his work. Although not large, the Revd John's *oeuvre* is valuable for what it reveals about both continuities and changes within the portrait tradition of the Bacon family, and the extent to which his drawings are a record of the agency that he exercised in his work.[104] In particular, his interest in portraiture and, specifically, the profile format, suggest the conscious emulation of the work of the two preceding generations. However, the Revd John's work also shows technical and stylistic innovations which reveal the extent to which drawing practices continued to evolve within the family and across the period in question.

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[101] For the Hollonds and liberal opposition to the regime of Napoleon III, see Patrick Waddington, 'Hollond [née Teed], Ellen Julia (1822–1884), salon hostess, philanthropist, and author', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/13570, accessed 8 March 2021.

[102] Julia Hollond died before the bequest could be made. In his will the painting is referred to as 'the copy of La Madonna della Staffa in a carved walnut frame presented to me [by?] Mrs George Forbes'; see Revd Thomas Bacon, Last will and testament.

[103] See David Hempton, *Evangelical Disenchantment: Nine Portraits of Faith and Doubt* (New Haven, CT and London, 2008), pp. 7-8.

[104] For artefacts as evidence of decisions made by historical actors, see Ludmilla Jordanova, *The Look of the Past: Visual and Material Evidence in Historical Practice* (Cambridge, 2012), p. 7.

Of the portraits in Album Three, twenty-six come from the RN series. Most of the sheets in the series are inscribed with the artist's monogram, 'JB', located in or adjacent to the design; the sheets are dated at lower right where, in many cases, the address at which the portrait was made was also recorded. With XXXVIII as the highest ordinal number remaining in the sequence, it can be supposed that either ten or eleven drawings are missing. (In what appears to be an error by the artist, there are two drawings identified as 'XIII'.)[105] The remaining eleven drawings in Album Three date from 1843-44, were not part of the RN series and reveal a marked change in the Revd John's style, addressed below.

Of the five drawings by the Revd John identified elsewhere, three are found in Album Five. Of these, only his self-portrait (see Fig. 123) comes from the RN series. Despite showing strong similarities to the technique seen in those works, neither the portrait of what is likely to be his infant son Francis (1841-1930) (N294), nor that of his wife, Mary Baruh Bacon (N274; Fig. 136), appear to have formed part of the RN series. Of the two remaining drawings attributed to the Revd John, one is an autograph copy of a portrait of his wife (N351; duplicate of N162), the original of which is among the eleven non-RA series portraits found in Album Three; while the last is a portrait of his eldest son, Maunsell John, dating to *c*. 1859 (N352; Fig. 137).

In addition to the internal evidence that forms the basis of my reattribution of the portraits of Album Three to the Revd John, discussed in Chapter One, aspects of his style and technique distinguish his work from that of his father. Having adopted the profile format that characterises much of the work of his father and grandfather, the portraits of the RN series generally cleave to a linear treatment similar to that seen in Bacon's drawings. However, there is considerable looseness in the Revd John's handling of the pencil, particularly in his use of the rapidly returning line, as seen in the costume of his brother-in-law, John Coke Fowler (see Fig. 82). Varying in intensity, the Revd John's marks are generally discrete strokes of the pencil, with little or no use of stumping to create areas of tone. But in contrast to Bacon's work, a creative approach is seen in the Revd John's use of media. What appears to be black pencil was used to enhance passages in graphite pencil, particularly representations of hair, as in his portrait of Thomas Smith (N149), giving the Revd John's drawings a broader tonal range than that found in his father's work. This innovation is consistent with the Revd John's liberal use of colour washes in his work,

[105] The duplicate numbers are found on *Elizabeth Thompson* (N140) and *Edward Norton Thornton* (N155).

particularly as applied to selected details of his sitters' clothing. Whether in a limited passage, such as the headdress of Emma Catherine Vivian (1810-53) (N156; Fig. 138), or more extensively, as in the plaid collar and patterned shawl of his sister Elizabeth (N158; see Fig. 125), or the Masonic decorations worn by White (N139). Further, in some of the RN series' portraits, the Revd John also revealed an interest in spatial context, although these remained few in number. The portrait of the diplomat and politician Joseph Planta (1787-1847) (N135; Fig. 139) is unique in the extent to which it features peripheral detail, showing the subject seated and at work at a desk.[106] Similarly, the portrait of Robert Hollond (see Fig. 135) includes the upper part of the back of an upholstered chair.

One feature of the Revd John's work that has no precedent in either his father's or grandfather's work is the inclusion of his sitters' autographs. Although it is difficult to be certain in each instance, the number of hands and markedly different styles in which the inscriptions were made suggest that all but one of the sheets in Album Three was autographed by the sitter depicted. These interventions by the Revd John's sitters serve an indexical purpose,[107] recording each sitter's presence during, and participation in, the generation of the portrait—what Freya Gowrley has described as 'the residual importance of the haptic act'.[108] Similar traces are found in contemporary prints, in which a facsimile of the sitter's autograph, perhaps taken from a letter, was appended to their portrait. Closer to the Revd John's work is the example of a portrait drawing by Alfred d'Orsay, comte d'Orsay (1801-52) of Sir George Wombwell (1792-1855) from April 1841, signed by the sitter, from which a lithograph was subsequently published.[109]

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[106] For Planta, see W. W. Wroth and H. C. G. Matthew, 'Planta, Joseph (1787–1847), diplomatist and politician', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi-org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/22354, accessed 8 March 2021.

[107] For a brief outline of Charles Peirce's concept of indexicality, and the related concepts of icon and symbol, see Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, 'Semiotics and Art History', *Art Bulletin*, 72:2 (June 1991), pp. 189-191.

[108] Freya Gowrley, 'Reflective and Reflexive Forms: Intimacy and Medium Specificity in British and American Sentimental Albums, 1800-1860', 6 (Fall 2018), https://www.journal18.org/3036, accessed 25 April 2019, unpaginated.

[109] Alfred d'Orsay, comte d'Orsay, *Sir George Wombwell*, April 1841, pencil and chalk, 283 x 207 mm, National Portrait Gallery, London, inv. NPG 4026(61). For an impression of the lithograph, see Richard James Lane, printed by Jérémie Graf, published by John Mitchell, after Alfred d'Orsay, comte d'Orsay, *Sir George Wombwell, 3rd Bt*, after April 1841, lithograph with some hand colouring, 220 x 173 mm, National Portrait Gallery, London, inv. NPG D45974.

Responding to photography

A significant change in style occurred in the Revd John's work from mid-1843. This is seen in his striking efforts to model his sitters' features through tone rather than line, although an enhanced version of the latter technique was deployed to remarkable effect in the rendering of his sitters' hair. Given the timing of this change, I suggest that it was made in response to the emergence of photographic technology. In the absence of any written sources concerning this development in his work, I have relied on the evidence of the visual effects that he pursued to argue that the Revd John's new style came about in response to the daguerreotype. Publicly revealed in Paris in August 1839, the technology of Louis Daguerre (1787-1851) enabled a unique image to be captured on a chemically-sensitised metal plate. As with the paper technology developed independently by his English rival, Henry Fox Talbot (1800-77), revealed in the same year, the new process was often described in terms of drawing. Indeed, inspired by his own disappointments as a draftsman, Talbot initially named his technique 'photogenic drawing', and both men considered their respective technologies as means by which nature inscribed itself.[110]

Bermingham has noted how, in *The Elements of Drawing* (1857), the critic John Ruskin (1819-1900) recognised the value of photography as a pedagogical tool for those learning to draw. Rather than for its wealth of detail, Ruskin valued the way in which the new technology recorded the appearance of objects, modelling these through the fall of light across surfaces, registering in variations of tone rather than descriptive line.[111] But if the critic had reconciled himself to the new technology by that time, his initial response had been mixed. In 1846 Ruskin was concerned that photography would see the public reject 'mere handling', reflecting, as Marien has observed, his belief that photography's incidental record of even the smallest detail left no room for 'the personality and soul of the artist.'[112] Of the 'mere handling' to which Ruskin referred, Marien contends that the ostensible objectivity of the photographic 'copy' challenged that made by hand, with the

[110] Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, pp. 238-240; Mary Warner Marien, *Photography and Its Critics: A Cultural History, 1839-1900* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 3; Weston Naef, 'Daguerre, Talbot, and the Crucible of Drawing', *Aperture*, Fall 1991, pp. 10-11.
[111] Bermingham, *Learning to Draw*, pp. 243-244.
[112] Cited in Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History* (London, 2002), p. 76.

latter 'open to new charges of representing a misapprehension, bias, or an error.'[113] As Julia Munro has revealed in her study of contemporary periodical literature, the novel photographic technologies challenged conventions of artistic representation, establishing a new standard of 'truth' of which critics were increasingly conscious, and which, despite its acknowledged shortcomings, was more suggestive of the living, breathing subject.[114] As much is evident in an 1843 remark by the poet Elizabeth Barrett who favoured 'the association and the sense of nearness involved in the thing [the daguerreotype]' over the work of an artist working in any other medium.[115] While, two years later, Ruskin, in his initial enthusiasm for the new technology, observed that a daguerreotype of a Venetian palace was 'very nearly the same thing as carrying off the palace itself'.[116]

If, as I suggest, the Revd John sought to emulate the daguerreotype, perhaps the change in his style was merely aesthetic, adapting his medium to emulate the particular qualities of the new technology. Certainly, the daguerreotype's coolly metallic tonal record defied the conventions of linear representation that characterised his earlier work. Or does this change register the critical emphasis on likeness that photography engendered? The latter was linked to the new standard of visual 'truth' that Munro has detailed, exploited in publicity material by the leading daguerreotype studios operating in London in the early years of the technology.[117] His interest in science, his visits to London during the period in question, and a surviving daguerreotype of Bacon himself suggest that the Revd John and other members of his circle would have been aware of the claims made for—and the attractions of—the new technology. As he did not cease to draw, and as his only known subject as an adult was the human figure, I suggest that he chose to emulate the new medium by embracing its distinctive characteristics—albeit flattering his sitters with consistently flawless, smoky complexions—in a bid to assert the continued value of his own drawing practice and the family tradition of which it formed a part.

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[113] Marien, *Photography and Its Critics*, pp. 39-40.
[114] For analysis of critical responses to the new technology in contemporary periodical literature, see Julia Francesca Munro, '"Drawn towards the lens": Representations and Receptions of Photography in Britain, 1839 to 1853' (PhD thesis, University of Waterloo, 2008), chapter 1, esp. pp. 66-69, and chapter 2; and Julia F. Munro, ''The optical stranger': Photographic anxieties in British periodical literature of the 1840s and early 1850s', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 7:2 (2009), pp. 173-175.
[115] Cited in Helmut Gernsheim and Alison Gernsheim, *A Concise History of Photography* (revised ed., London, 1971), p. 64.
[116] Cited in Graham Smith, 'Learning to Draw', *History of Photography*, 26:2 (2002), p. 164.
[117] See Munro, '"Drawn towards the lens"', chapter 1; and Munro, 'The optical stranger', pp. 173-175.

In order to do so, it was necessary to efface much of the evidence of his own mediating role in the production of each likeness. If this did not extend to the details of his sitters' costumes, in which his linear technique endured, in the face and hair he abandoned much of the expressive mark-making that constituted his earlier style. As the artist's 'presence' in his work became a distraction from the conceit of the autonomous image in the manner of the daguerreotype, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Revd John's monogram also disappeared from his portraits. Whereas this had previously been located in or very close to the design itself, in these later works this is replaced by his signature, 'John Bacon Jnr' or 'J Bacon Jnr', which is relegated to the lower right of the sheet.

Two undated drawings suggest how the Revd John experimented with technique, even as his new 'photographic' style took shape. The first, a portrait of his wife, shows the linear treatment characteristic of his RN series' works in the sitter's features (N274; see Fig. 136); whereas the treatment of Mary Baruh's hair speaks to his efforts at greater naturalism, as seen in his RN series' portrait of Marianne S. Robinson, dated 4 December 1841 (N137; Fig. 140). In both works we see a greater precision that points towards his later 'photographic' work. The second drawing, uncharacteristically *en face*, and believed to be of his son Francis as a toddler, likely dates to 1843-44 (N364; Fig. 141). In this, the handling is notably looser than in the RN series works, perhaps the result of working rapidly with a fidgeting child. The child's features do not show the linear treatment of the RN series works; rather the artist adopted a tonal treatment, albeit coarser than that seen in his 'photographic' style. Despite considerable fading, it is evident that watercolour was used to tint the irises, as well as quite extensively in the child's hair, the large straw hat and the ornament that decorates it. Neither drawing can be precisely located within the Revd John's *oeuvre*, but the distinctive combination of handling that each exhibits suggests the extent to which he experimented in his drawings, perhaps adapting his technique at will to resolve specific problems of representation.

By June 1843, the Revd John's 'photographic' style appears to have been fully resolved, as can be seen in the earliest such work, a portrait of his sister Elizabeth from that time (N128; Fig. 142). Here, the line that previously defined his sitters' profiles has all but disappeared. Setting aside his previous use of varied hatching, the fall of light on skin is now represented through carefully modulated application of graphite, apparently blended with a stump. The result appears to mimic the silvery effect of sitters' features rendered on the metallic surface of the daguerreotype plate. Having minimised the evidence of discrete strokes of graphite in his sitter's features, the Revd John nonetheless deployed a linear

treatment elsewhere, with individual marks evident in the costume. Line also features prominently in his sitter's hair, but it is no longer used primarily to suggest volume; rather, over a bed of fine hatching, each stroke suggests an individual hair. The portrait of Elizabeth stands alongside a less convincing portrait of his father that was made in the same month (see Fig. 129), and an undated drawing of the Revd John's friend, Sir James Mackenzie, Bt. (1814-84) (N164), that is very close technically. Both drawings may be early experiments in his new style, in which the carefully modelled tonality of the features sits uneasily against the less sophisticated treatment of hair and costume. Within two months these initial, mixed efforts had been resolved and by August 1843 the hair of each sitter was represented with a degree of precision comparable to the tonal treatment of their features, as seen in the portrait of his wife's cousin, Sarah B. Lousada (1817-1909) (N159; Fig. 143).

The Revd John's drawing of his eldest son, Maunsell John from *c*. 1859 (N352; see Fig. 137), indicates that he continued to work in his 'photographic' style with considerable success. Alongside the characteristic tonal treatment of the features, the tension between the sitter's carefully brushed hair and its natural tendency to curl is particularly evident. Something of an orphan, this late portrait is the only known work by the Revd John dating from after the mid-1840s that has been identified in my research. Previously framed and faded as a result, only traces of watercolour register in the sitter's irises. For even as he adapted his technique, in August 1843 the Revd John had retained the use of colour washes that are a prominent feature of the RN series' works, but which were initially limited to the lips, cheeks and irises of sitters in portraits in his new style. And while the use of colour appears to have remained somewhat sparing, portraits of his wife, Mary, from August 1843 (N162), and his friend, Jane Valpy (*c*. 1843) (N163; Fig. 144) reveal how colour washes could be applied to details of sitters' costumes. If we accept that it was the Revd John's intention to mimic the qualities of the daguerreotype, his introduction of colour washes may appear anachronistic. However, from March 1842, the first two portrait photography studios in London had offered customers hand-coloured daguerreotype portraits. It was an innovation that Helmut Gernsheim believed came in response to the public's unfavourable comparison of the coolly metallic daguerreotype with the warmly-coloured portrait miniatures with which contemporaries were familiar and that remained a

feature of artistic practice in the period.[118] The Revd John may have echoed this practice at the same time as he integrated aspects of his earlier technique into his new style.

Conclusion

After two generations in which portraiture formed the mainstay of their private drawing practice, the third generation of the Bacon family diversified significantly. Not bound to the tenets of academic training or the demands of a professional studio, Bacon's children were free to explore drawing in considerable variety. As we have seen, they began young, with access to drawing manuals that circulated among them. A shared interest in some genres appears to have enabled drawing to function as a joint leisure activity and sketching trips into the Devon countryside evidently formed one aspect of the family's recreation. As they aged, there is evidence that the children may have specialised in particular genres. The Revd John and Augusta Maria gravitated toward portraiture, upholding the family's traditional interest in that genre, although the Revd John's choice of sitters suggests a generational shift as he and his brother Thomas moved away from the conservative evangelical circles of their father and grandfather to more liberal and cosmopolitan figures in and around London. Christiana turned to flower painting, perhaps in response to the pressures identified by Bermingham in her analysis of the gendering of artistic practice in the period, although the evidence is too slight to make a firm judgment on this point. Shared to an extent by Bacon himself, the Revd Thomas' interest in landscape seems likely to have been encouraged by the demands of his military career, in which drawing retained a documentary value, despite which his picturesque treatment of the Indian landscape suggests a less utilitarian approach to his subject.

In the variety of their work, Bacon's children confirm the continued appeal and vitality of drawing and challenge both the gendering of the practice and periodisation claimed by Bermingham. Indeed, even as it was confronted with the changing aesthetic demands of new technologies, there is clear evidence that drawing retained considerable scope for innovation and creativity. Not only did the Revd Thomas continue to draw during the extensive European journeys that he made late in life, eschewing the photographic equipment then widely available, but the Revd John appears to have confronted the new technology with an assertion of drawing's capacity for change by emulating the aesthetic of

[118] Cited in Munro, '"Drawn towards the lens"', p. 80.

the daguerreotype in aspects of his work. Drawing in the third generation of the family was no faint echo of the tradition initiated by Bacon Senior and embraced by Bacon. Rather, it left a richly varied legacy of genres and techniques that suggests the continued relevance of the practice long into the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

In the late nineteenth century, Gertrude Bacon assumed the mantle of family historian, succeeding to a role that Bacon, her great-grandfather, had filled during his lifetime. Echoing the structure of Bacon's 'Reminiscences', Gertrude's biography of her father, the Revd John Mackenzie Bacon, *The Record of an Aeronaut* (1907), which incorporates his own unfinished memoir, opens with a short history of the Bacon family.[1] That account drew on correspondence that passed between Bacon, the Revd John and Edward Thornton Junior between 1839 and the early 1840s in the course of research concerned with establishing the family's origins among the Bacons of Maunsel House.[2] It was an interest shared across multiple generations of the family, including Gertrude's own father, for whom '[p]edigree hunting was at one time a hobby'.[3] Having introduced her father's life through the history of his ancestors, she explained that:

> If it be urged (as it well may be) that too much space has been devoted to the description of his [John Mackenzie's] parentage and ancestry, the writer would plead in extenuation that, since a man's disposition and natural bent are largely settled for him before ever he comes into the world, a study of the causes which predispose them is necessary to the true understanding of his character. Moreover, my father himself took a lively interest in the story of his forefathers. [4]

Her comments are reminiscent of remarks that Bacon directed to the Revd John, observing that if one ancestor in particular was not an 'eminent Christian' man, consolation

> is to be found in the fact that though great-grandfather John, and grandfather Thomas were probably in comparative poverty, they were in reality Lords of the

[1] Gertrude Bacon, *The Record of an Aeronaut*, chapter 1.
[2] For the correspondence, see John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', pp. 17-57.
[3] Gertrude Bacon, *The Record of an Aeronaut*, p. 12.
[4] Ibid, p. 25.

> Manors of Maunsell, Harpford, etc., etc. They were not in low and humble life as their proper element. They were out of their proper element.[5]

Heredity, class and character combine here in a way that appears to explain at least some of the value that generations of the Bacon family placed on their claims to a genteel ancestry. But, recognising the contingency of history, Gertrude acknowledged that although the 'loss of his paternal acres was a deeply rankling thorn in the flesh' to Bacon Senior's father, it was their relative poverty which had permitted the younger man to explore his natural talents, without which he 'would never have raised the drooping family fortunes and shed an additional fame upon the name.'[6] It was through art that the Bacons were redeemed; and it was through art, moreover, that they catalogued their familial, social and spiritual circumstances.

Some years after writing the memoir of her father, and following her publication of extracts from Bacon's 'Reminiscences',[7] Gertrude drafted two texts—a 'Prologue' and an 'Epilogue'—to bookend a proposed volume on the Bacons by the sculpture historian Katharine Esdaile (1881-1950).[8] The women had met in 1923 and over the following two years correspondence and copies of salient documents passed between them as Gertrude and other members of her extended family supported Esdaile's apparently unrealised project.[9] Bacon's 'Reminiscences' appear to have been central to that undertaking, and it is on this text that Gertrude meditated in her 'Prologue', emphasising his role as a historian of his family and the society in which he and his father had mixed in the course of their professional lives. Imagining him at work in 1847, it is significant that Gertrude identified family portraits as '[c]hief among' the 'many art treasures' found in Bacon's Mt Radford home, and indicated to Esdaile that she hoped to 'enumerate certain of the contents of the house – pictures, busts, etc, - that we know it then contained.'[10] Highlighting his portrait

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[5] Emphasis in the original. The individual in question was the shadowy John Bacon, fifth son of William Bacon of Maunsel House. John Bacon Junior to the Revd John Bacon, 25 November 1839, in John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', p. 27.
[6] Gertrude Bacon, *The Record of an Aeronaut*, p. 14.
[7] Not sighted. The extracts appear to have been published in *Chambers's Journal* as 'Farmer George', December 1920, and 'The Early Academicians', July 1923; see John M. Bacon, 'The Bacon Family', pp. 84-88; for a further, perhaps unpublished, selection, see ibid, pp. 89-95.
[8] Gertrude Bacon, 'Prologue', pp. 96-101; and 'Epilogue', pp. 112-119.
[9] For their meeting, see Gertrude Bacon, 'Prologue', p. 101. Their correspondence was identified too late, and in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, to be incorporated into this thesis; see Katharine Esdaile Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California, http://pdf.oac.cdlib.org/pdf/huntington/mss/esdaile.pdf.
[10] Ibid, p. 97.

drawings, and two of his wife in particular, Gertrude counted these among the 'mementoes of the days he chronicled' that surrounded Bacon as he wrote.[11]

In doing so, Gertrude was the first to articulate the links between the artist, personal and family histories and the visual record that three generations of Bacons had brought together. It was recognition of what many in the family had long known, as shown by the inscriptions that reveal continued engagement with the drawings, including those by Bishop Medley on that of Brandram (N237) and by the Revd Thomas on that of Wimble (N253). But such interventions were not limited to individual drawings, nor to those who knew the sitters personally. Evidence of the ways in which the corpus continued to function as a site of collective memory is found in the inscriptions made by successive owners of the albums, both identifying themselves within the family lineage and adding genealogical and biographical details, most recently in digitised versions of Albums One-Five.[12]

The role that Gertrude identified for portraiture in her family is a central theme of this thesis. I have argued that family identity was both consolidated through and expressed by the likenesses made and assembled by the Bacons. These included portraits that were displayed within the family's homes, several of which appear to have functioned as props of gentility, whether announcing the professional attainments and newfound status of Bacon Senior, as in the portrait by Chamberlin, or bolstering the family's claim to elite origins, as with the three oils acquired from Maunsel House. The latter works complemented the textual record that was dispersed among various archives, the pursuit and interrogation of which was itself an intergenerational pursuit. If the documentary evidence remained short of the proof that was hoped for, the growing collection of portraits by prominent contemporary artists likely affirmed the family's narrative of restored gentility in the aftermath of decline that was repeated within the family and broadcast in several publications.

The portrait drawings served a somewhat different purpose. Rather than being framed for display, with few exceptions Bacon's drawings were consigned to the albums

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[11] Ibid, p. 98.

[12] For example, in addition to Bacon's addresses at Newman Street, Sidcliff and Mount Radford, the front pastedown of Album One features inscriptions recording their possession of the album by his daughter Elizabeth Bacon, his great-grandson, John Maunsell Bacon (1866-1948), who also noted that his father the Revd Maunsell John Bacon (1839-1924) had owned it before him, and a further inscription by John Maunsell bequeathing the volume to his nephew, Bacon's great-great grandson, Ranulph Robert Maunsell Bacon (1906-88). Sir Ranulph, as he later became, bequeathed the volume to the current owner, who has created digitised versions of the albums that include annotations of biographical details of the artist and his sitters.

discussed in Chapter One. The close physical engagement that this method of presentation entailed presumably emphasised the intimate nature of the both the objects themselves and, in many cases the connections that they record. In Bacon's large *oeuvre*, his emotional investment in his wife and children, in particular, registers in the multiple portraits that he made of many of them, tracing their lives even as he traced their features in graphite. There is a certain parallel between the refuge that these portraits have found in Bacon's albums and the seclusion that he sought for his family, first at Paddington and later at Sidmouth. It is not insignificant, then, that the albums contain a wide range of sitters. Alongside portraits that recorded relationships of unquestioned intimacy, Bacon took the likenesses of clerics and others within his associational networks with whom he made common cause. If their relationships were of a different order, the presence of these likeminded men and women suggests that the artist's work records a continuum of intimacy. Like Tadmor's models of family and the flexible language of friendship,[13] Bacon's 'record of friendship' was capable of accommodating a range of types of relationships of varying emotional intensity, most of which, I suggest, were invested with spiritual significance.

Given that so many of the likenesses that Bacon drew were connected to his voluntary activities, I have suggested that he deployed portraiture not only to record but also perhaps to facilitate the relationships that he formed in those settings. In his retreat from the studio at Newman Street and, ultimately, from London itself, Bacon expanded his engagement with the culture of associational activity that was fast becoming a feature of late Georgian and Victorian sociability. Within such circles, Bacon could be both of the world while retaining a safe distance from the worldly, mixing with those who either shared his spiritual convictions or, at the very least, his ethic of social responsibility. The portraits that followed from these interactions reveal men—and some women—with whom the artist associated either beyond or in conjunction with his kinship network. Importantly, these drawings enable the partial reconstruction of a particular form of sociability that the textual record reveals only in part, suggesting a new route through which to reconstruct informal networks of association among historical actors. The same is true of the smaller body of work of the Revd John, for whom associational activity appears to have been less of a priority, but who clearly mixed in well-to-do and liberal circles in London when his pastoral duties permitted. If this reveals a rather more cosmopolitan milieu than that

[13] See Introduction, n. 6.

embraced by his father, the point only emphasises the extent to which portraiture may enable us to understand the changing priorities of individuals within both the Bacon family and the evangelical movement more broadly, and across succeeding generations of both. Indeed, the transmission of the ties of family and friendship, and the faith that underpinned these, as revealed in the Bacons' portraits, is among the most compelling findings of this research.

The Revd John's work came after several decades of portrait drawing in his family, of which we can assume he was fully aware. Certainly, it appears significant that his own drawings from the 1840s reveal many of the same formal concerns found in Bacon Senior's work from half a century earlier. Like his father, the Revd John showed the same preference for graphite pencil and, compositionally, the profile format. In this I believe that we see evidence of the conscious shaping of a shared aesthetic by the two succeeding generations, eager to locate their own portraits within a tradition initiated by Bacon Senior. Not merely a record of the family through time, the drawn portrait took on dynastic significance of a different order. This remained true, I suggest, even while Bacon and the Revd John initiated decisive changes, particularly in the application of colour washes and, as I have suggested, responded to the aesthetic of the daguerreotype.

A distinctive and valuable record of drawing in three generations of one family, I believe that the Bacon family corpus challenges aspects of the narrative promoted by historians of drawing, particularly the marginalisation and feminisation of the practice in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries posited by Ann Bermingham. Indeed, the Bacons' drawings suggest the need for a more grounded account of the history of drawing, one that relies less on prescriptive literature and turns instead to the evidence of individual practice in order to understand historical trends. In the case of the Bacons, at least, there is little to support Bermingham's claim of substantial change in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the Bacons' work is evidence of the continued enthusiasm for drawing among the middle-classes, particularly among men, suggesting that the tradition of the gentleman amateur had not been entirely displaced by the contested accomplishments in which young women were then schooled. Further, the connection between photography and the change in style that I have identified in the work of the Revd John suggests that drawing remained a vital and, in the right hands, innovative technology late into the nineteenth century.

Although Esdaile's study of the Bacons was never realised, Gertrude's proposed contribution placed her at the forefront of a different kind of history. In her recognition of the significance of portraiture among her ancestors, both as objects and as repositories of identity, memory and faith, many of which remain embedded within the Bacon clan, she foreshadowed a complex nexus of historiographies that have only emerged in the years since. Honouring her example, this thesis endeavours to bring together elements of several of these approaches in order to tease out some of the range of meanings that might be discovered in the Bacons' portrait drawings.