

received. and enter'd in the Catalogue with this mark AV. which character I thought convenient to adde to all the Books and Pamphlets of your donation' (Bodleian MS. Aubrey 12, fol. 257r). There are also objects in the catalogue which were not so marked but which can be identified as Aubrey's from other sources. These sources also reveal some items in Aubrey's donation which do not appear anywhere in the catalogues. The Latin entries in the catalogues have been translated into English.

PICTURES AND DRAWINGS

Miniature of John Aubrey by Samuel Cooper

'Donated by the most distinguished of men John Aubrey Esq. of Easton Pierse in the County of Wiltshire [. . .] a picture of the same Mr John Aubrey Esq. of Easton Pierse in the county of Wiltshire by Cooper painted in water colours, with a square ebony frame worked in crystalline gypsum' (AMS 8, fol. 39). Presented to the Museum in 1688. Stolen from the Museum in September 1691: see R. F. Ovenell, *The Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1986), p. 67. It is not known when this was painted; all references to it post-date Cooper's death in 1672. Aubrey knew Cooper well, and in a letter to Anthony Wood of November 1673, Aubrey calls him 'a long and old acquaintance' (MS. Wood F. 39, fol. 238).

Portrait of John Aubrey by William Faithorne

'Portrait of Mr John Aubrey Esq of Easton Pierse in the county of Wiltshire' (AMS 8, fol. 40). Still among the Ashmolean Museum's drawings. See Mrs R. L. Poole, *Catalogue of Portraits in the Possession of the University, Colleges, City, and County of Oxford*, (3 vols, Oxford Historical Society, 1912), i.185, and D. W. Brown, *Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings* (Oxford, 1982), iv.73-4.

Portrait of Erasmus

'Erasmus of Rotterdam. [Donated by] John Aubrey' (AMS 8, fol. 39). Perhaps the painting, once at Mapledurham House, described by Aubrey in his 'Life of Erasmus' (Clark, *Lives*, i.248-9), and in annotations on his copy, recently acquired by the Bodleian, of Erasmus's *Liber utilissimus de Conscribendi Epistolis* (Amsterdam, 1636; shelfmark Vet. B2 g.39), where he calls it 'a very good piece. 2 foot + high'. The painting has not been

John Aubrey's Non-book Donation to the Ashmolean Museum

traced since 1898 (the entry in AMS 22, no. 42). See David Piper, 'Paintings from the Foundation Collection of the Ashmolean Museum', in *Tradescant's Rarities*, ed. A. MacGregor (Oxford, 1983), p. 298.

Portrait of Judith Dobson presumably by William Dobson

'Portrait of Judith, wife of William Dobson Painter to the King, that is, Charles I. Number 8 in the Ashmolean Library' (AMS 8, fol. 39). Perhaps the painting described in letters to Aubrey by John Hoskins FRS: Hoskins wrote in July 1664 to advise Aubrey on the cost of 'rafaels and Carau in quarto' and to say that he had presented Aubrey's compliments to Cooper and Faithorne, and had been unable to contact a Mr Gander (MS. Aubrey 12, fol. 195). He wrote again on 2 March 1665 to say that

Yeste-day Mr Gander carryed mee to his howse and shewed mee some 3 or fower pictures of Mr Dobsons. one I thinke was and a good one but somewhat defac't 'twas of the clerke of the Oxford-Parliament whose name I haue forgot hee desir'd mee to let you know of them and if you like them and will deposit ten pownds the pictures shall be left till ye come and agree for the rest of the price or to haue your roli againe. hee told mee that the picture of his sister in the white hood was the most admired; it may bee so for the paynting cause lust if for the person to (the other is like a shepheardes) you need not envy any hauing already a copy of that as I thinke. (MS. Aubrey 12, fol. 196.)

It is likely that Judith Dobson was Gander's sister. It is not clear what Hoskins means by a 'copy' possessed by Aubrey; this might mean the portrait, or it might even refer to Joan Sumner, whom Aubrey was then courting. The only portrait of Judith Dobson known to exist, which is in a private collection, shows her in a white hood; this is likely to resemble Aubrey's painting closely, if they are not one and the same. See Malcolm Rogers, *William Dobson* (National Portrait Gallery, London, 1983), plate 2. Not traced since 1756. See *Tradescant's Rarities*, p. 333.

Portrait of Oliver Cromwell

'Portrait of Oliver, known as the great Protector of England, the worst of usurpers. Number 6 in the Ashmolean Library' (AMS 8, fol. 39). Robert Plot wrote to Aubrey on 18 October 1688 from the Museum to announce receipt of 'the Picture of Oliver Cromwell as directed to me by Moore the Carrier' (MS. Aubrey 13, fol. 140). Not traced since 1884. See *Tradescant's Rarities*, p. 331.

Miniature of Archbishop Bancroft by Nicholas Hilliard

'Portrait of the very reverend Richard Bancroft Archbishop of Canterbury by Hillyard, in water-colours, enclosed in an ivory box worked in crystalline gypsum' (AMS 8, fol. 39.) Presented by Aubrey to the Museum in October 1688 (MS. Aubrey 13, fol. 140). Stolen in or before 1691: see R. F. Ovenell, *The Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 67-8, quoting Lhuyd's list of stolen objects, where the miniature is described as 'A picture of A.Bp Bancroft set in a round box of Ivory not much bigger than a Crown peice'.

PICTURES AND DRAWINGS OF DOUBTFUL PROVENANCE

Edward Lhuyd's catalogue of the Ashmolean collections, 'Liber Domini Decani Aedis Christi', includes a sequence of 13 pictures headed 'Picturae a Domino Ashmole huic Museo legatae' (AMS 8, fols. 39-40). However, as Josten points out, some of these pictures are not in fact mentioned in Ashmole's will. These are: 'a portrait of Erasmus of Rotterdam, a portrait of an unnamed Doctor of Theology, a portrait of Oliver Cromwell, a portrait of Judith, the wife of the painter William Dobson, a portrait of John Selden, a picture of Venus and Cupid, a portrait of John Aubrey' (C. H. Josten, *Elias Ashmole*, 5 vols (Oxford, 1966), iv.1830, n.7). At least four of these—Erasmus, Cromwell, Aubrey, and Judith Dobson—were given to the Museum by Aubrey. It is perfectly plausible that the three remaining pictures—the unnamed theologian (identified with Dr Nicholas Fiske), Selden, and Venus and Cupid—were also given by Aubrey.

A picture of Venus and Cupid

Not traced after 1756. See *Tradescant's Rarities*, p. 332.

Portrait of John Selden

See *Tradescant's Rarities*, p. 298, item 256, and Lane Poole, *Catalogue of Portraits*, i.179.

A portrait of an unnamed Doctor of Theology

See *Tradescant's Rarities*, p. 314, no. 288. This is the portrait of Dr Nicholas Fiske which survives in the Ashmolean.

John Aubrey's Non-book Donation to the Ashmolean Museum

? 'A fine picture in Wax-worke'

There is no record of this work in the catalogues, but Aubrey wrote to Lhuyd in December 1691 after the theft, 'The Earle of Pembroke hath given me a fine picture in Wax-worke, which I will give to the Museum: and try if that will have any better fortune' (MS. Ashmole 1814, fol. 98).

COINS

Robert Plot wrote to Aubrey on 18 October 1688 from the Museum to announce receipt of a box containing '37 Coines, whereof seven were silver ones, the rest brass' (MS. Aubrey 13, fol. 140). These are detailed and sketched in his antiquarian works *Monumenta Britannica* (MSS. Top. Gen. c. 24-5) and *Wiltshire Antiquities* (MS. Aubrey 3).

Roman coin moulds

'Mr Andrew Paschal B.D. Rector of Chedzoy in Somersetshire sent to Mr H. Oldenburgh Secretary of the Royall Society Anno Domini 1670 a Box of at ~~least 2 quarts~~ seaventeen score of them of Clay-moulds of Roman coine, which were found in a ploughed field neer him; but Mr Oldenburgh dyeing before he delivered them into the possession of them, his Relict sold them (with a great many other curious things belonging to that Society) to . . . Earle of Anglesey. The heads only these, viz: Severus, Antoninus, Iulia, Plautilla, 17 score of them. There was found above a Bushell of them in all. I had about twenty, which he sent to me, which I have given to the Museum Ashmoleanum' (MS. Top. Gen. c. 25, fol. 119.)

Twelve Roman copper coins

'Mr Arch-Deacon Betteley of Canterbury gave me about a dozen little copper Roman coynes no bigger than halfe-pence found at Reculver in Kent: he haz an ounce or more of them. I gave mine to the Musaeum at Oxford' (MS. Top. Gen. c. 25, fol. 130v). Aubrey records that in Headington, Wiltshire, in 1654, 'digging-up the ground deeper, than the plough went, they found for a good way together foundations of houses, harthes, coales, and a great deale of Rom: money, silver, and copper, whereof I happened to gett as much as would fill a pint: there were some little copper pieces of monie no bigger than a silver halfe-penny quare if they were not the Rom: denarii. The coine that I had was found in a pott of the figure as in the margent; it was neer full when it was found. The

pott I gave to the Repository of the Royall Societie: most of the Coines were stollen from me: but those that were left are at the Repository and Museum Ashmoleanum' (MS. Top. Gen. c. 25, fol. 112b; alternative version in MS. Aubrey 3, fol. 124.) Edmund Gibson's translation and additions to Camden's *Britannia* (London, 1695), p. 103, asserts that Headington, Wiltshire must have been a Roman town, 'as is evident from the foundations of houses that have been dug up here for a mile together, and the finding of silver and copper coins of several Roman Emperors; some of which are given by Mr. John Aubrey to the Royal Society and to Ashmole's Musaeum in Oxford'. Aubrey testifies that 'Sir Edw: Baynton had the greatest part of the Coines found in Week-field; quære his son Henry Baynton Esq, or rather his Lady, the Lady Anne, daughter and co-heire of Jo: Earle of Rochester. she is a great Lover of such Antiquities' (MS Top. Gen. c. 25, fol. 111av).

Seven Roman silver coins

Edmund Gibson's translation and additions to Camden's *Britannia* (London, 1695), p. 101, describes Roman coins 'frequently' found in Sherston, Wiltshire: 'Some of the silver ones, viz. of Antoninus, Faustina, Gordianus, and Fl. Julianus are given to Ashmole's Musaeum in Oxford, by Mr. John Aubrey'. In *Monumenta Britannica*, Aubrey says that 'In Sherston-field in the County of Wilts was found a pretty quantity of Roman coines, by ploughing. Anno Domini 1650. I had one of them [now in the Musaeum], which was Constantine the Great, in Silver. see the Ectype of it in lib. A' (MS. Top. Gen. c. 25, fol. 123). 'Lib. A' means the first volume of the *Wiltshire Antiquities*, i.e. MS. Aubrey 3, where in the section on Sherston Magna Aubrey draws the coin in the margin and describes it: 'I have one silver piece of Constantine the Great: on his head [as in the margent] a kind of Chaplet of Roses, not Laurell; <margin: his haire, is a kind of flaggish haire.> on the reverse, CONSTANTINVS AVG in the limbe within an Angel, or Genius holding a Palme branch in the left hand (stretch't out) something like a snake involv'd under the Genius is T S G' (MS. Aubrey 3, fol. 104v).

John Aubrey's Non-book Donation to the Ashmolean Museum

NATURAL HISTORY

Specimens of North African locusts

In 1694, Edward Lhuyd published a letter to Martin Lister discussing the recent infestation of locusts on English and Welsh shores. A correspondent had sent him a single, slightly damaged, locust from Wales; after examining it he concluded it to be 'of the very same species with some African locusts in my custody in the Museum; for which (and many other valuable curiosities) we are obliged to that very inquisitive and ingenious gentleman, Mr. J. Aubrey, S.R.S. who received them some years since from Tangier' (*Philosophical Transactions*, no. 208, 20 February 1693/4, p. 45; quoted in R. T. Gunther, ed., *Early Science in Oxford*, xiv (London, 1945), p. 223). We do not know where Aubrey got his North African locusts from, but the likeliest source is Wyld Clark: see his letters to Aubrey, which discuss zoological and botanical specimens, with their proper gathering and packing, in *John Aubrey: Three Prose Works*, ed. J. Buchanan-Brown (Sussex, 1972), 482-6.

A Lion's skin from North Africa

Aubrey wrote to William Musgrave on 27 February 1684/5 to say that

I obtained sometime since of my worthy friend Edmund Wyld Esq a Barbarian Lyons skin, which the Merchant, that gave it him told me (seriously) that if one covered it with a sheet, or the like: no beast would walke over the sheet. but this was above 2 yeares since. When I carried in my hand from my Lodging to Mr Ashmoles office (a crosse-alley between the 2 streets) there was a great mastiffe belonging to the alley (that I did not presently see) that came smelling after it with great astonishment. the people of the alley called to me, and told me of it: and asked what it was, for they never saw the dog doe so before, though they [scilicet Coach-makers] bring in quantities of tanned skinned for their use. It will cost you nothing to reiterate this experiment: perhaps after so long keeping it may faile. (MS. Ashmole 1813, fol. 234.)

The minutes of the Philosophical Society of Oxford for 3 March 1684/5 record that 'A Letter from Mr John Awbrey, dated London Feb: 27 was read; it mention'd an Opinion that some Merchants were of; that Beasts are generally offended at a Barbary Lion's skin: There being one of these skins in the Musaeum Ashmolianum, he desires, the truth of this matter may be enquired into, which was order'd to be done' (MS. Ashmole 1810, fol. 94).

A box of specimens of 'Mineralls, and earths'

Aubrey wrote to Lhuyd on 18 July 1695 to announce the imminent arrival of 'a bundle of Mineralls, and earths' to the Museum (MS. Ashmole 1829, fol. 25). Aubrey wrote the following year to Lhuyd to say that 'In my last box [like a band-box] there were severall mineralls of Yorkeshire, which I brought thence with me among others, there was a Sample or two of the Alume stone, from Whitby', and he asked Lhuyd to bring a little piece of it to Wales for comparison with the local stone (MS. Ashmole 1829, fol. 56, 24 February 1696).

MATHEMATICAL INSTRUMENTS

Quadrant made to Francis Potter's design or made by Potter himself

'A quadrant suitable for all latitudes made by Francis Potter <or made to Francis Potter's design>. Donated by Mr Aubrey' (AMS 18, fol. 31). Aubrey annotated his manuscript 'Villare Anglicanum' when he sent it to Edmund Lhuyd on 21 April 1691, 'pray Register [...] Mr Francis Potters little Quadrant' (MS. Aubrey 5, fol. 2). In his 'Life of Potter', Aubrey says: 'He gave me a Quadrant in copper, and made me another in Silver, of his owne projection, which serves for all Latitudes' (MS Aubrey 6, fol. 63). However, Aubrey's correspondence with Lhuyd suggests that the quadrant had to be made specially for the Museum, to accompany the Life of Potter and Aubrey's collection of Potter's inventions; Lhuyd wrote to Aubrey on 9 January 1693/4 telling him: 'Our mathematic instrument maker pretends that Mr Potters quadrant is an old invention; but that he'l make one if you please for 10s; tho he says he can not see what use it will be off. I'll either employ him to make an other (if you think fit) or by permission of ye Vicechancr send it you to be copied at London' (MS. Aubrey 12, fol. 251). The instrument-maker was probably John Prujean as 'All Instruments for the Mathematicks' were said to have been made by him by a commentator in 1692: see R. T. Gunther, *Early Science in Oxford* (Oxford, 1923), i. 179-80.

'Dividing compasses' designed by Francis Potter

In a letter to Robert Plot, Aubrey gives this account:

Mr Potter invented a pair of Dividing Compasses many yeares since: which will divide an Inch into 1000 equall parts: he did me the favour to give me one of them of his owne making, which I presented to my good friend Edmund

John Aubrey's Non-book Donation to the Ashmolean Museum

Wyld Esq, before your Museum was thought of: I wish it were there. It is a hard matter to describe it, but I will give you a draught of it. It is a Saile-compass (as they call it) at the end of the skrew, is a brasse needle whose circumference is divided into an hundred equall visible parts; and also the moveable saile (MS Wood F. 39, fol. 152).

Yet in a letter to Lhuyd of 31 August 1693, Aubrey promises to hand over 'Mr Potters dividing compasses which he invented and made with his own hands' (MS. Ashmole 1829, fol. 13).

MAN-MADE ITEMS

Plaster-casts of Judith Dobson's hands

Aubrey wrote to Anthony Wood on 8 February 1690/1 to say that he had delivered to the Museum 'a box in which I inclosed Mrs Dobson's hands in plaister: [William Dobsons wife Painter to King Charles I.]' (MS. Wood F. 39, fol. 414).

Bronze tobacco-jar decorated with basket-work

'Bronze Tobacco box elegantly decorated with basket-work. Given by John Aubrey Esq of the Royal Society' (AMS 18, fol. 31). Aubrey annotated his manuscript *Villare Anglicanum* when he sent it to Edmund Lhuyd on 21 April 1691, with the instruction, 'pray Register my strawe Tobacco-box [...]'. (MS. Aubrey 5, fol. 2).

Part of a Roman tessellated pavement

When Sir Edward Hungerford's park at Farleigh Castle, Wiltshire, was dug up in 1683, a Roman pavement was discovered of 'Opus Tessellatum, a piece whereof Sir Edward gave me, which is now in the Museum Ashmoleanum at Oxford' (MS Top. Gen. c. 25, fol. 103); see also Edmund Gibson's translation and additions to Camden's *Britannia* (London, 1695), p. 105.

Part of a Roman burial urn

In *Monumenta Britannica*, Aubrey describes an excavation which Sir Edward Harley (1624-1700) of Bampton-Bryan Castle ordered of a barrow on his land in Herefordshire, at a Roman camp called the Brandon near Lanterden, in 1662: 'in the middle he found an Urne about two foot and a half high, full of coales and ashes and some pieces of burn't bones: I had a little piece of the Urne it is of a kind of darke muske colour [umbre]

a quarter of an Inch thick and the middle of it is as black as a coale. I gave this piece to the Museum Ashmoleanum' (MS. Top. Gen. c. 25, fol. 44). Aubrey lists the items found in the barrow which were kept by Harley 'as a Rarity', saying that the pieces of charred bone were carefully re-interred.

GEMS

Elongated triangular precious stone of a dark colour

Said to be similar to others in the collection and marked 'given by John Aubrey Esq FRS' (AMS 8, fol. 14v).

Agate knife-handle

Aubrey annotated his manuscript 'Villare Anglicanum' when he sent it to Edmund Lhuyd on 21 April 1691, 'pray Register [. . .] Mr Fr. Potters [. . .] Agat haft' (MS. Aubrey 5, fol. 2). The object is described in an undated letter by Aubrey to Robert Plot. The letter seems to have been prepared as an accompaniment to the object when it was presented to the Ashmolean; but Anthony Wood, to whom it was entrusted, evidently did not pass it on.

Dr Plott!

My honoured friend Mr Francis Potter Rector of Kilmanton in Somersetshire gave me this Agat-haft, which he had about fourty yeares. About September, or Midsommer [I have now forgot which] in the cleare of this Agat, would arise a cloud, from a little speck: which about the Sun's ingresse into Capricorn would disappeare.

Part of a letter from him to me dated Kilmington May 8th 1656.

Mr Aubrey! I doe certainly know, that the Agate did change apparently when I had him. Whether the change of place may cause him not to change, I know not. I layd him in my Studie neer to a new made wall, which wheter it might make a change in the stone, I know not. You may desire Doctor Harvey to keep it till this next Winter be passed
your etc: Francis Potter.

(MS. Wood F. 39, fol. 152)

Aubrey had lent the agate to his friend Edmund Wylde, who had natural-philosophical interests, to 'make Observations', on the understanding that it would then go to the Ashmolean Museum (MS. Wood F. 49, fol. 81v). Aubrey's own experiments on the object are described in a letter: he says that the object developed a spot when he carried it in his pocket for

John Aubrey's Non-book Donation to the Ashmolean Museum

some time but when it lay still it was 'pellucide' (MS. Aubrey 13, fol. 150). Aubrey made similar observations of stones which changed appearance over time, such as of a turquoise ring. This, Aubrey complains, was borrowed by Robert Boyle who mentioned it in a publication and did not return it (MS. Hearne's diaries 159, p. 208). The 1685 catalogue records a great many agates in the Museum.

Cracked knife-handle; perhaps the agate handle discussed above
'Knife handle, cracked, with white marks. Given by John Aubrey Esq. FRS' (AMS 8, fol. 11).