

PAINTING AND DECORATIVE NOTES

What was Burrell's taste in painting? Originally it was for Dutch paintings but later he also enjoyed French paintings especially the works of the Barbizon School and the Realist Artists. For information on Dutch painting the catalogue of the current Vermeer Exhibition at the Royal Academy is very good. Burrell, like other buyers in Glasgow at his time, was influenced by the dealers Craibie and Alexander Reid.

With regard to Dutch painting it went into a decline in the 18th Century but slowly revived in the 19th Century. Bosboom (1817-91) had a number of pupils in the Hague who were developing a quiet type of painting with a restrained use of colour. The Amsterdam school at this time was more dynamic and colourful. The impressionists of France had some influence (The Maris brothers worked in Paris in the 1870's) but not in the matter of colour liberation. The Dutch painters relied rather on ochres and browns (similar to their 17th forefathers). Works from the Hague School had a certain vogue. They were considered reliable in terms of collecting and investment.

There is a sequence of Degas ballet drawings in the Collection. From the notes on these it can be seen how knowledgeable Degas was about the various steps and postures and what a keen observer he was. But he had to give up painting in 1886 because of his failing eyesight. He is not to be regarded as an Impressionist. Impressionism was a movement between 1869 and 1880 and the only truly Impressionist painting in the Collection is the work by the English artist Sisley. Boudin was a precursor in his brushwork but not yet, like the Impressionists, obsessed with catching the effects of light. Jongkind may look like an Impressionist but the painting on display was actually painted from a photograph. Manet was also a forerunner and associated with the Impressionists. He liked to paint scenes of daily life in Paris - in the streets, theatres or cafes. The use of x-ray showed that he often altered his paintings eg. the one of the ham.

It is better not to use this room as the Impressionist Room, but rather to say that these artists were alive and working at the Impressionist time.