

The original of this had a notation clipped to it marked Rhodes. Some of you Rhodes must have a Romney somewhere.

Romney (George): born at Peckerside, near Dalton
in Furness, Lancashire, in 1734:

Son of a cabinet-maker, learning art under an
itinerant painter, for some two years at Kendal,
Westmoreland. In 1762 he visited London, and in the
following year was awarded the premium of fifty
guineas (receiving however only twenty-five) from
the Society of Arts, for his picture of the Death of
General Wolfe. A second picture, the Death of King
Edmund, obtained fifty guineas from the Society.
After some years of successful work, becoming one
of the most popular of portrait painters, he in 1773
went to Italy, studying for two years in Rome.
In 1775 he returned to England, retaining his
popularity as a portrait painter (in one year it
is said that, he earned £3600); and painting also
poetical and historical subjects, many of these
left in an unfinished state. Never exhibiting
he could not become a member of the Royal
Academy. In 1797, bodily and mental health were
failing; ~~and~~ in 1799 he returned to his native
North-country, where he died in 1802.

His pictures are remarkable for accuracy of
drawing and for clear and natural colouring,
characterised by manliness and dignity, with at
times "a certain touch of poetic loftiness, of which
Reynolds has furnished hardly an example."

His Cartoons

Romney 2

His Cartoons (writes Flaxman) "were examples of the sublime and terrible, at that time perfectly new in English Art." Some of these, - Cupid and Psyche, Proserpina and Eurydice, Prometheus Chained, the Ghost of Darius, are in the Liverpool Institution. Others have been lost. Thirty-eight designs by him are in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. Of his pictures it is exceedingly difficult to find out the owners. Flaxman's praise of him is very high. "Few artists since the fifteenth century have been able to do so much in so many different branches: for besides his beautiful compositions and pictures, which have added to the knowledge and celebrity of the English School, he modeled like a sculptor, carved ornaments in wood with great delicacy, and could make an architectural design in fine taste as well as construct every part of the building."

The list of his pictures is very numerous. Fourteen were painted from Nelson's Lady Hamilton: Circe, Sensibility, Joan of Arc, a Magdalen, Calypso, Cassandra, Phigalia, St. Cecilia, the Pythian Priests, Calhpe exposed with her child, the Spinners, and Bacchantes. Leave in the Storm was a first attempt before coming to London. In Italy he painted a Wood Nymph (valued at 200 guineas); Providence brooding over Chaos

(afterwards)

(afterwards called *Jupiter Pluvius*); and a portrait of *Wortley Montague* ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ Turkish costume, for which the Earl of Warwick paid 50 guineas.

Most famous among his pictures are his *Infant Shakespeare* attended by the *Passions*, *Ophelia*, *Milton dictating* to his daughters, and a portrait of *Thomas Paine*. Some eighteen portraits, principally of ladies and children, are enumerated by *Mrs Heaton* as painted before he went to Italy, and a further list is given by her of thirty-seven, among which, ~~being~~ ^{chiefly} of notable and noble persons, we find the names of *Warren Hastings*, *Pitt*, *Shatham*, *John Wesley*, and *David Hartley*, Minister for settling affairs with America. Of other ~~pictures~~ ^{pictures} finished and unfinished, it may be enough to mention a few out of a list of more than a hundred, to show the variety & extent of *Romney's* work. *Thetis supplicating Jupiter*, *Venus and Adonis*, *Electra and Orestes at the tomb of Agamemnon*, *David and Saul*, the *Ward Sisters*, the *Descent of Odin*, *Gen. Morice*, *Girls chasing a butterfly*, the *Temptation of Christ*, *Homer reciting*, *Doll Tearsheet*, *Camean Lybil*.

From *Mrs Heaton's* revised edition of
Alban Cunningsham's lives of
the Painters, 1879-80
 3 Vols. Geo. Bell & Sons
 York St. Covent Garden